GUIDE TO THE FR5 NGONI FILE

/The name "Ngoni" has political linguistic and ethnic meanings which will be discussed later. Concretely, Ngoni refers to a series of population groups or clusters located mainly in three countries of eastern Africa — Malawi (formerly Nyasaland), where they are found in nearly every sector of the country; Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia); and Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika). Some of the Malawi and Tanzania Ngoni also extend over into Mozambique. Most of these population groups are organized into political states or "kingdoms" of varying size, and they are generally named after the most prominent kings or chiefs who led them on their invasions from the south into their present locales. An inventory of the main groups follows arranged by country. These data are derived primarily from 2: Read and from Mary Tew, Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region, 1950. The names of countries and political subdivisions are those used in the sources, which were written while these countries were still under British colonial domination.

Nyasaland

1) Mbelwa (Mombera) Ngoni, called the "northern Ngoni kingdom" by Read; location: Mzimba district, Northern Province — also extend into Zambia at Lundazi; 1945 population: 44,948 in Mzimba district, 45,539 total according to Tew; main language spoken: Tumbuka.

2) Ciwere Ngoni, a minor state evidently settled by Mbelwa Ngoni; location: Dowa district; 1945 population of Dowa district: 20,329; main language spoken: probably Nyanja, the official language of the area.

3) Two other minor states — Jere and Msakambewa (?) — also settled by Mbelwa Ngoni; location: Kotakota district mainly (?); 1945 population of Kotakota district: 4,838.

4) Gomani Ngoni, called the "central Ngoni kingdom" by Read; for location and population Read evidently limits herself to the central kingdom proper whereas Tew seems to have included all the Ngoni who can

properly be classified as Gomani, therefore, both sets of data are given; location: Ncheu district, Central Province (Read), Ncheu and Dedza districts plus some extension into other districts and Mozambique (Tew); 1945 population: 15,242 (Read), 29,999 (Tew); main language spoken: Nyanja.

5) Four minor states — Kacindamoto, Kacere, Masula, and Vumbwe (?) — which separated from the central kingdom; location: Dedza, Lilongwe, and Cholo districts; 1945 population by district: Dedza — 14,757, Lilongwe — 17,707, Cholo — 9,185. (Tew probably included some of these people into her Gomani category.)

6) Ngoni of the Blantyre district, Southern Province; 1945 population: 25,224.

Both Tew and Read list the total Ngoni population of Nyasaland as of 1945 to be 193,482.

Northern Rhodesia

1) Mpezeni Ngoni; location: Fort Jameson district in Northern Rhodesia and Fort Manning district in Nyasaland; 1945 population: total of 85,000 — 60,000 in Northern Rhodesia, 25,000 in Nyasaland; main languages spoken: Nsenga is the common language, while Nyanja, which is the official language, is also spoken throughout the Fort Jameson district.

Tanganyika

1) Magwangwara Ngoni; they are divided into a northern and a southern chiefdom; location: Songea and Lindi districts, plus an extension into Mozambique; 1945 population: total of 74,869 — 57,769 in Songea district; main language spoken: Yao.

2) Watuta Ngoni; location: Tabora district; main language spoken: Nyamwezi. The Watuta evidently constitute a small population cluster.

In summary, there are five main Ngoni groups: Mbelwa or Mombera, Ciwere, Gomani, Mpezeni, and Magwangwara. Of these, the three major kingdoms are Mbelwa, Gomani, and Mpezeni, although there does not seem to be enough information about the Magwangwara to evaluate this group properly. At one point, Tew

(1950: 97) says that the Ngoni in Tanganyika were nearly annihilated by the German expeditions.

A good deal of confusion has been caused by the use of the name Ngoni as a tribal designation. Read says that Ngoni is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term. The name was assumed originally by a group of sibs who spoke an Nguni dialect, and who split off from the Zulu or Swazi stock in South Africa and migrated northward. "This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense today" (9: Read, p. 457). During their northward migration, the Ngoni absorbed elements from many other ethnic groups, so that the present ethnic composition of the Ngoni kingdoms is highly mixed. It is by examining this composition that we may best understand the full range of applications of the name Ngoni. Four categories of people are involved: a) those from the south; b) those from south of the Zambezi; c) those from the march; and d) those from this country. Category (a) consists of the "true" Ngoni, those whose sib descent names show their Zulu/Swazi ancestory. Read claims that contrary to previous information, most of the true Ngoni still speak their traditional language, which she says is almost identical with old Zulu, along with one of the local vernaculars such as Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Nyanja. In fact, use of the Ngoni language is one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni, who are in aristocratic minority in these political groupings, and the rest of the people. The other ethnic components are ranked hierarchically in rough geographic order of their absorption from south to north — again the sib descent names are the crucial classificatory index. Thus people in category (b) who were absorbed south of the Zambezi are ranked higher than those in category (c), while those in category (d) who were the last to be absorbed, and who have usually retained more of their own cultures, are ranked lowest. In her monograph, 2: Read uses the term Ngoni to refer to persons in categories (a) and (b) only, and it is their culture which she describes. In its widest application, however, Ngoni may be used as a political label to refer to all of the people within the political jurisdiction of an Ngoni state; in other words, to persons in all four of the categories listed above.

Mainly through the work of Barnes (cf. especially 1: Barnes), the Ngoni have become a "classic" example in the anthropological literature of a segmenting state system, or what Barnes calls a "snowball state." This means a state which steadily expands and occasionally spins off new states through processes of social fission, the fissioning units in this case being what Barnes calls "residential" units, which meet some but not all the criteria of lineage systems.

The FR5 Ngoni file presently consists of 14 sources, 6 of which focus on the Mpezeni Ngoni, making this the best described group. The basic authority is Barnes, who spent 20 months in 1946-1949 doing fieldwork among the Ngoni of the Fort Jameson district. 1: Barnes is a major analysis of Ngoni sociopolitical history and political processes. 4: Barnes is a fairly thorough study of marriage and kinship, while 10: Barnes is a good general summary of the social organization. 12: Barnes deals with material culture, particularly subsistence, technology, and crafts, whereas 8: Barnes is concerned with legends and oral traditions. 5: Allan covers some otherwise neglected aspects with his data on population, land utilization, and agriculture.

Read is the authority on the Mbelwa and Gomani Ngoni. 2: Read is a thorough general study of social organization, while 3: Read focuses upon the socialization system and cultural values. Read spent three and a half years among the Ngoni of Malawi in 1935-1939. 13: Fraser also deals with the Mbelwa Ngoni as of about 1890, presenting information on their history, social organization, economy, and religion.

9: Read is an excellent, general discussion of the ethnic composition and culture history of the Ngoni, relating mainly to the Mbelwa, Gomani, and Mpezeni Ngoni, and it should provide the researcher with a good introductory perspective to the file.

11: Lancaster also deals with general Ngoni social history based on oral traditions. He covers the period of migrations from South Africa to Zambia and Malawi which lasted from the 1820's through the 1860's.

6: Rattray describes miscellaneous customs, folk-lore, and songs of the Ngoni located mainly in the

Central Province of Nyasaland. And 7: Hodgson consists of ethnographic notes comparing CiwereNgoni customs with those of the Cewa (FR4).

Finally, 14: Rita-Ferreira is an annotated bibliography on the Ngoni./

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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[10] 173 167

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*isithakazelo*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapundi, Bangoni, Batuta, Bazowa, Bunga, Landeens, Landims, Machendi, Mafiti, Mafitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara, 101

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820'S

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Soshangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

[551] [643]

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Maviti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Nguni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became 173 613 [727] [622] [631]

[10] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-16; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] See Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 93.
[12] *Mulumuzana*, pl. *abamuzana*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzana*, village headman; also Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

l:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 173 167 619 668 bottom, seems the most acceptable.[23] Two other versions of this alleged dissension can also be rejected. Bryant says that the southern Nyasaland Ngoni remained behind after the main body had crossed the river and that they were led by Gwasa (*sic*), Zwangendaba's principal headman. Stigand's account is similar, except that he says they broke off after crossing the river. This conflicts with the evidence of Young and Chibambo of the subsequent part played by Gwaza, first lieutenant in segment 1, with Zwangendaba's own group. We must also reject the contention of Coxhead and Hodgson that the southern Nyasaland group broke away from the main body of Ngoni after Zwangendaba's death in Tanganyika Territory. The statement made by Stanley and followed by numerous other writers that the Hehe are an Ngoni group is quite without foundation.[24] Some other communities in [101] southern Tanganyika who were merely raided by Ngoni have themselves taken the name Ngoni or some other name used by Ngoni.[25]

Poole speaks in one place of 'the secession of Nquaba' (Nxaba) from Zwangendaba, but this does not tally with his earlier statements that Nxaba's migration was independent of Zwangendaba, and that the first secession from Zwangendaba's host was that of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni. Bryant's account of Nxaba is much fuller than Poole's, and contradicts Poole's suggestion that Nxaba crossed the Zambezi at the Lupata Gorge. According to Bryant, Nxaba's group never formed part of Zwangendaba's following, and Nxaba was eventually killed in Barotseland. Chibambo and Winterbottom support Bryant.[26]

Posselt, who worked among Mzilikazi's people, states that a section of Zwangendaba's group, composed of Swazi, broke off at about the time of the Zambezi crossing and turned back to join Mzilikazi who married the woman who led the dissident section.

[23] The secession of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni from Mzilikazi may explain Wiese's and Decle's assertions that Zwangendaba himself broke away from Mzilikazi. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 466; Decle, *Savage Africa*, p. 151.

[24] Murray, *Handbook*, p. 30; Young, *History*, p. 111, and letter in *African Studies*, 1950; Hatchell, 'Angoni' (1935), p. 69; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 11; Laws, p. 85, f.n.1, in Lugard, *East African Empire*, i; Johnson, *Nyasa*, p. 102; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 275; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Elmalie, *Introductory Grammar*, p. x; Read, 'Tradition', p. 464; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 31; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 16; Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 312*f*; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 465; Stigand, 'Natives', p. 126; Coxhead, *Native tribes*, p. 20; Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 128; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, pp. 499, 503; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 56, 62.

[25] Maples, *Journals*, p. 15; Weule, *Native Life*, p. 339.

[26] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 7 and 6; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 277, 279, 454, 460*f*, 471*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 16; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 16.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP B. MPEZENI'S NGONILAND AND SURROUNDING COUNTRY 1890

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Area inhabited by Mpezeni's Ngoni.
Boundary of no-man's-land surrounding inhabited area.
Modern political boundaries (1950).

[p. 67]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP D. STATUTORY DIVISION OF LAND, FORT JAMIESON 1949

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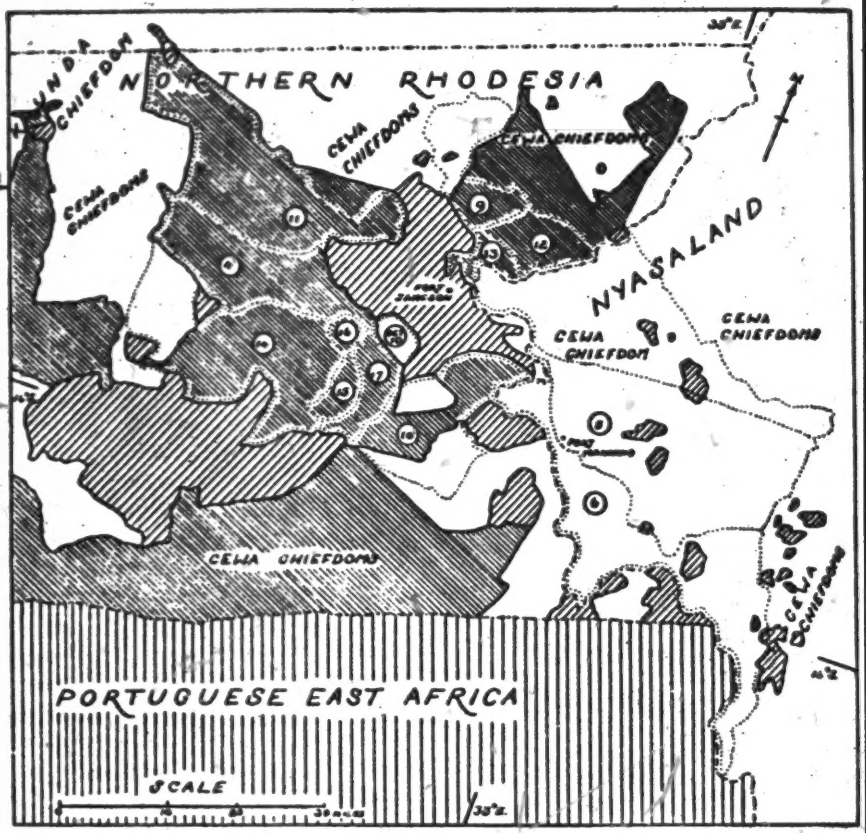

International Boundary.

N. Charterland Concession, Northern Boundary.

Statutory Division Boundary.

County Boundary.

Farmland in non-African ownership.

Native Reserves.

Native Trust land, crown land and disputed land, treated as if it were Native Trust land.

Portuguese East Africa.

County numbers.

[p. 120]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER I

THE NGONI PEOPLE

In the census of Nyasaland of 1945, there were 193,482 people enumerated as Ngoni. Their distribution extended from the extreme north in Karonga district through every other district to the extreme south in Port Herald district. There were concentrations of Ngoni people, however, as Table I shows, in the Mzimba district in the north, in the Dowa, Lilongwe, Dedza and Ncheu districts of the central province, and in the Blantyre district in the south. The Ngoni in the Mzimba district were known as Mbelwa's Ngoni [1] and will be called in this book the northern Ngoni Kingdom.

131 [161] [101]

Table I

Distribution of Ngoni in Nyasaland by Provinces and Districts from 1945 Census

162 131

Northern Province	*Total* 45,539
Mzimba district	44,948
Karonga ,,	295
Chinteche ,,	296
Central Province*	*Total* 80,943
Kasungu district	2,539
Dowa ,,	20,329
Lilongwe ,,	17,707
Dedza ,,	14,757
Ncheu ,,	15,242
Kotakota ,,	4,838
Fort Manning ,,	5,531
Southern Province	*Total* 67,000
Blantyre district	25,224
Zomba ,,	6,972
Liwonde ,,	7,572
Neno ,,	10,211
Cholo ,,	9,185
Fort Johnston ,,	1,343
Chikwawa ,,	1,029
Chiradzulu ,,	4,655
Mlanje ,,	751
Port Herald ,,	58
Total	*193,482*

* In 1931 this was included in the Northern Province.

[1] Tew, M. *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region.* O.U.P., 1950, p. 91.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found in three separate states in the Dowa and Kotakota districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpeseni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,891. Leaving out the Fort Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliation survives political dispersal? The chief problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, distinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambesi', 'those from the march' and 'those from this country'. The Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Luangwa valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(*d*) '*Those from this country*'

Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. These in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Yao origin.

Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi stock—that is categories (*a*) and (*b*) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged; or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

The second conclusion is that even if the criterion is accepted that the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambesi, the Ngoni kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (*a*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms of culture were found not only in groups (*a*) and (*b*), as would be expected, but often among families in group (*c*) who, through fighting in the Ngoni armies and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual pattern.[1]

[1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpeseni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their travels. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Maseko Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realize that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni eni eni*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names.

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.'[1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognized areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *alumuzana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *alumuzana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognized as *alumuzana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *alumuzana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognized court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *alumuzana* were recognized as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *alumuzana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*. 1935, p. 34.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[P.207]

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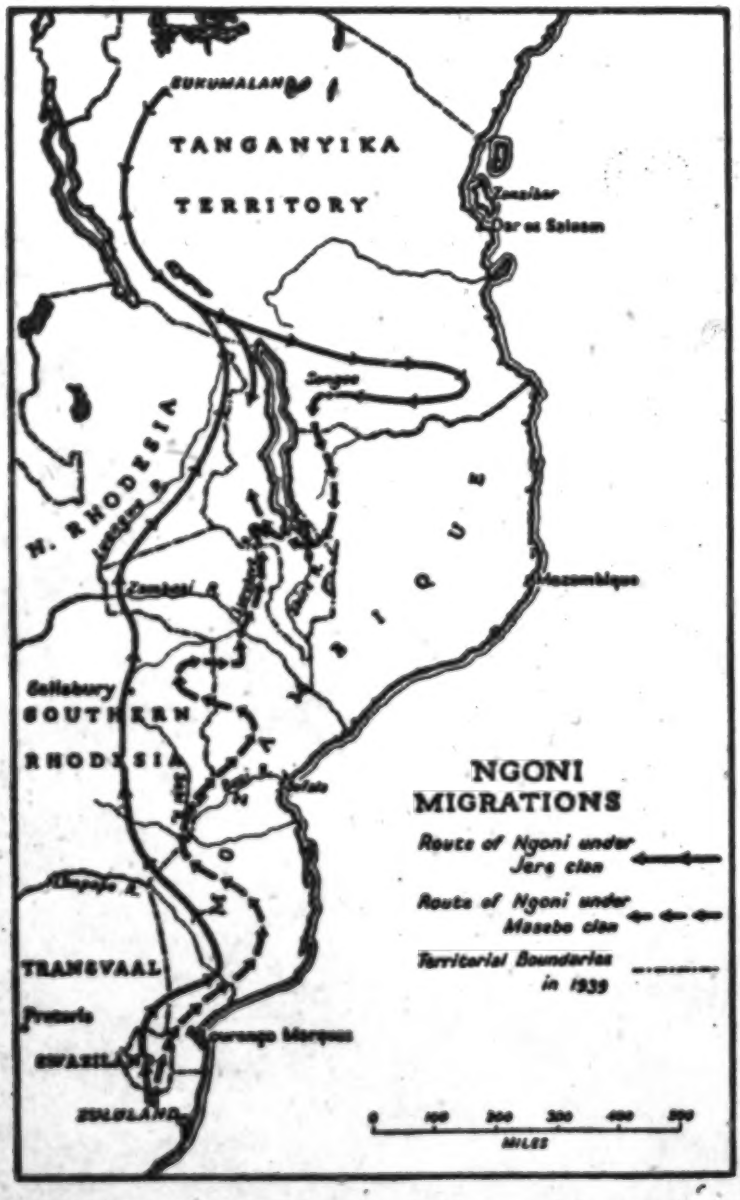

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[p. 208]

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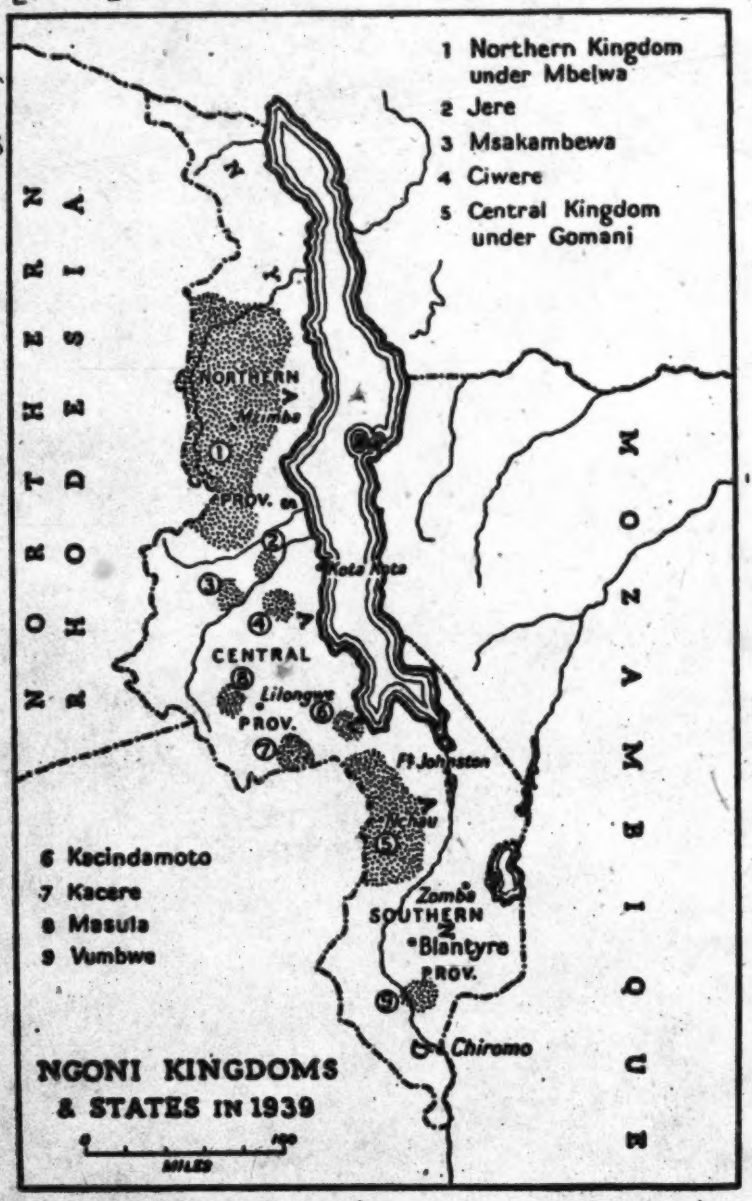

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part. 121

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000 live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[2]. 101 [161] 131 167 [648] [643] 631 241 [939] 464

[2] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 282 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned: such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources.

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile.

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfinzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipoka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni.

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent.

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do.

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
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PART IV

THE RESETTLEMENT OF NATIVE POPULATIONS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

§ 1. *The Problem and its Origin*

L M N 174 166 311

IN Northern Rhodesia and doubtless over a much greater part of Africa before the coming of the Europeans, the population-land pattern was a changing, kaleidoscopic picture. If an area became overcrowded more land was available, or it could be taken from a neighbouring people. A rough balance between land and population was maintained by means of migration, inter-tribal wars, periodic famine and disease.

L M N 648 166

With the coming of the European the kaleidoscopic picture was arrested, producing what we may call the primary population-land pattern. This was later modified, by alienation and reservation of land and by the movement of peoples into Native reserves, to produce a secondary pattern. New economic factors have so far modified this secondary pattern only to a minor extent, but it may be expected that they will tend to do so increasingly in the future.

L M N 166 311

The secondary population-land pattern was brought about mainly by the movement of the African population into Native reserves. As a result of this movement large areas of Crown Land were left practically uninhabited, and a number of factors operating together brought about mal-distribution and congestion of populations within the reserves themselves.

L M N [101] L M N 131

So far the problem has been studied in detail only in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province, the Mkushi District of the Central Province and the Ndola District of the Western Province, and it is within these districts that resettlement work—other than the 'Chitemene Control' scheme—has been carried out. The four districts are contiguous and the total area within them to which this discussion refers is about 33,800 square miles (4,000 square miles more than the whole land area of Scotland but only about one-ninth of the area of Northern Rhodesia) with a total population, in round figures, of 290,000 (about one-sixth of the total populaton of the Territory).

L N M 166 311

The primary population-land pattern was such that the ten tribes living within this area had ample or much more than ample land, except to a minor extent in the Fort Jameson District where the incursion of the immigrant Ngoni in the later 19th century had created a potential congestion problem. Under former conditions this problem would doubtless have resolved itself [167] as it arose by migration of the Chewa to north and west, under pressure from the Ngoni, but once the kaleidoscopic pattern was arrested no such

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

L M N 101 102 131

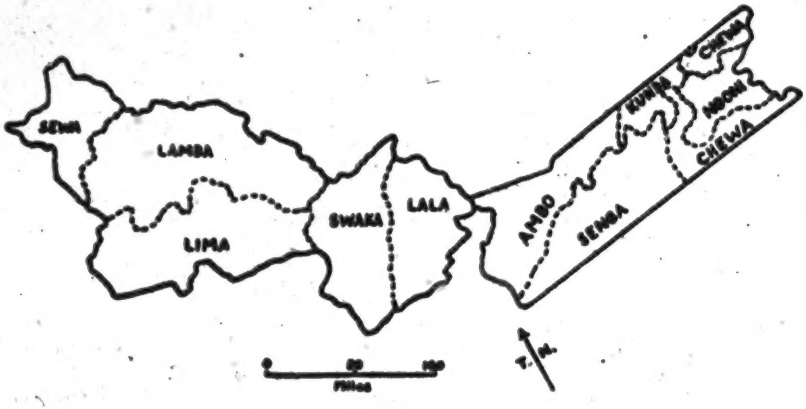

Fig 1.— THE ORIGINAL POPULATION-LAND PATTERN
Showing areas held by tribes.

M N 166 311 [648] [131]

movement was possible. The lands of the Ngoni and Chewa were then reduced, by alienation to European settlers and by reservation, to an extent which the following figures illustrate :

Habitable Land held by Tribes (square miles)

	Chewa	*Ngoni* *
Before Ngoni invasion	3,580	–
After Ngoni invasion	2,280	1,300
After land alienation	1,124	878
After creation of reserves	889	675

L M 648 166

Throughout the Petauke and Mkushi Districts the amount of land taken up by European settlers was negligible, but the Senga, Ambo, Lala and Swaka peoples were moved into Reserves some of which proved totally inadequate for the land needs of their traditional agricultural systems.

L 648 166 131

In the west (Ndola District) the congestion problem arose largely as a result of displacement of people from the area which is now the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia, a land loss which fell on the Lamba tribe. The land area of Mushiri's section of the Lamba, for example, which formerly included part of the Copperbelt, was reduced from 2,200 to 360 square miles. The Lamba were removed from the new mining areas and this movement accentuated by some migration of more distant peoples attracted by the mines, gave rise to a belt of relatively high population concentration about the southern and eastern margins of the Copperbelt.

L [316] [161]

* With a mixture of Chewa and other tribes.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

191 are unknown, and he talks, "having regard rather
184 to the poetical feeling than to the grammatical position and syntax of a word." But enclitics, tense particles, concords, the various forms of the verb (applied, causative, intensive, reversive, etc.), and all those auxiliary particles such as *ba*, *ka*, *ngo*, *dzi*, and enclitic particles such as *-nso*, *-be*, *-tu*, etc., by which all the finer shades of meaning are expressed, he uses absolutely correctly, and it is with a view of understanding, and making oneself understood, to the raw, uneducated element among these natives, that one should go to the trouble of learning this language.

121 The customs, stories, etc., recorded herein are
● 101 those of the natives inhabiting Central Angoniland. They are descendants, for the most part through intermarriage with the Achewa, of the Zulus who came from south of the Zambezi, scattering as they advanced, under different leaderships; those under *Gwaza* (the father of *Sakambewa*), and his *nduna Chiwere*, settling at Dowa; *Mpezeni*, a son of *Gwaza*, settling near Fort Jameson. *Mputa*, the father of *Chikusi*, after reaching as far as Lake Chirwa, and raiding the Anguru under *Sinjaubwereka*, came to Domwe, near Dedza, under promise of cattle from *Sosola*, a *Chipeta*, or *Nchewa* chief. (*Chipeta* and *Nchewa* are synonymous, the former word being a sobriquet bestowed on the *Achewa* who came on to the Angoniland plateau, by the *Achewa* who settled on the Lake shore, the latter referring to the former as the *a chipeta*, i. e. they of the *chipeta* (long grass)). Intermingled with these customs, borrowed for the most part by the con-
[177] querors from the conquered, are to be found traces here and there, and here and there a word, which strike the key-note of their past history, now all but forgotten even by themselves. But what is of their

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

past, and what of their present, will be clear to one who has made a more minute study of their Zulu ancestors than the writer had time or opportunity to do. Whatever be of merit in this little work, the writer owes to the Rev. Alexander Hetherwick, D.D., to whose kindness and courtesy in teaching him Chinyanja, when he first came to the country, he owes all that is best in his knowledge of the language.

MANDALA,
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA,
January 1, 1906.

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7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maravi FR4

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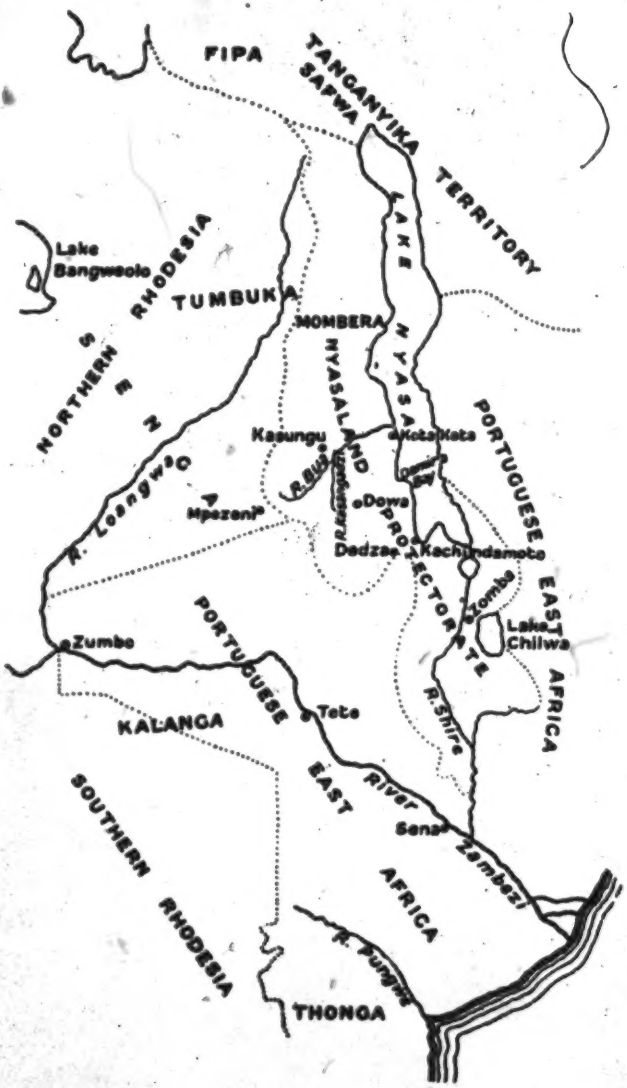

MAP I.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Maravi FR4

Dowa District of the Nyasaland Protectorate. 125

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101 ●
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MAP 2.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M 175

Livingstone found chief Mwase, at Kasungu, ruling over "a section of Mang'anja, called Machewa, or Macheba[1]."

M 175 648 [241] [167]

For some years the Achewa enjoyed a peaceful existence in their new home, keeping cattle, but living mainly by agriculture, until their tranquility was disturbed by the Ngoni invasion and by the slave raids of the Jumbe[2] at Kota Kota. By these the eastern branch of Achewa was continually harassed; and consequently in 1893 Dzoole, Kanyenda and others of the house of Karonga moved south to the Kasangadzi and Mtiti Rivers, and in 1896 handed over this part of the country to the protection of the British Government.

N 175 101 N 174

The Angoni, under the name of Mazitu, were described by Livingstone as Zulus,[3] and this terminological error has been copied by more than one subsequent writer. Of their earlier wanderings no record has been traced. Owing, perhaps, to their lighter colour it has been surmised that they came from far up the east coast; but it is known that under the style of Abe-nguni, derived from an ancient chief Mnguni, they were settled on the Dedesi, a small tributary of the upper St. John's River, when the Aba-mbo first arrived in Natal about 1620.[4] In this locality they remained for a couple of centuries, till towards the end of his reign the notorious Zulu king Chaka fell upon their allies the Ama-ndwandwe under Zwide. A section of the Abe-nguni then migrated northwards under Zwangendaba; and wherever they went they fought and subdued the peoples through whose country they passed, seizing cattle and incorporating captives in their own tribe. After raiding the Aba-suto, Ama-awazi, Aba-thonga[5] and Ama-kalanga, they crossed the Zambezi near Zumbo at the time of the total eclipse of the sun on the 19th of November, 1835,[6] and overran the territories of the Aba-senga, A-tumbuka, A-safwa and A-mandewere till they came to the land of the Wa-fipa and Wa-sukuma.

Here Zwangendaba (or Songandawa, as he is generally called in Nyasaland) died, and his following broke up and scattered in different directions. While others advanced to the north and east, four sections turned back, one under Mombera to the Tumbuka country, another under Mpezeni to the Loangwa river, the third under Chiwere to Dowa, and the fourth under Chikusi still further south. It is with the third section that we are now dealing. The hybrid nature of the Dowa Angoni can be inferred from the list of clans given in a subsequent section (IV, 2). During the last four decades they have intermarried still further with the Achewa, and there are now few, if any, pure-blooded Angoni in the district. Their paramount chief, Chiwere, though calling himself an Mngoni, is in reality an Msenga.

N 101 M N 648

M N 141 121

The general features, characteristics and habits of these peoples are akin to those of neighbouring tribes which have been described by the Reverend Duff Macdonald,[7] Miss Alice Werner

[1] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, pp. 528, 548.

[2] A coast Arab, acting as *wali*, or representative, of the Sultan of Zanzibar.

[3] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, p. 381.

[4] Eric A. Walker: *Historical Atlas of South Africa*, p. 6. J. H. Soga: *The South-Eastern Bantu*, pp. 81, *et seq.*

[5] In *ph* and *th* each consonant is pronounced. Similarly, in *au* and *eo* each vowel is pronounced.

[6] E. H. L. Poole: *Journal African Society*, vol. xxix, No. cxv, p. 290.

[7] Rev. Duff Macdonald, *Africana*. Miss Alice Werner, *The Natives of British Central Africa*. Dr. H. S. Stannus, *The Wayao of Nyasaland*, Harvard African Studies III, *Varia Africana* III, pp. 229-372, "Notes on Some Tribes of British Central Africa," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl. 1910, pp. 295-365, etc., etc.

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indunas*[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupulous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African territories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[1] [i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

one party of them came up from the south, and partly to divisions among the Ngoni during the period of settlement.

About 115 years ago the ancestors of these Ngoni left their homes in the present Zululand and Swaziland for their long trek north. The immediate cause of their departure was the defeat of Zwidi, chief of the Ndwandwe people, by Chaka, the history of whose military career in Zululand is well known and needs no repetition here. As part of Zwidi's people, the Ngoni did not want to stay under Chaka, and the same impetus and military skill which set up Chaka as the Zulu Napoleon drove the Ngoni northward as far as Lake Tanganyika, a conquering military horde amassing followers on the way. To-day they are found in three large groups and several smaller ones, the large groups known as the 'countries' of Mpezeni, Mwambera, and Gomani, who are the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs.[1]

These groups of people with their southern origin, settled among people who had a totally different language and social structure, present to the anthropologist a highly complex situation to investigate. He must at the outset ask the questions, 'Who are these Ngoni? Have they a separate identity as a people, marked by distinctive social and political institutions?' After living among them for nearly a year I am convinced that it is correct to speak of the Ngoni as a distinctive group; that they themselves are very conscious of their separate identity as a people, and that they can point to certain of their institutions, notably their language and political, territorial, and kinship groupings, which are definitely Ngoni, that is, of southern origin, and which distinguish them from the people among whom they settled. The complexities of this situation involve the analysing of the ethnic elements included in this term 'Ngoni' and the determining of the sense in which it is to be used. They involve also an explanation of what is meant by the expression 'a distinctive Ngoni culture', or 'distinctive Ngoni institutions'. The anthropologist who is interested in culture contact must go further and indicate the nature of the double contact caused first by the intermingling of the Ngoni with other tribes, and then by the advent of the Europeans. It is not possible in this article to do justice to all these aspects of an intricate problem.

[1] For the purposes of this article these are the only groups which will be considered.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

N M 101 641 people of Mpezeni '. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found [464] men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan [614] names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is ' the thing ' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, " We are all Ngoni ". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N 829 [614] The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, ' What is the meaning of a clan? ' they reply, ' It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many ' tribes ' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

N 121 101

[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word ' clan ' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. ' Tribe ' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which ' tribe ' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the ' blanket term ' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word ' tribe ' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

N M 197 128 N M 101 128

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts?

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *u* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups.

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans.

614 a hierarchy of rank expressed in the clan names, and this rank is
563 evident in the position of houses on a village site, and the degree of authority exercised by the clans and the respect[1] accorded to them. In effect, all those whose ancestors were absorbed before the final
●101 break up of the main Ngoni group are recognized as having some
563 claim to the name Ngoni. The rest, that is the clans found in the areas where the Ngoni finally settled are, or rather were, regarded as conquered or slave people.

101 We have seen, however, that there is a much wider sense in which the term Ngoni is used—that is, by all who live under the rule of the
641 Paramount Chief. This extended usage is due to the prestige and
186 honour in which the stricter meaning of Ngoni is held. It was illus-
[643] trated in the instance of the Nyasaland men in Johannesburg, who all claimed to be Ngoni because they had discovered at once that the name commanded respect among the mixture of tribes to be found on the mines. *Indunas* and other leading men sometimes make use of this wider connotation when boasting about the large numbers of people owning allegiance to the Ngoni Paramount Chief, compared with the other petty chieftainships. 'All those in the country of Mpezeni are Ngoni. All are his people.' At the same time they make it clear that there is a distinction between the real Ngoni and the other subjects of the Paramount—a distinction which formerly was much sharper than it is to-day. All are the people of the Paramount, it is true, but in old days the majority of the non-Ngoni were called slaves. To this day the Ngoni when angry may call out to some one, 'Chewa, Chewa', implying 'Slave, slave', and be hauled to the chief's court for insulting language. There the chief will take pains to point out that there are no slaves to-day, and that no Ngoni must 'spoil the country' by insulting the people of the Paramount.

It is, I think, clear that there is a connotation in which the term
101 Ngoni can be used with some degree of scientific accuracy—that is, to cover all those clans which are not belonging to the local tribes, or, in an even stricter sense, the clans of indubitably southern origin.

[196] [571] [1] This word 'respect' is constantly in use among the Ngoni. It implies both 'honour' and 'fear', and they sometimes use one word and sometimes the other. It really means, 'to give a person his due', that is, to behave towards him (or her) in the manner which his rank requires.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

We have also to recognize that the wider connotation of the word is in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction of that name.

III. Ngoni Society as a Cultural Unit. It is evident that the field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong centralized political organization. This society differs radically from that of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state', that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created social structure the principles of centralization and rank were dominant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of systematized law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, political, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history,

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hamlets.

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *inkosi* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'tribal

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 101 186 619 191 Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indunas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the N [123] aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see N [563] how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

N 105 101 186 As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans N M 177 182 and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, 'We taught them to honour their sons' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

N 123 186 After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

When the first white people arrived, as
traders and missionaries and officials, they were all impressed with 114
the power of the Ngoni Paramount Chief and the impossibility of [643]
getting any footing in the country without his consent and aid. 'Mpezeni[1] is a very powerful chief . . . and shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his governing powers. He has formed a powerful kingdom where his subjects are mainly Chewa, Chipeta and Senga stock, but his power is consolidated by a Zulu and half-Zulu aristocracy.' Such was the official view of the Ngoni state under old Mpezeni expressed by Sir Harry Johnston, and similar impressions are recorded of the Ngoni states in Nyasaland. If this was the European impression of Ngoni supremacy it is easy to picture the feelings of the Ngoni themselves with all their pride of race and of achievements in nation-holding, when for the first time a superior power [177] loomed on their horizon.

VII. The Advent of the Europeans. I have up to the present 101
referred to the three Ngoni areas as if they formed one cultural unit. This is true of their earliest days, and to a large extent of the time called *chamtendere*. In spite of certain minor differences there was then a form of society and of political organization which was the same in all three areas, and they all possessed the same language, traditions, and aristocratic hierarchy. After the advent of the Europeans, however, it 177
becomes impossible to generalize, as both the manner and the results 184
of white penetration varied so much in the three areas. As a study in culture contact where eye-witnesses, both white and black, are still available as informants, it is most illuminating to compare the effects of white contact in Mpezeni's and Mwambera's countries. In Mpezeni's the first contact was commercial, in Mwambera's, missionary. The contrast between Ngoni society in those two districts to-day is startling, and is commented on frequently by the Ngoni themselves. 'See', say Mpezeni's people, 'the Charterland Company came to us. To Mwambera's country it was Dr. Laws. And Dr. Laws's men can speak English to-day and we cannot. Our cattle were taken by the Europeans; Mwambera's were not. That is why they *lubola* their wives to-day with many cattle, and we have only a few cattle.' They often referred to these differences as soon as they knew I was going from

[1] This was the old Mpezeni, son of Zwangendaba.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the mental adjustments necessary to white contact. They still resent 177
white intrusion and its results, economic, administrative, and mis- 609
sionary. At the same time many of them earnestly wish for a solution of the present tension, but towards such a solution there is no easy short cut.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS. Conclusions reached after the first period of 128
field work are generally given with a certain reserve, especially in a 121
complex field such as the Ngoni present. I think, however, that the conclusions in this paper can be stated with some certainty, and as dogmatic statements they form a basis for further field work. For they set the main problems for the detailed study of the Ngoni, and also of the Ngoni as a field for observing culture contact. In this article I hope that the three chief elements in the study have emerged, namely, the problem of Ngoni society as a cultural and political unit; the culture contact problems due to the contact, and part fusion, with local tribes; and the modern culture contact problems due to European penetration.

1. The Ngoni as a group must be regarded from two points of 101
view: those who ethnically have a right to be called Ngoni, who are members of recognized Ngoni clans, with an acknowledged southern origin; and all those who live in the territory of the Ngoni Paramount Chief, and call themselves his people. These last were incorporated into the Ngoni state by the first group, who are still the ruling aristocracy, but the incorporated people now share in Ngoni 'national sentiment' and have made certain sociological changes in order to conform to Ngoni culture. It is their southern origin and their well remembered traditions of the past which confer distinctiveness on the true Ngoni, and on the state which they built. It is to their past they also turn for the charter for those institutions which are recognized as distinctively Ngoni, such as the Paramount Chieftainship, the hierarchy of rank, and patrilineal succession. Their historical origin and military achievements form also the charter for their former position as rulers of the country which they held before the advent of the Europeans.

2. The Europeans in two of the Ngoni areas destroyed the unique 177
position of the Ngoni by defeating their armies. These armies had 178

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

THE FORT JAMESON NGONI

By J. A. BARNES

Historical and Ecological Background

101 THERE are about a dozen groups of peoples in different parts of Africa who call themselves Ngoni, and others not using that name have also been classified as Ngoni on the basis of common [131] origin. They are found in Tanganyika Territory, Portuguese East Africa, Nyasaland, and Northern Rhodesia. The name Ngoni is derived from Nguni, the designation applied to themselves by the Zulu and Xhosa peoples. The Ngoni have a common history of emigration from 175 the vicinity of Zululand, in Natal, in the 1820's, and of subsequent 101 migration northwards. This common heritage they share with the Ndebele of Southern Rhodesia. These migrations were occasioned by the rise to power of the Zulu chief Shaka, whose defeat of his chief rival, Zwide of the Ndandwe, led to the flight northwards of parties of Ndandwe refugees. At least two parties travelled as far north as the River Zambezi, one of them led by Zwangendaba, whose party crossed the river in 1835.[1] This Ngoni group reached the vicinity of Lake Tanganyika in about 1845, and there Zwangendaba died. His people split into several segments, led by his sons and other followers. One of these segments went on farther north, others turned towards Lake Nyasa, while one segment led by Mpezeni, a son of Zwangendaba, struck south-westwards towards the Bemba country in what is now the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia. Here, in about 1856, they fought unsuccessfully with the Bemba, retreated southwards, and in about 1865 crossed the River Luangwa into Fort Jameson District. In 1868 they moved westwards into Petauke District, and a few years later moved eastwards to their present habitat in the vicinity of Fort Jameson.[2] It is with this group of Ngoni that we are concerned.[3]

[1] Poole, *Date of the Crossing of the Zambezi*, pp. 290–2.

[2] Cf. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, pp. 459–70; Chibambo, *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*, pp. 1–36; Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 151; Elmslie, *Among the Wild Angoni*, p. 28; Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 312–15; Hodgson, *Notes on the Achewa and Angoni*, p. 123; Kapunzah, *Angoni, Uzimba ndi Miyambi*, pp. 1–11; Lancaster, *Tentative Chronology*, p. 86; Poole, *Native Tribes*, pp. 5–10; Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 464; Stigand, *Natives of Nyasaland*, p. 126; Werner, *Natives of British Central Africa*, p. 281; Wiese, *Geschichte . . . der Angoni*, pp. 181–6; Winterbottom, *Angoni Paramountcy*, pp. 126–7; Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, pp. 108–17.

[114] [3] I worked among these people for a year in 1946–7 as an Assistant Anthropologist of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

[P. 194]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Marari FR4

N 635 [797] [743]

time controlled from a mission station just inside Nyasaland, so that many people crossed to attend religious services and receive instruction. From Mpezeni's own county it is easier to get to the hospital at Fort Manning than to the one at Fort Jameson, so that people wanting European medicine tend to go to Nyasaland for treatment rather than to Fort Jameson. Nyasalanders are for their part attracted into Northern Rhodesia by the market for foodstuffs among the urban population, White and Black, of Fort Jameson and by the greater variety of goods on sale there.

N [438]

Other Ngoni Groups

N 101 173

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are conscious of their links with the other groups of Ngoni scattered over Central Africa, and of their similarity with the Ndebele and the Swazi and Zulu. The Paramount Chief is sometimes praised by the recital in the Ngoni language of the past exploits of the Ngoni, how they crossed the Zambezi, and how they conquered one tribe after another. On one occasion I heard someone who cannot speak Ngoni praise the Paramount by repeating, in Ndebele, which is similar to Ngoni, a praise of Mzilikazi[1] which he had learnt by rote. This oration was accepted without comment by the Paramount. Lancaster has recorded a legend that Lobengula[2] fled to Mpezeni after the second Matebele War, and that he died in the country.[3] Some years after his installation Mpezeni II was visited by a delegation from Mombera, chief of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland, which, it is said, came to ratify Mpezeni's position as Chief of the Fort Jameson section of the Ngoni. An important headman in Mpezeni's county, who bears the same name as Chief Chiwere of the Ngoni of Dowa District, still claims from time to time that because his namesake and alleged relative is a chief, he too ought to be a chief.

Nsenga and Yao

N M 648 [197]

The Ngoni are on more friendly terms with the Nsenga of Petauke District than with the other matrilineal tribes of the region. Some of the kinship ties that were formed as a result of intermarriage between the two tribes in the 1870's can still be traced, and their languages are similar. Mpezeni III went in 1944 with his first lieutenant and twenty-five followers to visit the Nsenga Chief Manjawanthu, and he is expected to return the invitation.

[1] The first Ndebele king. [2] Son of Mzilikazi, defeated by the Whites.

[3] Lancaster, p. 83. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, and Posselt, *Upengula the Scatterer*, pp. 112–24.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

V. EARNING A LIVING

Intertribal Trade

439 There is little trade between the Ngoni and the neighbouring tribes, whose products are largely the same as their own. Fish is brought up from the Luangwa valley by Kunda and some of it is sold to the Ngoni of the Cipalamba, through whose villages the hawkers pass on their way to Fort Jameson. Bracelets are sometimes brought from Portuguese East Africa by Chikunda. The main attraction for these hawkers is Fort Jameson itself, and it is the fact that the town is encircled by the Ngoni that gives rise to trading with them. The geographical location of the town has also led to the growth in Ngoni [366] country of many stores and what are known in the vernacular as hotels, where tea and buns can be bought and where sometimes there is shelter for the night.

Of greater importance in the life of the tribe than these intertribal links are those arising from White and Indian economic activities. We may distinguish three zones of interaction, the shops both in Fort Jameson township and scattered throughout the district owned by Whites and Indians, the local tobacco farms, and the mines of Southern Rhodesia. The Ngoni have come to need cloth for clothes which they cannot produce themselves, and it is doubtful if there would be enough animals to provide skins for the tribe even if they did not insist on cloth. The need to earn money with which to buy clothes, soap, and other necessities can be met only by seeking employment on a farm, in Fort Jameson township, or farther off. A few people earn enough by selling vegetables in Fort Jameson, and there is a certain amount of maize and other cereals sold. These sales, however, do not provide sufficient income to reduce materially the extent to which people go out to work.

Control of Movement

● 101 To the White traveller, Fort Jameson District is an island of tobacco in a sea of bush. To the Ngoni, the island is not so sharply demarcated, and its characteristic property is cattle, not tobacco, yet it still remains an island, surrounded by a sea of other tribes whose 101 traditions are different from their own. The ships that cross this sea 489 are the lorries. In time past, men used to walk to their destinations, [493] going by Feira to Southern Rhodesia, or across the Luangwa to Broken Hill. A few used to go down to Lake Nyasa, and thence to the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Lupa goldfields and Dar-es-Salaam. Nowadays almost everyone goes 101
by lorry, but now as then a man has to go a long way before he can 489
arrive at an island of friends in one of the urban centres. This means
that, for the Ngoni, emigration is a definite event, and does not occur
as a result of a gradual drifting farther and farther away from the [167]
tribal area. Lorries run from Fort Jameson to Lusaka and to Lilongwe, 489
and from Missale to Mtoko in Southern Rhodesia. There is also a
lorry service from Lundazi to Fort Jameson, but this does not lead
anywhere else, and is not used by Mpezeni's people except locally.
Lusaka is on a railway line, Lilongwe is connected by bus and train to
Blantyre, while Mtoko is on the way to Salisbury. It is these lorry
routes which now provide the links with the outside world, and along
which people and goods travel, the people in both directions, and the
goods, apart from tobacco, mainly inwards. Use of these routes is
controlled by the chiefs, the Administration, by economic factors, and
by the weather. This last has been less important of late, and the roads
are seldom impassable for more than a week at a time, however heavy
the rains. In order to travel on the lorries from Fort Jameson a man
must have a ticket, which costs £1 for the journey to Lusaka, and
less for the trip to Lilongwe. The lorry service from Missale to Mtoko
is free.

The Administration exercise control by insisting that no man shall 486
leave the Territory of Northern Rhodesia unless he is in possession of 166
an identification certificate endorsed by the Administration permit-
ting him to do so. In practice, such endorsements are not usually made
unless the man can produce written permission from the chief that he
is free to go. This working arrangement is intended to ensure that
men do not flee the country when there are cases pending against them,
and to prevent unjustifiable desertion of wives and children. In fact
men are sometimes given permission to go while cases in which they
are involved are still unheard.

The emigration of women and children is further controlled in that 486
there is a law[1] forbidding a woman to leave the tribal area except in 562
the company of her husband, or with a pass to leave from the Native 858
Authority. Sucking children are allowed to accompany their mothers,
but other children under the age of sixteen are not allowed to leave the
province without permission of the Native Authority,[2] while boys

[1] Ngoni Native Authority Order 24.

[2] Ngoni N. A. Order 39. The child must be either accompanied by its parents or else accompanied by a guardian on the way to join its parents.

II:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed. 101 123 643

NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa. 159 167

Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1825. 173 643 648

In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques. [721]

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son. [595]

1 [induna = military leader -- Analyst]

/3/

The Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni

I

During the 1820s, the rise to power of the Zulu chief Chaka in 175
South Africa led to a number of migrations to the north led by lesser chiefs who wished to avoid a clash with the Zulu armies, or who had already clashed and had been defeated. The descendants of these migrants are to-day living scattered over East Africa, from Lake Victoria to near Lourenço Marques. Many of these still call them- 101
selves Ngoni, a term derived from Nguni, a word used to describe themselves while they were still in the south. The leader of one of these Ngoni migrations was Zwangendaba, and it is his descendants who are to be found in Northern Rhodesia and elsewhere at the present time. The only group in this country recognised as Ngoni by the Administration is to be found in Fort Jameson District, under Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Formerly a tribe living in Lundazi District under Chief Magodi was officially called Ngoni, but they are now known to the Administration as Tumbuka. They represent the western salient of the old empire of Mombera, a son of Zwangendaba, whose de-
scendant is now a chief in Nyasaland. This article deals only with [121]
the people under Chief Mpezeni.

Zwangendaba led his people northwards, fighting and taking 174
captives as he went, crossed the Zambezi in 1835, an event that happened to coincide with a solar eclipse, and after passing through the present-day Eastern Province, died near Lake Tanganyika in about 1845. His party then split up, one son, Mpezeni, leading his followers south-westwards towards the Bemba and the Wisa in the Northern Province. From there they moved southwards, crossed the Luangwa, and settled in Petauke District. In about 1865 they moved eastwards and settled to the north of the Mpangwe Hills in Fort
Jameson District. Some ten years later they went further east, and 175
in 1881, when they were first visited by a European, they had reached

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI.—*The Zulu of Nyasaland: their Manners and Customs.* By the Rev. DONALD FRASER, of the Livingstonia Mission.

[Read before the Society, 20th February, 1901.]

101 I SHALL take you to-night into British Central Africa, and describe slightly, a most interesting nation of warriors who live in West Nyasaland. To reach them we sail up the Zambezi, and the 13 Shiré to Lake Nyasa. Landing at Bandawe, we strike inland for two days, climbing most of the way. After passing through richly wooded hills and valleys, we arrive at a great plateau, veined by constant sudden ravines through which rivers roar in the wet season, and trickle in the dry. The plateau is almost bared of trees, and is relieved by huge rocky hills which rise precipitously, from the plain. A low scrub covers the face of the land except where [24] gardens are being cultivated, and the whole country is dotted by innumerable ant hills, each as large as a cottage. These are hoed by the villagers, and throughout most of the year, stand out gaunt and bear. Then the landscape is thirsty and inhospitable looking. The earth baked and hard, lies unclothed in the blazing sun. Cattle, [23] sheep, and goats, wander about the river beds, and one looks almost in vain for any sign of vegetation to afford them food. But when the first rains come, the land breaks into smiling. The scrub puts on a dress of the softest green. The gardens and ant hills are [24] covered with springing maize, and a thick garment of foliage, vegetation, and flowers, hides every vestige of the ground. Here we stand from 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. In the cold season, the thermometer falls as low as 40°, and in the hot, rises as high as 98°. But though the sun has a dangerous bite in midsummer, the heat is never oppressive, and the nights are cool and refreshing.

101 The people who live in this country, are a branch of the Zulu tribe, who started north 70 or 80 years ago on a great raid. The 175 causes which led them to desert their own country are wrapped in mystery, and even the old men who can remember the days when they crossed the Zambezi, are unable to give any clear account of their starting. Probably it arose from one of the wars of Chaka, in

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

which his army was defeated. The warriors knew that they would be killed when they got back to the great Zulu despot, and so they fled north, fighting as they went. As they went along, they conquered and absorbed the tribes, gathering Swazi, Atonga, and a medley of people into the nation. They came to the Zambezi, and on the day when they crossed it they were terrified by a total eclipse of the sun. From the Zambezi they fought their way to Nyasaland, then striking west, they passed through the Senga and Wemba populations till they reached Lake Tanganyika. On the plateau there the first great chief died. He had become infirm in his latter days, and travelled about riding on an ox. At his funeral a terrible massacre took place. One section of the tribe, eager to observe the old bloody funeral ceremonies, surprised and murdered all the widows of the chief that their spirits might accompany the dead chief to the other world. This butchery aroused great indignation among the others, and the tribe split in two. The butchers remained at the S.E. of Lake Tanganyika, where they still are a terror to the surrounding people. The great part of the tribe however, again marched south. One of the sons of the paramount chief was appointed his successor. His name was Mombera. His four brothers, Mpezeni, Mperembe, Maurau, and Mtwaro, were given large and powerful sub-chieftainships under him. This led to a scattering and readjustment of the tribe. Mperembe remained as chief and conquerer over the northern people, keeping the wild Wemba, and other tribes under his suzerainty. Mombera, along with two other brothers, settled in the highlands to the north-west of Nyasa. And Mpezeni went south and gradually got so far separated from the others that his people became an independent and insolated section of the tribe. A few years ago, the British Government levied war on Mpezeni, and his country came under the British Government.

In the north also, Mperembe was sore driven through his separation from the main section of the tribe, and at last his people rebelled, and with the aid of the Wemba, drove him south to join hands with his brother Mombera the paramount chief. Around Mombera the great part of the Ngoni nation remained. Some of his head men started petty chieftainships to the south among whom were Mandala, and Mwasi. Their people are called the Central and Southern Ngoni, and are well known in the Blantyre district as labourers, but they are not Ngoni. Few of them can speak the Zulu or Ngoni language, and they are a poor effeminate and cow-

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

101 [175] ardly people compared with the wild spirits who remained under Mombera.

This tribe is variously named Mazitu, Vikoko, Abangoni, and so on, and readers of Livingstone's 'Zambezi and its Tributaries,' will remember his frequent references to the wild marauding bands of Mazitu. The word Abangoni, by which the tribe calls itself, [186] simply means "The people." They reckon themselves the blooded aristocrats of Africa.

[193] The prefix *aba* before ngoni, is simply the plural form of the noun *umgoni*, a single man. The country is called Ubungoni, and the language Chingoni. For the peculiarity of the Bantu languages, is that words alter their number from singular to plural, and character from noun to adjective, not by changing the suffix but the prefix.

197 The language which the Ngoni speak is a slight modification of Zulu—but they only use two clicks—the dental *c* and labial *q*. In our schools therefore we use the Zulu literature in which there are already nearly 40 volumes, and the best of these are the translations left by Bishop Colenso. Zulu is however rapidly dying [567] out, as the language of the slaves and of the surrounding tribes is becoming the vernacular of the common people. When Mombera's 175 Ngoni settled down in the watershed of the Ruhuru, they soon made their presence disagreeably felt throughout West Nyasa. Their marauding parties were always out on the war path. Dressing [126] in a frightsome garb of cock feathers, carrying a large shield and two or three stabbing assegais, they terrorised the neighbouring tribes. They used to sleep near some village which they wished to attack, and then in the early morning just before the light had come, with a wild war whoop they would sweep through the village, killing the men and the old people; then when they had seized the women and children and tied them together they would start back for the hills, driving with them all the cattle and sheep and goats that they could find. Their fighting was never done in the open. It generally took the form of a wild and sudden rush, and in a moment bleeding corpses were lying about, and the village was in flames.

The terrified people betook themselves to huge stockaded villages, others piled their villages in the lake itself. The Poka, and Henga [101] fled to mountain fastnesses, and built on the edges of fearful precipices, the Senga fled to the Luangwa marsh and built great protected villages in the depths of huge thorn thickets. And the land became

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries.

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandom everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace.

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth fourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. When he listens in court to some great indaba his face is expressionless as granite, with an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had to

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP A. NGONI MIGRATIONS 1821–1900

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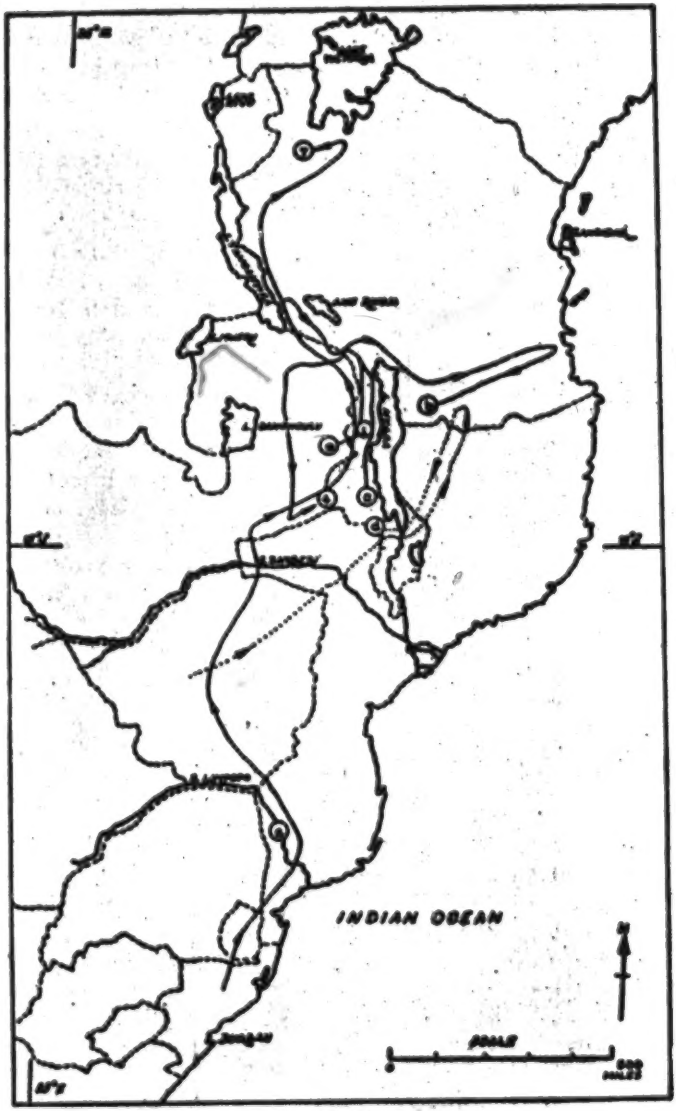


Route of groups stemming from Zwangendaba.

Route of Mascho Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

Modern political boundaries (1953).

1. Northern Nyasaland group, under Mwambera.
2. Fort Jameson group, under Mpezeni.
3. Runewe group, under Mtambalika and Mtambalala.
4. Landazi group, under Magodi.
5. Songea group, under Zulu Gama
6. Dowa group, under Chuma ndhlovu.
7. Southern Nyasaland group, originally under Mputa Mascho.
8. Gazaland group, under Soshangane.

[P. 8]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP B. MPEZENI'S NGONILAND AND SURROUNDING COUNTRY 1890

102
101
103
131
133

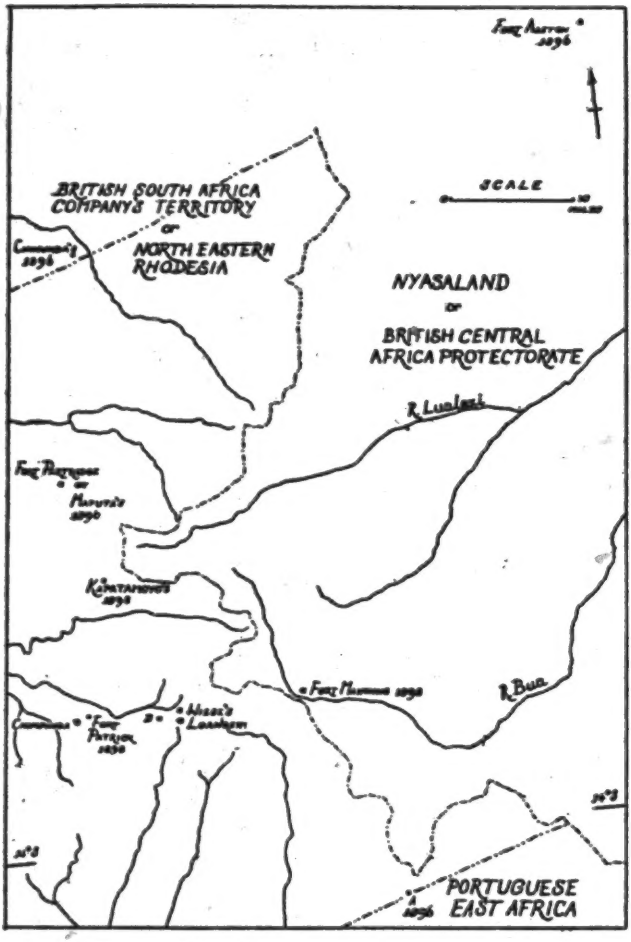
▪▪▪▪▪▪ Area inhabited by Mpezeni's Ngoni.
— — — — — Boundary of no-man's-land surrounding inhabited area.
—·—·—·— Modern political boundaries (1950).

[p. 67]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP C. WHITE SETTLEMENTS IN NGONILAND
1890–1900

102
103
133
648
175



- - - - White territorial boundaries.

— · — · North Charterland Concession, northern boundary.

• White settlements, with date of foundation.

A Camp near Mlanje known in 1896 as FORT YOUNG.

B Brick building known from 1898 onwards as FORT YOUNG or FORT ETTAMBA.

FORT JAMESON. The name applied in 1896 to a camp at CHIPUNDA'S; possibly in October 1897 to MAPUTA'S; from December 1897 until March 1898 to CHIPUNDA'S; and from October 1898 onwards to the township founded at KAPATAMOYO'S.

FORT YOUNG. The name applied in 1896 to a camp (A) at Mlanje; in 1897 and 1898 to a camp, also known as WEEM'S or CHAKWANA, near the village of Lonagoni; and from later in 1898 onwards to a brick building (B) about two miles farther west.

LOANGONI. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 10.

CHIPUNDA. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 13, also known as MPEZENI'S.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP D. STATUTORY DIVISION OF LAND, FORT JAMIESON 1949

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439
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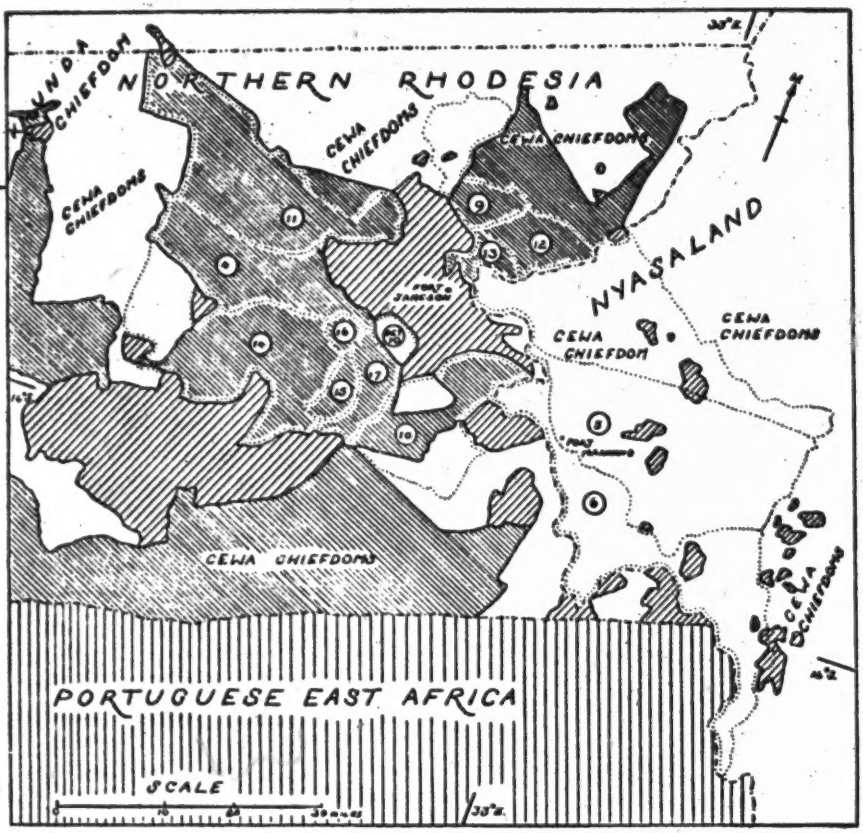

International Boundary.

N. Charterland Concession, Northern Boundary.

Statutory Division Boundary.

County Boundary.

Farmland in non-African ownership.

Native Reserves.

Native Trust land, crown land and disputed land, treated as if it were Native Trust land.

Portuguese East Africa.

County numbers.

[p. 120]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[P.207]

173
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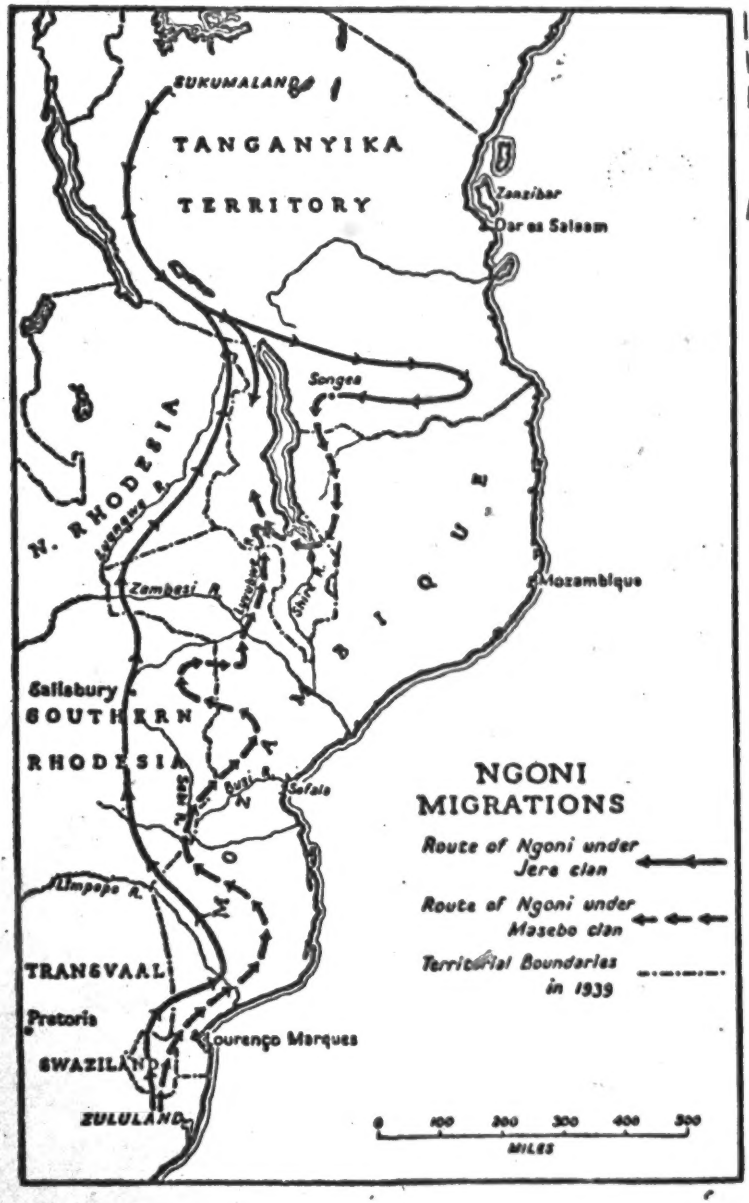
102
131
133
167



2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[P. 208]

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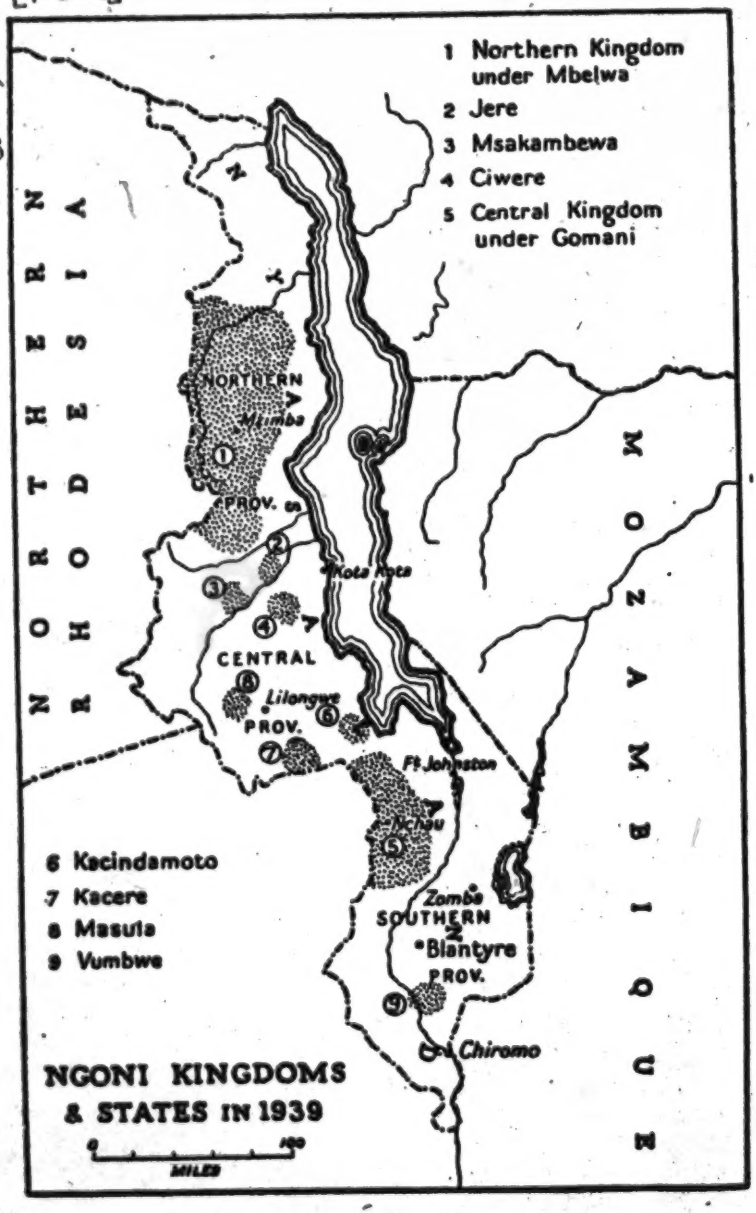

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949

FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

5 M
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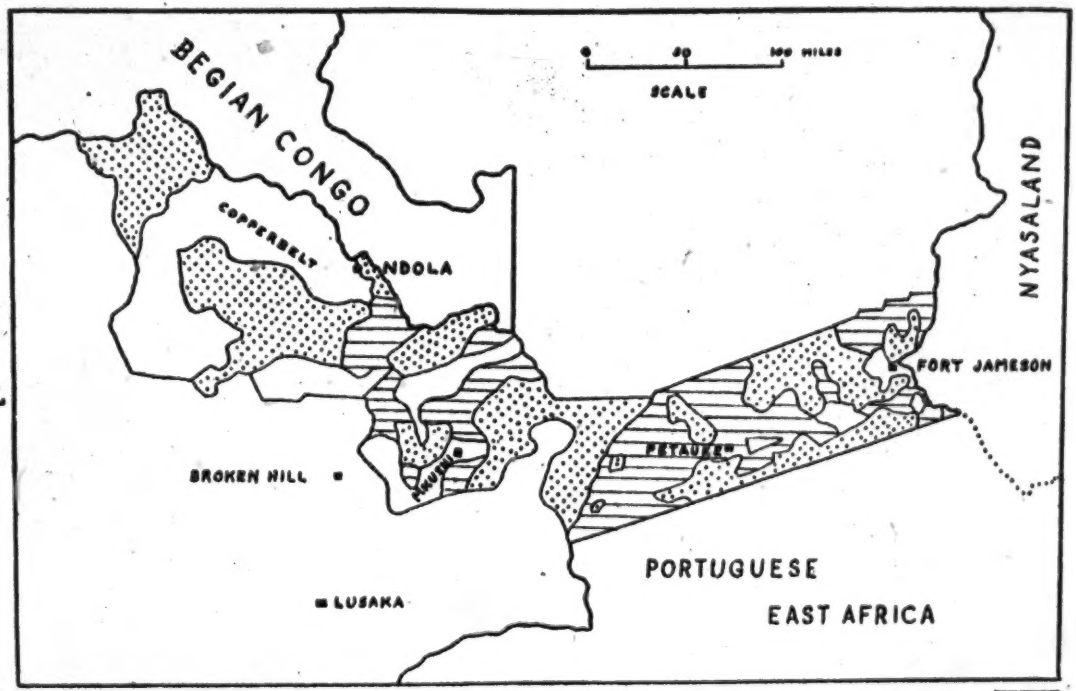

Native Reserves and Native occupied Crown Land. 1929-41.

Resettlement areas and and additions. 1941-45.

SKETCH MAP OF PART OF NORTHERN RHODESIA TO SHOW THE AREAS OF THE WESTERN PROVINCE, MKUSHI DISTRICT AND EASTERN PROVINCE, REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT.

[p.vi]

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

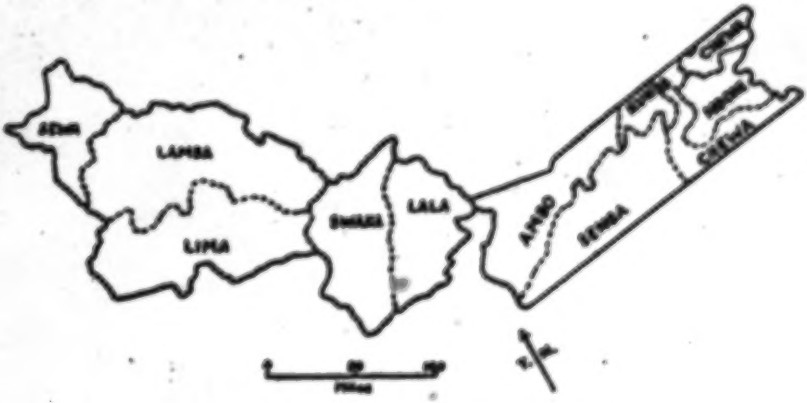

Fig 1.— THE ORIGINAL POPULATION-LAND PATTERN
Showing areas held by tribes.

movement was possible. The lands of the Ngoni and Chewa were then reduced, by alienation to European settlers and by reservation, to an extent which the following figures illustrate:

Habitable Land held by Tribes (square miles)

	Chewa	Ngoni *
Before Ngoni invasion	3,580	–
After Ngoni invasion	2,280	1,300
After land alienation	1,124	878
After creation of reserves	889	675

Throughout the Petauke and Mkushi Districts the amount of land taken up by European settlers was negligible, but the Senga, Ambo, Lala and Swaka peoples were moved into Reserves some of which proved totally inadequate for the land needs of their traditional agricultural systems.

In the west (Ndola District) the congestion problem arose largely as a result of displacement of people from the area which is now the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia, a land loss which fell on the Lamba tribe. The land area of Mushiri's section of the Lamba, for example, which formerly included part of the Copperbelt, was reduced from 2,200 to 360 square miles. The Lamba were removed from the new mining areas and this movement accentuated by some migration of more distant peoples attracted by the mines, gave rise to a belt of relatively high population concentration about the southern and eastern margins of the Copperbelt.

* With a mixture of Chewa and other tribes.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949

FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

L
M
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102
162
311
423
648

Crown land, Company land, alienated land and unoccupied Native Reserve. Largely uninhabited.

Land in Native occupation. Largely under-populated.

Land in Native occupation. Over-populated.

Fig 2.— THE SECONDARY POPULATION-LAND PATTERN.

Trust Land for future use of African peoples, Crown lands and alienated land.

Land in Native occupation. Balanced or under-populated.

Remaining areas of over-population, capable of supporting their populations on the basis of improved agriculture.

Fig. 3.— THE POPULATION-LAND PATTERN AFTER RESETTLEMENT.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

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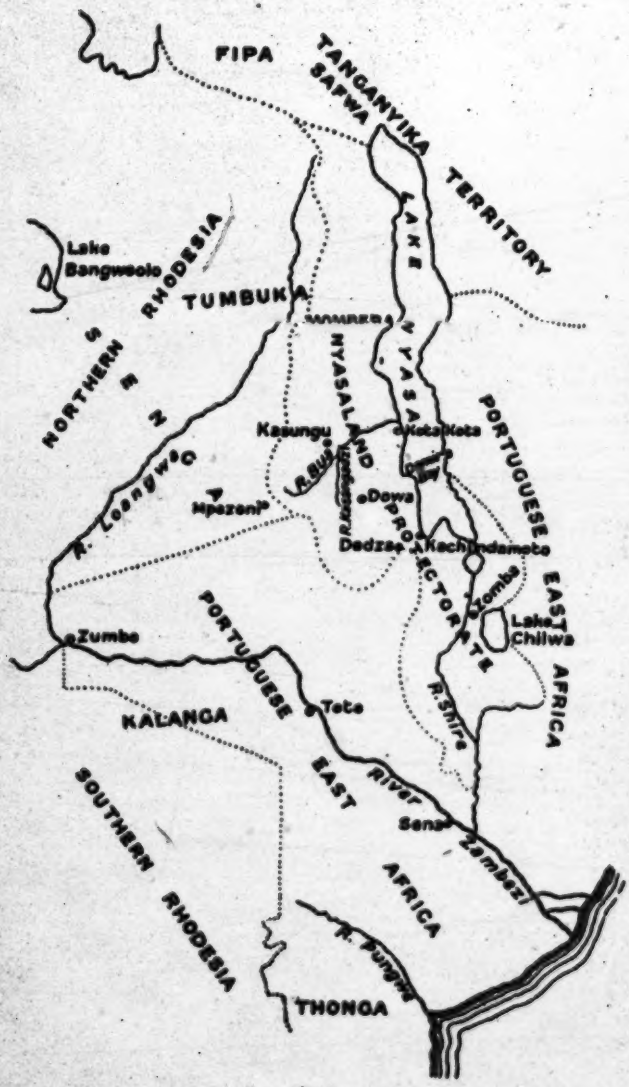

MAP I.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Marawi FR4

Dowa District of the Nyasaland Protectorate. 135

M
N
102 ●
101
103
131

BELGIAN
CONGO
Lake Tanganyika
Lake Rukwa
SUKUMA
FIPA
TANGANYIKA
TERRITORY
MANDEWERE
RAFWA
RHODESIA
TUMBUKA
TONGA
NGONI
Kota Kota
Dowa
Mamba
Mamba
Mamba

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP B. MPEZENI'S NGONILAND AND SURROUNDING COUNTRY 1890

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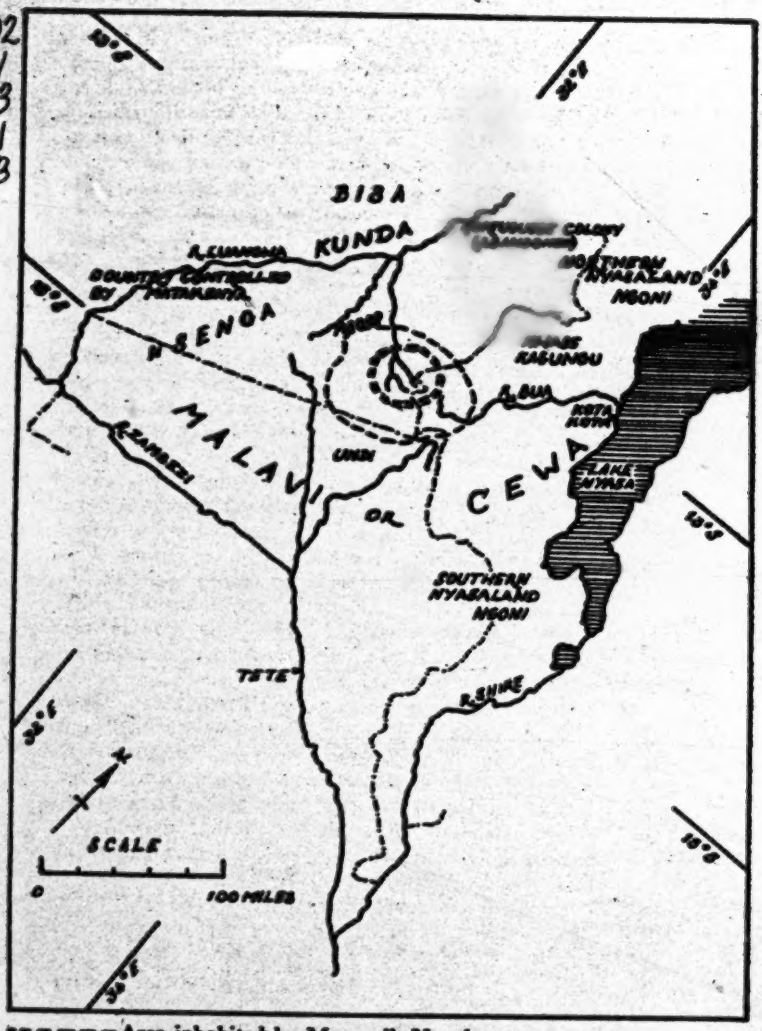

Area inhabited by Mpezeni's Ngoni.
Boundary of no-man's-land surrounding inhabited area.
Modern political boundaries (1950).

[p. 67]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP C. WHITE SETTLEMENTS IN NGONILAND
1890–1900

102
103
133
648
175

——— White territorial boundaries.

——— North Charterland Concession, northern boundary.

▪ White settlements, with date of foundation.

A Camp near Mkanda known in 1896 as FORT YOUNG.

B Brick building known from 1898 onwards as FORT YOUNG or FORT ETTAMBA.

FORT JAMESON. The name applied in 1896 to a camp at CHIPUKIRA'S; possibly in October 1897 to MAPUTA'S; from December 1897 until March 1898 to CHIPUKIRA'S; and from October 1898 onwards to the township founded at KAPATAMOYO'S.

FORT YOUNG. The name applied in 1896 to a camp (A) at Mkanda; in 1897 and 1898 to a camp, also known as WEBB'S or CHAKWARA, near the village of Lozagwi; and from later in 1898 onwards to a brick building (B) about two miles farther west.

LOZAGWI. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 10.

CHIPUKIRA. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 13, also known as MPEZENI'S.

[p. 84]

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949

FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

5 M
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● 103
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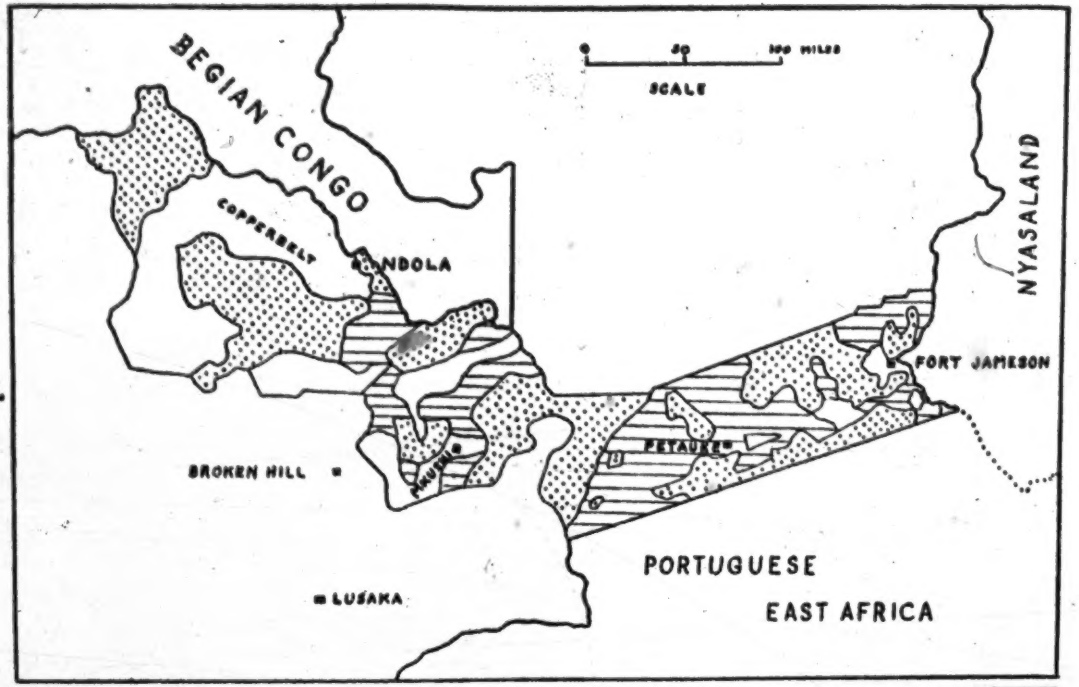
166

[p.vi]



Native Reserves and Native occupied Crown Land. 1929-41.

Resettlement areas and and additions. 1941-45.

SKETCH MAP OF PART OF NORTHERN RHODESIA TO SHOW THE AREAS OF THE WESTERN PROVINCE, MKUSHI DISTRICT AND EASTERN PROVINCE, REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Marawi FR4

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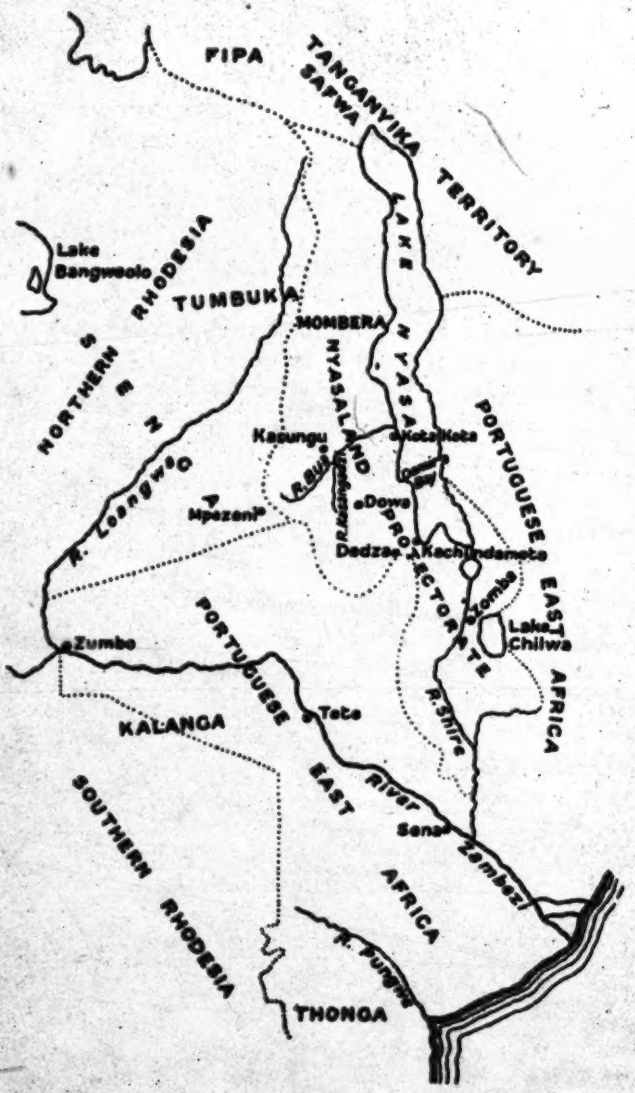

MAP I.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Marawi FR4

MAP 2.

M
N
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131

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the 592
same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for [882]
girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their [858]
elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their [595]
chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from 423
those of their wives.

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There 342
is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cook- [343]
ing and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no [252]
separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda.

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in 621
which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized.

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given 621
by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded 103
by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalaweni, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were found[illegible].

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this 621
type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of in- 622
dividuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder [103]
of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lived with their wives and children, and not all of which had royal headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Ngoni group with which we are most concerned, and within their regiments men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system.

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1775 the pattern of political alignment began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1810 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndandwe and Qwabe,[6] dominated the rest and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethewa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1821[8] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north-eastwards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Ngoni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[9] fighting with Nxaba, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All three parties raided the indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside their new masters.

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on farther north. He took with him his new Tsonga adherents and also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under

[6] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Atkins, 'Spelling Nyanja'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in its old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu.

[8] cf. Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 17, 71. Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1823 and Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 15, has 1823 or 1824. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 8, both have 1825. Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 272, says Zwangendaba left in 1829, while Coxhead, *Native tribes*, p. 20, says he left in the 1850's.

[9] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 161, 279, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The clicks

193 [194] c, x, q, had disappeared in central Ngoniland, and were only pronounced correctly by the older Ngoni in the north. The honorific prefixes before clan names in addressing people, and before first names in reference, also varied according to area, age group and clan ranking. Apparent 104 inconsistencies in spelling which occur in the book reflect these variations.

I have adopted English translations of certain Ngoni expressions and have used them throughout without quotation marks. An obvious example is Paramount for *inkosi*; and the use of 'house' for the Ngoni institution, and 'hut' for the dwelling place.

122 I acknowledge with gratitude the Fellowship given by the International African Institute which made possible the visits to Nyasaland; the grant from the London School of Economics for the research assistants, Miss Ruth Jones and Mr. G. P. Hall, who helped me collate material; the officials and missionaries in Nyasaland who gave hospitality and assisted me in every possible way; and the African people of the Ngoni kingdoms who, as my hosts in the villages and my helpers at all times, welcomed me into their midst and gave me an insight into their Ngoni culture.

London, 1955 MARGARET READ

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 with the main activities of the groups, though it did to some extent illustrate mutual relationships.

Age-Set terms

	Northern Ngoni	*Central Ngoni*
All children	*abantwana*	*ana*
Young men even if married	*amajaha*	*anyamata*
Young girls before puberty	*inkahazana*	*mabuthu*
Young girls past puberty	*izintombi*	*amamwali*
All married women	*abafazi*	*ahazi*
Senior men	*amadoda*	*madoda*
Senior women	*amanina*	*manina*

513 One of the most characteristic forms of Ngoni village organization
561 was the *laweni*, or boys' dormitory. It included the older boys in the group called 'children' and the young men until they married, who were
866 in fact called *amajaha* after they had left the *laweni* and married and had huts of their own. The age for entering the *laweni* was approximately seven years, and was as a rule determined by the age when a child began to get his second teeth. When a child was going about the village with several gaps in his front teeth, his companions jeered at him if he still slept in his grandmother's hut, and his father took the view that it was time he stopped playing like a child and took up seriously the job of herding goats and calves. There was often some hesitation, especially among boys who were not so well grown for their age, at taking the plunge and going to live in the *laweni*, since once made the step could not be retraced. It was primarily an individual decision. It meant leaving the protective affectionate care of the grandmother in the evenings, and the care-free play all day round the mother's hut with meals provided by her, for a different sort of existence altogether. *Laweni* life was rigorous and was dominated by the senior boys living in the hut. The younger ones were at their mercy, and were made to 'fag' for their elders, clean up the hut, sometimes steal food from their mothers' stores, and were beaten if they were slow or careless, or if they threatened to tell the
[626] elders in the village what went on in the *laweni*. The main weapon to get boys into the *laweni* was the ridicule of their fellows. Once members of the *laweni* group they were disciplined into obedience by threats and beating. The age range within a *laweni* was often considerable, from seven to seventeen years.

233 All the boys in a *laweni* who were members of houses possessing
857 cattle—and this as a rule included all sons of Ngoni families of trans-
561 Zambesi clans—had to take part in herding. Cattle-herding was a responsible task and could be an arduous one. The boys got up before dawn, opened the gate of the kraal, and took the cattle to water. They milked the cattle on an open space near the village and carried the milk in wooden jars, gourds or petrol tins to the owner of the cattle, keeping

[P. 205]
[P. 204 is blank]

GLOSSARY OF NGONI TERMS

abantu bembloko, prophets, diviners, dreamers of dreams
alezi (sing. *mlezi*), nursemaids
(m)alumuzana (sing. *mulumuzana*), heads of leading clans
amadlozi (sing. *idlozi*), ancestral spirits
amajaha, young men
amakanda, head villages
amanxusa, messengers
amasi, milk curds
amilaga, outlying villages
azungu, the English

baba, *bambo*, father
banja (Nyanja), family group
Bayete, greeting given only to Paramount
bwalo (Nyanja), open space by chief hut, court

cibale, relationship of brotherhood
cibwenzi, friendship, specially among age mates
cidlodlo, head-ring which senior men were allowed to wear
cigodlo, section of village behind chief hut
cingoni, that which is Ngoni
ciponde, period of lawlessness after death of Paramount

gogo, grandparent, elderly female attendant; also used for house where ancestral spirits are guarded and village left in care of *gogo* house

hlonipa, respect, honour

imihubo (sing. *muhubo*), songs sung by detachments of army
imitulo, tribute
impi, army
incwala, festival of first-fruits
indaba, meeting, affair
indlukulu, chief hut (in village), big house
ingcwembe, wooden dish for meat
inkosi, Paramount Chief
inkosikazi, big wife (of Paramount)
isihlutu, form of hair-dressing, chignon
izanusi (sing. *isanusi*), diviners
izibongo (sing. *cibongo*), praises, names used in thanking, clan names
izidandani (sing. *isidandani*), girl companions, attendants
izigawa, hamlets
izinduna (sing. *induna*), war leaders, officials
izitokozo, honorific epithets, 'thanking' names
izwe, land, country

kwathu, homeland

laweni, boys' dormitory
lichero, winnowing basket
ligiya, hero's dance
ligubo, war-dance
lobola, marriage payment, cattle transferred at marriage
lunungulu, new village (of chief or Paramount)

mabandla (sing. *libandla*), military companies based on districts
mabuto (sing. *libuto*), age sets, regiments
(a)madoda (sing. *lidoda*), senior men
(a)makosana, members of royal clan
(a)makosikazi, royal women
malume, mother's brother
mamina, senior women

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

●104 *mbumba* (Cewa), group of man, his sisters and sisters' children
mcando, beast given by bride's people to bridegroom's mother's house
mfumu (Nyanja), chief
micetho, domestic slaves, servants, pages
(u)mlobohazi, woman married with transfer of cattle; bride
mlomo wenhosi, mouthpiece of Paramount
mtimba, marriage ceremony
mtunzi, shadow
mwini, owner

ngoma, Ngoni dance
nhlanzi, substitute or additional wife (usually wife's sister)
nkomo, honorific title
nsengwa (Nyanja), food-basket
nseso, fat of kidneys (of cattle or sheep)
nsima (Nyanja), porridge of maize flour
nyongo, gall bladder (of cattle)

pasangwemi, at the gateway of kraal; men's meeting-place

sing'anga, specialist in medicines

(in)tonga, royal medicines, war medicines

ukuteta, to address the spirits
ukutwasa, reappearance of new moon; rebirth
ulubende, cooked blood
umbongi, official praiser
umsindo, pre-marriage rite for girls
utengwa (Cewa), virilocal marriage without *lobola*

zitambo, head-bands, mourning caps

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound, (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 122). 128 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582]

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajaha*

young girls before puberty: *inkakazana*

young girls after puberty: *izintombi*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AKULU	the important people
ALEZI	nursemaids
GOGO	grandparent or any very senior person
HLONIPA	respect
INDLUNKULU	chief hut in a village
INDUNA	official in village
IZIDANDANI	girl attendants
LAWENI	boys' dormitory
MWINI	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

APPENDIX

● 104

NDUKU	knobkerry—club with rounded end.
NGOMA	Ngoni-dance for older boys and girls
NTONGA	a rod or long pole
NYANJA	most common vernacular in Nyasaland
SANGWENI	gate of cattle kraal
ULEMU	respect
UMSINDO	pre-marriage rite for girls

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

plain is a moderately temperate, undulating plateau, standing from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea-level and broken by ranges of mountains whose peaks tower several thousand feet higher.

The Dowa District is situated in the centre of the Protectorate. Its area of 2,400 square miles is divided topographically into three nearly equal parts, the alluvial lake-shore plain on the east giving way to the escarpment of the hilly plateau in the centre, which again drops steeply on the west to another plain extending to the banks of the Bua River. Each plain is well covered with light timber and long grass, and contains a plentiful supply of all local varieties of game. Tsetse have long infested the lake shore; on the west, migrating from Rhodesia, they crossed the Bua as recently as 1914 and have now spread as far as the hills. The central plateau is cool and healthy. Formerly well timbered, it has since been denuded by the wasteful methods of the native inhabitants. It is free from tsetse and mosquitoes, and cattle thrive in consequence. The larger species of game are absent.

2. *Sociological Introduction.*

The census of 1926, taken at the time when these notes were compiled, shows the population of the District as consisting of 57,184 Achewa,[1] 38,244 Angoni, 93 Anyanja and 4,627 Wayao, together with an odd thousand belonging to other tribes. The Achewa live principally in the west and centre, the Angoni on the central plateau, and the Anyanja and Wayao on the lake shore. The same census gives a total of 247,000 Angoni and 470,000 Anyanja and Achewa out of 1,200,000 natives then settled in the Protectorate.

The two last-named tribes taken together are numerically the largest in Nyasaland, and they have probably lived in their present habitat longer than any others; but the exact duration of their residence can only be a matter for conjecture, since the history of the southern Bantu peoples, during the last four centuries at any rate, consists of one long series of migrations and invasions. From time to time clans and tribes have been united under a strong and powerful leader, and a few decades later disintegration has set in and they have almost vanished. New names have frequently been adopted, and few tribes in south-east Africa now bear the same designation and occupy the same ground as did their ancestors four hundred years ago. Oral tradition is supplemented but scantily by the reports of the early Portuguese explorers, who first ascended the Zambezi River at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their objects were commercial rather than scientific, and they have left little record of the native peoples with whom they came in contact.

It is known, however, that the Achewa and Anyanja are off-shoots or descendants of the A-maravi, who inhabited the country north of the Zambezi at Sena and Tete in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In his Report upon the Rivers of Cuama (Zambezi) compiled in 1667 Father Manuel Barreto states that this warlike tribe was governed by its emperor, named Carongo, whose kingdom extended two hundred leagues up the river from the port of

[1] Tribal names in Nyasaland generally take the plural prefix A-, as A-ngoni, A-chewa, sometimes Wa-, as Wa-yao. The singular prefix is M-, as Mngoni, Myao. Further south, Abe-, Abe- and Ama- are more common, *e.g.* Abe-Ngoni, Abe-Mbo, Ama-Ndwandwe. For the sake of convenience, when there is no danger of confusion between prefix and stem, I have omitted the hyphen.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maravi FR4

Tumbuka FR6

N 576

leave after meeting, withdrawing after a case in court, and initiating or concluding many other formal or less formal occasions. Children were taught to use the correct expressions and rebuked if they made a mistake, and it was one of the requirements in Ngoni families that a uniform standard of verbal politeness should accompany correct behaviour in posture.

CULTURAL AFFINITIES AND DIFFERENCES

N M 121 122

The anthropologist working in Nyasaland is aware of the problems inherent in any attempt to isolate cultural features within any of the larger ethnic groups found there. There were no ethnographic field studies published of any of the other ethnic groups when I was working among the Ngoni. Mary Tew, in *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*,[1] referred to scattered sources published before 1939, to which I had access; and from time to time Cewa informants wrote accounts of particular social institutions or ritual, from which I was able to make certain comparisons with Ngoni ritual and institutions. Some of the earlier accounts, such as that by Hodgson on the Cewa and Ngoni in the Dowa district,[2] assumed that all the cultural changes and 'borrowings' had been by the Ngoni from their Cewa neighbours, whereas I found in that area in 1939 Cewa villages where Ngoni cultural elements had been adopted.

N M 114 177

N M T 105

Ngoni cultural affinities with South-eastern Bantu	*Local tribal differences*	
Paramount and subordinate chiefs	Chiefs; no central authority except in Henga and Ngonde	
Patrilineal descent Virilocal residence Marriage by *lobola*	Cewa and southern Tumbuka	Matrilineal descent, uxorilocal residence, marriage witnesses
	Henga	Patrilineal descent and virilocal residence
Clan exogamy „ hierarchy Houses Age sets	Cewa	No clan exogamy „ „ hierarchy *Mbumba* group Girls' initiation schools
Cattle complex Ancestor cult associated with cattle	Tumbuka Cewa in Dedza district	Formerly cattle-owners but no terminology left and no association with ancestor cult
Burial customs: in skin near krsal	Cewa and Tumbuka	Graves outside village; buried in a mat

[1] Tew, M., op. cit.

[2] Hodgson, A. G. O. 'Notes on the Achewa and Angoni of Dowa District, Nyasaland.' *J. Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1933, pp. 126–64.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

a few weeks. They were both dominated by important Ngoni families, and both the headquarters of subordinate chiefs. They both represented that blend of old and new in Ngoni life which was continually keeping the anthropologist on her toes.

Enkodlweni was far from main roads and centres of modern life. When I first went there my lorry cut a swathe of grass knee-high on the so-called road to the village, and the radiator, choked with grass seed, boiled all the time. I lived in the mud-and-wattle hut maintained by the chief for visiting teachers and missionaries opposite the school, a four-standard school under an able young headmaster, well educated and well trained. He and his schoolboys, the resident evangelist and the court clerk represented the new elements in village life. Yet they were not cut off from the Ngoni way of life—on the contrary they were very much part of it and very proud of being Ngoni. The school had been taught in the Ngoni language, akin to old Zulu, until a few years before my visit, and the children were still given Ngoni proverbs to write in their copy-books. Several of the older people had books in their huts written in Zulu as well as in English, and Ngoni was still spoken as the home language in many of the households. The older women knew the traditional special vocabulary used by women only, and dressed their hair in the high chignon style. Proverbs were quoted often in the court and in church; stories of war against the Bemba people in Northern Rhodesia forty years ago were told by the kraal gate as if they happened last year. Several leading Ngoni clans were represented in the village, and each had their own praise songs and forms of addressing their ancestors.

The old evangelist, himself a member of a famous clan, had been threatened, thirty years before, with death by the former chief if he continued to teach and preach. He stayed, notwithstanding, and had become one of the trusted counsellors of the present chief. During the day he joined the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their [191] plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty- [162] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine [592] elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces- [361] sible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in- [342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was [871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [797] mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East Africa.

We have also to recognize that the wider connotation of the word is in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction of that name.

III. Ngoni Society as a Cultural Unit. It is evident that the field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong centralized political organization. This society differs radically from that of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state', that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created social structure the principles of centralization and rank were dominant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of systematized law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, political, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history,

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hamlets.

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *inkosi* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'tribal

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 101 186 619 191 Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indunas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the N [123] aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see N [563] how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

N ●105 101 186 As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans N M 177 182 and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, 'We taught them to honour their sons' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

N 123 186 After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

105

Identification

The tribe, together with the Mombera Ngoni of N Nyasaland, the Chiwere and Gomani Ngoni of S Nyasaland, and the Magwangara of Tanganyika, are remnants of Natal Nguni or "Zulu" who left Natal about 1820 to escape Shaka's rule, who added Thonga, Shona, and Swazi elements to their Zulu base as they migrated northward on a career of conquest and pillage, and who settled in their present location near Fort Jameson in Northern Rhodesia after returning from raids as far north as Lake Victoria (for further history see Starr report). In 1950 they numbered about 60,000 exclusive of 25,000 more in Nyasaland), living on an area of about 1,500 square miles. They have given up their former Nguni tongue and speak Nsenga, with whom they formerly lived and intermarried during two sojourns, although their present Maravi neighbors are Chewa rather than Nsenga.

Basic Economy

Primarily pastoral, with important subsidiary brand-tillage agriculture and communal hunting (importance unreported). Barnes (1951) says primarily agriculture with important animal husbandry. Maize is the staple crop, but bulrush and finger millet, peanuts, sorghum, tomatoes, and pumpkins are also grown. Cattle are numerous and important, most of the tribal territory being free from the tsetse fly. Other domestic animals include many goats, sheep, pigs, dogs and chickens. Fishing is practically absent but some hunting is done.

Sex Division of Labor

Herding is done by men (particularly boys). Men also hunt, clear land, and do some hoeing. The women do the bulk of the agriculture.

Property

The chief wealth is in cattle, which nominally belong to the paramount chief, although individual ownership is recognized today. Land is held feudally from chiefs; it cannot be sold but may be given away; usufruct rights are forfeited by departure from the community.

Inheritance of cattle is patrilineal, the bulk of a man's herd

105

going to the ElSo by his chief wife. A woman's cattle are inherited by her brother's children.

Social Stratification

War captives are slaves. They belong in theory to the paramount chief but in practice are usually allocated by him to their captors or to important families. The children of slaves are apparently free. Nobles and commoners.

Marriage

A substantial bride-price in cattle (the Nguni lobolo) formerly prevailed, but is uncommon today in consequence of acculturation to the subjected Maravi. Matrilocal bride-service occurs to some extent.

General polygyny prevails, with a chief wife and separate huts for each wife. Sororal polygyny is permitted (and perhaps encouraged); it requires no bride-price. There is preferential levirate with HuYoBr.

Family

The polygynous family is the norm. The old Nguni division into right-hand and left-hand "houses" formerly prevailed, but has broken down.

Residence

Residence was originally patrilocal (with bride-price), and this custom is still maintained by important families, but many follow the Maravi rule of matrilocal residence, and neolocal residence occurs in cases where the husband attaches himself to a chief. Children may be sent to live with grandparents in another village after weaning; otherwise they sleep in their mother's hut until 8-9 years old, when they move to special boys' and girls' dormitories.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Incest taboos are essentially bilateral, though marriage is permitted between cross-cousins. A man may not marry any own or classification Mo, Da, or Si.

Though the Ngoni originally had exogamous patri-sibs, these

105

have long since disappeared in the Mpezeni group, who retain only the patrilineal descent of names without any associated exogamous rule.

The original Dakota type of social system of the Nguni has largely broken down under contact with subjugated and absorbed matrilineal Maravi.

Kinship Terminology

Bifurcate merging terminology for avuncular relatives, generation type for nepotic relatives.

Cousin terminology is of Iroquois type.

Settlement Pattern

Settled villages of from 6 to 120 cone-cylinder huts, with a population range of 15-300.

Community Organization

A village is presumably not a kin-community because of the variation in residence rules and the decline of sibs. The houses of a village are laid out in parallel rows, with cattle pens at the edge of the village, instead of in the usual circular arrangement. Villages are of 5 types: (1) the capital village; (2) chiefly villages, founded by each new chief on his accession; (3) regal villages, old royal villages; (4) commoner villages ruled by hereditary headmen; (5) cadet villages, governed by junior members of the royal lineage. There are age-regiments, presumably on the Nguni pattern.

Local Government

Each village has a headman, who is succeeded by his ElSo by his chief wife. Royal villages (those of first 3 types), however, lack headmen, being administered by lieutenants appointed by the paramount chief.

State

Prior to 1898, the Mpezeni were tightly organized politically under a single paramount chief or king; his territory was divided into 4-5 provinces, each with a royal village administered by a senior queen and her sons and by appointive lieutenants; under each province were 3-4 districts with officials in charge; under

● 105

the latter were the local headmen. Conquered aliens were absorbed into this territorial system. Military regiments were formed at intervals of 4-5 years on a national basis. (For further data see Starr report).

Warfare

The tribe was organized primarily for offensive warfare and cattle stealing. In the 1870's and thereafter there were annual raiding expeditions during the dry season against the Bisa, Chewa, Chikunda, Ila, Lala, and Nsenga.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

1: Barnes, J.A. Politics in a Changing Society. A Political History of the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Cape Town, London, New York: Published for the Rhodes-Livingston Institute by Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1954

Pp. x, 220; preface; 12 photos; bibliography; index; 8 tables; 4 maps; 4 diagrams;

Yale: Nkd18 954B

[This volume is essentially a history of the changes and developments which have taken place in Ngoni political and social structure since they left South Africa (ca. 1820) and began their great migration to the Lake Nyassa region and continuing through the period of British administration. The author is particularly concerned with the effects on the structure of Ngoni society of the large scale incorporation of captive peoples into Ngoni society. For the post European period the changes are seen as part of the process of a small scale society becoming part of a large scale society--Analyst.]

Field date: 1946-1949

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Analyst: Robert J. Theodoratus

Processed in 1962

2: Read, Margaret. The Ngoni of Nyasaland. London, New York, Toronto: Published for the International African Institute by the Oxford University Press, 1956.

Pp. viii, 212, preface; glossary; 2 end maps; index.

Yale: Nkd85 An47 956R

/The material on which this source is based was collected in Nyasaland by the author, a professional anthropologist, during the three periods in which she served as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute in May-December 1935, April 1936-June 1937, and July 1938-August 1939. Basically this source, which strongly reflects the author's training in "traditional British Social Anthropology," is a study of the social organization of the Ngoni as seen from the stand-point of their political system, the Ngoni society itself (e.g., as represented in clan organization, family structure, age sets, etc.), and in the ancestor cult of the Ngoni. Data may also be found on the Paramount Chief, the Royal Women, courts and officials, military organization, traditional history, spirits, funeral and

2: Read, Margaret.

mourning ceremonies, the role of the diviner in the ancestor cult, the importance of cattle in the economy, and household organization. The material culture of the Ngoni is not covered in this source. -- Analyst/

Field date: 1935-1939
Analyst: John M. Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist - 5
Processed in 1962

3: Read, Margaret. Children of Their Fathers: Growing Up Among the Ngoni of Nyasaland. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960.

Pp. 176; 32 photographs; 2 diagrams; 5 figures; introduction; bibliography; glossary.

Yale: Nkc97 959Rb

[Read presents a comprehensive analysis of the Ngoni socialization system and the consequent patterning of individual behavior. Her approach is primarily cultural rather than psychological, with emphasis upon aims, methods, behavior patterns, and sociocultural context, rather than upon individual personality dynamics. She shows that the 'true Ngoni' of Nyasaland - i. e., the aristocratic ethnic component of these Ngoni kingdoms - have developed a quite explicit and elaborate system of socialization designed to produce adults embodying in their character and behavior the basic Ngoni sociocultural norms and values. Among the outstanding features of this system are (1) the crucial role played by consciously utilized, detailed patterns of social interaction, and (2) its successful adjustment to and selective incorporation of acculturative influences,

3: Read, Margaret.

particularly those stemming from British colonial rule and the cessation of 'tribal' warfare. The author also includes an extensive discussion of her theoretical orientation in both its scientific and applied aspects. Briefly, she is concerned with the formulation of principles and methods which will serve as a guide for the integration within modern societies of their informal socialization and formal educational systems. Finally, it should be noted that some of the contextual data may prove ambiguous to the reader not familiar with Ngoni ethnography. --Analyst]

Field date: 1935-1939
Analyst: Robert O. Lagacé

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist-5
Processed in 1962

4: Barnes, J. A. Marriage in a Changing Society: A Study in Structural Change Among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. The Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 20. Cape Town, London, New York: Published for the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute by Oxford University Press, 1951.

Pp. ix, 141; introduction; 14 tables; 4 photographs; bibliography; index.

Yale: DT351 R42 20

[Barnes presents a detailed description and analysis of Ngoni marriage patterns and kinship relations within the contexts of the village community and the overall social system. The analysis is both synchronic and diachronic; conditions prior and subsequent to 1898 - the date of British conquest - are described and compared, and an analysis is made of the processes of change. The analytical focus is upon the structural covariations within the marriage-kinship complex, and the impingement upon these variables of changes within their sociocultural environment. Empirically, the crucial problem is that of marriage stability and its determinants. The current high frequency of adultery, desertion, and divorce is related to changes in the political and

4: Barnes, J. A.

economic systems, the break-down of the traditional moral and social sanctions, fragmentation of the localized agnatic kin groups, modifications in marital residence patterns, marriage payments, and so forth. This would constitute a definitive study of Ngoni kinship in the broadest sense of the term except for Barnes' failure to include the system of kinship terminology in his analysis. No vernacular terms are presented, and only a few brief comments regarding the terminological grouping of kin. --Analyst]

Field date: 1946-1949
Analyst: Robert O. Lagacé

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist-5
Processed in 1962

5: Allan, William. Studies in African Land Usage in Northern Rhodesia. The Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 15. Cape Town, London, New York: Pub- for the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute by Oxford University Press, 1949.

Pp. v, 86/only pp. i-v, 21-23, and 71-84 were processed for this file./

Yale: DT351 R42 15

/This study is concerned with the relation between population and land utilization in the Eastern and Western Provinces of Northern Rhodesia. The major tribal groups inhabiting the area are the Ngoni, the Maravi (FR 4), and the Lamba (FQ 8). The specific foci of the sections processed are: (1) the problem of over-population in particular regions, associated with under-population in other regions; (2) the Colonial Government's program of village resettlement designed to achieve as closely as possible a previously determined optimum "population-land balance", and (3) the introduction of improved agricultural practices and conservation measures. The bulk of the material is presented

5:Allan

at a generalized level, with comparatively little concrete data. --Analyst/

Field date: 1941
Analyst: Robert O. Lagacé

Evaluation: Agricultural Expert-5
Processed in 1962

6: Rattray, R. Sutherland. Some Folk-lore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja, with English Translation and Notes. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1907.

Pp. v-xiii, 85-164

Yale: Fys N985 R18

[This source is a collection of folk-lore and songs of the people inhabiting Central Angoniland. It includes ethnographic data such as the customs related to birth, marriage, funeral, hunting; religious practices; stories, proverbs, and songs of Chinyanja speaking people. The author was a member of the African Lakes Corporation, British Central Africa and had close contact with the people. Part I-In Chinyanja and Part III-Notes on Part I have not been processed for the files. --Analyst]

Field date: Ca. 1900
Analyst: Hesung C. Koh

Evaluation: Ethnologist, Government Official-5
Processed in 1962

7: Hodgson, A. G. O. Notes on the Achewa and Angoni of the Dowa District of the Nyasaland Protectorate. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 63, pp. 123-64.

2 maps.

Yale: Nk10 +R81 v. 63

[The bulk of this paper consists of a compact ethnographic sketch of the Chewa (FR4), with particularly rich materials on puberty rites, beliefs and rituals associated with marital sexuality, funeral and mourning rituals, and the activities of the secret society, the vinyau. Briefer notes are included on marriage, residence, and descent patterns, property system, inheritance, sibs, and so forth. Some comparative data concerning many of these same cultural features are presented for the Ngoni and may be found scattered through pages 128, 141-46, 152-53, 155, 159-60, and 163-64. The Dowa Ngoni are an interesting example of a rather acculturated Ngoni group, but perhaps the greatest value of this source from the standpoint of the Ngoni file lies in the Chewa data, since this provides one of the necessary base lines for a study of Ngoni culture

7: Hodgson, A. G. O.

change. Bibliographical references are indicated in the footnotes. --Analyst]

Field date: 1926
Analyst: Robert O. Lagacé

Evaluation: Government Official-5
Processed in 1962

8: Barnes, J. A. The Perception of History in a plural Society: A Study of an Ngoni Group in Northern Rhodesia. Human Relations, Vol. 4, pp. 295-303. London, 1951

Yale: N10 H88 4

/This is a structural-functional analysis of the perception of history in Ngoni groups in Northern Rhodesia. The author, a British Social Anthropologist, was a staff member of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute during 1946-49. --Analyst/

Field date: 1946-1949
Analyst: Hesung C. Koh

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist-5
Processed in 1962

9: Read, Margaret. Tradition and Prestige Among the Ngoni. Africa, Vol. 9, pp. 453-84. London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1936.

Pp. 31. [French summary on pp. 483-84 was not processed for the files.]

Yale: DT1 A28 9

/This is a most valuable article and should, if at all possible, be read prior to consulting the other sources in this file. It provides in compact form a brilliant analysis and clarifaction of (1) the ethnic composition and structural relations of the populations included under the term 'Ngoni', and (2) the major phases of Ngoni culture history as experienced and interpreted by the 'true Ngoni' from the onset of their northward migrations to their contemporary situation under British colonial rule. The entire article constitutes a skillful blending of historical and structural analysis, with emphasis on the interrelations between types of culture contact, ethos, and sociocultural trends. The only significant weaknesses from the standpoint of the researcher are the lack of an ethnographic map and the very scanty bibliographical references

9: Read, Margaret.

provided in the footnotes. --Analyst/

Field date: 1935
Analyst: Robert O. Lagacé

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist-5
Processed in 1962

10: Barnes, J. A. The Fort Jameson Ngoni. In Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, Editors, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa, pp. 194-252. Oxford: The Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, 1951 (Reprinted 1959)

4 plates, 3 charts; bibliography

HRAF copy

/This is a brief outline of Fort Jameson Ngoni social organization based on the author's field study. The primary aim is to give general information for government officers working in the region or for students of anthropology who wish for some knowledge of the types of social organization to be found in the area. The author, first, outlines the internal social system of Ngoni such as the political and village structure and the kinship system; second, discusses the external contacts of Ngoni with other local groups, missionaries, and British administration; and last, describes the intertribal trade plus the Ngoni major role as a migrant laborer in common with other tribes of the Area. It is a brief but useful summary of Ngoni social organization. ---Analyst. /

Field date: 1946-1949
Analyst: Hesung C. Koh

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist-5
Processed in 1962

11: Lancaster, D. Gordon. Tentative Chronology of the Ngoni, Genealogy of Their Chiefs, and Notes. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 67, pp. 77-90. London, 1937.

5 genealogical charts

Yale: Nk10 ;R81 v.67

/This is a good reference source for the study of Ngoni social history. The data were derived almost entirely from traditional historical accounts rendered by prominent Ngoni elders. The bulk of the material deals with the period of the migrations from South Africa to Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland - roughly from the 1820's through the 1860's. The focus is upon biographical details concerning many of the Ngoni political and military leaders and their wives. From this, however, emerges a vivid picture of the social processes which characterized the migrations and proved to be of fundamental significance in the re-formulation of Ngoni society. At least three basic types of social processes may be discerned in the data: (1) the importance of the roles played by specific individuals in leadership positions; (2) the high incidence of intra-tribal friction, and the subsequent fission and fusion of social groups; and (3) the pattern of inter-tribal

11: Lancaster, D. Gordon.

relations, warfare, and assimilation. Unfortunately, only the names of authors, not their works, are given as bibliographical references. --Analyst/

Field date: ca. 1935
Analyst: Robert O. Lagacé

Evaluation: Government Official-5
Processed in 1962-1964

12: Barnes, J. A. The Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Occasional Papers, Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, No. 1, pp. 3-13. Livingstone: Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, 1948.

[HRAF Ms., 16 pp.]

Northwestern University Library

[This short paper provides useful notes on a wide variety of topics which are not restricted to material culture in the strict sense of the term. These include agriculture, hunting and collecting, domestic animals, food preparation and storage, diet, pottery and basketry making, house building, clothing, scarification, and so forth. The file slips are reproduced from a typed copy since the original text could not be xeroxed. --Analyst]

Field date: 1946-1948
Analyst: Robert O. Lagacé

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist-5
Processed in 1962

13: Fraser, Donald. The Zulu of Nyasaland: their Manners and Customs. Proceedings of the Philosophical Society of Glasgow, Vol. 32, pp. 60-75. Glasgow: Philosophical Society, 1901.

Yale: A48g. 30. 31-32.

[The author was a clergyman with the Livingstonia Mission in West Nyasaland. He briefly discusses the history, chieftanship, justice, social organization, economy and religious beliefs of the Ngoni. Of interest is the mention of changes brought about by the missionaries. - Analyst]

Field date: ca. 1890
Analyst: Joan Steffens

Evaluation: Missionary-5
Processed in 1963

Chibambo, Yesaya Mlonyeni. My Ngoni of Nyasaland. Africa's Own Library, No. 3. London: United Society for Christian Literature, no date.

Pp. 64

Harvard: Afr. 1.18 (3)

/This history of the Ngoni migrations by a mission trained native contains little or no original information not available in other sources already processed for the Ngoni file. ---Analyst/

Mair, Lucy P. Marriage and Family in the Dedza District of Nyasaland. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, vol. 81, pp. 103-119. London, 1951.

Yale: Nk10 ≠ R81 81-82

/This article by a British social anthropologist contains some good material on Cewa and Ngoni family life. However, the data on the two groups are so intermixed that it was decided not to process this source for the FR5 Ngoni file. -- Analyst/

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

A. Annotated list of works on the Ngoni.
B. List of other works cited.
C. Public records relating to Mpezeni's Ngoni.

113

ABBREVIATIONS

A & P.	*Accounts and Papers.*
B.C.A.G.	*British Central Africa Gazette.*
B.S.A.C.	*British South Africa Company.*
C.A.P.	*Central African Planter.*
D.K.B.	*Deutsches Kolonialblatt.*
D.K.Z.	*Deutsche Kolonialzeitung.*
J.A.I.	*Journal of the Anthropological Institute.*
J.R.A.I.	*Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute.*
J.R.G.S.	*Journal of the Royal Geographical Society.*
M.D.S.	*Mitteilungen von Forschungsreisenden und Gelehrten aus den Deutschen Schutzgebieten.*
M.R.A.	*Monghan Report, Appendix* (Cmd. 73 of 1921).
M.S.O.S.	*Mitteilungen des seminars für Orientalische Sprachen.*
NADA	*Native Affairs Department Annual* (Southern Rhodesia).
N.E.R.G.G.	*North-Eastern Rhodesia Government Gazette.*
P.R.G.S.	*Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society.*
R.G.S.	*Royal Geographical Society.*
R.I.I.J.	*Human Problems in British Central Africa, the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute Journal.*
S.G.M.	*Scottish Geographical Magazine.*
S.P.	*State Papers.*
S.P.C.K.	*Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.*
S.R. & O.	*Statutory Rules and Orders.*
T.N.R.	*Tanganyika Notes and Records*
U.M.C.A.	Universities' Mission to Central Africa.

A. ANNOTATED LIST OF WORKS ON THE NGONI

I have aimed to include in this list all works relating to Ngoni groups in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. I have also included works on the Tanganyika Ngoni earlier than 1915 and a few works relating to the Gaziland Ngoni, Portuguese East Africa.

ABRAHAM, JOHN G.

Nyasaland Protectorate: Report on the Census of 1931. Zomba: Government Printer, 1932.

pp. 17-21, general synoptic account of Ngoni history.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

ACCOUNTS AND PAPERS (A & P)

113

'Correspondence with British representatives and agents abroad, and reports from Naval Officers, and the Treasury, relative to the Slave Trade, 1886-9.' C. 5347. *A & P*, 1889, lxvi, pp. 483-510.

p. 344, fighting between Ngoni and slave traders east of Lake Nyasa.

'Protocols and General Act of the West African Conference.' C. 4361. *A & P*, 1884-5, lv, pp. 133-445.

p. 439, boundary of Congo Basin defined as extended between Lake Nyasa and the Zambezi.

'Correspondence . . . relative to the Slave Trade.' C. 4323. *A & P*, 1884-5, lxviii, pp. 383-473.

pp. 406-7, Ngoni raid on Blantyre, 3 October 1884.

'Correspondence relative to the Slave Trade.' C. 5101. *A & P*, 1887, lxxviii, pp. 313-511.

pp. 333-9, visit to Chikusi, relations between Mpezeni and Chikusi, and condition of Chikusi's territory.

'Correspondence relating to the Slave Trade, 1889.' C. 5968. *A & P*, 1888, lxxii, pp. 483-525.

p. 504, proposed visit to Tanganyika Ngoni.

'Correspondence relative to the Slave Trade, 1888-9.' C. 5821. *A & P*, 1889, lxxii, pp. 273-386.

p. 283, Fumbi threatens to call in Ngoni to attack Kawinga.

'Correspondence respecting the Anglo-German Agreement relative to Africa and Heligoland.' C. 6243. *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 19-90.

pp. 24-31, border between Tanganyika and Rhodesia and Nyasaland fixed.

'Correspondence respecting the actions of Portugal . . .' C. 5904. *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 55-255.

General chronicle of events, relations between Kawinga and Chikusi, proclamation of British Protectorate in Shire Highlands.

'Further correspondence respecting the affairs of Bechuanaland . . .' C. 5918. *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 389-633.

pp. 633-40, draft charter granted to B.S.A. Company.

'Correspondence respecting the Anglo-Portuguese Convention . . .' C. 6210. *A & P*, 1890-1, lvi, pp. 383-600.

p. 383, proposed Portuguese boundary to run from Ruo-Shire confluence to point midway between Tete and Kebra-bassa rapids.

'Papers relating to the Anglo-Portuguese Convention . . .' C. 6370. *A & P*, 1890-1, lvi, pp. 603-90.

p. 603, redefinition of Portuguese boundary, still south of Mpezeni.

'Correspondence relating to Great Britain and Portugal. . . .' C. 6450. *A & P*, 1890-1, lvi, pp. 691-918.

p. 683, description of Wilson's mission to Mpezeni.

'Treaty between Her Majesty and His Majesty the King of Portugal. . . .' C. 6373. *A & P*, 1890-1, xxvi, pp. 417-28.

pp. 419-20, final definition of Anglo-Portuguese boundary.

'Papers relative to . . . Nyasaland.' C. 6890. *A & P*, 1892, lxxiii, pp. 311-92.

p. 313, deputation to Johnston from Chikusi.

'Report . . . of the first three years' Administration . . .' C. 7309. *A & P*, 1894, lvii, pp. 341-93.

Maps of rainfall, vegetation and population.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

ACCOUNTS AND PAPERS (*A & P*) (cont.)

'Papers respecting the British sphere north of the Zambesi.' C. 7633. *A & P*, 1895, lviii, pp. 369-70. 113

p. 369, administrative connexion between B.S.A.C. and the Protectorate to cease; Wiese's claims still unsettled.

'Correspondence respecting operations against the Slave Traders. . . .' C. 8013. *A & P*, 1896, lviii, pp. 387-420.

pp. 413, 417-20, defeat of Mwase Kasungu, Mpezeni's deputation to Kondowe.

'Report . . . on the . . . British Central Africa Protectorate. . . .' C. 8234. *A & P*, 1896, lviii, pp. 403-54.

pp. 405, 433, Forbes assumes control of North-Eastern Rhodesia; administrative endeavour johnston in northern Nyasaland.

'Report . . . on the . . . Protectorate. . . .' C. 8498. *A & P*, 1897, lvii, pp. 13-50.

p. 13, campaign against Chikusa.

'Annual report on the . . . Protectorate. . . .' C. 9098. *A & P*, 1899, lviii, pp. 233-68.

p. 255, brief account of war against Mpezeni.

'British Central Africa Protectorate Report for 1904-5.' (Colonial Reports, Annual, No. 470.) Cd. 2884-18. *A & P*, 1906, lxviii, pp. 79-133.

pp. 91-3, administrative control extended to Ngoni in Northern Nyasaland.

'British Central Africa Protectorate Report for 1907-8.' (Colonial Reports, Annual, No. 499.) Cd. 4184-45. *A & P*, 1908, lxviii, pp. 139-200.

pp. 180-4, report on northern Ngoni and statistics of labour migration.

'Correspondence relating to the recruitment of labour in the Nyasaland Protectorate for the Transvaal and Southern Rhodesia mines.' Cd. 3990. *A & P*, 1908, lxviii, pp. 387-516.

pp. 490-5, memorandum by Acting Administrator on recruiting in North-Eastern Rhodesia.

'Second report of a commission appointed . . . to consider certain problems relating to Rhodesia.' [Buxton Report.] Cmd. 1431. *A & P*, 1921, xxiv, pp. 743-51.

p. 748, no action recommended yet to delimit reserves in Northern Rhodesia.

'Agreement . . . for the settling of outstanding questions relating to Southern and Northern Rhodesia.' Cmd. 1984. *A & P*, 1923, xviii, pp. 171-80.

p. 178, Crown reserves right to set apart reserves in North Charterland Concession.

'Report of the Royal Commission on Rhodesia-Nyasaland.' [Bledisloe Report.] Cmd. 3949. *A & P*, 1938-9, xv, pp. 211-313.

pp. 273-4, recommends that Ngoni at Fort Jameson and Fort Manning be brought under a single authority.

ADMIRALTY, Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division, Geographical Section *A manual of Portuguese East Africa.* (I.D. 1189.) London: H.M.S.O., 1920. pp. 98-101, 113f, 125, 133f, 463f, for summary of Ngoni history.

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113 *AFRICAN REVIEW, THE*
'Interview with Colonel Warren: Prospects of North Charterland: Attitude of M'Pezeni', x, 116 (9 January 1897), p. 67.
The natives are said to be friendly.
Other articles in issues of 1 and 30 October, and in Supplement of 18 December, 1897.
Comments on North Charterland activities, and on their offer of £10,000 for the discovery of a gold-field.

ALBERTO, MANUEL SIMÕES
'Os Angunes, os últimos povos invasores da Angónia Portuguesa', *Moçambique*, 27 (Julho-Dezembro, 1941), pp. 79-105.
History of Nduleni and of several Ngoni groups. Good photographs of old customs.

ALLAN, WILLIAM
'African Land Usage', *R.L.I.J.*, iii (June 1945), pp. 13-20.
p. 14, critical density of Mpezeni's country.
Studies in African Land Usage in Northern Rhodesia (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers No. 15). Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1949.
pp. 16, 21f, details of carrying capacity of Ngoniland: pp. 71-85, controlled resettlement near Fort Jameson.

ARGUE, H. CRAWFORD
'A trip to Northern Angoniland, *S.G.M.*, xv (1899), pp. 349-
Visited Mpezeni in 1898. Size of villages, boundaries of country, and location of chief's wives.

ARNING, WILHELM
'Die Wahehe', *M.D.S.*, ix (1896), pp. 225-46, and x (1897), pp. 46-60.
Contacts between Tangayika Ngoni and Hehe, with chronology.

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'The Nyanja-speaking population of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia', *African Studies*, ix (1950), pp. 35-9.
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Case of arrested North Charterland employee, Zidd.

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Description of a birth witnessed in 1947.

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Comparison of divorce frequency among Ngoni and other societies.

'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 154-252. *Seven tribes of British Central Africa* (E. Colson and M. Gluckman, eds.) London: Oxford University Press, 1951.

General introductory account of social organization.

Marriage in a Changing Society (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 20). Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1951.

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The relationship of present-day Ngoni to their past, real and imagined.

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The social position of village headman, and description of the installation of a headman's deputy.

BAXTER, T. W.

'The Angoni rebellion and Mpezeni', *Northern Rhodesia Journal*, ii (December 1950), pp. 14-24.

p. 17, map of fighting on 20 January 1898. Reprints extracts from dispatches and other articles.

BEHR, H. F. v.

'Geographische und ethnographische Notizen aus dem Flussgebiete des Rovuma', *M.D.S.*, v (1892), pp. 15-20.

Describes Ngoni habitat in Tanganyika.

'Die Wahua-Steppe', *M.D.S.*, vi (1893), pp. 42-60.

Note on raid on Masasi by Ngoni in 1881.

'Die Völker zwischen Rufiyi und Rovuma', *M.D.S.*, vi (1893), pp. 69-87.

p. 77, map of tribal distribution showing Ngoni south of Rovuma.

BELL, R. D. (Bell Report)

See Colonial Office Papers, Col. 152 of 1938.

BERICHT ÜBER LAND UND FORSTWIRTSCHAFT . . . IN D.O.A.

'Auszug aus den Berichten der Bezirksämter, Militärstationen, und anderer Dienstellen über die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung im Berichtsjahre vom 1 April 1902 bis 31 März 1903', ii (1904-6), pp. 37-116.

pp. 74*f.*, list of crops with vernacular and botanical names as used by Ngoni at Songea.

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See *A & P*, 1938-9, xv, pp. 211-505.

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Miscellaneous notes on Ciwere's Ngoni of Dowa District.

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'The African Labourer', *Africa*, iii (1930), pp. 13-30.
p. 27, Ngoni have a natural aptitude for paid labour.

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113

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pp. 131-3, Ngoni chiefs Mankondowa and Kalonkhale oppose D.R.C.M.

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'Die Erkundung des Ulungu-Gebietes', *Petermann's Mitteilungen*, xxxii (1886), pp. 313-63.
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'An early Portuguese settlement in Northern Rhodesia', *Journal of the African Society*, xxx (1931), pp. 164-8.
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MS. 'The tribes of the East Lungwa Province, Northern Rhodesia.' Deposited in Rhodes-Livingstone Museum.

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'The Magwangwara', *Journal of the Manchester Geographical Society*, ii (1886), pp. 263-82.

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PRINCE, D.

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'Geschichte der Magwangwara nach Erzählung des Arabers Raschid bin Mansoul und des Fumi, Bruders des vor drei Jahren verstorbenen Sultans des Magwangwara Mharuli', *M.D.S.*, vii (1894), pp. 213-24.

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Good map of Ngoni migration. Full account of quarrels after Zwangendaba's death and of Mtwalo chiefdom in Northern Nyasaland.

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Good map of Fort's route.

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'A survival of Flake-technique in Southern Rhodesia', *Man*, xxxviii (1938), 224.
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'Die musikalischen Beziehungen zwischen Urkulturen, Altpflanzern, und Hirtenvölkern', *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, lxx (1938), pp. 287-306. 113
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'Some notes on *utani* or the vituperative alliances existing between the clans in the Masai District', *T.N.R.*, 4 (1937), pp. 72-4.
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'Twenty years in Zambesia', *Geographical Journal*, i (1893), pp. 289-324.
p. 158, fight between Zwangendaba and Gazaland Ngoni near the headwaters of the River Sabi.
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The South-Eastern Bantu. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1930.
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'The African native and the Rhodesian copper mines', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, xxxvi (July 1937), Supp.
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SPIES, EBERHARD
'Observations on *utani* customs among the Ngoni of Songea District', *T.N.R.*, 16 (1943), pp. 49-53.
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SPISS, CASSIAN
'Kingoni und Kisutu', *M.S.O.S.*, vii, *Afrikanische Studien* (1904), pp. 270-414.
pp. 271-2, history of Ngoni. Full treatment of language.
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pp. 270, 289, 353, 444, connexion between Ngoni (Watuta and Mazitu) and Mirambo and the Ruga-Ruga.

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113 *Through the Dark Continent.* London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1878. 2 vols.

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STANNUS, H. S.

'Notes on some tribes of British Central Africa', *J.R.A.I.*, xl (1910), pp. 285-335.

pp. 311, 316, 317, 321, 329, burial of placenta, cremation of chief, deformation of teeth, clothing, weaving; relates in part to Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

'Nyasaland: Angoni smelting furnace', *Man*, xiv (1914), 65.

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'The WaYao of Nyasaland' pp. 229-372 in *Harvard African Studies* iii (Varia Africana, iii). Cambridge: Peabody Museum, 1922.

pp. 231-3, Ngoni fight Yao, aid Malemia against Kumtaja.

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Proclamation by Buchanan, covering Makololo, Yao and Machinga countries.

STATUTES

Foreign Jurisdiction Act, 1890. 53 & 54 Vict., c. 37.

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Activities of Johnston and of B.S.A.C. were governed by this order.

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Alteration of style and name of Governor of Nyasaland.

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Made Administrator responsible to the High Commissioner in South Africa.

Northern Rhodesia Order in Council, 1911. (4 May 1911), *S.R. & O.*, 438 of 1911, pp. 85-97.

Amalgamated North-Eastern and North-Western Rhodesia.

Northern Rhodesia Order in Council, 1924. (20 February 1924), *S.R. & O.*, 324 of 1924, pp. 395-407.

Termination of B.S.A. Company rule.

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Established Native Reserves in Fort Jameson District.

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Established major portion of Fort Manning Division as Native Trust Land.

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Established major portion of land bought by the Administration from North Charterland in 1941 as Native Trust Land.

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'History of the Tambuka', *Nyasa News*, 1 (August 1893), p. 17.
Reference to Ngoni conquest of Tumbuka.
Description of Mwambera's funeral, *Nyasa News*, 1 (August 1893), p. 29.
Eye-witness account.
'Native diseases and practice among the Ngoni', *Nyasa News*, 3 (1894), pp. 88-9.
Relates to Northern Nyasaland Ngoni; *insila*, *inyamakazi* and *amalombo*.

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MS. 'Human geography of the Mkhushi District, 1933.' Deposited at Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.
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STEVENSON, JAMES
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Useful map of slave-trading routes.

STEVENSON-HAMILTON, J.
The Lowveld: its wild life and its people. London: Cassell, 1929.
History of Gazaland Ngoni.

STEWART, JAMES (DR.)
'The second circumnavigation of Lake Nyassa', *P.R.G.S.*, i (1879), pp. 289-304.
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History of Livingstonia Mission in Northern Nyasaland.

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'Lake Nyasa and the water route to the lake region of Africa', *P.R.G.S.*, iii (1881), pp. 257-77.
Good account of history based on information given by Mambwe, with statement that there was an Ngoni group west of Tanganyika.

STIGAND, C. H.
'Notes on the Natives of Nyasaland, N.E. Rhodesia, and Portuguese Zambezia, their arts, customs and modes of subsistence', *J.R.A.I.*, xxxvii (1907), pp. 119-32.
pp. 125-7, short account of Ngoni history, with information not available elsewhere on Fort Manning Ngoni.
'Notes on the tribes in the neighbourhood of Fort Manning', *J.R.A.I.*, xxxix (1909), pp. 35-43.
Tribal distribution, tribal marks, history, and names of important headmen.

SWANN, ALFRED J.
'A tour in Marimba', *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 3 (1 February 1896), p. 2.
Description of trade routes through Kasungu and Ngoniland.
Fighting the Slave-hunters in Central Africa. London: Seeley, 1910.
Dealings of Administration at Kotakota with Mwase Kasungu and Mpezeni.

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113 SWINNY, G. H.
'Nyassa News', *Central Africa*, v (1887), pp. 20-3.
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Mharuli agrees to allow a mission in his country.

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'The African chief under European rule', *Africa*, iv (1931), pp. 63-76.
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Extracts from his letters, *Central Africa*, v (1887), pp. 9-10.
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TEW, MARY
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THEAL, GEORGE M'CALL
The Portuguese in South Africa. London: Fisher Unwin, 1896.
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THOMPSON, J. B.
Letter dated 4 February 1873, London Missionary Society archives.
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THOMSON, J. MOFFAT
Memorandum on the Native tribes and tribal areas of Northern Rhodesia. Livingstone: Government Printer, 1934.
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THOMSON, JOSEPH
To the central African lakes and back. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1881. 2 vols.
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'To Lake Bangweolo and the unexplored regions of British Central Africa', *Geographical Journal*, i (1893), pp. 97-121.
p. 114, meeting with Mpezeni in December 1890.

TOSCANO, D. F. and QUINTINHA, D. J.
A Derrocada do Imperio Va Tua e Mousinho de Albuquerque. Lisbon, 1930.
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Vegetation-Soil Map of Northern Rhodesia. Lusaka: Government Printer, 1947. 113
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'Lobengula the second', *Truth*, xliii (30 June 1898), pp. 1639-40.
An interestingly distorted account of the Ngoni war.

VAN DER WALT, L. B., *see* Mona

VAN OSS, MARK
'The North Charterland Concession Inquiry' and a letter to the editor, *Journal of the African Society*, xxxi (1932), pp. 402-11, and xxxii (1933), p. 220.
Summary and comment on the *Maugham Report.*

WALLACE, LAWRENCE A.
'The beginning of Native Administration in Northern Rhodesia', *Journal of the African Society*, xxi (1922) pp. 165-76.
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Artist a 'so-called' Ngoni from Shire Valley.
'Native poetry in East Africa', *Africa*, i (1928), pp. 348-57.
p. 350, a song sung at Chikuse's wedding, dictated in 1894.

WEULE, KARL
Wissenschaftliche Ergebnisse meiner ethnographischen Forschungsreise in den Südosten Deutsch-Ostafrikas (Ergänzungsheft No. 1, *M.D.S.*). Berlin: Mittler, 1908.
pp. 125-33, Tanganyika Ngoni customs and material culture.
Native Life in East Africa. London: Pitman, 1909.
pp. 96-7, 117, 339, Ngoni at Runsewe, raid of Chief Shabruma, and bogus Ngoni at Nchi-chira.

WIESE, CARL
'Expedição portugueza a M'Pesêne (1889) relatorio de Carlos Wiese, S.S.G.L.', *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, x (1891), pp. 235-73, 331-430, 465-97, and xi (1892), pp. 373-599.
A lengthy account, the first full description of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, together with history of the Portuguese expedition and of Sharpe and Thomson's visits. All references are to vol. x unless otherwise indicated.
'Beiträge zur Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambesi, namentlich der Angoni', *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1900), pp. 181-201.
Largely a repetition of the ethnographic section of his first article, with a few alterations, and short account of Ngoni war.

WIESE, CARL, *et al.*
(Expedição a M'Pesene e Outros) *see* Moçambique, Provincia de

WILSON, GODFREY
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WINTERBOTTOM, J. M.
'A note on the Angoni paramountcy', *Man*, xxxvii (1937), 158.
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Mpezeni

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Mpezeni

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Mpezeni

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C. PUBLIC RECORDS RELATING TO MPEZENI'S NGONI

These documents are listed in chronological order. For ease of foot-noting each has been given a serial number, shown below in the left-hand column.

Documents in the Public Records Office, London, are to be found in the Foreign Office series of papers, in either F.O. 2 (Africa), F.O. 83 (Great Britain and General) or F.O. 84 (Slave Trade). References to them are given in the form: series number/piece number/folio numbers (where these are numbered).

Some of these and similar documents have been printed in the Appendix to the first *Maugham Report* (Col. 73 of 1932). Page references to these are given below. The printed appendix also contains documents dated later than 1899 which have not been listed here.

I have also included particulars of documents which I have not seen but whose existence can be inferred. References to these are in the form: date (*where known*)/description/serial number of seen document in which reference is made to the unseen document.

This list does not include all the public records relevant to a general understanding of Central African history at the end of the nineteenth century, but merely those relating directly to Mpezeni's Ngoni. Reference should also be made to the entries *Accounts and Papers*, British South Africa Company, *London Gazette*, *State Papers*, *Statutes*, and *Statutory Rules and Orders* in List A of the Bibliography.

Abbreviations

A.L.C.	African Lakes Company.
B.S.A.C.	British South Africa Company.
C.A.	Central Africa
C.O.	Colonial Office.
F.O.	Foreign Office.
N.C.E.C.	North Charterland Exploration Company.
rti	referred to in.
Tele.	Telegram.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for footnotes	*Public Record Office reference*			*Maugham Report Appendix reference*	*Date*	*Description*
					1868	
1	84	1292	374–376		4 Mar.	No. 14/46 of 1868, Churchill to Gov. of Bombay.
2	84	1292	377–378		6 Mar.	Kirk to Churchill.
					1885	
3	84	1702	223–226		24 April	No. 3, Goodrich to F.O.
4	84	1702	233–236		1 June	No. 4, Goodrich to F.O.
					1886	
5	84	1751	218		1 July	Hawes, map.
					1889	
6	84	1969	255–259		26 Aug.	Africa No. 9, Johnston to Salisbury.
					1890	
7	84	2051	32–33		(1 Feb.)	List of treaties.
8	84	2051	34	end	(1 Feb.)	Map.
9	84	2051	19–31		1 Feb.	Africa No. 6, Johnston to Salisbury.
10	84	2051	90–206		17 Mar.	Johnston, report.
11	84	2052	301–302		18 Mar.	Chiwere and Britain, treaty (Sharpe)
12	84	2052	274–315		26 Mar.–6 June	Sharpe to Johnston.
13	84	2052	305–306	10–11	18 April	Muliro and Britain, treaty (Sharpe)
14				39	19 April	Muliro and B.S.A.C., treaty (Sharpe).
15	84	2052	26		10 June	No. 28, Churchill to Salisbury.
16	84	2052	143–148		9 Aug.	Johnston, memorandum.
17	84	2052	390–391		8 Sep.	Buchanan to Churchill.
18				20–21	5 Nov.	Unde and Wiese, treaty
19				29	20 Dec.	Sandue and Wiese, treaty.
20				30	24 Dec.	Marama and Wiese, treaty.
21				27–28	30 Dec.	Chipore and Wiese, treaty.
					1891	
22				31–32	2 Jan.	Jumba and Wiese, treaty.
23				26–27	5 Jan.	Said Nyendwa and Wiese, treaty.
24				25–26	9 Jan.	Lundo Nyango and Wiese, treaty.
25				24	14 Jan.	Chirupe N'grue and Wiese, treaty.
26				23	16 Jan.	Satcherima Miti and Wiese, treaty.
27				22	17 Jan.	Nyachifanghu Wula and Wiese, treaty.
28				32	23 Jan.	Sopa Muandza and de Solla, treaty.
29				11–12	Feb.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
30				12	2 Apr.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
31				17–18	14 Apr.	M'pesene and Wiese, treaty.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for footnotes	Public Record Office reference			Maugham Report Appendix reference	Date	Description
32				44	15 Apr.	Undi and A.L.C. and B.S.A.C. (Sharpe).
33				44–45	22 April	Likungwe and A.L.C. and B.S.A.C. (Sharpe).
34				18–20	12 May	Chigaga Pire and Wiese, treaty.
35				34	27 June	Belcher, receipt for 5*l.* fee.
36	84	2197	478		18 July	Johnston, public notice on land claims.
37					Oct.	Bowler's solicitors to F.O. (rti 70).
38					Nov.	Bowler's solicitors to F.O. (rti 70).
39				13	2 Dec.	Snell, Son and Greenip to F.O.
40				33	9 Dec.	Wiese, statutory declaration.
					1892	
41					4 Jan.	Snell, Son and Greenip to F.O. (rti 42).
42	84	2196	4–5		14 Jan.	No. 2, F.O. to Johnston.
43					22 Jan.	Snell, Son and Greenip to F.O. (rti 46).
44					28 Jan.	Snell, Son and Greenip to F.O. (rti 46).
45					30 Jan.	Snell, Son and Greenip to F.O. (rti 46).
46	84	2196	7–8		4 Feb.	No. 3, F.O. to Johnston.
47	84	2196	36–37		22 Mar.	No. 16, F.O. to Johnston.
48	84	2197	127–129, 138–142	15–16	30 Mar.	Johnston, memorandum.
49	84	2197	124–126, 131–136	13–14	31 Mar.	C.A. 16, Johnston to Salisbury.
50	84	2196	52–53		12 May	No. 27, F.O. to Johnston.
51	84	2196	78–81		17 June	No. 40, F.O. to Johnston.
52	84	2197	184–186		22 June	C.A. 21, Johnston to Salisbury.
53					6 Aug.	B.S.A.C. to F.O. (rti 54).
54	84	2196	112–113		12 Aug.	No. 54, F.O. to Johnston.
55					Aug.	Johnston to Wiese (rti 81).
56					Aug.	Wiese to Johnston (rti 81).
57	84	2196	124–125		8 Sep.	No. 59, F.O. to Johnston.
58	84	2197	366–394, 420–424		13 Oct.	C.A. 39, Johnston to Rosebery.
59	84	2197	435–446		18 Oct.	C.A. 40, Johnston to Rosebery.
60	84	2197	476–477		19 Nov.	C.A. 43, Johnston to Rosebery.
61				16–17		Wiese and Bowler, note.
					1893	
62					early	Bowler to Johnston (rti 81).
63					early	Johnston to Bowler (rti 81).
64	2	54	81–89		31 Jan.	C.A. 6, Johnston to Rosebery.
65	2	53	15–16		13 Feb.	No. 9, F.O. to Johnston.
66	2	54	137–138		23 Mar.	Johnston, note on Matchenya.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for footnotes	*Public Record Office reference*			*Maugham Report Appendix reference*	*Date*	*Description*
67	2	54	139–142		(23 Mar.)	Johnston, note on Wiese.
68	2	54	130–136		23 Mar.	Johnston to Anderson.
69					15 April	Johnston to Wiese (rti 80).
70					14 May	Wiese to Johnston (rti 80).
71				16	9 July	Bowler to Rosebery.
72					1 Aug.	Johnston to Wiese's agents (rti 80).
73	2	55	193–198, 213–214, 235–237, 273–274	34–36	25 Sep.	Johnston to B.S.A.C., certificate of claim.
	2	128	123–125			
74				42–43	25–8 Sep.	Johnston to B.S.A.C. and A.L.C., certificate of claim.
75	2	55	153–192, 205–213, 221–231, 265–273	45–47 (a)	14 Oct.	Johnston, report.
	2	128	109–118			
76	2	55	149–152, 205, 221, 265		14 Oct.	C.A. 55, Johnston to Rosebery.
	2	128	109			
77					autumn	Bowler to Johnston (rti 81).
78	2	66	112–113		12 Dec.	Sharrer's Zambezi Traffic Co. to King.
79	2	55	360–392, 353–359		16 Dec.	C.A. 68, Johnston to Rosebery.

a. Chapter IV only of the report is printed in the Appendix.

					1894	
80	2	66	141–143		2 Mar.	Warton to Johnston.
81	2	66	144–150		3 Mar.	Johnston to Warton.
82	2	66	137–138		3 Mar.	C.A. 23, Johnston to Rosebery.
83	2	66	198		23 Mar.	Johnston to Warton.
84	2	66	197		23 Mar.	C.A. 29, Johnston to Rosebery.
85	2	66	139–140		5 May	Currie, minute on 82.
86	2	108	327–331,		14 June	Glave to Edwards.
	2	148	334–337			
87	2	67	36–37		3 July	Hay Thorburn to Johnston.
88	2	67	26–29		4 July	Johnston to Anderson.
89	2	67	32–33		5 July	Currie, minute.
90	2	67	268–269		24 Sep.	L. C. Johnston to H. H. Johnston.
91	2	67	267		6 Oct.	Johnston to (?) Anderson.
92	2	67	306		15 Oct.	Johnston to Anderson.
93	2	65	126		15 Oct.	Anderson to Johnston.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for footnotes	*Public Record Office reference*			*Maugham Report Appendix reference*	*Date*	*Description*
94	2	67	326–331		17 Oct.	Johnston, memorandum.
95	2	65	181	47–49	24 Nov.	B.S.A.C. and F.O., agreement.
96				49	27 Nov. 1895	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
97	2	87	115–116		9 April	No. 44, F.O. to Sharpe.
98	2	90	25		22 April	Tele. No. 1, Johnston to F.O.
99	2	89	34–35	49–50	8 May	B.S.A.C. to Mozambique Company.
100				50–51	17 May	Mozambique Company and B.S.A.C., agreement.
101	2	88	482–484		10 June	Johnston to B.S.A.C.
102	2	88	479–481		10 June	C.A. 76, Johnston to Kimberley.
103	2	88	509	52	25 June	C.A. 83, Johnston to Kimberley.
104	2	89	33		9 July	Sharpe to Anderson.
105				52	9 July	Anderson, note.
106				53	9 July	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
107				53	10 July	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
108				54	10 July	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
109				54	11 July	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
110				54	15 July	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
111				55	18 July	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
112				55	19 July	B.S.A.C. to F.O.
113	2	89	41–42		29 July	C.A. 88, Johnston to F.O.
114	2	87	215–218		30 July	No. 81, F.O. to Johnston.
115	2	87	281–282		3 Oct.	No. 116, F.O. to Johnston.
116	2	89	307–308		15 Oct.	C.A. 129, Johnston to F.O.
117				55	2 Dec.	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
118				56	7 Dec.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
119				56	7 Dec. 1896	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
120				56	9 Jan.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
121	2	106	192–199		24 Mar.	Johnston to Anderson.
122				56–58	2 April	Warton to Forbes, extracts.
123	83	1444			11 May	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
124					14 May	N.C.E.C. to F.O. (rti 165).
125	2	109	38		25 May	Tele. No. 9, Sharpe to F.O.
126	2	106	280–281		26 May	C.A. 51, Sharpe to Salisbury.
127	83	1445			5 June	Tele., Warton to N.C.E.C.
128	83	1445			11 June	B.S.A.C. to N.C.E.C.
129	83	1445	58		22 June	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
130				59	30 June	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
131	2	107	99		11 July	Tele., Grey to Sharpe.
132	2	107	41–44	59–60	14 July	Johnston, memorandum.
133	83	1447			23 July	N.C.E.C., resolution by board.
134	83	1447			23 July	N.C.E.C. to B.S.A.C.
135	83	1447			30 July	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
136	83	1447			3 Aug.	Grey to B.S.A.C.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for footnotes	Public Record Office reference			Maugham Report Appendix reference	Date	Description
137	2	107	100		4 Aug.	Tele., Sharpe to Grey.
138	2	107	101		4 Aug.	Tele., Sharpe to Forbes.
139	2	107	102		4 Aug.	Tele., Forbes to Sharpe
140	2	107	96		4 Aug.	Tele., Sharpe to Forbes.
141	2	107	94–95		5 Aug.	C.A. 79, Sharpe to Salisbury
142	2	107	97–98			F.O. minute on 141.
143	83	1447			5 Aug.	B.S.A.C. to F.O.
144					12 Aug.	F.O. to N.C.E.C. (rti 151).
145	2	108	130–133		21 Sep.	Warton, statement.
146	2	108	127–128		29 Sep.	Warton to Sharpe.
147	2	108	64–65		6 Oct.	Johnston to Salisbury.
148	2	108	104–105		6 Oct.	Johnston to Sanderson.
148a	2	108	140–143		7 Oct.	Forbes to Sharpe.
149	2	109	15		12 Oct.	Tele. No. 8, F.O. to Sharpe.
150	2	108	126		13 Oct.	C.A. 113, Sharpe to Salisbury.
151				60	11 Dec.	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
152	2	108	311–313		17 Dec.	Sharpe to Hill.
153				60	19 Dec.	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
154	2	108	324–325		24 Dec.	C.A. 143, Sharpe to Salisbury.
155	2	108	336–337		29 Dec.	Johnston, note.
156	2	108	338–339		29 Dec.	Bertie, minute.
					1897	
157				61	25 Jan.	N.C.E.C., memorandum.
158	2	127	102–108	61–64	6 Feb.	Johnston, note.
159					2 April	No. 58, F.O. to Sharpe (rti 172).
160				64–65	7 April	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
161					9 April	No. 64, F.O. to Sharpe (rti 172).
162	83	1526		65	14 April	B.S.A.C. to N.C.E.C.
163	83	1526			23 April	Warton to N.C.E.C.
164	83	1526			7 May	Wiese to N.C.E.C.
165	83	1526		66	10 May	N.C.E.C. to B.S A.C.
166	83	1526		65	10 May	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
167	2	128	175		14 May	Mpezeni to Kotakota.
168	2	128	175		14 May	Hepburn to Kotakota.
169	2	128	63–64		15 May	McDonald to Sharpe.
170	2	128	174		26 May	McDonald to Sharpe.
171	2	128	61–62		30 May	C.A. 97, Sharpe to F.O.
172	2	128	171–173		13 June	C.A. 116, Sharpe to F.O.
173	2	126	233–234		11 Aug.	No. 117, F.O. to Sharpe.
174	2	129	371		29 Dec.	Tele. No. 19, Manning to F.O.
175	2	129	376–377		31 Dec.	C.A. 264, Manning to F.O.
176	2	129	372–375		31 Dec.	Manning to Hill.
					1898	
177	2	148	464–465		9 Jan.	Wiese to St. Hill.
178	2	148	466–467		9 Jan.	Rae to St. Hill.
179	2	148	468–469		9 Jan.	Roberts to St. Hill
180	2	148	470		9 Jan.	Wiese to Warringham.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for foot-notes	*Public Record Office reference*			*Maugham Report Appendix reference*	*Date*	*Description*
181	2	147	38–40		13 Jan.	C.A. 14, Manning to Salisbury.
182	2	150	38		15 Jan.	Tele., Sharpe to F.O.
183	2	147	46–52		18 Jan.	Sharpe to Hill.
184	2	147	98–109, 141–142		20 Jan.	Brake to Manning.
185	2	147	110–117, 143		21 Jan.	Brake to Manning.
186	2	147	53–54		21 Jan.	Cunningham to Hill.
187	2	147	136–137, 146		24 Jan.	Wiese, Roberts, Joyner and Rae to Brake.
	2	148	462–463			
188	2	147	138, 146		24 Jan.	St. Hill to Brake.
	2	148	461			
189	2	147	133–135, 145–146		27 Jan.	Sharp to Brake.
190	2	147	118–132, 144–145		29 Jan.	Brake to Manning.
191	2	150	41		3 Feb.	Tele., Sharpe to F.O.
192	2	150	2		4 Feb.	Tele., F.O. to Sharpe
193	2	150	42–43		4 Feb.	Tele. No. 1, Cunningham to F.O.
194	2	147	72		4 Feb.	Cunningham to Hill.
195	2	147	94–97, 140–141		17 Feb.	C.A. 25, Manning to Salisbury.
196					18 Feb.	Tele. No. 3, Manning to F.O. (rti 198 and 199).
197	2	150	48		21 Feb.	Tele., Sharpe to F.O.
198	2	147	184		2 Mar.	C.A. 33, Manning to Salisbury.
199	2	146	62–63		14 Mar.	No. 40, F.O. to Manning.
200					12 April	Manning to Brake (rti 201).
201	2	148	69–75		6 May	Brake to Manning.
202	2	150	4		12 May	Tele., Sharpe to Bertie.
203	2	150	4–5		12 May	Tele. No. 3, F.O. to Manning.
204	2	148	343–345		12 May	Laws to Sharpe.
205	2	147	440–481		(13 May)	Annual Report, British Central Africa Protectorate, 1897-8.
206	2	146	109–110		20 May	No. 71, F.O. to Manning.
207	2	150	56		20 May	Tele. No. 8, Manning to F.O.
208	2	148	15–16		20 May	C.A. 79, Manning to F.O.
209					20 May	F.O. to B.S.A.C. (rti 233).
210	2	148	67–68		16 June	C.A. 93, Manning to Salisbury.
211	2	148	227–230		6 July	Sharpe to Hill.
212	2	148	232–233		7 July	C.A. 105, Manning to Salisbury.
213	2	148	324–333		24 July	Sharpe to Salisbury.
214	2	148	338		24 July	Sharpe to Hill.
215	2	148	339–341		24 July	F.O. minute
216	2	150	8–9		(9 Aug.)	Anonymous account of disposal of Ngoni cattle.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for footnotes	*Public Record Office references*			*Maugham Report Appendix reference*	*Date*	*Description*
217	2	150	6–7		9 Aug.	Edward to Curzon.
218	2	146	177		12 Aug.	No. 112, F.O. to Manning.
219	2	148	456–458		31 Aug.	C.A. 135, Manning to Salisbury.
220	2	146	250		8 Nov.	No. 152, F.O. to Manning.
221	2	149	325–326		21 Dec. 1899	C.A. 217, Sharpe to F.O.
222	2	207	59		2 Mar.	No. 40, F.O. to Sharpe.
223	2	208	367–370	67–68	8 May	C.A. 98, Sharpe to F.O.
224	2	208	376–377		8 May	Map, Zomba to Fort Manning.
225	2	208	371–375		8 May	C.A. 99, Sharpe to F.O.
226	2	209	137–176		25–7 May	Regina v. Ziehl.
227	2	209	135–136		15 June	Pearce to Sharpe.
228	2	209	134		16 June	C.A. 145, Sharpe to Salisbury.
229					17 July	F.O. to B.S.A.C. (rti 230 and 233)
230	2	247		68–69	4 Aug.	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
231	2	247			16 Aug.	Hill, minute.
232	2	207	167–168		18 Aug.	No. 137, F.O. to Sharpe.
233	2	247		71	23 Aug.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.

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Appendix

113

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II

DEFINITIONS

128 CULTURE, the total way of living of a people, including kinship relations, economy, religion and magic, law, government, language, myths, child training etc.

[563] ETHNIC GROUP, used here instead of tribe because the Ngoni kingdoms and villages included several tribes. (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 1–6).

614 565 CLAN, exogamous group related through male line with a common clan name used in address. True Ngoni clans formed the aristocracy (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 116).

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the allusion being to the stick which is left overnight in the hut 'to watch over the beer'. In retrospect the people from the man's village talk of having 'fetched a broom there'.[4]

There seems to be considerable variation in the way in which this ceremony of 'entering' is carried out. It is not often performed and people have different ideas of what is correct. The man's people may decide to brew beer on their own account, so that sometimes the dancers are well intoxicated before they even arrive at the woman's village. They then find it difficult to adhere rigidly to any traditional form of behaviour.

[4] *Tayotola mthanyelo.* Cf. Zulu *uku-tola*, to get, and *umshanelo*, a hand-broom.

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Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, provide similar examples for different systems and land categories. In the second Report of the Ecological Survey (North Eastern Rhodesia, paras. 316–20) Trapnell records a wide range of observations on areas where land degeneration and soil erosion had become marked, in relation to land categories, population densities and the time factor. These observations provide independent evidence of the relatively low carrying capacity of much of our land under the traditional systems, and they accord well with the estimates obtained by the methods outlined in this paper.

161
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5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni Lamba FQ8 Maravi FR4

of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§. 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 5,600 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mkushi District and 4,800 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§ 3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Description of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population obtains its food only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 15s. *The Soil, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 5s.

[113]

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

In the study of this language, the student is fortunate in having two such scholarly works of reference as *A Practical Manual of the Nyanja Language*, by the Rev. A. Hetherwick, M.A., D.D., F.R.G.S., and *A Cyclopædic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language*, by the Rev. D. C. Scott, M.A., D.D., F.R.S.G.S.; on the other hand, there is a striking want of any good prose work in that language. Of translations of the Bible, and other religious books, there are many, but all such works, in the translation, follow the English text almost literally, and contain so many words from foreign sources as to be of little use to the student who, having mastered the grammar and syntax of the language, seeks to enlarge his vocabulary and knowledge of idiomatic expression by reading some prose work. (The ideal translation of the Bible, or other religious work, would be one in which the English sentence is taken, the meaning got at, and this remodelled and transformed according to the native way of thought and expression.) It is to supply such a want that this little work is intended. The aim throughout has been, in the Chinyanja part, to write each sentence as a raw native would speak it. It is a commonly heard saying, that only boys trained at a Mission talk the language "grammatically." This is correct, if by "grammar" we mean a principle of set rules for the speaking of a language. For to the uncivilized native any such rules as those governing our own, and other languages of civilized countries,

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

175 is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the
814 recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few. We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of those providing the information.[6] The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in
[195] the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope
212 that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin.
175 Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from con-
178 temporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grow shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that "the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory". From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations,
156 as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people
182 relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

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113

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts?

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *u* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups.

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

484 Looked at from the point of view of the individual, we find that all
167 adult men have at some time or other been away to work, and that the majority have been to Southern Rhodesia once or twice.

Conclusion

466 In their lives on the farms and in Fort Jameson, Ngoni mix with men from other tribes, and their position is largely subsumed under the conditions common to all African labourers on all European-controlled farms. The Administration does not support the Ngoni more
[648] than the Cewa, or one chief more than another. As the content of the relationship becomes more and more related to the world-wide polity and economy, so the nature of the relationship becomes common to a wider group. Ngoni living in Fort Jameson Compound live lives that are closer to the lives led by other tribes in compounds in other towns than they are to those led in the villages 5 miles away.
464 The phenomenon of labour migration greatly affects Ngoni social
[167] structure, but is not a distinctively Ngoni institution in the same way as the Ngoni village is distinctively Ngoni. When Ngoni ex-
[729] soldiers complain that when they were recruited they were promised that after the war they would get good jobs, and now find they do not get them, their sentiments derive more from their status as ex-soldiers, which they share with some millions of others, than they do from their status as Ngoni.

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173
175

Circa

1889. Mpezeni visited by Sir Alfred Sharp.

1890. Death of Mtwalu.

1891. Death of Mombera. Chikusi, son of Mputa, deposed. Mperembe acting chief of Mombera's Ngoni.

1893. Birth of Chiloa Mpezeni Jere, son of Tsingu Jere by his wife, Nkuchwa. Matebele War.

1894. Death of Lobengula Kumalo.

1895. Ngungunyana, King of the Abu-Gaza, deposed by the Portuguese.

1896. Matabele Rebellion. Defeat of Mwase at Kasungu by Alston and Swann.

1897. Ngoni Revolt. British South Africa Company at Chinunda (Fort Jameson Dist.)

1898. Mpezeni surrenders; exiled to Fort Manning. Tsingu Jere captured and shot. Nkuchwa, his wife, shot by *Lt.* Poole's troop in the Vubwi Valley. Revolt ended. Fort Jameson established.

1900. Mpezeni I. released and returned to his village. Death of Mpezeni I. Death of Sowera Nqumayo, mother of Ntutu Mpezeni Jere (Mpezeni I) and widow of Chief Zongendaba.

1901. Succession of Chiloa Mpezeni II (Jere).

1903. Chief Madzimawe claims the name of Zongendaba, but is refused by the Government.

1904. Death of Lupoko, wife of Mpezeni, at Lupoko village.

1906. Death of Ngungunyana.

1935. Chiloa Mpezeni II present at the indaba given in honour of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales at Broken Hill, N. Rhodesia.

1934. The Paramount, Chiloa Mpezeni II, presented with his "Staff of Office" by H.R.H. Prince George at Livingstone, N. Rhodesia.

1935. Great meeting of old Ngoni chiefs with Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, to discuss the chief's ancestors and the crossing of the Zambesi river in 1835. This being the Centenary. The Ngoni were well acquainted with native dug-outs (boats) before they left their tribal area, which is now known as Northern Zululand. [501]

Authorities consulted:—Bryant; Elliott; Seymour; Thomas; Marshall Hole; Theal.

113

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PREFACE

This study is based on twenty months' fieldwork among the Fort Jameson Ngoni of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland which I undertook during 1946–9 as a research officer of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. I have already published a description of marital relations among these people as well as a general outline of their social organization. In this work I discuss their political system. I hope in a later publication to describe Ngoni village life. 114

The raw materials of the field anthropologist are the actions, sayings and writings of his informants, and I am deeply indebted to those many people who allowed me to make use of their knowledge and experience of Ngoni society and to join with them in their activities. It would be invidious to mention only some of the great number of people who helped me with my inquiries and I must content myself with this expression of gratitude and thanks to all who made my work possible. I hope that my writings do not betray their confidence or invade their privacy. I shall regard it as only a partial repayment of my debt to them if this book helps them and their neighbours to a better understanding of the world they live in.

I must, however, mention by name Paramount Chief Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., for the support which he gave my work in his country; and I have to thank Lomthunzi Cazingwa Nkhuwa, Councillor Zuwani Lukhezo Zulu III, and Mdani Kausha Tembo for the hospitality I enjoyed in their villages. M. B. Lukhero, my clerk throughout my stay in Ngoniland, introduced me to Ngoni ways of life and assisted me in my inquiries. This study is as much his as it is mine. 115 122

My fieldwork owes much to the co-operation and assistance given me by the Provincial Administration in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, by the missions and by planters and traders in the district. I am particularly indebted to Mr. D. B. Hall, District Commissioner, and Mrs. Hall for hospitality shown my family and myself, and it is a pleasure to recall the interest taken in my work by Mr. R. P. Bush, O.B.E., Secretary for African Affairs, and Mrs. Bush; Commander T. S. L. Fox-Pitt, O.B.E., R.N. (Retd.), Provincial Commissioner, and Mrs. Fox-Pitt; Mr. H. C. Bayldon, M.C., District Officer, and Mrs. Bayldon; Mr. H. J. Roberts, Provincial Education Officer, and Mrs. Roberts; Mr. M. K. Daka, Headmaster of the Ngoni Native Authority School; and in Nyasaland Mr. D. W. Saunders-Jones, O.B.E., Provincial Commissioner; 000

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

OOCMr. M. N. Gandy, Assistant District Commissioner, and Mrs. Gandy. I received much assistance from The Rev. J. C. C. Pauw and The Rev. C. R. Kok, Dutch Reformed Church Mission; Mgr. Martin, Apostolic Prefect, and P. Kneer, White Fathers Mission; Miss A. S. Field, Universities' Mission to Central Africa; and Mr. Bambury, Seventh Day Adventist Mission. I am grateful to these and to many other friends for hospitality, information and encouragement, and for providing me with such pleasant interludes in the strenuous round of fieldwork.

[121] I have written this book as a social anthropologist, and from an anthropological point of view. The kind of inquiry I made, and the way in which I have tried to handle my data, have been largely determined by the guidance and instruction I have been privileged to receive from many masters at Cambridge, Cape Town, Oxford and London. To the late Mr. J. H. Driberg, my first teacher, I am especially indebted. His stimulating manner encouraged his pupils to disagree with him, and his manifest love of his subject forced me to reject one of his main propositions, that no one should think of taking up anthropology as a career. I am also indebted to Dr. G. E. Daniel and Dr. J. C. Trevor for early encouragement. To Professors Schapera, Evans-Pritchard, Fortes and Radcliffe-Brown I owe my grounding in the problems and methods of anthropology, and I am very grateful to them for the help they have given in lecture and discussion.

This whole study has been carried out under the direction and supervision of Professor Gluckman, and my debt to him is writ large throughout this volume. His continuing encouragement, assistance and careful criticism have deeply affected my work. My colleagues of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute have also largely helped to shape this book. Dr. J. C. Mitchell has always been stimulating in our discussions on common problems, and I have been helped by discussion and argument with Dr. E. Colson and Dr. I. G. Cunnison. In the field I had the benefit of parallel data collected by my colleagues from other areas, and was fortunate in being able to visit some of them myself. My thinking and writing have been profoundly influenced by this experience of working in a group, in which each member had his own field background and his own point of view to justify to his colleagues. At the same time [122] I am most grateful to the Trustees of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute for their financial support and for the freedom allowed me in my work.

114 In the field I was fortunate in collaborating with Mr. M. G. Marwick, Colonial Research Fellow, and Mrs. Marwick, whose

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

work lay in my vicinity, and with Miss P. M. Deane, Colonial Research Fellow, who visited Ngoniland and who kindly placed her data at my disposal. Their researches threw much light on my own.

The literature on the Ngoni is considerable, and my work has been helped by the reports of earlier writers. Professor Read visited the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1935, and those of my informants who had met her recalled her visit with great pleasure. I was often able to allay suspicion by explaining that I was trying to do the same kind of work as she had done earlier. In addition to published reports I have made considerable use of official dispatches and other archival material relating to the conquest of the Ngoni by the British in 1898.

For kind permission to quote from other works, I am indebted to the Oxford University Press and the International African Institute (in respect of *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* by Meyer Fortes), the Director of Agriculture, Northern Rhodesia Government (*The Soils, Vegetation and Agriculture of North-Eastern Rhodesia* by C. G. Trapnell), and The Editor, *Scottish Geographical Magazine* ('A Trip to Northern Angoniland', by H. Crawford Angus).

In preparing this book, I have to thank Miss D. Goldstein and Mr. J. Paing for help with diagrams and maps. Professors Schapera and Evans-Pritchard, Dr. Peristiany and Dr. Kaberry read the manuscript and I have been very grateful for their comments. Finally, I would thank my wife for companionship and assistance in the field, and for unremitting help in the arduous task of writing.

J. A. B.

Meling, Norway
1952

Postscript:

Since this book has gone to press, the British territories of Central Africa have been united in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. This momentous step in the development of the region has been accompanied by a major shift in the balance of power between the Administration, the White settlers and the indigenous African population. I do not know in detail how the Ngoni people have responded to this change. Federation was a topic of conversation among them even while I was carrying out this study, and several Ngoni men have been prominent in the political negotiations of the last four years. It seems, therefore, highly likely that the operation of the political structure discussed in the last two chapters

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 is limited by the fact that the Ngoni themselves were without writing, and their warlike disposition discouraged the visits of travellers who might otherwise have left some record of Ngoni life during those times. There is a considerable body of oral tradition [114] which has been reduced to writing since 1891, but for the most part these traditional tales assume a knowlege of Ngoni life and do not explicitly describe it. Our evidence for the main features of Ngoni society during this period of migration is found in three places. First we have the pattern of relationships prevailing at the present time between groups of Ngoni, between villages, chiefdoms and kingdoms. The legends which form the charter of these relations form a coherent and largely consistent corpus of traditional knowledge about events taking place within the last hundred and fifty years from which we can make reliable inferences about the internal history of the Ngoni. In particular we can gain significant information about the manner in which different groups were formed by elucidating the names applied to them. A modified form of genealogical inquiry, applied not to physiological ancestry but to links between dependant and lord and between satellite and parent villages, provides us with a reasonably trustworthy history of intergroup relations.

Secondly, there is the evidence available from the numerous [114] published accounts of Ngoni life which have been written by European and African authors. The traditions they record can be used to supplement the data gained from an analysis of present-day legends. A little information can be gleaned from the traditional histories of tribes attacked by the Ngoni.

Thirdly, we have a certain amount of comparative evidence 171 from other societies. There are about a dozen distinct Ngoni 184 kingdoms in different parts of Africa at the present time. In this 173 book we are concerned directly with only one of these groups, now situated near Fort Jameson in Northern Rhodesia. Much light is, however, thrown on its history by accounts of other Ngoni States, particularly of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, where the old form of society persisted longer than at Fort Jameson and where even now the changes brought about by colonial rule seem not to be so great. Accounts of Ngoni groups farther afield, and of the allied societies of the Swazi and Zulu in South Africa provide less direct evidence.

114 A few isolated events in early Ngoni history can be dated precisely. Captain Cutfield, R.N., met a group of Ngoni on 1737 November 1822 and some Ngoni warriors skirmished with the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Portuguese at Delagoa Bay on 2 August 1823.[1] There was a solar eclipse on the day the Ngoni crossed the Zambezi, an event which may therefore be reliably dated 20 November 1835.[2] Livingstone and other explorers also provide us with dates. For example, Burton was in the vicinity when Ngoni raided Ujiji in 1858.[3] These evidences enable us to construct a comparatively good chronology for the Ngoni from 1821 onwards, but they do not directly tell us much about the form of Ngoni society.

Livingstone (1857, 1865, 1880), Cameron (1877) and Young (1877) mention the Ngoni under various names but tell us little except that the Ngoni were raiding continually. These early travellers were unable to make close contact with the Ngoni, mainly because of the unwillingness of their African carriers, and it is not until 1881 that the Fort Jameson Paramount Chief, Mpezeni, is mentioned by name, in Stewart's account. Wiese reached Mpezeni in 1886, or perhaps a few years earlier, and in 1891 he published the first detailed account of Zwangendaba's people. Other pre-conquest visitors to Mpezeni who published were Money and Smith (1897) and Deare (who did not publish until 1928), and Johnston's account (1897) is derived from them and from their contemporaries. Early accounts of tribal history were written by Laws (1893), Elmslie (1897), both of them missionaries with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, by Decle (1898), an explorer, and by Maples and other missionaries working near the Ngoni of Songea District, Tanganyika Territory, and northern Mozambique, who published in *Occasional papers for Nyasaland* (1893) and *The Nyasa News* (1893-5). There are many post-conquest accounts, the most important being those of Stigand (1907 and 1909), Nkonjera (1911-12), Stannus (1922), Young (1923 and 1932), Hodgson (1933), Poole (1934), Hatchell (1935 and 1948), Read (1936 onwards), Lancaster (1937), Winterbottom (1937 and 1950), Kapunzah (1941), Bruwer (1941) and Chibambo (1942). All these writers have in part drawn directly on oral tradition. Useful collations have been made by Werner (1906), Murray (1922), Abraham (1932), Bradley (1940) and Tew (1950). Bryant's masterly account of Zulu history (1929) contains in addition a

[1] Owen, *Narrative*, i, pp. 80, 121, 142*f*, 255, 258, 271. All citations will give abbreviated titles only of the works concerned, while full details of all works cited will be found in the bibliographies at the end of the volume.

[2] cf. Poole, 'Crossing of the Zambesi', pp. 290*ff*. Poole gives the date as 19 November. This seems to be based on a misinterpretation of the astronomical, as distinct from the civil, date. Young, *History*, p. 110, gives the date correctly. cf. *Nautical almanac*, 1835, 2nd ed., p. 470.

[3] Burton, *Lake regions*, ii, pp. 75*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 second-hand account of the Ngoni, and some relevant information is given by Soga (1930).

Good accounts of pre-conquest social life are not so numerous. The most useful accounts are those of Wiese (1891 and 1900), Angus (1899), and Deare (1928), based on observations in the years immediately prior to the war of 1898. For the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland there are the works of Elmslie (1899) and Fraser (1901 and 1914). Read, in 1935, was the first to apply modern methods of inquiry and has published comparative material on the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, Fort Jameson and southern Nyasaland, and on the neighbouring Cewa.

Some of this literature has found its way back to the Ngoni [872] themselves, and children nowadays acquire their knowledge of the exploits of their ancestors as much from school books as from oral tradition. Under these circumstances, I decided that no useful 121 purpose would be served by my trying to make conventional inquiries into tribal history with the aim of establishing what had in fact occurred in the past. I found it was impossible to tell whether similarity between an informant's account of a past event and a previously published version was due to common origin, independent invention, or good teaching in school. I was however concerned with the quite different problem of what use the Ngoni made of their history,[4] and I collected the histories of many counties, villages and people. For the material in this chapter I have therefore relied on the fullest and most lucid of these many versions of [115] Ngoni history, that by Chibambo, an Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, supplemented by the writings of Poole, a member of the Administration at Fort Jameson for many years, and Lancaster, who was a game warden in the area.

2. *The Nguni background*

173 Before we can understand the Ngoni of central Africa we must first consider social conditions farther south, for it was from the south that many Ngoni came. From the sixteenth century onwards, south-eastern Africa was peopled by subsistence cultivators growing cereals and herding cattle. The Nguni, as the southernmost branch of these peoples is now called, occupied the area which has become Swaziland, Natal and the Transkei. At first the Nguni were not organized into powerful states but from the common background of Nguni society there developed, from the last quarter of the eighteenth century onwards, several strong political units. We may mention among others the Zulu empire under Shaka, the Swazi

[4] See my 'History in a changing society'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 parts of the segment, namely segments 2, 3 and 19, survived as
613 independent inferior segments within segment 1. The lieutenant
595 in charge of the warriors spared the pregnant queen and hid her.
643 She bore a son, Ntutu Mpezeni, and later was shown to Zwangendaba who received her kindly and, according to Chibambo, ordered her to live with her son in the headquarters of segment 1. She was not in charge of a bevy of wives, and as by this time the great wife was dead, the bevy in segment 3 now became Zwangendaba's senior bevy. Mwambera, eldest son of the leader of this bevy, was thus a candidate for the main heirship but owing to the disappearance of segment 18 and the subsequent reconciliation between Zwangendaba and Mpezeni's mother, the relative status of the two sons was uncertain. This uncertainty may have been one of the precipitating causes in the subsequent break-up of the State.

Rangeley's verson of this incident is that after he had been
[114] shown Mpezeni, Zwangendaba ordered the headquarters of segment 18 to be rebuilt. This seems less likely to be true than the version we have followed, since there is, as far as I know, no present-day village which we can identify as the headquarters of this segment.[20]

From Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba went up the Limpopo
173 Valley into Mashonaland. He fought with Kalanga and other
167 Shona peoples and there was renewed fighting with other refugee
721 groups under Soshangane and Nxaba. In 1835 Zwangendaba's group crossed over to the north side of the River Zambezi near Zumbo and settled in Nsenga country for four years. They moved on again along the eastern rim of the Luangwa basin and eventually arrived in about 1842 in Ufipa, on the east side of Lake Tanganyika. Here in about 1845 Zwangendaba died.

Two points of historical detail may be mentioned here. There is reliable
114 evidence for a raid made on a Portuguese fort at Delagoa Bay on 22 October 1833
173 by some of Soshangane's people.[21] Poole and Winterbottom state explicitly that
167 Zwangendaba's men also took part in this attack, and Lancaster seems to imply the same. According to the chronology adopted by Young and by Poole himself
721 Zwangendaba was at this time four hundred and fifty miles away in the Kalanga country of Southern Rhodesia and it therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he participated in this raid. Elmslie, Young and Chibambo do not mention it at all, and Bryant refers only to Soshangane's part in it.

A few years after Zwangendaba left Natal, he was followed by Mzilikazi, a chief who for a while fought under Shaka and then fled from him with his followers.

[20] Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', pp. 126*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 26*f*; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 58*f*.
[21] Theal, *Portuguese in South Africa*, pp. 279*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

They became known as the Rhodesian Ndebele or Matabele. Posselt, who worked among them, does not record in their history any fight with Zwangendaba, nor do Elmslie, Bryant, Young or Chibambo. Money and Smith say that it is a matter of doubt whether or not Zwangendaba met Mzilikazi. However, Wiese, who states that Zwangendaba broke away from Mzilikazi, says that there was a fight between them. Lancaster writes that there was a fight on the Transvaal border in 1828 before the raid of 1833. Poole makes this fight take place in about 1833 and writes of the Ngoni at that time living in the vicinity of modern Bulawayo and raiding Mzilikazi in the Transvaal. If we are to accept the existence of contact between Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi at all, either of these two versions is preferable to that of Winterbottom, who implies that after taking part in the 1833 raid at Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba moved to the vicinity of Bulawayo where he met Mzilikazi, only to move on to the Zambezi in 1835. Winterbottom crowds into two years more marching and fighting than seems likely to have taken place. There is also conclusive evidence, set out by Posselt, that Mzilikazi did not leave the Transvaal under Boer pressure until about 1838.

If Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi were not living side by side, the suggestion by Lancaster and Winterbottom that they quarrelled about a dog is unlikely to be correct. There may be confusion here with the story, recorded by Field and Rangeley, of a quarrel between Mpezeni and Mwambera over their dogs.[22]

6. *Fission*

Various writers describe three occasions on which, according to their accounts, dissident sections broke off from the main body of Ngoni prior to Zwangendaba's death. Our view is that only one of these secessions actually took place, and that it was relatively unimportant.

The first allegedly dissident group is that sometimes known as the Maseko Ngoni, now dwelling in the region round Mount Domwe, on both sides of the border between southern Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa. Murray, Young, Hatchell, Poole and Bruwer state that after crossing the River Zambezi together, the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland broke off from Zwangendaba while he was in Nsenga country. Laws, Johnson, Soga, Lancaster and Rangeley state that these Ngoni crossed the Zambezi separately from Zwangendaba. Elmslie says that they were not an offshoot of Zwangendaba's party, while Read, Chibambo and Winterbottom state that they broke away from Mzilikazi, not from Zwangendaba. Fraser mentions a group that remained behind when Zwangendaba crossed the river and says that it went on to the east of Lake Nyasa, but does not say that it later returned to southern Nyasaland. Of all these writers, Read has had most contact with the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, and her account, as amplified by Winter-

[22] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 5; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', pp. 15*f*; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Young, *History*, pp. 109*f*; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 150; Posselt, *Fact and fiction*, p. 171, Field, *Visiilano*, pp. 16*f*; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 173 167 619 668 bottom, seems the most acceptable.[23] Two other versions of this alleged dissension can also be rejected. Bryant says that the southern Nyasaland Ngoni remained behind after the main body had crossed the river and that they were led by Gwasa (*sic*), Zwangendaba's principal headman. Stigand's account is similar, except that he says they broke off after crossing the river. This conflicts with the evidence of Young and Chibambo of the subsequent part played by Gwaza, first lieutenant in segment 1, with Zwangendaba's own group. We must also reject the contention of Coxhead and Hodgson that the southern Nyasaland group broke away from the main body of Ngoni after Zwangendaba's death in Tanganyika Territory. The statement made by Stanley and followed by numerous other writers that the Hehe are an Ngoni group is quite without foundation.[24] Some other communities in [101] southern Tanganyika who were merely raided by Ngoni have themselves taken the name Ngoni or some other name used by Ngoni.[25]

Poole speaks in one place of 'the secession of Nquaba' (Nxaba) from Zwangendaba, but this does not tally with his earlier statements that Nxaba's migration was independent of Zwangendaba, and that the first secession from Zwangendaba's host was that of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni. Bryant's account of Nxaba is much fuller than Poole's, and contradicts Poole's suggestion that Nxaba crossed the Zambezi at the Lupata Gorge. According to Bryant, Nxaba's group never formed part of Zwangendaba's following, and Nxaba was eventually killed in Barotseland. Chibambo and Winterbottom support Bryant.[26]

Posselt, who worked among Mzilikazi's people, states that a section of Zwangendaba's group, composed of Swazi, broke off at about the time of the Zambezi crossing and turned back to join Mzilikazi who married the woman who led the dissident section.

[23] The secession of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni from Mzilikazi may explain Wiese's and Decle's assertions that Zwangendaba himself broke away from Mzilikazi. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 466; Decle, *Savage Africa*, p. 151.

[24] Murray, *Handbook*, p. 30; Young, *History*, p. 111, and letter in *African Studies*, 1950; Hatchell, 'Angoni' (1935), p. 69; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 11; Laws, p. 85, f.n.1, in Lugard, *East African Empire*, i; Johnson, *Nyasa*, p. 102; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 275; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Elmslie, *Introductory Grammar*, p. x; Read, 'Tradition', p. 464; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 31; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 16; Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 312*f*; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 465; Stigand, 'Natives', p. 126; Coxhead, *Native tribes*, p. 20; Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 128; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, pp. 499, 503; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 56, 62.

[25] Maples, *Journals*, p. 15; Weule, *Native Life*, p. 339.

[26] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 7 and 6; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 277, 279, 454, 460*f*, 471*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 16; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 16.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This story is followed by Bryant but does not occur in any accounts collected from Ngoni themselves. It seems probable therefore that this seceding section was not numerous or important.[27] 173 668 167

There are no other disruptions mentioned in the literature, and it seems probable therefore that until the death of Zwangendaba, the State remained largely intact. However the process, common in Bantu Africa, by which rival claimants to a throne succeed only in dividing their kingdom, operated with striking effect as soon as the founder of the State was buried. The elimination of segment 18 has sometimes been suggested as the reason why the State broke up, but it is clear from comparative considerations that a State of this kind was likely at any time to break into a number of independent groups, and that this tendency was greatest at the death or senescence of the king. 619 [643]

About 1840 a number of important people, mainly coming from south of the Zambezi, were killed off as a result of an internal struggle for power in which it appears that the recently captured Tumbuka, who were successful witch-finders, were allied with the Swazi and other Ndandwe against the Tsonga from the Delagoa Bay region.[28] Unfortunately there is very little information available on the relationship of this struggle to the rest of the political system. It is, however, clear that the effect of killing off a large number of Ngoni of Tsonga origin was insufficient to prevent the State breaking up a few years later. [754]

When Zwangendaba died, his sons were still young and, for the time being, effective leadership of the State was disputed between men of his own generation whose positions are shown in Diagram 2. His brothers, the lords of segments 5 and 6, were already dead. Fraser describes the dispute as a struggle between Ntabeni's children and Mgayi. Ntabeni was a younger brother of Zwangendaba and the lord of segment 7 while Mgayi was Zwangendaba's father's younger brother's son who, on Chibambo's evidence, represented the interests of the residue of segment 1. Rangeley has a slightly different version and makes Mgayi a supporter of segment 4. Poole, presumably following Fraser, says with some qualification that Ntabeni and Mgayi both claimed the chieftainship. From what we know of the south-eastern Bantu, and from our knowledge of present-day Ngoni, it seems unlikely that a brother would claim to be the legitimate heir in preference to a son, however much he might strive to gain ascendancy over the son. It seems preferable to follow Young and Chibambo in regarding Ntabeni and Mgayi 173 114 643

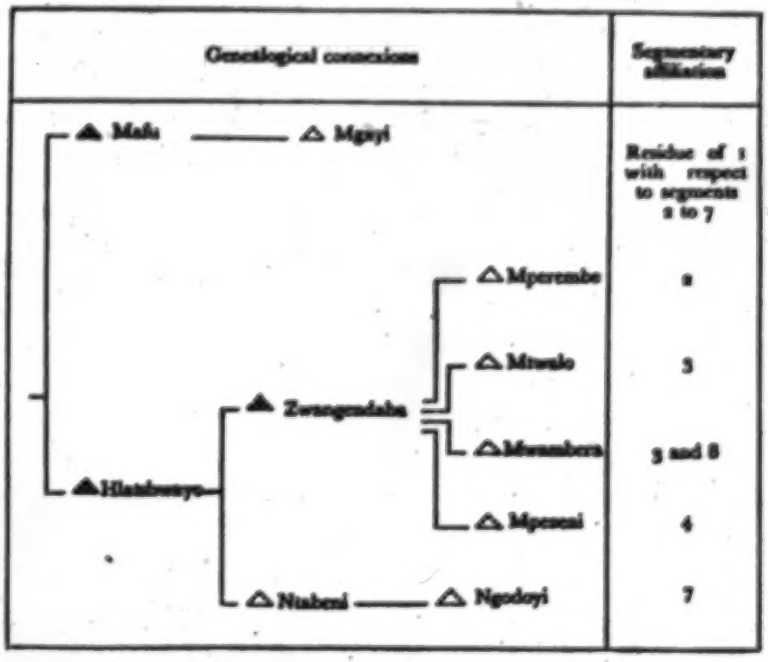
[27] Posselt, *Fact and fiction*, pp. 146-7, 176; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 464 *f*.
[28] See p. 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173
114 as acting as regent in turn on behalf of the young sons of Zwangendaba.[20]
643

The various published accounts of the succession differ from one another and reflect the different interpretations put upon the same event by rival sections of the tribe. Fraser and Young, who

DIAGRAM 2. ZWANGENDABA AND HIS HEIRS



worked in northern Nyasaland, say that Zwangendaba chose Mwambera of segment 3 as his heir, and Elmslie says that Mpezeni and others were under Mwambera. From Fort Jameson, Lancaster says that Zwangendaba chose Mpezeni, formerly of segment 18, and Poole, who is supported by Murray, says he nominated Mtwalo, another son in segment 3. Read, who worked in both areas, states

[20] For Mgayi's position in the residential system, we have only Chibambo's remark, 'the regent being Mgayi Jere, the father of Mtenje, of Elangeni', to be compared with Young's and Rangeley's mention of Emankechezeni (Emacakaseni) as the village of Mgayi. Rangeley also implies that Mgayi was Zwangendaba's brother's son, which is unlikely. Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 27 *ff*; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Young, *History*, pp. 115 *ff*; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 60.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

that 'the history of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one'.[30] It is not our task to decide between these conflicting stories. What is important for our purposes is firstly that there was a disputed succession, and secondly that present-day rival groups are still concerned each to show that its claimant was the legitimate heir.

Chibambo, who belongs to northern Nyasaland, has a different version. He states that Zwangendaba chose as his heir his younger brother's eldest son Ngodoyi, in segment 7. Such a succession would have been unusual, for Ngodoyi's father, Ntabeni, was still alive, and Chibambo does not discuss why Zwangendaba should have passed over all his own sons. Nor does Chibambo explain why Ntabeni, as regent, should have supported the claims of Zwangendaba's sons as against those of his own son Ngodoyi, for according to his account the regent declared that Mpezeni was the rightful heir. The lady of segment 3 had earlier quarrelled with the regent, lord of segment 7,[31] and now to spite her he declared that the next in succession after Mpezeni was not her eldest son Mwambera but Mtwalo, the eldest son of one of her subordinate co-wives.[32] Chibambo suggests that it was this quarrel which led the regent to support Mpezeni as against the legitimate claims of segment 3.

The regent established a new segment 4, Mtenguleni, for Mpezeni and his mother, and within segment 3 formed a separate segment 8, Emchakachakeni or Ecigodhlweni, for Mwambera and his mother, thus leaving Mtwalo and his mother in the headquarters of segment 3.

Chibambo states that Gwaza Jere, senior lieutenant of segment 1, supported the regent when he selected Mpezeni as Zwangendaba's heir, while Young says he strongly opposed it; both writers agree that after Mpezeni had been chosen there was a quarrel between the regent and the headquarters of segment 1.[33] Ntabeni, the regent, died shortly afterwards and his segment 7 broke off from the rest of the group. They were pursued by a party from segment 1 headquarters, but made their escape. The regentship now passed

[30] Fraser, loc. cit.; Young, loc. cit.; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 27; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 78; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 8; Murray, *Handbook*, pp. 29*f*; Read, 'Tradition and prestige', p. 464. cf. Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 17.

[31] Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 12; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 60.

[32] A linked co-wife, according to Winterbottom. However, his name for Mwambera's mother differs from that given by Chibambo, who merely says that the two wives were sisters. Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', p. 126; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 16.

[33] cf. *Occasional papers for Nyasaland*, 2, pp. 24-5.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 to Zwangendaba's father's brother's son Mgayi, of the residue of
643 segment 1.

Elmslie states that Ntabeni's people, i.e. those of segment 7, went northward
173 on the west side of Tanganyika and he is followed in this by Murray, Bryant and
Tew. Elmslie bases his statement on Stewart, who heard of them there in 1879.
167 However, Stewart did not visit the west side of Lake Tanganyika himself, and
114 merely gathered his information from people in a Mambwe village on his way to
the lake in October 1879. The account of the Ngoni that they gave him was
668 incorrect in a number of particulars, and we have, therefore, to treat with caution their statement about the existence of an Ngoni group west of Lake Tanganyika. Even if part of this segment did settle there, it is certain that the whole of segment 7 did not. Hatchell gives genealogical information for the group of Ngoni at present near Runsewe, Kahama District, Tanganyika Territory, which links them to Ntabeni and segment 7. Stanley describes an Ngoni group which attacked Ujiji and was allied to Mirambo, and in the light of Hatchell's account it is certain that Stanley is here referring to part, if not the whole, of segment 7. This interpretation is made by Fraser, and is in accord with Young and Chibambo. Hence we may conclude that the main body of segment 7 went north on the east side of Lake Tanganyika and eventually settled in Kahama District.

Part of segment 7 may have split off and gone elsewhere, possibly to the west of the lake. Hatchell, in his account of the Kahama group, does not mention Ngodoyi, son of Ntabeni, and it is possible that he may have led a group elsewhere although Rangeley states that it was his following that reached Kahama. Hatchell and Winterbottom write of an abortive expedition by Zwangendaba to the western shores of Lake Tanganyika but make no mention of a group remaining there.

This interpretation conflicts with Elmslie, who says that segment 7 was west of the lake while the group encountered by Stanley were a separate group led by Ntutu. Elmslie does not say who Ntutu was, but it is clear from the context that he does not refer to Ntutu Mpezeni. Hatchell does not mention the name Ntutu in his genealogies. Elmslie may, therefore, have been misled on this point.

The only other writer to mention a group west of the lake is Poole, who says that Ntabeni settled west of the lake in Nyamwezi country, where they were known as Watuta, and, co-operating with the Ruga-Ruga, were encountered by Livingstone and Stanley in 1871. Since in 1871 Livingstone, Stanley, the Ruga-Ruga, and the main body of Nyamwezi were all east of the lake, it appears that Poole intended to write 'east', not 'west'.

Colle refers to contact between the Ngoni and Luba, but the section of Luba with whom the Ngoni fought had crossed from the Congo to the east side of Lake Tanganyika before encountering the Ngoni. The existence of an Ngoni group on the west side of Lake Tanganyika seems therefore to be doubtful.[84]

Fraser says that Mgayi led the main body, including Mpezeni, Mwambera, and Mperembe, as far north as Victoria Nyanza. Finding the country poor, he led them back towards Sukuma country, but died on the way. Fraser is followed by Poole, Soga and Winterbottom. It is perhaps significant that Fraser does not

[84] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 25-7; Murray, *Handbook*, p. 29; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 468; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Stewart, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 268; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Hatchell, 'Tanganyika territory' (1935), pp. 69*f*; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, p. 499; Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Young, *History*, p. 115; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 29; Colle, *Baluba*, p. 65; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 62.

1;Barnes E 5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

mention Ntabeni's group as reaching Victoria Nyanza, and it may be that he has merely attributed this exploit to the wrong group. Such an interpretation would be in accord with the accounts of Elmslie, Young, Chibambo and Rangeley, and following them, Bryant and Tew. All these writers imply that the main body of Ngoni did not go farther north than Ufipa. It also provides a more reasonable chronology, for by Fraser's version we have to assume that within only about five years the main body of Ngoni traversed Tanganyika Territory from south to north and then back again. Lancaster is inconclusive on this point.[88]

173 114 167 668

7. *Mpezeni's kingdom*

Mgayi did not live long as regent and after his death the senior lieutenant of segment 1 made Mpezeni chief. There was a considerable shortage of food at the time and this, combined with dissension in the tribe about the succession, appears to have precipitated a further split. A follower of Zwangendaba called Zulu Gama, whose position in the segmentary organization seems not to have been recorded, led his segment off to the east, where in the vicinity of Songea he met with that group of Maseko Ngoni which we have mentioned earlier, and who probably broke off from the Ndebele some time prior to 1835. For a while the two groups operated as one but soon they split apart. Some people stayed on in Songea District, others went south and eventually rounded the southern end of Lake Nyasa to arrive in the Dedza District of southern Nyasaland, where they remain to-day.

173 167 668 643 631

Of those that remained behind under Mpezeni, the principal cleavage was between segments 2, 4, 5 and 6, all led by Mpezeni, on the one side and segment 3 with the headquarters of segment 1 on the other. Led by the senior lieutenant of segment 1, the latter group moved off to the south-east while Mpezeni moved west. While in the country of the Bisa, segment 2 broke off from Mpezeni and after settling for a while in Bemba country as an independent group it eventually went back to join segment 3. Mpezeni, with segments 4, 5 and 6, went south and eventually arrived in Fort Jameson District. His leadership of these segments seems not to have been questioned, but in the other group the senior lieutenant of segment 1 at first supported the headquarters of segment 3 against the claims to the chieftainship made by segment 8. Mtwalo, the son of Zwangendaba who had been put in charge of the headquarters of segment 3, protested, however, that the real head of that segment was Mwambera, head of segment 8, who thus became chief.

173 167 631 643

[88] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 274; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 18; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 27; Young, *History*, pp. 115*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 29*f*; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 467; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sectors attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8] 561 701

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights. [562]

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken. 561 796 [726]

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked. 561 701 727

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs, 561 701 621 [643]

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Nsingu's regiment. [114]
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Maola. Wiese and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Maiyiza. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Wiese gives two other regimental names. His Madouda or Madoda is merely the status term *madoda*, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madginga or Madjinga, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatakulu, Mang'ombe, Izimpisi, Makeke, Mahacu, Zimfezi, Manyoni. [557]
Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 59.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38, - Analyst]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

power. The history of the State and indeed of each subdivision within it was encapsulated in the formal relations between royal headquarters and between segments. Yet the system was always growing and every few years brought a new royal capital, a new chief, new headquarters for the heirs of large segments and new ambitious men as lieutenants. Each generation also brought greater divergence of interest between the constituent parts of each segment and of the State, as we shall discuss later. Before going on to examine the conditions under which the State split we shall turn aside to compare the Ngoni residential system with similar social structures found in some other societies.

4. *Continually segmenting systems*

Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, in their *African Political Systems*, have provided us with a solid foundation for a typology of political systems in simple societies. It is therefore appropriate to consider what place the Ngoni State has in this typology. The authors distinguish three types of political system in Africa,[34] and we shall attempt to determine to which of these the Ngoni State belongs.

Their first type includes those small societies in which everyone is kin to everyone else, and in which political relations are coterminous with kinship relations. It is clear that Ngoni society was not of this kind.

The other two types are those referred to as primitive states, or Group A, and stateless societies, or Group B. Primitive states are characterized by the presence of organized government, i.e. centralized authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions, and of cleavages of wealth, privilege and status corresponding to the distribution of power and authority. In stateless societies there is no government, in this sense, and political relations are primarily regulated by a segmentary system of permanent unilateral descent groups.

This classification is sometimes taken to imply that segmentary systems are found only in stateless societies but not in primitive states. This implication does not follow inevitably from the scheme of classification, though it is compatible with it. It is, however, easy to assume that this implication is intended, for the authors frequently use the adjective segmentary to characterize stateless societies in contrast to primitive states. This implication is false, as can be shown by reference to a number of societies, and cannot have been intended by the authors, for elsewhere Fortes has written that 'It

[34] Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, *African Political Systems*, pp. 6*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have
121 a segmentary social organization'.[25]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[26] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesser segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similarities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumstances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follow the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A societies as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political system may now be handled as a separate question, providing a classification cutting across the division into states and stateless societies.

642 We have spoken throughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a state, and this usage is in accord with the definition of a state given
[643] here. The Paramount Chief with his lieutenants exercised supreme
[622] authority, there was a highly organized administrative machine, and there was an organized method of settling disputes within the
[556] State. There were only slight variations in wealth except in the
[554] control of cattle, but privilege and status were expressed in the residential system and were inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

121 The presence or absence of a segmentary political system can itself be divided into two questions; was there a segmentary
631 system, and if so, was it the political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, then it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[25] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 234.

[26] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 201, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 34, diagrams.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Three

DEFEAT

1. Structural change 2. Portugal or Britain 3. Concession hunters 4. European consolidation 5. Friction 6. Fighting 7. Cattle 8. The end of a system

1. *Structural change*

178 619 64 THE STRUGGLES of the Ngoni during the middle of the nineteenth century were with groups of roughly the same character as themselves. The processes at work in the Ngoni social system were in the main repetitive. The State grew in size, split, and grew again, but it was still largely the same kind of State as before. Even though there were important differences between the Ngoni and their opponents, particularly after 1835, those whom they encountered were sufficiently like themselves to be absorbed into the system without difficulty. In the nomenclature of Radcliffe-Brown and the Wilsons, there was social circulation in the Ngoni State but little change in its structural form.[1] For this reason we have been concerned in our analysis so far with but few of the historical details of that period, and have dealt with history only in an abstract and generalized form. Many of the inconsistencies between various versions of the tribal legend have not been [114] significant. For example, Chief Ciwele Ndhlovu of Dowa broke off from the main body of Ngoni, according to some writers before, and according to others after, the split between Mpezeni and Mwambera.[2] It does not matter for our particular purpose which of these versions is correct, for we are here concerned only to establish that from time to time senior lieutenants did split off with their segments to form independent chiefdoms. This process, of which Ciwele's secession is an example, was essentially the same before and after the Mpezeni-Mwambera split.

648 178 121 After 1880 Ngoni history entered a new phase, and social processes began to operate which were not repetitive. Changes began to occur in the form of the Ngoni social field, for instead of interacting with groups similar to themselves, the Ngoni became involved in a much wider network of social relations. This change

[1] Radcliffe-Brown, 'On social structure', p. 4; Wilson, *Social change*, p. 58.
[2] cf. Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 32-3; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 18; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

557 648 This process was facilitated by the actions of some heads of major segments. It had always been correct procedure for one important person to deal with another through intermediaries, at least in the opening stages of negotiation, so that lieutenants and others were [624] frequently sent as ambassadors for their lords to the headquarters of other major segments. There was particular point in adopting this procedure in dealing with the Administration since its demands on a man sent to it were unpredictable and apt to be onerous. Thus in many instances a lieutenant or other dependant was presented to the Administration as the headman of an area or a group of villages. This nominee was regarded by the Administration as the rightful leader of the area concerned, a belief often fostered by the nominee himself. In this way effective control of an area passed from the head of a segment to one of his dependants.

648 Unfortunately, few records of the early administrative arrangements have survived. From 1883, when a British consul was first 114 appointed to Nyasaland, down to the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898, the doings of the tribe were of political significance to Britain, and were reported on at length in dispatches which are now public records. After 1898, events of similar importance within the tribe to those that had been reported earlier, the death of this lieutenant or the movement of that village from one site to another, were no longer of any interest to Whitehall or even to the Directors of the British South Africa Company. Thus there was a drastic reduction in the scale of reporting. At the same time the loss of sovereignty, of independent action, involved a reduction in the kind of events which were likely to be recorded. The Ngoni no longer made war or sold slaves. They did pay tax and work in the mines, but this they did not as an independent tribe but as part of Fort Jameson District and the Eastern Province, and such records as there are relate to these administrative units rather than to specific tribes. The B.S.A. [439] Company lacked the long tradition of administration enjoyed by the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, and its reports were scanty by comparison. Thus the only published report of any kind on affairs in North-Eastern Rhodesia for the year 1905-6 is a mere fifteen lines long, and there is only one sentence on African administration: 'The conduct of the Natives has continued to be satisfactory.'[18] It is not until 1928 that annual reports on African affairs began to be published. Our account of Ngoni history from 1898 until recent times therefore cannot be as complete as we would wish.

[18] *Directors' Report and Accounts*, 1906, p. 7.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 Ngoni tradition placed the departure of the two main groups under the leadership of Zwangendaba Jere and Ngwana Maseko during Shaka's wars, according to some traditions just before, and to others just after, the death of Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. The separate departure of the two Ngoni groups which later formed the two kingdoms was determined partly by their separate leadership under the Jere and Maseko clans, partly by their march by different routes to the Zambesi and after crossing it; and partly by the clan descent names of the Swazi element in the two kingdoms, which with few exceptions were different.

[533] Two traditional songs, sung at marriages, at dances at the Paramounts' villages, and the first in the church of the Scottish mission at Ekwendeni in north Nyasaland, reminded the Ngoni of their departure from Natal, of their separation from the Ndwandwe people under Zwide, and of the hazards of a small military band fighting its way northwards.

539

All the nations
Are gathered together against us.
How shall we fight?
They are called together against us.
Whence shall we summon help?
The big husky ones, ho!
They are called together against us.
We are reinforced by whom?

It is because of Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people
That though I lie down I cannot sleep.
O Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people!
Though I lie down I cannot sleep.
Shaka scatters us among the forests of Soshangane land.

173 There were several informants in both Ngoni kingdoms who had preserved the story of the departure of the Ngoni from the south. Y. M. Cibambo in his book gathered together the traditions and gave what he considered the most authentic version of the departure. One [114] text from the northern kingdom is given here, partly because it was typical of the kind of material Cibambo had to work on, and also because the author, Mlonyeni Jere, had heard it from his mother who, as a young girl, had lived at the court of Zwangendaba. The text gives the genealogy of Zwangendaba, and the connexion of his line with Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. It emphasizes the immediate cause of Zwangendaba's departure—namely the fear of meeting Shaka and his warriors in open battle, and the fact that he was not called a chief until he had made a breach with Zwide. The summons to the [571] mourning for his uncle Mafu, which he ignored, was considered by the Ngoni to be the final act by which Zwangendaba cut himself off from

173 Ntabeni had his own village named Engwenyameni, and the big village of Zwangendaba was called Elangeni, and there were others.

When Zwangendaba left with his brother Ntabeni, they built their village near a path. That was the time that he departed from Zwide and he was at this time called a chief and had his own people. When Zwide was running away, Zwangendaba was on the way, and he was building his villages and spent a year at one place, and sometimes more than a year.

[114] The following text on the departure of the central Ngoni from the south was written by Iahmael Mwale, the treasurer of Paramount Gomani II of the central Ngoni kingdom. As Cibambo had done in the north, he had collected and put together the oral traditions of the old men. This story also began with a flight from Shaka's army by two leaders, Nqaba (spelt by Bryant, Nxaba) of the Msane people and Ngwana of the Maseko people. They fought the Ngoni group led by the Jere clan, and the group under Gaza which were later called the Shangaan people, and were defeated by both. The tradition of crossing the Zambesi by dividing the waters with a stick was common to the northern and central Ngoni. After crossing the Zambesi, the central Ngoni went west of the Shire river to the Kirk Range on the eastern slopes of which they found the people called Ntumba.

The Departure of Ngwana from Swaziland
by Iahmael Mwale

¶ Nqaba, son of Mbekani, made war on Shaka, but was defeated and retreated to Swaziland. Then Ngwana said 'If you run away from Shaka, he will trouble us, so I am going to leave.' Chief Nyathi told Shaka that Ngwana was leaving, and Shaka said: 'Prevent him from leaving.' So Nyathi fought Ngwana and Ngwana knew that he was waiting for Shaka's army. So he performed a rite, and caused rain to come and darkness. In the middle of the darkness Ngwana left together with Nqaba. They came to the country of Nancekwani at Mauwa, and fought with the people. They defeated the four chiefs there and conquered the country. Ngwana went straight to Ulozi to the village of Mamba, father of Lewanika. He destroyed the country of the Lozi and died there. Magadlela his brother entered the chieftainship. When Magadlela left Ulozi he went to the country of Ndunduwali, and from there to the Nyika. He arrived at Cidima Mbirasweswe, and there Zwangendaba found them. There was fighting between Magadlela and Zwangendaba, and many people were killed and they did not know who they were because it was night. When Magadlela ran away he made for Golongozi where Nqaba was, and explained to him about the war. They mobilized the army to follow Zwangendaba. When they found him they destroyed many of his men. Somfuya and other brothers of Zwangendaba were killed. When they returned from the war with Zwangendaba they went to Cikwanda. There they found Gaza and fought him and were defeated. Magadlela and Nqaba ran away. Nqaba took a friendly farewell of Magadlela because there was hunger and there were many people without food. Magadlela allowed him

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

162 563 (35,107). It is difficult not to assume that many Nyanja had formerly called themselves Ngoni.

Table II

	1926	1931	1945
Mzimba district			
Ngoni	25,484	24,627	44,948
Tumbuka	46,029	78,483	89,135
Cewa	14,041	2,411	21,891
Yao	20	—	—
Tonga	3,052	605	32
Nkonde	141	—	—
Others	334	156	202
Total	89,101	106,282	156,208
Ncheu district			
Ngoni	64,023	46,308	15,242
Cewa	11	4,372	2,815
Nyanja	334	25,393	60,400
Cikunda	360	940	1,336
Yao	203	1,064	3,267
Nguru, etc.	—	—	4,448
Others	13	278	182
Total	64,944	78,355	87,690

631 Since the two Ngoni kingdoms are the subject of this book and not the secession states, the position of the rulers of those states as Native Authorities and the circumstances of their secession from the two main groups will not be examined here. The three secession states in the north were under Chiefs Ciwere and Msakambewa in Dowa district and Jere in Kotakota district. The four connected formerly with the central Ngoni were under Chiefs Kacere and Kacindamoto in Dedza, Masula in Lilongwe and Vumbwe in Cholo.

484 In the 1930's, when I was living sometimes in the northern kingdom, sometimes in the central, and for a time in the Ngoni state under Chief [114] Jere, I was aware that the existence of the two kingdoms and of the seven secession states did not preclude a great deal of contact between the Ngoni of the different areas. The stream of travel in Nyasaland from south to north and from north to south along the one trunk road, brought Ngoni as visitors from one kingdom to the other, from the smaller states to both kingdoms, and from 'the Ngoni of the dispersion' living in towns to visit their relatives and friends in the Ngoni king-574 doms and states. These visits might be social, to see parents or to marry a wife; they might be for economic purposes, to invest in or sell cattle, to supervise cotton or tobacco marketing; or they might be for ritual purposes such as mourning. When I travelled in the central Ngoni 814 kingdom in 1936 with Y. M. Cibambo, the historian of the northern

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maravi FR4
Tumbuka FR6

N 576

leave after meeting, withdrawing after a case in court, and initiating or concluding many other formal or less formal occasions. Children were taught to use the correct expressions and rebuked if they made a mistake, and it was one of the requirements in Ngoni families that a uniform standard of verbal politeness should accompany correct behaviour in posture.

CULTURAL AFFINITIES AND DIFFERENCES

N M 121 122

The anthropologist working in Nyasaland is aware of the problems inherent in any attempt to isolate cultural features within any of the larger ethnic groups found there. There were no ethnographic field studies published of any of the other ethnic groups when I was working among the Ngoni. Mary Tew, in *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*,[1] referred to scattered sources published before 1939, to which I had access; and from time to time Cewa informants wrote accounts of particular social institutions or ritual, from which I was able to make certain comparisons with Ngoni ritual and institutions. Some of the earlier accounts, such as that by Hodgson on the Cewa and Ngoni in the Dowa district,[2] assumed that all the cultural changes and 'borrowings' had been by the Ngoni from their Cewa neighbours, whereas I found in that area in 1939 Cewa villages where Ngoni cultural elements had been adopted.

N M 114 177

N M T 105

Ngoni cultural affinities with South-eastern Bantu	*Local tribal differences*	
Paramount and subordinate chiefs	Chiefs; no central authority except in Henga and Ngonde	
Patrilineal descent Virilocal residence Marriage by *lobola*	Cewa and southern Tumbuka	Matrilineal descent, uxorilocal residence, marriage witnesses
	Henga	Patrilineal descent and virilocal residence
Clan exogamy „ hierarchy Houses Age sets	Cewa	No clan exogamy „ „ hierarchy *Mbumba* group Girls' initiation schools
Cattle complex Ancestor cult associated with cattle	Tumbuka Cewa in Dedza district	Formerly cattle-owners but no terminology left and no association with ancestor cult
Burial customs: in skin near kraal	Cewa and Tumbuka	Graves outside village; buried in a mat

[1] Tew, M., op. cit.
[2] Hodgson, A. G. O. 'Notes on the Achewa and Angoni of Dowa District, Nyasaland.' *J. Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1933, pp. 126–64.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

171 The distinctiveness of Ngoni institutions, so often emphasized by the older men and by the early travellers in Nyasaland, was due to cultural affinities with the South-eastern Bantu. The attached table sets out those social and cultural elements in the Ngoni kingdoms which were most distinct from parallel features among the neighbouring peoples, and which had obvious affinity with South-eastern Bantu cultures. The main Ngoni cultural elements have already been referred to in this chapter and will be further discussed in the rest of this study. The corresponding elements among the local peoples are based partly on the [127] earlier sources quoted by Tew and partly on local informants and my 114 own observations. In collecting information about clans, the *mbumba* group consisting of a man with his sisters' children, and the girls' initiation schools, I had no direct contacts with any except Cewa sources.

Variations in cultural conformity among the Ngoni

178 In the Ngoni kingdoms among families with Swazi and trans-Zambesi 184 clan descent names there was considerable variation in the degree to which they maintained Ngoni institutions and practised Ngoni cultural forms. The anthropologist was constantly aware that the time element was an important factor in the consolidation of Ngoni practices and in the attitudes developed towards Ngoni culture among the individuals in the different generations. The Ngoni in both kingdoms spoke of the 'older generations' (*mibadwo wa kale*), 'the middle generations' (*mibadwo wa mpkati*), and 'the present generation' (*mibadwo wa tsopano*). The first had grown to adulthood before the Europeans came, and were the older senior men and women in the 1930's; the second had been affected by [172] European missionaries, traders, and officials while they were young men and women; the third had never known anything but European contacts and many had grown up in European schools. The senior Ngoni of the [181] older generation often expressed the sentiment: *zatha zonse tsopano* (everything is finished now). They included in that saying the regrets of the older Ngoni for their former independence, and their resentment at the domination of European rule and European culture. It is idle to 177 speculate what cultural changes might have taken place in the Ngoni 178 kingdoms if European influence had been postponed another twenty to thirty years. Nevertheless it is a vital factor in assessing Ngoni culture that the kingdoms had barely twenty years of independent existence before the Europeans began to penetrate Nyasaland. The older Ngoni [181] looked back on their former independent existence as a golden age in which they were spreading Ngoni customs and culture as well as exercising political supremacy. It is difficult to believe that this was wholly true, in view of the extensive cultural interchange going on in the country as a whole. It is, however, possible that wider acceptance of Ngoni cultural elements was prevented by the advent of the Europeans, in so far as cultural institutions and political dominance were closely

885 diagram is that of the *madoda*, the older men who wore the head-ring.
692 Probably in pre-European days they received more recognition than was apparent in the 1930's after the head-ring had been given up. The *madoda* will be referred to in the next chapter on the royal village and in Chapter V of Part III on age sets. In the appeal court of the Paramount and in the chief's court there was always a group of these senior men sitting behind the *izinduna*, to whom the *induna* speaking to the case sometimes turned for advice and consultation.

645 Reference was made to an overlap between territorial office-bearers and national office-bearers. The big *izinduna*, the spokesman of the Paramount, and sometimes the messengers, were members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and often were *alumuzana* who had no courts. This was a method by which in the 1930's those *alumuzana* could be drawn into the circle of officials and receive a small salary for their services.

This set of office-bearers which we have considered in relation to the Paramount, with the exception of his spokesman and his praiser, was duplicated for the chiefs in both kingdoms, whether they were of the royal clan or *alumuzana*. The account of the royal village in the central kingdom which follows in the next chapter will illustrate how these officials functioned in the day-to-day affairs of the Paramount's headquarters.

CHAPTER V

A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933

The Paramount and his village

361 FOR some weeks in 1935 and in 1936 I lived in the Paramount's village
[114] of Maganga in the central kingdom. The central kingdom included all
[13] Ncheu district, consisting of 1,092 square miles, a total population of
161 88,446, and a density of 80·99 per square mile. The village was 300 yards off the main road running from north to south of Nyasaland, and was approached by a hoed motor road flanked by huts. It consisted of three main sections: the Paramount's large brick residence and the surrounding buildings within a palisade or reed fence, including the huts of his daughter and son-in-law, and of his brother-in-law and sister; the huts and kraal in the section of the *induna* of his big house, Kalilombe Mbewe; and the huts and kraal of the original village 'owned' by the headman, Lazaro Dzonzi. On the south of the village was the large open space where the weekly market was held, and where several Indian stores faced the main road. On the north was the dispensary building,

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CHAPTER I

NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF review was given in Chapter III of Part I of the main elements of Ngoni culture, analysed into 'patterns' covering kinship, village layout, ritual, ceremonial, and language. In this section we shall be considering the principal social institutions embodying Ngoni culture: their clans, houses, families and age sets. We shall find evidence in the two kingdoms of an extensive common element in the social organization which the Ngoni brought with them from the south. Some important diversities will be evident also, such as the variations in virilocal residence found in the central kingdom, and the less widespread practice there of *lobola* marriage. Those elements which were common to Ngoni social organization in both kingdoms were often those which distinguished Ngoni culture from that of the neighbouring peoples. Patrilineal descent, the house system, the ranking of clans, the *laweni* organization of boys' life and activities—these were all distinctively Ngoni, practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and sometimes adopted by individuals and families of other clans who had been associated with the Ngoni over long periods. Nevertheless, in many of the villages of the central kingdom there were clearly two cultures existing side by side: the Ngoni culture being that of an aristocratic minority and the local culture that of the majority, who in the kingdom were equally subjects of the Paramount but in their villages possessed inferior social status. 114 121 [563 565]

Indications were to be seen, even in the more conservative and more isolated northern kingdom, that modern influences were affecting Ngoni social institutions. We have already noticed some of the effects of the cessation of warfare on a social system founded on military traditions. The exodus of young men from Ngoni villages to seek work elsewhere was very extensive, especially in the northern kingdom, where the level of education was higher but employment was not available, and this had repercussions on the age of marriage, the distribution of wealth, and the undertaking of family responsibilities, including the care of the old people. The gradual decline in polygyny, largely but not entirely due to the work of missions, was beginning to have its effects on the working of the house system and on the interrelations of the generations within the family group. 178 [595 797]

In the 1930's many of these modern changes were appearing but the traditional institutions were still functioning, and the Ngoni leaders themselves were clear about those forms and activities which were distinctively their own.

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CHAPTER I

THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS AND THE ARISTOCRATIC TRADITION

THIS section is not an account of Ngoni religion. It would require a study in itself to examine their beliefs about supernatural beings, their ideas on cosmogony, their concepts of the causes of disaster and sickness, their approach to and practice of forms of magic, and their attitude to witchcraft. Living in Ngoni villages, listening to individuals of different ages discussing prosperity and disaster, the seen and the unseen, the known and the feared, it was clear that it would be difficult to isolate a comprehensive system of beliefs and say that these were distinctively Ngoni beliefs concerning religion and magic and witchcraft. The observer was always aware of the intermingling of ideas and practices from the many Nyasaland tribal peoples who lived side by side and were in constant contact with one another in all those spheres of thought and action which demanded explanation and some remedial or therapeutic treatment. Among the Nyasaland tribes in the 1930's the influence of sixty years of Christian teaching by the missions played an important part, since the missions had introduced western medicine and education as well as a new religion and ethic, and so had influenced both thinking and action among their converts and their families. 114 771

In this complex situation it was virtually impossible to say: this is the Cewa religion, this is the Tumbuka cosmogony, this is Ntumba magic. It was nevertheless clear that there was an Ngoni cult of their ancestral spirits, which was not shared, in the form in which they practised it, by any of the neighbouring peoples, and the Ngoni had their own selective methods of relating it to Christian beliefs and practices. One reason why the Ngoni ancestor cult could be singled out as peculiar to them was its foundation in their aristocratic tradition. As long as the Ngoni political and social structure and organization survived, including the reciprocal roles of leading men and important women, the concept of houses with their ownership of cattle, and the role of the *gogo* house in maintaining tradition and carrying out ritual, the performance of the cult of ancestral spirits was assured. The eminent ancestors whose spirits were guarded in a village and who were known and remembered were addressed in times of trouble, and meat was offered to them as a form of sacrifice from the herd of cattle associated with the house to which they had belonged. This section will deal with the cult of ancestral spirits of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who formed the political and social aristocracy. Thus, in the form described here, the cult is 771 769 [563] [565]

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178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly
231 related to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
437 of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Money was needed for good
554 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which
the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling,
[453] except among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Values and attitudes in cattle-ownership

114 Any attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquiring, caring for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive
233 survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place
565 in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is not possible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba clans whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading clans and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.

231 The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they repre-
sented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able
556 to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of ritual for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

769 782 in three age groups on the verandah also came forward and, led by NaNkoloma, a widow of Njolomole I, thanked in the women's language, 561 '*Zimata, zaithwa mntwana wenkosi.*'

I did not witness any ritual sacrifices in the northern kingdom but 769 the accounts given me by informants corresponded closely with the 782 ritual in Mcakhatha just described. When sacrificing for rain to the spirits of the Paramount, a black ox with no white spot was driven into [825] the kraal in the late afternoon and the chosen spokesman addressed the ancestral spirits of the Jere clan telling them that this was their beast, they must eat the meat and tell UMkulumqango that the people needed rain. While this man prayed to the spirits he stood facing the beast, and everyone else sat looking in front of them and keeping very quiet. The women stayed at home in their huts and the Paramount stayed in his hut 'as if mourning'. When the beast urinated and showed that the spirits had heard, a messenger came and informed the Paramount. The beast was killed early the next morning in the kraal. While the flaying took place, all the huts of the chief wives were smeared with dried cow-dung on the floors and on the smooth place outside the doors. The meat, in two parts, was taken into the *indhunkulu* and left there all night at the back, so that the spirits might lick it. The next morning the meat was cooked in the kraal by the *madoda* and when it was ready they reported to the big *induna*. He called all the people into the kraal and divided them into companies according to their sections and head villages. The meat was given to the head of each head village who divided it among his group. When everyone had finished, one of the leading men stood up and began to praise the spirit using his titles and praise-names (*izitokozo*). The rest stood up and shouted *Bayete*. They then began to dance a war-dance but, the informants added, that was soon stopped by torrents of rain.

114 178 These chapters on the Ngoni ancestor cult bring to an end this study of the two Ngoni kingdoms in Nyasaland in the 1930's. We have seen how their distinctiveness as a people depended on the culture which they brought with them from the south and how this culture was found among the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In the topics included in the three sections of this book: the political system, the social organization, and the ancestor cult, the main features of Ngoni culture are most clearly seen. In much of their economic and agricultural life there was little to distinguish them from their neighbours among the other Nyasaland peoples. The changes brought about by the missions, the schools, new forms of local government, and new types of occupation, were all tending to make the Ngoni less distinctive as a people. The conversion of some leading Ngoni to Christianity, as suggested in Chapter V of Part II, and the spread of schools were together the most powerful influences in altering Ngoni traditional culture. The

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

organization of houses built on polygynous marriage, the ancestor cult, and other aspects of Ngoni culture, were profoundly affected by the teaching of Christianity and by the ideas and practices expected of adherents of the churches. Some leading Ngoni Christians like Cibambo attempted to make a synthesis between their past and their present, between traditional culture and modern life. Others said 'All is finished now.'

Two points which clearly emerged from a study of the Ngoni in the 1930's might indicate that the Ngoni as a distinct people were not 'finished'. One was their tenacity in adhering to certain traditional practices; the other was the ability they had shown in adapting their culture and political system to the mixed populations in their kingdoms.

Introduction

Like the wooden Ngoni meat dish, this book stands on three firm legs. It is the outcome of lecturing for over twenty years to teachers and students of education from all over the world on how an anthropologist approaches the study of education. It is the result of living for three and a half years in Ngoni villages in Nyasaland, watching how they brought up their children, hearing their reasons for the shaping of that upbringing, and seeing what use they made of formal education in mission schools. And lastly, since the war ended, young parents in several countries have talked with me now and then about how they were bringing up their children and what they thought of schools in relation to their home training. 114 121

I like to think, though it may be self-flattery, that a close study of the home and of parents' attitudes towards the bringing up of their children is an essential complement to the ideas presented to young teachers, and to older ones too for that matter, of what education is and how it works. I am often startled, and driven to furious thinking, when I come across statements like these: 'School is a civilizing place,' from the Harvard Committee on Education in a Free Society; or 'We have to rely on the schools for the training of character' from the Beecher Report on Education in Kenya; or 'The school is an institution specifically established to produce desirable changes in behaviour,' from the opening address to a symposium on Education and Anthropology at Stanford University, California. We all know that there are parents everywhere who are only too thankful to 121

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were reinforced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and [582] [631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women [562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village, [593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group, [606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages, [114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 society and particularly their children to new ways of living and thinking. These then are the four aspects of the study
121 for which I sought clues: awareness of their society, definite cultural values, social control of bringing up children, adaptation to external change.

114 In alluding to the following authors and the ways in which they furnished clues for this study, I hope it may lead
121 readers to consult the full works for themselves, and indeed to explore others which can be found in any good bibliography on socialization or on personality and culture. Over many years I have read and re-read Ralph Linton's *The Cultural Background of Personality*, in order to throw light on my own studies and to illustrate my lectures. When assembling the material for this Ngoni study I welcomed and followed up his thesis that 'some groups are much more conscious of the existence of culture and much more prone to generalize about behaviour than others'. That and other passages certainly helped to throw light on the Ngoni awareness of their own culture and their articulateness about behavioural training.

Linton also assisted me, though I did not completely agree with all his analysis, in placing cultural values in their relation to the accepted personality patterns. I used here other clues, and notably those provided by Monica Wilson in her book *Good Company* and John Whiting in his field manual for studies of child training. The Nyakusa values, brought out so clearly by Professor Wilson, I was able to compare with Ngoni values. Among the Nyakusa, 'good company', dignity, display, decency, wisdom, were constantly stressed and behaviour on these lines was commended by adults. The Nyakusa were a homogeneous and secure people, whose system of age-villages was unique among the surrounding peoples and a powerful force in maintaining and developing socially desirable forms of behaviour. Dr Whiting, in his field study manual, suggests eight 'systems of behaviour' for field workers to observe and classify in terms of individual

child behaviour. Five of them appear to suggest values some of which have a place either in Nyakusa or Ngoni ideal personality patterns: self-reliance, obedience, responsibility, sociability, dominance. But there is at least one major difference between the approaches of Professor Wilson and Dr Whiting to the training of children. Professor Wilson is describing the values of Nyakusa adults and their effect on the bringing up of children. Dr Whiting has selected from a series of cultures certain typical or common forms of behaviour which might be displayed by children. These forms of behaviour might represent general social values, but they are not set in the context of any one culture, and the criterion is whether an observer saw a child displaying sociability rather than whether the society desired their children to show sociability and took steps to encourage it. This book was after all a manual to be usable in a number of cultural situations. His emphasis is nevertheless on the observed behaviour of selected children, and illustrates my point made in the early pages of this chapter; whereas Professor Wilson's emphasis was on the adult ideal personality to which, it was hoped, Nyakusa children would conform.

The existence of a 'system' in the upbringing of children, a system set up by a society and under its control, posed a number of questions. Clyde Kluckhohn in several of his books has for a long time provided me with clues in the study of 'systems', and many of these clues are summarized in the chapter on Personality and Culture in his book *Mirror for Man*. Especially in two directions these clues have proved helpful: in his distinction between two kinds of cultural learning, technical and regulatory, or acquiring skills and learning to behave, the latter taking place in the early years of childhood, and acquiring skills in later years; and in his theme of predictability, illustrated in this quotation: 'A definition of socialization in any culture is the predictability of an individual's daily behaviour in various defined situations. . . . When a person behaves most of the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

114 121 time as others do in following cultural routines, he is then socialized.'

I have deliberately carried on the study of the Ngoni 'system' through what are generally called the adolescent years. In so doing I followed some of the clues in Professor Linton's discussion of how different societies treated adolescence and its alleged problems. Dr H. M. Ammar also provided a clue in his account of the sharp gulf in the Egyptian village of Silwa between child and adult, between the ways of childhood and the values of adulthood. But in sorting out the problems which the Ngoni study presented, I have drawn also on my recollection of discussions with Dr Kurt Hahn at Gordonstoun about the place of adolescents in society, and whether what is commonly called 'an awkward age' is necessarily part of a child's growing up. Two particular contributions of Kurt Hahn's have thrown light on the young Ngoni adult. One was the correlation between physical stages of growth and social responsibility; and the other was the close connexion between acquiring skills which are socially valuable and essential, and the general maturing of the young adult, especially in his growing confidence in himself and in his self-respect.

On the fourth point, the effect of external changes such as schools on child training, I found much that was useful in Oscar Lewis' *Life in a Mexican Village*. It seems to me he has gone further than most anthropologists in examining the school and its methods and ideas in relation to a traditional culture and society. From an educational as well as from an anthropological angle, H. M. Ammar's analysis of the place of schools in Egyptian villages is also very stimulating.

Social horizons of Ngoni children

128 [114] Most studies of child training concentrate, or at least place the main emphasis, on a child in his family setting, with the connotation of a family in the western individual sense of father, mother and their children. The subsequent chapters

not enough milk, or was unable to suckle the child, or was ill or died. If a woman died in or just after childbirth, and the child survived, it might be suckled by the paternal grandmother or by another co-wife of the dead woman, but as a rule they resorted to artificial feeding, and often used it to supplement breast feeding. The father of the child took the food pipe of a beast recently killed, washed it and dried it, and handed it over to the women to rub with fat until it was soft and pliable. One end was then tied tightly to close it, it was filled with warm cow's milk, and the other end was tied loosely so that the child could just suck through it. It was kept well washed with warm water, and many infants were brought up successfully with this 'bottle'.

The babies were also given very thin gruel made of millet or maize flour, and curds and whey beaten up together. This was put in a very small gourd, decorated with drawings, with a spout to pour from, and a cover to keep flies and dust out.

Weaning

Studies of weaning in different cultures lay emphasis on the traumatic shock of separation from the mother, not only in terms of being refused the breast, but also of being removed to sleep elsewhere than beside the mother, and perhaps being sent away to stay with another relative.

In the Ngoni pattern of nurse-girl care and of supplementary feeding, especially after the first few months, it might seem that the actual weaning was less of a shock than in cultural situations where the baby was with the mother all day, carried about by her and never refused the breast if it cried. Ngoni women, however, and men too, all asserted that weaning was a shock to the child, even if it happened at two years old.

The reasons for this shock were partly that it was done all in one morning at one fell swoop, and partly that the child was sent away from the mother at night. The same nurse girl looked after it all day, but now took it more often to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the observer or anthropologist. One such observer might 121
pursue the line suggested by the use of different persons of the verb and different pronouns in personal contacts, and the values inherent in such standardized usage. Another might choose to examine the institution of the boys' dormitory and its contribution to the total value system. Another might take the different emphases in bringing up boys and girls in relation to the fact that men were the permanent element in village society and that girls left the village on marriage. A dozen more examples could be taken from the narrative chapters of this study and usefully followed up. They would all illustrate, in the first instance, the subjective nature of the initial selection, whether the final results of several different investigations made a coherent integrated system or not. They would also illustrate the uncharted area of such studies, where there is little to guide the observer and the analyst, in spite of the growing interest in recent years in studying the value systems of non-literate societies.

Among the leads which I found most useful has been Pro- 121
fessor Monica Wilson's *Good Company*, to which I referred in
Chapter I, where she associated cultural values with the age- 114
village system in Nyakusa society. I owe much also to help and suggestions given to me at Harvard by Professor Cora Du Bois and Dr Ethel Albert, and to Professor Kluckhohn and his associates in discussions on their published and projected series on the study of values.

The relation between Ngoni values and their ideal per- 128
sonality pattern is based on the study of their society and culture described in my earlier book, and on the analysis of their system of bringing up children in this book. I referred in Chapter II to certain values as group values and to others as personal values. I am not sure that the distinction is a valid one, but it is a convenient form of classification and it
corresponds closely to the Ngoni way of thinking. They were 829
continually referring to their society, or a local community in it, as if it were an integrated whole, and to the effect of

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[3]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[3] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors.

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system.

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[20] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere

[20] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as well as to her husband and his kin, while a man tries to enlist the support of his own kin but not usually of his wife's kin if the dispute has nothing to do with marital affairs. At birth and death the division of labour and responsibility is mainly on sex lines. In general we may say that the elementary family does not emerge as a grouping of importance because there is no system of elementary families in which it can do so. Village is posed against village in dances, songs, the collection of tax, hunts, division of food, and so on. In other situations, one group of kinsmen act as a body in distinction to another group of kinsmen who are their affines. We have demonstrated this for the ceremonial situations of marriage and for the resolution of quarrels. In the intimacies of the hut, man and wife are in a simple and specific dyadic relationship which does not admit of substitution. To some extent, their infant, from conception to weaning, is a helpless appendage of this relationship. From weaning on, children acquire other social relationships of their own. The distinction drawn between marriage and the care of children is well illustrated by the remark made by an old widow when I asked her why she did not marry again. She replied 'I am now too old for marriage. My job is to look after children.' The missions encourage men and women to bring up and care for their own children, particularly where the children's grandparents are pagan. At the same time the importance of the economic ties that link every Ngoni household with the rest of the world is increasing and it is easier for men to find extra money when they are young and middle-aged than when they become grandparents. These two factors may lead to an increase in the importance of the elementary family, but it is also possible that the number of children sent home from Southern Rhodesia to their grandparents may grow as more women go there to join their husbands, thus increasing the responsibilities of the old towards their young grandchildren.

594 [628] [799]

9. Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce

178

We have seen that whereas in the old days divorce was infrequent, it is now comparatively common. We have also seen that prior to 1898 the kinship structure of the Ngoni was based on localized agnatic and quasi-agnatic lineages, for the captor-captive relationship was similar to that between father and child. These lineages are now no longer effective social groups, and individuals act and live together with cognates and affines related to them in a variety of ways. This parallel change in divorce frequency and in kinship structure provides confirmation for the hypothesis put forward by Gluckman that divorce is rare and difficult in tribes organized on a system of marked father-right, and frequent and easy to obtain in other types.* This hypothesis was suggested by a comparison of different tribes which Gluckman divides into two types. Among

[586] [613] 121 114

* Gluckman, op. cit., p. 190.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

others, the Zulu and Nuer have agnatic lineages and rare divorce, while the Lozi and Ila lack agnatic lineages and have frequent divorce. The Ngoni before 1898 appear to belong to the first type and the Ngoni of the present-day to the second. In 'the time of peace' the fertility of the married woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth to her husband's lineage segment, and the children whom she produced were recruits to that segment. Her agnates could never claim the children for their matrilateral segment. Associated with this system were the levirate, the sororate, and the right to enforce betrothal on pain of the return of gifts. The simple legal family was a relatively stable unit, and its position within the lineage segment was determined rigidly by the ranking of co-wives. Divorce was rare and could be effected only on the initiative of the husband. By contrast the affiliation of children nowadays is not fixed, and the very groups themselves to which they would formerly have attached themselves are no longer important. The children borne by a woman, whatever marriage payments have or have not been made for her, are potential recruits to local kin groups led by a variety of different relatives. Compared with the past, the simple legal family is unstable and divorce is frequent and easy. As might be expected, the levirate and sororate and enforceable betrothal, the trappings of the old system, have declined in importance.

Gluckman also suggests that in general, marriage payments fall in value with the decreasing dominance of patrilineal descent, although he cites the Ila as a virilocal people with high marriage payments, no agnatic lineages and frequent divorce. He regards the influence of property on marriage payments as secondary, but writes: 'On this hypothesis, which needs more testing, the amount of goods transferred and the divorce rate tend to be directly associated, but both are rooted in the kinship structure. It is rare divorce which allows high marriage payment, rather than high marriage payment which prevents divorce.'[7] The Ngoni material suggests that payments, kinship structure and divorce frequency are connected and that among them, as among the Ila, frequent divorce does not preclude high payments.

We may distinguish three phases in the history of Ngoni marriage payments. Prior to 1898 bridewealth varied in amount from one to a dozen beasts, depending on the status of the woman's father. In addition, recently captured women were married, both by men of high and low status, without payment of cattle. There is no indication that divorce was any less rare in one section of the community than another. In our pre-1898 sample, as set out in Table I, only one marriage out of eighteen ended in divorce, despite the absence of payments in half the marriages. It is true that in the single instance of divorce there were no marriage payments, yet even this marriage does not suggest marital instability as we

[7] Gluckman, op. cit., pp. 192, 200.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have been discussing it. Divorce took place because the man, a recently captured Kunda, ran away back to his former tribe leaving his wife, daughter of one of Mpezeni's lieutenants, behind in her father's village. In 'the time of peace' marriages were stable, with or without payment. The wealthy men were the politically important men, and indeed Wiese's assertion that men married off their daughters so as to gain the maximum number of cattle[8] may be based on the behaviour of socially ambitious fathers in what was largely an upward-mobile society. Political affiliation effected by marriage was ratified by a transfer of wealth appropriate to its importance in the general field of political and social relations. Divorce frequency and kinship structure were the same for rich and poor, aristocrats and captives, and were neutral factors in determining the amount of marriage payment.

The second phase began immediately after the war of 1898 and lasted until about 1930. At the beginning of this period the tribe as a whole was poorer than it has been before or since. Many cattle were looted in the war and for a long time there was little money in circulation. The majority of marriages without payment were contracted during this phase, and it seems reasonable to associate this in part with the poverty of the people. It is difficult to make any precise estimate of divorce frequency at this time, although we know that many Cewa and Nsenga women who had been married before 1898 deserted their husbands and returned home when British control was established. There does not seem to be any evidence for supposing that at this period women moved from one husband to another within the confines of the Ngoni kingdom more quickly than they do now. It is perhaps safe to say that the low level of payments was due partly to poverty but also partly to the general uncertainty about the future, about the kind of society which the White Administration was building for the Ngoni. Evans-Pritchard has stressed that 'It is morals that censure divorce and law that refuses to recognize grounds for divorce which ensure the stability of the union of husband and wife.'[9] The laws and moral code that had been enforced by the old chieftainship had been shaken by the defeat of 1898. The payment of bridewealth had defined legitimate expectations of behaviour, obligations and rights, within an organized system of social relations which had been shattered. While many Ngoni must still have regarded marriage with payment of bridewealth as morally right and desirable, they must also have been aware of the greatly increased risk they were running when making these payments, even if they had the cattle to make them. Rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* which were socially recognized but could not be enforced through the machinery of the State were hardly

[8] See above, p. 3, footnote 3.
[9] Evans-Pritchard, 'Social character of bride-wealth, with special reference to the Azande', *Man*, xxxiv (1934), p. 174.

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

PREFACE

The four papers reproduced here deal with a method of estimating land carrying capacities for human populations under African conditions and systems of land usage, and the application of this method to the study of practical problems. The method itself is based on Trapnell's work on the soils and agricultural systems of the Territory, and details of the method as applied in practice have largely been evolved in collaboration between him and the author, with material assistance from other members of the Agricultural Department. N 121

The first paper gives an outline of the technique used in carrying out detailed studies of land problems in the Eastern and Western Provinces of Northern Rhodesia. The basic conceptions of land deterioration and population carrying capacity, the relation of Native land usage to the vegetation-soil unit and the factors involved in the estimation of critical densities, which are discussed in this account, have already been referred to in Trapnell's *Ecological Report on North-Eastern Rhodesia* (paras. 37–41, 79 and 302–26). The main emphasis in Trapnell's account, however, is on the land deterioration aspect, whereas in the present essay the subject is given fuller treatment from the population standpoint and in the light of recent work on the redistribution of populations. N [128] N [114]

The second paper consists of a report, submitted to Government in 1940, on a reconnaisance survey of conditions in the area of the Lamba Chief Mushiri. This survey was the first attempt to apply the conception of land carrying capacity and the method of estimation to the study of a specific practical problem. Shortly afterwards the method was applied, on a vastly greater and more detailed scale, to the resettlement of congested populations in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province. In 1943 further study was given to the whole proplem of the concentration of populations, including that of Mushiri's area, about the southern and eastern rim of the Copperbelt. In the interval a Government Land Commission had visited the area. This Commission reported that the predictions made in the original report were being rapidly fulfilled and recommended the immediate grant of additional land under controlled settlement. Resettlement of populations from Mushiri and other overcrowded chieftaincies was started in 1943 and all of the recommendations contained in the original report have now been carried out or are in process of completion (see Annual Reports of the Agricultural Department, 1943–6). It will be noted that the Vegetation-Soil units have been revised and that other factors in the method of estimation have been somewhat modified, as a result of greater knowledge, since the original pioneer survey was made. L 121 [128] L [114]

The third paper is a report, presented to Government in October 1944, on the vexed question of the adequacy or otherwise of the native reserves L [128]

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned: such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources.

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile.

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamĩnzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipoka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni.

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent.

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do.

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, provide similar examples for different systems and land categories. In the second Report of the Ecological Survey (North Eastern Rhodesia, paras. 316–20) Trapnell records a wide range of observations on areas where land degeneration and soil erosion had become marked, in relation to land categories, population densities and the time factor. These observations provide independent evidence of the relatively low carrying capacity of much of our land under the traditional systems, and they accord well with the estimates obtained by the methods outlined in this paper.

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113

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5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§. 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 5,600 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mkushi District and 4,800 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§ 3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Description of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population obtains its food only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 15*s*. *The Soil, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 5*s*.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE REV. ALEXANDER HETHERWICK, D.D.

•114 THE author of the following book has been for some years located among the Nyanja-speaking tribes of British Central Africa at Blantyre, and afterwards in Central Angoniland. His occupation as a member of the African Lakes Corporation has brought him into close contact with the native 122 population of these districts. He has taken advantage of his opportunities to familiarize himself with the native language, of which he has acquired a very competent knowledge. In the course of his 126 studies he made a collection of native folk-lore and stories which illustrate in the fullest degree the various constructions, idioms and grammatical forms of the language. These he has now published with the coöperation of the Directors of the Corporation.

121 The book is of value as containing examples of native life, habits and customs which are rapidly disappearing from the country before the advance of civilization and the work of Christian missions. The coming generation of natives will grow up under [198] new influences, and the habits of thought and belief that ruled the lives of their fathers will soon be forgotten. Collections of folk-lore such as this book contains are therefore invaluable for the light they throw on a state of native life that is rapidly passing away.

To get into the heart of the native mind is a task well-nigh impossible for a European. The nearest

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

In the study of this language, the student is fortunate in having two such scholarly works of reference as *A Practical Manual of the Nyanja Language*, by the Rev. A. Hetherwick, M.A., D.D., F.R.G.S., and *A Cyclopædic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language*, by the Rev. D. C. Scott, M.A., D.D., F.R.S.G.S.; on the other hand, there is a striking want of any good prose work in that language. Of translations of the Bible, and other religious books, there are many, but all such works, in the translation, follow the English text almost literally, and contain so many words from foreign sources as to be of little use to the student who, having mastered the grammar and syntax of the language, seeks to enlarge his vocabulary and knowledge of idiomatic expression by reading some prose work. (The ideal translation of the Bible, or other religious work, would be one in which the English sentence is taken, the meaning got at, and this remodelled and transformed according to the native way of thought and expression.) It is to supply such a want that this little work is intended. The aim throughout has been, in the Chinyanja part, to write each sentence as a raw native would speak it. It is a commonly heard saying, that only boys trained at a Mission talk the language "grammatically." This is correct, if by "grammar" we mean a principle of sét rules for the speaking of a language. For to the uncivilized native any such rules as those governing our own, and other languages of civilized countries,

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indunas*[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupulous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African territories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[1 [i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

101 one party of them came up from the south, and partly to divisions among the Ngoni during the period of settlement.

About 115 years ago the ancestors of these Ngoni left their homes 173 in the present Zululand and Swaziland for their long trek north. The immediate cause of their departure was the defeat of Zwidi, chief of the Ndwandwe people, by Chaka, the history of whose military career in Zululand is well known and needs no repetition here. As part of Zwidi's people, the Ngoni did not want to stay under Chaka, and the same impetus and military skill which set up Chaka as the Zulu Napoleon drove the Ngoni northward as far as Lake Tanganyika, a conquering military horde amassing followers on the way. To-day 101 they are found in three large groups and several smaller ones, the [649] large groups known as the 'countries' of Mpezeni, Mwambera, and Gomani, who are the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs.[1]

121 These groups of people with their southern origin, settled among people who had a totally different language and social structure, present to the anthropologist a highly complex situation to investigate. He must at the outset ask the questions, 'Who are these Ngoni? Have they a separate identity as a people, marked by distinctive social and [114] political institutions?' After living among them for nearly a year I am convinced that it is correct to speak of the Ngoni as a distinctive 101 group; that they themselves are very conscious of their separate iden- 619 tity as a people, and that they can point to certain of their institutions, notably their language and political, territorial, and kinship groupings, which are definitely Ngoni, that is, of southern origin, and which distinguish them from the people among whom they settled. The 121 complexities of this situation involve the analysing of the ethnic elements included in this term 'Ngoni' and the determining of the sense in which it is to be used. They involve also an explanation of what is meant by the expression 'a distinctive Ngoni culture', or 'distinctive Ngoni institutions'. The anthropologist who is interested in culture contact must go further and indicate the nature of the double contact caused first by the intermingling of the Ngoni with other tribes, and then by the advent of the Europeans. It is not possible in this article to do justice to all these aspects of an intricate problem.

[1] For the purposes of this article these are the only groups which will be considered.

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts?

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *u* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups.

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans.

814 down fully and correctly. When I arrived in Chief Gomani's country,
124 after having stayed in the other two Ngoni areas, the chiefs and leading men whom he called to see me asked at once, 'What did the other
●[114] Ngoni do to show you they were Ngoni? *We* want you first to hear the story of our people.' If I said to any older man of good standing, that is of a true Ngoni clan, 'Tell me about the Ngoni', he invariably began with the traditions of the south and their trek north.

173 I have some fifteen long texts[1] of Ngoni history, most of which begin with the stories of Dingiswayo and Zwidi leading up to the rise
[126] of Chaka and the Ngoni exodus from the south. These texts not only show a measure of agreement with each other, but they also are verifiable by established history as recorded by Europeans. Those texts which came from Gomani's country contain different material after the exodus from the south. For the Ngoni under the leadership of the
[614] Maseko clan came north with Mzilikazi and the Matabele, and crossing the Zambesi alone, went east of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika.[2] The main Ngoni group under the Jere clan went west of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika, and remained a united group until the death of Zwangendaba in 1848. A disputed succession followed and the Ngoni split up under two rival Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera. The history
[814] of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one, the only one to whom the royal salute *Bayete* should be given. Mpezeni's historians say, 'Mwambera snatched *Bayete*'—and vice versa. In spite of these divergences in later history, however, the Ngoni point to their earlier
619 history and say, 'You see we are all one people'. They are conscious
829 of, and troubled about, their present divisions and inclined to attribute them to our premature arrival in the country. 'You came too soon. We would have fought until there was only one *inkosi*.'

814 The detailed knowledge of Ngoni history is regarded as the province of a specialist. 'How can a man of no wisdom remember all those names?' From time to time 'historians' tell episodes of this traditional history in the villages of the Paramount or of other im-

[1] 800–1,000 words.

[2] This is their own account and is confirmed by the Rev. Charles Stuart, formerly at Ekwendeni, but not so far recorded by other Europeans.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 173 829 177 [582] this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chinamwali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *umsindo* or *umgonxo* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chinamwali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

N M [881]

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

N M [191] [562] N [178]

N 114 If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chamtenderi*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

when the first white people arrived, as 114
traders and missionaries and officials, they were all impressed with the power of the Ngoni Paramount Chief and the impossibility of [483] getting any footing in the country without his consent and aid. 'Mpezeni[1] is a very powerful chief . . . and shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his governing powers. He has formed a powerful kingdom where his subjects are mainly Chewa, Chipeta and Senga stock, but his power is consolidated by a Zulu and half-Zulu aristocracy.' Such was the official view of the Ngoni state under old Mpezeni expressed by Sir Harry Johnston, and similar impressions are recorded of the Ngoni states in Nyasaland. If this was the European impression of Ngoni supremacy it is easy to picture the feelings of the Ngoni themselves with all their pride of race and of achievements in nation-holding, when for the first time a superior power [177] loomed on their horizon.

VII. The Advent of the Europeans. I have up to the present 101 referred to the three Ngoni areas as if they formed one cultural unit. This is true of their earliest days, and to a large extent of the time called *chamtenderr*. In spite of certain minor differences there was then a form of society and of political organization which was the same in all three areas, and they all possessed the same language, traditions, and aristocratic hierarchy. After the advent of the Europeans, however, it 177 becomes impossible to generalize, as both the manner and the results 184 of white penetration varied so much in the three areas. As a study in culture contact where eye-witnesses, both white and black, are still available as informants, it is most illuminating to compare the effects of white contact in Mpezeni's and Mwambera's countries. In Mpezeni's the first contact was commercial, in Mwambera's, missionary. The contrast between Ngoni society in those two districts to-day is startling, and is commented on frequently by the Ngoni themselves. 'See', say Mpezeni's people, 'the Charterland Company came to us. To Mwambera's country it was Dr. Laws. And Dr. Laws's men can speak English to-day and we cannot. Our cattle were taken by the Europeans; Mwambera's were not. That is why they *lobola* their wives to-day with many cattle, and we have only a few cattle.' They often referred to these differences as soon as they knew I was going from

[1] This was the old Mpezeni, son of Zwangendaba.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

THE FORT JAMESON NGONI

By J. A. BARNES

Historical and Ecological Background

101 THERE are about a dozen groups of peoples in different parts of Africa who call themselves Ngoni, and others not using that name have also been classified as Ngoni on the basis of common [r31] origin. They are found in Tanganyika Territory, Portuguese East Africa, Nyasaland, and Northern Rhodesia. The name Ngoni is derived from Nguni, the designation applied to themselves by the Zulu and Xhosa peoples. The Ngoni have a common history of emigration from 175 the vicinity of Zululand, in Natal, in the 1820's, and of subsequent 101 migration northwards. This common heritage they share with the Ndebele of Southern Rhodesia. These migrations were occasioned by the rise to power of the Zulu chief Shaka, whose defeat of his chief rival, Zwide of the Ndandwe, led to the flight northwards of parties of Ndandwe refugees. At least two parties travelled as far north as the River Zambezi, one of them led by Zwangendaba, whose party crossed the river in 1835.[1] This Ngoni group reached the vicinity of Lake Tanganyika in about 1845, and there Zwangendaba died. His people split into several segments, led by his sons and other followers. One of these segments went on farther north, others turned towards Lake Nyasa, while one segment led by Mpezeni, a son of Zwangendaba, struck south-westwards towards the Bemba country in what is now the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia. Here, in about 1856, they fought unsuccessfully with the Bemba, retreated southwards, and in about 1865 crossed the River Luangwa into Fort Jameson District. In 1868 they moved westwards into Petauke District, and a few years later moved eastwards to their present habitat in the vicinity of Fort Jameson.[2] It is with this group of Ngoni that we are concerned.[3]

[1] Poole, *Dawn of the Crossing of the Zambezi*, pp. 190-2.

[2] Cf. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, pp. 659-70; Chibambo, *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*, pp. 1-56; Doke, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 151; Elmslie, *Among the Wild Angoni*, p. 18; Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 312-13; Hodgson, *Notes on the Ndebele and Angoni*, p. 103; Kapumbu, *Angoni, Ulanda ndi Miyundi*, pp. 1-115; Lacunzo, *Tonsonia Chronicle*, p. 84; Poole, *Native Tribes*, pp. 3-10; Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 464; Stigand, *Natives of Nyasaland*, p. 126; Werner, *Natives of British Central Africa*, p. 181; Wilson, *Gombichiro . . . der Angoni*, pp. 181-4; Winterbottom, *Angoni Paramountcy*, pp. 116-7; Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, pp. 108-17.

[3] I worked among these people for a year in 1946-7 as an Assistant Anthropologist of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

[114]

[p. 194]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PREFACE

This study is based on twenty months' fieldwork among the Fort Jameson Ngoni of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland which I undertook during 1946–9 as a research officer of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. I have already published a description of marital relations among these people as well as a general outline of their social organization. In this work I discuss their political system. I hope in a later publication to describe Ngoni village life. 114

The raw materials of the field anthropologist are the actions, sayings and writings of his informants, and I am deeply indebted to those many people who allowed me to make use of their knowledge and experience of Ngoni society and to join with them in their activities. It would be invidious to mention only some of the great number of people who helped me with my inquiries and I must content myself with this expression of gratitude and thanks to all who made my work possible. I hope that my writings do not betray their confidence or invade their privacy. I shall regard it as only a partial repayment of my debt to them if this book helps them and their neighbours to a better understanding of the world they live in.

I must, however, mention by name Paramount Chief Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., for the support which he gave my work in his country; and I have to thank Lomthunzi Cazingwa Nkhuwa, Councillor Zowani Lukhezo Zulu III, and Mdani Kaunha Tembo for the hospitality I enjoyed in their villages. M. B. Lukhero, my clerk throughout my stay in Ngoniland, introduced me to Ngoni ways of life and assisted me in my inquiries. This study is as much his as it is mine. 115 122

My fieldwork owes much to the co-operation and assistance given me by the Provincial Administration in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, by the missions and by planters and traders in the district. I am particularly indebted to Mr. D. B. Hall, District Commissioner, and Mrs. Hall for hospitality shown my family and myself, and it is a pleasure to recall the interest taken in my work by Mr. R. P. Bush, O.B.E., Secretary for African Affairs, and Mrs. Bush; Commander T. S. L. Fox-Pitt, O.B.E., R.N. (Retd.), Provincial Commissioner, and Mrs. Fox-Pitt; Mr. H. C. Bayldon, M.C., District Officer, and Mrs. Bayldon; Mr. H. J. Roberts, Provincial Education Officer, and Mrs. Roberts; Mr. M. K. Daka, Headmaster of the Ngoni Native Authority School; and in Nyasaland Mr. D. W. Saunders-Jones, O.B.E., Provincial Commissioner; 000

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 second-hand account of the Ngoni, and some relevant information is given by Soga (1930).

Good accounts of pre-conquest social life are not so numerous. The most useful accounts are those of Wiese (1891 and 1900), Angus (1899), and Deare (1928), based on observations in the years immediately prior to the war of 1898. For the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland there are the works of Elmslie (1899) and Fraser (1901 and 1914). Read, in 1935, was the first to apply modern methods of inquiry and has published comparative material on the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, Fort Jameson and southern Nyasaland, and on the neighbouring Cewa.

Some of this literature has found its way back to the Ngoni [872] themselves, and children nowadays acquire their knowledge of the exploits of their ancestors as much from school books as from oral tradition. Under these circumstances, I decided that no useful 121 purpose would be served by my trying to make conventional inquiries into tribal history with the aim of establishing what had in fact occurred in the past. I found it was impossible to tell whether similarity between an informant's account of a past event and a previously published version was due to common origin, independent invention, or good teaching in school. I was however concerned with the quite different problem of what use the Ngoni made of their history,[4] and I collected the histories of many counties, villages and people. For the material in this chapter I have therefore relied on the fullest and most lucid of these many versions of [115] Ngoni history, that by Chibambo, an Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, supplemented by the writings of Poole, a member of the Administration at Fort Jameson for many years, and Lancaster, who was a game warden in the area.

2. *The Nguni background*

173 Before we can understand the Ngoni of central Africa we must first consider social conditions farther south, for it was from the south that many Ngoni came. From the sixteenth century onwards, south-eastern Africa was peopled by subsistence cultivators growing cereals and herding cattle. The Nguni, as the southernmost branch of these peoples is now called, occupied the area which has become Swaziland, Natal and the Transkei. At first the Nguni were not organised into powerful states but from the common background of Nguni society there developed, from the last quarter of the eighteenth century onwards, several strong political units. We may mention among others the Zulu empire under Shaka, the Swazi

[4] See my 'History in a changing society'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p. v]

PREFACE

THE material on which this book is based was collected during three periods in Nyasaland as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute: May–December 1935; April 1936–June 1937; July 1938–August 1939. 115 121 122

The choice had to be made whether to concentrate on one Ngoni area and omit the other, and also whether to present Ngoni culture as a common element in both areas or to regard them as separate cultural areas. I decided to gather material from northern and central Ngoniland, and accordingly spent about one-third of the time in north Nyasaland and about two-thirds in central Nyasaland. I used the Nyanja language all the time in central Ngoniland, and found that many people understood it in the north. I learned some Zulu, enough to read and hear Ngoni when spoken, but it was dying out as a language except for certain ceremonial and legal terms and expressions. Very few people spoke it in central Ngoniland; most of the older people knew it in the north and in one area it was still the language of the home in 1936. 122 197 [182]

The decision to present Ngoni culture as a common constituent of Ngoni life in all parts of Nyasaland was made after the material had been analysed. I decided also to attempt a reconstruction of Ngoni life at the time of the first European contacts, when the kingdoms were at the height of their power. Men and women were still alive, when I was in Ngoni villages, who had fought as warriors, who had organized large households, who had been present at the accession and death of the Paramounts. Their experiences were part of Ngoni culture and inseparable from much of what was regarded as essentially 'Ngoni' in the 1930's. 121

In both areas the informants were of two kinds: those who welcomed an anthropologist who would collect and record Ngoni history, patterns of social organization, and cultural behaviour of which they were intensely proud; and those who were reluctant at first to give information, either because they were Christians and had been at school and said they had 'forgotten'; or because they were suspicious of all Europeans, and did not want to speak of what to them was a treasured and hidden heritage. 115

Working in more than one language medium and bringing into the open Ngoni terms not as a rule used in the presence of Europeans presented a number of problems both of terminology and orthography. I have included a glossary of Ngoni terms used frequently in the book. There were several variations of the prefixes in common use with Ngoni words, as for example *abalumuzana*, *abamuzana*, *malumuzana*, all three of which were used in northern and central Ngoniland. The clicks, 128 193

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

AFTER the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

178 642 648 [721] 181 115 [124]

NGONI WARFARE IN OLD DAYS

539

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligubo* dance along with others.

721 554 [567] [577]

[P. 28 is blank]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their 576
family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If 577
children did not so behave to old and poor people, they 858
were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had [867]
failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early 576
travellers in Ngoniland to the good manners found in Ngoni 828
households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the 829
Ngoni because they liked living together without any scat- 867
tering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . .
Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of being beaten, but because all children were well taught that this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion 829
between personal behaviour and the integrity and prosperity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were talking about child training and its effect on the future of the Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within their society, so that harmonious relations would build up the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic secessions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human societies from the individual family outwards. We see this however in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about 539
keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining 829
their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who [115]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

115 539 829 had heard it from his grandmother. She had been a young Ngoni woman at the time the Ngoni crossed the Zambezi, and hence this story was said to have had its origin in the Ngoni former homeland in Natal.

The story of Heva

539 At the beginning of the creation of the world there was a woman of reddish colour whose name was Golela, and she had two children. The name of the older one was Heva, and of the second one Malusi. My grandmother, Madakacha, said that Malusi was the cause of our herds of cattle becoming smaller. When Malusi was herding cattle on the river plains where they were feeding, he kept on disturbing them and driving some away from the rest.

At this time Heva was staying with his mother. Her work was to keep watch over the sun so that the birds did not peck it, and Heva helped her by flapping away the flies which were troubling her.

Their mother Golela asked Heva, 'Where is your brother? What is he doing?' Heva replied, 'There he is yonder, disturbing your cattle on the river plain.' Then Golela called Malusi and said to him, 'Go. Choose what you want and depart. Go with them far away. What is left here is for Heva.'

After Malusi went away, all that remained on the river plain belonged to Heva, including the animals and the birds and the crops, but the cattle were reduced in number.

My grandmother used to say about this story, 'We who are descended from Heva are the victims of this separation between the brothers. Because Malusi in the beginning of the world took away many of the cattle of his mother's house, we have never had large herds of cattle since then.'

The Ngoni saw in the archaic form of this folk-tale several meanings. It was one of their traditional creation myths. It supported their belief that they were once owners of vast

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[3]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[3] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere; born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swaz; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1866/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 643

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Mulowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mackera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeve Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kdakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu, and Nkosi. 173 [614]

The *isitakazela*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows. 159 173

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Sosera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk; but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. 643 [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Sanjiyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphanza, Mahamunye Mphanza, Mahawa Mwase Shawa, Dude Tole, Mjoko Ndwambi Jere, Mabulaliche Tembo, Mzenje Nkhowa, Katanda Manyumy Mahowazo, Kapendeko Jawai Mvula, Machiliko Mphanza, Chibengulane Ngulowa, Chiwere Mainiko, Masina Jere, Mapalanga Mphanza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Madalmowe, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndawambi Hara, Matrino Kangwere Nkhowa, Pesayani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gawani Mawere, Chingulukani Dimba, Siya Mvula, Ngangu Singo Jere, Mahawa Mphanza, Mwaki Lukhelo, Njambwa Tembo, Adamburuko Mchanga, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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291
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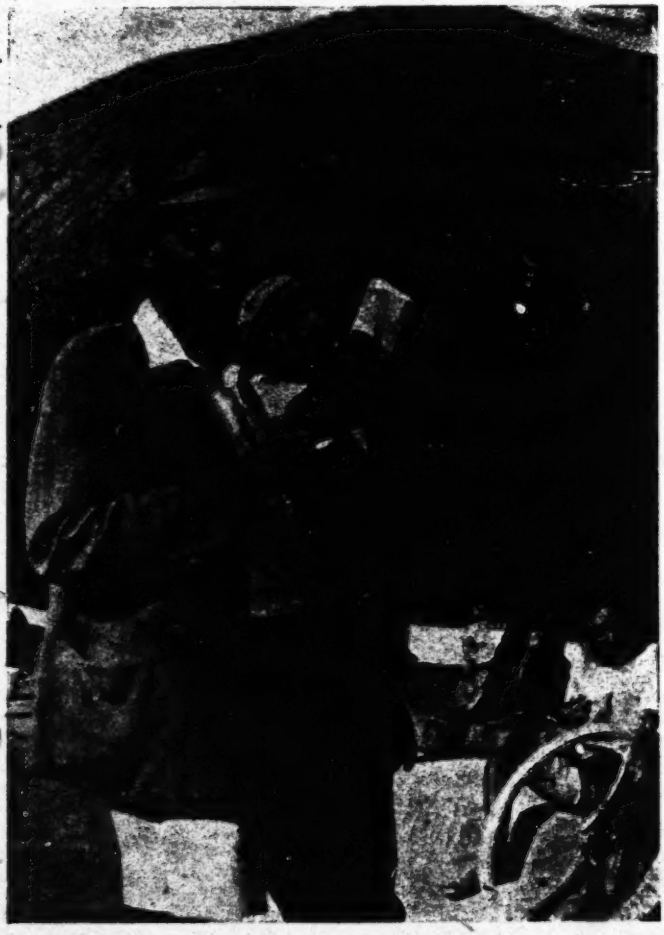

[443]

PLATE I. Paramount Chief Pontino Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., standing with a man from the chief's capital. The man points upwards and sings that, because they conquered the Ngoni, the Whites must have come from heaven.

[Frontpiece Facing p. i]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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POLITICS IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

A POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE FORT JAMESON NGONI

J. A. BARNES

[p. i]
[Title page]

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1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PREFACE

This study is based on twenty months' fieldwork among the Fort Jameson Ngoni of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland which I undertook during 1946–9 as a research officer of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. I have already published a description of marital relations among these people as well as a general outline of their social organization. In this work I discuss their political system. I hope in a later publication to describe Ngoni village life. 114

The raw materials of the field anthropologist are the actions, sayings and writings of his informants, and I am deeply indebted to those many people who allowed me to make use of their knowledge and experience of Ngoni society and to join with them in their activities. It would be invidious to mention only some of the great number of people who helped me with my inquiries and I must content myself with this expression of gratitude and thanks to all who made my work possible. I hope that my writings do not betray their confidence or invade their privacy. I shall regard it as only a partial repayment of my debt to them if this book helps them and their neighbours to a better understanding of the world they live in.

I must, however, mention by name Paramount Chief Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., for the support which he gave my work in his country; and I have to thank Lomthunzi Cazingwa Nkhuwa, Councillor Zuwani Lukhezo Zulu III, and Mdani Kausha Tembo for the hospitality I enjoyed in their villages. M. B. Lukhero, my clerk throughout my stay in Ngoniland, introduced me to Ngoni ways of life and assisted me in my inquiries. This study is as much his as it is mine. 115 122

My fieldwork owes much to the co-operation and assistance given me by the Provincial Administration in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, by the missions and by planters and traders in the district. I am particularly indebted to Mr. D. B. Hall, District Commissioner, and Mrs. Hall for hospitality shown my family and myself, and it is a pleasure to recall the interest taken in my work by Mr. R. P. Bush, O.B.E., Secretary for African Affairs, and Mrs. Bush; Commander T. S. L. Fox-Pitt, O.B.E., R.N. (Retd.), Provincial Commissioner, and Mrs. Fox-Pitt; Mr. H. C. Bayldon, M.C., District Officer, and Mrs. Bayldon; Mr. H. J. Roberts, Provincial Education Officer, and Mrs. Roberts; Mr. M. K. Daka, Headmaster of the Ngoni Native Authority School; and in Nyasaland Mr. D. W. Saunders-Jones, O.B.E., Provincial Commissioner; 000

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

000 Mr. M. N. Gandy, Assistant District Commissioner, and Mrs. Gandy. I received much assistance from The Rev. J. C. C. Pauw and The Rev. C. R. Kok, Dutch Reformed Church Mission; Mgr. Martin, Apostolic Prefect, and P. Kneer, White Fathers Mission; Miss A. S. Field, Universities' Mission to Central Africa; and Mr. Bambury, Seventh Day Adventist Mission. I am grateful to these and to many other friends for hospitality, information and encouragement, and for providing me with such pleasant interludes in the strenuous round of fieldwork.

[121] I have written this book as a social anthropologist, and from an anthropological point of view. The kind of inquiry I made, and the way in which I have tried to handle my data, have been largely determined by the guidance and instruction I have been privileged to receive from many masters at Cambridge, Cape Town, Oxford and London. To the late Mr. J. H. Driberg, my first teacher, I am especially indebted. His stimulating manner encouraged his pupils to disagree with him, and his manifest love of his subject forced me to reject one of his main propositions, that no one should think of taking up anthropology as a career. I am also indebted to Dr. G. E. Daniel and Dr. J. C. Trevor for early encouragement. To Professors Schapera, Evans-Pritchard, Fortes and Radcliffe-Brown I owe my grounding in the problems and methods of anthropology, and I am very grateful to them for the help they have given in lecture and discussion.

This whole study has been carried out under the direction and supervision of Professor Gluckman, and my debt to him is writ large throughout this volume. His continuing encouragement, assistance and careful criticism have deeply affected my work. My colleagues of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute have also largely helped to shape this book. Dr. J. C. Mitchell has always been stimulating in our discussions on common problems, and I have been helped by discussion and argument with Dr. E. Colson and Dr. I. G. Cunnison. In the field I had the benefit of parallel data collected by my colleagues from other areas, and was fortunate in being able to visit some of them myself. My thinking and writing have been profoundly influenced by this experience of working in a group, in which each member had his own field background and his own point of view to justify to his colleagues. At the same time [122] I am most grateful to the Trustees of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute for their financial support and for the freedom allowed me in my work.

114 In the field I was fortunate in collaborating with Mr. M. G. Marwick, Colonial Research Fellow, and Mrs. Marwick, whose

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Mpezeni

work lay in my vicinity, and with Miss P. M. Deane, Colonial Research Fellow, who visited Ngoniland and who kindly placed her data at my disposal. Their researches threw much light on my own. 114

The literature on the Ngoni is considerable, and my work has been helped by the reports of earlier writers. Professor Read visited the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1935, and those of my informants who had met her recalled her visit with great pleasure. I was often able to allay suspicion by explaining that I was trying to do the same kind of work as she had done earlier. In addition to published reports I have made considerable use of official dispatches and other archival material relating to the conquest of the Ngoni by the British in 1898. 127

For kind permission to quote from other works, I am indebted to the Oxford University Press and the International African Institute (in respect of *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* by Meyer Fortes), the Director of Agriculture, Northern Rhodesia Government (*The Soils, Vegetation and Agriculture of North-Eastern Rhodesia* by C. G. Trapnell), and The Editor, *Scottish Geographical Magazine* ('A Trip to Northern Angoniland', by H. Crawford Angus). 000

In preparing this book, I have to thank Miss D. Goldstein and Mr. J. Paing for help with diagrams and maps. Professors Schapera and Evans-Pritchard, Dr. Peristiany and Dr. Kaberry read the manuscript and I have been very grateful for their comments. Finally, I would thank my wife for companionship and assistance in the field, and for unremitting help in the arduous task of writing.

J. A. B.

Meling, Norway
1952

Postscript:

Since this book has gone to press, the British territories of Central Africa have been united in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. This momentous step in the development of the region has been accompanied by a major shift in the balance of power between the Administration, the White settlers and the indigenous African population. I do not know in detail how the Ngoni people have responded to this change. Federation was a topic of conversation among them even while I was carrying out this study, and several Ngoni men have been prominent in the political negotiations of the last four years. It seems, therefore, highly likely that the operation of the political structure discussed in the last two chapters 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of this book, involving as it does both Blacks and Whites, has now altered considerably. I have described relations between the Ngoni and their White neighbours as I saw them during 1946-9, but this description may not necessarily be valid now.

J. A. B.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

CONTENTS

Page 000

PREFACE iii

Chapter I. THE LONG MARCH

1. Sources 1
2. The Nguni background 4
3. Foundation of the State 7
4. The residential system 9
5. Under Zwangendaba's leadership 13
6. Fission 17
7. Mpezeni's kingdom 23
8. Foreign policy 25

Chapter II. THE SNOWBALL STATE

1. Manipulation 29
2. Age-sets 36
3. Officers of State 41
4. Continually segmenting systems 47
5. Lineage systems compared 54
6. Splitting the State 57
7. Stability 60

Chapter III. DEFEAT

1. Structural change 64
2. Portugal or Britain 66
3. Concession hunters 73
4. European consolidation 78
5. Friction 83
6. Fighting 85
7. Cattle 93
8. The end of a system 96

Chapter IV. TRANSITION

1. Administrative policy 107
2. White control 111
3. Chiefs 115
4. County segments 117
5. Relative status of chiefs 124
6. Counties as territorial units 127
7. Villages 129

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

000 Chapter V. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN A LARGE-SCALE SOCIETY — Page

1. The Administration and the Native Authority .. 136
2. Rivals of the Paramount Chief 139
3. The chief's advisers 141
4. The chief and his people 144
5. Royal hunts 147
6. African bureaucracies 148
7. Capital, court, and chief's village 158
8. Politics and the courts 160
9. Moral and physical sanctions 164
10. External links 167
11. Conclusion 171

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

A. Annotated list of works on the Ngoni 173
B. List of other works cited 200
C. Public records relating to Mpezeni's Ngoni .. 202

SKELETON GENEALOGY OF MPEZENI CHIEFTAINSHIP 210

INDEX 211

1:Barnett E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

LIST OF TABLES, DIAGRAMS AND MAPS

000

TABLES *Page*

I. Leaders of groups in the 1820's 9
II. Residential segments of historical importance .. 14
III. Regimental names 38
IV. Origin of villages in selected counties, 1948 118
V. County segments 121
VI. Salaries of chiefs and villages in their counties .. 126
VII. Villages founded before and after 1898 133
VIII. Personal emoluments to be paid by Ngoni Native Treasury, 1949 152

DIAGRAMS

1. The royal line and the residential system, segments 1 to 17 .. .. *Facing* 13
2. Zwangendaba and his heirs 20
3. Ranking of bevies 32
4. Old and new political systems related 102

MAPS

A. Ngoni migration, 1821–1900 8
B. Mpezeni's Ngoniland, 1890 67
C. White settlements in Ngoniland, 1890–1900 .. 84
D. Statutory division of land, Fort Jameson, 1949 .. 120

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

LIST OF PLATES

000

I.	Paramount Chief Mpezeni	*frontispiece*
II.	Beer party at a chief's house ..	*facing page* 144
III.	Collecting tax	" 144
IV.	Villagers hoeing a path	" 145
V.	District Officer, chief, headman and people	" 145
VI.	Checking the tax register	" 152
VII.	Litigants waiting outside a Native Court ..	" 152
VIII.	Issuing permits for selling beer	" 153
IX.	Issuing passes for collecting caterpillars ..	" 153
X.	Rethatching a school roof	" 168
XI.	A mobile post office	" 168
XII.	The customs	" 169

(The photographs for Plates I and XI were taken by Mr. M. B. Lukhero; the remainder by the author.)

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter One

THE LONG MARCH

1. Sources 2. The Ngoni background 3. Foundation of the State
4. The residential system 5. Under Zwangendaba's leadership 6. Fission
7. Mpezeni's kingdom 8. Foreign policy

1. *Sources*

WHAT we usually have in mind when we speak of a tribe or nation or empire is a large political unit enduring in time and space. The nation outlives its members, for as they grow old and die their children and grandchildren rise up to take their places. On its fringes there may be continual fluctuations, adjustments of boundaries and migrations of people, but always the majority of the population are born within the national territory and die within it as their ancestors have done before them. There is spatial continuity as well as biological continuity, and the same areas of land, sometimes even the same houses and fields, are occupied and cultivated by successive generations. The Ngoni State, whose history is the subject of this book, was clearly not a state of this kind. It was born suddenly, moved about from one part of Africa to another, and recruited most of its members from outside itself. Only at the end of the nineteenth century, when colonial rule was imposed by Europeans, was the migration of the Ngoni as an organized group brought to an end. Even so, the social and economic development of modern central Africa has ensured that the men and women who from time to time live in Ngoni tribal areas, fixed though these have become, are now part of a wider social system within which they travel great distances in search of work and of kinsmen, wives and friends. Yet despite these differences the Ngoni State, like other states and polities, has had structural, or institutional, continuity. It is an enduring organized social group with a history. The same forms of social organization have endured despite changes in space and despite biological discontinuity; and where these forms have changed there has been continuity even in change.

This history of the Ngoni from 1821 down to 1898 is essentially the history of an armed nation on the march. Our knowledge of it

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Mpeseni

is limited by the fact that the Ngoni themselves were without writing, and their warlike disposition discouraged the visits of travellers who might otherwise have left some record of Ngoni life during these times. There is a considerable body of oral tradition which has been reduced to writing since 1891, but for the most part these traditional tales assume a knowledge of Ngoni life and do not explicitly describe it. Our evidence for the main features of Ngoni society during this period of migration is found in three places. First we have the pattern of relationships prevailing at the present time between groups of Ngoni, between villages, chiefdoms and kingdoms. The legends which form the charter of these relations form a coherent and largely consistent corpus of traditional knowledge about events taking place within the last hundred and fifty years from which we can make reliable inferences about the internal history of the Ngoni. In particular we can gain significant information about the manner in which different groups were formed by elucidating the names applied to them. A modified form of genealogical inquiry, applied not to physiological ancestry but to links between dependant and lord and between satellite and parent villages, provides us with a reasonably trustworthy history of inter-group relations.

Secondly, there is the evidence available from the numerous published accounts of Ngoni life which have been written by European and African authors. The traditions they record can be used to supplement the data gained from an analysis of present-day legends. A little information can be gleaned from the traditional histories of tribes attacked by the Ngoni.

Thirdly, we have a certain amount of comparative evidence from other societies. There are about a dozen distinct Ngoni kingdoms in different parts of Africa at the present time. In this book we are concerned directly with only one of these groups, now situated near Fort Jameson in Northern Rhodesia. Much light is however, thrown on its history by accounts of other Ngoni States, particularly of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, where the old form of society persisted longer than at Fort Jameson and where even now the changes brought about by colonial rule seem not to be so great. Accounts of Ngoni groups further afield, and of the allied societies of the Swazi and Zulu in South Africa provide less direct evidence.

A few isolated events in early Ngoni history can be dated precisely. Captain Canfield, R.N., met a group of Ngoni on 7 November 1822 and some Ngoni warriors skirmished with the

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Mpezeni

Portuguese at Delagoa Bay on 2 August 1823.[1] There was a solar eclipse on the day the Ngoni crossed the Zambezi, an event which may therefore be reliably dated 20 November 1835.[2] Livingstone and other explorers also provide us with dates. For example, Burton was in the vicinity when Ngoni raided Ujiji in 1858.[3] These evidences enable us to construct a comparatively good chronology for the Ngoni from 1821 onwards, but they do not directly tell us much about the form of Ngoni society. 114 173

Livingstone (1857, 1865, 1880), Cameron (1877) and Young (1877) mention the Ngoni under various names but tell us little except that the Ngoni were raiding continually. These early travellers were unable to make close contact with the Ngoni, mainly because of the unwillingness of their African carriers, and it is not until 1881 that the Fort Jameson Paramount Chief, Mpezeni, is mentioned by name, in Stewart's account. Wiese reached Mpezeni in 1886, or perhaps a few years earlier, and in 1891 he published the first detailed account of Zwangendaba's people. Other pre-conquest visitors to Mpezeni who published were Money and Smith (1897) and Deare (who did not publish until 1928), and Johnston's account (1897) is derived from them and from their contemporaries. Early accounts of tribal history were written by Laws (1893), Elmslie (1897), both of them missionaries with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, by Decle (1898), an explorer, and by Maples and other missionaries working near the Ngoni of Songea District, Tanganyika Territory, and northern Mozambique, who published in *Occasional papers for Nyasaland* (1893) and *The Nyasa News* (1893-5). There are many post-conquest accounts, the most important being those of Stigand (1907 and 1909), Nkonjera (1911-12), Stannus (1922), Young (1923 and 1932), Hodgson (1933), Poole (1934), Hatchell (1935 and 1948), Read (1936 onwards), Lancaster (1937), Winterbottom (1937 and 1950), Kapunzah (1941), Bruwer (1941) and Chibambo (1949). All these writers have in part drawn directly on oral tradition. Useful collations have been made by Werner (1906), Murray (1922), Abraham (1932), Bradley (1940) and Tew (1950). Bryant's masterly account of Zulu history (1929) contains in addition a 114

[1] Owen, *Narrative*, i, pp. 80, 122, 142*f*, 255, 258, 271. All citations will give abbreviated titles only of the works concerned, while full details of all works cited will be found in the bibliographies at the end of the volume.

[2] *cf.* Poole, 'Crossing of the Zambezi', pp. 299*ff*. Poole gives the date as 19 November. This seems to be based on a misinterpretation of the astronomical, as distinct from the civil, date. Young, *History*, p. 110, gives the date correctly. *cf. Nautical almanac*, 1835, and ed., p. 470.

[3] Burton, *Lake regions*, ii, pp. 73*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

second-hand account of the Ngoni, and some relevant information is given by Soga (1930).

Good accounts of pre-conquest social life are not so numerous. The most useful accounts are those of Wiese (1891 and 1900), Angus (1899), and Deare (1928), based on observations in the years immediately prior to the war of 1898. For the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland there are the works of Elmslie (1899) and Fraser (1901 and 1914). Read, in 1935, was the first to apply modern methods of inquiry and has published comparative material on the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, Fort Jameson and southern Nyasaland, and on the neighbouring Cewa.

Some of this literature has found its way back to the Ngoni themselves, and children nowadays acquire their knowledge of the exploits of their ancestors as much from school books as from oral tradition. Under these circumstances, I decided that no useful purpose would be served by my trying to make conventional inquiries into tribal history with the aim of establishing what had in fact occurred in the past. I found it was impossible to tell whether similarity between an informant's account of a past event and a previously published version was due to common origin, independent invention, or good teaching in school. I was however concerned with the quite different problem of what use the Ngoni made of their history,[4] and I collected the histories of many counties, villages and people. For the material in this chapter I have therefore relied on the fullest and most lucid of these many versions of Ngoni history, that by Chibambo, an Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, supplemented by the writings of Poole, a member of the Administration at Fort Jameson for many years, and Lancaster, who was a game warden in the area.

2. *The Nguni background*

Before we can understand the Ngoni of central Africa we must first consider social conditions farther south, for it was from the south that many Ngoni came. From the sixteenth century onwards, south-eastern Africa was peopled by subsistence cultivators growing cereals and herding cattle. The Nguni, as the southernmost branch of these peoples is now called, occupied the area which has become Swaziland, Natal and the Transkei. At first the Nguni were not organized into powerful states but from the common background of Nguni society there developed, from the last quarter of the eighteenth century onwards, several strong political units. We may mention among others the Zulu empire under Shaka, the Swazi

[4] See my 'History in a changing society'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible of specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division. He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[1]

The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women, perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were, as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly alignments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organization, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[1] Based on Bryant, *Olden times*, and Cloetesse, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lived with their wives and children, and not all of which had royal headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Ngoni group with which we are most concerned, and within their regiments men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system.

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1775 the pattern of political alignment began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1810 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndandwe and Qwabe,[8] dominated the rest and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethewa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1821[9] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north-eastwards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Ngoni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[9] fighting with Nxaba, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All three parties raided the indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside their new masters.

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on farther north. He took with him his new Tsonga adherents and also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under

[8] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Ashton, 'Spelling Bysingh'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in the old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu.

[9] cf. Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 13, 71. Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1823 and Wilmot-Isaacs, 'Historian', p. 13, has 1824. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chilcombe, *My Ngoni*, p. 8, both have 1825. Bugg, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 171, says Zwangendaba left in 1824, while Cinderand, *Native tribes*, p. 20, says he left in the 1830's.

[10] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 161, 173, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP A. NGONI MIGRATIONS 1821–1900

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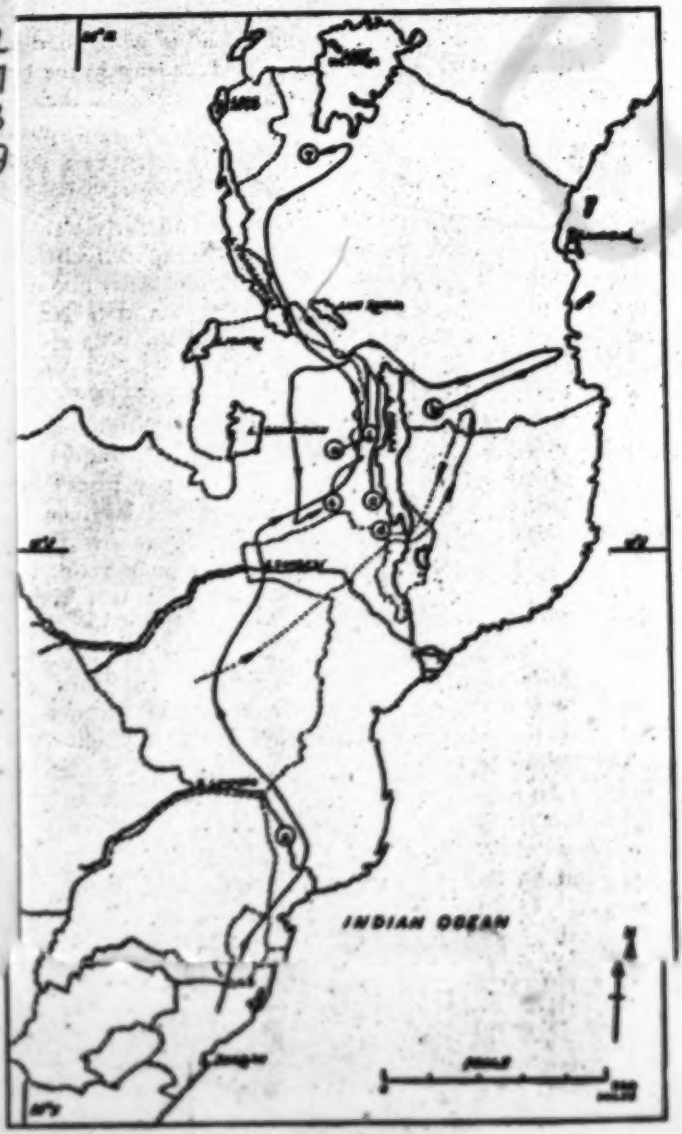

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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[10]

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*isithakazelo*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapundi, Bangoni, Batuta, Bazowa, Bunga, Landeens, Landims, Machendi, Mafiti, Mafitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara,

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820'S

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Soshangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Maviti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Nguni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became

[10] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-16; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] See Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 93.
[12] *Mabwanyamkulu*, pl. *abamkulu*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzane*, village headman; also Read, 'Tradition', p. 460.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 segments in what we shall term the Ngoni residential system. The
613 constituent segments of their lineages formed the nuclei of minor
631 segments of the residential system. Using the adjectives 'superior' and 'inferior' to indicate merely relative position, we may say that each Nguni agnatic lineage segment was in general contained within superior segments of greater span and at the same time contained within itself smaller but similar inferior units. This formation is characteristic of all lineage systems, as is well known. The segments of the residential system were arranged in the same way but whereas there were several distinct agnatic lineages, or parts of such lineages, under the political leadership of Zwangendaba, in the residential system all, or nearly all, of these distinct lineages were included within the largest residential segment. In other words, the largest segment of the residential system contained almost the whole of Zwangendaba's following, his regional governors, his and their captives and other followers, as well as his own agnatic kinsmen. Again, whereas the various lineage segments contained only the agnatic relatives of the head of the segment, each segment in the residential system included many captives, men, women and children, as well as an agnatic core.

The segments or units of the residential system were enduring social groups which, by analogy with the usual terminology for lineage systems, we shall call primal segments.[18] The segment of highest order was the State itself (or the greater portion thereof), consisting in 1898 of some 75,000 people, while many of the lowest order segments contained only half a dozen people. Each member of a segment belonged not only to that segment but also to all the superior segments of which it was a part.

173 We shall refer to the man in charge of, or the founder of, a
613 segment as a lord (*nfumu*) and to the members of his segment as his
622 dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord
121 dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord
631 except the Paramount Chief, Zwangendaba, was a dependant of some other lord higher in the hierarchy. A lord was politically responsible for all the men and women in his segment. He was related agnatically to some of the men in his segment and towards
[608] his captives he stood in a quasi-agnatic relationship in that, although he had the same rights and duties towards them as if he had been their father, it was nevertheless possible, and indeed quite usual,
[582] for his captives to marry one another and for him to marry one of his woman captives. In the absence of true agnatic descendants a lord was sometimes succeeded by a quasi-related dependant.

[18] *Cigulu*, pl. *cigulu*, from *ku-gulu*, to divide. cf. Nsenga, *ku-gulu*, to divide, and Zulu, *isi-gulu*, section or portion divided off from the whole.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*muavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*nkosikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Nkosa*, pl. *nkosa*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wirsz, 'Expedição', pp. 470, 471, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 621 631 together in a cluster of huts, and several clusters together formed a division, inhabited by members of a segment of greater span. Larger segments corresponded to complete villages and the largest segments of all contained many separate villages. The same general pattern of settlement was repeated at successive halting places on the migration, but as a segment grew in size by natural increase and by the addition of more captives, so its settlement grew from a cluster to a division and from a single village to a group of villages. In a large segment with many villages, the constituent inferior segments remained under the political leadership of the lord of the large segment but achieved a certain amount of autonomy. On many occasions the interests of one or more inferior segments diverged from those of the rest of the large segment, from what we shall term the *residue* of the large segment. This divergence of interest sometimes led to the disappearance of the large segment as an effective social unit and, at the highest level in the residential system, to splits in the State itself.

173 595 613 621 631 The first bevy of wives formed by a lord ranked senior to other bevies, and the wife in charge was the lord's great wife. Her eldest son was his main heir and the eldest son of each bevy leader was heir in its own segment. Yet sons, whether heirs or not, were able to establish segments of their own for their wives when they married and these segments remained as distinct social groups when an heir succeeded. Thus a man could be lord of a segment founded by his father and at the same time lord of a smaller segment, within the first, which he had founded himself. This arrangement was of fundamental importance in the working of the residential system, particularly in the formation of those large and politically dominant segments with which we are mainly concerned in this book, and still finds expression in the new villages founded by each reigning county chief. When the Paramount Chief, or one of his sons, founded a segment for a bevy of queens, the new segment was of village size and many men were called by the chief from existing segments to join the new one. As the segment grew in size, minor segments within it broke out to form separate villages of their own and the parent village became the headquarters of the group of villages and of the segment they formed. The headquarters of all large dispersed segments endured as social groups, as villages, despite the continual throwing off of more and more satellites. Thus the number of large villages, each the headquarters of a segment founded for a bevy of a reigning chief, increased as time went on. These villages remain to-day, and Ngoni history is largely the story of the formation and development of the segments associated with them.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-19,9) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Under Zwan ndaba's leadership*

When the Ngoni migration began, the greater portion of Zwangendaba's followers belonge to the primal segment founded for the great wife of Hlatshwayo father of Zwangendaba. When the migration began there were rhaps a thousand people in this segment (this figure is largely hesswork). For convenience of reference we shall refer to the vious historically significant segments by numbers. Thus segmt 1, with the proper name of Elangeni, is that of Hlatshway's great wife. The structural relationship of seventeen number segments to each other and to the royal genealogy is shown in I agram 1. A list of their proper names and of the names of the rds and ladies associated with them, is given in Table II, tog her with information on three segments superior to segment 1 a on three other segments which cannot be placed on Diagram 1 f lack of information.

This diagram and the acc npanying table are skeletons, showing only those few men and omen who were heads of major groups which, partly fortuitously, ave endured to the present day and are now large chiefdoms. Th e were many more queens than the ten shown on the diagram an very many more sons of chiefs, regional governors, lieutenants a other less exalted men and women all of whom were in cha of named segments, many of which still survive, forming part f a single system. The same principles of organization applie at all levels in the residential system. Here we have set out t names and positions of only the major limbs of the tree of Sta. We must not forget that the minor branches and little twigs ere part of the same growing whole.

Segment 1 included the grea portion of the State, but it is clear from Elmslie and Fraser, an le explicit by Read, that the headquarters of several superior segments were also present on the march north. Read states that villages belonging to nine generations of chiefs were still in existence in northern Nyasaland in 1936. There is no direct evidence from Fort Jameson, for there are no headquarters of ancient royal segments there, but there are several villages belonging to the lieutenants of segments founded by Zwangendaba's father. I have therefore included in Table II the three superior segments whose names are given by Chibambo.[17] It is probable that Zwangendaba had succeeded to the position of

[Text continues on page 15]

[17] Read, 'Tradition', pp. 46 f.; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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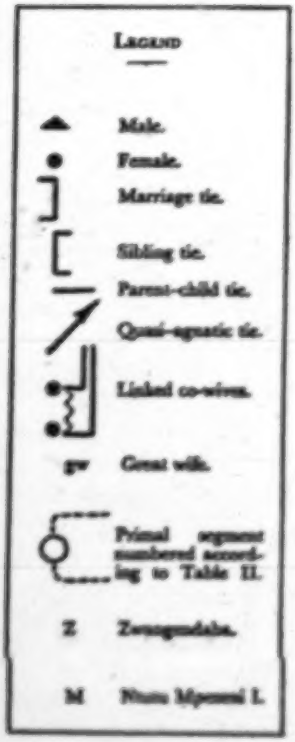
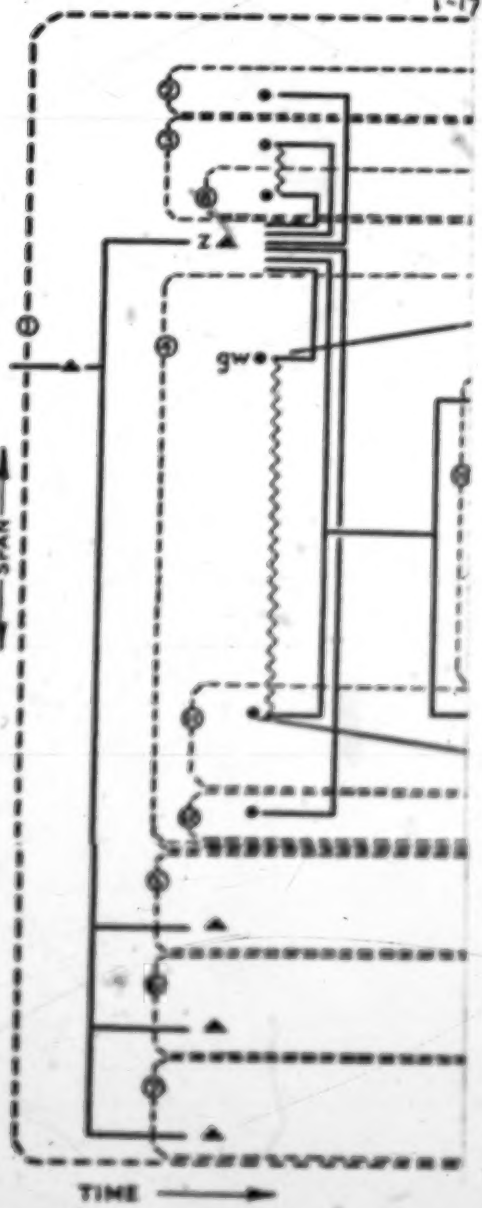
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

SEGMENTS 1-17





[Diagram I (b)]
[Facing page 18]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F R5 Ngoni F R5
Mpezeni

DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM
SEGMENTS 1–17

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621
631
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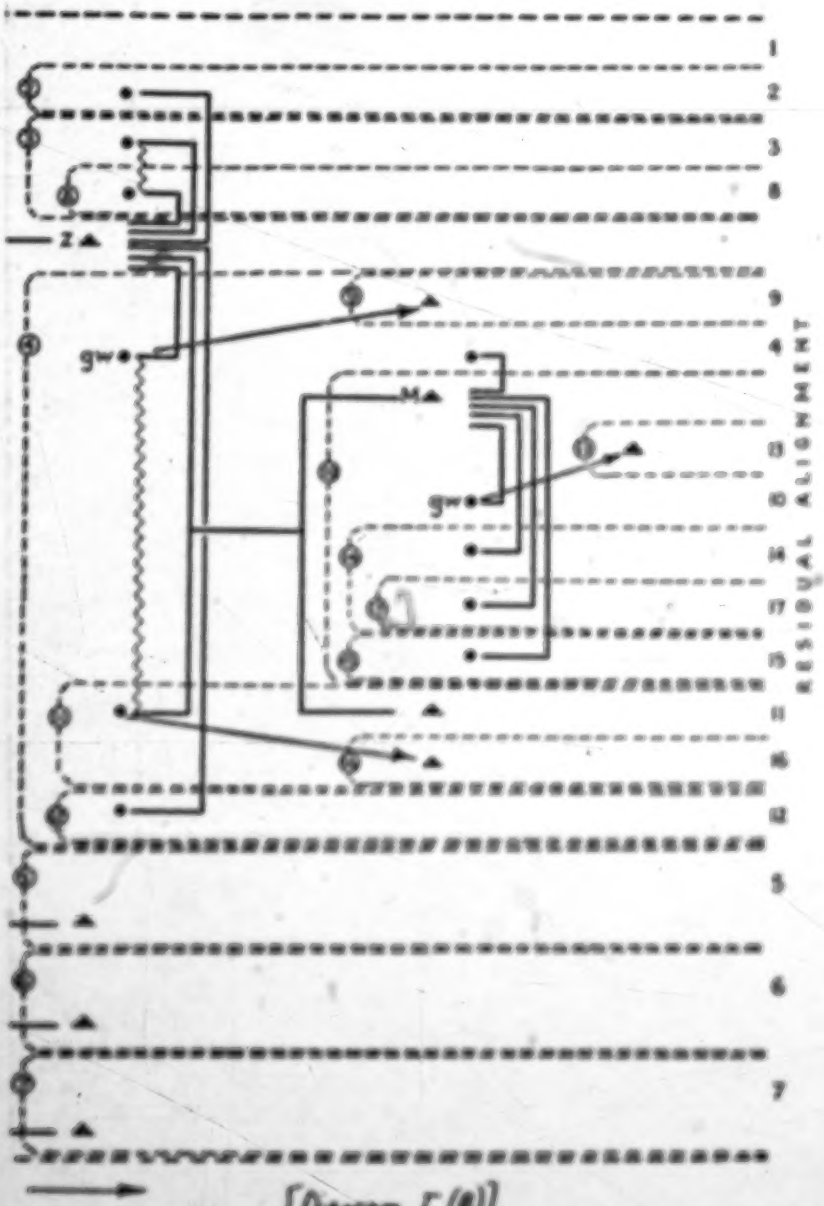

[Diagram I (B)]
[Facing page 15]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE II. RESIDENTIAL SEGMENTS OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

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Segment: Number	Segment: Proper name	Lady's husband (in brackets when segment was not the first founded by him)	Lady	Lady's heir
(e)	Emblakuti	Lonyanda	?	Magalela
(e)	Emblekiseni	Magalela	?	Magangata
(e)	Hoko	Magangata	?	Hlambwayo
1	Elangeni	Hlambwayo	Mganamche nsima	Zwangendaba
2	Emciweni	(Zwangendaba)	Mhambwe	Mpezemke or ? Ndindane
3	Ekwendeni	(Zwangendaba)	Mumene nsima, later Cutu nsima	Mwambera Mtwalo
4	Mtengabeni	(Zwangendaba)	Lusiwaba Lomperu nsumalo	Mpezeni (son of her linked co-wife)
5	Kumyeni	Lomapela	?	Magwambane
6	Nyangweni	Sondula	?	Mkenyeni(n)
7	Ekgwenyameni (d)	Ntabeni	?	Ngubeyi
8	Erigudibweni or Emchakachakeni	(Zwangendaba)	Mumene nsima	Mwambera
9	Cikenkheni	Mtukwa nsenyepa	?	?
10	Lomgeni	Ntutu Mpezeni I	Lupeko pakati	Nsingo
11	Dingeni	(Zwangendaba)	Sowela nsumalo	Neyowbu (second son)
12	Mkuchweni or ? Emangeni	(Zwangendaba)	Zinkhave nsukungane	Mlabulo (c)
13	Tundweni	Kapetamoyo	?	?
14	Fumbeni	(Mpezeni I)	Mkowa wako	Nsenmane
15	Chimpingo	(Mpezeni I)	Kokoya Kapili twala	Seyili
16	Fulaweni	Mukombolani (b)	?	?
17	Ngiyabweni	(Mpezeni I)	Faisako	Magoya
18(e)	Emcwyeni or Mwikiloni or ? Mwewenni	Zwangendaba	Lusiwaba nsumalo	——
19(e)	Emwini	(Zwangendaba)	Mukamme nsukungu	?
20(e)	Emankwbweni	Mgwyi	?	?

(Notes to table are on page 15. Analyst)

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration.

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mvelelelni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Emcisweni)[18] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emaizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18.

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[19] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent

[18] Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 58, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[19] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 5, 34, 94.

Notes

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mbwyeni, Fort Manning District.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mbwyeni and present Chief Tolebe, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Mkhoko, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

[see table on page 14 - analysis]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 parts of the segment, namely segments 2, 3 and 19, survived as
613 independent inferior segments within segment 1. The lieutenant
595 in charge of the warriors spared the pregnant queen and hid her.
643 She bore a son, Ntutu Mpezeni, and later was shown to Zwangendaba who received her kindly and, according to Chibambo, ordered her to live with her son in the headquarters of segment 1. She was not in charge of a bevy of wives, and as by this time the great wife was dead, the bevy in segment 3 now became Zwangendaba's senior bevy. Mwambera, eldest son of the leader of this bevy, was thus a candidate for the main heirship but owing to the disappearance of segment 18 and the subsequent reconciliation between Zwangendaba and Mpezeni's mother, the relative status of the two sons was uncertain. This uncertainty may have been one of the precipitating causes in the subsequent break-up of the State.

Rangeley's verson of this incident is that after he had been
[114] shown Mpezeni, Zwangendaba ordered the headquarters of segment 18 to be rebuilt. This seems less likely to be true than the version we have followed, since there is, as far as I know, no present-day village which we can identify as the headquarters of this segment.[80]

From Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba went up the Limpopo
173 Valley into Mashonaland. He fought with Kalanga and other
167 Shona peoples and there was renewed fighting with other refugee
721 groups under Soshangane and Nxaba. In 1835 Zwangendaba's group crossed over to the north side of the River Zambezi near Zumbo and settled in Nsenga country for four years. They moved on again along the eastern rim of the Luangwa basin and eventually arrived in about 1842 in Ufipa, on the east side of Lake Tanganyika. Here in about 1845 Zwangendaba died.

Two points of historical detail may be mentioned here. There is reliable
114 evidence for a raid made on a Portuguese fort at Delagoa Bay on 22 October 1833
173 by some of Soshangane's people.[81] Poole and Winterbottom state explicitly that Zwangendaba's men also took part in this attack, and Lancaster seems to imply
167 the same. According to the chronology adopted by Young and by Poole himself
721 Zwangendaba was at this time four hundred and fifty miles away in the Kalanga country of Southern Rhodesia and it therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he participated in this raid. Elmslie, Young and Chibambo do not mention it at all, and Bryant refers only to Soshangane's part in it.

A few years after Zwangendaba left Natal, he was followed by Mzilikazi, a chief who for a while fought under Shaka and then fled from him with his followers.

[80] Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', pp. 126f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 16f; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 28f.
[81] Theal, *Portuguese in South Africa*, pp. 279f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

They became known as the Rhodesian Ndebele or Matabele. Posselt, who worked among them, does not record in their history any fight with Zwangendaba, nor do Elmslie, Bryant, Young or Chibambo. Money and Smith say that it is a matter of doubt whether or not Zwangendaba met Mzilikazi. However, Wiese, who states that Zwangendaba broke away from Mzilikazi, says that there was a fight between them. Lancaster writes that there was a fight on the Transvaal border in 1828 before the raid of 1833. Poole makes this fight take place in about 1833 and writes of the Ngoni at that time living in the vicinity of modern Bulawayo and raiding Mzilikazi in the Transvaal. If we are to accept the existence of contact between Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi at all, either of these two versions is preferable to that of Winterbottom, who implies that after taking part in the 1833 raid at Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba moved to the vicinity of Bulawayo where he met Mzilikazi, only to move on to the Zambezi in 1835. Winterbottom crowds into two years more marching and fighting than seems likely to have taken place. There is also conclusive evidence, set out by Posselt, that Mzilikazi did not leave the Transvaal under Boer pressure until about 1838.

If Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi were not living side by side, the suggestion by Lancaster and Winterbottom that they quarrelled about a dog is unlikely to be correct. There may be confusion here with the story, recorded by Field and Rangeley, of a quarrel between Mpezeni and Mwambera over their dogs.[22]

6. *Fission*

Various writers describe three occasions on which, according to their accounts, dissident sections broke off from the main body of Ngoni prior to Zwangendaba's death. Our view is that only one of these secessions actually took place, and that it was relatively unimportant.

The first allegedly dissident group is that sometimes known as the Maseko Ngoni, now dwelling in the region round Mount Domwe, on both sides of the border between southern Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa. Murray, Young, Hatchell, Poole and Bruwer state that after crossing the River Zambezi together, the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland broke off from Zwangendaba while he was in Nsenga country. Laws, Johnson, Soga, Lancaster and Rangeley state that these Ngoni crossed the Zambezi separately from Zwangendaba. Elmslie says that they were not an offshoot of Zwangendaba's party, while Read, Chibambo and Winterbottom state that they broke away from Mzilikazi, not from Zwangendaba. Fraser mentions a group that remained behind when Zwangendaba crossed the river and says that it went on to the east of Lake Nyasa, but does not say that it later returned to southern Nyasaland. Of all these writers, Read has had most contact with the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, and her account, as amplified by Winter-

[22] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 5; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', pp. 15f; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Young, *History*, pp. 109f; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 150; Posselt, *Fact and fiction*, p. 171, Field, *Visitations*, pp. 16f; Rangeley, 'Mawalo', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

114 173 167 169 168 bottom, seems the most acceptable.[88] Two other versions of this alleged dissension can also be rejected. Bryant says that the southern Nyasaland Ngoni remained behind after the main body had crossed the river and that they were led by Gwaza (sic), Zwangendaba's principal headman. Stigand's account is similar, except that he says they broke off after crossing the river. This conflicts with the evidence of Young and Chibambo of the subsequent part played by Gwaza, first lieutenant in segment 1, with Zwangendaba's own group. We must also reject the contention of Cosbead and Hodgson that the southern Nyasaland group broke away from the main body of Ngoni after Zwangendaba's death in Tanganyika Territory. The statement made by Stanley and followed by numerous other writers that the Hehe are an Ngoni group is quite without foundation.[89] Some other communities in southern Tanganyika who were merely raided by Ngoni have themselves taken the name Ngoni or some other name used by Ngoni.[90]

[101] Poole speaks in one place of 'the secession of Nqualu' (Nzaba) from Zwangendaba, but this does not tally with his earlier statements that Nzaba's migration was independent of Zwangendaba, and that the first secession from Zwangendaba's host was that of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni. Bryant's account of Nzaba is much fuller than Poole's, and contradicts Poole's suggestion that Nzaba crossed the Zambezi at the Lupata Gorge. According to Bryant, Nzaba's group never formed part of Zwangendaba's following, and Nzaba was eventually killed in Barotseland. Chibambo and Winterbottom support Bryant.[91]

Fuseli, who worked among Mzilikazi's people, states that a section of Zwangendaba's group, composed of Swazi, broke off at about the time of the Zambezi crossing and turned back to join Mzilikazi who married the woman who led the dissident section.

[88] The secession of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni from Mzilikazi may explain Wilson's and Doke's assertions that Zwangendaba himself broke away from Mzilikazi. Wilson, 'Expedition', p. 466; Doke, *Lamba Africa*, p. 130.

[89] Murray, *Handbook*, p. 30; Young, *History*, p. 111, and letter in *African Studies*, 1950; Hanchell, 'Angoni' (1931), p. 69; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Brown, *Abbé*, p. 11; Lane, p. 85, *loc. cit.*, in Lugard, *East African Empire*, ii; Johnson, *Nyasa*, p. 100; Sage, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 173; Lancaster, 'Chronicles', pp. 78, 83; Elmslie, *Introductory Grammar*, p. 2; Read, 'Traditions', p. 463; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 31; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 18; Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 310 f.; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 463; Stigand, 'Nations', p. 126; Cosbead, *Native tribes*, p. 20; Hodgson, 'Dress Dances', p. 128; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, pp. 499, 503; Rangeley, 'Mtwale', pp. 56, 60.

[90] Maples, *Journals*, p. 13; Weule, *Native Life*, p. 339.

[91] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 7 and 8; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 472, 473, 474 *passim*, 475 f.; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 18; Winterbottom, 'Ovaban histories', p. 18.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

This story is followed by Bryant but does not occur in any accounts collected from Ngoni themselves. It seems probable therefore that this seceding section was not numerous or important.[17]

There are no other disruptions mentioned in the literature, and it seems probable therefore that until the death of Zwangendaba, the State remained largely intact. However the process, common in Bantu Africa, by which rival claimants to a throne succeed only in dividing their kingdom, operated with striking effect as soon as the founder of the State was buried. The elimination of segment 18 has sometimes been suggested as the reason why the State broke up, but it is clear from comparative considerations that a State of this kind was likely at any time to break into a number of independent groups, and that this tendency was greatest at the death or senescence of the king.

About 1840 a number of important people, mainly coming from south of the Zambezi, were killed off as a result of an internal struggle for power in which it appears that the recently captured Tumbuka, who were successful witch-finders, were allied with the Swazi and other Ndandwe against the Tsonga from the Delagoa Bay region.[18] Unfortunately there is very little information available on the relationship of this struggle to the rest of the political system. It is, however, clear that the effect of killing off a large number of Ngoni of Tsonga origin was insufficient to prevent the State breaking up a few years later.

When Zwangendaba died, his sons were still young and, for the time being, effective leadership of the State was disputed between men of his own generation whose positions are shown in Diagram 2. His brothers, the heads of segments 5 and 6, were already dead. Fraser describes the dispute as a struggle between Ntabeni's children and Mgayi. Ntabeni was a younger brother of Zwangendaba and the head of segment 7 while Mgayi was Zwangendaba's father's younger brother's son who, on Chibambo's evidence, represented the interests of the residue of segment 1. Rangeley has a slightly different version and makes Mgayi a supporter of segment 4. Poole, presumably following Fraser, says with some qualification that Ntabeni and Mgayi both claimed the chieftainship. From what we know of the south-eastern Bantu, and from our knowledge of present-day Ngoni, it seems unlikely that a brother would claim to be the legitimate heir in preference to a son, however much he might strive to gain ascendancy over the son. It seems preferable to follow Young and Chibambo in regarding Ntabeni and Mgayi

[17] Poole, *Fact and fiction*, pp. 146-5, 176; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 464f.
[18] See p. 89.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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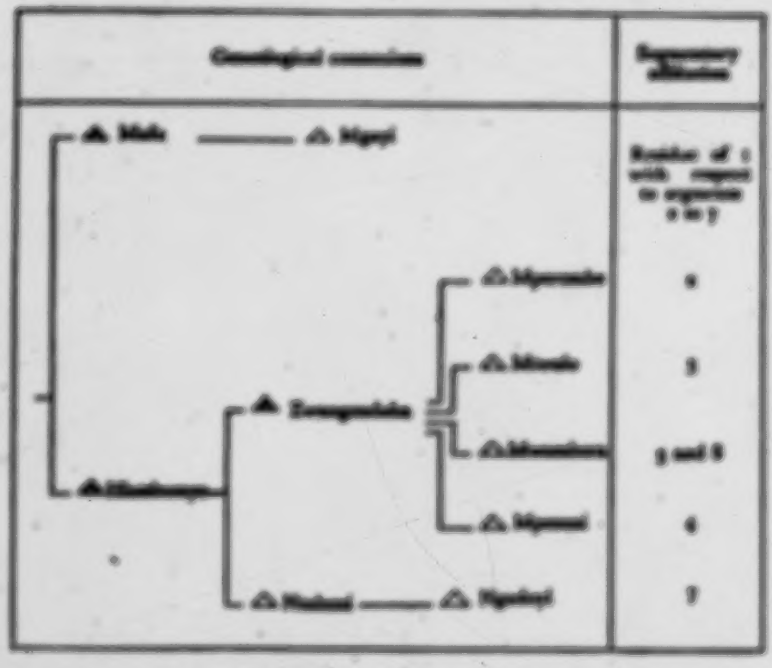
643

to acting as regent in turn on behalf of the young sons of Zwangendaba.*

The various published accounts of the succession differ from one another and reflect the different interpretations put upon the same event by rival sections of the tribe. Fraser and Young, who

DIAGRAM 2. ZWANGENDABA AND HIS HEIRS



worked in northern Nyasaland, say that Zwangendaba chose Mwembera of segment 5 as his heir, and Elmslie says that Mpezeni and others were under Mwembera. From Fort Jameson, Lancaster says that Zwangendaba chose Mpezeni, formerly of segment 18, and Poole, who is supported by Murray, says he nominated Mtwalo, another son in segment 3. Read, who worked in both areas, states

* For Mgayi's position in the residential system, we have only Chibambo's remark, 'the regent being Mgayi Jere, the father of Mtwalo, of Elangeni', to be compared with Young's and Ranger's mention of Kwambulawo (Kwambulawo) as the village of Mgayi. Ranger also implies that Mgayi was Zwangendaba's brother's son, which is unlikely. Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, p. 319; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 17f.; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 31; Young, *History*, pp. 119f.; Ranger, *Mashonalands*, p. 60.

1:Barnes K-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

that 'the history of these years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one'.[20] It is not our task to decide between these conflicting stories. What is important for our purposes is firstly that there was a disputed succession, and secondly that present-day rival groups are still concerned each to show that its claimant was the legitimate heir.

Chibambo, who belongs to northern Nyasaland, has a different version. He states that Zwangendaba chose as his heir his younger brother's eldest son Ngulozi, in segment 3. Such a succession would have been unusual, for Ngulozi's father, Ntabeni, was still alive, and Chibambo does not discuss why Zwangendaba should have passed over all his own sons. Nor does Chibambo explain why Ntabeni, as regent, should have supported the claims of Zwangendaba's sons as against those of his own son Ngulozi, for according to his account the regent declared that Mpezeni was the rightful heir. The lady of segment 3 had earlier quarrelled with the regent, head of segment 3,[21] and now to spite her he declared that the next in succession after Mpezeni was not her eldest son Mwambera but Mtwalo, the eldest son of one of her subordinate co-wives.[22] Chibambo suggests that it was this quarrel which led the regent to support Mpezeni as against the legitimate claims of segment 3.

The regent established a new segment 4, Mzungulezi, for Mpezeni and his mother, and within segment 3 formed a separate segment 8, Emchakachakezi or Ezigudibwezi, for Mwambera and his mother, thus leaving Mtwalo and his mother in the headquarters of segment 3.

Chibambo states that Gwaza Jere, senior lieutenant of segment 1, supported the regent when he selected Mpezeni as Zwangendaba's heir, while Young says he strongly opposed it; both writers agree that after Mpezeni had been chosen there was a quarrel between the regent and the headquarters of segment 1.[23] Ntabeni, the regent, died shortly afterwards and his segment 7 broke off from the rest of the group. They were pursued by a party from segment 1 headquarters, but made their escape. The regentship now passed

[20] Fraser, loc. cit.; Young, loc. cit.; Elmslie, *With Ngoni*, p. 17; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 38; Poole, *Notes* etc., p. 8; Marwick, *Handbook*, pp. 195f.; Read, 'Tradition and prestige', p. 269. cf. Winterbottom, 'Outline history', p. 17.

[21] Brown, *Mbiri*, p. 11; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 80.

[22] A linked co-wife, according to Winterbottom. However, his name for Mwambera's mother differs from that given by Chibambo, who merely says that the two wives were sisters. Winterbottom, 'Angoni government', p. 108; Chibambo, *Mfo Ngoni*, p. 18.

[23] cf. *Occasional papers for Nyasaland*, 1, pp. 195.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 173 167 167 to Zwangendaba's father's brother's son Mgayi, of the residue of segment 1.

Elmslie states that Ntabeni's people, i.e. those of segment 3, went northward on the west side of Tanganyika and he is followed in this by Murray, Bryant and Tew. Elmslie bases his statement on Stewart, who heard of them there in 1879. However, Stewart did not visit the west side of Lake Tanganyika himself, and merely gathered his information from people in a Mambwe village on his way to the lake in October 1879. The account of the Ngoni that they gave him was incorrect in a number of particulars, and we have, therefore, to treat with caution their statement about the existence of an Ngoni group west of Lake Tanganyika. Even if part of this segment did settle there, it is certain that the whole of segment 3 did not. Hatchell gives genealogical information for the group of Ngoni at present near Ruanwe, Kabanga District, Tanganyika Territory, which links them to Ntabeni and segment 3. Stanley describes an Ngoni group which attacked Ujiji and was allied to Mirambo, and in the light of Hatchell's account it is certain that Stanley is here referring to part, if not the whole, of segment 3. This interpretation is made by Fraser, and is in accord with Young and Chibambo. Hence we may conclude that the main body of segment 3 went north on the east side of Lake Tanganyika and eventually settled in Kabanga District.

Part of segment 3 may have split off and gone elsewhere, possibly to the west of the lake. Hatchell, in his account of the Kabanga group, does not mention Ngodeyi, son of Ntabeni, and it is possible that he may have led a group elsewhere although Rangeley states that it was his following that reached Kabanga. Hatchell and Winterbottom write of an abortive expedition by Zwangendaba to the western shores of Lake Tanganyika but make no mention of a group remaining there.

This interpretation conflicts with Elmslie, who says that segment 3 was west of the lake while the group encountered by Stanley were a separate group led by Ntaita. Elmslie does not say who Ntaita was, but it is clear from the context that he does not refer to Ntaita Mpezeni. Hatchell does not mention the name Ntaita in his genealogies. Elmslie may, therefore, have been misled on this point.

The only other writer to mention a group west of the lake is Poole, who says that Ntabeni settled west of the lake in Nyamwezi country, where they were known as Watuta, and, co-operating with the Ruga-Ruga, were encountered by Livingstone and Stanley in 1871. Since in 1871 Livingstone, Stanley, the Ruga-Ruga, and the main body of Nyamwezi were all east of the lake, it appears that Poole intended to write 'east', not 'west'.

Colle refers to contact between the Ngoni and Luba, but the section of Luba with whom the Ngoni fought had crossed from the Congo to the east side of Lake Tanganyika before encountering the Ngoni. The existence of an Ngoni group on the west side of Lake Tanganyika seems therefore to be doubtful.*

Fraser says that Mgayi led the main body, including Mpezeni, Mwamkwa, and Mpezeniko, as far north as Victoria Nyanza. Finding the country poor, he led them back towards Kabanga country, but died on the way. Fraser is followed by Poole, Soga and Winterbottom. It is perhaps significant that Fraser does not

* Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 23-7; Murray, *Handbook*, p. 23; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 488; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 34; Stewart, 'Lake Nyasa', p. 488; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Hatchell, 'Tanganyika territory' (1933), pp. 69 f.; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, p. 490; Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 312; Young, *History*, p. 115; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 29; Colle, *Baluba*, p. 63; Rangeley, 'Mirambo', p. 60.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

mention Nindozi's group as reaching Victoria Nyanza, and it may be that he has merely attributed this exploit to the wrong group. Such an interpretation would be in accord with the accounts of Elmslie, Young, Chibambo and Rangeley, and following them, Bryant and Tew. All these writers imply that the main body of Ngoni did not go further north than Ufipa. It also provides a more reasonable chronology, for by Fraser's version we have to assume that within only about five years the main body of Ngoni traversed Tanganyika Territory from south to north and then back again. Lawrence is inconclusive on this point.*

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7. *Mpezeni's kingdom*

Mgwyi did not live long as regent and after his death the senior lieutenant of segment 1 made Mpezeni chief. There was a considerable shortage of food at the time and this, combined with dissension in the tribe about the succession, appears to have precipitated a further split. A follower of Zwangendaba called Zulu Gama, whose position in the segmentary organization seems not to have been recorded, led his segment off to the east, where in the vicinity of Songea he met with that group of Maseko Ngoni which we have mentioned earlier, and who probably broke off from the Ndebele some time prior to 1835. For a while the two groups operated as one but soon they split apart. Some people stayed on in Songea District, others went south and eventually rounded the southern end of Lake Nyasa to arrive in the Dedza District of southern Nyasaland, where they remain to-day.

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Of those that remained behind under Mpezeni, the principal cleavage was between segments 2, 4, 5 and 6, all led by Mpezeni, on the one side and segment 3 with the headquarters of segment 1 on the other. Led by the senior lieutenant of segment 1, the latter group moved off to the south-east while Mpezeni moved west. While in the country of the Bisa, segment 2 broke off from Mpezeni and after settling for a while in Bemba country as an independent group it eventually went back to join segment 3. Mpezeni, with segments 4, 5 and 6, went south and eventually arrived in Fort Jameson District. His leadership of these segments seems not to have been questioned, but in the other group the senior lieutenant of segment 1 at first supported the headquarters of segment 3 against the claims to the chieftainship made by segment 8. Mtwalo, the son of Zwangendaba who had been put in charge of the headquarters of segment 3, protested, however, that the real head of that segment was Mwambera, head of segment 8, who thus became chief.

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* Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, p. 373; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 273; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Wheatley-Jones, 'Chokwe Immortal', p. 18; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 87; Young, *Elmslie*, pp. 115f.; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 29f.; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 487; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Lawrence, 'Chronology', p. 86; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the new dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4. It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwamberu's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group, for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife. However this woman was promoted to independent status by the formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingani) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba, who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkurweni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikwakhwi).

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Lowangwi) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary levies of wives in segments 14 (Fombwi) and 15 (Cimpingo). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelwwi) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondwwi) and 16 (Fadawwi) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's capital which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thos Young, writing of the period 1895-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.[*] The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwamkhwa's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwamkhwa in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of

[*] Young, *Niassa*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

[173 156 727] worship. They allowed the local chiefs to govern their people according to their own laws and customs, but under the authority of the Ngoni. They followed the method of governing which Europeans call "indirect rule".[1] They also took selected children from the conquered peoples and reared them as Ngoni in Ngoni villages. Young's account supports this.[2] Whether or not this method of government was wise is clearly a matter of opinion. It is perhaps significant that for Mpezeni's people the evidence provided by the present disposition of persons claiming descent from different ethnic groups suggests that a different policy was followed there. Chibambo and Young talk of groups of warriors under Mwambera belonging to various subjugated tribes; in Mpezeni's area captured men appear to have been drafted into [561] the various age-set regiments, so that men from the same tribe were distributed throughout the army and did not form a distinct group. Territorially, the dispersion of captives from the same tribe was not [173 563 727] so complete, for it appears that in Mpezeni's group the major segment settled on the east of the Ngoni area raided mostly to the east, and the western segment to the west, and so on, so that many of the captives taken from a particular locality were to be found in the major segment of the State nearest their homeland. Yet even this concentration of captives with the same ethnic origin was not complete, [illegible] representatives from all the principal tribes with whom the Ngoni came into contact are nowadays to be found in all parts of Mpezeni's Ngoniland. We suggest that this policy of assimilation, practised to a much greater degree by Mpezeni than by Mwambera, may be correlated with the fact that in Mpezeni's group there were no revolts by groups of captives of common origin, whereas in Mwambera's there were three such revolts, by Lake Tonga, Kamanga and Henga tributaries.

[173 721 649] Mwambera attacked the Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu some time round about 1860, and was driven off in the face of fire from guns Mwase had obtained from Arabs. He subsequently came to an agreement with Mwase whereby the Cewa chief became his 'child' and lent him soldiers armed with guns to assist in Ngoni raids. Travellers suggest that later Mwase came to an agreement with Mpezeni as well, but this is not so certain. Mpezeni does seem to have established peaceful relations with one or two minor chieftains during the period of early European contact,[3] but for

[1] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 39-41; Young, *Niassa*, p. 119.

[2] e.g. Gomile, a Kondo chief and Mbona, who had Kondo and Nyanja connections. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 11; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyasa', p. 196.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most part all external relations were warlike. The State, as it were, was internally an organisation of segments and externally stood proud against an undifferentiated hostile world. Even with the Mazeko Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, the Ngoni group spatially nearest to Mpezeni, relations were warlike.

Despite this hostility, it seems probable that some individuals from the neighbouring tribes did leave their own country and join the Ngoni of their own free will. I was given accounts of this in a number of family and village histories, and while it is possible that some of these people whose ancestors were captured may now think it preferable to speak of voluntary attachment to the Ngoni State rather than capture, I do not think this can be the complete explanation. In the first place, very many Ngoni of to-day are quite prepared to admit that their ancestors were captured on Ngoni raids, so that the desire to conceal the capture of an ancestor, if it exists at all, cannot be widespread. On the contrary, some Cewa chiefs and notables who are now politically independent of the Ngoni and live in their own chiefdoms will recount with great interest how their ancestors were captured by the Ngoni. Secondly, some of those who claim that their ancestors joined the Ngoni of their own volition come from places a long way distant from Ngoni country, where the frequency of Ngoni raids cannot have been high, even if the Ngoni ever raided there at all. For instance, one village claims that its people came voluntarily from as far away as Fingoe, in Portuguese East Africa. Thirdly, there is a well-known instance of a son and other close relatives of an Nenga chief who joined the Ngoni and rose to high position in the State. The Ngoni Paramount Chief and some of the minor chiefs are still friendly with the descendants of this Nenga chief, Kalindawalo, and the story that these Nenga nobles were not captured but were instructed by their own chief to transfer their allegiance to the Ngoni seems probably to be true, despite a contrary tradition among the Nenga that these men were taken as captives.[28] Lastly there is the evidence of Glave, writing in 1894, who says that a host of villages had given themselves up to the Ngoni rather than submit to the constant anxiety of attack.[29] This provision was made for men and women to join the State other than as captives. These volunteers were treated in the same way as captives. They were allocated, either as individuals or in small groups, to a segment and came under the orders of a lord or lady. The Ngoni lived at a much higher standard

[28] cf. Field, *Fieldnotes*, p. 16; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 92-4.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 89; see also Wiese, 'Expeditie', p. 458.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 of life than their neighbours, largely at the expense of those neighbours. It is therefore not surprising that at least some of the more adventurous of the hunted should have decided to join the ranks of the hunters.

In Tanganyika the activities of the Arabs and other slave traders brought about significant changes in Ngoni society earlier than in the less accessible Nyasa region. The Ngoni in Tanganyika did not regard their neighbours merely as enemies. Ngoni warriors formed part of the army of Mirambo, the Nyamwezi slave trader. An elaborate network of joking relationships seems to have regulated intercourse between the tribes of Tanganyika and the Tanganyika Ngoni were linked to many of their neighbours in this way.[40] Joking relationships of this kind did not develop among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. In recent times, however, Ngoni from Fort Jameson have come into contact on the Copperbelt and elsewhere with tribes such as the Bemba who have developed a joking relationship with other Ngoni groups. These joking relationships are now extended to the Fort Jameson men.

From this historical account we are able to gain some idea of Ngoni polity during the mid-nineteenth century. We have restricted our attention to the relations existing between major portions of the State and between the State and its neighbours. We have seen how forms of organization, in particular the lineage system, with which the Ngoni began their march, were modified in conformity with the peculiar conditions of migrant brigandage. In the next chapter we shall look more closely at the internal organization of the State and attempt to analyse the social processes at work within it.

[40] See the writings of Idamson, Fuller, Rodwaner and Spire.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Two

THE SNOWBALL STATE

1. Manipulation 2. Age-sets 3. Officers of State 4. Continually segmenting systems 5. Lineage systems compared 6. Splitting the State 7. Stability

1. *Manipulation*

In our first chapter we outlined some of the more significant events in Ngoni history prior to the arrival of Europeans. In this chapter we shall examine the political system within which these events took place. It is not the task of social analysis to determine why these or any other events occurred. What we shall attempt is a discussion of how they occurred, and what were the principal social relations involved in them.

Most of the incidents referred to in the first chapter concerned the State as a whole or the royal family. Nevertheless, when we begin to consider the conditions under which the State endured we have to discuss the social position of ordinary men and women within the State. For the Ngoni State held together as an organized social group, and on occasion failed to hold together, not merely because Zwangendaba was a good leader or his sons quarrelsome or his brothers ambitious, or because his people were bound by custom and knew no better, but also, and in our view mainly, because the State was a viable social entity in its time and place. The arrangement of people into segments and age-sets was not a mere formal and static division, but a means whereby a motley heterogeneous collection of individuals was converted into an organized society with agreed aims. The structure of the State had rules; in other words there was regularity in its social processes. Yet it was a structure which, within these rules, could be manipulated. The structure could be, and was, utilized by individuals for the realization of their private ends at the expense of others as well as providing for the common good. This is probably true of all social systems. We shall begin our analysis by examining the ways in which this manipulation was carried out.

In most societies, from the simplest system of hunting bands to the complex societies of the modern world, one of the most significant sets of rights are those relating to fixed natural resources. The structure of rights in land provides a key to the structure of society.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[23] society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

Power in the State was thus power over people rather than over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers. The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 55.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

captives were retained within the segment. In later years, at least, small-scale raiding organized by segment heads went on without the Paramount Chief's knowledge and it seems unlikely under these conditions that captives would have been sent in to him.

There is confirmatory evidence from other Ngoni groups. Hodgson wrote of the Dowa group that a warrior who had captured three or more people had one returned to him by the chief,[8] from which we may infer that they were at the disposal of the chief. For the Southern Ngoni, who are not so closely related to the Fort Jameson group as are those in northern Nyasaland and Dowa District, Read wrote that the Paramount Chief had a monopoly of slaves taken in war and that he distributed these to successful warriors, his wives and his relatives.[9]

Cattle were handled in much the same way as captives. There was a dogma that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, but they were dispersed among the different villages and kept in the byres there. The lord of a major segment had effective control of the cattle in his own village and, when he chose to exercise it, in the other villages of his segment as well. When the Paramount Chief visited a village, cattle were killed in his honour and he was praised as the giver of the feast, but in the chief's absence the head of the village decided when beasts were to be killed. A lord appointed his lieutenants to look after his cattle as well as his people. When cattle had been taken on a raid, they were driven back to Ngoniland and then allocated to a lord.

Cattle for bridewealth were provided for a man by his lord. However it seems possible that a large proportion of the marriages made by politically unimportant people were not ratified by the passage of cattle.[10]

Such evidence as there is suggests that the Ngoni consumed their cattle faster than many similar cattle people and, as with dependants, they captured cattle more than they reared them. People speak of the days before the conquest as a time when they lived entirely on meat and beer. Poole suggests that the Ngoni produced little or no food in their own country,[11] and while this is plainly contradicted by contemporary evidence, it is probable that they did rely on raiding to supplement their supplies of cattle and cereals, and that therefore many captured cattle were used as food. Thus cattle themselves were a short-term asset and the concept of

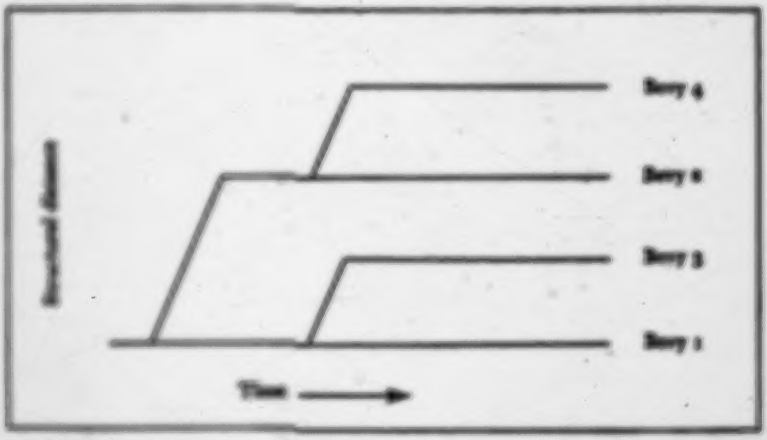
[8] Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 139.
[9] Read, 'Standards of Living', p. 60.
[10] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 3-6.
[11] Poole, 'Human geography of Lundazi and Fwambo', p. 19.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

cattle did not give rise to any cleavage of interest which was not already present in the residential system.

The system could also be manipulated by disputes about succession. If a man had many bevies of wives there was usually no doubt concerning which was the senior bevy and who was the great wife in it. Yet in general it was not possible to rank a man's bevies in a simple linear order of seniority, any more than the segments

DIAGRAM 3. RANKING OF BEVIES



to which they corresponded could be ordered in this way. In topological terms, ranking of bevies and of segments among the Ngoni was only partially, not simply, ordered. An example, illustrated in Diagram 3, will make this clear.

Suppose a man started with bevy 1 and then took part of it to form bevy 2. Later he took another part of bevy 1 to form bevy 3 and took part of bevy 2 to form bevy 4. With four bevies of wives, his senior bevy was bevy 1 and his great wife was the leader of bevy 1. Her eldest son was his principal heir, and if she had no sons the eldest son by the next wife in her bevy became heir. But suppose there was no son by any wife in bevy 1. Which hand provided the principal heir? It seems clear that bevy 4 did not, at least not if there were sons in bevy 2, for bevy 2 was senior to bevy 4. Bevy 2 might be regarded as senior to bevy 3, for it was formed from bevy 1 earlier. On the other hand, with reference to bevy 2, bevy 3 was merely a part of bevy 1 and hence the search for heirs should be continued in bevy 3 before shifting to bevy 2. Unfortunately I

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in levies 2 and 3 but not in levy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in levy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in levy 2 and the other by the heir in levy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs arising from the method of ranking levies. The same principle of ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to levies of wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FB5 Ngoni FB5
Mpezeni

537 and in other situations that which was founded last. The head-
539 quarters of the highest segment was in some sense capital of the
611 nation, yet chieftainship had already passed from it and it was less
612 important in other ways than the headquarters founded by the
[611] reigning chief. This apparent contradiction applied within every large segment. We have endeavoured to isolate these different contexts by our distinction between primal and residual segments, but as soon as we attempt to arrange villages or levies of wives in a linear order without reference to the relationship of their associated segments to one another, the contradiction reappears.

A clear and accepted sequence of heirs would have been
621 appropriate to a segmentary system in which segments continued to
611 hold together in all circumstances. Ngoni segments did not do this, and the simple linear sequence of heirs was lacking. The successive formation of inferior segments implied increased structural separation between the first inferior segment to be formed and the headquarters, and hence less likelihood that the former would provide the main heir. As in lineage systems, the further back the point of departure from the main line the greater the structural separation from it. But whereas in lineage systems it is the junior lines which are continually diverging from the main stem, in the Ngoni system the main heir was the first to break away from his father, who remained longer in close contact with his junior sons. Seniority within the newly formed undivided segment implied early differentiation within it, and hence early separation from its headquarters. Thus, the general principle of increasing separation with the passage of time, together with the particular principle of segment formation in order of seniority, combined to make a system of great flexibility despite essential regularity and uniformity. On the death of each segment head there was a shift of power within his segment and to some extent a formal recognition of the structural separating which had proceeded gradually during his lifetime. The headquarters founded by successive heads of segments persisted as the home of groups whose interests they symbolized. The history of the segments and of the nation itself was embodied in the relationships enduring between successive headquarters.

When a small segment was founded it was usually manned by
537 people drawn from the rump of the immediately superior segment,
611 that is, from those men and women in the superior segment who
621 had not already been allocated to some inferior segment within it. However it is clear that this rule was often over-ridden. When the
622 head of a large segment formed a new inferior segment for a wife or son he was able to command the services of everyone within his

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment, even of those who had been allocated to existing inferior segments. If he thought fit he could shift them from one inferior segment to another within his own segment. This process was particularly relevant to the formation of new segments for the great wives of men who were the heirs or lords of large segments. A new lord, making his great wife's segment after the death of his father, did not confine himself to the rump of his father's segment but selected men he thought he could trust from anywhere within his father's primal segment, whether or not they had made segments of their own. Similarly a lord sometimes took a man who occupied an unimportant position in the segment of one of his wives and promoted him to be lieutenant in a newly formed bevy. The more important the lord or heir, the greater the structural distance his dependants could be moved. Thus while the processes by which the Paramount Chief and a man with only a few followers made segments for bevies of wives were formally the same, the consequences were quite different. In the former case, many hundreds of people were involved and many key men were shifted in their allegiance in order to provide the new segment with lieutenants and followers. In the latter, few people were concerned and the event was not of general interest. The formal processes remained the same at all levels in society, but what in one case was essentially a political action in which a Paramount Chief acted as head of a State was in the other largely a matter of domestic reorganization. It is characteristic of the Ngoni State that the transition from one state of affairs to the other was a gradual one.

Occasionally a man moved himself from one segment to another on his own initiative. This happened only infrequently and it seems probable that it was only when a man who had quarrelled with his own segment sought asylum with the reigning chief that a move of this kind could be made. Chibambo records an incident in which many men transferred from their former segments to one newly formed by the reigning chief, but adds that later they returned to their old segments. A similar incident from the Fort Jameson group is noted below.* Despite these exceptions it nevertheless remains true that for the most part a man's affiliation to his segment was fixed and could be altered only by the actions of his political superiors.

We have spoken of the formation of segments, but not yet of their disappearance. Many minor segments faded away because their members died or because they were moved elsewhere by a lord. Sometimes a segment ceased to be an effective social unit

* Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 55; see p. 140.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

because of a divergence of interest between one or more of its inferior segments and the residue. In some instances all the people in the segment were killed, as presumably was the intention when Zwangendaba sent warriors to destroy segment 18. In other instances not everyone was killed and those whose lives were spared were drafted to some other part of a major segment to which they belonged. In the only examples I know of, in which either of these last two alternatives was adopted, action was taken by the highest lieutenants in the segments founded for the great wives of reigning chiefs, and was prompted by allegedly hostile acts directed against the chief. Heads of lesser segments could not readily act in this way for although the Paramount Chief and his lieutenants did not possess a monopoly of this power, they regarded its exercise by others with suspicion as a threat to the unity of the State.

If some of the members of an eliminated segment escaped annihilation, they might presently reform themselves into a new segment and begin a separate existence again. If they were not kinsmen of their lord, no structural complications ensued. If, however, relatives of the lord were concerned, then there might be conflict between the position required of them because of their relationship and that in which their new segment was formed. Thus, if the village of a great wife was annihilated and later a new village was founded for her, this could never replace the original one. Her subordinate hands of co-wives had formed their villages by breaking out from her original village, and that had been their headquarters. The new village was founded after they had made their own, and was not their headquarters, even though they still acknowledged that its head was their great co-wife. As we have seen, such a sequence of events occurred at a critical stage of Ngoni history, and may have influenced the way in which the State split.

2. *Age-sets*

The residential system was dominant in deciding the alignment of persons in most situations, but the waging of war and execution of certain ceremonies were organized on a different basis. The army was divided into age-set regiments. About every three or four years,[1] depending on the military requirements and on the availability of lads of the right age, a new regiment was formed from all the boys aged about fifteen years old. They assembled at the Paramount Chief's great wife's village and were inducted into the army. The chief gave them a regimental name and they came under the orders of his senior lieutenants. An experienced warrior

[1] cf. Wilson, 'Rites of Kinship', p. 47n.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

from a senior regiment was given command of the new regiment. 561
This post seems not to have been politically so important as it was 701
among the Zulu, where princes commanded regiments. In major [702]
battles, regiments fought as tactical units.

A list of regimental names is given in Table III. Some regiments had more than one proper name, and sometimes that portion of a regiment belonging to a single major segment was given a name of its own.

The regimental system was more formally prescribed than the 561
residential system, in that every lad had to join, and his regiment 557
was, at least initially, fixed for him by his apparent age. But even 701
here there was some possibility of manipulation. Men were expected to defer to members of senior age-sets and a well-favoured warrior might gain promotion from one regiment to the next above, either because of his own prowess in war or because the senior regiment was short of men. There were some offices of leadership within a regiment, but I was unable to discover what they were or how they were filled. Certain warriors were selected for special tasks, such as spying or scouting or forming an advance guard. But the greatest measure of flexibility derived from the nature of the activities carried on under this system. Some men fought well, others did not. Some survived and some were killed in battle. The successful warrior was rewarded by his superiors with dependants and thus he established his own segment. Thus success in one system led to advancement in the other.

On national raids one or more regiments were mobilized and 561
were commanded by a senior lieutenant from the Paramount Chief's 701
great wife's segment. Some informants said that in the line of battle [726]
men from the same segment were separated, so that there would be less chance of their being killed all at once. However within a regiment there must have been cleavages on segmentary lines, for at least in later years the leader of a major segment would from time to time mobilise all the men in his segment belonging to certain regiments and send them off raiding. Thus the Ngoni military system differed from the Zulu, in which the king alone was able to mobilise age-sets. Some of the segmentary divisions within Ngoni regiments had their own proper names. In battle, the men of a regiment might be divided for tactical reasons but this was not a lasting arrangement, and the only permanent cleavages within a regiment appear to have been those determined by the residential system. There does not seem to have been any system of non-territorial sectors, nor was there any organization, apart from the State-organised regiments, by which men of a single segment

[Text continues on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE III. REGIMENTAL NAMES

Men's regiments		Approximate year of formation	Women's regiments	
Information poor	Information good		Information good	Information poor
Majekwane		1821		
Ziolomba		1824		
Somfula		1827		
Macheya		1830		
Isiziti				
Zimpofu		1833		
Makupu		1836		
Ngowongo, Macihungu		1839		
Mangazi, Magazi		1842		
Malunge, Mavimba (a)		1845		
Masapi, Mashapi		1848		
Manyoka, Zinyoka		1851		
Manyinsa, Manyisa		1854		
Majuwela		1857		
Majunge, Mayunge		1859		
Maiyiza (c)		1861		
	Zinkhondo, Macaiya	1863		
Masala		1866		
	Macona	1869		
Maola (d)		1871		
Zinyati	Manyela	1874		
	Mabema (b)	1877		Mateza
Maola (d)		1879		
Masoo, Mazoo		1882		
	Kabacuda	1885	Mashambina	Matukya
	Mafelakudemi	1889	Magalela	Mashacue
Lembeni, Maiyiza (e)	Cimale, Lembalemba	1892	Mashumela	Makanya
	Mtani, Cotamoto	1895	Maichesa	Mekela ng'ombe
	Azola	1900	Macaiya	
	Ngazaza (c)	1906	Mambowya	
	Ngaziaiya	1912	Mteteza	
	Ciwombola, Ngamya	1914		Mekela
	Kalusilo, Maolokoto	1920	Gwaula	

561
701
[562]

[Footnotes on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sections attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8] 561 701

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights. [562]

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken. 561 796 [726]

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked. 561 701 727

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs, 561 701 621 [643]

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Nzunga's regiment.
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Maola. Wiese and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Maiyiza. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

[114]

Wiese gives two other regimental names. His Madouda or Madoda is merely the status term *madoda*, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madjinga or Madjinga, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatahakulu, Mang'ombe, Izimpini, Mabrke, Mahacu, Zimfezi, Manyoni. [554]

Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwala', p. 50.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38, - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly
561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the reg-
727 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were
621 indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appropriate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their
[702] coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*umuwale*) was organized on an
561 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this
796 ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the
[771] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social
[167] system, and the relationship between them was a political one.
648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them
691 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between
[772] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 229-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *umcwala*, and Read's informants called it *ingcwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

and the Ngoni did not seek to vanquish other tribes as states but rather to subject them by continued attrition. In later years it appears that a few minor chiefs who lived near the Fort Jameson group did manage to come to some agreement with it, for the Ngoni seem to have raided them only sporadically although warriors passed through their territories *en route* for more distant objectives; but this may have been due to the intervention of European traders. The powerful Cewa chief, Mwase Kasungu, may also have come to some arrangement with the Fort Jameson group even as he did with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland.

Thus for the most part the external relations of the Ngoni State were warlike. The Ngoni did not trade with their neighbours, or send ambassadors to them, or enter into alliances with them; they merely killed or captured them.[10] The army was organized on a basis of age-sets, but the age-sets as such did not enter into political relations with their enemies. They merely executed the policy of the State or of the major segment to which they belonged.

3. *Officers of State*

The residential and age-set systems formed the structure of the State and there was no separate administrative system. There was little specialization of function among those who wielded power in the State, and those who did have special governmental tasks were all the lords of large segments.

The nearest approach to special political officers is to be found among the regional governors. A few of Zwangendaba's followers were with him from the beginning of his journey from Natal. Some of these were his agnates, but the descendants of others have now forgotten what relationship, if any, they bore to him. These early followers did not stand in the lord-lieutenant relationship to Zwangendaba, for in Ngoni usage all lieutenants were captives, or the descendants of captives, of their lords. They were organized in segments in the same way as everyone else, but the heads of some of these segments were known by the special term *nduna-cesa* which I have translated as regional governor. Segments headed by regional governors were attached like other large segments to the various royal headquarters, and thus became primary divisions of the segments formed for queens. They differed from the lieutenants of the royal headquarters not only in their title but also in the greater freedom they were allowed in their segments. They kept their own villages separate from the royal villages to which they were attached politically.

[10] See pp. 25*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

[31] The title of regional governor was also awarded by the Paramount Chief to certain of his favoured lieutenants. These promoted lieutenants, with their segments, retained their positions in the residential system unaltered but they were allowed to keep their own captives, a privilege of all regional governors. It seems probable, from incomplete information, that there were about a dozen regional governors of one kind or the other in the Fort Jameson group in 1898.[33] Despite the early date at which some of the regional governors' segments were formed during the migration, they did not expand as rapidly as did the segments led by the chief's sparers and lieutenants, and in 1898 they comprised only a small portion of the State. In this respect the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland were organized differently, for there Read writes that the whole country was divided among regional governors, save for a central capital.[34] One of my informants stated that the head of a segment containing more than one village was never known as the lieutenant of his lord but was called, if he were not a kinsman of his lord, by the title regional governor. This is not true to-day, and in view of the large number of present-day commoner villages which claim to have been founded before the conquest, and whose heads are not regional governors, it seems unlikely to have been true earlier. On the other hand, all regional governors to-day are heads of segments containing more than one village, and this may well have been true before 1898 as well.

[32] [36] There were other minor honours similar to the title of regional governor and often awarded to the same people. These were the right to use the royal descent name *jere*, the right to a special praise name *ndzema*, and the right to wear ox horns as a decoration.[35]

[33] Wiese mentions certain special lieutenants who carried out tasks comparable to those of ministers of State. He describes three officials, one a minister for the interior, apparently responsible for the Paramount Chief's domestic affairs; another a minister of war who was also high priest; and the third a master of ceremonies at national festivals. He says that the ministers carried out these special tasks in addition to their ordinary duties as lieutenants, and gives the names of two of the three, who were the first lieutenants of two major sections.[36] Thus although there was some differen-

[33] See Table VII. The sample used in this table contains more villages founded by regional governors than would occur in a representative sample.

[34] Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[35] Brauer, *Afrikaner*, p. 231; Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 479, and 'Geschichte', p. 198.

[36] Wiese, 'Expedition', pp. 469-70 and 'Geschichte', p. 188. These two men were the first lieutenants of segments 14 and 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

tiation of function between the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief, it is improbable that there were any special political offices outside the residential system. 65 631

Read mentions a political hierarchy with various titles.[14] At least in the Fort Jameson group, three of the four vernacular terms she gives were used in connexion with the residential system. The fourth, *amanxane*, was used in Zulu for messengers sent by a chief and a dialectical variant of this (*mampsis*) is so used nowadays at Fort Jameson. They have no executive authority and do not seem to have had any in the past. 631 [624]

Fraser, writing of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, says that there were two groups of lieutenants, one composed of men who became Ngoni before the crossing of the Zambezi and which exercised civil power, and the other which included men of more recent incorporation into the Ngoni tribe and which supplied the war leaders. He implies that the war leaders did not take part in the civil administration.

There seems not to have been this distinction between civil and military lieutenants among the Fort Jameson group. Wiese's 'Minister of War', who was referred to as a Commander-in-Chief by other contemporary writers, was a segment head with the same responsibilities towards his people as anyone else. The regiments had leaders responsible for the tactical control of warriors, some of whom were recently incorporated men, and presumably Fraser is referring to them, but his statement that the man often chosen to lead the whole army had no voice in the council conflicts with Elmslie's account of the same place and period. The war leader, Ng'omomo, who is mentioned by Fraser, acted as regent on the death of the Paramount Chief in northern Nyasaland.[15] 631 764

The village as such had an importance independent of the size or order of segment of which it was headquarters or by which it was inhabited. There were no special terms for distinguishing the heads of large or small segments, for all were lords or ladies. But a special term[17] was used for a village headman, irrespective of the order of segment of which he was lord, provided he was not a lieutenant who had become head of the village in the absence of agnatic descendants of the founder. The use of a special term may have been an indication of the village headman's importance, part of which derived from the control he exercised over the cattle 631 622 [622]

[14] Read, 'Tradition', p. 462. cf. her account of the southern Ngoni in 'Standards', p. 18.

[15] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 32. cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 121, 189.

[17] *Inkosana*. In Zulu, a small or petty chief. cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[30]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[31] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[32] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *induna*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[30] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 13*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[31] Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 103*f*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 56*f*, 105*f*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedicja', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[32] See pp. 105*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'85 Ngoni F'85
Mpezeni

lord's dependants placed under a lieutenant's care became more specifically his dependants and eventually he appointed one or more of the men among them to be his own lieutenants. Thus it was possible for Z to be the lieutenant of Y and at the same time for Y to be the lieutenant of X. When Y died, his son became X's lieutenant or, if Y had no son, Z might succeed him as X's lieutenant. 63/ 62/ 64

A lord with but few dependants sometimes appointed one or more of them as his lieutenants without specifically dividing his dependants among them. Thus, a lieutenant might be appointed without the formation of a segment for him, and only later would he differentiate from the rest of his lord's dependants those for whom he was directly responsible.

The ranking of lieutenants was one of the least stable parts of the residential system. In a village under a lord there were lieutenants in charge of segments forming divisions within the village. As their segments grew in size, the lieutenants broke out of the village to found new satellite villages. A new set of lieutenants was gradually appointed to take their places in charge of the people remaining in the headquarters, and in the course of time the new set also broke away from the headquarters village.[*] Though they had moved out from the village the lieutenants still retained their positions as lieutenants within the primal segment of which it was the headquarters. Thus in a large segment containing many villages there was a long ranked roster of lieutenants, of which only the junior members still lived in the segment headquarters. Further proliferation of lieutenants sometimes took place when an heir succeeded as lord of the segment but did not found a new segment of his own. The new lord appointed his own lieutenants, so that within the same segment, and partly within the same settlement, there were two sets of lieutenants, one senior by time of appointment, the other enjoying the favour of the present head of the segment. When in these circumstances one of the senior set died, his eldest son sometimes had difficulty in asserting his position as lieutenant; and in this way the senior set, or part of it, lost control of the segment to the more recently appointed men.

It was in keeping with the expanding social boundaries of the State, and of the high degree of mobility within it, that there was no formally constituted council. Some contemporary accounts mention a tribal council, but it seems clear that until very recently, when the Administration tried to institute a council with defined membership, there has never been a legislative or executive body 65/ 66 [68]

[*] cf. my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 197f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various levies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot intervene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[28] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the melée he might be forced to take direct action.[29]

Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[28] Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 470.
[29] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

power. The history of the State and indeed of each subdivision within it was encapsulated in the formal relations between royal headquarters and between segments. Yet the system was always growing and every few years brought a new royal capital, a new chief, new headquarters for the heirs of large segments and new ambitious men as lieutenants. Each generation also brought greater divergence of interest between the constituent parts of each segment and of the State, as we shall discuss later. Before going on to examine the conditions under which the State split we shall turn aside to compare the Ngoni residential system with similar social structures found in some other societies.

4. *Continually segmenting systems*

Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, in their *African Political Systems*, have provided us with a solid foundation for a typology of political systems in simple societies. It is therefore appropriate to consider what place the Ngoni State has in this typology. The authors distinguish three types of political system in Africa,[*] and we shall attempt to determine to which of these the Ngoni State belongs.

Their first type includes those small societies in which everyone is kin to everyone else, and in which political relations are coterminous with kinship relations. It is clear that Ngoni society was not of this kind.

The other two types are those referred to as primitive states, or Group A, and stateless societies, or Group B. Primitive states are characterised by the presence of organised government, i.e. centralised authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions, and of cleavages of wealth, privilege and status corresponding to the distribution of power and authority. In stateless societies there is no government, in this sense, and political relations are primarily regulated by a segmentary system of permanent unilateral descent groups.

This classification is sometimes taken to imply that segmentary systems are found only in stateless societies but not in primitive states. This implication does not follow inevitably from the scheme of classification, though it is compatible with it. It is, however, easy to assume that this implication is intended, for the authors frequently use the adjective segmentary to characterise stateless societies in contrast to primitive states. This implication is false, as can be shown by reference to a number of societies, and cannot have been intended by the authors, for elsewhere Fortes has written that 'It

[*] Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, *African Political Systems*, pp. 6f.

Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization'.[30]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[31] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesser segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similarities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumstances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follow the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A societies as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political system may now be handled as a separate question, providing a classification cutting across the division into states and stateless societies.

We have spoken throughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a state, and this usage is in accord with the definition of a state given above. The Paramount Chief with his lieutenants exercised supreme authority, there was a highly organized administrative machine, and there was an organized method of settling disputes within the tribe. There were only slight variations in wealth except in the number of cattle, but privilege and status were expressed in the residential system and were inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

The presence or absence of a segmentary political system can itself be divided into two questions; was there a segmentary system, and if so, was it the political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, then it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[30] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 234.
[31] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 201, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 34, diagrams.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

A wide variety of forms of organization can legitimately be spoken of as segmentary, and can be represented visually by pyramids and triangles. We may even speak of our own system of local government as containing segments (rural districts) which are characteristically grouped together to form segments of higher order (counties) and which are divided internally into segments of lower order (parishes). This nesting aspect of segmentation, as we may perhaps call it, by which social groups are arranged in a hierarchy one within another, is of too wide an occurrence to be useful for our purposes. Almost every known political system must be segmentary in this sense. 12/

Nor is it the unilineal character of lineage systems which clearly marks them off from others. Until recently it was the general rule in Europe that a child took the nationality of its father, and we were therefore quite justified in talking of European nations as unilineally recruited groups. Yet we do not usually need a typology which places African lineage systems and European nations in the same category.

What then is the particular characteristic of lineage systems which significantly distinguishes them from the fixed social divisions of many states, and which they share with the Ngoni residential system? The critical characteristic seems to me to be that segmentation goes on continually. Every man (or woman) is the potential founder of a segment, and although a segment once formed tends to persist in time, more and more segments of lower and lower order are all the while being formed within it. We cannot count the number of levels at which the State is subdivided, as we can when there is a fixed hierarchy, for these points of subdivision are continually shifting with the passage of time and with change of context. It is difficult to attach labels to segments of different order or of different span, save in precisely defined situations. The magnitude of this difficulty is apparent from Fortes's elaborate descriptive armamentum, with its morphological minimal, effective minimal, nuclear, inner, medial, and maximal lineages, terms referring to successive stages in the life of a single segment, stages which occur at different times in the histories of different segments. The same difficulty arises in describing Ngoni segments, but it is not so pressing, since there was not the same differentiation of function related to degree of segmentation as is found among the Tallensi. 12/ 63/ [171]

Because of this continuous process of segment formation, the system is governed by the same principles at all levels. A group formed in a specific way at a low level eventually becomes a high-level group, and thus at any one time the constancy of past formation 63/

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[63] [121] is reflected in present uniformity of organization.[*] Fortes, writing on the concept of a segmentary society, says

> '. . . It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system . . . the principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.'[*]

[71] [63] [121] Here he is describing the egalitarian, homogeneous, stateless society of Taleland, but his description fits Ngoni society very closely. The one significant difference in this matter between Ngoni and Tale society is that Tale society goes back into the unremembered past whereas Ngoni society was founded at a known and remembered time and place. Hence a certain amount of extemporization was necessary to get the system going, to adapt Ngoni social organization to the peculiarities of Ngoni life, as we have noted in the relationship between the first Paramount Chief and his companions who became regional governors. Apart from this initial piece of social engineering, the system continued to perpetuate itself until checked by quite different external agencies.

In all these societies, the continually segmenting system has or had political functions. We may well ask if there are other societies in which there are continually segmenting systems lacking political functions. Gluckman has listed a large number of societies stated to possess corporate lineages, including some states as defined above. Some of these, for example the Tswana,[*] appear to organize their internal political relations not on the basis of these corporate lineages but through some separate administrative apparatus. What then is the social function of the lineage system in these societies, and is it continually segmenting? Evans-Pritchard has suggested that segmentation occurs where groups have political functions.[*] Nevertheless, among the Tswana, lineages do segment, even though they have only slight political significance, political action being largely determined by the ward organization.

We shall then take this process of continual formation of segments, which Firth calls the branching or ramifying process,[*]

[*] Fortes, *Web of kinship*, p. 341, suggests the term 'organic' to describe such a system. This word has so many other meanings that I am reluctant to use it.

[*] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 232.

[*] Gluckman in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, p. 4. cf. Schapera, *Tswana law and custom*.

[*] Evans-Pritchard, 'Nandi-speaking peoples', pp. 165*f*, and 'Nuer of the Southern Sudan', p. 287.

[*] Firth, *Tikopia*, p. 371.

1:Barnes E-S (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

as diagnostic of the presence of the kind of segmentary society in which we are interested. All the societies included by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard in their stateless category, i.e. Logoli, Tallensi and Nuer, have continually segmenting political systems. Of the societies with government, the Zulu were like the Ngoni in being a State and yet having a political system which was continually segmenting. Both of these states were organized by a segmentary system even at the highest level, so that it does not seem necessary to follow Fortes in restricting segmentary systems to only the subdivisions of states. In Shaka's time various changes came about in Zululand, such as the concentration of the army in a central area, which lessened the importance of the segmentary organization. But in the eighteenth century large-scale relations between and within the Ngoni chiefdoms were governed by the agnatic segmentary organization, that is, by the division of the people into clans, sub-clans, and lineages and by the continual transfer of allegiance by lineage segments from one chief to another. Even during the period of the Zulu empire, the continual segmentation of the constituent tribes was important in maintaining the power of the central government over them.[30]

If one of the main characteristics of the well-known African lineage systems, both in stateless societies like the Nuer, Tallensi, Logoli and Gusii, and in primitive states like the Zulu, is their political function, we may well inquire if these systems are not also one type in a more general category of political systems. Although lineage relations are essentially distinct from kinship relations, a lineage system defines political relations in the idiom of kinship. Thus in agnatic systems, the relationship between territorial groups may be expressed in terms of the relationships between founding ancestors who were brothers or fathers and sons. We have seen how among the Ngoni the relationship between captor and captive, between lord and dependant, and hence the relationship between the segments they founded, was expressed in agnatic terms. The relationship between husband and wife, lord and lady, was employed to define the relationship between the political groups they led, and in this respect the Ngoni system may be seen as taking one stage further the process employed in lineage systems, where most relationships of this kind are phrased agnatically. Among the south-eastern Bantu, however, the relationship between lineage segments founded by paternal half-brothers is defined in terms of their mothers' position as co-wives. Among some central African peoples, this process has been carried even further than

[30] Gluckman, 'Modern Zululand', pp. 147-54.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

among the Ngoni. Thus the device of perpetual kinship among the Yao, by which the holders of certain chiefly offices stand in relation to one another in a fixed arrangement of kinship positions, of Paramount Chief to son and to sister's son and to brother,[28] would seem to be an example of what is essentially the same process as that by which the dominant lineage in one part of Nuerland is conceived of as descended from a brother of the founding ancestor of another dominant lineage. Where a political relationship is expressed in terms of the connexion between husband and wife, rather than between brothers' or sisters' sons, we may find that a woman is used to embody the political relationship, and she then plays what is essentially a political role. The many wives of the Ngoni Paramount Chief were clearly used in roles of this kind. Not only were they rapporteurs for the Chief, as Deare points out,[29] but they were also living symbols of the political relationship between their segments and the State as a whole. Another central African example of this is the Lele institution of 'wife of the village' by which a village, as a group, may stand as daughter's husband or wife's parent to its chief.[30]

Wherever political relationships of this kind are embodied in persons who have private lives of their own, be they queens or sons-in-law of the village, there is bound to be some domestic and inter-personal relationship alongside the corresponding political relationship. But that should not obscure from us the essentially political role played by individuals in these positions. The analogy with the dynastic marriages of Western Europe is clear.

One of the characteristics of lineage systems and of the Ngoni residential system is that the transition from the ties of domesticity and close kinship to purely political relations is a gradual one. The same principles of organization apply at all levels, and it is gradually with the passage of time and with increasing structural separation and internal segmentation that inter-personal relations are replaced by those between groups, and actions based on sentiments of love and hate give way to those based ultimately on an appeal to force. Relations between the larger segments of a lineage, although expressed in the idiom of kinship, and although possibly explainable historically in kinship terms, are relations between political units, whereas the relationship between brothers living under the same roof is not governed by political considerations. The critical point at which relationships of increasing scale become dominantly

[28] Mitchell, 'Social organization of the Yao'
[29] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[30] Tew, 'Polyandry among the Lele'

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

political would seem to be, for example, at the medial lineage among the Tallensi, beyond which generation differences are not recognized; and at the village among the Nuer. It seems probable that in the old Ngoni system the village was also the significant unit, above which relationships were dominantly political and below which they were largely determined by the multiplex sentiments and activities arising out of kinship and domestic association. This is certainly so in modern Ngoniland, although the same principles of organization no longer apply at all levels.

I have described elsewhere the critical position of the modern Ngoni headman, linking the political system with the network of ties of kinship and co-residence operative within the village, and similar conditions have been reported elsewhere by Gluckman and Mitchell. Above the village, whether in a state or in a stateless society, relations are in the main between enduring groups and are defined with respect to interests vital to the survival of these groups, even if expressed in the idiom of kinship.*

Granted the existence of primitive states with continually segmenting political systems, such as the Zulu and Ngoni, it is then possible to look at from another point of view the various African political systems for which there is adequate information. In terms of political segmentation on a unilineal basis, states like the Ngoni and Zulu are closer in form to the stateless societies of the Nuer, Tallensi, Gusii and Logoli than to the Nupe and Kede states with their administrative systems largely independent of unilineal affiliation. To document this point fully would take us beyond the scope of this book; our purpose here is merely to emphasize the importance in comparative studies of examining political structures from more than one point of view.

When talking of states, we make the convenient distinction between internal and external political relations. No such simple distinction can be made with stateless societies, for in them relations which are external to one segment are internal to the next higher segment, and yet may still legitimately be regarded as political relations. The pre-Shakan chiefdoms of Zululand formed a system similar to the Tallensi maximal lineages, and we may speak therefore in that instance of a segmentary system regulating political relations between states. Ngoni external relations were not regulated in this way, for the Ngoni were isolated and unique in a region

* For this section, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* and 'Kinship among the Nuer'; Fortes, *Web of kinship*; Wagner, *Bantu of North Kavirondo*; Mayer, *Lineage principle in Gusii society*; Gluckman, 'Analysis of a social situation' and 'Kingdom of the Zulu'; Gluckman, *et al.*, 'Village headman'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organised themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[*] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[*] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[*] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[*] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[*] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[**]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[*] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[**] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-3; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Shona kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

61 segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a seg-
63 ment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A
59 residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in
62 quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled
63 peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require con-
12 siderable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It
17 seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting
61 systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties.
62 Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential
63 system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there
[183] was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in
[171] many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the
61 Swazi lineage,[41] and perhaps more widely, although in both these
62 societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed
63 as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[41] cf. Holleman, 'Twee-eenheidsbeginsel van die Zulu' and 'Zulu *izigodi*'; Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 729*f*, s.v. *isizinda*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

successive head of a major segment memorialized in this way, but the major divisions of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When splits occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fission had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fission in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fission we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[42] Fission in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fission was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fission did not bring into being any new segments, but merely dissolved the highest segment of all as a cohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fission was a hazardous

[42] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a *state* of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fission' to refer to the *process* of internal subdivision. cf. Fortes, *Web of kinship*, *passim*. I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later
179 rejoined it peaceably, but other instances of fission were accom-
668 panied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his
[669] warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank
[643] of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The
[786] internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Ciwele Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[43] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[44] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional
[669] governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force.
649 Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftain-
642 ship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this
[643] topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no mere secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[43] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 34.
[44] Stanley, *Livingstone*, p. 289, and *Dark Continent*, i, p. 499; Hatchell, 'Angoni', *passim*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[45] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[45] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 196; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, fn1; Young, *History*, p. 125.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[46] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and
619 the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to
[597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[46] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[855] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[67]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[626] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-
[701] professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[67] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than were the groups further inland. However, the evidence suggests that no great changes of this kind took place among the Fort Jameson group under Mpezeni, and it is therefore with changes in the external environment of the State that we shall be chiefly concerned.

In this early period, between 1821 and about 1885, there was for most of the time a situation in which the forces attaching people to the State were stronger than those tending to split it. The age-set system, the web of affinal ties, the attachment of segment members to their lord, the reliance of a lord on the support of his dependants, and the external opposition of all non-Ngoni, these all held the State together. Shifts in the balance of power could be made without disrupting the State because the State was continually expanding, and expansion gave it flexibility. The weakest links in the State were at the top, and it was these that were most strained as the State grew in numbers and in degree of segmentation. Under critical conditions, as on the death of the Paramount Chief or when the need for food necessitated a move from one tribal site to another, these were the links that gave way and fresh independent States were formed. Fission in the State led to consolidation of ties in each divergent group, but the same processes leading to further fission began again at once.

During the period of migration the Ngoni flourished. They were successful brigands on the march. Yet they were brigands in a poor land, and despite their military successes their economy remained one of subsistence cultivation, even though others did some of the cultivation for them. They were well organized for war and their enemies were not, but both they and their enemies were poor people relying on shifting cultivation with a poor technology and with access to only moderately valuable natural resources. The hinterland of Africa provided the Ngoni with an area within which they could operate successfully, but this area was bounded by the lands of wealthier and mightier peoples. Towards the end of the century the boundaries of the area began to contract. The Ngoni found themselves in conflict not with subsistence cultivators using hoes and spears, but with peoples using writing and guns and possessing apparently limitless resources of cloth, beads and gunpowder. We now have to turn to the story of the Ngoni struggle with these Arab and European invaders.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Three

DEFEAT

1. Structural change 2. Portugal or Britain 3. Concession hunters 4. European consolidation 5. Friction 6. Fighting 7. Cattle 8. The end of a system

1. *Structural change*

178 619 64 THE STRUGGLES of the Ngoni during the middle of the nineteenth century were with groups of roughly the same character as themselves. The processes at work in the Ngoni social system were in the main repetitive. The State grew in size, split, and grew again, but it was still largely the same kind of State as before. Even though there were important differences between the Ngoni and their opponents, particularly after 1835, those whom they encountered were sufficiently like themselves to be absorbed into the system without difficulty. In the nomenclature of Radcliffe-Brown and the Wilsons, there was social circulation in the Ngoni State but little change in its structural form.[1] For this reason we have been concerned in our analysis so far with but few of the historical details of that period, and have dealt with history only in an abstract and generalized form. Many of the inconsistencies between various versions of the tribal legend have not been [114] significant. For example, Chief Ciwele Ndhlovu of Dowa broke off from the main body of Ngoni, according to some writers before, and according to others after, the split between Mpezeni and Mwambera.[2] It does not matter for our particular purpose which of these versions is correct, for we are here concerned only to establish that from time to time senior lieutenants did split off with their segments to form independent chiefdoms. This process, of which Ciwele's secession is an example, was essentially the same before and after the Mpezeni-Mwambera split.

648 178 121 After 1880 Ngoni history entered a new phase, and social processes began to operate which were not repetitive. Changes began to occur in the form of the Ngoni social field, for instead of interacting with groups similar to themselves, the Ngoni became involved in a much wider network of social relations. This change

[1] Radcliffe-Brown, 'On social structure', p. 4; Wilson, *Social change*, p. 58.
[2] cf. Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 32-31 Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 18; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of scale,[8] as we may call it, was accompanied by major changes not only in the positions occupied by individuals in Ngoni society but also in the form of Ngoni society itself. We have to analyse at this stage a non-repetitive process, by which the autonomous Ngoni state, organized by a segmentary residential system and an age-set system, was changed into a dependent unit in a system of Native Authorities forming part of a world-wide colonial empire. For this reason the details of the process are worth noting, for in Ngoni history they are unique and largely determine the form of modern Ngoni society. Having established this significant sequence of events, we are then in a position to look at the same set of facts in a wider context. For what is unique and non-repetitive for the Ngoni may be repetitive in a wider context. The Ngoni are only one tribe among a myriad of tribes, and what happened to them has also happened to many others. Similar sequences of events, each unique for the particular tribe concerned, have occurred throughout the world at various periods of time whenever small autonomous systems have been absorbed into large and more highly resourceful ones. We can therefore look at Ngoni history from 1880 onwards as either unique, from the point of view of the Ngoni, or as typical, or at least probably typical, of a repetitive process which has often occurred in the development of any empire.

Conveniently, at least some of the facts can be ascertained with reasonable certainty. We are no longer dependent only on oral tradition, but can refer to contemporary documents. These reflect in the main only the European side of Black-White relations, but even so their testimony is enlightening. I have therefore set out in full the history, mainly of external relations, of the Fort Jameson Ngoni from 1886 down to 1900 both with the intention of throwing light on how the transition was made from pre-conquest to modern society in this particular tribal instance, and also as an example of what seems probably an oft-repeated process in the history of any empire. A discussion of how typical the Ngoni experience is would take us beyond the bounds of this book. We should, however, bear in mind that the newer comparative method, as developed by Radcliffe-Brown and his followers, is as applicable to mammoth social forms, such as empires, as to small ones such as hordes, provided only that the right kind of data are available.

Our detailed documentation should extend down to modern times, but after 1900 there was a change in the kind of events that were documented, related as we shall see to a change in social relations, and we have to proceed somewhat differently.

[8] For the concept of scale, see Wilson, *Social change*, pp. 25 *ff*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

2. *Portugal or Britain*

175 Several European powers were interested in the country into which the Ngoni moved in the 1870s. France and Germany both had a general interest in central Africa, and although their areas of greatest activity were elsewhere, they did not leave the country round Mpezeni entirely alone. The French explorer Giraud travelled through what is now the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia and down the Shire Valley in 1883-5, and his compatriot Foà was in the region between Mpezeni and the Zambezi at various times between 1891 and 1897. The White Fathers, a Catholic order at that time recruited largely in France, began work in Bemba country to the north of Mpezeni, and on the Zambezi to the south, during the 1890s. In 1892 Major von Wissmann travelled up the Shire Valley on his way to consolidate the German interest in south-western Tanganyika.

The fate of the plateau bounded by the Luangwa, Zambezi and Shire valleys, with its healthy climate, good pastures, and alleged deposits of gold was, however, the particular concern not of France or Germany, but of Portugal and Britain. The Portuguese settlements on the east coast of Africa guarding the long route to India had been founded in the sixteenth century. The Portuguese soon discovered, or were shown by the Arabs who had been there before them, the Missale gold-mines some forty miles south of present-day Ngoniland. These mines could not compare with the richer treasures discovered south of the Zambezi but they were worth exploiting and there was always the prospect of further discoveries in the vicinity. However in the middle of the eighteenth century the Jesuits, who had been the most penetrating of the Portuguese explorers, were expelled from all Portuguese possessions, and interest in the region lapsed. At the end of the century the quest began for a route to link the Portuguese settlements on the east and west coasts. Pereira and Lacerda passed through Missale in 1796 and 1798 on their visits to the Lunda chief Kazembe and similar routes were followed by Baptista and Jose in 1811, by Monteiro and Gamitto in 1831 and by Silva Porto in 1854. These [139] travellers were interested mainly in ivory and minerals and in securing unmolested passage for their caravans from coast to coast. Although the Portuguese were anxious to keep Britain out of central Africa, the only attempt they made to colonize this portion of the interior was at a short-lived military post, north of Mpezeni's future country in the Luangwa Valley, occupied from 1827 to 1829 and then abandoned.[4]

[4] Poole, 'Portuguese settlement', p. 164. See Map B.

[Text continues on page 68]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP B. MPEZENI'S NGONILAND AND SURROUNDING COUNTRY 1890

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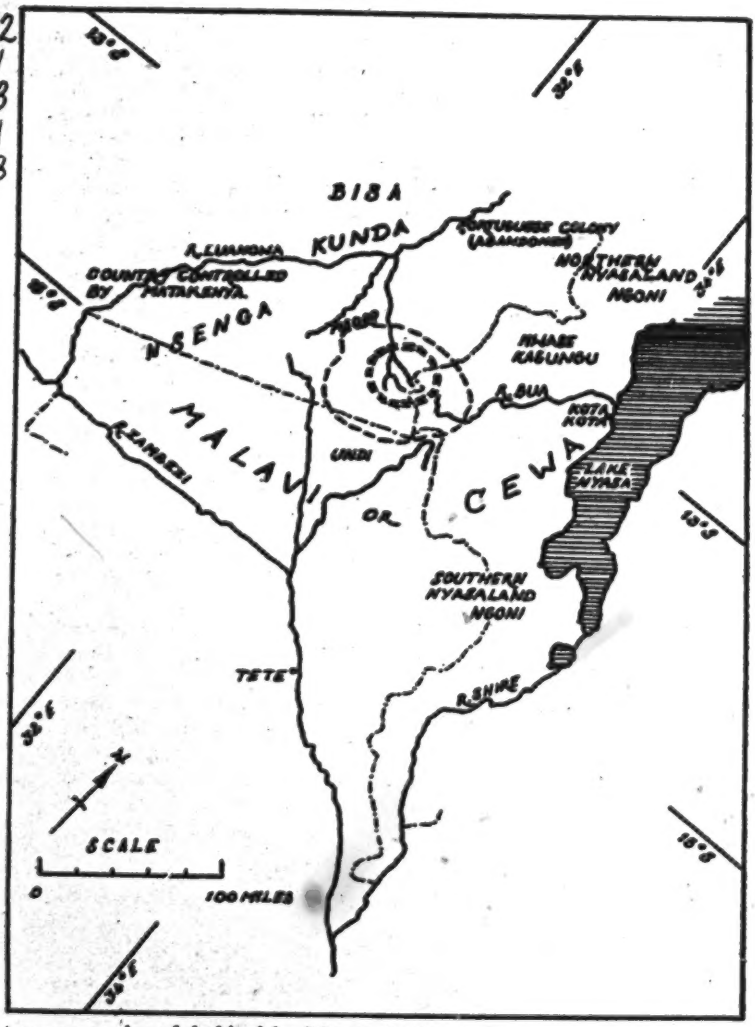

Area inhabited by Mpezeni's Ngoni.
Boundary of no-man's-land surrounding inhabited area.
Modern political boundaries (1950).

[p. 67]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 Livingstone was the first Briton to reach this area. In 1866 he passed through what was to become Mpezeni's country,[5] and in his journals he makes frequent references to Ngoni raids. Unfortunately his carriers would not take him to Ngoni villages and all he saw of Ngoni activity were burnt-out huts and dead bodies killed in battle. The accounts of his journeys stimulated British interest in the region round Lake Nyasa, a centre for the slave trade, and led to the arrival there of missionaries and settlers. In 1874 the [797] Livingstonia Mission was founded and in 1883 a British consul was first appointed to the Shire Highlands.[6]

Mpezeni's country lay some distance from the main centres of British and Portuguese activity, but was not without importance. Apart from Missale, it was thought that there were other gold deposits to be found in the area. In contrast with their harried neighbours, [132] the prosperous Ngoni with their herds of cattle attracted travellers while the pleasant climate of the plateau, compared with the hot valleys of Luangwa, Zambezi, and Nyasa, made it suitable for European colonization. Yet the Ngoni army was formidable, and had to be neutralized in some way if other settlements were to be safe. Mpezeni's country flanked several trade routes of importance from the Zambezi and Lake Nyasa inland to the sources of slaves [439] and ivory. For these various reasons Mpezeni's country attracted 175 the attention of traders and governments, those interested in benefiting by the slave trade as well as those seeking to end it. In 648 addition towards the end of the century when it became clear that Africa was to be completely divided between the Powers, any territory, however inhospitable, that had not already been claimed attracted the attention of treaty-making explorers.

The first move towards incorporating the Fort Jameson Ngoni in a colonial empire was made by the Portuguese who had been stimulated by the increasing British interest in Nyasaland. In November 1888 the Governor-General of Moçambique instructed Wiese, a German[7] trader who had already made contact with Mpezeni, to lead an expedition to him. According to Johnston, Wiese and an associate were offered £2,000 to secure Mpezeni's submission to Portugal.[8] Wiese was well received and distributed flags to Mpezeni and his sons. The Portuguese regarded the

[5] *Last Journals*, i, p. 150.
[6] Johnston, *British Central Africa*, pp. 55-69.
[7] In *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, p. 683, the Portuguese Foreign Minister describes Wiese as a Dutchman. This appears to be incorrect in the light of Wiese's contacts with the German Legation in Lisbon.
[8] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 235; **49**, p. 13. (To save space, all public records will be identified by a serial number printed **bold face**, taken from the first column of the Bibliography, List C.)

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

acceptance of these flags as acts of submission, a view echoed by the French explorer Foà. The British view, based on the observations of Sharpe and the statements of Ngoni envoys to Johnston in January 1890, was that no treaty was signed.[9] The official Portuguese report of the expedition records among other things that Mpezeni had been friendly to the Portuguese, that he accepted their flags, and said that their friends and enemies were also his, that he promised not to raid in their territory, and that he refused to see a British traveller [Sharpe] because he had not been recommended by the Portuguese. There is no specific mention of any agreement by which Mpezeni accepted Portuguese protection.[10] Whatever construction was put on these events by Europeans, either Portuguese or British, it seems unlikely that Mpezeni can have felt himself bound by his acceptance of a flag. Wiese evidently thought it necessary to point out to him that the flag was not to be used as an article of clothing.[11] Sharpe suggests that Wiese tried to make a treaty with the Cewa chief Mkanda, who had been driven out by the Ngoni; Wiese then intended to declare Mkanda the rightful owner of Mpezeni's country.[12]

The British Government had been reluctant to extend its commitments in the Lake Nyasa region beyond the appointment of a consul. During 1888-9, however, there was fighting at the north end of Lake Nyasa between Arabs and the African Lakes Company in which Lugard was involved. Rhodes's attention was attracted to the area and he offered Lugard a large subsidy to develop it.[13] This proof of Rhodes's interest emboldened the Foreign Office, and on 28 July 1889 Johnston arrived at the mouth of the Zambezi as the representative of the Foreign Office and of Rhodes and with the task of consolidating the British position in central Africa.

Johnston began at once to make treaties with as many chiefs as possible, spurred on by the activities of Pinto, a Portuguese engaged on a similar task. In August he sent Sharpe on a journey westward from the Shire Valley on which he made treaties with some of the chiefs lying south of Mpezeni and north of the Zambezi.[14] Sharpe returned to the Shire and was sent off again, this time to Mpezeni himself. He did not manage to see him. According to the Portu-

[9] *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, p. 683; Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, pp. 298*f*; 16, fo. 146; 12, fo. 275; 49; 158.
[10] *Boletim Official de Moçambique*, No. 21 (24 May 1890), pp. 238-40.
[11] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 488.
[12] 12, fo. 289, 311.
[13] Lugard, *East African Empire*, i, pp. 157-9, 202-7.
[14] 6, fo. 256; Sharpe, 'Journey between the Shire and Loangwa', pp. 150-7.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 guese, Mpezeni refused to see Sharpe, while according to Johnston
648 Sharpe had used up his stock of presents before reaching Mpezeni and hence did not attempt to negotiate with him. Sharpe found Wiese at Mpezeni's with a Portuguese officer and on 11 December 1889 witnessed the formal presentation of a Portuguese flag to one of Nsingu's lieutenants, though, 'for reasons of correctness', he was not asked to sign the document officially recording the incident.[14]

Although Wiese was leading the Portuguese party, he spoke bitterly to Sharpe of the way in which the Portuguese had treated him and indicated to him and in a letter to Johnston that he might consider working in the British interest. Johnston replied in January 1890 with a letter of 'a non-compromising but vaguely reassuring character'.[15]

In March 1890 Sharpe began another journey to Mpezeni, this time with instructions from Johnston to make a treaty with Mpezeni and to 'buy' Wiese with an offer of up to £1,000 a year for three years. He arrived at Mpezeni's village on 24 March, only to find that Wiese had left for Tete over a month earlier, leaving behind him the Portuguese officer. Mpezeni kept Sharpe waiting for an interview until 4 April, and although friendly he refused to discuss a treaty or accept a British flag. Sharpe left a letter for Wiese, offering him £300 a year for his services, and departed for the Luangwa Valley. After an unprofitable trip he returned to Mpezeni's on 21 May, to find Wiese and the Portuguese officer on the point of leaving for a trading-trip to Kasungu. Wiese rejected Sharpe's offer of £300 a year and Sharpe was forced to return to Nyasa with both the principal aims of his expedition unaccomplished. He had, however, made a few treaties with non-Ngoni chiefs.[17] Thomson, another explorer who, like Sharpe, was employed by Rhodes's British South Africa Company, arrived in Ngoni country in December 1890 after a successful trip to the Lala. Thomson was greeted with hostility, sheltered with Wiese, and fled during the night.[18]

175 Johnston played a dual role in Nyasaland, for besides repre-
439 senting the British Foreign Office he was also responsible for the
648 interests of Rhodes and the British South Africa Company, from

[14] 15, fo. 26-7; 16, fo. 144; *Boletim Official de Moçambique*, 21 (24 May 1890), p. 239.

[15] Wiese may have offered his services to Johnston before Sharpe arrived at Mpezeni's. cf. 49; 158, p. 62; 16, fo. 145-6.

[17] 9, fo. 30; 16, fo. 146; 12, fo. 274-95; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyassa', pp. 745, 749; Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 89; Wiese, 'Expedição', xi, pp. 412-31, 464-80.

[18] Thomson, 'Lake Bangweolo', p. 114; Wiese, 'Expedição', xi, p. 588.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

whom he received a subsidy. When that company was granted its first charter on 29 October 1889, its sphere of operations was restricted to south of the Zambezi. When Johnston began work north of the river the future division of responsibility between the Foreign Office and the B.S.A. Company was uncertain. On 21 September 1889 Buchanan, on Johnston's instructions, proclaimed a British Protectorate over the region round the Shire Highlands, and on 14 May 1891 this was superseded by the proclamation of a British Protectorate over approximately the whole of present-day Nyasaland. In April 1891 the Foreign Office sanctioned the extension of the B.S.A. Company's operations to the north of the Zambezi within the British sphere of influence, excluding Nyasaland. It was, however, still uncertain whether or not the administration of the Protectorate was to remain permanently separate from that of the B.S.A. Company's territory to the west. A complicated story of financial negotiations and of a quarrel between Johnston and Rhodes ended in an agreement whereby after 30 June 1895 all administrative connexion between the two territories ceased.[19]

The western boundary of the Protectorate proclaimed in 1891 was based on that laid down for the Conventional Basin of the Congo[20] at the Berlin West African Conference in 1885. This line, the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, passed through the eastern portion of Mpezeni's country, leaving the greater portion of Ngoniland outside the Protectorate. The dividing line between the British and Portuguese spheres of influence was not finally determined until the Anglo-Portuguese agreement of 11 June 1891. Despite the Portuguese flags and Wiese's affirmations of friendship, the whole of Mpezeni's country was placed by this agreement in the British and not in the Portuguese sphere, as it had also been in the unratified convention of 20 August 1890.[21] As a consequence, then, of the proclamation of the Nyasaland Protectorate, the extension northwards of the B.S.A. Company's sphere of activity, and the Anglo-Portuguese agreement, Mpezeni's country was divided between the Protectorate and the B.S.A. Company's territory. In consequence of the agreement, or because Mpezeni was tired of them, Wiese and the Portuguese expedition left Ngoniland.

Despite this formal division Mpezeni had as yet, as Johnston was to point out six years later, 'ceded nothing to anybody'.[22] On

[19] *State papers*, lxxxi, p. 1009, No. 243; *London Gazette*, 15 May 1891 and 24 February 1893; *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 634-40; *A & P*, 1895, lxxi, pp. 565-8; Johnston, *Story of my life*, p. 457.
[20] *A & P*, 1884-5, lv, p. 439.
[21] *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, pp. 589, 625; *A & P*, 1890-1, xcvi, p. 420.
[22] 158, p. 63. cf. 232, p. 59.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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the other hand, Sharpe and Thomson had made treaties with some of the chiefs round about Mpezeni, and Johnston urged that Mpezeni had merely dispossessed these treaty-making chiefs and 'consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief'. Mpezeni, he held, was a 'robber without rights'.[23] As a matter of policy Johnston supported the friendly matrilineal tribes rather than Mpezeni. He also opposed him because of the Ngoni raids which threatened the settled order he was trying to establish. He held that Mpezeni was such a scourge of the indigenous population that he must some day be dealt with, that he was an intrusive Zulu robber who must eventually be subdued and dethroned, when the country could be administered directly by Europeans or could be restored to the government of the rightful indigenous chieftains.[24] Even after Mpezeni had been defeated, the precipitating causes of the war were regarded by the Nyasaland Administration as only incidental, for 'The Angoni had, however, by their incessant raids into our territory made it a matter which sooner or later would have to be dealt with . . . '.[25]

One factor which delayed Johnston from acting as swiftly against Mpezeni as he did against the Yao and southern Ngoni was that Mpezeni was farther than they from the main artery of Nyasaland, Lake Nyasa and the Shire Valley. In any case Johnston was anxious not to take precipitate action with too few troops which might end in disaster. He was reluctant to allow the parties of prospectors and traders who entered Mpezeni's country to take arms with them lest they should provoke the Ngoni into attacking them before Johnston was ready. He was anxious to avoid having to face an alliance of all the various Ngoni groups. After the downfall of Lobengula in Southern Rhodesia in 1893, Ndebele refugees reached Mpezeni and according to some reports Lobengula himself was among them. Co-ordinated action by Mpezeni and the Ndebele was feared and, as we shall see, an attempt was in fact made by Chabisa to unite Mpezeni's forces with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. The only offensive action taken by the Nyasaland Administration prior to the final conflict in 1898 was in May 1896, when troops were moved from Kotakota to Kasungu in response to a report that Mpezeni was planning to kill some prospectors, but the report was found to be false and the expedition was called off.[26]

[23] 158, pp. 62-3.
[24] 132; 158, p. 61.
[25] *A & P*, 1899, lxiii, p. 253.
[26] 98; 132; 148a, fo. 141; Warton in *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These events made the inclusion of Mpezeni's country in the British colonial empire highly likely. The way in which this would come about was still not obvious, nor had it yet been decided who should control the economic resources of the area. It was the struggle for economic control which in the end decided the political issue. Here again Wiese played a prominent part. 175 648

3. *Concession hunters*

From 1885, if not before, Wiese lived in Ngoni country and among the neighbouring tribes as a trader.[27] His wife, who lived with him part of the time in Mpezeni's country, was Doña Romana, a black Portuguese lady who owned some hundreds of slaves. Wiese's commercial objectives can be inferred from the conversation he had with Sharpe on this matter in May 1890, when he mentioned that he employed over two hundred and fifty of his wife's slaves as elephant-hunters, and that he was planning to employ two thousand men in trading expeditions to the Luapula, Garanganze and other distant places. He was also at that time planning to make war on a certain Cewa chief.[28] 175 439

According to Wiese's own account, he gained a number of concessions from chiefs and he was granted in 1887 various mining rights by the Portuguese Government in the territory to the south of Mpezeni. On 15 November 1886 Mpezeni orally granted him a concession for ninety-nine years and, Wiese claimed, this agreement was ratified in writing on 14 April 1891. Mpezeni, described as 'Paramount Chief of the Angoni (Zulus) and Sovereign Ruler over Maravia and Western Nyassaland', granted Wiese a concession in 'one part' of his country some 6,700 square miles in extent and reaching to within twelve miles of the Zambezi near Chicoa. In return for exclusive mineral, timber, water, railway and other rights, Wiese agreed to pay Mpezeni £200 annually and 1 per cent of his profits. Mpezeni reserved the rights of sovereignty over his people and the land, water and timber necessary to his subjects were guaranteed.[29] [31]

A few months before this written concession was drawn up, Bowler and Rankin, representing the comprehensively named Upper and Lower Zambezi Navigation, Exploration, Trading, Land-acquiring and Colonization Company, Limited, arrived in

[27] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86, says that Wiese visited Mpezeni in 1881. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 71, in another tentative chronology, follows him, although there is no mention of this visit in the body of Poole's book. Wiese himself appears not to mention any date earlier than 1885. See 40.

[28] 67, fo. 139; 12, fo. 285.

[29] 32, pp. 17-18.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 439 the country.[30] They joined Wiese in collecting concessions from the surrounding chiefs.[31]

A legal procedure for registering and recognizing concessions 175 within the British sphere was established by Johnston on 18 July 439 1891.[32] Without recognition by Johnston's Land Court, a con- 648 cession did not of itself establish a clear right to title under British law. The issue of this proclamation may have been prompted by Wiese's actions. In June, shortly before it was issued, Wiese was travelling to Europe with his concessions. He met Johnston at Quilimane and asked him to recognize them.[33] Johnston refused to do this. He particularly objected to the concession from Mpezeni, not only for its monopolies but also because it had not been signed by Mpezeni but only by a Portuguese allegedly acting on the chief's behalf, and because Mpezeni did not control the large area mentioned in the concession. Such land as he did control he had obtained only by dispossessing the earlier inhabitants. Johnston regarded Wiese as a slave trader who forced chiefs to make their mark on documents without explaining what the documents meant and without making any payment for the concessions obtained. He maintained that Mpezeni had never granted any rights to Wiese and wrote of the concession: 'I always refused to recognize his preposterous document.' He complained that Wiese tried to 'bounce the British Government into recognition of his (wholly unfounded) claims'. Johnston later argued that in order to conclude eight of his other treaties, Wiese must have travelled five hundred miles between 20 December and 23 January, an improbable occurrence.[34] Acting on this policy Johnston insisted, at Quilimane, that he must examine Wiese's concessions before he could pronounce on them. Wiese made a declaration before Johnston's deputy describing the concessions and went on his way to Europe, he maintaining he had thereby registered his concessions and Johnston maintaining he had not.[35]

Wiese's agents in London began corresponding with the Foreign Office in December 1891 pressing for the recognition of his

[30] Hole, *Making of Rhodesia*, p. 241; 17, fo. 390-1.

[31] Bradley, 'Salute to adventurers', p. 54, says Wiese bought concessions from Bowler and Rankin.

[32] 36; 52, fo. 420.

[33] 40, p. 33; 49, p. 14; 67, fo. 140; 81, fo. 144-5.

[34] 49; 81, fo. 148.

[35] There is some uncertainty about the date on which Wiese made his statement at Quilimane. Johnston refers to a declaration sworn to by Wiese before the Acting Vice-Consul on 7 June 1891. Bowler's letter to the Foreign Office was supported by a copy of a receipt for a fee paid for witnessing a signature, dated 27 June. cf. 35; 48, p. 15; 74.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

concessions. In January 1892 Wiese offered his services to Johnston as an agent, and in March repeated the offer. He seems to have mentioned the possibility of his leading the Ngoni in battle on behalf of the Administration. Johnston rejected these offers contemptuously along with similar offers made by Bowler, saying that he wanted Bowler and Wiese to remain in Europe. He also remained adamant in his refusal to recognize Wiese's concessions, although the Foreign Office itself continued to prevaricate on this issue.[36]

In 1891 or 1892 Wiese visited Lisbon in an effort to collect the £2,000 owing to him for his services to the Portuguese during 1888 and the following years. It was, however, in London that he tried to obtain financial backing so that he could begin to exploit his concessions, with or without recognition from Johnston. According to Johnston, Wiese offered his concessions to the Central African and Zoutpansberg Exploration Company, with which the naval explorer Cameron was connected. In August 1892 Wiese told Johnston that he was no longer personally interested in the fate of the concessions. According to a Foreign Office minute, Wiese offered the concessions to the B.S.A. Company for a small sum in January 1893. The search for financial support ended on 18 February 1893 when the Mozambique Gold Land and Concessions Company Limited was incorporated in London to operate Wiese's concessions, for which they paid him £1,500.[37]

The Mozambique Company approached the Foreign Office and were instructed first to register their concessions in Nyasaland. According to Johnston, early in 1893 Bowler sent copies of the concessions to Johnston, who replied that he must produce the originals or certified copies. In April and May 1893 there was an exchange of letters between Wiese and Johnston about the recognition of the concessions, and in the autumn Bowler wrote again on the matter. However, according to Johnston, between June and October 1891 the African Lakes and British South Africa companies had placed claims before his Land Court for recognition in the prescribed manner and no counter-claims were registered there.[38] Therefore, on 25 September 1893 Johnston granted a certificate of claim to the B.S.A. Company, in its commercial capacity, entitling them to exercise mining and other rights throughout the greater part of what was to become North-Eastern Rhodesia and including the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland.

[36] 39; 42; 46, fo. 7; 47, fo. 36; 48; 49; 51; 52; 64, fo. 85-6.

[37] 67, fo. 140; 81, fo. 145; 64, fo. 89 (minute); 230, p. 69; *Maugham report*, p. 6.

[38] 80; 81, fo. 144, 146; 82.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 The B.S.A. Company produced in its support treaties made by
139 Sharpe and Stevenson with six chiefs, Mpezeni not among them.
648 Johnston's argument for including Mpezeni's country within the area of the grant appears to have been that the land had been wrested by Mpezeni from the treaty-making chiefs. None of the six chiefs mentioned by name in the certificate made any claim in the treaties to rights in Mpezeni's country, and indeed only one of them, Muliro, a minor Nsenga-Ambo chief, bordered on Mpezeni.

However Johnston also refers in the certificate of claim to 'similar privileges obtained through treaties concluded by the African Lakes Company and transferred by them to the British South Africa Company (the said treaties have received separate confirmation at my hands)'. These additional treaties are not specified in the certificate but later Johnston wrote, in connexion with the North Charterland Concession granted by the B.S.A. Company, that 'the B.S.A. Company would base its right to grant this concession on its recognized treaties with Undi, Mwasi Kazungu and ...(I forget the names), the indigenous and partially dispossessed chiefs of Mpezeni's country'. Sharpe had made a treaty with Undi
131 on 15 April 1891, in which the northern boundary of Undi's
175 territory was said to be the parallel of latitude 14° S. or thereabouts,
439 thus cutting into the southern fringe of the no-man's-land round
648 Mpezeni. Mwase made two treaties, one on 17 September 1885 with Stevenson as agent of the African Lakes Company and another on 30 November 1889 with the British Crown. In the earlier treaty the extent of Mwase's country is not stated but when the benefits of this treaty were transferred to the B.S.A. Company in 1893, Mwase's country was said to be bounded on the west by the water-parting between the Luangwa and Zambezi-Nyasa basins and on the south by the Anglo-Portuguese border. This water-parting does not meet the Anglo-Portuguese frontier until as far west as about 31° 15′ E., in what is now Petauke District, and in Ngoniland it runs approximately east-west on latitude 13° 49′ S. In the area controlled by Mpezeni, Mwase's territory, as defined in the transfer agreement, included the whole portion claimed by Undi in 1891 and in addition a strip of land to the north of Undi's claim, forming the southern margin of the Ngoni settled area. The main concentration of Ngoni villages, in the valleys of the Lutembwe, Lunthwele and Msipazi rivers, lay just north of the territory
175 claimed for Mwase. Thus the grant of rights to the B.S.A. Company
439 in Mpezeni's country appears to have been based for the most
648 part on treaties made with chiefs whose names Johnston forgot,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and possibly also on the 1889 treaty between Mwase and the British Crown.[39]

Johnston granted a second certificate of claim, completed on 28 September 1893, to the African Lakes and B.S.A. companies jointly, based on the 1891 treaty with Undi and on another made a week later with a neighbouring chief. The area mentioned in this certificate conforms to that laid down in the treaty.[40]

Therefore when Warton arrived in Nyasaland in 1894 as emissary of the Mozambique Company and tried to secure recognition of Wiese's concessions, he found that the area claimed by his company had already been granted to its rivals. He succeeded in registering the concessions but not in gaining recognition of their validity.

Johnston registered, but did not recognize, the Wiese concessions. On the other hand the concessions acquired by the B.S.A. Company, though registered and recognized by Johnston, were not yet confirmed by the Foreign Office. Johnston's conduct of the affair did not meet with approval from his superiors at home, who thought that Warton had been unfairly treated.[41] One consideration influencing the Foreign Office may have been Wiese's German nationality. There had been an Anglo-German Agreement in 1891[42] defining the spheres of influence of these two countries in central Africa, but Maugham suggests that the Foreign Office thought that Wiese, after offering his services to Portugal and Britain, might now turn to Germany who could then use his concessions as the basis of a claim to the territory. At the same time the Foreign Office thought it might be unwise to declare the concessions invalid, since they might sometime be acquired by the B.S.A. Company and be used to strengthen its hand. Wiese, who according to Johnston had run away from Germany to evade conscription, had nevertheless received the support of the German Minister in Lisbon in securing rights to extensive estates in Portuguese East Africa in lieu of the £2,000 he had been promised originally by the Portuguese Government. Johnston suspected Wiese of trying to introduce German methods on his estates and wrote that it would be 'awkward' if the land between Nyasaland and the coast were 'in the hands of a stronger Power than Portugal and one

[39] 73; 75, fo. 180-1; 76; 7, fo. 33; 158, p. 61. I am much indebted to Sir Dougal Malcolm and the British South Africa Company for permission to cite the 1885 treaty and the transfer agreement of 1893. Unfortunately I have been unable to trace the 1889 treaty.

[40] 74.

[41] 85.

[42] *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 24-31.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

far less likely to yield its pretensions'. These considerations found expression in the agreement of 24 November 1894, allowing the B.S.A. Company to take over from Johnston the administration of its sphere north of the Zambezi. The Foreign Office stipulated that sanction for the treaties made by the B.S.A. Company's agents was to be without prejudice to Wiese's possible claims.[43]

The Mozambique Company opened negotiations with the B.S.A. Company with these registered but unrecognized concessions as their asset. Agreement was reached on 8 May 1895. In return for any rights they might have in the British sphere under Wiese's concessions, and conditional on their raising certain capital, the Mozambique Company were granted mineral and land rights in a block of land ten thousand square miles in extent within the B.S.A. Company's territory. The rights of Natives were to be respected. Any rights the Mozambique Company might have in Portuguese territory were not to be exercised. A new company, the North Charterland Exploration Company, in which the B.S.A. Company had an interest, was formed to operate the grant of land. Thus the North Charterland Concession came into being. The whole of Mpezeni's country, except for that portion included in the Nyasaland Protectorate, came within the Concession.[44]

Some thirty-five years later, Mr. Justice Maugham was to rule that this grant to the Mozambique Company could only have been potential, not actual, since at that time the B.S.A. Company did not yet possess the mineral and other rights they were making over. At the time this consideration carried no weight. In April 1895, even before agreement with the B.S.A. Company had been concluded, the Mozambique Company's pioneer party reached Tete. They arrived in Ngoniland in the following year.[45]

4. *European consolidation*

In Nyasaland fighting continued sporadically in an attempt to end the slave trade. From 1891 onwards Johnston's troops fought a series of engagements with Arabs, Yao and southern Ngoni. Mpezeni was regarded not only as a robber with whom no treaties were necessary but also as a partner in the slave trade, for one of the main routes used by Arabs and their African colleagues ran near Mpezeni's country.[46] All Ngoni raids were interpreted by the Nyasaland Administration as raids for slaves and Sharpe, describing his second visit to Mpezeni, wrote that the chief did a brisk

[43] 67, fo. 141-2; 95, p. 48.
[44] 99; 100.
[45] *Maugham report*, pp. 6-7.
[46] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 3 (1 February 1896), p. 2, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

trade in slaves, selling them to the Arabs.[47] Wiese's evidence on this point is contradictory. In 1881 he wrote that Arab caravans continually visited Mpezeni and that most of the raids were to capture slaves for sale to the Arabs. In 1900, he wrote in one place that some captives were sold to the Arabs and in another that Mpezeni scarcely knew of the permanent slave hunters and that the sole object of major raids was to gain captives to cultivate the Ngoni fields.[48] Few tales of the Arabs and no nicknames have survived to the present time among the Ngoni, and it is probable that Sharpe was overestimating the importance to Mpezeni of the external slave trade. Although Livingstone knew it, Wiese and Kerr are the only contemporary writers who were aware that captives were assimilated,[49] for other writers do not distinguish between captives and slaves. Whether or not the raids were made for Ngoni recruits or for slaves to be sold to the Arabs, it is clear that they were often made into Nyasaland and thus challenged the Administration there. Towards the end of 1895 the Collector at Kotakota opened a campaign against Mwase Kasungu, the Cewa chief whose territory lay between Mpezeni and the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. It is alleged that Mpezeni offered to help Mwase in this campaign, but it seems that no help arrived. On 31 December 1895 the fortified village of Kasungu was captured and Chabisa, a chief who had been helping Mwase, fled to Mpezeni.[51]

Chabisa may have been the moving spirit behind the delegation which early in 1896 went from Mpezeni to the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland calling on them to rise with him and Chabisa against the British.[52] The Livingstonia Mission had already been working among the northern Ngoni for eighteen years, and the delegation found little support.

As well as Chabisa, other refugees arrived from the south, after the First Matabele War of 1893 in Southern Rhodesia. According to some accounts the Ndebele Paramount Chief, Lobengula, was with them, only to die a few months later.[53]

[47] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 745. cf. Perham, *Ten Africans*, p. 96.
[48] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478 and 'Geschichte', pp. 188 and 197.
[49] Livingstone, *Narrative*, p. 385; Kerr, 'Upper Zambesi', p. 396.
[51] Swann, the Collector, in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1; and *A & P*, 1896, lviii, pp. 417, 418, describes Chabisa and Mwase as Ngoni and Zulu chiefs. Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168, say Mwase and Chabisa were brothers. It is unlikely that either was Ngoni. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 144, calls Mwase a Cewa but says he had many Ngoni headmen under him, thereby amending his earlier statements that Mwase and Undi were Ngoni. See 10, fo. 109; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 412. [52] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 292.
[53] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2; Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 83; Posselt, *Upangula*, pp. 112-24; 98; 121, fo. 193.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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Meanwhile there was a lull in European activity in Mpezeni's country itself. After Wiese and the Portuguese officer left in mid-1891 a Portuguese trader remained behind. He was subsequently killed, either by accident or on Mpezeni's instructions.[54] After sending envoys to Johnston on Lake Nyasa in January 1890 and reporting the death of the Portuguese trader, Mpezeni seems not to have made any attempts to get in touch with Europeans for some years. Johnston sent an influential Swahili headman to visit Mpezeni in 1891, but Mpezeni threatened to behead the messenger if he entered Ngoniland, and he turned back before reaching the country.[55] In 1892 Ngoni patrols sweeping to the south in Undi's country came in touch with a French explorer living there and some of them were killed by his men. In 1895 they made contact with him again and he visited a senior lieutenant of segment 4.[56]

But the Frenchman was a bird of passage. It was not until 5 December 1895 that prospectors arrived with the intention of remaining in the country. They represented the Rhodesia Concessions Company and began to build Fort Partridge at Mafuta's, only twenty miles to the north of Mpezeni.[57] In the face of Johnston's opposition they had been allowed to bring Maxim guns with them. Despite the threat to Mpezeni implicit in this, they were at first received hospitably. Later the Ngoni became less friendly towards them, due, they thought, to the arrival of Chabisa and the Ndebele refugees and also because of the news reaching Mpezeni of increasing British activity in Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia. In May 1896 the prospectors thought that they might all be massacred and appealed for help to Kotakota. Troops were moved up from the Lake to Kasungu but, as we have mentioned above, they withdrew when it was found that the prospectors were in no danger. Nevertheless the prospectors left Ngoniland on 13 June, not for fear of Mpezeni but because the North Charterland complained that they were poaching on its preserves.[58] Thus the control of Europeans in his country had already passed out of Mpezeni's hands.

There were a number of transient visitors to Mpezeni in 1896,[59] and the B.S.A. Company's representative paid a visit, but

[54] 67, fo. 140.
[55] 81, fo. 147-8.
[56] Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, p. 281, and *Big game*, pp. 84, 105. In another account, 'Traversée de l'Afrique', p. 113, Foà says he visited the lieutenant in 1892.
[57] See Map C.
[58] 97; 101, fo. 483; 102, fo. 479; 113, fo. 41; 115, fo. 281; 123; 126; 148a, fo. 141; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2, and iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 2; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 12.
[59] McClonnie, Smith and Fraser, reported in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 1, and iii, 13 (1 July 1896), p. 2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most serious intrusion was from the direction of Tete. After his return to Africa in 1892, Wiese had occupied himself with his newly won estates in the Zambezi Valley, where his activities attracted the unfavourable attention of Johnston. His interests in Mpezeni's country took second place for a while, despite his letter to Johnston about them on 14 May 1893. It appears that when the Mozambique Company's party arrived at Tete in April 1895 they made contact with Wiese. Thereafter he was closely connected with the activities of the Mozambique Company and of its successor, the North Charterland. The exact course of events is not clear. Johnston reported on 24 March 1896 that Wiese had broken with the North Charterland, yet when Warton visited Mpezeni four months later as leader of the North Charterland delegation, Wiese was with him as interpreter.[60]

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At the beginning of 1896 representatives of the North Charterland first arrived in Ngoni country. After a short time, one of them was expelled by Mpezeni. On 5 July 1896 Warton with the main party established the North Charterland headquarters at a camp, later known as Fort Young, in the heart of Ngoniland adjacent to Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10.[61]

At first Mpezeni treated the North Charterland party kindly and provided them with carriers to bring up their loads from Tete.[62] According to the Foreign Office, whose sources of information I cannot trace, Mpezeni was friendly because Wiese emphasized that he was a German and offered himself and the expedition as a bulwark against British expansion. Warton, the ex-secretary of a cricket team and sometime lieutenant-colonel, posed, it was said, as Wiese's elder brother.[63] These allegations were denied by Warton and Wiese. They pointed out that the first member of the North Charterland party to enter Ngoniland had been an Englishman and maintained that Mpezeni was too intelligent not to recognize for himself the difference between an Englishman and a German. Warton had been introduced by Wiese merely as *okullo-ango* [*mkulu wangu*, my superior]. They maintained that the British flag had always been flown with the North Charterland's own flag.[64] Warton and Wiese's testimony conflicts with the Ngoni recollection

[60] *Maugham report*, p. 7; 122, fo. 192; 163; 164; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12*f*.

[61] 122, fo. 192; 163; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 71. Deare, who never mentions Warton or Wiese by name, claims to have been first to build the fort. Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.

[62] Forbes in *C.A.P.*, 15 November 1896; Warton in *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April; 148a, fo. 141.

[63] 16a, p. 64; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 12; Read, 'Tradition', p. 478.

[64] 163; 164.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175
439
648

of these events, as recorded by Read, and with the contemporary account of Genthe. Genthe was a German traveller who always flew a British flag in central Africa. There was no flag at Warton's camp when he visited it in 1897 and the North Charterland asked him not to display his Union Jack. Whatever may really have happened, an explanation of the North Charterland's success by reference to its anti-British pose conflicts with the evidence of Mpezeni's missions of friendship to the Collector at Kotakota. Deare, one of the North Charterland party, gives the impression that the success of the expedition was due to his ability to speak Zulu, make the right presents, and diagnose the cause of illness in Mpezeni's cattle. This explanation seems just as likely.[65]

It seems probable that Mpezeni was prepared to be friendly with the British at a distance but did not want them on his doorstep. We have noted his deputation to Johnston in January 1890. Early in 1896 Mpezeni sent a mission to the Collector at Kotakota asking for a British flag. Surprisingly this overture seems not to have been followed up. Swann, the Collector, did, however, send twelve beasts as a present to Mpezeni who replied, after prompting from Swann, with a gift of ivory.[66] In September Mpezeni sent word to the Collector that he had punished his warriors who had attacked some B.S.A. Company's carriers. In October his envoys told the Collector that he did not allow raiding and that he was glad to hear of raiders being punished when they were caught, while in February 1897 he appealed through his messengers to the Administration for help in restraining his people from raiding inside Nyasaland.

Wiese accompanied Mpezeni's envoys on this last trip to Kotakota and according to a North Charterland account of their mission, Mpezeni then consented to the introduction of a British garrison in his territory.[67] Even towards Warringham, the B.S.A. Company's representative, he was friendly at first. In about June 1896 he exchanged presents with him and made many expressions of good will, though telling Warringham that he was not afraid to meet him in war if necessary.[68]

[65] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1; 165; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 20, 27 April, 4 May.

[66] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 427; Swann, *Slave hunters*, pp. 315-16.

[67] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 12 (15 June 1896), p. 1; iii, 18 (1 October 1896), p. 2; iii, 22 (1 December 1896), p. 3; iv, 4 (1 March 1897), p. 3; and iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1; 165.

[68] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 15 (1 August 1896), p. 3; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Friction*

On 14 May 1897 Mpezeni wrote to the Collector at Kotakota that he wished to move across the border into the Protectorate. He said, 'If you agree to my removing . . . I shall not raid anywhere.' He was prepared to pay tax if called upon to do so.[69] He may have been led to take this drastic step by his growing annoyance at the activities of Warton and the North Charterland party. In 1896 Warton had apparently enjoyed Mpezeni's approval but he soon began to displease him. Johnston, who had no high opinion of his fellow-men, described Warton as 'that not very capable or prudent man' and as 'not a bad man but not very trustworthy'. The North Charterland was a purely commercial company and Warton had no administrative powers. These were reserved under the charter to the B.S.A. Company and were exercised on its behalf by Johnston until 1 July 1895, when Forbes was appointed Administrator for the B.S.A. Company's sphere. As yet, however, in Johnston's view, the B.S.A. Company had no governing rights in Mpezeni's country, as neither Mpezeni, nor the chiefs he was held to have displaced, had ceded them.[70] Forbes's nearest representatives were Warringham and Middleton, who in March 1896 made a camp sixty miles to the north of Mpezeni in the country of Cinunda, a Cewa chief. Forbes visited Mpezeni in September 1896, but with no success.[71] Warton considered that in the absence of any action by the B.S.A. Company he must set up his own administration. He drew up elaborate plans for developing the country, calling for an armed police force and for a hut tax of 5s.[72] He believed, he said, that if Mpezeni were convinced that the North Charterland had sufficient force available, he would not resist them.[73] He may have been influenced in adopting this attitude by the remark he attributed to the chief that if he was seriously threatened by Europeans he would give way. This conflicts with Mpezeni's remark to Warringham that he was quite prepared to fight, which we have noted above. According to Johnston, Warton tried to force a flag on Mpezeni and to stop him raiding for slaves. Johnston seems not to have been impressed with the delegations to Kotakota and maintained that Mpezeni organized raids to spite Warton.[74]

[69] 167.

[70] 169, fo. 63; 172, fo. 161; 158, p. 63; *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 2, cols. 1 and 3; *A & P.*, 1896, lviii, p. 425.

[71] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 71; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 19 (15 October 1896), p. 2.

[72] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12-13.

[73] 122.

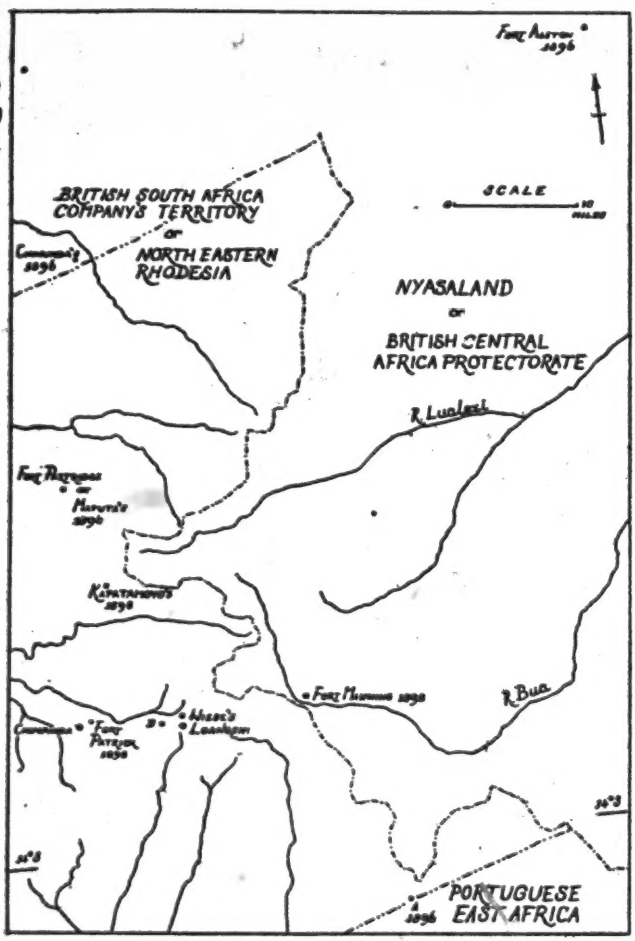
[74] 132, p. 59; 158, p. 62.

[Text continues on page 85]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

102
103
133
648
175

MAP C. WHITE SETTLEMENTS IN NGONILAND
1890–1900



-·-·-·- White territorial boundaries.

-·-·-·- North Charterland Concession, northern boundary.

• White settlements, with date of foundation.

A Camp near Missale known in 1896 as FORT YOUNG.

B Brick building known from 1898 onwards as FORT YOUNG or FORT ETTAMBA.

FORT JAMESON. The name applied in 1896 to a camp at CHIPUNDA'S; possibly in October 1897 to MAPOTA'S; from December 1897 until March 1898 to CHIPUNDA'S; and from October 1898 onwards to the township founded at KAPATAMOYO'S.

FORT YOUNG. The name applied in 1896 to a camp (A) at Missale; in 1897 and 1898 to a camp, also known as WEBB'S or CHAKWANA, near the village of Loangeni; and from later in 1898 onwards to a brick building (B) about two miles farther west.

LOANGENI. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 10.

CHIPUNDA. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 15, also known as MPEZENI'S.

[p. 84]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

6. *Fighting*

The European travellers who came to Ngoniland did not come alone. They brought with them their own retinues of servants and carriers, usually not Ngoni, who took orders only from their own masters and over whose misdoings there was continual friction with the Ngoni.[75] Wiese had an armed guard of a hundred and twenty Makua, though later this was disbanded.[76] Mpezeni insisted that the so-called Fort Young should not have a stockade but only a low reed fence, presumably to prevent the North Charterland from putting themselves beyond the reach of his warriors.[77] On the other hand Warton and the North Charterland directors were insistent that their employees should be armed, sought permission from the Foreign Office to import arms through Nyasaland, and even threatened to withdraw if the B.S.A. Company did not make adequate arrangements for their protection. Johnston was firmly opposed to private armies and private wars, and the Foreign Office advocated that if the North Charterland was in a precarious position it should withdraw until an administration had been established. Eventually Johnston came round to the view that the B.S.A. Company was so committed in Southern Rhodesia that it could not provide the North Charterland with the protection it was entitled to, and that, therefore, the North Charterland had a reasonable claim to arms of its own. Accordingly in July 1896, he reluctantly approved the import of two Maxim guns 'for eventual use against Mpezeni'. These Maxims seem never to have arrived, but Deare successfully smuggled in thirty rifles.[78] Thus the stage was set for struggle by persuasion to give way to struggle by arms.

At the same time as they were thus altering the distribution of power within Ngoni country, the European intruders were developing external relations with other African groups which were incompatible with the raided-raiding relationship existing between them and the Ngoni. Wiese had trading-stations in other tribal areas,[79] and we have already noted his plans for building up a large trading business based on the labour of his wife's slaves. Genthe was friendly with Cewa and Kunda chiefs and on that account tried to represent their interests to Mpezeni after they had been raided.[80] Deare went to visit Cimwala and Undi, Cewa chiefs, in about January

[75] e.g. the affair of the stolen red blankets, described by Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[76] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.
[77] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[78] 220, pp. 57-8; 229-33; 239-42; 249; 255; 256.
[79] 4[illegible]
[80] *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), pp. 1-2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 1897 and some time later they came to visit him at Fort Young.
439 Deare gave them presents, presumably to gain their support for his
own enterprises, and makes no mention of their seeing Mpezeni.[81]
648 Undi was the chief who claimed part of Mpezeni's country in his
treaty with Sharpe and who in 1892, when Foà was living in his
[721] village, was raided by Ngoni several times a month.[82] Thus the Europeans in Ngoniland were affiliated not only to European groups in Nyasaland and in England out of direct touch with Mpezeni but also with African groups with whom he was in contact. There was an essential contradiction in the situation in which, for example, Deare was friendly with both Mpezeni and Undi while Mpezeni was at war with Undi. Everywhere, not only in Nyasaland, the traditional Ngoni pattern of external relations was becoming incompatible with their relations with Europeans in their midst.

The leader of the opposition to the North Charterland was Nsingu, Mpezeni's heir.[83] Nsingu was at first friendly towards Warton but later his attitude changed. Deare, before establishing the North Charterland camp in 1896, had passed through Nsingu's
[576] village, by Ngoni standards an insulting thing to do, and later quarrelled with him, finally flogging him.[84] Genthe, the German traveller, met Nsingu on a path and only grudgingly gave way to let him pass.[85] While Mpezeni remained comparatively friendly, Nsingu and the warriors whose interests he came to represent became increasingly hostile towards all Europeans. At the same time Mpezeni's control over his lieutenants seems not to have been effective, as evidenced by his apparent inability to prevent unauthorized raiding. Deare, according to his own account, enjoyed Mpezeni's favour and was almost forced to marry one of his daughters, and yet Mashanga, the second lieutenant of segment 10, twice tried to kill him.[86] According to Genthe, Mpezeni sent repeatedly for some army leaders who had been raiding and they failed to appear. This may have been deliberate procrastination arranged by Mpezeni, who treated him coldly, but Genthe thought that Mpezeni was only a dummy whose lieutenants did what they liked.[87] With Deare there seems to have been a genuine difference in attitude between Mashanga on the one side and on the other Mpezeni, supported by Mcekwani, the first lieutenant over

[81] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[82] Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, pp. 280-1.
[83] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[84] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[85] *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1.
[86] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. cf. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.
[87] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mashanga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88] 175 439 648

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tsonga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions. 643 727 631 175 [578] [662]

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tsinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94] 175 643 648

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting 171 643

[88] Swann's report for 1896, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.
[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.
[90] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 24; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 23; cf. Young, *History*, p. 112, who reverses the role played by witch-finders in this incident.
[91] As reported by Warton in June 1896, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[92] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 493.
[93] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingu, Nzermane, and Madzimawi.
[94] 281, fo. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

171 643 between rival heirs even while the occupant of the throne was still alive. The brothers Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fought for the heirship while their father Mpande was still chief.[95]

175 643 648 669 The apparent ineffectiveness of Mpezeni's rule may well have been due to the increasing segmentation of the State as it expanded and to the growing differentiation of interest between one major segment and another. As it happened, there was no civil war and the tribe did not split, at least not in these terms. A cleavage in the royal house did reveal itself later, in 1903, after British rule had begun, when Madzimawi tried to take the name of Zwangendaba and was opposed by the supporters of Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu. But by then the form of the State was already determined by political forces other than the balanced opposition of segments. It is significant of the changed situation that Madzimawi did not send his armed followers against the new Mpezeni to challenge his succession. Instead he applied to the Native Commissioner for permission to take the name of his grandfather.[96]

Instead of dividing in civil war the whole country united against the European interlopers. Mpezeni alone tried to protect his friend Wiese. The effective cleavage was not between rival heirs but between the Paramount Chief and his people. He was now a man in his sixties who seemed not to want war and who perhaps benefited more than his people from the presents made by Europeans. The Ngoni people continued to believe and teach that fighting was the proper occupation for men. An attempt to exploit this cleavage was made in 1897 when Wiese, perhaps remembering his earlier attempt to serve Portugal and Britain simultaneously, offered his services to the B.S.A. Company. Forbes thought that if Wiese was given troops, he would be supported by Mpezeni, who would then be in a position to hold Nsingu and the Ngoni warriors in check.[97] But this plan was overtaken by events.

64 721 We saw in the previous chapter that the organization of the State was based on warfare, not only on war as an activity bringing prestige to successful warriors but also on war as a method of recruitment to the ever-widening segments of the residential system. Without warfare to eliminate the unsuccessful and to bring 175 promotion and dependants to those who survived, the system could 439 not keep going. It was in no sense inevitable that the Fort Jameson 648 Ngoni and the British should fight; we have only to turn to the

[95] Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', pp. 35-6, and *Malinowski's Sociological Theories*, pp. 19-20; Krige, *Social system of the Zulu*, p. 19.
[96] See pp. 139*f*.
[97] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Ngoni of northern Nyasaland for a similar situation which ended in the relatively peaceful incorporation of the tribe into the framework of colonial administration. But in northern Nyasaland there were no gold-mines, there were only missionaries. Johnston admits that the presence of mission stations among the northern Nyasaland Ngoni embarrassed him, and he refrained from using force against them in 1895 because this might have interfered with missionary activity.[99] In Mpezeni's country there were no mission stations and, as it happened, no gold-mines worth worrying about either; but by the time this fact had been realized it had ceased to be significant for the Ngoni. The North Charterland was formed in the belief that Mpezeni's country was rich. The capital of the company, not all paid up, was £1,000,000 and in 1897 it offered a reward of £10,000 to the discoverer of the first payable gold-field in its concession.[100] Given the fact that wealth of this magnitude was at stake, that there was gold to be found, and given the tactlessness of Warton and the intransigence of Nsingu, it was likely that war would come sooner or later.

As it was, the end of the Ngoni State as a sovereign political unit and its incorporation within a colonial empire came suddenly. Instead of the gradual formation of new groupings and alignments, the new system began as suddenly as the old system ended. We tend to think of the arrival of Europeans in the backwoods of Africa as a gradual process extending through many decades, and indeed even in Ngoniland there were Europeans for at least thirteen years prior to the war. Yet to old Ngoni of to-day the coming of the Europeans is a precisely defined event which took place on 19 January 1898.

The sequence of events which culminated in the fighting was as follows. In May 1897 some of Mpezeni's people began to build shelters and clear gardens at the headwaters of the River Bua, just inside the Nyasaland Protectorate. Sharpe, who had succeeded Johnston as Commissioner, was at first not greatly pleased, but instructed the Collector at Kotakota to make clear to Mpezeni that he would have to conform to the wishes of the Administration. A peaceful settlement between Mpezeni and the British seemed possible, and on second thoughts Sharpe was pleased to see, as he thought, Mpezeni removed from the sphere of influence of the North Charterland and the B.S.A. Company, who might have taken action against him and precipitated a crisis. However, the Collector was single-handed and it seems that he was unable to

[99] *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 437.
[100] *African Review*, xiii, 254 (2 October 1897), p. 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

visit Mpezeni to arrange a peaceful settlement with him.[161] In any case, although some movement of population may well have taken place, Mpezeni and the greater part of his people remained outside the Protectorate and in the Concession. In October 1897 Warringham, the B.S.A. Company's Collector at Cinunda's, moved in closer to Ngoniland and occupied the abandoned Fort Partridge, twenty miles north of Mpezeni. A month or so later, he appears to have found it prudent to move back again to Cinunda's.[162]

In December Manning, acting as Commissioner while Sharpe was on leave, was told by a North Charterland official at Chikwakwa, on the Shire, that Mpezeni's warriors were said to have murdered two Europeans on their way from Tete. This report was not confirmed. On 28 December[163] news arrived from Warringham that he at Cinunda's and Wiese at Fort Young were in danger of attack and could not communicate with each other. On 4 January there was news that Wiese was safe. According to his own account, Wiese was secretly warned by Mpezeni of the planned attack on him and had time 'on the next dark night' to build a small fortification into which he retired.[164] However, Wiese and his two European companions thought themselves still in danger and on 9 January wrote to the North Charterland general manager and to Warringham at Cinunda's asking for help and arms.[165]

Meanwhile a force of about seven hundred troops was organized by Manning in Nyasaland. Warringham at Cinunda's was reinforced but on 9 January he reported that Ngoni raids were preventing him from collecting provisions. The next day there was news that Wiese, now with three other Europeans, was still surrounded at Fort Young and that the Ngoni had mustered fully forty thousand fighting men. The rear troops, whose progress

[161] 272, fo. 61; 272, fo. 172; 273.

[162] Poole implies, but does not specifically mention, the move back to Cinunda's. In 1897 Genthe referred to the Cinunda camp as Fort Jameson and according to Poole this name was transferred to Fort Partridge when Warringham moved there. If so, the name must have been transferred back again with Warringham, for the Fort Jameson mentioned in reports of the fighting, both by Poole and in *B.C.A.G.* and dispatches, is the Cinunda camp. On the other hand, the new Fort Jameson established at Kapatamoyo's after the war is said to have been some twenty miles south of the earlier station of the same name. cf. *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 14-15, 19. The name Fort Young was also moved about, being at first applied to a camp near Missale. cf. *C.A.P.*, 15 November 1896, p. 5, and 1 December 1896, p. 3.

[163] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 15, says this message reached Kotakota on 21 December. This seems unlikely, for Manning states that he received the news at Zomba by wire from Kotakota on the morning of 28 December. cf. 274; 275, fo. 376; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1 (15 January 1898), p. 1.

[164] Wiese, 'Geschichte', pp. 186*ff*.

[165] 277-80.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

towards Ngoniland had been halted after the report of 4 January, resumed their march. 175

Four companies under Captain Brake reached Cinunda's on 17 January and left the next day for Fort Partridge, which was burnt by Ngoni as they arrived. On 19 January they moved on towards Fort Young. After some skirmishing they arrived there at 5.20 p.m. and relieved Wiese and his companions. Fort Young was only a few hundred yards outside Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10, and in the morning Brake found that this village and others near by, including Nsingu's, were full of warriors. Accordingly he decided not to withdraw to Fort Partridge as he had intended and sent his troops to clear the villages and burn them down. Later in the day there was organized fighting but in the face of fire from seven-pounders and Maxims the Ngoni lost heavily. The number of Ngoni warriors involved was estimated at from 4,000 to 5,000.[106] 648 726 439

On the next day, 21 January, Mpezeni sent messengers to Captain Brake with a present of a sheep. Brake regarded this poor present as an insult and insisted that he would negotiate only with important lieutenants. The next day, five messengers arrived with twelve head of cattle, but Brake regarded the messengers as slaves and said that if a lieutenant did not come the next day, he would deal with Cimpinga, headquarters of segment 15 where Mpezeni was living, as he had dealt with Nsingu's village. On 23 January a lieutenant and an important man arrived to see Brake and were interviewed by him the next day. They stated that Mpezeni was weary of the war brought on by the misconduct of his sons, and that he placed himself in Brake's hands to impose what conditions of peace he might choose. When Brake arrived at Cimpinga on 25 January he was met by two men who said that Mpezeni had gone into hiding outside the village. Brake told them to tell Mpezeni to come, otherwise the village would be destroyed. Brake waited until 5 p.m. and then burnt the village except for Mpezeni's own hut and those of his wives. The next day Lt. Sharp, with five men, succeeded in encountering Mpezeni, who had fifty men with him. Mpezeni asked for twenty minutes' grace while his wives got away and managed to slip away himself. 175 439 648 728

The main body of troops under Manning arrived at Cimpinga on 28 January. Manning sent out messengers to inform the Ngoni that unless Nsingu was handed over by the night of 30 January, troops would 'penetrate to every valley in Mpezeni's country and punish every village where opposition was encountered'. Manning

[106] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 475; Bradley, *Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 44-5.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 439 648 728

received defiant answers to his messages and on 31 January dispatched four columns each of about two hundred men to sweep the eastern portion of the country. On 3 February Nsingu was surrounded by troops and surrendered to them. Manning tried Nsingu by court martial for murder, instigating to murder and raiding in British territory. He was found guilty and shot on 4 February in the presence of all captured lieutenants. On 5 February another column visited the southern portion of the country. Manning left the country the next day. He recommended, possibly on Deare's advice, that Mpezeni should be allowed to return as chief.

Mpezeni voluntarily surrendered to Brake on 9 February and was told he would be allowed to resettle and that his people could reoccupy their villages. A great number of these must, however, have been burnt by the troops, for even on 23 January Brake had reported that in one district there was hardly a village or hut left standing. More villages had been destroyed by the columns sent out by Manning.[107]

After Mpezeni's surrender, Brake continued trying to capture other important people thought to have been supporters of Nsingu, but it seems no more villages were burnt. Some leaders went into hiding, other like Madzimawi fled west to Nsenga country, while Mlonyeni, head of segment 6, went to Mwambera's country in northern Nyasaland. Mpezeni had at first been instructed to live in a village near his former home at Cimpinga, but was later moved to an Ngoni village near Fort Manning, which Brake was then building just inside the Nyasaland border. After a year he was allowed to return to the centre of his country and was reinstated as chief. He died from natural causes soon afterwards on 21 September 1900.[108] The leaders who had fled drifted back and no further action was taken against them. Some people began to cultivate their gardens again and to make shelters.[109] Others, particularly Cewa who had been captured only a short while before 1898, left Ngoniland and either returned to their former tribal areas or moved on elsewhere.

175 439 648

Although fighting between Ngoni and British ceased, there was still some scrapping between the North Charterland and the

[107] For the preceding paragraphs. see 176, fo. 372-4; 181; 184-90; 193-5; 198; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1-3 (15 January, 5 and 26 February 1898), p. 1 of each issue; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 14-16, 71; Baxter, 'Angoni rebellion', p. 17 (map); Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

[108] *B.C.A.G.*, 118, vii, 9 (30 September 1900), p. 3. In view of this newspaper report the statement that Mpezeni died in October, made in *Reports on the Administration* 31 *March* 1902 and followed by Poole and others, must be wrong.

[109] 201; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 42; Stigand, 'Natives of Nyassaland', p. 126.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

B.S.A. Company's administration which now began to operate in Mpezeni's country itself. Each had its own African police force and on one occasion two people who had been taken prisoner by the Administration's police were released by a party of North Charterland police. The North Charterland police then arrested the Administration's police, and it was necessary for troops to come from Nyasaland to release them and arrest the North Charterland men.[110] By the end of 1899, however, conditions had become more settled. The B.S.A. Administration had acquired effective control over the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland. 175 439 648

The military operations in December 1897 and in 1898 were carried out during the wet season and in consequence there was much sickness among the troops. Although it was not the time of year which the Europeans would have chosen for a campaign, according to one of my informants Warringham had been advised by an Ngoni man whose support he had gained that he should arrange for the war to take place while all the warriors were away from the immediate vicinity of Fort Young attending the national first fruits ceremony at the headquarters of segment 4, the village of Zwangendaba's great wife. The descendants of this man are still regarded as traitors by other Ngoni. The first fruits ceremony was usually held about the new year, so that the war may in fact have followed immediately after the ceremony. This view is supported by the remark made by Harding, who arrived in Ngoniland a few months after the war was over. He said that the war 'arose over a highly strung official [presumably Warringham] mistaking an ordinary Native dance for an act of hostility towards the Administration'.[111] Whatever the truth in the matter, the first fruits ceremony would have been an appropriate time for Nsingu to call for an attack on the Whites. [796]

7. *Cattle*

It has been estimated that before the war there were about 20,000 head of cattle in Mpezeni's country.[112] During the fighting many were taken from Ngoni by Protectorate troops. These animals became the subject of much recrimination. Read states that half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot', while Poole states that a large portion of the 14,000 head captured were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners.[113] 231 648 727 439

[110] 223, fo. 368.
[111] Harding, *Far Bugles*, p. 82.
[112] 230, p. 69 has 24,000, while *Report on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19, has 15,000-20,000.
[113] Read, 'Tradition', p. 478; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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According to Manning, in his first report on the matter dated 17 February 1898, nearly 12,000 head were captured. It seems clear that at the time Manning thought that the whole of this herd would be used for the benefit of the B.S.A. Company, for he wrote:

> 'I have informed the British South Africa Company that we shall require them to pay the actual expenses incurred by us on account of the campaign. I do not imagine the total cost to the British South Africa Company will be more than 2,000*l*. This will be covered ten times over by the value of the cattle captured by the expedition, so that the British South Africa Company will reap a handsome profit on the campaign.'[114]

There seems, however, to have been considerable discussion among Europeans in the region about the disposal of the cattle. Roberts, a surgeon who had been one of Wiese's companions at Fort Young, was dismissed from the North Charterland shortly after the war ended. Wiese also left the country after the war and lost his North Charterland post worth £900 a year. Manning suggests that these two were anxious to make trouble by attacking the conduct of the war. St. Hill, the North Charterland manager, may have been anxious to forestall any accusations for on 23 April he published in a newspaper a statement admitting that there had been criticism on the capture of the cattle, but pointing out that 'Army regulations provide for a certain amount of loot'. He said that it had been a wonderfully cheap expedition, that the Protectorate men who went in certainly deserved something, and that he expected that the B.S.A. Company would return a very large number of cattle to the Natives.[115] Editorial comment on his article was nevertheless critical. Criticism began to be heard in Britain. A letter was written to the Parliamentary Secretary responsible, a question was asked in the Commons, and an article appeared in *Truth*. According to one account, the military officers said they expected £400 or £500 each from their share of the loot.[116] Whether or not he was influenced by this criticism, Sharpe on leave in England proposed on 12 May that half the captured herds be returned to the Ngoni, the other half to be retained by the B.S.A. Company.[117] On the same day the Foreign Office replied to Manning's dispatch of 17 February, quoted above, with the statement that the B.S.A. Company wanted only three hundred beasts. Manning was asked to

[114] 195.
[115] *Central African Times*, i, 30 (23 April 1898), p. 3.
[116] 216, fo. 8; 217; *Parliamentary Debates, 4th series*, lv (1898), cols. 1240, 1654-5; *Truth*, xliii, 1122 (30 June 1898), pp. 1639-40.
[117] 202.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

consider returning some of the remainder to the Ngoni.[118] Manning replied that representatives of the B.S.A. Company had already made arrangements for driving away five thousand cattle. He proposed to return three thousand to Mpezeni.[119]

The subsequent course of events is not clear. Poole states that due to the opportune arrival and intervention of Selby, a member of the B.S.A. Company's Administration, a large proportion of the cattle were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners. This is in accord with Sharpe's statement on 6 July that 'Mpezeni . . . has had all his cattle returned to him [his underlining]'. A missionary journal published in Blantyre on 15 July stated that probably a considerable part of the cattle had been returned.[120] Manning, who was in a better position to know than Sharpe, who was still on leave, wrote on 31 August that all the cattle had been returned to the Natives with the exception of about a thousand head handed over to the B.S.A. Company as a fine and about two hundred kept for the use of the troops.[121] The matter then seemed to have been settled.

In the next year the North Charterland continued its quarrel with the B.S.A. Company, and the disposal of the captured cattle was discussed again. The North Charterland complained that the whole Ngoni war had been unnecessary and had been provoked by the B.S.A. Company. There had been wholesale looting of cattle which had been disposed of in the interests of the officers concerned, Natives had been expelled from their lands, and in consequence the commercial prospects of the North Charterland had been ruined. The Foreign Office replied to these allegations on 23 August 1899, stating that so far as the cattle were concerned, five thousand head were to be driven out, three thousand returned to Mpezeni, and the balance held at the disposal of the B.S.A. Company, apart from two hundred and fifty head captured inside the Protectorate and driven off for use by the troops. This reply, referring to what would be done rather than what by then presumably had been done, appears to have been based on the arrangements proposed by Manning on 20 May 1898. Either the arrangements he reported on 31 August 1898 were never put into operation or else they were overlooked by mistake when the Foreign Office reply to the North Charterland was drafted a year later. The latter explanation seems more probable.[122]

[118] 203.
[119] 207.
[120] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; 211, fo. 228; *Life and Work in British Central Africa*, 125 (15 July 1898), p. 3.
[121] 219, fo. 456.
[122] 230; 233.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Manning stipulated that cattle handed back to the Ngoni should not be sold, to prevent traders bartering cattle for gunpowder.[123] Nevertheless the majority of the cattle remaining in or returned to Ngoni hands were sold within two years. In April 1898 over 14,000 head of cattle were counted.[124] Whether or not all these were in Ngoni ownership at the time is not clear, although the North Charterland implied in a letter written in 1899 that at least 12,000 belonged to Ngoni.[125] During the next year or so, in spite of Administrative opposition, many thousands of cattle were sold to traders or killed. By 31 March 1900 only 1,224 remained.[126] Thus another of the systems of social relationships, those mediated through cattle, which had sustained the old social order, was undermined.

8. *The end of a system*

Thus ended the Ngoni war and with it the Ngoni State. In the last twelve years of its existence, from 1886 to 1898, three struggles were proceeding simultaneously in linked regions of social space. First there were the traditional processes already described by which Ngoni killed and recruited their neighbours and by which cleavages between segments of their residential system widened and altered with time. Second there was the struggle between Portugal, Great Britain and, peripherally, Germany for the political control of south-central Africa. Third there was a struggle between different groups of financiers in London for the control of the rich economic resources which they believed, quite mistakenly as far as we can now tell, lay waiting to be discovered in Mpezeni's country and round about. Apart from these three major fields of activity, there were two others which affected this particular area to a lesser degree. There were the traders and adventurers like Wiese (until 1896), Matakenya and the Arabs who competed with one another and endeavoured to exploit the region in terms of ivory, gunpowder and slaves. There were also the various missions, representing the interests of their co-religionists and anti-slavery enthusiasts in Europe, competing with each other and with the slave traders for local control. There was even a scheme for colonizing Mpezeni's country with Christian laymen from Britain.[127] All these social fields were interwoven in reality, but in analysis

[123] 207; 208, fo. 15; 233.
[124] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[125] 230, p. 69. Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 393, implies that all the 14,000 belonged to Ngoni.
[126] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[127] 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

our task is to separate them out. Yet even in analysis we have to show how each field interlocks with the other two, how events in one field set up movements in others. [178 648]

The material apparatus used in the various fields was distinct. The traditional processes were decided ultimately by resort to spears and shields. Portugal and Britain fought with artillery, embargoes, customs dues and treaties. The North Charterland fought its rivals with concessions, certificates of claim and share capital.[128] Mpezeni, who knew how to fight with spears, was asked to sign pieces of paper which would then be negotiable in a property system of which he knew nothing, and the manipulators of which knew little of him. The treaty-collectors imagined a patchwork of stationary chiefdoms spread over the region, each with a chief powerful enough to sell his country, whereas in fact there was only an unstable series of groups of shifting cultivators, each liable to attack from the migrating Ngoni. [439 648]

Yet despite the differences in technique and despite the lack of knowledge of each other's systems of government, the various groups involved continued to pursue their own ends as best they could. Mpezeni may not have known what a flag was, yet the issue between Portugal and Britain was decided, and decided in Lisbon rather than in Ngoniland. The treaties may have been made beyond the competence, and the understanding, of the chiefs who signed them, and yet the B.S.A. Company did gain control of the country. Mpezeni never made his mark on a document, yet the North Charterland acquired its ten thousand square miles of land. On the other hand, the Ngoni regiments tried to win another battle like the others they had won before, and this time they failed. In consequence of the war of 1898 there was a revolution, a change of structural form, in Ngoni society, whereas in the histories of Portugal and Britain, and even of the B.S.A. Company, the event passed almost unnoticed. [721] [669]

In northern Nyasaland an analogous process of incorporation within a wider system was taking place. Here also there was an intruding European group and the same distant interest of the Nyasaland Administration. Yet in many ways the chain of events in northern Nyasaland was simpler than at Fort Jameson. In the north, there was only one set of resident Whites, the Livingstonia missionaries, there was no Wiese willing to play for both sides at once, and there was no North Charterland. In consequence the [797]

[128] cf. Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, p. 24: 'Swazi were subjugated through concessions, a type of economic warfare eventually sanctioned by powerful European governments.'

l:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 relationship between Ngoni and Europeans was of a somewhat
648 different kind, and one of its most interesting features was an attempt by the Ngoni, persisted in for many years, to establish a monopoly over the missionaries, at the expense of another tribe with whom they were at war.[129] In Fort Jameson the social field was more complex. One of Mpezeni's sons tried to sell ivory to Wiese illegally without his father's knowledge,[130] and we may look on this as an attempt to establish a relationship with him differentiated from the wider relationship between Wiese and the Ngoni as a whole, or perhaps as an attempt on Wiese's part to penetrate Ngoni society along its lines of structural cleavage. His and Deare's support for a candidate for the heirship was similar in intention.
[661] Mpezeni's efforts to gain support from Kotakota against his people was a more noticeable attempt to utilize the power of the Whites in his own sectional interest. Similarly the readiness with which raided chiefs made treaties was certainly related to their weak position in relation to the Ngoni and their hope of support against them. Even with the traders, as distinct from the treaty-collectors, this consideration was relevant. Deare relates how he asked Mpezeni to prevent raiding near the North Charterland supply route which passed through Undi's country. When later he visited Undi, he was welcomed for stopping the raids and was given ivory. Thus although at Fort Jameson no one group had a monopoly of access to the Europeans, there were these attempts to establish specific relations with them to the advantage of the different groups concerned.

For as soon as two groups are brought into contact, and for
[178] some reason neither group annihilates the other, there is a change in the structure of the social field in which they act. Life can no longer go on as before, for every man has new potential allies and new potential enemies. There is no established order to which appeal can be made, for a new order has to be created. A new set of alignments, a new social structure, emerges from the manoeuvring and intriguing of the transition period which must differ from the old because of the new interests and new relationships which it contains.

Thus Europeans discriminated between one African group and another. Similarly the Ngoni established different relations with different European groups. From the beginning it was clear that the Portuguese and the British were to be distinguished, and Mpezeni preferred the inaction of the former to the efficiency of

[129] cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 97, 129, 237 and 245.
[130] Wiese, 'Expedição', x, pp. 491-2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the latter. This alignment established, it was natural that Warton, 439
though not himself a party to the Imperial struggle, should utilize 648
it by arriving in the country from Tete, in Portuguese territory, rather than from Nyasaland, that he should pose as Wiese's brother, and, assuming that the Foreign Office was correctly informed, that he should fly a Portuguese flag. Genthe played a similar game with his Union Jack, but in a different area among the raided tribes. Even among the British, Mpezeni had three groups to deal with, North Charterland, B.S.A. Company, and the Nyasaland Administration. He was initially friendly and later hostile towards the first, unyielding to the second, and appealed for help to the third, although, or perhaps because, it was farthest away.

The effective cleavage within the Ngoni chiefdom was between 439
the chief and his eldest son. We might have expected the major 578
cleavage to have been between one son and another, particularly 648
in view of North Charterland support for one son rather than 668
another. We have some information concerning who Wiese and Deare thought were their friends, but some of these people appear to have taken a prominent part in the fighting. Mpezeni was certainly not entirely deserted by his own people, for he was able to send emissaries to Kotakota and to warn Wiese and Deare of plots against their lives.[121] The situation in which one section of the population supported the chief and the remainder supported his son may have been facilitated by the existence of what we have called rump segments in the residential system. For in this system the dependants of a segment head were not completely divided up among his heirs; there was a remainder who even after the death of the head constituted a rump segment and represented his interests as against those of his sons. Thus it may be that Mpezeni was supported by those who remained in his great wife's village, or perhaps in his father's great wife's village, as against those who had broken out from it. In the absence of satisfactory evidence, our hypothesis remains unverified. Such evidence as there is, is contradictory. Deare made friends, eventually, with the two senior lieutenants of segment 10, the segment of Mpezeni's great wife; this would support our thesis, as does Wiese's mention of the senior of these as one of his friends. Yet both of them, according to my informants, descendants of these men, were shot in the course of the campaign; this points against our thesis. In the list of friends and enemies which Wiese and his companions gave Brake, segments 4 and 10 each have members in both lists. Among those listed as friends are Ciboma msitini, regional governor in segment 4 and

[121] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186; 187, fo. 137; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10.
578 Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant
648 of segment 4, and Kamsembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional
668 governor in segment 10.[123] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[124] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour
[721] peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell
[178] their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs
439 traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid
648 Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with
567 Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[125] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[123] 287, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[124] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[125] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Karonga in 1895 and although slave trading went on through Portuguese territory even after 1900, Arabs never made any effort to maintain this trade in the Fort Jameson area. 439 648 [567]

When Wiese left the country in 1898 his work was done. His departure symbolized the end of the pioneering stage of colonialism and the beginning of the stage of settled paternal administration. Mpezeni was reinstated after the war, but there was no position into which Wiese could have been reinstated, nor anyone who wanted to reinstate him. Unlike Mpezeni, Wiese did not represent the long-term interests of any powerful group. In the history of empires there are many examples of men like Wiese who succeeded in weathering the transition from one phase to another and ended their lives in honour and glory. But Wiese had sold his assets before the war began. When it was over, his one saleable attribute, his friendship with Mpezeni, had been compromised and was no longer of value. He departed from a scene which had no place for him.

An examination of how the Imperial and the financial struggles were inter-connected would take us beyond the bounds of Ngoniland and of our subject. We have, however, shown that the three social fields were inter-connected, and that moves in one field were affected by and in turn inspired moves in another. It is important to realize that this inter-connection was not due merely to geographical accident. From one point of view it was accidental that Ngoniland should lie near so many frontiers and that there should be an ancient gold-mine in the vicinity. But Britain, the North Charterland, and Nsingu were all struggling partly for the same thing, control of the Ngoni people. Even Warton understood this. At the end of 1896 he was asked: 'The Natives, I understand, are friendly?' He replied: 'I am glad to say that, so far, we have succeeded in establishing most friendly relations with M'Pesene. . . . Fighting would not only be costly, but we should lose our labourers if we engaged in hostilities. So you see on selfish, as well as humanitarian grounds, we have every reason to avoid warfare and bloodshed.'[126] The mineral resources of Mpezeni's country may have been largely illusory but the human resources were real. Ngoni men could fight for slaves, for dependants, for cattle and for glory; they could carry loads from Tete and prepare to work in the North Charterland's mines; or they could migrate to Southern Rhodesia to work there: but they could not do all these things simultaneously. The fight to destroy the Ngoni army was as much one to secure a labour supply for European capital investment as it was to secure 439 464 648

[126] *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 464 648 law and order. In this, not only the Ngoni were concerned. There was a shortage of labour in Nyasaland and Mpezeni's raids prevented labourers reaching that country from the interior. The campaign against Mwase in 1895 was undertaken partly with the aim of opening up labour routes and Mpezeni's defeat carried this a stage further. The Collector at Kotakota wrote shortly after the war: 'It is quite safe to say that no greater assistance has been given to these districts (and in fact to the Protectorate) than this opening up of the Luapula Valley by the conquest of Mpezeni.'[126] Yet the Luapula is 350 miles from Fort Jameson. Even Ngoni technical skill in fighting was of value to the new conquerors, for within six [167] months of the war Ngoni fighting men were in Southern Rhodesia, not as allies of the Ndebele but as part of the British South Africa Police. Within ten months, the headquarters of segment 13 had been moved to make way for the new Administrative capital. With the defeat of Mpezeni, North-Eastern Rhodesia became a country.

178 361 648 A final point requires explication. Granted that the Ngoni social system had to change in this new complex social environment, and granted also that their activities, in particular raiding, had to be adapted to new demands on their labour, why did not the Ngoni continue to live in large villages as they had done hitherto? There are numerous analogies in Africa where segmentary social systems have been fitted into an Administrative framework, and where raiding has given way to migrant labour, and yet the pattern of settlement has remained the same. Why did the big Ngoni villages disappear after 1898?

Part of the answer to this question can be stated in ecological terms. In pre-conquest times, the dense population, human and bovine, the great stretches of cultivated land, and the manifest prosperity of the people impressed themselves vividly on contemporary observers accustomed to the scattered settlements of the surrounding tribes. Angus writes:

> 'Before us lay an undulating valley some miles in breadth, which, as the heavily timbered hills on either side proclaimed, had once been covered with forest, but was now denuded of every vestige of a tree. Village after village surrounded by waving cornfields, and green plains dotted with herds of cattle, stretched away into the distance. Never before in any of my African wanderings had I seen such an extent of land under cultivation; the cornfields seemed unending, and the size and number of the

[126] *B.C.A.G.*, v, 6 (30 April 1898), p. 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[137] 178 361 648

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfinsi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[138] [34] [311] [231]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared. [241] [177]

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[139] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[140] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers 161 [131] [311]

[137] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78.
[138] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[139] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 3 (26 February 1898), p. 1.
[140] Angus, 'Northern Angoliland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

161 such as Sharpe, Thomson and Deare, and with my own information based on village histories. Combining this with the lowest estimate of population, we arrive at a population density of 100 persons to the square mile, while the highest estimate implies a density of 375. Highly unreliable as these figures are, it is clear that the density of population was considerably greater before the conquest than it is now, when it averages about 68 persons to the square mile. Even the present-day figure is nearly three times the density which the land can sustain in perpetuity.

This dense population was concentrated in large villages. 361 Angus estimated that there were at least a thousand huts in Loan-
162 geni, while Deare estimated that there were sixteen hundred. Read states that it was over three miles across, while Genthe says that Ngoni villages were about five times the size of the average Cewa village. From the top of a mountain, Deare saw eleven villages all about the same size as Loangeni.[141] Thus it seems that there were several villages with populations of the order of three thousand. If Deare and Johnston are right in their estimates of tribal population the majority of the people lived in these big villages.

Yet by September 1898 the only villages left in Mpezeni's country were a few to the east of Fort Young. All the rest had been destroyed by troops, and their former inhabitants were said to be 'still timid' and living in scattered groups in grass shelters.[142] The large pre-conquest settlements were particularly vulnerable to attack by troops armed with guns and intent on burning, the more so because there were no defensive preparations at all. Glave wrote in 1894 that the Ngoni 'have no stockaded village, such protection they deem unnecessary as no enemy can be strong enough to attack them'.[143]

The large villages and the high density of population were appropriate only to a victorious military society, relying for at least part of its subsistence on raided crops and beasts produced outside its borders and for the rest on the maximum exploitation of the land [727] inside them. When its enemies had been plundered and its own [167] lands exhausted, it moved on. We can infer from Angus and from Sharpe, who wrote of 'entirely open' country,[144] that within the 178 settled area most of the cultivable land was in use at the same time. 311 Yet in many parts of the Fort Jameson area the soil is now exhausted after five years under maize and must be left for twenty-five years

[141] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 11 May; Read, 'Tradition', p. 475, f.n. 2; Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1.
[142] Selby, memorandum dated 10 March 1901.
[143] 86, fo. 329.
[144] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 745. For Angus, see pp. 102*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to recover under bush fallow. The long-term carrying capacity of the land before the conquest cannot have been much greater than its present average value of 25 persons to the square mile.[145] Thus it is certain that in pre-conquest times the Ngoni were settled at a density even more in excess of the critical value than it is now, despite alienation. There cannot have been much cultivable land in reserve and the State was exhausting the wealth of its own soil as well as drawing on the resources of its neighbours. Thus even if the large villages had not been burnt, the same number of people could not for long have continued to live in them practising subsistence agriculture. A reduction in the density of population necessarily involved under this economy a reduction in the size of villages, for Ngoni do not like to live more than an hour's walk from their gardens. As it was, the villages were burnt, many Ngoni of Cewa origin left Ngoniland, and much of the more densely settled land, carrying up to 140 persons to the square mile, was alienated to Europeans within six years of the war.[146] The arrangement of persons over the land and the activities they carried on were both dramatically altered by the European conquest. It is, therefore, not surprising that the old society was so drastically changed at the same time. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as we shall see, the forms of grouping of the past have influenced the forms of the new society.

In brief, the old political system was a system of segments, the new one is a system of villages and counties. The county segment links the two systems, but there is no function in the new order for segments embracing several counties or for those that embrace only part of a county. Within the village, the segmentary processes still go on, but at this level of organization we are dealing with kinship rather than politics. When a segment grows beyond the bounds of a single village, it begins to fade away, and we are left with a network of ties which link villages with one another but which do not define mutually exclusive groups as existed in pre-conquest times. The uncertainty about how counties should be divided internally is an indication of the lack of function of these intermediate segments. For some purposes, such as the organization of royal hunts, a county is divided into a number of rural districts. These are geographically defined areas, and it is sometimes possible to say that such-and-such a man, usually a senior lieutenant of the county segment, is the most important person in such-and-such a rural area. However, the recognizable rural districts in a county do not

[145] Allan, *Land Usage*, pp. 16-17.
[146] *N.E.R.G.G.*, ii, 2 (15 March 1904), p. 34.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

63/177 always exhaust its total area and districts sometimes overlap. When I inquired of chiefs and their councillors how their counties were subdivided in terms of allegiance, rather than area, I was rarely given a clear answer. The names of various men of importance in the county were mentioned, but there was no consensus about their relative status or the limits of their territories. In the present [622] system village headmen have definite responsibilities and so have county chiefs, but there are no intermediate posts. Segments have given way to counties and villages.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Four

TRANSITION

1. Administrative policy 2. White control 3. Chiefs 4. County segments 5. Relative status of chiefs 6. Counties as territorial units 7. Villages

1. *Administrative policy*

THE DEFEAT of the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1898 was followed by the establishment of an Administration under the British South Africa Company. The greater part of the Nyasaland troops who had done the fighting left the area in April 1898[1] but the North Charterland party remained at their old headquarters at Fort Young, the B.S.A. Company made a base at Fort Patrick a few miles away, and in Nyasaland the Protectorate Administration maintained a station at Fort Manning. The new township of Fort Jameson was established in October 1898[2] and the first mission station was opened by the Dutch Reformed Church Mission at Magwero in 1899, in response to a request for a mission made the previous year by Mpezeni.[3] From these bases, White administrators, traders and missionaries, aided by their Black assistants, began to alter the form of Ngoni life. We are here particularly concerned with political organization, and it was the Administration which was particularly influential in determining what form the new Ngoni political organization would take. But political systems do not exist in isolation, and the kinds of political relationship which we find existing to-day have been influenced by the changing economic, commercial and religious relationships which have been determined more specifically by traders, labour recruiters, planters and missionaries as well as by the exertions of administrators.

The Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia was in the hands of the B.S.A. Company, and the policy adopted was to some extent influenced by developments in other territories administered by the Company. Southern Rhodesia was much more accessible from the sea than North-Eastern Rhodesia, more capital had been invested in it, and its mineral wealth appeared to be considerably greater. North-Eastern Rhodesia was therefore

[1] 210, fo. 67.
[2] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71.
[3] Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and,
648 possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop
[464] the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that
[643] the cheapest way of running the country was through the
[622] indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[4] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all
[692] kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the
[651] most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black
[464] leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with
[797] establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

177 Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration
464 to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity
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648

[4] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of earning money to pay tax, together with such subsidiary measures as the prohibition of Native smelting, and the pressure on men to clothe themselves in imported clothing, ensured that the old order changed beyond the mere loss of sovereignty. Not only were links established with Southern Rhodesia and later with other parts of Africa, but new patterns of distribution of wealth and power were set up which were incompatible with the old order. The chief who stayed at home ruling his people found himself outclassed by the newly returned labourers from the south, with their display of clothes, money and urban mannerisms. The relationships between one tribe and another which formerly had found expression in fighting had now to find other expressions, and began to be based on different interests. 177 439 464 648 [556]

These general considerations applied throughout North-Eastern Rhodesia. In Ngoniland local variation was supplied more by the presence of the North Charterland than by the fact that the Ngoni had been defeated in war. The North Charterland was interested in the economic development of its concession, whereas the Administration had to consider the needs of other territories governed by the B.S.A. Company, particularly Southern Rhodesia. The same administrative policy was applied to the Ngoni as to neighbouring tribes which had not been conquered by force of arms. Nevertheless in Ngoni eyes the Administration discriminated against Ngoni in favour of Cewa. Many Cewa who had been captured shortly before 1898 moved away from Ngoniland after the war, or at least moved in the direction of their homeland. With the end of Ngoni raiding the no-man's-land round Ngoni country filled up again with Cewa who had been displaced when the Ngoni first arrived in the 1870s. Cewa chiefdoms were re-established and recognized by the Administration, to the chagrin of the Ngoni. 439 648 [186]

Even the Ngoni themselves were referred to by the Administration as the 'Angoni-Chewa' by way of emphasizing their mixed ethnic composition. When the Native Reserve scheme was put forward in 1913 the Ngoni chiefs objected to the Cewa being allotted land of their own, and suggested that all the tribes of the district should be placed in one reserve under Mpezeni II. The Administration did not agree. When villages were moved into the proposed reserves in the 1920s, a few more villages left Ngoniland for Cewa country. At the same time other villages moved into Ngoniland from other chiefdoms in the face of alienation of land or difficulties with the Portuguese Administration. Thus to-day many villages in Ngoniland are of Cewa origin and many villages in Cewa chiefdoms are of 648 [167]

Ngoni origin.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 Ngoni origin. The sharp cleavage between the Ngoni and their neighbours has gone.

Another relic of the privileged position enjoyed by the Ngoni 439 before the conquest which did not long survive their defeat was 648 the subsidy paid to Mpezeni. Under the terms of Wiese's alleged 651 concession of 14 April 1891, Mpezeni was to be paid £200 a year and one per cent of Wiese's profits. Wiese made presents to Mpezeni, but there is no record of any substantial payment. When the provisional grant of 10,000 square miles of land was made by the B.S.A. Company to the Mozambique Company on 8 May 1895, the latter agreed not to exercise any rights it might have under Wiese's concessions, but there was no mention of the disposal of any possible obligations. Warton continued Wiese's practice of giving presents to Mpezeni, but there was no regular payment. As Wiese's concession had never been recognized it would seem that there was no legal obligation on either the North Charterland or the B.S.A. Company to pay an annual subsidy. Nevertheless after the Ngoni war the two companies must have come to some agreement on the matter. In April 1898, according to the answer to a question in the Commons, the B.S.A. Company were ready to pay Mpezeni £200 a year 'for the present'. In January 1900 the Administrator stated that the Collector at Fort Jameson had spent only £50 during the current financial year on payments to Mpezeni and 'his loyal indunas'. He proposed to spend a further £50 during the year and the remaining £100 of the subsidy was to be distributed among the surrounding tribes in the interests of the North Charterland.[5] These special arrangements were presumably superseded in 1903 when, under the scheme of Native Administration drawn up in that year, provision was made for the payment of all recognized chiefs from the general funds of the Territory.

Similarly, the military organization of the Ngoni broke down 648 after the conquest. One of the first acts of the Administration was 701 to forbid Ngoni to carry weapons of war.[6] Four new age-set 561 regiments were formed between 1898 and 1914 but they were little more than dancing societies, singing the old songs which had excited their seniors in the 'time of peace' before the conquest but unable to emulate their military achievements. During the 1914-18 war the majority of young Ngoni men who might have formed a [464] new age-set were enrolled as carriers and soldiers on the Allied side.

[5] *Parliamentary Debates, 4th Series*, lv (1898), cols. 1654-5; report of a meeting between Administrator and North Charterland manager, 15 January 1900 (Lusaka archives); cf. Poole, MS., 'Tribes of East Luangwa Province'.

[6] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 201.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

After the war an age-set was formed but its activities conflicted with the demands of the churches and schools and it was not a success. No further attempts have been made to carry on the system. Ngoni now say, 'What need have we of regiments now that there are no other tribes for us to fight?' 561 701 648

2. *White control*

Apart from the squabble over cattle, the surrender of Mpezeni on 9 February 1898 marked the end of the Ngoni war. The Nyasaland troops did not pursue the leaders who fled, although Brake moved Mpezeni to the vicinity of Fort Manning. In May he wrote, perhaps over-optimistically, that in the central part of Ngoniland rebuilding had begun.[7] 648 727

It is clear that at first the Ngoni acquiesced in their defeat. Whereas prior to the war Whites had lived in their country on sufferance, now their right to be there was not challenged. Only a few months after the war Harding arrived, recruiting police for service in Southern Rhodesia. He was received in a 'most friendly manner by the chief in charge who gave an ocular demonstration of his loyalty by voluntarily and immediately handing over to my charge 200 of his young men for my newly formed Police Force...'.[8] 648 [464] After the death of Mpezeni I, his lieutenants waited the traditional period of a year. Mpezeni's heir Nsingu and his wife Mkucwa had both been shot during the war, and in September 1901 the lieutenants petitioned the Administration to appoint their eldest son, Ciloa, aged about 10 years, as chief. On 23 July 1903 the Native Commissioner held a meeting at which Madzimawi, son of Mpezeni I in the residue of segment 4, asked to be allowed to take the name Zwangendaba.[9] Thus even at that early date the over-riding authority of the Administration was acknowledged in matters concerning the chieftainship. 643 648

The establishment of an Administration based on Fort Jameson in 1898 was governed, in so far as the British legal system was concerned, by the legislation consolidated in the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890.[10] Relations between the Administration and its African subjects were controlled by the Africa Order in Council 1889.[11] This was superseded by later Orders in 1900, 1911 and 1924,[12] marking the delimitation of North-Eastern Rhodesia as a separate 648

[7] 198; 201, fo. 69.
[8] Harding, *Far Bugles*, p. 82.
[9] *Reports on the Administration*, 1900-2, p. 408; see pp. 1390*f*.
[10] 53 & 54 Vict., c. 37.
[11] *S.R. & O.*, Rev., 1890, iii, pp. 259-332.
[12] *S.R. & O.*, 89 of 1900, 438 of 1911 and 324 of 1924.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 territory, its amalgamation with North-Western Rhodesia, and the transfer of responsibility from the British South Africa Company to the Colonial Office. Statutory instruments issued under these and later Orders have provided legal backing for successive schemes of African Administration.

In 1900 the Fort Jameson Division, containing the country occupied by the Ngoni, Kunda and part of the Cewa tribes, was established as part of the East Luangwa District, stretching from the Nyasaland border to the River Luangwa. The names of these areas were later changed to Fort Jameson District and Eastern Province respectively, and there have been numerous changes in their boundaries during the last fifty years, though none of them have affected the Ngoni. To avoid confusion, we shall use the term District only in its modern usage. In charge of the African population of the District was a Native Commissioner responsible to a Magistrate, posts corresponding roughly to the modern District Commissioner and Provincial Commissioner. The Native Commissioner, with his assistants who were Whites, had a force of Native [202] messengers (otherwise known as boma messengers) attached to his office to convey instructions to the people of the District and to report irregularities to him. The Administrator, head of the Administration, appointed chiefs in charge of tribal districts [622] (smaller than the Administrative Districts already mentioned), and under them were district headmen appointed by the Secretary for Native Affairs. There were also district messengers who lived in [624] their villages, but assisted the Native Commissioner when he toured in their vicinity.

This scheme was regularized by the issue of the Native Commissioners' Regulations of 12 December 1908, made under King's Regulations of the same date. Minor amendments were introduced in 1913 and 1915, and a consolidating Proclamation was issued in 1916. This again was amended slightly in 1919.[13] The substance of the scheme was not altered until the enactment in 1929 of the Native Authorities Ordinance. A more comprehensive Ordinance, with provision for Native Treasuries, replaced this in 1936.[14]

The initiative in setting up, maintaining and modifying the system of administration lay with the Whites, not with the Ngoni, who indeed were only one tribe among many to whom the system applied. Yet the Administration endeavoured to enlist the support of chiefs and others who for the most part were persons of high status in their tribes. As early as 1905, the Administrator wrote of an

[13] Proclamations No. 3 of 1913, 11 of 1915, 8 of 1916, and 6 of 1919.
[14] Ordinances No. 32 of 1929, 9 of 1936.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

effort to induce them to co-operate actively with the government, and by 1910 he was looking forward to reducing the number of White officials in the Administration by devolving much of the Native work on to the Natives themselves. Co-operation was encouraged by the payment of small stipends to chiefs and others, varying in the 1920s in annual value from £22 10*s.* 0*d.* for Mpezeni down to 6*s.* for district messengers. 648

The Ngoni for the most part neither supported nor opposed this scheme of administration; they merely accepted it. For years the Administration bemoaned the indifference of the Ngoni, but apart from an attempt by a mission to set up its teachers as headmen, there was little attempt to obstruct the work of the Administration. [797]

In matters of land, the authority of the Whites was also dominant, but here the paternal amiability which characterized purely political relations between Administration and Ngoni was lacking. The alienation of land was at the instigation of the North Charterland, who considered themselves the owners of Ngoni country. Fort Jameson was built by the Administration in the middle of Ngoni country and the land round the township, few facilities though the town then had, became more valuable to potential settlers than more fertile but inaccessible tracts. The high density of population in Ngoni country also attracted settlers with the prospect of an adequate labour supply. Thus we find that many of the first tracts of land alienated were located in the middle of Ngoni country, in the most densely populated section. As early as 1 January 1904 the first Commission was appointed to inquire into land questions in Ngoni country.[16] Now that Ngoni had to grow their own food on land which had already been heavily exploited the density of population fell; but in relation to the carrying capacity of the land in perpetuity there was still serious overcrowding. During the unsettled period of the war and its aftermath, the population was dispersed, but from 1900 down to about 1930, in consequence of alienation and the formation of reserves, villages were gradually brought closer together. From 1930 onwards, with the recognition of land shortage by the Administration, villages have been allowed to spread out again. The negotiations concerning where the Ngoni should live have been protracted and complicated; I hope to discuss them in a later work in connexion with the economic background of Ngoni social life. What is here significant about them is that to a very large extent these negotiations have been carried on entirely by Whites, with the Administration representing for the greater part Ngoni

423 439 648 311 [167] 361 648

[16] *N.R.R.G.G.*, ii, 1 (1 January 1904), pp. 30-1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

interests and those of neighbouring tribes against the North Charterland and the White settlers. Ngoni themselves have not been in a position to enforce their own point of view.

In the operation of the legal system White control has never been so complete, as we have indicated above. However the support given to the judgments of chiefs and others by the Administration prior to 1929 was political rather than legal, and the courts held by chiefs with or without the approval of the Administration did not form part of the same legal system as the Administration's own courts. In that year Native Courts with defined powers were established as part of the same legal system as other recognized courts in the British Empire, with ultimate connexion to the Privy Council.[16] In matters of religion White dominance has been achieved more slowly and has never been complete. But even in this field the religions brought by the Whites have triumphed over the cult of the chief's ancestors and to-day it is the Christians who are the ritual experts.

A parallel sequence of events has taken place in Nyasaland, save that there the amount of land alienated in the Fort Manning area has been small. A scheme of administration was given a legal basis in 1912, and was similar to that in Northern Rhodesia. It was revised in 1924, and in 1933 Native Authorities and Native Courts were set up.[17] The two principal missions in Fort Jameson District have stations in Nyasaland as well.

In both countries Ngoni have been required to pay tax. A hut tax was introduced on the Rhodesian side of the border in 1901 and at about the same time in Nyasaland. The annual rate has varied in Fort Jameson District from three to ten shillings. The imposition of tax has been of importance, not only in partly meeting the costs of Administration, but also in bringing Ngoni men and women into the wider economic system of farms, mines and offices of southern Africa.

Thus the Whites established control over the Ngoni in most of their important external relations. Politics, settlement, litigation, religion and economic activity have all been moulded by the Whites. In many respects this has been a passive process, for little that the Ngoni have done or not done has been significant to the decision to set up Native Courts, or to expand the production of tobacco, or even to open up a mission of some new denomination.

[16] By Ordinance No. 33 of 1929. Subsequent legislation is contained in Ordinances No. 10 of 1936, 18 of 1940, and 21 of 1942.

[17] Legislation is to be found in Ordinances No. 13 of 1912, 11 of 1924, 13 of 1933 and 14 of 1933.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These decisions have been taken within frames of reference beyond the reach of our analysis and beyond the reach of Ngoni persuasion. We are here concerned with the way in which Ngoni society has been adapted and has adapted itself to these diverse intrusions from outside. 177 648

3. *Chiefs*

In the old residential system there was no definite category of persons whom we regard as chiefs. In the literature the lords of major segments are sometimes called chiefs, sometimes indunas (i.e. lieutenants), but it is clear that the importance of any particular segment varied from one time and situation to another, and that the only constant relations between positions in the social structure were vertical ones, between lord and dependant, and not horizontal, between persons at the same level in the hierarchy but in different parts of it. The administrative scheme introduced by the Whites provided for horizontal categorization as well as vertical grouping. There were to be a definite number of chiefs, district headmen, and later village headmen, whose names would appear on the Administration's files. The only indigenous categories of this kind were those of Paramount Chief and regional governor, and for this reason alone it was inevitable that the relationship between the old and new systems should be complex. Although the young Mpezeni II was not the only person to be called chief, his superior status was always recognized and later received formal ratification in the qualification Paramount. The regional governors may, perhaps, have formed a category of persons at the same level in the old hierarchy, but they were not very numerous, perhaps only a dozen in number, and under the new dispensation some managed to become chiefs or district headmen, while others failed to do so. Village headmen in the old system were lords of segments of many different orders of segmentation and of varying importance. If the large pre-conquest villages had continued, then perhaps their heads might have secured Administrative recognition. As it was, post-conquest settlements were all much smaller and there were more of them. 622 631 643 648 [621]

Apart from these formal considerations, the peculiar circumstances of the war introduced distortion. Some important people were killed in the fighting, others ran away, and the followers of others were scattered. More significantly, the arrival of the Administration, of traders and missions, provided means whereby people whose segments were of minor importance could advance themselves politically and gain control of large sections of the population. 648 587

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

557 This process was facilitated by the actions of some heads of major
648 segments. It had always been correct procedure for one important person to deal with another through intermediaries, at least in the opening stages of negotiation, so that lieutenants and others were
[624] frequently sent as ambassadors for their lords to the headquarters of other major segments. There was particular point in adopting this procedure in dealing with the Administration since its demands on a man sent to it were unpredictable and apt to be onerous. Thus in many instances a lieutenant or other dependant was presented to the Administration as the headman of an area or a group of villages. This nominee was regarded by the Administration as the rightful leader of the area concerned, a belief often fostered by the nominee himself. In this way effective control of an area passed from the head of a segment to one of his dependants.

Unfortunately, few records of the early administrative arrange-
648 ments have survived. From 1883, when a British consul was first
114 appointed to Nyasaland, down to the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898, the doings of the tribe were of political significance to Britain, and were reported on at length in dispatches which are now public records. After 1898, events of similar importance within the tribe to those that had been reported earlier, the death of this lieutenant or the movement of that village from one site to another, were no longer of any interest to Whitehall or even to the Directors of the British South Africa Company. Thus there was a drastic reduction in the scale of reporting. At the same time the loss of sovereignty, of independent action, involved a reduction in the kind of events which were likely to be recorded. The Ngoni no longer made war or sold slaves. They did pay tax and work in the mines, but this they did not as an independent tribe but as part of Fort Jameson District and the Eastern Province, and such records as there are relate to these administrative units rather than to specific tribes. The B.S.A.
[439] Company lacked the long tradition of administration enjoyed by the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, and its reports were scanty by comparison. Thus the only published report of any kind on affairs in North-Eastern Rhodesia for the year 1905-6 is a mere fifteen lines long, and there is only one sentence on African administration: 'The conduct of the Natives has continued to be satisfactory.'[18] It is not until 1928 that annual reports on African affairs began to be published. Our account of Ngoni history from 1898 until recent times therefore cannot be as complete as we would wish.

[18] *Directors' Report and Accounts*, 1906, p. 7.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

According to Coxhead, an Administrative Officer who published in 1914, there were at that time six minor chiefs under the Paramount. Four of these minor chiefs were sons of Mpezeni I.[18] Other Administrative records of the same period refer to ten 'subdivisions'. The Paramount Chief and the chiefs now in charge of counties 4, 14, 15 and 17 are each described as the 'important chief' in their subdivisions. The important chief in another subdivision is now not a county chief. The remaining four subdivisions had two chiefs each. Five of these are now county chiefs, one is a Cewa chief, and the remaining two are no longer chiefs. The title 'chief' was, however, not applied consistently by the Administration at that time and men who are called chiefs in some documents are called divisional or group headmen in others. In 1920, with the appointment of two new divisional headmen all Ngoniland villages in Northern Rhodesia were divided between ten rulers, not all of whom were called chiefs. Mpezeni II was ruler of one group of villages and Paramount over all ten, and the other nine rulers were the predecessors of the present minor chiefs. These ten groups of villages, and the two corresponding groups in Nyasaland, I have called *counties*. With one exception, each successive county chief has taken the name of his predecessor and this name is often used as the name of the county.

648 622 634 643

4. *County segments*

In each county there is one village known as the important village or capital. Many, but not all, of the villages in a county belong to the residential segment of which the capital is the headquarters. Thus we may speak of a county segment which forms, as it were, the core of the county. The villages that do not belong to the county segment fall into three main types. There are villages belonging to other segments under Mpezeni, there are a few which trace their origin to other Ngoni groups, and there are those which have entered Ngoniland after 1898 and so never formed part of the segmentary residential system. Most villages of the last type have come into Ngoniland from Cewa chiefdoms and some of them claim to have been settled in Ngoniland before the arrival of Mpezeni and to have been driven out by him. An indication of the distribution of villages in Northern Rhodesia counties among these different types is given in Table IV, where the only three counties for which I have the information are examined from this point of view.

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[18] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

632 634 621 In these three counties there were no instances of two other types of village found rarely in Ngoniland. Occasionally an immigrant labourer working on the Fort Jameson tobacco farms manages to attract sufficient followers from among other labourers and his local affines to found a new village in an Ngoni chiefdom. The other rare type of village is formed by direct administrative action. The Administration has been largely concerned to amalgamate existing villages rather than to create new ones. In at least one instance, however, scattered clusters of huts inhabited by people who had fled from several different villages to avoid coming under agricultural control have been united into a new village under a headman of their own choosing. One example of each of these rare types of village is included in the sample of villages analysed in Table VII (p. 133). 648

621 631 634 TABLE IV. ORIGIN OF VILLAGES IN SELECTED COUNTIES, 1948

	Number of villages in county, classified by origin				
County	*County segment*	*Other segment under Mpezeni*	*Other Ngoni groups*	*Other tribes, joining Ngoni after 1898*	*Total*
X	60 (72%)	4 (5%)	1 (1%)	18 (22%)	83 (100%)
Y	26 (55%)	10 (21%)	0 (0%)	11 (23%)	47 (100%)
Z	59 (70%)	16 (19%)	0 (0%)	9 (11%)	84 (100%)
Total	145 (68%)	30 (14%)	1 (0.5%)	38 (18%)	214 (100%)

Number of counties in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 10
Number of villages in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 540 approximately

It will be seen from Table IV that about two-thirds of the villages in each of the selected counties belong to their own county segment. It is to villages in this category that the ties of a county chief are strongest. Here old and new systems are in accord and the chief acts both as traditional lord of the segment as well as head of the Native Authority. Villages in their county segment appear to be

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more meticulous than others in such matters as discussing proposed changes of site with the county chief and in reporting important deaths to him. 621 631 634

The proportion of villages in each county belonging to other segments under Mpezeni varies from 5 per cent to 21 per cent. These are villages which chose, or were forced, to move away from the chief to whom they were attached in segmentary terms, or else villages belonging to major segments whose lords did not become chiefs. Villages in this category have ties that in certain situations, as when there is a serious quarrel, link them more closely with some other county than with their own. In any county where there are many villages of this kind the solidarity of the county as a social group is not great. The ruling chief has many rivals who seek to divide his county and to become chiefs themselves. We must distinguish here between villages in one county which belong to the segment of another and those interloping villages which belong to one county but are situated in the territory of another. We shall discuss interloping villages later (p. 128) in connexion with the territorial aspect of counties. [666]

In Nyasaland the history of administration has been separate from that of Northern Rhodesia, but the Ngoni population there also has divided itself on segmentary lines. For many years the two principal leaders recognised by the Administration have been the heads of segments 5 and 6, and these segments form the cores of the two counties they control. The two county chiefs are now Native Authorities and join with an adjacent Cewa chief to form the Fort Manning Council of Chiefs. This acts as the Native administrative body for the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District. 643 649 634

The geographical distribution of the twelve counties, the neighbouring chiefdoms of other tribes, and the tracts of alienated land are shown in Map D. 631 634

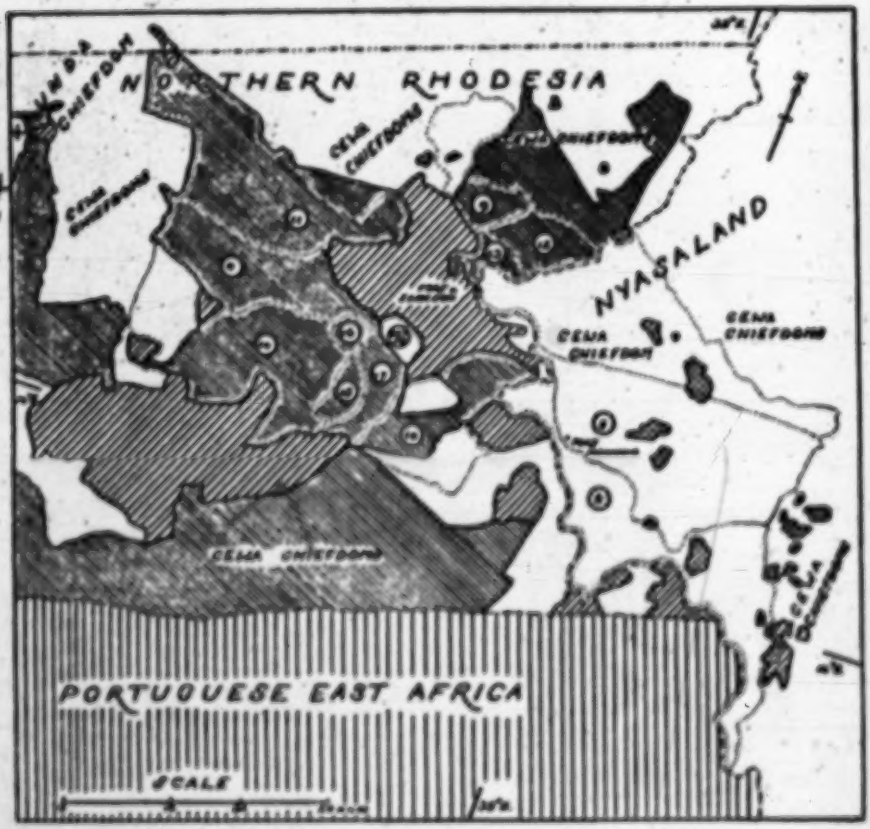
The twelve county segments, ten in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, are, in the nomenclature of Chapter I, segments 4 to 6 and 9 to 17. We shall refer to counties in the same way by the numbers of the segments corresponding to them. Thus county 4 is the county whose segment is number 4, and so on. County 10 is the Paramount Chief's county. Some of the county segments are primal, others are residual segments left after the formation of primal segments of lower order. The definition of the segment associated with each county is indicated in Table V. This table merely restates information implicit in Diagram 1. The hereditary names of county chiefs are also given.

[Text continues on page 121]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP D. STATUTORY DIVISION OF LAND, FORT JAMIESON 1949

102
423
631
489
634
101



- International Boundary.
- N. Charterland Concession, Northern Boundary.
- Statutory Division Boundary.
- County Boundary.
- Farmland in non-African ownership.
- Native Reserves.
- Native Trust land, crown land and disputed land, treated as if it were Native Trust land.
- Portuguese East Africa.
- County numbers.

[p. 120]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE V. COUNTY SEGMENTS

County[1]	Specification of county segment	Hereditary name of county chief
4	Residual after formation of segments 9 to 12	Madzimawe
5	Primal	Zulu
6	Primal	Mlonyeni
9	Primal	Mnukwa
10(a)	Residual after formation of segments 13 to 15	Mpezeni
11	Residual after formation of segment 16	Miholo
12	Primal	Mahawa
13	Primal	Kapatamoyo
14	Residual after formation of segment 17	Nzermane
15	Primal	Sayili
16	Primal	Teleka (b)
17	Primal	Maguya

(a) Paramount Chief's county.
(b) The first chief of this county was known as Mlonyeni. He was succeeded by his brother, who kept his own name of Teleka. The similarity of name with the chief of segment 6 was accidental.

[1] [County numbers refer to map on page 120, category 116 - Analyst]

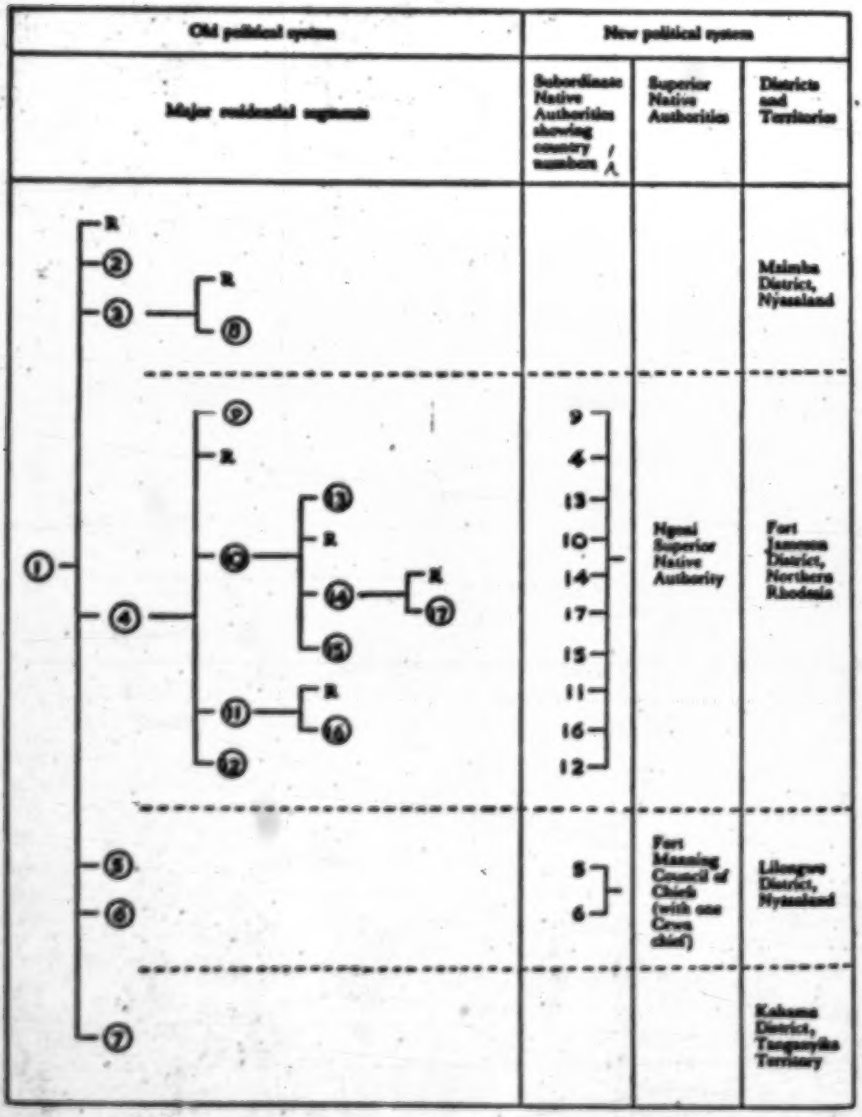
The county segments are not all of the same order of segmentation, yet the counties occupy positions of equivalence in the Native Authority. Each of the eleven counties under minor chiefs is, or has been for most of the time, the area under the control of a Subordinate Native Authority and also the area of jurisdiction of a second-class Native Court. According to the *Official Gazette* the Paramount Chief's county appears not to have been under any Subordinate Native Authority, nor does it seem to have been provided with a second-class court, but in some respects action takes place as if there were such an authority and court. The Superior Native Authority is responsible for all ten counties in Northern Rhodesia and there is a first-class Native Court for the same area. Thus the structural alignment of the twelve counties is markedly different from that of the segments corresponding to them. In practice the relations existing between the twelve counties and

[Text continues on page 123]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611
621
691

Diagram 4. OLD AND NEW POLITICAL SYSTEMS RELATED



(9) Residential segment, numbered as in Table II.

9 County.

R Residual segment.

1/A [County numbers correspond to those on map on page 120 category 116.-Analyst]

[p. 122]

[The notes to this chart are on page 123.-Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between their leaders are influenced by both their relative position in the Native Authority scheme and the position of the county segments, as well as by new interests that have emerged. The formal relationship between the alignments of segments and counties is set out in Diagram 4. This diagram also shows the relationship, at a higher level, between some of the other independent Ngoni groups and the major political divisions of British Africa.

In each county the chief, who does not live in the capital but in a village of his own, is head of the county segment and it seems probable that during the early years of the Administration it was the affiliation of villages within their old residential segments that provided the basis for the groupings of convenience which eventually crystallized into counties. In one or two instances succession to headship of the segment and county has been plainly manipulated, but the traditional rules of succession have not been outraged. Where the county segment is a residual one, the county chief may be also head of some segment of higher order. Thus the chief of county 11 is head of primal segment 11 although his county is only the residual segment after the formation of segment 16; county chief 14 is head of primal segment 14; and the Paramount Chief is head of primal segments 4 and 10.

---

[1] Three Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba are not shown on this diagram.

(a) A group under Magodi separated itself from either segment 2 or 3 and is now settled in Lundazi District, Northern Rhodesia.

(b) A group led by Zulu Gama is now settled in Songea District, Tanganyika Territory. The segment corresponding to this group appears to have been formed within segment 1, but I do not know what relation it bears to the other segments nor by what process it was formed. The western part of this group is still led by a descendant of Zulu Gama, but a descendant of one of his associates named Mboanani now leads the eastern part.

(c) A group under Ciwele ndhlovu is settled in Dowa District, Nyasaland. Some writers say it was formed within segment 4, others within the residue of segment 1. He was a lieutenant of either Zwangendaba or Mpezeni.

The two Ngoni groups which do not stem from Zwangendaba cannot be fitted into the diagram. They are located as follows.

(d) The Southern Nyasaland Ngoni, who broke away from the Southern Rhodesia Ndebele and who were led originally by Mputa, are now settled in Ncheu and Dedza Districts, Nyasaland, and in Circunscracão of Angónia, District of Tete, Portuguese East Africa.

(e) The Ngoni group led by Soshangane are now settled in the lower Limpopo Valley, Gazaland, Portuguese East Africa.

There are a few small Ngoni groups in the Shire Valley, Nyasaland, some of which have their own minor chiefs. There are also many Ngoni men and women in the towns of southern and eastern Africa, but they are not organized into political groups on a tribal basis.

[These notes refer to the chart on page 122.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Relative status of Chiefs*

178 There was nothing inherent in the residential system which
631 facilitated the emergence of twelve, and only twelve, counties from
634 Mpezeni's people. Each major segment already had a large number
648 of lesser segments within it in 1898, and it was during the unsettled years that followed the conquest, when new schemes of organization were tried out, when fresh occupants were sought for existing posts, and when the spatial distribution of people was being radically altered, that these twelve gradually emerged. Considerations of size do not seem to have been very important, for there is a wide variation in the size of counties. However, with the development of the Native Authority and Native Court, there is an upper limit to
[692] the size of the county which can be served adequately by a single court and possibly by a single minor chief, and this shows itself in the moves towards forming sub-counties within one or two of the larger ones. Yet in view of administrative attempts to do away with certain chiefs, it seems that in its eyes the Ngoni have too many rather than too few chiefs. The order of segmentation is not critical, as we have seen. Nor has there been merely an ossification of the formal structure as it was at the moment of conquest, as is often the case when a fluid society is suddenly put into a rigid mould. Wiese in 1891 wrote that Ngoniland was divided into four districts.[20] In our terms, these were as follows:

(*a*) Primal segment 11.
(*b*) Primal segment 14.
(*c*) Residual segment 10 after 14 was formed.
(*d*) Residual segment 4 after 10 and 11 were formed.

Of these four districts, the first has given rise to two counties, 11 and 16; the second to two, 14 and 17; the third to three, 10, 13 and 15; and the fourth to three, 4, 9 and 12. Wiese does not indicate in what districts he would place segments 5 and 6.

The fortuitous manner in which the counties have emerged is illustrated by the fact that for certain purposes one of the counties is treated as if it were two. At one time, when there were more administrative divisions than there are now, it was divided into two
[651] areas, and this arrangement still persists for tax collection. Other counties have only one tax register book each, but this one has two.

In genealogical terms also, the emergence of the twelve chiefs appears to have been fortuitous. For example, the second wife of
[643] Mpezeni I in segment 10, after the formation of segments 14 and 15,

[20] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648
had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after 178
Nsingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. 631
This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to 634
that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the [643]
second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important seg- [557]
ment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this 178
transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by 648
which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely 557
unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to [634]
be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the [632]
formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed [554]
warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget 465
meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and 634
a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is 648
suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

465 634 648 personal emoluments, there is usually some discussion. Thus the relative amounts paid to each chief provide us with some indication of the importance attached to him by the Administration and his colleagues. The salaries paid in 1946 are set out in Table VI together with the number of villages in each county in 1938, the last year for which I have that information.

TABLE VI. SALARIES OF CHIEFS AND VILLAGES IN THEIR COUNTIES

[643]

County segment	*Number of villages in county*, 1938	*Salary of county chief in £s per annum*, 1946
10	87	120 (*a*)
14	101	97½
4	88	82½
11	77	67½
12	42	52½
17	35	37½
13	30	27 (*b*)
15	28	27 (*b*)
9	19	30
16	19	30
Total	526	571½
Mean	52.6	57.15

(*a*) Paramount Chief.
(*b*) Calculated from monthly rate. Both these chieftainships were vacant for part of 1946.

It will be seen that the amount of a minor chief's salary is closely correlated with the number of villages in his county. The chiefs of counties 13 and 15 appear to be underpaid in relation to the number of their villages, and this may be related to efforts which the Administration had been making about that time to eliminate these two chieftainships and to amalgamate their chiefdoms with others. This arrangement also conforms to the alignment of segments. [643] The Paramount Chief is in charge of county 10 but he is also head of primal segment 4 which includes all the others, and it is therefore appropriate that he should be paid most. Chief 14 is

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Mpezeni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16.

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kupili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief.

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units*

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1930 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 reserves were amended, and as existing gardens were exhausted.
634 Movement of this kind did not greatly affect political allegiance, so
178 that not all the villages acknowledging the control of a minor chief were built in his vicinity. Coxhead mentions seven defined territorial units in 1914, but by the time I began fieldwork in 1946 their boundaries had been forgotten.[21] Most of the villages in any one county were clustered together, with the capital village and the chief's village somewhere in the middle of the cluster, but there were also more distant villages situated among those belonging to other counties. The next stage of development appears to have been the definition of county boundaries, so that by 1946 it was possible to speak of some villages as situated in one county and owing allegiance to another. Most of these interloping villages, as we may call them, belonged to the segment of the county to which they owed allegiance. They were a bone of contention between chiefs, for although each chief desires as many villages as possible
[311] under his control, he has only a limited amount of land in his county with which to satisfy his people. An analogous situation is found in some Welsh sheep farms, where each farmer likes to own as many sheep as possible but hopes they will graze on someone else's land. The chief in political control of an interloping village endeavoured to maintain his control at a distance and at the same time to make use of the land in the local chief's county, while the latter had to decide between trying to make the interloping village shift its allegiance so as to increase his own following and trying to get it to move away so as to give his people more land. In 1947 and 1948,
[648] to avoid such difficulties between chiefs, the Administration defined county boundaries precisely and insisted that all villages within the area of a county should be under the control of the county chief.

Thus, in the development of the county as a social group, ties
631 of segmentary affiliation have been gradually replaced by those of
634 territorial propinquity. This replacement is not yet complete, nor
648 has it arisen merely as a consequence of Administrative action in
178 the last few years. Village histories show that in many instances a village changed from attachment to the head of its major segment to attachment to the local county chief many years ago and without prompting from the Administration. Villagers marry their neigh-
[582] bours irrespective of county affiliation and thus build up ties which link them to the local county. It may be inconvenient to walk a long way to the court and county meetings of a distant chief, particularly if the local chief appears to listen more readily to his people's complaints and advice.

[21] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22, 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [361]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 621 agnation of the small segments to what I have termed an omni-
648 directional system), has increased the importance of the single
[601] village. After 1898 the Administration endeavoured to bring the people back into villages of moderate size which could be easily supervised by the Administration acting through chiefs.[22] In 1912 a comprehensive scheme of Native reserves was proposed. To facilitate the introduction of the scheme, many small villages were amalgamated with others near by to form units of forty huts or more. The larger groups of composite villages were to form the nuclei of the reserves.[23] After 1930, when villages began to spread out again, many of the enforced amalgamations came to an end. The Administrative rules that every man must live in a recognized village and that a village with less than ten tax-paying men could not be recognized were not always enforced, although they were not repealed until 1945. Administrative recognition has been an important consideration in determining the size of villages but it has not been the only one.

621 In the residential system, the process of segmentation did not
681 stop with the founding of the segments we now know as county
178 segments. Already in 1898 there were very many more segments in being than the few we have shown in Diagram 1. There we have indicated the position of the major branches of the tree of State but have omitted the hundreds of minor limbs and thousands of twigs which made up the whole. Even if we restrict our attention to segments founded before 1898 we find within any county segment to-day many smaller groups, some of them divisions, others single villages, and a few containing several villages, which are in fact inferior segments formed by one or other of the processes we discussed in Chapter I. Lieutenants and others have made their own segments, junior sons have left their natal villages, and so on. The processes of segment formation since 1898 have not been identical with those prevailing before the conquest, for the quasi-agnatic structure of segments has been modified and segments of recent formation, if in fact we can legitimately call them segments at all, are not organized in the same hierarchical manner as in the old residential system. We shall discuss the formation of small social groups in a later part of our study, the analysis of village life.
178 Here, at the county level, we have to deal with what is essentially a
634 continuation of a pre-conquest process. Each successive head of a
622 county segment, i.e. each county chief, has formed his own new segment within that of his predecessor. Thus, for instance, where

[22] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902, p. 2, and 1903, p. 2.
[23] *M.R.A.*, p. 108.

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Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's villages*, as I have defined them elsewhere.[24] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[24] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

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Mpezeni

and village headmen looked after them. About half the cattle in Ngoniland were captured during the fighting of 1898 and although many of these were returned to the Ngoni, they were soon disposed of to White traders. To-day, many of the cattle in royal (i.e. capital, regal and chief's) villages are said to belong to the Paramount Chief. This statement of royal ownership is now not merely one referring to political overlordship, for these beasts are contrasted with others which belong to commoners and to other chiefs

TABLE VII. VILLAGES FOUNDED BEFORE AND AFTER 1898

How founded or incorporated in the Ngoni State	*Type of present-day village*					
	Royal			*Cadet*	*Commoner*	*Total*
	Capital	*Regal*	*Chief's*			
Founded by regional governors or their ancestors prior to creation of the Ngoni State	0	0	0	0	3	3
Founded before 1898 to accommodate other segments of the residential system	1	6	0	1	25	33
Total known to have been founded before 1898	1	6	0	1	28	36
Founded to accommodate segments of the residential system, date unknown	0	0	0	1	11	12
Founded after 1898 to accommodate segments of the residential system or their modern equivalents	0	2	0	4	20	26
Founded outside the Ngoni State, date unknown, entering it after 1898	0	0	0	0	6	6
Founded in Ngoniland by a labour immigrant after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Founded by direct Administrative action after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total known to have been founded or incorporated after 1898	0	2	0	4	28	34
Grand total	1	8	0	6	67	82

Sample collected casually in the general course of fieldwork.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small, contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the same processes we have seen at work in the formation of segments. Those villages are linked which have a common origin, and the mechanism of dispersal is still the same as in pre-conquest times. Sons of a headman still break out of their natal village and lieutenants and others move off to make their own villages. However, with the decline in polygyny, fewer new villages arise from the formation of new bands of wives by a headman.

Secondly, the village has become more important than before, and village membership is now critical in a wide variety of situations. Thirdly, because it has become easier to move from one village to another than to form a new village, the genealogical structure of the village has become highly diversified as compared with segments of similar size in the old system.

Thus, the transition has been from a State based on a continuously segmenting political system to a minor unit of administration in a modern State. The new order has grown out of the old, not as the result of any professed policy of preserving indigenous forms of political organization, but because the aims of the Administration were essentially conservative, because it was concerned with preserving order in the country as cheaply as possible and did not wish to introduce economic and political changes which would conflict with the supply of labour to other areas scheduled for earlier development; and because for the most part those individuals who occupied powerful positions in the old régime were best able to survive in the struggle for power which determined the eventual form of the new. Therefore, although their entry into the colonial empire was so much more abrupt than that of their matrilineal neighbours, the political system to which Ngoni are now subject bears many more superficial similarities to its former condition than is the case among the Cewa and others. The changes have been great, as we have seen, but the symbols and names remain, with changed significance, to remind Ngoni of their past.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Five

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN A LARGE-SCALE SOCIETY

1. The Administration and the Native Authority 2. Rivals of the Paramount Chief 3. The chief's advisers 4. The chief and his people 5. Royal hunts 6. African bureaucracies 7. Capital, court, and chief's village 8. Politics and the courts 9. Moral and physical sanctions 10. External links 11. Conclusion

1. *The Administration and the Native Authority*

648 UNDER THE present system, political power lies not with the Paramount Chief but with the Administration. The administrative officers who come into face-to-face contact with the Ngoni are themselves subordinate to higher provincial officers and to the headquarters of the Government at Lusaka, and the Government is in its turn partly under the control of the United Kingdom Government through the Colonial Office and partly responsible to the local Legislative Council. Even the most recently joined cadet represents this powerful hierarchy to the Ngoni, and to a large extent his actions have its backing. There are about seventy tribes in Northern Rhodesia, and thousands more in the rest of the Colonial Empire, and matters of general administrative policy are decided by people some of whom have never heard of the Ngoni, and with reference to considerations of which the Ngoni are unaware. Thus to the Ngoni, the Administration appears always inscrutable and unpredictable. The unpredictability partly arises from the latitude which must inevitably be allowed to individual officers combined with a high rate of turnover. The good intentions of the Administration are suspect except where the Administration appears clearly as protecting Ngoni interests against the demands of some other group in the community, such as planters, Cewa, Indians, Coloureds, or missions.

The Administration works through the Native Authority, and it is through the Native Authority that Ngoni men and women have access to the Administration. This is not entirely true of Ngoni who live permanently in the township, where there are other channels of access, but applies to the bulk of the rural population. If direct representations are made to the Administration, then the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

man presenting his request for a gun licence, or for permission to go to Southern Rhodesia, or to move to another village, or whatever it may be, is told first to bring a letter from his chief in support of his request and it will then be considered. Thus the approval of the chief is necessary for a variety of enterprises. 648

A chief may decide not to support a request for a variety of reasons. He does not want to recommend to the Administration projects which will turn out unfavourably, and yet he does not want to oppose unnecessarily the wishes of his people who may begin to drift away into other counties or to Southern Rhodesia if they feel he is being unfair to them. Many of these requests from his people are handled by the court clerk who has custody of the rubber stamps, without whose imprint no letter looks official. Other councillors and advisers may also help with these requests, and may advise the chief, in the light of their own interests and of their estimate of the public interests, on whether or not to support a request. There is thus opportunity for a friend of the chief to block rivals and enemies by seeing that their requests do not go forward. Men who are thwarted in this way can appeal to the Administration, and may perhaps be granted their request. Such action, however, is likely to increase the antagonism of the Native Authority towards them, and in so far as they have defied the authority of the chief by appealing against his decision, they may be censured by their neighbours. Thus what they gain in one respect may be offset by what they lose in another. When the quarrel between a councillor and a man who is, say, trying to open a shop in his village is of long standing and with faults and undisclosed offences on both sides, it may be unwise to risk the whole matter being brought to the notice of the Administration by an appeal over the matter of the shop. [662] [626]

In other situations, where the Administration endeavours to intervene in some matter in which the chief is thought to be dilatory, the Native Authority may shield a man because of the danger of possible repercussions. Thus, for instance, a District Officer on tour found a man living in a village at which he was not registered. He turned the offender over to the Native Court. The offender had a perfectly good defence but his story would have involved reference to incest by an important person and it was therefore undesirable that the District Officer should hear of the matter. Accordingly the Court delayed the hearing of the case on some technicality, and after the District Officer had left the area nothing more was done. 629 649

In the main the Administration presents a united front to the Ngoni, and the words and actions of each Administrative officer 649

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 support those of his colleagues. However, chiefs and others do
[661] sometimes manage to play off one administrator against another where there are differences of interest between different departments of the Administration, and occasionally appeals by Ngoni chiefs to high Administrative officials against the actions of their juniors are successful. It is easier for Ngoni to exploit the much greater differences of interest between the different sections of the non-African community, officials, missions, planters and European and Indian traders.

648 In the early years of this century it appears that the chiefs were
662 approached by labour recruiters, planters, and missionaries who wished to gain their favour and utilize this to their own advantage. It is difficult to gauge to what extent this practice continues. There are one or two recent instances where the missions have clearly
[791] recognized the importance to them of securing the goodwill of an Ngoni in high authority, and it would also appear that some high-placed Ngoni have utilized their position to gain from the missions services which might not otherwise have been so readily available to them. With the cessation of labour recruiting there has been no
[464] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[366] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[579] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

inefficient workers on the local tobacco farms, where the ties that link them to the near-by villages with their marriages, funerals, and beer parties are still operative, and where the wages are much lower than in Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, Ngoni tend to suspect the good intentions of any non-African, however lavish he may be with his presents, and for this reason are reluctant to enter into agreements with them the social consequences of which they cannot foresee.

2. *Rivals of the Paramount Chief*

In pre-conquest times the death of the head of the State was followed by a struggle between rival heirs and by fission of the State. Under British colonial rule these struggles cannot be carried on by force of arms, and it is difficult to split the tribe when there is nowhere for the dissident section to move to and when Administrative recognition is an important condition for political existence. Nevertheless the same struggles continue even if in a different guise.

One of the most interesting incidents in the struggles between rival groups for the chieftainship occurred in 1903 and hinged on an aspect of segmentation within the residential system which we have not so far discussed. It was customary for the heir to a large segment founded by his father to place one wife in the headquarters of that segment as well as establishing his bevies of wives with their own inferior segments. The eldest son of the selected wife grew up to be in charge of the headquarters and came to be identified with his father's father, the founder of the headquarters, as against his father who was lord of its segment. Thus, for example, Zwangendaba, heir to segment 1, founded segment 18 for his own great wife, but also placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 1, the segment founded by his father for *his* great wife. Similarly Mpezeni, as son of Zwangendaba, placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 4, which by then had replaced the annihilated segment 18. In this matter the Ngoni seem to have differed from the Zulu, for among them, according to Bryant, the *inizinda*, son of the placed wife, represents his own father as against the father's main heir.[1]

In 1903 the eldest son of Mpezeni I by the selected wife in segment 4 tried to assume the name of his father's father, Zwangendaba. This was in accord with his structural position as representing the interests of the founder of the segment as against those of the

[1] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 80; Bryant, *Dictionary*, s.v. *ini-zinda*. cf. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 401. Lancaster implies that the selected wife was called *ikadlu*. This seems unlikely in view of the Zulu use of *i(li)kadlu* for the senior left-hand wife.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 643 reigning lord of the segment. It is probable that in this instance the divergence of interest had been increased by the shooting of Nsingu, for Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu and grandson of Mpezeni I, was only a young boy and in the hands of guardians who were commoners and who might respond to pressure from their ward's father's paternal half-brother. So far as can be gathered from the published account of the meeting called by the Administration to [646] discuss the matter, the young Paramount was supported by the lords of segments 12, 14 and 17 and by the senior lieutenants of segment 10. He was opposed by the heads of segments 9, 13 and 16 and by the senior lieutenant of segment 4. Segment 15 seems not to have taken part in the dispute. Thus the main cleavage appears to have been between segments 10 and 12 on the one hand and the residue of 4 on the other. Segment 13, in terms of its structural position, was on the wrong side; this may have been connected with the fact that the regional governor of Mpezeni I who led segment 13 was born in the headquarters of segment 4. After a quarrel about succession to his father's office of lieutenant in that segment, he moved to segment 10 where he found favour with the chief and was later promoted to regional governor. In the 1903 dispute he apparently transferred his support back to his natal segment.[1]

The attempt to assume the name Zwangendaba failed. The young chief's supporters outnumbered their opponents at the meeting and his spokesmen argued that he had been recognized by all the other chiefs and by the Administration as Paramount of the whole Ngoni country. If his rival took the name he would be led to usurp the authority of the young Paramount. The Native Commissioner then ruled that the name could not be taken.

643 611 754 669 579 Throughout his reign Mpezeni II was opposed by a half-brother, a son of Nsingu by a different mother. This man was older than Mpezeni and claimed that his mother had really been Nsingu's great wife, or at least that Nsingu had intended to make her so before he was shot in 1898. This rivalry took two forms. He endeavoured to bring destruction to the chief and his cattle by sorcery, and on one occasion made what seems to have been a half-hearted attempt to kill him with a spear. At the same time he endeavoured to establish his own segment as a county of its own, and in this he was assisted by others who fancied themselves as chief of the proposed new county.[2] The sorcery failed, not only because it was merely sorcery, but also because sorcery and

[1] *N.E.R.G.G.J.*, 4 (1 August 1903), Supplement. See p. 35.
[2] See pp. 143f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

639 county the senior lieutenants of the county segment are well-
643 known figures, usually headmen of large villages, and often seen at
645 the chief's house. There are also the lieutenants of the segments of lower order founded for their great wives by successive heads of the county segment, and in particular the lieutenants of the reigning chief's great wife's segment. There are individuals who for some reason or other have become friendly with the chief, and there are those occupying posts paid by the Native Treasury. There are the kinsmen of the chief, including the chief's deputy. All these categories contribute to the circle round the chief which keeps him informed of what is going on in his county, advises him what he should do and travels with him on journeys. The constitution of this group is not fixed and there is no formal council to which persons definitely do or do not belong. An Administrative officer once asked Mpezeni II who constituted the tribal council, and the Paramount Chief is said to have found difficulty in thinking of any names. Not all the people who might be expected to advise the chief do so, for there are always quarrels and preferences within each category. In particular, the lieutenants of regal segments seem to play a comparatively minor part. They do not represent the interests of the county as a whole, as do the lieutenants of the county segment, nor of the reigning chief, as do the lieutenants of his own village. They are the favourites of former chiefs and the segments that they represent are not functionally significant under the present scheme of administration.

In recent years the Administration has endeavoured from time
[648] to time to discuss affairs with the chiefs and the four newly appointed Native Authority councillors in isolation from the rest of the tribe.[4] In most situations in which matters of common interest are discussed there is, however, no restriction on who can offer advice to the chief or to the meeting. Any man can stand up and say what he wishes, but unless he is in an important social position people will listen to him attentively only if his counsel seems sound.[5]

It is the custom for a chief to nominate one of his agnatic
[645] kinsmen, usually a father's son or father's brother's son, as his deputy.[6] Although this appears to have been a traditional post, I
639 do not know what role was played by an important man's deputy
645 in pre-conquest times. Nowadays the deputy of a chief may help in his various official duties and represents the interests of the chief's agnatic kin as against those of his lieutenants. In village affairs

[4] See p. 151.
[5] See pp. 158f.
[6] *Mnuna*, cf. Zulu *umnuna*, younger sibling.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy. 634 645

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief. 202 634 629

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it. 611 643 551 634 [648] [695]

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has 634 669

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Lingani*, cf. *Zulu* (*ili*)*ntsuna*, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Brown, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 149f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 delegated a certain amount of responsibility, such as the collection
668 of licence fees or the holding of a court not recognized by the Administration but supplied by the county clerk with the apparatus of official forms. The would-be chief then argues that the rural district in which he lives has always been distinct from the rest of the county and that it is too far for the people in it to attend at the county court. No attempt of this kind since 1920 has been successful, although the recent dispersal of villages into reopened land outside
[693] the reserves has increased the distances some litigants have to travel to the county court, and hence the number of disputes referred to these unrecognized local leaders has increased.

4. *The chief and his people*

634 The chief interacts with his people in a variety of situations. He receives their presents of beer and other valuables, he presides at county meetings, and organizes the royal hunts. He visits them in their villages when there are important celebrations and festivities and they go to him with their requests and complaints.

634 Ngoni offer beer as one of their principal expressions of
574 hospitality, and in a formal beer party the ordered pattern of the
273 social structure is acted out in the distribution and dispensation of
[554] the various jars and bowls of beer.[11] One traditional obligation is to provide a jar of beer for the head of the segment. Everyone belongs, or belonged, to a hierarchy of segments so that there were many people who ought to be honoured in this way at every party. In practice, since beer is heavy to carry, few jars move outside the village in which they are brewed, but a distant political superior is sometimes called in to a village to attend a beer party at which he will be honoured in this way. In the chief's own village the chief lives close at hand and beer is provided in much the same way as for the headman in an ordinary village. When beer is brewed by important people in the capital and regal villages they often call the chief to come and visit them and enjoy their hospitality. The chief is not so frequently called to beer in commoner villages, but on an important occasion such as the formal installation of a village official, or the formal announcement that a village has moved to a new site, it is appropriate to invite the chief to attend. A chief may
634 also be honoured by his affines with beer brewed for him in the
554 same way as any other man, but there is some disagreement about the appropriateness of this, for the chief 'has exceeded all others'

[11] See Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 217-19, for the rules of and attitudes towards beer drinking.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE II. Beer party at a chief's house. Standing in the foreground wearing a fez is a Native Authority messenger.

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PLATE III. Collecting tax in a village. The Administrative clerk sits at a table on the verandah of the village headman's hut. Near him stand two Administrative messengers, and seated on the ground are men waiting to pay.

[Facing p. 144]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kinswoman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing. A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present is made by an individual and arises from his own political aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE IV. Villagers hoeing a path to another village in preparation for a visit from the District Officer.

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PLATE V. A District Officer, with a county chief on his left, talks to village headmen during a tour of villages. In the distance are villagers listening to the conversation.

[Facing p. 145]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 by this relationship participate in the presentation and consumption
273 of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the
[769] Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all
797 public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the
[557] ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of
[576] honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are
681 diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded
634 as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and
626 other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Paramount Chief is sometimes told of the matter and calls the minor
[643] chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other counties and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner.
643 The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[14] a
576 salutation which symbolizes his former position as head of an

[14] cf. Zulu *Bayete*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

independent group of Ngoni. Chibambo mentions how the use of this salutation was discontinued when the head of an erstwhile independent group rejoined his parent group.[15] In recent times people have indicated their disapproval of the Paramount Chief's actions by discontinuing this salutation temporarily. 643 576

Despite the security of tenure provided by Administrative recognition, a chief still needs the support of his people. There is an Ngoni maxim, 'chieftainship is people',[16] and commoners are well aware that it is because they support their chief that he has high status. The simplest and most effective sanction that commoners can employ against their chief is to leave him. Movement from one county to another, from one tribe to another, and from the county to the town and back again is crucial in the working of modern Ngoni society. Not all these movements take place as the result of the unpopularity of chiefs, but this is one factor among many. Chibambo records an early example of people moving to segment 8 from the residue of segment 1 in order to share the hospitality of a newly appointed chief, but he goes on to say 'afterwards they found it wise to return to their proper division [segment]'.[17] In more recent times there are several examples, particularly among villages which entered Ngoniland after 1898 and who therefore largely lack segmental affiliation, of villages and clusters that have changed from one county to another for political reasons. More significant at the present time are the numbers of ambitious people who emigrate to the towns because, among other things, they cannot find advancement in the political hierarchy. The most striking instance of this is in the family of the late Mpezeni II. He had six sons who survived him. One is now Paramount Chief, and one is still a boy. The other four, including the chief's deputy, are town-dwellers in other parts of Africa. 634 626 [166] [557] [643]

5. *Royal hunts*

The royal hunt is the only occasion on which a county, or more usually a rural district or part of a county, functions as an economic unit. Even then the economic element in the enterprise is not very marked. The chief announces, through his messengers, that on such-and-such a day he will hold a royal hunt and that the men of such-and-such villages are to meet in a certain place. The procedure followed on the hunt is exactly the same as on an ordinary hunt, with the chief or someone nominated by him in tactical command, though the number of hunters is greater than on a hunt 224 476 634

[15] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 36. [16] *Ufumu ni iwanthu.*
[17] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 35.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

224 organized by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief
476 and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who
634 killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt, but occasionally if the
634 field is very poor a chief will summon absentees in his court.

224 These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic
[136] significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as effectively as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but
[681] he can call out his men hunting.[18] Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with
[411] them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African bureaucracies*

647 Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was
648 little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous
693 leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

[18] See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 215, for Ngoni hunting methods.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Adminis- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created,
the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity
as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity
and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[19] were
employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make
arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native
Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of
subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The 692
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as
well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative
legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences [681]
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award
damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish
between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Adminis-
tration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native
Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority
was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni
Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping.
The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction
and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of
messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main
roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production,
for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had
to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries
and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an [647]
assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The
Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the
extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs
their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[19] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapau* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

651 marriages and for selling beer, and from fines and fees taken in court. In some years there has been a local levy on all men liable for Native tax.

642 The Native Authority, the Native Court and the Native Treasury form a single system of what is essentially local government. The judicial aspect of government has always been to the 693 fore, for the hearing of cases is an activity which has gone on without serious interruption since before the conquest. The first people to be appointed as assessors were in many instances the people who had been hearing cases with the chief for many years. They were joined in this by the councillors, for there was no separation between judicial and administrative organization in pre-conquest times and none had emerged by that time. Since the court clerk needed to be at least partially literate, he was usually a younger man who had been to school but, in some instances at least, he had close kinship ties with those in high office. He acted as a member of the bench as much as the councillors and assessors. In some courts other close supporters of the chief, particularly those who lived near their courts, also attended regularly to hear cases although they were not paid to do so, and in at least one instance a chief paid a regular salary out of his own pocket to a member of his court who was not recognized as such by the Administration.

Thus the court was the nucleus round which the Native Authority grew. The court clerk was employed as secretary to the chief and the Native Authority, and he had charge of the rubber stamps which came to be the new symbols of political power. He toured the county looking for dogs and bicycles without licences, for since he was literate he was considered the man to handle the money accruing from court fines, fees and licences. Sometimes he combined with these duties others that had nothing to do with court work, such as seeing that villages were swept clean or paths hoed. Because of his work in court he was well informed on disputes in the county, and since he made frequent trips to the township so that his accounts could be checked by the Administration, he was well briefed on what was going on there. The office of court clerk [554] came in this way to have a greater importance than its formal duties implied.

Yet in recent years the relative status of the court clerk has declined. The executive, as opposed to the judicial and fiscal, 648 functions of the Native Authority have become more numerous. 645 The activities of the Administration, instead of being confined mainly to tax collecting and the punishment of major crimes, have expanded to include a variety of social services for Africans and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

these need the support and co-operation of the African community. 648
The Administration has consulted Ngoni and other Native Authori- 645
ties on such matters as agricultural control, the emigration of women to the railway line, provision of better schools, and so on. In 1948 the number of councillor posts was reduced. Instead of employing councillors for general duties, each of the four councillors remaining, now receiving a much higher salary than before, has been given a specific task, the care of roads, the promotion of agriculture, the efficient use of school facilities, and the co-ordination of the work of the Native Authority as a whole. The Administration has attempted to make these four councillors, together with the ten Northern Rhodesian chiefs, into a formal council competent to take decisions without always referring to the people as a whole.

So far this attempt has not been very successful, but the power of the four councillors is certainly greater than that of their more numerous and lower-paid predecessors. The court clerks have been overshadowed by these new men and left behind in these new activities. Literacy is becoming common and clerks are no longer [212] in demand as secretaries to chiefs. The Native Authority is beginning to employ men whose jobs do not take them to court at all.

The present range of posts whose emoluments are handled by 647
the Native Treasury is shown in Table VIII.

All these posts are filled by the Native Authority in agreement with the Administration. It is easy to show how a large proportion of the employees are connected to the chiefs and senior lieutenants by kinship, but this fact is not as significant as it might appear. The Ngoni possess nowadays what may be called an omni-directional [611] kinship system in which ties of kinship can be traced as convenient through fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and by any combination of these. It would indeed be surprising if Native Authority employees could not trace genealogical connexion with chiefs and their lieutenants, for so can nearly everyone in Ngoniland. There is no formal selection procedure but a chief may announce at a county meeting that there is a post to be filled and those present may suggest names. Alternatively a chief may discuss the matter with his advisers and then offer the post to the man they decide on. Occasionally a man seeking employment [662] approaches the Paramount Chief in the hope that there may be a post to be filled. Thus although those who live near the chief, or who make it their business to see him and drink with him frequently stand a greater change of being chosen, choice is not restricted to these people. [see page 152, category 116. —Analyst]

[Text continues on page 153]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE VIII. PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS TO BE PAID BY NGONI NATIVE TREASURY, 1949

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Description of post	*Number of posts*	*Mean annual salary in £s, to nearest £*
Chief	10	72
Councillor	4	60
Treasury clerk	2½(a)	57
Artisan	2	42
Court clerk	10	25
Messenger	22	25
Assessor	20	24
School attendance officer	5	24
Road foreman	2	24
Office boy	1	24
Mail runner	2	16
Nursery keeper (fruit trees)	1	15
School matron	6	9(b)
Total number of full-time posts	87½	

(a) One tax-collecting clerk whose work was in Fort Jameson Township was paid jointly by the Ngoni and Cewa Native Treasuries.
(b) Including £1½ contributed by missions.

This table is based on the approved estimates for 1949 and it is possible that not all the posts were filled. In previous years all posts had been filled without difficulty, except for the matrons.
The emoluments shown here do not include allowances paid for bicycles, lorry fares, and rent-free housing available for some employees.
Not included in the table are the sums paid to a few employees at the Demonstration Farm, and the provision made for 240 man-months of casual labour on the roads at 25*s.* a month and 360 man-days of carrier labour at 10*d.* a day.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VI. The clerk of a county Native Court checks the whereabouts of men on the tax register of a village with an important man in the village. Standing are a Native Authority messenger with fez, and an Administrative messenger. The village headman and some of his people sit in the background.

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PLATE VII. Litigants outside a county Native Court wait for hearings to begin.

[Facing p. 152]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him. 634 648 [647] [687]

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialized services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them. 648 65 [797] 645 643

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo- 648 184

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VIII. The clerk of a Native Court, with one of the court assessors, sits in the chief's village issuing a permit for selling beer to a man who has come on behalf of his sister.

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PLATE IX. A Native Authority councillor, sitting on the verandah of the Native Court in his country, issues passes to men wishing to collect caterpillars. There are no edible caterpillars in Ngoniland, and Ngoni who wish to collect them provide themselves with passes to show to the Crown chiefs in whose countries caterpillars are found.

[Facing p. 153]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 genuous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native
[645] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people
[602] and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognised as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living,
[771] in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
649 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural
[693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local 647
Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these 624
duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in 648
conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary [693]
Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Adminis- [651]
tration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and
to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand
some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary
for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native
Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees
of other technical departments of the Administration, such as
Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two
police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are [625]
mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White
farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder,
have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European adminis- 648
trators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it
were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to 647
each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely
to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information
concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and
townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of
the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent
employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For
the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the
indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which
smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are
content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of
life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the
villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work 167
in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not 582
are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus
the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land
messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an
administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every
social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this
when the social distance between the two persons involved is small.
Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are
posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some
remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around 166
them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the 582

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

166 closeness of the ties linking them to the areas in which they find
582 themselves. To give two extreme examples, an agricultural demonstrator, after a few months in a rural compound, sought to marry a daughter of a near-by village headman. A policeman, sent to a village to investigate a murder, married a woman related to the dead man. Marriages of this kind are made partly because there is no other way by which a stranger in a village can be certain of getting enough to eat, but they also serve to broaden and diversify the relationship between the stranger and the people among whom he finds himself. Some of these marriages are terminated when the stranger is moved to another district, but there are a number of instances where Ngoni wives have gone with their stranger husbands to distant mines and towns. This process is, of course, merely part of the much wider one by which many Ngoni women follow their
[167] husbands when they leave their villages to seek work in Southern Rhodesia.

Similarly, chiefs and other important rural leaders endeavour
647 to establish enduring relations with members of the African Civil
557 Service. Some civil servants are their kinsmen, for one way by which a junior son of an important man can gain the position he desires but which is denied him by the rule of primogeniture is to enter the Civil Service or to seek advancement in one of the churches. Others are related by affinity, while yet others may go out of the way to offer hospitality to visiting political leaders when they need food and shelter in town. Some Ngoni civil servants maintain large households in the villages, which they visit at week-ends, and which they hope will have grown into recognized villages by the time they come to retire.

Thus there are two distinct groups of Africans concerned with
554 public affairs, the African Civil Service and the Native Authority
557 bureaucracy. They are in intimate association with one another,
647 and both exercise considerable political power. Both are formally distinct from the old political system. But status in traditional terms, as chief or village headman or head of a division or cluster, is still recognized in the face-to-face relations of people generally, and hence there is a continual attempt to bring the two systems into congruence with one another. Clerks aspire to become headmen when they retire, while headmen aspire to be the fathers and fathers-in-law of clerks. This is no new development, for as early as 1907 Stigand reported that a Swahili, whose home was near Zanzibar, and who had been a soldier, had founded a small village close to Fort Manning.[20]

[20] Stigand, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 125. See p. 118.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

One reason why the two bureaucracies remain separate is that members of the Civil Service are moved from one headquarters to another as the exigencies of the service demand, whereas a Native Authority councillor or foreman cannot, in general, seek similar employment in another tribe. In 1951 an Ngoni Native treasury clerk was transferred to a similar post in a neighbouring tribe, but moves of this kind are still exceptional, and almost out of the question where chiefs' posts are concerned. Clerks and messengers employed by the Administration are more likely to be moved at short notice, and the whole process of adaptation has to be begun again. The Ngoni clerk who is moved away from Ngoni country has to settle down to life in a strange district, and the stranger who comes to Fort Jameson has to find his way around the complexities of Ngoni society. 647 167

This factor of movement is even more significant in the case of the White administrators. Most of them spend only a few years in Ngoniland, and to them the Ngoni are merely one tribe among the many that they meet with in the course of their professional lives. Most of them can speak Nyanja, which most Ngoni can understand, so that there is not the added complication of interaction through interpreters, with the interpreters in a key social position, as Mitchell points out for the Nyasaland Yao.[88] But even though they can speak directly to Ngoni, it takes time for them to learn the faces of the people they see in the various Native Courts and at tribal meetings, and it also takes time to determine how these faces are related in a political system. Thus of necessity administrators are forced to rely on the advice of the African Civil Service, principally the messengers and clerks, and of the important chiefs when they need local knowledge to guide them. Chiefs and clerks attempt to establish firm relations with the administrators with whom they work, but owing to the great social distance which separates Black and White throughout southern Africa, there is little scope for this. Some messengers like to suggest that it is they, and not the White administrators, who really decide what shall be done. While this may have been partially true at one time, it is not true now. As Ngoni society has changed gradually in the direction of something with which administrators are more familiar, and as the context of administrative action has become less and less restricted to such simple activities as collecting tax and making roads, so the power of the district messenger has declined.[89] 648 647 [638]

[88] Mitchell, 'Political Organization of the Yao', pp. 139-9.

[89] Bradley, *Diary of a District Officer*, records in interesting fashion the relationship between himself, as District Officer, and Head Messenger Kachaje of Fort Jameson.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Capital, court and chief's village*

634 We have spoken of the headquarters of the county segment as the capital of the county, and this is in accord with vernacular usage. Although each chief is head of his county segment, no chief lives in his capital village. Each has made his segment and set up a village of his own. This process continues with each successive chief, each making his own new village. When brick buildings were made during the 1930s to house the newly recognised Native [399] Courts, these were located near the villages of the reigning chiefs. Some of these are still in office, while others have died and their successors live in their new villages, some of which are as much as two miles away from the court. There are thus in some counties three foci of political interest. There is the capital village, the court, and the chief's village. Associated with each centre are different leaders and different activities. The capital village provides a link with the past, and in particular with that moment in the past at which the segment was founded. The Paramount Chief [643] retains special rights in his capital village and can make a garden for one year on the old site of his county capital whenever it moves to a new one. Most, if not all, capital villages are larger than the average village but the senior lieutenants of the county segments do not live in them, for like the chiefs, they have made their own villages. Nevertheless, the lieutenants who do live in the capital [559] are regarded as people of considerable importance in the county. Meetings are sometimes held in the capital but more frequently at the county court or in the chief's village. The court is the home of the Native Authority, and it is there that the affairs of the Administration are discussed. An incident well illustrates the association of 692 the court with the Administration. I once called at the house of a 698 county chief who had not previously met me. He insisted that I 639 should go to the court to meet him there, as that was where he 697 always met Administrative officials. County meetings are called at the court to discuss matters raised by the Administration in its letters to chiefs, and to formulate requests and complaints for transmission to the Administration. The court clerk, the Native Authority councillors, assessors, and messengers are much in evidence, while the traditional advisers of the chief, his senior lieutenants, may be in the background even if they are not silent. Meetings of this kind are usually called by county chiefs, but occasionally a meeting may be held open to the whole tribe. I have described elsewhere the procedure at a county meeting.[20]

[20] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 1[illegible]-9.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
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In contrast to this, the private affairs of the chieftainship, matters connected with royal cattle, disputes among the chief's wives and quarrels between the chief and his affines or close supporters are discussed at the chief's village. Quarrels of an apparently trivial nature, such as a chief's wife's running away with a lorry driver, would in the old days have threatened the whole internal structure of the county segment, and they are still treated as questions of State by the lieutenants and kinsmen of the chief who attend these meetings. The contrast between these two kinds of assembly is striking. They are described by different vernacular terms,[*] and while any man can attend and speak at a meeting at the court, it would be considered inappropriate for him to intervene in a meeting at the chief's village unless his position in the old residential system was a high one. Women listen to court meetings, but rarely if ever speak, for the Administration works very largely through men and it is men who discuss the kinds of thing in which the Administration is interested. At the chief's village, the interests of the chief's kinswomen and wives are often directly concerned and they themselves contribute to the discussion. The marriages of chiefs established, and to a lesser extent do still reinforce and establish, affinal ties which cut across the cleavages between segments and which were crucial to the balance of power within the State. A quarrel between a chief and his wife was a matter of political, and not merely domestic, significance and must therefore be discussed by the chief's political advisers.

The sanction of deportation appears to be employed only in connexion with offences against the chieftainship. Thus a lieutenant who embezzled some royal cattle was called before a meeting at his chief's village attended by the important lieutenants in the county, and ordered to leave the country. Similarly, a man who was found drinking with a chief's wife under suspicious circumstances was ordered to leave the country by a tribunal of this kind. He moved first to another county, but was forced to move out again east of Nigeriland. Such sentences are sometimes taken without reference to recognized Native Courts or to the Administration, and the effectiveness of the tribunal's decision depends on the support it has from the people as a whole and from the Native Authority organization rather than on the ultimate sanctions wielded by the Administration. However, when matters of this

[*] A meeting to discuss matters of general interest is *mandimu*, one to discuss affairs of the chieftainship is *bulamuqa*. cf. *ku-mdimu*, to assemble (Nyanja) and (*ku*)*bulamu*, assembly (Zulu). The different derivation of the words, from Nyanja and Zulu, is significant. *Bulamuqa* also means agreed.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
698 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[609] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[696] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building
361 other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased importance to the Native Authority centre. Already there have been one or two attempts at opening shops near the courts to cater for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, headmen, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between political and judicial actions is not surprising. There is a connexion of this kind in every society, and the connexion is a particularly close one in societies like the Ngoni, where the same individuals act as legislators, administrators, and judges, and where the court does not confine itself merely to the legal issues in a dispute but examines the whole network of social relationships which are involved, with the object of restoring social order. 692

There are three ways in which this connexion can be seen. First, the court may be used as a vehicle for implementing the policy of the Native Authority. Secondly, the Administration may use the court to implement its policy. Thirdly, positions in the court may be used to satisfy men who seek political authority. We have to deal with the third point in our discussion of the development of the Native Authority. [557]

A chief anxious to gain favour with the Administration sees that his court enforces with heavy penalties the various regulations with which, for the time being, the Administration is concerned, such as those relating to agricultural control, and school attendance. A chief who does not wish to co-operate will neglect these regulations. Thus a few years ago there was a regulation that once a child had begun a two-year course at school, he or she must stay to finish it. In one county this rule was enforced much as the letter of the law indicated, in another it was completely ignored despite the protests of school-teachers, and in a third it was interpreted to mean that every child must go to school. About a year later the Administration decided that as promulgated the rule was *ultra vires*, and said it must be withdrawn. Nevertheless in some counties it is still enforced. These chiefs and courts are not being merely capricious. Some chiefs support the missions and their schools, others oppose them; some are in alliance with the school-teachers and other intelligentsia in their counties, others oppose them. These various attitudes and alignments are reflected in the way in which they respond to a new law. This is particularly noticeable when public delicts, such as absence from school, are concerned, for in general the court is its own law-enforcing agency. There is no independent police force to bring offenders to court whether or not the court wants to see them, but only the assessors, court clerk, messengers and others who, when they are not busy about their own affairs, may if they are so inclined wander through the villages looking for unlicensed dogs and unlicensed beer. Thus the enforcement of law relating to public delicts depends largely on the relationship between the Native Authority and the common people. 696 557 648 692 [872] [625] [693]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

696 In the court itself the magnitude of the penalties imposed and damages awarded is to some extent at the discretion of the court, and political considerations, among others, may influence judgments. Adultery with the wife of a chief is more heavily punished [681] than ordinary adultery, and people from other tribes, particularly [186] the Yao, are discriminated against. Ngoni courts maintain that they recognize only Ngoni law, even though the disputants may belong to other tribes. These ideas are familiar enough, but they indicate that questions of group membership, that is, political affiliation, and relations between groups, do influence the actions of the court. Within a county, hostility between a group having [578] the ear of the court and one lacking it may find expression in procedural obstructions, such as always hearing a particular suit at the end of a day, or of continually postponing the hearing because some minor witness is absent.

661 The chief and his advisers usually endeavour to maintain a 648 monopoly of access to the Administration, and this endeavour is 696 largely supported by the Administration as a matter of policy. In the particular sphere of legal action, appeal from the Native Court to the District Officer is sometimes regarded as a challenge to this monopoly, and litigants are sometimes punished for stating that they intend to appeal. In a celebrated recent case when a chief was successfully sued in the District Commissioner's court for damages for adultery, his people came to him afterwards to express their condolences, as after a funeral, at the injury done to his high office by this procedure.

692 Native Courts are formally recognized under Ordinance by 649 the Administration, and hence changes in the indigenous legal system brought about by the Administration are legal changes, in that they have behind them all the paraphernalia of Ordinances, Letters Patent, Orders-in-Council, and Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. This gives a special quality to manipulation of the legal system by the Administration, for this is really only another way of saying that effective sovereignty lies with the British Crown and not with Paramount Chief Mpezeni. But within the framework of analysis of the local situation, the actions of the Administration and of the chiefs in controlling the working of the courts are comparable sociologically.

The Administration is continually exercised about the quality of the work done in Native Courts, and in so far as all cases heard in Native Courts are subject to revision by the District Commissioner a direct check is, or could be, exerted on the way in which the courts operate. But Administrative intervention goes further

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than this. Annual reports often draw attention to the smooth working of Native Courts and their impartiality, while attempts are made to establish British rules of evidence and of legal procedure generally. By trying thus to isolate the judiciary from the Native Authority and, more recently, by the proposal to introduce an entirely separate police force into rural areas, the Administration is engaged on an active policy of social change. One change that has already occurred widely is in the role played by the chief in his court. We have seen that traditionally disputes were settled by the senior lieutenants of the segment concerned and referred to the chief only if the lieutenants did not agree, for the chief represented the unity of the people and was above all disputes. When Administrative officers began to supervise the work of Native Courts they usually interpreted the chief's absence from his court as neglect of his duties. Pressure was put on chiefs to attend and participate in their courts, another step towards the secularization of their office. Nowadays some Ngoni chiefs stay out of their courts, others actively hear cases in them, and others drift in and out, sometimes intervening, sometimes waiting for difficult issues to be referred to them. The changed Native Court is one of the agencies whereby the transition from small-scale to large-scale society is to be made. The very successes which were hailed generally for Native Courts in Africa on the introduction of Indirect Rule are surely evidence of the importance attached by the Administration to maintaining courts of the right kind.

The role of the court in the essentially political relationship between the Administration and the Native Authority is made clear when we consider the sources of law enforced in the courts. I have described elsewhere[24] how many of the regulations sought for by the Administration are introduced as Native Authority Rules and Orders, which are then approved by the Administration. This is a harmless legal fiction which worries no one, since new legislation emanating from within the counties is enforced or not quite independently of whether or not it is referred to the Administration and is included in its list of Native Authority legislation. But it is significant that even this fiction can have political significance, for recently it was suggested that a soil erosion law, which had been introduced as a Native Authority Order, would be more accurately described as an Administrative rule which the Native Courts were empowered to enforce. This suggestion was rejected by a meeting of chiefs, who stated that they wished to retain the

[24] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 100-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 rule as a Native Authority Order.[58] Thus the chiefs preferred to
671 appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the
692 judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the
692 indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts.
664 Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of
[707] divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people
671 and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened
646 about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are
661 constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[59]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the
692 ease with which their members may move away to other sur-
648 roundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts
626 are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the
[648] end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[58] *African Affairs*, report, 1948, p. 47.
[59] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

review by the Administration, but in practice the cases are so numerous, the written account of them so brief, and often the handwriting of the record so bad, that it is difficult to make an adequate review. The Administration is able to keep some check on the financial transactions of the courts, and convictions for embezzlement are not uncommon; but the Administration does not greatly influence the decisions taken by the courts nor their enforcement. For though there are police on the lorry routes and crocodiles in the rivers, it is fairly easy for a determined man (or woman) who is dissatisfied with the treatment he has received in the courts to get away. He can usually get to a White farm or to a town, and once there it is not so easy to get him back. Men are not continually running away from the courts, for they usually accept decisions given against them, though appeals from a minor chief's court to the Ngoni Appeal Court are fairly common. Few people take their appeals further to the District Officer, and I have never heard of a case going on appeal beyond the Provincial Commissioner's Court. 692 626 [648] [696]

The general moral approval by the people of the work of the courts which lies behind much of the effectiveness of the Native Court system does not extend automatically to all legal action as such. There is no widely held view that the decisions of the courts must be supported merely because they are the decisions of the courts. Some courts are good, some bad; and some decisions are good, some bad. The great majority of cases that come before a county court are brought by men and women living within the county, but sometimes a litigant begins his suit in a county court not his own, particularly in the Paramount Chief's county court, if he thinks that he will get a better hearing there. Yet chiefs support each other and a case brought before a chief by litigants from another county are sometimes thrown out, in accordance with the Native Courts Ordinance. 692 691

There is little moral sanction attaching to legal procedures, or methods of appeal, or even to the particular sums awarded as damages. The members of courts tend in the main to uphold each other's decisions, so that there is a fair amount of conformity throughout the ten counties. All those who work in courts have in fact an interest in increasing the power of the court system, which the people as a whole have not. Disputants will settle out of court if they can, for it is not so far to walk and the whole process is not so disruptive of social ties, but members of a court will sometimes challenge the right of independent arbitrators, village headmen and the like, to come to any binding decisions. 692 [681] [627]

1:Barnes E-5 (946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenuouness of the moral sanctions behind the court assists in the longrun in maintaining the courts as courts of equity, despite the contrary tendencies generated by political manipulation. This is also party due to the relatively poor physical sanctions directly availableto the court. If a man is actually inside the brick court building hecan be handcuffed and taken off to the Administration in the township. But if a man A has been told by the court to bring £1 nextFriday to hand over to B, then either he can run away, or he can offer B 5*s*. out of court and hope to hear no more about the matter or he can persuade B that it would be wiser not to press his clain. It may be months before B can persuade the court to send on of its messengers to bring A in by force, and by that time anything may have happened, and even the court may have changed itsmind about the case.

It is the Aiministration which possesses physical sanctions. However, little noral support is given by the Black section of society to the exercise of these sanctions. The Native Court has to utilise the powerof the Administration when it sentences a man to imprisonment, but this punishment is not regarded as a proper penalty for the offence for which the man is committed. If a man is ordered by thecourt to pay a fine or damages and refuses to do so, or maintains hat he has no money, the court will order him to be imprisoned i the Administration's jail. When he comes out again, he is stillunder an obligation to pay. Associated with this use of prison is te lack of any stigma attached to having been, or actually being, n prison. Prisoners are allowed a good deal of liberty and at one time were sometimes allowed to go home for a visit. Unskilled risoners are employed in the disposal of sewage in the township, and it is sometimes said that it is only this that keeps people out of peon. Clerks and others who are sent to prison are allowed considerble freedom and are sometimes to be seen visiting their friends in town. There is good technical training available for prisoners, and many craftsmen owe their start in their profession to a stay in prison. Prison is regarded as essentially a foreign institution introduced by the Whites, to be manipulated if possible by the Native Court, but in no way connected with making people suffer for their crimes.

The Administration is able to use physical sanctions not only against culprits but also to retain in the township possible witnesses in cases under investigation. For this reason, and also because it is likely to investigate incidental irregularities which may come to light in the course of an inquiry, people try to avoid becoming involved with it. This affects their actions where in the abstract

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

they might give their support to the enforcement of law. Murder has always been a public delict in Ngoni society and before the conquest, a murderer was usually tried by senior lieutenants at the headquarters of either segment 4 or 10 and if found guilty was executed by the first lieutenant of the segment. Ngoni still think that murderers ought to be brought to justice, but the investigation of murder, a matter for the Northern Rhodesia Police, is likely to be obstructed even though the investigation may be carried out entirely by Africans. Those affected by the murder wish to see the murderer punished, but they also want to keep clear of the legal process involved.

10. *External links*

The death of Zwangendaba was followed by a dispersal of Ngoni groups into various parts of east and central Africa. The present dispersal of Ngoni men and women from Fort Jameson over southern Africa arises from a different social situation and takes place in a different way. The early mining enterprises of Southern Rhodesia, like those in the Union of South Africa before them, were based on migratory labour. As we have noted, Ngoni began going to Southern Rhodesia only a few months after they had been conquered, and they have continued to go ever since. Although the first batch of migrants were apparently ordered to go by someone in authority, the great bulk of men who have gone away subsequently have gone as individuals, even if they were recruited in batches of a hundred or more at a time. Thus, the dispersal of population is not directly related to the political system of the tribe, as was the pre-conquest dispersal. There has been a certain amount of regional preference, one county supplying more than its share of migrants to the Northern Rhodesia Copperbelt, the Nyasaland counties supplying proportionately more migrants to the Union as compared with the Northern Rhodesia counties, and so on, but these preferences are not marked. The inhabitants of each county, and indeed of nearly every village, have kinsfolk who are scattered over the towns and farms of the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, the Transvaal and farther south.

Ngoni men and women are thus bound by many ties to other persons and groups located far away from the villages of Ngoniland. For the most part these ties bind individuals, for each person has distant attachments which are not the same as his neighbours. In this volume we are concerned primarily with politics, with social relations between enduring groups, and we shall reserve our discussion of the social implications of migration for a later work in

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern
683 Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
574 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
643 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
484 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and
167 other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
567 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm *Mpezeni* as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
619 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of
571 the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE X. Thatching a school roof. The county chief has sold men from nearby villages to do this work.

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PLATE XI. A mobile post office halted near a county court.

[Facing p. 168]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market.

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area.

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439

PLATE II. The customs post at Fort Manning, on the border between Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. The passengers on a lorry, mainly women, have put their luggage on the ground for inspection by the customs clerk.

[Facing p. 169]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

646 Secretariat or the Legislative Council. The agenda consists of
648 items suggested by the African members and by the Administration.
The African members of the Council elect four of their number as
[666] their nominees to the African Representative Council of Northern
Rhodesia, which in its turn advises the Governor on the appointment of the African members of Legislative Council. As yet, the Provincial Council meetings attract little attention among the bulk of the African population, and few Ngoni know who their members are. Nevertheless among the chiefs and councillors these meetings, if regarded with suspicion, are of some interest, and for the two delegates they provide an opportunity for stressing in public what they regard as the Ngoni point of view as contrasted with those of other tribes. Many of the Ngoni speeches are phrased in anachro-
[537] nistic terms, and represent more an affirmation of how different
[186] the Ngoni are or used to be rather than a realization of how similar their interests now are to those of their neighbours. However, it is possible as the Council acquires more power and the consequences of its deliberations begin to affect more people directly, Ngoni will take a greater interest in its proceedings.* The same comments apply to Ngoni participation on the Provincial Team, an advisory body with representatives from the Administration, the unofficial White community, Indians and Africans.

Ngoniland is almost completely surrounded by Cewa chief-
648 doms. The old no-man's-land which isolated the Ngoni from their neighbours in pre-conquest times has long ago disappeared. On the fringes of Ngoni country there is a great deal of contact between Ngoni villages and their Cewa neighbours and the links of kinship stretch across tribal boundaries without interruption. Within Ngoniland itself, under the control of county chiefs, are some
563 villages which still speak the Cewa language rather than the Nsenga
649 dialect used by most Ngoni. Most of these Cewa-speaking villages
[167] have come into Ngoniland after 1898. Their numbers are indicated in Table VII (p. 133) where it will be seen that on the average about one village in five has entered in this way. The great majority of these are Cewa in origin. Some of them claim that they have returned to ancestral sites, others state that they came as a result of land alienation or of some quarrel with their former chief. Others have been formed by non-Ngoni immigrants who have worked for many years in the township or on the farms and built up their own followings. In Northern Rhodesia villages of this kind form an integral part of Ngoni society. The cultural features which distin-

* cf. Barnes, 'History', for a discussion of the way in which Ngoni members act at council meetings.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

guish them from their neighbours are no more significant than the many varieties of custom and belief which are to be found in every Ngoni village. They do not form a group among themselves, their members participate in all communal activities in their counties and are to be found at all levels of the Native Authority organization below that of chief. They are linked by kinship to their neighbours. The two Nyasaland counties, however, include relatively large areas where there are only Cewa-speaking villages, and many of these claim that they have been placed under Ngoni rule only by Administrative action. From time to time they have made efforts to break away and to attach themselves to some neighbouring Cewa chief or to establish a separate chiefdom. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the Ngoni chiefs, with the villages in their county segments, and their Cewa-speaking subjects. It will be remembered that the two Nyasaland chiefdoms represent the head of the eastern movement of Mpezeni's group, and that some of the settlement across the border took place as late as 1897. It is not surprising therefore that in these two counties assimilation of Cewa captives and immigrants has not proceeded so far as in the longer established counties in Northern Rhodesia.

11. *Conclusion*

In this study we have attempted to show what has happened in Ngoni political life during a period of 150 years. To-day Ngoni society is changing but this has not always been so. Prior to the arrival of Wene in 1886, the actually existing social relations were changing, but the form of the social structure remained the same. Each new segment developed along lines that were already known, and each time the State split, the new States were copies of the old. A system of this kind could not have lasted for long, for the supply of new recruits to the Ngoni States must have sooner or later been exhausted. In Africa, even if the overall conditions facilitated the emergence of this kind of migratory militarism, they were particularly unfavourable for its prolonged continuation. The Arabs and the European Powers behind them were closing in on the centre of Africa, and Ngoni days were numbered. Then came the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898 and the emergence of a new system, in which some of the actually existing political groups, and the relations between them, appear to have a much greater stability than before. But at the same time society as a whole has become much more diversified, the special distribution of men and women in significant relationship with one another has become highly complicated, and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 new external factors are operating. There has been a change in the
631 scale of social relationships, and Ngoni men and women form part of a large-scale society in which events in one distant part of the system affect events in another part. The history and analysis of this change lies largely outside the scope of this study, and we have restricted ourselves to the way in which the political system of the tribe has adapted itself and been adapted in the changing society.
[64] The Ngoni sovereign State has become more and more like a rural district council in a backward area; foreign policy has given place to Native policy; social mobility has been restricted to the lowest
[557] caste in a plural society; and the great warrior chief has become in effect the only member of the Administration who never goes home
[643] to Britain on leave. But in the eyes of his people, the Paramount Chief still belongs to the Ngoni, and not to the Administration.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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A. Annotated list of works on the Ngoni.
B. List of other works cited.
C. Public records relating to Mpezeni's Ngoni.

113

ABBREVIATIONS

A & P	*Accounts and Papers.*
B.C.A.G.	*British Central Africa Gazette.*
B.S.A.C.	British South Africa Company.
C.A.P.	*Central African Planter.*
D.K.B.	*Deutsches Kolonialblatt.*
D.K.Z.	*Deutsche Kolonialzeitung.*
J.A.I.	*Journal of the Anthropological Institute.*
J.R.A.I.	*Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute.*
J.R.G.S.	*Journal of the Royal Geographical Society.*
M.D.S.	*Mitteilungen von Forschungsreisenden und Gelehrten aus den Deutschen Schutzgebieten.*
M.R.A.	*Monghan Report, Appendix* (Cmd. 73 of 1932).
M.S.O.S.	*Mitteilungen des seminars für Orientalische Sprachen.*
NADA	*Native Affairs Department Annual* (Southern Rhodesia).
N.E.R.G.G.	*North-Eastern Rhodesia Government Gazette.*
P.R.G.S.	*Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society.*
R.G.S.	*Royal Geographical Society.*
R.L.I.J.	*Human Problems in British Central Africa, the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute Journal.*
S.G.M.	*Scottish Geographical Magazine.*
S.P.	*State Papers.*
S.P.C.K.	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
S.R. & O.	*Statutory Rules and Orders.*
T.N.R.	*Tanganyika Notes and Records*
U.M.C.A.	Universities' Mission to Central Africa.

A. ANNOTATED LIST OF WORKS ON THE NGONI

I have aimed to include in this list all works relating to Ngoni groups in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. I have also included works on the Tanganyika Ngoni earlier than 1905 and a few works relating to the Gazaland Ngoni, Portuguese East Africa.

ABRAHAM, JOHN C.

Nyasaland Protectorate: Report on the Census of 1931. Zomba: Government Printer, 1932.

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Mpezeni

ACCOUNTS AND PAPERS (A & P)

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Upangalo the Sentinel, or Lobengula and the Amandebele. Bulawayo: Rhodesian Printing and Publishing Co., 1935.

pp. 119-124, evidence for Lobengula reaching Mpezeni's country.

PRINCE, D.

'Unser neues Zeug nach der Landschaft Ukuhe und die Begründung einer Station in Kalonga', *D.K.B.*, vii (1896), pp. 773-5.

p. 774, visited Mbarwili; attempts to get Ngoni to rise against Germans in 1896.

'Unser die neue Station Kiaki und die augenblickliche durige Lage', *D.K.B.*, iii (1890), pp. 401-5.

Ngoni known as Wamlongo; list of chiefs.

'Geschichte der Magwangwara nach Erzählung des Araboes Rashid bin Mussud und des Fundi, Bruders des vor drei Jahren verstorbenen Sultans des Magwangwara Mbarwili', *M.D.E.*, vii (1894), pp. 113-24.

Good account of political history, military organization and relations with Germans, with genealogy of chiefs.

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'Mirambo', *Nyasaland Journal*, v, 1 (January 1952), pp. 59-70.

Good map of Ngoni migration. Full account of quarrels after Zwangendaba's death and of Mirambo chieftaincy in Northern Nyasaland.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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Chinanga handbook. London: Sheldon Press, 1928.
Good grammar of dialect of Nanga spoken at Mzoro.

RANKIN, DANIEL J.
'Exploration in the Lounguwa-Zambezi Basin', *S.G.M.*, viii (1892), pp. 369-78.
Good map of Fuki's route.

RATTRAY, R. SUTHERLAND
Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes. London: S.P.C.K., 1907.
Based mainly on Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland. Good account of poison ordeal, funerals, initiation of girls, movement of villages, prayers for rain, divination and witchfinding. Also songs, riddles and proverbs. Full linguistic notes.

READ, MARGARET HELEN
'Tradition and prestige among the Ngoni', *Africa*, ix (1936), pp. 453-84.
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'Songs of the Ngoni people', *Bantu studies*, xi (1937), pp. 1-55.
From Ngoni of Northern and Southern Nyasaland. Songs of war, praise, first fruits, marriage, initiation of girls, doctoring and dancing.
'The moral code of the Ngoni and their former military State', *Africa*, xi (1938), pp. 1-24.
Comparison of Ngoni and Cewa in relation to sex, marriage and divorce.
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Based on Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland. Economic life, use of cattle, herding, agricultural technique, eating habits. Use of ivory and slaves: ritual when an important person is ill.
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REICHARD, PAUL
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pp. 200-11, Die Maloi. Mainly describes operation against Ngoni by Germans.

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'Rechtsgewohnheiten der Wangoni', *D.K.B.*, xviii (1907), pp. 672-6.
Rules about marriage, slavery, inheritance, debt and property among Tanganyika Ngoni.

ROBINSON, T. RADCLIFFE
'A survival of Flake-technique in Southern Rhodesia', *Man*, xxxviii (1938), 204.
Informant was an Ngoni from Nyasaland.

ROLIN, HENRI
Les lois et l'administration de la Rhodésie. Bruxelles: Émile Bruylant, 1913.
pp. 43, 411, 420, transfer of administration from Blantyre to Fort Jameson: alienation of land in North Charterland Concession.

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Twenty years in Central Africa. London: Wells, Gardner, Darton, n.d. (1881).
History of U.M.C.A. p. 243, Ngoni attack on Kilwa.

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'Die musikalischen Beziehungen zwischen Urkulturen, Altpflanzern, und Hirtenvölkern', *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, lxx (1938), pp. 287-306. 113
p. 295, reference to Ngoni music.

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A Cyclopædic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language spoken in British Central Africa. Edinburgh: Foreign Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland, 1892.
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SCRIVENOR, T. V.
'Some notes on *utani* or the vituperative alliances existing between the clans in the Masai District', *T.N.R.*, 4 (1937), pp. 72-4.
p. 72, joking relationship between Ngoni and Yao in Tanganyika.

SELOUS, FREDERICK COURTNEY
'Twenty years in Zambesia', *Geographical Journal*, i (1893), pp. 289-324.
p. 158, fight between Zwangendaba and Gazaland Ngoni near the headwaters of the River Sabi.

SELBY, PHILIP HAMILTON (memorandum) *see* Lusaka Archives

SHARPE, ALFRED
'A journey through the country lying between the Shire and Loangwa Rivers', *P.R.G.S.*, xii (1890), pp. 150-7.
Treaty-making expedition in country south of Mpezeni.
'A journey from Lake Nyassa to the Great Loangwa and Upper Zambezi Rivers', *P.R.G.S.*, xii (1890), pp. 744-51.
Sharpe's second visit to Mpezeni. Fuller report in 1a.

SMITH, CHARLES STEWART
'Explorations in Zanzibar Dominions', *Supplementary Papers, R.G.S.*, ii, 1 (1887), pp. 99-125.
p. 104, slight reference to Ngoni raids.

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The South-Eastern Bantu. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1930.
Chap. XVII, history of Ngoni. Apparently compilation, not reliable.

SPEARPOINT, F.
'The African native and the Rhodesian copper mines', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, xxxvi (July 1937), Supp.
p. 14, fighting on Copperbelt between Ngoni and others.

SPEKE, JOHN HANNING
Journal of the discovery of the source of the Nile. Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1864. 2nd ed.
pp. 5, 6, 101-12, movements of Ngoni in Northern Tanganyika.

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'Kingoni und Kisutu', *M.S.O.S.*, vii, *Afrikanische Studien* (1904), pp. 270-414.
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pp. 270, 289, 353, 444, connexion between Ngoni (Watuta and Mazitu) and Mirambo and the Ruga-Ruga.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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113 *Through the Dark Continent.* London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1878. 2 vols.
Vol. I, pp. 488, 505, Hobe said to be Ngoni; cows of Northern Tongaspike group.

STAPONUS, H. S.
'Notes on some tribes of British Central Africa', *J.R.A.I.*, xl (1910), pp. 283-325.
pp. 311, 316, 317, 321, 329, burial of pharaoh, cremation of chief, deformation of teeth, clothing, weaving; relates in part to Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.
'Nyasaland: Angoni smelting furnace', *Man*, xiv (1914), 65.
Description of smelting operation witnessed in 1911.
'The WaYao of Nyasaland' pp. 229-371 in *Harvard African Studies* iii (*Varia Africana*, iii). Cambridge: Peabody Museum, 1922.
pp. 231-5, Ngoni fight Yao, aid Makanjila against Kawinga.

STATE PAPERS (*S.P.*)
Declaration of British Protectorate, 21 September 1889. *S.P.*, lxxxi (1888-9), p. 1009, No. 243.
Proclamation by Sarbanes, covering Makololo, Yao and Machinga countries.

STATUTES
Foreign Jurisdiction Act, 1890. 53 & 54 Vict., c. 37.
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STATUTORY RULES AND ORDERS (*S.R. & O.*)
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Alteration of style and name of Governor of Nyasaland.
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Made Administrator responsible to the High Commissioner in South Africa.
Northern Rhodesia Order in Council, 1911. (4 May 1911), *S.R. & O.*, 458 of 1911, pp. 85-97.
Amalgamated North-Eastern and North-Western Rhodesia.
Northern Rhodesia Order in Council, 1924. (20 February 1924), *S.R. & O.*, 324 of 1924, pp. 395-407.
Termination of B.S.A. Company rule.
Northern Rhodesia (Crown Lands and Native Reserves) Order in Council, 1928. (22 March 1928), *S.R. & O.*, 246 of 1928, pp. 601-10.
Established Native Reserves in Fort Jameson District.
Nyasaland Protectorate (Native Trust Land) Order in Council, 1936. (24 March 1936), *S.R. & O.*, 728 of 1936, pp. 958-42.
Established major portion of Fort Manning Division as Native Trust Land.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

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'History of the Tumbuka', *Nyasa News*, 1 (August 1895), p. 13.
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Description of Mwambera's funeral, *Nyasa News*, 1 (August 1895), p. 19.
Eye-witness account.
'Native dances and practice among the Ngoni', *Nyasa News*, 3 (1896), pp. 88-9.
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The Arabs in Central Africa and at Lake Nyassa. Glasgow: Machlehose and Sons, 1888.
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'The second circumnavigation of Lake Nyassa', *P.R.G.S.*, i (1879), pp. 289-304.
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Dawn in the dark continent. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1903.
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'Lake Nyasa and the water route to the lake region of Africa', *P.R.G.S.*, iii (1881), pp. 257-77.
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STIGAND, C. H.
'Notes on the Natives of Nyasaland, N.E. Rhodesia, and Portuguese Zambesia, their arts, customs and modes of subsistence', *J.R.A.I.*, xxxvii (1907), pp. 119-32.
pp. 125-7, short account of Ngoni history, with information not available elsewhere on Fort Manning Ngoni.
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SWANN, ALFRED J.
'A tour in Marimba', *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 3 (1 February 1896), p. 2.
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113 SWIDLEY, G. H.
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TAGART, E. S. S.
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TAYLOR, MARGARET
'Angoni session', *N.A.D.A.*, 4 (1926), pp. 75-6.
Collected in Southern Nyasaland.
'More Angoni session', *N.A.D.A.*, 5 (1927), pp. 59-61.
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THEAL, GEORGE M'CALL
The Portuguese in South Africa. London: Fisher Unwin, 1896.
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THOMPSON, J. B.
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'Lobengula the second', *Truth*, xlii (30 June 1898), pp. 1899-90.
An interestingly distorted account of the Ngoni war.

VAN DER WALT, C. R., *see* Moss

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Artist a 'so-called' Ngoni from Shire Valley.
'Native poetry in East Africa', *Africa*, i (1928), pp. 348-53.
p. 350, a song sung at Chikusi's wedding, dressed in 1899.

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pp. 175-95. Tongwe-like Ngoni customs and material culture.
Native Life in East Africa. London: Fisher, 1909.
pp. 96-7, 115, 335. Ngoni at Kasungu, raid of Chief Shakwanda, and longer Ngoni at Nsala-chiwa.

WEISS, CARL
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A lengthy account, the first full description of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, together with history of the Portuguese expedition and of Sharpe and Thomson's visits. All references are to vol. x unless otherwise indicated.
'Beiträge zur Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambesi, namentlich der Angoni', *Globus für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1901), pp. 181-201.
Largely a repetition of the ethnographic section of his first article, with a few alterations, and short account of Ngoni war.

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'Outline histories of two Northern Rhodesian tribes', *R.L.I.J.*, iv (1956), pp. 14-23.
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'Ueber den weiteren Verlauf der Expedition des Kaiserlichen Kommissars Major v. Wissmann', *D.K.B.*, iv (1892), pp. 452-3.
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C. PUBLIC RECORDS RELATING TO MPEZENI'S NGONI

These documents are listed in chronological order. For ease of look-ing each has been given a serial number, shown below in the left-hand column.

Documents in the Public Records Office, London, are to be found in the Foreign Office series of papers, in either F.O. 2 (Africa), F.O. 84 (Great Britain and General) or F.O. 84 (Slave Trade). References to them are given in the form: series number/piece number/folio numbers (where these are numbered).

Some of these and similar documents have been printed in the Appendix to the first *Monghan Report* (Cd. 75 of 1931). Page references to these are given below. The printed appendix also contains documents dated later than 1899 which have not been listed here.

I have also included particulars of documents which I have not seen but whose existence can be inferred. References to these are in the form: date (where known)/description/serial number of seen document in which reference is made to the unseen document.

This list does not include all the public records relevant to a general understanding of Central African history at the end of the nineteenth century, but merely those relating directly to Mpezeni's Ngoni. Reference should also be made to the series *Accounts and Papers*, British South Africa Company, *London Gazette*, *State Papers*, *Statutes*, and *Statutory Rules and Orders* in List A of the Bibliography.

ABBREVIATIONS

A.L.C.	African Lakes Company.
B.S.A.C.	British South Africa Company.
C.A.	Central Africa
C.O.	Colonial Office.
F.O.	Foreign Office.
N.C.E.C.	North Charterland Exploration Company.
ri	referred to in.
Tele.	Telegram.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'85 Ngoni F'85
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for Zambia	Public Record Office reference		Rhodes House Report Appendix reference	Date	Description
				1888	
1	Eq	1090	374-378	4 Mar.	No. 1[illegible] of 1888, Churchill to Gov. of Bombay.
2	Eq	1090	379-378	8 Mar.	Kirk to Churchill.
				1889	
3	Eq	1700	223-226	24 April	No. 3, Goodrich to F.O.
4	Eq	1700	233-236	1 June	No. 4, Goodrich to F.O.
				1890	
5	Eq	1751	216	1 July	Shawe, map.
				1891	
6	Eq	1989	232-233	26 Aug.	Africa No. 9, Johnston to Salisbury.
				1892	
7	Eq	2031	30-33	(1 Feb.)	List of treaties.
8	Eq	2031	34	and (1 Feb.)	Map.
9	Eq	2031	19-31	1 Feb.	Africa No. 6, Johnston to Salisbury.
10	Eq	2031	90-106	17 Mar.	Johnston, report.
11	Eq	2032	301-304	18 Mar.	Chiwere and Britain, treaty (Sharpe)
12	Eq	2032	274-315	26 Mar.–6 June	Sharpe to Johnston.
13	Eq	2032	303-306	18 April	Mulire and Britain, treaty (Sharpe)
14			38	19 April	Mulire and B.S.A.C., treaty (Sharpe).
15	Eq	2032	26	10 June	No. 28, Churchill to Salisbury.
16	Eq	2032	143-146	9 Aug.	Johnston, memorandum.
17	Eq	2032	350-351	8 Sep.	Buchanan to Churchill.
18			20-21	5 Nov.	Undi and Wise, treaty
19			23	20 Dec.	Sandur and Wise, treaty.
20			30	24 Dec.	Marawa and Wise, treaty.
21			27-28	30 Dec.	Chipere and Wise, treaty.
				1891	
22			32-34	1 Jan.	Jumbe and Wise, treaty.
23			26-27	5 Jan.	Said Nyondwa and Wise, treaty.
24			23-26	9 Jan.	Lundu Nyungo and Wise, treaty.
25			24	14 Jan.	Chirupe N'gwa and Wise, treaty.
26			23	16 Jan.	Satchwima Mini and Wise, treaty.
27			22	17 Jan.	Nyachilenghu Wula and Wise, treaty.
28			32	23 Jan.	Supa Mzundza and de Sells, treaty.
29			11-12	Feb.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
30			12	2 Apr.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
31			17-18	14 Apr.	M'pezeni and Wise, treaty.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

Item	Serial number for Item	Public Record Office reference	Houghton Report Appendix reference	Date	Description
85	30		66	13 Apr.	Uteh and A.L.C. and R.S.A.C. (Sharpe).
	31		66-67	20 April	Likungwe and A.L.C. and R.S.A.C. (Sharpe).
	32		18-20	12 May	Chiponje Pire and Wiwa, treaty.
	33		70	27 June	Belshaw, receipt for 30 lbs.
	34	84 0137	478	18 July	Johnston, public notice on land claims.
	35			Oct.	Bowler's solicitors to F.O. (vol 30).
	36			Nov.	Bowler's solicitors to F.O. (vol 30).
	37		13	6 Dec.	Gwili, Sau and Gwenip to F.O.
	38		22	9 Dec.	Wiwa, statutory declaration.
	39			4 Jan.	Gwili, Sau and Gwenip to F.O. (vol 40).
	40	84 0136	0-3	12 Jan.	No. 1, F.O. to Johnston.
	41			20 Jan.	Gwili, Sau and Gwenip to F.O. (vol 48).
	42			28 Jan.	Gwili, Sau and Gwenip to F.O. (vol 48).
	43			30 Jan.	Gwili, Sau and Gwenip to F.O. (vol 48).
	44	84 0136	3-8	4 Feb.	No. 3, F.O. to Johnston.
	45	84 0136	36-37	22 Mar.	No. 18, F.O. to Johnston.
	46	84 0137	173-184, 198-198	13-16	31 Mar. Johnston, memorandum.
	47	84 0137	114-118, 131-138	13-14	31 Mar. C.A. 18, Johnston to Salisbury.
	48	84 0136	32-33		11 May No. 23, F.O. to Johnston.
	49	84 0136	38-41		17 June No. 40, F.O. to Johnston.
	50	84 0137	184-188		20 June C.A. 21, Johnston to Salisbury.
	51				6 Aug. B.S.A.C. to F.O. (vol 34).
	52	84 0136	110-113		10 Aug. No. 34, F.O. to Johnston.
	53				Aug. Johnston to Wiwa (vol 81).
	54				Aug. Wiwa to Johnston (vol 81).
	55	84 0136	124-125		8 Sep. No. 38, F.O. to Johnston.
	56	84 0137	388-394, 400-404		13 Oct. C.A. 39, Johnston to Rosebery.
	57	84 0137	433-446		18 Oct. C.A. 40, Johnston to Rosebery.
	58	84 0137	476-477		19 Nov. C.A. 43, Johnston to Rosebery.
	59			16-17	Wiwa and Bowler, note.
	60			1895 early	Bowler to Johnston (vol 81).
	61			early	Johnston to Bowler (vol 81).
	62	0 34	81-89	31 Jan.	C.A. 6, Johnston to Rosebery.
	63	0 33	13-16	13 Feb.	No. 9, F.O. to Johnston.
	64	0 34	137-138	23 Mar.	Johnston, note on Matekenya.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for Zambia	Public Record Office reference			Houghton Report Appendix reference	Date	Description
67	o	31	139–140		(23 Mar.)	Johnston, note on Wise.
68	o	31	139–138		23 Mar.	Johnston to Anderson.
69					13 April	Johnston to Wise (via Bc).
70					14 May	Wise to Johnston (via Bc).
71				16	3 July	Bowker to Rosebery.
72					1 Aug.	Johnston to Wise's reports (via Bc).
73	o	32	139–148, 219–224, 227–231, 233–235, 239–243, 249–251	34–38	23 Sep.	Johnston to B.S.A.C., certificate of claim.
	o	148	149–151			
74				40–42	27–8 Sep.	Johnston to B.S.A.C. and A.L.C., certificate of claim.
75	o	32	139–140, 242–244, 246–251, 253–255, 258–259	43–47 (a)	14 Oct.	Johnston, report.
	o	148	149–150			
76	o	32	140–139, 256, 260, 262, 264		14 Oct.	C.A. 35, Johnston to Rosebery.
	o	148	151			
77					20 June	Bowker to Johnston (via Bc).
78	o	66	110–113		12 Dec.	Shawer's Zambezi Traffic Co. to King.
79	o	32	260–262, 272–280		16 Dec.	C.A. 38, Johnston to Rosebery.

a. Chapter IV only of the report is printed in the Appendix.

					1894	
80	o	66	141–143		2 Mar.	Warton to Johnston.
81	o	66	144–150		3 Mar.	Johnston to Warton.
82	o	66	137–138		3 Mar.	C.A. 23, Johnston to Rosebery.
83	o	66	138		23 Mar.	Johnston to Warton.
84	o	66	137		23 Mar.	C.A. 29, Johnston to Rosebery.
85	o	66	139–140		3 May	Currie, minute on Bc.
86	o	148	327–331, 334–337		14 June	Glave to Edwards.
	o	148				
87	o	67	36–37		3 July	Hay Thorburn to Johnston.
88	o	67	28–29		4 July	Johnston to Anderson.
89	o	67	32–33		5 July	Currie, minute.
90	o	67	268–269		24 Sep.	L. C. Johnston to H. H. Johnston.
91	o	67	287		6 Oct.	Johnston to (?) Anderson.
92	o	67	308		15 Oct.	Johnston to Anderson.
93	o	67	126		15 Oct.	Anderson to Johnston.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

113

Serial number for file	Public Record Office reference			Mangham Report Appendix reference	Date	Description
94	0	87	326-331		17 Oct.	Johnston, memorandum.
95	0	85	181	47-49	24 Nov.	B.S.A.C. and F.O., agreement.
96				49	27 Nov. 1899	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
97	0	87	113-116		9 April	No. 44, F.O. to Sharpe.
98	0	90	15		20 April	Tele. No. 1, Johnston to F.O.
99	0	89	34-35	49-50	8 May	B.S.A.C. to Mozambique Company.
100				50-51	17 May	Mozambique Company and B.S.A.C., agreement.
101	0	88	480-484		20 June	Johnston to B.S.A.C.
102	0	88	479-481		20 June	C.A. 38, Johnston to Kimberley.
103	0	88	309	51	25 June	C.A. 83, Johnston to Kimberley.
104	0	89	33		9 July	Sharpe to Anderson.
105				51	9 July	Anderson, minute.
106				52	9 July	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
107				52	10 July	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
108				54	10 July	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
109				54	11 July	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
110				54	13 July	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
111				55	18 July	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
112				55	19 July	B.S.A.C. to F.O.
113	0	89	41-42		23 July	C.A. 88, Johnston to F.O.
114	0	87	113-118		30 July	No. 61, F.O. to Johnston.
115	0	87	282-284		3 Oct.	No. 118, F.O. to Johnston.
116	0	89	307-308		13 Oct.	C.A. 129, Johnston to F.O.
117				55	6 Dec.	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
118				56	7 Dec.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
119				56	7 Dec. 1898	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
120				56	9 Jan.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
121	0	116	130-139		24 Mar.	Johnston to Anderson.
122				56-58	2 April	Warton to Forbes, extracts.
123	B3	1444			11 May	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
124					14 May	N.C.E.C. to F.O. (vii 184).
125	0	109	58		23 May	Tele. No. 9, Sharpe to F.O.
126	0	116	280-281		26 May	C.A. 32, Sharpe to Salisbury.
127	B3	1445			5 June	Tele., Warton to N.C.E.C.
128	B3	1445			11 June	B.S.A.C. to N.C.E.C.
129	B3	1445	58		22 June	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
130				59	30 June	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
131	0	107	90		11 July	Tele., Grey to Sharpe.
132	0	107	41-44	59-60	14 July	Johnston, memorandum.
133	B3	1447			23 July	N.C.E.C., resolution by board.
134	B3	1447			23 July	N.C.E.C. to B.S.A.C.
135	B3	1447			30 July	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
136	B3	1447			3 Aug.	Grey to B.S.A.C.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

Serial number for Table	Public Record Office reference			Hongkong Report Appendix reference	Date	Description
137	0	117	100		4 Aug.	Tele., Sharpe to Grey.
138	0	117	101		4 Aug.	Tele., Sharpe to Forbes.
139	0	117	102		4 Aug.	Tele., Forbes to Sharpe
140	0	117	98		4 Aug.	Tele., Sharpe to Forbes.
141	0	117	94-95		3 Aug.	C.A. 79, Sharpe to Salisbury
142	0	117	97-98			F.O. minute on 141.
143	83	1447			3 Aug.	B.S.A.C. to F.O.
144					10 Aug.	F.O. to N.C.E.C. (at 131).
145	0	118	190-192		21 Sep.	Warton, memorandum.
146	0	118	217-218		29 Sep.	Warton to Sharpe.
147	0	118	64-65		6 Oct.	Johnston to Salisbury.
148	0	118	104-105		6 Oct.	Johnston to Sanderson.
149a	0	118	140-142		7 Oct.	Forbes to Sharpe.
149	0	118	15		10 Oct.	Tele. No. 8, F.O. to Sharpe.
150	0	118	108		13 Oct.	C.A. 113, Sharpe to Salisbury.
151				60	11 Dec.	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
152	0	118	311-313		17 Dec.	Sharpe to Hill.
153				60	19 Dec.	F.O. to N.C.E.C.
154	0	118	324-325		24 Dec.	C.A. 145, Sharpe to Salisbury.
155	0	118	336-337		29 Dec.	Johnston, note.
156	0	118	338-339		29 Dec.	Berto, minute.
					1897	
157				61	25 Jan.	N.C.E.C., memorandum.
158	0	117	109-108	61-64	6 Feb.	Johnston, note.
159					6 April	No. 58, F.O. to Sharpe (at 156).
160				64-65	7 April	F.O. to B.S.A.C.
161					9 April	No. 64, F.O. to Sharpe (at 156).
162	83	1326		65	14 April	B.S.A.C. to N.C.E.C.
163	83	1326			23 April	Warton to N.C.E.C.
164	83	1326			7 May	Wiese to N.C.E.C.
165	83	1326		66	10 May	N.C.E.C. to B.S.A.C.
166	83	1326		65	10 May	N.C.E.C. to F.O.
167	0	118	175		14 May	Mpezeni to Kotakota.
168	0	118	173		14 May	Hepburn to Kotakota.
169	0	118	63-64		15 May	McDonald to Sharpe.
170	0	118	174		26 May	McDonald to Sharpe.
171	0	118	61-62		30 May	C.A. 93, Sharpe to F.O.
172	0	118	171-173		13 June	C.A. 118, Sharpe to F.O.
173	0	116	233-234		11 Aug.	No. 113, F.O. to Sharpe.
174	0	119	371		29 Dec.	Tele. No. 13, Manning to F.O.
175	0	119	376-377		31 Dec.	C.A. 164, Manning to F.O.
176	0	119	372-375		31 Dec.	Manning to Hill.
					1898	
177	0	148	464-465		9 Jan.	Wiese to St. Hill.
178	0	148	466-467		9 Jan.	Rae to St. Hill.
179	0	148	468-469		9 Jan.	Roberts to St. Hill
180	0	148	470		9 Jan.	Wiese to Warringham.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

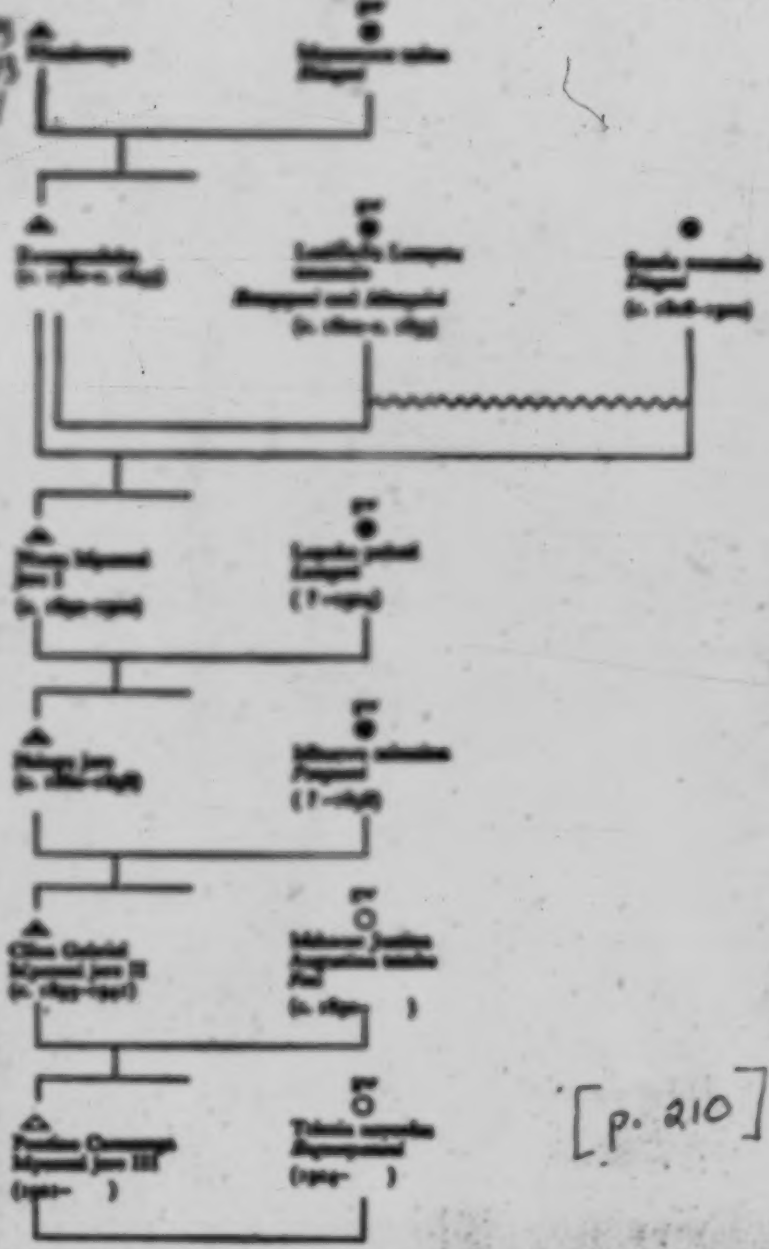
Serial number for Jan. 1960	Public Record Office reference		Mangham Report Appendix reference	Date	Description
181	0	147	98-99	12 Jan.	C.A. 14, Manning to Salisbury.
182	0	150	98	13 Jan.	Tele., Sharpe to F.O.
183	0	147	98-99	18 Jan.	Sharpe to Hill.
184	0	147	98-109, 121-126	20 Jan.	Brake to Manning.
185	0	147	110-113, 125	21 Jan.	Brake to Manning.
186	0	147	33-34	21 Jan.	Cunningham to Hill.
187	0	147	136-155, 158	24 Jan.	Wilson, Roberts, Joyner and Rae to Brake.
	0	148	480-483		
188	0	147	156, 158	24 Jan.	Sr. Hill to Brake.
	0	148	480		
189	0	147	159-175, 177-178	27 Jan.	Sharp to Brake.
190	0	147	176-178, 199-145	29 Jan.	Brake to Manning.
191	0	150	97	3 Feb.	Tele., Sharpe to F.O.
192	0	150	9	4 Feb.	Tele., F.O. to Sharpe
193	0	150	91-93	4 Feb.	Tele. No. 1, Cunningham to F.O.
194	0	147	70	4 Feb.	Cunningham to Hill.
195	0	147	59-67, 140-141	17 Feb.	C.A. 23, Manning to Salisbury.
196				18 Feb.	Tele. No. 3, Manning to F.O. (pl. 198 and 199).
197	0	150	98	21 Feb.	Tele., Sharpe to F.O.
198	0	147	184	9 Mar.	C.A. 33, Manning to Salisbury.
199	0	148	62-63	14 Mar.	No. 40, F.O. to Manning.
200				19 April	Manning to Brake (pl. 201).
201	0	148	69-73	6 May	Brake to Manning.
202	0	150	4	10 May	Tele., Sharpe to Bevin.
203	0	150	4-5	10 May	Tele. No. 3, F.O. to Manning.
204	0	148	343-345	10 May	Lawe to Sharpe.
205	0	147	440-481	(13 May)	Annual Report, British Central Africa Protectorate, 1897-8.
206	0	148	109-110	20 May	No. 71, F.O. to Manning.
207	0	150	36	20 May	Tele. No. 8, Manning to F.O.
208	0	148	15-16	20 May	C.A. 79, Manning to F.O.
209				20 May	F.O. to B.S.A.C. (pl. 235).
210	0	148	67-68	16 June	C.A. 93, Manning to Salisbury.
211	0	148	227-230	6 July	Sharpe to Hill.
212	0	148	230-233	7 July	C.A. 105, Manning to Salisbury.
213	0	148	304-333	24 July	Sharpe to Salisbury.
214	0	148	338	24 July	Sharpe to Hill.
215	0	148	339-341	24 July	F.O. minute
216	0	150	8-9	(3 Aug.)	Anonymous account of disposal of Ngoni cattle.

Liberia E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

Serial number for file	Public Record Office reference	Slaughter Report Appendix reference	Date	Description
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Aug.	Edward to Gwenne.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] Aug.	No. [illegible], F.O. to Mpezeni.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] Aug.	C.A. [illegible], Mpezeni to Salisbury.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] Nov.	No. [illegible], F.O. to Mpezeni.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] Dec.	C.A. [illegible], Sharpe to F.O.
			1[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] Mar.	No. [illegible], F.O. to Sharpe.
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] May	C.A. [illegible], Sharpe to F.O.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] May	Mpezeni, Sandes to Fort Mpezeni.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] May	C.A. [illegible], Sharpe to F.O.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	Engine v. Zulu.
			July	
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] June	Pearce to Sharpe.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] June	C.A. [illegible], Sharpe to Salisbury.
			[illegible] July	F.O. to B.S.A.C. (re eye and egg)
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Aug.	N.C.B.C. to F.O.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] Aug.	[illegible], minute.
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Aug.	No. [illegible], F.O. to Sharpe.
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible] Aug.	F.O. to B.S.A.C.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

SKELETON GENEALOGY OF MPEZENI CHIEFTAINSHIP



[p. 210]

(Names of regents founded for queens shown in dotted; other symbols as in Diagram 1 related through ninety degrees. Years of birth and death shown in brackets.)

Libraries E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

INDEX

Abraham, J. C., 4
Administration: policy, 107f., 135; power, 136; recognition by, 150, 158; across ix, 136f., 180; legacy, 139; rule, 182; and Native Courts, 181; see chief; chiefs; courts; District Officers; Native Authority.
Administrative officers, movement of, 137
administrative system, Ngoni, 41
Administrator, 101
adultery, 180, 180
African lands, 63f., 145
African Labour Company, 84, 75
African Provincial Council, 135, 184f.
age-sets, see regiments
agriculture, 44, 131, 135; and land ownership, 135f.
alienation of land, 105, 112f.; and migration, 105, 107
Allen, W., 105
alliances, 8
amaxosi, 63
Amaqunda, 9
Anglo, 76
ancestor cult, 55
Anglo-German agreement, 77
Anglo-Portuguese agreement, 71
Angoni, 9
Angoni-Chewa, 109
Angoni, H. C., 4, 100, 101f., 104
appeals, 160, 165; from Nyasaland, 169
appointments, political, 151, 168
Arabs: as invaders, 60f.; and slave trade, 18, 78, 100; and guns, 18, 59; on Nyasa, 63, 109f.; at Mlanda, 68
artisans, 150
assimilation: policy, 18, 60; and regiments, 40; and Fort Manning R., 171
assessors, 149f., 150, 158, Plate VIII
asylum, political, 55
Atkins, G., 7
Aunia, 58

baipata, 146f
band of wives, 11
Bangoni, 9
Bantu, south-eastern, 51
Baptists, 66
Barotseland, 18
barrels, 57
Barotse, 8
Barotse, T. W., 90
Bayeda, 148
Beirens, 8
beer; and chiefs, 15, 145; licences, 150, 161, Plate VIII
Bemba, 25, 28, 108
Berlin West Africa Congress, 71
berry, 11f., 30f.
bicycles, 146f.
billeting system, 38
birth, compulsory by, 8
Blue, 25, 87
Boers, 17
border, Rhodesia-Nyasaland, 188
Bowler, 71f.
boy, office, 150
Bradley, R. G., 3, 74, 91, 133
Brake, Capt., 91
branding process, 30
bribes, 158f.
brick buildings, 158, 180
bridewealth, 31
brigandage, migrant, 6, 18, 105, 171
British, 60, 66, 98
British South Africa Co.: administration, 24, 93, 107; land rights, 75f., 97; and West concessions, 75, 78; see Administration
B.S.A. Police, 100
brothers: differentiation between, 11, 100; of Paramount Chief, 46; of chiefs, 140f.
Brouwer, J. F., 3, 17, 21, 40, 107, 145
Bryant, A. T., 3 *et passim*
Bua, 67, 84, 89
Buchanan, 71
Bulawayo, 17
Bunga, 9
bureaucracies, 148-57
Burton, R. F., 3

Cameron, V. L., 3, 75
captives: inflow of, 39, 61, 88; quasi-agnatic link, 10; allocation of, 39f.; and cohesion, 87; and slave trade, 78f.; see assimilation
capture, recruitment by, 6

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

(222) cassions, 130
cassiopeiae, Plate IX
cattle: Ngoni, 6; cured, 122f, 130; in villages, 35f, 139f; see M, 37; in chief, 95f; export of, 108
centrifugal and centripetal tendencies, 86, 60
certificate of claim, 71f
Chabwanga, 88
Chewa: location, 63, 110; and Ngoni, 4; and Wiwa, 72; and Gwaba, 82; and Administration, 109; Mwase's, 18, 41, 60; villages, 104; chiefs, 97; kinship terminology, 35; in Ngoniland, 133, 139f; formerly Ngoni, 109f, 117
Chafulan, 72, 75f, 100
Chakwana, 82
change, social, 60-5
Chikanda, T. L., 3, 4, *et passim*
Chiwa, 73
childhood, Ngoni, 5f, 13, 32
chiefs: 108, 115f, Plate V; ordaining, 188; status, 109, 104f; minor and county, 108, 113, 119, 141; women, 107; powers, 59, Plate X; selection, 105f; women, 133; non-interventions by, 98; guns, 148; and boies, 90; and officers, 145f, 158; headmen of, 149f; advisers of, 141-4; and Administration, 133, 160; and people, 34f, 144-7; and courts, 161, 167; and religion, 148; see Paramount Chief; villages, chief's
chieftainships: new, 143f; and popular support, 147; and marriage, 159
Chikwakwa, 90
Chimpinga, see Gimpinga
Chimsoko's, see Gimsoko's
chronology, 10f
Chuma mission, 99
circle, 10
Chwakhomi, 14, 25
Cibu, see Mpezeni II
Cimale, 38
Cimpinga, 14, 25, 84, 91
Cimwala, 82
Cimsoko, Chief, 83
Cimsoko's (place), 84, 90
circumcision, 5
Clarke (Crewe) address, 8, 58, 64, 105; see Dewa N.
Chwambala, 38
clerks: Administration, 154f, Plate III; treasury, 149, 152, 157; in prison, 166; court, 149f, 152, 158, Plates VI, VIII
clothing, 109
cluster, 18
Colin, R. F., 19
Collector; see Kandeira, Swann, Warrington
Commissioner, Native of, 92
compensation method, 85
concubinage, 75f, 97
Congo, 10
Congo Basin, Commercial, 31
council, British, 187
continuously engineering systems, 47-56, 58, 135
cooking, 44
Copperbelt, 28, 178, 187
Coloniers, 38
council, lack of, 45, 140
councillors, 149f, 158, Plate IX; recently appointed, 140, 151f
counties, 113, 114, 138; new, 149f; and Native Authority, 180; see separate, county
county Administration, 133, 160, 166f; Native, 114, 191, 148f, 161, Plates VII, IX; location, 138; and political system, 180-4; Ngoniish, 139; structure of, 164f; review of cases, 160, 163; Native Liaison, 188; see separate; clerks, court; Native Authority
Cracknell, J. C. C., 3, 18, 113, 148
crafts in prison, 168
crocodiles, 165
Cundu, 38
customs post, 180, Plate XIII
Cutfield, Capt., R.N., 2
Cutu mission, 14

damages, 149
dance, 149
Dewe, C. R., 3, 4, 32; and Fort Young, 81; and Kondo, 99; and Nsenkumo, 87, 99; and Chimsoko and Uzeli, 83f, 98; and Nsingo, 86; and under Mankoka, 83; population estimate, 104
death penalty, 56, 60
Decle, L., 3, 18
Dedza District, 93
Delagoa Bay: Ngoni at, 7, 16, 24; in 1823, 31; in 1835, 18f; and Tsonga, 19
delicts, public, 161
dependants, 10, 30
deportation, 158f
deputy, 142f
descent, 34, 61; see quasi-agnatic link
descent name, royal, 43, 131, 143
Dingani, 14, 24
dispersal of Ngoni, 167
disputes, 11, 163
District Officers, 118, 137, Plate V

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

districts, tribal, 112
divination, 141
divisions: Nguni, 5*f*; of village, 12
dog: quarrel over, 17; licences, 149*f*, 161
Domwe, Mount, 17
Dowa Ngoni, 8, 64, 123; captives among, 31
Duff, H. L., 92, 96
'Durban Man, A'; *see* Deare, G. R.
Dutch Reformed Church Mission, 107
dynastic marriages, 52

Eastern Province, East Luangwa District, 112
Ecigodhlweni, 14, 21
eclipse, solar, 3
economic differentiation, 56
Ekwendeni, 14*f*
Elangeni, 13*f*, 20
Elmslie, W. A., 3, 4, *et passim*
Emacakazeni, 20
Emangeni, 14
Emankechezeni, 14, 20
embezzlement, 153, 159, 165
Emchakachakeni, 14, 21
Emcisweni, 14*f*
Emhlakuti, 14
empire, typical history of, 65
Emsizini, 14*f*
Emveyeyeni, 14*f*
enemies, external, 62
Engwenyameni, 14*f*
Enhlekiseni, 14
Europeans, 33, 63
Evans-Pritchard, E. E., iv, v, 48, 50
exogamy, 5, 54*f*
external and internal relations, 53

Fafazeni, 14, 25
Faisako, 14
famine, 155
farm: demonstration, 149, 152; White, 120
farmers, White, 138, 164
federation, v, 169
fee, hearing, 149*f*
Field, A. S., 27
fines, 149*f*
Fingoe, 27
first fruits festival: organization, 24, 39*f*, 59; and political independence, 58; and Ngoni war, 93
Firth, R. W., 50
fission: defined, 57; instances of, 17*ff*, 21, 23; divergence of interest, 12; and segmentation, 57*ff*; and consolidation, 63
flags: at Mpezeni's, 69, 81*ff*; request for British, 82
flexibility, 61
Foà, E.; travels of, 66, 80, 86; and flags, 69
food production, 31, 63
Forbes, Major, 81, 83, 88
force and the State, 59
Foreign Jurisdiction Act, 111
Foreign Office: and Nyasaland, 24, 69; and Johnston, 70; and Mozambique Co., 74*f*, 77; and Ngoni cattle, 95
foreign policy, 25*ff*, 40*f*
foreman, road, 152
Fort Alston, 84
Fortes, M., iv, 47, 48*f*, 50, 57, 60; and Evans-Pritchard, 47*f*, 51
Fort Ettanina, 84
Fort Jameson, 84, 107, 113
Fort Jameson District, Division, 112
Fort Jameson Ngoni: location, 8, 25, 67; arrival, 23; composition, 24; captives, 26, 30; joking relationships, 28; moves between segments, 35; revolts among, 26; and Mwase, 41; and succession to Zwangendaba, 20*f*; prosperity of, 68; poverty of, 138
Fort Manning, 84, 107, 156, Plate XII
Fort Manning Ngoni: and Administration, 114, 119, 122; contact with Fort Jameson N., 169; and Cewa, 169, 171
Fort Partridge, 80, 84, 90*f*
Fort Patrick, 84, 107
Fort Young, 81, 84, 86, 107; defences, 85; Cewa chiefs at, 86; besieged, 90; and segment 10, 100; at Missale, 90
France, 66
Fraser, D., 4, 22, 43 *et passim*
Fumbeni, 14, 25
funerals, 146

Gamitto, 66
Garanganze, 73
Gazaland Ngoni, 8, 123
genealogies, 2, 13, 55
Genthe, H., 82, 85*f*, 104
Germany, 66, 77*f*, 81, 96
ghee, 149
gifts to chief, 145*f*
Giraud, 66
Glave, E. J., 27, 104
Gluckman, M., iv *et passim*
gold, 66, 68, 89; Rand mines, 169
granaries, county, 149
gunpowder, 96

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

000 guns: Mwambera and Mwase, 26; Tower muskets, 59; North Charterland, 85; and Rhodesia Concessions, 80; in Ngoni war, 91; and lions, 148; licences, 149
Gusii, 51, 53, 56
Gwaza, 18
Gwaula, 38
Gwaza jere, 18, 21

Hailey, Lord, 108
hanging, 160
Harding, C., 93, 111
Hatchell, G. W., *passim*
headmen: district, 112, 129, 154*f*; divisional and group, 117, 129, 154; royal, 7
headmen, village, 43*f*, 106, 129*f*, Plates V, VI: among Zulu, 9; of large villages, 115; and cattle, 31; arbitration by, 165; between kinship and politics, 53
headquarters, 12, 41
heads, Nguni, 6*f*
Health Dept., 155
Hehe, 18
heirs, 12, 20
Henga, 26
history, 4
Hlatshwayo, 13*f*, 20
Hodgson, A. G. O., 3, 18, 31
Hoho, 14
Hole, H. M., 74
Holleman, J. F., 55*f*
homestead, roval, 5*f*
household, polygynous, 5*f*
houses of wives, 5*f*
Hunter, M., 139; *see* Wilson, G. and M.
hunting: among Nguni, 5*f*, 39; royal, 105, 147*f*

ikohlwa, 139
i(li)fandla, 159
i(li)khohlwa, 139
immigrants, 24, 27
imprisonment, 149, 166
incwala, 40
Indirect Rule, 26, 108, 163
induna, 5, 11
inkhosana, 43
inqwala, 40
interpreters, 157
isigaba, 10
isithakazelo, 9
isizinda, 56, 139
ivory, 98
izimpisi, 39

jere, 42
Jericho, battle of, 154
Jesuits, 66
Johnson, W. P., 17
Johnston, H. H., 3, 69-85
joking relationships, 28
Jose, 66
judiciary, independent, 163

Kabaenda, 38
Kachaje, Head Messenger, 157
Kaffir, Zulu, 9
Kahama District, 22, 122
Kalanga, 16
Kalindawalo, 27
Kalusilo, 38
Kamanga, 26
kapasu, 149
Kamzembe maiemesa, 100
Kapatamoyo, 14, 121
Kapatamoyo's, 84, 90
Kapunzah, 3
Karonga, 101
Kasungu, 70, 72, 79
Kazembe (Lunda chief), 66
Kazungu; *see* Kasungu, Mwase
Kede, 53
Kerr, W. M., 79
killing of Tsonga, 19
kingdoms, Nguni, 5*ff*
kinship, 51, 52*f*, 55
Kotakota, 67; and Mwase, 79; and Ngoni, 72, 82; Collector at, 89*f*, 102
Krige, E. J., 88
kugaiba, 10
Kukuya Kapili twala, 14, 127
Kunda, 67, 112, 120; and Cusula, Msoro, 26; and Genthe, 85
kusonkhana, 159
Kunyeni, 14*f*
Kuper, H., 40, 56, 97
kupaiba, 10

labour: supply, 101*f*, 138*f*; migrant, 145, 167*f*; recruiters, 108, 138; casual, 152; control of, 153; and White settlement, 113
Lacerda, 66
lady, 11, 44; *see* queens
Lake Tonga, 26
Lala, 70
Lancaster, D. G., 3, 4, 139 *et passim*
land: Nguni, 6; use of, 105*f*, 113*f*, 120; rights in, 29*f*; reopened, 144; carrying capacity, 105
Land court, 74*f*
Landeens, Landims, 9
law, 160, 162*f*

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

000

Laws, Dr. R., 3, 17
laymen, Christian, 96
legal system, British, 162
legends, 2
legislation, 111*f*, 164
Legislative Council, 136, 170
Lele, 52
Lembalemba, 38
Lembani, 38
licences, 149*f*, Plate VIII
lieutenants: Nguni, 5*f*; civil and military, 43; powers of, 11, 44*f*, 60; segments for, 25, 64; competing with lord's son, 33; becoming chiefs, 125; and captives, 41; in county, 158*f*
Lilongwe District, 119
Limpopo valley, 16
lineage: Nguni, 5*f*, 9; systems, 54*ff*; unilineal, 49; and residential system, 6, 10, 48; and political functions, 50; medial, 53
linked co-wives, 15, 25
lions, 148
Livingstone, D., 3, 22, 68, 79
Livingstonia Mission, 68, 79, 97
Loangeni, 14, 25, 81, 84, 104
Lobengula, 72, 79
Logoli, 51, 53
Lomapela, 14, 127
Lompetu; *see* Loziwawa
Lonyanda, 14
lord, 10: in residential system, 6, 10*f*; and bridewealth, 31; and lieutenants, 41; and chiefs, 115
lorry check points, 149
Loziwawa Lompetu nxumalo, 14
Luangwa, 16, 67
Luangwa valley, 66
Luapula, 73, 102
Luba, 22
Lugard, 69
Lukhero, M. B., iii
Lunda, 66
Lundazi Ngoni, 8, 123
Lunthwele, 76
Lupata gorge, 18
Lupoko pakati, 14
Lusaka, visited by chiefs, 168
Lutembwe, 76
lutsanya, 159

Mabema, 38
Macsiya, Machaya, Imiti, Machendi, Macihungu, Macona, 38
Madgingo, Madjingo, Madoda, Madouda, 39
Madzimawi, 87, 92, 121; and Zwangendaba's name, 88, 111
Mafelakudeni, 38
Mafiti, Mafitte, 9
Mafu, 20
Mafuta's, 80, 84
Magalela (man), 14
Magalela (age-set), 38
Magangata, 14
Magazi, 38
magistrate, 112
Magodi, 8, 123
Maguya, 14, 121
Magwagwara, 9
Magwambane, 14
Magwero, 107
Mahacu, 39
Maickesa, 38
mail runner, 152
Maiyiza, 38*f*
Majekwane, Majunge, Majuwela, Makanya, 38
Makeke, 39
Mekela, Mekelang'ombe, 38
Makua, 85
Makupu, 38
Makwangara, 9
Malavi, 67
Malcolm, Sir Dougal, 77
Malunge, Mambonya, 38
Mambwe, 22
Mangazi, 38
Mang'ombe, 39
Mangone, 9
Mangwangwara, 9
manipulation, 29-36, 61
Manitu, 9
Manning, 87, 91*ff*
Manyela, Manyinsa, Manyoka, 38
Manyoni, 39
manyusa, 43
Maola, 38*f*
Maples, C., 3, 18
marriages, 10, 52, 150
Masala, Masapi, 38
Maseko Ngoni, 8, 17*f*; and Zulu Gama, 23, 58; and Fort Jameson N., 27; *see* Southern Nyasaland N.
Mashambisa, 38
Mashanga, 86*f*
Mashaose, Mashapi, 38
Mashashulani, 14
Mashonaland, 16
Mashumela, Masoo, 38
Matabele, 17, 79
Matakenya, 67, 96
Mateza, 38
matron, school 152
Matukwa, 38
Maugham, F. H., 77*f*
Mavimba, 38
Maviti, Mavitu, 9

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

000 Mayer, Mrs. U. P., 57
Mayunge, 38
Mazite, Mazitu, 9
Mazoo, 38
Mboanani, 123
Mbunga, 9
Mbuyazi, 88
Mcekwani mpanza, 86, 100
Mchecherere, 9
Mcikazana madhlopa, 14
meetings: county, 142, 146, 151, 158; about chieftainship, 159
messengers: Native Authority, 129, 143, 149, 158, Plates II, VI; district (Administrative, Boma, Native, land) 143, 149, 154, 157, Plates III, VI; later called divisional headmen, 112*f*, 154; *see* agriculture
Mgayi: position of, 14, 20; as regent, 19*f*, 22*f*
Mhambose, 14
Middleton, Trooper, 83
migration: route, 8; history of, 7, 16-19, 21*ff*; boundaries during, 127; *see* alienation; brigandage; labour, migrant; movement
military organization, 6, 26, 36*ff*, 110
mineral rights, 73, 75
Mirambo, 22, 28, 58
Misholo of Dingeni, 15, 121
Misholo of Mkuchweni, 14
Missale, 66, 68, 84
missions: and chiefs, 138, 161; and education, 153; and divorce, 164; and Johnston, 89; monopolized, 98; *see* Livingstonia M., religion
Mitchell, J. C., iv, 52, 53, 157
Mkanda, 69
Mkuchweni, 14, 25
Mkucwa mbazima, 111
Mlonyeni of Fort Jameson, 15
Mlonyeni of Fort Manning, 14*f*, 92, 121
mnaus, 142
Mnukwa mazyopa, 14, 121
mobility, social, 115, 125
Moçambique, Governor-General of, 68
Money, R. I., and Smith, S. K., 3, 17, 80, 82
Monteiro, 66
Moreau, R. E., 28
movement: spatial, 147, 165; between segments, 35, 140; between villages, 135, 155; of villages, 109, 113; *see* migration
Mozambique, 3; M. Company, 75, 78, 81
Mpande, 88
Mperembe, 14, 20, 22
Mpezeni's Ngoni; *see* Fort Jameson, Fort Manning N.
Mpezeni I, Ntutu: mentioned by Stewart, 3; born, 16; segments of, 14, 25; regiment of, 39; heir of Zwangendaba, 20*ff*; kingdom of, 23*f*; wife in segment 4, 139; quarrel over dog, 17; and flags, 68*f*; and Sharpe, 69*f*; and war, 88, 91*f*; favourite wife, 100
Mpezeni II, Ciloa Gabriel: regiment of, 39; as chief, 111; and Reserves, 109; and sons, 147; and Zwangendaba's name, 140
Mpezeni III, Pontino, frontispiece, iii, 15
Mpezeni's county, 121
Mpezeni's (place), 84
Mputa Maseko, 8, 123
Mqamache nzima, 14
Mshawa, 121
Msipazi, 76
Msolokoto, 38
msonkhano, 159
Msoro, 26, 67
Mswati, 5
Mtambalala, Mtambalika, 8
Mtani, 38
Mtenguleni, 14, 21
Mtenje, 20
Mtetema, 38
Mthethwa, 7, 9
Mtizwa soko, 14
Mtwalo, 14, 20*f*
Muliro, 76
Munene nzima, 14
murder, punishment of, 59, 167
Murray, S. S., 3, 17, 20, 22
Mveleleni, 14*f*
Mveweni, 14
Mwambera: heir of segments 3 and 8, 14, 16; as heir of Zwangendaba, 20*ff*; quarrel over dog, 17; made chief, 23; *see* Northern Nyasaland Ngoni
Mwase Kasungu: and Mwambera, 26, 62; treaties with British, 76*f*; and Mpezeni, 26, 41; attacked by British, 79, 102; location, 67
mwazi, 11
mystical values, 58*f*
Mzilikazi, 16*ff*

names: tribal 9; chiefs', 127; *see* descent name, praise name
Natal, 4, 16
Native Authority: scheme, 112, 121*f*, 134; and Administration, 136-9, 154; and court, 158; and county, 160;

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rules and orders, 149, 163*f*; and social mobility, 125; and hereditary principle, 159; and territorial boundary, 24; and segments, 25, 122, 127; *see* Treasury, Native; Court, Native; segments, county; Reserves, Native; messengers
Native Commissioner, 112
Native Trust land, 120
Ndandwe, 7, 9, 19
Ndebele, Rhodesian: origin, 17; and Maseko Ngoni, 17*f*, 23, 123; refugees, 72, 79, 100; and Rhodesia Concessions, 80
Ndindane, 14
nduna, 11, 44
neighbouring tribes, 25
neighbours, among Nguni, 6
nesting of segments, 49
Nganya, Ngazaza, Ngaziaiya, 38
Ngiyelweni, 14, 25
Ngodoyi: heir of segment 7, 14; heir of Zwangendaba, 20*f*; location, 22
Ngoka Lukhero zulu, 100
Ngoni: name, 9, 18; groups, 8; State, 48; *see* Dowa, Fort Jameson, Fort Manning, Gazaland, Lundazi, Maseko, Northern Nyasaland, Songea, Southern Nyasaland, and Tanganyika Ngoni; Zwangendaba's people
Ng'onomo, 43
Ngowongo, 38
Nguni: name, 9; society, 5*f*, 7, 11
nkhosa, 42
Nkonjera, 3
nkosikazi, 11
nkwala, 40
no-man's-land, 25, 59, 62
non-intervention by leaders, 46
North Charterland Concession, 84, 120
North Charterland Exploration Co.: formed, 78; and Rhodesia Concessions, 80; and Fort Young, 81, 107; administration by, 83; arms, 85; police, 93; economic aims, 109; in social field, 97; and Mpezeni's subsidy, 110
Northern Nyasaland Ngoni: conservative, 2; and Read, 4; location, 8, 67, 122; ancient villages, 13; and succession dispute, 20; mode of conquest, 25*f*, 62; army organization, 26, 62; and Mwase, 41; lieutenants, 43; headman's ritual duties, 44; captives, 50; Chabisa, 72, 79, 100; missionaries among, 89, 97*f*; and Mlonyeni, 92; contract with Fort Jameson N., 168
Nqaba, 18
Nsenga: location, 67; Ngoni among, 16, 17; relations with Ngoni, 25, 27; treaty with, 67; and Madzimawe, 92; and Msoro, 26; kinship terms, 55
Nsingu: segment of, 16; regiment of, 39; and North Charterland, 86-9; shot, 92, 111, 140
Nsingu's village, 91
Ntabeni: and segment 7, 14; as regent, 19*f*, 21; and Kahama group, 22
Ntutu (unidentified leader), 22
Ntutu Mpezeni; *see* Mpezeni I
Nuer, 51, 53, 56
Nupe, 53
nursery keeper, 152
Nxaba, 7, 9; fight with Zwangendaba, 16; secession of, 18
Nyakusa, 56
Nyamfinsi, 103
Nyamwezi, 22, 28
Nyanja, 7, 157
Nyasaland Protectorate, 24
Nyungweni, 14, 15
Nzermane, 14, 87, 121
Nzyovhu, 14

officers of State, 41*ff*
omnidirectional kinship systems, 130, 151
oracle, poison, 11
organic, 50
Owen, W. F. W., 3
ox bones, 42

Paramount Chief: and residential system, 10; and rivals, 139*ff*; and minor chiefs, 141; appeals to, 11; control of captives, 30*f*; title of, 115; and cattle, 134; brothers of, 46; *see* chiefs
parishes, 125
'passing' of Negroes, 54
Pedler, F. J., 28
Pereira, 66
Perham, M., ed., 79
perpetual kinship, 52
Pinto, Serpa, 69
plural society, 154
police: and divisional headmen, 154; Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland P., 155, 167; marriages of, 156; and lorry routes, 165; proposal for new force, 163
Poole, E. H. L., 3, 4, *et passim*
population: in 1803, 13; in 1845, 40; in 1898, 10, 44, 102*ff*; density, 104 113; inflationary spiral, 60
Porto, Silva, 66

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

000 Portugal: and S.E. Africa, 62, 66, 96; and Wiese, 68f, 73, 75; treaties and flags, 69f; attacked by Ngoni, 3, 16; Ngoni from Portuguese territory, 27
Portuguese administration, 109
Portuguese, East Africa, Ngoni in, 123
Posselt, F. W. T., 17, 18
postal services, 153, Plate XI
power over people, 30
praise names, 42
precedents, 169
Pretorius, 55
primitive estates, 47
primogeniture, 5, 33, 61
prince, Nguni, 6
Protectorate, British, 71
Provincial Commissioner, 112
Provincial Team, 170
pyramidal organization, 48

quasi-agnatic link: defined, 10; in residential system, 6, 61; and lieutenant, 44; and marriage, 54
queens, 13, 41, 52, 159; *see* Sosela
Quilimane, 74
Qwabe, 7

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., iv, 64, 65
raids, 30f, 86
ramifying process, 50
Rangeley, W. H. J., *passim*
rank: of lieutenants, 45; of wives, 5, 33; of bevies, 32f
Rankin, D. J., 73f
Rattray, R. S., 44
Read, M. H., v, 3, *et passim*
rebels, punishment of, 58
regency, 20-3
regiments: Nguni, 5f; and residential system, 7, 35f; and military organization, 6, 26, 36ff; names, 38; captives in, 9; and State, 59; modern, 110f
regional governors, 9, 41f; and captives, 30; and Wiese, 99f; and chiefs, 115
religion, 114, 146, 154; *see* missions, ancestor cult
Reserves, Native, 109, 120, 128, 130
residential system: origin of, 6; and administrative system, 41, 43; working of, 9ff; and regiments, 7, 37f; and immigrant villages, 132; and Native Authorities, 127; a segmentary system, 48, 54ff
residue, 12
revolts by captured tribes, 26
Rhodes, C. J., 69ff
Rhodesia Concessions Co., 80
Rhodesia, North-Eastern, 24, 102
ritual experts, 114
roads, 149, 153
Roberts, 94
Romana, Doña, 73
Rugaruga, 9, 22, 58
rump, 11, 56, 99
Runsewe, 8, 22

St. Hill, 94
salaries, 108, 113; and North Charterland, 110; of chiefs, 125f; list, 152
sanctions: physical and moral, 164ff; people and chief, 146f
Sayili, 14, 121, 127
scale, 65, 172
Schapera, I, iv, v, 50
schools, Plate X: and Native Authority, 151; Ngoni N. A., 149; attendance, 152, 161; money for, 153
Scrivenor, T. V., 28
segments: superior, inferior, minor, primal, 10f; disappearance, 12, 35f; destroyed, 15; formation, 11f; for wife, or lieutenant, 24f; cadet, 131f; chief's, 131, 142; commoner, 132; county, 105f, 117-23, 142; queen's, 132; regal, 131, 142; movement between, 35, 140, 147; reformed, 36; growth of, 12; ranking of, 33f; new large, 34f; and locality, 55; and Native Authorities, 25, 122; in Western society, 49; numbered segments, 13f
segment 1: greater portion of State, 13-16: Mgayi supports residue, 19f; quarrel with regent, 21; senior lieutenant of, 23; split in, 23, 58; Mpezeni lord of, 24; Zwangendaba's wife in, 139; men leave, 147
segment 2: formation, 15f; and Mperembe, 20; and Mpezeni, 23; rejoined Mwambera, 58
segment 3: formed, 15f; Mwambera in, 20; lady's quarrel, 21; succession, 23; and segment 2, 58
segment 4: founded, 21; and Mgayi, 19; and Mpezeni, 20; with Fort Jameson N., 23f; sons in, 25; and segment 1, 58; first fruits ceremony, 93; and Wiese, 99f; representing Zwangendaba, 111, 140; Paramount Chief as lord, 123; and murder, 167; Mpezeni's wife in, 139
segments 5 and 6: founded, 15; founder dead, 19; with Fort Jameson N., 23f; in Nyasaland, 24, 119
segment 7: founded, 15; and Ntabeni, 19f; and Ngodoyi, 21; and Kahama group, 22; with Mirambo, 58

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment 8: founded, 21; and Mwambera, 20, 23; men joining, 147
segment 9, 14, 25, 140
segment 10; founded 25; location, 84; and Fort Young, 81; and Deare, 86; and Wiese, 99*f*; Paramount Chief as lord, 123; and murder, 167
segment 11, 24, 25, 123
segment 12, 14, 25, 140
segment 13, 13*f*, 25, 102, 140
segment 14, 14, 25, 123, 140
segment 15, 14, 25, 127; Mpezeni in, 91, 100; and Zwangendaba's name, 140
segment 16, 14, 25, 123, 140
segment 17, 14, 25, 140
segment 18: founded, 15, 139; lady of, 14; beer incident, 15*f*, 36; and fission, 19
segment 19, 15*f*
segmentary systems, 47*f*, 54*ff*
segmentation, 50, 57, 60*f*; *see* fission
Selby, P. H., 95, 104
Senga, 25
settlements, Nguni, 5
Shaka: and Zulu empire, 4, 9; and Zwide, 7; and Mzilikazi, 16; changes introduced by, 51
Sharpe, Sir Alfred: journeys, 69*f*, 72, 78*f*, 104; as Commissioner, 89; and Ngoni cattle, 94
Shire: river, 67; highlands, 68; valley 66, 123
Shona, 16, 55
shops, 160
Sinyama, 9
slave trade, 96, 101; and Mpezeni, 78*f*; and Arabs, 100; and L. Nyasa, 68; in Tanganyika, 28, 62
smelting, 109
Sobhuza I, 5
social circulation, 64
social field, change in, 97*f*
social services, 150*f*, 153
Soga, J. H., 4, 7, 17, 22
soil, 103, 104*f*
Somfula, 14, 38
sons, 12, 46
Songea Ngoni: and Maples, 3; location, 8, 123; and Zulu Gama and Maseko Ngoni, 23; *see* Tanganyika Ngoni
sorcery, 11, 140*f*
Sosela nxumalo, 14, 16
Soshangane: and Zwide, 7, 9; and Gazaland group, 8, 123; attack on Portuguese, 16
sources of information, *see* 1*ff*, 63, 116
South Africa, 108
Southern Nyasaland Ngoni: and Read, 000 4; and Zwangendaba, 16*f*; and Johnston, 72, 78; location, 8, 23, 67, 123; captives, 31; regional governors, 42; headman's ritual duties, 44
spears of office, 108, 129
spelling, 7
Spies, E., 28
stability, 60*ff*, 171
stamps, rubber, 150
Stanley, H. M., 18, 22, 58
Stannus, H. S., 3
state, Ngoni; continuity of, 1; founded, 6*ff*; as snowball, 60*f*; *see* fission, stability
stateless societies, 47, 51
status in old and new systems, 156
Stewart, J., 3, 22
Stigand, C. H., 3, 18
stockades, 104
strangers in Administrative service, 155*f*
structural: change, 64*f*; distance, 32, 35
structure, social, 171
sub-chief, 129
subsidy to Mpezeni, 110
succession: disputes, 19*ff*, 32, 34; by quasi-agnates, 10; and Europeans, 87
Sukuma, 22
Swahili: headman, 80; soldier, 156
Swann, A. J., 79, 82, 87
Swazi, 2, 4*f*; first fruits ceremony, 40; lineage system, 61; royal villages, 56; among Ngoni, 7, 18*f*
Swaziland, 4

Tallensi, 51, 53, 56
Tanganyika Ngoni, 28, 62*f*
Tatakakulu, 39
tax, 108, 114, 149, 155, Plate III; and North Charterland, 83
Teleka, 15, 121
ten taxpayer rule, 130
tenure of N. A. posts, 153
territorial units, counties as, 127*f*
Tete, 67, 70, 78
Tew, M. M., 3, 9, 22*f*, 52
Theal, G. M'C., 16
Thomson, J., 70, 72
time, fixed beginning in, 50
tobacco, 139, 169
Tondweni, 14, 25
Tonga, Lake, 26
Transkei, 4
traders, 164
Trafalgar, battle of, 154
Transvaal, fight in, 17
Trapnell, C. G., 103

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

000 treason, 60
Treasury, Native, 112, 142, 149*f*; *see* clerks, Treasury
treaties, 97; Pinto and Sharpe, 69*f*; Wiese, 74; B.S.A.C., 76
Truth, 94
Tsonga, 7, 19, 87
Tswana, 50
Tumbuka, 19

Ufipa, 16, 23
Ujiji, 3, 22
umnaiw, 142
umnumzana, 9
Undi, 67, 76*f*, 79, 85*f*
unilineal recruitment, 49
uniqueness, historical, 65

vegetables, for sale, 169
Veterinary Dept., 155
Victoria Nyanza, 22*f*
vigaiwe, 10
villages: between kinship and politics, 53; origin, 109*f*; formation, 118, 135; proliferation, 12; change of site, 44, 55; genealogies, 2; large, 6, 11, 102*f*; modern, 129*ff*; in county, 126, 160; chief's, 12*f*, 131, 133, 158; commoner, 132*f*; interloping, 128; private, 131; regal, royal, 131*ff*, satellite, 2, 12; *see* headmen, village; headquarters; movement

Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, 9
warfare, 88, 100: Nguni, 5; between segments, 58
Warner, W. L., 54
Warringham, 82, 83, 90; and cause of war, 93
Warton: character, 83, 89; plans, 83, 101; and Wiese, 81; and Nsingu, 86
Water Dept., 155
Watuta, 9, 22
wells, 149
Werner, Alice, 3
Weule, K., 18
whipping, 149
White Fathers, 66
Wiese, Carl: and Portuguese, 68*f*, 73, 75; as trader, 73; and concession, 73, 75; and North Charterland, 81*f*, 94; in Zambezi valley, 77, 81; and Ngoni war, 90*f*; friends of, 99*f*; end of, 101; on Mpezeni's slave trade, 79; *et passim*
Wiese's (place), 84
wife: among Nguni, 5*f*, 11; virilocal, 7; rank of, 5, 33; great, 5, 12; of heir, placed in headquarters, 25, 139; *see* bevy
Wilson, G. and M., 64*f*
Winterbottom, J. M., *passim*
Wissmann, Major von, 66
witch-finders, 19
witnesses, in criminal cases, 166*f*
women: emigration of, 151, 156, Plate XII; at meetings, 159; in politics, 52

Yao, 52, 72, 78
Young, T. Cullen, *passim*

Zambezi, river, 16, 17, 18
Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, 24, 71
Zimfezi, 39
Zimpofu, 38
Zinkhave maklangane, 14
Zinkhondo, Zinyoka, Ziolomba, 38
Zulu, 2, 3, 9; empire, 4, 5, 9; regimental commanders, 37; sector system, 39; first fruits ceremony, 40; chief's messenger, 43; *isizinda* wife, 139; segmentary state, 51, 53; kinship terminology, 55; lineage system, 56, 61; hunting, 39; fighting for throne, 87*f*
Zulu, Chief, of Fort Manning, 121, 127
Zulu Gama, 8, 23, 123; and Maseko Ngoni, 58
Zumbo, 16
Zwangendaba: leader of migration, 7, 10, 13; and Zwide, 7, 9; lord of segments, 14*f*; offered beer, 15; wife in segment 1, 139; punishment of rebels, 58; death of, 16; heirs of, 20*ff*; name of, 88, 111, 139*f*
Zwangendaba's people: described by Wiese, 3; and name Ngoni, 9; organization, 9*ff*; desertions among, 17*f*; early followers, 41
Zwide, 7, 9

1: Barnes
643
622
634

Ngoni FR5

[Category 643 is reserved for information pertaining to only the Paramount Chief and his activities; data on village chiefs or headmen will be found under category 622, while information on chiefs and other officials at the county or unstated intermediate level has been classified in category 634. --Analyst]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

THE NGONI OF NYASALAND

by

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Ph.D. London, M.A. Cambridge, C.B.E.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p. v]

PREFACE

THE material on which this book is based was collected during three periods in Nyasaland as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute: May–December 1935; April 1936–June 1937; July 1938–August 1939. 115 121 122

The choice had to be made whether to concentrate on one Ngoni area and omit the other, and also whether to present Ngoni culture as a common element in both areas or to regard them as separate cultural areas. I decided to gather material from northern and central Ngoniland, and accordingly spent about one-third of the time in north Nyasaland and about two-thirds in central Nyasaland. I used the Nyanja language all the time in central Ngoniland, and found that many people understood it in the north. I learned some Zulu, enough to read and hear Ngoni when spoken, but it was dying out as a language except for certain ceremonial and legal terms and expressions. Very few people spoke it in central Ngoniland; most of the older people knew it in the north and in one area it was still the language of the home in 1936. 122 197 [192]

The decision to present Ngoni culture as a common constituent of Ngoni life in all parts of Nyasaland was made after the material had been analysed. I decided also to attempt a reconstruction of Ngoni life at the time of the first European contacts, when the kingdoms were at the height of their power. Men and women were still alive, when I was in Ngoni villages, who had fought as warriors, who had organized large households, who had been present at the accession and death of the Paramounts. Their experiences were part of Ngoni culture and inseparable from much of what was regarded as essentially 'Ngoni' in the 1930's. 121

In both areas the informants were of two kinds: those who welcomed an anthropologist who would collect and record Ngoni history, patterns of social organization, and cultural behaviour of which they were intensely proud; and those who were reluctant at first to give information, either because they were Christians and had been at school and said they had 'forgotten'; or because they were suspicious of all Europeans, and did not want to speak of what to them was a treasured and hidden heritage. 115

Working in more than one language medium and bringing into the open Ngoni terms not as a rule used in the presence of Europeans presented a number of problems both of terminology and orthography. I have included a glossary of Ngoni terms used frequently in the book. There were several variations of the prefixes in common use with Ngoni words, as for example *abalumuzana*, *alumuzana*, *malumuzana*, all three of which were used in northern and central Ngoniland. The clicks, 128 193

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The clicks,

193 [194] *c, x, q,* had disappeared in central Ngoniland, and were only pronounced correctly by the older Ngoni in the north. The honorific prefixes before clan names in addressing people, and before first names in reference, also varied according to area, age group and clan ranking. Apparent 104 inconsistencies in spelling which occur in the book reflect these variations.

I have adopted English translations of certain Ngoni expressions and have used them throughout without quotation marks. An obvious example is Paramount for *inkosi*; and the use of 'house' for the Ngoni institution, and 'hut' for the dwelling place.

122 I acknowledge with gratitude the Fellowship given by the International African Institute which made possible the visits to Nyasaland; the grant from the London School of Economics for the research assistants, Miss Ruth Jones and Mr. G. P. Hall, who helped me collate material; the officials and missionaries in Nyasaland who gave hospitality and assisted me in every possible way; and the African people of the Ngoni kingdoms who, as my hosts in the villages and my helpers at all times, welcomed me into their midst and gave me an insight into their Ngoni culture.

London, 1955 MARGARET READ

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p.vii]

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CONTENTS

PREFACE v

Part I: INTRODUCTION

I THE NGONI PEOPLE 3
II THE NGONI KINGDOMS 11
III NGONI CULTURE 18

Part II: THE NGONI POLITICAL SYSTEM

I THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS 29
II THE PARAMOUNT 47
III THE ROYAL WOMEN 77
IV COURTS AND OFFICIALS 88
V A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933 100

Part III: NGONI SOCIETY

I NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION 115
II CLANS 116
III HOUSES 122
IV NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE 132
V AGE SETS 143

Part IV: THE ANCESTOR CULT OF THE NGONI

I THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS AND THE ARISTOCRATIC TRADITION 157
II CATTLE AND THE ANCESTOR CULT 165
III THE ROLE OF THE DIVINER IN THE ANCESTOR CULT 178
IV THE RITUAL OF ADDRESSING THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS 189

GLOSSARY OF NGONI TERMS 205
MAP OF NGONI MIGRATIONS 207
MAP OF NGONI KINGDOMS AND STATES IN 1939 208
INDEX 209

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[P.1]

PART I

INTRODUCTION

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER I

THE NGONI PEOPLE

In the census of Nyasaland of 1945, there were 193,482 people enumerated as Ngoni. Their distribution extended from the extreme north in Karonga district through every other district to the extreme south in Port Herald district. There were concentrations of Ngoni people, however, as Table I shows, in the Mzimba district in the north, in the Dowa, Lilongwe, Dedza and Ncheu districts of the central province, and in the Blantyre district in the south. The Ngoni in the Mzimba district were known as Mbelwa's Ngoni[1] and will be called in this book the northern Ngoni Kingdom.

131 [161] [101]

Table I

Distribution of Ngoni in Nyasaland by Provinces and Districts from 1945 Census

162 131

Northern Province		*Total 45,539*
Mzimba	district	44,948
Karonga	"	295
Chinteche	"	296
Central Province*		*Total 80,943*
Kasungu	district	2,539
Dowa	"	20,329
Lilongwe	"	17,707
Dedza	"	14,757
Ncheu	"	15,242
Kotakota	"	4,838
Fort Manning	"	5,531
Southern Province		*Total 67,000*
Blantyre	district	25,224
Zomba	"	6,972
Liwonde	"	7,572
Neno	"	10,211
Cholo	"	9,185
Fort Johnston	"	1,343
Chikwawa	"	1,029
Chiradzulu	"	4,655
Mlanje	"	751
Port Herald	"	58
Total		*193,482*

* In 1931 this was included in the Northern Province.

[1] Tew, M. *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*. O.U.P., 1950, p. 91.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

131 the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found
101 in three separate states in the Dowa and Kotakota districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpeseni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

162 According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with
131 the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,891. Leaving out the Fort
167 Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the
167 main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

101 The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It
121 was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliation survives political dispersal? The chief
128 problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

619 There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, dis-
563 tinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambesi', 'those from the march' and 'those from this country'. The
[614] Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(a) *'Those from the south'*

These were the descendants of the leaders of the two main Ngoni groups represented by the two Ngoni kingdoms, with their followers, who left Natal during the wars of Shaka. They were South-eastern Bantu of Nguni stock, and when they were first encountered by Europeans in Nyasaland, the Europeans called them Zulus and spoke of their language as Zulu. Ngoni informants in the 1930's who were regarded as most reliable repudiated their relationship with the Zulu, and always referred to their ethnic origin as a people of Swazi stock. Y. M. Cibambo whose knowledge of Ngoni traditions was unrivalled, said in his book *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*—'Very many of them [the Ngoni] came from Swaziland, which is north of Zululand'.[1] A nostalgic refrain occurred in more than one of their traditional songs:

> Come let us go to Swaziland
> Where the people die fat.[2]

Cultural affinities between the Ngoni in Nyasaland and the people now living in Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, with the Zulu, will be examined in several chapters of this book. In the chapter on clan descent names in Part III, we shall compare the clan names called Swazi by the Ngoni with the lists of clan names given by Bryant in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* [3] and with the list given by Kuper, in *An African Aristocracy*,[4] of the Swazi and pre-Swazi clans. The military organization of the Ngoni, the age-set system which formed part of it, and other cultural features which will be discussed in Chapter III of this section, all show a general cultural affinity with the peoples of the northern Nguni group of the South-eastern Bantu.

The separation of the Ngoni group from the parent stock, which took place at about the same time as the Ndebele and the Shangaan groups fought their way north, occurred before the Swazi and Zulu kingdoms took final form. It is more correct, therefore, to say that Ngoni cultural affinities were with the northern Nguni group as a whole than to say they were off-shoots of either the Zulu or the Swazi. The Ngoni themselves used the designation 'Swazi' for the people with clan descent names whose ancestors left the south with the original party. Some of the older men remembered their fathers and grandfathers speaking of their clan as having belonged to the Ntungwa group, the Mtetwa group, the Msane group, before the departure of the Ngoni took place. This differentiation into pre-Swazi tribal and clan groupings was not in the 1930's one to which the Ngoni gave much attention. In talking about their southern origin it was the Swazi connexion which they emphasized.

[1] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Lutterworth Press, 1942, p. 8.
[2] Read, M. 'Songs of the Ngoni People.' *Bantu Studies*, March 1937, p. 10.
[3] Bryant, A. T. *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*. Longmans, 1929, pp. 681–97.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*. O.U.P., 1947, p. 233.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 Ngoni tradition placed the departure of the two main groups under the leadership of Zwangendaba Jere and Ngwana Maseko during Shaka's wars, according to some traditions just before, and to others just after, the death of Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. The separate departure of the two Ngoni groups which later formed the two kingdoms was determined partly by their separate leadership under the Jere and Maseko clans, partly by their march by different routes to the Zambesi and after crossing it; and partly by the clan descent names of the Swazi element in the two kingdoms, which with few exceptions were different.

[533] Two traditional songs, sung at marriages, at dances at the Paramounts' villages, and the first in the church of the Scottish mission at Ekwendeni in north Nyasaland, reminded the Ngoni of their departure from Natal, of their separation from the Ndwandwe people under Zwide, and of the hazards of a small military band fighting its way northwards.

539

All the nations
Are gathered together against us.
How shall we fight?
They are called together against us.
Whence shall we summon help?
The big husky ones, ho!
They are called together against us.
We are reinforced by whom?

It is because of Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people
That though I lie down I cannot sleep.
O Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people!
Though I lie down I cannot sleep.
Shaka scatters us among the forests of Soshangane land.

173 There were several informants in both Ngoni kingdoms who had preserved the story of the departure of the Ngoni from the south. Y. M. Cibambo in his book gathered together the traditions and gave what he considered the most authentic version of the departure. One [114] text from the northern kingdom is given here, partly because it was typical of the kind of material Cibambo had to work on, and also because the author, Mlonyeni Jere, had heard it from his mother who, as a young girl, had lived at the court of Zwangendaba. The text gives the genealogy of Zwangendaba, and the connexion of his line with Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. It emphasizes the immediate cause of Zwangendaba's departure—namely the fear of meeting Shaka and his warriors in open battle, and the fact that he was not called a chief until he had made a breach with Zwide. The summons to the [57] mourning for his uncle Mafu, which he ignored, was considered by the Ngoni to be the final act by which Zwangendaba cut himself off from

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

his kinsfolk who remained in the south. This breach with his former kin and the assumption of chieftainship marked out Zwangendaba as a leader and his followers as a separate group. 173 571

THE DEPARTURE OF THE NGONI
by Mlonyeni Jere 173

¶ Zwangendaba was the son of Hlacwayo, the son of Magangata, the son of Magalela, the son of Cenge of Enhlekisweni.

Magangata had three sons, they were borne by one mother. The first-born was Gumede, the second was Hlacwayo, and the third was Mafu. Gumede did not marry, he hated them badly, he did not eat the food that was cooked by the women, and the same Gumede was the chief of all Magangata's sons. He did not love his brother Hlacwayo. He said that Hlacwayo was black and also he was dwarf, but he said Mafu will be the one to take his chieftainship. Mafu was refusing to take that possession while his brother was still alive and he said that though the people say that Hlacwayo is black, he is not black to me but he is red. And also though they say he is dwarf he is not dwarf to me, but he is tall. When Gumede died the chieftainship was taken by Hlacwayo and Mafu was his second since they were all born from one mother.

Magalela was at Ndwandwe the village of Langa. Langa was the father of Zwide and Zwide was a very bad chief. Zwide did not treat Zwangendaba well. When Hlacwayo died his chieftainship was taken by Zwangendaba his son. Zwide was called Nxumalo, and these people of Nxumalo were strong men there in Natal and some were afraid of them.

Dingiswayo, the son of Jobe of Elangeni, went to Zwide for a visit at Ndwandwe. As soon as he appeared Zwide caught him and killed him. When Shaka heard that Zwide had killed Dingiswayo, he grew angry for Shaka had grown up there at Dingiswayo's. He said ' Zwide has killed the chief who taught me how to fight better.' At the same time he ordered warriors to go and fight against Zwide at Ndwandwe.

Zwangendaba refused to fight with Shaka because he heard the story of Shaka, that he was a great warrior. Then he told his father Mafu that he must go away from Zwide. Zwide was troubling the Jere people. When they cooked beer he was snatching it, and when a man married a good girl he was snatching her, and when they killed a cow he was snatching the meat and taking it to Ndwandwe. When Zwide quarrelled with Shaka, Zwangendaba was glad that he had found a way of going away from Zwide. Zwide fought against Shaka and Zwangendaba ran away. The leaving of Zwangendaba nobody knew and nobody followed him. Also there was no one to follow him for Zwide was busy with war against Shaka.

They sent a message to Zwangendaba that Mafu had died:—'Come to the mourning.' Zwangendaba did not go back to the mourning. All the people who were in Mafu's villages did not follow Zwangendaba. They also went on their own way, and we do not know where they went. Zwangendaba came with only two sons of Mafu, Cenge and Mgayi. Thus many children of Mafu stayed in Natal.

Zwangendaba was with his brother Ntabeni when leaving Natal.

173 Ntabeni had his own village named Engwenyameni, and the big village of Zwangendaba was called Elangeni, and there were others.

When Zwangendaba left with his brother Ntabeni, they built their village near a path. That was the time that he departed from Zwide and he was at this time called a chief and had his own people. When Zwide was running away, Zwangendaba was on the way, and he was building his villages and spent a year at one place, and sometimes more than a year.

The following text on the departure of the central Ngoni from the south was written by Ishmael Mwale, the treasurer of Paramount [114] Gomani II of the central Ngoni kingdom. As Cibambo had done in the north, he had collected and put together the oral traditions of the old men. This story also began with a flight from Shaka's army by two leaders, Nqaba (spelt by Bryant, Nxaba) of the Msane people and Ngwana of the Maseko people. They fought the Ngoni group led by the Jere clan, and the group under Gaza which were later called the Shangaan people, and were defeated by both. The tradition of crossing the Zambesi by dividing the waters with a stick was common to the northern and central Ngoni. After crossing the Zambesi, the central Ngoni went west of the Shire river to the Kirk Range on the eastern slopes of which they found the people called Ntumba.

The Departure of Ngwana from Swaziland
by Ishmael Mwale

¶ Nqaba, son of Mbekani, made war on Shaka, but was defeated and retreated to Swaziland. Then Ngwana said 'If you run away from Shaka, he will trouble us, so I am going to leave.' Chief Nyathi told Shaka that Ngwana was leaving, and Shaka said: 'Prevent him from leaving.' So Nyathi fought Ngwana and Ngwana knew that he was waiting for Shaka's army. So he performed a rite, and caused rain to come and darkness. In the middle of the darkness Ngwana left together with Nqaba. They came to the country of Nancekwani at Mauwa, and fought with the people. They defeated the four chiefs there and conquered the country. Ngwana went straight to Ulozi to the village of Mamba, father of Lewanika. He destroyed the country of the Lozi and died there. Magadlela his brother entered the chieftainship. When Magadlela left Ulozi he went to the country of Ndunduwali, and from there to the Nyika. He arrived at Cidima Mbirasweswe, and there Zwangendaba found them. There was fighting between Magadlela and Zwangendaba, and many people were killed and they did not know who they were because it was night. When Magadlela ran away he made for Golongozi where Nqaba was, and explained to him about the war. They mobilized the army to follow Zwangendaba. When they found him they destroyed many of his men. Somfuya and other brothers of Zwangendaba were killed. When they returned from the war with Zwangendaba they went to Cikwanda. There they found Gaza and fought him and were defeated. Magadlela and Nqaba ran away. Nqaba took a friendly farewell of Magadlela because there was hunger and there were many people without food. Magadlela allowed him

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

to leave and went straight to the country of the Makombe. They conquered it and came to the Nyungwi and conquered them too. 173

When they wanted to cross the Zambesi they made medicine and beat the water with a stick and separated it. All the army crossed and reached Kalumbi. They fought there, and there Magadlela died and Mgoola took care of the chieftainship. Mgoola came with all the army to Ntumba and caught many Ntumba people. In the Ntumba country Mputa entered the chieftainship.

(*b*) '*Those from south of the Zambesi*'

In the northern kingdom two main groups were included in this category: those whose clan names showed Tsonga origin and those who showed Karanga origin. Bryant [1] wrote of the army under Zwangendaba hacking its way through Tsongaland almost by the same route as the army under Soshangane, who fought and defeated him on the headwaters of the Sabi river. To his Tsonga adherents Zwangendaba added a number from the Karanga country, many of whom, trained to fight by the Ngoni, became famous warriors in the Ngoni campaigns farther north. 619 173

The Ngoni under Ngwana with Nqaba and his army kept nearer to the coast, and fought their battle with Soshangane (whom they called Gaza in the text quoted) on the Busi river near Sofala. The two main groups of adherents whom they forced to join them were from the Ndau and Venda peoples, called collectively the Venda group by the Ngoni. Bryant [1] spoke of Nqaba's conquest of the Ndau people on the Busi river, which would indicate that the Venda leaders and their families were already part of the Ngoni army when the Ndau were added. Although, according to central Ngoni tradition, Ngwana's army with its followers zigzagged across the country between the Sabi river and the Zambesi, they do not appear to have collected adherents in any large numbers from the tribal areas through which they passed. This supposition is only based on internal evidence, that of the clan names recognized by the Ngoni as having come from south of the Zambesi. 174

(*c*) '*Those from the march*'

After crossing the Zambesi, the central Ngoni went by the Kirk Range into the western part of what is now the Ncheu district. Then they turned east, crossed the Shire river near Fort Johnston and went up the east side of the lake to the Livingstone mountains in the Songea district of Tanganyika where they fought with the northern Ngoni under the Gama clan. The clan descent names of followers acquired on this route included those from the Ntumba people on the Kirk Range whom they conquered on their first arrival in Nyasaland, and the Tengo people from Songea, some of whom were incorporated with 173 619

[1] op. cit. p. 461

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the
619 Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Luangwa valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(*d*) '*Those from this country*'

619 Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland
563 who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. These in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Yao origin.

101 Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition
128 of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi stock—that is categories (*a*) and (*b*) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would
[161] probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged; or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

101 The second conclusion is that even if the criterion is accepted that
563 the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambesi, the Ngoni kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (*a*), (*b*), (*c*)
184 and (*d*). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms
[172] of culture were found not only in groups (*a*) and (*b*), as would be expected, but often among families in group (*c*) who, through fighting in the Ngoni armies and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual pattern.[1]

174 [1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpeseni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their travels. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Maseko Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*.

11

CHAPTER II

THE NGONI KINGDOMS

In 1933, by the Native Authorities Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance, Mbelwa was recognized as Paramount of the northern Ngoni kingdom with six Subordinate Native Authorities under him, and his court was constituted the appeal court for their six courts. The same procedure was followed in the central kingdom for Paramount Gomani with six Subordinate Native Authorities, and his court as the appeal court for their courts. They were the only rulers in Nyasaland with S.N.A.[1] under them. Two other chiefs, Cikulamayembe of the Henga in Mzimba district and Kyungu of the Ngonde in North Nyasa district, had respectively four and five courts subordinate to them, but the chiefs owning these courts were not recognized as their subordinates. The Ngoni comment on these ordinances was 'Ha! Now they see what big chiefs we have. Only our chiefs are called *inkosi*.' 642 643 692

The northern kingdom was in Mzimba district, and Paramount Mbelwa's royal village was at the southern end of his kingdom. The central kingdom included the whole of Ncheu district with Paramount Gomani's royal village at the northern end. This kingdom had Portuguese territory on its western frontier, close to the royal village. When the Portuguese boundary was fixed in 1891, the Ngoni kingdom under the Maseko Paramount was cut in two and a section under a Maseko ruler became a separate kingdom under the Portuguese. There was constant trouble in the 1930's over this Portuguese frontier, for Gomani's Ngoni visited their relatives, grazed their cattle and hoed gardens on the Portuguese side; and from time to time claims by the Portuguese for rent for gardens and grazing lands and disputes about taxation, needed judicious handling in the District Commissioner's court. 631 648

The figures in Table II for Mzimba and Ncheu districts in 1926, 1931, and 1945 show the changes in the ethnic composition of the districts, some of which are difficult to account for. In Mzimba district the Henga under Cikulamayembe were included in the figures for the Tumbuka and hence the northern Ngoni kingdom did not include all the 156,208 in the district. In Ncheu, the total district population of 87,690 were all included in the central Ngoni kingdom, showing the mixed ethnic elements, among which the Ngoni, or those who were enumerated as Ngoni, had declined from 64,023 in 1926 to 15,242 in 1945. Between 1931 and 1945 the decrease in the number of Ngoni (31,066) was almost balanced by the increase in the number of Nyanja 162 563

[1] This abbreviation will be used henceforward in referring to Subordinate Native Authorities.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

162 563 (35,107). It is difficult not to assume that many Nyanja had formerly called themselves Ngoni.

Table II

	1926	1931	1945
Mzimba district			
Ngoni	25,484	24,627	44,948
Tumbuka	46,029	78,483	89,135
Cewa	14,041	2,411	21,891
Yao	20	—	—
Tonga	3,052	605	32
Nkonde	141	—	—
Others	334	156	202
Total	89,101	106,282	156,208
Ncheu district			
Ngoni	64,023	46,308	15,242
Cewa	11	4,372	2,815
Nyanja	334	25,393	60,400
Cikunda	360	940	1,336
Yao	203	1,064	3,267
Nguru, etc.	—	—	4,448
Others	13	278	182
Total	64,944	78,355	87,690

631 Since the two Ngoni kingdoms are the subject of this book and not the secession states, the position of the rulers of those states as Native Authorities and the circumstances of their secession from the two main groups will not be examined here. The three secession states in the north were under Chiefs Ciwere and Msakambewa in Dowa district and Jere in Kotakota district. The four connected formerly with the central Ngoni were under Chiefs Kacere and Kacindamoto in Dedza, Masula in Lilongwe and Vumbwe in Cholo.

484 [114] In the 1930's, when I was living sometimes in the northern kingdom, sometimes in the central, and for a time in the Ngoni state under Chief Jere, I was aware that the existence of the two kingdoms and of the seven secession states did not preclude a great deal of contact between the Ngoni of the different areas. The stream of travel in Nyasaland from south to north and from north to south along the one trunk road, brought Ngoni as visitors from one kingdom to the other, from the smaller states to both kingdoms, and from 'the Ngoni of the dispersion' living in towns to visit their relatives and friends in the Ngoni kingdoms and states. These visits might be social, to see parents or to marry 574 a wife; they might be for economic purposes, to invest in or sell cattle, to supervise cotton or tobacco marketing; or they might be for ritual purposes such as mourning. When I travelled in the central Ngoni 814 kingdom in 1936 with Y. M. Cibambo, the historian of the northern

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realize that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni eni eni*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names.

814 [186] 619 101

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.'[1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognized areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *alumuzana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *alumuzana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognized as *alumuzana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *alumuzana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognized court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *alumuzana* were recognized as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *alumuzana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

642 [643 631] 614 642 631

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements 647

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*. 1935, p. 54.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

647 in the political organization. Some of these officials were also members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but many were not. The officials served the Paramount in his court and his administration, and also the chiefs, and formed the lines of communication between them. This 647 created a network of relationships between the Paramount and the 631 chiefs at the top level, and between the chiefs and the village headmen under them at the lower level. From this network were excluded, in the northern kingdom, all the *alumuzana* and, in the central kingdom, all those *alumuzana* who were not chiefs. In the two kingdoms the *alumuzana* exercised unofficial control over a varying number of villages, and were inclined to assert their social superiority because they were excluded from official recognition.

The foundations of the political structure within which the ruling 571 aristocracy operated were a series of related institutions which will be 171 described and analysed later in the book, but which must be referred to 178 here, partly in order to explain the terminology used. The South-eastern Bantu, whose culture the Ngoni brought with them, had an institution in all important villages known as 'houses', which was a grouping of huts and of the wives owning them round the hut of one or more of the leading women. This institution, with its variations among the southern and northern Nguni people, was described by Mrs. Hoernlé in the chapter on 'Social Organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*.[1] The Ngoni institution of houses had developed from the basic pattern among the South-eastern Bantu into an independent form. In the first place it was only found in relation to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading men of the royal clan, and the *alumuzana*. It did not, as in South Africa, form the basic pattern of all [62] villages in the Ngoni kingdoms. Where, as in most villages owned by *alumuzana*, mixed ethnic groups lived together, the house system existed only for the head of the clan, his brothers and his successor. It was specifically an Ngoni institution in the cultural and social sense. In the second place, the terms 'right-hand' and 'left-hand' house, common among the South-eastern Bantu, were not used by the Ngoni in the 1930's. The two terms they used were the 'big house' and the '*gogo* house', and I propose to use these terms here. The principle behind the use of these terms was that the big house was the one from which the heir should come to succeed the Paramount, the chief, or the *mulumuzana*. The *gogo* house was the one which was responsible for maintaining tradition and performing ritual.

Another institution, closely related to that of the houses, was the 621 *lusungulu* and *gogo* villages. The Paramounts, the chiefs, and the leading 571 *alumuzana*, when they succeeded their father after his death, moved out of his village and made their own new village, or took their households

[1] Schapera, I. (ed.). *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*. Routledge, 1937, chap. IV.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and settled where another village already existed.[1] In both forms, this new settlement was called the *lusungulu* village, 'the one which goes in front'; and the village which was left was known as the *gogo* village. This use of the term *gogo* (literally 'grandparent') for house and village had a common basic connotation. It expressed the concept of being left behind to look after something, the *gogo* house being passed over for the heir to the Paramountcy or chieftainship but charged with ritual and ceremonial duties; and the *gogo* village being left behind to take care of the traditions and generally also of most of the widows of the deceased Paramount or chief. Each *lusungulu* village eventually divided on the death of its owner, part 'going forward' with the new successor, part remaining behind. The main groups in the village which went ahead or which remained were the houses connected with the new Paramount or chief or *mulumuzana* and those connected with his dead father. In the chapter on houses (Chapter III, Part III) this process will be examined in greater detail.

The third related institution was the provision for guarding the spirit of a dead Paramount or chief and those of some leading *alumuzana*. A senior woman was always guardian of such a spirit and in her hut were kept the ritual objects: spear, wooden dish, baskets, fire-stick, which were used in sacrifices to the ancestors. The guardianship of the spirit of a dead Paramount was always associated with the village which had been his *lusungulu*. His corpse was buried on the edge of the kraal containing the cattle of the house where he had grown up, and this village became the *gogo* village associated with him, where his spirit was guarded in a hut, probably though not necessarily belonging to one of his widows. The recognition of such a woman guardian was a matter for selection and appointment, and was the responsibility of the senior men of the *gogo* house in that village in consultation with the senior men of the *gogo* house in the dead man's father's village. The concept of guarding the spirits of important men, and the means by which such guardianship was practised, will be more fully discussed in Part IV in connexion with the ancestor cult.

THE NGONI KINGDOMS AND AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS

In the final section of this chapter we shall look at the Ngoni kingdoms in their relationship to other African kingdoms and states such as those described in *African Political Systems*.[2] A methodological problem arises here. In this study a number of references are made to the Ngoni kingdoms in pre-European times, especially in connexion

[1] This form of the institution was found in densely populated areas and the incoming households dominated the original ones.

[2] Fortes, M., & Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (ed.). *African Political Systems*. O.U.P., 1940 pp. 9–23.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 with the military organization and the Paramountcy. The main emphasis in the study is, however, on the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's, when the Paramount and the administrative organization under him were recognized by the Nyasaland government. Though certain elements in 642 the kingdoms, as for example the position and authority of the *alumu-* 648 *zana*, were not recognized by the ordinance, the supreme authority of the Paramounts and the position of their appeal courts received additional support from the colonial officials, from the financial basis of the administration, and from the many new responsibilities of the Paramount for his people illustrated by the bye-laws made and the welfare measures carried out.

121 It is the Ngoni kingdoms as they functioned in the 1930's which will be compared with other African political systems, bearing in mind all the time that behind the Ngoni kingdoms lay the authority and power of the colonial government. The comparison will be made with the general characteristics of what were called by the editors of *African Political Systems*, in their introductory essay, 'Group A systems', and the references will be to the criteria and concepts in that introduction.

The main characteristics cited of the Group A systems were all to be [642] found in the Ngoni kingdoms: centralized authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions. These will be the chief material in Part II of this book on the Ngoni political system. In *African Political Systems* the editors stated that all the societies described in the book which were in the category of Group A systems were 'an amalgam of different peoples, each aware of its unique origin and history, and all except the Zulu and Bemba are still today culturally heterogenous'. Such a definition was appropriate for the Ngoni kingdoms, where [563] political authority was wielded over several different peoples, as the ethnic grouping in the 1945 census showed, and where there was cultural heterogeneity among the different peoples. This second characteristic will be examined more fully in Chapter III of this section, dealing with Ngoni culture. To the factor of diversity within the Ngoni 121 kingdoms should be added two other points made by the editors 571 towards the end of their introduction where they said: 'Community of language and culture does not necessarily give rise to political unity, any more than linguistic and cultural dissimilarity prevents political unity.' In the next chapter we shall be discussing the relation of language and culture among the Ngoni, and between them and other Nyasaland peoples. The second point in the essay which is also applicable to the Ngoni kingdoms and their neighbours was stated in these terms: 'The overlapping and interlocking of societies is due to the fact that where political relations end is not the point at which all social relations cease.' The relevance of this statement to the Ngoni in Nyasaland has already been mentioned in connexion with the visiting which goes on between individuals from the Ngoni kingdoms and states. It

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

was still more clearly demonstrated by the attitude of the Ngoni 'of the dispersion', who returned for visits, some frequently and others at varying intervals, to their former homes though they were no longer in a political sense subjects of the Ngoni Paramount. 121 571

In the Group A systems, not only is the Paramount the political head of a culturally and ethnically heterogeneous state, but he is also a territorial ruler, and everyone living within the boundaries of his state is his subject. This was peculiarly a characteristic of the so-called conquest states, when effective administrative control was established within recognized boundaries after the conquest or surrender of neighbouring peoples. In the chapter on the military organization of the Ngoni, it will be seen how the nature of the military tenure of *alumuzana*, and the relation of groups of conquered villages known as *amilaga* to the central villages of the Paramount and *alumuzana*, emphasized the limits within which Ngoni authority was effective. One of the often repeated grievances of the older Ngoni was that the Europeans 'arrived too soon', before the Ngoni were able to establish effective authority over the whole country. 121 643 642

Two further points emerge in the introductory essay to *African Political Systems* which relate to the balance of forces within the Group A type of state and to the position of the Paramount. Both these points will be illustrated in Part II. The first concerns the relationship of the subordinate chiefs (called 'local chiefs' in the essay) to the central authority. They represented the central authority in the areas where they ruled, and they represented the people under them and their needs to the central authority. When the older Ngoni were talking about the Paramount in pre-European days, much emphasis was laid on his control of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, and on the obligation they felt to visit the Paramount in his village frequently, in order that they might appear to be carrying out his orders and not usurping undue authority. The older Ngoni also laid stress on the accessibility of the Paramount to all his people, provided—and it was an important proviso—that a man came to him with an intermediary, either his headman or his *mulumuzana*.

The final point of comparison between Group A systems and the Ngoni kingdoms is the mystical values bound up with kingship. This will be discussed in the chapter on the Paramount (Chapter II, Part II) and it is related also to the ancestor cult. The Ngoni Paramounts were more than ruling monarchs; they were the symbol of the unity of their state; in pre-European days the Paramount was the head of the army; and the ritual at the accession and at the death of a Paramount was related to the fertility of the land and the prosperity of the people. 121 643 829

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CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and *ahumuzana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

563 621 120 [184 121] 563

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *mlobokazi*. A strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was supported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

583 593 [586] 591 [592]

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

A widespread variant

on virilocal residence will be discussed later and illustrated in Chapter IV of Part III. 591

(b) *Village pattern*

There was a traditional pattern of Ngoni village organization, which consisted in the siting of the huts in the village and the corresponding social groups formed in the different sections. Informants made it clear that when the Ngoni first settled in the areas where the two kingdoms now exist, the royal villages and the chiefs' villages were very large. Segmentation of these large villages, not only by the *lusungulu* 'going out' as already described, but also by sections of the village breaking off, began before the Europeans came and continued after their arrival. In the 1930's the traditional pattern was sometimes altered by a desire to build a 'model village' laid out in lines instead of in a horse-shoe curve round the kraal. Even in some of these model villages the grouping of huts, though no longer in a series of circles, indicated the house affiliation of their owners and their relationship to the head of the village. 621

The traditional ground-plan of an Ngoni village was based on the main kraal which occupied the centre. The gate of the kraal was on the open end of the horse-shoe formation, and the most important hut, the *indlunkulu*, was at the top of the kraal. On either side of the *indlunkulu* were grouped the huts belonging to the houses associated with the wives of the owner of the village. Behind the *indlunkulu* were the huts of his married sons and those of his brothers who chose to live with him, and this group of huts, known as *cigodlo*, spread round behind the main huts of the owners of houses. Behind each house-group of huts were the huts of the *induna* associated with the house; in large villages he often had a kraal and reproduced a similar small village plan in his own circle of huts. On the wings of the village, curving towards the gate of the kraal and called by the Ngoni 'the horns of the village', were the less important families in the village. The general principle of the village plan in terms of social status and the siting of huts was that the nearer huts were to the *indlunkulu* the higher was the prestige of their owner. The following very much simplified plan of an Ngoni village illustrates the principle of siting the huts in relation to social grouping, as it was when a new *lusungulu* village was set up. In this plan the *indlunkulu* hut was owned by the mother of the owner of the village, one of his father's widows who moved out with him. When she died the big wife on her right might move into the actual *indlunkulu* hut, or stay in her own hut while another widow of her father-in-law entered the *indlunkulu*. There was no invariable rule for this type of succession, but there were only these two possible alternatives. Reference should be made here to one other hut site—that of the *laweni* or boys' dormitory. It was usually sited behind either the big house or the *gogo* house, far enough behind [417] [554]

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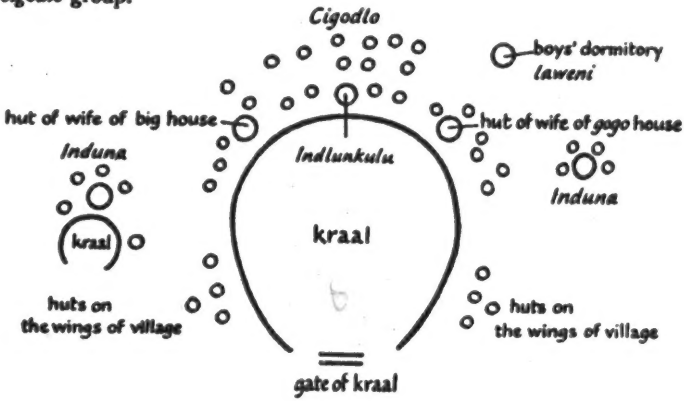
FR5 Ngoni FR5

621 the main circle round the kraal to emphasize its connexion with the *cigodlo* group.



621 The group referred to as 'a house' has already been defined in its
571 relation to the Paramount and his *lusungulu* village, and it will be illustrated and examined further in Chapter III of Part III. As an Ngoni institution the big house was an integral factor in the succession to high office, and the *gogo* house played an essential role in ceremonial and ritual life. Houses were also one of the most important components in village grouping. Men, women and children regarded themselves as associated with a house in one of three ways. They were related to it by descent or by marriage; or they were members of the family of the *induna* who looked after its affairs; or they served the house as servants or labourers, and were possibly the descendants of captives caught in war and assigned to that house. Thus it often happened that the people living on the wings of the village had some relationship to the house on the side of the kraal where their huts were sited. There were many Ngoni villages where all the inhabitants were said to belong to one of the two or three or more houses, even though the majority of the inhabitants had no kinship or official relationship with a house.

614 The term 'clan' or 'clan descent group' has been used already many times and some explanation and definition is needed as a guide to its use in Part II before it is discussed further in Chapter II of Part III. The Ngoni considered that the clan of a person was of great importance for several reasons. The use of the clan descent name was the normal mode
[576] of address between all adults. The Ngoni said they could not speak to any stranger until they knew his clan name, and they used it in all social intercourse, except when addressing the Paramount. Exogamy was strict for people with the same clan name, and sexual relations between such
[635] individuals was regarded as incest.

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In the 1930's, in the villages of the *ahamuzana*, individuals with the same clan name formed patrilineal groups of an extended family type. The original *ahamuzana* were the leaders of groups of persons bearing their clan descent name, who crossed the Zambesi under Zwangendaba or Mputa. In Part II we shall see how these *ahamuzana* were settled in the Ngoni kingdoms round the royal villages, with the result that a group of villages of mixed ethnic origin came to be associated with the village regarded as the head village of a clan. Reference is made from time to time in this study to clan heads, and to the head villages of certain clans. There was no head of a Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan who was not regarded as a *mahamuzana*. On the ground that his ancestor crossed the Zambesi with his wives and followers, the head of such a clan was always given that title. In addition to the head village of a *mahamuzana* there were a number of other villages connected with the clan, created partly by the working of the *husungula* system of village segmentation, and partly by other sections of the larger villages moving off to make new gardens. The association of a number of villages owned by individuals with the same descent name was due to the original settlement of the *ahamuzana* who were given land at varying distances from the royal village. When the Ngoni spoke of 'clan areas' this was the connotation they gave to the term. Village censuses showed that small family groups bearing the same descent name were scattered widely over a number of villages in several of the chiefs' areas. There was, however, in connexion with each clan an area of concentration round the head village where a number of families and individuals with that descent name were living. These were sometimes referred to as clan areas, using the name of the clan with the prefix *ma*, meaning the people of that clan, in central Ngoniland, and with the prefix *u*, meaning the land of the clan, in the northern kingdom.

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(c) *The ritual pattern*

In the rest of this study there will be descriptions and analyses of Ngoni marriage and funeral rites, of the puberty rites carried out for each boy and girl, but not in groups in initiation schools, and of the rituals associated with the ownership of cattle and with the ancestor cult. The marriage and funeral rites have South-eastern Bantu affinities, and so has the ritual associated with cattle-keeping and the ancestor cult. The northern Ngoni had a tradition that circumcision was practised among them when they left Natal, and that it was given up while they were in Tanganyika. Giving the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) to the men who were allowed to leave the regiments and settle as married men in civilian life was another ritual of southern origin which the Ngoni gave up soon after the kingdoms were established in Nyasaland.[1] The

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[1] The early Europeans in Nyasaland reported that head-rings were worn by all the senior Ngoni men.

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183 178 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 535 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 301 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well preserved by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in 126 the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom 192 were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used 197 in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to [194] make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

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leave after meeting, withdrawing after a case in court, and initiating or concluding many other formal or less formal occasions. Children were taught to use the correct expressions and rebuked if they made a mistake, and it was one of the requirements in Ngoni families that a uniform standard of verbal politeness should accompany correct behaviour in posture.

CULTURAL AFFINITIES AND DIFFERENCES

N M 121 122

The anthropologist working in Nyasaland is aware of the problems inherent in any attempt to isolate cultural features within any of the larger ethnic groups found there. There were no ethnographic field studies published of any of the other ethnic groups when I was working among the Ngoni. Mary Tew, in *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*,[1] referred to scattered sources published before 1939, to which I had access; and from time to time Cewa informants wrote accounts of particular social institutions or ritual, from which I was able to make certain comparisons with Ngoni ritual and institutions. Some of the earlier accounts, such as that by Hodgson on the Cewa and Ngoni in the Dowa district,[2] assumed that all the cultural changes and 'borrowings' had been by the Ngoni from their Cewa neighbours, whereas I found in that area in 1939 Cewa villages where Ngoni cultural elements had been adopted.

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Ngoni cultural affinities with South-eastern Bantu	*Local tribal differences*	
Paramount and subordinate chiefs	Chiefs; no central authority except in Henga and Ngonde	
Patrilineal descent Virilocal residence Marriage by *lobola*	Cewa and southern Tumbuka	Matrilineal descent, uxorilocal residence, marriage witnesses
	Henga	Patrilineal descent and virilocal residence
Clan exogamy „ hierarchy Houses Age sets	Cewa	No clan exogamy „ „ hierarchy *Mbumba* group Girls' initiation schools
Cattle complex Ancestor cult associated with cattle	Tumbuka Cewa in Dedza district	Formerly cattle-owners but no terminology left and no association with ancestor cult
Burial customs: in skin near kraal	Cewa and Tumbuka	Graves outside village; buried in a mat

[1] Tew, M., op. cit.

[2] Hodgson, A. G. O. 'Notes on the Achewa and Angoni of Dowa District, Nyasaland.' *J. Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1933, pp. 126–64.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

171 The distinctiveness of Ngoni institutions, so often emphasized by the older men and by the early travellers in Nyasaland, was due to cultural affinities with the South-eastern Bantu. The attached table sets out those social and cultural elements in the Ngoni kingdoms which were most distinct from parallel features among the neighbouring peoples, and which had obvious affinity with South-eastern Bantu cultures. The main Ngoni cultural elements have already been referred to in this chapter and will be further discussed in the rest of this study. The corresponding elements among the local peoples are based partly on the [127] earlier sources quoted by Tew and partly on local informants and my 114 own observations. In collecting information about clans, the *mbumba* group consisting of a man with his sisters' children, and the girls' initiation schools, I had no direct contacts with any except Cewa sources.

Variations in cultural conformity among the Ngoni

178 In the Ngoni kingdoms among families with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names there was considerable variation in the degree to 184 which they maintained Ngoni institutions and practised Ngoni cultural forms. The anthropologist was constantly aware that the time element was an important factor in the consolidation of Ngoni practices and in the attitudes developed towards Ngoni culture among the individuals in the different generations. The Ngoni in both kingdoms spoke of the 'older generations' (*mibadwo wa kale*), 'the middle generations' (*mibadwo wa mphati*), and 'the present generation' (*mibadwo wa tsopano*). The first had grown to adulthood before the Europeans came, and were the older senior men and women in the 1930's; the second had been affected by [172] European missionaries, traders, and officials while they were young men and women; the third had never known anything but European contacts and many had grown up in European schools. The senior Ngoni of the [18] older generation often expressed the sentiment: *zatha zonse tsopano* (everything is finished now). They included in that saying the regrets of the older Ngoni for their former independence, and their resentment at the domination of European rule and European culture. It is idle to 177 speculate what cultural changes might have taken place in the Ngoni 178 kingdoms if European influence had been postponed another twenty to thirty years. Nevertheless it is a vital factor in assessing Ngoni culture that the kingdoms had barely twenty years of independent existence before the Europeans began to penetrate Nyasaland. The older Ngoni [161] looked back on their former independent existence as a golden age in which they were spreading Ngoni customs and culture as well as exercising political supremacy. It is difficult to believe that this was wholly true, in view of the extensive cultural interchange going on in the country as a whole. It is, however, possible that wider acceptance of Ngoni cultural elements was prevented by the advent of the Europeans, in so far as cultural institutions and political dominance were closely

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associated. When warfare ceased the Ngoni could no longer force subject peoples to accept their rule and their cultural institutions, and they had to acquiesce in considerable cultural heterogeneity within their kingdoms, which, according to Ngoni informants, would not have been allowed in pre-European days. The illustrations they gave were in terms of the families living 'on the horns of the village', in many cases the families of captives taken in war. Formerly, they said, those families would have been made to marry with *lobola*, to have their ears pierced in Ngoni fashion, to serve in the army, to be associated with one of the house-groups and serve them in the huts or in the gardens. When Ngoni political power declined, and when large villages broke up, some of these groups formed their own villages and reverted to their former practices of matrilineal descent and uxorilocal residence, and of girls' initiation ceremonies. 177 178

In the northern kingdom one section of the peoples under Hengs leadership had adopted a patrilineal system before the Ngoni came. The effect of the Ngoni conquest was to strengthen these practices in this northern section, adding marriage by *lobola*, and to extend them to the southern Tumbuka whose kinship and marriage practices were like those of the Cewa who were their neighbours.[1] In the central kingdom, patrilineal descent, marriage by *lobola* and virilocal residence were only practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and they had introduced variations in virilocal residence which will be discussed in Chapter IV, Part III. Within the true Ngoni families in both kingdoms the senior men and women in the 1930's were aware that cultural conformity with Ngoni practices was not as strict as it had been in their parents' days. They spoke of those Ngoni families who were non-conforming as 'people who spoil the land'. [184]

On the other hand, the adoption of Ngoni customs by non-Ngoni in the Ngoni kingdoms, that is by families with descent names from cis-Zambesi and local clans, continued to take place after European rule began. I found several instances of this adoption in the central kingdom, and many of them were related to the acquisition of cattle by former non-Ngoni families. It was chiefly the virilocal form of residence and patrilineal descent which were taken over with *lobola* marriage. When describing the adoption of such Ngoni practices, informants always said it was *monga cingoni* (like the Ngoni). Those who belonged to the Ngoni kingdoms and had largely adopted Ngoni culture expressed strong sentiments of attachment to it; this was particularly true of town-dwellers who had come from the Ngoni kingdoms but were not members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans. Though they adopted many external forms of European culture in dress, houses and food, the consciousness of their association with Ngoni culture and the Ngoni kingdoms was expressed in strongly emotional terms. [186]

[1] Tew, M. op. cit. pp. 107, 109.

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PART II

THE NGONI POLITICAL SYSTEM

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CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

After the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

Ngoni Warfare in Old Days

"To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligubo* dance along with others.

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Herding as preparation for war

Preparation for war began in youth. When boys were about ten or twelve they were sent to herd goats or calves; when they were older they herded the cattle. At this time the boys were in the bush with their elders who were often haughty and fierce. The older herders taught the boys how to fight and how to defend themselves. They taught them to fight with twigs and sticks; the older herders fought with *izinduku* (knobkerries) and *izinkhonjo* (wooden swords). They were not allowed to fight with real spears though some had them. The older herders stirred up the hearts of the younger to fight and taught them to strike each other with knobkerries and to use little shields. If the herders of one village met the herders of another, the bulls were teased till they fought, and the little herders also. The small herders were not allowed to say anything about the herding to their parents. The older herders also loved to fight as in war with those of other villages. At such times the older men and even the elders came out from the village to see the battle and to stir up the hearts of the boys. If the herders of one village ran away they were laughed at, but the winners were greatly praised.

At the time when the cattle ate the refuse in the maize-gardens, after harvest, fighting most often broke out. Some of the boys provoked their neighbours to go and drive the cattle into the maize-fields of another village deliberately. The custom was that cattle might eat in the maize-gardens of their own village and the boys ought to ask if they may go into the fields of others. The herders did this to annoy the other herders and to start a fight. Often a great struggle was the result and the young men of the village who had outgrown herding joined in the fight to help the youngsters of their village. But they did it sensibly, none caused a wound with a spear, for anyone who did that was punished by law.

So the boys grew accustomed to the first steps in fighting which would help them later in war. Those who knew how to protect themselves with a knobkerry and small shield had no scars on their heads, but there were many long ago who had scars from fighting in the herding time. Children of the chief were in the same predicament—if they could not defend themselves they were beaten by their herding companions and possibly got their heads broken. The flowing of blood was not considered very serious, only if one did it in a stealthy way then he had to pay compensation. In this way the boys grew up with stout hearts and loved fighting.

Another thing which excited the boys was the custom of whistling. The boys were very expert and quick in expressing changes of mood in whistling. This was done so that the cattle would go carefully or quickly, but also when they were fighting the herders loved to whistle and even the older men in war did so also. The whistling stirred up the hearts of those who were thinking of running away. There were many ways of whistling and some were very good at it.

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Enlistment

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When the young men reached the age of 21–26 they left off herding. Sometimes it was their fathers who stopped them, sometimes they themselves wished to stay at home. They took their shields (*amahawu*) and

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their spears and gathered together; they went to the kraal and began to dance the *ligubo* war dance. Sometimes they set themselves in order as though they were out on a raid; they came out at the right middle of the kraal and went *pa lisango*, toward the gate, singing, marching, and shaking their shields and spears. Sometimes they retreated as though running from the enemy, then turned about as though running to meet the enemy again. This was done to show how they could fight and defend themselves from the enemy. It showed that the boys were now young men and of the warrior class, and they were asking to be admitted to the status of grown men. If the old men agreed that their prayer should be granted they were formed into a new regiment (*libandla*) and were given a senior to lead and govern them. 539 702 [884]

The Army

All the war companies were under the Paramount. He had the power to call the whole army to go out against enemies. But all big villages and villages of men of reputation had their own companies, like Zulu Gama, Njerenjere Sibande and many others. These companies were under the war *induna* of the Paramount and when they were called they came quickly to the village of the Paramount which was the central meeting place. A *libandla* (company) was divided into *mabuto* (sections) sometimes of 100 or more. For each section there was an *induna* who led it in war, judged all disputes, and spoke for it to the war *induna*. The war *induna* was the eye of the Paramount in all that pertained to war. 539 704 [643]

The army was divided into companies corresponding to the districts or chiefs' villages and all the company leaders were under the war *induna*. All the parts of the army were divided in lesser parts in accordance with the generation of the young men, *amajaha*, and the older men, *amadoda*.

Mobilization

If desired the Paramount had power to send a summons through the whole country that his army should mobilize in his village in order that he might see it. The lesser chiefs had the same power for their districts. The man who delivered the summons went into the kraal and shouted that the Paramount wished the army to gather at the central meeting place. The message was spread everywhere. Then all the sections in the villages and in the districts of the lesser chiefs and clan heads hastened to come at the appointed time. The Paramount prepared cattle to be killed for the army. As the sections were marching in they sang the songs called *imihubo*. Section by section they chose their *muhubo* for arriving and entering the kraal and each section drew up by itself. An open space was left between the sections so that they might be known. 539 726

When they had all gathered in their places the herald rose and shouted '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenhosi, uti, Ayigube*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, let them dance.' This was to tell the sections to begin the war-dance. Each section got up with one heart and made a wide circle and began to dance. One of them began a song which he remembered on the spur of the moment from the *ligubo* and led off, the whole section took it up waving their shields and thrusting with their spears now right now left according to their step and each foot stamping the ground. [535]

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539 726 714 301 At the dance the warriors wore their full war-dress. Those who had the head-ring wore a little bunch of black feathers sewn together and attached to a skin and looking like a lion's mane, which came out from under the head-ring on the neck, and they tied a strip of other skin over their eyes. Those who had not the head-ring had their heads completely covered and at the side of their face they put rosettes of feather ends so that the head-dress should not hide their sight. The head-dress was of birds' black feathers, especially ravens; they took out the quills so that they were soft and they sewed them together on cowhide, the man's head resting on the skin. On the body and arms they wore a white skin of goat-hair, or a white belt with long hair, and twisted straps of skin reaching to the knee at the loins. The belts were made from the skins of white goats which had long hair and they stitched them. Round the loins they had whole skins of kids both front and back. Some tied *fainkondo*, hides made to look like a tail, at the back. In their ears they had *inicaso*, earrings of ivory, or sometimes of bone or wood. Truly they looked as terrifying as wild beasts when they stood up. So they ornamented themselves. The oldest of the men stuck a tail feather of a crane in the skin strip above the eyes.

539 726 535 When the dance had begun the women rose to help the men. The Paramount's wives and wives of the men of standing wore the claws of lion and leopard on the top of their hair combed up on the crown and round the neck along with other beads. Ordinary women also wore beads on their heads and necks. All looked very well. Both men and women sang the dance songs and danced. The men spread out in a circle round the edge of the space; the women faced the men at a distance or perhaps they put them in the middle of the ring. All sang, the women commencing, the men joining in or responding. The women had little sticks or reeds in their hands shooting high up. Others came forward and went into the middle of the circle or half circle, and went singing and dancing and shaking their sticks and thrusting out their necks.

539 726 When the dance was over the herald told the army to scatter to their villages until the provisions and snuff had been prepared, and on such and such a day they were to gather again in the Paramount's village. On the day of the gathering of the army they brought their dress and food, the sections dressing as they were in the kraal. The herald called again, '*Uyeqwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayihete*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, fall in.' Then all the sections stood up, each by itself but now joined together in close order, shields and spears raised above them. Then the chief *induna* or someone else who had been chosen told them the enemy stockade which it was proposed to attack, and the plan of campaign. When the sections had heard, they began to march out of the kraal one by one.

The whole day the sections had been kept in the kraal, no one was allowed to go to a house and say good-bye. Those outside were not allowed to greet the warriors inside. Children were kept out of the way, lest they should greet their fathers as they went out to war. If a man was greeted as he went out to war, the fear was that he would not come back but would die there.

When the army went out in the evening near sunset it slept near the

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village in grass-shelters opposite the kraal gate, and no one was allowed to go to a house or to be with his wife. They said that if a man broke this law the army would be unlucky. Even the Paramount if he still went with the army slept there outside. If the Paramount left for the war, his oldest *induna* left his own village and went to the Paramount's and stayed there till the army came back. In the royal village there was continence and all the people were ordered to control themselves in the villages, until the army left.

When the army went out the old men accompanied it, but after they had spoken words of warning they came back to the village. The chief point in it all was that the young men should have courage, and should help each other if one is wounded or there is any other difficulty, and should obey the leaders. They warned the leaders too to begin the fighting wisely and not on a bad or treacherous place. If a leader did that sort of thing and many were killed a case was brought against him. When the army went out two sections were detached to guard the village. These stayed at home along with the companies of old men. They 'kept the tribe', the Paramount and the old people and the stock. [887]

The approach and attack

When the army went out it marched very slowly, and halts for the night were at short intervals. All the sections kept together as ordered by the war *induna*. In all the sections there were scouts to show the way for the army. In each section one or perhaps two were chosen and were put together to walk ahead and look carefully, and come and report any news, especially when they were in enemy country. When the army rested, the scouts went forward to see if there was any danger near. When the army slept in grass-shelters, one or two sections were sent to guard against danger both in front and rear. The army had provision carriers, that is, those who carried food and the coverings of the old men. These were boys and girls, sometimes women from their houses. These were not sent by the Paramount but each household chose its young people to carry the food. The section of the food carriers had another section to protect them when the enemy were attacked or when they went to meet enemies. [724]

When the army was near the enemy stockade the leader ordered them to sit down and rest before they attacked. At such a time the warriors snuffed or smoked hemp. This hemp-smoking was preferred because it maddened the warriors and gave them hearts without fear in facing the enemy. In the enemy stockade the drums would be beating to show that their enemies were angry, but the army of the Ngoni sat and rested as though there were no enemy. [726]

When the army had rested, the war *induna* and the other *izinduna*, or the leader of this army (for all the armies that went out were put under one man of whom they said, the owner of this army is so and so) scouted to see the difficulties of the stockade and to choose a good place for attack.

When it had been carefully chosen and the *izinduna* had agreed together how the attack should begin, then the leader roused the army and began to dance his own praise-dance. The army responded to him. After

539 726 he had danced before all the sections he began to call '*Uyezwa, uti, Aiyime ngito*', 'Do you hear? Stand to arms.' Immediately section by section got up and rushed forward with noise and whistling deafening the ears. The warriors stood in crowds near the stockade and almost surrounding it. When the army was small, they stood in the shape of a young crescent moon. While they did so, they were blowing their horns and whistling to drown the noise in the stockade.

Very soon the message was heard: '*Utsho njalo yena, uti, Asiqwebane*', 'Thus it is said, let the bulls fight.' On these words the warriors ran at the stockade with one heart and a noise like wind and the country was filled with the tread of their feet. For a short time there would sometimes be silence, then a shout would be heard from a section: '*Ngingu pakati: kuti loko*', 'I am inside: I of such and such a village.' The man who was first in the stockade would name his village. Then there would be heard, '*Nginawe, nmakwetu*', 'I am with you, comrade.' All the *izinduna* and warriors fought in their own sections but once the army was inside they began to ask for the name of the first man in and those who had been near gave the name of the heroes. So each *induna* knew all about what had happened in his own section before he met the war *induna*, and when the latter reported to the Paramount at home he could tell everything.

Return from war

539 727 Long ago all that was found in the village or stockade (goats, sheep and cattle) belonged of right to the man who had entered first. That was easy when they sent only one company to the attack. All the other things belonged to the finder. Afterwards when all the warriors went to the attack together, it was difficult to distinguish who had got in first and so the spoils went to the man who reached them first. The Paramount had [643] his portion of everything taken. Outside the stockade those who had taken cattle put aside two or three which they said were *amahloma ankosi*, the first taste to the Paramount.

On the return all who had dipped their spears in the blood of their enemies carried what the killed had been wearing and their weapons or bows. If a man had killed a woman he wore her things (that is her ornaments, bark-cloth, etc.). These things were done to fulfil a taboo. When [783] the end of the time of purification came, all those things that were worthless were thrown away or burned, but the beautiful things were kept. Only the very old people wore the clothes of the killed.

When the army was on the way home it looked for bones of animals and burned them and ground them fine like flour, and also made charcoal dust. On the day of arrival some flour was kneaded and bone dust and the charcoal dust each by itself. They painted themselves on the face and on the body. This custom was to show those who had speared an enemy in the fight.

When the army was near their own country the war *induna* chose some messengers to go and give the news of the fighting and the names of those who had been killed. These messengers went to the important *izinduna*, and from them the news went quickly to the Paramount, headmen, and elders. The women were not told quietly; even if a man knew that his son

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had been killed it was not permitted to show his grief before the army had returned and mobilised in the kraal.

When the sections marched back to the village the first sections to go out to war came last and the one that had been last now led the way. The army never entered the Paramount's village in the afternoon but in the morning or before midday. They did this because it took a long time to tell all the news of the war, so if the army arrived near the village in the afternoon they slept in grass-shelters outside.

When the army was ready to enter, the sections were set in order, each one told off to follow another and each one chose its own song for the entry. When they sang the warriors covered their heads with their shields, with their spears in the middle of the shields. While they were singing one warrior of the section would jump out in front and dance his own praise-dance and the others let him; when he had fallen into the ranks again, they took up the section-song. The songs sung at the entry to the kraal were called *imihubo*. These were different from *ligubo* for they were sung by mouth only, whereas a *ligubo* was sung with stamping of the feet. [533]

When the warriors marched on the cattle track there was heard a confused noise of singing and shouting praises. All the warriors marched very slowly as they sang, section by section but crowding together. When they came close to the gateway they stood and waited to let those who had not blooded their spears have their dance out, because once inside only the 'killers' might dance before the Paramount and the headmen. When they stood they were as though the kraal were built of men but they left a space in the middle for the Paramount and headmen to sit and watch. For a little time the warriors danced their own praise-dances and these were chiefly those whose bravery was well known.

After these had danced a little there was a shout for silence, and all kept silent waiting for the words of the war *induna*. He came out from the throng and began to dance while all the warriors responded to his war-cry or praise-names. After he had finished he began to tell the story. He began by saying that in such and such a section, so and so had been first to enter the stockade, or to throw a spear first which killed a man inside. In all the sections he went over those whose names had been taken by the *izinduna*; if he forgot anything or the name of a 'killer' he went and asked the *induna* of the section to help him. Whenever he mentioned a name, the warrior jumped forward and danced so as to be known to the Paramount and all the men. Then the Paramount and the headmen chose one of themselves to reply and thank the army; sometimes it was the chief *induna*. Before he began he also danced a little, then spoke praising or blaming. After he had finished he danced again and sat down among his peers. This the Ngoni called *ukudumisela impi*, thanking in respect for the army.

Demobilization and purification

When all was finished in the kraal the warriors scattered and went to their villages to take off all their war equipment and to put their shields on the *mpalane*, the resting place or bedstead of shields. Then they sat down by their big house and were greeted by their wives, parents, children and friends. The custom was the same as that on the birth of a child, the

539 the salutation being '*Amehlo amhlope*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Buyani*', 'Return',
727 along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebo*' also with the clan name.
[576] This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Echigodhlweni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amakanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[824] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Po*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[834] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Po*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of heroes

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
703 then they were called again together to dance the *ligubo*. On that day bulls
[862] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the hero of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the heroes of the sections
[237] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amakanda* of the *alumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were [703] allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

701 allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.[1] Since he also had the
643 sole right of forming a new regiment of young men and giving it a name,
702 he controlled the intake to the army as well as the discharge of seasoned warriors.

The big war *induna* served directly under the Paramount. Associated
701 with him were other subordinate war leaders or *izinduna*, one of whom was always at the head of each regiment. Considerable emphasis was laid by Cibambo and other Ngoni informants on the essentially military character, in pre-European days, of the office and function of the *izinduna*, who were officials serving the whole kingdom. We shall see in Chapters III, IV and V how the term *induna* was also used for civil
[647] officials at the royal village and in the courts, as well as for the men in charge of sections of a village and of houses.

The account of the mobilization of the army shows that the Ngoni
701 had changed the system of military barracks concentrated about the
171 capital, described by Gluckman as typical of the Zulu military organization and by Kuper for the Swazi. Gluckman said that the chiefs assembled their people in territorial, not age, divisions, and that the age regiments belonged to the king alone and lived in or near his capital.[2] In pre-European days the Ngoni, according to Cibambo and to other informants, had in their armies territorial divisions as well as age regiments, and there was no concentration of young warriors by age regiments round the Paramount's village.[3]

When a summons to war went forth, the warriors in the territory of
726 each chief or *mulumuzana* assembled at his head village as a *libandla*.
704 This included the warriors from the outlying villages and from the head
561 village. Cibambo's use of the term *libandla* emphasized that it was a territorial unit, divided into *mabuto* (which he called sections) on the basis of age.

When each *libandla* arrived at the Paramount's village ready for warfare, the different age groups within it joined up with their parallel age groups from other *mabandla* to form regiments. The Ngoni term for these national regiments was *mabuto*, the same term as that used for the age divisions of the *mabandla*. Old men who had been warriors in their youth expressed to me many times their immense pride in their own
[703] *libuto*, and it had for them something of the tradition and prestige of a famous school. They would recite the names of other *mabuto*, beginning with their own as the most recent, and going backwards through ten or more regimental names to those who had crossed the Zambesi with

703 [1] Cibambo in the text spoke of warriors wearing the head-ring. The usual practice, according to informants, was to give the head-ring at the end of service in the army. Cibambo may have been referring to former warriors with a head-ring putting on war-dress for a ceremony.

[2] Gluckman, M. 'The Kingdom of the Zulu', in *African Political Systems*, 1940, p. 31.

[3] One example of a concentration of young men was reported at the village of the Queen Mother in the central kingdom in 1898 in *The Central African Times*, see Memorandum XVI, International African Institute, 1938, p. 18.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Zwangendaba or Mputa. Some informants showed that there was not always agreement about the use of the terms *mabandla* and *mabuto* when relating stories of the past, and the connotation of age regiment was sometimes given to *mabandla*. Cibambo and the other Ngoni historians who used the Ngoni language habitually were, however, quite clear about the differentiation between the two terms, one being territorial and the other denoting an age group. This use of the term *libuto* was confirmed by Dr. Kuper in her account of Swazi military organization.[1] 726 704 561

The organization of Ngoni warfare included the use of divining and of medicines to ensure success in war, and the summoning of the men charged to carry out these functions. In both Ngoni kingdoms there were men alive at the time of my visits who knew the medicines for war and had performed the functions of a 'war-medicine doctor'. According to these informants there was no sharp division between the functions of the diviner and the 'doctor' in relation to their services to the kingdom and to the army. There were individuals who had acted in both capacities. The diviner's task was to prophesy about probable success in war and about attacks from the enemy. He might, and sometimes did, combine this with 'doctoring' the army. 708 791

The preparation and administering of medicines to strengthen the army were discussed by informants in terms of two main types of medicine and a third which was less often referred to. The two main types were *intonga* and *intelezi* and the third one *inkhenza*. In the northern kingdom Mopo Jere, who had been a 'war doctor' and was the son of a former famous 'war doctor', insisted that the term *intonga* could be used in several different ways: for medicines made of roots; for a rod or stick (*nduku*) which was medicated; and occasionally for the 'doctor' who used these objects. He also emphasized that each chief or *nduna-muzana* had his own *intonga* and performed ceremonies for his own warriors before they left his kraal for that of the Paramount, where they went through another ceremony of having medicines administered to them before going on the campaign. 726 789

Formerly the *intonga*, that is, the stick or rod, was treated with the root of a shrub ground up and mixed with water. A beast was then killed, the Paramount ate the meat in the kraal with his senior men, and the skin was made into a bag in which the medicated *intonga* was placed. This skin bag containing the *intonga* was carried in front of the army when it was on the march. It could only be carried and handled when with the army by boys who had not yet reached puberty. The *intonga* in its bag was pointed at the enemy, as the army drew near, to make his warriors tremble and feel powerless and take to their heels. Its potency to make men powerless was so strong that no man from the Ngoni army dared walk in front of it, lest he too should lose all his strength.

[1] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organization in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

726 The *intelezi* was made from the roots of a creeper and a bush which grew on the banks of rivers. These roots were burned over the fire, 789 pounded and mixed with water. The warriors were given some to lick [824] on the tips of their fingers, some was smeared inside their shields, and the rest was beaten in a gourd till it foamed. The 'war doctor' took the tail of a gnu or of a zebra and dipped it in the foam and sprinkled the warriors as they finally passed out of the gateway of the kraal on the campaign. This medicine was for strengthening them and also for making them 'slippery', so that the enemy spears would glide by them and not pierce them, and they could slip between the posts of the enemy stockade. After being sprinkled with the *intelezi* no one could sleep with [834] his wife or any other woman, as he would risk spoiling the effect of the medicine and therefore would be more liable to be killed.

[411] The *inhlenza* was a spear with a barbed hook. The Paramount threw it in front of the army as they stood in the kraal until all the warriors had left. It was then put back in the *indlunkulu* where it was kept in the care of the owner of that hut.

There were thus three functions to be performed, each by one of the war medicines. The *intelezi* was to strengthen and protect individual warriors. The *intonga* was the symbol of their Paramount and their kingdom leading them to war and weakening the enemy. The *inhlenza* was the symbol of invincibility, administered by the Paramount.

726b There were two stages of assembling in the Paramount's village before a campaign. The first followed the initial summons to mobilize, when the local companies (*mabandla*) marched into the kraal, sorted themselves into age regiments (*mabuto*) and sang their regimental songs. Then followed the *ligubo*, the war-dance, when the warriors wore their full war-dress, and the women joined in. There was no individual dancing but a working up of corporate feeling through the dancing and songs. The Ngoni used no drums in their music, relying on achieving [533] rhythm and unison by the stamping of their feet and their singing. After this dance the warriors left for their villages, while at the Paramount's village preparation was made for food and snuff for the campaign. Hard [705 251] cakes of roasted bullrush millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts pounded together, and dried meat, were the main supplies carried. At the second summons the warriors returned in their companies with their carriers. These carriers, who were usually young boys, carried the war-dresses and ornaments wrapped in a mat, and the food supplies.

Since on this final meeting depended much of the ultimate success of the campaign, only the warriors and the senior men were present, and all women and young children were excluded from the kraal. After the objectives of the fighting had been explained the warriors were addressed by the old men and exhorted to be brave and to help their comrades, and then the final medication by the 'war doctor' took place. The separation of the army from the civil population was complete until their return

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

from the campaign and the purification of those who had killed any of the enemy. 726

Cibambo and other Ngoni informants had no idea of the size of the Ngoni armies beyond emphasizing that they were 'very big and very strong'. Evidence was forthcoming, however, from early European sources on the size of the armies which, though it can only have been based on guess-work, nevertheless gave an indication of the numbers involved. Dr. Elmslie referred in 1878 to having seen in the previous year an army of 10,000 of the northern Ngoni which went out in June and returned in September.[1] In the *B.C.A. Gazette* of December 1894, reference was made to the armies of the central Ngoni which were said to be, at the time of their last raids, 50,000 strong. In the *Blantyre District Note Book* there was an entry of 1884, giving no numbers for the army but reporting on the raid on Blantyre in that year when the 'vanguard of the army was composed entirely of young men in their first vigour of manhood, who were said to have marched 50 miles in half a day'. From such scanty references by Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni armies in the field consisted of large numbers, were highly organized, and trained to feats of endurance as well as in fighting skill. The Blantyre reference also brought out the authority of the big war *induna*, who was presented with cloth by the Moir brothers of the African Lakes Corporation as a bribe not to attack the Blantyre area again, and kept his promise. 701 175 [662]

Objectives in warfare

Dr. Kuper wrote of the Swazi military kingdom that wars were waged 'to extend the boundaries, to retain tribal independence and to secure internal solidarity'.[2] After the Ngoni kingdoms were set up in Nyasaland, warfare had the same objectives with the additional one of bringing back captives and cattle. In north Nyasaland Dr. Elmslie, in the reference already cited, wrote that, after the four months' campaigning the Ngoni armies returned 'laden with spoil in slaves, cattle and ivory'. Up to the coming of the Europeans many of the raids and wars took place in the hope of annexing additional territory. Dr. Elmslie wrote in 1878 of the Ngoni dominating an area of 30,000 square miles in north Nyasaland from the lake-shore to the Luangwa river. In central Nyasaland the *B.C.A. Gazette* of 1894 reported that the Ngoni Paramount ruled from the Lintippe river near Lilongwe to the Luvubwe river south of the Kirk Range. The chief challenge to Ngoni security in the northern kingdom came from the Bemba, and in the central kingdom from a combination of Yao and Arabs. Dr. Laws recorded in 1886 that the Ngoni, in their final victorious campaign against the Bemba, had 721 175 [171] [648]

[1] Elmslie, W. A. *Among the Wild Ngoni*. Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1899, p. 79.
[2] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organisation in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

721 defeated an alliance between the Arabs and the Bemba in which the
175 allies intended to dominate all the territory between the Luangwa river
648 and the lake-shore, driving the Ngoni from their highlands and opening all the country to the slave-trade. In the central kingdom, during the interregnum after Cikusi's death in 1891, a powerful Yao chief raided the kingdom, destroyed six villages and took many captives. In both kingdoms it was necessary for the Ngoni to defend their independence by constant vigilance and preparedness, especially against a combination of Arab slave-raiders and local tribes. Since large numbers of warriors were mobilized every year, these trained armies demanded an outlet, and the policy of aggression served the dual purpose of raiding enemy territory and maintaining a defence force.

727 There was a difference of opinion among informants about the results of raids in terms of spoils of war. In both kingdoms captives were taken in war, especially young men of military age and women. From tsetse-free areas where cattle were to be found, live beasts were brought to add to the herds in the Paramount's village and in those of the chiefs and *alumuzana*. Ivory for trading and cloth for wearing were two of the most valued forms of booty, and Cibambo mentioned the looting of clothes and weapons from those who had been killed. From accounts by the first Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni burned the villages and killed the inhabitants in the majority of their later raids.

72/ If defensive and aggressive military action and the acquisition of
182 valued forms of wealth were two of the main objectives in war, a third was undoubtedly the need to build up a national sentiment within the military kingdoms by success in warfare in the first place, and by intensive training of all young men in the second, thus integrating the youth from conquered units with those who belonged to the trans-Zambesi clans. Again and again, in talking about their past, Ngoni informants from the Paramounts downwards emphasized the discipline and training of the young men in the days of warfare, and expressed their opinion that no other training could take its place. It was not only the common military training which contributed to this national sentiment and held the Ngoni together in a common purpose of preparedness for warfare. The *libuto* or age set within the *libandla* or territorial unit, and the *impi* or national army in which the territorial units were merged, provided a military organization which was adaptable and balanced, and which, through the control of the Paramount, gave the main impetus to centralization, while encouraging pride and initiative among local and age-set groups.

The relics of a military tradition

648 In north Nyasaland the Ngoni never fought against the Europeans,
[797] and were not coerced into giving up warfare, but, as a result of their contacts with the Livingstonia Mission, they finally agreed to give it up voluntarily. When Dr. Laws met the Commissioner near Mponda's at

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the south end of the lake in 1891, he pleaded with him not to use force against the northern Ngoni. 'Don't fight them,' he urged, 'enlist them.' The military commander, Captain Macguire, who was present at the interview, showed interest in the idea of a new recruiting ground for the regular forces in Nyasaland, but his ideas were not pursued as it proved to be easier to continue recruiting the Yao and Tonga who had already shown themselves good military material.

In the central kingdom the first reactions of the Administration towards the Ngoni were favourable. Paramount Cikusi was visited by administrators in 1882 and 1886, and in 1890 concluded a treaty placing himself under British protection. On his death in 1891 his successor Gomani I sent messengers to inform the Administration of his father's death, to declare his allegiance to the British, and to present a bull and a cow, four tusks of ivory and twenty-five men to help in the war against the slave-raiders. In the following year 100 Ngoni warriors were drafted into the regular forces and Mr. H. H. Johnston reported: 'The Ngoni are altogether a splendid people and may be regarded as the backbone of British Central Africa.'[1] But this co-operative relationship did not last. In 1896 it was reported that 'Gomani and a number of his turbulent young headmen were opposed to our influence.'[2] Ngoni armies raided a mission station, an expeditionary force under British officers was sent, the Paramount's village was attacked and his army defeated. He was taken prisoner and, refusing to walk to Zomba, was shot near Dombole in his former kingdom.

In the 1930's the Ngoni of the central kingdom referred repeatedly to the expedition sent against them, the defeat of their army, the death of their Paramount and the seizure of some of their cattle. They nursed a grudge against their conqueror which coloured much of their sentiments towards Europeans. They sometimes referred to the long period of contact of the northern Ngoni kingdom with the Livingstonia Mission, and contrasted it with their contacts with several missions who appeared to them to be in league with the Administration against them and not to take their side in relations with the Government as Dr. Laws had done in the north.

When Cibambo visited the central Ngoni kingdom with me in 1936 he was interested in making comparisons with his own Ngoni of the north. He found that in central Ngoniland there were very few men who knew Ngoni songs well, and that in general the knowledge of the Ngoni language had almost died out. The big shields were not, he thought, as well cut as those in the north. Yet the war-dances were performed correctly, and the war-dress which the dancers wore was more striking than anything which had been preserved in the north.

[1] Johnston, H. H. *Report of the First Three Years' Administration of the Eastern Portion of B.C.A.* 1894, p. 24.
[2] Johnston, H. H. *Report on Trade and General Conditions in Nyasaland, 1896–7*, p. 7.

535 He was present with me in November 1936 at a big *ligubo* dance in
797 the royal village of Maganga. It took place on the open space in front of the court-house. The Provincial Commissioner brought a party of Europeans to see it, and some members of a South African mission a few miles away were persuaded to come. Some of the missionaries before coming had been afraid that the dances and songs would be obscene, but when they saw the translations of the Ngoni songs which with Cibambo's help I had prepared, and watched the rhythm and dignity of the dances they were so favourably impressed that they asked the Paramount to send senior men to teach the songs and dances to the boys in the mission school.

535 At this *ligubo* dance contingents came from all over the central king-
dom. The men came in groups based on the head villages of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, with young carriers bringing their war-dress fastened up in rolls of mats. They put on this war-dress in the neighbouring village of Lizulu, the *gogo* village from which Magonga had 'gone out', using the compounds of the huts belonging to the houses of the senior women for their robing. They climbed the steep path up to Maganga in companies, and near the Paramount's house they advanced in close formation with their shields held over their heads, while an official 'praiser' called out the *izibongo*, the praise names of the Paramount and his ancestors. On the open space in front of the court-house, the different detachments came together and formed a crescent facing the Paramount and his guests. The dance was chiefly a rhythmic stamping of the feet, with from time to time a slow movement of a few steps to the right and then to the left. A number of women of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, including the Paramount's wife, danced in front of the warriors, facing them, carrying small sticks and small shields, and co-ordinating their steps with a rhythmic jerking of the right arm and neck, described by Cibambo as the women's dance in his account of warfare in old days. Every now and then one of the men leaped out in front, jumping high in the air, brandishing his spear and shield, and singing his own war song, the *ligiya*, the dance of the individual warrior. At intervals one of the official praisers came forward and sang the praise-songs of the Maseko line of Paramounts.

535 The *ligubo*, as a war-dance, could only be danced at the Paramount's
764 village, or at the funeral of the Paramount or of his older sister by the same mother. In 1937 the older sister of the former Paramount Cikusi died, and the *ligubo* was danced during the mourning ceremonies which took place in the village of Mcakhatha.

During these funeral ceremonies the *ligubo* was danced continually from the moment when the corpse was wrapped in skins after death, until it was lowered into the grave three days later. *Ligubo*, the individual *ligiya*, and the songs of the army going out to war, went on all day and much of the night, and broke out with renewed vigour every time a

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

fresh detachment came into the village from another part of the country. 535
The corpse was finally carried in a cow-skin from the hut to the grave 764
between a double line of warriors singing *ligubo* songs and thundering with their shields knocking against their knees.

The only relics, therefore, of the military tradition which could be 178
observed in the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's were related either to the national gatherings at the Paramount's village, or to the mourning ritual for the royal line. The knowledge of the songs and the war-dresses was preserved by the senior leading men and women of the trans-Zambesi clans. The songs which follow were sung, except for the last one, in both 533
Ngoni kingdoms, and not only when *ligubo* dances took place. Some were sung at marriage ceremonies, and some formerly as *umsindo* songs at the pre-marriage rite for girls. In northern Ngoniland the last two songs were sung in the churches, and tunes of other well-known war songs were used in the churches of the Scottish mission with different words written for them. Most of the songs when translated sound very brief. They were less brief when sung in the Ngoni language since there was repetition of certain lines, with repeated refrains, and with a series of 'sounds' such as *inyo ho, zi, ye ye* which accompanied the stamping of feet and the clash of shields. These untranslatable 'sounds' were sometimes the only part of the song which was known by the younger men who had never used the Ngoni language, and they chanted them in the right places as a chorus.

The first four songs were all intended to encourage the warriors at the 537
time of mobilization before going out on a campaign. They reminded the singers that in the use of the short stabbing spear the Ngoni armies were stronger than their enemies; that they brought their fighting skill from the south-east; that, though the fight might be long, rest would come in the evening; and that the army belonged to the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The fifth song suggested the kind of warning given to warriors by the old men—that they should not give in after a fight, but pursue the enemy and capture their cattle. The sixth song, though the reference to Longiyeka was obscure, was said to be a warning against treachery and revolt in the army. The seventh song had three themes: that death was the lot of every man, and the earth where the grave would be dug was never satisfied (*ukunona* means 'to be satisfied'); that no one would escape the universal fate of death, from the senior men wearing the head-plumes to the common people and the cattle; and that the ancestors already buried in the land would be joined by those then alive. The terms used in this song to describe the social groups among the Ngoni people were those which will occur throughout this book.

1. No Paramount can be poor because of the spear.
   Then why are you running away?

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

537 2. Do you hear?
The Ngoni come from the south-east.

3. What are we contending for?
In this way in the sky
The sun is setting.

4. O alas! the Paramount!
We fight for our Paramount only that.

5. The cattle run away, you cowards.
Those yonder; they run, you cowards.
The cattle, see, do they run? They run, you cowards.
Is your young manhood over? They run.
You are left with the carriers. They run.
Look at the cattle, they run, they run;
You have eyes only for the food-stuffs. They run.

6. They are talking, they are talking
Throughout the land.
Listen, keep silent, be still.
They are talking.
It will be spoken, it will be spoken
Throughout the land.
Longiyeka, you keep silent, you be still.
People are being talked about.

7. The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of those who wear the head-plumes.
We shall die on the earth.
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of those who die as heroes.
Shall we all die on the earth?
Listen, O earth! We shall mourn because of you.
Listen, O earth! Shall we all die on the earth?

The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the chiefs.
Shall we die on the earth?
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the women chiefs.
Shall we die on the earth?
Listen, O earth! We shall mourn because of you.
Listen, O earth! Shall we all die on the earth?

The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of nobles.
Shall we die on the earth?
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the royal women.
Shall we die on the earth?
Listen, O earth! We shall mourn because of you.
Listen, O earth! Shall we all die on the earth?

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 537

The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the common people.
Shall we die on the earth?
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of all beasts.
Shall we die on the earth?
Listen, you who are asleep, who are left tightly closed in the land!
Shall we all sink into the earth?
Listen, O earth! The sun is setting tightly.
We shall all enter into the earth.

CHAPTER II

THE PARAMOUNT

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Introduction

THE Cewa term for chief (*mfumu*) was widely used in Nyasaland for chiefs of all ranks, as well as for village headmen and, occasionally, as an honorific form of address to an important individual. Among the Cewa a man could 'become a chief' by acquiring, through marriage or purchase, the right to own a site, known as a *mzinda*, on which female initiation rites were carried out. This concept of the office of chieftainship among the Cewa and other local tribes was in sharp contrast to the centralized and unified concept inherent in the Ngoni term *inkosi*. I have translated *inkosi* here as Paramount because the term Paramount Chief was adopted by the Administration to denote a ruler who had recognized subordinate chiefs under him and whose court was an appeal court for their courts. It is necessary to emphasize here how distinctive the office of Paramount was among the various types of chiefs in Nyasaland, both in official recognition, and still more in the Ngoni ideas about their Paramount. We saw in Chapter II of Part I that no Nyasaland chiefs, except the Ngoni Paramounts, had Subordinate Native Authorities under them.

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When the Ngoni left the south, a number of small chiefdoms there were gradually being overcome by Shaka and, based on his armies, he had set up a new and unique type of *inkosi*. The leaders of military bands who left him—Mzilikazi, Soshangane, Zwangendaba and Ngwana—had little recognition before they left, except as military and clan leaders. Yet after the Ngoni left, Zwangendaba and Ngwana received from their followers recognition of their political leadership as *inkosi*, and this was expressed by giving to the Paramount the salute of *Bayete*. Throughout their recitals of traditions and in their accounts of their political system, Ngoni informants in both kingdoms emphasized that for each kingdom there was one *inkosi* to whom alone the *Bayete* was given. We assume, therefore, that the later Ngoni concept of the Paramount and his

571 643 function and authority was largely evolved and built up during the Ngoni migration across the Zambesi and the early settlement in Nyasaland.

643 The office of the Paramount was supported by three typical Ngoni institutions. The first was the regency exercised by the man who was held responsible for the care of the office of the Paramount. He was called 'the one who takes care of the country', 'the one who has to put the new *ishosi* in his place', 'the one who takes care of the young *ishosi* until he enters his father's place'. We shall see later how this principle of regency operated in particular cases in the succession to the Paramountcy. It proved to be an effective provision both in the case of a minor who was recognized as his father's heir, and during an interregnum while the succession was being discussed. The Ngoni showed a clear understanding of what functions the regent ought to perform, and when he exceeded these functions and usurped, or tried to usurp, the Paramount's position they condemned his action as wrong.

The second institution which supported the Paramountcy was the 'big house' from which the heir to the Paramount had to come. We shall see later that it was not always considered essential that the heir should be the actual child of the wife in the big house. A boy could be adopted [592] into the house and, by Ngoni kinship rules, he was then a child of that house and of the woman in it.

643 The third institution, which made the Paramount immortal at death after having been supreme in his life-time, was the Ngoni practice of 769 'guarding his spirit' in a hut, usually in the village where he had lived. The guardianship of a spirit was not practised exclusively for the Paramount. All the chiefs and the heads of the Swazi clans had this provision made for their spirits when they died, but in national crises prayers [282] addressed to the spirits of former Paramounts were of supreme importance.

The royal clan and the big house

643 Among the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans which formed the Ngoni 614 aristocracy the royal clan had a unique position. Not only was it the clan 565 of the Paramount, but its members had social rank and prestige because 184 they belonged to his clan. In the northern kingdom informants showed awareness of the fact that their royal clan of Jere was not one of the well-known clans in the south. Other clan names found among them, such as Ngomezulu, Thole, Naima, Nqumayo, and many more, were known to be clan names among the South-eastern Bantu. The following explanation was given by Cibambo about the name Jere and was the one most widely accepted:

€ The Ngoni themselves say that the clan name of Jere was given during the journey, and that it arose out of the number of people who were with Zwangendaba. When the Ngoni want to speak of a large number of people they use two well-known words which are: '*Ngu Shaka*' (it is Shaka);

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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'*Ngu Jere*' (it is Jere). Perhaps Zwangendaba and others took their clan name from this, seeing that they had become a great number. It is certain that the clan name of Jere is not known in Zululand or Swaziland.

In the northern kingdom all the chiefs recognized as Subordinate Native Authorities were of the royal clan, and hence its political authority was widespread. It was noticed by the early missionaries in northern Ngoniland that the sons of Zwangendaba who were chiefs under their brother, the Paramount, showed some degree of independence in that they wanted to rule their own areas with the minimum of centralized control. The pre-eminence of the Paramount among the other Jere rulers was strengthened as time went on by the remoter kinship relationship of the other Jere chiefs to the Paramount. After Zwangendaba's death they were his brothers of the same father and different mothers. Two generations later they were farther removed from his kinship circle since each of their posts was inherited on a direct father to son principle. The political and social importance of membership of the royal clan tended to go in the direct line of relationship to the Paramount rather than to the collateral branches. Later, in Part III, we shall examine the social prestige of the *amakosana* (lit. children of the *inkosi*). It was the closeness of their relationship to the reigning Paramount which was the basis for their social prestige, though evidence showed that a sister or brother or child from a big house of a former Paramount was also given social recognition as an important personage.

The royal clan of Maseko in the central kingdom was also known in Swaziland. Dr. Kuper refers to it in connexion with the Swazi custom of cremating the body of the Maseko chief at his death on a rock by a river.[1] This custom was brought from the south by the Ngoni under Maseko leadership and carried out for each successive Paramount up to 1891. Among these Ngoni the royal clan had special relationships with other leading clans, but the Paramount did not share his political authority with any others of his clan. His chiefs were all of other clans, and Ngoni informants said that it was a deliberate act of the Paramount Mputa to exclude his brothers from political authority and from disputing with him the control of the kingdom. In the isolated position thus established for the royal clan, two other clans had a ritual relationship with the Paramount. One was the Phungwako clan which was custodian of the Paramount's 'medicines', known as the *tonga*. The other was the Ngono clan which provided the companion for the Paramount whom I have called the 'royal shadow' (see below, pp. 61–3). Yet another special relationship with the royal clan was that of the Nzunga clan which had *ohola*, or brotherly relations, with the Maseko clan, that involved sharing the same avoidances and excluded inter-marriage.

[766]

The relationship of the Paramount to other leaders of the royal clan

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 86.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 was thus different in the two kingdoms. In the north he was one ruler,
614 though a supreme one, among several ruling kinsmen of the same clan.
565 His position in the past had been strengthened by the prestige shared by
184 his clansmen, but also challenged by his near kinsmen in positions of authority. In the central kingdom the Paramount shared no authority with his fellow clansmen. He was unique among them as a ruler, while sharing special ritual relationships with the two other clans which supported his position without challenging it.

643 A new Paramount, in order to be installed in his father's place, had
614 to be of the big house as well as of the royal clan. Dr. Kuper described
585 the Swazi practice whereby cattle were contributed by the nation for the mother of the king, so that she was called the 'mother of the people of the country'. She also described the ritual marriage of the first wife of a ruler, who was called *sisulamsiti*, and who was never the mother of the heir.[1] The Ngoni Paramount-elect in the northern kingdom married his first wife when he was a young man and she was called *msulamsixi*, 'the one who takes the darkness off him'. The big wife, who would bear the heir, was married with a large gift of cattle taken from the herd of the big wife of the reigning Paramount and, after marriage, was attached to her big house. We shall discuss in greater detail in the next chapter the relationships of the royal women to the Paramount and to each other. Here it is important to note that the big house owned by the big wife was the place where the future chief was brought up. In the central kingdom the first marriage of the Paramount was traditionally with a woman of the Magagula clan who was said not to bear children. She held an honoured place in the social hierarchy and was married with cattle taken from the herd of the *gogo* house of the reigning Paramount. It was regarded as a ritual marriage, for if she did bear children they were not acknowledged.
[842 Informants were uncertain whether methods to prevent conception were
847] used, or whether abortion was practised, or whether children, if born, died young or were disposed of or placed out in other households. The last alternatives were unlikely, and one of the first two expedients was in line with the phrase always used of this wife: 'she did not bear children'. The wife who bore the heir was married next and was always of another leading clan, and the cattle for her came from the herd of the big house of the reigning Paramount.

643 The reasons were obvious why the remembered genealogies of the
614 Ngoni Paramounts of the royal clans were short compared with the genealogies of some other African royal houses. The remote ancestors of Jere chiefs and Maseko chiefs, who were, as we have seen, not Paramounts before they left the south, were forgotten once the departure had taken place. Only a few names had been handed down and were repeated by the official praisers, whose task it was to call out the names of the direct ancestors of the Paramount before declaiming his *izibongo* or

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. pp. 54 & 91.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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praise-songs. The northern Ngoni remembered the names of five direct ancestors of Zwangendaba, ancestors who had died before they left the south, and the central Ngoni remembered the names of three direct ancestors of Mputa who had died before crossing the Zambesi.[1] 643 614

The genealogy of the Jere Paramounts which was recited in the northern kingdom varied in different localities. Of three versions which I found two agreed, except in the name given for the earliest ancestor. 643 173

Lovuma (Kali is the alternative given by Cibambo)
|
Lonyanda
|
Magalera Died in the south
|
Magangata
|
Hlacwayo
|
Zwangendaba
|
Mbelwa I
|
Mbelwa II
|
Mbelwa III, ruling in 1939

The list above was given by Cibambo of Ekwendeni and Simon Nhlane of Hoho, the leading member of the Nhlane clan.

Third Version:

Nyandeni
|
Mehlo enzhomo
|
Jele ka Lovuma
|
Nchingile
|
Gumede
|
Magangata
|
Hlacwayo
|
Zwangendaba
|
Mbelwa I
|
Mbelwa II
|
Mbelwa III

[1] In 'Traditions and Prestige among the Ngoni' (*Africa*, 1936) I said (p. 466) that nine generations of ancestors were remembered in the north and seven in the centre. These referred to the Paramounts after crossing the Zambesi as well as to their ancestors who died in the south.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 173 The third version was given by Chinombo Jere, a grandson of Zwangendaba, who came from Emcisweni. This section of the Ngoni, under Chief Mperembe, had for a time associated with Paramount Mpeseni, and not with Mbelwa. This separation gave them a slightly different set of traditions, and they were, perhaps owing to their geographical isolation, the last group to give up the old language and dress.

An attempt to check the Emcisweni version of the Jere genealogy with that of Ekwendeni showed one piece of evidence in favour of the latter. This was the tradition preserved by the Nhlane clan that the Swazi chiefs of the Nqumayo clan had as their chief *ixinduna* men of the Jere clan who were of the same age regiment. The names remembered were as follows:

Swazi chiefs	*Ngoni ixinduna*
Ndwandwe	Magalela
Langa	Magangata
Zwide	Hlacwayo
Sikunyane	Zwangendaba

In the central Ngoni kingdom the following was the generally accepted version of the genealogy of the Maseko Paramounts:

Msizi no bulako } Died in the south
Goqweni
Ngwana — Died before crossing the Zambesi
Mputa
Cikusi
Gomani I
Gomani II, ruling in 1939

After the death of Ngwana before the crossing of the Zambesi, two of his brothers in turn acted as regents. Also, on the death of Mputa, his brother Cidyawonga acted as regent. In the recital of the Paramount's genealogies, however, the names of the regents were not included.

The succession to the Paramountcy and the role of the regent

643 It might appear that among a strictly patrilineal people like the Ngoni, where marriage was formalized by exchange of cattle, and where each wife had a recognized position and rank, it would have been easy to formulate rules for the succession to the Paramountcy, and that they would have been followed without deviation. Such had obviously not

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been the case. It could be argued that the unsettled conditions on the northward journey made it necessary to modify rules of succession in favour of the 'strong man'. Europeans have tried to detect an element of popular choice in the appointment of the *inkosi*, or at least of a popular verdict in favour of or against a proposed candidate. Another element suggested by Ngoni informants was nomination of his heir by the dying Paramount. 643

There were, however, certain principles which were clear in the accounts given by informants. One was that immediately on the death of a Paramount a regent took charge of the country, of the office of the Paramount, and of the person of the heir elect, and also of the funeral rites of the dead Paramount. The provision for a regency allowed for a period of delay before announcing the successor. There was no 'The king is dead. Long live the king.' The office of the Paramount was clearly in suspense during this interregnum which had been known to last a few days, a few months, or even years—the last in the case of a successor who was a minor. During this period the regent was responsible for carrying on the work of the Paramount, and for consultation with heads of leading clans about the successor. In the past the regent was usually a brother of the dead Paramount. The traditions of the central Ngoni were, as we have seen, that after Ngwana had led them out of the south, he died before crossing the Zambesi. Two of his brothers, Magadlera who died before the Zambesi crossing and Mgoola who died near Domwe, successively acted as regents until Mputa was old enough to enter his father's place. When the time came for the end of the interregnum, it was the regent's responsibility to summon the people and present the heir to them as the new Paramount.

The assumption of authority by a regent and the provision for an interregnum make it clear that the identity of the successor was seldom a foregone conclusion even though the heir-apparent stood with a spear at his father's grave. Among the principles of succession which determined the choice of the new Paramount, one was that he should come from the big house. This could be 'arranged' by adopting him into it if there was no likely heir who had been born there. Another principle was a less easily defined qualification, that of suitability. This was discussed by the regent with the leading clan heads, who took into account the wishes of the late Paramount and the character and personality already displayed by the proposed successor, who had stood by his father's grave. Informants made it clear that responsibility for this selection weighed heavily on the regent and the leading men, for the choice once made was final, the power of the Paramount was very great, the 'medicines' used at his accession set him aside as a person of potential supernatural power, and the prosperity of the country and of everyone in it depended on this decision. 643 578

Two famous cases of disputed succession in the past had led to major

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first occurred in the north on the death of Zwangendaba, when his brother Ntabeni became regent, and this dispute revolved round the principle that the heir should come from the big house. It led to the final split between Mpeseni and Mbelwa, the setting up of two kingdoms, and the giving of the '*Bayete*' to two Paramounts of the Jere clan. The following account was given by Chief Mtwalo Jere, son of the Mtwalo mentioned, and he told it to me in his own village of Ezondweni. It brings out the function and position of the regent; the relation of 'house' to 'village'; the influence of the popular verdict on the choice of a successor; the magnanimous attitude of other possible rivals for the Paramountcy; and the effect of personal quarrels on a national matter.

¶ Ntabeni went to the house of Munene, the mother of Mbelwa. She insulted him and would not give him beer. Zwangendaba went to bathe and when he returned Ntabeni said to him 'I have been insulted by your wife. She called me "Sutu".' This is a great insult among the Ngoni.[1] Zwangendaba was very angry, and he took a pan and fried groundnuts, and said to his wife 'You must take the groundnuts in your hand.' Her hands were very burnt because the groundnuts were too hot. 'You are burnt because you must not abuse this your brother-in-law. You are punished.' Zwangendaba died. Ntabeni was taking care of the country. He was the right man to put the *inkosi*. He said to Mbelwa: 'You are not a chief because your mother abused me.' So Mpeseni was *inkosi*, and the second was Mtwalo. They chased away Mbelwa. When Mpeseni was elected to be *inkosi* all the people were complaining because they said the chieftainship should be for the village of Elangeni. The people of Elangeni and of Ekwendeni did not want Mpeseni as *inkosi*.

Ntabeni died. The people of Elangeni and of Ekwendeni wanted to fight Ntabeni's people because they were not told of his death, and when he was buried they were not there. The Ntabeni people went away to Tanganyika. All the rest left Ufipa and came to Cidlodlo. Mpeseni and Mperembe stayed there and the rest came to Coma. Then Mperembe returned from Mpeseni.

Mtwalo said to Mbelwa 'You are the right man to be *inkosi*. I am not the right man because through jealousy Ntabeni gave the *inkosi* to Mpeseni.' Then they gave '*Bayete*' to Mbelwa.

Cibambo, whose father was *mlomo wenkosi* (mouthpiece of the chief) in Ekwendeni for old Mtwalo mentioned above, confirmed this part of the story of the succession and the role played by Ntabeni as regent. He also gave in his book [2] the most coherent account of an earlier dispute about which wife of Zwangendaba was the big wife—a dispute which illustrated the significance of the house in the succession.

[1] Bryant, in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, said (p. 134) that 'Sutu' was an insult because it meant 'barbarian'—one who had not had his ears pierced according to the custom of the Zulu.

[2] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. London, 1942, chaps. V & VI.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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A disputed succession in the central kingdom arose over a struggle between Cikusi, the son of the Paramount Mputa, and Cifisi, the son of the regent Cidyawonga who took care of the kingdom after Mputa's death. When the regent died, his son Cifisi claimed the succession and war broke out between the followers of the two claimants. After fighting had continued through two generations of claimants the state under Cifisi seceded and became independent, though the '*Bayete*' was only given to Cikusi and his descendants of Mputa's main line. The following account was given in the royal village of the central kingdom by a former regent assisted by an official reciter of tradition. It related to the succession to Mputa, who died in the Songea district of Tanganyika, and to the defeat of these Ngoni by the followers of Zulu Gama. After this defeat the Ngoni under Cidyawonga returned to the west side of the lake and built on Domwe mountain.

¶ When they burned the body of Mputa, Cidyawonga stood with Cikusi, and that was the sign that Cikusi was still young but was *inkosi*. Cidyawonga was the brother of Mputa. The people told Cidyawonga 'We are in war. You must help us.' They took Cikusi and put him in the big house, because there were no children there.

Cidyawonga was the regent when they built on Domwe. When he was about to die he said to the people 'Now I leave this country in the hands of the owner, because I was only appointed to keep it for him. This is your leader.' He sent for Cikusi and gave him his father's spear, saying to him 'This country is yours.' He said to Cifisi, his own son, 'You my son do not struggle with Cikusi. He is the only Paramount here.' Cidyawonga we did not burn because he had cared for the Paramountcy. And when Cidyawonga died we put Cikusi in his place.

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The relation between the regent and the Paramount emerged again from the confusion following the death of Paramount Gomani I in 1896 at the hands of the British. The record in the *Ncheu District Note Book* said that authority was divided between the dead Paramount's brother, Mandala, and NaMlangeni, the mother of Cikusi the former Paramount. After the Portuguese-Nyasaland boundary was fixed dividing the Ngoni territory, the Portuguese entered their section to administer it. NaMlangeni and Mandala resisted their entry and were taken prisoners and died. Meantime a big *mulumuzana* of Paramount Gomani I had acted as regent for his heir who had been placed in the big house. The following account by the treasurer of Gomani II described the situation during the early years of the minority of the Paramount.

¶ Chief Gomani II was born in 1893. The country was destroyed by the Europeans when this child was three years old, and he was taken care of by the big *mulumuzana* of his father, Cakumbira Mpalale Ndau. When the war of the Europeans had finished, they built the village of Lizulu, near Mlanda mountain, where the Dutch mission is today. The child was with them in that village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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643 When the European Mr. Walker asked the big people whether Gomani I left any children, those big people refused to tell and said 'He did not leave children, they died when they were small.' They feared lest perhaps the Europeans wanted to kill the children too. Mr. Walker (they called him Cipyoza, 'the thing that goes on boring a hole') did not stop asking because he said 'Gomani was my friend and I want to help his children.' On his second journey they revealed to him that there were two children in the village here, and they named the heir Philip Gomani and his younger brother William Gomani who died in 1919. Then Mr. Walker rejoiced. When they brought the children out before his eyes, he gave them gifts which he brought for them, clothes and other things.

The accession of the Paramount and the royal medicines

When the succession of the new Paramount had been decided according to the principles just discussed, the regent had the further responsibility of presenting the new Paramount to the people. This presentation was the act of accession and, as we have seen, it might take place a short time or a longer time after the death of the former Paramount. In describing the accession and the ritual accompanying it, I shall use illustrations from the central kingdom, partly because the material there was more co-ordinated and more complete, especially that relating to the religious and magical significance of the ritual, and also because the unique feature of the 'royal shadow' in relation to the Paramount was, so far as I could tell, peculiar to that area.

The actual accession of the new Paramount had four main elements in it. The first was the decision as to the individual who was to succeed, which was taken by the regent and the senior men. The second was the 'placing' (*kuimika*) of the chosen successor, which was the announcement to the people that he was the Paramount. The third was the instruction by the senior men, and the fourth was the administering of 'medicines' to strengthen the Paramount.

The two following accounts relate to the accession of Gomani I. The first is by Captain Rattray and was included in his collection of Nyanja texts.[1] It was dictated to him by a man who was present at the death and cremation of Cikusi. At the end of this text there is a brief reference to the acknowledgment of the new Paramount:

[516] ¶ They allow three days to pass [after the funeral], and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps out and says, 'Do you hear? Your new chief is so and so' (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then everyone shouts '*Bayete*', and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes. Then the elders take the 'child', going with him to a hut to give him instruction, saying 'Today you stand alone. Look after

[1] Rattray, R. S. *Some Folklore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja*. London, S.P.C.K. 1907.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

your people as did your father before you. If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned.' 643

Habuya Dube, the official 'praiser' of Paramount Gomani II, had been present at the funeral of Cikusi, and he confirmed that the ceremony of accession was as described above and added these further details:

¶ At the time of the burning of the body of Cikusi, Gomani stood up in the smoke, standing on one leg with a shield in his hand. When all had been consumed by the fire, they began to open the waters and the grave-digger swept the ashes. And they picked up Gomani and went with him to the mound so that he should wash. When these things were over, we left the water to go to the house. We were dancing *ligubo* in the open place and Gomani had a headdress of *luve* [1] feathers on his head. And they followed him into the house, but all the people were dancing *ligubo* in the *bwalo* for a whole month. When the mourning was over, Bvumbwe Maseko said 'Now let us establish (*tiimike*) our chief.' So he was established. [766]

The 'standing on one leg' referred to in both texts is the position adopted by other East and South-east African people when resting supported by the spear, with one foot flat against the other knee and the shield in front of the body. Other men inheriting their father's position stood at the grave holding a spear, but only those of the Maseko clan, succeeding the Paramount in the direct line, adopted the position of standing on one leg. 'Placing' or establishing the Paramount was done before a large gathering of people with the warriors in full war-dress, described graphically in terms of the waving head-plumes and the thunder of the shields. It was evident that all discussion of who would or would not be a suitable Paramount went on within the closed circle of the regent and the senior men, and the people were presented with the chosen Paramount whom they acclaimed. [516]

The instruction by the senior men was a reminder to the new Paramount that, though his new powers were extensive and unique in their authority, he should not act like a cruel despot. There are references in the *Nchew District Note Book* [2] to the passing-over of an elder brother of Gomani I on the grounds that he was of a fierce and cruel disposition, though, according to Ngoni informants, this man Mandala was a younger brother of Cikusi and an uncle of Gomani, and thus was not eligible to be Paramount. In discussing the type of man who was considered suitable to be Paramount, Ngoni informants always laid stress on the need for him not to be fierce and cruel. This pointed to an ideal type of Paramount and did not agree with European accounts of large-scale poison ordeals at Cikusi's court. The instruction to the new Paramount [183]

[1] Feathers worn only by the Paramount. [2] *Nchew District Note Book*. 1891.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 so briefly referred to was in the nature of a warning that the kingdom must be held together and certain Ngoni customs and institutions preserved. This general mandate to a new Paramount was in keeping with the Ngoni policy of maintaining order and justice within the kingdom, while showing all the aggressive qualities of warfare against external enemies.

173 643 In the story of their northward trek, the division of authority among the central Ngoni between the Maseko and the Phungwako clans was referred to as the Maseko taking the '*Bayete*' and the Phungwako taking [789] the *tonga*.[1] In central Ngoniland the *tonga* was a collective name given to royal medicines used at different times for different purposes and was not reserved for the medicine used in the army as in the northern kingdom. It was said to have been 'from the beginning in the south'; 'it is very old, ever since people were born'. The following description was given by a member of the Phungwako clan in the head village of Chief Kacere:

643 789 ¶ The Ngoni had protection for all their people of the most powerful kind. This was the *tonga*. This was specially to protect the Paramount at his accession. When the Ngoni were thus accustomed to being protected by the *tonga*, there was one thing which gave them protection above all others. If the Paramount died, in arranging matters, the *tonga* was essential in establishing the new Paramount. And if war had to be made, the *tonga* also gave protection so that they had strength to overcome their enemies.

[791] Also when the Ngoni were travelling in wild places and did not find somewhere to stay, they began to listen to the *tonga*. The diviner, who went ahead with the *tonga*, looked to see if there were bad omens. When they found a place to stay and stayed there with their cattle, they were protected by the *tonga*, so that they were not afraid of anything. They just conquered the country and took the cattle and made the people surrender.

[825] When getting ready the *tonga*, they could only do it with a sheep. They killed it, and took its blood and its fat and smeared the *tonga*. And the big people who were set aside for the work of the *tonga*, it was they who were doing these things. The meat of the sheep which was killed for the *tonga*, they did not eat it just anyhow, no. They were eating it in a special way, not in the house, no; nor with the women, no; but in a very different way from the meat of every day. They ate it without being greedy when it was divided, and they took care not to put some aside, for they feared lest someone should eat the *tonga*. They just ate to finish it quickly, and when they had finished they did not sleep in their houses with their wives, but they went apart and slept in the place where this was done for the *tonga*. Their sleeping was different from other days, for they did not sleep on good mats, no. When they had eaten meat for the *tonga* they changed their ways, to act differently from usual. Instead of

[1] The head of the Phungwako clan, Chief Kacere, ruled one of the Ngoni states in the Dedza district which, in the 1930's, was separate from the central Ngoni kingdom.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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sleeping on mats they slept on grass until the required days were finished, and they scattered to their homes.

This account brings out certain elements in the ritual surrounding the *tonga*. The word *tonga* in the Ngoni language means 'rod', and was used in the very ancient folk tale *Intonga yetusi*, 'The Brass Rod'. There was no rod, however, nor anything representing one, among the medicines or ingredients which together made up the *tonga*. A descendant of one of the early 'guardians' of the *tonga* said about it:

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¶ The *tonga* is the horn of a sheep, and the horn by itself has no real power, but there are other things which give it power like the rib of a lion.

It is clear that in the past the *tonga* was regarded as giving protection to the Ngoni people, particularly by providing medicine at the accession of a new Paramount when he needed medicine for strengthening.

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Other informants from the Phungwako clan said that the *tonga* provided the medicine with which the Paramount washed at the time of *incwala*, the feast of the first-fruits. No one alive in the 1930's had seen that ceremony and the special songs had been forgotten. A tradition remained that the Paramount had to undergo seclusion and ritual washing with medicines before the first green crops could be eaten.

Throughout the references to the *tonga* there was no hint that it was ever worshipped or addressed in any way similar to the invocations to the ancestor spirits. It was clearly a 'medicine' possessing great power and guarded as a national treasure. The ingredients of the medicine were kept in a particular way, in a particular place, in the guardianship of a particular person. I have seen the ingredients, the place and the guardian, but I gave a promise not to reveal them. I was allowed to handle the objects and, after doing so, I had to perform the ritual act of washing my hands with cowdung. This was the form of ritual cleansing practised by the Paramount after using the medicines.

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There were two ways in which these medicines were used by the Paramount to strengthen him on his accession. He washed in the kraal with the medicines whipped into a foam. The old men said that in ancient times the water for making the medicines had to be fetched from the sea. In addition to washing he had to eat meat in which the medicines were mixed. The majority of informants said that beef was used for this ritual eating, while others said that, as in the ritual for preparing the *tonga*, the meat taken was sheep. This ritual was said to have taken place for the last time at the death of Cikusi and the accession of Gomani I, though it was hinted that it had been performed at the accession of the Ngoni chief of the Maseko clan now living in Portuguese territory.

It was clear that the Maseko Paramounts made use of the *tonga* as a royal medicine both at their accession and in time of war. The reference

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 789 766 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

241 796 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *umsindo*, *ligubo*, *incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said [643 424] '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins everyone sings the songs of *incwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the [178] Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Intokoni* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for [824 224] a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ye'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala seigwabuliwe*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, [535] wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuzo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiwe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *xi xi*, *ozi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 762 766 came, 'to quieten them'. Thereafter this Ngozo boy did everything with the Paramount. He began by washing with the royal medicine at the time of the accession. He drank beer with him, he ate with him, he 'stood with him' (*amaima naye*) on all important occasions, such as sending out the army and judging cases. He slept in his own hut which was in the *cigodlo*, where the Paramount's sons built, and when he married he built huts for his wives in that same section of the royal village. At the death of the Paramount, he danced the war-dance in full war-dress and leaped on to the pyre to perish with the dead Paramount in the flames.

Informants sometimes said of this Ngozo boy that he was 'of one [582] blood' with the Maseko clan. They described the relationship between the two clans as that of *cibale*, brotherhood, which excluded all possi- [602] bility of inter-marriage. Between the Paramount and the Ngozo boy was established a joking relationship, so that the Ngozo boy could say 'good and bad things to the Paramount'.

643 644 It was clear that the ritual and social aspects of this relationship complemented and supported each other. The recurrent emphasis on the taking of medicine at the accession, on the participation in the war medicines, and most of all on the death on the Paramount's funeral pyre, were all evidence of this ritual relationship. Informants repudiated any idea of a scapegoat which involved protecting the Paramount from poison by eating before him. They reiterated several times that the Ngozo boy did not eat *before* the Paramount; in fact he ate after him though sharing his food dishes. Surrounding the Paramount were other boys called *micetho*, who performed the duties of pages or personal servants. The Ngozo boy was always distinct from them, and the distinction lay in the combined ritual and social relationship.

The concept of a 'shadow' was of something very close to a person, almost indistinguishable from the person himself. In referring to the Ngozo boy in the terms 'he was as the shadow of the *inkosi*; he was as himself', informants emphasized the extreme closeness of the tie between the two men. It seemed as if the royal shadow existed to meet a need for strengthening the Paramount by giving him a second self. It emphasized also the dangerous sphere of life and action in which the Paramount lived, due to the medicines he had used, his powers to protect the land and its fertility, and his power to give strength to the army through the use of the *tonga* medicine. No one else in the royal family shared these dangers and there was inherent in the relationship of royal shadow to *inkosi* the sense of some security through a companionship where protective medicines were shared as well as the hazardous occasions for which they gave protection.

643 644 608 This intense and dangerous ritual relationship was buttressed by the social ties binding the Ngozo boy to the Paramount. We have seen that between them as individuals there was that freedom of a joking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

relationship, described in terms of brotherhood, and this brotherhood was further emphasized by the ban on inter-marriage between the Ngozo and Maseko clans. The significance of the Ngozo boy, when he became a man, building in the *cigodlo* where the Paramount's sons built, was often stressed by informants. Though his huts were in this *cigodlo* section of the royal village, as if he were a son of the Paramount's family, the Paramount never said 'child' to him but invariably 'brother'. 643 644 608

In all the occasions of daily life, as well as in those of special ritual significance, the Ngozo boy stood or sat next to the Paramount. The Ngoni insisted that the status of a man or woman should be expressed in terms of sitting or standing in order of precedence. Sitting or standing next to the Paramount implied that that individual had the highest possible social status. The leading members of the Ngozo clan in their villages displayed an awareness of their social prestige which was very noticeable. This high rank was, however, in the past bought with a price —that of sharing in the dangers of the Paramountcy. This was acknowledged through the gift of cattle to the boy's family, sent at the time when he 'entered the chieftainship' with the Paramount. [554]

The institution of the royal shadow came to an end with the advent of the Europeans. An Ngozo man acted as a royal shadow on the accession of Cikusi but did not die on his funeral pyre. When Cikusi's son Gomani I was installed as *inkosi*, an Ngozo boy 'entered the chieftainship' with him and stood with him 'in the smoke of the *tonga*' when the army went to war. It was this Gomani I who was killed by the British, and there was no royal ritual at this death, and no cremation in a stream in which the Ngozo boy could share. The royal shadow retired in those troubled days to his father's village, where he died in 1937. It was alleged that no Ngozo man stood in this relationship to Gomani II, either at his accession, which took place during the period of Direct Rule, or in 1933 when his Paramount Chieftaincy was recognized. Informants showed a certain hesitation in answering direct questions on this topic, which was attributable partly to the fact that the Paramount was a Christian, and partly to a reluctance to discuss the continued use of 'royal medicines'. The following account of the royal shadow was given by informants of the Nzunga and Ngozo clans. 643 644 178

¶ When the Paramount entered the chieftainship he stood with a man from the Ngozo clan. The Ngozo people are of one blood with the Paramount, because they stand together when entering the chieftainship. When the Paramount of the Maseko dies, he dies together with one of the Ngozo. It was so when there died Ngwana, Mputa, Cikusi.

When the Ngoni came into this country they stopped killing an Ngozo man when the Paramount died. When the Paramount died a young man of the Ngozo clan just stood beside the body of the Paramount, and when making the funeral pyre of the Paramount, he also was there until they set fire to it. If anyone wanted to kill an Ngozo man by the

643 water and the pyre, he was refusing, saying 'No, not in these days, but
644 formerly.'
[178] When Magona Ngozo was with Cikusi he was st g with him in the daytime. Magona had his own huts and Cikusi his. When eating, Cikusi ate alone, but afterwards he gave food to Magona. When Cikusi was washing it was together with Magona. When he went to the bush, they went together. When Cikusi was washing with the *tonga*, he was doing it with Magona. When the warriors were going out, Cikusi and Magona stood together, and they made fire for the medicines and they stood together in the smoke and then the warriors went out. So, when mentioning Magona, they said: 'the shadow of Cikusi'. When they were eating in the *bwalo*, the *nsima* (porridge) was brought to Cikusi, but if some *alumuzana* came, the wives of Magona cooked *nsima* and gave it to the *alumuzana*. When Cikusi died, Magona could take his wives if he wanted. The Ngozo man could tell the Paramount anything, good or bad, and stay like the mouth of the Paramount.

[762] When the Paramount died formerly, the Ngozo man dressed in his war-dress. When he came near the fire he danced with the shield in his hand. When the fire blazed up he ran and jumped on the fire. So the Maseko people gave cattle to the Ngozo people, to quieten their hearts because they were brothers. And when another Paramount was installed they gave an Ngozo man to stand with him. The father of the man who died with the Paramount received cattle and villages to rule over and gifts. The Paramounts gave cattle because they said: 'Since our brother is going to stand with the Paramount, if that Paramount dies, he also will be killed, so the Paramount ought to give cattle like *lobola* so they may quieten the hearts of his brothers.' Though these cattle are not given for a woman but for a man, any Maseko man ought not to marry an Ngozo woman because there is this brotherhood.

And this man of the Ngozo clan was like a chief because he had men to manage his affairs at his door, as did the Paramount. And if he died his funeral was like that of a chief. But the day the Paramount died the Ngozo man was killed. When the Paramount washed with medicines, he was washing with the Ngozo man. When drinking beer, he was drinking in the same hut as the Paramount. When the Paramount was sacrificing he was together with the Ngozo man, and they did not leave each other.

The Ngozo people have a thanking name (*isibongo*) Maphonya. It is they who were standing with the Paramounts, and the Ngozo people were
[262] in the section of Ziyembe. Their avoidances were the same as all the Ngoni, especially fish and elephant. When Cikusi died Gulo stood with Gomani when he entered the chieftainship. Gulo was the son of Magona.

The royal village and the daily routine of the Paramount

643 In Part I, Chapter II we referred to the process by which each Para-
361 mount, after his accession, went out from his father's village to build
644 his own. The Ngoni called this *ukupumisa inkosi* (to send out the Paramount) and the term used for the new village, *lusungulu* (the needle), was said to signify 'the front village where you expect to find the Paramount'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Dr. Kuper described the Swazi king making his own capital, but referred also to the existence of several royal villages where the wives of the reigning king lived.[1] The Ngoni system of one royal village which went out from the former royal village resulted in a series of social groups, based on residence, which were related to past Paramounts and their widows and to present Paramounts and their wives. The diagram in Chapter III of Part I shows a very much simplified form of the component parts of a new royal village and their relationship illustrated by the siting of the huts. 643 361 644

The following text was given by an elderly widow of a grandson of Zwangendaba, in the head village of Chief Mperembe in the northern kingdom.

¶ When a new village, *lusungulu*, was built the *indlunkulu* was first erected and then followed all the other huts of the *inkosi* in order. Those huts which belonged to the *indlunkulu* took the right-hand side facing the kraal. The second house took the left-hand side, and all huts belonging to this one followed it. Such huts could be counted as belonging to the *indlunkulu* and the second house by the cattle that were taken from such houses. To marry a new wife, if the *inkosi* took cattle from the right-hand house that new wife would belong there. All the huts of each house of the *inkosi* were built at the back of the hut of the owner of that house.

When erecting huts, those of the *ixinduna* came next and were built next to those of the *inkosi*. After that they built their own according to their *ixigawa* or divisions.

All the huts at the back of the *indlunkulu* and behind the other huts were called *cigodlo*. Huts near the gate of the kraal at the left were called *kwa cikulu*.

This text brings out the fact that each new royal village had three main elements in it: the mothers of the Paramount, his wives, and the *ixinduna* and their families. The Paramount was always accompanied to his new village by one or more wives of his father, *ukulondolosa mntwana* (to keep the son). One of these was usually his own mother and she occupied the *indlunkulu*. The text points out that the big wife of the Paramount was on the right of the *indlunkulu*, and closely associated with its owner, the Paramount's mother. [592 644]

There was no fixed rule for the number of *ixinduna* in charge of the houses of the Paramount's mothers and wives. When the Ngoni kingdoms were established in Nyasaland, the royal villages were very large and the divisions of the village, called in the text *ixigawa*, were small hamlets. Each division was generally identified with a house, and in that case the *induna* in charge of the house was also in charge of the division. The original composition of royal villages could only be reconstructed by tracing the relationships of separate villages in the 1930's to their former parent village. This will be illustrated in the next chapter on the

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 41.

royal women. In the royal villages in the 1930's there was one big *induna* and several lesser ones whose position and functions will be described in Chapter IV.

This 'going out' of the new Paramount's village, leaving the former Paramount's village as the *gogo* village, brought about some re-distribution of authority, prestige and material goods. It gave the new Paramount his own village, always to be known as his, even after his death. His village became the focal meeting-place for the territory and for the court and territorial officials who surrounded the Paramount; and it was to the new royal village that the *alumuzana* in pre-European days came frequently to visit the Paramount and report to him on conditions in their areas. His moving out of the *gogo* village, on the other hand, gave his brothers who stayed there, and especially those of the *gogo* house, more freedom and authority within that village as well as responsibility for the conduct of all ritual matters relating to the kingdom. The Paramount's big wife had to take her place as the leading woman in the new village and to order the affairs of the wives attached to her house in consultation with the Paramount's mother. Cattle, beer and food for the royal household became the concern of the new village, and the *izinduna* and the royal women had to plan and manage the economy of a capital where political interests converged and where visitors and hangers-on were constantly turning up.

The following text by Chief Mtwalo Jere in Mzimba district, helped by Cibambo's older brother, describes the daily routine of the Paramount and his royal village as they had known it in their youth before the coming of the Europeans:

¶ The *inkosi* had to wash very early before the people came to see him. The *ingceko* was the servant who took care of washing the *inkosi*. He had to go with the *inkosi* to the bush and hide the faeces to prevent any bad person from getting the faeces. The *ingceko* was anyone whom the *inkosi* called for this, and must be one who walks well with the *inkosi*.

Before leaving his house to go to the kraal the *inkosi* had to eat a little porridge. When he went to the kraal a calabash of beer was brought to him. When any beer was brought to the *inkosi*, the *ingceko* tasted it first to see if it was good. The *inkosi* asked 'Is it good beer?' and the *ingceko* said 'Yes *inkosi*' and gave it to the *inkosi* to drink. When the *inkosi* took snuff the big *alumuzana* could beg from him. The other *amadoda* could only touch their noses. Then the *inkosi* knew they were begging snuff from him. Where the *inkosi* sat a mat was spread, and on it was laid a leopard- or a lion-skin. This was called 'the chair of the *inkosi*'. On arrival the big *alumuzana* went straight into the kraal to where the *inkosi* sat and greeted him '*Bayete*', and sat down in front of him.

The *inkosi* could not eat porridge except that cooked by his own wives. In his own hut he ate alone with one wife to serve him. His mothers also came with food every day. He ate twice in his own hut, early and late, and once in the kraal. When he ate in the kraal all could see him. He could

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not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingcwembe*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

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In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

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In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *izipheko*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izinduna* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 turn were invited to eat with the Paramount or summoned to special
651 feasts. On the other hand there were people who seemed to have noth-
431 ing, and who came in the hope of getting invited to eat food if they just
527 sat in the kraal and looked hungry. Cibambo called them 'the notable
571 people' and 'the poor people'. This contrast in behaviour ran right through Ngoni society and reflected the social standing of individuals who behaved in such different ways. There was a good deal of cadging for gifts and of gate-crashing at feasts on the part of people who had no intention, or no possibility, of making any adequate return. An Ngoni proverb illustrated the public attitude to reciprocal giving as distinct from begging: 'To say: Give, give, is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.'

571 The bringing of tribute to the Paramount was only one aspect of the
643 reciprocal relationships which ran right through Ngoni society, namely
651 the bringing of gifts by a man in an inferior social position to his
431 superior, with the expectation of receiving food or favour and of standing well with this superior. It was recognized that tribute was of two kinds, one of which was voluntary. If a *mulumuzana* or other notable wanted to please the Paramount he brought him presents—grain, flour, meat, beer. It was always emphasized that this was a free gift, with the added proviso that the giver wished to keep on good terms with the Paramount. Ngoni informants declared that the only compulsory form of tribute in pre-European days was that whenever a lion or a leopard was killed it had to be brought to the royal village through a succession of intermediaries, as described below.

These two principles of free giving and compulsory giving, and the attitudes engendered, are compared with the feeling about compulsory taxes under European rule in this text by Cibambo.

¶ Although people hate giving taxes to strangers in this land, yet tribute (*imitulo*) was given to their *inkosi* and to other chiefs. Such tribute was given in an indirect way, that is the *isinduna* did not mark out those who gave and who did not give tribute. The Ngoni did not wish that every male should give tribute as is done by Europeans today. They were just pleased if the village headman or *mulumuzana* had given something even though other people in his village did not give anything. Even the *alumuzana* themselves gave something at the time they thought it was convenient to themselves to give. There was no fixed time of the month or year. Much that was given as tribute was beer, meat, ivory, hoes and cloth, also cattle, sheep and goats after raids, and other loot from war.

[825] Power to 'eat' (*ukudla*) lion- and leopard-skins was given to certain people of the Swazi clans, but all the rest were obliged to bring them in. The lion- or leopard-skin had to be given first to the village headman. He went with it to the chief or *mulumuzana*. This one brought it to the *inkosi* along with his *amadoda* or *amajaha* of all his villages, the older men and
[554] younger men. This was like going as warriors and they went with dancing (*ligube*). The one who first stabbed the animal was pointed out, and the

second and third, and the finisher, at the place of dancing in the kraal. At such times each one when called rose and danced *ungiye*, repeating his names. This was called *ukubika isinkulipi*, reporting the heroes or the fierce ones. This is still being done today. The *inkosi* thanked the people who brought the skins by giving them a beast or a goat. When they were dressing the meat and eating it, they kept on dancing *ligube* and crying the war-cry. At such times the women went along with the men to help them dance *ligube*. They made the responses to the songs and jerked their necks. 571 643 651 431 [559]

All such things the *inkosi* divided among his houses. The big house had a big share, but especially his mother's house. She should have most. Even if his real mother was dead, the big share had to go there, to her house, where her successor lived.

Visits to the Paramount, whether for a particular occasion or as a matter of routine, were hedged about with ceremonial. It was expected that *ahenusane* and other important people who lived near enough would visit the Paramount frequently and, according to some informants, they went every day in pre-European times. 643 574 576 644

No one could approach the Paramount except through one of the *iniduna* of the royal village, and the correct person to approach was the *induna* of the *indlunkulu*. Visitors were expected to wait at the gate of the kraal and put down their spears. When they were brought by the *induna* to the Paramount, they greeted him with '*Bayete*'. Then they sat down and the Paramount told the *induna* to greet them, and they replied '*Yebo, inkosi*'. This custom of indirect approach to the Paramount has been maintained. Early travellers in Nyasaland spoke of observing it, and when I was there it was considered outrageous manners on the part of any European if he penetrated immediately to the presence of the Paramount, without going through the accustomed channels. 643 644

The Paramount was both greeted and thanked for gifts of food, beer or snuff, with '*Bayete*'. If he moved from the kraal, all present said '*Bayete*'. If anyone had to leave his presence, he crouched low and murmured '*Bayete*' as he went out. Cibumbo described this punctilious formality of thanking for gifts in the Ngoni manner. 643 644 431

¶ When receiving presents the Ngoni thanked the giver by taking them with two hands, even though it was a small present. Afterwards they thanked the giver by his *isibongo*, clan name, openly. They said that receiving a thing with one hand showed that you decided it and did not put any value on it. When receiving a present from bigger people or from a chief, some words of respect were added to the *isibongo*, such as '*Baba*', '*Nkosi yami*', '*E-Jere*'. Often the receiver if he was much pleased with the present added some *izinkuso* to the clan name, if he knew them. Those near him or some further away helped the receiver by thanking loudly after him. If what he received was food, he thanked at the beginning, and after eating the food he thanked again. If such a present of food was given to a body of people, the leader in the company first led the others in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 thanking, and then all thundered the thanking together. This included all
644 the rest who were in the neighbourhood though they did not take part in
the food or the present. The leader would first thank '*E-Jere*' and then all
431 would follow together, '*E-Jere*', or the clan name of the one who was the
giver. The Paramount, if he gave presents to the people, was not thanked
by his clan name as other people. He was thanked by '*Bayete*' as was done
when saluting him. Likewise those who received the title *Nhomo* were
thanked by that title when they gave presents to people.

643 On ceremonial occasions, visitors to the royal village heard the
644 *izibongo* or praise-songs of the Paramount. These were songs referring
to great deeds and notable incidents both in the lifetime of the reigning
533 Paramount and in the lives of his predecessors. They were distinct from
576 the *izitakozo*, which were honorific epithets added to the clan name and
spoken when thanking a well-known man or woman for their gifts. The
izitakozo could be said by anyone, since each person of note had his own
which were well known. The *izibongo* could only be spoken or sung by
an *umbongi* or official 'praiser'. Such a person was a man of good
[826] memory and possessing eloquence. The chest was thought to be the seat
of wisdom and eloquence, and a man who composed praise-songs, as
distinct from repeating well-known ones, had to have the faculty of
finding the right words, since new songs of this kind were generally
invented on a sudden inspiration.

The occasions when the praise-songs were recited were when important visitors came to the royal village; when beasts were slaughtered in the ancestor cult; at special dances at the royal village or at the feasts of the Paramount. On such occasions the official praiser stood up in the kraal, everyone kept silence and did not move, and after a pause he began to call out '*Bayabonga inkosi*', 'let us praise the Paramount'. In repeating the praise-songs he began with those of the immediate ancestor of the Paramount, and then went on to those of earlier ancestors. At the end he shouted '*Bayete*' and all the people replied '*Bayete*'. Examples of the praise-songs of Zwangendaba and his father Hlacwayo of the northern kingdom and of Ngwana, father of Mputa, of the central Ngoni kingdom are given at the end of the chapter.

The tension caused by the extreme formality in the behaviour of the
643 Paramount, his courtiers and his visitors was lightened by the presence
644 of a court jester. Informants were agreed that such an individual was
usually present to amuse the Paramount with his sallies and gestures and
522 clown-like tumbling about. Dr. Laws referred to such a jester at the
court of Mbelwa I when the Livingstonia Mission was making its first
settlement in northern Ngoniland.[1] I saw a jester who came with Paramount Zintambira Maseko from Portuguese territory when he and his officials visited Mcakhatha for the war-dance at the mourning for Bambo

[1] Livingstone, W. P. *Laws of Livingstonia*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1921, p. [illegible].

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Manga. It was a time of great emotional tension and strain, and the absurdities of the jester relieved the solemnity and formality of the visit. This jester was said by informants to be a man of the Moyo clan, who owed his position not to hereditary right but to a ready and witty tongue. 643 644 522

The death of the Paramount

It is in the ceremonies at the death of the Paramount that we find some major differences between the traditional practices of the northern and central Ngoni peoples, which might be attributed to the separate groups in Natal from which they came. I was living in Mcakatha village in the central kingdom at the time of the sickness and death of Bambo Manga, the most important of the royal women among the central Ngoni. The ritual ceremonies at her funeral were said to be almost identical with those at the death of the Paramount, and I was able to check details of similarity and difference with old men who remembered the death of Cikusi, the last Ngoni Paramount in the central kingdom for whom the full ritual was carried out. I was not able after that to pursue further possible parallels and differences among the northern Ngoni. My general impression from informants was that among the northern Ngoni the ritual at the death of a Paramount differed from that of any other prominent man only in certain details of the period and form of mourning. Among the central Ngoni, as Rattray said in a note on the text which will be given, 'such funerals were more of a military pageant than anything else. All outward signs of grief were rigorously excluded.' I can confirm that from my observations at the death of Bambo Manga. 184 643 766 [152]

When the Paramount became ill, a diviner was called to give advice. He might advise that a sacrifice should be made to the ancestor spirits. He might suggest witchcraft as the cause of illness. He might advise calling in a man to give medicine to the Paramount. When, in spite of sacrifices and treatment, the Paramount died, the announcement was made from the edge of his village: *Izulu lidilihile*, 'the heaven has fallen down'. Messengers were sent to all the chiefs and to all the *alumuzana* and other leading men. From the edge of each central village the cry was made, and each chief and *mulumuzana* sent his messengers to make the same announcement in each of the villages under him. [791]

Among the northern Ngoni the actual ceremony of burial does not appear to have been very different from that of any other important man, with one exception, that the Paramount, like other ruling Jere chiefs, was buried at the edge of the cattle kraal in a circular pit of the kind used when digging clay for mudding houses, on one side of which there was a niche where the corpse was placed in a sitting position, facing south-east. This burying in a circular grave on the edge of the kraal was the procedure which I witnessed at the burial of Bambo Manga among the central Ngoni (see below p. 75).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 766 184 Dr. Steele, one of the early medical missionaries in northern Ngoniland, was present at the burial of Mbelwa I and left an account of it which is quoted by Dr. Elmslie.[1] He spoke of the great crowds of men coming to mourn armed with spears and shields, and some with guns. They came in companies, as if they were the military bands coming for mobilization from the head villages. They marched first with their shields held high over their heads, and then laid them down and clasped their hands behind their heads, advancing towards and retreating from the grave and keeping up a continuous mourning cry of '*Baba he*'. Three days elapsed between the death and the burial. During that time two graves were dug, in order that all the Paramount's possessions might be buried with him or beside him. When the graves were ready, the kraal was cleared of all but the married men who had the head-ring. Meantime the wives of the Paramount, carrying his shields, were advancing towards the grave and retreating, a few steps at a time. They finally went back to their houses, dressed themselves in skins, and returned in single file on their hands and knees. They withdrew as the corpse was brought out and placed in the grave, and other women came with the Paramount's possessions, such as pipes, wooden head-rests and shields, and all were put into the graves. The men stood in circles round the graves with their shields over their heads.

Among the central Ngoni Rattray recorded an account of the funeral rites of Cikusi in 1891, which I was able to check with more than one old man who had been present. There was also the funeral of Bambo Mangs which I witnessed in 1937, where the ritual followed was identical with that described by the old men for the Paramount Cikusi, with one exception: that her possessions but not her body were cremated by a stream.

The chief differences between the northern and central Ngoni in the funeral rites at the death of the Paramount were that the central Ngoni Paramounts of the Maseko clan were cremated and not buried, and there was no public mourning, but instead a series of war-dances. There [644] were two other distinctive features among the central Ngoni: formerly [786] the individual known as the 'royal shadow' died with the Paramount; and from the time of the actual death to the time of the cremation there was a period of licence and lawlessness called *cipande*. This latter phenomenon may have existed among the northern Ngoni, but I did not ask about it specifically when I was there, and I did not hear it referred to. I was made aware of it forcibly at the death of Bambo Mangs when my cook and houseboy immediately dumped all their possessions in my hut as the only safe place during the time of *cipande*. Rattray's account of the death of Cikusi also mentioned this practice.

In the traditions of the central Ngoni it was recorded that only the Maseko Paramounts in the direct line were cremated, and not the

[1] Elmslie, W. A. op. cit. p. 270.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

brothers of the dead Paramount who acted as regents. Thus Ngwana was cremated in Ulozi before crossing the Zambesi, and Mputa was cremated in the river Lichiningo in Songea in Tanganyika. This was confirmed by an informant of the Gama clan who were for a time under the central Ngoni Paramount in Songea and later were allied with the northern Ngoni. He said 'We killed Mputa, the *inkosi*, when fighting, and his people burned him because it was their custom in burying to burn.' 184 643 766

An old woman who came from Portuguese territory to see me in the central kingdom said that when Zintambira I died the Portuguese made them bury him 'in a box'. The onlookers in Mcakatha at the time of my interview with the old woman said 'Yes, they were not allowed to burn him.' [648]

The central Ngoni leaders referred often to the ritual significance of the cremation of their Paramount, followed by the washing of the ashes into the stream 'to strengthen the land'. On my first arrival in the central kingdom I was questioned closely by several of the big *izinduna* and *abamuzana* about the practice of cremation in England. They alleged that, under the influence of the local mission, the Paramount Gomani II had said that he wished to be buried in a coffin with Christian burial rites. They were much concerned about this, because of the effect on the strength and status of his successor and on the country as a whole. 'If he is not burned his children will not be honoured and will only be as *abamuzana*. Is it right that another tribe, the English, should come and change our customs?' Great relief was expressed when I told them that Christians were cremated in England with full Christian ritual, and also when I told them that the ashes of one of the early Scottish missionaries in northern Ngoniland had been brought back by his widow to lie there. [797] [648]

The following account of the funeral of Cikusi was given to Rattray: 643

¶ When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them 'the clouds have fallen today'. They do this because they fear, 'if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death'. Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head until it all glitters, and then take the 766 [203] [301]

643 766 skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors [387] come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre and the flames go roaring up. They place the child [and heir] where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields, and chant their war songs . . .

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry . . ., they burn on a fire on one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse is also consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut [302] roofs belonging to the chief are removed. Next morning all the headmen shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands.

Additional details and slight variations were supplied by Habuya Dube, an old man who was official praiser of Paramount Gomani II. He was also at the funeral.

"After some time Cikusi began to be ill and of that same illness he died. And we danced *ligubo* for one month, and over a hundred beasts were killed. For a whole week [1] he was in the house, and then soon he began to smell because he was decaying. The grave-diggers, they of the Ngoso clan, burned the fat of the cattle and roasted it on the fire, doing it as if to prevent the smell. And they made him hold a cup of beer in his hand. On a certain day we lifted him up and went with him to the water. Then

[1] Compare the previous account which gave four days between death and cremation. At Bambo Mange's death it was three days.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

we dammed the stream and made a pool and a mound. And we put him on a rock, and on top of him we put cowhide shields and left them so. And we put firewood above. Then Ngwazi Ngozo took fire and lit that fire. Then *ligubo* was danced and the women were singing. They sang songs of *ligubo* and the *amadoda* danced (*anagiya*). The owner of the country did not cry, no, and the big people did not cry. Only the wives and other women cried. 643 766

Habuya Dube added later that everyone came with one piece of wood and put it on the pyre; and that they killed a cow and took the fat and put it on the wood, and used the skin to wrap the body in.

In discussing the ceremony of cremation with informants among the central Ngoni, there was no reference to the suggestion made by Dr. Kuper, that cremating was a substitute for embalming to avoid the corruption of the body of the king. They regarded the act of burning as an essential element in the continuing strength of the royal line, since the heir stood in the smoke from the pyre, and in the continuing fertility and strength of the country, since the ashes were swept into the river. The concept was that the royal ruler had been strengthened with the *tonga* medicine, and thereafter his body and its strength was the symbol of the unity and strength and fertility of his country.

On the question of mourning or no mourning they were equally emphatic. 'Death cannot cut life' was an expression often on their lips during the funeral ceremonies of Bambo Manga, when great care was taken to carry out the traditional ritual as far as possible in every detail. They were shocked at the idea of mourning and wailing at such a time by any of the big people. The leading Ngoni women were expected to join the *ligubo* dances in the courtyard. Some old women of lower social rank in the village, together with the daughter of Bambo Manga, sat in the house with the corpse sobbing and crying '*Mayi, mayi*' and many of them became quite ill and others hysterical with prolonged sobbing. The leading Ngoni men were contemptuous of this display of grief. They admitted it was correct behaviour for her daughter because of the close kinship tie, but of the behaviour of the rest they said 'Ha, just like the Ntumba people.' The only behaviour which was considered correct was to dance in the courtyard openly before the house of Bambo Manga, or to slip off quietly home and rest before returning to take up the dance. 643 765 565 766 [152]

The traditional ritual procedure at the death of the Paramount, with the exception of the cremation of the corpse, I saw in all its details at the death of Bambo Manga. The corpse was placed in the same position in the hut as described at Cikusi's death, and was wrapped in a sheep-skin first with a cow-skin over, the spleen, gall-bladder and fat decorating the head and neck. The dancing of *ligubo* by the men with shields and spears, and by the women, was continuous from the moment of death to the burial, and afterwards whenever fresh companies from the central 643 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 kingdom and from Portuguese territory arrived to mourn. The grave
766 was made at the edge of the kraal and the kraal fence enlarged to take it in so that the cattle might walk on it.

643 In this chapter I have tried to bring together some of the chief elements in the position of the Paramount, and in the performance of
174 his duties, which were remembered by the old men as having been characteristic of pre-European days. Some of these features, as I have indicated, had disappeared in the 1930's. Others survived and will be illustrated in Chapter V. Chapters III and IV on the royal women and on the officials in the kingdoms will illustrate the importance of the leading women in the Ngoni kingdoms, and the hierarchy of officials already mentioned in Chapter II of Part I.

643 The texts of the praise-songs which conclude this chapter are given because in the 1930's they were still recited in the royal villages and were
533 a feature of all public ceremonies. Most of the allusions in the texts were obscure. Cibambo, who translated them for me and who consulted other older men, did not recognize some of the names or the meaning of the attributes. Some names corresponded with those given in Part I in the texts about the departure of the Ngoni in their two groups from Natal (see pp. 7, 8), such as the Nqumayo people whom Zwide ruled over, Nqaba who left with Ngwana, Nyathi who tried to prevent Ngwana from leaving. But in the way in which they were used in the 1930's these praise-songs had little meaning for those who heard them except as a form of salutation to the Paramount.

Praises of Zwangendaba, son of Hlacwayo

643 Zwangendaba whose intention it is to be black who denies it to be light.
533 Go away, let us go, you the rejected one.
539 We are like a man of the Ntungwa, a fat one; there the people die as fat ones.
Nqaba you must eat people. Leave the cattle.
Nqaba son of Lushwana, there was confusion.
There he is, there he is, where do they see him? They see him in the fences of his mothers.
One who is angry because the cattle have gone with the calves.
His great cunning overcomes the magic stones of the doctors.
I have gone away until I have seen Lebombo Mountains.
We are suffering on account of the great dispute with the Nqumayo people.
You are seeing the hoes which are waiting for you, the hoes which cannot be used for hoeing.
He saw it, the short grass, he was biting it hastily.
He saw it, the ditch, his foot slipped into it.
He who divided the water with a stick at the Zambesi.
He who remembered the cattle of the Balunjana.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

Praises of Hlacwayo, son of Magangata

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Hlacwayo the dwarf who cannot trail his cloth
Whereas the tall people trail their cloths.
Meat eaten with knives of axes,
If it is not eaten with forks it is rotten.
Hlacwayo whose bodily vigour is finished off compared with Hlacwayo of former times.
Grass of deep red colour is not burned with burning; it burns very slowly, drop by drop.

Praises of Ngwana, son of Goqweni

You who cut the trees and who cut the mouths,
You the locust, the grasshopper who fixed in your hair the feathers of the locust,
Who went below and climbed up, and went to bring the morning star of the dawn,
You go, since you are rejected; you go and bring the armlets of wild animals; those of cattle will be much disputed.
You who remember the fault of long ago.
In descending, you descend together into the mountains.
You who drank the blood of cattle,
You who separated from the people of Shaka, Shaka of Mbelebele kraal,
You who separated from the people of Nyathi the son of Mashobane; it thundered, it was cloudy.
Thou resemblest cattle which were finished by wolves.
You who originated with the people of Mzilikazi,
You who originated with the people of Mpakana son of Lidonga,
You who originated with the people of Ndwandwe.

CHAPTER III

THE ROYAL WOMEN

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An early traveller in central Ngoniland in 1886 remarked on the number of 'true Ngoni women' to be found there, who were 'easily distinguished from the other women by their light colour and by being taller and stouter'. He went on to say: 'The king's houses at Livisini were 30 feet in diameter, built within an enclosure with other huts where the attendants lived. All were kept very clean and well swept.' This tribute to the appearance and achievements of Ngoni women of high rank was borne out by my own observations in the 1930's in central and northern Ngoniland. There was a definite physical type, light in colour, with high cheek-bones and orthognathic profile, tall with an upright carriage of the head. Women with these physical characteristics were in all cases of leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and their influence on their

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

142 surroundings, their families, and the behaviour of those for whom they
565 were responsible was most noticeable. Not all of these women were in the category of royal women, nor did all the royal women conform to this distinctive physical type, though the association of high-ranking family, physical appearance and pride of bearing was striking.

644 There were three main classes of royal women, all associated with the
565 Paramount in a special relationship. These showed some parallels with the classes of royal women among the Swazi described by Dr. Kuper. I have not adopted her terms for distinguishing them, with the exception of the term Queen Mother, which I have used in the English sense of the widow of a former ruler and mother of the existing ruler. The chief women associated with the Paramount in the Ngoni kingdoms were the Royal Sister, the Queen Mother, and the big wife. This same association of three leading women with a ruling chief or *mukumuzana* was found in the subordinate chieftainships under the Paramount, and in the head villages of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. It was a definite Ngoni pattern, associating women of high rank with the men who carried political responsibility. Their positions in the Ngoni patrilineal and virilocal social structure was markedly different from the position of the leading women in the matrilineal and uxorilocal societies of other Nyasaland peoples, especially in their relationship to their husbands, sons and brothers.

644 The relationships of the Queen Mother and the big wife to the Para-
593 mount were of a different character from that of the Royal Sister to her brother, since she was of the royal clan and they were not. We shall first consider the position in the Ngoni kingdoms of the Queen Mother and the big wife, since reference has been made to them already in the previous chapter. In the new *lusungulu* village of the Paramount there was a close connexion between the Queen Mother, who moved out with him, and his own big wife. His big wife was of the same house as the Queen Mother, since the cattle for her *lobola* had been taken from the herd of the Queen Mother. At this time of moving out into the new village the big wife began to be head of her own house. Other wives, married with cattle from the herd which had been built up for her, and kraaled with those belonging to the Queen Mother, were attached to her house, and their huts were built near her own. She was the mother, actual or potential, of the future Paramount. If she failed to have a male child, or if her sons died, a male child would be taken from another wife's hut and brought up in her hut and would be known as the child of her house. Since she was the mother of the heir she had a special relationship to the *induna* appointed to look after her house. It was the house of the Paramount elect and also she would probably, when the Queen Mother died, succeed to the ownership of the *indlunkulu* hut. Her *induna* would then become one of the most important men in the village as he would receive all guests and strangers.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

When the Queen Mother, who had in her husband's lifetime been the big wife of his village and the head of his big house, moved out with her son to his *lusungulu* village, she had the unrivalled distinction of occupying the *indlunkulu*. While her hut was the centre of all hospitality and of ceremonials such as marriages and funerals, she was aware that her daughter-in-law, her son's big wife, was the leading lady of that village by right of being the Paramount's big wife and the mother of his heir. Such a situation could have produced friction between the big wife and the Queen Mother, but informants were shocked at the idea of two women in such positions not being able to control their tempers and adjust any differences which arose. I never saw any visible signs of friction. The Queen Mother and her co-widows in the village seemed aware that their time of active participation in royal village or national affairs was over, and the Queen Mother appeared content to occupy the *indlunkulu*, provide a meeting-place for all the women, and give advice and counsel when invited to do so. Part of her duty in occupying the *indlunkulu* hut was to keep the ritual vessels for sacrificing to the ancestral spirit of her late husband, the former Paramount, and when the sequence of ceremonies after his death had been completed, she looked after his spirit which had been 'brought back' to that hut. 644 [769]

In the central kingdom, when the Paramount Mputa died in Tanganyika, a regent took care of the kingdom while his son Cikusi was a minor. During that period the royal village built by Domwe mountain was a very large one divided into hamlets. The position of Queen Mother was then held by NaMlangeni, formerly the big wife of Mputa, who had a daughter Manga, but no son. A son, Cikusi, born to the next wife, was put into the house of NaMlangeni and brought up there. Golozela Nzunga, the *induna* in charge of her house, was also in charge of the section of the royal village called Ziyembe. When the royal village divided, its constituent hamlets spread out from Domwe and the section called Ziyembe moved to the east towards the escarpment. The head village of the Nzunga clan was built there, and Golozela continued as *induna* for NaMlangeni. She went with him, while Cikusi's own mother went into his *lusungulu* village in the section called Liwisini sited near the Kirk Range. NaMlangeni took care of the spirit of Paramount Mputa in the Nzunga clan head village of Mcakatha. Her hut in that village was the *indlunkulu* and after she died her daughter Manga came to live in that hut and look after her father's spirit. 644 768 [769]

This brief account of the succession of a Queen Mother in the central kingdom brings up the question of succession, which was a vital element in the office of the Queen Mother, in respect both of her occupancy of the *indlunkulu* and her guardianship of the spirit of the dead Paramount. In the case of a successor to the Queen Mother of a recently deceased Paramount, two alternatives were open. The reigning Paramount's big wife could succeed to the *indlunkulu* and to the 644

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

644 guardianship of his father's spirit, or she could take over the *indlunkulu* while a co-widow of the Queen Mother inherited the guardianship of the spirit in her own hut. The second alternative was the one followed in all the instances remembered by informants. In both kingdoms the spirits of the main line of the Paramounts were guarded by someone appointed to that task, chosen on the grounds of reputation and reliability. There was yet another variant in the central kingdom, where, as we have seen, it was Manga, the daughter of Mputa, who succeeded to her mother's guardianship of his spirit. The one principle which emerged from a number of cases cited in both kingdoms, was that occupancy of the *indlunkulu* and guardianship of a spirit might be undertaken by the same person, but generally it did not work out that way.

The Royal Sister, a title equivalent to the English Princess Royal, was the older full sister of the Paramount by the same mother, or his older sister by his father's big wife if she had borne no son. She was always referred to as 'the one who would have been chief if she had been a man'. She stood in a special relationship to the reigning Paramount [601] and to the Paramount-elect. She was in constant touch with the Paramount's children who used the name *dadakazi* (female father) when addressing her or referring to her. Dr. Kuper [1] reported that the Royal Sister among the Swazi was addressed by the same term, and that she came next in rank to the big wife and the leading wives. My informants and my own observations in both Ngoni kingdoms put the Royal Sister next to the big wife and before the other wives. She visited the royal village at frequent intervals to see her brother and his children, and was consulted about their affairs. She took a leading part in the puberty ritual for the daughters of her brother and was prominent at *ligubo* and other dances, and at mourning ceremonies. She was married with an exchange of cattle to a man of a leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan, and during his lifetime lived in his village, visiting the royal village often.

565 The position of the royal women in the Ngoni kingdoms has been discussed in terms of the sister, mother and big wife of the Paramount. 644 The same relationships were found in the families of the chiefs and 631 *alumuzana*. There the equivalent of the Royal Sister was the older full sister by the same mother of the chief or *mulumuzana*, and his own big wife and his father's big wife played similar roles, within their own spheres, to those played in the Paramount's village by the Queen Mother and his big wife.

Five texts follow which illustrate the life and activities of leading women who filled roles equivalent to those of Royal Sister, big wife and Queen Mother. One of the texts is by a Royal Sister—Bambo Manga, who was the sister of Paramount Cikusi in the central kingdom. Margaret Jere was the elder full sister of the heir to the chieftanship of

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 59.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Chief Mtwalo II in the northern kingdom. Two texts are by former big wives of leading men. NyaNsangu was the former big wife of a grandson of Zwangendaba, a member of the royal clan but not a chief, though he owned many villages. NaNdumbu was the former big wife of the head of the Nzunga clan in the central kingdom. The last text by Cibambo gives details of the clothes worn by royal women and leading women in pre-European days, some of which were still in use in the 1930's. 565 644 631

Life of the Royal Women
by Manga Maseko

daughter of Mputa, former Paramount of the central kingdom

159 565

¶ Formerly I was just staying for I did not work. I had many slaves and their work was especially to thread beads. Up to today I have not worked except to cook. Our hair was anointed with the fat of cows and of milk. Our food was milk and we drank it in a wooden cup. We were getting cloth when they sold slaves to the Arabs. For honouring each other, the big men were telling the youths: 'You should honour the big people that the country may be rich.' Only the big women were dancing *ngoma*, *mindo* and *ligube*. If a man married the child of a chief, he gave many cattle, and the poor man could not marry the child of a chief. 631 644 [302] [262]

When NaMlangeni was alive she was a well-known chief and was greatly honoured. When speaking a case, they called her that she might judge. When people went to war and captured slaves and cattle they were giving them to her, and she divided them. For thanking her they said: '*Zaithwa Mai*.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Margaret Jere

granddaughter of Mtwalo I, daughter of Johanne Jere in the northern kingdom

¶ When I was a child I was not allowed to go out quickly in the sun, and when crawling I had to stay in the house. I was very light coloured. The *mlezi* (nurse girl) took me to my mother, UNsulazi Nzima, to be suckled at special times. I slept in the house of Magodise Moyo, my grandmother, who was the widow of Chief Mtwalo. The *isidandani* (attendant) also slept there. My grandmother and others, the *manina* (senior women), were telling me how to behave. A special *isidandani* living in Magodise's house was told by my grandmother to speak specially to me when I had reached puberty. This *isidandani* could speak to me about anything. When nearing marriage a woman was chosen, Hlamseya Nzima, and sent to reveal to me how I was to live in my married state. The sisters of my father, Tinzira and Sayeya Jere, also came and spoke to me at the time of my marriage. Hlamseya Nzima was sent by my grandmother to examine me (for virginity) before marriage. I was allowed to play with those children who lived in the same section of the village and who were known to my mother and grandmother. The *isidandani* did all the work but sometimes I used to pound and fetch water, but not too hard and just for pleasure.

When strangers came, I came and saluted them and then went out of

159 565 631 644 the house. If my father came to my mother's house, I would go out, but if he sent for me I would return and he would talk to me and play with me. We learned how to behave well, and were rebuked if we behaved badly. My father would beat a child for not behaving well. My father did not allow his children to be spoiled by being treated differently from others. He said: 'They are all my children.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Mdingase Nsangu

widow of Chinombo Jere, grandson of Zwangendaba in the northern kingdom

565 631 644 [300] ¶ The *amakosikazi* were not working. During the day they kept dressing their hair, both the young women and the old. The old women no longer kept their *isihlutu*, or high chignon, but wore the *umzoco*, or long curls. For the *umzoco* the hair was cut short and not allowed to grow very long. Instead of dressing it upwards they took a blade of grass and kept it pressed down after oil and scent were applied. Their other work was to go to the river and wash.

They also drank beer and some gruel, and afterwards danced *ngoma* in the house where beer was brewed. The men and chief also joined in the *ngoma* and the women were responding to the singing. They began to drink in the morning until the afternoon, but not in the evening. Other people went on drinking until evening, and even some of the *amakosikazi* who were *izidli* (gluttonous) but the rest were sleeping or resting.

When drinking in the house the chief always sat by the right-hand doorpost, and the big *inkosikazi* by the left-hand post. They sat near the door to draw breath easily because there were many people inside. The beer-pot being set halfway between the door and the hearth-stones in the centre, a man was chosen to pour the beer in the gourds for drinking. He was *umtele wocwala*, the beer pourer, and was often the village *induna* or one who was favoured by the chief. When the gourds were full he told the chief, and the chief told him to distribute them. Sometimes there were four or even six for the different classes in the house. They sat in order, the *inkosi* with the *izinduna* and *amadoda*, and the *inkosikazi* with the other wives of the chief and the wives of the *izinduna* and *amadoda*. The chief and the *inkosikazi* kept on inviting the common people to come and drink. [576] Such invited people thanked the person at the beginning and at the end, others joining him. The *inkosikazi* or other wives of the chief were thanked '*Nkomo*'.

The *amakosikazi* never worked at all, but the lesser wives worked, and pounded grain and fetched firewood. These were the ones who had not yet got attendants in their houses. All the chief *amakosikazi* had attendants who performed all the work of the house. The *amakosikazi* often sat in the verandah or outside under the platform of branches supported by posts. [262] There they ate their food which was *ilambazi* and *umnjinji*, thick gruel of millet; *izinkwa ze nyauti*, bulrush millet ground to a paste; or *izinkobe*, whole grains of maize boiled and pounded. The meat was eaten as a feast on the *egceheni*, the smeared place in front of the house, and all the chief's wives joined in. A mat was spread for the big *amakosikazi* where they sat

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingcwembe*, or big platter of the *inhosikazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *nhlanzi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inhosikazi* called for an *ingcwembe* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njolomole Nzunga I in the central kingdom

¶ Old Njolomole had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361 351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked *nsima* and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [574]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these cloths and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njolomole excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njolomole was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibambo

565 302 [177]

¶ Today Ngoni women are not easily recognized because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isihlutu*. The oil was *ipehla*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [301]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

565 302 [301] thorn stuck at the top of the *isihlutu*, and round it they put narrow bands of beads (*intuyeya* and *isincuayo*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion claws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*amasongo*) which they got from the Arabs, 291 or *izipote*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft 565 dressed leather (*isidwaba*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped [301] well over. A long piece of soft leather (*ingcayi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *ingcayi* [304] were fastened small bells made of brass (*mgomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inkosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ngoma* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

565 The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in 644 these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their households and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indhunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *induna*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

In addition to the *induna* in charge of the big house, the royal women 357 and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *alumuzana* were sur- 565 rounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were 644 known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*micetho*), girl companions (*izidandani*), nurse girls (*alezi*) and older women attendants (*agogo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1930's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

292 The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the 644 clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

clan and for women of leading Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Two of the texts emphasized the distinction conferred on the royal women by special clothing. Cibambo described the use of well-dressed soft skins and of beads and wire, the beads brought with them from the south, the brass wire obtained from the Arabs. In NaNdumbu's text she mentioned cloth bought from the stores. After the Ngoni women gave up wearing soft leather for skirts and the long piece of leather draped from the left shoulder, they used strong cotton cloth of dark blue or black, originally brought by the Arabs and later stocked by the stores. They tied the main cloth under their arms in a draped knot over the breast and on ceremonial occasions they added another fastened on the left shoulder like a plaid. A woman who had been a young girl in the village of Paramount Cikusi, but was not of a leading clan, said that in this village there was a great difference between the royal women and the rest: 'Only the daughters of Cikusi and his big wives could wear dark cloth as the Ngoni do. The others would have been killed if they tried to look like the big women'.

292 644 [439] [565 689]

The royal women and the big wives and widows of chiefs and *ahumuzana* were treated by all with whom they came in contact with the distinction and respect due to their prestige. They were addressed and thanked by the term *Nkomo*, with the clan name and the honorific prefix added, except where, as in the case of Bambo Manga, a title had been conferred. She was thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*'.[1] *Ukuhlonipa*, and its Nyanja equivalent *kulemekeza*, meaning to honour and to behave in a respectful manner towards senior people and those of superior rank, was an expression constantly used by the Ngoni and by the other peoples in the Ngoni kingdoms. The forms of showing respect were partly verbal; partly in the position adopted, with the eyes cast down and a slight curtsey by the women when facing someone; partly in the tone of voice when speaking; and partly in the deliberate and controlled behaviour noticed by several early travellers in Nyasaland. A particular verbal form of respect practised by the royal women was the use of the *hlonipa* vocabulary. I found this practice surviving only in the Emcisweni area in northern Ngoniland where the Ngoni language was still spoken, but informants said that it had been common to all married women of trans-Zambesi clans in the northern kingdom when they had spoken Ngoni among themselves. The *hlonipa* vocabulary consisted of the substitution of special words, known only to the women, in order to avoid using a word in which the main syllable of a man's name occurred—a man with whom they were connected by marriage or by affinal relationship.[2] Thus Zwangendaba's wives and widows could

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[1] *Bambo* (father) was a term of respect used for important senior men.

[2] *Hlonipa* as a form of special vocabulary was widely practised among the Nguni groups in South Africa. Hoernlé, A. W. 'Social Organisation', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, pp. 74, 77.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

551 never use any word in which *indaba* (meeting or affair) occurred. They
565 substituted *incayo* for *indaba* and spoke of him as Zwangencayo. The
576 women of the Ngomezulu clan could never use the word *ilanga* (sun)
644 for which they substituted *ijiko*, since Langa was the name of the father of Zwide who had married into the Ngomezulu clan.

Though the particular verbal form of *hlonipa* which the Ngoni royal women brought from the south survived only in one area of northern Ngoniland, the concept inherent in it and the attitudes of honour and respect which it implied were expressed in the use of *Nkomo* in thanking and in the other non-verbal forms already mentioned. Manga, the Royal Sister of Cikusi, was as we have seen, thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*' but also with the formula '*Zikomo mntwana wenkosi*' (thanks, child of the Paramount). Among the central Ngoni there were two expressions of thanks which were probably a relic of *hlonipa* vocabulary since they were used only by the leading women. The customary form of thanking, and of taking leave after a conversation or after getting a reply to a question, was '*Zikomo*' with the clan name and honorific prefix added. The royal women in this area, when making the response to this form of thanking, always replied '*Zaithwa*' with the clan name, and they thanked each other by '*Zimata*' with the clan name instead of '*Zikomo*'. When I observed this and used it myself, they nudged each other and said 'She also is one of us.'

644 We have discussed so far the outward signs of respect shown to the royal women, and the visible marks of distinction in their clothes and the number of their attendants. We shall now examine the way in which the authority of the royal women was exercised. This will give some indication of their relationship to the political organization of the kingdoms, in so far as they had certain responsibilities to the people as a whole, and to their husbands and sons within the royal village where they lived. At the royal village the Queen Mother and her co-widows shared with the wives of the two leading houses to the right and left of the *indlunkulu*, the responsibility for preparing and serving food and beer for the Paramount and those whom he called to eat with him. The text by NyaNsangu[1] describes the etiquette of beer drinking in one of the chiefdoms in the northern kingdom, of sending food to the chief when he ate in the cattle kraal, and of assembling the wives in order of
[264] precedence according to their houses to take their food. The formality of this etiquette was characteristic of Ngoni eating and drinking, and it was maintained by the organization and forethought of the royal women, the big wives and mothers of the Paramount, who planned the work of their own households and supervised that of the lesser wives who were attached to the two main houses.

[1] The procedure described in the text applied equally to the Paramount's village and to the villages of ruling chiefs. The Ngoni in that area used the term '*inkosi*' for chief as well as for Paramount.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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The responsibility of the royal women went beyond the sphere of domestic economy, fundamental though that was in a largely subsistence mode of living. They were expected to maintain good relations and settle all disputes among the women under them, except in cases where a dispute had to be taken to court, and such instances were generally regarded as a failure on their part to use their judgement and exert their authority. In pre-European days, when the Paramount and the chiefs held their judicial courts in the kraal, the royal women generally sat outside the kraal fence and listened, and were asked by the chief in the evening what they had to say about the judgements given. Some of the royal women had a great reputation for wisdom and intelligence, though they never spoke in public. They were still acting as unofficial advisers and critics to the chiefs during my visits in the 1930's, though it was recognized and often said that this kind of wisdom in judicial affairs was an unusual gift among women.

The title 'royal women' was adopted for this chapter in order to show the relationship of three particular women to the ruling Paramount in both kingdoms. It was difficult to discover whether the existence of an older full sister was accidental and she was given *ad hoc* recognition, or whether the relationship was considered so important that it was provided for by adoption if there did not happen to be an older full sister. The example of the Swazi, as described by Dr. Kuper, points to evidence of a recognized institution, by which in the case of the Paramount, a woman of the royal clan was always associated with her brother who was the ruler, with the same provision in the case of reigning chiefs and *alumuzana* of Swazi clans. Informants were able to give the names of Royal Sisters of former Paramounts prior to the establishment of the kingdoms in Nyasaland. It seemed, therefore, that this relationship was a permanent institution and that its chief significance lay in the public acknowledgement of a woman of the royal clan in a position close to her brother who was the ruling Paramount. The fact that she was of his clan, and that she had a special relationship to the Paramount's children, was a check to the power and authority exercised by the Queen Mother and the big wife, who were of other clans, over the Paramount's children of the royal clan.

In the case of the Queen Mother and the big wife, since the big wife in course of time became the Queen Mother, the permanent element in their positions was the setting up and maintenance of houses in the royal village and in other important villages. This will be discussed more fully in Chapter III of Part III. They shared with the Royal Sister the supervision and responsibility for the children of the Paramount, as Margaret Jere shows in her text; and in the royal village, and hence in the kingdom as a whole, they occupied leading positions in daily affairs as well as on ceremonial occasions.

[p. 88]

CHAPTER IV

COURTS AND OFFICIALS

121 177 671 THE Ngoni claimed that when they established their kingdoms in Nyasaland they introduced a new idea of law, a different system of courts, and a different procedure for conducting cases in those courts, from those found among the local peoples. Within their kingdoms they imposed on all their subjects these ideas, courts and legal procedure as part of their government, applied to the conquerors and the conquered alike. We shall consider in this chapter only those aspects of the courts and the legal system which were related to the political structure. The categories of crime, the degree of punishment, the sanctions for enforcement of the law, and the effect of the judicial procedure on the balance of equilibrium in the community, all belong to a specialized study and are not included here.

THE NGONI CONCEPT OF LAW

692 643 671 We begin with two texts, the first from the northern kingdom by Cibambo, the second by Ishmael Mwale the Treasurer of the Paramount in the central kingdom.

671 ¶ (1) The Ngoni seem to have been born with a gift for leadership or rule. Though they were a wandering tribe, yet there was one Paramount from whom proceeded the laws for the good government of the people. All the lesser chiefs and headmen received from him the leadership of the people. [203] Though they had no way of writing to each other, they kept their unity by messengers passing between them. The Paramount had power to call gatherings from time to time, in which they talked of the affairs of the country. In these gatherings the old men and the men of repute who had a point to make were heard in criticism and made suggestions for the building up of the realm. By this means the Paramount and his counsellors learned of and understood the thoughts of their people. It was in such large gatherings that the laws of the country were delivered to the people, so that they might hold fast to them and not be punished unreasonably for breaking them in ignorance. After they came back from these gatherings, the headmen and men of standing gathered together their villages to tell the people what had been spoken in the great council of the Paramount, and told them carefully about the laws which had come from the gathering.

173 671 (2) Before the Ngoni came to this country the villages were small and isolated from one another. There was constant pouncing on people to catch them as slaves. It was unsafe to go even a quarter of a mile from one village to another, because a man might be in hiding and pounce out and catch you and take you off to his village as a slave, and there was no redress and no case was heard. Most people never went beyond the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

boundaries of their own village, and they were afraid to travel even in a large party of twenty or thirty. So no one had any wisdom beyond that of his own village and family. When the Ngoni came they had one law for all people and they had courts to hear cases where this law was enforced. There was freedom to travel in the land where the Ngoni ruled, because they had peace within their boundaries. Therefore, we say: this was the kind of peace we had. 173 671

In these two texts we have one major concept of Ngoni law with three chief ways in which it was implemented. The concept was that there was 'one law for all people' and that the knowledge of and enforcement of this law brought internal peace and resulted in good government in the country. There was one source of law as there was one source of political and military authority—the Paramount. As Cibembo points out, the Paramount delegated his authority for carrying out the law to chiefs and headmen and depended on his 'old men and men of repute' to keep him in touch with the thoughts and desires of all his subjects, so that he might adjust the enforcement of the law to bind the people to him. He also called large gatherings of all the chiefs and *alumuanna* and headmen in order that they might hear from him any new laws and regulations and understand them so that they in turn could make them known to their people. In the intervals between the holding of these large gatherings, which took place not more than once or twice a year, messengers passed constantly from the Paramount's village to all the areas of the chiefs and *alumuanna*, reporting to them about decisions taken at the royal village on matters affecting the country as a whole, and taking back reports to the Paramount on what was happening in the outlying districts. 671 643 692 203

I attended two of these annual meetings of the chiefs and *alumuanna* and headmen in the central kingdom. They took place not at the Paramount's village but at a more central spot for the whole territory. The people were drawn up in a square formation, with the Paramount at one end supported by his 'mouthpiece' (*mlomo wenkosi*), who always spoke for him, with the six Subordinate Native Authority chiefs beside him, and the councillors (*isinduna*) messengers and other officials of his court and of the S.N.A. courts arranged in order of precedence, facing the crowd as they did during court sessions. On the three sides of the square in the front ranks were the *alumuanna* and the headmen of their villages, sitting in territorial groups, and behind each headman were the *madoda* or senior men of the village, and behind them again the *amajoko* or young men. I watched this assembly of 3,000 to 4,000 people being arranged, as they arrived, by the *isinduna* of the Paramount's court and the *isinduna* of the six chiefs. They took up their places as though on a military parade, and once placed there was no further movement. The effect was that of a barrack square in the straightness of lines and orderliness of behaviour. After all was in order the Paramount 631 643 692 645

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

631 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in
643 his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning
to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount
692 by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one
645 by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first
'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then
it was open for any of the *ahamuzana* or headmen to speak 'from the
floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to
be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from
those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with
freedom.

The topics covered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with
matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement
of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from
[744] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern
Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits.
Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men
in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice
exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages
below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for
sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said,
would have that leader recognized as a headman. This drew a number
of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme,
others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning
money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognized in the
new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages.
'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our head-
men. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant after-
thought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Para-
mount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to
[651 be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few
585] shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A
number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the
induna had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are
your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay
a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted
to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict
was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that
marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among
the audience during and after this discussion and the *induna* had to
call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had
been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese
[648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands
over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izindunu* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

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This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izindunu* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambesi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

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were, however, and they realised it at such assemblies, the people of the Paramount, and he was to them the visible symbol of their unity in one kingdom.

The Court System of the Ngoni

692 The enforcement of the laws as announced and discussed at these assemblies was the business of the courts, where the laws themselves were interpreted and often elaborated on occasions of an open breach.

The relationships of the courts in the kingdom followed the hierarchical pattern of the political organization. All minor cases were heard and, whenever possible, settled at the village level. If the plaintiff failed to get satisfaction, or if the village headman was unable to get his judgement accepted, he had to go with the litigants to the chief's court, and [698] if he failed there, the case could be taken to the appeal court of the Paramount. There were certain cases, such as murder and witchcraft, which in pre-European days could only be dealt with in the Paramount's court.

Some confusion arose over the use of one term 'court' for every type of institution which exercised judicial functions. The Nyanja term used in central Ngoniland for the courts at the lowest level was *kwale*, literally the open space in front of the *indlunkulu* in any Ngoni village. Nothing could be apparently more informal than the discussion among a group of senior men called together by the headman, on a verandah or under a big tree, in order to settle quarrels and hear complaints. No formal records were kept, there was no clerk, and there was no summing up or pronouncement of judgment. There was, if the meeting was successful, general agreement about the action necessary and about who ought to initiate action. Above the level of this village headman's court were the courts of the *ahamsanse* held at their head villages, and above them again the chiefs' courts. After 1933 the courts of the *ahamsanse* gave place to the courts at the head villages of the chiefs. The proceedings there were more formal and included presenting evidence, defending the case and pronouncing judgement on cases rather than, as in the villages, talking things over and appealing to certain principles to re-establish equilibrium and resolve disputes.

The Ngoni nevertheless always recognised these courts at the village [622] level as an integral part of their system. It was the mark of a good headman that he should be able to settle the minor cases in his village without [563] constant reference to higher authority. The majority of villages under Ngoni rule were villages of local tribes who had surrendered to, or been conquered by, the Ngoni. The headmen were therefore of the local tribe, as a rule surrounded by their kinsmen, and their position carried with it the necessity of relating local tribal custom, especially in matters involving marriage and family affairs, to the legal principles and procedure of the Ngoni courts. Many cases came before the courts in

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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central Ngoniland in which Ngoni law and usage differed from local usage in such matters as the custody of children, the right to 'leave the village' and the ownership of cattle.

Above the informal courts of the village headmen were the courts held in pre-European days at the head villages of the *ahemnanu*. A *mahemnanu* was called 'the owner' of those villages surrounding his head village, consisting of his own clan members, local people and captives. The *mahemnanu* had a double interest in maintaining justice in his area. If he failed in a case, there was in the central kingdom only one court above him—that of the Paramount—though in the northern kingdom the areas ruled by the leading Jere chiefs had courts which came between the *ahemnanu* and the Paramount. Except in cases of murder and witchcraft, which he was obliged to take to the Paramount's court, the *mahemnanu* was anxious to prove to the Paramount that he was a man fit to hold and wield authority over a number of villages. He was also concerned to maintain his authority among his own people, and this was recognized most clearly in the conduct of cases in his court. The system of checks and balances in the Ngoni political organization required that the Paramount should always dominate, but at the same time delegate authority to his chiefs and the heads of leading clans. The authority exercised by a *mahemnanu* derived from his leadership of a Swazi or trans-Zambezi clan in a particular area, but he had to maintain his position in pre-European days by constant vigilance over his people. In the process of holding together villages of mixed tribal origin the courts of the *ahemnanu* and the administration of law in them played an important integrating role.

The conduct of cases in Ngoni courts

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Informants in the northern and central kingdoms made it clear that there were certain common elements in Ngoni procedure in pre-European days which were carried on in the courts in the 1930's. The one who brought the case to court, the *plaintiff*, was called the *owner* of the case (*mwini wa nkonde*). Those who were called as witnesses were those who were present at the time of the quarrel who might have seen or heard something which bore on the case. The Ngoni practice of legal procedure was not to call witnesses to support either side, but to appeal to the public to give evidence about what had occurred. I heard Ngoni councillors press a witness to say exactly where he or she was at the time of an assault. On other occasions they addressed a witness in these terms: 'Now you are from X's family. Here in this court you must tell us truly what happened. Do not be afraid. Do not remember your kinship (*ukuhi*) but remember what you saw, and speak well.' There was explicit in this approach a definite appeal to the public to take their part in seeing that justice was done and so restoring equilibrium and good feeling in the village. If the councillors who were conducting a case

695 suspected a witness of lying, they accused him of doing so after he had told his story. If he persisted in his version of the events, and they still thought he was lying, they cross-questioned him, and when the point where he contradicted himself was reached they turned on him and said: 'You lied. Now you have said you lied. You do not speak well.'

671 In the following account of Ngoni law by Cibambo there are two main emphases. One is on the existence of law, in the sense of a norm
695 of good conduct, conformity to which was expected and enforced. The text at the beginning of this chapter showed how the law was made known to all the inhabitants of the country, so that ignorance could not be pleaded as an excuse for law-breaking. The other emphasis is on decorum and the regular and accepted pattern of behaviour expected in the courts, and on the Ngoni hatred of bribery, which was claimed by them, and on the whole endorsed by Europeans.[1] Respect for the law, for the court in session and for the judgement, are expressed in Cibambo's account of the proceedings, and the winner of the case (though formerly it was the loser) expressed his thanks, after judgement was given, to the Paramount or the chief, and to the elders.

671 ¶ The laws and the power to punish disturbers of the peace were in the power of the Paramount and those who were under him. If there was a
692 bad case in which the guilty man deserved death according to the law, such a matter was in the power of the Paramount and the lesser chiefs who helped him, and of them only. It was the same in the case of anyone who deserved to be despoiled of all his possessions because of his wrong-doing. The law was a protection for the people who might have been killed cruelly by their masters if they had had the power. People who were in danger from those who were above them, in danger of confiscation or of death, ran to the younger brothers of the Paramount or to the Paramount himself or sometimes they ran to the great *izinduna*. Praises had been added to those of Chief Mtwalo for this very reason that he had saved many whom Mbelwa had wanted to kill *'Izifuba zimnamnani, ababa ababetwala ababomnanwe'* (a chest with words which spoke for the men of middle height).

692 If people quarrelled in a village and could not be reconciled it was the work, as it is today, of the headman to try and bring them together, and if he thought that one had wronged the other he ordered him to bring something to recompense the other. Such recompenses were small things, from beads to a goat, perhaps an axe or a hoe. If the headman found he could not settle the business he went with them himself to the next court, to the head of the group of villages, and the standard of the payment increased. Serious cases went to the courts of the chiefs but these cases were few and not like today. People were very much afraid of each other

[1] On the walls of Paramount Mbelwa's court in Mzimba district in north Nyasaland were painted three sayings in English and in Tumbuka. Over the Paramount's chair was written 'Justice is blind'; by the place where the witnesses stood to speak, 'The law has no respect of a person'; and over where the general public sat 'Everyone is equal before the law'.

and appeals were uncommon. Chiefs did not allow a man to come by himself with his case to them, he had to come with his headman. Even those in danger of death went first to the headmen and these brought them to the chiefs. 692

The Ngoni hated bribes. If any indunu was found to have taken bribes from people he was condemned and punished. [687]

The hearing of the cases was like what it is today. The one who brought the case to the court spoke first, then the one with whom he was quarrelling. If there were elders there from their village they also spoke telling out how these people quarrelled, saying so-and-so began to quarrel in such-and-such a way, and then showed how they had been unable to judge it in the village. They did not go into details of the quarrel, that was done by the men themselves. After those who had quarrelled had told of the beginning of the case any who knew of it were asked to say how it appeared to them in the village. These were the witnesses both for and against. 695

When this had been done, all who were implicated or interested in the case remained silent. It is the custom of the Ngoni that all who spoke in a case should stand and have a stick, and as they spoke they should walk about and limp with the stick or sometimes stand all together, but in that case the hand which held the stick should shake and stick it into the ground. Only women spoke seated. No one at the hearing of a case was allowed to lie down, everyone, even the Paramount, sat. They did this because they were afraid that otherwise the case would not finish quickly. The court was held in the cattle kraal. Women were not allowed into the kraal for cases, but sat outside opposite where the old men were gathered, even though they were the wives of the Paramount. 695 516

After the litigants and the witnesses had spoken it was the turn of the elders of the court. They questioned and agreed with or criticized the men who had quarrelled but they did not pronounce judgement. They waited for the Paramount who first of all sat silent and noticed those who unravelled or twisted the case. Afterwards when the people had finished speaking, the elders delivered the story to the Paramount or judge. The judge then delivered his judgement and condemned those who had twisted the case. He delivered his judgement sitting not standing like the other people and when he had finished all thanked him, or rather saluted him with a loud '*Bayete*' or with the surname if to lesser chiefs. Sometimes he sent an elder to tell the court the judgement. When the case had been judged no one criticized the judgement. The one who began to give thanks for the judgement was the one who was found guilty: this he did to show submission and repentance. The custom of today that the one who wins the case gives the thanks is not good because the man who has lost goes away in resentment and discontent and often the case crops up again. 695 [694]

If an indunu or man of standing went secretly to the Paramount to accuse somebody that he deserved death (perhaps for witchcraft), very often the Paramount sent a man in secret to warn the condemned man to run to a chief's village and hide his head. In this way many left their indunu and went to build with the chiefs and when they went they took 693 692 692

all their things

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *irizi zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
685 this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was
778 death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *iniedusa* and the *amadoda* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticised each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The
[857] discussion of court and cases extended to the play of children and to the conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *lomni* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organising his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

631 NGONI OFFICE-BEARERS

622 In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni
645 political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a
[566] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

be used exclusively for either group, and in fact there was considerable overlapping between them. 622 631

We begin with the text by Cibambo which emphasizes the hierarchy of office-bearers in the northern kingdom in pre-European days and illustrates the correlation between the courts and the political administration. 645

¶ The former government of the Ngoni was based on the following:

(1) Above all was the one called *Inhosi* or *UBaba*, because they thought of him as the father of the country, the head.

(2) After him came the *izinduna*. Sometimes these were two or perhaps four. These were very highly honoured and the Paramount feared them greatly: he called them *Bobaba* and their words had great weight with him. They were the ones who gave advice to the Paramount and if any grave matter arose he called them to hear what they thought. The Paramount in his village had also his old men who helped him with everything small that did not need to go to the *izinduna*. If there was word that the Paramount was meeting with the *izinduna* he first of all met with the old men and asked for advice to place before the *izinduna*. And these old men had the right to speak when the Paramount took counsel with the *izinduna*.

(3) After the *izinduna* came the *amakosana*, or lesser chiefs. These were perhaps the younger brothers of the ruling Paramount, and had their districts under him. They also had their *izinduna* and were responsible for their own districts. When the Paramount met with the *izinduna*, the *amakosana* were also there if it was considered fitting.

(4) Then there were the *alumuzana*. These were over villages or smaller districts. Their villages were called *amakanda* (heads) and they had power in their small districts to carry out the laws and they looked to the *izinduna* for instructions.

(5) Lastly the old men (*madoda*) who wore the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) but not all of them; only those who had good sense and understood the ways of the tribe. [888]

All these five divisions had their share in the government of the country. If there was a great court of justice, all these were to be found at it, and took part in the discussions. If fresh matter arose, or new laws, these delivered them to their villages. Also there were men called *amaxuxus*, messengers. These were men chosen to run with messages from the Paramount to the *izinduna* or *amakosana*, to go with and return with news. Almost every village or little district had its chosen messengers. All the types (2), (3) and (4) had their messengers. When anything happened, the messenger in the village of the Paramount made a general proclamation and called the *amaxuxus* together. When the *amaxuxus* had heard the message they scattered throughout all the country. So in the districts and by this way news travelled very quickly. [203]

In the central kingdom one of the big *izinduna* explained the change in their system which occurred after crossing the Zambesi: 178 622 631

¶ When the Ngoni were coming from the south they chose lesser chiefs and *izinduna* from the *amakosana*, who were the Paramount's brothers, 645

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 622 631 645 sons of his father and of his father's brothers. These *amakosana* were honoured next to the Paramount. The *alumuzana* were for justice in the courts, and for being the 'ears of the Paramount' in all the country. The change was made by Mputa because he saw that if the *amakosana* were given power they claimed to be big chiefs themselves. Therefore he chose for the courts and for the leaders in war and for lesser chiefs the *alumuzana* and *izinduna* who were clever and whom they could trust.

184 622 631 645 [698] The diagram on p. 99 relates to the period between 1933 and 1939 and sets out first the officials in the territorial divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms from the Paramount to the headman of a village. In the northern kingdom only the Paramount and the six chiefs had recognized courts, the chiefs' courts operating for their districts and the Paramount's court for the whole kingdom. There were two sets of office-bearers who had no courts but who exercised authority over groups of villages. One group consisted of members of the Jere clan who were not recognized chiefs but were *amakosana*, literally 'children of the chief' but used as a rule for all members of the royal clan. Only certain *amakosana* had villages under them. The other group consisted of the heads of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who owned several villages and sometimes had authority over a large area. Cibambo put this group below that of the chiefs, and other informants confirmed this as the pre-European pattern. But the informants also said that many of the powerful *alumuzana* formerly had their own courts and did not have to bring their cases to the chiefs' courts as they did in the 1930's. At the bottom of the territorial hierarchy came the headmen of single villages. In some cases the village headman had formerly been an *induna* in a large village which had broken up. Some were of the royal clan or of Swazi clans. The majority belonged to the local tribes and were owners of villages which were for the most part villages of one kinship group.

The text about the hierarchy in the central kingdom shows that a deliberate change had been made in the traditional pattern through a struggle between the Paramount and his brothers when they had recognized positions as chiefs. The *alumuzana* who appear in the diagram as chiefs were the six who were recognized in 1933 as Subordinate Native Authorities. There were other *alumuzana* who were not so recognized, and certain members of the royal clan, all of whom owned a number of villages but had to take their cases to the recognized courts. The division caused by setting up the Portuguese boundary in the 1890's left many of the leaders of the Maseko clan on the Portuguese side, with the result that the number of *amakosana* owning villages and taking any prominent part in the life of the kingdom was very small; and another large group of the Maseko clan were in Dedza district under Chief Kacindameto. The majority of village headmen in the central kingdom were of local tribes, and their villages were as a rule much larger than those in the northern kingdom.

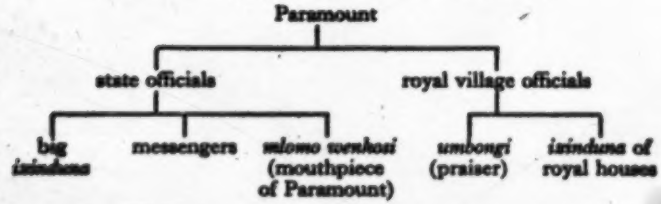
 184

Ngoni territorial office-bearers. 622

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Paramount	Paramount
chiefs (*amahosana*)	*alumuzana* (chiefs)
other *amahosana* and *alumuzana* (no courts)	other *alumuzana* and *amahosana* (no courts)
village headmen	village headmen

631 643 645

Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *izinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only [illegible] ceremonies in the royal village. 643 645

The big *izinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *izinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below his. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *alumuzana* and *amahosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned. [203] 885

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the 692

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

885 diagram is that of the *madoda*, the older men who wore the head-ring.
692 Probably in pre-European days they received more recognition than was apparent in the 1930's after the head-ring had been given up. The *madoda* will be referred to in the next chapter on the royal village and in Chapter V of Part III on age sets. In the appeal court of the Paramount and in the chief's court there was always a group of these senior men sitting behind the *ixinduna*, to whom the *induna* speaking to the case sometimes turned for advice and consultation.

645 Reference was made to an overlap between territorial office-bearers and national office-bearers. The big *ixinduna*, the spokesman of the Paramount, and sometimes the messengers, were members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and often were *alumuzana* who had no courts. This was a method by which in the 1930's those *alumuzana* could be drawn into the circle of officials and receive a small salary for their services.

This set of office-bearers which we have considered in relation to the Paramount, with the exception of his spokesman and his praiser, was duplicated for the chiefs in both kingdoms, whether they were of the royal clan or *alumuzana*. The account of the royal village in the central kingdom which follows in the next chapter will illustrate how these officials functioned in the day-to-day affairs of the Paramount's headquarters.

CHAPTER V

A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933

The Paramount and his village

361 [114] [13] 161 For some weeks in 1935 and in 1936 I lived in the Paramount's village of Magangs in the central kingdom. The central kingdom included all Ncheu district, consisting of 1,092 square miles, a total population of 88,446, and a density of 80·99 per square mile. The village was 300 yards off the main road running from north to south of Nyasaland, and was approached by a hoed motor road flanked by huts. It consisted of three main sections: the Paramount's large brick residence and the surrounding buildings within a palisade or reed fence, including the huts of his daughter and son-in-law, and of his brother-in-law and sister; the huts and kraal in the section of the *induna* of his big house, Kalilombe Mbewe; and the huts and kraal of the original village 'owned' by the headman, Lazaro Dzonzi. On the south of the village was the large open space where the weekly market was held, and where several Indian stores faced the main road. On the north was the dispensary building,

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the circular court-house in a commanding position on a small hill with a big open space all round it. 361

There were several places in this village which were referred to as the *bwalo*: they included the open space within the reed fence of the Paramount's section, the much larger open and unfenced space round the court-house, and the more restricted spaces round the huts of the *induna* and of the headman. The meaning of the term *bwalo* was always slightly ambiguous in this village since it was often used for the verandah of the royal residence, as well as the open space in front of it. The central Ngoni custom of surrounding the huts of important men and women with high reed fences with a narrow opening, made it easy to say '*ali pa bwalo*', 'he is on the *bwalo*', so that it covered either the verandah of the hut or the space inside the fence. The local usage of *bwalo* by the Cewa people more often denoted the open space in the middle of the village where the men congregated to sit and talk and drink beer.[1] The connotation of *bwalo* in Ngoni villages in the central kingdom was usually in terms of the big house and the space in front of it within the fence.

In Maganga the place to which the name *bwalo* was most often applied was the space within the reed fence surrounding the Paramount's large brick residence and the outbuildings. When I lived in one of the outbuildings at the back of the house, I was said to be living *pa bwalo*; and it was also alluded to as *pa cigodlo*, that is in the enclosure where the Paramount's children lived behind the big house. His daughter's hut was in this section, on the north side, and beyond her hut was that of the *mlomo wenkosi*, who was also the Paramount's brother-in-law, since he had married the Paramount's sister and was the brother of the Paramount's wife. In the other buildings within the reed fence lived several servants of the household, and at the kitchen end of the brick house lived the girls who assisted the Paramount's wife with cooking and looking after her younger children. 643 342 361

When the Paramount built his court-house, he built some offices as part of it for himself, his *mlomo wenkosi*, his treasurer and the court clerk. The intention had been that official business would be carried out there, and relieve the big house of some of its many callers, and also ensure some measure of privacy for those who lived there. It proved very difficult to achieve this separation of public and private affairs, since the tradition that the Paramount was accessible to all his people at all times was persistent. 344 643

The entrance to the enclosure or *bwalo* of the big house was guarded in the traditional manner. If strangers (and all visitors were called *alendo* or strangers) arrived on the side road leading off the main road, they inquired from one of the huts there if the headman was present and waited till he arrived. The headman then went to tell the *induna* or the *mlomo wenkosi* that strangers had come, while they waited till the reply 574 643

[1] Scott, D. C. *Mang'anja Dictionary*. Edinburgh, 1892.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

574 643 came. One of thee two officials usually came to greet them. He then informed the Parmount that strangers were present and took back the Paramount's greeing to them and asked their business. This was in turn reported to the Pramount, who arranged for their business to be taken care of and, if thy were important people, sent an invitation for them to come to the *bwalo*, to which they were escorted by one of his officials and given seats. h due time the Paramount came out of his house and they gave him the*Bayete* and then he greeted them. As a rule he carried, on all conversatio through his *mlomo wenkosi*, and, after staying for a short time, often vent back into the house and left his officials to entertain the guests. I the guests were visiting chiefs and *ahomuzana*, word had gone round when they first arrived, and the senior men of the village, the *madoa*, gathered to greet them, and sat in a group as they did for court case. Such conversations of a social nature took place as a rule in the courtyard where chairs and mats were placed. If it rained or was very hot thy went onto the verandah which ran the whole length of the house. Nevr, so far as I could discover, did visitors come into the house unless theywere close relatives of the Paramount or his wife.

Women visitos who came with the men or by themselves went through the sameprocedure of announcing themselves and stating their business. Then, ithey were important people, they were escorted to the courtyard at the ack of the big house where they were greeted by the Paramount's wifand by her daughter, who then settled down to talk with them, eitherut of doors or on the back verandah, according to the weather. It was tual for the Paramount's wife and daughter also to go and greet the ma visitors on the front verandah or in the courtyard. 26 They did not sta, however, and if the visitors had come from far the 579 643 Paramount tol his wife, after she had greeted them, to 'catch a fowl'. When she returned to the back courtyard, children chased hens and there was squawking and yelling until the right number had been caught and killed. Pounding of maize began, the fowls were dressed and put in pots on the fire and other 'relish' was prepared of vegetables and groundnuts, and the flour was cooked to make porridge (*nsima*). The Paramount's wife and her helpers prepared the best pot-roast of chicken I have ever had. Food thus prepared was served to the guests on the front verandah in the traditional style, the porridge in food baskets (*nsengwa*), the chicken and other relish in small covered pots. The Paramount offered the food to his guests and then withdrew into the house. When they received the food, as well as when they had finished eating, they [576] thanked him with the traditional *Bayete nkosi*, adding, if they were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, some of the praise names or *isitokozo* of the Maseko Paramounts. To European visitors, and occasionally to Christian Africans, tea was offered with milk and sugar.

574 643 Viewed from the back *bwalo*, where I lived and watched all this happening and listened to comments, it was evident that the never-ending

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

hospitality involved both planning and expense. The Paramount's wife had to keep enough food stocks on hand not only to feed her own large family and household, but also to be able to respond to expected and unexpected guests. The Paramount's personal annual salary at that time was £60, out of which he had to keep his family and household in food and clothes and school fees, and pay for the upkeep of his house. The bulk of the cereals and some of the beans and other vegetables used in his house came from his fields worked by hired labour. Another source of food supply was the market 'custom', a small toll levied on the produce sold in the weekly market, which was paid chiefly in kind and put in the storehouses on the Paramount's *bwalo* to be used to feed his guests.[1]

The Paramount not only gave food and drink to the expected and unexpected visitors to the royal village. From time to time he gave a feast to which the Christians of the congregation of the mission church were invited, as on one New Year's Day when I was staying there. He gave a feast to all the neighbourhood on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. From time to time he invited all his people to dance *ligubo* or *ngoma* at the royal village and provided beer for all and food for the *alumuzana* and the chiefs and their wives. The organization of these big feasts demanded planning on a generous scale and a large outlay in maize for porridge and meat for relish. No feast at the Paramount's village was complete without meat enough to satisfy everyone.

The visitors, the feasts, the dances, all had their focal point in the royal residence in the royal village. There were two other focal points in the village where large numbers of people came regularly, and made the place where the Paramount lived a centre which brought his people together and brought him before them as their ruler. These were the market and the court-house which also housed his offices.

Before 1939 the market in the royal village was unique in the area for its size and the service which it rendered to the countryside. At any one time on a Saturday there would be 600 to 1,000 people present. In 1938 a second market was opened by the Paramount at Nsipe at the southern end of his territory. They were definitely his markets in that he allotted space for them; fixed the days on which they were held; controlled the policing of the market and the strangers' huts where sellers arriving overnight could sleep; fixed the prices according to seasonal variations in supply; and, as we have seen, collected 'custom' in lieu of rents for sites. The market at Maganga served an area extending roughly 15 miles to the east, 15 to the west and 10 miles to the north and south. It stretched in the east to below the escarpment whence came bamboo and

[1] An average weekly amount of custom reckoned over several weeks was 10*s.* in cash, and a quantity of bananas, sugar-cane, vegetables and cereals amounting to two sackfuls and sometimes three. The cash was levied on meat, 1*s.* 9*d.* per cow, 1*s.* 6*d.* per goat or pig; and on mats, baskets, etc. at roughly 1*d.* in the 1*s.*

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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sugar cane, and fish from the lake. From the west came sellers of foodstuffs, mainly maize and vegetables, from the villages in Portuguese territory. Whether by accident or design the sellers took up their stands in the market-place on the side to which they first came. Thus on the east side were the fish-sellers, who had carried their fish up the two escarpments from the lake during the night. Near them were the sellers of bamboo and bark-rope, reed and raffia mats, baskets of all kinds, wooden spoons and hoe handles. The vegetable sellers mostly from Portuguese villages were on the western edge of the market. In the centre under some trees were the butchers selling meat and cutting up the cattle, pigs and goats which they had killed in the early morning. Pottery was in another section, thread for bead-work and grass hats and bangles in another. On the edge of the market site were the Indian stores where, on market days, people with cash in hand from their sales bought cloth and had it made up by the tailors sitting with their sewing machines on the verandahs of the stores.

The Paramount's early life and marriage

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The officials surrounding the Paramount in the central kingdom were aware that he had begun his rule under difficulties owing to the death of his father. Two texts on this follow, the first by the *induna* of the royal village, Kalilombe Mbewe, and the second by Ishmael Mwale the treasurer of the Paramount, neither of them members of trans-Zambesi clans, but both imbued with Ngoni sentiments and sense of values and devoted to the royal clan.[1] The first text emphasizes the action taken by the two big *izinduna* of the Paramount to hide and protect the young heir to the Paramountcy, and to look after the wives of the big house.

¶ Formerly we were on Domwe, and when we left there, we built the first village here and its name was Lizulu. When Gomani I was taken by the Europeans his *izinduna* Cakumbira Ndau and Mambeyu Moyo were here at Lizulu. When Gomani I was taken, his son Phillip Gomani was a young child. He stayed with Cakumbira Ndau, so did the big wives of Gomani I. Other wives of Gomani I went to their own families. Cakumbira took with him from Domwe his own cattle and those of the Paramount. When Gomani I was killed the Europeans did not ask about the child who would enter his place. Later when the people were accustomed to the Europeans, the Europeans asked: 'Who is the child who should enter his place?' And the senior men brought him out from hiding and said 'This is he.' The senior men revealed this because they knew that the war had finished and that he could not be killed.

The text by the treasurer takes up the story from the times when the existence of the heir to the Paramount was made known, and covers

[1] The fathers of both these men had been taken by the Ngoni from near the Kirk Range, and trained as warriors in Songea before returning to Nyasaland to the royal village on Domwe mountain.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

his boyhood, schooling, marriage, conversion to Christianity and accession to the Paramountcy. The first paragraph refers to the action of a European who had made contact with the young heir because of his friendship with his father. 643

¶ When Mr. Walker returned to Lizulu on another journey he told the big people, 'Today I am taking the big child and I will bring him up in my home.' He took Philip Gomani and he looked after him very well, in the same way as a black man would bring up his child. He engaged a man to teach the child until he knew Cinyanja well and could read and write it. Altogether he took care of him for five years, and then he brought him back to Lizulu.

When the children were back at the village they were thinking and thinking about the European schools. When they were thus thinking, another European came who lived at Nsoni in the Mang'anja country. He came to recruit men for work. When he saw the children he asked them 'Why do you children just stay here without learning anything?' The children said 'It is school that we want, but we have no means by which we can be helped to go to school'. This European said 'Where I live there is a school of the Blantyre Mission. If you come I will take care of you and pay your school fees.' In very truth when those children went to him, he took care of them well, fed and clothed them and paid their school fees as he said.

In 1915 when he was still at school the Paramount married NaNdau. And the big people said 'The child of the Paramount who ought to enter the chieftainship ought not to marry only one wife.' Because they spoke thus he also married two other women, NaNungu and NaMilanzi, whose home was in the Portuguese country in Mpanyila in Chief Zintambira's kingdom. The Paramount did not want these three wives, and only took them because of the words of the big people. When he had stayed with 747
them only one year, he sent away those two wives and said 'I want to join the Church', and so began in the Bible Class at Blantyre Mission to learn 643
there.

In 1917 before he had finished school they began to build his house in the village which was called Magangs. It was his coming out of the village of Chief Cakumbira. When he left Blantyre in 1918 he went to live in his village because he had finished school. He came with a letter from the Bible Class. But the elders of the church of the Dutch mission in that country did not believe that it could be true that the child of the Paramount would join the church. Before he had been received by the mission, there came to his house at Magangs a European woman who said 'This house is very good. It ought to belong to a Christian'. The Paramount said 'I changed my heart long ago. I brought my letter from the Bible Class and gave it to the elders of the church but they said nothing to me.' Then she said 'Tomorrow you come to my place and let us talk.' The Paramount went. When they had talked she told the minister of the mission station. He said 'All right, next week you come and I will examine you.' That week the Paramount was tested and showed that he believed all the teachings.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

797 In 1921 he was baptised by the Rev. J. Botes in the year in which he entered the chieftainship, when Cakumbira, the one who took care of the
643 chieftainship, had died. For entering the chieftainship there was not much to be done. The people gathered together, and the Paramount just stood up and grasped his spear and pointed to the south-east. The people danced *ligubo* and praised the Paramount.

The people began to consider and said 'Seeing that he is a young man, how will he know how to judge the cases?' Ha! But there was confusion in their minds, because his judgements excelled those of the big people who had judged formerly. From 1921 to today in all matters he has the chieftainship and Christianity. He holds both these in his hand to strengthen him.

361 The texts bring out several points relative to the royal village which
643 arose from the circumstances surrounding the early life of the Paramount. Reference has already been made to the large royal village on Domwe which broke up when Cikusi entered the Paramountcy and built his *lusungulu* village at Liwisini near the Kirk Range. The section of the royal village called Lizulu moved out almost due east from Domwe under its big *induna*, Cakumbira Ndau. When Gomani I was killed after a brief reign of five years, the Ndau clan brought to their village the big wives of Gomani I, including NaMagagula his first wife, in whose house the child Philip Gomani was brought up. With the big *induna* of Lizulu of the Ndau clan was Mambeyu Moyo, one of the big war *izinduna* of Cikusi. Lizulu, with NaMagagula living there, was regarded as the *gogo* village of the Paramount, and from there his own *lusungulu* village went out to build at Magangs where there was already a village under a headman of the local tribe. One of the reasons given for building on a village site already occupied was that the Portuguese frontier restricted all movements to the west, and round the village of Lizulu to the east and south a number of outlying villages were already in existence. Proximity to the main north to south Nyasaland road was also considered a good reason for building the Paramount's village on the site at Magangs. Lizulu village had two important aspects. It was the *gogo* village of the Paramount, and it was also the head village of the Ndau
643 clan, and the court of Chief George Ndau who was one of the S.N.A.

[797] The conversion of the Paramount to Christianity was a severe blow for the older officials in his kingdom. They feared that much of the ritual associated with the office of the Paramount would necessarily disappear and that the Ngoni kingdom would become weakened in consequence. Three events partly allayed these fears though the older men were never wholly reconciled. One was his marriage to NaNdau, daughter of Cakumbira Ndau who had hidden him, thus binding the royal line to the powerful Ndau clan which had protected him in his childhood. Another was the recognition in 1933 by the Nyasaland government of the Paramountcy with its Appeal Court. The third was

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount's interest in modern aspects of administration, especially after his visit to the course for chiefs held at the Jeanes School in Zomba in 1934. The old councillors, sceptical though they were of many modern innovations, recognized that they were in line with European ideas of administration, and also that they appealed to the younger educated men in the kingdom who had travelled and seen other countries and ways of living. 643

The Paramount married NaNdau as his big wife, and though, as the text mentions, he married two other wives when urged by the senior men, he sent them away after a year or two and NaNdau remained his only wife. She had an assured position since she bore him five sons and two daughters, the first-born being a daughter and receiving all the respect due to a Royal Sister. One of the brothers of NaNdau was chief of a division, and another was *mlomo wakosi* to the Paramount. She succeeded in maintaining much of the traditional pattern in the royal village and the big house. Her personal supervision of the household was thorough and competent. She exercised complete authority over the girls and women belonging to the household and arranged that the Ngoni custom of examining the young girls, including her own daughter, at regular intervals should be maintained. Her knowledge of Ngoni songs and dances, and her own skilled and graceful participation in the dances on state occasions, brought her before the people in her role as the big wife. At the feasts given by the Paramount she moved about among the people to serve them, and listened to complaints from the women about affairs in their villages which she then handed on to her husband. [595] [586] 644

The back verandah and all the outbuildings were the domain of the Paramount's wife. When I was there, she had some ten or twelve girls *and women as well as several men working* for her. They came and went if they had homes elsewhere, and the personnel changed often. All the household work was done by them: bringing water and fuel, pounding maize, and a good deal of the cooking, though this was closely supervised by the Paramount's wife. No beer was made in the household as it was against the rules of the church to which they belonged. In other Ngoni households of subordinate chiefs and *alumuzana* who were not Christian, the brewing of beer was a time-absorbing part of the household tasks and was shared by the different wives under the supervision of the big house. In Magungu, when the Paramount was entertaining unexpected guests and wanted to offer them beer, he inquired from his *induna* if anyone was brewing beer in the village, and sent for some for which he paid. When he knew beforehand that guests were coming who would expect beer to be offered to them as part of the Paramount's hospitality, he told his *induna* to see that beer was made in one of the village households, and he paid for it. [273]

The cooking which went on in the big house kitchens was always extensive. The Paramount, his wife and six children had two meals a 643 574 264

643 day, and so did all the regular helpers in the household. The stream of
574 visitors was incessant, especially on Saturdays when the market was
264 held, and on the days when the Appeal Court was in session at the court-house adjoining the village. Not every caller was given food, but if they came from a distance it was always offered. In the setting of a modern brick house and a Christian household with only one wife, the Paramount had to provide a great deal of hospitality. The old tradition that *alumuzana* and other important men visited the Paramount daily no longer held. But the weekly market and the court meetings, and the lorry service on the main road bringing callers from north and south, as well as administrative affairs which had constantly to be discussed and settled, made the Paramount's house and *bwalo* a very busy place.

Officials of the royal village and state officials

574 When I lived in the royal village for several weeks I was aware of a
643 never-ending stream of persons coming to consult or to work with the
645 Paramount. Well protected as he was by the Ngoni method of indirect approach and the surveillance of the village and *bwalo* by the *induna of* the big house and the *mlomo wenkosi*, the Paramount was still subject to constant inquiries from his office-bearers who needed his counsel, and from persons great and small from all over his kingdom who believed that he could help them. Among the village officials the *induna* of the big house worked closely with the headman of the village, and displayed unremitting efforts to see that all affairs in the immediate neighbourhood of the Paramount should go smoothly. They were constantly on the *bwalo* of the big house, or near the gate of the fence surrounding it. These two always turned up when visitors came, and sat on the verandah or in the *bwalo* with the other senior men, *and kept an eye on* all that happened. If anything went wrong in the village or the compound when the Paramount was away they were in great distress, as on one occasion when a man ran amok and threatened people with a knife. There was a strong tradition that around the Paramount and his living quarters everything and everyone had to be orderly and peaceable.

645 The *nwbungi*, or praiser of the Paramount, was among the royal vil-
574 lage officials, though he only appeared on the *bwalo* when ceremonies took place there. He sometimes came when important visitors arrived if their visit was known in advance. He always came to the big dances and feasts held at the royal village. He was an old man, tall and spare, leaning heavily on a long staff, and many of the onlookers who listened attentively to his praise-songs showed nervousness when he began making personal remarks, for he had a sharp tongue and a flow of language.

Of the state officials the *mlomo wenkosi* was seldom away from the big house or far from the person of the Paramount. He had married the Paramount's sister, and was own brother to the *inkosikazi*, and his

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

kinship links strengthened and facilitated his official relations. If the Paramount went away visiting, he generally went with him, and if he were very busy or resting, then the *nkomo mnkosi* would act as his assistant and endeavour to meet the needs of the applicants. He was known on the register of Native Administration employees as the Paramount's assistant. 645 574

The other state officials who were constantly at the royal village included the clerk of the Appeal Court, the four councillors, the three messengers, and the treasurer. The clerk was in his office on most days, and when the court was sitting he kept the records. He also came to the big house when important visitors arrived and sat with the senior men. The four councillors and three messengers were all senior men, five of them of trans-Zambesi clans. The councillors conducted the cases in the court and reported to the Paramount, and spoke for him when he gave judgement. They and the messengers always came to the big house before the court opened, and returned there to eat food after the sessions were over. This was invariably an occasion for discussing cases and judgements and the general state of the country. The fact that the court was an Appeal Court, to which cases were referred from the six subordinate courts, enabled the councillors to estimate the efficiency of these courts in various parts of the country. Their private comments on the abilities of the respective chiefs to maintain order and judge cases in their courts were often caustic.

Several references have been made to the treasurer of the Paramount, a title assumed by Ishmael Mwale in view of his financial responsibilities for the central kingdom. The District Commissioner in his report for 1935 said: 645

« During the year the financial responsibility of the Native Authority was *increased: he was handed over the keys of his safe as the Bwana*, and the District Commissioner only handled his cash for the purpose of checking. Gomani's clerk has acquired or given himself the name of 'Treasurer', and in this capacity frequently visits the Subordinate Authorities to make a financial inspection of their books, and to collect money which is surplus to their needs and bring it on charge in the main account. The District Commissioner's role has in consequence become akin to that of an auditor.

Ishmael Mwale, the 'Treasurer', has shown ability for his duties. Not only is he capable of abstracting the revenue and expenditure of the Subordinate Authorities into a common ledger, but the time has now come when he should be fully capable of preparing draft estimates for the consideration of the District Commissioner.

The treasurer knew the country and the people of the different regions in a way that no other official of the Paramount knew them, and was therefore often called in for advice when petitions were brought in or complaints made. His eldest son married the Paramount's older daughter, and there was therefore a close tie between the two families.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

645 He was a student of Ngoni history and custom, and used his travels as treasurer to collect new information. He always intended to write a history of the central kingdom as Cibambo had done for the northern kingdom, but his public duties never gave him time.

643 645 974 In making contact with his people and keeping in touch with his officials the Paramount did not rely only on their visits to the royal village. Two or three times a year he toured his kingdom, accompanied by his *mkomo nwabai* and the treasurer, and stayed at the head villages of the chiefs and also of other *ahemzanza*. The treasurer spoke enthusiastically of the Paramount's habit of making himself known to his people and enabling them to present petitions to him in person. He met village headmen on their own ground, and *ahemzanza* who were unostentatiously directing the affairs of their villages and areas, as well as the official chiefs or Subordinate Native Authorities. He saw for himself how his own regulations were being carried out and how the measures for agricultural improvement and cattle-dipping which the Government was promoting were being adopted. These visits in his own territory were followed by visits to Blantyre and Zomba and to the mining centres outside the country where his people were working. He was thus able to check on the conditions in the subordinate chiefs' areas which had been created by the prolonged absence of men from the villages.

The Paramount and changes in law and custom

643 178 Through his school education at Blantyre, his membership of a Christian church, and through attending the chiefs' course at the Jeanes School in Zomba, the Paramount stood between the old and the new in the changing conditions in his kingdom. After the 1933 Ordinance one of the changes in administration was that a Native Authority had to budget for income and expenditure in his area. The income for 1935 for this 652 974 area was £1555, made up of a share of the taxes; fifty per cent. of the yearly rental of stores; court fines and fees and beer licences. The expenditure was £830, under items of salaries to the Paramount and subordinate chiefs; salaries for messengers, councillors, clerks and policemen; payment of fourpence per tax to the headmen of the villages so that it was to their advantage to collect the full amount; and a small sum for uniforms, office expenses and such items as cash boxes and handcuffs. This budget for the central Ngoni kingdom was drawn up in consultation with the District Officer by the Paramount and his treasurer. It was a source of great pride to the treasurer that he had, as we have seen, his own key to a safe in the District Office where he put the tax money collected in the area, and drew out sums needed for expenditure in the Paramount's office.

714 653 In 1933, as already mentioned, a meeting of subordinate chiefs, *ahemzanza* and headmen heard the Paramount's proposals for new regulations about village improvement and agreed to them. These regulations were

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

called 'to make a clean village', and were one of the results of the Paramount's visits to his area. They included building latrines, sweeping the open spaces round huts, disposing of rubbish, mending roofs and fences, smooth mudding of houses, digging wells. The Paramount appointed three men who were called *mnumbiwi* to go round the villages to inspect and report to him, and instituted a system of fines for failure to carry out these measures. In addition to promoting clean villages, he ordered that cattle were to be dipped regularly, cultivation was to be carried out by a ridge system instead of mounds, and all sick people, especially women, were to attend hospital. He sent his own daughter to hospital for her confinement, and she attended the baby clinic regularly with her child.

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Some of the changes in local customs which the Paramount ordered were not so easy to enforce as the newer practices in relation to health and hygiene. He forbade drinking at night when quarrelling became rife; he prohibited Cewa dances such as *vinyau* and *malumbo* and the Cewa female puberty rite of *cinamwali*. The only dances allowed were the Ngoni dance *ngoma*; the *ligubo* or war-dance at his village; and the individual hero's dance (*ligiya*) when a lion or leopard was brought to his village. Marriages had to be registered, and births and deaths recorded and reported to the Paramount when he visited the villages.

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It was always possible to start an argument among the senior men sitting on the Paramount's *bwalo*, or on the steps of his court-house, either on the subject of how far Ngoni law and custom had replaced local Ntumba and Cewa custom, or on the advantages and disadvantages of the modern reforms of the Paramount. Some of the older men were anxious to establish that the Ngoni, meaning those of the tsana-Zambwi clans, had not only achieved a political conquest but had also changed the practices of the local peoples and made them observe Ngoni customs. They used to assert, among other things, that the local people had become patrilineal, and had adopted a *lobolo* form of marriage—statements which could easily be disproved and were laughed at by the onlookers. On the other hand, they were right when they said that Ngoni laws and court procedure were universally approved and followed, and that the younger generations at least were willing to carry out the welfare measures of the Paramount. One constant feature of all such discussions of recent changes was the steady support given by the Ntumba and Tonga clan leaders to the Paramount and his rule. This, more than any other feature, proved that the tsana-Zambwi pattern of political rule had triumphed, and that in their loyalty to the Paramount and their practice of Ngoni custom the village headmen and their families could be counted on to support the rulers.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

PART III

NGONI SOCIETY

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CHAPTER I

NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF review was given in Chapter III of Part I of the main elements of Ngoni culture, analysed into 'patterns' covering kinship, village layout, ritual, ceremonial, and language. In this section we shall be considering the principal social institutions embodying Ngoni culture: their clans, houses, families and age sets. We shall find evidence in the two kingdoms of an extensive common element in the social organization which the Ngoni brought with them from the south. Some important diversities will be evident also, such as the variations in virilocal residence found in the central kingdom, and the less widespread practice there of *lobola* marriage. Those elements which were common to Ngoni social organization in both kingdoms were often those which distinguished Ngoni culture from that of the neighbouring peoples. Patrilineal descent, the house system, the ranking of clans, the *lamwi* organization of boys' life and activities—these were all distinctively Ngoni, practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and sometimes adopted by individuals and families of other clans who had been associated with the Ngoni over long periods. Nevertheless, in many of the villages of the central kingdom there were clearly two cultures existing side by side: the Ngoni culture being that of an aristocratic minority and the local culture that of the majority, who in the kingdom were equally subjects of the Paramount but in their villages possessed inferior social status. 114 121 [563 565]

Indications were to be seen, even in the more conservative and more isolated northern kingdom, that modern influences were affecting Ngoni social institutions. We have already noticed some of the effects of the cessation of warfare on a social system founded on military traditions. The exodus of young men from Ngoni villages to seek work elsewhere was very extensive, especially in the northern kingdom, where the level of education was higher but employment was not available, and this had repercussions on the age of marriage, the distribution of wealth, and the undertaking of family responsibilities, including the care of the old people. The gradual decline in polygyny, largely but not entirely due to the work of missions, was beginning to have its effects on the working of the house system and on the interrelations of the generations within the family group. 178 [595 597]

In the 1930's many of these modern changes were appearing but the traditional institutions were still functioning, and the Ngoni leaders themselves were clear about those forms and activities which were distinctively their own.

[p.114]

CHAPTER II

CLANS

In Chapter III of Part I we saw that the Ngoni clans had a particular role in their political and social organization. These clans had certain characteristics which distinguished them from the clans of the local peoples, and which they had in common with the Ngoni group of the South-eastern Bantu. The use of the clan name in address and in thanking for gifts, the strict exogamy in the clans, and the hierarchy of rank among the clans—these were all of southern origin. Mrs. Hunwick,[1] writing of the social organization among the northern Ngoni, said that the clan was called *ishongo*, 'a word referring more particularly to the name of the group'. The Ngoni spoke of their clan name as their *ishongo*, and they generally added 'that is my thanking name'. Dr. Kuper[2] used the term clan for 'the furthest extension of kinsmen traced through the father or the mother'. She referred also to the sub-division of clans among the Swazi—a process of fission by which a section of a clan was known by a double name, so that the Nkosi clan became the Nkosi Gininza, the Nkosi Mamba, with other sub-divisions. These divisions eventually became recognized as separate clans, so that marriage could take place between them, and so that the heads of the sub-clans could achieve independence from the head of the original clan. It is possible that some development of this kind took place after the Ngoni left Natal for, as we shall see later in this chapter, there were among the Ngoni a number of clan names which they said emphatically were Swazi but which were not among those noted by Dr. Kuper[3] or by Bryant.[4] In tracing the early history of the Swazi Dr. Kuper[5] distinguished between two periods: the first, when small patrilineal clans were migrating southwards, and the second, when rival clan heads became petty chiefs having non-clansmen among their subjects. At the beginning of their northward march Zwangendaba and Ngwane, in addition to being military leaders, were petty chiefs of this type, each including among his followers members of his own clan as well as others.

The Swazi became a heterogeneous nation composed of people from over 70 clan descent groups, of which one-fifth were true Swazi, one-seventh were prior inhabitants of the territory, and the rest were migrants into the kingdom. The clan hierarchy which was part of the structure of the nation showed, as Dr. Kuper[6] pointed out, 'some connexion between the rank of a clan and the period at which it was

[1] Hunwick, A. W., 'Social organization', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 80.
[2] Op. cit., p. 111.
[3] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 11.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 11.
[5] *Order Plans in Zululand and Natal*, pp. 180-90.
[6] Ibid. p. 113.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

incorporated into the nation'. This, as we saw in Chapter I of Part I, was what took place in the Ngoni kingdoms. By the time they settled in Nyasaland, a hierarchical relationship had been built up between the clans based on the length of time they had formed part of the Ngoni kingdoms. As the Swazi had their true Swazi, 'those found ahead', and late comers, so the Ngoni had their 'Swazi' clans, others from across the Zambezi, those who joined from this side, and the local peoples.

Dr. Kuper [1] summarized her description of the Swazi clan hierarchy by saying that it was 'neither precise nor static . . . a certain degree of mobility is recognized amongst the elite'. The Ngoni too had their own ways of adjusting a somewhat rigid system to suit their needs in spite of their recognition of the ranking of clans, and the fact that in the 1890's the kingdoms were ruled by an aristocracy. As among the Swazi, officials were appointed who did not belong to Swazi or trans-Zambezi clans. Much importance was attached, as also among the Swazi, to 'marrying up' and a number of instances of this were recorded, particularly in the central kingdom. In such cases a man, when explaining who he was, often gave the name of his mother as well as that of his father in order to impress upon the inquirer that he came from Swazi stock on one side, though his clan name, being his father's, did not show it.

Since some discussion of clans comes into every section of this book it will be useful to summarize here the main characteristics of the Ngoni clans in the two kingdoms. We shall be referring exclusively to the Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, except when others are specifically mentioned.

Each clan was primarily a group of people with a common name. The families bearing this name might be found throughout the Ngoni kingdoms and states, in the towns and elsewhere, as the census figures quoted in Chapter I, Part I show. Their kinship was recognized firstly through clan exogamy, and secondly through the fact that when Ngoni people met a fellow clansman, they greeted him with particular warmth and both individuals were prepared to render each other mutual service. I met a number of the younger educated Ngoni who set out on a journey in Nyasaland, or to Northern or Southern Rhodesia, with the express purpose of looking for fellow clansmen, getting hospitality from them, and inviting them to visit Nyasaland and receive return hospitality. I was present at one or two such meetings in Nyasaland between Ngoni from the two kingdoms and the conversation began by establishing what branch of the Mpezeni or Gama clan they belonged to, and where the head village was situated. Within each kingdom each clan had a head village, and the head of that village was the head of the clan. In most of the Swazi clans the head of the clan was acknowledged as a endlomnomo. This correlation between being head of a Swazi clan and being a

[1] Ibid. p. 250.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

G4 [G2] mukwamane was not invariable. Some informants said that *akwamane* were appointed by the Paramount. Others said that if the ancestor of a Swazi clan was known by name to have crossed the Zambezi with Zwangendaba or Mpezeni then his descendant in the direct line was always a *mukwamane*.

G4 [N9] It was the criterion of having a known ancestor and knowing the genealogy of the clan that was most widely accepted in acknowledging the head of a Swazi clan as *mukwamane*. At the clan head village prayers were addressed to this ancestor, his cattle were sacrificed, and the names recited as far back as tradition and memory could recall. Later we shall see that there were said to be about 25 Swazi clans in the northern kingdom and 29 in the central. Among these about 15 in the northern and 12 in the central kingdom had head villages where the ancestor cult was performed. In the central kingdom several of the leading clans had their head villages in Portuguese territory, and therefore did not carry out the cult in the central kingdom.

S5 G4 In the hierarchy of the clans the Swazi clans were the acknowledged leaders. In village and national life this leadership was accorded to the royal clans and the clans of the chiefs, and was the reason for the respect shown to *akwamane* who had no direct political power. Only the heads of Swazi clans possessed *izidwedwe* (honorific spittoons) which commemorated events in the past history of the clan leaders. On all ceremonial occasions heads of Swazi clans, whether in national or in village affairs, took precedence over the rest when walking in procession, standing for dances, taking part in ritual, or sitting down at feasts. Certain forms of burial, such as the use of a sheep-skin, and placing the corpse on a shelf in the grave, were observed only for members of the Swazi clans. [N6]

S5 G4 In arranging marriages, there was, in addition to strict exogamy within a clan, a prohibition on marriage between clans which had *ulude* (brotherhood) relations. In the central kingdom the royal clan, Mandu, had *ulude* with the Ngwane clan which provided the royal shadow, and with the Nzunga clan. The Nzunga and the Mandu clans shared the same totems, notably elephant and fish. As well as prohibited marriages between certain clans, there were preferred marriages between certain others. In general there was a preference for marriage between the families of leading Swazi clans. In the northern kingdom the Ngwenyama clan had a preference for marrying into the Tfula, Nhlanu, Mahlalela and Fakati clans. It was alleged that formerly they could marry only into these clans, but in the 1930's exceptions were found in a number of villages. [N4]

G4 The following lists of the names of Swazi clans were collected from informants in the two kingdoms, who were questioned closely about which names should be included under the title of Swazi. This was the grouping claimed by the Ngoni in both kingdoms. They said emphatic-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

ally 'There are Swazi clans.' The first set of names on each list, 17 in the northern kingdom and 11 in the central, occurs in the lists of clan names given by Kuper [1] and by Bryant.[2] Very few, however, were enumerated as names of actual Swazi clans either by Kuper or Bryant, and they related, in fact, to several tribal groups which were found in the early nineteenth century in Natal. The Ngoni made no attempt to separate these so-called Swazi clans into constituent tribal groups, as they did the Kumalo, Tsunga and Vezulu clans. I have therefore accepted this classification of these clans and used the name of Swazi as it was used by the Ngoni.

Swazi clans in the Ngoni kingdoms occurring in the lists of Kuper and Bryant

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Thula	Mamba
Nkosi	Magagula
Gama	Mlangeni
Nsiane	Masyani
Shandu	Magwenyi
Ngwenyama	Mahlalela
Ndlovudlela	Tshabe
Tfula	Fakla
Mpandlela	Mnisya
Mdluli	Mngomezulu
Fakazi	Dube
Mahlalela	Ngwenya
Madlela	
Mlangeni	
Mdluzi	
Ndlovu	
Ngwenya	

Swazi clans not occurring in the lists of Kuper and Bryant

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Lwa	Magongora
Nyambose	Ngwa
Mdluzi	Mdlela
Mbulayi	Ngwana
Mafinga	Ngwangwana
Ngwangwana	Ephondo
Gwazi	Gwazi
Mayosi	Nsunga
	Mhlambi
	Ptungwaba
	Nkambu
	Mawa
	Lihlwani
	Mtembeni
	Mafu

[1] op. cit. p. [illegible] [2] op. cit., pp. [illegible]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

614 The Ngoni were, as I have said, emphatic that the names on this second list should be included among the Swazi clans. It was headed in the northern kingdom by the royal clan and in the central kingdom by one of the most honoured clans, and all the clan names were in fact held in great respect. There are three possible explanations for their non-occurrence in the Kuper and Bryant lists. One is that the clan name and the isitakazelo, the ceremonial or address name, may have been interchanged, and the original clan name forgotten. Another explanation may be that fission of the clans took place on the march, and as a result new clan names appeared. Both these were likely and may account for some of the omissions. The third reason may be that on the march and after settlement the Ngoni may have forgotten the correct pronunciation even of their famous clan names, and the anthropologist may have made mistakes in transcribing them.

Reference was made earlier in the chapter to the fact that social mobility was found among the Ngoni aristocracy. One form in which this took place affected the position of individuals belonging to the royal clan. In the northern kingdom the chiefs as well as the Paramount all belonged to the royal clan, and descendants of the sons and grandsons of Zwangendaba and his brothers were found all over the kingdom. In the central kingdom, where none of the chiefs were of the royal clan, the descendants of Cibyawonga, the brother of Cikusi, were in the secession state under Chief Kacindamoto, and the children of the brothers of Cikusi and Gomani I were most of them living in the Portuguese Ngoni kingdom. Thus there were large numbers of the royal clan in the northern kingdom, some in the family groups of the chiefs, others living in their own or other villages; while in the central kingdom members of the royal clan were comparatively few in number and were excluded from all political power unless they were of the Paramount's immediate family. Members of other Swazi clans in the north felt they had to assert themselves against the dominance of the royal clan in social as well as political life. In the central kingdom it was the royal clan who asserted themselves socially because they had no political rights in the chiefdoms.

614 There was a general opinion that individuals bearing the royal clan name who were not of the immediate family of the Paramount or, in the 978 north, were not among his subordinate chiefs, ought not to trade on their 979 name. This meant in effect expecting to get hospitality and other formal recognition when visiting other villages. As one informant said 'If they come to a village they like people to tremble and say "A chief has come".' They wanted to be recognized everywhere as nobamas, children of chiefs. The popular resistance to these claims came from two sources. One was the general public who did not see why an ever-increasing number of people bearing the royal clan name should get free food and beer—gifts which they would not hesitate to give to people

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

they acknowledged as rulers or direct sons of rulers. The other opposition came from the heads of the Swazi clans who saw their claims to recognition threatened by large numbers of these makosana. When such a person was announced a makosana might comment to bystanders 'Who is this man? We do not know his father.' Then to save his face as well as that of the visitor, he would send a greeting to him and order beer to be supplied, while avoiding any elaborate form of entertainment. This subtle form of resistance to what were considered undue claims from lesser members of the royal clan was found everywhere.

In both kingdoms the Paramounts and chiefs, especially after 1933, appointed as officials for the kingdom and for the royal village, members of Swazi clans, but also, and increasingly, members of ciz-Zambezi and local clans. This practice brought together in the royal villages and in the chiefs' villages men of the ruling aristocracy and men of the lesser clans, to share administrative responsibility, to assist on ceremonial occasions, and to take part on an equal footing in giving and receiving hospitality. This mingling on the official level was one of the reasons why marriages became more frequent between girls of Swazi clans and men of non-Swazi clans whose fathers had been promoted to official positions. The marriage of Paramount Gomani II's daughter to the son of his treasurer was an illustration of this. The daughters of families of Swazi clans were also sought in marriage by men of non-Swazi clans who, through their education, had got well-paid work in the Government or in commercial firms, and could therefore afford to give cattle for *lobola* for the girls. These were two instances of the type of marrying up which in the 1930's was lessening the sharp division in social life between Swazi and other clans. We shall see in Chapter IV, pp. 133, 140) that Ngoni fathers of daughters married to non-Swazi clansmen found a way of keeping their married daughters, as well as their sons, in their villages, particularly in the central kingdom.

Though the Ngoni clan system in the 1930's was, in Dr. Kuper's phrase, 'neither precise nor static', it was an integral part of Ngoni social organization. It was closely related on the one hand to the ruling aristocracy, and on the other to the social hierarchy. Both in the villages and in the national life of the kingdoms individuals belonging to Swazi clans played a leading part in social and ceremonial life, and carried on those distinctive Ngoni practices which their ancestors had brought with them from the south.

CHAPTER III

HOUSES

361 171 823 WRITING of the social organization of the northern Ngoni among the South-eastern Bantu, Mrs. Hoernlé[1] referred to three divisions of the typical village: the *indlondolo* section where the principal hut was that of the mistress of the village; the *ikhokho* section on the left-hand side of this hut, and the *inqudi* section on the right. The terminology used by the northern Ngoni expressed right and left hand from the point of view of someone looking up from the gate of the kraal. I found that among the Ngoni they used right and left the other way as if the person were at the top of the kraal looking down at the gate, and I have adopted their usage.

171 361 554 Ngoni villages, which were royal villages or the head villages of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, also had a tripartite division into houses related to leading women, as we saw in the village plan in Chapter III of Part I, but there was a major difference between them and the northern Ngoni grouping described by Mrs. Hoernlé. In Ngoni villages the *indlondolo*, the hut at the head of the kraal, was occupied by the mother of the owner of the village, who had 'come out' with him from his father's village. In the right-hand section of the huts round the kraal was the hut of the owner's big wife, and on the left the hut of his next important wife. These three huts, representing three houses, were the focal points of the main divisions of the village. In fact in most villages the owner of the *indlondolo* had the huts of other widows of her late husband beside her on each side, and the *ziqudi*, or section where the sons of the owner of the village lived, spread over a wide area behind the *indlondolo* and behind the huts of the two chief wives. The plan used in Chapter III of Part I was necessarily simplified in order to bring out the main points. The grouping of huts in typical Ngoni villages showed varying degrees of elaboration, and it was not always easy or free to trace their connexions with the houses.

592 571 Houses in the Ngoni kingdoms could be considered as divisions of the village, though they did not always cover all the divisions. If we look at the membership of a house, as it was illustrated in a typical Ngoni village, it is clear that it had in it three elements connected by ties of kinship, affinity or association with the owner of the house, who was either a wife or a mother of the male owner of the village. The kinship group related to the *indlondolo* comprised the male owner of the village, his mother and classificatory mothers with his brothers who had joined him. In the big house and in the second house of his wives the kinship

[1] op. cit. p. 8.

group consisted of himself and the mother and her children, including her daughters only until they married. 571 592

The affinal element in a house consisted of the other wives associated with the owner of the house as co-wives, and the wives of the sons of the owner. Both the kinship group and the affinal group were bound together by their rights in the cattle of the herd which was known as 'the cattle of the house of X'. From that herd were taken cattle for the *lobola* of the wives married after the house was founded, and for the wives of the sons and adopted sons of the house. Into that herd came the cattle received for the marriages of the daughters belonging to the house and the gift cattle sent to wives by their fathers after marriage. When the *lobola* had been fully paid up for a daughter of the house, then her relationship with it ceased and she was thenceforth known as belonging to her husband's mother's house. 592 585 571 [591]

Associated with the house in the villages of the Paramounts, the chiefs and the leading *abamnumna* were two other groups of people. One was the *induna* appointed 'to take care of the house' and his family. In the *ezyo*'s the *induna* was in charge of the cattle and of the many activities connected with the house, including the organization of male labour in hut-building, in kraal construction and in cultivation; he was consulted by the male members of the house about the selling of cattle and the use of the goods accumulated in the house. The other group associated with the house in pre-European days consisted of captives taken in war and allocated to the house who worked as labourers. The servants who worked for a house in the *ezyo*'s assisted with cooking, beer-making and minding the children, and they had huts near that of the owner of the house to which they belonged, placed on the right- or left-hand side of the kraal according to their affiliation with the big house or the second house. Informants said that in the past such association with a house included giving a beast from the herd of the house for the marriage of a servant. The *induna*, through the marriage of his daughters, built up his own herd, which he frequently kept at first with the cattle of the house in the main kraal, later building his own kraal. 592 571 357 [592]

A new house began when a man married his big wife. Although at first he built her a hut at the back of his mother's hut in his father's village, as soon as he moved out to his new village after his father's death, the big wife's hut had the next most important site in the kraal after that of the *indlondlo*, and the second wife had the third place of importance. In some of the larger villages of the central kingdom, the custom of moving out into a new village after the death of the former owner had been given up, partly because of pressure on the land. The house grouping in relation to the siting of huts then became very complex, but the pattern was nevertheless discernible. The two sections under the big house and the *gqo* house, which had formerly divided into two villages, continued to exist together, and at Mankhetha this dual 561 591 592 [594] 561 592

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 592 pattern covered two generations including the houses of the former chief and the reigning one.

The houses served several purposes in the organization of village life on the one hand, and on the other, provided an important instrument for regulating succession and inheritance, and for carrying out traditional ceremonies and ritual. It was the eldest son of the second house who would, if the *lesungulo* practice was followed, remain behind with the *pupo* village; and he was responsible for conducting traditional ritual and was expected to be able to carry out ceremonial procedure correctly. This was the main function of the *pupo* village and of the man who was head of the male members of the *pupo* house. The corresponding head of the male members of the big house was the owner of the village, and it was his eldest son by his first wife who would normally succeed him as chief or headman. The members of each house had a stake in the property of that house, particularly in the herd of cattle owned by it, and in any goods, such as cloth, bought by the sale of the cattle of the house. The house united the male members who belonged to it through this common ownership of cattle. In Chapter II of Part IV we shall examine further this aspect of belonging to a house.

559 592 564 In the organization of village life in villages belonging to chiefs or headmen the houses established the status of the wives of the owner of the village, and the status of those of his mothers who had come with him. His mother in the *indlunkulu* hut ranked first among her co-widows. The big wife came next, and the wife of the second house after her. Wives attached to the big house ranked above those attached to the second house.

571 592 587 564 The houses fulfilled their most prominent role in the day-to-day activities of the household associated with them. It was in these daily affairs and in planning for future [illegible] that the house organization provided the chief channels of authority. The exercise of this authority ranged from instruction in household tasks and emphasis on good standards of housekeeping to settling minor disputes arising from marital quarrels over property and over the custody of children. These minor cases could be settled out of court if the senior women showed that they knew how to listen to complaints and give advice which was accepted, with the result that good relations were restored. The main topics of discussion among the senior women on the verandah of the *indlunkulu* were the ingredients of these minor quarrels and disputes. If, by judicious handling, they could keep the cases out of court, they knew, and so did the village, that their authority was enhanced and their prestige more firmly established.

571 592 564 The authority of senior women was further reinforced through their organization of women's labour in household work and in cultivation. This authority in domestic affairs covered a woman's own household and the women and girls attached to it as household servants, the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

households of her co-wives who were junior to her in the house, and the households of her sons' wives. These women also decided when to undertake certain work in cultivation or in harvesting crops, when to brew beer, when to re-polish the floors of huts and the sitting place in front of the huts, when to replenish the stock of cloth, ornaments and beads, baskets and mats, which were part of the wealth of the house. Other occasions for the exercise of authority were attending and superintending women's confinements and the private puberty rite of the girls, advising on matters of health, and supervising the training of children. 562 571 592

All these activities of the owners of the houses were so much part of the day-to-day life of a village that they could pass almost unnoticed unless a detailed analysis were made. The position and authority of owners of houses was, however, immediately evident on ceremonial occasions. These included the pre-marriage ceremony of *umsindo*, which was abandoned after the Europeans came; the series of visits and exchanges leading up to the marriage ceremony, *umsindo*; brewing beer on a number of occasions, for dancing *ngoma* and *ligubo*, for funerals and subsequent ritual shaving, or for entertaining important visitors whose coming was expected so that beer could be prepared in advance. On all such occasions, the courtyard surrounding the *indlunkulu* was a scene of great activity. Men put on their war-dance equipment there; the beer pots were assembled there; meat and blood for feasts were cooked there, while the less important maize porridge (*usima*) was cooked in subordinate households. From the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* a procession of the *nsunsu* (senior women) led by the owner of the house went out to greet visitors, to go to the beer drink, to take part in the dances, and to perform the ritual connected with births, deaths and marriages. 592 554 571 [178]

Marriage in Ngoni Society

Earlier in this chapter it was said that a new house derived from the marriage of a leading man to his big wife. Since marriage was so closely linked with the continuance and development of houses, and since a new wife when married separated from her own mother's house and became a member of her husband's mother's house, I have included a discussion of marriage in this chapter on houses. 581 182

There were three main principles in Ngoni marriage. It was a binding contract sealed by the exchange of cattle; it established succession in the male line; it formed a link between leading Swazi clans. When we examine in detail the organisation of Ngoni marriage we see that its objectives were to build up a series of inter-clan and inter-family relationships. These began with inter-marriage between the leading Swazi clans, in order to strengthen the political and social relationships within that inner circle of Ngoni society. The political allegiance of leading individuals from clans of non-Swazi origin was strengthened by marriage

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182. with men and women of Swazi class. There were two Ngoni practices
581 which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows
182. by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if
581 the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her
587 needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an ukhazi, a substitute or
182. additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been
581 handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give
585 another daughter as ukhazi, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her ukhazi. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an ukhazi might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

58 There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the houses played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

584 The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indirect choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner.
[582] In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi class marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

found opportunities for visiting the village and looking at the girl, and having decided in her favour, he then proceeded to court her along the following recognised and definite lines: 584

1. He courted the girl and if she was willing she eventually agreed to marry him.
2. He informed a member of the *gupe* house of his father's family, usually an older brother of his father.
3. This elder informed the man's father.
4. At the father's request, this elder went to the girl's village and sought out a corresponding elder of her family, usually an older brother of her father and always someone belonging to the *gupe* house.
5. This elder in the girl's village informed her father and mother and, when this was done, told the elder from the man's village, who then went home.
6. The girl's parents asked her if she agreed to the marriage and, if she gave her consent, they considered the matter and finally gave their consent.
7. The man's elder returned to the girl's village and the girl's parents told him they had consented and he then went home again.
8. He returned soon with a beast, called 'the snuff box', as a gift from the man's father. This elder now had several companions with him, but no one from the man's immediate family circle or from his house.
9. The beast was killed and the betrothal feast was held in the girl's village, after which her parents and the elders of her village said, 'We have snuffed.'
10. The man's father sent another elder to 'call the girl' and she was then addressed as 'daughter-in-law'.
11. The girl's father and his brothers decided what the *lobola* should be and informed the man's parents how many beasts they wanted.

Men of the *gupe* house in each village played the major part as go-betweens in the negotiations between the two families, opening the way for the new relationship which was felt to be full of difficulties. Once the betrothal feast had been held, the leading function of the *gupe* house gave way to more direct participation by the man's house, where the male members had now to find the cattle for the *lobola*, the amount of which had been fixed by the girl's family. This amount was in direct relationship to the status of the girl's family and clan. In the *ngpi*'s for a girl of the royal clan it was up to fifteen beasts; for girls of other Swazi clans from three to nine beasts; and for girls of non-Swazi clans from one to three—the variation depending on the status of her father in his village, and on the house from which he came. It was to the lord belonging to this house that the cattle of the *lobola* were allocated. The [584]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 period within which the handing over of cattle was completed varied according to the demands of the girl's father and the capacity of the man's father to find the required number. Informants agreed that when only a few beasts were demanded, the transfer took place before or immediately after the main ceremony. In addition to this formal transfer agreed on and carried out as part of the marriage contract, there was also an informal reciprocal transfer which had two main purposes. At the time of the main ceremony the bride's party brought with them a beast, called *mzunda*, which was put into the herd of the bridegroom's mother's house to which the bride would henceforth belong. Later, when the two families ate together for the first time, one or more additional beasts were brought from the girl's former house and put into the herd of the house to which she now belonged. In this way, the new wife began to have cattle in the herd of her mother-in-law's house which were known as hers and which would be taken to form a new herd when she went out with her husband to his *kwangala* village. As soon as these cattle were in the kraal of the house to which she now belonged, the new wife was able to eat *amasi* in her husband's village, which she had not been allowed to do since leaving her father's village.

571 In the series of feasts which marked the stages in the marriage relationship and which facilitated the coming together of the two families,
585 the major part was played by the *indlunkulu* in each village. Many households in the girl's village shared in the preparation of food for the betrothal feast, but it was assembled when cooked and divided out by the woman owner of the *indlunkulu*, assisted by the men and women belonging to the girl's father's house. The next feast was in the man's village, and formed part of the main ceremony, before the bride's party returned to their home. The third feast was to celebrate the 'showing of the hearth-stones', when the young wife was allowed to cook in her husband's village for the first time. The food was collected in her parents' village and carried to her new village, where it was cooked by the women of the house into which she had married, and served in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu*. In the two final feasts—the *umcwaqo* which was a beer drink, and the *inkwaqo*, a feast of beer and food—the beer was brewed and the food collected in the wife's village and cooked and
[602] eaten in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* in the husband's village. These two feasts finally broke down the barrier between the parents-in-law and were the first occasion on which they ate and drank beer together.

585 The main ceremony (*umtshato*) had three distinct parts.[1] The first part included the preparation of the girl in her own village (*ukwaqa*), the entrance of her party into the man's village and the presenting of small

[1] I was present at an *umtshato* in Emondweni in the northern kingdom when the traditional ritual carried out in full was combined with a church wedding. The bridegroom was a man of the Dlamini clan from Emondweni, who had been adopted by Chief Mbundu and had built a hut in the *ugwalo* of the big house.

(*ubupendisi*). The middle section, the main part of the ceremony, took place in the husband's village while the bridal party was there. In the last part the bride was left in her new home and these ceremonies marked her gradual integration into her new social group. 585

After the number of cattle had been decided upon in the final stage of the betrothal, the initiative was left to the girl's parents to announce the date of the *umtolo*. Eventually a message was sent through the *gqo* house of the girl's village to say that the bridal party would arrive on a certain day. Before the day came, the girl, now addressed as *umfokadwesi* (the bride), was called to the *indlunkulu* in her village. There the leading women, her father's mothers, who had called in her father's sisters, gave her final instructions on how to behave in her new home. Ngoni women said that they were told at this time: 'Our child, we are putting you out of our family. We are handing you over to the other people. You were free and now your freedom is over for you are under other people. Where you are going you will meet with many troubles. They will say of you many things which you did not do. It is good to be patient.' During this instruction the girl cried and so did her mother. On the morning of the departure the girl was dressed in freshly prepared skins, her hair was arranged in the *inkhata* (chignon) to which the gall bladder of a goat was pinned, and the gall bladder of a cow was tied to her elbow. Then, still sobbing and whimpering, and surrounded by her age mates and the female members of her house, she set out for her bridegroom's village, the young men of her village driving a bullock (*umsuki*) as a present from the bride's parents to the mother of the bridegroom, in whose hard it was placed. [292 237] [152]

This part of the ceremony, the entry of the bride's party (*ubupendisi*), was held to be of great importance, since it was the first time the bride's family and friends as a group had met the husband's family. The bride's procession waited by the kraal gate, singing *umtolo* songs, and every now and then a woman of the bride's party, one of her father's sisters, sang the praises of the bride's clan. As the young men driving the bullock entered the kraal, the bridal party joined them and they began to dance in the kraal. 571 585

Now the first overtures were made between the bride's party and the people of the bridegroom's village. The older women of the village approached the older women of the bride's party, greeting them and exchanging, in the Ngoni phrase, 'words which were good and proud and showed the quickness of their tongues'.

After these advances, the men of the village came into the kraal or gathered by the *indlunkulu*. While the bridal party began to sing with their heads bowed, the chief woman from the *indlunkulu* of the bride's village came forward, bending low, and on her knees presented of the *indoni* of the *indlunkulu* of the husband's village a basket containing snuff boxes and beads. She made a speech, in which she said, 'Here is [516 431]

571 our child who is now leaving her home. She has no father now. She is
585 leaving his care. We expect you to cherish her now as her father would.' In reply the *indoma* answered them, 'Now she is here we will cherish her, but she must respect the owner of this house and be under her in all things.' Speeches about the absence of disease in either village were then made and the men took snuff. The bridal party and the villagers all remained seated and began to sing *umdadi* songs (songs to be sung sitting).

585 At the marriage at Emondweni, where I was present, the girls of the bridal party began to shiver as night fell, and a woman of the village
[533] brought a sleeping mat as an invitation to go into the hut. Singing as they went, the women of the bridal party were shown a place to sleep, and the bride slept among them for that night. The bride's party went
[74] off the next morning to the church at Ilangeni for the church marriage service, while the bridegroom with a party from Emondweni went by a separate route. In the days before the mission came, they used to spend the morning dancing in the kraal, while the husband's family killed a beast, or more than one, for the feast. During the day's dancing in the kraal, the leader of the village women took the husband's spear, came into the kraal with the village party and touched the bride gently on the shoulder. This was a sign that the bride was now one of the village
[152] group, and the correct response was for her party to turn their backs and weep to show their grief because she had left them.

In Emondweni, where the parties returned from church in the afternoon, a large crowd had assembled. The bridal party danced and sang in the kraal and outside the *indlondlo* and now and then a leading woman of the bridegroom's village joined in. The bride and two supporting friends were given a mat to sit on, the husband and the *umdadi* also sat down, the minister from the church prayed and they sang a hymn. Then the food, bowls of *umsizi* with large pieces of meat on top, was divided. The names of the divisions of Emondweni were called out and the leaders of the divisions of that village and of other villages came to get the portions for their people.

Dancing continued after the feast until the bride's party took the bride to the husband's hut and left her there. The next morning the
[533] bridal party returned home singing. Formerly the bride came to the door of the hut where she had slept with her husband, and called out the praise-names of her father. She then sang the *umsokwa* song (song of the dishwashing) and the husband stood in the doorway behind her. Then he went into the kraal and sat facing the bridal party, who were singing. When the bride came in with a gourd of water there was silence while she poured water for him to wash his hands, mouth and eyes. This was the first public act of service for the husband after the consummation of the marriage and ended the main part of the ceremony, after which the bridal party went home.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The three final acts of the *ukuteka* were performed for the new wife by the women of her new village. The first took place about two days after the end of the main ceremony and was the occasion for her instruction by her husband's relatives. She sat on a mat by the *indlunkulu*, while the women of that house dressed her *isikhalo*, anointed her with oil, and clothed her in fresh skins and new beads taken from the store of the house to which she now belonged. They then instructed her in her behaviour to old and young, telling her to avoid selfishness and quarrelling and to be friendly with everyone.

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The second act, called *ukufumisa umtshakazi* (bringing the wife out), took place thirty to forty days later, during which time the wife had been sitting by her hut being watched. All this time she had eaten only a little food, sent to her from her mother-in-law's hut, had been afraid to speak to anyone, and had wept often. Now she was told that she might go anywhere and talk with anyone. She could help her mother-in-law by fetching firewood and by lighting her fire. A pot of water was given to her and an axe to cut firewood, and her mother-in-law gave her the *indlunkulu* head, a sign that she might speak and eat in front of her parents-in-law. But her testing time was not yet over. She was told to fetch a huge bundle of split wood and to lay it down carefully before her mother-in-law's hut without dropping any. As the bundle was on her head, it meant kneeling down and bending forward slowly until she could gently ease the wood on to the ground. Other tests included stripping large quantities of maize, soaking them, and pounding them into stamped maize (*izinkuki*). This testing was called *ukubiyela umtshakazi* (watching the new wife), and was in many cases far more exacting than anything she had been made to do in her own home.

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The culminating act of the integration process, *ukufekisa umtshakazi*, in which the new wife's hut was recognized as the starting-point of a new house, was the ceremony of making fire in her new hut to cook food for her husband. Two or three months after the marriage, a woman from her father-in-law's *gape* house suddenly appeared in the doorway of the new wife's hut, carrying three hearth-stones. She fetched fire, kindled it, and began to cook boiled maize. The astonished young wife was expected to cry because she had now been turned away from her mother-in-law's cooking-place, as if she were being put out of the house. The maize cooked on this first fire in the new hut was regarded as having been cooked by the bride, and was divided into portions, one being taken to each section of the village attached to a house. Meanwhile the young wife sat nearby, hanging her head and showing the conventional signs of grief. Nevertheless she was so excited that she went back to her own home as soon as possible to tell them the news. The response of her own people was to prepare food for a feast and bring it to her new village to express to her husband's people their appreciation of this token of confidence in the girl's ability to cook for her husband.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 585 621 The prolonged series of interviews, exchanges and ceremonies emphasized the Ngoni conception of the marriage contract and its binding nature. They also underlined the severance of the new wife from her fertile family and home, and her gradual assimilation into her mother-in-law's house. This relationship between Ngoni women within the houses provided an effective means of integrating them into a village to which they were strangers.

CHAPTER IV

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

183 59 'Tax Ngoni have power and authority over their women and their children.' So began one of the texts on *ingoni*, 'the thing that is Ngoni', by a man of the Ntumbu people whose grandfather had been born among the Ngoni when they were in Songea. There was a recognized ideal pattern of an Ngoni family which covered both the individuals included in the family group and the place where they lived. This pattern was patrilineal in descent, virilocal in residence, polygynous in marriage for all men of standing who were not Christians. Other recognized and often-mentioned characteristics were the continued residence of widows in their husband's village after his death, the grouping of families by houses, and the *lawoni*, or dormitory system for boys and unmarried young men.

581 593 The young wife wept on the day of her marriage because she was leaving the security and known relationships of her own family for the hazards and uncertainty of entering as a stranger into her husband's family group. The dramatization of these sentiments in the protracted marriage ceremony, and the allusions in the *nsimbo* songs, brought out clearly the continuity of the man's relations with all members of his family and the sudden sharp break in the woman's relationship when she married. When her first child was born, and a new individual family group launched, her final integration into her husband's family began. As a mother who had borne a grandchild to her husband's people she had thenceforward a direct part in the relationships within her husband's family, but as a wife she was always a stranger. The marriage negotiations and ceremonial express the dilemma of the family ties, showing on the girl's side the anxiety of her family on parting with her to live among strangers; and on the man's side the hesitancy of the husband's family at taking into their midst an unknown and untried stranger. In addition, the protracted exchanges of cattle and beers, delaying the final ceremony and building up relationships between the two family groups, illustrate the Ngoni attitude towards marriage as a

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FRS Ngoni FRS

binding contract. In theory at least the girl left her family for good once the agreed *lobola* was handed over, and the responsibility for adjustment to the family she had entered was hers, first as wife and then as mother.

Investigation of the terminology associated with the Ngoni concept of family immediately poses problems of relating group structure to individual and group relationships. Dr. Kuper did not refer to any single term for family among the Swazi. The nearest was the term *umuti* used for homestead[1] which covered a recognized leader and his dependents, in terms of common residence, mutual relations and economic activities. The Cewa term *banja*,[2] widely used in Nyasaland in the 1930's to translate 'family', in its general use was more akin to the Swazi *umuti* since it denoted the relationships of a group of people to one man, and their common residence in a single village or a section of a village. *Banja* was used to express relationship to one man by kinship and marriage, but when it was used among the central Ngoni it also applied to other individuals, such as his age mates and the descendants of his father's former captives who lived in the same village. Another Cewa term *ubumbe* was used in two distinct senses. The common use was to express the relationship of one man with his sisters and their children who inherited his position and his property and looked to him for assistance. A much less common use of the term was found sometimes in central Nyasaland and occasionally in north Nyasaland to cover the group of a man and his children and his brothers and their children—a patrilineal concept of a kinship group which was usually but not always associated with common residence.

There was one major difference between the Ngoni concept inherent in their use of *banja* and that of the Cewa and other matrilineal peoples. When an important man or woman died among the Cewa, someone always 'assumed their place' in the kinship system, and this acquiring of a new position involved a shift in actual relationships and in terminology throughout the group of kin. There was no such change among the Ngoni in the use of kinship terms. When a man or woman among the Ngoni entered a dead person's place it was in order to perform his functions and not to assume the dead person's kinship relationships.

The village lay-out in different types of Ngoni villages illustrates the way in which family grouping could be recognized in the sharing of the same hut, in the grouping of huts, and in the relations with neighbouring villages. Later in this chapter illustrations will be given from the northern and central Ngoni kingdoms to show how certain patterns of residential grouping on a family basis were evolving from the divisions of mixed tribal groups characteristic of the former large villages of pre-European days. The general tendency in northern Ngoniland was to

[1] Op. cit. p. 38.
[2] Scott and Hetherwick in their dictionary translate *banja* variously, house, home, household, family.

601 913 break up into smaller villages, and there were on the whole more villages in the north said to be *wakunja limodzi* (*of* one family) than among the central Ngoni. On the other hand, the *bonguale* pattern of village division had almost disappeared among the central Ngoni.

911 912 [561] A man on his first marriage built a hut for his wife behind his mother's hut, where his brothers by the same mother or by mothers of the same house also built. The family grouping by residence was therefore determined by house affiliation. Associated with this residential group based on kinship, there were the residences of the *induna* and his family which had separate alignments on a kinship basis, though for certain common purposes they combined with the family groups related to the house by kinship. The children of the families belonging to the house and the children of the *induna* who took care of it began to intermarry when the prohibitions on marriage within the village ceased to operate. In this way kinship bonds were created within a group which formerly had only residence and certain activities in common, and this process was recognizable in a number of the larger villages, especially in the central kingdom.

913 Within the different types of family groups determined by their residential basis there were certain outstanding relationships between members of the same family. The most important of these was that between father and children; the father, as the biological parent and also the symbol of authority, was the focus of honour and respect, and the one who helped his children when they were in need. The relation between the father and his children among the Ngoni was always a balance between affection and care, and respect and authority. The ideal pattern of a father, as described by informants, included all these elements and also wisdom. This concept of the father relationship was extended to the head of a *banja*, to the headman of a village or a section of a village, to a *mabomawanse* in charge of an area, to a chief, and to the [572] Paramount himself. The Ngoni greeting to all older men, and the most respectful form of address to a man of any seniority, was *babe*, father, or its Nyanja equivalent *bambo*.

The mother, on the other hand, had a more limited relationship within the family circle. To her own children and to the children of her co-wives, especially of her house, she was the provider of food, and the affectionate 'cherisher'* of young children; but she was also treated with respect and, when she reached some seniority, she had considerable authority over her daughters and her younger co-wives. She could never compete, however, with the sisters of her husband or with his mothers, who expected to exercise authority over her children and to arrange for the ceremonies connected with birth, puberty, and marriage. [571 18] In villages where virilocal residence was the rule, the husband's sisters were married elsewhere and were only present in the village during

* *Sadwa*, lit. to cherish, is the word used for bringing up children.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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visits or on special occasions. In the central kingdom, where an important man's sisters often married in the village and stayed there, it was evident that they often exercised authority over their brother's children. [591 184]

In polygynous Ngoni families the relationship between siblings was marked by strong attachment. Among the boys in the *lomeni* brothers united to protect their younger brothers from other boys, and in the families of Swazi clans brothers showed many signs of youthful intolerance and arrogance towards boys of other clans, especially in matters concerning cattle and their herding. Sibling rivalry among boys was to a large extent controlled by two factors. One was the *lomeni* system where the age-set principle predominated. The other was the division into the big house and *gogo* house, where the children of the *gogo* house knew that they stood in a different relationship to succession and authority in the village from their brothers and sisters in the big house. Within the big house itself, sons of the big wife knew that succession was regulated by seniority, and that the eldest son would expect to get priority when he married and it was necessary to allot cattle for *lobola*. The brother-sister link between children of the same mother was, as we have seen, a very close one, especially with the older sister of a man who was heir to a high position. This sister in her relation to his children carried almost the same authority as he did. Among sisters of the same family there was less apparent cohesion, except among very high-ranking Swazi clans where the girl children were looked after by special nursemaids and had their instruction in correct behaviour together from the older woman known as their *gogo*. 595 [561]

Ngoni grandparents on the paternal side showed little of the joking relationship with their grandchildren sometimes associated with this tie. When children went to visit their maternal grandparents in another village there was noticeably more ease between them and more indulgence was shown. In their father's village children were always aware that his parents were persons of standing and authority. Girls over six or seven often slept in their paternal grandmother's hut if she was a widow, and were aware that, though she showed kindliness in providing for their needs, she was a firm disciplinarian in all matters of behaviour. 603

Within the family group the male role of leadership was unquestioned. Honour and respect were a man's due from wives as well as from children. In difficult relations within his family, as in the case of divorce, he could count on counsel and support from his brothers, who were also ready to help him if cattle were needed for his own or his son's marriage or for payment of court penalties. This male circle of father and sons, father's brothers and their sons, was a closely knit group which functioned in regulating family affairs and in buying and selling cattle for the house to which they belonged. An obligation to help his sons was recognized by the father of a family and this obligation 562 593 593

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

593 extended to his brothers' sons, especially if their father was dead. Following the same pattern, a man's sons who were away at work sent back money to their father who bought cattle with it, or spent it as the sons asked. It was clear in the 1930's that Ngoni men rarely sent money directly to their wives, though they frequently asked their father to give money to their wives and to buy for them cloth or needed household equipment.

562 Within the larger orbit of the male family responsibilities women
844 had their more restricted but clearly defined sphere. At a woman's
593 confinement she was looked after by her husband's own mother, aided by his other mothers and by his sisters if they were present in the village. At the 'coming out' of the new member of the family, ten to fourteen days after birth, the woman and the baby, bathed and ritually
562 cleansed, were seated on a mat outside the hut and presented to the
846 male members of the father's family who gave small gifts to the baby. If it was a boy, the father's mother generally carried it to the gate of
593 the kraal where the men were sitting, to present it to them as one who would eventually herd the cattle. On this occasion, or soon after, the
[553] child's name was chosen, usually by the father's father, who prepared and gave to the mother a calf-skin or goat-skin for carrying the child in. The meat of the animal was cooked by the father's mother and a small feast was held for the father's mothers, sisters, brothers and their wives, and any others of the father's family who had helped in the confinement.[1] After the child had thus been acknowledged in its father's family circle, the mother took the baby to visit her own family, who also gave it presents.

593 During the rearing of the child, its father's female relatives assumed responsibility for giving the young mother advice. The father's mother
862 was expected to note the stage at which the child should be weaned, always if possible before the mother's next pregnancy. If the father's mother was unobservant, the other senior women of the husband's family would rebuke her and say 'Look now you are foolish because the child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to it.' These women then took the initiative and insisted on weaning the child. They said to the baby's mother 'We want to wean the child.' They made a paste of ground chillies and put it on the mother's breasts and covered them with a skin or cloth. The child was taken from her after it had tried to
[853] suck and had been refused, and given to the father's mother or sister, who looked after it with the help of a nursemaid. It was fed on cow's milk, *amasi* (milk curds), and gruel.

The publicity given to the weaning and the initiative taken by the senior women of the husband's family were intended to inform others in
[178] the village that the parents were now free to have another child. This was one aspect of the old Ngoni form of family planning and, in describing

[1] This feast was also held when a carrying cloth was given instead of a skin.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and concubines were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving.

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*lomwi*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *lomwi*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father.

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *lomwi* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary.

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1936
FR5 Nguni FR5

was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Nguni buildings.

The tables which follow show the total population of these villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Men	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Kwanini	25	10	21	28	59	10	4	6	21
Emfindini	15	9	21	21	51	6	1	6	15
Ekhwangini	37	19	36	34	109	11	4	5	34
Central kingdom									
Gokwini	39	20	39	35	113	13	3	6	8
Mangeni	82	41	83	53	165	9	18	6	4
Mtukhanha	120	71	104	68	251	30	18	14	18

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the pattern of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Nguni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *homepah* and *pepe* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *kanjo* was not found in the north.

The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *mahomasana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *mahomasana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

Households[1]

	Total	Leading clan
Northern Nguniland		
Kawanini	[illegible]	[illegible]
Endindeni	[illegible]	[illegible]
Ekhongweni	[illegible]	[illegible]
Central Nguniland		
Gadewita	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mangwen	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mpakhatha	[illegible]	[illegible]

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head.

Kawanini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Kawanini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *kwapada* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother.

Endindeni was a *gupo* village owned by Zibekere Mdwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gupo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ukuti* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more *kawani*.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

191 with. The village with its single kraal was 'of one house', and it was
592 widely known as a good village by Ngoni standards, because, as the
604 head people said, 'all the men are Makwakwa men'.

Ekulungwini was a *pepo* village where the spirit of Mtanje Jere, the son of a brother of Mwamzindako, was guarded. The kinship group of Mwamzindako Jere, the owner of the village, were all of one house, that of his mother who was dead. Her place in the *indlunkulu* had been taken by his big wife who also inherited the guardianship of the spirit of Mtanje. There was one widow of his father in the village, but she had become a Christian and therefore could not guard the spirit. Mwamzindako had two wives, and three widows of his brothers by the same mother were also in the village. One brother by another mother was the only one of his generation still alive and he had two sons and two grandsons living in the *ciposhi* behind the *indlunkulu*. All Mwamzindako's family were grouped round one kraal. There were two other kraals with family groups round them in the village, one belonging to the *induna* of his dead mother, and one to an age mate who had been in his regiment. The *induna*'s group belonged to the same house as Mwamzindako, but the pattern of the three distinct groups each with its own kraal was more like that of the *banja* in the central kingdom.

191 In the central Kingdom the relationships of the various groups in a
563 village followed a different pattern from that in the north. Instead of
592 the *banapele* and *pepo* characteristics where the family groups were
601 integrated into houses, the southern pattern was that of a conquered village with the Ngoni element superimposed. In Cinkwita and in Mtakhatha the village headman and his family group had originally been conquered, then established as an outlying village, and finally chosen for the permanent settlement of a family group belonging to an
[26] Ngoni clan when they left the royal village after it broke up. In Cinkwita there were three kraals associated with three *banja*. Two of the *banja* belonged to kinship groups of Ntumbu clans, and the head of one was known as the headman of the village. The head of the *banja* of Cinkwita Ndau, the Ngoni clan group, was his eldest son Wilkinson, whose wife was of a leading Swazi clan, the Magwagwa. His family group consisted of his wife, two sons and three daughters; a brother and his two daughters; the widow of a dead brother and his two sons and a daughter; three sisters, one of whom had married the brother of the village headman and one who was a widow; and a widowed sister of his father. This family grouping expressed in terms of household illustrates what has already been referred to several times, namely the tendency of the heads of leading Ngoni families in the central kingdom to keep, in addition to their sons, their sisters and daughters in the village after marriage, even when *lobola* had been given. It also illustrates the comparatively small number of plural marriages in the south among the younger men.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

Mangoso, as its name suggests, was the head village of the Ngoso clan. It had been originally settled by Ngwani Ngoso who brought with him two family groups of Nzumba clans who had been with him in Sangwa. These two Nzumba family groups each formed a *hanja*, and one had a kraal. The other two *hanja* belonged to two elderly Ngoso brothers, sons of Ngwani and of the same house, who had one kraal between them. The senior of these, Mbiri Ngoso, had in his *hanja* a widow of his father, not his own mother, and nine widows of a dead elder brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, three grandsons and three granddaughters; and his sister. The *hanja* of Cinyama Ngoso included two widows of another brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, one grandson and one granddaughter. The two brothers between them had to support eleven widows of dead brothers.

Mrakhatha had a dual foundation. The village site was originally one of the outlying villages of the section known as Zyombe. It was also the head village of the Nzunga clan. Three of the five *hanja* into which the village was divided belonged to Nzumba family groups, and the head of one of these was known as the headman of the village. Of the two *hanja* belonging to the Nzunga clan, one was a *gupo hanja*, the other that of the ruling chief who was a Sub-Native Authority.[1] Within the *gupo hanja* was the house of Bambo Mangu in whose hut the spirit of Mpuza was guarded. Two other houses in the *gupo hanja* were associated with the guardianship of the spirits of the grandfather and father of the ruling chief. There was therefore a house and a *hanja* formation existing together, in which the *hanja* predominated. The two Nzunga *hanja* consisted of two family groups, one associated with the ruling chief and one with his paternal uncle in charge of the *gupo* section. The chief's *hanja* included his own five wives, one sister and two brothers by the same mother, and two sisters and four brothers by other mothers. The *hanja* of the head of the *gupo* section included his own five wives and two widows whom he had inherited from the former chief, his elder brother; three brothers and two sisters by other mothers; three of his sons. It also included a widow of his father, and nine widows of his dead brother who had not been inherited; and the households of Bambo Mangu and her daughter and granddaughter for whom the father of the ruling chief had assumed responsibility. The Ngoni family pattern of this village was more complex than that of Cinkwita or Mangoso because of the clearly marked *gupo* section existing alongside that of the ruling chief. It showed, however, the general characteristics of Ngoni family grouping in the central kingdom, keeping sisters and daughters in the village after marriage while retaining responsibility for widows of fathers and brothers. There were three Nzunga kraals, two in the *gupo hanja* and one in the chief's *hanja*, but the cattle were always referred to

[1] In northern Ngoniland the ruling chief would have moved out of this village on his father's death, leaving the *gupo hanja* as the *gupo* village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

189 as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and
993 the high ranking of the Nzunga clan accounted for the number of
621 Ndebele marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

994 As individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans
565 claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families
614 in the area of a mukomwanse owning a local village and the small Ngoni
621 family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received
'honour' (ulemu). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and
in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were
[557] a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank
and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was
more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick
to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would
enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side, responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and the hearth. Quarrels had to be compared, if possible before they came to court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be expected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the northern and Mangono in the central kingdom.

[471] In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose husbands were away at work. The dislocation caused to the village economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and heads of a hearth, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include the needs of these 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradition emphasized this type of help.

367 In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and relationships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty ceremonies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

boys and young men, as long as they were in the village. Ngoni men 867
insisted that their children should be correctly trained, and they were
contemporaries of Cewa and other tribal groups who left it 'all to the
women'. The handing on of correct behaviour by the mother-in-law [(86 563)]
to her daughter-in-law was, they considered, essential, and one of the
reasons why young men in the central kingdom liked to 'marry up' was
that they could count on the careful grounding in all the canons of
behaviour which their wives had received.

CHAPTER V

AGE SETS

The Ngoni brought with them to Nyasaland an age-set system akin to 561
that among the South-eastern Bantu, which was an important element
in their social structure. In pre-European days the division into cattle-
herders or pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors or senior men,
regulated the tasks and responsibilities of boys and men in other spheres
besides those of warfare. At the beginning of this section, when review-
ing age sets as one of the constituent forms of Ngoni social organization,
I said that some features of an age-set system had persisted. In com-
parison with age-grouping in the other Nyasaland tribes it was distinc-
tively Ngoni in form; it influenced behaviour patterns in inter-group
and intra-group relations; and in it were recognized certain responsi-
bilities and activities belonging to the different groups based on age.

Among the distinctively Ngoni elements in the age-set system were
the private nature of the puberty ritual and the absence of initiation
schools; the organization of boys' life in the *lamwi*; the strong ties [881]
between age mates up to marriage; the selective principle in designating
senior men and women as *mudzale* and *mamiwe*; and a different kind of [572]
selective principle in the formation of friendship pacts between indi-
viduals of the same age. In observing the role of age sets in Ngoni
village society, the two main groups which were constantly in evidence
as groups were the older boys and girls and the senior men and women.
These groups not only carried out activities together, but also showed
evidence of the strength of the internal ties linking members of an age
set. There were, however, no sharp edges to these groups, either in
terms of actual age or physiological development or of exclusive mem-
bership. The following list of terms applied to age sets in the two main
Ngoni areas shows primarily the difference in designation between males
and females according to broad age grouping, but it illustrates also the
fact that the terminology applied to the age sets did not always coincide

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561 with the main activities of the groups, though it did to some extent illustrate mutual relationships.

Age-Set terms

	Northern Ngoni	*Central Ngoni*
All children	[illegible]	[illegible]
Young men even if married	[illegible]	[illegible]
Young girls before puberty	[illegible]	[illegible]
Young girls post puberty	[illegible]	[illegible]
All married women	[illegible]	[illegible]
Senior men	[illegible]	[illegible]
Senior women	[illegible]	[illegible]

[181 104] 513 561 866 One of the most characteristic forms of Ngoni village organization was the *lomwi*, or boys' dormitory. It included the older boys in the group called 'children' and the young men until they married, who were in fact called *amajuba* after they had left the *lomwi* and married and had huts of their own. The age for entering the *lomwi* was approximately seven years, and was as a rule determined by the age when a child began to get his second teeth. When a child was going about the village with several gaps in his front teeth, his companions jeered at him if he still slept in his grandmother's hut, and his father took the view that it was time he stopped playing like a child and took up seriously the job of herding goats and calves. There was often some hesitation, especially among boys who were not so well grown for their age, at taking the plunge and going to live in the *lomwi*, since once made the step could not be retrieved. It was primarily an individual decision. It meant leaving the protective affectionate care of the grandmother in the evenings, and the care-free play all day round the mother's hut with meals provided by her, for a different sort of existence altogether. *Lomwi* life was rigorous and was dominated by the senior boys living in the hut. The younger ones were at their mercy, and were made to 'fag' for their elders, clean up the hut, sometimes steal food from their mothers' stores, and were beaten if they were slow or careless, or if they threatened to tell the [626] elders in the village what went on in the *lomwi*. The main weapon to get boys into the *lomwi* was the ridicule of their fellows. Once members of the *lomwi* group they were disciplined into obedience by threats and beating. The age range within a *lomwi* was often considerable, from seven to seventeen years.

233 857 561 All the boys in a *lomwi* who were members of houses possessing cattle—and this as a rule included all sons of Ngoni families of true-Zambezi clans—had to take part in herding. Cattle-herding was a responsible task and could be an arduous one. The boys got up before dawn, opened the gate of the kraal, and took the cattle to water. They milked the cattle on an open space near the village and carried the milk in wooden jars, gourds or petrol tins to the owner of the cattle, keeping

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some for themselves as their perquisite. They then drove the cattle to pasture, and this might be some distance away when grass was scarce in the dry season. They sometimes drove the cattle back near the village to rest at noon under the shade trees, but if the pasture was far away the cattle rested there and went on feeding later. They were brought back to the kraal in the late afternoon and counted by one of the senior men.

The herd-boys taught each other to fight with sticks, to wrestle, to catch rats and small birds, to use the knobkerry, catapults, and bows and arrows. Sometimes in the afternoon they went to other villages and challenged another herd to a fight between bulls.[1] During the long day's herding, the boys used to drink milk, *makwi amasi* (milk curds) in a gourd and eat it, bake birds in clay and roast ears of maize taken from their mothers' grain stores. Precedence among the herd-boys depended first on age and only secondly on the rank and position of the families they belonged to. There was an easily recognizable air of authority and element of arrogance among the older boys responsible for their fathers' and uncles' cattle. They superintended the process of letting out the cattle, milking them, driving them to pasture and the return to the kraal in the evening. Mounted on donkeys, wearing large straw hats made by themselves, the senior boys acted like ranch owners leaning up inefficient work hands.

This period of living in the *lomwi* was, as we have seen, shared by boys of a wide age group. In a large village where there were two or three or four *lomwi*, there was often one in each section, which generally meant that the boys belonging to one kraal or section shared one *lomwi*. This had the effect of dividing them up to some extent on a basis of family and rank, but in a *lomwi* serving a whole village all the boys went in together whatever families they came from. There was no respecting of class status in the *lomwi* and young boys of high-ranking families had to wait on and obey older boys of lower rank. *Lomwi* life was therefore a democratizing influence among the boys of the village, and no boys were excused from herding cattle because they belonged to a house which owned cattle. Even if some went to school and others did not, the school-boys had to take their share of herding in the holidays. Ngoni chiefs and leading men laid great emphasis on keeping the boys busy and making them carry out the work allotted to them. The older boys began to listen in at court cases and to discuss them among themselves. During the wet season from time to time they formed hoeing parties for clearing new ground and for the periodical weeding of gardens. They seldom did any continuous cultivation, as the women and the older men did, and a boy who liked to go off and hoe by himself was pointed out as one with rather peculiar tastes.

During this period of *lomwi* life, when in addition to herding the

[1] For the relation between the training of herd-boys and preparation for war, see Part II, Chap. I, p. 50.

54 boys took more interest and more part in adult occupations and affairs, 55 the emergence of leadership among Ngoni boys of high-ranking families was watched by their elders and recognized by their age mates. This was the formative period when a boy's capacity to succeed his father in a position of authority was carefully observed and judged. The Ngoni had ways of paying over a man who was a physical weakling, a coward in face of danger, a sadistic bully to weaker men, a pursuer of women and a breaker-up of marriages. The *madala* in a Ngoni village, who appeared to let the boys in the *lamwi* manage their own affairs without interfering, had nevertheless a shrewd idea of who was making good and who was proving disappointing. Their comments, showing continued observation over a long period, were often expressed when two or three friends and age mates from the *lamwi* decided to go off to the south to work together. The *madala* would then say: 'We hope they will come back soon and not be "lost". So and so is like his father and he will help us here in the village'; or they might comment: 'Good riddance, they were always hanging round the girls—worthless men, indeed' (see *chale* exhibit).

91 It has already been pointed out that there was no circumcision school 92 nor public initiation rite among the Ngoni. At puberty the ritual observed was a private and personal affair. On a boy's first nocturnal emission his age mates informed an older boy in the *lamwi*, who told him to go at once before it was light and bathe in the river, and to do so 93 each morning after an emission. This use of cold water was believed to 94 give a boy strength and virility. The boy was also instructed by the older boys in the *lamwi* on how to behave to his equals and his elders and to women. This stage was called *ukuchayisa ngo' mamai*, 'to be beaten with water', and was not reported to the older people. When the older people noticed that the boy's voice was breaking, his father inquired whether he had passed puberty and, on being assured of this, he found a man who knew the *ukudengele* medicine. The father killed a goat, and the medicine man took some of the unchewed cud from the goat's stomach, mixed it with the bitter *ukudengele* root and put it on a pan over a fire. This took place near the gate of the kraal or near the parents' hut, with the father and the father's male relatives standing by. When the mixture boiled, the boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the pan one after the other and lick each one quickly. At the same time he kept jumping over the fire and striking his elbows against his sides. The Ngoni believed that this medicine gave boys physical strength and stamina and they administered it to their servants' sons as well. It was still practised in the 1930's among Ngoni who were educated and partly westernized.

96 While the organization of the *lamwi* catered for all boys from their 97 second teeth till their marriage, including boys from the age sets called *ukutwasa* and *umujaba*, the organization of girls' life followed a

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

different pattern. They also went to sleep with a grandmother or some other older member of the family when they were old enough to be excluded from their mother's hut at night, and they shared with their small brothers the grandmother's care and her story-telling round the fire in the evenings. During the day the girls continued as part of their mother's household group, eating with her and the younger children. As little girls they were taught to sit down carefully and to smooth down the cloth which they wore round their waists. They were trained to speak correctly and to know the right forms of address, to greet strangers politely, to avoid touching their father's mats or bed, to eat tidily and with restraint. The emphasis was on exclusiveness for these high-born Ngoni girls, but, as a result of mixing too freely with everyone, they should forget the teaching given and the behaviour which was expected of them. In contrast to their brothers' rigorous training in the *lawani*, Ngoni girls, as they showed signs of approaching puberty, were guarded and looked after and instructed further in correct behaviour.

When a girl found that she was menstruating for the first time, she told one of her age mates and sent her to tell her *gugu*.[1] The *gugu* told her to stay in the hut during the period and showed her how to wear a cloth between her legs, which she had henceforth to wear always whether menstruating or not. She was told to sleep from now on in a different part of the hut from the smaller children and never to bathe with younger girls. At the end of her first period the girl was escorted to the women's bathing-place by her father's sisters and other female members of her father's family. She was made to wash in the stream and squat in the cold water while doing so. I saw more than one child trying to control her shivering while her relatives watched to see if she would be strong and brave, or weak and cowardly. When she was in the water she was made to face south-east—the quarter which the Ngoni called *kwaba* (our home). After this ceremony the girl's father and mother were informed, and her father informed the head of his *kraal* and the head of the village. The news was greeted with rejoicing and made generally public.

From about the age of ten or eleven, the Ngoni girl belonged to an age set distinguished by a separate name. She was no longer included in the group of children, as were her brothers of the same age, but was marked out by belonging to the age set called *inkukuzana* or *nukutha*. After her first menstruation she belonged to the age set called *isiwombi* or *umwanali*. From this stage, Ngoni girls were under the close supervision of the older women. The association of a *gugu* or older woman with each house in a Ngoni village meant that the girls of the house were under her special care, particularly after they had passed puberty. There

[1] *gugu* in this context is used for grandmother or for the elderly woman to whose care the girl was assigned.

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were clearly defined aims in the case of girls after puberty, including instruction in personal hygiene and in pre-marital sexual relations. A girl's father's sisters and her own mother wanted to be able to say, when marriage negotiations began: *Ngombe zako zikhondo*, 'her cattle are full', which was the commonest mode when girls were examined periodically to see if they were still virgin. To achieve this they constantly said to her: '*Mkhulumnqe, mwakhelwe*', 'take care of yourself, control yourself'; and the gogo explained to the girl how she could protect herself. In one area where I lived, the chief's daughter was examined every week, with her *ikhondwani* or companions, and the girls who helped in the big house were examined every month. The strict behaviour required of Ngoni girls of good family was expected also of those of the same age who were members of the same household, either appointed to be with them as companions or as servants in the big house.

Looking forward to marriage involved not only preservation of her virginity. An Ngoni girl going to a strange village had to know how to perform women's work in the home, how to do it herself as well as how to direct others, and she had to be carefully trained in that meticulous and exclusive social behaviour required of Ngoni women of good family. She might be going to marry a man who intended to 'marry up', in which case she might be thought in one sense to be 'marrying below her station'. Yet her personal position as a member of her father's clan and family could not be altered by her marriage, and she was well aware that she was conferring something on the man and on the family she married into.

While the boys were learning their roles in later life in the democratic atmosphere of the *lomwi* and of the boys' pursuits in the village, the girls in the later stage of their training after puberty were treated more individually, and were not left to find their level in a group of their age mates. The adult women took an active part in telling them how to behave, how to dress and how to cook. The girls of high-ranking families sometimes pounded maize with their age mates, singing as they did so, but more for fun than because their food depended on it. They learned to dress their hair and put on clothes, and to walk and dance in company with other girls, but always with the critical eye of their gogo upon them. Their lower-ranking companions could make mistakes and be careless, and walk and dance in an exaggerated fashion. Ngoni girls might never pass certain bounds of decorum, and the standard expected of them was high and exacting. I have heard *mamina* of leading clans scold young girls many times for careless behaviour and badly done work.

In this training, as throughout that of the boys, there was a deliberate preparation for leadership. A girl's character and ability were being watched and, while an awareness of her personal dignity and position was being fostered, it was accompanied by requirements of obedience

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and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show submissiveness to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knows, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss.

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umuindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umuindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *ipuba*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umuindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were displaced by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private.

The *umuindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umuindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umuindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umuindo* ceremony

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 F36 565 emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

859 Many of the amindo songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of them, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

952 304 The boys and girls were through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a twig, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambezi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

561 957 After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance epsona in a neighbouring village.

857 535 In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the epsona dance played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

2: Reed E-5 (1933-1939) 1956
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of an opposite 'competition' the team was made up of lads and girls of about fourteen to eighteen years old. They went off to another village, having announced their arrival previously, and challenged the 'home team' to dance against. The dancing was in the kraal with the adults looking on and acting as judges. It was all very decorous and orderly and the competing teams were in dead earnest. As we have noticed already, the Ngoni danced without drums. The steady beat of the feet of the young men made the rhythm for the dance, but the co-ordination in the long lines of boys in front and girls behind needed assiduous practice to produce harmonious results. In both northern and central Nguniland the Paramounts had forbidden all dances except Ngoni dances, and in the north the agama was encouraged by the chiefs because it was considered a 'good dance' for young people.

After marriage, the young women were absorbed in the care of their huts and young children and only appeared as an age set when they took part in a communal beating; on such occasions they were inclined to keep apart from the older women, sometimes on the grounds that they did not drink the full-strength beer, and therefore clustered round a pot of 'sweet' beer when they knocked off work. In most Ngoni villages the young men after marriage went off to find work and, as a group of friends within an age set, they would get together to talk things over, make their preparations and travel to the south.

In day-to-day village affairs, as well as on ceremonial occasions, the age sets of the *mamisa* and *madola* were very much in evidence. The *madola* met at meal-times by the gate of the kraal, and they went there to count the cattle when they came back in the evening. The same group could be seen either at the kraal gate or on a verandah talking about village affairs or drinking together, or at a court listening to cases. The *mamisa* usually gathered in the verandah of the *indlunkulu* to talk over women's affairs or to receive guests. As an age set they met less frequently than the men because the larger part of their tasks lay in their own huts or in the group of women associated with a house. On all occasions when the formal reception of strangers took place, or when ritual fencing or shaving or washing occurred, or when important decisions had to be made, the *mamisa* and the *madola* in their separate sets were in evidence.

Although the age sets in village life were social units carrying definite responsibilities and performing recognised activities, their chief importance in Ngoni social life was in regulating behavioural patterns and preserving mutual relationships. Here we have to take note of a selective principle at work among the *mamisa* and *madola*. Although in one sense all women and men of forty to forty-five and upwards belonged to these age sets, the individuals who carried out the characteristic activities of these groups did not include all the men and women of that age. The very old people did not continue to exercise any influence in village

2: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1956
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561 885 affairs unless they were exceptionally vigorous mentally and physically, or the kind of dominating personality who could not be overlooked. It was evident also that individuals of weak character or evil disposition were not included in the group. I saw one or two such persons who bore a bad reputation in village society turned away from a senior group which was talking over a difficult village affair, with the caustic comment: 'Who is that worthless one? We cannot know him.' On the other hand, on social occasions when food or beer was being dispensed, all the old ones and the less reputable ones would be given their share, though sometimes with a cutting remark about the people who never missed a party but never did any work.

Selection in the senior age sets was intended to show that only persons who could be trusted, that is who were of known good character, were qualified to supervise the growing up of boys and girls, for whom the village elders as a group felt responsible. The maintenance of Ngoni standards of behaviour in young people was in the hands of this older group, who could and did exercise authority over and above that of the family and house. There were no more ardent supporters of Ngoni behaviour patterns than some of the older men and women of Nyasa class in the central kingdom who had been brought up in the houses of Swazi or trans-Zambezi class, and were recognized as *mamisa* and *madodo* in their villages.

561 576 Among the younger people below the group of elders, it was common to hear them address each other as *stanga yami*, or *mwanga*, 'my age mate'. Boys shouted it at each other on the cattle ground, young women called to each other in these terms when pounding maize, and when on a visit as an *ngoma* dance team it was a frequent form of address among the youths and girls. There was inherent in that form of address an case of relationship, an absence of seniority or inferiority, and an acknowledgement of a tie which went beyond that of the family or house or clan. It was most commonly used within a village, but it was sometimes used between young people of different villages.

561 572 Within these groups of youths and girls and among young married men and women, there was a recognized friendship relation, *cibwezi*, which existed as a rule between pairs of individuals of the same sex and age. It was sometimes a continuation of a playmate companionship, sometimes an expression of the need of a young boy in a *lomesi* or a young married woman for a confidante or sympathiser. Most often it was a spontaneous specialized liking for another person, expressed invariably through an exchange of small gifts and generally of confidences, and often by going off together to bathe or cut firewood or catapult small birds. Such friendships were said as a rule to be permanent, though girls and women sometimes referred contemptuously to someone as 'She was my friend. Now she hates me and does not give me anything.' The decision to go off in search of work was often taken

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by two youths who were friends and who mentioned their intention, and then were joined by other pairs.

These forms of an age-set system which the Nguni brought with them from the north were still in the 1930's a significant element in village life. The greatest change had occurred in the cessation of warfare and, with the enforcement of peace, the recognized stages mentioned in the beginning of this chapter had to a large extent disappeared. Though the boys and men were no longer divided into pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors, the institution of the *lumsi* and the important role played by the *umdoda* were two distinctive elements in Nguni village life. So also was the form and content of the training given to Nguni girls of Swazi clans, which largely determined the role played by the *umtsiso* in village affairs.

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PART IV

THE ANCESTOR CULT OF THE NGONI

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CHAPTER I

THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS AND THE ARISTOCRATIC TRADITION

THIS section is not an account of Ngoni religion. It would require a study in itself to examine their beliefs about supernatural beings, their ideas on cosmogony, their concepts of the causes of disaster and sickness, their approach to and practice of forms of magic, and their attitude to witchcraft. Living in Ngoni villages, listening to individuals of different ages discussing prosperity and disaster, the seen and the unseen, the known and the feared, it was clear that it would be difficult to isolate a comprehensive system of beliefs and say that these were distinctively Ngoni beliefs concerning religion and magic and witchcraft. The observer was always aware of the intermingling of ideas and practices from the many Nyasaland tribal peoples who lived side by side and were in constant contact with one another in all those spheres of thought and action which demanded explanation and some remedial or therapeutic treatment. Among the Nyasaland tribes in the 1930's the influence of sixty years of Christian teaching by the missions played an important part, since the missions had introduced western medicine and education as well as a new religion and ethic, and so had influenced both thinking and action among their converts and their families. 114 771

In this complex situation it was virtually impossible to say: this is the Cewa religion, this is the Tumbuka cosmogony, this is Ntumba magic. It was nevertheless clear that there was an Ngoni cult of their ancestral spirits, which was not shared, in the form in which they practised it, by any of the neighbouring peoples, and the Ngoni had their own selective methods of relating it to Christian beliefs and practices. One reason why the Ngoni ancestor cult could be singled out as peculiar to them was its foundation in their aristocratic tradition. As long as the Ngoni political and social structure and organization survived, including the reciprocal roles of leading men and important women, the concept of houses with their ownership of cattle, and the role of the *gogo* house in maintaining tradition and carrying out ritual, the performance of the cult of ancestral spirits was assured. The eminent ancestors whose spirits were guarded in a village and who were known and remembered were addressed in times of trouble, and meat was offered to them as a form of sacrifice from the herd of cattle associated with the house to which they had belonged. This section will deal with the cult of ancestral spirits of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who formed the political and social aristocracy. Thus, in the form described here, the cult is 771 769 [563] [565]

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565 exclusively related to the aristocratic tradition, and no account will be
769 given or analysis made of ancestor cults practised by those groups in the
771 two Ngoni kingdoms who were not of the leading clans. In the ancestor cult, as it will be described here, the emphasis was always on known and named spirits of the dead, associated with the village where the ritual was performed. In the approach to these known and named spirits—an approach which I have called a cult—there were three essential components: the diviner, the ritual address and the cattle. The diviner's role we shall discuss in Chapter III and the ritual forms of addressing the ancestors in Chapter IV. The Ngoni believed they could not approach their ancestral spirits except through their cattle, which had first to
[825] show that the spirits agreed to prayers being made, and the sign was that the beast urinated. The sacrifice of a beast was an integral part of the rite, which was concluded by the suppliants eating the meat together. At no point in their common life did the Ngoni more clearly demonstrate their dependence on their cattle than in the ritual of addressing their ancestral spirits. For this reason, in Chapter II we shall review the place of cattle in Ngoni life and relate it to their role in the ancestor cult.

Ancestral spirits of the Ngoni Paramounts.

643 The reigning Paramount and his predecessors in that office held an
769 unchallenged supremacy in the hierarchy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The
776 Ngoni believed that the line of dead Paramounts similarly led the hierarchy of the ancestral spirits, and that the dead Paramounts had power to help the Ngoni nation in time of need. It was taken for granted that when Paramounts died they would continue to be powerful and held in great respect, and that their position in the spirit world would enable them to influence UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit. This Great Spirit was believed to be the creator of all things and the ultimate source of power, particularly of sending rain, success in war, and deliverance from pestilence; and he was in general regarded as the giver of health and strength to mankind. The Ngoni held that those ancestors who were nearest to the living in time, whose names they knew, possessed less power than the remote ancestors whose names had been forgotten. On the same principle UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit, the originator of all creation, possessed more power than any other being, but, since he was so far removed in time from the living, no one could know his praise-names or his genealogy, and therefore he could not be addressed directly. In the same way the remotest ancestors of the Paramount could not be addressed directly because their praise-names were unknown to living men. Only those direct ancestors of the Paramount, whose names and genealogy and praise-names were known, could be addressed correctly and they could be counted on to use their influence with remoter and more powerful ancestral spirits and with the Great Spirit himself.

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As one of the Ngoni said: 'The spirits of the dead Paramounts were the guardians of the whole nation. These *amadloxi* stood between UMkulumqango and the people. They were never worshipped at times of plenty and prosperity, but at the time of crisis and danger.'

In pre-European days there had been two special occasions when the spirits of former Paramounts were addressed on behalf on the whole nation. One was at the time of the *incwala* or first-fruits ceremony, which as we have seen was given up before the final settlement in Nyasaland. This was an occasion uniting all the people with songs and dances at the village of the Paramount. The second occasion was in time of war before the army went out on a raid. This could take place more than once during the fighting season, and always at the Paramount's village.

The remaining occasions for addressing the spirits of former Paramounts on behalf of the nation were when epidemics threatened, when there was a drought, or in the serious illness of the Paramount or of a leading member of his family. In prayer for rain or for the recovery from illness of someone of the royal clan, the diviner had to be consulted about which of the ancestors of the Paramount should be addressed. The ancestor indicated by the diviner had to be named in the ritual, his genealogy given and, as a rule, his particular attributes and his praise-names mentioned. The following account was given to me by Mlonyeni Jere, who prayed for rain in Elangeni in 1935:

¶ When the rain stopped, the *amadoda* spoke among themselves 'What shall be done?' If they could not find out who had made the rain to stop, they said 'We must ask the *isanusi* (diviner). Perhaps it is one of the *amadloxi* (spirits) who are stopping the rain.'

If the *isanusi* finds it is the spirit of Hlacwayo, then all the big people are called to come to the kraal at Elangeni. Then they say 'We should choose a black ox with no white spot and bring it to the kraal.' They appointed a speaker who knows how to speak well all the names of the chiefs who have died. This man says to the spirit 'This cow is yours. You must eat it all. Then you must tell UMkulumqango our troubles.' If it urinates or makes dung, the spirits agree. This praying to the spirits is in the kraal in the evening. At early dawn next day someone is sent to kill the ox. While it was being flayed, the huts of the chief wives were smeared with cow dung on the floors and on the place outside the door. The meat was cooked in the kraal by the *amadoda*. Some of it was taken into the *indlunkulu* and kept there for one night so that the spirit might lick it.

The Paramount had already eaten in the kraal and the meat was divided for the *amadoda* according to their age regiments. After they have eaten, a big man rises up to thank the spirit with his titles and praise-names, and all the people answer *Bayete* and there is a war-dance in the kraal. Then they look up and see clouds coming. Then the rain comes.

This particularizing of the appeal to an individual dead Paramount in the ancestor cult was an essential element in the ritual, and there seemed

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769 to be no occasion and no form of ritual in which a generalized appeal was made to the spirits of all former Paramounts.

The reasons for this were related to the place of the sacrifice and the herd of cattle used. The place was determined by the village where the spirit of the dead Paramount was guarded by a particular house, and where some at least of the cattle belonging to that house were kraaled. Thus, in the northern kingdom, the spirit of Zwangendaba Jere was addressed in Ekwendeni; of Hlacwayo his father in Elangeni; and of Magangata his grandfather in Hoho. In the central kingdom the spirit of Mputa was addressed in Mcakhatha and also in Lizulu; and of his father, Ngwana, in a village in Portuguese territory. I heard no reference to the spirits of more recent Paramounts being addressed, and when I asked the reason several informants suggested that it was important to address the Ngoni Paramount who had been with his people in the south, and who therefore knew the names of the spirits of former Paramounts who had died in the south, names which the Ngoni in Nyasaland had forgotten. On the other hand, provision was made for the guardianship of the spirit of each successive Paramount, and in central Ngoniland there was provision for guarding the spirit of a Queen Mother, NaMlangeni, the big wife of Mputa who survived him, and of her daughter, the Royal Sister Bambo Manga. The reason given for the guardianship of the spirits of these two royal women in Mcakhatha illustrates the close link between the village where the spirit was guarded and the herd of cattle kept there and was explained by informants in the following terms. While the central Ngoni were still in Songea Paramount Mputa wanted cattle to give as *lobola* for his marriage to NaMlangeni. He went to Golozela, the head of the Nzunga clan, and asked him for cattle, which were handed over to the father of NaMlangeni. Golozela Nzunga then became the *induna* of the house of NaMlangeni in the royal village and her daughter Bambo Manga lived in his section. The cattle given for her *lobola* when she was married were put in the kraal of Golozela Nzunga to repay him for his previous gift. After her husband's death, Bambo Manga returned to the Nzunga head village where her cattle were, and assumed the guardianship of the spirits of her mother and of her father Mputa.

Ancestral spirits of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans

769 614 Ngoni informants often made statements such as the following by Cibambo:

> ¶ The Ngoni believed that each family had its own line of spirits (*amadlozi*) dating far back to the origin of that family, and that these in succession carried the messages until they reached the unknown ancestors, who in turn had the right to carry the message to UMkulumqango.

When such a statement was checked in several areas it was clear that the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans focussed their

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ancestor cult in the head village of their clan. If they were asked 'How do you address the spirit (*teta idloni*)?' they gave the names and genealogy of the former heads of the clan and their attributes if they were known. If they were asked 'Where do you address the spirits?' the reply was always in terms of a particular village where a certain spirit was guarded. 769 614

The occasions on which the Swazi clan ancestors were addressed and sacrifices made were in cases of sickness of an important member of the clan. It was sometimes suggested that there might be trouble in the clan villages for which prayer should be made to the clan spirits, but when pressed the only specific instance informants could give was when the cattle did not thrive. They repudiated immediately any idea of prayer to the clan spirits in cases of drought or epidemics in the clan villages since those troubles, wherever they occurred, could only be helped by the spirits of the Paramounts who were concerned with all the land and all its people. [731]

The procedure followed in the clan head village was the same as that for addressing the spirits of the Paramounts. In that village a diviner was consulted, he named the spirit who should be addressed, a beast was sacrificed and prayers were made. This was the Ngoni pattern of the ancestor cult, and it was limited to the Swazi and some of the trans-Zambesi clans. Its correct observance required that combination of cattle, houses, and known genealogies which only the leading clans possessed. [563]

The living and the dead

At times such as funerals, and when talking about the ancestor cult, the Ngoni often used the phrase: 'Death cannot cut life.' They believed that human spirits had a continued existence after death, and that this existence was related to the place where they had dwelt, the people who were of their family and clan, and the cattle which belonged to their house and village. This continued association was not an automatic process. It had to be assured by the correct performance of the burial rites, the observance of stages of mourning and the deliberate 'bringing back' of the spirit to the village where it would be guarded and honoured after the final mourning ceremony was over. 775 769

In the Ngoni funeral rites there were distinctive elements in the burial of those belonging to Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In handling the corpse the legs were bent and drawn up to the body and the arms folded and crossed each side of the neck, so that the corpse seemed to be sitting and holding its head in its hands. It was wrapped in the skin of a newly killed beast. In the central kingdom men and women of Swazi clans were wrapped first in a sheep-skin, with a cow-skin put over it. The grave was a circular pit, with a small side chamber or shelf where the body was placed in a sitting position, propped up with large stones and facing south-east to the ancestral homeland. Personal possessions, such as skins and shields and baskets, were either put in the grave or taken to be 764 184

764 184 burned immediately after the burial on the banks of the stream where the living performed their ritual washing. Small children who were related to the dead took charcoal in their hands, and walked up to the grave backwards and threw the charcoal in without looking. Some leaders of the Swazi clans were buried on the edge of the kraal of the house to which they belonged, and the fence was enlarged to include the grave. The Ngoni comment on this place of burial was: 'If we make a grave, we make it outside the kraal, and afterwards build the kraal round that place so that cattle may walk over it and lie on it. Thus it may become flat as if it were nothing, for Ngoni people do not want a grave to [765] be seen from the outside.' The women who were near relatives of the dead were allowed to mourn in the hut where the person had died, or they could if they chose take part in the war-songs and dances which were the only form of mourning allowed to the male relatives and to the men and women of the village who were not closely related to the dead person. The usual procedure was for a group of older women to wail and sob in the hut, but for all the rest, men and women, to mourn in the Ngoni way by taking part in war-dances and songs.

764 182 Much of this ritual appears to have had as its purpose to remove the fear of death from the living. That was the explanation of why the children threw charcoal in the grave—that they should not remember with fear the dead person being put in the earth. The obliteration of the grave site on the edge of the kraal had a dual purpose. One has been already referred to—that the grave should not be seen. The other was to identify the grave of a leading man or woman with the kraal site and the cattle herded there. If the village moved and a new kraal was set up, people would still say 'X was buried here', adding 'He was buried here when we were on Domwe—or in Songea', referring to an earlier site of the village. Placing the corpse facing south-east, and singing Ngoni war-songs which had come from the south, linked the newly dead with the ancestral dead, and emphasized the chain of communication between the living and the dead, which a new ancestral spirit could help to forge. It was establishing this means of communication which was the dominant note in the ritual of the funeral and in the post-burial rites.

When a death took place, the first action taken after the corpse had been prepared and wrapped in a skin was to send out a summons to come and mourn. We saw in the chapter on the Paramount that at his death the summons was in the formula 'The skies have fallen.' For others the announcement was: 'So and so has died. Come and mourn.' The [765] obligation to mourn was binding. If relatives and fellow clansmen could not come at the time of the burial, or were away in the south, one of their first duties on returning to their home village was to go and mourn by the kraal where the dead person was buried. This was intended partly to show sympathy for the bereaved, but also to acknowledge and salute a new ancestral spirit, and to demonstrate the re-integration of

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the group of those living relatives who had performed or were about to perform certain rites for the newly dead.

These rites were the stages of mourning laid down in the Ngoni funeral ritual. They were stages in which all adults took part, and they fulfilled the need to build up the future links with the spirit who had joined the ancestors and to bring together in common acts those from whom death had removed one of their number. The following text by one of the leaders of a Swazi clan in the central kingdom puts together briefly the successive stages of shaving, drinking beer, eating meat, singing war-songs, ritual cleansing and widow inheritance, and bringing back the spirit.

¶ If a man died, the second day they shave; after 5 or 6 months they shave again and cook beer. This means the widows must take off their white *xitambo* (head bands). After 12 months they take off their black *xitambo* and kill a beast to praise the spirit so that he may return to his house. This is also the time for inheriting the widows.

When they take off the white *xitambo*, the brother of the one who died takes sheep dung and sprinkles it in the houses where the widows are sleeping. At the same time the men wash their hands with cattle dung. The meaning of this is to tell the widows to cook food for the brothers of the dead man to send to them when they sit by the kraal. This they do before they can see them.

From the ritual witnessed at many funeral ceremonies, which never altered in its main elements, and from discussions with Ngoni informants, it was possible to gain some idea of Ngoni beliefs about the relation between the living and the dead. It was clear that the attitude of the living towards the dead was one of respect and honour, but not predominantly one of avoidance and fear as among some of the neighbouring tribes. The post-burial ritual culminated in 'bringing back the spirit' to the village, and we shall examine this further in the last chapter of this section. An observer was always conscious of a sense that people were waiting for the return of the spirit, which had to be planned for and carried out by the living. During the interval between the death and bringing back the spirit, it was said to be 'in the bush'. When asked where in fact the spirit was, the answer was always 'We do not know. How can we know?' They admitted that the life of the spirits was unknown to them, and there was evidence of a slightly uneasy relationship during this interval of waiting. When the spirit had been brought back and was being guarded by some woman appointed for that purpose, then it was once more near to the living and their cattle, and it could be addressed correctly. In the absence of any clear concepts about life in a spirit world, the Ngoni clung to the ritual by which they believed they could establish and maintain contact of a safe and respectful nature between the living and the dead. 769 775

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178 769 764 In the central kingdom there were two instances of a modern adaptation of the ancestor cult, both of which were evidence of its close links with the aristocratic tradition; one related to a *mahumusana* of a Swazi clan, the other to the royal clan. One of the first things which caught the eye of a visitor to the village of Mcakhatha was a large circular brick and cement tomb with a wooden cross on the top, in the middle of the village by the main kraal and within sight of the ruling chief's hut. It was the tomb of Njolomole Nzunga I, son of Golozela Nzunga who gave the cattle for NaMlangeni's *lobola*, and father of the ruling Chief Njolomole Nzunga II. The idea of this memorial originated with Lopati Nzunga, younger brother of Njolomole I and head of the *gogo* section of the village, and he had organized its erection. The bricks and cement were given by Europeans in the neighbourhood, and three beasts were killed for meat for those who carried the materials. The money to pay for the bricklayers' wages was raised by the sale of another beast. The name on the wooden cross was cut by the Chief's brother-in-law who was a carpenter, and Lopati said that the cross was for writing the name on and had no Christian significance. The tomb was declared 'open' to the public in the presence of a large number of people. A beast was presented to the Paramount Chief, and another beast was killed and cooked for a feast in the village. Beer was brewed in the huts of the two leading widows who had been in the big house and second house of Njolomole I.

This tomb was a memorial and not a grave, for Njolomole I had been buried in Ngoni fashion on the edge of the kraal, the fence of which was enlarged to take in the grave. It was regarded as a central point in the village. Ngoni visitors saluted it as they went by with the right arm [576 upraised in Ngoni fashion, and war-dances and *ngoma* dances took place 201] beside it. The idea of a brick tomb with a cross on top was of course a modern concept taken from European cemeteries in Nyasaland which Lopati had seen. It cost six cattle to put it up and 'open' it, and these cattle were taken from the herds of the big house of Njolomole I.

In the chapter on the Paramount (Part II, Chapter II) it was pointed out that in the central kingdom the Paramount Gomani I was shot as a result of the 'war with the English' when he refused to walk to Zomba for his trial. On the Zomba road near the turning to the mission station of Dombole was a track leading into some woods. In an open clearing was a brick and cement tomb to Gomani I, subscribed to by the central Ngoni (including those living in the towns of Blantyre and Zomba). A memorial fund called 'The late Gomani Memorial Fund' was opened in 1926, and three years later those who had organized the fund formed the Angoni Highlands Association, mainly of Ngoni working in Blantyre and Zomba and wishing to maintain their links with their home villages. In discussing the origin of this fund for the memorial informants pointed out that they were aware that Gomani I, unlike his father and grand-

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father, had been a fierce ruler, and had gathered round him bands of young men who were not easily restrained. Though they could judge his character in this objective way, they respected his office, and hence his death and the confiscation of cattle which followed were a deep injury to Ngoni pride. So thirty years after his death they collected money and put up the memorial, and the appeal was supported for three main reasons. One was to commemorate this Paramount who had not had the traditional cremation by a river; another was to remove the shame of his death; the last was to draw together all his people in a common act. Every year numbers of Ngoni gathered at this memorial and held a Christian service which was followed by a general meeting. This memorial service and meeting had a definite link with the ancestor cult, and illustrated in a particular form Ngoni beliefs in the relation of the living and the dead.

In the 1930's, as we saw in Chapter III of Part I, the form of Ngoni funerals and the ritual of mourning were closely related to the ancestor cult and were practised by the Ngoni aristocracy. These forms of ritual and their beliefs they brought with them from the south, and they were an important part of Ngoni culture. We shall see in a later chapter how some of these cultural elements were combined with Christian ritual, both for leading individuals of Swazi clans and for lesser members of those clans.

CHAPTER II

CATTLE AND THE ANCESTOR CULT

THERE are many references throughout this study to the importance of cattle among the Ngoni. In this chapter the place of cattle in Ngoni life will be examined with reference to the ancestor cult, and hence certain limitations have been imposed in the selection of material and its interpretation. There will, for example, be no analysis of the role of cattle in the economic life of Ngoni families and villages. Much of the material discussed has an economic significance which is immediately apparent, but the limitations set will not allow the economic implications of certain practices to be pursued further here. It is important for the main purpose of this chapter to make a brief analysis of some factors in the ownership, care, and use of cattle, and to follow that with references to some of the values and attitudes inherent in the Ngoni ownership and use of cattle. I made a preliminary analysis of these factors in a memorandum on standards of living in the central kingdom, published

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 in 1938.[1] The sociological and ritual significance of these factors will be
233 the chief emphasis here, with reference to earlier chapters in this book on Ngoni culture and on the structure of Ngoni society.

233 In the sociological significance of cattle-ownership there are certain
554 outstanding points to be emphasized, which will be indicated here and
565 developed further in the analysis which follows. One is the connexion between cattle-ownership and status, illustrated by the dominance of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in village life, since their possession of cattle was related to the kraal and to the siting of huts and to their house organization. The cattle horns on the roof of the *indlunkulu* were no trivial ornament. They were a proud assertion of cattle-ownership attached to the residences of the leading women, with all the implications of 'house herds' of cattle and of *lobola* given and received. Closely related to cattle-ownership and status was the power conferred by the possession of herds. The status of leading families was enhanced by the ability to give feasts, to give *lobola* for their sons' wives, to make sacrifices to the ancestors and, as we saw at the end of the last chapter, to realize cash by the sale of beasts belonging to the herd. Cattle-owners did at times have to decide whether to maintain and augment their herds and thereby be known as wealthy cattle-owning families; or to sell cattle in order to command labour to build a modern brick house, or to buy fine clothes for their wives and display their wealth in another form.

182 In the organization of Ngoni society, cattle were an important factor
233 in uniting groups of persons. We have seen how the house, as a group of men and women, and its variant, the central Ngoni form of *banja*,
621 had common possession of a herd of cattle which formed a source of wealth for all members of the house. Within the house the senior men were bound together by the responsibilities attached to the ownership and care of a herd. Within the village the senior men of a house or *banja* united in the upkeep of the kraal, the supervision of the herd-boys, the tending of sick cattle, and in meeting or resisting the Government's demands for culling or dipping stock. Where cattle were boarded out in another village, ties of association in the care of the beasts and in accountability for them bound together the cattle-owners or cattle-keepers of more than one village. A stage in the adjustment of a young wife to a strange village was reached when she added to the herd of the house she had married into the gift cattle given her by her father and so partly compensated for those which had been given to him by her husband's family. A new wife's standing in a village was thus advanced through any cattle which flowed in the opposite direction from those of the *lobola* cattle. Finally, and this is the main theme of this chapter, cattle were an essential link between the living and the dead.

[1] Read, M. *Native Standards of Living and African Culture Change*. Memorandum XVI of International African Institute, 1938.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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The relation of cattle-ownership to social integration, which was so marked a feature of Ngoni society, was limited to the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. There was evidence that the acquisition of herds by former captives and by the local Cewa and other tribes created conflicts within the society. The following statement was made by an Ntumba village headman, commenting on several court cases relating to cattle-ownership. The reference in the last sentence is to the Ngoni practice in the ownership of cattle.

« Sometimes people say 'If your father was caught and was the slave of a certain person, and also if your mother was caught and was a slave of another man, then if you buy cattle and put them in the kraal of your father, those who caught your father say "These cattle are mine (or ours)." And those who caught your mother say "These cattle are ours." ' They all say so because it was they who caught your ancestors. So those cattle do not recognize their real owner. And sometimes those cattle do not bear well, and sometimes they just die.

Then perhaps you die and leave your cattle, and those people are quarrelling to find out who is the owner of those cattle, since there are three people who want those same cattle: your father, the one who caught your father, and the one who caught your mother.

And it is really best if there are many masters that you, a child, should not buy cattle, but just leave off because they are a source of trouble. But one who is a free man without any masters, he ought to buy cattle because there will be no trouble for him.

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Among the local Cewa tribes, when a man wanted to start a herd and had money to buy cattle, he was expected to give the money to his *malume* (mother's brother) who then bought the cattle and took charge of them and regarded them as his.[1] This assertion of ownership of cattle bought with another man's money was part of the services to which the mother's brother was entitled from his sister's children, in return for services which he had performed or would perform for them. If those relationships between a man and his *malume* were not working smoothly and the *malume* was not helping his nephew, there was a tendency for the man to turn to his own father and give him the money, and vest the ownership of the cattle in him, often because the father had paid the school fees or a court fine for his son. When the *malume* realized that his position had been usurped and that his chance of owning cattle had gone, his dislike of the man's father and his family showed itself in jealousy and quarrels between the two individuals and friction between the families. The Cewa matrilineal *mbumba* as a cattle-owning group under a senior man had not the continuity of the Ngoni house, for an *mbumba* was said to be 'finished' when a woman and all

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[1] The Cewa believed that if cattle were to survive and increase, they had to be owned and cared for by senior men. On the highlands round Dedza the Cewa had had cattle before the Ngoni came.

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Maravi FR4

her daughters had died, and the herd of cattle was either inherited by the senior daughter's eldest son or divided among the sons of different daughters. Cewa informants said that quarrels constantly arose over the ownership of cattle, and two modern developments—the spread of *utengwa*[1] marriage and of a patrilineal form of *mbumba* with its repercussions on cattle acquisition and disposal—caused further tensions in Cewa society.

The role which cattle played in Ngoni social life partly depended on the structure and inter-relationships of the Ngoni social groups. The house and the family within the larger village unit were so organized that group ownership and group disposal of cattle caused no permanent friction. There were arguments about the disposal of cattle, but they were temporary and relatively trivial. The strength of tradition in the concept of ownership, and in the values and attitudes inherent in cattle-owning and keeping, was firmly established and was related to modern needs by the ingenuity of the Ngoni in manipulating traditional practices to suit new situations. Cattle therefore strengthened the integration of existing social units, and helped to preserve that unity and cohesion in Ngoni society which the ancestors were said to commend and to wish for. On this plane of conformity to a required pattern, cattle influenced the living and their behaviour. They also, through the structure and function of the houses, belonged to the spirit who was guarded in a particular house. As we shall see in Chapter IV, the ritual formula of address to the ancestor at the sacrifice of a beast was always 'Here is your beast . . . Here is your meat.' The living and the dead were joined therefore in the common ownership of a herd or part of a herd. The actual practices in social and ritual life where cattle were concerned, and the ideas and concepts from which the practices arose, will take up most of this chapter and form the necessary prelude to the further analysis of the ancestor cult.

Ownership of cattle and care of herds

'The war of the cattle-tax' was the name given in the central kingdom to the installation of dipping tanks in the 1930's and the levying of a tax of a shilling per head of cattle on all cattle-owners. The attempt by the Government to focus responsibility for dipping and to collect the taxes due brought out clearly the difficulties of applying English conceptions of ownership to the Ngoni. In the English meaning of the word ownership, a man can claim as his possession cattle which he has bought or inherited, and their offspring. This individual ownership means that he alone has the right to sell the animals or their milk, to regard the profits from such sale as his, and at any time to kill an animal for meat. He can will them to his descendants or to anyone he chooses after his

[1] Marriages in which the man took his wife to live in his village, but did not give *lobola* for her.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

death, or he can give them to anyone he likes during his lifetime. Hence individual acquisition in the English sense involves the legal right of individual disposal; the individual possession of profits from such disposal; and the individual responsibility for complying with any regulations concerning cattle, such as inoculation, slaughter for foot-and-mouth disease, and testing of milk.

In Ngoni usage the concept of ownership involved the acquisition and disposal of, and the responsibility for, cattle, but behind this apparent similarity of terms lay a wide difference in interpretation. Cattle could be acquired by inheritance, by natural increase, by *lobola*, as payment in a court case, as a gift, or by purchase. Formerly cattle could be acquired in warfare and raiding, but never by purchase. With this exception of buying cattle for cash, the methods of acquiring cattle had not altered since the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland. In pre-European days in the Ngoni kingdoms only the Paramount, the subordinate chiefs, the *alumuzana* and the big *ixinduna* possessed cattle. Having a herd marked the owner as a leading member of a leading clan, or as a famous warrior of a lesser clan whose distinguished war service had been rewarded by the Paramount giving him cattle, or allowing him to keep some of those he had taken from the enemy. New herds were formed when a Paramount or a chief moved out of his father's village and set up his own *lusungulu* village, taking with him one or more of his mothers who, together with his big wife, set up houses in the new village, and these houses were allotted cattle from the former undivided herd. Another way in which a herd was divided was when a big *induna* in charge of the house of a leading wife of a Paramount or a chief built a kraal for the cattle of that house near his own huts, and added to that herd any cattle which he acquired. Large Ngoni villages in pre-European days usually had one or more kraals on the edge of the village, as well as the big central one. When the large villages broke up and the *induna* moved off to found his own village, he still took care of the cattle of that house. If the house was one where an ancestral spirit was guarded, a successor was always appointed to live in the hut and guard the spirit. Hence the relationship of the house, its spirit guardian, its cattle and the *induna* in charge continued, though the personalities changed through death and for other reasons. This explained how in the 1930's cattle were found in one kraal which were said to belong to a house or a woman guardian of a spirit miles away in another village. Sometimes they were described as the cattle of a man long dead.

It is clear, therefore, that the Ngoni methods of acquiring cattle and building up herds did not result in a concept of individual ownership. Cattle were not willed from father to son, but the son of a Paramount or a chief, when he made his new *lusungulu* village, had the right to receive and to take with him the cattle of his mother's house; and the head of the *gogo* village who stayed behind also received and looked after the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

233 cattle of *his* mother's house and those of other widows of his father,
422 even though the widows remarried and went to live elsewhere. The ownership of a herd, in the sense of authority to acquire and to dispose of the cattle, was in fact vested in the senior male members belonging to each house in whose name cattle were held. This senior male leadership of a house had, in the central kingdom, a parallel in the senior male members of a *banja*. The implication in both was the same—that there was a group of senior men linked by membership of a house or a *banja*, who took responsibility for all the cattle in the herd of that house or *banja* and for all additions to the herd. Any new beasts acquired through natural increase, *lobola*, court payments, gifts, or purchase, by any member of that house went into the herd belonging to it. Thus it was easy for young men working in the south to send back money to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. They knew the choice would be well made and that the cattle would be well cared for until their return.

The right of disposal of cattle in a herd belonging to a house or *banja* was based on the same concept of ownership. The senior male group had to decide which beasts to send for the *lobola* when a young man of
[476] their house married. They undertook, as owners of the cattle, to pay fines in court cases when a member of the house was fined. If money was needed, either by the group as a whole or by an individual member, a beast was chosen and sold by the senior men; part of the proceeds was given to the individual who needed help, and part either buried under the floor of the hut of the woman who was head of the house, or converted into cloth and stored in the hut. Gifts of cattle were sometimes
[431] given to important visitors, or as an expression of sympathy when mourning at a funeral, or for a sacrifice to the ancestors. On all such occasions the decision to dispose of one or more beasts and the selection of them were in the hands of the senior male group. Though prolonged discussion might go on before a decision to sell or make a gift was made, once there was agreement the selection was often made very quickly. The leading men would go to the kraal, point out the beasts to the herd-boys, and tell them to drive them to the appointed place.

233 The care of the herds was primarily the responsibility of the senior men, though the actual herding was delegated to the herd-boys. Informants said that in pre-European days great care was taken of the animals in the rainy season; the ant-hills in the kraal were preserved so that the animals might get out of the mud, and calf-houses with roofs were always provided for shelter for the calves. I saw some calf-houses of this kind, and some kraals with ant-hills left in them, but neither was common practice, and the reason given was that the kraals and herds were much smaller than in pre-European days.

There were two chief objectives in the care of herds: that the cattle should keep well and avoid disease, and that they should multiply. The

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

cattle never came back to the kraal in the evening without one or more of the senior men standing by the gate and watching them and counting them as they went in. Sick cattle were noted and the herd-boys questioned about them. Mating was observed and noted, but not regulated, though poorly developed male beasts were sometimes castrated by one of the men who had acquired skill as a cattle doctor. Such a man would also administer drenches and other medicines, but the responsibility for calling a *sing'anga*, the specialist in medicines, to perform a ritual for a sick beast was taken by the whole group. They also made the decision to call a *sing'anga* to protect the kraal against lions. On several occasions I was in a village where lions attempted to get into the kraal at night, and the next morning the senior men who were responsible for the herd discussed the efficacy of this or that man's 'lion medicine' and decided who should be sent for to make the kraal safe again.

Important decisions were taken from time to time about placing the cattle belonging to the herd of a house in other kraals. This custom of *kuikilila* (lit. to entrust) was common in the central kingdom and had been adapted to modern needs as one means of evading the cattle-tax by appearing to have few cattle, whereas a number were boarded out in other areas. This boarding out was a long-established custom of the Ngoni and was practised for various reasons. One reason, and probably the most important formerly, was to build up good relations with leading men in the outlying villages by entrusting cattle to their care. The reward if the cattle throve was often the gift of a beast, and this was one means by which men of local tribes could build up a herd. It was also a signal honour to have cattle entrusted in this way and it was acknowledged by sending to such a 'keeper' the head of any beast killed from this herd. Another reason for boarding out was to prevent diseases spreading among a whole herd all kept in one kraal, and yet another was a belief that certain men had latent power with cattle, and that beasts put in their care throve and multiplied. This emphasis on enlarging the herds by natural increase was the main motive for letting the calves have all the milk they needed in order that they might thrive.

The uses of cattle and cattle products

Many of the uses to which cattle were put and for which they were greatly valued have been referred to in this chapter and in earlier sections of this book. We shall now examine the consumption of meat, milk and blood as food, and the forms of exchange in which cattle were directly exchanged or converted into cash. The ritual use of cattle will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

The testimony of early Europeans in Nyasaland and the accounts by the Ngoni of their life in the pre-European period agree in giving the consumption of meat, milk, and blood a high place in the diet of the cattle-owning families. It was a widespread European criticism in the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 1930's that the Ngoni did not live as well as they might and had, in fact, an impoverished diet, because they did not make full use, and sometimes very little use, of the milk and meat which they had available. In pre-European days, when the possession of cattle was confined to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading *alumuzana*, there was a continuous slaughter of animals to provide a regular diet of meat and *ulubende*, the cooked blood which the Ngoni liked very much. The heads of the big houses saw that there was always on hand *amasi*, the milk curds which was the form in which adults took their milk, fresh milk being reserved for young children and herd-boys. This provision of meat, *ulubende* and *amasi* was only possible for those who had plenty of cattle, [721] and in both kingdoms wars and raids were carried out partly to obtain fresh supplies of cattle from neighbouring and unconquered tribes. As we saw in the chapter on the Paramount, in pre-European days the *alumuzana* who lived near enough to the royal village made a practice of calling frequently, if not daily, and such calls were rewarded by their being asked to eat with the Paramount, and 'food' in those days was predominantly meat. Between fighting seasons, that is during the rains, the young men (*amajaha*) who were newly recruited to the regiments [883] were kept busy in and around the Paramount's village and the head villages of the *alumuzana*, mending fences, making shields, and clearing new land. When they were thus employed they also were fed by the Paramount or *mulumuzana*, who regarded these periodic feasts for the *amajaha* as one of the first calls on the consumption of his cattle. The Ngoni later rationalized this earlier procedure of restricting meat and milk consumption to certain groups of people by arguing that it made the young warriors strong and able to fight and endure hardships, and they declared that the senior men and women who also shared the Paramount's supplies lived long and had great wisdom and strength of character. This rationalization was not only looking back to a past Utopia. It was also based on the argument that Europeans ate meat regularly and that they were strong, both physically and politically.

262 178 The European criticism in the 1930's that the Ngoni did not make full dietary use of their cattle and their products was justified, but there are two factors to note in this connexion. One was that the number of those who lived well on meat and milk in the old days was relatively small—confined in fact to cattle-owners, women owners of big houses, and warriors. The situation changed after the Europeans came, and a large number of people owned a few cattle and many of the new owners had no tradition about using their products. Among the cattle-owners of the Swazi clans the tradition of cooking blood and making curds continued and both were valued as food, but some of those who had only recently become owners of cattle did not know these practices, and 262 I came across many cattle-owners of local tribes who did not know how 272 to milk a cow. The failure to use milk in the Ngoni diet was due partly

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 262

to the method of rearing calves by letting them take all the milk they wanted, and partly to the practice of letting the herd-boys have the rest. In villages under a *muhumuzana* of a Swazi clan, who had a wife in his big house also of a Swazi clan, the consumption of milk was to some extent organized. These senior women saw that the herd-boys brought them a certain amount of milk each day, and they gave it to young children or invalids, and made some into *amasi*. 272

Another practice which restricted the use of meat and milk as regular items of diet was that the building up of the herds was regarded as a primary responsibility of the owners and guardians of cattle. Hence calves were given milk, which in western countries would be drawn off for human use, and the killing of beasts, unless they were sick, was restricted to selling the meat for cash or using it in ritual. One of the embarrassments suffered by an anthropologist was being presented with a beast by people who hardly ever killed one for their own use. It was true that a general share-out took place when the beast was killed, but it was none the less one beast fewer in the herd, and it was the maintenance and increase of the herds which was the cattle-owners' chief concern. 231 262

This emphasis on numbers rather than quality, which caused so much misunderstanding between government departments and cattle-owners, was closely related to the forms of exchange in cattle. Formerly cattle were handed over either as *lobola* or as penalties for the infringement of laws. Both these forms of transfer continued, but there were additional demands which cattle-owners or potential owners had to be aware of in watching the increase or diminution of their herds. One characteristic of these modern forms of exchange was the ready convertibility of cattle into cash and of cash into cattle. We have seen how young men away at work sent money back to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. We have seen too how the possession of cattle made it possible to sell a beast and obtain cash for various purposes, and the proximity of markets where there were butchers' stalls encouraged this sale of cattle. 231 437

One of the most frequent reasons for the conversion of cattle into cash was for the purpose of hiring labour. We saw in Chapter I of this section how Lopati Nzunga killed cattle to feed the men who carried bricks and cement for his brother's tomb and sold another beast to pay wages to the bricklayers. The traditional way of paying labourers had been by feeding them with meat, and the modern method was to pay them cash wages and to find the money for it by the sale of cattle. Such labour could be for cultivating, house-building, fence-building, road-making and other local work. The possession of cattle which were easily convertible into cash made possible this payment of labour, and this relationship between the role of cattle-owner and the role of employer of labour was common. 231 464 [465]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly
231 related to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
437 of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Money was needed for good
554 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which
the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling,
[453] except among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Values and attitudes in cattle-ownership

114 Any attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquir-
233 ing, caring for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive
565 survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is not possible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba clans whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading clans and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.

231 The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they repre-
556 sented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of ritual for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

considered it his individual bad luck. On the other hand the house which depended on its herd for mutual help among its members and for the performance of ritual in sickness was deeply concerned at the loss of cattle and at any diminution of its herd. 231 556

After security, pleasure and emotional satisfaction were important Ngoni values in relation to cattle. This outlet for interest and enjoyment was very marked among Ngoni men. It began with the young herd-boys and continued until old age. Cattle were an endless topic for discussion, and in remote areas, where few strangers came and local affairs played a predominant part in village life, the fortunes of individual beasts and the progress of herds were talked about continuously. The advent of a letter from a son in the south sending money to his father to buy a beast gave a fillip to village life which little else provided. When the young men themselves came home, they went during their first evening to the kraal where the cattle they had paid for were kept, and showed interest and pleasure in the herd which was shared by all. The older men who had carried the responsibility were there, and on the fringes of the group the herd-boys hung around, listening to their elders, proud of having done their bit for the cattle which were the common concern of all three age-groups.

The Ngoni were aware that security in their cattle and the pleasure they got from them had to be won, and there was a price to pay. Hence they attached great value to knowledge and experience and to the ability to organize. Among the senior men responsible for a herd in a house or *banja*, some would be known for their knowledge and skill in handling cattle and for their experience in dealing with sick beasts, in castrating bullocks, and in choosing well when buying new beasts. The Ngoni recognized an innate quality of skill, which they called *mphumi wabwino*, 'the good forehead', a term used as an equivalent for the 'green thumb' when talking about crops. They also recognized the knowledge which came from experience and which might or might not be associated with *mphumi wabwino*. In any village where there were cattle, men were pointed out who possessed knowledge about cattle-tending, and the choice of a neighbouring village kraal for boarding out purposes was generally decided on the reputation of the owner of the kraal as a good cattle man. Not all the people who had this specialized knowledge had ability to organize the care of cattle, a characteristic Ngoni quality on which they set a high value. Foresight and planning were necessary in the choice of kraals for boarding out, in the selection of animals for *lobola*, fines, gifts or slaughter, and above all in buying and selling cattle. This kind of organizing ability required the possession of information about local markets and about potential sellers or buyers of cattle. It also demanded some nice calculations when sending cattle for *lobola* or giving a beast as a gift. Men were often torn between wishing to appear generous to the point of lavishness, and not wanting to give 231 555 [431]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 555 431 away the prize animals in the herd. Their formula in presenting a beast was 'Here is a small sheep.' This belittling of a gift was the social counterpart of their inner desire for a reputation for generosity.

183 422 476 It has been clear from many previous references that mutual assistance among members of a house was inherent in the social pattern of cattle-ownership. The Ngoni attached great value to this reciprocity of service, and it was deeply embedded in their social ethic. Young men in Ngoni villages thought twice before they deliberately took action which would bring them into the courts, because the fine would have to be paid by their elders from the common herd of cattle. The implications of this service proved no ultimate deterrent to hot-headed youth, but the lesson was constantly being rubbed in. After a court case for adultery, when a young man's father and his father's brothers had handed over a beast for a fine, they would grumble in the evening by the kraal at this waste of good cattle, and suggest it was time the young man went off to the south and sent money home to buy more cattle. This was the cycle of mutual help—the elders provided cattle from the herd for *lobola* and fines for the young men, who in turn went off to work and sent back money to buy more cattle. Reference has been made to 'the cloth of the spirits', when cattle were sold to provide cash for a young man who needed it, and the balance was used to buy cloth which was kept in the hut where the ancestral spirit was guarded. This cloth was the common property of all who belonged to the house owning the herd, and was returnable to the hut after it had been worn for some festive occasion. The forms which this mutual help could take were numerous and varied, and they all illustrated the fact that the correct and continuous observance of this reciprocity was considered by the Ngoni as one of the basic values underlying the ownership and use of cattle.

Among the group bound together by cattle-ownership this emphasis on mutual help as a desirable behaviour pattern had its counterpart in the social concept of integration. As we have seen, the Ngoni put a high value on 'staying together', on being united when challenged by a situation which made for disintegration. Within the social units of the house and family, the ownership of cattle and their care and use demanded some degree of co-operation through responsibility for the herd which was held in common. Integration between the living and their ancestors was also provided by the cattle. Common possession of a herd did more than just hold people together. The pattern of family and house organization which was characteristically Ngoni was given some stability through the ownership of cattle, allowing for the subdivision of herds when the new village 'went out', the exchanges at marriage, and the sacrifices at death.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Cattle in the ancestor cult 825

The Ngoni, unlike the Swazi as described by Dr. Kuper,[1] had no 769
clear ideas about the life after death as lived by their immediate ancestors
with whom they had associated in their lifetime. They did not, as the 775
Swazi did, picture them living somewhere surrounded with cattle and [171]
other familiar creatures and objects. The importance of bringing the spirit back (*ukubuyisa idlozi*) to the house where it would be cared for signified two main things for them. The first was the continuous association of the spirit of the dead with the living persons in the community to which he had belonged, through the individuals belonging to the house, the actual hut where the sacrificial vessels were kept, and the cattle which belonged to the house. The other significant point was that contact with the returned spirit, and through him with the spirits of more remote ancestors, could only be established in the village containing the cattle of the house to which the dead man had belonged.

We shall be examining some aspects of the ritual of addressing the ancestral spirits in a later chapter of this section. Here we shall establish three constituent parts of the ancestor cult in which cattle were essential links between those taking part in the cult and the spirits whom they 764
addressed.

The first part was the group of ceremonies which took place at death, 769
at the burial, at the first ritual shaving and at bringing back the spirit. 825
A text by Lopati Nzunga (see Chapter IV, p. 200) illustrates how three parts of a beast—the skin, the kidney fat (*nseso*) and the gall bladder (*nyongo*)—were considered essential for Ngoni burial. It was interesting [177]
to find in Blantyre among educated Ngoni who were Christians and occupied clerical and commercial posts, that they had given up the cow-skin for wrapping the corpse and substituted a coffin. But they admitted confidentially that in most Ngoni funerals the use of the *nseso* and the *nyongo* was customary. After the burial the ritual shaving, 765
shared in by all who attended the funeral, was accompanied by the 769
killing of a beast and the consumption of its meat, though with no ritual 825
significance beyond its association with the purification of the mourners and their integration as a group. From six to twelve months later the [783]
second shaving and the bringing back of the spirit was also accompanied by killing a beast and eating its meat. These ceremonies expressed the sense of loss felt for the human person who had died, the sorrow of the mourners, their successive acts of purification which served to bring them together, and the final bringing of the spirit to live among them again. As we have seen, each stage of the death and mourning rites was accompanied by the eating of a beast or the use of certain parts of a beast. The cattle of the house to which the dead person belonged were used to bury him or her, to strengthen the mourners, and to reintegrate the spirit with the living community.

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 186.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 In another part of the cult cattle played a still more direct part. When
825 a diviner advised that prayer should be made to the spirit of a leading
787 man on behalf of someone of his clan who was sick, the man who was in charge of the *gogo* section of the village informed the head of the clan or *banja* and they agreed to address the spirits, and to offer a sacrifice if the spirits were willing. The sign of willingness on the part of the spirits was for the selected beast, when it had been driven out of the kraal, to urinate or make dung. If either happened they said the spirit was willing, and arranged a time for the prayer and sacrifice. If neither happened, if the beast just stood still or lay down, the spirits had 'refused' and the sacrifice could not go forward. This sign or lack of sign by the beast could not be ignored, and was a further illustration that the Ngoni considered cattle to be essential as a medium of approach to the spirits of their ancestors.

When the beast 'refused', those responsible called the diviner again and asked for an explanation. He produced a reason and advised them to try again, and the process was repeated until the sign of agreement was given. There was always anxiety when the beast 'refused', partly because of the delay in sacrificing and partly owing to an uneasy feeling that they had left something undone and the ancestral spirit was not pleased with them.

The main part of the ritual of sacrifice to an ancestral spirit was killing the beast, offering the meat to the spirits and the eating of the meat by the principal persons concerned. This we shall examine more closely in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER III

THE ROLE OF THE DIVINER IN THE ANCESTOR CULT

791 It has been apparent in the chapters on the Paramount and on warfare
769 in Part II, and in the two previous chapters of Part IV, that divining by an accredited person was a necessary preliminary for sacrificing to and addressing the ancestors.[1] I never heard or received any account of the ancestor cult in which divining was not specifically mentioned as the first step in the performance of the ritual. Moreover, all the diviners of good standing were themselves operating because they had contact with and were possessed by the spirit of an ancestor. By virtue of this direct contact with the spirit world the diviners claimed their special powers.

[1] The one possible exception was the first-fruits ceremony, but this had been given up before the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland, and the old men had no clear memories of the ritual followed.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Dr. Kuper called the diviners among the Swazi 'the most powerful and respected specialists operating in both individual and national situations'.[1] I found that among the Ngoni also they were greatly respected once they had established their reputation for prophecy and diagnosis. Except on the occasions when they were called upon to carry out their functions the majority of diviners whom I saw in the 1930's lived in relative seclusion, and had no outward signs of power in any political or economic sense, though in the past some of the 'prophets' had also been warriors and leaders. Socially they were always shown great honour when they came in response to a call, or when they went visiting on non-professional occasions. They were addressed in a respectful tone of voice, given a mat to sit on, and village noises around them were hushed. They were, however, essentially recluses, withdrawn from public life except when they were called on to help in time of crisis, and they did not show any ostentation of wealth or position. 791 769 [171]

Dr. Kuper used the term 'specialist' to describe the diviners among the Swazi. In the Ngoni kingdoms there were many kinds of specialists owing to the existence of several tribal groups each with its traditional system of religion and magic, and each with varying methods of treating sickness, diagnosing the causes of misfortune, and interpreting omens and dreams. The diviners in the Ngoni kingdoms who were best known and on whom the greatest responsibility lay were those who were called by the Paramount in times of national crisis. Such responsibility and such fame had in pre-European days corresponding risks. The following story, which was told me in Hoho by Timoti Jere and which I heard quoted in several areas in the northern kingdom, puts in a traditional setting and with much circumstantial detail the kind of demands formerly made on diviners and the kind of treatment meted out to them: 791 173 791

¶ Zwangendaba in his coming out of South Africa arrived in the country of the Maculu at Mabiri. It is there now. When the *impi* was summoned it went out to contend for the country of the Sukuma. That *impi* wanted very much to be victorious, because it went to fight in two countries, in that of the Sukuma, where they took the long-horned cattle, and in that of the Ngonde, where they took the cattle without horns and with big humps. While the *impi* was away, the Paramount called all the *izinduna* and said 'Why has the *impi* delayed so long? Call the *izanusi* that they may divine. Perhaps the *impi* has run away and turned back.' Then the *izinduna* called the *izanusi*. In their divining they said 'The *impi* has run away and turned back.' There was one *izanusi*, his name was UMakhende Nkosi, who divined and said 'All the *impi* is there and it will return in this month. The long delay of the *impi* is because they have raided two countries, the country of the Sukuma with long-horned cattle and the country of the Ngonde with unhorned cattle.' It was so, and that month the *impi* returned and arrived at Mabiri with many herds of cattle as UMakhende Nkosi had said.

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 163.

173 After one year Zwangendaba called again all the *izinduna* and said
791 'Let us test all those *izanusi* in their divining.' So they spoke together secretly and said 'Let us take a goat and kill it, and take its blood, and let us sprinkle it on the doorways of the huts and on the posts of the doorways.' The *izinduna* agreed and no man knew of it. So they took a goat and stabbed its throat and when the blood came out they received it in the *ngcwembe*, and then sprinkled it on the doorways and the posts of the huts in the enclosure of the Paramount. They did this at night and returned to their huts and slept.

When it was dawn, all the people were astonished at seeing blood on the doorways of the Paramount's huts. The people told the *izinduna* and the *izinduna* told the Paramount. He said 'Call the *izanusi* that they may divine.' They called all the *izanusi* and they divined together and they said, 'That blood is of man. There are flesh eaters here. They are striving that you O Paramount may die.' There was one *isanusi* UMakhende Nkosi who divined alone, and he said 'O Paramount the blood is of a goat. You, together with the *izinduna*, are proving us as *izanusi*. It is you O Paramount and the *izinduna* who have done this thing.' So the Paramount agreed. He commanded the *izinduna* and said 'Kill all the *izanusi* except UMakhende only.' All the *izanusi* were killed in this way by Paramount Zwangendaba at Mabiri.

The moral of this traditional story, as the Ngoni always pointed out when relating it, was that diviners could be wrong. The specialized skill which they claimed to possess carried with it a recognized responsi-
791 bility for using it correctly and not deceiving the people who consulted them. There was also a suggestion in the story of the contempt for this kind of skill shown by leaders who possessed great political and military power. Hard-headed chiefs and army leaders in the past expected efficiency in their diviners, and punished them severely for ineptness and what appeared as deceit. This veiled contempt, associated as it was with the tacit admission that the diviner as a specialist could not be dispensed with in Ngoni life, appeared often in the 1930's when Ngoni leaders were talking about divining and were planning to have recourse to it. As in this story, they were ready to recognize authentic diagnosis when they heard it, but not to regard the diviners as a class as infallible. One of the reasons for this view about divining was the wide range of social background and the diversity of functions among the diviners. The following account by Cibambo suggests that two categories of diviners were recognized by the Ngoni and indicates certain Ngoni attitudes towards their range of operations and the way in which they carried them out. The account refers to pre-European days, and there was in the 1930's little evidence of these distinctions between types of diviners.

¶ There were men who acted as go-betweens between the spirits and the people called *izanusi*. Just as in the days of the Jews there were true and false prophets, so it was among the Ngoni. It is going too far, indeed it is

untrue, to say that all the prophets were false. Some were true go-betweens between the land of the spirits and the land of men. They received in dreams, sometimes in visions, things that related to the people of their time. God himself agreed to make them his workers and messengers even though these men sought for him in twisty ways. 791

The real go-betweens or prophets were called *isanusi*, 'those who smell something', and *abantu benhloko*, 'people of the head, people of dreams'. These men were considered to meet with the spirits in dreams or by their medicines which lifted them up to see the things of the spirit land. The people thought that these men received news from the spirits which they were to give to the earth people.

These men who had the gift of seeing in dreams were not allowed to live in big villages where there were often noises, but the chiefs sent them out to build for themselves a little distance from the chief's village along with their family. They were afraid that people would be disturbing them and making a noise when they met with the spirits. They were also afraid that in the big villages there would be many people who did not walk in an orderly way, and so these men, meeting those people, would spoil their own good sense.

These men did not talk with the spirits all the time. Often they did not receive any messages, but on other days their heads were stirred up and they spoke.

In the central kingdom there had been in the past the same distinction mentioned by Cibambo between diviners who dreamed, and those who used medicines to smell before giving their message. Informants said that there was also a distinction between those who took the initiative in announcing that they had something to say, and those who waited to be called for consultation. In pre-European days, in the hierarchy of diviners, the highest esteem was given to those who dreamed only (*abantu benhloko*) and who announced as a result of their dreams that they had something of importance to tell the Paramount. The Maseko line of Paramounts had, in the days of Mputa, a famous woman diviner called NaNdumbu who was of a Swazi clan. She went north to Tanganyika with the Paramount Mputa and was regarded as the *isanusi* for the whole country who foretold events as a result of her dreams. An informant who had seen her described her after she had had a dream or a vision coming into the *bwalo*, the open space in front of the Paramount's hut, and dancing with the little stick which the women carry in the *umsindo* dance. When the Paramount saw her dancing thus he came out to her and she spoke with him alone, telling him of her dream. Then, when the people around were silent, she lifted up her stick high with an outstretched arm, and the Paramount told the people what she had told him, and when they heard it they knocked their sticks on the ground and said '*e e e e*'. After she died her brother took her place as *isanusi*, and his daughter was living in Mcakhatha when I was there. This woman said of her father 'When I was young they told me "Your father has become [554]

791 an *isanusi* today". When he entered the place of his sister, NaNdumbu, he was dreaming. If there was a war he could say "You must not go to that war because all the people will be killed." He was just dreaming and dancing his *isanusi* dance. When he danced that dance on the chief's *bwalo* the people praised him with special praises.'

791 Two informants remembered fragments of the songs sung by NaNdumbu and her brother, and these songs were also sung by the old
533 *isanusi* in the northern kingdom. I give here the Ngoni versions with an English translation, omitting the repetition of lines and the 'sounds' which accompanied the singing:

[539]

Uyezwa mihlolo	Do you see the omens?
Inkanyezo ipuma	The star comes out,
Ipuma yanga	It comes out in the East.
. . . . .	. . . . .
Ubaba uyangibiza	My father is calling me.
Hamba ehaya	Go home.
Indaba zikuyandela	Things have turned against you,
Hamba ehaya	Go home.

791 Although these diviners acted at times on their own initiative, this did not prevent their being called on in time of crisis to diagnose the reason
787 for disaster or sickness. *Isanusi* who used their own medicines to smell
237 could prophesy and speak on their own initiative as well as waiting to be called on. These medicines were said to induce the dreams on which the prophecy was based, and they were generally contained in the tail of a gnu or in a sheep's horn, or some other horn.

787 Below this category of the prophets, whether *abantu benhloko* or *isanusi*, came those who used lots when called on to diagnose a par-
791 ticular situation. These were often men who dreamed, or who used their own medicines to receive messages from their ancestral spirits, but instead of announcing their message directly, they brought with them some form of lots which they used when they were consulted, and gave their diagnosis as a result of observing the lots. Sometimes they sang their own songs, accompanied by dancing, which led to an almost trance-like condition; sometimes they used their lots without any previous working up of an emotional state through song or dance. I never met any of the dreamer type of prophet who used no medicines and no lots. There was general agreement among the Ngoni that they had died out, that their main service had been in times of war, and that the number of men or women who possessed such powers had, even in the past, been very small indeed. I did, however, see one diviner at work who used the song and dance technique with the lots, and two who used the lots without song or dance.

756 The *isanusi* whom I saw in the northern kingdom was divining for
787 sickness at the request of a party of people who had come to consult him

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

about a sick relative. He asked for a preliminary payment in cash from me before he would say anything in front of me, having already received the customary present of fowls from the sick man's relatives. There was an atmosphere of part pantomime, part reluctant performance in front of a stranger whose presence seemed to trouble him more than it did his clients. He wore a python-skin cap with beads dangling from it, and carried the tail of a black cow bound with lead and a small skin bag with the lots in it. At first he sat holding the tail in his hands and sniffing it occasionally. Then he suddenly shook the lots out of the bag—six large beans called *kulumo* and about twenty small round nuts called *mapi*. He put snuff on the top of each bean, sprinkled snuff on the nuts, picked the nuts up in both hands, shook his hands together and threw the nuts on the ground. Some fell near the big beans, others rolled between them. He looked intently at them, then at the group waiting to consult him. 'There is someone who is sick,' he said to them and the group replied '*Siyavuma*' (we agree). They continued to chant *siyavuma* in a low tone over and over again, with an almost mesmeric effect. He meantime went on to describe the sickness, that it was a pain inside the man (the chanting was loud), that it had been on the right side (less response), in the stomach (less response), on the left side (loud response). At intervals he waved the tail in the air and knocked the leaded end on the ground to emphasize the louder response. He did not specify the complaint but advised the people consulting him to go home and kill a goat as a sacrifice to their ancestors, and give the sick man some medicines which he would sell them.

It may have been the mixture of a real consultation with my visit which produced his slightly mountebank performance, and it may also have been his combination of the role of diviner with peddling medicines which the people present for the consultation evidently expected to obtain from him. This aspect of his performance impressed itself on the Ngoni informant who was with me. He was slightly contemptuous throughout, even when the songs were being sung and taken down. He kept on muttering 'This is Nsenga,' and said afterwards as we were going away that this diviner worked only for ordinary people and their sickness, as witnessed by his telling them to sacrifice a goat, and that he would not have been acknowledged by the real Ngoni. He was making comparisons all the time between the 'people of the head' and the diviners of this type, illustrating the Ngoni esteem for the real dreamers, and the slight, sometimes great, contempt for those who combined divining with recommending medicines as remedies.

The contrast between the performance of this diviner and that of the two *izanusi* whom I saw at work in the central kingdom was considerable. My long residence in Mcakhatha and the entrée I had to all that was taking place in connexion with the sickness of Bambo Manga no doubt helped to give confidence to the diviners. The chief and his

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

123 brother arranged for first one *isanusi* and then, when he became ill, for another to come and see me. In each case they concluded that I was 791 consulting them and foretold what would happen and gave me advice, warning and assurance. There was great seriousness of purpose and no mountebank atmosphere, even though they came to the courtyard of my hut and saw round them all the paraphernalia of a European's camping equipment.

791 The first diviner, who was of a Venda clan, was a very old man and greatly respected and trusted by the Nzunga clan, who were looking after Bambo Manga in Mcakhatha and who had called him several times to divine for them during her illness. His story was that he was the son of an *isanusi* and when the signs of his initiation began to appear before he reached puberty, his father recognized the fainting and the pain and refusal to eat, and said 'This child will be a diviner also.' The spirit who came to him in dreams was his father's father who had died south of the Zambesi, where his father had been born.

This man was very definite about the kind of situations for which he could and would divine and the type of advice he would give. Questioned further on this point, he gave in this order: sickness, journeys, auspicious days for holding an *ngoma* dance or a hunt, 'absent treatment' of relatives in trouble in the south asked for by letter, sickness of cattle, moving a village to a new site. He refused contemptuously any divining about stealing or death, or agricultural practices such as choosing new gardens or beginning cultivation. Neither he nor the people with him made any specific reference to the different roles of an *isanusi* among the Ngoni and the local Cewa and other tribes, but since they used the same terms for divining, *kuombeza maula* (to throw the lots), they were careful to point out what the Ngoni diviners did *not* do. In the case of sickness due [755] to 'spirits troubling', of auspicious days for journeys and other events, of cattle sickness, of moving villages, his invariable advice was to sacrifice a beast to the spirits. Most of the inquiries addressed to him were about sickness. When such an inquiry came to him in his village, he smelled his medicines and asked of *his* ancestral spirit 'Is the man likely to live or not? Who is troubling him? What shall he do?'

787 The first occasion on which I saw him divine was in the hut of a widow of the former chief, Njolomole I, which had been newly swept 791 and a new fire made. The chief and his uncle sat on either side of the fire, the diviner on the right-hand side of the door and I on the left on the woman's side. The diviner was told to begin. He pulled out his *ntibo*, the stem of a gourd, which was wrapped in bark and cloth and had inside it the medicine, and which was waxed at each end. He scraped bits of the *nsika* root into a pot with a little water in it. He put the *ntibo* in the water for a moment and then took it out and rubbed it in his hands. He put it under a flat food basket and swept his hand over the top of the basket once or twice before putting the pot on top. He gazed

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

into the pot, which he kept turning with his right hand, and he murmured in a low voice from time to time, and shook his head. The only words which were audible were '*Inu tamverani*', 'You, please listen.' After three minutes he tried to lift the pot, but it seemed to stick to the basket. All this time he was very calm and unexcited, though the pot appeared to stick every time. Finally he said the spirits of the Maseko chiefs were not willing for a sacrifice to be made. The reason, he said, was that I was there and they were afraid of a white face, because the Europeans had killed Gomani I and the spirits 'were ashamed' before white people. The following day the lots were tried again when I was not present and the spirits gave the diviner the sign that they agreed to the sacrifice.

About three weeks later, at the suggestion of the head of the *gogo* house in the village, he came to see me, having been asked to tell me about his initiation. He treated the call as a genuine summons to a consultation, however, and performed for me the ritual I had seen him carry out in the hut. This time he consulted the spirits of his father and grandfather. I had made no specific inquiry of him, but he asked his spirits for advice about my movements, whether I should go or stay, addressing them with '*Tamverani*', 'Please listen.' The pot came off the basket after the second effort and he looked at the bits of *nsika* root as they floated inside. Then he looked up at me and said 'You must not leave here. Perhaps you were thinking of returning to the Paramount's village. You should not do this because my spirits tell me that the spirits here want you to stay.'

When this old diviner became ill, another one of an Ntumba clan was called to Mcakhatha to divine about the illness of one of the leading women. His father had also been a diviner, a dreamer who did not dance or throw lots for sickness, but told of things to come, especially about war. His father had been in the Tengo country in Songea with Mputa and had spoken Ngoni there, and the spirit of his father's father was the one who came to him at his initiation as a young man. His equipment and technique were slightly different from those of the former diviner. He had a small duiker horn which had medicine inside it of the *ciswambalame* tree roots and, like the *ntibo*, was waxed at the end and rounded so that it could swivel on its base. At first he smelled the horn and made deep belching noises, almost like retching. He put the horn in an empty gourd cup, waxed end down, and left it by his left thigh. Out of a skin bag he took ten small half-shells of nuts, four large and six small, which he said he got from the Venda people. They were called *zihlobo*. He arranged them face down in front of him, the larger ones in the middle. He gathered them up again, smelled them, belched and threw them down. Five fell face down and five face up. He picked them up and threw them five times until they fell in the position he wanted, muttering as he did so '*ai, ai*' (no, no), and finally '*akondwera*' (they are happy).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

787 He left the shells, picked up a small rattle, a little gourd with stones in
791 it, and knocked it on his knees. Meantime he picked up the gourd with the horn in it, and held it on the palm of his left hand with the base resting on his extended fingers. The horn rocked on its base inside the gourd and came to rest, touching one edge of the gourd or another and sometimes standing erect without touching the rim of the gourd. During this part he was much disturbed and sweat ran down his face while he murmured to his spirits '*Nanga inu*' (What are you doing?), '*Mubodza ndithu*' (You are surely lying), '*Ai ai ndithudi*' (No, no truly). Finally the horn came to rest against the rim of the gourd towards him, and he put it down, and wiped his forehead. Then he said to me 'You will be ill, but you will recover. You will not die in this country. So do not fear. You will not die'.[1]

During the rocking of the horn in the gourd the diviner was listening to and speaking to his spirits. His obvious distress at first, and his subsequent relief were genuine and onlookers said that with this man such swaying of fortunes, through appeal to his spirits, often took place. He was considered a very powerful diviner, in that he could argue with the spirits and did not depend only on what the lots said or take them as the final word. His combination of the use of the medicated horn with the throwing of lots was considered a sign of power. He said himself that he always knew the day before when a man was coming to consult him about someone who was ill and that night he dreamed and his spirits told him what to say.

791 Several references have been made to the initiation of a diviner, which was an essential preparation for his role, and an experience which marked him out as different from other men. Both the diviners whom I saw at work in the central kingdom gave short accounts of what happened before they became diviners. In the first (*a*) that of the very old man, most emphasis was laid on the finding and preparing of the medicines. In the second (*b*) the emphasis was on the re-birth element of the initiation, denoted by the expression *ukutwasa* which was used for the reappearance of the new moon after the period of darkness.

¶ (*a*) When I began to divine I slept, and in the night I dreamed dreams, and they said go and fetch a tree, its name is *nsiha*, and when you have done so take the handle of a gourd and put some of the *nsiha* inside, and shut each end of the handle with wax and on the wax put beads. Find a pot and pour water in it and put in pieces of *nsiha* bark. Take that handle and put it on the ground and cover it with an *nsengwa* and put the pot on top and what you say will be true.

They told me just to go anywhere to find that tree. These dreams came to me when I was a young man. After these dreams I was very ill, near to death, and another thing I had pains in my heart; and my mother and my father thought I was dead.

[1] This prophecy was remembered by the people and often quoted when two weeks later I was attacked by a swarm of wild bees and nearly died.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

(*b*) At first I died and when I rose up again I felt the wind of the spirits. My dying was my initiation. This *ukutwasa* was like that of the moon when it is new. I began to speak and speak and I danced with the python skin on my head. Then the people tested me whether I had bad or good spirits and after that I began to divine. The spirit of my grandfather, he has told me about this work. I am talking with his spirit when the horn is going round. 791

The fact of my being in Mcakhatha during the illness and death of Bambo Manga, and witnessing all the attendant ritual, gave me many opportunities of discussing the role of diviners in the ancestor cult, as well as of observing two of them at work. No such opportunity presented itself in the northern kingdom, but the role of the diviner was very fully discussed with leading Ngoni in Ekwendeni, Ezondweni and Hoho, and the account given by Cibambo at the beginning of this chapter was partly the result of these talks. 124 791

I have made several references to the graded hierarchy among the diviners, though I have not made any connexion between those diviners who either prophesied or made a diagnosis and those others, whether they were called *izanusi* or *izing'anga*, who made a diagnosis and also gave treatment through medicines. I have limited the analysis here to the diviners who operated through their own ancestral spirits and who, by virtue of this contact of theirs, claimed to be able to interpret the will of the ancestral spirits of the Ngoni clans. It was a notable fact that very few of the famous diviners, and none of the less well-known, were of Swazi clans, though the one true prophet in the story of the slaughter at Mabiri was of a Swazi clan. Two great *izinduna* and *alumuzana*, who were also dreamers and prophets, Gwaza Jere in the north and Golozela Nzunga in the central kingdom, were of Swazi clans. So also was the famous woman diviner NáNdumbu. It appeared that the capacity to become a diviner and the successful practice of the art was very unusual among the leading Ngoni. They depended therefore on men of lesser trans-Zambesi and cis-Zambesi clans to perform these duties for them. The attitude shown by leading Ngoni towards the diviners, already referred to, may have been partly a rationalization of their dependence on this kind of skill as well as on force of arms. It may also have been due to the necessity, admitted somewhat reluctantly, of using men of lower social status, that is of cis-Zambesi clans, for such vital services to the nation and to their own families. The Ngoni had a strong pragmatic streak which led them to suspect knowledge and skill which could not be reduced to concrete terms, and hence they were always ready to accuse the less well accredited diviners of lying and deceit. 791

In spite of Ngoni doubts and suspicions about the class of diviners as a whole, within their kingdoms these persons were recognized as specialists for certain reasons. They had all been through the experience described as *ukutwasa*. It began with physical symptoms, such as fainting, 791 158

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

791 lack of appetite, forgetfulness, sweating. These manifestations could
158 take place in childhood, around puberty, or when the man was fully grown, though the most usual age was in the late teens. The symptoms culminated in sharp pains and a prolonged collapse, and after that a deep sleep. It was then that the dreams came giving the man the assurance that he was henceforth a medium, and that through the spirit of his grandfather, or whoever was now appearing to him, he could communicate with the spirit world. At this time also he was told in dreams where to find medicines and what to do with them. A constant feature in the initiation of well known and accredited diviners was that they
[775] knew the name and identity of the spirit with whom they were in contact, and it appeared to be always someone related to them and most often their father's father.

791 As they returned to normality from an experience which was frightening in its intensity, it dawned on them that they now had to practise as a diviner, to make use of the powers which had come to them. There was evidence that they accepted this role with reluctance. Their relatives, when they saw them going through the earlier stages, were aware that there was an inevitable sequel, that of practising as a diviner, and they too shared the reluctance of the man himself. Sometimes a diviner began to practise by associating as a junior partner with a successful practitioner; sometimes he began hesitantly by himself. The criterion of the validity of their calling was their success. No one seemed to know what became of diviners who were unsuccessful and never became accredited. They apparently disappeared from the field because no one employed them.

The diviners whom I met and talked with, as well as those few whom
791 I saw practising their calling, were considered by the Ngoni to possess
157 a distinctive temperament. It was evident that they wished to live somewhat apart, and that they were withdrawn in a social as well as in a spatial sense. They married, but usually only one wife, and had children, but played little part in extended family or village affairs. Their huts were always on the outskirts of villages and were neither large and prosperous nor very poor looking. They had a reputation for being unpunctual and forgetful, but they were far from being unobservant. Part of their skill lay in watching people and learning about their concerns from observation and storing events in a good memory. Though they could work themselves up into emotionally excited states during a consultation, at other times they gave the impression of being controlled, rather quiet, detached, and uninfluenced by the currents of talk and opinion around them.

The rewards for their services were in kind as a rule, and could be
791 articles of household equipment, food, cloth, and sometimes F[illegible]n clothes or goods from the stores, such as lanterns, soap, mat[illegible] cigarettes. There appeared to be no bargaining over payment. T[illegible]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

goods were handed over, the diviner thanked the giver in the customary manner, and his wife or child carried the gifts away. Informants said that leading Ngoni would never be mean in their payments to diviners, and that diviners of the upper grades would never bargain over their rewards. It was openly said that a leading diviner cared most for his reputation as a successful specialist, and that the kind of life he led and the sort of man he was did not induce a desire to be wealthy. 791

One aspect of the diviner's role among the Ngoni was that he, an individualist, was always summoned at the request of a group. In a case of sickness of one of its members, it was the family or the senior men of a house who summoned the diviner, and they gave him his reward and carried out his advice. When a family heard from the diviner that a sick member might recover if a sacrifice were made to their ancestors, they regarded the diviner, in Cibambo's phrase, as a go-between linking the living group and their dead ancestors. The diviner therefore, like the cattle, was an essential link in the relationship between the living and the dead. [769]

CHAPTER IV

THE RITUAL OF ADDRESSING THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS

In the course of the first three chapters of this section, and in earlier sections, many beliefs and practices have been discussed which bear on the ritual of the ancestor cult. In spite of the risk of some repetition it will be useful to bring together here in one chapter the main elements in the ritual, and in so doing to raise certain theoretical issues. 769

Dr. Kuper said[1] that among the Swazi, ancestor spirits were not worshipped, and she gave as the reasons for this statement that the spirits were addressed as living persons would be, being sometimes scolded and seldom thanked, and that indignation rather than humility was the attitude of the living when disasters befell them which might have been due to malice or carelessness on the part of the ancestors. Without entering into an argument on the nature of worship and its essential accompaniments, I would state that certain aspects of the Ngoni ancestor cult showed those features which are usually considered to be part of a people's worship. These were sacrifice, prayer, and purification, which, not necessarily in that order, were the main elements in the cult. There was, moreover, a connexion between the ancestor cult and ethical behaviour in Ngoni thinking. The guardianship of an ancestral spirit, involving much respect for the house to [171]

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 192.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

which it belonged, was always given to a woman whose good character was vouched for.[1] The man who inherited the *gogo* village with its particular charge to look after the spirits of the dead, as well as the welfare of the living, also had to be someone of good repute. The responsibility for maintaining social cohesion in a village and among the members of a house with which the cattle, and therefore the spirits, were closely bound up, was one which the senior male members of that house regarded as a solemn duty. If people did not behave well the cattle would not flourish and multiply, and that would upset the spirits and be a sign of their disapproval.

Cibambo wrote the following account of the ancestor cult as a part of the presentation of Ngoni customs to his own people. As a Christian minister he was concerned with making a case to his own people for putting the Ngoni ancestor cult higher in the religious scale than the cults which used images in their worship. He was using his Christian beliefs to rationalize the ancestor cult, particularly in relating it to the concept of a High God. The Ngoni undoubtedly had the idea of a creator, remote and unapproachable by man, as his title implied, but nevertheless referred to as the sender of rain, sickness and other benefits and disasters for the country as a whole. Prayers and sermons by Ngoni ministers in Ngoniland used many of the old Ngoni terms for the creator to express their Christian concept of God.

¶ We think that the worship of the Ngoni was better than the worship of other tribes who were near them, for in their worship there were no images made of wood or stones or other things, but they worshipped spirits who were unseen. Nearly all Central African tribes believe that there is a God who created heaven and earth, and who is unseen by eyes. In worship they could not reach him himself with the things of their hearts, so they did not worship him himself. They followed the custom well known among the black people when they wished to talk to their chiefs or their fathers when there was something of importance. A black man thinks it is a great impertinence and dishonour to speak for himself in front of his chief or his father, so he sends someone of standing as his messenger who carries his words and returns with a reply. This custom took effect also in the worshipping of black peoples. In worshipping the creator they made use of a go-between, who stood between God and men. He knew how to speak for them and pray for them before God. They thought that certain created things ought to accomplish this work.

The Ngoni believed that there was God who was chief of all created things and the source of all. Some of the names they gave him were:

UMkulumqango	The Great Deviser
Uluhlanga	The Original Source
UMkulu Kakulu	The Greatest of All
UMnikazi we Zinto Zonke	The Owner of All Things.

[1] On other grounds, such as kinship, such guardianship might have gone to a woman who was not acceptable on moral grounds and was therefore passed over.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

In these names it is clear that God was known as the Beginning of All Things, the Owner, the One Above All. They knew him as the nourisher of the earth, sending rain and all good things, but they thought that he had little knowledge of his people. Nor could his people know much of him, so they did not worship him himself or speak with him. His character they did not know and so they were not able to praise or glorify him as they were the spirits of their ancestors, whom they knew thoroughly. They knew him from afar and so they could not pray and speak to him. 769 776

Since the Ngoni were not able to be at home with UMkulumqango so in worship they sought others known to them that they should tell them the things of their hearts, and these were the spirits of those who had died. At once when one of themselves died, they thought that now he is a spirit with living power greater than he had when a man on the earth, and that he is a spirit who can watch over and protect his relatives on earth, but they also realized that he had power to rebuke and punish. So this spirit was added to the spirits of the tribe who were worshipped. They thought that each clan had its own spirits, stretching back to the beginning of the clan. They believed that the recent spirits received the news from their friends on earth, and handed it on until it arrived at the spirits of very long ago and now forgotten. These then delivered the message to the Creator of all.

Cibambo's main intention in this account of Ngoni worship was to put the ancestor cult in its setting as a means of approach to the creator. He used the Ngoni concept of an intermediary, who was essential in the approach to a Paramount, to argue that the ancestor cult was not necessarily wrong but was an earlier stage towards Christianity. This was a theme constantly expressed in sermons and prayers in Ngoni churches. In the rest of this account he emphasized 'becoming an ancestral spirit', which we shall examine later in its ritual context; allocation of authority among the ancestral spirits; and the fact that prayer and sacrifice, which he called worship, were made chiefly in times of trouble, and not in times of prosperity.

It is legitimate, in view of Dr. Kuper's statement, to ask whether there was a fundamental difference between addressing an ancestral spirit as a go-between and worshipping him. The Ngoni were not trained theologians, except for Christian ministers like Cibambo, but they had a range of philosophical concepts to which it is impossible to do justice in this context. In the prayers which I heard their thoughts were focused on the ancestors whose names they knew and recited. Questioned afterwards, they said that there were other ancestors whose names they did not know, but the ones they named could not fail to be aware of the living, their descendants, since their spirits were guarded in a house and their cattle were sacrificed in the ritual. They therefore directed their worship, or address, to those who were known to them, believing that they would influence the remoter but possibly more powerful spirits whose names were unknown. Spontaneous references to 769 771

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

768 UMkulumqango or other names for the High God were rare. When
771 questioned they said that such a High God existed and the spirits knew him, but they, the living, did not. The Ngoni phrase, *asiyazi*, 'we do not know', and its Nyanja version, *sitingadziwa*, 'we cannot know', were constantly on their lips in discussions on this topic. Among Christians like Cibambo as well as non-Christians like Nzunga, their interest in the ancestor cult was part of maintaining their identity as Ngoni. The neighbouring tribes had other forms of ancestor cults but the Ngoni form brought from the south was distinctive, and many of the concepts and practices were known to the South-eastern Bantu peoples.

The ritual for a new ancestral spirit

761 The Ngoni believed that at the moment of death the spirit left the body. If a sick person fell into a coma and was unconscious for a long
775 time they said that the person had died when the coma began even though they knew he went on breathing. This happened at the death of Bambo Manga when she had periods of unconsciousness before she died. They said that her spirit had left her at the beginning of the last long coma, even though they knew from her pulse and breathing that she was not dead. At the parting of the spirit from the body they had to care for both, in order that the new ancestral spirit might be happy and in the right relationship with the living. Equal importance was attached to caring for the spirit and to caring for the corpse, since the correct performance of ritual had deep significance for the dead and for the living.

763 When the spirit left the body it was believed to go to the bush at the outskirts of the village where the person had been accustomed to go to
775 relieve himself. Between the death of Bambo Manga and the burial, each morning before it was light, the men marched with a dancing step up the path to the bush where she was wont to go, singing a war song dating from trans-Zambesi days which was sung at the sending out of the *impi*. Marching to the bush and singing the war song was one step in bringing the spirit back or, more correctly perhaps, keeping in touch with it so that it should not go too far away. This approach to the spirit between the death and burial was the first of three ritual acts, each called 'bringing back the spirit'. The other two occurred after the first and second ritual shaving.

764 The preparation of the corpse for burial has been described in the first chapter of this section. Those features of Ngoni burial were considered essential for the welfare of the spirit, and were carried out in the majority of funerals which I witnessed, whether the dead person was a Christian or not. An account of the burial of a leading *mulumuzana* in the northern kingdom who was a Christian, given to me by another Christian Ngoni and confirmed by some of the missionaries present at the funeral, emphasized all the distinctive Ngoni elements: the round

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

grave with the little shelf at one side, the corpse wrapped in a cow-skin, the *nseso* and *nyongo* on the neck and forehead, the bent legs and upright sitting position facing south-east, and washing the face of the corpse at the grave side with a bunch of grass. On this occasion the Ngoni form of burial was followed by the Christian burial service after the grave had been filled in. During the digging of the grave hymns set to the tunes of Ngoni war songs were sung by the onlookers until the body was brought out of the house. After that there was complete silence while the corpse was lowered into the grave and the grave was filled up, until the service began. This combination of Christian and Ngoni ritual I witnessed many times. One of the missions set its face against the use of the cow-skin and declared that no Christian could be buried except in a coffin, but even this was sometimes disregarded and the full Ngoni ritual was carried out, followed by a Christian service.

After the body had been put in the grave and when the first calling back of the spirit from the bush had reminded the living that they had to care for this new spirit, a series of further duties faced them. These have been referred to as the first and second shaving. The first shaving we shall consider later as a necessary purification before eating the meat of the funeral rites which brought back the spirit right into the village. The second shaving, which took place from six to twelve months after the funeral, was the prelude to the time when the new ancestral spirit came, or was brought back, to its final lodging. The importance of this last rite was emphasized by Lopati Nzunga in his account of the ritual which took place at the tomb put up to the memory of Gomani I (see p. 165) When the building of the tomb under the supervision of Ngoni in the area was finished, many leading Ngoni from all parts, including those from the towns, gathered there for two days. Every morning before dawn they went up the forest paths singing war songs, as they did later at the time of the death of Bambo Manga, to call back the spirit from the bush where it had spent some thirty years. After a Christian service held by the tomb, the Ngoni *alumuzana* 'brought back' the spirit to Lizulu, Gomani I's village, to the house of NaMagagula his big wife. She was a Christian, so could not take the care of the spirit in her hut, but another of the widows of Gomani I, NaNsambi, who was in the house of NaMagagula, was chosen as guardian. Earlier in the proceedings, when they had decided that the tomb was going to be built, a diviner was consulted, the spirits were addressed in the kraal, the cattle showed that they agreed, and a beast from the herd of the house of NaMagagula was sacrificed and the meat offered to the ancestral spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Then they built a new hut for NaNsambi and put in it new sacrificial vessels. When the spirit of Gomani I was finally brought home it was to this hut and guardianship that it came. They were uncertain about what had happened to the spirit in the thirty years interval and it did not seem advisable to probe

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 too closely because of the still bitter feeling against Europeans for having caused the Paramount's death. It was quite clear, however, that since this essential step in the recognition of an ancestral spirit had been omitted at the time of his death, it was considered important to make good the omission, and the 'opening' of the grave appeared as the logical occasion.

765 769 In Mcakhatha village I witnessed a ritual second shaving for a man of the Nzunga clan, a son of the former chief, Njolomole I. This man had been absent from the village for many years, having left as a young man still living in the *laweni*, and his death in the south was reported by letter from a fellow villager to his relatives in the village. When the letter was received, a diviner was consulted and he advised a sacrifice to the spirits. The first ritual shaving of all members of the Nzunga clan and their affines took place as it would have done on the day after burial if he had died in the village, and a beast was killed and the meat offered to the spirits and ritually eaten. The women of the Nzunga clan and the wives and widows of Nzunga men put on *xitambo* or mourning caps. Six months later the diviner was consulted again, and a day was fixed for the second shaving 'to bring back the spirit'. The spirits of the Nzunga clan were addressed, the beast selected for the sacrifice urinated, the spirits 'agreed', and the shaving of the Nzunga clan members and [302] their affines took place; this time the whole head was shaved whereas the first shaving was only a small patch on the temple. The men were shaved by the kraal, the women near the hut of the dead man's mother which was uninhabited. The women who were relatives or affines of the deceased took off their *xitambo* and unravelled the threads of which the caps were made, collecting in front of each a little heap of hair and thread. Then one of the leading women got up and said '*Tiyeni* (Let us go)', and the women went in procession to the stream, each carrying her little handful of hair and thread. As they passed they pulled a handful of dry grass from the roof of the hut by which they had been sitting to start their fires. By the stream each of the former mourners, eleven in all, made a fire of grass and dried leaves lit from a bunch of smouldering grass carried by one of them, put on it the threads and hair and tended the fire until only ashes were left. All these eleven women stood erect behind their fires facing the stream, except when bending down to fan the flames. When the fires died down each woman swept the ashes into the stream with her hand and splashed water on the site of the fire until no trace was left, lifting overhanging branches to leave a free passage for the ashes on to the water. The leading widow, a descendant of NaNdumbu, the famous woman diviner of Mputa's day, took a look round to see if all traces of the fires had gone, said 'We have finished', and led the way to the washing pool where all the women washed their clothes and their bodies. Meantime the men had been to wash in the stream on the other side of the village and had also burned their hair

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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by the stream and swept the ashes into the water. The beast for the sacrifice had been killed early in the morning before the shaving, and the ritual eating of the meat took place. This second shaving and sacrifice were to end the mourning period and to bring back the spirit to the village. A widow of Chief Njolomole I was appointed to guard the spirit and she kept in her hut the baskets which had been used for the sacrifice.

When asked whether this ritual of bringing back the spirit was followed for everyone who died away from home, the answer was 'No. It was done for this man because he was a big one and he was the son of a chief.' Only for members of leading Swazi clans and some others of trans-Zambesi origin was the ritual invariably followed of recalling the spirit to the village where he had lived and where the clan sacrifices were performed with the cattle of the man's house. The ritual ensured that a new ancestor spirit was recognized, that provision could be made for its guardianship, and that the spirit had been brought back to the village even though the man had died and been buried elsewhere. The ritual was based, not on the assumption that the spirit would be angry [182] if not so treated and might injure his living descendants, but on the belief that absence had weakened the bonds between members of the clan and the house, and that the ritual associated with the making of an ancestor spirit gave an opportunity for strengthening these bonds. This was achieved by bringing together the living to commemorate the dead; by repeating once again the traditional pattern of speaking to the ancestors through the cattle; by giving the spirits their meat which the living shared; and by making sure that the spirit of the dead man would henceforth be taken care of by an appointed guardian.

In the case of important people of the royal clan and chiefs, the second 1769 shaving was a preliminary to bringing back the spirit to be taken care of permanently and there were two stages to this last ritual in the making of an ancestral spirit. Three months after the death of Bambo Manga there was an elaborate ceremony of the second shaving which was accompanied by brewing vast amounts of beer. On this occasion there was an offering of beer, not meat, to the ancestral spirits. The ritual began with consulting the diviner first about whether the beer would be good. The diviner reported that two quarrelling women were spoiling it, and the quarrel would have to be resolved before the brewing would be successful. The diviner was also asked which spirit should be offered beer on this occasion, and answered that NaQwana, the mother of Mputa and grandmother of Bambo Manga, was the one to be addressed. The next act was making the ritual fire, since all the beer had to be cooked on newly made fires. Lopati Nzunga took the ritual fire-stick from Bambo Manga's hut, two young men kindled a fire outside and the women took grass from Bambo Manga's fence to build a fire. The women picked up bits of this fire to kindle their own new fires before brewing the beer.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 When the beer was ready, Lopati took from Bambo Manga's hut the gourd cup (another of the ritual objects kept there), filled it with beer and offered it to the spirit of NaQwana, and left it at the right side of the hut where the corpse had been set upright before the burial. Cups of beer from the other houses who were brewing were also put in the hut and drunk during the night by the old women who had slept there continuously since the death of Bambo Manga in order to guard her spirit. The next morning the *ligubo* (war-dance) was danced by the grave at the edge of the kraal. When the time came for shaving, the men were shaved, first a small lock as at the first shaving, and then the whole [302] head. The women were shaved over the whole head and cut the strings of their *xitambo* and unravelled the threads. Ritual washing at the stream and burning of the hair and threads took place as described earlier, but in this case the *nseso* from the beast killed at the death of Bambo Manga was burned on the same fires. Part of the *nseso* had been put round her neck for the burial, but part had been hung at the back of the hut, and this was now taken down and divided up to be burned.

In the final part of the ceremony the men danced *ligubo* in the courtyard of Bambo Manga's hut, while the old women danced *umsindo* at her grave. All this went on for four days as long as the beer lasted, and the way was then clear for bringing back the spirit. The spirit had been 'guarded' in the hut where the old women slept, lest if it were empty the spirit might depart. The spirit was there, but not quite there, and could not be addressed as an ancestral spirit until the final 'bringing back'.

After the second shaving the leading men of the village had a new hut built in which Cisbwe Maseko, the daughter of Cikusi and older sister of Paramount Gomani I, was installed as guardian of the spirit of Bambo Manga. They bought new baskets, cups and a fire-stick, and destroyed the old ones. After the diviner had been consulted and had appointed a day for the sacrifice, a beast was killed and the meat offered to the spirit of Bambo Manga in the new hut in the new baskets. A sheep was killed at the same time and the meat of both was eaten by the men and boys.

We have now seen the process by which the living descendants and kin of a dead person recognized the spirit of that person as an ancestral spirit. This, as we saw, was no automatic process following on death. Ceremonies had to be undertaken and rituals performed which, through successive stages, brought the spirit of the dead into such relationship with the living that they could offer sacrifices and call on its name in the naming of the ancestors in the cult. These were acts performed by the living for the dead to cause the spirit to be settled in a place it knew and guarded by someone held in respect, and the living community hoped the spirit was therefore content and happy and ready to be approached and addressed as an ancestral spirit.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

The ritual of the purification of the living

The living had certain rites to carry out on their own behalf which, if omitted, would bring the displeasure of the ancestors upon them. These were essentially purification rites for they removed the defilement of death from each individual who was closely related to, or had performed some office for, the dead; and through the rites the houses and utensils were cleansed, and the living community was re-integrated after the loss of one of its members. Shaving, burning the hair and mourning bands, and washing in a stream, were the prescribed acts for all who were connected by kinship or marriage with the deceased, or who had taken part in preparing the body or digging the grave. These were a succession of rites as we have seen, and emphasized the need for ritual cleansing over a long period, and for renewed integration between the living. 783 768

In addition to this generally practised ritual, there were some acts of ritual purification of houses and utensils found only among the Swazi clans. One informant told of the ritual washing of hoes used to dig the grave in the blood of a newly killed sheep. Several others spoke of the cleansing with sheep dung of the huts of the widows of a dead man at the time of the second shaving. On each occasion when meat was offered to the ancestors after a death, the living who ate the meat had to be made ceremonially clean through the act of shaving, followed by ritual washing at the river.

The ritual of addressing the spirits

There was no set formula for addressing the ancestral spirits but there were three parts in all the prayers which I heard and which were recited to me. The first was the naming of the ancestors. The leading clans in the two kingdoms demonstrated the way in which they prayed to their ancestors by repeating the names of successive heads of the clan. They began with the name of the ancestor who had died in Swaziland and those of his father and grandfather and other forbears if known. The Nhlane clan, for example, told me 'We pray: *UNdina ka UNchaba ka UMulavu ka UMazongolo*' and then added: 'UNdina died in our village of Hoho before we left Swaziland and he was buried in the kraal in Hoho.' The Mhlambi clan in central Ngoniland named their ancestor UNgekwazi who died in Swaziland, but they did not know any names before him. Other clans in the central kingdom used the name of their ancestor who crossed the Zambesi with Mputa. The most important element in the prayer, therefore, was the naming of the 'big spirit', sometimes coupled with more remote ancestors. 769 782

The second element in addressing the spirits was to call their attention to the beast which was to be offered to them if they 'agreed'. 'Here is your beast' was the formula. Although three or four beasts or even

769 more were driven out of the kraal before the invocation of the spirits,
782 one had been selected for the sacrifice, and the spirits' attention was drawn to this animal. They were reminded that it was their beast because it belonged to the herd of the house which guarded their spirits, and it was also their beast because it was to be killed and its meat offered to them if they showed agreement.

The third part of the prayer was mentioning the needs of the person on whose behalf the spirits were being addressed. The following words were used by Lopati Nzunga when he spoke this prayer to the spirits when Bambo Manga was ill:

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O thou Gumede!
O thou Mputa!
O thou great chief!
Here is your beast.
That your child may be healed,
Look on what is yours.
May you remain well
And your child recover.
We do not know,
We do not know.
If you say that she will die,
She is yours, this child of yours.
It is your affair.
As for us, we long that your child may recover.
If she dies, this child of yours,
We can only speak your names.
We cry to you for her.

769 Bambo Manga was there and her daughter and Chief Njolomole,
782 and while Lopati Nzunga addressed the spirits, the rest murmured the names '*Wena Gumede*', '*Wena Mputa*', and added '*Mutwanayako*' (your child), '*Inkomoyako*' (your beast). The form of the prayer varied, and might be a sequence of address and petition as in this one, or a series of ejaculations with little consecutive thought. It depended on the eloquence and skill of the speaker of the prayer, and that form of eloquence was a well-recognized characteristic among the Ngoni. In the central kingdom before the Europeans came, the head of the Phungwako clan had addressed the spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Since the Phungwako chiefs had separated from Gomani's kingdom, the Nzunga clan performed this ritual for Bambo Manga in their head village. In addition to speaking the prayer, the same man had to see that all was done in order, the cattle driven out, the chief people assembled, and the subsequent action taken in accordance with the sign given by the spirits, either to kill a beast for sacrifice, or to find out from the diviners why the spirits had failed to agree. When the spirits 'refused' the first time Lopati Nzunga addressed them, he concluded the proceedings by gently

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

reminding the spirits that all depended on them. There was no tone of scolding in the words but a respectful plea for attention and help. 769 782

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Alas O Paramount,
Alas O Father,
Why do you refuse us?
What do you say about your child?
We say we are your people,
Alas O Paramount.

In prayers for rain the same form of address was used with the three parts of the prayer. The ancestral spirits addressed were those of the line of the Paramounts, since the needs of the whole country were involved. The beast chosen for the offering to the spirits was a black one with no white markings, and in place of the sick person's name, the need for rain was mentioned. In the account given by Mlonyeni Jere (quoted in the first chapter of Part IV) he used this formula, mentioning the names, presenting the cow, and then asking the ancestral spirits to tell UMkulumqango how greatly they were troubled through lack of rain.

The ritual of sacrificing to the spirits

The essential equipment in the ritual of sacrificing was the spear with which the beast was killed; baskets, both the wide winnowing basket (*lichero*) and the food basket (*nsengwa*); the wooden dish (*ngcwembe*) on which the meat was placed; and the gourd cups for beer. These have been mentioned already in several contexts as the sacrificial vessels or ritual objects connected with the ancestor cult and kept in the hut of the woman who was guardian of a particular ancestral spirit. In the northern kingdom one of the Nhlane clan who carried out the ritual for sacrifices to UNdina Nhlane at Hoho said that in the hut of UNtani Nzima who died in Swaziland, but whose house had continued, was a spear, a black cloth for rain-making and a wooden meat dish. These were kept on the right-hand side at the back of the hut, and no one passing by could stand erect; he had to bend his back and head 'as men do when passing the *inkosi*'. Since the coming of the missions these had been thrown away. 769 778 782 [415]

In the central kingdom I saw in several houses this collection of ritual vessels. There was always a spear, a food basket, one or more gourds for beer, and one or more of the wide, flat, winnowing baskets on which uncooked flour was carried and which was used for meat if there was no wooden dish. These were kept at the back of the hut hanging on the wall, above the place where sacrificial meat was laid.

The first stage of the ritual sacrifice was killing and flaying the beast. It was killed either in the kraal or just outside the fence, with a thrust from the spear, or more than one if necessary, by some member of the leading clan. At the time of the sacrifice when Bambo Manga was ill 769 782

769 the killing and the flaying were done just outside the kraal by young
men of the Nzunga clan, younger brothers of the chief. The cow ran
782 backward as she was stabbed and a second blow killed her, and she was dragged round when she fell to lie with her head to the south-east. Some of the blood from the wound was collected immediately by Lopati and taken by him and put in Bambo Manga's hut in 'the place of the spirits'. The cow was skinned with a few neat strokes of the knife, and a thin strip of meat about six inches wide was cut from the back. This Lopati put in the sacrificial food basket and he and the chief went with it to Bambo Manga's house. The three firestones were removed and the meat was spread on the glowing logs till it was cooked through and quite white. Bambo Manga, who was lying on her mat, washed her hands and face with water brought by her daughter and rinsed out her mouth. Two small pieces of the meat were given to her to eat, and the rest was cut up in small pieces and eaten by Lopati, the chief, his sister and Bambo Manga's daughter. This meat could only be eaten by that inner group.

The men who had skinned the beast cut it up and, following an Ngoni practice, laid all the meat on the gate of the reed fence surrounding the *bwalo*, and carried it to the hut and laid it outside the door. Holding the sacrificial winnowing basket Lopati directed the men to put in it three right ribs, a piece of liver, both stomachs, the heart and lungs, the fat from round the kidneys, a bit of the intestine and the spleen. The head of the beast was arranged facing towards Kabwazi's village, since he had always kraaled some of the Nzunga cattle.

Lopati took the basket into the hut and was followed by the head herd-boy holding the tip of the tail and the gall bladder. The basket with the meat in it was put on the floor at the back of the hut in 'the place of the spirits'. Lopati and the chief squatted on their haunches
[516] nearby, and Bambo Manga knelt on her mat while her daughter wiped the soles of her feet, and she went forward on her knees to the place of the spirits. Lopati intervened and said 'Please walk upright', but she refused and said 'I will do as my ancestors did'. Her daughter knelt behind her.

Then Lopati began to praise the spirits, calling on Mputa by name, saying 'Here is your meat. Please eat. We praise you. We are your children.' The rest ejaculated '*Wena Nkosi*', '*Wena, Gumede*' as if supporting him, keeping quite still and facing the place of the spirits. After the invocation Bambo Manga went back to her mat, and Lopati took the gall bladder and sprinkled the juice round her, and then round the meat basket and round the hearth-stones. The gall bladder was then put in a small pot with water in it and laid on the floor, and the tip of the tail was tied above the place of the spirits. The skin of the beast, which had been washed but not scraped, was brought in and laid on the ground between the firestones and the wall and the gate with the meat

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

on was placed on it. The meat in the basket and on the gate stayed there all night. 769 782

Following the ritual of offering meat to the spirits came the ritual of cooking and eating the meat, both that offered to the spirits and the rest. After the basket of meat had been left all night in the place of the spirits, the large quantity on the gate was carried away and cooked by an old woman outside the hut of Bambo Manga's granddaughter. The meat in the basket which had been offered to the spirits was put in a pot and cooked on the fire in Bambo Manga's hut. It stayed cooking all day and all night till the following morning. Dzinthenga Phungwako, an old and highly respected *lidoda*, came to the hut and divided the sacrificial meat among all who were in the house, that is Bambo Manga, her daughter and granddaughter and several senior women. When they had finished the leading women stood up and thanked '*Zikhomo Maseko*', '*Zikhomo Magwagwa*'. Then they washed their hands and went to their own houses. 252 769 782

The large quantity of meat which had been laid on the gate and cooked on another fire in another *bwalo* was carried in a big pot and put down outside Bambo Manga's hut in the late afternoon. Her daughter came outside and divided the meat into three piles: a small one from the breast-bones for the women, a leg for the chief, the head for Kabwazi the headman of a neighbouring village, and the rest in a big pot for the men. A boy came to tell Lopati that all was ready and he and the chief went out to the place where the beast was killed, near the gate of the kraal. There were four groups already sitting there and the chief and Lopati made a fifth: the *madoda*, the senior men; the *majaha*, the young men; the *mabusa*, the herd-boys; and the little boys. Before Lopati divided the meat he and the chief washed elaborately with water brought in a gourd, and then he washed the knife before cutting the meat. He called the *madoda* to send someone for their portion in a basket, then the young men and the herd-boys were given their portions—a basket for each group, and the small boys had bits put in their hands. The eating was very sedate, there was no snatching of choice bits, and in each group the one who fetched the meat distributed it. There was the general atmosphere of a ritual meal rather than a feast, though the small boys smacked their lips appreciatively. From time to time Lopati called up someone from a group and gave him a bit more to divide up. When it was all eaten, a boy was sent to fetch water and the soapy leaves which the Ngoni used for washing, and the chief and Lopati and the *madoda* all washed the grease off their fingers. Then Lopati stood up and called out '*Siyadumisa baba, zihomo mntwana wenkosi*', 'We are praising you, father, thank you child of the Paramount', and the others all agreed and said '*Zikhomo baba.*' Then they all went together to Bambo Manga's hut and stood opposite her door and called out the same thanks. The women who had eaten their meat 431 769 782 [264] [515] [561]

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

in three age groups on the verandah also came forward and, led by NaNkoloma, a widow of Njolomole I, thanked in the women's language, '*Zimata, zaithwa mntwana wenkosi.*'

I did not witness any ritual sacrifices in the northern kingdom but the accounts given me by informants corresponded closely with the ritual in Meakhatha just described. When sacrificing for rain to the spirits of the Paramount, a black ox with no white spot was driven into the kraal in the late afternoon and the chosen spokesman addressed the ancestral spirits of the Jere clan telling them that this was their beast, they must eat the meat and tell UMkulumqango that the people needed rain. While this man prayed to the spirits he stood facing the beast, and everyone else sat looking in front of them and keeping very quiet. The women stayed at home in their huts and the Paramount stayed in his hut 'as if mourning'. When the beast urinated and showed that the spirits had heard, a messenger came and informed the Paramount. The beast was killed early the next morning in the kraal. While the flaying took place, all the huts of the chief wives were smeared with dried cow-dung on the floors and on the smooth place outside the doors. The meat, in two parts, was taken into the *indlunkulu* and left there all night at the back, so that the spirits might lick it. The next morning the meat was cooked in the kraal by the *madoda* and when it was ready they reported to the big *induna*. He called all the people into the kraal and divided them into companies according to their sections and head villages. The meat was given to the head of each head village who divided it among his group. When everyone had finished, one of the leading men stood up and began to praise the spirit using his titles and praise-names (*izitokozo*). The rest stood up and shouted *Bayete*. They then began to dance a war-dance but, the informants added, that was soon stopped by torrents of rain.

These chapters on the Ngoni ancestor cult bring to an end this study of the two Ngoni kingdoms in Nyasaland in the 1930's. We have seen how their distinctiveness as a people depended on the culture which they brought with them from the south and how this culture was found among the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In the topics included in the three sections of this book: the political system, the social organization, and the ancestor cult, the main features of Ngoni culture are most clearly seen. In much of their economic and agricultural life there was little to distinguish them from their neighbours among the other Nyasaland peoples. The changes brought about by the missions, the schools, new forms of local government, and new types of occupation, were all tending to make the Ngoni less distinctive as a people. The conversion of some leading Ngoni to Christianity, as suggested in Chapter V of Part II, and the spread of schools were together the most powerful influences in altering Ngoni traditional culture. The

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

organization of houses built on polygynous marriage, the ancestor cult, and other aspects of Ngoni culture, were profoundly affected by the teaching of Christianity and by the ideas and practices expected of adherents of the churches. Some leading Ngoni Christians like Cibambo attempted to make a syntheais between their past and their present, between traditional culture and modern life. Others said 'All is finished now.' 114 178

Two points which clearly emerged from a study of the Ngoni in the 1930's might indicate that the Ngoni as a distinct people were not 'finished'. One was their tenacity in adhering to certain traditional practices; the other was the ability they had shown in adapting their culture and political system to the mixed populations in their kingdoms.

[P. 205]
[P. 204 is blank]

GLOSSARY OF NGONI TERMS

abantu bemkloko, prophets, diviners, dreamers of dreams
alezi (sing. *mlezi*), nursemaids
(m)alumuzana (sing. *mulumuzana*), heads of leading clans
amadlozi (sing. *idlozi*), ancestral spirits
amajaha, young men
amahanda, head villages
amanxusa, messengers
amasi, milk curds
amilaga, outlying villages
azungu, the English

baba, *bambo*, father
banja (Nyanja), family group
Bayete, greeting given only to Paramount
bwalo (Nyanja), open space by chief hut, court

cibale, relationship of brotherhood
cibwenzi, friendship, specially among age mates
cidlodlo, head-ring which senior men were allowed to wear
cigodlo, section of village behind chief hut
cingoni, that which is Ngoni
ciponde, period of lawlessness after death of Paramount

gogo, grandparent, elderly female attendant; also used for house where ancestral spirits are guarded and village left in care of *gogo* house

hlonipa, respect, honour

imihubo (sing. *muhubo*), songs sung by detachments of army
imitulo, tribute

impi, army
incwala, festival of first-fruits
indaba, meeting, affair
indlukulu, chief hut (in village), big house
ingcwembe, wooden dish for meat
inkosi, Paramount Chief
inkosikazi, big wife (of Paramount)
isihlutu, form of hair-dressing, chignon
izanusi (sing. *isanusi*), diviners
izibongo (sing. *cibongo*), praises, names used in thanking, clan names
izidandani (sing. *isidandani*), girl companions, attendants
izigawa, hamlets
izinduna (sing. *induna*), war leaders, officials
izitokozo, honorific epithets, 'thanking' names
izwe, land, country

kwathu, homeland

laweni, boys' dormitory
lichero, winnowing basket
ligiya, hero's dance
ligubo, war-dance
lobola, marriage payment, cattle transferred at marriage
lumgulu, new village (of chief or Paramount)

mabandla (sing. *libandla*), military companies based on districts
mabuto (sing. *libuto*), age sets, regiments
(a)madoda (sing. *lidoda*), senior men
(a)makosana, members of royal clan
(a)makosikazi, royal women
malume, mother's brother
manina, senior women

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

104

mbumba (Cewa), group of man, his sisters and sisters' children
mcando, beast given by bride's people to bridegroom's mother's house
mfumu (Nyanja), chief
micetho, domestic slaves, servants, pages
(*u*)*mlobohazi*, woman married with transfer of cattle; bride
mlomo wenkosi, mouthpiece of Paramount
mtimba, marriage ceremony
mtunzi, shadow
mwini, owner

ngoma, Ngoni dance
nhlanzi, substitute or additional wife (usually wife's sister)
nhomo, honorific title
nsengwa (Nyanja), food-basket
nseso, fat of kidneys (of cattle or sheep)
nsima (Nyanja), porridge of maize flour
nyongo, gall bladder (of cattle)

pasangweni, at the gateway of kraal; men's meeting-place

sing'anga, specialist in medicines

(*in*)*tonga*, royal medicines, war medicines

ukuteta, to address the spirits
ukutwasa, reappearance of new moon; rebirth
ulubende, cooked blood
umbongi, official praiser
umsindo, pre-marriage rite for girls
utengwa (Cewa), virilocal marriage without *lobola*

zitambo, head-bands, mourning caps

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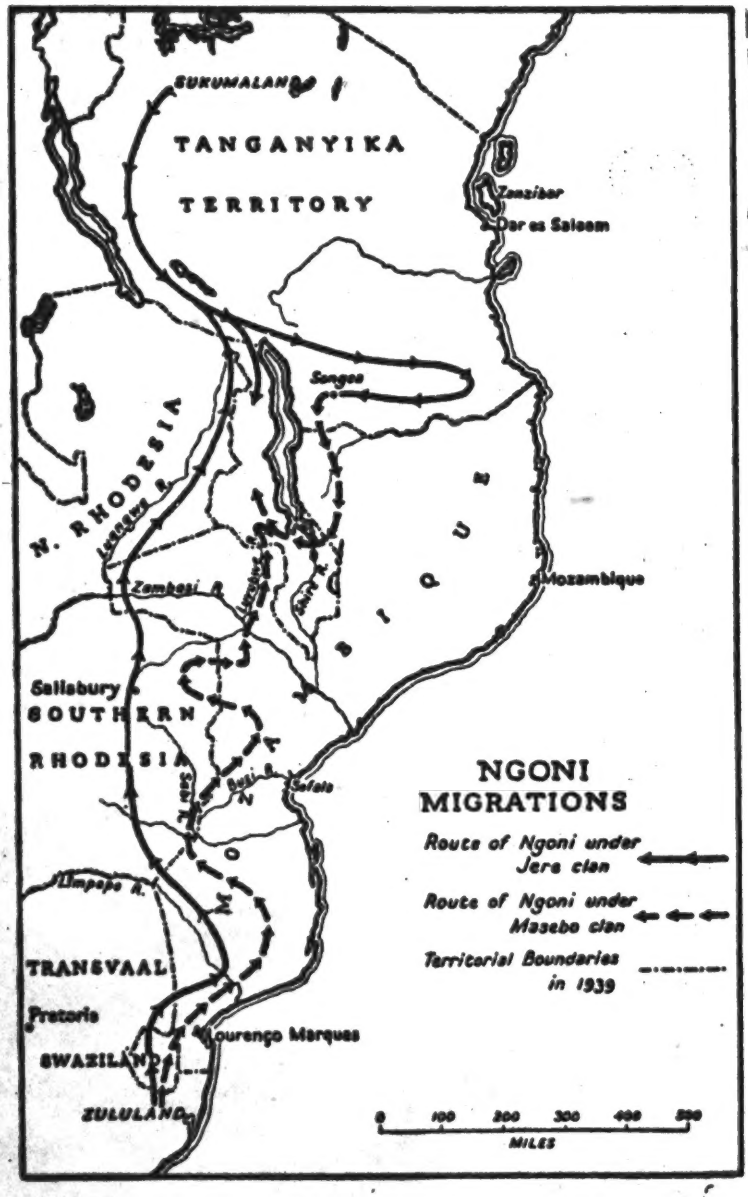
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[P.207]

173
101
102
131
133
167

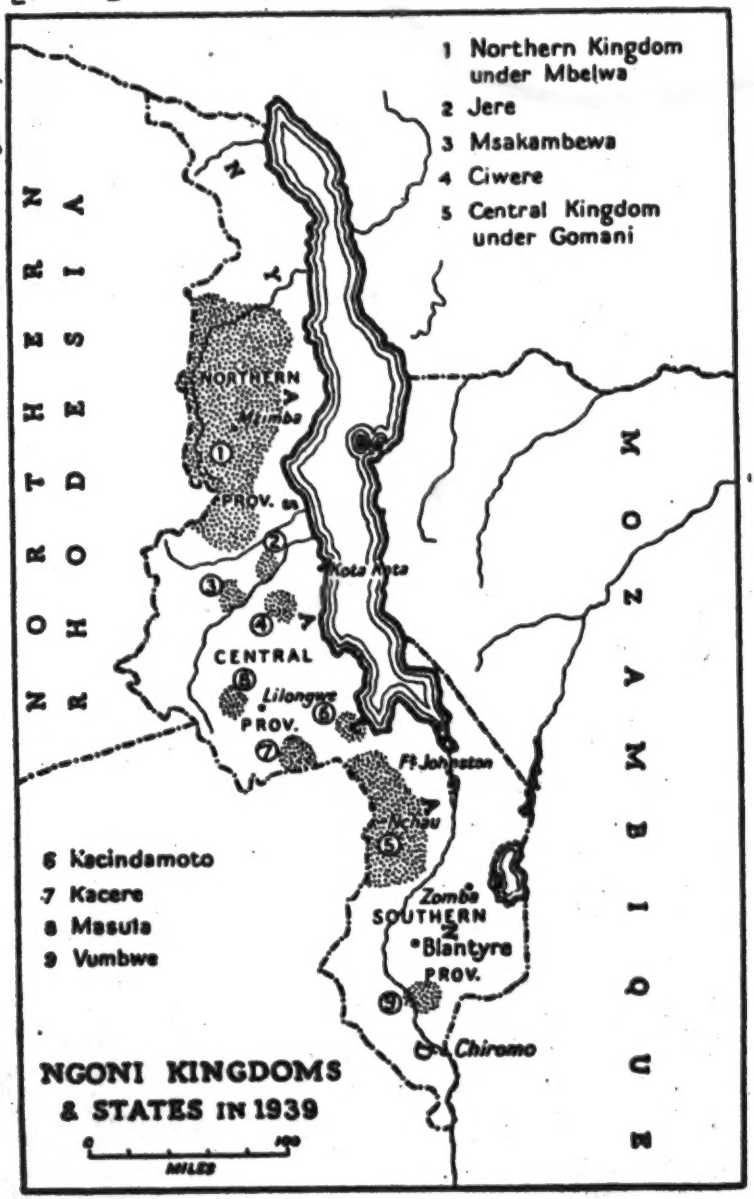


2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p. 208]

101
102
131
133
69



2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

INDEX

African Political Systems, 15 ff.
Age sets, 23, 42, 135, 143 ff.
Ancestors, 118, 158, 160, 161, 176, 177, 183, 189, 197
  ancestor cult, 15, 17, 21, 23, 118, 157–203 *passim*
  see also Ancestral spirits
Ancestral spirits, 158, 159, 165 ff., 169, 177 ff., 184, 187, 191, 192 ff., 200
  guardianship of, 15, 48, 79, 80, 141, 177, 189, 191, 193, 195, 196
Arabs, 41, 42, 81, 85
Aristocracy, 13, 14, 18, 96, 115, 117, 120, 121, 174
Army, 31 ff., 37, 38, 40, 41
  medicines for, 39–40

Bazia, 133, 134, 138, 140–1
Beer, 60, 66, 67, 82, 84, 101, 107, 120, 121, 125, 151, 163, 164, 195
Bemba, 10, 16, 41, 42
Birth, 125, 134, 136, 142
Boys' dormitory (*lawemi*), 19, 96, 115, 135, 137, 143, 144–6

Cash, 173–4
Cattle, 165 ff.
  and house system, 123, 124
  exchange of, 173, 177
  gifts of, 61, 63, 64, 128
  herding of, 30, 145, 170
  in ancestor cult, 158, 160, 165 ff., 176, 177 ff.
  in marriage, 18, 50, 52, 78, 125, 127, 128, 160, 177
  in ritual, 21, 158, 159, 174, 191
  ownership of, 18, 166 ff., 176
  products, 171
  purchase of, 169, 174–5
  -raids, 41, 42
  sale of, 123, 124, 135, 166, 170, 173, 174, 175
  uses of, 171 ff.
  values attaching to, 174 ff.
  see also Lobola
Ceremonies
  ear-piercing, 25, 150
Ceremonies (*contd.*)
  first-fruits, 21, 59, 60
  initiation, 24, 25, 47, 143, 146
  marriage, 125 ff.
  mourning, 161 ff.
  see also Funeral rites, Marriage rites
Cewa, 10, 22, 23, 24, 47, 111, 133, 143, 167, 184
Chiefs, 12, 13, 14, 17, 23, 31, 47 ff., 74, 80, 85, 87, 89, 91, 95, 109, 121, 124, 184, 185, 195, 198
Children, 18, 23, 24, 35, 40, 82, 84, 87, 101, 107, 123, 124, 125, 134, 135, 136, 142, 151, 152
Christianity, Christians, 63, 73, 90, 103, 105–6, 110, 190, 191, 192–3, 202–3
Circumcision, 21, 146
Clan, 10, 20, 21, 49, 116 ff., 127, 138, 142, 187, 195, 197, 198, 202
  heads, 21, 22, 31, 53, 117
  names, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 18, 20, 24, 25, 48, 85, 116, 117, 120
  villages, *see* Head villages
  see also Royal clan, Swazi clans
Courts, 10, 47, 87, 88 ff., 98–100, 109,
  appeal, 10, 47, 106, 109
  chiefs', 94–96, 98
  Paramount's, 10, 93, 98, 100, 106
  village, 92–93
Court-house, 101, 111
Court jester, 70
Cremation, 49, 63, 72, 73, 74, 75

Dances, dancing, 22, 44, 60, 75, 80, 82, 84, 103, 107, 111, 125, 130, 149, 150–1, 181, 182, 196
  see also War-dances
Death, 45, 75, 125
  of Paramount, 71 ff., 192, 197
Descent, matrilineal, 23, 25, 78
  names, *see* Clan names
  patrilineal, 18, 25, 52, 78, 111, 115, 132
Diviners, 37, 39, 58, 71, 159, 178 ff., 194, 195, 198

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Doctors, 37, 39, 40
see also Diviners
Dreams, 181, 182, 186, 188

Europeans, 5, 17, 19, 24, 37, 41, 42, 43, 44, 53, 56, 69, 91, 95, 104, 185, 194, 198
Exogamy, 20, 23, 117, 118, 126

Family, 24, 25, 132 ff.
Fines, 111, 135, 174, 176
First-fruits ceremony, 21, 59, 60, 159
Funeral rites, 21, 22, 44, 45, 57, 61, 75, 80, 161 ff., 165, 177, 192 ff.
of Paramount, 71 ff.

Genealogies, 50 ff., 118, 158, 161
Girls, 135, 146 ff.
age sets, 147
puberty ritual of, 147
training of, 148–9, 152–3
God, *see* Great Spirit
Gogo house, 14, 19, 20, 123, 124, 127, 131, 135, 185
village, 15, 124, 139, 140, 141, 190
Gomani I (Paramount Chief), 43, 55, 56–57, 59, 63, 104
Gomani II (Paramount Chief), 55, 57, 63, 73, 121

Headmen, 14, 47, 68, 88, 89, 92, 94–95, 98, 99, 101, 110, 111, 134, 167, 174, 202
Henga, 10, 11, 25
Herd-boys, 30, 143, 145, 170, 173, 175, 201
Herds, *see* Cattle
Houses, 14, 18, 20, 65, 78, 87, 122 ff., 132, 134, 166, 169, 190
Big house, 14, 20, 48, 50, 53, 55, 100, 101, 104, 107–8, 123, 124, 135
see also Gogo house
Huts, 14, 19, 65, 77, 79, 100, 101, 122, 125, 134, 137
siting of, 19, 122, 123, 133

Initiation ceremonies, 24, 25, 47, 143, 146

Kinship, 18, 49, 115, 117, 122, 123, 133, 134

Law, 88 ff.
see also Courts
Lobola (cattle transferred at marriage), 18, 23, 25, 78, 111, 115, 121, 127, 128, 133, 138, 142

Magic, 67, 179
Markets, 100, 103–4
Marriage, 18, 20, 52, 79, 81, 85, 103, 118, 121, 123, 125 ff., 148
of Paramount, 50, 105, 106, 107
pre-marriage rite, 149
prohibitions, 134; *see also* Exogamy
registration of, 90, 111
rites, 21, 125 ff., 132, 134
utengwa, 168
uxorilocal, 78
virilocal, 78, 134, 142
see also Lobola
Mbwela (Paramount Chief), 3, 11, 52, 70, 72
Meat
consumption of, 171–2, 173, 177, 196, 201
of sacrifice, 200, 201
Medicines, 53, 56, 181, 182, 183, 184, 186
royal, 58 ff., 62
war, 37, 39–40
Military organization, 37–41, 42
Swazi, 39 and note
Zulu, 38
see also War, Warriors, Regiments
Milk, 81, 171, 172, 173
Missionaries, Missions, 24, 42, 43, 44, 72, 73, 105, 115, 199, 202
Mother's brother (*malume*), 167
Mputa (Paramount Chief), 9, 21, 39, 49, 51, 55, 73, 79, 118

Natal, 5, 6, 7
Ndebele, 5, 22
Ngoni language, 22, 85
Nguni, 5
Ngwana, 6, 9, 53, 73, 76, 116
Ntumba, 9, 111, 140
Nyasaland, 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 16, 21, 24, 29, 42, 47, 85

Officials, 13–14, 38, 88 ff., 96–100, 101–2, 121

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Paramount Chief, 11, 13, 14, 15, 31, 34, 37, 40, 47 ff., 62, 63, 66, 85, 86, 87, 94, 95, 97, 99, 100 ff., 111, 120, 179, 181
accession of, 56 ff., 62
big wife of, 50, 66, 78, 79, 102, 107
death of, 53, 61, 63, 64, 71 ff.
heir of, 48, 50, 53
marriage of, 50, 105, 106
mother of, *see* Queen Mother
sister of, 78, 80
spirit of, 15, 48, 79, 95, 102
wives of, 65, 67, 80
Portuguese, 11, 55, 73, 90–91, 98, 104, 118
Praise-names, 29, 35, 130, 158, 159, 202
Praise-songs, 51, 70, 76–77, 108
Prayers, 197–9, 202
Prophets, 179, 181, 182, 187
Puberty, 21, 39, 80, 125, 134, 142, 147–8, 188
see also under Ritual

Queen Mother, 65, 66, 67, 78 ff., 85–87

Rain, prayers for, 199, 202
Regency, regent, 48, 52 ff., 73, 79
Regiments, 21, 31, 38, 40
Ritual, 14, 17, 21, 124
at accession of Paramount, 56 ff.
of ancestor cult, 157–203
of purification, 36, 41, 193, 197
pre-marriage, 149–50, 189 ff.
puberty, 80, 125, 134, 143, 147
shaving, 125, 194, 195, 196
vessels, 15, 79, 199
see also Ceremonies, Funeral rites, Marriage rites
Royal clan, 13, 14, 48 ff., 78, 87, 118, 120, 195
Royal shadow, 49, 61–4, 72, 118
Royal women, 50, 71, 77 ff., 81, 84–85, 86, 87

Sacrifices, 15, 157, 159, 161, 166, 170, 174, 176, 178, 183, 184, 185, 189, 191, 193, 195, 196, 198, 199 ff.
Schools, 105, 110
Servants, 20, 62, 77, 84, 107, 123, 124, 137
Shaka, 5, 6, 7, 8, 47, 77
Slaves, 29, 41, 81, 84, 88
Slave-trade, 41, 43
Snuff, 33, 40, 67, 183
Songs, 6, 22, 44, 45–7, 60, 61, 75, 107, 149, 182, 183, 192, 193
see also War-songs
Spirits, 157, 158, 160, 161, 162, 177, 178, 181, 183, 184 ff., 190
Great Spirit, 158, 190, 191, 192
see also Ancestors, Ancestral spirits
Subordinate Native Authorities, 11, 47, 49, 89, 109, 141
Succession, 124, 125, 135
of Queen Mother, 79–80
to Paramountcy, 52 ff.
Swazi, 5, 6, 41, 49, 50, 78, 87, 116, 117, 133, 179, 189
clans, 5, 13, 14, 24, 25, 29, 48, 80, 93, 98, 117, 118–19, 121, 125, 127, 138, 140, 142, 187, 195, 202
-land, 5, 197

Tanganyika, 9, 10, 21
Tonga (royal medicines), *see* Medicines
Tribute, 67–68
Tumbuka, 10, 11, 25, 29

Venda, 9, 119, 184, 185
Village, 14, 19 ff., 25, 31, 90, 93, 98, 106, 133, 134, 138, 140–1, 142
head, 21, 36, 38, 78, 79, 93, 110, 117, 118, 123, 139; *see also* Clan
moving of, 14, 65, 106, 123, 139
owner of, 19, 122, 123, 124
royal, 12, 64 ff., 79, 80, 86, 87, 99, 100 ff., 121, 122
see also Gogo village, Headmen

War, warfare, 25, 29–47, 159
captives, 20, 24, 41, 42, 123
-dances, 21, 31, 32, 36, 37, 40, 43, 72, 162, 196, 202
-dress, 32, 40, 43, 44
leaders, 33, 38
medicines, *see under* Medicines
-songs, 31, 35, 40, 192, 193
see also Army

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Warriors, 32, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 40, 43, 45, 57, 74, 143
Widows, 15, 19, 65, 79, 126, 138, 139, 141, 142, 163, 170
Wives, 19, 65, 82, 85, 86, 103, 105, 107, 123, 124, 131–2, 135, 137, 138, 142, 166
of Paramount, 66 ff., 72, 78, 84, 86, 87, 103, 107
big wife, 19, 50, 66, 78, 79, 81, 85, 87, 107, 123, 124, 139
substitute w., 126
Women, 20, 32, 40, 77, 122, 132
senior, 25, 124, 125, 136, 143, 151, 153
royal, q.v.

Yao, 41, 43

Zambesi river, 4, 8, 9, 10, 21, 48, 53, 76, 97, 117, 184, 187, 197
Zulu, 5, 6, 16, 22, 38
Zwangendaba, 6, 7–8, 9, 21, 39, 47, 49, 51, 54, 76, 85, 116, 118, 179–80

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Children of their Fathers 000

GROWING UP AMONG THE NGONI OF NYASALAND

MARGARET READ

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'60 - Yale Press

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[p.4]

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Contents

000

INTRODUCTION *page* 11

I NGONILAND AND THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED IN IT
The homeland 17
The Ngoni kingdoms 20
Ngoni society 21
Life in two Ngoni villages 22
Political and social changes 25

II GROWING UP AMONG THE NGONI
The approach to this study 29
Clues to this study 31
Social horizons of Ngoni children 34
The goals of Ngoni child training 36
The story of Heva 38
The story of Brass-Rod 39
Learning how to behave 42
Ngoni ideas about nature and nurture 45
Ngoni cultural values 47

III 'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'
Preparation for birth 49
The birth of the child 51
Ritual and social uncleanness 52
'Coming out of the hut' 53
Naming the child 55
Visit to the mother's home 56
Taking care of the baby 57
Weaning 59

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CONTENTS

000 Social relationships involved in the birth of a child:
Wife to husband's family page 61
Wife to husband 62
Father's family to child 63
Baby to nurse girl and women helpers 63
Variants on the Ngoni pattern 64

IV FAMILY LIFE FOR THE YOUNG CHILD
The women's world 67
The father's role with young children 72
The physical surroundings of the small child 73
Training in habits 78
Play places and playthings 82
Young Ngoni children among their siblings and age-mates 86

V VILLAGE LIFE FOR OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS
Second teeth: a new stage 88
The boys' dormitory 91
Boys' life in the village 95
Girls' life in the village 100

VI THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (i)
The study of adolescence 105
Initiation schools 106
Ngoni puberty rituals 107
Girls' private ritual 108
Boys' private ritual 110
The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual 112
Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles 113
Young adults in Ngoni society 117

VII THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (ii)
Knowledge and skills 122
Ngoni traditional knowledge:
The reckoning of time 123
The heavens and the earth 125

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CONTENTS

Reckoning of numbers page 126 000
Ngoni history 126
Ngoni law 128
Ngoni traditional skills 129
Men's skills:
Care of cattle 130
Hunting 134
Other skills 137
Specialised crafts 138
Women's skills:
Guardianship of property 139
Varieties of food and their preparation 141
Ngoni women's crafts 143
The art of cleanliness 144
The art of speech 146
The art of dancing 146

VIII PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER
Personality, culture and character 148
The Ngoni system of values 150
The Ngoni ideal personality 154
The ideal personality of Ngoni women 157
The ideal personality of Ngoni men 159
Ngoni personality in a changing culture 161

IX SOME EDUCATIONAL REFLECTIONS
Education, culture and society 166
Where this study might lead 169

APPENDIX
I Select Bibliography 173
II Definitions 174
III Vernacular Terms 175

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

List of Plates

000

1.	Chief dressed for war-dance	*facing page* 16
2.	Chief dressed for war-dance with wives	17
3.	Chief and his elders in kraal	17
4.	Chief waiting to hear cases	32
5.	Chief with his elders in his court-house	32
6, 7.	Pounding maize	33
8.	A well-filled grain store	48
9.	Winnowing	48
10.	Young musicians	49
11.	Young musicians	64
12.	Chiefs' wives wearing leopard claws	65
13.	Chiefs' wives leading in the dance	65
14.	Mother and babies	96
15.	Nursemaids with their charges	96
16.	Traditional hair style	97
17.	Girls sitting correctly	97
18.	Chiefs' wives	112
19.	Girls dancing *Ngoma*	112
20.	Making lorries	113
21.	Will the wheels work?	113
22, 23.	Herd boys	128

[page 8 is blank]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

LIST OF PLATES

000 24. Learning to make fire *facing page* 129
25. Explaining how to do it . 129
26. Making clay figures 144
27. Ear piercing 144
28. Learning to carry wood 145
29. Learning to pound 145

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Introduction

Like the wooden Ngoni meat dish, this book stands on three firm legs. It is the outcome of lecturing for over twenty years to teachers and students of education from all over the world on how an anthropologist approaches the study of education. It is the result of living for three and a half years in Ngoni villages in Nyasaland, watching how they brought up their children, hearing their reasons for the shaping of that upbringing, and seeing what use they made of formal education in mission schools. And lastly, since the war ended, young parents in several countries have talked with me now and then about how they were bringing up their children and what they thought of schools in relation to their home training. 114 121

I like to think, though it may be self-flattery, that a close study of the home and of parents' attitudes towards the bringing up of their children is an essential complement to the ideas presented to young teachers, and to older ones too for that matter, of what education is and how it works. I am often startled, and driven to furious thinking, when I come across statements like these: 'School is a civilizing place,' from the Harvard Committee on Education in a Free Society; or 'We have to rely on the schools for the training of character' from the Beecher Report on Education in Kenya; or 'The school is an institution specifically established to produce desirable changes in behaviour,' from the opening address to a symposium on Education and Anthropology at Stanford University, California. We all know that there are parents everywhere who are only too thankful to 121

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 hand over to the schools, or to anyone, the continuous and exacting task of seeing how children behave, watching the development of their individual character and abilities, thinking out and putting into practice ways in which the young barbarians can eventually become useful members of a community. That last word, 'community', is perhaps the clue to those parents, and it seems to me that there are many in western countries and in Africa and India and elsewhere today, who are consciously, and with increasing interest, taking on their shoulders the job of bringing up their children and hoping for co-operation from the school and teachers in that task.

What are these families, the interested ones, aiming at in bringing up their children and what means do they use to forward those aims? Are they chiefly concerned with the way their children fit into and regard the intimate family group of which they are a part, and the larger circle of kinsfolk and relations, sometimes real to children if they live near and meet often, sometimes shadowy if they are seldom seen, sometimes a joy and sometimes a menace to the more intimate family life? Do parents also want their children to fit into the local 'community' whatever it may be, a village, a suburb, a city street? Or are the parents themselves rather conscious of belonging to a selected group of neighbours and friends, and do they want their children, as they grow up, to be identified with this, or a similar group? Do these parents want their children to identify themselves solely or mainly with their own age group in school and in the neighbourhood? Or do they envisage that growing children, even at their most individualistic and aggressive stages, should learn to fit in with younger children, with adults in general and with older people, and should develop attitudes and behaviour which have a wider social significance than those displayed in the classroom and the playground?

These are the kind of questions which many young parents are asking themselves today. Sometimes they

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

get together and talk about the peculiar ideas of teachers about children in general and their children in particular. They wonder how far school standards of behaviour and school codes of morals harmonize or clash with family ideas on behaviour and family ways of living. There is sometimes an attitude of aggressive criticism on both sides, parents and teachers; occasionally it becomes an attitude of cheerful and friendly co-operation; quite often parents and teachers shrug their shoulders with resignation at the gulf which separates home and school, and look for another scapegoat, like an education authority, on which to put the blame.

This situation, which embraces the outlook of parents on their children's present and future, and their attitude towards schools, teachers and education systems in general, is world wide—it knows no national frontiers. When parents and teachers from different countries get down to talking about these questions, they can understand each other's problems in general terms, though they have to explain to each other the specific cultural forms in which these problems appear in each country, with regard to learning and using more than one language for example. In the groups of students to whom I lectured, many of the teachers from overseas were also parents, but very few of them had ever considered the education of their own children in school in relation to the pattern of family and home training in their own society. Many of them discovered an alarming number of problems which demanded their attention—alarming because they were obliged to consider and formulate their own family attitudes towards child training, and at the same time to contemplate and criticize the school education which they had accepted so whole-heartedly as the vital step towards progress for their children and their nation. Every now and then my confidence in the usefulness of this anthropological approach to education was fostered by an angry young man who came up after a lecture and said 'Why was I not told about these things when I was training as a teacher? How

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 can my country begin to understand these things?' From Somaliland and the Sudan, from British Guiana and Jamaica, from Malaya, India and Pakistan, and from all parts of Africa came these indignant reactions, and from those countries and many others I have had in letters over many years references to 'those Ngoni people you used to talk about'.

So it is with young parents and young teachers chiefly in mind, though I hope with some young anthropologists too, that this book has been written. I have for instance avoided 128 as far as possible technical jargon, that seemingly essential language in which anthropologists, educationists and many others wrap up and conceal their hidden mysteries from the common man. In the appendix will be found certain definitions of terms which have crept in and whose use has been inevitable in the Ngoni cultural setting, and also some of the vernacular terms for which I have substituted the nearest English equivalent. Here and there I have had to introduce a vernacular term but there are not many. The book is so arranged that the five narrative chapters (III to VII) follow consecutively. Chapters II and VIII are concerned with an analysis of some of the problems presented by the study, and can be skipped by those who do not like problems but want a straight story. Chapter I is I think essential to a full understanding of the narrative chapters, because Ngoni children were not brought up in a vacuum, but in a very specific political and social situation—as indeed all children are.

There will be plenty of criticism about the material and the focus in this book. Indignant young women will say 'What a poor deal the Ngoni mother had! Did the father and the grandmother really have it all their own way?' The answer is partly that a writer has to use bold outline strokes in painting his picture or it becomes hazy and lacking in purpose; and partly that young Ngoni mothers knew that one day they would be grandmothers and then they would

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

get their own back. Psychologists will say 'But this is all too positive! Positive aims in training, positive methods and, apparently, positive results. Were there no failures and breakdowns in the systems, no cleavages in the society, no maladjusted individuals?' Of course there were. Again the bold outlines have been essential in portraying a situation unfamiliar to many readers. And the rest of the answer to that criticism, as I hinted more than once in the book, lies in studies of individual Ngoni people and how they came out of the training process; and also in studies of the relation of schools and the education given in them to that somewhat rigid and self-consciously controlled Ngoni society. Both of these I hope to write one day, but this book is long enough already. 128

Young parents the world over are often surprised, and delighted (though not always), at the individual character shown by each of their children. They look in their children for signs of heredity and for evidence of the success or failure of their training. So did the Ngoni, and yet at the end they always came back to 'It is his own human nature'. 858 828

M. R.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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1. Chief dressed for war-dance

[facing page 16]
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I

Ngoniland and the People who lived in it

The homeland

137
The little country of Nyasaland in Central Africa received 133
its name from the lake by which Livingstone and those who
followed him penetrated into the interior and reached the [131]
lands and people living round the lake. On the west side
there is a narrow strip of low-lying coastal land. Then a
series of escarpments begin, and up them roads and paths [487]
wind through steep wooded valleys, until the final scarp
leads to the grasslands of the high plateau. Here on the high
plateau the Ngoni settled about the middle of the nineteenth [167]
century, after nearly forty years of trekking from Natal to [173]
Tanganyika. They turned south again at the shores of Lake
Victoria and returned to this land which they had passed
through on their northward march. This high plateau has
great diversity of scenery, and much of it reminded the Ngoni
of the hills and valleys and grasslands of Natal. There are
high mountains with sharp peaks and massive granite
shoulders. Between the ranges of lower grass-covered hills
are shallow valleys where the rain washes down good soil to [134]
the valley bottoms. Sweeps of grassland, bare of trees,
alternate with river valleys where there is a continuous flow
of water, fed by springs and mountain streams.

In the dry season, from April to November, the trees lose 132
their leaves and the grass gradually dries up till the prevail- 137
ing colours are gold and brown against the black and grey

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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[411]

2. Chief dressed for war-dance with wives

3. Chief and his elders in kraal

[facing page 17]

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the
137 rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose
311 it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited
361 their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe
361 formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had
351 a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
[343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

There were two focal points in each village, reproduced
621 on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
[554] the 'big house'[1] at the head of the kraal, where the leading woman had her home.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

woman had her home. The other was the 'gate'[2] of the kraal 621
at the opposite end of the enclosure to the 'big house'. The
name by which this 'gate' was known applied also to the [417]
space on each side of the gap in the kraal fence through
which the cattle went out and came in—a gap which was
closed at night with heavy poles. Here at the gate the men [512]
of the village sat by day, ate their meals brought to them by
children from their wives' huts, talked, received strangers,
pursued their crafts, and supervised the return of the cattle
in the evenings.

In and around the main huts within the tall reed fences, 342
the life of a Ngoni household went on. Some of the huts
were rectangular, others round. All had a veranda built up
above the ground-level and shaded by the house roof. The
back parts of the veranda were often enclosed with mats to
make additional storage space. In old Ngoni households the 351
open space around the hut was kept swept and mudded and
polished like a floor, so that people could sit there in comfort
and cleanliness as well as on the veranda. Near the house 417
was one or more little reed platforms about five feet above
the ground, where kitchen utensils, gourds and vegetables
were laid to dry, and which were used to sit under as shelter
from the sun in the hot months. Large and small wooden 415
pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape, mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
always to be seen outside and around the hut, as well as
inside.

In each household, within the main hut, there were two 353
places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
door-posts at the entrance. These posts with the hollow for [354]
the fireplace in the centre of the floor divided the hut into
a right-hand and left-hand side—the men's side and the

[1] and [2] A short list of the vernacular terms for some these common Ngoni place-names is given at end of the book.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled,
[721] they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[648] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British administration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [583]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a [563]
group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

a few weeks. They were both dominated by important 121
Ngoni families, and both the headquarters of subordinate chiefs. They both represented that blend of old and new in Ngoni life which was continually keeping the anthropologist on her toes.

Enkodlweni was far from main roads and centres of 105
modern life. When I first went there my lorry cut a swathe 621
of grass knee-high on the so-called road to the village, and the radiator, choked with grass seed, boiled all the time. I lived in the mud-and-wattle hut maintained by the chief [342]
for visiting teachers and missionaries opposite the school, a [872]
four-standard school under an able young headmaster, well educated and well trained. He and his schoolboys, the resident evangelist and the court clerk represented the new elements in village life. Yet they were not cut off from the Ngoni way of life—on the contrary they were very much part of it and very proud of being Ngoni. The school had been taught in the Ngoni language, akin to old Zulu, until a few years before my visit, and the children were still given Ngoni proverbs to write in their copy-books. Several of the older people had books in their huts written in Zulu as well as in English, and Ngoni was still spoken as the home language in many of the households. The older women knew the traditional special vocabulary used by women only, and dressed their hair in the high chignon style. Proverbs were quoted often in the court and in church; stories of war against the Bemba people in Northern Rhodesia forty years ago were told by the kraal gate as if they happened last year. Several leading Ngoni clans were represented in the village, and each had their own praise songs and forms of addressing their ancestors.

The old evangelist, himself a member of a famous clan, had been threatened, thirty years before, with death by the former chief if he continued to teach and preach. He stayed, notwithstanding, and had become one of the trusted counsellors of the present chief. During the day he joined the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] [191] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-[162] [592] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces-[361] sible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in-[342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was [871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [797] mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East Africa.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182] In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[448] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

as young men, and had known the independence and 178
supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'every- 184
thing is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when 561
faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the [797] influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, mini- [463] sters and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni way of living, and many of them had made a successful [183] synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they [156] said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described 178
briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes domin- 829
ated social relationships. There was a determined struggle 177
on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate [861]
these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasa- [186] land sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 culture worth preserving, inspired them to put up a fight-
829 against all that threatened the values inherent in their way
177 of living. It was perhaps the struggle of a disappearing aristocracy. But Ngoni fathers thought that the principles of education on which they brought up their children were worth a struggle.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

II

Growing up among the Ngoni

The approach to this study

Among the several titles used to describe this and similar kinds of studies, such as child development, child study, child training, socialization, I think the ugly but useful term socialization most nearly covers the theme of this particular study. I much prefer, mainly on aesthetic grounds, the non-technical, non-committal expression 'growing-up', used in the title of this chapter and established long ago in the pioneer study of Margaret Mead in New Guinea. I realize, however, that this title could be misleading if readers expected a psychological as well as an anthropological approach, and looked for psychological analyses and techniques applied to children at different stages of their development. The arguments for a joint approach by anthropologists and psychologists are well known, and have been clearly stated in the introduction to Dr H. M. Ammar's recent book: *Growing up in an Egyptian Village*. On the whole, in most studies of 'growing up', the psychological emphasis is much stronger. We frequently find descriptions of infancy and the early years of childhood set out in psychological terms familiar to western society, without what I consider as the essential complement, an equal emphasis on the aims and methods of that particular society in training its children. This complementary study could and should be predominantly the task of the social anthropologist, but it is one which has hitherto not attracted a great deal of attention from anthropologists in their field studies.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 One more word about 'growing up'. It has in popular language often been associated with 'he just growed, like Topsy', implying a minimal amount of direction and a maximum amount of free response by a child to all external stimuli. No one can, of course, control a child's inner response to direction and training, but more often than not a child can and does learn, for a variety of reasons, to show the overt response expected by the adults who are bringing him up. The potential conflict in a child between his inner and overt responses lies within the field of individual psychological studies, and I am well aware that in this respect as in others this study is incomplete.

However, as I endeavoured to suggest in the introduction, this is a society-directed study in which the focus is on how adults bring up their children to fit into their society and to perpetuate their cultural values. The emphasis, therefore, here is on the training of children as part of the social life and cultural aims of the community, and the children's response is regarded from the angle of how they learn what the adults have to teach. Here and there I think I may have lost the thread of learning in following the thread of teaching—too close a concentration on two foci can produce a squint which is not always the best way of looking at situations. The main emphases in the training of Ngoni children, perhaps of children everywhere, are on behaviour, on skills and on knowledge. If we want to understand the process carried out by adults in training their children in any of these respects, we have to keep asking the questions, familiar to educationalists: what is taught? Who teaches it? When do they do it? In what contexts do they do it? It would be tedious in the extreme to keep on asking these questions in the following chapters, and to use this method would certainly break or hopelessly entangle the threads of learning and teaching in Ngoni society. Those questions however [128] have been in the background and implicit all through the narrative chapters from III to VII. If readers cannot find

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

answers to them somewhere, then there have been some vital omissions in the narrative. 121

Clues to this study

In relating this study to other field studies and analyses of socialization techniques and processes, I have not attempted to present here any general assessment of similar or related studies, much less any review of the field as a whole, since I have touched on both in earlier publications.[1] Instead I have brought into this chapter one or two clues or guide lines from other sources which seemed to me to elucidate some of my problems, particularly in regard to four main aspects of this study, which have already been mentioned in Chapter I and which to a large extent set the limits and determine the emphases of this book. The 'true Ngoni' were a society within a society, a distinct cultural group within the Ngoni kingdom. This society of theirs had sharp edges, definable and recognizable limits, and that partly accounted for their own awareness of themselves as distinct from, though at so many points connected with, the neighbouring peoples. Their culture, that is their way of living within this society, had definite values which they strove to maintain, and this was one of the reasons why the ideal Ngoni personality pattern, and their endeavour to see it reproduced in each child, was easy to recognize. In order to safeguard their society and maintain their culture they exercised a fairly rigid social control over the upbringing of their children, which resulted in something approaching a 'system' of training and educating children. Set against this conservation of traditional values however was the reality and extent of changes due to external circumstances mentioned at the end of Chapter I. In the face of these changes the Ngoni showed that they could adapt some of them to their own purposes, and they made use of the schools, for example, once they approved of them, to help adjust their

184 186 829 183 [157] [861] 177

[1] See Appendix (i)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 society and particularly their children to new ways of living and thinking. These then are the four aspects of the study
121 for which I sought clues: awareness of their society, definite cultural values, social control of bringing up children, adaptation to external change.

In alluding to the following authors and the ways in which
114 they furnished clues for this study, I hope it may lead
121 readers to consult the full works for themselves, and indeed to explore others which can be found in any good bibliography on socialization or on personality and culture. Over many years I have read and re-read Ralph Linton's *The Cultural Background of Personality*, in order to throw light on my own studies and to illustrate my lectures. When assembling the material for this Ngoni study I welcomed and followed up his thesis that 'some groups are much more conscious of the existence of culture and much more prone to generalize about behaviour than others'. That and other passages certainly helped to throw light on the Ngoni awareness of their own culture and their articulateness about behavioural training.

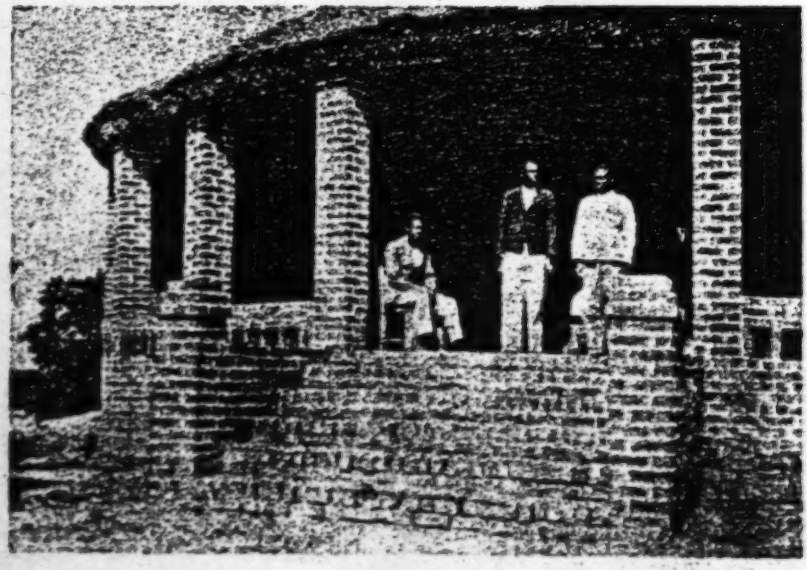
Linton also assisted me, though I did not completely agree with all his analysis, in placing cultural values in their relation to the accepted personality patterns. I used here other clues, and notably those provided by Monica Wilson in her book *Good Company* and John Whiting in his field manual for studies of child training. The Nyakusa values, brought out so clearly by Professor Wilson, I was able to compare with Ngoni values. Among the Nyakusa, 'good company', dignity, display, decency, wisdom, were constantly stressed and behaviour on these lines was commended by adults. The Nyakusa were a homogeneous and secure people, whose system of age-villages was unique among the surrounding peoples and a powerful force in maintaining and developing socially desirable forms of behaviour. Dr Whiting, in his field study manual, suggests eight 'systems of behaviour' for field workers to observe and classify in terms of individual

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

292
142

4. Chief waiting to hear cases



5. Chief with his elders in his court-house

[facing page 32]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

child behaviour. Five of them appear to suggest values some of which have a place either in Nyakusa or Ngoni ideal personality patterns: self-reliance, obedience, responsibility, sociability, dominance. But there is at least one major difference between the approaches of Professor Wilson and Dr Whiting to the training of children. Professor Wilson is describing the values of Nyakusa adults and their effect on the bringing up of children. Dr Whiting has selected from a series of cultures certain typical or common forms of behaviour which might be displayed by children. These forms of behaviour might represent general social values, but they are not set in the context of any one culture, and the criterion is whether an observer saw a child displaying sociability rather than whether the society desired their children to show sociability and took steps to encourage it. This book was after all a manual to be usable in a number of cultural situations. His emphasis is nevertheless on the observed behaviour of selected children, and illustrates my point made in the early pages of this chapter; whereas Professor Wilson's emphasis was on the adult ideal personality to which, it was hoped, Nyakusa children would conform.

The existence of a 'system' in the upbringing of children, a system set up by a society and under its control, posed a number of questions. Clyde Kluckhohn in several of his books has for a long time provided me with clues in the study of 'systems', and many of these clues are summarized in the chapter on Personality and Culture in his book *Mirror for Man*. Especially in two directions these clues have proved helpful: in his distinction between two kinds of cultural learning, technical and regulatory, or acquiring skills and learning to behave, the latter taking place in the early years of chilhhood, and acquiring skills in later years; and in his theme of predictability, illustrated in this quotation: 'A definition of socialization in any culture is the predictability of an individual's daily behaviour in various defined situations. . . . When a person behaves most of the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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6, 7. Pounding maize

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[facing p. 33]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

114 time as others do in following cultural routines, he is then
121 socialized.'

I have deliberately carried on the study of the Ngoni 'system' through what are generally called the adolescent years. In so doing I followed some of the clues in Professor Linton's discussion of how different societies treated adolescence and its alleged problems. Dr H. M. Ammar also provided a clue in his account of the sharp gulf in the Egyptian village of Silwa between child and adult, between the ways of childhood and the values of adulthood. But in sorting out the problems which the Ngoni study presented, I have drawn also on my recollection of discussions with Dr Kurt Hahn at Gordonstoun about the place of adolescents in society, and whether what is commonly called 'an awkward age' is necessarily part of a child's growing up. Two particular contributions of Kurt Hahn's have thrown light on the young Ngoni adult. One was the correlation between physical stages of growth and social responsibility; and the other was the close connexion between acquiring skills which are socially valuable and essential, and the general maturing of the young adult, especially in his growing confidence in himself and in his self-respect.

On the fourth point, the effect of external changes such as schools on child training, I found much that was useful in Oscar Lewis' *Life in a Mexican Village*. It seems to me he has gone further than most anthropologists in examining the school and its methods and ideas in relation to a traditional culture and society. From an educational as well as from an anthropological angle, H. M. Ammar's analysis of the place of schools in Egyptian villages is also very stimulating.

Social horizons of Ngoni children

128 Most studies of child training concentrate, or at least place
[114] the main emphasis, on a child in his family setting, with the connotation of a family in the western individual sense of father, mother and their children. The subsequent chapters

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of
living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and
the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We
shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the
setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be in-
terpreted according to the Ngoni social organization,
sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my
earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and
who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle
of people forming a young child's contacts was from the
beginning much wider than the individual family which a
child was born into. When he began to run about and to
pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was
as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni
adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when neces-
sary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related
families in other villages, with all members of the same clan [602]
living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship
and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads [631]
were also inseparable from the political links between the
people and their territorial chief, and between the whole
people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-
Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the
villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their
children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence
in most villages there were sharp distinctions between stand- [183]
ards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni
families.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

194 563 [867] families. It was, however, demanded from Ngoni children that they should behave in the socially approved manner to everyone, and not only to their Ngoni kin and fellow clansmen. And it was evident in non-Ngoni families that there was often some attempt to teach Ngoni standards of behaviour to their children, but that such attempts broke down when their family system was not organized to enforce the necessary training.

576 577 [867]

The goals of Ngoni child training

Ngoni adults, and especially the senior men and women who were in control of the training of children and themselves deeply conscious of the traditional values of their society, summed up the aims of the upbringing of children in one word 'respect'. The vernacular term *ulemu*—in the old Ngoni language *klonipa*—is a concept very difficult to translate adequately, certainly to convey its full meaning in a single English word or phrase. The nearest terms are honour and respect, and though in some contexts it is often translated as politeness, that is too limited a term. In fact they had another vernacular term to express courtesy which was to them one way of showing respect. The concept of *ulemu* included the recognition that a particular person or office was entitled to honour; that all behaviour to that person must express respect; and that by showing respect in language, posture and action, a child or adult so behaving, shared in that honour which they were acknowledging. Conversely, through failing to convey respect, a person, whether child [558] or adult, was 'ashamed' and lost face accordingly. I have just said that a particular person was entitled to honour and therefore to respect in the behaviour of others. The Ngoni said that was the origin of the concept, and it was demonstrated in the punctilious observance of etiquette to all chiefs, and to all leading men and women by everyone else. [858] But there was an extension of this concept to include all older people, and Ngoni children were expected to show

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their 576
family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If 577
children did not so behave to old and poor people, they 858
were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had [867]
failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early 576
travellers in Ngoniland to the good manners found in Ngoni 828
households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the 829
Ngoni because they liked living together without any scat- 867
tering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . .
Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of
being beaten, but because all children were well taught that
this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of
the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion 829
between personal behaviour and the integrity and pros-
perity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were
talking about child training and its effect on the future of the
Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who
spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof
off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was
built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated
the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within
their society, so that harmonious relations would build up
the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and
indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic seces-
sions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are
perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human socie-
ties from the individual family outwards. We see this how-
ever in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were
acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences
of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about 539
keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining 829
their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who [115]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

115 had heard it from his grandmother. She had been a young
539 Ngoni woman at the time the Ngoni crossed the Zambezi,
829 and hence this story was said to have had its origin in the Ngoni former homeland in Natal.

The story of Heva

539 At the beginning of the creation of the world there was a woman of reddish colour whose name was Golela, and she had two children. The name of the older one was Heva, and of the second one Malusi. My grandmother, Madakacha, said that Malusi was the cause of our herds of cattle becoming smaller. When Malusi was herding cattle on the river plains where they were feeding, he kept on disturbing them and driving some away from the rest.

At this time Heva was staying with his mother. Her work was to keep watch over the sun so that the birds did not peck it, and Heva helped her by flapping away the flies which were troubling her.

Their mother Golela asked Heva, 'Where is your brother? What is he doing?' Heva replied, 'There he is yonder, disturbing your cattle on the river plain.' Then Golela called Malusi and said to him, 'Go. Choose what you want and depart. Go with them far away. What is left here is for Heva.'

After Malusi went away, all that remained on the river plain belonged to Heva, including the animals and the birds and the crops, but the cattle were reduced in number.

My grandmother used to say about this story, 'We who are descended from Heva are the victims of this separation between the brothers. Because Malusi in the beginning of the world took away many of the cattle of his mother's house, we have never had large herds of cattle since then.'

The Ngoni saw in the archaic form of this folk-tale several meanings. It was one of their traditional creation myths. It supported their belief that they were once owners of vast

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

herds of cattle. It emphasized the relationships between brothers in their mothers' 'house', and the vesting of the rights over cattle in the male members of the house. But the chief reason why it was told to the children was as a warning against quarrels between brothers, which led to their separating from each other and dividing the property of a house instead of keeping it intact. 539

The second folk-tale was always known as the story of Brass-Rod, the translation of the name of the elder sister.

The story of Brass-Rod

A certain chief had two daughters. The name of the older one was Ntonga-ye-Tusi, and the younger one was Mbikazi. Ntonga-ye-Tusi, because she was the daughter of a chief, wanted to go and seek in marriage a chief who had a country of his own. So she set out on her travels, leaving her younger sister at home. When she met crippled people on the road, she was polite to all of them, and helped them and made them comfortable.

When she arrived at a certain place she went to the men of the village and they asked her, 'What have you come here for?' She replied, 'I want to seek a chief in marriage.' The man said, 'Well, our chief is a snake, but don't be afraid. When he visits you in the hut he will come with a whistling wind.'

They made her enter a hut and she stayed there quietly saying nothing, while they prepared for the wedding. Suddenly she heard the wind and knew it was the coming of the chief. The chief asked the elders of the village 'Whose wedding are you preparing for?' They said, 'It is for your wedding O Chief and yonder is your bride.' Ntonga-ye-Tusi stayed silent in her hut. She 'sewed up her heart' and was brave. Suddenly the snake-chief entered the hut and coiled round her body and put his head on her heart, saying to himself, 'Let me listen. Perhaps she is afraid.' But she was not afraid.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 So they took each other in marriage. The people told her, 'Now then, give him watery gruel for his food and put it for him in the fire hole.' When the gruel was poured out there, he sucked it up because he had no teeth.

Some time after this Ntonga-ye-Tusi rose up to go and see the people at her home. When she got there her younger sister saw her fine clothes and was jealous of her. She said to herself, 'I too am going to the place where my big sister went to get married.'

So Mbikazi rose up and went on her travels. But she treated badly all the crippled people she met, and did not pity those who were carrying heavy loads, and used insulting language to many. When she arrived at the village of the chief who was a snake, the people received her politely and made her go into a hut for the wedding. They told her, as they had told her sister, that she should 'sew up her panic' and not be afraid because the chief was a big snake who came with a wind. When the chief came Mbikazi did not receive him quietly as her sister had done. She ran to and fro in the hut and cried out 'Alas! Alas! What have I found?' Then she trod on the tail of the snake-chief and he was angry and said, 'In what manner have you come? Have you come with insults to call me names and to tread on me?' He caught her and beat her so hard that the village elders begged him to spare her. So he left her in the hut.

When Mbikazi cooked gruel for the chief, she was careless and left a lump in it. The chief sucked his gruel but the lump stuck in his throat and choked him. He wriggled and fainted. The girl ran away, but the people of the village gathered round him, lamenting. Then the small lump came out and the chief recovered, and said, 'Where has she gone?'

He went after her until he reached her home and there he coiled up near the well. When the women went to draw water, they threw down their pots and ran away, and reported that there was a wild beast at the well. Ntonga-ye-Tusi wondered if it could be her husband, so she went to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the well and sat near her husband, and they touched hands and saluted each other. 539

At first the village people ridiculed Ntonga-ye-Tusi because she had played such a trick on them and had gone off and married a wild beast. But she paid no attention and took her husband into her hut.

Then the village people said to her, 'We want to make your husband all right, so that he may stand upright. Don't be afraid and don't weep'—for she was already weeping, fearing that they might harm her husband.

They made the chief go into another hut and they shut the door and set fire to the hut and burned it. His bones burst asunder, and they picked them up and put them in a pit with a gourd full of oil and some iron rattles. Then they sat beside the pit. Suddenly they heard the rattles ringing far down inside and they hurried to take off the stone covering the pit. They saw coming out of the pit a good-looking man of a very handsome red appearance, wearing a head-ring.[1] They acclaimed him and said, 'Here indeed is our son-in-law.' This chief was courteous and well clad. He became the husband of Ntonga-ye-Tusi, later he married Mbikazi also.

This story had many allusions to Ngoni culture past and present. The emphasis on 'red colour' here, as in the story of Heva, recalled the Ngoni belief that they were originally a red, not a black, people. In old days, chiefs' daughters sometimes chose their own husbands, so Brass-Rod and her sister were following an old custom. When the snake-chief, after his transformation, married the younger sister, it was as a subsidiary wife, called by the special title of *nhlanzi*. Such a marriage to a sister of the first wife was regarded as a compliment to the parents of the girl and a recognition of of their careful training of the first wife.

[1] The head-ring was the distinguising mark of the warrior who had served in the army and was allowed to marry.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 867 The moral, which was always repeated at the end as part of the story, was that children were warned not to show unkindness to people but to treat them well so that people would bless them. They were reminded that the older sister showed the qualities of pity, courage and obedience, while the younger sister did not hesitate to display disgust and fear and carelessness. It was the older sister who had her ultimate reward as leading wife of a handsome chief, while the younger sister, as a subsidiary wife, had to take second place.

These two folk-tales were popular among the children, even though they were so different from the animal folk-tales, full of humour and absurdities. The children used to shiver with excitement over the Brass-Rod story, especially the little girls, and the boys sucked in their breath when the wind blew and snapped their fingers for the rattling in the pit. Because the stories were serious and had a didactic purpose, Ngoni fathers approved of them, and encouraged the grandmothers to tell them often in order that the children might remember the moral.

Learning how to behave

203 957 Ngoni villages, like the whole Ngoni kingdom, had an efficient system of communication between individuals and groups, but whereas the kingdom had a network of official [202] messengers continually moving between the capital and the outlying sections, the village 'intercom' depended on the children. At any time of day, from first light till after dark, children were moving about the village from one hut to another, from a hut to the kraal gate, taking messages, summoning people, carrying food, reporting arrivals. The messages and summons were all at the bidding of the adults. 576 When a child was called to take a message, he had to respond 957 immediately wherever he was, and run to hear what he was 867 wanted for. Someone calling a child's name, followed by a 202 long drawn out 'Yo—o—o', punctuated all the hours of daylight in a village. When a child was told to call someone

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

older, on reaching them he had to bend one knee, or sit down, and say in a low but clear voice: 'They are calling you.' If a child was sent to call another child to his father because he had a scolding to administer, the bad child had to listen with head bent down, not saying a word or making a sound until the father had finished all he had to say, whether the accusation was just or not. If the child forgot himself and answered back or made excuses, the onlookers would beat the child for being rude to his father. If when taking a message a child had to pass a line or a group of people, he had always to go in front of them, never behind, bending forward from the waist and murmuring as he went by, 'I am before your eyes.' If a child had to give an adult a food basket or any other object, he had to offer it with both hands and bend slightly over it; and when he received it back he always did so with both hands outstretched and bent head.

857 576 867 202

Acting as messengers constantly, and no child was immune from being called if he or she was in the village, impressed on children from their early years the chief behavioural skills of language and deportment. Taking a message was always a formal occasion, and standards of behaviour in language, posture and gesture were rigidly enforced. We shall see in later chapters how very small children were first taught to thank people for gifts or in response to a greeting, and later to greet people politely themselves. The correct terms in which to address or to refer to relatives formed another stage in learning language skills, and later on came reminders about the use of pronouns and the use of the second person singular and plural of verbs, the first to equals only, the second to all adults, with the third person plural for chiefs and 'great ones'. About the age of five or six a child was told: 'When your mother speaks to a stranger she says "Please (you) sit here". You should speak like this to all people you must honour. Only rude people speak that other way—people who do not know how to thank and how to honour, not like the Ngoni who know these things.'

[191]

867 Correction of bad behaviour, even if thoughtless or careless, was just as often carried out by older children as by
[123] adults. I used to hold a 'children's hour' now and then round the fire in my compound, or a honey party if I had been given some wild honey. These occasions were open to all and were enthusiastically organized by the older children of leading Ngoni families. They pushed the children into some sort of order, whether sitting or standing, or marching round the honey-pot to stick one finger in and lick it as they passed. When we were sitting round the fire there was always due regard for family ranking, the places immediately on my right and left being the places of honour. Children of non-Ngoni families were sharply rebuked if they failed to respond to my greeting or say farewell, and shyness was never admitted as an excuse. Scathing remarks were dealt out to any who did not say the correct formal thanks for the honey. 'You, fellow-villager, you are with the Ngoni now. Say "thank you" to the lady or she will think you are a wild animal from the bush, unable to speak.' Bad behaviour was not only corrected
867 by adults with beating and rebukes. Sometimes the more
538 indirect form of a proverb was used, especially to correct unkindness, lack of generosity, boasting or bragging. When someone said with biting emphasis: 'Strength breaks the handle,' it was enough to deflate a young (or an old) braggart. When children plagued their elders to give them something, they rounded on the children with: 'Give! Give! that is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.' This was invariably effective with Ngoni children who hung their heads in shame at the very idea of being thought the child of a captive. Proverbs, except ones like those quoted which were very often used, were generally enigmatic, and the meaning was hidden rather than obvious. In a mixed gathering of children and adults, a proverb might suddenly be dropped like a stone into a pond. The conversation rippled away into silence, and the boy or girl who had refused to share some peanuts or had been boasting began to wonder

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to himself: 'Can that be for me? No? Yes? It *is* me. I am 867
ashamed.' No one said anything but the shamed one took 538
the first chance of slipping away to avoid further public notice. The use of proverbs in this way were an effective way of making a child learn for himself and apply the lesson; and with children, as with adults, the use of proverbs was a way of 'saving face' when a direct rebuke in the presence of others would have caused overwhelming shame.

Ngoni ideas about nature and nurture

This fixed code of social behaviour between persons was in- 867
stilled by Ngoni adults into their children from their early 858
years. By the time they had their second teeth, a significant stage to the Ngoni, they were expected to conduct themselves towards other people according to this code. Their behaviour, in public at any rate, should be predictable, if those responsible for the teaching of 'respect' had carried out their task conscientiously. But, as the Ngoni themselves 828
recognized, it was one thing to have a system of training 867
with a desired goal in view. It was another thing to see how each individual child responded to the training, and either conformed to the code or resisted it. The Ngoni thought that the clue to conformity or resistance lay in the individual's character, and they talked a great deal about the character of their children. Such conversations generally arose when 857
adults were watching a group of boys and girls carrying out a socially required or self-appointed task. They might be bringing back the cattle in the evening, practising for the *ngoma* dance, grinding bulrush millet for snacks for the little children, asking each other riddles or telling a story. Some of the tasks called for intelligence, some for physical strength, some for initiative or organizing ability, some for eloquence.

Character, so the Ngoni thought, came from two sources, 828
inborn qualities and acquired qualities. The first they called 827
mabadidwe, literally those things which an individual was born with. These included physical resemblances to their

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

828 parents, such as colour of skin, shape of face and features,
827 posture and carriage, speaking voice; and the less tangible qualities such as control of temper, power to command others, eloquence in speech, as well as anti-social characteristics such as cruelty, rages, meanness, jealousy. Both kinds of inborn qualities, physical and moral, could come from either parent. In the case of the average child, who was not outstanding in any way, few comments if any were made on his heredity. But if a child showed outstanding ability or powers of leadership, or was on the contrary always quarrelling or showing off or sulking, they looked for an explanation of such qualities in his parentage.

Yet heredity was not in Ngoni thinking the only explana-
828 tion for a child's character. Nor did they believe that it al-
867 ways followed that a cruel father had vicious sons, nor a mother who was tactful and pacific, daughters showing the same traits. They thought character, though partly inherited, was modified by and moulded by acquired qualities due to training. In the case of bad inherited qualities they could be, it was hoped, corrected by persistent training. When desirable qualities were shown by either or both parents it was always hoped that the child would also show them, and that good upbringing would ensure their development. They were always puzzled when sons of outstanding men and daughters of distinguished women turned out badly.

The acquired qualities were known as *makhalidzw*, the root of which was *kakhala*. This was a word used in a great many contexts with different meanings in each. In the context of child training it was used to mean to behave, with the added implication that it was what a person was like, due to his behaviour. *Makhalidzw* was used therefore, in the sense of conduct, implying behaviour in all relationships and including what had been acquired through response to training.

As we shall see later, Ngoni elders were afraid to leave a child, especially a girl after the age of seven or so, in her

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

mother's household if the mother showed obvious signs of being a 'bad character'. They might take the child away and put her with some relative of acknowledged 'good character', in the hope of offsetting the effects of heredity by careful training. 828 867

In later childhood and especially on the threshold of adulthood, as we shall see in Chapters VI and VII, boys and girls were expected to learn and practise traditional Ngoni skills and to be conversant with traditional Ngoni knowledge. Skills and knowledge, or rather the ability to use them, might be inherited from a parent, but they were generally regarded as acquired qualities. In any case, they needed careful training and direction in order that they might be fully developed. 868 [828] [827]

Ngoni cultural values

After the Scottish Mission had been in North Nyasaland for some time, and the Bible and other Christan literature had been translated into the vernacular, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* became one of the most popular and widely read books in Ngoniland, both by older children and by adults. The reason was that its imagery portrayed so many ideas and situations which the Ngoni recognized as being relevant for them in the new world to which they had to adapt themselves. It became for Ngoni Christians, and for many others too since it was told far more often than it was read, a new kind of folk-tale, and was told as such to children in school and in the villages. The themes of striving towards a goal, and fighting lions and giants on the way, and listening to good advice as well as hearing bad—these and other themes were recognized as in the Ngoni tradition although in such a different setting. 177 538

In the final chapter of this book we shall talk about personality and character among the Ngoni, looking at the ideas of basic personality as set out by Linton and others, and trying to see how training at different stages of childhood had been converging towards the ideal personality of the Ngoni 128

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

128 man and woman. It will give us an opportunity of looking more closely at the values inherent in Ngoni culture and implicit in all the training of their children. I propose here only to put down a brief list of these values, in order that they may be kept in mind during the detailed narrative of the upbringing of children in the following chapters. There
181 were three main group values which Ngoni families and village and national groups had always before them: keeping together as a people; dominating but with paternal benevolence those subject to their rule; and mutual aid and trust between the individuals in the Ngoni groups. Thus there was a strong in-group feeling of interdependence contrasted with a feeling towards the out-group of kindly but firm authority.

In the realm of personal behaviour to others, respect and obedience were always expected towards elders and superiors. Self-control, involving a high degree of restraint, was expected towards superiors, equals and inferiors. Generosity was expected of everyone towards his equals and inferiors.

A group of three qualities which showed Ngoni values were always being quoted as the distinguishing marks of 'true Ngoni' men and women: physical strength with which physical courage was closely associated; persistence and thoroughness in any task undertaken or assigned; and wisdom which was sharply contrasted with being clever, and which included knowledge, good judgement, ability to control people and keep the peace, and skill in using speech.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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8. A well-filled grain store

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[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

III

'A New Stranger has come'

In these words the father's mother announced from the door of the hut that a child had been born. From inside the hut the women assisting the mother at the time of delivery had given a single cry if it was a boy and two cries for a girl. If the birth had been delayed till late afternoon towards sunset, the women in the hut said to the mother, if it was a boy: 'See the baby has been awaiting the return of the cattle, because it is he who will tend the cattle.' 944 851

The new baby was at first regarded as a stranger, born by a woman who had herself come to the village as a stranger when she married. In later years, when speaking of his parents, the child would say: 'X is my father, and I am of the womb of A, and G and H they are my brother and my sister of one womb.' This particularization of a full brother and sister was used to correct the extended use of the kinship terms, and also to convey the idea that having been born from the womb of one woman gave children a special relationship important in Ngoni thinking. 851 593 [591] [601]

Preparation for birth

When an Ngoni wife was aware that she was pregnant she did not say anything to her husband, and indeed endeavoured to conceal her condition from him as long as possible, continuing the normal sleeping arrangements and intercourse. Ngoni women liked to assert their authority and ascendancy on these occasions, and therefore excluded the men from knowledge of the coming event and from all preparations for it. The senior women used to say, 'Men are 943 595 562

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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10. Young musicians

[facing page 49]

843 little children. They are not able to hear those things which
593 belong to pregnancy.' The men on their part accepted the
562 role of being ignorant of what was coming, though they were generally aware of it. It was an elaborate piece of role-playing, standardized by custom, emphasizing the separation of the men's and women's worlds in Ngoni life, and giving control and authority into the experienced hands of the senior women.

The Ngoni culture pattern forbade the wife to tell her
843 mother-in-law herself about her condition. She had, as so
606 often in the Ngoni pattern, to approach first a friend who
572 was her confidante, who might be another young wife or a helper in the household. This friend had to tell her mother-in-law, the future paternal grandmother of the baby, who was destined to play a big part in the child's upbringing.

During the months of pregnancy a Ngoni woman carried on with her normal work in the household, including cooking for her husband. If she feared a miscarriage, and suffered from what was called 'a shaking inside', she stayed quietly in the hut, and, saying that she had a headache, asked her husband to call her friend. Then the friend told the mother-in-law who sent for a 'doctor' to bring medicines 'to make the inside not shake'. A young Ngoni woman did not expect to have miscarriages, and feared that her husband's relatives
843 would blame her home for not giving her enough food be-
152 fore marriage to make her strong and healthy in child-bearing.

The fear of invidious comparisons with her own home and upbringing also operated when the wife felt herself near to labour. She would keep on working up to the last minute, for if she told her friend that her time was come, and the friend summoned the senior women, they came to examine her. Should they find on examination that she was not about to deliver, they looked at her and said, 'What are you afraid of? Did you call us for fear?' The young wife was ashamed of being thought fearful, both for her own reputation and

because it was implied that her family had not given her 843 152
good instruction and advice before marriage.

The birth of the child

When the senior women were satisfied that labour was about 844
to begin, they took charge of all the preparations. They first
sent out of the hut all the things belonging to the husband,
his clothes, axes, spears, shields, and all the good mats, pots [422]
and baskets. Only old mats and clothes and pots were used
during labour, and the hut was henceforth unclean and [846]
forbidden to the husband and to all males. The mother-in-law directed operations, with the help of her co-wives, the wives of her husband's brothers, widowed sisters of her husband, and some of the wives of the younger generation. The women who took an active part in the actual delivery were the older ones, but several younger women came to assist, or look on, and to encourage the young wife.

She was made to sit on a mat leaning back against the knees of another woman, and the experienced 'midwives' were in front to receive the child in their hands. She was told to bear down and sometimes given a bark rope tied to the rafters to pull on. Though she might be in great pain, she was not expected to cry out or even to groan. The older women talked to her encouragingly, and wiped her face, or gave her a little water to drink. After the birth, the woman knelt forward leaning on her hands until the placenta was born. It was buried in a hole, in the floor at the back of the hut on the women's side.

The baby was washed by a senior woman and oiled with castor oil. The cord was tied with thread and the baby was
given very thin gruel made of finger millet fried and ground. [853]
This was intended to act as a purgative to get rid of the mucus in the stomach. After this had been ejected, a tiny bit of the sour milk curds was put in the baby's mouth.

The mother was washed and covered with a cloth and left to rest, while the women folded up the delivery mat

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and massaged them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

845 The other ethnic groups surrounding the Ngoni in Nyasa-[184] land considered it disastrous if a child was born face down or with the buttocks first, and twins were dreaded as ill omens. The Ngoni shared none of these beliefs and were particularly considerate for the mother of twins, often killing [262] a beast to give the mother meat and broth to increase her [853] flow of milk. The only notice the Ngoni took of the method of presentation at birth was that they gave a child a name [553] indicative of such a birth. They gave special names for the first and second twin born. If one twin died it was buried under the veranda of the hut and a smooth stone was placed [766] on top. This stone was used for sitting on, and the surviving twin was held on it when being washed.

Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and 783 everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

over the age of ten had to avoid the hut and its inhabitants altogether. The husband slept either in the boys' dormitory or with the husband of the woman who was looking after his wife. 846 783

This ritual uncleanness extended to any food once it was carried into the hut. Ngoni women used to demonstrate their love for their husbands by stopping cooked food being carried into the hut, and sending it instead by the child who brought it to her husband where the men were gathered at the gate of the kraal. [593]

Ritual cleansing of a hut and its occupants took place in stages. At the time of 'bringing out the child', which I shall shortly describe, the hut itself was made clean again. It was thoroughly swept, and the floor and veranda were smeared with cowdung. Cowdung was used habitually for smearing on floors, prior to polishing them with a smooth stone. But fresh wet cowdung rubbed on the hands was also used for ritual cleansing after some 'dangerous' act such as touching sacred objects or administering the royal medicines. In the case of its use after childbirth it was undoubtedly used in the ritual sense, for the operation was called 'making the hut safe for the husband to sleep in'. The household goods were then put back in their places, anyone could go into the hut, and the husband returned to sleep there, though on a separate mat on his, the right-hand side, of the fireplace. If the child was a first baby, the husband's return to sleep in the hut was delayed, since the senior women stayed on to instruct the young mother how to take care of the baby at night, and especially how to be careful not to smother it as it lay beside her on her mat. [237]

'Coming out of the hut'

The falling of the cord was the signal that the baby was ready to 'come out of the hut' and be presented to the village. Ngoni women used to hasten the falling of the cord by burning a maize cob, and squeezing into the ashes the juice of the 846 851 278

851 small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was
[846] applied with a feather to the baby's navel.
[278] When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and
[302] the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then
[515] they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a
[431] basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for
[177] pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come
[554] back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grand-
[603] mother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to
[431] the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's
864 lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

societies maintaining officially a conspiracy of silence, the stories were only standard replies by adults to children, and most adults admitted that children pursued these inquiries among themselves and found out what they wanted to know from each other. 864

Naming the child

After coming out of the hut and being presented to its male kin and to the elders of the village as 'the new stranger', the baby was given a name. The choice of a name was usually left to the baby's paternal grandfather. He sometimes gave it his name or his father's name, if a boy, or if a girl, his mother's name or his father's sister's name. There was no ceremony attached to naming. After the matter had been talked over by the men at the kraal gate, the grandfather came to the hut, and called the mother and child out and said, 'His name is so and so.' The personal name was seldom used in ordinary social intercourse, but in spite of this every child was given a personal name, and sometimes had added to it a descriptive name indicating that it had been born face downwards, or born a twin, or born too soon after the previous baby. 553 [551] [845]

At this time of naming, the father, or more generally the paternal grandfather, prepared a 'carrying skin' for the mother to carry the baby in. It really belonged to the baby rather than to the mother, for it was used by the nurse girl to carry the baby, and she had the child in her charge most of the day. The skin was that of a goat or small calf from the herd owned by the house to which the baby's father belonged. The skin was cleaned and scraped and made soft by rubbing in fat, and handed over to the mother with some of the meat for broth, and the rest of the meat was eaten by the males of that house. The gift in time became a cloth and not a skin, as skins for wearing or household use went out of fashion. The cloth when presented however was still called a 'carrying skin' and a goat or a calf from the herd of the 854 [281] [922] [262]

3:Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

854 house was still killed and eaten. The cloth came out of the
[432] store of cloth bought when cattle were sold, and kept in the hut of the senior woman of the father's house.

Visit to the mother's home

593 If, as was always the case in earlier days, the mother of the
574 new baby had come from a distant village, she did not see her own mother or her relatives, and they did not see the child until it was several weeks old, and considered by the senior women strong enough to undertake a journey. Then a visit involving much ceremony took place, for the wife's
[606] mother-in-law headed the party. The stiff and formal relations between the two sets of 'in-laws' had been eased slightly through the series of feasts and exchanges which preceded and followed the marriage ceremony. Face-to-face
[571] intercourse was, however, still very formal between the two families, and this first visit with the grandchild was in one sense an act of condescension on the part of the husband's family, since the child belonged to them. It was also a human and natural recognition of the eagerness of the young mother to see her own mother and display her child. Word was sent in advance by a messenger from the husband's village to announce the visit, so that the wife's family could make due preparation.

The main object of this visit was, in the Ngoni phrase, 'to show the child at its mother's home'. The young mother and
[606] baby, with her mother-in-law in the place of honour, sat outside the big house of the girl's father's family. Her father
[431] and his male relatives came to salute the child and to give it
[603] presents of beads, and in modern times small gifts of money as well. If the girl's father owned many cattle, he killed a beast, and they feasted that night, and the visitors carried home meat with them as well as the presents to the child. It was all very formal and correct, except when the young mother escaped for a short time to the circle of her sisters and girlhood friends, and exchanged confidences with them.

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

After this formal visit had taken place, the young mother was free to visit her former home more often, and her relatives could come and see her and her baby in her husband's village. 593 574

Taking care of the baby

There were two special features of infant care among the Ngoni which were not found among the neighbouring peoples. One was the assignment of a nurse girl from outside the circle of relatives to care for a new infant. The nurse girl was chosen by the grandmother from among her dependent household staff, and was allotted to one particular baby. The girl, who was usually in her early teens and unmarried, was supervised by an older woman, also of the grandmother's household. This woman watched over the personal behaviour of several nurse girls, as well as seeing that they did their work properly as nurses. 854 357 [592] [883]

The nurse girl took charge of the baby in the early morning and kept it with her all day until nightfall, bringing it back to the mother at more or less regular intervals for suckling. The mother played with the baby if she felt like it, and sent for the nurse girl to bring it to her if strangers came and she wanted to display the child. The Ngoni commended this practice by saying that their women kept clean because they did not carry babies about all day on their backs. They admitted at the same time that many infants grew greatly attached to their nurse girls, to the extent of being happier with them than with their mother. The nurse girls did not take little babies far afield. They stayed around within the fences of the household or near at hand, helping with domestic chores, chatting to other nurse girls, helping to prepare meals, and eating with the baby's mother and anyone else who formed part of the household eating unit. At night, after she had given the baby to its mother, she went off to sleep in the hut of the older woman who was in charge of her and other nurse girls.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

854 533 When the baby cried, and it was not time to take him to his mother for suckling, the nurse girl jogged him up and down on her back, and walked to and fro with him endlessly, crooning little lullabies to soothe the baby. Some of these lullabies were traditional, handed down from the older women, others were improvised by a nurse girl or copied by her from another.

539 Two traditional lullabies, well know in the Northern Ngoni kingdom, were as follows:

Hush my child;
Never mind, never mind,
Hush my child;
Never mind, never mind,
There is a busybody gossiping
There is a busybody gossiping
Ho! We reap the maize

Kholwane, Kholwane, son of Makhwaphuna,
What are you carrying?
I am carrying the food of the baby
For someone may go about defiling it
In the dark paths.

The following is an example of an impromptu lullaby which I heard from a nurse girl in the Northern kingdom:

Bu, bu, bu, bu,
The baby cries for its nurse and not for its mother.
Bu, bu, bu, bu,
She is coming to make gruel for the baby.
There she comes,
Bu, bu, bu, bu;
The baby sleeps.

853 The reference to the baby's food in two of the lullabies belongs to the second special feature of Ngoni infant care, the provision of baby food to supplement the mother's milk, and the arrangements for artificial feeding if the mother had

not enough milk, or was unable to suckle the child, or was 853
ill or died. If a woman died in or just after childbirth, and the child survived, it might be suckled by the paternal grandmother or by another co-wife of the dead woman, but as a rule they resorted to artificial feeding, and often used it to supplement breast feeding. The father of the child took [237] the food pipe of a beast recently killed, washed it and dried [415] it, and handed it over to the women to rub with fat until it was soft and pliable. One end was then tied tightly to close it, it was filled with warm cow's milk, and the other end was tied loosely so that the child could just suck through it. It was kept well washed with warm water, and many infants were brought up successfully with this 'bottle'.

The babies were also given very thin gruel made of millet or maize flour, and curds and whey beaten up together. This [415] was put in a very small gourd, decorated with drawings, with [531] a spout to pour from, and a cover to keep flies and dust out.

Weaning

Studies of weaning in different cultures lay emphasis on the 114
traumatic shock of separation from the mother, not only in *terms of being refused the breast, but also of being removed* to sleep elsewhere than beside the mother, and perhaps being sent away to stay with another relative.

In the Ngoni pattern of nurse-girl care and of supplement- 862
ary feeding, especially after the first few months, it might seem that the actual weaning was less of a shock than in cultural situations where the baby was with the mother all day, carried about by her and never refused the breast if it cried. Ngoni women, however, and men too, all asserted that weaning was a shock to the child, even if it happened at two years old.

The reasons for this shock were partly that it was done all in one morning at one fell swoop, and partly that the child was sent away from the mother at night. The same nurse girl looked after it all day, but now took it more often to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

862 other compounds, so that the child should not 'see the mother's breasts and cry for them'. Nevertheless they did cry, some of them day and night at first, and many for weeks at night when the indulgent warmth of the mother on her mat was exchanged for the kindly but somewhat stern care [603] of the grandmother or another older woman. Paternal grandmothers did not believe in spoiling Ngoni children, and the child was often left to cry itself to sleep.

The Ngoni used to say: 'On the day when a child was 593 weaned, all the village knew. It was not a secret. People 862 spoke about it to show that the parents were now free to 606 have another child.' The mother-in-law and the other senior women of the father's family took the initiative as well as assuming responsibility for deciding the moment for weaning. Those same senior women who had assisted at the birth of the child arrived one morning on the veranda of the mother's hut and announced, 'We want to wean this child.' Apparently the mother was sometimes capable of refusing to co-operate. She did not want to give up suckling the child, so she picked it up and ran out of the hut past the women, and hid herself and her child with some of her friends. The senior women did not stoop to argument. They formed into a procession and filed out of the compound saying, 'Well, she has refused. She can now find the proper time herself, with her husband.' The young mother, who had yielded to a sudden impulse, found herself on reflection in great difficulty. It was considered a 'shame' for her to do the weaning herself, and her husband was jeered at by his brothers and friends for having a rebellious wife who did not pay attention to the claims of his family on the child.

So when the senior women announced that they had come 862 to do the weaning, most young mothers meekly submitted, whatever their personal sentiments were. The senior women pounded chillies and put the hot paste on the mother's breasts, and held the child near enough to smell the chillies, even to touch them. They said to the child, 'Leave it alone.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

This breast is now bad'—and they spat downwards as they did when something was really bad. While the child was howling with fright and frustration, the mother's breasts were covered with a cloth. The child was then picked up and carried away in its carrying cloth to the compound of its paternal grandmother, or a widowed paternal aunt, attended by its own nurse girl. If it had a feeding bottle, or one could be made for it, it was given cow's milk, as well as gruel, and curds and whey. The Ngoni women believed that if a weaned child was given cow's milk it would forget its mother's breasts quickly, but they admitted that it was a conventional belief and not always justified.

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[853]

Social relationships involved in the birth of a child: Wife to husband's family

Throughout the period of pregnancy during childbirth and after, up to and including weaning the mother of a new baby was made to feel her position as a stranger among her husband's relatives. Before marriage it had been impressed on her by her own family that, at any rate in the early years of marriage, she must be obedient and humble, not only to establish her own present and future position among her husband's people, but for the sake of the reputation of her own family from whom she was now separated. The key relationship in this cycle of pregnancy, birth, weaning and new conception was that between her and her mother-in-law. If she showed respect by being humble and obedient, she could establish a behaviour pattern which in the end rewarded her by giving her self-respect because she was doing her duty in accepting the authority of her husband's mother. It was no easy path for a high-spirited girl who had had freedom and indulgence in her own home. She knew however that these first few years of marriage and child-bearing were the critical ones. She could see for herself how women who had been married longer had more freedom from the authority of their mothers-in-law because they had learned how to

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

606 handle them, as well as how to conform to required behaviour. So she put up with present restrictions for the sake of future peace and harmony. Her lot was to live there with her husband's people, and the birth of the child was a strong link in the chain which bound her to them. Meantime she [572] found some relief in her friends among the other young wives, and particularly with the one in whom she placed her confidence, and who acted as her go-between with her mother-in-law.

Wife to husband

593 Throughout the intricate and often vexing relations with her mother-in-law and other senior women, the husband-wife relationship remained for the young mother a steadying and constant factor. She had been attracted to him in courtship; [58] she had had the chance of accepting or refusing him when the marriage proposals were made; the cattle had been handed over to her father to seal the marriage contract. For all these and other reasons she held on to her love for her husband and her relationship with him, whatever overbearing behaviour might be shown her by his relatives. Hence she took care of his possessions in the hut they shared, helping the senior women to send them out of the hut just before the confinement. She redirected food towards him when it was sent to her during her confinement, gladly going short herself in order to prove her devotion. She was glad that after coming out of the hut, having a nurse girl meant that she could keep her body and her clothes clean and sweet-smelling and therefore pleasing to him. She was happy when the ritual cleansing of the hut and of herself made it possible for her to cook for her husband again and endear him to her by that means. When weaning the child caused her pain and frustration, there was at the same time a deep satisfaction that full intercourse was now officially permitted [834] between her and her husband, and that they were free to have another child.

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

Father's family to child

Ngoni children were indeed the children of their fathers 596
from the time of their birth onwards. They were born into a 'house', of which their father was a member. If their father divorced his wife or she ran away, the children remained in [586]
the custody of his family. We have seen how the paternal grandmother took charge of all the preparations for birth, and of the actual birth itself. It was her proud duty to present the child to the public after the 'coming out of the hut' ceremony, when she took it to the kraal gate where the assembled elders were sitting. The other senior women of Ngoni families held her responsible for advising on the spac- 842
ing between the birth of this new baby and the next, so that 596
the interests of this child should be safeguarded. If it was suspected that the young wife was pregnant again before the grandmother had planned to wean the child, the other senior women said to her: 'Look now. You are foolish. The child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to him.' That touched her on a very vital point, and she in turn accused the young parents of harming the present child. Having rebuked them, generally in public, she followed it up with a box on the ear for her son and his wife. When this [858]
next child was born it was called 'the destroyer', because by following on too quickly, it had injured the prospects of the first child.

Baby to nurse girl and women helpers

The baby, as we have seen, spent a great deal of its time in 854
the company of its nurse girl, and after weaning she was its constant companion. She and the older woman helpers who supervised her formed a counterbalancing influence to the paternal grandmother, though outwardly they obeyed her instructions about the care of the child. The nurse girl especially was inclined to be indulgent; she was young and playful; the baby was her only responsibility. She was

854 anxious to protect her charge in every way, and with the connivance of the women helpers she made little charms of bits of roots to hang around the baby's neck to make him [751] grow quickly and to ward off sorcery and witchcraft. She [754] threaded pumpkin seeds and tied them around his neck to [856] make his teeth come quickly if they were late in appearing. These charms were generally those used by the local peoples, and Ngoni fathers were contemptuous about their use and efficacy. 'These women are spoiling our children,' they said, and then reassured themselves by remembering that a boy would be free from such women's spoiling once he went into the boys' dormitory.

Variants on the Ngoni pattern

183 This traditional pattern of authority and behaviour in respect [565] of birth, infant care and weaning was essentially that of the true Ngoni, that relatively small aristocratic group who never forgot their superior social status and its foundation in their ancestry. This first stage in the socialization of a child, from 861 *birth to weaning, brought out clearly two fundamental* 596 features of Ngoni social organization. One was the role played by the senior women who had themselves in their childhood been brought up on strict Ngoni lines. The father of the new baby accepted the role played by his own mother in controlling, and if necessary coercing, his young wife. Though, as we shall see later, every Ngoni boy and young man had a period of virtually complete escape from feminine control, once a man married and his young wife was established within the social group of his mother's house, he acknowledged his mother's authority over her, and particularly over the birth and care of his child. The mother-son relationship of the young father to his own mother dominated the relationship of the young mother to her child. Young Ngoni fathers never questioned their allegiance to their own mothers, cherishing them as they grew older and supporting them in their exercise of authority. Much as he loved his

3: Read E[illegible] (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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11. Young musicians

(342)

[Facing page 64]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway. 596 861

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but which turned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers. 183 596 [184]

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it. 177 563 [845] [841]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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12. Chiefs' wives wearing leopard claws

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13. Chiefs' wives leading in the dance

[facing page 65]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

591 Changes in residence at and after marriage influenced the
184 composition of the group of relatives who assisted at births. In
844 the central kingdom daughters of leading men in the village often stayed in their father's village at marriage. Hence the father's sisters were often present at the birth and the wife's mother and her sisters might be living in the village. If the
[614] wife belonged to a higher ranking Ngoni clan than her husband, her relatives shared responsibility with those of the husband's family.

As may be imagined the struggle between mother-in-law
177 control and western medical practices at childbirth was a
844 protracted one. Even when there was a younger member of the husband's family trained as a nurse or midwife, she by
[759] no means had her way in organizing the conduct of the birth. She might introduce a few hygienic measures such as clean cloths instead of old rags, and sterilized thread for tying the cord. But unless the senior women were frightened, and they seldom were, by prolonged and difficult labour, the Ngoni families were averse to taking a young mother into hospital.
[606] The chief reason was the challenge to the authority of the mother-in-law, especially when the younger women who had some knowledge of western medical practices questioned the advice of the senior women.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

IV

Family Life for the Young Child

The women's world

It was the proud boast of the Ngoni aristocrats that their women did no 'work' in the old days. When they spoke thus they were equating 'work' with physical labour, sweeping and cleaning in the hut and compound, fetching wood and water, hoeing in the gardens, and the routine part of preparing and cooking food. The Ngoni women of the former large households had an army of 'helpers' to do all these tasks for them. Though the number of helpers dwindled as the larger households disappeared, the pattern of appropriation of tasks remained in the shrunken households, and hence the Ngoni women were always responsible for a high degree of household management. Larger households in the old days fed fifty to sixty people from their cooking-pots, and though when I lived among them the scale of their households was much smaller, some were still feeding twenty and more people for each meal, apart from the occasional meals served when kinsfolk and strangers came unexpectedly. 562 461 592

I never failed to be impressed with the quiet dignified competence with which Ngoni women managed their household affairs. They did it with an apparent effortlessness, which had its roots in long training and tradition, and in an awareness of responsibility that increased, but weighed less heavily, with age and experience. This competence was always apparent on occasions such as wedding feasts. There cereal food, meat, vegetable relishes were cooked in vast quantities and served out to the separate groups of guests. [262]

542 These skills of management, and of order and dignity in
461 serving, were not however only seen in large-scale operations.
592 The modern young Ngoni wife serving tea and 'scones' to her husband's guests sitting on his veranda showed the same qualities of careful preparation and considerate service as her grandmother had shown presiding over 500 guests at a wedding feast.

542 Household management in Ngoni homes included primarily managing the household staff, allotting their tasks to them, settling their quarrels, looking after them when sick, marrying off the young ones when the time came. In the all-important aspect of feeding a large household and its dependents, Ngoni women assumed responsibility for seeing that there were enough supplies of different kinds of food at hand, for regular consumption and for emergencies. They consulted at times with the 'official' who was in charge of their 'house' about stabilising supplies or organising women helpers to cultivate in the gardens. Most significant in the eyes of Ngoni and non-Ngoni alike was the task of Ngoni
[264] women of 'dividing the food' at every meal-time. It was a key concept in Ngoni culture that at all times when food, beer, or other kinds of goods were to be divided out, and enjoyed or used by a large number of people, the 'one who divided' was an important individual. He, or more often she, must be of 'good character', who assumed, or was given, the task because he or she knew how to do it, and no one questioned the justice or the competence with which the dividing was done. Again I was impressed by the almost nonchalant air with which Ngoni women ladled out food for a large number of individuals and groups. It looked
[461] so easy. It was obviously not a simple matter. The results were always accepted and welcomed, and I never heard any grumbles.

593 Central to the organisation of the household, and in one
592 sense the axis on which it revolved, was the care and attention the wife gave to her husband. Cooking, including the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling re- (183)
gretted him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 557
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 542
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 592
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 575
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 501
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- (546)
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 592
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 595
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing (406)
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly (541)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and
of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and
they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy
and therefore to be removed from them when the time came
for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with
him, they sometimes carried him about while the nurse girl
[242] did something else, they ground bulrush millet or roasted
ground-nuts to give him as snacks. They were particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the
right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[593] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their
singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and
his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and
his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other
hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he ad-
dressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
[559] measure of the authority which his father and his father's
brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers
came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but
he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other
wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and
grandmother's households. There were young children who
were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and
her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this
division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of
their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 557
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organized through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' became a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who had acquired chairs, among other modern household furniture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they continued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

574 [192] [771] [562] 572 [264] [521]

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accelerated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptisms of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher conducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

[771] [851] [782]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

It was the fathers who decided at what age a child should go to school, and having once enrolled the boy or girl and paid the fees, the fathers insisted on regular attendance. 593 [972]

All Ngoni fathers showed affection for their young children, some consistently and others when it occurred to them. They picked them up and carried them about, held their hand while they tried their first steps, listened to their attempts to speak correctly, held them in their arms when they sat on the veranda. In one village twin boys aged four were devoted to their father and he to them. When he walked about, he held a hand of each. When he sat on the veranda they were always beside him and he had an arm round each. When he was elsewhere, the twins wandered about the compound disconsolately, hand in hand, rejecting the advances of their nurse girls and uncertain what to do until he appeared again.

Ngoni fathers had to be consulted in cases of sickness when the grandmother's remedies had failed and specialist help was needed. Then the father and his brothers and their father decided whether to summon a diviner or a herbalist, and arranged for the throwing of lots or the search for 'medicines', and paid the agreed fee when the cure worked. 593 757

It was part of Ngoni tradition to keep the knowledge of death away from young children. The father was held responsible for seeing that his children were kept away from the hut where the corpse was awaiting burial, and from the funeral itself. When men and women of leading Ngoni families were buried at the edge of the kraal, and the fence enlarged so that the cattle stamped over the grave, the explanation given (though it was not the only reason) was that 'the young children should not know or fear death in this village'. 593 764 958

The physical surroundings of the small child

The two diagrams, overleaf, illustrate the layout of the hut and compound in typical Ngoni households. Some of these 942 951

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

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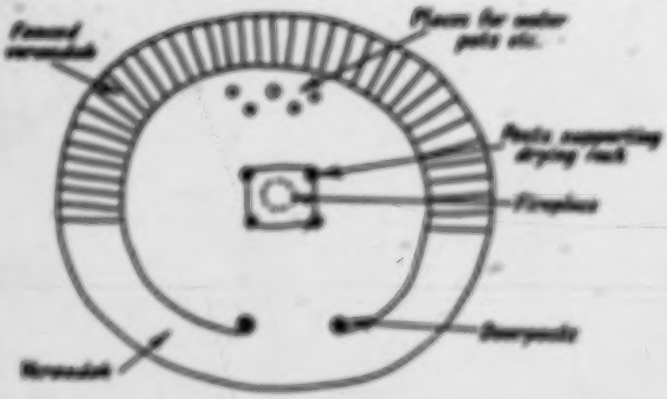

DIAGRAM OF HUT

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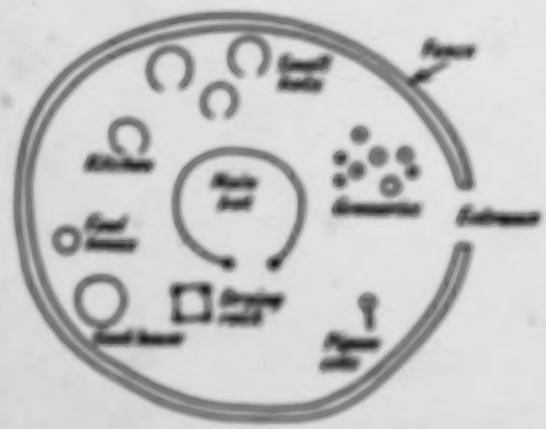

DIAGRAM OF HOUSEHOLD COMPOUND
[p. 74]

3: Read L-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some 342
repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage 351
for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several re- [128]
spects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance
of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish
between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of [171]
the household objects were indeed the same as those used by
other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration
about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept
in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural
significance about some of the features of Ngoni households
mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found elsewhere.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at
weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was
full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 342
'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right
hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with
interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical
roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and [324]
decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in [297]
four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two
main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling.
Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters
and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which [251]
gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this
platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for
the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots [154]
were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the
back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which
were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots hold- [415]
ing water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut
was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by
the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the
back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front 351
of the hut was a well-swept space, smoothed and polished in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut
and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been
announced, and from that vantage-point she could command
the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to
receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large
enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night
and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On
the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up
on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high
and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[558] do women would have four or five of them bulging with
maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for
ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three
small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked
against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not
be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from
one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were
moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch
children there. There were much smaller mortars for pound-
ing ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in
veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger
millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
416 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow win-
nowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as
large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre-ropes brought out into the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fascinate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens', and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work in the gardens was an expedition for young children which they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places forbidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven years old, because they found their fathers there and the hard boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

signs of irritation at female control, especially with this prohibition on going to the kraal gate. They escaped surveillance and ran off there now and then, only to be caught by one of the men, beaten and brought back to the compound with the remark: 'This child is not yet a herd boy. Keep him with you.'

If the village was near a roadway with traffic on it, or near a river, children were forbidden to go there without some older person with them. They were also warned not to go near fireplaces in case a burning log fell out, and to keep away from the woodpile where there might be snakes.

Training in habits

In these surroundings, diversified, orderly, and on the whole safe if forbidden places were avoided, young children's needs were attended to and they were gradually trained to look after themselves. For food, bathing and sleep, their primary physical needs, they had their older sisters, nurse girls, mothers, grandmothers and helpers all at hand to ensure that these needs were satisfied.

After the post-weaning months were over, and generally though not always after the next baby was born, a young child went back to eat with his mother in her compound and sleep in her hut, though a grandmother, if she had taken a special fancy to a child, might say she was going to keep him to eat and sleep with her. In his mother's compound twice a day the child watched her and her helpers preparing and cooking a meal. In due time he was called to the veranda where the food lay smoking, his hands were wiped, he was made to rinse out his mouth, and he sat down beside his mother or his nurse in a circle round the food basket. This contained the mash of cooked grain, usually maize, and beside it were the little pots of cooked 'relish', beans, peas, green vegetables, tomatoes, ground-nuts. At first someone pinched up a little lump of the mash, dipped it in a relish, and popped it into his mouth, telling him to shut his mouth and chew before he swallowed. Later he learned to do this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

himself, with his eyes rather anxiously on the elders, lest he should take too large a lump, or get the relish all over his hand and wrist instead of only on his finger-tips. He learned, however hungry he was, not to stuff himself, and not to eat noisily. If he smacked his lips and gulped audibly, someone in the circle might say: 'I hear the guns of the Tyandile people beaming.' They all stopped eating and looked at him, and he learned that a proverb could be a veiled rebuke, and he hung his head, ashamed.

Sometimes the smaller children had cow's milk or curds and whey or thin gruel given to them in a tiny gourd between the main meal-times, and through the day nurse girls and older sisters gave them little snacks if they thought of it or if the child whimpered because it was hungry. A favourite snack was ground bulrush millet, creamy and nutty to taste. Throughout this period spent in the women's world the child did not lack food either at or between meals. As he grew more mobile and independent, he went foraging in the compounds of his other mothers and his grandmothers, especially if his own mother had gone to her garden. They always welcomed him and gave him something to go on with.

After set meals the child was made to rinse his mouth, and his hands were cleaned by his nurse girl and his face and chest washed if he had covered himself with food fragments. His nurse girl found him a 'tooth-brush twig' and frayed it for him, and taught him to use it after meals as well as in the early morning.

Washing of small children was always done in the compound. While some children squirmed and yelled when washed, others liked it. They sat grinning on the veranda while their mother or nurse splashed water over them, rubbed soapy leaves on their hair, dried them with a cloth, and rubbed cow's fat on their skin. The Ngoni children in well-ordered household shone with cleanliness till they were about six years old. Then the boys dodged these female attentions, their skin became dry and scaly, and their hair fell

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of dust, and many of them began to suffer from sores, itch and sore eyes. The girls however, had already begun to like a clean and shining skin for the sake of being beautiful, and their ablutions were no longer under duress.

The smallest children urinated and defecated wherever they happened to be. From the age of three or four, however, they were taught to tell someone if they wanted to defecate, and taken outside the hut. Maize cobs or soft leaves or grass were used to clean the child, and then thrown on the fire. When the child began to look after himself, he was shown how to use the left hand only when cleaning himself, and told it was 'the hand of shame, only used for bad things'. From the age of four or five small girls and boys went with their mothers and the other women to the section of the surrounding bush reserved for the women's toilet. At about the same age boys and girls were taught to withdraw from the public gaze when urinating, and to conceal themselves behind a hut or in some other hiding-place. The Ngoni were extremely prudish about all physical acts connected with evacuating or sex, and began to demand correct behaviour from children at an early age.

If a child was constipated, or had diarrhoea, or was vomiting, or had a fever or stomach-ache, the nurse girl reported it to his mother who went to tell the child's paternal grandmother. For all the range of usual childish ailments the grandmother prescribed and carried out standard treatments, such as whey used as a purgative, or very thin gruel to check diarrhoea. The Ngoni women had a number of herbal remedies which they used for themselves and their children. They also used hot poultices, cupping, and forms of massage. Only when the known household remedies failed, did the grandmother tell the child's father and he, as we have seen, took the responsibility for calling in 'specialists'.

Sleep, the little child's third major need, was sometimes well ordered and sometimes erratic. It was not considered proper for children to sleep in the same hut as their parents

after the age of four or five, when they might become aware §67
that intercourse was taking place. From this age, when the
Ngoni said 'they will now begin to see things and to ask §64
questions', they went to sleep either with a widowed grand-
mother or senior helper.

During the 'dark half of the month' and in the rains, most 512
people went to bed soon after dark and little children got a §57
long sleep. When the moon was bright, and in dry weather, [132]
the whole village was astir, walking around, dancing, talk-
ing, visiting. Little children tagged round with their elder 513
sisters or nurse girls, and if they were sleepy were either pick-
ed up and carried, or put in the hut to sleep on their mat,
provided there was no fire burning into which they could
fall. During the day, especially in the hot weather, children
dropped off to sleep just where they were, on the veranda,
under the platform, or in some other shady spot.

It was just before bedtime, in the grandmother's hut, that
traditional folk-tales were told, round the last flickers of a [538]
wood fire. Sometimes a child dropped off to sleep before the
story was finished. Someone either took him on her lap, or
dumped him on his mat and covered him up.

This acquiring of habits, directed consciously by adults, §67
was designed to give the child increasingly a sense of being §58
part of a community which had certain standards of be-
haviour. There were, in this training, some prohibitions
which a child was expected to observe as soon as he could §64
walk and talk. The most stringent was on any form of sex
play between boys and girls. To avoid any likelihood of this,
little boys and girls were early encouraged to form separate
play groups. The elders kept an eye particularly on the boys,
and if they showed any inquisitiveness in their play about
the private parts of a girl playmate, they were beaten and
reproved and told: 'If you do this again, I shall tell your
father.'

Many little boys and girls up to the age of four or five ran §64
about naked, but in leading Ngoni families they wore a scrap 291

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of cloth hanging in front from a bead or grass waistband. They were all taught before that age, and most stringently after it, to sit correctly. For the little girls, this meant kneeling first and then sitting with the legs tucked on one side. They always smoothed down their scrap of cloth so that their genitals were covered. Little boys often squatted, sitting on their heels. Their correct position however, especially when eating food, was to sit with their legs crossed and the soles of their feet pressed against their thighs, and their cloth or skin apron arranged to cover their genitals.

Any rudeness in speech or action towards parents or elders was corrected at once, and the child was told: 'That is not the Ngoni way.' Studied courtesy included looking down when addressed by an elder, and as we saw in Chapter II, never walking behind a group of elders but passing in front of them, bending slightly forward and murmuring: 'I am before your eyes.'

Play places and playthings

In spite of what appeared like a somewhat restrictive régime, Ngoni children were merry and busy all their waking hours. Occasionally lack of health, or an awkward temperament, produced a child who sat around by himself, or glowered at other children, or was spiteful and vindictive. For the most part their nurse girls and older sisters paid them the attention they demanded, were always ready to provide distractions and amusements, and showed them how to use all that lay around them as playthings.

The places where they played depended on their age and mobility. The youngest children stayed round the hut and inside the fence. Occasionally the nurse girls and older sisters in the afternoons took them to a 'playground' on the outskirts of the village, where the older girls were accustomed to meet and practise dancing, or to thread beads and chatter. When the harvest was in, some of the older children about five and six years old, helped by the nurse girls, made 'play

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

houses' among the maize stalks, tying the stalks together to make conical shelters. There they played house, pretending to cook and pound. But the enthusiasm for these playhouses was short-lived, and on the whole the children and their nurse girls preferred to be in the village where they could see and hear what was going on. The older boys in this age-group seldom went to the playground, and pursued their games in the open spaces of the village. 857

The small girls had 'dolls' which they treated as little babies. Sometimes it was a maize cob tucked into a bit of cloth and carried on their backs. More realistic dolls were made of a bundle of reeds tied together with the hard round shell of a fruit fitted on top and painted with eyes, nose and mouth. Older girls made these dolls for the little ones, and showed them how to feed the doll from a tiny gourd and taught them lullabies to sing while they jogged the dolls on their back or nursed them on their lap. 524

Little boys had a wider range of toys, made for them by older brothers and quickly copied by the children themselves. They made windmills from maize sheaths which twirled on a stick as they ran. They had hoops of bamboo peelings, trundled with a notched stick, and a small round solid wooden wheel with a hole in it which they pushed with a long-handled crook. They had tops of wood and whipped them with lengths of bark rope. They were for ever collecting scraps of iron from wherever men were working. These they sharpened on stones, and used as knives, or bound them to a haft, as a little axe, with fragments of skin which they scrounged when a shield was being cut, or an ox flayed. The small boys were the tinkers of the village, collecting whatever scrap they thought they could use, and hiding it each in his own safe and secret place, and fighting savagely if anyone robbed a secret store. Many boys spent hours making clay figures, men, cattle, monkeys, dogs, and there were certain conventions which allowed little variety governing their style and shape. Sometimes they drew, or 'wrote' as they 857 857 532

§57 said, in the most more conventional figures of men and
592 animals which are reproduced here. Their ingenuity in the use of local materials was boundless, and led later to remarkably accurate scale models of lorries and aeroplanes made from pith, bamboo and thorns.

A man

A wild pig

A baboon

A dog

A cow

§57 Most of the games such as tops and hoops were seasonal. They appeared suddenly in the village, lasted for a few weeks and then ceased as abruptly as they had begun. A perennial amusement among Ngoni boys of five to seven was playing at law courts. They sat round in traditional style with a 'chief' and his elders facing the court, the plaintiffs and defendants presenting their case, and the counsellors conducting proceedings and cross-examining witnesses. In their high squeaky voices the little boys imitated their fathers whom they had seen in the courts, and they gave judgements, imposing heavy penalties, and keeping order in the court with ferocious severity. Another game which the boys of five to seven enjoyed was a form of tug-of-war, two gangs pulling on a bark rope, until one gave way, with shouting, whistling and a final cry: 'The strong ones. They prevail.'

000 In the dry season which was the dancing season children

3: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

In the dry season which was the dancing season children from three and four years upwards spent hours watching the older boys and girls dancing. On the edge of the main group small boys particularly would with intense solemnity and exaggerated movements practise steps and postures, singing meanwhile. The Ngoni used no drums and no musical instruments in their dancing, and despised the users of drums. All their rhythm and synchrony was achieved by perfect union of action and voice. The little boys practising solo on the edge of a dance-group listened intently every now and then to get the rhythm correctly, shifted their feet and stamped with the rest. 535 868 [534]

The little girls were collected together by older girls now and then, and sometimes joined by the boys, to play games of catch and various miming games such as choosing a lover, hen and chickens, slave-raiding, baboons in the maize gardens. These were accompanied by songs in which the leader, or 'owner', of the game sang the story and the rest joined in the refrains. Many of these miming games called for alertness and co-operation, and the slow and solitary were soon shown up and laughed at. Another set of songs with refrains were ballads or stories without action, and these were listened to by the hour by the younger children towards the end of the day, especially if the singer of the ballad was a lively narrator. 524 533 857

Girl children of this age-group spent a lot of their time watching adults and older girls doing their household work. In time they learned to imitate the actions of pounding and grinding, using a small pole or a stone, of sweeping with a frayed-out stalk, of winnowing or sieving with a little basket, or ladling food with a tiny wooden spoon. When they went to the gardens with their mother, they were given a small branch to carry home on their heads for the fire. Later the little girls had a tiny pot put on their head, perched on a miniature grass carrying-ring and went to the water-hole with their nurse girl to fill it and carry it home without spilling the water. 868

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Young Ngoni children among their siblings and age-mates

593 855 The hard-worked theme of sibling rivalry among small children in a family was not obvious among young Ngoni children. I expected to see outbursts of jealousy when the ex-baby returned after weaning to his mother's compound and found another baby installed there. But even with the new baby present, the mother seemed to have time to pet the ex-baby, telling the nurse girl to leave him with her, and there were few overt signs of emotional tension. This was certainly due to a large extent to the nurse-girl pattern, the fenced compound which was the child's home, and the interest of older sisters in their younger brothers and sisters. Young children growing up, as we have seen, were the focus of attention for a group of girls and women of different ages. They were hardly ever in a situation in which they had to struggle to assert themselves against a sibling, or, in their early years, against their age-mates. If they felt slighted or miserable or hungry or tired they could always go to someone to be petted or fed.

Hence their emotional needs for affection and attention never seemed to be unsatisfied. They were accustomed to having their physical needs supplied by any one of several women, and did not depend only on their mother for these needs. Nurse girls and older sisters were often demonstrative to small children, and they got more actual petting from them than from their mother or grandmother. Young children in turn often petted one smaller than themselves, or a new baby, and there was a contented affectionate relationship between children in the home which indicated the absence of any acute sibling rivalry.

857 561 From about the age of five or six, boys, who were escaping from the restrictions and security of the compound to the freedom and competition of village life, found a new challenge in a large group of their own age-mates, also just coming out of the younger child seclusion of the home. Boys

of this age, escaping from the women, showed their independence in their choice of games and occupations, many of which, as we have seen, were of an individual nature. They were not much inclined to join together as an age-group except for occasional gang enterprises. If one boy interfered with another's game of tops or took away his axe or hoop, there was an immediate short sharp fight. The defeated one either ran home to be comforted, with the jeers of the victor in his ears, or he stood and sulked for a moment, and then went on with his pursuit. It was outside in the open village spaces and not behind the fences of the compounds that small boys learned to put up with each other, to meet aggression and to be aggressive in turn, and then suddenly to gang up with a group and play happily together. 857 561

The test for boys of correct Ngoni training in the childhood stage, between weaning and second teeth, was their ability to get on with their age-mates and fellow villagers when they went to live in the dormitory. One boy went to live for long periods with his maternal grandmother in his mother's home village, after an argument in which for once his father was overruled by his wife and her family. This boy was indulged and spoiled by his maternal relatives who were afraid to correct him and to discipline him because he was the child of their son-in-law. The result was that when the boy came back about the age of seven, on his father's insisting that he should take part in herding and live in the dormitory, he was selfish, rude and disobedient, and failed to fit in with the other boys. This and similar stories were often quoted to show the importance of the father's family being in sole control during the early stages of childhood. 858 867

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

V

Village Life for older Brothers and Sisters

Second teeth: a new stage

858 We saw in Chapter II that Ngoni children who lost their first teeth, and acquired their second, had reached a new stage in their development. The obvious gaps in their mouths
[856] were filled, and this might happen between the ages of six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half, and some of the children might be rather small and slight for their age. Socially, because they had their second teeth, and because it was a sign of physical change recognised by everyone, the Ngoni adult would regard these children as ready for a different kind of life than that described in the previous chapter. The children were no longer dependent on adults for the detailed care and attention which we saw in the last chapter spelled security for the young child because every need of his was met. These older children could feed themselves, wash themselves, say what they wanted, speak correctly; and were beginning to behave as Ngoni children were expected to behave in all the relationships and activities of daily living. They were still in the wider sense dependent on adults for their basic needs—food to eat, a place to sleep in, tasks to perform, care when sick. But they had passed completely out of the hands of nurse girls, and the boys, to a very large extent, out of the control and surveillance of the women.

A new-found independence had begun to show in the
[866] little boys before they got their second teeth. Independence

3: Reed E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

then meant running out of the compound to the freedom of the village. At that time young children might behave outrageously and be punished for it, but they were not held accountable. The nurse girls and the mother, or some other adult, was blamed for letting the child grow up with such an uncontrolled temper or appetite or tongue. Once children were recognized as having passed the young child stage, that is when they had their second teeth, they themselves were held accountable for their behaviour and punished more severely, even though parents were also blamed for careless upbringing. The social sanctions of rebuke and ridicule, which began to operate in the later years of young childhood to only a limited extent, were now seen in their full force, made use of by adults, and still more effectively by the children's own age-mates. The fear of estrangement, of social ostracism as the penalty for failing to conform to the required manners and ways of living, had increasing force as the children grew older. As little children they were buttressed and protected by adults in their childish quarrels with, and moods and attitudes towards, other children. As boys in the dormitory and as girls in the girls' circle they had no longer such protection, and the result was that they became increasingly sensitive to the opinion of their peers. Professor Wilson in her study of Nyakusa age-villages, has called this social awareness the quality known as 'being good company'—getting on well with their contemporaries.

It was at this stage, at the beginning of the children's newly-found independence, that the ear-piercing ceremony took place. In contrast with the neighbouring peoples, the Ngoni had no facial or body markings, and it was the pierced ears which showed they were true Ngoni. In the days of warfare, captives, especially boys and men, were forcibly made to have their ears pierced, and hence a number of men in the Ngoni kingdoms who were not of Ngoni clans were found with pierced ears. Sometimes their children went to their parents and said, 'We want to be made Ngoni now.'

3: Read E-5 (1933-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

Children of Ngoni families, as also those others, chose their own time to have their ears pierced, though sometimes their father or father's sister or father's mother reminded them that it was about time. It was nearly always soon after the second teeth had come, and children who delayed having it done were taunted by their fellows: 'You, are you afraid, my age-mate? See my ears already have bone in them.' This was a reference to the round plugs of bone inserted when the hole was large enough. A bit of thread was put in at first, then a small bit of grass, then a fine reed, and finally a bone plug. Ear piercing was always done in the cold weather so that the lobe of the ear would heal quickly. It was carried out by a leading woman of one of the Ngoni families, who watched the children to see how they took it. They knew it was a test of courage, and however much they were afraid it would hurt, they stood like little statues during the operation, with a face as set and expressionless as when they were being beaten.

Accountability for individual behaviour was one aspect of the responsibility which Ngoni adults now began to demand from children. Another aspect was the performance of their allotted tasks. The responsibility for cattle herding was in a sense a corporate responsibility of all the boys whose fathers owned cattle. The older herd-boys had in fact to answer for the condition of the cattle they brought back every evening to their owners. They passed on, however, a number of small duties, such as care of the calves, sheep and goats, to the younger boys, who in turn were held responsible by the older boys for performing these duties. The boys' world, centred in the dormitory, recognized grades of responsibility from which no one escaped.

Another facet of responsibility which was at a later stage remarked on often by Ngoni adults, was seen in children's choice of leisure-time occupations, according to their individual manual and intellectual and artistic capacities. They stopped playing childish games and began instead to develope their skills in making things from local materials.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

All of them made their own axes, knobkerries and catapults for hunting. Some were interested in music and made shepherds' pipes, or one-stringed lyres, or hand pianos of metal strips affixed to a wooden base. They composed their own songs and airs for these instruments. Others showed ingenuity in making elaborate models of kraals and aeroplanes, or in carving heads of animals. Others liked to weave fibre into the wide-brimmed hats some herd-boys wore.

More significant still for their future social relationships, they began now to choose their own intimate friend and to form the friendship pacts which were characteristic of Ngoni society, and regarded by adults as important in the child's development. In the friendship pacts, especially those between boys, there was no implied or manifest restraint. They could have 'joking relations', and hence say outrageous things to each other. They could quarrel and make it up, and defy each other's wishes and decisions, without a final breach. The relationship between friends often lasted into later adult life, and was probably all the stronger for the occasional lapses and outbursts, and by the fact that in the daily companionship of friends the burden of observing 'respect' did not oppress them.

The boys' dormitory

The hut known as the boys' dormitory and the whole system of living which it represented was a traditional feature of Ngoni village life. In their culture it had three main purposes. Formerly, when as they said 'War was our school', it was the place where boys slept and lived together, and where they learned to defend themselves and to obey authority. It was in a sense the preparatory school for the regiment, and the herding of cattle was the basis of the curriculum. Once a boy went to sleep in a dormitory he never left it until he married, unless he was seriously ill. In the days of warfare, he learned in the dormitory and out herding the cattle, a knowledge of the bush and its wild life and of his fellows, and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount. Dormitory life was therefore central in the Ngoni past and though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a necessary training ground for young manhood. In very large villages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys belonged to the dormitory of that section where their parents' household was situated. There were occasional attempts sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory for boys who were baptised Christians or in an inquirers' class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' development, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled. They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory system except on the geographical lines already mentioned, which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they had their second teeth, from the influence of the women. Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision at what they considered a crucial stage.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There was no doubt that this abrupt transition, like the sudden weaning, was a shock for many boys between six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half. From having been impudent, well-fed, self-confident and spoiled youngsters among the women many of them quickly became skinny, scruffy, subdued and with a hunted expression. The subdued and hunted looks passed off as they adjusted themselves to their new environment and there were boys, generally those exceptionally well grown and physically strong, who showed no apparent signs of shock. They all, however, showed the effects of irregular and inadequate feeding. The younger boys were chronically hungry and their hair and skin and bony knees and ribs were eloquent of calory, protein and vitamin shortages. 575 156 [146]

The other main purpose of dormitory life in Ngoni culture was to mix up all the boys in the village and let the common life together teach them how to get on with their age-mates and knuckle under to their superiors in age. Age and strength were the only criteria for authority. Older brothers might try to protect and intercede for younger brothers but it was not encouraged. All the young ones had to take their chance equally, without regard for their family name or their father's position. 575 858

The dormitory was primarily a sleeping-place, but through the group of boys who slept there the herding of cattle was organized and the off-duty amusements and occupations of the older boys were planned. The young ones had to 'fag' for the rest, fetching wood and water, keeping fires going, sweeping the hut, taking messages, huddling in a corner at night when the oldest boys brought girls in, and submitting to beatings both as a warning and as a punishment. They were usually beaten once or twice soon after their arrival and then threatened with much worse if they ever divulged what went on in the dormitory. It was not however a torture house, far from it, and the boys boasted of belonging to 'our dormitory' and were proud of having their own hidden life 575 [513] [857]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. [148] This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten [272] by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when [262] milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The [867] Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [155] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for authority. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

considerable labour, and at times even, antagonism from the younger towards the older group. This was to some extent mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of importance, called in for consultations with the adults who were cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went with them to market when beasts were sold. These older boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones', with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle, skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. They fought with 'ends', like single-sticks, and became adept at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal. Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leadership among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a kind of knock-out championship, hotly contested, until everyone agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they conducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about

men's affairs.

3: Rad E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

521 men's affairs. The kind of topics discussed by men at the kraal
187 gate included hunting, in the right season; cases heard in the courts and the application of Ngoni law to all subjects of the Ngoni chiefs; the organisation of village affairs from tax collecting and dealing with tax evaders to beer drinks and burials and building houses; the sales of cotton, tobacco and cattle at near-by markets and the current prices; the various labour recruiters combing the villages for likely young men and the latest stories brought back by men who had returned from working in the south. Every now and then, particularly when the talk ranged round decisions in the courts or adding to the herds of cattle, references were made to the Ngoni past, to their relations with Europeans, both missionaries and officials, and to the behaviour of the non-Ngoni groups in the Ngoni kingdoms. The older boys listened attentively and as we shall see later in Chapter VII acquired among other things an extensive knowledge about the needs and uses of cattle. The younger ones pricked up their ears now and then when a familiar name or event was mentioned, and stored up questions to ask their father at a time when he was willing to listen and answer.

576 There was the usual Ngoni formality about where people
417 sat at the kraal gate. The most senior men sat on each side of the opening, leaning up against the gate-posts, with the rest in decreasing order of rank as they were farther from the gate. The cleared space on each side of the gate and in front of it was all known as the 'gate of the kraal'. The craftsmen
[469] who were carving wood or twisting bark rope, making baskets or plaiting mats, sat according to their age and rank on the edges of the senior group or among them. They could have carried on their trade anywhere, but they preferred the company of their fellows and did not want to miss listening
858 to the talk or the arrival of strangers. The herd-boys, when they were present, were on the extreme edges of those sitting
[561] there, divided into two groups, 'youths' and boys. Each
[262] group made its own fire for boiling milk and roasting sweet potatoes or ground-nuts 596

3: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

142
291
854

14. Mother and babies

142
302
291
342
854

[facing page 96]

15. Nursemaids with their charges

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

potatoes or ground-nuts. Round their fire when dusk came on, the boys who were under fourteen asked each other riddles. The children, for girls did it in their own groups too, called riddles 'our lovely sitting game', 'our lovely wise sayings for little children', 'our wise sayings which were puzzles'. The use of riddles and their enjoyment was confined to children between about seven and fourteen, never older, and was only a game for after dark, never played in daylight. About the age of fourteen they suddenly dropped them, and if asked about them said, 'Yes, we once played at riddles, when we were young'.

Here are a few from the vast number of riddles known to the Ngoni children:

The live thing bore a dead thing and the dead thing bore a live thing—the fowl and the egg.

A large garden reaped into the hands—a man's hair.

My mother's food is sweet and cool in the morning and the evening but hot at midday—the sun.

What is it that goes on four legs in the morning, on two at midday, and on three in the evening?—a man, who crawls on hands and knees in childhood, walks erect when grown, and with the aid of a stick in his old age.

The hut of my mother has no door—an egg.

The little birds drink at one well—the roof rafters which meet at the top.

The roof is leaky—a basket-work beer-strainer.

Sitting round in a circle so that they all faced inwards towards each other, the children flung these riddles into the group, sometimes expecting anyone to reply, sometimes pointing at one child and addressing the riddle to him: 'Thou, there. Listen.' They jeered at slow and inept replies, and applauded quickness and correct answers. It was clear that riddles were partly a test of intelligence and of memory, partly a play on words with a humorous twist in question and answer, and partly a test of alertness to catch the meaning

3: Reed E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

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16. Traditional hair style

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17. Girls sitting correctly [facing page 97]

3: Read E-5 (1955-1959)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

524 of the riddle. An unexpected reply or a good guess often drew applause, even if it was not the accepted correct answer.

595 857 Before it was dark, all the herd-boys joined in what they called "drill" on the flat space where they milked the cows in front of the kraal gate. As a rule this "drill" was practising for the *ngoma* dance which took place after harvest and was the only dance for boys and girls approved by the Ngoni rulers. Sometimes they varied this dance, practising with swift follow-my-leader manœuvres, turning, twirling, lifting sticks, knocking knobkerries together, stamping, whistling. [594] As we have said already, the Ngoni had no drums, and all the precision and rhythm in any dances or concerted movements depended on exact timing and following the leader. The accuracy and precision reached was remarkable, and represented a high degree of intense concentration and co-operation among the dancers or "drillers", who developed an almost intuitive knowledge of what the leader was going to do next. This dancing was practised in front of the men and older youths on purpose. They criticised it freely, and sometimes, though rarely, praised the boys. More often they came forward to show them how to do it better.

299 857 For the greater part of the day the herd-boys were with the cattle. They rose before it was light, undid the kraal gate, and as dawn broke led the cattle to the river. Then they went to the grazing grounds which according to the season were near or far from the village. As the dry season advanced and the grass became poorer, they had to go farther afield to find grazing. They returned to the village about ten o'clock [294] and milked the cows and took the milk in gourds to the senior women, keeping some as their own perquisite. The cattle were driven under some trees to rest during the heat of the day, and taken to the grazing ground again about two and brought back about five, watered and put in the kraal and the gate was closed. Variations in this time-table depended on the seasons, the quality of the pasture, and on whether the herd-boys went to school or not.

3: Reed E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The youngest boys were not expected to herd cattle until they were ten or eleven years old. Their work was to look after the calves, sheep and goats, sometimes following the cattle to the grazing ground, sometimes wandering round the edge of the village, avoiding the cultivated areas until after harvest. At that time cattle, calves, sheep and goats were driven into the stubble and left to forage. 295 857 561

As a result of dormitory life, combined with cattle-herding, a definite ideal herd-boy personality developed. This was fostered by the hero-worship of the older herd-boys by the young ones. It was also built up by the praise or blame meted out for herding well or badly by the older herd-boys to younger ones, and by the cattle-owners. This 'ideal herd-man' was used by Ngoni ministers and teachers living in the villages to relate their teaching about Christianity to the life around them. Prayers near the kraal, conducted by an Ngoni minister each evening, or before people went on a journey, often began with the words 'Jesus our shepherd, keep us well'. Young teachers often said to me how they always listened as boys when a prayer began like this, and that in school their favourite Bible story was that of David the herd-boy. 155 157 157 797

When there was a school in the village or near by which the Ngoni elders approved of, the herd-boys had a busy life. They watered the cattle very early, took them to graze and milked them. Then they went to school from ten to two, taking the cattle out grazing afterwards. In the cold weather they went to school from six to ten and herded cattle the rest of the day, after the sun had dried the dew off the grass. School attendance depended on the attitude of fathers to the new learning, and how the village elders regarded the local mission and its teachers. The boys whose fathers had no cattle, in general the non-Ngoni elements in the village, were free to attend school continuously since they had no herding responsibilities. There was some jeering among the boys in the dormitory at those who only went to school and did not 295 857 872 872

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

872 go herding. School was sometimes regarded as an easy option where you sat still all day and repeated things after the teacher. This was far from being the case in a village like [875] Enkodlweni where the headmaster was well trained and kept the boys on their toes. In such schools the boys themselves were enthusiastic about learning, and regarded going to school as a dignified and worth-while occupation, and not a childish amusement.

Girls' life in the village

858 When the girls had their second teeth and were acknowledged to have reached the new stage in their development, there was no abrupt transition for them, as for their brothers, from the household circle to the dormitory, or from the women's world to the men's world. They continued as part of the women's world; they changed their occupations and their daily routine on the whole very little; and they went on sleeping in the hut of a widowed aunt or grandmother. All that was said however in the earlier part of the chapter about accountability for their behaviour was as true as for the boys.

561 The Ngoni girls of leading families formed a distinct group, [565] called in the age-set terms 'children' until they were about eleven and then 'immature girls' until they reached puberty. There was in Ngoni thought and practice a clear division between immature and mature girls, and we shall see what this involved in girls' life in Chapters VI and VII. The age-set terms used to distinguish between children and immature girls did not imply any real differences in ways of living, manners and occupations. The girls between about seven and fourteen were looked on as belonging to a 'girls' circle', and this girls' circle had certain distinctive features.

561 In the first place the tendency of the girls to draw apart
562 from the boys of their own age, already evident before the
535 coming of the second teeth, was now more or less complete
628 with the boys' withdrawal into dormitory life and their preoccupation with herding. Later, about the age of twelve

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they
joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to
correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at
the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their
mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and
sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grand-
mother with whom they slept, but the other practice was
more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan
name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611]
their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan.
In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister
kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to re-
main as a distinctive group. They were members of their
father's house until they married; and when that took place [583]
it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd be-
longing to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the
girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the
training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the care-
lessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the
grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisa- [597]
bility of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another
household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

858 upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if
581 the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended not only on her own reputation and character, but on the household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

561 The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive
858 group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one. The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of
[603] the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training
357 ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl,
855 to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter into all her occupations and amusements. This companion, chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's household, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and ate in the same household.

561 In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their compan-
872 ions. There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this
[601] group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided that it would also be wise to send their girls to school, especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men, learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daugh-
[565] ters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and dignified behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when asked questions. They took their school work seriously in order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be transferred at their marriage would be greater according to whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or even VI. 561 872 565 [583]

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daughters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. They and their companions, according to their growth and strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water, grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household, where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores. As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time with the young children, or washing themselves and their clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rubbing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more amusing side of the daily routine. 561 857 592 512 [302] [301]

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classificatory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage. The friend was always from another compound and of a leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream together. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained 572

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

535 The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called
571 the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group,
[578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

865 The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

157 One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect-
538 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell-
555 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI

The Threshold of Adulthood (i)

The study of adolescence

Studies of adolescents as an age-group, of the adolescent boy and girl in society, and of the characteristics of the stage called adolescence, have assumed certain principles and have stated certain conclusions in terms of western society. These theoretical leads need examining closely before they can be applied to, or assumed to have validity for, non-western societies. This points on the one hand to the problems raised in Chapter II of the emphasis on individual psychological development in western studies of childhood and adolescence. It also suggests that a follow-through of any culture-personality study, whether in homogeneous relatively isolated cultures, or in rapidly changing cultures, involves a re-examination of the relation between individual development on the one hand and social control and training on the other, and this latter requires an analysis of the aims of the society in terms of its methods in bringing up its children.

Several questions need stating here in general terms and these in turn lead to specific questions about Ngoni culture and society. Are there cultures and societies in which childhood can be said to end at a particular age or stage? Are there others in which adulthood is said to begin at the end of the childhood stage? Are there others again, as most studies of western societies assume, in which an intervening stage between childhood and adulthood is recognized which is commonly known as adolescence? If adolescence as a stage in development is recognized, what are its age-limits or other

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

12.1 forms of limitation? And what are the chief characteristics which distinguish it from childhood on the one hand and adulthood on the other?

Studies of non-western societies suggest a variety of answers to these questions, and the answers are related to the social structure and the organization of social relations within the society, and to the economic demands made on different age-groups in the society. Societies with a marked age-set system have one set of answers; societies where economic necessity determines the role of all but small children have another. Every type of society is differently affected by the introduction of the modern school systems which cut across traditional views and practices on age-role and age-status.

There is nevertheless, as the title of this chapter is intended to convey, in every society, and particularly in non-western societies not as yet completely changed and dominated by school systems, a stage when adult behaviour and adult competence in technical skills is expected from the rising generation. This may occur before, at, or after the onset of physical maturity at puberty. A society which has exerted a conscious and directed control over the upbringing of its children regards the threshold of adulthood as the testing of its methods of socialization, calling perhaps for a re-alignment of emphases in training, in view of the advent for these young people of greater responsibility in social relations and of demands on them for effective economic co-operation. In other words, this threshold of adulthood is a test of the effectiveness of training children and young people to conform to the personality pattern of the culture of the society, and for the young individuals themselves a test of their adjustment to that pattern.

Initiation schools

The study of adolescence as a recognized stage of individual development in non-western societies has been influenced by three main factors: the attention paid to the physical changes

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

at puberty and their subsequent implications for marriage and sexual life; the social recognition by the society of the significance of this change; and the rituals which marked this transition. Initiation rites, as a form of *rites de passage*, occur in many societies immediately after puberty. The majority of these initiation rites takes the form of a 'school', involving a period of seclusion in some remote locality away from normal social life, varying degrees of physical endurance tests, instruction in traditional hygiene and sex life and in correct behaviour to senior people, with an intense emphasis on submission to authority. At the end of the seclusion period, which varies in different societies from a few weeks to three or four months, there is generally feasting and other forms of rejoicing when the initiates return to their villages to resume normal life but with a new status.

The underlying aim in many initiation rites was to bring home to the individuals, and to the entire age-group which they represented, the dominant importance of fertility in the life of their society. This lesson among the Cewa, one of the ethnic groups living close to the Ngoni, was driven home by a second ritual which occurred at the first pregnancy of every married woman. In sociological and psychological terms the aims of the ritual in initiation schools were to strengthen the individual at a time of crisis in his life, to sanction his new status in society after the period of seclusion and instruction, and to assert the authority of society over the individual through the solemnity and rigour of the ritual. One purpose of these rituals which has not received much attention was to bring together separately boys and girls in homogeneous sex and age-groups for the last time before they broke up into separate heterogeneous relationships on marriage.

Ngoni puberty rituals

The Ngoni, unlike the ethnic groups by which they were surrounded, had no initiation schools either at or after puberty. In spite of their cultural emphasis on the importance

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 of 'staying together', they did not make the occasion of physical maturity an opportunity for driving home the lesson. According to Ngoni tradition the forms of private ritual for girls and for boys had come with them from the [173] south. At one point in their wanderings, said to be in Tanganyika before they settled in Nyasaland, they gave up the practice of circumcision, also brought from the south. This rite, according to tradition, had coincided with boys passing out from herding cattle and being called up into a regiment.

The question naturally arises why the Ngoni adhered to 178 their private ritual at puberty, and never adopted any of the 881 local forms of initation schools, and why they abandoned their only corporate ritual of this type: the circumcision school. Various reasons were given by the Ngoni elders for abandoning the circumcision ritual: that there were no more grass to be found of the sharp kind with which the foreskin was cut; that the school which lasted three to four months delayed for too long the intake of young men into the army; and that the young men of non-Ngoni families, compulsorily absorbed into the army, objected strongly to being circumcised.

After a short description of the private ritual for girls and boys, we will return to answer the question why the Ngoni held to these forms.

Girls' private ritual

881 When a Ngoni girl found she was menstruating for the first time, she stayed in the hut where she was sleeping and called her companion or her friend and told her what was taking place. Ngoni women declared that their girls were as a rule unprepared, and that the flow of blood was unexpected and alarming. Some Ngoni girls agreed that this was true. The majority said, 'We knew about this from our older sisters and companions, but we hid this knowledge from the elders.' The companion or friend found a senior helper in the grandmother's household, generally the one who had supervised the

girl's former nurse girl and had continued to take an interest 881
in the girl. This woman came to the hut, gave the girl a cloth to wear, told her to stay in the hut until the period was over, and instructed her companion to stay with her, bring her food, and look after her other needs. When the period was over, the companion told the senior helper who in the meantime had informed the girl's paternal grandmother, her father's sister (to whom a special message was sent to the village where she lived), and the girl's own mother. The information was always given in the phrase, 'This child has now matured.' The father's sister, who made a special visit for the [604]
purpose, came into the hut and told the girl to get up and follow her. A little procession formed, the father's sister leading, the girl immediately behind her, then the grandmother and other senior women of the father's house, the senior helper who had attended the girl, and finally the girl's mother. At the river the girl was made to take off her clothes [823]
and sit in shallow water, facing south-east, the ritual position adopted in all Ngoni crises of life and death. On the bank the women stood in silence and watched the girl splashing herself with water and trying to control her shivering, until she was allowed to come out and given clean clothes to put on.

Back at the grandmother's hut, the women sat on the veranda, the girl in front of them, legs tucked in sideways, head bent in a respectful attitude. The father's sister led off with some matter-of-fact instructions to the girl. At subsequent periods she would not be in seclusion but she would take every care to conceal her condition from everyone. She must always wear a cloth between her legs, whether menstruating or not, and she must now consider herself separated from the children's and the immature girls' groups. She would sleep only with mature girls in a senior helper's hut, and must wash in the river only with them, and never anywhere near young children or immature girls. Later on, not on this 881
occasion, the senior helper who had assisted her and felt 864

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

88 [864] responsible for her, told her how to keep her legs together if she should sleep with a boy, and warned her against full intercourse and possible pregnancy. This warning was followed up with regular examination to see if the hymen was intact, carried out every two months or so by some senior woman of the girl's father's house.

When the simple ritual was over, the grandmother sent for the girl's father and told him what had taken place. He in turn told the male members of his house and the elders of the village. The news 'So and so's daughter is now mature' was received in the village with quiet rejoicing, and the father was congratulated as one who would in time receive cattle on his daughter's marriage.

881 182 In this ritual the seclusion, washing with cold water and facing south-east in the river were the only strictly ritual acts. Equally important in Ngoni thinking however was the reassertion, at a critical time, of the authority of the women of her father's house over the girl. The girl was also made aware of her new status by being forbidden to perform certain daily functions in the presence of children and younger girls. Later we shall see how the first stages of courtship followed this event.

Boys' private ritual

881 The boys' ritual consisted of two distinct parts. At his first nocturnal emission the boy told one of his age-mates or his friend, who went and told one of the older boys in the dormitory. This older boy told him to go to the river very early in the morning and 'wash strongly', splashing the water all over him, and to do this after each emission. This act, called 'being beaten with water', the Ngoni believed was essential to strengthen the body and assist to control sexual impulse. There was great secrecy observed about this stage, only the boy and his friend and the older boy knowing about it. If other boys said to him 'You have now matured', he denied it vehemently.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (I)

When the boy's voice began to break, and his father or another older man noticed it, the second part of the ritual took place. The father's brother went to a senior man famed in the village as a herbalist and obtained from him several kinds of roots. These were ground and then cooked either in milk or in the cud from a goat's stomach, usually the latter, for the father liked it to be known that he killed a goat for his son. If the mixture was cooked in milk, a fowl was killed, and in either case the boy was given the meat to eat immediately after the mixture to take away the extremely bitter taste. The cooking took place on a small fire by the kraal gate in the presence of the male members of the father's house. The boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the mixture as it was bubbling in the pan and to lick them quickly. He was not expected to show that he found the mixture very bitter as well as hot to touch. At intervals the boy had to jump over the fire, hitting his elbows and knees with the palms of his hands. The more often he did this, the less often did he have to dip in the pan because the mixture soon dried up, but he had to continue dipping and licking till there was no liquid left. The senior men watched intently all through this performance because they believed the mixture not only helped physical growth and muscular strength but would prevent impotence. When this ritual was performed for the heir of a chief, it was followed by a war-dance in the cattle kraal and the boy had to take a second dose of medicine in the kraal surrounded by the warriors. In such a case a bull was killed instead of the customary goat, and the contents of its stomach used for mixing the medicine. The meat was eaten by the boy and his father's relatives.

As in the case of the girls, this boy's ritual was an occasion for asserting the authority of the father and his kin over the boy. For him there was however no separating off into another group after this maturing. He continued to live in the dormitory, herd cattle, and go to school as before.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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Cewa

The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual

N 881 182 We now come back to the question of why the Ngoni held to this private ritual for girls and boys at puberty. There were three main reasons. The first was that each Ngoni child belonged to his or her father's house. At this sign of physical maturity, significant for the boy or girl, and for the society, the elders of the house asserted anew their authority over them, performed a brief traditional ritual, and watched during the ritual for evidence of the Ngoni personality traits of courage and physical endurance which they expected to see in young adults. The second reason was that the change at puberty was regarded as marking only one of the stages in the development of growing boys and girls. It is true it had more significance for girls, in that it set the mature girls apart as a separate group. But it was not the prelude to immediate M [881] marriage, as the girls' initiation school was among the neighbouring Cewa people; N [171] nor was it in old days the prelude for the boys joining the army. The third reason was that the Ngoni did not regard fertility as the major dominant factor N [842] in the development of young women, as it undoubtedly was considered among the Cewa. They greatly disliked the ritual and the significance of the Cewa female initiation rites and forbade Ngoni women to have any part in them. Potency N [833] among men, on the other hand, was recognized as important both for the individual and for the social group, and impotence, particularly in leading men, was kept secret and hidden from outside knowledge as far as possible. If an Ngoni N [842] woman after marriage did not bear children, it was not con- [595] sidered a stigma on her, either individually or socially. The [597] common practice of marrying one of her sisters as a 'substitute', or the very common practice of adoption was resorted to. The latter was always referred to as 'putting a child into the house of So and so'.

N 881 171 One of the alleged objects of initiation schools among other ethnic groups was to instruct the young initiates in correct

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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18. Chiefs' wives

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[facing page 112]

19. Girls dancing *Ngoma*

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic 881
and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards
authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out 171
by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past 177
in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasa- 561
land had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded
up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior 641
herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at 561
irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time [702]
they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season,
during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were [464]
called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals.
At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they 885
were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the
hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they [302]
were told they could marry and retire from the army. The
older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to [836]
sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They
moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives [591]
in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house.
The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's [583]
family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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20. Making lorries

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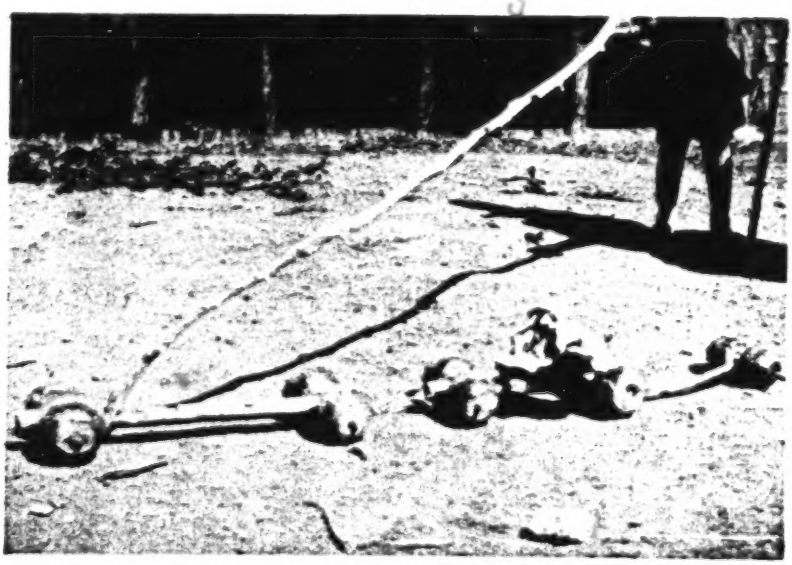

21. Will the wheels work?

[facing page 113]

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

177 561 464 The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, [871] if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons [434] at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or [583] seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that [885] earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the head-ring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any probition on marriage until [582] a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no [167] wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
891 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
292 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
885 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often
301 trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the pre-marriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
885 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
556 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after.
593 It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
[836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to
177 say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'
885 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to establish their hold. The Ngoni elders said the missions did not like it, and alleged that they gave it up for this reason. But they held on to other rituals also not approved by the missions, and it was probably largely due to the fact that there were no longer large herds of cattle to provide lavish feasts. The songs were remembered and sung by the older women when dancing the special dances associated with the ritual, holding in their hands short rods and small rounded shields, and making stiff jerking movements of head and elbows. Such dances as were put on for me were however a relic and not a living tradition. For the Ngoni girl of good family there was no longer any intervening ritual between her private puberty ceremony and the marriage ceremony.

The marriage age of girls, like that of men, was much earlier than formerly, the most usual age being from sixteen upwards. Most of the older women held that this left very little time in which to teach girls all that they were expected to know before being married and leaving their own home and their father's village for good. This was a particular cause of anxiety to the senior women in areas where the young men emigrated soon after marriage, and where the girl had to maintain her own position and reputation among his relatives without his companionship and support.

Young adults in Ngoni society

We have just seen that cultural changes coming from the outside radically altered the traditional pattern of development of Ngoni youths and girls. The net result of these changes was to telescope the period between physical maturity at puberty and full adult status at marriage, to squeeze the former eight to ten years of this intervening period into about two for the girls and four at most for the youths. This shortened period of preparation for full adult life raised a number of problems for the Ngoni elders. They were aware, as was suggested in the beginning of this chapter, that the attainment of physical maturity called for some re-alignment

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especial-
561 ly the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes,
but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and
867 competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter
128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there
584 were certain social controls among the Ngoni which operated in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited
835 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers
582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment.
581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptized or under instruction. This last pre-
581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference
182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

warrior, was responsible for advising the youth. He indicated seven villages in which there were girls of good family whom he might go and have a look at. He urged him not to marry 'a girl who belonged to another nation', meaning another group, not Ngoni. He wanted him to marry one of several girls in a collateral branch of the royal clan, for whom the youth would have to give several head of cattle in the marriage transfer. The grandfather was quite prepared to sacrifice several of the cattle from his herd in order that the youth might make a good marriage. The young man's mother and his teachers in the mission wanted him to marry a Christian girl. In the time after harvest he went visiting with his age-mates, and saw a girl he liked the look of at a wedding dance in another village. He was particularly attracted by this girl's quiet and dignified behaviour, and by the fact, discovered through a 'go-between', that she had been to school and could read and write. The girl was at that time not a baptized Christian but under instruction. She was also not of an Ngoni clan, but of one belonging to a neighbouring ethnic group. He pursued his inquiries and found that her parents had been brought up in an Ngoni village and 'knew Ngoni customs because as children they had grown in Ngoni hands'. He married this girl, greatly to the disappointment of his grandfather, who felt that if the father had been alive he might have been able to find possible choices for the boy which would have reconciled the Ngoni ideal of marriage to a high-ranking clan with a Christian background. 581 182

In pre-European days there had been a series of 'dynastic marriages' between the royal clan and the leading clans and the desire to link the aristocratic families in this way was very strong still. It was always alleged that the girl had the right to refuse a suitor if she did not like him. I found several cases however in which the girl's refusal had been overruled by the men of her father's house who desired a 'dynastic marriage'. In two of these cases the girl was finally carried off to her husband's village for the marriage ceremony after 584

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 a strenuous resistance, during which one of them earned the name which stuck to her ever afterwards of 'the biting spider'. Considerations in choosing a mate, both for youths and girls, were not only influenced by the Ngoni desire, 581 especially strong among the senior people, for linking Ngoni clans and families together by marriage. The high proportion of young people, boys especially, who had been to school and were Christian, weighed the scales in favour of an educated Christian wife or husband. As always, however, the factor of personal liking was very strong. Attraction first, and then liking based on further acquaintance, was held as most important by the youths and girls themselves. It was partly the question of the transfer of cattle to seal the mar- [583] riage contract which inclined the young men to listen to the advice of their elders, for they were dependent on them, at least in the first instance, for providing the cattle.

836 The other direction in which social control operated in relations between the sexes was in the forms of courtship 584 tolerated and permitted. In pre-European days, and for a long time after the missions came, the age of marriage was, as we have seen, postponed for many years after puberty. In those days there was a recognized and socially accepted pattern of sexual freedom before marriage, which we have already mentioned. A girl could indicate to a young man, who had recently joined a regiment, and had shown in various ways that he was attracted by her, that she was willing to take him as a lover. Often this relationship led eventually to marriage between the two, but it was not always the case. These two slept together from time to time in the dormitory, practising limited intercourse. The fear of being deflowered and still more of being pregnant before marriage acted as a [848] very strong deterrent to the girls not to let the young man, in the Ngoni phrase, 'harm her in any way'. If this occurred the girls knew they would have no pre-marriage rite and no full public wedding ceremony, and this would bring shame not only on them but on their father's family and house.

The missionaries, and through their influence Ngoni Christian teachers and ministers, tried to put a stop to this form of courtship. It was very difficult to convince Ngoni elders and young people that a practice which had been considered socially correct and was under some measure of social control, was now wrong and must be given up. They saw it as something quite distinct from casual and promiscuous intercourse, which they discouraged and despised. A young Christian teacher, speaking of his own youth, said: 'The Christian rule forbade boys and girls to sleep together at night and to play as our fathers played. We did not keep those rules, and we visited girls at night who wanted us, but we were careful not to harm them.' The Ngoni Christian leaders who were aware of the problems on both sides finally threw their weight into advocating much earlier marriages while supporting the carrying out of the private puberty rituals. As we have seen, marriage became usual at about sixteen for girls and from eighteen upwards for youths. This as a rule, though not invariably, ensured that the girls were virgin at marriage which was a very strict Ngoni requirement. But it brought in its train a number of other difficulties which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VII

The Threshold of Adulthood (ii)

Knowledge and skills

867 Towards the end of the last chapter we said that in this fol-
868 lowing chapter we would be concerned with the knowledge and skills which young adults in Ngoni society needed before they could assume the adult role of setting up and managing a new home, and of taking part in village and national affairs. Here and there in earlier chapters there have been references to 'men's affairs' and the 'world of women', suggesting that there was a range of knowledge, of activities and of competence in those activities for which preparation and training was needed for those on the threshold of adulthood.

In talking with the Ngoni about the way in which they were handing on their traditional knowledge to the younger generations, they often distinguished between two kinds of knowledge: one a wide range of perceptions and information necessary to carry out daily and occasional activities in the household and village; and the other, a corpus of traditional lore about natural phenomena, and about their history and law. This is not altogether a valid distinction since both kinds of knowledge were traditional but it is a convenient way of approaching the two kinds of instruction given to young
867 adults. The Ngoni were often apt to stress the importance of
[186] this second kind of knowledge because they resented the attitude of many Europeans that the Ngoni, and other African peoples, were 'ignorant' until the schools came. This
[577] touched them on a very sore point since they set great store on knowledge and wisdom in men and women, and did

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

not understand how Europeans could draw such a sharp line 867
and equate ignorance with the absence of a literature and [212]
written traditions. When talking about how they instructed
their young people in the traditional knowledge about the
natural world and their own national law and history, they
pointed out that there were no set periods for this kind of
teaching, but that there was a recognition that the young
man, before or about the time when he himself became a
father, should know what his father knew. We will begin 128
then with some indication of the kind of matters included
in this traditional store of knowledge, recognizing that reference can be made only to a small selection from it. We will go on in the second half of the chapter to the other kind of knowledge which was inseparably connected with practical and technical skills.

Ngoni traditional knowledge: the reckoning of time

The Ngoni had a system of reckoning time and a recognized 805
calendar. This consisted of thirteen lunar months in the year, reckoned from the first appearance of each new moon, and beginning with our December as the first month. The names of the months are all related to natural events, and these as the following list shows were in five main groups: when certain wild animals had their young; the time of bitter cold and frosts; when the hawks came to catch chickens; when certain trees fruited; when the new crops were ripe and the former first fruit ceremony took place.

NGONI NAMES FOR MONTHS

1 *Impala*	Antelopes have their young
2 *Inkokoni*	Gnu have their young
3 *Impuso*	Tasting new crops
4 *Inyati*	Buffaloes have their young
5 *Indlovu*	Elephants have their young
6 *Ilize elincinyane*	Beginning of cold weather
7 *Ilize elikulu*	Great cold weather

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

805 8	*Ukholo omnsinyane*	Hawks fly and hover
9	*Ukholo omkhulu*	Hawks catch chickens
10	*Isiganyane esincinyane*	Trees begin to flower
11	*Isiganyane esikhulu*	Trees fruiting
12	*Inhlachana*	Trees fruiting
13	*Umgano*	Trees fruiting

The months were more generally grouped in two main [132] seasons: the rains, whose name meant that the earth was 'clothed and decorated with new grass, leaves and flowers'; and the dry season, the time for moving village sites, felling trees and clearing bush for new gardens, castrating oxen. It was the true Ngoni families who knew the names for the months and the relation of months to the seasons. Among these families in every Ngoni village there were men who watched the sun's movements, and noted the hill or tall trees behind which the sun set when it reached its most southerly point. This was for them one of the signals that the rains were near. If the rains did not begin when the sun reached this point, they announced that this year the rains were delayed and the crops would probably suffer. When the *inkaku* bird [825] began to sing, the first man who heard it went to tell his neighbours to repair their hoe handles and begin to clear the fields, for the rains and the planting season was at hand. [824] When a large flat mushroom appeared in the woodland, it too was the herald of rain.

Not only were these months and the seasons they indicated 805 the means of regulating work. They were also the way by 211 which the Ngoni reckoned time. They had rods for each month and notches for the days. They took these with them on campaigns, and when returning they produced the rods, and pointing to the notches they said: 'On the sixth day of the seventh month we began fighting against X's village,' or 'We reached that river on the first day of the fifth month.' 211 Ngoni elders were however quick to point out that they were all trained from childhood up to have excellent memories,

and the notched sticks were only an *aide-mémoire*, not a necessity. 211

The heavens and the earth

When the Pleiades appeared just before dawn they said the Pleiades were being 'reborn' (the word used for the new moon's appearance and for the initiation of a diviner), and that in this position in the heavens they were heralds of the cold season. They knew the relative positions of Venus as an evening star and a morning star, and watched for the appearance high in the heavens of Jupiter which they knew by its size. Orion they recognized as a man with a spear, a hunter, and the Milky Way as the sands of the sky, since sand was used to denote numbers which cannot be counted. 821

In announcing the death of a great chief by a messenger sent from village to village, the traditional formula was: 'Listen. Do you hear? The heavens have fallen.' Hence when earthquakes were felt, it was believed that some great chief had died, and the earthquake was the trembling when his spirit left the earth for the place of the departed spirits. If it turned out to be no one of their own people, they nevertheless held to the belief that somewhere, unknown to them, a 'great one' had died and his spirit had departed at the time of the earth's trembling. 763 775 823

Eclipses of the sun and moon they also connected with some great event either among their own people or elsewhere, and they used the eclipse year and month to date these events. Their famous crossing of the Zambezi on their northward march, finally and irrevocably cutting off their connexions with the south, was during a solar eclipse. In teaching young adults Ngoni history they said: 'When we crossed the Zambezi it became night at noon.' 821 [167]

A lunar eclipse, almost total, occurred when I was in a chief's village, and all the people were called to the kraal and stood watching it. Then the chief's spokesman, his 'mouthpiece', called for silence in the phrase used for a war summons [632]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

821 or other pregnant announcement: 'Listen. Do you hear? The chief says there is a great matter being discussed. It is not here but elsewhere. The case is very important.' Then the women took their poles and struck the tall wooden pounding mortars with resounding blows. A Ngoni elder commented to me: 'Listen. They are washing the moon from its clouds, so that it may come out of the darkness and shine again.' The event was curiously reminiscent of an eclipse during my stay in an Indian village when pots were struck 'to wash the moon'.

Reckoning of numbers

802 The Ngoni used tens as units in counting. They began with the right hand clenched, like the fist they raised in the traditional greeting. One by one they raised from the bent-in position the thumb and each finger in turn, and then did the same with the left hand. When they reached ten they struck one hand against the other with all the fingers extended and said '*ihlumi*' (ten), and for twenty, thirty and so on they struck their hands together the correct number of times. For one hundred they used the word '*ikulu*', but it was generally agreed that this had not been in their original counting [177] terms, but had been brought in when the Zulu Bible came to them with the first Scottish missionaries.

Ngoni history

814 To a people like the Ngoni whose remembered past was one of migrations, conquests and settlement in a new country, their history was no dead verbal record but a living reminder [186] of their past achievements, and of their cultural and political differences from the people around them in Nyasaland. There were many occasions in Ngoni village life, especially in the villages of chiefs and heads of leading clans when recitals of history took place. Frequent references were made to historical events in songs, court cases, when visiting Ngoni came, in the vernacular readers used in the Scottish Mission

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. 814
Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on [224]
Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry [172]
grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous secessions from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Ciwere had gone. All the people shouted "Ciwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni 814
succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the 871
schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Cibambo, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred 173
to historical events which were illustrated in songs or record- 537
ed in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, 791
called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni 177
Christian leaders went further than this. They used the 173
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 parallel of the Jews of the Old Testament preparing the way
177 for the Christian era to illustrate and drive home their belief
797 that they, the Ngoni, had prepared the way for the Christian Gospel in Nyasaland. 'Were we not also a people who hated idols and images? We too tried to reach the Great God through our ancestor spirits, but we failed, until the mission came to teach us.' 'We held together the people of this land under one rule so that the missionaries could travel safely and spread the Gospel teaching.' These beliefs were stated so often that they became almost standard formula, and the incongruity of this picture with some of the warlike situations recorded by the earliest missionaries was ignored and forgotten. In the churches, where the people sat on mats, Sunday by Sunday, facing their Ngoni ministers, rising to sing, in
[533] their typical Ngoni harmonies, Christian hymns set to former Ngoni war tunes—in this setting Ngoni history was brought home, interwoven with the new teaching, to young adults who formed the majority of the congregation. For Ngoni elders it was something more than a reminder of their past. It was setting the Ngoni people in a special relationship to
[186] the European missionaries and the new learning, compensating for the passing of military power and political supremacy by establishing Ngoni cultural superiority over their neighbours. This gave some spiritual reassurance to a people in the throes of political change, and it was a lesson which lost none of its significance for the young adults who heard it.

Ngoni law

671 'There was one law for all the people. No one could be ignorant of the law.' These were the words, quoted in Chapter I, which the Ngoni used frequently to describe the importance
[182] of law in their culture, its role in the political unification of their own and subject peoples, and the responsibility, laid on all adults, for knowledge of the law and conformity with its demands. An incident in a court of law, which was unfor-
692 gettable to an anthropologist, was a case in which a chief sat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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342

22, 23. Herd boys

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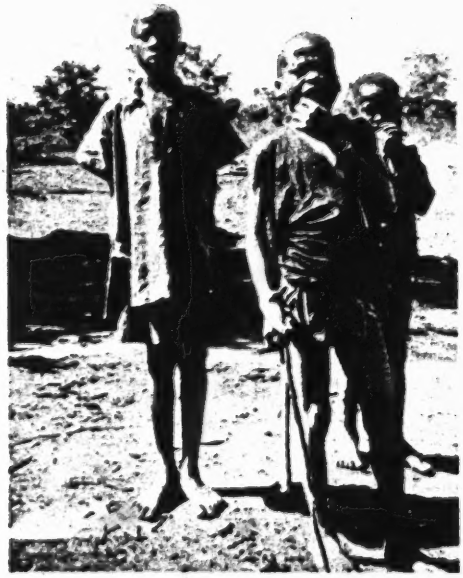
516



[facing page 128]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in judgement on his own son, a young man of twenty-one, 692
for committing adultery with the wife of a man of a former
slave family. The husband brought the case against the [684]
chief's son, and the chief ordered the man to speak truly and [694]
not be afraid. The case was heard amid the most deathly [695]
silence. In awarding a heavy penalty of compensation against
his son, the chief spoke of the central position of law in Ngoni
life, and of the fact, so sharply brought out by the case, that
the law was no respecter of persons.

Young adults, boys and girls, were held personally re- 672
sponsible for breaches of the law which they had commited.
Penalties were awarded against them as individuals, even
though they often could not pay the compensation without
the help of their father and his family. They were expected 867
to become acquainted with the law in various ways. One
was by conformity to accepted social codes of behaviour, in-
stilled into them by their elders, particularly in such matters
as sex relations, respect for property, avoidance of slander
and of injury by violence. Another way of learning how the
law operated, as well as the principles upon which the case-
law was built, was by attending the courts, and listening [695]
carefully to the cross-examinations as well as to the judge-
ments. Young people were expected also to ask their fathers,
and elders generally, about points of law which they had not
understood, or had confused with some of the practices of the
local people. The onus was upon young adults for acquiring
this knowledge of the law as well as for behaving in accord-
ance with it. We shall see in the next chapter how the Ngoni [577]
regarded being law-abiding as one of their basic cultural
traits, as well as being evidence of the individual character
of a young adult.

Ngoni traditional skills

We made a distinction, albeit a rather tentative one, at the 128
beginning of this chapter between certain kinds of tradi-
tional knowledge which we have been describing up to this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

372
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24. Learning to make fire

25. Explaining how to do it

[facing page 129]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

128 point, and other kinds of knowledge which in Ngoni culture were the basis for performing certain traditional activities. This second part of the chapter I have called traditional skills, to avoid the clumsiness of constantly differentiating between knowledge, skill and activities. Again, as in the first part of the chapter, we have to be selective, and I have
128 chosen a few out of the typical Ngoni skills taught to young
868 adults to make them efficient producers in the village economy, able to manage and direct various units of workers, and to be 'good company' in those pursuits which were for leisure time enjoyment. The young men's traditional skills which we
[462] shall look at are the care of cattle, hunting and some of their crafts; the young women's are the care of property, the storage and use of food-stuffs and some women's crafts. At the end of the chapter we shall look at certain Ngoni 'arts', which demanded individual and corporate skill of a special nature.

Men's skills: Care of cattle

868 The senior herd-boys, sons of cattle-owners, carried consider-
able responsibilities for the herds under their care during
233 the day. By the time they gave up herding they had learned a great deal about cattle. Understanding about what constituted good herding had been handed on to them by their seniors, and they were well aware that losing an animal, failing to find good grazing so that the beasts became thin, letting them escape into the cultivated fields—all these were signs of bad herding and they would be punished accordingly by the cattle-owners. The daily scrutiny of the herds by the owners was made the occasion for blame or commendation. Every evening the owners of the cattle stood by the kraal gate as the boys drove the animals in, and the head herd-boys reported to the owners if a cow was sick, or if a bull had been mating.

Cattle-owners, since they were anxious that any cases of illness should be promptly reported, made a point of calling

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 561 severed portions. On branches of fresh leaves, brought by the younger herd-boys, were piled the sections of the animal, down to the last bit of intestine, for distribution according to a fixed Ngoni pattern.

231 825 A senior man of the house owning the beast, when all was ready, 'counted' all the parts, that is he named each part, head, horns, tail, feet, joints and internal organs, and each was pointed out to him as being present. The herd-boys stand-[868] ing round learned the names of the organs and the sections of the animal, and heard the names and status of the men to whom the parts were assigned. The herd-boys of the family of the owner were given certain symbolic parts: an ear, an eye and the nose, for hearing, seeing and smelling; parts of an artery and of an intestine as controlling the blood flow and the waste material, and the rectum as ejecting waste; and the foot for walking steadily and fast.

Some of the meat was roasted over a fire, parts like the 252 stomach and intestines were cleaned and boiled, some was [251] dried slowly on a rack over a fire of green wood, and put in fibre bags for keeping. The blood was taken to the head woman of the house owning the herd. She cooked it with the fat round the kidneys till it coagulated and formed a dish, salty and meaty, much liked by the Ngoni, and rather akin to black pudding. The women also took over any spare fat and rendered it down and clarified it to use as [278] unguents.

233 868 The young adult who had had six or seven years of herding cattle and had advanced to be a senior herd-boy, had acquired not only certain manual skills such as those just described, but also some knowledge of the anatomy of cattle, some idea of the social attitudes towards cattle and their ownership, and some idea of their economic value to the Ngoni. For certain restricted ritual purposes, a cow in calf had to be killed for sacrifice, and herd-boys saw the foetus removed when the cow was cut up. They were also often present at the birth of calves in the bush, and had to wait

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [248] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 177 233 234

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 natural translation for Ngoni young men to become butchers
233 and dairymen, if they could apprentice themselves to a rela-
234 tive, or if their father could put up the necessary capital outlay for starting independently. This conversion of knowledge and traditional skill into a channel offering higher rewards in cash incomes found the young Ngoni adult well prepared to earn his living.

Hunting

224 There was an aura of manhood and of distinction about all forms of hunting among the Ngoni. They did it because they enjoyed it, and not seriously to augment their family's food supply. There were two main corporate forms of hunting: the chase, when hare and deer were hunted with dogs; and killing lions and leopards. The first was the pursuit of a Ngoni gentleman which no one wanted to miss during the right season; and the second was the act of warriors defending themselves and their cattle and villages from marauders.

Ngoni boys in their herding days acquired some of the
868 skills needed later for hunting with the men. They made
224 traps to catch birds from the hair of cows tails or smeared bird lime on branches. They developed great adroitness at hitting birds on the wing with knobkerries. In these pursuits, which for them were half fun, half to get bits of extra food, they were training their eye, learning to observe the habits of birds and small animals, learning to track them, and developing that combination of patience, prompt action and accuracy of aim essential to successful hunting.

Some of the Ngoni men liked to go off hunting on their own, usually those who had a gun. Fathers used to take their sons on such hunting trips, and use the opportunity to teach them how to track successfully, how to put up with hunger and thirst on long marches, how to load and fire a gun. One young man described how his father used to point out to him on such trips the birds and butterflies in the bush. On one trip his father taught him to use his muzzle-loading gun, how

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to carry it safely when loaded and how to aim carefully. His father, who was a noted preacher, then likened aiming in shooting to aims in life: 'There are many things in the world, and when you see them you will think that you can have them all at once. But you will fail if you have no aim and do not choose what you want to aim at.' 868 224

The 'chase', the main Ngoni form of hunting in a group, took place in the hot dry season, after the grass fires and before the first rains fell. A leading man who wanted to hunt sent messengers to neighbouring villages to announce that a hunt would be held on a certain day in such and such an area. The form of the message was the same as that for mobilization for war. The villagers turned out in companies according to their old military formations; and on the night before the hunt they slept apart from their wives, as when mobilized for a campaign. On reaching the hunting site, the slope of a hill, or the head of a valley, or a shallow depression, the important people were in the centre, the ordinary men around them and the youths on the wing. All could come to the hunt, masters and servants alike. 224 [221]

Etiquette was strict about the kill. The first man who wounded the game with his spear called out his name, the second who inflicted a wound did the same, and so did the man who dealt the final blow. All those three were entitled to some part of the animal according to his share in the killing, and part was set aside for the 'owner' of the hunt. Spears were used in this kind of hunt, and those who had no spears, chiefly the non-Ngoni servants and lesser villagers, used long hunting-knives and knobkerries. No guns were taken on this kind of chase, but dogs accompanied the huntsmen. These dogs were trained for hunting and tracking game, and were lean and fierce but under control by their owners. Accompanying the main body of huntsmen were skilled trackers who knew the area well and could guide the hunt, calling out at intervals one of the Ngoni war-cries: 'Listen. Do you hear me? I say the game is over there.'

224 After the hunt the tally of kills was reckoned up, the game was carried home by the young men, and on the return to [262] the villages the meat was cooked and eaten by the men at the kraal gate. This was the occasion for going over all [521] the episodes of the chase, the skill of So-and-so, the fine organizing of the hunt by its 'owner'. No one mentioned the misses, no one's feelings were hurt, and there was a warm feeling of united and contented sharing in a good day's sport.

Lion-hunting was organized differently. Only former warriors and well-known huntsmen were called, and they sometimes took their sons with them as carriers. Guns as well as spears were taken, though the Ngoni liked to say, and it was often true, that they killed lions with spears only. Tracking a lion was dangerous and difficult, and when it was located in a patch of tall grass or reeds, the huntsmen made a circle round it, ready to attack when it broke cover. As in the chase, the one who stabbed the lion first, second and finally was noted. The dead lion was hoisted on poles slung from the shoulders of young men, and carried to the village where the hunt was organized. Here the party was welcomed and given food, the heroes were acclaimed, and the headman and seniors led the way to the village of the clan head, who called his men together to rejoice. When the augmented party reached the chief's or Paramount's village, [535] where all lions had to be taken, a war-dance took place in [555] the kraal, as of warriors returning from a campaign. The killer of the lion came out in front of the rest and danced his individual war-dance; he was hailed as a hero and new epithets were added to his praise names. The whole party [273] was given beer, a beast was killed for a meat feast, and then [574] the party thanked the Paramount in traditional fashion and went home.

It was in lion-hunting that young adults who were taken along felt the spice of danger, the thrill of success, and witnessed the pride of recognition for the successful killer by the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

476 having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river
342 with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

463 Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established
[177] and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft.
281 Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from
[411] skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons,
322 wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most
[413] Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what
285 was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope
283 for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

534 Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Women's skills: Guardianship of property

Ngoni social organization, as we saw in Chapter I, placed the guardianship of all wealth except cattle in the hands of the women who were heads of houses. As a Ngoni girl grew towards adulthood and the time drew nearer when she would marry and leave her home for a strange village, the leading women of her father's house initiated her into the skills needed to create and preserve the forms of property for which she would some day be responsible. 429 462 868

First among these skills came the care of the hut and compound. The framework and roof of the huts were built by men, but the walls were mudded and the floors of the hut and veranda were strengthened and polished by women. Ngoni women of good family did not often do the actual plastering of mud upon the wooden framework of the hut. It was considered too dirty and exhausting a job for them to do, but they had to know how it should be done, and what standards of good work involved, in order that they might later instruct others. During a hut building Ngoni girls might be seen tucking up their clothes and rather half-heartedly slapping mud on the walls, to the good-humoured jesting of the village women who were vigorous and expert at the job. The girl's grandmother stood by and said at intervals: 'That is too thick; it will fall off. Fill up those cracks. Smooth over those joins,' and so on. The girls shrugged their shoulders and obeyed while Grandmother was watching, but gave up as soon as she went away. 462 342

The flat-ended flails with which the floor was beaten were heavy and girls were generally unable to use them expertly, but they were made to watch the process, with its seemingly endless beating of the earth floor compounded of river mud, ant-hill clay and cowdung. Once the floor was beaten so that it was level and all cracks had disappeared, the Ngoni girls were made to get down on their knees and learn how to polish it with damp ashes and a smear of cowdung, rubbed [413] 356 868 [237]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

356 in with a smooth round stone. This too was hard work, but every now and then the grandmother, watching and supervising, handed out a lump of clarified fat which quickly brought up a fine polish. The girls were told that this high polish was necessary so that people might sit with pleasure on the floor, and so that all dust and refuse showed up clearly in the morning sweeping of the hut. The floor of the veranda was similarly polished, and, as we saw in Chapter [351] IV, the more important huts had a smeared and polished space all round the front.

353 In arranging the inside of the hut girls were taught the right places to put the water-jars and other pots, the baskets and mats, and the bundles of cloth and ornaments belonging to the 'house' wrapped in mats or packed neatly in wooden or tin chests. Brass and bead ornaments, and special cloths [301] for use by men and women on ceremonial occasions, were [292] all kept in the huts of leading women. The ornaments worn [768] by such a woman during her lifetime were returned to the 'house' after her death and looked after in the hut of her successor. These possessions and heirlooms were periodically 356 brought out into the sun, and shaken and aired or polished. A housewife was publicly shamed if she did not take care of such property, and people spread stories that she was careless about keeping the wealth of the house in good repair. Girls were reminded of this when they were called to help at such a 'spring cleaning', and told as a warning: 'So-and-so in that village over there, she let the insects eat the cloth of the house. The mildew spoiled the bead-bands and waistcoats. The green rust came on the brass wire. She was shamed when men spoke about it.'

251 Part of the property of each household was the food stored after harvest or gathered from the bush. Formerly the Ngoni stored their staple cereal in pits dug in the kraal, mudded and fired and covered with a flat rock. The same kind of pit was sometimes made in the side veranda for storing sweet potatoes, but nothing was stored in the kraal.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV. Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and their presence in the compound conferred importance on their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter, dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats, spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to have a high standard of household management in her new home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish was being prepared. They watched every movement of their mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on, measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 round covered food basket, the side dishes in small covered
[415] earthenware bowls. Among the traditional Ngoni dishes learned by girls were the following:

Gruel made of cow's milk and maize flour (for young
252 children).
262 Whole maize boiled with beans and round peas.
Sweet potatoes boiled, peeled and mashed with tomatoes.
Beans and finger millet flour cooked separately and then stirred together.
Pumpkins cooked with ground-nut paste.
Ground-nut flour cooked with scraps of meat.
Whole tall millet pounded with ground-nuts.
Pot-roast chicken with tomatoes, onions and ground-nuts.

In Ngoni households meat when cooked in large quantities,
262 not just as broth made from bones and titbits, was served on
415 a special wooden meat-dish, round or oblong with rounded ends, and supported on three sturdy legs. This meat-dish was an integral part of the equipment of every 'true Ngoni'
[264] household, and, like the French housewife's omelet pan, was after use wiped clean and polished with clarified fat. The outside of these meat-dishes was often decorated with 'poker
[531] work' designs by the maker, and such decorated and shining meat-dishes were treasured as heirlooms. Other, but rare,
415 heirlooms were hammered brass pots with a flat bottom and turned over edge, of the pattern known in India as *dekchies*. The Ngoni women who owned them declared they had been brought by their ancestors from the south.

All the extra fat when a beast was killed was sent to the
251 women of the 'house' in whose herd it was, and this fat was cooked until it was clarified, and then stored. Butter was made by shaking milk in a gourd, and it was also clarified
[234] for keeping. Formerly milk curds were made daily by the senior women and kept to mature in a jar before being eaten. Only in a few Ngoni households was this still done.

273 Beer was made on special occasions when the women had

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of 273
sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their 281
women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and 294
sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The 177
use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni 301
families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One [531]
was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form standardized geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the bead 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once 302
was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and [412]
combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] beadbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They 301 were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain 356 standards in their homes and in their persons, which were 515 held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This 182 emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government [177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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26. Making clay figures

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[facing page 144]

27. Ear piercing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 181 356 515 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infect their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again. 825 356 [485]

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene which made them insist that there should be no spitting or nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An ingenious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose. 515 356 [413]

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean. 515 [576]

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up 264

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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28. Learning to carry wood

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29. Learning to pound

[facing page 145]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

264 might be a chore but when it was done in the open it was also an advertisement of high standards.

The art of speech

191 The Ngoni believed that as boys and girls neared adult life they should be well drilled in the art of speaking, because it
195 was regarded as a basic Ngoni characteristic. We have seen how adults watched children tossing riddles at each other to test, among other things, their quickness of speech. Girls had been watched telling stories to see how they held their audience and showed a sense of dramatic values in recitation.

In all the standardized forms of speech such as greetings, messages, announcements, responses, young adults were expected to speak clearly and correctly, without mumbling but not too loudly. When relating an event, such as a visit, a bull-fight, or when giving evidence in the courts, they had to give an orderly account without repetition. Otherwise they were told: 'You are speaking badly. Tell it again, in order, from the beginning.' An ordered sequence of the narrative was always demanded, and, as we shall see in the next chapter, they used proverbs frequently to impress on people speaking the need to get to the point, while leaving out nothing of importance.

The art of words used with music in songs was regarded as
533 a special gift and those who possessed it were encouraged to develop it. Inspiration for words and music was as we have seen something which came 'from the chest' and was regarded almost as if it was a special kind of breathing. Some used this gift to sing with a solo instrument such as a stringed lyre. Others used it to compose new songs for *ngoma* dances.
[177] Others again wrote Christian hymns and composed music for them, or set them to traditional Ngoni tunes.

The art of dancing

535 'Ngoni people think that their dances show their personality,
[828] their manhood, that which was born in them.' Phrases like

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

this were used by Ngoni elders to try to express their feelings about their own dances, and were often said to me when we were watching youths and girls practising the *ngoma* dance, the only one allowed in the Ngoni kingdoms for Ngoni young people. On moonlight nights or in the late afternoons, young men and girls took very seriously the perfection of this art of dancing, through practising over and over again a special movement, or a section of the dance. As we have seen, they danced without drums, and all movements and changes of movement were made by a change of voice in the singing, prompted by a sudden impulse in the leader. 535

The competitive *ngoma* dances took place after harvest in the dry season, and were heralded by one village sending a message to another: 'The *ngoma* of the village of X will come to dance on such and such a day.' As many as fifty girls and sixty or more young men formed a village 'team', and in some dances which I saw they walked eight to ten miles to the other village, and then danced all day. Both teams wore their best clothes, with bead ornaments and headbands, coloured scarves and headcloths. The young men in the dance carried small shields and knobkerries or small axes. The girls had long rods or spears held upside down. 535 628

The visiting team danced first, and the adults of the home village were the audience and the judges, deciding, after both teams had performed, which one had 'danced most strongly'. The singing was kept up continuously, the song changing to mark a change of dance step, or a change in the relative positions of the girls' and boys' lines. The points of excellence, as judged by the spectators, were the perfect timing of girls and youths together, and the strong beating of the youths' feet on the dry dung floor of the kraal. When the verdict was announced, the leader of the defeated team went up to the leader of the victorious team and shook hands in Ngoni fashion, saying: 'Yes, we are defeated. Your *ngoma* was stronger.'

VIII

Personality and Character

Personality, culture and character

128 The threads of teaching and learning whose ends were grasped in Chapter II have been followed through the intervening five chapters, and our task now is to see what pattern they have made of the system of training given by the Ngoni to their children. The threads have eventually been twisted 121 together to form two separate but linked strands, one the achievement of the Ngoni basic personality and the other the development of individual character. In this chapter I am going to use personality in the sense derived from Linton and Kluckhohn, namely the sum total of the traits which are desired by a society and form part of its culture, and which are instilled into children in the system of training set up by the society. Personality therefore since it is regarded as an aim in child training is a social product. The ideal personality is held up to the growing generation, not so much as a total achievement, but as the acquisition of a number of traits of behaviour, skills and knowledge. The Ngoni basic personality [157] therefore consisted of common personality elements in adults, [155] which, as Kluckhohn says, were largely a product of learning, and that learning was directed and controlled by the system of training. Character on the other hand I am going to use as the sum total of the individual's response to his training. It therefore includes his personal adjustment to the training given by the society, and, as a result, his acquiring of some or many of the basic personality traits, and hence the degree of his approximation to the ideal personality. Over and above

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

this overt response to training, character is the distinctive individual twist given to the basic personality, together with certain special abilities and individual traits which might be in harmony with, or at variance with, the basic personality traits. When an individual showed abilities and traits which harmonized with the concept of the basic personality, he was recognized as a 'good character'. If however he developed traits which eventually showed his failure to adjust to the basic personality, then he was, or would probably become, a 'bad character'. The 'badness' was his responsibility due to a series of choices which he had made, though it might also reflect on the training given in his earlier years.

The Ngoni had a word which very nearly expressed their concept of individual character. They spoke of a person's 'own human nature' (*Ubuntu*), 'the human nature of himself'. Thus they recognized, as studies of personality and culture are bound to recognize, two distinct results of child training, arising from the interweaving of the threads of teaching and learning, namely the development of young men and women into Ngoni adults whom the society regarded as fulfiling, at least to some extent, their ideals of behaviour, skills and knowledge; and the development of young individual adults, distinguishable each from his fellows by the individual character he displayed before his elders who either approved or disapproved of him.

Anthropologists on the whole would agree with Kluckhohn that so far they have studied personality as a socially directed product rather than the unique product of each individual's growth and development. Individual reactions and responses are recognized as being primarily in the field of psychology. But the anthropologist and the educationist can make some claim to understanding this essential complement to individual personality studies. On the one hand they find the society they are studying recognizing values which do not always fit into an accepted basic personality pattern. On the other hand they become aware that individual reactions to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 learning, and the end product of a system of training, can never be as stereotyped and as uniform as some of the exponents of personality and culture studies would have us believe.

The outlines of the ideal Ngoni personality have really been 128 sketched in the narrative chapters, though without stopping to point out specifically that this or that aim in training is to foster a Ngoni personality trait. I shall therefore in this chapter put together these traits, and, to introduce a new element and so avoid too much repetition, some of these traits will be associated with Ngoni proverbs. But before doing this I shall discuss those Ngoni values which I believe were the foundations for their child training.

The Ngoni system of values

121 The chief reason for introducing at the end of this book such an involved and difficult subject as values is to suggest that 128 there is an inevitable connexion in any society or culture between an ideal personality and the values cherished by that society. It is therefore reasonable to follow up, and to some extent to sum up, the preceding narrative chapters of this study with a glance, for it cannot be more than that, at the fundamental beliefs and values which impelled the Ngoni people to pursue certain lines in bringing up their children. We have seen that there was a continuous and clear direction 181 in training children which I have called a system. The more deeply one analyses the nature of Ngoni culture and the organization of Ngoni society, the clearer it becomes that there were certain definite values which they clung to as a result of their experience and of their reflection upon their past history and present and future prospects. In so far as these values were integrated into an intelligible whole, we can call them a system of values, but the recognition of such a system does not preclude the recognition also of some isolated values which do not appear to fit into an integrated system.

121 One of the major difficulties in examining the values of a non-literate culture is the inevitable subjective approach of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the observer or anthropologist. One such observer might 121
pursue the line suggested by the use of different persons of the verb and different pronouns in personal contacts, and the values inherent in such standardized usage. Another might choose to examine the institution of the boys' dormitory and its contribution to the total value system. Another might take the different emphases in bringing up boys and girls in relation to the fact that men were the permanent element in village society and that girls left the village on marriage. A dozen more examples could be taken from the narrative chapters of this study and usefully followed up. They would all illustrate, in the first instance, the subjective nature of the initial selection, whether the final results of several different investigations made a coherent integrated system or not. They would also illustrate the uncharted area of such studies, where there is little to guide the observer and the analyst, in spite of the growing interest in recent years in studying the value systems of non-literate societies.

Among the leads which I found most useful has been Pro- 121
fessor Monica Wilson's *Good Company*, to which I referred in Chapter I, where she associated cultural values with the age- 114
village system in Nyakusa society. I owe much also to help and suggestions given to me at Harvard by Professor Cora Du Bois and Dr Ethel Albert, and to Professor Kluckhohn and his associates in discussions on their published and projected series on the study of values.

The relation between Ngoni values and their ideal per- 128
sonality pattern is based on the study of their society and culture described in my earlier book, and on the analysis of their system of bringing up children in this book. I referred in Chapter II to certain values as group values and to others as personal values. I am not sure that the distinction is a valid one, but it is a convenient form of classification and it corresponds closely to the Ngoni way of thinking. They were 829
continually referring to their society, or a local community in it, as if it were an integrated whole, and to the effect of

829 individuals upon the cohesion of that society through their behaviour and actions. This was illustrated in the phrase so constantly used by them, and referred to already several times: 'He is spoiling the land,' or the converse, quoted in Chapter I: 'Young people were well taught that this behaviour was right for the upbuilding of the land.'

181 Among these so-called group values the first of all, and pre-
829 eminent above all, was the value of keeping together. Taught by bitter experience that personal quarrels could lead to political secessions and to the diminution of the power and influence of the Ngoni kingdoms, the focus of much of their thinking was on maintaining cohesion whether in small units or in large. I think the Ngoni were the only people in Nyasa-
[641] land where individuals and families were not allowed to
[166] leave the villages to live elsewhere without permission of the
[621] chief or headman. In the local courts there were frequent cases in which the accused had been guilty of leaving with-
[687] out permission. This illustration could be used also to indicate the second of the group values. I have called it dominance for want of a better term. It involves the exercise of authority, political and legal, over their own and subject peoples, the determination to exact obedience, influenced by a feeling of paternal responsibility for all over whom authority was claimed. This was an ambivalent sentiment affecting the attitude of the ruler and his relations with the ruled, and was the basis of the court case quoted in Chapter VI, when a chief made a judgement against his own son for adultery with a poor man's wife. The third group value was that of mutual aid and trust within the in-group, in order to secure its cohesion. This was the integrating principle of the 'house' system, described briefly in Chapter I and mentioned in many other contexts. Mutual trust and aid had been in the past the main element in the behaviour of men in their own regiments, in the mutual relation of warrior with warrior, both when on
181 campaigns and when living together in the villages.
577 The four personal values were inherent in the acceptance

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and demonstration of the group values. The first two, physical and moral strength, and working hard and persistently at allotted tasks, were, as we have seen, instilled into children from the stage of second teeth onward. The second two, dignity and wisdom, were to a large extent values implicit in adult life, and in the case of wisdom seen specially in the contribution made by senior men and women to community life. Dignity, however, had an ambivalent meaning, as did dominance among the group values. It covered not only language, deportment, self-control, accepted rank and precedence within the hierarchy on all social occasions, but the more subtle and very typical Ngoni attitude towards 'losing face'. In the sense that young adults and even older children hated being rebuked in public because it made them lose face, it belonged to younger people as well as to older, to those called the 'humble ones' as well as to the 'great ones'. 181 577

All the emphases in child training on language, deportment, self-control, manners and inter-personal behaviour of all kinds were related to the value of human dignity, and to the concept of a person's 'human nature' as being something to be respected and built up, and carefully guarded, since it was very vulnerable. [867] [828]

At the end of Chapter II when some Ngoni values were mentioned, wisdom was contrasted with cleverness, and equated with knowledge, good judgement, ability to control others and keep the peace, and skill in the use of speech. The young Ngoni headmaster in the first village described in Chapter I said reflectively one evening, after listening to some of the elders talking with me about Ngoni values, 'Yes, we are different in our generation. We are proud, but they had wisdom.' It was an acknowledgement of the pretensions which his generation had begun to claim as a result of the new knowledge in the schools. It was also a recognition that the accumulated wisdom of the generations of his father and grandfather had in it an understanding of values which the younger generation had not yet acquired. [184]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

181 The four so-called personal values will be reflected in the
577 Ngoni personality traits which we are going on to discuss.
828 There are however two values which did not appear to fit
[182] into any integrated system, and which yet recurred as
themes in Ngoni culture, and here and there in the ideas
inherent in child training. One was the theme of childhood
innocence, which was much deeper and more subtle than
merely keeping children in ignorance of sexual life and inter-
course. The other was the value set on the 'gentle' man. He
was a man who appeared to be almost wholly self-controlled,
able to have normal sexual intercourse with his wives but
not always thinking about women, showing sternness but
without anger, being just but also merciful. These were the
qualities looked for in the man responsible for the guardian-
ship of certain head villages where the ancestor cult was
[769] carried on, and who was entrusted with the ritual associated
[778] with the ancestor cult. In the more ancient ritual, such as
carrying the sacred emblem before the armies, it was young
boys, exemplifying the childhood innocence theme, who
were entrusted with this charge. In the more modern con-
[793] texts, many of the outstanding Ngoni ministers in the church
were recognized and revered as 'gentle' men.

The Ngoni ideal personality

577 Chapters IV and V, as well as Chapters VI and VII, showed
that there were certain elements in the Ngoni ideal of what
their children should be like which were common to young
men and women, to boys and girls, while others were empha-
sized only for girls or for boys. Among the common traits we
have already seen the outstanding emphasis on 'respect' in
all forms of behaviour and in all kinds of contact with older
people, and with others who should be 'honoured'. Part of
this respect was shown in obedience, and with this obedience
in all the detailed inter-personal relations with senior people
was associated, in the individual's relations to society as a
whole, being law-abiding and complying with Ngoni law.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

As we saw in Chapter VII ignorance of the law was no excuse 577
for breaking the law, and the positive virtue of being law-abiding was constantly emphasized in families, villages and in the kingdom generally. Inherent in showing respect and being obedient and law-abiding was the much stressed quality of self-control. Early travellers remarked on the restrained, dignified and courteous behaviour in Ngoni villages, which was my experience also, and especially in the vicinity of leading Ngoni families. This kind of self-control was taught as we have seen in a great variety of contexts, [867] from avoiding greedy and noisy eating as young children to putting up with being ordered about in the boys' dormitory, and from the insistence on the decorous forms of greeting and thanks to the suppression of any overt fear or pain at the puberty ceremonies.

Two other qualities were emphasized in child training since they were expected of all Ngoni people in inter-personal relations. One was generosity in sharing anything that a person had. It was a quality demanded of everyone, from the small child who was made to unclench his fist in which he was hiding three ground-nuts and give two of them to his fellows, to the big chief whose duty at a feast was to see that everyone had enough and to send food from his own portion to anyone who looked hungry. A number of proverbs called 577
attention to the value of generosity and to the social attitude 598
towards meanness, which was felt to be despicable. 'If you do not play with other people the grass will grow round your hut' implied that isolation and social ostracism would be the retaliation to a mean man. The reciprocal element in generosity was always implicit in the teaching and the practice and was illustrated in the proverb, often said hopefully by visitors when hospitality was not very readily forthcoming: 'I have sent my food basket to someone; the basket will return to me.'

The other quality was the conventional display of sympathy, especially at times of mourning for the dead, but also 577
on occasions of severe loss, such as cattle dying, or illness or

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

577 accident. These visits and expressions of sympathy could not be omitted without grave social disapproval. If a young man or woman was absent from the village at the time of death or loss, their first duty on returning was to go and express sympathy with the sufferer. To assist in these condolences so that the speaker and the hearer would readily understand each [538] other, proverbs were used such as: 'If the pot is broken it is broken indeed,' and, 'When water is poured out it cannot be gathered up.' The Ngoni disliked the noisy and unrestrained [765] forms of mourning which they saw among the people round them. To them the quiet visit and the note of resignation in the proverbs used fully conveyed the sympathy they wished to express.

577 All through the later stages of training children and young 191 adults the importance of speaking well was emphasized. 195 This at first referred to correct language and being audible 538 but not noisy. Later, as we saw in Chapter VII, the art of speech was held up as a Ngoni characteristic, and many proverbs brought this out in ordinary conversation as well as on more formal occasions such as giving evidence in the courts. When a group of people, generally women, kept up a continuous meaningless chatter, onlookers, generally men, shrugged their shoulders and said, 'They are preparing meat without salt.' When a person talked on and on about a matter which was being discussed without getting to the point, impatient listeners, or the councillor in the law courts said: 'Your wisdom is like mushrooms which come after the cooking is finished,' or, more scathingly, 'You are the feet of a centipede' which wander aimlessly with many steps but no direction. Proverbs were not always a form of rebuke; they could also be a commendation. When a person brought out clearly the point of an argument the listeners said, 'You have rung a little bell'; and when after a prolonged discussion or the hearing of a case in the courts the audience accepted a decision as conclusive and just, they said, 'The upper and the lower teeth meet together.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

When the Ngoni talked about the separate ideal personalities of men and women, they emphasized the training needed for younger men, and to some extent also for younger women. Senior men and women were expected to possess special qualities due to their age and status and experience. It was recognized that the limited responsibilities of young men before marriage gave them little authority in village and family affairs. Since each family however was bringing up its girls to leave them on marriage and to take the good name of the family elsewhere, there was less distinction made between the qualities desired in younger married women and older ones than there was between the two groups of men.

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The ideal personality of Ngoni women

This had four main aspects: physical capacity and appearance, relationship to her husband and his relatives, competence in household management, and general reputation for justice and wisdom.

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We talked in Chapter III about the connexion in Ngoni thinking between women being healthy and strong and being able to bear healthy children. In the marriage negotiations and even at the final ceremony itself in the bridegroom's village, there were formalized standard questions put by the bridegroom's representatives about the health of the girl and her family, and these were replied to also in conventional phrases. Such inquiries about health had been made secretly long before the final ceremony, and indeed before any formal approaches had been made which led to the betrothal. But the fact that they were made in public on two distinct occasions, at the preliminary visit of the man's representatives and at the marriage itself, underlined the importance of health and its relation to child-bearing capacity in the ideal Ngoni woman.

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We saw in the last chapter that physical strength for continuous hard manual work in the household and in the

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day
[302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one
[291] fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony,
[516] her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

Many references have been made already to the relation-
577 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife,
602 especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognized by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

Competence in household management, being a success-
577 ful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if
592 she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

wife. We have talked in Chapters IV and VII of her duties 577
in organizing food supplies, supervising cooking, and that 592
supreme test of competence: dividing out the food so that
all had a fair share. The same high standard of skill was [264]
expected in the general care and supervision of the compound, the children and the household staff. Ngoni women, like their menfolk, were proud of being able to supervise other people and organize life around them, to control others satisfactorily, to hear complaints and to pacify quarrels. The proverb 'The tooth laughs to no purpose', meaning that [538]
angry people show their teeth but with no merriment, was often heard when Ngoni women intervened to stop two quarrelling girls or to prevent an irate helper getting angry with the nurse girls.

The traits of justice and wisdom were important elements 577
in the foundation of a Ngoni married woman's reputation.
These were judged by her ability to allocate fair shares of 538
food to servants and helpers, and to adjudicate wisely in women's disputes. Two proverbs referred particularly to dividing out food and were said about women who were either careless or stingy, and did not give their helpers a fair share. 'The finger-nails are surfeited' meant that the important people had eaten heartily without thought for others; and 'She has sliced one side only' had the same connotation, that those who had the supplies were keeping too much for themselves. Two other proverbs drove home this principle of *noblesse oblige* when emphasizing the responsibilities of married women: 'The elephant is not made heavy by its trunk,' and 'If the cows do not produce milk the herdsman is responsible.'

The ideal personality of Ngoni men

As we have just said, there was a definite personality pattern 577
for young men whether married or not, which emphasized 562
special qualities looked for in them, since on the whole they 561
had relatively little authority or responsibility in village

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

577 affairs. Boys and young men were expected to be physically
562 strong, and tough in the sense of being able to do hard tasks,
561 walk long distances, dance for hours on end, and put up
[827] with hardships without grumbling. The senior men, as we saw earlier in this chapter hated to see idleness and set great store by young men working hard and persistently at any tasks undertaken. Several proverbs illustrated this quality
[538] and were used with effect when boys were found hanging round in the village doing nothing: 'Loitering eats the owner,' 'Laziness is eating dung,' 'The garden will not be tilled if you stop hoeing it.'

577 Other qualities desired in young men were all connected
829 with the values of staying together as a family and as a village group, and of fostering mutual aid and trust within the groups of males in the dormitory and in the 'house'. It was believed that they ought to be acutely sensitive to the opinion of their contemporaries, a lesson which they learned from early days in the dormitory. To an insensitive person, showing intolerance and hard-heartedness they said: 'Were you made with dog's bones?' for dogs' bones were thought
[538] to be hard and unfeeling; or, 'You have a heart like a crocodile.' A fear of social ostracism was fostered all the time and expressed in the proverb: 'The bird eats in his own field.'

577 There were innumerable proverbs about willingness to
829 co-operate in all the necessary tasks which fell to the young
538 men, such as communal hoeing described in Chapter VII, or digging the grave at a funeral. 'The eyes for seeing,' 'One arm cannot crush a louse,' 'A river grows by its little streams,' 'The heifer grows by giving it more food'—these and many others were used to admonish those who held back and to encourage those who joined in willingly. Other proverbs warned against promises of help which were not kept. 'You will eat those of the axe but not those of the hoe' was said to someone who had counted on noisy assertions of forthcoming help, like the sounds made by the chopping of an axe, and not in quiet persistent help, like the smooth almost silent

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

action of the hoe. 'They are our kin according to their eyes' was said as a reminder of misplaced trust in those who appeared to be helpful but were not really. 577 538 829

Readiness to take advice both from their age-mates and from older men was another quality held to be desirable in young men. Proverbs illustrating this were: 'He that refuses instruction will be surprised by blood,' and 'He remembers that he fell; he forgot that he was hurt.' As often with proverbs, there were others with a contrary emphasis which were sometimes used as a retort to the former ones, or in self-defence. 'The inheritance was eaten by those worthy of it' was intended as a rejoinder not to interfere in other people's affairs, when unwanted advice was offered. 'The body is felt by its owner' was sometimes said to encourage a man to stick to his own opinion. On the other hand a too abrupt rejoinder, especially to an older person, was regarded as discourteous, and onlookers said 'You cause the spittle to be dry' to express extreme disapproval.

Ngoni personality in a changing culture

The direction of the training of boys had been formerly towards military life, and towards the qualities which made effective fighting men, and emphasized loyalty to leaders and camaraderie in the regiments. This emphasis on military preparedness was however never the sole emphasis in Ngoni training, and hence when warfare came to an end, there remained traditional spheres of influence and activity which were an integral part of life in the Ngoni kingdoms, as well as new spheres of activity opened up by missions, the administration, the trading companies and the labour recruiters. 867 177 [703]

The traditional forms of activity were found in Ngoni local government which included the chief's administration and the courts of law; family and village affairs including the building up of herds and buying and selling cattle; and ritual life. The new kinds of activity included occupations such as teacher, minister, clerk, store assistant, houseboy, 463 177

463 foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group
177 involved the earning, spending and sharing of money in-
[434] comes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered
[571] opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

624 In local government and in the courts, which formed an
693 integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom, ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain
[827] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial
[562] ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

622 In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'.

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders.

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the
797 church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been
159 threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition
875 and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary
[622] behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to
[871] some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organize his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described
177 in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose
797 partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or
871 ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose per-
186 sonal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

871 Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected
463 their boys who had been to school and had entered European
554 employment away from their homes, to find work which assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

position. They wanted them to be, or to become, senior clerks, trusted store assistants, valued houseboys, foremen in charge of other men, hospital assistants. They wanted them, in other words, to be in positions where Ngoni traits would be appreciated, and where good behaviour and self-control, ability to supervise others, responsibility and initiative, obedience to orders, would be recognized and rewarded. 871 463 554 [577]

In conclusion here is a record of a conversation I heard in the village of a very senior chief, so senior that he was given the title of *Inkosi* when his subjects addressed him. The chief, who was then in his seventies, but active and vigorous, was sitting in a chair on the veranda of his hut, out of the sun's glare, with several of the senior men of the village behind him. Two young teachers in charge of a school came to greet him. They bent one knee as they squatted in front of him, as they had been taught to do as children, gave him the customary greeting, and waited in silence till he spoke. 622 871

'How is your school?'

'The classes are full and the children are learning well, *Inkosi*.'

'How do they behave?'

'Like Ngoni children, *Inkosi*.'

'What do they learn?'

'They learn reading, writing and arithmetic, scripture and geography and drill.'

'Is that education?'

'It is education, *Inkosi*.'

'No! No! Education is *very* broad, *very* deep. It is not only in books, it is learning to live. I am an old man. When I was a boy I went with the army to the Bemba war. Then the mission came and I went to school. I became a teacher. Then I was a chief. I have seen this country change, and now the young men go away to work. I tell you Ngoni children must learn how to live, and how to work and earn money, and how to build up our land. *Uyezwa na?*' (Do you hear?)

'*Yebo Inkosi*.' (Yes, O chief.)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

IX

Some Educational Reflections

Education, culture and society

121 We saw in the introduction that the main objective in this study was to see what the Ngoni parents were aiming at in bringing up their children, and how they had worked out a system which they believed suitable for their society. It was suggested that some of the aims and methods used by the Ngoni might throw light on some of the problems which faced young parents and teachers today. This does not mean of course that the methods used by the Ngoni are in any sense transferable to other peoples and other times. They were tried out in and related to a specific situation. Nor does it mean that the aims of the Ngoni in their education could be in any way compared with parental aims in bringing up children in our own day and age, and in our own society. The very sharp contrast between Ngoni life and thought, and our own ideas and our present situation, makes any kind of close comparison invalid and a waste of time. What we have to try to do, if this study has stimulated us to think more deeply about these matters, is to understand the relation between aims and methods in the Ngoni system of education, and to stretch our own concept of education beyond the limits of formal learning and regular schooling to include what many American educationists call 'adjustment to life'.

American educational thinking is turning more and more towards social and cultural anthropology as a guide to analysing educational problems in their schools, in their

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

homes, in their communities and in their national life. There are several reasons for this tendency. One is a recognition of the limitations of individual psychology as a guide to the understanding of how children grow up. This arises from the newly perceived importance of culture, in the anthropological sense of that word, as a total way of living of a specific group of people, which may be that of a fairly homogeneous large group, or of several smaller groups, differing culturally from each other but drawn together by political, economic or residential ties. Thus Ngoni culture as described in this book could be regarded as that of a small group within the Ngoni kingdom and within Ngoni villages where other people of differing cultures were to be found. A number of references were made in this study to the cultural differences within Ngoni villages in spite of the proximity of living conditions. We find the same kind of situation in many countries today, whether those of a western way of living or a non-western. The French Swiss in Switzerland for example are a distinct cultural group within the Swiss nation, and they are divided into the sub-cultural groups of Protestants and Catholics, each with a characteristic way of living which shows itself not only in differences of religious belief.

As we look round the world we see societies, even nations or parts of nations like the French Swiss, trying to hold on either to their total culture, or to those parts of it such as language, religion, forms of family life, distinctive dress and food, which seem to them to have special significance for them and their children. No cultures, or virtually none, are unaffected by modern changes brought about by political, economic or social influences and forces. And there are societies and nations anxious to change their culture in order to bring it into line with the demands of modern, mainly western, life. The educationist who is aware of other systems than his own soon realizes that an education system and what is taught in it can be used to change culture, or to perpetuate certain elements in it. This attempt to balance

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121) the forces of cultural change and cultural continuity through the education of a people is found all over the world today.

The concept of culture as a way of living, and of a specific society or social group practising that way of living, has many implications for those who are thinking about education at the present time. Readers of this book, especially those in western countries, who are unaccustomed to the ideas and language of anthropology, may find some difficulty in relating what they have thought of as principles of education to the aims and methods of the Ngoni in bringing up their children. This difficulty arises for two main reasons. One is that we in the west have to stretch and widen our ideas about education, and burst the classroom walls in our effort to see children growing up in a total culture and not only inside the limits of formal schooling. The other reason also demands an effort of imagination, for we in the west have got to appreciate and understand the differences between the growing up of children in the tight little family of father, mother and children living a separate existence in a town house or flat, and children growing up in the larger family and circle of relatives, creating family life in the wider sense used in this Ngoni study. The first kind of family life is characteristic of our urban industrial society, the second of rural life in most of the rest of the world and in many aspects of urban life in eastern and African countries as well.

The inevitable sequel, or at least it should always follow, to thinking about education as either changing a people's culture or helping to perpetuate parts of it, is to look at the effect on individual children and their growth and development. This concentration on individual development has so far been the main preoccupation of educational study in the west, and many questions arise, as was suggested in the introduction, about the effect, for example, of certain Ngoni methods of training on the development of individuals. Perhaps all students of education, and most administrators and planners too, have to ride a see-saw between adapting

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

education to the needs of society and adapting it to the needs of individual children. There is as we all know no final choice possible. Some kind of synthesis is essential, and the balance is always swinging first in one direction and then in another. And here parents, their views on education and their methods of training children in their homes, have a supremely important role to play, almost a controlling role, since they can work in with the aims of formal schooling or persistently try to counteract them. 121

Where this study might lead

'Growing up among the Ngoni' is only one of several studies of growing up in non-western societies. The societies described from this angle of child-training differ from each other structurally and culturally, but there are common elements in the studies of growing up which should be of interest, in western and non-western countries alike, to teachers and parents and all who are concerned about how children are in fact growing up, and the role of formal schooling in this process.

One of the dominant notes in modern psychological advice to young parents and to teachers is the emphasis on security for the young child. It is worth while looking at the early years of Ngoni children from this angle, and perhaps using other studies of growing up as well, examining the kind of security provided by a wide circle of relatives all living round the child's home, and all ready to meet the child's needs; and then comparing this form of security with the dependence of a young child on its mother only, which is characteristic of most small families in western urban societies.

There is another aspect of the security of Ngoni children, found too in several other growing up studies, and that is the freedom conferred on a child because he learns early in life just how to speak and how to behave to other people. This may be an unusual view of the apparent restrictions placed on language, posture, attitude, actions, displayed by a child 155

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

155 particularly towards adults. Anyone who has brought up children however knows that they are unhappy with unlimited licence in behaviour, and is aware that the learning of etiquette and manners and obedience, apparently so tiresome in its early stages, does eventually eliminate a number of perplexing choices for children, and by regulating certain relationships confers freedom in other directions. That was my reading of the Ngoni children's reactions to the somewhat formal code of manners taught from their early years and strictly enforced. Ngoni good manners did not mean that the children were coerced and subdued. They were happy, busy, friendly, helpful, endlessly inventive and full of initiative. I suggested here and there in the book that they had various outlets in the middle years of childhood for [154] aggression, jealousy, frustration. There was very little evidence of neurotic tendencies, and, except in certain instances mentioned, there was little apparent inclination to avoid social mixing with age-mates or with other groups and the obligations inherent in such mixing.

The seeming absence of frustration and overt rebellion in the years just after puberty was due to the social recognition by relatives and by the village community of the new stage reached by boys and girls, and to the increasing responsibility required of them for carrying out allotted tasks and for preparing for their future careers. There was no doubt that the outlet for youths of emigration from the villages to work for wages in the south provided a much-needed opportunity at a critical moment in their late teens. In the same way the stimulus of modern schooling, depending on the area and the type of schools in it, helped older boys and girls to look forward to further opportunities of work, of interests, and of escape from the too intimate control of their family and kinship circle and village elders.

121 Another line to be followed in these growing-up studies is the actual pattern of relationships between the parents and the children, the parents and their circle of relatives, the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

parents and the community, the children and the community, and the community and the school. There are a number of clues to follow in examining the different groups of people involved in a child's growing up, and discovering some kind of consistent pattern of relationship between them. The clues are not difficult to trace for they begin in such information as the amount of time a child spends with each group, what he learns from each group, how much authority and responsibility the group assumes for him, and so on. In this analysis it is not enough to relate each group to the children. It is important too to be aware of the personal relations between parents, relatives, community, school authorities, in terms of their opportunities for mutual contact and discussion, and their attitude towards culture change and cultural conservation. Out of such potential contacts arise the formulation of aims for home and school training, and their harmony or their conflict, and the resultant effects on the growing up of a child. 121

These two lines to be followed up, which we have just indicated, are familiar to most teachers and to many parents. The third line arising out of this study, and common to most other studies of growing up, is related to research on personality and culture and on national character. This field of studies is more controversial and more complex than the former. In the case of the Ngoni they had a more or less distinct ideal personality rooted in their culture and answering the question: what kind of people are the Ngoni and how do they want others to regard them? This ideal personality was the goal of their child-training as described in this book, but it was in the process of being modified by school teaching, by Christian teaching, and perhaps more profoundly still by the growth of Nyasaland African nationalism. The sharp outlines of the ideal personality type of Ngoni men and women were already blurred by these political and educational developments. 577 177

For readers of this book the relevance of this aspect of 157

157 Ngoni children's growing up is probably to call attention to cultural and national influences in emphasizing certain qualities in the ideal personality and in individual character.

In general, in the west, cultural influences determining
121 a way of life, and setting standards for individual behaviour are found in certain kinds of 'class' grouping, or in the environmental determinants of rural communities, 'new' towns and housing estates, slum or suburban areas. Very few western societies can show their children the sharp outline of an ideal personality which seemed so important and compelling to the Ngoni. Nevertheless behind parents' attempts to train their children or to direct their growing up lie as a rule some vague ideas about ideal personality traits or the qualities to be looked for in national character. Perhaps some searching into these fundamental motives, stimulated by this Ngoni study, could help to bring them to the surface and so assist in the harmonizing of educational aims.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Appendix

113

I

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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II

DEFINITIONS

128 CULTURE, the total way of living of a people, including kinship relations, economy, religion and magic, law, government, language, myths, child training etc.

[563] ETHNIC GROUP, used here instead of tribe because the Ngoni kingdoms and villages included several tribes. (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 1–6).

614 565 CLAN, exogamous group related through male line with a common clan name used in address. True Ngoni clans formed the aristocracy (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 116).

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound, (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 122). 128 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582]

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajaha*

young girls before puberty: *inkakazana*

young girls after puberty: *izintombi*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AKULU	the important people
ALEZI	nursemaids
GOGO	grandparent or any very senior person
HLONIPA	respect
INDLUNKULU	chief hut in a village
INDUNA	official in village
IZIDANDANI	girl attendants
LAWENI	boys' dormitory
MWINI	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

APPENDIX

104

NDUKU	knobkerry—club with rounded end.
NGOMA	Ngoni dance for older boys and girls
NTONGA	a rod or long pole
NYANJA	most common vernacular in Nyasaland
SANGWENI	gate of cattle kraal
ULEMU	respect
UMSINDO	pre-marriage rite for girls

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A Study in Structural Change among the Fort Jameson Ngoni

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Professor Schapera has kindly pointed out that my use of the term 'band' for a group of wives is likely to cause confusion, as this word has other technical uses in anthropology. He has suggested the term 'bevy' in lieu. It has not been possible to make the change in this paper, but readers should substitute 'bevy' for 'band' throughout.

J. A. Barnes

London, June 1950

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

CONTENTS

page

Acknowledgements iii
List of Tables and Illustrations v
List of Case Histories vi

INTRODUCTION vii

Chapter I MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE .. 1
1. The old social structure. 2. Fidelity and fertility. 3. Payments and ceremonies. 4. Relationship to affines. 5. Autonomy of marriage. 6. Polygyny. 7. The levirate. 8. Segmentation.

Chapter II PROCESSES OF CHANGE 17
1. White conquest. 2. Rival tribes. 3. Christianity. 4. The punishment of adultery. 5. Labour migration.

Chapter III HUSBANDS AND WIVES 22
1. The field of modern marriage. 2. Choice. 3. Sexual partners. 4. The legal relationship. 5. Co-operation between husband and wife. 6. Mystical links. 7. Divorce. 8. Co-wives.

Chapter IV KINSFOLK, AFFINES AND NEIGHBOURS 58
1. The setting of marriage. 2. The marriages of children. 3. Formal interaction. 4. Co-operation between affines. 5. Quarrels. 6. The absent husband. 7. Child's parents-in-law. 8. Other kinsfolk. 9. Widows. 10. Rights in wives and children. 11. Headmen. 12. The court. 13. The Administration and the missions. 14. Spouses and kinsfolk.

Chapter V SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS 105
1. Old and new marriage. 2. Movement between villages. 3. Polygyny. 4. The moral significance of sexual activity. 5. Christian marriage. 6. The transfer of rights. 7. Mystical beliefs and marriage stability. 8. The support of relatives. 9. Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce. 10. Attempts to resist change. 11. Marriage in an omnidirectional kinship system.

ETHNOGRAPHIC APPENDICES 127
I. The gall bladder ceremony. II. First cooking. III. The hoeing party. IV. Carrying beer. V. Entering the wife's mother's hut.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CITED 135

INDEX 137

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

LIST OF TABLES

		page
I	Pre-1898 marriage payments; incidence	7
II	Pre-1898 marriage payments; magnitude	7
III	Marital status of males, by age, 1948-9	24
IV	Marital status of females, by age, 1948-9	25
V	Incidence of bridewealth, by decades..	36
VI	Magnitude of bridewealth, by decades	36
VII	Magnitude of legalization payment, by decades ..	38-39
VIII	Incidence of legalization payment, by decades ..	40
IX	Marital experience of males, by age, 1948-9 ..	51
X	Marital experience of females, by age, 1948-9 ..	52
XI	Divorce ratios	53
XII	Incidence of marriage without payment, by decades..	70
XIII	Residence of husband and wife, 1948-9	73
XIV	Virilocality and uxorilocality, 1948-9	74

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

(Following Page 126)

I Preparing meat for a gallbladder ceremony .. ..
II Bride kneeling on mat outside her husband's mother's hut .. ..
III Anointing the bride's feet with gall .. .. ..
IV The gall-bladder is safely pinned in the bride's hair..

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

LIST OF CASE HISTORIES

page

1. Amos and Eve 28
An offer of bridewealth prevented by the man's father.
2. Zachariah, Ruth and Naomi 52
A man unsuccessfully obstructs his wife's divorce.
3. Jehu 57
A co-wife instructs a bride.
4. Absolom and Mary 60
A man opposes his daughter's marriage.
5. Ahab 61
A young man's relatives find him a wife.
6. Job and Rebecca 62
No legalization payment is sometimes an advantage to a woman's relatives.
7. Rachel and Esau 63
A man refuses legalization payment for a much-divorced sister.
8. Abner and Esther 79
A man should follow his runaway wife.
9. Daniel and Deborah 81
Relatives resolve a marital quarrel.
10. Saul 85
A woman is not deserted if her husband sends presents.
11. Laban and Sara 95
An absent husband does not spurn an adulterine child.
12. Nebo and Milcah 97
Bridewealth gives the right to a daughter's legalization payment.
13. Simon and Nimshi 97
Does the legalization payment give rights in genetricem?
14. Samuel 109
Uxorilocal residence can be an asylum from agnates.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

INTRODUCTION

MARRIAGE among the Ngoni is much the same as anywhere else. 581
It establishes a relationship between a man and a woman, regulates their sexual activities, locates their children in the kinship system and influences the inheritance of their property. These general features, however, do no more than define and identify marriage, and distinguish marriage from concubinage. Our task 121
is to analyse the particular features that distinguish Ngoni marriage from other marriage systems and to relate marriage to other institutions and social processes in Ngoni society.

In Ngoni history there has always been marriage. Indeed men and 581
women look back longingly to a past when people married properly 183
and decorously, and when adulterers were killed, and bemoan the promiscuity of the present when no woman's fidelity is certain. Yet even now old people still expect their juniors to marry and their expectations are fulfilled. Adults are assumed to be married, and the assumption is justified.

Marriage is seen by the Ngoni as part of the natural order. [589]
Unmarried adults cannot fill important roles and are regarded as overgrown children whose anomalous condition must be explained by reference to a malady or a physical or moral defect. Yet despite the universal and permanent character of marriage as an Ngoni institution there have been, in the course of the hundred and thirty [178]
years which constitute Ngoni history, great changes in the procedures and implications of marriage and in its relations to other aspects of the social life of which it is a part. These changes have been paralleled in other Ngoni institutions, in law, in local organization, in religion and above all in political structure. In this paper we 121
shall attempt to contrast the institution of marriage as seen at two stages in Ngoni history and to relate it to the general plan of social life at these two periods. We shall also discuss some of the processes of change that have brought about the differences we observe and which to some extent are still at work in contemporary Ngoni society.

It is convenient to compare marriage as it was during the 1890's 124
and as it is at the present day. The information relating to the earlier period is contained only to a slight extent in contemporary [127]
documents,[1] and consists largely in the recollections of older men and women as recorded by a number of writers from 1914 onwards. The

[1] The most important of these are Wiese's articles, 'Expedição portugueza a M'Pesêne (1889)', in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, x (1891) pp. 235-73, 331-430, 465-97, and xi (1892) pp. 373-599. (All page references cited are from Vol. X); and 'Beitrage zür Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambezi, namentlich der Angoni,' *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1900), pp. 181-200.

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[a]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[a] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part. 121

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000, live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[3]. 101 [161] 131 167 [648] [643] 631 241 [439] 464

[3] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 252 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived 361
in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a
central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut [585]
and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts
were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a [592]
few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership
of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an [554]
important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and
their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped [727]
into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. 621
Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates
of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or [624]
his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who
were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions [672]
made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The
village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman
or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him.
Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the
headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where 631
there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions,
villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential [128]
system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the [171]
Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same 631
cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to
establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in 571
importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their
clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be
contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves
as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself
affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who
established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained
a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance.
The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters,
a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relation-
ships of superordination and subordination between persons remained
the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigawa*, pl. *vigawa*, from *ku-gawa*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
498 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[729] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was,
[581] in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[178] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political
602 ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

842 If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

562 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nhlanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshlanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanti* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedicao . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

new wife to replace the divorced woman. Divorce however seems to have been rare, and in the genealogies I collected I met with only one instance of divorce at this period. 586

3. *Payments and ceremonies*

Betrothal[10] was a preliminary to marriage but was not compulsory. 584 A girl was betrothed only if she was sought in marriage before puberty and the marriage then did not take place until some years after puberty. If a girl passed puberty without being betrothed she was subsequently married without a betrothal period. A man was expected to make presents to the girl he had betrothed and he began to adopt avoidance relationships towards her parents. If after puberty the girl or her parents wished to break off the engagement they could do so but were then under an obligation to return the man's presents. The ceremony at which an aristocratic girl after puberty chose her own husband has been described by Wiese.[11]

In the marriage itself there are two main stages marked by two 583 distinct transfers of cattle. The first transfer was called 'snuff-box', *mfuko*. The name of the payment is based on the practice of begging snuff from one's friends and acquaintances and indicates something trifling and not recoverable. It consisted of one beast. Payment of 'snuff-box' established the man's rights to bring an action against an adulterer but it did not give him the right to take his wife away to his own village nor to the custody of any children she might bear [591] him. These rights were obtained only by the payment of bridewealth, *malowolo*,[12] which consisted of from one to a dozen beasts [851] depending on the status of the woman's father. Both payments, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth, were made by the man or, if he was a young man, by his father to his wife's father. No specifically defined relatives were obliged to help a man find his marriage cattle but a man with few cattle of his own looked for assistance to the head of his cluster. Similarly there were no definite rules of distribution of the marriage cattle among the woman's relatives and the matter

[10] The verb is *ku-komeka* for a man, and the passive *ku-komekewa* for a woman. Cf. Bemba *uku-kobeka* and *uku-kobekwa* in Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Present Economic Conditions* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Four), p. 61.

[11] In his later paper he calls the ceremony *inyamuals*. In the earlier paper 881 he calls the ceremony held at first menstruation *inkamuals* and says that after this ceremony the girl went with others to choose the man she liked. The vernacular words he mentions are presumably connected with the modern Nyanja *cinamwali*, which is now sometimes applied to three ceremonies held (1) at first menstruation, (2) six months later, *cinamwali caciwaya*, and (3) after first pregnancy, *cinamwali cacikulu*. The abstract noun *unamwali* is sometimes used in place of the concrete *cinamwali*. Cf. Wiese, op. cit., 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191; Rattray, op. cit. pp. 102 and 190; Stigand, 'Notes on the natives of Nyasaland, N.E. Rhodesia, and Portuguese Zambezia, their arts, customs and modes of subsistence', *JRAI*, xxxvii (1907), p. 121; Read, 'Tradition and prestige among the Ngoni', *Africa*, ix (1936), p. 472; Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, pp. 22-4.

[12] Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola*; also Rattray, op. cit. p. 199.

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of [587] his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 851 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriage belonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth his sons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin on behalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim. I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past and when recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

[727] Important men sometimes married female captives and no [954] bridewealth passed. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons founded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bride- 183 wealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.[13] The infor- [128] mation on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II.

It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was [276] offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898

[13] See pp. 22f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

marriage system. We shall discuss the legalization payment at some length in the succeeding chapters, for it is the most important of all the payments made in modern marriage. A possible explanation of its occurrence in these early marriages is that although the marriages themselves were made before 1898, the payments were made considerably later. The amounts alleged to have been handed over as legalization payments may have been regarded as 'snuff-box' at the time of payment although they are now referred to as legalization payments, either because of the general obsolescence of the term 'snuff-box' or because my informants thought I would know the new term and not the old one. Another possibility is that even before 1898 the vernacular term for legalization payment (*cimalo*) was in use as a synonym for 'snuff-box'. The term itself was certainly in use among neighbouring tribes before 1898.

This is a very small sample from which to draw any conclusions, but it is of value in suggesting where the reality of social life differed

Table I. Pre-1898 marriage payments: incidence

Payments made	Number of marriages
'Snuff-box' only	1
Bridewealth only	1
Legalization payment only	5
None	7
Total	14
Not known if any payments were made or not	4
Grand total	18
In this sample there were no pre-1898 marriages in which more than one kind of payment was made	

Table II. Pre-1898 marriage payments; magnitude

Payment	Magnitude	Number of marriages
'Snuff-box'	Handful of tobacco	1
Bridewealth	8 beasts	1
Legalization payment	1 beast	2
	1 chicken	1
	Cloth	1
	Not known	1
	Total	5

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

128 from the recollections of informants and the accounts of contemporary writers. Even in a society as rapidly expanding as was the Ngoni 554 before 1898, the majority of the population at any one time consists 581 of people who are politically unimportant. What were remembered 184 and what was recorded at the time were the marriages of leaders and their close relatives. It is they, more than others, who were distinctively Ngoni, and it was by their actions that the values of Ngoni society were emphasized and developed. Their marriages [187] were important in maintaining tribal solidarity and it is the system exemplified in these marriages that we have been describing. But the recent captives, the poor, the unsuccessful warriors, the junior sons of junior sons, they also married and their marriages were at least as numerous as those of their more fortunate brethren, despite the large bands of wives acquired by successful men.

583 The data in our sample provide suggestions as to both the relative 554 frequency of marriage without payment and the kind of relationship that held between payment and status of spouse. The eight cattle were offered by one of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants as bridewealth for the daughter of a man of Nsenga origin. Two junior sons of this lieutenant each offered a beast as legalization payment for a wife, one of whom was the daughter of a divisional head. A legalization payment of unknown magnitude was made in a marriage between a village headman and a daughter of another of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants. These four marriages we may regard as important marriages between people of high status accompanied by marriage payments which usually were substantial. Among persons of low status we find that in six out of the seven marriages in which no payment was made, one or both of the spouses had been captured. Intermediately we have the remaining two marriages in which the legalization payment was made and the one in which 'snuff-box' was paid, all involving people of low or middle status and accompanied by relatively small payments, namely a chicken, some cloth, and tobacco. This positive correlation between status and payment holds for thirteen out of the fourteen marriages, but one marriage without payment was between one of the same junior sons of the lieutenant and the daughter of a man of Kalanga origin.

From such evidence as there is, it seems probable that marriages between people of high status were usually accompanied by substantial payments. At the same time, many of the marriages of people of low status and some of the unimportant marriages of men of high status took place without payments. What proportion of the total these marriages accounted for we cannot now ever hope to know. However since they amount to half of our pre-1898 sample it seems probable that they constituted a considerable fraction of all the marriages contracted at that time.

581 The payment of 'snuff-box and bridewealth were the crucial events establishing a marriage but there were a number of other transfers of beer and cattle, and a number of ceremonies without

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *lusiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *nyongo*, from the Zulu *inyongo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 40 and 114, and Scott, *A cyclopaedic dictionary of the Mang'anja language spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 486, both translate the Nyanja word *nyongo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mpheksiso*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-phekisa*, to help or make to cook. Weise, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', pp. 473-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *vipeko*. Cf. Zulu *uku-pheka*, to cook.

[17] Called *mngeniso*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *suyelano*, from the Zulu *uku-dlana*, or *kulyelana*, from the Nsenga *ku-lyelana*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place
[591] of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[19] If
[593] the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists
[583] to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on
[241] beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

581 As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction
602 between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they
[658] belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who
[554] had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[19] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 191-2.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors. 581 602 554

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system. 62 581 571 [611] [591] [554]

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[50] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere [121] 582 [114] [561] [643]

[50] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Chief did however interfere
643 to some extent in the marriages of those near him and on occasion took away a wife from one man and gave her as wife to another. Nsingu, the heir of Mpezeni I, once took a wife from one of the important men in his mother's royal village and made her his queen.
644 The man committed suicide and Nsingu killed a beast to placate the anger of his mother's lieutenants. Such instances of intervention seem to have been rare and were disliked by the common people.

6. Polygyny

592 The pattern of growth of the residential system was determined by the grouping of children in the compound family. This grouping was in turn determined by the ranking of wives. It seems that the
595 South-Eastern Bantu system of dividing wives into three groups,
[171] a great house and a left- and a right-hand house was not continued. Old men are agreed that in the past wives could be described as either left-hand or right-hand, but there is no agreement on the principles of this division. In discussing the wives of well-known men who flourished about this period, there was no consensus about which women were left-hand wives and which were right. The division cannot in any case have had the same spatial reference to the husband's cattle byre as among the South-Eastern Bantu,
[361] since the Ngoni lived in large villages with a central byre containing all the cattle of the village.

Wives were arranged into small groups which we may term
595 'bands'. A band might contain up to a dozen co-wives and was
592 under the charge of its senior member. Wives in a band lived close to each other in the same cluster of huts. A man might have as many as five or six bands of wives, and the senior wife of one of the bands was the man's great wife, the mother of his heir. We have seen that a cross-cousin was inferior to an unrelated wife, and a wife from the same or related village inferior to one from afar. These two considerations, however, seem only to have influenced a man's choice of senior wives and did not themselves directly determine wifely rank. Thus a man could if he wished make a cross-cousin from his own village his great wife or the senior wife of one of his bands, but most men did not do so. The first wife married with bridewealth was the great wife. If there was a wife married earlier for whom no bridewealth had been paid, perhaps a cross-cousin or a recently captured woman, then she became subordinate to the chief wife and was regarded as a member of her band. Wives married subsequently were attached to this band until the husband decided to start another band. He took either one of the wives of his great wife's band or else a newly acquired wife, and established a new cluster of huts for her. Some other members of the great wife's band might be transferred to the new band, as subordinates of the newly promoted wife. As the man continued to take new wives they were allocated to one or other of the existing bands. If the husband was an important man he allocated to each

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[22] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [564] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[23] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. The levirate

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[22] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organisation' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[23] Called variously *mseke* or *mfoso*. *Mseke* is an Nsenga word meaning a small [192] cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt [291] by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mfoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her pro-husband. If there was no younger brother the pro-husband was one of her husband's junior patrilineal kinsmen of his own generation. She could not refuse a pro-husband although her husband's brothers could choose not to provide her with a pro-husband if they so wished. The widow continued to live in her own cluster where her pro-husband came to visit her. Rattray states that widows waited one year after their husband's death before their re-marriage was settled[28] and this is nowadays the traditional procedure. Wiese, however, writes that widows waited four years before they could marry again.[29] The children begotten by the pro-husband were regarded as children of the dead man for social purposes but the identity of their genitor was not disguised. They called him *father*, but this was as much because he was their dead pater's brother and their mother's pro-husband as because he was their genitor.

The same principle of substitution was applied to betrothal. If a man died before marrying a girl to whom he was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger brother or a classificatory brother. If a girl died before marrying the man to whom she was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger sister. Unlike the operation of the levirate, however, the children of this type of marriage were regarded as the children of their genitor and genetrix for all purposes, as though their parents had been betrothed to each other in the first place. Again, unlike the levirate, if a man considered himself too old when his betrothed became marriageable he might give her instead to his son as a wife. The children of this marriage were also regarded for all purposes as the children of their genitor and genetrix.

Occasionally a woman whose husband died young, went to live with a man who was not her dead husband's brother, real or classificatory. The pro-husband gave a goat to the woman, but if bride-wealth had been offered for her by her first husband, the pro-husband could never gain permanent custody of the children. The children that she bore by him belonged to the segment of the dead man, took his descent name, and when old enough went to live in his segment. When the dead man's kinsmen claimed these children, they gave a beast to their genitor 'to straighten his back', that is, for his labour in begetting them. This arrangement is in some ways analogous to Nuer widow-concubinage[30] but with the important difference that the pro-husband, although not a kinsman of the dead man, had rights in the widow as a wife and an exclusive right to her sexual services. It seems that the status of a widow living in this kind of union was not low. In one instance I heard of, very aristocratic families were involved, and the arrangement appears to have been

[28] Rattray, op. cit., p. 97.
[29] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedition . . .', p. 474, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 188.
[30] Cf. Evans-Pritchard, *Some Aspects of Marriage and Family Among the Nuer* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Eleven), p. 16.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

f. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the children of one bend and the children of another. Within a bend, the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers while retaining a common allegiance to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent and succession were traced through males, the pattern of segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetuated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The recent capture

855 593 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband, wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

63 554 591 In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw attention to two features of the residential system which were not, at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features [191] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

58 613 Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without losing permanently the [192] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this. We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility [193] and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.17]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the introduction of White technology, political authority, legal concepts and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass sheds built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1896 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the loosing of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chieftains reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1896, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Cewa dances, speak Cewa, and are to a lesser extent internally organized on Cewa lines. They do not form a distinct class of village in Ngoni country, and are inextricably bound by ties of kinship with their neighbours. But there are fewer traces of the former pre-1898 system of organization in such villages than in those which have a remembered history linking them with the glorious past.[1]

3. *Christianity*

At the same time as Ngoni values were being undermined from within by the Cewa, they were attacked from without by the Whites. The first missionaries to settle in the area arrived in 1899, although there had been some earlier contact. They attempted to convert Ngoni to Christianity, and therefore to monogamy and pre-marital chastity. In chastity the missionaries were allied with the Ngoni against the Cewa; in monogamy the missions fought against Ngoni allied to Cewa. New rituals were introduced and a new hierarchy developed, composed of priests, evangelists and deacons. However, in this region, unlike much of the rest of Africa, the impact of Christianity has not produced a distinctive legal status of persons married by Christian rite. The Administration's earliest piece of marriage legislation was the *North-Eastern Rhodesia Marriage Regulations*, 1903.[2] There was specific provision for monogamous marriages between Africans, with penalties for bigamy and detailed rules for the division of property left by Africans married under these regulations and dying intestate. Few, if any, marriages involving Africans were made in this form, for it seems that the missions did not license themselves under the Regulations and their ceremonies therefore did not have legal significance to the Administration. These elaborate provisions were repealed by the *Northern Rhodesia Marriage Proclamation*, 1918.[3] Since then the only form of marriage performed within Northern Rhodesia between Africans that has legal significance in the eyes of the Administration is marriage 'in accordance with native law and custom'. What constitutes such a marriage has never been rigidly defined.

The missions themselves have differed in their attitude towards indigenous marriage. One mission insists that all 'customary obligations' must be fulfilled in addition to Christian rites, another holds that it is wrong to transfer wealth from one side to another in marriage, while a third holds that the fulfilment or not of any customary obligations is not the concern of the church. The Native

[1] Cf. Read, 'Tradition and prestige' and 'Moral code' for an account of some of these changes in structure and values, based on observations of three Ngoni kingdoms.

[2] Government Notice No. 2 of 1903, *British Central Africa Gazette*, 146, x, 1, 31 January 1903.

[3] N.R. No. 10 of 1918, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, viii, 11, 7 September 1918.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. The punishment of adultery

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognized other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognized and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. Labour migration

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Rhodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one mining town to the next, sleeps for a night with a prostitute and 581
lives for years with a concubine. What is at least relatively 571
permanent is his relationship to his wife and to his children by her.
Men still hope that they will be able to gather their children about [573]
them as they grow old, and build up new villages so that their names
will be remembered. Status is still measured in terms of dependants, [554]
and the most certain of all dependants are legitimate children.
Ngoni marriage no longer automatically ensures that a man will
have custody of his children, but without marriage he has no hope
at all of retaining them.

[P.22]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [826] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [828] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer [162] without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance of women over men caused by labour migration.

128 Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically 121 from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 257 and 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs con- [521] cerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles away from the other two.

[1] *Cisile*, pl. *sisile*, or *ciw Gunda Gutyulatyula*. Cf. Nsenga *nlu*, pl. *mazilu*, idiot.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

away from the other two. They were the four most accessible 121
from my base camp, built at a site chosen by the Administration. I was able to compare their size, history, and kinship structure with those of many other villages I visited, and as far as I could tell they were in these respects fairly typical Ngoni villages. They form a 128
sample of approximately one per cent of the whole of the Fort Jameson Ngoni.

The tables in which the units are individuals or extant marriages (III, IV, IX, X, XIII and XIV) are based on the marital histories of the men and woman normally resident in those villages during the latter part of 1948, in one village, and during the earlier part of 1949 in the other five. In Tables I, II, V to VIII, XI and XII, where the units are marriages and not individuals, I have drawn on the histories of men and women who lived in these villages as wedded people for at least part of the time from 1946 to 1949. I endeavoured to inter- [124]
view the whole population but failed to do so for various reasons. I was however, able to determine who was, and who was not, a resident in these villages, and can therefore indicate the number of people who could have been included in this six-village sample had more been known about them. Some of my interviews were only partial.

In Tables V to VIII, which deal with the incidence and magnitude of marriage payments, each marriage is classified by the decade in which it began. This is not necessarily the decade in which the payment was made, for as we have noted payments are sometime made after many years of marriage. Unfortunately I do not have enough information to classify by the decade of payment.

In the tables I have used the word 'wedded' to refer to all people who had ever been married, whether or not they were currently married at the time of inquiry.

It will be seen from Table III that in this sample there was no 162
unwedded man over the age of twenty-four, and, out of a total of 589
116 wedded men, there were only one widower and seven men whose last marriage had ended in divorce and who had not remarried. From Table IV we see that there was only one unwedded woman over the age of nineteen, but that there were as many as 31 widows who had not remarried. Only about a half, 122 out of 223, of the wedded women were living with their husbands.

Marriage is then an experience that sooner or later comes to nearly 581
every man or woman, although not every adult lives all the time in a simple family of procreation. Nevertheless, the ties forged by marriage remain, and the results of marriage extend beyond the wedding ceremony and beyond the domestic association of man and wife. It is the sexual activities of individuals that are most closely regulated by the fact of marriage. In succession to office and wealth, marriage, as we shall see, plays nowadays a permissive rather than a determining role. It is only by means of the symbolic acts which form part of marriage that a man can be reasonably sure of acquiring rights over his wife and the custody of his children. Yet he may,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 on the one hand, acquire that custody without undertaking any of these symbolic acts, and on the other hand he may have full rights over his wife without ever getting control of his children.

2. Choice

582 Marriage involves choice and selection. There are prescribed 'preferential marriages' in the usual terminology, but as applied to the Ngoni this nomenclature is misleading, for, as in the old days, a woman who marries her cross-cousin does not have such high status in her husband's compound family as a wife who is not related to her husband. A man behaves in some respects towards his female cross-cousins as though they were his wives or potential wives, but it is incorrect to say that Ngoni men prefer to marry their cross-

Table III. Marital status of males by age, 1948-9

162
586
589
595

Age in years	Marital Status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Number of wives						Total wedded men	
		0		1	2	3	Not known		
		Divorced men	Widowers						
0-4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	51
5-9	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	61
10-14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	55
15-19	28	1	–	2	–	–	–	3	31
20-24	14	–	–	6	–	–	–	6	20
25-29	–	2	–	13	–	–	1	16	16
30-34	–	1	–	7	–	–	–	8	8
35-39	–	–	–	13	3	1	–	17	17
40-44	–	–	–	4	2	2	–	8	8
45-49	–	–	–	8	–	–	1	9	9
50-54	–	1	–	4	–	–	1	6	6
55-59	–	–	–	8	1	–	1	10	10
60-64	–	–	–	9	2	–	–	11	11
65-69	–	1	1	6	1	1	–	10	10
70-74	–	1	–	1	1	–	–	3	3
75-79	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	2	2
Not known	–	–	–	1	–	–	6	7	7
Total	209	7	1	83	11	4	10	116	325

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

cousins. Whether a man decides to marry a cross-cousin or an unrelated woman, he still has to decide just exactly whom he will try to marry, and similarly a woman has also to make up her own mind about whom she will accept as husband. The initiative in choosing lies very largely with the couple themselves, and not with their parents and kinsmen. If a man is diffident about asking a woman to marry him, he may ask his father or elder brother to seek out a woman for him, or a woman may have a spouse presented to

582
584

Table IV. Marital status of females, by age, 1948-9

162
586
589
591

Age in years	Marital status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Divorced women living alone	Widows living alone	Divorced woman living as concubine	Married women			Total wedded women	
					HH	HA	HS		
0–4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	58
5–9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	65
10–14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	54
15–19	20	–	1	–	14	9	1	25	45
20–24	–	3	–	–	10	11	–	24	24
25–29	–	1	–	1	17	8	1	29	29
30–34	1	–	–	–	14	8	–	22	23
35–39	–	–	–	–	19	3	1	23	23
40–44	–	2	1	–	13	1	1	18	18
45–49	–	–	2	–	13	2	–	17	17
50–54	–	3	–	–	7	3	1	14	14
55–59	–	1	5	–	6	–	1	13	13
60–64	–	1	8	–	3	1	1	15	15
65–69	–	2	8	–	1	–	–	11	11
70–74	–	–	5	–	1	–	–	6	6
75–79	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
80–84	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	4	4
Total	198	14	31	1	122	46	7	223	421

Legend

HH (Husband at Home)	Husband living within thirty miles of his wife, in a village, and not separated from her
HA (Husband Away)	Husband living permanently on a farm, or in Fort Jameson, or more than thirty miles away
HS (Husband Separated)	Husband living within thirty miles, in a village, but separated from his wife

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Wisa FQ5

N 584 her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is N 582 trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship N [601] term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, affines*, and *children*.[3] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin*. In the second ascending and N 603 descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* and his female *grandchild* as *wife*, and he can, to a slight extent, joke 602 and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. N But Ngoni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to [582] marry his female *grandchild*, and do not approve of such marriages [186] among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

N 605 A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins*. We have noted above that the Nguni peoples W from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not M 582 allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Ŵisa peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organization was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Ŵisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage N with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. 582 The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage 583 is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*banja*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

[3] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, op. cit. pp. 222 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

cousin comes from another village she can become the great wife. This lack of consensus about the appropriateness of payments may be due to the difference between the traditional views of the Nguni aristocrats and of their more recent captives. The Nguni tribes, although not allowing cross-cousin marriage, did require transfers of marriage cattle. In contrast to them, the Cewa and others who approved of cross-cousin marriages did not make large marriage payments. It may be that neither view has prevailed over the other among the present-day Ngoni.

When I began my inquiries into marriage I hoped to express numerically the frequencies with which people married their cross-cousins and other relatives. As my inquiries proceeded, it became clear that this was not the simple matter I had thought it to be. There was little consistency in the way in which the word *mvyala*, which I have translated as cross-cousin, was used by different informants. Sometimes one spouse would say that the other was a cross-cousin and the other would deny it. In addition to the expected use of the term to refer to father's own or classificatory sister's child, and to mother's own or classificatory brother's child, it was also used for 'person with a parent with the same descent-name as mine', 'person from the same tribe', 'person with the same captor', and so on. Some informants regarded the alleged cross-cousin relationship as a primary one that could not necessarily be broken down into a series of links between parents and children and between siblings. If pressed, informants would often say in explanation 'One of us came from the side of the man and the other from the side of the woman'; yet they would be unable to decide who came from the man's side and who from the woman's. This complexity of reference of the term for cross-cousin applies to a lesser extent to the terms for other relatives with whom marriage takes place. In view of the lack of consensus and of the large number of possible referents of single vernacular terms, I have thought it best to postpone publication of any frequencies until later, when I hope to deal with the general problem of inter-connectedness between local groups of kin.

We have mentioned above the prohibitions against marrying certain relatives and the partial encouragement to marry a cross-cousin. In addition, a man should not marry his brother's wife's sister, and some people say that a man ought not to marry his sister's husband's sister. Both these women he calls *sibling-in-law*. These are not exactly definite prohibitions, but rather pieces of traditional advice. Marriage with these relatives does occur. No specific reason was given for this prohibition, but I noticed that a quarrel in one marriage tended to have repercussions in the marriages of the spouses' siblings, and the objection to these types of marriage may be based on some consideration of this kind.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 583

Case history 1

Amos[1] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

N 614 613 [582] [601]

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N 563

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] N 581 [581] [928] N 186 581 N

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognise these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

585 648 582

[1] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European. 595 648 582

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from reciving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infinge canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instrucion, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules. 799 582

Locality is of some importance in influncing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likly he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists tha it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in rom outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different village are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse he two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young wome, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance agains the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and dicuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dances. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by th young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends ther are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into groups of half a dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls. 621 582 554 628 584 535

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide 628 584 574

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 much opportunity for a man to assess his sweetheart's domestic
584 efficiency and moral character, but he can get information on these
594 matters from other people who live in her vicinity. When he sees a girl in a distant village where he is staying, he has more leisure to see what she is like and can ask his own hosts about her character. Girls visit in the same way as men, and if a girl is anxious to get a husband and fears she may not find one, she may spend most of her time visiting in different villages hoping to attract a suitable man.

[721] There is more time for visiting and flirting at the end of the dry season when there is little work to do in the gardens, but marriages are contracted throughout the year.[5]

Young men say that what they like in a girl is a light skin colour,
581 a pretty face, and the ability to dance and to copulate well. Some
832 men, however, say that such a girl might be all right to run after, but for marriage one would also need to know that she could cook porridge. Women say they like a man who is well dressed, who has a good job working for a European, and who has a parting in his hair. Women sometimes wear medicines which are believed to attract men, and men who have no good clothes may borrow the clothes of others in order to attract women.

3. Sexual partners

593 The relationship between a man and his wife, at least for the
581 first years of their marriage, is spoken of principally in sexual terms, and the sexual activities of the couple are more closely defined by the marriage bond than are their residence and their economic life. Informants say that the reason for the existence of marriage is either 'the work in the house', a euphemism for copulation, or else 'clothes', that is, so that a woman may have someone to buy clothes for her. It is, however, much easier to improvise alternative solutions to the problem of clothing than it is to find alternative means of sexual satisfaction without coming into conflict with law and economy. Furthermore, while we have seen in the old days that the main emphasis was on the fertility of the woman, this has now shifted, and it is her skill in copulation rather than her success in childbearing
[842] that is emphasized. Fertility is still valued, but does not appear to form so important a theme in ceremonial, songs, and gossip as among other societies where the principle of unilinear descent has not broken down, and where, therefore, fertility either of a man's wife or of his sister, is a vital necessity for the maintenance of local structure.

593 The husband-wife relationship is one in which the man is apparently superordinate to his wife, but we shall see that in practice this superordination is not as clear-cut as might at first appear. It is furthermore a relationship in which there are certain prescribed mutual obligations, so that if these obligations are neglected, it is

[5] Cf. Young and Bemba, *Our African Way of Life*, p. 66.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

necessary to take formal action to restore harmony. Husband and wife still remain separate persons, separated socially by their distinct roles. Yet they are bound together by economic ties, by symbolic procedures, and by mystical connexion.

The sexual rights and obligations of husband and wife in each other are not symmetrical. A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, but a woman cannot gain exclusive sexual rights over her husband. Her husband can take other wives, or commit adultery, and she has no ground in law for complaint unless at the same time he neglects her. The most she can do is to make life so unpleasant for him that rather than face her anger he decides to sleep with her alone. Mystical procedures are available to both man and wife, and while a husband may use medicines to safeguard that which is his by right, a wife uses medicines to augment her other sanctions, such as the threat of not cooking food for her husband or of running away to her relatives. There is one class of medicines[8] which a man can administer to his wife by cicatrization which it is believed will cause any lover of the woman to die. Another magical procedure is stated to prevent the lover from withdrawing after coitus, so that the adulterous pair will have to reveal themselves to their neighbours in order to gain medical assistance. These medicines are said to be favoured by men going off to Southern Rhodesia without their wives. It is difficult to tell to what extent they are actually administered, but the belief in their efficacy is wide-spread, and people would comment that so-and-so who was ill had become so because he had slept with a woman doctored in this way, and that the scars on such-and-such a woman were made when her husband had given her this sort of medicine. On the other hand a woman may use medicine[9] to prevent her husband from copulating with anyone else, and there are other medicines which act as love charms or which encourage the husband to stay at home at night.[9] The beliefs about difficult labour and *mdulo*[9] also have a stabilizing effect in that the man may fear for the fate of his child and for that reason be faithful to his wife while she is pregnant. On the other hand it is believed that a rejected lover can give medicine[10] to a woman who resists his approaches, so that she will die or have difficulties in childbirth. The only way for a woman to avoid this hazard is to live demurely and not to excite the attention of other men.

If a woman believes that her husband is committing adultery with

[8] Known as *kakwakka*. There are at least four variations of this, associated with different malefics all of which are fatal to the adulterer. Cf. *kakwakka* in Colson, *Marriage among the Plateau Tonga* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers—forthcoming).

[9] *Mdumanga*. See below, p. 58.

[9] E.g., medicine made from the house lizard (*nakulikki*) and the domesticated cat, because these animals are always in the house and do not wander about.

[9] See below, p. 48.

[10] *Kalomatila*, from the name of the species of frog from which it is made.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

If a woman believes that her husband is committing adultery with another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages. Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *ciwewengalala*,[33] which is performed only indoors. At a girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *ciwewengalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[34] A girl learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[35] The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her erotic proficiency by dancing[36] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[33] Meaning, in Nyanja, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[34] Such as *mtondo*, a root, and *kajabajaba*, a plant.
[35] *Mphungu*.
[36] The dance is called *ciluapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kajabajaba*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Narrative FR4

Girls are not examined to see if they have been deflowered. Many girls have love affairs with young boys before they reach puberty, and at one time children built play-houses, after the manner of the Cewa, where they pretended to be adults playing at cooking and copulation. The Cewa encouraged this among their own children and at puberty Cewa girls, if not already deflowered, had their hymen forcibly ruptured in a prescribed manner. We have seen that the Ngoni formerly expected girls to be chaste before marriage while the Cewa believed that if a girl did not copulate at puberty she would die. It seems nowadays that adults expect that pre-pubescent boys and girls will play together sexually and that, provided this takes place with a certain amount of discretion, nothing is done to stop it. Boys and girls visit each other in dormitories, hoping that their voices will not be recognized by people in neighbouring huts. After puberty young men and women continue to flirt together, individuals varying in the extent to which they copulate. Grown men do not usually sleep with young girls, nor grown women with young boys, and if this does happen and is discovered there is always the suspicion of sorcery. The Ngoni believe, with most of their neighbours, that in order to make many of the anti-social medicines of sorcery effective, a sorcerer must copulate with some partner morally forbidden to him (or her), such as a close relative or a person of greatly disparate age or an animal. With this background of belief, Ngoni say that after puberty young men and women naturally like to frolic together and not with their juniors. Within this framework of tolerated covert activity no particular arrangements are made at puberty, save that if a man is betrothed to a young girl he will be invited formally to come and sleep with her once while she is secluded.

Thus from an early age their future roles as husbands and wives condition the sexual activities of boys and girls. A girl who allows herself to be seduced too easily is regarded as foolish and a man who is for ever chasing unmarried girls when he should be founding a family is regarded as immature. But sexual activity is taken for granted, and the only stipulations are that it should be conducted discreetly so that the older people in the village are not forced to notice it, and that unmarried girls should not bear live children. Knowledge of abortifacients seems to be fairly common and recently contraceptives, issued originally to soldiers in the 1939-45 war, have come into use. Few cases of seduction of unmarried girls come before the courts.

Despite the emphasis on sexual satisfaction rather than on fertility, Ngoni men and women still desire children. This is so for men despite the low incidence of bridewealth payments and the uncertainty about the custody of children. A man's children may decide to live with their mother's people, but they are still his children and he can always follow them from village to village in his old age wherever they decide to settle.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 wherever they decide to settle. Children are still valuable. A barren woman is pitied, and a man's impotence is whispered about behind his back. Men and women seek fertility, and a man tries to conceal his impotence. A woman who does not want to bear children is regarded as irresponsible.

We have seen that the traditional solution for barrenness was to introduce a linked co-wife, but this is now rarely done. A woman can either look for medicines[15] to make her fertile, or, if she is unsuccessful, she may beg children from a fertile sister. These children will stay with her while they are young, but they are not thought of or talked about as being her own children.

No clear distinction is drawn between impotence and sterility, and men who are said to be impotent are also known to commit adultery. A sterile husband does not find favour with his wife or with her relatives, who want her to have children to care for her when she grows old. If medicines fail to cure a man's sterility, and it is thought that the lack of children is due to him and not to his wife, then he may call in an acquaintance to sleep with his wife so that [839] she may conceive. For this task, it is said that a man will choose a person whose discretion he can trust, but one on the fringe of his acquaintance who will not feel disposed to gossip maliciously about the incident afterwards. Thus it is said that a man would never ask his brother to do this. If the woman bears a child then at some [431] later date the husband gives a goat to the progenitor, hoping that people will not connect the present with the birth of the child.

Sterility is a shameful thing and men do not easily admit to it. [128] My information on the procedure followed in specific instances is based only on village gossip and not on admissions by the men and women concerned. Although it is agreed that a sterile man may feel 842 forced to call in a seed-raiser the whole matter must remain secret. 837 There must be no loophole by which adultery might be condoned. In the words of an informant,

> A man may be impotent and may ask someone to copulate with his wife so that she may have children. This man coming to copulate with his wife comes in secret as it is considered a disgraceful thing among the people of the family and the rest of the village if they know, yet the people in the village know very well sometimes. In the old days the same thing happened, but if a man coming to sleep with the woman came in an open way, and everyone knew of his sleeping with the wife of an impotent man, he was to be killed by the chief, even though the impotent man asked him to do this work for him. The person coming to do this work of copulating with this woman was to be paid a cow or a goat for the work that he did. In these days it happens.

The sterile husband takes the risk that his friend will continue sleeping with the woman after she has conceived. I have recorded

[15] Called *ciwiwa*. The first child born after the successful administration of this medicine is sometimes called Ciwiwa.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

one instance where the woman ran off with the man called in by her sterile husband.

4. The legal relationship

Emphasis on sexual partnership is characteristic of the beginning of marriage. Young people are 'foolish', dance all night long and sleep late in the morning. With the arrival of children, man and wife emerge from the tutelage of their elders and non-sexual aspects of their marriage relationship gain in importance. Even then the importance of sexual satisfaction is not forgotten. People say openly of a woman who obstructs her husband when he seeks a second wife, 'She is too fond of his penis', and old widows explain their failure to remarry by saying 'Our joints are too stiff to copulate'.

Nevertheless at all times there is a great deal more in Ngoni marriage than mere sexual partnership. The obligations and duties of husband and wife towards each other and each other's kin are determined by the marriage payments and ratified by the ceremonies of marriage. These obligations persist despite the fluctuations of sexual attraction. We have seen that in 'the time of peace' the two principal transfers were 'snuff-box' and bridewealth. Today the position is different and the rights transferred by the marriage payments are different. For simplicity we may discuss the latter payment first. Bridewealth is still recognised but, as can be seen from Table V, is paid in only about four per cent of all marriages. It consists of a payment of one or more beasts or £8 made by the man to his wife's father.[10] If only one cow is offered and it dies before calving, it must be replaced. Some indication of the range of variation in amounts paid is given by Table VI.

This sample of only twelve payments is very small, but there is some indication that the amount paid has decreased in recent years. This is of interest in view of the general rise in the standard of wealth and in the amount offered as legalization payment.

By the payment of bridewealth a man ensures that all the children of his wife, by whatever genitor, shall, or rather ought to, belong to his group of relatives and live in his village when they grow up. The payment is made only after several children have been born. In the old days, if this payment was made, the children were legitimate and lived in their father's segment, and if it was not paid they could be claimed by their mother's father's segment. In these days there is no such hard and fast rule. Everyone has in effect a large choice of places where he can live, and the payment or non-payment of bridewealth for his mother is only one factor operating with many others in influencing his decisions. It is not surprising that so few people pay bridewealth.

[10] For comparative figures for the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Native standards of living and African cultural change', *Africa* xi (1938), 1, supplement, p. 22.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

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Bridewealth is not often returned. A man does not usually consider offering the payment until he is fairly sure that his marriage is a stable and happy one, with little likelihood of divorce. Divorce is more the time for paying bridewealth than for taking it back. If a man has had children by a wife whom he later divorces, then,

Table V. Incidence of bridewealth, by decades

583
178

Bridewealth	Date of marriage									Total
	1870-97	1898-97	1898-1907	1908-17	1918-27	1928-37	1938-47	1948-49	Not known	
Offered and accepted ..	—	1	2	2	2	2	2	—	—	11
Offered but refused ..	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Not offered ..	1	12	38	83	41	86	119	17	6	347
Total	1	13	38	86	44	88	121	17	6	359
Ratio of offers to total number	0%	8%	7%	2%	5%	2%	2%	0%	—	4%
Not known if offer was made or accepted ..	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	92	70	99	139	24	10	426

Information as in Table VIII

Table VI. Magnitude of bridewealth, by decades

Amount paid	Date of marriage								Total
	1870-97	1898-97	1898-1907	1908-17	1918-27	1928-37	1938-47	1948-9	
Beasts: 1 ..	—	—	—	1	1	2	1	—	5
2 ..	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
3 ..	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
6 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
8 ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
£8 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	2
Total ..	0	1	2	2	3	2	2	0	12

Information as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

unless he has paid bridewealth, the children will go to her relatives, whatever the cause of the divorce and whichever party is at fault. He can then offer bridewealth to secure custody of the children at the same time as he loses the services of his wife.

Bridewealth to-day is almost entirely concerned with the custody of children of the marriage and does not affect the rights of a man in his wife. These rights are determined by a payment which probably did not exist in the old marriage system and which we may call the legalization payment.* This payment is now the most important in marriage and is the only one recorded on the printed marriage certificates issued by the Administration through the Native Authorities. The Ngoni believe that the word has been taken from the Cewa, although the Cewa use the word differently. A law was made in about 1944 by the Ngoni chiefs fixing the amount of the legalization payment at a minimum of thirty shillings. Prior to this other smaller amounts were more usual. The way in which the magnitude of the payment has varied through time can be seen from Table VII. Some people do not follow the law and pay less than thirty shillings; the majority pay the legal amount, in some areas thirty-five shillings is more usual, and recently a few fathers have successfully demanded much higher sums, up to £10, for their daughters. The effect implied that at least thirty shillings should be offered in every marriage, but marriages have been and still are being contracted without any legalization payment, as can be seen from Table VIII. However, from this table it appears that in the last twelve years legalization payments have been offered in a greater proportion of marriages than previously.

The most important right established by this payment is that to damages in the event of adultery. If a man has made the legalization payment he is sure that when his wife commits adultery the court will order both the woman and her lover to pay him damages. Adultery suits are the commonest heard in court and the legalization payment clearly establishes the fact that the man and woman are married in the eyes of the law. If the first payment a man makes is bridewealth, the legalization payment falls away, and he gains the exclusive right of sexual access to his wife without any further payment. In this respect we can see a carry-over from the old system in which bridewealth followed after 'sniff-how', and adultery was punishable by death. Usually if bridewealth is paid in a subsisting marriage, it comes after the legalization payment and is additional to it. The one payment relates to the custody of the children, the other to the sexual services of the woman. We have noted that bridewealth can be offered on the occasion of divorce when perhaps no legalization payment has ever been made.

* Claude, G. Young, *Notes on the customs and folklore of the Tumbuka-Kamanga peoples*, p. 81; Cardinall, *The Native tribes of North-Eastern Rhodesia: their laws and customs* (Livingstone) Papers No. Five, Royal Anthropological Institute), p. 18; Barnes, op. cit. p. 229

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS Mpezeni

583 The third payment we have to consider in modern marriage is 'mali-kwa', and this nowadays is not important. The word is used in two senses. It may be an alternative name for the legalis-

Table VII. Magnitude of legalistic payment, by decades

583 198

Amount paid	Date of marriage									Total
	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Not known	
[illegible]	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
[illegible]	—	1	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	5
[illegible]	—	1	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	6
[illegible]	—	—	—	2	1	1	—	—	—	4
[illegible]	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
[illegible]	—	—	—	2	2	2	1	—	—	12
[illegible]	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	3
A [illegible]	—	2	—	2	1	2	2	—	—	11
[illegible]	2	4	7	34	2	4	3	2	2	60
[illegible]	—	—	1	2	1	—	1	—	—	5
[illegible]	—	—	1	—	1	1	1	—	—	4
[illegible]	—	—	2	—	—	2	—	—	—	4
[illegible]	—	—	—	1	2	—	1	—	—	4
[illegible]	—	—	2	1	2	2	2	—	—	11
[illegible]	—	—	—	1	2	—	1	—	—	4
[illegible]	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
[illegible]	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
[illegible]	—	—	1	2	1	2	—	—	1	8
[illegible]	—	—	1	1	1	2	2	2	—	10
[illegible]	—	—	—	1	—	1	2	—	—	4
[illegible]	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	2	—	4
[illegible]	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	3

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	1
	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	2
Total	6	9	8	10	24	31	80	13	3	180
	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2
	1	4	15	24	30	30	60	13	3	210
	—	—	8s.	8s.	6s.	10s.	£1.10s.	£1.10s.	—	£1.10s.
	—	—	8s. 6d.	15s.	12s.	20s.	20s. 6d.	41s.	14s.	20s. 6d.

Information as in Table VIII

the payment, where the payment is made in kind, that is, one beast, and not in money. This is a straightforward continuation of the old usage, for we have seen that it was by the payment of 'small-beer', consisting of one beast, that a man established his exclusive sexual rights over his wife. Nowadays few people offer a beast as legalisation payment. The word can be used in another sense to indicate any small present made by the man to the wife's father at the beginning of the marriage negotiations, as an indication that he intends to make the proper and more substantial legalisation payment later on. A present of this kind is not convertible, and consists of a shilling, a half-crown, a chicken, tobacco or a cloth. It conveys no rights at all.*

The legalisation payment by no means completely transfers the woman to her husband's group. Her kinsfolk retain an active interest in her welfare, and see her refuge from her husband's wrath. They intervene to preserve the marriage when otherwise it would end in hatred and divorce. The husband must see that they are formally told whenever his wife becomes pregnant, and if she dies

* These small presents are also called *mwaiwa*, or *mwiwawa*, literally in Tonga, 'the thing of opening a lip'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 in childbirth the husband is held to be responsible at least in part.
593 He must pay one cow[10] to the dead woman's kin to appease them. It is said that if bridewealth has been paid the man need not pay another beast, but that the woman's relatives would take a beast from the bridewealth and kill that in order to mourn their kinswoman.

593 The separation of interest that continues even after a marriage has been contracted is demonstrated by the payments which husband and wife are required to make to each other. Although they use many things in common, their possessions are thought of as belonging either to the one or the other. A man may own chickens, although his wife looks after them for him, while a woman may own a beast and let her husband care for it. If husband and wife quarrel the one who apologizes may offer a chicken to the other to make peace. These payments are in part enforced by public opinion

Table VIII. Incidence of legalization payment, by decades

583
178

Legalization payment	Date of marriage									Total
	1870-87	1888-97	1898-1907	1908-17	1918-27	1928-37	1938-47	1948-9	Not known	
Offered and accepted ..	1	4	15	34	33	30	63	13	3	216
Offered but refused	–	–	–	1	–	1	3	–	–	5
Not offered ..	–	9	12	11	29	27	30	9	4	132
Total	1	13	27	46	62	58	116	16	7	353
Ratio of offers to total number ..	100%	31%	56%	69%	53%	53%	54%	81%	—	62%
Not known if offer was made or accepted ..	1	3	7	6	14	11	17	6	3	70
Grand total ..	2	16	34	52	76	69	133	22	10	423

124 Informants

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	132	136	97·4
Women	132	137	96·4
Total	264	273	96·7

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 132

[10] Called mukwa, from the Nyanja verb, ku-kwa, to bite or chew. The corresponding payment among the Cewa is said to be called mulyo or mikwa. Cf. Young, op. cit., p. 40.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and pressure from kinsmen, but also occur within the intimacy of life in the hut. Husband and wife shave each other's pubic hair and if either cuts the flesh of the other, he or she must offer a chicken in compensation. It is said that if this is not done, then the injured person will shame the other by telling people about the incident. A man cannot take the produce of his wife's garden without her permission, even though he may have done most of the work in it and have originally provided the land for her. In court, a woman may be ordered to pay her husband damages, or a husband to pay his wife, and this is done without terminating the marriage, and despite the general principle that a husband ought to be financially responsible for his wife.

The social distance that separates man and wife never completely vanishes, while on the other hand there are formal ways of increasing it. When the divergence of interest becomes too great divorce is the usual solution, but before that stage is reached there are various procedures by which the danger of open conflict is reduced. A wife expresses her dissatisfaction with her husband by failing to cook food for him or by running away from him, that is, by non-co-operation in the domestic unit. For his part he can retaliate by staying away from her night after night, by not clothing her, and so on. When the stage in the quarrel is reached at which the man 'leaves his wife in disgust',* he formally indicates that he cannot maintain friendly relations with her, but that he does not wish to divorce her. It is re-establishment of the marriage relationship at a different level. He never sleeps with her, but he must continue to clothe her and to help her in her garden. If she is his great wife he must appear on her verandah during the daytime. Outwardly the position has not changed. Yet everyone knows that they do not sleep together and that there is coldness between them. The state of affairs can be ended if and when the couple become reconciled on their own account or because of the pressure of kindreds. It is a procedure favoured by chiefs, who have many wives and who do not wish to incur the disgrace still attaching to divorce in aristocratic circles. Some men purport to adopt this procedure when their real intention is to provoke their wives into committing adultery.

5. Co-operation between husband and wife

Despite the separation between the couple there is a very great deal of co-operation between them. A man must see that his wife is clothed and housed, and that she has a garden of her own; and to a large extent he is responsible before the court for her actions. A woman must feed her husband, provide hospitality for his friends, and

* *Kuhalika ndoati.* The verb *ku-halika* is also used when a man setting provisions over a visitor coming and hides the provisions rather than shares it with him. The verb may perhaps be derived from the same root as the *halika* adverbial, to ignore, leave unattended.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a hut. If the marriage begins unsteadily, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has remarried.

Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in ordinal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be designed as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe.

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen.

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care.

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly.

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been assembled. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But commoner men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money. At any beer-drinking ceremony, it is her business and the mark of her skill.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her.

681 In court, when a woman has to pay damages or a fine, she may
913 be able to provide the money from her own resources. If not, she can turn to her husband or to her own kinsfolk. Provided damages for adultery are not involved, her husband, if he is not away working, ought to provide the money and a deliberate refusal to do so would precipitate a major quarrel and the possibility of divorce. If a woman gets into a fight at a party, and has to pay, say, half-a-crown to someone she has hurt, her husband ought to find the money for her. If he refuses to do so though she has no money of her own, the court will say that he no longer loves his wife, and is trying to find an opportunity to divorce her. Indeed, there would be little point in the husband refusing to pay, as those who cannot pay their fines are committed to prison, and he would then lose the services of his wife.

583 A woman can hold property in her own right and a husband honours
421 a well-loved wife by giving her cattle. Gifts that she gets from her own kinsfolk do not pass to her husband, and such things as blankets and mats that she has used, even if her husband bought them, are regarded as her own property. Even the money that her husband gives her to make specific purchases is her own to do as she pleases with, so that a woman may forgo the skirt for which her husband has given her money and instead give it to her sister to buy something else. Husbands do not always like such actions, but they cannot do anything directly to prevent them. One of the ways in which a wife acquires livestock of her own is by buying animals with the money she gets from her husband for clothes. The produce of a wife's wet-season garden, maize, sorghum, millet, root crops, pulses, cucurbits, is in effect held in common by husband and wife, and
[24] neither ought to sell any of it without first consulting the other.
[24] On divorce the crops are divided between them unless the court decides that one party did not work in the garden, or has deserted the other. The money a woman earns by brewing beer for sale she
[24] usually keeps, although some men say that a woman should hand the money over to her husband, lest he find her with it and suspect that she has earned it by prostitution. In practice, most women seem to keep their own earnings and it is not uncommon, where the husband is a drunkard and weak-willed, for his wife to have custody of his money as well. Behind the simultaneous operation within the husband-wife relationship of structural separation and social co-operation is well demonstrated by the apparently paradoxical situation, of which I saw two instances, in which a man ordered to pay damages to his wife for fighting her had to ask her to hand him over the money so that he could daily hand it back to her.

6. Mystical links

593 Symbolic expression of the relationship between man and wife is not greatly developed among the Ngoni, and the mystical bonds

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

uniting a married couple are weak as compared with say, the Bemba.[43] The bride is anointed with gall, and carries the gall bladder in her hair back to her own village as a sign that she has been through the marriage ceremony and has been instructed in her wifely duties by her husband's kinsfolk and neighbours. But the husband himself is usually not there, 'that day is not his work', and I once saw a man quietly drinking on one side of the village while his bride was being anointed on the other. In general it is not until much later that husband and wife appear together in ceremonial situations. The personal association of husband and wife begins in darkness and the privacy of the hut. Later the wife will have validated her status as a married woman, and can appear as such in public alongside her husband without embarrassment.

It is when a woman is pregnant that her husband's actions are most liable to affect her mystically. In general a man may commit adultery and his wife has no case against him; but when she is pregnant he is under a moral obligation to sleep only with her and, if he is a polygynist, with his other wives. His adultery endangers her life, for it is believed that her labour will be difficult and she or the child may die. The pregnant woman is in mortal danger if she herself commits adultery and there is a common obligation of fidelity on both man and wife throughout pregnancy, accompanied in the eyes of some people by a positive obligation to copulate together so that the foetus may grow strong in the womb. When labour proves difficult, the midwife calls on the husband to confess the adulteries he committed while his wife was pregnant so that the child can be born. She may also tell the woman to confess.[44] If the child is born dead, the woman's relatives begin to suspect that the man confessed only some of his adulteries and concealed others, thereby killing the child. We have already noted that if the woman dies the husband must offer a beast to her kinsfolk (pp. 38f).

From the birth of the child until its umbilical cord has fallen off and it has been doctored, the husband should not sleep with anyone at all, not even with his other wives. He can resume sexual relations with them after the cord has fallen but he does not sleep with the mother of the child until about three months after the birth, when he has ritual intercourse with her and the child is again doctored. While the infant is sleeping the husband has coitus interruptus with its mother and allows his semen to fall on her thighs. She smears the semen over her thighs and then takes up the child and gives it to her husband, who rests it on his lips. After a moment he hands the infant back to his wife who also rests it on her lips. The child is then put back to sleep on the mat beside the couple. This ritual intercourse is obligatory in that if it is omitted it is believed the child

[43] Richards, op. cit., p. 115.
[44] Barnes, op. cit., p. 168, and M. F. Barnes, 'The birth of a Ngoni child' Man, xlix (1949), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

will die. The child is in danger from the illness known as *mdulo* throughout the period from birth until the resumption of intercourse between its parents. It is not until after this ceremony, known as 'taking up the child'* that the mystical link between man, wife, and child is broken and the man free to commit adultery without mystical retribution. Thus while there are definite rights and obligations between husband and wife which can be enforced in the courts or are susceptible to the pressure of public opinion there are also in the critical situations of pregnancy and childbirth other mystical forces operating which unite the couple to a greater extent than at any other time. To a lesser extent the same principle operates when a woman menstruates. Her husband is in danger from her menstrual blood. She may not lie on the same mat with him and if he has a bed she must lie on the floor. If he has intercourse with her while she is menstruating he will contract an illness called *kapula*** whose symptoms are a very black face, nasal discharge, and continual feeling of cold. After death a man's widows are in danger of *mdulo* if they commit adultery during the first month of mourning.

We see then that the relationship between a man and his wife is partly defined in legal terms, with mutual duties and rights that are enforceable in the courts. This relationship is documentated and validated by the transfer of money and cattle from one group to the other and by the performance of the various marriage ceremonies. Because of the relationship between them, man and wife live together, sleep together, eat together and work together. But above all, together they produce and rear children. It is primarily because of these children that the kin of man and wife are concerned in the marriage relationship. It is during the long process of producing children that the two spouses are most closely associated with each other, and actions of the one in some mystical way directly and automatically influence the well-being of the other.

When a marriage grows out of flirtation between a young man and a young woman, there is at first sexual attraction between them. With the passage of time this may give place to a broader sentiment of mutual affection and respect. To this extent we may say that man and wife come to love each other. But whereas young men frequently discuss with other men the attraction they experience towards women, unmarried or married, they do not do this when they have settled down and begun to acquire prestige in the community. A man may quarrel with his wife in public, but he never expresses his affection for her, even in the intimacies of the bed. Men and women mourn their spouses with great lamentation at funerals, but while this may sometimes be the expression of a personal

* Kutola mwana. Cf. *kutenga* mwana among the Cewa.

** Cf. Read, op. cit., 'The moral code . . .', p. 18, where she describes a medicine called *ngula* with which men declared their wives so that their lovers would die of a wasting sickness. Also cf. *Zulu ukupula*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sorrow, it is not necessarily always so, for loud wailing and tears are appropriate at the death of all neighbours and kinsfolk, whether friends or enemies. Men do not usually seek the companionship of their wives at dances and beer parties, although there are some men who do. In our own society we think of a man earning his living in company with other men, but spending his leisure with his wife. By contrast Ngoni men work in the gardens with their wives but seek other company for recreation.

7. Divorce

The relationship between husband and wife can be terminated by death or by divorce. If one spouse dies, then his or her interest in the marriage is guarded by the surviving kinsfolk, and we shall deal with their actions in our next chapter as part of the intervention of affines in a marriage. In divorce, however, except in cases of desertion, both husband and wife are themselves involved and it is primarily by their own actions, rather than by the actions of their kinsmen, that the marriage is terminated.

While a marriage is established without reference to the Ngoni state organization, except in so far as the issue of a marriage certificate is concerned, divorce more frequently involves resort to the Native courts. It is possible to effect divorce without taking the matter to the court, and in the past, before the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy had begun, many people were divorced in the village. Kinsfolk of the two parties meet together in the village of one or other party, discuss the marriage, and agree among themselves that the couple are to be divorced. The formal act of divorce is made by the couple shaking hands with each other, while those present tell them to stop hating each other. The woman is told 'If this man comes as a traveller to your house, and asks for water, do not refuse him'.

It is more usual for a divorce to be referred to the court. Attempts are made by the kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, if quarrel there is, and when the attempts fail, the group seeking the divorce or hoping to get damages from the other side take the matter to the county Native Court. It is open to either the man or the woman to take the initiative in this matter. The court hears the case, awards damages as appropriate, and, if it thinks fit, declares the couple divorced. The formal act of shaking hands is sometimes performed in court, but is often dispensed with.

Divorce takes place in the village only when there is substantial agreement on both sides that it would be a mistake to allow the marriage to continue. The meeting of kinsfolk in the village may reach agreement about the return of the legalization payment or even the award of damages, but it is only the court that has power to enforce decisions of this kind, and it is to the court that disputants turn when they cannot agree. When a man wishes to divorce his wife on the ground of her adultery he usually does so through the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS Mpezeni

court. Women whose husbands have threatened them with divorce often bring the matter to court so that the divorce may be ratified and their grievance brought to light, or in the hope that they may be awarded damages for cruelty. If a woman does not wish to be divorced she may hope that the court will persuade her husband to take her back. In some areas where the Native Court is powerful, divorces are referred to it even after they have been agreed to in the village. The Dutch Reformed Church Mission sometimes allows divorce, but its members first seek divorce in the Native courts and then, when the divorce has been granted, apply to the Mission for divorce in the eyes of the Church.

After a quarrel between a man and his wife he may give her a present of sixpence or a shilling and tell her that she is divorced and must go home. This act does not of itself constitute a certain divorce unless the man takes no steps to persuade her to return after she has stayed at her own village for a month or more. If the man does not go to her kinsfolk to apologize and ask them to intercede with the woman on his behalf, then it is plain that he meant what he said, and the woman may feel free to seek a new husband. A woman divorced in this way is not, however, so sure of her position as if she had been divorced in court or by agreement at a meeting of kinsfolk and there is always the possibility that her old husband may bring a suit of adultery against her and the new husband. The gift and the husband's statement 'I divorce you' constitute really only a threat of divorce, and a woman who returns to her own people after such a threat and who is not followed by an apologetic husband will, if she is sensible, take steps to clarify her status. Her kinsfolk may go to her husband's kin and discuss the quarrel with them and attempt a reconciliation or they refer the matter to the court.

A man does not need any specific grounds for divorcing his wife and if the marriage has lasted only a short time he may just say that he does not like her or does not want her as a wife. If no marriage payments have been made a man may merely say he is tired of his wife and send her home. The more common reasons given when divorce occurs soon after marriage are that a wife is always quarrelling, is lazy about preparing food, is disrespectful, or is always running off to her own village. Where the marriage has lasted longer, the most common grounds for divorce are adultery by the wife and desertion by the husband.

A woman usually seeks divorce on the grounds of cruelty or desertion. It is not sufficient for her to claim that her husband is a leper, or is mad, or has syphilis, for the court will argue that she ought to seek out the proper medicine to cure her husband. If her husband has been sent to prison, the court will argue that he went against his will and that his wife must wait for him to come out. She is more likely to get a divorce if she can prove that he is continually beating her or that he does not clothe her although he

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

has the money to do so. Sometimes a wife brings her husband to court seeking damages from him for cruelty without asking for a divorce.

The woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of desertion is usually the wife of a labour migrant. Her struggle is not with her husband himself but with her affines, his kinsfolk who try to protect his interests for him while he is away. We shall consider this type of situation in the next chapter, where we deal with the relationship between a woman and her husband's kin. Here it will suffice to say that provided the man has been away for about four years without writing the divorce is usually granted.

Actions for adultery are always liable to turn into divorce cases, and the amount of damages awarded depends on whether or not a divorce is granted. If adultery is proved, and it is easier to prove than to disprove it, the woman and her lover each pay 30s. to the husband and 5s. fine to the court. If the woman is divorced on the ground of the adultery, the damages are increased to £3 each to the husband and 10s. each to the court. In court the woman is usually asked "Which man do you love?" and if she selects her lover, the divorce is granted. Sometimes the husband protests that he wants his wife back, but if the court is persuaded that to send the woman back would only lead to more trouble, they will divorce the woman despite the protests of the husband.

When divorce is granted the legalisation payment, if it has been made, should be returned. The court does not, however, make any definite order on this point unless called upon to do so by the man or his relatives, and it seems that in the absence of definite instructions to hand over the money, it is retained by the woman's relatives. This is particularly true when the divorce is on the ground of the man's desertion when it is likely that his interests will be poorly represented by his relatives.

If the husband has brought his wife to court in order to divorce her on some ground other than adultery, the court may merely tell the couple that they are divorced, without awarding damages to either party. But the law on this point appears to be changing, and the rule followed in one court is not always followed in another. Even in the same court the decisions given at one time may conflict with those given at another. If the court decides that the woman is at fault she may be ordered to pay £3 damages to her husband. If the man is at fault then, more rarely, the man is ordered to pay £3 damages to his wife. Occasionally, although the fault is held to lie with the man, the woman is ordered to pay £3 damages to secure her divorce. The factors influencing these decisions appear to be the readiness of any particular court to listen to the pleas of a woman, and its opinion of the character of the women. A woman who is reported as foolish, or given to quarrelling over nothing, or provocatives, is sometimes ordered to pay damages to her husband

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

although the evidence presented during the hearing of the case has established the husband's fault as the ground for divorce.

Only if there is dispute over the matter will the court make an order about the division of crops. The principles of division are that the crops belong to those who worked hard to grow them and that the children of the marriage have to be fed by the parent with whom they live, whoever may eventually have their custody. Thus in a case in which a woman successfully pleaded for divorce because of her husband's cruelty, the court awarded all the crops in the couple's garden to the husband, as the woman had been lazy and had done only a little towards their cultivation.

Bridewealth is not automatically returned on divorce and as we have seen, divorce is the time for paying bridewealth rather than for retrieving it. The disposal of the children of a divorced couple is regarded as a separate issue and to be treated on its own merits.

It is useful to have some quantitive estimate of divorce frequency, but the construction of a satisfactory measure is not easy. One aspect of the occurrence of divorce is presented in Tables IX and X, where the number of divorces experienced by wedded men and women of different ages is set out.

It will be seen that, considering only those wedded men and women whose divorces are known, the mean number of divorces per head of wedded population is 0·49 (51/104) for men and 0·30 (62/210) for women. This difference may be due in part to a greater reluctance on the part of women to admit to divorce, but is also due to the greater mobility of men. While women stay at home, their husbands go off to money in the towns, divorcing their urban wives when they return home or when the strange rural environment proves intolerable to the women from the towns.

By considering the number of years that marriages have lasted, it is possible to say what is the mean duration of marriage. The necessary information was available for 402 marriages extant as well as completed, experienced by men and women who were resident in the sample villages. The mean duration of all these marriages is 10·6 years, and the mean duration of the marriages that ended in divorce is 6·6 years. The median duration of all marriages is, to the nearest year, 8 years, and of marriages ended in divorce, 5 years. More divorces occurred in the period from four-and-a-half years to five-and-a-half years after marriage than in any other similar one-year period.*

For comparison with other societies, we can express as a ratio the relationship between the number of marriages that ended in divorce and the number that did not or have not yet done so. This can be done in three ways, as set out in Table XI.

* There is no space here to give the method by which these calculations were made, but see my 'Measures of divorce frequency in simple societies.' *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, lxxvi (1946), pp. 63-69.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

The precise significance of these ratios need not concern us here. It is sufficient to note that they indicate that divorce among the Ngoni is more frequent than it is among the Ngoni people from whom they first came where divorce is said to be 'rare'.[*] The Ngoni ratios are closer to the Lozi and Bemba than to the Tswana.[**] The indication is that Ngoni informants are right when they assert that divorce is much more frequent than it used to be, for it seems legitimate to suppose that in former times the Ngoni were more like their Ngoni forbears, in this as in other things, than they are now.

Once agreed upon, either at the court or in the village, divorce

Table [illegible]. Marital experience of males, by age, 1946-9

Present age in years	Marital experience													
	All males								Married males only					
	Number of marriages entered into since birth								Number of divorces experienced since birth					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0-4	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	–	–	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	–	0
5-9	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	–	–	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	–	0
10-14	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	–	–	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	–	0
15-19	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	[illegible]
20-24	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]
25-29	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]
30-34	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	[illegible]
35-39	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	[illegible]
40-44	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	[illegible]
45-49	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	[illegible]	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	[illegible]	[illegible]
50-54	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]
55-59	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
60-64	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	[illegible]	–	[illegible]
65-69	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	[illegible]
70-74	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	[illegible]
75-79	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	[illegible]
Not known	–	–	–	–	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[*] Clarkson, 'Kinship and marriage among the Lozi of Northern Rhodesia and the Zulu of Natal', in Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, eds., *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, [illegible].

[**] Clarkson in Mitchell and Barnes, 'The Lenshe Village: report of a social survey' (Communications from the School of African Studies, University of Cape Town, new series No. [illegible]), pp. [illegible], and Richards, op. cit., p. [illegible].

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

is normally irreversible and couples do not often go back to each other. If a wife does go back soon after a divorce people laugh at her for having caused trouble over nothing. A husband may sometimes assert that his wife has been divorced without his approval, perhaps while he was away working, but such complaints go unanswered for it is in the interests of the court to uphold its own decisions. Even if a man is living in the rural area his wife may get a divorce if he refuses to go to court to defend his case. In addition he runs the risk of a fine for contempt of court. The somewhat lengthy process by which a woman can get her divorce despite the obstruction of her husband is illustrated by the following account of a court case.

Case History 2

In April 1948 Zachariah, a man holding the royal descent name and married to Ruth and Naomi, began to make advances to a recently divorced

Table X. Marital experience of females, by age, 1948-9

Age in years	Marital experience: All females: Number of marriages entered into since birth: 0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	Married females only: Number of divorces experienced since birth: 0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0-4	[illegible]	-	-	-	-	-	-	[illegible]	-	-	-	-	-	0
5-9	[illegible]	-	-	-	-	-	-	[illegible]	-	-	-	-	-	0
10-14	[illegible]	-	-	-	-	-	-	[illegible]	-	-	-	-	-	0
15-19	[illegible]	[illegible]	1	-	-	-	1	[illegible]	[illegible]	1	-	-	1	[illegible]
20-24	-	[illegible]	3	-	-	-	1	[illegible]	[illegible]	3	1	-	1	[illegible]
25-29	-	[illegible]	4	-	-	-	1	[illegible]	[illegible]	4	1	-	1	[illegible]
30-34	1	15	4	1	-	-	2	[illegible]	[illegible]	4	-	-	2	[illegible]
35-39	-	13	7	2	-	-	2	[illegible]	[illegible]	4	1	-	2	[illegible]
40-44	-	[illegible]	5	2	1	-	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	4	1	-	-	[illegible]
45-49	-	9	[illegible]	-	1	-	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	5	-	1	-	[illegible]
50-54	-	4	7	-	1	-	-	[illegible]	7	5	1	1	-	[illegible]
55-59	-	7	5	1	-	-	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	5	-	1	-	[illegible]
60-64	-	9	4	1	-	-	1	[illegible]	[illegible]	1	1	-	1	[illegible]
65-69	-	3	6	-	-	1	-	[illegible]	3	3	-	-	1	[illegible]
70-74	-	5	3	-	-	-	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	-	-	-	[illegible]
75-79	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
80-84	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1
Not known	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	4	4
Total	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	7	3	1	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	3	3	[illegible]	[illegible]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

159
513
513
58%

women who lived near the place where he was working, with the idea of taking her as his third wife. Ruth, the great wife, was living with Zachariah at the time, and tried to prevent him from marrying this woman. Zachariah insisted but then became so angry with Ruth that he gave her expenses and said she was divorced. She went back to her village, saying she would get a divorce in the court. She stayed at her father's village for some time and then went back to her husband.

In October there was another quarrel between Ruth and Zachariah. According to Zachariah he told his wife to bring some tobacco from inside the hut and she refused, whereupon there was a fight. Ruth took the matter to court, complaining that in the fight Zachariah had hurt her so

Table 21. Divorce ratios

58%

Ratio	Value
A	30·0% (115/383)
B	33·0% (115/348)
C	36·0% (115/319)

Legend

A. The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages

B. The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all completed marriages

C. The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages except those ended by death

124

Informants

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	117	136	86·0
Women	113	131	86·3
Total	230	267	87·6

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 111

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

badly that she had had to go to hospital. She produced a letter from the White doctor by way of evidence. Ruth's father testified that Ruth was the first wife Zachariah had married, yet despite this he fought her and did not fight with his second wife Naomi. Ruth asked the court to divorce her as she feared she would be killed by Zachariah. A court councillor said that although she and her husband had been to the court before with their troubles, it was not the work of the court to force men and women to divorce one another but to instruct them how to live together in peace. Zachariah was ordered to pay two pounds damages to Ruth and ten shillings fine to the court. Zachariah agreed to pay the fine but refused to pay the damages. The chief, who was in court at the time, asked him if he said this because of his royal descent-name. If Zachariah persisted in his attitude the chief would write to his employer and tell him to deduct the money from his wages. Zachariah then said he would send a boy back to collect the two pounds from his village.

Ruth went to her own village. About this time Zachariah was transferred to another area, distant from Ruth's village. In November Ruth's father began to complain that the two pounds had not yet been paid and said that Zachariah was trying to trap his wife by not visiting her, hoping she would commit adultery.

In February 1948 Ruth took out a summons against Zachariah for failing to come and visit her despite the ruling of the court in October that they were not to be divorced. The summons was sent to Zachariah in another county and Zachariah wrote back to a court councillor to say that he would not come to court as he had heard that Ruth was committing adultery with a certain man. On receiving the letter the chief said nothing could be done about it until Zachariah decided to bring an action for adultery against Ruth.

By this time Zachariah had acquired another wife and when in March he was given leave he took the new wife to his own village where his second wife Naomi had been living all the time.

In December 1948 Ruth brought an action against Zachariah for divorce on the ground of his desertion. Three times the case was down for hearing but Zachariah never appeared. The court then divorced Ruth with no damages to pay.

Hearing this Zachariah went to the District Officer and asked why his wife had been divorced without his knowledge. The District Officer referred him to the chief. Zachariah wrote a rather facetious letter to the chief challenging his right to divorce Ruth. The court clerk read the letter and said that Zachariah ought to be fined for insulting the chief. He observed that Ruth's mother had died in September and that Zachariah must be a cruel man as he had not gone to other his condolences.

It is easier for a woman to prove desertion in a case like this where the man is living in the rural area, than when he is away in the town working and writes sporadically if at all. The court feels that it is under an obligation to the migrant labourers of the tribe not to divorce their wives too easily. But if a husband is in the area and could perfectly easily go and see his wife, it is much easier to demonstrate that the desertion is deliberate and sustained, and not merely forced on a man by the exigencies of earning a living.

We have seen that the two main grounds for divorce are adultery and desertion. Some Whites express this by saying that these are the main causes of divorce among the Ngoni and other tribes. The Ngoni do not see the matter in this light. The cause of divorce to them is the presence of the White group. Old men deplore the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

apparent ease with which women get divorces and councillors say that they divorce people only because the Administration would interfere if they did not. We can see that in one sense the Ngoni analysis is correct. Whatever may be the precipitating causes of particular divorces, one basic factor is that the old social order in which divorce was rare has been replaced, through a series of events beginning with the White conquest, by a different form of social structure in which wives are relatively mobile from one husband to another. Adultery and desertion lead to divorce because it is no longer necessary to tie down the fertility of women to definite points in a segmentary system based on patrilineal descent, and this is so because the system no longer exists. It is true that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Missions do not recognize divorce but ecclesiastical ceremonies have no force in law, either in the eyes of the Administration or of the Native Courts, and the sanctions utilized by these missions do not entirely prevent their members seeking divorce. 586 178

Immediately after a divorce the couple usually wish to have little to do with one another. After the passage of years the hostility between them fades away and they may talk to one another in the ordinary course of village life. They continue to address each other as *husband* and *wife* and their children, although nominally in the custody of one group or the other continue to visit back and forth and keep the parents informed of each other's doings. A woman now married elsewhere may return to her former husband when their son comes home on leave from work. In her old age a woman may even go back to the man from whom she was divorced a long time ago if she has no one else to turn to for shelter and assistance. More frequently she follows her children to where they are living in her former husband's village but has little to do with him directly, only through their children. 586

B. Co-wives

593 595

We have seen that the rights of a man over his wife's sexual activities are different from hers over his. Whereas a woman who commits adultery pays damages to her husband, he does not pay her when he commits adultery. This lack of symmetry derives from the polygynous nature of the Ngoni marriage system. A man can always argue that he is seeking another wife, even if the woman he is running after is married to someone else. It is considered no business of his wife to interfere. She may attempt to stop him but all she can use are domestic and mystical sanctions, she cannot appeal to the law. Again, a wife has no right to the sexual monopoly of her husband and cannot prevent him from taking additional wives except by making his life with her so difficult that he decides to abandon the attempt. [584]

As can be seen from Table III, about one man in seven has two or more wives. Although the Christian Missions do not tolerate 595 794

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

595 polygyny, and punish their members who take additional wives,
799 there are still a number of Christian polygynists who for most purposes align themselves with the Christian group.

595 As in the old days, the wives of a polygynist are ranked in the
178 chronological order of marriage, the first wife married being the great wife. If, however, bridewealth has been paid, the wives married
[583] in this way are all senior to those who are married without it. The arrangement by which a barren or aged wife was given a linked co-wife (*nikanni*) has now almost disappeared. A young girl may still be indicated as a linked co-wife designate at the gall bladder ceremony of her kinswoman and the intestines placed round her neck, but this is now a mere ceremonial, and the girl marries elsewhere when she grows up. As mentioned above a chief negotiated recently for a linked co-wife on the strength of bridewealth paid by his father, but with no success.

593 A man makes his headquarters in his great wife's hut, and keeps
595 his possessions and money in it. During the day it is considered proper that he should sit and chat or entertain visitors on the verandah of her hut. Her hut is likely to be of better design than those of her co-wives, and she is more likely than they to have a separate kitchen. When her husband returns from a journey, he ought to go first to her hut, and if he has brought back goods from Southern Rhodesia, it is in her house that he stores his loads until he has time to divide them among his wives and relatives. A visitor from afar goes first to the great wife's hut and there asks for the man he is seeking. In her husband's absence it is she who must entertain the visitor. This pattern of precedence is followed to greater or lesser extent despite quarrels between husband and wife, and is not affected by where the husband actually sleeps at night.

Apart from this emphasis on the importance of the great wife, the
595 correct behaviour for a man with many wives is impartiality. He must sleep with each wife in rotation, usually for a week at a time, and must not confide in one wife the secrets of his relationship to another. Relationships between co-wives are sometimes strained, and one may use medicines against the others. The medicine[*]
[834] believed to prevent a man from achieving erection with anyone other than the woman who gives it to him is sometimes used by one wife against another. On the other hand, some co-wives help each other in their gardens and many polygynists' households run smoothly. Each wife has her own hut and her own garden and it is possible for them to arrange their affairs so that they can co-operate or act separately as they find best. If they persistently quarrel
[591] their husband may deem it well for them to live in separate villages, so that for example a man may live virilocally with his great wife and uxorilocally with his second wife, going from one village to the

[*] Possibly known as *ndemonga*. The details of this medicine are not known by many men, and I was unable to question any women on this matter.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Nguni FRS
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other for a week at a time. Men working permanently in the township or with trading stores in strange villages take one wife at a time with them, and there is a change round every month. 595

It is the newcomer to a group of wives who is likely to be the target of hostility. The other co-wives sometimes combine to make life so difficult for her and their husband that he may decide to abandon the idea of marrying her. One way out of this situation is to go off to a farm or to Fort Jameson township. The couple live there until the man's other wives have calmed down and accepted the inevitable. When the arrival of a new co-wife is agreed to by the old wives she is expected to live in peace with them. They take part in her gall-bladder ceremony and instruct her in her duties as a wife. The kind of sentiments expressed by a woman to her new co-wife are illustrated in the following speech.

Case history 3

John had two wives and had just married another. The new bride, who came from Ishmael village, arrived at John's village for her gall bladder ceremony. She was instructed by many people including John's great wife, who said

'I am the great wife of John and I have a co-wife married to the same husband. We have never quarrelled since we were married to John. Perhaps you will be the first to start quarrelling in our home. If you are a quarrelsome person, when you go back to your home today, go and leave it [your quarrelsomeness] there and come back here with a good heart. Women who are married to one husband ought to love one another and sit together without backbiting. We have never held a meeting in this village because of a quarrel between us two [co-wives]. Leave all your jealousy at your home in Ishmael village and do not bring it here.'

6: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

[F 59]

CHAPTER IV

KINSFOLK, AFFINES AND NEIGHBOURS

1. *The setting of marriage*

[F 60] When a man marries he acquires not only a wife but also affinal relatives. His kinsfolk become her affines and both groups of relatives become kin of the children of the marriage. Husband and wife do not exist in isolation but are the centre of a network of relationships by which one group is articulated with the other. The common interest of the two groups is in the well-being of the couple and of the family which they found. This is true of all societies but among the Ngoni the relatives of a married couple play a more important part in the marriage than they do, for example, in Western society. The importance of the kin is increased by the custom of sending children away to live with their grandparents as soon as they have been weaned, and by the fact that husband and wife do not set up their residence entirely on their own but follow their [F 61] relatives and live in close proximity to one or more of them. We have said that in the old days the elementary family did not emerge as an important grouping in society. This proposition is still true to-day, although our grounds for making it have shifted somewhat. In the towns the old pattern of kinship cannot operate and husband [F 54] and wife live their lives much more as an isolated pair, cut off from their kin and alone responsible for their children. But in villages neighbours are kinsmen and a quarrel between man and wife brings kinsfolk from all around seeking to establish the rights and wrongs of the quarrel and to effect reconciliation. Many children are not sent to live with their grandparents, but even they grow up with their age-mates in the village, are fed by many different women, sleep in [F 55] different huts, and visit to and fro with their relatives in other villages. The difficulties of rearing children in the towns have led to the rise of a new pattern in which children born in Southern Rhodesia are brought back hundreds of miles to the village to be cared for by rural kinsfolk. The quarrels of spouses in the towns are referred home to the village for discussion.

It is the kinsfolk of the pair who are most directly concerned with their marriage, but there are other persons and groups who are also interested. In the village the headman and his lieutenants, even if they are not close kinsmen of one of the spouses, have an interest in the good behaviour of the couple, and they too may intervene in a quarrel. They participate in the ceremonials of marriage, and may receive part of the meat and beer given by one side to the other. [F 60] Beyond the village the Native Courts deal to a great extent with

G Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
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[illegible] The Native Courts deal in a brief way with matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the development of Christian marriage.

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who owes him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are responsible for their own actions before the court, and that transgressions can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peacefully with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms.

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage.

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later

[1] Called *ndowa*.

G. Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS-Mpezeni

583 that if the lover is thought to be very desirable as a husband, the girl and her parents will begin to act as though she had in fact been married by him. Few cases of seduction come before the courts, perhaps because of the fact that it is only pre-marital pregnancy that can lead to action in the court and not merely pre-marital copulation. If the lover agrees to marry the girl it is in the interests of her kin to let him do so, rather than take the matter to court where they may be awarded more damages but where also their daughter will appear as a foolish and indecent person. It is said that some girls hand on to their parents some of the presents they receive from their lovers, and that therefore the parents take no action against the lovers, but I have no information as to the extent of this practice.

The kin of a woman have therefore an interest in her sexual activities before she is married, and to a lesser extent a man's relatives have a similar interest. The main concern of a man, however, is that he shall not get himself into such serious trouble that he has to find the money for damages to the court and that he will not be forced to marry an unsuitable girl whom he has impregnated.

2. The marriages of children

581 At marriage itself a person's relatives may act on his or her behalf in choosing a spouse, and the factors that influence their choice are different from those which operate when people choose their own spouses. A man's relatives stress that the wife-to-be must be hardworking, polite to her superiors and not given to promiscuity. The fact that a girl begins to sleep with her lover may influence her lover's parents against her for they argue that if she sleeps so easily with their son she will soon tire of him and run off after someone else. They pay more attention to the character of her parents and siblings and look to see what sort of wives her sisters have made. Similarly the parents of the girl may look critically at the young man and they too argue that as he has already begun to sleep with their daughter he will soon begin running after other women and leave his wife 'alone in her hut'. If a relative of the girl has already married a relative of the man and that marriage has not been a success, their kinsfolk may try to prevent a second marriage.

Case history 4

Abedem, who works in South Africa, wrote to his brother saying he wanted to marry Mary. The brother, who was married to Mary's sister, approached Mary's father who said that he could not agree. Mary's father later said that he opposed the marriage as Abedem's brother had infected his wife with syphilis and he did not want another of his daughters to marry into that family.

[164]

584 If a man is away working he may write home and ask his father or some other relative to find a wife for him. A marriage arranged in this way does not necessarily find favour with the man when he finds out who his bride is to be, but a number of soldiers successfully

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

married women chosen for them by their kindsfolk while they were away during the 1939-45 war. If the woman selected for him by one relative is unsatisfactory, a man may turn to another relative for help, as is shown in the following incident.

Case history 5

Abeb, a young man of about twenty, was working in Fort Jameson. He wrote to his father in the village enclosing money for the legislation payment, asking that his father should find him a wife. His father spoke to a friend living in another village who had an unmarried daughter. The friend agreed that his daughter should marry Abeb, but the girl said that she wanted to see Abeb before making up her mind about him. Abeb was told of the arrangement but refused to agree to it, saying that he knew that the girl chosen was a prostitute.

Abeb then asked a classificatory grandmother to find him a wife. This woman found a girl and when Abeb came home from work he and a friend went for a walk to the girl's village to spy her out. The friend, on seeing the girl, advised Abeb against marrying her and the negotiations again fell through.

Abeb asked his grandmother to try again and this time he approved of the girl selected. The legislation payment was made and the girl came to live in Abeb's village with his grandmother. After a week or so, she was taken by the grandmother and other important women of the village into the township to start living with Abeb.

On the other hand a man may desist from marrying the girl of his choice in the face of parental opposition. For example, the first girl that Amos found for himself was opposed by his father because her father was a sorcerer; the second on the ground that her parents were unreliable and that she was a cross-cousin, a point against her in that Amos's brother had married a cross-cousin and the marriage was not a success; only with the third choice did the father agree to his marriage.

The initiative in arranging a marriage lies with the man and his kin rather than with the woman, and a girl who goes too much out of her way to attract a husband risks her reputation and may be regarded as a potential prostitute. On elopement, it is the woman who runs off to the man's village or to his place of work, and it might be expected that her relatives would initiate action to bring her back or to claim damages for abduction. Sometimes a man does take action against the lover with whom his daughter has run away, and the lover pays a beast. Another man, however, may take no steps to follow his runaway daughter, merely refusing to recognize the existence of any marriage between her and her lover, and sometimes denying any knowledge of the lover's name. If the woman shows no sign of returning to her own village, efforts may be made to bring her children back to her parents to be brought up. Sometimes a man who has eloped with a woman later approaches her parents, apologizes for his precipitate action and makes them gifts, after which they may decide to recognize him as a son-in-law.

If a man shows his intention of marrying despite the disapproval of his close kin, they can retaliate by not helping him financially,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Hgent FRS
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by not visiting him, by refusing his presents of beer, and even by refusing to speak to him. Provided the man can find the money for the legalisation payment himself, they cannot prevent the money from being handed over. The woman's kin are in rather a different position for they can try to prevent her from marrying against their wish by refusing to accept the legalisation payment. It will be seen from Table VIII that this happened in four per cent (9/198) of the marriages in our sample. The woman's father may sometimes think the sum offered is too small and may refuse to accept until it is increased. The man can either give way and offer the larger sum or, if he thinks the demand is excessive or beyond his resources, he may start living with her without any legalisation payment at all. He is then not so sure of his rights over his wife as he would be otherwise and his wife's parents may try to break up the marriage. Should quarrels lead to a divorce it will be easier to obtain because of the absence of payments.

The woman's relatives may, however, refuse to accept the offered legalisation payment irrespective of the amount. They do this if they feel that the marriage has no chance at all of success, either because of the unsatisfactory character of the man or of the well-established unreliability of their kinswoman. By refusing the payment they hope to protect themselves against the call for damages which they feel sure is bound to come when their daughter commits adultery and her husband wants to divorce her. Even at the monetary level the amount they are likely to get as legalisation payment is only thirty shillings while the damages they will be called upon to find will be three pounds. If, however, no legalisation payment has been made, then the divorce should be granted without the award of damages against the woman. Thus her relatives protect themselves financially by refusing the payment, but at the same time by so doing they are trying to avoid trouble in the group of kin and quarrels with their newly-found affines. If a man before making his legalisation payment shows himself to be unsuitable as a husband, or if it is plain that his wife will not be satisfactory to him, her kin will not put any pressure on him to pay and begin to hope that the marriage will end before too much trouble ensues. If the payment is made, some of the woman's relatives may refuse any part of it offered to them, hoping thereby to avoid future financial responsibility for her adultery.

Case history 6

Job works in the township and had two wives. He then married the girl Rebecca. She lived with him in town for a month or two and then Job sent her back th her village to be taught to cook properly. Her mother's mother remarked 'Ever since she reached puberty we told Rebecca she must learn to cook properly but she took no notice. The other wives of Job often laugh at her.' Her mother's mother's elder sister said 'It is a good thing for us that we did not accept any legalisation payment from this man.' A month or so later the marriage broke up and Rebecca was divorced.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
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Where a woman has already troubled her relatives by her adultery, they may try to avoid further expense by refusing the legalization payment offered for her.

Case History 7

Rachel had had two husbands and had been divorced from them both. She had also lived with a White for some years. In 1946 she began to live with Enos, who already had three wives. In 1949 Enos approached an important man in Rachel's village and asked him to act as intermediary as he wished to offer the legalization payment to Rachel's brother. This man refused to do so, and in the end Enos approached his brother-in-law himself. The brother-in-law said that he had known his sister Rachel a long time and she was just a prostitute. He would not take the money for her. Enos said he would speak to his wife and ask her to change her character. Eventually the brother-in-law agreed to accept the thirty shillings offered.

Although the kinsfolk of the man or woman can exercise social pressure to prevent a marriage it is difficult for them to force a girl to marry against her will, and impossible in the case of a man. We have noted that in the old days, according to informants, people married whom they were told and did not refuse. Even if this was ever true, it is true no longer. A man can move off to the towns in the face of pressure and a woman can always run away to other relatives if her parents are insistent on an unwanted marriage. The Administration does not allow girls to be married against their will, but I do not know of any recent instance in which it has intervened on this issue. A girl's relatives can show their anger by abusing her and by scaring off her own preferred mate, but they cannot detain her against her will and they cannot force her to go through the ceremonies of marriage. They cannot appeal to the court to punish the girl for disobedience.

In some instances pressure is put on a man by a woman's kin to force him into marrying her. If a woman bears a pre-marital child, and it is known that the genitor is an important man or chief, her kinsfolk begin to adopt towards the genitor's family the patterns of respect and avoidance which would be appropriate if he were their affine. This procedure may be adopted although it is plain to people in general that the genitor has no intention of marrying the woman. If it is unsuccessful in forcing the hand of the genitor, the formal attitudes of the woman's kinsfolk come to be generally ridiculed and they abandon the pretence.

So far we have considered only the attitude of kinsfolk towards a proposed marriage and the legalization payment associated with it. The factors influencing the acceptance or refusal of bridewealth are different. Bridewealth, when offered, is not often refused. Table V shows that in our sample this happened in only one out of 300 marriages. We must remember that bridewealth is paid only in about four per cent of all marriages, and that a man is usually on good terms with his affines and has lived in peace for many years with his wife before he offers it. A youngish man may seek the

4: Barnes R-5 (1945-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

583 approval of his father before he offers, and as in the case of Amos and Eve (p. 38), the father may sometimes disapprove. If the man is from another part of the territory or from abroad the parents of
583 the woman, even if they accept the legalization payment, may be
583 reluctant to allow their grandchildren to go a long way away from
583 there to live among their son-in-law's kin. This consideration applies particularly to strangers in the township who marry Ngoni women. When they leave their jobs or retire they try to take their wives and children with them. They may be frustrated in the removal of their children by the woman's parents, who refuse the bridewealth. The courts support the claims of Ngoni grandparents for the retention of their grandchildren under these conditions and a returning Yao or Cipeta man may be forced to travel without his children and sometimes without his wife. I have recorded elsewhere[9] an incident in which a Yao man who had been married to an Ngoni woman for twenty-one years was divorced by her and his offer of bridewealth refused by her parents. The police who check the movements of women and children by bus and lorry away from Fort Jameson are in touch with the Native Courts and may be on the look out if it seems likely that a man from a strange tribe will attempt to smuggle his wife and children away from their Ngoni kin.

581 Thus we see that the kinsfolk are directly concerned with marriage. When the children are still toddlers, they are paired off in fun by their
[584] adult relatives as they sit playing. For a week or month or even longer a woman will laughingly call her neighbour *child's father-in-law* because their children have been nominated *husband* and *wife* in this way. As a child grows older, so the interest of its relatives in its marriage become clearer. Before marriage the relatives of a
584 girl hold rights in her that are violated if she is seduced and bears
584 a child. It is to them that the girl's lover pays the beast of seduction to recompense them for the wrong he has done by impregnating the girl, but he does not gain custody of the child. On the other hand,
836 no one brings a case against a man merely because he sleeps with an unmarried girl. It is only when she becomes pregnant that an action can be laid against him. A man caught *in flagrante delicto* by one of the unmarried girl's kin can expect abuse and possibly blows but unless he is provocative he need not fear action in the courts. The hostility directed towards him seems to be due in part to his having behaved so indiscreetly as to be caught and having forced the girl's kin to take cognizance of what was happening.

581 At marriage the woman's kin grant rights in her sexual activities
583 to her husband. These rights are unambiguously transferred by the legalization payment, and the woman's kin are therefore in a position to delay or facilitate the transfer of these rights by their attitude towards the payment. There is no corresponding right in an unmarried man held by his kin, and at marriage there is no corres-

[9] Barnes, op. cit. p. 236

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

pending payment through which they can attempt to control the relationship between the couple. Yet both groups of kin are interested in the successful outcome of the marriage, and therefore attempt to influence the choice of marriage partner.

5. Formal interaction

In the formal negotiations that precede a marriage, and in the ceremonies that mark its stages of development, the kinsfolk are always involved. The married couple depend on their kin for economic assistance, and are under obligations to help their kin. The place of residence of the couple is determined by the dispositions of their kin in different villages. If the man is a labour migrant his interests are represented by his rural kinsfolk. In general it is the fathers of the couple who are most directly concerned, if they are available, but in all Ngoni situations in which a man (or woman) appeals to his kin for support there are no hard and fast rules about the genealogical positions his supporters should occupy. If a man's father is old he turns to his older brother. If his genealogically close kinsmen live far away, he turns to those who live nearer although they may be further removed from him in genealogical terms. If there is no male kinsman available he may seek the support of an old kinswoman.

The formal situations which require the co-operation of kinsfolk are the matchmaking, the gall bladder ceremony (which we may perhaps regard as the wedding), the ceremony of first cooking, the hoeing party, the announcement of first pregnancy, the carrying of beer and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. Betrothal is another formal situation requiring the presence of the woman's kin, but as nowadays very few girls are betrothed, we shall omit this from our analysis. It will be recalled that even in the old days betrothal applied only to girls under puberty and that a girl who reached puberty without becoming betrothed proceeded to marriage without passing through any intermediate stage. The matchmaking, at which the marriage is arranged, is carried on in a formal manner but there is little ceremonial. The carrying of beer is a visit from one group to the other that can be repeated as many times as they wish, but all the other ceremonies occur but once in a marriage, if they occur at all. The hoeing party has a certain economic value but the other ceremonies are largely symbolic in content. As with the marriage payments, the marriage ceremonials can all be dispensed with and yet there be a marriage which to all intents and purposes is valid. What cannot be omitted so easily from a marriage are the patterns of respect and avoidance between the couple and their affines, particularly between a man and his wife's mother. Even here, however, there is some variation in practice.

The usual procedure in matchmaking is that first the man and the woman agree between themselves that they will get married. They reach this agreement in secret without reference to their kinsfolk

Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

or friends. If the man is away working or in the Army he may make his proposal by letter. When agreement has been reached negotiations can proceed although they are carried on as if there had been no prior agreement and the proposal was entirely a new one.

A man tells his eldest brother of his intention to marry, or, if he is the eldest son, he may approach his father direct. He does not speak to his mother about this matter, for a man does not confide in his mother about anything connected with sex, but she is told of his intentions by her husband. A man ought to tell his grandmother at an early stage, particularly the grandmother who reared him. A woman tells her sisters and her grandmother, and her eldest sister will tell her eldest brother. The man's father or eldest brother may decide on who shall act as intermediaries in the matchmaking, or else the man may himself ask important people in the village to act. There is no definite rule as to who they should be, and either men or women or both may make up the party. Usually two or three people go, and a man will try and choose people who are reliable and clever and tactful. Marriage intermediaries do not have the same important responsibilities for the marriage as do the marriage mentis (or witnesses) among the Nyanja and Yao although they are known by the same term.[9] The intermediaries go to the woman's village and consult her senior relatives. Traditionally they should go to the woman's grandmother, either her father's mother or her mother's mother, depending on who lives in the village and who is the more important. They tell her that they have heard that such-and-such a marriage has been contemplated. The girl's grandmother tells the girl's father that the intermediaries have come, and if nothing has arisen to jeopardise the marriage, the visiting party are told that all is well and that they must come back again. They return to their own village, and the next day, or the next week if it is a long way to walk, they go again, bringing with them a gift or sometimes the legalisation payment. The gift or money is handed to the person leading the negotiations on the woman's side who passes it on to the woman's father. Arrangements are made about the gall bladder ceremony and a date fixed. The intermediaries then go back to their village.

At the gall bladder ceremony the bride receives formal advice from her affines and the people in their village. Shortly afterwards she begins to live with her husband in either his or her village. If they live virilocally she does not at first cook for her husband, but the couple rely on food prepared by his other wives or his mother or grandmother. It may be up to a year later that the woman first cooks for her husband and husband's father, the latter commenting on her cooking. When she first becomes pregnant she is anointed by her husband's grandmother, and goes with a young girl from her husband's kinsfolk to announce her pregnancy to her own kin.

[9] Mkisowe.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

At the hoeing party, her husband goes with kinsfolk and neighbours to work in the garden of her mother for a day and they are rewarded by her father. In the carrying of beer, a party of women from the wife's village carry beer brewed by her mother to her husband's father, who rewards them. At the final ceremony of entering the wife's mother's hut, a party of men and women from the man's village go to the woman's parents' village and are entertained by them. The husband enters his mother-in-law's hut, a woman from his village eats together from the same spoon with a woman from the wife's village, and his parents sit with her parents and discuss the marriage of their children.[a] It will be noted that these ceremonies are similar to those mentioned in connection with marriage in 'the time of peace'[b] except that what was formerly a distinct rite, at which a man ate with his wife's mother, has now become part of the ceremony of entering her hut.

All these ceremonies can be omitted, and the man and woman will be validly married to each other. It often happens that a woman dies before her daughter's husband has entered her hut, and in this ceremony no one can act as a substitute for her. If a man's parents-in-law die soon after his marriage, he will never receive beer from them, while even if they remain alive but live far away, the ceremony may never be performed. If a man quarrels with his parents-in-law, they may decide not to send him beer though he is living near them. A migrant labourer who returns home for a short holiday of a month or so may not feel inclined to get up a party to work in his wife's mother's garden. Marriages often begin in Southern Rhodesia, and it is only when a couple come home, sometimes with children, that the man initiates the formal approach to his wife's parents and makes the offer of the legalization payment. In a marriage of this kind it is too late to hold the gall bladder ceremony, and it is never performed. If a man acquiesces without enthusiasm in the marriage of his son to a girl of whom he does not really approve, he may not go to the trouble of arranging the gall bladder ceremony for her and the couple begin their married life together in the village of one of them without any ceremony at all. The absence of these ceremonies, even less than the absence of marriage payments, does not invalidate the legal rights of husband and wife. It does, however, mean that they are less sure of the informal support of their kinsmen. The kinsfolk express their participation in the marriage of the couple by these formalized patterns of behaviour. Their interests in the marriage may remain without this formal articulation with it, and the interests may find expression in other ways, as by intervention in quarrels, support in litigation, care of children, visits, and so on. Ngoni believe that the

[a] See Appendices for accounts of the formal procedures at the marriage ceremonies.

[b] See above, p. 9.

4: Barnes E-5 (1966-1969) 1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

606 good man behaves towards his father-in-law with obedience and respect, and that he is rewarded by the gifts of beer sent to his father by his wife's father. If these gifts are not made, then the man must be 'bad' or his father-in-law 'force' or 'cruel'.

581 There is one type of marriage in which none of these ceremonies are performed. This is what is known as the 'poorly fixed marriage'* which lies on the borderland between marriage and cohabitation. People do not expect a 'poorly fixed' marriage to last long, and this expectation is based more on their estimation of the character of the couple involved than on a consideration of the absence of marriage ceremonies and payments. If a couple, who have shown by their general behaviour that they are fickle and quarrelsome, begin to live together without going through any of the formalities of marriage, people speak of their marriage as 'poorly fixed'. If the union breaks up there is no divorce procedure and the couple merely go their own separate ways. The categorization 'poorly fixed' is not applied to all marriages in which there are no marriage [583] payments, for poverty is usually regarded as a valid excuse for not offering money or animals or for not bowing beer. It is rather poverty of character and lack of permanency and fickleness that lead to 'poorly fixed' marriages.

581 Sometimes a marriage which begins as 'poorly fixed' lasts for some time and becomes accepted as a proper marriage. An example of this is the marriage of Rachel and Enos (p. 68). In 1948 I was told this was a 'poorly fixed' marriage and that it would not last. In 1949 opinion had changed, and as we have seen, Enos succeeded in making the legalization payment for his wife. Even if his money had been refused his position would still have been better than it was in 1948 for he had shown that he could live with Rachel for three years without an undue amount of quarrelling and she had not drifted off to some other man. By making the legalization payment [583] Enos made his rights over her more certain.

People who live in 'poorly fixed' marriages are not despised for [584] doing so, but are rather pitied for their moral inability to make a 'well fixed' marriage. They are never so sure of the support of their relatives and neighbours as they would be otherwise. A man who 586 has not made the legalization payment may be supported by his wife's relatives when she commits adultery if they think that he is a good husband and that it is she who is at fault in the matter. But if a man neglects his obligations towards his wife's parents and [604] in particular does not approach them formally at the beginning of the marriage to tell them of his desire to marry their daughter, they may turn on him if he tries to exercise rights over the woman. In court, the wife's father may look at his son-in-law, who perhaps has been his neighbour for many years, and say 'Who is this man? We do not know him'; and the court will refuse to recognise his claims.

* *Ukuti ewayewaya.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1966-1969)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

claims. In retrospect, when discussing an erstwhile 'poorly fixed' marriage that has broken up, people will say 'That was not a proper marriage', and 'She was just his friend'. In all the tables we have excluded 'poorly fixed' marriages from consideration.

The initiative in strengthening a 'poorly fixed' marriage lies with the man and not with the woman's relatives. If their daughter is living with a man who has not made the legislation payment they cannot bring him to court and force him to pay. If their daughter has only just passed puberty there may be grounds for an abduction suit, but if she has been married before or is considered old enough to decide for herself, her relatives are unlikely to take any action in the courts against her husband. The woman cannot be forced to return to her own people. Similarly if no bridewealth has been paid, the children cannot be forced to live in one village rather than in the other. They can be asked to do so, but they cannot be taken to court if they refuse.

All 'poorly fixed' marriages are marriages without payments, but not all marriages without payment are 'poorly fixed'. It will be seen from Table XII that no payments at all have been offered in about a third of the marriages in our sample. In some of the marriages for which there have been offers of payment, these consist only of the small present given as 'snuff-box'[7] in modern marriage. Yet these marriages are valid despite the paucity or absence of payment. Many of them have lasted for a long time and the lack of payment is almost forgotten. It would be an act of malicious on the part of the woman's relatives if after twenty years of happy married life they began to remind her husband that he had not yet made the legislation payment. With the increasing importance of marriage certificates on which the legislation payment is recorded, and the rise in power of the Native Authority, the position may well change in years to come. At present, most marriages without payments are more like marriages with payment than they are like the unions of men with concubines and prostitutes. The persevering inquirer may unearth the lack of payments, but in the day-to-day life of the village, as well as in many of the formal situations of marriage, this lack is not significant. In the work of the garden, in the sharing of food, on festive occasions when there is beer and dancing, there is no distinction between wives married in one way or the other. More significantly, we find instances where despite the absence of any payments, beer has been brewed for a daughter's husband and he has been invited to go through the ceremony of 'entering the wife's mother's hut'. Some marriages are solemnized in church, with the approval of the parents on both sides, without any payments being made. The rules of avoidance between a man and his wife's mother operate independently of the marriage payments, and widows are subject to the same restrictions

[7] *Mfuko, cawadawa, cawadawadawa.* See above, p. 38, n. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Mgmt FRS
Mgmt

and wear the same signs of mourning whether or not their deceased husbands made any payments. The absence of payments does not automatically deny to a man and woman the status of husband and wife any more than the completed payments automatically ensure marital happiness.

As collected in Table XII, the proportion of marriages in which no payments are offered has decreased in the last twelve years, and we know from Table VIII that this is due to an increase in the number of marriages in which the legalisation payment is made. It is therefore possible in future there will be a clearer division between marriage, with its legalisation payment, and concubinage, with no such payment and with a completely different relationship between the sexual partners and between their respective groups of relatives. We are not in this paper concerned specifically with concubinage and prostitution, but it may at this point be useful to point out that not many women are concubines. In our sample, as set out in Table IV, there was only one concubine, a wedded woman, among 222 wedded women. From Table III, we see that there were no men at all, in our sample of 110 wedded men, living with concubines. The paramour of the concubine in our sample was resident on a nearby farm, and so did not come into the sample of men.

d. Co-operative between affines

The payments and ceremonies of marriages are isolated and memorable events. The ceremonies are public in that neighbours

Table XII. Incidence of marriage without payment, by decades

Marriage payment	Date of marriage									Total
	1876-87	1888-97	1898-1907	1908-17	1918-27	1928-37	1938-47	1948-9	Not known	
At least one payment offered	1	6	17	37	36	34	66	14	5	208
None offered ..	–	7	11	19	26	24	39	3	3	132
Ratio of marriages without offer of payment to total	0%	54%	39%	34%	41%	41%	35%	18%	—	34%
Not known if any payments offered	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	74	69	123	24	10	406

Informants as in Table VIII

4) Burma E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni
Mutuli FRS

are there and to a large extent participate in them, joining in the dancing and drinking, giving presents and advice to the bride, and so on. Less spectacular are the continual patterns of interaction between a man and his affines arising from his partial dependence on them and his obligations towards them as expressed in everyday life. A man must avoid his mother-in-law and help his father-in-law with garden work, and if he is living uxorilocally he may be dependent on his affines for food and housing. If they move from one village to another he moves with them.

Avoidance is most marked between a man and his wife's mother. He must not speak to her, sit near her, pass in front of or enter her hut, and he should endeavour not to meet her on the path. Above all he must never sit on her mat, for sitting on a woman's mat is regarded as symbolically equivalent to sleeping with her. To a lesser extent a man must avoid his father-in-law, but it is not considered amiss for a man to sit at one end of a verandah while his father-in-law sits at the other. They can talk to each other if necessary. A woman is comparatively free with her parents-in-law and does not avoid their hut. The formalities of relationship between a man and his parents-in-law begin when he starts to negotiate his marriage, or earlier if their daughter is betrothed to him while she is still a child. With the passage of time a man avoids his mother-in-law less, and after the ceremony of entering her hut he can sit and chat to her. Even then it is still considered shameful for him to sit on her mat.

The Ngoni regard uxorilocal residence as part of the obligation a man has towards his wife's parents. Many couples spend their whole married life virilocally and others live permanently in uxorilocal marriage, but in describing where a couple ought to live, Ngoni speak always in virilocal terms. We have seen that in the old days virilocal residence was the rule but that a man might live uxorilocally for a while at the beginning of his first marriage after paying 'small-boy' until he paid bridewealth (p. 8). The Cewa lived uxorilocally, but it was possible for a Cewa man to make a small payment some years after marriage permitting him to take his wife to his own village. Nowadays among the Ngoni some men, but not all, begin their marriages uxorilocally. A man may do so either because he finds it more convenient, due to lack of suitable accommodation in his own village, quarrels with his kin or shortage of food, or else because he is made to do so by his parents-in-law. A parent who does not approve of his (or her) daughter's suitor may accept the young man on condition that the couple live under his eye for a while so that he can assure himself that his daughter will be well treated by her husband. Sometimes it is said that a man who has not yet made the legalization payment must live uxorilocally until he can find the money, but this is not always done and some couples whose marriages are only 'poorly fixed' live virilocally.

The proportion of couples who live virilocally varies from one village to another.

4: Barnes E-5 (1966-1969)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

village to another. An indication of the relative frequency with which different types of marriage residence occur is given by Table XIII. This table is based on all the extant marriages involving the 90 married men whose wives were known and the 175 married women, as shown in Tables III and IV. A distinction is made in Table XIII between those marriages in which the man lived with his wife or in a village near her and those in which the man was effectively absent.

We may now assess the relative frequency of virilocal and uxorilocal residence by extracting those marriages falling into either one or other of these residential categories and by then dividing the number of virilocal contracts by the number of uxorilocal. This is done in Table XIV.

It will be seen that although there were three marriages in which both spouses lived virilocally for every one in which they both lived uxorilocally, this preponderance of virilocality was reversed in those marriages in which the man was absent. There were approximately three wives who lived uxorilocally while their husbands were away for every two who lived virilocally. This difference between the ratios in the two parts of the sample is not likely to have arisen as a chance result and may be regarded as definitely associated with the whereabouts of the husband.

On the basis of these figures we may continue to call the Ngoni a virilocal rather than an uxorilocal people, but it is evident from the last column of Table XIII that virilocal marriages amount to slightly less than half (47·3 per cent) of all extant marriages. It should also be remembered that by no means all of the couples we have classified as virilocal were living in the village of the wife's father. We have included in this category all marriages in which the man had definitely stronger ties to the other inhabitants of their village than had his wife. Our definition of the uxorilocal category is similar and not all uxorilocal couples were living in the woman's mother's village.[1] A more detailed examination of the frequencies with which these different kinds of marriage residence occur will be attempted elsewhere.

We have already noted that a man who goes to live in the village of his bride takes on the care of her garden and works in it with her. The produce of the garden is pooled with whoever was looking after the bride, and the young couple draw their food from this common store.[2] A man who does not intend to stay long in his wife's village will usually try to keep his own garden under cultivation near his own village and when he takes his wife back to his village he reverts to his own garden as his main source of supply. If the two villages are a long way apart this may not be practicable, or the man may find it irksome to keep two gardens going, and may lend his own to someone else on the understanding that he will be wanting it back

[1] See below, pp. 75f.
[2] See above, p. 62.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 94 --ANALYST]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

Table XXII. Residence of husband and wife, 1948-9

591

Wife's residence	Husband's residence: Rural	Husband's residence: Away	Total
Intra-village	33·4% (93)	30% (15)	33·4% (108)
Virilocal	43·4% (121)	38% (19)	42·4% (140)
Uxorilocal	17·4% (48)	42% (21)	24·2% (69)
Neither related	1·4% (4)	8% (4)	1·7% (8)
Separated	4·3% (12)	—	3·8% (12)
Total	100·0% (278)	100% (50)	100·0% (328)

Legend

Rural	Husband living in a village within thirty miles of his wife, either permanently or part-time.
Away	Husband living permanently on a farm, in Fort Jameson township or more than thirty miles away from his wife.
Intra-village	Wife living in a village to which both she and her husband belong.
Virilocal	Wife living in her husband's village which is not her own village.
Uxorilocal	Wife living in her own village which is not her husband's village.
Neither related	Wife living in a village to which neither she nor her husband belong.
Separated	Wife and husband living in different villages and separated from each other.

124

Informants		Used	Potential	% Used
	Men	98	108	91
	Women	175	175	100
	Total	273	283	96

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 110

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

after a year or so. If he keeps it going himself he visits his own village for a week or two at a time to tend the garden, and stores the produce with a relative in the village. If, however, a man intends to reside for many years in his wife's village, he gives away his garden and concentrates his labours in his wife's garden. After a year or two he builds her a storehouse in her village and the couple begin to keep their own supplies separate from those of her relatives.

Even when the couple have their own storehouse it is considered proper if from time to time they are given maize by their parents. If a woman living virilocally goes to visit her parents and relatives and returns without maize or flour her husband's relatives are likely to laugh at her and say 'She must come from a very poor family'.

Uxorilocal residence is described by the vernacular term *cikomwene*. In its most general usage this word refers to the obligations a man owes to his wife's parents, particularly at the beginning of his marriage. It has three specific meanings:

(i) Uxorilocal residence.

(ii) Assistance rendered from time to time by a man in his wife's mother's garden.

(iii) A hoeing party of men and women from the man's village which works in his wife's mother's garden.

Uxorilocal residence is classed with these other two aspects of affinal obligation and like them it can be avoided completely, shirked, or executed in full. The extent to which the obligations are fulfilled

Table XIV. Virilocality and Uxorilocality, 1948-9

Wife's residence	Husband's residence		Total
	Rural	Away	
Virilocal ..	72	14	86
Uxorilocal ..	24	20	44
Total	96	34	130
Ratio of virilocal to uxorilocal wives	3	0·7	1·95
Association between husband's residence and wife's residence $\chi^2 = 12{\cdot}83$ $P < {\cdot}001$			
Informants as in Table XIII			

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

depends as much on the compliance of the man as on the insistence of his father-in-law. 591 606

A payment[10] of about five shillings is sometimes made by a man to his wife's father enabling him to take his wife to his own village. This is made either at the beginning of the marriage or after one or two years of uxorilocal residence, but in some marriages the payment is never made at all, and in some villages even the vernacular term is unknown. In those villages where the payment is recognized there is no consensus of opinion as to the rights granted by it. Some people hold that the payment is equivalent to a year or two of uxorilocal residence, and that, therefore, the money should be offered when the marriage is arranged, so that it may be begun virilocally. They go on to say that when a man has completed his period of uxorilocal residence, he is free to take his wife to his own village without making this payment. Other people say that a man ought to remain living uxorilocally until he makes this payment, which should therefore be done a year or so after marriage, or at some time later when the man wishes to move. Where the payment is not recognized, people either say that a man ought to live uxorilocally for a while and cannot buy himself out of this obligation, or else assert that the Ngoni, unlike the Cewa, do not marry uxorilocally and that the legalization payment allows a man to take a bride to his village as soon as he chooses. There is a wide variation in the norms held, or at least expressed, on this matter and an equally wide variation in actual behaviour. Men select their course of action by reference to the total situation in which they find themselves when they marry. A man may try to enforce one rule on one son-in-law and another rule on another. I observed one extreme case in which a man allowed one of his daughters, married to a man from her own village, to move to her husband's cluster after only a few months of uxorilocal residence in his own cluster. At the same time he would not allow another daughter to move to her husband's village after four years of uxorilocal residence, despite the offer of ten shillings payment to him. He approved of the first son-in-law while disliking the second, who had failed to report to him when his daughter first became pregnant. 583 591

We have talked of the man's village and the woman's village. It is perhaps necessary to stress that what is meant by, say, the man's village is a village to which the man's ties are stronger than those of his wife. It is likely to be a village where some relative of his is living, but the relative may be his father or his mother or his father's mother or his mother's father or some more distant connexion. Sometimes a man goes to live in his first wife's village and then brings in his second wife. The second wife is then said to be living virilocally, in the village of her husband rather than in her own, although the man is himself living in his first wife's village, 591 602

[10] *Nikahula*. Cf. Barnes, op. cit. p. 229

591 that is, in uxorilocal marriage. In the man's village there are likely
602 to be relatives of his wife already established, but it is she who is said to 'follow' her husband to the village and not he who 'follows' her, since his ties to the village, and to the cluster in the village within which they set up their household, are stronger than hers. Similarly a man may have relatives of his own living in his wife's village and yet be spoken of as living uxorilocally. If a woman's father is living in her village, he will be the focus of her husband's obligations. But if he lives a long way away and the woman has been dependent on her grandparents, or on her mother's brother, then it is they who will act towards her husband to some extent in
[606] the role of substitute parents-in-law. However, a man does not avoid his substitute mother-in-law as thoroughly as he would his wife's own mother.

606 The obligation on a man to help his wife's parents in their garden
583 is expressed in two ways. Once during the marriage the man must provide a party of people to hoe for the greater part of one day in his wife's mother's garden. He must also be prepared to work in this garden from time to time when he is called upon, and his wife may work with him. While the labour given by the man and his wife is useful labour, the work done by the hoeing party is only partly useful and may do more damage than good. The procedure is that the man, or a relative of his, tells his father-in-law that he proposes to bring a party to hoe on such-and-such a day. By agreeing to this the father-in-law tacitly agrees also to provide the party with beer and presents. On the appointed day, early in the morning, the party arrives and begins work. When the father-in-law thinks the work has gone on long enough, he sends an intermediary to offer a present to the leader of the hoers. If the present is considered sufficient the party stops hoeing and returns to the father-in-law's village. If not, it continues to hoe with renewed vigour. At intervals the father-in-law sends intermediaries with higher and higher offers until at last the hoers are satisfied or exhausted and they come into the village to collect their presents and beer. As often as not the hoers try to force the father-in-law to offer a present at the limit of his resources, for example a beast, and, as the offers mount, the workers become more and more excited and their hoeing less and less useful. At the end of a day, with the light failing, physically exhausted hoers begin to root up the maize with the weeds, and the mother-in-law's garden may be seriously damaged. If the father-in-law is obstinate and does not offer them what they want the hoers may spend the night sleeping out in the garden. By the next morning everyone is too tired to continue the matter further, and the party disperses.[11]

[154] This sort of hoeing party may not facilitate the cultivation of good maize but it is of great significance to the married couple and the

[11] See Appendix III for an account of two of these parties.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

two groups of relatives. In the partial destruction of the father-in-law's crop by the man's friends, the latent hostility between the two groups is canalized into a form that is just socially acceptable. In the later stages of hoeing the men and women in the party act wildly, dance round and round anyone who tries to interfere with them and throw earth all over them. At first all contact between the father-in-law and the leader of the party is through intermediaries, and if all goes well, and there is no crisis, the father-in-law will always remain in the background. But with rising tempers the tension increases, and the father-in-law may himself go to cajole and threaten the party. When they do decide to stop and go into the village, an attempt is made to establish peaceful relations again, and the leader of the party begins to protest that they never really intended holding out for such a large present, that they knew it was getting dark and that they could not hoe at night. They settle down to drink the beer provided by the father-in-law and in the morning go back to their own village. It is significant that the man himself cannot be the leader of the party, so that he does not come into direct contact with his father-in-law. He shelters behind the party leader, so that the chances of an open breach between him and his father-in-law are lessened.

The formalized expression of hostility, which is a feature of many Ngoni ceremonials,[12] appears most clearly in marriage in the custom of the hoeing party, but is present in some other situations, as in the instruction of the bride at the gall bladder ceremony, when she is sometimes told she has a bad character, is mean and deceitful. Even the carrying of beer can be used to express hostility, as is indicated by Reuben's remark towards the end of his son-in-law's hoeing party, that he would tell his wife to brew beer and send it to his son-in-law's village, where the women bringing beer would demand a present even greater than the one demanded by the leader of the hoers.[13]

Men and women wish their daughters to bear children, and are reluctant to marry them to impotent men. Yet childbirth is hazardous, and a woman may die in labour because of her adultery or the adultery of her husband. It is important, therefore, that a woman's parents should be informed whenever she becomes pregnant, lest the woman die and her parents hear of her death without being forewarned of the danger. It is not sufficient that the woman's parents should hear from others that their daughter is pregnant. She must go to them on a special visit to tell them the news herself. This formal notification takes place every time she is pregnant, but if, when she becomes pregnant for the first time, she is living in

[12] For another example, see the installation of the headman's deputy described in Gluckman, Mitchell and Barnes, 'The village headman in British Central Africa', *Africa*, xix (1949), pp. 100-106.
[13] See Appendix III, p. 131.

843 her husband's village, the occasion must be recognized in a more elaborate manner. Her husband or his relatives buy her a new cloth. Wearing this cloth she stands at the door of her husband's hut, and is undressed by her husband's grandmother. The old woman rubs castor oil on her abdomen and dresses her again. A small girl from her husband's kin goes with her to her own village, and their arrival there, with the woman dressed in her new cloth, indicates formally to her parents that she is pregnant. They stay at the woman's village for about a week, and then return to her husband's village.[14] Her parents have thus been made socially aware of her pregnancy, and the man can legitimately look to them for help if she becomes ill or fractious.

844 If the woman does die in childbirth, her husband has to offer a beast to her parents even though they were told of her pregnancy.[15]
761 The husband may confess to adultery when called upon to do so
606 by the midwife, but this does not absolve him from the obligation
684 to pay the beast. Confession absolves him from the charge of having caused the death of his wife by his careless behaviour, but he must still recompense his parents-in-law for the death of their daughter. It is recognized that a woman may die in childbirth despite the absence of adultery during pregnancy or despite full confession of adultery by both the woman and her husband. She dies just because God lets her die, and not because of any human misconduct. Yet she reaches the situation in which there is the danger of death because of her position as the wife of her husband. It is the 'work' of married women to bear children, and it is the 'work' of the husband if his wife dies in childbirth to offer a beast to her parents so that they may mourn their daughter.

5. Quarrels

581 We see then that a woman is not severed utterly from her own group when she marries, but that her kinsfolk retain an interest in her welfare and have certain rights in her and in her husband. The recognition of these rights by their son-in-law increases his esteem in their eyes, and enables him to appeal to them with confidence when he needs their support. The common interest of all is in the successful maintenance of the marriage, and the mutual recognition of rights and fulfilment of obligations consolidate the social relationships established between people related by marriage. Quarrels threaten the continued existence of the marriage,
578 and it is therefore in the common interest that they should be settled
602 as expeditiously as possible. The intervention of affines in a personal quarrel between husband and wife is characteristic of a system in which most neighbours are kinsfolk and in which the spatial concentration of people into compact villages, where abuse shouted at one

[14] This ceremony is called *ngayi*, which means 'breast-cloth' in Nsenga.
[15] See above, pp. 391.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

end of the village can be heard at the other, ensures that all quarrels soon become public knowledge. The quarrels of any members of the village are known to, and in greater or lesser degree are the concern of, everyone else in the village. Beyond the confines of the village, kinsfolk living in neighbouring villages can soon be called in and in any case soon come to hear of a serious dispute. In a quarrel between man and wife there are certain restrictions on the extent to which affines can intervene, and there are certain regularities in the way in which they are brought into the ambit of the quarrel. 578 602

When a woman has a serious quarrel with her husband, she runs away. If the couple are living uxorilocally she may not go very far, and may take shelter with a friend or relative at the other end of the village but the consequences are much the same as if she had gone off to a kinsman several miles away. As a woman flees from the anger of one relative by seeking refuge with another or with her affines, so she flees from her husband to the shelter of a kinsman or kinswoman. Occasionally a woman will go to someone to whom she is bound only by bonds of quasi-kinship, as for example to a former playmate or school friend whom she addresses by a kinship term, but this is not common. If her husband makes no effort to persuade her to return, it is assumed that he does not want her back and that he is trying to trap her into committing adultery. A woman can sue for divorce if her husband has allowed her to stay away after a quarrel and has not tried to get her back again. [586]

Case history 8

Abner was married to Esther and had paid the legalization payment. Abner suspected her of copulating with another man in the village and fought her. He then told her he was contemplating taking another wife. Esther ran off to her father's village about eight miles away and stayed there five months. Abner did not come to see her and she complained to the court. Abner was asked in court why he did not go to visit Esther and replied that he had had no time to do so as he had been ill. Esther said that Abner always suspected her of being a prostitute, but she wanted Abner as her husband; the trouble was that Abner did not want her or else he would have followed her to her village. The court agreed that Abner did not want Esther as a wife and was merely setting a trap for her, hoping to get damages for adultery when Esther had been left alone a long time. Abner was ordered to divorce his wife. He refused to do so, saying that he still liked her. Esther said that if Abner still wanted her he must come and live with her in her father's village where her father could see how he looked after her. Abner refused to go and live there. The court then divorced Esther without awarding any damages to Abner.

The correct behaviour for a husband when he finds that his wife has run away is to inquire from her friends in the village where she has gone, and then to hurry after her himself. It would not be considered right for him to send an intermediary; he must himself go and apologize. Arriving at the hut of the relative with whom his wife is sheltering, he does not speak to his wife but first asks the relative to intercede with her. They discuss the cause of the quarrel, and if it can be settled easily, as for instance when the man admits

578 602 that he was drunk when he quarrelled with his wife and did not mean what he said, the woman may agree to return. If she is adamant, or if a serious issue such as cruelty or adultery is involved, a formal discussion is held in the village of one or the other. Relatives come from both sides and a man of senior status convenes the meeting.[16] Sometimes it may be agreed that the offending spouse must pay nominal damages to the other. The usual procedure is to offer a chicken to the other, but sometimes a few shillings are given instead. If agreement cannot be reached at a meeting like this, the matter can either be referred to the court, or else the issue of the quarrel may be left unresolved in the hope that at some later date a solution may be possible. While the initiative in holding a village meeting lies with the senior relatives of the [694] couple, the only people who can take the matter to the court are the couple themselves. A father may sometimes handle the formalities of laying a case against his son-in-law on his daughter's behalf but it would be difficult for him to do so without her co-operation, and, on the man's side, it is only he and not his father or brother who can effectively sue his wife.

The interests of the two groups of relatives are centred on the successful maintenance of the marriage. It is considered more important that people should live together in peace without quarrelling than that the exact rights of one side or the other, even where these rights can be defined precisely, should be upheld. [684] A man who commits adultery may be censured by his father, who will perhaps refuse to speak to his son if he thinks that the stability of his son's marriage is threatened, even though it is admitted that the man's wife has no legal right to object to her husband's adultery. When there has been a quarrel people do not rush to hold a village meeting since, by doing so, the existence of the quarrel is formally recognized and its seriousness increased. It is better if possible to get the couple to 'change their character', that is, to become reconciled to each other on their own account. Until the woman's sudden departure indicates to the world that they have quarrelled, relatives are reluctant to interfere between man and wife. People gossip about the quarrels of married couples, but even their close kinsmen will hedge and say that these affairs are not their responsibility if pressed for an opinion. The action of the wife in running away is the mechanism by which she begins her appeal to her relatives for support, and she carries it a stage further by refusing to accept her husband's apologies. Finally if the settlement proposed at the meeting is not acceptable she appeals to the court. Men do not run away to their kinsmen and do not rely on relatives to the same extent as do their wives. Yet a man can if he wishes

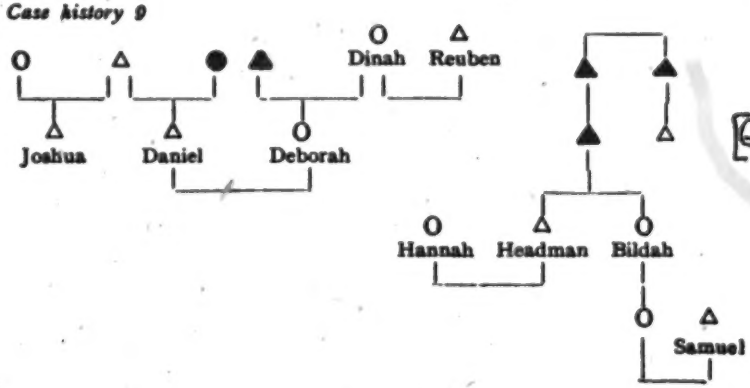
[192] [16] *Tanda*. This word is used of any formal meeting in a village to settle a quarrel, matrimonial or otherwise, before the issue is referred to the court. Cf. Nsenga *ku-tandala*, to talk or discuss.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

precipitate an open quarrel by staying away from his wife, by eating elsewhere or by threatening divorce. Fights in the village, provided the parties concerned do not hurry off to court, are dealt with first at a village meeting, and even where the combatants are not man and wife, the elucidation of the cause of the fight may bring to light a latent marital quarrel which must then be dealt with by the relatives. Accusations of adultery must be denied, and a woman may call in her relatives to protect her from the slander of a jealous woman. 578 602

The processes by which a quarrel between man and wife comes to light, and the attempts of kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, are well illustrated by the following account of an adulterous wife. 578 602 159

Case history 9



[601]

Daniel was a labour migrant in Southern Rhodesia and his wife Deborah was living meanwhile in the village of her mother's husband Reuben. The headman of this village had himself returned from the railway line a year previously. At a beer party Deborah quarrelled with Hannah the headman's wife, who accused Deborah of sleeping with the headman and who started to fight her. A meeting was held in the village to settle the affair. Deborah denied that she had ever slept with the headman and the headman denied that he had ever slept with her. Hannah retorted that she did not like to see her husband running after other women and always talking to Deborah. Reuben and a neighbour of his said that they could say nothing in the matter as Deborah was a married woman, and they called on Joshua, who was Daniel's father's son, to speak. He had come from his own village to attend the meeting. Joshua said that Hannah had not actually caught Deborah sleeping with her husband the headman, and that therefore Hannah had done wrong in accusing Deborah without good reason. Hannah had also erred in making accusations that would make Deborah's brothers-in-law think that Deborah was committing adultery. The headman had also erred and should stop talking to Deborah, or else the brothers-in-law of Deborah would take him to court for drinking beer at night with Deborah, who was a married woman.

Hannah then admitted that she had done wrong in fighting Deborah. Another man in the village, Samuel, the headman's sister's daughter's husband, spoke, and said that Hannah must offer a chicken to Deborah because if Hannah had really known that Deborah was sleeping with the headman, surely she would have seen that Deborah was taken to court.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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Hannah sent her son to catch a chicken, which was put at the feet of Samuel and a lieutenant of the village, who called on Deborah to accept it. Deborah was stopped from doing so by Reuben, who said that the village was now a bad village since the headman had returned to it, and that he did not want his daughter to accept the chicken. The chicken was released, and the meeting broke up. Reuben subsequently explained his action by saying that if he had let Deborah take the chicken, there would be hatred between Deborah and Hannah, and more quarrels would ensue. People would quarrel in the village just to get chickens.

Two months later Daniel returned from Southern Rhodesia, and Deborah went back to Daniel's village to live with him there. Soon he quarrelled with her, and accused her of committing adultery while he was away. A meeting was held at the house of Daniel's father to deal with the quarrel. Daniel said that he had brought back with him medicine which he had put under Deborah's pillow while she was asleep. Under the influence of the medicine Deborah talked in her sleep and disclosed the names of the men with whom she had slept while Daniel had been away. Daniel said that he did not like to take these men to court on the evidence of this medicine alone. Reuben, who had been called from his village to attend the meeting, said that the matter was not one in which he could act and it was up to Daniel to decide what he wanted to do, as Deborah was his wife. Daniel's father said that as Deborah had children by Daniel she ought to be forgiven and warned not to do it again. The headman of Daniel's village observed that women had been committing adultery long before there was any labour migration, and that as this was Deborah's first offence she should just be warned. Daniel said that Deborah should be warned not in his village but in her own village, and that she should be warned not by himself or his father but by her father Reuben. Daniel wrote down the names of the people he had heard mentioned by Deborah, but he did not show this list at the meeting. An informant who claimed that he saw the list said that it contained, among others, the name of the headman of Reuben's village.

A month later a meeting was held in Reuben's village to continue the discussion. Some of the important people in the village attended, but not the headman or his lieutenant. This ommission was explained by Reuben as being because all the people concerned were Christians and they must decide it among themselves without reference to the headman, a pagan. Daniel's father opened the discussions by saying that Daniel wanted to know about the adulteries of Deborah while he was away in Southern Rhodesia. Daniel then said that he wanted to take to court the people who had slept with his wife. He had found medicines in the house on his return, and these he produced as evidence. He said he had asked his wife what sort of medicines these were, and at first she had refused to tell him. He had pressed her and she had then said that some were medicines she had got from people in another country for headache, and that others were roots of love medicine she had got from other women in the village. Daniel said he did not believe his wife when she told him this, as a woman would not make love medicine if her husband were away. He had found other medicines hidden in the roof of the storehouse which Deborah had refused to explain to him.

Deborah spoke and said that she admitted sleeping with two men, Gideon and Balaam. (They were both men from other villages.) Another man from the village, the headman's father's father's brother's son, who had been invited to the meeting (but who was not a Christian) said that these people Gideon and Balaam ought to be taken to court as Daniel had suggested, for a case like this could not be settled in the village.

Daniel then went on to say that he thought his wife was pregnant and he wanted to know who had impregnated her. Deborah said that she was sure it was Gideon and Balaam who had made her pregnant. Daniel's father remarked that they had best wait before bringing a case against

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Gideon as Gideon's village was on the point of moving from one county to another and they wanted to begin the case in the right court. 578

Dinah, Deborah's mother, addressed her daughter: 602

'My daughter, ever since I married my husband, I have never committed adultery with anyone who was not my husband, and I have never asked anyone to give me medicines so that Reuben would love me. My husband loves me because I obey him, and he looks after me well. In addition he looks after you, who are not his real daughter. Believe my words, when Reuben dies, you will not find me married to such a good husband who can look after me and all my children. I used to tell you not to drink beer all night long because your husband was away working. You did not obey me, and see now you have done wrong to both parents, your own parents and the parents of your husband. We will regard you as a bad child who has not been well instructed; and the parents of your husband will regard us as bad people for not instructing you well. Now it is up to you because you are a fully grown person.' 159

Daniel's father said that the men who had made Deborah pregnant would be punished by the court, and that now Daniel and Deborah must be told to live in peace. Daniel said that he had nothing more to say as the people who had been sleeping with his wife had been identified. He would take them to court and would live peacefully with his wife. The meeting then ended.

Two months later Daniel took Balaam to court, and Deborah and Balaam were each ordered to pay Daniel thirty shillings damages.

We see in this account the constant interest of the kinsfolk in maintaining the marriage. Divorce was never mentioned. Instead, Deborah was told to change her ways. Her father-in-law argued that she should be forgiven as she had already borne children to Daniel. Her mother's husband, although he was more diffident about the matter than if she had been his own daughter, tried to prevent her quarrel with Hannah from worsening when he prevented her taking the chicken offered her. Although Reuben was only her step-father Daniel considered him, rather than his own father, the proper person to deliver a reproof to Deborah.

Occasionally the aftermath of a marital quarrel is neither reconciliation nor divorce but a state of affairs we may call separation. 586 If a wife runs away, or if her husband goes off to work and avoids her on his return, there may be attempts at reconciliation which may fail or there may even be no attempts. Not every woman in this position seeks divorce. Some still hope that their husbands will return, particularly if there are growing children to be cared for, while others may be bound by the rules of their religion against divorce. If a woman is old and does not wish to take another husband, she may be disinclined to take the trouble to obtain a divorce. It will be seen from Table IV that there are only a few women in this condition. They live with their own relatives and sometimes maintain indirect contact with their husbands through their children who visit back and forth. This category of separation is applicable only where the husband is living near his wife. If a man is in Southern Rhodesia and does not write, we cannot say whether or not he is, in this sense, separated from his wife. His

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 attitude towards her can be tested only when, if ever, he returns to the rural area.

A man whose wife runs away and who will not return may likewise continue to hope that one day she will change her mind and return to him, and for this reason will not divorce her. Unlike a woman, a man in this condition does not jeopardize his chances by taking a fresh spouse, and therefore it is rare to find a man whose only wife is one separated from him. It will be seen from Table III that there were no men separated from all their wives included in the sample.

593 In both separation and in the procedure by which a man 'leaves his wife in disgust',[17] sexual intercourse ceases between the couple. In other respects the two procedures are quite distinct. When a man 'leaves his wife in disgust', he stops sleeping with her but he continues to treat her as his wife. She has her hut next to her co-wives, her husband sits on her verandah, and she can rely on his help in the garden and in the care of her children. If she is separated from him, she must fend for herself. Her status as wife is significant only in that she does not marry anyone else.

6. The absent husband

A man appeals to his kinsfolk for support, but they do not replace him in the marriage relationship. His wife is linked mystically to him but not to them, and the right of sexual access to her is held by him alone. It cannot be exercised on his behalf by his kinsmen. He takes the initiative in appealing to them in a marital dispute, and his agreement is necessary at each fresh stage of events. If, however, the man is not there, his kin act on his behalf as far as they are able.

593 Most adult men, at some time or other, go away to work in the towns
167 or mines. Some men take their wives with them but at any one time, as can be seen from Table IV, between a quarter and a third of all married women living in the rural area have their husbands away working either in Fort Jameson township, in the towns of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, or living permanently on the tobacco farms around Fort Jameson. When a man goes away to work, no one can tell when he will return. Some men go off and never write or come home again. Others write regularly, send home money and clothes, come home themselves for visits, and remain in close contact with those at home. Friends and relatives may give news of a long vanished migrant whom they have met in Southern Rhodesia.

For at least the first two or three years the assumption is made that a man intends to return, even if he does not write. If his wife
[591] is living uxorilocally she will probably continue to do so. If she is living in her husband's village, as long as she stays there she can depend to some extent on the support of her husband's relatives, who may help her with her hut and garden, and if they are kind-hearted

[17] See above, p. 41.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and have the money to spare, they may buy her clothes. The only ways in which she can raise money easily for herself are by brewing beer, making pots, and working on the farms. To work on a farm she must, however, remove herself from the surveillance of her husband's kin, and unless she goes to join a contingent from their village working at the farm, they may think she is running away from them to seek a lover or new husband. We have seen, however, from Table XIV that significantly more wives whose husbands are away live uxorilocally. 593 167 [591]

Many husbands write home, not only to their wives, and some remit postal orders and bank-notes. A man may get a friend who is returning from Southern Rhodesia to take home blankets and other bulky articles to be handed over to his wife. He may send presents like these direct to his wife or he may think it more prudent to send them to his father or brother and allow them to hand on to his wife as much as they think fit. The woman must then behave herself in the eyes of her affines if she wishes to receive her husband's presents. The acceptance of these gifts is taken as proof that the woman is still dependent on her husband however long he stays away. If the woman applies to the court for a divorce on the ground of desertion, the presents will be cited by her husband's kinsfolk as evidence that there is no intention on his part to desert. Gluckman reports from the Lozi that even if a man sends goods, after a statutory period the court will hold that 'a woman marries a man and not a blanket', that is, the husband must return to look after and sleep with his wife as well as send clothes to her. This argument is not used among the Ngoni. A woman who complains that she is not satisfied with marriage under these conditions is told to write to her absent husband and ask him for the fare to join him in Southern Rhodesia. [586] [171]

Case history 10

Saul was working in Nyasaland. He sent home to his wife 7*s*. 6*d*. for clothes. Later she wrote to him saying she wanted him to return. He sent her 15*s*., being 5*s*. for clothes and 10*s*. bus fare so that she could join him. She did not go and later went to the court complaining she had been deserted. Her husband's relatives argued, to the satisfaction of the court, that as her husband had sent her these gifts he was still taking care of her. The court dismissed her plea as she had refused to go to Nyasaland when the fare had been sent. [586]

The husband's relatives try to watch carefully the movements of the woman so that they may prevent or at least report any adultery on her part. If they are in touch with the husband, they write to him should they suspect infidelity. Sometimes the husband ignores their letter, sometimes he gives them instructions how they should proceed in the matter, and sometimes he returns to the village to see for himself what is going on. He arrives without warning and hopes to catch his wife in the act. If all is well and he is satisfied that his wife has been faithful he usually goes back to work again. 593 167 602

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 167 Some men when they decide to return home from work in the normal course of events do not let their relatives know that they will be arriving. There are a variety of reasons for this, one being that the mystical hazards of the journey home are increased if a man's enemies know that it is taking place. There is also sometimes the desire to check on the fidelity of a wife. A chief returning from the railway line in 1947 reached Fort Jameson and sent on ahead a man to tell the people their chief had returned. A councillor who was with him remarked 'What sort of chief is this who gives his queens time to get back to their own houses? We ought to arrive suddenly and catch them all with their lovers.'

593 167 602 The woman's kin also wish to avoid trouble in her marriage and do what they can to prevent her committing adultery if they think that her husband is still treating her well. They talk to her about her obligations to her absent husband and if they think she cannot be trusted, one of them, perhaps the woman's mother, may sleep in the hut with her to see that she does not entertain lovers there. They may warn her that if she is taken to court for adultery they will not support her.

Thus we see that there is social prescription not only of the ways in which a man and his affines should behave towards each other, but also of the ways in which his affines should behave when the man is away. Similarly a woman and her affines interact in the light of their relationship not only when her husband is present but also when he has been absent for years. As a husband can exceed his rights over his wife, so can an affine go beyond what is tolerated while trying to safeguard the interests of an absent husband. The perseverence of some brothers of absent husbands, and the limitations imposed on their actions by public opinion, are recalled by a girls' song current in 1949.

[533] I am wanting to go and sleep,
What stops me is something in the loins,
I go to the water, and the one who keeps on following comes,
He has exceeded his sibling-in-law-ship,[10]
He has dragged Eleni from the reeds.

Eleni is supposed to be the wife of a labour migrant. Her husband's brother follows her to the stream, where she has gone ostensibly to draw water, as he thinks that she is really going to meet a lover. [607] She hides in the reeds and he drags her out. Such active intervention is inappropriate and dangerous for if there is a struggle the woman is likely to claim that the man was trying to rape her. The astute brother-in-law would have waited his time until he could catch her red-handed with her lover in a village.

167 832 It is never legitimate for a woman whose husband is a labour migrant to have intercourse with another man. People regret that

[193] [10] *Ulamu*, the abstract noun formed from *mulamu*, sibling-in-law.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that

a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant. This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman. These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for 'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery. The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address
593 of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife,
684 the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration.
692 Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

593 The general principle that no court action involving the husband's
684 sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

578 Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their
602 relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both
[845] from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman
[787] had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who
[754] was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go
167 away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great
602 deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

migrant sons, and villagers mourn for a dead kinsman of whose death in the towns they have just heard. 167 602

Although it is possible for a couple to keep in contact with their rural kin if they are diligent in writing, the amount of interaction between the couple and their kin is much less under these conditions than when they are living in the village. Even when only the man is away and his wife is living at home, the ties linking relatives by marriage cannot in general be as strong as when the individual through whom those ties pass is present in face-to-face contact with his affines. None of the ceremonies of marriage, except the obtaining of a marriage certificate, can be performed if the man is away from the village and they must wait until he returns. Ngoni say 'You cannot send beer on a lorry'. When the man returns for a rest his wife's parents sometimes seize the opportunity to send him beer, but if he has been away a long time, they may be reluctant to brew for a man they do not know very well and whose character may have changed in the treacherous environment of the towns. Even if the man is working as near as Fort Jameson township, he may have difficulty in getting away from his job just at the time his parents-in-law want him at home. [585]

Some men marry women they meet in the towns. Often an unmarried man leaves the village and a year or so later the news comes that he now has a wife. If the woman is from another tribe it is unlikely that the relatives at home will be told her name, and if the children of the marriage remain in Southern Rhodesia, they too will be unknown at home in the village. Sometimes, however, a man may marry a woman who comes from his own neighbourhood who has been visiting relatives in Southern Rhodesia or who has been divorced from another labour migrant. There is then more chance that the rural kin will be made aware of the marriage, and the children born to the couple may be sent home to one or other grandparent. If and when the man brings his bride back to the village, he goes to her village to give her relatives formal notification of what has happened, how he was in Southern Rhodesia and saw her and how they married there. Men sometimes offer the legalization payment for wives married in Southern Rhodesia when they return home. If the woman's relatives see that the man is treating his wife well, that she is well clothed and that the man is not running after other women, they may accept the marriage and brew beer for the man. If they do not approve of him there is little direct action they can take but they may try to start a quarrel sooner or later. 581 602

7. Child's parents-in-law

On either side of the married couple are their kin groups, and there is a special term to express the relationship between the parents of one spouse and the parents of the other. This relationship is thought of as one of limited co-operation. The two pairs of 602

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 parents have different fields of interest, but the two fields overlap in the well-being of the married couple. At first there is much formality between them, and intermediaries are used whenever possible. Later they become more friendly. In the setting of the village meeting some parents appear to see themselves as allied in wisdom with the opposite parents against the foolishness of the younger generation whose immature behaviour has been the cause of the meeting. At other times, they may act to defend the rights and happiness of their child against the claims of the rival kin group. We have seen in the story of Daniel and Deborah [21] how yet another alignment can occur when both sets of parents support one spouse against the other. There is no simple way in which these different alignments can be predicted, for they are in fact the outcome of
829 the continually changing pattern of social relationships within the local community. In general, all people wish to preserve the existing configuration of relationships, to support the interests of their children and to maintain the values of their society. In any particular situation, these goals may be mutually incompatible, and there is
571 no over-riding principle, such as agnatic descent or a state-enforced code of law, to which all decisions can be referred. The tenuousness of the cohesion of the local group of kin is reflected in the varying alignments of parents in marital quarrels.

578 We tend to think of quarrels as socially disruptive, and in so far as
571 they are not resolved they do lead to the break-up of existing groupings and the formation of new ones. Yet from another point of view, quarrelling is as much a cohesive process as is common participation in marriage ceremonial. Indeed, just as we have seen already [22] that a ceremony of marriage may be a vehicle for expressing hostility between kin groups as well as recognition of common interest, so a quarrel may lead to increased solidarity between kin groups as well as express hostility between spouses. By taking steps to resolve a quarrel, one kin group is brought into face-to-face contact with the other; there is visiting between their villages and mutual hospitality in somewhat the same way as in marriage ceremonial. The two groups may join to censure the erring spouse. The censured person may feel deserted by his (or her) parents but his father and his father-in-law may have come closer together.

602 The formality that characterizes relations between parents at the beginning of a marriage gradually disappears. A man or woman can always seek shelter and hospitality at the hut of a *child's parent-in-law* and in the final ceremony of marriage, when the married couple enter the wife's mother's hut, the two pairs of parents sit together and discuss the merits and limitations of their respective
835 offspring. It is regarded as incestuous for a man to marry a woman whom he calls *child's parent-in-law*. By so doing his son's wife

[21] See above, p. 82.
[22] See above, pp. 76f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

becomes her husband's *sibling* so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere[23] an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her *sibling*. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court. 835

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages. 578 602 851 [583] [589] 431 586

8. Other Kinsfolk 602

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of

[23] See Barnes, op. cit. p. 232

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 the parents of the couple. If the parents are not available other kinsfolk can substitute for them, but in general it is a man's or woman's father who represents the interests of their local group of kin in situations in which these interests are contrasted with those of the spouse's kin. It is the woman's father who receives all the different payments made in marriage, and he is free to keep the payments or to distribute them among his relatives as he thinks fit. If a woman's father is dead or away at work the payments are made to her brother or her father's brother or her mother or some other relative who, in this situation, is prepared to assume the responsibilities that would otherwise be borne by him. Similarly, most men find the money for marriage payments themselves, but if a man is too poor to do this, it is first to his father that he turns for assistance. If, however, his father is dead or poverty-stricken or unwilling to provide the money, he can ask some other relative for help. Here we are dealing with situations in which the father or his substitute [591] is acting as the representative of the loosely structured local group of kin in situations in which his own children are specifically involved. There are, however, certain specific kinship relations which we can separate out from the general operation of local kinship and which impinge on the marriage relationship. A grandmother has a particular interest in the sexual aspect of marriage. The eldest brother acts as intermediary between a man and his father in the marriage negotiations. Younger brothers are interested in the disposal of widows. Children have rights in the property of a married couple. These are more specific obligations and rights, and while it is possible to find substitutes if the genealogically correct relatives are not there, there is more rigidity in these matters than in those in which the initiative lies with the local group of kinsfolk whoever they may be.

603 We have mentioned that the grandmother who rears a girl may be in charge of her seclusion at puberty (p. 32). Even when some other old woman is in charge, the girl's grandmother has some responsibility for her sexual behaviour. If a man does not sleep with his wife she complains to his grandmother, and although a man is not instructed in sexual matters by his grandmother, he can discuss them more freely with her than with any other kinswoman. Grandmothers sometimes play an important part in the resolution of a marital quarrel in the village, and they often act as midwives. It is a man's grandmother who complains to him if his wife is not bearing children, and it is to her that he may turn for advice about medicines. In the courts, however, grandmothers do not play so important a role. They are women, and important women use their influence more in village situations than in court, where men are in [562] control and male councillors look to a man's brothers and father for confirmation of evidence.

593 There is considerable formality in the relationship between a man and his own parents and this formality appears to be greater if

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

he has not been brought up by them but by some other relative. In 593
particular a man is reluctant to discuss his affairs directly with his father if he can get his eldest brother to act as his intermediary. The eldest brother is heir to their father and it is considered that he should act as the channel by which the father is approached. He deals with proposals of marriage arising from his younger siblings and if he approves of them, he refers the matter to their father. This [184]
pattern of relations seems most marked in aristocratic families.

9. Widows

While it is a man's eldest brother who helps to arrange his marriage, 587
it is his younger brothers who become pro-husbands to his widows. 851
We have seen that in the old days a widow was usually looked after by a younger brother of the dead man but she continued to live in her dead husband's segment, and the children she bore by her pro-husband were grouped with the children of the dead man. This can still happen but it is no longer the invariable rule. As in the old days, if bridewealth has been paid by the first husband and after his death his widow goes to live with someone else, the second husband or pro-husband cannot offer bridewealth and the children he begets belong to the dead husband and take his descent name.

Some indication of the extent to which widows remain with their 587
dead husbands' kin is given by data collected in two villages. All the women now living in these villages had between them experienced widowhood 31 times. In two instances (6 per cent) the widow had been cared for by her dead husband's brother; and in 11 instances (35 per cent) the widow took a new husband not directly related to the dead man. In the remaining 18 instances (58 per cent) [589]
the widow had not married again and was living alone.

A man may die at any stage of his marriage. If he is betrothed to 584
a girl and then dies, the betrothal passes to a younger brother. When the girl is old enough, the younger brother marries her as though she had been betrothed to him in the first place and the children he has by her are his own children. Similarly, if a betrothed girl dies before she is married, the betrothal passes to a younger sister.

If a man dies after he has been properly married his widows have 765
definite roles to play. For a month after his death, they must wear the signs of mourning, and they are in danger of *mdulo*[34] if they commit adultery during that time. They must be ready to wail when distant visitors arrive to mourn. At the end of a month they brew beer, and there is a joyous party. A year after the death there is another party, and the fate of the widows is discussed. If none 589
of the younger brothers or kinsmen of the dead man wish to look after the widows, they are free to go their own way, and there may be a formal statement of divorce. They are in any case now spoken

[34] See above, p. 46.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

589 of as being divorced from the dead man. If they do not themselves wish to be inherited they cannot be forced to remain.

587 If a widow is cared for by a younger brother of her dead husband, and that man already has a wife of his own, the widow is regarded as inferior in status to the man's own wife. Yet any children she 851 has by him count as if they were children by the dead husband, and 428 as such they inherit his cattle and offices before the brother's children by his own wife. This apparent paradox is due to the nature of 554 Ngoni seniority. Seniority was always associated with position in a definite segment in the old residential system. The widow belongs to the segment of her dead husband, and even today if she is a queen she ought to stay there after she has been given a pro-husband. If she moves to live in proximity to her pro-husband, she comes into the ranking system of which the pro-huband's great wife is the superior. Her children are, however, still associated with the segment from whence she came.

The new husband, whether he is a kinsman of the dead man or 587 not, pays one goat, also known as 'snuff-box', on taking the woman, 583 and this animal she keeps herself, and does not hand on to her father or brother. If no bridewealth was paid by the first husband, the 851 children borne to the second take the descent name of their own father and his rights in the marriage are the same as if he were marrying the woman for the first time and had made the legalization payment.

589 There is then an opportunity for the marriage to continue after the death of the man if his wife and his kinsmen are both agreeable. If the widow wishes to go her own way, she can do so, and if his kinsmen do not wish to care for her, they need not. Even if they do not like the woman they cannot turn her out of the village, and she can go on living in her dead husband's hut and cultivating the same garden as before. She may even re-marry and bring in her new husband to live with her in her dead spouse's village. The extent to which this can be done without quarrelling depends very much on the personalities of the people involved. If the widow decides to go back to her own village, her husband's kin may try to prevent her removing possessions of which the ownership is not certain, and she should discuss with them how much of the crops she can take away from her garden.

587 Nowadays the death of a wife brings the marriage to an end. We have seen that in the old days the dead woman was replaced by a linked co-wife, and that this institution has now all but disappeared. There is no other form of sororate, and although a man may sometimes in jest address his wife's sister as *wife*, he has no rights over her.

593 The specific responsibilities of brothers towards a man's marriage are demonstrated in the role of the elder brother as a marriage negotiator and of the younger brother as potential husbands for a man's widows. A man would not, save in exceptional circumstances,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

turn to a younger brother for help in arranging a marriage, but 593
although it is said that a man cannot marry the widow of a younger brother, this is sometimes done. The position of children born in a union of this kind is anomalous and there is likely to be dissension in the family if the elder brother has no children by his own wives.

10. Rights in wives and children

The new-born child sleeps in its mother's hut, is in danger from its 854
father's adultery, and is held by its parents at their ritual resumption of sexual intercourse. It is carried to the garden on its mother's back and at mealtimes sucks porridge from her finger. Perhaps its father may play a little with it, but this is not very likely. After [862]
weaning, which takes place about the age of two, it may be sent to a grandparent or some other relative, or may perhaps remain in the parental hut for a few more years. But already it has been handled and probably suckled by many women, has learnt to play
with the other young children in the village, and has gone off with 857
them into the bush or to the stream. It has learnt also the correct kinship terms for most people in the village and has seen its village teams dance against those of other villages. It has gone visiting in other villages with its parents and has begun to explore its web of kinship, of which it is the centre.

The growing child therefore does not see its parents as sharply 593
distinguished from all other adults in the vicinity, but merely as the two people to whom its ties are closest and on whom it is most dependent. If a child whose parents are dead or are living in Southern Rhodesia is brought up by a relative, it may not learn their names until it is adult, if then. Parents are important to their children only when they live near them or with them. It is when children grow up in the village of their parents that they rely on them for school fees, clothes and medicines. Later a boy may ask his father for financial help or may use him as a banker, handing over his wages to him.

This is true not only of a man's own children of whom he is both 848
genitor and pater, but also of his wife's adulterine and pre-marital children, if he chooses to accept them into his household. It is clear that if a man has paid bridewealth, he has custody of all the children borne by his wife, in adultery as well as in wedlock. If he has not paid bridewealth, then adulterine children like legitimate children belong in theory to his wife's relatives. In practice a man can either accept or spurn them. If he has been away a long time and returns to find his wife with illegitimate children, he may decide to accept the children as his own. They then take his descent name and not that of their genitor. The biological parentage of such children is not mentioned openly, but is remembered in malicious gossip.

Case history 11

Laban went away to work in Southern Rhodesia. His wife Sara went

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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to a farm to work and while there had a child by a man working on the farm. When Laban returned from Southern Rhodesia people said to him, 'You have a bad wife, she has borne a child by a man while you have been away.' Laban said 'It does not matter, I love my wife and I will look after the child.'

The rights of children born in adultery to inherit their pater's property on his death are never certain. If there is enmity between them and the true sons of their pater, they may be denied any assistance from the estate of the dead man.

593 583 A man acquires rights *in genetricem* in his wife,[35] that is, rights in her as a mother, by the payment of bridewealth. We have seen that bridewealth is not often paid and that the rights exercised by a man over his children by virtue of this payment are ill defined.[36] Ngoni argue that in theory when a woman marries, the marriage payments should be paid to her mother's brother and not to her father if he has not paid bridewealth for her mother. Rights in a woman *in genetricem* are held to include the right to the marriage payments of the woman's daughters. In practice this aspect of rights *in genetricem* is as ill defined as rights to determine where children shall live. If a girl is living in the same village as her father or even her mother's husband, the fact that he may not have paid bridewealth is overlooked when the time comes for the girl to marry. Her suitor does not inquire into the affairs of her relatives before he marries her and indeed if her parents are divorced or dead he may never know their names. He respects his affines and does not probe into their secrets. He offers the legalization payment to whosoever appears to be responsible for his bride, her father or her mother's husband or her mother's brother or some other relative, depending on how and where she is living. At the level of the next generation, if a man treats his wife well, her relatives will not want to make trouble in the marriage by insisting on their theoretical rights when his daughters get married. If the man is prudent he gives them some of the money and they are content. On the other hand, if there is a quarrel between affines and the case is taken to court, it may be possible to establish rights *in genetricem*. The court holds that to take the legalization payment of a daughter is to exercise rights *in genetricem* in her mother. The following case concerns a man who exercised rights *in genetricem* that he did not possess.[36a]

Here the award of £3 damages against Nebo is due partly to his having initiated the action for divorce without any substantial complaint against his wife, and partly because he had taken the legalization payment which should have gone to her relatives.

Cases like this are not common, and the interest of the court is more often focussed on the legalization payment than on bridewealth. The legalization payment is becoming the more important payment

[35] See below, p. 113.
[36] See above, p. 35. and Table V.
[36a] See p. 97.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Case history 12

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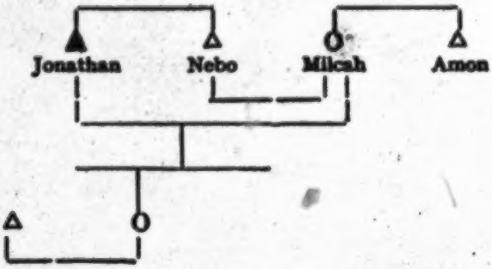

[601]

Nebo inherited the wife, Milcah, of his elder brother Jonathan. Neither brother paid bridewealth. One of the daughters of Jonathan and Milcah was married and the legalization payment for her taken by Nebo. In 1947 Nebo brought his wife to court to divorce her. He said that she was always committing adultery and he was afraid that one day he would kill her in anger. Milcah's brother Amon complained that Nebo had taken the legalization payment of Jonathan's daughter, and insisted that if there was a divorce custody of all Milcah's children should be given to him. This was accepted by the court, who told Nebo that if he wanted the children he must pay bridewealth. The divorce was granted and £3 damages awarded to Milcah. The payment of bridewealth was left undecided. [586]

in marriage, and some people are beginning to confuse the rights originally transferred by it with the rights *in genetricem* associated with bridewealth. The vernacular term for the legalization payment (*cimalo*) is common to many tribes in the Eastern Province, whereas that for bridewealth (*malowolo*) is peculiar to the Ngoni. Bridewealth is not recorded on the marriage certificate whereas the legalization payment is. It is possible that while the rights *in genetricem* relating to the residence of the children of the marriage will remain indefinite and unenforceable, rights *in genetricem* relating to the acceptance of legalization payments for the daughters of the marriage will become attached to the legalization payment itself. This trend is illustrated by the following incident. [191]

Case history 13

Simon had been married for many years and his daughter was being sought in marriage. Simon's wife's brother Nimshi came to see him to remind him that he had not yet handed over either the legalization payment or bridewealth for his wife. Simon admitted this. Nimshi said that someone would soon be offering a legalization payment for Simon's daughter. If Simon wanted to keep the money he must first offer the legalization payment in his own marriage. Simon paid Nimshi and kept the payment for his daughter.

Here Nimshi held that the legalization payment offered by Simon entitled Simon to keep the legalization payment offered for his daughter. According to traditional usage Nimshi should have insisted that Simon paid bridewealth not merely the legalization

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 payment. It may have been that Nimshi was merely trying to get
583 as much as he could hope for out of Simon, who was a fierce and powerful person. In view, however, of the decline in the incidence of bridewealth and the increasing importance of the legalization payment it is not unlikely that this right to the daughter's legalization payment may soon be separated from bridewealth.

428 It is at the death of a man that his children exercise their particular rights from him as against the claims of other kin. If a man has
[583] paid bridewealth for his wife, then the claim of his eldest son by her to his property is clear. The eldest son by the great wife is the heir, and he takes over control of the dead man's herd, and inherits his money. For inheritance, cattle are more important than money. Most men keep their money hidden in the ground, and it sometimes
[454] happens that a man dies without mentioning where he has put his savings, so that they are lost. Cattle are publicly-owned property,
[422] in that every boy in the village knows the ownership of each beast, and they can be seen in the byre every day. Men sometimes divide their property among their sons before they die, but it is more usual for a man to give one cow to the eldest son of each wife and to leave the rest undivided. The residue then passes to his heir on his death.
[583] If bridewealth has not been paid, the claim of the dead man's eldest son to the herd may be disputed by the dead man's brothers. Succession here does not seem to be determined in the light of the failure to pay bridewealth but by a consideration of residence. If a man is living in the same village as his father then he can expect to inherit his father's cattle when he dies. If he is living elsewhere, and tries to claim his inheritance, he may be opposed by his father's kinsmen resident in his father's village should he try to remove the cattle.

The eldest son inherits, but he has an obligation to help his sisters and younger brothers when they need beasts or money. If the other brothers are scattered in different villages, the herd may be divided among them, but it may be many years after the death that the division takes place. If the eldest son is in Southern Rhodesia the dead man's brothers delay the division of the herd as long as possible in case the rightful heir should return.

[325] Women acquire cattle and other animals with money they have saved or gained by selling beer, or as gifts from their husbands.
[583] If no bridewealth has been paid for a woman any animals she may own pass on her death to her eldest son. If bridewealth has been paid for her the disposal of her property is uncertain. Some people argue that the animals cannot then go to her son, for her son belongs to her husband's group because of the bridewealth, and that they ought to pass to her brother's son. Others say that the animals should go to her eldest son irrespective of bridewealth. Unfortunately I did not record any specific instance of inheritance from a woman.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the rôle he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.' 622 624 585

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village. 622 578 [621]

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular 692 648 797 466

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In the particular

427 field of urban housing, however, the forms of marriage become
581 important and a man may be required to show that he is legally married before he can rent married quarters.

The work of the court is, in the words of the councillor hearing the
692 pleas of Ruth (p. 54), 'not . . . to force men and women to divorce
581 each other, but to instruct them how to live well together'. Whereas kinsfolk have an interest in a particular marriage, the court is concerned with the well-being of the tribe as a whole, and the maintenance of Ngoni values. It has a particular interest in those aspects of marriage in which the Native Authority bureaucracy is concerned, namely the issue of marriage certificates and the handing over of the legalization payment. In court as yet, no inquiry is made as to whether a marriage certificate has been issued in respect of any particular marriage. These certificates were first introduced only a few years ago, and if a married couple want one they must make a visit to the court accompanied by one or two relatives, and pay sixpence fee. They do not go to this trouble until they need one for the journey away from Fort Jameson. This may be after several years of married life.[27] In village discussions of marriage I never heard mention of marriage certificates, nor did I see a litigant produce one in court. One man, obtaining a certificate for his marriage that had taken place a year previously remarked that in these days one could not be sure of damages for adultery unless one had a certificate. I think he was ahead of custom in this matter, but as the same individuals issue certificates and try cases, it seems probable that such a development will take place. But even with the increased importance of the issue of certificates, it seems likely that the role of the court as primarily a conciliatory body will continue for some time, so long as court members do not become a body of specialists differentiated from the rest of the population.

The court is reluctant to grant divorce to a woman on the ground
692 of her husband's desertion if he is a labour migrant until it can be
586 shown that she has made efforts to trace him and has given him a chance of re-establishing contact with her. Therefore, women are made to write to their husbands informing them of their intention to proceed with a divorce. These letters are sometimes shown to the court as evidence that they have been written. It is only after an adjournment of several months that the court will take up the case, and the wise woman, during this time, avoids any indication that she has a new husband in view. It is, as it were, assumed that there is always a suspicion of adultery, but if her husband's kin cannot marshal any evidence against her, the court will grant her plea. It is felt by some court members that the attention paid to the pleas of women is forced on them by the Administration, and they are anxious to show that they do not divorce women too

[27] Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 84.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [643] [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [182] [693] [562]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another. 486 562

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 if the latter is unable to leave the area legally.[38] Various devices
562 have been introduced to prevent women from using other people's passes, such as recording finger-prints on the certificate. On the other hand there are a great variety of ways in which women contrive to leave the area without a proper pass, such as marrying the bus driver for the duration of the journey, getting off the bus and walking round the control points, and so on.

13. The Administration and the missions

648 Under the Laws of Northern Rhodesia, which guide the Administration, the only valid marriages between Africans are those
671 performed in accordance with 'customary tribal law'. There has
581 never been any systematic attempt to codify the rules implied by this phrase, and in any particular case that comes before the Administration's courts, the views of individual African assessors must carry
586 weight. The tendency has been to try and discover what used to happen in the old days rather than what was the *de facto* law at the time. On the other hand, there appears to have been a feeling that women were entitled to certain rights in equity that may perhaps have been associated with the proviso that 'customary tribal law' shall not be administered when it is 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. The Administration has certainly been sympathetic towards deserted wives seeking divorce and has encouraged Native Courts to allow their pleas where the husband has been many years away and has not written home. In the past the District Officer on tour has divorced batches of women who had applied in vain to the Native Courts for divorce on the ground of desertion. It has been argued by the Administration that since chiefs depend on the gifts of returned labour migrants to supplement their own income, they are reluctant to offend men by divorcing their wives in their absence. There are fewer divorces, in relation to the same number
[171] of pleas, granted in Ngoni courts than among the neighbouring Cewa, who are subject to the same Administrative and mission influences. The Ngoni find no consolation in this comparison. They merely observe that there are more divorces now than there used to be, and blame the Whites for the change.

791 The missions are all concerned with the development of Christian
581 marriage, but their ideas as to what this is differ from one denomination to another, as do their views on the relationship
586 of Christian to other types of marriage. The White Fathers and the Universities Mission to Central Africa do not allow divorce, while the Dutch Reformed Church Mission does. The U.M.C.A. insist that all 'customary obligations' shall be fulfilled before a marriage can be solemnized between Christians, the White Fathers

[38] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 245f for the rules regulating the movement of women beyond Fort Jameson District.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

teach that the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of marriage payments is no concern of the Church, while the D.R.C.M. have a rule that bridewealth shall not be paid although this rule does not seem to be enforced. In general, in the village and in the court, the obligations of Christians are thought of as supplementary to their obligations as ordinary men and women, and Christian ceremonies to some extent supplement, but do not replace, traditional ceremonies. Thus there may be a church wedding in addition to a gall bladder ceremony, and a divorce in the eyes of the mission following after a divorce in court. Pressure has sometimes been put on chiefs and court members to act in accordance with the teaching of the mission, as in a past attempt on the part of the Catholic White Fathers to prevent courts from granting divorces to Catholics.[29] This type of intervention has applied particularly to courts where the chief was himself a Catholic. The Administration has opposed this pressure, and does not itself recognize any legal significance in religious ceremonies.

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14. Spouses and kinsfolk

We may see the married couple in the middle of a system of relationships which connects them with persons and institutions each interested in their behaviour and in the maintenance of the marriage tie. By living peacefully together, by producing children, and by fulfilling their obligations to their kinsfolk and affines, they can, with discretion, satisfy the divergent claims implicit in this system of relationships. If they begin to quarrel, their kinsmen and neighbours attempt in the first instance to reconcile them. Only when this is impossible do those interested in the marriage begin to split up into groups with differing interests whose rival claims must be weighed by the court. Even then it is hoped that reconciliation will be possible, that a wife will return to her husband after she has paid him damages for adultery, and a husband return to his wife after many years of neglect. Whereas in the old days marriage was related to a fairly definite residential system, and rights and obligations were clear cut, nowadays the forces holding together a body of kinsfolk are weaker, and the danger of disruption of the group because of quarrelling is greater. The genealogical composition of the group is more variable and alters from year to year. Marriage, as one of the mechanisms by which local groups are built up, is part of the general political process, and is affected by inter-group and inter-personal relations that at first sight appear to have little to do with marriage. We observed that tribal and religious affiliation are significant criteria in a possible spouse. The divergent interests of less permanent groups, such as cliques and factions, influence choice of marriage partner and behaviour within marriage, as we have seen in the stories of Absolom and Mary (p. 60) and Amos and Eve (p. 28). Conversely, marital interests affect non-

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[29] Cf. Richards, op. cit. pp. 83-4, for similar events among the Bemba.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 marital behaviour, as for example when a new-acquired wife
593 persuaded her husband to seek work with her in Southern Rhodesia
602 so that she might enjoy his prosperity to the exclusion of her senior co-wives who were left in the village.
511 Within the kinship system itself, ties of affinity compete with and are affected by ties of consanguinity. A quarrel between a married couple may lead to further quarrelling between affinally-linked relatives, and a dispute between a man and his wife's relatives may lead to a quarrel with his wife. Yet on the other hand a man who merely finds a woman and marries her without reference to her relatives is uncertain of his rights in the marriage and cannot appeal to her relatives if she misbehaves. There can be no ceremonies of marriage, and he must resort to subterfuge to get a marriage certificate. If he sends his children to his wife's parents to be cared for, they will accept them, but by so doing they do not accept him as a son-in-law. His wife's parents will deny that they know his name and if he takes his wife to court, they will mock him by saying 'We do not know this man'. Irrespective of marriage payments, a man cannot be validly and effectively married in the rural area without establishing his relationship to his affines. For a woman this is not always so, for her husband may have come from afar to work in the area, or he may earlier have broken away from his kinsmen. But without the support of his own kinsmen a man is dependent on his wife's kin for assistance in the marriage and, though the marriage may last, he is still one man living alone in a strange village.

[P.105]

CHAPTER V

SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS

1. Old and new marriage

WE HAVE described marriage at two periods in Ngoni history, as it was in the 1890's and as it is now. The differences we have found between the two periods are not due to chance except in the sense in which we may speak of all historical incidents as being partly due to chance and partly determined by the limiting conditions imposed by the past. Changes in the field of Ngoni marriage have been paralleled by changes in other aspects of Ngoni social life, have been influenced by other changes and have in turn influenced them. Throughout Ngoni history men and women have always married, but the society in which they married has changed. Marriage in the time of peace was appropriate, more or less, to the general ordering of social life in those days, and modern marriage is appropriate, again more or less, to the social structure of today. 581 178

Our task is then a threefold one. We have to show the relationship between old marriage and the rest of the old society, a similar relationship between modern marriage and modern society, and the process by which the transition from one set of conditions to the other has come about. We have outlined in Chapter II some of the internal and external factors responsible for this transition, and the nature of the material available to us on the 1890 period has led us, in Chapter I, to describe the old system largely in analytic terms. In this chapter we shall attempt to clarify our picture of the past in the light of an analysis of modern marriage. 121 128

In the old days the residential system provided the framework for political and lineage ties. Marriage was a legitimate means whereby children were recruited into segments of the system. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of fertility from the woman's kin to her husband's kin. Adultery was punishable by death, and divorce was rare. Affinal ties cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system, but while these ties were important, a man could not transfer his allegiance to his wife's or to his mother's group. A man who quarrelled with his kinsmen could not move to another village to live, but could only hive off to form a dependent but recognizable cluster of his own, which still remained part of the same residential segment. 571

The material apparatus belonging to the system, that is, the great villages with hundreds of huts and central cattle byres, was to a large extent destroyed in 1898 by the British. A few important people in the system were killed, and many of the cattle looted. With the establishment of British rule, it was physically possible for the 727 648 178 648

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 Ngoni to rebuild their old system, yet they did not do so. The
GA8 social conditions that permitted the old system to operate had disappeared.

The most important new factor was the presence of the Administration in political control of the area and backed by a superior technology. Tribal warfare was no longer possible, so that recruitment into the tribe by capture ceased. Frontiers and land boundaries were established, and free movement across the face of Africa ended. Instead men went off in parties to work in the mines, and either returned or were lost to the tribe. The internal structure of the state was modified by the creation of new posts held by Ngoni and by the actions and exhortations of Administrative officers who did not fully understand the operation of the old system and who were themselves bound by the general plan of Native Administration decided on for the Territory as a whole. The sanctions available to chiefs and headmen were severely curtailed, and in particular they were prevented from killing adulterers. Unrelated groups of neighbours were forced to amalgamate into single villages, while other populated areas were cleared and the land made over to White farmers who began employing labourers from near and far. Cewa captives returned to their old areas while other Cewa entered the area as labourers or seeking places to make their villages. At the same time as these new elements were intruding into the system, mobility within it by traditional processes became more difficult. The old political structure held together because there was provision within it for promotion and demotion, for vertical as well as horizontal social mobility. Successful warriors were rewarded by the chief, and made lieutenants and regional governors. After 1898 this was no longer possible. The chief lost his power to allocate people as dependants to an important or ambitious man, and as it became futile for men to struggle for position within the old system, so they began to struggle outside it, in the Administration, the churches, farms and mines.[1]

These were new phenomena, without structural equivalents in the old order. The most important change was the loss of sovereignty, but this in itself did not directly impinge on the field of marriage. It was no longer possible to divide up the kingdom in terms of the great royal villages under the leadership of senior queens, for the Paramount Chief was a young boy and a Catholic, and by the time he had acquired a number of queens, boundaries had already been drawn and the formation of new villages controlled by the Administration. Royal marriage has ceased to have the political significance that it had in the old days. This is attributable to the confinement of the kingdom within the geographical and administrative bounds of the larger system. But we know from other areas

[1] Cf. Barnes, 'Some aspects of political development among the Fort Jameson Ngoni', *African Studies*, vii (1948), pp. 104-105, 108-109.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

But we know from other areas 121
that loss of sovereignty itself does not necessarily disrupt the marriage arrangements of common people and we must look elsewhere for an explanation.

2. Movement between villages

The old villages formed part of the residential system, and their 621
structure was maintained by the power of the central chieftainship, as expressed through the lieutenants of the royal villages, and by the diffuse sanction of public opinion based on ideas held in common as to the rights conferred by the payment of bridewealth. Nowadays
the lieutenants of the royal villages have very much less power, and [178]
bridewealth is not often paid. The village is held together by the various ties of kinship and affinity between its members, and to a slight extent by the restriction of movement from one village to
another. This control, exercised by the Administration through the [648]
system of registration of adult males, is largely ineffective except in the Resettlement Areas.[2] Men and women are more or less free to live wherever they can find relatives, and if they quarrel in one village they can move to another where they hope life will be more pleasant. There is no general rule to which appeal can be made concerning whether a married couple should live uxorilocally or virilocally. Hence a quarrel between man and wife or between affinally related people may lead to a split in the village, and the dissident section may attempt to form a village of its own or attach
itself to another village. It is therefore in the interests of the [622]
headman that quarrels in his village should be settled as rapidly as possible, and he has therefore an interest in the private lives of his people even though they may not be his close relatives. His interests are represented by his lieutenants and are shared by everyone in the village who wishes his own to be a large prosperous and happy
village. The theme of the good and happy village recurs in many [183]
of the formal situations of Ngoni life and finds expression in much of local action on a village basis, as for example in the competitive dances, the division of food at a ceremony and the organization of the religious sects.

We find therefore that the headman and his lieutenants participate [622]
in the ceremonies of marriage and in marital quarrels. Conversely the headman is brought into relationship with the married couple by the allocation to him of pots of beer whenever there is a general distribution even though he may not be at the ceremony. Other important men and women similarly participate merely because of their common membership of the village. For example, a hoeing party was led by a middle-aged woman who was described as 'an important person' in the son-in-law's village. She was in fact

[2] Areas which have been reopened to settlement by Ngoni and other tribes since 1941 with various restrictions on agricultural methods and on population. About ten per cent of Ngoni live in Resettlement Areas.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 related to him but her participation was explained in terms of her status as an 'important person' and not in terms of this relationship.

A man can move from his village to his wife's village if he or she
591 has quarrelled with his kinsfolk, and a quarrel with her relatives may
178 cause them to move in the reverse direction. These shifts from one kind of residence to another occurred in a different context in the old system. We have seen that there was sometimes a change from uxorilocal to virilocal residence, for at the beginning of his first marriage a man might leave his wife living uxorilocally until he had paid bridewealth. If there was a quarrel between a man and his wife's kin at this stage, they might try to delay his taking the woman to his own village, although they could not entirely prevent him from so doing. Hostility found expression in the desire to keep him under close surveillance, not in the desire to be rid of him. This old idea still persists to some extent, as we have seen in the story of Abner and Esther (p. 79). Esther wanted her husband Abner to live in her village so that her father could see that he looked after her well. A man may refuse to allow his daughter to move to her husband's village until he is satisfied that the young man is a good husband. This line of action, however, now applies only at the beginning of a marriage and in families where a man is determined to maintain his control over his growing children. When there is a quarrel involving a couple who have been married for a long time, it is then too late to hope that a man will improve his behaviour under the eye of his wife's father. If he quarrels with his father-in-law it is better that he should go and live in his own village.

The significance of the reverse move, from virilocality to uxorilocality, was different in the old system from what it is in the new. In the light of what we know of the South-Eastern Bantu and by reference to the present position among the Ngoni it seems probable that in the old days it did happen from time to time that a man sought refuge with his wife's agnates. Yet from the dearth of instances of this in my genealogical material it would seem that this cannot have occurred very often. Once a man had established himself in virilocal residence he usually stayed there. If he quarrelled with his kinsfolk all he could do was to move off and make his own segment distinct from those of his brothers; he could not seek permanent shelter with his wife's kinsfolk. Nowadays he can do so, and it may be easier for him to change to uxorilocal residence than
621 to try to form his own group. In the old days the transition from
178 what we now call a cluster to a division or from a division to a village was a gradual one. Spatial separation between minor segments of the same order was initially a matter of yards and with successive moves in the tribal migration became a matter of miles. Nowadays
648 there is a definite number of villages recognized by the Administration
361 and a man who establishes his own residential cluster of huts is, or at least was until very recently, in danger of punishment for not living in a recognized village. For many years there was an

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village. 648 361 591

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[18] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers. [554]

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased. 591 621 [178]

3. *Polygyny*

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organize large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance 595 178 [556] [554] [592]

[18] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 595 178 of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an expression more of their different matrilateral affiliations than of the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its N [855] own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother, although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by his first and third wives [3] were reared by their father's fourth wife's mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally N a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of 855 his children. This division is in accord with the statement made 183 frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's. Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace', however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft- N reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make M these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal 591 identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The 177 facility with which married couples live uxorilocally is no doubt partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxorilocal Cewa and other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

N M *4. The moral significance of sexual activity*

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to 836 be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa 177 believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die, and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa N view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives M and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to 562 have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so 177 carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

[3] See above, p. 109

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

developed as the men's. It is to be expected, therefore, that there would be greater Cewa and Nsenga influence in those affairs controlled by women than in political and military matters, which were organized by men. This is borne out by linguistic evidence, for while many of the words, but not all, pertaining to affairs of state are of Ngoni origin, the words now used in the seclusion of girls are drawn from Cewa and Nsenga.

We find therefore that it is the bearing of children before marriage and to a lesser extent pre-marital impregnation which are disapproved of rather than pre-marital copulation. The real contrast in attitude is between pre-marital copulation and adultery. We have seen that in the old days adulterers were killed by order of the chief. The punishment of adultery was a process involving headmen, lieutenants and other important men. The abhorrence of adultery remains despite its great frequency and the prohibition on killing adulterers. An adulterer is a thief, stealing the rights of another man and endangering his marriage. Even when the wife of a labour migrant bears a child and it is in danger of *mdulo* until it can be 'taken up' (p. 87) she cannot openly call in a man with whom to perform this rite. She must either get a man to come in secret or obtain expensive medicines which remove the danger. In like manner, if her husband is impotent, there must be no public recognition of any extra-marital intercourse, for impotence is shameful and not to be admitted and cannot justify the intervention of another man. It is thought regrettable that a woman should grow old without bearing daughters to help her pound maize and sons to clothe her in her old age. Yet when medicines have been of no avail and her husband calls in a seed-raiser he must come in secret and later be rewarded covertly. Similarly the sexual activities of children must be conducted discreetly. Here, however, a much more tolerant attitude is taken and there is not the same need for secrecy. There is no chaperoning of unmarried girls but only of married women whose husbands are away. There is no inspection of girls at marriage, and one informant said that if after puberty a girl has no lover with whom she can sleep, her grandmother will call in a young man to copulate with the girl in the grandmother's house to see if she is proficient, and that for this he would be rewarded by the grandmother. From one point of view we may say that there is pre-marital freedom, with discretion, and marital restriction of sexual activity. Pre-marital intercourse does, however, have a moral connotation, and it is held that the girl who sleeps too easily with all comers before marriage will continue thus after she is married. The need for discretion in premarital affairs is in some part due to the activities of the missions, working at the village level through deacons, elders and women helpers. Yet in general no action is taken by the local Christian group in the village unless the pre-marital sexual activities of its members are conducted in such a way that it is no longer possible to ignore them.

Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within

833 Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within the marriage bond it is not merely permitted, it is right and proper and positively sanctioned. All intercourse is dangerous, whether marital or not, and indeed it is perhaps the licit social significance of marital intercourse that leads to the attribution of mystical
843 significance. While a woman is pregnant, her husband can and indeed should sleep with her and with her co-wives, for it is not her husband's mere copulation with others that endangers her child, but frivolous and illicit intercourse with the wife of another or with some woman he has no intention of marrying. The moral code supports the social order, and the infant is born live into a righteous and well-regulated family. Otherwise it will not be born, or be born dead. Thus runs the belief.

5. *Christian marriage*

794 We have noted that, whatever were the intentions of the framers of the 1903 Regulations, Christian marriage ceremonies do not now have
581 any legal significance, either in the Administration's courts or in the Native Courts. They are, however, significant in the eyes of the missions concerned, and sanctions are employed to ensure that all Christians are married in church. Marriages usually take place at the mission itself and there is some sort of preparation beforehand to verify that the couple concerned are aware of the religious implications of the marriage. Important people are sometimes married in a village church and the ceremony is attended by many people. These rites, both at the mission and in the village, involve the local groups of Christians and serve to integrate the members. The barriers against marriage outside the sectarian group might under some conditions lead to Christian or even sectarian endogamy but among the Ngoni this has not taken place. If a couple are anxious to marry and cannot by reason of a religious disparity, the pagan will usually join the church and then proceed to marriage as soon as the rules of the denomination permit. After marriage, a number then cease active participation in the affairs of the church, although they usually continue to regard themselves and are regarded as Christians. The fairly rapid growth of Christianity in the last fifty years makes it impossible to tell as yet whether an endogamous community will be formed. In any case, the Christian community stretches like the rest of Ngoni society to the Copperbelt and the towns of Southern Rhodesia, and there are facilities for Christian labour migrants who wish to marry Christian girls in the towns.

799 The missions have attacked polygyny, the inheritance of widows,
[597] the ceremony of 'taking up the child', belief in *mdulo* and pre-marital copulation. In addition, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission has opposed the drinking of beer, and in theory but not as yet in practice, payment of bridewealth. The prohibition on the drinking of beer has led to the exchange of gifts of cooked food between the two sides in the various ceremonies of marriage, without making any important difference to their content and meaning. The missions have had

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated with political allegience, and therefore it was inappropriate that her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genetricem* in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genetricem* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem* and bridewealth rights *in genetricem*. Rights *in genetricem* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genetricem* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*.

Whereas the rights *in genetricem* were definite in the old system, in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme they were related to position in a residential system of which one of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession. With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another, and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups, for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people, some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tion for associating children with one parent rather than the other. There is only the one proud dogma that the Ngoni, unlike their neighbours, are a patrilineal virilocal people. This reflects the actual dominance of the virilocal mode of residence but does not furnish a rule to which appeal can be made in specific cases. The only definite unit to which a man can be said to belong is his village, and such few attempts as are made to enforce rights *in genetricem* are expressed in terms of residence in villages. In marriages that are made outside the tribe, rights *in genetricem* become significant, for a child is not likely to wander to and fro between one tribe and another hundreds of miles away in the same way as children change from one village to another within the kingdom. Here then we find more attention paid to the payment of bridewealth and to rights *in genetricem* and these rights are enforceable through the police checks on buses and lorries.

If a man is away working his interests are represented by his kinsfolk. They cannot exercise his rights *in uxorem* for him, but if they are violated they can act on his behalf. His permission is necessary, however, before they can proceed to the court, and if they are awarded damages then they are under some sort of obligation to hand over the money to him when he returns. There was no situation comparable to this in the old system, for men did not go away for years at a time, and the violation of rights *in uxorem* was punishable by death.

The position of the man as holder of rights *in uxorem* over his wife is reinforced to some extent by mystical ties believed to connect the couple, and at the same time the man can fortify his rights by the use of medicines to ensure fidelity. During pregnancy, for a short while after childbirth, and during menstruation, the actions of man and wife affect one another automatically, and each is placed in danger of illness by the failure of the other to observe their mutual obligations. To protect his rights *in uxorem* a man may doctor his wife so that possible violators may be deterred by the fear of mystical retribution as well as action in the courts.

7. *Mystical beliefs and marriage stability*

The mystical connexion believed to exist between a man and his wife serves to define their relationship more closely, for this same connexion does not hold between a woman and her husband's kin or between a man and his wife's kin. The adultery of a pregnant woman's brother-in-law, like her husband's adultery, may threaten the peace of her local group of relatives and friends, and may even lead her to change her village or go to the court as a supporter. The important distinction between the adultery of her husband's brother and her husband's adultery is that the former does not automatically endanger her delivery while the latter does. A man confesses his adultery when his own wife gives birth, not when her sister is in labour. This connexion is definite, and is not extended

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 602 to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

N 753 182 626 The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugola* supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugola* and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[5]

N 755 754 N 626 N [171] N M [626] [177]

N 753 834 164 To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an efficient deterrent of adultery.

N 581 Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

N 602

[5] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unity of full-siblings is the result of the established relationship 602
between their mother and father. A man's relationship with his
wife may in turn lead to solidarity between their children, but until
his wife has stayed with him for many years and borne him live 593
children their own relationship is always uncertain. He must
acknowledge that she too has rights, that she must be clothed and
respected and must be slept with. He must not abuse her at a beer
party or hit her too often, and he must not try to trap her into
adultery. When she runs away, he must go after her to apologize.

8. The support of relatives

It is the tenuousness of the marriage relationship which necessitates 581
the co-operation of the relatives in the marriage. There are occasions 602
when affines quarrel, as when a young woman is encouraged by her
husband's kin to remain in their village to be delivered of her first
child and at the same time is under pressure from her own relatives
to move back to her own village for the confinement. A man who
is anxious to build up his own cluster of huts in a village may attempt
to force his sons and daughters to bring their spouses to live near
him against the wishes of his children's affines. These struggles, [591]
where they occur, are expressed in terms of residence, for it is common
residence that welds kinsfolk together. But in general affines
co-operate rather than quarrel. Litigation about marriage payments
is rare, and frequently divorces are granted without consideration
of the return of marriage payments. During a marriage it is more
important that the married couple should be exhorted to adjust
themselves to each other and be tolerant of each other's foibles,
than that each side should insist on its formal rights. Old people
try to prevent marriages they consider unsuitable, but they do not
usually try to make difficulties once a marriage has taken place.
The successful marriages of a man's children bring him grand-
children to care for and play with, and *children's parents-in-law*
who will welcome him and give him food, even if they do not always
add to his own cluster of huts.

To some degree people appear to be afraid of the sorcery of an [754]
offended affine, but this is not a well-developed idea, and more
frequently people express their reasons for trying to patch up a
marriage that is in danger of breaking in terms of the need for 581
everyone to 'live well together', without bringing troubles into the 621
village. The well-being of the village and of the local group of
kinsfolk within it has ultimate value for the Ngoni and is an end in [181]
itself. It follows that serious quarrels can only be resolved by
means of some new residential alignment, involving moves from
one cluster to another, and from one village to another. The
village itself does not exist in isolation, and a village thrives because 628
of the ties that link it to other villages in the vicinity. Marriages 602
link villages together, by the bonds of affinity which cut across
village boundaries, and by the interaction between groups of affines 581

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 in different villages. This distinction between the two groups
602 linked by marriage is symbolised by their spatial separation, and by
581 the existence of 'the man's village' and 'the woman's village', and we have seen how in the story of Daniel and Deborah (p. 82), Daniel wanted Deborah to be warned not in his village but in her own. He wished her own kinsfolk and her own local community to express their condemnation of her conduct, and this could only be done on their own ground. Without their co-operation it would have seemed that it was merely Daniel's relatives who were accusing Deborah, and trying to make trouble for her for no good reason. With the co-operation of her relatives it was possible to pass censure on Deborah with less fear that the marriage might come to an end.

594 It is because the marriage relationship is one which involves other kinsfolk as well as the married couple themselves that the elementary family is not an important grouping in Ngoni society. We have seen that in the old days children left their mother's hut on weaning and went to live with their grandmother or their parents' captor's great wife. A man slept in the same hut as his wife and their unweaned child, but their waking lives were spent with other people. Nowadays the pattern is more variable. Some children stay with their parents until they are old enough to sleep in a dormitory with other children of the same sex. They are fed and clothed by their parents from infancy until they grow up. Yet most old women still gather round themselves groups of three or four grandchildren for whose food and shelter they are responsible. The provision of clothes and school fees is a more difficult thing for an old woman to manage, and for these a child usually turns to its father, if the father is living near. Even the children who live in their parent's hut, however, soon join a play group and spend much of their time away from their parents. Other boys and girls who are
[603] sent home from Southern Rhodesia may have to rely entirely on their grandparents for clothes if their parents do not send money for them. A man who is richer than his neighbours, particularly
[556] if his riches are in money rather than in cattle, is entreated by his relatives to buy them clothes and other necessities, and he may make himself responsible for the clothing of his siblings' children.

Financially, then, the elementary family is a more distinct grouping than in the days when the only form of wealth was cattle, controlled by the heads of segments. But even financially it is not yet a very clear cut grouping and the same is true in other fields of activity. A man and his wife work together in their garden, and they and their children live on its produce, more or less. On the other hand, at the beginning of a marriage they may be dependent on the parents of one or the other for their food and may pool their resources with them. Many meals are taken in common in the village, a group of neighbours cooking for each other in turn and feeding themselves and their children and grandchildren from the same dishes. In court, a woman looks for support to her own kinsfolk

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as well as to her husband and his kin, while a man tries to enlist the support of his own kin but not usually of his wife's kin if the dispute has nothing to do with marital affairs. At birth and death the division of labour and responsibility is mainly on sex lines. In general we may say that the elementary family does not emerge as a grouping of importance because there is no system of elementary families in which it can do so. Village is posed against village in dances, songs, the collection of tax, hunts, division of food, and so on. In other situations, one group of kinsmen act as a body in distinction to another group of kinsmen who are their affines. We have demonstrated this for the ceremonial situations of marriage and for the resolution of quarrels. In the intimacies of the hut, man and wife are in a simple and specific dyadic relationship which does not admit of substitution. To some extent, their infant, from conception to weaning, is a helpless appendage of this relationship. From weaning on, children acquire other social relationships of their own. The distinction drawn between marriage and the care of children is well illustrated by the remark made by an old widow when I asked her why she did not marry again. She replied 'I am now too old for marriage. My job is to look after children.' The missions encourage men and women to bring up and care for their own children, particularly where the children's grandparents are pagan. At the same time the importance of the economic ties that link every Ngoni household with the rest of the world is increasing and it is easier for men to find extra money when they are young and middle-aged than when they become grandparents. These two factors may lead to an increase in the importance of the elementary family, but it is also possible that the number of children sent home from Southern Rhodesia to their grandparents may grow as more women go there to join their husbands, thus increasing the responsibilities of the old towards their young grandchildren.

594 [628] [199]

9. Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce 178

We have seen that whereas in the old days divorce was infrequent, it is now comparatively common. We have also seen that prior to 1898 the kinship structure of the Ngoni was based on localized agnatic and quasi-agnatic lineages, for the captor-captive relationship was similar to that between father and child. These lineages are now no longer effective social groups, and individuals act and live together with cognates and affines related to them in a variety of ways. This parallel change in divorce frequency and in kinship structure provides confirmation for the hypothesis put forward by Gluckman that divorce is rare and difficult in tribes organized on a system of marked father-right, and frequent and easy to obtain in other types.* This hypothesis was suggested by a comparison of different tribes which Gluckman divides into two types. Among

[586] [613] 121 114

* Gluckman, op. cit., p. 190.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 others, the Zulu and Nuer have agnatic lineages and rare divorce,
121 while the Lozi and Ila lack agnatic lineages and have frequent divorce. The Ngoni before 1898 appear to belong to the first type and the Ngoni of the present-day to the second. In 'the time of peace'
178 the fertility of the married woman was transferred by the payment
602 of bridewealth to her husband's lineage segment, and the children whom she produced were recruits to that segment. Her agnates could never claim the children for their matrilateral segment. Associated with this system were the levirate, the sororate, and the right to enforce betrothal on pain of the return of gifts. The simple legal family was a relatively stable unit, and its position within the lineage segment was determined rigidly by the ranking of co-wives. Divorce was rare and could be effected only on the initiative of the husband. By contrast the affiliation of children nowadays is not fixed, and the very groups themselves to which they would formerly have attached themselves are no longer important. The children borne by a woman, whatever marriage payments have or have not been made for her, are potential recruits to local kin groups led by a variety of different relatives. Compared with the past, the simple legal family is unstable and divorce is frequent and easy. As might be expected, the levirate and sororate and enforceable betrothal, the trappings of the old system, have declined in importance.

114 Gluckman also suggests that in general, marriage payments fall in value with the decreasing dominance of patrilineal descent, although he cites the Ila as a virilocal people with high marriage payments, no agnatic lineages and frequent divorce. He regards the influence of property on marriage payments as secondary, but writes: 'On this hypothesis, which needs more testing, the amount of goods transferred and the divorce rate tend to be directly associated, but both are rooted in the kinship structure. It is rare divorce which allows high marriage payment, rather than high marriage payment which prevents divorce.'[7] The Ngoni material
121 suggests that payments, kinship structure and divorce frequency are connected and that among them, as among the Ila, frequent divorce does not preclude high payments.

We may distinguish three phases in the history of Ngoni marriage
583 payments. Prior to 1898 bridewealth varied in amount from one to a
586 dozen beasts, depending on the status of the woman's father. In
178 addition, recently captured women were married, both by men of high and low status, without payment of cattle. There is no indication that divorce was any less rare in one section of the community than another. In our pre-1898 sample, as set out in Table I, only one marriage out of eighteen ended in divorce, despite the absence of payments in half the marriages. It is true that in the single instance of divorce there were no marriage payments, yet even this marriage does not suggest marital instability as we

[7] Gluckman, op. cit., pp. 192, 200.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have been discussing it. Divorce took place because the man, a recently captured Kunda, ran away back to his former tribe leaving his wife, daughter of one of Mpezeni's lieutenants, behind in her father's village. In 'the time of peace' marriages were stable, with or without payment. The wealthy men were the politically important men, and indeed Wiese's assertion that men married off their daughters so as to gain the maximum number of cattle [8] may be based on the behaviour of socially ambitious fathers in what was largely an upward-mobile society. Political affiliation effected by marriage was ratified by a transfer of wealth appropriate to its importance in the general field of political and social relations. Divorce frequency and kinship structure were the same for rich and poor, aristocrats and captives, and were neutral factors in determining the amount of marriage payment.

The second phase began immediately after the war of 1898 and lasted until about 1930. At the beginning of this period the tribe as a whole was poorer than it has been before or since. Many cattle were looted in the war and for a long time there was little money in circulation. The majority of marriages without payment were contracted during this phase, and it seems reasonable to associate this in part with the poverty of the people. It is difficult to make any precise estimate of divorce frequency at this time, although we know that many Cewa and Nsenga women who had been married before 1898 deserted their husbands and returned home when British control was established. There does not seem to be any evidence for supposing that at this period women moved from one husband to another within the confines of the Ngoni kingdom more quickly than they do now. It is perhaps safe to say that the low level of payments was due partly to poverty but also partly to the general uncertainty about the future, about the kind of society which the White Administration was building for the Ngoni. Evans-Pritchard has stressed that 'It is morals that censure divorce and law that refuses to recognize grounds for divorce which ensure the stability of the union of husband and wife.' [9] The laws and moral code that had been enforced by the old chieftainship had been shaken by the defeat of 1898. The payment of bridewealth had defined legitimate expectations of behaviour, obligations and rights, within an organized system of social relations which had been shattered. While many Ngoni must still have regarded marriage with payment of bridewealth as morally right and desirable, they must also have been aware of the greatly increased risk they were running when making these payments, even if they had the cattle to make them. Rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* which were socially recognized but could not be enforced through the machinery of the State were hardly

[8] See above, p. 3, footnote 3.
[9] Evans-Pritchard, 'Social character of bride-wealth, with special reference to the Azande', *Man*, xxxiv (1934), p. 174.

583 rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled
586 affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another
178 in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[10] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the
[436] contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year
[191] of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the
[465] rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in
[435] bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call
[641] on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group, so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for
[581] stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic
[613] group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor
[183] sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the
121 Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may
171 be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes.
586 Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[10] *ibid*, p. 172.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rare divorce, has survived despite loss of sovereignty, territorial dispersal, economic impoverishment, high incidence of labour migration, and frequent adultery and illegitimacy.[11] The Ngoni, subjected to similar external processes, but in addition surrounded by matrilineal peoples and themselves largely of matrilineal origin, have lost their agnatic affiliation and, with it, stable marriage.

It is difficult to see exactly where this trend will lead. The third phase, as I have characterized it, is a recent development. There does not seem to have been any sharp rise in marriage payments until the 1939-45 war. During the war many Ngoni men earned higher wages than ever before in the Army and in industry. It may have been this that was decisive in raising the level of payments. It will be remembered that the thirty shillings minimum for the legalization payment was fixed by law during the war. It may, however, be suggested that if it is hoped by raising the level of payments to achieve stability in marriage, this hope is in vain. Payments may rise if people are in a position to pay more. Higher wages permit higher marriage payments without necessitating further changes in economic life, but in fact these changes are already taking place. Money is needed for more clothes, more food, more education, as well as for higher marriage payments. Payments rise as Africans participate increasingly in the general money economy of Southern Africa. The more they participate, the less marriage is constrained by a kinship structure based on morally significant face-to-face relations between agnates. The higher payments rise the more frequent becomes divorce. This is not a long-term prognosis, for I have indicated above that affiliation is not the only possible determining factor, and it is clear that if more people align themselves with those missions which do not permit divorce, the frequency of divorce as a whole may decline. There are other possibilities, but it seems to me unlikely that any of these other social mechanisms will become effective quickly; therefore the most probable concomitant of a rise in marriage payments in the immediate future is more frequent divorce.

Thus we see that at least for the Ngoni, changes in the amount and distribution of property have had a marked effect on the level of marriage payments, and that this effect can to some extent be isolated from that due to changes in kinship structure and in divorce frequency.

10. Attempts to resist change

The major structural changes taking place in Ngoni society in the last fifty years have not come about entirely unopposed. The Administration, the missions, and the Ngoni people themselves have noticed from year to year how the old order was changing and with varying success have made attempts to control the direction of change.

[11] Cf. information from Kark cited by Gluckman, op. cit., p. 204, footnote 1

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 648 change. In the field of marriage we have seen that it was the conscious intervention of the Administration which forced the abolition of the death penalty for adultery. It is to some extent due to the Administration, with its emphasis that women must have rights equal to those of men, that divorce is more frequent than it was, though this result does not seem to have been planned. In the eyes of the Administration the important fact is that it is more difficult for a woman to get a divorce among the Ngoni than among the Cewa. Of recent years it has been more concerned with the increase in concubinage, prostitution and juvenile delinquency in the towns, and has introduced measures designed to check the flow of women and children from the rural areas to the towns. As we have seen, one result has been that it is possible for rights *in genetricem* to be enforced in inter-tribal marriages, and bridewealth has therefore more significance in these marriages than in marriages within the tribe.

829 181 The Ngoni people themselves have, on the whole, accepted the changes passively and regretfully. The one deliberate constructive action appears to have been the law made in about 1944 that the legalization payment shall be at least thirty shillings. Apart from this, the Ngoni appear to have been overwhelmed by events. The frustrations of the present time are all attributed to the coming of the Whites, and this in turn provides the reason why nothing can be done to change things. The past, 'the time of peace', is glorified and simplified, and to some extent reinterpreted in terms of the new values which have been acquired in the interim. Thus, some informants said that the Ngoni never fought other tribes, but only invited people to join the Ngoni kingdom. People like to assert dogmatically that adulterers were always killed, that every man always paid bridewealth, that women always married whom they were told, and only reluctantly admit, on closer questioning, that there were sometimes exceptions to these rules. The imputed rules of the past have become the 'customs' of the present, and the adjective *Ngoni* is applied not to what the Ngoni people do today but to what they like to think they did in the virtuous past. *Ngoni* marriage (*ukwati wacingoni*) is marriage in which all the ceremonial observances are carried out in detail, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth are paid, the woman is obedient and fertile, the man dutiful and respectful towards his wife's parents, and in which the couple 'live well together'. This is contrasted with modern marriage (*ukwati wamakono*) in which there is no bridewealth, few ceremonies, little attention paid to obligations towards kin, and in which the woman sues successfully for divorce. Modern marriage is an invention of the Whites, designed to worry the Ngoni. The Whites have conquered the Ngoni, they are the owners of the country, and there is nothing to be done except to keep alive the knowledge of the past.[12]

[12] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', and 'Traditions and prestige . . .', *passim*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This attitude of resignation, while still very common, has to some extent been replaced by a more constructive attitude among members of the Native Authority bureaucracy. Chiefs, councillors and other officials have considerable political power and are encouraged to use it by the Administration, whose policy it is to strengthen the hand of the Native Authority.[13] Court members introduce changes in law with some confidence, although this is still done under the guise of a re-enforcement of a forgotten traditional law. Chiefs, under increasing pressure from their people and the Administration, endeavour to take action to modify social life in their areas. As yet political action is not very sophisticated, and the workings of the Administration are not well understood. In those fields of activity where Administrative interest is strongest, such as price control, food production, and the amalgamation of villages, the Ngoni response tends to be in moral rather than in political terms. It is wrong that the price of maize should be so low, the good man knows best how to cultivate his own garden, people in a village must live peacefully together. By contrast, in the field of marriage, where the Administration is comparatively disinterested, and where the wishes of the Administration, missions and Ngoni do to a large extent coincide, the bureaucracy has been able to act in a more positive manner. The thirty shillings law is one of the rare legislative acts of the Ngoni chiefs and people, and it is significant that the law was not made until 1944, fifteen years after the passing of the Native Authorities Ordinance. It is said that the law was made so that women could be punished for adultery in the same way as men. At the meeting at which the law was agreed upon, it was also decided that bridewealth should be a minimum of six pounds or one cow. Whereas the ruling about legalization payments is still remembered and increasingly followed, the bridewealth rule has been largely forgotten. This attempt to check adultery by increasing the legalization payment was in general agreement with the wishes of the Administration and more or less with the wishes of the missions. It was possible to envisage a decrease in adultery due to a clarification of rights *in uxorem* without any other major structural changes, whereas the re-introduction of bridewealth as a universal payment could only be envisaged in terms of a return to the patrilineal virilocal residential system of 'the time of peace'. It would hardly have been possible for the Native Authority to have restored the old system had they wished to do so. Ngoni village life is now part of a system wider than the chiefdom and there are other ways of acquiring wealth and status than within the residential system and at the pleasure of the Paramount Chief.

11. Marriage in an omnidirectional kinship system

We may characterize the change from the old order to the new

[13]Cf. Barnes, op. cit. 'Some aspects of political development . . .'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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I. Preparing meat for a gall-bladder ceremony. The leader of the bride's party sits on the left with her helper while the meat is cut up by the master of ceremonies.

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II. Bride kneeling on mat outside her husband's mother's hut. Standing behind her are the three women of her party.

[Facing P. 126]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as one from a graded segmentary society organized on a basis of patrilineal descent and modified by political promotion to a society of villages organized on a basis of omnidirectional kinship. In the past a man lived in the same place as his father and in charge of the segment allocated to him by his father. Now a man lives where he can find relatives of one kind or another who may be related to him agnatically, cognatically, affinally, or by any combination of these ways. He is not even restricted to consanguineal relatives, as in cognatic kinship systems, for he can affiliate himself to some person who is linked cognatically neither to him or to any of his potential descendants, as when he goes to live with his father's wife's mother's brother. Genealogical connexion can be traced along all possible paths and there are no mechanisms by which one path is automatically favoured or by which the length of a path is restricted. In consequence the genealogical constitution of any local group of relatives is complex, and every man is a potential recruit to many local groups. He selects between the numerous possibilities open to him on the basis of his own inclinations and in response to the various pressures exerted on him by his siblings, his parents, his wife, her parents, and others. Once he has made his choice he can always change his mind and move elsewhere if he finds his neighbours irksome. His wealth, either in cattle or money, is his own and he can take it with him when he moves. There are no rights in land (with the one exception of dry season gardens) which might otherwise tie him to one particular spot. As with residence, so with marriage payments, the formal and informal procedures of marriages, and the values associated with them. In all, considerable variation is tolerated. Indeed, we may well regard variation as a necessity in this system, for every man is subject to a mass of potential conflicting claims and he cannot possibly honour them all simultaneously. Variation occurs not because of different practices by various sections of the population but rather because of different individual decisions. A man decides for himself whether or not he will pay bridewealth, or take a hoeing party to his wife's mother's garden, or be suspended from the sacraments for marrying a second wife. Yet although he makes these choices himself, he is all the time subject to social pressure from kinsfolk and neighbours who will be affected by his decisions and who therefore try to influence them. A woman is not quite so free as a man, but she too can make many decisions for herself, and her relatives must appeal to her if they wish to influence her, for they cannot force her against her will. Man and wife living together are in a unique relationship which is personal and non-transferable, yet they live in the midst of kinsfolk and the well-being of one relative is the concern of all. The quarrels of a married couple are a danger to the cohesion of the local group in which they live, while the longer they live together, fertile and peaceful, the greater the local solidarity.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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III. Anointing the bride's feet with gall. The master of ceremonies rubs gall over the bride, who sits on a mat between a woman of her party and the guide.

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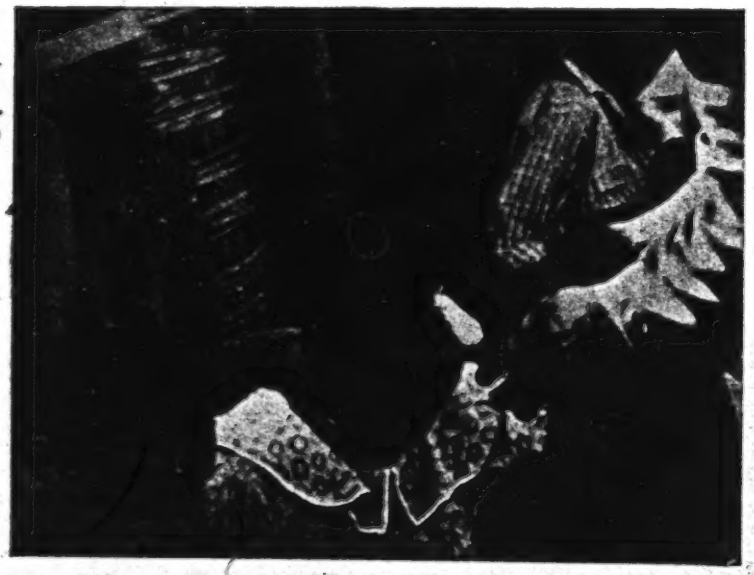

IV. The gall-bladder is safely pinned in the bride's hair. Thus decorated, she will return to her own village.

[Facing P. 127]

[P. 127]

Appendix I

THE GALL BLADDER CEREMONY

This ceremony is known as *lusiwa* or sometimes is referred to by the word for gall bladder, *nyongo*. If it is performed, it takes place after arrangements for the marriage have been completed and before the bride begins to live with her husband. If the couple are Christians, it is held before the banns are called. I observed two of these ceremonies in 1948. 585

The ceremony takes place in the man's village at his mother's hut. In the evening of the day before the ceremony the bride arrives accompanied by three women from her own village. They may be kinswomen or important women of the village. One of these women is in charge of the bridal party. In one instance the leader was the bride's mother's husband's son's wife, and the other two women were another classificatory sister-in-law and a classificatory sister. In the other instance the women were a classificatory grandmother, a father's sister, and a younger sister.

The bridal party are given a hut to sleep in and are fed by the bridegroom's mother. In the morning they remain in their hut and each person who comes in to greet them must do in a special way. They reply with a little song.

The bridegroom's father asks a reliable friend in the village to act as master of ceremonies. The master of ceremonies chooses an animal from the byre of the bridegroom's father and tethers it near the groom's mother's hut. A message is sent to the bridal party, and the leader comes to look at the animal. She accepts it by saying 'Yes', and the master of ceremonies, or the lads who gather round to help him, kill the animal. It is said that the bride's leader could refuse the animal if she thought it a poor one, but to do so would upset all the arrangements for the marriage which has been agreed upon, and I did not hear of any instance of refusal. The animal killed is traditionally a cow, but in the tsetse fly areas where there are no cattle a goat is taken instead. [136]

The animal is killed by slitting its throat, and the blood is collected in a bowl. The intestinal fat of the animal is cut into little pieces and mixed with the blood. The gall bladder is carefully removed. When the animal has been skinned and the meat cut up, the leader of the bride's party is called again from her hut, and makes an allocation of meat, traditionally giving the head and one leg to the bridegroom's father. The rest belongs to her party. [231]

A mat is placed in front of the groom's mother's hut, and the bride comes out of her hut, preceded by the other women of her party. They walk slowly to the mat, and sit down on it. Sometimes the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

585 bride herself refuses to sit on the mat until she has been given a present. She is joined on the mat by a small girl, aged about ten, from the groom's family, who becomes known as 'the guide'.[1] The leader of the bride's party and one other of the bride's women sit down on the mat, with the bride and the guide between them.

The instruction of the bride now begins, with a speech from some [237] important man in the village, who takes the gall bladder and anoints the head, arms and feet of the bride with the gall, going on to anoint the guide in the same way. They are then sometimes anointed with vaseline by a woman. One person after another, men and women, [867] now proceed to lecture the bride on how she should behave in the village, and each explains to her who he or she is in relation to her. The gall bladder is blown up and stuck in the hair of the bride, where she will keep it until she returns to her own village. Each person who delivers a speech of instruction gives a small present, a threepenny bit or beads, which they put into a plate on the mat at the bride's feet. This situation of formal instruction, often of an [183] abusive nature, accompanied by presents, is a recurrent one in Ngoni ceremonial.[2]

[237] Sometimes the small intestine of the animal is placed round the shoulders of a younger sister of the bride who is a member of her party. This girl is then designated linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) of the bride. This is not always done, and when it is done it does not imply that the girl will later become the real linked co-wife of her elder sister. Although in the two ceremonies I saw this designation of a linked co-wife did not occur, in both a sister of the bride was one of the bridal party.

[262] At the end of the instruction, the bride and her party go back into their own hut, and the leader cooks the liver of the animal, and the blood and fat. This she divides between the two families, sending the portion of the bridegroom's family to their hut for them to eat there. The guide stays in the bride's hut. After they have rested, the bride, guide, and their companions leave the village, taking the meat with them back to the bride's village. Outside her village the party stop, and are met by more women from the bride's family. The guide demands a small present before she will enter the village, usually beads. Inside the village the bride's mother takes the gall bladder from her daughter's head and buries it in the byre. The guide stays in the village for a few days, and demands another small present before she will assist the bride's people with cooking. When a quantity of flour has been pounded for the bride, and some maize half-pounded for the guide, the bride and the guide return quietly to the bridegroom's village. The bride begins to live with her husband, and the guide resumes her normal

[1] *Mpelekezi*, from the verb *ku-pelekeza*, to accompany part of the way. Cf. Zulu *impelesi*, girl accompanying a bride to her wedding.
[2] See above, p. 77.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

life as a young girl. She gives the half-pounded maize to the bridegroom's mother. 585

In neither of the two ceremonies I saw did the husband play any large part. He did not appear when his bride was instructed. His father sent word to him that all was going well, but he himself stayed out of the way at the other end of the village. Sometimes, however, the bridegroom does sit with his bride on the mat and is instructed with her.

Another gall bladder ceremony which I recorded was held at the time the bride went to live with her husband. This was in an intra-village marriage. In the evening the bride came with important women from her section of the village. The bridegroom's relatives were waiting to receive them, and promised to give them a beast. The bride was then handed over to them. The women went back to their own division, and returned the next day to claim the beast and wash the bride. The beast, an ox, was killed and the intestines were placed round the neck of a younger sister of the bride who became the designated linked co-wife. [231]

If Christians hold the gall bladder ceremony before the bride begins to live with her husband, it is followed by a ceremony in church. The bride does not come back to live with her husband after the gall bladder ceremony but instead goes with her relatives to the local church, where they meet a party from the man's village, and the arrangements for the marriage are set in hand. After three weeks the couple are married in church. The bride then goes back again to her village and as before she pounds flour. After a few days she comes to live with her husband, or he comes to live with her.

Appendix II

FIRST COOKING

When a woman begins her marriage in her husband's village, 592
she cannot cook food until she has been invited to do so by her 252
husband's parents. Until then, she relies on food cooked by her 593
co-wives or her mother-in-law or grandmother-in-law. This state of affairs may last from a month up to a year. It is ended by the ceremony of 'making to cook' (*mphekiso*). I did not see this ceremony, and I have relied on the accounts of informants. It is said that a man's parents would be ashamed of their poverty if they did not entertain the new bride as a guest until the time had come for her to join in the general run of domestic work in the village.

The man's parents decide when the ceremony shall be held. On the day, the man's sisters, mothers and grandmothers prepare flour, plates, porridge pat and stirring stick in the house of the man's

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

592 mother. One of the man's sisters conducts the wife to her mother-
252 in-law's hut, and under the instruction of the assembled women
593 she begins to cook. Although people speak of her doing the cooking, in practice all she does is to look on while her sisters-in-law do
[262] the work. The porridge is divided onto plates and distributed under the directions of the man's mother. One plate is sent to the man's father, one to the husband who eats the porridge with his brothers, and one to the most important woman in the village, while some are taken by the cooks themselves. The man's father is expected to remark on how well the porridge has been cooked, but he may say that it has been poorly prepared and his daughter-in-law must be taught again. This expression of disapproval cannot be more than a way of showing his dislike for his daughter-in-law for whatever he says the ceremony is not repeated and the woman begins to cook regularly for her husband. If the man's relatives are wealthy, they may kill a goat or a sheep on this occasion, or the woman's parents may send a sheep or a goat to be killed and eaten. The woman's parents cannot themselves attend the ceremony.

If the couple begin their marriage uxorilocally this ceremony
[591] does not take place. The bride begins to cook for her husband as soon as he comes to live with her, using her grand-mother's hut as a kitchen.

Appendix III

THE HOEING PARTY

606 A man is under an obligation to provide once during his marriage
583 a party of hoers who work in his wife's mother's garden for the greater part of one day and who are rewarded by his wife's father. This party is called by the general word for obligations owed by a man towards his parents-in-law, *cikomwene*.[1] The function of this occasion, as a socially sanctioned method of expression of hostility between a man and his affines, has already been discussed. I attended one of these parties and my clerk attended two others.

The man, or a relative of his, tells his father that he is planning to bring a party to hoe on such and such a day. If the father-in-law agrees that the day is suitable he tells his wife to brew beer for the hoers. On the agreed day the hoeing party arrive early in the morning and begin to work in the garden. The father-in-law promises presents to the leader of the hoers, who continue to hoe until they are offered what they consider is sufficient. They then stop, and go to the village to receive the present and drink beer.

[1] See above, p. 74.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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One day in December 1946 a party of eight men and two women arrived at 6.30 a.m. in the garden of Dinah.[2] They included Goliath, a young man recently married to a daughter of Dinah and Reuben. The party was led by one of the women. They hoed in the garden continuously but not very actively until 3 p.m. Reuben then asked Samuel, who lived in the village, to offer sixpence to the hoers. This offer was refused, and a little later Samuel came back again with the offer of a shilling. This was also refused, as was the next offer brought by Samuel, of ten shillings and sixpence. One of the hoers hinted to Samuel that they really wanted a beast. Samuel returned to the village and asked Bildah, his wife's mother and the village headman's eldest sister, to go and repeat the offer, lest Reuben should think that it was Samuel who was egging on the hoers. Bildah went with a number of people from the village and on seeing her the hoers began working frantically. They ceased to distinguish between maize and weeds and uprooted both. The hoers attacked Deborah, daughter of Dinah by a former husband, who tried to stop them, by throwing earth over her and hoeing round her as if she were a mound. One of the hoers tried to borrow my lamp so that they could continue working through the night. The people who had come from the village withdrew, followed by taunts from the hoers, 'You will find us here in the morning.' It began to get dark and at 7 p.m. when it was quite dark Reuben himself came out to speak to the hoers. He told the leader that if she insisted on a beast, he would give it them, but that he would also tell his wife to start brewing beer the next day; when his party brought the beer to their village, they would demand an even bigger present before they would go home. These remarks were met with derision and the hoers called for beer and cigarettes to sustain them through the night.

About half an hour later, the hoeing party appeared in the village and entered the hut of Goliath, who was living uxorilocally at the time. The leader of the party was called to Reuben's hut. On the verandah the money was counted out and handed over to her. She then said that they had never intended to demand a beast but had been only pretending. In Goliath's hut drinking began with beer provided by Dinah. Soon an argument broke out, some of the hoers protesting that they ought to have kept on hoeing until Reuben had given them a certain beast he was keeping in Goliath's own village.

In December 1947, in a nearby village, a man agreed that his son-in-law should bring a party to hoe, but did not brew any beer for the occasion. He offered them seven shillings and sixpence, but this was refused. He then offered the same amount again, and this was accepted, but the leader of the party said that they would go on hoeing until something else was added to the present. They went on hoeing all night long, sleeping at intervals. Both

[2] See above, p. 81, for the genealogical connexions of this group of people.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 583 offers had been made to the leader of the party through the mother-in-law acting as intermediary for her husband. In the morning the mother-in-law came to the garden to find the hoers still there. She fell to the ground beseeching them to stop. The leader then told the party to stop, which they did with much grumbling. One hoer said 'It would have been better if we had cut down some more maize to cool down our hearts.'

Appendix IV

CARRYING BEER

606 431 273 The carrying of beer is the first formal occasion on which the initiative is taken by the woman's kin and not by the man's. Beer is brewed by the woman's mother and is taken to the husband's father, or if he is not available, to the husband himself. It is known as *vipeko*, a word used to describe any offering of beer sent to a chief or headman in virtue of his position as such as well as beer sent to a a son-in-law. Beer can and is sent in this way more than once, to indicate the continued respect enjoyed by the man in the eyes of his parents-in-law. Members of the Dutch Reformed Church who are not allowed to drink proper beer send instead gifts of porridge to their sons-in-law. The beer, or its porridge equivalent, is sent at least once in about 40 per cent of all marriages. It is usually brewed while the couple are living virilocally.

It is held by some that a man cannot expect beer sent to him until he has made the legalization payment for his wife. In practice, if the woman's parents think that he is treating his wife well, they may brew beer for him despite the absence of legalization payment.

The beer is brewed by the woman's mother, and is carried in jars from one village to another. If the villages are too far apart to make this practicable, the woman's mother comes to stay with some relative in a nearby village and does her brewing there. She herself does not accompany the party carrying the beer.

The party may consist of, say, half-a-dozen women from the village. They carry the beer to the man's village, and halt just outside the village. Sometimes they demand a present before they will agree to enter the village. They are led to the hut of the man's parents or of his grandmother, and there they offer the beer to the man's relatives. They are given somewhere to sleep the night. In the morning people come to greet them, and as in the gall bladder ceremony they reply with a little song. The pots of beer are allocated by the man's father to important people in the village. People who come to drink the beer give presents such as threepenny bits which are collected by the leader of the party and which are

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

distributed among the women of the party as a recompense for carrying the beer. The married couple drink the beer but do not take any prominent part in the proceedings. The next day the man's father gives a beast or a goat or money to the leader of the party. The animal is killed and the women carry the meat back to their own village where it is divided up by some important relative of the wife. If some of the sprouted maize and flour that were prepared for the brewing remain over, the mother-in-law may brew again, and send it to her son-in-law as before. The second brew of beer is called 'offering'.[1]

606 431 273

Appendix V

ENTERING THE WIFE'S MOTHER'S HUT

As performed nowadays elements are combined from what formerly were two distinct ceremonies. The name of one of these, 'eating together' (*mayelano*) is now not often heard and the combined ceremony is known by the name of the other, 'entering' (*magenisa*). It represents the final stage in the acceptance of the man as a satisfactory son-in-law and marks the formal setting aside of the avoidance relationship between him and his wife's mother. It is performed in about one marriage in eight. I attended two of these ceremonies.

606 [118]

Some informants say that like the carrying of beer the ceremony of entering is not performed unless the legalization payment is made. However, I have recorded instances in which the ceremony was performed in the absence of any payment. It almost always occurs after beer has been carried to the man's village once or twice and when the man is living virilocally.

[583]

The parents of the woman send word to the village of the man that on such and such a day there will be beer brewed for him to enter the hut of his mother-in-law. On the day appointed the man and his wife go in procession with other people, singing and dancing, from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession traditionally should be led by the eldest child of the marriage, boy or girl, holding a club aloft, but this is not always done. The man's parents do not go with the party but stay behind in the village. On the outskirts of the woman's parents' village, the party may be met by people dancing out to meet them, and they sometimes pause to drink beer brought out to them. The dancing party go on into the cattle byre, or if there is no byre to some clear space on the fringe of the village. They enter the byre in a rough

[1] *Nzumbe*, an Nwanga word.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 [273] order, first women, then men, and the couple last. Inside the byre they are given beer which they drink without praising.[1] They then dance on to the hut of the woman's mother and enter. Beer and a plate of boiled maize have already been put inside. The dancers are joined by a few important people from the family of the woman, but the woman's parents do not come into the hut at this stage. The people from the man's village, including the woman and her husband, sit on one side of the hut and the people from the woman's family on the other. One of the woman's relatives makes a speech about the added responsibilities of the husband, how he must come and visit in their village and must help his parents-in-law. There is sometimes a speech in reply from the man's side. A threepenny bit or a sixpence is placed on a basketwork plate on top of the beer by one of the man's people, and someone from the woman's side does the same. The money is picked up by someone else from the woman's side. Sometimes there is another plate, into which a representative of the man will put the real gift, as opposed to these tokens, which may be as much as one pound. This is also taken up by someone from the woman's side and is later given to the father-in-law.

606 273 A woman from the wife's side then takes a spoonful of boiled maize and spits it out again. She is followed by a woman from the husband's side, who does the same. This ends the formal stage of the ceremony and drinking begins. The distribution of the beer is controlled by the senior man in the husband's party. If they are so inclined they may go back again into the byre and dance or they may wander round the village dancing. If the father-in-law wishes, he may kill a beast for them.[2] When they are tired and have drunk their fill, they go back to their own village, leaving a walking stick behind them in the hut.

On the next day the party of dancers come back again, this time with the husband's parents. They go back into the wife's mother's house and the wife's parents join them there. There is beer, and the wife's mother fills a bowl and presents it to her son-in-law, kneeling at his feet and drinking from the bowl before handing it over to him, after the usual fashion of offering a bowl of beer to anyone. The son-in-law drinks, and passes the beer round the hut. The rest of the pots of beer are then presented to the son-in-law's [603] people, and drinking begins again. The two sets of parents sit together, and discuss the characters of their children. There is much plain speaking. When all the beer is finished the party breaks up, and people return to their own villages. The proceedings on the second day are referred to as 'following the dancing-stick',[3]

[1] For the custom of praising when drinking beer, see Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 216 ff. The beer drunk in the byre is called *shatulo*.
[2] Called *congenela*. Cf. Zulu *ukw-ngenela*, to enter for (something).
[3] *Kulanda zinthonga*. Cf. Zulu *ukw-landa*, to follow, and *in-tonga*, a stick.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the allusion being to the stick which is left overnight in the hut 606
'to watch over the beer'. In retrospect the people from the man's 273
village talk of having 'fetched a broom there'.[4]

There seems to be considerable variation in the way in which this ceremony of 'entering' is carried out. It is not often performed and people have different ideas of what is correct. The man's people may decide to brew beer on their own account, so that sometimes the dancers are well intoxicated before they even arrive at the woman's village. They then find it difficult to adhere rigidly to any traditional form of behaviour.

[4] *Tayotola mthanyslo.* Cf. Zulu *uhu-tola*, to get, and *umshanelo*, a hand-broom.

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Mpezeni

[P. 137]

INDEX

Abduction, 69
Abner, 79, 108
Abortifacients, 33
Absolom, 60, 103
Administration: and marriage certificates, 37; introducing changes, 121; and concubines of Whites, 28; and death penalty, 124; established in 1898, 17; tracing migrants 88; and native law, 20, 102; and Ngoni political system, 106, 125; and religious ceremonies 55, 103; and village size, 18; as protector of women, 63, 100, 102
Affines: relations between, 4, 9ff, 70ff; sorcery by, 117
Age of first marriage, 11
Age-sets, *see* Regiments
Agnatic: kin, 9; lineages, 28
Agriculture, 10, 15, 43
Ahab, 61
Albinos, 22
Amon, 97
Amos, 28, 61, 64, 103
Anglicans, 55
Animal husbandry, 43
Anointing, 128
Aphrodisiacs, 32
Arabs, 17, 42
Aristocrats, 28
Avoidance, man and wife's mother, 10, 71; and payments, 69; alteration in, 4; and substitute mother-in-law, 76
Adultery: capital offence, 4, 105; children born in, 95f; damages for, 49; different for husband and wife, 55; and divorce, 48; frequent, 101, 111; by migrant's wife, 88; and legalization payment, 37; among matrilineal tribes, 18; and medicines 31; during mourning, 46; during pregnancy, 45, 115; provocation for, 41, 79; punishment of, 20, 106; and rights *in uxorem*, 113ff; and seed-raising, 34; and 'snuff-box', 5; and 'taking up the child', 87
Balaam, 82f.
Banda, 5, 30
Bands, iii, 8, 12
Banja, 26
Barnes, H. F., 45
Barrenness: cure for, 34; and linked co-wife, 3f, 13, 56
Beer: brewing of, 15, 43f; carrying of, 8f, 65, 67, 132f; and D.R.C.M., 112; parties, 42
Bemba, 5, 45, 51, 103
Betrothal: and avoidance, 10; now uncommon, 65; and puberty seclusion, 33; pre-1898, 5; substitution in, 14, 93
Bevy, iii
Bigamy, 19
Bildah, 81ff, 131
Biological determinants, 16
Bohannan, 113
Bridewealth: and children, 37, 69, 91; and death in childbirth, 40; and divorce, 4, 36f, 50; and D.R.C.M., 112; incidence of, 33, 35f; magnitude of, 5, 37, 120ff, 125; pre-1898, 7; and rank of wives, 12; refused, 63f; and rights *in genitricem*, 5, 96ff, 114; and status, 8; and virilocality, 5, 71; when not paid, 6; and widows, 94
British, 17
Brother: elder, 65f, 92f; younger, 95
Buses, check on, 64, 101f, 115

Camulomo, 39, 69
Canon law, 29
Captives: in residential system, 1, 15; marrying captor, 6; marrying each other, 11; from matrilineal tribes, 18
Catechumen, 29
Catholics, 29, 55
Cattle: as bridewealth, 3, 5, 8, 35; for captives, 15; in central byres, 12; division of herd, 98; as legalization payment, 38f; looted, 17f; as placation gift, 4
Cavulamulomo, 39, 69
Ceremonies of marriage, 2, 8f, 89; and validity, 67
Certificates, marriage, 37, 47, 69, 89, 100ff
Cewa: chiefdoms, 17; cross-cousin marriage, 26f; divorce, 102; legalization payment, 37; marrying Ngoni women, 28; and *mdulo*, 116; movements after 1898, 18, 106, 121; and puberty, 33, 110f; -speaking Ngoni villages, 18f; and uxorilocality, 71, 75; visits to relatives, 29
Change, attempts to resist, 123ff
Chaperoning, 111
Character of spouse-to-be, 30
Chastity, 3f, 19, 33
Chicken, 39
Chiefs, 20, 86; Paramount, 2, 11f, 106
Childbirth, 32: death in, 40, 78; difficulties in, 45
Children, 5, 59, 98; married in fun, 64; pre-marital, 63, 95; ranking, 94
Child's parent-in-law, 89ff, 117

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P. 138]

INDEX

Choice: of residence, 35; of spouse, 3, 24f, 60ff
Christian(s): gall bladder ceremony, 127, 129; marriage, 19f, 112; polygynists, 56; marriage prohibitions, 29; and traditional marriage patterns, 102f
Church going, 42
Church, marriage in, 69
Cidumu, 59
Cigawa, 1
Cihapa, 32
Cihomwene, 74, 130
Cimalo, 7, 37, 97
Cimwangalala, 32
Cinamwali, 5
Cipela, 64
Cisawa, 34
Clans, 28
Clothes for wives, 41f, 48f
Cluster, 1, 12
Colson, 31
Concubinage, 21, 25, 68; future trend, 69; uncommon, 70; urban, 124; with Whites, 28
Confession during childbirth, 45, 78, 115
Congenela, 134
Contraceptives, 33
Cooking, ceremony of first, 9, 65f, 129f
Copulation, 30; *inter crura*, 3; premarital, 60, 111ff; at puberty, 18, 33, 110; ritual, 45f
Courts, native: and adultery, 37; and divorce, 47ff; and migrant labourers, 54; policy of, 99ff; and religious ceremonies, 20, 55; and village meetings, 87f; wives in, 44
Co-wives, 15, 55ff
Coxhead, 37
Cripples, 22
Crops, 44, 50; destruction by affines, 77
Cross-cousins: as wives, 10, 12, 24; and payments, 26f
Cruelty, 48f
Custody of children: and bridewealth, 35, 37; divorce and, 50; and marriage ceremonies, 24; quarrels about, 91; uncertain, 20f, 22, 33
Customs, Ngoni, 124
Damages, 49f
Dances, 29, 32
Daniel, 81ff, 90, 99, 118
Daughters, 59f
Deacons, 19
Death, 47: of husband, 93ff, 98; of wife, 94
Deborah, 81ff, 90, 99, 118, 131
Defloration, 3, 33
Delinquency, juvenile, 124
Dependants, 13, 15
Descent-names, 28, 94
Desertion, 48, 87f: by rural husband, 54; by migrant, 20, 49; and courts, 100f; and Administration, 102; and presents, 85; and residential system, 55
Dinah, 81ff, 131
District Messengers, 18
District Officer, 54
Division, 1
Divorce, 47ff: and Administration, 102; and bridewealth, 36f; in court and village, 101; experience, 51f; frequency, 50; and kinship structure, 119ff; of migrants, 87f; without payments, 62; and presents, 85; and 'poorly fixed marriages', 68; pre-conquest, 4f; and quarrels, 44, 79; ratios, 50, 53; and residential system, 55; threat of, 48; of widows, 93f
-dlana, 9
-dwba, 41
Duration of marriage, 50
Dutch Reformed Church Mission, 29, 48, 102f, 112, 132
-duwa, 41
Eating together ceremony, 9f, 133
Eleni, 86
Elopement, 61
Endogamy, upper-class, 3
English law, 20
Entering wife's mother's hut, ceremony of, 9, 65, 67, 69, 99, 133ff
Erotic proficiency, 30
Esau, 63
Esther, 79, 108
Ethnic rank, 3, 28
European clothing, 42
Europeans as paramours, 28
Evangelists, 19
Evans-Pritchard, 14, 121, 122
Eve, 28, 64, 103
Ever-married *see* Wedded
Exogamic rules *see* Prohibitions, marriage
Exogamy, 16
Family, elementary, 15, 118
Feeding, 41, 43
Fertility, 33f; and levirate, 13; pre-conquest, 2f, 105; and residential system, 55
Financial responsibility of husband, 41
Finger-prints, 102
Fortes, 13

INDEX

[P. 139]

Fort Jameson: Ngoni, x; township, 22, 28
Fort Manning, x

Gall bladder ceremony, 65ff, 127ff; and co-wives, 57; and headmen, 99; and husband, 45; pre-conquest, 9
Gardens, 41ff: co-wives in, 56; rights in, 128; and uxorilocal residence, 72, 74
Ghost marriage, 2
Gideon, 82f
Gifts, 44, 74, 91, 110, 112
Gluckman, 51, 77, 85, 119, 120, 123
Goliath, 131
Grandmother, 15, 91f
Grandparents, 58, 64
Grounds for divorce, 48
'Guide', 128
Guns, 17

Hannah, 81ff
Headmen, 99, 107
Hiving-off, 16, 105
Hoeing party, 65, 67, 76f, 130ff
Hoernlé, 13
Hospitality, 9, 41
Hostility, expression of, 77, 90, 128
Housing, 13, 15, 41f, 100
Hunting, 43
Husbands, 22ff; absent, 72, 84ff
Husband's: brother, 6, 13, 25, 92; grandmother, 66, 78; kin, 61f, 84ff, 88; mother, 66; parents, 10, 92f

Ila, 120
Impelesi, 128
Impotence, 34, 111
Incest, 88, 90f
Incidence of marriage payments, 23
Indians, 28
Inhamuale, 5
Inheritance, 22
Inhlanti, 4
Intermediaries, 66, 92
Inter-tribal marriage, 115, 124
Intestacy, 19
Intestinal fat, 9, 127f
Intonga, 134
Inyamuale, 5
Inyongo, 9
Ivory, 17
Ishmael, 57

Jchu, 57
Jesse, 99
Job, 62
Jonathan, 97
Joshua, 81ff

Kalamatila, 31
Kalanga, 8
Kapakapa, 32
Kark, 123
Kinship, 2, 114, 119f; omni-directional, 125f; quasi-, 1, 79
-hobeha, 5
-homeha, 5

Kuduwa mhasi, 41
Kulanda zinthonga, 134
Kulyelana, 9
Kunda, 121
Kuper, 1, 4
Kulenga mwana, 46
Kulola mwana, 45
Labour assistance, 10, 76
Labour migration, 84ff; and marriage ceremonies, 67; division of goods, 56; and divorce, 49f, 54, 100; prevelance of, x, 17, 20, 108; sex differentiation, 22
Labour recruiters, 17
Lamba, 51
Lancaster, 4
-landa, 134
'Leaving wife in disgust', 41, 84
Left-hand wives, 12
Legalization payment, 37ff; and divorce, 49; increase in, 35, 122; law about, 101; and marriage certificate, 69; pre-conquest, 6f; and 'poorly fixed' marriage, 68; refused, 62; and rights *in uxorem*, 96ff, 114; and uxorilocal residence, 75; and widows, 94
Legal relationship between spouses, 35
Legislation: by Administration, 19, 102; by Native Authority, 37, 101, 124f
Lepers, 48
Letters, 85, 100
Levirate, 13
Lieutenants: and adultery, 4; and marriage ceremonies, 99; and residential system, 1, 11, 13, 16
Linked co-wife: and barrenness, 4, 34; designate, 56, 128; and senior co-wife, 13; for son, 6, 56; as sororate, 94
-loboła, 5
Locality, influence of, 29
Love, 46f
Lozi, 85, 120
Lugola, 46, 116
Lukankho, 31
-luma, 40
Lusiwa, 9, 127
-lyelana, 9
Madmen, 22, 48

Malowolo, 5, 97
Marital: experience, 51f; status, 24f
Marriage, Ngoni and modern, 124

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P. 140]

INDEX

000 Mary, 60, 103
Master of ceremonies, 127f
Matchmaking, 65f
Maternal kin, 9
Matrilineal succession, 18
Mbololiho, 31
Mceka, 13
Mdula: and Cewa, 116; and fidelity, 31; and new-born child, 46; and missions, 112f; and widows, 46, 93
Menstruation, 32, 46
Medicines, 116
Mfuko, 5, 69
Milcah, 97
Missions: and Administrative legislation, 19; arrival of, 17; and Christian marriage, 112: and customary marriage, 19; differences between, 102f; and divorce, 55, 123; and polygyny, 109; and pre-marital copulation, 111; and rearing of children, 119; and ritual intercourse, 87
Mitchell, 51, 77
Mngeniso, 9, 133
Mobility, 20, 50
Money, x, 98
Monogamy, 19
Mourning, 46f, 70, 93
Mpelekezi, 128
Mpezeni, x, 101
Mphekiso, 9, 129
Mphungu, 32
Mtoso, 13
Mtototo, 32
Mtupa, 40
Mulumo, 40
Mvyala, 27
Mystical: beliefs, 44ff, 115; procedures, 31; sanctions, 55
Mzyelano, 9, 133

Naomi, 52ff
Native Authority, 47, 69, 100, 125
Ndamanga, 31, 56
Nebo, 97
Neighbours, 9
Ngayi, 78
-ngenela, 134
-ngenisa, 9
Ngoni: and evidence of desertion, 85; divorce frequency, 51, 102, 120; and inter-tribal marriage, 64; and sexual activity, 110f; and unstable marriage, 123; of Northern Nyasaland, ix; of Southern Nyasaland, 35
Nguni, 51
Ng'anda, 13
Nhlanzi, 4
Nimshi, 97f
Nhatulo, 134
Nhkosuo, 66
No-man's land, 17
Nsembe, 133
Nsenga, 29, 111, 121
Nshanzi, 4, 56, 128
Nshlanze, 4
Nthakula, 75
Nthupa, 40
Nuer, 120
Nuptuality, 22f
Nyongo, 9

'Offering', 133

Parents, 59, 95
Parents-in-law, 9
Parity of age of sexual partners, 33
Patrilineal descent, 15, 55
Payments between spouses, 40f
Payments, marriage: absence of, 6, 8, 69f, 121; incidence of, 7; magnitude of, 7, 23, 120ff; pre-1898, 6; quarrels over, 91; and status, 8
-pelekeza, 128
-pheka, 9
-phekisa, 9
Planters, 99
Play houses, 33
Police, 64
Political: allegience, 16, 18; superiors, 9, 15
'Poorly fixed' marriage, 68f
Polygyny: changes in, 109f; missions and, 112f; modern, 55f; pre-conquest, 12f
Porridge, 132
Preferential marriage, 24
Pregnancy: and fidelity, 31; first, 65, 77f; and labour migration, 87; mystical significance, 45, 115; pre-marital, 60; report to relatives, 10, 39, 66
Priests, 19
Prison, 48
Prohibitions, marriage, 26
Pro-husband, 14, 93f
Promiscuity, 3
Prostitution, 21f, 44, 69, 124
Puberty, 3: instructress, 32

Quarrels, 78ff: cohesive, 90; formalities of, 41; and kinsfolk, 103, 117; pre-conquest, 10; in public, 46
Queens, 11, 11, 15
'Quite useless people', 22

Rachel, 63, 68
Rattray, 3, 5, 9, 14
Read, Margaret, 3, 4, 5, 19, 35, 46, 116, 124
Rearing of children, 15, 119

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

INDEX

[P. 141]

Rebecca, 62
Regiments, 2f, 11, 26; system of, 1, 10, 16f, 94, 105
Regional governors, 1
Resettlement Areas, 107
Residence, change of, 16
Reuben, 77, 81ff, 131
Richards, 5, 45, 51, 100, 103
Right-hand wives, 12
Rights: in marriage, 113ff; *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*, 96f, 121f, 124f
Roman-Dutch law, 20
Royal headquarters, 1, 16
Running away, 79f
Ruth, 52ff, 100

Sampling method, 22f
Samuel, 81ff, 109f, 131
Saul, 85
Schools, 17
Science, 113
Scott, 9
Seduction, 33, 59f
Seed-raisers, 4, 34f
Segmentation, 11, 13, 15, 55
Separation, 83f
Sexual: activities, 22, 30ff, 55, 110ff; attraction, 46; maturation, 32; ratio, 20, 22; rights, 31; satisfaction, 32f, 35
Siblings-in-law, 27
Simon, 97f
Sister, eldest, 66
Slaves, 17
'Snuff-box': modern, 37ff, 69; pre-conquest, 5ff; rights, 35, 113f; uxorilocal residence, 71; widows, 94
Soldiers, 60f
Sons, 59f; eldest, 98
Sons-in-law, 4
Sororate, 13, 94
South-Eastern Bantu, 28, 116
Spleen, 9
Status and payments, 8
Sterility, 34
Stigand, 5
Still-births, 45
Storehouses, 42f, 74
Succession, 2, 22
Sulphonamides, 113
Sureties, 66
Survey of marriages, 6
Swazi, 1
Syphilis, 48

Tables, method of construction, 23
'Taking up the child', 45f, 87, 112f
Tanda, 80
-tandala, 80
Tayotola mthanyelo, 135
Ten taxpayer rule, 109
Testicles, 32
'Time of peace', ix
Tobacco farms, 17, 28
Towns: moves to, 63; women married in, 89
Tribal preferences, 28
Tswana, 51

Ugola, 46
Ukwati: owayawaya, 68; *wamahono*, 124; *wacingoni*, 124
Ulugola, 46
Umbilical cord, 45
Unamwali, 5
Unimportant people, marriages of, 8
Universities' Mission to Central Africa, 102
Unmarried adults, 22
Uxorilocality, 18, 42, 71ff, 108ff

Venereal disease, 116
Villages, 1; amalgamated, 106; large, 1, 17, 105; linked by marriage, 117; man's and woman's, 75f, 118; meetings, 47, 87f; modern, 18; movement between, 107ff
Vipeko, 9
Virilocality, 15, 71ff, 108ff, 115
Visits, 9f, 29

Wages, 122f
War, 11, 106; 1939-45, 123
Wealth, 118
Wedded population, 22f
Western society, 58
White Fathers, 102f
Whites, 54
Widows, 92ff; Christian, 112; mourning by, 69f; pre-conquest, 13f; rights over, 114
Widow-concubinage, 14
Widowers, 22
Wiese, viii, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 14, 121
Wives, 9, 22ff; from afar, 10, 12; great, 12f, 15, 56; rank of, 12; old, 13
Wife's: father, 75, 92; grandmother, 66; kin, 62ff, 86; mother, 69, 71; parents, 10
Witnesses, marriage, 66
Woman marriage, 2
Women: owning cattle, 98; in court, 100f; indoctrination of, 110f

Wisa, 26

Yao, 28, 64
Young men, 29
Young, T. Cullen, 5, 30, 37, 62

Zachariah, 52ff
Zulu, ix, 11, 116, 120, 122

[The Ngoni engage in gift giving and gift exchanges on frequent occasions, and the relevant information is scattered throughout the text. Since only a few major instances have been marked for this category, the interested reader should consult category 116.]

4: Barnes
631

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[Category 631 has been applied in a special sense, namely to cover Barnes' concept of "residential system" as defined on page 1 of the text. Thus it refers not only to political organization, but also to the entire hierarchy of spatially defined social groups.]

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

THE RHODES-LIVINGSTONE PAPERS NUMBER FIFTEEN 000

STUDIES IN AFRICAN LAND USAGE IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

BY

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[Title page]
[p. i]

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[p. ii]

MORIJA PRINTING WORKS
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5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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PREFACE

The four papers reproduced here deal with a method of estimating land carrying capacities for human populations under African conditions and systems of land usage, and the application of this method to the study of practical problems. The method itself is based on Trapnell's work on the soils and agricultural systems of the Territory, and details of the method as applied in practice have largely been evolved in collaboration between him and the author, with material assistance from other members of the Agricultural Department. N 121

The first paper gives an outline of the technique used in carrying out detailed studies of land problems in the Eastern and Western Provinces of Northern Rhodesia. The basic conceptions of land deterioration and population carrying capacity, the relation of Native land usage to the vegetation-soil unit and the factors involved in the estimation of critical densities, which are discussed in this account, have already been referred to in Trapnell's *Ecological Report on North-Eastern Rhodesia* (paras. 37–41, 79 and 302–26). The main emphasis in Trapnell's account, however, is on the land deterioration aspect, whereas in the present essay the subject is given fuller treatment from the population standpoint and in the light of recent work on the redistribution of populations. N [128] N [114]

The second paper consists of a report, submitted to Government in 1940, on a reconnaisance survey of conditions in the area of the Lamba Chief Mushiri. This survey was the first attempt to apply the conception of land carrying capacity and the method of estimation to the study of a specific practical problem. Shortly afterwards the method was applied, on a vastly greater and more detailed scale, to the resettlement of congested populations in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province. In 1943 further study was given to the whole proplem of the concentration of populations, including that of Mushiri's area, about the southern and eastern rim of the Copperbelt. In the interval a Government Land Commission had visited the area. This Commission reported that the predictions made in the original report were being rapidly fulfilled and recommended the immediate grant of additional land under controlled settlement. Resettlement of populations from Mushiri and other overcrowded chieftaincies was started in 1943 and all of the recommendations contained in the original report have now been carried out or are in process of completion (see Annual Reports of the Agricultural Department, 1943–6). It will be noted that the Vegetation-Soil units have been revised and that other factors in the method of estimation have been somewhat modified, as a result of greater knowledge, since the original pioneer survey was made. L 121 [128] L [114]

The third paper is a report, presented to Government in October 1944, on the vexed question of the adequacy or otherwise of the native reserves L [128]

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

L 121 128 in the Mkushi District and the additions which have from time to time been made to them. This study deals with two somewhat more complex systems, both in a state of change, in which *chitemene* and hoe cultivation methods are combined. The report was followed, after further study, by an annexure (not reproduced here as it contains little of general interest) giving details of the proposed land additions and population transfers, and precise suggestions for measures to improve land usage which might be carried out by Native Authorities. Most of these suggestions have been adopted by the Native Authorities concerned.

It will be realized that both the Mushiri and Mkushi reports are strictly reconnaissance surveys intended to define the nature and scope of specific problems, to indicate what immediate measures may be necessary, and to pave the way for further more detailed study and survey on the lines indicated in the first paper.

N 128 [121] The fourth paper gives a brief and general account of the resettlement work which has been carried out, or is in process of completion, in Northern Rhodesia. It, like the first paper, was written in reply to numerous enquiries as to the technique, methods and objects of resettlement. None of the papers was intended for publication at the time it was written, but it is thought that their presentation may be of some value as a contribution to the study of the relationship between the African and his land.

N 121 The question of land usage and its relation to the available supply of land is, of course, only one aspect of the general problem of African development. The life of the African is so intimately bound up with his land that one may almost say that there is no problem concerning him which is purely agricultural; just as there are few problems which are purely administrative, political, sociological, medical or veterinary. All of these aspects are often intimately, sometimes inextricably, bound together as integral parts of the one common problem.

In recent surveys, of which it is hoped to publish an example shortly, sociologists of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute have co-operated closely with officers of the Agricultural Department in the study of specific aspects of a common problem. Extension of this co-operative method of approach offers the best hope for the solution of many of the problems of African land usage.

But such studies, to be of full practical value, must take into account the effects of changing conditions. The industrial and economic changes which are to be expected within the next decade will profoundly affect the whole structure of African life and will, to a very large extent, determine the pattern and speed of rural development.

Mazabuka, W.A.
6 November 1947.

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

CONTENTS

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I. How much Land does a Man Require? 1

II. A Report on Agricultural and Land Problems within Mushiri's Area of the Lamba-Lima Reserve 25

III. A Reconnaissance Survey of the Land Problem in Mkushi District 47

IV. The Resettlement of Native Populations in Northern Rhodesia 71

Note on the Chitemene Control Scheme 86

S: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949

FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Mamvi FR4

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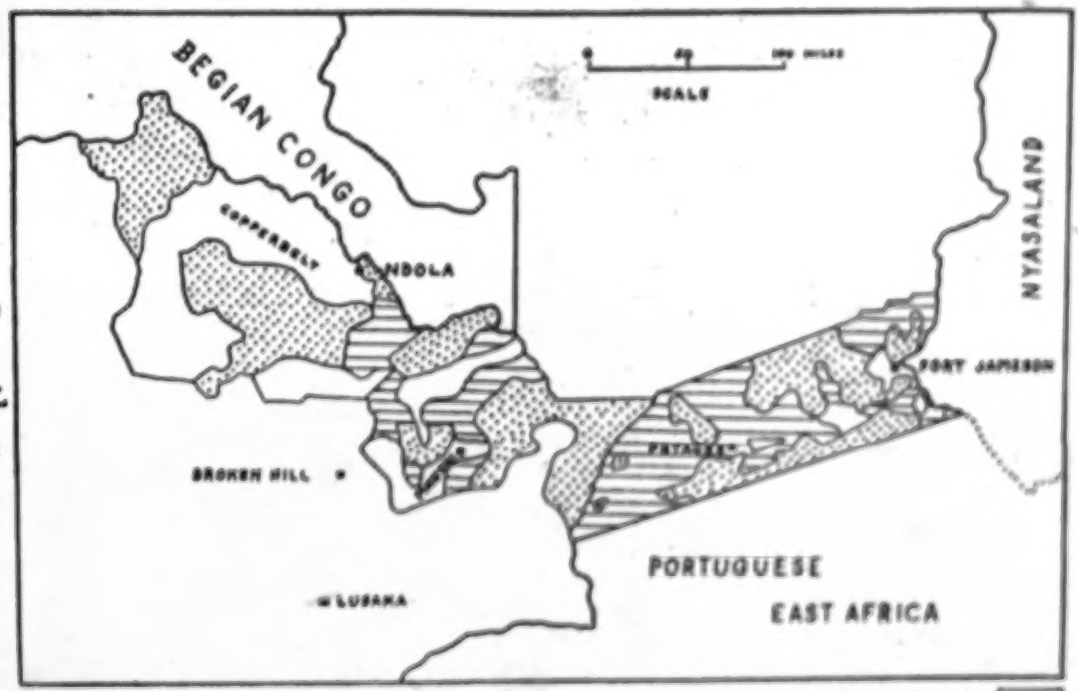
102
103
131
166



Native Reserves and Native occupied Crown Land. 1929-41.

Resettlement areas and and additions. 1941-45.

SKETCH MAP OF PART OF NORTHERN RHODESIA TO SHOW THE AREAS OF THE WESTERN PROVINCE, MKUSHI DISTRICT AND EASTERN PROVINCE, REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT.

[p. vi]

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned: such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources. 000

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile. 114 101 121 161 311 [133]

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfinzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipuka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni. [181]

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent. [797] [427]

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do. [134]

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people. [439]

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

N 251 511 [126] The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages

(February 1941)

N [162]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,710

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [361] N [166]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 311 511

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

L 161 311 511 000

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, provide similar examples for different systems and land categories. In the second Report of the Ecological Survey (North Eastern Rhodesia, paras. 316–20) Trapnell records a wide range of observations on areas where land degeneration and soil erosion had become marked, in relation to land categories, population densities and the time factor. These observations provide independent evidence of the relatively low carrying capacity of much of our land under the traditional systems, and they accord well with the estimates obtained by the methods outlined in this paper.

161
311
511
[114]
[128]

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113

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Lamba FQ8

PART IV

THE RESETTLEMENT OF NATIVE POPULATIONS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

§ 1. *The Problem and its Origin*

IN Northern Rhodesia and doubtless over a much greater part of Africa before the coming of the Europeans, the population-land pattern was a changing, kaleidoscopic picture. If an area became overcrowded more land was available, or it could be taken from a neighbouring people. A rough balance between land and population was maintained by means of migration, inter-tribal wars, periodic famine and disease.

With the coming of the European the kaleidoscopic picture was arrested, producing what we may call the primary population-land pattern. This was later modified, by alienation and reservation of land and by the movement of peoples into Native reserves, to produce a secondary pattern. New economic factors have so far modified this secondary pattern only to a minor extent, but it may be expected that they will tend to do so increasingly in the future.

The secondary population-land pattern was brought about mainly by the movement of the African population into Native reserves. As a result of this movement large areas of Crown Land were left practically uninhabited, and a number of factors operating together brought about mal-distribution and congestion of populations within the reserves themselves.

So far the problem has been studied in detail only in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province, the Mkushi District of the Central Province and the Ndola District of the Western Province, and it is within these districts that resettlement work—other than the 'Chitemene Control' scheme—has been carried out. The four districts are contiguous and the total area within them to which this discussion refers is about 33,800 square miles (4,000 square miles more than the whole land area of Scotland but only about one-ninth of the area of Northern Rhodesia) with a total population, in round figures, of 290,000 (about one-sixth of the total population of the Territory).

The primary population-land pattern was such that the ten tribes living within this area had ample or much more than ample land, except to a minor extent in the Fort Jameson District where the incursion of the immigrant Ngoni in the later 19th century had created a potential congestion problem. Under former conditions this problem would doubtless have resolved itself as it arose by migration of the Chewa to north and west, under pressure from the Ngoni, but once the kaleidoscopic pattern was arrested no such

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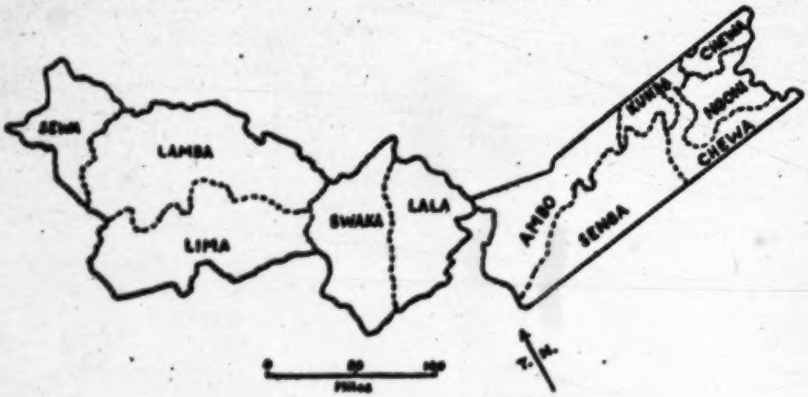

Fig 1.— THE ORIGINAL POPULATION-LAND PATTERN
Showing areas held by tribes.

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movement was possible. The lands of the Ngoni and Chewa were then reduced, by alienation to European settlers and by reservation, to an extent which the following figures illustrate:

Habitable Land held by Tribes (square miles)

	Chewa	*Ngoni* *
Before Ngoni invasion	3,580	–
After Ngoni invasion	2,280	1,300
After land alienation	1,124	878
After creation of reserves	889	675

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Throughout the Petauke and Mkushi Districts the amount of land taken up by European settlers was negligible, but the Senga, Ambo, Lala and Swaka peoples were moved into Reserves some of which proved totally inadequate for the land needs of their traditional agricultural systems.

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In the west (Ndola District) the congestion problem arose largely as a result of displacement of people from the area which is now the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia, a land loss which fell on the Lamba tribe. The land area of Mushiri's section of the Lamba, for example, which formerly included part of the Copperbelt, was reduced from 2,200 to 360 square miles. The Lamba were removed from the new mining areas and this movement accentuated by some migration of more distant peoples attracted by the mines, gave rise to a belt of relatively high population concentration about the southern and eastern margins of the Copperbelt.

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* With a mixture of Chewa and other tribes.

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In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftaincies remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional sytems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

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of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§. 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 5,600 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mkushi District and 4,800 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§ 3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Description of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population obtains its food only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 15s. *The Soil, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 5s.

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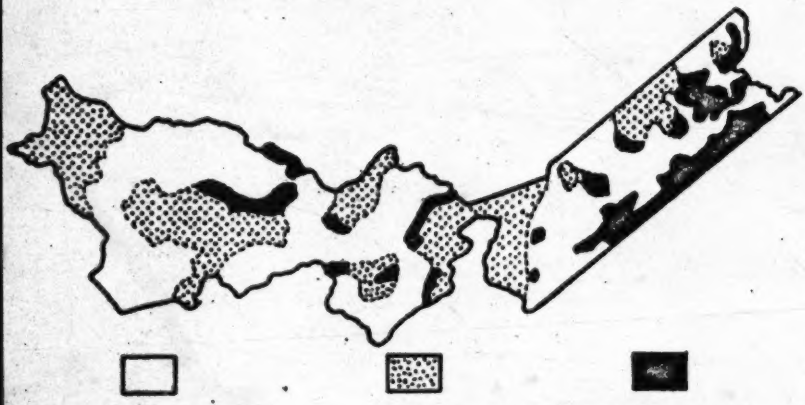

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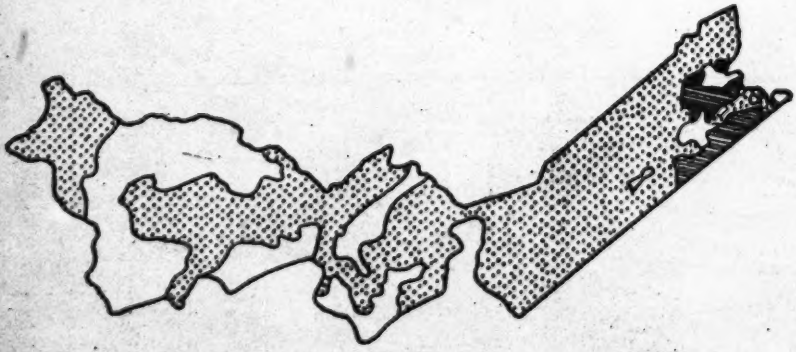
Crown land, Company land, alienated land and unoccupied Native Reserve. Largely uninhabited.

Land in Native occupation. Largely under-populated.

Land in Native occupation. Over-populated.

Fig 2.— THE SECONDARY POPULATION-LAND PATTERN.



Trust Land for future use of African peoples, Crown lands and alienated land.

Land in Native occupation. Balanced or under-populated.

Remaining areas of over-population, capable of supporting their populations on the basis of improved agriculture.

Fig. 3.— THE POPULATION-LAND PATTERN AFTER RESETTLEMENT.

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climate and by the way in which the land is used. If the limit is exceeded *without a compensating change in the system of land usage* then a process of land degradation is set in operation and ultimately, unless food is obtained from outside the area, population must decline to the limit determined by natural conditions and the system of land use, or to a lower level. This limit, the maximum number of people that a given land area will maintain in perpetuity under a certain system of land usage, has been termed the 'carrying capacity' of the area *for that system*. It will be clear that the term can be used only in relation to a clearly defined system of land usage. Throughout these notes, when no statement to the contrary is made, the expression is used in relation to the traditional agricultural system of the tribes concerned. These systems, and the staple crops which go with them, vary greatly within this relatively small area of 33,800 square miles, and range from a primitive form of axe-agriculture among the Western Lala to comparatively advanced soil selection methods practised by the Eastern tribes. Descriptions of all of these systems will be found in the publications to which reference has already been made.

The term 'population-land balance' hardly requires definition. If the total population of an area is equal to or less than the land capacity for the system of agriculture practised, then a population-land balance exists within that area. When the total population is well below the land carrying capacity the areas may be described as under-populated.

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These concepts, and the methods of survey and of estimating the carrying capacities for the different land categories and agricultural systems, were applied to the problem of resettlement. Rapid reconnaissance surveys were made throughout the populated areas, with the objects of assessing approximately the land carrying capacity for each chief's area and estimating the number of people who would have to be moved to unoccupied land in order to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of the traditional agricultural systems. The estimate indicated that a total of about 160,800 people would have to be moved, as shown in the Table below.

District	*Tribe*	*Number of people to be moved*
Fort Jameson	Chewa Ngoni	98,300
Petauke	Senga Ambo	35,000 8,000
Mkushi	Lala Swaka	3,200 4,300
Ndola	Lamba	12,000

The estimates make no allowances for the readjustment of population distribution within the old Reserves. Some chieftaincies were in fact much under-populated and in some of the Reserves considerable areas remained almost or completely uninhabited because of water shortage, the occur-

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rence of sleeping sickness or for other reasons. It would have been possible by re-distribution of populations within the old Reserves, in conjunction with provision of water supplies and measures against 'fly', materially to reduce the number of people to be moved to unoccupied land. Such a course would have involved serious political repercussions and, in view of the amount of land available, it was never contemplated.

The next essential step was to survey the vacant land available for resettlement, to prepare vegetation-soil maps of the areas, and to estimate the carrying capacity of each area for the traditional agricultural system of the people who would occupy it. In the Eastern Province and the Ndola District surveys were made on the basis of parallel straight line traverses, using liquid prismatic compasses and cyclometer wheels. Traverse lines were usually one mile apart, but wider intervals up to three miles were used, in order to save time, if the country was relatively uniform or if no high degree of accuracy was required. In some instances, when very accurate maps were wanted, the traverse interval was reduced to one half or one quarter of a mile. Information on water supplies, the state of regeneration of land and timber, the former inhabitants and other relevant details, was collected in the course of these surveys. In the case of Mkushi District, where there was an abundance of available land in relation to the needs of the population, sample traverses only were used. The methods of survey and mapping are described in one of the other papers in this series.

When estimates had been made of the number of people to be moved from each of the over-crowded chieftaincies and the carrying capacity of the available land, divided into convenient areas, had been ascertained, the planning of population movements became, in theory, simple. In practice, of course, there were a good many difficulties.

Tribal boundaries and the original ownership of the land had to be taken into consideration, though these were not regarded as sacrosanct and, in fact, a large area formerly occupied by the Senga was used for the resettlement of a section of the Chewa. Other factors also limit movement. There is, obviously, a physical limit; fifty miles was regarded as the maximum practical move, but in extreme cases villages were moved as much as seventy miles. Traditional systems of land usuage are, generally, adaptations to particular sets of ecological conditions and people cannot be moved into an environment unsuited to their food crops and method of production. Cattle-owning people will not willingly move to tsetse country leaving their herds behind.

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Water supplies proved to be a very great difficulty over large areas, especially in the Eastern Province. Natural supplies were not sufficient to allow of full utilization of the land on the basis of its carrying capacity, and in some cases practically no settlement was possible before artificial watering points had been provided. It appeared that, in the Eastern Province at least, permanent surface water had greatly diminished in the twelve to twenty years during which the land had lain unoccupied. The old sites of villages and their sources of water supply were noted in the course of the

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L M N 312 361 surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The fierce late fires which swept through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the dessication.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

L M N 648 491 After survey had been completed and before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their food-stocks and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

L M N 648 312 653 Wherever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (25 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mushiri resettlement area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central L [228] dam which was stocked with bream (*Tilapia spp.*) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

L M N 136 166 311 Another difficulty was the occurance of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

N 744 [164] In the northern part of Fort Jameson Districts, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on compacting pedocal soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'fly' country, 166
but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern 136
zone that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. 164
The large available land area in Mkushi enabled the relatively small 'fly' 744
areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'fly' areas of Mkushi.

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'fly' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the kraals. Ten herds each of five beasts were used; the animals were numbered and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomyaisis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'fly' infestation were defined.

§ 6. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in 166
accordance with the general plan to restore the population-land balance as 621
far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in 648
many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers.

Headmen and other representatives of the villagers who had finally [622]
elected to move then toured the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villagers almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Vegetation-Soil Map. Blocks
of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total [311]
villages population, allowing for temporary absentees, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation
of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular; the people [423]
are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone beacons, to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features.

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually app- 166
lied or always possible. The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, 648

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L M 166 648 The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, much of it inaccessible and uninhabitable, except for small pockets of fertile soil, was opened to unrestricted settlement by the Ambo and Senga-Kunda peoples. Other areas of poor soils and low carrying capacities in Fort Jameson District were also opened to free settlement up to a population total determined by the carrying capacity.

L [731] In Ndola District an area was opened to immediate uncontrolled settlement, in order to relieve acute land shortage and actual starvation in one section of the Reserve.

L M [312] [361] [632] A somewhat modified method has been used in parts of Petauke District where dams are the only means of providing water. Here the population unit consists of three or four villages grouped into a 'parish' and settled about the watering points. A single land area is demarcated for each of these groups, instead of allocating a separate block to each village. This method allows of economy in the distribution of watering points, tends to reduce the effect of inter-village movements and, it is hoped, will lead to larger administrative units.

§ 7. *Agricultural Control and Improvement*

N 161 [311] The general object of resettlement is to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of traditional land usage *and the present population numbers*. Obviously, this balance cannot be permanent if the population is increasing; and if it is not increasing something is seriously wrong. Reliable vital statistics are entirely lacking but probably most of the tribes are increasing (the Ngoni may be an exception) at a rate which, judging by the very few available data, may be about 1½ per cent per annum, a rate which would double the population in forty-six years.

N 242 654 648 Resettlement is not, and was never regarded as, a substitute for agricultural improvement. The objects are to reduce the agricultural problem to practicable proportions, to relieve acute land shortage, to give time for experiment and the introduction of new methods. The assumption is that an evolutionary process of agricultural improvement will keep pace with natural increase of population, and that this process must be guided by experiment.

N [177] Simple measures of agricultural control, and the beginnings of soil conservation and agricultural improvement, have been introduced in each of the resettlement areas as a condition of occupation. It need hardly be said that these are not popular with the majority and the existence of such conditions is a deterrent to movement.

M N 648 242 [185] [241] In the case of the earlier settlements in the Fort Jameson District an elementary system of soil conservation was introduced by demarcating the land for cultivation in contour strips separated by untouched belts of grass (which acquired the name of 'ten-yardis' since the original strips were ten paces wide). This was followed by an attempt to replace the traditional mound system of Ngoni, Chewa and Senga by cultivation on ridges

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approximately on the contour and parallel to demarcated 'marker' ridges on the true contour. A system of contour cultivation has now been developed which is proving practical and effective. The 'marker' ridges are demarcated at a vertical interval of two feet six inches and are gradually converted by the people into more or less broad-based banks. In the first year the ridge is built up to a base width of six feet and a height of not less than six inches. The base and height are increased until a permanent bank eight feet wide at the base and eighteen inches in height is completed. Villages on the 'ten yardi' system can change over to contour cultivation if the majority of people elect to do so. New villages are allowed to move into resettlement areas in the Eastern Province only on condition that they agree to practice contour cultivation; they are given four or five years to adapt themselves to the new system but in many cases practically the whole of the new gardens are under ridges by the end of the second year. Cultivation practice has been adapted to the new system and, meanwhile, experiments are being made to find the best methods of ridging, spacing and planting of crops for use in conjunctions with the ridge cultivation system.

M N 648 242 [241] M N [166]

In the Ndola District gardens are laid off between contour grass strips at vertical intervals of two feet. The people are then encouraged to convert the grass strip into three parallel ridges approximating to the normal dimension of their mounds for subsidiary crops and to plant the ridges with beans and cowpeas; or to make one or two such ridges and plant the remainder of the strip with groundnuts on the flat—a combination of contour ridges and strip cropping. This method, an adaptation of normal Lamba practice was adopted after a series of trials to find the simplest method of erosion control acceptable to these somewhat backward people. The object is not only to check erosion but to restore the cultivation of subsidiary crops, now almost entirely neglected. The planting of the ridges to beans and cowpeas and the strips to groundnuts restores the balance between cereals and legumes and should allow of a small surplus for sale. The idea seems to be less unpopular than one might expect and most villages have made a satisfactory effort to convert the strips into ridges for the cultivation of subsidiary crops.

L 242 648 L [177]

Contours are laid off by trained African Assistants of the Department of Agriculture, using road tracers, and it has been found necessary during the initial stages of settlement to have one or two African Assistants* for at least every ten villages or, approximately, for every 600 to 1,000 people. Constant supervision is maintained during the initial phase by the African Agricultural Assistants in co-operation with District Messengers and the Native Authorities. This supervision is irksome and resented by some of the older people but it is, perhaps, significant that at a recent meeting of the African Regional Council of the Western Province after the subject had been freely debated, the council voted by a large majority for an increase in the number of Agricultural Capitaos.

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Fruit tree planting has also been introduced and in the Eastern and Western Provinces laws made by the Native Authorities require each household

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* Usually one and a learner assistant at Ndola.

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648 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds,
245 seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and
671 bananas are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little
[177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a
[132] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of
311 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush.
648 In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre-
185 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning
[622] of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve
361 the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this
362 has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built
[342] of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's
648 journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

to clear large enough gardens at the new site in the first year a part of the old gardens can be used, for it is easy to travel back and forward between the old and new villages. The majority of the moves were of this order and no assistance was required or given. In the case of longer moves, heavy household goods and food stocks were transported by motor lorry, or in some instances when it was convenient to do so the entire grain stock was bought at the old village and food, purchased locally, was sold at the new site. This enabled the people to give the whole of their time to preparing a large garden acreage in the first year. The great majority of villages moving for moderate or long distances (twenty five to seventy miles) succeeded in preparing large enough gardens and growing sufficient food for themselves in the first year. A few did not, for one reason or another, such as starting too late, a bad season or just plain laziness, and these villages were supplied with food in the first season either in return for work or on promise of repayment after a good harvest. Less than 5 per cent of villages received such relief.

§ 10. *The Progress of Resettlement*

It was estimated that, in order to restore a complete population-land balance, about 141,300 people would have to be moved from the Reserves of the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts. No such movement was, in fact, possible. The total carrying capacity of the land available for resettlement which contained a vast mass of escarpment hills and other large areas of almost useless land, was estimated to be 78,000 people. This land was, of necessity, allocated to the tribal groups in the following way:

Ngoni and Chewa	:	Sufficient land	for	35,000	people
Senga	:	"	"	35,000	"
Ambo	:	"	"	8,000	"

Thus in the case of the Ngoni and Chewa the available land was totally insufficient to allow of the restoration of a population-land balance, while in the case of the other peoples such a balance could be achieved.

Two alternatives were possible; to re-distribute the Ngoni and Chewa populations more or less evenly over the new land and the Reserves, in which case both would be over-populated in relation to their carrying capacities, or to populate the new land to the maximum of its carrying capacity, leaving the Reserves still over-populated. The latter course was adopted for a variety of reasons, including the fact that much of the new land was tsetse infested and the keeping of cattle and development of mixed farming would not be possible at least for a very considerable time. The Reserves, on the other hand, carried many cattle and, with reduction of the population by resettlement, would be able to support their populations on a basis of mixed farming.

Movement was therefore designed to populate the new areas to the maximum of their carrying capacity and to reduce the agricultural problem

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

M N 166 311 648

of the Reserves to manageable proportions, leaving an excess of population, but not too great an excess, within the cattle areas.

L M 166 311 648

In Petauke District, where there is ample land available, the object aimed at is a complete restoration of the population-land balance by controlled movement of some 35,000 Senga and uncontrolled movement of 8,000 Ambo and Senga-Kunda.

L M N 166 648

Survey work in the Eastern Province started in 1941 and a few pioneer villages were moved in that year, but the main movement started in 1942 (when over 18,000 people were moved) and it is still in progress. By the end of 1945 the programme was more than half completed; 292 villages (about 32,000 people) had been moved into controlled 'village blocks' or 'parish settlements' in addition to uncontrolled or partially controlled movements in the escarpment area and parts of the Fort Jameson District. The comparatively slow rate of progress is due to water-shortage. Large areas in Petauke District and the north of Fort Jameson have not yet been settled for this reason, while in the latter area there is also some danger of sleeping sickness, and measures for the control of 'fly' (game destruction and clearing of 'hard pan') are in progress. Settlement is continuing at the rate set by provision of water supplies and the control of tsetse.

L M N [312] [136]

L 648 311 166

The Mkushi District presents an entirely different picture since the available land is about twice as much as the present population require, on the basis of their traditional agricultural practice. Here, instead of village blocks, comparatively large areas have been demarcated to take a number of villages and there is no strict control. The Superior Native Authority has introduced rules intended to bring about a gradual conversion from small circle *chitemene* (a primitive form of axe-agriculture) to hoe cultivation of kaffir corn with subsidiary gardens for a variety of crops.

L [242]

The land not actually required for immediate use has not been allocated but is being held in reserve against the future needs of the African people and the Native Authorities undertake responsibility for early burning within the reserved land.

The bulk of the necessary population transfers have already been carried out.

In Ndola District also the available land is considerably greater than present needs and some is being held in reserve. Populations moved from the congested zone about the mines have been settled in village blocks and, apart from an area demarcated for immediate settlement in 1943 to relieve actual starvation, there is no uncontrolled settlement.

Movement of 120 villages, having a total estimated population of 11,775, was completed in 1945. It has since been found, however, that the population counts made by a District Officer seconded for the purpose are in fact over-estimated and a considerable number of the blocks are under-populated and further movements may be necessary.

113, 166, 311, 648 Lamba FQ8

/ For information concerning the relation between population patterns and land utilization, and particularly with regard to the resettlement program carried out by the Colonial Administration, see 5: Allan, FR5 Ngoni, category 116. Only specific data have been marked for this file, whereas there is much relevant information in the generalized sections of that source. The researcher particularly interested in the Lamba, however, is advised to consult the original account since the parts not processed for the files deal primarily with the Lamba tribal groups. --Analyst/

6:Rattray R.G-6 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

SOME FOLK-LORE

STORIES AND SONGS

IN CHINYANJA

WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND NOTES

BY

R. SUTHERLAND RATTRAY

MEMBER OF THE AFRICAN LAKES CORPORATION, LTD.,
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

WITH PREFACE BY

THE REV. ALEXANDER HETHERWICK, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "A PRACTICAL MANUAL OF THE NYANJA LANGUAGE," ETC.

[Title Page]

LONDON
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE
NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, W.C.
1907

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE REV. ALEXANDER HETHERWICK, D.D.

114 The author of the following book has been for some years located among the Nyanja-speaking tribes of British Central Africa at Blantyre, and afterwards in Central Angoniland. His occupation as a member of the African Lakes Corporation has brought him into close contact with the native 122 population of these districts. He has taken advantage of his opportunities to familiarize himself with the native language, of which he has acquired a very competent knowledge. In the course of his 126 studies he made a collection of native folk-lore and stories which illustrate in the fullest degree the various constructions, idioms and grammatical forms of the language. These he has now published with the coöperation of the Directors of the Corporation.

121 The book is of value as containing examples of native life, habits and customs which are rapidly disappearing from the country before the advance of civilization and the work of Christian missions. The coming generation of natives will grow up under [198] new influences, and the habits of thought and belief that ruled the lives of their fathers will soon be forgotten. Collections of folk-lore such as this book contains are therefore invaluable for the light they throw on a state of native life that is rapidly passing away.

To get into the heart of the native mind is a task well-nigh impossible for a European. The nearest

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 approach is made through the media of such collections as the author of the following pages has made. For this reason the book is commended to all who are interested in the study of native African life and habits.

It is further to be commended for its illustrations of the Nyanja language in which the stories, etc., are written. This language is spoken over the greater part of British Central Africa, or Nyasaland Protectorate, and forms the chief means of communication between the natives of the various districts themselves, as well as between the European settlers and the native population around them. It seems likely to become also the *lingua franca* of the whole of the British possessions in Central Africa that border on the Nyasaland Protectorate. The student of this language will find no better way into the heart of the subject he is dealing with than through the medium of these native stories. To facilitate this use of them, a literal translation is added, and notes are appended illustrating and explaining such idiomatic constructions as would be likely to present difficulty to a learner.

[197]

The writer of this preface has no doubt but that the book will prove its usefulness to the student of the Nyanja tongue, as well as its interest to the student of native African life and thought.

ALEXANDER HETHERWICK.

BLANTYRE MISSION,
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA,
January 1, 1906.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

In the study of this language, the student is for- 113
tunate in having two such scholarly works of reference as *A Practical Manual of the Nyanja Language*, by the Rev. A. Hetherwick, M.A., D.D., F.R.G.S., and *A Cyclopædic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language*, by the Rev. D. C. Scott, M.A., D.D., F.R.S.G.S.; on the other hand, there is a striking
want of any good prose work in that language. Of 114
translations of the Bible, and other religious books, 121
there are many, but all such works, in the translation, follow the English text almost literally, and contain so many words from foreign sources as to be of little use to the student who, having mastered the grammar and syntax of the language, seeks to enlarge his vocabulary and knowledge of idiomatic
expression by reading some prose work. (The ideal 121
translation of the Bible, or other religious work, would be one in which the English sentence is taken, the meaning got at, and this remodelled and transformed according to the native way of thought and expression.) It is to supply such a want that this little work is intended. The aim throughout has been, in the Chinyanja part, to write each sentence as a raw native would speak it. It is a commonly heard saying, that only boys trained at a Mission talk the language "grammatically." This is cor-
rect, if by "grammar" we mean a principle of set 191
rules for the speaking of a language. For to the 189
uncivilized native any such rules as those governing our own, and other languages of civilized countries,

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

are unknown, and he talks, "having regard rather to the poetical feeling than to the grammatical position and syntax of a word." But enclitics, tense particles, concords, the various forms of the verb (applied, causative, intensive, reversive, etc.), and all those auxiliary particles such as *ba*, *ka*, *ngo*, *dzi*, and enclitic particles such as *-nso*, *-be*, *-tu*, etc., by which all the finer shades of meaning are expressed, he uses absolutely correctly, and it is with a view of understanding, and making oneself understood, to the raw, uneducated element among these natives, that one should go to the trouble of learning this language.

The customs, stories, etc., recorded herein are those of the natives inhabiting Central Angoniland. They are descendants, for the most part through intermarriage with the Achewa, of the Zulus who came from south of the Zambezi, scattering as they advanced, under different leaderships; those under *Gwaza* (the father of *Sakambewa*), and his *ndana Chiwere*, settling at Dowa; *Mpezeni*, a son of *Gwaza*, settling near Fort Jameson. *Mputa*, the father of *Chikusi*, after reaching as far as Lake Chirwa, and raiding the Anguru under *Sinjaubweteka*, came to Domwe, near Dedza, under promise of cattle from *Sosola*, a *Chipeta*, or *Nchewa* chief. (*Chipeta* and *Nchewa* are synonymous, the former word being a sobriquet bestowed on the *Achewa* who came on to the Angoniland plateau, by the *Achewa* who settled on the Lake shore, the latter referring to the former as the a *chipeta*, i. e. they of the *chipeta* (long grass)). Intermingled with these customs, borrowed for the most part by the conquerors from the conquered, are to be found traces here and there, and here and there a word, which strike the key-note of their past history, now all but forgotten even by themselves. But what is of their

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

past, and what of their present, will be clear to one 121
who has made a more minute study of their Zulu 101
ancestors than the writer had time or opportunity
to do. Whatever be of merit in this little work, the 122
writer owes to the Rev. Alexander Hetherwick,
D.D., to whose kindness and courtesy in teaching
him Chinyanja, when he first came to the country,
he owes all that is best in his knowledge of the
language.

MANDALA,
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA,
January 1, 1906.

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6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE BY THE REV. ALEXANDER HETHERWICK, D.D.	v
PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR	vii

PART I (IN CHINYANJA)

NO.		
I.	ZA MWABVI	17
II.	„ MALIRO	22
III.	„ MALIRO A MFUMU A NGONI	28
IV.	„ UNAMWALI	30
V.	„ CHIKUTA	33
VI.	„ MASASA	36
VII.	„ ULOKAZI	38
VIII.	„ UKWATI	41
IX.	„ KACHISI	43
X.	„ ULA	44
XI.	„ UZIMBA	45
XII.	„ MABISALIRA	48
XIII.	„ KUKUSULA KWA ANGONI	50
XIV.	„ MALIRO A ASUTU	50
XV.	MFUMU YA KUKA NDI MKAMWINI	51
XVI.	KAMBA NDI GWAPE	53
XVII.	NSATU YA MITU IWIRI	54
XVIII.	KACHIRAMBE	54

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

NO.		PAGE
XIX.	KALULU NDI MKANGO	57
XX.	KALULU NDI NJOBVU	60
XXI.	TAMBALA NDI NAMZEZE	62
XXII.	KAMBA NDI NYANI	64
XXIII.	KAMBA NDI KAMUNDI	65
XXIV.	WOPUNDUKA MASO NDI WOCHOKA MSANA	67
XXV.	MWAMBI (NTANU)	71
XXVI.	CHAMBA CHA KANONOMERA	74
XXVII.	,, ,, MTETEREZI	76
XXVIII.	,, ,, KANDENGA	78
XXIX.	,, ,, CHITOTO	79
XXX.	,, ,, KUNJU	80
XXXI.	NYIMBO ZINA	80

Part II (a literal English Translation)

I.	THE ORDEAL POISON	85
II.	A FUNERAL	92
III.	THE FUNERAL OF AN ANGONI CHIEF	99
IV.	THE UNAMWALI CEREMONY	102
V.	THE BIRTH OF A CHILD	105
VI.	A VILLAGE EXODUS	109
VII.	MARRIAGE BY PURCHASE	112
VIII.	MARRIAGE (CHIPETA)	116
IX.	THE RAIN TEMPLE	118
X.	THE LOTS	120
XI.	HUNTING	122
XII.	THE WITCH-FINDER	125
XIII.	AN ANGONI PRAYER FOR RAIN	127
XIV.	THE FUNERAL OF AN NSUTU	128

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

NO.		PAGE
XV.	THE CHIEF OF THE KUKA AND HIS SON-IN-LAW	129
XVI.	THE TORTOISE AND THE ANTELOPE	131
XVII.	THE TWO-HEADED PYTHON	132
XVIII.	KACHIRAMBE	133
XIX.	THE RABBIT AND THE LION	136
XX.	THE RABBIT AND THE ELEPHANT	139
XXI.	THE COCK AND THE SWALLOW	142
XXII.	THE TORTOISE AND THE BABOON	145
XXIII.	THE TORTOISE AND THE LEMUR	146
XXIV.	THE BLIND MAN AND THE HUNCHBACK	149
XXV.	SOME RIDDLES AND PROVERBS	153
XXVI—XXXI.	SONGS	157

PART III

NOTES ON PART I 167

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

I

THE ORDEAL POISON

I. In the event of a chief's wife dying, or perhaps his child, the chief holds a consultation with the village elders, saying, "You at the village here, we wish to consult the oracle." At the "chief's" ordeal they summon all the headmen, but in the case of the "people's" ordeal, every one partakes of the poison. When they see that people are often dying they talk it over with the headmen, saying, "Look here at the village, here people are dying and we wish to summon the medicine man, that he may follow up the clue for us at the village." So they send one youth to summon the medicine man. He arrives very late in the evening. They put him in some hut, without people knowing that he has come. In the morning a young man gets up, and goes and stands at the open space in the village [where the men sit and talk, and where the different disputes are settled], and when he has climbed on an ant-hill, that all men may hear, he says, "Do you hear, you must not eat your '*nsima*' porridge to-day; he who is asleep let him arise that he may himself hear. They are saying you all must bathe, you taste a little of the beer that is not sweet, to-day."

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II. He who was about to have his morning sup, pushes aside his flour against the hut wall, he begins

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 to hide his household goods for, says he, "How
695 do we know we shall return from there." And all
791 their beads are taken off. When they see the sun is beginning to rise, every one assembles. And then they begin to pick out some strong young men, saying, "So and so must stay behind, and so and so, they must look after their companions and keep guard over the village, lest the medicine man's children begin to pillage the property of them who do not die." And then they begin to set out to go to the spot the poison is to be drunk at, and they [412] carry in readiness a grain mortar and a pestle (just any mortar), and follow the path in single file, and come to where the witch doctor is, and he begins to arrange them in a line; they do not turn their backs to the sun, the women spread out in one line, the men in another. The place is black with people. [242] The medicine man has his feather head-dress on, and goat's-hair bands are round his wrists. And then some old man gets up to present that for which the medicine is pounded, perhaps a goat, and this is for opening his bag [where he keeps the poison].

III. Thereupon the doctor says, "Give to me the spirit of the dead." Then that old man gets up, and going up to the village chief, tells him "The doctor is seeking the spirit of the dead." And the chief speaks, saying, "Well, and know you not them who have died here?" And then the old man *gives* him, the doctor, the spirit, saying, "Here so and so, and so and so have died, and it is on their account we summon you." Then the pounder of the poison says, "Give to me the partakers of human flesh who have eaten these ones you name." And then they call up two people, a man and a woman, saying, "Let her of the race of the Hills, and him of such and such a clan come here." And them they thus called come and stand near the mortar. Then

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the pounder of the ordeal poison opens his monkey-skin wallet, pulls out the poison bark, and breaks it off into the mortar with a hippo's tooth. When he is chipping it off, he does not finish all the bark he has in his hand, he chips off a little and leaves the rest. When he is doing this the bark jumps, and falls on the left, and again on the right. They surely know that here to-day wonders will befall and that men will die and women. Then the medicine man says, "Give us men to go and draw water." Then the old man asks, "How many men shall we bring?" And perhaps he says, "Bring three, because the people are many," and the doctor tells them, "You must not glance behind, but just draw the water and return." (Lest they give warning to the flesh-eaters.) When he has finished cutting down the bark, he bids his attendant "begin to pound." They do not pound the poison bark as they would grain, they pound, thud! thud! and turn the pestle in the hands. While the attendant is pounding, the pounder of the bark keeps tapping, rat, tat, tat, on the mortar, with his monkey stick [which monkeys use for digging roots], and chants—

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IV. "You have heard mother of children,
Mother of children of *Kundamva*.
Indiscriminate slaughter is the game war plays,
It slew the baboon at *Bongwe*,
When you slay let your victims fall backward and not forward.
Bag, make the poison hear my words.
You are come into the village, you are their advocate.
They say, that here so and so and so and so have died.

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6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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It is to plead for them you have been summoned.
There they are, she of the house of the Hills, and he of so and so's clan.
She of the Hills, it is she who has taken the basket.
He, the man, took the little sharp knife,
If it be not you, on the spot, on the spot, you must vomit,
If it be you,
Oh slay, slay, slay."

When they come with the water, the medicine man takes a water-jar full, and pours it into the mortar. You can hear the froth come foaming up, and then he draws a cup of the poison and struts about stirring it with his monkey stick, and uttering this incantation—

"Pick them out, pick them out, pick them out,
You see only the morning's sun, its rays when sinking in the west you must not see.
Are you not that one?
You went to Zomba,
You beat the drum,
It was heard in the 'Never-reach-there country' of the fly,
The spurred fly.
There is a squint-eyed lizard there.
If it were not you who beat that drum,
You must vomit.
If it were you,
You must die.

V. "You went into the regions of the air,
You captured a ray of the sun,
You likened it unto a girdle,
Saying, 'Do you be my strength,
That when the poison comes,

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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You will give me the mastery over it,
I shall win,
This girdle do you sever, sever, sever.'
You swallowed the egg of a fish-eagle,
That the poison when it came might become as naught,
This egg you must smash.

"You took the spleen of a crocodile,
You laid it in your heart,
You took a python's belly,
You swallowed it, that power might be yours,
Do you [my poison bark] rend these.

"You took wax,
You smeared it on your feet,
Going in your neighbours' fields,
Going with stealthy tread to gather up his grain,
To dust off again in your own garden,
Your companions are in want,
You have wealth to overflowing.

VI. "When you see your neighbour's child,
You say, 'Why should he walk thus at large?'
But surely I had better have eaten him
He who thinks thus shall enter here [into the mortar].

"The broken gourd-cups off the grave you beat together, that they might turn into snakes.
Was it not you who sang the song, saying,
'If it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy,
They go about rolling it,
If it be small and light, they just lift it' [the corpse].

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 Was it not you who sang so?
695 I seem to think I heard you.
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"That little razor have you brought it now?
539 No, I have forgotten it [supposed answer].

"Maiden, beautiful maiden, E! E! E!
You took the arm-bones of the children of men,
You used to go and dance with them,
The squint-eyed lizard is on his seat, and
Sounding the drum,
Wheeling ever one way.
Now in the opposite direction, see they have rent the drum.

"There is a thing that walks by night,
There is something that comes by day,
It has seen him."

754 VII. "No, to-day we have met each other, the
695 boundary is there, from the east to the zenith is
791 yours, from the zenith to the west is mine alone." He kneels down where one of the human flesh-eaters is, he does not address the demon himself, but talks with another who is next him, and says, "My child, where did you get your black magic; did you get it that you might be all-powerful, you alone?" When he gets up he exclaims, "I have got you, you must not escape, you must go in there, in there, you must enter here" [into the mortar]. When he sees that his attendant has finished pounding the poison, he takes some water and pours it into the mortar, and stirs it, and removes the dregs and takes two gourd-cups, and fills them with the poison. The woman and the man, they are the first to drink. Then the doctor makes every one else do so. Two men drink, he draws again, and gives two women. And so on until all have partaken.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

VIII. Then the witch finder says, "That beer I had great trouble in buying, you must not waste it, no, you there, we only told you to sip it, do not you see it is a small pot." Then he knocks down the mortar with his foot, and beats together two pieces of metal. When he sees that one human flesh-eater is dead, he says he has caused the mortar to fall. Some, when dying, cry out [like a hyæna]. "Uwi, uwi"; and people know he used to transform himself into that animal; should he roar like a lion, they know he was at times that mighty beast. Others again, when dying, clench their hands. Should they clench one hand, it is known they have eaten five people; if they clench both, men know their victims have been ten. When all have vomited, he causes the survivors to jump over the path. When he sees a man has jumped, he knows that one is an ordinary person and not an eater of human flesh, and the reason the doctor knows this is because he has washed the poison with a medicine made from the "*siswiri*" mouse [and it cannot cross a path and live]. Then the medicine man says, "Let them return to the village now, where a tree has fallen you cannot hide the fall thereof." Any one who has withstood all these tests, on seeing the grass tuft on his hut, dies. When the doctor hears a man has died, he goes to the place to strip him of his cloth and cut off the belt of beads from his waist. Of them who die at the drinking-place and who are free born, their friends make some payment to the doctor, saying, father has died from the poison. Anything the dead man be a slave they burn the body. They who remained behind at the village will drink on the morrow. The pounder of the poison, on returning to his home, is given a goat, perhaps a slave whose "Let me go and bury them." Should the dead

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6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 human flesh-eaters may have worn, the doctor takes
695 home with him and washes his poison bark with it,
791 that it may still retain its virtue. In the case of a man who dies from drinking the poison, his spirit is
[775] not brought back to the village, but is driven out into the bush.

II

A FUNERAL

764 I. When a person dies every one is told that so and so, who was ill, is "finished for." Then the village elders come together and go into his hut. They begin to bathe the body and anoint it with oil, folding the knees against the chest, and laying the palms of the hands against the cheeks, the arms being bent from the elbows. Then they take a large flat stone, set it against the hut wall, and on it place the body in a sitting position. Then they commence to wail, the women folk only are in the hut where the corpse is, the men are outside, and the children on the verandah. They lament, saying, "Alas, alas, my husband, what shall I do this day?" [The women pass the night in the hut with the dead body, the men sleep outside.] Next morning, when it is dawn, some men take their hoes, and sacrificial flour, and go to some resting-place on the wayside, and sprinkle some flour at the foot of a tree, and set out again, and when now they are drawing near the burial ground, the one who is in front picks up a stone and throws it, with the words, "We have passed." Then they commence to clear a piece of ground, and take the flour and mark out the grave.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

When they have finished doing so, one old man comes forward and turns up a little of the soil at each end of the grave, while the rest then begin to dig. People at a funeral do not fear each other; should they wish to abuse one another they just do so. When they have finished digging the grave, a person getting in is invisible. The reason they dig a deep hole is that they fear the eaters of human flesh, lest they should lift out the corpse should it be [lit. from] close to the surface. Then they take the blade of grass which they have measured the body with, and measure the cave, which they now dig inwards on one side of the grave, and throw out the earth to form this space. When this is finished, some of the old men come to have a look at the work. The two men who now remain in the grave (to await the corpse) are the chief mourners whose duty it will be to divide out the mourning feast to their fellows.

II. They who go to bring the body now set out, uttering the funeral wail. And all the people who remained behind at the village come together and congregate at the hut, and they enter and lift up the body. A mat is spread at the doorway and the body set down upon it; they lift it from there, and make a circuit of all the huts the man used to frequent when alive, and they take him also to the village court, and set him down there. On lifting him from there, they go to the burial ground. When they arrive at the accustomed halting-place for travellers, the corpse is again set down, and then they come with it to the grave. On the way to the burial ground they who carry the household goods and mats of the deceased go first. And the people take turns in carrying the body. When they come to the grave, they hand down the body to the two men who remained in it. They strip off his calico,

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

764 and take a large flat stone and set the corpse on it, and take a millstone and place it on his head. If it be he has children, they are made to take charcoal in their hands, and this they cast into the grave (this is to cause them to forget). Then some old man takes up a hoe, and strikes the ground at one side of the grave and again at the other, when many begin to fill in the earth, the chief mourners trampling it down.

III. When they have finished filling in, they knock out the hoe heads, and set off for the stream. They who carry the hoes and household belongings of the deceased go first. When they reach the water, the chief mourners bathe first, then every one else; the men bathe up-stream, the women down-stream. They do not rub each other's backs. When
768 they have finished bathing, they take the calico, sporran, and "*nsengwa*" baskets the dead man used to eat out of, and set fire to them, and splash the ashes with water. Then they set out for the village, wailing. When they come to the grave, the medicine man looks for medicine to remove the evil
[765] influence of the spirit of the dead; [this medicine] he breaks up, puts in a potsherd, pours on water, and stirs. The chief mourner begins to rub it on his
765 legs, face, and hands, then others come and do the same. If the deceased had children of his own, they also rub some of the medicine on. They again keep wake at the hut in which the man died. Next morning at dawn the nearest relation of the dead
[431] takes goats and fowls and gives them to the chief mourners, who then begin to shave a little patch of hair from the side of each person's head, when the people will then shave each other quite bald. The widows go to some spot in the bush to weave the "red" bands and to shave. When every one has quite finished shaving, the meat is taken from the

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

fire and divided out. They again sleep at the hut of the deceased. Next morning they begin to lift away any refuse. The chief mourners do this, throwing away the stuff at the cross-roads [where they set fire to them]. And then the people disperse. 765

IV. The widows live in the hut where the man died; they get up night and morning to go and utter their laments in the bush; if they meet any one, they cover their head with their calico. The chief mourners and the elders of the village now leave off cohabiting with their wives. When perhaps a month has passed, the elders make preparations for soaking the grain for beer. Previous to boiling the beer, they go to the village oracle to consult him, saying, "We are putting the beer-pots on the fire, and we are not sure if it will be successfully made with no hitch, and whether or not the people will quarrel." Then the oracle may say none of these evils will happen, telling them "the beer will be successfully made." Then they also ask, saying, "Who is she who is to set the beer on the fire?" And then the oracle consults the lots, and says, "But she of so and so's clan, it is she who shall set the beer on the fire." Next morning the beer is set on the fire, the following day it still boils, on the third day it stands off the fire, on the fourth the malt is put in. (In making beer not connected with any mourning, should it not ferment, it is allowed to stand over another day, but mourning beer, even should it not ferment well, they just go on boiling it.) On that day they summon the dance, and every one is told that the beer is ready on that evening. Then all the people collect and begin to dance. They beg some beer for "kindling the fire," and some to "pour on the drums." When they have danced some time an old man comes forth and 765 791 273 765 273

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

%5 commands silence, saying, "You have all met to-
273 gether here, look well to what I say. We are a people in affliction, let no one stir up discord; he who has adultery in his heart let him not commit it here, but at his own village." When it is dawn, some more beer, [called] the "bather of the eyes," is brought out. When the sun begins to get hot, all the chief mourners assemble, and a pot of beer, called the "shaving beer," is produced, and some
[300] is poured into a potsherd and used like water (for shaving), that the chief mourners may use it for shaving a small patch from each person's head, and when this is done, one shaves his companion. The womenfolk shave at the hut of the deceased. The widows alone shave their heads somewhere in the bush, and remove the "red" head-bands, and put on new ones, smeared with oil, and go to the water to bathe. Should there still be some beer remaining they again pass the night dancing, that it may be quickly finished, so that the villagers may resume cohabitation with their wives. The widows no longer go to the bush to lament, and they are privileged to commit adultery, provided they remove the head-bands.

V. When they have passed another month, they then begin to hurry on the women, saying, "Now you must make haste with the malt." This beer is that for "bringing back the spirit," and for "knocking down the deceased's hut." When it is
%5 ready they put it in a new hut that has been built beside the one the man died in. The elders then meet together in the hut, and one speaks as follows [to the spirit], "This is your new abode, these children you must guard from harm, and not, when they are walking, cause to fall over a snag; should you wish to ask for anything send the (harmless) mshawa snake, or the lizard, or the chameleon, and

6Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

when they see these they will consult the village lots, and the oracle will tell them it is the spirit of their relation who is asking for beer." And when the beer is finished they honour (use *kupwapa*) him by saying, "Hail to him of so and so's clan-animal name." Then the chief mourners commence to pull down the hut in which the man died, and when they have done so they take water and wash their hands. Then they take a little pot and dig a hole at the hut door (they have just demolished), and put the pot in, and fill in the earth, the rim only of the pot being visible, and they knock a hole in the bottom of the pot, and they take beer and pour it into the pot, and it goes right through into the ground; and they take a potsherd and cover over the pot, and over that place the old grass door, and pin down the door with a bamboo stick, and take a gourd-cup, and having broken the handle, hang it on the bamboo. When they have done all this they bring out the beer of the chief mourners and dance, perhaps the *Chitoto* dance. 765

VI. On that day the widows may again meet face to face with men. For another year they hoe by themselves, and then some old person comes to speak to them, saying, "The mourning is now long past, get some malt, and look out for another husband (*ono kwapana*); where water gets spilt (people) do not pick it up." And then they begin to hurry on the beer, and when it is ready all the chief mourners (and all who took part in the funeral) come and spend the night dancing. The widows get up early in the morning, and take a gourd of beer and go with it to the stream, and take off their bands, and set fire to them and quench the fire with the beer. Then the elders say, "Come, let us take the widows, who are now eligible for marriage again." And they tell some very old women to go to the *Kuku* 765 587

6:Ratray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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587

hut and tell the women that so and so is wishing to marry them, and take the place of him who died. At first the women refuse, saying, "We do not want (to marry again) but to go on mourning," and the old women go off and tell the men, who are congregated at the village court. The men say, "Oh, that is what they say, is it?" and they take their knobkerries and give them to the old women, who go off again to the women and produce the knobkerries. Say they, "This is so and so's, this so and so's." And the women take the one of him they wish to marry. When they have received the stick, the old women come out again to say, "She, who is now an eligible widow, wants so and so." And he, the man, then sends some one to bring out the beer from the hut [where the women are]. The man whom she loves then goes off to the medicine man to get medicine, and takes that for which the medicine is pounded. And the doctor gives him it, saying, "But go and bathe your former wife (or wives), before you enter the hut of her who is a widow." And he takes the medicine, and goes and gives it to his former wife, saying, "There is medicine, you must go and bathe." And he goes to the hut of his new wife, and takes a potsherd and sets it on the fire near the doorway. When it gets hot he pours in some water, and then some of the medicine. Then the man takes some of the mixture, puts his fingers to his lips, and smears his knees with it. Then the woman does the same. Some other medicine is in a pot. The woman stirs it round with a stick which has a little piece of wood fastened to one end, which she revolves in the hands (as if making fire); this pot she then lifts, and goes with it to where cross-roads meet, and here the man bathes, and then the woman. In the evening they take a hen and put it at one end of

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the hut "towards the feet," and then they sleep together. Next morning a relation of the man who died comes and takes away the fowl, going with it to the house of the man's mother. The spirit follows the fowl. When the man has lived some time with the woman, and if he does not get on with her, he just leaves her, and his companions say, "He only went to get his bows." If the woman wants to marry any one else she can do so, without any further medicine.

265
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III

THE FUNERAL OF AN ANGONI CHIEF

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I. When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them "the clouds have fallen today." They do this because they fear, "if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death." Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup, and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not

6.Ratzky E, G-5 (ra. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head till it all glitters, and then take the skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

II. The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day, they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre, and the flames go roaring up. They place the child [and heir] where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields and chant their war songs—

III. "This thing (that has befallen),
Have you heard these things, wife of an old man?"

6.Ratzay E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

"Wage war on the *Afo*,
Hayo, hayo, ho,
They have left him;
They have left him in their midst."

"*Hwaba*, the mighty medicine man, has gone with them,
He has swallowed a magic horn, has *Hwaba*."

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry (*bagwire*), they burn on a fire at one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse also is consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief are removed.

IV. Next morning all the headmen shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands. Then they allow three days to pass, and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps out and says, "Do you hear, your new chief is so and so" (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then every one shouts, "Hail," and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes (trans. *bwiwiri*). Then the elders

G.Barnsley E, G-S (ca. 1906) 1907 FRS Hgmsl FRS

[G43] take the "child," going with him to a hut to give him instruction, saying, "To-day you stand alone. Look after your people as did your father before you. [F63] If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned."

IV

THE UNAMWALI CEREMONY

[F1] 1. Were a young girl finds she has become a woman, she goes and stands beside the pathway [leading to the village]. Any one passing finds her there, standing silent. If it be a man who notices her, he goes off and tells some woman, saying to her, "I have come across game, go and lift it." An old woman goes off to speak to her. She finds the girl, her face enveloped in her calico, and giving no answer to any question put to her. Then the old woman knows the girl is now a matured woman, and takes her off to the stream to bathe her. On returning with her from the water she places her in the hut of the head old woman of the village. (The old woman who first found her is the head of the ensuing ceremony.) Then the old woman goes off to inform other elderly women that "the maiden has reached womanhood." The girl remains in the hut six days. Should she be of the clan of [G44] Kaowi, they give her porridge made from millet [K3] only, if of any other clan, porridge made of any grain. In her relish they do not put salt. Her porridge she eats out of an old basket, and the relish from a potsherd. (This old basket will be

6-Ramsey E.G-5 (ia. 1900) 1907 FRS Hgust FRS

thrown away the day she comes out of the *tsimda* hut.) [537]

II. On the seventh day, before dawn, one of the old women rises and makes a shrill noise with her tongue, then old matrons only collect and go with the girl to the stream. Should the maiden formerly have been of an insolent nature, she is tied up in a bundle of grass and thrown into the water. The old women warm themselves over a fire on the bank. When the sun gets hot, she is taken out, and set on the bank, and they commence to dance and pull her about, and reprove her, saying, "You there, listen; I sent you to go and draw water for me, and you refused. You said, 'I am not a slave.' But could you have come to the water here to-day? She who has brought you here, is not she that very old creature?" Then she is given all sorts of advice. When they have finished they shave her head and [538] palms, and rub her with oil and adorn her with beads. Then the old woman who is head of the ceremony takes her up on her back, and as they go they sing—

"Wrinkles, mother, wrinkles,
I was at my own house, and never a wrinkle,
I came among the Angoni, [539]
I saw wrinkles, [540]
Wrinkles, O!
Things like this all fall on me.
Maiden chuck like an old sitting hen,
How can I chuck, I am only a young bird?
Chuck."

When they come with her to her mother's house, they sing—

"Tumbling about the things in her mother's hut,
In the hut that is no longer hers."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

III. Then they spread a mat and go and bring her husband, and set them down on the mat side by side and begin to shave his head. As the hair falls the people throw down beads. Then they take a stick and lay it across the legs of the man and woman so that each may know it is that stick that will beat them [if they do wrong]. When they have finished shaving the man, they bring oil and rub the bodies of the man and woman. When it is dark the old women escort the girl to her husband's hut. The *ndivo* relish is cooking on the fire. During the night the woman rises and puts some salt in the pot. Next morning, before dawn, before the villagers have opened their doors, the woman goes off, and gives some of the relish to her mother, and to the old woman who was mistress of the ceremony. This relish she just sets down at the door, and when they open they find it, and rub it on their feet and under their arm-pits; little children just eat it. If she have any relations who are at a distance, they sharpen a little piece of bamboo and stick the relish on the end (and put it aside) that the distant one, when he returns, shall also rub his feet with it. Perhaps the absent one, should he not have heard that these events have happened when he comes to the village, and should say, "Give me water that I may drink," they refuse him, but with a purpose, even though the water is there, and go and bring the relish that first he may rub some on his feet. It may be the woman discovers that her husband is impotent, then she just stays in her hut and does not come forth to distribute the relish. Then the old women [who know the reason] will persuade the man, saying, "Go off to the man with the lots to consult them" [to see what is to be done]. When he goes off (on this errand) some other man is called in, and he

6/Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

will finish the ceremony [that the relish may be given out]. Should the girl, before she came to maturity, not have been betrothed to any man, the matrons tell her she must go to some lover; this is known as "chigango." In the evening she takes her cooking pot and relish and goes to the quarters of the young unmarried men, who for the night sleep somewhere else. In the morning the girl goes back to the *Kuku* hut.

V

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

1. When a woman becomes pregnant, the matrons of the village tell the husband "he must now no longer cohabit with her." If the man have another wife he goes off to her house. When the time draws near for the woman's accouchement, she bids her husband leave her. He goes to one of the village matrons and tells her, "My wife is very ill." Then old women go to the hut and begin to take out all the cooking utensils and household goods. Should the woman have difficulty in giving birth the old woman bid her confess, saying, "Speak, child, lest you die; who committed adultery with you?" Should she have been faithless she confesses, saying, "I sinned with so and so." The matrons hide such confessions. When she is safely delivered they bathe the infant, then one old woman goes off to tell the husband, "Your wife is well." Perhaps the woman has given birth to a male child, then she tells him, "You have seen a knobkerry."

6.Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Ngoni PRS

If a female child, "You have seen a basket." Then the man comes and sits down on the verandah and makes fire. The old fire in the hut is thrown away. The old woman takes up the new fire and kindles with it a new fire in the hut. The husband goes away to another hut. He does not now cohabit with any of his other wives until his wife, who was confined, is seen again in public.

II. When they know the umbilical cord is going to break, when they set the infant on the knees (legs), they lay it on its side so that when the cord breaks it will fall on one side; for if it breaks and falls on the pubes the child will be impotent, or barren. The umbilical cord they bury on the verandah. That day is the one on which they shave the mother and child. They begin with the infant and they shave the mother. On shaving the infant's head they leave a little hair on the fontanel, and should the infant be of the clan *Mseko*, they also leave a little patch on the back of the head, and then his godmother gives the child a name, saying, "My grandchild's name is so and so." This name it will have until such time as it begins to laugh and notice people, then the father, should he wish, will give the child another name. When it grows up still farther it will give itself a name, saying, "Now I am so and so." When the child becomes a man he will once again discard his old name and take another. And if a person calls him by the old name, he says, "He has named me by that thing the wild bush-pigs unearth while digging with their tusks" [meaning something very old]. When they have finished the shaving, the child's grandmother powders some medicine called *pfundabwe*, this she mixes with castor oil and red clay, and then rubs on the fontanel. This medicine they continually renew. When the infant gets strong and big they stop. The

6:Ratzuy E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

reason they put on this medicine is that they fear the sun lest it strike through the skull. They also take a purgative medicine called *chirara*, and pour a decoction in a gourd used for cooking the infant's gruel. The gruel is left off once the child gets strong.

III. Now they prepare to steam the infant. They get the roots of the *Nyelinse* tree and the leaves of the *Chipangapungu*, and put them in a pot of water, and get four large white pebbles, and put them in the fire, and when they are red hot, lift them out between two pieces of stick, and drop them into the pot, and the steam envelops the infant. They do this because they fear a disease called *Tsempo* and *Mzoko*. This done, the floor of the hut is replastered [with dung], and they set fire to everything that was left in the hut—baskets, potsherds, and spoons. The fire in the hollow in the centre of the floor, they rake up on the floor level, and remove the ashes only, but when they come to fasten the mkazi belt round the infant's waist, the fire is completely extinguished, and rekindled from that of some other hut. Then the husband comes and stands upright near the doorway, and little cuts are made on his leg. They begin with his big toe, and cut four little slashes, and four on his shin, and four on his knee, both sides, and do the same on the other leg, and on his chest are cut two little gashes, and on his back two. Into these cuts is rubbed some medicine for a disease called Chiwpalo. When they do this they fear, should the man step over the spot on the verandah where the umbilical cord and afterbirth are buried, he might take this disease of the legs (Chinyalo). If the man have another wife it is she who twists the belt made from the bark of the *Mpoze* tree and places it underneath the mat where she and her husband sleep. Next morning

G.Barney E, G-5 (ca. 1909) 1907 FRS Ngwi FRS

she rises early to go and fasten the belt on the infant. Should the man not have a second wife, the one to put the belt on the child is his (the man's) sister. The man does not immediately see the face of his child; some day these same old women make him take it in his arms [hands]. The father then makes them a present of beads.

IV. When they notice the infant is beginning to grow his bottom teeth and to smile at people, the elders tell the father that, "Now you must bring the child into the village." The child's grandmother ties up beforehand some *lizwapo*. She begins with a little strip of calico, and rolls it round and round the medicine charm and along with a piece of string; then takes a little piece of skin and sews it over this, and takes some beads and sews them on the skin. The mother cooks some relish beforehand. That evening the husband and wife sleep together (this is "to bring the child into the village.") She cuts off the old belt the child is wearing, and puts on the new one with the *lizwapo* medicine in it, some more of the medicine, similarly tied up, is placed under the infant's head. In the morning she takes the relish to present to the two old women, and then takes the *lizwapo* she had placed under the child's head and ties it round his neck, and then takes a belt of beads, interspersed with little wooden charms, and adorns the child. When in time the *lizwapo* belt breaks, they do not look for it or replace it. In the event of an infant dying before he has been "brought into the village," they bury it in some open glade, near the edge of some stream, its funeral is attended by women only. Should a man tramp over the spot where the child is buried, he "has taken" the disease known as *kepori*. Such a grave is known as *ecwepe*.

6.Bantuey E,G-6 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

VI

A VILLAGE EXODUS

1. Tsa village-chief, when he wishes to remove the village to a new site, tells the young men of the village beforehand to look out all the building materials necessary. These they will just pile up. Then some day the head old man gets up very early in the morning (ngo) and seek a suitable spot. When he finds a good place, he says, "Yes, this is where I shall build" (i. "This is my place"). When he goes to the village that evening, he tells them not to break the rules enforced on such occasions, as he wishes to 'kindle fire in the forest," as he is tired of the present site of the village. Next morning at dawn he rises very early, along with his brother and the medicine man, and goes to the site of the new village. They begin to walk all round, tying green tufts do little knots and smearing them with medicine, ad they make fire where they are going to build th Kuka hut, and they put some medicine on the ire, and bring water, and blow it in a spray out f their mouth. And the reason they thus medicine-guard the village, is for fear of lions and human flesh-eaters. Then the village people come with the building materials, and they are told to "clear the ground." And they do so, and when this is finished, the chief takes the door-posts and sticks them in position, and also the side-posts, where others put them in (firmly). When the Kuka hut is completed they begin with that of the headman. When dark others leave, going back to the old village. There remain only the chief, and the others who will continue to sleep there, not

6;Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

again returning to the old village. That evening they take some of the fire (that they made earlier in the day) to kindle a fire with in the (new) hut (*Kuka*). In kindling it they do not squat down, they blow the faggots into flame from a standing position, and they do this lest the smoke might ever after hang in wreaths over the floor. The womenfolk come every day to cook.

II. When the chief's huts are finished, they build those of the old men, and when these are complete, they bring all the huts [from the old village]. When they see that all the huts are finished, beer is made at the old village, and they go and bring the spirits. He who has a grave pours some beer in a gourd-pot and places it on the grave, saying, "We have gone hence, you must not search for us here, come let us go together." On that day they demolish all the huts that remain, they leave only the huts of which the occupant has lately died. When now the sun begins to slant westward, from the *Kuka* hut they take five gourd-pots, and fill them with beer and make young women carrying these lead the way. The head old woman of the *Kuka* hut goes first, the chief wife of the chief follows *Gogo*, and then come the ones carrying the beer. When they arrive at the new village they set down the gourd-pots and all the people assemble. The elder of the village then begins to propitiate, saying, "There is the beer we down on earth have made, we have gone from yonder, we present to you your new village, all men you will have a cow for." Then the village chief makes a present of a goat and hands it to the old man, and he again speaks, saying, "Here is a goat which your child presents, you will wash it down with the beer." If the goat makes water, that is to say the spirit consents, if it will not they do not kill it. Then they kill the goat

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

Then they fill the pot

and take the liver, and lungs, and stomach, and set them down beside the beer, and cut off some meat from a fore-leg, and roast it, and cut off a piece, and give the head of the *Kuku* hut, and cut another piece, and the chief eats it, and another his old men eat, and then they begin to cut off bits for their children. The rest of the meat is put in a basket, and next morning is cut up.

III. When the propitiation of the spirits is finished the chief tells his headman, "Today you must cook some relish, and give it to all the people, and finish the ceremony in connection with the exodus." So he (the headman) sleeps with his wife, and in the morning she takes the relish to give to the chief. All persons of lesser importance come and take theirs from the hut, and any one who is at a distance at the time has his put aside. Now the ceremony is over, and the villagers again resume cohabitation with their wives [broken off since the beginning of the ceremony]. One month passes, and then a great quantity of beer is cooked all over the village, and they have a dance that at the new village the ground may become trampled and hard. When some further time has elapsed, they cook beer, to demolish the huts of the dead, that were left standing at the old village. At the new village, when a man dies, the first one to do so is buried at the old village; when one of the village elders dies, he is buried at the new settlement, and thereafter all who die are buried there.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

VII

MARRIAGE BY PURCHASE

584 1. An Angoni, when he has daughters, makes an arrangement with some man from another village, saying to him, "You are my friend, you must wed
584 one of my children." Then the girl's father makes
584 beer, and they go and summon his friend and set
584 him in a hut by himself, and the father bids his daughters, "Go and pour out beer for the stranger." The father points out his child [to his friend], saying, "You will see she has on such and such a kind of calico, and then you will know that is the one." Then some other day he tells his child she must go and present herself at her future husband's. When the moon is full all the maidens of the village assemble and come by night to the man's village and sit down at the village court. They sit in a circle, the betrothed in the middle, and cover their heads with their calico. They tell stories and laugh that the villagers may know people have come to the bwalo court. Then some young man comes out, and says, "I have found something," and his companion says, "I go halves." Then an elder asks,
584 "What is it?" And the young man reply, "The maidens have come." Then some of the women at the village are sent to ask the girls at the bwalo court what they have come for, and they do so, saying, "What is your business here." And they reply, "We have come for so and so." They are naming some very little child. So they ask again, saying, "Are you really meaning that child himself?" And they reply, "No, we mean his big brother." Then they go and tell the elders of the

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRI Ngoni FRS

village that "The people who have come to the village court are saying they wish so and so." Then the elders say, "Put them in a hut." Next morning they cook for them whole maize, the betrothed does not eat with them, and when the old woman see she is dying of hunger, they take her to a hut on the outskirts of the village and give her beer. 574

II. On the following morning they from the man's village take an offering of two goats, and go with them to the girl's village. These goats are accepted, for they say, "They are only the spirits, and no doubt the price of the girl must be behind." When the young braves leave, they leave behind a child to guard the betrothed, and follow her about, and when they return to their own village they take other goats and go with them (to the girl's home), and when they come with them there they sit at the bwalo court, then one of the village elders makes a little gap in the grass fence (that surrounds all Angoni huts) and peeps out. When he sees the goats he tells the village chief that there are such and such a number, and the chief tells him not to receive them. Then the young warriors, when they have waited and waited, go off to their own village. At the outskirts they stand to await the escort of young girls, and then they go and say to the man who wishes to marry the girl, "They did not receive from us." So next morning they take more goats and go with them. The old man again looks out, and when he sees that more goats have come he goes and tells the girl's father, "To-day such and such a number have arrived." And the man answers, "Go and take them and put them in the kraal." (When this is done) the old man comes and takes the knobkerry from one of the men (who brought the goats) and puts it in a hut, and the men follow the knobkerry, and they cook 574 431

6:Ratzmy E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

584 431 porridge for them and it is refused, and they spear goats for them and they eat. Next day they go home. They of the girl's village tell them, saying, "You will hear from us." Now, if the malt for the beer be in readiness, they do not sleep many [913] days, but if not, they let a moon pass. On the day on which the beer is strained they go and call the bodyguard of young warriors, and they come along with the husband (to be) to drink the beer. The man who is to marry the girl they go and hide away in a hut on the edge of the village along with his betrothed, and the beer for them will be drawn in a little pot.

585 III. Now every one comes together at the village [909] court and bring goats. The betrothed sits on a mat. Her grandmother shaves her head, leaving a round patch of hair on the crown. When she has finished shaving her one of the men from the man's [910] village steps out and begins to kill some goats. Should a goat not die immediately it is beaten. Then the goats are skinned, and they take a spleen and let drops fall from it to the head of the girl, and then inflate all the spleens. They take the fat from the belly, and spread it in the sun to dry. Towards evening they take the girl and go with her to the *Kuku* hut, and there they take a frothy medicine, called *chitanda*, and the girl bathes with it, and her little watchman bathes also, and he (the child) takes the spleens and the fat, the inflated spleens are fastened on the girl's head and the fat over her shoulders and under her arms. The little child, when he has finished tying them on, is beaten by the men from the man's village (playfully). Then one of the village elders gets up and speaks, saying, "There you have your mother, we give her you to-day; she is subject to no disease, her illnesses consist of occasional headaches. Should she

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

go and get *tsempo*, well, we shall know she got it at your village, for here there is no *tsempo*." Thereupon all the men from the man's village, and all the women from that of the betrothed, set out to escort their "sister." On the way the betrothed is carried on the back [of some person]. When they arrive at the bridegroom's village, they are given the hut they had when they first came, and the betrothed sleeps there with all her (girl) companions. Next day four matrons come—two from the girl's home and two from the man's—and take the girl aside [into the bush]. If all is well and they find "the cattle are there," they shrilly sound the *nkulangwani* and say, "The cattle are there, the cattle are there." [That is to say they consider the girl a virgin.] Should, however, they find that "the cattle are finished" (*i.e.* must be returned to the man), the girl's father must return two or three goats, or, should the man demand it, "shave another maiden for him." In some retreat in the bush they dance the *mindo* dance. They then go to the open village court that the bride may dance with a spear in her hand before the eyes of all men, and when she has done so her little watchman steps up and takes the spear from her hand, then the girl kneels down, and the child takes a shallow basket and begins to remove the spleens and fat the girl is adorned with (putting them in the basket), and these they place in the *Kuka* hut. They bring calico and dress the maiden and go with her to her husband's hut, and that evening he cuts the bead girdle and it is left lying on the mat. On the following morning the woman takes a jar of water and goes and freshly plasters the floor of the *Kuka* hut. An old woman comes and gets the girdle of beads and places them beside the spleens and the fat. When some time has elapsed the

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6.Ratzay E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

585 young wife is made cook beer, and on the day it is
[301] drunk the spleens are burned and the bead girdle unravelled, and the girl will make bracelets of it.

VIII

MARRIAGE (Chipeta)

584 1. When a girl and a man love one another, they make each other presents in secret, and when this has gone on for some time, they say, "But let these things fly away on the wind now and be heard by people." Then the man goes and tells the elders of his village, saying, "Go and ask for me at so and so's. I would live with them, for I am miserable (here)." Then some of the elders go there to ask for him, saying, "Here we have seen a (girl's) basket, and we would remain with you, for where we are we are unhappy." Then the headman replies, "First of all you must return, when we have asked the child if she consents you shall hear again." Then the deputation go off home. The man calls his children, he sees the one who is almost a woman, and asks her, saying, "So and so have come and say they want you to stay with them." And the child answers, "Well, what can I say, words which you may speak I obey." And they from the man's village return again, saying, "We have come about that proposal which we mentioned yesterday; we are most anxious for what we asked." Then the chief says, "Let the man come, he shall live here, I do not refuse." And they go back home and tell the man, saying, "We

Rattray E.G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Signed FRS

went across there, and heard what he told us. He says you must go and live there." And the man says, "We shall do so, it's not far to the water." Then the old men (who are negotiating the affair) return there and say, "We shall stay with you, there is water, and it is not far away." And the village chief says, "Let him come, this is not some other land that eats up a man." Then the old men return, and bring their child and take him to the chief, saying, "Here is your man, and he has no other words [meaning complaining, bad-tempered words]; all he ever says is, 'Cook me porridge, for I am hungry.'" And the chief replies, "For our part, our one has not one little thing (against her), cooking in her forts and pounding flour, and, perhaps, even hoeing, but as to that we do not know for certain as we have not yet seen her with a hoe in her hand."

II. Then the old men return, going back to their own village, and leave the child. He must sleep in the quarters of the young unmarried men, and his wife will cook his food for him until he has built his hut. He does not cohabit with her. When he has finished building it, they put him in it. At the village where he is, he does not ever see his mother-in-law, they always run away from each other. When he says, "Now I am sick of this running away, let us 'uncover' each other." Then the mother-in-law cooks beer, and the son-in-law gets some calico, and they go and call the people from the man's village, telling them that now they wish "to uncover." Then the people from the man's village come and take the man and go with him to his mother-in-law's hut. His head is still covered with his calico and the mother-in-law's also is still over her head. Then the man's brother goes and uncovers the mother-in-law and takes the

Gilmore E.G-4 (ca. 1900) 1997 FRS Digital FRS

782 present of calico and gives it her. The mother-in-law pours out a little pot of beer and gives it to her "little" son-in-law, and he drinks and drinks, and one drinks and hands to the other. The brother is still sitting (covered up). When this is finished the mother-in-law goes out and the man then gets up and drinks with his companions, saying, "Now we have 'uncovered' each other, and the state of mother-in-lawship requiring one to run away from the other is finished." They now honour each other.

IX

THE RAIN TEMPLE

789 1. In the rains do not some people say, "Look at this, the rain keeps refusing to fall from above; come, let us try to propitiate the rain spirit, and perhaps the rain may come." Then they begin to make ready, saying, "Let all of you collect a few handfuls of grain, we can at least try; if we fail we shall do so having at least made the attempt." Then they begin to collect the maize, the very same day it is ground and pounded, and they boil the beer and pour it in a gourd-cup. Next morning at dawn every one comes together and they go to the rain temple. They clear away the grass that the ground may be open. He who is chief of the ceremony sits in the middle and first draws some of the beer and pours it in a pot buried in the ground, and says, "Master, Chauta, you have hardened your heart towards us, what would you have us do? We

6/Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

must perish indeed. Give your children the rains, [789]
there is the beer we have given you." Then the people begin to clap their hands and sound the *nkulungwesi*; they sing, swaying their bodies back- [533]
wards and forwards, and keep saying, "Pardon, [782]
pardon." When they have finished propitiating, they take the beer that remains and dip a cup in and give every one to drink, just a little, no one is short, and even the children are made to sip it. When they have finished they take branches of trees and commence to dance and sing—

"This little cloud, and this, [539]
This little cloud, and this, [533]
Let the rains come with this little cloud.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Kettle.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Kettle."

When they come to the village they find an old woman has drawn water in readiness, and put it at the doorway, and the people begin to dip in their branches and wave them aloft, scattering the drops, and then they see the rain come in heavy storm-clouds.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

X

THE LOTS

753 I. If a man be ill, his companion goes off and
791 seeks the oracle man. He comes outside his hut and hails him, "Zikomo." The owner says, "Yes, come in here." And the man enters the hut, and says, "We have come to you that you may trace a spirit for us." Then the man takes out his lots from a little cat's-skin bag, and takes some ashes and rubs the lots with them, and begins to consult them, and says, "Are you nursing some sick person?" And he replies, "Yes, indeed, I have been attending on a sick person; the little thing that is ill is a child, and I cannot get sleep for him (lit. with him), and he will not even eat gruel, and I said, 'But I must go to the oracle man; perhaps there he may follow up for me the spirit which is causing the child to be ill.'" Then he begins to consult the lots, and says, "It is the spirit of the child's grandmother; it is she who is causing the child to be ill." And he who has come to consult the lots replies, "I have heard." And the lots again speak (through the man): "Why do you not keep me in mind, and even my grandchild, you also go without calling me to mind," but if you give the spirit a fowl take it from me, the child is sitting up; when you go and take the fowl, kneel down with it, and say, "Grandmother, there is the fowl on account of which you are taking a life" (*munta*). Then the man who has come from the road (to consult the lots) says, "Put the spirit of mine back in the bag."

782 II. Then he goes home, and takes his fowl, and
755 kneels down with it, and takes a gourd-cup of water,

Schantzy K,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Signed FRS

and fills his mouth, and blows the water out in a spray, and says, "Grandmother, there is the fowl for which you are causing a person to be ill; you harden your heart all for the sake of a fowl; go, let your little child alone, that he also shall walk about like his companions do; you must not see fit to take a man, only for the sake of a fowl." Then he takes the fowl and kills it, and plucks it, and cleans it; he roasts the liver, and places it at that side of the hut where his head is towards when he sleeps. When the fowl is cooked, he makes some porridge and dishes it out in little baskets, leaving some in the pot, and commences the propitiation of the spirit, saying, "Here is the fowl we have killed for you; eat of it together, let there not be one who refuses. And there is your portion also, little children; you must eat together and rejoice." And he takes the pot, and says, "And this is yours, old woman." And when he has finished propitiating, he takes the porridge and puts it at "the head" of the hut, so that he can eat what is left on the morrow, and then he begins to divide out the food to the people, saying, "You, there is your portion; and you, also, there is yours, and this is yours, old woman." And when they have finished eating they clap their hands and sound the *ntungululu*, and then disperse. Next morning, at dawn, they take what they had put at the head, and eat it.

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6.Ratney E, G-5 (ia. 1900) 1907 F85 Jigual F85

XI

HUNTING

224 1. When a man wishes to call up a hunting party, he tells the young men of his village, saying, "Go and summon the hunt, and tell the people that it goes in such and such a direction, and it is there we shall assemble." Then the young men get their knobkerries and set out; they are knocking them together, and singing, "Roast, roast, roast," and when they come to a village, the headman comes out and answers, "Roast," and says, "Whose is it?" (the hunt). And they say, "It is so and so's, and goes in such and such a direction, and it is there we shall meet." Next morning, at dawn, they begin to assemble, their dogs are in the leash, and they bring their spears and knobkerries, and make some little child go in front, saying, "Cross your arms over your shoulders." And when they come to where the hunt will start from, they say, "Lie down there, and do not move about." Then every one who comes along takes a branch and piles it upon the child. And that is so that the game may not go and be shy. Then the master of the hunt begins to instruct the hunters, saying, "Look here, some of you have got your dogs; look well at their marks." And then he begins to arrange the hunt, saying, "Let so and so's wing go there, and so and so's there, I myself take the centre." And they start off, advancing all along the line. If a buck start up, and one spear it, and another spear it a second time, he (the second one) has a share in it too. The one who first throws, should he only wound the animal ever so slightly, and his companion then kill it out-

Gilfillan E.G-4 (ca. 1901) 1907 F85 Signal F85

right, the animal is the property of him who first [drew blood].

II. Should it be a buck about which there is a dispute, one saying, "My dog was first," another, "My dog was first," then they say, "Come, let us dig up medicine." And they take the medicine, one his lot, the other his, and chew a bit between the teeth, and one blows it out over his dog, saying, "You dog, if it were not you (who caught the buck), you must die; if it were you, you must vomit." And the other man says the same (to his dog), and they see the dog of one of them is dying. Should it chance that two men throw together, and one says, "It was I who began," they say, "Do not let us be always arguing about this; come, let us go to the medicine man." They do not drink (the poison) themselves, but their dogs drink. And when they have finished hunting they say, "Let us be getting back now." All the game they have killed they pile up together, and the master of the hunt begins to "twist off" the legs that are his share. If they see that there is a great quantity of meat, they cut it in strips, and make a drying rack and light a fire (under it), that the meat may dry. When dry, it is taken off the rack and tied into bundles.

III. One way of hunting is with many men and dogs, and another of the single hunter. Others, again, dig game pits, and make long fences leading up to them, leaving gaps here and there where the pits are. Another way of hunting is by cutting off a stretch of bush. A man separates his lot of jungle, [by clearing a bare strip all round it] and when all the bush is burned, it alone remains. The game run away from the bare place and enter the bush patch; when the rains are just about to begin to fall, he goes and sets fire to the cut off bush patch. When the game run for the open, people kill them.

Gdarney E, G-6 (ca. 1969) 1967 FRS Signal FRS

224 A falling spear trap for an elephant is called "mchawa." It is set in the path where elephants pass. They take the weighted spear, and tie it up above, the string for setting it off is on the ground. An elephant, when it passes, will set off the string, and the spear comes down and falls on the spine of the elephant. Men hunt also with a game net; they stretch the net, and take staves and drive them in at the ends and the middle (to keep the net up). People remain behind and hunt out the game, and when a buck starts up, it goes into the net. Birds
223 are hunted with a little net made tied to two bamboos, which are held in the hands, and (the person hunting) stands still. Others go and drive the birds, and if they go into the net, the man who is holding it swirls it round and kills the birds by squeezing them to his breast, but they cry out, and meanwhile gives a whistle, and the beaters stand. The kinds of birds caught by a net are *Mpete*, *Ata*
[16] *Mdewepo*, *Mepwiti*, *Kacibazi*, *Nkwali* (partridge), *Nkwapa* (guinea-fowl), *Mwag'ani* (quail), *Nipwa* (pigeon) are hunted with knobkerries; when they fly up, they throw. Birds are also hunted with blunt-headed arrows, and others caught in traps. In the dry season, when there is only a very little water left, all the thirsty birds go to drink water, and always go to the same place. When a person sees they frequent this place, he begins to set about trapping them with birdlime. He rubs it on a stick, and sticks the stick in the water, and when the birds come to drink water, they get stuck by their
224 feet (legs), and also feathers. Mice are also hunted. The *Mwede*, and the *Nchewi* (rat), and the *Sukwi*, are all hunted with "goba" traps, which are set on the run. Some go and hunt them out, one stays behind; when a mouse would run away, it goes into the goba trap, and the man squeezes it to death, and

6.Ramsey E.G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Signal FRS

burns it out. They also trap them with a falling stone trap, and a spring trap, and others they dig by and smoke out. Mice dig out a hole, and a little farther on make a little chamber, where their nest is; farther on still is their escape exit, with just a thin layer of earth between them and the surface, so that when any one starts digging they can just burst out there. Other mice make a nest in the grass. The *Swiri* mouse people do not eat; it cannot jump a path; if it tries to, it dies.

XII

THE WITCH-FINDER

I. When a person has died, the chief mourner goes off to seek the witch-finder. When he finds him he says, "At my home something awful has happened, and I am saying that perhaps you can follow up the thing that has killed the person." The witch-finder comes very late in the evening. When he comes, the chief mourner gives him children to lead him to the grave. When they come to the grave there, he asks them, saying, "Which way did they come with the body?" And they say they came there. And he puts medicine where they came, and asks again, saying, "Well, and his head, which direction did they lay it?" And they tell him, "His head was in this direction." He again with medicine guards the place. Then the witch-finder makes fire, and kindles it into flame, and pours medicine on it; and he does so lest people see the fire. And then they see the human flesh-eaters

Edmunsy E, G-6 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Signal FRS

are coming; they stand a long way off, and then they call the dead man by his old name, the one he was born with, saying, "Come forth so and so." And the dead man begins to come out of the grave. Then the witch-finder says, "You must not come forth; I am your redeemer." And he returns to the bottom of his grave again. Those flesh-eaters call him again, and he would come forth, but the witch-finder again says the same. Then the human flesh-eaters say, "Who is it that is making our meat to refuse [to step forth]?" And they throw two little pieces of wood, and they turn into lions; they keep coming and clawing (the ground) and roaring, and then the witch-finder sees they are come quite close, and he takes his medicine and scatters it, and these wild beasts turn into little bits of wood, and he takes the bits of wood and puts them in his horn. They send all the wild beasts, but they effect nothing. Then they say, "Whoever can it be who is more powerful than we? Come, come, come, let us see him." Then they come, as it were there, and stand in line, and send one; say they, "Go you and dance and wriggle." And he, when he would wriggle and dance, was not able, and he comes and says, "No, no, no, I cannot dance." (The witch-finder and his fire are glimmering.) "Let another go and try, if it be you think I am lying." And the other, when he would dance, is made to fail just the same. Then the witch-finder says, "I am tired of them." And he takes his (medicine) tail and waves it, and they are dead, and he commences to identify them, saying, "That is so and so, and that so and so." And then he asks, "Well, what shall we do with them—shall we kill them, shall we leave them?" Then perhaps he whose case it is (*mwini wache*) says, "Kill them." The witch-doctor takes sharpened sticks and drives them in

6.Ramsay E.G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Signed FRS

between their legs, and begins one by one, and tells him, "You, you will let three days elapse, the fourth you will die;" and tells another, "You will let four days pass, and on the fifth you die." All of them he speaks to thus. Then he takes some medicine and scatters it, and they rise and begin to run off, and the witch-finder also runs away. At the village, when they have slept three days, they hear so and so is dead, and when four days have gone they hear so and so is dead.

XIII

AN ANGONI PRAYER FOR RAIN

1. When rain does not come, they go to the man with the lots to consult them. He of the lots says, "It is the great spirit; it is she who is keeping the rain from coming." Then all the elders assemble. In the morning at dawn, an ox is taken from the kraal, and the chief stands up and says, "This ox I have given you, our ancestor, seeing that you are keeping the rain from us; give us, your children, rain; look, all men are afflicted because of you." And the elders utter a response, saying, "Hail, chief, spare us, help us, thy people." And when they are answering (thus) the ox makes water, and then people know the spirit has heard. Should it not make water, they say the spirit refused (to do as asked), and leave the ox, and go again to consult the lots. And they kill the ox, and cut off its tail, and put it in a basket, and take also the liver, and put in the basket, and these they go off to the *Kuka*

6.Stanley E, G-5 (ca. 1960) 1967 F85 Ngoni F85

but with, and set it (the basket) down at "the head" against the wall, and say, "There is the ox we have killed for you." Then they bring all the meat and put it in the *Kuka* hut. In the morning the elders rise early to eat it up; every one eats of it.

XIV

THE FUNERAL OF AN NSUTU

1. When the chief of the *Ababa* dies, people are not told at first; they hide the fact from them lest his attendants run away. On the day on which they make it known, they seize beforehand youths and maidens, and then every one is told that the chief has died. Then every one assembles and goes to the grave, and they dig and dig a very large "village" (cave) in the grave. When they have dug this cavity, they take the youths and maidens and shave their heads and rub them with oil, streaming down, and red clay. The youths have already their bows in their hands, as if going to the dance, though they are going to die. Then they lift the corpse and make the youths go in first, and the corpse follows. When they come to the cross-ways, they take one of the young men, and sharpening a bamboo, hammer it down through his head with a stone, and the stake grips (lit. bites) the ground. He is sitting upright as if alive, and he is made to hold a bow in his hand. When they come to the grave, they commence to break the legs of the others, and pour the juice of chilies over their heads. (And the reason they do this is because they fear

6.Sarmey K.G-6 (ca. 1800) 1907 FRS Signed FRS

their relations may dig them out, and place them in some other country.) And they throw them to the back of the cave, and take the corpse and lay it on top of them. Then they begin to fill in, the cows in the cave are groaning, "Alas, alas!" When they have finished filling in, they go to the water to bathe. When they return to the village they dance.

XV

THE CHIEF OF THE KUKA AND THE SON-IN-LAW

1. The chief of the Kuka hot and his son-in-law came hoed a garden. When the maize grew up, the father-in-law told his son-in-law to build a watch-tower. Then the father-in-law went off and forged some arrow-heads, and gave them to his son-in-law, saying, "There are some arrows, you must keep a look-out with them in the garden here." And the son-in-law received the arrows, and remained at the watch-tower there. One day the wind came and flattened down all the maize, and his father-in-law came to walk on a round of inspection in the garden, and then he saw that the wind had laid the maize, and he clapped his hands and said, "Oh, to-day I see wonders, those arrow-heads I just forged for him to keep by him [and look at]." And then he went up to the watch-tower, where his son-in-law was, and asked him, saying, "Those arrow-heads I forged, I just forged that you might sleep with them on the watch-tower here?" And the son-

G.Savory E,G-8 (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Ngumi PRS

606 in-law replied, "And how am I to wound the
539 winds?"

II. When the father-in-law had gone off, the son-in-law took some maize and went off to set some falling-traps, and one of his traps caught a guinea-fowl, and he took it out, and went and gave it to his wife, saying, "There is a guinea-fowl, cook it; I am going away a long way; I shall be away four days, and for my share you must harden some of the gravy over the fire, the meat you can eat yourself." Then he woman went off and told her father, saying, "That fellow has killed a guinea-fowl, and he tells me I must brown the gravy before the fire for him, and the meat I am to eat, and where he has gone he will remain four days." And the father said, "And how an you brown gravy over a fire, my child?"

III. When the son-in-law returned, he told his wife, "Cook some porridge." And the woman did so, and went with it to her husband. But he looked into the dish and said, "Where is my gravy, that I told you to brown before the fire?" Then the woman went off to tell her father, saying, "He is
539 asking for the gravy." Then the father went off
609 to tell the villagers, "You must settle a case for
606 me." So the people assembled at the village court in crowds, and (one) said, "Chief of the *Kuka* hut, state your case that we may hear." Then the chief of the *Kuka* hut took up his case and began to speak saying, "As for me, I bid you ask my son-in-law there, on my account, the things which he has in his heart." Then the people spoke, laying the charge before the son-in-law. And he replied, "Yes, what he says is true about me, but I was at the watch-tower, and I saw the chief of the *Kuka* hut, and he asks of me, saying, "You there, do you just sleep on the watch-tower here, and not keep a look-out over the garden? The arrows I went

6/Attorney E,G-5 (rev. 1900) 1907 FES Signed FES

and forgot that you might just keep them by you, and not keep a look-out for what is eating up the maize in the garden." And as for me, I replied, saying, "And you, how do you wound the winds?" So I also went and caught some "meat," that they in their turn should brown some gravy for me, for, seeing they know how to wound the wind with an arrow, they could also brown gravy before a fire; and that is what the case against me is." And the elders said, "That is his complaint, is it? The chief of the Kaka hut was in the wrong."

XVI

THE TORTOISE AND THE ANTELOPE

1. A Tortoise and an Antelope once had an argument. The Antelope said, "Tortoise, are you able to run along with me?" And the Tortoise replied, "Yes, I am able." Then the Tortoise went off to tell his companions, and he said, "We have had a discussion with the Antelope (about running), and he says we must race together, and you, my friends, come along, you must give me your assistance." And the Tortoise began to place them in a long line, and they reached to the plain which they had agreed upon [as the scene of the race]. Then the Antelope said, "Tortoise, come on, let us begin to run." Then the Antelope set off as hard as he could; he runs and runs, and at length calls out, "Hallo, Tortoise!" And the Tortoise replied far in front, "Hallo! I passed long ago." And the Antelope set off again, and again called out, "Where

6.Samay E,G-6 (sa. 1909) 1907 FRS Ngani FRS

539 are you, Tortoise?" And the Tortoise replied, "As for me, I passed long ago." So the Antelope had just to give up.

XVII

THE TWO-HEADED PYTHON

1. Once upon a time there was a Python with two heads; he was very long, and sang a song, which said—

> "*Ngingiringi* when walking,
> He says '*Ngingiringi*,'
> Walking he says, '*Ngingiringi*.'"

And from his back some one repeated just the same (song). And he made up a pipe of hemp and coughed *wopo! wopo! wopo!* and from behind him he heard *wopo! wopo! wopo!* And he asked, "Who is that trying to imitate me?" And he sent his attendants, telling them, "Go see [who it was], and when you have found him, kill him." And they went off, following their master's [body], and at length came to where it ended, and they say, "Must we kill him; if we do so, will not he (our master) die? Come, let us leave him." And they went to tell him, and said, "Well, his body and yours are one and the same, how shall we kill him?" But the Python was angry, saying, "Why did you spare him? I wish you to kill him." And then he lit his pipe again and coughed *wopo!* and said, "Go, you must not spare him again; to-day go and kill him."

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So the attendants came to where the second head was, and cut its throat, and as they return he is dozing; when he would cough he cannot finish, and just goes, "ooyo! 'ooyo! 'yo!" with a weak voice, and dozeys, and dozeys, and dies.

XVIII

THE STORY OF KACHIRAMBE

1. Seven young girls once said, "Come, let us go and pluck leaves for a relish with our porridge." And when they were gathering them, one of the children saw the egg of a hyæna, and picked it up, and put it in her basket, and said to her companions, "You children, I have got all I want, I am going." And her companions said, "Whenever did you pull them, when you are off so soon?" And she replied, "As for me, I filled my basket some time ago." So her companions bade her go. When she has gone, they saw a hyæna; he has come up to them and asks, saying, "You children, who has taken my egg from there?" And they deny having done so, saying, "We do not know, but she who has gone off perhaps she has taken it." And the hyæna went off. He comes to where she lives, and says, "Who has taken my egg?" And the mother of the girl replies, "But the child, she has come in with an egg, it is on the fire," and the hyæna said, "Well, what am I to do?" And the woman replied, "Wait, when I have a child you shall eat him." And the hyæna said, "Yes, [that is a good arrangement]."

6.Barney E.G-4 (ca. 1909) 1997 FRS Signed FRS

539 II. Another day, when the mother went to the water, the hyæna asked her if she had had the child, and the woman replied, "No, not yet." And every day the hyæna is asking the same thing, and then one day he said, "If you do not quickly have that child you are the one I shall eat." And then the woman saw a boil on her shin bone, it is all swollen and soft. And it burst, and there came forth a child. He has a bow, and a quiver full of arrows, and a little gourd of medicine, and a knife and dogs, and he said, "I have come forth, I, Kachirambe, the child born on a shin bone." Then the mother of this Kachirambe was again asked by the hyæna, when she went to the stream, if she had had the child, and she replied, "Yes, and the child is very clever, you cannot catch him, but I myself shall deceive him for you; you I tie up in a bundle of grass and then I shall go and tell Kachirambe, 'Go and lift the bundle of grass which is on the path there.'" Then she tied up the hyæna in a grass bundle, and went off to the village and told her child, "Go and lift the bundle of grass that is on the path." Then Kachirambe went, and stood a long way off, and said, "You bundle, get up that I may lift you easily." And the bundle got up by itself, and Kachirambe said, "What bundle is it that gets up alone? As for me, I have not seen such a one, and I do not intend to lift it." And off he went to the village.

III. And the hyæna came along, and told the woman that her child was a clever one indeed. And she told him that to-day she would cheat him over a falling stone trap for killing rats. And she said to Kachirambe, "Go, set a falling trap, see the rats are finishing the baskets." Then Kachirambe got a large flat stone, and a forked stick, and the stick to lay across it, and bark string, and got the

Bleek, W.H.I. G-4 (ca. 1869) 1307 783 Wpad 783

little bit of stick which sets the trap, and see it on, and takes the bait and puts it in the trap, and has finished. In the evening the hyæna comes to the trap, and causes it to fall, and Kachirambe's mother called out, "Kachirambe, the trap has fallen." Then Kachirambe said, "You trap fall again, that I may know a rat has been caught." And the hyæna is at the trap, leave he, bang! And Kachirambe said, "What trap is it that falls wise? I have not yet seen one of that kind."

IV. Then Kachirambe's mother again told the hyæna, saying, "Go and wait at the beans tree, and I shall go and tell my child to go and pull beans." So Kachirambe went, and got his basket, and transformed himself into a fly, and the hyæna just keeps looking out for him, saying, "I wonder (again) if he will come." He sees not a sign, and then Kachirambe got all he wanted, and came to the village, and his mother was again astonished, saying, "Where did he get the beans when there is only one tree of them?" Then the mother said, "To-day I shall deceive him telling him to go and bring firewood, and you (hyæna) will consumer him there." And she said to Kachirambe, "Go and get wood in the bush." But that child had a dream, that to-day he would go to his death, and he took his bow, and quiver, and little medicine gourd, and his great big knife, and went off, and climbed into a tree, and began to cut; and then he saw the hyæna has come, and says, "You have died to-day, you do not escape. I shall eat you, come down quickly from up there." And Kachirambe cut off (a piece of) wood and said, "I am coming down, you gape." And the hyæna gaped, and said, "Come down." And Kachirambe answered, "Yes, I am coming." And he threw the lump of wood and it entered the mouth of the

G.Kenney E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 F85 Signal F85

539 hyena, and it died; and his dogs, when they would have bitten it, died also. And Kachiramba came down, and took his medicine, and scattered it over his dogs, and they got up. When he went to the village he shot an arrow, saying, "What did I say to you when you most needs send wild beasts against me to eat me?" And his mother begged pardon (of him), saying, "Pardon, my child, my apologies suffice without the case being brought up for trial." [Lit. the case is finished at the mouth.]

XIX

THE RABBIT AND THE LION

1. A Rabbit once dug a game-pit that he might kill game, and carefully covered it over, and then he took his axe and stuck it up on a tree, and began to cry, saying, "Mother, mother!" Then a Bush-buck came along and asked why he was crying, and the Rabbit said, "There came a Reed-buck and he has put my axe up there out of my reach." And the Bush-buck said, "There, and you have given up trying to get it down by yourself, but I shall bring it down for you." But when he made to bring it down, he fell into the game-pit, and the Rabbit jumped and got his axe, and cut at the Bush-buck, and again stuck his axe up, and covered over the game pit anew, and again began to cry. And a Buffalo came along. "Why are you crying, child?" And the Rabbit said, "A Sable-antelope came, and he has put my axe up above out of my reach. And the Buffalo said, "There, wait, I shall

G.Barnsley E.G-S (ca.1900) 1907 FRS Signed FRS

539

get it down for you." And when he was about to do so, he went down the game-pit, and the Rabbit jumped up again, got his axe, and killed the Buffalo with it. And a Lion comes by. "Why do you weep, Rabbit?" And he replied, "There came past an Elephant, and he has placed my axe up aloft out of my reach." And the Lion said, "Wait a bit, I shall get it down for you." And when he would do so, he fell into the game-pit, but (this time) the Rabbit also fell in there, and the Lion seized him, and said, "How comes it you deceived me so that I fell? As for me, now I kill you." And the Rabbit said, "Pardon, great chief, I am yours; if it be you have children, I shall look after them for you." And the Lion answered, "My children are two, and them you shall nurse."

II. And then they went to the Lion's village, and he was told, "You there, the children you have to nurse, there they are." The Lion went to the forest to hunt game, and on his return called the Rabbit to take the game (he had killed) to his cubs, saying, "You Rabbit, go and eat the bones, the children you must go and give the flesh to, because their teeth are not yet strong." But the Rabbit went off, and said, "You cubs, there is a bone for you, you will eat that you may harden your teeth; as for me I shall eat the flesh." Next morning the Rabbit said to the cubs, "Come, let us go to the stream to play." And when they came to the water, he said, "Come, let us wrestle to see who is the strongest." And a cub knocked down the Rabbit, and he said, "You must not kill me; if you kill me, who will show you the way to the village?" So he was spared, but the Rabbit in his turn overcame the cub, and twisted his neck, and then took the other one and went off with it to the hut. Then the father called him,

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 and said, "There is some meat, go and give it to the children, and I also come there to see my children." Then the Rabbit held up a cub, and showed it him, saying, "Look, there you have one." He lifts it up again, and says, "There is another." But he held up the one (both times). Another day the Rabbit said, "Come, let us bathe again." And they began again to play about, and the cub knocked the Rabbit down, and said, "You supposed back there you had killed my brother for me." And the Rabbit said, "If you kill me, whom do you go with to the village?" So the cub spared him, and the Rabbit then got on top and killed him. Then he said, "How now, seeing I have killed them all, can I go and deceive them at the village? But I shall just climb into a thorn tree, and get all scratched." So he climbed up, and threw himself down, crashing through the branches, and scratched all his body, and ran to inform the Lion, saying, "Sir, I have not seen what is good to-day; the cubs, they have killed them to-day. Look, I barely managed to escape, they would have killed me also." And the Lion said, "Have you recognized them?" And the Rabbit replied, "I knew some of them, I go (now) to identify them."

III. So he went off, and came to the village of the Baboons, and finds the villagers playing at throwing tops at maize cobs, and saying as they threw, "Hands!" Then the Rabbit said, "Friends, let us throw together, all of us, and when I throw, when I say, "Who ate the Lion's cub?" you must say, "It was I, it was I"; that is the proper thing to say, and as for us, we always say so." When leaving, the Rabbit said, "You fellows, I come back to-morrow and we shall throw again." Then the Rabbit went back to the Lion, and said, "They who killed the children I have cornered to-day."

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

And the Lion said, "Come, let us all go that I may go and see." But the Rabbit said, "I must tie you up in a bundle." And he tied him up, and took some fruit and stuck them here and there in the bundle, that the Baboons might rejoice, saying, "Our friend has come with something to eat to-day." So they came to the Baboon's village, and the Rabbit said, "I have come, get out the tops that we may throw them." And he began to throw, saying, "Who ate the Lion's cub, and here and here he has not yet come back?" And the Baboons replied, "It was I, it was I." And the Rabbit also said, "Listen, my bundle, yourself." And the bundle began to unfasten, and the Lion burst out, and seized all the Baboons.

539

XX

THE RABBIT AND THE ELEPHANT

I. WITHOUT there was a drought, and the ground became hard, without any water, and all the animals were in distress, and the Elephant said, "You all, we shall die, come let us scrape out a hole, to see if the water will come." Then all the animals collected, and went to an open plain, and the Elephant said, "I must begin to stamp." (And as he stamped) he said, "Let me stamp there, there is water, let me stamp there, there is water." And they just see clouds of dust. Then the Rhino. said, "Wait, I am going to try to stamp." And he began, "Let me tramp there, and there is water." But he just gave up too. All the animals

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 failed, and then the Rabbit said, "Wait a bit, let me tramp." Then the great ones (of the forest) rebuked him, saying, "What you, you would stamp (with) your tiny little feet? Look at my foot, it is like the bottom of a grain mortar." And the Rabbit replied, "I can only try, if it be too much for me, let me fail, having made the attempt." And he began to tramp—

"I must tramp there, (and) there is water,
I must tramp there, (and) there is water."

And they saw the damp soil was showing up. And the Elephant came and said, "Get out, I must stamp." And he stamped and tramped, and again they just saw dust rolling up, and he said, "Come here, Rabbit, you shall try again." And then they saw a pool, stretching far away, and all the animals drank. And the elephant issued a proclamation, and said, "Let not one other Rabbit be seen drinking water here, except that Rabbit who got down to the water, he shall drink." Then the Rabbits said, "As for us, we have not yet seen the like, the water which our kinsman pierced through to, it, they must say, the Rabbits must not drink." Then the Elephant said, "I shall be watchman and shall see who comes to drink water here." And then the Rabbits talked together for a little, and said, "Come, children, let us take our battle-axes, and be off and dig for honey."

II. (Some time after) a Rabbit came along (to the pool) and hailed, and the Elephant said, "And who are you?" And the Rabbit said, "It is I, and I have got something sweet to suck, for giving the great ones (of the forest) to sip when once they have been bound." And the Elephant said, "Let me see, and have tasted it first." And the Rabbit gave him a little gourd-cup (with some honey in it),

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

saying, "There." And the Elephant put in his trunk, and licked it, and said, "Yes, indeed it is good, tie me up." Then the Rabbit took his string and bound him, and went and had a drink, and cleared off, and the Elephant said, "Rabbit, you are going off without giving me (the honey)." But the Rabbit just went off, taking no notice. Then the Elephant called out, "Children, come and unbind me." And his companions came, and said, "Who has tied you?" And the Elephant replied, "The Rabbit came along with something sweet for sucking, and he said it was for giving the great one of the forest to suck, but they must first be bound, and I said, 'Well, bind me,' and he bound me, and drank his fill of water, and ran off." Then the Tortoise spoke, saying, "I must wait here to-day." And the Elephant said, "Child Tortoise, you who shuffle along, is it you who would catch the Rabbit?" And the Tortoise replied, "Never mind, stick bees' wax on me, I shall catch him on this very spot." Then his companions rubbed wax over him, and set him by the water, and he just remained with his back sticking up above the water, plain to be seen. And then the Rabbit came along and said, "Hallo, there!" He sees (lit. has seen) everything is quiet. So he came to the water, that he might look and look, but found there was no one. Then he said, "But I must drink from the stone there." And he comes, and jumps on the back of the Tortoise, and drinks and drinks, and when he would say, "Now I must be off," he found he was stuck fast. And then the Tortoise began to shout out, "I have got him, I have got him, come all of you." Then all the animals came and pulled out the Tortoise along with the Rabbit, and one seized the Tortoise, and another the Rabbit, and pulled them apart, and

539

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 the Rabbit said, "You all, if you are going to kill me, and you go and seize me by the head, I shall live, if you seize me by the leg I shall live, but if you catch hold of my tail, that is my death."

III. So they caught hold of his tail, and when they would dash him down his tail stripped off. So the Rabbit ran off home and told his companions, saying, "There has come a tail-stripper (into the country); look at mine there, I have long ago pulled it off, he declares. Should he see a person who has not his tail stripped off, that one he seizes, he says." So it came to pass, at their village there, the Rabbits stripped off each other's tails, all of them. Then the Elephant came—he is following the spoor of the Rabbit on the damp soil, and he says, "I have you to-day, who was that one who came to drink water?" Then the Rabbit said, "How do we know? we are not proper rabbits; look, we all are without a tail. Should you see one with a tail, he is not of our village." So the Elephant just gave up the quest, and went home. And the story ends there.

XXI

THE COCK AND THE SWALLOW

I. A Cock and a Swallow once struck up a friendship, and the Cock called the Swallow, and said, "You must come along to my home, and we shall chat." And the Cock told his wife, that when the Swallow came, she was to say to him, "Your friend, is not that he there? He says he has cut off his head, as he has had a great shock." Then the

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Swallow came and asked for his friend. (The Cock had taken his head and put it under his wing, so that his friend must come and say he had cut it off with a knife.) Then the Cock's wife said, "Is not that he there? He says he has cut off his head, as he has had a great shock." And the Swallow sat and sat, and waited and waited, and at last went off home without seeing him. And the Swallow in his turn went to his hut, and told his wife, "To-day I am going to call my friend the Cock, and when he came there, you will say to him, that his friend had cut off his head, as he had received a great shock over something." And the Cock came, and asked the Swallow's wife where his friend was, and she said, "Is not that he, there? He says he has cut off his head, as he had a shock over something he had seen." And however the Cock may look and look he does not see the slightest movement, because the Swallow had taken a knife and cut off his head. Then the Cock went off home and remained there three days, and came to the Swallow's hut, and said, "How is our friend now? We do not see him coming to our home to talk over things." And the Swallow's wife replied, "I do not know, he is still lying there as before." And that is how the Swallow went away (from this earth).

II. But a kinsman of the Swallow's also struck up a friendship with the Cock, saying, "Let me see [what I can do to get even with him]." And he said to the Cock, "You and I indeed love each other, we shall never part." Then the Swallow told his wife that to-day she was to cook pumpkins as he was going to summon his friend the Cock, and when he came and should ask where his friend was, she was to say, "Your friend is in there" (in the pot). Then the Cock arrived and asked

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 where his friend was, and the woman said, "Your friend is in here." The Cock may look, he finds the pot is boiling with the fire, and he was astonished, saying, "My friend must come out of the pot there?" Then the woman uncovered the pot, and the Swallow darted forth; he enters the middle of the smoke, just as if he is coming out of the pot, and sat down and said, "Ah, we were in there, and we heard you talking. Wife, dish out the pumpkin, we shall eat with the visitor." And the woman served out the pumpkin, and gave it them, and the Swallow began to eat with his friend. But the Cock went home, and told his wife that tomorrow she must cook pumpkins as he was going to call his friend, and him she was to put in the pot, and when the Swallow came she was to say that her lord was in the pot. And the woman asked if he should not be cooked, and he replied, "No, for my friend acted thus, his wife cooked him, and I in my turn tell you you have got to cook me, and when the Swallow comes you must uncover me (in the pot) and I, I shall come forth with the smoke." And so the woman took some pumpkins, and sliced them up in a pot, and put it on the fire, and poured in water, and got fire-wood and broke it up at the fire, and put her husband in the pot and covered it over. And then her pot began to boil, but the Cock began to flap about in the pot, and at last died in it, and the woman just kept piling on the wood. Then his friend the Swallow came and said, "Where is my friend?" And the woman said, "He is in the pot there." And when she uncovered the pot, she saw the feathers all loose, and she said, "Is this life?" And she began to dish out, and saw her husband did not rise, he is all limp. And the Swallow said, "Have you cooked our friend?" And the Cock's wife said,

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

"He would insist on telling me, saying 'Cook.' I asked him if he should not be burned, and he said 'No, my friend did this, I shall not burn.'" And the Swallow said, "You have acted badly." But when he went off to his own home he told the story to his companions, saying, "I made a fool of the Cock, and his wife cooked him. He used to say he had fooled us, we on our part have fooled him and he has died, even as our kinsman died long ago."

539

XXII

THE TORTOISE AND THE BABOON

I. A Tortoise and a Baboon made a covenant of friendship, and the Baboon told the Tortoise, "you must come to my home and drink beer." So when the beer was ready, the Tortoise set out (to visit) the Baboons, and he found they had already climbed into a tree, and taken their beer with them. And the Tortoise they addressed, saying, "Climb up here, for we do not drink beer on the ground." And the Tortoise when he would climb, slips, and at length gives up. And the Baboons said, "See, there is the beer, it is your own fault if you leave it." Then the Tortoise went off home and cooked beer of his own and summoned the Baboons; then he set fire to grass, and set his beer down in the centre of the burned patch, and then thoroughly washed the cup (for drinking the beer with). And the Baboons, when they came, trampled all over the burned place, and then the Tortoise told them, "Look here, this cup belongs to some one else,

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 and he says you must not catch hold of it with dirty hands, first of all go and wash your hands. And the Baboons went off to wash; coming back they come and tread again on the burned place, and finally the Tortoise says, "It is your own fault if you leave the beer."

XXIII

THE TORTOISE AND THE LEMUR

I. A TORTOISE once married at a certain village, and a Lemur also asked for a wife at the very same place, and the reason they "acted the son-in-law" was that they were poor; had they had wealth they would have got a wife by purchase. Then their mother-in-law divided out a garden for them, saying, "The Tortoise will hoe and go in that direction, the Lemur will hoe and go in that." So they commenced to hoe in their gardens, and the Tortoise sang—

"Shuffling along I go, they at the village will say he is hoeing." (*Repeat.*)

And the Lemur sang—

"Chop! I have cut, Lemur you just hate me."

And people saw, in the direction of the Lemur, a clear open space, but in that of the Tortoise the bush was thick. Then one day, their mother-in-law said she wished to go and see in the gardens where her sons-in-law were hoeing. When she

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

came there, she saw where the Lemur was, was hoed, and where the Tortoise was, there was not a day's hoeing done, and she said, "It seems I have chosen a man who cannot hoe; now the Lemur he is a man, he tries to hoe." And she told the Tortoise to go and cut down a tree which was in the middle of the garden, and told him, if he did not fell it, he should clear out from there. Then the Tortoise pondered, saying, "How shall I go and cut down the tree, as if I could climb up aloft; but I must make friends with some person, and perhaps he may go and cut it down for me."

539

II. And then the Tortoise saw a Wild-cat, and said, "Cat, you are my friend, you must go and cut down for me the tree that is in my mother-in-law's garden." And the Wild-cat got up very early in the morning, when the cold morning wind was blowing, and came to the tree, and cut and cut. When it was quite light outside, the Tortoise took his axe, saying, "I must go and cut down my tree." So he went off, he crawls along, his axe he throws in front of him, and shuffles up to it. When he got to the tree, he found that the Wild-cat had cut it down, and lopped off all the branches, and then the Wild-cat went off, and the Tortoise remained; he listlessly cuts. When he sees his mother-in-law (coming) he strives with all his might. The mother-in-law was surprised, saying, "What, the Tortoise has cut down that tree in this manner, now he is my son-in-law, he does not again leave me." And again at the Wild-cat's home there was a mourning. And the Wild-cat went to call the Tortoise, and told him, saying, "At my home they are electing a new chief, and you, my friend, in your turn, will go and ransom me to-day, (for) when the other children come and speak their names (at the grave) you will remain silent; when you hear me saying,

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 'I, the Wild-cat, have come, that I may guide the people,' you shall answer, and the chieftainship will be mine." And the Tortoise went off in the very middle of the night, and burrowed at the grave, and went in. Next morning at dawn a great crowd assembled, and one child came out and said, "I, so and so, have come and I say I must rule the people." And at the grave yonder they saw not a sign. Then there came forth another child and said, "I, so and so, have come that I may rule your village." At the grave there is not a sound. And then the Wild-cat got up and said, "I, the Wild-cat, am come, and I say I must rule your people." Thereupon all the people heard at the grave there speaking, saying, "Yes, I am wishing for you, my child, the Wild-cat, that you should rule my people well, in my stead." Then every one rejoiced, and they lifted up the Wild-cat and put him on their shoulders, and that evening the Tortoise came out (of the grave) to go home.

III. Then at the Wild-cat's they made beer, and went and called the Tortoise, and the Tortoise told the children of the village, saying, "Come, my friend has summoned me, we must go and drink beer." Then the children of the village taunted him, saying, "You, where will you see a friend?" And the Tortoise said, "Come, you must go and see my friend, he is greater than any of you." So the Tortoise went off with the children from the village, and came to the village of the Wild-cat, and the Wild-cat got a mat in readiness and spread it down for him. Then he got out beer, and set it down before the Tortoise, saying, "There is food." And the Tortoise in his turn passed it to the children from his village, and they drank and drank the beer, and then he bade his friend farewell. And when he has come to his village these children (who had

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

always laughed at him) spread a good report, saying, 539
"The Tortoise is a chief; you must not always be annoying and contradicting him, for we to-day have seen with our own eyes, the friend of the Tortoise is a very great chief."

XXIV

THE BLIND MAN AND THE HUNCHBACK

I. LONG ago a chief built his village, and to the village there used to come lions to seize people. And the chief said, "What are we to do with these lions?" And his people said, "Speak with them." Then the chief asked them, saying, "How is it you are always seizing people?" And the lions said, "We are saying you must give us your two daughters whom you love, and when you give us the children we shall not come back to catch people." Then the chief took his two children, and went and made a rough grass hut for them at the hill where the lions came forth from. And from another country there set out two men, one blind and the other hunchbacked, and they were on their way to the chief's village. And Hunchback saw a tortoise on the path, and he told his comrade, "There is a tortoise here." And Blind-eyes said, "Pick it up." And Hunchback refused. Then Blind-eyes said, "Pick it up for me." And he picked it up for him, and put it in his wallet. And they walked and walked, and came to another place, and found that a porcupine had died there. And Hunchback said, "There is a porcupine here." And his companion

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 said, "Pick up one of his spines." But he refused, and Blind-eyes said, "Well, pick it up for me." And he did so, and put it in his bag, and they went elsewhere, and found there had died an elephant there, and the man who had wounded the elephant, he also was dead, and his gun was there, and Hunchback again said, "There has died an elephant here, and the man and his gun are on the same spot." And his companion said, "Pick up the gun and one tusk." And he refused, and Blind-eyes said, "Pick them up for me."

II. When they saw the sun was setting, Hunchback climbed a hill, and he saw on the other side there was smoke rising, and they went there and found two maidens in a grass hut, and they said, "Darkness has overtaken us, and we wish somewhere to sleep." But the girls refused, saying, "You must not sleep here; as for us, our father built us the hut, that when the lions come they may come and eat us." But they refused (to be warned), and said, "We sleep here." When they would have talked on, they find the lions have come, they are roaring, and then one asks, "Who is it talking in the hut? Let us eat them up together." Then Blind-eyes said, "You are not able to eat us; and as for us, we only came here to find sleeping-room." And the lion said, "I shall throw one of my lice at you, and you will be frightened (enough then)." Thereupon they all fainted with the exception of Blind-eyes; and then the lion threw a louse, and Blind-eyes felt about with his hand for it, and picked it up, and said, "That tiny little thing! See, I go and cast it on the fire." And when he did so, it gave a crack, and he said, "Now, in my turn, I am going to throw you my louse." And he got out the tortoise and threw it; and the lion picks it up, looks at it, and says (aside), "Ah yes, he has

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539

huge lice." But he says, "No, I am not afraid; now I am going to throw a hair of mine for you (to see). And he pulled out one hair, saying, "There it is, I have thrown it for you (to see)." And Blind-eyes feels about for it, and says, "That is what I am to fear! look at mine." And he takes the porcupine quill, and throws it at the lion, and the lion picks it up, looks at it, and says, "Yes, indeed" (aside). But he says, "No; even though you can do such things I am not going to spare you." And he takes a tooth and throws it, and Blind-eyes feels about for it, picks it up, and says, "I am to fear this, am I? Wait till I throw you mine."

III. Then he cast the tusk of the elephant at him, and the lion gave a jump, saying, "Ha! yes, indeed, the fellow has a fearsome tooth" (aside). But he said, "Now I am going to let you hear my voice." And he began to roar, and Blind-eyes said, "The other—let it sound its voice too, that I may hear you." Then he said, "I have heard, and now come close that you may hear my voice." Then the lions came up close, and Blind-eyes said, "Where are you?" And they said, "We are here." And he said, "Lay your heads together." Then he took his gun and pointed it in their direction, and said, "Now listen, I am going to talk my words." And he fired the gun, and killed the lot. Said he, "Have you heard my words?" He finds all is silence. Then he roused his companions who had fainted, saying, "Get up, I have killed those wild beasts." And they contradict him, saying, "You are deceiving us." And Blind-eyes said, "You people, do get up; you must open the door for me, and I can go and look myself." And they did so, and he goes and feels, and says, "This is the male, this the female. Come outside, that you may see for yourselves."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 IV. Next morning, they went off; one of the maidens carried Blind-eyes, and the other Hunchback, on their backs. When they came to the village their father saw them, and said, "What, you have come back again, though I said you were to remain there; now I shall kill you all." And the children told him that (the men) had killed those wild beasts, and the father asked if that was indeed true, and they said, "May I be struck dead if it is not." And the father sent men to see. And they came and found them, and cut off their tails, and went and told the chief, saying, "There are the tails; it is quite true they killed them." Then the chief held a consultation with his people, saying, "Well, those people who killed the wild beasts, what are we to do about them?" And they said, "You must just give them these maidens in marriage." So they gave Blind-eyes his, and Hunchback his, and took six shells, saying, "One, three, the other, three, and you must go and build your village there." And as they went along the road, Hunchback said, "They have given us five shells, and they say, two are yours, and three are mine." And Blind-eyes said, "Oh, you are cheating me; did not the chief say he had given us six?—mine three, and yours three; how comes it you deceive me, insomuch as when I said, 'Pick up this,' you refused?" Then Hunchback stood up and hit him on the eyes, and straightway Blind-eyes found his eyes were opened; and he took his knobkerry and hit his companion, and Hunchback found his back had straightened. And thereupon they grasped hands in token of friendship.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXV

SOME RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

I. "Come, let us give riddles to-day," some one says, and then every one collects, and the hut is packed. One begins to say, "Such and such a thing, what is it?" And should his companions give up, then (the one who gave the riddle) says, "Then kill me so and so's cattle." And they do so (in pretence), saying, "Go and eat what's his name's." And he has them stabbed, the meat is all over the place, and eats and eats, and says, "The answer is so and so." 519

Some Riddles

Q. Something without a spoor; what is that? 539
A. An arrow.

Q. Something that cannot be bound.
A. The winds. (Perhaps water, or smoke.)

Q. Something with a very keen scent; for even if you hide away some little thing you have, it goes and finds it out. What is that?
A. A fly.

Q. Something which warms itself with its back to the fire.
A. The shelf above the fire, in a hut.

Q. A war which baffles all of you; there is one little thing, spoiling for a fight, that goes and tackles it. What is that?
A. The porridge stick.

Q. A person shoots his arrow up in the air, and when it returns, it does so without its shaft.
A. Winged white ant. (Because when it flies off it has wings, but falls without its wings.)

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 *Q.* A little thing, yet that cannot be lifted.
A. A shadow.

Q. A tree which grows out of a companion tree.
A. The *ulimbo* tree.

Q. Up down, up down. What is that?
A. A pestle (for pounding grain).

Q. The house has been burned, and there remains only the cross-beam.
A. A path. (Because when the bush is burned the road-way is there stretching away.)

Q. I built a hut with only one post to prop up the roof. What is that?
A. A mushroom.

Q. Two people support a huge thing. What is that?
A. The two pair of supports of a grain store.

Q. The stone trap has fallen over and over again to-day alone. What is that?
A. The eyelid.

Q. Something which no number of people can lift, yet there is one person who can do so.
A. Water.

Q. Something which comes from far away, and finds us here.
A. The rain.

Q. A man who hoes many gardens in one day without being tired.
A. A barber.

Q. Something which finds the way by itself; it does not go wide of the mark even though it is dark.
A. The hand. (Because it does not forget the mouth.)

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539

Q. One axe handle, but ten axe heads.
A. A bunch of bananas.

Q. A hut without a doorway.
A. An egg.

Q. Something you cannot tell whence it fell from.
A. A cloud.

Q. A little thing of such importance that, when you wish it, you go and take it with both hands.
A. A ground nut.

Q. An old fellow who cuts the grass with his belly, and smoothes it down with his back.
A. A spoon (used for dishing out the porridge).

Q. A tree which you cut down to-day, and the next it begins to sprout.
A. Hair.

Q. However far away it be, this very day this thing reaches there.
A. Memories.

Q. You go in this direction, I go in that, and we must meet.
A. A belt.

Q. Some great beast which dies in the dry season, and the scent of which reaches us here.
A. The first of the rains.

Q. The animals meet each other at the water (where they all come to drink).
A. Men and women. (When there is a common place for drawing water, where those from different villages get their supply.)

Q. A chief sent a person to bring a goat, and some maize, and a leopard, and when he came to the river, he found only a small boat, and he said, "What must I begin with? Should I begin with the leopard, the goat will eat the maize, and if I

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 begin with the maize, the leopard will eat the goat, but I must begin with the goat." So he takes the goat and ferries it over, and again he began to think, saying, "Now, if I take the maize over, the goat will eat it, and should I take the leopard the goat will be eaten." Well, what did the man do?

A. First of all he ferried over the goat, it goes across, and he returns and takes the leopard, and also takes the goat back in the boat to the other side there, and leaves it there, taking over the maize, and comes back once more for the goat.

Some Proverbs

If water gets spilt, they do not gather it up.

Where a tree has fallen, you cannot hide the fall thereof.

That little you have is what you have eaten up beforehand; if you do not eat it up, it is some one else's. (*i.e.* "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die.")

O earth, I should not have eaten you (for yourself); I am only eating you because you are mixed up along with the honey.

You all start on an equality when it is a question of racing in the sand.

What has seen your friend to-day has gone off, to-morrow it will pay you a visit. (*i.e.* Do not laugh at a companion in trouble; your turn may come next.)

You gain wealth from my tusks, and yet you do not eat my flesh.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVI

THE KANONOMERA DANCE

If a person is ill, they go and consult the lots, 753
and then he of the lots says, "It is the spirit of his 791
grandmother, it is wanting a dance; when you dance 755
that dance, you can take it from us the child is 782
sitting up." And they go to the village and take a basket of grain, and with it they address the spirit, saying, "There is the grain for which you are killing a person; when we have made beer, let us see the person (who is ill) sitting up." And then they assemble every one, and the day the beer is strained, they all come together, and that evening they enter the hut (where the sick person is), and begin to clap their hands to rouse the spirit, and then they see the sick one is trembling and crying out, and then the people say (to the spirit), "You must not come with war, it is we who have called you; see here at the village the drums have come, but let them depart again without anything happening to mar the dance." And when they have finished clapping their hands the dance comes forth, and the 535
drums begin to sound, and they are dancing. He 755
who remembers a song sings it; when one is pos- 782
sessed by a spirit, down he falls, and they drag him 787
out of the dance, and deck him with calico and skins of animals, and he again enters the circle and dances. When a person is possessed by a child's spirit, they bind his calico tightly round him that it be strong, because that person is wishing to strip it off, and dance naked, as a child does not wear anything. Should a woman be seized by a man's spirit, saying, "I am so and so," they deck her with a

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 755 782 787 feather head-dress, and in her hand she holds a little stick (for a spear), and her calico is tied round her waist, and her breasts swing free. The songs they sing at the Kanonomera dance go thus—

533 755 539 What knocks off the dew,
Comes at the early dawn.—(*Repeat.*)

Looking, gazing, we just gaze one at the other.
(*Repeat.*)

When the drum sounds it is the *choinjoli* drum
that brings the spirit.—(*Repeat.*)

Far away there, far away,
Far away there, far away,
Far away where shines white that little cloud,
Far away there, is my bow.

Little quail, little quail, you are picking up the
little grains.
And what if he is,
Are they not his eyes?
It broke his leg for him;
Only hunger, only hunger.

Oh no, indeed, indeed,
Two wives have been too many for him indeed;
Two wives have been too many for him indeed.

You hate me,
You hate me for my being so old.—(*Repeat.*)

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Little maiden, whom war has given me, 533
Should you refuse to be mine, 755
I am as a slave in my grief, 539
And then what must you do?

We were far away;
Our companions had cut off their head rings.

XXVII

THE NTETEREZI DANCE

539
533
[764]

It is danced only at a funeral.

Scrape out the beer pot and give me.
Have some sense, the beer is finished.

He is the husband who favours your companion
(*i.e.* his second wife),
And you, you only cook and give him, all in silence;
And here you return,
And weep against the hut post.

Should you be a childless man,
Do not be hitting your neighbour's child,
That's so, father.
Don't you think you should go and beat that maize you planted?
That's so, father.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 She has left him sleeping there, de de;
533 She has left the home he made her, de de;
She has left him.

The man who is in my home;
Yes, yes, father.
From the way he leans against the hut post (all indifferent to my charms)
You would think he had been drinking beer.

What, you say you would marry *me?*—
You of the goat-skin (loin cloth).
No, father; oh no, father;
You of the goat-skin.

Mother! mother!
Did she go to send you,
Saying, "When he comes you must abuse him?"

Oh stop that fidgeting and turning;
Stop saying, "I must so."
Stop saying, "I must thus."
We do not want that.

You have brought in vain your wooden pillow;
I do not wish you,
I do not want you.

Should you kill a little mouse, go and give it to your sister.
With one's wives it's do this, do that for them, and then they leave you.
We have said so; we have said so.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVIII

THE KANDENGA DANCE

In dancing this dance the women stand in line on one side, the men in a line on another, the drums are where the men are; then a woman goes and takes the knobkerry from a man, and the man goes back with her to where the women are, and again they return and stand close together. The man places one hand on the woman's shoulder, and they dance thus, and when they have done dancing the woman turns round and hands the man his knobkerry. The Kandenga is danced at a funeral, but also just for fun when the moon is shining. 535 [764]

A white-haired man is malt;
On his coming, let him make beer;
  Yes, father.
On his coming he shall make beer. 539 533

Towards the river to *Likongwe*
A cloud shines white like some little bird, maybe,
But it's those Angoni; they always said
"That's a rich little spot where the *Nsugudzi* flows."

I am an unmarried maiden, and one of Njolo's men
  will be my lord,
  De, de.
The youths from here think too much of themselves.
Did not one say, I was his,
  De, de.
The youths of here are too conceited.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 Place your hand upon her shoulder in the dance.
533 Place your hand up her shoulder whom you love.
This season there is no bow (*i.e.* war).

Oh, oh, oh.
I have come to the wedding.
The porridge they have cooked with the finger.
(It is so badly made.)

Oh belt, belt, belt,
Belt, belt,
Why should I not borrow the belt,
When the dance has sounded?

XXIX

THE CHITOTO DANCE

535 THEY dance it at a mourning, and even just for
[534] fun. They do not have drums, but fasten rattles on
their legs.

---

539 One perhaps has taken the other,
533 Summoned him for love of him,
And to-day we mourn, love;
Yes, father,
And the cock crows.

Should your neighbour's son not have a wife,
Look after his belly,
His belly,
His belly, wo, ha, ho!
I have sung.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Should you have no child by your neighbour's 539
daughter, 533
Give her your friend, and he shall wed her;
As for you, you be happy with the beer pot,
With the beer pot, wo, ha, ho!
You be content with the beer pot.

XXX

THE KUNJU DANCE

MEN do not dance it, but only women, with the [535]
men looking on.

You, Nzinyai, you, Nzinyai,
Nzinyai, she refuses hospitality to the strangers,
You, Nzinyai.
The porridge which I have not seen;
Nzinyai, return whence you came.

The man who is in my hut begins to refuse his food; when I only dish him out two helpings of porridge, he looks aside;
When I dish him out three (he says), "Give me the water (to wash his hands). I shall give the child his."
But that child he is wise,
"Eat up your porridge," says he; "was it not you who scolded at me?"
Now, what do you think of that? My child he knows how to conduct a quarrel.
A quarrel they settle at the village court.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXXI

OTHER SONGS

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Moon, you must shine, shine that I may eat the tadpoles;
I sit on a stone, and my bones all rattle.
If it were not for my big mouth,
The maidens would be crying for me.

(The song of the night-jar.)

That great bird has gone in there,
Gone to the other side there,
Gone and got a snake there;
The very snake that told me of misfortune,
Told me of misfortune, e! e! e!
Which foretold evil at the site of the deserted village.

Frog you, frog you,
Your friend, your friend.
Frog you, frog you,
He is calling his wife.
Jump squat, jump squat,
He is calling his wife.

(The frog's song.)

Dawn, day; dawn, day;
The Tsambe mouse is finishing other folk's food.

(The song of the *ndongera* mouse, that eats during the day.)

Stay a little yet, night; stay a little yet, night;
While I eat with you.

(The song of the *Tsambe* mouse, that eats only at night.)

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NOTES ON THE ACHEWA AND ANGONI OF THE DOWA DISTRICT OF THE NYASALAND PROTECTORATE.

[With Maps 1 and 2.]

By A. G. O. Hodgson.

CONTENTS.

I.—Environment. PAGE
1. Geographical Introduction 123
2. Sociological Introduction 126

II.—Domestic Life: Marital.
1. *Mdulo* (Chewa). 129
2. Puberty: Initiation of girls (Chewa) ... 131
3. " " boys (Chewa) ... 136
4. Forbidden and enjoined unions (Chewa) 137
5. Forms of marriage (Chewa) 138
6. Customary licence and illicit unions (Chewa)... 138
7. Husband and wife (Chewa) 138
8. Dissolution of marriage (Chewa) ... 140
9. Marriage of widows (Chewa) 140
10. Forbidden and enjoined unions (Ngoni) 141
11. Forms of marriage (Ngoni) 141
12. Customary licence (Ngoni) 142
13. Dissolution of marriage (Ngoni) ... 142

III.—Domestic Life: Filial.
1. Infancy 142
2. Inheritance 143

IV.—Social Organization: Political and Legal.
1. Political Organization and clans (Chewa) 143
2. " " " (Ngoni) 144
3. Secret societies: the *Viyaw* 146
4. Property 152

V.—Social Organization: Military. PAGE
1. Preparations for war 153
2. Methods 153
3. Subsequent proceedings 153

VI.—Social Organization: Ecclesiastical and Professional.
1. Rainmaking (Chewa) 154
2. " (Ngoni) 155

VII.—Tribal Life: Funeral Rites.
1. Preparation of the body (Chewa) ... 155
2. Disposal of the corpse (Chewa)... ... 155
3. Funeral rites (Chewa) 156
4. Memorial rites (Chewa) 157
5. Funeral rites (Ngoni) 159

VIII.—Mental Characters.
1. Re-incarnation and spirits (Chewa) ... 160
2. Miscellaneous 161

IX.—Economics.
1. Beermaking (Chewa) 162
2. Iron smelting 163
3. Implements of war 163

I.—Environment.

1. *Geographical Introduction.*

M
N
131

The Nyasaland Protectorate consists of a strip of land some five hundred miles in length and approximately seventy miles in width, lying around the southern and western shores of Lake Nyasa, which is the most southerly and the third in size of the great East African lakes. The hot, low-lying plain which forms part of the Rift valley rises gradually from an altitude of 120 feet on the Lower Shire River to 1,600 feet at the level of the lake. To the west of this

M
N
133

[text continues on page 126]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M
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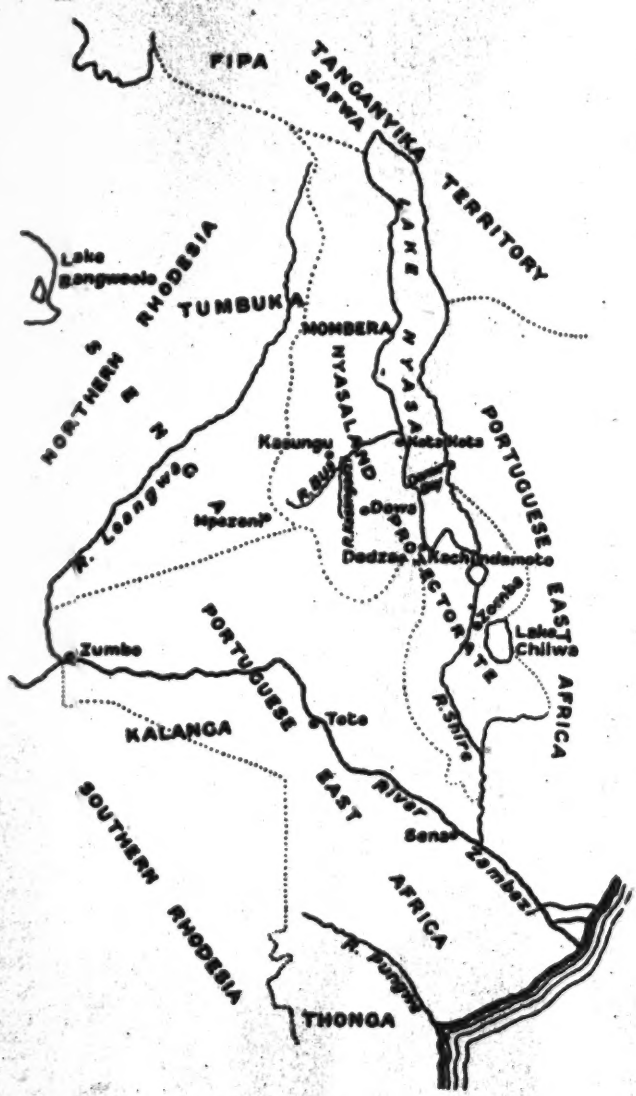
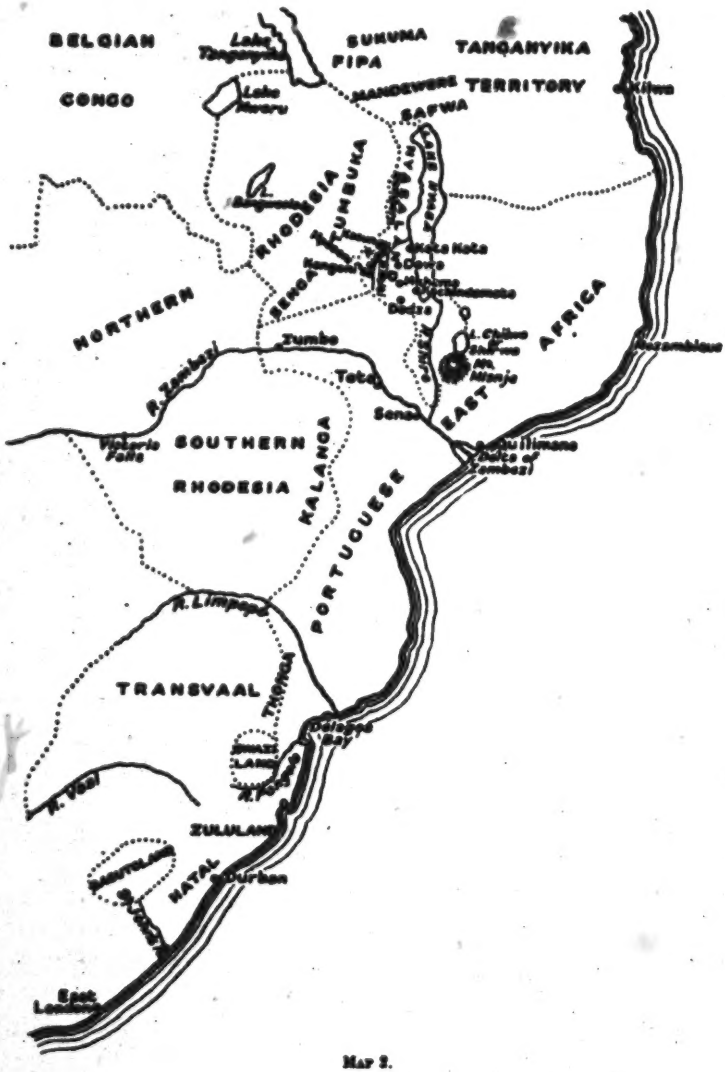
102
101
103
131



Map 1.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M
N
102
101
103
131



MAP 2.

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Maravi FR4

M N 133 plain is a moderately temperate, undulating plateau, standing from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea-level and broken by ranges of mountains whose peaks tower several thousand feet higher.

[131] The Dowa District is situated in the centre of the Protectorate. Its area of 2,400 square miles is divided topographically into three nearly equal parts, the alluvial lake-shore plain on the east giving way to the escarpment of the hilly plateau in the centre, which again drops steeply on the west to another plain extending to the banks of the Bua River. Each plain is well covered with light timber and long grass, and contains a plentiful supply of all local varieties of game. Tsetse have long infested the lake shore; on the west, migrating from Rhodesia, they crossed the Bua as recently as 1914 and have now spread as far as the hills. The central plateau is cool and healthy. Formerly well timbered, it has since been denuded by the wasteful methods of the native inhabitants. It is free from tsetse and mosquitoes, and cattle thrive in consequence. The larger species of game are absent.

N M 137 196 [192]

2. *Sociological Introduction.*

N M 161 131 The census of 1926, taken at the time when these notes were compiled, shows the population of the District as consisting of 57,184 Achewa,[1] 38,244 Angoni, 93 Anyanja and 4,627 Wayao, together with an odd thousand belonging to other tribes. The Achewa live principally in the west and centre, the Angoni on the central plateau, and the Anyanja and Wayao on the lake shore. The same census gives a total of 247,000 Angoni and 470,000 Anyanja and Achewa out of 1,300,000 natives then settled in the Protectorate.

M 194 The two last-named tribes taken together are numerically the largest in Nyasaland, and they have probably lived in their present habitat longer than any others; but the exact duration of their residence can only be a matter for conjecture, since the history of the southern Bantu peoples, during the last four centuries at any rate, consists of one long series of migrations and invasions. From time to time clans and tribes have been united under a strong and powerful leader, and a few decades later disintegration has set in and they have almost vanished. New names have frequently been adopted, and few tribes in south-east Africa now bear the same designation and occupy the same ground as did their ancestors four hundred years ago. Oral tradition is supplemented but scantily by the reports of the early Portuguese explorers, who

M [175] first ascended the Zambezi River at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their objects were commercial rather than scientific, and they have left little record of the native peoples with whom they came in contact.

It is known, however, that the Achewa and Anyanja are off-shoots or descendants of the A-maravi, who inhabited the country north of the Zambezi at Sena and Tete in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In his Report upon the Rivers of Cuama (Zambezi) compiled

M 175 in 1667 Father Manuel Barreto states that this warlike tribe was governed by its emperor, named Cazonga, whose kingdom extended two hundred leagues up the river from the port of

N M [164]

[1] Tribal names in Nyasaland generally take the plural prefix A-, as A-ngoni, A-chewa, sometimes Wa-, as Wa-yao. The singular prefix is M-, as Mngoni, Myao. Further south, Aba-, Aba- and Ama- are more common, e.g. Aba-Ngoni, Aba-Mbo, Ama-Ndwandwa. For the sake of convenience, when there is no danger of confusion between prefix and stem, I have omitted the hyphen.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

Quilimane and included all the Macua and many other people and vast provinces as far as Mombasa.[1] It may also have embraced part of what is now Nyasaland, since Lake Maravi, slightly to the north-west of the actual position of Lake Nyasa, figures in Portuguese maps of 1546 and 1623.[2] In 1860, the people living round Dedza, fifty miles south of Dowa, still described themselves as Amaravi,[3] and even now among the Achewa and Anyanja there may be found old men who will say, "We are Amaravi"; but this time-honoured designation has practically disappeared, and has been replaced by "Chewa" north of Dedza, "Mang'anja" on the Shire River, and "Nyanja" round Lakes Shirwa and Nyasa.[4] The Achewa living round Dedza and to the south of Dowa are frequently called "Achipeta," but this is nothing more nor less than a nickname bestowed upon them at the time of the Ngoni raids because they fled and hid themselves in the *chipeta* (long grass) country. In speech, manners and customs they do not differ from the Achewa of the north. 175 101 [726]

The tradition of the Dowa Achewa is that they came from the Maravi country on the Zamberi many, many years ago, and finding people of very small stature in the country lying south-west of Lake Nyasa, they killed them and settled in their country.[5] 173

Later, probably towards the end of the eighteenth century, their paramount chief, Karonga,[6] made his headquarters on the Nkadzapula stream near the present site of Kachindamoto's village, and his four brothers Mwase Kampani, Mwimba, Gebisa and Chipwaira collected a following and emigrated in a north-westerly direction to seek new lands, adopting at the same time the name "Achewa" in order to distinguish themselves from the parent stock. Mwimba and his company halted at the Bua, and settled near Kongoni's, while the others pressed on to the Dwangwa and Loangwa Rivers in the country then inhabited by the Atumbuka. In 1831 Monteiro reported that these "Tombokas were serfs of the Chevas"; the name of the well-known chief, Mwase, first appears in Portuguese records seven years earlier[7]; and in 1863 [643] [101] [167] 175

[1] G. M. Theal: *Records of South East Africa*, vol. iii, p. 464 *et seq.*

[2] J. S. Keltie: *The Partition of Africa*, p. 46.

[3] David and Charles Livingstone: "The Zambesi and its Tributaries," map.

[4] *Nyasa* in the Yao and *nyanja* in the Chewa or Nyanja language both mean lake, or broad river. Mang'anja is, of course, another variation of Nyanja.

[5] This legend is current also among the Amang'anja further south, and Sir Harry Johnston (*British Central Africa*, p. 53) states that the natives living around Mlanje Mountain informed him that people of the Bushman-Hottentot type were living on the upper plateau until quite recently, but in spite of intensive search no trace of their remains has been found.

In the Harvard African Studies III, *Varia Africana* III, on p. 318, Dr. H. S. Stannus refers to the mythical "little people" of the Anyanja and Wayao, who are supposed to dwell on the tops of high mountains. They are small and fierce, wearing long beards and carrying spears, and are said to damage gardens at night. He suggests that in them we may see the transition from historical fact to fairy story.

[6] The same name as Caronga, who is referred to above. The A-mang'anja use Karonga as a form of address when they wish to show respect to anyone. Chilembwe is used in a similar sense. (*Cf.* also *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, xl, p. 308). The A-mang'anja called their paramount chief Lundu or Rondo, and Barreto's report mentions a kingdom of Bororo, extending up the river from Quilimane, subject to Runda, the second person in the empire of Maravi. L and r are interchangeable in these languages.

[7] E. H. L. Poole: *Journal African Society*, vol. xxx, No. cxix, p. 184 *et seq.*

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

M 175

Livingstone found chief Mwase, at Kasunga, ruling over "a section of Mang'anja, called Machewa, or Macheba[1]."

M 175 648 [241] [167]

For some years the Achewa enjoyed a peaceful existence in their new home, keeping cattle, but living mainly by agriculture, until their tranquility was disturbed by the Ngoni invasion and by the slave raids of the Jumbe[2] at Kota Kota. By these the eastern branch of Achewa was continually harassed; and consequently in 1893 Duncle, Kanyunda and others of the house of Karunga moved south to the Kasungedzi and Mtiti Rivers, and in 1896 handed over this part of the country to the protection of the British Government.

N 175 101 N 174

The Angoni, under the name of Mazitu, were described by Livingstone as Zulus,[3] and this terminological error has been copied by more than one subsequent writer. Of their earlier wanderings no record has been traced. Owing, perhaps, to their lighter colour it has been surmised that they came from far up the east coast; but it is known that under the style of Abe-nguni, derived from an ancient chief Mnguni, they were settled on the Dedesi, a small tributary of the upper St. John's River, when the Abe-mbo first arrived in Natal about 1620.[4] In this locality they remained for a couple of centuries, till towards the end of his reign the notorious Zulu king Chaka fell upon their allies the Ama-ndwandwe under Zwide. A section of the Abe-nguni then migrated northwards under Zwangendaba; and wherever they went they fought and subdued the peoples through whose country they passed, seizing cattle and incorporating captives in their own tribe. After raiding the Aba-suto, Ama-swazi, Aba-thonga[5] and Ama-kalanga, they crossed the Zambezi near Zumbo at the time of the total eclipse of the sun on the 19th of November, 1835,[6] and overran the territories of the Abe-senga, A-tumbuka, A-safwa and A-mandewere till they came to the land of the Wa-fipa and Wa-sukuma.

Here Zwangendaba (or Songandawa, as he is generally called in Nyasaland) died, and his following broke up and scattered in different directions. While others advanced to the north and east, four sections turned back, one under Mombera to the Tumbuka country, another under Mpezeni to the Loangwa river, the third under Chiwere to Dowa, and the fourth under Chikusi still further south. It is with the third section that we are now dealing. The hybrid nature of the Dowa Angoni can be inferred from the list of clans given in a subsequent section (IV, 2). During the last four decades they have intermarried still further with the Achewa, and there are now few, if any, pure-blooded Angoni in the district. Their paramount chief, Chiwere, though calling himself an Mngoni, is in reality an Msenga.

N 101 M N 648

The general features, characteristics and habits of these peoples are akin to those of neighbouring tribes which have been described by the Reverend Duff Macdonald,[7] Miss Alice Werner

M 171 121

[1] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, pp. 536, 542.

[2] A coast Arab, acting as *wali*, or representative, of the Sultan of Zanzibar.

[3] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, p. 361.

[4] Eric A. Walker: *Historical Atlas of South Africa*, p. 6. J. H. Soga: *The South-Eastern Bantu*, pp. 81, *et seq.*

[5] In *ph* and *th* each consonant is pronounced. Similarly, in *oo* and *ee* each vowel is pronounced.

[6] E. H. L. Poole: *Journal African Society*, vol. xxix, No. cxv, p. 290.

[7] Rev. Duff Macdonald, *Africana*. Miss Alice Werner, *The Natives of British Central Africa*. Dr. H. S. Stannus, *The Wayao of Nyasaland*, Harvard African Studies III, *Varia Africana* III, pp. 229-372, "Notes on Some Tribes of British Central Africa," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl. 1910, pp. 285-365, etc., etc.

Dr. H. S. Stannus and other writers, and I have attempted, therefore, in the following pages to confine myself to matters which, so far as I know, have not been recorded fully elsewhere. The present tense is generally used, though in many instances, during forty years of contact with missionary and other European influence, the custom described may have fallen wholly or partially into desuetude. Except where otherwise stated, the notes may be taken as referring to the Chewa tribe.

II. Domestic Life: Marital.

1. *Mdulo.* (*Chewa*).

Mdulo (a noun derived from *ku-dula*, to cut or break off) is the causing of illness in oneself or another person by indulging in sexual intercourse at prohibited times, or, more rarely, by abstaining therefrom when it is prescribed. The following are examples of cases in which the misfortune of *mdulo* is conferred:

(*a*) Upon a husband by his wife if he eats food into which she has put salt either during her periods or after she has committed adultery.

(*b*) Upon an unweaned child by its father—

(1) if he fails to achieve connexion after its birth (*vide infra* II, 7);

(2) if he commits adultery in his own house when the child is there;

(3) if he has connexion with his wife on the child's blanket when the child is sleeping in the house; or

(4) if he occupies the same house with two wives, and has connexion with the other in the temporary absence of the child and its mother.

(*c*) Upon an unweaned child by its mother if she leaves its *sabereko*[1] outside the house while she has intercourse and afterwards puts the child into it again. In the event of such a contretemps the *sabereko* must always be given away to someone else.

(*d*) Upon the womb of a wife by her husband—

(1) if he commits adultery when she is pregnant and then eats with her out of the same pot.

(2) When a man has two wives, he normally spends a week or two with each in turn. If, when one is pregnant, he leaves her for an abnormally long period, he must not return to her until after she has given birth, otherwise he will thereby "cut off" the womb. The result of this misadventure is that the wife will die in child-birth, or the child will be still-born or will die shortly after birth.

(*e*) Upon a boy in the *bwalo*[2] by his parents—

(1) when the boy comes to their house in their absence and helps himself to meat or food from a pot, if the parents have intercourse on their return and then give him meat from the same piece or food from the pot;

[1] *Sabereko*, the cloth or skin fastened round a mother's neck or shoulder and slung on her back, in which she carries her child till it is weaned, that is, till it has reached the age of two or three years. The *sabereko*, when made of tanned skin is often decorated gaily with beads. *Ku-beba* is the verb meaning to carry in this way.

[2] *Bwalo*, the communal open space in a village. Boys of five or six years of age, who are too old to continue to sleep with their parents, go to a communal hut until they are married. This hut is known as the "*bwalo*" hut, and the boys are said to be "in the *bwalo*."

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

753 684 833 (2) if they have intercourse during his absence on a long journey, unless upon his return they first take medicine known as *kundabwi*[1] and procured from a doctor before killing a fowl for him or giving him any food or drink.

[755] (f) Upon a girl by her parents unless they refrain from intercourse during her first menstruation (*vide infra*, section 2 on Puberty).

[622] (g) Upon the village headman by a girl—

(1) unless he abstains from sexual intercourse during her first menstruation;

(2) if she becomes pregnant before she has passed through the puberty ceremonies described in the following section.

[535] (h) Upon any of the other actors in a *vingau* dance (*vide infra*, IV, 3) on any occasion by one of their number who eats with them on the following day after having failed to observe the rule of sexual abstinence until the final night when intercourse with their own wives is compulsory.

[317] [263] (i) Upon the other members of a party who have made a journey together to procure salt by any one of them who fails to comply with the regulation whereby all are compelled to take it together; and upon the wife or children of any member unless he gives them some of it before enjoying his conjugal rights on his return.

[764] (j) Upon all who sleep at the hut of the deceased during a funeral by any one of them who does not abstain from sexual intercourse.

When anyone suspects that he or she is a victim of *sululo*, the culprit is discovered by the 755 *sing'anga*[2] and subjected to the *mumbei*[3] trial by ordeal. The illness has no specified form, but it invariably terminates fatally unless the following precautions are taken. The offender must call a doctor and the sick person to his house, where the doctor cuts up roots of the plant [824] *mdyapumbwa*, and ties the pieces into two small bundles (*vikunja*). Next, the doctor kills a chicken by piercing it with a sharp stick from vent to mouth, plucks it, and puts it with water and one of the bundles of roots into a pot, which he boils on the fire. Then he puts salt into a *chichezo* (basket strainer used for making salt), and pours in water. The offender also pours in water, and if it is his child who was sick, his wife, marriage witnesses and relations do the same. The doctor then pours the mixture into the pot, places a second pot on top, and plasters up the intervening space with clay. When the concoction has been thoroughly boiled, the offender places the pots near the door and pulls off the top one, whereupon the sick person cowers over the other under cover of a blanket to prevent the fumes escaping, and remains there as long as he can. When a father has "cut off" his child, he holds him in his arms, and both inhale [262] the fumes together. Then the doctor cooks porridge in another pot, and puts it in an *nsengwa*

[1] *Kundabwi* or *pundabwi* consists of the ashes of burnt roots. This meaning is also given in the Rev. D. C. Scott's *Cyclopædic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language*. Dr. H. S. Stannus, in his "Notes on Some Tribes of British Central Africa," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl, 1910, on page 295, refers to *pfundabwi* as being made of red earth and castor oil and used by the Anyanja as a protection for infants against the sun.

[2] *Sing'anga*, the doctor or medicine man.

[3] The bark of the *mumbei* tree (*erythrophlæum guineense*) is highly poisonous and is commonly administered to, or taken voluntarily by, persons suspected of witchcraft or other crimes. [695]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

(shallow basket), from which both offender and victim help themselves, first dipping each mouthful into the pot containing the chicken. After this, the doctor roasts the other roots; when charred (now known as *kundabwi*), these also are dipped in the pot and eaten. Then the second bundle of roots is mixed with a light gruel of flour and water, and eaten by both parties, and the ceremony is over. In accordance with the practice customary in all cases of sickness, the doctor receives a small present when called, and has not the temerity to claim his full fee until the cure is complete. 755 [262]

2. *Puberty: Chinamwali (Chewa initiation of girls).*

When a Chewa girl first menstruates, the first person to be aware of the fact reports it immediately to the girl's mother, using the formula "*watyola bowo*" (she has broken the reed arrow shaft). The mother tells the father, who in turn reports at once to the village headman. The parents then select two women friends, who take the girl about and sleep with her during the ceremonies. These are known as *aphungu*, the senior one taking the lead, and the junior one following. During the next three days, the girl and her *aphungu* sleep in her mother's house: the mother remains, but the father must sleep elsewhere. The village headman must abstain from sexual intercourse during this period, otherwise *sadulo* will result; and on the fourth day the father reports that the girl is well again, and presents him with a fowl known as *Nkhuku ya kundabwi*. The headman then makes *kundabwi* medicine, which the mother mixes with the food which she and the father share the same evening. The mother and female relations then shave the girl's head without any special ceremony, and throw the hair away. The *aphungu* are also partially shaved. This is known as the first *kusseta* (shaving). 881 [622] [302]

If the girl is already married, as is generally the case, she continues to live with her husband during the ensuing month, at the end of which, after giving her a mat and an *nsengwa*[1] basket, he is sent away till the second *kusseta*. The parents also give her a mat and an *nsengwa*, and they must refrain from intercourse and from putting salt into her food until she has resumed cohabitation. [582] [431] [263] [888]

The real ceremonies take place some time after the second month, and always in the slack season following the harvest. A girl may then be "danced" alone, or with any number of others. If there are nine or ten girls in one village, and the harvest has been a good one, they may be divided into two or three groups. The husband now brings a gift, as for example, two *nsilichero* (sifting baskets), two *nsengwa* and four fowls, to which the parents add a rather smaller contribution; and in the evening the *asambwangwi*[2] take them all as presents to the village headman. The headman puts the gifts inside the house, and asks when they intend to shave the girl. Having already commenced the preparations for the beer, they reply that they will collect firewood next day. The parents select two fresh *aphungu*, and the female [431]

[1] The *nsengwa* is used constantly by women in their work, and is regarded as a symbol of womanhood. [885]

[2] In every village there are three male and three female *asambwangwi*, or instructors of youth, selected principally for their task on account of their knowledge of medicines. One of each sex is always old, and has no duty beyond that of giving advice, whereas the others are younger, and take the active parts demanded of them. [867]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni Maravi FR4

881 *anambungwi* announce their decision to the male *anambungwi*, who pass the news round the village. In the evening the *Vingwe*[1] dancers repair to the *liunde* and discuss their programme
[595] for the dance.

Next day (*tsiku lofulula*) they are busy collecting materials and taking them to the *dambwe*.
881 575 There they fashion an *ukhandwe* (jackal) by cutting the large end of a gourd, smoothing the edges, and fastening a piece of goatskin over the opening and pegging it down round the side.
[534] The skin is bored in the centre, and through the hole is inserted a piece of *ulasa* (fan palm leaf
[825] rib) till it protrudes at the narrow end, whence it is pulled with spittle-covered fingers, a small cross-piece of stick preventing it from slipping right through. If a couple of fingers wetted with spittle are now drawn along it, a noise is emitted like the cry of a jackal, *We! We!* Two of these *ukhwandwe* are operated by unmarried youths, so that no one will know who is doing it. The
[833] girl resumes cohabitation with her husband that night; the young men keep up their jackals' cries till late, and the women of the village respond with their *ulungululu* (cry of joy, *ngululu . . .*). When not in use, the *ukhandwe* are hidden until required again in a *nyumba ya*
[768] *mwaiye* (house which is deserted after its occupier's death).

Next morning (*tsiku lotsiriza*, also known on this occasion as *tsiku la chiduulu* or the day of the rascal) at early dawn the jackal's cry is again heard. It serves as a signal for the female *anambungwi* to proceed to the girl's hut, whence they drag her forth simulating terror and alarm,
[291] her cloth, which is normally fastened above the breasts, now wound round her waist and between her legs. The *dyalungu* are similarly clothed. The style of attire on this occasion is known by the special name of *tsuwa* or *ukhwachera*, and it is retained till the close of the ceremonies. The *ukhandwe* then return to the *dambwe* to assist the others in constructing the figures. About two o'clock the women of the village take the girl into the bush with their mats and the drums, and spend some time "instructing" her. It is said that they teach her secret songs, strip her naked, make her climb a tree, etc. Then they all return to the village singing, "*Chiduulu chakuka, chiduulu chakuka*," the rascal has mended her ways; one of the *anambungwi* holds an *uwagwe* in each hand and flaps her arms up and down; the men arrive and seize the drums and don their rattles; and the *ujedwa* dance begins, the women pouring flour on the girl's head
[535] in imitation of a *chiwalo*, placing her astride another woman's shoulders, and dancing round with her. At sunset the men go to the *dambwe*, while the women place the girl prostrate on the ground, gather round her, remove the flour and hide it by trampling it into the dust. Then the men proceed to the *liunde*, where they feast on meat and other food provided by the parents, who also supply the headman and the women with their quota. When they have dined, *lululu* always commences the dance. He receives two mats from the parents as his fee, and dances
[465] on them till he is tired, when he is replaced by a *chiwalo*, and two of the younger members roll up his mats and carry them to the *liunde*. The next ukhwala is always *chiwalo*; and after the second *chiwalo* follows *kuniaja*, whose business it is to chastise the girl driving her round and round the *uziwala* with a long stick. She is ordered to kneel down before him, and should she show any reluctance, it is interpreted as a sign of an evil heart, and earth is thrown at her till

[1] In order to appreciate what follows it is necessary to read first the sections on Bwemba and *Vingwe* (VX, 1 and IV, 3).

the complies. When her mother thinks she has had enough, she presents a fowl to *chimdo*, who then retires to the *liwale*. The other *mikhwala* follow without any set order of precedence, and dancing is kept up till midnight. Finally, after the men have gone to bed, one of the women takes two *nangwa*, covers them over with clean cloths, and pulls her own cloth over her head; some of the other women go to bed, but the *anambungwi* and the older ones gather round her. They hold up hoe handles round which they have tied pieces of rag, and sing to the girls: 881 575

" *Chitanda, chitanda, elele lele,*
Chimati m'dzulo, chimati m'mawa,
Chitanda chachendere." [539]

Chitanda means the trunk of an elephant, which is symbolized by the hoe handle; and the song is an instruction to the girls to use regularly at certain periods the cloth worn by a woman capable of bearing children. [841]

Then they proceed to the headman's house and receive a present (*supo*), the woman with the baskets keeping her head covered so that he may not know who she is. Then the girl retires with her *apkungu* and the three female *anambungwi* to sleep in the hut in which the beer was made, now vacated by its other occupants. [431]

The following day, *tsiku lopola*, is known as *tsiku la chingondo*. In the early morning the women take the girl into the bush and cover her all over with flour. This process is known as *chingondo*. Then they dance in the *bwalo* while the men beat drums till about 8 o'clock, when they take her again into the bush and perform a ceremony known as *lukowi*, which consists principally of chasing the girl about and reminding her of her past sins, the women having previously been bribed with beads by the parents to chastise her for any particular faults which they name. Her mother is not allowed to be present. At dusk the men bring the *viapwa* to the *liwale*, and after eating in their houses they begin to dance at the *mziada*. On this evening there is no particular order of precedence; but it is the only occasion on which the *mikhwala chilupira* and *chambele* appear, and each of them receives a present of a mat. [535] [535] [431]

On the morning of the third day (*tsiku loshambula*, now called *tsiku la tindwidza*) they work at the *dambwe* on *njobwa* and the other figures, and the father of each girl sends them baskets of flour and fowls, adding a goat if he is rich enough. When they have finished, *njobwa* is left outside the village, and the women place a pot of beer in front of him. Meanwhile, the women have made the girl a headdress known as *tindwidza*. This consists of a mud cast held into position on the head with a cloth until dry, with a row of long feathers such as the tail feathers of the *mkurukuru* (Livingstone's turaco) or *ngoni* (black whydah bird) sticking out along the centre from back to front. The *tsawa* is now discarded, and the girl is adorned with beads and dressed in new cloths, one of which is fastened under the arms and the other round the waist with the ends hanging down behind. The *apkungu* at the same time don smaller *tindwidza*, and change their attire. [292] [301]

The *viapwa* appear in the afternoon, *chimdo* leading. After they have danced awhile in the *mziada*, *lukhwazi* plays a special part, leading the girl to the houses of her relations, accompanied by four *maliya* (men dressed as women with false breasts of bananas). First they dance [585] [838]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

881 575 round the house of an adult sister, who gives them presents (*mazupo*). About sunset they serenade the mother, who gives them two mats, then the village headman, who gives them one mat,
[431] and finally the husband, who gives them two mats. Thence to the village *bwalo*, where the *anambungwi* remove the *timbwidza* and throw it away. Then they take the girl away; wash
[302] her in a stream, and shave her pubic hairs after having partially shaved those of the *ephungu*; and bring her back to the *bwalo*, where they place her on a mat. The husband, who has
[562] previously shaved his pubic hairs, takes his seat by her side carrying the symbols of manhood, a bow in one hand and an axe in the other, while his wife holds an *uzungwe*. He then dances round with his bow and axe, while she kneels before him. The *anambungwi* next take a small cup of beer, and shave the heads of the girl and the husband, and a little round the sides of those
[273] of the *ephungu*. Then, while the men drink beer, the female *anambungwi* take the girl home; eat porridge with her; tell her that this is her house, that she must bring water every morning for her husband and cook his food; and before departing give other final instructions as to her behaviour. Having at length left her to await her husband, they go with other married women
[622] to the house of the village headman, and uncover their private parts. While the headman
[832] gazes at them, his wife is present, and feels his penis. If he is excited, it is a bad sign, for all his people are as his children, and he should be able to look at them without carnal desire. If he is not excited, they know that he is a father worthy to superintend their initiations.

About nine o'clock, dancing is resumed, *mbonongo*, *kasinja*, and *njobwe* beginning. Finally
[535] they take all the mats and *ziugwe* to the *liunda*, leaving only *njobwe* and *nzunda* and two *vivulto* in the *mcinda*.[1]

At dawn on the *tsiku la kumwe*, or *tsiku la kumwa*, *Njobwe* begins to dance, while four *Ajwe*[2] cut at him with their axes, and men howl outside in the bush like hyænas waiting for his death. He then receives two mats from the headman, two mats from the husband
[431] and one from the father, and proceeds to the *liunda*. The *Ajwe* dance awhile together before following him. Everything is now burnt at the *dambwe*, except the *nyunda* of *njobwe*, *mbonongo*, *chiwindo* and other large *milkhunda*, which are hidden for future use in a *nyunda ya mazige*, or an old graveyard. The dancers finish off the beer and bathe; and next morning the *chiwindo* goes to the *liunda* and divides the presents, which have been guarded by unmarried youths in his own house.

On the morning following the *tsiku la kumwe*, the girls proceed with the *anambungwi* and
881 *ephungu* to the house of the headman. The *anambungwi* asks the *phungu* what new name she
[553] has chosen for the girl. The *phungu* gives the new name, which is now pronounced for the first time, and the *anambungwi* informs the girl that that is now her name. This ceremony over,

[1] On pp. 297, 298 of *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, Dr. Stannus describes part of the ceremony
[171] which he witnessed on the fourth and fifth days at a Wisa village in 1907, including the performances of *njobwe* and *nzunda* and two *vivulto* named *Sawkwa* and *Nhlolo*. *Sawkwa* is the word in common use for a bogey to frighten children.

Among the Wayao also, on the second night of *chipeto*, grass and bamboo representations similar to the *ziugwe* are brought in. (Harvard *African Studies* III, *loc. cit.*, p. 271.)

[224] [2] In imitation of the Nhlolo *Ajwe*, who used to kill elephants by hamstringing them with axes.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FRS Ngoni FRS
Maravi FR4

the husband and wife are secluded in their hut for two nights and a day; if obliged to leave, they must avoid being seen. On the second day, still keeping out of sight, they go off to the bush at dawn and remain there till dusk. The following day they do the same; but in the evening the girl's mother takes them with some fresh beer to the headman; they make obeisance to him, and receive a present of cloth. Next morning they show themselves in the village and display fitting humility. Whenever the girl meets another adult woman, she prostrates herself, hiding her face in her hands; the other woman whispers in her ear, and she stands up again. The *aphungu* are similarly constrained before women older than themselves. Every man the girl meets gives her a small present, such as a penny or a little maize; in acknowledgment she may not speak, but claps her hands, and he also claps his. Neither husband nor wife may speak to anyone on that day, but on the fifth morning they resume a normal existence. M 881 M [622] M [576] [431]

The Chewa girls are usually married a few months before puberty. The Angoni in the olden days were not wed till several years later; but now they generally marry shortly after puberty, and in some cases they have begun to follow the custom of the Achewa. M N 582

If a Chewa girl is not married when she first menstruates, a temporary substitute must be found. On the fourth day, after the *kundabwi* medicine has been procured, her father asks her eldest maternal uncle to find a *fisi*.[1] This man is generally a friend decided upon beforehand by the parents, and is usually middle-aged, as, if he were a youth, the girl might want to marry him, contrary to custom. He receives a fowl from the uncle, and visits the girl by stealth that night and the next one; no one must be allowed to discover his identity, and after the second night he must not come near her again. If the girl does not like the look of the *fisi* on either occasion, and refuses to have anything to do with him, he goes away and complains to the uncle, from whom he receives a fowl as compensation for the insult. The uncle reports the objection to the *aphungu* at once, and repeats it to the mother next morning. The mother then interviews the girl, who names a man she is willing to accept as a *fisi*, and he is called on the following evening; but in the interval and until she has received the *fisi*, the *aphungu* leave her, and she must remain by herself, so that all the people know she has refused her *fisi*. M 881 839

If she is still unmarried at the later ceremony, she is known as a *kudyeli*, and may not be danced alone, but only in the company of one or more married girls. A second *fisi* must be chosen in the same way to sleep with her on the two nights following the close of the ceremony; but he observes the same secrecy, and plays no part taken by the husband in public.

[1] Cf. also Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 315. When a Nyanja widow has been shaved in the course of the funeral memorial rites, the following night "she has to sleep with a man paid by her relations. He is called *Fisi*, because he steals his adultery." M [171]

This same custom obtains among the Wayao, in order that the widow may be clean for her prospective husband. The paid man is called *Hyaa*, which is the Yao word for hyena (Stannus, Harvard African Studies III, *loc. cit.*, p. 237).

The word *Hyaa* may also convey a sense of impersonality. It is used to denote the body of an unborn child, or of a child who dies before its father and mother have resumed sexual relations. (Harvard African Studies III, *loc. cit.*, p. 237)

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

3. *Puberty: Initiation of boys (Chewa).*

881 575 The initiation of Chewa boys takes place at the same time as that of the girls; and during the ceremonies the boys are known as *anamwali*, which is the name in everyday use for girls who have reached the age of puberty. The arrangements are made by the boy's *mtsibweni* (eldest maternal uncle) with the *chiwinda*[11] who in company with his assistants makes enquiries into the candidate's character, in order that he may be treated with greater or less severity according to his merits. The fee payable is now usually about five shillings, or a goat and [465] three or four fowls. The father is not allowed to be present, but two male *aphungu* are chosen to accompany the boy during the proceedings.

On the *tsiku la chiulwulu* of the girls' *chinamwali*, after the jackal's cries have died away, the boy is taken by his *aphungu* to the *dambwe*, where he is warned that if he divulges anything he sees there, he and his parents will die speechless, and if he is already married, his wife will die in childbirth. Then he is stripped and blindfolded, and led to the *vinyau*,[6] one *mkhwala*[9] being placed over him. The bandage is removed, and he finds himself in darkness. He is pulled out, and sees *vinyau* all round him. The figures are pushed against him, filling him with terror; and he is told that the *mikhwala* are the spirits of far-distant ancestors, and the [775] *vinyau*[6] those of their children, and that they have emerged from the stream. Then his trials begin. He may be tied over the fork of a tree with his head and feet downwards, or suspended head downwards from a tree over a lighted fire and swung round and round so that he may not be burnt. Sometimes the *chiwinda* and his satellites tie his hands behind his back, and push his head continually downwards, so that he nearly stumbles; or they pull him prostrate up and down a slope; take turns to pursue him round the *dambwe*; press his chest till he is breathless; tie him to a tree and put warrior ants on him; roll him up in grass in which they have put gum and the itching mucuna bean, and pour water on him; smear excrement on him; or pull him backwards by a string tied round his parts while his buttocks are beaten from behind. All the while they remind him of his past peccadilloes, but in these softer times it is essential that he should be returned to his mother without any marks, and by paying a small fine of a penny or two, or a fowl, his relations are allowed to stop any particular trial when they think he has had enough. They also scoop a shallow grave, wrap the boy completely in a cloth so that he cannot see, put him in the grave, and pour earth in. A *nanikungwi* whispers in his ear, telling him to wriggle upwards, so that the earth passes underneath and he is not smothered. After a time, they go away and leave him, hiding nearby to see what he will do. Presently, having heard no sounds, he gets up to see what is happening, and finds no one in sight. A cowardly boy will then sometimes make a bolt for safety; but if he does, he is caught and subjected to more severe punishment. At the *dambwe* each boy eats with his *aphungu*, the elder of whom kills a fowl by splitting it with a sharpened root from vent to mouth in order that the medicine from the root may permeate it entirely. After it has been plucked and roasted, they eat it with porridge, and finally devour the charred remains of the root. On each night of their trial the boys sleep with their *aphungu* in the *bwalo* hut,[12] and on the last evening they are made to sit in the cold water of the stream, after which they are presented with fowls to signify that all is over and that no malice is borne on either side.

Finally, on the *tsiku la kumwa*, after they have taken away *njobwa's* five mats, they bring back the boy *anamwali* from the *liunde* to the *mzinda*, each boy carrying a mat. They dance to the drums without *vingwa*, and the women make them small presents (*masupo*). Then they put the *masache* rattles on the boy *anamwali* and their *aphungu*, who dance till their friends and relations have twice given them *masupo*. Then the youths who were initiated during the preceding year put on the *masache* and dance till they also have earned *masupo* from their friends and relations. M 881 575 535 431

Then the older ones come and dance again, and receive *masupo* from the women. Finally, all the men and boys join in dancing the *chisamba*, after which they proceed to the *liunde*, where they form a chain, each one grasping the waist of the one in front, the *anamwali* in the middle. Thus they return to the *mzinda*, singing, "*Ndawala mkhoma kuliyede*" (It is good to run about early in the morning), and dance till the women *supa* them. After another retreat to the *liunde*, they return carrying sticks. Armed with these, they go round to every house for presents of beer, beads, etc., picking up en route anything they see lying about, and demanding ransom from the owners. On the morning following the *tsiku la kumwa*, the boys precede the girls to the house of the headman, and each boy receives from his *phungu* the new name which he will henceforth carry through life. During the next two nights, the boys sleep again in the *bwale* hut with their *aphungu*; and for three days they may not see their mothers, nor talk to anyone except their *aphungu* and each other, unless a man or woman first gives them a small present. The *aphungu* similarly may not address men older than themselves. On the third evening, the *aphungu* take each boy to his mother, and tell her, "This is your son; his name is now so-and-so." The boy is told that this is his mother's house, and that he must not go to his father's bed, nor take anything in the absence of his parents, nor ask for anything that he is not given. This exhortation concluded, the mother presents the *aphungu* with a fowl apiece, and they and the boy are free to do as they will. 881 575 431 [535] M [553] M

No form of circumcision is practised either by the Achewa or the Angoni. N [304]

4. *Forbidden and enjoined unions* (*Chewa*).

The Achewa are matrilineal and matrilocal. Grandfather and cousin marriage were formerly in vogue; and every eldest son was obliged first to marry a daughter of his mother's oldest brother, if there was one. After having done this he could choose his other wives himself. Even now this cousin marriage is the common practice, though its non-observance results no longer in a case stated before the chief. A man might marry his father's father's wives, his son's son's wives or his son's daughter, but not his daughter's daughter; nowadays, such cases are rare. M 611 591 M 582

It was formerly deemed incestuous to marry anyone of the same clan, even though of a different tribe, but not to marry anyone of a different clan with the same tabu. This custom, though still favoured by the older men, is now falling into disuse. Incest was sometimes practised to increase the effect of unlawful medicine; but the perpetrator was suspected of witchcraft and, when detected, was always punished by death. It is still considered a serious M [614] M [835] [754]

It is still considered a serious
582 offence to marry or to have connexion with a dwarf or grossly deformed person, and damages
[732] may be claimed by the guardian of the girl.

5. *Forms of Marriage* (*Chewa*).

584 There is no condition of betrothal; but the marriage may be contracted long before the girl is old enough for consummation, and in such a case she must abstain from intercourse with any other man, just as though the marriage had been consummated. If, however, she is married before she can know her own mind, and subsequently refuses to have intercourse with the husband when approaching puberty, she is not held to the contract.

Marriage is contracted by the suitor in the first place by sending a friend (known as the *akhosiwe*, or witness) to the girl's *msibweni* (mother's eldest brother), who calls her mother and father, relations and headman. If the friend returns with an affirmative reply, the suitor goes with his *aukhosiwe*, who present a fowl to the girl's *aukhosiwe*, who pass it on to her *msibweni*,
[583] and the marriage is then valid. The payment is only symbolic; but, nowadays, it is frequently
[177] increased to three or four shillings, or a goat; and sometimes by agreement the Ngoni custom of bride-price (*vide infra* II, 11) is followed altogether. There must not be less than two *aukhosiwe* on each side; generally, there are two or three, rarely more than four or five, and not necessarily the same number on each side. Fathers, father's brothers and mother's brothers are ineligible,
[591] but younger brothers are frequently chosen. After beer has been consumed by the *aukhosiwe*,
[342] the bridegroom commences to build a house for his bride in her mother's village, and cohabitation
[585] is supposed not to commence before it is finished.

6. *Customary Licence and Illicit Unions* (*Chewa*).

836 Unchastity before marriage is the custom, but a strict line is drawn between concubinage and marriage. In the former state, no rights are acquired nor obligations incurred, and the woman is entitled to leave without assigning any reason and to take her children with her;
595 but if the partnership continues for many years and children are born, the parties usually contract
581 marriage in the ordinary way, and any previous children of the union are then considered to have been born in wedlock.

7. *Husband and Wife* (*Chewa*).

578 A wife's mother is primarily responsible for her behaviour, and it is the duty of the relations
[593] generally to look after the conduct of both parties. Quarrels are first discussed by the guardians, and then by the *aukhosiwe*, after which they are taken to the village headman, when necessary. If the wife is aggrieved, she first tells her mother; if the husband, he goes direct to the wife's
[692] *msibweni*. The case is normally decided by the headman of the village in which the parties live;
[622] but when a neighbouring headman has a reputation as a judge, it may be transferred to him by mutual consent. Where the quarrel is only trivial, the party at fault is ordered to give the
[689] other a fowl in acknowledgment of the blame; in a rather more serious case, a goat may be paid. If after several quarrels it is clear that the parties cannot live amicably together, but the wife's relations like the husband and wish to keep him in their family, they sometimes give him a
[587] younger sister in place of the former wife.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

In addition to his ordinary marital duties, the husband is supposed also to help his mother-in-law in hoeing her garden, building or repairing her hut or grainstore, paying her tax, making mats or doors and performing various errands. 606

The following custom known as *chitengwa* (from *kutenga*, to take) is common, especially in the case of cousins. If after a few years the husband wishes to return to live at his mother's village, and the wife also agrees, he informs his *ankhosse*, who arrange the matter with the wife's *ankhosse* and relations, and hand over a fowl as evidence of the contract. Should they subsequently return to the wife's original home, arrangements are made by the *ankhosse*, and the fowl, or corresponding token is restored. 591

In the second month of pregnancy, a *chisamba* dance known as *chinamwali cha mimba* (initiation of the womb) is held. In this dance, at which no men are present, the woman's stomach is handled by her fellows. The *namkungwi* asks her who will name the child, and she replies with the name of the younger brother of her father-in-law, who eventually names the child after its birth in the presence of the relations without any particular ceremony, the second name being given by the maternal grandmother. 843 [553]

If a woman becomes pregnant without having passed through the usual initiation described in section 2 of this chapter, it is considered a great disgrace, as the headman suffers *mdulo* thereby. Consequently, the *chisamba* is not danced, a *chimbwinda* being held instead in the fifth month of pregnancy. At this *chimbwinda* all the women come to the hut before daylight, wearing bark cloth, sackcloth and maizecobs. They then proceed to beat the husband, and carry off the wife, and dance her naked in the bush until sunset. [881] [753] [689]

Birth takes place in the dwelling hut. The midwife (*osamba*) remains there for about a week until the navel strings (*mchombo*) are severed. She then buries them under the mother's sleeping dais, so that when the child begins to crawl over it, he will derive strength therefrom. The placenta (*chibaliro*) is now buried with the navel strings. Formerly, it was buried by the midwife at night at the bottom of a refuse heap[1]; but medicine-men used to lie in wait to steal it, as, when dried in the sun and mixed with medicine, it was particularly efficacious for killing people. So long as the midwife remains in the house, the husband may visit his wife in the day time, but must keep away at night. When her services have been dispensed with, he may sleep in the house, but must not resume intercourse until the end of the first month, when he presents the midwife with a fowl, and again goes in to his wife. It is said to be quite a common occurrence on such occasions for the man to be unable to complete his task "owing to the thought that the child came out where he would enter"; and the child suffers *mdulo* thereby, and will die unless the necessary medicine is administered. 844 846 [754] [753]

When a man has failed to beget a child, he usually takes a second wife; and if he is still unsuccessful, he is held to be impotent. He then goes to a doctor, who gives him medicine to make him vomit forth the cause of his impotency. An impotent man (*mchimbwiru*) frequently arranges with his wife for a friend to beget him a child secretly; and in such a case, the friend, and not the husband must first have connexion with the wife a month after birth, 842

[1] Cf. also H. S. Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 311, and Harvard African Studies III, *loc. cit.*, p. 236.

842 otherwise *mdulo* of the child will still result. Medicine is taken also by women who are unable to conceive. If it fails, it is because a spirit has entered the womb; and lots are taken to find whose spirit it is, after which sacrifices are offered until the desired result is obtained.

8. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Chewa*).

586 The Achewa have no form of legal separation by agreement, and a divorce can be effected only where adequate reason exists. A husband may not divorce his wife on account of barrenness; but he may divorce her for adultery or desertion; or if she persistently neglects to cook food, bring water or perform her other work; or if she is offensively and perpetually jealous. A wife may divorce her husband if he is impotent; or if he fails to maintain a habitable house, or to do his share of the work; or if he fails to pay her tax, feed and clothe her properly; or on account of desertion or ill-treatment. Effect is given to the divorce after the hearing of the case by the husband handing over a fowl or other token, always known as *mubvi*[1] (an arrow), in the presence of the *anakhosui*[17] to the wife's father, who passes it on to her *mtsibweni*.[2] The wife always keeps the children, even if she has been at fault; though sometimes in very flagrant cases one or more fully-grown children may be awarded to the husband; and in adultery the
[684] co-respondent is obliged to pay heavy damages as compensation for the loss of the children, and the value of several years' tax is refunded by the *mtsibweni*. A woman may not be divorced while she is pregnant.

9. *Marriage of Widows* (*Chewa*).

587 A widow may not be courted until after the conclusion of the funeral ceremonies described in Section VII. When, a few months later, she has to make her choice, she brews beer at her own house, and on the evening of the *tsiku loshambula* her suitors, friends and relations foregather outside; the eldest female relation holds before her pieces of (*tsebera*) grass, and tells her which of the suitors each piece represents. Then she signifies her choice by taking the appropriate piece in her hand; and the old woman proceeds to the house of the chosen one, selects therefrom a knife or other small article, and hands it to the widow. In due course the
[775] bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, brings a cow, sheep, goat or fowl, according to his
[842] means, and ties it to the centre post of the widow's house, in order to get rid of the spirit of her late husband; otherwise, he will not be able to beget a child. The widow brings out beer; her relations subsequently remove the animal from the centre post, and at night the bridal pair sleep apart in the house. Next day they procure medicine from a doctor and put it in a big pot in the house; and in the evening first the man and then the woman bathes in it. That night they again abstain from conjugal intercourse; but at cockcrow, after bathing a second time in the pot, they take it outside the village to a place where two paths meet, and break it there, thus finally and completely ridding themselves of the spirit of the first husband. They return to the village before it is light, and then commence their married life.

[1] Cf. H. S. Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 309.
[2] *Tsebera*, a long coarse grass used for thatching.

10. *Forbidden and Enjoined Unions (Ngoni).*

The Angoni are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*vide infra*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the Angoni it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage (Ngoni).*

When an Mngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headman to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *ankhoswe* with a present to the *ankhoswe* of the girl. There are always two *ankhoswe* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ku-onga*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several elder women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commensuration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ku-tenlera*, and sends a cloth (known as *sukeku*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kulowola*, or *kupereka mabeka*. The *mabeka*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

12. *Customary Licence* (*Ngoni*).

N 836 [183] [684] [583] Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

N 586 [595] Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mchehu*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *nakhosewe* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mchehu*, *kutenderu* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. M [586] But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

III.—DOMESTIC LIFE: FILIAL.

1. *Infancy*.

M 845 Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*kigelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man [582] at the same time, and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

M 429 Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *mwibweni*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

N 429 593 Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

2. *Inheritance.*

When a Chewa woman dies, her personal property is inherited by her mother's eldest brother; but he must always give something to the deceased's eldest brother, and may then present a share, first to her other brothers and sisters, and then to his own brothers and sisters, if there is enough to go round. If the woman is married and leaves children, they may also share, if the inheritance is sufficiently large. A man's land and crops at his wife's village are always inherited by the widow; his personal property falls to his mother's eldest brother or, in default, to his own eldest brother; but the deceased's eldest son must always receive a share. M 428

Among the Angoni, a man's land is inherited by his eldest son, or by his eldest surviving brother, if he has no son. His personal property goes first to his eldest son, or, if he has no son, to his eldest daughter. If he dies childless, his father inherits; if the father is dead, the deceased's eldest surviving brother; if he leaves no brothers, then the father's eldest living brother; and if all these are dead, their sons are taken in order. On the death of a woman, the husband takes the children; but her father takes all her personal property, including her share of the proceeds of the joint property of her husband and herself. N 428

IV.—Social Organization: Political and Legal.

1. *Political Organization and Clans (Chewa).*

The tribal life of the Achewa and of the other descendants of the Amaravi has always been a disintegrated one. They have lived normally in small family communities, uniting under a common leader only when obliged by an emergency to do so. After the passing of the emergency, the leader has retained, nevertheless, a certain amount of influence, and has been regarded in some respects and in a small degree as a paramount chief. M 571 621 643

Their tradition as to the origin of their chiefs is that long ago they had no instruments of war, hunting or agriculture. So they were at a disadvantage and an easy prey to their enemies, but at length God showed them ore, and they devised a smelting furnace (*ng'anjo*) (*vide infra* IX, 2). By this means men began to acquire wealth and power, whereby they became chiefs; and *chuma*, the name given to the iron so made, is the word now used to signify any kind of wealth. M 773 [325] [556]

The Achewa are divided into various clans, or *visongo* (sing. *chisongo*). The common explanation now given is that these clan-names were devised in order that people might know their relations. Formerly, restrictions in the matter of diet were imposed upon adult members of a clan; but these restrictions are now generally ignored, and in many cases they have been forgotten. Marriage with a member of the same *chisongo* was strictly prohibited, but it is now of common occurrence. M 614 [262] [582]

The clan-names are the same as those of the Anyanja and Amang'anja. In some cases they correspond with those of the Wayao, who are a different tribe speaking a different language and, though the distinctions of the clan are falling daily deeper into disregard, an Mchewa will treat an Myao of the same clan as his *mbale*, or brother; and recently, when the Chewa chief, M [171] M [648]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M 614 [648]

Mwase, died at Kasungu, the Yao chief, Makanjira, living on the lake shore made a journey of fifty miles to attend his funeral ceremonies because both were members of the *Phiri* clan.

Three Chewa *viwongo* predominate in the Dowa District. These are—

(1) *Phiri*, meaning a hill, said to be derived from a big hill where this section of the tribe halted during its earlier migrations. It includes chiefs Kamtepa and Mphanda. Its members were forbidden to eat the animals normally found on hills, viz., baboon, klipspringer and hyrax.

(2) *Banda*, including chiefs Kahuni and Nguruwe. Two derivations of the name are given, (*a*) from *banda*, a small hut, because when on trek they found a small hut by itself in the middle of uninhabited bush, and (*b*) from *ku-wanda*, to beat down the grass, because this clan always took the lead on the march. No tabu is observed.

M [643]

(3) *Mwale*, Dzoole, who is the principal Chewa chief of the district. It is said that one day some Akwa-banda[1] killed a hartebeest, cut its head into strips and scattered them, and then called themselves Akwa-mwale, (from *kumwala*, to scatter). They were forbidden to eat the flesh of the hartebeest.

Other Chewa *viwongo* in the district are:

(4) *Nkhoma*, a root eaten by baboons, which might not be eaten by members of the clan. It includes chiefs Bazare and Mamba.

(5) *Chulu*, a termite heap. It includes chief Kalindang'oma. Its members were forbidden to eat termites.

(6) *Mphadwe*. This clan includes Duwa and Kayembe Chinchila. The legend of the Akwa-mphadwe is that they were formerly Akwa-banda; but one day a man went into the bush with his sister, who climbed an *mphadwe* tree for fruit; her clothes fell off, whereupon the man was excited and had connexion with her, and to avoid the crime of incest said he was an Mkwa-mphadwe.

(7) *Zimba*, from *ku-zimba*, to announce, because one day a messenger came and announced that he had found a large herd of game dead in the bush.

(8) *Kwenda*, (9) *Linde*, (10) *Mbewe*, (11) *Saka*, (12) *Chibwe*, (13) *Zonzi*, (14) *Nyirenda*, (15) *Biaga*.

2. *Political Organization and Clans* (*Ngoni*).

N 614

As might be expected from their history during the last century, the Angoni retain greater regard for their chiefs than do the Achewa. They also are divided into clans or *mafuko* (sing. *ufuko*), the members of which were formerly bound by restrictions of exogamy and prohibited food; but these restrictions have long since ceased to carry any weight, and in most cases they and the origins of the clans have been forgotten.

The following is a list of the true Angoni and of the tribes whom they incorporated with themselves during their wanderings. The names of the principal chiefs are given in brackets following the names of the clans.

[1] The prefix Akwa- is used to denote the members of a *chiwongo*.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FRS Ngoni FRS

True Ngoni.

(1) *Jave*, the clan of Songandawa, which includes also chiefs Mukimbowa, Mascotengenji, Zemetyala and Chitete. *Jave* means a bangle; but the name is said to be derived from the words of Songandawa when he crossed the Zambezi with all his prisoners, "Ningujeze," or "We are many." Members of the clan did not eat or kill the domestic pigeon, because when surrounding a village they attached burning barkcloth to these birds which, when released, flew on to the houses and set them on fire.

(2) *Gama* (Maliwa). (3) *Mgomerulu* (Chatambalala). (4) *Nkhosi* (Njolomole).

614

Of the Suto Tribe.

(1) *Mugui*. (2) *Mlipipo* (Mvuyani).

614
563

Of the Swazi Tribe.

(1) *Ngwenya* (Mjuwi). (2) *Gausi* (Chisenga). (3) *Mangatawa* (Mtumuni). (4) *Mafulelo* (Kofman). (5) *Gwama* (Zembezi).

Of the Thonga Tribe.

(1) *Sembo* (Marakheka). (2) *Mabanza* (Kafunikale). (3) *Sungwazi* (Ndawambi). (4) *Mpumulo* (Mapilani). (5) *Zungu* (Machila). (6) *Maliaga* (Mtekateka).

Of the Kalanga Tribe.

(1) *Hara* (Makanjira). (2) *Moyo*, meaning heart (Mundolilo). Members of these two clans might not eat the heart or liver, or drink the blood of any animal. (3) *Soko*, a monkey, (Chikuni). They might not eat monkeys, or baboons, or any food plucked by them. (4) *Nesa* (Chidzaye II). (5) *Skosa* (Nakutepa). Tabu: the eland. (6) *Honde* (Kalichero). (7) *Mapala* (Simakumi).

Of the Senga Tribe.

(1) *Mvula*, meaning rain (Ndualuwa). (2) *Khinda* (Zinombe). (3) *Lungu* (Chipanda). (4) *Mumba* (Pikheni). (5) *Mwanza* (Chingwo). (6) *Sabula* (Chimenge). (7) *Mwendya* (Mgubo). (8) *Nguruwe*, meaning a bushpig, which was tabu, as was also any foodstuff uprooted by bushpigs. (Mkukula II.) (9) *Ngoma* (Dzinaumalekra). (10) *Shamu* (Chidzaye). (11) *Mitu* (Msambo). (12) *Tembo* (Chikunumbu). (13) *Kunda* (Gwireni). (14) *Njobwa*, meaning an elephant, the meat of which was prohibited. To this clan belong Chiefs Chiwere, Mtalimanja and Makaruni. (15) *Mbewa* (Funzani II). (16) *Maleko* (Mbirintengenji). (17) *Mkonezi* (Chimangamassa). (18) *Mkunjo* (Wata).

Of the Tumbuka Tribe.

(1) *Nyalenda* (Gwireni). (2) *Chirwa*. (3) *Chunga*.

Of the Senfwa Tribe.

(1) *Mashiwa* (Mpowera). (2) *Sangu* (Manjaka).

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 614 563

Of the Mandawere Tribe.

(1) *Chimbale* (Chimbalanga).

Of the Sukuma Tribe.

(1) *Nthera*, meaning the frame put over an antheap. Tabu: termites (Kamkwamba, Yekoniya). (2) *Chisi* (Kampimbi, Funzani). (3) *Mphepo* (Lichapa). (4) *Chipata* (Chinyanya). (5) *Chimwa* (Njumbula). (6) *Ng'ombe* (Manyuza). (7) *Chiba* (Dumbo). (8) *Liwinda* (Kalinda). (9) *Mlenje* (Mgubo).

Of the Tonga Tribe. (A tribe allied to the Atumbuka living in the North of Nyasaland, not to be confused with the Aba-thonga south of the Zambezi).

(1) *Manda*. (2) *Nthata*.

3. *Secret Societies: the Vinyau.*

M 575 535 [825] [764] [881] N [575] [177]

The word *vinyau* (sing. *chinyau*) signifies "representations of animals." It serves also as the name of a dance in which large figures of grass and wicker, masks and other disguises play the principal part. This dance has a wide range and has long been performed by the Achewa in connexion with funerals. Latterly it has been introduced into initiation ceremonies as well. It is not danced by the Ngoni or Tumbuka tribes to the north; but the Dowa Angoni, who have not preserved their own nationality, tribal forms and customs to any great extent, have adopted it generally for funerals and sometimes for initiations. The most prevalent explanation of its origin is that when God made the country and its people He also instituted the *vinyau*. Consequently, the life of the people is bound up with it, and its secrets must be guarded zealously, initiates being warned that if they disclose them, not only will they themselves perish, but also their fathers and mothers and all their relations with them.

M [114] [775]

In 1907 Captain R. S. Rattray referred to this dance in his "Folk Lore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja," pp. 178 and 179, and expressed the opinion that it was undoubtedly in some way connected with totemism, the grass animals being reincarnations of the dead. He observed that the secrets were scrupulously kept, and that natives accustomed to speak freely on their other customs refused absolutely to discuss the *vinyau*. During the last twenty years of contact with European civilisation, its devotees have greatly increased in number; the dance itself has diverged to some extent from its original purpose and degenerated into a mere amusement; and the educated native of to-day does not believe so readily in the mysterious properties of a grass animal, and is therefore comparatively ready to impart his knowledge on the subject.[1]

M [178]

M [171]

[1] Dr. Stannus makes a brief reference to the *vinyau*, and in Harvard African Studies III, *loc. cit.*, p. 232, he describes one of the corresponding Yao *unyago* figures, viz., the *nambunda*, which is a "representation of an animal made of bark on a framework covered with mud and painted with flour in spiral markings, hence the name (*nambunda* is part of a spiral shell from the Zanzibar coast much prized by natives as an ornament)." In the following pages he gives a list of the other *unyago* figures, nearly all of which represent various animals, and states that they are used at the *lupanda* (initiation of boys) for instructional purposes, the Wayao denying any totemic origin. The Yao word *unyago* is, of course, the same as the Chewa *vinyau*.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

The figures, or *vinyau*, are divided into three classes, namely, (1) the *mikhwala*, or more important ones, being grass and wicker representations usually supported by several men; (2) the *visudzo*, or lesser ones, consisting of masks or other disguises worn by single men; and (3) various others which do not belong to either of the foregoing classes. The following are the best-known examples of *vinyau* and of the songs which accompany them. 575 532 539

Mikhwala.

With the exception of *chiwoko*, *njobvu*, *mdondo*, *njalza* and *kasiya maliro*, the larger *mikhwala* representing animals only perform at night, but any of the smaller ones may perform in the day time. [535]

(1) *Kalulu* (the hare).—This is a small man, but he draws a big fee. He opens the first day of the *chinamwali*. [881]

Wathawitsa kalulu ayenera kukhala wochenjera kwambiri kalulu mkuru wa bwalo, bwandende, bwandende.

Chorus: *Kalulu mkuru wa bwalo.*

(Kalulu makes you run away, he is very cunning indeed, kalulu, the chief of the village.)

(2) *Chiwoko* has big ears like an elephant's; he begins the *maliro*[1] on the first day and the *chinamwali* on the second day. [764] [881]

Taonani matu[2] *turuku msenjere.*

Chorus: *Chiwoko, chiwoko.*

(Look at his ears sticking out of the grass.)

(3) *Mdondo*, a very large figure.

Nyama mdondo, eee, nyama mdondo.

(*Mdondo*, the game animal.)

(4) *Kasiya maliro*, who dances alone at the close of a *maliro* (funeral). [764]

Kasiya maliro, mwanna kasiya.

Chorus: *Kasiya maliro.*

(Leave the funeral, leave the man.)

(5) *Njobvu*, the elephant.

(6) *Namwali walinga*, the girl does not heed (what her mother tells her).

(7) *Chilumpire bere*, an insect.

Chilumpire bere, wachiona, chilumpire bere.

(You have seen *chilumpire bere*.)

(8) *Tengere katundu*, bring the load.

(9) *Ngoma*, the kudu antelope.

(*Akadya thonje ngoma, mkazi ali ndi usiku.*)

Chorus: *Ngoma'yo.*

(The kudu eats my cotton, my wife is shabby.)

[1] *Maliro*, funeral or mourning, from *ku-lira*, to cry.
[2] *Matu*, an abbreviation of *malikatu*, ears.

575
532
539

(10) *Kakwa*, the paddy bird, *ibis bubulcus*.
Kakwa timapiko tating'ono mbalame ya ku nyanja.
(The paddy bird with its little wings, a bird of the river.)

(11) *Mbonongo*, a large figure.
Mbonongo, mbonongo, uiyone kuti nyama,
kubwalo kachepa, ku Tsanja kwa Njerewende,
ku Mtula kwa Chimbwanda.
(See what a beast it is, the village courtyard is too small for it, at the hills of Tsanja and Mtula near the chiefs Njerewende and Chimbwanda.)[1]

(12) *Mpungu*, the vulture.
Onetsa kumbuyu ku mimba ndakwona kale, mpungu.
(Show your stern ; I have already seen your belly)—*i.e.*, looking upwards from underneath.

(13) *Mpingu mphepo*, maker of a draught, *i.e.*, by waving something.

(14) *Kumutu nkuti*, with two tails, but no head.
Kumutu nkuti onani mchira'wo.
(Where is its head ? look at that tail.)

[881] (15) *Chikupiru* } These only appear on the second day of the *chinamwali*.
(16) *Chambebe* }

(17) *Mpando wa Mwadzama.*
Mpando wa Mwadzama sinawone.
Chorus : *e e sinawone eye*
(I have not seen the chair of Mwadzama[2].)

(18) *Zimbwa*, like a dog.
Zimbwa, zimbwa, nyama yosadya.
(*Zimbwa*, not eating meat.)

(19) *Kangachepe msendere.*
Kangachepe msendere kangwo
Chorus : *Kangwo kamwana.*
(Move the little cloth, it is small, a little child.)

(20) *Chimwepa*, a bird.
Chimwepa anasiya mwana m'bande.
(*Chimwepa* has left its child in the bush.)

(21) *Ng'ongwe*, the saddle-billed stork.
Ng'ongwe'yo, yaya yaya, ng'ongwe'yo.

(22) *Waiyona mbalame ya nyanja.*
(Have you seen the bird of the river ?)

(23) *Nsesula*, the pala antelope, who always finishes the *chinamwali* with *njobwa*.

[1] These chiefs were noted for their interest in the *ringwa*.
[2] A Kota kota chief prominent in the *ringwa*.

575
532
539

(24) *Njati*, the buffalo.
Njati, ee, nyama, nyama itibula.
(The buffalo! game! the game grunts!)

(25) *Njala*, a small pig.
Njala, njala, dada, njala, njala, njala.

Visudzo.

Any member of the *vinyau* may dress himself up as a *chisudzo* by wearing a mask and maize cobs and smearing himself with flour. Some of these masks have been purchased in South Africa, and they are frequently adorned with real human hair. The *visudzo* only dance at night, and some times divest themselves of all clothing. Their songs are frequently topical, and are not set pieces, like those of the *mikhwala*. The following are some of the best-known *visudzo*, none of them being of greater importance than the others. 575 532 [439 535 533]

Songo is one of the most effective, but it may not appear in the *bwalo*. It is made of a long bazaboo with *nyanda*[1] fastened to it by string at intervals. The man carrying it has four *nyanda* on his head and one on each calf and biceps; he sets fire to the *nyanda*, and runs about in the bush outside the *bwalo*, where the people are watching the flames and singing.

Mbiya zadooka (broken pots) also dances once in the day time, and may or may not be called a *chisudzo*.

Others are: *ndatola, kang'wing'wi, kachiponda, kambwanya, garuwamatumbatesi, namwali tagwiire ndaota mato ndakongwa* (open for me, girl, to warm me, I am cold), *tepa tepa tatepa kumbi* (the undulating flight of the nightjar), *chingunde, tsotokwa, muyenderanji ochisamba, nguru, kampanga, chidadada*, etc., etc.

The following *vinyau* have no collective name, and are neither *mikhwala* nor *visudzo*. They wear hemp strings and feathers on their heads, and perform in daylight.

Kasinja binds two hemp string bands round his waist, two round his breast, three round his neck and two small ones round his brow; he chases the women about, and is very popular with them. *Chadzunda*, a very popular figure with a big wooden head and big ears with long feathers behind the head; he wears a shirt and loincloth, and walks with a stick like an old man; *kapoli* performs at *maliro*; *maliya*, at initiation of girls; *makanja*, a figure on stilts; *kakhwazi, kadyankhari* and *kachipopa*.

Formerly, there were three principal *vinyau* companies in Dowa District, at the villages of chiefs Dzoole, Mazengera and Mkanthama; but now practically every Chewa village of any size has its company. The leader in each village is called the *chiwinda*, a word signifying the leader of a caravan, whose duty it was to protect the caravan at night with medicine.[2] The *chiwinda* is chosen by the headman of the village, who usually nominates himself. He has two assistants, who have no special designation. Fees and fines are paid to the *chiwinda* in the presence of witnesses so that he cannot appropriate them himself. He divides them at the 575 [621]

[1] Bark cloth made from the *mzuzu* (acacia) tree.
[2] *Ku-winda*, to protect with medicine.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

575 *dambwe*[1] either in cash, or in food and beer, which is consumed there. Young boys are not given any of the money so received. The entrance fee of a young boy is not taken by the *chiwinda*, but by the boy's *mtoibweni* (maternal uncle), who divides it at the *dambwe*. When a new village is built, the headman and the six *anamkungwi* (instructors at initiation, *q.v.*) take medicine called *nchiri*, and bury it in the ground at night in the centre of the place destined for the *mtinda* (*vinyau* dancing ground). No one else may be present, unless the headman and *anamkungwi* are not members of the *vinyau* themselves, in which case they hire members from a neighbouring village. This preparation by proxy is known as *kugula mtinda*, or buying the *mtinda*.

575 532 The evening before the commencement of a dance, the dancers meet and arrange *kusaka viyombo* (to hunt wild beasts) on the following day. During the night they steal the maize cobs which they require for the figures, and take them to the *dambwe*. The younger members set to work before dawn, the others following later. Two or three work on each figure, while the younger ones help by bringing the required component parts, which have the following special names:—

[192]

Bweya: grass or leaves.
Chilale: stripped maize cob.
Namkungwi: knife or axe.
Nthole (lit. a pledge): barkstring.
Nthiti (lit. ribs): split bamboos.
Mtuto (lit. paint): mud.
Mmma (lit. back): the space between bent *nthiti*.
Liondo: stick.
Kumwetse nyama (lit. give the animal a drink): to plaster the bottom with mud.

These terms are always employed at the *dambwe*, and if any one makes use of the wrong word, he is fined a fowl. They are supposed to be secret, and if used before the uninitiated, the offending member is fined.

Nelomwero (lit. is it for drinking ?) is a cryptic term used in the sense "Does he belong to us ?" by one member to another in the presence of a third person when the speaker wishes to find out whether the person referred to is also an initiate.

Any number of *mikhwala* may be made, usually from about four to ten, but often many more. Anyone who likes may make a *chiwalo* or other unclassified figure for himself; he details a boy to help him and to carry it to the *liondo*[2] in the evening. Formerly, if any stranger came near the 575 scene of operations, or inadvertently upset a figure, he was put to death; but now an intruder [689] is only fined, or he may be forced to become a member by going through the usual course. If [562] any woman stumbles in, she is seized, and her husband is forced to pay a heavy fine. She may

[1] The name of the place where the figures are made. It is always in long grass or thick bush near the bank of a stream. Women are afraid to use this word, and say *ku njiru*, *i.e.*, down the road.

[2] A place in the bush outside the village near the dancing theatre for which it serves as a dressing room. [345]

ship be made a member of the society without any form of initiation, and three of these women are selected to help at the *dambwe*. As a general practice, women are not admitted because they cannot be trusted to keep a secret. Those admitted by force of circumstances are few in number, and are therefore supposed to be afraid to disclose what they see at the *dambwe*. When a member has left the *vinyau*, he can be a spectator free of charge or on payment of a small fee; but if he wishes to be reinstated to full membership and to be allowed to go to the *dambwe*, he is charged a double fee and must again go through a course of initiation, at which his trials are greatly increased. If a complete stranger arrives at a village when the *vinyau* dance is in progress, he is tested by being required to give the names of the component parts used at the *dambwe*, and his interrogators are usually satisfied when he has named five. He is generally charged a small fee, such as a penny, for the privilege of being a spectator at the *bwalo*, and rather more if he wishes to go to the *liunde*, but he is rarely admitted to the *dambwe*. He will usually receive hospitality, but not by virtue of his being a member of the *vinyau* society, as free entertainment is nearly always accorded to strangers by the Achowa. Male strangers who cannot pass the test are not even permitted to be present as spectators at the *bwalo*. No one is allowed to make fun of the *vinyau*, either by speech or otherwise, as, for example, by drawing pictures of the figures in the sand. During the work of construction, no one is permitted to leave the *dambwe* on any account. Food is brought from the village by women detailed by their husbands the night before, and is left outside the *dambwe*, whence it is fetched by the workers and cooked by the women members mentioned above. The food is shared communally, and is eaten in small groups.

When the construction of the figures is finished, the men go home, leaving the boys behind to plaster mud on the lower parts of the *mikhwala* to hide the feet of those inside, and on the tails and horns to make them dark. At sunset the figures are taken to the *liunde*, where the dancers assemble and sing for a short time, after which they go home for their evening meal, leaving the younger members on guard. When they return, they dance for a while, and allow the boys to go and eat. Then they go to the *mzinda* and dance to the drums with rattles on their ankles. Presently the *mikhwala* come out from the *liunde* and dance around while the figures gyrate. This gyration is known as *ku-zuyeta*. When they are tired, the *viwalo* come out, and the *mikhwala* return to the *liunde*, and so on alternately till about midnight, *mikhwala* and *viwalo* never performing together. Persons not initiated are allowed to look on by payment. Then they take the figures back to the *dambwe*, and go home to sleep. It is the duty of the two junior permanent *anamkungwi* to look after the *mzinda*, and they must sweep away all traces of the dance before daylight, otherwise they are fined.

Next morning the performers repair to the *dambwe* as before, and make fresh *mikhwala* and *viwalo*, though the old ones may be used provided that they are altered sufficiently to create the impression that they are different; but on each succeeding night of the dance, a larger number of *vinyau* must be shown than on the preceding one. On the last night of the dance, before retiring to rest, they must burn all the figures at the *liunde* and *dambwe*, and scrape earth over the remains. Next morning they go to the *dambwe*, and obliterate all traces completely. Then they take roots and fasten them to sticks which they plant in the ground outside the *dambwe*,

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M 575 535 [534] so that anyone coming that way may see "medicine" and turn aside. After which, all bathe in the stream, and the ceremonies are over.

During a *vingwe* dance six drums are always used, namely, the *mphenje* (five or six feet in length, and beaten at one end only); the *ndewere* (another large drum three feet in length), or the *mbulule*; the *mbandambanda* and the *mtiwiso* (of medium size about two feet long); and two *hambumbe* (small drums eighteen inches in length). These are beaten by men detailed by the headman or *chiwinda*; but there are no special drums appertaining exclusively to particular *mibhunda* or songs. The big village drum always belongs to the headman; the others are privately owned, and are hired out for a small fee, such as an *nangwe* basket. Before use they are always warmed first at the fire.

4. *Property.*

M N 423 [425] Land was acquired by the Achewa by occupation and by the Angoni by conquest. It was divided by the paramount chief among his lieutenants, who in turn divided their sections among the heads of lesser groups or families. Each headman now allots land to his villagers; and if they move the village to a new site, everyone retains possession of the garden which he held before. The allottee is entitled to trees, antheaps, honey or anything else on his plot; and he may sell crops or other produce, but may not sell or lease the land itself. When reaping his crop, he presents a basket of maize to his headman.

M N [422] In the home, the wife must provide the pots, and they are her personal property. The husband must supply her with baskets, hoes, etc.; but everything which pertains to woman's work belongs to the wife. The produce of a garden is the equal property of both. After a boy has passed through his initiation, he is given a small garden of his own. When, as in the case of the N [622] Achewa, he leaves the village to marry, the garden reverts to the chief, who is always spoken of as the owner of the land, since it is he who divides it out among his people.

N 422 233 The majority of the cattle owners are Angoni. Possession is individual; but all the animals in one village are kept in one open kraal belonging to the village headman, who selects small boys to look after them. Herdsmen were formerly unpaid; but now, when a beast is sold, killed or otherwise removed, they receive a present from the owner, as also does the headman. There is no fixed fee; but the owner of a dozen head may give the headman a calf every other year, while the owner of one or two only gives him a goat. If a man living in a village where there is no kraal buys cattle, he frequently places them in the care of a friend at a neighbouring village where there is a kraal, instead of handing them over to his own headman. The friend makes his own arrangement with the headman; but the friend is liable to the owner, and the usual payment is made to the friend, who divides it with the headman.

N 672 233 If a beast dies in the kraal, there is no liability, provided that the headman (or responsible friend) informs the owner, so that the latter can make use of the meat. Should the headman or friend fail to do this, he must pay the owner a live animal of the same age and sex. Where loss occurs through the carelessness of a herdsman, a case for damages lies against him. Sometimes cows calve in the kraal, but generally they wander off into the bush for the purpose; if they are then lost, or killed by carnivora, there is no liability. If a cow sold as sound dies

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the headman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good one; and the headman in return hands over three other animals of similar age. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organization: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Achewa consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'anga* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'anga* under Chief Chiwere was Chimongo, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unawares, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a stout resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'anga* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the *chisunde* or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connexion with women. Next day, they burned goats' bones, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni Maravi FR4

VI.—SOCIAL ORGANIZATION: ECCLESIASTICAL AND PROFESSIONAL.

1. *Rainmaking* (Chewa).

789 791 The most famous rainmaker still practising is Matenkamula, who resides in Mponera's country near Nchisi. When the chief wants rain, he sends messengers to him with a black cloth. Matenkamula takes the cloth, and goes into his hut and prays, till at length a snake,[1] either an *nanta* (python) or an *nakola* glides into the hut. The *nakola*, a thin, buff-coloured snake about three feet long, is rarely seen, and makes a noise "*hurr*—" at night. Both these snakes [825] are known to be spirits. They are harmless, and live in the vicinity of the village, the people being afraid to kill them, lest they or their relations die. The snake sleeps for two nights with Matenkamula, and during this period no male may enter the house. Meanwhile, the messengers have departed; and after two or three weeks of rain, when fully satisfied that Matenkamula has completed his task, the chief sends him a white cloth in recognition of his services.

The only other well-known rainmaker is Tsang'oma, of the Phiri clan, living near Dzalanyama. When required, he calls the people together to pray for rain. Neither of these two men ever kills a black goat, since, if he did so, the rain clouds being black would not come to him [291] when invoked.

Another renowned rainmaker, now dead, was Chauwa, of the Banda clan, living at Chirenje, near Mkhoma. When the Achewa fire the grass early in the dry season, it is their custom to leave unburnt near each village a patch of bush which is known as a *chiwe*. This patch is burnt separately at the end of the dry season, after it has been surrounded by hunters who lie in wait for the game which has taken cover therein. Great care was always taken to protect Chauwa's *chiwe* from fire until rain was required; and it was said that anyone who set it alight, even though accidentally, would immediately die.

When, however, the chief considered that rain was needed, he sent word to Chauwa, who despatched messengers bearing a maize cob with red grains to each headman in the district, ordering him to assemble his people at the *chiwe* on the following day. This kind of cob was [824] called *chimanga chaatukwa*, and its red grains were held to be a symbol of the blood of the game about to be killed. So every person living near—man, woman or child—came next day to the *chiwe*, each carrying a white grain of maize, and these grains were ground all together at Chauwa's village. Chauwa's deputy then took the resultant flour and a black goat to a large pool, over which a tree was growing almost horizontally. Having walked along the tree, he cut the throat of the goat, pouring its blood upon the water and flour upon the blood, thereby causing it to twirl round and round instead of dispersing. Meanwhile, the deputy prayed to God, in words which he had learnt from Chauwa, that rain might be sent as soon as the *chiwe* had been burnt. By the non-dispersal of the blood the crowd of people present knew that the prayer had been heard, and on its conclusion they all said, "*Pepa*,"[2] and returned to their homes.

[1] Dr. Hazeus, on p. 207 of vol. xl of the *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, refers to a Yao rainmaker who conferred with two spirits said to be a male and female snake. [171]

[2] Meaning, I am sorry to have troubled you, or, I beg your pardon.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Next day the hunters assemble at the *chiw* with their bows and arrows, spears and dogs; and the women commenced to sow in anticipation of the rain which they knew would fall. Chauwa himself again remained at home, and his deputy alone was allowed to burn the grass after it had been surrounded by every available man and boy in the neighbourhood so that nothing might escape. Such was the reputation of Chauwa that it is said that rain always fell before sunset on the same day. M 789 791

Then the women cooked the goat at the house of Chauwa, who could not himself partake, as he was the director of the sacrifice; and all the other members of his *chimsogo* abstained with him. The liver was cooked in a separate pot after it had been tied up with a piece of *mtsiruti* tree in red cloth and genet cat skin. It was then covered over, and any other person was allowed to kill a goat and cook its liver in the same pot. Next morning any of their children who had not yet reached the age of initiation were allowed to eat such part of the livers as had not been consumed by the spirits. The meat of the game killed was divided in accordance with the usual rules of hunting. M [262] M [224]

2. *Rainmaking (Ngoni).*

Songandawa's slave wife, Mwachuma, who was brought by Chief Chiwere to the Dowa District, remained there as the mother of all the people and was always referred to as Gogo (grandmother). All the principal spirits of the Angoni were to be found at her village. When rain was desired, Chiwere assembled his Angoni there, and killed four or five black cows, which were cooked and eaten outside the kraal. Then he prayed to the spirits of Songandawa and Gwaza, and poured water into an *upemba* (wooden bowl), which was covered with another bowl after some of the water had been poured out into a gourd. This praying was known as *upemba*. As the chief prayed, he held the gourd in his hand; and as he invoked each spirit in turn, he poured a little water on the ground. After the last spirit had been invoked, he rinsed his mouth, spat the water out, and emptied the gourd upon the ground. Then the people went home, and rain fell. N 789 [776]

VII.—Tribal Life: Funeral Rites.

1. *Preparation of the Body (Chewa).*

When a man dies, the men (usually relations) watching beside him in the hut close his eyes, straighten his fingers and all his limbs, shave his head, wash and oil him, and wrap him in cloths. These cloths must always be new, and though coloured ones may be used, the outside one must always be white. However poor the relations may be, they invariably manage somehow or other to procure a new white cloth. The death is announced at once with the formula "*wastiriziku*" (he is finished). M 764 M [763]

2. *Disposal of the Corpse (Chewa).*

On hearing the news, the men of the village beat drums in the *bwalo* until the following morning, while men and women wail together, uttering cries of mourning, and occasionally breaking forth into expressions such as, "So and so is dead, I am alone in the world"; "God has done evil to me"; "Whom shall I live with now?" "God should have killed me too";

764 "So and so (mentioning someone absent from home) has left me alone." The chorus is varied periodically by a solo from the *mwini muliro* (master of the ceremonies, lit. owner of the funeral), who is generally the eldest brother of the deceased.

At dawn next day, the women take the drums, while the men of the village accompanied by friends from elsewhere go and dig the grave. Chewa graves are made all together in a graveyard in thick bush near the village. The grave may point in any direction; it is usually eight or ten feet deep, and is spoken of as *mudzi* (lit. a village). The corpse is interred on its back pointing either way, the limbs stretched out straight. If it begins to putrefy early, they say that the hair of the animal into which the deceased is turning (*vide infra* VIII, 1) is beginning to [775] appear, and they cry out, "So and so has become a leopard." At noon the men return to the village, wrap the corpse in mats, and carry it to the grave fastened with barkstring to a pole. Four men chosen by the *mwini muliro*, two of whom are relations of the deceased and two relations of his wife, descend into the grave, receive the corpse as it is lowered by the ropes, and place four small baskets of maize flour at the head, feet and each side. All the dead man's hoes, knives, bows and arrows, empty beer pots and food pots are also laid beside him, together with the barkstring and pole. The grave is then covered up and flat stones put on top, after which all who were present at the interment go off and bathe, the men upstream above the women. The hoes used in digging are taken to the house of the deceased, the iron blades being heated in the fire and left there till their owners go home, in order to ward off the *chiwanda*, or madness which would otherwise be inflicted upon them by the spirit of the deceased. People not intimately connected with the dead man may now depart; but the friends and relations return in the evening and sleep, the men outside and the women inside the hut. The *mwini muliro* is told [575] that the *viyaw* will dance, and materials are collected and taken to the *dambwe*.

3. *Funeral rites* (Chewa).

765 Next morning, the dancers prepare the figures as usual, and after leaving them at the 575 *liwale* in the evening, eat their food either at home or at the house of the deceased, where the women have prepared a meal. At no time need any *viyaw* member perform unless he wishes and on this particular occasion few turn out, as there is no beer and little in the way of presents. Generally, there are only two or three *mikhwala*, owing to the short notice, and these may dance in any order or place. The *viwalo* take pots from the graveyard, and dance into the *liwale*, holding them above their heads and singing, "*Mbiya nokoka*" (broken pots). The *mwini muliro* and other near relations remain in their houses and mourn, but the *mikhwala* come round to their doors and receive *masupa*. Even when there is real grief, the relations like the noise and merriment in much the same way that the English lower orders are reputed to take a pride in providing "a lovely funeral." When the dancing is over, the relations sleep again at the house of the deceased.

On the following day, *i.e.*, the third after death, the *viyaw* again perform; but on neither of these days is the dancing kept up late. *Kalulu* and *njobwe* never appear at a *muliro*, 766 except in the case of a headman, *nambungwi*, *chiwinda* or other important person. In such

M 766

M 765

[833]

M 775

N [775]

M 765 575 [535]

cases, *bolulu* may begin to dance on the day of interment, and *bolyambhazi* dances near the grave, while *hang'wing'wi* dashes out into the village with a stick, kills two or three fowls, runs with them to the *dambwe*, roasts them there, and takes them to the people who are digging the grave. In the early morning of the third day, the women sweep the hut and burn the rubbish outside; men and women then bathe as before, and most of the friends depart; but the near relations, male and female, shave their heads and sleep at the hut.

On the fourth morning the *dambwe* is swept up, and the performers bathe, the figures having been destroyed overnight. The near relations must still remain and sleep at the hut. During this period, all who sleep at the hut must abstain from sexual intercourse; should anyone have intercourse, he must cease to sleep at the hut, or he will *dula* the other (*vide* II, 1). On the fifth day all go away, and the widow sleeps alone in the house. During the next week or two, and sometimes even longer, she must not talk except when absolutely necessary, nor may she wash any part of her person except her mouth.

After the death of a headman or other important personage,[1] it is necessary to recall the spirit which has departed to the base of a tree in the bush; and beer is therefore made by the widow when a month or so has elapsed. On the *tsiku lookyambula* (*vide infra* IX, 1) all those who have assisted at the interment gather outside the house and drink. Later, in the evening, two of the deceased's elderly male relations go into the bush with two *nasugwa* baskets, into one of which they put a *chiubwi* (species of caterpillar), afterwards placing the baskets in the house at the head of the bed. The caterpillars are eaten in due course by the ubiquitous small *ngwere* ant; but the spirit remains, and the widow presents periodical offerings of beer and porridge, invoking him by his *chin* name (*kwanga chiwanga chake*), *e.g.* "Yo Banda! Yo Banda!" Anything left by the spirit is given to the children next morning. The Angoni keep the spirit by making a small fence round the *nasugwa*, but the Achewa consider this unnecessary. On the *tsiku lakumwa* all bathe together in the stream and drink beer at the house. Next day the first offering to the spirit is made by the widow, and the relations may disperse.

4. *Memorial Rites* (*Chewa*).

After an interval of two or three months, when they have had time to collect food, money and other presents, a *ringwa* dance is held by way of memorial. If two men die in the same village at the same time, the funeral rites described above may be held for the two jointly; but each must have his own memorial separately. The dance is arranged by the *mwini malire* and lasts three days. The relations are now permitted to look on. There is no beer; and generally not more than four or five *mikhwala* perform each day. On the first evening *injelu* always begins, but he receives no *nasupo*, though the *mikhwala* and *siwalu* receive the usual presents. *Kasinja* performs about midnight, and dancing continues till cockcrow. On the second night *kasinja* always begins, and dancing is generally over by midnight. On the third night there is no particular order of precedence, and the figures are usually taken to the *dambwe*

[1] *Cf.* Swanson, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl, 1910, p. 300, on the *Anyanja*: "The spirits of the departed retain their former stations, thus the status of a chief is a thing of greater account than that of an ordinary man. It is thought to continue to hold a directing influence on the well-being of the tribe."

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

765 575 and burnt before midnight. Next morning the performers tidy up and bathe, and go about their affairs.

On this occasion, or else at the final *kumeta maliro* (*vide infra*), the following performance takes place. At the *liunde* a man is decked out as a corpse, shaved and oiled. Then he is bound in a shroud with his big toes tied together, wrapped in leaves of the *mtubei tubei*,[1] and rolled in a mat with two *nengwe* baskets under his head. Four *akasinja* bear him to the *bwalo*, where they unwrap him and then run away. *Kapoli* stands over him with a torch; he holds his breath; and the women come and look at him and sing and call to the *visudso*. When they are still singing the *akasinja* return and take him away. This number is taken quite seriously by everybody, especially by the "corpse," who has a bad headache next day from the smell of the leaves.

When it is a child who is being mourned, a few days previously a life-sized figure is cut [532] out of *mbawbawa*[2] wood by a skilled man in the bush. This effigy is taken to the *dambwe*, where it is coated in black mud and left in the sun till the mud is hardened. Then the head is covered with gum, and real hair is stuck on; the body is oiled and wrapped in cloths; and the figure is taken to the *bwalo* by a single *kasinja*, who sings, "*Maliro a mwana wamkhanda simunawone*" (You have not seen the funeral of an infant child). The women then come and examine the corpse, as above.

The final ceremony, that of *kumeta maliro*,[3] takes place in the slack season following the [221] harvest at a time fixed by the headman, when all the deaths of the past year are joined in a [223] general celebration. Beer is brewed, and preparations are made for large numbers of *mikhwala*. Everyone joins in, and performers and spectators come from neighbouring villages, especially if anyone of the deceased has been a person of importance. Beer is made by the widow at the dead man's house and by other women at their own houses. All the relations sleep at the house of the deceased, and on the morning of the *tsiku lofulula* the males make a fence (*chikhute*) round that part of the verandah where the beer is. On the following day (*tsiku lakubwerera*) they collect materials for the *vinyau*. On the *tsiku lakupola*, when they are making the *vinyau*, the *mwini maliro* takes a few fowls and a basket of flour to the *dambwe* for the entertainment of the workers. In the evening they move from the *liunde* to the *mzinda* as usual. *Mjadza* is always the first *mkhwala*, but there is no rule as to the order of the others. All of them receive generous *masupo* from the *mwini maliro*.

Next day (*tsiku lachambula*) food and beer are taken to the workers at noon. *Mdondo* and *chiwoko* are always made on this day, and are paraded before sunset—*chiwoko* leading, then *mdondo*, and then *mkhunja* on stilts—in front of the women, who present beer to *mdondo*. The figures are then taken back to the *liunde*. When the dancing begins about seven o'clock as usual, *chiwoko* leads and the others follow in any order. The performance only lasts for two or three hours, and on its termination the *mikhwala* are all burnt with the exception of *mdondo* and *kasiya maliro*.

[1] These leaves exude a vile odour, like that of a rotten body. *Mtubei* means excrement.
[2] *Mbawbaw*, a tree with rough bark sometimes used for making drums and grain mortars.
[3] *Ku-meta*, to shave.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

The final day of the proceedings, *toibu la humwa*, is known as *toibu la humwa malivo*. The beer is tested at cockcrow, and *kusiya malivo* begins to dance, followed first by a *chisudzo* and then by *mdondo*. At sunrise the dancers proceed to the *dambwe*, and those who play no further active part may go and bathe, after which they repair to the *liunde*, where they rest and drink till noon. Meanwhile, the relations, accompanied by any other of the men who assisted in digging the grave or were present at the interment, have betaken themselves early to the banks of the stream where they bathed on the former occasion. The women who have worn *zinthambo* burn them in a fire, and scatter the ashes. If they have indulged in sexual intercourse while wearing them, the *zinthambo* refuse to burn. Both sexes bathe separately as before, and all return to the house of the deceased, outside which the men shave each others' heads, as also do the women. About noon one or more *amalipu* come from the *liunde* and dance in the *mzinda*. *Chadzunda* hobbles out, peers round the graveyard, and goes first to the house of the deceased to receive a *supo* from the widow and then to the house of the headman, where he sits on a chair while people come and give him *masupo* and beer. After this refreshment he dances in the *bwalo*, and then retreats to the *liunde* for a rest, returning to dance a second and third time before retiring finally to the *dambwe*. Then *kusiya malivo* dances for the last time, and is taken to the *dambwe* and burnt, and those who have handled him bathe. *Visudzo* again bring broken pots from the graveyard, and dance with them in the bush, singing "*Mbiya zadoobu*," and the *amalipu* continue dancing for a while. At sunset the ceremonies are ended by the male relations of the deceased burning first the beer fence and then the house. The widow sleeps in someone else's house for a few weeks, until a new house has been built for her by her relations.

M 765 575 M [515] [302] [535] M [768]

5. *Funeral rites (Ngoni).*

The procedure described by Captain Rattray[2] in 1907 is still remembered by the old men; but the younger Angoni are inclined to follow the customs of the Achewa with certain modifications. For example, they place the corpse in a recess cut out from the bottom of the wall of the grave in order that it may not be soiled when the grave is filled in. They do not leave him any food, but place his spear and shield and one or two of his knives in the recess by his side. Part of his remaining property is deposited in the main shaft; but the sons always inherit the knives, except the *chipundu* (knife for cutting meat), which falls to the head wife.

N 764 [177] N 428

On the second day after the death, the widows send children to cut *mpulupudzwa* grass, from which they weave *zinthambo* to bind on their heads. As long as the widows wear these *zinthambo*, they must abstain from sexual intercourse; if they fall from grace, they invariably remove the *zinthambo* first. They must also keep their hands behind their backs when walking abroad, and may only use one hand when gesticulating. They must refrain from conversation and ablution for two or three weeks, at the end of which they brew beer (known as *mwa wa zinthambo*) and invite a few friends to partake of it. Very often a widow's near female relations past the time of childbearing wear *zinthambo* and observe prohibitions in sympathy with her.

N 765 N [273]

[1] Mourning bands of plaited grass (see following section).
[2] "Some Folk Lore Songs and Stories in Chinyanja," pp. 98-99.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 765 [262] On the second day, also, the *mwini malire* takes cows or a goat according to his means, and divides the flesh among the mourners. The bones may not be gnawed, as this would be considered equivalent to eating the dead man, but they are put into an *ngwembe* basket and thrown away into the bush at the end of the feast.

M N [764] [177] On the third and fourth days the male relations surround the grave with a fence of *tsehewa* grass known as *chilise*, which is sometimes plastered by the women with mud. The Achewa are now beginning to imitate this custom, and also that of wearing *sinthambo*. Both tribes plant *nhhadzi*[1] trees about the graves in order that the dead may have shade.

N 766 765 237 A chief is not buried in the common graveyard, but in the village just outside his hut, and a chair is sometimes placed inside the *chilise*. One of his senior relations kills a goat, and the new prospective chief ties a root along the handle and blade of a knife, with which he cuts a horizontal strip of skin round the quarters of a goat, and wears the strip for two or three months as a belt, the tail hanging down behind. With the same knife the widows cut off the false hoofs together with a small piece of adjacent skin, through which they thread a string, and then bind a false hoof on each wrist and wear them till the end of the period of mourning. The root must remain fastened to the knife throughout this period, at the end of which all are burnt together.

VIII.—Mental Characters.

1. *Reincarnation and Spirits* (*Chewa*).

M 769 [776] [622] [778] [262] *Mizimu* or spirits are invoked as intermediaries between man and God (*Chauta*), and each village contains a hut for the spirits of past chiefs, to whom prayers are generally made because they are powerful and because they are known to everybody. Some of the larger villages have two huts, one for the spirits of men and the other for the spirits of women. A man may also make offerings to the spirits of his own family in his own hut. When the green maize is ready for eating, the people may not taste it until their headman has taken a cob, cooked it in his house and placed it in the spirits' house, where he claps his hands and thanks the spirits for the crop. The cob, like other offerings to spirits, may be eaten next morning by children below the age of initiation.

M 775 If, as frequently happens, a traveller strays—as we should say, absentmindedly—when following a route which he knows quite well, it is the work of a spirit which has been annoyed by him. On one such occasion a police constable of mine, who had been sent to the neighbouring station while his child was ill, found himself wandering several times from the main road, and knew thereby that his child was dead, and that its spirit was troubling him because he should

[1] *Nhadzi*, euphorbia. These are evergreen, quickly propagated and long lived, and so they serve also as a sign to mark the grave long afterwards. In the Mlanje District the Anyanja and other tribes sometimes plant them in maize fields because they are supposed to be obnoxious to termites.

[824] Livingstone, *loc. cit.*, p. 105, writes that in the Shire Highlands in 1859 they found all Mang'anja villages surrounded by an impenetrable hedge of poisonous euphorbia. He continues: "This tree casts a deep shade, which would render it difficult to bowmen to take aim at the villagers inside. The grass does not grow beneath it, and this may be the reason why it is so universally used, for when dry the grass would convey fire to huts inside; moreover, the hedge acts as a fender to all flying sparks.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

not have left it. On his return two days later, he attended the funeral and propitiated the spirit so that it should not trouble him again. 775

The Achewa believe that after death they undergo reincarnation. I am not aware of any rules regulating the kind of form to be adopted; but many people acquire medicine from a doctor enabling them to assume the form they wish, and more especially to avoid those of inferior species such as ants, flies, etc. Lightning, lions and leopards are among those most desired, and all lepers are supposed to become hippopotami. Women believe in spirits more strongly than do men, and they will sometimes refrain from eating guineafowl because they say it is a man who has neglected to take medicine. [825] [184] [262]

A certain doctor named Kalizamimba, living near Malungundi, was said to have the power to send lions to kill an enemy. If, for example, one Uje wishes to slay his man in this way, he goes to the doctor who takes two *mipinjiri* (slips of wood) and bores them with an arrow head, in order to ward off the effect of all weapons. Then the two men betake themselves together to a fork in the road, where the doctor buries a pot and waves a basket over it. Slowly, and by degrees, a lion comes out of the pot. The doctor orders it to go and kill the person whose death is encompassed, and Uje returns to his village. No one can kill the lion, so everybody knows that an enemy has sent it. Having performed its appointed task, the lion returns by night and roars outside Uje's village, whereupon Uje goes out with his porridge stick and a fowl, gives the lion the fowl and knocks it down with the stick. It vanishes forthwith, and Uje picks up one of the *mipinjiri* in its place. If the lion's mate should then appear, Uje knocks her down also and picks up the other *mpinjiri* in her place. Then he puts the *mipinjiri* in the ground over the pot, cuts the throat of the fowl, and calls upon the lion to devour the blood and to stay there till he has returned to his hut. It is believed, also, that men can become lions by eating *mipinjiri* given to them by a doctor. In such cases, after the death of the victim has been accomplished, the lion returns to the place whence he started and thereupon finds himself a man again. 754 825 [789]

Four kinds of snake are said to be spirits because they do not bite and are rarely seen. They are *chilelo*, *thunga*, *nsatu* (python) and *mdala* (*vide supra* VI, 1). If a man meets any one of these on his way to fight or hunt, he must return forthwith and offer a sacrifice before setting out afresh on his enterprise. If one of them enters a house, the inmates cast lots to discover whose spirit it is and then offer sacrifice accordingly. They are never killed, and numerous stories have been weaved around them. 825 775 [782]

When a lion or leopard is killed, the skin and heart are taken to the chief, who eats the heart after mixing it with medicine and makes a present in return to the successful hunter. Ceremonial washing to avert the consequent *chiwanda* (madness caused by the spirit of the slain, *vide supra* V, 3) is required only in the case of a lion or a hyæna. It is believed that when a snake has killed or bitten a person or animal, it invariably enters water to purify itself for the same reason. 224 825 [262] [783]

2. *Miscellaneous* (*Chewa*).

The chiefs of the Achewa had few marks of distinction; but they alone were allowed to wear cloth with an *mponje* (fringe), or the feathers of the *mkurukuru* (*turaco livingstonianus*), 622

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni
Maravi FR4

622 the nsutsubwi (paradise flycatcher, *terpsiphone perspicillata*) and the mbulu (a coucal, *centropus superciliosus*); and no commoners were allowed to sit on stools in their presence.

241 From the commencement of harvest until after the complete crop had been stowed in the nkhalwe (grain stores), the Achewa used to refrain from sexual intercourse, from the use of a razor and from washing any part of the person except the face.

824 278 Parasitic plants and part of the taller of two trees growing together are supposed to make particularly good medicine, for in both cases they have proved themselves to be the stronger of two.

15'1 The habit of cracking the fingers by pulling them out, known as *kwese* (from *ku-kwese*, to curl up), is very common among the Achewa. It is resorted to in order to gain strength, whether after an illness, or on awaking to dispel laziness, or when tired, as for example, during the hearing of a case in court when bored or sleepy.

777 484 When travelling along a road one frequently notices stones which have been placed in low forks of trees near the side of the path by voyagers who hope thereby to ensure a safe journey and to arrest the downward path of the sun, so that they may reach their destination before nightfall.

IX.—Economics.

1. *Beermaking (Chewa).*

273 The methods of brewing vary slightly, but the following is the most common. The grains of maize are first soaked in water for three days. On the fourth day they are strained and put into a pot which has been left in the sun the whole of the previous day. The pot is then covered over with leaves and left in the house for another three days, at the end of which the grains are sprouting and are now known as *chimera* (from *ku-mera*, to sprout). The *chimera* is taken out of the pot and spread on a mat. After it has been left there a couple of days it is pounded. This, the first, pounding is called *ku-kwasa*. The husks are then removed, and the *chimera* is boiled and taken off the fire (*ku-pusa*, to take off the fire). Next, *phala* (light maize porridge or gruel) is boiled and left for two days.

The next day is the first day of the beermaking proper, and it is known as *tsiku lofulula*.[1] On this day the *phala* is strained[2] and pounded for five or six hours. The *chimera* is pounded separately, and water is boiled in a large pot. Flour is mixed with the *phala* and well stirred. In the evening the *chimera* is added, and the mixture—which is still called *phala*—is left overnight.

The next day, *i.e.* the second day of the beer-making proper, is called *tsiku lakudwerera*.[3] In the morning the *phala* is boiled in the big pot until noon, and it is then left standing. It is now called *mburu*.

[1] *Tsiku*, day. *Ku-fulula*, to stay in one place.

[2] The technical word for this straining is *ku-kwata* (lit. to beat) because the straining is effected by knocking the rim of the strainer.

[3] *Ku-dwerera*, to do a thing over again.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

The third day is known as *tsiku lakupola*.[1] In the morning more *chimera* is pounded and added to the *mbusu*, which is boiled again to make it frothy. The process is repeated in the afternoon, and the *mbusu* is left for the night. M 273

The fourth day is called *tsiku lachambula*, the day of mixing. Early in the morning more *chimera* is pounded and cooked separately. When the *mbusu* is boiling well, the *chimera* is poured into the big pot. Then a girl cooks *nsima ya lipoko* (bean porridge) while her mother strains the beer. Later in the afternoon they pour the beer from the big pots into the smaller pots, which are then put on one side. As soon as it is cool enough they taste it, and when it is quite cool they taste again.

The fifth day is *tsiku lakumwa mow*, the day of drinking the beer. At early dawn it is tasted again, and after the *nsima ya lipoko* has been added it is well stirred. It is now quite strong and is called *mow*, the ordinary name for beer.

On the sixth day it is still called *mow* and is good for drinking. On the seventh day it is known as *mivula* and it is not so palatable; and on the eighth day—in the *mbvunde*[2] stage—it begins to go bad. It is usually consumed by the end of the sixth day; but the woman who has made it always pours a little into a small pot, which she hides away and preserves for the benefit of her husband and herself.

2. *Iron Smelting* (*Chewa*).

When a man wishes to make a furnace he first consults a doctor (*sing'anga*). The *sing'anga* puts medicine in a stripped maize cob, and instructs a small boy to throw it at a pregnant woman. This causes her to have a miscarriage the same evening. The abortion is buried in a refuse heap in the usual manner[3]; but the doctor digs it up at night, mixes it with medicine known as *mkungu* (lit. a thief), and burns it in a hole in the ground. The furnace is then made by working the clay into a wall rising above this hole; more *mkungu* is poured on to it, and a fowl is killed and also thrown on to it. If the fowl falls so that its head points to the north, the furnace is no good, and another one must be made the following month in a different place. The fowl is then plucked, roasted whole without being gutted, and eaten with their *nsima* (maize porridge) by the people who have made the furnace. Strict continence must be observed by all the workers during the process of smelting. When the hoes have been made, some are given as compensation to the woman who had the miscarriage, but she is not supposed to know the reason for the gift. M 326 [754] [847] M [262] [834] [431]

3. *Implements of War.*

The Angoni carried shields or *visyungo*, made of oxhide. Down the centre of each *chisyungo* runs a bamboo stick, to the top of which is fastened a *mwila* or binding made from the fur of the genet cat (*mwiri*). The stick is kept in place by cross-pieces of hide known as *matoto*. Each side of the shield outside the *matoto* is called the *nguapa*. Their favourite weapon was N 714 281 000

[1] *Ku-pola*, to get better.
[2] *Ku-bvunda*, to be rotten.
[3] *Cf.* H. S. Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 311.

Their favorite weapon

N 411 the *ngubutu* or throwing spear, the shaft of which was made of *mzabo* or *mzapani* or other hard wood. The head is bound to the shaft with copper wire; part of an ox tail serves as a grip; and at the top is a plume of goat's hair known as the *chowa*. Battle axes were also used. Round his waist the warrior wore a *mipepe*, or kilt composed of strips of skin of leopard, wild cat, monkey, baboon or sheep—some of them straight, and others plaited and twisted. In lieu of a *mipepe*, a sporran or *chikwa cha ku mate* might be worn in front with a similar covering styled *chikwa cha ku mbego* behind. These were generally made of serval or other wild cat skins. *Njiwiri* or garters, consisting of strips of goat skin threaded with iron bells also known man's attire.

N 714 281

M 411 825 [828] [381] M 714

The Achewa also carried battle-axes, but they relied mainly on the bow (*uta*) and arrow (*mpalive*). The favourite wood for the bow was *mudzua*, and the bowstring or *mzinga* was made from the skin of Sharpe's steinbuck or another small antelope. The barbed head (*nchete*) of the arrow is bound to the *kano* (shaft of *kanga* reed) by *bauzi* string cemented with the sap of the wild fig tree. The fork at the butt end is known as *ntera*, and is protected by a binding of *bauzi* string called *kauri*, which is also the name for the hair of an elephant's tail. Chiefs displayed a battle headdress styled *ngoni*, consisting of the feathers of the turaco, coucal (*vide supra* VIII, 2) and other birds sewn on to a pad of goat skin. An *nchera*, or band of cowrie shells, was frequently worn round the forehead.

[Glossary of Frequently Used Chewa Terms]

1. anamkungwi (sing. namkungwi): instructors of youth selected on the basis of their knowledge of medicines; there are 3 male and 3 female anamkungwi in every village.

2. anamwali: the name for boys during their initiation ceremonies; also the name in everyday use for girls who have reached the age of puberty.

3. ankhoswe (sing. nkhoswe): persons who serve as intermediaries in arranging a marriage, usually the younger brothers of each partner.

4. aphungu (sing. phungu): female ceremonial sponsors of a girl duuring her initiation rites.

5. bwalo: lit. the communal open space in a village; applied to thee communal hut in which unmarried male youths live from about 5 or 6 yearss of age.

6. chimera: the name for maize grains at a particular stage of their processing for food.

7. chinamwali: the entire complex of initiation rites for girls following their first menstruation.

8. chire: a patch of bush near each village which is left unburned when the grass is fired early in the dry season.

9. chisamba: a dance held during the second month of pregnancy.

10. chisudzo: sing. of visudzo (q. v.).

11. chiwanda: madness caused by the spirits of the slain, as for example the spirits of enemies killed in battle.

12. chiwinda: the leader of the vinyau (q. v.) in each village.

13. chiwoko: a mkhwala (q. v.).

14. dambwe: the name of the place where the vinyau (q. v.) figures are made; it is always in a long grass or thick bush near the bank of a stream.

15. fisi: name given to the man who has sexual relations with a girl after her first menstruation if she is not already married.

16. kalulu: lit. the hare; a mkhwala (q. v.).

17. kasinja: an unclassified type of vinyau (q. v.) figure.

18. kasiya maliro: a mkhwala (q. v.).

19. kumeta: shaving. to shave.

20. kundabwi: a "medicine" consisting of the ashes of burnt roots.

21. liunde: a place in the bush outside the village near the vinyau (q. v.) dancing ground for which it serves as a dressing room

22. maliro: funeral or mourning.

23. maliya: men dressed as women with false breasts of bananas; an unclassified type of vinyau (q.v.) figure.

24. masupo (sing. supo): gifts.

25. mdulo: the causing of illness or the illness caused in oneself or another person by indulging in sexual intercourse at prohibited times, or, more rarely, by abstaining therefrom when it is prescribed.

26. mikhwala (sing. mkhwala): the more important class of grass and wicker animal figures, or vinyau (q. v.), usually supported by several men; they are believed to be the spirits of far-distant ancestors.

27. mkhwala: sing. of mikhwala (q. v.).

28. mjedza: a dance which is part of the initiation rites.

29. mtsibweni: mother's eldest brother.

30. mwini maliro: lit. owner of the funeral; the leader of the funeral ceremonies, who is generally the eldest brother of the deceased.

31. mzinda: the vinyau (q. v.) dancing ground.

32. njobvu: lit. the elephant; a mkhwala (q. v.).

33. nkhandwe (pl. ankhandwe): lit. a jackal; a special instrument which emits a noise like the cry of a jackal.

34. nsengwa: a shallow basket used constantly by women in their work and regarded as a symbol of womanhood.

35. nyanda: bark cloth made from the mambo (acacia) tree.

36. sing'anga: the doctor or medicine man; it is not clear from the text whether he is a shaman or sorcerer or both.

37: vinyau: lit. representations of animals; most broadly, the name of the Chewa secret society characterized by animal figures evidently believed to be reincarnations of the dead, and ceremonial dancing - esp. at funerals and initiation rites - involving the use of these figures; also seems to be used more narrowly as the name of the dance complex itself, in which large animal figures of grass and wicker, masks and other disguises play the principal part. There are three classes of figures, or vinyau: (1) the mikhwala (q. v.), (2) the visudzo (q. v.), and (3) a miscellaneous group. The vinyau dance has been adopted by the Dowa Ngoni for funerals and sometimes for initiations.

38: visudzo (sing. chisudzo): the lesser class of figures, or vinyau, consisting of masks and other disguises worn by single men; believed to be the spirits of the children of far-distant ancestors.

39: viwongo (sing. chiwongo): generic term for sibs.

40: zinthambo: mourning bands of plaited grass.

113, 166, 311, 648 Maravi FR4

/For information concerning the relation between population patterns and land utilization, and particularly with regard to the resettlement program carried out by the Colonial Administration, see 5: Allan, FR 5 Ngoni, category 116. Only specific data have been marked for this file, whereas there is much relevant information in the generalized sections of that source. --Analyst/

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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BRIEFER STUDIES AND ANNOTATIONS

THE PERCEPTION OF HISTORY IN A PLURAL SOCIETY

A Study of an Ngoni Group in Northern Rhodesia[1]

J. A. BARNES

121 In non-literate societies there is, strictly speaking, no history; for there are no documents, and history, in the sense of historiography, is essentially the study of contemporary documents. There are only legends by which to a greater or less degree present conditions are related to or explained by alleged former conditions.[2] In fully literate societies with a well documentated past, legends take different forms and it is often difficult to distinguish legend from history. In modern societies many socially significant legends relate to the immediate past rather than to antiquity. It is of interest, therefore, to examine what kinds of legend are current in societies shifting from non-literacy to literacy and to what extent they have a history.

In many Western cultures the earliest surviving documents are chronicles or codes of law. At an early stage writing was employed to record facts of wide interest rather than things of significance only to a few. When Africans first become literate they employ their skill in writing letters to one another. Only later do individuals begin to write essays, histories and novels and so develop a vernacular literature. They learn to write in an environment already containing a great quantity of vernacular printed matter issuing from European-controlled sources. The spatial separation of kinsfolk and friends brought about by labour migration makes letter-writing worth while and the emphemeral nature of these pencil-written documents is no disadvantage. It requires greater resources than most individuals and Native Authorities can muster to produce a family or tribal chronicle in permanent form.

1. Read at the Birmingham meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Section H, 1 September 1950, and published in the journal of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute under the title "History in a Changing Society".
2. Cf. Evans-Pritchard, "Marett lecture", p. 121.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

212 The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish
121 between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

181 Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of Euro-
[177] pean control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller
181 looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-
178 dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung
[538] at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now
533 largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs
182 they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in
538 ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is
173 the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women
648 are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The
186 cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

175 We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the
648 whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories
648 are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not
177 only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes
177 as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there
[769] was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made
648 to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The
186 Ngoni identified themselves with European rather than with their matrilineal
156 neighbours even before the European conquest. Wiese, himself the main agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[4]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount
[197] Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[5] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not pro-
829 duced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An
183 aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian
181 neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to ration-
186 alize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

4. Wiese, *Geschichte*, pp. 200 f.
5. Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'zeni said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Deare, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 25.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British. Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly", and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the
693 Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
184 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
692 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done
183

under the guise of drawing attention to some good Ngoni custom which has been neglected. Thus, for example, a man came to court saying that he was always quarrelling with his wife and that he wished to divorce her. The bench granted the divorce and awarded the woman 30s. damages. The litigant protested. The junior member of the bench, a man aged about 25 years, said, "Don't you know, it has always been the custom in this court to award 30s. damages against men who divorce their wives?" Yet this was a comparatively recent practice and the litigant's protest seemed, to me, to be quite justified. The young man had been on the bench only about eighteen months. Even without Administrative stimulus, deliberate acts of legislation are not unknown among the Ngoni, but they require considerable discussion and probably a tribal meeting. It is easier, particularly for a court member as junior as the man in question, to appeal to the unwritten corpus of tribal custom when introducing a new rule. An analogous process in our own society is perhaps concealed under the fiction that judges do not make law. Ngoni do not quote specific precedents in court, and in this undocumented environment new decisions, if they are not soon challenged, become part of what has always been the custom since time immemorial.

We may then summarize by saying that their common store of notions about the past provides Ngoni with a means of distinguishing themselves from similar groups at a time when the cultural distinctions between these groups are in fact becoming less and less. In the Courts, appeals to the value of traditional custom are made to gain acceptance for new rulings, while in ordinary life breaches of custom are widespread and are not censured.

When we consider legends associated with particular groups within he tribe the picture is rather different. Separate groups in the population remember, and sometimes act in the light of, particular incidents in the past which link them to other similar groups. Thus village A is linked with village B because of some incident in the past when the erstwhile leader of A captured the leader of B, or because at one time the leaders of A and B were brothers. These incidents, and the present inter-group relations with which they are associated, are not known universally but only by the groups concerned and by those near them. Yet in many ways these incidents are of greater practical significance than the more widely known tribal history. The relationships to which they give rise, or rather such of these relationships as have persisted, are remembered at funerals, in the formal exchanges of beer, and in the settlement of quarrels. There are at first glance no sanctions to maintain relationships of this kind, and indeed the very separate existence of two villages A and B may be due to a quarrel followed by a split. But although, for example, when an old woman dies in A there is no way of directly forcing a messenger to carry the news to B, there is in fact a greal deal of social pressure on both groups to keep alive the connection between them. This arises from the general responsibility placed on everyone to preserve the peace, that is, to preserve the existing social order intact. If there are

If there are 829
quarrels in a villagee the headman is blamed by the chief for not controlling [627]
his people well. All d disputes are best settled out of court, even if they must be 628
referred to court latater on. Therefore a quarrel in village A brings to light all the alliances and cleeavages which link A with other villages and differentiate it from them. The headman of A appeals to B for support, invoking the historical incident lilinking them, and hopes to settle affairs of his village with the authority of B's approval behind him. For if the headman of B is a potential ally he is also a potential rival, and the dissident section in A may themselves invoke their link with B and transfer their allegiance to him. Thus although thee details of the relationship between A and B, and the historical incident connected with it, may not be widely known there is considerable externaal pressure on them to maintain their relationship. Connexions of this kinnd, mainly between villages, but also between chiefdoms, play a large part inn contemporary Ngoni life. Men walk twenty miles to a funeral and womenn carry pots of beer all day in response to ties of this kind.

Thus we see, onn the one hand, that tribal legends are widely known, 829
relate to pre-conquuest times, and do not directly influence conduct; and, on 173
the other, that legeends associated with inter-group relations are known only 628
by the groups conocerned, may relate to either before or after 1898, and do directly influence aaction. Why is there this difference? We may regard the former legends as of significance mainly in external relations and the latter in internal. Withinn the tribe, and more particularly within the minor chiefdom, inter-group rrelations are still largely determined by Ngoni themselves, however much theey may have altered in form and content since 1898 and however much Nggoni are part of a wide system. Movement between villages is only slightly conntrolled by the Administration and in quarrelling, in marriage and adultery, beer-drinking and hoeing, Ngoni men and women choose their own allies annd enemies. Incidents in reality give rise to inter-group relations and are suubsequently invoked to maintain them. History is written not in books but inn the names of groups and in the remembered connexions between them, andd as these connexions gradually change so local legendary history is gradualyy rewritten.

In external relaations the Ngoni never act as a tribe except within the 829
framework of Eurcopean-controlled institutions. As yet no myth of origin is 182
needed to explain the fact that Ngoni and Cewa representatives sit together on the Provincial Council save that the Administration put them there. The world of external relations is one of cultural heterogeneity and comparative adequate documerntation. In this field legends have only a limited social function. They diifferentiate tribe X from tribe Y but do not relate them to each other.

Lastly we musst consider Ngoni history proper. There have been many 175
alleged accounts of Ngoni history published in Europe and South Africa, 819
but these seem too have had little influence on the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Recently several hhistories have appeared in the vernacular, and tribal history

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few. We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of these providing the information.[6] The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin. Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from contemporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grow shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that "the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory". From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations, as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

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113

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[title page]

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indunas*[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupulous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African territories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[1 [i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

one party of them came up from the south, and partly to divisions among the Ngoni during the period of settlement.

About 115 years ago the ancestors of these Ngoni left their homes in the present Zululand and Swaziland for their long trek north. The immediate cause of their departure was the defeat of Zwidi, chief of the Ndwandwe people, by Chaka, the history of whose military career in Zululand is well known and needs no repetition here. As part of Zwidi's people, the Ngoni did not want to stay under Chaka, and the same impetus and military skill which set up Chaka as the Zulu Napoleon drove the Ngoni northward as far as Lake Tanganyika, a conquering military horde amassing followers on the way. To-day they are found in three large groups and several smaller ones, the large groups known as the 'countries' of Mpezeni, Mwambera, and Gomani, who are the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs.[1]

These groups of people with their southern origin, settled among people who had a totally different language and social structure, present to the anthropologist a highly complex situation to investigate. He must at the outset ask the questions, 'Who are these Ngoni? Have they a separate identity as a people, marked by distinctive social and political institutions?' After living among them for nearly a year I am convinced that it is correct to speak of the Ngoni as a distinctive group; that they themselves are very conscious of their separate identity as a people, and that they can point to certain of their institutions, notably their language and political, territorial, and kinship groupings, which are definitely Ngoni, that is, of southern origin, and which distinguish them from the people among whom they settled. The complexities of this situation involve the analysing of the ethnic elements included in this term 'Ngoni' and the determining of the sense in which it is to be used. They involve also an explanation of what is meant by the expression 'a distinctive Ngoni culture', or 'distinctive Ngoni institutions'. The anthropologist who is interested in culture contact must go further and indicate the nature of the double contact caused first by the intermingling of the Ngoni with other tribes, and then by the advent of the Europeans. It is not possible in this article to do justice to all these aspects of an intricate problem.

[1] For the purposes of this article these are the only groups which will be considered.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

N M 101 641 N M 101 186 [464] N M [614]

people of Mpezeni'. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is 'the thing' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, "We are all Ngoni". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N 829 [614] N 121 101

The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, 'What is the meaning of a clan?' they reply, 'It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many 'tribes' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

N M 197 128

[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word 'clan' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. 'Tribe' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which 'tribe' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the 'blanket term' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word 'tribe' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

N M 101 128

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts?

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *n* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups.

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans.

614 a hierarchy of rank expressed in the clan names, and this rank is
563 evident in the position of houses on a village site, and the degree of authority exercised by the clans and the respect[1] accorded to them. In effect, all those whose ancestors were absorbed before the final
101 break up of the main Ngoni group are recognized as having some
563 claim to the name Ngoni. The rest, that is the clans found in the areas where the Ngoni finally settled are, or rather were, regarded as conquered or slave people.

101 We have seen, however, that there is a much wider sense in which the term Ngoni is used—that is, by all who live under the rule of the
641 Paramount Chief. This extended usage is due to the prestige and
186 honour in which the stricter meaning of Ngoni is held. It was illus-
[643] trated in the instance of the Nyasaland men in Johannesburg, who all claimed to be Ngoni because they had discovered at once that the name commanded respect among the mixture of tribes to be found on the mines. *Indunas* and other leading men sometimes make use of this wider connotation when boasting about the large numbers of people owning allegiance to the Ngoni Paramount Chief, compared with the other petty chieftainships. 'All those in the country of Mpezeni are Ngoni. All are his people.' At the same time they make it clear that there is a distinction between the real Ngoni and the other subjects of the Paramount—a distinction which formerly was much sharper than it is to-day. All are the people of the Paramount, it is true, but in old days the majority of the non-Ngoni were called slaves. To this day the Ngoni when angry may call out to some one, 'Chewa, Chewa', implying 'Slave, slave', and be hauled to the chief's court for insulting language. There the chief will take pains to point out that there are no slaves to-day, and that no Ngoni must 'spoil the country' by insulting the people of the Paramount.

101 It is, I think, clear that there is a connotation in which the term Ngoni can be used with some degree of scientific accuracy—that is, to cover all those clans which are not belonging to the local tribes, or, in an even stricter sense, the clans of indubitably southern origin.

[196] [571] [1] This word 'respect' is constantly in use among the Ngoni. It implies both 'honour' and 'fear', and they sometimes use one word and sometimes the other. It really means, 'to give a person his due', that is, to behave towards him (or her) in the manner which his rank requires.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

We have also to recognize that the wider connotation of the word is in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction of that name.

III. Ngoni Society as a Cultural Unit. It is evident that the field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong centralized political organization. This society differs radically from that of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state', that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created social structure the principles of centralization and rank were dominant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of systematized law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, political, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history,

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hamlets.

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *induna* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'tribal

178 829 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form- [185] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state, [177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship [182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 648 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were [161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they per-

[304] [186] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are named by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikwamayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 101 186 619 191 Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indunas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the N [123] aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see N [563] how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

N 105 101 186 As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans N M 177 182 and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, 'We taught them to honour their sons' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

N 123 186 After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

 123

the reason for this enthusiasm about being 'written up'. 'At last', he said, 'someone will know about us.' He went on to speak with regret about the old days when one or two missionaries and others really knew about the Ngoni and could speak their language. He then spoke with bitterness about the present, lamenting that the Ngoni were no longer regarded as a great people. Gradually it became evident that the Ngoni, being very conscious themselves of their distinctive cultural identity, and of their positive achievements in setting up the Ngoni state, expect other people to recognize this too. They keep constantly before them memories of their past greatness, and they dwell gloomily on the coming of the Europeans which marked the end of their ascendancy. 186

IV. The Historical Sense of the Ngoni. From the beginning of my stay among the Ngoni the chiefs and leading men impressed on me the importance of knowing about their past. In each area the Paramount Chief arranged that 'historians', that is, old men accredited by him as having correct information, should come to dictate Ngoni history to me. At first this relating of history took place in public before any who liked to listen. The old historians, however, grizzled warriors of many fights, trembled and stammered in giving their accounts, because the Paramount Chief so impressed on them the importance of the occasion, and pulled them up sharply when they hesitated over names or events. At the subsequent private sittings, where the old men could argue fiercely with each other without any fear of causing shame before an audience, the accounts were much more coherent, and, as the Paramount Chief assured me, correct. After one such taking down of history in the Paramount's village, I went to stay in the village of one of these 'historians', a very much respected *makwenzana* and one of the 'best families'. He gently but firmly put aside my scheme of studying village organization and economic life, saying, 'First you ought to know about our beginnings'.[1] After giving me still more detailed accounts of Ngoni history, he explained that though much of their social life was mixed up to-day with that of other tribes, their history and traditions were distinct and belonged to them alone. Hence I ought to have it written 814 124

[1] He used the verb *kukuda*, which implies root or origin.

814 down fully and correctly. When I arrived in Chief Gomani's country,
124 after having stayed in the other two Ngoni areas, the chiefs and leading
[114] men whom he called to see me asked at once, 'What did the other Ngoni do to show you they were Ngoni? *We* want you first to hear the story of our people.' If I said to any older man of good standing, that is of a true Ngoni clan, 'Tell me about the Ngoni', he invariably began with the traditions of the south and their trek north.

173 I have some fifteen long texts[1] of Ngoni history, most of which
[126] begin with the stories of Dingiswayo and Zwidi, leading on to the rise of Chaka and the Ngoni exodus from the south. These texts not only show a measure of agreement with each other, but they also are verifiable by established history as recorded by Europeans. Those texts which came from Gomani's country contain different material after the exodus from the south. For the Ngoni under the leadership of the
[614] Maseko clan came north with Mzilikazi and the Matabele, and crossing the Zambesi alone, went east of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika.[2] The main Ngoni group under the Jere clan went west of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika, and remained a united group until the death of Zwangendaba in 1848. A disputed succession followed and the Ngoni split up under two rival Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera. The history
[814] of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one, the only one to whom the royal salute *Bayete* should be given. Mpezeni's historians say, 'Mwambera snatched *Bayete*'—and vice versa. In spite of these divergences in later history, however, the Ngoni point to their earlier
619 history and say, 'You see we are all one people'. They are conscious
829 of, and troubled about, their present divisions and inclined to attribute them to our premature arrival in the country. 'You came too soon. We would have fought until there was only one *inkosi*.'

The detailed knowledge of Ngoni history is regarded as the pro-
814 vince of a specialist. 'How can a man of no wisdom remember all those names?' From time to time 'historians' tell episodes of this traditional history in the villages of the Paramount or of other im-

[1] 800–1,000 words.

[2] This is their own account and is confirmed by the Rev. Charles Stuart, formerly at Ekwendeni, but not so far recorded by other Europeans.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

portant chiefs. The Paramounts have told me that occasionally at 814
their biannual 'meeting of chiefs' and *indunas*, some recital of history is made, especially if they want to quote a precedent or examine an old custom with a view to change. This historical tradition therefore is alive and has a recognized function in regulating Ngoni life. In one area part of it has been written in the vernacular and is used as a school history book.[1] In the other areas the Paramounts have spoken of the need for something of the same kind, as they recognize that with the coming of modern education it is an effective way of training the young in the traditions of the Ngoni past.

In addition to recitals of tradition by 'historians' there are many other reminders of the Ngoni past which are constantly before the people. An adequate examination of Ngoni history as it is expressed in their institutions and standardized behaviour would need an article to itself. I shall only mention here some ways and occasions through which tradition and old Ngoni institutions are brought before the people.

1. The praise songs of chiefs, war songs, regimental songs, names of famous regiments, and prayers for rain. These contain references, [533]
often rather obscure, to events and persons in the past. The praise songs are sung, or rather shouted, on special occasions, as when thanking the chief for beer, by members of important clans who alone know the words. The war songs and regimental songs recall the great days of conquest, and are sung and danced in war dress at big gatherings at the Paramount's village or at other chief's villages. The [782]
prayers for rain invoke the names of great chiefs in old days, but are now only a memory as they are no longer used in ceremonies—at least in none that I have found so far.

2. The names of prominent landmarks, such as hills and rivers where great chiefs built their villages and fights took place. Herd [823]
boys will point out a river and say, 'That is where Mtwalo built when he came from Choma', or 'That hill is where Singu hid in the Azungu war'. The historical events attached to these places are widely known and constantly before people's eyes in the diversified landscape of hills and valleys.

3. Important village names. During the trek north, the names of [621]

[1] In Mwambera's country.

814 621 the villages of certain chiefs in the south were preserved.[1] In Mwambera's country there are the names of villages belonging to nine generations of Jere chiefs, and in Gomani's country for seven generations of Maseko chiefs. Villages holding these historic names are in charge of an individual of high rank who is never called the 'owner' of that village but 'the one who takes care'. I realized how clear to the people is the historical significance of these village names, when I asked a question and they exclaimed, 'What? You do not know about Elangeni being the village of Hlachwayo? But all Ngoni people can know that.'[2]

814 614 [193] [576] 4. Clan names. The clan names, as the Ngoni say, denote a person's 'tribe' and the respect due to him. With the prefix, *e*, *a*, *na* (according to the area) the clan name is used as a respectful form of address, and always when thanking for a gift or favour. The tone of reverence with which the great clan names are thus mentioned is itself an indication of the rank and honour of a person.

814 621 5. Village descent. In old days Ngoni villages were very much larger than to-day. The headman of a village on your first visit will always give you the genealogy of his village, how it split off from A, which split off from B, which was the *chigawa* under *induna* X of the big village of chief Y. Reciting these village genealogies generally leads to some recalling of the past, and the village notables, the *amadoda*, gather round to corroborate or correct the headman's recital.

814 It takes very little to stimulate the Ngoni to historical conversations. I have heard them originate in the return of a villager from Johannesburg, where he met Zulu and Swazi men and found they could speak together and had common traditions; in a sermon preached by an Ngoni minister in which he used illustrations from Ngoni warfare; in a rebuke from the Boma to a headman for trying to move his village from worn out land to a site outside the Reserve on an empty farm. And it is not only the aristocrats who take part in such conversations. Sometimes it is evident that men and boys whose [619] fathers had been slaves are anxious to show their knowledge of Ngoni history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni.

[1] I am not clear yet what was the precise sociological process by which the identity of these villages was preserved.

[2] An idiomatic use which has the force of a double negative 'No one cannot know it'.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni. It is nevertheless recognized that the aristocrats, through their kinship links with the past, have the best knowledge; the rest listen and defer to them. For matters relating to history are no antiquarian interest to the Ngoni. It is probable that recalling history and dwelling on the great days of the past is to some extent a compensation for what the Ngoni consider the indignities of their position to-day. Yet it is also a stimulus to them to maintain their separate identity and to revere their institutions. Tradition supports rank, by recognizing the historical importance of certain clans; and rank preserves tradition because intimate knowledge is the proud monopoly of certain families.

V. Tradition and Legend as Documentation. To the anthropologist who examines the part played by tradition and legend in the culture of a people, Professor Malinowski has given an invaluable lead. He suggests that myths are the charter and documentation for traditional tribal life, 'statements of reality which live in the institutions and pursuits of the people';[1] and that legend is re-interpreted history. All peoples of whatever level of civilization interpret history in the light of their beliefs about themselves, their achievements, and their destiny. The Ngoni are no exception to this. Sometimes they relate factual history which is verifiable and accurate. At other times it is probably part fact, part fiction. Yet at all times the emphasis in, and interpretation of, tradition, has a definite purpose, and it is possible to see how a standardized form of a narrative has come to be accepted and believed in. The version of a narrative at one time was interpreted or moulded to serve a purpose. Having been established, it then moulds the thinking of the people on that particular issue. The vexed question of the supremacy of the two Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera[2] is a case in point. The basis of the story of the original dispute is the same, but the versions as told in each 'country' differ in a succession of minute details, whose arrangement and emphasis prove the point in each case. Mpezeni's historians have arranged the details to prove that he is the rightful *inkosi*; Mwambera's historians

[1] B. Malinowski. Article on Culture in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

[2] The two Paramounts at present holding these titles are grandsons of the first holders, to whom I refer as old Mpezeni.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 do the same. And in each area the versions as recited convince the
829 people that their *inkosi* is supreme. The main purpose of the tradition
643 was to show that there cannot be more than one rightful *inkosi* of the Ngoni. The present-day interpretations serve the same purpose and exalt one of the two claimants at the expense of the other.

The traditions centring round the person of Zwangendaba are numerous. Some of these are concerned to show that he was an important chief in the south under Zwidi, and that the Jere clan of which he was head was a leading one. Other accounts do not disguise that he was an upstart, but lay stress on his success as leader of the Ngoni in their trek north. All these traditions about Zwangendaba are told as documentation for the importance of the *inkosi*, and centre round the Ngoni belief that their state must have one head in whom authority is centralized. It is easy to see that the circumstances under which the Ngoni state was created demanded a strong autocratic ruler. The traditions gathered round this first ruler of their state now serve to perpetuate the beliefs about the office of Paramount Chief, beliefs which modern ideas and western education have hardly modified at all.

173 Ngoni history divides into three periods, and the traditions in each
829 period, as they are told, form the people's thinking about that section of their past. The traditions of the earliest period, that is, of their life in the south and their trek north, are the charter for their pride as a distinctive people. The traditions of the middle period, of their conquests and settlements, document their superiority over the surrounding peoples. The traditions of the last period, that of the arrival of the European, determine their attitude towards white contact. Their interpretation of their history, therefore, reflected in the established legends and tradition, influences profoundly their thinking about themselves, about their neighbours, and about the Europeans.

173 VI. Prelude to White Contact. This second period of Ngoni
167 history includes the events from the crossing of the Zambezi to the coming of the Europeans, roughly the years 1835–1885. During these fifty years the original Ngoni horde, with additions to it from the tribes south of the Zambezi, explored the country in which they were finally to settle, went farther north into Tanganyika, and finally

9: Read E--5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

returned between the years 1855–1865, to settle in their present habitat. The earlier part of the period was one of exploring and of conquest. The later part was the time of settlement and consolidation, during which the Ngoni 'states' emerged in the form in which they were found, when the Europeans first arrived.

The Ngoni in Mpezeni's country, when speaking of this time, call it *chamtendere* (the time of peace). Any white travellers' tales referring to these years lay stress on the constant raids carried out by the Ngoni, the fierceness of their warriors, and their ravaging of the countryside for slaves and cattle. It was obviously a time of frequent wars. Why then do the Ngoni call it a time of peace? I have asked this question of many men of rank and standing and they give one invariable reply, 'We call it *chamtendere* because the *Azungu* (Europeans) were not there to trouble us'. This statement is in effect the key to Ngoni thinking about the days of pre-white contact, and also about the advent of the Europeans. The way in which they speak of *chamtendere* is itself significant. I first heard it during a long recital of Ngoni history, and stopped the narrator to ask the meaning of the word. There was instantly an embarrassed silence and self-conscious grins in the group. The word had evidently slipped out unawares, for later on they told me that it was a word they only used among themselves. Having once been used, however, it appeared frequently in conversations with me, and proved a useful starting-point for accounts of the organization of their own state and the effects on it of the European advent. 'Ah, *chamtendere*', they say, with a deep sigh, 'then we were people'. It proved also to be a pass-word to their confidence, for whenever I mentioned *chamtendere* to a village headman, he and his notables nudged each other, and laughed and said, 'She can know about us'. When pressed to be more specific about this 'troubling' by the *Azungu* they spoke of taxes, of the ban upon raiding and warfare, of young men being called away to work, of their land being taken for European farms. These restrictions and disabilities caused by white contact they regarded as warfare, that is, as troubled times, because the Europeans forcibly prevented them from doing as they liked, just as they had done in their day to the surrounding tribes. The conquered tribes, on the other hand, naturally hailed the advent of the Europeans as a time of peace and security. Therein lies the chief

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 173 829 184

difference to-day between the attitude of the Ngoni to the Europeans and that of the Chewa, for example. In the vernacular expression the Ngoni say, 'The Europeans spoiled our country'; the Chewa say, 'The Europeans saved us'.

N 173 178 642

Chamtendere, then, was the period of Ngoni supremacy, when they established by force of arms their right to rule over the country and its indigenous inhabitants. There was, however, some difference between the political organization of the Ngoni as a conquering horde on the march, and their organization when they finally settled in their present areas. At both times the focus of their organization was warfare—they were a nation under arms. But once settled on land which they had chosen they began to spread a network of political organization over the country, and to plan in terms of 'countries'[1] instead of mobile villages. To-day when they discuss the advent of the Europeans and the consequent 'spoiling' of their country, they recall the days when extensive tribute was paid to their Paramount Chief, chiefs were free to choose good sites for their very big villages, the outlying areas were ruled by *indunas* and lesser chiefs. It was the partial breaking up of this centralized political organization which they regarded as 'spoiling their country', as well as the economic restrictions with regard to land and the prohibition of raiding for new supplies of cattle.

N [648] [829]

N 173 178 829 643 796

During this time of Ngoni supremacy Ngoni institutions flourished —those institutions which they had brought with them from the south and preserved through their wanderings. When they are telling to-day about these years they speak fervently and reverently of the part played by the Paramount Chief in every side of life, the training for warfare of all the young men, the instruction and supervision of young chiefs by old *indunas*, Ngoni marriage and initiation ceremonies. It was during this time in Mpezeni's country that the *Inqwala* or first fruits ceremony was regularly observed at Mtenguleni, the village of the mother of old Mpezeni.[2] At this ceremony the Paramount Chief 'opened' the new food season by the ritual eating of new fruits, especially young maize and pumpkins. It was also the

[1] i.e. chiefs' areas.

[2] The description of this *Inqwala* given by men and women who took part in it in their youth shows much similarity to the *Inqwala* of to-day among the Swazi.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Moravi FR4

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 173 829 177 this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chinamwali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *umsindo* or *umgonxo* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chinamwali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

[582] N M [881]

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

N M [191] [562] N [178]

N 114 If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chamtendere*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

When the first white people arrived, as
traders and missionaries and officials, they were all impressed with 114
the power of the Ngoni Paramount Chief and the impossibility of [643]
getting any footing in the country without his consent and aid. 'Mpezeni[1] is a very powerful chief . . . and shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his governing powers. He has formed a powerful kingdom where his subjects are mainly Chewa, Chipeta and Senga stock, but his power is consolidated by a Zulu and half-Zulu aristocracy.' Such was the official view of the Ngoni state under old Mpezeni expressed by Sir Harry Johnston, and similar impressions are recorded of the Ngoni states in Nyasaland. If this was the European impression of Ngoni supremacy it is easy to picture the feelings of the Ngoni themselves with all their pride of race and of achievements in nation-holding, when for the first time a superior power [177] loomed on their horizon.

VII. The Advent of the Europeans. I have up to the present 101
referred to the three Ngoni areas as if they formed one cultural unit. This is true of their earliest days, and to a large extent of the time called *chamtendere*. In spite of certain minor differences there was then a form of society and of political organization which was the same in all three areas, and they all possessed the same language, traditions, and aristocratic hierarchy. After the advent of the Europeans, however, it 177
becomes impossible to generalize, as both the manner and the results 184
of white penetration varied so much in the three areas. As a study in culture contact where eye-witnesses, both white and black, are still available as informants, it is most illuminating to compare the effects of white contact in Mpezeni's and Mwambera's countries. In Mpezeni's the first contact was commercial, in Mwambera's, missionary. The contrast between Ngoni society in those two districts to-day is startling, and is commented on frequently by the Ngoni themselves. 'See', say Mpezeni's people, 'the Charterland Company came to us. To Mwambera's country it was Dr. Laws. And Dr. Laws's men can speak English to-day and we cannot. Our cattle were taken by the Europeans; Mwambera's were not. That is why they *lobola* their wives to-day with many cattle, and we have only a few cattle.' They often referred to these differences as soon as they knew I was going from

[1] This was the old Mpezeni, son of Zwangendaba.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 one Ngoni area to another, and it is evident that they are well aware
184 that they met with different kinds of white contact. A frequent topic of discussion in villages is the differences between the administration of N. Rhodesia and of Nyasaland, as well as the policy and attitudes of the different missions.

177 There is, however, one common factor in the situation called culture contact, existing wherever the Ngoni meet any Europeans.
186 Like the Zulu, the Ngoni do not necessarily take kindly to white ways nor desire to make an extensive imitation of white culture. Their racial and cultural pride makes them cling to their own institutions and resent the assertion of white superiority in every sphere of life. This is evident in material culture as well as in the realm of political and social values. The Ngoni are well known for their skill in house-
[342] building, yet they prefer their own of poles and mud, and are slow to take to brick houses. Their houses, both in the villages and on the copper mines, were noticeably bare of 'store goods', and their expenditure on clothes and 'trash' is low in comparison with the wages earned. Their standards of hospitality, of courtesy, and of mutual assistance they believe to be much superior to the Europeans. They carried on their own system of courts by themselves until it was
[692] recognized by the Native Courts Ordinance a few years ago, and they speak with scorn of the chief who cannot decide his own cases and has to have recourse to the Boma. Several times in the villages, when describing their agricultural methods, or hygiene for young men, or moral training of children, they have said to me, 'Write that we knew this before the *Azungu* came'.

On one count they do concede superiority to the Europeans. 'Only
186 in war the *Azungu* knew better', and that to the Ngoni was the acid
726 test. In Mpezeni's and Gomani's countries, where they were conquered by force of arms, they knew they had to yield as they had made others yield in their day. Yet even here they find a cause for pride. 'No one ever conquered us until the *Azungu* came, and no one will conquer us again until they first conquer the *Azungu*.' This I have had said to me many times by men when speaking of their experiences as carriers and as *askari* in the East African campaign. They add as explanation, 'We went to the war of the Germans because the Boma said we should go. But we wanted also to see if the English would

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no 186
means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely 726
about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'.

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard 173
the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of 721
strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni 726
tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British [713]
superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the [727]
huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale.

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni 173
it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they [186]
dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] [648] [423]

[1] In the Report on Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'. [361]

[2] Over 3 miles across. [3] in 1889.

173 made friends with old Mpezeni and finally made Luangeni, Mpezeni's
648 head village, his head-quarters. He obtained mining rights in the land
[423] from Mpezeni, by word of mouth, but Mpezeni signed no deed of gift or transfer. This legal point which subsequently became one of the major points at issue in the North Charterland Company case has been emphasized again and again to me in the villages. 'Mpezeni was writing nothing. He was only giving presents to Weise, and
[481] Weise gave presents to him, and Mpezeni was saying, "You may travel in my country and dig for gold. You are my friend."' They add further, 'Mpezeni did not want to make friends with the British
[648] because he had heard from the Matabele and from Nyasaland what they were doing. Weise said "I am not from the British", and so Mpezeni was making promises with him.' So deeply is this tradition of friendship between Mpezeni and Weise, with its consequences of betrayal and disaster, embedded in the Ngoni thinking, that when I stayed in the Paramount Chief's village and exchanged presents with
[123] him, many old people shook their heads and warned the young people, 'The *Azungu* war will come again. This is how that other war was beginning.'

175 Weise failed to establish his claim to mining rights in Mpezeni's
648 territory with Sir Harry Johnston, then Commissioner for all British territories north of the Zambezi. Meantime the British South Africa Company obtained a new charter to extend its field north of the Zambezi, and sent an emissary to Mpezeni's kraal to make a treaty with him. Mpezeni refused. He also refused Sir Harry Johnston's emissary who met Weise at Mpezeni's kraal with a view to getting Mpezeni to make a treaty direct with the British Crown. The mining rights in Mpezeni's country were potentially valuable, and on Mpezeni's refusal to grant them were claimed by the British South Africa Company[1] on the ground of treaties made with the conquered Chewa people, whom Mpezeni had dispossessed.[2] Weise was at this time at Mpezeni's with one or two Portuguese traders and officials, making hay while the sun shone.

[1] 'Finding Mpezeni obdurate the British South Africa Company concluded treaties with all the surrounding indigenous chiefs whom Mpezeni had dispossessed. We consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief.'

[2] F.O. 6537.

In 1893 the North Charterland Company was formed, distinct from and yet allied with the British South Africa Company,[1] with mining and trading rights over 10,000 square miles, most of which lay in Mpezeni's territory. The legal right to this concession was based on the British South Africa Company's treaties with 'dispossessed chiefs'. At the same time the North Charterland Company recognized that Mpezeni still held the effective sovereignty over the area, and that the success and safety of any mining or trading expedition sent to the territory depended on good relations being established with Mpezeni. They therefore persuaded Weise to join their staff in order to get Mpezeni's consent to the venture. They gained a foothold and did some prospecting, and then tried to impose a hut tax, and to exercise administrative powers through their own uniformed police of the Tonga tribe from Lake Nyasa—a tribe despised by the Ngoni. Two memoranda by Sir Harry Johnston to the Foreign Office set out the chain of events which led to the use of armed force against Mpezeni in January 1898, the pretext being the alleged danger of two white men in his country. Sir Harry Johnston wrote, 'Mpezeni is a very powerful Zulu chief and intimately allied with the Matabele. He offers no great objection to mining for gold but shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his independence or governing powers. The latter is the cause of his quarrel with Colonel Warton on the matter of a British flag and taxation.' He concludes the second memorandum with the remarks, 'Mpezeni is an intrusive Zulu robber who must sooner or later be dethroned and subdued. He is very powerful and is the only avowedly recalcitrant chief in all British Central Africa. When his hour comes he can be dealt with by the present Protectorate forces.' Following the last memoranda on the situation in Mpezeni's country the Foreign Office wrote to the British South Africa Company in April 1897, 'Lord Salisbury gathers that the North Charterland Company have maintained friendly relations with Mpezeni by withholding from his knowledge their connexion with the British South Africa Company and their British nationality. It is stated that the representative of the North Charterland Company has passed himself off to Mpezeni as brother to Weise.'

Lord Salisbury was well informed. When the Ngoni tell this story

[1] See North Charterland Inquiry.

648 in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of
814 those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Azungu* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for under-
[609] standing the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognise Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final
175 humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with
648 his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot';
[727] and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the old *induna* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *inkosi* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic
178 changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and
[648] demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on
[484] both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand
[167] for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1924.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union. This exodus to the south in its turn brought the Ngoni into touch once more with the Matabele, the Zulu, and the Swazi, and reawakened their consciousness of their southern origin. It is significant that just at the point when their power in their own country received a crushing blow, they came into contact once more in the south with the stock from which they had sprung and to whom they could still speak in their own language. The anthropologist who looks for the reason why the distinctive Ngoni culture did not die out entirely after their military defeat and the advent of the whites, can see at least part of the reason supplied by the results of this economic exodus to work in the south. When the other tribes in the neighbourhood were, in the Ngoni phrase, 'running always to the Boma' and incidentally picking up fragments of European customs, the Ngoni remained, according to their own account, to a great extent aloof and were strengthened in this aloofness by their renewed southern connexions.

Ngoni supremacy over the country was at an end. The Europeans were the overlords of all the tribes, not the Ngoni. Instead of one big chief in the country, many small ones were now recognized who dared to give themselves airs because they knew the Ngoni could not compel allegiance to their Paramount. Chewa people living under Ngoni chiefs could no longer be forced to stay there, therefore a different attitude towards them was necessary. 'Chewa' could no longer be synonymous with 'slave'. I have heard Ngoni chiefs in court address their *indunas* and headmen many times on behaving well to people of other tribes 'Or they will leave us and to-day we cannot make them return'. A recent case in which a young chief, but a very important one, was summoned to the Paramount's court for insulting a Chewa woman, was made the occasion by the Paramount for a long public discourse on the present relations between Ngoni and Chewa, pointing out that an Ngoni chief whose Chewa subjects left him would 'spoil his country' and 'all his people would be ashamed'. Ngoni prestige, in fact, having lost the support of military power, had to rely on other sanctions. In their own eyes, their prestige was still due to their southern origin, their success in creating the Ngoni state in an alien milieu, and those distinctive institutions which they had retained. To the surrounding people, to the Chewa and other tribes,

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643]

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, 'because all his chiefs obey him', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *shawtendev*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, 'We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes'.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184]

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. 'To pay taxes, that is our war to-day', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

the mental adjustments necessary to white contact. They still resent 177
white intrusion and its results, economic, administrative, and mis- 609
sionary. At the same time many of them earnestly wish for a solution of the present tension, but towards such a solution there is no easy short cut.

VIII. Conclusions. Conclusions reached after the first period of 128
field work are generally given with a certain reserve, especially in a 121
complex field such as the Ngoni present. I think, however, that the conclusions in this paper can be stated with some certainty, and as dogmatic statements they form a basis for further field work. For they set the main problems for the detailed study of the Ngoni, and also of the Ngoni as a field for observing culture contact. In this article I hope that the three chief elements in the study have emerged, namely, the problem of Ngoni society as a cultural and political unit; the culture contact problems due to the contact, and part fusion, with local tribes; and the modern culture contact problems due to European penetration.

1. The Ngoni as a group must be regarded from two points of 101
view: those who ethnically have a right to be called Ngoni, who are members of recognised Ngoni clans, with an acknowledged southern origin; and all those who live in the territory of the Ngoni Paramount Chief, and call themselves his people. These last were incorporated into the Ngoni state by the first group, who are still the ruling aristocracy, but the incorporated people now share in Ngoni 'national sentiment' and have made certain sociological changes in order to conform to Ngoni culture. It is their southern origin and their well remembered traditions of the past which confer distinctiveness on the true Ngoni, and on the state which they built. It is to their past they also turn for the charter for those institutions which are recognised as distinctively Ngoni, such as the Paramount Chieftainship, the hierarchy of rank, and patrilineal succession. Their historical origin and military achievements form also the charter for their former position as rulers of the country which they held before the advent of the Europeans.

2. The Europeans in two of the Ngoni areas destroyed the unique 177
position of the Ngoni by defeating their armies. These armies had 178

177 178 hitherto been the chief sanction for Ngoni supremacy. With their invincibility gone,-the regiments broke up and the Ngoni military prestige was at an end. At the same time the direction of political affairs and the relations between the different tribes was assumed by a superior power. Ngoni political ascendancy and their control of economic organization was also at an end. The subject races of the Ngoni who had hitherto either been conquered or submitted voluntarily to the Ngoni had now an ally who was stronger than their former masters.

3. The new situation forced the Ngoni to make drastic readjustments. They had to readjust themselves to new relations with other 177 178 tribes, and at the same time to the Europeans. In their contact with 186 the Chewa and other subject tribes they could no longer maintain the 648 social exclusiveness which had marked the distinction between Ngoni and slaves. There was therefore less actual resistance to culture fusion, though the dislike of adopting alien customs persisted. This dislike of alien customs was evident to some extent also in white contacts. The missionaries brought a new religion, western education, and western medicine. Other Europeans introduced land reserves, taxation, and working for wages. To the local tribes the European represented security as well as certain material benefits. To the Ngoni these material benefits appeared less welcome in the face of their defeat. There was therefore a psychological conflict set up among the Ngoni 178 —a malaise due to their military and political downfall, together with 181 their determination to preserve certain elements in their own culture. 182 That psychological conflict is evident everywhere to-day, and finds expression in all conversations which turn on the relations of the Ngoni to other tribes or to Europeans. To the persistence of that conflict is due the strength of Ngoni 'national feeling', which has directed the selective process by which some of their political, legal, and social institutions have survived the results of culture contact.

4. Conditions all over Africa are changing and new forms of social 178 and political organization are emerging due to the contact of the 648 Africans with European civilization. What place has the Ngoni state in this emergent African society? Are there still cultural realities in Ngoni society which should be preserved, and can the Ngoni political structure be galvanized into new life through the medium of indirect

Rule? There might have been a time, before the Ngoni wars, when treaties could have been made with the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs, and the Ngoni state have evolved without defeat. Policy, however, was different in those days, and strong chiefs were crushed. The demand now is for strong tribal organization which can carry on its own administration with the minimum of European interference and direction. The vital question is: has that moment gone for the Ngoni? Has their defeat, not only military, but economic and political, so taken the heart out of them, that they can no longer rebuild their tribal organization and make a success of Indirect Rule?

The answer to that question has two desiderata. One is a thorough intensive study of Ngoni society and Ngoni institutions as they exist to-day, and of the relation of the true Ngoni to those who call themselves Ngoni. The other is the willingness of Europeans, officials, missionaries, and settlers, to show some recognition of Ngoni pride in their past. The Ngoni are not children. They do not want a toy called Indirect Rule handed out to them to play with. If their political aspirations were appreciated and their racial pride acknowledged, they could make a successful synthesis between Ngoni institutions and modern administration with its concomitants of modern education and modern economic methods. They themselves discuss frequently in the men's talking places in the villages such a synthesis of Ngoni and western culture. The attempt in one area in Nyasaland to work out such a synthesis is a sign that it is not impossible. With fuller knowledge and co-operation on both sides the strength of Ngoni national sentiment might be used to make a success of the policy of Indirect Rule.

MARGARET READ.

Résumé

TRADITION ET PRESTIGE CHEZ LES NGONI

Les Ngoni sont une section des Zoulous qui habitent l'Afrique orientale. Le vocable Ngoni désigne aujourd'hui deux groupes: les descendants des chefs originels qui, il y a cent cinquante ans environ, dominèrent vers le nord et les membres des tribus assujetties et absorbées dans l'état Ngoni. Les Ngoni proprement dits forment une aristocratie, qui se distingue par le commandement absolu et la connaissance de la langue Ngoni originelle et des traditions historiques de la tribu. Leur institutions diffèrent de celles des tribus voisines

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

SEVEN TRIBES OF BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

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and

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
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THE FORT JAMESON NGONI

By J. A. BARNES

Historical and Ecological Background

101 THERE are about a dozen groups of peoples in different parts of Africa who call themselves Ngoni, and others not using that name have also been classified as Ngoni on the basis of common origin. They are found in Tanganyika Territory, Portuguese East [131] Africa, Nyasaland, and Northern Rhodesia. The name Ngoni is derived from Ngoni, the designation applied to themselves by the Zulu and Xhosa peoples. The Ngoni have a common history of emigration from 175 the vicinity of Zululand, in Natal, in the 1820's, and of subsequent 101 migration northwards. This common heritage they share with the Ndebele of Southern Rhodesia. These migrations were occasioned by the rise to power of the Zulu chief Shaka, whose defeat of his chief rival, Zwide of the Ndandwe, led to the flight northwards of parties of Ndandwe refugees. At least two parties travelled as far north as the River Zambezi, one of them led by Zwangendaba, whose party crossed the river in 1835.[1] This Ngoni group reached the vicinity of Lake Tanganyika in about 1845, and there Zwangendaba died. His people split into several segments, led by his sons and other followers. One of these segments went on farther north, others turned towards Lake Nyasa, while one segment led by Mpezeni, a son of Zwangendaba, struck south-westwards towards the Bemba country in what is now the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia. Here, in about 1856, they fought unsuccessfully with the Bemba, retreated southwards, and in about 1864 crossed the River Luangwa into Fort Jameson District. In 1868 they moved westwards into Petauke District, and a few years later moved eastwards to their present habitat in the vicinity of Fort Jameson.[2] It is with this group of Ngoni that we are concerned.[3]

[1] Poole, *Story of the Crossing of the Zambezi*, pp. 190–2.

[2] Cf. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, pp. 459–77; Chilmaiza, *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*, pp. 1–38; Doke, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 151; Elmslie, *Among the Wild Angoni*, p. 18; Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 310–23; Hodgson, *Notes on the Ndebele and Angoni*, p. 113; Kapumpula, *Angoni*; Uanale ndi Mpumbi, pp. 1–113; Lamizana, *Tanganyika Chronicle*, p. 82; Poole, *Native Tribes*, pp. 3–10; Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 182; Reignal, *Stations of Nyasaland*, p. 128; Watson, *Stations of British Central Africa*, p. 181; Wilson, *Gumbinkho . . . der Angoni*, pp. 180–4; Wintembergen, *Angoni Parentage*, pp. 108–13; Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, pp. 108–13.

[3] I worked among these people for a year in 1948–9 as an Anthropologist of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

[149]

[P. 194]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The present-day population of the tribe is about 85,000, of whom about 60,000 live in Northern Rhodesia and 25,000 in the Fort Manning area of Nyasaland.[1] In Northern Rhodesia the tribe is largely confined to two demarcated Native Reserves. In 1938 the density of population in these two reserves averaged 68 persons to the square mile,[2] but in some congested or very fertile areas it was 90 or more.[3] Since 1941 the density has been reduced in some of the more congested parts by controlled resettlement in areas outside the reserves.[4] The density of population of the Nyasaland section of the tribe was about 46 persons to the square mile in 1945.[5] 161 191

The region in which the Ngoni live consists of a fairly flat plateau about 3,500 feet above sea-level, with massive granite outcrops rising another 1,000 feet or more. The soils of the region are principally of the types suitable only for shifting or partial cultivation, but there are also belts of more valuable soils.[6] In relation to the customary mode of agriculture, in which maize is the principal crop, the critical density of the land has been calculated to be about 22 persons to the square mile.[7] The annual rainfall at Fort Jameson varies from 27 to 48 inches, averaging about 35 inches. The region contains the meeting of the Lusangwa-Nyasa and Lusangwa-Zambezi watersheds. Most of the streams that flow down into the Lusangwa dry up in July, while the Zambezi and Nyasa streams continue to flow somewhat longer.[8] 133 [134] [243] [132]

The natural vegetation of the region consists principally of *Brachystegia-Isoberlinia* woodlands, with larger trees along the lines of streams. The mean maximum temperature for the region is about 137 132

of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. This account was prepared at Oxford, and I am very grateful to Dr. Max Gluckman for criticism of this paper in draft.

[1] In the 1945 Nyasaland census many of the people living in the two Ngoni reserves were classified as Cewa. Hence the figure of 5,431 Ngoni in Fort Manning does not represent the total population of these two reserves. Cf. *Report on the Census*, Table 9.

[2] Calculated from the figures given in the *Fort Report*, p. 364. These two reserves contain Cewa chieftainships as well as Ngoni, but the average population density of the two tribes is probably of the same order.

[3] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 70.

[4] Fraser, *Land Resettlement*, pp. 47-9.

[5] *Report on the Census*, Table 8. The Fort Manning District contains 9 Cewa chieftainships as well as the two Ngoni. The figure given above is the average for the whole district.

[6] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 70.

[7] Allan, *African Land Usage*, p. 14.

[8] Poole, *Human Geography*, pp. 1 and 2.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132. 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and [231] chickens are also kept.

571 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neighbours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 572 573 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 69 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the regime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 69 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the headmen.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Tempelhoff, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 1–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mabwanamkulu*, pl. *ubwanamkulu*.
[4] *Nduna*, pl. *ndunas*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the absence of any definite internal land boundaries between the territories of one political segment and another. The constant elements were the residential groups that we now know as villages,[1] and we may liken them to ships of different size and importance that preserve a loose formation while the fleet sails from place to place. Villages, discrete clusters of dwellings in comparative proximity and separated from one another by undeveloped stretches of garden-land and bush, were internally divided into divisions,[2] and from time to time these divisions broke away from one another or from their parent village to form new villages of their own. This process of divisional fission was characteristic of the commoner villages. Royal villages were usually formed by a parallel process by which an important member of the royal lineage established a new village for one or more of his queens by recruitment from his own natal village. The eldest son by the senior queen in that village then became the head of the segment of the royal lineage associated with the village. Thus the segmentation of the royal lineage was reflected in a proliferation of royal villages.

In the period immediately prior to the conquest of the tribe by British forces in 1898, there were four important royal villages, with populations of probably several thousands each. One belonged to a brother of Mpezeni, and the other three were controlled by groups of Mpezeni's own queens and their sons. Associated with each royal village were several regional governors, each of whom was responsible for the well-being of a group of lesser villages, and who resided among them in a village of his own. These lesser villages were commoner villages, with under his own headman. Each large royal village had also a number of lesser royal villages attached to it, and also many commoner villages were attached to a royal village of some sort directly, and not through a regional governor.[3]

Each important person, chief, member of the royal lineage, regional governor, or headman was assisted by a number of lieutenants, trusted subordinates who were usually not parallel kinsmen of their principal but who were sometimes related affinally. These lieutenants were ranked in order of the creation of their posts by their principal and assisted him in the control of his unit of administration. In the case of Mpezeni himself, however, there were two kinds of lieutenants. These people known as the lieutenants of Mpezeni were

[1] *Mzunzi*, pl. *mizunzi*.
[2] *Ugwalo*, pl. *ugwalo*.
[3] Cf. Kapere, *the African dictionary*, p. 98, for a similar system among the Ngoni.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[61] [558] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

69 178 161 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

69 64 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was [569] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a 64 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population 77 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There 568 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State. [567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain economy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set 68 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise 69 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was 70

[1] Mnumu, pl. amanu. Cf. the Zulu term umnumzane, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made in the regimental system, which was organised on a national basis. A person of low ethnic status, that is, of comparatively late incorporation into the tribe but of senior regiment, was considered to be, in most circumstances, as good as a man of more aristocratic family but of a junior regiment. New regiments were formed about every four years. 563 641 701

Development of Minor Chieftainship

The defeat of the Ngoni army at the hands of the British in 1898 and the subsequent establishment of British control led to the partial breakdown of this system. The population was dispersed by the fighting and by the unsettled conditions that followed, and part of the kingdom was cleared for European occupation. The Administration recognized the grandson of Mpezeni I as the chief of the tribe, and also worked through a number of men known as Divisional Headmen, who were made responsible for small areas. Some of these divisional headmen were regional governors, some lieutenants of Mpezeni, some members of the royal lineage, and others were upstarts. It is not clear from the rather meagre records that remain or from the statements of informants exactly what happened between 1898 and 1904, but we know that by the latter date the Administration had come to recognize six men as local chiefs, apart from Mpezeni, and that four of them were said to be sons of Mpezeni I.[1] In 1929, when the term Native Authority was introduced, nine minor chiefs were appointed, of whom four were descended from Mpezeni I and one from the father of Mpezeni I. Two of the other minor chiefs have the descent-name *jere* that belongs to the royal lineage, and may be regarded as belonging to assimilated lineages. One is descended from a regional governor, the other from a policeman. Two minor chiefs do not h[illegible] this descent-name, one being descended from a lieutenant of Zwangendaba and the other from a regional governor. This arrangement of one Paramount Chief and nine minor chiefs persists to the present day. With each of the ten chiefs is associated a more or less defined area within which most of the villages are said to belong to the chief of the area. What appears to have happened during the thirty years after the conquest is that the central power declined and that certain political and territorial segments achieved a degree of autonomy. The ten areas belonging to the different chiefs, which I shall refer to as counties, represent 175 648 631

[1] Cadenhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 10 and 14.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the
178 capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the headman, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants
[622] of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present regime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mrumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Cousins, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest. 647

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interlaping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interlaping villages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, but this cannot be done openly under the present regime. 628 643 648 692 649

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships. 691 64

Sanctions

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that control through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 687 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 sensitive to suggestions that a chief may be oppressing his people,
649 usually works through the Paramount. One minor chief was sent to the Paramount's village for a period of instruction in order that he might learn how to rule wisely. On another occasion a chief who had abused the Administration was fined one month's salary by the Paramount. In both these instances the Administration was the initiator of the Paramount Chief's action, but he may also act without reference to it. It was reported to the Paramount that a certain minor chief had struck one of his subjects who had been slow to offer him beer. The Paramount warned the minor chief that he might kill someone this way, and that he ought to fine people, not to strike them. In a dispute between a minor chief and his court clerk over some new court furniture, which the chief wished to use in his own house, the Paramount intervened and ordered that the chairs be put in the courthouse.

643 The Paramount himself is subject to social constraint, and may be criticised by his senior Headmen. He is advised on how he should behave by these men, and if his behaviour is unsatisfactory they may rebuke him. At country meetings, headmen and others can voice their
644 complaints against the royal house as a whole, and have from time to
641 time protested successfully at such a meeting against too many of the Native Authority posts being filled by members of the royal lineage.

The Native Authority

647 Under the Native Authority system, introduced by the Administration in 1929, there are a number of paid officials, apart from the chiefs,
648 whose salaries are met by the Native Treasury. They include councillors, assessors, clerks, police, postmen, school attendance officers, and others. The most important of these, and the most highly paid, are
692 the councillors and assessors. They sit once or twice a week in court and hear cases brought before them. Each of the chiefs has a court, and for the most part the cases that come before a country court are brought by people living in the country. When litigants from two countries are involved there is no definite rule as to which court will hear the case and it largely depends on the wish of the instigator of the proceedings. Cases come before the Paramount Chief's country court that concern people from other countries and a litigant may take his case from one chief to another, including the Nyaniland chiefs, in an attempt to obtain a favourable and enforceable decision. The Appeal Court sits at the Paramount Chief's village and is held once a month.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and sub-chiefs are nominated by the chief on the advice of their lineaments and some of them are in fact lineaments or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is literate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lineaments or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying sixpence for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the country and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [693]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organized system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional government. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of African people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 431 [272] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend them to people they can trust. All the chiefs organize their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole country, but only part of the country. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organize enough hunts. 622 224 [911] [136]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

Royal and Commoner Villages

62 Nowadays most of the villages in the kingdom are commoner villages under the charge of headmen. From such evidence as is available, it seems likely that in the pre-conquest period there were fewer villages than there are now, and that they were bigger than are most modern villages.[1] It also appears that the process by which a division of a village broke away to become a separate village was a gradual one, so that at any one time there would have been some doubt in deciding how many distinct villages there were. This is seen at the present time in the histories of what are now distinct villages; the people relate how the first time they made a village of their own it was done only a little distance away from the parent village. Pairs of villages of common origin still tend to occupy sites in comparative proximity to one another, and may arrange their moves from one site to another, in search for new garden land, simultaneously.

In general, however, there is little difficulty in observing the village as a discrete spatial residential group. We may distinguish five types of village,[2] according to the status of the person in charge of the village. The capital villages and chiefs' villages have already been mentioned. Intermediate between these two categories are the royal villages. These have been formed from older royal villages to accommodate a group of wives of a chief or other member of the royal lineage, but do not now have a chief living in them. All these three kinds of royal village, capital, royal, and chief's, are controlled in the same way, by lieutenants appointed to the task in the first instance by a member of the royal family. There is another kind of village which I shall call a cadet village. The junior members of the royal lineage, that is, younger sons and sons by unimportant wives, did not have sufficient following to carry on this process of forming large new villages and merely lived with their wives in their natal villages or founded small villages of their own. Such villages are now similar in form to commoner villages, except that the headman of the village belongs to the royal lineage. All other villages we may class as commoner villages.

[1] 'The Angoni villages are about five times the size of an average Achewa village ...' (Gluckman, p. 6). G. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 275.

[2] All types are known in the vernacular by the same descriptive term, *mzumi*, and there are no distinctive terms. It is possible to tell whether a village is royal or commoner by its name. A village with a male personal name is a commoner or cadet village. A village with a female personal name, or a descriptive name in the Ngoni language, is a royal village.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE 1. *Village Types*

Type of village		Senior resident
Royal	Capital	First Swazi-man
	Royal	First Swazi-man
	Chief's	Chief
Cadet		Royal Shadow
Commoner		Commoner Headman

621
622

This process of village formation may be illustrated from Mpezeni's own country. The capital of the country is the village founded by Mpezeni I for his chief wife and one or two other wives. His heir Singa was born in this village, and when he married he founded two villages of his own which are now royal villages. In the senior of these two Mpezeni II was born, and in about 1915 he founded a new village which is still the chief's village of the country. There are other royal villages in the country founded in a similar manner. 621

This formation of royal villages would, other things being equal, lead to a dispersal of the population. It seems, however, that the major factor in dispersing the population since 1898 has been the formation of independent commoner villages. Many of these villages have histories that go back to the foundation of the village as an independent unit immediately after 1898, and it seems likely that the unsettled conditions of those days and the burning of villages did much to bring about the breakdown of the old system in which the royal villages were more important than they are today. 161 621

The royal villages are more closely connected with the chieftainships than are the commoner villages, and the chiefs visit in them more frequently than in other villages. A dispute in a royal village is usually settled by a meeting in the village itself attended by the local chief, whereas in the case of an ordinary village dispute the matter would be taken to the chief for him to settle in his own village or court. A chief may be called to a royal village to drink beer. The royal herds of cattle are kept in the royal villages, and the chiefs look to the first Swazi-men of their royal villages for the well-being of the royal cattle as well as of the inhabitants of the royal villages. All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself,[1] but in so far as the cattle held by most people are concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that 628 [627] 422 251 643

[1] Cf. Gluckman, p. 19.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
291 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is proved as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the headmen are more under the control of the chief of the country, who may intervene to depose a headman if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
698 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material housing

961 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the
[343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the
[487] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of elms.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually headman, pl. makolwana; otherwise nduna pennani, pl. mapkuna nennani. The specific term for headman of a ward or commoner village is mudzimunani.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the same hut. There may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relatives, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from those of their wives. 592 [882] [858] [595] 423

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cooking and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. Where there is no separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda. 342 [343] [252]

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized. 621

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given by their founders. For example, there is a royal village founded by Singa, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngulowesi, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were founded. 621 103

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of individuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary, 621 622 [103]

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIII

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1. Storing finger millet. The untidily thatched building on the right is a dormitory for boys

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2. A queen brewing beer. It is only important people who own oil drums

NGONI

[Facing P. 208]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief wife who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first lieutenant of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the
551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni on formal occasions in addition to their other personal names.

624 To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and there may be in the village one or more lieutenants. The office of lieutenant in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no lieutenants.

621 In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have
582 consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
178 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time some of the senior captives became lieutenants of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aristocratic lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aristocratic captors.

Movements

361 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
166 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Fortes, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 192: '. . . the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of like sort.'

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FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

PLATE XIV

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3. Boys crushing ground-nuts. The expressed oil will be used in a bird trap

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4. Boy playing with a toy motor-car made from maize stalks

NGONI

[Facing P.209]

19: Barnes E-S (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man has to go further and further from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of unpossessed land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1898 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested areas.

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county chief, and village headman. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headman and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The first people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Ratray, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the new one is gradual, as, unless the distance between the sites is too great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Ratray, *Folk-Lore Review*, pp. 109-11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 203-5, gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

361 Here sometimes becomes infested with ticks, or the site itself may prove to be intolerably damp. New huts are then built a short distance away or even contiguously to the old site, and no new gardens are made apart from those made among the deserted huts.

Internal Segmentation of the Village

361 We have already seen that the divisions within the village are embryonic new villages. These divisions are more formally indicated
621 in the Nyasaland counties, where there are large villages divided into a distinct number of divisions, with the special boundaries between the divisions indicated by a greater interval between the huts, and with each division named and under the charge of a lieutenant or of a petitioned kinsman of the headman. On the Rhodesian side, however, it is more usual to find that certain small clusters of huts within a village are regarded as being the division of such-and-such a person living in one of them. The bulk of the huts in the village do not belong to any particular cluster but merely to the village as a whole. These clusters do not have any name apart from that of their senior inhabitant, whose close relatives occupy the huts of the cluster. The leader of a cluster may be a lieutenant of the headman or merely some important person with a comparatively large body of dependants. Such clusters, which are often on the periphery of the village, sometimes originate from the grouping together by a polygynist of the huts of his various wives, and grow as their children marry and live alongside their parents. Another mechanism for the formation of clusters is that
[166] of immigration into the village at about the same time by a number of persons related to each other more closely than to the other inhabitants of the village, as, for example, on the break-up of some other village. The immigrants tend to build together if there is room. In this case the leader of the cluster may have little standing in the village. The boundaries of clusters are not always plainly indicated, while a man who is ambitious to make his own village may as a first step try to increase the clarity with which his cluster is defined spatially.

Land Utilization

311 We may divide gardens into three types: main, old village, and moist.
241 The moist gardens are made near streams, and are fenced to keep out cattle. Tomatoes, cabbages, onions, and other vegetables are grown, and maize is planted during the hot season so that it can be harvested in December or January. These gardens are cultivated only by the

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FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

more industrious and usually with a view to sale of vegetables in Fort Jameson. The sites last for many years and are usually abandoned because of the removal of the owner's village to a distant place rather than because of exhaustion of the soil. 311 291

Old-village gardens are made on the site of former huts and byres, in order to take advantage of the high fertility of the soil. These gardens are not usually fenced, except when they are made on the outskirts of some existing village on the site of an old byre. Tobacco is sometimes grown, but for the most part they are cultivated in the same way as are main gardens. The site belongs to the [423] former owner of the hut or byre, so long as the garden continues to be worked.

Main gardens are made from bush clearings, and are chosen with some regard to the type and quantity of the natural vegetation. Land that has been abandoned for long enough, say twenty-five years, regains its natural cover, and if the ownership of former gardens has [423] been forgotten, it is treated as though it were virgin woodland, that is, it is permissible for anyone who wishes to come and cultivate it. A new village site is chosen to be near, if possible, an ample amount of [961] such regenerated land, and at the first selection of gardens the headman of the village may go round the area and see where the new gardens are being made. Gardens tend to be within 2 miles of the village, but there is no one definite area that is associated with a particular village, so that if there are a number of villages in proximity, the gardens of their inhabitants will be intermingled. A man exercises a lien on the area of uncleared land round his garden, and may take [425] up this land himself as he enlarges his garden. Hence at first there are considerable belts of bush left between one garden and the next. With the passage of time, these are cleared, and gardens become contiguous, with boundaries between them that are almost imperceptible at first glance. At the same time as enlargements are made, the least productive parts of the gardens are neglected, so that, as the years go by, the area cultivated by one man may gradually change its position, and fresh areas of resting-land will appear between the gardens. Main gardens vary in size from about 1 to 3 acres.

If a man moves into a village and wishes to start a garden, he is 423 usually given part of the garden of the person to whom he is attached in the village. A son returning from the mines may be given part of his father's garden. Conversely when someone leaves the village, his garden passes to his relatives. In particular, when a man dies, his

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 widows continue to cultivate the gardens they had before his death. When a man opens up a new garden he may hand over his nearly exhausted old garden to some relative who does not wish to go to the labour of clearing new ground himself. Rights in land cannot be sold, but only given away, and no presents are given to the donor by the recipient of a garden or garden site. They can only be sustained by continued residence in the locality, either by the owner of the rights himself or by his relatives. There are very few court cases concerned with rights in land, and in the courts the only attempt I saw in which a man tried to enforce what he thought to be his rights was met by the statement from the bench that no one had any rights in land, for did not all land belong to the chief?

241 Maize is planted at the beginning of the rains, and the garden is usually weeded twice over before the maize has grown high enough to surmount the weeds. When the rains end, the stalks are felled and put into large stooks to dry. The cobs are then taken off the stalks and carried back to the village to be stored. Finger millet is grown in ash-fertilized patches scattered through the main garden, and in between the maize ground-nuts, pumpkins, and other crops are grown. Sorghum, bulrush millet, and rice are also grown. Most of the work in the garden is carried on in the rainy season, and after the harvest the garden is more or less deserted until the next season, although a certain amount of new land may be cleared as a garden extension.

Dwellings outside the Village

361 There are two types of settlement outside the recognized villages that require mention. These are permanently occupied settlements consisting of two or three huts which I shall refer to as hamlets and [578] temporarily occupied huts in the gardens. The hamlets usually arise as a result of quarrels within a village that are resolved by the breaking away of one of the parties to the quarrel. The activities of the Agricul- [648] tural Department have also led to the formation of hamlets of similar size, both of hamlets of persons accepting agricultural control whose co-villagers have all moved off, and the other way about. These hamlets are all attached to proper villages for registration purposes, and participate in many of the collective activities of the villages near by.

221 The damage done to crops in the latter part of the rainy season 361 necessitates the keeping of a continuous watch, particularly at gar- [241] dens that are on the edge of a cultivated area, in order to drive off the monkeys by day and the wild pigs by night. Shelters are erected on

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FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may stay behind to look after the cattle. Ferments are in spate at this time of year, and some men build garden byres to which they move their cattle to avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the gardens is important from the point of view of inter-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so that they are adjacent to those of kinsfolk from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in *her* dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organising public works, and that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as reported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and may be up to 20 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead. Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle

[1] Elmslie, p. 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Nguni FR5
Mpezeni

233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are
857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve
233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the
[648] cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather
628 than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into
233 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between
857 the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between
[541] the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd-
233 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village
833 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were
857 now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief,
631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

call rural districts. By virtue of their membership of rural districts 629
and counties, villages have certain formal relationships with each 631
other which we may regard as mainly political, and which we have discussed in connexion with the organization of the state. But there are other inter-village activities that are not related directly to the tribal political structure. These include hunting, dancing, drinking, trading, and some co-operative economic activities.

Hunting takes place for the most part in the dry season, but hunts 224
may be organized at any time to deal with predatory animals which 628
are causing damage to crops and livestock. Only men and boys hunt. [562]
Any man who chooses can organize a hunt, but it is usually a man of middle age with some experience and of some standing in his village who sends out word to the neighbouring villages that he proposes to hunt in such-and-such an area on such-and-such a day. The organizer is referred to as the owner of the hunt, and he is in tactical command. He nominates two men to be in charge of the two wings of the hunt, and himself stays in the middle of the single line abreast in which the hunters arrange themselves. Instructions are shouted from the centre and passed out to the wings. Any animals seen are attacked with knobkerries, spears, dogs, and, if there are any, guns. The owner of the hunt has no special privileges over the animals killed, which are divided between the men who actually kill them and the people who carry them back from the hunt to the village. Attendance at such hunts is not enforced, and if the chase is unsuccessful, people tend to drop out half-way. In the main, people distribute themselves along the line of the hunt in village groups, and the leaders of the wings usually bring with them a large band of hunters from their own villages. There are usually about sixty people on a hunt, coming from perhaps ten different villages.

Dancing is an activity that brings people together from many 535
villages. Although girls, and sometimes boys, hold dances in their own 628
villages in the evenings, these dances are thought of as practices rather than as proper dances. The latter take place in connexion with ceremonies of various kinds, and indeed wherever there is beer to [279]
drink there is the probability of some sort of dancing. Dances are also held for their own sake, without reference to other forms of social activity. Of these, two are important in promoting inter-village ties. The first, *ngoma*,[1] the most formal of all dances, was danced by regiments in the days when the regimental system was still operative, but

[1] Cf. the Zulu dance *ingoma*, and Reed, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 52.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

515 is now danced by villages. The important men in one village suggest
628 to another village that this dance should be held in the latter village. If this is agreed, beer is brewed in the second village and on the pre-arranged day many people from the first village come in procession from their village to the dance. The visiting dancers enter the cattle byre and start to dance. They are joined by people from the home village. The dancers are arranged in two lines, men on one side and women on the other, and the dance consists of a series of virtuoso performances by two or three men and women at a time in the space between the two lines, to the accompaniment of clapping and antiphonal singing. The dance is followed by drinking and more dancing. Later in the year, or in the next year, the host village goes to the home of the visitors, and the performance is repeated.

[539]

515 Of more frequent occurrence are dances involving girls only. These
628 are usually held on Sunday afternoons, and as at the *ngoma* dances, at
985 least two villages are involved. Here the initiative is taken not by the important men but by the senior unmarried girl in the village. She invites a girl of similar status in another village with whom she is acquainted, or whom she has seen dancing, to bring a team of girls to dance in her village. This kind of dance is competitive in that the visitors are opposed by a similar team of girls from the home village, who dance separately from the visitors until, at the end of the session, the two teams combine. That team which has danced best is held to be the winner, although there is always great doubt as to which team this is. The girl who invited the visitors is responsible for seeing that the visiting team is fed, although beer is not provided. No work is done in the gardens on Sundays, so that these dances always attract a large number of onlookers. As with *ngoma*, a return match is danced at some later date. The pairs of villages that are linked in these dance exchanges are not always those that contain many people related to one another. One girl may ask an acquaintance in another village to find a team; in one case the girl who made the invitation did not know the name of the girl she was inviting.

Beer-drinking

273 Beer, water, and tea are the three main drinks of the Ngoni. The
[271] ordinary rules of hospitality govern the drinking of water, which is
[574] provided for the traveller whenever he asks for some. Tea is sold in
[272] the roadside stores known as hotels. Beer is more important socially

10: Baruma E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

than either of these two drinks, and the drinking of it is essentially a social event. The kind of beer brewed is made from maize, sorghum, and finger millet. It is brewed by women, the process lasting about a week. The beer can be drunk at any time during the week, but it is not regarded as truly beer until after the brewing process has been completed. It remains good to drink for about three days, after which it becomes too sour. About 20 to 30 gallons of beer are brewed at a time. The beer can be sold, used to provide refreshment for participants in some ceremony or other, offered in return for labour or other services, or also just drunk for its own sake. In each case the presence of beer in the village acts as a magnet attracting people from other villages. Beer that is sold is of economic importance as it is the principal way in which women raise funds for themselves. In connexion with a ceremony of some kind, the attraction of the beer is secondary in general to that caused by the ceremony itself. The provision of beer in return for cultivation services we shall discuss later. It is in the patterns of behaviour adopted when beer is drunk for its own sake that we can see reflected the structure of social action at the village level. 273 [462] [434] [796]

Beer is stored in earthenware jars of about 7 gallons capacity. A calabash-gourd cup is used to ladle the beer into earthenware bowls holding about 4 pints; from these the beer is drunk. When the beer is ready for drinking, the friendly fellow villagers of the man whose wife has brewed come to the beer-hut, which is usually the woman's kitchen, and the owner of the beer drinks the first jar with them. The procedure with each jar is that the owner of the beer gives the jar to someone, almost invariably a man, who becomes known as the divider of the beer, and who calls on someone junior to him to act as the dispenser of the beer. The dispenser sits on the ground and fills up the bowls from the jar under the instruction of the divider of the beer, and then takes them, or points them out to, the people to whom the divider wishes to give the beer. Thus the beer is given away in jars by the owner of the beer to the dividers of the beer, and is then divided into bowlfuls, and given by the dividers to yet other people. The owners of the bowlfuls drink some and pass on the bowls so that other people may drink. Each time these gifts of beer of different quantities are made they are acknowledged by the recipient in the form of a praise, consisting of the syllable *yo* followed by the descent-name of the giver. This is also done when a bowl or a jar is finished, so that when the last bowl of a jar is finished the owner of the bowl is praised, then the divider of the beer, and finally the owner of the beer. The [251] [415]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

273 recipient usually takes the lead in praising, and his praise is echoed by the rest of the people in the hut.

The first jar, then, is divided by the owner himself and the bowlfuls are given to his village neighbours. The next jar is given to the headman or lieutenant of the village for division, and it is with the drinking of this jar that the party is held really to begin. The first bowl of this second jar is given by the divider of the beer back to the owner of the beer, who praises the divider before drinking. The second bowl goes to some other lieutenant or, if there is no other village lieutenant, to some important woman. Successive bowls go to other important people in the village. Subsequent jars are usually given to important visitors from other villages, who will allocate the bowls to their companions and to people in the host village. The first bowl of each jar goes to the divider of the jar, and the dregs, which are usually taken as the two last bowlfuls in each jar, and which are poured out after the jar has been tilted on its side, go to the dispenser of the beer, and to anyone who has been helping him.

There is a great deal of freedom in the allocation of beer in this way, and the complaints of people who hoped to be given beer and who were unfortunate are an inevitable aftermath of any beer-party. It is important to note that the quantity of beer consumed by any individual is to some extent independent of the allocation of the jars and bowls. There are usually two or three bowls in use, and these are all filled up at each round. This means that most people in the hut drink each time. But what is remembered is not the beer drunk, but the method of allocation. Even if a man becomes intoxicated, he may yet complain the next day to his friends that the owner of the beer was miserly and lacking in generosity if no jar or bowl was specifically allocated to him. There is an obligation to return gifts of beer made in
[431] this way, so that a man can ensure a favourable reception for himself in other villages where there is beer, by his generosity and sagacity in distributing when there is beer in his own house.

The importance attached to beer-drinking is well brought out in
262 some essays written by schoolboys on the topic 'What I want to do
273 when I leave school'. One of the boys wrote: 'Beer and cattle are the food of the Ngoni. . . . If your friend comes and he doesn't get beer and meat, then although he gets porridge, he still says that there was hunger in the house.' Another said: 'I will brew beer very often. Our life depends on drinking beer.' The small importance attached to beer
[829] by the neighbouring Cewa tribe is well known to the Ngoni, and one

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sophisticated informant remarked: 'The Cows are just down, they 273
merely eat. The Ngoni are like the Whites; they eat little and drink 242
much.' 229

Economic Co-operation

There are other activities which entail inter-village ties. Cattle 233
seek their own fodder, but small stock, pigs, goats, and sheep, are fed 476
on kraals and other scraps. A man whose animals have increased be- 628
yond his ability to feed them will farm out some of them to his friends, either in his own village or in some neighbouring one. The tender of the animals then exercises some control over the disposal of any natural increase and at the end of the arrangement he is entitled to be given one of the animals. The friends whom a man selects for this task are not always close relatives, and may sometimes be people to whom he can trace no genealogical relationship at all, but whom he may have met, for instance, in Southern Rhodesia. Other people acquire a reputation for integrity, and may be given animals to look after by their acquaintances. Cattle are not disposed of so widely, and there is more often a kinship connexion between the owner and the tender. On the other hand, cattle are more susceptible than small stock to tsetse fly, and in consequence there are many people in the new areas that have been recently resettled who have to keep their cattle in the village of a relative or friend who lives in an area free from fly.

Harvesting of crops is carried out by members of the household 241
except in the case of the aged, who will call on their relatives to help 476
them. Hut-building, making a new section of a garden, clearing the 602
ground prior to planting, and, in particular, weeding the garden during the wet season, are activities that are often carried out by collective effort. Women, particularly pairs of widows, may work together in each other's gardens turn and turn about, and a man may be able to call on relatives, particularly his sons-in-law, to help in his garden without paying them for it. Most of the outside assistance that may be required in a garden is raised by means of a beer-party. The man's 273
wife brews beer, and it is made known in the village and round about 476
that on such-and-such a day there will be a party to hoe in their 241
garden. A dozen or so people go to the garden in the morning, and work until the task set by the owner of the garden is completed. They then move to the village, and are refreshed with beer. Attendance at the beer-party is not restricted to those who have worked in the garden, and at some such parties a jar of beer may be specifically allocated to

241 those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their
273 work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory
776 that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's
[485] labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

453 There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no
573 potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neighbouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for
[462] pot-making sufficiently high to attract customs even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

285 Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when
[462] it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

759 Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical
[648] services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

611 The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying
[591] bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern prac-
[583] tice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were
[184] incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

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Mpezeni

matrilineal matrilineal tribes, and the values associated with these systems of organization were not entirely forgotten. With the decline of the central power of the chieftainship after the conquest, cultural diversity within the tribe increased, so that at the present time we have a wide range of variation in the kinds of family found between one village and the next, and even within the same village. In particular, the irreconcilable differences between the organization of unilineal kin-groups on patrilineal and matrilineal principles appears to have led to a condition in which, for most of the tribe, the only groups of relatives that emerge as corporate groups are stocks, people with a common ancestor from whom they are descended through sons or daughters or both. These stocks are not mutually exclusive, and a man may think of himself at one time as belonging to one stock and at another time to another stock. Frequently alongside the true members of a stock there are other people who claim to belong to the same 'family' who are in fact related affinally to the members of the stock. The organizing factor in domestic affairs is not kinship by itself but common residence combined with genealogical connection. A stock, with its affinal accretions, emerges as the core of a corporate group of kindred only when its members live near one another and meet each other frequently. The strongest groups are those people of a stock who are living alongside one another in the same part of a village. 611 189

The use made of double affinal links in establishing attachment to a stock is noticeable. For example, a child will call a man who is his mother's divorced husband's wife's divorced husband by the term *father* (see Diagram 4 below). A man may bring into his village a wife from outside who may come with her children by a former husband. When grown up, the sons may also bring in wives accompanied by their children from former marriages. These children grow up to regard the village as their own and to think of themselves, in certain contexts, as belonging to the 'family' of the headman of the village. Informants in a village with a most complicated kinship structure will say 'We are all one family here'. 602 611 [601]

Kinship Terminology

The variation in the kinship systems of the different tribes from which the Ngoni recruited their members has led to some confusion in the use of kinship terms. Most of the terms now used are in the 601 [197]

[1] *Bonja*, pl. *mabonja*.

19: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[191] Nsenga language,[1] but Nyanja and old Ngoni terms are also heard. The rules of application of these terms, as formulated by the people, are not always adhered to, and I found that when I challenged the accuracy of some of the kinship terms I heard being used, the speakers were quite ready to admit that the terms had been incorrect by their own rules. Here I propose to give only the Nsenga terms, in the way in which they are used when people are discussing other families, and in which to a lesser extent they are used as forms of address. It is with this meaning that the terms can be used to describe the operation of exogamy. A full account of their use must await further inquiry.

There are ten terms of wide application, and three more used in restricted contexts. These three may be translated as *husband*, *wife*, and *cross-cousin*. *Cross-cousin* is used of mother's brother's child and father's sister's child; usually the child referred to is of the sex opposite to ego. *Wife* refers to own wife, brother's wife, and brother's wife's sister, and similarly *husband* refers to own husband, sister's husband, and sister's husband's brother. Thus *husband* and *wife* are reciprocal terms, and *cross-cousin* is self-reciprocal.

The remaining terms may be grouped as follows.

1. *Father*, *mother*, and *mother's brother*, with a common reciprocal *child*.
2. The reciprocal pair *grandparent* and *grandchild*.
3. Four self-reciprocal terms, *sibling*, *sibling-in-law*, *affine*, and *child's parent-in-law*.

These have the meanings implied in their translation, but are also applied more widely, as is indicated in the diagrams. Throughout, the marriage sign is used to indicate any marriage, whether extant or terminated by death or divorce. The symbols used for vernacular terms are shown in Table II.

The way in which these terms are applied can be seen from the diagrams. In the more distant applications the genealogical connexion to ego ceases to be important, and indeed may be unknown. A man may have been told that he should call such-and-such a woman *mother*. He will then apply kinship terms to her close relatives in a systematic manner which is independent of his genealogical connexion to them. The same procedure is followed with the relatives of people called *father* or *sibling*.

[1] The same Nsenga terms seem to be used differently by the Ngoni and the Nsenga. Cf. Ranger, *Chisenga Handbook*, pp. 68–9, 108–9.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE II. *Principal kinship terms in Ngoni language*

Symbol	Vocative term	Basic reference and or translation	Reciprocal term
F	[illegible]	father	child
M	[illegible]	mother	child
C	[illegible]	child	father, mother, mother's brother
FF	[illegible]	grandparent	grandchild
CC	[illegible]	grandchild	grandparent
G	[illegible]*	sibling	sibling
BG	[illegible]	sibling-in-law	sibling-in-law
EF	[illegible]	affine	affine
CEF	[illegible]	child's parents-in-law	child's parents-in-law
H	[illegible]	husband	wife
W	[illegible]	wife	husband
FZC	[illegible]	cross-cousin	cross-cousin
MB	[illegible]	mother's brother	child

* [illegible] means 'my sibling'. The terms for 'your sibling' and 'his or their sibling' are [illegible] and [illegible] respectively.

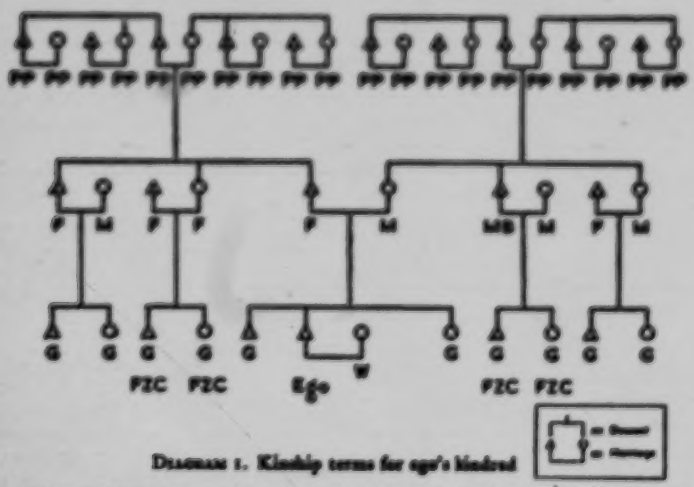

DIAGRAM 1. Kinship terms for ego's kindred

The terms for the generations after ego follow from the rule that *grandchild* is the reciprocal of *grandparent*, and *child* of *father*, *mother*, *mother's brother*. The term *sibling* is often used in place of *cross-cousin* when referring to a cousin of the same sex as ego.

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Mpezeni

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5. Girls dancing *Gimbi* in companionship with another village. The girl in the corner has a whistle in her mouth

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6. Young man drumming for a *Jimi Reja* dance at an installation ceremony. This dance, named after an American band leader, is allowed only on important occasions

NGONI

[Facing P. 224]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[p.224]

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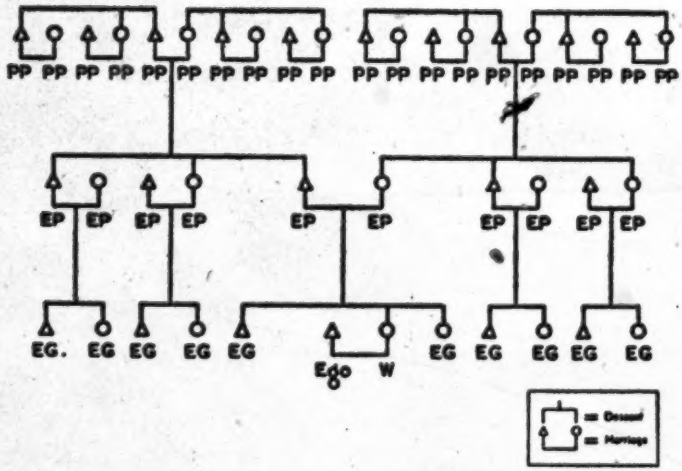

DIAGRAM 2. Kinship terms for wife's kindred

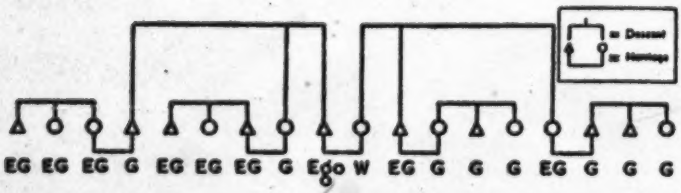

DIAGRAM 3. *Sibling* and *sibling-in-law*

The use of *sibling* to describe ego's spouse's sibling's spouse is more common by men than by women.

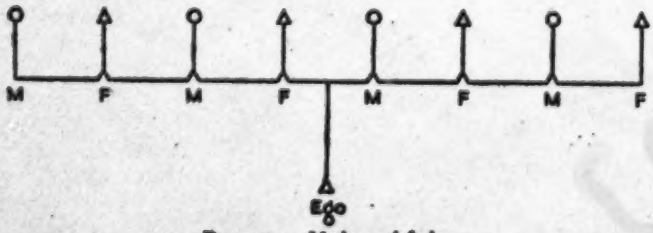

DIAGRAM 4. *Mother* and *father*

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XVI

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7. Drying a cow-hide at a funeral. A beast from the herd of the dead man has been killed for the mourners. The skin will be buried on top of the coffin

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8. Later, at the same funeral. The body has been interred and the mourners are sitting round the grave, near the cattle-byre, listening to a sermon by a local preacher of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission

[Facing P. 225]

NGONI

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In all the diagrams ego is shown as male. There is no difference in the way these terms are used when ego is a woman, except that she calls her spouse *husband* and not *wife*. There is no consensus as to what great-grandparents should be called. Sometimes *father* 601 [183]

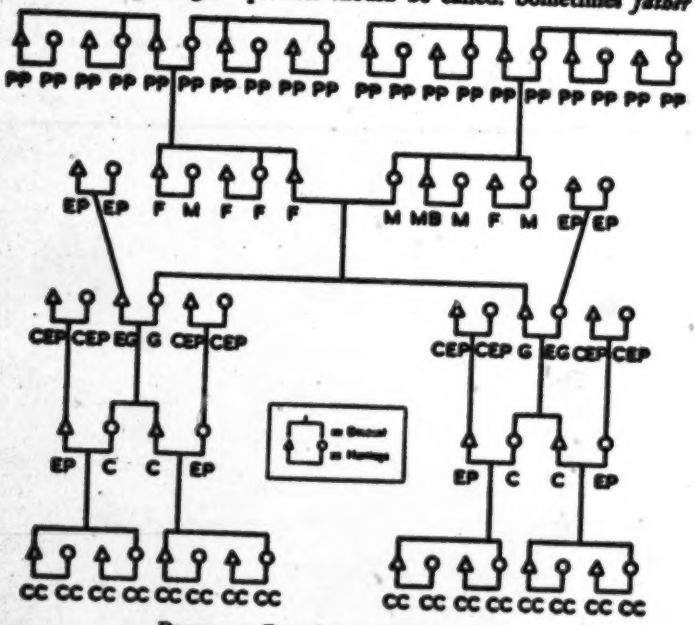

DIAGRAM 5. Extended use of kinship terms

or *mother* is used, according to sex, while others use *grandparent*. Similarly, great-grandchildren are sometimes called *child*, sometimes *grandchild*.

Exogamy and Descent-names

A man may not marry anyone whom he calls *mother*, *father*, *mother's brother*, *child*, *affine*, *child's parent-in-law*, and, except for his *cross-cousins*, *sibling*. Marriage with his brother's wife's sister, whom he calls *sibling-in-law*, is allowed, but is thought to be not very satisfactory. As we have seen, these terms can be applied widely, with no theoretical limit to the extent of application. Little interest is shown, however, in tracing genealogical relationships accurately, and the sex and age of the relative referred to may affect the term used. If a 582 835 601

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

582 proposed marriage appears to conflict with these rules of incest, be-
835 cause of some distant relationship between the couple, the connexion
601 may be conveniently forgotten by the parties concerned. Incestuous liaisons between people whose parents are still alive are hampered from becoming proper marriages by the refusal of the woman's parents to accept any marriage payments from the man. Similar liaisons between older people may alter the relative kinship status of other couples so that their marriages become incestuous, and they will appeal to the courts. For example, an old man married his son's wife's mother, whom he called *child's parent-in-law*. In consequence, his son and his son's wife became *sibling* to each other. The young woman refused to go on sleeping with her husband, who appealed to the court. The old man was then ordered to give up his newly acquired wife, so that his son's marriage might continue.

[601] At its widest extension, the term *sibling* is applied to any person of
551 the same descent-name as ego and of approximately the same age.
614 The other kinship terms are then applied to the relatives of this
582 nominal sibling in the usual way. However, there is no rule of exogamy applying to these nominal relatives. These descent-names have been referred to by other writers on the Ngoni as clan-names and the aggregate of people with the same descent-name as a clan. The Ngoni term for such names, *vi-ŭongo*, is related to the Zulu *isi-bongo*, and many of the Ngoni descent-names are the same as the names of the clans described for the South-Eastern and Central Bantu.[1] However, among the Fort Jameson Ngoni at the present time, the category of persons formed by all those holding the same descent-name does not have any of the attributes generally attributed by modern writers to the clan. There are no clan heads, no clan exogamy, no clan taboos, no beliefs in a common origin from a legendary ancestor, no clan totems, and no correlation between clan and territory. In these conditions it seems better to use the term descent-name, as has been done for the Lozi.[2] Informants state that even in the old days, when there was a closer approximation to a clan system, there was no clan exogamy. These names are normally inherited by the child from its father, and some of the names are not very common in the tribe, so that it happens that all the people bearing the one name may be the patrilineal descendants of one man. Such groups are exogamic, but this is

[1] Cf. Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, p. 143, for a classification of some of these names, on the basis of ethnic origin.

[2] Gluckman, *Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*, pp. 84–5.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal 551
descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme 614
are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the 582
neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy.

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in 177
the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the 611
Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and 551
the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not [848]
accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of 602
a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is in- 551
voked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of 571
descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking.

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A 583
woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, 584
usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away.

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that 583
made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the 671
legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has

[1] The name *nulu* for a man becomes *mvulu* for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimalo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 [671] been made. It is the legalization payment that is recorded on the marriage registration certificate when one is issued.

Often this payment is postponed until some years after marriage and sometimes it is never made at all. It is generally £1. 10*s*., and is normally provided by the bridegroom himself out of his savings, although in the old days a man would have been helped by his father. The money goes to the bride's father, and there is no legal obligation on him to share the money with his relatives, although he may do so. Marriage ties can be reinforced by a whole series of ceremonies and ceremonial exchanges and payments between the man's people and the woman's people, and a marriage in which all these ceremonies have been performed is regarded as being 'well fixed'. In such a marriage the parents and siblings of the couple have come to know each other, have collaborated in ritual activities, and have probably had occasion to deliberate together as a court of conciliation in settling quarrels between the couple. This line of development is seldom taken in a marriage in which the legalization payment has not been made. If the husband refuses to pay, then the wife's people will not brew beer for him and his parents, and will not use their influence with his wife to maintain the marriage. We may say that in a well-fixed marriage the two families are linked together, and that in one that is not well fixed it is only the two individuals who are linked. Indeed when no payments have been made it is common for the bride's relatives to profess ignorance of the name of the husband, or at least of his parents' names. No action can be taken in the court to enforce marriage payments, although in an adultery or divorce case the court may order the legalization payment to be made.

585 476 578 The ceremonies of marriage should not be thought of merely as occasions for harmonious co-operation. They may also become the vehicle for the expression of aggression between the two families involved. This is particularly true of the obligation on the man to bring a party of his friends to hoe in the garden of his father-in-law. The hoeing party may do more harm than good to the crops if the present offered them by the father-in-law is considered inadequate.

583 178 [231] Prior to the conquest of the tribe the principal marriage payment was bride-wealth,[1] consisting of so many head of cattle. In those days, according to informants, no legalization payment was made. Nowadays bride-wealth is paid only in a small proportion of marriages, and rarely until after several children have been born. In the old days

[1] *Malowolo*. Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola* and noun *ilobolo*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In the old days

marriages in which bride-wealth was paid were patrilocal, and those 583
in which it was not paid, except for marriages with slave wives, were 178
matrilocal. The matrilocal marriages were made only by recently [567]
incorporated Ngoni. The payment of bride-wealth is now significant
only in relation to the residence and affiliation of the children of the 591
marriage and does not affect the residence of the couple themselves. 583
It frequently happens that a man goes and lives in the village of his wife when they are first married and that after a year or so he takes her back to his own village. This practice is fairly common among the matrilineal tribes of the region. A small payment[1] of five shillings or so may be made instead to enable a man to take his bride to his own village without first completing a period of matrilocal residence. Sometimes the legalization payment is considered sufficient to exempt from matrilocal residence. Indeed it is indicative of the wide range of variation in the different payments made and not made and in the [184] significance attached to them that some informants were unable to state with certainty what payments had been made in their own marriages, although they knew the amount of money or animals that had been handed over.

This wide range of variation in behaviour in relation to marriage 184
is one instance of the high measure of cultural heterogeneity of the 58
Fort Jameson Ngoni. While present-day conditions are relevant to a study of Ngoni marriage, at the same time the effect of the combination of people with very different conceptions of marriage into a single state must not be overlooked. Among families that are powerful and claim to have migrated with Zwangendaba from the south, patrilocal marriage and the payment of bride-wealth are more frequent than they are among families of more recent incorporation. Cross-cousin marriage is noticeably more frequent in villages with people of Bisa descent than in the population as a whole. In Nyasaland, where there is a sharper cleavage into old Ngoni villages and conquered Cewa villages, the old Ngoni are characterized by a greater, and the Cewa by a lesser, incidence of patrilocal marriage.

Divorce

In the old days there was no way in which a woman could divorce 586
her husband. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own people. The usual procedure nowadays, except in cases of adultery, is for the man to give his wife sixpence or a shilling

[1] *Ntbakula.*

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 and inform her that she is divorced. If the wife has committed adultery, the husband can take the case to court. If the adultery is proved he is 586 usually awarded £3 damages against his wife and £3 against the co-684 respondent, and the woman is divorced. On the other hand, a woman can seek a divorce in the courts on the grounds of desertion or cruelty. The court will award a divorce if the desertion or cruelty is proved, but may also rule that the woman must pay £3 to her husband's family.

If a man does not wish to divorce his adulterous wife, the court will award him damages of £1. 10*s*. against his wife and £1. 10*s*. against the co-respondent. In adultery cases in which a divorce is granted the damages awarded against the woman are often met by the co-respondent, who then marries the woman, but where there is no divorce the woman will appeal to her father or brothers to help her pay her husband.

If a woman runs away from her husband there is nothing that the husband can do to force her back, and if methods of conciliation fail, he has little hope of redress, except in cases of seduction or abduction. If the woman refuses to rejoin her husband the court may award damages against her, but such a marriage usually ends in adultery on the part of the woman and a divorce on that ground.

It has been observed by District Officers that divorce is not so 586 frequent among the Ngoni as compared with their Cewa neighbours. 593 Nevertheless, divorce must be considered as a frequent occurrence among the Ngoni, and is so regarded by the people themselves. There is a maxim that a man ought to rely on his brothers, not on his wife, and one informant remarked: 'Never trust your wife; perhaps tomorrow you will divorce her.'

The Wife's Mother

The tensions between the two groups linked by a marriage find 606 their most formal expression in the attitude prescribed for a man to his wife's mother. While a woman can speak to her parents-in-law and enter their house, a man cannot do so. In his contacts with his father-in-law he must be quiet and reserved, and although face-to-face contact is not considered shocking, it should be as rare as possible. But a man must go out of his way to avoid his mother-in-law, and this injunction is in the main observed in practice. The avoidance is usually phrased in terms of a prohibition on the entry into the hut of the mother-in-law. A man who has to pass by this hut will normally go round the back of it.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

It is therefore appropriate that, when a man has proved himself to be a good son-in-law by fulfilling his obligations to his parents-in-law and by treating their daughter well, he is invited to make a formal entry into the house of his wife's parents. This is the occasion for much dancing and speech-making. The salient features of the ceremony[1] are as follows. The married couple come in procession with their relatives and neighbours from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession is led by the eldest child of the couple carrying a knobkerry. They dance in the cattle byre and then enter the hut of the woman's parents. Here after some drinking and dancing, during which the visitors keep themselves more or less to one side of the hut and leave the other side for the relatives of the woman, there is a ceremony in which a gift is offered by the man's people to the woman's people, and in which a female relative of the man takes a spoonful of boiled maize from a dish and then spits it out again. She is followed by a female relative of the woman, who does the same. The two people who do this are close relatives of the couple, sometimes sisters. The knobkerry stays in the hut overnight, and the next day the man's parents come and they formally enter the woman's parents' hut. The couple also come into the hut with their friends and the woman's mother offers beer to the man in the usual way by kneeling at his feet and drinking to him. He then drinks from the bowl, and it is passed round for everyone in the hut to drink. 606 527

The completion of this ceremony marks the setting aside of the avoidance taboos to the greatest extent allowed. The man may still not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law but he can now talk to her and can come into her hut. It is, as it were, the final reward of the good son-in-law and marks the end of the series of adjustments in relative status that began with the small gifts that the man made before the legalization payment was fixed. The hostility between the two families has been reduced by carrying out through the years their reciprocal rights and duties, and their common interest in the children of the marriage is symbolized by the eldest child who leads the procession from one village to the other.

Even on such a family occasion as this, village, as distinct from kinship, ties remain important. At one ceremony I attended the leader of the first delegation from the man's village was described as being just an important woman in the village and not related to him. [621]

[1] *Magenia*. Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-genia*, to enter another person's house (Colenso).

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage. The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's [606] mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a 593 matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it 691 is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the 578 brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on [586] grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although 593 they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other. 571 In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative 578 in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a [684] woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

IV. WIDER CONTACTS

Other Local Groups

We have so far in this account been concerned with delineating the main outlines of political and village structure and the kinship system. We have examined the internal constitution of the tribe and have only been concerned secondarily with the external relationships by which the Ngoni are connected with the wider world. But in the Fort Jameson District there are, and have been for many years, people who do not fall within the tribal framework but with whom the Ngoni interact. These include people from the British Isles and South Africa, Indians, and Coloured persons, as well as Africans from other tribes. The Europeans are there as administrators, missionaries, farmers, and traders. Indians are traders and farmers, while Coloured persons are farmers and foremen. Africans from other tribes are, like the Ngoni, labourers on the farms and in the township, as well as subsistence cultivators in their own tribal areas. 563

The land of the District is divided into Native Reserve and Trust land, farm-land, township, and Crown land. Almost all Ngoni villages lie on Reserve or Trust land, and it is in this zone that most of the activities described so far take place. On the farm-land Ngoni participate not as headmen or lieutenants or chiefs, but as labourers and foremen. They still fill the roles of husband, wife, sibling, parent, and child, and sometimes other kinship positions, but the family in the farm compound is on a smaller scale than in the village. In the town of Fort Jameson the range of activity open to them is greater, and there are Ngoni butchers, drivers, clerks, shop assistants, Native Urban Court assessors, and so on. All these roles on farm and in the town are shared with Africans from other tribes in the Eastern Province and from more distant regions. 311 463

The Churches

The influence of the non-African groups extends out beyond the areas in which they live into the reserves. We have already seen how the Administration has affected the life of the tribe. The Christian Church has also had a profound influence. By 1910 there were three denominations at work in Ngoni country: the Dutch Reformed Church Mission,[1] the White Fathers,[2] and the Universities' Mission to 797 795

[1] Algemeente Zending Commissie der Nederduitsche Gereformeerde Kerk in den Oranje Vrijstaat.

[2] Société des Missionaires de Notre Dame d'Afrique, a Catholic Order.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

797 Central Africa. The U.M.C.A. subsequently concentrated its activi-
795 ties in another part of the District, so that the two main denominations are now the Dutch Reformed Church and the Catholic Church. There was for a time a branch of the Livingstonia Mission (Free Church of Scotland) in the area, while more recently a Seventh Day Adventist Mission has begun work. Since 1924 there have been some adherents to the Watch Tower[1] amongst the Ngoni, but this movement did not become important until some years later.

797 Primary education is carried on in mission schools subsidized by
872 the Administration, but there is also a Native Authority school over which the chiefs exercise some influence and which is to some extent supported by Native Treasury funds. The teachers in the elementary
[875] schools live in the villages, but they do not exercise very much influence outside their classrooms. This does not appear to have been the case in the past, when there was greater hostility between the different missions and when the missions tended to disregard the tribal authorities. The teachers then seem to have set themselves up as headmen on their own, and schools were built without the permission of the local headmen. In many cases where the issue between the missions was undecided, there were two schools in the same village. In the middle 'thirties many of these so-called schools were closed on the initiative of the Administration and the teachers who remain are now more interested in education than in politics.

872 A village school serves more than one village, so that the children of a neighbourhood containing, say, half a dozen villages get to know each other and visit in each other's villages. Certain dances and songs,
[595] known as *konsert*, are performed by parties of schoolchildren going from
[593] one village to another, and this leads to similar inter-village dancing in the evenings organized by groups of boys. At the end of term a number of schools of the same denomination combine to perform a rather more elaborate programme of songs and dances, and these displays are attended by many adults.

797 The deacons and evangelists are of greater importance in the
794 political life of the tribe than are the school teachers. Deacons take a certain initiative in settling disputes in the village, and they report to their missions deaths and serious sins that affect their people. They arrange for religious instruction for catechumens and may on occasion organize opposition to some practice that has been declared wrong by
797 the mission. Evangelists are responsible for a number of villages and

[1] The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

may often be heard in the afternoons blowing their whistles to call their flock to prayer in the local school. 797

Meetings of all deacons and evangelists of one denomination within the tribe are held every year or so. Permission to hold these meetings has to be obtained from the chief, who may sometimes attend. Food is provided by the local church members and a levy to raise funds for buying a goat or sheep may be made. The initiative at these meetings is taken by the senior deacons and decisions reached are passed on to the members by the deacons. Church services, which are attended by people from many villages, are not only meetings for worship but are also occasions when instructions for collective action are given. For example, a lieutenant was recently suspended by his mission for helping to find another wife for his chief. Church members in his county were then instructed at a church service that they must not attend the funeral of this man or of any of his children. 795 [794] [688]

The tribal area is divided into two zones controlled by the two main denominations, with some overlapping, and this division cuts across the county boundaries, so that people from more than one county have a common interest in a church serving them all. This interest is reinforced by attendance at funerals and prayer meetings in the villages.

The Watch Tower, also known as Jehovah's Witnesses, or in the vernacular, as The Society, is now the third sect of importance in the area. This organization has had a rather chequered career, and has been the target of much adverse criticism from missions, Administration, and chiefs. From the point of view of social structure, it is significant because its organization within the tribe cuts across the county boundaries, because it holds that the teachers of the other denominations are wholly false, because its membership is drawn largely from people who previously belonged to these other denominations, and because no local Whites and few persons of importance in the tribe are members of this sect. In the past, members of the Society opposed the chiefs on principle, but this attitude is not held now, and opportunities are taken to demonstrate their loyalty to the existing order. Meetings are held in different parts of the country every month, and members from other parts are housed and fed by the local members.

Not every person in the tribe has been baptized as a Christian, but the initiative in religious affairs has passed to the functionaries of the different denominations. While the indigenous practices of the people 797

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

797 have affected the content of their Christian beliefs and their utilization of Christian institutions, there is now little religious activity that can be called pagan.

The Nyasaland Counties

685 The Fort Jameson Ngoni maintain strong connexion with the two counties under Ngoni chiefs in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District, Nyasaland. When the border was drawn between North-Eastern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, about a quarter of Mpezeni's tribal area fell within Nyasaland. The two countries have been administered separately, so that the ties that have persisted have done so despite the formal division of the area and are in the main derived from sentiments related to pre-conquest times. These ties are seen in operation in the attendance of the Nyasaland chiefs at Mpezeni's village on various formal occasions, as at the ceremony ending the mourning for Mpezeni II and beginning the reign of Mpezeni III. In 1920 a delegation from the Nyasaland chiefs visited Mpezeni, and in 1922 Mpezeni took a party across into Nyasaland to visit the two chiefs, apparently with the idea of discussing the possibility of moving his capital into Nyasaland[1] where there was more land available than there was for him in Northern Rhodesia. From time to time Mpezeni has called on the Nyasaland chiefs to send him maize when his own supplies have run low, and these requests have been met. The Nyasaland Administration has also tried to keep alive the connexion with Mpezeni. In the past the Magistrate at Fort Manning brought the Nyasaland chiefs into Fort Jameson to meet Mpezeni there on such occasions as the King's Birthday, while in 1932 when there was a dispute between the two chiefs as to which was the senior, the District Officer informed them that the question did not arise as they were both only lieutenants of Mpezeni. On the other hand, the Nyasaland Administration has intervened to prevent tribal levies for the benefit of Mpezeni.

There are also relationships across the border that arise principally from the mere territorial contiguity of the two areas. The border, which is the Luangwa–Nyasa watershed, is not easy to follow and there has sometimes been doubt as to where it runs. The villages [361] stretch without interruption across the watershed and there is much coming and going from one village to another. Some villages have moved from one country to the other and many people have relatives [797] on both sides of the border. The Catholic Missions were for a long

[1] Mpezeni I had the same idea. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 1 August 1897, p. 2.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
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time controlled from a mission station just inside Nyasaland, so that many people crossed to attend religious services and receive instruction. From Mpezeni's own county it is easier to get to the hospital at Fort Manning than to the one at Fort Jameson, so that people wanting European medicine tend to go to Nyasaland for treatment rather than to Fort Jameson. Nyasalanders are for their part attracted into Northern Rhodesia by the market for foodstuffs among the urban population, White and Black, of Fort Jameson and by the greater variety of goods on sale there.

Other Ngoni Groups

N 101 173

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are conscious of their links with the other groups of Ngoni scattered over Central Africa, and of their similarity with the Ndebele and the Swazi and Zulu. The Paramount Chief is sometimes praised by the recital in the Ngoni language of the past exploits of the Ngoni, how they crossed the Zambezi, and how they conquered one tribe after another. On one occasion I heard someone who cannot speak Ngoni praise the Paramount by repeating, in Ndebele, which is similar to Ngoni, a praise of Mzilikazi[1] which he had learnt by rote. This oration was accepted without comment by the Paramount. Lancaster has recorded a legend that Lobengula[2] fled to Mpezeni after the second Matebele War, and that he died in the country.[3] Some years after his installation Mpezeni II was visited by a delegation from Mombera, chief of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland, which, it is said, came to ratify Mpezeni's position as Chief of the Fort Jameson section of the Ngoni. An important headman in Mpezeni's county, who bears the same name as Chief Chiwere of the Ngoni of Dowa District, still claims from time to time that because his namesake and alleged relative is a chief, he too ought to be a chief.

Nsenga and Yao

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The Ngoni are on more friendly terms with the Nsenga of Petauke District than with the other matrilineal tribes of the region. Some of the kinship ties that were formed as a result of intermarriage between the two tribes in the 1870's can still be traced, and their languages are similar. Mpezeni III went in 1944 with his first lieutenant and twenty-five followers to visit the Nsenga Chief Manjawanthu, and he is expected to return the invitation.

[1] The first Ndebele king. [2] Son of Mzilikazi, defeated by the Whites.
[3] Lancaster, p. 83. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, and Posselt, *Upengula the Scatterer*, pp. 112–24.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
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The Yao are mistrusted more than any other tribe, and some of the decisions taken by the courts are harsh on Yao. For example, a Yao man who was married to an Ngoni woman had, it was alleged, caught venereal disease from his wife. His wife then applied to the courts for a divorce, which was granted, together with the custody of the children. No bride-wealth had been paid in the marriage, but the husband now offered to pay in order to retain the children. This bride-wealth was refused by the woman's parents. The Yao appealed, but the judgement was upheld, and in addition he was ordered to go back to Nyasaland at once. He asked for permission to return to the woman's village in order to collect his belongings, and this was granted by the court, after first securing agreement between the couple as to the extent of his possessions, to wit, four plates and two beds. This deportation order was made despite the fact that the Yao had been living with his wife for twenty-one years. If a man of some other tribe had been involved, it is unlikely that he would have been ordered to leave the country, nor would the court have been so suspicious of his trying to take away more than his rightful share of the household possessions.

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A Yao, who had a good job in Fort Jameson, once offered 30*s.* to the Paramount Chief when he was in the town as the legalization payment for a woman of the royal lineage whom he wished to marry. The Paramount Chief refused the money on the ground that the man was a Yao and he was not going to permit Yao to marry into the royal lineage, despite the protest of one of his lieutenants that the Yao was just a man like anyone else.

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The reason that is given for this dislike of Yao is that they are sexually very virile, due to the medicines that they possess for increasing potency. It is perhaps significant that the same is said of Indians, who are also disliked. The Yao are known among the Ngoni for their great knowledge of medicines of all kinds, and the allegation of unnatural sexual vigour may be a rationalization of the fear that the Yao may practise sorcery among the families into which they marry. Another factor that may operate is that the Yao are the only tribe in the region that the Ngoni cannot claim to have conquered.

Political Relations with Other Tribes

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Before the European conquest relations between the Ngoni and other tribes were principally those of raiders and raided. The great season for raiding was after the harvest, when the surrounding tribes

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could be raided for their crops, as well as for captives, and when the rivers did not form such an obstacle to rapid movement as they did during the wet season. Some of the early reports of travellers suggest that there was some sort of alliance or working arrangement between the Ngoni and Mwasi Kasungu, whose territory acted as a buffer-state between Mpezeni's Ngoni and Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland[1] but this alliance does not seem to have been very stable. 648 [721]

The British Administration restored or created Cewa chieftainships that now completely encircle the Ngoni except where the Ngoni area reaches to the edge of the waterless and uninhabited Luangwa escarpment. The Administration did not recognize any right of the Ngoni over these Cewa areas, and it is now difficult to discover how much control was in fact exercised by the Ngoni over the Cewa at that time. The Ngoni certainly continued to hold that they were entitled to control the Cewa. In 1913, when the formation of reserves was being discussed with the Administration, the Ngoni chiefs are said to have been disappointed that the scheme would give the Cewa land of their own and later in the same year they tried to ensure that the Cewa to their south, who were to be granted a reserve separate from those of the Ngoni, should be formally placed under the control of Mpezeni.

At the present time the principal institution in which Ngoni co-operate with other tribes under the aegis of the Administration is the Eastern Province African Provincial Council. This body meets once a year for three days, and is attended by delegates from all the Superior Native Authorities in the Eastern Province, as well as by representatives of the Administration. It discusses matters of common interest and it elects two members to represent the Eastern Province on the African Representative Council of the whole Territory, but it does not have any legislative or executive powers. Its meetings are open to the public,[2] but as yet few people attend and the recommendations reached are passed on to only a small section of the tribe. The delegates to the Council are chosen by the Paramount Chief on the advice of his lieutenants. 646 648

There are also other political relationships that unite Ngoni with other tribes. Some of them arise from common residence in an area outside the Ngoni country. Representatives are stationed at the 648

[1] Money and Smith, *Explorations in the Country West of Lake Nyasa*, p. 152.

[2] Except on the first day, when the African members of the Council meet by themselves in Committee.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 principal urban centres on the railway line in Northern Rhodesia who represent the Ngoni Native Authority in the various Native Urban Courts. These representatives are appointed by the Superior Native Authority, that is, by the Paramount Chief and his lieutenants. These posts are regarded in much the same light as those of the minor chiefs except that the tenure of office is not so stable, and the same struggles to gain them take place. There are Ngoni members of the Fort Jameson African Urban Advisory Council, but they are elected by urban Africans and are not appointed by the Native Authority.

Rural and Urban Status

369 554 The relatively privileged position of certain individuals in the urban order may raise their status in the life of the tribe. We have already seen how the initiative in religious matters is taken by the deacons and evangelists, and these people are also called upon to lead the prayers that precede all county meetings. The orderlies in the hospitals in Fort Jameson are able to establish private practices and number chiefs and other important people among their clients. The senior shop assistants may find it possible to entertain important people by offering them European spirits. The clerks of the Administration, as part of the protective screen around the District Officers, can exercise their discretion in allowing pleas to go forward to them.

There seems to be very much less bribery and corruption than has been reported from other parts of Africa. The Ngoni are in the main more interested in and more able to make effective use of medicines and other material goods than they are of advance information. But the fact remains that the African Civil Service and the various commercial undertakings are institutions within which a man of no importance in the village and tribe can rise to a position of influence which will affect his dealings with other tribesmen. The only Ngoni on the African Representative Council, which meets yearly and includes representatives from the whole of Northern Rhodesia, was in 1946 not a headman or lieutenant but was the most prominent African businessman in Fort Jameson.

To some extent this association of high status in the urban community and low status in the rural one is inevitable, since it is only by absence from the district for many years that a man can advance himself sufficiently and acquire sufficient skill and seniority to reach this high urban status. The member of the African Representative

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Council mentioned above spent some tweny years of his life in Johannesburg. Fort Jameson itself is not a sufficiently big town for this process to take place within it, and yet it is only in Fort Jameson or on the tobacco farms that a man can live with a leg in both camps, going home to the village at the week-ends and probably keeping his wife in the village during the wet season to tend her crop. 369 554

On the other hand, there is some rivalry between the traditional leaders and the comparatively prosperous townspeople. The well-clad and well-housed Ngoni of the township are sometimes described scornfully by village people as 'merely White'. There is a feeling that the leading African traders are trying to monopolize the economic opportunities in the villages. Recently the same prominent Ngoni businessman proposed that he should take over the delivery of mail to the Native Authorities, which he claimed he would be able to do more efficiently with a car than can the present postman on a bicycle. The Paramount Chief did not answer this proposal but wrote instead to the Administration to complain against the danger of one man being allowed to earn so much more than anyone else while there were so many people who needed money. At the same time, men whose lives are led principally in the towns complain that in the villages there is 'nothing but jungle', and that the chiefs are old-fashioned and obstructive. 369 578 177 [205] [493]

The Administration

The relationship between the Provincial Administration and the Ngoni is characteristically one of superordination and subordination. The District Officer can send for any Ngoni, but not even the Paramount Chief can send for the District Officer. This characteristic arises from two sources, from the premiss which we find held all over Southern Africa, that any White is superior to any Black, and from the supervisory role allotted to the Administration in the Native Authority scheme. These two facets of the same relationship are not always seen separately by the Ngoni, and in many contexts their behaviour towards the Administration is governed entirely by the fact that the District Officer and those above him are all White. Official reports by the Administration during the reign of Mpezeni II repeatedly remarked on the Paramount Chief's distrust of Whites, and this attitude still persists. Any kind of trouble at all, particularly when it is seen as a characteristic of the present times as opposed to the glorious trouble-free past of the days of peace, before the Whites 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 came, is attributed to the Whites. I was told that the high incidence of divorce, the disappearance of wooden plates, the frequent breaches of the mother-in-law avoidance, were all due to the Whites. The District Officer is seen primarily as a member of this White tribe, and only secondarily as a member of the Administration as opposed to being a farmer or a missionary. An Administration official was once described by an admirer as 'a man whom the Ngoni trusted, although he was a White'.

In practice, it is the Administration, through the person of the District Officer, which supplies the stimulus to maintain the Native Authority structure in being in its present form. As far as many of the tasks allocated to it by the Administration are concerned, the Ngoni Native Authority falls into the class mentioned by Davidson as having 'still to be continually stirred into activity by the local District Officer'.[1] It is the Administration which calls the meetings of representatives of the whole tribe to discuss questions relating to land, agriculture, schools, labour migration, ex-soldiers, and the like. It is the Administration which supplies the forms to the Native Courts, the ubiquitous books that are the symbol of White power, which informs the Native Authority what taxes and licence fees to collect, which supplies land for resettlement, organizes the building of wells and roads, and so on.

Mistrust is certainly the principal characteristic of the Ngoni attitude to Whites, a mistrust which is based as much on what are felt to be past wrongs as on an inability to understand the motives for present administrative actions, however well intentioned these may be.[2] At the same time there is considerable admiration for White material achievements, and to a lesser extent for the large-scale political and economic developments of which they are aware. Sentiments such as 'the British Empire means peace for everybody' are not at all uncommon.

It is in relation to the farmers that the Administration is seen in the kindliest light, and it is from the Administration that Ngoni seek redress for infringements of their rights by Whites and Indians. The District Officer also acts as an agent for some of the smaller Ngoni traders, obtaining supplies for them from the urban centres. The Administration attempts to protect the rights of Ngoni by seeing that they are not cheated of their wages by planters or overcharged by traders.

[1] Davidson, *N.R. Legislative Council*, p. 29.
[2] Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, pp. 473–81.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tribe is represented to the Administration in the person of its chief, and the fact that it is through him that the Administration articulates with the tribe is realized by thinking people. In a wider sense, he represents the tribe to the White community as a whole. When I first started work in the area there were many formalities at my meetings with the Paramount Chief, so that I should understand the importance of his position. Mpezeni II is said never to have allowed a White to see him dancing, because of the mystical and social dangers involved. At a county meeting, held while the Paramount Chief was away in Livingstone, the court clerk reminded headmen that the month of May was approaching, and that he would soon be wanting people to hoe the Native Authority roads. When the time came, he did not want headmen to say they had no people. He continued: 'If the people do not obey the laws, then Mpezeni will not be well regarded by the Whites. Then when the Administration wants to make bad laws, Mpezeni will not protest, as he will want to punish his own people.' 648

If the chief is too attentive to the requirements of the Administration, then his standing with his own people is likely to suffer. A chief's court was once described as 'just a White court' because of its alleged bias in favour of the Administration's interpretation of native custom. On the other hand, this identification with the White Administration is not accepted by the chiefs and their advisers. In an adultery case, in which the husband did not want to divorce his wife but she refused to go back to him, Mpezeni, who was present, ordered the woman to return to her husband. A councillor asked the woman what she had to say. She said she loved the co-respondent. The councillor was annoyed, and asked her, 'Do you know who Mpezeni is?' The woman said, 'He 's a chief', using the usual word for chief, *nfumu*, current all over north-eastern Rhodesia. The councillor replied: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a chief, everyone is a chief nowadays.' The woman then said, 'He 's a White.' The councillor answered: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a White whose orders can be sometimes obeyed and sometimes ignored. Mpezeni is *nkhosi*, the great chief of the Ngoni, whose commands must always be carried out.' 643 554 177

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

V. EARNING A LIVING

Intertribal Trade

439 There is little trade between the Ngoni and the neighbouring tribes, whose products are largely the same as their own. Fish is brought up from the Luangwa valley by Kunda and some of it is sold to the Ngoni of the Cipalamba, through whose villages the hawkers pass on their way to Fort Jameson. Bracelets are sometimes brought from Portuguese East Africa by Chikunda. The main attraction for these hawkers is Fort Jameson itself, and it is the fact that the town is encircled by the Ngoni that gives rise to trading with them. The geographical location of the town has also led to the growth in Ngoni [366] country of many stores and what are known in the vernacular as hotels, where tea and buns can be bought and where sometimes there is shelter for the night.

Of greater importance in the life of the tribe than these intertribal links are those arising from White and Indian economic activities. We may distinguish three zones of interaction, the shops both in Fort Jameson township and scattered throughout the district owned by Whites and Indians, the local tobacco farms, and the mines of Southern Rhodesia. The Ngoni have come to need cloth for clothes which they cannot produce themselves, and it is doubtful if there would be enough animals to provide skins for the tribe even if they did not insist on cloth. The need to earn money with which to buy clothes, soap, and other necessities can be met only by seeking employment on a farm, in Fort Jameson township, or farther off. A few people earn enough by selling vegetables in Fort Jameson, and there is a certain amount of maize and other cereals sold. These sales, however, do not provide sufficient income to reduce materially the extent to which people go out to work.

Control of Movement

101 To the White traveller, Fort Jameson District is an island of tobacco in a sea of bush. To the Ngoni, the island is not so sharply demarcated, and its characteristic property is cattle, not tobacco, yet it still remains an island, surrounded by a sea of other tribes whose 101 traditions are different from their own. The ships that cross this sea 489 are the lorries. In time past, men used to walk to their destinations, [493] going by Feira to Southern Rhodesia, or across the Luangwa to Broken Hill. A few used to go down to Lake Nyasa, and thence to the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Lupa goldfields and Dar-es-Salaam. Nowadays almost everyone goes 101
by lorry, but now as then a man has to go a long way before he can 489
arrive at an island of friends in one of the urban centres. This means
that, for the Ngoni, emigration is a definite event, and does not occur
as a result of a gradual drifting farther and farther away from the [167]
tribal area. Lorries run from Fort Jameson to Lusaka and to Lilongwe, 489
and from Missale to Mtoko in Southern Rhodesia. There is also a
lorry service from Lundazi to Fort Jameson, but this does not lead
anywhere else, and is not used by Mpezeni's people except locally.
Lusaka is on a railway line, Lilongwe is connected by bus and train to
Blantyre, while Mtoko is on the way to Salisbury. It is these lorry
routes which now provide the links with the outside world, and along
which people and goods travel, the people in both directions, and the
goods, apart from tobacco, mainly inwards. Use of these routes is
controlled by the chiefs, the Administration, by economic factors, and
by the weather. This last has been less important of late, and the roads
are seldom impassable for more than a week at a time, however heavy
the rains. In order to travel on the lorries from Fort Jameson a man
must have a ticket, which costs £1 for the journey to Lusaka, and
less for the trip to Lilongwe. The lorry service from Missale to Mtoko
is free.

The Administration exercise control by insisting that no man shall 486
leave the Territory of Northern Rhodesia unless he is in possession of 166
an identification certificate endorsed by the Administration permit-
ting him to do so. In practice, such endorsements are not usually made
unless the man can produce written permission from the chief that he
is free to go. This working arrangement is intended to ensure that
men do not flee the country when there are cases pending against them,
and to prevent unjustifiable desertion of wives and children. In fact
men are sometimes given permission to go while cases in which they
are involved are still unheard.

The emigration of women and children is further controlled in that 486
there is a law[1] forbidding a woman to leave the tribal area except in 562
the company of her husband, or with a pass to leave from the Native 858
Authority. Sucking children are allowed to accompany their mothers,
but other children under the age of sixteen are not allowed to leave the
province without permission of the Native Authority,[2] while boys

[1] Ngoni Native Authority Order 24.

[2] Ngoni N. A. Order 39. The child must be either accompanied by its parents or else accompanied by a guardian on the way to join its parents.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native
562 Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws
858 are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one
486 might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly
562 by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

484 The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to
167 look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko–Missale service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these
205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more
249 than 12 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man
[361] to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

can live in the village and cultivate a garden. The maintenance of 464
contacts is facilitated by the fairly general cessation of work on the 249
farms at the week-ends. Apart from two periods of tobacco slump, the local demand for labour has exceeded the supply ever since the earlier period of European settlement. As early as January 1900 the manager of the North Charterland Exploration Company complained to the Administration that the lack of local labour was very serious, and attributed this to the large number of people who were going away to work in Southern Rhodesia. This theme has been repeated over and over again ever since. The practical effect of this chronic local shortage of labour has been that work on the farms has always been a more easy-going affair than work away on the mines or in the big towns. Men have been able to absent themselves from work to attend to their affairs at home very much as they have pleased. Payment has been either for piece-work or for the number of days worked, so that [465]
at one time it was not unusual for a man to take two or three months to complete thirty days' work, for which he had contracted.

Prior to about 1930, there were a few villages located on farm-land, 361
whose inhabitants undertook to work for so many days, with pay, in 465
return for permission to remain on the land. With the completion of 466
the move into reserves, this became rare, and at the present time the bulk of the people who live on farm-land are accommodated in compounds provided for them by the farmer. These people are the labourers on the farm for the time being, their families, and friends. The compound is under the charge of a foreman who is usually an employee of long standing on the farm. On some of the farms there [244]
are small gardens, but none of them, as far as I know, permit the 233
keeping of cattle by the labourers. This means that a man with cattle must continue to keep them at home in his village or in the village of a relative. Cattle are still the principal form of investment, particularly for people who cannot spend their capital in building a brick house, so that it is common to find in a village that many of the cattle in the byre are being tended for the benefit of an absent owner who spends the majority of his time away on a farm and who may not even have a hut in the village.

The demand for labour on the tobacco farms varies considerably 249
with the time of year, being greatest from about Christmas until about 464
June. At the same time, the calls on a man to tend his own garden are greatest from about November until May. Farmers therefore try to get labour for a few days at a time from people who live in villages

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
264 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[357] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

466 To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

584 Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

444 The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

164 The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
651 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
653 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
[622] ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Labour Ordinances, he can only do so through the District Commissioner's court at Fort Jameson, which may take up more of his time than he thinks the matter worth. In consequence, few actions are brought by farmers against their African labourers and if a man breaks his contract and deserts, no action may be taken against him. 691 578

It is not surprising that the efficiency of labour operating under these conditions is low, and that the wages are also low. These two conditions react on one another, and it is misleading to regard the low wages as the only cause of the inefficiency, or the inefficiency as the only cause of the low wages. The practical effect is that men who wish to earn more money than they can get as labourers on the farms at 14*s.* a month with food go away to Southern Rhodesia. It must be observed, however, that men started going to Southern Rhodesia long before the tobacco farms were opened up to their present extent. 461 [465]

Labour Migration

Prior to the European conquest, the only men who had worked for Whites were those employed as carriers by the handful of travellers who passed through the country before 1896, and as carriers and labourers by the North Charterland Exploration Company from 1896 onwards. But immediately after the end of the fighting in 1898, recruiting started among the Ngoni for police work in Southern Rhodesia, and there has been a continual flow of labour migrants south ever since. 167 464

There have been considerable fluctuations in the number of men going south since that time, particularly during the two world wars, when the military requirements of the Territory exercised a greater claim. The latest figures for the Eastern Province as a whole show that, in 1946, 23 per cent. of the taxable males registered in the province were absent from the province. Another 17½ per cent. were at work within the province.[1] In May 1947, in two Ngoni counties with a combined total of 1,739 registered taxable males, it was found that 30 per cent. of them were at work in the Eastern Province and a further 42 per cent. were away elsewhere, a total of 72 per cent. away from their villages. Half of those living outside the Eastern Province were classified as 'lost', in that their present whereabouts were unknown to the people at home.[2] These figures exclude all men who have been 'lost' for more than five years.

[1] Labour Department, *Annual Report, 1946*, p. 12.
[2] These figures were given me by the District Commissioner, Fort Jameson.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

484 Looked at from the point of view of the individual, we find that all
167 adult men have at some time or other been away to work, and that the majority have been to Southern Rhodesia once or twice.

Conclusion

466 In their lives on the farms and in Fort Jameson, Ngoni mix with men from other tribes, and their position is largely subsumed under the conditions common to all African labourers on all European-controlled farms. The Administration does not support the Ngoni more
[648] than the Cewa, or one chief more than another. As the content of the relationship becomes more and more related to the world-wide polity and economy, so the nature of the relationship becomes common to a wider group. Ngoni living in Fort Jameson Compound live lives that are closer to the lives led by other tribes in compounds in other towns than they are to those led in the villages 5 miles away.
464 The phenomenon of labour migration greatly affects Ngoni social
[167] structure, but is not a distinctively Ngoni institution in the same way as the Ngoni village is distinctively Ngoni. When Ngoni ex-
[729] soldiers complain that when they were recruited they were promised that after the war they would get good jobs, and now find they do not get them, their sentiments derive more from their status as ex-soldiers, which they share with some millions of others, than they do from their status as Ngoni.

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[title page]

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed. 101 123 643

NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa. 159 167

Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1825. 173 643 648

In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukuza, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques. [721]

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son. [595]

1 [induna=military leader--Analyst]

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159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
578 Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
643 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
648 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.

In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo.
[805] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Masebo, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction
[645] was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[684] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Msafwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinaluzi River. On his death bed he gave
[766 his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was
[428 then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
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migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombbengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze*.

N 159 173 562 [595] N [764] [423]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Loziwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtenguleni Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchizo* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

N 159 173 595 842 602

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jero; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 644

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Ansenga tribe worked for Sosera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Sosera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the *ikohlwa* wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamache Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Imiti. Father, Nzyekezera (Njekerezera); mother and wife, not known; sons, Masakambewa and Chitete.

[554] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his [578] instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1846.

159 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

173 Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambose Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

167 On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed [578] by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Maseko was killed by [554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 (6) Njokwane Ntilila. Father, Mphango, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, 173 Manyuwazana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mene, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu [701] regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpinduka Hill, Matambazi River, [645] in the year 1868.

(7) Mgai Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majokwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere; born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1868/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 643

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Malowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mashera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyonda, Kotakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

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He

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

643 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in
November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment;
551 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment; Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief
[643] Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[645] Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black oxhide,
[701] white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives
of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Sosera Nqumayo,
[595] Great Wife; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu;
Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku ?; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndauya Mbanzima,
[593] Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker ? Daughters:—
Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nquanceleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.

167 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
551 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
593 Chief Diviner or *Isanusi*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadose, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595] Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere;
Mtizwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere;
Maiwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife.
Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727] 1898. Grandson:—Chilos Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near
[727] Msesa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vuhwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsaswe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayunga (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu,
Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Masoho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera,
704 Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

173

(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were Basuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

159

Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

173

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Somra village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. 643 [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Kumpambe:—Daniliyo Sabu, Zonodyo Mphuma, Mahumuyo Mphuma, Mahowe Nwae Mazia, Dodo Tole, Mpho Mdwandzi Jere, Mdwandzibe Tembo, Mwenje Mdhlovu, Kotanda Mnyamuy Mahowesa, Kapondda Jumbi Nyoda, Mandhlela Mphuma, Chimuguzhowe Mgabwa, Chimwe Mdwandzi, Mandwe Jere, Mkandanga Mphuma, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Mndhlamowe, Andrew Kapotamupo Jere, James Mdwandzi Hara, Mandwe Kangwere Mdhlovu, Pungwani Nyoda, Adriyano Phiri, Ndandzibe Gomani Mawere, Chingadzimani Hlanda, Ngwa Nyoda, Ngungu Nkuge Jere, Mahowe Mphuma, Nwaki Lakhalo, Njambwe Tembo, Adandzumbe Mahungu, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 *Circa* TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI TRIBE.

1500. Zambo station on the Zambesi located by the Portuguese.

1760. Senzangakona born: *son of* Jama and father *of* tshaka.

1770. Dingiswayo born; *chief of* the Mtetwa tribe and *son of Jobe.*

1775. Ziwide born: *son of* Langa *of* the Ndwandwe tribe.

1780. Zongendaba born; son *of* Hlatshwayo *of* the Ngoni tribe. Zambo Station opened and abandoned by Manoel G. Pereira.

1785. Tshaka born: *son of Senzangakona of* the Zulu tribe.

1790. Mailikazi born; *son of* Mashobana *of* the Kumalo clan.

1800. Accession of Dingiswayo. Loniwawa Nqumayo born; daughter *of* Nombhengula, the son of Ulanga Vimba.

1805. Tshaka took refuge with Dingiswayo.

1808. Sowera Nqumayo, sister of Loniwawa Nqumayo, born.

1810. Death of Senzangakona. Accession of Tshaka.

1812. Tshaka defeated the Ama Ngwana. *Flight of* Matiwane.

1817. Tshaka defeats the Ema Cunwini tribe. *Flight of the tribe.*

1818. Dingiswayo of the Mtetwa tribe killed by Ziwide.

1821. *First* attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe tribe. Nombhengula, brother *of* Ziwide, killed; father of Loniwawa and Sowera, *wives of* Chief Zongendaba; also of Nomahlanjana, Ziwide's heir; Mpepa and Dayingubo his sons were killed.

1822. Sebetwane moves off with the Nati clan. Secession of Zongendaba and his induna, after second Ndwandwe attack by Tshaka at Nhlandhla; Ziwide's people beaten. Cattle and women seized by Tshaka and incorporated into the Zulu tribe.

1825. Secession of Mailikazi, son of Matshobana, from Tshaka. Secession of Soshangane Manukuza, son of Sigode, younger son of Langa Vimba, Chief of the Ndwandwe tribe. Tribe vanquished by Chaka at Eldolwani Mountain between Mkuze and Pongolo Rivers. Death of Ziwide. Death of Sikwayana.

1826. Death of "Nada the Lily" (Nandi), mother of Tshaka, widow of Senzangakona, and daughter of Mbengi, Chief of the Elangeni clan. Ntutu Mpezeni born; eldest son of Chief Zongendaba by his Great Wife's (Loniwawa Nqumayo's) *Nkhosazi* and younger sister, Sowera Nqumayo).

1828. Zongendaba fought with Mailikazi on the P.E. Africa Border, was beaten, and broke away into P.E. Africa near the Limpopo River, where he met and united himself with Manukuza and his brother, Mhlahwadabuka. Death of Tshaka. Death of Matiwane.

Circa

1829. David Hume visited Mzilikazi at Marico. Rev. Moffat visited Mzilikazi at Limpopo R. Lobengula born; son of Mzilikazi by his Swazi wife, Fulata, daughter of Chief Malendela of the Ama-Swazi.

1830. Dingaan's impis fight Mzilikazi without result to either side.

1831. Mzilikazi at Thaba Bosigo; attacks the BaSuto, but without success.

1832. Mzilikazi at Mosega. Mtwalo born; son of Zongendaba by his wife, Nqutu, younger sister of Umnene.

1833. Manukusa defeated and drove the Portuguese from Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques). Fight between Manukusa and Zongendaba. Zongendaba and Mhlabwadabuka left Manukusa and migrated in a northerly direction. Death of Luziwwa Nqumayo, Great Wife of Zongendaba.

1834. Mzilikazi at Kapaying. On what is now the S. Rhodesia-Portuguese (Mozambique) border, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabwadabuka, brother of Manukusa, and proceeded in a north-westerly direction where he met the Ba-Loal or Ba-Nyai. A fight took place at Ingwekwini River where the latter were destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba zi-Ka-Mambo.

1835. In November the Ngoni under the leadership of Chiefs Zongendaba and Gwana crossed over the Ukwenbe (Zambesi) River at the Manyerere Drift. Mgabi Maseko quarrelled and did not cross but travelled along the south bank and at a later date, 1836, crossed the river in the vicinity of Tete. The date of crossing was marked by an eclipse.

1836. Ngoni settled in the Amanga country. Sofala plundered and destroyed by Manukusa. Mzilikazi's Matebele attack the Boers at Veekkop. Harris and others met Mzilikazi at Mosega.

1837. Chief Umtiguna, Dingaan's induna, fought with Mzilikazi and captured numerous cattle, but left an impi dead on the field. Mosega burnt out by the Boers. Mzilikazi moves out of the Transvaal. Fulata Swazi, wife of Chief Mzilikazi and daughter of the Swazi chief, Malendela, and Mother of "Ningi" and Lobengula, died near the Limpopo River.
At the end of this year the Matabele entered what is now S. Rhodesia, "Wabale."

1838. Bands of roving Ama-Swazi defeated and incorporated by Mzilikazi.

1840. Mombera (Mbelwa), son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene, born at Chulu, Nyasaland. Ngoni in the Rukuru Valley.

1842. Arrival of the Ngoni in the Ufipa country.

1843. Local raids.

1845. Death of Zongendaba at Mapupu in the Ufipa country. Buried near the Nyimalusi River. Break up of the Tribe.

Ill: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173

Circa

1846. Death of Ntabeni in U'fipa country.

1847. Death of Gwaza Tole in U'fipa country. Northward trek of a body of Ngoni led by Mgai.

1848. Ngoni at Victoria Nyanza.

1849. Death of Mgai in Sukuma country. Zulu Gama and his people broke away into Songea. They were followed by Mombera's adherents, who caught them up. Mombera's people badly beaten; the fight took place near Old Langenburg. Mombera returned.

1850. Mpezeni and Mperembe break away and enter the Wisa and Wemba country. Mombera and Mtwalu move to the Henga country.

1855. Mombera's Ngoni in the Tumbuka country in the vicinity of Hora Mountain.

1856. Mpezeni skirted the Wemba country on southward migration and raided Wisa and Lala tribes en route, east of Bangweulu.

1858. Death of Manukusa; his son, Maweva, succeeds him.

1860. Mpezeni's Ngoni at Cherongo on the Mchinga escarpment where an encampment was made, crops were grown, and local natives raided for slaves. Maweva defeated by Mzila, son of Manukusa.

1861. Mzila takes chieftainship.

1861. Ulomba, Great Wife of Mzilikazi, died at Inyati, Oct. 5th, 1861.

1862. Zumbo Boma re-occupied by Albino Manuel Pacheeho.

1865. Mpezeni's Ngoni at Mkoma and Mbangombe Hills. Further encampment. Tsingu Jere born, son of Mpezeni Jere by his wife, Lupoko.

1868. Zula Gama crossed the Shire river, 8th September. Death of Chief Mzilikazi at Inyati. Mpezeni at Mpinduka Hill, Matambadzi Stream. Death of Induna Njekwane. Mperembe's Ngoni defeated by the combined forces of Arab traders and Wemba near Chikumbo, Lake Bangweulu district.

1869. Mombera turned back, crossed the Luangwa river and joined Mtwalu and Mperembe in the Tumbuka country.

1870. Lobengula, son of Mzilikazi by his wife, Fulata, crowned King of the Ama-Tebele.

1872. Mpezeni at Mtengulenl-Uka-Soera V. at the Lutembwe. R. Mpezeni at the Msipazi river.

[754] 1878. "Ningi," sister of Lobengula, murdered on an alleged charge of witchcraft, causing Lobengula's wife, Loukeyi, to have a still born child.

1880. Massacre of the Tumbuka on Hora Mountain by Mombera's Ngoni.

1881. Mpezeni at Langeni Village. Visited by Carl Wiese.

1884. Death of Mzila, known to the Ngoni as Kaulandwa.

II:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173
175

Circa

1889. Mpezeni visited by Sir Alfred Sharp.

1890. Death of Mtwalu.

1891. Death of Mombera. Chikusi, son of Mputa, deposed. Mpezembe acting chief of Mombera's Ngoni.

1892. Birth of Chiloa Mpezeni Jere, son of Tsingu Jere by his wife, Nkuchwa. Matebele War.

1894. Death of Lobengula Kumalo.

1895. Ngungunyana, King of the Abu-Gaza, deposed by the Portuguese.

1896. Matabele Rebellion. Defeat of Mwase at Kasungu by Alston and Swann.

1897. Ngoni Revolt. British South Africa Company at Chinunda (Fort Jameson Dist.)

1898. Mpezeni surrenders; exiled to Fort Manning. Tsingu Jere captured and shot. Nkuchwa, his wife, shot by Lt. Poole's troop in the Vubwi Valley. Revolt ended. Fort Jameson established.

1900. Mpezeni I. released and returned to his village. Death of Mpezeni I. Death of Sosera Nqumayo, mother of Ntutu Mpezeni Jere (Mpezeni I) and widow of Chief Zongendaba.

1901. Succession of Chiloa Mpezeni II (Jere).

1902. Chief Madzimawe claims the name of Zongendaba, but is refused by the Government.

1904. Death of Lupoko, wife of Mpezeni, at Lupoko village.

1908. Death of Ngungunyana.

1925. Chiloa Mpezeni II present at the indaba given in honour of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales at Broken Hill, N. Rhodesia.

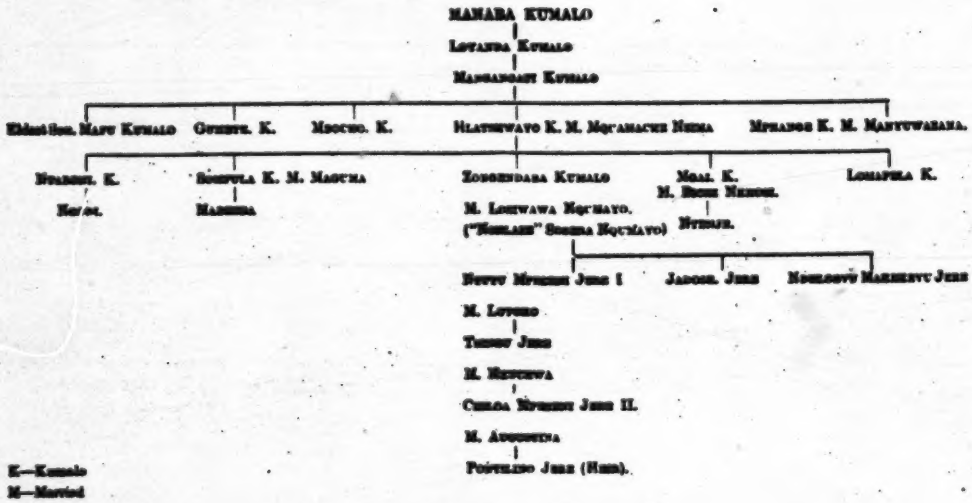
1934. The Paramount, Chiloa Mpezeni II, presented with his "Staff of Office" by H.R.H. Prince George at Livingstone, N. Rhodesia.

1935. Great meeting of old Ngoni chiefs with Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, to discuss the chief's ancestors and the crossing of the Zambesi river in 1835. This being the Centenary. The Ngoni were well acquainted with native dug-outs (boats) before they left their tribal area which is now known as Northern Zululand. [501]

Authorities consulted:—Bryant; Elliott; Seymour; Thomas; Marshall Hole; Theal.

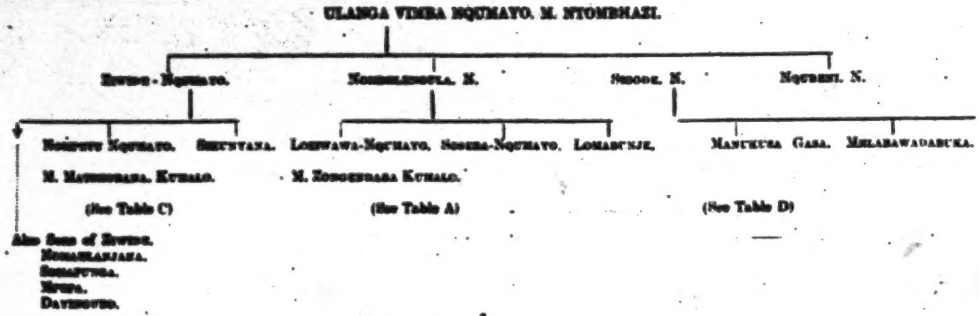
113

GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE NGONI LINE. (A.)

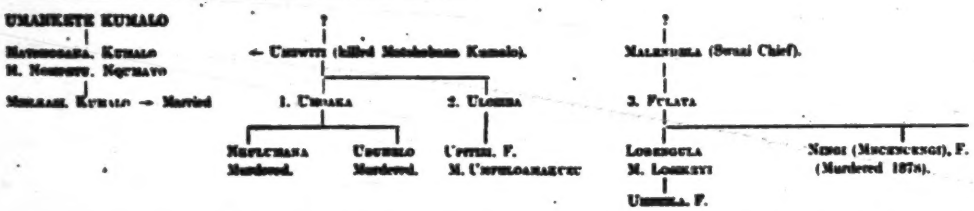


K—Kumalo
M—Married

GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE AMA-NDWANDWE TRIBE. (B.)



GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE MATABELE LINE. (C.)



NOTE.—Nompuyu Nqumayo, Mother of Mzilikazi of the Matebele, was the Daughter of Ziwide of the Ama-Ndwandwe and a Cousin of Lombwana Nqumayo wife of Zongendaba of the Ngoni. Shook, Father of Manukusa of the Aba Gasa was her Uncle. Thus were Mzilikazi, Zongendaba and Manukusa related.

M—Married K—Kumayo F—Female

Ni
Ne
173

Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Ndebele F54

173

GENEALOGICAL TREE OF ABA-GAZA. LINE. (D.)

ULAMBA VIMBA NQUMAYO

M. Nyoshwani

Nkondo

Mantumba Gasa — Mhlabawadabuka

Mbila — Nwaeya. Eldest son deposed.

Kotbontyana

Mdugaza

GENEALOGY OF MORE NGONI CHIEFS. (E.)

MANABA KUMALO

Loyanda Kumalo

Mangangati Kumalo

Mpandor K. M. Mantuwaziana

Umpumela. Chulo. Mbe. Mawe. Njekwane Kumalo ... M. Nyongajiqo. Sondwani. Hoye.

Kapatamoto Jere. ... M. Nyampendu Mapulela

Kapatamoto Jere II.

MANABA KUMALO

Loyanda Kumalo

Mangangati Kumalo

Hlatshwayo Kumalo

Sompula Kumalo M. Magura who re-married Mbotwane.

Maninba Jere — Molenyeni.....Nkuku

MANABA KUMALO

Loyanda K.

Mangangati K.

Hlatshwayo K.

Zondondara. K. M. Umbube Nzika

Mbelwa (Mombera)

Regency of Mpezeni.

Chintunda.—Mombera's Indunas disagreed over this appointment because Mombera had cast off Chintunga's mother for adultery.
Deposed by Nyasaland Government 1913.

[643]

K.—Kumalo
M.—Married

12: Barnes E-5 (1946-1948) 1948 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

The Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni

J.A. Barnes

Occasional Papers, Rhodes-Livingstone Museum

No. I
/Pp; 3-13/

Livingstone: Rhodes-Livingstone Museum

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/Title page/

/3/

The Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni

I

During the 1820s, the rise to power of the Zulu chief Chaka in 175
South Africa led to a number of migrations to the north led by lesser chiefs who wished to avoid a clash with the Zulu armies, or who had already clashed and had been defeated. The descendants of these migrants are to-day living scattered over East Africa, from Lake Victoria to near Lourenço Marques. Many of these still call them- 101
selves Ngoni, a term derived from Nguni, a word used to describe themselves while they were still in the south. The leader of one of these Ngoni migrations was Zwangendaba, and it is his descendants who are to be found in Northern Rhodesia and elsewhere at the present time. The only group in this country recognised as Ngoni by the Administration is to be found in Fort Jameson District, under Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Formerly a tribe living in Lundazi District under Chief Magodi was officially called Ngoni, but they are now known to the Administration as Tumbuka. They represent the western salient of the old empire of Mombera, a son of Zwangendaba, whose descendant is now a chief in Nyasaland. This article deals only with [121]
the people under Chief Mpezeni.

Zwangendaba led his people northwards, fighting and taking 179
captives as he went, crossed the Zambezi in 1835, an event that happened to coincide with a solar eclipse, and after passing through the present-day Eastern Province, died near Lake Tanganyika in about 1845. His party then split up, one son, Mpezeni, leading his followers south-westwards towards the Bemba and the Wisa in the Northern Province. From there they moved southwards, crossed the Luangwa, and settled in Petauke District. In about 1865 they moved eastwards and settled to the north of the Mpangwe Hills in Fort 175
Jameson District. Some ten years later they went further east, and in 1881, when they were first visited by a European, they had reached

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central,
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 602 624
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a

/4 cont'd/

701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
241 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
464 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital
[681] investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

161 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson
621 Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[118] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

/5 cont'd/

614 Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni
551 families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the
576 Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man
428 and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman,
591 although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

361 In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing
351 the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here.
392 Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as
423 well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they
882 have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of
342 the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The
[324] walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used
[353] for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the weather. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

342 /5 cont'd/ With both bamboo and pole huts, the
[962] construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and
[353] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September,
[921] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is co-operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and
[476] help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer,
[465] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

343 Storehouses are built of bamboo or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household
[690] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in
[241] separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

/6 cont'd/

417 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which [132] there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

231 /7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [136] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

417 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [285] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [35] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may 343 have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasional- [511] ly open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

/7 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household,
415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or
[511] china crockery.

323 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every
[461] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood.
[489] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol
[415] and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves
[824] of the mbwabwa tree.

285 Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men,
[353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be
[467] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings
[491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often
[493] made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /8/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

/8 cont'd/

285 the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found [482] and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

415 In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat 412 porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. [531] Wooden hemispherical pats, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

412 At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzilia quanzensis or Monotes trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is [531] a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four [504] inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones [426] or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are 352 sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make [463] a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

/8 cont'd/

352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled 285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any 513 headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts [177] and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

/9/ V

412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of furnaces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used, [325] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa [567] slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

493 Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the [291] village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle, [490] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of 411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about 224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

/9 cont'd/

294 the hunt walks in the middle of the line, with a responsible person posted on each flank. A started animal, if not shot by the guns, usually turns to run parallel to the line of hunters, who hurl spears and knobkerries at it, and send their dogs after it. The chances of escape for a hunted animal are fairly high. Animals are also trapped, usually with a piece of meat tied to the muzzle of a gun. Hunting with nets is sometimes undertaken in the wet season. Rats are caught in small conical traps baited with beans. The rat chews through a piece of string and releases a green stick, thereby strangling itself.

[114] Shields, once the pride of the Ngoni armies, are not carried on hunts and are infrequently seen.

VI

291 It is only the old men who still wear skin garments, and then [177] only as additions to European style clothing. Men are dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, long trousers, cast-off European clothing, or clothes brought back from the army. Often two shirts are worn on top of one another. Women wear a blouse, a skirt tied on a tape, a cloth wrapped round on top of the skirt, and a small cloth tied [854] round their waist. If carrying a baby, the cloth supporting the child is slung over the left and under the right shoulder, and another cloth may be wrapped round the woman and child under her armpits. Dresses are also worn, and sometimes a singlet under the blouse. Shoes are less common for women than for men. Men /10/ wear a [177] variety of European style hats, but women wear only embroidered cloths or berets, or in the case of poorer women, plain bands of cloth.

Children go naked, or may be draped in whatever garment, of whatever size, happens to be available. If the money is there to pay for them, boys are dressed in shorts and shirts, and girls in little dresses.

304 In the old days, every adult had slit ears, but this custom has [178] died out. Women nowadays pierce their ears if they wish, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a small slit made as a

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
[301] beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
[324] Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
[302] cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkhoiosa grass. These marks are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
[531] is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nsenga
[619] tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks. When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimental dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys
524 of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long, terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction, made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes, with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys consists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

/10 cont'd/

524 after moving other beans out of a hole. A boys' game played in the wet season is played with egg-shaped pieces of mud, with a small flange at one end. These pieces are thrown down on to the water, and ought to make an explosive noise.

/11/ VII

243 Maize, the main crop, is planted with the first steady rains in [221] November, and is harvested soon after the end of the rains in April or May. Under the influence of the Agricultural Department of the [242] Government, planting in small ridges following the contour is increasingly practised, but prior to the introduction of this and other new agricultural methods in the 1930s, planting was carried out in mounds about three feet in diameter and eighteen inches high. Finger millet is grown on patches of soil on which branches and garden trash have been burnt. However, the citemene system, as known in 241 other parts of the country, in which trees are felled over a wide area and burnt to fertilise a small area in the middle, is not practised as a principal method here. Finger millet is the only crop to be planted solely in ash fertilised patches, while the rest of the cleared ground may be planted with beans and nuts, and in the following season, with maize. Gardens last from two up to twenty or more years, depending on the type of soil, and the selection of a garden site is determined to some extent by the nature of the soil and of the vegetation growing on it.

244 In seepage areas, dry season gardens can be cultivated, and it is in such gardens, fenced in to keep out straying animals, that vegetables are grown for sale to Europeans and in the villages. These sites are also used for early planted maize, which is harvested in January and eaten in the form of green mealies. In the villages [249] themselves, small plots of tobacco and castor oil are grown on old hut sites, while abandoned village sites are used as subsidiary gardens for maize and other crops. Mango, banana, and pawpaw trees are 245 found in villages and on the sites of abandoned villages.

/11 cont'd/

241 The busiest time of the year in the garden is at the beginning of the rains, when there is much work to be done planting and weed-
[136] ing, and scaring away the monkeys and wild pigs. Later on, in the new year, after the garden has been weeded twice, it is possible to think of enlarging the garden at one edge, and if it is not too late, the newly cleared portion may be planted with a catch crop. Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out
[476] to some extent co-operatively, either on a mutual help basis between two women, or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner of the garden. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink on the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrive at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subse-
[273] quent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set
[576] aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden.

/12/ Towards the end of the rains, there is less cultivating to be done, but the ravages of wild animals become more serious, and many families sleep for two or three months in the garden, returning to the village only to obtain food. Garden shelters are simple open-sided affairs with a thatched roof, but those owners who intend to
[342] sleep in their gardens for a long time, build small circular huts as in the village, or conical shelters with the roof reaching to the ground.
[417] A few lookout platforms built in trees are used as vantage points for spotting wild animals. If a man has a garden a long way from the village, particularly across a stream which will be in spate in the late rains, he may build a byre for his cattle at the garden.

Maize and ground-nuts are the first crops to be harvested, and later finger millet, root crops, and finally kaffir-corn. Maize is
251 stooked before the cobs are removed, and these are then dried on platforms before being carried to the village to be stored.

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [031] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [073] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [051] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fin- [853] gers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the [862] milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by them- 234 selves and sell the meat.

/13 cont'd/

273 Beer drinking is one of the most important social occupations, and a considerable proportion of maize is consumed in this way. Brewing takes six days to complete, but two weeks more are required to prepare the sprouted maize that is an essential ingredient. Once brewed, the beer remains drinkable for two or three days, but the partially brewed beer, of smaller alcoholic content, is also drunk. Beer is brewed for many reasons, for working parties in the garden or housebuilding, for selling at threepence a bowl, or as often as not, just for drinking. Finger millet is used in beer making, and if available, the whole maize flour from a grinding machine, as well as the white maize flour of the village. The beer is brewed in large ten-gallon pots, then poured into smaller four-gallon pots that can be carried about, and from these ladled with a gourd into bowls or ornamental gourd cups. Four-gallon petrol tins are sometimes used instead of pots, and large enamelware mugs instead of bowls. Very rarely, beer is drunk from glasses.

VIII

233 Cattle are in the care of herdboys, whose ages range from eight to fourteen. They take the cattle out of the byres in the morning and go off with them to look for pasture. The cattle come back in the early afternoon, when the calves suck, and go off again until about five o'clock in the evening, when they are put back in the byre for the night. The calves are looked after by smaller children, and do not usually go so far away from the village as do the fully grown cattle. In the dry season, after the harvest, when there is no danger of spoiling crops, the cattle wander about very much by themselves, and the boys play or do odd jobs in the village. In these days of village schools, suitable boys are not always free to look after cattle, and in this case girls will do the herding.

234 Little use is made of the milk except occasionally for use in porridge, and for sale to Europeans. The European market also pro-
235 vides the only use for eggs.

/13 cont'd/

463 Other specialised activities carried out in the village, apart from those mentioned, are such things as shoe mending, bicycle repairing, and carpentry. These trades are followed by men who learnt them in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and are carried on
443 as part-time occupations. Village stores are modest affairs, with goods for sale that have been bought retail from Indian traders in Fort Jameson, and have been brought out to the village on bicycle. Larger stores on the main roads may be able to buy wholesale, and may employ a tailor making up cloth bought in the store. Shops called in the vernacular "hotels," where tea and scones are sold and perhaps bread, also lie on the main roads.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI.—*The Zulu of Nyasaland: their Manners and Customs.* By the Rev. DONALD FRASER, of the Livingstonia Mission.

[Read before the Society, 20th February, 1901.]

101 I SHALL take you to-night into British Central Africa, and describe slightly, a most interesting nation of warriors who live in West Nyasaland. To reach them we sail up the Zambezi, and the 13 Shiré to Lake Nyasa. Landing at Bandawe, we strike inland for two days, climbing most of the way. After passing through richly wooded hills and valleys, we arrive at a great plateau, veined by constant sudden ravines through which rivers roar in the wet season, and trickle in the dry. The plateau is almost bared of trees, and is relieved by huge rocky hills which rise precipitously, from the plain. A low scrub covers the face of the land except where [241] gardens are being cultivated, and the whole country is dotted by innumerable ant hills, each as large as a cottage. These are hoed by the villagers, and throughout most of the year, stand out gaunt and bear. Then the landscape is thirsty and inhospitable looking. The earth baked and hard, lies unclothed in the blazing sun. Cattle, [231] sheep, and goats, wander about the river beds, and one looks almost in vain for any sign of vegetation to afford them food. But when the first rains come, the land breaks into smiling. The scrub puts on a dress of the softest green. The gardens and ant hills are [241] covered with springing maize, and a thick garment of foliage, vegetation, and flowers, hides every vestige of the ground. Here we stand from 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. In the cold season, the thermometer falls as low as 40°, and in the hot, rises as high as 98°. But though the sun has a dangerous bite in midsummer, the heat is never oppressive, and the nights are cool and refreshing.

101 The people who live in this country, are a branch of the Zulu 175 tribe, who started north 70 or 80 years ago on a great raid. The causes which led them to desert their own country are wrapped in mystery, and even the old men who can remember the days when they crossed the Zambezi, are unable to give any clear account of their starting. Probably it arose from one of the wars of Chaka, in

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

which his army was defeated. The warriors knew that they would be killed when they got back to the great Zulu despot, and so they fled north, fighting as they went. As they went along, they conquered and absorbed the tribes, gathering Swazi, Atonga, and a medley of people into the nation. They came to the Zambezi, and on the day when they crossed it they were terrified by a total eclipse of the sun. From the Zambezi they fought their way to Nyasaland, then striking west, they passed through the Senga and Wemba populations till they reached Lake Tanganyika. On the plateau there the first great chief died. He had become infirm in his latter days, and travelled about riding on an ox. At his funeral a terrible massacre took place. One section of the tribe, eager to observe the old bloody funeral ceremonies, surprised and murdered all the widows of the chief that their spirits might accompany the dead chief to the other world. This butchery aroused great indignation among the others, and the tribe split in two. The butchers remained at the S.E. of Lake Tanganyika, where they still are a terror to the surrounding people. The great part of the tribe however, again marched south. One of the sons of the paramount chief was appointed his successor. His name was Mombera. His four brothers, Mpezeni, Mperembe, Maurau, and Mtwaro, were given large and powerful sub-chieftainships under him. This led to a scattering and readjustment of the tribe. Mperembe remained as chief and conquerer over the northern people, keeping the wild Wemba, and other tribes under his suzerainty. Mombera, along with two other brothers, settled in the highlands to the north-west of Nyasa. And Mpezeni went south and gradually got so far separated from the others that his people became an independent and insolated section of the tribe. A few years ago, the British Government levied war on Mpezeni, and his country came under the British Government.

In the north also, Mperembe was sore driven through his separation from the main section of the tribe, and at last his people rebelled, and with the aid of the Wemba, drove him south to join hands with his brother Mombera the paramount chief. Around Mombera the great part of the Ngoni nation remained. Some of his head men started petty chieftainships to the south among whom were Mandala, and Mwasi. Their people are called the Central and Southern Ngoni, and are well known in the Blantyre district as labourers, but they are not Ngoni. Few of them can speak the Zulu or Ngoni language, and they are a poor effeminate and cow-

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

101 ardly people compared with the wild spirits who remained under
[175] Mombera.

This tribe is variously named Mazitu, Vikoko, Abangoni, and so on, and readers of Livingstone's 'Zambezi and its Tributaries,' will remember his frequent references to the wild marauding bands of Mazitu. The word Abangoni, by which the tribe calls itself,
[186] simply means "The people." They reckon themselves the blood-ed aristocrats of Africa.

[193] The prefix *aba* before ngoni, is simply the plural form of the noun *umgoni*, a single man. The country is called Ubungoni, and the language Chingoni. For the peculiarity of the Bantu languages, is that words alter their number from singular to plural, and character from noun to adjective, not by changing the suffix but the prefix.

197 The language which the Ngoni speak is a slight modification of Zulu—but they only use two clicks—the dental *c* and labial *q*. In our schools therefore we use the Zulu literature in which there are already nearly 40 volumes, and the best of these are the translations left by Bishop Colenso. Zulu is however rapidly dying
[567] out, as the language of the slaves and of the surrounding tribes is
175 becoming the vernacular of the common people. When Mombera's Ngoni settled down in the watershed of the Ruhuru, they soon made their presence disagreeably felt throughout West Nyasa. Their marauding parties were always out on the war path. Dressing
[126] in a frightsome garb of cock feathers, carrying a large shield and two or three stabbing assegais, they terrorised the neighbouring tribes. They used to sleep near some village which they wished to attack, and then in the early morning just before the light had come, with a wild war whoop they would sweep through the village, killing the men and the old people; then when they had seized the women and children and tied them together they would start back for the hills, driving with them all the cattle and sheep and goats that they could find. Their fighting was never done in the open. It generally took the form of a wild and sudden rush, and in a moment bleeding corpses were lying about, and the village was in flames.

The terrified people betook themselves to huge stockaded villages, others piled their villages in the lake itself. The Poka, and Henga
[101] fled to mountain fastnesses, and built on the edges of fearful precipices, the Senga fled to the Luangwa marsh and built great protected villages in the depths of huge thorn thickets. And the land became

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries.

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandom everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace.

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth fourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. When he listens in court to some great indaba his face is expressionless as granite. With an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had to

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 wait for six or seven years before the procrastinating headmen
[645] could lay aside jealousies, and actually place him in the authority of his father. Then when he is crowned he cannot sit in judgment
[695] or give a decision unless his councillors have been summoned, and have deliberated with him. Many a time in the old fierce days the councillors and chief argued and defied one another for weeks at a time over the question as to whether the white man was to be tolerated in the country, and it was the strong affection of old Mombera for Dr. Laws, and Wm. Koyi which alone held in the dogs of war, and prevented his councillors from going forth on an exterminating expedition. Yet in spite of the great power of the chief he lives as father of the people with all the villagers as his children. His house is like their own, built right in the centre of
[560] the village. The poorest slave has access to him, and he hands his beer pot or his snuff to the meanest villager when he would show him friendliness.

[620] Under the paramount chief there are four great sub-chiefs, and
[634] each of them has his councillors and headmen. Then these headmen have each a group of villages under their control. They
[692] hear and dispose of petty quarrels between the villagers. Cases in which headmen are involved go to the sub-chief, and cases in which the sub-chiefs are involved, and all great tribal affairs,
645 go to the paramount chief. The tribal council is an impressive sight. Just before I came here I had the privilege of being present in one of these great gatherings of the tribe. It had met to discuss the advisability of coming under the British Protectorate. The great chief, Chimtunga, had sent out his messengers to call to council all the sub-chiefs and headmen. They marched into the
[634] chief's kraal on the appointed day, each sub-chief followed by his councillors and hundreds of armed warriors, all walking in single file, and dressed in their gaudiest clothes. They sat round the kraal till thousands were present. By-and-bye the paramount
[643] chief walked in, followed by his brothers and council. He was greeted by a roar of salutation, and took his seat. When the case was opened, and the subject introduced, the fathers of the people rose one after the other and saluted the chief, and then addressed the people. The speakers walked up and down, speaking with
[530] considerable incisiveness and eloquence, their language full of metaphors and traditional allusions. Then the chief spoke, closing the discussion. Immediately it was ended and the royal
[535] salutation given, a warrior leapt into the circle with a war cry, fell

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

down at the chief's feet, and with a shout dashed up again and danced a furious war dance. His eyes fixed and staring with passion, every muscle distended, he stabbed into the air with his spear, tossed the dust of the kraal about, and leapt hither and thither in a frenzy of passion. All the while he kept shouting his battle-cry, and the thousands of fighting men around beat their spears and chanted a chorus. When he had exhausted himself, another headman leapt into the circle and went through his own peculiar wild dance, and then another and another, and for half-an-hour or more these fantastic exhibitions were maintained. Then the chief rose. A great roar of salutation greeted him. Gathering his clothes about him he walked in procession from the kraal, and the council broke up.

In the olden days the power of the chiefs was maintained by a wholesome dread of his warriors, and the laws were enforced with a consistent severity. One result of this is that the Ngoni tribe has always had a higher standard of morality than any Central Africa people. Some persons were stealing mission cattle and complaints were made to the chief. After a time a thief was caught, and then in spite of the pleadings of the missionary the highest penalty was meted out to him. He was hanged on a tree opposite the mission house, and it was forbidden to remove his body. The hyenas wore a path round the foot of the tree trying to get at the carcase, and there he hung, a terrible example to the neighbourhood, until the white ants ate the rope by which he hung, and the body fell to the waiting hyenas.

I have seen a chief receive news of the adultery of one of his wives, turn to his executioner, and give him instructions, and in a few minutes both man and woman were lying dead outside the village. I have myself begged for the life of a woman who had sinned, and she was spared only after a great fine in cattle was levied instead.

These were harsh and terrible punishments, necessary for rough times. And now when the chief is loosing some of his old authority, and dare not exercise capital punishment because of the overshadowing British Government, one fears that except where the power of religion has taken the place of the old dread, a weaker morality is apt to sap the vitality of the tribe. The punishments were not arbitrary. They were fixed by precedent. And all the past quarrels for forty or fifty years back would be quoted to prove the right of a plaintiff or defender. And now

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality 595
of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes
that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have [191]
100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's
matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil
custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And
when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it
must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry 177
till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full [587]
grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But
now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the
Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse
marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this
serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday,
at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock.
But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by
appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have
reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am
satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his 583
father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery
varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would
marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as
much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or
three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages,
for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth,
and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable 562
ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a 565
considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But
the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than
that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out
with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this
exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for 462
many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the [171]
woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women
went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, [243]
while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the
grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. [252]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

888 Yet the position of the old women of the village was a highly
[622] honoured one. The mother of the headman was almost more powerful than her son. And we always take good care when we enter a new village to win the kindly favour of the old grandmother first of all. Then we are sure we have found a way to the son's heart. One of the most beautiful things in our tribal life is the honour which is paid to the grey hairs of the village. The bent and helpless old men who lived through the glorious fighting
[623] days, and understand all precedent and etiquette are the judges and councillors. And no case can be tried, no decision can be made, until the old men give their presence and their opinion. It is hard when the young are leaping ahead of their fathers through education to maintain this veneration for the elders. Yet it is the very backbone of the tribe. There is nothing more contemptible than an African or an Asiastic with a veneer of education who affects to despise the elders of the village. But I know no more pathetic sight than our afternoon schools where grey-haired men and women may be seen peering through faded eyes trying also to learn to read and keep abreast of the young and alert life, while the sun goes down in their eventide.

233 The Ngoni were first of all a fighting people, and then a
[181] pastoral. Their land affords splendid pasture for cattle. And they take great pride in their herds. Round the cattle kraal centre all their ambitions, and highest delights, and best intelligence. They sit and watch the cattle going out in the early morning and coming in in the evening, and know every spot and colour of their beautiful animals. The quietest and most peaceful sight I know is when the sun goes down, and the fierce heat has
[534] given place to the welcome cool of the evening. Then you will hear the music of reed pipes, and looking up you see a long line
[512] of sleek, solemn cows, with large silken dew laps, and fat humps, slowly coming up the village path lowing for their calves, while boys ride on their backs sitting or standing upright, balancing themselves carefully and blowing on their pipes. Before and behind them runs a troop of goats and sheep bleating with such a human cry. In a moment the village is alive—sheep and goats are chased back and forward till they find the huts where they sleep with their masters. And boys run out with wooden pails
[234] into which they milk what the calves have not sucked from their mothers.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession, the Ngoni have learned to plant also reserve gardens of kasava, for the locusts and drought can scarcely affect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

These vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white porridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the natives, to get at them, will hew down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stretching themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first clouds appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertiliser. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

243 forest is cut down and burnt, and another garden cultivated, and so the country is rapidly being deforested. The crop is largely used to make a heady beer, and although Central Africa has been 213 happily saved from the curse of European liquor, the native beer is a great source of big drunken bouts. Heavy drinking, however, does not bring the evil effects that brandy drunkenness would entail. The drink is a nutritious and a very sustaining food, I know some of the old chiefs who are drunk almost every day of their lives by midday, yet they bear up wonderfully. But [579] these drunken bouts, when whole villages run riot, are the source of nearly all quarrels, adultery, bloodshed, and every outburst of passion. We have had to denounce the beer drinking as a menace [177] to the social order of the country, and for lack of the strong restraint of the British Government, which forbids the cutting down of trees, we have preached against the deforesting of the land as a wicked improvidence. The native church has, of its own initiative, taken up the question, and enjoined on the members total abstinence, and the preservation of the forests.

461 Three or four months labour are sufficient to provide a family with food for the year, and the sale of a sheep or a heifer will buy all the clothes the family requires. There is therefore little necessity to work, and the tendency is to spend the months lounging about the village, talking and trifling. Now, happily a more 177 industrious period is waking, and larger ambitions for cloth and 461 for stock, are drawing out the men to work. As a mission we insist on the duty of labour, we refuse church privileges to a man 797 if he cannot show that he has been engaged for some months each year at some labour centre doing honest work. No moral good is ever effected by pampering African pride and indolence, and one of the first lessons Christianity has to teach the native, is the dignity of labour, and the absolute necessity for the labourer to be industrious and honest in the discharge of his work. A penny a day is the ordinary wage we give a labourer, and even the great majority of my 220 teachers do not receive more than 1/6 a month.

171 Of course many of the Central Africans have industries of their own, smelting, basket making, cloth weaving, wire pulling, and so on. But the Ngoni were a handless people until they got a spear in their hand. Then they drew themselves up as men, and defied the universe. Yet this martial life had an ennobling effect on them. It is a curious thing to notice, and a fact which was

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

borne out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful 171
and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the
fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. [648]
The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a [177]
moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to
hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land
they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where
family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived
in an atmosphere that was charged with vice. But when the
Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were
punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited,
many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally
a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. 565
His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fear- 181
lessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your
privacy. I have heard the old men storm in a village because
some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a 576
superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in
whispers. When they address you they always give you your
family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each
sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at
the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a
long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that 574
the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come
out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly.
When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain
silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a
decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say,
"We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the
whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would
rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they
reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous
and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way,
and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interests and amusements. 692
During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in
open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual [537]
speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus
of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance 535
is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 challenge is sent from one group of villages to another. And on the day appointed the strangers arrive walking in procession. The girls and women are dressed in their gaudiest clothes, and their heads and arms are decked with bright coloured beads, and the claws of lions and leopards. The lads carry dancing sticks and miniature shields. The strangers open the dance. The girls standing together and holding reed wands in their hands sing in chorus, while the men arranged in a great semi-circle dance and sing. Their dance is wonderfully energetic and graceful, and is executed with a rythm and unison which is fascinating. You can hear a long way off the hundred feet come down on the earth of the kraal with a thud as of one man. When they have danced for about an hour they give way to their rivals. The home villagers step in and dance for another hour. And so on they go from ten o'clock till about four. There is no mingling of men and women. And the whole exercise is chaste, healthful, and beautiful. It is quite the show piece of our village life.

181 And now a few remarks in conclusion on their religious beliefs. I do not intend to say much on this point as one only can get at the inner meaning of their faith after long and careful investigation, and with a thorough knowledge of their language. Their religion
771 was not formulated. If you ask them about it they can tell you little or nothing. They will deny that they knew anything of God until we came. Their observances were scarcely recognised by themselves, they were the spontaneous and almost unconscious expression of a people groping after the unknown God if haply they might find Him. They recognise a spirit who presides over the universe.

776 They have a name for Him which means the great great one. But the ordinary name is the one which south of the Zambesi is used for all white men, and seems also to imply some feeling of wisdom and greatness. But they seem to have no idea of God's imminence in the world. He is rather the mighty far away Spirit to whom men cannot come. Along with this, homage is made to
771 great mountains and ancient trees, and to the strong elemental forces, as thunder and lightening. But this seems to me to be an
[177] addition which has come through their residence among the Tumbuka.

769 The great pervading article in their religious life is reverence and dread of the ancestral spirits. The whole land is full of their presence. And offerings are continually made to them to appease

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity. [87]
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [825]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [753]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 787
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if [241]
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [726]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [243]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when [177]
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty [177]
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[787] rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned.
[177] Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment.
795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a
741 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancien successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities.
695 The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When
766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before
849 their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We
177 seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the
[643] only independent tribe in Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government.
[634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

they find dirt and untidiness compel the people to turn out and sweep the village, and rebuild their houses.

Education is spreading at a great rate, and there are fifty schools already established among the people with about 7,000 scholars in attendance. These pay fees for their attendance. And so great is the thirst for reading that last year more than 4,000 volumes were bought by the people.

A Christian church is rapidly growing up, and at certain religious seasons a great congregation of over 7,000 people may be seen gathered from all quarters.

Yet it would be a pity if with this inrush of new life the old tribal characteristics were lost in a wretched caricature of European methods. There is nothing more slovenly than a lithe athletic African dressed in European cast off clothing, or more repulsive than a lad trying to be an Englishman when he should be an Ngoni proud of his nationality. And this is one of the most serious problems that is constantly before us, to guide this people in their formative period, that in the end they may not be denationalised, and made hideous and ridiculous in a distorted and unnatural mould, to preserve all national customs which are not evil in themselves and yet evolve a people honest, industrous, intelligent, and Christian, who will have some harmonious and beautiful part to take when the world's orchestra is filling up to play its symphony of peace and prosperity.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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[121] I have written this book as a social anthropologist, and from an anthropological point of view. The kind of inquiry I made, and the way in which I have tried to handle my data, have been largely determined by the guidance and instruction I have been privileged to receive from many masters at Cambridge, Cape Town, Oxford and London. To the late Mr. J. H. Driberg, my first teacher, I am especially indebted. His stimulating manner encouraged his pupils to disagree with him, and his manifest love of his subject forced me to reject one of his main propositions, that no one should think of taking up anthropology as a career. I am also indebted to Dr. G. E. Daniel and Dr. J. C. Trevor for early encouragement. To Professors Schapera, Evans-Pritchard, Fortes and Radcliffe-Brown I owe my grounding in the problems and methods of anthropology, and I am very grateful to them for the help they have given in lecture and discussion.

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114 In the field I was fortunate in collaborating with Mr. M. G. Marwick, Colonial Research Fellow, and Mrs. Marwick, whose

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter One

THE LONG MARCH

1. Sources 2. The Nguni background 3. Foundation of the State 4. The residential system 5. Under Zwangendaba's leadership 6. Fission 7. Mpezeni's kingdom 8. Foreign policy

1. *Sources*

WHAT WE usually have in mind when we speak of a tribe or nation or empire is a large political unit enduring in time and space. The nation outlives its members, for as they grow old and die their children and grandchildren rise up to take their places. On its fringes there may be continual fluctuations, adjustments of boundaries and migrations of people, but always the majority of the population are born within the national territory and die within it as their ancestors have done before them. There is spatial continuity as well as biological continuity, and the same areas of land, sometimes even the same houses and fields, are occupied and cultivated by successive generations. The Ngoni State, whose history is the subject of this book, was clearly not a state of this kind. It was born suddenly, moved about from one part of Africa to another, and recruited most of its members from outside itself. Only at the end of the nineteenth century, when colonial rule was imposed by Europeans, was the migration of the Ngoni as an organized group brought to an end. Even so, the social and economic development of modern central Africa has ensured that the men and women who from time to time live in Ngoni tribal areas, fixed though these have become, are now part of a wider social system within which they travel great distances in search of work and of kinsmen, wives and friends. Yet despite these differences the Ngoni State, like other states and polities, has had structural, or institutional, continuity. It is an enduring organized social group with a history. The same forms of social organization have endured despite changes in space and despite biological discontinuity; and where these forms have changed there has been continuity even in change.

This history of the Ngoni from 1821 down to 1898 is essentially the history of an armed nation on the march. Our knowledge of it

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 second-hand account of the Ngoni, and some relevant information is given by Soga (1930).

Good accounts of pre-conquest social life are not so numerous. The most useful accounts are those of Wiese (1891 and 1900), Angus (1899), and Deare (1928), based on observations in the years immediately prior to the war of 1898. For the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland there are the works of Elmslie (1899) and Fraser (1901 and 1914). Read, in 1935, was the first to apply modern methods of inquiry and has published comparative material on the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, Fort Jameson and southern Nyasaland, and on the neighbouring Cewa.

Some of this literature has found its way back to the Ngoni [872] themselves, and children nowadays acquire their knowledge of the exploits of their ancestors as much from school books as from oral tradition. Under these circumstances, I decided that no useful 121 purpose would be served by my trying to make conventional inquiries into tribal history with the aim of establishing what had in fact occurred in the past. I found it was impossible to tell whether similarity between an informant's account of a past event and a previously published version was due to common origin, independent invention, or good teaching in school. I was however concerned with the quite different problem of what use the Ngoni made of their history,[4] and I collected the histories of many counties, villages and people. For the material in this chapter I have therefore relied on the fullest and most lucid of these many versions of [115] Ngoni history, that by Chibambo, an Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, supplemented by the writings of Poole, a member of the Administration at Fort Jameson for many years, and Lancaster, who was a game warden in the area.

2. *The Nguni background*

173 Before we can understand the Ngoni of central Africa we must first consider social conditions farther south, for it was from the south that many Ngoni came. From the sixteenth century onwards, south-eastern Africa was peopled by subsistence cultivators growing cereals and herding cattle. The Nguni, as the southernmost branch of these peoples is now called, occupied the area which has become Swaziland, Natal and the Transkei. At first the Nguni were not organized into powerful states but from the common background of Nguni society there developed, from the last quarter of the eighteenth century onwards, several strong political units. We may mention among others the Zulu empire under Shaka, the Swazi

[4] See my 'History in a changing society'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Two

THE SNOWBALL STATE

1. Manipulation 2. Age-sets 3. Officers of State 4. Continually segmenting systems 5. Lineage systems compared 6. Splitting the State 7. Stability

1. *Manipulation*

In our first chapter we outlined some of the more significant events in Ngoni history prior to the arrival of Europeans. In this chapter we shall examine the political system within which these events took place. It is not the task of social analysis to determine why these or any other events occurred. What we shall attempt is a discussion of how they occurred, and what were the principal social relations involved in them.

Most of the incidents referred to in the first chapter concerned the State as a whole or the royal family. Nevertheless, when we begin to consider the conditions under which the State endured we have to discuss the social position of ordinary men and women within the State. For the Ngoni State held together as an organized social group, and on occasion failed to hold together, not merely because Zwangendaba was a good leader or his sons quarrelsome or his brothers ambitious, or because his people were bound by custom and knew no better, but also, and in our view mainly, because the State was a viable social entity in its time and place. The arrangement of people into segments and age-sets was not a mere formal and static division, but a means whereby a motley heterogeneous collection of individuals was converted into an organized society with agreed aims. The structure of the State had rules; in other words there was regularity in its social processes. Yet it was a structure which, within these rules, could be manipulated. The structure could be, and was, utilized by individuals for the realization of their private ends at the expense of others as well as providing for the common good. This is probably true of all social systems. We shall begin our analysis by examining the ways in which this manipulation was carried out.

In most societies, from the simplest system of hunting bands to the complex societies of the modern world, one of the most significant sets of rights are those relating to fixed natural resources. The structure of rights in land provides a key to the structure of society.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

power. The history of the State and indeed of each subdivision within it was encapsulated in the formal relations between royal headquarters and between segments. Yet the system was always growing and every few years brought a new royal capital, a new chief, new headquarters for the heirs of large segments and new ambitious men as lieutenants. Each generation also brought greater divergence of interest between the constituent parts of each segment and of the State, as we shall discuss later. Before going on to examine the conditions under which the State split we shall turn aside to compare the Ngoni residential system with similar social structures found in some other societies.

4. *Continually segmenting systems*

Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, in their *African Political Systems*, have provided us with a solid foundation for a typology of political systems in simple societies. It is therefore appropriate to consider what place the Ngoni State has in this typology. The authors distinguish three types of political system in Africa,[24] and we shall attempt to determine to which of these the Ngoni State belongs.

Their first type includes those small societies in which everyone is kin to everyone else, and in which political relations are coterminous with kinship relations. It is clear that Ngoni society was not of this kind.

The other two types are those referred to as primitive states, or Group A, and stateless societies, or Group B. Primitive states are characterized by the presence of organized government, i.e. centralized authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions, and of cleavages of wealth, privilege and status corresponding to the distribution of power and authority. In stateless societies there is no government, in this sense, and political relations are primarily regulated by a segmentary system of permanent unilateral descent groups.

This classification is sometimes taken to imply that segmentary systems are found only in stateless societies but not in primitive states. This implication does not follow inevitably from the scheme of classification, though it is compatible with it. It is, however, easy to assume that this implication is intended, for the authors frequently use the adjective segmentary to characterize stateless societies in contrast to primitive states. This implication is false, as can be shown by reference to a number of societies, and cannot have been intended by the authors, for elsewhere Fortes has written that 'It

[24] Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, *African Political Systems*, pp. 6*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have
121 a segmentary social organization'.[25]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[26] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesser segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similarities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumstances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follow the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A societies as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political system may now be handled as a separate question, providing a classification cutting across the division into states and stateless societies.

642 We have spoken throughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a state, and this usage is in accord with the definition of a state given
[643] here. The Paramount Chief with his lieutenants exercised supreme
[622] authority, there was a highly organized administrative machine, and there was an organized method of settling disputes within the
[556] State. There were only slight variations in wealth except in the
[554] control of cattle, but privilege and status were expressed in the residential system and were inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

121 The presence or absence of a segmentary political system can itself be divided into two questions; was there a segmentary
631 system, and if so, was it the political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, then it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[25] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 234.

[26] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 201, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 34, diagrams.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

A wide variety of forms of organization can legitimately be spoken of as segmentary, and can be represented visually by pyramids and triangles. We may even speak of our own system of local government as containing segments (rural districts) which are characteristically grouped together to form segments of higher order (counties) and which are divided internally into segments of lower order (parishes). This *nesting* aspect of segmentation, as we may perhaps call it, by which social groups are arranged in a hierarchy one within another, is of too wide an occurrence to be useful for our purposes. Almost every known political system must be segmentary in this sense. 121

Nor is it the unilineal character of lineage systems which clearly marks them off from others. Until recently it was the general rule in Europe that a child took the nationality of its father, and we were therefore quite justified in talking of European nations as unilineally recruited groups. Yet we do not usually need a typology which places African lineage systems and European nations in the same category.

What then is the particular characteristic of lineage systems which significantly distinguishes them from the fixed social divisions of many states, and which they share with the Ngoni residential system? The critical characteristic seems to me to be that segmentation goes on continually. Every man (or woman) is the potential founder of a segment, and although a segment once formed tends to persist in time, more and more segments of lower and lower order are all the while being formed within it. We cannot count the number of levels at which the State is subdivided, as we can when there is a fixed hierarchy, for these points of subdivision are continually shifting with the passage of time and with change of context. It is difficult to attach labels to segments of different order or of different span, save in precisely defined situations. The magnitude of this difficulty is apparent from Fortes's elaborate descriptive armamentum, with its morphological minimal, effective minimal, nuclear, inner, medial, and maximal lineages, terms referring to successive stages in the life of a single segment, stages which occur at different times in the histories of different segments. The same difficulty arises in describing Ngoni segments, but it is not so pressing, since there was not the same differentiation of function related to degree of segmentation as is found among the Tallensi. 121 631 [171]

Because of this continuous process of segment formation, the system is governed by the same principles at all levels. A group formed in a specific way at a low level eventually becomes a high-level group, and thus at any one time the constancy of past formation 631

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

63/ is reflected in present uniformity of organization.[27] Fortes, writing
[12] on the concept of a segmentary society, says

> '. . . It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system . . . the principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.'[28]

17/ Here he is describing the egalitarian, homogeneous, stateless
63/ society of Taleland, but his description fits Ngoni society very
12/ closely. The one significant difference in this matter between Ngoni and Tale society is that Tale society goes back into the unremembered past whereas Ngoni society was founded at a known and remembered time and place. Hence a certain amount of extemporization was necessary to get the system going, to adapt Nguni social organization to the pecularities of Ngoni life, as we have noted in the relationship between the first Paramount Chief and his companions who became regional governors. Apart from this initial piece of social engineering, the system continued to perpetuate itself until checked by quite different external agencies.

In all these societies, the continually segmenting system has or had political functions. We may well ask if there are other societies in which there are continually segmenting systems lacking political functions. Gluckman has listed a large number of societies stated to possess corporate lineages, including some states as defined above. Some of these, for example the Tswana,[29] appear to organize their internal political relations not on the basis of these corporate lineages but through some separate administrative apparatus. What then is the social function of the lineage system in these societies, and is it continually segmenting? Evans-Pritchard has suggested that segmentation occurs where groups have political functions.[30] Nevertheless, among the Tswana, lineages do segment, even though they have only slight political significance, political action being largely determined by the ward organization.

We shall then take this process of continual formation of segments, which Firth calls the branching or ramifying process,[31]

[27] Fortes, *Web of kinship*, p. 341, suggests the term 'organic' to describe such a system. This word has so many other meanings that I am reluctant to use it.

[28] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 232.

[29] Gluckman in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, p. 4. cf. Schapera, *Tswana law and custom*.

[30] Evans-Pritchard, 'Nandi-speaking peoples', pp. 265*f*, and 'Nuer of the Southern Sudan', p. 287.

[31] Firth, *Tikopia*, p. 371.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as diagnostic of the presence of the kind of segmentary society in which we are interested. All the societies included by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard in their stateless category, i.e. Logoli, Tallensi and Nuer, have continually segmenting political systems. Of the societies with government, the Zulu were like the Ngoni in being a State and yet having a political system which was continually segmenting. Both of these states were organized by a segmentary system even at the highest level, so that it does not seem necessary to follow Fortes in restricting segmentary systems to only the sub-divisions of states. In Shaka's time various changes came about in Zululand, such as the concentration of the army in a central area, which lessened the importance of the segmentary organization. But in the eighteenth century large-scale relations between and within the Nguni chiefdoms were governed by the agnatic segmentary organization, that is, by the division of the people into clans, sub-clans, and lineages and by the continual transfer of allegiance by lineage segments from one chief to another. Even during the period of the Zulu empire, the continual segmentation of the constituent tribes was important in maintaining the power of the central government over them.[32]

If one of the main characteristics of the well-known African lineage systems, both in stateless societies like the Nuer, Tallensi, Logoli and Gusii, and in primitive states like the Zulu, is their political function, we may well inquire if these systems are not also one type in a more general category of political systems. Although lineage relations are essentially distinct from kinship relations, a lineage system defines political relations in the idiom of kinship. Thus in agnatic systems, the relationship between territorial groups may be expressed in terms of the relationships between founding ancestors who were brothers or fathers and sons. We have seen how among the Ngoni the relationship between captor and captive, between lord and dependant, and hence the relationship between the segments they founded, was expressed in agnatic terms. The relationship between husband and wife, lord and lady, was employed to define the relationship between the political groups they led, and in this respect the Ngoni system may be seen as taking one stage further the process employed in lineage systems, where most relationships of this kind are phrased agnatically. Among the south-eastern Bantu, however, the relationship between lineage segments founded by paternal half-brothers is defined in terms of their mothers' position as co-wives. Among some central African peoples, this process has been carried even further than

[32] Gluckman, 'Modern Zululand', pp. 147-54.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

among the Ngoni. Thus the device of perpetual kinship among the Yao, by which the holders of certain chiefly offices stand in relation to one another in a fixed arrangement of kinship positions, of Paramount Chief to son and to sister's son and to brother,[33] would seem to be an example of what is essentially the same process as that by which the dominant lineage in one part of Nuerland is conceived of as descended from a brother of the founding ancestor of another dominant lineage. Where a political relationship is expressed in terms of the connexion between husband and wife, rather than between brothers' or sisters' sons, we may find that a woman is used to embody the political relationship, and she then plays what is essentially a political role. The many wives of the Ngoni Paramount Chief were clearly used in roles of this kind. Not only were they rapporteurs for the Chief, as Deare points out,[34] but they were also living symbols of the political relationship between their segments and the State as a whole. Another central African example of this is the Lele institution of 'wife of the village' by which a village, as a group, may stand as daughter's husband or wife's parent to its chief.[35]

Wherever political relationships of this kind are embodied in persons who have private lives of their own, be they queens or sons-in-law of the village, there is bound to be some domestic and inter-personal relationship alongside the corresponding political relationship. But that should not obscure from us the essentially political role played by individuals in these positions. The analogy with the dynastic marriages of Western Europe is clear.

One of the characteristics of lineage systems and of the Ngoni residential system is that the transition from the ties of domesticity and close kinship to purely political relations is a gradual one. The same principles of organization apply at all levels, and it is gradually with the passage of time and with increasing structural separation and internal segmentation that inter-personal relations are replaced by those between groups, and actions based on sentiments of love and hate give way to those based ultimately on an appeal to force. Relations between the larger segments of a lineage, although expressed in the idiom of kinship, and although possibly explainable historically in kinship terms, are relations between political units, whereas the relationship between brothers living under the same roof is not governed by political considerations. The critical point at which relationships of increasing scale become dominantly

[33] Mitchell, 'Social organization of the Yao'
[34] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[35] Tew, 'Polyandry among the Lele'

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

political would seem to be, for example, at the medial lineage among the Tallensi, beyond which generation differences are not recognized; and at the village among the Nuer. It seems probable that in the old Ngoni system the village was also the significant unit, above which relationships were dominantly political and below which they were largely determined by the multiplex sentiments and activities arising out of kinship and domestic association. This is certainly so in modern Ngoniland, although the same principles of organization no longer apply at all levels.

I have described elsewhere the critical position of the modern Ngoni headman, linking the political system with the network of ties of kinship and co-residence operative within the village, and similar conditions have been reported elsewhere by Gluckman and Mitchell. Above the village, whether in a state or in a stateless society, relations are in the main between enduring groups and are defined with respect to interests vital to the survival of these groups, even if expressed in the idiom of kinship.[36]

Granted the existence of primitive states with continually segmenting political systems, such as the Zulu and Ngoni, it is then possible to look at from another point of view the various African political systems for which there is adequate information. In terms of political segmentation on a unilineal basis, states like the Ngoni and Zulu are closer in form to the stateless societies of the Nuer, Tallensi, Gusii and Logoli than to the Nupe and Kede states with their administrative systems largely independent of unilineal affiliation. To document this point fully would take us beyond the scope of this book; our purpose here is merely to emphasize the importance in comparative studies of examining political structures from more than one point of view.

When talking of states, we make the convenient distinction between internal and external political relations. No such simple distinction can be made with stateless societies, for in them relations which are external to one segment are internal to the next higher segment, and yet may still legitimately be regarded as political relations. The pre-Shakan chiefdoms of Zululand formed a system similar to the Tallensi maximal lineages, and we may speak therefore in that instance of a segmentary system regulating political relations between states. Ngoni external relations were not regulated in this way, for the Ngoni were isolated and unique in a region

[36] For this section, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* and 'Kinship among the Nuer'; Fortes, *Web of kinship*; Wagner, *Bantu of North Kavirondo*; Mayer, *Lineage principle in Gusii society*; Gluckman, 'Analysis of a social situation' and 'Kingdom of the Zulu'; Gluckman, *et al.*, 'Village headman'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organized themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[37] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[38] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[37] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[38] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a segment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require considerable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties. Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the Swazi lineage,[41] and perhaps more widely, although in both these societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[41] cf. Holleman, 'Twee-eenheidsbeginsel van die Zulu' and 'Zulu *isigodi*'; Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 729*f*, s.v. *isizinda*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40*f*.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

successive head of a major segment memorialized in this way, but the major divisions of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When splits occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fission had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fission in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fission we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[42] Fission in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fission was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fission did not bring into being any new segments, but merely dissolved the highest segment of all as a coohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fission was a hazardous

[42] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a *state* of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fission' to refer to the *process* of internal subdivision. cf. Fortes, *Web of kinship, passim.* I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

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Chapter Three

DEFEAT

1. Structural change 2. Portugal or Britain 3. Concession hunters 4. European consolidation 5. Friction 6. Fighting 7. Cattle 8. The end of a system

1. *Structural change*

178 619 64 THE STRUGGLES of the Ngoni during the middle of the nineteenth century were with groups of roughly the same character as themselves. The processes at work in the Ngoni social system were in the main repetitive. The State grew in size, split, and grew again, but it was still largely the same kind of State as before. Even though there were important differences between the Ngoni and their opponents, particularly after 1835, those whom they encountered were sufficiently like themselves to be absorbed into the system without difficulty. In the nomenclature of Radcliffe-Brown and the Wilsons, there was social circulation in the Ngoni State but little change in its structural form.[1] For this reason we have been concerned in our analysis so far with but few of the historical details of that period, and have dealt with history only in an abstract and generalized form. Many of the inconsistencies between various versions of the tribal legend have not been [114] significant. For example, Chief Ciwele Ndhlovu of Dowa broke off from the main body of Ngoni, according to some writers before, and according to others after, the split between Mpezeni and Mwambera.[2] It does not matter for our particular purpose which of these versions is correct, for we are here concerned only to establish that from time to time senior lieutenants did split off with their segments to form independent chiefdoms. This process, of which Ciwele's secession is an example, was essentially the same before and after the Mpezeni-Mwambera split.

648 178 12 After 1880 Ngoni history entered a new phase, and social processes began to operate which were not repetitive. Changes began to occur in the form of the Ngoni social field, for instead of interacting with groups similar to themselves, the Ngoni became involved in a much wider network of social relations. This change

[1] Radcliffe-Brown, 'On social structure', p. 4; Wilson, *Social change*, p. 58.
[2] cf. Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 32-31 Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 18; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of scale,[8] as we may call it, was accompanied by major changes not only in the positions occupied by individuals in Ngoni society but also in the form of Ngoni society itself. We have to analyse at this stage a non-repetitive process, by which the autonomous Ngoni state, organized by a segmentary residential system and an age-set system, was changed into a dependent unit in a system of Native Authorities forming part of a world-wide colonial empire. For this reason the details of the process are worth noting, for in Ngoni history they are unique and largely determine the form of modern Ngoni society. Having established this significant sequence of events, we are then in a position to look at the same set of facts in a wider context. For what is unique and non-repetitive for the Ngoni may be repetitive in a wider context. The Ngoni are only one tribe among a myriad of tribes, and what happened to the has also happened to many others. Similar sequences of events, each unique for the particular tribe concerned, have occurred throughout the world at various periods of time whenever small autonomous systems have been absorbed into large and more highly resourceful ones. We can therefore look at Ngoni history from 1880 onwards as either unique, from the point of view of the Ngoni, or as typical, or at least probably typical, of a repetitive process which has often occurred in the development of any empire.

Conveniently, at least some of the facts can be ascertained with reasonable certainty. We are no longer dependent only on oral tradition, but can refer to contemporary documents. These reflect in the main only the European side of Black-White relations, but even so their testimony is enlightening. I have therefore set out in full the history, mainly of external relations, of the Fort Jameson Ngoni from 1886 down to 1900 both with the intention of throwing light on how the transition was made from pre-conquest to modern society in this particular tribal instance, and also as an example of what seems probably an oft-repeated process in the history of any empire. A discussion of how typical the Ngoni experience is would take us beyond the bounds of this book. We should, however, bear in mind that the newer comparative method, as developed by Radcliffe-Brown and his followers, is as applicable to mammoth social forms, such as empires, as to small ones such as hordes, provided only that the right kind of data are available.

Our detailed documentation should extend down to modern times, but after 1900 there was a change in the kind of events that were documented, related as we shall see to a change in social relations, and we have to proceed somewhat differently.

[8] For the concept of scale, see Wilson, *Social change*, pp. 25 *ff*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p. v]

PREFACE

THE material on which this book is based was collected during three periods in Nyasaland as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute: May–December 1935; April 1936–June 1937; July 1938–August 1939. 115 121 122

The choice had to be made whether to concentrate on one Ngoni area and omit the other, and also whether to present Ngoni culture as a common element in both areas or to regard them as separate cultural areas. I decided to gather material from northern and central Ngoniland, and accordingly spent about one-third of the time in north Nyasaland and about two-thirds in central Nyasaland. I used the Nyanja language all the time in central Ngoniland, and found that many people understood it in the north. I learned some Zulu, enough to read and hear Ngoni when spoken, but it was dying out as a language except for certain ceremonial and legal terms and expressions. Very few people spoke it in central Ngoniland; most of the older people knew it in the north and in one area it was still the language of the home in 1936. 122 197 [182]

The decision to present Ngoni culture as a common constituent of Ngoni life in all parts of Nyasaland was made after the material had been analysed. I decided also to attempt a reconstruction of Ngoni life at the time of the first European contacts, when the kingdoms were at the height of their power. Men and women were still alive, when I was in Ngoni villages, who had fought as warriors, who had organized large households, who had been present at the accession and death of the Paramounts. Their experiences were part of Ngoni culture and inseparable from much of what was regarded as essentially 'Ngoni' in the 1930's. 121

In both areas the informants were of two kinds: those who welcomed an anthropologist who would collect and record Ngoni history, patterns of social organization, and cultural behaviour of which they were intensely proud; and those who were reluctant at first to give information, either because they were Christians and had been at school and said they had 'forgotten'; or because they were suspicious of all Europeans, and did not want to speak of what to them was a treasured and hidden heritage. 115

Working in more than one language medium and bringing into the open Ngoni terms not as a rule used in the presence of Europeans presented a number of problems both of terminology and orthography. I have included a glossary of Ngoni terms used frequently in the book. There were several varistions of the prefixes in common use with Ngoni words, as for example *abalumuzana*, *alumuzana*, *malumuzana*, all three of which were used in northern and central Ngoniland. The clicks, 128 193

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

131 the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found
101 in three separate states in the Dowa and Kotakota districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpeseni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

162 According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with
131 the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,891. Leaving out the Fort
167 Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the
167 main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

101 The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It
121 was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliation survives political dispersal? The chief
128 problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

619 There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, dis-
563 tinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambesi', 'those from the march' and 'those from this country'. The
[614] Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

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and settled where another village already existed.[1] In both forms, this new settlement was called the *hungulu* village, 'the one which goes in front'; and the village which was left was known as the *gogo* village. This use of the term *gogo* (literally 'grandparent') for house and village had a common basic connotation. It expressed the concept of being left behind to look after something, the *gogo* house being passed over for the heir to the Paramountcy or chieftainship but charged with ritual and ceremonial duties; and the *gogo* village being left behind to take care of the traditions and generally also of most of the widows of the deceased Paramount or chief. Each *hungulu* village eventually divided on the death of its owner, part 'going forward' with the new successor, part remaining behind. The main groups in the village which went ahead or which remained were the houses connected with the new Paramount or chief or *mulumuzana* and those connected with his dead father. In the chapter on houses (Chapter III, Part III) this process will be examined in greater detail. 621 571

The third related institution was the provision for guarding the spirit of a dead Paramount or chief and those of some leading *alumuzana*. A senior woman was always guardian of such a spirit and in her hut were kept the ritual objects: spear, wooden dish, baskets, fire-stick, which were used in sacrifices to the ancestors. The guardianship of the spirit of a dead Paramount was always associated with the village which had been his *hungulu*. His corpse was buried on the edge of the kraal containing the cattle of the house where he had grown up, and this village became the *gogo* village associated with him, where his spirit was guarded in a hut, probably though not necessarily belonging to one of his widows. The recognition of such a woman guardian was a matter for selection and appointment, and was the responsibility of the senior men of the *gogo* house in that village in consultation with the senior men of the *gogo* house in the dead man's father's village. The concept of guarding the spirits of important men, and the means by which such guardianship was practised, will be more fully discussed in Part IV in connexion with the ancestor cult. 769 554 775 [766]

THE NGONI KINGDOMS AND AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS

In the final section of this chapter we shall look at the Ngoni kingdoms in their relationship to other African kingdoms and states such as those described in *African Political Systems*.[2] A methodological problem arises here. In this study a number of references are made to the Ngoni kingdoms in pre-European times, especially in connexion 121

[1] This form of the institution was found in densely populated areas and the incoming households dominated the original ones.

[2] Fortes, M., & Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (ed.). *African Political Systems*. O.U.P., 1940 pp. 9-23.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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with the military organization and the Paramountcy. The main emphasis in the study is, however, on the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's, when the Paramount and the administrative organization under him were recognized by the Nyasaland government. Though certain elements in the kingdoms, as for example the position and authority of the *ahamuzana*, were not recognized by the ordinance, the supreme authority of the Paramounts and the position of their appeal courts received additional support from the colonial officials, from the financial basis of the administration, and from the many new responsibilities of the Paramount for his people illustrated by the bye-laws made and the welfare measures carried out.

It is the Ngoni kingdoms as they functioned in the 1930's which will be compared with other African political systems, bearing in mind all the time that behind the Ngoni kingdoms lay the authority and power of the colonial government. The comparison will be made with the general characteristics of what were called by the editors of *African Political Systems*, in their introductory essay, 'Group A systems', and the references will be to the criteria and concepts in that introduction.

The main characteristics cited of the Group A systems were all to be found in the Ngoni kingdoms: centralized authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions. These will be the chief material in Part II of this book on the Ngoni political system. In *African Political Systems* the editors stated that all the societies described in the book which were in the category of Group A systems were 'an amalgam of different peoples, each aware of its unique origin and history, and all except the Zulu and Bemba are still today culturally heterogenous'. Such a definition was appropriate for the Ngoni kingdoms, where political authority was wielded over several different peoples, as the ethnic grouping in the 1945 census showed, and where there was cultural heterogeneity among the different peoples. This second characteristic will be examined more fully in Chapter III of this section, dealing with Ngoni culture. To the factor of diversity within the Ngoni kingdoms should be added two other points made by the editors towards the end of their introduction where they said: 'Community of language and culture does not necessarily give rise to political unity, any more than linguistic and cultural dissimilarity prevents political unity.' In the next chapter we shall be discussing the relation of language and culture among the Ngoni, and between them and other Nyasaland peoples. The second point in the essay which is also applicable to the Ngoni kingdoms and their neighbours was stated in these terms: 'The overlapping and interlocking of societies is due to the fact that where political relations end is not the point at which all social relations cease.' The relevance of this statement to the Ngoni in Nyasaland has already been mentioned in connexion with the visiting which goes on between individuals from the Ngoni kingdoms and states. It

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

was still more clearly demonstrated by the attitude of the Ngoni 'of the dispersion', who returned for visits, some frequently and others at varying intervals, to their former homes though they were no longer in a political sense subjects of the Ngoni Paramount. 121 571

In the Group A systems, not only is the Paramount the political head of a culturally and ethnically heterogeneous state, but he is also a territorial ruler, and everyone living within the boundaries of his state is his subject. This was peculiarly a characteristic of the so-called conquest states, when effective administrative control was established within recognized boundaries after the conquest or surrender of neighbouring peoples. In the chapter on the military organization of the Ngoni, it will be seen how the nature of the military tenure of *alumuzana*, and the relation of groups of conquered villages known as *amilaga* to the central villages of the Paramount and *alumuzana*, emphasized the limits within which Ngoni authority was effective. One of the often repeated grievances of the older Ngoni was that the Europeans 'arrived too soon', before the Ngoni were able to establish effective authority over the whole country. 121 643 642

Two further points emerge in the introductory essay to *African Political Systems* which relate to the balance of forces within the Group A type of state and to the position of the Paramount. Both these points will be illustrated in Part II. The first concerns the relationship of the subordinate chiefs (called 'local chiefs' in the essay) to the central authority. They represented the central authority in the areas where they ruled, and they represented the people under them and their needs to the central authority. When the older Ngoni were talking about the Paramount in pre-European days, much emphasis was laid on his control of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, and on the obligation they felt to visit the Paramount in his village frequently, in order that they might appear to be carrying out his orders and not usurping undue authority. The older Ngoni also laid stress on the accessibility of the Paramount to all his people, provided—and it was an important proviso—that a man came to him with an intermediary, either his headman or his *mulumuzana*.

The final point of comparison between Group A systems and the Ngoni kingdoms is the mystical values bound up with kingship. This will be discussed in the chapter on the Paramount (Chapter II, Part II) and it is related also to the ancestor cult. The Ngoni Paramounts were more than ruling monarchs; they were the symbol of the unity of their state; in pre-European days the Paramount was the head of the army; and the ritual at the accession and at the death of a Paramount was related to the fertility of the land and the prosperity of the people. 121 643 829

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CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and *abumzana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of interwoven patterns of social organisation and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

563 621 128 [184] 121 563

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *mlobokazi*. A strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was supported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

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leave after meeting, withdrawing after a case in court, and initiating or concluding many other formal or less formal occasions. Children were taught to use the correct expressions and rebuked if they made a mistake, and it was one of the requirements in Ngoni families that a uniform standard of verbal politeness should accompany correct behaviour in posture.

CULTURAL AFFINITIES AND DIFFERENCES

N M 121 122

The anthropologist working in Nyasaland is aware of the problems inherent in any attempt to isolate cultural features within any of the larger ethnic groups found there. There were no ethnographic field studies published of any of the other ethnic groups when I was working among the Ngoni. Mary Tew, in *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*,[1] referred to scattered sources published before 1939, to which I had access; and from time to time Cewa informants wrote accounts of particular social institutions or ritual, from which I was able to make certain comparisons with Ngoni ritual and institutions. Some of the earlier accounts, such as that by Hodgson on the Cewa and Ngoni in the Dowa district,[2] assumed that all the cultural changes and 'borrowings' had been by the Ngoni from their Cewa neighbours, whereas I found in that area in 1939 Cewa villages where Ngoni cultural elements had been adopted.

N M 114 177

N M T 105

Ngoni cultural affinities with South-eastern Bantu	*Local tribal differences*	
Paramount and subordinate chiefs	Chiefs; no central authority except in Hengs and Ngonde	
Patrilineal descent Virilocal residence Marriage by *lobola*	Cewa and southern Tumbuka	Matrilineal descent, uxorilocal residence, marriage witnesses
	Hengs	Patrilineal descent and virilocal residence
Clan exogamy " hierarchy Houses Age sets	Cewa	No clan exogamy " " hierarchy *Mbumba* group Girls' initiation schools
Cattle complex Ancestor cult associated with cattle	Tumbuka Cewa in Dedza district	Formerly cattle-owners but no terminology left and no association with ancestor cult
Burial customs: in skin near kraal	Cewa and Tumbuka	Graves outside village; buried in a mat

[1] Tew, M., op. cit.
[2] Hodgson, A. G. O. 'Notes on the Achewa and Angoni of Dowa District, Nyasaland.' *J. Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1923, pp. 126-64.

[p. 88]

CHAPTER IV

COURTS AND OFFICIALS

121 177 671 THE Ngoni claimed that when they established their kingdoms in Nyasaland they introduced a new idea of law, a different system of courts, and a different procedure for conducting cases in those courts, from those found among the local peoples. Within their kingdoms they imposed on all their subjects these ideas, courts and legal procedure as part of their government, applied to the conquerors and the conquered alike. We shall consider in this chapter only those aspects of the courts and the legal system which were related to the political structure. The categories of crime, the degree of punishment, the sanctions for enforcement of the law, and the effect of the judicial procedure on the balance of equilibrium in the community, all belong to a specialized study and are not included here.

THE NGONI CONCEPT OF LAW

692 643 671 We begin with two texts, the first from the northern kingdom by Cibambo, the second by Ishmael Mwale the Treasurer of the Paramount in the central kingdom.

¶ (1) The Ngoni seem to have been born with a gift for leadership or rule. Though they were a wandering tribe, yet there was one Paramount from whom proceeded the laws for the good government of the people. All the lesser chiefs and headmen received from him the leadership of the people. [203] Though they had no way of writing to each other, they kept their unity by messengers passing between them. The Paramount had power to call gatherings from time to time, in which they talked of the affairs of the country. In these gatherings the old men and the men of repute who had a point to make were heard in criticism and made suggestions for the building up of the realm. By this means the Paramount and his counsellors learned of and understood the thoughts of their people. It was in such large gatherings that the laws of the country were delivered to the people, so that they might hold fast to them and not be punished unreasonably for breaking them in ignorance. After they came back from these gatherings, the headmen and men of standing gathered together their villages to tell the people what had been spoken in the great council of the Paramount, and told them carefully about the laws which had come from the gathering.

173 671 (2) Before the Ngoni came to this country the villages were small and isolated from one another. There was constant pouncing on people to catch them as slaves. It was unsafe to go even a quarter of a mile from one village to another, because a man might be in hiding and pounce out and catch you and take you off to his village as a slave, and there was no redress and no case was heard. Most people never went beyond the

[P. 115]
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CHAPTER I

NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF review was given in Chapter III of Part I of the main elements of Ngoni culture, analysed into 'patterns' covering kinship, village layout, ritual, ceremonial, and language. In this section we shall be considering the principal social institutions embodying Ngoni culture: their clans, houses, families and age sets. We shall find evidence in the two kingdoms of an extensive common element in the social organization which the Ngoni brought with them from the south. Some important diversities will be evident also, such as the variations in virilocal residence found in the central kingdom, and the less widespread practice there of *lobola* marriage. Those elements which were common to Ngoni social organization in both kingdoms were often those which distinguished Ngoni culture from that of the neighbouring peoples. Patrilineal descent, the house system, the ranking of clans, the *laweni* organization of boys' life and activities—these were all distinctively Ngoni, practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and sometimes adopted by individuals and families of other clans who had been associated with the Ngoni over long periods. Nevertheless, in many of the villages of the central kingdom there were clearly two cultures existing side by side: the Ngoni culture being that of an aristocratic minority and the local culture that of the majority, who in the kingdom were equally subjects of the Paramount but in their villages possessed inferior social status. 114 121 [563 565]

Indications were to be seen, even in the more conservative and more isolated northern kingdom, that modern influences were affecting Ngoni social institutions. We have already noticed some of the effects of the cessation of warfare on a social system founded on military traditions. The exodus of young men from Ngoni villages to seek work elsewhere was very extensive, especially in the northern kingdom, where the level of education was higher but employment was not available, and this had repercussions on the age of marriage, the distribution of wealth, and the undertaking of family responsibilities, including the care of the old people. The gradual decline in polygyny, largely but not entirely due to the work of missions, was beginning to have its effects on the working of the house system and on the interrelations of the generations within the family group. 178 [595 797]

In the 1930's many of these modern changes were appearing but the traditional institutions were still functioning, and the Ngoni leaders themselves were clear about those forms and activities which were distinctively their own.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

father, had been a fierce ruler, and had gathered round him bands of young men who were not easily restrained. Though they could judge his character in this objective way, they respected his office, and hence his death and the confiscation of cattle which followed were a deep injury to Ngoni pride. So thirty years after his death they collected money and put up the memorial, and the appeal was supported for three main reasons. One was to commemorate this Paramount who had not had the traditional cremation by a river; another was to remove the shame of his death; the last was to draw together all his people in a common act. Every year numbers of Ngoni gathered at this memorial and held a Christian service which was followed by a general meeting. This memorial service and meeting had a definite link with the ancestor cult, and illustrated in a particular form Ngoni beliefs in the relation of the living and the dead.

In the 1930's, as we saw in Chapter III of Part I, the form of Ngoni funerals and the ritual of mourning were closely related to the ancestor cult and were practised by the Ngoni aristocracy. These forms of ritual and their beliefs they brought with them from the south, and they were an important part of Ngoni culture. We shall see in a later chapter how some of these cultural elements were combined with Christian ritual, both for leading individuals of Swazi clans and for lesser members of those clans.

CHAPTER II

CATTLE AND THE ANCESTOR CULT

There are many references throughout this study to the importance of cattle among the Ngoni. In this chapter the place of cattle in Ngoni life will be examined with reference to the ancestor cult, and hence certain limitations have been imposed in the selection of material and its interpretation. There will, for example, be no analysis of the role of cattle in the economic life of Ngoni families and villages. Much of the material discussed has an economic significance which is immediately apparent, but the limitations set will not allow the economic implications of certain practices to be pursued further here. It is important for the main purpose of this chapter to make a brief analysis of some factors in the ownership, care, and use of cattle, and to follow that with references to some of the values and attitudes inherent in the Ngoni ownership and use of cattle. I made a preliminary analysis of these factors in a memorandum on standards of living in the central kingdom, published

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 in 1938.[1] The sociological and ritual significance of these factors will be
233 the chief emphasis here, with reference to earlier chapters in this book on Ngoni culture and on the structure of Ngoni society.

233 In the sociological significance of cattle-ownership there are certain
554 outstanding points to be emphasized, which will be indicated here and
565 developed further in the analysis which follows. One is the connexion between cattle-ownership and status, illustrated by the dominance of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in village life, since their possession of cattle was related to the kraal and to the siting of huts and to their house organization. The cattle horns on the roof of the *indlunkulu* were no trivial ornament. They were a proud assertion of cattle-ownership attached to the residences of the leading women, with all the implications of 'house herds' of cattle and of *lobola* given and received. Closely related to cattle-ownership and status was the power conferred by the possession of herds. The status of leading families was enhanced by the ability to give feasts, to give *lobola* for their sons' wives, to make sacrifices to the ancestors and, as we saw at the end of the last chapter, to realize cash by the sale of beasts belonging to the herd. Cattle-owners did at times have to decide whether to maintain and augment their herds and thereby be known as wealthy cattle-owning families; or to sell cattle in order to command labour to build a modern brick house, or to buy fine clothes for their wives and display their wealth in another form.

182 In the organization of Ngoni society, cattle were an important factor
233 in uniting groups of persons. We have seen how the house, as a group of men and women, and its variant, the central Ngoni form of *banja*,
621 had common possession of a herd of cattle which formed a source of wealth for all members of the house. Within the house the senior men were bound together by the responsibilities attached to the ownership and care of a herd. Within the village the senior men of a house or *banja* united in the upkeep of the kraal, the supervision of the herd-boys, the tending of sick cattle, and in meeting or resisting the Government's demands for culling or dipping stock. Where cattle were boarded out in another village, ties of association in the care of the beasts and in accountability for them bound together the cattle-owners or cattle-keepers of more than one village. A stage in the adjustment of a young wife to a strange village was reached when she added to the herd of the house she had married into the gift cattle given her by her father and so partly compensated for those which had been given to him by her husband's family. A new wife's standing in a village was thus advanced through any cattle which flowed in the opposite direction from those of the *lobola* cattle. Finally, and this is the main theme of this chapter, cattle were an essential link between the living and the dead.

[1] Read, M. *Native Standards of Living and African Culture Change*. Memorandum XVI of International African Institute, 1938.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Introduction

Like the wooden Ngoni meat dish, this book stands on three firm legs. It is the outcome of lecturing for over twenty years to teachers and students of education from all over the world on how an anthropologist approaches the study of education. It is the result of living for three and a half years in Ngoni villages in Nyasaland, watching how they brought up their children, hearing their reasons for the shaping of that upbringing, and seeing what use they made of formal education in mission schools. And lastly, since the war ended, young parents in several countries have talked with me now and then about how they were bringing up their children and what they thought of schools in relation to their home training.

I like to think, though it may be self-flattery, that a close study of the home and of parents' attitudes towards the bringing up of their children is an essential complement to the ideas presented to young teachers, and to older ones too for that matter, of what education is and how it works. I am often startled, and driven to furious thinking, when I come across statements like these: 'School is a civilizing place,' from the Harvard Committee on Education in a Free Society; or 'We have to rely on the schools for the training of character' from the Beecher Report on Education in Kenya; or 'The school is an institution specifically established to produce desirable changes in behaviour,' from the opening address to a symposium on Education and Anthropology at Stanford University, California. We all know that there are parents everywhere who are only too thankful to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

12 hand over to the schools, or to anyone, the continuous and exacting task of seeing how children behave, watching the development of their individual character and abilities, thinking out and putting into practice ways in which the young barbarians can eventually become useful members of a community. That last word, 'community', is perhaps the clue to those parents, and it seems to me that there are many in western countries and in Africa and India and elsewhere today, who are consciously, and with increasing interest, taking on their shoulders the job of bringing up their children and hoping for co-operation from the school and teachers in that task.

What are these families, the interested ones, aiming at in bringing up their children and what means do they use to forward those aims? Are they chiefly concerned with the way their children fit into and regard the intimate family group of which they are a part, and the larger circle of kinsfolk and relations, sometimes real to children if they live near and meet often, sometimes shadowy if they are seldom seen, sometimes a joy and sometimes a menace to the more intimate family life? Do parents also want their children to fit into the local 'community' whatever it may be, a village, a suburb, a city street? Or are the parents themselves rather conscious of belonging to a selected group of neighbours and friends, and do they want their children, as they grow up, to be identified with this, or a similar group? Do these parents want their children to identify themselves solely or mainly with their own age group in school and in the neighbourhood? Or do they envisage that growing children, even at their most individualistic and aggressive stages, should learn to fit in with younger children, with adults in general and with older people, and should develop attitudes and behaviour which have a wider social significance than those displayed in the classroom and the playground?

These are the kind of questions which many young parents are asking themselves today. Sometimes they

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

get together and talk about the peculiar ideas of teachers about children in general and their children in particular. They wonder how far school standards of behaviour and school codes of morals harmonize or clash with family ideas on behaviour and family ways of living. There is sometimes an attitude of aggressive criticism on both sides, parents and teachers; occasionally it becomes an attitude of cheerful and friendly co-operation; quite often parents and teachers shrug their shoulders with resignation at the gulf which separates home and school, and look for another scapegoat, like an education authority, on which to put the blame.

This situation, which embraces the outlook of parents on their children's present and future, and their attitude towards schools, teachers and education systems in general, is world wide—it knows no national frontiers. When parents and teachers from different countries get down to talking about these questions, they can understand each other's problems in general terms, though they have to explain to each other the specific cultural forms in which these problems appear in each country, with regard to learning and using more than one language for example. In the groups of students to whom I lectured, many of the teachers from overseas were also parents, but very few of them had ever considered the education of their own children in school in relation to the pattern of family and home training in their own society. Many of them discovered an alarming number of problems which demanded their attention—alarming because they were obliged to consider and formulate their own family attitudes towards child training, and at the same time to contemplate and criticize the school education which they had accepted so whole-heartedly as the vital step towards progress for their children and their nation. Every now and then my confidence in the usefulness of this anthropological approach to education was fostered by an angry young man who came up after a lecture and said 'Why was I not told about these things when I was training as a teacher? How

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

●121 can my country begin to understand these things?' From Somaliland and the Sudan, from British Guiana and Jamaica, from Malaya, India and Pakistan, and from all parts of Africa came these indignant reactions, and from those countries and many others I have had in letters over many years references to 'those Ngoni people you used to talk about'.

So it is with young parents and young teachers chiefly in mind, though I hope with some young anthropologists too, that this book has been written. I have for instance avoided
128 as far as possible technical jargon, that seemingly essential language in which anthropologists, educationists and many others wrap up and conceal their hidden mysteries from the common man. In the appendix will be found certain definitions of terms which have crept in and whose use has been inevitable in the Ngoni cultural setting, and also some of the vernacular terms for which I have substituted the nearest English equivalent. Here and there I have had to introduce a vernacular term but there are not many. The book is so arranged that the five narrative chapters (III to VII) follow consecutively. Chapters II and VIII are concerned with an analysis of some of the problems presented by the study, and can be skipped by those who do not like problems but want a straight story. Chapter I is I think essential to a full understanding of the narrative chapters, because Ngoni children were not brought up in a vacuum, but in a very specific political and social situation—as indeed all children are.

There will be plenty of criticism about the material and the focus in this book. Indignant young women will say 'What a poor deal the Ngoni mother had! Did the father and the grandmother really have it all their own way?' The answer is partly that a writer has to use bold outline strokes in painting his picture or it becomes hazy and lacking in purpose; and partly that young Ngoni mothers knew that one day they would be grandmothers and then they would

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

● 121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

a few weeks. They were both dominated by important Ngoni families, and both the headquarters of subordinate chiefs. They both represented that blend of old and new in Ngoni life which was continually keeping the anthropologist on her toes. 121

Enkodlweni was far from main roads and centres of modern life. When I first went there my lorry cut a swathe of grass knee-high on the so-called road to the village, and the radiator, choked with grass seed, boiled all the time. I lived in the mud-and-wattle hut maintained by the chief for visiting teachers and missionaries opposite the school, a four-standard school under an able young headmaster, well educated and well trained. He and his schoolboys, the resident evangelist and the court clerk represented the new elements in village life. Yet they were not cut off from the Ngoni way of life—on the contrary they were very much part of it and very proud of being Ngoni. The school had been taught in the Ngoni language, akin to old Zulu, until a few years before my visit, and the children were still given Ngoni proverbs to write in their copy-books. Several of the older people had books in their huts written in Zulu as well as in English, and Ngoni was still spoken as the home language in many of the households. The older women knew the traditional special vocabulary used by women only, and dressed their hair in the high chignon style. Proverbs were quoted often in the court and in church; stories of war against the Bemba people in Northern Rhodesia forty years ago were told by the kraal gate as if they happened last year. Several leading Ngoni clans were represented in the village, and each had their own praise songs and forms of addressing their ancestors. 105 621 [342] [872]

The old evangelist, himself a member of a famous clan, had been threatened, thirty years before, with death by the former chief if he continued to teach and preach. He stayed, notwithstanding, and had become one of the trusted counsellors of the present chief. During the day he joined the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

II

Growing up among the Ngoni

The approach to this study

Among the several titles used to describe this and similar kinds of studies, such as child development, child study, child training, socialization, I think the ugly but useful term socialization most nearly covers the theme of this particular study. I much prefer, mainly on aesthetic grounds, the non-technical, non-committal expression 'growing-up', used in the title of this chapter and established long ago in the pioneer study of Margaret Mead in New Guinea. I realize, however, that this title could be misleading if readers expected a psychological as well as an anthropological approach, and looked for psychological analyses and techniques applied to children at different stages of their development. The arguments for a joint approach by anthropologists and psychologists are well known, and have been clearly stated in the introduction to Dr H. M. Ammar's recent book: *Growing up in an Egyptian Village*. On the whole, in most studies of 'growing up', the psychological emphasis is much stronger. We frequently find descriptions of infancy and the early years of childhood set out in psychological terms familiar to western society, without what I consider as the essential complement, an equal emphasis on the aims and methods of that particular society in training its children. This complementary study could and should be predominantly the task of the social anthropologist, but it is one which has hitherto not attracted a great deal of attention from anthropologists in their field studies.

121 One more word about 'growing up'. It has in popular language often been associated with 'he just growed, like Topsy', implying a minimal amount of direction and a maximum amount of free response by a child to all external stimuli. No one can, of course, control a child's inner response to direction and training, but more often than not a child can and does learn, for a variety of reasons, to show the overt response expected by the adults who are bringing him up. The potential conflict in a child between his inner and overt responses lies within the field of individual psychological studies, and I am well aware that in this respect as in others this study is incomplete.

However, as I endeavoured to suggest in the introduction, this is a society-directed study in which the focus is on how adults bring up their children to fit into their society and to perpetuate their cultural values. The emphasis, therefore, here is on the training of children as part of the social life and cultural aims of the community, and the children's response is regarded from the angle of how they learn what the adults have to teach. Here and there I think I may have lost the thread of learning in following the thread of teaching—too close a concentration on two foci can produce a squint which is not always the best way of looking at situations. The main emphases in the training of Ngoni children, perhaps of children everywhere, are on behaviour, on skills and on knowledge. If we want to understand the process carried out by adults in training their children in any of these respects, we have to keep asking the questions, familiar to educationalists: what is taught? Who teaches it? When do they do it? In what contexts do they do it? It would be tedious in the extreme to keep on asking these questions in the following chapters, and to use this method would certainly break or hopelessly entangle the threads of learning and teaching in Ngoni society. Those questions however [128] have been in the background and implicit all through the narrative chapters from III to VII. If readers cannot find

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

answers to them somewhere, then there have been some vital omissions in the narrative. 121

Clues to this study

In relating this study to other field studies and analyses of socialization techniques and processes, I have not attempted to present here any general assessment of similar or related studies, much less any review of the field as a whole, since I have touched on both in earlier publications.[1] Instead I have brought into this chapter one or two clues or guide lines from other sources which seemed to me to elucidate some of my problems, particularly in regard to four main aspects of this study, which have already been mentioned in Chapter I and which to a large extent set the limits and determine the emphases of this book. The 'true Ngoni' were a society within a society, a distinct cultural group within the Ngoni kingdom. This society of theirs had sharp edges, definable and recognizable limits, and that partly accounted for their own awareness of themselves as distinct from, though at so many points connected with, the neighbouring peoples. Their culture, that is their way of living within this society, had definite values which they strove to maintain, and this was one of the reasons why the ideal Ngoni personality pattern, and their endeavour to see it reproduced in each child, was easy to recognize. In order to safeguard their society and maintain their culture they exercised a fairly rigid social control over the upbringing of their children, which resulted in something approaching a 'system' of training and educating children. Set against this conservation of traditional values however was the reality and extent of changes due to external circumstances mentioned at the end of Chapter I. In the face of these changes the Ngoni showed that they could adapt some of them to their own purposes, and they made use of the schools, for example, once they approved of them, to help adjust their

184 186 829 183 [157] [861] 177

[1] See Appendix (i)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 society and particularly their children to new ways of living and thinking. These then are the four aspects of the study
121 for which I sought clues: awareness of their society, definite cultural values, social control of bringing up children, adaptation to external change.

114 In alluding to the following authors and the ways in which they furnished clues for this study, I hope it may lead
121 readers to consult the full works for themselves, and indeed to explore others which can be found in any good bibliography on socialization or on personality and culture. Over many years I have read and re-read Ralph Linton's *The Cultural Background of Personality*, in order to throw light on my own studies and to illustrate my lectures. When assembling the material for this Ngoni study I welcomed and followed up his thesis that 'some groups are much more conscious of the existence of culture and much more prone to generalize about behaviour than others'. That and other passages certainly helped to throw light on the Ngoni awareness of their own culture and their articulateness about behavioural training.

Linton also assisted me, though I did not completely agree with all his analysis, in placing cultural values in their relation to the accepted personality patterns. I used here other clues, and notably those provided by Monica Wilson in her book *Good Company* and John Whiting in his field manual for studies of child training. The Nyakusa values, brought out so clearly by Professor Wilson, I was able to compare with Ngoni values. Among the Nyakusa, 'good company', dignity, display, decency, wisdom, were constantly stressed and behaviour on these lines was commended by adults. The Nyakusa were a homogeneous and secure people, whose system of age-villages was unique among the surrounding peoples and a powerful force in maintaining and developing socially desirable forms of behaviour. Dr Whiting, in his field study manual, suggests eight 'systems of behaviour' for field workers to observe and classify in terms of individual

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

child behaviour. Five of them appear to suggest values some of which have a place either in Nyakusa or Ngoni ideal personality patterns: self-reliance, obedience, responsibility, sociability, dominance. But there is at least one major difference between the approaches of Professor Wilson and Dr Whiting to the training of children. Professor Wilson is describing the values of Nyakusa adults and their effect on the bringing up of children. Dr Whiting has selected from a series of cultures certain typical or common forms of behaviour which might be displayed by children. These forms of behaviour might represent general social values, but they are not set in the context of any one culture, and the criterion is whether an observer saw a child displaying sociability rather than whether the society desired their children to show sociability and took steps to encourage it. This book was after all a manual to be usable in a number of cultural situations. His emphasis is nevertheless on the observed behaviour of selected children, and illustrates my point made in the early pages of this chapter; whereas Professor Wilson's emphasis was on the adult ideal personality to which, it was hoped, Nyakusa children would conform.

The existence of a 'system' in the upbringing of children, a system set up by a society and under its control, posed a number of questions. Clyde Kluckhohn in several of his books has for a long time provided me with clues in the study of 'systems', and many of these clues are summarized in the chapter on Personality and Culture in his book *Mirror for Man*. Especially in two directions these clues have proved helpful: in his distinction between two kinds of cultural learning, technical and regulatory, or acquiring skills and learning to behave, the latter taking place in the early years of childhood, and acquiring skills in later years; and in his theme of predictability, illustrated in this quotation: 'A definition of socialization in any culture is the predictability of an individual's daily behaviour in various defined situations. . . . When a person behaves most of the

114 time as others do in following cultural routines, he is then
121 socialized.'

I have deliberately carried on the study of the Ngoni 'system' through what are generally called the adolescent years. In so doing I followed some of the clues in Professor Linton's discussion of how different societies treated adolescence and its alleged problems. Dr H. M. Ammar also provided a clue in his account of the sharp gulf in the Egyptian village of Silwa between child and adult, between the ways of childhood and the values of adulthood. But in sorting out the problems which the Ngoni study presented, I have drawn also on my recollection of discussions with Dr Kurt Hahn at Gordonstoun about the place of adolescents in society, and whether what is commonly called 'an awkward age' is necessarily part of a child's growing up. Two particular contributions of Kurt Hahn's have thrown light on the young Ngoni adult. One was the correlation between physical stages of growth and social responsibility; and the other was the close connexion between acquiring skills which are socially valuable and essential, and the general maturing of the young adult, especially in his growing confidence in himself and in his self-respect.

On the fourth point, the effect of external changes such as schools on child training, I found much that was useful in Oscar Lewis' *Life in a Mexican Village*. It seems to me he has gone further than most anthropologists in examining the school and its methods and ideas in relation to a traditional culture and society. From an educational as well as from an anthropological angle, H. M. Ammar's analysis of the place of schools in Egyptian villages is also very stimulating.

Social behaviour of Ngoni children

128 Most studies of child training concentrate, or at least place
[114] the main emphasis, on a child in his family setting, with the connotation of a family in the western individual sense of father, mother and their children. The subsequent chapters

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI

The Threshold of Adulthood (i)

The study of adolescence

Studies of adolescents as an age-group, of the adolescent boy and girl in society, and of the characteristics of the stage called adolescence, have assumed certain principles and have stated certain conclusions in terms of western society. These theoretical leads need examining closely before they can be applied to, or assumed to have validity for, non-western societies. This points on the one hand to the problems raised in Chapter II of the emphasis on individual psychological development in western studies of childhood and adolescence. It also suggests that a follow-through of any culture-personality study, whether in homogeneous relatively isolated cultures, or in rapidly changing cultures, involves a re-examination of the relation between individual development on the one hand and social control and training on the other, and this latter requires an analysis of the aims of the society in terms of its methods in bringing up its children.

Several questions need stating here in general terms and these in turn lead to specific questions about Ngoni culture and society. Are there cultures and societies in which childhood can be said to end at a particular age or stage? Are there others in which adulthood is said to begin at the end of the childhood stage? Are there others again, as most studies of western societies assume, in which an intervening stage between childhood and adulthood is recognized which is commonly known as adolescence? If adolescence as a stage in development is recognized, what are its age-limits or other

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

12.1 forms of limitation? And what are the chief characteristics which distinguish it from childhood on the one hand and adulthood on the other?

Studies of non-western societies suggest a variety of answers to these questions, and the answers are related to the social structure and the organization of social relations within the society, and to the economic demands made on different age-groups in the society. Societies with a marked age-set system have one set of answers; societies where economic necessity determines the role of all but small children have another. Every type of society is differently affected by the introduction of the modern school systems which cut across traditional views and practices on age-role and age-status.

There is nevertheless, as the title of this chapter is intended to convey, in every society, and particularly in non-western societies not as yet completely changed and dominated by school systems, a stage when adult behaviour and adult competence in technical skills is expected from the rising generation. This may occur before, at, or after the onset of physical maturity at puberty. A society which has exerted a conscious and directed control over the upbringing of its children regards the threshold of adulthood as the testing of its methods of socialization, calling perhaps for a re-alignment of emphases in training, in view of the advent for these young people of greater responsibility in social relations and of demands on them for effective economic co-operation. In other words, this threshold of adulthood is a test of the effectiveness of training children and young people to conform to the personality pattern of the culture of the society, and for the young individuals themselves a test of their adjustment to that pattern.

Initiation schools

The study of adolescence as a recognized stage of individual development in non-western societies has been influenced by three main factors: the attention paid to the physical changes

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

at puberty and their subsequent implications for marriage and sexual life; the social recognition by the society of the significance of this change; and the rituals which marked this transition. Initiation rites, as a form of *rites de passage*, occur in many societies immediately after puberty. The majority of these initiation rites takes the form of a 'school', involving a period of seclusion in some remote locality away from normal social life, varying degrees of physical endurance tests, instruction in traditional hygiene and sex life and in correct behaviour to senior people, with an intense emphasis on submission to authority. At the end of the seclusion period, which varies in different societies from a few weeks to three or four months, there is generally feasting and other forms of rejoicing when the initiates return to their villages to resume normal life but with a new status. 121

The underlying aim in many initiation rites was to bring home to the individuals, and to the entire age-group which they represented, the dominant importance of fertility in the life of their society. This lesson among the Cewa, one of the ethnic groups living close to the Ngoni, was driven home by a second ritual which occurred at the first pregnancy of every married woman. In sociological and psychological terms the aims of the ritual in initiation schools were to strengthen the individual at a time of crisis in his life, to sanction his new status in society after the period of seclusion and instruction, and to assert the authority of society over the individual through the solemnity and rigour of the ritual. One purpose of these rituals which has not received much attention was to bring together separately boys and girls in homogeneous sex and age-groups for the last time before they broke up into separate heterogeneous relationships on marriage.

Ngoni puberty rituals

The Ngoni, unlike the ethnic groups by which they were surrounded, had no initiation schools either at or after puberty. In spite of their cultural emphasis on the importance 881

VIII

Personality and Character

Personality, culture and character

128 The threads of teaching and learning whose ends were grasped in Chapter II have been followed through the intervening five chapters, and our task now is to see what pattern they have made of the system of training given by the Ngoni to their children. The threads have eventually been twisted together to form two separate but linked strands, one the ●121 achievement of the Ngoni basic personality and the other the development of individual character. In this chapter I am going to use personality in the sense derived from Linton and Kluckhohn, namely the sum total of the traits which are desired by a society and form part of its culture, and which are instilled into children in the system of training set up by the society. Personality therefore since it is regarded as an aim in child training is a social product. The ideal personality is held up to the growing generation, not so much as a total achievement, but as the acquisition of a number of traits of behaviour, skills and knowledge. The Ngoni basic personality [157] therefore consisted of common personality elements in adults, [155] which, as Kluckhohn says, were largely a product of learning, and that learning was directed and controlled by the system of training. Character on the other hand I am going to use as the sum total of the individual's response to his training. It therefore includes his personal adjustment to the training given by the society, and, as a result, his acquiring of some or many of the basic personality traits, and hence the degree of his approximation to the ideal personality. Over and above

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

this overt response to training, character is the distinctive individual twist given to the basic personality, together with certain special abilities and individual traits which might be in harmony with, or at variance with, the basic personality traits. When an individual showed abilities and traits which harmonized with the concept of the basic personality, he was recognized as a 'good character'. If however he developed traits which eventually showed his failure to adjust to the basic personality, then he was, or would probably become, a 'bad character'. The 'badness' was his responsibility due to a series of choices which he had made, though it might also reflect on the training given in his earlier years.

The Ngoni had a word which very nearly expressed their concept of individual character. They spoke of a person's 'own human nature' (*Ubuntu*), 'the human nature of himself'. Thus they recognized, as studies of personality and culture are bound to recognize, two distinct results of child training, arising from the interweaving of the threads of teaching and learning, namely the development of young men and women into Ngoni adults whom the society regarded as fulfilling, at least to some extent, their ideals of behaviour, skills and knowledge; and the development of young individual adults, distinguishable each from his fellows by the individual character he displayed before his elders who either approved or disapproved of him.

Anthropologists on the whole would agree with Kluckhohn that so far they have studied personality as a socially directed product rather than the unique product of each individual's growth and development. Individual reactions and responses are recognized as being primarily in the field of psychology. But the anthropologist and the educationist can make some claim to understanding this essential complement to individual personality studies. On the one hand they find the society they are studying recognising values which do not always fit into an accepted basic personality pattern. On the other hand they become aware that individual reactions to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 learning, and the end product of a system of training, can never be as stereotyped and as uniform as some of the exponents of personality and culture studies would have us believe.

The outlines of the ideal Ngoni personality have really been 128 sketched in the narrative chapters, though without stopping to point out specifically that this or that aim in training is to foster a Ngoni personality trait. I shall therefore in this chapter put together these traits, and, to introduce a new element and so avoid too much repetition, some of these traits will be associated with Ngoni proverbs. But before doing this I shall discuss those Ngoni values which I believe were the foundations for their child training.

The Ngoni system of values

121 The chief reason for introducing at the end of this book such 128 an involved and difficult subject as values is to suggest that there is an inevitable connexion in any society or culture between an ideal personality and the values cherished by that society. It is therefore reasonable to follow up, and to some extent to sum up, the preceding narrative chapters of this study with a glance, for it cannot be more than that, at the fundamental beliefs and values which impelled the Ngoni people to pursue certain lines in bringing up their children. 181 We have seen that there was a continuous and clear direction in training children which I have called a system. The more deeply one analyses the nature of Ngoni culture and the organisation of Ngoni society, the clearer it becomes that there were certain definite values which they clung to as a result of their experience and of their reflection upon their past history and present and future prospects. In so far as these values were integrated into an intelligible whole, we can call them a system of values, but the recognition of such a system does not preclude the recognition also of some isolated values which do not appear to fit into an integrated system.

121 One of the major difficulties in examining the values of a non-literate culture is the inevitable subjective approach of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the observer or anthropologist. One such observer might 121
pursue the line suggested by the use of different persons of the verb and different pronouns in personal contacts, and the values inherent in such standardized usage. Another might choose to examine the institution of the boys' dormitory and its contribution to the total value system. Another might take the different emphases in bringing up boys and girls in relation to the fact that men were the permanent element in village society and that girls left the village on marriage. A dozen more examples could be taken from the narrative chapters of this study and usefully followed up. They would all illustrate, in the first instance, the subjective nature of the initial selection, whether the final results of several different investigations made a coherent integrated system or not. They would also illustrate the uncharted area of such studies, where there is little to guide the observer and the analyst, in spite of the growing interest in recent years in studying the value systems of non-literate societies.

Among the leads which I found most useful has been Pro- 121
fessor Monica Wilson's *Good Company*, to which I referred in 114
Chapter I, where she associated cultural values with the age-village system in Nyakusa society. I owe much also to help and suggestions given to me at Harvard by Professor Cora Du Bois and Dr Ethel Albert, and to Professor Kluckhohn and his associates in discussions on their published and projected series on the study of values.

The relation between Ngoni values and their ideal per- 128
sonality pattern is based on the study of their society and culture described in my earlier book, and on the analysis of their system of bringing up children in this book. I referred in Chapter II to certain values as group values and to others as personal values. I am not sure that the distinction is a valid one, but it is a convenient form of classification and it 829
corresponds closely to the Ngoni way of thinking. They were constantly referring to their society, or a local community in it, as if it were an integrated whole, and to the effect of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

IX

Some Educational Reflections

Education, culture and society

● 121 We saw in the introduction that the main objective in this study was to see what the Ngoni parents were aiming at in bringing up their children, and how they had worked out a system which they believed suitable for their society. It was suggested that some of the aims and methods used by the Ngoni might throw light on some of the problems which faced young parents and teachers today. This does not mean of course that the methods used by the Ngoni are in any sense transferable to other peoples and other times. They were tried out in and related to a specific situation. Nor does it mean that the aims of the Ngoni in their education could be in any way compared with parental aims in bringing up children in our own day and age, and in our own society. The very sharp contrast between Ngoni life and thought, and our own ideas and our present situation, makes any kind of close comparison invalid and a waste of time. What we have to try to do, if this study has stimulated us to think more deeply about these matters, is to understand the relation between aims and methods in the Ngoni system of education, and to stretch our own concept of education beyond the limits of formal learning and regular schooling to include what many American educationists call 'adjustment to life'.

American educational thinking is turning more and more towards social and cultural anthropology as a guide to analysing educational problems in their schools, in their

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

homes, in their communities and in their national life. There are several reasons for this tendency. One is a recognition of the limitations of individual psychology as a guide to the understanding of how children grow up. This arises from the newly perceived importance of culture, in the anthropological sense of that word, as a total way of living of a specific group of people, which may be that of a fairly homogeneous large group, or of several smaller groups, differing culturally from each other but drawn together by political, economic or residential ties. Thus Ngoni culture as described in this book could be regarded as that of a small group within the Ngoni kingdom and within Ngoni villages where other people of differing cultures were to be found. A number of references were made in this study to the cultural differences within Ngoni villages in spite of the proximity of living conditions. We find the same kind of situation in many countries today, whether those of a western way of living or a non-western. The French Swiss in Switzerland for example are a distinct cultural group within the Swiss nation, and they are divided into the sub-cultural groups of Protestants and Catholics, each with a characteristic way of living which shows itself not only in differences of religious belief.

As we look round the world we see societies, even nations or parts of nations like the French Swiss, trying to hold on either to their total culture, or to those parts of it such as language, religion, forms of family life, distinctive dress and food, which seem to them to have special significance for them and their children. No cultures, or virtually none, are unaffected by modern changes brought about by political, economic or social influences and forces. And there are societies and nations anxious to change their culture in order to bring it into line with the demands of modern, mainly western, life. The educationist who is aware of other systems than his own soon realises that an education system and what is taught in it can be used to change culture, or to perpetuate certain elements in it. This attempt to balance

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 the forces of cultural change and cultural continuity through the education of a people is found all over the world today.

The concept of culture as a way of living, and of a specific society or social group practising that way of living, has many implications for those who are thinking about education at the present time. Readers of this book, especially those in western countries, who are unaccustomed to the ideas and language of anthropology, may find some difficulty in relating what they have thought of as principles of education to the aims and methods of the Ngoni in bringing up their children. This difficulty arises for two main reasons. One is that we in the west have to stretch and widen our ideas about education, and burst the classroom walls in our effort to see children growing up in a total culture and not only inside the limits of formal schooling. The other reason also demands an effort of imagination, for we in the west have got to appreciate and understand the differences between the growing up of children in the tight little family of father, mother and children living a separate existence in a town house or flat, and children growing up in the larger family and circle of relatives, creating family life in the wider sense used in this Ngoni study. The first kind of family life is characteristic of our urban industrial society, the second of rural life in most of the rest of the world and in many aspects of urban life in eastern and African countries as well.

The inevitable sequel, or at least it should always follow, to thinking about education as either changing a people's culture or helping to perpetuate parts of it, is to look at the effect on individual children and their growth and development. This concentration on individual development has so far been the main preoccupation of educational study in the west, and many questions arise, as was suggested in the introduction, about the effect, for example, of certain Ngoni methods of training on the development of individuals. Perhaps all students of education, and most administrators and planners too, have to ride a see-saw between adapting

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

education to the needs of society and adapting it to the needs of individual children. There is as we all know no final choice possible. Some kind of synthesis is essential, and the balance is always swinging first in one direction and then in another. And here parents, their views on education and their methods of training children in their homes, have a supremely important role to play, almost a controlling role, since they can work in with the aims of formal schooling or persistently try to counteract them. 121

Where this study might lead

'Growing up among the Ngoni' is only one of several studies of growing up in non-western societies. The societies described from this angle of child-training differ from each other structurally and culturally, but there are common elements in the studies of growing up which should be of interest, in western and non-western countries alike, to teachers and parents and all who are concerned about how children are in fact growing up, and the role of formal schooling in this process.

One of the dominant notes in modern psychological advice to young parents and to teachers is the emphasis on security for the young child. It is worth while looking at the early years of Ngoni children from this angle, and perhaps using other studies of growing up as well, examining the kind of security provided by a wide circle of relatives all living round the child's home, and all ready to meet the child's needs; and then comparing this form of security with the dependence of a young child on its mother only, which is characteristic of most small families in western urban societies.

There is another aspect of the security of Ngoni children, found too in several other growing up studies, and that is the freedom conferred on a child because he learns early in life just how to speak and how to behave to other people. This may be an unusual view of the apparent restrictions placed on language, posture, attitude, actions, displayed by a child 155

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

155 particularly towards adults. Anyone who has brought up children however knows that they are unhappy with unlimited licence in behaviour, and is aware that the learning of etiquette and manners and obedience, apparently so tiresome in its early stages, does eventually eliminate a number of perplexing choices for children, and by regulating certain relationships confers freedom in other directions. That was my reading of the Ngoni children's reactions to the somewhat formal code of manners taught from their early years and strictly enforced. Ngoni good manners did not mean that the children were coerced and subdued. They were happy, busy, friendly, helpful, endlessly inventive and full of initiative. I suggested here and there in the book that they had various outlets in the middle years of childhood for [154] aggression, jealousy, frustration. There was very little evidence of neurotic tendencies, and, except in certain instances mentioned, there was little apparent inclination to avoid social mixing with age-mates or with other groups and the obligations inherent in such mixing.

The seeming absence of frustration and overt rebellion in the years just after puberty was due to the social recognition by relatives and by the village community of the new stage reached by boys and girls, and to the increasing responsibility required of them for carrying out allotted tasks and for preparing for their future careers. There was no doubt that the outlet for youths of emigration from the villages to work for wages in the south provided a much-needed opportunity at a critical moment in their late teens. In the same way the stimulus of modern schooling, depending on the area and the type of schools in it, helped older boys and girls to look forward to further opportunities of work, of interests, and of escape from the too intimate control of their family and kinship circle and village elders.

● 121 Another line to be followed in these growing-up studies is the actual pattern of relationships between the parents and the children, the parents and their circle of relatives, the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

parents and the community, the children and the community, and the community and the school. There are a number of clues to follow in examining the different groups of people involved in a child's growing up, and discovering some kind of consistent pattern of relationship between them. The clues are not difficult to trace for they begin in such information as the amount of time a child spends with each group, what he learns from each group, how much authority and responsibility the group assumes for him, and so on. In this analysis it is not enough to relate each group to the children. It is important too to be aware of the personal relations between parents, relatives, community, school authorities, in terms of their opportunities for mutual contact and discussion, and their attitude towards culture change and cultural conservation. Out of such potential contacts arise the formulation of aims for home and school training, and their harmony or their conflict, and the resultant effects on the growing up of a child. 121

These two lines to be followed up, which we have just indicated, are familiar to most teachers and to many parents. The third line arising out of this study, and common to most other studies of growing up, is related to research on personality and culture and on national character. This field of studies is more controversial and more complex than the former. In the case of the Ngoni they had a more or less distinct ideal personality rooted in their culture and answering the question: what kind of people are the Ngoni and how do they want others to regard them? This ideal personality was the goal of their child-training as described in this book, but it was in the process of being modified by school teaching, by Christian teaching, and perhaps more profoundly still by the growth of Nyasaland African nationalism. The sharp outlines of the ideal personality type of Ngoni men and women were already blurred by these political and educational developments. 577 177

For readers of this book the relevance of this aspect of 157

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

157 Ngoni children's growing up is probably to call attention to cultural and national influences in emphasizing certain qualities in the ideal personality and in individual character.

In general, in the west, cultural influences determining
● 121 a way of life, and setting standards for individual behaviour are found in certain kinds of 'class' grouping, or in the environmental determinants of rural communities, 'new' towns and housing estates, slum or suburban areas. Very few western societies can show their children the sharp outline of an ideal personality which seemed so important and compelling to the Ngoni. Nevertheless behind parents' attempts to train their children or to direct their growing up lie as a rule some vague ideas about ideal personality traits or the qualities to be looked for in national character. Perhaps some searching into these fundamental motives, stimulated by this Ngoni study, could help to bring them to the surface and so assist in the harmonizing of educational aims.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was first drafted to supply information on Ngoni marriage to the African Marriage Survey organized by the International African Institute and the International Missionary Council. It is based on inquiries made in the field while I was on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. My fieldwork would have been impossible without the generous co-operation and assistance of many friends, European and African; I hope to be able to mention them by name in a later publication. However I must here acknowledge my debt to Mr. M. B. Lukhero, for help with this inquiry; to Professor Gluckman and my colleagues of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, for comments on this paper in draft; to Miss B. Pole for secretarial assistance; and to my wife for help in the field and in writing up.

Professor Schapera has kindly pointed out that my use of the term 'band' for a group of wives is likely to cause confusion, as this word has other technical uses in anthropology. He has suggested the term 'bevy' in lieu. It has not been possible to make the change in this paper, but readers should substitute 'bevy' for 'band' throughout.

J. A. Barnes

London, June 1950

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

INTRODUCTION

MARRIAGE among the Ngoni is much the same as anywhere else. It establishes a relationship between a man and a woman, regulates their sexual activities, locates their children in the kinship system and influences the inheritance of their property. These general features, however, do no more than define and identify marriage, and distinguish marriage from concubinage. Our task is to analyse the particular features that distinguish Ngoni marriage from other marriage systems and to relate marriage to other institutions and social processes in Ngoni society.

In Ngoni history there has always been marriage. Indeed men and women look back longingly to a past when people married properly and decorously, and when adulterers were killed, and bemoan the promiscuity of the present when no woman's fidelity is certain. Yet even now old people still expect their juniors to marry and their expectations are fulfilled. Adults are assumed to be married, and the assumption is justified.

Marriage is seen by the Ngoni as part of the natural order. Unmarried adults cannot fill important roles and are regarded as overgrown children whose anomalous condition must be explained by reference to a malady or a physical or moral defect. Yet despite the universal and permanent character of marriage as an Ngoni institution there have been, in the course of the hundred and thirty years which constitute Ngoni history, great changes in the procedures and implications of marriage and in its relations to other aspects of the social life of which it is a part. These changes have been paralleled in other Ngoni institutions, in law, in local organization, in religion and above all in political structure. In this paper we shall attempt to contrast the institution of marriage as seen at two stages in Ngoni history and to relate it to the general plan of social life at these two periods. We shall also discuss some of the processes of change that have brought about the differences we observe and which to some extent are still at work in contemporary Ngoni society.

It is convenient to compare marriage as it was during the 1890's and as it is at the present day. The information relating to the earlier period is contained only to a slight extent in contemporary documents,[1] and consists largely in the recollections of older men and women as recorded by a number of writers from 1914 onwards. The

[1] The most important of these are Wilson's articles, 'Expedições portuguesas a M'Pezeni (1889)', in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, x (1891) pp. 338-73, 391-430, 468-97, and xi (1892) pp. 373-500. (All page references cited are from Vol. X); and 'Beiträge zur Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambesi, namentlich der Angoni,' *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1900), pp. 181-200.

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[1]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[1] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lekhaza, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part. 121

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000 live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other*. 101 [161] 131 167 [649] [643] 631 24 [839] 464

* For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 201 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
438 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[127] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount
[581] Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was, in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
603 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[10] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[108] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife
602 fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organised patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
583 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[p.19]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass shacks built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.20]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [506] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [528] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer [160] without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance of women over men caused by labour migration.

128 Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically •181 from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 257 and 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs concerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 [501] residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles away from the first two.

[1] Chisile, pl. visile, or also [illegible]. Cf. Nsenga ulu, pl. wanilu, idiot.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

away from the other two. They were the four most accessible 121 ●
from my base camp, built at a site chosen by the Administration. I was able to compare their size, history, and kinship structure with those of many other villages I visited, and as far as I could tell they were in these respects fairly typical Ngoni villages. They form a 128
sample of approximately one per cent of the whole of the Fort Jameson Ngoni.

The tables in which the units are individuals or extant marriages (III, IV, IX, X, XIII and XIV) are based on the marital histories of the men and woman normally resident in those villages during the latter part of 1948, in one village, and during the earlier part of 1949 in the other five. In Tables I, II, V to VIII, XI and XII, where the units are marriages and not individuals, I have drawn on the histories of men and women who lived in these villages as wedded people for at least part of the time from 1946 to 1949. I endeavoured to inter- [124]
view the whole population but failed to do so for various reasons. I was however, able to determine who was, and who was not, a resident in these villages, and can therefore indicate the number of people who could have been included in this six-village sample had more been known about them. Some of my interviews were only partial.

In Tables V to VIII, which deal with the incidence and magnitude of marriage payments, each marriage is classified by the decade in which it began. This is not necessarily the decade in which the payment was made, for as we have noted payments are sometime made after many years of marriage. Unfortunately I do not have enough information to classify by the decade of payment.

In the tables I have used the word 'wedded' to refer to all people who had ever been married, whether or not they were currently married at the time of inquiry.

It will be seen from Table III that in this sample there was no 162
unwedded man over the age of twenty-four, and, out of a total of 589
116 wedded men, there were only one widower and seven men whose last marriage had ended in divorce and who had not remarried. From Table IV we see that there was only one unwedded woman over the age of nineteen, but that there were as many as 31 widows who had not remarried. Only about a half, 122 out of 223, of the wedded women were living with their husbands.

Marriage is then an experience that sooner or later comes to nearly 581
every man or woman, although not every adult lives all the time in a simple family of procreation. Nevertheless, the ties forged by marriage remain, and the results of marriage extend beyond the wedding ceremony and beyond the domestic association of man and wife. It is the sexual activities of individuals that are most closely regulated by the fact of marriage. In succession to office and wealth, marriage, as we shall see, plays nowadays a permissive rather than a determining role. It is only by means of the symbolic acts which form part of marriage that a man can be reasonably sure of acquiring rights over his wife and the custody of his children. Yet he may,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.105]

CHAPTER V

SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS

1. *Old and new marriage*

WE HAVE described marriage at two periods in Ngoni history, as it was in the 1890's and as it is now. The differences we have found between the two periods are not due to chance except in the sense in which we may speak of all historical incidents as being partly due to chance and partly determined by the limiting conditions imposed by the past. Changes in the field of Ngoni marriage have been paralleled by changes in other aspects of Ngoni social life, have been influenced by other changes and have in turn influenced them. Throughout Ngoni history men and women have always married, but the society in which they married has changed. Marriage in the time of peace was appropriate, more or less, to the general ordering of social life in those days, and modern marriage is appropriate, again more or less, to the social structure of today.

Our task is then a threefold one. We have to show the relationship between old marriage and the rest of the old society, a similar relationship between modern marriage and modern society, and the process by which the transition from one set of conditions to the other has come about. We have outlined in Chapter II some of the internal and external factors responsible for this transition, and the nature of the material available to us on the 1890 period has led us, in Chapter I, to describe the old system largely in analytic terms. In this chapter we shall attempt to clarify our picture of the past in the light of an analysis of modern marriage.

In the old days the residential system provided the framework for political and lineage ties. Marriage was a legitimate means whereby children were recruited into segments of the system. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of fertility from the woman's kin to her husband's kin. Adultery was punishable by death, and divorce was rare. Affinal ties cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system, but while these ties were important, a man could not transfer his allegiance to his wife's or to his mother's group. A man who quarrelled with his kinsmen could not move to another village to live, but could only hive off to form a dependent but recognizable cluster of his own, which still remained part of the same residential segment.

The material apparatus belonging to the system, that is, the great villages with hundreds of huts and central cattle byres, was to a large extent destroyed in 1898 by the British. A few important people in the system were killed, and many of the cattle looted. With the establishment of British rule, it was physically possible for the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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But we know from other areas 121●
that loss of sovereignty itself does not necessarily disrupt the marriage arrangements of common people and we must look elsewhere for an explanation.

2. Movement between villages

The old villages formed part of the residential system, and their 621
structure was maintained by the power of the central chieftainship, as expressed through the lieutenants of the royal villages, and by the diffuse sanction of public opinion based on ideas held in common as to the rights conferred by the payment of bridewealth. Nowadays
the lieutenants of the royal villages have very much less power, and [178]
bridewealth is not often paid. The village is held together by the various ties of kinship and affinity between its members, and to a slight extent by the restriction of movement from one village to another. This control, exercised by the Administration through the [648]
system of registration of adult males, is largely ineffective except in the Resettlement Areas.[3] Men and women are more or less free to live wherever they can find relatives, and if they quarrel in one village they can move to another where they hope life will be more pleasant. There is no general rule to which appeal can be made concerning whether a married couple should live uxorilocally or virilocally. Hence a quarrel between man and wife or between affinally related people may lead to a split in the village, and the dissident section may attempt to form a village of its own or attach
itself to another village. It is therefore in the interests of the [620]
headman that quarrels in his village should be settled as rapidly as possible, and he has therefore an interest in the private lives of his people even though they may not be his close relatives. His interests are represented by his lieutenants and are shared by everyone in the village who wishes his own to be a large prosperous and happy
village. The theme of the good and happy village recurs in many [183]
of the formal situations of Ngoni life and finds expression in much of local action on a village basis, as for example in the competitive dances, the division of food at a ceremony and the organization of the religious sects.

We find therefore that the headman and his lieutenants participate [622]
in the ceremonies of marriage and in marital quarrels. Conversely the headman is brought into relationship with the married couple by the allocation to him of pots of beer whenever there is a general distribution even though he may not be at the ceremony. Other important men and women similarly participate merely because of their common membership of the village. For example, a hoeing party was led by a middle-aged woman who was described as 'an important person' in the son-in-law's village. She was in fact

[3] Areas which have been reopened to settlement by Ngoni and other tribes since 1941 with various restrictions on agricultural methods and on population. About ten per cent of Ngoni live in Resettlement Areas.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as well as to her husband and his kin, while a man tries to enlist the support of his own kin but not usually of his wife's kin if the dispute has nothing to do with marital affairs. At birth and death the division of labour and responsibility is mainly on sex lines. In general we may say that the elementary family does not emerge as a grouping of importance because there is no system of elementary families in which it can do so. Village is posed against village in dances, songs, the collection of tax, hunts, division of food, and so on. In other situations, one group of kinsmen act as a body in distinction to another group of kinsmen who are their affines. We have demonstrated this for the ceremonial situations of marriage and for the resolution of quarrels. In the intimacies of the hut, man and wife are in a simple and specific dyadic relationship which does not admit of substitution. To some extent, their infant, from conception to weaning, is a helpless appendage of this relationship. From weaning on, children acquire other social relationships of their own. The distinction drawn between marriage and the care of children is well illustrated by the remark made by an old widow when I asked her why she did not marry again. She replied 'I am now too old for marriage. My job is to look after children.' The missions encourage men and women to bring up and care for their own children, particularly where the children's grandparents are pagan. At the same time the importance of the economic ties that link every Ngoni household with the rest of the world is increasing and it is easier for men to find extra money when they are young and middle-aged than when they become grandparents. These two factors may lead to an increase in the importance of the elementary family, but it is also possible that the number of children sent home from Southern Rhodesia to their grandparents may grow as more women go there to join their husbands, thus increasing the responsibilities of the old towards their young grandchildren.

9. *Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce*

We have seen that whereas in the old days divorce was infrequent, it is now comparatively common. We have also seen that prior to 1898 the kinship structure of the Ngoni was based on localized agnatic and quasi-agnatic lineages, for the captor-captive relationship was similar to that between father and child. These lineages are now no longer effective social groups, and individuals act and live together with cognates and affines related to them in a variety of ways. This parallel change in divorce frequency and in kinship structure provides confirmation for the hypothesis put forward by Gluckman that divorce is rare and difficult in tribes organized on a system of marked father-right, and frequent and easy to obtain in other types.[6] This hypothesis was suggested by a comparison of different tribes which Gluckman divides into two types. Among

[6] Gluckman, op. cit., p. 190.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

others, the Zulu and Nuer have agnatic lineages and rare divorce, while the Lozi and Ila lack agnatic lineages and have frequent divorce. The Ngoni before 1898 appear to belong to the first type and the Ngoni of the present-day to the second. In 'the time of peace' the fertility of the married woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth to her husband's lineage segment, and the children whom she produced were recruits to that segment. Her agnates could never claim the children for their matrilateral segment. Associated with this system were the levirate, the sororate, and the right to enforce betrothal on pain of the return of gifts. The simple legal family was a relatively stable unit, and its position within the lineage segment was determined rigidly by the ranking of co-wives. Divorce was rare and could be effected only on the initiative of the husband. By contrast the affiliation of children nowadays is not fixed, and the very groups themselves to which they would formerly have attached themselves are no longer important. The children borne by a woman, whatever marriage payments have or have not been made for her, are potential recruits to local kin groups led by a variety of different relatives. Compared with the past, the simple legal family is unstable and divorce is frequent and easy. As might be expected, the levirate and sororate and enforceable betrothal, the trappings of the old system, have declined in importance.

Gluckman also suggests that in general, marriage payments fall in value with the decreasing dominance of patrilineal descent, although he cites the Ila as a virilocal people with high marriage payments, no agnatic lineages and frequent divorce. He regards the influence of property on marriage payments as secondary, but writes: 'On this hypothesis, which needs more testing, the amount of goods transferred and the divorce rate tend to be directly associated, but both are rooted in the kinship structure. It is rare divorce which allows high marriage payment, rather than high marriage payment which prevents divorce.'[9] The Ngoni material suggests that payments, kinship structure and divorce frequency are connected and that among them, as among the Ila, frequent divorce does not preclude high payments.

We may distinguish three phases in the history of Ngoni marriage payments. Prior to 1898 bridewealth varied in amount from one to a dozen beasts, depending on the status of the woman's father. In addition, recently captured women were married, both by men of high and low status, without payment of cattle. There is no indication that divorce was any less rare in one section of the community than another. In our pre-1898 sample, as set out in Table I, only one marriage out of eighteen ended in divorce, despite the absence of payments in half the marriages. It is true that in the single instance of divorce there were no marriage payments, yet even this marriage does not suggest marital instability as we

[9] Gluckman, op. cit., pp. 192, 300.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[14] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group, so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes. Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[14] *Ibid*, p. 172.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rare divorce, has survived despite loss of sovereignty, territorial dispersal, economic impoverishment, high incidence of labour migration, and frequent adultery and illegitimacy.[11] The Ngoni, subjected to similar external processes, but in addition surrounded by matrilineal peoples and themselves largely of matrilineal origin, have lost their agnatic affiliation and, with it, stable marriage.

It is difficult to see exactly where this trend will lead. The third phase, as I have characterised it, is a recent development. There does not seem to have been any sharp rise in marriage payments until the 1939-45 war. During the war many Ngoni men earned higher wages than ever before in the Army and in industry. It may have been this that was decisive in raising the level of payments. It will be remembered that the thirty shillings minimum for the legalization payment was fixed by law during the war. It may, however, be suggested that if it is hoped by raising the level of payments to achieve stability in marriage, this hope is in vain. Payments may rise if people are in a position to pay more. Higher wages permit higher marriage payments without necessitating further changes in economic life, but in fact these changes are already taking place. Money is needed for more clothes, more food, more education, as well as for higher marriage payments. Payments rise as Africans participate increasingly in the general money economy of Southern Africa. The more they participate, the less marriage is constrained by a kinship structure based on morally significant face-to-face relations between agnates. The higher payments rise the more frequent becomes divorce. This is not a long-term prognosis, for I have indicated above that affiliation is not the only possible determining factor, and it is clear that if more people align themselves with those missions which do not permit divorce, the frequency of divorce as a whole may decline. There are other possibilities, but it seems to me unlikely that any of these other social mechanisms will become effective quickly; therefore the most probable concomitant of a rise in marriage payments in the immediate future is more frequent divorce.

Thus we see that at least for the Ngoni, changes in the amount and distribution of property have had a marked effect on the level of marriage payments, and that this effect can to some extent be isolated from that due to changes in kinship structure and in divorce frequency.

10. Attempts to resist change

The major structural changes taking place in Ngoni society in the last fifty years have not come about entirely unopposed. The Administration, the missions, and the Ngoni people themselves have noticed from year to year how the old order was changing and with varying success have made attempts to control the direction of change.

[11] Cf. information from Kark cited by Gluckman, op. cit., p. 204, footnote 1

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PREFACE

The four papers reproduced here deal with a method of estimating land carrying capacities for human populations under African conditions and systems of land usage, and the application of this method to the study of practical problems. The method itself is based on Trapnell's work on the soils and agricultural systems of the Territory, and details of the method as applied in practice have largely been evolved in collaboration between him and the author, with material assistance from other members of the Agricultural Department. N 121

The first paper gives an outline of the technique used in carrying out detailed studies of land problems in the Eastern and Western Provinces of Northern Rhodesia. The basic conceptions of land deterioration and population carrying capacity, the relation of Native land usage to the vegetation-soil unit and the factors involved in the estimation of critical densities, which are discussed in this account, have already been referred to in Trapnell's *Ecological Report on North-Eastern Rhodesia* (paras. 37–41, 79 and 302–26). The main emphasis in Trapnell's account, however, is on the land deterioration aspect, whereas in the present essay the subject is given fuller treatment from the population standpoint and in the light of recent work on the redistribution of populations. N [128] N [114]

The second paper consists of a report, submitted to Government in 1940, on a reconnaissance survey of conditions in the area of the Lamba Chief Mushiri. This survey was the first attempt to apply the conception of land carrying capacity and the method of estimation to the study of a specific practical problem. Shortly afterwards the method was applied, on a vastly greater and more detailed scale, to the resettlement of congested populations in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province. In 1943 further study was given to the whole proplem of the concentration of populations, including that of Mushiri's area, about the southern and eastern rim of the Copperbelt. In the interval a Government Land Commission had visited the area. This Commission reported that the predictions made in the original report were being rapidly fulfilled and recommended the immediate grant of additional land under controlled settlement. Resettlement of populations from Mushiri and other overcrowded chieftaincies was started in 1943 and all of the recommendations contained in the original report have now been carried out or are in process of completion (see Annual Reports of the Agricultural Department, 1943–6). It will be noted that the Vegetation-Soil units have been revised and that other factors in the method of estimation have been somewhat modified, as a result of greater knowledge, since the original pioneer survey was made. L 121 [128] L [114]

The third paper is a report, presented to Government in October 1944, on the vexed question of the adequacy or otherwise of the native reserves L [128]

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in the Mkushi District and the additions which have from time to time been made to them. This study deals with two somewhat more complex systems, both in a state of change, in which *chitemene* and hoe cultivation methods are combined. The report was followed, after further study, by an annexure (not reproduced here as it contains little of general interest) giving details of the proposed land additions and population transfers, and precise suggestions for measures to improve land usage which might be carried out by Native Authorities. Most of these suggestions have been adopted by the Native Authorities concerned.

It will be realized that both the Mushiri and Mkushi reports are strictly reconnaissance surveys intended to define the nature and scope of specific problems, to indicate what immediate measures may be necessary, and to pave the way for further more detailed study and survey on the lines indicated in the first paper.

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The fourth paper gives a brief and general account of the resettlement work which has been carried out, or is in process of completion, in Northern Rhodesia. It, like the first paper, was written in reply to numerous enquiries as to the technique, methods and objects of resettlement. None of the papers was intended for publication at the time it was written, but it is thought that their presentation may be of some value as a contribution to the study of the relationship between the African and his land.

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The question of land usage and its relation to the available supply of land is, of course, only one aspect of the general problem of African development. The life of the African is so intimately bound up with his land that one may almost say that there is no problem concerning him which is purely agricultural; just as there are few problems which are purely administrative, political, sociological, medical or veterinary. All of these aspects are often intimately, sometimes inextricably, bound together as integral parts of the one common problem.

In recent surveys, of which it is hoped to publish an example shortly, sociologists of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute have co-operated closely with officers of the Agricultural Department in the study of specific aspects of a common problem. Extension of this co-operative method of approach offers the best hope for the solution of many of the problems of African land usage.

But such studies, to be of full practical value, must take into account the effects of changing conditions. The industrial and economic changes which are to be expected within the next decade will profoundly affect the whole structure of African life and will, to a very large extent, determine the pattern and speed of rural development.

Mazabuka,
6 November 1947.

W.A.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned: such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources. 000

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile. 114 101 121 161 311 [133]

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfinsi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipoka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni. [181]

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent. [797] [427]

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do. [134]

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people. [439]

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In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftainships remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional systems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

9: Allan C-1 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Lamba F48
Marawi FR4

of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§. 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 5,600 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mkushi District and 4,800 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Description of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population obtains its food only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 15s. *The Soil, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 5s.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Marawi FR4

LMN 121 128

climate and by the way in which the land is used. If the limit is exceeded *without a compensating change in the system of land usage* then a process of land degradation is set in operation and ultimately, unless food is obtained from outside the area, population must decline to the limit determined by natural conditions and the system of land use, or to a lower level. This limit, the maximum number of people that a given land area will maintain in perpetuity under a certain system of land usage, has been termed the 'carrying capacity' of the area *for that system*. It will be clear that the term can be used only in relation to a clearly defined system of land usage. Throughout these notes, when no statement to the contrary is made, the expression is used in relation to the traditional agricultural system of the tribes concerned. These systems, and the staple crops which go with them, vary greatly within this relatively small area of 33,800 square miles, and range from a primitive form of axe-agriculture among the Western Lala to comparatively advanced soil selection methods practised by the Eastern tribes. Descriptions of all of these systems will be found in the publications to which reference has already been made.

The term 'population-land balance' hardly requires definition. If the total population of an area is equal to or less than the land capacity for the system of agriculture practised, then a population-land balance exists within that area. When the total population is well below the land carrying capacity the areas may be described as under-populated.

LMN 511 166 648

These concepts, and the methods of survey and of estimating the carrying capacities for the different land categories and agricultural systems, were applied to the problem of resettlement. Rapid reconnaissance surveys were made throughout the populated areas, with the objects of assessing approximately the land carrying capacity for each chief's area and estimating the number of people who would have to be moved to unoccupied land in order to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of the traditional agricultural systems. The estimate indicated that a total of about 160,800 people would have to be moved, as shown in the Table below.

District	*Tribe*	*Number of people to be moved*
Fort Jameson	Chewa Ngoni	98,300
Petauke	Senga Ambo	35,000 8,0[illegible]0
Mkushi	Lala Swaka	3,200 4,300
Ndola	Lamba	12,000

The estimates make no allowances for the readjustment of population distribution within the old Reserves. Some chieftaincies were in fact much under-populated and in some of the Reserves considerable areas remained almost or completely uninhabited because of water shortage, the occur-

6:Rattray E,G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

PREFACE BY THE REV. ALEXANDER HETHERWICK, D.D.

114 The author of the following book has been for some years located among the Nyanja-speaking tribes of British Central Africa at Blantyre, and afterwards in Central Angoniland. His occupation as a member of the African Lakes Corporation has brought him into close contact with the native 132 population of these districts. He has taken advantage of his opportunities to familiarize himself with the native language, of which he has acquired a very competent knowledge. In the course of his 126 studies he made a collection of native folk-lore and stories which illustrate in the fullest degree the various constructions, idioms and grammatical forms of the language. These he has now published with the coöperation of the Directors of the Corporation.

• 121 The book is of value as containing examples of native life, habits and customs which are rapidly disappearing from the country before the advance of civilization and the work of Christian missions. The coming generation of natives will grow up under [198] new influences, and the habits of thought and belief that ruled the lives of their fathers will soon be forgotten. Collections of folk-lore such as this book contains are therefore invaluable for the light they throw on a state of native life that is rapidly passing away.

To get into the heart of the native mind is a task well-nigh impossible for a European. The nearest

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

• 12.1 approach is made through the media of such collections as the author of the following pages has made. For this reason the book is commended to all who are interested in the study of native African life and habits.

It is further to be commended for its illustrations of the Nyanja language in which the stories, etc., are written. This language is spoken over the greater part of British Central Africa, or Nyasaland Protectorate, and forms the chief means of communication between the natives of the various districts themselves, as well as between the European settlers and the native population around them. It seems likely to become also the *lingua franca* of the whole of the British possessions in Central Africa that border on the Nyasaland Protectorate. The student of this language will find no better way into the heart of the subject he is dealing with than through the medium of these native stories. To facilitate this use of them, a literal translation is added, and notes are appended illustrating and explaining such idiomatic constructions as would be likely to present difficulty to a learner.

[197]

The writer of this preface has no doubt but that the book will prove its usefulness to the student of the Nyanja tongue, as well as its interest to the student of native African life and thought.

ALEXANDER HETHERWICK.

BLANTYRE MISSION,
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA,
January 1, 1906.

6:Ratuzay E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

In the study of this language, the student is fortunate in having two such scholarly works of reference as *A Practical Manual of the Nyanja Language*, by the Rev. A. Hetherwick, M.A., D.D., F.R.G.S., and *A Cyclopædic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language*, by the Rev. D. C. Scott, M.A., D.D., F.R.S.G.S.; on the other hand, there is a striking want of any good prose work in that language. Of translations of the Bible, and other religious books, there are many, but all such works, in the translation, follow the English text almost literally, and contain so many words from foreign sources as to be of little use to the student who, having mastered the grammar and syntax of the language, seeks to enlarge his vocabulary and knowledge of idiomatic expression by reading some prose work. (The ideal translation of the Bible, or other religious work, would be one in which the English sentence is taken, the meaning got at, and this remodelled and transformed according to the native way of thought and expression.) It is to supply such a want that this little work is intended. The aim throughout has been, in the Chinyanja part, to write each sentence as a raw native would speak it. It is a commonly heard saying, that only boys trained at a Mission talk the language "grammatically." This is correct, if by "grammar" we mean a principle of set rules for the speaking of a language. For to the uncivilized native any such rules as those governing our own, and other languages of civilized countries,

6.Rattray E. G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 F15 Ngoni FR5

are unknown, and he talks, "having regard rather to the poetical feeling than to the grammatical position and syntax of a word." But enclitics, tense particles, concords, the various forms of the verb (applied, causative, intensive, reversive, etc.), and all those auxiliary particles such as *ba*, *ka*, *ngo*, *dzi*, and enclitic particles such as *-nso*, *-be*, *-tu*, etc., by which all the finer shades of meaning are expressed, he uses absolutely correctly, and it is with a view of understanding, and making oneself understood, to the raw, uneducated element among these natives, that one should go to the trouble of learning this language.

The customs, stories, etc., recorded herein are those of the natives inhabiting Central Angoniland. They are descendants, for the most part through intermarriage with the Achewa, of the Zulus who came from south of the Zambezi, scattering as they advanced, under different leaderships; those under *Gwaza* (the father of *Sakambewa*), and his *nduna Chiwere*, settling at Dowa; *Mpezeni*, a son of *Gwaza*, settling near Fort Jameson. *Mputa*, the father of *Chikusi*, after reaching as far as Lake Chirwa, and raiding the Anguru under *Sinjaubwereka*, came to Domwe, near Dedza, under promise of cattle from *Sosola*, a *Chipeta*, or *Nchewa* chief. (*Chipeta* and *Nchewa* are synonymous, the former word being a sobriquet bestowed on the *Achewa* who came on to the Angoniland plateau, by the *Achewa* who settled on the Lake shore, the latter referring to the former as the a *chipeta*, i. e. they of the *chipeta* (long grass)). Intermingled with these customs, borrowed for the most part by the conquerors from the conquered, are to be found traces here and there, and here and there a word, which strike the key-note of their past history, now all but forgotten even by themselves. But what is of their

6:Rattray E.G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

past, and what of their present, will be clear to one who has made a more minute study of their Zulu ancestors than the writer had time or opportunity to do. Whatever be of merit in this little work, the writer owes to the Rev. Alexander Hetherwick, D.D., to whose kindness and courtesy in teaching him Chinyanja, when he first came to the country, he owes all that is best in his knowledge of the language.

MANDALA,
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA,
January 1, 1906.

[X is blank]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Malawi FR4

N 175

Livingstone found chief Mwase, at Kasungu, ruling over "a section of Mang'anja, called Machewa, or Machikulu."[1]

M 175 648 241 167

For some years the Achewa enjoyed a peaceful existence in their new home, keeping cattle, but living mainly by agriculture, until their tranquillity was disturbed by the Ngoni invasion and by the slave raids of the Jumbe[2] at Kota Kota. By these the eastern branch of Achewa was continually harassed; and consequently in 1888 Dundo, Kanyundo and others of the house of Kasungu moved south to the Kasungulu and Mzimi Rivers, and in 1896 handed over this part of the country to the protection of the British Government.

N 175 101 N 174

The Angoni, under the name of Maziti, were described by Livingstone as Zulus,[3] and this terminological error has been copied by more than one subsequent writer. Of their earlier wanderings no record has been traced. Owing, perhaps, to their lighter colour it has been surmised that they came from far up the east coast; but it is known that under the style of Abe-ngoni, derived from an ancient chief Ngoni, they were settled on the Dedani, a small tributary of the upper St. John's River, when the Abe-nabe first arrived in Natal about 1820.[4] In this locality they remained for a couple of centuries, till towards the end of his reign the notorious Zulu king Chaka fell upon their allies the Ama-ndwandwe under Zwide. A section of the Abe-ngoni then migrated northwards under Zwangendaba; and wherever they went they fought and subdued the peoples through whose country they passed, seizing cattle and incorporating captives in their own tribe. After raiding the Abe-nsio, Ama-swazi, Abe-thonga[5] and Ama-kalanga, they crossed the Zambezi near Zumbo at the time of the total eclipse of the sun on the 19th of November, 1835,[6] and overran the territories of the Abe-ngoni, A-tumbuka, A-nfwa and A-mandewere till they came to the land of the Wa-fipa and Wa-nkonde.

Here Zwangendaba (or Sangandaba, as he is generally called in Nyasaland) died, and his following broke up and scattered in different directions. While others advanced to the north and east, four sections turned back, one under Mzuchera to the Tumbuka country, another under Mpezeni to the Lungwa river, the third under Chiwere to Dowa, and the fourth under Chikusi still further south. It is with the third section that we are now dealing. The hybrid nature of the Dowa Angoni can be inferred from the list of clans given in a subsequent section (IV, 2). During the last four decades they have intermarried still further with the Achewa, and there are now few, if any, pure-blooded Angoni in the district. Their paramount chief, Chiwere, though calling himself an Ngoni, is in reality an Mang'anja.

N 101 M N 648 M N 171 121

The general features, characteristics and habits of these peoples are akin to those of neighbouring tribes which have been described by the Reverend Duff Macdonald,[7] Miss Alice Werner

[1] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, pp. 520, 548.

[2] A coast Arab, acting as wali, or representative, of the Sultan of Zanzibar.

[3] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, p. 201.

[4] Eric A. Walker: *Historical Atlas of South Africa*, p. 6. J. H. Soga: *The South-Eastern Bantu*, pp. 61, *et seq.*

[5] In ph and th each consonant is pronounced. Similarly, in ce and ce each vowel is pronounced.

[6] E. H. L. Poole: *Journal African Society*, vol. xxix, No. cxv, p. 300.

[7] Rev. Duff Macdonald, *Africana*. Miss Alice Werner, *The Natives of British Central Africa*. Dr. H. S. Stannus, *The Wagao of Nyassaland*, Harvard African Studies III, *Varia Africana* III, pp. 229-272, "Notes on Some Tribes of British Central Africa," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl. 1910, pp. 295-365, etc., etc.

7: Hodgson . G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Dr. H. S. Stannus and other writers, and I have attempted, therefore, in the following pages to confine myself to matters which, so far as I know, have not been recorded fully elsewhere. The present tense is generally used, though in many instances, during forty years of contact with missionary and other European influence, the custom described may have fallen wholly or partially into desuetude. Except where otherwise stated, the notes may be taken as referring to the Chewa tribe.

M N 121 [171] [128]

II. Domestic Life: Marital.

1. *Mdulo.* (*Chewa*).

Mdulo (a noun derived from *ku-dula*, to cut or break off) is the causing of illness in oneself or another person by indulging in sexual intercourse at prohibited times or, more rarely, by abstaining therefrom when it is prescribed. The following are examples of cases in which the misfortune of *mdulo* is conferred:

M 753 684 893

(*a*) Upon a husband by his wife if he eats food into which she has put salt either during her periods or after she has committed adultery. [263]

(*b*) Upon an unweaned child by its father—

(1) if he fails to achieve connexion after its birth (*vide infra* II, 7);

(2) if he commits adultery in his own house when the child is there;

(3) if he has connexion with his wife on the child's blanket when the child is sleeping in the house; or

(4) if he occupies the same house with two wives, and has connexion with the other in the temporary absence of the child and its mother. M [595]

(*c*) Upon an unweaned child by its mother if she leaves its *mbereko*[1] outside the house while she has intercourse and afterwards puts the child into it again. In the event of such a contretemps the *mbereko* must always be given away to someone else.

(*d*) Upon the womb of a wife by her husband—

(1) if he commits adultery when she is pregnant and then eats with her out of the same pot.

(2) When a man has two wives, he normally spends a week or two with each in turn. If, when one is pregnant, he leaves her for an abnormally long period, he must not return to her until after she has given birth, otherwise he will thereby "cut off" the womb. The result of this misadventure is that the wife will die in child-birth, or the child will be still-born or will die shortly after birth. M [595] [843] [761]

(*e*) Upon a boy in the *bwalo*[2] by his parents—

(1) when the boy comes to their house in their absence and helps himself to meat or food from a pot, if the parents have intercourse on their return and then give him meat from the same piece or food from the pot;

[1] *Mbereko*, the cloth or skin fastened round a mother's neck or shoulder and slung on her back, in which she carries her child till it is weaned, that is, till it has reached the age of two or three years. The *mbereko*, when made of tanned skin is often decorated gaily with beads. *Ku-deka* is the verb meaning to carry in this way. M [854] [862]

[2] *Bwalo*, the communal open space in a village. Boys of five or six years of age, who are too old to continue to sleep with their parents, go to a communal hut until they are married. This hut is known as the "*bwalo*" hut, and the boys are said to be "in the *bwalo*." [342] [858]

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

BRIEFER STUDIES AND ANNOTATIONS

THE PERCEPTION OF HISTORY IN A PLURAL SOCIETY

A Study of an Ngoni Group in Northern Rhodesia[1]

J. A. BARNES

•121 In non-literate societies there is, strictly speaking, no history; for there are no documents, and history, in the sense of historiography, is essentially the study of contemporary documents. There are only legends by which to a greater or less degree present conditions are related to or explained by alleged former conditions.[2] In fully literate societies with a well documentated past, legends take different forms and it is often difficult to distinguish legend from history. In modern societies many socially significant legends relate to the immediate past rather than to antiquity. It is of interest, therefore, to examine what kinds of legend are current in societies shifting from non-literacy to literacy and to what extent they have a history.

In many Western cultures the earliest surviving documents are chronicles or codes of law. At an early stage writing was employed to record facts of wide interest rather than things of significance only to a few. When Africans first become literate they employ their skill in writing letters to one another. Only later do individuals begin to write essays, histories and novels and so develop a vernacular literature. They learn to write in an environment already containing a great quantity of vernacular printed matter issuing from European-controlled sources. The spatial separation of kinsfolk and friends brought about by labour migration makes letter-writing worth while and the emphemeral nature of these pencil-written documents is no disadvantage. It requires greater resources than most individuals and Native Authorities can muster to produce a family or tribal chronicle in permanent form.

1. Read at the Birmingham meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Section H, 1 September 1950, and published in the journal of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute under the title "History in a Changing Society".
2. Cf. Evans-Pritchard, "Marett lecture", p. 121.

212 The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish
● 121 between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

181 Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of Euro-
[177] pean control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller
181 looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-
178 dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung
[538] at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now
533 largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs
182 they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in
538 ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is
173 the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women
648 are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The
186 cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

175 We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the
648 whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories
648 are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not
179 only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

one party of them came up from the south, and partly to divisions among the Ngoni during the period of settlement.

About 115 years ago the ancestors of these Ngoni left their homes in the present Zululand and Swaziland for their long trek north. The immediate cause of their departure was the defeat of Zwidi, chief of the Ndwandwe people, by Chaka, the history of whose military career in Zululand is well known and needs no repetition here. As part of Zwidi's people, the Ngoni did not want to stay under Chaka, and the same impetus and military skill which set up Chaka as the Zulu Napoleon drove the Ngoni northward as far as Lake Tanganyika, a conquering military horde amassing followers on the way. To-day they are found in three large groups and several smaller ones, the large groups known as the 'countries' of Mpezeni, Mwambera, and Gomani, who are the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs.[1]

These groups of people with their southern origin, settled among people who had a totally different language and social structure, present to the anthropologist a highly complex situation to investigate. He must at the outset ask the questions, 'Who are these Ngoni? Have they a separate identity as a people, marked by distinctive social and political institutions?' After living among them for nearly a year I am convinced that it is correct to speak of the Ngoni as a distinctive group; that they themselves are very conscious of their separate identity as a people, and that they can point to certain of their institutions, notably their language and political, territorial, and kinship groupings, which are definitely Ngoni, that is, of southern origin, and which distinguish them from the people among whom they settled. The complexities of this situation involve the analysing of the ethnic elements included in this term 'Ngoni' and the determining of the sense in which it is to be used. They involve also an explanation of what is meant by the expression 'a distinctive Ngoni culture', or 'distinctive Ngoni institutions'. The anthropologist who is interested in culture contact must go further and indicate the nature of the double contact caused first by the intermingling of the Ngoni with other tribes, and then by the advent of the Europeans. It is not possible in this article to do justice to all these aspects of an intricate problem.

[1] For the purposes of this article these are the only groups which will be considered.

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 101 641

people of Mpezeni '. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is ' the thing ' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, " We are all Ngoni ". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N M 101 186 [464] N M [614]

N 829 [614]

The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, ' What is the meaning of a clan? ' they reply, ' It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many ' tribes ' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

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[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word ' clan ' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. ' Tribe ' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which ' tribe ' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the ' blanket term ' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word ' tribe ' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

N M 101 128

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts? 121 101

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *u* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups. 101 [197] [173] [829]

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore 101 619 614 563 [114] [621]

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans. [113]

178 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard
829 the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form-
[183] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state,
[177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship
[182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

● 121 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior
648 in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were
[161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[304] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-
[186] piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni. It is nevertheless recognized that the aristocrats, through their kinship links with the past, have the best knowledge; the rest listen and defer to them. For matters relating to history are no antiquarian interest to the Ngoni. It is probable that recalling history and dwelling on the great days of the past is to some extent a compensation for what the Ngoni consider the indignities of their position to-day. Yet it is also a stimulus to them to maintain their separate identity and to revere their institutions. Tradition supports rank, by recognizing the historical importance of certain clans; and rank preserves tradition because intimate knowledge is the proud monopoly of certain families.

V. Tradition and Legend as Documentation. To the anthropologist who examines the part played by tradition and legend in the culture of a people, Professor Malinowski has given an invaluable lead. He suggests that myths are the charter and documentation for traditional tribal life, 'statements of reality which live in the institutions and pursuits of the people';[1] and that legend is re-interpreted history. All peoples of whatever level of civilization interpret history in the light of their beliefs about themselves, their achievements, and their destiny. The Ngoni are no exception to this. Sometimes they relate factual history which is verifiable and accurate. At other times it is probably part fact, part fiction. Yet at all times the emphasis in, and interpretation of, tradition, has a definite purpose, and it is possible to see how a standardized form of a narrative has come to be accepted and believed in. The version of a narrative at one time was interpreted or moulded to serve a purpose. Having been established, it then moulds the thinking of the people on that particular issue. The vexed question of the supremacy of the two Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera[2] is a case in point. The basis of the story of the original dispute is the same, but the versions as told in each 'country' differ in a succession of minute details, whose arrangement and emphasis prove the point in each case. Mpezeni's historians have arranged the details to prove that he is the rightful *inkosi*; Mwambera's historians

[1] B. Malinowski. Article on Culture in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

[2] The two Paramounts at present holding these titles are grandsons of the first holders, to whom I refer as old Mpezeni.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the mental adjustments necessary to white contact. They still resent 177
white intrusion and its results, economic, administrative, and mis- 609
sionary. At the same time many of them earnestly wish for a solution of the present tension, but towards such a solution there is no easy short cut.

VIII. Conclusions. Conclusions reached after the first period of 128
field work are generally given with a certain reserve, especially in a 121
complex field such as the Ngoni present. I think, however, that the conclusions in this paper can be stated with some certainty, and as dogmatic statements they form a basis for further field work. For they set the main problems for the detailed study of the Ngoni, and also of the Ngoni as a field for observing culture contact. In this article I hope that the three chief elements in the study have emerged, namely, the problem of Ngoni society as a cultural and political unit; the culture contact problems due to the contact, and part fusion, with local tribes; and the modern culture contact problems due to European penetration.

1. The Ngoni as a group must be regarded from two points of 101
view: those who ethnically have a right to be called Ngoni, who are members of recognized Ngoni clans, with an acknowledged southern origin; and all those who live in the territory of the Ngoni Paramount Chief, and call themselves his people. These last were incorporated into the Ngoni state by the first group, who are still the ruling aristocracy, but the incorporated people now share in Ngoni 'national sentiment' and have made certain sociological changes in order to conform to Ngoni culture. It is their southern origin and their well remembered traditions of the past which confer distinctiveness on the true Ngoni, and on the state which they built. It is to their past they also turn for the charter for those institutions which are recognized as distinctively Ngoni, such as the Paramount Chieftainship, the hierarchy of rank, and patrilineal succession. Their historical origin and military achievements form also the charter for their former position as rulers of the country which they held before the advent of the Europeans.

2. The Europeans in two of the Ngoni areas destroyed the unique 177
position of the Ngoni by defeating their armies. These armies had 178

9: Read È-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Rule? There might have been a time, before the Ngoni wars, when treaties could have been made with the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs, and the Ngoni state have evolved without defeat. Policy, however, was different in those days, and strong chiefs were crushed. The demand now is for strong tribal organization which can carry on its own administration with the minimum of European interference and direction. The vital question is: has that moment gone for the Ngoni? Has their defeat, not only military, but economic and political, so taken the heart out of them, that they can no longer rebuild their tribal organization and make a success of Indirect Rule?

The answer to that question has two desiderata. One is a thorough intensive study of Ngoni society and Ngoni institutions as they exist to-day, and of the relation of the true Ngoni to those who call themselves Ngoni. The other is the willingness of Europeans, officials, missionaries, and settlers, to show some recognition of Ngoni pride in their past. The Ngoni are not children. They do not want a toy called Indirect Rule handed out to them to play with. If their political aspirations were appreciated and their racial pride acknowledged, they could make a successful synthesis between Ngoni institutions and modern administration with its concomitants of modern education and modern economic methods. They themselves discuss frequently in the men's talking places in the villages such a synthesis of Ngoni and western culture. The attempt in one area in Nyasaland to work out such a synthesis is a sign that it is not impossible. With fuller knowledge and co-operation on both sides the strength of Ngoni national sentiment might be used to make a success of the policy of Indirect Rule.

MARGARET READ.

Résumé

TRADITION ET PRESTIGE CHEZ LES NGONI

Les Ngoni sont une section des Zoulou qui habitent l'Afrique orientale. Le vocable Ngoni désigne aujourd'hui deux groupes: les descendants des clans originels qui, il y a cent cinquante ans environ, émigrèrent vers le nord et les membres des tribus assujetties et absorbées dans l'état Ngoni. Les Ngoni proprement dits forment une aristocratie, qui se distingue par la communauté clanique et la connaissance de la langue Ngoni originelle et des traditions historiques de la tribu. Leurs institutions également diffèrent de celles des tribus soumises

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The Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni

I

During the 1820s, the rise to power of the Zulu chief Chaka in South Africa led to a number of migrations to the north led by lesser chiefs who wished to avoid a clash with the Zulu armies, or who had already clashed and had been defeated. The descendants of these migrants are to-day living scattered over East Africa, from Lake Victoria to near Lourenço Marques. Many of these still call themselves Ngoni, a term derived from Nguni, a word used to describe themselves while they were still in the south. The leader of one of these Ngoni migrations was Zwangendaba, and it is his descendants who are to be found in Northern Rhodesia and elsewhere at the present time. The only group in this country recognised as Ngoni by the Administration is to be found in Fort Jameson District, under Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Formerly a tribe living in Lundazi District under Chief Magodi was officially called Ngoni, but they are now known to the Administration as Tumbuka. They represent the western salient of the old empire of Mombera, a son of Zwangendaba, whose descendant is now a chief in Nyasaland. This article deals only with the people under Chief Mpezeni.

Zwangendaba led his people northwards, fighting and taking captives as he went, crossed the Zambezi in 1835, an event that happened to coincide with a solar eclipse, and after passing through the present-day Eastern Province, died near Lake Tanganyika in about 1845. His party then split up, one son, Mpezeni, leading his followers south-westwards towards the Bemba and the Wisa in the Northern Province. From there they moved southwards, crossed the Luangwa, and settled in Petauke District. In about 1865 they moved eastwards and settled to the north of the Mpangwe Hills in Fort Jameson District. Some ten years later they went further east, and in 1881, when they were first visited by a European, they had reached

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 challenge is sent from one group of villages to another. And on the day appointed the strangers arrive walking in procession. The girls and women are dressed in their gaudiest clothes, and their heads and arms are decked with bright coloured beads, and the claws of lions and leopards. The lads carry dancing sticks and miniature shields. The strangers open the dance. The girls standing together and holding reed wands in their hands sing in chorus, while the men arranged in a great semi-circle dance and sing. Their dance is wonderfully energetic and graceful, and is executed with a rythm and unison which is fascinating. You can hear a long way off the hundred feet come down on the earth of the kraal with a thud as of one man. When they have danced for about an hour they give way to their rivals. The home villagers step in and dance for another hour. And so on they go from ten o'clock till about four. There is no mingling of men and women. And the whole exercise is chaste, healthful, and beautiful. It is quite the show piece of our village life.

•181 And now a few remarks in conclusion on their religious beliefs. I do not intend to say much on this point as one only can get at the inner meaning of their faith after long and careful investigation, and with a thorough knowledge of their language. Their religion 771 was not formulated. If you ask them about it they can tell you little or nothing. They will deny that they knew anything of God until we came. Their observances were scarcely recognised by themselves, they were the spontaneous and almost unconscious expression of a people groping after the unknown God if haply they might find Him. They recognise a spirit who presides over the universe.

776 They have a name for Him which means the great great one. But the ordinary name is the one which south of the Zambesi is used for all white men, and seems also to imply some feeling of wisdom and greatness. But they seem to have no idea of God's imminence in the world. He is rather the mighty far away Spirit to whom men cannot come. Along with this, homage is made to 771 great mountains and ancient trees, and to the strong elemental forces, as thunder and lightening. But this seems to me to be an [177] addition which has come through their residence among the Tumbuka.

769 The great pervading article in their religious life is reverence and dread of the ancestral spirits. The whole land is full of their presence. And offerings are continually made to them to appease

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PREFACE

This study is based on twenty months' fieldwork among the Fort Jameson Ngoni of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland which I undertook during 1946–9 as a research officer of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. I have already published a description of marital relations among these people as well as a general outline of their social organization. In this work I discuss their political system. I hope in a later publication to describe Ngoni village life. 114

The raw materials of the field anthropologist are the actions, sayings and writings of his informants, and I am deeply indebted to those many people who allowed me to make use of their knowledge and experience of Ngoni society and to join with them in their activities. It would be invidious to mention only some of the great number of people who helped me with my inquiries and I must content myself with this expression of gratitude and thanks to all who made my work possible. I hope that my writings do not betray their confidence or invade their privacy. I shall regard it as only a partial repayment of my debt to them if this book helps them and their neighbours to a better understanding of the world they live in.

I must, however, mention by name Paramount Chief Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., for the support which he gave my work in his country; and I have to thank Lomthunzi Cazingwa Nkhuwa, Councillor Zuwani Lukhezo Zulu III, and Mdani Kausha Tembo for the hospitality I enjoyed in their villages. M. B. Lukhero, my clerk throughout my stay in Ngoniland, introduced me to Ngoni ways of life and assisted me in my inquiries. This study is as much his as it is mine. 115 122

My fieldwork owes much to the co-operation and assistance given me by the Provincial Administration in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, by the missions and by planters and traders in the district. I am particularly indebted to Mr. D. B. Hall, District Commissioner, and Mrs. Hall for hospitality shown my family and myself, and it is a pleasure to recall the interest taken in my work by Mr. R. P. Bush, O.B.E., Secretary for African Affairs, and Mrs. Bush; Commander T. S. L. Fox-Pitt, O.B.E., R.N. (Retd.), Provincial Commissioner, and Mrs. Fox-Pitt; Mr. H. C. Bayldon, M.C., District Officer, and Mrs. Bayldon; Mr. H. J. Roberts, Provincial Education Officer, and Mrs. Roberts; Mr. M. K. Daka, Headmaster of the Ngoni Native Authority School; and in Nyasaland Mr. D. W. Saunders-Jones, O.B.E., Provincial Commissioner; 000

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

000 Mr. M. N. Gandy, Assistant District Commissioner, and Mrs. Gandy. I received much assistance from The Rev. J. C. C. Pauw and The Rev. C. R. Kok, Dutch Reformed Church Mission; Mgr. Martin, Apostolic Prefect, and P. Kneer, White Fathers Mission; Miss A. S. Field, Universities' Mission to Central Africa; and Mr. Bambury, Seventh Day Adventist Mission. I am grateful to these and to many other friends for hospitality, information and encouragement, and for providing me with such pleasant interludes in the strenuous round of fieldwork.

[121] I have written this book as a social anthropologist, and from an anthropological point of view. The kind of inquiry I made, and the way in which I have tried to handle my data, have been largely determined by the guidance and instruction I have been privileged to receive from many masters at Cambridge, Cape Town, Oxford and London. To the late Mr. J. H. Driberg, my first teacher, I am especially indebted. His stimulating manner encouraged his pupils to disagree with him, and his manifest love of his subject forced me to reject one of his main propositions, that no one should think of taking up anthropology as a career. I am also indebted to Dr. G. E. Daniel and Dr. J. C. Trevor for early encouragement. To Professors Schapera, Evans-Pritchard, Fortes and Radcliffe-Brown I owe my grounding in the problems and methods of anthropology, and I am very grateful to them for the help they have given in lecture and discussion.

This whole study has been carried out under the direction and supervision of Professor Gluckman, and my debt to him is writ large throughout this volume. His continuing encouragement, assistance and careful criticism have deeply affected my work. My colleagues of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute have also largely helped to shape this book. Dr. J. C. Mitchell has always been stimulating in our discussions on common problems, and I have been helped by discussion and argument with Dr. E. Colson and Dr. I. G. Cunnison. In the field I had the benefit of parallel data collected by my colleagues from other areas, and was fortunate in being able to visit some of them myself. My thinking and writing have been profoundly influenced by this experience of working in a group, in which each member had his own field background and his own point of view to justify to his colleagues. At the same time [122] I am most grateful to the Trustees of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute for their financial support and for the freedom allowed me in my work.

114 In the field I was fortunate in collaborating with Mr. M. G. Marwick, Colonial Research Fellow, and Mrs. Marwick, whose

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p. v]

PREFACE

THE material on which this book is based was collected during three periods in Nyasaland as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute: May–December 1935; April 1936–June 1937; July 1938–August 1939. 115 121 122

The choice had to be made whether to concentrate on one Ngoni area and omit the other, and also whether to present Ngoni culture as a common element in both areas or to regard them as separate cultural areas. I decided to gather material from northern and central Ngoniland, and accordingly spent about one-third of the time in north Nyasaland and about two-thirds in central Nyasaland. I used the Nyanja language all the time in central Ngoniland, and found that many people understood it in the north. I learned some Zulu, enough to read and hear Ngoni when spoken, but it was dying out as a language except for certain ceremonial and legal terms and expressions. Very few people spoke it in central Ngoniland; most of the older people knew it in the north and in one area it was still the language of the home in 1936. 122 197 [182]

The decision to present Ngoni culture as a common constituent of Ngoni life in all parts of Nyasaland was made after the material had been analysed. I decided also to attempt a reconstruction of Ngoni life at the time of the first European contacts, when the kingdoms were at the height of their power. Men and women were still alive, when I was in Ngoni villages, who had fought as warriors, who had organized large households, who had been present at the accession and death of the Paramounts. Their experiences were part of Ngoni culture and inseparable from much of what was regarded as essentially 'Ngoni' in the 1930's. 121

In both areas the informants were of two kinds: those who welcomed an anthropologist who would collect and record Ngoni history, patterns of social organization, and cultural behaviour of which they were intensely proud; and those who were reluctant at first to give information, either because they were Christians and had been at school and said they had 'forgotten'; or because they were suspicious of all Europeans, and did not want to speak of what to them was a treasured and hidden heritage. 115

Working in more than one language medium and bringing into the open Ngoni terms not as a rule used in the presence of Europeans presented a number of problems both of terminology and orthography. I have included a glossary of Ngoni terms used frequently in the book. There were several variations of the prefixes in common use with Ngoni words, as for example *abalumuzana*, *alumuzana*, *malumuzana*, all three of which were used in northern and central Ngoniland. The clicks, 128 193

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The clicks

193 [194] *c, x, q*, had disappeared in central Ngoniland, and were only pronounced correctly by the older Ngoni in the north. The honorific prefixes before clan names in addressing people, and before first names in reference, also varied according to area, age group and clan ranking. Apparent 104 inconsistencies in spelling which occur in the book reflect these variations.

I have adopted English translations of certain Ngoni expressions and have used them throughout without quotation marks. An obvious example is Paramount for *inkosi*; and the use of 'house' for the Ngoni institution, and 'hut' for the dwelling place.

122 I acknowledge with gratitude the Fellowship given by the International African Institute which made possible the visits to Nyasaland; the grant from the London School of Economics for the research assistants, Miss Ruth Jones and Mr. G. P. Hall, who helped me collate material; the officials and missionaries in Nyasaland who gave hospitality and assisted me in every possible way; and the African people of the Ngoni kingdoms who, as my hosts in the villages and my helpers at all times, welcomed me into their midst and gave me an insight into their Ngoni culture.

London, 1955 MARGARET READ

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maravi FR4
Tumbuka FR6

N 576

leave after meeting, withdrawing after a case in court, and initiating or concluding many other formal or less formal occasions. Children were taught to use the correct expressions and rebuked if they made a mistake, and it was one of the requirements in Ngoni families that a uniform standard of verbal politeness should accompany correct behaviour in posture.

CULTURAL AFFINITIES AND DIFFERENCES

N M 121 122

The anthropologist working in Nyasaland is aware of the problems inherent in any attempt to isolate cultural features within any of the larger ethnic groups found there. There were no ethnographic field studies published of any of the other ethnic groups when I was working among the Ngoni. Mary Tew, in *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*,[1] referred to scattered sources published before 1939, to which I had access; and from time to time Cewa informants wrote accounts of particular social institutions or ritual, from which I was able to make certain comparisons with Ngoni ritual and institutions. Some of the earlier accounts, such as that by Hodgson on the Cewa and Ngoni in the Dowa district,[2] assumed that all the cultural changes and 'borrowings' had been by the Ngoni from their Cewa neighbours, whereas I found in that area in 1939 Cewa villages where Ngoni cultural elements had been adopted.

N M 114 177

N M T 105

Ngoni cultural affinities with South-eastern Bantu	*Local tribal differences*	
Paramount and subordinate chiefs	Chiefs; no central authority except in Henga and Ngonde	
Patrilineal descent Virilocal residence Marriage by *lobola*	Cewa and southern Tumbuka	Matrilineal descent, uxorilocal residence, marriage witnesses
	Henga	Patrilineal descent and virilocal residence
Clan exogamy " hierarchy Houses Age sets	Cewa	No clan exogamy " " hierarchy *Mbumba* group Girls' initiation schools
Cattle complex Ancestor cult associated with cattle	Tumbuka Cewa in Dedza district	Formerly cattle-owners but no terminology left and no association with ancestor cult
Burial customs: in skin near krsal	Cewa and Tumbuka	Graves outside village; buried in a mat

[1] Tew, M., op. cit.
[2] Hodgson, A. G. O. 'Notes on the Achewa and Angoni of Dowa District, Nyasaland.' *J. Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1933, pp. 126–64.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE REV. ALEXANDER HETHERWICK, D.D.

114 THE author of the following book has been for some years located among the Nyanja-speaking tribes of British Central Africa at Blantyre, and afterwards in Central Angoniland. His occupation as a member of the African Lakes Corporation has brought him into close contact with the native
• 122 population of these districts. He has taken advantage of his opportunities to familiarize himself with the native language, of which he has acquired a very competent knowledge. In the course of his
126 studies he made a collection of native folk-lore and stories which illustrate in the fullest degree the various constructions, idioms and grammatical forms of the language. These he has now published with the coöperation of the Directors of the Corporation.

121 The book is of value as containing examples of native life, habits and customs which are rapidly disappearing from the country before the advance of civilization and the work of Christian missions. The coming generation of natives will grow up under
[178] new influences, and the habits of thought and belief that ruled the lives of their fathers will soon be forgotten. Collections of folk-lore such as this book contains are therefore invaluable for the light they throw on a state of native life that is rapidly passing away.

To get into the heart of the native mind is a task well-nigh impossible for a European. The nearest

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

past, and what of their present, will be clear to one who has made a more minute study of their Zulu ancestors than the writer had time or opportunity to do. Whatever be of merit in this little work, the writer owes to the Rev. Alexander Hetherwick, D.D., to whose kindness and courtesy in teaching him Chinyanja, when he first came to the country, he owes all that is best in his knowledge of the language.

MANDALA,
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA,
January 1, 1906.

[X is blank]

about a sick relative. He asked for a preliminary payment in cash from 756
me before he would say anything in front of me, having already received 787
the customary present of fowls from the sick man's relatives. There was an atmosphere of part pantomime, part reluctant performance in front of a stranger whose presence seemed to trouble him more than it did his clients. He wore a python-skin cap with beads dangling from it, and [293]
carried the tail of a black cow bound with lead and a small skin bag with the lots in it. At first he sat holding the tail in his hands and sniffing it occasionally. Then he suddenly shook the lots out of the bag—six large beans called *kulumo* and about twenty small round nuts called *mapi*. He put snuff on the top of each bean, sprinkled snuff on the nuts, picked the nuts up in both hands, shook his hands together and threw the nuts on the ground. Some fell near the big beans, others rolled between them. He looked intently at them, then at the group waiting to consult him. 'There is someone who is sick,' he said to them and the group replied '*Siyavuma*' (we agree). They continued to chant *siyavuma* in a low tone over and over again, with an almost mesmeric effect. He meantime went on to describe the sickness, that it was a pain inside the man (the chanting was loud), that it had been on the right side (less response), in the stomach (less response), on the left side (loud response). At intervals he waved the tail in the air and knocked the leaded end on the ground to emphasize the louder response. He did not specify the complaint but advised the people consulting him to go home and kill a goat as a sacrifice to their ancestors, and give the sick man some medicines which he would sell them.

It may have been the mixture of a real consultation with my visit which produced his slightly mountebank performance, and it may also have been his combination of the role of diviner with peddling medicines which the people present for the consultation evidently expected to obtain from him. This aspect of his performance impressed itself on the Ngoni informant who was with me. He was slightly contemptuous [565]
throughout, even when the songs were being sung and taken down. He kept on muttering 'This is Nsenga,' and said afterwards as we were going away that this diviner worked only for ordinary people and their sickness, as witnessed by his telling them to sacrifice a goat, and that he [554]
would not have been acknowledged by the real Ngoni. He was making comparisons all the time between the 'people of the head' and the diviners of this type, illustrating the Ngoni esteem for the real dreamers, and the slight, sometimes great, contempt for those who combined divining with recommending medicines as remedies.

The contrast between the performance of this diviner and that of the 123 ●
two *izanusi* whom I saw at work in the central kingdom was considerable. 791
My long residence in Mcakhatha and the entrée I had to all that was taking place in connexion with the sickness of Bambo Manga no doubt helped to give confidence to the diviners. The chief and his

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

123 brother arranged for first one *isanusi* and then, when he became ill, for another to come and see me. In each case they concluded that I was 791 consulting them and foretold what would happen and gave me advice, warning and assurance. There was great seriousness of purpose and no mountebank atmosphere, even though they came to the courtyard of my hut and saw round them all the paraphernalia of a European's camping equipment.

791 The first diviner, who was of a Venda clan, was a very old man and greatly respected and trusted by the Nzunga clan, who were looking after Bambo Manga in Mcakhatha and who had called him several times to divine for them during her illness. His story was that he was the son of an *isanusi* and when the signs of his initiation began to appear before he reached puberty, his father recognized the fainting and the pain and refusal to eat, and said 'This child will be a diviner also.' The spirit who came to him in dreams was his father's father who had died south of the Zambesi, where his father had been born.

This man was very definite about the kind of situations for which he could and would divine and the type of advice he would give. Questioned further on this point, he gave in this order: sickness, journeys, auspicious days for holding an *ngoma* dance or a hunt, 'absent treatment' of relatives in trouble in the south asked for by letter, sickness of cattle, moving a village to a new site. He refused contemptuously any divining about stealing or death, or agricultural practices such as choosing new gardens or beginning cultivation. Neither he nor the people with him made any specific reference to the different roles of an *isanusi* among the Ngoni and the local Cewa and other tribes, but since they used the same terms for divining, *kuombeza maula* (to throw the lots), they were careful to point out what the Ngoni diviners did *not* do. In the case of sickness due [755] to 'spirits troubling', of auspicious days for journeys and other events, of cattle sickness, of moving villages, his invariable advice was to sacrifice a beast to the spirits. Most of the inquiries addressed to him were about sickness. When such an inquiry came to him in his village, he smelled his medicines and asked of *his* ancestral spirit 'Is the man likely to live or not? Who is troubling him? What shall he do?'

787 The first occasion on which I saw him divine was in the hut of a widow of the former chief, Njolomole I, which had been newly swept 791 and a new fire made. The chief and his uncle sat on either side of the fire, the diviner on the right-hand side of the door and I on the left on the woman's side. The diviner was told to begin. He pulled out his *ntibo*, the stem of a gourd, which was wrapped in bark and cloth and had inside it the medicine, and which was waxed at each end. He scraped bits of the *nsika* root into a pot with a little water in it. He put the *ntibo* in the water for a moment and then took it out and rubbed it in his hands. He put it under a flat food basket and swept his hand over the top of the basket once or twice before putting the pot on top. He gazed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

867 Correction of bad behaviour, even if thoughtless or careless, was just as often carried out by older children as by adults. I used to hold a 'children's hour' now and then round [123] the fire in my compound, or a honey party if I had been given some wild honey. These occasions were open to all and were enthusiastically organized by the older children of leading Ngoni families. They pushed the children into some sort of order, whether sitting or standing, or marching round the honey-pot to stick one finger in and lick it as they passed. When we were sitting round the fire there was always due regard for family ranking, the places immediately on my right and left being the places of honour. Children of non-Ngoni families were sharply rebuked if they failed to respond to my greeting or say farewell, and shyness was never admitted as an excuse. Scathing remarks were dealt out to any who did not say the correct formal thanks for the honey. 'You, fellow-villager, you are with the Ngoni now. Say "thank you" to the lady or she will think you are a wild animal from the bush, unable to speak.' Bad behaviour was not only corrected by adults with beating and rebukes. Sometimes the more 867 indirect form of a proverb was used, especially to correct un- 538 kindness, lack of generosity, boasting or bragging. When someone said with biting emphasis: 'Strength breaks the handle,' it was enough to deflate a young (or an old) braggart. When children plagued their elders to give them something, they rounded on the children with: 'Give! Give! that is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.' This was invariably effective with Ngoni children who hung their heads in shame at the very idea of being thought the child of a captive. Proverbs, except ones like those quoted which were very often used, were generally enigmatic, and the meaning was hidden rather than obvious. In a mixed gathering of children and adults, a proverb might suddenly be dropped like a stone into a pond. The conversation rippled away into silence, and the boy or girl who had refused to share some peanuts or had been boasting began to wonder

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

N 101 186 619 191 Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indunas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the N [123] aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see N [563] how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

N 105 101 186 As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans N M 177 182 and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, 'We taught them to honour their sons' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

N 123 186 After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

 123 186

the reason for this enthusiasm about being 'written up'. 'At last', he said, 'someone will know about us.' He went on to speak with regret about the old days when one or two missionaries and others really knew about the Ngoni and could speak their language. He then spoke with bitterness about the present, lamenting that the Ngoni were no longer regarded as a great people. Gradually it became evident that the Ngoni, being very conscious themselves of their distinctive cultural identity, and of their positive achievements in setting up the Ngoni state, expect other people to recognize this too. They keep constantly before them memories of their past greatness, and they dwell gloomily on the coming of the Europeans which marked the end of their ascendancy.

IV. THE HISTORICAL SENSE OF THE NGONI. From the beginning of my stay among the Ngoni the chiefs and leading men impressed on me the importance of knowing about their past. In each area the Paramount Chief arranged that 'historians', that is, old men accredited by him as having correct information, should come to dictate Ngoni history to me. At first this relating of history took place in public before any who liked to listen. The old historians, however, grizzled warriors of many fights, trembled and stammered in giving their accounts, because the Paramount Chief so impressed on them the importance of the occasion, and pulled them up sharply when they hesitated over names or events. At the subsequent private sittings, where the old men could argue fiercely with each other without any fear of causing shame before an audience, the accounts were much more coherent, and, as the Paramount Chief assured me, correct. After one such taking down of history in the Paramount's village, I went to stay in the village of one of these 'historians', a very much respected *mulumuzana* and one of the 'best families'. He gently but firmly put aside my scheme of studying village organization and economic life, saying, 'First you ought to know about our beginnings'.[1] After giving me still more detailed accounts of Ngoni history, he explained that though much of their social life was mixed up to-day with that of other tribes, their history and traditions were distinct and belonged to them alone. Hence I ought to have it written 814 124

[1] He used the verb *kudauka*, which implies root or origin.

returned between the years 1855–1865, to settle in their present habitat. The earlier part of the period was one of exploring and of conquest. The later part was the time of settlement and consolidation, during which the Ngoni 'states' emerged in the form in which they were found, when the Europeans first arrived. N 173 167

The Ngoni in Mpezeni's country, when speaking of this time, call it *chamtendere* (the time of peace). Any white travellers' tales referring to these years lay stress on the constant raids carried out by the Ngoni, the fierceness of their warriors, and their ravaging of the countryside for slaves and cattle. It was obviously a time of frequent wars. Why then do the Ngoni call it a time of peace? I have asked this question of many men of rank and standing and they give one invariable reply, 'We call it *chamtendere* because the *Azungu* (Europeans) were not there to trouble us'. This statement is in effect the key to Ngoni thinking about the days of pre-white contact, and also about the advent of the Europeans. The way in which they speak of *chamtendere* is itself significant. I first heard it during a long recital of Ngoni history, and stopped the narrator to ask the meaning of the word. There was instantly an embarrassed silence and self-conscious grins in the group. The word had evidently slipped out unawares, for later on they told me that it was a word they only used among themselves. Having once been used, however, it appeared frequently in conversations with me, and proved a useful starting-point for accounts of the organization of their own state and the effects on it of the European advent. 'Ah, *chamtendere*', they say, with a deep sigh, 'then we were people'. It proved also to be a pass-word to their confidence, for whenever I mentioned *chamtendere* to a village headman, he and his notables nudged each other, and laughed and said, 'She can know about us'. When pressed to be more specific about this 'troubling' by the *Azungu* they spoke of taxes, of the ban upon raiding and warfare, of young men being called away to work, of their land being taken for European farms. These restrictions and disabilities caused by white contact they regarded as warfare, that is, as troubled times, because the Europeans forcibly prevented them from doing as they liked, just as they had done in their day to the surrounding tribes. The conquered tribes, on the other hand, naturally hailed the advent of the Europeans as a time of peace and security. Therein lies the chief

N 173 829 [721]

N [186]

N [123]

N [648]

M 173 829 184

173 made friends with old Mpezeni and finally made Luangeni, Mpezeni's
648 head village, his head-quarters. He obtained mining rights in the land
[423] from Mpezeni by word of mouth, but Mpezeni signed no deed of gift or transfer. This legal point which subsequently became one of the major points at issue in the North Charterland Company case has been emphasized again and again to me in the villages. 'Mpezeni was writing nothing. He was only giving presents to Weise, and
[431] Weise gave presents to him, and Mpezeni was saying, "You may travel in my country and dig for gold. You are my friend."' They add further, 'Mpezeni did not want to make friends with the British
[648] because he had heard from the Matabele and from Nyasaland what they were doing. Weise said "I am not from the British", and so Mpezeni was making promises with him.' So deeply is this tradition of friendship between Mpezeni and Weise, with its consequences of betrayal and disaster, embedded in the Ngoni thinking, that when I stayed in the Paramount Chief's village and exchanged presents with
[123] him, many old people shook their heads and warned the young people, 'The *Azungu* war will come again. This is how that other war was beginning.'

Weise failed to establish his claim to mining rights in Mpezeni's
175 territory with Sir Harry Johnston, then Commissioner for all British
648 territories north of the Zambezi. Meantime the British South Africa Company obtained a new charter to extend its field north of the Zambezi, and sent an emissary to Mpezeni's kraal to make a treaty with him. Mpezeni refused. He also refused Sir Harry Johnston's emissary who met Weise at Mpezeni's kraal with a view to getting Mpezeni to make a treaty direct with the British Crown. The mining rights in Mpezeni's country were potentially valuable, and on Mpezeni's refusal to grant them were claimed by the British South Africa Company[1] on the ground of treaties made with the conquered Chewa people, whom Mpezeni had dispossessed.[2] Weise was at this time at Mpezeni's with one or two Portuguese traders and officials, making hay while the sun shone.

[1] 'Finding Mpezeni obdurate the British South Africa Company concluded treaties with all the surrounding indigenous chiefs whom Mpezeni had dispossessed. We consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief.'

[2] F.O. 6537.

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed.

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NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa.

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Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1825.

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In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques.

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It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son.

[595]

1 [induna = military leader -- Analyst]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

AFTER the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

NGONI WARFARE IN OLD DAYS

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligubo* dance along with others.

[P. 28 is blank]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(*b*) At first I died and when I rose up again I felt the wind of the spirits. My dying was my initiation. This *ukutwasa* was like that of the moon when it is new. I began to speak and speak and I danced with the python skin on my head. Then the people tested me whether I had bad or good spirits and after that I began to divine. The spirit of my grandfather, he has told me about this work. I am talking with his spirit when the horn is going round. 791

The fact of my being in Mcakhatha during the illness and death of Bambo Manga, and witnessing all the attendant ritual, gave me many opportunities of discussing the role of diviners in the ancestor cult, as well as of observing two of them at work. No such opportunity presented itself in the northern kingdom, but the role of the diviner was very fully discussed with leading Ngoni in Ekwendeni, Ezondweni and Hoho, and the account given by Cibambo at the beginning of this chapter was partly the result of these talks. 124 791

I have made several references to the graded hierarchy among the diviners, though I have not made any connexion between those diviners who either prophesied or made a diagnosis and those others, whether they were called *izanusi* or *izing'anga*, who made a diagnosis and also gave treatment through medicines. I have limited the analysis here to the diviners who operated through their own ancestral spirits and who, by virtue of this contact of theirs, claimed to be able to interpret the will of the ancestral spirits of the Ngoni clans. It was a notable fact that very few of the famous diviners, and none of the less well-known, were of Swazi clans, though the one true prophet in the story of the slaughter at Mabiri was of a Swazi clan. Two great *izinduna* and *alumuzana*, who were also dreamers and prophets, Gwaza Jere in the north and Golozela Nzunga in the central kingdom, were of Swazi clans. So also was the famous woman diviner NaNdumbu. It appeared that the capacity to become a diviner and the successful practice of the art was very unusual among the leading Ngoni. They depended therefore on men of lesser trans-Zambesi and cis-Zambesi clans to perform these duties for them. The attitude shown by leading Ngoni towards the diviners, already referred to, may have been partly a rationalization of their dependence on this kind of skill as well as on force of arms. It may also have been due to the necessity, admitted somewhat reluctantly, of using men of lower social status, that is of cis-Zambesi clans, for such vital services to the nation and to their own families. The Ngoni had a strong pragmatic streak which led them to suspect knowledge and skill which could not be reduced to concrete terms, and hence they were always ready to accuse the less well accredited diviners of lying and deceit. 791

In spite of Ngoni doubts and suspicions about the class of diviners as a whole, within their kingdoms these persons were recognized as specialists for certain reasons. They had all been through the experience described as *ukutwasa*. It began with physical symptoms, such as fainting, 791 158

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] [191] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-[162] [592] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces-[361] sible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in-[342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was [871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [797] mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

away from the other two. They were the four most accessible 121
from my base camp, built at a site chosen by the Administration. I was able to compare their size, history, and kinship structure with those of many other villages I visited, and as far as I could tell they were in these respects fairly typical Ngoni villages. They form a 128
sample of approximately one per cent of the whole of the Fort Jameson Ngoni.

The tables in which the units are individuals or extant marriages (III, IV, IX, X, XIII and XIV) are based on the marital histories of the men and woman normally resident in those villages during the latter part of 1948, in one village, and during the earlier part of 1949 in the other five. In Tables I, II, V to VIII, XI and XII, where the units are marriages and not individuals, I have drawn on the histories of men and women who lived in these villages as wedded people for at least part of the time from 1946 to 1949. I endeavoured to interview the whole population but failed to do so for various reasons. I was [124] ●
however, able to determine who was, and who was not, a resident in these villages, and can therefore indicate the number of people who could have been included in this six-village sample had more been known about them. Some of my interviews were only partial.

In Tables V to VIII, which deal with the incidence and magnitude of marriage payments, each marriage is classified by the decade in which it began. This is not necessarily the decade in which the payment was made, for as we have noted payments are sometime made after many years of marriage. Unfortunately I do not have enough information to classify by the decade of payment.

In the tables I have used the word 'wedded' to refer to all people who had ever been married, whether or not they were currently married at the time of inquiry.

It will be seen from Table III that in this sample there was no 162
unwedded man over the age of twenty-four, and, out of a total of 589
116 wedded men, there were only one widower and seven men whose last marriage had ended in divorce and who had not remarried. From Table IV we see that there was only one unwedded woman over the age of nineteen, but that there were as many as 31 widows who had not remarried. Only about a half, 122 out of 223, of the wedded women were living with their husbands.

Marriage is then an experience that sooner or later comes to nearly 581
every man or woman, although not every adult lives all the time in a simple family of procreation. Nevertheless, the ties forged by marriage remain, and the results of marriage extend beyond the wedding ceremony and beyond the domestic association of man and wife. It is the sexual activities of individuals that are most closely regulated by the fact of marriage. In succession to office and wealth, marriage, as we shall see, plays nowadays a permissive rather than a determining role. It is only by means of the symbolic acts which form part of marriage that a man can be reasonably sure of acquiring rights over his wife and the custody of his children. Yet he may,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 in childbirth the husband is held to be responsible at least in part.
593 He must pay one cow[19] to the dead woman's kin to appease them. It is said that if bridewealth has been paid the man need not pay another beast, but that the woman's relatives would take a beast from the bridewealth and kill that in order to mourn their kinswoman.

593 The separation of interest that continues even after a marriage has been contracted is demonstrated by the payments which husband and wife are required to make to each other. Although they use many things in common, their possessions are thought of as belonging either to the one or the other. A man may own chickens, although his wife looks after them for him, while a woman may own a beast and let her husband care for it. If husband and wife quarrel the one who apologizes may offer a chicken to the other to make peace. These payments are in part enforced by public opinion

Table VIII. Incidence of legalization payment, by decades

583
178

Legalization payment	Date of marriage									Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	
Offered and accepted ..	1	4	15	34	33	30	83	13	3	216
Offered but refused	–	–	–	1	–	1	3	–	–	5
Not offered ..	–	9	12	21	29	27	30	3	4	135
Total	1	13	27	56	62	58	116	16	7	356
Ratio of offers to total number ..	100%	31%	56%	63%	53%	53%	74%	81%	—	62%
Not known if offer was made or accepted ..	1	3	7	6	14	11	17	8	3	70
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

124 Informants

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	122	135	90·4
Women	232	251	92·4
Total	354	386	91·7

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 122

[19] Called *mulumo*, from the Nsenga verb, *ku-luma*, to bite or chew. The corresponding payment among the Cewa is said to be called *mlupa* or *nlupa*. Cf. Young, op. cit., p. 62.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

woman who lived near the place where he was working, with the idea of taking her as his third wife. Ruth, the great wife, was living with Zachariah at the time, and tried to prevent him from marrying this woman. Zachariah desisted but then became so angry with Ruth that he gave her sixpence and said she was divorced. She went back to her village, saying she would get a divorce in the court. She stayed at her father's village for some time and then went back to her husband. 159 593 586

In October there was another quarrel between Ruth and Zachariah. According to Zachariah he told his wife to bring some tobacco from inside the hut and she refused, whereupon there was a fight. Ruth took the matter to court, complaining that in the fight Zachariah had hurt her so

Table XI. Divorce ratios

586

Ratio	Value
A	28·5% (115/403)
B	55·8% (115/206)
C	36·9% (115/312)

Legend

A The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages

B The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all completed marriages

C The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages except those ended by death

124

Informants

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	117	136	86·0
Women	222	251	88·4
Total	339	387	87·6

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 111

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

Table XIII. Residence of husband and wife, 1948-9

591

Wife's residence	Husband's residence: Rural	Husband's residence: Away	Total
Intra-village	22·8% (31)	26% (12)	23·6% (43)
Virilocal	52·9% (72)	30% (14)	47·3% (86)
Uxorilocal	17·6% (24)	43% (20)	24·2% (44)
Neither related ..	1·5% (2)	0% (0)	1·1% (2)
Separated	5·1% (7)	—	3·8% (7)
Total	100·0% (136)	100% (46)	100·0% (182)

Legend

Rural	Husband living in a village within thirty miles of his wife, either permanently or part-time.
Away	Husband living permanently on a farm, in Fort Jameson township or more than thirty miles away from his wife.
Intra-village	Wife living in a village to which both she and her husband belong.
Virilocal	Wife living in her husband's village which is not her own village.
Uxorilocal	Wife living in her own village which is not her husband's village.
Neither related	Wife living in a village to which neither she nor her husband belong.
Separated	Wife and husband living in different villages and separated from each other.

124 ●

Informants		Used	Potential	% Used
	Men	98	108	91
	Women	175	175	100
	Total	273	283	96

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 110

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

 123

the reason for this enthusiasm about being 'written up'. 'At last', he said, 'someone will know about us.' He went on to speak with regret about the old days when one or two missionaries and others really knew about the Ngoni and could speak their language. He then spoke with bitterness about the present, lamenting that the Ngoni were no longer regarded as a great people. Gradually it became evident that the Ngoni, being very conscious themselves of their distinctive cultural identity, and of their positive achievements in setting up the Ngoni state, expect other people to recognize this too. They keep constantly before them memories of their past greatness, and they dwell gloomily on the coming of the Europeans which marked the end of their ascendancy.

IV. The Historical Sense of the Ngoni. From the beginning of my stay among the Ngoni the chiefs and leading men impressed on me the importance of knowing about their past. In each area the Paramount Chief arranged that 'historians', that is, old men accredited by him as having correct information, should come to dictate Ngoni history to me. At first this relating of history took place in public before any who liked to listen. The old historians, however, grizzled warriors of many fights, trembled and stammered in giving their accounts, because the Paramount Chief so impressed on them the importance of the occasion, and pulled them up sharply when they hesitated over names or events. At the subsequent private sittings, where the old men could argue fiercely with each other without any fear of causing shame before an audience, the accounts were much more coherent, and, as the Paramount Chief assured me, correct. After one such taking down of history in the Paramount's village, I went to stay in the village of one of these 'historians', a very much respected *makwazana* and one of the 'best families'. He gently but firmly put aside my scheme of studying village organization and economic life, saying, 'First you ought to know about our beginnings'.[1] After giving me still more detailed accounts of Ngoni history, he explained that though much of their social life was mixed up to-day with that of other tribes, their history and traditions were distinct and belonged to them alone. Hence I ought to have it written

[1] He used the verb *kukuula*, which implies root or origin.

814 down fully and correctly. When I arrived in Chief Gomani's country,
124 after having stayed in the other two Ngoni areas, the chiefs and leading
[114] men whom he called to see me asked at once, 'What did the other Ngoni do to show you they were Ngoni? *We* want you first to hear the story of our people.' If I said to any older man of good standing, that is of a true Ngoni clan, 'Tell me about the Ngoni', he invariably began with the traditions of the south and their trek north.

173 I have some fifteen long texts[1] of Ngoni history, most of which
[126] begin with the stories of Dingiswayo and Zwidi, leading on to the rise of Chaka and the Ngoni exodus from the south. These texts not only show a measure of agreement with each other, but they also are verifiable by established history as recorded by Europeans. Those texts which came from Gomani's country contain different material after the exodus from the south. For the Ngoni under the leadership of the
[614] Maseko clan came north with Mzilikazi and the Matabele, and crossing the Zambesi alone, went east of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika.[2] The main Ngoni group under the Jere clan went west of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika, and remained a united group until the death of Zwangendaba in 1848. A disputed succession followed and the Ngoni split up under two rival Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera. The history
[814] of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one, the only one to whom the royal salute *Bayete* should be given. Mpezeni's historians say, 'Mwambera snatched *Bayete*'—and vice versa. In spite of these divergences in later history, however, the Ngoni point to their earlier
619 history and say, 'You see we are all one people'. They are conscious
829 of, and troubled about, their present divisions and inclined to attribute them to our premature arrival in the country. 'You came too soon. We would have fought until there was only one *inkosi*.'

814 The detailed knowledge of Ngoni history is regarded as the province of a specialist. 'How can a man of no wisdom remember all those names?' From time to time 'historians' tell episodes of this traditional history in the villages of the Paramount or of other im-

[1] 800–1,000 words.

[2] This is their own account and is confirmed by the Rev. Charles Stuart, formerly at Ekwendeni, but not so far recorded by other Europeans.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all
178 the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment
535 of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well pre-
301 served by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or
126 Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom
192 were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used
197 in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to
[194] make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

N 251 511 [U26]

The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages

(February 1941)

N [162]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,710

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [361] N [U66]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 311 511

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

L 161 311 511 000

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE REV. ALEXANDER HETHERWICK, D.D.

114 THE author of the following book has been for some years located among the Nyanja-speaking tribes of British Central Africa at Blantyre, and afterwards in Central Angoniland. His occupation as a member of the African Lakes Corporation has brought him into close contact with the native 122 population of these districts. He has taken advantage of his opportunities to familiarize himself with the native language, of which he has acquired a very competent knowledge. In the course of his • 126 studies he made a collection of native folk-lore and stories which illustrate in the fullest degree the various constructions, idioms and grammatical forms of the language. These he has now published with the coöperation of the Directors of the Corporation.

121 The book is of value as containing examples of native life, habits and customs which are rapidly disappearing from the country before the advance of civilization and the work of Christian missions. The coming generation of natives will grow up under [178] new influences, and the habits of thought and belief that ruled the lives of their fathers will soon be forgotten. Collections of folk-lore such as this book contains are therefore invaluable for the light they throw on a state of native life that is rapidly passing away.

To get into the heart of the native mind is a task well-nigh impossible for a European. The nearest

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

814 down fully and correctly. When I arrived in Chief Gomani's country,
124 after having stayed in the other two Ngoni areas, the chiefs and leading men whom he called to see me asked at once, 'What did the other
[114] Ngoni do to show you they were Ngoni? *We* want you first to hear the story of our people.' If I said to any older man of good standing, that is of a true Ngoni clan, 'Tell me about the Ngoni', he invariably began with the traditions of the south and their trek north.

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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

work lay in my vicinity, and with Miss P. M. Deane, Colonial Research Fellow, who visited Ngoniland and who kindly placed her data at my disposal. Their researches threw much light on my own. 114

The literature on the Ngoni is considerable, and my work has been helped by the reports of earlier writers. Professor Read visited the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1935, and those of my informants who had met her recalled her visit with great pleasure. I was often able to allay suspicion by explaining that I was trying to do the same kind of work as she had done earlier. In addition to published reports I have made considerable use of official dispatches and other archival material relating to the conquest of the Ngoni by the British in 1898. 127

For kind permission to quote from other works, I am indebted to the Oxford University Press and the International African Institute (in respect of *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* by Meyer Fortes), the Director of Agriculture, Northern Rhodesia Government (*The Soils, Vegetation and Agriculture of North-Eastern Rhodesia* by C. G. Trapnell), and The Editor, *Scottish Geographical Magazine* ('A Trip to Northern Angoniland', by H. Crawford Angus). 000

In preparing this book, I have to thank Miss D. Goldstein and Mr. J. Paing for help with diagrams and maps. Professors Schapera and Evans-Pritchard, Dr. Peristiany and Dr. Kaberry read the manuscript and I have been very grateful for their comments. Finally, I would thank my wife for companionship and assistance in the field, and for unremitting help in the arduous task of writing.

J. A. B.

Meling, Norway
1952

Postscript:

Since this book has gone to press, the British territories of Central Africa have been united in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. This momentous step in the development of the region has been accompanied by a major shift in the balance of power between the Administration, the White settlers and the indigenous African population. I do not know in detail how the Ngoni people have responded to this change. Federation was a topic of conversation among them even while I was carrying out this study, and several Ngoni men have been prominent in the political negotiations of the last four years. It seems, therefore, highly likely that the operation of the political structure discussed in the last two chapters 648

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

171 The distinctiveness of Ngoni institutions, so often emphasized by the older men and by the early travellers in Nyasaland, was due to cultural affinities with the South-eastern Bantu. The attached table sets out those social and cultural elements in the Ngoni kingdoms which were most distinct from parallel features among the neighbouring peoples, and which had obvious affinity with South-eastern Bantu cultures. The main Ngoni cultural elements have already been referred to in this chapter and will be further discussed in the rest of this study. The corresponding elements among the local peoples are based partly on the [127] earlier sources quoted by Tew and partly on local informants and my 114] own observations. In collecting information about clans, the *mbumba* group consisting of a man with his sisters' children, and the girls' initiation schools, I had no direct contacts with any except Cewa sources.

Variations in cultural conformity among the Ngoni

178 In the Ngoni kingdoms among families with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names there was considerable variation in the degree to 184 which they maintained Ngoni institutions and practised Ngoni cultural forms. The anthropologist was constantly aware that the time element was an important factor in the consolidation of Ngoni practices and in the attitudes developed towards Ngoni culture among the individuals in the different generations. The Ngoni in both kingdoms spoke of the 'older generations' (*mibadwo wa kale*), 'the middle generations' (*mibadwo wa mpkati*), and 'the present generation' (*mibadwo wa tsopano*). The first had grown to adulthood before the Europeans came, and were the older senior men and women in the 1930's; the second had been affected by [172] European missionaries, traders, and officials while they were young men and women; the third had never known anything but European contacts and many had grown up in European schools. The senior Ngoni of the [181] older generation often expressed the sentiment: *zatha zonse tsopano* (everything is finished now). They included in that saying the regrets of the older Ngoni for their former independence, and their resentment at the domination of European rule and European culture. It is idle to 177 speculate what cultural changes might have taken place in the Ngoni 178 kingdoms if European influence had been postponed another twenty to thirty years. Nevertheless it is a vital factor in assessing Ngoni culture that the kingdoms had barely twenty years of independent existence before the Europeans began to penetrate Nyasaland. The older Ngoni [181] looked back on their former independent existence as a golden age in which they were spreading Ngoni customs and culture as well as exercising political supremacy. It is difficult to believe that this was wholly true, in view of the extensive cultural interchange going on in the country as a whole. It is, however, possible that wider acceptance of Ngoni cultural elements was prevented by the advent of the Europeans, in so far as cultural institutions and political dominance were closely

INTRODUCTION

MARRIAGE among the Ngoni is much the same as anywhere else. 581
It establishes a relationship between a man and a woman, regulates their sexual activities, locates their children in the kinship system and influences the inheritance of their property. These general features, however, do no more than define and identify marriage, and distinguish marriage from concubinage. Our task 121
is to analyse the particular features that distinguish Ngoni marriage from other marriage systems and to relate marriage to other institutions and social processes in Ngoni society.

In Ngoni history there has always been marriage. Indeed men and 581
women look back longingly to a past when people married properly 183
and decorously, and when adulterers were killed, and bemoan the promiscuity of the present when no woman's fidelity is certain. Yet even now old people still expect their juniors to marry and their expectations are fulfilled. Adults are assumed to be married, and the assumption is justified.

Marriage is seen by the Ngoni as part of the natural order. [589]
Unmarried adults cannot fill important roles and are regarded as overgrown children whose anomalous condition must be explained by reference to a malady or a physical or moral defect. Yet despite the universal and permanent character of marriage as an Ngoni institution there have been, in the course of the hundred and thirty [178]
years which constitute Ngoni history, great changes in the procedures and implications of marriage and in its relations to other aspects of the social life of which it is a part. These changes have been paralleled in other Ngoni institutions, in law, in local organization, in religion and above all in political structure. In this paper we 121
shall attempt to contrast the institution of marriage as seen at two stages in Ngoni history and to relate it to the general plan of social life at these two periods. We shall also discuss some of the processes of change that have brought about the differences we observe and which to some extent are still at work in contemporary Ngoni society.

It is convenient to compare marriage as it was during the 1890's 129
and as it is at the present day. The information relating to the 121
earlier period is contained only to a slight extent in contemporary [127]
documents,[1] and consists largely in the recollections of older men and women as recorded by a number of writers from 1914 onwards. The

[1] The most important of these are Wiese's articles, 'Expedição portugueza a M'Pesêne (1889)', in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, x (1891) pp. 235-73, 331-430, 465-97, and xi (1892) pp. 373-599. (All page references cited are from Vol. X); and 'Beitrage zür Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambezi, namentlich der Angoni,' *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1900), pp. 181-200.

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[2]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[2] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 of life than their neighbours, largely at the expense of those neigh-
167 bours. It is therefore not surprising that at least some of the more
648 adventurous of the hunted should have decided to join the ranks of
727 the hunters.
[511]

In Tanganyika the activities of the Arabs and other slave traders brought about significant changes in Ngoni society earlier
173 than in the less accessible Nyasa region. The Ngoni in Tanganyika
648 did not regard their neighbours merely as enemies. Ngoni warriors formed part of the army of Mirambo, the Nyamwezi slave trader. An elaborate network of joking relationships seems to have regulated intercourse between the tribes of Tanganyika and the Tanganyika Ngoni were linked to many of their neighbours in this way.[41] Joking relationships of this kind did not develop among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. In recent times, however, Ngoni from Fort Jameson have come into contact on the Copperbelt and elsewhere with tribes such as the Bemba who have developed a joking relationship with other Ngoni groups. These joking relationships are now extended to the Fort Jameson men.

From this historical account we are able to gain some idea of
173 Ngoni polity during the mid-nineteenth century. We have restricted
128 our attention to the relations existing between major portions of the State and between the State and its neighbours. We have seen how forms of organization, in particular the lineage system, with which the Ngoni began their march, were modified in conformity with the peculiar conditions of migrant brigandage. In the next chapter we shall look more closely at the internal organization of the State and attempt to analyse the social processes at work within it.

[41] See the writings of Moreau, Pedler, Scrivener and Spies.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Two

THE SNOWBALL STATE

1. Manipulation 2. Age-sets 3. Officers of State 4. Continually segmenting systems 5. Lineage systems compared 6. Splitting the State 7. Stability

1. *Manipulation*

In our first chapter we outlined some of the more significant events in Ngoni history prior to the arrival of Europeans. In this chapter we shall examine the political system within which these events took place. It is not the task of social analysis to determine why these or any other events occurred. What we shall attempt is a discussion of how they occurred, and what were the principal social relations involved in them.

Most of the incidents referred to in the first chapter concerned the State as a whole or the royal family. Nevertheless, when we begin to consider the conditions under which the State endured we have to discuss the social position of ordinary men and women within the State. For the Ngoni State held together as an organized social group, and on occasion failed to hold together, not merely because Zwangendaba was a good leader or his sons quarrelsome or his brothers ambitious, or because his people were bound by custom and knew no better, but also, and in our view mainly, because the State was a viable social entity in its time and place. The arrangement of people into segments and age-sets was not a mere formal and static division, but a means whereby a motley heterogeneous collection of individuals was converted into an organized society with agreed aims. The structure of the State had rules; in other words there was regularity in its social processes. Yet it was a structure which, within these rules, could be manipulated. The structure could be, and was, utilized by individuals for the realization of their private ends at the expense of others as well as providing for the common good. This is probably true of all social systems. We shall begin our analysis by examining the ways in which this manipulation was carried out.

In most societies, from the simplest system of hunting bands to the complex societies of the modern world, one of the most significant sets of rights are those relating to fixed natural resources. The structure of rights in land provides a key to the structure of society.

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Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organized themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[37] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[38] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[37] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[38] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of scale,[3] as we may call it, was accompanied by major changes not only in the positions occupied by individuals in Ngoni society but also in the form of Ngoni society itself. We have to analyse at this stage a non-repetitive process, by which the autonomous Ngoni state, organized by a segmentary residential system and an age-set system, was changed into a dependent unit in a system of Native Authorities forming part of a world-wide colonial empire. For this reason the details of the process are worth noting, for in Ngoni history they are unique and largely determine the form of modern Ngoni society. Having established this significant sequence of events, we are then in a position to look at the same set of facts in a wider context. For what is unique and non-repetitive for the Ngoni may be repetitive in a wider context. The Ngoni are only one tribe among a myriad of tribes, and what happened to them has also happened to many others. Similar sequences of events, each unique for the particular tribe concerned, have occurred throughout the world at various periods of time whenever small autonomous systems have been absorbed into large and more highly resourceful ones. We can therefore look at Ngoni history from 1880 onwards as either unique, from the point of view of the Ngoni, or as typical, or at least probably typical, of a repetitive process which has often occurred in the development of any empire.

Conveniently, at least some of the facts can be ascertained with reasonable certainty. We are no longer dependent only on oral tradition, but can refer to contemporary documents. These reflect in the main only the European side of Black-White relations, but even so their testimony is enlightening. I have therefore set out in full the history, mainly of external relations, of the Fort Jameson Ngoni from 1886 down to 1900 both with the intention of throwing light on how the transition was made from pre-conquest to modern society in this particular tribal instance, and also as an example of what seems probably an oft-repeated process in the history of any empire. A discussion of how typical the Ngoni experience is would take us beyond the bounds of this book. We should, however, bear in mind that the newer comparative method, as developed by Radcliffe-Brown and his followers, is as applicable to mammoth social forms, such as empires, as to small ones such as hordes, provided only that the right kind of data are available.

Our detailed documentation should extend down to modern times, but after 1900 there was a change in the kind of events that were documented, related as we shall see to a change in social relations, and we have to proceed somewhat differently.

[3] For the concept of scale, see Wilson, *Social change*, pp. 25 *ff*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p. v]

PREFACE

THE material on which this book is based was collected during three periods in Nyasaland as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute: May–December 1935; April 1936–June 1937; July 1938–August 1939. 115 121 122

The choice had to be made whether to concentrate on one Ngoni area and omit the other, and also whether to present Ngoni culture as a common element in both areas or to regard them as separate cultural areas. I decided to gather material from northern and central Ngoniland, and accordingly spent about one-third of the time in north Nyasaland and about two-thirds in central Nyasaland. I used the Nyanja language all the time in central Ngoniland, and found that many people understood it in the north. I learned some Zulu, enough to read and hear Ngoni when spoken, but it was dying out as a language except for certain ceremonial and legal terms and expressions. Very few people spoke it in central Ngoniland; most of the older people knew it in the north and in one area it was still the language of the home in 1936. 122 197 [182]

The decision to present Ngoni culture as a common constituent of Ngoni life in all parts of Nyasaland was made after the material had been analysed. I decided also to attempt a reconstruction of Ngoni life at the time of the first European contacts, when the kingdoms were at the height of their power. Men and women were still alive, when I was in Ngoni villages, who had fought as warriors, who had organized large households, who had been present at the accession and death of the Paramounts. Their experiences were part of Ngoni culture and inseparable from much of what was regarded as essentially 'Ngoni' in the 1930's. 121

In both areas the informants were of two kinds: those who welcomed an anthropologist who would collect and record Ngoni history, patterns of social organization, and cultural behaviour of which they were intensely proud; and those who were reluctant at first to give information, either because they were Christians and had been at school and said they had 'forgotten'; or because they were suspicious of all Europeans, and did not want to speak of what to them was a treasured and hidden heritage. 115

Working in more than one language medium and bringing into the open Ngoni terms not as a rule used in the presence of Europeans presented a number of problems both of terminology and orthography. I have included a glossary of Ngoni terms used frequently in the book. There were several variations of the prefixes in common use with Ngoni words, as for example *abahumuzana*, *ahumuzana*, *mahumuzana*, all three of which were used in northern and central Ngoniland. The clicks, 128 193

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found in three separate states in the Dowa and Kotakota districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpezeni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,891. Leaving out the Fort Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliation survives political dispersal? The chief problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, distinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambesi', 'those from the march' and 'those from this country'. The Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(a) 'Those from the south'

These were the descendants of the leaders of the two main Ngoni groups represented by the two Ngoni kingdoms, with their followers, who left Natal during the wars of Shaka. They were South-eastern Bantu of Nguni stock, and when they were first encountered by Europeans in Nyasaland, the Europeans called them Zulus and spoke of their language as Zulu. Ngoni informants in the 1930's who were regarded as most reliable repudiated their relationship with the Zulu, and always referred to their ethnic origin as a people of Swazi stock. Y. M. Cibambo whose knowledge of Ngoni traditions was unrivalled, said in his book *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*—'Very many of them [the Ngoni] came from Swaziland, which is north of Zululand'.[1] A nostalgic refrain occurred in more than one of their traditional songs:

> Come let us go to Swaziland
> Where the people die fat.[2]

Cultural affinities between the Ngoni in Nyasaland and the people now living in Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, with the Zulu, will be examined in several chapters of this book. In the chapter on clan descent names in Part III, we shall compare the clan names called Swazi by the Ngoni with the lists of clan names given by Bryant in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*[3] and with the list given by Kuper, in *An African Aristocracy*,[4] of the Swazi and pre-Swazi clans. The military organisation of the Ngoni, the age-set system which formed part of it, and other cultural features which will be discussed in Chapter III of this section, all show a general cultural affinity with the peoples of the northern Ngoni group of the South-eastern Bantu.

The separation of the Ngoni group from the parent stock, which took place at about the same time as the Ndebele and the Shangaan groups fought their way north, occurred before the Swazi and Zulu kingdoms took final form. It is more correct, therefore, to say that Ngoni cultural affinities were with the northern Ngoni group as a whole than to say they were off-shoots of either the Zulu or the Swazi. The Ngoni themselves used the designation 'Swazi' for the people with clan descent names whose ancestors left the south with the original party. Some of the older men remembered their fathers and grandfathers speaking of their clan as having belonged to the Ntungwa group, the Mtetwa group, the Msane group, before the departure of the Ngoni took place. This differentiation into pre-Swazi tribal and clan groupings was not in the 1930's one to which the Ngoni gave much attention. In talking about their southern origin it was the Swazi connexion which they emphasised.

[1] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Lutterworth Press, 1942, p. 8.
[2] Read, M. 'Songs of the Ngoni People.' *Bantu Studies*, March 1933, p. 10.
[3] Bryant, A. T. *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*. Longmans, 1929, pp. 681–92.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*. O.U.P., 1947, p. 252.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

123 these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the
619 Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Luangwa valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(d) *'Those from this country'*

619 Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland
563 who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. These in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Yao origin.

101 Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition
128 of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi stock—that is categories (a) and (b) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would
[161] probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged; or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

101 The second conclusion is that even if the criterion *is* accepted that
563 the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambesi, the Ngoni
184 kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (a), (b), (c) and (d). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms
[172] of culture were found not only in groups (a) and (b), as would be expected, but often among families in group (c) who, through fighting in the Ngoni armies and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual pattern.[1]

174 [1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpezeni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their travels. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Mbandze Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*.

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to 563 the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also 621 a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and *ahamuzana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of 128 interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a [184 consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations 121] of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual 563 pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-583 betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *mlobokazi*. A 593 strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of [586] a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. 591 Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was sup-[592] ported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 can my country begin to understand these things?' From Somaliland and the Sudan, from British Guiana and Jamaica, from Malaya, India and Pakistan, and from all parts of Africa came these indignant reactions, and from those countries and many others I have had in letters over many years references to 'those Ngoni people you used to talk about'.

So it is with young parents and young teachers chiefly in mind, though I hope with some young anthropologists too, that this book has been written. I have for instance avoided as far as possible technical jargon, that seemingly essential 128 language in which anthropologists, educationists and many others wrap up and conceal their hidden mysteries from the common man. In the appendix will be found certain definitions of terms which have crept in and whose use has been inevitable in the Ngoni cultural setting, and also some of the vernacular terms for which I have substituted the nearest English equivalent. Here and there I have had to introduce a vernacular term but there are not many. The book is so arranged that the five narrative chapters (III to VII) follow consecutively. Chapters II and VIII are concerned with an analysis of some of the problems presented by the study, and can be skipped by those who do not like problems but want a straight story. Chapter I is I think essential to a full understanding of the narrative chapters, because Ngoni children were not brought up in a vacuum, but in a very specific political and social situation—as indeed all children are.

There will be plenty of criticism about the material and the focus in this book. Indignant young women will say 'What a poor deal the Ngoni mother had! Did the father and the grandmother really have it all their own way?' The answer is partly that a writer has to use bold outline strokes in painting his picture or it becomes hazy and lacking in purpose; and partly that young Ngoni mothers knew that one day they would be grandmothers and then they would

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

get their own back. Psychologists will say 'But this is all too positive! Positive aims in training, positive methods and, apparently, positive results. Were there no failures and breakdowns in the systems, no cleavages in the society, no maladjusted individuals?' Of course there were. Again the bold outlines have been essential in portraying a situation unfamiliar to many readers. And the rest of the answer to that criticism, as I hinted more than once in the book, lies in studies of individual Ngoni people and how they came out of the training process; and also in studies of the relation of schools and the education given in them to that somewhat rigid and self-consciously controlled Ngoni society. Both of these I hope to write one day, but this book is long enough already. 128

Young parents the world over are often surprised, and delighted (though not always), at the individual character shown by each of their children. They look in their children for signs of heredity and for evidence of the success or failure of their training. So did the Ngoni, and yet at the end they always came back to 'It is his own human nature'. 858 828

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 One more word about 'growing up'. It has in popular language often been associated with 'he just growed, like Topsy', implying a minimal amount of direction and a maximum amount of free response by a child to all external stimuli. No one can, of course, control a child's inner response to direction and training, but more often than not a child can and does learn, for a variety of reasons, to show the overt response expected by the adults who are bringing him up. The potential conflict in a child between his inner and overt responses lies within the field of individual psychological studies, and I am well aware that in this respect as in others this study is incomplete.

However, as I endeavoured to suggest in the introduction, this is a society-directed study in which the focus is on how adults bring up their children to fit into their society and to perpetuate their cultural values. The emphasis, therefore, here is on the training of children as part of the social life and cultural aims of the community, and the children's response is regarded from the angle of how they learn what the adults have to teach. Here and there I think I may have lost the thread of learning in following the thread of teaching—too close a concentration on two foci can produce a squint which is not always the best way of looking at situations. The main emphases in the training of Ngoni children, perhaps of children everywhere, are on behaviour, on skills and on knowledge. If we want to understand the process carried out by adults in training their children in any of these respects, we have to keep asking the questions, familiar to educationalists: what is taught? Who teaches it? When do they do it? In what contexts do they do it? It would be tedious in the extreme to keep on asking these questions in the following chapters, and to use this method would certainly break or hopelessly entangle the threads of learning and teaching in Ngoni society. Those questions however [128] have been in the background and implicit all through the narrative chapters from III to VII. If readers cannot find

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

114 time as others do in following cultural routines, he is then
121 socialized.'

I have deliberately carried on the study of the Ngoni 'system' through what are generally called the adolescent years. In so doing I followed some of the clues in Professor Linton's discussion of how different societies treated adolescence and its alleged problems. Dr H. M. Ammar also provided a clue in his account of the sharp gulf in the Egyptian village of Silwa between child and adult, between the ways of childhood and the values of adulthood. But in sorting out the problems which the Ngoni study presented, I have drawn also on my recollection of discussions with Dr Kurt Hahn at Gordonstoun about the place of adolescents in society, and whether what is commonly called 'an awkward age' is necessarily part of a child's growing up. Two particular contributions of Kurt Hahn's have thrown light on the young Ngoni adult. One was the correlation between physical stages of growth and social responsibility; and the other was the close connexion between acquiring skills which are socially valuable and essential, and the general maturing of the young adult, especially in his growing confidence in himself and in his self-respect.

On the fourth point, the effect of external changes such as schools on child training, I found much that was useful in Oscar Lewis' *Life in a Mexican Village*. It seems to me he has gone further than most anthropologists in examining the school and its methods and ideas in relation to a traditional culture and society. From an educational as well as from an anthropological angle, H. M. Ammar's analysis of the place of schools in Egyptian villages is also very stimulating.

Social horizons of Ngoni children

128 Most studies of child training concentrate, or at least place
[114] the main emphasis, on a child in his family setting, with the connotation of a family in the western individual sense of father, mother and their children. The subsequent chapters

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of
living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and
the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We
shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the
setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be in-
terpreted according to the Ngoni social organization,
sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my
earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and
who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle
of people forming a young child's contacts was from the
beginning much wider than the individual family which a
child was born into. When he began to run about and to
pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was
as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni
adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when neces-
sary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related
families in other villages, with all members of the same clan [602]
living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship
and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads
were also inseparable from the political links between the [631]
people and their territorial chief, and between the whole
people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-
Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the
villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their
children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence
in most villages there were sharp distinctions between stand- [183]
ards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni
families.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

mother's household if the mother showed obvious signs of being a 'bad character'. They might take the child away and put her with some relative of acknowledged 'good character', in the hope of offsetting the effects of heredity by careful training. 828 867

In later childhood and especially on the threshold of adulthood, as we shall see in Chapters VI and VII, boys and girls were expected to learn and practise traditional Ngoni skills and to be conversant with traditional Ngoni knowledge. Skills and knowledge, or rather the ability to use them, might be inherited from a parent, but they were generally regarded as acquired qualities. In any case, they needed careful training and direction in order that they might be fully developed. 868 828 827

Ngoni cultural values

After the Scottish Mission had been in North Nyasaland for some time, and the Bible and other Christan literature had been translated into the vernacular, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* became one of the most popular and widely read books in Ngoniland, both by older children and by adults. The reason was that its imagery portrayed so many ideas and situations which the Ngoni recognized as being relevant for them in the new world to which they had to adapt themselves. It became for Ngoni Christians, and for many others too since it was told far more often than it was read, a new kind of folk-tale, and was told as such to children in school and in the villages. The themes of striving towards a goal, and fighting lions and giants on the way, and listening to good advice as well as hearing bad—these and other themes were recognized as in the Ngoni tradition although in such a different setting. 177 538

In the final chapter of this book we shall talk about personality and character among the Ngoni, looking at the ideas of basic personality as set out by Linton and others, and trying to see how training at different stages of childhood had been converging towards the ideal personality of the Ngoni 128

128 man and woman. It will give us an opportunity of looking more closely at the values inherent in Ngoni culture and implicit in all the training of their children. I propose here only to put down a brief list of these values, in order that they may be kept in mind during the detailed narrative of the upbringing of children in the following chapters. There
181 were three main group values which Ngoni families and village and national groups had always before them: keeping together as a people; dominating but with paternal benevolence those subject to their rule; and mutual aid and trust between the individuals in the Ngoni groups. Thus there was a strong in-group feeling of interdependence contrasted with a feeling towards the out-group of kindly but firm authority.

In the realm of personal behaviour to others, respect and obedience were always expected towards elders and superiors. Self-control, involving a high degree of restraint, was expected towards superiors, equals and inferiors. Generosity was expected of everyone towards his equals and inferiors.

A group of three qualities which showed Ngoni values were always being quoted as the distinguishing marks of 'true Ngoni' men and women: physical strength with which physical courage was closely associated; persistence and thoroughness in any task undertaken or assigned; and wisdom which was sharply contrasted with being clever, and which included knowledge, good judgement, ability to control people and keep the peace, and skill in using speech.

Some of these

surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some 342
repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage 351
for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several re- [128]
spects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance
of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish
between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of [171]
the household objects were indeed the same as those used by
other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration
about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept
in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural
significance about some of the features of Ngoni households
mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found else-
where.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at
weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was
full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 342
'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right
hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with
interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical
roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and [824]
decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in [237]
four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two
main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling.
Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters
and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which [251]
gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this
platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for
the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots [354]
were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the
back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which
were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots hold- [415]
ing water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut
was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by
the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the
back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front 351
of the hut was a well-swept space, mudded and polished in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especial-
561 ly the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes,
867 but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter
128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there
584 were certain social controls among the Ngoni which operated in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited
835 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers
582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment.
581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptized or under instruction. This last pre-
581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference
182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

not understand how Europeans could draw such a sharp line 867
and equate ignorance with the absence of a literature and [212]
written traditions. When talking about how they instructed
their young people in the traditional knowledge about the
natural world and their own national law and history, they
pointed out that there were no set periods for this kind of
teaching, but that there was a recognition that the young
man, before or about the time when he himself became a
father, should know what his father knew. We will begin 128
then with some indication of the kind of matters included
in this traditional store of knowledge, recognizing that re-
ference can be made only to a small selection from it. We
will go on in the second half of the chapter to the other kind
of knowledge which was inseparably connected with practi-
cal and technical skills.

Ngoni traditional knowledge: the reckoning of time

The Ngoni had a system of reckoning time and a recognized 805
calendar. This consisted of thirteen lunar months in the year,
reckoned from the first appearance of each new moon, and
beginning with our December as the first month. The names
of the months are all related to natural events, and these as
the following list shows were in five main groups: when cer-
tain wild animals had their young; the time of bitter cold
and frosts; when the hawks came to catch chickens; when
certain trees fruited; when the new crops were ripe and the
former first fruit ceremony took place.

NGONI NAMES FOR MONTHS

1 *Impala*	Antelopes have their young
2 *Inkokoni*	Gnu have their young
3 *Impuso*	Tasting new crops
4 *Inyati*	Buffaloes have their young
5 *Indlovu*	Elephants have their young
6 *Ilize elincinyane*	Beginning of cold weather
7 *Ilize elikulu*	Great cold weather

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in judgement on his own son, a young man of twenty-one, 692
for committing adultery with the wife of a man of a former
slave family. The husband brought the case against the [684]
chief's son, and the chief ordered the man to speak truly and [694]
not be afraid. The case was heard amid the most deathly [695]
silence. In awarding a heavy penalty of compensation against
his son, the chief spoke of the central position of law in Ngoni
life, and of the fact, so sharply brought out by the case, that
the law was no respecter of persons.

Young adults, boys and girls, were held personally re- 672
sponsible for breaches of the law which they had commited.
Penalties were awarded against them as individuals, even
though they often could not pay the compensation without
the help of their father and his family. They were expected 867
to become acquainted with the law in various ways. One
was by conformity to accepted social codes of behaviour, in-
stilled into them by their elders, particularly in such matters
as sex relations, respect for property, avoidance of slander
and of injury by violence. Another way of learning how the
law operated, as well as the principles upon which the case-
law was built, was by attending the courts, and listening [695]
carefully to the cross-examinations as well as to the judge-
ments. Young people were expected also to ask their fathers,
and elders generally, about points of law which they had not
understood, or had confused with some of the practices of the
local people. The onus was upon young adults for acquiring
this knowledge of the law as well as for behaving in accord-
ance with it. We shall see in the next chapter how the Ngoni [577]
regarded being law-abiding as one of their basic cultural
traits, as well as being evidence of the individual character
of a young adult.

Ngoni traditional skills

We made a distinction, albeit a rather tentative one, at the 128
beginning of this chapter between certain kinds of tradi-
tional knowledge which we have been describing up to this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

128 point, and other kinds of knowledge which in Ngoni culture were the basis for performing certain traditional activities. This second part of the chapter I have called traditional skills, to avoid the clumsiness of constantly differentiating between knowledge, skill and activities. Again, as in the first part of the chapter, we have to be selective, and I have
128 chosen a few out of the typical Ngoni skills taught to young
868 adults to make them efficient producers in the village economy, able to manage and direct various units of workers, and to be 'good company' in those pursuits which were for leisure time enjoyment. The young men's traditional skills which we
[462] shall look at are the care of cattle, hunting and some of their crafts; the young women's are the care of property, the storage and use of food-stuffs and some women's crafts. At the end of the chapter we shall look at certain Ngoni 'arts', which demanded individual and corporate skill of a special nature.

Men's skills: Care of cattle

868 The senior herd-boys, sons of cattle-owners, carried consider-
able responsibilities for the herds under their care during
233 the day. By the time they gave up herding they had learned a great deal about cattle. Understanding about what constituted good herding had been handed on to them by their seniors, and they were well aware that losing an animal, failing to find good grazing so that the beasts became thin, letting them escape into the cultivated fields—all these were signs of bad herding and they would be punished accordingly by the cattle-owners. The daily scrutiny of the herds by the owners was made the occasion for blame or commendation. Every evening the owners of the cattle stood by the kraal gate as the boys drove the animals in, and the head herd-boys reported to the owners if a cow was sick, or if a bull had been mating.

Cattle-owners, since they were anxious that any cases of illness should be promptly reported, made a point of calling

VIII

Personality and Character

Personality, culture and character

128 The threads of teaching and learning whose ends were grasped in Chapter II have been followed through the intervening five chapters, and our task now is to see what pattern they have made of the system of training given by the Ngoni to their children. The threads have eventually been twisted together to form two separate but linked strands, one the 121 achievement of the Ngoni basic personality and the other the development of individual character. In this chapter I am going to use personality in the sense derived from Linton and Kluckhohn, namely the sum total of the traits which are desired by a society and form part of its culture, and which are instilled into children in the system of training set up by the society. Personality therefore since it is regarded as an aim in child training is a social product. The ideal personality is held up to the growing generation, not so much as a total achievement, but as the acquisition of a number of traits of behaviour, skills and knowledge. The Ngoni basic personality [157] therefore consisted of common personality elements in adults, [155] which, as Kluckhohn says, were largely a product of learning, and that learning was directed and controlled by the system of training. Character on the other hand I am going to use as the sum total of the individual's response to his training. It therefore includes his personal adjustment to the training given by the society, and, as a result, his acquiring of some or many of the basic personality traits, and hence the degree of his approximation to the ideal personality. Over and above

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 learning, and the end product of a system of training, can never be as stereotyped and as uniform as some of the exponents of personality and culture studies would have us believe.

The outlines of the ideal Ngoni personality have really been
● 128 sketched in the narrative chapters, though without stopping to point out specifically that this or that aim in training is to foster a Ngoni personality trait. I shall therefore in this chapter put together these traits, and, to introduce a new element and so avoid too much repetition, some of these traits will be associated with Ngoni proverbs. But before doing this I shall discuss those Ngoni values which I believe were the foundations for their child training.

The Ngoni system of values

121 The chief reason for introducing at the end of this book such an involved and difficult subject as values is to suggest that
128 there is an inevitable connexion in any society or culture between an ideal personality and the values cherished by that society. It is therefore reasonable to follow up, and to some extent to sum up, the preceding narrative chapters of this study with a glance, for it cannot be more than that, at the fundamental beliefs and values which impelled the Ngoni people to pursue certain lines in bringing up their children.
181 We have seen that there was a continuous and clear direction in training children which I have called a system. The more deeply one analyses the nature of Ngoni culture and the organization of Ngoni society, the clearer it becomes that there were certain definite values which they clung to as a result of their experience and of their reflection upon their past history and present and future prospects. In so far as these values were integrated into an intelligible whole, we can call them a system of values, but the recognition of such a system does not preclude the recognition also of some isolated values which do not appear to fit into an integrated system.

121 One of the major difficulties in examining the values of a non-literate culture is the inevitable subjective approach of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the observer or anthropologist. One such observer might 121
pursue the line suggested by the use of different persons of the verb and different pronouns in personal contacts, and the values inherent in such standardized usage. Another might choose to examine the institution of the boys' dormitory and its contribution to the total value system. Another might take the different emphases in bringing up boys and girls in relation to the fact that men were the permanent element in village society and that girls left the village on marriage. A dozen more examples could be taken from the narrative chapters of this study and usefully followed up. They would all illustrate, in the first instance, the subjective nature of the initial selection, whether the final results of several different investigations made a coherent integrated system or not. They would also illustrate the uncharted area of such studies, where there is little to guide the observer and the analyst, in spite of the growing interest in recent years in studying the value systems of non-literate societies.

Among the leads which I found most useful has been Pro- 121
fessor Monica Wilson's *Good Company*, to which I referred in Chapter I, where she associated cultural values with the age- 114
village system in Nyakusa society. I owe much also to help and suggestions given to me at Harvard by Professor Cora Du Bois and Dr Ethel Albert, and to Professor Kluckhohn and his associates in discussions on their published and projected series on the study of values.

The relation between Ngoni values and their ideal per- 128
sonality pattern is based on the study of their society and culture described in my earlier book, and on the analysis of their system of bringing up children in this book. I referred in Chapter II to certain values as group values and to others as personal values. I am not sure that the distinction is a valid one, but it is a convenient form of classification and it corresponds closely to the Ngoni way of thinking. They were 829
continually referring to their society, or a local community in it, as if it were an integrated whole, and to the effect of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

113 2. *Growing up in New Guinea.* Kegan Paul, 1939—Penguin, 1954. These were two pioneer studies in the Pacific.
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II

DEFINITIONS

128 CULTURE, the total way of living of a people, including kinship relations, economy, religion and magic, law, government, language, myths, child training etc.

[563] ETHNIC GROUP, used here instead of tribe because the Ngoni kingdoms and villages included several tribes. (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 1–6).

614 565 CLAN, exogamous group related through male line with a common clan name used in address. True Ngoni clans formed the aristocracy (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 116).

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound, (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 122). 128 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582]

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajaha*

young girls before puberty: *inkakazana*

young girls after puberty: *izintombi*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AKULU	the important people
ALEZI	nursemaids
GOGO	grandparent or any very senior person
HLONIPA	respect
INDLUNKULU	chief hut in a village
INDUNA	official in village
IZIDANDANI	girl attendants
LAWENI	boys' dormitory
MWINI	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was first drafted to supply information on Ngoni marriage to the African Marriage Survey organised by the International African Institute and the International Missionary Council. It is based on inquiries made in the field while I was on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. My fieldwork would have been impossible without the generous co-operation and assistance of many friends, European and African; I hope to be able to mention them by name in a later publication. However I must here acknowledge my debt to Mr. M. B. Lukhero, for help with this inquiry; to Professor Gluckman and my colleagues of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, for comments on this paper in draft; to Miss B. Pole for secretarial assistance; and to my wife for help in the field and in writing up.

Professor Schapera has kindly pointed out that my use of the term 'band' for a group of wives is likely to cause confusion, as this word has other technical uses in anthropology. He has suggested the term 'bevy' in lieu. It has not been possible to make the change in this paper, but readers should substitute 'bevy' for 'band' throughout.

J. A. Barnes

London, June 1950

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1948-9.*

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

* I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. H. B. Lakhani, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him. Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions, villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance. The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters, a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigaba*, pl. *zigaba*, from *ku-gaba*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of [581] his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 851 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriage belonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth his sons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin on behalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim. I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past and when recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

[727] Important men sometimes married female captives and no [554] bridewealth passed. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons founded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bride- 183 wealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.[13] The infor- [128] mation on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II.

It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was [276] offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898

[13] See pp. 221.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

marriage system. We shall discuss the legalization payment at some length in the succeeding chapters, for it is the most important of all the payments made in modern marriage. A possible explanation of its occurrence in these early marriages is that although the marriages themselves were made before 1898, the payments were made considerably later. The amounts alleged to have been handed over as legalization payments may have been regarded as 'snuff-box' at the time of payment although they are now referred to as legalisation payments, either because of the general obsolescence of the term 'snuff-box' or because my informants thought I would know the new term and not the old one. Another possibility is that even before 1898 the vernacular term for legalization payment (*cimalo*) was in use as a synonym for 'snuff-box'. The term itself was certainly in use among neighbouring tribes before 1898.

This is a very small sample from which to draw any conclusions, but it is of value in suggesting where the reality of social life differed

583
183
128

Table I. Pre-1898 marriage payments: incidence

Payments made	Number of marriages
'Snuff-box' only	1
Bridewealth only	1
Legalisation payment only	5
None	7
Total	14
Not known if any payments were made or not	4
Grand total	18
In this sample there were no pre-1898 marriages in which more than one kind of payment was made	

583

Table II. Pre-1898 marriage payments; magnitude

Payment	Magnitude	Number of marriages
'Snuff-box'	Handful of tobacco	1
Bridewealth	8 beasts	1
Legalisation payment	1 beast	2
	1 chicken	1
	Cloth	1
	Not known	1
	Total	5

128 from the recollections of informants and the accounts of contemporary writers. Even in a society as rapidly expanding as was the Ngoni before 1898, the majority of the population at any one time consists 554 of people who are politically unimportant. What were remembered 581 and what was recorded at the time were the marriages of leaders 184 and their close relatives. It is they, more than others, who were distinctively Ngoni, and it was by their actions that the values of Ngoni society were emphasized and developed. Their marriages [187] were important in maintaining tribal solidarity and it is the system exemplified in these marriages that we have been describing. But the recent captives, the poor, the unsuccessful warriors, the junior sons of junior sons, they also married and their marriages were at least as numerous as those of their more fortunate brethren, despite the large bands of wives acquired by successful men.

583 The data in our sample provide suggestions as to both the relative frequency of marriage without payment and the kind of relationship 554 that held between payment and status of spouse. The eight cattle were offered by one of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants as bridewealth for the daughter of a man of Nsenga origin. Two junior sons of this lieutenant each offered a beast as legalization payment for a wife, one of whom was the daughter of a divisional head. A legalization payment of unknown magnitude was made in a marriage between a village headman and a daughter of another of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants. These four marriages we may regard as important marriages between people of high status accompanied by marriage payments which usually were substantial. Among persons of low status we find that in six out of the seven marriages in which no payment was made, one or both of the spouses had been captured. Intermediately we have the remaining two marriages in which the legalization payment was made and the one in which 'snuff-box' was paid, all involving people of low or middle status and accompanied by relatively small payments, namely a chicken, some cloth, and tobacco. This positive correlation between status and payment holds for thirteen out of the fourteen marriages, but one marriage without payment was between one of the same junior sons of the lieutenant and the daughter of a man of Kalanga origin.

From such evidence as there is, it seems probable that marriages between people of high status were usually accompanied by substantial payments. At the same time, many of the marriages of people of low status and some of the unimportant marriages of men of high status took place without payments. What proportion of the total these marriages accounted for we cannot now ever hope to know. However since they amount to half of our pre-1898 sample it seems probable that they constituted a considerable fraction of all the marriages contracted at that time.

581 The payment of 'snuff-box' and bridewealth were the crucial events establishing a marriage, but there were a number of other transfers of beer and cattle, and a number of ceremonies without

[P.22]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [826] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [828] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance [162] of women over men caused by labour migration.

Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner ●128 or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 257 and 121 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs concerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 [621] residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles away from the other two.

[1] *Cisilu*, pl. *visilu*, or else *ûmuntu ûmtyulatyala*. Cf. Nsenga *silu*, pl. *masilu*, idiot.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

away from the other two. They were the four most accessible 121
from my base camp, built at a site chosen by the Administration.
I was able to compare their size, history, and kinship structure with
those of many other villages I visited, and as far as I could tell they
were in these respects fairly typical Ngoni villages. They form a 128
sample of approximately one per cent of the whole of the Fort
Jameson Ngoni.

The tables in which the units are individuals or extant marriages (III, IV, IX, X, XIII and XIV) are based on the marital histories of the men and woman normally resident in those villages during the latter part of 1948, in one village, and during the earlier part of 1949 in the other five. In Tables I, II, V to VIII, XI and XII, where the units are marriages and not individuals, I have drawn on the histories of men and women who lived in these villages as wedded people for at least part of the time from 1946 to 1949. I endeavoured to inter- [124]
view the whole population but failed to do so for various reasons. I was however, able to determine who was, and who was not, a resident in these villages, and can therefore indicate the number of people who could have been included in this six-village sample had more been known about them. Some of my interviews were only partial.

In Tables V to VIII, which deal with the incidence and magnitude of marriage payments, each marriage is classified by the decade in which it began. This is not necessarily the decade in which the payment was made, for as we have noted payments are sometime made after many years of marriage. Unfortunately I do not have enough information to classify by the decade of payment.

In the tables I have used the word 'wedded' to refer to all people who had ever been married, whether or not they were currently married at the time of inquiry.

It will be seen from Table III that in this sample there was no 162
unwedded man over the age of twenty-four, and, out of a total of 589
116 wedded men, there were only one widower and seven men whose last marriage had ended in divorce and who had not remarried. From Table IV we see that there was only one unwedded woman over the age of nineteen, but that there were as many as 31 widows who had not remarried. Only about a half, 122 out of 223, of the wedded women were living with their husbands.

Marriage is then an experience that sooner or later comes to nearly 581
every man or woman, although not every adult lives all the time in a simple family of procreation. Nevertheless, the ties forged by marriage remain, and the results of marriage extend beyond the wedding ceremony and beyond the domestic association of man and wife. It is the sexual activities of individuals that are most closely regulated by the fact of marriage. In succession to office and wealth, marriage, as we shall see, plays nowadays a permissive rather than a determining role. It is only by means of the symbolic acts which form part of marriage that a man can be reasonably sure of acquiring rights over his wife and the custody of his children. Yet he may,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

cousin comes from another village she can become the great wife. This lack of consensus about the appropriateness of payments may be due to the difference between the traditional views of the Nguni aristocrats and of their more recent captives. The Nguni tribes, although not allowing cross-cousin marriage, did require transfers of marriage cattle. In contrast to them, the Cewa and others who approved of cross-cousin marriages did not make large marriage payments. It may be that neither view has prevailed over the other among the present-day Ngoni.

When I began my inquiries into marriage I hoped to express numerically the frequencies with which people married their cross-cousins and other relatives. As my inquiries proceeded, it became clear that this was not the simple matter I had thought it to be. There was little consistency in the way in which the word *mvyala*, which I have translated as cross-cousin, was used by different informants. Sometimes one spouse would say that the other was a cross-cousin and the other would deny it. In addition to the expected use of the term to refer to father's own or classificatory sister's child, and to mother's own or classificatory brother's child, it was also used for 'person with a parent with the same descent-name as mine', 'person from the same tribe', 'person with the same captor', and so on. Some informants regarded the alleged cross-cousin relationship as a primary one that could not necessarily be broken down into a series of links between parents and children and between siblings. If pressed, informants would often say in explanation 'One of us came from the side of the man and the other from the side of the woman'; yet they would be unable to decide who came from the man's side and who from the woman's. This complexity of reference of the term for cross-cousin applies to a lesser extent to the terms for other relatives with whom marriage takes place. In view of the lack of consensus and of the large number of possible referents of single vernacular terms, I have thought it best to postpone publication of any frequencies until later, when I hope to deal with the general problem of inter-connectedness between local groups of kin.

We have mentioned above the prohibitions against marrying certain relatives and the partial encouragement to marry a cross-cousin. In addition, a man should not marry his brother's wife's sister, and some people say that a man ought not to marry his sister's husband's sister. Both these women he calls *sibling-in-law*. These are not exactly definite prohibitions, but rather pieces of traditional advice. Marriage with these relatives does occur. No specific reason was given for this prohibition, but I noticed that a quarrel in one marriage tended to have repercussions in the marriages of the spouses' siblings, and the objection to these types of marriage may be based on some consideration of this kind.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 wherever they decide to settle. Children are still valuable. A barren woman is pitied, and a man's impotence is whispered about behind his back. Men and women seek fertility, and a man tries to conceal his impotence. A woman who does not want to bear children is regarded as irresponsible.

We have seen that the traditional solution for barrenness was to introduce a linked co-wife, but this is now rarely done. A woman can either look for medicines[15] to make her fertile, or, if she is unsuccessful, she may beg children from a fertile sister. These children will stay with her while they are young, but they are not thought of or talked about as being her own children.

No clear distinction is drawn between impotence and sterility, and men who are said to be impotent are also known to commit adultery. A sterile husband does not find favour with his wife or with her relatives, who want her to have children to care for her when she grows old. If medicines fail to cure a man's sterility, and it is thought that the lack of children is due to him and not to his wife, then he may call in an acquaintance to sleep with his wife so that [837] she may conceive. For this task, it is said that a man will choose a person whose discretion he can trust, but one on the fringe of his acquaintance who will not feel disposed to gossip maliciously about the incident afterwards. Thus it is said that a man would never ask his brother to do this. If the woman bears a child then at some [431] later date the husband gives a goat to the progenitor, hoping that people will not connect the present with the birth of the child.

Sterility is a shameful thing and men do not easily admit to it. [128] My information on the procedure followed in specific instances is based only on village gossip and not on admissions by the men and women concerned. Although it is agreed that a sterile man may feel 842 forced to call in a seed-raiser the whole matter must remain secret. 837 There must be no loophole by which adultery might be condoned. In the words of an informant,

> A man may be impotent and may ask someone to copulate with his wife so that she may have children. This man coming to copulate with his wife comes in secret as it is considered a disgraceful thing among the people of the family and the rest of the village if they know, yet the people in the village know very well sometimes. In the old days the same thing happened, but if a man coming to sleep with the woman came in an open way, and everyone knew of his sleeping with the wife of an impotent man, he was to be killed by the chief, even though the impotent man asked him to do this work for him. The person coming to do this work of copulating with this woman was to be paid a cow or a goat for the work that he did. In these days it happens.

The sterile husband takes the risk that his friend will continue sleeping with the woman after she has conceived. I have recorded

[15] Called *cisaŵa*. The first child born after the successful administration of this medicine is sometimes called Cisaŵa.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 although the evidence presented during the hearing of the case has
692 established the husband's fault as the ground for divorce.
562 Only if there is dispute over the matter will the court make an order about the division of crops. The principles of division are
586 that the crops belong to those who worked hard to grow them and that the children of the marriage have to be fed by the parent with whom they live, whoever may eventually have their custody. Thus in a case in which a woman successfully pleaded for divorce because of her husband's cruelty, the court awarded all the crops in the couple's garden to the husband, as the woman had been lazy and had done only a little towards their cultivation.

Bridewealth is not automatically returned on divorce and as we
[583] have seen, divorce is the time for paying bridewealth rather than for retrieving it. The disposal of the children of a divorced couple is regarded as a separate issue and to be treated on its own merits.

It is useful to have some quantitive estimate of divorce frequency,
[128] but the construction of a satisfactory measure is not easy. One aspect of the occurrence of divorce is presented in Tables IX and X, where the number of divorces experienced by wedded men and women of different ages is set out.

It will be seen that, considering only those wedded men and women whose divorces are known, the mean number of divorces per head of wedded population is 0·49 (51/104) for men and 0·30 (62/210) for women. This difference may be due in part to a greater reluctance on the part of women to admit to divorce, but is also due to the greater mobility of men. While women stay at home, their husbands go off to marry in the towns, divorcing their urban wives when they return home or when the strange rural environment proves intolerable to the women from the towns.

581 By considering the number of years that marriages have lasted,
586 it is possible to say what is the mean duration of marriage. The necessary information was available for 403 marriages extant as well as completed, experienced by men and women who were resident in the sample villages. The mean duration of all these marriages is 15·6 years, and the mean duration of the marriages that ended in divorce is 6·6 years. The median duration of all marriages is, to the nearest year, 8 years, and of marriages ended in divorce, 5 years. More divorces occurred in the period from four-and-a-half years to five-and-a-half years after marriage than in any other similar one-year period.[25]

128 For comparison with other societies, we can express as a ratio the relationship between the number of marriages that ended in divorce and the number that did not or have not yet done so. This can be done in three ways, as set out in Table XI.

[25] There is no space here to give the method by which these calculations were made, but see my 'Measures of divorce frequency in simple Societies" *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, lxxix (1949) (pp. 37-62).

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

claims. In retrospect, when discussing an erstwhile 'poorly fixed' marriage that has broken up, people will say 'That was not a proper marriage', and 'She was just his friend'. In all the tables we have excluded 'poorly fixed' marriages from consideration.

The initiative in strengthening a 'poorly fixed' marriage lies with the man and not with the woman's relatives. If their daughter is living with a man who has not made the legalization payment they cannot bring him to court and force him to pay. If their daughter has only just passed puberty there may be grounds for an abduction suit, but if she has been married before or is considered old enough to decide for herself, her relatives are unlikely to take any action in the courts against her husband. The woman cannot be forced to return to her own people. Similarly if no bridewealth has been paid, the children cannot be forced to live in one village rather than in the other. They can be asked to do so, but they cannot be taken to court if they refuse.

All 'poorly fixed' marriages are marriages without payments, but not all marriages without payment are 'poorly fixed'. It will be seen from Table XII that no payments at all have been offered in about a third of the marriages in our sample. In some of the marriages for which there have been offers of payment, these consist only of the small present given as 'snuff-box' [7] in modern marriage. Yet these marriages are valid despite the paucity or absence of payment. Many of them have lasted for a long time and the lack of payment is almost forgotten. It would be an act of maliciousness on the part of the woman's relatives if after twenty years of happy married life they began to remind her husband that he had not yet made the legalization payment. With the increasing importance of marriage certificates on which the legalization payment is recorded, and the rise in power of the Native Authority, the position may well change in years to come. At present, most marriages without payments are more like marriages with payment than they are like the unions of men with concubines and prostitutes. The persevering inquirer may unearth the lack of payments, but in the day-to-day life of the village, as well as in many of the formal situations of marriage, this lack is not significant. In the work of the garden, in the sharing of food, on festive occasions when there is beer and dancing, there is no distinction between wives married in one way or the other. More significantly, we find instances where despite the absence of any payments, beer has been brewed for a daughter's husband and he has been invited to go through the ceremony of 'entering the wife's mother's hut'. Some marriages are solemnized in church, with the approval of the parents on both sides, without any payments being made. The rules of avoidance between a man and his wife's mother operate independently of the marriage payments, and widows are subject to the same restrictions

[7] *Mfuko, camulomo, cavulamulomo.* See above, p. 39, n. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

village to another. An indication of the relative frequency with which different types of marriage residence occur is given by Table XIII. This table is based on all the extant marriages involving the 98 married men whose wives were known and the 175 married women, as shown in Tables III and IV. A distinction is made in Table XIII between those marriages in which the man lived with his wife or in a village near her and those in which the man was effectively absent.

We may now assess the relative frequency of virilocal and uxorilocal residence by extracting those marriages falling into either one or other of these residential categories and by then dividing the number of virilocal contracts by the number of uxorilocal. This is done in Table XIV.

It will be seen that although there were three marriages in which both spouses lived virilocally for every one in which they both lived uxorilocally, this preponderance of virilocality was reversed in those marriages in which the man was absent. There were approximately three wives who lived uxorilocally while their husbands were away for every two who lived virilocally. This difference between the ratios in the two parts of the sample is not likely to have arisen as a chance result and may be regarded as definitely associated with the whereabouts of the husband.

On the basis of these figures we may continue to call the Ngoni a virilocal rather than an uxorilocal people, but it is evident from the last column of Table XIII that virilocal marriages amount to slightly less than half (47·3 per cent) of all extant marriages. It should also be remembered that by no means all of the couples we have classified as virilocal were living in the village of the man's father. We have included in this category all marriages in which the man had definitely stronger ties to the other inhabitants of their village than had his wife. Our definition of the uxorilocal category is similar and not all uxorilocal couples were living in the woman's mother's village.[8] A more detailed examination of the frequencies with which these different kinds of marriage residence occur will be attempted elsewhere.

We have already noted that a man who goes to live in the village of his bride takes on the care of her garden and works in it with her. The produce of the garden is pooled with whoever was looking after the bride, and the young couple draw their food from this common store.[9] A man who does not intend to stay long in his wife's village will usually try to keep his own garden under cultivation near his own village and when he takes his wife back to his village he reverts to his own garden as his main source of supply. If the two villages are a long way apart this may not be practicable, or the man may find it irksome to keep two gardens going, and may lend his own to someone else on the understanding that he will be wanting it back

[8] See below, pp. 75f.
[9] See above, p. 42.

[TEXT CONTINUES on P. 74 --analyst]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.105]

CHAPTER V

SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS

1. *Old and new marriage*

WE HAVE described marriage at two periods in Ngoni history, as it was in the 1890's and as it is now. The differences we have found between the two periods are not due to chance except in the sense in which we may speak of all historical incidents as being partly due to chance and partly determined by the limiting conditions imposed by the past. Changes in the field of Ngoni marriage have been paralleled by changes in other aspects of Ngoni social life, have been influenced by other changes and have in turn influenced them. Throughout Ngoni history men and women have always married, but the society in which they married has changed. Marriage in the time of peace was appropriate, more or less, to the general ordering of social life in those days, and modern marriage is appropriate, again more or less, to the social structure of today. 581 178

Our task is then a threefold one. We have to show the relationship between old marriage and the rest of the old society, a similar relationship between modern marriage and modern society, and the process by which the transition from one set of conditions to the other has come about. We have outlined in Chapter II some of the internal and external factors responsible for this transition, and the nature of the material available to us on the 1890 period has led us, in Chapter I, to describe the old system largely in analytic terms. In this chapter we shall attempt to clarify our picture of the past in the light of an analysis of modern marriage. 121 128

In the old days the residential system provided the framework for political and lineage ties. Marriage was a legitimate means whereby children were recruited into segments of the system. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of fertility from the woman's kin to her husband's kin. Adultery was punishable by death, and divorce was rare. Affinal ties cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system, but while these ties were important, a man could not transfer his allegiance to his wife's or to his mother's group. A man who quarrelled with his kinsmen could not move to another village to live, but could only hive off to form a dependent but recognizable cluster of his own, which still remained part of the same residential segment. 591

The material apparatus belonging to the system, that is, the great villages with hundreds of huts and central cattle byres, was to a large extent destroyed in 1898 by the British. A few important people in the system were killed, and many of the cattle looted. With the establishment of British rule, it was physically possible for the 222 648 178 648

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni Lamba FQ8

PREFACE

The four papers reproduced here deal with a method of estimating land carrying capacities for human populations under African conditions and systems of land usage, and the application of this method to the study of practical problems. The method itself is based on Trapnell's work on the soils and agricultural systems of the Territory, and details of the method as applied in practice have largely been evolved in collaboration between him and the author, with material assistance from other members of the Agricultural Department. N 121

The first paper gives an outline of the technique used in carrying out detailed studies of land problems in the Eastern and Western Provinces of Northern Rhodesia. The basic conceptions of land deterioration and population carrying capacity, the relation of Native land usage to the vegetation-soil unit and the factors involved in the estimation of critical densities, which are discussed in this account, have already been referred to in Trapnell's *Ecological Report on North-Eastern Rhodesia* (paras. 37–41, 79 and 302–26). The main emphasis in Trapnell's account, however, is on the land deterioration aspect, whereas in the present essay the subject is given fuller treatment from the population standpoint and in the light of recent work on the redistribution of populations. N [128] N [114]

The second paper consists of a report, submitted to Government in 1940, on a reconnaisance survey of conditions in the area of the Lamba Chief Mushiri. This survey was the first attempt to apply the conception of land carrying capacity and the method of estimation to the study of a specific practical problem. Shortly afterwards the method was applied, on a vastly greater and more detailed scale, to the resettlement of congested populations in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province. In 1943 further study was given to the whole proplem of the concentration of populations, including that of Mushiri's area, about the southern and eastern rim of the Copperbelt. In the interval a Government Land Commission had visited the area. This Commission reported that the predictions made in the original report were being rapidly fulfilled and recommended the immediate grant of additional land under controlled settlement. Resettlement of populations from Mushiri and other overcrowded chieftaincies was started in 1943 and all of the recommendations contained in the original report have now been carried out or are in process of completion (see Annual Reports of the Agricultural Department, 1943–6). It will be noted that the Vegetation-Soil units have been revised and that other factors in the method of estimation have been somewhat modified, as a result of greater knowledge, since the original pioneer survey was made. L 121 [128] L [114]

The third paper is a report, presented to Government in October 1944, on the vexed question of the adequacy or otherwise of the native reserves L [128]

L 121 128 in the Mkushi District and the additions which have from time to time been made to them. This study deals with two somewhat more complex systems, both in a state of change, in which *chitemene* and hoe cultivation methods are combined. The report was followed, after further study, by an annexure (not reproduced here as it contains little of general interest) giving details of the proposed land additions and population transfers, and precise suggestions for measures to improve land usage which might be carried out by Native Authorities. Most of these suggestions have been adopted by the Native Authorities concerned.

It will be realized that both the Mushiri and Mkushi reports are strictly reconnaissance surveys intended to define the nature and scope of specific problems, to indicate what immediate measures may be necessary, and to pave the way for further more detailed study and survey on the lines indicated in the first paper.

N ● 128 [121] The fourth paper gives a brief and general account of the resettlement work which has been carried out, or is in process of completion, in Northern Rhodesia. It, like the first paper, was written in reply to numerous enquiries as to the technique, methods and objects of resettlement. None of the papers was intended for publication at the time it was written, but it is thought that their presentation may be of some value as a contribution to the study of the relationship between the African and his land.

N 121 The question of land usage and its relation to the available supply of land is, of course, only one aspect of the general problem of African development. The life of the African is so intimately bound up with his land that one may almost say that there is no problem concerning him which is purely agricultural; just as there are few problems which are purely administrative, political, sociological, medical or veterinary. All of these aspects are often intimately, sometimes inextricably, bound together as integral parts of the one common problem.

In recent surveys, of which it is hoped to publish an example shortly, sociologists of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute have co-operated closely with officers of the Agricultural Department in the study of specific aspects of a common problem. Extension of this co-operative method of approach offers the best hope for the solution of many of the problems of African land usage.

But such studies, to be of full practical value, must take into account the effects of changing conditions. The industrial and economic changes which are to be expected within the next decade will profoundly affect the whole structure of African life and will, to a very large extent, determine the pattern and speed of rural development.

Mazabuka,
5 November 1947.

W.A.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, provide similar examples for different systems and land categories. In the second Report of the Ecological Survey (North Eastern Rhodesia, paras. 316–20) Trapnell records a wide range of observations on areas where land degeneration and soil erosion had become marked, in relation to land categories, population densities and the time factor. These observations provide independent evidence of the relatively low carrying capacity of much of our land under the traditional systems, and they accord well with the estimates obtained by the methods outlined in this paper.

161 311 511 [114] [128]

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5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§. 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 5,600 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mkushi District and 4,800 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§ 3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Description of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population obtains its food only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 15s. *The Soil, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 5s.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

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climate and by the way in which the land is used. If the limit is exceeded *without a compensating change in the system of land usage* then a process of land degradation is set in operation and ultimately, unless food is obtained from outside the area, population must decline to the limit determined by natural conditions and the system of land use, or to a lower level. This limit, the maximum number of people that a given land area will maintain in perpetuity under a certain system of land usage, has been termed the 'carrying capacity' of the area *for that system*. It will be clear that the term can be used only in relation to a clearly defined system of land usage. Throughout these notes, when no statement to the contrary is made, the expression is used in relation to the traditional agricultural system of the tribes concerned. These systems, and the staple crops which go with them, vary greatly within this relatively small area of 33,800 square miles, and range from a primitive form of axe-agriculture among the Western Lala to comparatively advanced soil selection methods practised by the Eastern tribes. Descriptions of all of these systems will be found in the publications to which reference has already been made.

The term 'population-land balance' hardly requires definition. If the total population of an area is equal to or less than the land capacity for the system of agriculture practised, then a population-land balance exists within that area. When the total population is well below the land carrying capacity the areas may be described as under-populated.

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These concepts, and the methods of survey and of estimating the carrying capacities for the different land categories and agricultural systems, were applied to the problem of resettlement. Rapid reconnaissance surveys were made throughout the populated areas, with the objects of assessing approximately the land carrying capacity for each chief's area and estimating the number of people who would have to be moved to unoccupied land in order to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of the traditional agricultural systems. The estimate indicated that a total of about 160,800 people would have to be moved, as shown in the Table below.

District	*Tribe*	*Number of people to be moved*
Fort Jameson	Chewa Ngoni	98,300
Petauke	Senga Ambo	35,000 8,000
Mkushi	Lala Svaka	3,200 4,300
Ndola	Lamba	12,000

The estimates make no allowances for the readjustment of population distribution within the old Reserve. Some chieftaincies were in fact much under-populated and in some of the Reserves considerable areas remained almost or completely uninhabited because of water shortage, the occur-

7: Hodgson . G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Dr. H. S. Stannus and other writers, and I have attempted, therefore, in the following pages to confine myself to matters which, so far as I know, have not been recorded fully elsewhere. The present tense is generally used, though in many instances, during forty years of contact with missionary and other European influence, the custom described may have fallen wholly or partially into desuetude. Except where otherwise stated, the notes may be taken as referring to the Chewa tribe.

II. Domestic Life: Marital.

1. *Mdulo.* (*Chewa*).

Mdulo (a noun derived from *ku-dula*, to cut or break off) is the causing of illness in oneself or another person by indulging in sexual intercourse at prohibited times, or, more rarely, by abstaining therefrom when it is prescribed. The following are examples of cases in which the misfortune of *mdulo* is conferred:

(*a*) Upon a husband by his wife if he eats food into which she has put salt either during her periods or after she has committed adultery.

(*b*) Upon an unweaned child by its father—

(1) if he fails to achieve connexion after its birth (*vide infra* II, 7);

(2) if he commits adultery in his own house when the child is there;

(3) if he has connexion with his wife on the child's blanket when the child is sleeping in the house; or

(4) if he occupies the same house with two wives, and has connexion with the other in the temporary absence of the child and its mother.

(*c*) Upon an unweaned child by its mother if she leaves its *mbereko*[1] outside the house while she has intercourse and afterwards puts the child into it again. In the event of such a contretemps the *mbereko* must always be given away to someone else.

(*d*) Upon the womb of a wife by her husband—

(1) if he commits adultery when she is pregnant and then eats with her out of the same pot.

(2) When a man has two wives, he normally spends a week or two with each in turn. If, when one is pregnant, he leaves her for an abnormally long period, he must not return to her until after she has given birth, otherwise he will thereby "cut off" the womb. The result of this misadventure is that the wife will die in child-birth, or the child will be still-born or will die shortly after birth.

(*e*) Upon a boy in the *bwalo*[2] by his parents—

(1) when the boy comes to their house in their absence and helps himself to meat or food from a pot, if the parents have intercourse on their return and then give him meat from the same piece or food from the pot;

[1] *Mbereko*, the cloth or skin fastened round a mother's neck or shoulder and slung on her back, in which she carries her child till it is weaned, that is, till it has reached the age of two or three years. The *mbereko*, when made of tanned skin is often decorated gaily with beads. *Ku-bela* is the verb meaning to carry in this way.

[2] *Bwalo*, the communal open space in a village. Boys of five or six years of age, who are too old to continue to sleep with their parents, go to a communal hut until they are married. This hut is known as the "bwalo" hut, and the boys are said to be "in the *bwalo*."

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 101 641 N M 101 186 [464] N M [614]

people of Mpezeni '. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is ' the thing ' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, " We are all Ngoni ". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N 829 [614] N 121 101

The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, ' What is the meaning of a clan? ' they reply, ' It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many ' tribes ' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

N M 197 128 N M 101 128

[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word ' clan ' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. ' Tribe ' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which ' tribe ' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the ' blanket term ' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word ' tribe ' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

We have also to recognize that the wider connotation of the word is in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction of that name. 101 [329] [565]

III. Ngoni Society as a Cultural Unity. It is evident that the field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong centralized political organization. This society differs radically from that of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state', that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created social structure the principles of centralization and rank were dominant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of systematized law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, political, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history, 128 178 329 [105]

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hundreds. [621]

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *induna* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'ritual [504] [186]

the mental adjustments necessary to white contact. They still resent 177
white intrusion and its results, economic, administrative, and mis- 609
sionary. At the same time many of them earnestly wish for a solution of the present tension, but towards such a solution there is no easy short cut.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS. Conclusions reached after the first period of 126
field work are generally given with a certain reserve, especially in a 121
complex field such as the Ngoni present. I think, however, that the conclusions in this paper can be stated with some certainty, and as dogmatic statements they form a basis for further field work. For they set the main problems for the detailed study of the Ngoni, and also of the Ngoni as a field for observing culture contact. In this article I hope that the three chief elements in the study have emerged, namely, the problem of Ngoni society as a cultural and political unit; the culture contact problems due to the contact, and part fusion, with local tribes; and the modern culture contact problems due to European penetration.

1. The Ngoni as a group must be regarded from two points of 101
view: those who ethnically have a right to be called Ngoni, who are members of recognized Ngoni clans, with an acknowledged southern origin; and all those who live in the territory of the Ngoni Paramount Chief, and call themselves his people. These last were incorporated into the Ngoni state by the first group, who are still the ruling aristocracy, but the incorporated people now share in Ngoni 'national sentiment' and have made certain sociological changes in order to conform to Ngoni culture. It is their southern origin and their well remembered traditions of the past which confer distinctiveness on the true Ngoni, and on the state which they built. It is to their past they also turn for the charter for those institutions which are recognized as distinctively Ngoni, such as the Paramount Chieftainship, the hierarchy of rank, and patrilineal succession. Their historical origin and military achievements form also the charter for their former position as rulers of the country which they held before the advent of the Europeans.

2. The Europeans in two of the Ngoni areas destroyed the unique 177
position of the Ngoni by defeating their armies. These armies had 178

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI.—*The Zulu of Nyasaland: their Manners and Customs.* By the Rev. DONALD FRASER, of the Livingstonia Mission.

[Read before the Society, 20th February, 1901.]

101 I SHALL take you to-night into British Central Africa, and describe slightly, a most interesting nation of warriors who live in West Nyasaland. To reach them we sail up the Zambesi, and the ● 13 Shiré to Lake Nyasa. Landing at Bandawe, we strike inland for two days, climbing most of the way. After passing through richly wooded hills and valleys, we arrive at a great plateau, veined by constant sudden ravines through which rivers roar in the wet season, and trickle in the dry. The plateau is almost bared of trees, and is relieved by huge rocky hills which rise precipitously, from the plain. A low scrub covers the face of the land except where [241] gardens are being cultivated, and the whole country is dotted by innumerable ant hills, each as large as a cottage. These are hoed by the villagers, and throughout most of the year, stand out gaunt and bear. Then the landscape is thirsty and inhospitable looking. The earth baked and hard, lies unclothed in the blazing sun. Cattle, [231] sheep, and goats, wander about the river beds, and one looks almost in vain for any sign of vegetation to afford them food. But when the first rains come, the land breaks into smiling. The scrub puts on a dress of the softest green. The gardens and ant hills are [241] covered with springing maize, and a thick garment of foliage, vegetation, and flowering [illegible] covers the ground. There we stand from 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. In the cold season, the thermometer falls as low as 40°, and in the hot, rises as high as 98°. But though the sun has a dangerous bite in midsummer, the heat is never oppressive, and the nights are cool and refreshing.

101 The people who live in this country, are a branch of the Zulu tribe, who started north 70 or 80 years ago on a great raid. The 115 causes which led them to desert their own country are wrapped in mystery, and even the old men who can remember the days when they crossed the Zambesi, are unable to give any clear account of their starting. Probably it arose from one of the wars of Chaka, in

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP B. MPEZENI'S NGONILAND AND SURROUNDING COUNTRY 1890

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Area inhabited by Mpezeni's Ngoni.
Boundary of no-man's-land surrounding inhabited area.
Modern political boundaries (1950).

[p. 67]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 The B.S.A. Company produced in its support treaties made by
439 Sharpe and Stevenson with six chiefs, Mpezeni not among them.
648 Johnston's argument for including Mpezeni's country within the area of the grant appears to have been that the land had been wrested by Mpezeni from the treaty-making chiefs. None of the six chiefs mentioned by name in the certificate made any claim in the treaties to rights in Mpezeni's country, and indeed only one of them, Muliro, a minor Nsenga-Ambo chief, bordered on Mpezeni.

However Johnston also refers in the certificate of claim to 'similar privileges obtained through treaties concluded by the African Lakes Company and transferred by them to the British South Africa Company (the said treaties have received separate confirmation at my hands)'. These additional treaties are not specified in the certificate but later Johnston wrote, in connexion with the North Charterland Concession granted by the B.S.A. Company, that 'the B.S.A. Company would base its right to grant this concession on its recognized treaties with Undi, Mwasi Kazungu and ...(I forget the names), the indigenous and partially dispossessed chiefs of Mpezeni's country'. Sharpe had made a treaty with Undi
131 on 15 April 1891, in which the northern boundary of Undi's
175 territory was said to be the parallel of latitude 14° S. or thereabouts,
439 thus cutting into the southern fringe of the no-man's-land round
648 Mpezeni. Mwase made two treaties, one on 17 September 1885 with Stevenson as agent of the African Lakes Company and another on 30 November 1889 with the British Crown. In the earlier treaty the extent of Mwase's country is not stated but when the benefits of this treaty were transferred to the B.S.A. Company in 1893, Mwase's country was said to be bounded on the west by the water-parting between the Luangwa and Zambezi-Nyasa basins and on the south by the Anglo-Portuguese border. This water-parting does not meet the Anglo-Portuguese frontier until as far west as about 31° 15' E., in what is now Petauke District, and in Ngoniland it runs approximately east-west on latitude 13° 40' S. In the area controlled by Mpezeni, Mwase's territory, as defined in the transfer agreement, included the whole portion claimed by Undi in 1891 and in addition a strip of land to the north of Undi's claim, forming the southern margin of the Ngoni settled area. The main concentration of Ngoni villages, in the valleys of the Luzembwe, Lundwele and Maipasi rivers, lay just north of the territory
175 claimed for Mwase. Thus the grant of rights to the B.S.A. Company
439 in Mpezeni's country appears to have been based for the most
648 part on treaties made with chiefs whose names Johnston forgot,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[127] 178 361 648

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfinsi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[128] [34] [311] [23]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared. [241] [177]

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[129] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoni-land proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston imputes, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[130] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers 161 [131] [34]

[127] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 38.
[128] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[129] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & F*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.C.*, v, 3 (28 February 1898), p. 1.
[130] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', pp. 34, 38; *B.C.A.C.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1898), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER I

THE NGONI PEOPLE

In the census of Nyasaland of 1945, there were 193,482 people enumerated as Ngoni. Their distribution extended from the extreme north in Karonga district through every other district to the extreme south in Port Herald district. There were concentrations of Ngoni people, however, as Table I shows, in the Mzimba district in the north, in the Dowa, Lilongwe, Dedza and Ncheu districts of the central province, and in the Blantyre district in the south. The Ngoni in the Mzimba district were known as Mbelwa's Ngoni [1] and will be called in this book the northern Ngoni Kingdom.

131 [161] [101]

Table I

Distribution of Ngoni in Nyasaland by Provinces and Districts from 1945 Census

162 131

Northern Province	*Total* 45,539
Mzimba district	44,948
Karonga "	295
Chinteche "	296
Central Province*	*Total* 80,943
Kasungu district	2,539
Dowa "	20,329
Lilongwe "	17,707
Dedza "	14,757
Ncheu "	15,242
Kotakota "	4,838
Fort Manning "	5,531
Southern Province	*Total* 67,000
Blantyre district	25,224
Zomba "	6,072
Liwonde "	7,572
Neno "	10,211
Cholo "	9,185
Fort Johnston "	1,343
Chikwawa "	1,029
Chiradzulu "	4,655
Mlanje "	751
Port Herald "	58
Total	193,482

* In 1931 this was included in the Northern Province.

[1] Tew, M. *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*. O.U.P., 1950, p. 91.

[P.2 is blank]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found in three separate states in the Dowa and Kotakota districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpeseni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,891. Leaving out the Fort Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliation survives political dispersal? The chief problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, distinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambesi', 'those from the march' and 'those from this country'. The Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

885 diagram is that of the *madoda*, the older men who wore the head-ring.
692 Probably in pre-European days they received more recognition than was apparent in the 1930's after the head-ring had been given up. The *madoda* will be referred to in the next chapter on the royal village and in Chapter V of Part III on age sets. In the appeal court of the Paramount and in the chief's court there was always a group of these senior men sitting behind the *izinduna*, to whom the *induna* speaking to the case sometimes turned for advice and consultation.

645 Reference was made to an overlap between territorial office-bearers and national office-bearers. The big *izinduna*, the spokesman of the Paramount, and sometimes the messengers, were members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and often were *alumuzana* who had no courts. This was a method by which in the 1930's those *alumuzana* could be drawn into the circle of officials and receive a small salary for their services.

This set of office-bearers which we have considered in relation to the Paramount, with the exception of his spokesman and his praiser, was duplicated for the chiefs in both kingdoms, whether they were of the royal clan or *alumuzana*. The account of the royal village in the central kingdom which follows in the next chapter will illustrate how these officials functioned in the day-to-day affairs of the Paramount's headquarters.

CHAPTER V

A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933

The Paramount and his village

[114] [13] 161 [illegible] in 1933 and in 1930 I lived in the Paramount's village of Magungs in the central kingdom. The central kingdom included all Ncheu district, consisting of 1,092 square miles, a total population of 88,446, and a density of 80·99 per square mile. The village was 300 yards off the main road running from north to south of Nyasaland, and was approached by a hoed motor road flanked by huts. It consisted of three main sections: the Paramount's large brick residence and the surrounding buildings within a palisade or reed fence, including the huts of his daughter and son-in-law, and of his brother-in-law and sister; the huts and kraal in the section of the *induna* of his big house, Kalikombe Mbewe; and the huts and kraal of the original village 'owned' by the headman, Lazaro Dzonzi. On the south of the village was the large open space where the weekly market was held, and where several Indian stores faced the main road. On the north was the dispensary building,

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[P.207]

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[P. 208]

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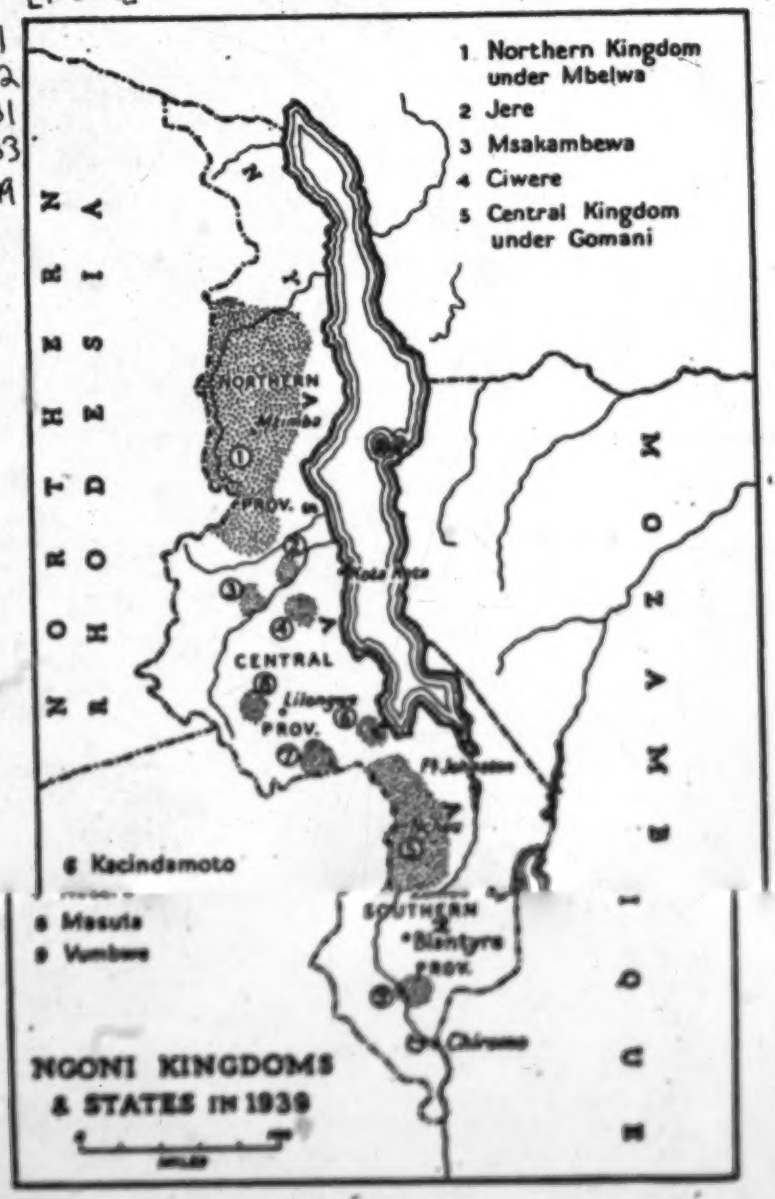

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

I

Ngonland and the People who lived in it

The homeland

The little countryof Nyasaland in Central Africa received its name from the ake by which Livingstone and those who followed him pentrated into the interior and reached the lands and people iving round the lake. On the west side there is a narrowstrip of low-lying coastal land. Then a series of escarpmets begin, and up them roads and paths wind through step wooded valleys, until the final scarp leads to the grasslnds of the high plateau. Here on the high plateau the Ngoniettled about the middle of the nineteenth century, after nealy forty years of trekking from Natal to Tanganyika. The turned south again at the shores of Lake Victoria and retned to this land which they had passed through on their ...thward march. This high plateau has great diversity of scenery, and much of it reminded the Ngoni of the hills and valleys and grasslands of Natal. There are high mountains with sharp peaks and massive granite shoulders. Between the ranges of lower grass-covered hills are shallow valleys where the rain washes down good soil to the valley bottoms. Sweeps of grassland, bare of trees, alternate with river valleys where there is a continuous flow of water, fed by springs and mountain streams.

In the dry season, from April to November, the trees lose their leaves and the grass gradually dries up till the prevailing colours are gold and brown against the black and grey

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East Africa.

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part. 121

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000, live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[3]. 101 [161] 131 167 [648] [643] 631 241 [439] 464

[3] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 202 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949

FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

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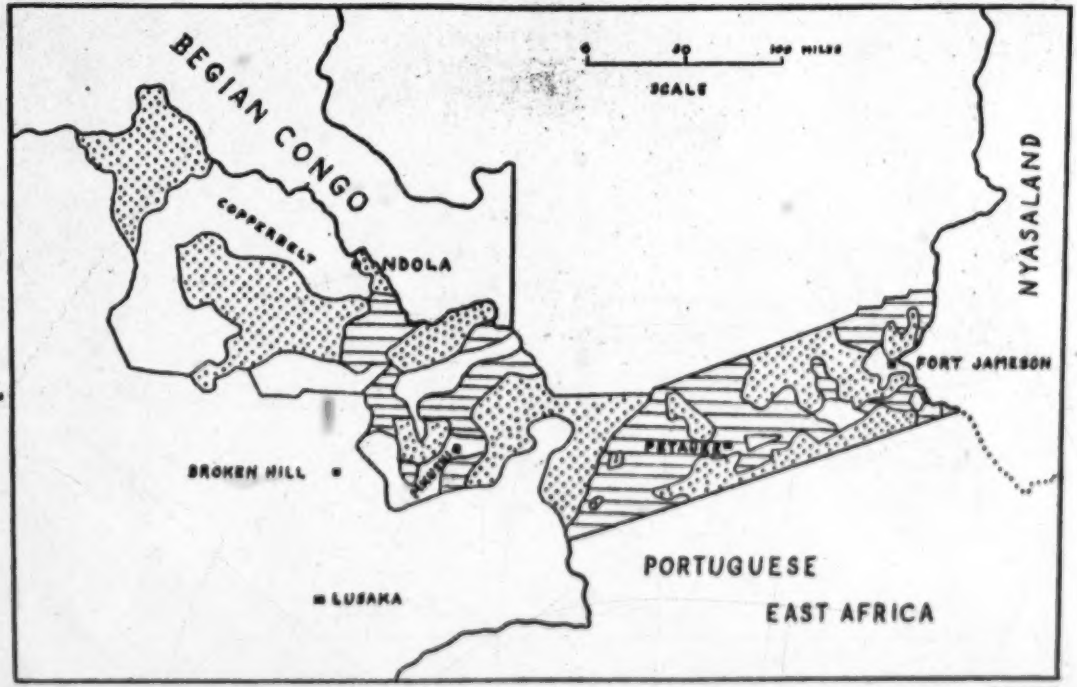
[p. vi]



Native Reserves and Native occupied Crown Land. 1929-41.

Resettlement areas and and additions. 1941-45.

SKETCH MAP OF PART OF NORTHERN RHODESIA TO SHOW THE AREAS OF THE WESTERN PROVINCE, MKUSHI DISTRICT AND EASTERN PROVINCE, REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Lamba FQ8

PART IV

THE RESETTLEMENT OF NATIVE POPULATIONS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

§ 1. *The Problem and its Origin*

IN Northern Rhodesia and doubtless over amuch greater part of Africa before the coming of the Europeans, the ppulation-land pattern was a changing, kaleidoscopic picture. If an area beame overcrowded more land was available, or it could be taken from a nghbouring people. A rough balance between land and population was maintined by means of migration, inter-tribal wars, periodic famine and disease.

With the coming of the European the kaleidscopic picture was arrested, producing what we may call the primary ppulation-land pattern. This was later modified, by alienation and reservatin of land and by the movement of peoples into Native reserves, to poduce a secondary pattern. New economic factors have so far modified thi secondary pattern only to a minor extent, but it may be expected that they vill tend to do so increasingly in the future.

The secondary population-land pattern was rought about mainly by the movement of the African population into Nativ reserves. As a result of this movement large areas of Crown Land were eft practically uninhabited, and a number of factors operating together rought about mal-distribution and congestion of populations within the rserves themselves.

So far the problem has been studied in detil only in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province the Mkushi District of the Central Province and the Ndola District of te Western Province, and it is within these districts that resettlement work—other than the 'Chitemene Control' scheme—has been carried out. The four districts are contiguous and the total area within them to which this discussion refers is about 33,800 square miles (4,000 square miles more than the whole land area of Scotland but only about one-ninth of the area of Northern Rhodesia) with a total population, in round figures, of 290,000 (about one-sixth of the total population of the Territory).

The primary population-land pattern was such that the ten tribes living within this area had ample or much more than ample land, except to a minor extent in the Fort Jameson District where the incursion of the immigrant Ngoni in the later 19th century had created a potential congestion problem. Under former conditions this problem would doubtless have resolved itself as it arose by migration of the Chewa to north and west, under pressure from the Ngoni, but once the kaleidoscopic pattern was arrested no such

L M N 174 166 311 L M N 648 166 L M N 166 311 L M N [101] L M N 131 L M N 166 311 [167]

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
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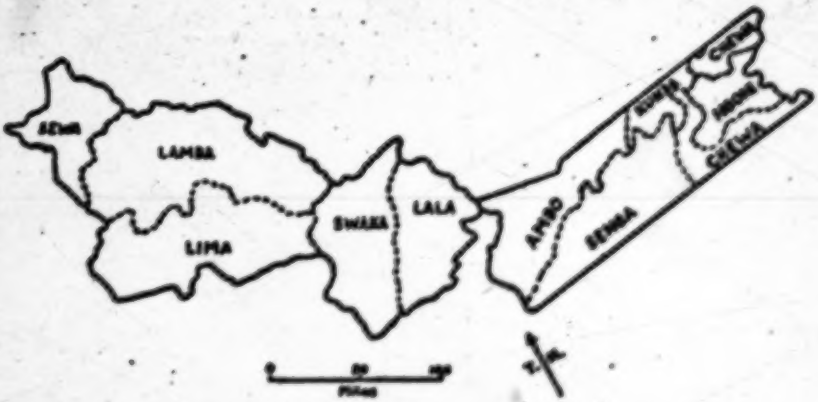

Fig 1.— THE ORIGINAL POPULATION-LAND PATTERN
Showing areas held by tribes.

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[131]

movement was possible. The lands of the Ngoni and Chewa were then reduced, by alienation to European settlers and by reservation, to an extent which the following figures illustrate:

Habitable Land held by Tribes (square miles)

	Chewa	*Ngoni**
Before Ngoni invasion	3,580	–
After Ngoni invasion	2,280	1,300
After land alienation	1,124	878
After creation of reserves	889	675

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Throughout the Petauke and Mkushi Districts the amount of land taken up by European settlers was negligible, but the Senga, Ambo, Lala and Swaka peoples were moved into Reserves some of which proved totally inadequate for the land needs of their traditional agricultural systems.

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In the west (Ndola District) the congestion problem arose largely as a result of displacement of people from the area which is now the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia, a land loss which fell on the Lamba tribe. The land area of Mushiri's section of the Lamba, for example, which formerly included part of the Copperbelt, was reduced from 2,200 to 360 square miles. The Lambas were removed from the new mining areas and this movement accentuated by some migration of more distant peoples attracted by the mines, gave rise to a belt of relatively high population concentration about the southern and eastern margins of the Copperbelt.

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* With a mixture of Chewa and other tribes.

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni Lambe FQ8 Marawi FR4

In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftaincies remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional systems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

T: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1913 FRS Nyasa FRS
Marsen FRH

NOTES ON THE ACHEWA AND ANGONI OF THE DOWA DISTRICT OF THE NYASALAND PROTECTORATE.

[With Maps 1 and 2.]

By A. G. O. Hodgson.

CONTENTS.

	Page
I.—Introduction.	
1. Geographical Introduction	[illegible]
2. Ethnological Introduction	[illegible]
II.—Domestic Life: Marriage.	
1. Bride (Chewa)	[illegible]
2. Polygyny: Initiation of girls (Chewa)	[illegible]
3. " " boys (Chewa)	[illegible]
4. Prohibition and aversion rules (Chewa)	[illegible]
5. Forms of marriage (Chewa)	[illegible]
6. Customary Source and Bride outside (Chewa)	[illegible]
7. Husband and wife (Chewa)	[illegible]
8. Dissolution of marriage (Chewa)	[illegible]
9. Marriage of widows (Chewa)	[illegible]
10. Prohibition and aversion rules (Ngoni)	[illegible]
11. Forms of marriage (Ngoni)	[illegible]
12. Customary Source (Ngoni)	[illegible]
13. Dissolution of marriage (Ngoni)	[illegible]
III.—Domestic Life: Person.	
1. Infancy	[illegible]
2. Inheritance	[illegible]
IV.—Social Organization: Practices and Laws.	
1. Political Organization and dress (Chewa)	[illegible]
2. " " " (Ngoni)	[illegible]
3. Social relations: the Totem	[illegible]
4. Property	[illegible]
V.—Social Organization: Religion.	
1. Preparations for war	[illegible]
2. Methods	[illegible]
3. Subsequent proceedings	[illegible]
VI.—Social Organization: Sorcerers and Witchcraft.	
1. Sorcerers (Chewa)	[illegible]
2. " (Ngoni)	[illegible]
VII.—Public Life: Previous Tribes.	
1. Disposition of the body (Chewa)	[illegible]
2. Disposal of the corpse (Chewa)	[illegible]
3. Funeral rites (Chewa)	[illegible]
4. Secretial rites (Chewa)	[illegible]
5. Funeral rites (Ngoni)	[illegible]
VIII.—Religious Conceptions.	
1. Re-incarnation and spirits (Chewa)	[illegible]
2. Miscellaneous	[illegible]
IX.—Appendix.	
1. Storytelling (Chewa)	[illegible]
2. Tree-worship	[illegible]
3. Implements of war	[illegible]

I.—Introduction.

1. Geographical Introduction.

The Nyasaland Protectorate consists of a strip of land some five hundred miles in length and approximately seventy miles in width, lying around the southern and western shores of Lake Nyasa, which is the most southerly and the third in size of the great East African lakes. The flat, low-lying plain which forms part of the Bilé valley rises gradually from an altitude of [illegible] feet on the Lower Bilé River to 1,000 feet at the level of the lake. To the west of this

[Text continues on page 186]

PIPA
TUMBUTU
MAIDUGURI
KANO
ZARIA
KADUNA
ILORIN
IBADAN
LAGOS
ABEOKUTA
ABAKALIKI
ENUGU
ONITSHA
OWERRI
PORT HARCOURT
CALABAR
ONDO
ASABA
BENIN
ABA
UYO
OKITIPUPA
ASHAKA
YOLA
MAIDUGURI
KANO
ZARIA
KADUNA
ILORIN
IBADAN
LAGOS
ABEOKUTA
ABAKALIKI
ENUGU
ONITSHA
OWERRI
PORT HARCOURT
CALABAR
ONDO
ASABA
BENIN
ABA
UYO
OKITIPUPA
ASHAKA
YOLA

Map 1

Zone District of the Nyamlanti Protectorate. 135

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Map 6.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

M N 133 plain is a moderately temperate, undulating plateau, standing from 3,500 to 5,000 feet above sea-level and broken by ranges of mountains whose peaks tower several thousand feet higher.

[131] The Dowa District is situated in the centre of the Protectorate. Its area of 3,600 square miles is divided topographically into three nearly equal parts, the alluvial lake-shore plain on the east giving way to the escarpment of the hilly plateau in the centre, which again drops steeply on the west to another plain extending to the banks of the Bua River. Each plain is well covered with light timber and long grass, and contains a plentiful supply of all local varieties of game. Tsetse have long infested the lake shore; on the west, migrating from Rhodesia, they crossed the Bua as recently as 1914 and have now spread as far as the hills. The central plateau is cool and healthy. Formerly well timbered, it has since been denuded by the wasteful methods of the native inhabitants. It is free from tsetse and mosquitoes, and cattle thrive in consequence. The larger species of game are absent.

N M 137 136 [132]

2. *Sociological Introduction.*

N M 161 131 The census of 1926, taken at the time when these notes were compiled, shows the population of the District as consisting of 57,184 Achewa,[1] 38,244 Angoni, 98 Anyanja and 4,857 Wayao, together with an odd thousand belonging to other tribes. The Achewa live principally in the west and centre, the Angoni on the central plateau, and the Anyanja and Wayao on the lake shore. The same census gives a total of 247,000 Angoni and 470,000 Anyanja and Achewa out of 1,200,000 natives then settled in the Protectorate.

M 174 The two last-named tribes taken together are commonly the largest in Nyasaland, and they have probably lived in their present habitat longer than any others; but the exact duration of their residence can only be a matter for conjecture, since the history of the southern Bantu peoples, during the last four centuries at any rate, consists of one long series of migrations and invasions. From time to time clans and tribes have been united under a strong and powerful leader, and a few decades later disintegration has set in and they have almost vanished. New names have frequently been adopted, and few tribes in south-east Africa now bear the same designation and occupy the same ground as did their ancestors four hundred years ago. Oral tradition is supplemented but scantily by the reports of the early Portuguese explorers, who first ascended the Zambezi River at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their objects were commercial rather than scientific, and they have left little record of the native peoples with whom they came in contact.

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It is known, however, that the Achewa and Anyanja are off-shoots or descendants of the A-maravi, who inhabited the country north of the Zambezi at Sena and Tete in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In his Report upon the Rivers of Cuama (Zambezi) compiled in 1667 Father Manuel Barreto states that this warlike tribe was governed by its emperor, named Caronga, whose kingdom extended two hundred leagues up the river from the part of

M 175

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[1] Tribal names in Nyasaland generally take the plural prefix A-, as A-ngoni, A-chewa, sometimes Wa-, as Wa-yao. The singular prefix is M-, as Mngoni, Myao. Further south, Abe-, Aba- and Amo- are more common, e.g. Abe-Ngoni, Abe-Mbo, Amo-Shona. For the sake of convenience, when there is no danger of confusion between prefix and stem, I have omitted the hyphen.

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

1. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indunas*[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupulous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was strictly regulated by custom, and so strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African territories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 84,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 150,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[1] [i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

THE FORT JAMESON NGONI

By J. A. BARNES

Historical and Ecological Background

101 There are about a dozen groups of people in different parts of Africa who call themselves Ngoni, and others not using that name have also been classified as Ngoni on the basis of common origin. They are found in Tanganyika Territory, Portuguese East Africa, Nyasaland, and Northern Rhodesia. The name Ngoni is derived from Nguni, the designation applied to themselves by the Zulu and Xhosa peoples. The Ngoni have a common history of emigration from the vicinity of Zululand, in Natal, in the 1820's, and of subsequent migration northwards. This common heritage they share with the Ndebele of Southern Rhodesia. These migrations were occasioned by the rise to power of the Zulu chief Shaka, whose defeat of his chief rival, Zwide of the Ndwandwe, led to the flight northwards of parties of Ndwandwe refugees. At least two parties travelled as far north as the River Zambezi, one of them led by Zwangendaba, whose party crossed the river in 1835.[1] This Ngoni group reached the vicinity of Lake Tanganyika in about 1845, and there Zwangendaba died. His people split into several segments, led by his sons and other followers. One of these segments went on further north, others turned towards Lake Nyasa, while one segment led by Mpezeni, a son of Zwangendaba, struck south-westwards towards the Bemba country in what is now the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia. Here, in about 1856, they fought unsuccessfully with the Bemba, retreated southwards, and in about 1863 crossed the River Luangwa into Fort Jameson District. In 1868 they moved westwards into Petauke District, and a few years later moved eastwards to their present habitat in the vicinity of Fort Jameson.[2] It is with this group of Ngoni that we are concerned.[3]

[131]

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[1] Poole, *Sons of the Crossing of the Zambezi*, pp. 190-1.

[2] Cf. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, pp. 659-701; Chidzumbe, *My Life of Dyamabwi*, pp. 1-38; Doke, *Clicks Tales in Bantu Africa*, p. 151; Gluckie, *Among the Wild Angoni*, p. 18; Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 310-13; Hodgson, *Notes on the Ndebele and Angoni*, p. 103; Kapumbu, *Angoni*, Cambridge MS (typed), pp. 1-113; Lancaster, *Tentative Chronology*, p. 86; Poole, *Native Tribes*, pp. 3-10; Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 180; Stigand, *Province of Nyasaland*, p. 128; Watson, *Notes of British Central Africa*, p. 180; Wilson, *Cambridge ... Ngoni*, pp. 180-8; Wisemann, *Angoni Parliamentary*, pp. 108-9; Young, *Memory of the Tumbuka Kingdom*, pp. 108-13.

[3] I worked among these people for 2 years in 1948-9 as an Anthropologist of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

[p. 199]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The present-day population of the tribe is about 8,000, of whom about 6,500 live in Northern Rhodesia and 1,500 in the Fort Manning area of Nyasaland.[1] In Northern Rhodesia the tribe is largely confined to two demarcated Native Reserves. In 1938 the density of population in these two reserves averaged 68 persons to the square mile,[2] but in some congested or very fertile areas it was 90 or more.[3] Since 1941 the density has been reduced in some of the more congested parts by controlled resettlement in areas outside the reserves.[4] The density of population of the Nyasaland section of the tribe was about 46 persons to the square mile in 1945.[5] 161 151

The region in which the Ngoni live consists of a fairly flat plateau about 3,500 feet above sea-level, with massive granite outcrops rising another 1,000 feet or more. The soils of the region are principally of the types suitable only for shifting or partial cultivation, but there are also belts of more valuable soils.[6] In relation to the customary mode of agriculture, in which maize is the principal crop, the critical density of the land has been calculated to be about 10 persons to the square mile.[7] The annual rainfall at Fort Jameson varies from 27 to 48 inches, averaging about 35 inches. The region contains the meeting of the Lunguwe-Nyasa and Lunguwe-Zambezi watersheds. Most of the streams that flow down into the Lunguwe dry up in July, while the Zambezi and Nyasa streams continue to flow somewhat longer.[8] 153 [134] [241] [132]

The natural vegetation of the region consists principally of *Brachystegia-Isoberlinia* woodlands, with larger trees along the line of streams. The mean maximum temperature for the region is about 137 132

of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. This account was prepared at Oxford, and I am very grateful to Dr. Max Gluckman for criticism of this paper in draft.

[1] In the 1931 Nyasaland census many of the people living in the two Ngoni reserves were classified as Cewa. Hence the figure of 5,000 Ngoni in Fort Manning does not represent the total population of these two reserves. Cf. *Report on the Census*, Table 9.

[2] Calculated from the figures given in the *Five Reports*, p. 364. These two reserves contain Cewa chieftainships as well as Ngoni, but the average population density of the two tribes is probably of the same order.

[3] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 70.

[4] Fraser, *Land Resettlement*, pp. 47-9.

[5] *Report on the Census*, Table 8. The Fort Manning District contains a Cewa chieftainship as well as the two Ngoni. The figure given above is the average for the whole district.

[6] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 70.

[7] Allan, *African Land Usage*, p. 19.

[8] Fosbrooke, *Human Geography*, pp. 1 and 2.

/3 cont'd/

a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898 they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Already the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now controlled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District, and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, rather than the old Ngoni language, zulu to Zulu, which is used only in prayers and songs. Chewa is spoken in some villages which at the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surrounding neighbours is in their form of centralized chieftainship, inherited from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chieftainships created by the British South Africa Company's administration, and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional headmen in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary offices, descended from captains of the original headmen who had been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regimental system. Regiments were formed every so many years as a

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national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regiments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exodus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to provide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and finger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority living in the Ngoni and Mwanbiki Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 300 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical purposes, descent is ambilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

Livingstone was the first Briton to reach this area. In 1866 he passed through what was to become Mpezeni's country,[1] and in his journals he makes frequent references to Ngoni raids. Unfortunately his carriers would not take him to Ngoni villages and all he saw of Ngoni activity were burnt-out huts and dead bodies killed in battle. The accounts of his journeys stimulated British interest in the region round Lake Nyasa, a centre for the slave trade, and led to the arrival there of missionaries and settlers. In 1874 the Livingstonia Mission was founded and in 1883 a British consul was first appointed to the Shire Highlands.[2]

Mpezeni's country lay some distance from the main centres of British and Portuguese activity, but was not without importance. Apart from Mimosie, it was thought that there were other gold deposits to be found in the area. In contrast with their harried neighbours, the prosperous Ngoni with their herds of cattle attracted travellers while the pleasant climate of the plateau, compared with the hot valleys of Lourenço, Zambezi, and Nyasa, made it suitable for European colonization. Yet the Ngoni army was formidable, and had to be neutralized in some way if other settlements were to be safe. Mpezeni's country flanked several trade routes of importance from the Zambezi and Lake Nyasa inland to the source of slaves and ivory. For these various reasons Mpezeni's country attracted the attention of traders and governments, those interested in benefiting by the slave trade as well as those seeking to end it. In addition towards the end of the century when it became clear that Africa was to be completely divided between the Powers, any territory, however inhospitable, that had not already been claimed attracted the attention of treaty-making explorers.

The first move towards incorporating the Fort Jameson Ngoni in a colonial empire was made by the Portuguese who had been stimulated by the increasing British interest in Nyasaland. In November 1888 the Governor-General of Mozambique instructed Wiese, a German[3] trader who had already made contact with Mpezeni, to lead an expedition to him. According to Johnston, Wiese and an associate were offered £2,000 to secure Mpezeni's submission to Portugal.[4] Wiese was well received and distributed flags to Mpezeni and his sons. The Portuguese regarded the

[1] Last Journals, I, p. 150.
[2] Johnston, British Central Africa, pp. 75-80.
[3] In A. H. P., chapter, 141, p. 184, the Portuguese Foreign Minister describes Wiese as a Dutchman. This appears to be incorrect in the light of Wiese's contacts with the German Legation in Lisbon.
[4] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 177; see p. 12. (To save space, all public records will be identified by a serial number printed bold there, taken from the first column of the Bibliography, List G.)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

1

Ngoniland and the People who lived in it

The homeland

The little country of Nyasaland in Central Africa received its name from the lake by which Livingstone and those who followed him penetrated into the interior and reached the lands and people living round the lake. On the west side there is a narrow strip of low-lying coastal land. Then a series of escarpments begin, and up these roads and paths wind through steep wooded valleys, until the final steep leads to the grasslands of the high plateau. Here on the high plateau the Ngoni settled about the middle of the nineteenth century, after nearly forty years of trekking from Natal to Tanganyika. They turned south again at the shores of Lake Victoria and returned to this land which they had passed through on their northward march. This high plateau has great diversity of scenery, and much of it reminded the Ngoni of the hills and valleys and grasslands of Natal. There are high mountains with sharp peaks and massive granite shoulders. Between the ranges of lower grass-covered hills are shallow valleys where the rain washes down good soil to the valley bottoms. Swaths of grassland, lines of trees, alternate with close valleys where there is a continuous flow of water, fed by springs and mountain streams.

In the dry season, from April to November, the trees lose their leaves and the grass gradually dries up till the prevailing colours are gold and brown against the black and grey

3: Reed E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

/32 /37 [22] rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet slope and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow aroma and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

31/ 36/ 35/ In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its homestead grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of huts also became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more [30] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central [30] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom, [31] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work were on, and wood and grass were stored.

62/ [34] There were two focal points in each village, reproduced on a minor scale in the homesteads round each kraal. One was the "big house" or the head of the kraal, where the leading women had her house... (8)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

after the age of four or five, when they might become aware that intercourse was taking place. From this age, when the Ngoni said 'they will now begin to see things and to ask questions', they were to sleep either with a widowed grandmother or senior helpe.

During the 'dark bit' of the month' and in the rains, most people went to bed very after dark and little children got a long sleep. When the moon was bright, and in dry weather, the whole village was out, walking around, dancing, talking, visiting. Little children tagged round with their older sisters or nurse girls, and if they were sleepy were either picked up and carried, or put in the hut to sleep on their mat, provided there was a fire burning into which they could fall. During the day, specially in the hot weather, children dropped off to sleep just where they were, on the veranda, under the platform, or some other shady spot.

It was just before bedtime, in the grandmother's hut, that traditional folk-tales were told, round the last flickers of a wood fire. Sometimes a child dropped off to sleep before the story was finished. Someone either took him on her lap, or dumped him on his mat and covered him up.

This acquiring of hints, directed consciously by adults, was designed to give a child increasingly a sense of being part of a community which had certain standards of behaviour. There were in this training, some prohibitions which a child was expected to observe as soon as he could walk and talk. The most stringent was on any form of sex play between boys or girls. To avoid any likelihood of this, little boys and girls was early encouraged to form separate play groups. The elders kept an eye particularly on the boys, and if they showed by inquisitiveness in their play about the private parts of girl playmates, they were beaten and reproved and told: 'If you do this again, I shall tell your father.'

Many little boys or girls up to the age of four or five remained almost naked, but in Ngoni families they wore a scrap

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

805	8 *Ukhale omnciyane*	Hawks fly and hover
	9 *Ukhale onkhale*	Hawks catch chickens
	10 *Izigwayane ezincinyane*	Trees begin to flower
	11 *Izigwayane ezikhale*	Trees fruiting
	12 *Izilalwane*	Trees fruiting
	13 *Umgwane*	Trees fruiting

The months were more generally grouped in two main
●[152] seasons: the rains, whose name meant that the earth was "clothed and decorated with new grass, leaves and flowers"; and the dry season, the time for moving village sites, felling trees and clearing bush for new gardens, castrating oxen. It was the true Ngoni families who knew the names for the months and the relation of months to the seasons. Among these families in every Ngoni village there were men who watched the sun's movements, and noted the hill or tall tree behind which the sun set when it reached its most southerly point. This was for them one of the signals that the rains were near. If the rains did not begin when the sun reached this point, they announced that this year the rains were delayed and the crops would probably suffer. When the *intuda* bird
[825] begins to sing, the first man who heard it went to tell his neighbours to repair their hoe handles and begin to clear the fields, for the rains and the planting season was at hand.
[826] When a large flat mushroom appeared in the woodland, it too was the herald of rain.

Not only were these months and the seasons they indicated
805 the season of regulating work. They were also the way by
211 which the Ngoni reckoned time. They had *ondo* for each month and *nonches* for the days. They took these with them on campaigns, and when returning they produced the *ondo*, and pointing to the *nonches* they said: "On the sixth day of the seventh month we began fighting against X's village," or "We reached that river on the first day of the fifth month."
211 Ngoni elders were however quick to point out that they were all trained from childhood up to have excellent memories,

to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds, seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush. In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the preservation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some open land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headmen concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built at Kimberley Istich. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's journey of fifteen miles or so, does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

plain is a comfortably temperate, undulating plateau, standing from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea-level and broken by ranges of mountains whose peaks tower several thousand feet higher.

The Town District is situated in the centre of the Protectorate. Its area of 3,400 square miles is divided topographically into three nearly equal parts, the alluvial lake-shore plain on the west giving way to the mountains of the hilly plateau in the centre, which again drops steeply on the east to another plain extending to the banks of the Sun River. Each plain is well watered with light timber and long grass, and contains a plentiful supply of all food varieties of game. Tribes have long inhabited the lake shore; on the west, migrating from Rhodesia, they crossed the Sun as recently as 1914 and have now spread as far as the hills. The central plateau is cool and healthy. Formerly well timbered, it has since been denuded by the wasteful methods of the native inhabitants. It is free from tsetse and mosquitoes, and cattle thrive in consequence. The larger species of game are absent.

2. *Ethnological Introduction.*

The census of 1926, taken at the time when these notes were compiled, shows the population of the District as consisting of 37,200 *Ashowa*,[1] 30,200 *Angwi*, 90 *Anyanja* and 4,007 *Wayao*, together with an odd thousand belonging to other tribes. The *Ashowa* live principally in the west and centre, the *Angwi* on the central plateau, and the *Anyanja* and *Wayao* on the lake shore. The same census gives a total of 347,000 *Angwi* and 470,000 *Anyanja* and *Ashowa* out of 1,300,000 natives then settled in the Protectorate.

The two last-named tribal tribes together are numerically the largest in Nyasland, and they have probably lived in their present habitat longer than any others; but the exact location of their traditions can only be a matter for conjecture, since the history of the southern Bantu peoples, during the last four centuries at any rate, consists of one long series of migrations and invasions. From time to time chiefs and tribes have risen, united under a strong and powerful leader, and a few decades later disintegration has set in and they have almost vanished. New names have frequently been adopted, and few tribes in South-east Africa now bear the same designation and occupy the same ground as did their ancestors four hundred years ago. This condition is supplemented but scantily by the reports of the early Portuguese explorers, who first ascended the Zambezi River at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their reports were commercial rather than scientific, and they have left little record of the native peoples with whom they came in contact.

It is known, however, that the *Ashowa* and *Anyanja* are off-shoots or descendants of the *Karanga*, who inhabited the country north of the Zambezi as Sena and Tete in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In his Report upon the Rivers of Gazaa (Zambezi) compiled in 1887 Dalton Harold Stevens states that this country was governed by the emperor, named Gazaga, whose kingdom extended two hundred leagues up the river from the port of

[1] Tribal names in Nyasland generally take the plural prefix *A-*, as *A-ngwi*, *A-showa*, sometimes *Wa-*, as *Wa-yao*. The singular prefix is *Mu-*, as *Mu-ngwi*, *Mu-yao*. Further south, *Ama-*, *Aba-* and *Ama-* are more common, as *Ama-ngwi*, *Aba-Mbo*, *Ama-Mbondwe*. For the sake of convenience, when there is no danger of confusion between prefix and root, I have omitted the hyphen.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

The present-day population of the tribe is about 83,000, of whom about 60,000 live in Northern Rhodesia and 23,000 in the Fort Manning area of Nyasaland.[1] In Northern Rhodesia the tribe is largely confined to two demarcated Native Reserves. In 1938 the density of population in these two reserves averaged 68 persons to the square mile,[2] but in some congested or very fertile areas it was 90 or more.[3] Since 1941 the density has been reduced in some of the more congested parts by controlled resettlement in areas outside the reserves.[4] The density of population of the Nyasaland section of the tribe was about 48 persons to the square mile in 1945.[5] 161 151

The region in which the Ngoni live consists of a fairly flat plateau about 3,500 feet above sea level, with massive granite outcrops rising another 1,000 feet or more. The soils of the region are principally of the types suitable only for shifting or partial cultivation, but there are also belts of more valuable soils.[6] In relation to the customary mode of agriculture, in which maize is the principal crop, the critical density of the land has been calculated to be about 20 persons to the square mile.[7] The annual rainfall at Fort Jameson varies from 27 to 48 inches, averaging about 35 inches. The region contains the meeting of the Lumpuru-Nyasa and Lumpuru-Zambezi watersheds. Most of the streams that flow down into the Lumpuru dry up in July, while the Zambezi and Nyasa streams continue to flow somewhat longer.[8] 153 [194] [291] [192]

The natural vegetation of the region consists principally of *Brachystegia-Isoberlinia* woodlands, with larger trees along the line of streams. The more moisture temperature for the region is about 137 132

of the Rhodes Livingstone Institute. This account was prepared at Oxford, and I am very grateful to Dr. Max Gluckman for criticism of this paper in draft.

[1] In the 1931 Nyasaland census many of the people living in the two Ngoni areas were not enumerated in Cross. Hence the figure of 2,231 Ngoni in Fort Manning does not represent the total population of these two districts. Cf. Report on the Census, Table 5.

[2] Calculated from the figures given in the Fin Report, p. 364. There two reserves contain Cross chiefdoms as well as Ngoni, but the average population density of the two tribes is probably of the same order.

[3] Chapanda, *Ecological Survey*, p. 10.

[4] Brown, *Land Resettlement*, pp. 27-9.

[5] Report on the Census, Table 6. The Fort Manning District contains a Cross chiefdom as well as the two Ngoni. The figure given above is the average for the whole district.

[6] Chapanda, *Ecological Survey*, p. 10.

[7] Allan, *African Land Usage*, p. 19.

[8] Fosbrooke, *Human Geography*, pp. 1 and 2.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

192. 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] These seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, bushpigs, wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens are also kept.

The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neighbours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and mud; some women make pottery and some men make mud mats; all buy their clothes and their beer from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours because of their clanishness. The other tribes do not, in the eyes of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the regime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] and the headmen.[4] The political system was at the same time the territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The persons of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, Geological Survey, pp. [illegible].
[2] See my Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni.
[3] Mabwanamkulu, pl. mabwanamkulu.
[4] Nduna, pl. ndunas.

1:Dawson R-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'85 Mgwani F'85
Mgwani

Map 3. MPEZENI'S MOONLAND AND SURROUNDING COUNTRY 1880

102
Rd
109
181
139

[illegible] Area inhabited by Mgwani's Ngoni.

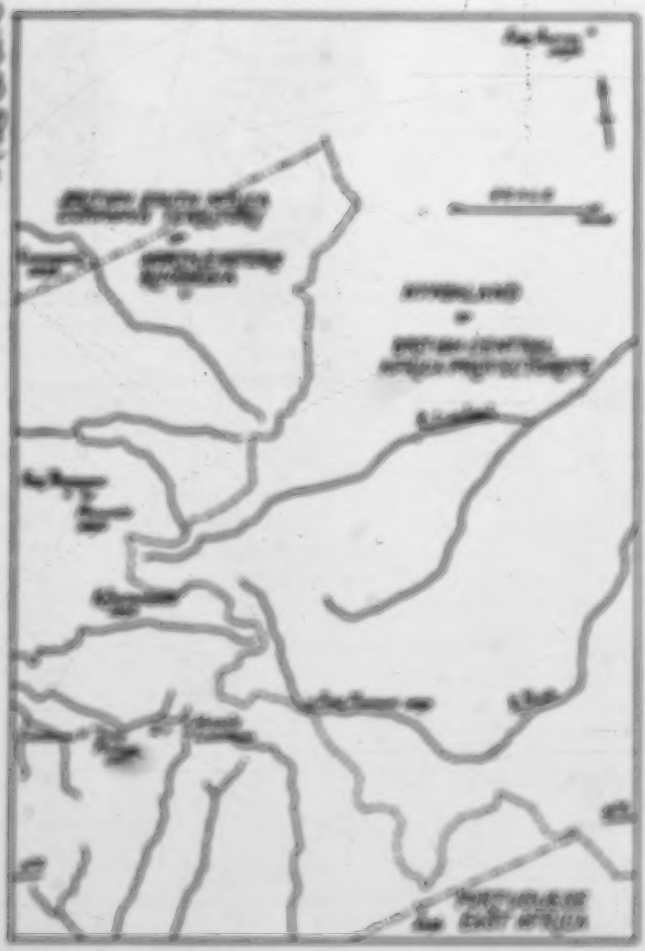
[illegible] Boundary of no-man's-land surrounding inhabited area.

[illegible] Modern political boundaries (approx).

[p. 67]

1:Series E-5 (1946-1947)554 F35 Ngoni F35
Ngoneni

Map C. WHITE SETTLEMENTS IN NGONILAND
[illegible]

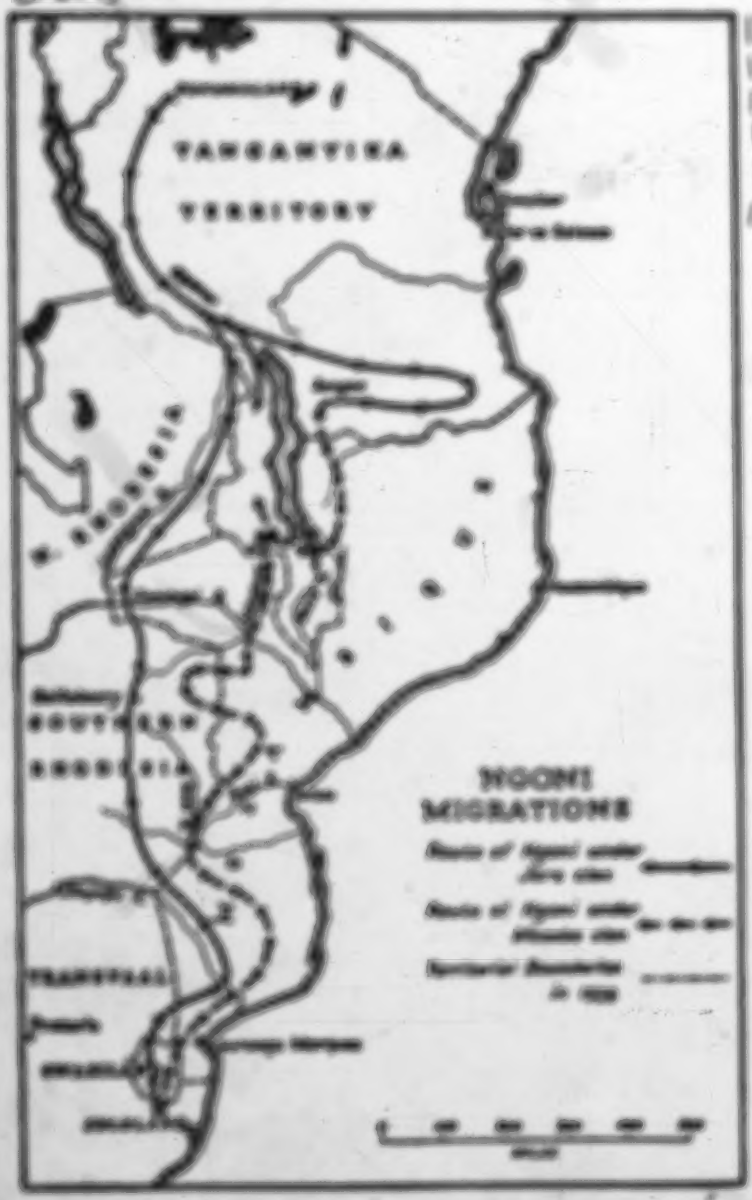


[illegible]

[p. 99]

2: Reed E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5



173
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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

I

Ngoniland and the People who lived in it

The homeland

The little country of Nyasaland in Central Africa received its name from the lake by which Livingstone and those who followed him penetrated into the interior and reached the lands and people living round the lake. On the west side there is a narrow strip of low-lying coastal land. Then a series of escarpments begin, and up them roads and paths wind through steep wooded valleys, until the final scarp leads to the grasslands of the high plateau. Here on the high plateau the Ngoni settled about the middle of the nineteenth century, after nearly forty years of trekking from Natal to Tanganyika. They turned south again at the shores of Lake Victoria and returned to this land which they had passed through on their northward march. This high plateau has great diversity of scenery, and much of it reminded the Ngoni of the hills and valleys and grasslands of Natal. There are high mountains with sharp peaks and massive granite shoulders. Between the ranges of lower grass-covered hills are shallow valleys where the rain washes down good soil to the valley bottoms. Sweeps of grassland, bare of trees, alternate with river valleys where there is a continuous flow of water, fed by springs and mountain streams.

In the dry season, from April to November, the trees lose their leaves and the grass gradually dries up till the prevailing colours are gold and brown against the black and grey

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned; such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources. 000

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile. 114 101 121 161 311 [133]

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfuzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipuka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni. [181]

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organisation had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent. [797] [427]

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do. [138]

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people. [439]

NOTES ON THE ATHENA AND ANGOLI OF THE DOWA DISTRICT OF THE TFANGALAND PROTECTORATE.

[View Maps 1 and 2.]

By A. G. O. Hodgson.

CONTENTS.

I.—Introduction. PAGE
1. Geographical Introduction 120
2. Ecological Introduction 120

II.—Customs Law: Marriage.
1. Bride (Chewa) 120
2. Polygamy: Initiation of girls (Chewa) ... 121
3. " " boys (Chewa) ... 122
4. Prohibited and expiated unions (Chewa) 127
5. Forms of marriage (Chewa) 130
6. Customary Dowry and Bride services (Chewa) 130
7. Unchaste and wife (Chewa) 130
8. Dissolution of marriage (Chewa) ... 130
9. Marriage of widows (Chewa) 140
10. Prohibited and expiated unions (Ngoni) 141
11. Forms of marriage (Ngoni) 141
12. Customary Dowry (Ngoni) 142
13. Dissolution of marriage (Ngoni) ... 142

III.—Customs Law: Pledge.
1. Infancy 142
2. Inheritance 142

IV.—Social Organization: Totemism, and Labola.
1. Political Organization and clans (Chewa) 142
2. " " " (Ngoni) 144
3. Social evolution: the Fingos 146
4. Property 146

V.—Social Organization: Marriage.
1. Preparations for war 150
2. Methods 150
3. Subsequent proceedings 150

VI.—Social Organization: Kinship and Personnel.
1. Relationship (Chewa) 150
2. " (Ngoni) 150

VII.—Customs Law: Criminal Delict.
1. Preparation of the body (Chewa) ... 150
2. Disposal of the corpse (Chewa) 150
3. Funeral rites (Chewa) 150
4. Ancestral rites (Chewa) 157
5. Funeral rites (Ngoni) 158

VIII.—Religious Observances.
1. Re-incarnation and spirits (Chewa) ... 160
2. Miscellaneous 162

IX.—Economics.
1. Barmaking (Chewa) 166
2. Iron smelting 168
3. Implements of war 168

I.—Introduction.

1. Geographical Introduction.

The Nyamlond Protectorate consists of a strip of land some five hundred miles in length and approximately seventy miles in width, lying around the southern and western shores of Lake Nyasa, which is the most southerly and the third in size of the great East African lakes. The flat, low-lying plain which forms part of the Rift valley rises gradually from an altitude of 120 feet on the Lower Shire River to 1,000 feet at the level of the lake. To the west of this

[text continues on page 126]

plain is a comfortably temperate, undulating plateau, standing from 5,000 to 6,000 feet above sea-level and broken by ranges of mountains whose peaks tower several thousand feet higher.

The Cross District is situated in the centre of the Protectorate. Its area of 5,400 square miles is divided topographically into three nearly equal parts, the elevated lake-shore plain on the west giving way to the escarpment of the hilly plateau in the centre, which again drops steeply on the east to another plain extending to the banks of the Sea River. Each plain is well covered with light timber and long grass, and contains a plentiful supply of all local varieties of game. Tsetse have long infested the lake shore; on the west, migrating from Rhodesia, they crossed the Sea as recently as 1904 and have now spread as far as the hills. The central plateau is cool and healthy. Formerly well timbered, it has since been denuded by the wasteful methods of the native inhabitants. It is free from tsetse and mosquitoes, and cattle thrive in consequence. The larger species of game are absent.

2. Ethnological Introduction.

The census of 1900, taken at the time when hut-tax was imposed, shows the population of the District as consisting of 17,200 Ankore,* 30,500 Angoni, 90 Anyanja and 4,007 Wayao, together with an odd thousand belonging to other tribes. The Ankore live principally in the west and centre, the Angoni on the central plateau, and the Anyanja and Wayao on the lake shore. The same census gives a total of 347,000 Angoni and 470,000 Anyanja and Ankore out of 7 300,000 natives then within the Protectorate.

The two [illegible] tribes together are numerically the largest in Nyasaland, and they have probably lived in their present habitat longer than any others; but the exact duration of their residence can only be a matter for conjecture, since the history of the southern Bantu peoples, during the last four centuries at any rate, consists of one long series of migrations and invasions. From time to time chiefs and tribes have been united under a strong and powerful leader, and a few decades later disintegration has set in and they have almost vanished. New names have frequently been adopted, and few tribes in south-east Africa now bear the same designation and occupy the same ground as did their ancestors four hundred years ago. Oral tradition is supplemented, but scantily, by the reports of the early Portuguese explorers, who first ascended the Zambezi River at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their objects were commercial rather than scientific, and they have left little record of the native peoples with whom they came in contact.

It is known, however, that the Ankore and Anyanja are offshoots or descendants of the A-maravi, who inhabited the country north of the Zambezi at Tete and Teto in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In his Report upon the Rivers of Cuama (Zambezi) compiled in 1667 Father Manuel Barreto states that this warlike tribe was governed by its emperor, named Caranga, whose kingdom extended two hundred leagues up the river from the point of

* Tribal names in Nyasaland generally take the plural prefix A-, as A-ngoni, A-ckore, sometimes Wa-, as Wa-yao. The singular prefix is M-, as Mngoni, Myao. Further south, Ama-, Aba- and Ama- are more common, e.g. Ama-Ngoni, Aba-Mbo, Ama-Shona-ka. For the sake of convenience, when there is no danger of confusion between prefix and stem, I have omitted the hyphen.

The present-day population of the tribe is about [illegible], of whom about [illegible] live in Northern Rhodesia and [illegible] in the Fort Manning area of Nyasaland.[1] In Northern Rhodesia the tribe is largely confined to two demarcated Native Reserves. In 1938 the density of population in these two reserves averaged 18 persons to the square mile,[2] but in some congested or very fertile areas it was 50 or more.[3] Since 1951 the density has been reduced in some of the more congested parts by controlled resettlement in areas outside the reserves.[4] The density of population of the Nyasaland section of the tribe was about 48 persons to the square mile in 1945.[5] 161 151

The region in which the Ngoni live consists of a fairly flat plateau about 3,500 feet above sea level, with massive granite outcrops rising another 1,000 feet or more. The soils of the region are principally of the types suitable only for shifting or partial cultivation, but there are also belts of more valuable soils.[6] In relation to the customary mode of agriculture, in which maize is the principal crop, the critical density of the land has been calculated to be about 60 persons to the square mile.[7] The annual rainfall at Fort Jameson varies from 27 to 48 inches, averaging about 35 inches. The region contains the meeting of the Lunguwe-Nyasa and Lunguwe-Zambezi watersheds. Most of the streams that flow down into the Lunguwe dry up in July, while the Zambezi and Nyasa streams continue to flow somewhat longer.[8] 153 [194] [241] [172]

The natural vegetation of the region consists principally of *Brachystegia-Julbernardia* woodlands, with larger trees along the line of streams. The mean maximum temperature for the region is about 137 132

of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. This account was prepared at Oxford, and I am very grateful to Dr. Max Gluckman for criticism of this paper in draft.

[1] In the 1951 Nyasaland census many of the people living in the two Ngoni reserves were classified as Cewa. Hence the figure of 5,631 Ngoni in Fort Manning does not represent the total population of these two reserves. Cf. *Report on the Census*, Table 9.

[2] Calculated from the figures given in the *Fire Report*, p. 364. These two reserves contain Cewa chieftainships as well as Ngoni, but the average population density of the two tribes is probably of the same order.

[3] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 70.

[4] Fraser, *Land Resettlement*, pp. 17-9.

[5] *Report on the Census*, Table 8. The Fort Manning District contains a Cewa chieftainship as well as the two Ngoni. The figure given above is the average for the whole district.

[6] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 70.

[7] Allan, *African Land Usage*, p. 14.

[8] Pasley, *Human Geography*, pp. 1 and 2.

1:Berens E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[100]

We may compare this description of conditions in 1898 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of continued cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Magoye's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen scored by dongas fifty yards deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamlimi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[101]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared.

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[102] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[103] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers

[100] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 76.
[101] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[102] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 3 (26 February 1898), p. 1.
[103] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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1

Ngoniland and the People who lived in it

The Ngoniland

The little country of Nyasaland in Central Africa received its name from the lake by which Livingstone and those who followed him penetrated into the interior and reached the lands and people living round the lake. On the west side there is a narrow strip of low-lying coastal land. Then a series of escarpments begin, and up them roads and paths wind through steep wooded valleys, until the final scarp leads to the grasslands of the high plateau. Here on the high plateau the Ngoni settled about the middle of the nineteenth century, after nearly forty years of trekking from Natal to Tanganyika. They turned south again at the shores of Lake Victoria and returned to this land which they had passed through on their northward march. This high plateau has great diversity of scenery, and much of it reminded the Ngoni of the hills and valleys and grasslands of Natal. There are high mountains with sharp peaks and massive granite shoulders. Between the ranges of lower grass-covered hills are shallow valleys where the rain washes down good soil to the valley bottoms. Sweeps of grassland, bare of trees, alternate with river valleys where there is a continuous flow of water, fed by springs and mountain streams.

In the dry season, from April to November, the trees lose their leaves and the grass gradually dries up till the prevailing colours are gold and brown against the black and grey

the productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned; such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources.

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpwaani, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftainry was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were apparently living within the chieftainry. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountainous country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile.

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamdzai range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipuka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni.

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent.

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do.

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people.

19: Series E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
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Ngoneni

The present-day population of the tribe is about [illegible], of whom about [illegible] live in Northern Rhodesia and [illegible] in the Fort Manning area of Nyasaland.[1] In Northern Rhodesia the tribe is largely confined to two demarcated Native Reserves. In 1958 the density of population in these two reserves averaged 68 persons to the square mile,[2] but in some congested or very fertile areas it was 90 or more.[3] Since 1951 the density has been reduced in some of the more congested parts by controlled resettlement in areas outside the reserves.[4] The density of population of the Nyasaland section of the tribe was about 48 persons to the square mile in 1945.[5]

The region in which the Ngoni live consists of a fairly flat plateau about [illegible] feet above sea level, with massive granite outcrops rising another [illegible] feet or more. The soils of the region are principally of the types suitable only for shifting or partial cultivation, but there are also belts of more valuable soils.[6] In relation to the customary mode of agriculture, in which maize is the principal crop, the critical density of the land has been calculated to be about 20 persons to the square mile.[7] The annual rainfall at Fort Jameson varies from 27 to 48 inches, averaging about 35 inches. The region contains the meeting of the Luangwa-Nyasa and Luangwa-Zambezi watersheds. Most of the streams that flow down into the Luangwa dry up in July, while the Zambezi and Nyasa streams continue to flow somewhat longer.[8]

The natural vegetation of the region consists principally of *Brachystegia-Isoberlinia* woodlands, with larger trees along the line of streams. The mean maximum temperature for the region is about

of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. This account was prepared at Oxford, and I am very grateful to Dr. Max Gluckman for criticism of this paper in draft.

[1] In the 1951 Nyasaland census many of the people living in the two Ngoni reserves were classified as Cewa. Hence the figure of 5,551 Ngoni in Fort Manning does not represent the total population of these two reserves. Cf. *Report on the Census*, Table 4.

[2] Calculated from the figures given in the *Five Report*, p. 362. These two reserves contain Cewa chieftainships as well as Ngoni, but the average population density of the two tribes is probably of the same order.

[3] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 72.

[4] Fraser, *Land Resettlement*, pp. 47-9.

[5] *Report on the Census*, Table 8. The Fort Manning District contains a Cewa chieftainship as well as the two Ngoni. The figure given above is the average for the whole district.

[6] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 72.

[7] Allan, *African Land Usage*, p. 14.

[8] Poole, *Human Geography*, pp. 1 and 2.

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organised by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt, but occasionally if the field is very poor a chief will summon almost all in his court.

These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as efficiently as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but he can call out his men hunting.* Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African Bureaucracies*

Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

* See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 215, for Ngoni hunting methods.

4: Barnes E-5 (1948-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
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[P 129]

Appendix I

THE GALL BLADDER CEREMONY

This ceremony is known as *lusiwa* or sometimes is referred to by the word for gall bladder, *nyongo*. If it is performed, it takes place after arrangements for the marriage have been completed and before the bride begins to live with her husband. If the couple are Christians, it is held before the banns are called. I observed two of these ceremonies in 1948. [P 5]

The ceremony takes place in the man's village at his mother's hut. In the evening of the day before the ceremony the bride arrives accompanied by three women from her own village. They may be kinswomen or important women of the village. One of these women is in charge of the bridal party. In one instance the leader was the bride's mother's husband's son's wife, and the other two women were another classificatory sister-in-law and a classificatory sister. In the other instance the women were a classificatory grandmother, a father's sister, and a younger sister.

The bridal party are given a hut to sleep in and are fed by the bridegroom's mother. In the morning they remain in their hut and each person who comes in to greet them must do in a special way. They reply with a little song.

The bridegroom's father asks a reliable friend in the village to act as master of ceremonies. The master of ceremonies chooses an animal from the byre of the bridegroom's father and tethers it near the groom's mother's hut. A message is sent to the bridal party, and the leader comes to look at the animal. She accepts it by saying 'Yes', and the master of ceremonies, or the lads who gather round to help him, kill the animal. It is said that the bride's leader could refuse the animal if she thought it a poor one, but to do so would upset all the arrangements for the marriage which has been agreed upon, and I did not hear of any instance of refusal. The animal killed is traditionally a cow, but in the tsetse fly areas where there are no cattle a goat is taken instead. [134]

The animal is killed by slitting its throat, and the blood is collected in a bowl. The intestinal fat of the animal is cut into little pieces and mixed with the blood. The gall bladder is carefully removed. When the animal has been skinned and the meat cut up, the leader of the bride's party is called again from her hut, and makes an allocation of meat, traditionally giving the head and one leg to the bridegroom's father. The rest belongs to her party. [131]

A mat is placed in front of the groom's mother's hut, and the bride comes out of her hut, preceded by the other women of her party. They walk slowly to the mat, and sit down on it. Sometimes the

9: Allen C-5 (1961)(1963) FRS Signal FRS ●
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surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The fierce bushfires which swept through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the destruction.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

After survey had been completed and before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their foodstuffs and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

Whenever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (20 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mankii resettlement area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central dam which was [illegible] with bream (Tilapia spp.) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

Another difficulty was the occurrence of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

In the northern part of Fort Jameson District, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on compacting pedocal soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'B2' country, but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern areas that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. The large available land area in Mbeshi enabled the relatively small 'B2' areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'B2' areas of Mbeshi. 166 136 164 744

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'B2' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the herds. Two herds each of five beasts were used; the animals were monitored and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomiasis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'B2' infestation were defined.

§ 6. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in accordance with the general plan to remove the population-land balance as far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers. 166 621 648

Headmen and other representatives of the villages who had finally elected to move then toured the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villages almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Vegetation-Soil Map. Blocks of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total village population, allowing for temporary absentees, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular; the people are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone beacons, to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features. [622] [311] [423]

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually applied or always possible. The great escarpment areas of the Eastern Province, 166 648

Ngoni

to clear large enough gardens at the new site in the first year a part of the old gardens was be used, for it is easy to travel back and forward between the old and new villages. The majority of the moves were of this order and no assistance was required or given. In the case of longer moves, heavy household goods and food stocks were transported by motor lorry, or in some instances where it was convenient to do so the entire grain stock was brought at the old village and food, purchased locally, was sold at the new site. This enabled the people to give the whole of their time to preparing a large garden acreage in the first year. The great majority of villages moving for moderate or long distances (twenty five to seventy miles) succeeded in preparing large enough gardens and growing sufficient food for themselves in the first year. A few did not, for one reason or another, such as starting too late, a bad season or just plain laziness, and these villages were supplied with food in the first season either in return for work or on promise of repayment after a good harvest. Less than 5 per cent of villages received such relief.

§ 10. *The Progress of Resettlement*

It was estimated that, in order to restore a complete population-land balance, about 141,200 people would have to be moved from the Reserves of the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts. No such movement was, in fact, possible. The total carrying capacity of the land available for resettlement, which consisted a vast mass of escarpment hills and other large areas of almost useless land, was estimated to be 78,000 people. This land was, of necessity, allocated to the tribal groups in the following way:

Ngoni and Chewa	:	Sufficient land	for	35,000	people
Senga	:	"	"	35,000	"
Ambo	:	"	"	8,000	"

Thus in the case of the Ngoni and Chewa the available land was totally insufficient to allow of the restoration of a population-land balance, while in the case of the other peoples such a balance could be achieved.

Two alternatives were possible; to re-distribute the Ngoni and Chewa populations more or less evenly over the new land and the Reserves, in which case both would be over-populated in relation to their carrying capacities, or to populate the new land to the maximum of its carrying capacity, leaving the Reserves still over-populated. The latter course was adopted for a variety of reasons, including the fact that much of the new land was tsetse infested and the keeping of cattle and development of mixed farming would not be possible at least for a very considerable time. The Reserves, on the other hand, carried many cattle and, with reduction of the population by resettlement, would be able to support their populations on a basis of mixed farming.

Movement was therefore designed to populate the new areas to the maximum of their carrying capacity and to reduce the agricultural problem

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of the Reserves to reasonable proportions, having an excess of population, but not too great an excess, within the cattle areas.

In Ferndale District, where there is ample land available, the object aimed at is a complete rationalisation of the population-land balance by controlled movement of some 20,000 Songa and uncontrolled movement of 8,000 Ambo and Songa-Kondo.

Survey work in the Eastern Province started in 1941 and a few pioneer villages were moved in that year, but the main movement started in 1942 (when over 18,000 people were moved) and it is still in progress. By the end of 1945 the programme was more than half completed; 202 villages (about 22,000 people) had been moved into controlled 'village blocks' or 'parish settlements' in addition to uncontrolled or partially controlled movements in the occupied area and parts of the Fort Jameson District. The comparatively slow rate of progress is due to water-shortage. Large areas in Ferndale District and the north of Fort Jameson have not yet been settled for this reason, while in the latter area there is also some danger of sleeping sickness, and measures for the control of 'fly' (game destruction and clearing of 'hard pan') are in progress. Settlement is continuing at the rate set by provision of water supplies and the control of tsetse.

The Mbeshi District presents an entirely different picture since the available land is about twice as much as the present population requires, on the basis of their traditional agricultural practice. Here, instead of village blocks, comparatively large areas have been demarcated to take a number of villages and there is no strict control. The Superior Native Authority has introduced rules intended to bring about a gradual conversion from small circle chitemene (a primitive form of ass-agriculture) to hoe cultivation of hoffe area with subsidiary gardens for a variety of crops.

The land not actually required for immediate use has not been allocated but is being held in reserve against the future needs of the African people and the Native Authorities undertake responsibility for early burning within the reserved land.

The bulk of the necessary population transfers have already been carried out.

In Ndola District also the available land is considerably greater than present needs and some is being held in reserve. Populations moved from the congested zone about the mines have been settled in village blocks and, apart from an area demarcated for immediate settlement in 1943 to relieve actual starvation, there is no uncontrolled settlement.

Movement of 120 villages, having a total estimated population of 11,775, was completed in 1945. It has since been found, however, that the population counts made by a District Officer seconded for the purpose are in fact over-estimated and a considerable number of the blocks are under-populated and further movements may be necessary.

G.Barnsley E, G-4 (ca. 1900) 1917 FEB Signed FEB

224 A falling spear trap for an elephant is called "mukwa." It is set in the path where elephants pass. They take the weighted spear, and tie it up above, the string for setting it off is on the ground. An elephant, when it passes, will set off the string, and the spear comes down and falls on the spine of the elephant. Men hunt also with a game net; they stretch the net, and take stakes and drive them in at the ends and the middle [to keep the net up]. People remain behind and hunt out the game, and when a buck starts up, it goes into the net. Birds
223 are hunted with a little net made tied to two bamboos, which are held in the hands, and (the person hunting) stands still. Others go and drive the birds, and if they go into the net, the man who is holding it swirls it round and kills the birds by squeezing them to his breast, but they cry out, and meanwhile gives a whistle, and the hunters stand. The kinds of birds caught by a net are *Mpota*, *Ati Mukwanjo*, *Mapwiti*, *Kasibwi*, *Nkwali* (partridge), *Nkanga* (guinea-fowl), *Mang'ani* (quail), *Njowa* (pigeon) are hunted with kushkavvira; when they fly up, they throw. Birds are also hunted with blunt-headed arrows, and others caught in traps. In the dry season, when there is only a very little water left, all the thirsty birds go to drink water, and always go to the same place. When a person sees they frequent this place, he begins to set about trapping them with birdlime. He rubs it on a stick, and sticks the stick in the water, and when the birds come to drink water, they get stuck by their
224 feet (legs), and also feathers. Mice are also hunted. The *Mende*, and the *Nchewzi* (rat), and the *Sakwi*, are all hunted with "gobe" traps, which are set on the run. Some go and hunt them out, one stays behind; when a mouse would run away, it goes into the gobe trap, and the man squeezes it to death, and

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M N 133 plain is a moderately temperate, undulating plateau, standing from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea-level and broken by ranges of mountains whose peaks tower several thousand feet higher.

[131] The Dowa District is situated in the centre of the Protectorate. Its area of 2,400 square miles is divided topographically into three nearly equal parts, the alluvial lake-shore plain on the east giving way to the escarpment of the hilly plateau in the centre, which again drops steeply on the west to another plain extending to the banks of the Bua River. Each plain is well covered with light timber and long grass, and contains a plentiful supply of all local varieties of game. Tsetse have long infested the lake shore; on the west, migrating from Rhodesia, they crossed the Bua as recently as 1914 and have now spread as far as the hills. The central plateau is cool and healthy. Formerly well timbered, it has since been denuded by the wasteful methods of the native inhabitants. It is free from tsetse and mosquitoes, and cattle thrive in consequence. The larger species of game are absent.

N M 137 136 [132]

2. *Sociological Introduction.*

N M 161 131 The census of 1926, taken at the time when these notes were compiled, shows the population of the District as consisting of 57,184 Achewa,[1] 38,244 Angoni, 93 Anyanja and 4,627 Wayao, together with an odd thousand belonging to other tribes. The Achewa live principally in the west and centre, the Angoni on the central plateau, and the Anyanja and Wayao on the lake shore. The same census gives a total of 247,000 Angoni and 470,000 Anyanja and Achewa out of 1,200,000 natives then settled in the Protectorate.

M 174 The two last-named tribes taken together are numerically the largest in Nyasaland, and they have probably lived in their present habitat longer than any others; but the exact duration of their residence can only be a matter for conjecture, since the history of the southern Bantu peoples, during the last four centuries at any rate, consists of one long series of migrations and invasions. From time to time clans and tribes have been united under a strong and powerful leader, and a few decades later disintegration has set in and they have almost vanished. New names have frequently been adopted, and few tribes in south-east Africa now bear the same designation and occupy the same ground as did their ancestors four hundred years ago. Oral tradition is supplemented but scantily by the reports of the early Portuguese explorers, who

M [175] first ascended the Zambezi River at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their objects were commercial rather than scientific, and they have left little record of the native peoples with whom they came in contact.

It is known, however, that the Achewa and Anyanja are off-shoots or descendants of the A-maravi, who inhabited the country north of the Zambezi at Sena and Tete in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In his Report upon the Rivers of Cuama (Zambezi) compiled

M 175 in 1667 Father Manuel Barreto states that this warlike tribe was governed by its emperor, named Caronga, whose kingdom extended two hundred leagues up the river from the port of

N M [104]

[1] Tribal names in Nyasaland generally take the plural prefix A-, as A-ngoni, A-chewa, sometimes Wa-, as Wa-yao. The singular prefix is M-, as Mngoni, Myao. Further south, Aba-, Aba- and Ama- are more common, e.g. Aba-Ngoni, Aba-Mbo, Ama-Ndwandwe. For the sake of convenience, when there is no danger of confusion between prefix and stem, I have omitted the hyphen.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and [231] chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

619 The important positions in the old political structure were occupied by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Malumuzana*, pl. *alumuzana*. [4] *Ndunu*, pl. *ndunu*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and assessors are nominated by the chiefs on the advice of their lieutenants and some of them are in fact lieutenants or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is illiterate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lieutenants or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying sixpence for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the county and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [693]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organized system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional governors. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of their people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 431 [273] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend these to people they can trust. All the chiefs organize their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole county, but only part of the county. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organize enough hunts. 622 224 [411] [136]

/6 cont'd/

417 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which [132] there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

/7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [136] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

417 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [385] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [35] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may 343 have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasional- [511] ly open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

/11 cont'd/

241 The busiest time of the year in the garden is at the beginning of the rains, when there is much work to be done planting and weeding, and scaring away the monkeys and wild pigs. Later on, in the new year, after the garden has been weeded twice, it is possible to think of enlarging the garden at one edge, and if it is not too late, the newly cleared portion may be planted with a catch crop. Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out to some extent co-operatively, either on a mutual help basis between two women, or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner of the garden. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink on the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrive at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subsequent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden.

/12/ Towards the end of the rains, there is less cultivating to be done, but the ravages of wild animals become more serious, and many families sleep for two or three months in the garden, returning to the village only to obtain food. Garden shelters are simple open-sided affairs with a thatched roof, but those owners who intend to sleep in their gardens for a long time, build small circular huts as in the village, or conical shelters with the roof reaching to the ground. A few lookout platforms built in trees are used as vantage points for spotting wild animals. If a man has a garden a long way from the village, particularly across a stream which will be in spate in the late rains, he may build a byre for his cattle at the garden.

Maize and ground-nuts are the first crops to be harvested, and later finger millet, root crops, and finally kaffir-corn. Maize is stooked before the cobs are removed, and these are then dried on platforms before being carried to the village to be stored.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE IV. Villagers hoeing a path to another village in preparation for a visit from the District Officer.

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PLATE V. A District Officer, with a county chief on his left, talks to village headmen during a tour of villages. In the distance are villagers listening to the conversation.

[Facing p. 145]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

I

Ngoniland and the People who lived in it

The homeland

The little country of Nyasaland in Central Africa received its name from the lake by which Livingstone and those who followed him penetrated into the interior and reached the lands and people living round the lake. On the west side there is a narrow strip of low-lying coastal land. Then a series of escarpments begin, and up them roads and paths wind through steep wooded valleys, until the final scarp leads to the grasslands of the high plateau. Here on the high plateau the Ngoni settled about the middle of the nineteenth century, after nearly forty years of trekking from Natal to Tanganyika. They turned south again at the shores of Lake Victoria and returned to this land which they had passed through on their northward march. This high plateau has great diversity of scenery, and much of it reminded the Ngoni of the hills and valleys and grasslands of Natal. There are high mountains with sharp peaks and massive granite shoulders. Between the ranges of lower grass-covered hills are shallow valleys where the rain washes down good soil to the valley bottoms. Sweeps of grassland, bare of trees, alternate with river valleys where there is a continuous flow of water, fed by springs and mountain streams.

In the dry season, from April to November, the trees lose their leaves and the grass gradually dries up till the prevailing colours are gold and brown against the black and grey

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making
137 scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose
311 it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited
361 their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe
361 formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had
351 a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
[343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

There were two focal points in each village, reproduced
621 on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
[554] the 'big house'[1] at the head of the kraal, where the leading woman had her home.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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I. Preparing meat for a gall-bladder ceremony. The leader of the bride's party sits on the left wih her helper while the meat is cut up by the master of ceremonies.

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II. Bride kneeling on mat outside her husband's mother's hut. Standing behind her are the three women of her party.

[Facing P. 126]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M N 133 plain is a moderately temperate, undulating plateau, standing from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea-level and broken by ranges of mountains whose peaks tower several thousand feet higher.

[131] The Dowa District is situated in the centre of the Protectorate. Its area of 2,400 square miles is divided topographically into three nearly equal parts, the alluvial lake-shore plain on the east giving way to the escarpment of the hilly plateau in the centre, which again drops steeply on the west to another plain extending to the banks of the Bua River. Each plain is well covered with light timber and long grass, and contains a plentiful supply of all local varieties of game. Tsetse have long infested the lake shore; on the west, migrating from Rhodesia, they crossed the Bua as recently as 1914 and have now spread as far as the hills. The central plateau is cool and healthy. Formerly well timbered, it has since been denuded by the wasteful methods of the native inhabitants. It is free from tsetse and mosquitoes, and cattle thrive in consequence. The larger species of game are absent.

N M 137 136 [132]

2. *Sociological Introduction.*

N M 161 131 The census of 1926, taken at the time when these notes were compiled, shows the population of the District as consisting of 57,184 Achewa,[1] 38,244 Angoni, 93 Anyanja and 4,627 Wayao, together with an odd thousand belonging to other tribes. The Achewa live principally in the west and centre, the Angoni on the central plateau, and the Anyanja and Wayao on the lake shore. The same census gives a total of 247,000 Angoni and 470,000 Anyanja and Achewa out of 1,200,000 natives then settled in the Protectorate.

M 174 The two last-named tribes taken together are numerically the largest in Nyasaland, and they have probably lived in their present habitat longer than any others; but the exact duration of their residence can only be a matter for conjecture, since the history of the southern Bantu peoples, during the last four centuries at any rate, consists of one long series of migrations and invasions. From time to time clans and tribes have been united under a strong and powerful leader, and a few decades later disintegration has set in and they have almost vanished. New names have frequently been adopted, and few tribes in south-east Africa now bear the same designation and occupy the same ground as did their ancestors four hundred years ago. Oral tradition is supplemented but scantily by the reports of the early Portuguese explorers, who first ascended the Zambezi River at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their objects were commercial rather than scientific, and they have left little record of the native peoples with whom they came in contact.

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It is known, however, that the Achewa and Anyanja are off-shoots or descendants of the A-maravi, who inhabited the country north of the Zambezi at Sena and Tete in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In his Report upon the Rivers of Cuama (Zambezi) compiled in 1667 Father Manuel Barreto states that this warlike tribe was governed by its emperor, named Carongo, whose kingdom extended two hundred leagues up the river from the port of

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N M [104]

[1] Tribal names in Nyasaland generally take the plural prefix A-, as A-ngoni, A-chewa, sometimes Wa-, as Wa-yao. The singular prefix is M-, as Mngoni, Myao. Further south, Abe-, Aba- and Ama- are more common, *e.g.* Abe-Ngoni, Aba-Mbo, Ama-Ndwandwe. For the sake of convenience, when there is no danger of confusion between prefix and stem, I have omitted the hyphen.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The present-day population of the tribe is about 85,000, of whom about 60,000 live in Northern Rhodesia and 25,000 in the Fort Manning area of Nyasaland.[1] In Northern Rhodesia the tribe is largely confined in two demarcated Native Reserves. In 1938 the density of population in these two reserves averaged 68 persons to the square mile,[2] but in some congested or very fertile areas it was 90 or more.[3] Since 1941 the density has been reduced in some of the more congested parts by controlled resettlement in areas outside the reserves.[4] The density of population of the Nyasaland section of the tribe was about 46 persons to the square mile in 1945.[5] 161 131

The region in which the Ngoni live consists of a fairly flat plateau about 3,500 feet above sea-level, with massive granite outcrops rising another 1,000 feet or more. The soils of the region are principally of the types suitable only for shifting or partial cultivation, but there are also belts of more valuable soils.[6] In relation to the customary mode of agriculture, in which maize is the principal crop, the critical density of the land has been calculated to be about 22 persons to the square mile.[7] The annual rainfall at Fort Jameson varies from 27 to 48 inches, averaging about 35 inches. The region contains the meeting of the Luangwa–Nyasa and Luangwa–Zambezi watersheds. Most of the streams that flow down into the Luangwa dry up in July, while the Zambezi and Nyasa streams continue to flow somewhat longer.[8] 133 [134] [241] [132]

The natural vegetation of the region consists principally of *Brachystegia–Isoberlinia* woodlands, with larger trees along the lines of streams. The mean maximum temperature for the region is about 137 132

of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. This account was prepared at Oxford, and I am very grateful to Dr. Max Gluckman for criticism of this paper in draft.

[1] In the 1945 Nyasaland census many of the people living in the two Ngoni counties were classified as Cewa. Hence the figure of 5,531 Ngoni in Fort Manning does not represent the total population of these two counties. Cf. *Report on the Census*, Table 4.

[2] Calculated from the figures given in the *Pim Report*, p. 364. These two reserves contain Cewa chieftainships as well as Ngoni, but the average population density of the two tribes is probably of the same order.

[3] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 72.

[4] Fraser, *Land Resettlement*, pp. 47–9.

[5] *Report on the Census*, Table 8. The Fort Manning District contains a Cewa chieftainship as well as the two Ngoni. The figure given above is the average for the whole district.

[6] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 72.

[7] Allan, *African Land Usage*, p. 14.

[8] Poole, *Human Geography*, pp. 1 and 2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE I. Paramount Chief Pontino Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., standing with a man from the chief's capital. The man points upwards and sings that, because they conquered the Ngoni, the Whites must have come from heaven.

[Frontpiece Facing p. i]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Praises of Hlacwayo, son of Magengata

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Hlacwayo the dwarf who cannot trail his cloth
Whereas the tall people trail their cloths.
Meat eaten with knives of axes,
If it is not eaten with forks it is rotten.
Hlacwayo whose bodily vigour is finished off compared with Hlacwayo of former times.
Grass of deep red colour is not burned with burning; it burns very slowly, drop by drop.

Praises of Ngwana, son of Goqweni

You who cut the trees and who cut the mouths,
You the locust, the grasshopper who fixed in your hair the feathers of the locust,
Who went below and climbed up, and went to bring the morning star of the dawn,
You go, since you are rejected; you go and bring the armlets of wild animals; those of cattle will be much disputed.
You who remember the fault of long ago.
In descending, you descend together into the mountains.
You who drank the blood of cattle,
You who separated from the people of Shaka, Shaka of Mbelebele kraal,
You who separated from the people of Nyathi the son of Mashobane; it thundered, it was cloudy.
Thou resemblest cattle which were finished by wolves.
You who originated with the people of Mzilikazi,
You who originated with the people of Mpakana son of Lidonga,
You who originated with the people of Ndwandwe.

CHAPTER III

THE ROYAL WOMEN

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An early traveller in central Ngoniland in 1886 remarked on the number of 'true Ngoni women' to be found there, who were 'easily distinguished from the other women by their light colour and by being taller and stouter'. He went on to say: 'The king's houses at Livisini were 30 feet in diameter, built within an enclosure with other huts where the attendants lived. All were kept very clean and well swept.' This tribute to the appearance and achievements of Ngoni women of high rank was borne out by my own observations in the 1930's in central and northern Ngoniland. There was a definite physical type, light in colour, with high cheek-bones and orthognathic profile, tall with an upright carriage of the head. Women with these physical characteristics were in all cases of leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and their influence on their

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

142 surroundings, their families, and the behaviour of those for whom they were responsible was most noticeable. Not all of these women were in the category of royal women, nor did all the royal women conform to this distinctive physical type, though the association of high-ranking family, physical appearance and pride of bearing was striking.

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644 There were three main classes of royal women, all associated with the Paramount in a special relationship. These showed some parallels with the classes of royal women among the Swazi described by Dr. Kuper. I have not adopted her terms for distinguishing them, with the exception of the term Queen Mother, which I have used in the English sense of the widow of a former ruler and mother of the existing ruler. The chief women associated with the Paramount in the Ngoni kingdoms were the Royal Sister, the Queen Mother, and the big wife. This same association of three leading women with a ruling chief or *mulumuzana* was found in the subordinate chieftainships under the Paramount, and in the head villages of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. It was a definite Ngoni pattern, associating women of high rank with the men who carried political responsibility. Their positions in the Ngoni patrilineal and virilocal social structure was markedly different from the position of the leading women in the matrilineal and uxorilocal societies of other Nyasaland peoples, especially in their relationship to their husbands, sons and brothers.

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644 The relationships of the Queen Mother and the big wife to the Paramount were of a different character from that of the Royal Sister to her brother, since she was of the royal clan and they were not. We shall first consider the position in the Ngoni kingdoms of the Queen Mother and the big wife, since reference has been made to them already in the previous chapter. In the new *lusungulu* village of the Paramount there was a close connexion between the Queen Mother, who moved out with him, and his own big wife. His big wife was of the same house as the Queen Mother, since the cattle for her *lobola* had been taken from the herd of the Queen Mother. At this time of moving out into the new village the big wife began to be head of her own house. Other wives, married with cattle from the herd which had been built up for her, and kraaled with those belonging to the Queen Mother, were attached to her house, and their huts were built near her own. She was the mother, actual or potential, of the future Paramount. If she failed to have a male child, or if her sons died, a male child would be taken from another wife's hut and brought up in her hut and would be known as the child of her house. Since she was the mother of the heir she had a special relationship to the *induna* appointed to look after her house. It was the house of the Paramount elect and also she would probably, when the Queen Mother died, succeed to the ownership of the *indlunkulu* hut. Her *induna* would then become one of the most important men in the village as he would receive all guests and strangers.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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1. Chief dressed for war-dance

[facing page 16]
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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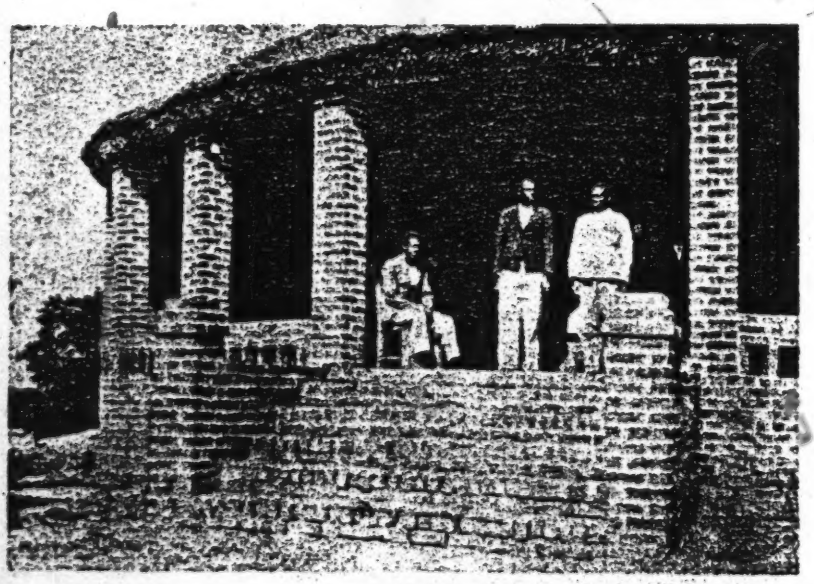
4. Chief waiting to hear cases



5. Chief with his elders in his court-house

[facing page 32]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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12. Chiefs' wives wearing leopard claws

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13. Chiefs' wives leading in the dance

[facing page 65]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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14. Mother and babies

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[facing page 96]

15. Nursemaids with their charges

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(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazela*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE RE DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

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Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

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Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtengulani Uka Sosera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. 643 [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Bualiyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphonza, Mdawanyo Mphonza, Mdawa Mvao Mawa, Dede Tole, Mjoko Ndwambi Jere, Malwalalirko Tembo, Manje Nkhawa, Katanda Mazyanny Mdawanza, Kapendula Jamai Mvula, Machilika Mphonza, Chhongwikano Ngulowa, Chiwere Mainina, Masku Jere, Magodongo Mphonza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Mudumanwa, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndwambi Hara, Mulvino Kangwero Nkhawa, Pungani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gwanai Mawera, Chingulukani Dzuka, Siya Mvula, Ngonga Singa Jere, Mdawa Mphonza, Mwaki Lukhelo, Njombwa Tembo, Adamkwacho Mdungu, etc.

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

VILLAGE LIFE FOR OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS

There was no doubt that this abrupt transition, like the sudden weaning, was a shock for many boys between six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half. From having been impudent, well-fed, self-confident and spoiled youngsters among the women many of them quickly became skinny, scruffy, subdued and with a hunted expression. The subdued and hunted looks passed off as they adjusted themselves to their new environment and there were boys, generally those exceptionally well grown and physically strong, who showed no apparent signs of shock. They all, however, showed the effects of irregular and inadequate feeding. The younger boys were chronically hungry and their hair and skin and bony knees and ribs were eloquent of calory, protein and vitamin shortages. 575 156 [146]

The other main purpose of dormitory life in Ngoni culture was to mix up all the boys in the village and let the common life together teach them how to get on with their age-mates and knuckle under to their superiors in age. Age and strength were the only criteria for authority. Older brothers might try to protect and intercede for younger brothers but it was not encouraged. All the young ones had to take their chance equally, without regard for their family name or their father's position. 575 858

The dormitory was primarily a sleeping-place, but through the group of boys who slept there the herding of cattle was organized and the off-duty amusements and occupations of the older boys were planned. The young ones had to 'fag' for the rest, fetching wood and water, keeping fires going, sweeping the hut, taking messages, huddling in a corner at night when the oldest boys brought girls in, and submitting to beatings both as a warning and as a punishment. They were usually beaten once or twice soon after their arrival and then threatened with much worse if they ever divulged what went on in the dormitory. It was not however a torture house, far from it, and the boys boasted of belonging to 'our dormitory' and were proud of having their own hidden life 575 [513] [857]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. [146] This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten [272] by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when [262] milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The [867] Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [155] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for authority. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Manga. It was a time of great emotional tension and strain, and the absurdities of the jester relieved the solemnity and formality of the visit. This jester was said by informants to be a man of the Moyo clan, who owed his position not to hereditary right but to a ready and witty tongue.

643 644 522

The death of the Paramount

It is in the ceremonies at the death of the Paramount that we find some major differences between the traditional practices of the northern and central Ngoni peoples, which might be attributed to the separate groups in Natal from which they came. I was living in Mcakatha village in the central kingdom at the time of the sickness and death of Bambo Manga, the most important of the royal women among the central Ngoni. The ritual ceremonies at her funeral were said to be almost identical with those at the death of the Paramount, and I was able to check details of similarity and difference with old men who remembered the death of Cikusi, the last Ngoni Paramount in the central kingdom for whom the full ritual was carried out. I was not able after that to pursue further possible parallels and differences among the northern Ngoni. My general impression from informants was that among the northern Ngoni the ritual at the death of a Paramount differed from that of any other prominent man only in certain details of the period and form of mourning. Among the central Ngoni, as Rattray said in a note on the text which will be given, 'such funerals were more of a military pageant than anything else. All outward signs of grief were rigorously excluded.' I can confirm that from my observations at the death of Bambo Manga.

184 643 766 [152]

When the Paramount became ill, a diviner was called to give advice. He might advise that a sacrifice should be made to the ancestor spirits. He might suggest witchcraft as the cause of illness. He might advise calling in a man to give medicine to the Paramount. When, in spite of sacrifices and treatment, the Paramount died, the announcement was made from the edge of his village: *Izulu lidilikile*, 'the heaven has fallen down'. Messengers were sent to all the chiefs and to all the *alumuzana* and other leading men. From the edge of each central village the cry was made, and each chief and *mulumuzana* sent his messengers to make the same announcement in each of the villages under him.

[791]

Among the northern Ngoni the actual ceremony of burial does not appear to have been very different from that of any other important man, with one exception, that the Paramount, like other ruling Jere chiefs, was buried at the edge of the cattle kraal in a circular pit of the kind used when digging clay for mudding houses, on one side of which there was a niche where the corpse was placed in a sitting position, facing south-east. This burying in a circular grave on the edge of the kraal was the procedure which I witnessed at the burial of Bambo Manga among the central Ngoni (see below p. 75).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

we dammed the stream and made a pool and a mound. And we put him on a rock, and on top of him we put cowhide shields and left them so. And we put firewood above. Then Ngwazi Ngozo took fire and lit that fire. Then *ligubo* was danced and the women were singing. They sang songs of *ligubo* and the *amadoda* danced (*amagiya*). The owner of the country did not cry, no, and the big people did not cry. Only the wives and other women cried. 643 766

Habuya Dube added later that everyone came with one piece of wood and put it on the pyre; and that they killed a cow and took the fat and put it on the wood, and used the skin to wrap the body in.

In discussing the ceremony of cremation with informants among the central Ngoni, there was no reference to the suggestion made by Dr. Kuper, that cremating was a substitute for embalming to avoid the corruption of the body of the king. They regarded the act of burning as an essential element in the continuing strength of the royal line, since the heir stood in the smoke from the pyre, and in the continuing fertility and strength of the country, since the ashes were swept into the river. The concept was that the royal ruler had been strengthened with the *tonga* medicine, and thereafter his body and its strength was the symbol of the unity and strength and fertility of his country.

On the question of mourning or no mourning they were equally emphatic. 'Death cannot cut life' was an expression often on their lips during the funeral ceremonies of Bambo Manga, when great care was taken to carry out the traditional ritual as far as possible in every detail. They were shocked at the idea of mourning and wailing at such a time by any of the big people. The leading Ngoni women were expected to join the *ligubo* dances in the courtyard. Some old women of lower social rank in the village, together with the daughter of Bambo Manga, sat in the house with the corpse sobbing and crying '*Mayi, mayi*' and many of them became quite ill and others hysterical with prolonged sobbing. The leading Ngoni men were contemptuous of this display of grief. They admitted it was correct behaviour for her daughter because of the close kinship tie, but of the behaviour of the rest they said 'Ha, just like the Ntumba people.' The only behaviour which was considered correct was to dance in the courtyard openly before the house of Bambo Manga, or to slip off quietly home and rest before returning to take up the dance. 643 765 565 766 [152]

The traditional ritual procedure at the death of the Paramount, with the exception of the cremation of the corpse, I saw in all its details at the death of Bambo Manga. The corpse was placed in the same position in the hut as described at Cikusi's death, and was wrapped in a sheep-skin first with a cow-skin over, the spleen, gall-bladder and fat decorating the head and neck. The dancing of *ligubo* by the men with shields and spears, and by the women, was continuous from the moment of death to the burial, and afterwards whenever fresh companies from the central 643 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(*ukuqandisa*). The middle section, the main part of the ceremony, took place in the husband's village while the bridal party was there. In the last part the bride was left in her new home and three ceremonies marked her gradual integration into her new social group. 585

After the number of cattle had been decided upon in the final stage of the betrothal, the initiative was left to the girl's parents to announce the date of the *mtimba*. Eventually a message was sent through the *gogo* house of the girl's village to say that the bridal party would arrive on a certain day. Before the day came, the girl, now addressed as *umlobokazi* (the bride), was called to the *indlunkulu* in her village. There the leading women, her father's mothers, who had called in her father's sisters, gave her final instructions on how to behave in her new home. Ngoni women said that they were told at this time: 'Our child, we are putting you out of our family. We are handing you over to the other people. You were free and now your freedom is over for you are under other people. Where you are going you will meet with many troubles. They will say of you many things which you did not do. It is good to be patient.' During this instruction the girl cried and so did her mother. On the morning of the departure the girl was dressed in freshly prepared skins, her hair was arranged in the *isihlutu* (chignon) to which the gall bladder of a goat was pinned, and the gall bladder of a cow was tied to her elbow. Then, still sobbing and whimpering, and surrounded by her age mates and the female members of her house, she set out for her bridegroom's village, the young men of her village driving a bullock (*mcando*) as a present from the bride's parents to the mother of the bridegroom, in whose herd it was placed. [292 237] [152]

This part of the ceremony, the entry of the bride's party (*ukuqandisa*), was held to be of great importance, since it was the first time the bride's family and friends as a group had met the husband's family. The bride's procession waited by the kraal gate, singing *mtimba* songs, and every now and then a woman of the bride's party, one of her father's sisters, sang the praises of the bride's clan. As the young men driving the bullock entered the kraal, the bridal party joined them and they began to dance in the kraal. 571 585

Now the first overtures were made between the bride's party and the people of the bridegroom's village. The older women of the village approached the older women of the bride's party, greeting them and exchanging, in the Ngoni phrase, 'words which were good and proud and showed the quickness of their tongues'.

After these advances, the men of the village came into the kraal or gathered by the *indlunkulu*. While the bridal party began to sing with their heads bowed, the chief woman from the *indlunkulu* of the bride's village came forward, bending low, and on her knees presented to the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* of the husband's village a basket containing snuff boxes and beads. She made a speech, in which she said, 'Here is [516 431]

571 our child who is now leaving her home. She has no father now. She is
585 leaving his care. We expect you to cherish her now as her father would.' In reply the *induna* assured them, 'Now she is here we will cherish her, but she must respect the owner of this house and be under her in all things.' Speeches about the absence of disease in either village were then made and the men took snuff. The bridal party and the villagers all remained seated and began to sing *umbedlo* songs (songs to be sung sitting).

585 At the marriage at Ezondweni, where I was present, the girls of the bridal party began to shiver as night fell, and a woman of the village [533] brought a sleeping mat as an invitation to go into the huts. Singing as they went, the women of the bridal party were shown a place to sleep, and the bride slept among them for that night. The bride's party went [797] off the next morning to the church at Elangeni for the church marriage service, while the bridegroom with a party from Ezondweni went by a separate route. In the days before the mission came, they used to spend the morning dancing in the kraal, while the husband's family killed a beast, or more than one, for the feast. During the day's dancing in the kraal, the leader of the village women took the husband's spear, came into the kraal with the village party and touched the bride gently on the shoulder. This was a sign that the bride was now one of the village [152] group, and the correct response was for her party to turn their backs and weep to show their grief because she had left them.

In Ezondweni, when the parties returned from church in the afternoon, a large crowd had assembled. The bridal party danced and sang in the kraal and outside the *indlunkulu* and now and then a leading woman of the bridegroom's village joined in. The bride and two supporting friends were given a mat to sit on, the husband and the *madoda* also sat down, the minister from the church prayed and they sang a hymn. Then the food, bowls of *usima* with large pieces of meat on top, was divided. The names of the divisions of Ezondweni were called out and the leaders of the divisions of that village and of other villages came to get the portions for their people.

Dancing continued after the feast until the bride's party took the bride to the husband's hut and left her there. The next morning the [533] bridal party returned home singing. Formerly the bride came to the door of the hut where she had slept with her husband, and called out the praise-names of her father. She then sang the *ummekezo* song (song of the deflowering) and the husband stood in the doorway behind her. Then he went into the kraal and sat facing the bridal party, who were singing. When the bride came in with a gourd of water there was silence while she poured water for him to wash his hands, mouth and eyes. This was the first public act of service for the husband after the consummation of the marriage and ended the main part of the ceremony, after which the bridal party went home.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

843 little children. They are not able to hear those things which
593 belong to pregnancy.' The men on their part accepted the
562 role of being ignorant of what was coming, though they were generally aware of it. It was an elaborate piece of role-playing, standardized by custom, emphasizing the separation of the men's and women's worlds in Ngoni life, and giving control and authority into the experienced hands of the senior women.

843 The Ngoni culture pattern forbade the wife to tell her
606 mother-in-law herself about her condition. She had, as so
572 often in the Ngoni pattern, to approach first a friend who was her confidante, who might be another young wife or a helper in the household. This friend had to tell her mother-in-law, the future paternal grandmother of the baby, who was destined to play a big part in the child's upbringing.

During the months of pregnancy a Ngoni woman carried on with her normal work in the household, including cooking for her husband. If she feared a miscarriage, and suffered from what was called 'a shaking inside', she stayed quietly in the hut, and, saying that she had a headache, asked her husband to call her friend. Then the friend told the mother-in-law who sent for a 'doctor' to bring medicines 'to make the inside not shake'. A young Ngoni woman did not expect
843 to have miscarriages, and feared that her husband's relatives
152 would blame her home for not giving her enough food before marriage to make her strong and healthy in child-bearing.

The fear of invidious comparisons with her own home and upbringing also operated when the wife felt herself near to labour. She would keep on working up to the last minute, for if she told her friend that her time was come, and the friend summoned the senior women, they came to examine her. Should they find on examination that she was not about to deliver, they looked at her and said, 'What are you afraid of? Did you call us for fear?' The young wife was ashamed of being thought fearful, both for her own reputation and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

because it was implied that her family had not given her good instruction and advice before marriage. 843 152

The birth of the child

When the senior women were satisfied that labour was about to begin, they took charge of all the preparations. They first sent out of the hut all the things belonging to the husband, his clothes, axes, spears, shields, and all the good mats, pots and baskets. Only old mats and clothes and pots were used during labour, and the hut was henceforth unclean and forbidden to the husband and to all males. The mother-in-law directed operations, with the help of her co-wives, the wives of her husband's brothers, widowed sisters of her husband, and some of the wives of the younger generation. The women who took an active part in the actual delivery were the older ones, but several younger women came to assist, or look on, and to encourage the young wife. 844 [422] [846]

She was made to sit on a mat leaning back against the knees of another woman, and the experienced 'midwives' were in front to receive the child in their hands. She was told to bear down and sometimes given a bark rope tied to the rafters to pull on. Though she might be in great pain, she was not expected to cry out or even to groan. The older women talked to her encouragingly, and wiped her face, or gave her a little water to drink. After the birth, the woman knelt forward leaning on her hands until the placenta was born. It was buried in a hole, in the floor at the back of the hut on the women's side.

The baby was washed by a senior woman and oiled with castor oil. The cord was tied with thread and the baby was given very thin gruel made of finger millet fried and ground. This was intended to act as a purgative to get rid of the mucus in the stomach. After this had been ejected, a tiny bit of the sour milk curds was put in the baby's mouth. [853]

The mother was washed and covered with a cloth and left to rest, while the women folded up the delivery mat

852 Children of Ngoni families, as also these others, chose their
304 own time to have their ears pierced, though sometimes their father or father's sister or father's mother reminded them that it was about time. It was nearly always soon after the second teeth had come, and children who delayed having it done were taunted by their fellows: 'You, are you afraid, my age-mate? See my ears already have bone in them.' This
[237] was a reference to the round plugs of bone inserted when the hole was large enough. A bit of thread was put in at first, then a small bit of grass, then a fine reed, and finally a bone plug. Ear piercing was always done in the cold weather so that the lobe of the ear would heal quickly. It was carried out by a leading woman of one of the Ngoni families, who watched the children to see how they took it. They knew it was a test of courage, and however much they were afraid it would hurt,
[152] they stood like little statues during the operation, with a face as set and expressionless as when they were being beaten.

Accountability for individual behaviour was one aspect of
866 the responsibility which Ngoni adults now began to demand
868 from children. Another aspect was the performance of their allotted tasks. The responsibility for cattle herding was in a sense a corporate responsibility of all the boys whose fathers owned cattle. The older herd-boys had in fact to answer for
[233] the condition of the cattle they brought back every evening to their owners. They passed on, however, a number of small duties, such as care of the calves, sheep and goats, to the younger boys, who in turn were held responsible by the older boys for performing these duties. The boys' world, centred in the dormitory, recognized grades of responsibility from which no one escaped.

Another facet of responsibility which was at a later stage
868 remarked on often by Ngoni adults, was seen in children's
[517] choice of leisure-time occupations, according to their individual manual and intellectual and artistic capacities. They stopped playing childish games and began instead to develope their skills in making things from local materials.

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the induna s of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere: born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Lonagwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1888/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 643

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Malowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mackera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

155 particularly towards adults. Anyone who has brought up children however knows that they are unhappy with unlimited licence in behaviour, and is aware that the learning of etiquette and manners and obedience, apparently so tiresome in its early stages, does eventually eliminate a number of perplexing choices for children, and by regulating certain relationships confers freedom in other directions. That was my reading of the Ngoni children's reactions to the somewhat formal code of manners taught from their early years and strictly enforced. Ngoni good manners did not mean that the children were coerced and subdued. They were happy, busy, friendly, helpful, endlessly inventive and full of initiative. I suggested here and there in the book that they had various outlets in the middle years of childhood for [154] aggression, jealousy, frustration. There was very little evidence of neurotic tendencies, and, except in certain instances mentioned, there was little apparent inclination to avoid social mixing with age-mates or with other groups and the obligations inherent in such mixing.

The seeming absence of frustration and overt rebellion in the years just after puberty was due to the social recognition by relatives and by the village community of the new stage reached by boys and girls, and to the increasing responsibility required of them for carrying out allotted tasks and for preparing for their future careers. There was no doubt that the outlet for youths of emigration from the villages to work for wages in the south provided a much-needed opportunity at a critical moment in their late teens. In the same way the stimulus of modern schooling, depending on the area and the type of schools in it, helped older boys and girls to look forward to further opportunities of work, of interests, and of escape from the too intimate control of their family and kinship circle and village elders.

121 Another line to be followed in these growing-up studies is the actual pattern of relationships between the parents and the children, the parents and their circle of relatives, the

591 that is, in uxorilocal marriage. In the man's village there are likely to be relatives of his wife already established, but it is she who is 602 said to 'follow' her husband to the village and not he who 'follows' her, since his ties to the village, and to the cluster in the village within which they set up their household, are stronger than hers. Similarly a man may have relatives of his own living in his wife's village and yet be spoken of as living uxorilocally. If a woman's father is living in her village, he will be the focus of her husband's obligations. But if he lives a long way away and the woman has been dependent on her grandparents, or on her mother's brother, then it is they who will act towards her husband to some extent in [606] the role of substitute parents-in-law. However, a man does not avoid his substitute mother-in-law as thoroughly as he would his wife's own mother.

606 583 The obligation on a man to help his wife's parents in their garden is expressed in two ways. Once during the marriage the man must provide a party of people to hoe for the greater part of one day in his wife's mother's garden. He must also be prepared to work in this garden from time to time when he is called upon, and his wife may work with him. While the labour given by the man and his wife is useful labour, the work done by the hoeing party is only partly useful and may do more damage than good. The procedure is that the man, or a relative of his, tells his father-in-law that he proposes to bring a party to hoe on such-and-such a day. By agreeing to this the father-in-law tacitly agrees also to provide the party with beer and presents. On the appointed day, early in the morning, the party arrives and begins work. When the father-in-law thinks the work has gone on long enough, he sends an intermediary to offer a present to the leader of the hoers. If the present is considered sufficient the party stops hoeing and returns to the father-in-law's village. If not, it continues to hoe with renewed vigour. At intervals the father-in-law sends intermediaries with higher and higher offers until at last the hoers are satisfied or exhausted and they come into the village to collect their presents and beer. As often as not the hoers try to force the father-in-law to offer a present at the limit of his resources, for example a beast, and, as the offers mount, the workers become more and more excited and their hoeing less and less useful. At the end of a day, with the light failing, physically exhausted hoers begin to root up the maize with the weeds, and the mother-in-law's garden may be seriously damaged. If the father-in-law is obstinate and does not offer them what they want the hoers may spend the night sleeping out in the garden. By the next morning everyone is too tired to continue the matter further, and the party disperses.[11]

[154] This sort of hoeing party may not facilitate the cultivation of good maize but it is of great significance to the married couple and the

[11] See Appendix III for an account of two of these parties.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

two groups of relatives. In the partial destruction of the father-in-law's crop by the man's friends, the latent hostility between the two groups is canalized into a form that is just socially acceptable. In the later stages of hoeing the men and women in the party act wildly, dance round and round anyone who tries to interfere with them and throw earth all over them. At first all contact between the father-in-law and the leader of the party is through intermediaries, and if all goes well, and there is no crisis, the father-in-law will always remain in the background. But with rising tempers the tension increases, and the father-in-law may himself go to cajole and threaten the party. When they do decide to stop and go into the village, an attempt is made to establish peaceful relations again, and the leader of the party begins to protest that they never really intended holding out for such a large present, that they knew it was getting dark and that they could not hoe at night. They settle down to drink the beer provided by the father-in-law and in the morning go back to their own village. It is significant that the man himself cannot be the leader of the party, so that he does not come into direct contact with his father-in-law. He shelters behind the party leader, so that the chances of an open breach between him and his father-in-law are lessened.

The formalized expression of hostility, which is a feature of many Ngoni ceremonials,[12] appears most clearly in marriage in the custom of the hoeing party, but is present in some other situations, as in the instruction of the bride at the gall bladder ceremony, when she is sometimes told she has a bad character, is mean and deceitful. Even the carrying of beer can be used to express hostility, as is indicated by Reuben's remark towards the end of his son-in-law's hoeing party, that he would tell his wife to brew beer and send it to his son-in-law's village, where the women bringing beer would demand a present even greater than the one demanded by the leader of the hoers.[13]

Men and women wish their daughters to bear children, and are reluctant to marry them to impotent men. Yet childbirth is hazardous, and a woman may die in labour because of her adultery or the adultery of her husband. It is important, therefore, that a woman's parents should be informed whenever she becomes pregnant, lest the woman die and her parents hear of her death without being forewarned of the danger. It is not sufficient that the woman's parents should hear from others that their daughter is pregnant. She must go to them on a special visit to tell them the news herself. This formal notification takes place every time she is pregnant, but if, when she becomes pregnant for the first time, she is living in

[12] For another example, see the installation of the headman's deputy described in Gluckman, Mitchell and Barnes, 'The village headman in British Central Africa', *Africa*, xix (1949), pp. 100-106.
[13] See Appendix III, p. 131.

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. [146] This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten [272] by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when [262] milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The [867] Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [155] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for authority. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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they were ten or eleven years old. Their work was to look 857
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As a result of dormitory life, combined with cattle-herding, 155
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VIII

Personality and Character

Personality, culture and character

128 The threads of teaching and learning whose ends were grasped in Chapter II have been followed through the intervening five chapters, and our task now is to see what pattern they have made of the system of training given by the Ngoni to their children. The threads have eventually been twisted together to form two separate but linked strands, one the 121 achievement of the Ngoni basic personality and the other the development of individual character. In this chapter I am going to use personality in the sense derived from Linton and Kluckhohn, namely the sum total of the traits which are desired by a society and form part of its culture, and which are instilled into children in the system of training set up by the society. Personality therefore since it is regarded as an aim in child training is a social product. The ideal personality is held up to the growing generation, not so much as a total achievement, but as the acquisition of a number of traits of behaviour, skills and knowledge. The Ngoni basic personality [157] therefore consisted of common personality elements in adults, [155] which, as Kluckhohn says, were largely a product of learning, and that learning was directed and controlled by the system of training. Character on the other hand I am going to use as the sum total of the individual's response to his training. It therefore includes his personal adjustment to the training given by the society, and, as a result, his acquiring of some or many of the basic personality traits, and hence the degree of his approximation to the ideal personality. Over and above

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

education to the needs of society and adapting it to the needs of individual children. There is as we all know no final choice possible. Some kind of synthesis is essential, and the balance is always swinging first in one direction and then in another. And here parents, their views on education and their methods of training children in their homes, have a supremely important role to play, almost a controlling role, since they can work in with the aims of formal schooling or persistently try to counteract them. 121

Where this study might lead

'Growing up among the Ngoni' is only one of several studies of growing up in non-western societies. The societies described from this angle of child-training differ from each other structurally and culturally, but there are common elements in the studies of growing up which should be of interest, in western and non-western countries alike, to teachers and parents and all who are concerned about how children are in fact growing up, and the role of formal schooling in this process.

One of the dominant notes in modern psychological advice to young parents and to teachers is the emphasis on security for the young child. It is worth while looking at the early years of Ngoni children from this angle, and perhaps using other studies of growing up as well, examining the kind of security provided by a wide circle of relatives all living round the child's home, and all ready to meet the child's needs; and then comparing this form of security with the dependence of a young child on its mother only, which is characteristic of most small families in western urban societies.

There is another aspect of the security of Ngoni children, found too in several other growing up studies, and that is the freedom conferred on a child because he learns early in life just how to speak and how to behave to other people. This may be an unusual view of the apparent restrictions placed on language, posture, attitude, actions, displayed by a child 155

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

155 particularly towards adults. Anyone who has brought up children however knows that they are unhappy with unlimited licence in behaviour, and is aware that the learning of etiquette and manners and obedience, apparently so tiresome in its early stages, does eventually eliminate a number of perplexing choices for children, and by regulating certain relationships confers freedom in other directions. That was my reading of the Ngoni children's reactions to the somewhat formal code of manners taught from their early years and strictly enforced. Ngoni good manners did not mean that the children were coerced and subdued. They were happy, busy, friendly, helpful, endlessly inventive and full of initiative. I suggested here and there in the book that they had various outlets in the middle years of childhood for [154] aggression, jealousy, frustration. There was very little evidence of neurotic tendencies, and, except in certain instances mentioned, there was little apparent inclination to avoid social mixing with age-mates or with other groups and the obligations inherent in such mixing.

The seeming absence of frustration and overt rebellion in the years just after puberty was due to the social recognition by relatives and by the village community of the new stage reached by boys and girls, and to the increasing responsibility required of them for carrying out allotted tasks and for preparing for their future careers. There was no doubt that the outlet for youths of emigration from the villages to work for wages in the south provided a much-needed opportunity at a critical moment in their late teens. In the same way the stimulus of modern schooling, depending on the area and the type of schools in it, helped older boys and girls to look forward to further opportunities of work, of interests, and of escape from the too intimate control of their family and kinship circle and village elders.

121 Another line to be followed in these growing-up studies is the actual pattern of relationships between the parents and the children, the parents and their circle of relatives, the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as young men, and had known the independence and 178
supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'every- 184
thing is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when 561
faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the [797] influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, ministers and hospital assistants, [463] married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni way of living, [183] and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they [156] said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described 178
briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes domin- 829
ated social relationships. There was a determined struggle 177
on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate [861]
these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasa- [186] land sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of
living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and
the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We
shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the
setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be in-
terpreted according to the Ngoni social organization,
sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my
earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and
who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle
of people forming a young child's contacts was from the
beginning much wider than the individual family which a
child was born into. When he began to run about and to
pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was
as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni
adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when neces-
sary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related
families in other villages, with all members of the same clan [602]
living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship
and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads
were also inseparable from the political links between the [631]
people and their territorial chief, and between the whole
people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-
Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the
villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their
children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence
in most villages there were sharp distinctions between stand- [183]
ards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni
families.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 357
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organized through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

There was no doubt that this abrupt transition, like the 575
sudden weaning, was a shock for many boys between six-and- 156
a-half and seven-and-a-half. From having been impudent, well-fed, self-confident and spoiled youngsters among the women many of them quickly became skinny, scruffy, subdued and with a hunted expression. The subdued and hunted looks passed off as they adjusted themselves to their new environment and there were boys, generally those exceptionally well grown and physically strong, who showed no apparent signs of shock. They all, however, showed the effects of irregular and inadequate feeding. The younger boys were [146]
chronically hungry and their hair and skin and bony knees and ribs were eloquent of calory, protein and vitamin shortages.

The other main purpose of dormitory life in Ngoni culture 575
was to mix up all the boys in the village and let the common 858
life together teach them how to get on with their age-mates and knuckle under to their superiors in age. Age and strength were the only criteria for authority. Older brothers might try to protect and intercede for younger brothers but it was not encouraged. All the young ones had to take their chance equally, without regard for their family name or their father's position.

The dormitory was primarily a sleeping-place, but through 575
the group of boys who slept there the herding of cattle was [513]
organized and the off-duty amusements and occupations of the older boys were planned. The young ones had to 'fag' [857]
for the rest, fetching wood and water, keeping fires going, sweeping the hut, taking messages, huddling in a corner at night when the oldest boys brought girls in, and submitting to beatings both as a warning and as a punishment. They were usually beaten once or twice soon after their arrival and then threatened with much worse if they ever divulged what went on in the dormitory. It was not however a torture house, far from it, and the boys boasted of belonging to 'our dormitory' and were proud of having their own hidden life

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The Ngoni identified themselves with European rather than with their matrilineal neighbours even before the European conquest. Wiese, himself the main agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[4]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[5] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not produced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to rationalize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

4. Wiese, *Geschichte*, pp. 200 f.

5. Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'zeni said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Deare, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 25.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few. We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of these providing the information.[6] The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin. Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from contemporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grow shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that "the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory". From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations, as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

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6. Read and Winterbottom have pointed out that informants from Northern Nyasaland assert that their Paramount Chief is the heir of Zwangondaba, while those from Fort Jameson say that their Chief is the heir. Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 467, and Winterbottom, *Outline Histories*, p. 17.

791 lack of appetite, forgetfulness, sweating. These manifestations could
158 take place in childhood, around puberty, or when the man was fully grown, though the most usual age was in the late teens. The symptoms culminated in sharp pains and a prolonged collapse, and after that a deep sleep. It was then that the dreams came giving the man the assurance that he was henceforth a medium, and that through the spirit of his grandfather, or whoever was now appearing to him, he could communicate with the spirit world. At this time also he was told in dreams where to find medicines and what to do with them. A constant feature in the initiation of well known and accredited diviners was that they
[775] knew the name and identity of the spirit with whom they were in contact, and it appeared to be always someone related to them and most often their father's father.

791 As they returned to normality from an experience which was frightening in its intensity, it dawned on them that they now had to practise as a diviner, to make use of the powers which had come to them. There was evidence that they accepted this role with reluctance. Their relatives, when they saw them going through the earlier stages, were aware that there was an inevitable sequel, that of practising as a diviner, and they too shared the reluctance of the man himself. Sometimes a diviner began to practise by associating as a junior partner with a successful practitioner; sometimes he began hesitantly by himself. The criterion of the validity of their calling was their success. No one seemed to know what became of diviners who were unsuccessful and never became accredited. They apparently disappeared from the field because no one employed them.

The diviners whom I met and talked with, as well as those few whom
791 I saw practising their calling, were considered by the Ngoni to possess
157 a distinctive temperament. It was evident that they wished to live somewhat apart, and that they were withdrawn in a social as well as in a spatial sense. They married, but usually only one wife, and had children, but played little part in extended family or village affairs. Their huts were always on the outskirts of villages and were neither large and prosperous nor very poor looking. They had a reputation for being unpunctual and forgetful, but they were far from being unobservant. Part of their skill lay in watching people and learning about their concerns from observation and storing events in a good memory. Though they could work themselves up into emotionally excited states during a consultation, at other times they gave the impression of being controlled, rather quiet, detached, and uninfluenced by the currents of talk and opinion around them.

The rewards for their services were in kind as a rule, and could be
791 articles of household equipment, food, cloth, and sometimes European clothes or goods from the stores, such as lanterns, soap, matches and cigarettes. There appeared to be no bargaining over payment. The

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

answers to them somewhere, then there have been some vital omissions in the narrative. 121

Clues to this study

In relating this study to other field studies and analyses of socialization techniques and processes, I have not attempted to present here any general assessment of similar or related studies, much less any review of the field as a whole, since I have touched on both in earlier publications.[1] Instead I have brought into this chapter one or two clues or guide lines from other sources which seemed to me to elucidate some of my problems, particularly in regard to four main aspects of this study, which have already been mentioned in Chapter I and which to a large extent set the limits and determine the emphases of this book. The 'true Ngoni' were a society within a society, a distinct cultural group within the Ngoni kingdom. This society of theirs had sharp edges, definable and recognizable limits, and that partly accounted for their own awareness of themselves as distinct from, though at so many points connected with, the neighbouring peoples. Their culture, that is their way of living within this society, had definite values which they strove to maintain, and this was one of the reasons why the ideal Ngoni personality pattern, and their endeavour to see it reproduced in each child, was easy to recognize. In order to safeguard their society and maintain their culture they exercised a fairly rigid social control over the upbringing of their children, which resulted in something approaching a 'system' of training and educating children. Set against this conservation of traditional values however was the reality and extent of changes due to external circumstances mentioned at the end of Chapter I. In the face of these changes the Ngoni showed that they could adapt some of them to their own purposes, and they made use of the schools, for example, once they approved of them, to help adjust their

184 186 829 183 [157] [861] 177

[1] See Appendix (i)

864 of cloth hanging in front from a bead or grass waistband.
[291] They were all taught before that age, and most stringently after it, to sit correctly. For the little girls, this meant kneel-
516 ing first and then sitting with the legs tucked on one side.
864 They always smoothed down their scrap of cloth so that their genitals were covered. Little boys often squatted, sitting on their heels. Their correct position however, especially when eating food, was to sit with their legs crossed and the soles of their feet pressed against their thighs, and their cloth or skin apron arranged to cover their genitals.

Any rudeness in speech or action towards parents or elders
867 was corrected at once, and the child was told: 'That is not the Ngoni way.' Studied courtesy included looking down when addressed by an elder, and as we saw in Chapter II, never walking behind a group of elders but passing in front of them, bending slightly forward and murmuring: 'I am before your eyes.'

Play places and playthings

857 In spite of what appeared like a somewhat restrictive régime, Ngoni children were merry and busy all their waking hours. Occasionally lack of health, or an awkward temperament, produced a child who sat around by himself, or glowered at
[157] other children, or was spiteful and vindictive. For the most
[855] part their nurse girls and older sisters paid them the attention they demanded, were always ready to provide distractions and amusements, and showed them how to use all that lay around them as playthings.

The places where they played depended on their age and mobility. The youngest children stayed round the hut and inside the fence. Occasionally the nurse girls and older sisters in the afternoons took them to a 'playground' on the outskirts of the village, where the older girls were accustomed to
[868] meet and practise dancing, or to thread beads and chatter. When the harvest was in, some of the older children about five and six years old, helped by the nurse girls, made 'play

VILLAGE LIFE FOR OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS

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As a result of dormitory life, combined with cattle-herding, 155
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or 535 near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called 571 the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group, [578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had 865 violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect- ● 157 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell- 538 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the 555 others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

VIII

Personality and Character

Personality, culture and character

128 The threads of teaching and learning whose ends were grasped in Chapter II have been followed through the intervening five chapters, and our task now is to see what pattern they have made of the system of training given by the Ngoni to their children. The threads have eventually been twisted together to form two separate but linked strands, one the 121 achievement of the Ngoni basic personality and the other the development of individual character. In this chapter I am going to use personality in the sense derived from Linton and Kluckhohn, namely the sum total of the traits which are desired by a society and form part of its culture, and which are instilled into children in the system of training set up by the society. Personality therefore since it is regarded as an aim in child training is a social product. The ideal personality is held up to the growing generation, not so much as a total achievement, but as the acquisition of a number of traits of behaviour, skills and knowledge. The Ngoni basic personality [157] therefore consisted of common personality elements in adults, [155] which, as Kluckhohn says, were largely a product of learning, and that learning was directed and controlled by the system of training. Character on the other hand I am going to use as the sum total of the individual's response to his training. It therefore includes his personal adjustment to the training given by the society, and, as a result, his acquiring of some or many of the basic personality traits, and hence the degree of his approximation to the ideal personality. Over and above

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

parents and the community, the children and the community, and the community and the school. There are a number of clues to follow in examining the different groups of people involved in a child's growing up, and discovering some kind of consistent pattern of relationship between them. The clues are not difficult to trace for they begin in such information as the amount of time a child spends with each group, what he learns from each group, how much authority and responsibility the group assumes for him, and so on. In this analysis it is not enough to relate each group to the children. It is important too to be aware of the personal relations between parents, relatives, community, school authorities, in terms of their opportunities for mutual contact and discussion, and their attitude towards culture change and cultural conservation. Out of such potential contacts arise the formulation of aims for home and school training, and their harmony or their conflict, and the resultant effects on the growing up of a child. 121

These two lines to be followed up, which we have just indicated, are familiar to most teachers and to many parents. The third line arising out of this study, and common to most other studies of growing up, is related to research on personality and culture and on national character. This field of studies is more controversial and more complex than the former. In the case of the Ngoni they had a more or less distinct ideal personality rooted in their culture and answering the question: what kind of people are the Ngoni and how do they want others to regard them? This ideal personality was the goal of their child-training as described in this book, but it was in the process of being modified by school teaching, by Christian teaching, and perhaps more profoundly still by the growth of Nyasaland African nationalism. The sharp outlines of the ideal personality type of Ngoni men and women were already blurred by these political and educational developments. 577 177

For readers of this book the relevance of this aspect of 157

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

157 Ngoni children's growing up is probably to call attention to cultural and national influences in emphasizing certain qualities in the ideal personality and in individual character.

121 In general, in the west, cultural influences determining a way of life, and setting standards for individual behaviour are found in certain kinds of 'class' grouping, or in the environmental determinants of rural communities, 'new' towns and housing estates, slum or suburban areas. Very few western societies can show their children the sharp outline of an ideal personality which seemed so important and compelling to the Ngoni. Nevertheless behind parents' attempts to train their children or to direct their growing up lie as a rule some vague ideas about ideal personality traits or the qualities to be looked for in national character. Perhaps some searching into these fundamental motives, stimulated by this Ngoni study, could help to bring them to the surface and so assist in the harmonizing of educational aims.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(*b*) At first I died and when I rose up again I felt the wind of the spirits. My dying was my initiation. This *ukutwasa* was like that of the moon when it is new. I began to speak and speak and I danced with the python skin on my head. Then the people tested me whether I had bad or good spirits and after that I began to divine. The spirit of my grandfather, he has told me about this work. I am talking with his spirit when the horn is going round. 791

The fact of my being in Mcakhatha during the illness and death of Bambo Manga, and witnessing all the attendant ritual, gave me many opportunities of discussing the role of diviners in the ancestor cult, as well as of observing two of them at work. No such opportunity presented itself in the northern kingdom, but the role of the diviner was very fully discussed with leading Ngoni in Ekwendeni, Ezondweni and Hoho, and the account given by Cibambo at the beginning of this chapter was partly the result of these talks. 124 791

I have made several references to the graded hierarchy among the diviners, though I have not made any connexion between those diviners who either prophesied or made a diagnosis and those others, whether they were called *izanusi* or *izing'anga*, who made a diagnosis and also gave treatment through medicines. I have limited the analysis here to the diviners who operated through their own ancestral spirits and who, by virtue of this contact of theirs, claimed to be able to interpret the will of the ancestral spirits of the Ngoni clans. It was a notable fact that very few of the famous diviners, and none of the less well-known, were of Swazi clans, though the one true prophet in the story of the slaughter at Mabiri was of a Swazi clan. Two great *izinduna* and *alumuzana*, who were also dreamers and prophets, Gwaza Jere in the north and Golozela Nzunga in the central kingdom, were of Swazi clans. So also was the famous woman diviner NaNdumbu. It appeared that the capacity to become a diviner and the successful practice of the art was very unusual among the leading Ngoni. They depended therefore on men of lesser trans-Zambesi and cis-Zambesi clans to perform these duties for them. The attitude shown by leading Ngoni towards the diviners, already referred to, may have been partly a rationalization of their dependence on this kind of skill as well as on force of arms. It may also have been due to the necessity, admitted somewhat reluctantly, of using men of lower social status, that is of cis-Zambesi clans, for such vital services to the nation and to their own families. The Ngoni had a strong pragmatic streak which led them to suspect knowledge and skill which could not be reduced to concrete terms, and hence they were always ready to accuse the less well accredited diviners of lying and deceit. 791

In spite of Ngoni doubts and suspicions about the class of diviners as a whole, within their kingdoms these persons were recognized as specialists for certain reasons. They had all been through the experience described as *ukutwasa*. It began with physical symptoms, such as fainting, 791 158

791 lack of appetite, forgetfulness, sweating. These manifestations could
158 take place in childhood, around puberty, or when the man was fully grown, though the most usual age was in the late teens. The symptoms culminated in sharp pains and a prolonged collapse, and after that a deep sleep. It was then that the dreams came giving the man the assurance that he was henceforth a medium, and that through the spirit of his grandfather, or whoever was now appearing to him, he could communicate with the spirit world. At this time also he was told in dreams where to find medicines and what to do with them. A constant feature in the initiation of well known and accredited diviners was that they
[775] knew the name and identity of the spirit with whom they were in contact, and it appeared to be always someone related to them and most often their father's father.

791 As they returned to normality from an experience which was frightening in its intensity, it dawned on them that they now had to practise as a diviner, to make use of the powers which had come to them. There was evidence that they accepted this role with reluctance. Their relatives, when they saw them going through the earlier stages, were aware that there was an inevitable sequel, that of practising as a diviner, and they too shared the reluctance of the man himself. Sometimes a diviner began to practise by associating as a junior partner with a successful practitioner; sometimes he began hesitantly by himself. The criterion of the validity of their calling was their success. No one seemed to know what became of diviners who were unsuccessful and never became accredited. They apparently disappeared from the field because no one employed them.

791 The diviners whom I met and talked with, as well as those few whom
157 I saw practising their calling, were considered by the Ngoni to possess a distinctive temperament. It was evident that they wished to live somewhat apart, and that they were withdrawn in a social as well as in a spatial sense. They married, but usually only one wife, and had children, but played little part in extended family or village affairs. Their huts were always on the outskirts of villages and were neither large and prosperous nor very poor looking. They had a reputation for being unpunctual and forgetful, but they were far from being unobservant. Part of their skill lay in watching people and learning about their concerns from observation and storing events in a good memory. Though they could work themselves up into emotionally excited states during a consultation, at other times they gave the impression of being controlled, rather quiet, detached, and uninfluenced by the currents of talk and opinion around them.

791 The rewards for their services were in kind as a rule, and could be articles of household equipment, food, cloth, and sometimes European clothes or goods from the stores, such as lanterns, soap, matches and cigarettes. There appeared to be no bargaining over payment. The

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Chief Mtwalo II in the northern kingdom. Two texts are by former big wives of leading men. NyaNsangu was the former big wife of a grandson of Zwangendaba, a member of the royal clan but not a chief, though he owned many villages. NaNdumbu was the former big wife of the head of the Nzungu clan in the central kingdom. The last text by Cibambo gives details of the clothes worn by royal women and leading women in pre-European days, some of which were still in use in the 1930's. 565 644 631

Life of the Royal Women
by Mangu Maseko

daughter of Mputa, former Paramount of the central kingdom

159 565 631 644

◀ Formerly I was just staying for I did not work. I had many slaves and their work was especially to thread beads. Up to today I have not worked except to cook. Our hair was anointed with the fat of cows and of milk. Our food was milk and we drank it in a wooden cup. We were getting [302] [262] [illegible] for honouring each other, the big men were telling the youths: 'You should honour the big people that the country may be rich.' Only the big women were dancing *ngoma*, *mizudu* and *ligube*. If a man married the child of a chief, he gave many cattle, and the poor man could not marry the child of a chief.

When NaMlangeni was alive she was a well-known chief and was greatly honoured. When speaking a case, they called her that she might judge. When people went to war and captured slaves and cattle they were giving them to her, and she divided them. For thanking her they said: '*Zoithuna Mai*.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Margaret Jere

granddaughter of Mtwalo I, daughter of Johanne Jere in the northern kingdom

◀ When I was a child I was not allowed to go out quickly in the sun, and when crawling I had to stay in the house. I was very light coloured. The *ulusi* (nurse girl) took me to my mother, UNsulasi Naima, to be suckled at special times. I slept in the house of Magodise Moyo, my grandmother, who was the widow of Chief Mtwalo. The *inidondosi* (attendant) also slept there. My grandmother and others, the *mosina* (senior women), were telling me how to behave. A special *inidondosi* living in Magodise's house was told by my grandmother to speak specially to me when I had reached puberty. This *inidondosi* could speak to me about anything. When nearing marriage a woman was chosen, Hlamseya Naima, and sent to reveal to me how I was to live in my married state. The sisters of my father, Tizaira and Seyeya Jere, also came and spoke to me at the time of my marriage. Hlamseya Naima was sent by my grandmother to examine me (for virginity) before marriage. I was allowed to play with those children who lived in the same section of the village and who were known to my mother and grandmother. The *inidondosi* did all the work but sometimes I used to pound and fetch water, but not too hard and just for pleasure.

When strangers came, I came and saluted them and then went out of

159 565 631 644 the house. If my father came to my mother's house, I would go out, but if he sent for me I would return and he would talk to me and play with me. We learned how to behave well, and were rebuked if we behaved badly. My father would beat a child for not behaving well. My father did not allow his children to be spoiled by being treated differently from others. He said: 'They are all my children.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Mdingase Nsangu

widow of Chinombo Jere, grandson of Zwangendaba in the northern kingdom

565 631 644 [302] ¶ The *amakosikazi* were not working. During the day they kept dressing their hair, both the young women and the old. The old women no longer kept their *isihlutu*, or high chignon, but wore the *umzoco*, or long curls. For the *umzoco* the hair was cut short and not allowed to grow very long. Instead of dressing it upwards they took a blade of grass and kept it pressed down after oil and scent were applied. Their other work was to go to the river and wash.

They also drank beer and some gruel, and afterwards danced *ngoma* in the house where beer was brewed. The men and chief also joined in the *ngoma* and the women were responding to the singing. They began to drink in the morning until the afternoon, but not in the evening. Other people went on drinking until evening, and even some of the *amakosikazi* who were *isidli* (gluttonous) but the rest were sleeping or resting.

When drinking in the house the chief always sat by the right-hand doorpost, and the big *inkosikazi* by the left-hand post. They sat near the door to draw breath easily because there were many people inside. The beer-pot being set halfway between the door and the hearth-stones in the centre, a man was chosen to pour the beer in the gourds for drinking. He was *umtele wocwala*, the beer pourer, and was often the village *induna* or one who was favoured by the chief. When the gourds were full he told the chief, and the chief told him to distribute them. Sometimes there were four or even six for the different classes in the house. They sat in order, the *inkosi* with the *izinduna* and *amadoda*, and the *inkosikazi* with the other wives of the chief and the wives of the *izinduna* and *amadoda*. The chief and the *inkosikazi* kept on inviting the common people to come and drink. [576] Such invited people thanked the person at the beginning and at the end, others joining him. The *inkosikazi* or other wives of the chief were thanked '*Nkomo*'.

The *amakosikazi* never worked at all, but the lesser wives worked, and pounded grain and fetched firewood. These were the ones who had not yet got attendants in their houses. All the chief *amakosikazi* had attendants who performed all the work of the house. The *amakosikazi* often sat in the verandah or outside under the platform of branches supported by posts. [62] There they ate their food which was *ilambazi* and *umnjinji*, thick gruel of millet; *isinkwa se nyoni*, bulrush millet ground to a paste; or *isinkobe*, whole grains of maize boiled and pounded. The meat was eaten as a feast on the *ngcakasi*, the smeared place in front of the house, and all the chief's wives joined in. A mat was spread for the big *amakosikazi* where they sat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'. 622 [554]

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out *of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders.* 463 177 [871]

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the 797 871 [177] 159 797 [577] [796] [184] [851]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the
797 church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been
159 threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition
875 and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary
[622] behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the
[871] playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organize his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described
177 in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose
797 partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or
871 ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools
186 were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose personal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

871 Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected
463 their boys who had been to school and had entered European
554 employment away from their homes, to find work which assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

586 is normally irrevocable and couples do not often go back to each other. If a wife does go back soon after a divorce people laugh at her for having caused trouble over nothing. A husband may sometimes assert that his wife has been divorced without his approval, perhaps while he was away working, but such complaints go unanswered for it is in the interests of the court to uphold its own decisions. Even if a man is living in the rural area his wife may get a divorce if he refuses to go to court to defend his case. In addition he runs the risk of a fine for contempt of court. The somewhat lengthy process by which a woman can get her divorce despite the obstruction of her husband is illustrated by the following account of a court case.

159 593 586

Case history 2

In April 1946 Zachariah, a man holding the royal descent-name and married to Ruth and Naomi, began to make advances to a recently divorced

Table X. Marital experience of females, by age, 1948-9

162 581 586

Present age in years	Marital experience													
	All females								Wedded females only					
	Number of marriages entered into since birth								Number of divorces experienced since birth					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0-4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	58	–	–	–	–	–	0
5-9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	65	–	–	–	–	–	0
10-14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	54	–	–	–	–	–	0
15-19	20	23	1	–	–	–	1	45	23	1	–	–	1	25
20-24	–	20	3	–	–	–	1	24	19	2	2	–	1	24
25-29	–	24	4	–	–	–	1	29	23	4	1	–	1	29
30-34	1	15	4	1	–	–	2	23	16	4	–	–	2	22
35-39	–	12	7	2	–	–	2	23	16	4	1	–	2	23
40-44	–	10	5	2	1	–	–	18	10	6	2	–	–	18
45-49	–	5	11	–	1	–	–	17	11	5	–	1	–	17
50-54	–	6	7	–	1	–	–	14	7	5	1	1	–	14
55-59	–	7	5	1	–	–	–	13	10	2	–	1	–	13
60-64	–	9	4	1	–	–	1	15	12	1	1	–	1	15
65-69	–	5	5	–	–	1	–	11	8	2	–	–	1	11
70-74	–	3	3	–	–	–	–	6	6	–	–	–	–	6
75-79	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	1
80-84	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	4	–	–	–	–	4	4
Total	198	140	60	7	3	1	12	421	162	37	8	3	13	223

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

woman who lived near the place where he was working, with the idea of taking her as his third wife. Ruth, the great wife, was living with Zachariah at the time, and tried to prevent him from marrying this woman. Zachariah desisted but then became so angry with Ruth that he gave her sixpence and said she was divorced. She went back to her village, saying she would get a divorce in the court. She stayed at her father's village for some time and then went back to her husband. 159 593 586

In October there was another quarrel between Ruth and Zachariah. According to Zachariah he told his wife to bring some tobacco from inside the hut and she refused, whereupon there was a fight. Ruth took the matter to court, complaining that in the fight Zachariah had hurt her so

Table XI. Divorce ratios 586

Ratio	Value
A	28·5% (115/403)
B	55·8% (115/206)
C	36·9% (115/312)

Legend

A The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages

B The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all completed marriages

C The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages except those ended by death

124

Informants

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	117	136	86·0
Women	222	251	88·4
Total	339	387	87·6

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 111

159 593 586

badly that she had had to go to hospital. She produced a letter from the White doctor by way of evidence. Ruth's father testified that Ruth was the first wife Zachariah had married, yet despite this he fought her and did not fight with his second wife Naomi. Ruth asked the court to divorce her as she feared she would be killed by Zachariah. A court councillor said that although she and her husband had been to the court before with their troubles, it was not the work of the court to force men and women to divorce one another but to instruct them how to live together in peace. Zachariah was ordered to pay two pounds damages to Ruth and ten shillings fine to the court. Zachariah agreed to pay the fine but refused to pay the damages. The chief, who was in court at the time, asked him if he said this because of his royal descent-name. If Zachariah persisted in his attitude the chief would write to his employer and tell him to deduct the money from his wages. Zachariah then said he would send a boy back to collect the two pounds from his village.

Ruth went to her own village. About this time Zachariah was transferred to another area, distant from Ruth's village. In November Ruth's father began to complain that the two pounds had not yet been paid and said that Zachariah was trying to trap his wife by not visiting her, hoping she would commit adultery.

In February 1948 Ruth took out a summons against Zachariah for failing to come and visit her despite the ruling of the court in October that they were not to be divorced. The summons was sent to Zachariah in another county and Zachariah wrote back to a court councillor to say that he would not come to court as he had heard that Ruth was committing adultery with a certain man. On receiving the letter the chief said nothing could be done about it until Zachariah decided to bring an action for adultery against Ruth.

By this time Zachariah had acquired another wife and when in March he was given leave he took the new wife to his own village where his second wife Naomi had been living all the time.

In December 1948 Ruth brought an action against Zachariah for divorce on the ground of his desertion. Three times the case was down for hearing but Zachariah never appeared. The court then divorced Ruth with no damages to pay.

Hearing this Zachariah went to the District Officer and asked why his wife had been divorced without his knowledge. The District Officer referred him to the chief. Zachariah wrote a rather facetious letter to the chief challenging his right to divorce Ruth. The court clerk read the letter and said that Zachariah ought to be fined for insulting the chief. He observed that Ruth's mother had died in September and that Zachariah must be a cruel man as he had not gone to offer his condolences.

586 It is easier for a woman to prove desertion in a case like this where the man is living in the rural area, than when he is away in the town working and writes sporadically if at all. The court feels that it is under an obligation to the migrant labourers of the tribe not to divorce their wives too easily. But if a husband is in the area and could perfectly easily go and see his wife, it is much easier to demonstrate that the desertion is deliberate and sustained, and not merely forced on a man by the exigencies of earning a living.

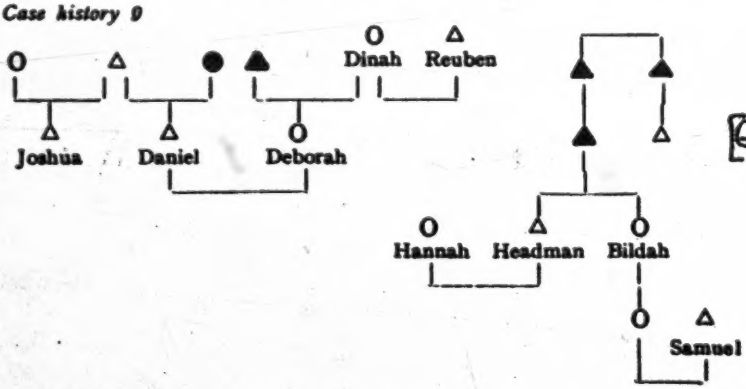
586 178 We have seen that the two main grounds for divorce are adultery and desertion. Some Whites express this by saying that these are the main causes of divorce among the Ngoni and other tribes. The Ngoni do not see the matter in this light. The cause of divorce to them is the presence of the White group. Old men deplore the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

precipitate an open quarrel by staying away from his wife, by eating elsewhere or by threatening divorce. Fights in the village, provided the parties concerned do not hurry off to court, are dealt with first at a village meeting, and even where the combatants are not man and wife, the elucidation of the cause of the fight may bring to light a latent marital quarrel which must then be dealt with by the relatives. Accusations of adultery must be denied, and a woman may call in her relatives to protect her from the slander of a jealous woman. 578 602

The processes by which a quarrel between man and wife comes to light, and the attempts of kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, are well illustrated by the following account of an adulterous wife. 578 602 159

Case history 9



[601]

Daniel was a labour migrant in Southern Rhodesia and his wife Deborah was living meanwhile in the village of her mother's husband Reuben. The headman of this village had himself returned from the railway line a year previously. At a beer party Deborah quarrelled with Hannah the headman's wife, who accused Deborah of sleeping with the headman and who started to fight her. A meeting was held in the village to settle the affair. Deborah denied that she had ever slept with the headman and the headman denied that he had ever slept with her. Hannah retorted that she did not like to see her husband running after other women and always talking to Deborah. Reuben and a neighbour of his said that they could say nothing in the matter as Deborah was a married woman, and they called on Joshua, who was Daniel's father's son, to speak. He had come from his own village to attend the meeting. Joshua said that Hannah had not actually caught Deborah sleeping with her husband the headman, and that therefore Hannah had done wrong in accusing Deborah without good reason. Hannah had also erred in making accusations that would make Deborah's brothers-in-law think that Deborah was committing adultery. The headman had also erred and should stop talking to Deborah, or else the brothers-in-law of Deborah would take him to court for drinking beer at night with Deborah, who was a married woman.

Hannah then admitted that she had done wrong in fighting Deborah. Another man in the village, Samuel, the headman's sister's daughter's husband, spoke, and said that Hannah must offer a chicken to Deborah because if Hannah had really known that Deborah was sleeping with the headman, surely she would have seen that Deborah was taken to court.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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602
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Hannah sent her son to catch a chicken, which was put at the feet of Samuel and a lieutenant of the village, who called on Deborah to accept it. Deborah was stopped from doing so by Reuben, who said that the village was now a bad village since the headman had returned to it, and that he did not want his daughter to accept the chicken. The chicken was released, and the meeting broke up. Reuben subsequently explained his action by saying that if he had let Deborah take the chicken, there would be hatred between Deborah and Hannah, and more quarrels would ensue. People would quarrel in the village just to get chickens.

Two months later Daniel returned from Southern Rhodesia, and Deborah went back to Daniel's village to live with him there. Soon he quarrelled with her, and accused her of committing adultery while he was away. A meeting was held at the house of Daniel's father to deal with the quarrel. Daniel said that he had brought back with him medicine which he had put under Deborah's pillow while she was asleep. Under the influence of the medicine Deborah talked in her sleep and disclosed the names of the men with whom she had slept while Daniel had been away. Daniel said that he did not like to take these men to court on the evidence of this medicine alone. Reuben, who had been called from his village to attend the meeting, said that the matter was not one in which he could act and it was up to Daniel to decide what he wanted to do, as Deborah was his wife. Daniel's father said that as Deborah had children by Daniel she ought to be forgiven and warned not to do it again. The headman of Daniel's village observed that women had been committing adultery long before there was any labour migration, and that as this was Deborah's first offence she should just be warned. Daniel said that Deborah should be warned not in his village but in her own village, and that she should be warned not by himself or his father but by her father Reuben. Daniel wrote down the names of the people he had heard mentioned by Deborah, but he did not show this list at the meeting. An informant who claimed that he saw the list said that it contained, among others, the name of the headman of Reuben's village.

A month later a meeting was held in Reuben's village to continue the discussion. Some of the important people in the village attended, but not the headman or his lieutenant. This ommission was explained by Reuben as being because all the people concerned were Christians and they must decide it among themselves without reference to the headman, a pagan. Daniel's father opened the discussions by saying that Daniel wanted to know about the adulteries of Deborah while he was away in Southern Rhodesia. Daniel then said that he wanted to take to court the people who had slept with his wife. He had found medicines in the house on his return, and these he produced as evidence. He said he had asked his wife what sort of medicines these were, and at first she had refused to tell him. He had pressed her and she had then said that some were medicines she had got from people in another country for headache, and that others were roots of love medicine she had got from other women in the village. Daniel said he did not believe his wife when she told him this, as a woman would not make love medicine if her husband were away. He had found other medicines hidden in the roof of the storehouse which Deborah had refused to explain to him.

Deborah spoke and said that she admitted sleeping with two men, Gideon and Balaam. (They were both men from other villages.) Another man from the village, the headman's father's father's brother's son, who had been invited to the meeting (but who was not a Christian) said that these people Gideon and Balaam ought to be taken to court as Daniel had suggested, for a case like this could not be settled in the village.

Daniel then went on to say that he thought his wife was pregnant and he wanted to know who had impregnated her. Deborah said that she was sure it was Gideon and Balaam who had made her pregnant. Daniel's father remarked that they had best wait before bringing a case against

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Gideon as Gideon's village was on the point of moving from one county to another and they wanted to begin the case in the right court. 578 602

Dinah, Deborah's mother, addressed her daughter:

'My daughter, ever since I married my husband, I have never committed adultery with anyone who was not my husband, and I have never asked anyone to give me medicines so that Reuben would love me. My husband loves me because I obey him, and he looks after me well. In addition he looks after you, who are not his real daughter. Believe my words, when Reuben dies, you will not find me married to such a good husband who can look after me and all my children. I used to tell you not to drink beer all night long because your husband was away working. You did not obey me, and see now you have done wrong to both parents, your own parents and the parents of your husband. We will regard you as a bad child who has not been well instructed; and the parents of your husband will regard us as bad people for not instructing you well. Now it is up to you because you are a fully grown person.' 159

Daniel's father said that the men who had made Deborah pregnant would be punished by the court, and that now Daniel and Deborah must be told to live in peace. Daniel said that he had nothing more to say as the people who had been sleeping with his wife had been identified. He would take them to court and would live peacefully with his wife. The meeting then ended.

Two months later Daniel took Balaam to court, and Deborah and Balaam were each ordered to pay Daniel thirty shillings damages.

We see in this account the constant interest of the kinsfolk in maintaining the marriage. Divorce was never mentioned. Instead, Deborah was told to change her ways. Her father-in-law argued that she should be forgiven as she had already borne children to Daniel. Her mother's husband, although he was more diffident about the matter than if she had been his own daughter, tried to prevent her quarrel with Hannah from worsening when he prevented her taking the chicken offered her. Although Reuben was only her step-father Daniel considered him, rather than his own father, the proper person to deliver a reproof to Deborah.

Occasionally the aftermath of a marital quarrel is neither reconciliation nor divorce but a state of affairs we may call separation. 586 If a wife runs away, or if her husband goes off to work and avoids her on his return, there may be attempts at reconciliation which may fail or there may even be no attempts. Not every woman in this position seeks divorce. Some still hope that their husbands will return, particularly if there are growing children to be cared for, while others may be bound by the rules of their religion against divorce. If a woman is old and does not wish to take another husband, she may be disinclined to take the trouble to obtain a divorce. It will be seen from Table IV that there are only a few women in this condition. They live with their own relatives and sometimes maintain indirect contact with their husbands through their children who visit back and forth. This category of separation is applicable only where the husband is living near his wife. If a man is in Southern Rhodesia and does not write, we cannot say whether or not he is, in this sense, separated from his wife. His

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed.

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NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa.

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Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1828.

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In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques.

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It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son.

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1 [induna=military leader--Analyst]

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
578 Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
643 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
648 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.

In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo.
[805] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Maseko, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Masfwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinaluzi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
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11:Lancaster G-5 (ca.1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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N 159 173 562 N M 171 643 842 851

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In those cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze*.

N 159 173 562 [595] N [764] [423]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Loziwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtenguleni Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchizo* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

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After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jere; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

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It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Ansenga tribe worked for Sosera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Sosera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the *ikohlwa* wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamache Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Imiti. Father, Nzyekezera (Njekerezera), mother and wife, not known; sons, Masakambewa and Chitete.

[554] [578] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1846.

159 173 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambose Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

167 On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

[578] After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Maseko was killed by [554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 [701] [645] (6) Njekwane Ntilila. Father, Mphange, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyuwazana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mene, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpinduka Hill, Matambazi River, in the year 1868.

(7) Mgai Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majekwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere: born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173 643

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1888/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu.

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Mulowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mackera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

693 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment;
551 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment; Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[643] Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black oxhide,
[645] white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives
[701] of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Soseza Nqumayo, Great Wife; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu;
[595] Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku?; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndauya Mbanzima,
[593] Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nquaneleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.

Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
167 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
551 Chief Diviner or *Inunusi*:—Manyonkolo.
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(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadose, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595] Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere; Mtizwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere; Maiwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727] 1898. Grandson:—Chiba Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near
[727] Msesa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsaswe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayungo (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu,
704 Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Masoho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera, Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

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Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Sosera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1938, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Bazaliyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphanza, Mahawuaye Mphanza, Mahawu Mwaw Shawa, Ibede Tole, Mjoko Ndwambi Jere, Malwalalike Tembo, Mwaje Nkhawa, Katanda Manyumwa Mahowana, Kapondola Jonani Mvula, Machilika Mphanza, Chimgurbane Ngulwa, Chiwere Maimba, Masina Jere, Magulanga Mphanza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Madalanowe, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndawambi Hara, Mairino Kongwere Nkhawa, Pengani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gawani Mowa, Chingulubani Hinda, Siya Mvula, Ngwaga Singa Jere, Mahawa Mphanza, Mwaki Lukhelo, Njombwa Tembo, Adwilewako Mahanga, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]
[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[66] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
619 and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to
[597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[66] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-4, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[137]

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfinsi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[138]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared.

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[139] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[140] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers

[137] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78.
[138] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[139] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 3 (26 February 1898), p. 1.
[140] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

161 such as Sharpe, Thomson and Deare, and with my own information based on village histories. Combining this with the lowest estimate of population, we arrive at a population density of 100 persons to the square mile, while the highest estimate implies a density of 375. Highly unreliable as these figures are, it is clear that the density of population was considerably greater before the conquest than it is now, when it averages about 68 persons to the square mile. Even the present-day figure is nearly three times the density which the land can sustain in perpetuity.

This dense population was concentrated in large villages. 361 Angus estimated that there were at least a thousand huts in Loan-
162 geni, while Deare estimated that there were sixteen hundred. Read states that it was over three miles across, while Genthe says that Ngoni villages were about five times the size of the average Cewa village. From the top of a mountain, Deare saw eleven villages all about the same size as Loangeni.[141] Thus it seems that there were several villages with populations of the order of three thousand. If Deare and Johnston are right in their estimates of tribal population the majority of the people lived in these big villages.

Yet by September 1898 the only villages left in Mpezeni's country were a few to the east of Fort Young. All the rest had been destroyed by troops, and their former inhabitants were said to be 'still timid' and living in scattered groups in grass shelters.[142] The large pre-conquest settlements were particularly vulnerable to attack by troops armed with guns and intent on burning, the more so because there were no defensive preparations at all. Glave wrote in 1894 that the Ngoni 'have no stockaded village, such protection they deem unnecessary as no enemy can be strong enough to attack them'.[143]

The large villages and the high density of population were appropriate only to a victorious military society, relying for at least part of its subsistence on raided crops and beasts produced outside its borders and for the rest on the maximum exploitation of the land [727] inside them. When its enemies had been plundered and its own [167] lands exhausted, it moved on. We can infer from Angus and from Sharpe, who wrote of 'entirely open' country,[144] that within the 178 settled area most of the cultivable land was in use at the same time. 311 Yet in many parts of the Fort Jameson area the soil is now exhausted after five years under maize and must be left for twenty-five years

[141] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 11 May; Read, 'Tradition', p. 475, fn. 2; Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1.
[142] Selby, memorandum dated 10 March 1901.
[143] B6, fo. 329.
[144] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyasa', p. 345. For Angus, see pp. 109f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to recover under bush fallow. The long-term carrying capacity of the land before the conquest cannot have been much greater than its present average value of 25 persons to the square mile.[141] Thus it is certain that in pre-conquest times the Ngoni were settled at a density even more in excess of the critical value than it is now, despite alienation. There cannot have been much cultivable land in reserve and the State was exhausting the wealth of its own soil as well as drawing on the resources of its neighbours. Thus even if the large villages had not been burnt, the same number of people could not for long have continued to live in them practising subsistence agriculture. A reduction in the density of population necessarily involved under this economy a reduction in the size of villages, for Ngoni do not like to live more than an hour's walk from their gardens. As it was, the villages were burnt, many Ngoni of Cewa origin left Ngoniland, and much of the more densely settled land, carrying up to 140 persons to the square mile, was alienated to Europeans within six years of the war.[142] The arrangement of persons over the land and the activities they carried on were both dramatically altered by the European conquest. It is, therefore, not surprising that the old society was so drastically changed at the same time. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as we shall see, the forms of grouping of the past have influenced the forms of the new society.

In brief, the old political system was a system of segments, the new one is a system of villages and counties. The county segment links the two systems, but there is no function in the new order for segments embracing several counties or for those that embrace only part of a county. Within the village, the segmentary processes still go on, but at this level of organization we are dealing with kinship rather than politics. When a segment grows beyond the bounds of a single village, it begins to fade away, and we are left with a network of ties which link villages with one another but which do not define mutually exclusive groups as existed in pre-conquest times. The uncertainty about how counties should be divided internally is an indication of the lack of function of these intermediate segments. For some purposes, such as the organization of royal hunts, a county is divided into a number of rural districts. These are geographically defined areas, and it is sometimes possible to say that such-and-such a man, usually a senior lieutenant of the county segment, is the most important person in such-and-such a rural area. However, the recognizable rural districts in a county do not

[141] Allan, *Land Usage*, pp. 16-17.
[142] *N.R.R.G.G.*, ii, 2 (15 March 1904), p. 30.

CHAPTER I

THE NGONI PEOPLE

In the census of Nyasaland of 1945, there were 193,482 people enumerated as Ngoni. Their distribution extended from the extreme north in Karonga district through every other district to the extreme south in Port Herald district. There were concentrations of Ngoni people, however, as Table I shows, in the Mzimba district in the north, in the Dowa, Lilongwe, Dedza and Ncheu districts of the central province, and in the Blantyre district in the south. The Ngoni in the Mzimba district were known as Mbelwa's Ngoni [1] and will be called in this book the northern Ngoni Kingdom.

131 [161] [101]

Table I

Distribution of Ngoni in Nyasaland by Provinces and Districts from 1945 Census

162 131

Northern Province	*Total* 45,539
Mzimba district	44,948
Karonga "	295
Chitipa "	296
Central Province*	*Total* 80,943
Karonga district	2,539
Dowa "	20,329
Lilongwe "	17,797
Dedza "	14,757
Ncheu "	15,242
Kota-kota "	4,858
Fort Manning "	3,631
Southern Province	*Total* 67,000
Blantyre district	25,224
Zomba "	6,972
Liwonde "	7,572
Nsanje "	10,211
Chiromo "	9,185
Port Johnston "	1,343
Chikwawa "	1,029
Chiradzulu "	4,655
Mlanje "	751
Port Herald "	58
Total	193,482

* In 1931 this was included in the Northern Province.

[1] Tew, M. *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*. O.U.P., 1950, p. 91.

[P2 is blank]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the
619 Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Luangwa valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(*d*) '*Those from this country*'

619 Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland
563 who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. These in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Yao origin.

101 Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition
128 of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi stock—that is categories (*a*) and (*b*) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would
[161] probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged; or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

101 The second conclusion is that even if the criterion is accepted that
563 the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambesi, the Ngoni kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (*a*), (*b*), (*c*)
184 and (*d*). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms
[172] of culture were found not only in groups (*a*) and (*b*), as would be expected, but often among families in group (*c*) who, through fighting in the Ngoni armies and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual pattern.[1]

174 [1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpezeni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their travels. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Mlanbo Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*.

885 diagram is that of the *madoda*, the older men who wore the head-ring.
692 Probably in pre-European days they received more recognition than was apparent in the 1930's after the head-ring had been given up. The *madoda* will be referred to in the next chapter on the royal village and in Chapter V of Part III on age sets. In the appeal court of the Paramount and in the chief's court there was always a group of these senior men sitting behind the *izinduna*, to whom the *induna* speaking to the case sometimes turned for advice and consultation.

645 Reference was made to an overlap between territorial office-bearers and national office-bearers. The big *izinduna*, the spokesman of the Paramount, and sometimes the messengers, were members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and often were *alumuzana* who had no courts. This was a method by which in the 1930's those *alumuzana* could be drawn into the circle of officials and receive a small salary for their services.

This set of office-bearers which we have considered in relation to the Paramount, with the exception of his spokesman and his praiser, was duplicated for the chiefs in both kingdoms, whether they were of the royal clan or *alumuzana*. The account of the royal village in the central kingdom which follows in the next chapter will illustrate how these officials functioned in the day-to-day affairs of the Paramount's headquarters.

CHAPTER V

A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933

The Paramount and his village

361 For some weeks in 1935 and in 1936 I lived in the Paramount's village
[114] of Magangs in the central kingdom. The central kingdom included all
[13] Ncheu district, consisting of 1,092 square miles, a total population of
[16] 88,446, and a density of 80·99 per square mile. The village was 300 yards off the main road running from north to south of Nyasaland, and was approached by a hoed motor road flanked by huts. It consisted of three main sections: the Paramount's large brick residence and the surrounding buildings within a palisade or reed fence, including the huts of his daughter and son-in-law, and of his brother-in-law and sister; the huts and kraal in the section of the *induna* of his big house, Kalilombe Mbewe; and the huts and kraal of the original village 'owned' by the headman, Lazaro Dzonzi. On the south of the village was the large open space where the weekly market was held, and where several Indian stores faced the main road. On the north was the dispensary building,

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may cal Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage today; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part. 121

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in ths paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000 live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the ralway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[3]. 101 [161] 131 167 [648] [643] 631 241 [439] 464

[3] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 252 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned: such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources. 000

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile. 114 101 121 161 311 [133]

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfinzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipoka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni. [181]

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent. [797] [427]

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do. [134]

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people. [439]

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

N 251 511 [126]

The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages

(February 1941)

N [162]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,710

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [361] N [166]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 311 511

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

L 161 311 511 000

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, provide similar examples for different systems and land categories. In the second Report of the Ecological Survey (North Eastern Rhodesia, paras. 316–20) Trapnell records a wide range of observations on areas where land degeneration and soil erosion had become marked, in relation to land categories, population densities and the time factor. These observations provide independent evidence of the relatively low carrying capacity of much of our land under the traditional systems, and they accord well with the estimates obtained by the methods outlined in this paper.

161
311
511
[114]
[128]

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113

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5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

L M 166 648 The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, much of it inaccessible and uninhabitable, except for small pockets of fertile soil, was opened to unrestricted settlement by the Ambo and Senga-Kunda peoples. Other areas of poor soils and low carrying capacities in Fort Jameson District were also opened to free settlement up to a population total determined by the carrying capacity.

L [731] In Ndola District an area was opened to immediate uncontrolled settlement, in order to relieve acute land shortage and actual starvation in one section of the Reserve.

L M [312] [361] [632] A somewhat modified method has been used in parts of Petauke District where dams are the only means of providing water. Here the population unit consists of three or four villages grouped into a 'parish' and settled about the watering points. A single land area is demarcated for each of these groups, instead of allocating a separate block to each village. This method allows of economy in the distribution of watering points, tends to reduce the effect of inter-village movements and, it is hoped, will lead to larger administrative units.

§ 7. *Agricultural Control and Improvement*

N ● 161 [311] The general object of resettlement is to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of traditional land usage *and the present population numbers*. Obviously, this balance cannot be permanent if the population is increasing; and if it is not increasing something is seriously wrong. Reliable vital statistics are entirely lacking but probably most of the tribes are increasing (the Ngoni may be an exception) at a rate which, judging by the very few available data, may be about 1½ per cent per annum, a rate which would double the population in forty-six years.

N 242 654 648 Resettlement is not, and was never regarded as, a substitute for agricultural improvement. The objects are to reduce the agricultural problem to practicable proportions, to relieve acute land shortage, to give time for experiment and the introduction of new methods. The assumption is that an evolutionary process of agricultural improvement will keep pace with natural increase of population, and that this process must be guided by experiment.

N [177] Simple measures of agricultural control, and the beginnings of soil conservation and agricultural improvement, have been introduced in each of the resettlement areas as a condition of occupation. It need hardly be said that these are not popular with the majority and the existence of such conditions is a deterrent to movement.

M N 648 242 [185] [241] In the case of the earlier settlements in the Fort Jameson District an elementary system of soil conservation was introduced by demarcating the land for cultivation in contour strips separated by untouched belts of grass (which acquired the name of 'ten-yardis' since the original strips were ten paces wide). This was followed by an attempt to replace the traditional mound system of Ngoni, Chewa and Senga by cultivation on ridges

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M N 133 plain is a moderately temperate, undulating plateau, standing from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea-level and broken by ranges of mountains whose peaks tower several thousand feet higher.

[131] The Dowa District is situated in the centre of the Protectorate. Its area of 2,400 square miles is divided topographically into three nearly equal parts, the alluvial lake-shore plain on the east giving way to the escarpment of the hilly plateau in the centre, which again drops steeply on the west to another plain extending to the banks of the Bua River. Each plain is well covered with light timber and long grass, and contains a plentiful supply of all local varieties of game. Tsetse have long infested the lake shore; on the west, migrating from Rhodesia, they crossed the Bua as recently as 1914 and have now spread as far as the hills. The central plateau is cool and healthy. Formerly well timbered, it has since been denuded by the wasteful methods of the native inhabitants. It is free from tsetse and mosquitoes, and cattle thrive in consequence. The larger species of game are absent.

N M 137 136 [132]

2. *Sociological Introduction.*

N M 161 131 The census of 1926, taken at the time when these notes were compiled, shows the population of the District as consisting of 57,184 Achewa,[1] 38,244 Angoni, 93 Anyanja and 4,627 Wayao, together with an odd thousand belonging to other tribes. The Achewa live principally in the west and centre, the Angoni on the central plateau, and the Anyanja and Wayao on the lake shore. The same census gives a total of 247,000 Angoni and 470,000 Anyanja and Achewa out of 1,200,000 natives then settled in the Protectorate.

M 174 The two last-named tribes taken together are numerically the largest in Nyasaland, and they have probably lived in their present habitat longer than any others; but the exact duration of their residence can only be a matter for conjecture, since the history of the southern Bantu peoples, during the last four centuries at any rate, consists of one long series of migrations and invasions. From time to time clans and tribes have been united under a strong and powerful leader, and a few decades later disintegration has set in and they have almost vanished. New names have frequently been adopted, and few tribes in south-east Africa now bear the same designation and occupy the same ground as did their ancestors four hundred years ago. Oral tradition is supplemented but scantily by the reports of the early Portuguese explorers, who first ascended the Zambezi River at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their objects were commercial rather than scientific, and they have left little record of the native peoples with whom they came in contact.

M [175]

It is known, however, that the Achewa and Anyanja are off-shoots or descendants of the A-maravi, who inhabited the country north of the Zambezi at Sena and Tete in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In his Report upon the Rivers of Cuama (Zambezi) compiled in 1667 Father Manuel Barreto states that this warlike tribe was governed by its emperor, named Caronga, whose kingdom extended two hundred leagues up the river from the port of

M 175

N M [104]

[1] Tribal names in Nyasaland generally take the plural prefix A-, as A-ngoni, A-chewa, sometimes Wa-, as Wa-yao. The singular prefix is M-, as Mngoni, Myao. Further south, Abe-, Aba- and Ama- are more common, e.g. Abe-Nguni, Aba-Mbo, Ama-Ndwandwe. For the sake of convenience, when there is no danger of confusion between prefix and stem, I have omitted the hyphen.

178 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard
829 the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form-
[183] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state,
[177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship
[182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior
648 in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were
[161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[304] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-
[186] piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The present-day population of the tribe is about 85,000, of whom about 60,000 live in Northern Rhodesia and 25,000 in the Fort Manning area of Nyasaland.[1] In Northern Rhodesia the tribe is largely confined in two demarcated Native Reserves. In 1938 the density of population in these two reserves averaged 68 persons to the square mile,[2] but in some congested or very fertile areas it was 90 or more.[3] Since 1941 the density has been reduced in some of the more congested parts by controlled resettlement in areas outside the reserves.[4] The density of population of the Nyasaland section of the tribe was about 46 persons to the square mile in 1945.[5] 161 131

The region in which the Ngoni live consists of a fairly flat plateau about 3,500 feet above sea-level, with massive granite outcrops rising another 1,000 feet or more. The soils of the region are principally of the types suitable only for shifting or partial cultivation, but there are also belts of more valuable soils.[6] In relation to the customary mode of agriculture, in which maize is the principal crop, the critical density of the land has been calculated to be about 22 persons to the square mile.[7] The annual rainfall at Fort Jameson varies from 27 to 48 inches, averaging about 35 inches. The region contains the meeting of the Luangwa–Nyasa and Luangwa–Zambezi watersheds. Most of the streams that flow down into the Luangwa dry up in July, while the Zambezi and Nyasa streams continue to flow somewhat longer.[8] 133 [134] [241] [132]

The natural vegetation of the region consists principally of *Brachystegia–Isoberlinia* woodlands, with larger trees along the lines of streams. The mean maximum temperature for the region is about 137 132

of the Rhodes–Livingstone Institute. This account was prepared at Oxford, and I am very grateful to Dr. Max Gluckman for criticism of this paper in draft.

[1] In the 1945 Nyasaland census many of the people living in the two Ngoni counties were classified as Cewa. Hence the figure of 5,531 Ngoni in Fort Manning does not represent the total population of these two counties. Cf. *Report on the Census*, Table 4.

[2] Calculated from the figures given in the *Pim Report*, p. 364. These two reserves contain Cewa chieftainships as well as Ngoni, but the average population density of the two tribes is probably of the same order.

[3] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 72.

[4] Fraser, *Land Resettlement*, pp. 47–9.

[5] *Report on the Census*, Table 8. The Fort Manning District contains a Cewa chieftainship as well as the two Ngoni. The figure given above is the average for the whole district.

[6] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 72.

[7] Allan, *African Land Usage*, p. 14.

[8] Poole, *Human Geography*, pp. 1 and 2.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that
[558] of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and
178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and
161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political
641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was
[684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a
641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population
727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There
563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State.
[567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain
563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set
641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise
701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Musewa*, pl. *ausewa*. Cf. the Zulu term *umnewa*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE 1. *Village Types*

621
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Type of village		*Senior resident*
Royal	Capital	First lieutenant
	Regal	First lieutenant
	Chief's	Chief
Cadet		Royal Headman
Commoner		Commoner Headman

This process of village formation may be illustrated from Mpezeni's own county. The capital of the county is the village founded by Mpezeni I for his chief wife and one or two other wives. His heir Singu was born in this village, and when he married he founded two villages of his own which are now regal villages. In the senior of these two Mpezeni II was born, and in about 1925 he founded a new village which is still the chief's village of the county. There are other regal villages in the county founded in a similar manner. 621

This formation of royal villages would, other things being equal, lead to a dispersal of the population. It seems, however, that the major factor in dispersing the population since 1898 has been the formation of independent commoner villages. Many of these villages have histories that go back to the foundation of the village as an independent unit immediately after 1898, and it seems likely that the unsettled conditions of those days and the burning of villages did much to bring about the breakdown of the old system in which the royal villages were more important than they are today. 161 621

The royal villages are more closely connected with the chieftainships than are the commoner villages, and the chiefs visit in them more frequently than in other villages. A dispute in a royal village is usually settled by a meeting in the village itself attended by the local chief, whereas in the case of an ordinary village dispute the matter would be taken to the chief for him to settle in his own village or court. A chief may be called to a royal village to drink beer. The royal herds of cattle are kept in the royal villages, and the chiefs look to the first lieutenants of their royal villages for the well-being of the royal cattle as well as of the inhabitants of the royal villages. All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself,[1] but in as far as the cattle held by most people are concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that 628 [627] 422 231 643

[1] Cf. Cashead, p. 27.

/4 cont'd/

701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
241 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
464 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital
[581] investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

161 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson
631 Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[178] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *ndunu*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 107*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 56*ff*, 105*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

161 such as Sharpe, Thomson and Deare, and with my own information based on village histories. Combining this with the lowest estimate of population, we arrive at a population density of 100 persons to the square mile, while the highest estimate implies a density of 375. Highly unreliable as these figures are, it is clear that the density of population was considerably greater before the conquest than it is now, when it averages about 68 persons to the square mile. Even the present-day figure is nearly three times the density which the land can sustain in perpetuity.

This dense population was concentrated in large villages. 361 Angus estimated that there were at least a thousand huts in Loangeni, 162 while Deare estimated that there were sixteen hundred. Read states that it was over three miles across, while Genthe says that Ngoni villages were about five times the size of the average Cewa village. From the top of a mountain, Deare saw eleven villages all about the same size as Loangeni.[161] Thus it seems that there were several villages with populations of the order of three thousand. If Deare and Johnston are right in their estimates of tribal population the majority of the people lived in these big villages.

Yet by September 1898 the only villages left in Mpezeni's country were a few to the east of Fort Young. All the rest had been destroyed by troops, and their former inhabitants were said to be 'still timid' and living in scattered groups in grass shelters.[162] The large pre-conquest settlements were particularly vulnerable to attack by troops armed with guns and intent on burning, the more so because there were no defensive preparations at all. Glave wrote in 1894 that the Ngoni 'have no stockaded village, such protection they deem unnecessary as no enemy can be strong enough to attack them'.[163]

The large villages and the high density of population were appropriate only to a victorious military society, relying for at least part of its subsistence on raided crops and beasts produced outside its borders and for the rest on the maximum exploitation of the land [177] inside them. When its enemies had been plundered and its own [167] lands exhausted, it moved on. We can infer from Angus and from Sharpe, who wrote of 'entirely open' country,[164] that within the 178 settled area most of the cultivable land was in use at the same time. 311 Yet in many parts of the Fort Jameson area the soil is now exhausted after five years under maize and must be left for twenty-five years

[161] Angus, 'Northern Anguiland', p. 36; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 11 May; Read, 'Tradition', p. 475, f.n. 1; Genthe, 'Mpezeni V', p. 1.
[162] Kelly, memorandum dated 10 March 1901.
[163] Id., fn. 359.
[164] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyasa', p. 345. For Angus, see pp. 104f.

CHAPTER I

THE NGONI PEOPLE

In the census of Nyasaland of 1945, there were 193,482 people enumerated as Ngoni. Their distribution extended from the extreme north in Karonga district through every other district to the extreme south in Port Herald district. There were concentrations of Ngoni people, however, as Table I shows, in the Maimba district in the north, in the Dowa, Lilongwe, Dedza and Ncheu districts of the central province, and in the Blantyre district in the south. The Ngoni in the Maimba district were known as Mbelwa's Ngoni [1] and will be called in this book the northern Ngoni Kingdom.

Table I

Distribution of Ngoni in Nyasaland by Provinces and Districts from 1945 Census

Northern Province	*Total* 45,539
Maimba district	44,948
Karonga "	[illegible]
Chitipa "	[illegible]
Central Province*	*Total* [illegible]
Karonga district	1,539
Dowa "	[illegible]
Lilongwe "	17,797
Dedza "	14,757
Ncheu "	[illegible]
Kasungu "	4,858
Port Manning "	[illegible]
Southern Province	*Total* 97,000
Blantyre district	[illegible]
Zomba "	4,076
Liwonde "	7,079
Neno "	[illegible]
Chiole "	9,185
Port Johnston "	1,343
Chikwawa "	1,009
Chiradzulu "	4,855
Mlanje "	731
Port Herald "	[illegible]
Total	193,482

* In 1931 this was included in the Northern Province.

[1] Tew, M. *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*. O.U.P., 1950, p. 91.

[P2 is blank]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found in three separate states in the Dowa and Kotakota districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpeseni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,891. Leaving out the Fort Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliation survives political dispersal? The chief problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, distinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambezi', 'those from the march' and 'those from this country'. The Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

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CHAPTER II

THE NGONI KINGDOMS

In 1933, by the Native Authorities Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance, Mbelwa was recognized as Paramount of the northern Ngoni kingdom with six Subordinate Native Authorities under him, and his court was constituted the appeal court for their six courts. The same procedure was followed in the central kingdom for Paramount Gomani with six Subordinate Native Authorities, and his court as the appeal court for their courts. They were the only rulers in Nyasaland with S.N.A.[1] under them. Two other chiefs, Cikulamayembe of the Henga in Mzimba district and Kyungu of the Ngonde in North Nyasa district, had respectively four and five courts subordinate to them, but the chiefs owning these courts were not recognized as their subordinates. The Ngoni comment on these ordinances was 'Ha! Now they see what big chiefs we have. Only our chiefs are called *inkosi*.' 642 643 692

The northern kingdom was in Mzimba district, and Paramount Mbelwa's royal village was at the southern end of his kingdom. The central kingdom included the whole of Ncheu district with Paramount Gomani's royal village at the northern end. This kingdom had Portuguese territory on its western frontier, close to the royal village. When the Portuguese boundary was fixed in 1891, the Ngoni kingdom under the Maseko Paramount was cut in two and a section under a Maseko ruler became a separate kingdom under the Portuguese. There was constant trouble in the 1930's over this Portuguese frontier, for Gomani's Ngoni visited their relatives, grazed their cattle and hoed gardens on the Portuguese side; and from time to time claims by the Portuguese for rent for gardens and grazing lands and disputes about taxation, needed judicious handling in the District Commissioner's court. 631 648

The figures in Table II for Mzimba and Ncheu districts in 1926, 1931, and 1945 show the changes in the ethnic composition of the districts, some of which are difficult to account for. In Mzimba district the Henga under Cikulamayembe were included in the figures for the Tumbuka and hence the northern Ngoni kingdom did not include all the 156,208 in the district. In Ncheu, the total district population of 87,690 were all included in the central Ngoni kingdom, showing the mixed ethnic elements, among which the Ngoni, or those who were enumerated as Ngoni, had declined from 64,023 in 1926 to 15,242 in 1945. Between 1931 and 1945 the decrease in the number of Ngoni (31,066) was almost balanced by the increase in the number of Nyanja 112 563

[1] This abbreviation will be used henceforward in referring to Subordinate Native Authorities.

(33,107). It is difficult not to assume that many Nyasja had formerly called themselves Ngoni.

Table II

	1926	1931	1945
Mzimba district			
Ngoni	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tumbuka	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Cewa	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yao	[illegible]	—	—
Tonga	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nkhonde	[illegible]	—	—
Others	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nkhata district			
Ngoni	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Cewa	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tonga	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tumbuka	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yao	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nkhonde, etc.	—	—	[illegible]
Others	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Since the two Ngoni kingdoms are the subject of this book and not the secession states, the position of the rulers of these states as Native Authorities and the circumstances of their secession from the two main groups will not be examined here. The three secession states in the north were under Chiefs Gwaze and Mankhambira in Deme district and Jere in Kasungu district. The four concerned formerly with the central Ngoni were under Chiefs Kaporo and Kachindamoto in Dedza, Mwenda in Lilongwe and Yamikani in Chiefs.

In the 1930's, when I was living sometimes in the northern kingdom, sometimes in the central, and for a time in the Ngoni state under Chief Jere, I was aware that the existence of the two kingdoms and of the secession states did not preclude a great deal of contact between the Ngoni of the different areas. The stream of travel in Nyasaland from south to north and from north to south along the one truck road, brought Ngoni as visitors from one kingdom to the other, from the smaller states to both kingdoms, and from 'the Ngoni of the dispersion' living in towns to visit their relatives and friends in the Ngoni kingdoms and states. These visits might be social, to see parents or to marry a wife; they might be for economic purposes, to invest in or sell cattle, to supervise cotton or tobacco marketing; or they might be for ritual purposes such as mourning. When I travelled in the central Ngoni kingdom in 1938 with T. M. Chimaliro, the Ntwanda of the northern

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

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was instructed before marriage how to keep those household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

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The tables which follow show the total population of these villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobolo* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Men	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobolo marriages
Northern Kingdom									
Kawanda	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kadichwali	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kalongwali	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Central Kingdom									
Gadewin	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mangwan	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mwalimbu	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambezi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *kanyanda* and *pupu* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on lineage affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *kanja* was not found in the north.

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The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *mdumawiwa*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *mdumawiwa*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the east, where they were approximating to a one-family village.

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[721] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[642] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organised on a centralised pattern
[641] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[672] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[715] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[641] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
[638] summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] [191] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-[162] [592] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emzakazeni was just off a main road and as easily accessible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top [561] in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut inside a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [193] [871] [797] minister disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

ı: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlwei. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlwei, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East Africa.

[P.22]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [806] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [828] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance [162] of women over men caused by labour migration.

128 Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically 121 from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 237 and 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs con- [59] cerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles away from the first two.

[1] Ciulu, pl. ciulu, or ciu Swahi [illegible]. Cf. Nsenga ciu, pl. mwiu, idiot.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

away from the other two. They were the four most accessible 121
from my base camp, built at a site chosen by the Administration. I was able to compare their size, history, and kinship structure with those of many other villages I visited, and as far as I could tell they were in these respects fairly typical Ngoni villages. They form a 128
sample of approximately one per cent of the whole of the Fort Jameson Ngoni.

The tables in which the units are individuals or extant marriages (III, IV, IX, X, XIII and XIV) are based on the marital histories of the men and woman normally resident in those villages during the latter part of 1948, in one village, and during the earlier part of 1949 in the other five. In Tables I, II, V to VIII, XI and XII, where the units are marriages and not individuals, I have drawn on the histories of men and women who lived in these villages as wedded people for at least part of the time from 1946 to 1949. I endeavoured to inter- [124]
view the whole population but failed to do so for various reasons. I was however, able to determine who was, and who was not, a resident in these villages, and can therefore indicate the number of people who could have been included in this six-village sample had more been known about them. Some of my interviews were only partial.

In Tables V to VIII, which deal with the incidence and magnitude of marriage payments, each marriage is classified by the decade in which it began. This is not necessarily the decade in which the payment was made, for as we have noted payments are sometime made after many years of marriage. Unfortunately I do not have enough information to classify by the decade of payment.

In the tables I have used the word 'wedded' to refer to all people who had ever been married, whether or not they were currently married at the time of inquiry.

It will be seen from Table III that in this sample there was no 162
unwedded man over the age of twenty-four, and, out of a total of 589
116 wedded men, there were only one widower and seven men whose last marriage had ended in divorce and who had not remarried. From Table IV we see that there was only one unwedded woman over the age of nineteen, but that there were as many as 31 widows who had not remarried. Only about a half, 122 out of 223, of the wedded women were living with their husbands.

Marriage is then an experience that sooner or later comes to nearly 581
every man or woman, although not every adult lives all the time in a simple family of procreation. Nevertheless, the ties forged by marriage remain, and the results of marriage extend beyond the wedding ceremony and beyond the domestic association of man and wife. It is the sexual activities of individuals that are most closely regulated by the fact of marriage. In succession to office and wealth, marriage, as we shall see, plays nowadays a permissive rather than a determining role. It is only by means of the symbolic acts which form part of marriage that a man can be reasonably sure of acquiring rights over his wife and the custody of his children. Yet he may,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 on the one hand, acquire that custody without undertaking any of these symbolic acts, and on the other hand he may have full rights over his wife without ever getting control of his children.

2. Choice

582 Marriage involves choice and selection. There are prescribed 'preferential marriages' in the usual terminology, but as applied to the Ngoni this nomenclature is misleading, for, as in the old days, a woman who marries her cross-cousin does not have such high status in her husband's compound family as a wife who is not related to her husband. A man behaves in some respects towards his female cross-cousins as though they were his wives or potential wives, but it is incorrect to say that Ngoni men prefer to marry their cross-

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Table III. Marital status of males by age, 1948-9

Age in years	Marital Status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Number of wives						Total wedded men	
		0		1	2	3	Not known		
		Divorced men	Widowers						
0-4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	51
5-9	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	61
10-14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	55
15-19	28	1	–	2	–	–	–	3	31
20-24	14	–	–	6	–	–	–	6	20
25-29	–	2	–	13	–	–	1	16	16
30-34	–	1	–	7	–	–	–	8	8
35-39	–	–	–	13	3	1	–	17	17
40-44	–	–	–	4	2	2	–	8	8
45-44	–	–	–	4	2	2	–	8	8
45-49	–	–	–	8	–	–	1	9	9
50-54	–	1	–	4	–	–	1	6	6
55-59	–	–	–	8	1	–	1	10	10
60-64	–	–	–	9	2	–	–	11	11
65-69	–	1	1	6	1	1	–	10	10
70-74	–	1	–	1	1	–	–	3	3
75-79	–	1	–	1	1	–	–	2	2
Not known	–	–	–	1	–	–	6	7	7
Total	[illegible]	7	1	[illegible]	11	4	10	116	[illegible]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

cousins. Whether a man decides to marry a cross-cousin or an unrelated woman, he still has to decide just exactly whom he will try to marry, and similarly a woman has also to make up her own mind about whom she will accept as husband. The initiative in choosing lies very largely with the couple themselves, and not with their parents and kinsmen. If a man is diffident about asking a woman to marry him, he may ask his father or elder brother to seek out a woman for him, or a woman may have a spouse presented to

Table IV. Marital status of females, by age, 1948-9

Age in years	Marital status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Divorced women living alone	Widows living alone	Divorced women living as married	Married women			Total wedded women	
					HH	HA	HS		
0–4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	58
5–9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	65
10–14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	54
15–19	20	–	1	–	14	9	1	25	45
20–24	–	3	–	–	10	11	–	24	24
25–29	–	1	–	1	17	8	1	29	29
30–34	1	–	–	–	14	8	–	22	23
35–39	–	–	–	–	19	3	1	23	23
40–44	–	2	1	–	13	1	1	18	18
45–49	–	–	2	–	13	2	–	17	17
50–54	–	3	–	–	7	3	1	14	14
55–59	–	1	5	–	6	–	1	13	13
60–64	–	1	9	–	5	1	1	15	15
65–69	–	2	8	–	1	–	–	11	11
70–74	–	–	5	–	1	–	–	6	6
75–79	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
80–84	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	4	4
Total	198	14	31	1	122	46	7	223	421

Legend

HH (Husband at Home)	Husband living within thirty miles of his wife, in a village, and not separated from her
HA (Husband Away)	Husband living permanently on a farm, or in Fort Jameson, or more than thirty miles away
HS (Husband Separated)	Husband living within thirty miles, in a village, but separated from his wife

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The precise significance of these ratios need not concern us here. It is sufficient to note that they indicate that divorce among the Ngoni is more frequent than it is among the Nguni people from whom they first came where divoce is said to be 'rare'.[26] The Ngoni ratios are closer to the Lamba and Bemba than to the Tswana.[27] The indication is that Ngoni informants are right when they assert that divorce is much more frequent than it used to be, for it seems legitimate to suppose that in former times the Ngoni were more like their Nguni forbears, in this as in other things, than they are now.

Once agreed upon, either at the court or in the village, divorce

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Table IX. Marital experience of males, by age, 1948-9

Present age in years	Marital experience													
	All male								Wedded males only					
	Number of marriages entered into since birth								Number of divorces experienced since birth					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0–4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	51	–	–	–	–	–	0
5–9	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	61	–	–	–	–	–	0
10–14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	55	–	–	–	–	–	0
15–19	28	3	–	–	–	–	–	31	2	1	–	–	–	3
20–24	14	5	–	–	–	–	1	20	5	–	–	–	1	6
25–29	–	12	3	–	–	–	1	16	11	4	–	–	1	16
30–34	–	6	2	–	–	–	–	8	4	4	–	–	–	8
35–39	–	8	6	1	2	–	–	17	10	6	1	–	–	17
40–44	–	3	1	2	1	1	–	8	4	3	1	–	–	8
45–49	–	4	3	–	1	–	1	9	5	2	1	–	1	9
50–54	–	3	2	–	–	–	1	6	4	1	–	–	1	6
55–59	–	5	1	2	–	1	1	10	5	3	–	1	1	10
60–64	–	3	3	3	1	–	–	11	7	2	–	2	–	11
65–69	–	1	4	3	1	–	–	10	4	6	–	–	–	10
70–74	–	–	1	1	1	–	–	3	1	1	1	–	–	3
75–79	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	2	1	1	–	–	–	2
Not known	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	7	–	–	–	–	7	7
Total	209	53	28	11	9	3	12	325	68	34	4	3	12	116

[26] Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage among the Lozi of Northern Rhodesia and the Zulu of Natal', in Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, eds., *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 204.

[27] Gluckman in Mitchell and Barnes, 'The Lamba Village: report of a social survey' (*Communications from the School of African Studies*, University of Cape Town, new series No. 24), pp. 15 ff., and Richards, op. cit. p. 120.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 is normally irrevocable and couples do not often go back to each other. If a wife does go back soon after a divorce people laugh at her for having caused trouble over nothing. A husband may sometimes assert that his wife has been divorced without his approval, perhaps while he was away working, but such complaints go unanswered for it is in the interests of the court to uphold its own decisions. Even if a man is living in the rural area his wife may get a divorce if he refuses to go to court to defend his case. In addition he runs the risk of a fine for contempt of court. The somewhat lengthy process by which a woman can get her divorce despite the obstruction of her husband is illustrated by the following account of a court case.

Case history 2

159 593 586 In April 1946 Zachariah, a man holding the royal descent-name and married to Ruth and Naomi, began to make advances to a recently divorced

Table X. Marital experience of females, by age, 1948-9

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Present age in years	Marital experience: All females — Number of marriages entered into since birth								Marital experience: Wedded females only — Number of divorces experienced since birth					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0-4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	58	–	–	–	–	–	0
5-9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	65	–	–	–	–	–	0
10-14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	54	–	–	–	–	–	0
15-19	20	23	1	–	–	–	1	45	23	1	–	–	1	25
20-24	–	20	3	–	–	–	1	24	19	2	2	–	1	24
25-29	–	24	4	–	–	–	1	29	23	4	1	–	1	29
30-34	1	15	4	1	–	–	2	23	16	4	–	–	2	22
35-39	–	12	7	2	–	–	2	23	16	4	1	–	2	23
40-44	–	10	5	2	1	–	–	18	10	6	2	–	–	18
45-49	–	8	11	–	1	–	–	17	11	5	–	1	–	17
50-54	–	6	7	–	1	–	–	14	7	5	1	1	–	14
55-59	–	7	5	1	–	–	–	13	10	2	–	1	–	13
60-64	–	9	4	1	–	–	1	15	12	1	1	–	1	15
65-69	–	5	5	–	–	1	–	11	8	2	–	–	1	11
70-74	–	3	3	–	–	–	–	6	6	–	–	–	–	6
75-79	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	1
80-84	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	4	–	–	–	–	4	4
Total	198	140	60	7	3	1	12	421	162	37	8	3	13	223

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

N 251 511 [126]

The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages

(February 1941)

N [162]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,710

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [361] N [166]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 161 311 511

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

L 161 311 511 600

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949

FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

L
M
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Crown land, Company land, alienated land and unoccupied Native Reserve. Largely uninhabited.

Land in Native occupation. Largely under-populated.

Land in Native occupation. Over-populated.

Fig 2.— THE SECONDARY POPULATION-LAND PATTERN.

Trust Land for future use of African people. Crown lands and alienated land.

Land in Native occupation. Balanced or under-populated.

Expanding areas of over-population, capable of supporting their people there on the basis of improved agriculture.

Fig. 3.— THE POPULATION-LAND PATTERN AFTER RESETTLEMENT.

/4 cont'd/

national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regiments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exodus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to provide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and finger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority living in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /3/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1911
?R5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine describes this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards further on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Mours. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the long circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life was the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most carefully guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he supports all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their accumulations with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

848 684 that if the lover is thought to be very desirable as a husband, the girl and her parents will begin to act as though she had in fact been married by him. Few cases of seduction come before the courts, perhaps because of the fact that it is only pre-marital pregnancy that can lead to action in the court and not merely pre-marital copulation. If the lover agrees to marry the girl it is in the interests of her kin to let him do so, rather than take the matter to court when they may be awarded more damages but where also their daughter will appear as a foolish and indiscreet person. It is said that some girls hand on to their parents some of the presents they receive from their lovers, and that therefore the parents take no action against the lovers, but I have no information as to the extent of this practice.

The kin of a woman have therefore an interest in her sexual activities before she is married, and to a lesser extent a man's relatives have a similar interest. The main concern of a man, however, is that he shall not get himself into such serious trouble that he has to find the money for damages in the court and that he will not be forced to marry an unsuitable girl whom he has impregnated.

2. The marriages of children

581 At marriage itself a person's relatives may act on his or her behalf in choosing a spouse, and the factors that influence their choice are different from those which operate when people choose their own spouses. A man's relatives stress that the wife-to-be must be hardworking, polite to her superiors and not given to promiscuity. The fact that a girl begins to sleep with her lover may influence her lover's parents against her for they argue that if she sleeps so easily with their son she will soon tire of him and run off after someone else. They pay more attention to the character of her parents and siblings and look to see what sort of wives her sisters have made. Similarly the parents of the girl may look critically at the young man and they too argue that, as he has already begun to sleep with their daughter he will soon begin running after other women and leave his wife 'alone in her hut'. If a relative of the girl has already married a relative of the man and that marriage has not been a success, their kinsfolk may try to prevent a second marriage.

Case history 4

Abankwa, who works in South Africa, wrote to his brother saying he wanted to marry Mary. The brother, who was married to Mary's sister, approached Mary's father who said that he could not agree. Mary's father later said that he opposed the marriage as Abankwa's brother had infected his wife with syphilis and he did not want another of his daughters to marry into that family.

584 If a man is away working he may write home and ask his father or some other relative to find a wife for him. A marriage arranged in this way does not necessarily find favour with the man when he finds out who his bride is to be, but a number of soldiers successfully

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Marvi FR9

to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *fagula* supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *fagula* and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.*

To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an efficient deterrent of adultery.

Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights to access, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unbreakable and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

*Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 9.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lambe F08
Maravi FR4

surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The fierce late fires which sweep through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the desiccation.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

After survey had been completed still before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their food-stocks and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

Wherever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (25 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mushi resettlement area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central dam which was stocked with bream (*Tilapia* spp.) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

Another difficulty was the occurrence of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of subterfuge.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

In the southern part of Fort Jameson District, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard post' (pockets of *Africia Harveyi* on compacting pedoral soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

S: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'fly' country, but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern zone that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. The large available land area in Mkushi enabled the relatively small 'fly' areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'fly' areas of Mkushi. 166 136 164 744

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'fly' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the kraals. Ten herds each of five beasts were used; the animals were numbered and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomiasis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'fly' infestation were defined.

§ 6. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in accordance with the general plan to restore the population-land balance as far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers. 166 621 648

Headmen and other representatives of the villagers who had finally elected to move then toured the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villagers almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Vegetation-Soil Map. Blocks of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total village population, allowing for temporary absentees, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular; the people are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone beacons to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features. [622] [311] [423]

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually applied or always possible. The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, 166 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'85 Ngoni F'85
Mpezeni

Chapter One

THE LONG MARCH

1. Source 2. The Ngoni background 3. Foundation of the State
4. The residential system 5. Under Zwangendaba's leadership 6. Phases
7. Mpezeni's kingdom 8. Foreign policy

1. *Source*

What we usually have in mind when we speak of a tribe or nation or empire is a large political unit enduring in time and space. The nation outlives its members, for as they grow old and die their children and grandchildren rise up to take their places. On its fringes there may be continual fluctuations, adjustments of boundaries and migrations of people, but always the majority of the population are born within the national territory and die within it as their ancestors have done before them. There is spatial continuity as well as biological continuity, and the same areas of land, sometimes even the same houses and fields, are occupied and cultivated by successive generations. The Ngoni State, whose history is the subject of this book, was clearly not a state of this kind. It was born suddenly, moved about from one part of Africa to another, and recruited most of its members from outside itself. Only at the end of the nineteenth century, when colonial rule was imposed by Europeans, was the migration of the Ngoni as an organized group brought to an end. Even so, the social and economic development of modern central Africa has ensured that the men and women who from time to time live in Ngoni tribal areas, fixed though these have become, are now part of a wider social system within which they travel great distances in search of work and of kinsmen, wives and friends. Yet despite these differences the Ngoni State, like other states and polities, has had structural, or institutional, continuity. It is an enduring organized social group with a history. The same forms of social organization have endured despite changes in space and despite biological discontinuity; and where these forms have changed there has been continuity even in change.

This history of the Ngoni from 1821 down to 1898 is essentially the history of an armed nation on the march. Our knowledge of it

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Mpezeni

more meticulous than others in such matters as discussing proposed changes of site with the county chief and in reporting important deaths to him.

The proportion of villages in each county belonging to other segments under Mpezeni varies from 5 per cent to 21 per cent. There are villages which chose, or were forced, to move away from the chief to whom they were attached in segmentary terms, or else villages belonging to major segments whose heads did not become chiefs. Villages in this category have ties that in certain situations, as when there is a serious quarrel, link them more closely with some other county than with their own. In any county where there are many villages of this kind the solidarity of the county as a social group is not great. The ruling chief has many rivals who seek to divide his county and to become chiefs themselves. We must distinguish here between villages in one county which belong to the segment of another and those interlaping villages which belong to one county but are situated in the territory of another. We shall discuss interlaping villages later (p. 128) in connexion with the territorial aspect of counties.

In Nyasaland the history of administration has been separate from that of Northern Rhodesia, but the Ngoni population there also has divided itself on segmentary lines. For many years the two principal leaders recognized by the Administration have been the heads of segments 5 and 6, and these segments form the cores of the two counties they control. The two county chiefs are now Native Authorities and join with an adjacent Cewa chief to form the Fort Manning Council of Chiefs. This acts as the Native administration body for the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District.

The geographical distribution of the twelve counties, the neighbouring chieftaincies of other tribes, and the tracts of alienated land are shown in Map D.

The twelve county segments, ten in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, are, in the nomenclature of Chapter I, segments 4 to 8 and 9 to 15. We shall refer to counties in the same way by the numbers of the segments corresponding to them. Thus county 4 is the county whose segment is number 4, and so on. County 10 is the Paramount Chief's county. Some of the county segments are primal, others are residual segments left after the formation of primal segments of lower order. The definition of the segments associated with each county is indicated in Table V. This table merely renews information implicit in Diagram 1. The hereditary names of county chiefs are also given.

[Text continues on page 121]

1:Series E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F25 Ngwa; F25 Mpesa

independent group of Ngwa. Chibueze mentions how the use of this situation was discontinued when the head of an outside independent group rejected his parent group.* In recent times people have indicated their disapproval of the Paramount Chief's actions by discontinuing this situation temporarily.

Despite the security of tenure provided by Administration recognition, a chief still needs the support of his people. There is an Ngwa maxim, 'chieftainship is people',* and commoners are well aware that it is because they support their chief that he has high status. The simplest and most effective sanction that commoners can employ against their chief is to leave him. Movement from one county to another, from one ward to another, and from the country to the town and back again is crucial in the working of modern Ngwa society. Not all these movements take place as the result of the unpopularity of chiefs, but this is one factor among many. Chibueze records an early example of people moving to separate it from the residue of segment : in order to show the hospitality of a newly appointed chief, but he goes on to say 'afterwards they found it wise to return to their proper division [segment]'.* In more recent times there are several examples, particularly among villages which entered Ngwaland after 1898 and who therefore largely lack segmental affiliation, of villages and chiefs that have changed from one county to another for political reasons. More significant at the present time are the numbers of ambitious people who emigrate to the towns because, among other things, they cannot find advancement in the political hierarchy. The most striking instance of this is in the family of the late Mpesana III. He had six sons who survived him. One is now Paramount Chief, and one is still a boy. The other four, including the chief's deputy, are now dwellers in other parts of Africa.

b. *Royal hunts*

The royal hunt is the only occasion on which a county, or more usually a rural district or part of a county, functions as an economic unit. Even then the economic element in the enterprise is not very marked. The chief announces, through his messengers, that on such-and-such a day he will hold a royal hunt and that the men of such-and-such villages are to meet in a certain place. The procedure followed on the hunt is exactly the same as on an ordinary hunt, with the chief or someone nominated by him in tactical command, though the number of hunters is greater than on a hunt

* Chibueze, MS Ngwa, p. 48.
* Chibueze, MS Ngwa, p. 50.
* Oral tradition.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'25 Ngoni F'25
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these duties they are known as land managers. They sometimes work in conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees of other technical departments of the Administration, such as Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White farms, but some to villages where serious crimes, such as murder, have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form so to speak a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of the Administration when they seek to support. Thus the permanent employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the indigenous social order but in the new urban situation, in which smart clothes, wealth and a proper distaste for villagers who are content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work in Nyasaland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land manager and the people he has to supervise is not simply an administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this when the social distance between the two persons involved is small. Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some remote connection of kinship which links them to others around them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the

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Mpezeni

166 fancies of the ties linking them to the areas in which they find
167 themselves. To give two extreme examples, an agricultural demonstrator, after a few months in a rural compound, sought to marry a daughter of a near-by village headman. A policeman, sent to a village to investigate a murder, married a woman related to the dead man. Marriages of this kind are made partly because there is no other way by which a stranger in a village can be certain of getting enough to eat, but they also serve to broaden and diversify the relationship between the stranger and the people among whom he finds himself. Some of these marriages are terminated when the stranger is moved to another district, but there are a number of instances where Ngoni wives have gone with their stranger husbands to distant mines and towns. This process is, of course, merely part of the much wider one by which many Ngoni women follow their
168 husbands when they leave their villages to seek work in Southern Rhodesia.

Similarly, chiefs and other important rural leaders endeavour
4.47 to establish enduring relations with members of the African Civil
5.17 Service. Some civil servants are their kinsmen, for one way by which a junior son of an important man can gain the position he feels but which is denied him by the rule of primogeniture is to enter the Civil Service or to seek advancement in one of the churches. Others are related by affinity, while yet others may go out of the way to offer hospitality to visiting political leaders when they need food and shelter in town. Some Ngoni civil servants maintain large households in the villages, which they visit at week-ends, and which they hope will have grown into recognized villages by the time they come to retire.

Thus there are two distinct groups of Africans concerned with
5.17 public affairs, the African Civil Service and the Native Authority
5.18 bureaucracy. They are in intimate association with one another,
5.19 and both exercise considerable political power. Both are formally distinct from the old political system. But status in traditional terms, as chief or village headman or head of a division or cluster, is still recognized in the face-to-face relations of people generally, and hence there is a continual attempt to bring the two systems into congruence with one another. Clerks aspire to become headmen when they retire, while headmen aspire to be the fathers and fathers-in-law of clerks. This is no new development, for as early as 1907 Bulgaud reported that a Swahili, whose home was near Zanzibar, and who had been a soldier, had founded a small village close to Fort Manning.*

* Bulgaud, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 109. See p. 118.

229 individuals upon the cohesion of that society through their behaviour and actions. This was illustrated in the phrase so constantly used by them, and referred to already several times: 'He is spoiling the land,' or the converse, quoted in Chapter I: 'Young people were well taught that this behaviour was right for the upbuilding of the land.'

Among these so-called group values the first of all, and pre-
181 eminent above all, was the value of keeping together. Taught
229 by bitter experience that personal quarrels could lead to political secessions and to the diminution of the power and influence of the Ngoni kingdoms, the focus of much of their thinking was on maintaining cohesion whether in small units or in large. I think the Ngoni were the only people in Nyasa-
[64] land where individuals and families were not allowed to
[66] leave the villages to live elsewhere without permission of the
[67] chief or headman. In the local courts there were frequent
[68] cases in which the accused had been guilty of leaving without permission. This illustration could be used also to indicate the second of the group values. I have called it dominance for want of a better term. It involves the exercise of authority, political and legal, over their own and subject peoples, the determination to exact obedience, influenced by a feeling of paternal responsibility for all over whom authority was claimed. This was an ambivalent sentiment affecting the attitude of the ruler and his relations with the ruled, and was the basis of the court case quoted in Chapter VI, where a chief made a judgement against his own son for adultery with a poor man's wife. The third group value was that of mutual aid and trust within the in-group, in order to secure its cohesion. This was the integrating principle of the 'house' system, described briefly in Chapter I and mentioned in many other contexts. Mutual trust and aid had been in the past the main element in the behaviour of men in their own regiments, in the mutual relation of warrior with warrior, both when on campaign and when living together in the villages.

181 The four personal values were inherent in the acceptance
377

[p. vi]

S: Allen C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lambia FQ8

The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages
(February 1941)

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to cross cut the distribution of food supplies.

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 91 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil exhaustion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degeneration may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mbeshi District obvious land degeneration and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to arrest the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 10 to 20 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

S: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni Mazeyi FR4 Lamba FQ5

PART IV

THE RESETTLEMENT OF NATIVE POPULATIONS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

§ 1. *The Problem and its Origin*

IN Northern Rhodesia and doubtless over a much greater part of Africa before the coming of the Europeans, the population-land pattern was a changing, kaleidoscopic picture. If an area became overcrowded more land was available, or it could be taken from a neighbouring people. A rough balance between land and population was maintained by means of migration, inter-tribal wars, periodic famine and disease.

With the coming of the Europeans the kaleidoscopic picture was arrested, producing what we may call the primary population-land pattern. This was later modified, by alienation and reservation of land and by the movement of peoples into Native reserves, to produce a secondary pattern. These economic factors have so far modified this secondary pattern only to a minor extent, but it may be expected that they will tend to do so increasingly in the future.

The secondary population-land pattern was brought about mainly by the movement of the African population into Native reserves. As a result of this movement large areas of Crown Land were left practically uninhabited, and a number of factors operating together brought about mal-distribution and congestion of population within the reserves themselves.

So far the problem has been studied in detail only in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province, the Mkushi District of the Central Province and the Ndola District of the Western Province, and it is within these districts that amelioration work—other than the 'Chinsenene Control' scheme—has been carried out. The four districts are contiguous and the total area within them in which this discussion refers is about 11,000 square miles (1,000 square miles more than the whole land area of Scotland but only about one-sixth of the area of Northern Rhodesia) with a total population, in round figures, of 290,000 (about one-sixth of the total population of the Territory).

The primary population-land pattern was such that the ten tribes living within this area had ample or much more than ample land, except to a minor extent in the Fort Jameson District where the incursion of the immigrant Ngoni in the late 19th century had created a potential congestion problem. Under former conditions this problem would doubtless have resolved itself, as it usual by migration of the Chewa to north and west, under pressure from the Ngoni, but once the kaleidoscopic pattern was arrested no such

S: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Marevi FR4

Fig 1.— THE ORIGINAL POPULATION-LAND PATTERN
Showing areas held by tribes.

movement was possible. The lands of the Ngoni and Chewa were then reduced, by alienation to European settlers and by reservation, to an extent which the following figures illustrate:

Habitable Land held by Tribes (square miles)

	Chewa	Ngoni*
Before Ngoni invasion	1,000	-
After Ngoni invasion	1,200	1,100
After land alienation	1,120	375
After creation of reserves	800	675

Throughout the Fort Jameson and Mfuwalu Districts the amount of land alienated by European settlers was negligible, but the Senga, Ambo, Lala and Swaka peoples were moved into Reserves some of which proved totally inadequate for the land needs of their traditional agricultural systems.

In the west (Mkushi District) the congestion problem arose largely as a result of displacement of people from the area which is now the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia, a land loss which fell on the Lamba tribe. The land area of Mukwid's section of the Lamba, for example, which formerly included part of the Copperbelt, was reduced from 2,200 to 300 square miles. The Lamba were removed from the new mining areas and this movement accompanied by some migration of more distant peoples attracted by the mines, gave rise to a belt of relatively high population concentration about the northern and eastern margins of the Copperbelt.

* With a minority of Chewa and other tribes.

S: Allan C-5 (1961) 1969 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni
Lambe FOS
Harvey FRS

In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftaincies remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance migration was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1961 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional systems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement would have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measures which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for the matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Tonga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

5:Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FRS Ngoni FRS

of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§ 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 3,000 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mfuwalu District and 4,000 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§ 3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Descriptions of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population chooses to feed only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 1948. *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 1949.

5: Afika C-5 (1961)1969 FRS Ngoni FRS
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Lomba FQE
Marani FRY

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climate and by the way in which the land is used. If the limit is exceeded without a compensating change in the system of land usage then a process of land degradation is set in operation and ultimately, unless food is obtained from outside the area, population must decline to the limit determined by natural conditions and the system of land use, or to a lower level. This limit, the maximum number of people that a given land area will maintain in perpetuity under a certain system of land usage, has been termed the 'carrying capacity' of the area for that system. It will be clear that the term can be used only in relation to a clearly defined system of land usage. Throughout these notes, where no statement to the contrary is made, the expression is used in relation to the traditional agricultural system of the tribes concerned. These systems, and the staple crops which go with them, vary greatly within this relatively small area of 31,000 square miles, and range from a primitive form of non-agriculture among the Western Lala to comparatively advanced soil selection methods practised by the Eastern tribes. Descriptions of all of these systems will be found in the publications to which reference has already been made.

The term 'population-land balance' hardly requires definition. If the total population of an area is equal to or less than the land capacity for the specified agriculture practised, then a population-land balance exists within that area. Where the total population is well below the land carrying capacity the area may be described as under-populated.

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These concepts, and the methods of survey and of estimating the carrying capacities for the different land categories and agricultural systems, were applied to the problem of resettlement. Rapid reconnaissance surveys were made throughout the populated areas, with the objects of assessing approximately the land carrying capacity for each chief's area and estimating the number of people who would have to be moved to unoccupied land in order to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of the traditional agricultural systems. The estimate indicated that a total of about 100,000 people would have to be moved, as shown in the Table below.

District	Tribe	Number of people to be moved
Fort Jameson	Chewa	[illegible]
	Ngoni	
Petauke	Chewa	[illegible]
	Nsenga	
Mfuwalli	Chewa	[illegible]
	Nsenga	
Nkhata	Lomba	[illegible]

The estimate make no allowance for the redistribution of population distribution within the old Reserves. Some districts were in fact much under-populated and in some of the Reserves considerable areas remained almost or completely uninhabited because of water shortage, the nature

S: Allen C-5 (1961) 1969 FRS Ngoni FRS
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cause of sleeping sickness or for other reasons. It would have been possible by re-distribution of population within the old Reserve, in conjunction with provision of water supplies and measures against 'fly', materially to reduce the number of people to be moved to unoccupied land. Such a course would have involved serious political repercussions and, in view of the amount of land available, it was never contemplated.

The next essential step was to survey the recent land available for resettlement, to prepare reconnaissance-sketch maps of the areas, and to estimate the carrying capacity of each area for the traditional agricultural requirements of the people who would occupy it. In the Eastern Province and the Hola District surveys were made on the basis of parallel straight line traverses, using liquid prismatic compasses and cyclometer wheels. Traverse lines were usually one mile apart, but wider intervals up to three miles were used, in order to save time, if the country was relatively uniform or if no big degree of accuracy was required. In some instances, where very accurate maps were wanted, the traverse interval was reduced to one half or one quarter of a mile. Information on water supplies, the area of cultivation of land and timber, the former inhabitants and other relevant details, was checked in the course of these surveys. In the case of Mbeere District, where there was an abundance of available land in relation to the needs of the population, sample traverses only were used. The methods of survey and mapping are described in one of the other papers in this series.

When estimates had been made of the number of people to be moved from each of the over-crowded distributions and the carrying capacity of the available land, divided into convenient areas, land has ascertained, the planning of population movements became, in theory, simple. In practice, of course, there were a good many difficulties.

Tribal boundaries and the original ownership of the said land to be taken into consideration, though these were not regarded a movement and, in fact, a large area formerly occupied by the Ilonga was used for the resettlement of a section of the Chuka. Other factors also hit movement. There is, obviously, a physical limit; fifty miles was regarded as the maximum practical move, but in extreme cases villages were moved as much as seventy miles. Traditional systems of land usage are, generally, adaptations to particular sets of ecological conditions and people cannot be moved into an environment unsuited to their food crops and method / production. Conservative people will not willingly move to some extent leaving their lands behind.

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Water supplies proved to be a very great difficulty over large areas, especially in the Eastern Province. Natural supplies are not sufficient to allow of full utilisation of the land on the basis of a carrying capacity, and in some areas practically no settlement was possible before artificial watering points had been provided. It appeared that, in the Eastern Province at least, permanent surface water had greatly diminished in the twelve to twenty years during which the land had lain unoccupied. The old sites of villages and their sources of water supply were within the course of the

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surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The force late flow which swept through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the desolation.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

After survey had been completed and before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their foot-stocks and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

Whenever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (20 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mashi countryside area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central dam which was stocked with bream (*Tilapia spp.*) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

Another difficulty was the nuisance of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, so far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

In the northern part of Fort Jameson District, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'bush pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on competing pedzwi soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

9: Allen C-5 (1941) 1949 FRS Figoni FRS Mpesani

Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'fly' country, but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern zone that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. The large available land area in Mkushi enabled the relatively small 'fly' areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'fly' areas of Mkushi.

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'fly' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the kraals. Ten herds each of five beasts were used; the animals were numbered and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomiasis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'fly' infestation were defined.

§ 4. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in accordance with the general plan to secure the population-land balance as far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers.

Headmen and other representatives of the villages who had finally elected to move then visited the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villagers almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Tsetse-fly Map. Blocks of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total village population, allowing for temporary abandonment, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular; the people are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone houses, to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features.

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually applied as always possible. The great resettlement area of the Eastern Province,

S: Allen C-5 (1941) 1949 FRS Ngoni FRS
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approximately on the contour and parallel to demarcated 'marker' ridges on the true contour. A system of contour cultivation has now been developed which is proving practical and effective. The 'marker' ridges are demarcated at a vertical interval of two feet six inches and are gradually converted by the people into more or less broad-based banks. In the first year the ridge is built up to a base width of six feet and a height of not less than six inches. The base and height are increased until a permanent bank eight feet wide at the base and eighteen inches in height is completed. Villages on the 'non pacit' system can change over to contour cultivation if the majority of people elect to do so. New villages are allowed to move into settlement areas in the Eastern Province only on condition that they agree to practice contour cultivation; they are given four or five years to adapt themselves to the new system but in many cases practically the whole of the new gardens are under ridges by the end of the second year. Cultivation practice has been adapted to the new system and, moreover, experiments are being made to find the best methods of ridging, sowing and planting of crops for use in conjunction with the ridge cultivation system.

In the Ndola District gardens are laid off between contour grass strips at vertical intervals of two feet. The people are then encouraged to convert the grass strip into three parallel ridges approximating to the normal dimensions of their mounds for subsidiary crops and to plant the ridges with beans and cowpeas; or to make one or two such ridges and plant the remainder of the strip with groundnuts on the flat—a combination of contour ridges and strip cropping. This method, an adaptation of normal Lamba practice was adopted after a series of trials to find the simplest method of erosion control acceptable to these somewhat backward people. The object is not only to check erosion but to restore the cultivation of subsidiary crops, now almost entirely neglected. The planting of the ridges to beans and cowpeas and the strips to groundnuts restores the balance between cereals and legumes and should allow of a small surplus for sale. The idea seems to be less unpopular than one might expect and most villages have made a satisfactory effort to convert the strips into ridges for the cultivation of subsidiary crops.

Contours are laid off by trained African Assistants of the Department of Agriculture, using road tracers, and it has been found necessary during the initial stages of settlement to have one or two African Assistants* for at least every two villages or, approximately, for every 600 to 1,000 people. Constant supervision is maintained during the initial phase by the African Agricultural Assistants in co-operation with District Messengers and the Native Authorities. This supervision is irksome and resented by some of the older people but it is, perhaps, significant that at a recent meeting of the African Regional Council of the Western Province after the subject had been freely debated, the council voted by a large majority for an increase in the number of Agricultural Captains.

Fruit tree planting has also been introduced and in the Eastern and Western Provinces laws made by the Native Authorities require each household

* Usually one and a lesser number of Wives.

to plant a small number of trees (four per hut in the general rule). Seeds, seedlings and cuttings of orange, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the site of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush. In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the preservation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headmen concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's journey of fifteen miles or so, does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

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to clear large enough gardens at the new site in the first year a part of the old gardens can be used, for it is easy to travel back and forward between the old and new villages. The majority of the moves were of this order and no assistance was required or given. In the case of longer moves, heavy household goods and food stocks were transported by motor lorry, or in some instances when it was convenient to do so the entire grain stock was bought at the old village and food, purchased locally, was sold at the new site. This enabled the people to give the whole of their time to preparing a large garden acreage in the first year. The great majority of villages moving for moderate or long distances (twenty five to seventy miles) succeeded in preparing large enough gardens and growing sufficient food for themselves in the first year. A few did not, for one reason or another, such as starting too late, a bad season or just plain laziness, and these villages were supplied with food in the first season either in return for work or on promise of repayment after a good harvest. Less than 5 per cent of villages received such relief.

If it is impossible N 166 241 648

§ 10. *The Progress of Resettlement*

It was estimated that, in order to restore a complete population-land balance, about 141,000 people would have to be moved from the Reserves of the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts. No such movement was, in fact, possible. The total carrying capacity of the land available for resettlement which contained a vast mass of escarpment hills and other large areas of almost useless land, was estimated to be 78,000 people. This land was, of necessity, allocated to the tribal groups in the following way:

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Ngoni and Chewa	:	Sufficient land	for	35,000	people
Senga	:	"	"	35,000	"
Ambo	:	"	"	8,000	"

Thus in the case of the Ngoni and Chewa the available land was totally insufficient to allow of the restoration of a population-land balance, while in the case of the other peoples such a balance could be achieved.

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Two alternatives were possible; to re-distribute the Ngoni and Chewa populations more or less evenly over the new land and the Reserves, in which case both would be over-populated in relation to their carrying capacities, or to populate the new land to the maximum of its carrying capacity, leaving the Reserves still over-populated. The latter course was adopted for a variety of reasons, including the fact that much of the new land was tsetse infested and the keeping of cattle and development of mixed farming would not be possible at least for a very considerable time. The Reserves, on the other hand, carried many cattle and, with reduction of the population by resettlement, would be able to support their populations on a basis of mixed farming.

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Movement was therefore designed to populate the new areas to the maximum of their carrying capacity and to reduce the agricultural problem

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of the Reserves to manageable proportions, having an excess of population, but not too great an excess, within the cattle areas.

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In Petauke District, where there is ample land available, the object aimed at is a complete restoration of the population-land balance by controlled movement of some 35,000 Senga and uncontrolled movement of 8,000 Ambo and Senga-Kunda.

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Survey work in the Eastern Province started in 1941 and a few pioneer villages were moved in that year, but the main movement started in 1942 (when over 18,000 people were moved) and it is still in progress. By the end of 1945 the programme was more than half completed; 292 villages (about 32,000 people) had been moved into controlled 'village blocks' or 'parish settlements' in addition to uncontrolled or partially controlled movements in the escarpment area and parts of the Fort Jameson District. The comparatively slow rate of progress is due to water-shortage. Large areas in Petauke District and the north of Fort Jameson have not yet been settled for this reason, while in the latter area there is also some danger of sleeping sickness, and measures for the control of 'fly' (game destruction and clearing of 'hard pan') are in progress. Settlement is continuing at the rate set by provision of water supplies and the control of tsetse.

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The Mkushi District presents an entirely different picture since the available land is about twice as much as the present population require, on the basis of their traditional agricultural practice. Here, instead of village blocks, comparatively large areas have been demarcated to take a number of villages and there is no strict control. The Superior Native Authority has introduced rules intended to bring about a gradual conversion from small circle *chitemene* (a primitive form of axe-agriculture) to hoe cultivation of kaffir corn with subsidiary gardens for a variety of crops.

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The land not actually required for immediate use has not been allocated but is being held in reserve against the future needs of the African people and the Native Authorities undertake responsibility for early burning within the reserved land.

The bulk of the necessary population transfers have already been carried out.

In Ndola District also the available land is considerably greater than present needs and some is being held in reserve. Populations moved from the congested zone about the mines have been settled in village blocks and, apart from an area demarcated for immediate settlement in 1943 to relieve actual starvation, there is no uncontrolled settlement.

Movement of 120 villages, having a total estimated population of 11,775, was completed in 1945. It has since been found, however, that the population counts made by a District Officer seconded for the purpose are in fact over-estimated and a considerable number of the blocks are under-populated and further movements may be necessary.

6.Ratney E.G-E (ra. 1900) 1907 FEE Digest FEE

VI

A VILLAGE EXODUS

1. The village chief, when he wishes to remove the village to a new site, tells the young men of the village beforehand to look out all the building materials necessary. These they will just pile up. Then some day the head old man gets up very early in the morning to go and seek a suitable spot. When he finds a good place, he says, "Yes, this is where I shall build" (lit. "This is my place"). When he goes to the village that evening, he tells them not to break the rules enforced on such occasions, as he wishes to "kindle fire in the forest," as he is tired of the present site of the village. Next morning at dawn he rises very early, along with his brother and the medicine man, and goes to the site of the new village. They begin to walk all round, tying grass tufts into little knots and smearing them with medicine, and they make fire where they are going to build the *Kuka* hut, and they put some medicine on the fire, and bring water, and blow it in a spray out of their mouth. And the reason they thus medicine-guard the village, is for fear of lions and human flesh-eaters. Then the village people come with the building materials, and they are told to "clear the ground." And they do so, and when this is finished, the chief takes the door-posts and sticks them in position, and also the side-posts, when others put them in (firmly). When the *Kuka* hut is completed they begin with that of the headman. When dark others leave, going back to the old village. There remain only the chief, and the others who will continue to sleep there, not

February 2, 0-6 (ex. 1969) 1967 793 Signal 793

again returning to the old village. That evening they take some of the fire (that they made earlier in the day) to kindle a fire with it in the (new) hut (*Kuka*). In kindling it they do not squat down, they blow the faggots into flame from a standing position, and they do this lest the smoke might ever after hang in wreaths over the floor. The women-folk come every day to cook.

11. When the chief's huts are finished, they build those of the old men, and when these are complete, they bring all the huts [from the old village]. When they see that all the huts are finished, beer is made at the old village, and they go and bring the spirits. He who has a grave pours some beer in a gourd-pot and places it on the grave, saying, "We have gone hence, you must not search for us here, come let us go together." On that day they demolish all the huts that remain, they leave only the huts of which the occupant has lately died. When now the sun begins to slant westward, from the *Kuka* hut they take five gourd-pots, and fill them with beer and make young women carrying these lead the way. The head old woman of the *Kuka* hut goes first, the chief wife of the chief follows *Gogo*, and then come the ones carrying the beer. When they arrive at the new village they set down the gourd-pots and all the people assemble. The elder of the village then begins to propitiate, saying, "There is the beer we down on earth have made, we have gone from yonder, we present to you your new village, all men you will have a care for." Then the village chief makes a present of a goat and hands it to the old man, and he again speaks, saying, "Here is a goat which your child presents, you will wash it down with the beer." If the goat makes water, that is to say the spirit consents, if it will not they do not kill it. Then they kill the goat

and take the liver, and lungs, and stomach, and sit down down beside the beer, and cut off some meat from a hare-leg, and roast it, and cut off a piece, and give the head of the Kuku hut, and cut another piece, and the chief eats it, and another his old men eat, and then they begin to cut off bits for their children. The rest of the meat is put in a basket, and next morning is cut up.

111. When the propitiation of the spirits is finished the chief tells his headmen, "To-day you must cook some relish, and give it to all the people, and finish the ceremony in connection with the conduct." So he (the headman) sleeps with his wife, and in the morning she takes the relish to give to the chief. All persons of lesser importance come and take theirs from the hut, and any one who is at a distance at the time has his put aside. Now the ceremony is over, and the villagers again resume cohabitation with their wives [broken off since the beginning of the ceremony]. One month passes, and then a great quantity of beer is cooked all over the village, and they have a dance that at the new village the ground may become trampled and hard. When some further time has elapsed, they cook beer, to demolish the huts of the dead, that were left standing at the old village. At the new village, when a man dies, the first one to do so is buried at the old village; when one of the village elders dies, he is buried at the new settlement, and thereafter all who die are buried there.

621/ usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the few Ikomeneni of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the importance attached to the inheritance of name that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni as formal surnames in addition to their other personal names.

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To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and
629 there may be in the village one or more Ikomeneni. The office of Ikomeneni is a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no Ikomeneni.

In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have
621/ consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
582 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time
179 some of the entire captives became Ikomeneni of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aforementioned lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I mentioned in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, ethnically and exogamically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of ethnic assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aforementioned captors.

Movement

561/ A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
766 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Forde, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 190: '... the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a separate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

18: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Ngoni

[361] [166] [311]

[168]

[448]

[448]

[349]

[422] [164]

221 361 166 241

[illegible] by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as [illegible]. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village is [illegible] reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man has to go further and further from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of unpossessed land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a [illegible] of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the other has been referred to the chief. Since 1948 many villages have moved off land claimed by Wilson, or away from congested areas.

Now the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, country chief and village headmen. In moves made on the initiative of the Ngoni, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headmen and other important people in the village and the site chosen is called to the chief for his approval. The few people start to make chinyambos in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easy to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was built last [illegible] would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Ranney, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the new is gradual, so, unless the distance between the sites is too great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until they are exhausted. Now gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of a village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Ranney, *Folk-Lore Stories*, pp. 109-11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. [illegible] gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-East Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller enclosure on the outskirts of the village.

10: Berman E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
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Missouri

Here sometimes become infested with ticks, or the site itself may prove to be incurably damp. New huts are then built a short distance away or even contiguously to the old site, and so new gardens are made apart from those made among the deserted huts.

Internal Segmentation of the Village

We have already seen that the divisions within the village are embryonic new villages. These divisions are most formally indicated in the Hyundaui country, where there are large villages divided into a distinct number of divisions, with the special boundaries between the divisions indicated by a greater interval between the huts, and with each division named and under the charge of a headman or of a petitioned kinsman of the headman. On the Kinshasa side, however, it is more usual to find that certain small clusters of huts within a village are regarded as being the division of such-and-such a person living in one of them. The bulk of the huts in the village do not belong to any particular cluster but merely to the village as a whole. These clusters do not have any name apart from that of their senior inhabitant, whose close relatives occupy the huts of the cluster. The leader of a cluster may be a kinsman of the headman or merely some important person with a comparatively large body of dependants. Such clusters, which are often on the periphery of the village, sometimes originate from the grouping together by a polygynist of the huts of his various wives, and grow as their children marry and live alongside their parents. Another mechanism for the formation of clusters is that of immigration into the village at about the same time by a number of persons related to each other more closely than to the other inhabitants of the village, as, for example, on the break-up of some other village. The immigrants tend to build together if there is room. In this case the leader of the cluster may have little standing in the village. The boundaries of clusters are not always plainly indicated, while a man who is ambitious to make his own village may as a first step try to increase the clarity with which his cluster is defined spatially.

Land Utilization

We may divide gardens into three types: main, old village, and moist. The moist gardens are made near streams, and are fenced to keep out cattle. Tomatoes, cabbages, onions, and other vegetables are grown, and maize is planted during the hot season so that it can be harvested in December or January. These gardens are cultivated only by the

10: Barnes E-2 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

Lake goldfish and Tiger-fishes. Nowadays almost everyone goes by lorry, but now as then a man has to go a long way before he can catch or an island of friends in one of the urban centres. This means that, for the Ngoni, emigration is a definite event, and does not mean as a result of a gradual drifting further and further away from the tribal area. Lorries run from Fort Jameson to Lundu and to Lilongwe, and from Mfundu to Mzuzu in Southern Rhodesia. There is also a lorry service from Lundazi to Fort Jameson, but this does not lead anywhere else, and is not used by Mpezeni's people except locally. Lundu is on a railway line, Lilongwe is connected by bus and train to Blantyre, while Mzuzu is on the way to Salisbury. It is these lorry routes which now provide the links with the outside world, and along which people and goods travel, the people in both directions, and the goods, apart from tobacco, mainly inwards. Use of these routes is controlled by the chiefs, the Administration, by economic factors, and by the weather. This last has been less important of late, and the roads are seldom impassible for more than a week at a time, however heavy the rains. In order to travel on the lorries from Fort Jameson a man must have a ticket, which costs £1 for the journey to Lundu, and less for the trip to Lilongwe. The lorry service from Mfundu to Mzuzu is free.

The Administration exercise control by insisting that no man shall leave the Territory of Northern Rhodesia unless he is in possession of an identification certificate endorsed by the Administration permitting him to do so. In practice, such endorsements are not usually made unless the man can produce written permission from the chief that he is free to go. This working arrangement is intended to ensure that men do not flee the country when there are cases pending against them, and to prevent unjustifiable desertion of wives and children. In fact men are sometimes given permission to go while cases in which they are involved are still unheard.

The emigration of women and children is further controlled in that there is a law[1] forbidding a woman to leave the tribal area except in the company of her husband, or with a pass to leave from the Native Authority. Sucking children are allowed to accompany their mothers, but other children under the age of sixteen are not allowed to leave the province without permission of the Native Authority,[2] while boys

[1] Ngoni Native Authority Order 24.
[2] Ngoni N. A. Order 39. The child must be either accompanied by its parents or else accompanied by a guardian on the way to join its parents.

Nguni F 23 1954 (1965-1969) Nguni F 23
Nguni

lived with their wives and children, and are all of which had royal [72]
headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Nguni [65]
group with which we are now concerned, and within their regi- [72]
mental men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system.

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth [73]
centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. [65]
There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1725 the pattern of political alignments began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1800 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndwandwe and Qwabe,[1] dominated the east and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndwandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethwa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndwandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1820[2] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north- [65]
wards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Nguni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[3] fighting with Nyaka, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All these parties raided the [73]
indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside [73]
their new masters.

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on [73]
further north. He took with him his new Tsonga followers and [67]
also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under

[1] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Achim, 'Spelling Nguni'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in the old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu. [104]

[2] cf. Bryant, Olden times, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 13, 71. Lawrence, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1819 and Wilmsen, 'Historical', p. 13, has 1819 or 1820. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chilembwe, *Ab Nguni*, p. 6, both have 1819. Rogers, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 270, says Zwangendaba left in 1819, while Cloetzel, *Native tribes*, p. 10, says he left in the 1820's.

[3] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, Olden times, pp. 161, 179, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

Library E.S. (1946-1949)954 F95 Ngoni F95
Mpezeni

Map A. NGONI MIGRATIONS 1821-1889

[p. 9]

1:Reserve E-5 (1966-1969) 1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Edgerton

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[10]

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Ngoni, a term of admiration (*ishihlonipi*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with which the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as *Angoni*, *Amangoni*, *Bangoni*, *Bezulu*, *Bezwe*, *Bungu*, *Landowe*, *Landlane*, *Machwali*, *Malti*, *Maliti*, *Magwangwara*, *Makwangwe*,

TABLE 1. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE CHIEF'S

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndwandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Sodangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometimes ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

Mangwe, *Mangwangwara*, *Manito*, *Mavili*, *Mawito*, *Mazito*, *Mazito*, *Mbunga*, *Mchechawo*, *Rogwaga*, *Sinyanga*, *Wazungwe*, *Wajoje*, *Wamachanda*, *Wamachanto*, *Wangoni*, *Wapoma*, *Watuta*, *Zulu* and *Zulu Kaffirs*.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Ngoni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became

[10] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 138-71, 204-18; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] Ian Tree, *Lake Ngoni*, p. 95.
[12] *Mabungwana*, pl. *ebungwana*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzane*, village headman; also Read, "Tradition", p. 460.

Inference E-5 (986-0593)914 F 23 Ngoni F 23
Mpezeni

177 part of the segment, namely segments 1, 3 and 13, survived as
67 independent inferior segments within segment 1. The lieutenant
72 in charge of the warriors spared the pregnant queen and bid her
695 She bore a son, Nyati Mpezeni, and later was shown to Zwangendaba who received her kindly and, according to Chibambo, ordered her to live with her son in the headquarters of segment 1. She was set in charge of a levy of wives, and so by this time the great wife was dead, the levy in segment 3 now became Zwangendaba's senior levy. Mwembera, eldest son of the leader of this levy, was thus a candidate for the main leadership but owing to the disappearance of segment 18 and the subsequent reconciliation between Zwangendaba and Mpezeni's mother, the relative status of the two sons was uncertain. This uncertainty may have been one of the precipitating causes in the subsequent break-up of the State.

Rangeley's version of this incident is that after he had been shown Mpezeni, Zwangendaba ordered the headquarters of segment 18 to be rebuilt. This seems less likely to be true than the version we have followed, since there is, so far as I know, no present-day village which we can identify as the headquarters of this segment.*

[104]

From Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba went up the Limpopo Valley into Mashonaland. He fought with Kalonga and other Shona peoples and there was renewed fighting with other refugee groups under Sohangwane and Nxaba. In 1833 Zwangendaba's group crossed over to the north side of the River Zambezi near Zumbo and settled in Nsenga country for four years. They moved on again along the eastern rim of the Luangwa basin and eventually arrived in about 1842 in Ufipa, on the east side of Lake Tanganyika. Here in about 1845 Zwangendaba died.

177 67 72

Two points of historical detail may be mentioned here. There is reliable evidence for a raid made on a Portuguese fort at Delagoa Bay on 10 October 1833 by some of Sohangwane's people.* Poole and Wauchope state explicitly that Zwangendaba's men also took part in this attack, and Lancaster seems to imply the same. According to the chronology adopted by Young and by Poole himself Zwangendaba was at this time four hundred and fifty miles away in the Kalonga country of Southern Rhodesia and it therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he participated in this raid. Rhodes, Young and Chibambo do not mention it at all, and Bryant refers only to Sohangwane's part in it.

114 177 67 72

A few years after Zwangendaba left Natal, he was followed by Mzilikazi, a chief who for a while fought under Shaka and then fled from him with his followers.

* Wauchope, 'Angoni paramountcy', pp. 106f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 18f; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 38f.
* Theal, *Portuguese in South Africa*, pp. 175f.

Zambia E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F 21 Ngoni F 21
Mpezeni

They became known as the Gwaliolan Gwaliolo or Mazulu. Fraser, who worked among them, does not record in their history any fight with Zwangendaba, nor do Mbelele, Bryant, Young or Gulbandas. Mossop and Smith say that it is a matter of doubt whether or not Zwangendaba met Mzilikazi. However, Wilson, who states that Zwangendaba broke away from Mzilikazi, says that there was a fight between them. Lancaster writes that there was a fight on the Transvaal border in 1828 before the end of 1832. Poole makes his fight take place in about 1832 and writes of the Ngoni as then now living in the vicinity of modern Bulawayo and raiding Mzilikazi in the Transvaal. It can safely be assumed that the existence of contact between Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi is all, either of them was serious in proportion to that of Winterbottom, who implies that after taking part in the raid on Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba moved to the vicinity of Bulawayo where he met Mzilikazi, only to move on to the Zambezi in 1835. Winterbottom records two years more marching and fighting than seems likely to have taken place. There is also conclusive evidence, set out by Poole, that Mzilikazi did not leave the Transvaal under four years until about 1838.

If Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi were not living side by side, the suggestion by Lancaster and Winterbottom that they quarrelled about a dog is unlikely to be correct. There may be confusion here with the story, recorded by Field and Rangeley, of a quarrel between Mpezeni and Mwamkuru over their dogs.[20]

6. *Fission*

Various writers describe three occasions on which, according to their accounts, dissident sections broke off from the main body of Ngoni prior to Zwangendaba's death. Our view is that only one of these occasions actually took place, and that it was relatively unimportant.

The first allegedly dissident group is that sometimes known as the Mawbe Ngoni, now dwelling in the region round Mount Dunsen, on both sides of the border between southern Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa. Murphy, Young, Hatchell, Poole and Brown state that after crossing the River Zambezi together, the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland broke off from Zwangendaba while he was in Nsenga country. Laws, Johnson, Sage, Lancaster and Rangeley state that these Ngoni crossed the Zambezi separately from Zwangendaba. Elmslie says that they were not an offshoot of Zwangendaba's party, while Read, Chibambo and Winterbottom state that they broke away from Mzilikazi, not from Zwangendaba. Fraser mentions a group that remained behind when Zwangendaba crossed the river and says that it went on to the east of Lake Nyasa, but does not say that it later returned to southern Nyasaland. Of all these writers, Read has had most contact with the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, and her account, as amplified by Winter-

[20] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 5; Winterbottom, 'Outline history', pp. 15f.; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 38, 51; Young, *History*, pp. 109f.; Murphy and Sandy, 'Exploration', p. 130; Fraser, *Fact and fiction*, p. 171; Field, *Fetishes*, pp. 14f.; Rangeley, 'Mbwela', p. 69.

Library E-5 (194-1943)194 F25 Ngoni F25
Myeni

bottom, seems the most acceptable.* Two other versions of this alleged discussion can also be rejected. Bryant says that the southern Nyamkhond Ngoni considered behind after the main body had crossed the river and that they were led by Gwana (sic), Zwangendaba's principal headman. Magwaul's account is similar, except that he says they broke off after crossing the river. This conflicts with the evidence of Young and Chibambo of the subsequent part played by Gwana, first lieutenant to Mpakani, with Zwangendaba's own group. We must also reject the contention of Cockburn and Hodgson that the southern Nyamkhond group broke away from the main body of Ngoni after Zwangendaba's death in Tongaville Territory. The statement made by Stanley and followed by numerous other writers that the Hehe are an Ngoni group is quite without foundation.** Some other communities in southern Tongaville who were merely raided by Ngoni have derivations taken the name Ngoni or some other name used by Ngoni.***

Poole speaks in one place of 'the secession of Nyaube' (Nsabe) from Zwangendaba, but this does not tally with his earlier statements that Nsabe's migration was independent of Zwangendaba, and that the first secession from Zwangendaba's host was that of the southern Nyamkhond Ngoni. Bryant's account of Nsabe is much fuller than Poole's, and contradicts Poole's suggestion that Nsabe crossed the Zambezi on the Luparo Gorge. According to Bryant, Nsabe's group never formed part of Zwangendaba's following, and Nsabe was eventually killed in Barotseland. Chibambo and Wisenhutsen support Bryant.***

Pauli, who worked among Mulikani's people, states that a section of Zwangendaba's group, composed of Swazi, broke off at about the time of the Zambezi crossing and turned back to join Mulikani who married the women who led the dissident section.

* The secession of the southern Nyamkhond Ngoni from Mulikani was explicit Wilson's and Dachs's assertions that Zwangendaba himself broke away from Mulikani. Wilson, 'Zwangendaba', p. 48[illegible]; Dachs, *Bungu Africa*, p. 131.

** Marwick, *Handbook*, p. 30; Young, *History*, p. 111, and letter to *African Studies*, 1950; Hamilton, 'Ngoni' (1950), p. 80; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 3; Bryant, *Africa*, p. 11; Lewis, p. 80, [illegible], in Lugard, *East African Empire*; C. Johnson, *Zwangendaba*, p. 100; Sagi, *South Eastern Bantu*, p. 172; Lawrence, 'Chronology', pp. 38, 81; Elmslie, *Autobiography Gwanam*, p. 2; Read, 'Tradition', p. 46[illegible]; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 31; Wisenhutsen, 'Historical', p. 18; Pauli, *Primitive people*, pp. 31[illegible]; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 46[illegible]; Magwaul, 'Mulikani', p. 148; Cockburn, *Native tribes*, p. 20; Hodgson, 'Dress Dances', p. 148; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, pp. 4[illegible], 30[illegible]; Kangalay, 'Mirambo', pp. 38, 80.

*** Maples, *Journals*, p. 13; Wrede, *Native Life*, p. 330.

**** Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 3 and 6; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 37[illegible], 57[illegible], 45[illegible], 46[illegible], 47[illegible]; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 16; Wisenhutsen, 'Chaliko historical', p. 18.

Africana R-5 (1945-1947) 1954 (25 Ngoni 5'25
Mpezeni

This story is followed by Bryant but does not rear in any accounts collected from Ngoni descendants. It seems probable therefore that this wrestling incident was not numerous or important.*

There are no other disruptions mentioned in the literature, and it seems probable therefore that until the death of Zwangendaba, the State remained largely intact. Forever the process, common in Bantu Africa, by which civil chiefs rise to a throne accused only to dividing their kingdoms, spread with striking effect as soon as the founder of the State withdrew. The disruption of segment 18 has sometimes been suggested as the reason why the State broke up, but it is clear from comparative considerations that a State of this kind was likely to continue to break into a number of independent groups, and that this tendency was greatest at the death or retirement of the king.

Almost ships a number of important people, mainly coming from south of the Zambezi, were killed off as a result of an internal struggle for power in which it appears that the recently captured Tumbukas, who were successful witch-finders, were allied with the Swazi and other Nduandwe against the Tonga from the Delagoa Bay region.* Unfortunately there is very little information available on the relationship of this struggle to the rest of the political system. It is, however, clear that the effect of killing of a large number of Ngoni of Tonga origin was insufficient to prevent the State breaking up a few years later.

When Zwangendaba died, his sons were still young and, for the time being, effective leadership of the tribe was disputed between men of his own generation whose pedigrees are shown in Diagram 1. His brothers, the heads of segments 2 and 6, were already dead. Fraser describes the dispute as a struggle between Ntabeni's children and Mgayi. Ntabeni was a younger brother of Zwangendaba and the head of segment 7 while Mgayi was Zwangendaba's father's younger brother's son who, on Chisamba's evidence, represented the interests of the resident of segment 1. Rangeley has a slightly different version and makes Mgayi a supporter of segment 4. Poole, presumably following Fraser, says with some qualification that Ntabeni and Mgayi both claimed the kinship. From what we know of the south-eastern Bantu, and from our knowledge of present-day Ngoni, it seems unlikely that a mother would claim to be the legitimate heir in preference to a son, however much he might strive to gain ascendancy over the son. It seems preferable to follow Young and Chisamba in regarding Ntabeni and Mgayi

* Fraser, *Fact and fiction*, pp. 146-7, 156; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 464 f.
* See p. 87.

Libraries R-5 0946-1949/1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

[illegible] Zwangendaba's father's brother's son Mgayi, of the resident of [illegible] Ngoni 1.

Elmslie states that Nsokosi's people, i.e. those of segment 3, were northward on the west side of Tanganyika and he is followed in this by Murray, Bryant and Tew. Elmslie bases his statement on Stewart, who heard of them there in 1879. However, Stewart did not visit the west side of Lake Tanganyika himself, and merely gathered his information from people in a Mambwe village on his way to the lake in October 1879. The account of the Ngoni that they gave him was inaccurate in a number of particulars, and we have, therefore, to treat with caution their statement about the existence of an Ngoni group west of Lake Tanganyika. Even if part of this segment did settle there, it is certain that the whole of segment 3 did not. Hatchell gives genealogical information for the group of Ngoni at present near Kasanga, Kalambo District, Tanganyika Territory, which links them to Nsokosi and segment 3. Stanley describes an Ngoni group which crossed Ufipa and was allied to Mirambo, and in the light of Hatchell's account it is certain that Stanley is here referring to part, if not the whole, of segment 3. This interpretation is made by Fraser, and is in accord with Young and Chibambo. Hence we may conclude that the main body of segment 3 went north on the east side of Lake Tanganyika and eventually settled in Kalambo District.

Part of segment 3 may have split off and gone elsewhere, possibly to the west of the lake. Hatchell, in his account of the Kalambo group, does not mention Ngulwayi, son of Nsokosi, and it is possible that he may have led a group elsewhere although Rangeley states that it was his following that reached Kalambo. Hatchell and Winterbottom write of an abortive expedition by Zwangendaba to the western shores of Lake Tanganyika but make no mention of a group remaining there.

This interpretation conflicts with Elmslie, who says that segment 3 went east of the lake while the group encountered by Stanley were a separate group led by Nsuta. Elmslie does not say who Nsuta was, but it is clear from the context that he does not refer to Nsuta Mpezeni. Hatchell does not mention the name Nsuta in his genealogies. Elmslie may, therefore, have been misled on this point.

The only other writer to mention a group west of the lake is Poole, who says that Nsokosi settled west of the lake in Nyamwezi country, where they were known as Wazwa, and, co-operating with the Ruga-Ruga, were encountered by Livingstone and Stanley in 1871. Since in 1871 Livingstone, Stanley, the Ruga-Ruga, and the main body of Nyamwezi were all east of the lake, it appears that Poole intended to write 'east', not 'west'.

Colle refers to contact between the Ngoni and Luba, but the section of Luba with whom the Ngoni fought had crossed from the Congo to the east side of Lake Tanganyika before encountering the Ngoni. The existence of an Ngoni group on the west side of Lake Tanganyika seems therefore to be doubtful.[illegible]

Fraser says that Mgayi led the main body, including Mpezeni, Mwamkwa, and Mperembe, as far north as Victoria Nyanza. Finding the country poor, he led them back towards Sukuma country, but died on the way. Fraser is followed by Poole, Sega and Winterbottom. It is perhaps significant that Fraser does not

[illegible] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 25-7; Murray, *Handbook*, p. 25; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 468; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Stewart, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 268; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Hatchell, 'Tanganyika territory' (1935), pp. 63f; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, p. 499; Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Young, *History*, p. 115; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 25; Colle, *Baluba*, p. 63; Rangeley, 'Mowale', p. 62.

Reserve E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

mention Mashoni's group as reaching Victoria Nyanza, and it may be that he has recently confirmed this implicit to the wrong group. Such an interpretation would fit in accord with the accounts of Elmslie, Young, Chibambo and Rangeley, and following them, Bryant and Tew. All these authors imply that the main body of Ngoni did not go further north than Ufipa. It also provides a more reasonable chronology, for by Fraser's version we have to assume that within only about five years the main body of Ngoni crossed Tanganyika Territory from south to north and then back again. Lancaster is inconclusive on this point.*

3. *Mpezeni's kingdom*

Mgwai did not live long as regent and after his death the senior lieutenant of segment 1 made Mpezeni chief. There was a considerable shortage of food at the time and this, combined with dissension in the tribe about the succession, appears to have precipitated a further split. A follower of Zwangendaba called Zulu Gama, whose position in the segmentary organization seems not to have been recorded, led his segment off to the east, where in the vicinity of Songea he met with that group of Mazeko Ngoni which we have mentioned earlier, and who probably broke off from the Ndebele some time prior to 1835. For a while the two groups operated as one but soon they split apart. Some people stayed on in Songea District, others went south and eventually rounded the southern end of Lake Nyasa to arrive in the Dedza District of southern Nyasaland, where they remain to-day.

Of those that remained behind under Mpezeni, the principal cleavage was between segments 2, 4, 5 and 6, all led by Mpezeni, on the one side and segment 3 with the headquarters of segment 1 on the other. Led by the senior lieutenant of segment 1, the latter group moved off to the south-east while Mpezeni moved west. While in the country of the Bisa, segment 2 broke off from Mpezeni and after settling for a while in Bemba country as an independent group it eventually went back to join segment 3. Mpezeni, with segments 4, 5 and 6, went south and eventually arrived in Fort Jameson District. His leadership of these segments seems not to have been questioned, but in the other group the senior lieutenant of segment 1 at first supported the headquarters of segment 3 against the claims to the chieftainship made by segment 8. Mtwalo, the son of Zwangendaba who had been put in charge of the headquarters of segment 3, protested, however, that the real head of that segment was Mwambera, head of segment 8, who thus became chief.

* Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 274; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 18; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 87; Young, *History*, pp. 115f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 29f; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 467; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group
167 consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the
631 now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of
643 Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4. It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwambera's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group,
[648] for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes
173 of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the
613 head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not
643 lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife.
644 However this woman was prompted to independent status by the
595 formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingeni) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most part all external relations were warlike. The State, as it were, was internally an organization of segments and externally stood posed against an undifferentiated hostile world. Even with the Maseko Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, the Ngoni group spatially nearest to Mpezeni, relations were warlike.

Despite this hostility, it seems probable that some individuals from the neighbouring tribes did leave their own country and join the Ngoni of their own free will. I was given accounts of this in a number of family and village histories, and while it is possible that some of those people whose ancestors were captured may now think it preferable to speak of voluntary attachment to the Ngoni State rather than capture, I do not think this can be the complete explanation. In the first place, very many Ngoni of to-day are quite prepared to admit that their ancestors were captured on Ngoni raids, so that the desire to conceal the capture of an ancestor, if it exists at all, cannot be widespread. On the contrary, some Cewa chiefs and notables who are now politically independent of the Ngoni and live in their own chiefdoms will recount with great interest how their ancestors were captured by the Ngoni. Secondly, some of those who claim that their ancestors joined the Ngoni of their own volition come from places a long way distant from Ngoni country, where the frequency of Ngoni raids cannot have been high, even if the Ngoni ever raided there at all. For instance, one village claims that its people came voluntarily from as far away as Fingoe, in Portuguese East Africa. Thirdly, there is a well-known instance of a son and other close relatives of an Nsenga chief who joined the Ngoni and rose to high position in the State. The Ngoni Paramount Chief and some of the minor chiefs are still friendly with the descendants of this Nsenga chief, Kalindawalo, and the story that these Nsenga nobles were not captured but were instructed by their own chief to transfer their allegiance to the Ngoni seems probably to be true, despite a contrary tradition among the Nsenga that these men were taken as captives.[39] Lastly there is the evidence of Glave, writing in 1894, who says that a host of villages had given themselves up to the Ngoni rather than submit to the constant anxiety of attack.[40] Thus provision was made for men and women to join the State other than as captives. These volunteers were treated in the same way as captives. They were allocated, either as individuals or in small groups, to a segment and came under the orders of a lord or lady. The Ngoni lived at a much higher standard

[39] cf. Field, *Visitilane*, p. 16; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 42-4.
[40] 86, fo. 329. See p. p. 68, f.n. 8. See also Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 of life than their neighbours, largely at the expense of those neigh-
167 bours. It is therefore not surprising that at least some of the more
648 adventurous of the hunted should have decided to join the ranks of
727 the hunters.
[511] In Tanganyika the activities of the Arabs and other slave traders brought about significant changes in Ngoni society earlier
173 than in the less accessible Nyasa region. The Ngoni in Tanganyika
648 did not regard their neighbours merely as enemies. Ngoni warriors formed part of the army of Mirambo, the Nyamwezi slave trader. An elaborate network of joking relationships seems to have regulated intercourse between the tribes of Tanganyika and the Tanganyika Ngoni were linked to many of their neighbours in this way.[41] Joking relationships of this kind did not develop among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. In recent times, however, Ngoni from Fort Jameson have come into contact on the Copperbelt and elsewhere with tribes such as the Bemba who have developed a joking relationship with other Ngoni groups. These joking relationships are now extended to the Fort Jameson men.

From this historical account we are able to gain some idea of
173 Ngoni polity during the mid-nineteenth century. We have restricted
128 our attention to the relations existing between major portions of the State and between the State and its neighbours. We have seen how forms of organization, in particular the lineage system, with which the Ngoni began their march, were modified in conformity with the peculiar conditions of migrant brigandage. In the next chapter we shall look more closely at the internal organization of the State and attempt to analyse the social processes at work within it.

[41] See the writings of Moreau, Pedler, Scrivener and Spies.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly 561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regi- 727 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were 621 indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appropriate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their [702] coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*nkwala*) was organized on an 561 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this 796 ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social [167] system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them 631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [722] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 229-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *inqwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than were the groups further inland. However, the evidence suggests that no great changes of this kind took place among the Fort Jameson group under Mpezeni, and it is therefore with changes in the external environment of the State that we shall be chiefly concerned. 631 178

In this early period, between 1821 and about 1885, there was for most of the time a situation in which the forces attaching people to the State were stronger than those tending to split it. The age-set system, the web of affinal ties, the attachment of segment members to their lord, the reliance of a lord on the support of his dependants, and the external opposition of all non-Ngoni, these all held the State together. Shifts in the balance of power could be made without disrupting the State because the State was continually expanding, and expansion gave it flexibility. The weakest links in the State were at the top, and it was these that were most strained as the State grew in numbers and in degree of segmentation. Under critical conditions, as on the death of the Paramount Chief or when the need for food necessitated a move from one tribal site to another, these were the links that gave way and fresh independent States were formed. Fission in the State led to consolidation of ties in each divergent group, but the same processes leading to further fission began again at once. 178 64

During the period of migration the Ngoni flourished. They were successful brigands on the march. Yet they were brigands in a poor land, and despite their military successes their economy remained one of subsistence cultivation, even though others did some of the cultivation for them. They were well organized for war and their enemies were not, but both they and their enemies were poor people relying on shifting cultivation with a poor technology and with access to only moderately valuable natural resources. The hinterland of Africa provided the Ngoni with an area within which they could operate successfully, but this area was bounded by the lands of wealthier and mightier peoples. Towards the end of the century the boundaries of the area began to contract. The Ngoni found themselves in conflict not with subsistence cultivators using hoes and spears, but with peoples using writing and guns and possessing apparently limitless resources of cloth, beads and gunpowder. We now have to turn to the story of the Ngoni struggle with these Arab and European invaders. 167 721 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 464 648 law and order. In this, not only the Ngoni were concerned. There was a shortage of labour in Nyasaland and Mpezeni's raids prevented labourers reaching that country from the interior. The campaign against Mwase in 1895 was undertaken partly with the aim of opening up labour routes and Mpezeni's defeat carried this a stage further. The Collector at Kotakota wrote shortly after the war: 'It is quite safe to say that no greater assistance has been given to these districts (and in fact to the Protectorate) than this opening up of the Luapula Valley by the conquest of Mpezeni.'[126] Yet the Luapula is 350 miles from Fort Jameson. Even Ngoni technical skill in fighting was of value to the new conquerors, for within six [167] months of the war Ngoni fighting men were in Southern Rhodesia, not as allies of the Ndebele but as part of the British South Africa Police. Within ten months, the headquarters of segment 13 had been moved to make way for the new Administrative capital. With the defeat of Mpezeni, North-Eastern Rhodesia became a country.

178 361 648 A final point requires explication. Granted that the Ngoni social system had to change in this new complex social environment, and granted also that their activities, in particular raiding, had to be adapted to new demands on their labour, why did not the Ngoni continue to live in large villages as they had done hitherto? There are numerous analogies in Africa where segmentary social systems have been fitted into an Administrative framework, and where raiding has given way to migrant labour, and yet the pattern of settlement has remained the same. Why did the big Ngoni villages disappear after 1898?

Part of the answer to this question can be stated in ecological terms. In pre-conquest times, the dense population, human and bovine, the great stretches of cultivated land, and the manifest prosperity of the people impressed themselves vividly on contemporary observers accustomed to the scattered settlements of the surrounding tribes. Angus writes:

> 'Before us lay an undulating valley some miles in breadth, which, as the heavily timbered hills on either side proclaimed, had once been covered with forest, but was now denuded of every vestige of a tree. Village after village surrounded by waving cornfields, and green plains dotted with herds of cattle, stretched away into the distance. Never before in any of my African wanderings had I seen such an extent of land under cultivation; the cornfields seemed unending, and the size and number of the

[126] *B.C.A.G.*, v, 6 (30 April 1898), p. 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

161 such as Sharpe, Thomson and Deare, and with my own information based on village histories. Combining this with the lowest estimate of population, we arrive at a population density of 100 persons to the square mile, while the highest estimate implies a density of 375. Highly unreliable as these figures are, it is clear that the density of population was considerably greater before the conquest than it is now, when it averages about 68 persons to the square mile. Even the present-day figure is nearly three times the density which the land can sustain in perpetuity.

This dense population was concentrated in large villages. 361 Angus estimated that there were at least a thousand huts in Loan-
162 geni, while Deare estimated that there were sixteen hundred. Read states that it was over three miles across, while Genthe says that Ngoni villages were about five times the size of the average Cewa village. From the top of a mountain, Deare saw eleven villages all about the same size as Loangeni.[141] Thus it seems that there were several villages with populations of the order of three thousand. If Deare and Johnston are right in their estimates of tribal population the majority of the people lived in these big villages.

Yet by September 1898 the only villages left in Mpezeni's country were a few to the east of Fort Young. All the rest had been destroyed by troops, and their former inhabitants were said to be 'still timid' and living in scattered groups in grass shelters.[142] The large pre-conquest settlements were particularly vulnerable to attack by troops armed with guns and intent on burning, the more so because there were no defensive preparations at all. Glave wrote in 1894 that the Ngoni 'have no stockaded village, such protection they deem unnecessary as no enemy can be strong enough to attack them'.[143]

The large villages and the high density of population were appropriate only to a victorious military society, relying for at least part of its subsistence on raided crops and beasts produced outside its borders and for the rest on the maximum exploitation of the land [727] inside them. When its enemies had been plundered and its own [167] lands exhausted, it moved on. We can infer from Angus and from Sharpe, who wrote of 'entirely open' country,[144] that within the 178 settled area most of the cultivable land was in use at the same time. 311 Yet in many parts of the Fort Jameson area the soil is now exhausted after five years under maize and must be left for twenty-five years

[141] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 11 May; Read, 'Tradition', p. 475, f.n. 2; Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1.
[142] Selby, memorandum dated 10 March 1901.
[143] 86, fo. 329.
[144] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 745. For Angus, see pp. 102*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to recover under bush fallow. The long-term carrying capacity of the land before the conquest cannot have been much greater than its present average value of 25 persons to the square mile.[145] Thus it is certain that in pre-conquest times the Ngoni were settled at a density even more in excess of the critical value than it is now, despite alienation. There cannot have been much cultivable land in reserve and the State was exhausting the wealth of its own soil as well as drawing on the resources of its neighbours. Thus even if the large villages had not been burnt, the same number of people could not for long have continued to live in them practising subsistence agriculture. A reduction in the density of population necessarily involved under this economy a reduction in the size of villages, for Ngoni do not like to live more than an hour's walk from their gardens. As it was, the villages were burnt, many Ngoni of Cewa origin left Ngoniland, and much of the more densely settled land, carrying up to 140 persons to the square mile, was alienated to Europeans within six years of the war.[146] The arrangement of persons over the land and the activities they carried on were both dramatically altered by the European conquest. It is, therefore, not surprising that the old society was so drastically changed at the same time. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as we shall see, the forms of grouping of the past have influenced the forms of the new society.

In brief, the old political system was a system of segments, the new one is a system of villages and counties. The county segment links the two systems, but there is no function in the new order for segments embracing several counties or for those that embrace only part of a county. Within the village, the segmentary processes still go on, but at this level of organization we are dealing with kinship rather than politics. When a segment grows beyond the bounds of a single village, it begins to fade away, and we are left with a network of ties which link villages with one another but which do not define mutually exclusive groups as existed in pre-conquest times. The uncertainty about how counties should be divided internally is an indication of the lack of function of these intermediate segments. For some purposes, such as the organization of royal hunts, a county is divided into a number of rural districts. These are geographically defined areas, and it is sometimes possible to say that such-and-such a man, usually a senior lieutenant of the county segment, is the most important person in such-and-such a rural area. However, the recognizable rural districts in a county do not

[145] Allan, *Land Usage*, pp. 16-17.
[146] *N.E.R.G.G.*, ii, 2 (15 March 1904), p. 34.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of earning money to pay tax, together with such subsidiary measures as the prohibition of Native smelting, and the pressure on men to clothe themselves in imported clothing, ensured that the old order changed beyond the mere loss of sovereignty. Not only were links established with Southern Rhodesia and later with other parts of Africa, but new patterns of distribution of wealth and power were set up which were incompatible with the old order. The chief who stayed at home ruling his people found himself outclassed by the newly returned labourers from the south, with their display of clothes, money and urban mannerisms. The relationships between one tribe and another which formerly had found expression in fighting had now to find other expressions, and began to be based on different interests. 177 439 464 648 [556]

These general considerations applied throughout North-Eastern Rhodesia. In Ngoniland local variation was supplied more by the presence of the North Charterland than by the fact that the Ngoni had been defeated in war. The North Charterland was interested in the economic development of its concession, whereas the Administration had to consider the needs of other territories governed by the B.S.A. Company, particularly Southern Rhodesia. The same administrative policy was applied to the Ngoni as to neighbouring tribes which had not been conquered by force of arms. Nevertheless in Ngoni eyes the Administration discriminated against Ngoni in favour of Cewa. Many Cewa who had been captured shortly before 1898 moved away from Ngoniland after the war, or at least moved in the direction of their homeland. With the end of Ngoni raiding the no-man's-land round Ngoni country filled up again with Cewa who had been displaced when the Ngoni first arrived in the 1870s. Cewa chiefdoms were re-established and recognized by the Administration, to the chagrin of the Ngoni. 439 648 [186]

Even the Ngoni themselves were referred to by the Administration as the 'Angoni-Chewa' by way of emphasizing their mixed ethnic composition. When the Native Reserve scheme was put forward in 1913 the Ngoni chiefs objected to the Cewa being allotted land of their own, and suggested that all the tribes of the district should be placed in one reserve under Mpezeni II. The Administration did not agree. When villages were moved into the proposed reserves in the 1920s, a few more villages left Ngoniland for Cewa country. At the same time other villages moved into Ngoniland from other chiefdoms in the face of alienation of land or difficulties with the Portuguese Administration. Thus to-day many villages in Ngoniland are of Cewa origin and many villages in Cewa chiefdoms are of Ngoni origin. 648 [167]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

effort to induce them to co-operate actively with the government, and by 1910 he was looking forward to reducing the number of White officials in the Administration by devolving much of the Native work on to the Natives themselves. Co-operation was encouraged by the payment of small stipends to chiefs and others, varying in the 1920s in annual value from £22 10*s.* 0*d.* for Mpezeni down to 6*s.* for district messengers. 648

The Ngoni for the most part neither supported nor opposed this scheme of administration; they merely accepted it. For years the Administration bemoaned the indifference of the Ngoni, but apart from an attempt by a mission to set up its teachers as headmen, there was little attempt to obstruct the work of the Administration. [797]

In matters of land, the authority of the Whites was also dominant, but here the paternal amiability which characterized purely political relations between Administration and Ngoni was lacking. The alienation of land was at the instigation of the North Charterland, who considered themselves the owners of Ngoni country. Fort Jameson was built by the Administration in the middle of Ngoni country and the land round the township, few facilities though the town then had, became more valuable to potential settlers than more fertile but inaccessible tracts. The high density of population in Ngoni country also attracted settlers with the prospect of an adequate labour supply. Thus we find that many of the fist tracts of land alienated were located in the middle of Ngoni country, in the most densely populated section. As early as 1 January 1904 the first Commission was appointed to inquire into land questions in Ngoni country.[15] Now that Ngoni had to grow their own food on land which had already been heavily exploited the density of population fell; but in relation to the carrying capacity of the land in perpetuity there was still serious overcrowding. During the unsettled period of the war and its aftermath, the population was dispersed, but from 1900 down to about 1930, in consequence of alienation and the formation of reserves, villages were gradually brought closer together. From 1930 onwards, with the recognition of land shortage by the Administration, villages have been allowed to spread out again. The negotiations concerning where the Ngoni should live have been protracted and complicated; I hope to discuss them in a later work in connexion with the economic background of Ngoni social life. What is here significant about them is that to a very large extent these negotiations have been carried on entirely by Whites, with the Administration representing for the greater part Ngoni

423 439 648 311 [167] 361 648

[15] *N.R.R.G.G.*, ii, 1 (1 January 1904), pp. 30-1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16.

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kupili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief.

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units*

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1930 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local 647
Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these 624
duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in 648
conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary [693]
Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and [651]
to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees of other technical departments of the Administration, such as Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are [625]
mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder, have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it 648
were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to 647
each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work 167
in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not 582
are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this when the social distance between the two persons involved is small. Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some
remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around 166
them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the 582

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

166 closeness of the ties linking them to the areas in which they find
582 themselves. To give two extreme examples, an agricultural demonstrator, after a few months in a rural compound, sought to marry a daughter of a near-by village headman. A policeman, sent to a village to investigate a murder, married a woman related to the dead man. Marriages of this kind are made partly because there is no other way by which a stranger in a village can be certain of getting enough to eat, but they also serve to broaden and diversify the relationship between the stranger and the people among whom he finds himself. Some of these marriages are terminated when the stranger is moved to another district, but there are a number of instances where Ngoni wives have gone with their stranger husbands to distant mines and towns. This process is, of course, merely part of the much wider one by which many Ngoni women follow their [167] husbands when they leave their villages to seek work in Southern Rhodesia.

Similarly, chiefs and other important rural leaders endeavour
647 to establish enduring relations with members of the African Civil
557 Service. Some civil servants are their kinsmen, for one way by which a junior son of an important man can gain the position he desires but which is denied him by the rule of primogeniture is to enter the Civil Service or to seek advancement in one of the churches. Others are related by affinity, while yet others may go out of the way to offer hospitality to visiting political leaders when they need food and shelter in town. Some Ngoni civil servants maintain large households in the villages, which they visit at week-ends, and which they hope will have grown into recognized villages by the time they come to retire.

Thus there are two distinct groups of Africans concerned with
554 public affairs, the African Civil Service and the Native Authority
557 bureaucracy. They are in intimate association with one another,
647 and both exercise considerable political power. Both are formally distinct from the old political system. But status in traditional terms, as chief or village headman or head of a division or cluster, is still recognized in the face-to-face relations of people generally, and hence there is a continual attempt to bring the two systems into congruence with one another. Clerks aspire to become headmen when they retire, while headmen aspire to be the fathers and fathers-in-law of clerks. This is no new development, for as early as 1907 Stigand reported that a Swahili, whose home was near Zanzibar, and who had been a soldier, had founded a small village close to Fort Manning.[30]

[30] Stigand, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 125. See p. 118.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

One reason why the two bureaucracies remain separate is that members of the Civil Service are moved from one headquarters to another as the exigencies of the service demand, whereas a Native Authority councillor or foreman cannot, in general, seek similar employment in another tribe. In 1951 an Ngoni Native treasury clerk was transferred to a similar post in a neighbouring tribe, but moves of this kind are still exceptional, and almost out of the question where chiefs' posts are concerned. Clerks and messengers employed by the Administration are more likely to be moved at short notice, and the whole process of adaptation has to be begun again. The Ngoni clerk who is moved away from Ngoni country has to settle down to life in a strange district, and the stranger who comes to Fort Jameson has to find his way around the complexities of Ngoni society. 647 167

This factor of movement is even more significant in the case of the White administrators. Most of them spend only a few years in Ngoniland, and to them the Ngoni are merely one tribe among the many that they meet with in the course of their professional lives. Most of them can speak Nyanja, which most Ngoni can understand, so that there is not the added complication of interaction through interpreters, with the interpreters in a key social position, as Mitchell points out for the Nyasaland Yao.[21] But even though they can speak directly to Ngoni, it takes time for them to learn the faces of the people they see in the various Native Courts and at tribal meetings, and it also takes time to determine how these faces are related in a political system. Thus of necessity administrators are forced to rely on the advice of the African Civil Service, principally the messengers and clerks, and of the important chiefs when they need local knowledge to guide them. Chiefs and clerks attempt to establish firm relations with the administrators with whom they work, but owing to the great social distance which separates Black and White throughout southern Africa, there is little scope for this. Some messengers like to suggest that it is they, and not the White administrators, who really decide what shall be done. While this may have been partially true at one time, it is not true now. As Ngoni society has changed gradually in the direction of something with which administrators are more familiar, and as the content of administrative action has become less and less restricted to such simple activities as collecting tax and making roads, so the power of the district messenger has declined.[22] 648 647 [558]

[21] Mitchell, 'Political Organization of the Yao', pp. 153-4.

[22] Bradley, *Diary of a District Officer*, records in interesting fashion the relationship between himself, as District Officer, and Head Messenger Kachaje of Fort Jameson.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

they might give their support to the enforcement of law. Murder has always been a public delict in Ngoni society and before the conquest, a murderer was usually tried by senior lieutenants at the headquarters of either segment 4 or 10 and if found guilty was executed by the first lieutenant of the segment. Ngoni still think that murderers ought to be brought to justice, but the investigation of murder, a matter for the Northern Rhodesia Police, is likely to be obstructed even though the investigation may be carried out entirely by Africans. Those affected by the murder wish to see the murderer punished, but they also want to keep clear of the legal process involved.

696 648 [682]

10. *External links*

The death of Zwangendaba was followed by a dispersal of Ngoni groups into various parts of east and central Africa. The present dispersal of Ngoni men and women from Fort Jameson over southern Africa arises from a different social situation and takes place in a different way. The early mining enterprises of Southern Rhodesia, like those in the Union of South Africa before them, were based on migratory labour. As we have noted, Ngoni began going to Southern Rhodesia only a few months after they had been conquered, and they have continued to go ever since. Although the first batch of migrants were apparently ordered to go by someone in authority, the great bulk of men who have gone away subsequently have gone as individuals, even if they were recruited in batches of a hundred or more at a time. Thus, the dispersal of population is not directly related to the political system of the tribe, as was the pre-conquest dispersal. There has been a certain amount of regional preference, one county supplying more than its share of migrants to the Northern Rhodesia Copperbelt, the Nyasaland counties supplying proportionately more migrants to the Union as compared with the Northern Rhodesia counties, and so on, but these preferences are not marked. The inhabitants of each county, and indeed of nearly every village, have kinsfolk who are scattered over the towns and farms of the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, the Transvaal and farther south.

167 464

Ngoni men and women are thus bound by many ties to other persons and groups located far away from the villages of Ngoniland. For the most part these ties bind individuals, for each person has distant attachments which are not the same as his neighbours. In this volume we are concerned primarily with politics, with social relations between enduring groups, and we shall reserve our discussion of the social implications of migration for a later work in

167 567 464

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
484 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
693 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
574 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The
643 man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
484 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
167 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni
567 as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
619 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of
571 the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

646 Secretariat or the Legislative Council. The agenda consists of
648 items suggested by the African members and by the Administration. The African members of the Council elect four of their number as
[666] their nominees to the African Representative Council of Northern Rhodesia, which in its turn advises the Governor on the appointment of the African members of Legislative Council. As yet, the Provincial Council meetings attract little attention among the bulk of the African population, and few Ngoni know who their members are. Nevertheless among the chiefs and councillors these meetings, if regarded with suspicion, are of some interest, and for the two delegates they provide an opportunity for stressing in public what they regard as the Ngoni point of view as contrasted with those of other tribes. Many of the Ngoni speeches are phrased in anachro-
[537] nistic terms, and represent more an affirmation of how different
[186] the Ngoni are or used to be rather than a realization of how similar their interests now are to those of their neighbours. However, it is possible as the Council acquires more power and the consequences of its deliberations begin to affect more people directly, Ngoni will take a greater interest in its proceedings.[28] The same comments apply to Ngoni participation on the Provincial Team, an advisory body with representatives from the Administration, the unofficial White community, Indians and Africans.

Ngoniland is almost completely surrounded by Cewa chief-
648 doms. The old no-man's-land which isolated the Ngoni from their neighbours in pre-conquest times has long ago disappeared. On the fringes of Ngoni country there is a great deal of contact between Ngoni villages and their Cewa neighbours and the links of kinship stretch across tribal boundaries without interruption. Within Ngoniland itself, under the control of county chiefs, are some
563 villages which still speak the Cewa language rather than the Nsenga
648 dialect used by most Ngoni. Most of these Cewa-speaking villages
[167] have come into Ngoniland after 1898. Their numbers are indicated in Table VII (p. 133) where it will be seen that on the average about one village in five has entered in this way. The great majority of these are Cewa in origin. Some of them claim that they have returned to ancestral sites, others state that they came as a result of land alienation or of some quarrel with their former chief. Others have been formed by non-Ngoni immigrants who have worked for many years in the township or on the farms and built up their own followings. In Northern Rhodesia villages of this kind form an integral part of Ngoni society. The cultural features which distin-

[28] cf. Barnes, 'History', for a discussion of the way in which Ngoni members act at council meetings.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found in three separate states in the Dowa and Kotakota districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpeseni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,891. Leaving out the Fort Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliation survives political dispersal? The chief problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, distinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambesi', 'those from the march' and 'those from this country'. The Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[P.207]

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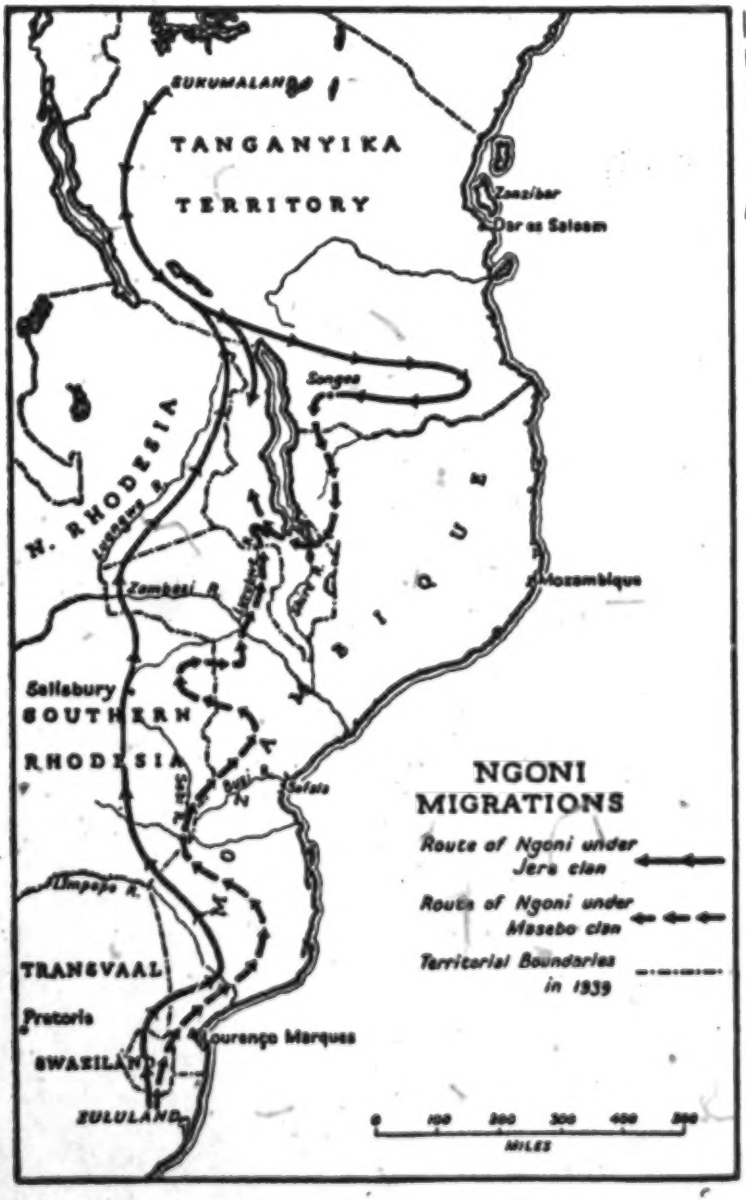

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

I

Ngoniland and the People who lived in it

The homeland

The little country of Nyasaland in Central Africa received its name from the lake by which Livingstone and those who followed him penetrated into the interior and reached the lands and people living round the lake. On the west side there is a narrow strip of low-lying coastal land. Then a series of escarpments begin, and up them roads and paths wind through steep wooded valleys, until the final scarp leads to the grasslands of the high plateau. Here on the high plateau the Ngoni settled about the middle of the nineteenth century, after nearly forty years of trekking from Natal to Tanganyika. They turned south again at the shores of Lake Victoria and returned to this land which they had passed through on their northward march. This high plateau has great diversity of scenery, and much of it reminded the Ngoni of the hills and valleys and grasslands of Natal. There are high mountains with sharp peaks and massive granite shoulders. Between the ranges of lower grass-covered hills are shallow valleys where the rain washes down good soil to the valley bottoms. Sweeps of grassland, bare of trees, alternate with river valleys where there is a continuous flow of water, fed by springs and mountain streams.

In the dry season, from April to November, the trees lose their leaves and the grass gradually dries up till the prevailing colours are gold and brown against the black and grey

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 561 464 The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, [871] if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons [434] at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or [583] seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that [885] earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the headring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any probition on marriage until [582] a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no [167] wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the notched sticks were only an *aide-mémoire*, not a necessity. 211

The heavens and the earth

When the Pleiades appeared just before dawn they said the Pleiades were being 'reborn' (the word used for the new moon's appearance and for the initiation of a diviner), and that in this position in the heavens they were heralds of the cold season. They knew the relative positions of Venus as an evening star and a morning star, and watched for the appearance high in the heavens of Jupiter which they knew by its size. Orion they recognized as a man with a spear, a hunter, and the Milky Way as the sands of the sky, since sand was used to denote numbers which cannot be counted. 821

In announcing the death of a great chief by a messenger sent from village to village, the traditional formula was: 'Listen. Do you hear? The heavens have fallen.' Hence when earthquakes were felt, it was believed that some great chief had died, and the earthquake was the trembling when his spirit left the earth for the place of the departed spirits. If it turned out to be no one of their own people, they nevertheless held to the belief that somewhere, unknown to them, a 'great one' had died and his spirit had departed at the time of the earth's trembling. 763 775 823

Eclipses of the sun and moon they also connected with some great event either among their own people or elsewhere, and they used the eclipse year and month to date these events. Their famous crossing of the Zambezi on their northward march, finally and irrevocably cutting off their connexions with the south, was during a solar eclipse. In teaching young adults Ngoni history they said: 'When we crossed the Zambezi it became night at noon.' 821 [167]

A lunar eclipse, almost total, occurred when I was in a chief's village, and all the people were called to the kraal and stood watching it. Then the chief's spokesman, his 'mouthpiece', called for silence in the phrase used for a war summons [632]

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part.

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000, live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[3].

[3] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 252 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Mamvi FR4

came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery, and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1898 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the looting of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chiefdoms reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1898, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Cewa dances, speak Cewa, and are to a lesser extent internally organized on Cewa lines. They do not form a distinct class of village in Ngoni country, and are inextricably bound by ties of kinship with their neighbours. But there are fewer traces of the former pre-1898 system of organization in such villages than in those which have a remembered history linking them with the glorious past.[1]

3. *Christianity*

At the same time as Ngoni values were being undermined from within by the Cewa, they were attacked from without by the Whites. The first missionaries to settle in the area arrived in 1899, although there had been some earlier contact. They attempted to convert Ngoni to Christianity, and therefore to monogamy and pre-marital chastity. In chastity the missionaries were allied with the Ngoni against the Cewa; in monogamy the missions fought against Ngoni allied to Cewa. New rituals were introduced and a new hierarchy developed, composed of priests, evangelists and deacons. However, in this region, unlike much of the rest of Africa, the impact of Christianity has not produced a distinctive legal status of persons married by Christian rite. The Administration's earliest piece of marriage legislation was the *North-Eastern Rhodesia Marriage Regulations*, 1903.[2] There was specific provision for monogamous marriages between Africans, with penalties for bigamy and detailed rules for the division of property left by Africans married under these regulations and dying intestate. Few, if any, marriages involving Africans were made in this form, for it seems that the missions did not license themselves under the Regulations and their ceremonies therefore did not have legal significance to the Administration. These elaborate provisions were repealed by the *Northern Rhodesia Marriage Proclamation*, 1918.[3] Since then the only form of marriage performed within Northern Rhodesia between Africans that has legal significance in the eyes of the Administration is marriage 'in accordance with native law and custom'. What constitutes such a marriage has never been rigidly defined.

The missions themselves have differed in their attitude towards indigenous marriage. One mission insists that all 'customary obligations' must be fulfilled in addition to Christian rites, another holds that it is wrong to transfer wealth from one side to another in marriage, while a third holds that the fulfilment or not of any customary obligations is not the concern of the church. The Native

[1] Cf. Read, 'Tradition and prestige' and 'Moral code' for an account of some of these changes in structure and values, based on observations of three Ngoni kingdoms.

[2] Government Notice No. 2 of 1903, *British Central Africa Gazette*, 146, x, 1, 31 January 1903.

[3] N.R. No. 18 of 1918, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, viii, 11, 7 September 1918.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. The punishment of adultery

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognized other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognized and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. Labour migration

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Rhodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 attitude towards her can be tested only when, if ever, he returns to the rural area.

A man whose wife runs away and who will not return may likewise continue to hope that one day she will change her mind and return to him, and for this reason will not divorce her. Unlike a woman, a man in this condition does not jeopardize his chances by taking a fresh spouse, and therefore it is rare to find a man whose only wife is one separated from him. It will be seen from Table III that there were no men separated from all their wives included in the sample.

593 In both separation and in the procedure by which a man 'leaves his wife in disgust',[17] sexual intercourse ceases between the couple. In other respects the two procedures are quite distinct. When a man 'leaves his wife in disgust', he stops sleeping with her but he continues to treat her as his wife. She has her hut next to her co-wives, her husband sits on her verandah, and she can rely on his help in the garden and in the care of her children. If she is separated from him, she must fend for herself. Her status as wife is significant only in that she does not marry anyone else.

6. The absent husband

A man appeals to his kinsfolk for support, but they do not replace him in the marriage relationship. His wife is linked mystically to him but not to them, and the right of sexual access to her is held by him alone. It cannot be exercised on his behalf by his kinsmen. He takes the initiative in appealing to them in a marital dispute, and his agreement is necessary at each fresh stage of events. If, however, the man is not there, his kin act on his behalf as far as they are able.

593 Most adult men, at some time or other, go away to work in the towns
167 or mines. Some men take their wives with them but at any one time, as can be seen from Table IV, between a quarter and a third of all married women living in the rural area have their husbands away working either in Fort Jameson township, in the towns of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, or living permanently on the tobacco farms around Fort Jameson. When a man goes away to work, no one can tell when he will return. Some men go off and never write or come home again. Others write regularly, send home money and clothes, come home themselves for visits, and remain in close contact with those at home. Friends and relatives may give news of a long vanished migrant whom they have met in Southern Rhodesia.

For at least the first two or three years the assumption is made that a man intends to return, even if he does not write. If his wife
[591] is living uxorilocally she will probably continue to do so. If she is living in her husband's village, as long as she stays there she can depend to some extent on the support of her husband's relatives, who may help her with her hut and garden, and if they are kind-hearted

[17] See above, p. 41.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and have the money to spare, they may buy her clothes. The only ways in which she can raise money easily for herself are by brewing beer, making pots, and working on the farms. To work on a farm she must, however, remove herself from the surveillance of her husband's kin, and unless she goes to join a contingent from their village working at the farm, they may think she is running away from them to seek a lover or new husband. We have seen, however, from Table XIV that significantly more wives whose husbands are away live uxorilocally. 593 167 [591]

Many husbands write home, not only to their wives, and some remit postal orders and bank-notes. A man may get a friend who is returning from Southern Rhodesia to take home blankets and other bulky articles to be handed over to his wife. He may send presents like these direct to his wife or he may think it more prudent to send them to his father or brother and allow them to hand on to his wife as much as they think fit. The woman must then behave herself in the eyes of her affines if she wishes to receive her husband's presents. The acceptance of these gifts is taken as proof that the woman is still dependent on her husband however long he stays away. If the woman applies to the court for a divorce on the ground of desertion, the presents will be cited by her husband's kinsfolk as evidence that there is no intention on his part to desert. Gluckman reports from the Lozi that even if a man sends goods, after a statutory period the court will hold that 'a woman marries a man and not a blanket', that is, the husband must return to look after and sleep with his wife as well as send clothes to her. This argument is not used among the Ngoni. A woman who complains that she is not satisfied with marriage under these conditions is told to write to her absent husband and ask him for the fare to join him in Southern Rhodesia. [586] [171]

Case history 10

Saul was working in Nyasaland. He sent home to his wife 7*s.* 6*d.* for clothes. Later she wrote to him saying she wanted him to return. He sent her 15*s.*, being 5*s.* for clothes and 10*s.* bus fare so that she could join him. She did not go and later went to the court complaining she had been deserted. Her husband's relatives argued, to the satisfaction of the court, that as her husband had sent her these gifts he was still taking care of her. The court dismissed her plea as she had refused to go to Nyasaland when the fare had been sent. [586]

The husband's relatives try to watch carefully the movements of the woman so that they may prevent or at least report any adultery on her part. If they are in touch with the husband, they write to him should they suspect infidelity. Sometimes the husband ignores their letter, sometimes he gives them instructions how they should proceed in the matter, and sometimes he returns to the village to see for himself what is going on. He arrives without warning and hopes to catch his wife in the act. If all is well and he is satisfied that his wife has been faithful he usually goes back to work again. 593 167 602

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

593 167 Some men when they decide to return home from work in the normal course of events do not let their relatives know that they will be arriving. There are a variety of reasons for this, one being that the mystical hazards of the journey home are increased if a man's enemies know that it is taking place. There is also sometimes the desire to check on the fidelity of a wife. A chief returning from the railway line in 1947 reached Fort Jameson and sent on ahead a man to tell the people their chief had returned. A councillor who was with him remarked 'What sort of chief is this who gives his queens time to get back to their own houses? We ought to arrive suddenly and catch them all with their lovers.'

593 167 602 The woman's kin also wish to avoid trouble in her marriage and do what they can to prevent her committing adultery if they think that her husband is still treating her well. They talk to her about her obligations to her absent husband and if they think she cannot be trusted, one of them, perhaps the woman's mother, may sleep in the hut with her to see that she does not entertain lovers there. They may warn her that if she is taken to court for adultery they will not support her.

Thus we see that there is social prescription not only of the ways in which a man and his affines should behave towards each other, but also of the ways in which his affines should behave when the man is away. Similarly a woman and her affines interact in the light of their relationship not only when her husband is present but also when he has been absent for years. As a husband can exceed his rights over his wife, so can an affine go beyond what is tolerated while trying to safeguard the interests of an absent husband. The perseverence of some brothers of absent husbands, and the limitations imposed on their actions by public opinion, are recalled by a girls' song current in 1949.

[533]

> I am wanting to go and sleep,
> What stops me is something in the loins,
> I go to the water, and the one who keeps on following comes,
> He has exceeded his sibling-in-law-ship,[18]
> He has dragged Eleni from the reeds.

Eleni is supposed to be the wife of a labour migrant. Her husband's brother follows her to the stream, where she has gone ostensibly to draw water, as he thinks that she is really going to meet a lover. She hides in the reeds and he drags her out. Such active intervention is inappropriate and dangerous for if there is a struggle the woman is likely to claim that the man was trying to rape her. The astute brother-in-law would have waited his time until he could catch her red-handed with her lover in a village.

[607]

167 It is never legitimate for a woman whose husband is a labour migrant to have intercourse with another man. People regret that

[193]

[18] *Ulamu*, the abstract noun formed from *mulamu*, sibling-in-law.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that

a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the [182]
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with 843
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant.
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child 167
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are [837]
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent 692
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address
593 of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife,
684 the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration.
692 Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

593 The general principle that no court action involving the husband's
684 sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

578 Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their
602 relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both
[845] from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman
[787] had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who
[754] was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go
167 away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great
602 deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

migrant sons, and villagers mourn for a dead kinsman of whose death in the towns they have just heard. 167 602

Although it is possible for a couple to keep in contact with their rural kin if they are diligent in writing, the amount of interaction between the couple and their kin is much less under these conditions than when they are living in the village. Even when only the man is away and his wife is living at home, the ties linking relatives by marriage cannot in general be as strong as when the individual through whom those ties pass is present in face-to-face contact with his affines. None of the ceremonies of marriage, except the obtaining of a marriage certificate, can be performed if the man is away from the village and they must wait until he returns. Ngoni say 'You cannot send beer on a lorry'. When the man returns for a rest his wife's parents sometimes seize the opportunity to send him beer, but if he has been away a long time, they may be reluctant to brew for a man they do not know very well and whose character may have changed in the treacherous environment of the towns. Even if the man is working as near as Fort Jameson township, he may have difficulty in getting away from his job just at the time his parents-in-law want him at home. [585]

Some men marry women they meet in the towns. Often an unmarried man leaves the village and a year or so later the news comes that he now has a wife. If the woman is from another tribe it is unlikely that the relatives at home will be told her name, and if the children of the marriage remain in Southern Rhodesia, they too will be unknown at home in the village. Sometimes, however, a man may marry a woman who comes from his own neighbourhood who has been visiting relatives in Southern Rhodesia or who has been divorced from another labour migrant. There is then more chance that the rural kin will be made aware of the marriage, and the children born to the couple may be sent home to one or other grandparent. If and when the man brings his bride back to the village, he goes to her village to give her relatives formal notification of what has happened, how he was in Southern Rhodesia and saw her and how they married there. Men sometimes offer the legalization payment for wives married in Southern Rhodesia when they return home. If the woman's relatives see that the man is treating his wife well, that she is well clothed and that the man is not running after other women, they may accept the marriage and brew beer for the man. If they do not approve of him there is little direct action they can take but they may try to start a quarrel sooner or later. 581 602

7. Child's parents-in-law

On either side of the married couple are their kin groups, and there is a special term to express the relationship between the parents of one spouse and the parents of the other. This relationship is thought of as one of limited co-operation. The two pairs of 602

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Lamba FQ8

PART IV

THE RESETTLEMENT OF NATIVE POPULATIONS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

§ 1. *The Problem and its Origin*

IN Northern Rhodesia and doubtless over a much greater part of Africa before the coming of the Europeans, the population-land pattern was a changing, kaleidoscopic picture. If an area became overcrowded more land was available, or it could be taken from a neighbouring people. A rough balance between land and population was maintained by means of migration, inter-tribal wars, periodic famine and disease.

With the coming of the European the kaleidoscopic picture was arrested, producing what we may call the primary population-land pattern. This was later modified, by alienation and reservation of land and by the movement of peoples into Native reserves, to produce a secondary pattern. New economic factors have so far modified this secondary pattern only to a minor extent, but it may be expected that they will tend to do so increasingly in the future.

The secondary population-land pattern was brought about mainly by the movement of the African population into Native reserves. As a result of this movement large areas of Crown Land were left practically uninhabited, and a number of factors operating together brought about mal-distribution and congestion of populations within the reserves themselves.

So far the problem has been studied in detail only in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province, the Mkushi District of the Central Province and the Ndola District of the Western Province, and it is within these districts that resettlement work—other than the 'Chitemene Control' scheme—has been carried out. The four districts are contiguous and the total area within them to which this discussion refers is about 33,800 square miles (4,000 square miles more than the whole land area of Scotland but only about one-ninth of the area of Northern Rhodesia) with a total population, in round figures, of 290,000 (about one-sixth of the total populaton of the Territory).

The primary population-land pattern was such that the ten tribes living within this area had ample or much more than ample land, except to a minor extent in the Fort Jameson District where the incursion of the immigrant Ngoni in the later 19th century had created a potential congestion problem. Under former conditions this problem would doubtless have resolved itself as it arose by migration of the Chewa to north and west, under pressure from the Ngoni, but once the kaleidoscopic pattern was arrested no a[illegible]

L M N 174 166 311 L M N 648 166 L M N 166 311 L M N [101] L M N 131 L N M 166 31-1 [167]
[p. 71]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 do the same. And in each area the versions as recited convince the
829 people that their *inkosi* is supreme. The main purpose of the tradition
643 was to show that there cannot be more than one rightful *inkosi* of the Ngoni. The present day interpretations serve the same purpose and exalt one of the two claimants at the expense of the other.

The traditions centring round the person of Zwangendaba are numerous. Some of these are concerned to show that he was an important chief in the south under Zwidi, and that the Jere clan of which he was head was a leading one. Other accounts do not disguise that he was an upstart, but lay stress on his success as leader of the Ngoni in their trek north. All these traditions about Zwangendaba are told as documentation for the importance of the *inkosi*, and centre round the Ngoni belief that their state must have one head in whom authority is centralized. It is easy to see that the circumstances under which the Ngoni state was created demanded a strong autocratic ruler. The traditions gathered round this first ruler of their state now serve to perpetuate the beliefs about the office of Paramount Chief, beliefs which modern ideas and western education have hardly modified at all.

173 Ngoni history divides into three periods, and the traditions in each
829 period, as they are told, form the people's thinking about that section of their past. The traditions of the earliest period, that is, of their life in the south and their trek north, are the charter for their pride as a distinctive people. The traditions of the middle period, of their conquests and settlements, document their superiority over the surrounding peoples. The traditions of the last period, that of the arrival of the European, determine their attitude towards white contact. Their interpretation of their history, therefore, reflected in the established legends and tradition, influences profoundly their thinking about themselves, about their neighbours, and about the Europeans.

173 VI. Prelude to White Contact. This second period of Ngoni
167 history includes the events from the crossing of the Zambezi to the coming of the Europeans, roughly the years 1835–1885. During these fifty years the original Ngoni horde, with additions to it from the tribes south of the Zambezi, explored the country in which they were finally to settle, went farther north into Tanganyika, and finally

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

returned between the years 1855–1865, to settle in their present habitat. The earlier part of the period was one of exploring and of conquest. The later part was the time of settlement and consolidation, during which the Ngoni 'states' emerged in the form in which they were found, when the Europeans first arrived.

The Ngoni in Mpezeni's country, when speaking of this time, call it *chamtendere* (the time of peace). Any white travellers' tales referring to these years lay stress on the constant raids carried out by the Ngoni, the fierceness of their warriors, and their ravaging of the countryside for slaves and cattle. It was obviously a time of frequent wars. Why then do the Ngoni call it a time of peace? I have asked this question of many men of rank and standing and they give one invariable reply, 'We call it *chamtendere* because the *Azungu* (Europeans) were not there to trouble us'. This statement is in effect the key to Ngoni thinking about the days of pre-white contact, and also about the advent of the Europeans. The way in which they speak of *chamtendere* is itself significant. I first heard it during a long recital of Ngoni history, and stopped the narrator to ask the meaning of the word. There was instantly an embarrassed silence and self-conscious grins in the group. The word had evidently slipped out unawares, for later on they told me that it was a word they only used among themselves. Having once been used, however, it appeared frequently in conversations with me, and proved a useful starting-point for accounts of the organization of their own state and the effects on it of the European advent. 'Ah, *chamtendere*', they say, with a deep sigh, 'then we were people'. It proved also to be a pass-word to their confidence, for whenever I mentioned *chamtendere* to a village headman, he and his notables nudged each other, and laughed and said, 'She can know about us'. When pressed to be more specific about this 'troubling' by the *Azungu* they spoke of taxes, of the ban upon raiding and warfare, of young men being called away to work, of their land being taken for European farms. These restrictions and disabilities caused by white contact they regarded as warfare, that is, as troubled times, because the Europeans forcibly prevented them from doing as they liked, just as they had done in their day to the surrounding tribes. The conquered tribes, on the other hand, naturally hailed the advent of the Europeans as a time of peace and security. Therein lies the chief

648 in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of
814 those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Azungu* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for under-
[609] standing the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognize Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final
175 humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with
648 his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot';
[727] and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the old *indunas* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *inkosi* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic
178 changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and
[648] demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on
[464] both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its
[167] turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1924.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Lupa goldfields and Dar-es-Salaam. Nowadays almost everyone goes 101
by lorry, but now as then a man has to go a long way before he can 489
arrive at an island of friends in one of the urban centres. This means
that, for the Ngoni, emigration is a definite event, and does not occur
as a result of a gradual drifting farther and farther away from the [167]
tribal area. Lorries run from Fort Jameson to Lusaka and to Lilongwe, 489
and from Missale to Mtoko in Southern Rhodesia. There is also a
lorry service from Lundazi to Fort Jameson, but this does not lead
anywhere else, and is not used by Mpezeni's people except locally.
Lusaka is on a railway line, Lilongwe is connected by bus and train to
Blantyre, while Mtoko is on the way to Salisbury. It is these lorry
routes which now provide the links with the outside world, and along
which people and goods travel, the people in both directions, and the
goods, apart from tobacco, mainly inwards. Use of these routes is
controlled by the chiefs, the Administration, by economic factors, and
by the weather. This last has been less important of late, and the roads
are seldom impassable for more than a week at a time, however heavy
the rains. In order to travel on the lorries from Fort Jameson a man
must have a ticket, which costs £1 for the journey to Lusaka, and
less for the trip to Lilongwe. The lorry service from Missale to Mtoko
is free.

The Administration exercise control by insisting that no man shall 486-
leave the Territory of Northern Rhodesia unless he is in possession of 166
an identification certificate endorsed by the Administration permitting him to do so. In practice, such endorsements are not usually made unless the man can produce written permission from the chief that he is free to go. This working arrangement is intended to ensure that men do not flee the country when there are cases pending against them, and to prevent unjustifiable desertion of wives and children. In fact men are sometimes given permission to go while cases in which they are involved are still unheard.

The emigration of women and children is further controlled in that 486
there is a law[1] forbidding a woman to leave the tribal area except in 562
the company of her husband, or with a pass to leave from the Native 858
Authority. Sucking children are allowed to accompany their mothers, but other children under the age of sixteen are not allowed to leave the province without permission of the Native Authority,[2] while boys

[1] Ngoni Native Authority Order 24.

[2] Ngoni N. A. Order 39. The child must be either accompanied by its parents or else accompanied by a guardian on the way to join its parents.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native
562 Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws
858 are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one
486 might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly
562 by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to
484 look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives
●167 and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko–Missale service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these
205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more
249 than 12 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man
[361] to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Labour Ordinances, he can only do so through the District Commissioner's court at Fort Jameson, which may take up more of his time than he thinks the matter worth. In consequence, few actions are brought by farmers against their African labourers and if a man breaks his contract and deserts, no action may be taken against him. 691 578

It is not surprising that the efficiency of labour operating under these conditions is low, and that the wages are also low. These two conditions react on one another, and it is misleading to regard the low wages as the only cause of the inefficiency, or the inefficiency as the only cause of the low wages. The practical effect is that men who wish to earn more money than they can get as labourers on the farms at 14*s.* a month with food go away to Southern Rhodesia. It must be observed, however, that men started going to Southern Rhodesia long before the tobacco farms were opened up to their present extent. 461 [465]

Labour Migration

Prior to the European conquest, the only men who had worked for Whites were those employed as carriers by the handful of travellers who passed through the country before 1896, and as carriers and labourers by the North Charterland Exploration Company from 1896 onwards. But immediately after the end of the fighting in 1898, recruiting started among the Ngoni for police work in Southern Rhodesia, and there has been a continual flow of labour migrants south ever since. 167 464

There have been considerable fluctuations in the number of men going south since that time, particularly during the two world wars, when the military requirements of the Territory exercised a greater claim. The latest figures for the Eastern Province as a whole show that, in 1946, 23 per cent. of the taxable males registered in the province were absent from the province. Another 17½ per cent. were at work within the province.[1] In May 1947, in two Ngoni counties with a combined total of 1,739 registered taxable males, it was found that 30 per cent. of them were at work in the Eastern Province and a further 42 per cent. were away elsewhere, a total of 72 per cent. away from their villages. Half of those living outside the Eastern Province were classified as 'lost', in that their present whereabouts were unknown to the people at home.[2] These figures exclude all men who have been 'lost' for more than five years.

[1] Labour Department, *Annual Report, 1946*, p. 12.
[2] These figures were given me by the District Commissioner, Fort Jameson.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

484 Looked at from the point of view of the individual, we find that all
167 adult men have at some time or other been away to work, and that the majority have been to Southern Rhodesia once or twice.

Conclusion

466 In their lives on the farms and in Fort Jameson, Ngoni mix with men from other tribes, and their position is largely subsumed under the conditions common to all African labourers on all European-controlled farms. The Administration does not support the Ngoni more [648] than the Cewa, or one chief more than another. As the content of the relationship becomes more and more related to the world-wide polity and economy, so the nature of the relationship becomes common to a wider group. Ngoni living in Fort Jameson Compound live lives that are closer to the lives led by other tribes in compounds in other towns than they are to those led in the villages 5 miles away.
464 The phenomenon of labour migration greatly affects Ngoni social [167] structure, but is not a distinctively Ngoni institution in the same way as the Ngoni village is distinctively Ngoni. When Ngoni ex-[729] soldiers complain that when they were recruited they were promised that after the war they would get good jobs, and now find they do not get them, their sentiments derive more from their status as ex-soldiers, which they share with some millions of others, than they do from their status as Ngoni.

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TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed. 101 123 643

NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mqumache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa. 159 167 173

Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time assisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1828. 643 648

In the same year, 1828, Soechangane, known as Manukuza, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Soseza, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques. [721]

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Soseza. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son. [595]

1 [induna=military leader--Analyst]

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159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
●167 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
173 Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
578 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
643 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.
648 In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo.
[805] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Maseko, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction
[645] was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[684] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Msafwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinaluzi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

159 (2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
173 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
562

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159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Ansenga tribe worked for Sosera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Sosera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the *ikoklwa* wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamache Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Imiti. Father, Nzyekezera (Njekerezera); mother and wife, not known; sons, Masakambewa and Chitete.

[554] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his

[578] instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1846.

159 173 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambose Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

167 On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed

[578] by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Maseko was killed by

[554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 (6) Njekwane Ntilila. Father, Mphango, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyuwazana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mene, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu

[701] [645] regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpinduka Hill, Matambazi River, in the year 1868.

(7) Mgai Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majekwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.

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He

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

643 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military
● 167 Adviser; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment;
551 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment: Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief
[643 Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[645 Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black oxhide,
[701 white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Sosera Nqumayo,
[595 Great Wife; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu;
[593 Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku I; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndauya Mbanzima, Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nquaneleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.
167 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
551 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
593 Chief Diviner or *Isanusi*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadose, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595 Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere; Mtizwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere; Maiwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntomblyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727 1898. Grandson:—Chiloa Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near
[727 Msesa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsaswe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayunge (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu,
704 Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Masoho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera, Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

/4 cont'd/

national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regiments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exodus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to provide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and finger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority living in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

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Mpezeni

guish them from their neighbours are no more significant than the many varieties of custom and belief which are to be found in every Ngoni village. They do not form a group among themselves, their members participate in all communal activities in their counties and are to be found at all levels of the Native Authority organization below that of chief. They are linked by kinship to their neighbours. The two Nyasaland counties, however, include relatively large areas where there are only Cewa-speaking villages, and many of these claim that they have been placed under Ngoni rule only by Administrative action. From time to time they have made efforts to break away and to attach themselves to some neighbouring Cewa chief or to establish a separate chiefdom. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the Ngoni chiefs, with the villages in their county segments, and their Cewa-speaking subjects. It will be remembered that the two Nyasaland chiefdoms represent the head of the eastern movement of Mpezeni's group, and that some of the settlement across the border took place as late as 1897. It is not surprising therefore that in these two counties assimilation of Cewa captives and immigrants has not proceeded so far as in the longer established counties in Northern Rhodesia.

11. *Conclusion*

In this study we have attempted to show what has happened in Ngoni political life during a period of 130 years. To-day Ngoni society is changing but this has not always been so. Prior to the arrival of Wiese in 1886, the actually existing social relations were changing, but the form of the social structure remained the same. Each new segment developed along lines that were already known and each time the State split, the new States were copies of the old. A system of this kind could not have lasted for long, for the supply of new recruits to the Ngoni States must have sooner or later been exhausted. In Africa, even if the overall conditions facilitated the emergence of this kind of migratory militarism, they were particularly unfavourable for its prolonged continuation. The Arabs and the European Powers behind them were closing in on the centre of Africa, and Ngoni days were numbered. Then came the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898 and the emergence of a new system, in which some of the actually existing political groups, and the relations between them, appear to have a much greater stability than before. But at the same time society as a whole has become much more diversified, the spatial distribution of men and women in significant relationship with one another has become highly complicated, and

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Mpezeni

173 is limited by the fact that the Ngoni themselves were without writing, and their warlike disposition discouraged the visits of travellers who might otherwise have left some record of Ngoni life during those times. There is a considerable body of oral tradition [114] which has been reduced to writing since 1891, but for the most part these traditional tales assume a knowlege of Ngoni life and do not explicitly describe it. Our evidence for the main features of Ngoni society during this period of migration is found in three places. First we have the pattern of relationships prevailing at the present time between groups of Ngoni, between villages, chiefdoms and kingdoms. The legends which form the charter of these relations form a coherent and largely consistent corpus of traditional knowledge about events taking place within the last hundred and fifty years from which we can make reliable inferences about the internal history of the Ngoni. In particular we can gain significant information about the manner in which different groups were formed by elucidating the names applied to them. A modified form of genealogical inquiry, applied not to physiological ancestry but to links between dependant and lord and between satellite and parent villages, provides us with a reasonably trustworthy history of intergroup relations.

Secondly, there is the evidence available from the numerous [114] published accounts of Ngoni life which have been written by European and African authors. The traditions they record can be used to supplement the data gained from an analysis of present-day legends. A little information can be gleaned from the traditional histories of tribes attacked by the Ngoni.

Thirdly, we have a certain amount of comparative evidence 171 from other societies. There are about a dozen distinct Ngoni 184 kingdoms in different parts of Africa at the present time. In this 173 book we are concerned directly with only one of these groups, now situated near Fort Jameson in Northern Rhodesia. Much light is, however, thrown on its history by accounts of other Ngoni States, particularly of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, where the old form of society persisted longer than at Fort Jameson and where even now the changes brought about by colonial rule seem not to be so great. Accounts of Ngoni groups farther afield, and of the allied societies of the Swazi and Zulu in South Africa provide less direct evidence.

114 A few isolated events in early Ngoni history can be dated precisely. Captain Cutfield, R.N., met a group of Ngoni on 1737 November 1822 and some Ngoni warriors skirmished with the

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Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

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Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly 561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regi- 727 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, 621 were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appro- [702] priate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*nkwala*) was organized on an 561 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this 796 ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social [167] system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them 631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [772] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *inqwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

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Mpezeni

A wide variety of forms of organization can legitimately be spoken of as segmentary, and can be represented visually by pyramids and triangles. We may even speak of our own system of local government as containing segments (rural districts) which are characteristically grouped together to form segments of higher order (counties) and which are divided internally into segments of lower order (parishes). This *nesting* aspect of segmentation, as we may perhaps call it, by which social groups are arranged in a hierarchy one within another, is of too wide an occurrence to be useful for our purposes. Almost every known political system must be segmentary in this sense. 121

Nor is it the unilineal character of lineage systems which clearly marks them off from others. Until recently it was the general rule in Europe that a child took the nationality of its father, and we were therefore quite justified in talking of European nations as unilineally recruited groups. Yet we do not usually need a typology which places African lineage systems and European nations in the same category.

What then is the particular characteristic of lineage systems which significantly distinguishes them from the fixed social divisions of many states, and which they share with the Ngoni residential system? The critical characteristic seems to me to be that segmentation goes on continually. Every man (or woman) is the potential founder of a segment, and although a segment once formed tends to persist in time, more and more segments of lower and lower order are all the while being formed within it. We cannot count the number of levels at which the State is subdivided, as we can when there is a fixed hierarchy, for these points of subdivision are continually shifting with the passage of time and with change of context. It is difficult to attach labels to segments of different order or of different span, save in precisely defined situations. The magnitude of this difficulty is apparent from Fortes's elaborate descriptive armamentum, with its morphological minimal, effective minimal, nuclear, inner, medial, and maximal lineages, terms referring to successive stages in the life of a single segment, stages which occur at different times in the histories of different segments. The same difficulty arises in describing Ngoni segments, but it is not so pressing, since there was not the same differentiation of function related to degree of segmentation as is found among the Tallensi. 121 631 [171]

Because of this continuous process of segment formation, the system is governed by the same principles at all levels. A group formed in a specific way at a low level eventually becomes a high-level group, and thus at any one time the constancy of past formation 631

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Mpezeni

63/ is reflected in present uniformity of organization.[27] Fortes, writing
[121] on the concept of a segmentary society, says

> '. . . It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system . . . the principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.'[28]

171 Here he is describing the egalitarian, homogeneous, stateless
63/ society of Taleland, but his description fits Ngoni society very
121 closely. The one significant difference in this matter between Ngoni and Tale society is that Tale society goes back into the unremembered past whereas Ngoni society was founded at a known and remembered time and place. Hence a certain amount of extemporization was necessary to get the system going, to adapt Nguni social organization to the pecularities of Ngoni life, as we have noted in the relationship between the first Paramount Chief and his companions who became regional governors. Apart from this initial piece of social engineering, the system continued to perpetuate itself until checked by quite different external agencies.

In all these societies, the continually segmenting system has or had political functions. We may well ask if there are other societies in which there are continually segmenting systems lacking political functions. Gluckman has listed a large number of societies stated to possess corporate lineages, including some states as defined above. Some of these, for example the Tswana,[29] appear to organize their internal political relations not on the basis of these corporate lineages but through some separate administrative apparatus. What then is the social function of the lineage system in these societies, and is it continually segmenting? Evans-Pritchard has suggested that segmentation occurs where groups have political functions.[30] Nevertheless, among the Tswana, lineages do segment, even though they have only slight political significance, political action being largely determined by the ward organization.

We shall then take this process of continual formation of segments, which Firth calls the branching or ramifying process,[31]

[27] Fortes, *Web of kinship*, p. 341, suggests the term 'organic' to describe such a system. This word has so many other meanings that I am reluctant to use it.

[28] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 232.

[29] Gluckman in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, p. 4. cf. Schapera, *Tswana law and custom*.

[30] Evans-Pritchard, 'Nandi-speaking peoples', pp. 265*f*, and 'Nuer of the Southern Sudan', p. 287.

[31] Firth, *Tikopia*, p. 371.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as diagnostic of the presence of the kind of segmentary society in which we are interested. All the societies included by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard in their stateless category, i.e. Logoli, Tallensi and Nuer, have continually segmenting political systems. Of the societies with government, the Zulu were like the Ngoni in being a State and yet having a political system which was continually segmenting. Both of these states were organized by a segmentary system even at the highest level, so that it does not seem necessary to follow Fortes in restricting segmentary systems to only the subdivisions of states. In Shaka's time various changes came about in Zululand, such as the concentration of the army in a central area, which lessened the importance of the segmentary organization. But in the eighteenth century large-scale relations between and within the Nguni chiefdoms were governed by the agnatic segmentary organization, that is, by the division of the people into clans, sub-clans, and lineages and by the continual transfer of allegiance by lineage segments from one chief to another. Even during the period of the Zulu empire, the continual segmentation of the constituent tribes was important in maintaining the power of the central government over them.[32]

If one of the main characteristics of the well-known African lineage systems, both in stateless societies like the Nuer, Tallensi, Logoli and Gusii, and in primitive states like the Zulu, is their political function, we may well inquire if these systems are not also one type in a more general category of political systems. Although lineage relations are essentially distinct from kinship relations, a lineage system defines political relations in the idiom of kinship. Thus in agnatic systems, the relationship between territorial groups may be expressed in terms of the relationships between founding ancestors who were brothers or fathers and sons. We have seen how among the Ngoni the relationship between captor and captive, between lord and dependant, and hence the relationship between the segments they founded, was expressed in agnatic terms. The relationship between husband and wife, lord and lady, was employed to define the relationship between the political groups they led, and in this respect the Ngoni system may be seen as taking one stage further the process employed in lineage systems, where most relationships of this kind are phrased agnatically. Among the south-eastern Bantu, however, the relationship between lineage segments founded by paternal half-brothers is defined in terms of their mothers' position as co-wives. Among some central African peoples, this process has been carried even further than

[32] Gluckman, 'Modern Zululand', pp. 147-54.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

among the Ngoni. Thus the device of perpetual kinship among the Yao, by which the holders of certain chiefly offices stand in relation to one another in a fixed arrangement of kinship positions, of Paramount Chief to son and to sister's son and to brother,[33] would seem to be an example of what is essentially the same process as that by which the dominant lineage in one part of Nuerland is conceived of as descended from a brother of the founding ancestor of another dominant lineage. Where a political relationship is expressed in terms of the connexion between husband and wife, rather than between brothers' or sisters' sons, we may find that a woman is used to embody the political relationship, and she then plays what is essentially a political role. The many wives of the Ngoni Paramount Chief were clearly used in roles of this kind. Not only were they rapporteurs for the Chief, as Deare points out,[34] but they were also living symbols of the political relationship between their segments and the State as a whole. Another central African example of this is the Lele institution of 'wife of the village' by which a village, as a group, may stand as daughter's husband or wife's parent to its chief.[35]

Wherever political relationships of this kind are embodied in persons who have private lives of their own, be they queens or sons-in-law of the village, there is bound to be some domestic and inter-personal relationship alongside the corresponding political relationship. But that should not obscure from us the essentially political role played by individuals in these positions. The analogy with the dynastic marriages of Western Europe is clear.

One of the characteristics of lineage systems and of the Ngoni residential system is that the transition from the ties of domesticity and close kinship to purely political relations is a gradual one. The same principles of organization apply at all levels, and it is gradually with the passage of time and with increasing structural separation and internal segmentation that inter-personal relations are replaced by those between groups, and actions based on sentiments of love and hate give way to those based ultimately on an appeal to force. Relations between the larger segments of a lineage, although expressed in the idiom of kinship, and although possibly explainable historically in kinship terms, are relations between political units, whereas the relationship between brothers living under the same roof is not governed by political considerations. The critical point at which relationships of increasing scale become dominantly

[33] Mitchell, 'Social organization of the Yao'
[34] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[35] Tew, 'Polyandry among the Lele'

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

political would seem to be, for example, at the medial lineage among the Tallensi, beyond which generation differences are not recognized; and at the village among the Nuer. It seems probable that in the old Ngoni system the village was also the significant unit, above which relationships were dominantly political and below which they were largely determined by the multiplex sentiments and activities arising out of kinship and domestic association. This is certainly so in modern Ngoniland, although the same principles of organization no longer apply at all levels.

I have described elsewhere the critical position of the modern Ngoni headman, linking the political system with the network of ties of kinship and co-residence operative within the village, and similar conditions have been reported elsewhere by Gluckman and Mitchell. Above the village, whether in a state or in a stateless society, relations are in the main between enduring groups and are defined with respect to interests vital to the survival of these groups, even if expressed in the idiom of kinship.[36]

Granted the existence of primitive states with continually segmenting political systems, such as the Zulu and Ngoni, it is then possible to look at from another point of view the various African political systems for which there is adequate information. In terms of political segmentation on a unilineal basis, states like the Ngoni and Zulu are closer in form to the stateless societies of the Nuer, Tallensi, Gusii and Logoli than to the Nupe and Kede states with their administrative systems largely independent of unilineal affiliation. To document this point fully would take us beyond the scope of this book; our purpose here is merely to emphasize the importance in comparative studies of examining political structures from more than one point of view.

When talking of states, we make the convenient distinction between internal and external political relations. No such simple distinction can be made with stateless societies, for in them relations which are external to one segment are internal to the next higher segment, and yet may still legitimately be regarded as political relations. The pre-Shakan chiefdoms of Zululand formed a system similar to the Tallensi maximal lineages, and we may speak therefore in that instance of a segmentary system regulating political relations between states. Ngoni external relations were not regulated in this way, for the Ngoni were isolated and unique in a region

[36] For this section, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* and 'Kinship among the Nuer'; Fortes, *Web of kinship*; Wagner, *Bantu of North Kavirondo*; Mayer, *Lineage principle in Gusii society*; Gluckman, 'Analysis of a social situation' and 'Kingdom of the Zulu'; Gluckman, *et al.*, 'Village headman'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[39] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[40]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[39] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[40] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-5; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Hera kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

61/ segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a seg-
63 ment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A
59/ residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in
62/ quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled
63/ peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require con-
12/ siderable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It
17/ seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting
61/ systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties.
62/ Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential
63/ system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there
[183] was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in
[171] many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the
61/ Swazi lineage,[41] and perhaps more widely, although in both these
62/ societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed
63/ as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[41] cf. Holleman, 'Twee-eenheidsbeginsel van die Zulu' and 'Zulu *isigodi*'; Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 729*f*, s.v. *isizinda*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mashanga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tsonga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tsinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[88] Swann's report for 1896, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.

[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.

[90] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 24; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 23; cf. Young, *History*, p. 112, who reverses the role played by witch-finders in this incident.

[91] As reported by Warton in June 1896, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.

[92] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 493.

[93] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingu, Nzermane, and Madzimawi.

[94] 282, fo. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

171 643 between rival heirs even while the occupant of the throne was still alive. The brothers Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fought for the heirship while their father Mpande was still chief.[55]

175 643 648 669 The apparent ineffectiveness of Mpezeni's rule may well have been due to the increasing segmentation of the State as it expanded and to the growing differentiation of interest between one major segment and another. As it happened, there was no civil war and the tribe did not split, at least not in these terms. A cleavage in the royal house did reveal itself later, in 1903, after British rule had begun, when Madzimawi tried to take the name of Zwangendaba and was opposed by the supporters of Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu. But by then the form of the State was already determined by political forces other than the balanced opposition of segments. It is significant of the changed situation that Madzimawi did not send his armed followers against the new Mpezeni to challenge his succession. Instead he applied to the Native Commissioner for permission to take the name of his grandfather.[56]

Instead of dividing in civil war the whole country united against the European interlopers. Mpezeni alone tried to protect his friend Wiese. The effective cleavage was not between rival heirs but between the Paramount Chief and his people. He was now a man in his sixties who seemed not to want war and who perhaps benefited more than his people from the presents made by Europeans. The Ngoni people continued to believe and teach that fighting was the proper occupation for men. An attempt to exploit this cleavage was made in 1897 when Wiese, perhaps remembering his earlier attempt to serve Portugal and Britain simultaneously, offered his services to the B.S.A. Company. Forbes thought that if Wiese was given troops, he would be supported by Mpezeni, who would then be in a position to hold Nsingu and the Ngoni warriors in check.[57] But this plan was overtaken by events.

64 721 We saw in the previous chapter that the organization of the State was based on warfare, not only on war as an activity bringing prestige to successful warriors but also on war as a method of recruitment to the ever-widening segments of the residential system. Without warfare to eliminate the unsuccessful and to bring 175 promotion and dependants to those who survived, the system could 439 not keep going. It was in no sense inevitable that the Fort Jameson 648 Ngoni and the British should fight; we have only to turn to the

[55] Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', pp. 35-6, and *Malinowski's Sociological Theories*, pp. 19-20; Krige, *Social system of the Zulu*, p. 19.
[56] See pp. 139 *f*.
[57] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of 571
hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control 574
imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many
people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, [439]
and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market. [311]

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as deter- [692]
mined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, 648
does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasa- 643
land counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the 611
same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours 178
in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy 171
and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for [249]
sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so;
recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and [464]
prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area.

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the 646
Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe 648
in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(a) *'Those from the south'*

These were the descendants of the leaders of the two main Ngoni groups represented by the two Ngoni kingdoms, with their followers, who left Natal during the wars of Shaka. They were South-eastern Bantu of Nguni stock, and when they were first encountered by Europeans in Nyasaland, the Europeans called them Zulus and spoke of their language as Zulu. Ngoni informants in the 1930's who were regarded as most reliable repudiated their relationship with the Zulu, and always referred to their ethnic origin as a people of Swazi stock. Y. M. Cibambo whose knowledge of Ngoni traditions was unrivalled, said in his book *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*—'Very many of them [the Ngoni] came from Swaziland, which is north of Zululand'.[1] A nostalgic refrain occurred in more than one of their traditional songs:

> Come let us go to Swaziland
> Where the people die fat.[2]

Cultural affinities between the Ngoni in Nyasaland and the people now living in Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, with the Zulu, will be examined in several chapters of this book. In the chapter on clan descent names in Part III, we shall compare the clan names called Swazi by the Ngoni with the lists of clan names given by Bryant in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* [3] and with the list given by Kuper, in *An African Aristocracy*,[4] of the Swazi and pre-Swazi clans. The military organization of the Ngoni, the age-set system which formed part of it, and other cultural features which will be discussed in Chapter III of this section, all show a general cultural affinity with the peoples of the northern Nguni group of the South-eastern Bantu.

The separation of the Ngoni group from the parent stock, which took place at about the same time as the Ndebele and the Shangaan groups fought their way north, occurred before the Swazi and Zulu kingdoms took final form. It is more correct, therefore, to say that Ngoni cultural affinities were with the northern Nguni group as a whole than to say they were off-shoots of either the Zulu or the Swazi. The Ngoni themselves used the designation 'Swazi' for the people with clan descent names whose ancestors left the south with the original party. Some of the older men remembered their fathers and grandfathers speaking of their clan as having belonged to the Ntungwa group, the Mtetwa group, the Msane group, before the departure of the Ngoni took place. This differentiation into pre-Swazi tribal and clan groupings was not in the 1930's one to which the Ngoni gave much attention. In talking about their southern origin it was the Swazi connexion which they emphasized.

[1] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Lutterworth Press, 1942, p. 8.
[2] Read, M. 'Songs of the Ngoni People.' *Bantu Studies*, March 1937, p. 10.
[3] Bryant, A. T. *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*. Longmans, 1929, pp. 681–97.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*. O.U.P., 1947, p. 233.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in the political organization. Some of these officials were also members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but many were not. The officials served the Paramount in his court and his administration, and also the chiefs, and formed the lines of communication between them. This created a network of relationships between the Paramount and the chiefs at the top level, and between the chiefs and the village headmen under them at the lower level. From this network were excluded, in the northern kingdom, all the *alumuzana* and, in the central kingdom, all those *alumuzana* who were not chiefs. In the two kingdoms the *alumuzana* exercised unofficial control over a varying number of villages, and were inclined to assert their social superiority because they were excluded from official recognition.

The foundations of the political structure within which the ruling aristocracy operated were a series of related institutions which will be described and analysed later in the book, but which must be referred to here, partly in order to explain the terminology used. The South-eastern Bantu, whose culture the Ngoni brought with them, had an institution in all important villages known as 'houses', which was a grouping of huts and of the wives owning them round the hut of one or more of the leading women. This institution, with its variations among the southern and northern Nguni people, was described by Mrs. Hoernlé in the chapter on 'Social Organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*.[1] The Ngoni institution of houses had developed from the basic pattern among the South-eastern Bantu into an independent form. In the first place it was only found in relation to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading men of the royal clan, and the *alumuzana*. It did not, as in South Africa, form the basic pattern of all villages in the Ngoni kingdoms. Where, as in most villages owned by *alumuzana*, mixed ethnic groups lived together, the house system existed only for the head of the clan, his brothers and his successor. It was specifically an Ngoni institution in the cultural and social sense. In the second place, the terms 'right-hand' and 'left-hand' house, common among the South-eastern Bantu, were not used by the Ngoni in the 1930's. The two terms they used were the 'big house' and the '*gogo* house', and I propose to use these terms here. The principle behind the use of these terms was that the big house was the one from which the heir should come to succeed the Paramount, the chief, or the *mulumuzana*. The *gogo* house was the one which was responsible for maintaining tradition and performing ritual.

Another institution, closely related to that of the houses, was the *lusungulu* and *gogo* villages. The Paramounts, the chiefs, and the leading *alumuzana*, when they succeeded their father after his death, moved out of his village and made their own new village, or took their households

[1] Schapera, I. (ed.). *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*. Routledge, 1937, chap. IV.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

In the 1930's, in the villages of the *alumuzana*, individuals with the same clan name formed patrilineal groups of an extended family type. The original *alumuzana* were the leaders of groups of persons bearing their clan descent name, who crossed the Zambesi under Zwangendaba or Mputa. In Part II we shall see how these *alumuzana* were settled in the Ngoni kingdoms round the royal villages, with the result that a group of villages of mixed ethnic origin came to be associated with the village regarded as the head village of a clan. Reference is made from time to time in this study to clan heads, and to the head villages of certain clans. There was no head of a Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan who was not regarded as a *mulumuzana*. On the ground that his ancestor crossed the Zambesi with his wives and followers, the head of such a clan was always given that title. In addition to the head village of a *mulumuzana* there were a number of other villages connected with the clan, created partly by the working of the *lusungulu* system of village segmentation, and partly by other sections of the larger villages moving off to make new gardens. The association of a number of villages owned by individuals with the same descent name was due to the original settlement of the *alumuzana* who were given land at varying distances from the royal village. When the Ngoni spoke of 'clan areas' this was the connotation they gave to the term. Village censuses showed that small family groups bearing the same descent name were scattered widely over a number of villages in several of the chiefs' areas. There was, however, in connexion with each clan an area of concentration round the head village where a number of families and individuals with that descent name were living. These were sometimes referred to as clan areas, using the name of the clan with the prefix *ma*, meaning the people of that clan, in central Ngoniland, and with the prefix *u*, meaning the land of the clan, in the northern kingdom.

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(c) *The ritual pattern*

In the rest of this study there will be descriptions and analyses of Ngoni marriage and funeral rites, of the puberty rites carried out for each boy and girl, but not in groups in initiation schools, and of the rituals associated with the ownership of cattle and with the ancestor cult. The marriage and funeral rites have South-eastern Bantu affinities, and so has the ritual associated with cattle-keeping and the ancestor cult. The northern Ngoni had a tradition that circumcision was practised among them when they left Natal, and that it was given up while they were in Tanganyika. Giving the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) to the men who were allowed to leave the regiments and settle as married men in civilian life was another ritual of southern origin which the Ngoni gave up soon after the kingdoms were established in Nyasaland.[1] The

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[1] The early Europeans in Nyasaland reported that head-rings were worn by all the senior Ngoni men.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

171 The distinctiveness of Ngoni institutions, so often emphasized by the older men and by the early travellers in Nyasaland, was due to cultural affinities with the South-eastern Bantu. The attached table sets out those social and cultural elements in the Ngoni kingdoms which were most distinct from parallel features among the neighbouring peoples, and which had obvious affinity with South-eastern Bantu cultures. The main Ngoni cultural elements have already been referred to in this chapter and will be further discussed in the rest of this study. The corresponding elements among the local peoples are based partly on the [127] earlier sources quoted by Tew and partly on local informants and my 114] own observations. In collecting information about clans, the *mbumba* group consisting of a man with his sisters' children, and the girls' initiation schools, I had no direct contacts with any except Cewa sources.

Variations in cultural conformity among the Ngoni

178 In the Ngoni kingdoms among families with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names there was considerable variation in the degree to 184 which they maintained Ngoni institutions and practised Ngoni cultural forms. The anthropologist was constantly aware that the time element was an important factor in the consolidation of Ngoni practices and in the attitudes developed towards Ngoni culture among the individuals in the different generations. The Ngoni in both kingdoms spoke of the 'older generations' (*mibadwo wa kale*), 'the middle generations' (*mibadwo wa mpkati*), and 'the present generation' (*mibadwo wa tsopano*). The first had grown to adulthood before the Europeans came, and were the older senior men and women in the 1930's; the second had been affected by [172] European missionaries, traders, and officials while they were young men and women; the third had never known anything but European contacts and many had grown up in European schools. The senior Ngoni of the [181] older generation often expressed the sentiment: *zatha zonse tsopano* (everything is finished now). They included in that saying the regrets of the older Ngoni for their former independence, and their resentment at the domination of European rule and European culture. It is idle to 177 speculate what cultural changes might have taken place in the Ngoni 178 kingdoms if European influence had been postponed another twenty to thirty years. Nevertheless it is a vital factor in assessing Ngoni culture that the kingdoms had barely twenty years of independent existence before the Europeans began to penetrate Nyasaland. The older Ngoni [181] looked back on their former independent existence as a golden age in which they were spreading Ngoni customs and culture as well as exercising political supremacy. It is difficult to believe that this was wholly true, in view of the extensive cultural interchange going on in the country as a whole. It is, however, possible that wider acceptance of Ngoni cultural elements was prevented by the advent of the Europeans, in so far as cultural institutions and political dominance were closely

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

701 allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.[1] Since he also had the
643 sole right of forming a new regiment of young men and giving it a name,
702 he controlled the intake to the army as well as the discharge of seasoned warriors.

The big war *induna* served directly under the Paramount. Associated
701 with him were other subordinate war leaders or *izinduna*, one of whom was always at the head of each regiment. Considerable emphasis was laid by Cibambo and other Ngoni informants on the essentially military character, in pre-European days, of the office and function of the *izinduna*, who were officials serving the whole kingdom. We shall see in Chapters III, IV and V how the term *induna* was also used for civil
[643] officials at the royal village and in the courts, as well as for the men in charge of sections of a village and of houses.

701 The account of the mobilization of the army shows that the Ngoni
171 had changed the system of military barracks concentrated about the capital, described by Gluckman as typical of the Zulu military organization and by Kuper for the Swazi. Gluckman said that the chiefs assembled their people in territorial, not age, divisions, and that the age regiments belonged to the king alone and lived in or near his capital.[2] In pre-European days the Ngoni, according to Cibambo and to other informants, had in their armies territorial divisions as well as age regiments, and there was no concentration of young warriors by age regiments round the Paramount's village.[3]

When a summons to war went forth, the warriors in the territory of
726 each chief or *mulumuzana* assembled at his head village as a *libandla*.
704 This included the warriors from the outlying villages and from the head
561 village. Cibambo's use of the term *libandla* emphasized that it was a territorial unit, divided into *mabuto* (which he called sections) on the basis of age.

When each *libandla* arrived at the Paramount's village ready for warfare, the different age groups within it joined up with their parallel age groups from other *mabandla* to form regiments. The Ngoni term for these national regiments was *mabuto*, the same term as that used for the age divisions of the *mabandla*. Old men who had been warriors in their
[703] youth expressed to me many times their immense pride in their own *libuto*, and it had for them something of the tradition and prestige of a famous school. They would recite the names of other *mabuto*, beginning with their own as the most recent, and going backwards through ten or more regimental names to those who had crossed the Zambesi with

703 [1] Cibambo in the text spoke of warriors wearing the head-ring. The usual practice, according to informants, was to give the head-ring at the end of service in the army. Cibambo may have been referring to former warriors with a head-ring putting on war-dress for a ceremony.

[2] Gluckman, M. 'The Kingdom of the Zulu', in *African Political Systems*, 1940, p. 31.

[3] One example of a concentration of young men was reported at the village of the Queen Mother in the central kingdom in 1898 in *The Central African Times*, see Memorandum XVI, International African Institute, 1938, p. 18.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

from the campaign and the purification of those who had killed any of the enemy. 726

Cibambo and other Ngoni informants had no idea of the size of the Ngoni armies beyond emphasizing that they were 'very big and very strong'. Evidence was forthcoming, however, from early European sources on the size of the armies which, though it can only have been based on guess-work, nevertheless gave an indication of the numbers involved. Dr. Elmslie referred in 1878 to having seen in the previous year an army of 10,000 of the northern Ngoni which went out in June and returned in September.[1] In the *B.C.A. Gazette* of December 1894, reference was made to the armies of the central Ngoni which were said to be, at the time of their last raids, 50,000 strong. In the *Blantyre District Note Book* there was an entry of 1884, giving no numbers for the army but reporting on the raid on Blantyre in that year when the 'vanguard of the army was composed entirely of young men in their first vigour of manhood, who were said to have marched 50 miles in half a day'. From such scanty references by Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni armies in the field consisted of large numbers, were highly organized, and trained to feats of endurance as well as in fighting skill. The Blantyre reference also brought out the authority of the big war *induna*, who was presented with cloth by the Moir brothers of the African Lakes Corporation as a bribe not to attack the Blantyre area again, and kept his promise. 701 175 [662]

Objectives in warfare

Dr. Kuper wrote of the Swazi military kingdom that wars were waged 'to extend the boundaries, to retain tribal independence and to secure internal solidarity'.[2] After the Ngoni kingdoms were set up in Nyasaland, warfare had the same objectives with the additional one of bringing back captives and cattle. In north Nyasaland Dr. Elmslie, in the reference already cited, wrote that, after the four months' campaigning the Ngoni armies returned 'laden with spoil in slaves, cattle and ivory'. Up to the coming of the Europeans many of the raids and wars took place in the hope of annexing additional territory. Dr. Elmslie wrote in 1878 of the Ngoni dominating an area of 30,000 square miles in north Nyasaland from the lake-shore to the Luangwa river. In central Nyasaland the *B.C.A. Gazette* of 1894 reported that the Ngoni Paramount ruled from the Lintippe river near Lilongwe to the Luvubwe river south of the Kirk Range. The chief challenge to Ngoni security in the northern kingdom came from the Bemba, and in the central kingdom from a combination of Yao and Arabs. Dr. Laws recorded in 1886 that the Ngoni, in their final victorious campaign against the Bemba, had 721 175 [171] [648]

[1] Elmslie, W. A. *Among the Wild Ngoni*. Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1899, p. 79.
[2] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organisation in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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[P. 116]

CHAPTER II

CLANS

614 171. [576]

In Chapter III of Part I we saw that the Ngoni clans had a particular role in their political and social organization. These clans had certain characteristics which distinguished them from the clans of the local peoples, and which they had in common with the Nguni group of the South-eastern Bantu. The use of the clan name in address and in thanking for gifts, the strict exogamy in the clans, and the hierarchy of rank among the clans—these were all of southern origin. Mrs. Hoernlé,[1] writing of the social organization among the northern Nguni, said that the clan was called *isibongo*, 'a word referring more particularly to the name of the group'. The Ngoni spoke of their clan name as their *cibongo*, and they generally added 'that is my thanking name'. Dr. Kuper [2] used the term clan for 'the furthest extension of kinsmen traced through the father or the mother'. She referred also to the sub-division of clans among the Swazi—a process of fission by which a section of a clan was known by a double name, so that the Nkosi clan became the Nkosi Gininza, the Nkosi Mamba, with other sub-divisions. These divisions eventually became recognized as separate clans, so that marriage could take place between them, and so that the heads of the sub-clans could achieve independence from the head of the original clan. It is possible that some development of this kind took place after the Ngoni left Natal for, as we shall see later in this chapter, there were among the Ngoni a number of clan names which they said emphatically were Swazi but which were not among those noted by Dr. Kuper [3] or by Bryant.[4] In tracing the early history of the Swazi Dr. Kuper [5] distinguished between two periods: the first, when small patrilineal clans were migrating southwards, and the second, when rival clan heads became petty chiefs having non-clansmen among their subjects. At the beginning of their northward march Zwangendaba and Ngwana, in addition to being military leaders, were petty chiefs of this type, each including among his followers members of his own clan as well as others.

The Swazi became a heterogeneous nation composed of people from over 70 clan descent groups, of which one-fifth were true Swazi, one-seventh were prior inhabitants of the territory, and the rest were migrants into the kingdom. The clan hierarchy which was part of the structure of the nation showed, as Dr. Kuper [6] pointed out, 'some connexion between the rank of a clan and the period at which it was

[1] Hoernlé, A. W., 'Social organisation', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 80.
[2] Op. cit., p. 111.
[3] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 11.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 11.
[5] *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, pp. 681–97.
[6] ibid. p. 113.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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incorporated into the nation'. This, as we saw in Chapter I of Part I, was what took place in the Ngoni kingdoms. By the time they settled in Nyasaland, a hierarchical relationship had been built up between the clans based on the length of time they had formed part of the Ngoni kingdom. As the Swazi had their true Swazi, 'those found ahead', and late comers, so the Ngoni had their 'Swazi' clans, others from across the Zambesi, those who joined from this side, and the local peoples. 614 171

Dr. Kuper [1] summarized her description of the Swazi clan hierarchy by saying that it was 'neither precise nor static . . . a certain degree of mobility is recognized amongst the élite'. The Ngoni too had their own ways of adjusting a somewhat rigid system to suit their needs in spite of their recognition of the ranking of clans, and the fact that in the 1930's the kingdoms were ruled by an aristocracy. As among the Swazi, officials were appointed who did not belong to Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans. Much importance was attached, as also among the Swazi, to 'marrying up' and a number of instances of this were recorded, particularly in the central kingdom. In such cases a man, when explaining who he was, often gave the name of his mother as well as that of his father in order to impress upon the inquirer that he came from Swazi stock on one side, though his clan name, being his father's, did not show it. 171 557 614

Since some discussion of clans comes into every section of this book it will be useful to summarize here the main characteristics of the Ngoni clans in the two kingdoms. We shall be referring exclusively to the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, except when others are specifically mentioned. 614

Each clan was primarily a group of people with a common name. The families bearing this name might be found throughout the Ngoni kingdoms and states, in the towns and elsewhere, as the census figures quoted in Chapter I, Part I show. Their kinship was recognized firstly through clan exogamy, and secondly through the fact that when Ngoni people met a fellow clansman, they greeted him with particular warmth and both individuals were prepared to render each other mutual service. I met a number of the younger educated Ngoni who set out on a journey in Nyasaland, or to Northern or Southern Rhodesia, with the express purpose of looking for fellow clansmen, getting hospitality from them, and inviting them to visit Nyasaland and receive return hospitality. I was present at one or two such meetings in Nyasaland between Ngoni from the two kingdoms and the conversation began by establishing what branch of the Moyo or Gama clan they belonged to, and where the head village was situated. Within each kingdom each clan had a head village, and the head of that village was the head of the clan. In most of the Swazi clans the head of the clan was acknowledged as a *mulumuzana*. This correlation between being head of a Swazi clan and being a [574] 614 622

[1] ibid. p. 233.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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CHAPTER III

HOUSES

361 171 823 WRITING of the social organization of the northern Nguni among the South-eastern Bantu, Mrs. Hoernlé[1] referred to three divisions of the typical village: the *indlunkulu* section where the principal hut was that of the mistress of the village; the *ikhohlo* section on the left-hand side of this hut, and the *inqadi* section on the right. The terminology used by the northern Nguni expressed right and left hand from the point of view of someone looking up from the gate of the kraal. I found that among the Ngoni they used right and left the other way as if the person were at the top of the kraal looking down at the gate, and I have adopted their usage.

171 361 554 Ngoni villages, which were royal villages or the head villages of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, also had a tripartite division into houses related to leading women, as we saw in the village plan in Chapter III of Part I, but there was a major difference between them and the northern Nguni grouping described by Mrs. Hoernlé. In Ngoni villages the *indlunkulu*, the hut at the head of the kraal, was occupied by the mother of the owner of the village, who had 'come out' with him from his father's village. In the right-hand section of the huts round the kraal was the hut of the owner's big wife, and on the left the hut of his next important wife. These three huts, representing three houses, were the focal points of the main divisions of the village. In fact in most villages the owner of the *indlunkulu* had the huts of other widows of her late husband beside her on each side, and the *cigodlo*, or section where the sons of the owner of the village lived, spread over a wide area behind the *indlunkulu* and behind the huts of the two chief wives. The plan used in Chapter III of Part I was necessarily simplified in order to bring out the main points. The grouping of huts in typical Ngoni villages showed varying degrees of elaboration, and it was not always easy at first to trace their connexions with the houses.

592 571 Houses in the Ngoni kingdoms could be considered as divisions of the village, though they did not always cover all the divisions. If we look at the membership of a house, as it was illustrated in a typical Ngoni village, it is clear that it had in it three elements connected by ties of kinship, affinity or association with the owner of the house, who was either a wife or a mother of the male owner of the village. The kinship group related to the *indlunkulu* comprised the male owner of the village, his mother and classificatory mothers with his brothers who had joined him. In the big house and in the second house of his wives the kinship

[1] op. cit. p. 83.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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binding contract. In theory at least the girl left her family for good once the agreed *lobola* was handed over, and the responsibility for adjustment to the family she had entered was hers, first as wife and then as mother. 581 593

Investigation of the terminology associated with the Ngoni concept of family immediately poses problems of relating group structure to individual and group relationships. Dr. Kuper did not refer to any single term for family among the Swazi. The nearest was the term *umuti* used for homestead[1] which covered a recognized leader and his dependents, in terms of common residence, mutual relations and economic activities. The Cewa term *banja*,[2] widely used in Nyasaland in the 1930's to translate 'family', in its general use was more akin to the Swazi *umuti* since it denoted the relationships of a group of people to one man, and their common residence in a single village or a section of a village. *Banja* was used to express relationship to one man by kinship and marriage, but when it was used among the central Ngoni it also applied to other individuals, such as his age mates and the descendants of his father's former captives who lived in the same village. Another Cewa term *mbumba* was used in two distinct senses. The common use was to express the relationship of one man with his sisters and their children who inherited his position and his property and looked to him for assistance. A much less common use of the term was found sometimes in central Nyasaland and occasionally in north Nyasaland to cover the group of a man and his children and his brothers and their children—a patrilineal concept of a kinship group which was usually but not always associated with common residence. 593 171

There was one major difference between the Ngoni concept inherent in their use of *banja* and that of the Cewa and other matrilineal peoples. When an important man or woman died among the Cewa, someone always 'entered their place' in the kinship system, and this acquiring of a new position involved a shift in actual relationships and in terminology throughout the group of kin. There was no such change among the Ngoni in the use of kinship terms. When a man or woman among the Ngoni entered a dead person's place it was in order to perform his functions and not to assume the dead person's kinship relationships. 171 768 602 593

The village lay-out in different types of Ngoni village illustrates the way in which family grouping could be recognized in the sharing of the same hut, in the grouping of huts, and in the relations with neighbouring villages. Later in this chapter illustrations will be given from the northern and central Ngoni kingdoms to show how certain patterns of residential grouping on a family basis were evolving from the divisions of mixed tribal groups characteristic of the former large villages of pre-European days. The general tendency in northern Ngoniland was to 621 593

[1] op. cit. p. 36.

[2] Scott and Hetherwick in their dictionary translate *banja*: house, home, household, family.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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her daughters had died, and the herd of cattle was either inherited by the senior daughter's eldest son or divided among the sons of different daughters. Cewa informants said that quarrels constantly arose over the ownership of cattle, and two modern developments—the spread of *utengwa*[1] marriage and of a patrilineal form of *mbumba* with its repercussions on cattle acquisition and disposal—caused further tensions in Cewa society.

The role which cattle played in Ngoni social life partly depended on the structure and inter-relationships of the Ngoni social groups. The house and the family within the larger village unit were so organized that group ownership and group disposal of cattle caused no permanent friction. There were arguments about the disposal of cattle, but they were temporary and relatively trivial. The strength of tradition in the concept of ownership, and in the values and attitudes inherent in cattle-owning and keeping, was firmly established and was related to modern needs by the ingenuity of the Ngoni in manipulating traditional practices to suit new situations. Cattle therefore strengthened the integration of existing social units, and helped to preserve that unity and cohesion in Ngoni society which the ancestors were said to commend and to wish for. On this plane of conformity to a required pattern, cattle influenced the living and their behaviour. They also, through the structure and function of the houses, belonged to the spirit who was guarded in a particular house. As we shall see in Chapter IV, the ritual formula of address to the ancestor at the sacrifice of a beast was always 'Here is your beast . . . Here is your meat.' The living and the dead were joined therefore in the common ownership of a herd or part of a herd. The actual practices in social and ritual life where cattle were concerned, and the ideas and concepts from which the practices arose, will take up most of this chapter and form the necessary prelude to the further analysis of the ancestor cult.

Ownership of cattle and care of herds

'The war of the cattle-tax' was the name given in the central kingdom to the installation of dipping tanks in the 1930's and the levying of a tax of a shilling per head of cattle on all cattle-owners. The attempt by the Government to focus responsibility for dipping and to collect the taxes due brought out clearly the difficulties of applying English conceptions of ownership to the Ngoni. In the English meaning of the word ownership, a man can claim as his possession cattle which he has bought or inherited, and their offspring. This individual ownership means that he alone has the right to sell the animals or their milk, to regard the profits from such sale as his, and at any time to kill an animal for meat. He can will them to his descendants or to anyone he chooses after his

[1] Marriages in which the man took his wife to live in his village, but did not give *lobola* for her.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

death, or he can give them to anyone he likes during his lifetime. Hence individual acquisition in the English sense involves the legal right of individual disposal; the individual possession of profits from such disposal; and the individual responsibility for complying with any regulations concerning cattle, such as inoculation, slaughter for foot-and-mouth disease, and testing of milk.

In Ngoni usage the concept of ownership involved the acquisition and disposal of, and the responsibility for, cattle, but behind this apparent similarity of terms lay a wide difference in interpretation. Cattle could be acquired by inheritance, by natural increase, by *lobola*, as payment in a court case, as a gift, or by purchase. Formerly cattle could be acquired in warfare and raiding, but never by purchase. With this exception of buying cattle for cash, the methods of acquiring cattle had not altered since the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland. In pre-European days in the Ngoni kingdoms only the Paramount, the subordinate chiefs, the *alumuzana* and the big *izinduna* possessed cattle. Having a herd marked the owner as a leading member of a leading clan, or as a famous warrior of a lesser clan whose distinguished war service had been rewarded by the Paramount giving him cattle, or allowing him to keep some of those he had taken from the enemy. New herds were formed when a Paramount or a chief moved out of his father's village and set up his own *lusungulu* village, taking with him one or more of his mothers who, together with his big wife, set up houses in the new village, and these houses were allotted cattle from the former undivided herd. Another way in which a herd was divided was when a big *induna* in charge of the house of a leading wife of a Paramount or a chief built a kraal for the cattle of that house near his own huts, and added to that herd any cattle which he acquired. Large Ngoni villages in pre-European days usually had one or more kraals on the edge of the village, as well as the big central one. When the large villages broke up and the *induna* moved off to found his own village, he still took care of the cattle of that house. If the house was one where an ancestral spirit was guarded, a successor was always appointed to live in the hut and guard the spirit. Hence the relationship of the house, its spirit guardian, its cattle and the *induna* in charge continued, though the personalities changed through death and for other reasons. This explained how in the 1930's cattle were found in one kraal which were said to belong to a house or a woman guardian of a spirit miles away in another village. Sometimes they were described as the cattle of a man long dead.

It is clear, therefore, that the Ngoni methods of acquiring cattle and building up herds did not result in a concept of individual ownership. Cattle were not willed from father to son, but the son of a Paramount or a chief, when he made his new *lusungulu* village, had the right to receive and to take with him the cattle of his mother's house; and the head of the *gogo* village who stayed behind also received and looked after the

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Cattle in the ancestor cult

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The Ngoni, unlike the Swazi as described by Dr. Kuper,[1] had no 769
clear ideas about the life after death as lived by their immediate ancestors 775
with whom they had associated in their lifetime. They did not, as the [177]
Swazi did, picture them living somewhere surrounded with cattle and other familiar creatures and objects. The importance of bringing the spirit back (*ukubuyisa idlozi*) to the house where it would be cared for signified two main things for them. The first was the continuous association of the spirit of the dead with the living persons in the community to which he had belonged, through the individuals belonging to the house, the actual hut where the sacrificial vessels were kept, and the cattle which belonged to the house. The other significant point was that contact with the returned spirit, and through him with the spirits of more remote ancestors, could only be established in the village containing the cattle of the house to which the dead man had belonged.

We shall be examining some aspects of the ritual of addressing the ancestral spirits in a later chapter of this section. Here we shall establish three constituent parts of the ancestor cult in which cattle were essential links between those taking part in the cult and the spirits whom they addressed. 764

The first part was the group of ceremonies which took place at death, 769
at the burial, at the first ritual shaving and at bringing back the spirit. 825
A text by Lopati Nzunga (see Chapter IV, p. 200) illustrates how three parts of a beast—the skin, the kidney fat (*nseso*) and the gall bladder (*nyongo*)—were considered essential for Ngoni burial. It was interesting [177]
to find in Blantyre among educated Ngoni who were Christians and occupied clerical and commercial posts, that they had given up the cow-skin for wrapping the corpse and substituted a coffin. But they admitted confidentially that in most Ngoni funerals the use of the *nseso* and the *nyongo* was customary. After the burial the ritual shaving, 765
shared in by all who attended the funeral, was accompanied by the 769
killing of a beast and the consumption of its meat, though with no ritual 825
significance beyond its association with the purification of the mourners and their integration as a group. From six to twelve months later the [783]
second shaving and the bringing back of the spirit was also accompanied by killing a beast and eating its meat. These ceremonies expressed the sense of loss felt for the human person who had died, the sorrow of the mourners, their successive acts of purification which served to bring them together, and the final bringing of the spirit to live among them again. As we have seen, each stage of the death and mourning rites was accompanied by the eating of a beast or the use of certain parts of a beast. The cattle of the house to which the dead person belonged were used to bury him or her, to strengthen the mourners, and to reintegrate the spirit with the living community.

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 186.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Dr. Kuper called the diviners among the Swazi 'the most powerful and respected specialists operating in both individual and national situations'.[1] I found that among the Ngoni also they were greatly respected once they had established their reputation for prophecy and diagnosis. Except on the occasions when they were called upon to carry out their functions the majority of diviners whom I saw in the 1930's lived in relative seclusion, and had no outward signs of power in any political or economic sense, though in the past some of the 'prophets' had also been warriors and leaders. Socially they were always shown great honour when they came in response to a call, or when they went visiting on non-professional occasions. They were addressed in a respectful tone of voice, given a mat to sit on, and village noises around them were hushed. They were, however, essentially recluses, withdrawn from public life except when they were called on to help in time of crisis, and they did not show any ostentation of wealth or position.

Dr. Kuper used the term 'specialist' to describe the diviners among the Swazi. In the Ngoni kingdoms there were many kinds of specialists owing to the existence of several tribal groups each with its traditional system of religion and magic, and each with varying methods of treating sickness, diagnosing the causes of misfortune, and interpreting omens and dreams. The diviners in the Ngoni kingdoms who were best known and on whom the greatest responsibility lay were those who were called by the Paramount in times of national crisis. Such responsibility and such fame had in pre-European days corresponding risks. The following story, which was told me in Hoho by Timoti Jere and which I heard quoted in several areas in the northern kingdom, puts in a traditional setting and with much circumstantial detail the kind of demands formerly made on diviners and the kind of treatment meted out to them:

¶ Zwangendaba in his coming out of South Africa arrived in the country of the Maculu at Mabiri. It is there now. When the *impi* was summoned it went out to contend for the country of the Sukuma. That *impi* wanted very much to be victorious, because it went to fight in two countries, in that of the Sukuma, where they took the long-horned cattle, and in that of the Ngonde, where they took the cattle without horns and with big humps. While the *impi* was away, the Paramount called all the *izinduna* and said 'Why has the *impi* delayed so long? Call the *izanusi* that they may divine. Perhaps the *impi* has run away and turned back.' Then the *izinduna* called the *izanusi*. In their divining they said 'The *impi* has run away and turned back.' There was one *izanusi*, his name was UMakhende Nkosi, who divined and said 'All the *impi* is there and it will return in this month. The long delay of the *impi* is because they have raided two countries, the country of the Sukuma with long-horned cattle and the country of the Ngonde with unhorned cattle.' It was so, and that month the *impi* returned and arrived at Mabiri with many herds of cattle as UMakhende Nkosi had said.

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 163.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

goods were handed over, the diviner thanked the giver in the customary manner, and his wife or child carried the gifts away. Informants said that leading Ngoni would never be mean in their payments to diviners, and that diviners of the upper grades would never bargain over their rewards. It was openly said that a leading diviner cared most for his reputation as a successful specialist, and that the kind of life he led and the sort of man he was did not induce a desire to be wealthy. 791

One aspect of the diviner's role among the Ngoni was that he, an individualist, was always summoned at the request of a group. In a case of sickness of one of its members, it was the family or the senior men of a house who summoned the diviner, and they gave him his reward and carried out his advice. When a family heard from the diviner that a sick member might recover if a sacrifice were made to their ancestors, they regarded the diviner, in Cibambo's phrase, as a go-between linking the living group and their dead ancestors. The diviner therefore, like the cattle, was an essential link in the relationship between the living and the dead. [769]

CHAPTER IV

THE RITUAL OF ADDRESSING THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS

In the course of the first three chapters of this section, and in earlier sections, many beliefs and practices have been discussed which bear on the ritual of the ancestor cult. In spite of the risk of some repetition it will be useful to bring together here in one chapter the main elements in the ritual, and in so doing to raise certain theoretical issues. 769

Dr. Kuper said[1] that among the Swazi, ancestor spirits were not worshipped, and she gave as the reasons for this statement that the spirits were addressed as living persons would be, being sometimes scolded and seldom thanked, and that indignation rather than humility was the attitude of the living when disasters befell them which might have been due to malice or carelessness on the part of the ancestors. Without entering into an argument on the nature of worship and its essential accompaniments, I would state that certain aspects of the Ngoni ancestor cult showed those features which are usually considered to be part of a people's worship. These were sacrifice, prayer, and purification, which, not necessarily in that order, were the main elements in the cult. There was, moreover, a connexion between the ancestor cult and ethical behaviour in Ngoni thinking. The guardianship of an ancestral spirit, involving much respect for the house to [171]

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 192.

child behaviour. Five of them appear to suggest values some of which have a place either in Nyakusa or Ngoni ideal personality patterns: self-reliance, obedience, responsibility, sociability, dominance. But there is at least one major difference between the approaches of Professor Wilson and Dr Whiting to the training of children. Professor Wilson is describing the values of Nyakusa adults and their effect on the bringing up of children. Dr Whiting has selected from a series of cultures certain typical or common forms of behaviour which might be displayed by children. These forms of behaviour might represent general social values, but they are not set in the context of any one culture, and the criterion is whether an observer saw a child displaying sociability rather than whether the society desired their children to show sociability and took steps to encourage it. This book was after all a manual to be usable in a number of cultural situations. His emphasis is nevertheless on the observed behaviour of selected children, and illustrates my point made in the early pages of this chapter; whereas Professor Wilson's emphasis was on the adult ideal personality to which, it was hoped, Nyakusa children would conform.

The existence of a 'system' in the upbringing of children, a system set up by a society and under its control, posed a number of questions. Clyde Kluckhohn in several of his books has for a long time provided me with clues in the study of 'systems', and many of these clues are summarized in the chapter on Personality and Culture in his book *Mirror for Man*. Especially in two directions these clues have proved helpful: in his distinction between two kinds of cultural learning, technical and regulatory, or acquiring skills and learning to behave, the latter taking place in the early years of chilhhood, and acquiring skills in later years; and in his theme of predictability, illustrated in this quotation: 'A definition of socialization in any culture is the predictability of an individual's daily behaviour in various defined situations. . . . When a person behaves most of the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Some of these
surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some 342
repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage 351
for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several re- [128]
spects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance
of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish
between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of [171]
the household objects were indeed the same as those used by
other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration
about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept
in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural
significance about some of the features of Ngoni households
mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found else-
where.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at
weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was
full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 342
'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right
hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with
interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical
roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and [824]
decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in [237]
four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two
main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling.
Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters
and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which [251]
gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this
platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for
the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots [354]
were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the
back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which
were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots hold- [415]
ing water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut
was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by
the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the
back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front 351
of the hut was a well-swept space, mudded and polished in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

then meant running out of the compound to the freedom of the village. At that time young children might behave outrageously and be punished for it, but they were not held accountable. The nurse girls and the mother, or some other adult, was blamed for letting the child grow up with such an uncontrolled temper or appetite or tongue. Once children were recognized as having passed the young child stage, that is when they had their second teeth, they themselves were held accountable for their behaviour and punished more severely, even though parents were also blamed for careless upbringing. The social sanctions of rebuke and ridicule, which began to operate in the later years of young childhood to only a limited extent, were now seen in their full force, made use of by adults, and still more effectively by the children's own age-mates. The fear of estrangement, of social ostracism as the penalty for failing to conform to the required manners and ways of living, had increasing force as the children grew older. As little children they were buttressed and protected by adults in their childish quarrels with, and moods and attitudes towards, other children. As boys in the dormitory and as girls in the girls' circle they had no longer such protection, and the result was that they became increasingly sensitive to the opinion of their peers. Professor Wilson in her study of Nyakusa age-villages, has called this social awareness the quality known as 'being good company'—getting on well with their contemporaries.

It was at this stage, at the beginning of the children's newly-found independence, that the ear-piercing ceremony took place. In contrast with the neighbouring peoples, the Ngoni had no facial or body markings, and it was the pierced ears which showed they were true Ngoni. In the days of warfare, captives, especially boys and men, were forcibly made to have their ears pierced, and hence a number of men in the Ngoni kingdoms who were not of Ngoni clans were found with pierced ears. Sometimes their children went to their parents and said, 'We want to be made Ngoni now.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4
Cewa

The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual

N 881 182 We now come back to the question of why the Ngoni held to this private ritual for girls and boys at puberty. There were three main reasons. The first was that each Ngoni child belonged to his or her father's house. At this sign of physical maturity, significant for the boy or girl, and for the society, the elders of the house asserted anew their authority over them, performed a brief traditional ritual, and watched during the ritual for evidence of the Ngoni personality traits of courage and physical endurance which they expected to see in young adults. The second reason was that the change at puberty was regarded as marking only one of the stages in the development of growing boys and girls. It is true it had more significance for girls, in that it set the mature girls apart as a separate group. But it was not the prelude to immediate M [881] marriage, as the girls' initiation school was among the neighbouring Cewa people; nor was it in old days the prelude for N [171] the boys joining the army. The third reason was that the Ngoni did not regard fertility as the major dominant factor N [842] in the development of young women, as it undoubtedly was considered among the Cewa. They greatly disliked the ritual and the significance of the Cewa female initiation rites and forbade Ngoni women to have any part in them. Potency N [833] among men, on the other hand, was recognized as important both for the individual and for the social group, and impotence, particularly in leading men, was kept secret and hidden from outside knowledge as far as possible. If an Ngoni N [842] woman after marriage did not bear children, it was not con- [595] sidered a stigma on her, either individually or socially. The [597] common practice of marrying one of her sisters as a 'substitute', or the very common practice of adoption was resorted to. The latter was always referred to as 'putting a child into the house of So and so'.

N 881 171 One of the alleged objects of initiation schools among other ethnic groups was to instruct the young initiates in correct

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave. 881 171

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasaland had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's family were taken from the herd belonging to that house. 177 561 641 561 [702] [464] 885 [302] [836] [591] [583]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him. Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions, villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance. The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters, a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigaŵa*, pl. *sigaŵa*, from *ku-gaŵa*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
428 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[729] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount
[581] Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was, in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

511 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[178] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife
602 fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Chief did however interfere
643 to some extent in the marriages of those near him and on occasion took away a wife from one man and gave her as wife to another. Nsingu, the heir of Mpezeni I, once took a wife from one of the important men in his mother's royal village and made her his queen.
[762] The man committed suicide and Nsingu killed a beast to placate the anger of his mother's lieutenants. Such instances of intervention seem to have been rare and were disliked by the common people.

6. Polygyny

592 The pattern of growth of the residential system was determined by the grouping of children in the compound family. This grouping was in turn determined by the ranking of wives. It seems that the
595 South-Eastern Bantu system of dividing wives into three groups,
[171] a great house and a left- and a right-hand house was not continued. Old men are agreed that in the past wives could be described as either left-hand or right-hand, but there is no agreement on the principles of this division. In discussing the wives of well-known men who flourished about this period, there was no consensus about which women were left-hand wives and which were right. The division cannot in any case have had the same spatial reference to the husband's cattle byre as among the South-Eastern Bantu,
[361] since the Ngoni lived in large villages with a central byre containing all the cattle of the village.

595 Wives were arranged into small groups which we may term 'bands'. A band might contain up to a dozen co-wives and was
592 under the charge of its senior member. Wives in a band lived close to each other in the same cluster of huts. A man might have as many as five or six bands of wives, and the senior wife of one of the bands was the man's great wife, the mother of his heir. We have seen that a cross-cousin was inferior to an unrelated wife, and a wife from the same or related village inferior to one from afar. These two considerations, however, seem only to have influenced a man's choice of senior wives and did not themselves directly determine wifely rank. Thus a man could if he wished make a cross-cousin from his own village his great wife or the senior wife of one of his bands, but most men did not do so. The first wife married with bridewealth was the great wife. If there was a wife married earlier for whom no bridewealth had been paid, perhaps a cross-cousin or a recently captured woman, then she became subordinate to the chief wife and was regarded as a member of her band. Wives married subsequently were attached to this band until the husband decided to start another band. He took either one of the wives of his great wife's band or else a newly acquired wife, and established a new cluster of huts for her. Some other members of the great wife's band might be transferred to the new band, as subordinates of the newly promoted wife. As the man continued to take new wives they were allocated to one or other of the existing bands. If the husband was an important man he allocated to each

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her pro-husband. If there was no younger brother the pro-husband was one of her husband's junior patrilineal kinsmen of his own generation. She could not refuse a pro-husband although her husband's brothers could choose not to provide her with a pro-husband if they so wished. The widow continued to live in her own cluster where her pro-husband came to visit her. Rattray states that widows waited one year after their husband's death before their re-marriage was settled[23] and this is nowadays the traditional procedure. Wiese, however, writes that widows waited four years before they could marry again.[24] The children begotten by the pro-husband were regarded as children of the dead man for social purposes but the identity of their genitor was not disguised. They called him *father*, but this was as much because he was their dead pater's brother and their mother's pro-husband as because he was their genitor.

The same principle of substitution was applied to betrothal. If a man died before marrying a girl to whom he was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger brother or a classificatory brother. If a girl died before marrying the man to whom she was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger sister. Unlike the operation of the levirate, however, the children of this type of marriage were regarded as the children of their genitor and genetrix for all purposes, as though their parents had been betrothed to each other in the first place. Again, unlike the levirate, if a man considered himself too old when his betrothed became marriageable he might give her instead to his son as a wife. The children of this marriage were also regarded for all purposes as the children of their genitor and genetrix.

Occasionally a woman whose husband died young, went to live with a man who was not her dead husband's brother, real or classificatory. The pro-husband gave a goat to the woman, but if bride-wealth had been offered for her by her first husband, the pro-husband could never gain permanent custody of the children. The children that she bore by him belonged to the segment of the dead man, took his descent name, and when old enough went to live in his segment. When the dead man's kinsmen claimed these children, they gave a beast to their genitor 'to straighten his back', that is, for his labour in begetting them. This arrangement is in some ways analagous to Nuer widow-concubinage[25] but with the important difference that the pro-husband, although not a kinsman of the dead man, had rights in the widow as a wife and an exclusive right to her sexual services. It seems that the status of a widow living in this kind of union was not low. In one instance I heard of, very aristocratic families were involved, and the arrangement appears to have been

[23] Rattray, op. cit., p. 97.
[24] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 474, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192.
[25] Cf. Evans-Pritchard, *Some Aspects of Marriage and Family Among the Nuer* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Eleven), p. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The precise significance of these ratios need not concern us here. It is sufficient to note that they indicate that divorce among the Ngoni is more frequent than it is among the Nguni people from whom they first came where divorce is said to be 'rare'.[36] The Ngoni ratios are closer to the Lamba and Bemba than to the Tswana.[37] The indication is that Ngoni informants are right when they assert that divorce is much more frequent than it used to be, for it seems legitimate to suppose that in former times the Ngoni were more like their Nguni forbears, in this as in other things, than they are now.

Once agreed upon, either at the court or in the village, divorce

Table IX. Marital experience of males, by age, 1948-9

Present age in years	Marital experience													
	All males								Wedded males only					
	Number of marriages entered into since birth								Number of divorces experienced since birth					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0–4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	51	–	–	–	–	–	0
5–9	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	61	–	–	–	–	–	0
10–14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	55	–	–	–	–	–	0
15–19	28	3	–	–	–	–	–	31	2	1	–	–	–	3
20–24	14	5	–	–	–	–	1	20	5	–	–	–	1	6
25–29	–	12	3	–	–	–	1	16	11	4	–	–	1	16
30–34	–	6	2	–	–	–	–	8	4	4	–	–	–	8
35–39	–	8	6	1	2	–	–	17	10	6	1	–	–	17
40–44	–	3	1	2	1	1	–	8	4	3	1	–	–	8
45–49	–	4	3	–	1	–	1	9	5	2	1	–	1	9
50–54	–	3	2	–	–	–	1	6	4	1	–	–	1	6
55–59	–	5	1	2	–	1	1	10	5	3	–	1	1	10
60–64	–	3	3	3	1	1	–	11	7	2	–	2	–	11
65–69	–	1	5	1	3	–	–	10	4	6	–	–	–	10
70–74	–	–	1	1	1	–	–	3	1	1	1	–	–	3
75–79	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	2	1	1	–	–	–	2
Not known	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	7	–	–	–	–	7	7
Total	209	53	28	11	9	3	12	325	63	34	4	3	12	116

[36] Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage among the Lozi of Northern Rhodesia and the Zulu of Natal', in Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, eds., *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 204.

[37] Gluckman in Mitchell and Barnes, 'The Lamba Village: report of a social survey' (*Communications from the School of African Studies*, University of Cape Town, new series No. 24), pp. 15 ff., and Richards, op. cit. p. 120.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

584 or friends. If the man is away working or in the Army he may make his proposal by letter. When agreement has been reached negotiations can proceed although they are carried on as if there had been no prior agreement and the proposal was entirely a new one.

A man tells his eldest brother of his intention to marry, or, if he is the eldest son, he may approach his father direct. He does not [593] speak to his mother about this matter, for a man does not confide in his mother about anything connected with sex, but she is told of his intention by her husband. A man ought to tell his grand- [603] mother at an early stage, particularly the grandmother who reared him. A woman tells her sisters and her grandmother, and her eldest sister will tell her eldest brother. The man's father or eldest brother may decide on who shall act as intermediaries in the matchmaking, or else the man may himself ask important people in the village to act. There is no definite rule as to who they should be, and either men or women or both may make up the party. Usually two or three people go, and a man will try and choose people who are reliable and sober and tactful. Marriage intermediaries do not have the same important responsibilities for the marriage as do the marriage [191] sureties (or witnesses) among the Nyanja and Yao although they are known by the same term.[3] The intermediaries go to the woman's village and consult her senior relatives. Traditionally they should go to the woman's grandmother, either her father's mother or her mother's mother, depending on who lives in the village and who is the more important. They tell her that they have heard that such-and-such a marriage has been contemplated. The girl's grandmother tells the girl's father that the intermediaries have come, and if nothing has arisen to jeopardize the marriage, the visiting party are told that all is well and that they must come back again. They return to their own village, and the next day, or the next week if it is a long way to walk, they go again, bringing with them a gift or some- times the legalization payment. The gift or money is handed to the [583] person leading the negotiations on the woman's side who passes it on to the woman's father. Arrangements are made about the gall bladder ceremony and a date fixed. The intermediaries then go back to their village.

585 At the gall bladder ceremony the bride receives formal advice [591] from her affines and the people in their village. Shortly afterwards she begins to live with her husband in either his or her village. If they live virilocally she does not at first cook for her husband, but the couple rely on food prepared by his other wives or his mother or [593] grandmother. It may be up to a year later that the woman first cooks for her husband and husband's father, the latter commenting on her cooking. When she first becomes pregnant she is anointed 843 by her husband's grandmother, and goes with a young girl from her husband's kinsfolk to announce her pregnancy to her own kin.

[3] *Nkhoswe.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and have the money to spare, they may buy her clothes. The only ways in which she can raise money easily for herself are by brewing beer, making pots, and working on the farms. To work on a farm she must, however, remove herself from the surveillance of her husband's kin, and unless she goes to join a contingent from their village working at the farm, they may think she is running away from them to seek a lover or new husband. We have seen, however, from Table XIV that significantly more wives whose husbands are away live uxorilocally. 593 167 [591]

Many husbands write home, not only to their wives, and some remit postal orders and bank-notes. A man may get a friend who is returning from Southern Rhodesia to take home blankets and other bulky articles to be handed over to his wife. He may send presents like these direct to his wife or he may think it more prudent to send them to his father or brother and allow them to hand on to his wife as much as they think fit. The woman must then behave herself in the eyes of her affines if she wishes to receive her husband's presents. The acceptance of these gifts is taken as proof that the woman is still dependent on her husband however long he stays away. If the woman applies to the court for a divorce on the ground of desertion, the presents will be cited by her husband's kinsfolk as evidence that there is no intention on his part to desert. Gluckman reports from the Lozi that even if a man sends goods, after a statutory period the court will hold that 'a woman marries a man and not a blanket', that is, the husband must return to look after and sleep with his wife as well as send clothes to her. This argument is not used among the Ngoni. A woman who complains that she is not satisfied with marriage under these conditions is told to write to her absent husband and ask him for the fare to join him in Southern Rhodesia. [586] [171]

Case history 10

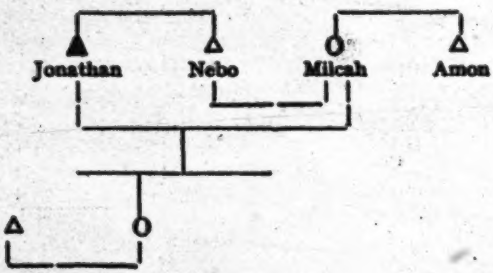
Saul was working in Nyasaland. He sent home to his wife 7*s*. 6*d*. for clothes. Later she wrote to him saying she wanted him to return. He sent her 15*s*., being 5*s*. for clothes and 10*s*. bus fare so that she could join him. She did not go and later went to the court complaining she had been deserted. Her husband's relatives argued, to the satisfaction of the court, that as her husband had sent her these gifts he was still taking care of her. The court dismissed her plea as she had refused to go to Nyasaland when the fare had been sent. [586]

The husband's relatives try to watch carefully the movements of the woman so that they may prevent or at least report any adultery on her part. If they are in touch with the husband, they write to him should they suspect infidelity. Sometimes the husband ignores their letter, sometimes he gives them instructions how they should proceed in the matter, and sometimes he returns to the village to see for himself what is going on. He arrives without warning and hopes to catch his wife in the act. If all is well and he is satisfied that his wife has been faithful he usually goes back to work again. 593 167 602

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Case history 12

593
583



[601]

Nebo inherited the wife, Milcah, of his elder brother Jonathan. Neither brother paid bridewealth. One of the daughters of Jonathan and Milcah was married and the legalization payment for her taken by Nebo. In 1947 Nebo brought his wife to court to divorce her. He said that she was always committing adultery and he was afraid that one day he would kill her in anger. Milcah's brother Amon complained that Nebo had taken the legalization payment of Jonathan's daughter, and insisted that if there was a divorce custody of all Milcah's children should be given to him. This was accepted by the court, who told Nebo that if he wanted the children he must pay bridewealth. The divorce was granted and £3 damages awarded to Milcah. The payment of bridewealth was left undecided. [586]

in marriage, and some people are beginning to confuse the rights originally transferred by it with the rights *in genetricem* associated with bridewealth. The vernacular term for the legalization payment (*cimalo*) is common to many tribes in the Eastern Province, whereas that for bridewealth (*malowolo*) is peculiar to the Ngoni. Bridewealth is not recorded on the marriage certificate whereas the legalization payment is. It is possible that while the rights *in genetricem* relating to the residence of the children of the marriage will remain indefinite and unenforceable, rights *in genetricem* relating to the acceptance of legalization payments for the daughters of the marriage will become attached to the legalization payment itself. This trend is illustrated by the following incident. [171]

Case history 13

Simon had been married for many years and his daughter was being sought in marriage. Simon's wife's brother Nimshi came to see him to remind him that he had not yet handed over either the legalization payment or bridewealth for his wife. Simon admitted this. Nimshi said that someone would soon be offering a legalization payment for Simon's daughter. If Simon wanted to keep the money he must first offer the legalization payment in his own marriage. Simon paid Nimshi and kept the payment for his daughter.

Here Nimshi held that the legalization payment offered by Simon entitled Simon to keep the legalization payment offered for his daughter. According to traditional usage Nimshi should have insisted that Simon paid bridewealth not merely the legalization

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

486 if the latter is unable to leave the area legally.[38] Various devices
562 have been introduced to prevent women from using other people's passes, such as recording finger-prints on the certificate. On the other hand there are a great variety of ways in which women contrive to leave the area without a proper pass, such as marrying the bus driver for the duration of the journey, getting off the bus and walking round the control points, and so on.

13. The Administration and the missions

648 Under the Laws of Northern Rhodesia, which guide the Adminis-
671 tration, the only valid marriages between Africans are those
581 performed in accordance with 'customary tribal law'. There has never been any systematic attempt to codify the rules implied by this
586 phrase, and in any particular case that comes before the Administration's courts, the views of individual African assessors must carry weight. The tendency has been to try and discover what used to happen in the old days rather than what was the *de facto* law at the time. On the other hand, there appears to have been a feeling that women were entitled to certain rights in equity that may perhaps have been associated with the proviso that 'customary tribal law' shall not be administered when it is 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. The Administration has certainly been sympathetic towards deserted wives seeking divorce and has encouraged Native Courts to allow their pleas where the husband has been many years away and has not written home. In the past the District Officer on tour has divorced batches of women who had applied in vain to the Native Courts for divorce on the ground of desertion. It has been argued by the Administration that since chiefs depend on the gifts of returned labour migrants to supplement their own income, they are reluctant to offend men by divorcing their wives in their absence. There are fewer divorces, in relation to the same number
[171] of pleas, granted in Ngoni courts than among the neighbouring Cewa, who are subject to the same Administrative and mission influences. The Ngoni find no consolation in this comparison. They merely observe that there are more divorces now than there used to be, and blame the Whites for the change.

791 The missions are all concerned with the development of Christian
581 marriage, but their ideas as to what this is differ from one denomination to another, as do their views on the relationship
586 of Christian to other types of marriage. The White Fathers and the Universities Mission to Central Africa do not allow divorce, while the Dutch Reformed Church Mission does. The U.M.C.A. insist that all 'customary obligations' shall be fulfilled before a marriage can be solemnized between Christians, the White Fathers

[38] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 245f for the rules regulating the movement of women beyond Fort Jameson District.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 602 to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

N 753 182 626 The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugola* supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory N 755 754 it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even N 626 the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, N although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern [171] Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other N M people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at [626] both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugola* [177] and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[5]

N 753 834 164 To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an N efficient deterrent of adultery.

581 Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you N may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable 602 and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[5] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

583 rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled
586 affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another
178 in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[10] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the
[436] contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year
[191] of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the
[465] rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in
[435] bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call
[641] on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group,
[581] so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for
[613] stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor
[183] sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the
121 Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may
121 be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes.
586 Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[10] *ibid*, p. 172.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rare divorce, has survived despite loss of sovereignty, territorial dispersal, economic impoverishment, high incidence of labour migration, and frequent adultery and illegitimacy.[11] The Ngoni, subjected to similar external processes, but in addition surrounded by matrilineal peoples and themselves largely of matrilineal origin, have lost their agnatic affiliation and, with it, stable marriage.

It is difficult to see exactly where this trend will lead. The third phase, as I have characterized it, is a recent development. There does not seem to have been any sharp rise in marriage payments until the 1939-45 war. During the war many Ngoni men earned higher wages than ever before in the Army and in industry. It may have been this that was decisive in raising the level of payments. It will be remembered that the thirty shillings minimum for the legalization payment was fixed by law during the war. It may, however, be suggested that if it is hoped by raising the level of payments to achieve stability in marriage, this hope is in vain. Payments may rise if people are in a position to pay more. Higher wages permit higher marriage payments without necessitating further changes in economic life, but in fact these changes are already taking place. Money is needed for more clothes, more food, more education, as well as for higher marriage payments. Payments rise as Africans participate increasingly in the general money economy of Southern Africa. The more they participate, the less marriage is constrained by a kinship structure based on morally significant face-to-face relations between agnates. The higher payments rise the more frequent becomes divorce. This is not a long-term prognosis, for I have indicated above that affiliation is not the only possible determining factor, and it is clear that if more people align themselves with those missions which do not permit divorce, the frequency of divorce as a whole may decline. There are other possibilities, but it seems to me unlikely that any of these other social mechanisms will become effective quickly; therefore the most probable concomitant of a rise in marriage payments in the immediate future is more frequent divorce.

Thus we see that at least for the Ngoni, changes in the amount and distribution of property have had a marked effect on the level of marriage payments, and that this effect can to some extent be isolated from that due to changes in kinship structure and in divorce frequency.

10. Attempts to resist change

The major structural changes taking place in Ngoni society in the last fifty years have not come about entirely unopposed. The Administration, the missions, and the Ngoni people themselves have noticed from year to year how the old order was changing and with varying success have made attempts to control the direction of change.

[11] Cf. information from Kark cited by Gluckman, op. cit., p. 204, footnote 1

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

M 175

Livingstone found chief Mwase, at Kasungu, ruling over "a section of Mang'anja, called Machewa, or Macheba[1]."

M 175 648 [241] [167]

For some years the Achewa enjoyed a peaceful existence in their new home, keeping cattle, but living mainly by agriculture, until their tranquility was disturbed by the Ngoni invasion and by the slave raids of the Jumbe[2] at Kota Kota. By these the eastern branch of Achewa was continually harassed; and consequently in 1893 Dzoole, Kanyenda and others of the house of Karonga moved south to the Kasungadzi and Mtiti Rivers, and in 1896 handed over this part of the country to the protection of the British Government.

N 175 101 N 174

The Angoni, under the name of Mazitu, were described by Livingstone as Zulus,[3] and this terminological error has been copied by more than one subsequent writer. Of their earlier wanderings no record has been traced. Owing, perhaps, to their lighter colour it has been surmised that they came from far up the east coast; but it is known that under the style of Abe-nguni, derived from an ancient chief Mnguni, they were settled on the Dedesi, a small tributary of the upper St. John's River, when the Aba-mbo first arrived in Natal about 1620.[4] In this locality they remained for a couple of centuries, till towards the end of his reign the notorious Zulu king Chaka fell upon their allies the Ama-ndwandwe under Zwide. A section of the Abe-nguni then migrated northwards under Zwangendaba; and wherever they went they fought and subdued the peoples through whose country they passed, seizing cattle and incorporating captives in their own tribe. After raiding the Aba-suto, Ama-swazi, Aba-thonga[5] and Ama-kalanga, they crossed the Zambezi near Zumbo at the time of the total eclipse of the sun on the 19th of November, 1835,[6] and overran the territories of the Aba-senga, A-tumbuka, A-safwa and A-mandewere till they came to the land of the Wa-fipa and Wa-sukuma.

Here Zwangendaba (or Songandawa, as he is generally called in Nyasaland) died, and his following broke up and scattered in different directions. While others advanced to the north and east, four sections turned back, one under Mombera to the Tumbuka country, another under Mpezeni to the Loangwa river, the third under Chiwere to Dowa, and the fourth under Chikusi still further south. It is with the third section that we are now dealing. The hybrid nature of the Dowa Angoni can be inferred from the list of clans given in a subsequent section (IV, 2). During the last four decades they have intermarried still further with the Achewa, and there are now few, if any, pure-blooded Angoni in the district. Their paramount chief, Chiwere, though calling himself an Mngoni, is in reality an Msenga.

N 101 M N 648 M N 171 121

The general features, characteristics and habits of these peoples are akin to those of neighbouring tribes which have been described by the Reverend Duff Macdonald,[7] Miss Alice Werner

[1] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, pp. 526, 548.

[2] A coast Arab, acting as *wali*, or representative, of the Sultan of Zanzibar.

[3] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, p. 381.

[4] Eric A. Walker: *Historical Atlas of South Africa*, p. 6. J. H. Soga: *The South-Eastern Bantu*, pp. 81, *et seq.*

[5] In ph and th each consonant is pronounced. Similarly, in ea and oo each vowel is pronounced.

[6] E. H. L. Poole: *Journal African Society*, vol. xxix, No. cxv, p. 290.

[7] Rev. Duff Macdonald, *Africana*. Miss Alice Werner, *The Natives of British Central Africa*. Dr. H. S. Stannus, *The Wayao of Nyasaland*, Harvard African Studies III, *Varia Africana* III, pp. 229-372, "Notes on Some Tribes of British Central Africa," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl, 1910, pp. 285-385, etc., etc.

7: Hodgson . G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

Dr. H. S. Stannus and other writers, and I have attempted, therefore, in the following pages to confine myself to matters which, so far as I know, have not been recorded fully elsewhere. The present tense is generally used, though in many instances, during forty years of contact with missionary and other European influence, the custom described may have fallen wholly or partially into desuetude. Except where otherwise stated, the notes may be taken as referring to the Chewa tribe.

II. Domestic Life: Marital.

1. *Mdulo.* (*Chewa*).

Mdulo (a noun derived from *ku-dula*, to cut or break off) is the causing of illness in oneself or another person by indulging in sexual intercourse at prohibited times, or, more rarely, by abstaining therefrom when it is prescribed. The following are examples of cases in which the misfortune of *mdulo* is conferred:

(*a*) Upon a husband by his wife if he eats food into which she has put salt either during her periods or after she has committed adultery.

(*b*) Upon an unweaned child by its father—

(1) if he fails to achieve connexion after its birth (*vide infra* II, 7);

(2) if he commits adultery in his own house when the child is there;

(3) if he has connexion with his wife on the child's blanket when the child is sleeping in the house; or

(4) if he occupies the same house with two wives, and has connexion with the other in the temporary absence of the child and its mother.

(*c*) Upon an unweaned child by its mother if she leaves its *mbereko*[1] outside the house while she has intercourse and afterwards puts the child into it again. In the event of such a contretemps the *mbereko* must always be given away to someone else.

(*d*) Upon the womb of a wife by her husband—

(1) if he commits adultery when she is pregnant and then eats with her out of the same pot.

(2) When a man has two wives, he normally spends a week or two with each in turn. If, when one is pregnant, he leaves her for an abnormally long period, he must not return to her until after she has given birth, otherwise he will thereby "cut off" the womb. The result of this misadventure is that the wife will die in child-birth, or the child will be still-born or will die shortly after birth.

(*e*) Upon a boy in the *bwalo*[2] by his parents—

(1) when the boy comes to their house in their absence and helps himself to meat or food from a pot, if the parents have intercourse on their return and then give him meat from the same piece or food from the pot;

[1] *Mbereko*, the cloth or skin fastened round a mother's neck or shoulder and slung on her back, in which she carries her child till it is weaned, that is, till it has reached the age of two or three years. The *mbereko*, when made of tanned skin is often decorated gaily with beads. *Ku-beba* is the verb meaning to carry in this way.

[2] *Bwalo*, the communal open space in a village. Boys of five or six years of age, who are too old to continue to sleep with their parents, go to a communal hut until they are married. This hut is known as the "*bwalo*" hut, and the boys are said to be "in the *bwalo*."

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and [231] chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 619 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2-3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Malumunana*, pl. *alumunana*. [4] *Nduna*, pl. *nduna*.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 159 173 562 N M 171 643 842 851

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze*.

N 159 173 562 [595] N [764] [A23]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Loziwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtenguleni Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchiza* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

N 159 173 595 842 602

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jere; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 644

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality 595
of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes
that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have [191]
100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's
matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil
custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And
when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it
must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry 177
till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full [582]
grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But
now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the
Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse
marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this
serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday,
at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock.
But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by
appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have
reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am
satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his 583
father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery
varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would
marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as
much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or
three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages,
for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth,
and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable 562
ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a 565
considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But
the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than
that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out
with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this
exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for 462
many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the [171]
woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women
went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, [243]
while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the
grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. [252]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

243 forest is cut down and burnt, and another garden cultivated, and so the country is rapidly being deforested. The crop is largely used to make a heady beer, and although Central Africa has been 213 happily saved from the curse of European liquor, the native beer is a great source of big drunken bouts. Heavy drinking, however, does not bring the evil effects that brandy drunkenness would entail. The drink is a nutritious and a very sustaining food. I know some of the old chiefs who are drunk almost every day of their lives by midday, yet they bear up wonderfully. But [579] these drunken bouts, when whole villages run riot, are the source of nearly all quarrels, adultery, bloodshed, and every outburst of passion. We have had to denounce the beer drinking as a menace [177] to the social order of the country, and for lack of the strong restraint of the British Government, which forbids the cutting down of trees, we have preached against the deforesting of the land as a wicked improvidence. The native church has, of its own initiative, taken up the question, and enjoined on the members total abstinence, and the preservation of the forests.

461 Three or four months labour are sufficient to provide a family with food for the year, and the sale of a sheep or a heifer will buy all the clothes the family requires. There is therefore little necessity to work, and the tendency is to spend the months lounging about the village, talking and trifling. Now, happily a more 177 industrious period is waking, and larger ambitions for cloth and 461 for stock, are drawing out the men to work. As a mission we insist on the duty of labour, we refuse church privileges to a man 797 if he cannot show that he has been engaged for some months each year at some labour centre doing honest work. No moral good is ever effected by pampering African pride and indolence, and one of the first lessons Christianity has to teach the native, is the dignity of labour, and the absolute necessity for the labourer to be industrious and honest in the discharge of his work. A penny a day is the ordinary wage we give a labourer, and even the great majority of my 220 teachers do not receive more than 1/6 a month.

• 171 Of course many of the Central Africans have industries of their own, smelting, basket making, cloth weaving, wire pulling, and so on. But the Ngoni were a handless people until they got a spear in their hand. Then they drew themselves up as men, and defied the universe. Yet this martial life had an ennobling effect on them. It is a curious thing to notice, and a fact which was

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

borne out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived in an atmosphere that was charged with vice. But when the Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited, many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fearlessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your privacy. I have heard the old men storm in a village because some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in whispers. When they address you they always give you your family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly. When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say, "We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way, and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interests and amusements. During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. 814
Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on [224] Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry [172] grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous sermons from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Ciwere had gone. All the people shouted "Ciwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni 814 succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the 871 schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grand- [illegible] twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred 173 to historical events which were illustrated in songs or record- 597 ed in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, 791 called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni 177 Christian leaders went further than this. They used the 173 797

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Mpezeni

Chapter One

THE LONG MARCH

1. Sources 2. The Ngoni background 3. Foundation of the State 4. The residential system 5. Under Zwangendaba's leadership 6. Fission 7. Mpezeni's kingdom 8. Foreign policy

1. *Sources*

What we usually have in mind when we speak of a tribe or nation or empire is a large political unit enduring in time and space. The nation outlives its members, for as they grow old and die their children and grandchildren rise up to take their places. On its fringes there may be continual fluctuations, adjustments of boundaries and migrations of people, but always the majority of the population are born within the national territory and die within it as their ancestors have done before them. There is spatial continuity as well as biological continuity, and the same areas of land, sometimes even the same houses and fields, are occupied and cultivated by successive generations. The Ngoni State, whose history is the subject of this book, was clearly not a state of this kind. It was born suddenly, moved about from one part of Africa to another, and recruited most of its members from outside itself. Only at the end of the nineteenth century, when colonial rule was imposed by Europeans, was the migration of the Ngoni as an organised group brought to an end. Even so, the social and economic development of modern central Africa has ensured that the men and women who form where or when live in Ngoni tribal areas, fixed though these have become, are now part of a wider social system within which they travel great distances in search of work and of kinsmen, wives and friends. Yet despite these differences the Ngoni State, like other states and polities, has had structural, or institutional, continuity. It is an enduring organised social group with a history. The same forms of social organization have endured despite changes in space and despite biological discontinuity; and where these forms have changed there has been continuity even in change.

This history of the Ngoni from 1821 down to 1898 is essentially the history of an armed nation on the march. Our knowledge of it

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Mpezeni

173 is limited by the fact that the Ngoni themselves were without writing, and their warlike disposition discouraged the visits of travellers who might otherwise have left some record of Ngoni life during those times. There is a considerable body of oral tradition [114] which has been reduced to writing since 1891, but for the most part these traditional tales assume a knowlege of Ngoni life and do not explicitly describe it. Our evidence for the main features of Ngoni society during this period of migration is found in three places. First we have the pattern of relationships prevailing at the present time between groups of Ngoni, between villages, chiefdoms and kingdoms. The legends which form the charter of these relations form a coherent and largely consistent corpus of traditional knowledge about events taking place within the last hundred and fifty years from which we can make reliable inferences about the internal history of the Ngoni. In particular we can gain significant information about the manner in which different groups were formed by elucidating the names applied to them. A modified form of genealogical inquiry, applied not to physiological ancestry but to links between dependant and lord and between satellite and parent villages, provides us with a reasonably trustworthy history of inter-group relations.

Secondly, there is the evidence available from the numerous [114] published accounts of Ngoni life which have been written by European and African authors. The traditions they record can be used to supplement the data gained from an analysis of present-day legends. A little information can be gleaned from the traditional histories of tribes attacked by the Ngoni.

Thirdly, we have a certain amount of comparative evidence 171 from other societies. There are about a dozen distinct Ngoni 184 kingdoms in different parts of Africa at the present time. In this 175 book [illegible] only one of these groups, now situated near Fort Jameson in Northern Rhodesia. Much light is, however, thrown on its history by accounts of other Ngoni States, particularly of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, where the old form of society persisted longer than at Fort Jameson and where even now the changes brought about by colonial rule seem not to be so great. Accounts of Ngoni groups farther afield, and of the allied societies of the Swazi and Zulu in South Africa provide less direct evidence.

114 A few isolated events in early Ngoni history can be dated 173 precisely. Captain Cutfield, R.N., met a group of Ngoni on 7 November 1822 and some Ngoni warriors skirmished with the

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Portuguese at Delagoa Bay on 2 August 1823.[1] There was a solar eclipse on the day the Ngoni crossed the Zambezi, an event which may therefore be reliably dated 20 November 1835.[2] Livingstone and other explorers also provide us with dates. For example, Burton was in the vicinity when Ngoni raided Ujiji in 1858.[3] These evidences enable us to construct a comparatively good chronology for the Ngoni from 1821 onwards, but they do not directly tell us much about the form of Ngoni society. 114 173

Livingstone (1857, 1865, 1880), Cameron (1877) and Young (1877) mention the Ngoni under various names but tell us little except that the Ngoni were raiding continually. These early travellers were unable to make close contact with the Ngoni, mainly because of the unwillingness of their African carriers, and it is not until 1881 that the Fort Jameson Paramount Chief, Mpezeni, is mentioned by name, in Stewart's account. Wiese reached Mpezeni in 1886, or perhaps a few years earlier, and in 1891 he published the first detailed account of Zwangendaba's people. Other pre-conquest visitors to Mpezeni who published were Money and Smith (1897) and Deare (who did not publish until 1928), and Johnston's account (1897) is derived from them and from their contemporaries. Early accounts of tribal history were written by Laws (1893), Elmslie (1897), both of them missionaries with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, by Decle (1898), an explorer, and by Maples and other missionaries working near the Ngoni of Songea District, Tanganyika Territory, and northern Mozambique, who published in *Occasional papers for Nyasaland* (1893) and *The Nyasa News* (1893-5). There are many post-conquest accounts, the most important being those of Stigand (1907 and 1909), Nkonjera (1911-12), Stannus (1922), Young (1923 and 1932), Hodgson (1933), Poole (1934), Hatchell (1935 and 1948), Read (1936 Oswarus), Lancaster (1937), Winterbottom (1937 and 1950), Kapunzah (1941), Bruwer (1941) and Chibambo (1942). All these writers have in part drawn directly on oral tradition. Useful collations have been made by Werner (1906), Murray (1922), Abraham (1932), Bradley (1940) and Tew (1950). Bryant's masterly account of Zulu history (1929) contains in addition a 114

[1] Owen, *Narrative*, i, pp. 80, 121, 142*f*, 255, 258, 271. All citations will give abbreviated titles only of the works concerned, while full details of all works cited will be found in the bibliographies at the end of the volume.

[2] cf. Poole, 'Crossing of the Zambezi', pp. 290*ff*. Poole gives the date as 19 November. This seems to be based on a misinterpretation of the astronomical, as distinct from the civil, date. Young, *History*, p. 110, gives the date correctly. cf. *Nautical almanac*, 1835, 2nd ed., p. 470.

[3] Burton, *Lake regions*, ii, pp. 72*f*.

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Mpezeni

114 second-hand account of the Ngoni, and some relevant information is given by Soga (1930).

Good accounts of pre-conquest social life are not so numerous. The most useful accounts are those of Wiese (1891 and 1900), Angus (1899), and Deare (1928), based on observations in the years immediately prior to the war of 1898. For the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland there are the works of Elmslie (1899) and Fraser (1901 and 1914). Read, in 1935, was the first to apply modern methods of inquiry and has published comparative material on the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, Fort Jameson and southern Nyasaland, and on the neighbouring Cewa.

Some of this literature has found its way back to the Ngoni [872] themselves, and children nowadays acquire their knowledge of the exploits of their ancestors as much from school books as from oral tradition. Under these circumstances, I decided that no useful 121 purpose would be served by my trying to make conventional inquiries into tribal history with the aim of establishing what had in fact occurred in the past. I found it was impossible to tell whether similarity between an informant's account of a past event and a previously published version was due to common origin, independent invention, or good teaching in school. I was however concerned with the quite different problem of what use the Ngoni made of their history,[4] and I collected the histories of many counties, villages and people. For the material in this chapter I have therefore relied on the fullest and most lucid of these many versions of [115] Ngoni history, that by Chibambo, an Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, supplemented by the writings of Poole, a member of the Administration at Fort Jameson for many years, and Lancaster, who was a game warden in the area.

2. *The Nguni background*

173 Before we can understand the Ngoni of central Africa we must first consider social conditions farther south, for it was from the south that many Ngoni came. From the sixteenth century onwards, south-eastern Africa was peopled by subsistence cultivators growing cereals and herding cattle. The Nguni, as the southernmost branch of these peoples is now called, occupied the area which has become Swaziland, Natal and the Transkei. At first the Nguni were not organized into powerful states but from the common background of Nguni society there developed, from the last quarter of the eighteenth century onwards, several strong political units. We may mention among others the Zulu empire under Shaka, the Swazi

[4] See my 'History in a changing society'.

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Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually
[561] a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

173 Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment
631 of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local
[613] matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels
[627] between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division.
[621] He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and
[619] danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the
[701] regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[5]

178 The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women, perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social
619 system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages
[619] disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential
[621] system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were,
[561] as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly alignments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organi-
[701] zation, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the
178 bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the
621 former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[5] Based on Bryant, *Olden times*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

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Mpezeni

lived with their wives and children, and not all of which had royal headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Ngoni group with which we are most concerned, and within their regiments men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system. 178 621 [701]

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1775 the pattern of political alignment began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1810 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndandwe and Qwabe,[6] dominated the rest and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethewa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1821[8] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north-eastwards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Ngoni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[9] fighting with Nxaba, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All three parties raided the indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside their new masters. 173 643 [167] [721] [727]

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on farther north. He took with him his new Tsonga adherents and also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under 173 167

[6] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Atkins, 'Spelling Nyanja'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in its old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu. [104]

[8] cf. Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 17, 71. Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1823 and Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 15, has 1823 or 1824. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 8, both have 1825. Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 272, says Zwangendaba left in 1829, while Cochrane, *Native tribes*, p. 20, says he left in the 1850's.

[9] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 161, 279, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP A. NGONI MIGRATIONS 1821–1900

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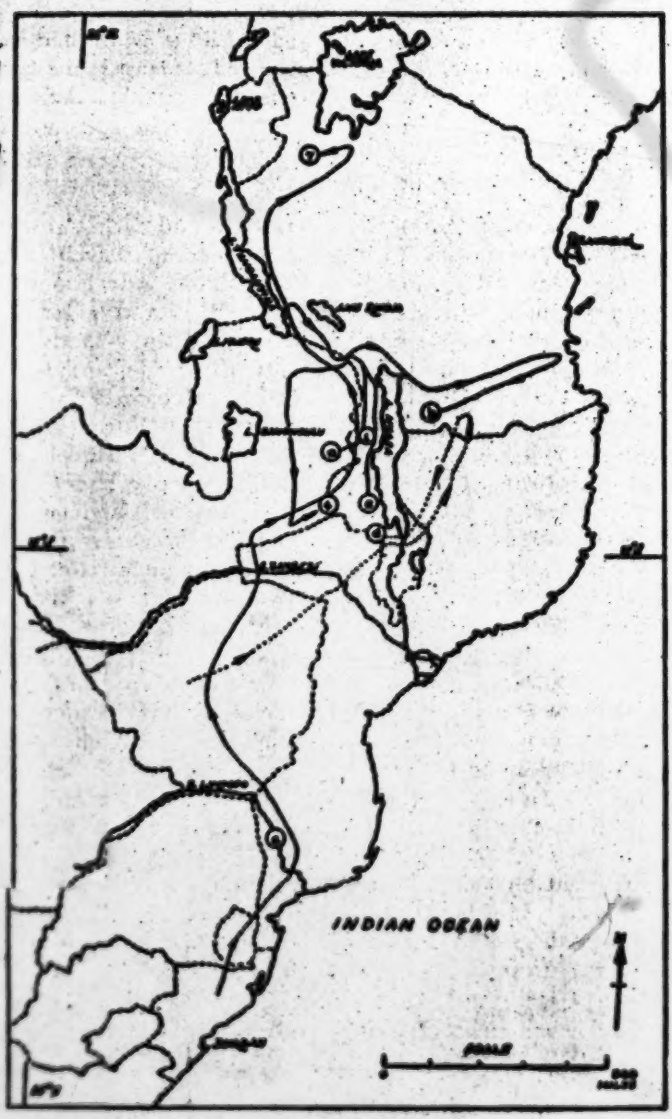

Route of groups stemming from Zwangendaba.

Route of Maseko Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

Modern political boundaries (1958).

① Northern Nyasaland group, under Mwambera.

② Fort Jameson group, under Mpezeni.

③ Rozwi group, under Mzilikazi and Mtshabalala.

④ Lundazi group, under Magwai.

⑤ Songea group, under Zulu Gama.

⑥ Dowa group, under Chewa ndhlovu.

⑦ Southern Nyasaland group, originally under Kyelu Maseko.

⑧ Gazaland group, under Soshangane.

[p. 8]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[10] 173 167

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*isithakazelo*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapundi, Bangoni, Batuta, Bazowa, Bunga, Landeens, Landims, Machendi, Mafiti, Mafitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara, 101

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820's

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Soshangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

[551] [643]

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Maviti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Nguni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became 173 613 [727] [622] [631]

[10] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-16; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] See Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 93.
[12] *Mahamuzana*, pl. *alamuzana*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzana*, village headman; also Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 segments in what we shall term the Ngoni residential system. The
613 constituent segments of their lineages formed the nuclei of minor
631 segments of the residential system. Using the adjectives 'superior' and 'inferior' to indicate merely relative position, we may say that each Nguni agnatic lineage segment was in general contained within superior segments of greater span and at the same time contained within itself smaller but similar inferior units. This formation is characteristic of all lineage systems, as is well known. The segments of the residential system were arranged in the same way but whereas there were several distinct agnatic lineages, or parts of such lineages, under the political leadership of Zwangendaba, in the residential system all, or nearly all, of these distinct lineages were included within the largest residential segment. In other words, the largest segment of the residential system contained almost the whole of Zwangendaba's following, his regional governors, his and their captives and other followers, as well as his own agnatic kinsmen. Again, whereas the various lineage segments contained only the agnatic relatives of the head of the segment, each segment in the residential system included many captives, men, women and children, as well as an agnatic core.

The segments or units of the residential system were enduring social groups which, by analogy with the usual terminology for lineage systems, we shall call primal segments.[13] The segment of highest order was the State itself (or the greater portion thereof), consisting in 1898 of some 75,000 people, while many of the lowest order segments contained only half a dozen people. Each member of a segment belonged not only to that segment but also to all the superior segments of which it was a part.

173 We shall refer to the man in charge of, or the founder of, a
613 segment as a lord (*mfumu*) and to the members of his segment as his
622 dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord
631 except the Paramount Chief, Zwangendaba, was a dependant of some other lord higher in the hierarchy. A lord was politically responsible for all the men and women in his segment. He was related agnatically to some of the men in his segment and towards
[608] his captives he stood in a quasi-agnatic relationship in that, although he had the same rights and duties towards them as if he had been their father, it was nevertheless possible, and indeed quite usual,
[582] for his captives to marry one another and for him to marry one of his woman captives. In the absence of true agnatic descendants a lord was sometimes succeeded by a quasi-related dependant.

[13] *Cigaŵa*, pl. *vigaŵa*, from *ku-gaŵa*, to divide. cf. Nsenga, *ku-yaŵa*, to divide, and Zulu, *isi-gaba*, section or portion divided off from the whole.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*muavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*nkosikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Ndunu*, pl. *ndunu*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 470, 472, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 621 631 together in a cluster of huts, and several clusters together formed a division, inhabited by members of a segment of greater span. Larger segments corresponded to complete villages and the largest segments of all contained many separate villages. The same general pattern of settlement was repeated at successive halting places on the migration, but as a segment grew in size by natural increase and by the addition of more captives, so its settlement grew from a cluster to a division and from a single village to a group of villages. In a large segment with many villages, the constituent inferior segments remained under the political leadership of the lord of the large segment but achieved a certain amount of autonomy. On many occasions the interests of one or more inferior segments diverged from those of the rest of the large segment, from what we shall term the *residue* of the large segment. This divergence of interest sometimes led to the disappearance of the large segment as an effective social unit and, at the highest level in the residential system, to splits in the State itself.

173 595 613 621 631 The first bevy of wives formed by a lord ranked senior to other bevies, and the wife in charge was the lord's great wife. Her eldest son was his main heir and the eldest son of each bevy leader was heir in its own segment. Yet sons, whether heirs or not, were able to establish segments of their own for their wives when they married and these segments remained as distinct social groups when an heir succeeded. Thus a man could be lord of a segment founded by his father and at the same time lord of a smaller segment, within the first, which he had founded himself. This arrangement was of fundamental importance in the working of the residential system, particularly in the formation of those large and politically dominant segments with which we are mainly concerned in this book, and still finds expression in the new villages founded by each reigning county chief. When the Paramount Chief, or one of his sons, founded a segment for a bevy of queens, the new segment was of village size and many men were called by the chief from existing segments to join the new one. As the segment grew in size, minor segments within it broke out to form separate villages of their own and the parent village became the headquarters of the group of villages and of the segment they formed. The headquarters of all large dispersed segments endured as social groups, as villages, despite the continual throwing off of more and more satellites. Thus the number of large villages, each the headquarters of a segment founded for a bevy of a reigning chief, increased as time went on. These villages remain to-day, and Ngoni history is largely the story of the formation and development of the segments associated with them.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Under Zwangendaba's leadership*

When the Ngoni migration began, the greater portion of Zwangendaba's followers belonged to the primal segment founded for the great wife of Hlatshwayo, father of Zwangendaba. When the migration began there were perhaps a thousand people in this segment (this figure is largely guesswork). For convenience of reference we shall refer to the various historically significant segments by numbers. Thus segment 1, with the proper name of Elangeni, is that of Hlatshwayo's great wife. The structural relationship of seventeen numbered segments to each other and to the royal genealogy is shown in Diagram 1. A list of their proper names and of the names of the lords and ladies associated with them, is given in Table II, together with information on three segments superior to segment 1 and on three other segments which cannot be placed on Diagram 1 for lack of information.

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This diagram and the accompanying table are skeletons, showing only those few men and women who were heads of major groups which, partly fortuitously, have endured to the present day and are now large chiefdoms. There were many more queens than the ten shown on the diagram and very many more sons of chiefs, regional governors, lieutenants and other less exalted men and women all of whom were in charge of named segments, many of which still survive, forming part of a single system. The same principles of organization applied at all levels in the residential system. Here we have set out the names and positions of only the major limbs of the tree of State. We must not forget that the minor branches and little twigs were part of the same growing whole.

Segment 1 included the greater portion of the State, but it is clear from Elmslie and Fraser, and made explicit by Read, that the headquarters of several superior segments were also present on the march north. Read states that villages belonging to nine generations of chiefs were still in existence in northern Nyasaland in 1936. There is no direct evidence from Fort Jameson, for there are no headquarters of ancient royal segments there, but there are several villages belonging to the lieutenants of segments founded by Zwangendaba's father. I have therefore included in Table II the three superior segments whose names are given by Chibambo.[17] It is probable that Zwangendaba had succeeded to the position of

[Text continues on page 15]

[17] Read, 'Tradition', pp. 463f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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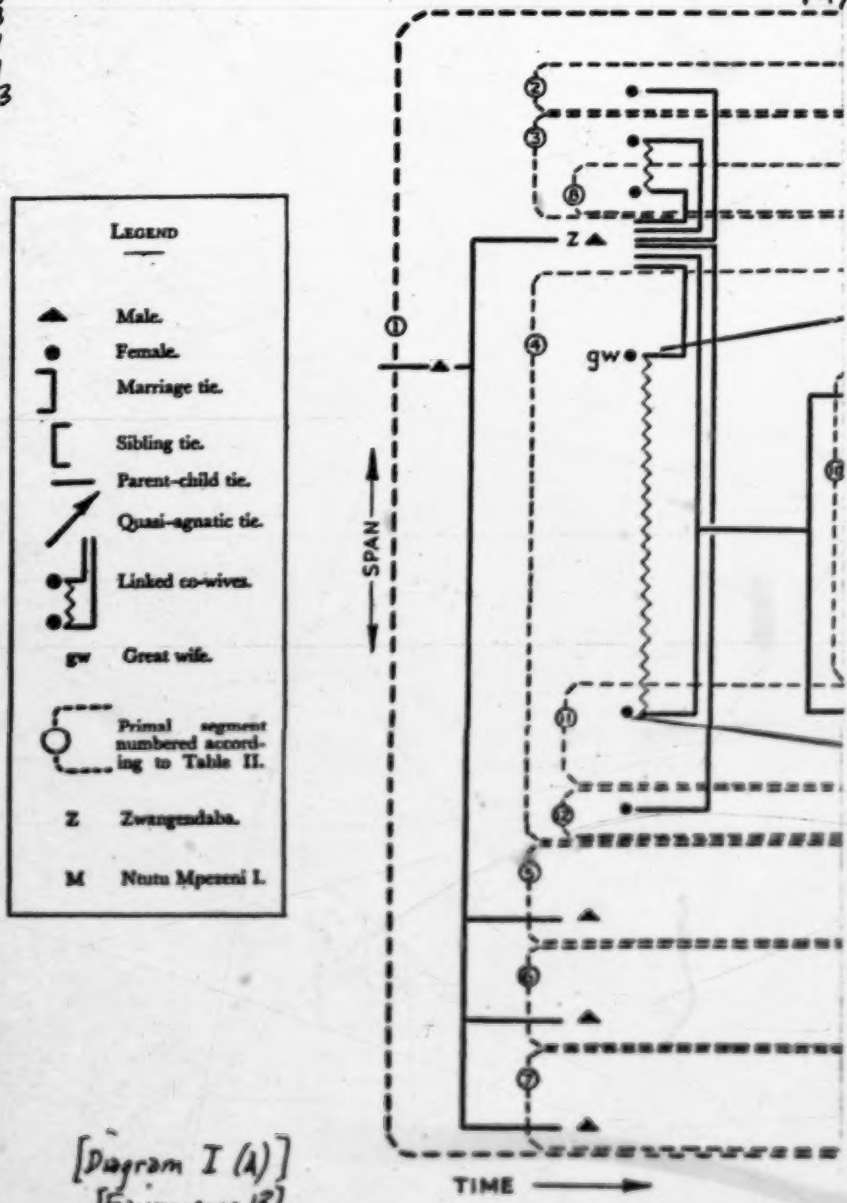
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM
SEGMENTS 1-17



[Diagram I (a)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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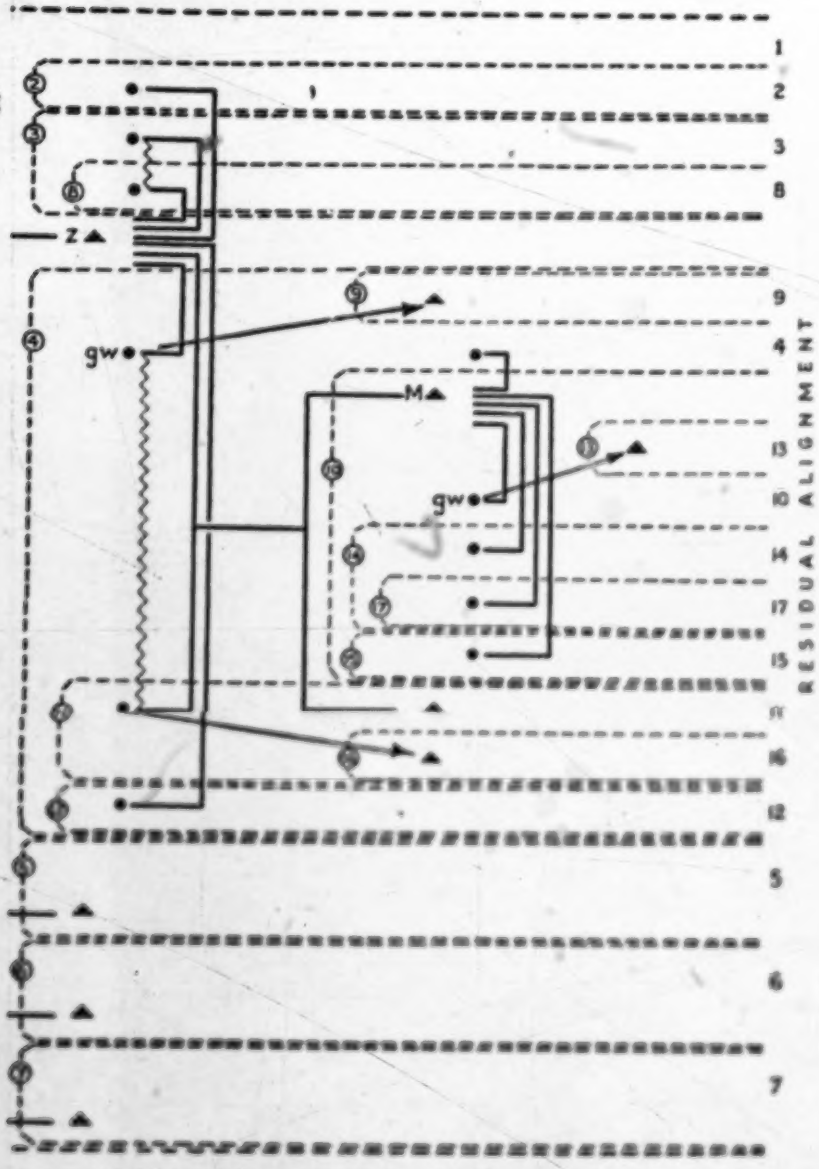
DIAGRAM 1. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM
SEGMENTS 1–17



[Diagram I (B)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE II. RESIDENTIAL SEGMENTS OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

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Segment		*Lady's husband (in brackets when segment was not the first founded by him)*	*Lady*	*Lady's heir*
Number	*Proper name*			
(e)	Emblakuti	Lonyanda	?	Magalela
(e)	Emblekieni	Magalela	?	Magangata
(e)	Hoho	Magangata	?	Hlatshwayo
1	Elangeni	Hlatshwayo	Mqamache nsima	Zwangendaba
2	Enciweni	(Zwangendaba)	Mhambose	Mpevembe *or* ? Ndindane
3	Ekwendeni	(Zwangendaba)	Munene nsima, *later* Cutu nsima	Mwambera Mtwalo
4	Mtengdeni	(Zwangendaba)	Lozikwa Lompeta nzumalo	Mpezeni (son of her linked co-wife)
5	Kunyeni	Lomapela	?	Magwambane
6	Nyungweni	Somfula	?	Mhonyeni(a)
7	Engwenyameni (d)	Ntabeni	?	Ngodoyi
8	Ezigodhlweni *or* Emchakachakeni	(Zwangendaba)	Munene nsima	Mwambera
9	Cikenkheni	Mnukwa mazyopa	?	?
10	Loangeni	Ntutu *Mpezeni I*	Lupeko pakati	Nsingu
11	Dingeni	(Zwangendaba)	Sowela nzumalo	Nzyoshu (second son)
12	Mhuchweni *or* ? Emangeni	(Zwangendaba)	Zinkhave mahlangane	Mahulo (c)
13	Tundweni	Kapetamoyo	?	?
14	Fumbeni	(Mpezeni I)	Mdowa nako	Nzermane
15	Chimpingu	(Mpezeni I)	Kubuya Kapili twala	Seyili
16	Fafazeni	Mashabulani (b)	?	?
17	Ngiyebweni	(Mpezeni I)	Faisako	Magoya
18(c)	Emweyeyeni *or* Mvelebeni *or* ? Mveweni	Zwangendaba	Lozikwa nzumalo	—
19(c)	Emaiziini	(Zwangendaba)	Mchazana machinga	?
20(c)	Emankechezeni	Mgayi	?	?

[Notes to table are on page 15.-Analyst]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration. 173 613

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mveleleni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Enciswenì)[10] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emsizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18. 595 621 631 643

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[11] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent 173 595 613 643 [273] [682]

[10] Rangeley, 'Mawali', p. 58, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[11] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 5, 34, 94.

Notes

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mbenyeni, Fort Manning Division.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mbenyeni and present Chief Tolika, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Mdabola, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

[see table on page 16 - [illegible]]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 parts of the segment, namely segments 2, 3 and 19, survived as
613 independent inferior segments within segment 1. The lieutenant
995 in charge of the warriors spared the pregnant queen and hid her.
693 She bore a son, Ntutu Mpezeni, and later was shown to Zwangendaba who received her kindly and, according to Chibambo, ordered her to live with her son in the headquarters of segment 1. She was not in charge of a bevy of wives, and as by this time the great wife was dead, the bevy in segment 3 now became Zwangendaba's senior bevy. Mwambera, eldest son of the leader of this bevy, was thus a candidate for the main heirship but owing to the disappearance of segment 18 and the subsequent reconciliation between Zwangendaba and Mpezeni's mother, the relative status of the two sons was uncertain. This uncertainty may have been one of the precipitating causes in the subsequent break-up of the State.

Rangeley's verson of this incident is that after he had been
[114] shown Mpezeni, Zwangendaba ordered the headquarters of segment 18 to be rebuilt. This seems less likely to be true than the version we have followed, since there is, as far as I know, no present-day village which we can identify as the headquarters of this segment.[80]

From Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba went up the Limpopo
173 Valley into Mashonaland. He fought with Kalanga and other
167 Shona peoples and there was renewed fighting with other refugee
721 groups under Soshangane and Nxaba. In 1835 Zwangendaba's group crossed over to the north side of the River Zambezi near Zumbo and settled in Nsenga country for four years. They moved on again along the eastern rim of the Luangwa basin and eventually arrived in about 1842 in Ufipa, on the east side of Lake Tanganyika. Here in about 1845 Zwangendaba died.

Two points of historical detail may be mentioned here. There is reliable
114 evidence for a raid made on a Portuguese fort at Delagoa Bay on 22 October 1833
173 by some of Soshangane's people.[81] Poole and Winterbottom state explicitly that
167 Zwangendaba's men also took part in this attack, and Lancaster seems to imply
721 the same. According to the chronology adopted by Young and by Poole himself Zwangendaba was at this time four hundred and fifty miles away in the Kalanga country of Southern Rhodesia and it therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he participated in this raid. Elmslie, Young and Chibambo do not mention it at all, and Bryant refers only to Soshangane's part in it.

A few years after Zwangendaba left Natal, he was followed by Mzilikazi, a chief who for a while fought under Shaka and then fled from him with his followers.

[80] Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', pp. 106f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 18f; Rangeley, 'Mrewa', pp. 58f.
[81] Theal, *Portuguese in South Africa*, pp. 239f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

They became known as the Rhodesian Ndebele or Matabele. Pumelt, who worked among them, does not record in their history any fight with Zwangendaba, nor do Elmslie, Bryant, Young or Chibambo. Money and Smith say that it is a matter of doubt whether or not Zwangendaba met Mzilikazi. However, Wood, who states that Zwangendaba broke away from Mzilikazi, says that there was a fight between them. Lancaster writes that there was a fight on the Transvaal border in 1828 before the raid of 1833. Poole makes this fight take place in about 1833 and writes of the Ngoni at that time living in the vicinity of modern Bulawayo and raiding Mzilikazi in the Transvaal. If we are to accept the existence of contact between Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi at all, either of these two versions is preferable to that of Winterbottom, who implies that after taking part in the 1833 raid at Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba moved to the vicinity of Bulawayo where he met Mzilikazi, only to move on to the Zambezi in 1835. Winterbottom crowds into two years more marching and fighting than seems likely to have taken place. There is also conclusive evidence, set out by Pumelt, that Mzilikazi did not leave the Transvaal under Boer pressure until about 1838.

If Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi were not living side by side, the suggestion by Lancaster and Winterbottom that they quarrelled about a dog is unlikely to be correct. There may be confusion here with the story, recorded by Field and Rangeley, of a quarrel between Mpezeni and Mwambera over their dogs.[10]

6. *Fission*

Various writers describe three occasions on which, according to their accounts, dissident sections broke off from the main body of Ngoni prior to Zwangendaba's death. Our view is that only one of these secessions actually took place, and that it was relatively unimportant.

The first allegedly dissident group is that sometimes known as the Maseko Ngoni, now dwelling in the region round Mount Domwe, on both sides of the border between southern Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa. Murray, Young, Hatchell, Poole and Bruwer state that after crossing the River Zambezi together, the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland broke off from Zwangendaba while he was in Nsenga country. Laws, Johnson, Soga, Lancaster and Rangeley state that these Ngoni crossed the Zambezi separately from Zwangendaba. Elmslie says that they were not an offshoot of Zwangendaba's party, while Read, Chibambo and Winterbottom state that they broke away from Mzilikazi, not from Zwangendaba. Fraser mentions a group that remained behind when Zwangendaba crossed the river and says that it went on to the east of Lake Nyasa, but does not say that it later returned to southern Nyasaland. Of all these writers, Read has had most contact with the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, and her account, as amplified by Winter-

[10] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 5; Winterbottom, 'Outline history', pp. 15f; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Young, *History*, pp. 105f; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 150; Pumelt, *Fact and fiction*, p. 171, Field, *Fictions*, pp. 16f; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

bottom, seems the most acceptable.[*] Two other versions of this alleged dissension can also be rejected. Bryant says that the southern Nyasaland Ngoni remained behind after the main body had crossed the river and that they were led by Gwasa (*sic*), Zwangendaba's principal headman. Stigand's account is similar, except that he says they broke off after crossing the river. This conflicts with the evidence of Young and Chibambo of the subsequent part played by Gwasa, first lieutenant in segment 1, with Zwangendaba's own group. We must also reject the contention of Cosstead and Hodgson that the southern Nyasaland group broke away from the main body of Ngoni after Zwangendaba's death in Tanganyika Territory. The statement made by Stanley and followed by numerous other writers that the Hehe are an Ngoni group is quite without foundation.[*] Some other communities in southern Tanganyika who were merely raided by Ngoni have themselves taken the name Ngoni or some other name used by Ngoni.[*]

Poole speaks in one place of 'the secession of Nqaba' (Nzaba) from Zwangendaba, but this does not tally with his earlier statements that Nzaba's migration was independent of Zwangendaba, and that the first secession from Zwangendaba's host was that of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni. Bryant's account of Nzaba is much fuller than Poole's, and contradicts Poole's suggestion that Nzaba crossed the Zambezi at the Lupata Gorge. According to Bryant, Nzaba's group never formed part of Zwangendaba's following, and Nzaba was eventually killed in Basutoland. Chibambo and Winterbottom support Bryant.[*]

Fosbrooke, who worked among Mzilikazi's people, states that a section of Zwangendaba's group, composed of Swazi, broke off at about the time of the Zambezi crossing and turned back to join Mzilikazi who married the woman who led the dissident section.

[*] The secession of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni from Mzilikazi may explain Wilson's and Doke's assertions that Zwangendaba himself broke away from Mzilikazi. Wilson, 'Expedition', p. 46[illegible]; Doke, *Lamba Africa*, p. 131.

[*] Murray, *Handbook*, p. 90; Young, *History*, p. 111, and letter in *African Studies*, 1950; Hatchell, 'Angoni' (1935), p. 69; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Bryant, *Abel*, p. 11; Laws, p. 85, fn.1, in Lugard, *East African Empire*, i; Johnston, *Nyasa*, p. 100; Sage, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 177; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 81; Elmslie, *Introductory Grammar*, p. 2; Rusk, 'Traditions', p. 46[illegible]; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 31; Winterbottom, 'Historical', p. 16; Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, pp. 310 f.; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 46[illegible]; Stigand, 'Nations', p. 126; Cosstead, *Native tribes*, p. 20; Hodgson, 'Dress Dances', p. 108; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, pp. 499, 503; Rangeley, 'Mtwara', pp. 56, 60.

[*] Maples, *Journals*, p. 135; Weule, *Native life*, p. 229.

[*] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 7 and 6; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 577, 578, 654, 46[illegible] f., 671 f.; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 16; Winterbottom, 'Oral historical', p. 18.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This story is followed by Bryant but does not occur in any accounts collected from Ngoni themselves. It seems probable therefore that this wrestling section was not numerous or important.[17]

There are no other disruptions mentioned in the literature, and it seems probable therefore that until the death of Zwangendaba, the State remained largely intact. However the process, common in Bantu Africa, by which rival claimants to a throne succeed only in dividing their kingdom, operated with striking effect as soon as the founder of the State was buried. The elimination of segment 18 has sometimes been suggested as the reason why the State broke up, but it is clear from comparative considerations that a State of this kind was likely at any time to break into a number of independent groups, and that this tendency was greatest at the death or succession of the king.

About 1840 a number of important people, mainly coming from south of the Zambezi, were killed off as a result of an internal struggle for power in which it appears that the recently captured Tumbuka, who were successful witch-finders, were allied with the Swazi and other Ndandwe against the Tsonga from the Delagoa Bay region.[18] Unfortunately there is very little information available on the relationship of this struggle to the rest of the political system. It is, however, clear that the effect of killing off a large number of Ngoni of Tsonga origin was insufficient to prevent the State breaking up a few years later.

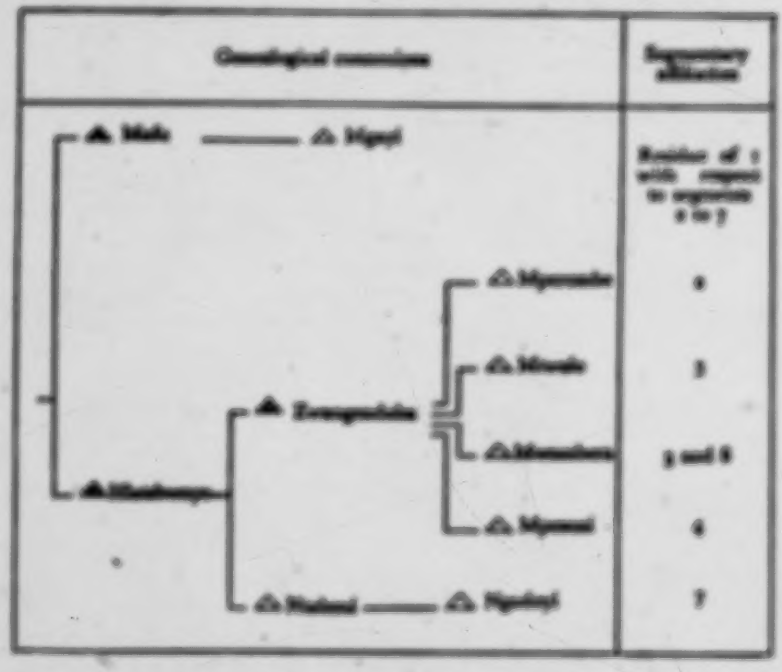
When Zwangendaba died, his sons were still young and, for the time being, effective leadership of the State was disputed between men of his own generation whose positions are shown in Diagram 2. His brothers, the heads of segments 5 and 6, were already dead. Fraser describes the dispute as a struggle between Ntabeni's children and Mgayi. Ntabeni was a younger brother of Zwangendaba and the head of segment 7 while Mgayi was Zwangendaba's father's younger brother's son who, on Chibambo's evidence, represented the interests of the residue of segment 1. Rangeley has a slightly different version and makes Mgayi a supporter of segment 4. Poole, presumably following Fraser, says with some qualification that Ntabeni and Mgayi both claimed the chieftainship. From what we know of the south-eastern Bantu, and from our knowledge of present-day Ngoni, it seems unlikely that a brother would claim to be the legitimate heir in preference to a son, however much he might strive to gain ascendancy over the son. It seems preferable to follow Young and Chibambo in regarding Ntabeni and Mgayi

[17] Fraser, *Fact and fiction*, pp. 146-7, 178; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 464f.
[18] See p. 89.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

178 as acting as regent in turn on behalf of the young sons of
179 Zwangendaba.*
643 The various published accounts of the succession differ from one another and reflect the different interpretations put upon the same event by rival sections of the tribe. Fraser and Young, who

DIAGRAM 2. ZWANGENDABA AND HIS HEIRS



worked in northern Nyasaland, say that Zwangendaba chose Mwembera of segment 5 as his heir, and Elmslie says that Mpezeni and others were under Mwembera. From Fort Jameson, Lancaster says that Zwangendaba chose Mpezeni, formerly of segment 18, and Poole, who is supported by Murray, says he nominated Mtwalo, another son in segment 3. Read, who worked in both areas, states

* For Mgayi's position in the residential system, we have only Chibambo's remark, 'the regent being Mgayi Jere, the father of Mtwalo, of Ekwendeni', to be compared with Young's and Rangeley's mention of Ezondweni (Ekwendeni) as the village of Mgayi. Rangeley also implies that Mgayi was Zwangendaba's brother's son, which is unlikely. Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 373; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 17f.; Poole, *Native origin*, p. 7; Young, *Mzungu*, pp. 119f.; Rangeley, 'Mwenda', p. 60.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

that 'the history of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one'.* It is not our task to decide between these conflicting stories. What is important for our purposes is firstly that there was a disputed succession, and secondly that present-day rival groups are still concerned each to show that its claimant was the legitimate heir.

Chibambo, who belongs to northern Nyasaland, has a different version. He states that Zwangendaba chose as his heir his younger brother's eldest son Ngodoyi, in segment 3. Such a succession would have been unusual, for Ngodoyi's father, Ntabeni, was still alive, and Chibambo does not discuss why Zwangendaba should have passed over all his own sons. Nor does Chibambo explain why Ntabeni, as regent, should have supported the claims of Zwangendaba's sons as against those of his own son Ngodoyi, for according to his account the regent declared that Mpezeni was the rightful heir. The lady of segment 3 had earlier quarrelled with the regent, lord of segment 3,** and now to spite her he declared that the next in succession after Mpezeni was not her eldest son Mwambera but Mtwalo, the eldest son of one of her subordinate co-wives.** Chibambo suggests that it was this quarrel which led the regent to support Mpezeni as against the legitimate claims of segment 3.

The regent established a new segment 4, Mzungulowi, for Mpezeni and his mother, and within segment 3 formed a separate segment 8, Emchakuchakowi or Tsiguhlowi, for Mwambera and his mother, thus leaving Mtwalo and his mother in the headquarters of segment 3.

Chibambo states that Gwesa Jere, senior lieutenant of segment 1, supported the regent when he selected Mpezeni as Zwangendaba's heir, while Young says he strongly opposed it; both writers agree that after Mpezeni had been chosen there was a quarrel between the regent and the headquarters of segment 1.** Ntabeni, the regent, died shortly afterwards and his segment 7 broke off from the rest of the group. They were pursued by a party from segment 1 headquarters, but made their escape. The regentship now passed

* Fraser, loc. cit.; Young, loc. cit.; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 27; Lawrence, 'Chronology', p. 38; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 8; Marwick, *Handbook*, pp. 75-7; Read, 'Tradition and prestige', p. 489. cf. Wisenthornton, 'Gaduka succession', p. 17.

** Bowen, *Bibliography*, p. 17; Kaspelin, 'Mwaiki', p. 60.

** A linked co-wife, according to Wisenthornton. However, his name for Mwambera's mother differs from that given by Chibambo, who merely says that the two wives were sisters. Wisenthornton, 'Angoni paramountcy', p. 108; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 18.

** cf. *Occasional papers for Nyasaland*, 1, pp. 129-9.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 to Zwangendaba's father's brother's son Mgayi, of the residue of
643 segment 1.

Elmslie states that Ntabeni's people, i.e. those of segment 7, went northward on the west side of Tanganyika and he is followed in this by Murray, Bryant and Tew. Elmslie bases his statement on Stewart, who heard of them there in 1879. However, Stewart did not visit the west side of Lake Tanganyika himself, and merely gathered his information from people in a Mambwe village on his way to the lake in October 1879. The account of the Ngoni that they gave him was incorrect in a number of particulars, and we have, therefore, to treat with caution their statement about the existence of an Ngoni group west of Lake Tanganyika. Even if part of this segment did settle there, it is certain that the whole of segment 7 did not. Hatchell gives genealogical information for the group of Ngoni at present near Runowe, Kabanga District, Tanganyika Territory, which links them to Ntabeni and segment 7. Stanley describes an Ngoni group which attached Ujiji and was allied to Mirambo, and in the light of Hatchell's account it is certain that Stanley is here referring to part, if not the whole, of segment 7. This interpretation is made by Fraser, and is in accord with Young and Chibambo. Hence we may conclude that the main body of segment 7 went north on the east side of Lake Tanganyika and eventually settled in Kabanga District.

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Part of segment 7 may have split off and gone elsewhere, possibly to the west of the lake. Hatchell, in his account of the Kabanga group, does not mention Ngodoyi, son of Ntabeni, and it is possible that he may have led a group elsewhere although Rangeley states that it was his following that reached Kabanga. Hatchell and Winterbottom write of an abortive expedition by Zwangendaba to the western shores of Lake Tanganyika but make no mention of a group remaining there.

This interpretation conflicts with Elmslie, who says that segment 7 was west of the lake while the group encountered by Stanley were a separate group led by Ntuta. Elmslie does not say who Ntuta was, but it is clear from the context that he does not refer to Ntuta Mpezeni. Hatchell does not mention the name Ntuta in his genealogies. Elmslie may, therefore, have been misled on this point.

The only other writer to mention a group west of the lake is Poole, who says that Ntabeni settled west of the lake in Nyamwezi country, where they were known as Watuta, and, co-operating with the Ruga-Ruga, were encountered by Livingstone and Stanley in 1871. Since in 1871 Livingstone, Stanley, the Ruga-Ruga, and the main body of Nyamwezi were all east of the lake, it appears that Poole intended to write 'east', not 'west'.

Colle refers to contact between the Ngoni and Luba, but the section of Luba with whom the Ngoni fought had crossed from the Congo to the east side of Lake Tanganyika before encountering the Ngoni. The existence of an Ngoni group on the west side of Lake Tanganyika seems therefore to be doubtful.[10]

Fraser says that Mgayi led the main body, including Mpezeni, Mwambwa, and Mpezembe, as far north as Victoria Nyanza. Finding the country poor, he led them back towards Sukuma country, but died on the way. Fraser is followed by Poole, Saga and Winterbottom. It is perhaps significant that Fraser does not

[10] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 23-7; Murray, *Handbook*, p. 23; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 488; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Stewart, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 488; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Hatchell, 'Tanganyika territory' (1935), pp. 63-; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, p. 490; Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Young, *History*, p. 115; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 23; Colle, *Baluba*, p. 63; Rangeley, 'Mpezeni', p. 62.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

mention Ntabeni's group as reaching Victoria Nyanza, and it may be that he has merely attributed this exploit to the wrong group. Such an interpretation would be in accord with the accounts of Elmslie, Young, Chibambo and Rangeley, and following them, Bryant and Tew. All these writers imply that the main body of Ngoni did not go further north than Ufipa. It also provides a more reasonable chronology, for by Fraser's version we have to assume that within only about five years the main body of Ngoni traversed Tanganyika Territory from south to north and then back again. Lancaster is inconclusive on this point.[20]

7. *Mpezeni's kingdom*

Mgayi did not live long as regent and after his death the senior lieutenant of segment 1 made Mpezeni chief. There was a considerable shortage of food at the time and this, combined with dissension in the tribe about the succession, appears to have precipitated a further split. A follower of Zwangendaba called Zulu Gama, whose position in the segmentary organization seems not to have been recorded, led his segment off to the east, where in the vicinity of Songea he met with that group of Maseko Ngoni which we have mentioned earlier, and who probably broke off from the Ndebele some time prior to 1835. For a while the two groups operated as one but soon they split apart. Some people stayed on in Songea District, others went south and eventually rounded the southern end of Lake Nyasa to arrive in the Dedza District of southern Nyasaland, where they remain to-day.

Of those that remained behind under Mpezeni, the principal cleavage was between segments 2, 4, 5 and 6, all led by Mpezeni, on the one side and segment 3 with the headquarters of segment 1 on the other. Led by the senior lieutenant of segment 1, the latter group moved off to the south-east while Mpezeni moved west. While in the country of the Bisa, segment 2 broke off from Mpezeni and after settling for a while in Bemba country as an independent group it eventually went back to join segment 3. Mpezeni, with segments 4, 5 and 6, went south and eventually arrived in Fort Jameson District. His leadership of these segments seems not to have been questioned, but in the other group the senior lieutenant of segment 1 at first supported the headquarters of segment 3 against the claims to the chieftainship made by segment 8. Mtwalo, the son of Zwangendaba who had been put in charge of the headquarters of segment 3, protested, however, that the real head of that segment was Mwambera, head of segment 8, who thus became chief.

[20] Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, p. 373; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 173; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Wissmann, 'Outline historical', p. 18; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 87; Young, *Makua*, pp. 115f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 19f; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 487; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86; Rangeley, 'Mbemba', p. 69.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4. It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwambera's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group, for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife. However this woman was prompted to independent status by the formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingeni) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkuewni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni).

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Loangeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary levies of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Cimpings). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Falaseni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thomas Young, writing of the period 1855-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.* The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambera's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambera in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of

* Young, *History*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 10.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 worship. They allowed the local chiefs to govern their people
696 according to their own laws and customs, but under the authority
727 of the Ngoni. They followed the method of governing which Europeans call "indirect rule".' They also took selected children from the conquered peoples and reared them as Ngoni in Ngoni villages. Young's account supports this.* Whether or not this method of government was wise is clearly a matter of opinion. It is perhaps significant that for Mpezeni's people the evidence provided by the present disposition of persons claiming descent from different ethnic groups suggests that a different policy was followed there. Chibambo and Young talk of groups of warriors under Mwambera belonging to various subjugated tribes; in Mpezeni's area captured men appear to have been drafted into
[561] the various age-set regiments, so that men from the same tribe were distributed throughout the army and did not form a distinct group.
173 Territorially, the dispersion of captives from the same tribe was not
983 so complete, for it appears that in Mpezeni's group the major
727 segment settled on the east of the Ngoni area raided mostly to the east, and the western segment to the west, and so on, so that many of the captives taken from a particular locality were to be found in the major segment of the State nearest their homeland. Yet even this concentration of captives with the same ethnic origin was not complete, and representatives from all the principal tribes with whom the Ngoni came into contact are nowadays to be found in all parts of Mpezeni's Ngoniland. We suggest that this policy of assimilation, practised to a much greater degree by Mpezeni than by Mwambera, may be correlated with the fact that in Mpezeni's group there were no revolts by groups of captives of common origin, whereas in Mwambera's there were three such revolts, by Lake Tonga, Kamanga and Henga tribesmen.

173 Mwambera attacked the Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu some
721 time round about 1860, and was driven off in the face of fire from
698 guns Mwase had obtained from Arabs. He subsequently came to an agreement with Mwase whereby the Cewa chief became his 'child' and lent him soldiers armed with guns to assist in Ngoni raids. Travellers suggest that later Mwase came to an agreement with Mpezeni as well, but this is not so certain. Mpezeni does seem to have established peaceful relations with one or two minor chieftains during the period of early European contact,* but for

* Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 39-41; Young, *History*, p. 119.

* e.g. Gamela, a Kamela chief and Mbewa, who had Kamela and Henga [illegible]. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 11; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyasa', p. 196.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most part all external relations were warlike. The State, as it were, was internaly an organization of segments and externally stood posed against an undifferentiated hostile world. Even with the Maseko Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, the Ngoni group spatially nearest to Mpezeni, relations were warlike. 173 648 721

Despite this hostility, it seems probable that some individuals from the neighbouring tribes did leave their own country and join the Ngoni of their own free will. I was given accounts of this in a number of family and village histories, and while it is possible that some of these people whose ancestors were captured may now think it preferable to speak of voluntary attachment to the Ngoni State rather than capture, I do not think this can be the complete explanation. In the first place, very many Ngoni of to-day are quite prepared to admit that their ancestors were captured on Ngoni raids, so that the desire to conceal the capture of an ancestor, if it exists at all, cannot be widespread. On the contrary, some Cewa chiefs and notables who are now politically independent of the Ngoni and live in their own chiefdoms will recount with great interest how their ancestors were captured by the Ngoni. Secondly, some of those who claim that their ancestors joined the Ngoni of their own volition come from places a long way distant from Ngoni country, where the frequency of Ngoni raids cannot have been high, even if the Ngoni ever raided there at all. For instance, one village claims that its people came voluntarily from as far away as Fingoe, in Portuguese East Africa. Thirdly, there is a well-known instance of a son and other close relatives of an Nsenga chief who joined the Ngoni and rose to high position in the State. The Ngoni Paramount Chief and some of the minor chiefs are still friendly with the descendants of his Nsenga chief, Kalindawalo, and the story that these Nsenga nobles were not captured but were instructed by their own chief to transfer their allegiance to the Ngoni seems probably to be true, despite a contrary tradition among the Nsenga that these men were taken as captives.[28] Lastly there is the evidence of Glave, writing in 1894, who says that a host of villages had given themselves up to be Ngoni rather than submit to the constant anxiety of attack.[29] Thus provision was made for men and women to join the State other than as captives. These volunteers were treated in the same way as captives. They were allocated, either as individuals or in small groups, to a segment and came under the orders of a lord or lady. The Ngoni lived at a much higher standard

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[28] cf. Field, Fieldiana, p. 16; Poole, Native tribes, pp. 42-4.
[29] Id. in pop. Sci., p. 68, f.n. 8. See also Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 478.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 of life than their neighbours, largely at the expense of those neigh-
167 bours. It is therefore not surprising that at least some of the more
648 adventurous of the hunted should have decided to join the ranks of
727 the hunters.
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In Tanganyika the activities of the Arabs and other slave traders brought about significant changes in Ngoni society earlier
173 than in the less accessible Nyasa region. The Ngoni in Tanganyika
648 did not regard their neighbours merely as enemies. Ngoni warriors formed part of the army of Mirambo, the Nyamwezi slave trader. An elaborate network of joking relationships seems to have regulated intercourse between the tribes of Tanganyika and the Tanganyika Ngoni were linked to many of their neighbours in this way.[41] Joking relationships of this kind did not develop among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. In recent times, however, Ngoni from Fort Jameson have come into contact on the Copperbelt and elsewhere with tribes such as the Bemba who have developed a joking relationship with other Ngoni groups. These joking relationships are now extended to the Fort Jameson men.

From this historical account we are able to gain some idea of
173 Ngoni polity during the mid-nineteenth century. We have restricted
128 our attention to the relations existing between major portions of the State and between the State and its neighbours. We have seen how forms of organization, in particular the lineage system, with which the Ngoni began their march, were modified in conformity with the peculiar conditions of migrant brigandage. In the next chapter we shall look more closely at the internal organization of the State and attempt to analyse the social processes at work within it.

[41] See the writings of Marwick, Peller, Schwarz and Spire.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

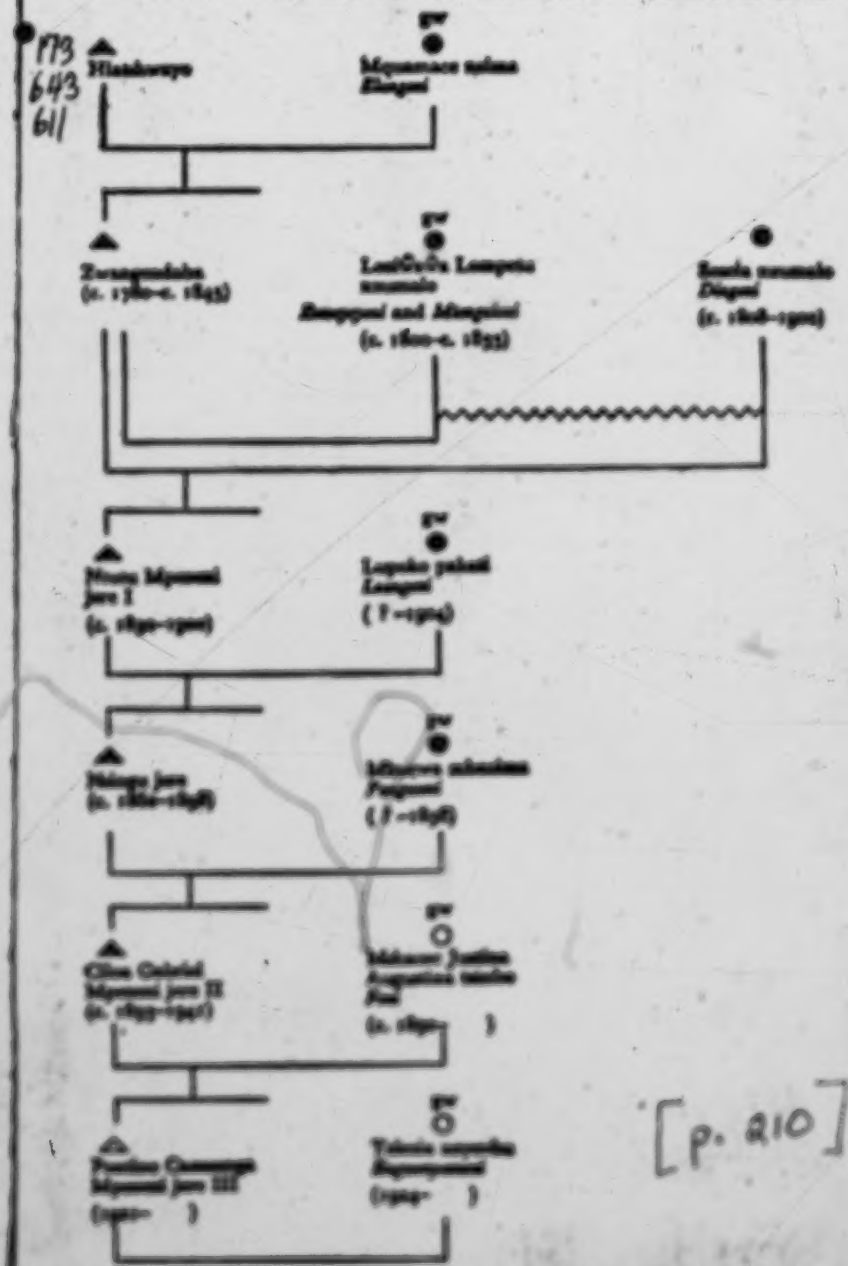
We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [773]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [82] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

SKELETON GENEALOGY OF MPEZENI CHIEFTAINSHIP



[p. 210]

(Names of segments founded for reasons shown in Jeffrey other symbols as in Diagram 1 restored through ninety degrees. Years of birth and death shown in brackets.)

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(a) 'Those from the south'

These were the descendants of the leaders of the two main Ngoni groups represented by the two Ngoni kingdoms, with their followers, who left Natal during the wars of Shaka. They were South-eastern Bantu of Ngoni stock, and when they were first encountered by Europeans in Nyasaland, the Europeans called them Zulus and spoke of their language as Zulu. Ngoni informants in the 1930's who were regarded as most reliable repudiated their relationship with the Zulu, and always referred to their ethnic origin as a people of Swazi stock. Y. M. Chiumbo whose knowledge of Ngoni traditions was unrivalled, said in his book *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*—'Very many of them [the Ngoni] came from Swaziland, which is north of Zululand'.[1] A nostalgic refrain occurred in more than one of their traditional songs:

> Come let us go to Swaziland
> Where the people die fat.[2]

Cultural affinities between the Ngoni in Nyasaland and the people now living in Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, with the Zulu, will be examined in several chapters of this book. In the chapter on clan descent names in Part III, we shall compare the clan names called Swazi by the Ngoni with the lists of clan names given by Bryant in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*[3] and with the list given by Kuper, in *An African Aristocracy*,[4] of the Swazi and pre-Swazi clans. The military organisation of the Ngoni, the age-set system which formed part of it, and other cultural features which will be discussed in Chapter III of this section, all show a general cultural affinity with the peoples of the northern Ngoni group of the South-eastern Bantu.

The separation of the Ngoni group from the parent stock, which took place at about the same time as the Ndebele and the Shangaan groups fought their way north, occurred before the Swazi and Zulu kingdoms took final form. It is more correct, therefore, to say that Ngoni cultural affinities were with the northern Ngoni group as a whole than to say they were off-shoots of either the Zulu or the Swazi. The Ngoni themselves used the designation 'Swazi' for the people with clan descent names whose ancestors left the south with the original party. Some of the older men remembered their fathers and grandfathers speaking of their clan as having belonged to the Ntungwa group, the Mbewe group, the Mbane group, before the departure of the Ngoni took place. This differentiation into pre-Swazi tribal and clan groupings was not in the 1930's one to which the Ngoni gave much attention. In talking about their southern origin it was the Swazi connexion which they emphasised.

[1] Chiumbo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Lutterworth Press, 1949, p. 9.
[2] Read, M. 'Songs of the Ngoni People.' *Bantu Studies*, March 1937, p. 10.
[3] Bryant, A. T. *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*. Longmans, 1929, pp. 780–93.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*. O.U.P., 1947, p. 1[illegible].

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 Ngoni tradition placed the departure of the two main groups under the leadership of Zwangendaba Jere and Ngwana Maseko during Shaka's wars, according to some traditions just before, and to others just after, the death of Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. The separate departure of the two Ngoni groups which later formed the two kingdoms was determined partly by their separate leadership under the Jere and Maseko clans, partly by their march by different routes to the Zambezi and after crossing it; and partly by the clan descent names of the Swazi element in the two kingdoms, which with few exceptions were different.

[533] Two traditional songs, sung at marriages, at dances at the Paramounts' villages, and the first in the church of the Scottish mission at Ekwendeni in north Nyasaland, reminisced the Ngoni of their departure from Natal, of their separation from the Ndwandwe people under Zwide, and of the hardship of a small military band fighting its way northwards.

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All the nations
Are gathered together against us.
How shall we fight?
They are called together against us.
Whence shall we summon help?
The big honky cows, ha!
They are called together against us.
We are reinforced by whom?

It is because of Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people
That though I lie down I cannot sleep.
O Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people!
Though I lie down I cannot sleep.
Shaka wanders on among the forests of Sozhangane land.

173 There were several informants in both Ngoni kingdoms who had preserved the story of the departure of the Ngoni from the south. V. M. Cibambo in his book gathered together the traditions and gave what he considered the most authentic version of the departure. One text from the northern kingdom is given here, partly because it was typical of the kind of material Cibambo had to work on, and also because the author, Mbunyani Jere, had heard it from his mother who, as a young girl, had lived at the court of Zwangendaba. The text gives the genealogy of Zwangendaba, and the connexion of his line with Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. It emphasizes the immediate cause of Zwangendaba's departure—namely the fear of meeting Shaka and his warriors in open battle, and the fact that he was not called a chief until he had made a breach with Zwide. The summons to the mourning for his uncle Mabi, which he ignored, was considered by the Ngoni to be the final act by which Zwangendaba cut himself off from

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

his kinsfolk who remained in the south. This breach with his former kin and the assumption of chieftainship marked out Zwangendaba as a leader and his followers as a separate group.

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The Departure of the Ngoni
by Mkenyeni Jere

Zwangendaba was the son of Hlacwayo, the son of Magangata, the son of Magalela, the son of Cenge of Ezhlakiweni.

Magangata had three sons, they were borne by one mother. The first-born was Gumede, the second was Hlacwayo, and the third was Mafu. Gumede did not marry, he hated them badly, he did not eat the food that was cooked by the woman, and the same Gumede was the chief of all Magangata's sons. He did not love his brother Hlacwayo. He said that Hlacwayo was black and also he was dwarf, but he said Mafu will be the one to take his chieftainship. Mafu was refusing to take that possession while his brother was still alive and he said that though the people say that Hlacwayo is black, he is not black to me but he is red. And also though they say he is dwarf he is not dwarf to me, but he is tall. When Gumede died the chieftainship was taken by Hlacwayo and Mafu was his second since they were all born from one mother.

Magalela was at Ndwandwe the village of Langa. Langa was the father of Zwide and Zwide was a very bad chief. Zwide did not treat Zwangendaba well. When Hlacwayo died his chieftainship was taken by Zwangendaba his son. Zwide was called Nzumalo, and these people of Nzumalo were strong men there in Natal and some were afraid of them.

Dingiswayo, the son of Jobe of Elangeni, went to Zwide for a visit at Ndwandwe. As soon as he appeared Zwide caught him and killed him. When Shaka heard that Zwide had killed Dingiswayo, he grew angry for Shaka had grown up there at Dingiswayo's. He said ' Zwide has killed the chief who taught me how to fight better.' At the same time he ordered warriors to go and fight against Zwide at Ndwandwe.

Zwangendaba refused to fight with Shaka because he heard the story of Shaka, that he was a great warrior. Then he told his father Mafu that he must go away from Zwide. Zwide was troubling the Jere people. When they cooked beer he was snatching it, and when a man married a good girl he was snatching her, and when they killed a cow he was snatching the meat and taking it to Ndwandwe. When Zwide quarrelled with Shaka, Zwangendaba was glad that he had found a way of going away from Zwide. Zwide fought against Shaka and Zwangendaba ran away. The leaving of Zwangendaba nobody knew and nobody followed him. Also there was no one to follow him for Zwide was busy with war against Shaka.

They sent a message to Zwangendaba that Mafu had died—'Come to the mourning.' Zwangendaba did not go back to the mourning. All the people who were in Mafu's villages did not follow Zwangendaba. They also went on their own way, and we do not know where they went. Zwangendaba came with only two sons of Mafu, Cenge and Mpayi. Those many children of Mafu stayed in Natal.

Zwangendaba was with his brother Nxakwi when leaving Natal.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 Ntabeni had his own village named Engwenyamani, and the big village of Zwangendaba was called Elangeni, and there were others.

When Zwangendaba left with his brother Ntabeni, they built their village near a path. That was the time that he departed from Zwide and he was at this time called a chief and had his own people. When Zwide was running away, Zwangendaba was on the way, and he was building his villages and spent a year at one place, and sometimes more than a year.

The following text on the departure of the central Ngoni from the south was written by Iskwani Mwale, the treasurer of Paramount
[114] Gomani II of the central Ngoni kingdom. As Cibambo had done in the north, he had collected and put together the oral traditions of the old men. This story also begins with a flight from Shaka's army by two leaders, Nqabe (spelt by Bryant, Nzabe) of the Mbatse people and Ngwana of the Mbanko people. They fought the Ngoni group led by the Jere clan, and the group under Gasa which were later called the Shangaan people, and were defeated by both. The tradition of crossing the Zambezi by dividing the waters with a stick was common to the northern and central Ngoni. After crossing the Zambezi, the central Ngoni went west of the Shire river to the Kirk Range on the eastern slopes of which they found the people called Ntumba.

The Departure of Ngwana from Swaziland
by Iskwani Mwale

© Nqabe, son of Mbekeni, made war on Shaka, but was defeated and retreated to Swaziland. Then Ngwana said 'If you run away from Shaka, he will trouble us, so I am going to leave.' Chief Nyathi told Shaka that Ngwana was leaving, and Shaka said: 'Prevent him from leaving.' So Nyathi fought Ngwana and Ngwana knew that he was waiting for Shaka's army. So he performed a rite, and caused rain to come and darkness. In the middle of the darkness Ngwana left together with Nqabe. They came to the country of Nanzekwani or Mawa, and fought with the people. They defeated the four chiefs there and conquered the country. Ngwana went straight to Ulozi to the village of Mambo, father of Lewanika. He destroyed the country of the Lozi and died there. Magadlela his brother removed the chieftainship. When Magadlela left Ulozi he went to the country of Ndandwali, and from there to the Nyika. He arrived at Cidima Mkhwanyana, and there Zwangendaba found them. There was fighting between Magadlela and Zwangendaba, and many people were killed and they did not know who they were because it was night. When Magadlela ran away he made for Gokongwi where Nqabe was, and explained to him about the war. They mobilized the army to follow Zwangendaba. When they found him they destroyed many of his men. Bandeya and other brothers of Zwangendaba were killed. When they returned from the war with Zwangendaba they went to Cikwanda. There they found Gasa and fought him and were defeated. Magadlela and Nqabe ran away. Nqabe took a friendly farewell of Magadlela because there was hunger and there were many people without food. Magadlela allowed him

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173

to leave and went straight to the country of the Mdumbe. They conquered it and came to the Nyungwi and conquered them too.

When they wanted to cross the Zambezi they made medicine and beat the water with a stick and separated it. All the army crossed and reached Kalundzi. They fought there, and there Magadlela died and Mgondo took care of the chieftainship. Mgondo came with all the army to Ntumbo and caught many Ntumbo people. In the Ntumbo country Mgondo entered the chieftainship.

(3) *'Those from south of the Zambezi'*

619

In the northern kingdom two main groups were included in this category: those whose clan names showed Tonga origin and those who showed Karanga origin. Bryant [1] wrote of the army under Zwangendaba 173
lacking its way through Tongaland almost by the same route as the army under Soshangane, who fought and defeated him on the headwaters of the Sabi river. To his Tonga adherents Zwangendaba added a number from the Karanga country, many of whom, trained to fight by the Ngoni, became famous warriors in the Ngoni campaigns further north.

The Ngoni under Ngwana with Ngabo and his army kept nearer to the coast, and fought their battle with Soshangane (whom they called Gaza in the text quoted) on the Buzi river near Sofala. The two main groups of adherents whom they forced to join them were from the Ndau and Venda peoples, called collectively the Venda group by the Ngoni. Bryant [1] spoke of Ngabo's conquest of the Ndau people on the Buzi river, which would indicate that the Venda leaders and their families were already part of the Ngoni army when the Ndau were added. Although, according to central Ngoni tradition, Ngwana's army with its followers zigzagged across the country between the Sabi river and the Zambezi, they do not appear to have collected adherents in any 174
large numbers from the tribal areas through which they passed. This supposition is only based on internal evidence, that of the clan names recognized by the Ngoni as having come from south of the Zambezi.

(4) *'Those from the north'*

173

After crossing the Zambezi, the central Ngoni went by the Kirk 619
Range into the western part of what is now the Nchisi district. Then they turned east, crossed the Shire river near Fort Johnston and went up the east side of the lake to the Livingstone mountains in the Songea district of Tanganyika where they fought with the northern Ngoni under the Gama clan. The clan descent names of followers acquired on this route included those from the Ntumbo people on the Kirk Range where they conquered on their first arrival in Nyasaland, and the Tonga people from Songea, some of whom were incorporated with

[1] op. cit. p. 480

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

173 these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the
49 Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Lusangwe valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(d) 'Those from this country'

179 Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland
543 who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. Those in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Tao origin.

101 Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition
128 of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambezi stock—that is categories (a) and (b) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would
[161] probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged, or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

101 The second conclusion is that even if the criterion is accepted that
543 the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambezi, the Ngoni
184 kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (a), (b), (c) and (d). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms
[172] of culture were found not only in groups (a) and (b), as would be expected, but often among families in group (c) who, through fighting in the Ngoni service and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual patterns.[1]

174 [1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpezeni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their records. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Mombo Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

prime-songs. The northern Ngoni remembered the names of five direct ancestors of Zwangendaba, ancestors who had died before they left the south, and the central Ngoni remembered the names of three direct ancestors of Mputa who had died before crossing the Zambezi.[1] 643 614

The genealogy of the Jere Paramounts which was recited in the northern kingdom varied in different localities. Of three versions which I found two agreed, except in the name given for the earliest ancestor. 643 173

Lowuma (Kali is the alternative given by Cibambo)
|
Lomande
|
Magulera — Died in the south
|
Magangata
|
Hlazwayo
|
Zwangendaba
|
Mhelwa I
|
Mhelwa II
|
Mhelwa III, ruling in 1939

The list above was given by Cibambo of Ekwendeni and Simon Nhlane of Hohe, the leading member of the Nhlane clan.

Third Version:

Nyandeni
|
Mahlo ambumo
|
Jele na Lowuma
|
Nchingile
|
Gumede
|
Magangata
|
Hlazwayo
|
Zwangendaba
|
Mhelwa I
|
Mhelwa II
|
Mhelwa III

[1] In 'Traditions and Prestige among the Ngoni' (Africa, 1956) I said (p. 46) that nine generations of ancestors were remembered in the north and seven in the centre. These referred to the Paramounts after crossing the Zambezi as well as to their ancestors who died in the south.

643 173 The third version was given by Chinombo Jere, a grandson of Zwangendaba, who came from Emciweni. This section of the Ngoni, under Chief Mperembe, had for a time associated with Paramount Mpezeni, and not with Mbelwa. This separation gave them a slightly different set of traditions, and they were, perhaps owing to their geographical isolation, the last group to give up the old language and dress.

An attempt to check the Emciweni version of the Jere genealogy with that of Ekwendeni showed one piece of evidence in favour of the latter. This was the tradition preserved by the Nhlane clan that the Swazi chiefs of the Nqumayo clan had as their chief *izinduna* men of the Jere clan who were of the same age regiment. The names remembered were as follows:

Swazi chiefs	*Ngoni izinduna*
Ndwandwe	Magalela
Langa	Magangata
Zwide	Hlacwayo
Sikunyane	Zwangendaba

In the central Ngoni kingdom the following was the generally accepted version of the genealogy of the Mseko Paramounts:

Msizi no bulako } Died in the south
Goqweni
Ngwana — Died before crossing the Zambezi
Mputa
Cikusi
Gomani I
Gomani II, ruling in 1939

After the death of Ngwana before the crossing of the Zambezi, two of his brothers in turn acted as regents. Also, on the death of Mputa, his brother Cidyawonga acted as regent. In the recital of the Paramount's genealogies, however, the names of the regents were not included.

The succession to the Paramountcy and the role of the regent

643 It might appear that among a strictly patrilineal people like the Ngoni, where marriage was formalised by exchange of cattle, and where each wife had a recognised position and rank, it would have been easy to formulate rules for the succession to the Paramountcy, and that they would have been followed without deviation. Such had obviously not

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 so briefly referred to was in the nature of a warning that the kingdom must be held together and certain Ngoni customs and institutions preserved. This general mandate to a new Paramount was in keeping with the Ngoni policy of maintaining order and justice within the kingdom, while showing all the aggressive qualities of warfare against external enemies.

773 643 In the story of their northward trek, the division of authority among the central Ngoni between the Maseko and the Phungwako clans was referred to as the Maseko taking the '*Reyete*' and the Phungwako taking [744] the *tonga*.[1] In central Ngoniland the *tonga* was a collective name given to royal medicines used at different times for different purposes and was not reserved for the medicine used in the army as in the northern kingdom. It was said to have been 'from the beginning in the south'; 'it is very old, ever since people were born'. The following description was given by a member of the Phungwako clan in the head village of Chief Kaswe:

643 789 'The Ngoni had protection for all their people of the most powerful kind. This was the *tonga*. This was specially to protect the Paramount at his accession. When the Ngoni were thus accustomed to being protected by the *tonga*, there was one thing which gave them protection above all others. If the Paramount died, in arranging matters, the *tonga* was essential in establishing the new Paramount. And if war had to be made, the *tonga* also gave protection so that they had strength to overcome their enemies.

[741] Also when the Ngoni were travelling in wild places and did not find somewhere to stay, they began to listen to the *tonga*. The diviner, who went ahead with the *tonga*, looked to see if there were bad omens. When they found a place to stay and stayed there with their cattle, they were protected by the *tonga*, so that they were not afraid of anything. They just conquered the country and took the cattle and made the people surrender.

[825] When getting ready the *tonga*, they could only do it with a sheep. They killed it, and took its blood and its fat and smeared the *tonga*. And the big people who were set aside for the work of the *tonga*, it was they who were doing these things. The meat of the sheep which was killed for the *tonga*, they did not eat it just anyhow, no. They were eating it in a special way, not in the house, no; nor with the women, no; but in a very different way from the meat of every day. They ate it without being greedy when it was divided, and they took care not to put some aside, for they feared lest someone should eat the *tonga*. They just ate to finish it quickly, and when they had finished they did not sleep in their houses with their wives, but they went apart and slept in the place where this was done for the *tonga*. Their sleeping was different from other days, for they did not sleep on good mats, no. When they had eaten meat for the *tonga* they changed their ways, to act differently from usual. Instead of

[1] The head of the Phungwako clan, Chief Kaswe, ruled one of the Ngoni states in the Dedza district which, in the 1930's, was separate from the central Ngoni kingdom.

[p. 88]

CHAPTER IV

COURTS AND OFFICIALS

[12] 177 671 The Ngoni claimed that when they established their kingdoms in Nyasaland they introduced a new idea of law, a different system of courts, and a different procedure for conducting cases in these courts, from those found among the local peoples. Within their kingdoms they imposed on all their subjects these ideas, courts and legal procedure as part of their government, applied to the conquerors and the conquered alike. We shall consider in this chapter only those aspects of the courts and the legal system which were related to the political structure. The categories of crime, the degree of punishment, the sanctions for enforcement of the Law, and the effect of the judicial procedure on the balance of equilibrium in the community, all belong to a specialized study and are not included here.

The Ngoni Concept of Law

692 643 671 We begin with two texts, the first from the northern kingdom by Cibambo, the second by Ishmael Mwale the Treasurer of the Paramount in the central kingdom.

(1) The Ngoni seem to have been born with a gift for leadership or rule. Though they were a wandering tribe, yet there was one Paramount from whom proceeded the laws for the good government of the people. All the lesser chiefs and headmen received from him the leadership of the people. [203] Though they had no way of writing to each other, they kept their unity by messengers passing between them. The Paramount had power to call gatherings from time to time, in which they talked of the affairs of the country. In these gatherings the old men and the men of reports who had a point to make were heard in criticism and made suggestions for the building up of the realm. By this means the Paramount and his counsellors learned of and understood the thoughts of their people. It was in such large gatherings that the laws of the country were delivered to the people, so that they might hold fast to them and not be punished unreasonably for breaking them in ignorance. After they came back from these gatherings, the headmen and men of standing gathered together their villages to tell the people what had been spoken in the great council of the Paramount, and told them carefully about the laws which had come from the gathering.

● 173 671 (2) Before the Ngoni came to this country the villages were small and isolated from one another. There was constant pounding on people to catch them as slaves. It was unsafe to go even a quarter of a mile from one village to another, because a man might be in hiding and pounce out and catch you and take you off to his village as a slave, and there was no redress and no case was heard. Most people never went beyond the

2: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

boundaries of their own village, and they were afraid to travel even in a large party of twenty or thirty. So no one had any wisdom beyond that of his own village and family. When the Ngoni came they had one law for all people and they had courts to hear cases where this law was enforced. There was freedom to travel in the land where the Ngoni ruled, because they had peace within their boundaries. Therefore, we say: this was the kind of peace we had.

In these two texts we have one major concept of Ngoni law with three chief ways in which it was implemented. The concept was that there was 'one law for all people' and that the knowledge of and enforcement of this law brought internal peace and resulted in good government in the country. There was one source of law as there was one source of political and military authority—the Paramount. As Cibambo points out, the Paramount delegated his authority for carrying out the law to chiefs and headmen and depended on his 'old men and men of reports' to keep him in touch with the thoughts and desires of all his subjects, so that he might adjust the enforcement of the law to bind the people to him. He also called large gatherings of all the chiefs and *abamasoma* and headmen in order that they might hear from him any new laws and regulations and understand them so that they in turn could make them known to their people. In the intervals between the holding of these large gatherings, which took place not more than once or twice a year, messengers passed constantly from the Paramount's village to all the areas of the chiefs and *abamasoma*, reporting to them about decisions taken at the royal village on matters affecting the country as a whole, and taking back reports to the Paramount on what was happening in the outlying districts.

I attended two of these annual meetings of the chiefs and *abamasoma* and headmen in the central kingdom. They took place not at the Paramount's village but at a more central spot for the whole territory. The people were drawn up in a square formation, with the Paramount at one end supported by his 'mouthpiece' (*ndomo wenkosi*), who always spoke for him, with the six Subordinate Native Authority chiefs beside him, and the councillors (*iminduna*) messengers and other officials of his court and of the S.N.A. courts arranged in order of precedence, facing the crowd as they did during court sessions. On the three sides of the square in the front ranks were the *abamasoma* and the headmen of their villages, sitting in territorial groups, and behind each headman were the *madala* or senior men of the village, and behind them again the *amajaha* or young men. I watched this assembly of 3,000 to 4,000 people being arranged, as they arrived, by the *iminduna* of the Paramount's court and the *iminduna* of the six chiefs. They took up their places as though on a military parade, and once placed there was no further movement. The effect was that of a barrack square in the straightness of lines and orderliness of behaviour. After all was in order the Paramount

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1936
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Dr. Kuper called the diviners among the Swazi 'the most powerful and respected specialists operating in both individual and national situations'.[1] I found that among the Ngoni also they were greatly respected once they had established their reputation for prophecy and diagnosis. Except on the occasions when they were called upon to carry out their functions the majority of diviners whom I saw in the ngo'o lived in relative seclusion, and had no outward signs of power in any political or economic sense, though in the past some of the 'prophets' had also been warriors and leaders. Socially they were always shown great honour when they came in response to a call, or when they were visiting on non-professional occasions. They were addressed in a respectful tone of voice, given a mat to sit on, and village noises around them were hushed. They were, however, essentially exclusive, withdrawn from public life except when they were called on to help in time of crisis, and they did not show any ostentation of wealth or position.

Dr. Kuper used the term 'specialist' to describe the diviners among the Swazi. In the Ngoni kingdoms there were many kinds of specialists owing to the existence of several tribal groups each with its traditional system of religion and magic, and each with varying methods of treating sickness, diagnosing the causes of misfortune, and interpreting omens and dreams. The diviners in the Ngoni kingdoms who were best known and on whom the greatest responsibility lay were those who were called by the Paramount in times of national crisis. Such responsibility and such fame had in pre-European days corresponding risks. The following story, which was told me in Hobo by Timoti Jere and which I heard quoted in several areas in the northern kingdom, puts in a traditional setting and with much circumstantial detail the kind of demands formerly made on diviners and the kind of treatment meted out to them.

When Zwangendaba in his coming out of South Africa arrived in the country of the Mazulu at Mahiri. It is there now. When the *impi* was commanded it went out to contend for the country of the Sukuma. That *impi* wanted very much to be victorious, because it went to fight in two countries, in that of the Sukuma, where they took the long-horned cattle, and in that of the Ngonde, where they took the cattle without horns and with big humps. While the *impi* was away, the Paramount called all the *ndondos* and said 'Why has the *impi* delayed so long? Call the *tinomo* that they may divine. Perhaps the *impi* has run away and turned back.' Then the *ndondos* called the *tinomo*. In their divining they said 'The *impi* has run away and turned back.' There was one *tinomo*, his name was UMakhosele Nkosi, who divined and said 'All the *impi* is there and it will return in this month. The long delay of the *impi* is because they have raided two countries, the country of the Sukuma with long-horned cattle and the country of the Ngonde with unhorned cattle.' It was so, and that month the *impi* returned and arrived at Mahiri with many herds of cattle as UMakhosele Nkosi had said.

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 184.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 791 After one year Zwangendaba called again all the *izinduna* and said 'Let us use all those *izanusi* in their divining.' So they spoke together secretly and said 'Let us take a goat and kill it, and take its blood, and let us sprinkle it on the doorways of the huts and on the posts of the doorways.' The *izinduna* agreed and no man knew of it. So they took a goat and stabbed its throat and when the blood came out they received it in the *umtomko*, and then sprinkled it on the doorways and the posts of the huts in the enclosure of the Paramount. They did this at night and returned to their huts and slept.

When it was dawn, all the people were astonished at seeing blood on the doorways of the Paramount's huts. The people told the *izinduna* and the *izinduna* told the Paramount. He said 'Call the *izanusi* that they may divine.' They called all the *izanusi* and they divined together and they said, 'That blood is of man. There are fresh corpses here. They are striving that you O Paramount may die.' There was one *izanusi* UMdlebundo Nkosi who divined alone, and he said 'O Paramount the blood is of a goat. You, together with the *izinduna*, are proving us as *izanusi*. It is you O Paramount and the *izinduna* who have done this thing.' So the Paramount agreed. He commended the *izinduna* and said 'Kill all the *izanusi* except UMdlebundo only.' All the *izanusi* were killed in this way by Paramount Zwangendaba at Mdzini.

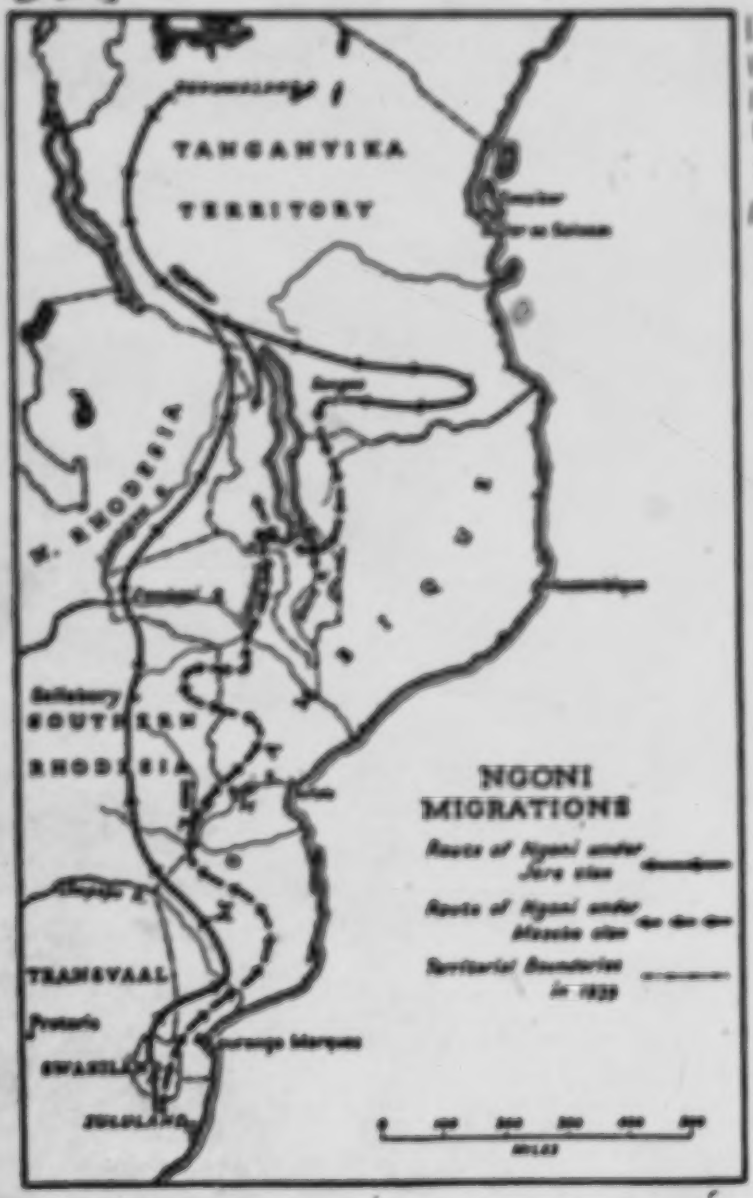
The moral of this traditional story, as the Ngoni always pointed out when relating it, was that diviners could be wrong. The specialised skill which they claimed to possess carried with it a recognised responsibility for using it correctly and not deceiving the people who consulted them. There was also a suggestion in the story of the contempt for this kind of skill shown by leaders who possessed great political and military power. Hard-headed chiefs and army leaders in the past expected efficiency in their diviners, and punished them severely for ineptness and what appeared as deceit. This veiled contempt, associated as it was with the tacit admission that the diviner as a specialist could not be dispensed with in Ngoni life, appeared often in the 1930's when Ngoni leaders were talking about divining and were planning to have recourse to it. As in this story, they were ready to recognise authentic diagnosis when they heard it, but not to regard the diviners as a class as infallible. One of the reasons for this view about divining was the wide range of social background and the diversity of functions among the diviners. The following account by Cibambo suggests that two categories of diviners were recognised by the Ngoni and indicates certain Ngoni attitudes towards their range of operations and the way in which they carried them out. The account refers to pre-European days, and there was in the 1930's little evidence of these distinctions between types of diviners.

791

¶ There were men who acted as go-betweens between the spirits and the people called *izanusi*. Just as in the days of the Jews there were true and false prophets, so it was among the Ngoni. It is going too far, indeed it is

2: Reed E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5



3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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Ngoniland and the People who lived in it

The homeland

The little country of Nyasaland in Central Africa received its name from the lake by which Livingstone and those who followed him penetrated into the interior and reached the lands and people living round the lake. On the west side there is a narrow strip of low-lying coastal land. Then a series of escarpments begin, and up them roads and paths wind through steep wooded valleys, until the final scarp leads to the grasslands of the high plateau. Here on the high plateau the Ngoni settled about the middle of the nineteenth century, after nearly forty years of trekking from Natal to Tanganyika. They turned south again at the shores of Lake Victoria and returned to this land which they had passed through on their northward march. This high plateau has great diversity of scenery, and much of it reminded the Ngoni of the hills and valleys and grasslands of Natal. There are high mountains with sharp peaks and massive granite shoulders. Between the ranges of lower grass-covered hills are shallow valleys where the rain washes down good soil to the valley bottoms. Sweeps of grassland, bare of trees, alternate with river valleys where there is a continuous flow of water, fed by springs and mountain streams.

In the dry season, from April to November, the trees lose their leaves and the grass gradually dries up till the prevailing colours are gold and brown against the black and grey

3: Rand E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of 'staying together', they did not make the occasion of physical maturity an opportunity for driving home the lesson. According to Ngoni tradition the forms of private ritual for girls and for boys had come with them from the south. At one point in their wanderings, said to be in Tanganyika before they settled in Nyasaland, they gave up the practice of circumcision, also brought from the south. This rite, according to tradition, had coincided with boys passing out from herding cattle and being called up into a regiment.

The question naturally arises why the Ngoni adhered to their private ritual at puberty, and never adopted any of the local forms of initiation schools, and why they abandoned their only corporate ritual of this type: the circumcision school. Various reasons were given by the Ngoni elders for abandoning the circumcision ritual: that there were no more grass to be found of the sharp kind with which the foreskin was cut; that the school which lasted three to four months delayed for too long the intake of young men into the army; and that the young men of non-Ngoni families, compulsorily absorbed into the army, objected strongly to being circumcised.

After a short description of the private ritual for girls and boys, we will return to answer the question why the Ngoni held to these forms.

Girls' private ritual

When a Ngoni girl found she was menstruating for the first time, she stayed in the hut where she was sleeping and called her companion or her friend and told her what was taking place. Ngoni women declared that their girls were as a rule unprepared, and that the flow of blood was unexpected and alarming. Some Ngoni girls agreed that this was true. The majority said, 'We knew about this from our older sisters and companions, but we hid this knowledge from the elders.' The companion or friend found a senior helper in the grandmother's household, generally the one who had supervised the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on Mount Chuma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous secessions from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Gwere had gone. All the people shouted "Gwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Ghambe, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred to historical events which were illustrated in songs or recorded in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni Christian leaders went further than this. They used the

3 Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[175] [177] [177] parallel of the Jews of the Old Testament preparing the way for the Christian era to illustrate and drive home their belief that they, the Ngoni, had prepared the way for the Christian Gospel in Nyasaland. 'Were we not also a people who hated idols and images? We too tried to reach the Great God through our ancestor spirits, but we failed, until the missions came to teach us.' 'We held together the people of this land under one rule so that the missionaries could travel safely and spread the Gospel teaching.' These beliefs were stated so often that they became almost standard formula, and the incongruity of this picture with some of the warlike situations recorded by the earliest missionaries was ignored and forgotten. In the churches, where the people sat on mats, Sunday by Sunday, facing their Ngoni ministers, rising to sing, in [199] their typical Ngoni harmonies, Christian hymns set to former Ngoni war tunes—in this setting Ngoni history was brought home, interwoven with the new teaching, to young adults who formed the majority of the congregation. For Ngoni elders it was something more than a reminder of their past. It was setting the Ngoni people in a special relationship to [196] the European missionaries and the new learning, compensating for the passing of military power and political supremacy by establishing Ngoni cultural superiority over their neighbours. This gave some spiritual reassurance to a people in the throes of political change, and it was a lesson which lost none of its significance for the young adults who heard it.

Ngoni law

671 'There was one law for all the people. No one could be ignorant of the law.' These were the words, quoted in Chapter I, which the Ngoni used frequently to describe the importance [192] of law in their culture, its role in the political unification of their own and subject peoples, and the responsibility, laid on all adults, for knowledge of the law and conformity with its demands. An incident in a court of law, which was unfor- 692 gettable to an anthropologist, was a case in which a chief sat

The Fort Jameson Ngoni[1] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe nonliterate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were nonliterate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is transmitted. I shall distinguish between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821-1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of European control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admired defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

1. I worked among these people during 1948-49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

quarrels in a village the headman is blamed by the chief for not controlling the people well. All disputes are best settled out of court, even if they must be referred to court later on. Therefore a quarrel in village A brings to light all the alliances and cleavages which link A with other villages and differentiate it from them. The headman of A appeals to B for support, invoking the historical incident linking them, and hopes to settle affairs of his village with the authority of B's approval behind him. For if the headman of B is a potential ally he is also a potential rival, and the dissident section in A may themselves invoke their link with B and transfer their allegiance to him. Thus although the details of the relationship between A and B, and the historical incident connected with it, may not be widely known there is considerable external pressure on them to maintain their relationship. Connexions of this kind, mainly between villages, but also between chiefdoms, play a large part in contemporary Ngoni life. Men walk twenty miles to a funeral and women carry pots of beer all day in response to ties of this kind.

Thus we see, on the one hand, that tribal legends are widely known, relate to pre-conquest times, and do not directly influence conduct; and, on the other, that legends associated with inter-group relations are known only by the groups concerned, may relate to either before or after 1898, and do directly influence action. Why is there this difference? We may regard the former legends as of significance mainly in external relations and the latter in internal. Within the tribe, and more particularly within the minor chiefdoms, inter-group relations are still largely determined by Ngoni themselves, however much they may have altered in form and content since 1898 and however much Ngoni are part of a wide system. Movement between villages is only slightly controlled by the Administration and in quarrelling, in marriage and adultery, beer-drinking and hoeing, Ngoni men and women choose their own allies and enemies. Incidents in reality give rise to inter-group relations and are subsequently invoked to maintain them. History is written not in books but in the names of groups and in the remembered connexions between them, and as these connexions gradually change so local legendary history is gradually rewritten.

In external relations the Ngoni never act as a tribe except within the framework of European-controlled institutions. As yet no myth of origin is needed to explain the fact that Ngoni and Cewa representatives sit together on the Provincial Council save that the Administration put them there. The world of external relations is one of cultural heterogeneity and comparative inadequate documentation. In this field legends have only a limited social function. They differentiate tribe X from tribe Y but do not relate them to each other.

Finally we must consider Ngoni history proper. There have been many alleged accounts of Ngoni history published in Europe and South Africa, but these seem to have had little influence on the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Recently several histories have appeared in the vernacular, and tribal history

9: Read E-5 (1955) 1956 FRS Ngoni FRS

one party of them came up from the south, and partly to divisions among the Ngoni during the period of settlement.

About 113 years ago the ancestors of these Ngoni left their homes in the present Zululand and Swaziland for their long trek north. The immediate cause of their departure was the defeat of Zwidi, chief of the Ndwandwe people, by Chaka, the history of whose military career in Zululand is well known and needs no repetition here. As part of Zwidi's people, the Ngoni did not want to stay under Chaka, and the same impetus and military skill which set up Chaka as the Zulu Napoleon drove the Ngoni northward as far as Lake Tanganyika, a conquering military horde amassing followers on the way. To-day they are found in three large groups and several smaller ones, the large groups known as the 'countries' of Mpezeni, Mwamkwera, and Gomani, who are the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs.[1]

These groups of people with their southern origin, settled among people who had a totally different language and social structure, present to the anthropologist a highly complex situation to investigate. He must at the outset ask the questions, 'Who are these Ngoni? Have they a separate identity as a people, marked by distinctive social and political institutions?' After living among them for nearly a year I am convinced that it is correct to speak of the Ngoni as a distinctive group; that they themselves are very conscious of their separate identity as a people, and that they can point to certain of their institutions, notably their language and political, territorial, and kinship groupings, which are definitely Ngoni, that is, of southern origin, and which distinguish them from the people among whom they settled. The complexities of this situation involve the analysing of the ethnic elements included in this term 'Ngoni' and the determining of the sense in which it is to be used. They involve also an explanation of what is meant by the expression 'a distinctive Ngoni culture', or 'distinctive Ngoni institutions'. The anthropologist who is interested in culture contact must go further and indicate the nature of the double contact caused first by the intermingling of the Ngoni with other tribes, and then by the advent of the Europeans. It is not possible in this article to do justice to all these aspects of an intricate problem.

[1] For the purposes of this article these are the only groups which will be considered.

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts?

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connections. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Ngoni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Ngoni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *e* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups.

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'These are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Ngoni clans.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[2] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working as one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the bush, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[3] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and inherited traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwide, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[2] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[3] With the possible exception of Chikwembayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

819 down fully and correctly. When I arrived in Chief Gomani's country,
124 after having stayed in the other two Ngoni areas, the chiefs and leading
[114] men whom he called to see me asked at once, 'What did the other Ngoni do to show you they were Ngoni? *We* want you first to hear the story of our people.' If I said to any older man of good standing, that is of a true Ngoni clan, 'Tell me about the Ngoni', he invariably began with the traditions of the south and their trek north.

173 I have some fifteen long texts[1] of Ngoni history, most of which
[126] begin with the stories of Dingiswayo and Zwidi, leading on to the rise of Chaka and the Ngoni exodus from the south. These texts not only show a measure of agreement with each other, but they also are verifiable by established history as recorded by Europeans. Those texts which came from Gomani's country contain different material after the exodus from the south. For the Ngoni under the leadership of the
[619] Maseko clan came north with Mzilikazi and the Matabele, and crossing the Zambezi alone, went east of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika.[2] The main Ngoni group under the Jere clan went west of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika, and remained a united group until the death of Zwangendaba in 1848. A disputed succession followed and the Ngoni split up under two rival Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera. The history
[829] of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one, the only one to whom the royal salute *Bayete* should be given. Mpezeni's historians say, 'Mwambera snatched *Bayete*'—and vice versa. In spite of these divergences in later history, however, the Ngoni point to their earlier
619 history and say, 'You see we are all one people'. They are conscious
829 of, and troubled about, their present divisions and inclined to attribute them to our premature arrival in the country. 'You came too soon. We would have fought until there was only one *inkosi*.'

The detailed knowledge of Ngoni history is regarded as the pro-
814 vince of a specialist. 'How can a man of no wisdom remember all those names?' From time to time 'historians' tell episodes of this traditional history in the villages of the Paramount or of other im-

[1] 800–1,000 words.

[2] This is their own account and is confirmed by the Rev. Charles Stuart, formerly at Ekwendeni, but not so far recorded by other Europeans.

history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni. It is nevertheless recognised that the aristocrats, through their kinship links with the past, have the best knowledge; the rest listen and defer to them. For matters relating to history are no antiquarian interest to the Ngoni. It is probable that recalling history and dwelling on the great days of the past is to some extent a compensation for what the Ngoni consider the indignities of their position to-day. Yet it is also a stimulus to them to maintain their separate identity and to revere their institutions. Tradition supports rank, by recognising the historical importance of certain clans; and rank preserves tradition because intimate knowledge is the proud monopoly of certain families. 814 [565] [196] [182]

V. Tradition and Legend as Documentation. To the anthropologist who examines the part played by tradition and legend in the culture of a people, Professor Malinowski has given an invaluable lead. He suggests that myths are the charter and documentation for traditional tribal life, 'statements of reality which live in the institutions and pursuits of the people';[1] and that legend is re-interpreted history. All peoples of whatever level of civilization interpret history in the light of their beliefs about themselves, their achievements, and their destiny. The Ngoni are no exception to this. Sometimes they relate factual history which is verifiable and accurate. At other times it is probably part fact, part fiction. Yet at all times the emphasis in, and interpretation of, tradition, has a definite purpose, and it is possible to see how a standardized form of a narrative has come to be accepted and believed in. The version of a narrative at one time was interpreted or moulded to serve a purpose. Having been established, it then moulds the thinking of the people on that particular issue. The vexed question of the supremacy of the two Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera[2] is a case in point. The basis of the story of the original dispute is the same, but the versions as told in each 'country' differ in a succession of minute details, whose arrangement and emphasis prove the point in each case. Mpezeni's historians have arranged the details to prove that he is the rightful *inkosi*; Mwambera's historians [121] 814 182 173 829 643

[1] B. Malinowski. Article on Culture in *Encyclopædia of Social Sciences*.

[2] The two Paramounts at present holding these titles are grandsons of the first holders, to whom I refer as old Mpezeni.

9: Rand E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 829 693

do the same. And in each area the versions as minimal convince the people that their *induni* is supreme. The main purpose of the tradition was to show that there cannot be more than one rightful *induni* of the Ngoni. The present-day interpretations serve the same purpose and exalt one of the two claimants at the expense of the other.

The traditions centring round the person of Zwangendaba are numerous. Some of these are concerned to show that he was an important chief in the south under Zwidi, and that the Jere clan of which he was head was a leading one. Other accounts do not disguise that he was an upstart, but lay stress on his success as leader of the Ngoni in their trek north. All these traditions about Zwangendaba are told as documentation for the importance of the *induni*, and centre round the Ngoni belief that their state must have one head in whom authority is centralized. It is easy to see that the circumstances under which the Ngoni state was created demanded a strong autocratic ruler. The traditions gathered round this first ruler of their state now serve to perpetuate the beliefs about the office of Paramount Chief, beliefs which modern ideas and western education have hardly modified at all.

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Ngoni history divides into three periods, and the traditions in each period, as they are told, form the people's thinking about that section of their past. The traditions of the earliest period, that is, of their life in the south and their trek north, are the charter for their pride as a distinctive people. The traditions of the middle period, of their conquests and settlements, document their superiority over the surrounding peoples. The traditions of the last period, that of the arrival of the European, determine their attitude towards white contact. Their interpretation of their history, therefore, reflected in the established legends and tradition, influences profoundly their thinking about themselves, about their neighbours, and about the Europeans.

173 167

VI. Prelude to White Contact. This second period of Ngoni history includes the events from the crossing of the Zambezi to the coming of the Europeans, roughly the years 1855–1885. During these fifty years the original Ngoni horde, with additions to it from the tribes south of the Zambezi, explored the country in which they were finally to settle, went farther north into Tanganyika, and finally

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

returned between the years 1855–1865, to settle in their present habitat. The earlier part of the period was one of exploring and of conquest. The later part was the time of settlement and consolidation, during which the Ngoni 'states' emerged in the form in which they were found, when the Europeans first arrived.

The Ngoni in Mpezeni's country, when speaking of this time, call it *chamtendere* (the time of peace). Any white travellers' tales referring to these years lay stress on the constant raids carried out by the Ngoni, the fierceness of their warriors, and their ravaging of the countryside for slaves and cattle. It was obviously a time of frequent wars. Why then do the Ngoni call it a time of peace? I have asked this question of many men of rank and standing and they give one invariable reply, 'We call it *chamtendere* because the *Azungu* (Europeans) were not there to trouble us'. This statement is in effect the key to Ngoni thinking about the days of pre-white contact, and also about the advent of the Europeans. The way in which they speak of *chamtendere* is itself significant. I first heard it during a long recital of Ngoni history, and stopped the narrator to ask the meaning of the word. There was instantly an embarrassed silence and self-conscious grins in the group. The word had evidently slipped out unawares, for later on they told me that it was a word they only used among themselves. Having once been used, however, it appeared frequently in conversations with me, and proved a useful starting-point for accounts of the organization of their own state and the effects on it of the European advent. 'Ah, *chamtendere*', they say, with a deep sigh, 'then we were people'. It proved also to be a pass-word to their confidence, for whenever I mentioned *chamtendere* to a village headman, he and his notables nudged each other, and laughed and said, 'She can know about us'. When pressed to be more specific about this 'troubling' by the *Azungu* they spoke of taxes, of the ban upon raiding and warfare, of young men being called away to work, of their land being taken for European farms. These restrictions and disabilities caused by white contact they regarded as warfare, that is, as troubled times, because the Europeans forcibly prevented them from doing as they liked, just as they had done in their day to the surrounding tribes. The conquered tribes, on the other hand, naturally hailed the advent of the Europeans as a time of peace and security. Therein lies the chief

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

difference to-day between the attitude of the Ngoni to the Europeans and that of the Chewa, for example. In the vernacular expression the Ngoni say, 'The Europeans spoiled our country'; the Chewa say, 'The Europeans saved us'.

Chamtendere, then, was the period of Ngoni supremacy, when they established by force of arms their right to rule over the country and its indigenous inhabitants. There was, however, some difference between the political organization of the Ngoni as a conquering horde on the march, and their organization when they finally settled in their present areas. At both times the focus of their organization was warfare—they were a nation under arms. But once settled on land which they had chosen they began to spread a network of political organization over the country, and to plan in terms of 'countries'[1] instead of mobile villages. To-day when they discuss the advent of the Europeans and the consequent 'spoiling' of their country, they recall the days when extensive tribute was paid to their Paramount Chief, chiefs were free to choose good sites for their very big villages, the outlying areas were ruled by *indunas* and lesser chiefs. It was the partial breaking up of this centralized political organization which they regarded as 'spoiling their country', as well as the economic restrictions with regard to land and the prohibition of raiding for new supplies of cattle.

During this time of Ngoni supremacy Ngoni institutions flourished —those institutions which they had brought with them from the south and preserved through their wanderings. When they are telling to-day about these years they speak fervently and reverently of the part played by the Paramount Chief in every side of life, the training for warfare of all the young men, the instruction and supervision of young chiefs by old *indunas*, Ngoni marriage and initiation ceremonies. It was during this time in Mpezeni's country that the *Inqwala* or first fruits ceremony was regularly observed at Mtenguleni, the village of the mother of old Mpezeni.[2] At this ceremony the Paramount Chief 'opened' the new food season by the ritual eating of new fruits, especially young maize and pumpkins. It was also the

[1] i.e. chiefs' areas.

[2] The description of this *Inqwala* given by men and women who took part in it in their youth shows much similarity to the *Inqwala* of to-day among the Swazi.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Moravi FR4

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

N M 173 829 177 [582] this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chinamwali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *umsindo* or *umgonxo* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chinamwali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

N M [881]

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

N M [191] [562]

N [178]

N 114 If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chamtendere*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no 186
means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely 726
about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'.

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard 173
the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of 721
strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni 726
tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British [713]
superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the [727]
huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale.

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni 173
it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they [186]
dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] [648] [423]

[1] In the Report of Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'. [361]

[2] Over 3 miles across. [3] in 1885.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 648 made friends with old Mpezeni and finally made Luangeni, Mpezeni's head village, his head-quarters. He obtained mining rights in the land [423] from Mpezeni, by word of mouth, but Mpezeni signed no deed of gift or transfer. This legal point which subsequently became one of the major points at issue in the North Charterland Company case has been emphasized again and again to me in the villages. 'Mpezeni was writing nothing. He was only giving presents to Weise, and [491] Weise gave presents to him, and Mpezeni was saying, "You may travel in my country and dig for gold. You are my friend."' They add further, 'Mpezeni did not want to make friends with the British [648] because he had heard from the Matabele and from Nyasaland what they were doing. Weise said "I am not from the British", and so Mpezeni was making promises with him.' So deeply is this tradition of friendship between Mpezeni and Weise, with its consequences of betrayal and disaster, embedded in the Ngoni thinking, that when I stayed in the Paramount Chief's village and exchanged presents with [123] him, many old people shook their heads and warned the young people, 'The *Azungu* war will come again. This is how that other war was beginning.'

175 648 Weise failed to establish his claim to mining rights in Mpezeni's territory with Sir Harry Johnston, then Commissioner for all British territories north of the Zambezi. Meantime the British South Africa Company obtained a new charter to extend its field north of the Zambezi, and sent an emissary to Mpezeni's kraal to make a treaty with him. Mpezeni refused. He also refused Sir Harry Johnston's emissary who met Weise at Mpezeni's kraal with a view to getting Mpezeni to make a treaty direct with the British Crown. The mining rights in Mpezeni's country were potentially valuable, and on Mpezeni's refusal to grant them were claimed by the British South Africa Company[1] on the ground of treaties made with the conquered Chewa people, whom Mpezeni had dispossessed.[2] Weise was at this time at Mpezeni's with one or two Portuguese traders and officials, making hay while the sun shone.

[1] 'Finding Mpezeni obdurate the British South Africa Company concluded treaties with all the surrounding indigenous chiefs whom Mpezeni had dispossessed. We consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief.'

[2] F.O. 6537.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Marari FR4

N 635 [797] [743]

time controlled from a mission station just inside Nyasaland, so that many people crossed to attend religious services and receive instruction. From Mpezeni's own county it is easier to get to the hospital at Fort Manning than to the one at Fort Jameson, so that people wanting European medicine tend to go to Nyasaland for treatment rather than to Fort Jameson. Nyasalanders are for their part attracted into Northern Rhodesia by the market for foodstuffs among the urban population, White and Black, of Fort Jameson and by the greater variety of goods on sale there.

N [438]

Other Ngoni Groups

N 101 173

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are conscious of their links with the other groups of Ngoni scattered over Central Africa, and of their similarity with the Ndebele and the Swazi and Zulu. The Paramount Chief is sometimes praised by the recital in the Ngoni language of the past exploits of the Ngoni, how they crossed the Zambezi, and how they conquered one tribe after another. On one occasion I heard someone who cannot speak Ngoni praise the Paramount by repeating, in Ndebele, which is similar to Ngoni, a praise of Mzilikazi[1] which he had learnt by rote. This oration was accepted without comment by the Paramount. Lancaster has recorded a legend that Lobengula[2] fled to Mpezeni after the second Matebele War, and that he died in the country.[3] Some years after his installation Mpezeni II was visited by a delegation from Mombera, chief of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland, which, it is said, came to ratify Mpezeni's position as Chief of the Fort Jameson section of the Ngoni. An important headman in Mpezeni's county, who bears the same name as Chief Chiwere of the Ngoni of Dowa District, still claims from time to time that because his namesake and alleged relative is a chief, he too ought to be a chief.

Nsenga and Yao

N M 648 [197]

The Ngoni are on more friendly terms with the Nsenga of Petauke District than with the other matrilineal tribes of the region. Some of the kinship ties that were formed as a result of intermarriage between the two tribes in the 1870's can still be traced, and their languages are similar. Mpezeni III went in 1944 with his first lieutenant and twenty-five followers to visit the Nsenga Chief Manjawanthu, and he is expected to return the invitation.

[1] The first Ndebele king. [2] Son of Mzilikazi, defeated by the Whites.

[3] Lancaster, p. 83. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, and Posselt, *Upangula the Scatterer*, pp. 112–24.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed. 101 123 643

NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Ndima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa. 159 167

Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1825. 173 643 648

In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques. [721]

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son. [595]

1 [induna=military leader--Analyst]

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
578 Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
643 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
648 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.

In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo.
[805] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Maseko, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Msafwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinaluzi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
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11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 159 173 562

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze*.

N M 171 643 842 851

N 159 173 562 [595]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Loziwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtenguleni Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

N [764] [423]

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchizu* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

N 159 173 595 842 602

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jure; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 644

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Ansenga tribe worked for Sosera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Sosera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the *ikohlwa* wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamache Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Imiti. Father, Nzyekezera (Njekerezera), mother and wife, not known; sons, Masakambewa and Chitete.

[554] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his

[578] instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1846.

159 173 167 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambose Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed

[578] by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Maseko was killed by

[554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 (6) Njekwane Ntilila. Father, Mphange, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyuwazana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mene, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu

[701] [645] regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpinduka Hill, Matambazi River, in the year 1868.

(7) Mgai Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majekwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca.1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere: born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1868/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 643

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Mulowi River, that he had one son by her named Chisombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mackera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

He

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

543 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment;
551 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment: Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief
[643 Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[645 Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black oxhide,
[701 white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Sosera Nqumayo,
[595 Great Wife; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu;
[543 Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku?; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndauya Mbanzima, Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nquaneleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.
167 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
551 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
543 Chief Diviner or *Isanusi*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadose, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595 Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere; Mtizwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere; Maiwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727 1898. Grandson:—Chiba Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

[727 Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near Msesa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsawe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayunge (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu,
704 Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Mascho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera, Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

173

(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

159
173
643

Lobengula, Chief of the Amaxebele. It is stated as follows.

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Susera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Basaliyo Soko, Zimajaya Mphanza, Mshamunye Mphanza, Mshawa Mwase Shawa, Dede Tole, Mjobo Ndwambi Jere, Malwalaliche Tembo, Maenje Nkhawa, Katenda Manyunyu Makowane, Kapondola Jozeni Mvula, Machilika Mphanza, Chhanguchane Ngulowe, Chiwere Maimba, Maulau Jere, Mqulanga Mphanza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Madalmawe, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndawambi Hara, Matrino Kangwere Mkhawa, Pengani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gawani Mawere, Chingulukani Ntemba, Siya Mvula, Ngungu Singa Jere, Mshawa Mphanza, Mzarki Lukhelo, Njombwa Tembo, Adembwaeke Mchanga, etc.

115
527
551
814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

lh: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173

Circa TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI TRIBE.

1580. Zumbo station on the Zambesi located by the Portuguese.

1760. Senzangakona born: son of Jama and father of tshaka.

1770. Dingiswayo born; chief of the Mtetwa tribe and son of Jobe.

1775. Ziwide born: son of Langa of the Ndwandwe tribe.

1780. Zongendaba born; son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe. Zumbo Station opened and abandoned by Manoel G. Pereira.

1785. Tshaka born: son of Senzangakona of the Zulu tribe.

1790. Mzilikazi born; son of Mashobana of the Kumalo clan.

1800. Accession of Dingiswayo. Loziwawa Nqumayo born; daughter of Nombhengula, the son of Ulanga Vimba.

1805. Tshaka took refuge with Dingiswayo.

1808. Sosera Nqumayo, sister of Loziwawa Nqumayo, born.

1810. Death of Senzangakona. Accession of Tshaka.

1812. Tshaka defeated the Ama Ngwana. Flight of Matiwane.

1817. Tshaka defeats the Ema Cunwini tribe. Flight of the tribe.

1818. Dingiswayo of the Mtetwa tribe killed by Ziwide.

1821. First attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe tribe. Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide, killed; father of Loziwawa and Sosera, wives of Chief Zongendaba; also of Nomahlanjana, Ziwide's heir; Mpepa and Dayingubo his sons were killed.

1823. Sebetwane moves off with the Nati clan. Secession of Zongendaba and his indunas, after second Ndwandwe attack by Tshaka at Nkhandhla; Ziwide's people beaten. Cattle and women seized by Tshaka and incorporated into the Zulu tribe.

1825. Secession of Mzilikazi, son of Matshobana, from Tshaka. Secession of Soochangane Manukuza, son of Sigode, younger son of Langa Vimba, Chief of the Ndwandwe tribe. Tribe vanquished by Chaka at Eldololwani Mountain between Mkuze and Pongolo Rivers. Death of Ziwide. Death of Sikunyana.

1826. Death of "Nada the Lily" (Nandi), mother of Tshaka, widow of Senzangakona, and daughter of Mbengi, Chief of the Elangeni clan. Ntutu Mpeneni born; eldest son of Chief Zongendaba by his Great Wife's (Loziwawa Nqumayo's) *Nablonze* and younger sister, Sosera Nqumayo).

1828. Zongendaba fought with Mzilikazi on the P.E. Africa Border, was beaten, and broke away into P.E. Africa near the Limpopo River, where he met and united himself with Manukuza and his brother, Mhlabawadabuka. Death of Tshaka. Death of Matiwane.

Circa

1829. David Hume visited Mzilikazi at Marico. Rev. Moffat visited Mzilikazi at Limpopo R. Lobengula born; son of Mzilikazi by his Swazi wife, Fulata, daughter of Chief Malendela of the Ama-Swazi.

1830. Dingaan's impis fight Mzilikazi without result to either side.

1831. Mzilikazi at Thaba Bosigo; attacks the BaSuto, but without success.

1832. Mzilikazi at Mosega. Mtwalu born; son of Zongendaba by his wife, Nqutu, younger sister of Umsine.

1833. Manukusa defeated and drove the Portuguese from Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques). Fight between Manukusa and Zongendaba. Zongendaba and Mhlabawadabuka left Manukusa and migrated in a northerly direction. Death of Loziwawa Nqumayo, Great Wife of Zongendaba.

1834. Mzilikazi at Kapaying. On what is now the S. Rhodesia-Portuguese (Mozambique) border, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka, brother of Manukusa, and proceeded in a north-westerly direction where he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai. A fight took place at Inqwekwizi River where the latter were destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba zi-Ka-Mambo.

1835. In November the Ngoni under the leadership of Chiefs Zongendaba and Gwana crossed over the Ukwembe (Zambesi) River at the Manyorere Drift. Mgabi Maseko quarrelled and did not cross but travelled along the south bank and at a later date, 1838, crossed the river in the vicinity of Tete. The date of crossing was marked by an eclipse.

1836. Ngoni settled in the Ansenga country. Sofala plundered and destroyed by Manukusa. Mzilikazi's Matebele attack the Boers at Vechkop. Harris and others met Mzilikazi at Mosega.

1837. Chief Umtigane, Dingaan's induna, fought with Mzilikazi and captured numerous cattle, but left an impi dead on the field. Mosega burnt out by the Boers. Mzilikazi moves out of the Transvaal. Fulata Swazi, wife of Chief Mzilikazi and daughter of the Swazi chief, Malendela, and Mother of "Ningi" and Lobengula, died near the Limpopo River.

At the end of this year the Matabele entered what is now S. Rhodesia, "Walale."

1838. Bands of roving Ama-Swazi defeated and incorporated by Mzilikazi.

1840. Mombera (Mbelwa), son of Zongendaba by his wife Umaene, born at Chulu, Nyasaland. Ngoni in the Rukuru Valley.

1842. Arrival of the Ngoni in the Ufipa country.

1845. Local raids.

1848. Death of Zongendaba at Mapupu in the Ufipa country. Buried near the Nylmelimi River. Break up of the Tribe.

Ib: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173

Circa

1846. Death of Ntabeni in U'fipa country.

1847. Death of Gwaza Tole in U'fipa country. Northward trek of a body of Ngoni led by Mgai.

1848. Ngoni at Victoria Nyanza.

1849. Death of Mgai in Sukuma country. Zulu Gama and his people broke away into Songea. They were followed by Mombera's adherents, who caught them up. Mombera's people badly beaten; the fight took place near Old Langenburg. Mombera returned.

1850. Mpezeni and Mperembe break away and enter the Wiza and Wemba country. Mombera and Mtwalu move to the Henga country.

1855. Mombera's Ngoni in the Tumbuka country in the vicinity of Hora Mountain.

1856. Mpezeni skirted the Wemba country on southward migration and raided Wiza and Lala tribes en route, east of Bangweulu.

1858. Death of Manukusa; his son, Maweva, succeeds him.

1860. Mpezeni's Ngoni at Cheronga on the Mchinga escarpment where an encampment was made, crops were grown, and local natives raided for slaves. Maweva defeated by Mzila, son of Manukusa.

1861. Mzila takes chieftainship.

1861. Uloziba, Great Wife of Mzilikazi, died at Inyati, Oct. 5th, 1861.

1862. Zumbo Boma re-occupied by Albino Manuel Pacheeho.

1865. Mpezeni's Ngoni at Mkoma and Mbangombe Hills. Further encampment. Tsingu Jere born, son of Mpezeni Jere by his wife, Lupoko.

1868. Zula Gama crossed the Shire river, 5th September. Death of Chief Mzilikazi at Inyati. Mpezeni at Mpinduka Hill, Matambadzi Stream. Death of Induna Njekwane. Mperembe's Ngoni defeated by the combined forces of Arab traders and Wemba near Chikumbo, Lake Bangweulu district.

1869. Mombera turned back, crossed the Luangwa river and joined Mtwalu and Mperembe in the Tumbuka country.

1870. Lobengula, son of Mzilikazi by his wife, Fulata, crowned King of the Ama-Tebele.

1873. Mpezeni at Mtenguleni-Uka-Sosera V. at the Lutembwe. R. Mpezeni at the Msipazi river.

[754] 1878. "Ningi," sister of Lobengula, murdered on an alleged charge of witchcraft, causing Lobengula's wife, Losekeyi, to have a still born child.

1880. Massacre of the Tumbuka on Hora Mountain by Mombera's Ngoni.

1881. Mpezeni at Langeni Village. Visited by Carl Wiese.

1884. Death of Mzila, known to the Ngoni as Kaulandwa.

II:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173
175

Circa

1889. Mpezeni visited by Sir Alfred Sharp.

1890. Death of Mtwalu.

1891. Death of Mombera. Chikusi, son of Mputa, deposed. Mperembe acting chief of Mombera's Ngoni.

1893. Birth of Chiku Mpezeni Jere, son of Tsingu Jere by his wife, Nkuchwa. Matebele War.

1894. Death of Lobengula Kumalo.

1895. Ngungunyana, King of the Abu-Gaza, deposed by the Portuguese.

1896. Matabele Rebellion. Defeat of Mwase at Kasungu by Alston and Swann.

1897. Ngoni Revolt. British South Africa Company at Chinunda (Fort Jameson Dist.)

1898. Mpezeni surrenders; exiled to Fort Manning. Tsingu Jere captured and shot. Nkuchwa, his wife, shot by Lt. Poole's troop in the Vubwi Valley. Revolt ended. Fort Jameson established.

1900. Mpezeni I. released and returned to his village. Death of Mpezeni I. Death of Soora Nqumayo, mother of Ntutu Mpezeni Jere (Mpezeni I) and widow of Chief Zongendaba.

1901. Succession of Chiku Mpezeni II (Jere).

1902. Chief Mahimawe claims the name of Zongendaba, but is refused by the Government.

1904. Death of Lupoko, wife of Mpezeni, at Lupoko village.

1906. Death of Ngungunyana.

1925. Chiku Mpezeni II present at the indaba given in honour of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales at Broken Hill, N. Rhodesia.

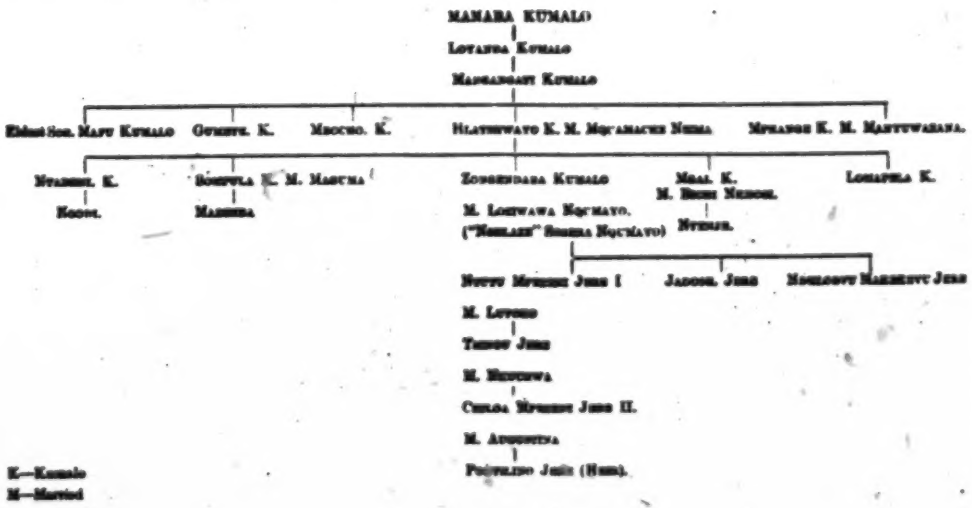
1934. The Paramount, Chiku Mpezeni II, presented with his "Staff of Office" by H.R.H. Prince George at Livingstone, N. Rhodesia.

1935. Great meeting of old Ngoni chiefs with Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, to discuss the chief's ancestors and the crossing of the Zambesi river in 1835. This being the Centenary. The Ngoni were well acquainted with native dug-outs (boats) before they left their tribal area which is now known as Northern Zululand. [501]

Authorities consulted:—Bryant; Elliott; Seymour; Thomas; Marshall Hole; Theal.

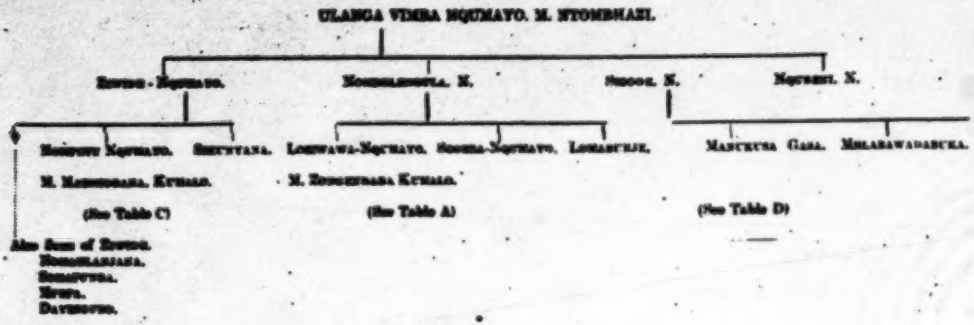
113

GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE NGONI LINE. (A.)

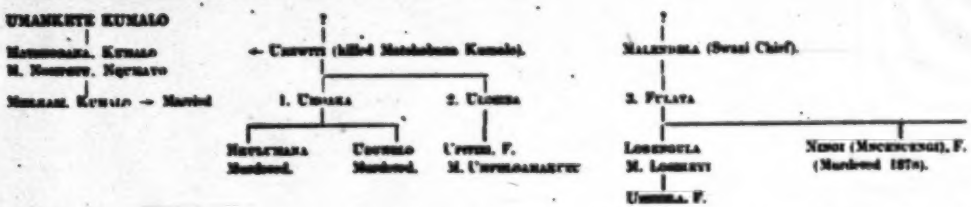


K—Kumalo
M—Married

GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE AMA-NDWANDWE TRIBE. (B.)



GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE MATABELE LINE. (C.)



NOTE.—Nomfuyi Nqumayo, Mother of Malikazi of the Matabele, was the Daughter of Zwide of the Ama-Ndwandwe and a Cousin of Lobiwana Nqumayo wife of Zongwana of the Ngoni. Sudoor, Father of Mancuusa of the Abo Gasa was her Uncle. Thus were Malikazi, Zongwana and Mancuusa related.

M—Married K—Kumayo F—Female

Hilancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FRS Ngoni FRS
Ndebele F54
Ni Ne 173

● 173

GENEALOGICAL TREE OF ABA-GAZA. LINE. (D.)

ULANGA YIMBA NQUMAYO

M. Nyoshwari

Ngode

Mahuruwa Gasa — Mulabawadabura

Mbila — Nwabwa. Eldest son deposed.

Mo'nbuntana

Mbugasa

GENEALOGY OF SOME NGONI CHIEFS. (E.)

MANABA KUMALO

Loyanda Kumalo

Mangangati Kumalo

Mpandor K. M. Mantuwazana

Umafumba. Chule. Mbe. Mazwe. Nokwane Kumalo ... M. Mpondalozo. Sowdwani. Hove.

Kapatamoto Jere. ... M. Nyamphow Mafulera

Kapatamoto Jere II.

MANABA KUMALO

Loyanda Kumalo

Mangangati Kumalo

Hlatshwayo Kumalo

Nomtula Kumalo M. Magwna who re-married Mbotwane.

Mabeba Jere — Molenyeni.....Mpuru

MANABA KUMALO

Loyanda K.

Mangangati K.

Hlatshwayo K.

Zopondaba. K. M. Umbeze Nzima

Mbelwa (Mombera)

Regency of Mpembe.

Chintunda.—Mombera's Indunas disagreed over this appointment because Mombera had cast off Chintunga's mother for adultery.
Deposed by Nyasaland Government 1915.

[643]

K.—Kumalo
M.—Married

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

political would seem to be, for example, at the medial lineage among the Tallensi, beyond which generation differences are not recognized; and at the village among the Nuer. It seems probable that in the old Ngoni system the village was also the significant unit, above which relationships were dominantly political and below which they were largely determined by the multiplex sentiments and activities arising out of kinship and domestic association. This is certainly so in modern Ngoniland, although the same principles of organization no longer apply at all levels.

I have described elsewhere the critical position of the modern Ngoni headman, linking the political system with the network of ties of kinship and co-residence operative within the village, and similar conditions have been reported elsewhere by Gluckman and Mitchell. Above the village, whether in a state or in a stateless society, relations are in the main between enduring groups and are defined with respect to interests vital to the survival of these groups, even if expressed in the idiom of kinship.[36]

Granted the existence of primitive states with continually segmenting political systems, such as the Zulu and Ngoni, it is then possible to look at from another point of view the various African political systems for which there is adequate information. In terms of political segmentation on a unilineal basis, states like the Ngoni and Zulu are closer in form to the stateless societies of the Nuer, Tallensi, Gusii and Logoli than to the Nupe and Kede states with their administrative systems largely independent of unilineal affiliation. To document this point fully would take us beyond the scope of this book; our purpose here is merely to emphasize the importance in comparative studies of examining political structures from more than one point of view.

When talking of states, we make the convenient distinction between internal and external political relations. No such simple distinction can be made with stateless societies, for in them relations which are external to one segment are internal to the next higher segment, and yet may still legitimately be regarded as political relations. The pre-Shakan chiefdoms of Zululand formed a system similar to the Tallensi maximal lineages, and we may speak therefore in that instance of a segmentary system regulating political relations between states. Ngoni external relations were not regulated in this way, for the Ngoni were isolated and unique in a region

[36] For this section, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* and 'Kinship among the Nuer'; Fortes, *Web of kinship*; Wagner, *Bantu of North Kavirondo*; Mayer, *Lineage principle in Gusii society*; Gluckman, 'Analysis of a social situation' and 'Kingdom of the Zulu'; Gluckman, *et al.*, 'Village headman'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organized themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[37] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[38] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[37] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[38] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[39] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[40]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[39] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[40] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-5; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Hera kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(a) *'Those from the south'*

These were the descendants of the leaders of the two main Ngoni groups represented by the two Ngoni kingdoms, with their followers, who left Natal during the wars of Shaka. They were South-eastern Bantu of Nguni stock, and when they were first encountered by Europeans in Nyasaland, the Europeans called them Zulus and spoke of their language as Zulu. Ngoni informants in the 1930's who were regarded as most reliable repudiated their relationship with the Zulu, and always referred to their ethnic origin as a people of Swazi stock. Y. M. Cibambo whose knowledge of Ngoni traditions was unrivalled, said in his book *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*—'Very many of them [the Ngoni] came from Swaziland, which is north of Zululand'.[1] A nostalgic refrain occurred in more than one of their traditional songs:

> Come let us go to Swaziland
> Where the people die fat.[2]

Cultural affinities between the Ngoni in Nyasaland and the people now living in Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, with the Zulu, will be examined in several chapters of this book. In the chapter on clan descent names in Part III, we shall compare the clan names called Swazi by the Ngoni with the lists of clan names given by Bryant in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* [3] and with the list given by Kuper, in *An African Aristocracy*,[4] of the Swazi and pre-Swazi clans. The military organization of the Ngoni, the age-set system which formed part of it, and other cultural features which will be discussed in Chapter III of this section, all show a general cultural affinity with the peoples of the northern Nguni group of the South-eastern Bantu.

The separation of the Ngoni group from the parent stock, which took place at about the same time as the Ndebele and the Shangaan groups fought their way north, occurred before the Swazi and Zulu kingdoms took final form. It is more correct, therefore, to say that Ngoni cultural affinities were with the northern Nguni group as a whole than to say they were off-shoots of either the Zulu or the Swazi. The Ngoni themselves used the designation 'Swazi' for the people with clan descent names whose ancestors left the south with the original party. Some of the older men remembered their fathers and grandfathers speaking of their clan as having belonged to the Ntungwa group, the Mtetwa group, the Msane group, before the departure of the Ngoni took place. This differentiation into pre-Swazi tribal and clan groupings was not in the 1930's one to which the Ngoni gave much attention. In talking about their southern origin it was the Swazi connexion which they emphasized.

[1] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Lutterworth Press, 1942, p. 8.
[2] Read, M. 'Songs of the Ngoni People.' *Bantu Studies*, March 1937, p. 10.
[3] Bryant, A. T. *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*. Longmans, 1929, pp. 681–97.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*. O.U.P., 1947, p. 233.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to leave and went straight to the country of the Makombe. They conquered it and came to the Nyungwi and conquered them too. 173

When they wanted to cross the Zambesi they made medicine and beat the water with a stick and separated it. All the army crossed and reached Kalumbi. They fought there, and there Magadlela died and Mgoola took care of the chieftainship. Mgoola came with all the army to Ntumba and caught many Ntumba people. In the Ntumba country Mputa entered the chieftainship.

(*b*) '*Those from south of the Zambesi*'

In the northern kingdom two main groups were included in this category: those whose clan names showed Tsonga origin and those who showed Karanga origin. Bryant [1] wrote of the army under Zwangendaba hacking its way through Tsongaland almost by the same route as the army under Soshangane, who fought and defeated him on the headwaters of the Sabi river. To his Tsonga adherents Zwangendaba added a number from the Karanga country, many of whom, trained to fight by the Ngoni, became famous warriors in the Ngoni campaigns farther north. 619 173

The Ngoni under Ngwana with Nqaba and his army kept nearer to the coast, and fought their battle with Soshangane (whom they called Gaza in the text quoted) on the Busi river near Sofala. The two main groups of adherents whom they forced to join them were from the Ndau and Venda peoples, called collectively the Venda group by the Ngoni. Bryant [1] spoke of Nqaba's conquest of the Ndau people on the Busi river, which would indicate that the Venda leaders and their families were already part of the Ngoni army when the Ndau were added. Although, according to central Ngoni tradition, Ngwana's army with its followers zigzagged across the country between the Sabi river and the Zambesi, they do not appear to have collected adherents in any large numbers from the tribal areas through which they passed. This supposition is only based on internal evidence, that of the clan names recognized by the Ngoni as having come from south of the Zambesi. 174

(*c*) '*Those from the march*'

After crossing the Zambesi, the central Ngoni went by the Kirk Range into the western part of what is now the Ncheu district. Then they turned east, crossed the Shire river near Fort Johnston and went up the east side of the lake to the Livingstone mountains in the Songea district of Tanganyika where they fought with the northern Ngoni under the Gama clan. The clan descent names of followers acquired on this route included those from the Ntumba people on the Kirk Range whom they conquered on their first arrival in Nyasaland, and the Tengo people from Songea, some of whom were incorporated with 173 619

[1] op. cit. p. 461

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Luangwa valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(*d*) '*Those from this country*'

Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. These in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Yao origin.

Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi stock—that is categories (*a*) and (*b*) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged; or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

The second conclusion is that even if the criterion is accepted that the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambesi, the Ngoni kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (*a*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms of culture were found not only in groups (*a*) and (*b*), as would be expected, but often among families in group (*c*) who, through fighting in the Ngoni armies and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual pattern.[1]

[1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpeseni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their travels. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Maseko Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region.*

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 kingdom and from Portuguese territory arrived to mourn. The grave
766 was made at the edge of the kraal and the kraal fence enlarged to take it in so that the cattle might walk on it.

In this chapter I have tried to bring together some of the chief
643 elements in the position of the Paramount, and in the performance of
174 his duties, which were remembered by the old men as having been characteristic of pre-European days. Some of these features, as I have indicated, had disappeared in the 1930's. Others survived and will be illustrated in Chapter V. Chapters III and IV on the royal women and on the officials in the kingdoms will illustrate the importance of the leading women in the Ngoni kingdoms, and the hierarchy of officials already mentioned in Chapter II of Part I.

The texts of the praise-songs which conclude this chapter are given
643 because in the 1930's they were still recited in the royal villages and were
533 a feature of all public ceremonies. Most of the allusions in the texts were obscure. Cibambo, who translated them for me and who consulted other older men, did not recognize some of the names or the meaning of the attributes. Some names corresponded with those given in Part I in the texts about the departure of the Ngoni in their two groups from Natal (see pp. 7, 8), such as the Nqumayo people whom Zwide ruled over, Nqaba who left with Ngwana, Nyathi who tried to prevent Ngwana from leaving. But in the way in which they were used in the 1930's these praise-songs had little meaning for those who heard them except as a form of salutation to the Paramount.

Praises of Zwangendaba, son of Hlacwayo

643 Zwangendaba whose intention it is to be black who denies it to be light.
Go away, let us go, you the rejected one.
533 We are like a man of the Ntungwa, a fat one; there the people die as fat
539 ones.
Nqaba you must eat people. Leave the cattle.
Nqaba son of Lushwana, there was confusion.
There he is, there he is, where do they see him? They see him in the fences of his mothers.
One who is angry because the cattle have gone with the calves.
His great cunning overcomes the magic stones of the doctors.
I have gone away until I have seen Lebombo Mountains.
We are suffering on account of the great dispute with the Nqumayo people.
You are seeing the hoes which are waiting for you, the hoes which cannot be used for hoeing.
He saw it, the short grass, he was biting it hastily.
He saw it, the ditch, his foot slipped into it.
He who divided the water with a stick at the Zambesi.
He who remembered the cattle of the Balunjana.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

INTRODUCTION

MARRIAGE among the Ngoni is much the same as anywhere else. 581
It establishes a relationship between a man and a woman, regulates their sexual activities, locates their children in the kinship system and influences the inheritance of their property. These general features, however, do no more than define and identify marriage, and distinguish marriage from concubinage. Our task 121
is to analyse the particular features that distinguish Ngoni marriage from other marriage systems and to relate marriage to other institutions and social processes in Ngoni society.

In Ngoni history there has always been marriage. Indeed men and 581
women look back longingly to a past when people married properly 183
and decorously, and when adulterers were killed, and bemoan the promiscuity of the present when no woman's fidelity is certain. Yet even now old people still expect their juniors to marry and their expectations are fulfilled. Adults are assumed to be married, and the assumption is justified.

Marriage is seen by the Ngoni as part of the natural order. [589]
Unmarried adults cannot fill important roles and are regarded as overgrown children whose anomalous condition must be explained by reference to a malady or a physical or moral defect. Yet despite the universal and permanent character of marriage as an Ngoni institution there have been, in the course of the hundred and thirty
years which constitute Ngoni history, great changes in the procedures [178]
and implications of marriage and in its relations to other aspects of the social life of which it is a part. These changes have been paralleled in other Ngoni institutions, in law, in local organization, in religion and above all in political structure. In this paper we 121
shall attempt to contrast the institution of marriage as seen at two stages in Ngoni history and to relate it to the general plan of social life at these two periods. We shall also discuss some of the processes of change that have brought about the differences we observe and which to some extent are still at work in contemporary Ngoni society.

It is convenient to compare marriage as it was during the 1890's 129
and as it is at the present day. The information relating to the 121
earlier period is contained only to a slight extent in contemporary [127]
documents,[1] and consists largely in the recollections of older men and women as recorded by a number of writers from 1914 onwards. The

[1] The most important of these are Wiese's articles, 'Expedição portugueza a M'Pesêne (1889)', in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, x (1891) pp. 235-73, 331-430, 465-97, and xi (1892) pp. 373-599. (All page references cited are from Vol. X); and 'Beitrage zür Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambesi, namentlich der Angoni,' *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1900), pp. 181-200.

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[3]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[3] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Lamba FQ8

PART IV

THE RESETTLEMENT OF NATIVE POPULATIONS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

§ 1. *The Problem and its Origin*

L M N

IN Northern Rhodesia and doubtless over a much greater part of Africa before the coming of the Europeans, the population-land pattern was a changing, kaleidoscopic picture. If an area became overcrowded more land was available, or it could be taken from a neighbouring people. A rough balance between land and population was maintained by means of migration, inter-tribal wars, periodic famine and disease. 174 ● 166 311

L M N

With the coming of the European the kaleidoscopic picture was arrested, producing what we may call the primary population-land pattern. This was later modified, by alienation and reservation of land and by the movement of peoples into Native reserves, to produce a secondary pattern. New economic factors have so far modified this secondary pattern only to a minor extent, but it may be expected that they will tend to do so increasingly in the future. 648 166

L M N

The secondary population-land pattern was brought about mainly by the movement of the African population into Native reserves. As a result of this movement large areas of Crown Land were left practically uninhabited, and a number of factors operating together brought about mal-distribution and congestion of populations within the reserves themselves. 166 311

L M N

So far the problem has been studied in detail only in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province, the Mkushi District of the Central Province and the Ndola District of the Western Province, and it is within these districts that resettlement work—other than the 'Chitemene Control' scheme—has been carried out. The four districts are contiguous and the total area within them to which this discussion refers is about 33,800 square miles (4,000 square miles more than the whole land area of Scotland but only about one-ninth of the area of Northern Rhodesia) with a total population, in round figures, of 290,000 (about one-sixth of the total populaton of the Territory). [101] 131

L M N

L N M

The primary population-land pattern was such that the ten tribes living within this area had ample or much more than ample land, except to a minor extent in the Fort Jameson District where the incursion of the immigrant Ngoni in the later 19th century had created a potential congestion problem. Under former conditions this problem would doubtless have resolved itself as it arose by migration of the Chewa to north and west, under pressure from the Ngoni, but once the kaleidoscopic pattern was arrested no such [167] 166 311

[p. 71]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

M 175

Livingstone found chief Mwase, at Kasungu, ruling over "a section of Mang'anja, called Machewa, or Macheba[1]."

M 175 648 [241] [167]

For some years the Achewa enjoyed a peaceful existence in their new home, keeping cattle, but living mainly by agriculture, until their tranquility was disturbed by the Ngoni invasion and by the slave raids of the Jumbe[2] at Kota Kota. By these the eastern branch of Achewa was continually harassed; and consequently in 1893 Dzoole, Kanyenda and others of the house of Karonga moved south to the Kasangadzi and Mtiti Rivers, and in 1896 handed over this part of the country to the protection of the British Government.

N 175 101 N 174

The Angoni, under the name of Mazitu, were described by Livingstone as Zulus,[3] and this terminological error has been copied by more than one subsequent writer. Of their earlier wanderings no record has been traced. Owing, perhaps, to their lighter colour it has been surmised that they came from far up the east coast; but it is known that under the style of Abe-nguni, derived from an ancient chief Mnguni, they were settled on the Dedesi, a small tributary of the upper St. John's River, when the Aba-mbo first arrived in Natal about 1620.[4] In this locality they remained for a couple of centuries, till towards the end of his reign the notorious Zulu king Chaka fell upon their allies the Ama-ndwandwe under Zwide. A section of the Abe-nguni then migrated northwards under Zwangendaba; and wherever they went they fought and subdued the peoples through whose country they passed, seizing cattle and incorporating captives in their own tribe. After raiding the Aba-suto, Ama-swazi, Aba-thonga[5] and Ama-kalanga, they crossed the Zambezi near Zumbo at the time of the total eclipse of the sun on the 19th of November, 1835,[6] and overran the territories of the Aba-senga, A-tumbuka, A-safwa and A-mandewere till they came to the land of the Wa-fipa and Wa-sukuma.

Here Zwangendaba (or Songandawa, as he is generally called in Nyasaland) died, and his following broke up and scattered in different directions. While others advanced to the north and east, four sections turned back, one under Mombera to the Tumbuka country, another under Mpezeni to the Loangwa river, the third under Chiwere to Dowa, and the fourth under Chikusi still further south. It is with the third section that we are now dealing. The hybrid nature of the Dowa Angoni can be inferred from the list of clans given in a subsequent section (IV, 2). During the last four decades they have intermarried still further with the Achewa, and there are now few, if any, pure-blooded Angoni in the district. Their paramount chief, Chiwere, though calling himself an Mngoni, is in reality an Msenga.

N 101 M N 648 M 171 121

The general features, characteristics and habits of these peoples are akin to those of neighbouring tribes which have been described by the Reverend Duff Macdonald,[7] Miss Alice Werner

[1] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, pp. 526, 548.

[2] A coast Arab, acting as *wali*, or representative, of the Sultan of Zanzibar.

[3] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, p. 381.

[4] Eric A. Walker: *Historical Atlas of South Africa*, p. 6. J. H. Soga: *The South-Eastern Bantu*, pp. 81, *et seq.*

[5] In ph and th each consonant is pronounced. Similarly, in ou and oo each vowel is pronounced.

[6] E. H. L. Poole: *Journal African Society*, vol. xxix, No. cxv, p. 290.

[7] Rev. Duff Macdonald, *Africana*. Miss Alice Werner, *The Natives of British Central Africa*. Dr. H. S. Stannus, *The Wayao of Nyasaland*, Harvard African Studies III, *Varia Africana* III, pp. 229-272, "Notes on Some Tribes of British Central Africa," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl, 1910, pp. 295-365, etc., etc.

/3/

The Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni

I

During the 1820s, the rise to power of the Zulu chief Chaka in 175
South Africa led to a number of migrations to the north led by lesser chiefs who wished to avoid a clash with the Zulu armies, or who had already clashed and had been defeated. The descendants of these migrants are to-day living scattered over East Africa, from Lake Victoria to near Lourenço Marques. Many of these still call them- 101
selves Ngoni, a term derived from Nguni, a word used to describe themselves while they were still in the south. The leader of one of these Ngoni migrations was Zwangendaba, and it is his descendants who are to be found in Northern Rhodesia and elsewhere at the present time. The only group in this country recognised as Ngoni by the Administration is to be found in Fort Jameson District, under Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Formerly a tribe living in Lundazi District under Chief Magodi was officially called Ngoni, but they are now known to the Administration as Tumbuka. They represent the western salient of the old empire of Mombera, a son of Zwangendaba, whose de- [121]
scendant is now a chief in Nyasaland. This article deals only with the people under Chief Mpezeni.

Zwangendaba led his people northwards, fighting and taking 174
captives as he went, crossed the Zambezi in 1835, an event that happened to coincide with a solar eclipse, and after passing through the present-day Eastern Province, died near Lake Tanganyika in about 1845. His party then split up, one son, Mpezeni, leading his followers south-westwards towards the Bemba and the Wisa in the Northern Province. From there they moved southwards, crossed the Luangwa, and settled in Petauke District. In about 1865 they moved eastwards and settled to the north of the Mpangwe Hills in Fort 175
Jameson District. Some ten years later they went further east, and in 1881, when they were first visited by a European, they had reached

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of scale,[8] as we may call it, was accompanied by major changes not only in the positions occupied by individuals in Ngoni society but also in the form of Ngoni society itself. We have to analyse at this stage a non-repetitive process, by which the autonomous Ngoni state, organized by a segmentary residential system and an age-set system, was changed into a dependent unit in a system of Native Authorities forming part of a world-wide colonial empire. For this reason the details of the process are worth noting, for in Ngoni history they are unique and largely determine the form of modern Ngoni society. Having established this significant sequence of events, we are then in a position to look at the same set of facts in a wider context. For what is unique and non-repetitive for the Ngoni may be repetitive in a wider context. The Ngoni are only one tribe among a myriad of tribes, and what happened to them has also happened to many others. Similar sequences of events, each unique for the particular tribe concerned, have occurred throughout the world at various periods of time whenever small autonomous systems have been absorbed into large and more highly resourceful ones. We can therefore look at Ngoni history from 1880 onwards as either unique, from the point of view of the Ngoni, or as typical, or at least probably typical, of a repetitive process which has often occurred in the development of any empire.

Conveniently, at least some of the facts can be ascertained with reasonable certainty. We are no longer dependent only on oral tradition, but can refer to contemporary documents. These reflect in the main only the European side of Black-White relations, but even so their testimony is enlightening. I have therefore set out in full the history, mainly of external relations, of the Fort Jameson Ngoni from 1886 down to 1900 both with the intention of throwing light on how the transition was made from pre-conquest to modern society in this particular tribal instance, and also as an example of what seems probably an oft-repeated process in the history of any empire. A discussion of how typical the Ngoni experience is would take us beyond the bounds of this book. We should, however, bear in mind that the newer comparative method, as developed by Radcliffe-Brown and his followers, is as applicable to mammoth social forms, such as empires, as to small ones such as hordes, provided only that the right kind of data are available.

Our detailed documentation should extend down to modern times, but after 1900 there was a change in the kind of events that were documented, related as we shall see to a change in social relations, and we have to proceed somewhat differently.

[8] For the concept of scale, see Wilson, *Social change*, pp. 25 *ff*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

2. *Portugal or Britain*

175 Several European powers were interested in the country into which the Ngoni moved in the 1870s. France and Germany both had a general interest in central Africa, and although their areas of greatest activity were elsewhere, they did not leave the country round Mpezeni entirely alone. The French explorer Giraud travelled through what is now the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia and down the Shire Valley in 1883-5, and his compatriot Foà was in the region between Mpezeni and the Zambezi at various times between 1891 and 1897. The White Fathers, a Catholic order at that time recruited largely in France, began work in Bemba country to the north of Mpezeni, and on the Zambezi to the south, during the 1890s. In 1892 Major von Wissmann travelled up the Shire Valley on his way to consolidate the German interest in south-western Tanganyika.

The fate of the plateau bounded by the Luangwa, Zambezi and Shire valleys, with its healthy climate, good pastures, and alleged deposits of gold was, however, the particular concern not of France or Germany, but of Portugal and Britain. The Portuguese settlements on the east coast of Africa guarding the long route to India had been founded in the sixteenth century. The Portuguese soon discovered, or were shown by the Arabs who had been there before them, the Missale gold-mines some forty miles south of present-day Ngoniland. These mines could not compare with the richer treasures discovered south of the Zambezi but they were worth exploiting and there was always the prospect of further discoveries in the vicinity. However in the middle of the eighteenth century the Jesuits, who had been the most penetrating of the Portuguese explorers, were expelled from all Portuguese possessions, and interest in the region lapsed. At the end of the century the quest began for a route to link the Portuguese settlements on the east and west coasts. Pereira and Lacerda passed through Missale in 1796 and 1798 on their visits to the Lunda chief Kazembe and similar routes were followed by Baptista and Jose in 1811, by Monteiro and Gamitto in 1831 and by Silva Porto in 1854. These [439] travellers were interested mainly in ivory and minerals and in securing unmolested passage for their caravans from coast to coast. Although the Portuguese were anxious to keep Britain out of central Africa, the only attempt they made to colonize this portion of the interior was at a short-lived military post, north of Mpezeni's future country in the Luangwa Valley, occupied from 1827 to 1829 and then abandoned.[4]

[4] Poole, 'Portuguese settlement', p. 164. See Map B.

[Text continues on page 68]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 Livingstone was the first Briton to reach this area. In 1866 he passed through what was to become Mpezeni's country,[5] and in his journals he makes frequent references to Ngoni raids. Unfortunately his carriers would not take him to Ngoni villages and all he saw of Ngoni activity were burnt-out huts and dead bodies killed in battle. The accounts of his journeys stimulated British interest in the region round Lake Nyasa, a centre for the slave trade, and led to the arrival there of missionaries and settlers. In 1874 the [797] Livingstonia Mission was founded and in 1883 a British consul was first appointed to the Shire Highlands.[6]

Mpezeni's country lay some distance from the main centres of British and Portuguese activity, but was not without importance. Apart from Missale, it was thought that there were other gold deposits to be found in the area. In contrast with their harried neighbours, [132] the prosperous Ngoni with their herds of cattle attracted travellers while the pleasant climate of the plateau, compared with the hot valleys of Luangwa, Zambezi, and Nyasa, made it suitable for European colonization. Yet the Ngoni army was formidable, and had to be neutralized in some way if other settlements were to be safe. Mpezeni's country flanked several trade routes of importance from the Zambezi and Lake Nyasa inland to the sources of slaves [439] and ivory. For these various reasons Mpezeni's country attracted 175 the attention of traders and governments, those interested in benefiting by the slave trade as well as those seeking to end it. In 648 addition towards the end of the century when it became clear that Africa was to be completely divided between the Powers, any territory, however inhospitable, that had not already been claimed attracted the attention of treaty-making explorers.

The first move towards incorporating the Fort Jameson Ngoni in a colonial empire was made by the Portuguese who had been stimulated by the increasing British interest in Nyasaland. In November 1888 the Governor-General of Moçambique instructed Wiese, a German[7] trader who had already made contact with Mpezeni, to lead an expedition to him. According to Johnston, Wiese and an associate were offered £2,000 to secure Mpezeni's submission to Portugal.[8] Wiese was well received and distributed flags to Mpezeni and his sons. The Portuguese regarded the

[5] *Last Journals*, i, p. 150.

[6] Johnston, *British Central Africa*, pp. 55-69.

[7] In *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, p. 683, the Portuguese Foreign Minister describes Wiese as a Dutchman. This appears to be incorrect in the light of Wiese's contacts with the German Legation in Lisbon.

[8] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 235; **49**, p. 13. (To save space, all public records will be identified by a serial number printed **bold face**, taken from the first column of the Bibliography, List C.)

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

acceptance of these flags as acts of submission, a view echoed by the French explorer Foà. The British view, based on the observations of Sharpe and the statements of Ngoni envoys to Johnston in January 1890, was that no treaty was signed.[9] The official Portuguese report of the expedition records among other things that Mpezeni had been friendly to the Portuguese, that he accepted their flags, and said that their friends and enemies were also his, that he promised not to raid in their territory, and that he refused to see a British traveller [Sharpe] because he had not been recommended by the Portuguese. There is no specific mention of any agreement by which Mpezeni accepted Portuguese protection.[10] Whatever construction was put on these events by Europeans, either Portuguese or British, it seems unlikely that Mpezeni can have felt himself bound by his acceptance of a flag. Wiese evidently thought it necessary to point out to him that the flag was not to be used as an article of clothing.[11] Sharpe suggests that Wiese tried to make a treaty with the Cewa chief Mkanda, who had been driven out by the Ngoni; Wiese then intended to declare Mkanda the rightful owner of Mpezeni's country.[12]

The British Government had been reluctant to extend its commitments in the Lake Nyasa region beyond the appointment of a consul. During 1888-9, however, there was fighting at the north end of Lake Nyasa between Arabs and the African Lakes Company in which Lugard was involved. Rhodes's attention was attracted to the area and he offered Lugard a large subsidy to develop it.[13] This proof of Rhodes's interest emboldened the Foreign Office, and on 28 July 1889 Johnston arrived at the mouth of the Zambezi as the representative of the Foreign Office and of Rhodes and with the task of consolidating the British position in central Africa.

Johnston began at once to make treaties with as many chiefs as possible, spurred on by the activities of Pinto, a Portuguese engaged on a similar task. In August he sent Sharpe on a journey westward from the Shire Valley on which he made treaties with some of the chiefs lying south of Mpezeni and north of the Zambezi.[14] Sharpe returned to the Shire and was sent off again, this time to Mpezeni himself. He did not manage to see him. According to the Portu-

[9] *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, p. 683; Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, pp. 298*f*; 16, *fo.* 146; 12, fo. 275; 49; 158.
[10] *Boletim Official de Moçambique*, No. 21 (24 May 1890), pp. 238-40.
[11] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 488.
[12] 12, fo. 280, 311.
[13] Lugard, *East African Empire*, i, pp. 157-9, 202-7.
[14] 6, fo. 256; Sharpe, 'Journey between the Shire and Loangwa', pp. 150-7.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 648 guese, Mpezeni refused to see Sharpe, while according to Johnston Sharpe had used up his stock of presents before reaching Mpezeni and hence did not attempt to negotiate with him. Sharpe found Wiese at Mpezeni's with a Portuguese officer and on 11 December 1889 witnessed the formal presentation of a Portuguese flag to one of Nsingu's lieutenants, though, 'for reasons of correctness', he was not asked to sign the document officially recording the incident.[15]

Although Wiese was leading the Portuguese party, he spoke bitterly to Sharpe of the way in which the Portuguese had treated him and indicated to him and in a letter to Johnston that he might consider working in the British interest. Johnston replied in January 1890 with a letter of 'a non-compromising but vaguely reassuring character'.[16]

In March 1890 Sharpe began another journey to Mpezeni, this time with instructions from Johnston to make a treaty with Mpezeni and to 'buy' Wiese with an offer of up to £1,000 a year for three years. He arrived at Mpezeni's village on 24 March, only to find that Wiese had left for Tete over a month earlier, leaving behind him the Portuguese officer. Mpezeni kept Sharpe waiting for an interview until 4 April, and although friendly he refused to discuss a treaty or accept a British flag. Sharpe left a letter for Wiese, offering him £300 a year for his services, and departed for the Luangwa Valley. After an unprofitable trip he returned to Mpezeni's on 21 May, to find Wiese and the Portuguese officer on the point of leaving for a trading-trip to Kasungu. Wiese rejected Sharpe's offer of £300 a year and Sharpe was forced to return to Nyasa with both the principal aims of his expedition unaccomplished. He had, however, made a few treaties with non-Ngoni chiefs.[17] Thomson, another explorer who, like Sharpe, was employed by Rhodes's British South Africa Company, arrived in Ngoni country in December 1890 after a successful trip to the Lala. Thomson was greeted with hostility, sheltered with Wiese, and fled during the night.[18]

175 439 648 Johnston played a dual role in Nyasaland, for besides representing the British Foreign Office he was also responsible for the interests of Rhodes and the British South Africa Company, from

[15] 15, fo. 26-7; 26, fo. 144; *Boletim Official de Moçambique*, 21 (24 May 1890), p. 239.

[16] Wiese may have offered his services to Johnston before Sharpe arrived at Mpezeni's. cf. 49; 158, p. 62; 26, fo. 145-6.

[17] 9, fo. 30; 16, fo. 146; 12, fo. 274-95; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyassa', pp. 745, 749; Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 89; Wiese, 'Expedição', xi, pp. 412-31, 464-80.

[18] Thomson, 'Lake Bangweolo', p. 114; Wiese, 'Expedição', xi, p. 588.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

whom he received a subsidy. When that company was granted its first charter on 29 October 1889, its sphere of operations was restricted to south of the Zambezi. When Johnston began work north of the river the future division of responsibility between the Foreign Office and the B.S.A. Company was uncertain. On 21 September 1889 Buchanan, on Johnston's instructions, proclaimed a British Protectorate over the region round the Shire Highlands, and on 14 May 1891 this was superseded by the proclamation of a British Protectorate over approximately the whole of present-day Nyasaland. In April 1891 the Foreign Office sanctioned the extension of the B.S.A. Company's operations to the north of the Zambezi within the British sphere of influence, excluding Nyasaland. It was, however, still uncertain whether or not the administration of the Protectorate was to remain permanently separate from that of the B.S.A. Company's territory to the west. A complicated story of financial negotiations and of a quarrel between Johnston and Rhodes ended in an agreement whereby after 30 June 1895 all administrative connexion between the two territories ceased.[19]

The western boundary of the Protectorate proclaimed in 1891 was based on that laid down for the Conventional Basin of the Congo[20] at the Berlin West African Conference in 1885. This line, the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, passed through the eastern portion of Mpezeni's country, leaving the greater portion of Ngoniland outside the Protectorate. The dividing line between the British and Portuguese spheres of influence was not finally determined until the Anglo-Portuguese agreement of 11 June 1891. Despite the Portuguese flags and Wiese's affirmations of friendship, the whole of Mpezeni's country was placed by this agreement in the British and not in the Portuguese sphere, as it had also been in the unratified convention of 20 August 1890.[21] As a consequence, then, of the proclamation of the Nyasaland Protectorate, the extension northwards of the B.S.A. Company's sphere of activity, and the Anglo-Portuguese agreement, Mpezeni's country was divided between the Protectorate and the B.S.A. Company's territory. In consequence of the agreement, or because Mpezeni was tired of them, Wiese and the Portuguese expedition left Ngoniland.

Despite this formal division Mpezeni had as yet, as Johnston was to point out six years later, 'ceded nothing to anybody'.[22] On

[19] *State papers*, lxxxi, p. 1009, No. 243; *London Gazette*, 15 May 1891 and 24 February 1893; *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 634-40; *A & P*, 1895, lxxi, pp. 565-8; Johnston, *Story of my life*, p. 497.

[20] *A & P*, 1884-5, lv, p. 439.

[21] *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, pp. 589, 625; *A & P*, 1890-1, xcvi, p. 420.

[22] 158, p. 65. cf. 132, p. 59.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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the other hand, Sharpe and Thomson had made treaties with some of the chiefs round about Mpezeni, and Johnston urged that Mpezeni had merely dispossessed these treaty-making chiefs and 'consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief'. Mpezeni, he held, was a 'robber without rights'.[23] As a matter of policy Johnston supported the friendly matrilineal tribes rather than Mpezeni. He also opposed him because of the Ngoni raids which threatened the settled order he was trying to establish. He held that Mpezeni was such a scourge of the indigenous population that he must some day be dealt with, that he was an intrusive Zulu robber who must eventually be subdued and dethroned, when the country could be administered directly by Europeans or could be restored to the government of the rightful indigenous chieftains.[24] Even after Mpezeni had been defeated, the precipitating causes of the war were regarded by the Nyasaland Administration as only incidental, for 'The Angoni had, however, by their incessant raids into our territory made it a matter which sooner or later would have to be dealt with . . . '.[25]

One factor which delayed Johnston from acting as swiftly against Mpezeni as he did against the Yao and southern Ngoni was that Mpezeni was farther than they from the main artery of Nyasaland, Lake Nyasa and the Shire Valley. In any case Johnston was anxious not to take precipitate action with too few troops which might end in disaster. He was reluctant to allow the parties of prospectors and traders who entered Mpezeni's country to take arms with them lest they should provoke the Ngoni into attacking them before Johnston was ready. He was anxious to avoid having to face an alliance of all the various Ngoni groups. After the downfall of Lobengula in Southern Rhodesia in 1893, Ndebele refugees reached Mpezeni and according to some reports Lobengula himself was among them. Co-ordinated action by Mpezeni and the Ndebele was feared and, as we shall see, an attempt was in fact made by Chabisa to unite Mpezeni's forces with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. The only offensive action taken by the Nyasaland Administration prior to the final conflict in 1898 was in May 1896, when troops were moved from Kotakota to Kasungu in response to a report that Mpezeni was planning to kill some prospectors, but the report was found to be false and the expedition was called off.[26]

[23] 158, pp. 62-3.
[24] 132; 158, p. 61.
[25] *A & P*, 1899, lxiii, p. 253.
[26] 98; 132; 14[illegible], fo. 141; Warton in *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67.

l:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These events made the inclusion of Mpezeni's country in the British colonial empire highly likely. The way in which this would come about was still not obvious, nor had it yet been decided who should control the economic resources of the area. It was the struggle for economic control which in the end decided the political issue. Here again Wiese played a prominent part. 175 648

3. *Concession hunters*

From 1885, if not before, Wiese lived in Ngoni country and among the neighbouring tribes as a trader.[27] His wife, who lived with him part of the time in Mpezeni's country, was Doña Romana, a black Portuguese lady who owned some hundreds of slaves. Wiese's commercial objectives can be inferred from the conversation he had with Sharpe on this matter in May 1890, when he mentioned that he employed over two hundred and fifty of his wife's slaves as elephant-hunters, and that he was planning to employ two thousand men in trading expeditions to the Luapula, Garanganze and other distant places. He was also at that time planning to make war on a certain Cewa chief.[28] 175 439

According to Wiese's own account, he gained a number of concessions from chiefs and he was granted in 1887 various mining rights by the Portuguese Government in the territory to the south of Mpezeni. On 15 November 1886 Mpezeni orally granted him a concession for ninety-nine years and, Wiese claimed, this agreement was ratified in writing on 14 April 1891. Mpezeni, described as 'Paramount Chief of the Angoni (Zulus) and Sovereign Ruler over Maravia and Western Nyassaland', granted Wiese a concession in 'one part' of his country some 6,700 square miles in extent and reaching to within twelve miles of the Zambezi near Chicoa. In return for exclusive mineral, timber, water, railway and other rights, Wiese agreed to pay Mpezeni £200 annually and 1 per cent of his profits. Mpezeni reserved the rights of sovereignty over his people and the land, water and timber necessary to his subjects were guaranteed.[29] [31]

A few months before this written concession was drawn up, Bowler and Rankin, representing the comprehensively named Upper and Lower Zambezi Navigation, Exploration, Trading, Land-acquiring and Colonization Company, Limited, arrived in

[27] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86, says that Wiese visited Mpezeni in 1881. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 71, in another tentative chronology, follows him, although there is no mention of this visit in the body of Poole's book. Wiese himself appears not to mention any date earlier than 1885. See 40.

[28] 67, fo. 139; 22, fo. 285.

[29] 32, pp. 17-18.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 439 the country.[20] They joined Wiese in collecting concessions from the surrounding chiefs.[21]

A legal procedure for registering and recognizing concessions 175 439 within the British sphere was established by Johnston on 18 July 1891.[22] Without recognition by Johnston's Land Court, a con- 648 cession did not of itself establish a clear right to title under British law. The issue of this proclamation may have been prompted by Wiese's actions. In June, shortly before it was issued, Wiese was travelling to Europe with his concessions. He met Johnston at Quilimane and asked him to recognize them.[23] Johnston refused to do this. He particularly objected to the concession from Mpezeni, not only for its monopolies but also because it had not been signed by Mpezeni but only by a Portuguese allegedly acting on the chief's behalf, and because Mpezeni did not control the large area mentioned in the concession. Such land as he did control he had obtained only by dispossessing the earlier inhabitants. Johnston regarded Wiese as a slave trader who forced chiefs to make their mark on documents without explaining what the documents meant and without making any payment for the concessions obtained. He maintained that Mpezeni had never granted any rights to Wiese and wrote of the concession: 'I always refused to recognize his preposterous document.' He complained that Wiese tried to 'bounce the British Government into recognition of his (wholly unfounded) claims'. Johnston later argued that in order to conclude eight of his other treaties, Wiese must have travelled five hundred miles between 20 December and 23 January, an improbable occurrence.[24] Acting on this policy Johnston insisted, at Quilimane, that he must examine Wiese's concessions before he could pronounce on them. Wiese made a declaration before Johnston's deputy describing the concessions and went on his way to Europe, he maintaining he had thereby registered his concessions and Johnston maintaining he had not.[25]

Wiese's agents in London began corresponding with the Foreign Office in December 1891 pressing for the recognition of his

[20] Hole, *Making of Rhodesia*, p. 241; 17, fo. 390-1.

[21] Bradley, 'Salute to adventurers', p. 54, says Wiese bought concessions from Bowler and Rankin.

[22] 36; 58, fo. 420.

[23] 40, p. 33; 49, p. 14; 67, fo. 140; 81, fo. 144-5.

[24] 49; 81, fo. 148.

[25] There is some uncertainty about the date on which Wiese made his statement at Quilimane. Johnston refers to a declaration sworn to by Wiese before the Acting Vice-Consul on 7 June 1891. Bowler's letter to the Foreign Office was supported by a copy of a receipt for a fee paid for witnessing a signature, dated 27 June. cf. 35; 48, p. 15; 72.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

concessions. In January 1892 Wiese offered his services to Johnston as an agent, and in March repeated the offer. He seems to have mentioned the possibility of his leading the Ngoni in battle on behalf of the Administration. Johnston rejected these offers contemptuously along with similar offers made by Bowler, saying that he wanted Bowler and Wiese to remain in Europe. He also remained adamant in his refusal to recognize Wiese's concessions, although the Foreign Office itself continued to prevaricate on this issue.[36]

In 1891 or 1892 Wiese visited Lisbon in an effort to collect the £2,000 owing to him for his services to the Portuguese during 1888 and the following years. It was, however, in London that he tried to obtain financial backing so that he could begin to exploit his concessions, with or without recognition from Johnston. According to Johnston, Wiese offered his concessions to the Central African and Zoutpansberg Exploration Company, with which the naval explorer Cameron was connected. In August 1892 Wiese told Johnston that he was no longer personally interested in the fate of the concessions. According to a Foreign Office minute, Wiese offered the concessions to the B.S.A. Company for a small sum in January 1893. The search for financial support ended on 18 February 1893 when the Mozambique Gold Land and Concessions Company Limited was incorporated in London to operate Wiese's concessions, for which they paid him £1,500.[37]

The Mozambique Company approached the Foreign Office and were instructed first to register their concessions in Nyasaland. According to Johnston, early in 1893 Bowler sent copies of the concessions to Johnston, who replied that he must produce the originals or certified copies. In April and May 1893 there was an exchange of letters between Wiese and Johnston about the recognition of the concessions, and in the autumn Bowler wrote again on the matter. However, according to Johnston, between June and October 1891 the African Lakes and British South Africa companies had placed claims before his Land Court for recognition in the prescribed manner and no counter-claims were registered there.[38] Therefore, on 25 September 1893 Johnston granted a certificate of claim to the B.S.A. Company, in its commercial capacity, entitling them to exercise mining and other rights throughout the greater part of what was to become North-Eastern Rhodesia and including the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland.

[36] 39; 42; 46, fo. 7; 47, fo. 36; 48; 49; 51; 52; 64, fo. 85-6.

[37] 67, fo. 140; 81, fo. 145; 64, fo. 89 (minute); 230, p. 69; *Maugham report*, p. 6.

[38] 80; 81, fo. 144, 146; 82.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 The B.S.A. Company produced in its support treaties made by
439 Sharpe and Stevenson with six chiefs, Mpezeni not among them.
648 Johnston's argument for including Mpezeni's country within the area of the grant appears to have been that the land had been wrested by Mpezeni from the treaty-making chiefs. None of the six chiefs mentioned by name in the certificate made any claim in the treaties to rights in Mpezeni's country, and indeed only one of them, Muliro, a minor Nsenga-Ambo chief, bordered on Mpezeni.

However Johnston also refers in the certificate of claim to 'similar privileges obtained through treaties concluded by the African Lakes Company and transferred by them to the British South Africa Company (the said treaties have received separate confirmation at my hands)'. These additional treaties are not specified in the certificate but later Johnston wrote, in connexion with the North Charterland Concession granted by the B.S.A. Company, that 'the B.S.A. Company would base its right to grant this concession on its recognized treaties with Undi, Mwasi Kazungu and ... (I forget the names), the indigenous and partially dispossessed chiefs of Mpezeni's country'. Sharpe had made a treaty with Undi
131 on 15 April 1891, in which the northern boundary of Undi's
175 territory was said to be the parallel of latitude 14° S. or thereabouts,
439 thus cutting into the southern fringe of the no-man's-land round
648 Mpezeni. Mwase made two treaties, one on 17 September 1885 with Stevenson as agent of the African Lakes Company and another on 30 November 1889 with the British Crown. In the earlier treaty the extent of Mwase's country is not stated but when the benefits of this treaty were transferred to the B.S.A. Company in 1893, Mwase's country was said to be bounded on the west by the water-parting between the Luangwa and Zambezi-Nyasa basins and on the south by the Anglo-Portuguese border. This water-parting does not meet the Anglo-Portuguese frontier until as far west as about 31° 15′ E., in what is now Petauke District, and in Ngoniland it runs approximately east-west on latitude 13° 49′ S. In the area controlled by Mpezeni, Mwase's territory, as defined in the transfer agreement, included the whole portion claimed by Undi in 1891 and in addition a strip of land to the north of Undi's claim, forming the southern margin of the Ngoni settled area. The main concentration of Ngoni villages, in the valleys of the Lutem-
175 bwe, Lunthwele and Msipazi rivers, lay just north of the territory claimed for Mwase. Thus the grant of rights to the B.S.A. Company
439 in Mpezeni's country appears to have been based for the most
648 part on treaties made with chiefs whose names Johnston forgot,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and possibly also on the 1889 treaty between Mwase and the British Crown.[39]

Johnston granted a second certificate of claim, completed on 28 September 1893, to the African Lakes and B.S.A. companies jointly, based on the 1891 treaty with Undi and on another made a week later with a neighbouring chief. The area mentioned in this certificate conforms to that laid down in the treaty.[40]

Therefore when Warton arrived in Nyasaland in 1894 as emissary of the Mozambique Company and tried to secure recognition of Wiese's concessions, he found that the area claimed by his company had already been granted to its rivals. He succeeded in registering the concessions but not in gaining recognition of their validity.

Johnston registered, but did not recognize, the Wiese concessions. On the other hand the concessions acquired by the B.S.A. Company, though registered and recognized by Johnston, were not yet confirmed by the Foreign Office. Johnston's conduct of the affair did not meet with approval from his superiors at home, who thought that Warton had been unfairly treated.[41] One consideration influencing the Foreign Office may have been Wiese's German nationality. There had been an Anglo-German Agreement in 1891[42] defining the spheres of influence of these two countries in central Africa, but Maugham suggests that the Foreign Office thought that Wiese, after offering his services to Portugal and Britain, might now turn to Germany who could then use his concessions as the basis of a claim to the territory. At the same time the Foreign Office thought it might be unwise to declare the concessions invalid, since they might sometime be acquired by the B.S.A. Company and be used to strengthen its hand. Wiese, who according to Johnston had run away from Germany to evade conscription, had nevertheless received the support of the German Minister in Lisbon in securing rights to extensive estates in Portuguese East Africa in lieu of the £2,000 he had been promised originally by the Portuguese Government. Johnston suspected Wiese of trying to introduce German methods on his estates and wrote that it would be 'awkward' if the land between Nyasaland and the coast were 'in the hands of a stronger Power than Portugal and one

[39] 73; 75, fo. 180-1; 76; 7, fo. 33; 158, p. 61. I am much indebted to Sir Dougal Malcolm and the British South Africa Company for permission to cite the 1885 treaty and the transfer agreement of 1893. Unfortunately I have been unable to trace the 1889 treaty.

[40] 74.

[41] 85.

[42] *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 24-31.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 far less likely to yield its pretensions'. These considerations found
439 expression in the agreement of 24 November 1894, allowing the
B.S.A. Company to take over from Johnston the administration of
648 its sphere north of the Zambezi. The Foreign Office stipulated that sanction for the treaties made by the B.S.A. Company's agents was to be without prejudice to Wiese's possible claims.[43]

The Mozambique Company opened negotiations with the B.S.A. Company with these registered but unrecognized concessions as their asset. Agreement was reached on 8 May 1895. In return for any rights they might have in the British sphere under Wiese's concessions, and conditional on their raising certain capital, the Mozambique Company were granted mineral and land rights in a block of land ten thousand square miles in extent within the B.S.A. Company's territory. The rights of Natives were to be respected. Any rights the Mozambique Company might have in Portuguese territory were not to be exercised. A new company, the North Charterland Exploration Company, in which the B.S.A. Company had an interest, was formed to operate the grant of land. Thus the North Charterland Concession came into being. The whole of Mpezeni's country, except for that portion included in the Nyasaland Protectorate, came within the Concession.[44]

Some thirty-five years later, Mr. Justice Maugham was to rule that this grant to the Mozambique Company could only have been potential, not actual, since at that time the B.S.A. Company did not yet possess the mineral and other rights they were making over. At the time this consideration carried no weight. In April 1895, even before agreement with the B.S.A. Company had been concluded, the Mozambique Company's pioneer party reached Tete. They arrived in Ngoniland in the following year.[45]

4. *European consolidation*

175 In Nyasaland fighting continued sporadically in an attempt to
439 end the slave trade. From 1891 onwards Johnston's troops fought
a series of engagements with Arabs, Yao and southern Ngoni.
567 Mpezeni was regarded not only as a robber with whom no treaties
648 were necessary but also as a partner in the slave trade, for one of
721 the main routes used by Arabs and their African colleagues ran near Mpezeni's country.[46] All Ngoni raids were interpreted by the Nyasaland Administration as raids for slaves and Sharpe, describing his second visit to Mpezeni, wrote that the chief did a brisk

[43] 67, fo. 141-2; 95, p. 48.
[44] 99; 100.
[45] *Maugham report*, pp. 6-7.
[46] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 3 (1 February 1896), p. 2, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

trade in slaves, selling them to the Arabs.[47] Wiese's evidence on this point is contradictory. In 1881 he wrote that Arab caravans continually visited Mpezeni and that most of the raids were to capture slaves for sale to the Arabs. In 1900, he wrote in one place that some captives were sold to the Arabs and in another that Mpezeni scarcely knew of the permanent slave hunters and that the sole object of major raids was to gain captives to cultivate the Ngoni fields.[48] Few tales of the Arabs and no nicknames have survived to the present time among the Ngoni, and it is probable that Sharpe was overestimating the importance to Mpezeni of the external slave trade. Although Livingstone knew it, Wiese and Kerr are the only contemporary writers who were aware that captives were assimilated,[49] for other writers do not distinguish between captives and slaves. Whether or not the raids were made for Ngoni recruits or for slaves to be sold to the Arabs, it is clear that they were often made into Nyasaland and thus challenged the Administration there. Towards the end of 1895 the Collector at Kotakota opened a campaign against Mwase Kasungu, the Cewa chief whose territory lay between Mpezeni and the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. It is alleged that Mpezeni offered to help Mwase in this campaign, but it seems that no help arrived. On 31 December 1895 the fortified village of Kasungu was captured and Chabisa, a chief who had been helping Mwase, fled to Mpezeni.[51]

Chabisa may have been the moving spirit behind the delegation which early in 1896 went from Mpezeni to the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland calling on them to rise with him and Chabisa against the British.[52] The Livingstonia Mission had already been working among the northern Ngoni for eighteen years, and the delegation found little support.

As well as Chabisa, other refugees arrived from the south, after the First Matabele War of 1893 in Southern Rhodesia. According to some accounts the Ndebele Paramount Chief, Lobengula, was with them, only to die a few months later.[53]

[47] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 745. cf. Perham, *Ten Africans*, p. 96.
[48] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478 and 'Geschichte', pp. 188 and 197.
[49] Livingstone, *Narrative*, p. 385; Kerr, 'Upper Zambesi', p. 396.
[51] Swann, the Collector, in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1, and *A & P*, 1896, lviii, pp. 417, 418, describes Chabisa and Mwase as Ngoni and Zulu chiefs. Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168, say Mwase and Chabisa were brothers. It is unlikely that either was Ngoni. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 144, calls Mwase a Cewa but says he had many Ngoni headmen under him, thereby amending his earlier statements that Mwase and Undi were Ngoni. See 20, fo. 129; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 412. [52] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 292.
[53] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2; Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 83; Posselt, *Upengula*, pp. 112-24; 98; 121, fo. 193.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Meanwhile there was a lull in European activity in Mpezeni's country itself. After Wiese and the Portuguese officer left in mid-1891 a Portuguese trader remained behind. He was subsequently killed, either by accident or on Mpezeni's instructions.[54] After sending envoys to Johnston on Lake Nyasa in January 1890 and reporting the death of the Portuguese trader, Mpezeni seems not to have made any attempts to get in touch with Europeans for some years. Johnston sent an influential Swahili headman to visit Mpezeni in 1891, but Mpezeni threatened to behead the messenger if he entered Ngoniland, and he turned back before reaching the country.[55] In 1892 Ngoni patrols sweeping to the south in Undi's country came in touch with a French explorer living there and some of them were killed by his men. In 1895 they made contact with him again and he visited a senior lieutenant of segment 4.[56]

But the Frenchman was a bird of passage. It was not until 5 December 1895 that prospectors arrived with the intention of remaining in the country. They represented the Rhodesia Concessions Company and began to build Fort Partridge at Mafuta's, only twenty miles to the north of Mpezeni.[57] In the face of Johnston's opposition they had been allowed to bring Maxim guns with them. Despite the threat to Mpezeni implicit in this, they were at first received hospitably. Later the Ngoni became less friendly towards them, due, they thought, to the arrival of Chabisa and the Ndebele refugees and also because of the news reaching Mpezeni of increasing British activity in Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia. In May 1896 the prospectors thought that they might all be massacred and appealed for help to Kotakota. Troops were moved up from the Lake to Kasungu but, as we have mentioned above, they withdrew when it was found that the prospectors were in no danger. Nevertheless the prospectors left Ngoniland on 13 June, not for fear of Mpezeni but because the North Charterland complained that they were poaching on its preserves.[58] Thus the control of Europeans in his country had already passed out of Mpezeni's hands.

There were a number of transient visitors to Mpezeni in 1896,[59] and the B.S.A. Company's representative paid a visit, but

[54] 67, fo. 140.

[55] 81, fo. 147-8.

[56] Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, p. 281, and *Big game*, pp. 84, 105. In another account, 'Traversée de l'Afrique', p. 113, Foà says he visited the lieutenant in 1892.

[57] See Map C.

[58] 97; 101, fo. 483; 102, fo. 479; 113, fo. 41; 115, fo. 281; 125; 126; 148a, fo. 141; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2, and iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 2; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 12.

[59] McClonnie, Smith and Fraser, reported in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 1, and iii, 13 (1 July 1896), p. 2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most serious intrusion was from the direction of Tete. After his return to Africa in 1892, Wiese had occupied himself with his newly won estates in the Zambezi Valley, where his activities attracted the unfavourable attention of Johnston. His interests in Mpezeni's country took second place for a while, despite his letter to Johnston about them on 14 May 1893. It appears that when the Mozambique Company's party arrived at Tete in April 1895 they made contact with Wiese. Thereafter he was closely connected with the activities of the Mozambique Company and of its successor, the North Charterland. The exact course of events is not clear. Johnston reported on 24 March 1896 that Wiese had broken with the North Charterland, yet when Warton visited Mpezeni four months later as leader of the North Charterland delegation, Wiese was with him as interpreter.[60]

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At the beginning of 1896 representatives of the North Charterland first arrived in Ngoni country. After a short time, one of them was expelled by Mpezeni. On 5 July 1896 Warton with the main party established the North Charterland headquarters at a camp, later known as Fort Young, in the heart of Ngoniland adjacent to Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10.[61]

At first Mpezeni treated the North Charterland party kindly and provided them with carriers to bring up their loads from Tete.[62] According to the Foreign Office, whose sources of information I cannot trace, Mpezeni was friendly because Wiese emphasized that he was a German and offered himself and the expedition as a bulwark against British expansion. Warton, the ex-secretary of a cricket team and sometime lieutenant-colonel, posed, it was said, as Wiese's elder brother.[63] These allegations were denied by Warton and Wiese. They pointed out that the first member of the North Charterland party to enter Ngoniland had been an Englishman and maintained that Mpezeni was too intelligent not to recognize for himself the difference between an Englishman and a German. Warton had been introduced by Wiese merely as *okullo-ango* [*mkulu wangu*, my superior]. They maintained that the British flag had always been flown with the North Charterland's own flag.[64] Warton and Wiese's testimony conflicts with the Ngoni recollection

[60] *Maugham report*, p. 7; 121, fo. 192; 163; 164; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12*f*.

[61] 121, fo. 192; 163; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 71. Deare, who never mentions Warton or Wiese by name, claims to have been first to build the fort. Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.

[62] Forbes in *C.A.P.*, 15 November 1896; Warton in *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April; 148a, fo. 141.

[63] 160, p. 64; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 12; Read, 'Tradition', p. 478.

[64] 163; 164.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175
439
648

of these events, as recorded by Read, and with the contemporary account of Genthe. Genthe was a German traveller who always flew a British flag in central Africa. There was no flag at Warton's camp when he visited it in 1897 and the North Charterland asked him not to display his Union Jack. Whatever may really have happened, an explanation of the North Charterland's success by reference to its anti-British pose conflicts with the evidence of Mpezeni's missions of friendship to the Collector at Kotakota. Deare, one of the North Charterland party, gives the impression that the success of the expedition was due to his ability to speak Zulu, make the right presents, and diagnose the cause of illness in Mpezeni's cattle. This explanation seems just as likely.[65]

It seems probable that Mpezeni was prepared to be friendly with the British at a distance but did not want them on his doorstep. We have noted his deputation to Johnston in January 1890. Early in 1896 Mpezeni sent a mission to the Collector at Kotakota asking for a British flag. Surprisingly this overture seems not to have been followed up. Swann, the Collector, did, however, send twelve beasts as a present to Mpezeni who replied, after prompting from Swann, with a gift of ivory.[66] In September Mpezeni sent word to the Collector that he had punished his warriors who had attacked some B.S.A. Company's carriers. In October his envoys told the Collector that he did not allow raiding and that he was glad to hear of raiders being punished when they were caught, while in February 1897 he appealed through his messengers to the Administration for help in restraining his people from raiding inside Nyasaland.

Wiese accompanied Mpezeni's envoys on this last trip to Kotakota and according to a North Charterland account of their mission, Mpezeni then consented to the introduction of a British garrison in his territory.[67] Even towards Warringham, the B.S.A. Company's representative, he was friendly at first. In about June 1896 he exchanged presents with him and made many expressions of good will, though telling Warringham that he was not afraid to meet him in war if necessary.[68]

[65] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1; 165; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 20, 27 April, 4 May.

[66] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 427; Swann, *Slave hunters*, pp. 315-16.

[67] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 12 (15 June 1896), p. 1; iii, 18 (1 October 1896), p. 2; iii, 22 (1 December 1896), p. 3; iv, 4 (1 March 1897), p. 3; and iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1; 165.

[68] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 15 (1 August 1896), p. 3; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Friction*

On 14 May 1897 Mpezeni wrote to the Collector at Kotakota that he wished to move across the border into the Protectorate. He said, 'If you agree to my removing . . . I shall not raid anywhere.' He was prepared to pay tax if called upon to do so.[69] He may have been led to take this drastic step by his growing annoyance at the activities of Warton and the North Charterland party. In 1896 Warton had apparently enjoyed Mpezeni's approval but he soon began to displease him. Johnston, who had no high opinion of his fellow-men, described Warton as 'that not very capable or prudent man' and as 'not a bad man but not very trustworthy'. The North Charterland was a purely commercial company and Warton had no administrative powers. These were reserved under the charter to the B.S.A. Company and were exercised on its behalf by Johnston until 1 July 1895, when Forbes was appointed Administrator for the B.S.A. Company's sphere. As yet, however, in Johnston's view, the B.S.A. Company had no governing rights in Mpezeni's country, as neither Mpezeni, nor the chiefs he was held to have displaced, had ceded them.[70] Forbes's nearest representatives were Warringham and Middleton, who in March 1896 made a camp sixty miles to the north of Mpezeni in the country of Cinunda, a Cewa chief. Forbes visited Mpezeni in September 1896, but with no success.[71] Warton considered that in the absence of any action by the B.S.A. Company he must set up his own administration. He drew up elaborate plans for developing the country, calling for an armed police force and for a hut tax of 5s.[72] He believed, he said, that if Mpezeni were convinced that the North Charterland had sufficient force available, he would not resist them.[73] He may have been influenced in adopting this attitude by the remark he attributed to the chief that if he was seriously threatened by Europeans he would give way. This conflicts with Mpezeni's remark to Warringham that he was quite prepared to fight, which we have noted above. According to Johnston, Warton tried to force a flag on Mpezeni and to stop him raiding for slaves. Johnston seems not to have been impressed with the delegations to Kotakota and maintained that Mpezeni organized raids to spite Warton.[74]

[69] 167.

[70] 169, fo. 63; 172, fo. 161; 158, p. 63; *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 2, cols. 1 and 3; *A & P.*, 1896, lviii, p. 425.

[71] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 71; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 19 (15 October 1896), p. 2.

[72] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12-13.

[73] 122.

[74] 132, p. 59; 158, p. 62.

[Text continues on page 85]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP C. WHITE SETTLEMENTS IN NGONILAND
1890–1900

102
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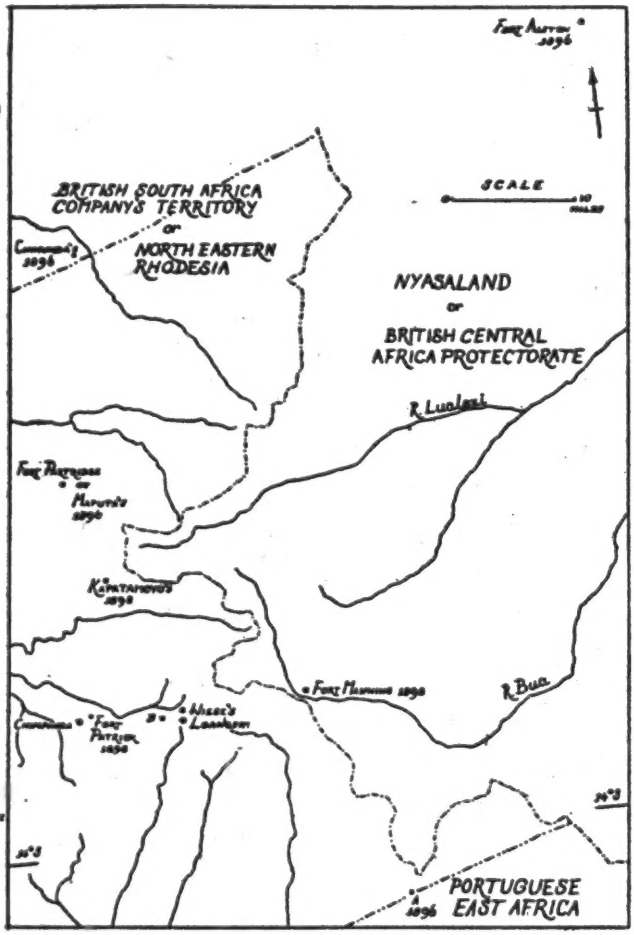
175



- - - - - White territorial boundaries.

- · - · - North Charterland Concession, northern boundary.

▪ White settlements, with date of foundation.

A Camp near Mimale known in 1896 as FORT YOUNG.

B Brick building known from 1898 onwards as FORT YOUNG or FORT ETTANHIA.

FORT JAMESON. The name applied in 1896 to a camp at CHIWUMA'S; possibly in October 1897 to MAFUTA'S; from December 1897 until March 1898 to CHIMUNDA'S; and from October 1898 onwards to the township founded at KAPATAMOYO'S.

FORT YOUNG. The name applied in 1896 to a camp (A) at Mimale; in 1897 and 1898 to a camp, also known as WEBB'S or CHAKWANA, near the village of Loangeni; and from later in 1898 onwards to a brick building (B) about two miles farther west.

LOANGENI. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 10.

CHIMUNDA. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 15, also known as MPEZENI'S.

[p. 84]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

6. *Fighting*

The European travellers who came to Ngoniland did not come alone. They brought with them their own retinues of servants and carriers, usually not Ngoni, who took orders only from their own masters and over whose misdoings there was continual friction with the Ngoni.[75] Wiese had an armed guard of a hundred and twenty Makua, though later this was disbanded.[76] Mpezeni insisted that the so-called Fort Young should not have a stockade but only a low reed fence, presumably to prevent the North Charterland from putting themselves beyond the reach of his warriors.[77] On the other hand Warton and the North Charterland directors were insistent that their employees should be armed, sought permission from the Foreign Office to import arms through Nyasaland, and even threatened to withdraw if the B.S.A. Company did not make adequate arrangements for their protection. Johnston was firmly opposed to private armies and private wars, and the Foreign Office advocated that if the North Charterland was in a precarious position it should withdraw until an administration had been established. Eventually Johnston came round to the view that the B.S.A. Company was so committed in Southern Rhodesia that it could not provide the North Charterland with the protection it was entitled to, and that, therefore, the North Charterland had a reasonable claim to arms of its own. Accordingly in July 1896, he reluctantly approved the import of two Maxim guns 'for eventual use against Mpezeni'. These Maxims seem never to have arrived, but Deare successfully smuggled in thirty rifles.[78] Thus the stage was set for struggle by persuasion to give way to struggle by arms.

At the same time as they were thus altering the distribution of power within Ngoni country, the European intruders were developing external relations with other African groups which were incompatible with the raided-raiding relationship existing between them and the Ngoni. Wiese had trading-stations in other tribal areas,[79] and we have already noted his plans for building up a large trading business based on the labour of his wife's slaves. Genthe was friendly with Cewa and Kunda chiefs and on that account tried to represent their interests to Mpezeni after they had been raided.[80] Deare went to visit Cimwala and Undi, Cewa chiefs, in about January

[75] e.g. the affair of the stolen red blankets, described by Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[76] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.
[77] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[78] 122, pp. 57-8; 129-33; 139-42; 149; 155; 156.
[79] ib.
[80] *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), pp. 1-2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

1897 and some time later they came to visit him at Fort Young. Deare gave them presents, presumably to gain their support for his own enterprises, and makes no mention of their seeing Mpezeni.[81] Undi was the chief who claimed part of Mpezeni's country in his treaty with Sharpe and who in 1892, when Foà was living in his village, was raided by Ngoni several times a month.[82] Thus the Europeans in Ngoniland were affiliated not only to European groups in Nyasaland and in England out of direct touch with Mpezeni but also with African groups with whom he was in contact. There was an essential contradiction in the situation in which, for example, Deare was friendly with both Mpezeni and Undi while Mpezeni was at war with Undi. Everywhere, not only in Nyasaland, the traditional Ngoni pattern of external relations was becoming incompatible with their relations with Europeans in their midst.

The leader of the opposition to the North Charterland was Nsingu, Mpezeni's heir.[83] Nsingu was at first friendly towards Warton but later his attitude changed. Deare, before establishing the North Charterland camp in 1896, had passed through Nsingu's village, by Ngoni standards an insulting thing to do, and later quarrelled with him, finally flogging him.[84] Genthe, the German traveller, met Nsingu on a path and only grudgingly gave way to let him pass.[85] While Mpezeni remained comparatively friendly, Nsingu and the warriors whose interests he came to represent became increasingly hostile towards all Europeans. At the same time Mpezeni's control over his lieutenants seems not to have been effective, as evidenced by his apparent inability to prevent unauthorized raiding. Deare, according to his own account, enjoyed Mpezeni's favour and was almost forced to marry one of his daughters, and yet Mashanga, the second lieutenant of segment 10, twice tried to kill him.[86] According to Genthe, Mpezeni sent repeatedly for some army leaders who had been raiding and they failed to appear. This may have been deliberate procrastination arranged by Mpezeni, who treated him coldly, but Genthe thought that Mpezeni was only a dummy whose lieutenants did what they liked.[87] With Deare there seems to have been a genuine difference in attitude between Mashanga on the one side and on the other Mpezeni, supported by Mcekwani, the first lieutenant over

[81] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[82] Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, pp. 280-1.
[83] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[84] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[85] *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1.
[86] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. cf. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.
[87] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mashanga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88] 175 439 648

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tsonga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions. 643 727 631 175 [578] [662]

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tsinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94] 175 643 648

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting 171 643

[88] Swann's report for 1896, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.

[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.

[90] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 24; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 23; cf. Young, *History*, p. 112, who reverses the role played by witch-finders in this incident.

[91] As reported by Warton in June 1896, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.

[92] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 493.

[93] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingu, Nzermane, and Madzimawi.

[94] 181, fo. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

171 643 between rival heirs even while the occupant of the throne was still alive. The brothers Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fought for the heirship while their father Mpande was still chief.[86]

175 643 648 669 The apparent ineffectiveness of Mpezeni's rule may well have been due to the increasing segmentation of the State as it expanded and to the growing differentiation of interest between one major segment and another. As it happened, there was no civil war and the tribe did not split, at least not in these terms. A cleavage in the royal house did reveal itself later, in 1903, after British rule had begun, when Madzimawi tried to take the name of Zwangendaba and was opposed by the supporters of Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu. But by then the form of the State was already determined by political forces other than the balanced opposition of segments. It is significant of the changed situation that Madzimawi did not send his armed followers against the new Mpezeni to challenge his succession. Instead he applied to the Native Commissioner for permission to take the name of his grandfather.[87]

Instead of dividing in civil war the whole country united against the European interlopers. Mpezeni alone tried to protect his friend Wiese. The effective cleavage was not between rival heirs but between the Paramount Chief and his people. He was now a man in his sixties who seemed not to want war and who perhaps benefited more than his people from the presents made by Europeans. The Ngoni people continued to believe and teach that fighting was the proper occupation for men. An attempt to exploit this cleavage was made in 1897 when Wiese, perhaps remembering his earlier attempt to serve Portugal and Britain simultaneously, offered his services to the B.S.A. Company. Forbes thought that if Wiese was given troops, he would be supported by Mpezeni, who would then be in a position to hold Nsingu and the Ngoni warriors in check.[88] But this plan was overtaken by events.

64 721 We saw in the previous chapter that the organization of the State was based on warfare, not only on war as an activity bringing prestige to successful warriors but also on war as a method of recruitment to the ever-widening segments of the residential system. Without warfare to eliminate the unsuccessful and to bring 175 promotion and dependants to those who survived, the system could 439 not keep going. It was in no sense inevitable that the Fort Jameson 648 Ngoni and the British should fight; we have only to turn to the

[86] Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', pp. 35-6, and *Malinowski's Sociological Theories*, pp. 19-20; Krige, *Social system of the Zulu*, p. 19.
[87] See pp. 139 *f*.
[88] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Ngoni of northern Nyasaland for a similar situation which ended in the relatively peaceful incorporation of the tribe into the framework of colonial administration. But in northern Nyasaland there were no gold-mines, there were only missionaries. Johnston admits that the presence of mission stations among the northern Nyasaland Ngoni embarrassed him, and he refrained from using force against them in 1895 because this might have interfered with missionary activity.[99] In Mpezeni's country there were no mission stations and, as it happened, no gold-mines worth worrying about either; but by the time this fact had been realized it had ceased to be significant for the Ngoni. The North Charterland was formed in the belief that Mpezeni's country was rich. The capital of the company, not all paid up, was £1,000,000 and in 1897 it offered a reward of £10,000 to the discoverer of the first payable gold-field in its concession.[100] Given the fact that wealth of this magnitude was at stake, that there was gold to be found, and given the tactlessness of Warton and the intransigence of Nsingu, it was likely that war would come sooner or later.

As it was, the end of the Ngoni State as a sovereign political unit and its incorporation within a colonial empire came suddenly. Instead of the gradual formation of new groupings and alignments, the new system began as suddenly as the old system ended. We tend to think of the arrival of Europeans in the backwoods of Africa as a gradual process extending through many decades, and indeed even in Ngoniland there were Europeans for at least thirteen years prior to the war. Yet to old Ngoni of to-day the coming of the Europeans is a precisely defined event which took place on 19 January 1898.

The sequence of events which culminated in the fighting was as follows. In May 1897 some of Mpezeni's people began to build shelters and clear gardens at the headwaters of the River Bua, just inside the Nyasaland Protectorate. Sharpe, who had succeeded Johnston as Commissioner, was at first not greatly pleased, but instructed the Collector at Kotakota to make clear to Mpezeni that he would have to conform to the wishes of the Administration. A peaceful settlement between Mpezeni and the British seemed possible, and on second thoughts Sharpe was pleased to see, as he thought, Mpezeni removed from the sphere of influence of the North Charterland and the B.S.A. Company, who might have taken action against him and precipitated a crisis. However, the Collector was single-handed and it seems that he was unable to

[99] *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 437.
[100] *African Review*, xiii, 254 (2 October 1897), p. 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 visit Mpezeni to arrange a peaceful settlement with him.[181] In any
439 case, although some movement of population may well have taken
648 place, Mpezeni and the greater part of his people remained outside the Protectorate and in the Concession. In October 1897 Warringham, the B.S.A. Company's Collector at Cinunda's, moved in closer to Ngoniland and occupied the abandoned Fort Partridge, twenty miles north of Mpezeni. A month or so later, he appears to have found it prudent to move back again to Cinunda's.[182]

In December Manning, acting as Commissioner while Sharpe was on leave, was told by a North Charterland official at Chikwakwa, on the Shire, that Mpezeni's warriors were said to have murdered two Europeans on their way from Tete. This report was not confirmed. On 28 December[183] news arrived from Warringham that he at Cinunda's and Wiese at Fort Young were in danger of attack and could not communicate with each other. On 4 January there was news that Wiese was safe. According to his own account, Wiese was secretly warned by Mpezeni of the planned attack on him and had time 'on the next dark night' to build a small fortification into which he retired.[184] However, Wiese and his two European companions thought themselves still in danger and on 9 January wrote to the North Charterland general manager and to Warringham at Cinunda's asking for help and arms.[185]

Meanwhile a force of about seven hundred troops was organized
FR 649 by Manning in Nyasaland. Warringham at Cinunda's was
726 reinforced but on 9 January he reported that Ngoni raids were
459 preventing him from collecting provisions. The next day there was news that Wiese, now with three other Europeans, was still surrounded at Fort Young and that the Ngoni had mustered fully forty thousand fighting men. The rear troops, whose progress

[181] 272, fo. 61; 272, fo. 172; 273.

[182] Poole implies, but does not specifically mention, the move back to Cinunda's. In 1897 Genthe referred to the Cinunda camp as Fort Jameson and according to Poole this name was transferred to Fort Partridge when Warringham moved there. If so, the name must have been transferred back again with Warringham, for the Fort Jameson mentioned in reports of the fighting, both by Poole and in *B.C.A.G.* and dispatches, is the Cinunda camp. On the other hand, the new Fort Jameson established at Kapatamoyo's after the war is said to have been some twenty miles south of the earlier station of the same name. cf. *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 14-15, 19. The name Fort Young was also moved about, being at first applied to a camp near Missale. cf. *C.A.P.*, 15 November 1896, p. 5, and 1 December 1896, p. 3.

[183] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13, says this message reached Kotakota on 21 December. This seems unlikely, for Manning states that he received the news at Zomba by wire from Kotakota on the morning of 28 December. cf. 274; 275, fo. 376; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1 (15 January 1898), p. 1.

[184] Wiese, 'Geschichte', pp. 186ff.

[185] 277-80.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

towards Ngoniland had been halted after the report of 4 January, resumed their march.

Four companies under Captain Brake reached Cinunda's on 17 January and left the next day for Fort Partridge, which was burnt by Ngoni as they arrived. On 19 January they moved on towards Fort Young. After some skirmishing they arrived there at 5.20 p.m. and relieved Wiese and his companions. Fort Young was only a few hundred yards outside Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10, and in the morning Brake found that this village and others near by, including Nsingu's, were full of warriors. Accordingly he decided not to withdraw to Fort Partridge as he had intended and sent his troops to clear the villages and burn them down. Later in the day there was organized fighting but in the face of fire from seven-pounders and Maxims the Ngoni lost heavily. The number of Ngoni warriors involved was estimated at from 4,000 to 5,000.[166]

On the next day, 21 January, Mpezeni sent messengers to Captain Brake with a present of a sheep. Brake regarded this poor present as an insult and insisted that he would negotiate only with important lieutenants. The next day, five messengers arrived with twelve head of cattle, but Brake regarded the messengers as slaves and said that if a lieutenant did not come the next day, he would deal with Cimpinga, headquarters of segment 15 where Mpezeni was living, as he had dealt with Nsingu's village. On 23 January a lieutenant and an important man arrived to see Brake and were interviewed by him the next day. They stated that Mpezeni was weary of the war brought on by the misconduct of his sons, and that he placed himself in Brake's hands to impose what conditions of peace he might choose. When Brake arrived at Cimpinga on 25 January he was met by two men who said that Mpezeni had gone into hiding outside the village. Brake told them to tell Mpezeni to come, otherwise the village would be destroyed. Brake waited until 5 p.m. and then burnt the village except for Mpezeni's own hut and those of his wives. The next day Lt. Sharp, with five men, succeeded in encountering Mpezeni, who had fifty men with him. Mpezeni asked for twenty minutes' grace while his wives got away and managed to slip away himself.

The main body of troops under Manning arrived at Cimpinga on 28 January. Manning sent out messengers to inform the Ngoni that unless Nsingu was handed over by the night of 30 January, troops would 'penetrate to every valley in Mpezeni's country and punish every village where opposition was encountered'. Manning

[166] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 475; Bradley, *Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 44-5.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 439 648 728

received defiant answers to his messages and on 31 January dispatched four columns each of about two hundred men to sweep the eastern portion of the country. On 3 February Nsingu was surrounded by troops and surrendered to them. Manning tried Nsingu by court martial for murder, instigating to murder and raiding in British territory. He was found guilty and shot on 4 February in the presence of all captured lieutenants. On 5 February another column visited the southern portion of the country. Manning left the country the next day. He recommended, possibly on Deare's advice, that Mpezeni should be allowed to return as chief.

Mpezeni voluntarily surrendered to Brake on 9 February and was told he would be allowed to resettle and that his people could reoccupy their villages. A great number of these must, however, have been burnt by the troops, for even on 23 January Brake had reported that in one district there was hardly a village or hut left standing. More villages had been destroyed by the columns sent out by Manning.[107]

After Mpezeni's surrender, Brake continued trying to capture other important people thought to have been supporters of Nsingu, but it seems no more villages were burnt. Some leaders went into hiding, other like Madzimawi fled west to Nsenga country, while Mlonyeni, head of segment 6, went to Mwambera's country in northern Nyasaland. Mpezeni had at first been instructed to live in a village near his former home at Cimpinga, but was later moved to an Ngoni village near Fort Manning, which Brake was then building just inside the Nyasaland border. After a year he was allowed to return to the centre of his country and was reinstated as chief. He died from natural causes soon afterwards on 21 September 1900.[108] The leaders who had fled drifted back and no further action was taken against them. Some people began to cultivate their gardens again and to make shelters.[109] Others, particularly Cewa who had been captured only a short while before 1898, left Ngoniland and either returned to their former tribal areas or moved on elsewhere.

175 439 648

Although fighting between Ngoni and British ceased, there was still some scrapping between the North Charterland and the

[107] For the preceding paragraphs, see 176, fo. 372-4; 181; 184-90; 193-5; 198; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1-3 (15 January, 5 and 26 February 1898), p. 1 of each issue; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 14-16, 71; Baxter, 'Angoni rebellion', p. 17 (map); Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

[108] *B.C.A.G.*, 118, vii, 9 (30 September 1900), p. 3. In view of this newspaper report the statement that Mpezeni died in October, made in *Reports on the Administration* 31 *March* 1902 and followed by Poole and others, must be wrong.

[109] 202; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 42; Stigand, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 126.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

B.S.A. Company's administration which now began to operate in Mpezeni's country itself. Each had its own African police force and on one occasion two people who had been taken prisoner by the Administration's police were released by a party of North Charterland police. The North Charterland police then arrested the Administration's police, and it was necessary for troops to come from Nyasaland to release them and arrest the North Charterland men.[110] By the end of 1899, however, conditions had become more settled. The B.S.A. Administration had acquired effective control over the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland.

The military operations in December 1897 and in 1898 were carried out during the wet season and in consequence there was much sickness among the troops. Although it was not the time of year which the Europeans would have chosen for a campaign, according to one of my informants Warringham had been advised by an Ngoni man whose support he had gained that he should arrange for the war to take place while all the warriors were away from the immediate vicinity of Fort Young attending the national first fruits ceremony at the headquarters of segment 4, the village of Zwangendaba's great wife. The descendants of this man are still regarded as traitors by other Ngoni. The first fruits ceremony was usually held about the new year, so that the war may in fact have followed immediately after the ceremony. This view is supported by the remark made by Harding, who arrived in Ngoniland a few months after the war was over. He said that the war 'arose over a highly strung official [presumably Warringham] mistaking an ordinary Native dance for an act of hostility towards the Administration'.[111] Whatever the truth in the matter, the first fruits ceremony would have been an appropriate time for Nsingu to call for an attack on the Whites.

7. *Cattle*

It has been estimated that before the war there were about 20,000 head of cattle in Mpezeni's country.[112] During the fighting many were taken from Ngoni by Protectorate troops. These animals became the subject of much recrimination. Read states that half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot', while Poole states that a large portion of the 14,000 head captured were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners.[113]

[110] 223, fo. 368.
[111] Harding, *Far Bugles*, p. 82.
[112] 238, p. 69 has 24,000, while *Report on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19, has 15,000-20,000.
[113] Read, 'Tradition', p. 478; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and village headmen looked after them. About half the cattle in Ngoniland were captured during the fighting of 1898 and although many of these were returned to the Ngoni, they were soon disposed of to White traders. To-day, many of the cattle in royal (i.e. capital, regal and chief's) villages are said to belong to the Paramount Chief. This statement of royal ownership is now not merely one referring to political overlordship, for these beasts are contrasted with others which belong to commoners and to other chiefs

TABLE VII. VILLAGES FOUNDED BEFORE AND AFTER 1898

How founded or incorporated in the Ngoni State	*Type of present-day village*					
	Royal			*Cadet*	*Commoner*	*Total*
	Capital	*Regal*	*Chief's*			
Founded by regional governors or their ancestors prior to creation of the Ngoni State	0	0	0	0	3	3
Founded before 1898 to accommodate other segments of the residential system	1	6	0	1	25	33
Total known to have been founded before 1898	1	6	0	1	28	36
Founded to accommodate segments of the residential system, date unknown	0	0	0	1	11	12
Founded after 1898 to accommodate segments of the residential system or their modern equivalents	0	2	0	4	20	26
Founded outside the Ngoni State, date unknown, entering it after 1898	0	0	0	0	6	6
Founded in Ngoniland by a labour immigrant after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Founded by direct Administrative action after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total known to have been founded or incorporated after 1898	0	2	0	4	28	34
Grand total	1	8	0	6	67	82

Sample collected casually in the general course of fieldwork.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and
631 disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each
621 village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the
432 village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief
231 who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village
[643] concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed
[685] by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion
[643] between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small,
631 contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there
621 was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of
648 British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still
628 formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of
621

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

(a) 'Those from the south'

These were the descendants of the leaders of the two main Ngoni groups represented by the two Ngoni kingdoms, with their followers, who left Natal during the wars of Shaka. They were South-eastern Bantu of Nguni stock, and when they were first encountered by Europeans in Nyasaland, the Europeans called them Zulus and spoke of their language as Zulu. Ngoni informants in the 1930's who were regarded as most reliable repudiated their relationship with the Zulu, and always referred to their ethnic origin as a people of Swazi stock. Y. M. Cibambo whose knowledge of Ngoni traditions was unrivalled, said in his book *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*—'Very many of them [the Ngoni] came from Swaziland, which is north of Zululand'.[1] A nostalgic refrain occurred in more than one of their traditional songs:

> Come let us go to Swaziland
> Where the people die fat.[2]

Cultural affinities between the Ngoni in Nyasaland and the people now living in Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, with the Zulu, will be examined in several chapters of this book. In the chapter on clan descent names in Part III, we shall compare the clan names called Swazi by the Ngoni with the lists of clan names given by Bryant in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* [3] and with the list given by Kuper, in *An African Aristocracy*,[4] of the Swazi and pre-Swazi clans. The military organization of the Ngoni, the age-set system which formed part of it, and other cultural features which will be discussed in Chapter III of this section, all show a general cultural affinity with the peoples of the northern Nguni group of the South-eastern Bantu.

The separation of the Ngoni group from the parent stock, which took place at about the same time as the Ndebele and the Shangaan groups fought their way north, occurred before the Swazi and Zulu kingdoms took final form. It is more correct, therefore, to say that Ngoni cultural affinities were with the northern Nguni group as a whole than to say they were off-shoots of either the Zulu or the Swazi. The Ngoni themselves used the designation 'Swazi' for the people with clan descent names whose ancestors left the south with the original party. Some of the older men remembered their fathers and grandfathers speaking of their clan as having belonged to the Ntungwa group, the Mtetwa group, the Msane group, before the departure of the Ngoni took place. This differentiation into pre-Swazi tribal and clan groupings was not in the 1930's one to which the Ngoni gave much attention. In talking about their southern origin it was the Swazi connexion which they emphasized.

[1] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Lutterworth Press, 1942, p. 8.
[2] Read, M. 'Songs of the Ngoni People.' *Bantu Studies*, March 1937, p. 10.
[3] Bryant, A. T. *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*. Longmans, 1929, pp. 681–97.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*. O.U.P., 1947, p. 233.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

from the campaign and the purification of those who had killed any of the enemy. 726

Cibambo and other Ngoni informants had no idea of the size of the Ngoni armies beyond emphasizing that they were 'very big and very strong'. Evidence was forthcoming, however, from early European sources on the size of the armies which, though it can only have been based on guess-work, nevertheless gave an indication of the numbers involved. Dr. Elmslie referred in 1878 to having seen in the previous year an army of 10,000 of the northern Ngoni which went out in June and returned in September.[1] In the *B.C.A. Gazette* of December 1894, reference was made to the armies of the central Ngoni which were said to be, at the time of their last raids, 50,000 strong. In the *Blantyre District Note Book* there was an entry of 1884, giving no numbers for the army but reporting on the raid on Blantyre in that year when the 'vanguard of the army was composed entirely of young men in their first vigour of manhood, who were said to have marched 50 miles in half a day'. From such scanty references by Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni armies in the field consisted of large numbers, were highly organized, and trained to feats of endurance as well as in fighting skill. The Blantyre reference also brought out the authority of the big war *induna*, who was presented with cloth by the Moir brothers of the African Lakes Corporation as a bribe not to attack the Blantyre area again, and kept his promise. 701 175 [662]

Objectives in warfare

Dr. Kuper wrote of the Swazi military kingdom that wars were waged 'to extend the boundaries, to retain tribal independence and to secure internal solidarity'.[2] After the Ngoni kingdoms were set up in Nyasaland, warfare had the same objectives with the additional one of bringing back captives and cattle. In north Nyasaland Dr. Elmslie, in the reference already cited, wrote that, after the four months' campaigning the Ngoni armies returned 'laden with spoil in slaves, cattle and ivory'. Up to the coming of the Europeans many of the raids and wars took place in the hope of annexing additional territory. Dr. Elmslie wrote in 1878 of the Ngoni dominating an area of 30,000 square miles in north Nyasaland from the lake-shore to the Luangwa river. In central Nyasaland the *B.C.A. Gazette* of 1894 reported that the Ngoni Paramount ruled from the Lintippe river near Lilongwe to the Luvubwe river south of the Kirk Range. The chief challenge to Ngoni security in the northern kingdom came from the Bemba, and in the central kingdom from a combination of Yao and Arabs. Dr. Laws recorded in 1886 that the Ngoni, in their final victorious campaign against the Bemba, had 721 175 [171] [648]

[1] Elmslie, W. A. *Among the Wild Ngoni*. Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1899, p. 79.
[2] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organisation in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

721 defeated an alliance between the Arabs and the Bemba in which the allies intended to dominate all the territory between the Luangwa river and the lake-shore, driving the Ngoni from their highlands and opening all the country to the slave-trade. In the central kingdom, during the interregnum after Cikusi's death in 1891, a powerful Yao chief raided the kingdom, destroyed six villages and took many captives. In both kingdoms it was necessary for the Ngoni to defend their independence by constant vigilance and preparedness, especially against a combination of Arab slave-raiders and local tribes. Since large numbers of warriors were mobilized every year, these trained armies demanded an outlet, and the policy of aggression served the dual purpose of raiding enemy territory and maintaining a defence force.

There was a difference of opinion among informants about the results of raids in terms of spoils of war. In both kingdoms captives were taken in war, especially young men of military age and women. From tsetse-free areas where cattle were to be found, live beasts were brought to add to the herds in the Paramount's village and in those of the chiefs and *alumuzana*. Ivory for trading and cloth for wearing were two of the most valued forms of booty, and Cibambo mentioned the looting of clothes and weapons from those who had been killed. From accounts by the first Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni burned the villages and killed the inhabitants in the majority of their later raids.

If defensive and aggressive military action and the acquisition of valued forms of wealth were two of the main objectives in war, a third was undoubtedly the need to build up a national sentiment within the military kingdoms by success in warfare in the first place, and by intensive training of all young men in the second, thus integrating the youth from conquered units with those who belonged to the trans-Zambesi clans. Again and again, in talking about their past, Ngoni informants from the Paramounts downwards emphasized the discipline and training of the young men in the days of warfare, and expressed their opinion that no other training could take its place. It was not only the common military training which contributed to this national sentiment and held the Ngoni together in a common purpose of preparedness for warfare. The *libuto* or age set within the *libandla* or territorial unit, and the *impi* or national army in which the territorial units were merged, provided a military organization which was adaptable and balanced, and which, through the control of the Paramount, gave the main impetus to centralization, while encouraging pride and initiative among local and age-set groups.

The relics of a military tradition

In north Nyasaland the Ngoni never fought against the Europeans, and were not coerced into giving up warfare, but, as a result of their contacts with the Livingstonia Mission, they finally agreed to give it up voluntarily. When Dr. Laws met the Commissioner near Mponda's at

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M 175

Livingstone found chief Mwase, at Kasungu, ruling over "a section of Mang'anja, called Machewa, or Macheba[1]."

M 175 648 [241] [167]

For some years the Achewa enjoyed a peaceful existence in their new home, keeping cattle, but living mainly by agriculture, until their tranquility was disturbed by the Ngoni invasion and by the slave raids of the Jumbe[2] at Kota Kota. By these the eastern branch of Achewa was continually harassed; and consequently in 1893 Dzoole, Kanyenda and others of the house of Karonga moved south to the Kasangadzi and Mtiti Rivers, and in 1896 handed over this part of the country to the protection of the British Government.

N 175 101 N 174

The Angoni, under the name of Mazitu, were described by Livingstone as Zulus,[3] and this terminological error has been copied by more than one subsequent writer. Of their earlier wanderings no record has been traced. Owing, perhaps, to their lighter colour it has been surmised that they came from far up the east coast; but it is known that under the style of Abe-nguni, derived from an ancient chief Mnguni, they were settled on the Dedesi, a small tributary of the upper St. John's River, when the Aba-mbo first arrived in Natal about 1620.[4] In this locality they remained for a couple of centuries, till towards the end of his reign the notorious Zulu king Chaka fell upon their allies the Ama-ndwandwe under Zwide. A section of the Abe-nguni then migrated northwards under Zwangendaba; and wherever they went they fought and subdued the peoples through whose country they passed, seizing cattle and incorporating captives in their own tribe. After raiding the Aba-suto, Ama-swazi, Aba-thonga[5] and Ama-kalanga, they crossed the Zambezi near Zumbo at the time of the total eclipse of the sun on the 19th of November, 1835,[6] and overran the territories of the Aba-senga, A-tumbuka, A-safwa and A-mandewere till they came to the land of the Wa-fipa and Wa-sukuma.

Here Zwangendaba (or Songandawa, as he is generally called in Nyasaland) died, and his following broke up and scattered in different directions. While others advanced to the north and east, four sections turned back, one under Mombera to the Tumbuka country, another under Mpezeni to the Loangwa river, the third under Chiwere to Dowa, and the fourth under Chikusi still further south. It is with the third section that we are now dealing. The hybrid nature of the Dowa Angoni can be inferred from the list of clans given in a subsequent section (IV, 2). During the last four decades they have intermarried still further with the Achewa, and there are now few, if any, pure-blooded Angoni in the district. Their paramount chief, Chiwere, though calling himself an Mngoni, is in reality an Maenga.

N 101 M N 648 M 171 121

The general features, characteristics and habits of these peoples are akin to those of neighbouring tribes which have been described by the Reverend Duff Macdonald,[7] Miss Alice Werner

[1] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, pp. 526, 548.

[2] A coast Arab, acting as *uali*, or representative, of the Sultan of Zanzibar.

[3] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, p. 361.

[4] Eric A. Walker: *Historical Atlas of South Africa*, p. 6. J. H. Soga: *The South-Eastern Bantu*, pp. 81, *et seq.*

[5] In pâ and tâ each consonant is pronounced. Similarly, in au and eo each vowel is pronounced.

[6] E. H. L. Poole: *Journal African Society*, vol. xxix, No. cxv, p. 290.

[7] Rev. Duff Macdonald, *Africana*. Miss Alice Werner, *The Natives of British Central Africa*. Dr. H. S. Stannus, *The Wayao of Nyasaland*, Harvard African Studies III, *Varia Africana* III, pp. 229-372, "Notes on Some Tribes of British Central Africa," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl. 1910, pp. 285-365, etc., etc.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of European control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

quarrels in a village the headman is blamed by the chief for not controlling his people well. All disputes are best settled out of court, even if they must be referred to court later on. Therefore a quarrel in village A brings to light all the alliances and cleavages which link A with other villages and differentiate it from them. The headman of A appeals to B for support, invoking the historical incident linking them, and hopes to settle affairs of his village with the authority of B's approval behind him. For if the headman of B is a potential ally he is also a potential rival, and the dissident section in A may themselves invoke their link with B and transfer their allegiance to him. Thus although the details of the relationship between A and B, and the historical incident connected with it, may not be widely known there is considerable external pressure on them to maintain their relationship. Connexions of this kind, mainly between villages, but also between chiefdoms, play a large part in contemporary Ngoni life. Men walk twenty miles to a funeral and women carry pots of beer all day in response to ties of this kind.

Thus we see, on the one hand, that tribal legends are widely known, relate to pre-conquest times, and do not directly influence conduct; and, on the other, that legends associated with inter-group relations are known only by the groups concerned, may relate to either before or after 1898, and do directly influence action. Why is there this difference? We may regard the former legends as of significance mainly in external relations and the latter in internal. Within the tribe, and more particularly within the minor chiefdom, inter-group relations are still largely determined by Ngoni themselves, however much they may have altered in form and content since 1898 and however much Ngoni are part of a wide system. Movement between villages is only slightly controlled by the Administration and in quarrelling, in marriage and adultery, beer-drinking and hoeing, Ngoni men and women choose their own allies and enemies. Incidents in reality give rise to inter-group relations and are subsequently invoked to maintain them. History is written not in books but in the names of groups and in the remembered connexions between them, and as these connexions gradually change so local legendary history is gradually rewritten.

In external relations the Ngoni never act as a tribe except within the framework of European-controlled institutions. As yet no myth of origin is needed to explain the fact that Ngoni and Cewa representatives sit together on the Provincial Council save that the Administration put them there. The world of external relations is one of cultural heterogeneity and comparative adequate documentation. In this field legends have only a limited social function. They differentiate tribe X from tribe Y but do not relate them to each other.

Lastly we must consider Ngoni history proper. There have been many alleged accounts of Ngoni history published in Europe and South Africa, but these seem to have had little influence on the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Recently several histories have appeared in the vernacular, and tribal history

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few. We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of these providing the information.[6] The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin. Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from contemporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grow shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that "the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory". From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations, as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

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"A Durban Man" (Deare, Major George Russel). "Eighteen months with the last of the slave raiders." *Natal Weekend Advertiser*, 6 April–11 May 1929. (Page reference to typescript in Central African Archives.)

6. Read and Winterbottom have pointed out that informants from Northern Nyasaland assert that their Paramount Chief is the heir of Zwangondaba, while those from Fort Jameson say that their Chief is the heir. Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 467, and Winterbottom, *Outline Histories*, p. 17.

173 made friends with old Mpezeni and finally made Luangeni, Mpezeni's
648 head village, his head-quarters. He obtained mining rights in the land
[423] from Mpezeni, by word of mouth, but Mpezeni signed no deed of gift or transfer. This legal point which subsequently became one of the major points at issue in the North Charterland Company case has been emphasized again and again to me in the villages. 'Mpezeni was writing nothing. He was only giving presents to Weise, and
[491] Weise gave presents to him, and Mpezeni was saying, "You may travel in my country and dig for gold. You are my friend."' They add further, 'Mpezeni did not want to make friends with the British
[648] because he had heard from the Matabele and from Nyasaland what they were doing. Weise said "I am not from the British", and so Mpezeni was making promises with him.' So deeply is this tradition of friendship between Mpezeni and Weise, with its consequences of betrayal and disaster, embedded in the Ngoni thinking, that when I stayed in the Paramount Chief's village and exchanged presents with
[123] him, many old people shook their heads and warned the young people, 'The *Azungu* war will come again. This is how that other war was beginning.'

175 Weise failed to establish his claim to mining rights in Mpezeni's
648 territory with Sir Harry Johnston, then Commissioner for all British territories north of the Zambezi. Meantime the British South Africa Company obtained a new charter to extend its field north of the Zambezi, and sent an emissary to Mpezeni's kraal to make a treaty with him. Mpezeni refused. He also refused Sir Harry Johnston's emissary who met Weise at Mpezeni's kraal with a view to getting Mpezeni to make a treaty direct with the British Crown. The mining rights in Mpezeni's country were potentially valuable, and on Mpezeni's refusal to grant them were claimed by the British South Africa Company[1] on the ground of treaties made with the conquered Chewa people, whom Mpezeni had dispossessed.[2] Weise was at this time at Mpezeni's with one or two Portuguese traders and officials, making hay while the sun shone.

[1] 'Finding Mpezeni obdurate the British South Africa Company concluded treaties with all the surrounding indigenous chiefs whom Mpezeni had dispossessed. We consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief.'

[2] F.O. 6537.

In 1895 the North Charterland Company was formed, distinct from and yet allied with the British South Africa Company,[1] with mining and trading rights over 10,000 square miles, most of which lay in Mpezeni's territory. The legal right to this concession was based on the British South Africa Company's treaties with 'dispossessed chiefs'. At the same time the North Charterland Company recognized that Mpezeni still held the effective sovereignty over the area, and that the success and safety of any mining or trading expedition sent to the territory depended on good relations being established with Mpezeni. They therefore persuaded Weise to join their staff in order to get Mpezeni's consent to the venture. They gained a foothold and did some prospecting, and then tried to impose a hut tax, and to exercise administrative powers through their own uniformed police of the Tonga tribe from Lake Nyasa—a tribe despised by the Ngoni. Two memoranda by Sir Harry Johnston to the Foreign Office set out the chain of events which led to the use of armed force against Mpezeni in January 1898, the pretext being the alleged danger of two white men in his country. Sir Harry Johnston wrote, 'Mpezeni is a very powerful Zulu chief and intimately allied with the Matabele. He offers no great objection to mining for gold but shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his independence or governing powers. The latter is the cause of his quarrel with Colonel Warton on the matter of a British flag and taxation.' He concludes the second memorandum with the remarks, 'Mpezeni is an intrusive Zulu robber who must sooner or later be dethroned and subdued. He is very powerful and is the only avowedly recalcitrant chief in all British Central Africa. When his hour comes he can be dealt with by the present Protectorate forces.' Following the last memoranda on the situation in Mpezeni's country the Foreign Office wrote to the British South Africa Company in April 1897, 'Lord Salisbury gathers that the North Charterland Company have maintained friendly relations with Mpezeni by withholding from his knowledge their connexion with the British South Africa Company and their British nationality. It is stated that the representative of the North Charterland Company has passed himself off to Mpezeni as brother to Weise.'

Lord Salisbury was well informed. When the Ngoni tell this story

[1] See North Charterland Inquiry.

648 in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of
814 those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Azungu* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts
[609] of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for understanding the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognize Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final
175 humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with
648 his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot';
[727] and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the old *indunas* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *inkosi* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic
178 changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and
[648] demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on
[464] both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its
[167] turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1924.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

THE FORT JAMESON NGONI

By J. A. BARNES

Historical and Ecological Background

101 THERE are about a dozen groups of peoples in different parts of Africa who call themselves Ngoni, and others not using that name have also been classified as Ngoni on the basis of common [131] origin. They are found in Tanganyika Territory, Portuguese East Africa, Nyasaland, and Northern Rhodesia. The name Ngoni is derived from Nguni, the designation applied to themselves by the Zulu and Xhosa peoples. The Ngoni have a common history of emigration from ●175 the vicinity of Zululand, in Natal, in the 1820's, and of subsequent 101 migration northwards. This common heritage they share with the Ndebele of Southern Rhodesia. These migrations were occasioned by the rise to power of the Zulu chief Shaka, whose defeat of his chief rival, Zwide of the Ndandwe, led to the flight northwards of parties of Ndandwe refugees. At least two parties travelled as far north as the River Zambezi, one of them led by Zwangendaba, whose party crossed the river in 1835.[1] This Ngoni group reached the vicinity of Lake Tanganyika in about 1845, and there Zwangendaba died. His people split into several segments, led by his sons and other followers. One of these segments went on farther north, others turned towards Lake Nyasa, while one segment led by Mpezeni, a son of Zwangendaba, struck south-westwards towards the Bemba country in what is now the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia. Here, in about 1856, they fought unsuccessfully with the Bemba, retreated southwards, and in about 1865 crossed the River Luangwa into Fort Jameson District. In 1868 they moved westwards into Petauke District, and a few years later moved eastwards to their present habitat in the vicinity of Fort Jameson.[2] It is with this group of Ngoni that we are concerned.[3]

[1] Poole, *Date of the Crossing of the Zambesi*, pp. 290–2.

[2] Cf. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, pp. 459–70; Chibambo, *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*, pp. 1–36; Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 151; Elmslie, *Among the Wild Angoni*, p. 28; Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 312–15; Hodgson, *Notes on the Achewa and Angoni*, p. 123; Kapunzah, *Angoni, Unimba ndi Miyambi*, pp. 1–11; Lancaster, *Tentative Chronology*, p. 86; Poole, *Native Tribes*, pp. 5–10; Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 464; Stigand, *Natives of Nyasaland*, p. 126; Werner, *Natives of British Central Africa*, p. 281; Wiese, *Geschichte . . . der Angoni*, pp. 181–6; Winterbottom, *Angoni Paramountcy*, pp. 126–7; Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, pp. 108–17.

[3] I worked among these people for a year in 1946–7 as an Assistant Anthropologist [114] of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

[p. 194]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made in the regimental system, which was organized on a national basis. A person of low ethnic status, that is, of comparatively late incorporation into the tribe but of senior regiment, was considered to be, in most circumstances, as good as a man of more aristocratic family but of a junior regiment. New regiments were formed about every four years. 563 641 701

Development of Minor Chieftainships

The defeat of the Ngoni army at the hands of the British in 1898 and the subsequent establishment of British control led to the partial breakdown of this system. The population was dispersed by the fighting and by the unsettled conditions that followed, and part of the kingdom was cleared for European occupation. The Administration recognized the grandson of Mpezeni I as the chief of the tribe, and also worked through a number of men known as Divisional Headmen, who were made responsible for small areas. Some of these divisional headmen were regional governors, some lieutenants of Mpezeni, some members of the royal lineage, and others were upstarts. It is not clear from the rather meagre records that remain or from the statements of informants exactly what happened between 1898 and 1914, but we know that by the latter date the Administration had come to recognize six men as local chiefs, apart from Mpezeni, and that four of them were said to be sons of Mpezeni I.[1] In 1929, when the term Native Authority was introduced, nine minor chiefs were appointed, of whom four were descended from Mpezeni I and one from the father of Mpezeni I. Two of the other minor chiefs have the descent-name *jere* that belongs to the royal lineage, and may be regarded as belonging to assimilated lineages. One is descended from a regional governor, the other from a policeman. Two minor chiefs do not have this descent-name, one being descended from a lieutenant of Zwangendaba and the other from a regional governor. This arrangement of one Paramount Chief and nine minor chiefs persists to the present day. With each of the ten chiefs is associated a more or less defined area within which most of the villages are said to belong to the chief of the area. What appears to have happened during the thirty years after the conquest is that the central power declined and that certain political and territorial segments achieved a degree of autonomy. The ten areas belonging to the different chiefs, which I shall refer to as counties, represent 175 648 631

[1] Conhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22 and 24.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have
178 continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the head-
[622] man, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Genthe, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173
175

Circa

1889. Mpezeni visited by Sir Alfred Sharp.

1890. Death of Mtwalu.

1891. Death of Mombera. Chikusi, son of Mputa, deposed. Mpezeni acting chief of Mombera's Ngoni.

1893. Birth of Chiba Mpezeni Jere, son of Tsingu Jere by his wife, Nkuchwa. Matebele War.

1894. Death of Lobengula Kumalo.

1895. Ngungunyana, King of the Abu-Gaza, deposed by the Portuguese.

1896. Matabele Rebellion. Defeat of Mwase at Kasungu by Alston and Swann.

1897. Ngoni Revolt. British South Africa Company at Chinunda (Fort Jameson Dist.)

1898. Mpezeni surrenders; exiled to Fort Manning. Tsingu Jere captured and shot. Nkuchwa, his wife, shot by Lt. Poole's troop in the Vubwi Valley. Revolt ended. Fort Jameson established.

1900. Mpezeni I. released and returned to his village. Death of Mpezeni I. Death of Soera Nqumayo, mother of Ntutu Mpezeni Jere (Mpezeni I) and widow of Chief Zongendaba.

1901. Succession of Chiba Mpezeni II (Jere).

1902. Chief Mafaimawe claims the name of Zongendaba, but is refused by the Government.

1904. Death of Lupoko, wife of Mpezeni, at Lupoko village.

1906. Death of Ngungunyana.

1924. Chiba Mpezeni II present at the Indaba given in honour of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales at Broken Hill, N. Rhodesia.

1934. The Paramount, Chiba Mpezeni II, presented with his "Staff of Office" by H.R.H. Prince George at Livingstone, N. Rhodesia.

1935. Great meeting of old Ngoni chiefs with Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, to discuss the chief's ancestors and the crossing of the Zambezi river in 1835. This being the Centenary. The Ngoni were well acquainted with native dug-outs (boats) before they left their tribal area which is now known as Northern Rhodesia. [501]

113

Authorities consulted:—Bryant; Elliott; Seymour; Thomas; Marshall Hole; Theal.

12: Barnes--1 E-5 (1946-1948) 1948 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

/3/

The Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni

I

During the 1820s, the rise to power of the Zulu chief Chaka in 175
South Africa led to a number of migrations to the north led by lesser chiefs who wished to avoid a clash with the Zulu armies, or who had already clashed and had been defeated. The descendants of these migrants are to-day living scattered over East Africa, from Lake Victoria to near Lourenço Marques. Many of these still call them- 181
selves Ngoni, a term derived from Nguni, a word used to describe themselves while they were still in the south. The leader of one of these Ngoni migrations was Zwangendaba, and it is his descendants who are to be found in Northern Rhodesia and elsewhere at the present time. The only group in this country recognised as Ngoni by the Administration is to be found in Fort Jameson District, under Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Formerly a tribe living in Lundazi District under Chief Magodi was officially called Ngoni, but they are now known to the Administration as Tumbuka. They represent the western salient of the old empire of Mombera, a son of Zwangendaba, whose de-
scendant is now a chief in Nyasaland. This article deals only with [121]
the people under Chief Mpezeni.

Zwangendaba led his people northwards, fighting and taking 174
captives as he went, crossed the Zambezi in 1835, an event that happened to coincide with a solar eclipse, and after passing through the present-day Eastern Province, died near Lake Tanganyika in about 1845. His party then split up, one son, Mpezeni, leading his followers south-westwards towards the Bemba and the Wisa in the Northern Province. From there they moved southwards, crossed the Luangwa, and settled in Petauke District. In about 1865 they moved eastwards and settled to the north of the Mpangwe Hills in Fort
Jameson District. Some ten years later they went further east, and 175
in 1881, when they were first visited by a European, they had reached

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 602
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary 624
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI.—*The Zulu of Nyasaland: their Manners and Customs.* By the Rev. DONALD FRASER, of the Livingstonia Mission.

[Read before the Society, 20th February, 1901.]

101 I SHALL take you to-night into British Central Africa, and describe slightly, a most interesting nation of warriors who live in West Nyasaland. To reach them we sail up the Zambezi, and the
13 Shiré to Lake Nyasa. Landing at Bandawe, we strike inland for two days, climbing most of the way. After passing through richly wooded hills and valleys, we arrive at a great plateau, veined by constant sudden ravines through which rivers roar in the wet season, and trickle in the dry. The plateau is almost bared of trees, and is relieved by huge rocky hills which rise precipitously, from the plain. A low scrub covers the face of the land except where
[241] gardens are being cultivated, and the whole country is dotted by innumerable ant hills, each as large as a cottage. These are hoed by the villagers, and throughout most of the year, stand out gaunt and bear. Then the landscape is thirsty and inhospitable looking. The earth baked and hard, lies unclothed in the blazing sun. Cattle,
[231] sheep, and goats, wander about the river beds, and one looks almost in vain for any sign of vegetation to afford them food. But when the first rains come, the land breaks into smiling. The scrub puts
[241] on a dress of the softest green. The gardens and ant hills are covered with springing maize, and a thick garment of foliage, vegetation, and flowers, hides every vestige of the ground. Here we stand from 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. In the cold season, the thermometer falls as low as 40°, and in the hot, rises as high as 98°. But though the sun has a dangerous bite in midsummer, the heat is never oppressive, and the nights are cool and refreshing.

101 The people who live in this country, are a branch of the Zulu tribe, who started north 70 or 80 years ago on a great raid. The
13 causes which led them to desert their own country are wrapped in mystery, and even the old men who can remember the days when they crossed the Zambezi, are unable to give any clear account of their starting. Probably it arose from one of the wars of Chaka, in

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

which his army was defeated. The warriors knew that they would be killed when they got back to the great Zulu despot, and so they fled north, fighting as they went. As they went along, they conquered and absorbed the tribes, gathering Swazi, Atonga, and a medley of people into the nation. They came to the Zambezi, and on the day when they crossed it they were terrified by a total eclipse of the sun. From the Zambezi they fought their way to Nyasaland, then striking west, they passed through the Senga and Wemba populations till they reached Lake Tanganyika. On the plateau there the first great chief died. He had become infirm in his latter days, and travelled about riding on an ox. At his funeral a terrible massacre took place. One section of the tribe, eager to observe the old bloody funeral ceremonies, surprised and murdered all the widows of the chief that their spirits might accompany the dead chief to the other world. This butchery aroused great indignation among the others, and the tribe split in two. The butchers remained at the S.E. of Lake Tanganyika, where they still are a terror to the surrounding people. The great part of the tribe however, again marched south. One of the sons of the paramount chief was appointed his successor. His name was Mombera. His four brothers, Mpezeni, Mperembe, Maurau, and Mtwaro, were given large and powerful sub-chieftainships under him. This led to a scattering and readjustment of the tribe. Mperembe remained as chief and conqueror over the northern people, keeping the wild Wemba, and other tribes under his suzerainty. Mombera, along with two other brothers, settled in the highlands to the north-west of Nyasa. And Mpezeni went south and gradually got so far separated from the others that his people became an independent and insolated section of the tribe. A few years ago, the British Government levied war on Mpezeni, and his country came under the British Government.

In the north also, Mperembe was sore driven through his separation from the main section of the tribe, and at last his people rebelled, and with the aid of the Wemba, drove him south to join hands with his brother Mombera the paramount chief. Around Mombera the great part of the Ngoni nation remained. Some of his head men started petty chieftainships to the south among whom were Mandala, and Mwasi. Their people are called the Central and Southern Ngoni, and are well known in the Blantyre district as labourers, but they are not Ngoni. Few of them can speak the Zulu or Ngoni language, and they are a poor effeminate and cow-

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

101 ardly people compared with the wild spirits who remained under
[175] Mombera.

This tribe is variously named Mazitu, Vikoko, Abangoni, and so on, and readers of Livingstone's 'Zambezi and its Tributaries,' will remember his frequent references to the wild marauding bands of Mazitu. The word Abangoni, by which the tribe calls itself, [186] simply means "The people." They reckon themselves the blood-ed aristocrats of Africa.

[193] The prefix *aba* before ngoni, is simply the plural form of the noun *umgoni*, a single man. The country is called Ubungoni, and the language Chingoni. For the peculiarity of the Bantu languages, is that words alter their number from singular to plural, and character from noun to adjective, not by changing the suffix but the prefix.

197 The language which the Ngoni speak is a slight modification of Zulu—but they only use two clicks—the dental *c* and labial *q*. In our schools therefore we use the Zulu literature in which there are already nearly 40 volumes, and the best of these are the translations left by Bishop Colenso. Zulu is however rapidly dying [567] out, as the language of the slaves and of the surrounding tribes is becoming the vernacular of the common people. When Mombera's 175 Ngoni settled down in the watershed of the Ruhuru, they soon made their presence disagreeably felt throughout West Nyasa. Their marauding parties were always out on the war path. Dressing [1126] in a frightsome garb of cock feathers, carrying a large shield and two or three stabbing assegais, they terrorised the neighbouring tribes. They used to sleep near some village which they wished to attack, and then in the early morning just before the light had come, with a wild war whoop they would sweep through the village, killing the men and the old people; then when they had seized the women and children and tied them together they would start back for the hills, driving with them all the cattle and sheep and goats that they could find. Their fighting was never done in the open. It generally took the form of a wild and sudden rush, and in a moment bleeding corpses were lying about, and the village was in flames.

The terrified people betook themselves to huge stockaded villages, others piled their villages in the lake itself. The Poka, and Henga [101] fled to mountain fastnesses, and built on the edges of fearful precipices, the Sengs fled to the Luangwa marsh and built great protected villages in the depths of huge thorn thickets. And the land became

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries.

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandom everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace.

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth fourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. When he listens in court to some great indaba his face is expressionless as granite, with an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had to

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[855] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[47]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[636] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-
[701] professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[47] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231 439 648 727 Manning stipulated that cattle handed back to the Ngoni should not be sold, to prevent traders bartering cattle for gunpowder.[123] Nevertheless the majority of the cattle remaining in or returned to Ngoni hands were sold within two years. In April 1898 over 14,000 head of cattle were counted.[124] Whether or not all these were in Ngoni ownership at the time is not clear, although the North Charterland implied in a letter written in 1899 that at least 12,000 belonged to Ngoni.[125] During the next year or so, in spite of Administrative opposition, many thousands of cattle were sold to traders or killed. By 31 March 1900 only 1,224 remained.[126] [177] Thus another of the systems of social relationships, those mediated through cattle, which had sustained the old social order, was undermined.

8. *The end of a system*

178 648 Thus ended the Ngoni war and with it the Ngoni State. In the last twelve years of its existence, from 1886 to 1898, three struggles were proceeding simultaneously in linked regions of social space. First there were the traditional processes already described by which Ngoni killed and recruited their neighbours and by which cleavages between segments of their residential system widened and altered with time. Second there was the struggle between Portugal, Great Britain and, peripherally, Germany for the political control of south-central Africa. Third there was a struggle between [439] different groups of financiers in London for the control of the rich economic resources which they believed, quite mistakenly as far as we can now tell, lay waiting to be discovered in Mpezeni's country and round about. Apart from these three major fields of activity, there were two others which affected this particular area to a lesser degree. There were the traders and adventurers like Wiese (until 1896), Matakenya and the Arabs who competed with one another and endeavoured to exploit the region in terms of ivory, gunpowder and slaves. There were also the various missions, [799] representing the interests of their co-religionists and anti-slavery enthusiasts in Europe, competing with each other and with the slave traders for local control. There was even a scheme for colonizing Mpezeni's country with Christian laymen from Britain.[127] All these social fields were interwoven in reality, but in analysis

[123] 207; 208, fo. 15; 233.
[124] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[125] 230, p. 69. Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 393, implies that all the 14,000 belonged to Ngoni.
[126] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[127] 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[127] 178 361 648

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfinsi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[128] [134] [311] [231]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared. [241] [177]

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[129] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[140] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers 161 [131] [311]

[127] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78.
[128] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[129] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 3 (26 February 1898), p. 1.
[140] Angus, 'Northern Angoliland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to recover under bush fallow. The long-term carrying capacity of the land before the conquest cannot have been much greater than its present average value of 25 persons to the square mile.[145] Thus it is certain that in pre-conquest times the Ngoni were settled at a density even more in excess of the critical value than it is now, despite alienation. There cannot have been much cultivable land in reserve and the State was exhausting the wealth of its own soil as well as drawing on the resources of its neighbours. Thus even if the large villages had not been burnt, the same number of people could not for long have continued to live in them practising subsistence agriculture. A reduction in the density of population necessarily involved under this economy a reduction in the size of villages, for Ngoni do not like to live more than an hour's walk from their gardens. As it was, the villages were burnt, many Ngoni of Cewa origin left Ngoniland, and much of the more densely settled land, carrying up to 140 persons to the square mile, was alienated to Europeans within six years of the war.[146] The arrangement of persons over the land and the activities they carried on were both dramatically altered by the European conquest. It is, therefore, not surprising that the old society was so drastically changed at the same time. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as we shall see, the forms of grouping of the past have influenced the forms of the new society.

In brief, the old political system was a system of segments, the new one is a system of villages and counties. The county segment links the two systems, but there is no function in the new order for segments embracing several counties or for those that embrace only part of a county. Within the village, the segmentary processes still go on, but at this level of organization we are dealing with kinship rather than politics. When a segment grows beyond the bounds of a single village, it begins to fade away, and we are left with a network of ties which link villages with one another but which do not define mutually exclusive groups as existed in pre-conquest times. The uncertainty about how counties should be divided internally is an indication of the lack of function of these intermediate segments. For some purposes, such as the organization of royal hunts, a county is divided into a number of rural districts. These are geographically defined areas, and it is sometimes possible to say that such-and-such a man, usually a senior lieutenant of the county segment, is the most important person in such-and-such a rural area. However, the recognizable rural districts in a county do not

[145] Allan, *Land Usage*, pp. 16-17.
[146] *N.E.R.G.G.*, ii, 2 (15 March 1904), p. 34.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

always exhaust its total area and districts sometimes overlap. When I inquired of chiefs and their councillors how their counties were subdivided in terms of allegiance, rather than area, I was rarely given a clear answer. The names of various men of importance in the county were mentioned, but there was no consensus about their relative status or the limits of their territories. In the present system village headmen have definite responsibilities and so have county chiefs, but there are no intermediate posts. Segments have given way to counties and villages.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Four

TRANSITION

1. Administrative policy 2. White control 3. Chiefs 4. County segments 5. Relative status of chiefs 6. Counties as territorial units 7. Villages

1. *Administrative policy*

THE DEFEAT of the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1898 was followed by the establishment of an Administration under the British South Africa Company. The greater part of the Nyasaland troops who had done the fighting left the area in April 1898[1] but the North Charterland party remained at their old headquarters at Fort Young, the B.S.A. Company made a base at Fort Patrick a few miles away, and in Nyasaland the Protectorate Administration maintained a station at Fort Manning. The new township of Fort Jameson was established in October 1898[2] and the first mission station was opened by the Dutch Reformed Church Mission at Magwero in 1899, in response to a request for a mission made the previous year by Mpezeni.[3] From these bases, White administrators, traders and missionaries, aided by their Black assistants, began to alter the form of Ngoni life. We are here particularly concerned with political organization, and it was the Administration which was particularly influential in determining what form the new Ngoni political organization would take. But political systems do not exist in isolation, and the kinds of political relationship which we find existing to-day have been influenced by the changing economic, commercial and religious relationships which have been determined more specifically by traders, labour recruiters, planters and missionaries as well as by the exertions of administrators.

The Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia was in the hands of the B.S.A. Company, and the policy adopted was to some extent influenced by developments in other territories administered by the Company. Southern Rhodesia was much more accessible from the sea than North-Eastern Rhodesia, more capital had been invested in it, and its mineral wealth appeared to be considerably greater. North-Eastern Rhodesia was therefore

[1] 220, fo. 67.
[2] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71.
[3] Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and,
648 possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop
[464] the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that
[643] the cheapest way of running the country was through the
[622] indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[4] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all
[692] kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the
[651] most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black
[464] leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with
[797] establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

177 Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration
464 to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity
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648

[4] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

l:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of earning money to pay tax, together with such subsidiary measures as the prohibition of Native smelting, and the pressure on men to clothe themselves in imported clothing, ensured that the old order changed beyond the mere loss of sovereignty. Not only were links established with Southern Rhodesia and later with other parts of Africa, but new patterns of distribution of wealth and power were set up which were incompatible with the old order. The chief who stayed at home ruling his people found himself outclassed by the newly returned labourers from the south, with their display of clothes, money and urban mannerisms. The relationships between one tribe and another which formerly had found expression in fighting had now to find other expressions, and began to be based on different interests. 177 439 464 648 [556]

These general considerations applied throughout North-Eastern Rhodesia. In Ngoniland local variation was supplied more by the presence of the North Charterland than by the fact that the Ngoni had been defeated in war. The North Charterland was interested in the economic development of its concession, whereas the Administration had to consider the needs of other territories governed by the B.S.A. Company, particularly Southern Rhodesia. The same administrative policy was applied to the Ngoni as to neighbouring tribes which had not been conquered by force of arms. Nevertheless in Ngoni eyes the Administration discriminated against Ngoni in favour of Cewa. Many Cewa who had been captured shortly before 1898 moved away from Ngoniland after the war, or at least moved in the direction of their homeland. With the end of Ngoni raiding the no-man's-land round Ngoni country filled up again with Cewa who had been displaced when the Ngoni first arrived in the 1870s. Cewa chiefdoms were re-established and recognized by the Administration, to the chagrin of the Ngoni. 439 648 [186]

Even the Ngoni themselves were referred to by the Administration as the 'Angoni-Chewa' by way of emphasizing their mixed ethnic composition. When the Native Reserve scheme was put forward in 1913 the Ngoni chiefs objected to the Cewa being allotted land of their own, and suggested that all the tribes of the district should be placed in one reserve under Mpezeni II. The Administration did not agree. When villages were moved into the proposed reserves in the 1920s, a few more villages left Ngoniland for Cewa country. At the same time other villages moved into Ngoniland from other chiefdoms in the face of alienation of land or difficulties with the Portuguese Administration. Thus to-day many villages in Ngoniland are of Cewa origin and many villages in Cewa chiefdoms are of Ngoni origin. 648 [167]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

361 interests and those of neighbouring tribes against the North Charter-
648 land and the White settlers. Ngoni themselves have not been in a position to enforce their own point of view.

In the operation of the legal system White control has never
648 been so complete, as we have indicated above. However the
692 support given to the judgments of chiefs and others by the Administration prior to 1929 was political rather than legal, and the courts held by chiefs with or without the approval of the Administration did not form part of the same legal system as the Administration's own courts. In that year Native Courts with defined powers were established as part of the same legal system as other recognized courts in the British Empire, with ultimate connexion to the Privy Council.[16] In matters of religion White dominance has been achieved more slowly and has never been complete. But even in
[797] this field the religions brought by the Whites have triumphed over
[769] the cult of the chief's ancestors and to-day it is the Christians who are the ritual experts.

A parallel sequence of events has taken place in Nyasaland, save that there the amount of land alienated in the Fort Manning area has been small. A scheme of administration was given a legal basis in 1912, and was similar to that in Northern Rhodesia. It was revised in 1924, and in 1933 Native Authorities and Native Courts were set up.[17] The two principal missions in Fort Jameson District
[797] have stations in Nyasaland as well.

In both countries Ngoni have been required to pay tax. A
651 hut tax was introduced on the Rhodesian side of the border in 1901
648 and at about the same time in Nyasaland. The annual rate has varied in Fort Jameson District from three to ten shillings. The imposition of tax has been of importance, not only in partly meeting the costs of Administration, but also in bringing Ngoni men and women into the wider economic system of farms, mines and offices of southern Africa.

Thus the Whites established control over the Ngoni in most
177 of their important external relations. Politics, settlement, litigation,
648 religion and economic activity have all been moulded by the Whites. In many respects this has been a passive process, for little that the Ngoni have done or not done has been significant to the decision to set up Native Courts, or to expand the production of tobacco, or even to open up a mission of some new denomination.

[16] By Ordinance No. 33 of 1929. Subsequent legislation is contained in Ordinances No. 10 of 1936, 18 of 1940, and 21 of 1942.

[17] Legislation is to be found in Ordinances No. 13 of 1912, 11 of 1924, 13 of 1933 and 14 of 1933.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These decisions have been taken within frames of reference beyond the reach of our analysis and beyond the reach of Ngoni persuasion. We are here concerned with the way in which Ngoni society has been adapted and has adapted itself to these diverse intrusions from outside. 177 648

3. *Chiefs*

In the old residential system there was no definite category of persons whom we regard as chiefs. In the literature the lords of major segments are sometimes called chiefs, sometimes indunas (i.e. lieutenants), but it is clear that the importance of any particular segment varied from one time and situation to another, and that the only constant relations between positions in the social structure were vertical ones, between lord and dependant, and not horizontal, between persons at the same level in the hierarchy but in different parts of it. The administrative scheme introduced by the Whites provided for horizontal categorization as well as vertical grouping. There were to be a definite number of chiefs, district headmen, and later village headmen, whose names would appear on the Administration's files. The only indigenous categories of this kind were those of Paramount Chief and regional governor, and for this reason alone it was inevitable that the relationship between the old and new systems should be complex. Although the young Mpezeni II was not the only person to be called chief, his superior status was always recognized and later received formal ratification in the qualification Paramount. The regional governors may, perhaps, have formed a category of persons at the same level in the old hierarchy, but they were not very numerous, perhaps only a dozen in number, and under the new dispensation some managed to become chiefs or district headmen, while others failed to do so. Village headmen in the old system were lords of segments of many different orders of segmentation and of varying importance. If the large pre-conquest villages had continued, then perhaps their heads might have secured Administrative recognition. As it was, post-conquest settlements were all much smaller and there were more of them. 622 631 643 648 [621]

Apart from these formal considerations, the peculiar circumstances of the war introduced distortion. Some important people were killed in the fighting, others ran away, and the followers of others were scattered. More significantly, the arrival of the Administration, of traders and missions, provided means whereby people whose segments were of minor importance could advance themselves politically and gain control of large sections of the population. 648 557

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than this. Annual reports often draw attention to the smooth 648
working of Native Courts and their impartiality, while attempts 692
are made to establish British rules of evidence and of legal procedure [696]
generally. By trying thus to isolate the judiciary from the Native Authority and, more recently, by the proposal to introduce an entirely separate police force into rural areas, the Administration is engaged on an active policy of social change. One change that has already occurred widely is in the role played by the chief in his [177]
court. We have seen that traditionally disputes were settled by the senior lieutenants of the segment concerned and referred to the chief only if the lieutenants did not agree, for the chief represented the unity of the people and was above all disputes. When Administrative officers began to supervise the work of Native Courts they usually interpreted the chief's absence from his court as neglect of his duties. Pressure was put on chiefs to attend and participate in their courts, another step towards the secularization of their office. Nowadays some Ngoni chiefs stay out of their courts, others actively hear cases in them, and others drift in and out, sometimes intervening, sometimes waiting for difficult issues to be referred to them. The changed Native Court is one of the agencies whereby the transition from small-scale to large-scale society is to be made. The very successes which were hailed generally for Native Courts in Africa on the introduction of Indirect Rule are surely evidence of the importance attached by the Administration to maintaining courts of the right kind.

The role of the court in the essentially political relationship 648
between the Administration and the Native Authority is made 671
clear when we consider the sources of law enforced in the courts. 692
I have described elsewhere[25] how many of the regulations sought for by the Administration are introduced as Native Authority Rules and Orders, which are then approved by the Administration. This is a harmless legal fiction which worries no one, since new legislation emanating from within the counties is enforced or not quite independently of whether or not it is referred to the Administration and is included in its list of Native Authority legislation. But it is significant that even this fiction can have political significance, for recently it was suggested that a soil erosion law, which had been introduced as a Native Authority Order, would be more accurately described as an Administrative rule which the Native Courts were empowered to enforce. This suggestion was rejected by a meeting of chiefs, who stated that they wished to retain the

[25] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 102-3.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Luangwa valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(*d*) '*Those from this country*'

Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. These in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Yao origin.

Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi stock—that is categories (*a*) and (*b*) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged; or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

The second conclusion is that even if the criterion is accepted that the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambesi, the Ngoni kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (*a*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms of culture were found not only in groups (*a*) and (*b*), as would be expected, but often among families in group (*c*) who, through fighting in the Ngoni armies and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual pattern.[1]

[1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpeseni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their travels. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Maseko Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4
Tumbuka FR6

N 576

leave after meeting, withdrawing after a case in court, and initiating or concluding many other formal or less formal occasions. Children were taught to use the correct expressions and rebuked if they made a mistake, and it was one of the requirements in Ngoni families that a uniform standard of verbal politeness should accompany correct behaviour in posture.

CULTURAL AFFINITIES AND DIFFERENCES

N M 121 122

The anthropologist working in Nyasaland is aware of the problems inherent in any attempt to isolate cultural features within any of the larger ethnic groups found there. There were no ethnographic field studies published of any of the other ethnic groups when I was working among the Ngoni. Mary Tew, in *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*,[1] referred to scattered sources published before 1939, to which I had access; and from time to time Cewa informants wrote accounts of particular social institutions or ritual, from which I was able to make certain comparisons with Ngoni ritual and institutions. Some of the earlier accounts, such as that by Hodgson on the Cewa and Ngoni in the Dowa district,[2] assumed that all the cultural changes and 'borrowings' had been by the Ngoni from their Cewa neighbours, whereas I found in that area in 1939 Cewa villages where Ngoni cultural elements had been adopted.

N M 114 177

N M T 105

Ngoni cultural affinities with South-eastern Bantu	*Local tribal differences*	
Paramount and subordinate chiefs	Chiefs; no central authority except in Henga and Ngonde	
Patrilineal descent Virilocal residence Marriage by *lobola*	Cewa and southern Tumbuka	Matrilineal descent, uxorilocal residence, marriage witnesses
	Henga	Patrilineal descent and virilocal residence
Clan exogamy ,, hierarchy Houses Age sets	Cewa	No clan exogamy ,, ,, hierarchy *Mbumba* group Girls' initiation schools
Cattle complex Ancestor cult associated with cattle	Tumbuka Cewa in Dedza district	Formerly cattle-owners but no terminology left and no association with ancestor cult
Burial customs: in skin near kraal	Cewa and Tumbuka	Graves outside village; buried in a mat

[1] Tew, M., op. cit.
[2] Hodgson, A. G. O. 'Notes on the Achewa and Angoni of Dowa District, Nyasaland.' *J. Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1933, pp. 126–64.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

171 The distinctiveness of Ngoni institutions, so often emphasized by the older men and by the early travellers in Nyasaland, was due to cultural affinities with the South-eastern Bantu. The attached table sets out those social and cultural elements in the Ngoni kingdoms which were most distinct from parallel features among the neighbouring peoples, and which had obvious affinity with South-eastern Bantu cultures. The main Ngoni cultural elements have already been referred to in this chapter and will be further discussed in the rest of this study. The corresponding elements among the local peoples are based partly on the [127 earlier sources quoted by Tew and partly on local informants and my 114] own observations. In collecting information about clans, the *mbunba* group consisting of a man with his sisters' children, and the girls' initiation schools, I had no direct contacts with any except Cewa sources.

Variations in cultural conformity among the Ngoni

178 In the Ngoni kingdoms among families with Swazi and trans-Zambesi 184 clan descent names there was considerable variation in the degree to which they maintained Ngoni institutions and practised Ngoni cultural forms. The anthropologist was constantly aware that the time element was an important factor in the consolidation of Ngoni practices and in the attitudes developed towards Ngoni culture among the individuals in the different generations. The Ngoni in both kingdoms spoke of the 'older generations' (*mibadwo wa kale*), 'the middle generations' (*mibadwo wa mphati*), and 'the present generation' (*mibadwo wa tsopano*). The first had grown to adulthood before the Europeans came, and were the older senior men and women in the 1930's; the second had been affected by [172 European missionaries, traders, and officials while they were young men and women; the third had never known anything but European contacts and many had grown up in European schools. The senior Ngoni of the [181 older generation often expressed the sentiment: *zatha zonse tsopano* (everything is finished now). They included in that saying the regrets of the older Ngoni for their former independence, and their resentment at the domination of European rule and European culture. It is idle to 177 speculate what cultural changes might have taken place in the Ngoni 178 kingdoms if European influence had been postponed another twenty to thirty years. Nevertheless it is a vital factor in assessing Ngoni culture that the kingdoms had barely twenty years of independent existence before the Europeans began to penetrate Nyasaland. The older Ngoni [181 looked back on their former independent existence as a golden age in which they were spreading Ngoni customs and culture as well as exercising political supremacy. It is difficult to believe that this was wholly true, in view of the extensive cultural interchange going on in the country as a whole. It is, however, possible that wider acceptance of Ngoni cultural elements was prevented by the advent of the Europeans, in so far as cultural institutions and political dominance were closely

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

associated. When warfare ceased the Ngoni could no longer force subject peoples to accept their rule and their cultural institutions, and they had to acquiesce in considerable cultural heterogeneity within their kingdoms, which, according to Ngoni informants, would not have been allowed in pre-European days. The illustrations they gave were in terms of the families living 'on the horns of the village', in many cases the families of captives taken in war. Formerly, they said, those families would have been made to marry with *lobola*, to have their ears pierced in Ngoni fashion, to serve in the army, to be associated with one of the house-groups and serve them in the huts or in the gardens. When Ngoni political power declined, and when large villages broke up, some of these groups formed their own villages and reverted to their former practices of matrilineal descent and uxorilocal residence, and of girls' initiation ceremonies. 177 178

In the northern kingdom one section of the peoples under Henga leadership had adopted a patrilineal system before the Ngoni came. The effect of the Ngoni conquest was to strengthen these practices in this northern section, adding marriage by *lobola*, and to extend them to the southern Tumbuka whose kinship and marriage practices were like those of the Cewa who were their neighbours.[1] In the central kingdom, patrilineal descent, marriage by *lobola* and virilocal residence were only practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and they had introduced variations in virilocal residence which will be discussed in Chapter IV, Part III. Within the true Ngoni families in both kingdoms the senior men and women in the 1930's were aware that cultural conformity with Ngoni practices was not as strict as it had been in their parents' days. They spoke of those Ngoni families who were non-conforming as 'people who spoil the land'. [184]

On the other hand, the adoption of Ngoni customs by non-Ngoni in the Ngoni kingdoms, that is by families with descent names from cis-Zambesi and local clans, continued to take place after European rule began. I found several instances of this adoption in the central kingdom, and many of them were related to the acquisition of cattle by former non-Ngoni families. It was chiefly the virilocal form of residence and patrilineal descent which were taken over with *lobola* marriage. When describing the adoption of such Ngoni practices, informants always said it was *monga cingoni* (like the Ngoni). Those who belonged to the Ngoni kingdoms and had largely adopted Ngoni culture expressed strong sentiments of attachment to it; this was particularly true of town-dwellers who had come from the Ngoni kingdoms but were not members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans. Though they adopted many external forms of European culture in dress, houses and food, the consciousness of their association with Ngoni culture and the Ngoni kingdoms was expressed in strongly emotional terms. [186]

[1] Tew, M. op. cit. pp. 107, 109.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingwenshe*, or big platter of the *inkosikazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *nhlanzi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inkosikazi* called for an *ingwenshe* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njolomole Nzunga I in the central kingdom

¶ Old Njolomole had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361] [351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked *nsima* and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and finer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [574]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these cloths and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njolomole excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njolomole was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibambo

565 302 [177]

¶ Today Ngoni women are not easily recognized because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *inhluta*. The oil was *ipakla*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [301]

[p. 88]

CHAPTER IV

COURTS AND OFFICIALS

121 177 671 THE Ngoni claimed that when they established their kingdoms in Nyasaland they introduced a new idea of law, a different system of courts, and a different procedure for conducting cases in those courts, from those found among the local peoples. Within their kingdoms they imposed on all their subjects these ideas, courts and legal procedure as part of their government, applied to the conquerors and the conquered alike. We shall consider in this chapter only those aspects of the courts and the legal system which were related to the political structure. The categories of crime, the degree of punishment, the sanctions for enforcement of the law, and the effect of the judicial procedure on the balance of equilibrium in the community, all belong to a specialized study and are not included here.

THE NGONI CONCEPT OF LAW

692 643 671 We begin with two texts, the first from the northern kingdom by Cibambo, the second by Ishmael Mwale the Treasurer of the Paramount in the central kingdom.

(1) The Ngoni seem to have been born with a gift for leadership or rule. Though they were a wandering tribe, yet there was one Paramount from whom proceeded the laws for the good government of the people. All the lesser chiefs and headmen received from him the leadership of the people. [203] Though they had no way of writing to each other, they kept their unity by messengers passing between them. The Paramount had power to call gatherings from time to time, in which they talked of the affairs of the country. In these gatherings the old men and the men of repute who had a point to make were heard in criticism and made suggestions for the building up of the realm. By this means the Paramount and his counsellors learned of and understood the thoughts of their people. It was in such large gatherings that the laws of the country were delivered to the people, so that they might hold fast to them and not be punished unreasonably for breaking them in ignorance. After they came back from these gatherings, the headmen and men of standing gathered together their villages to tell the people what had been spoken in the great council of the Paramount, and told them carefully about the laws which had come from the gathering.

173 671 (2) Before the Ngoni came to this country the villages were small and isolated from one another. There was constant pounding on people to catch them as slaves. It was unsafe to go even a quarter of a mile from one village to another, because a man might be in hiding and pounce out and catch you and take you off to his village as a slave, and there was no redress and no case was heard. Most people never went beyond the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Cattle in the ancestor cult

825

The Ngoni, unlike the Swazi as described by Dr. Kuper,[1] had no clear ideas about the life after death as lived by their immediate ancestors with whom they had associated in their lifetime. They did not, as the Swazi did, picture them living somewhere surrounded with cattle and other familiar creatures and objects. The importance of bringing the spirit back (*ukubuyisa idlozi*) to the house where it would be cared for signified two main things for them. The first was the continuous association of the spirit of the dead with the living persons in the community to which he had belonged, through the individuals belonging to the house, the actual hut where the sacrificial vessels were kept, and the cattle which belonged to the house. The other significant point was that contact with the returned spirit, and through him with the spirits of more remote ancestors, could only be established in the village containing the cattle of the house to which the dead man had belonged.

769 775 [171]

We shall be examining some aspects of the ritual of addressing the ancestral spirits in a later chapter of this section. Here we shall establish three constituent parts of the ancestor cult in which cattle were essential links between those taking part in the cult and the spirits whom they addressed.

764

The first part was the group of ceremonies which took place at death, at the burial, at the first ritual shaving and at bringing back the spirit. A text by Lopati Nzungs (see Chapter IV, p. 200) illustrates how three parts of a beast—the skin, the kidney fat (*susu*) and the gall bladder (*nyongo*)—were considered essential for Ngoni burial. It was interesting to find in Blantyre among educated Ngoni who were Christians and occupied clerical and commercial posts, that they had given up the cow-skin for wrapping the corpse and substituted a coffin. But they admitted confidentially that in most Ngoni funerals the use of the *susu* and the *nyongo* was customary. After the burial the ritual shaving, shared in by all who attended the funeral, was accompanied by the killing of a beast and the consumption of its meat, though with no ritual significance beyond its association with the purification of the mourners and their integration as a group. From six to twelve months later the second shaving and the bringing back of the spirit was also accompanied by killing a beast and eating its meat. These ceremonies expressed the sense of loss felt for the human person who had died, the sorrow of the mourners, their successive acts of purification which served to bring them together, and the final bringing of the spirit to live among them again. As we have seen, each stage of the death and mourning rites was accompanied by the eating of a beast or the use of certain parts of a beast. The cattle of the house to which the dead person belonged were used to bury him or her, to strengthen the mourners, and to reintegrate the spirit with the living community.

769 825 [177] 765 769 825 [783]

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 186.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East Africa.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182] In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as young men, and had known the independence and supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'everything is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, ministers and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni way of living, and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes dominated social relationships. There was a determined struggle on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasaland sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

178 culture worth preserving, inspired them to put up a fight
829 against all that threatened the values inherent in their way
177 of living. It was perhaps the struggle of a disappearing aristocracy. But Ngoni fathers thought that the principles of education on which they brought up their children were worth a struggle.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

answers to them somewhere, then there have been some vital omissions in the narrative. 121

Clues to this study

In relating this study to other field studies and analyses of socialization techniques and processes, I have not attempted to present here any general assessment of similar or related studies, much less any review of the field as a whole, since I have touched on both in earlier publications.[1] Instead I have brought into this chapter one or two clues or guide lines from other sources which seemed to me to elucidate some of my problems, particularly in regard to four main aspects of this study, which have already been mentioned in Chapter I and which to a large extent set the limits and determine the emphases of this book. The 'true Ngoni' were a society within a society, a distinct cultural group within the Ngoni kingdom. This society of theirs had sharp edges, definable and recognizable limits, and that partly accounted for their own awareness of themselves as distinct from, though at so many points connected with, the neighbouring peoples. Their culture, that is their way of living within this society, had definite values which they strove to maintain, and this was one of the reasons why the ideal Ngoni personality pattern, and their endeavour to see it reproduced in each child, was easy to recognize. In order to safeguard their society and maintain their culture they exercised a fairly rigid social control over the upbringing of their children, which resulted in something approaching a 'system' of training and educating children. Set against this conservation of traditional values however was the reality and extent of changes due to external circumstances mentioned at the end of Chapter I. In the face of these changes the Ngoni showed that they could adapt some of them to their own purposes, and they made use of the schools, for example, once they approved of them, to help adjust their

184 186 829 183 [157] [861] 177

[1] See Appendix (i)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 society and particularly their children to new ways of living and thinking. These then are the four aspects of the study
121 for which I sought clues: awareness of their society, definite cultural values, social control of bringing up children, adaptation to external change.

In alluding to the following authors and the ways in which
114 they furnished clues for this study, I hope it may lead
121 readers to consult the full works for themselves, and indeed to explore others which can be found in any good bibliography on socialization or on personality and culture. Over many years I have read and re-read Ralph Linton's *The Cultural Background of Personality*, in order to throw light on my own studies and to illustrate my lectures. When assembling the material for this Ngoni study I welcomed and followed up his thesis that 'some groups are much more conscious of the existence of culture and much more prone to generalize about behaviour than others'. That and other passages certainly helped to throw light on the Ngoni awareness of their own culture and their articulateness about behavioural training.

Linton also assisted me, though I did not completely agree with all his analysis, in placing cultural values in their relation to the accepted personality patterns. I used here other clues, and notably those provided by Monica Wilson in her book *Good Company* and John Whiting in his field manual for studies of child training. The Nyakusa values, brought out so clearly by Professor Wilson, I was able to compare with Ngoni values. Among the Nyakusa, 'good company', dignity, display, decency, wisdom, were constantly stressed and behaviour on these lines was commended by adults. The Nyakusa were a homogeneous and secure people, whose system of age-villages was unique among the surrounding peoples and a powerful force in maintaining and developing socially desirable forms of behaviour. Dr Whiting, in his field study manual, suggests eight 'systems of behaviour' for field workers to observe and classify in terms of individual

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

mother's household if the mother showed obvious signs of being a 'bad character'. They might take the child away and put her with some relative of acknowledged 'good character', in the hope of offsetting the effects of heredity by careful training.

In later childhood and especially on the threshold of adulthood, as we shall see in Chapters VI and VII, boys and girls were expected to learn and practise traditional Ngoni skills and to be conversant with traditional Ngoni knowledge. Skills and knowledge, or rather the ability to use them, might be inherited from a parent, but they were generally regarded as acquired qualities. In any case, they needed careful training and direction in order that they might be fully developed.

Ngoni cultural values

After the Scottish Mission had been in North Nyasaland for some time, and the Bible and other Christan literature had been translated into the vernacular, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* became one of the most popular and widely read books in Ngoniland, both by older children and by adults. The reason was that its imagery portrayed so many ideas and situations which the Ngoni recognized as being relevant for them in the new world to which they had to adapt themselves. It became for Ngoni Christians, and for many others too since it was told far more often than it was read, a new kind of folk-tale, and was told as such to children in school and in the villages. The themes of striving towards a goal, and fighting lions and giants on the way, and listening to good advice as well as hearing bad—these and other themes were recognized as in the Ngoni tradition although in such a different setting.

In the final chapter of this book we shall talk about personality and character among the Ngoni, looking at the ideas of basic personality as set out by Linton and others, and trying to see how training at different stages of childhood had been converging towards the ideal personality of the Ngoni

851 small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was
[841] applied with a feather to the baby's navel.
[278] When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and
[302] the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then
[515] they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a
[431] basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such
● [177] presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come
[554] back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grand-
[603] mother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to
[431] the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's
864 lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway. 596 861

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but which turned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers. 183 596 [184]

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it. 177 563 [845] [841]

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

591 184 844 Changes in residence at and after marriage influenced the composition of the group of relatives who assisted at births. In the central kingdom daughters of leading men in the village often stayed in their father's village at marriage. Hence the father's sisters were often present at the birth and the wife's mother and her sisters might be living in the village. If the [614] wife belonged to a higher ranking Ngoni clan than her husband, her relatives shared responsibility with those of the husband's family.

177 844 [759] As may be imagined the struggle between mother-in-law control and western medical practices at childbirth was a protracted one. Even when there was a younger member of the husband's family trained as a nurse or midwife, she by no means had her way in organizing the conduct of the birth. She might introduce a few hygienic measures such as clean cloths instead of old rags, and sterilized thread for tying the cord. But unless the senior women were frightened, and they seldom were, by prolonged and difficult labour, the Ngoni families were averse to taking a young mother into hospital. [606] The chief reason was the challenge to the authority of the mother-in-law, especially when the younger women who had some knowledge of western medical practices questioned the advice of the senior women.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

575 the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which
182 he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was
called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount.
342 Dormitory life was therefore rooted in the Ngoni past and
though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared
with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the
organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a neces-
575 sary training ground for young manhood. In very large vil-
[342] lages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a
[621] section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys be-
longed to the dormitory of that section where their parents'
household was situated. There were occasional attempts
sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory
[797] for boys who were baptized Christians or in an inquirers'
class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the
Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to
divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an
important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' de-
velopment, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled.
They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory
system except on the geographical lines already mentioned,
which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining
purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

575 The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they
had their second teeth, from the influence of the women.
562 Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all
861 women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in
favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking
Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and
[177] often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and
practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly
in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that
[186] dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract
non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them
so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision
at what they considered a crucial stage.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasaland had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

177 561 464 The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, [871] if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons [434] at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or [583] seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that [885] earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the head-ring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any prohibition on marriage until [582] a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no [167] wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
831 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
292 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
885 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often
301 trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the premarriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
885 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
556 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after.
593 It was also a way of emphasising the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
[836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'

● 177 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to establish their hold. The Ngoni elders said the missions did not like it, and alleged that they gave it up for this reason. But they held on to other rituals also not approved by the missions, and it was probably largely due to the fact that there were no longer large herds of cattle to provide lavish feasts. The songs were remembered and sung by the older women when dancing the special dances associated with the ritual, holding in their hands short rods and small rounded shields, and making stiff jerking movements of head and elbows. Such dances as were put on for me were however a relic and not a living tradition. For the Ngoni girl of good family there was no longer any intervening ritual between her private puberty ceremony and the marriage ceremony.

The marriage age of girls, like that of men, was much earlier than formerly, the most usual age being from sixteen upwards. Most of the older women held that this left very little time in which to teach girls all that they were expected to know before being married and leaving their own home and their father's village for good. This was a particular cause of anxiety to the senior women in areas where the young men emigrated soon after marriage, and where the girl had to maintain her own position and reputation among his relatives without his companionship and support.

Young adults in Ngoni society

We have just seen that cultural changes coming from the outside radically altered the traditional pattern of development of Ngoni youths and girls. The net result of these changes was to telescope the period between physical maturity at puberty and full adult status at marriage, to squeeze the former eight to ten years of this intervening period into about two for the girls and four at most for the youths. This shortened period of preparation for full adult life raised a number of problems for the Ngoni elders. They were aware, as was suggested in the beginning of this chapter, that the attainment of physical maturity called for some re-alignment

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especial-
561 ly the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes,
867 but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter
128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there
584 were certain social controls among the Ngoni which operated in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited
835 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers
582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment.
581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptized or under instruction. This last pre-
581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference
182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (1)

The missionaries, and through their influence Ngoni Christian teachers and ministers, tried to put a stop to this form of courtship. It was very difficult to convince Ngoni elders and young people that a practice which had been considered socially correct and was under some measure of social control, was now wrong and must be given up. They saw it as something quite distinct from casual and promiscuous intercourse, which they discouraged and despised. A young Christian teacher, speaking of his own youth, said: 'The Christian rule forbade boys and girls to sleep together at night and to play as our fathers played. We did not keep these rules, and we visited girls at night who wanted us, but we were careful not to harm them.' The Ngoni Christian leaders who were aware of the problems on both sides finally threw their weight into advocating much earlier marriages while supporting the carrying out of the private puberty rituals. As we have seen, marriage became usual at about sixteen for girls and from eighteen upwards for youths. This as a rule, though not invariably, ensured that the girls were virgin at marriage which was a very strict Ngoni requirement. But it brought in its train a number of other difficulties which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

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or other pregnant announcement: 'Listen. Do you hear? The chief says there is a great matter being discussed. It is not here but elsewhere. The case is very important.' Then the women took their poles and struck the tall wooden pounding mortars with resounding blows. A Ngoni elder commented to me: 'Listen. They are washing the moon from its clouds, so that it may come out of the darkness and shine again.' The event was curiously reminiscent of an eclipse during my stay in an Indian village when pots were struck 'to wash the moon'.

Reckoning of numbers

The Ngoni used tens as units in counting. They began with the right hand clenched, like the fist they raised in the traditional greeting. One by one they raised from the bent-in position the thumb and each finger in turn, and then did the same with the left hand. When they reached ten they struck one hand against the other with all the fingers extended and said '*ikhumi*' (ten), and for twenty, thirty and so on they struck their hands together the correct number of times. For one hundred they used the word '*ikule*', but it was generally agreed that this had not been in their original counting terms, but had been brought in when the Zulu Bible came to them with the first Scottish missionaries.

Ngoni history

To a people like the Ngoni whose remembered past was one of migrations, conquests and settlement in a new country, their history was no dead verbal record but a living reminder of their past achievements, and of their cultural and political differences from the people around them in Nyasaland. There were many occasions in Ngoni village life, especially in the villages of chiefs and heads of leading clans when recitals of history took place. Frequent references were made to historical events in songs, court cases, when visiting Ngoni came, in the vernacular readers used in the Scottish Mission

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. 814
Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on [224]
Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry [172]
grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous sermons from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Gwere had gone. All the people shouted "Gwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni 814
succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the 871
schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Chamdo, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred 173
to historical events which were illustrated in songs or recorded 597
in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, 791
called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the
advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni 177
Christian leaders went further than this. They used the 175
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

175 parallel of the Jews of the Old Testament preparing the way
● 177 for the Christian era to illustrate and drive home their belief
797 that they, the Ngoni, had prepared the way for the Christian Gospel in Nyasaland. 'Were we not also a people who hated idols and images? We too tried to reach the Great God through our ancestor spirits, but we failed, until the mission came to teach us.' 'We held together the people of this land under one rule so that the missionaries could travel safely and spread the Gospel teaching.' These beliefs were stated so often that they became almost standard formula, and the incongruity of this picture with some of the warlike situations recorded by the earliest missionaries was ignored and forgotten. In the churches, where the people sat on mats, Sunday by Sunday, facing their Ngoni ministers, rising to sing, in
[593] their typical Ngoni harmonies, Christian hymns set to former Ngoni war tunes—in this setting Ngoni history was brought home, interwoven with the new teaching, to young adults who formed the majority of the congregation. For Ngoni elders it was something more than a reminder of their past. It was setting the Ngoni people in a special relationship to
[186] the European missionaries and the new learning, compensating for the passing of military power and political supremacy by establishing Ngoni cultural superiority over their neighbours. This gave some spiritual reassurance to a people in the throes of political change, and it was a lesson which lost none of its significance for the young adults who heard it.

Ngoni law

671 'There was one law for all the people. No one could be ignorant of the law.' These were the words, quoted in Chapter I,
[192] which the Ngoni used frequently to describe the importance of law in their culture, its role in the political unification of their own and subject peoples, and the responsibility, laid on all adults, for knowledge of the law and conformity with its
692 demands. An incident in a court of law, which was unintelligible to an anthropologist, was a case in which a chief set

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [249] [249] [292] 177

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 233 234

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 natural translation for Ngoni young men to become butchers
233 and dairymen, if they could apprentice themselves to a rela-
234 tive, or if their father could put up the necessary capital outlay for starting independently. This conversion of knowledge and traditional skill into a channel offering higher rewards in cash incomes found the young Ngoni adult well prepared to earn his living.

Hunting

224 There was an aura of manhood and of distinction about all forms of hunting among the Ngoni. They did it because they enjoyed it, and not seriously to augment their family's food supply. There were two main corporate forms of hunting: the chase, when hare and deer were hunted with dogs; and killing lions and leopards. The first was the pursuit of a Ngoni gentleman which no one wanted to miss during the right season; and the second was the act of warriors defending themselves and their cattle and villages from marauders.

Ngoni boys in their herding days acquired some of the
168 skills needed later for hunting with the men. They made
224 traps to catch birds from the hair of cows tails or smeared bird lime on branches. They developed great adroitness at hitting birds on the wing with knobkerries. In these pursuits, which for them were half fun, half to get bits of extra food, they were training their eye, learning to observe the habits of birds and small animals, learning to track them, and developing that combination of patience, prompt action and accuracy of aim essential to successful hunting.

Some of the Ngoni men liked to go off hunting on their own, usually those who had a gun. Fathers used to take their sons on such hunting trips, and use the opportunity to teach them how to track successfully, how to put up with hunger and thirst on long marches, how to load and fire a gun. One young man described how his father used to point out to him on such trips the birds and butterflies in the bush. On one trip his father taught him to use his muzzle-loading gun, how

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

476 having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river
342 with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

463 Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established
[177] and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft.
281 Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from
[411] skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons,
322 wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most
[413] Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what
285 was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope
283 for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

534 Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of 273
sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their 281
women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and 294
sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The 177
use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni 301
families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One [331]
was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form standardised geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the bead 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once 302
was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and [412]
combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] headbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 301 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 356 515 182 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain standards in their homes and in their persons, which were held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare [177] measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

264 might be a chore but when it was done in the open it was also an advertisement of high standards.

The art of speech

191 The Ngoni believed that as boys and girls neared adult life they should be well drilled in the art of speaking, because it
195 was regarded as a basic Ngoni characteristic. We have seen how adults watched children tossing riddles at each other to test, among other things, their quickness of speech. Girls had been watched telling stories to see how they held their audience and showed a sense of dramatic values in recitation.

In all the standardized forms of speech such as greetings, messages, announcements, responses, young adults were expected to speak clearly and correctly, without mumbling but not too loudly. When relating an event, such as a visit, a bull-fight, or when giving evidence in the courts, they had to give an orderly account without repetition. Otherwise they were told: 'You are speaking badly. Tell it again, in order, from the beginning.' An ordered sequence of the narrative was always demanded, and, as we shall see in the next chapter, they used proverbs frequently to impress on people speaking the need to get to the point, while leaving out nothing of importance.

The art of words used with music in songs was regarded as
583 a special gift and those who possessed it were encouraged to develop it. Inspiration for words and music was as we have seen something which came 'from the chest' and was regarded almost as if it was a special kind of breathing. Some used this gift to sing with a solo instrument such as a stringed lyre. Others used it to compose new songs for *ngoma* dances.
• [171] Others again wrote Christian hymns and composed music for them, or set them to traditional Ngoni tunes.

The art of dancing

535 'Ngoni people think that their dances show their personality,
[828] their manhood, that which was born in them.' Phrases like

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

action of the hoe. 'They are our kin according to their eyes' was said as a reminder of misplaced trust in those who appeared to be helpful but were not really. 577 538 829

Readiness to take advice both from their age-mates and from older men was another quality held to be desirable in young men. Proverbs illustrating this were: 'He that refuses instruction will be surprised by blood,' and 'He remembers that he fell; he forgot that he was hurt.' As often with proverbs, there were others with a contrary emphasis which were sometimes used as a retort to the former ones, or in self-defence. 'The inheritance was eaten by those worthy of it' was intended as a rejoinder not to interfere in other people's affairs, when unwanted advice was offered. 'The body is felt by its owner' was sometimes said to encourage a man to stick to his own opinion. On the other hand a too abrupt rejoinder, especially to an older person, was regarded as discourteous, and onlookers said 'You cause the spittle to be dry' to express extreme disapproval.

Ngoni personality in a changing culture

The direction of the training of boys had been formerly towards military life, and towards the qualities which made effective fighting men, and emphasized loyalty to leaders and camaraderie in the regiments. This emphasis on military preparedness was however never the sole emphasis in Ngoni training, and hence when warfare came to an end, there remained traditional spheres of influence and activity which were an integral part of life in the Ngoni kingdoms, as well as new spheres of activity opened up by missions, the administration, the trading companies and the labour recruiters. 867 177 [703]

The traditional forms of activity were found in Ngoni local government which included the chief's administration and the courts of law; family and village affairs including the building up of herds and buying and selling cattle; and ritual life. The new kinds of activity included occupations such as teacher, minister, clerk, store assistant, houseboy, 463 177

463 foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group
● 177 involved the earning, spending and sharing of money in-
[434] comes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered
[571] opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

624 In local government and in the courts, which formed an
693 integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom, ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain
[827] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial
[562] ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

622 In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'. 622 [554]

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders. 463 177 [871]

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the 797 871 [177] 159 797 [577] [796] [184] [151]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the
797 church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been
159 threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition
875 and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary
[622] behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to
[871] some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organise his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described
177 in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose
797 partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or
871 ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools
186 were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose personal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected
871 their boys who had been to school and had entered European
463 employment away from their homes, to find work which
554 assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

parents and the community, the children and the community, and the community and the school. There are a number of clues to follow in examining the different groups of people involved in a child's growing up, and discovering some kind of consistent pattern of relationship between them. The clues are not difficult to trace for they begin in such information as the amount of time a child spends with each group, what he learns from each group, how much authority and responsibility the group assumes for him, and so on. In this analysis it is not enough to relate each group to the children. It is important too to be aware of the personal relations between parents, relatives, community, school authorities, in terms of their opportunities for mutual contact and discussion, and their attitude towards culture change and cultural conservation. Out of such potential contacts arise the formulation of aims for home and school training, and their harmony or their conflict, and the resultant effects on the growing up of a child. (2)

These two lines to be followed up, which we have just indicated, are familiar to most teachers and to many parents. The third line arising out of this study, and common to most other studies of growing up, is related to research on personality and culture and on national character. This field of studies is more controversial and more complex than the former. In the case of the Ngoni they had a more or less distinct ideal personality rooted in their culture and answering the question: what kind of people are the Ngoni and how do they want others to regard them? This ideal personality was the goal of their child-training as described in this book, but it was in the process of being modified by school teaching, by Christian teaching, and perhaps more profoundly still by the growth of Nyasaland African nationalism. The sharp outlines of the ideal personality type of Ngoni men and women were already blurred by these political and educational developments. 577 177

For readers of this book the relevance of this aspect of /157

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedition . . .', p. 475 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.17]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass huts built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and those small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Malawi FR4

came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery, and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1890 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the looting of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chiefdoms reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1890, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Malawi FR4

Cewa dances, speak Cewa, and are to a lesser extent internally organised on Cewa lines. They do not form a distinct class of village in Ngoni country, and are inextricably bound by ties of kinship with their neighbours. But there are fewer traces of the former pre-1898 system of organisation in such villages than in those which have a remembered history linking them with the glorious past.[1]

3. Christianity

At the same time as Ngoni values were being undermined from within by the Cewa, they were attacked from without by the Whites. The first missionaries to settle in the area arrived in 1899, although there had been some earlier contact. They attempted to convert Ngoni to Christianity, and therefore to monogamy and pre-marital chastity. In chastity the missionaries were allied with the Ngoni against the Cewa; in monogamy the missions fought against Ngoni allied to Cewa. New rituals were introduced and a new hierarchy developed, composed of priests, evangelists and deacons. However, in this region, unlike much of the rest of Africa, the impact of Christianity has not produced a distinctive legal status of persons married by Christian rite. The Administration's earliest piece of marriage legislation was the *North-Eastern Rhodesia Marriage Regulations*, 1903.[2] There was specific provision for monogamous marriages between Africans, with penalties for bigamy and detailed rules for the division of property left by Africans married under these regulations and dying intestate. Few, if any, marriages involving Africans were made in this form, for it seems that the missions did not license themselves under the Regulations and their ceremonies therefore did not have legal significance to the Administration. These elaborate provisions were repealed by the *Northern Rhodesia Marriage Proclamation*, 1918.[3] Since then the only form of marriage performed within Northern Rhodesia between Africans that has legal significance in the eyes of the Administration is marriage 'in accordance with native law and custom'. What constitutes such a marriage has never been rigidly defined.

The missions themselves have differed in their attitude towards indigenous marriage. One mission insists that all 'customary obligations' must be fulfilled in addition to Christian rites, another holds that it is wrong to transfer wealth from one side to another in marriage, while a third holds that the fulfilment or not of any customary obligations is not the concern of the church. The Native

[1] Cf. Read, 'Tradition and prestige' and 'Moral code' for an account of some of these changes in structure and values, based on observations of three Ngoni kingdoms.

[2] Government Notice No. 2 of 1903, *British Central Africa Gazette*, 140, x, 1, 31 January 1903.

[3] N.R. No. 10 of 1918, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, viii, 11, 7 September 1918.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [586] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 491 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, [177] and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [586] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 342 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 356 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require 462 rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has [591] previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 493 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 341 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [349] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 341 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [191]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one [182]
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant. 893
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child 169
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [155]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for [237]
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court 692
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni
Marawi FRS

of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an expression more of their different matrilateral affiliations than of the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother, although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by his first and third wives[8] were reared by their father's fourth wife's mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of his children. This division is in accord with the statement made frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's. Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace', however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft-reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The facility with which married couples live uxorilocally is no doubt partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxorilocal Cewa and other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

4. *The moral significance of sexual activity*

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die, and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

[8] See above, p. 109

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Malawi FR4

developed as the men's. It is to be expected, therefore, that there would be greater Cewa and Nsenga influence in those affairs controlled by women than in political and military matters, which were organised by men. This is borne out by linguistic evidence, for while many of the words, but not all, pertaining to affairs of state are of Ngoni origin, the words now used in the seclusion of girls are drawn from Cewa and Nsenga.

We find therefore that it is the bearing of children before marriage and to a lesser extent pre-marital impregnation which are disapproved of rather than pre-marital copulation. The real contrast in attitude is between pre-marital copulation and adultery. We have seen that in the old days adulterers were killed by order of the chief. The punishment of adultery was a process involving headmen, lieutenants and other important men. The abhorrence of adultery remains despite its great frequency and the prohibition on killing adulterers. An adulterer is a thief, stealing the rights of another man and endangering his marriage. Even when the wife of a labour migrant bears a child and it is in danger of *nsulo* until it can be 'taken up' (p. 87) she cannot openly call in a man with whom to perform this rite. She must either get a man to come in secret or obtain expensive medicines which remove the danger. In like manner, if her husband is impotent, there must be no public recognition of any extra-marital intercourse, for impotence is shameful and not to be admitted and cannot justify the intervention of another man. It is thought regrettable that a woman should grow old without bearing daughters to help her pound maize and sons to clothe her in her old age. Yet when medicines have been of no avail and her husband calls in a seed-raiser he must come in secret and later be rewarded covertly. Similarly the sexual activities of children must be conducted discreetly. Here, however, a much more tolerant attitude is taken and there is not the same need for secrecy. There is no chaperoning of unmarried girls but only of married women whose husbands are away. There is no inspection of girls at marriage, and one informant said that if after puberty a girl has no lover with whom she can sleep, her grandmother will call in a young man to copulate with the girl in the grandmother's house to see if she is proficient, and that for this he would be rewarded by the grandmother. From one point of view we may say that there is pre-marital freedom, with discretion, and marital restriction of sexual activity. Pre-marital intercourse does, however, have a moral connotation, and it is held that the girl who sleeps too easily with all comers before marriage will continue thus after she is married. The need for discretion in premarital affairs is in some part due to the activities of the missions, working at the village level through deacons, elders and women helpers. Yet in general no action is taken by the local Christian group in the village unless the pre-marital sexual activities of its members are conducted in such a way that it is no longer possible to ignore them.

Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 273 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni
Marriage

to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *bugule* supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *bugule* and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[6]

To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an efficient deterrent of adultery.

Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[6] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

St Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni Lamba FO8 Malawi FR4

In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftainries remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional systems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

S:Allan C-S (1941)1949 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Marav: FQ4

The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, much of it inaccessible and uninhabitable, except for small pockets of fertile soil, was opened to unrestricted settlement by the Ambo and Senga-Kunda peoples. Other areas of poor soils and low carrying capacities in Fort Jameson District were also opened to free settlement up to a population total determined by the carrying capacity.

In Ndola District an area was opened to immediate uncontrolled settlement, in order to relieve acute land shortage and actual starvation in one section of the Reserve.

A somewhat modified method has been used in parts of Petauke District where dams are the only means of providing water. Here the population unit consists of three or four villages grouped into a 'parish' and settled about the watering points. A single land area is demarcated for each of these groups, instead of allocating a separate block to each village. This method allows of economy in the distribution of watering points, tends to reduce the effect of inter-village movements and, it is hoped, will lead to larger administrative units.

§ 7. *Agricultural Control and Improvement*

The general object of resettlement is to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of traditional land usage *and the present population numbers*. Obviously, this balance cannot be permanent if the population is increasing; and if it is not increasing something is seriously wrong. Reliable vital statistics are entirely lacking but probably most of the tribes are increasing (the Ngoni may be an exception) at a rate which, judging by the very few available data, may be about 1½ per cent per annum, a rate which would double the population in forty-six years.

Resettlement is not, and was never regarded as, a substitute for agricultural improvement. The objects are to reduce the agricultural problem to practicable proportions, to relieve acute land shortage, to give time for experiment and the introduction of new methods. The assumption is that an evolutionary process of agricultural improvement will keep pace with natural increase of population, and that this process must be guided by experiment.

Simple measures of agricultural control, and the beginnings of soil conservation and agricultural improvement, have been introduced in each of the resettlement areas as a condition of occupation. It need hardly be said that these are not popular with the majority and the existence of such conditions is a deterrent to movement.

In the case of the earlier settlements in the Fort Jameson District an elementary system of soil conservation was introduced by demarcating the land for cultivation in contour strips separated by untouched belts of grass (which acquired the name of 'ten-yardis' since the original strips were ten paces wide). This was followed by an attempt to replace the traditional mound system of Ngoni, Chewa and Senga by cultivation on ridges

5: Allan C-5 (1961)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut in the general rule). Seeds,
295 seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and
671 banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little
[177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a
[132] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of
311 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush.
648 In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre-
185 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of water-sheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning
[622] of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve
361 the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this
362 has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built
[342] of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's
648 journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

are unknown, and he talks, "having regard rather to the poetical feeling than to the grammatical position and syntax of a word." But enclitics, tense particles, concords, the various forms of the verb (applied, causative, intensive, reversive, etc.), and all those auxiliary particles such as *ba*, *ka*, *ngo*, *dzi*, and enclitic particles such as *-nso*, *-be*, *-tu*, etc., by which all the finer shades of meaning are expressed, he uses absolutely correctly, and it is with a view of understanding, and making oneself understood, to the raw, uneducated element among these natives, that one should go to the trouble of learning this language.

The customs, stories, etc., recorded herein are those of the natives inhabiting Central Angoniland. They are descendants, for the most part through intermarriage with the Achewa, of the Zulus who came from south of the Zambezi, scattering as they advanced, under different leaderships; those under *Gwaza* (the father of *Sakambewa*), and his *nduna Chiwere*, settling at Dowa; *Mpezeni*, a son of *Gwaza*, settling near Fort Jameson. *Mpata*, the father of *Chikusi*, after reaching as far as Lake Chirwa, and raiding the Anguru under *Sinjaubwereka*, came to Domwe, near Dedza, under promise of cattle from *Sosola*, a *Chipeta*, or *Nchewa* chief. (*Chipeta* and *Nchewa* are synonymous, the former word being a sobriquet bestowed on the *Achewa* who came on to the Angoniland plateau, by the *Achewa* who settled on the Lake shore, the latter referring to the former as the *a chipeta*, i. e. they of the *chipeta* (long grass)]. Intermingled with these customs, borrowed for the most part by the conquerors from the conquered, are to be found traces here and there, and here and there a word, which strike the key-note of their past history, now all but forgotten even by themselves. But what is of their

T: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FRS Hgson FRS
Manual

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Of the Mwalawa Tribe.

(1) *Chimbalo* (*Chimbalonga*).

Of the Ashowa Tribe.

(1) *Nikwa*, meaning the frame put over an antlemp. Tales: *tumbwa* (*Kambwandu*, *Tikwalya*). (2) *Chiri* (*Kamphinda*, *Panzi*). (3) *Mphepe* (*Linkupe*). (4) *Chipete* (*Chinyanya*). (5) *Chimwa* (*Kpambula*). (6) *Ng'wada* (*Mwayawa*). (7) *Chilo* (*Dwaka*). (8) *Lintula* (*Kalinda*). (9) *Mwapi* (*Mpulu*).

Of the Tonga Tribe. (A tribe allied to the *Amambwe* living to the North of Nyasaland, not to be confused with the *Aba-tonga* south of the Zambezi).

(1) *Mwale*. (2) *Nikwa*.

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3. *Secret Societies: the Vingan.*

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The word *vingan* (*sing. chingan*) signifies "representations of animals." It serves also as the name of a dance in which large figures of grass and wicker, masks and other disguises play the principal part. This dance has a wide range and has long been performed by the Ashowa in connexion with funerals. Latterly it has been introduced into initiation ceremonies as well. It is not danced by the Ngoni or Tumbuka tribes to the north; but the Dewa Angoni, who have not preserved their own nationality, tribal forms and customs to any great extent, have adopted it generally for funerals and sometimes for initiations. The most prevalent explanation of its origin is that when God made the country and its people He also instituted the *vingan*. Consequently, the life of the people is bound up with it, and its secrets must be guarded zealously, initiates being warned that if they disclose them, not only will they themselves perish, but also their fathers and mothers and all their relations with them.

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In 1907 Captain R. S. Rattray referred to this dance in his "Folk Lore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja," pp. 158 and 179, and expressed the opinion that it was undoubtedly in some way connected with totemism, the grass animals being representations of the dead. He observed that the secrets were scrupulously kept, and that natives accustomed to speak freely on their other customs refused absolutely to discuss the *vingan*. During the last twenty years of contact with European civilization, the dancers have greatly increased in number; the dance itself has diverged to some extent from its original purpose and degenerated into a mere amusement; and the educated native of to-day does not believe so readily in the mysterious properties of a grass animal, and is therefore comparatively ready to impart his knowledge on the subject.*

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* Dr. Brazzon makes a brief reference to the *vingan*, and in Harvard African Studies III, loc. cit., p. 200, he describes one of the corresponding Yao *ungaje* figures, viz., the *mwakwada*, which is a "representation of an animal made of bark on a framework covered with mud and painted with liver in spiral markings, hence the name (*ukwada* is part of a spiral shell from the Zanzibar coast much prized by natives as an ornament)." In the following pages he gives a list of the other *ungaje* figures, nearly all of which represent various animals, and states that they are used at the *Jagwada* (initiation of boys) for instructional purposes, the Wayao denying any totemic origin. The Yao word *ungaje* is, of course, the same as the Chewa *vingan*.

T: Hodgson G-5 (1906) 1933 FRS Naga FRS
Marayi FR4

The third day of the proceedings, tribe is known, is known as tribe is known makes. The beer is tasted as customary, and *hoige* makes begins to dance, followed first by a *chinsuka* and then by *nakuda*. As sunrise the dances proceed to the *dambu*, and those who play no further active part sway go and bathe, after which they repair to the *kenda*, where they eat and drink all seem. Meanwhile, the relatives, accompanied by any other of the men who assisted in digging the grave or were present at the interment, have betaken themselves early to the banks of the stream where they bathed on the former occasion. The women who have worn *cinthanda* leave them in a fire, and sanitize the ashes. If they have indulged in sexual intercourse while wearing them, the *cinthanda* refuse to burn. Both sexes bathe separately as before, and all return to the house of the deceased, outside which the men shave each others' heads, as also do the women. Almost some one or more *amalipa* come from the *kenda* and dance in the *mainda*. *Chadamada* hobbles out, goes round the graveyard, and goes first to the house of the deceased to receive a cape from the widow and then to the house of the headman, where he sits on a chair while people come and give him *mungu* and beer. After this refreshment he dances in the *kenda*, and then retreats to the *kenda* for a rest, returning to dance a second and third time before retiring finally to the *dambu*. Then *hoige* makes dances for the last time, and is taken to the *dambu* and buried, and those who have handled him bathe. Twelve again being broken pots from the graveyard, and dance with them in the *kenda*, singing "*Hoige nakuda*," and the *amalipa* continue dancing for a while. At sunset the ceremonies are ended by the male relatives of the deceased burning first the beer house and then the house. The widow sleeps in someone else's house for a few weeks, until a new house has been built for her by her relatives.

M 765 575 M [515] [302] [535] M [168]

9. *Funeral rites (Ngami).*

The procedure described by Captain Battye[1] in 1907 is still remembered by the old men; but the younger *Angami* are inclined to follow the customs of the Arhows with certain modifications. For example, they place the corpse in a recess cut out from the bottom of the wall of the grave in order that it may not be soiled when the grave is filled in. They do not leave him any food, but place his spear and shield and one or two of his knives in the recess by his side. Part of his remaining property is deposited in the main shaft; but the men always inherit the knives, except the *chipumbu* (knife for cutting meat), which falls to the head wife.

N 764 [177] N 428

On the second day after the death, the widows and children to cut *mpulopudwu* grass, from which they weave *cinthanda* to bind on their heads. As long as the widows wear these *cinthanda*, they must abstain from sexual intercourse; if they fall from grace, they invariably remove the *cinthanda* first. They must also keep their hands behind their backs when walking abroad, and may only use one hand when gesticulating. They must refrain from conversation and ablution for two or three weeks, at the end of which they brew beer (known as *mun ne cinthida*) and invite a few friends to partake of it. Very often a widow's near female relatives past the time of childbearing wear *cinthanda* and observe prohibitions in sympathy with her.

N 765 N [273]

[1] Mourning bands of plaited grass (see following section).
[2] "Some Folk Lore Songs and Stories in Chinyenje," pp. 98-99.

N 765 [262]

On the second day, also, the social undue takes some or a goat according to his means, and divides the flesh among the mourners. The horns may not be gnawed, as this would be considered equivalent to eating the dead man, but they are put into an opendo basket and thrown away into the bush at the end of the feast.

M N [764] [177]

On the third and fourth days the male relations surround the grave with a fence of indeno grass known as ekiba, which is sometimes plastered by the women with mud. The Ashowa are now beginning to imitate this custom, and also that of wearing sinkondo. Both tribes plant sikindi* trees about the graves in order that the dead may have shade.

N 766 765 237

A chief is not buried in the common graveyard, but in the village just outside his hut, and a chair is sometimes placed inside the ekiba. One of his senior relations kills a goat, and the new prospective chief ties a rope along the handle and blade of a knife, with which he cuts a horizontal strip of skin round the quarters of a goat, and wears the strip for two or three months as a belt, the tail hanging down behind. With the same knife the widows cut off the false hanki together with a small piece of adjacent skin, through which they thread a string, and then bind a false hanki on each wrist and wear them till the end of the period of mourning. The rope must remain fastened to the knife throughout this period, at the end of which all are burnt together.

VIII.—Mental Characters.

1. *Reincarnation and Spirits (Chenu).*

M 769 [776] [622] [779] [262]

Mizimu or spirits are invoked as intermediaries between man and God (Chenu), and each village contains a hut for the spirits of past chiefs, to whom prayers are generally made because they are powerful and because they are known to everybody. Some of the larger villages have two huts, one for the spirits of men and the other for the spirits of women. A man may also make offerings to the spirits of his own family in his own hut. When the green maize is ready for eating, the people may not taste it until their headman has taken a cob, cooked it in his house and placed it in the spirits' house, where he claps his hands and thanks the spirits for the crop. The cob, like other offerings to spirits, may be eaten next morning by children below the age of initiation.

M 775

If, as frequently happens, a traveller strays—as we should say, unconsciously—when following a route which he knows quite well, it is the work of a spirit which has been accepted by him. On one such occasion a police constable of mine, who had been sent to the neighbouring station while his child was ill, found himself wandering several times from the main road, and knew thereby that his child was dead, and that its spirit was troubling him because he should

[824]

* Sikindi, euphorbia. These are evergreen, quickly propagated and long lived, and as they serve also as a sign to mark the grave long afterwards. In the Mzungu District the Anyanja and other tribes sometimes plant them in maize fields because they are supposed to be obnoxious to termites.

Livingstone, *loc. cit.*, p. 105, writes that in the Shire Highlands in 1859 they found all Mang'anja villages surrounded by an impenetrable hedge of poisonous euphorbia. He continues: "This tree casts a deep shade, which would render it difficult to lowmen to take aim at the villagers inside. The grass does not grow beneath it, and this may be the reason why it is so universally used, for when dry the grass would convey fire to huts inside; moreover, the hedge acts as a leader to all flying sparks.

The Fort Jameson Ngoni[1] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821-1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of European control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battledress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the words they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

1. I worked among these people during 1946-49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

648 in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes
199 as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there
[168] was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made
648 to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The
186 Ngoni identified themselves with European rather than with their maritimal
156 neighbours even before the European conquest. Wawa, himself the main agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[6]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount
[177] Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[7] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not pro-
129 duced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days
18 I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

181 Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian
186 neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to rationalize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

6. Wawa, Geschichte, pp. 220 f.
7. Lane, whom he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'ansi said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Dunn, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 23.

178 829 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, forming [185] parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state, [177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship [182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly defined rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 648 [161] When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[309] 186 much[1] of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

9. Read E-9 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Marawi FR4

Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *induna* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the aimoneers and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalamwana*, *izinduna*, *amacosana*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *inigawe* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, 'We taught them to honour their sons' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mzoroi FRY

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FRS Ngoni FRS
Marwi FRY

this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chinamwali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *nwinde* or *ungwe* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chinamwali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chawtinder*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

when the first white people arrived, as
traders and missionaries and officials, they were all impressed with 114
the power of the Ngoni Paramount Chief and the impossibility of [643]
getting any footing in the country without his consent and aid. 'Mpezeni[1] is a very powerful chief . . . and shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his governing powers. He has formed a powerful kingdom where his subjects are mainly Chewa, Chipeta and Senga stock, but his power is consolidated by a Zulu and half-Zulu aristocracy.' Such was the official view of the Ngoni state under old Mpezeni expressed by Sir Harry Johnston, and similar impressions are recorded of the Ngoni states in Nyasaland. If this was the European impression of Ngoni supremacy it is easy to picture the feelings of the Ngoni themselves with all their pride of race and of achievements in nation-holding, when for the first time a superior power [177] loomed on their horizon.

VII. The Advent of the Europeans. I have up to the present 101
referred to the three Ngoni areas as if they formed one cultural unit. This is true of their earliest days, and to a large extent of the time called *chamtendere*. In spite of certain minor differences there was then a form of society and of political organization which was the same in all three areas, and they all possessed the same language, traditions, and aristocratic hierarchy. After the advent of the Europeans, however, it 177
becomes impossible to generalize, as both the manner and the results 184
of white penetration varied so much in the three areas. As a study in culture contact where eye-witnesses, both white and black, are still available as informants, it is most illuminating to compare the effects of white contact in Mpezeni's and Mwambera's countries. In Mpezeni's the first contact was commercial, in Mwambera's, missionary. The contrast between Ngoni society in those two districts to-day is startling, and is commented on frequently by the Ngoni themselves. 'See', say Mpezeni's people, 'the Charterland Company came to us. To Mwambera's country it was Dr. Laws. And Dr. Laws's men can speak English to-day and we cannot. Our cattle were taken by the Europeans; Mwambera's were not. That is why they *lubola* their wives to-day with many cattle, and we have only a few cattle.' They often referred to these differences as soon as they knew I was going from

[1] This was the old Mpezeni, son of Zwangendaba.

177 one Ngoni area to another, and it is evident that they are well aware
184 that they met with different kinds of white contact. A frequent topic of discussion in villages is the differences between the administration of N. Rhodesia and of Nyasaland, as well as the policy and attitudes of the different missions.

177 There is, however, one common factor in the situation called culture contact, existing wherever the Ngoni meet any Europeans.
186 Like the Zulu, the Ngoni do not necessarily take kindly to white ways nor desire to make an extensive imitation of white culture. Their racial and cultural pride makes them cling to their own institutions and resent the assertion of white superiority in every sphere of life. This is evident in material culture as well as in the realm of political and social values. The Ngoni are well known for their skill in house-
[342] building, yet they prefer their own of poles and mud, and are slow to take to brick houses. Their houses, both in the villages and on the copper mines, were noticeably bare of ' store goods ', and their expenditure on clothes and ' trash ' is low in comparison with the wages earned. Their standards of hospitality, of courtesy, and of mutual assistance they believe to be much superior to the Europeans. They carried on their own system of courts by themselves until it was
[692] recognized by the Native Courts Ordinance a few years ago, and they speak with scorn of the chief who cannot decide his own cases and has to have recourse to the Boma. Several times in the villages, when describing their agricultural methods, or hygiene for young men, or moral training of children, they have said to me, ' Write that we knew this before the *Azungu* came '.

On one count they do concede superiority to the Europeans. 'Only
186 in war the *Azungu* knew better ', and that to the Ngoni was the acid
726 test. In Mpezeni's and Gomani's countries, where they were conquered by force of arms, they knew they had to yield as they had made others yield in their day. Yet even here they find a cause for pride. ' No one ever conquered us until the *Azungu* came, and no one will conquer us again until they first conquer the *Azungu*.' This I have had said to me many times by men when speaking of their experiences as carriers and as *askari* in the East African campaign. They add as explanation, ' We went to the war of the Germans because the Boma said we should go. But we wanted also to see if the English would

work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union. This exodus to the south in its turn brought the Ngoni into touch once more with the Matabele, the Zulu, and the Swazi, and reawakened their consciousness of their southern origin. It is significant that just at the point when their power in their own country received a crushing blow, they came into contact once more in the south with the stock from which they had sprung and to whom they could still speak in their own language. The anthropologist who looks for the reason why the distinctive Ngoni culture did not die out entirely after their military defeat and the advent of the whites, can see at least part of the reason supplied by the results of this economic exodus to work in the south. When the other tribes in the neighbourhood were, in the Ngoni phrase, 'running always to the Boma' and incidentally picking up fragments of European customs, the Ngoni remained, according to their own account, to a great extent aloof and were strengthened in this aloofness by their renewed southern connexions.

Ngoni supremacy over the country was at an end. The Europeans were the overlords of all the tribes, not the Ngoni. Instead of one big chief in the country, many small ones were now recognized who dared to give themselves airs because they knew the Ngoni could not compel allegiance to their Paramount. Chewa people living under Ngoni chiefs could no longer be forced to stay there, therefore a different attitude towards them was necessary. 'Chewa' could no longer be synonymous with 'slave'. I have heard Ngoni chiefs in court address their *indunas* and headmen many times on behaving well to people of other tribes 'Or they will leave us and to-day we cannot make them return'. A recent case in which a young chief, but a very important one, was summoned to the Paramount's court for insulting a Chewa woman, was made the occasion by the Paramount for a long public discourse on the present relations between Ngoni and Chewa, pointing out that an Ngoni chief whose Chewa subjects left him would 'spoil his country' and 'all his people would be ashamed'. Ngoni prestige, in fact, having lost the support of military power, had to rely on other sanctions. In their own eyes, their prestige was still due to their southern origin, their success in creating the Ngoni state in an alien milieu, and those distinctive institutions which they had retained. To the surrounding people, to the Chewa and other tribes,

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643]

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, ' because all his chiefs obey him ', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chamtendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, ' We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes '.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184]

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. ' To pay taxes, that is our war to-day ', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the mental adjustments necessary to white contact. They still resent 177
white intrusion and its results, economic, administrative, and mis- 609
sionary. At the same time many of them earnestly wish for a solution of the present tension, but towards such a solution there is no easy short cut.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS. Conclusions reached after the first period of 128
field work are generally given with a certain reserve, especially in a 121
complex field such as the Ngoni present. I think, however, that the conclusions in this paper can be stated with some certainty, and as dogmatic statements they form a basis for further field work. For they set the main problems for the detailed study of the Ngoni, and also of the Ngoni as a field for observing culture contact. In this article I hope that the three chief elements in the study have emerged, namely, the problem of Ngoni society as a cultural and political unit; the culture contact problems due to the contact, and part fusion, with local tribes; and the modern culture contact problems due to European penetration.

1. The Ngoni as a group must be regarded from two points of 101
view: those who ethnically have a right to be called Ngoni, who are members of recognized Ngoni clans, with an acknowledged southern origin; and all those who live in the territory of the Ngoni Paramount Chief, and call themselves his people. These last were incorporated into the Ngoni state by the first group, who are still the ruling aristocracy, but the incorporated people now share in Ngoni 'national sentiment' and have made certain sociological changes in order to conform to Ngoni culture. It is their southern origin and their well remembered traditions of the past which confer distinctiveness on the true Ngoni, and on the state which they built. It is to their past they also turn for the charter for those institutions which are recognized as distinctively Ngoni, such as the Paramount Chieftainship, the hierarchy of rank, and patrilineal succession. Their historical origin and military achievements form also the charter for their former position as rulers of the country which they held before the advent of the Europeans.

2. The Europeans in two of the Ngoni areas destroyed the unique 177
position of the Ngoni by defeating their armies. These armies had 178

177 hitherto been the chief sanction for Ngoni supremacy. With their
178 invincibility gone, the regiments broke up and the Ngoni military prestige was at an end. At the same time the direction of political affairs and the relations between the different tribes was assumed by a superior power. Ngoni political ascendancy and their control of economic organization was also at an end. The subject races of the Ngoni who had hitherto either been conquered or submitted voluntarily to the Ngoni had now an ally who was stronger than their former masters.

3. The new situation forced the Ngoni to make drastic readjust-
177 ments. They had to readjust themselves to new relations with other
178 tribes, and at the same time to the Europeans. In their contact with
186 the Chewa and other subject tribes they could no longer maintain the
648 social exclusiveness which had marked the distinction between Ngoni and slaves. There was therefore less actual resistance to culture fusion, though the dislike of adopting alien customs persisted. This dislike of alien customs was evident to some extent also in white contacts. The missionaries brought a new religion, western education, and western medicine. Other Europeans introduced land reserves, taxation, and working for wages. To the local tribes the European represented security as well as certain material benefits. To the Ngoni these material benefits appeared less welcome in the face of their defeat. There was therefore a psychological conflict set up among the Ngoni
178 —a malaise due to their military and political downfall, together with
181 their determination to preserve certain elements in their own culture.
182 That psychological conflict is evident everywhere to-day, and finds expression in all conversations which turn on the relations of the Ngoni to other tribes or to Europeans. To the persistence of that conflict is due the strength of Ngoni 'national feeling', which has directed the selective process by which some of their political, legal, and social institutions have survived the results of culture contact.

4. Conditions all over Africa are changing and new forms of social
178 and political organization are emerging due to the contact of the
648 Africans with European civilization. What place has the Ngoni state in this emergent African society? Are there still cultural realities in Ngoni society which should be preserved, and can the Ngoni political structure be galvanized into new life through the medium of Indirect

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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5. Girls dancing *Citelele* in competition with another village. The girl in the centre has a whistle in her mouth

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6. Young man drumming for a *Jimi Roja* dance at an installation ceremony. This dance, named after an American band leader, is allowed only on important occasions

NGONI

[Facing P. 224]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [848]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name *sulu* for a man becomes *swula* for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimalo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Council mentioned above spent some tweny years of his life in Johannesburg. Fort Jameson itself is not a sufficiently big town for this process to take place within it, and yet it is only in Fort Jameson or on the tobacco farms that a man can live with a leg in both camps, going home to the village at the week-ends and probably keeping his wife in the village during the wet season to tend her crop. 369 554

On the other hand, there is some rivalry between the traditional leaders and the comparatively prosperous townspeople. The well-clad and well-housed Ngoni of the township are sometimes described scornfully by village people as 'merely White'. There is a feeling that the leading African traders are trying to monopolize the economic opportunities in the villages. Recently the same prominent Ngoni businessman proposed that he should take over the delivery of mail to the Native Authorities, which he claimed he would be able to do more efficiently with a car than can the present postman on a bicycle. The Paramount Chief did not answer this proposal but wrote instead to the Administration to complain against the danger of one man being allowed to earn so much more than anyone else while there were so many people who needed money. At the same time, men whose lives are led principally in the towns complain that in the villages there is 'nothing but jungle', and that the chiefs are old-fashioned and obstructive. 369 578 177 [205] [493]

The Administration

The relationship between the Provincial Administration and the Ngoni is characteristically one of superordination and subordination. The District Officer can send for any Ngoni, but not even the Paramount Chief can send for the District Officer. This characteristic arises from two sources, from the premiss which we find held all over Southern Africa, that any White is superior to any Black, and from the supervisory role allotted to the Administration in the Native Authority scheme. These two facets of the same relationship are not always seen separately by the Ngoni, and in many contexts their behaviour towards the Administration is governed entirely by the fact that the District Officer and those above him are all White. Official reports by the Administration during the reign of Mpezeni II repeatedly remarked on the Paramount Chief's distrust of Whites, and this attitude still persists. Any kind of trouble at all, particularly when it is seen as a characteristic of the present times as opposed to the glorious trouble-free past of the days of peace, before the Whites 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tribe is represented to the Administration in the person of its chief, and the fact that it is through him that the Administration articulates with the tribe is realized by thinking people. In a wider sense, he represents the tribe to the White community as a whole. When I first started work in the area there were many formalities at my meetings with the Paramount Chief, so that I should understand the importance of his position. Mpezeni II is said never to have allowed a White to see him dancing, because of the mystical and social dangers involved. At a county meeting, held while the Paramount Chief was away in Livingstone, the court clerk reminded headmen that the month of May was approaching, and that he would soon be wanting people to hoe the Native Authority roads. When the time came, he did not want headmen to say they had no people. He continued: 'If the people do not obey the laws, then Mpezeni will not be well regarded by the Whites. Then when the Administration wants to make bad laws, Mpezeni will not protest, as he will want to punish his own people.' 648

If the chief is too attentive to the requirements of the Administration, then his standing with his own people is likely to suffer. A chief's court was once described as 'just a White court' because of its alleged bias in favour of the Administration's interpretation of native custom. On the other hand, this identification with the White Administration is not accepted by the chiefs and their advisers. In an adultery case, in which the husband did not want to divorce his wife but she refused to go back to him, Mpezeni, who was present, ordered the woman to return to her husband. A councillor asked the woman what she had to say. She said she loved the co-respondent. The councillor was annoyed, and asked her, 'Do you know who Mpezeni is?' The woman said, 'He 's a chief', using the usual word for chief, *mfumu*, current all over north-eastern Rhodesia. The councillor replied: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a chief, everyone is a chief nowadays.' The woman then said, 'He 's a White.' The councillor answered: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a White whose orders can be sometimes obeyed and sometimes ignored. Mpezeni is *nkhosi*, the great chief of the Ngoni, whose commands must always be carried out.' 643 554 177

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352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled
285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any
513 headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts
[179] and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

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412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of fur-
[325] naces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used,
[567] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid
493 wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the
[241] village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle,
[490] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of
411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about
224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

/9 cont'd/

294 the hunt walks in the middle of the line, with a responsible person posted on each flank. A started animal, if not shot by the guns, usually turns to run parallel to the line of hunters, who hurl spears and knobkerries at it, and send their dogs after it. The chances of escape for a hunted animal are fairly high. Animals are also trapped, usually with a piece of meat tied to the muzzle of a gun. Hunting with nets is sometimes undertaken in the wet season. Rats are caught in small conical traps baited with beans. The rat chews through a piece of string and releases a green stick, thereby strangling itself.

[714] Shields, once the pride of the Ngoni armies, are not carried on hunts and are infrequently seen.

VI

291 [177] It is only the old men who still wear skin garments, and then only as additions to European style clothing. Men are dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, long trousers, cast-off European clothing, or clothes brought back from the army. Often two shirts are worn on top of one another. Women wear a blouse, a skirt tied on a tape, a cloth wrapped round on top of the skirt, and a small cloth tied [854] round their waist. If carrying a baby, the cloth supporting the child is slung over the left and under the right shoulder, and another cloth may be wrapped round the woman and child under her armpits. Dresses are also worn, and sometimes a singlet under the blouse. Shoes are less common for women than for men. Men /10/ wear a [177] variety of European style hats, but women wear only embroidered cloths or berets, or in the case of poorer women, plain bands of cloth.

Children go naked, or may be draped in whatever garment, of whatever size, happens to be available. If the money is there to pay for them, boys are dressed in shorts and shirts, and girls in little dresses.

304 [178] In the old days, every adult had slit ears, but this custom has died out. Women nowadays pierce their ears if they wish, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a small slit made as a

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries.

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandom everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace.

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth fourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. When he listens in court to some great indaba his face is expressionless as granite, with an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had to

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

down at the chief's feet, and with a shout dashed up again and danced a furious war dance. His eyes fixed and staring with passion, every muscle distended, he stabbed into the air with his spear, tossed the dust of the kraal about, and leapt hither and thither in a frenzy of passion. All the while he kept shouting his battle-cry, and the thousands of fighting men around beat their spears and chanted a chorus. When he had exhausted himself, another headman leapt into the circle and went through his own peculiar wild dance, and then another and another, and for half-an-hour or more these fantastic exhibitions were maintained. Then the chief rose. A great roar of salutation greeted him. Gathering his clothes about him he walked in procession from the kraal, and the council broke up.

In the olden days the power of the chiefs was maintained by a wholesome dread of his warriors, and the laws were enforced with a consistent severity. One result of this is that the Ngoni tribe has always had a higher standard of morality than any Central Africa people. Some persons were stealing mission cattle and complaints were made to the chief. After a time a thief was caught, and then in spite of the pleadings of the missionary the highest penalty was meted out to him. He was hanged on a tree opposite the mission house, and it was forbidden to remove his body. The hyenas wore a path round the foot of the tree trying to get at the carcase, and there he hung, a terrible example to the neighbourhood, until the white ants ate the rope by which he hung, and the body fell to the waiting hyenas.

I have seen a chief receive news of the adultery of one of his wives, turn to his executioner, and give him instructions, and in a few minutes both man and woman were lying dead outside the village. I have myself begged for the life of a woman who had sinned, and she was spared only after a great fine in cattle was levied instead.

These were harsh and terrible punishments, necessary for rough times. And now when the chief is loosing some of his old authority, and dare not exercise capital punishment because of the overshadowing British Government, one fears that except where the power of religion has taken the place of the old dread, a weaker morality is apt to sap the vitality of the tribe. The punishments were not arbitrary. They were fixed by precedent. And all the past quarrels for forty or fifty years back would be quoted to prove the right of a plaintiff or defender. And now

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have 100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it must disappear. 595 [171]

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday, at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock. But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am satisfied the banns are published and they are married. 177 [582]

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages, for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth, and pay for his wife. 583

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed. 562 565

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. 462 [171] [243] [252]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

243 forest is cut down and burnt, and another garden cultivated, and so the country is rapidly being deforested. The crop is largely used to make a heady beer, and although Central Africa has been 213 happily saved from the curse of European liquor, the native beer is a great source of big drunken bouts. Heavy drinking, however, does not bring the evil effects that brandy drunkenness would entail. The drink is a nutritious and a very sustaining food. I know some of the old chiefs who are drunk almost every day of their lives by midday, yet they bear up wonderfully. But [579] these drunken bouts, when whole villages run riot, are the source of nearly all quarrels, adultery, bloodshed, and every outburst of passion. We have had to denounce the beer drinking as a menace [177] to the social order of the country, and for lack of the strong restraint of the British Government, which forbids the cutting down of trees, we have preached against the deforesting of the land as a wicked improvidence. The native church has, of its own initiative, taken up the question, and enjoined on the members total abstinence, and the preservation of the forests.

461 Three or four months labour are sufficient to provide a family with food for the year, and the sale of a sheep or a heifer will buy all the clothes the family requires. There is therefore little necessity to work, and the tendency is to spend the months lounging about the village, talking and trifling. Now, happily a more 177 industrious period is waking, and larger ambitions for cloth and 461 for stock, are drawing out the men to work. As a mission we insist on the duty of labour, we refuse church privileges to a man 797 if he cannot show that he has been engaged for some months each year at some labour centre doing honest work. No moral good is ever effected by pampering African pride and indolence, and one of the first lessons Christianity has to teach the native, is the dignity of labour, and the absolute necessity for the labourer to be industrious and honest in the discharge of his work. A penny a day is the ordinary wage we give a labourer, and even the great majority of my 220 teachers do not receive more than 1/6 a month.

171 Of course many of the Central Africans have industries of their own, smelting, basket making, cloth weaving, wire pulling, and so on. But the Ngoni were a handless people until they got a spear in their hand. Then they drew themselves up as men, and defied the universe. Yet this martial life had an ennobling effect on them. It is a curious thing to notice, and a fact which was

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

borne out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful 171
and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the
fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. [648]
The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a [177]
moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to
hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land
they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where
family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived
in an atmosphere that was charged with vice. But when the
Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were
punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited,
many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally
a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. 565
His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fear- 181
lessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your
privacy. I have heard the old men storm in a village because
some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a 576
superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in
whispers. When they address you they always give you your
family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each
sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at
the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a
long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that 574
the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come
out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly.
When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain
silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a
decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say,
"We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the
whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would
rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they
reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous
and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way,
and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interests and amusements. 692
During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in
open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual [537]
speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus
of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance 535
is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 challenge is sent from one group of villages to another. And on the day appointed the strangers arrive walking in procession. The girls and women are dressed in their gaudiest clothes, and their heads and arms are decked with bright coloured beads, and the claws of lions and leopards. The lads carry dancing sticks and miniature shields. The strangers open the dance. The girls standing together and holding reed wands in their hands sing in chorus, while the men arranged in a great semi-circle dance and sing. Their dance is wonderfully energetic and graceful, and is executed with a rythm and unison which is fascinating. You can hear a long way off the hundred feet come down on the earth of the kraal with a thud as of one man. When they have danced for about an hour they give way to their rivals. The home villagers step in and dance for another hour. And so on they go from ten o'clock till about four. There is no mingling of men and women. And the whole exercise is chaste, healthful, and beautiful. It is quite the show piece of our village life.

181 And now a few remarks in conclusion on their religious beliefs. I do not intend to say much on this point as one only can get at the inner meaning of their faith after long and careful investigation, and with a thorough knowledge of their language. Their religion 791 was not formulated. If you ask them about it they can tell you little or nothing. They will deny that they knew anything of God until we came. Their observances were scarcely recognised by themselves, they were the spontaneous and almost unconscious expression of a people groping after the unknown God if haply they might find Him. They recognise a spirit who presides over the universe.

796 They have a name for Him which means the great great one. But the ordinary name is the one which south of the Zambesi is used for all white men, and seems also to imply some feeling of wisdom and greatness. But they seem to have no idea of God's imminence in the world. He is rather the mighty far away Spirit to whom men cannot come. Along with this, homage is made to 791 great mountains and ancient trees, and to the strong elemental forces, as thunder and lightening. But this seems to me to be an addition which has come through their residence among the [797] Tumbuka.

769 The great pervading article in their religious life is reverence and dread of the ancestral spirits. The whole land is full of their presence. And offerings are continually made to them to appease

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity. [871]
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [825]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [753]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 782
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if [241]
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [726]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [243]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when [177]
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor [177]
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

787 rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned.
[177] Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment.
795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a
791 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancien successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities.
695 The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When
766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before
849 their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We
177 seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the
[643] only independent tribe is Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government.
[634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

they find dirt and untidiness compel the people to turn out and sweep the village, and rebuild their houses.

Education is spreading at a great rate, and there are fifty schools already established among the people with about 7,000 scholars in attendance. These pay fees for their attendance. And so great is the thirst for reading that last year more than 4,000 volumes were bought by the people.

A Christian church is rapidly growing up, and at certain religious seasons a great congregation of over 7,000 people may be seen gathered from all quarters.

Yet it would be a pity if with this inrush of new life the old tribal characteristics were lost in a wretched caricature of European methods. There is nothing more slovenly than a lithe athletic African dressed in European cast off clothing, or more repulsive than a lad trying to be an Englishman when he should be an Ngoni proud of his nationality. And this is one of the most serious problems that is constantly before us, to guide this people in their formative period, that in the end they may not be denationalised, and made hideous and ridiculous in a distorted and unnatural mould, to preserve all national customs which are not evil in themselves and yet evolve a people honest, industrous, intelligent, and Christian, who will have some harmonious and beautiful part to take when the world's orchestra is filling up to play its symphony of peace and prosperity.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually
[561] a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

173 Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had
631 obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local
[613] matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels
[627] between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division.
[621] He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other
[619] chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the
[701] regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[5]

178 The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women,
619 perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages
[619] disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential
[621] system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were,
[561] as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly alignments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organi-
[701] zation, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the
178 bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the
621 former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[5] Based on Bryant, *Olden times*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lived with their wives and children, and not all of which had royal headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Ngoni group with which we are most concerned, and within their regiments men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system.

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1775 the pattern of political alignment began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1810 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndandwe and Qwabe,[6] dominated the rest and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethewa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1821[8] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north-eastwards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Ngoni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[9] fighting with Nxaba, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All three parties raided the indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside their new masters.

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on farther north. He took with him his new Tsonga adherents and also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under

[6] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Atkins, 'Spelling Nyanja'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in its old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu.

[8] cf. Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 17, 71. Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1823 and Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 13, has 1823 or 1824. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 8, both have 1825. Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 272, says Zwangendaba left in 1829, while Cotthead, *Native tribes*, p. 20, says he left in the 1850's.

[9] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 161, 279, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

successive head of a major segment memorialized in this way, but the major divisions of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When splits occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fission had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fission in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fission we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[42] Fission in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fission was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fission did not bring into being any new segments, but merely dissolved the highest segment of all as a cohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fission was a hazardous

[42] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a *state* of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fission' to refer to the *process* of internal subdivision. cf. Fortes, *Web of kinship, passim*. I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later rejoined it peaceably, but other instances of fission were accompanied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Ciwele Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[43] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[44] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force. Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftainship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no mere secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[43] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 34.
[44] Stanley, *Livingstone*, p. 289, and *Dark Continent*, i, p. 499; Hatchell, 'Angoni', *passim*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[46] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
619 and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree
[597] of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[46] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[355] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[47]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[636] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-
[701] professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[47] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than were the groups further inland. However, the evidence suggests that no great changes of this kind took place among the Fort Jameson group under Mpezeni, and it is therefore with changes in the external environment of the State that we shall be chiefly concerned.

In this early period, between 1821 and about 1885, there was for most of the time a situation in which the forces attaching people to the State were stronger than those tending to split it. The age-set system, the web of affinal ties, the attachment of segment members to their lord, the reliance of a lord on the support of his dependants, and the external opposition of all non-Ngoni, these all held the State together. Shifts in the balance of power could be made without disrupting the State because the State was continually expanding, and expansion gave it flexibility. The weakest links in the State were at the top, and it was these that were most strained as the State grew in numbers and in degree of segmentation. Under critical conditions, as on the death of the Paramount Chief or when the need for food necessitated a move from one tribal site to another, these were the links that gave way and fresh independent States were formed. Fission in the State led to consolidation of ties in each divergent group, but the same processes leading to further fission began again at once.

During the period of migration the Ngoni flourished. They were successful brigands on the march. Yet they were brigands in a poor land, and despite their military successes their economy remained one of subsistence cultivation, even though others did some of the cultivation for them. They were well organized for war and their enemies were not, but both they and their enemies were poor people relying on shifting cultivation with a poor technology and with access to only moderately valuable natural resources. The hinterland of Africa provided the Ngoni with an area within which they could operate successfully, but this area was bounded by the lands of wealthier and mightier peoples. Towards the end of the century the boundaries of the area began to contract. The Ngoni found themselves in conflict not with subsistence cultivators using hoes and spears, but with peoples using writing and guns and possessing apparently limitless resources of cloth, beads and gunpowder. We now have to turn to the story of the Ngoni struggle with these Arab and European invaders.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Three

DEFEAT

1. Structural change 2. Portugal or Britain 3. Concession hunters 4. European consolidation 5. Friction 6. Fighting 7. Cattle 8. The end of a system

1. *Structural change*

178 619 64 THE STRUGGLES of the Ngoni during the middle of the nineteenth century were with groups of roughly the same character as themselves. The processes at work in the Ngoni social system were in the main repetitive. The State grew in size, split, and grew again, but it was still largely the same kind of State as before. Even though there were important differences between the Ngoni and their opponents, particularly after 1835, those whom they encountered were sufficiently like themselves to be absorbed into the system without difficulty. In the nomenclature of Radcliffe-Brown and the Wilsons, there was social circulation in the Ngoni State but little change in its structural form.[1] For this reason we have been concerned in our analysis so far with but few of the historical details of that period, and have dealt with history only in an abstract and generalized form. Many of the inconsistencies between various versions of the tribal legend have not been [114] significant. For example, Chief Ciwele Ndhlovu of Dowa broke off from the main body of Ngoni, according to some writers before, and according to others after, the split between Mpezeni and Mwambera.[2] It does not matter for our particular purpose which of these versions is correct, for we are here concerned only to establish that from time to time senior lieutenants did split off with their segments to form independent chiefdoms. This process, of which Ciwele's secession is an example, was essentially the same before and after the Mpezeni-Mwambera split.

648 178 121 After 1880 Ngoni history entered a new phase, and social processes began to operate which were not repetitive. Changes began to occur in the form of the Ngoni social field, for instead of interacting with groups similar to themselves, the Ngoni became involved in a much wider network of social relations. This change

[1] Radcliffe-Brown, 'On social structure', p. 4; Wilson, *Social change*, p. 58.
[2] cf. Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 32-3; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 18; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of scale,[8] as we may call it, was accompanied by major changes not only in the positions occupied by individuals in Ngoni society but also in the form of Ngoni society itself. We have to analyse at this stage a non-repetitive process, by which the autonomous Ngoni state, organized by a segmentary residential system and an age-set system, was changed into a dependent unit in a system of Native Authorities forming part of a world-wide colonial empire. For this reason the details of the process are worth noting, for in Ngoni history they are unique and largely determine the form of modern Ngoni society. Having established this significant sequence of events, we are then in a position to look at the same set of facts in a wider context. For what is unique and non-repetitive for the Ngoni may be repetitive in a wider context. The Ngoni are only one tribe among a myriad of tribes, and what happened to them has also happened to many others. Similar sequences of events, each unique for the particular tribe concerned, have occurred throughout the world at various periods of time whenever small autonomous systems have been absorbed into large and more highly resourceful ones. We can therefore look at Ngoni history from 1880 onwards as either unique, from the point of view of the Ngoni, or as typical, or at least probably typical, of a repetitive process which has often occurred in the development of any empire.

Conveniently, at least some of the facts can be ascertained with reasonable certainty. We are no longer dependent only on oral tradition, but can refer to contemporary documents. These reflect in the main only the European side of Black-White relations, but even so their testimony is enlightening. I have therefore set out in full the history, mainly of external relations, of the Fort Jameson Ngoni from 1886 down to 1900 both with the intention of throwing light on how the transition was made from pre-conquest to modern society in this particular tribal instance, and also as an example of what seems probably an oft-repeated process in the history of any empire. A discussion of how typical the Ngoni experience is would take us beyond the bounds of this book. We should, however, bear in mind that the newer comparative method, as developed by Radcliffe-Brown and his followers, is as applicable to mammoth social forms, such as empires, as to small ones such as hordes, provided only that the right kind of data are available.

Our detailed documentation should extend down to modern times, but after 1900 there was a change in the kind of events that were documented, related as we shall see to a change in social relations, and we have to proceed somewhat differently.

[8] For the concept of scale, see Wilson, *Social change*, pp. 25 *ff*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231 439 648 727 Manning stipulated that cattle handed back to the Ngoni should not be sold, to prevent traders bartering cattle for gunpowder.[123] Nevertheless the majority of the cattle remaining in or returned to Ngoni hands were sold within two years. In April 1898 over 14,000 head of cattle were counted.[124] Whether or not all these were in Ngoni ownership at the time is not clear, although the North Charterland implied in a letter written in 1899 that at least 12,000 belonged to Ngoni.[125] During the next year or so, in spite of Administrative opposition, many thousands of cattle were sold to traders or killed. By 31 March 1900 only 1,224 remained.[126] [177] Thus another of the systems of social relationships, those mediated through cattle, which had sustained the old social order, was undermined.

8. *The end of a system*

178 648 Thus ended the Ngoni war and with it the Ngoni State. In the last twelve years of its existence, from 1886 to 1898, three struggles were proceeding simultaneously in linked regions of social space. First there were the traditional processes already described by which Ngoni killed and recruited their neighbours and by which cleavages between segments of their residential system widened and altered with time. Second there was the struggle between Portugal, Great Britain and, peripherally, Germany for the political control of south-central Africa. Third there was a struggle between [439] different groups of financiers in London for the control of the rich economic resources which they believed, quite mistakenly as far as we can now tell, lay waiting to be discovered in Mpezeni's country and round about. Apart from these three major fields of activity, there were two others which affected this particular area to a lesser degree. There were the traders and adventurers like Wiese (until 1896), Matakenya and the Arabs who competed with one another and endeavoured to exploit the region in terms of ivory, gunpowder and slaves. There were also the various missions, [799] representing the interests of their co-religionists and anti-slavery enthusiasts in Europe, competing with each other and with the slave traders for local control. There was even a scheme for colonizing Mpezeni's country with Christian laymen from Britain.[127] All these social fields were interwoven in reality, but in analysis

[123] 207; 208, fo. 15; 233.
[124] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[125] 230, p. 69. Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 393, implies that all the 14,000 belonged to Ngoni.
[126] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[127] 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

our task is to separate them out. Yet even in analysis we have to show how each field interlocks with the other two, how events in one field set up movements in others. [178] [648]

The material apparatus used in the various fields was distinct. The traditional processes were decided ultimately by resort to spears and shields. Portugal and Britain fought with artillery, embargoes, customs dues and treaties. The North Charterland fought its rivals with concessions, certificates of claim and share capital.[188] Mpezeni, who knew how to fight with spears, was asked to sign pieces of paper which would then be negotiable in a property system of which he knew nothing, and the manipulators of which knew little of him. The treaty-collectors imagined a patchwork of stationary chiefdoms spread over the region, each with a chief powerful enough to sell his country, whereas in fact there was only an unstable series of groups of shifting cultivators, each liable to attack from the migrating Ngoni. [639] [648]

Yet despite the differences in technique and despite the lack of knowledge of each other's systems of government, the various groups involved continued to pursue their own ends as best they could. Mpezeni may not have known what a flag was, yet the issue between Portugal and Britain was decided, and decided in Lisbon rather than in Ngoniland. The treaties may have been made beyond the competence, and the understanding, of the chiefs who signed them, and yet the B.S.A. Company did gain control of the country. Mpezeni never made his mark on a document, yet the North Charterland acquired its ten thousand square miles of land. On the other hand, the Ngoni regiments tried to win another battle like the others they had won before, and this time they failed. In consequence of the war of 1898 there was a revolution, a change of structural form, in Ngoni society, whereas in the histories of Portugal and Britain, and even of the B.S.A. Company, the event passed almost unnoticed. [721] [669]

In northern Nyasaland an analogous process of incorporation within a wider system was taking place. Here also there was an intruding European group and the same distant interest of the Nyasaland Administration. Yet in many ways the chain of events in northern Nyasaland was simpler than at Fort Jameson. In the north, there was only one set of resident Whites, the Livingstonia missionaries, there was no Wiese willing to play for both sides at once, and there was no North Charterland. In consequence the [797]

[188] cf. Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, p. 24: 'Swazi were subjugated through concessions, a type of economic warfare eventually sanctioned by powerful European governments.'

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 relationship between Ngoni and Europeans was of a somewhat
648 different kind, and one of its most interesting features was an attempt by the Ngoni, persisted in for many years, to establish a monopoly over the missionaries, at the expense of another tribe with whom they were at war.[129] In Fort Jameson the social field was more complex. One of Mpezeni's sons tried to sell ivory to Wiese illegally without his father's knowledge,[130] and we may look on this as an attempt to establish a relationship with him differentiated from the wider relationship between Wiese and the Ngoni as a whole, or perhaps as an attempt on Wiese's part to penetrate Ngoni society along its lines of structural cleavage. His and Deare's support for a candidate for the heirship was similar in intention.
[661] Mpezeni's efforts to gain support from Kotakota against his people was a more noticeable attempt to utilize the power of the Whites in his own sectional interest. Similarly the readiness with which raided chiefs made treaties was certainly related to their weak position in relation to the Ngoni and their hope of support against them. Even with the traders, as distinct from the treaty-collectors, this consideration was relevant. Deare relates how he asked Mpezeni to prevent raiding near the North Charterland supply route which passed through Undi's country. When later he visited Undi, he was welcomed for stopping the raids and was given ivory. Thus although at Fort Jameson no one group had a monopoly of access to the Europeans, there were these attempts to establish specific relations with them to the advantage of the different groups concerned.

For as soon as two groups are brought into contact, and for
[178] some reason neither group annihilates the other, there is a change in the structure of the social field in which they act. Life can no longer go on as before, for every man has new potential allies and new potential enemies. There is no established order to which appeal can be made, for a new order has to be created. A new set of alignments, a new social structure, emerges from the manoeuvring and intriguing of the transition period which must differ from the old because of the new interests and new relationships which it contains.

Thus Europeans discriminated between one African group and another. Similarly the Ngoni established different relations with different European groups. From the beginning it was clear that the Portuguese and the British were to be distinguished, and Mpezeni preferred the inaction of the former to the efficiency of

[129] cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 97, 129, 237 and 245.
[130] Wiese, 'Expedição', x, pp. 491-2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10.
578 Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant
648 of segment 4, and Kamzembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional
668 governor in segment 10.[132] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[133] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour
[721] peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell
[178] their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs
439 traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid
648 Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with
567 Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[134] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[132] 187, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[133] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[134] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 law and order. In this, not only the Ngoni were concerned. There
464 was a shortage of labour in Nyasaland and Mpezeni's raids pre-
648 vented labourers reaching that country from the interior. The campaign against Mwase in 1895 was undertaken partly with the aim of opening up labour routes and Mpezeni's defeat carried this a stage further. The Collector at Kotakota wrote shortly after the war: 'It is quite safe to say that no greater assistance has been given to these districts (and in fact to the Protectorate) than this opening up of the Luapula Valley by the conquest of Mpezeni.'[126] Yet the Luapula is 350 miles from Fort Jameson. Even Ngoni technical skill in fighting was of value to the new conquerors, for within six
[167] months of the war Ngoni fighting men were in Southern Rhodesia, not as allies of the Ndebele but as part of the British South Africa Police. Within ten months, the headquarters of segment 13 had been moved to make way for the new Administrative capital. With the defeat of Mpezeni, North-Eastern Rhodesia became a country.

178 A final point requires explication. Granted that the Ngoni social system had to change in this new complex social environment,
361 and granted also that their activities, in particular raiding, had to
648 be adapted to new demands on their labour, why did not the Ngoni continue to live in large villages as they had done hitherto? There are numerous analogies in Africa where segmentary social systems have been fitted into an Administrative framework, and where raiding has given way to migrant labour, and yet the pattern of settlement has remained the same. Why did the big Ngoni villages disappear after 1898?

Part of the answer to this question can be stated in ecological terms. In pre-conquest times, the dense population, human and bovine, the great stretches of cultivated land, and the manifest prosperity of the people impressed themselves vividly on contemporary observers accustomed to the scattered settlements of the surrounding tribes. Angus writes:

> 'Before us lay an undulating valley some miles in breadth, which, as the heavily timbered hills on either side proclaimed, had once been covered with forest, but was now denuded of every vestige of a tree. Village after village surrounded by waving cornfields, and green plains dotted with herds of cattle, stretched away into the distance. Never before in any of my African wanderings had I seen such an extent of land under cultivation; the cornfields seemed unending, and the size and number of the

[126] *B.C.A.G.*, v, 6 (30 April 1898), p. 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[127] 178 361 648

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfinsi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[128] [134] [311] [231]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared. [241] [177]

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[129] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[140] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers 161 [131] [311]

[127] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78.
[128] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[129] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 3 (26 February 1898), p. 1.
[140] Angus, 'Northern Angoliland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

161 such as Sharpe, Thomson and Deare, and with my own information based on village histories. Combining this with the lowest estimate of population, we arrive at a population density of 100 persons to the square mile, while the highest estimate implies a density of 375. Highly unreliable as these figures are, it is clear that the density of population was considerably greater before the conquest than it is now, when it averages about 68 persons to the square mile. Even the present-day figure is nearly three times the density which the land can sustain in perpetuity.

This dense population was concentrated in large villages. 361 Angus estimated that there were at least a thousand huts in Loan-162 geni, while Deare estimated that there were sixteen hundred. Read states that it was over three miles across, while Genthe says that Ngoni villages were about five times the size of the average Cewa village. From the top of a mountain, Deare saw eleven villages all about the same size as Loangeni.[141] Thus it seems that there were several villages with populations of the order of three thousand. If Deare and Johnston are right in their estimates of tribal population the majority of the people lived in these big villages.

Yet by September 1898 the only villages left in Mpezeni's country were a few to the east of Fort Young. All the rest had been destroyed by troops, and their former inhabitants were said to be 'still timid' and living in scattered groups in grass shelters.[142] The large pre-conquest settlements were particularly vulnerable to attack by troops armed with guns and intent on burning, the more so because there were no defensive preparations at all. Glave wrote in 1894 that the Ngoni 'have no stockaded village, such protection they deem unnecessary as no enemy can be strong enough to attack them'.[143]

The large villages and the high density of population were appropriate only to a victorious military society, relying for at least part of its subsistence on raided crops and beasts produced outside its borders and for the rest on the maximum exploitation of the land [727] inside them. When its enemies had been plundered and its own [169] lands exhausted, it moved on. We can infer from Angus and from Sharpe, who wrote of 'entirely open' country,[144] that within the 178 settled area most of the cultivable land was in use at the same time. 311 Yet in many parts of the Fort Jameson area the soil is now exhausted after five years under maize and must be left for twenty-five years

[141] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 11 May; Read, 'Tradition', p. 475, f.n. 2; Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1.
[142] Selby, memorandum dated 10 March 1901.
[143] B6, fo. 329.
[144] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyasa', p. 745. For Angus, see pp. 102*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to recover under bush fallow. The long-term carrying capacity of the land before the conquest cannot have been much greater than its present average value of 25 persons to the square mile.[146] Thus it is certain that in pre-conquest times the Ngoni were settled at a density even more in excess of the critical value than it is now, despite alienation. There cannot have been much cultivable land in reserve and the State was exhausting the wealth of its own soil as well as drawing on the resources of its neighbours. Thus even if the large villages had not been burnt, the same number of people could not for long have continued to live in them practising subsistence agriculture. A reduction in the density of population necessarily involved under this economy a reduction in the size of villages, for Ngoni do not like to live more than an hour's walk from their gardens. As it was, the villages were burnt, many Ngoni of Cewa origin left Ngoniland, and much of the more densely settled land, carrying up to 140 persons to the square mile, was alienated to Europeans within six years of the war.[146] The arrangement of persons over the land and the activities they carried on were both dramatically altered by the European conquest. It is, therefore, not surprising that the old society was so drastically changed at the same time. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as we shall see, the forms of grouping of the past have influenced the forms of the new society.

In brief, the old political system was a system of segments, the new one is a system of villages and counties. The county segment links the two systems, but there is no function in the new order for segments embracing several counties or for those that embrace only part of a county. Within the village, the segmentary processes still go on, but at this level of organization we are dealing with kinship rather than politics. When a segment grows beyond the bounds of a single village, it begins to fade away, and we are left with a network of ties which link villages with one another but which do not define mutually exclusive groups as existed in pre-conquest times. The uncertainty about how counties should be divided internally is an indication of the lack of function of these intermediate segments. For some purposes, such as the organization of royal hunts, a county is divided into a number of rural districts. These are geographically defined areas, and it is sometimes possible to say that such-and-such a man, usually a senior lieutenant of the county segment, is the most important person in such-and-such a rural area. However, the recognizable rural districts in a county do not

[146] Allan, *Land Usage*, pp. 16-17.
[146] *N.E.R.G.G.*, ii, 2 (15 March 1904), p. 34.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Relative status of Chiefs*

178 There was nothing inherent in the residential system which
631 facilitated the emergence of twelve, and only twelve, counties from
634 Mpezeni's people. Each major segment already had a large number
648 of lesser segments within it in 1898, and it was during the unsettled years that followed the conquest, when new schemes of organization were tried out, when fresh occupants were sought for existing posts, and when the spatial distribution of people was being radically altered, that these twelve gradually emerged. Considerations of size do not seem to have been very important, for there is a wide variation in the size of counties. However, with the development of the Native Authority and Native Court, there is an upper limit to
[692] the size of the county which can be served adequately by a single court and possibly by a single minor chief, and this shows itself in the moves towards forming sub-counties within one or two of the larger ones. Yet in view of administrative attempts to do away with certain chiefs, it seems that in its eyes the Ngoni have too many rather than too few chiefs. The order of segmentation is not critical, as we have seen. Nor has there been merely an ossification of the formal structure as it was at the moment of conquest, as is often the case when a fluid society is suddenly put into a rigid mould. Wiese in 1891 wrote that Ngoniland was divided into four districts.[30] In our terms, these were as follows:

(*a*) Primal segment 11.
(*b*) Primal segment 14.
(*c*) Residual segment 10 after 14 was formed.
(*d*) Residual segment 4 after 10 and 11 were formed.

Of these four districts, the first has given rise to two counties, 11 and 16; the second to two, 14 and 17; the third to three, 10, 13 and 15; and the fourth to three, 4, 9 and 12. Wiese does not indicate in what districts he would place segments 5 and 6.

The fortuitous manner in which the counties have emerged is illustrated by the fact that for certain purposes one of the counties is treated as if it were two. At one time, when there were more administrative divisions than there are now, it was divided into two
[651] areas, and this arrangement still persists for tax collection. Other counties have only one tax register book each, but this one has two.

In genealogical terms also, the emergence of the twelve chiefs appears to have been fortuitous. For example, the second wife of
[643] Mpezeni I in segment 10, after the formation of segments 14 and 15,

[30] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after Nsingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important segment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16.

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kupili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief.

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units*

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1930 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 reserves were amended, and as existing gardens were exhausted.
634 Movement of this kind did not greatly affect political allegiance, so
178 that not all the villages acknowledging the control of a minor chief were built in his vicinity. Coxhead mentions seven defined territorial units in 1914, but by the time I began fieldwork in 1946 their boundaries had been forgotten.[21] Most of the villages in any one county were clustered together, with the capital village and the chief's village somewhere in the middle of the cluster, but there were also more distant villages situated among those belonging to other counties. The next stage of development appears to have been the definition of county boundaries, so that by 1946 it was possible to speak of some villages as situated in one county and owing allegiance to another. Most of these interloping villages, as we may call them, belonged to the segment of the county to which they owed allegiance. They were a bone of contention between chiefs, for although each chief desires as many villages as possible
[311] under his control, he has only a limited amount of land in his county with which to satisfy his people. An analogous situation is found in some Welsh sheep farms, where each farmer likes to own as many sheep as possible but hopes they will graze on someone else's land. The chief in political control of an interloping village endeavoured to maintain his control at a distance and at the same time to make use of the land in the local chief's county, while the latter had to decide between trying to make the interloping village shift its allegiance so as to increase his own following and trying to get it to move away so as to give his people more land. In 1947 and 1948,
[648] to avoid such difficulties between chiefs, the Administration defined county boundaries precisely and insisted that all villages within the area of a county should be under the control of the county chief.

Thus, in the development of the county as a social group, ties
631 of segmentary affiliation have been gradually replaced by those of
634 territorial propinquity. This replacement is not yet complete, nor
648 has it arisen merely as a consequence of Administrative action in
178 the last few years. Village histories show that in many instances a village changed from attachment to the head of its major segment to attachment to the local county chief many years ago and without prompting from the Administration. Villagers marry their neigh-
[582] bours irrespective of county affiliation and thus build up ties which link them to the local county. It may be inconvenient to walk a long way to the court and county meetings of a distant chief, particularly if the local chief appears to listen more readily to his people's complaints and advice.

[21] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22, 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [861]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 621 648 [601] agnation of the small segments to what I have termed an omni-directional system), has increased the importance of the single village. After 1898 the Administration endeavoured to bring the people back into villages of moderate size which could be easily supervised by the Administration acting through chiefs.[22] In 1912 a comprehensive scheme of Native reserves was proposed. To facilitate the introduction of the scheme, many small villages were amalgamated with others near by to form units of forty huts or more. The larger groups of composite villages were to form the nuclei of the reserves.[23] After 1930, when villages began to spread out again, many of the enforced amalgamations came to an end. The Administrative rules that every man must live in a recognized village and that a village with less than ten tax-paying men could not be recognized were not always enforced, although they were not repealed until 1945. Administrative recognition has been an important consideration in determining the size of villages but it has not been the only one.

621 631 178 In the residential system, the process of segmentation did not stop with the founding of the segments we now know as county segments. Already in 1898 there were very many more segments in being than the few we have shown in Diagram 1. There we have indicated the position of the major branches of the tree of State but have omitted the hundreds of minor limbs and thousands of twigs which made up the whole. Even if we restrict our attention to segments founded before 1898 we find within any county segment to-day many smaller groups, some of them divisions, others single villages, and a few containing several villages, which are in fact inferior segments formed by one or other of the processes we discussed in Chapter I. Lieutenants and others have made their own segments, junior sons have left their natal villages, and so on. The processes of segment formation since 1898 have not been identical with those prevailing before the conquest, for the quasi-agnatic structure of segments has been modified and segments of recent formation, if in fact we can legitimately call them segments at all, are not organized in the same hierarchical manner as in the old residential system. We shall discuss the formation of small social groups in a later part of our study, the analysis of village life. 178 Here, at the county level, we have to deal with what is essentially a 634 continuation of a pre-conquest process. Each successive head of a county segment, i.e. each county chief, has formed his own new 622 segment within that of his predecessor. Thus, for instance, where

[22] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902, p. 2, and 1903, p. 2.
[23] *M.R.A.*, p. 108.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's villages*, as I have defined them elsewhere.[24] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[24] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the same processes we have seen at work in the formation of segments. Those villages are linked which have a common origin, and the mechanism of dispersal is still the same as in pre-conquest times. Sons of a headman still break out of their natal village and lieutenants and others move off to make their own villages. However, with the decline in polygyny, fewer new villages arise from the formation of new bands of wives by a headman.

Secondly, the village has become more important than before, and village membership is now critical in a wide variety of situations. Thirdly, because it has become easier to move from one village to another than to form a new village, the genealogical structure of the village has become highly diversified as compared with segments of similar size in the old system.

Thus, the transition has been from a State based on a continuously segmenting political system to a minor unit of administration in a modern State. The new order has grown out of the old, not as the result of any professed policy of preserving indigenous forms of political organization, but because the aims of the Administration were essentially conservative, because it was concerned with preserving order in the country as cheaply as possible and did not wish to introduce economic and political changes which would conflict with the supply of labour to other areas scheduled for earlier development; and because for the most part those individuals who occupied powerful positions in the old régime were best able to survive in the struggle for power which determined the eventual form of the new. Therefore, although their entry into the colonial empire was so much more abrupt than that of their matrilineal neighbours, the political system to which Ngoni are now subject bears many more superficial similarities to its former condition than is the case among the Cewa and others. The changes have been great, as we have seen, but the symbols and names remain, with changed significance, to remind Ngoni of their past.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market.

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area.

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

guish them from their neighbours are no more significant than the many varieties of custom and belief which are to be found in every Ngoni village. They do not form a group among themselves, their members participate in all communal activities in their counties and are to be found at all levels of the Native Authority organization below that of chief. They are linked by kinship to their neighbours. The two Nyasaland counties, however, include relatively large areas where there are only Cewa-speaking villages, and many of these claim that they have been placed under Ngoni rule only by Administrative action. From time to time they have made efforts to break away and to attach themselves to some neighbouring Cewa chief or to establish a separate chiefdom. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the Ngoni chiefs, with the villages in their county segments, and their Cewa-speaking subjects. It will be remembered that the two Nyasaland chiefdoms represent the head of the eastern movement of Mpezeni's group, and that some of the settlement across the border took place as late as 1897. It is not surprising therefore that in these two counties assimilation of Cewa captives and immigrants has not proceeded so far as in the longer established counties in Northern Rhodesia.

11. *Conclusion*

In this study we have attempted to show what has happened in Ngoni political life during a period of 130 years. To-day Ngoni society is changing but this has not always been so. Prior to the arrival of Wiese in 1886, the actually existing social relations were changing, but the form of the social structure remained the same. Each new segment developed along lines that were already known and each time the State split, the new States were copies of the old. A system of this kind could not have lasted for long, for the supply of new recruits to the Ngoni States must have sooner or later been exhausted. In Africa, even if the overall conditions facilitated the emergence of this kind of migratory militarism, they were particularly unfavourable for its prolonged continuation. The Arabs and the European Powers behind them were closing in on the centre of Africa, and Ngoni days were numbered. Then came the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898 and the emergence of a new system, in which some of the actually existing political groups, and the relations between them, appear to have a much greater stability than before. But at the same time society as a whole has become much more diversified, the spatial distribution of men and women in significant relationship with one another has become highly complicated, and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 new external factors are operating. There has been a change in the
631 scale of social relationships, and Ngoni men and women form part of a large-scale society in which events in one distant part of the system affect events in another part. The history and analysis of this change lies largely outside the scope of this study, and we have restricted ourselves to the way in which the political system of the tribe has adapted itself and been adapted in the changing society.
[64] The Ngoni sovereign State has become more and more like a rural district council in a backward area; foreign policy has given place
[557] to Native policy; social mobility has been restricted to the lowest caste in a plural society; and the great warrior chief has become in effect the only member of the Administration who never goes home
[643] to Britain on leave. But in the eyes of his people, the Paramount Chief still belongs to the Ngoni, and not to the Administration.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in the political organization. Some of these officials were also members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but many were not. The officials served the Paramount in his court and his administration, and also the chiefs, and formed the lines of communication between them. This created a network of relationships between the Paramount and the chiefs at the top level, and between the chiefs and the village headmen under them at the lower level. From this network were excluded, in the northern kingdom, all the *alumuzana* and, in the central kingdom, all those *alumuzana* who were not chiefs. In the two kingdoms the *alumuzana* exercised unofficial control over a varying number of villages, and were inclined to assert their social superiority because they were excluded from official recognition.

The foundations of the political structure within which the ruling aristocracy operated were a series of related institutions which will be described and analysed later in the book, but which must be referred to here, partly in order to explain the terminology used. The South-eastern Bantu, whose culture the Ngoni brought with them, had an institution in all important villages known as 'houses', which was a grouping of huts and of the wives owning them round the hut of one or more of the leading women. This institution, with its variations among the southern and northern Nguni people, was described by Mrs. Hoernlé in the chapter on 'Social Organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*.[1] The Ngoni institution of houses had developed from the basic pattern among the South-eastern Bantu into an independent form. In the first place it was only found in relation to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading men of the royal clan, and the *alumuzana*. It did not, as in South Africa, form the basic pattern of all villages in the Ngoni kingdoms. Where, as in most villages owned by *alumuzana*, mixed ethnic groups lived together, the house system existed only for the head of the clan, his brothers and his successor. It was specifically an Ngoni institution in the cultural and social sense. In the second place, the terms 'right-hand' and 'left-hand' house, common among the South-eastern Bantu, were not used by the Ngoni in the 1930's. The two terms they used were the 'big house' and the '*gogo* house', and I propose to use these terms here. The principle behind the use of these terms was that the big house was the one from which the heir should come to succeed the Paramount, the chief, or the *mulumuzana*. The *gogo* house was the one which was responsible for maintaining tradition and performing ritual.

Another institution, closely related to that of the houses, was the *luzungulu* and *gogo* villages. The Paramounts, the chiefs, and the leading *alumuzana*, when they succeeded their father after his death, moved out of his village and made their own new village, or took their households

[1] Schapera, I. (ed.). *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*. Routledge, 1937, chap. IV.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

In the 1930's, in the villages of the *ahumuzana*, individuals with the same clan name formed patrilineal groups of an extended family type. The original *ahumuzana* were the leaders of groups of persons bearing their clan descent name, who crossed the Zambesi under Zwangendaba or Mputa. In Part II we shall see how these *ahumuzana* were settled in the Ngoni kingdoms round the royal villages, with the result that a group of villages of mixed ethnic origin came to be associated with the village regarded as the head village of a clan. Reference is made from time to time in this study to clan heads, and to the head villages of certain clans. There was no head of a Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan who was not regarded as a *mulumuzana*. On the ground that his ancestor crossed the Zambesi with his wives and followers, the head of such a clan was always given that title. In addition to the head village of a *muhumuzana* there were a number of other villages connected with the clan, created partly by the working of the *lusungulu* system of village segmentation, and partly by other sections of the larger villages moving off to make new gardens. The association of a number of villages owned by individuals with the same descent name was due to the original settlement of the *ahumuzana* who were given land at varying distances from the royal village. When the Ngoni spoke of 'clan areas' this was the connotation they gave to the term. Village censuses showed that small family groups bearing the same descent name were scattered widely over a number of villages in several of the chiefs' areas. There was, however, in connexion with each clan an area of concentration round the head village where a number of families and individuals with that descent name were living. These were sometimes referred to as clan areas, using the name of the clan with the prefix *ma*, meaning the people of that clan, in central Ngoniland, and with the prefix *u*, meaning the land of the clan, in the northern kingdom.

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(*c*) *The ritual pattern*

In the rest of this study there will be descriptions and analyses of Ngoni marriage and funeral rites, of the puberty rites carried out for each boy and girl, but not in groups in initiation schools, and of the rituals associated with the ownership of cattle and with the ancestor cult. The marriage and funeral rites have South-eastern Bantu affinities, and so has the ritual associated with cattle-keeping and the ancestor cult. The northern Ngoni had a tradition that circumcision was practised among them when they left Natal, and that it was given up while they were in Tanganyika. Giving the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) to the men who were allowed to leave the regiments and settle as married men in civilian life was another ritual of southern origin which the Ngoni gave up soon after the kingdoms were established in Nyasaland.[1] The

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[1] The early Europeans in Nyasaland reported that head-rings were worn by all the senior Ngoni men.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all
178 the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment
535 of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well pre-
301 served by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or
126 Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom
192 were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used
197 in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to
[194] make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

171 The distinctiveness of Ngoni institutions, so often emphasized by the older men and by the early travellers in Nyasaland, was due to cultural affinities with the South-eastern Bantu. The attached table sets out those social and cultural elements in the Ngoni kingdoms which were most distinct from parallel features among the neighbouring peoples, and which had obvious affinity with South-eastern Bantu cultures. The main Ngoni cultural elements have already been referred to in this chapter and will be further discussed in the rest of this study. The corresponding elements among the local peoples are based partly on the [127] earlier sources quoted by Tew and partly on local informants and my 114] own observations. In collecting information about clans, the *mbumba* group consisting of a man with his sisters' children, and the girls' initiation schools, I had no direct contacts with any except Cewa sources.

Variations in cultural conformity among the Ngoni

178 In the Ngoni kingdoms among families with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names there was considerable variation in the degree to 184 which they maintained Ngoni institutions and practised Ngoni cultural forms. The anthropologist was constantly aware that the time element was an important factor in the consolidation of Ngoni practices and in the attitudes developed towards Ngoni culture among the individuals in the different generations. The Ngoni in both kingdoms spoke of the 'older generations' (*mibadwo wa kale*), 'the middle generations' (*mibadwo wa mpkati*), and 'the present generation' (*mibadwo wa tsopano*). The first had grown to adulthood before the Europeans came, and were the older senior men and women in the 1930's; the second had been affected by [172] European missionaries, traders, and officials while they were young men and women; the third had never known anything but European contacts and many had grown up in European schools. The senior Ngoni of the [18] older generation often expressed the sentiment: *zatha zonse tsopano* (everything is finished now). They included in that saying the regrets of the older Ngoni for their former independence, and their resentment at the domination of European rule and European culture. It is idle to 177 speculate what cultural changes might have taken place in the Ngoni 178 kingdoms if European influence had been postponed another twenty to thirty years. Nevertheless it is a vital factor in assessing Ngoni culture that the kingdoms had barely twenty years of independent existence before the Europeans began to penetrate Nyasaland. The older Ngoni [181] looked back on their former independent existence as a golden age in which they were spreading Ngoni customs and culture as well as exercising political supremacy. It is difficult to believe that this was wholly true, in view of the extensive cultural interchange going on in the country as a whole. It is, however, possible that wider acceptance of Ngoni cultural elements was prevented by the advent of the Europeans, in so far as cultural institutions and political dominance were closely

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

associated. When warfare ceased the Ngoni could no longer force subject peoples to accept their rule and their cultural institutions, and they had to acquiesce in considerable cultural heterogeneity within their kingdoms, which, according to Ngoni informants, would not have been allowed in pre-European days. The illustrations they gave were in terms of the families living 'on the horns of the village', in many cases the families of captives taken in war. Formerly, they said, those families would have been made to marry with *lobola*, to have their ears pierced in Ngoni fashion, to serve in the army, to be associated with one of the house-groups and serve them in the huts or in the gardens. When Ngoni political power declined, and when large villages broke up, some of these groups formed their own villages and reverted to their former practices of matrilineal descent and uxorilocal residence, and of girls' initiation ceremonies. 177 178

In the northern kingdom one section of the peoples under Henga leadership had adopted a patrilineal system before the Ngoni came. The effect of the Ngoni conquest was to strengthen these practices in this northern section, adding marriage by *lobola*, and to extend them to the southern Tumbuka whose kinship and marriage practices were like those of the Cewa who were their neighbours.[1] In the central kingdom, patrilineal descent, marriage by *lobola* and virilocal residence were only practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and they had introduced variations in virilocal residence which will be discussed in Chapter IV, Part III. Within the true Ngoni families in both kingdoms the senior men and women in the 1930's were aware that cultural conformity with Ngoni practices was not as strict as it had been in their parents' days. They spoke of those Ngoni families who were non-conforming as 'people who spoil the land'. [184]

On the other hand, the adoption of Ngoni customs by non-Ngoni in the Ngoni kingdoms, that is by families with descent names from cis-Zambesi and local clans, continued to take place after European rule began. I found several instances of this adoption in the central kingdom, and many of them were related to the acquisition of cattle by former non-Ngoni families. It was chiefly the virilocal form of residence and patrilineal descent which were taken over with *lobola* marriage. When describing the adoption of such Ngoni practices, informants always said it was *monga cingoni* (like the Ngoni). Those who belonged to the Ngoni kingdoms and had largely adopted Ngoni culture expressed strong sentiments of attachment to it; this was particularly true of town-dwellers who had come from the Ngoni kingdoms but were not members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans. Though they adopted many external forms of European culture in dress, houses and food, the consciousness of their association with Ngoni culture and the Ngoni kingdoms was expressed in strongly emotional terms. [186]

[1] Tew, M. op. cit. pp. 107, 109.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

After the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

Ngoni Warfare in Old Days

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligubo* dance along with others.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

the south end of the lake in 1891, he pleaded with him not to use force against the northern Ngoni. 'Don't fight them,' he urged, 'enlist them.' The military commander, Captain Macguire, who was present at the interview, showed interest in the idea of a new recruiting ground for the regular forces in Nyasaland, but his ideas were not pursued as it proved to be easier to continue recruiting the Yao and Tonga who had already shown themselves good military material.

In the central kingdom the first reactions of the Administration towards the Ngoni were favourable. Paramount Cikusi was visited by administrators in 1882 and 1886, and in 1890 concluded a treaty placing himself under British protection. On his death in 1891 his successor Gomani I sent messengers to inform the Administration of his father's death, to declare his allegiance to the British, and to present a bull and a cow, four tusks of ivory and twenty-five men to help in the war against the slave-raiders. In the following year 100 Ngoni warriors were drafted into the regular forces and Mr. H. H. Johnston reported: 'The Ngoni are altogether a splendid people and may be regarded as the backbone of British Central Africa.'[1] But this co-operative relationship did not last. In 1896 it was reported that 'Gomani and a number of his turbulent young headmen were opposed to our influence.'[2] Ngoni armies raided a mission station, an expeditionary force under British officers was sent, the Paramount's village was attacked and his army defeated. He was taken prisoner and, refusing to walk to Zomba, was shot near Dombole in his former kingdom.

In the 1930's the Ngoni of the central kingdom referred repeatedly to the expedition sent against them, the defeat of their army, the death of their Paramount and the seizure of some of their cattle. They nursed a grudge against their conqueror which coloured much of their sentiments towards Europeans. They sometimes referred to the long period of contact of the northern Ngoni kingdom with the Livingstonia Mission, and contrasted it with their contacts with several missions who appeared to them to be in league with the Administration against them and not to take their side in relations with the Government as Dr. Laws had done in the north.

When Cibambo visited the central Ngoni kingdom with me in 1936 he was interested in making comparisons with his own Ngoni of the north. He found that in central Ngoniland there were very few men who knew Ngoni songs well, and that in general the knowledge of the Ngoni language had almost died out. The big shields were not, he thought, as well cut as those in the north. Yet the war-dances were performed correctly, and the war-dress which the dancers wore was more striking than anything which had been preserved in the north.

[1] Johnston, H. H. *Report of the First Three Years' Administration of the Eastern Portion of B.C.A.* 1894, p. 24.
[2] Johnston, H. H. *Report on Trade and General Conditions in Nyasaland*, 1896–7, p. 7.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

fresh detachment came into the village from another part of the country. 535
The corpse was finally carried in a cow-skin from the hut to the grave 764
between a double line of warriors singing *ligubo* songs and thundering with their shields knocking against their knees.

The only relics, therefore, of the military tradition which could be 178
observed in the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's were related either to the national gatherings at the Paramount's village, or to the mourning ritual for the royal line. The knowledge of the songs and the war-dresses was preserved by the senior leading men and women of the trans-Zambesi clans. The songs which follow were sung, except for the last one, in both 533
Ngoni kingdoms, and not only when *ligubo* dances took place. Some were sung at marriage ceremonies, and some formerly as *umtindo* songs at the pre-marriage rite for girls. In northern Ngoniland the last two songs were sung in the churches, and tunes of other well-known war songs were used in the churches of the Scottish mission with different words written for them. Most of the songs when translated sound very brief. They were less brief when sung in the Ngoni language since there was repetition of certain lines, with repeated refrains, and with a series of 'sounds' such as *inyo ho, zi, ye ye* which accompanied the stamping of feet and the clash of shields. These untranslatable 'sounds' were sometimes the only part of the song which was known by the younger men who had never used the Ngoni language, and they chanted them in the right places as a chorus.

The first four songs were all intended to encourage the warriors at the 537
time of mobilization before going out on a campaign. They reminded the singers that in the use of the short stabbing spear the Ngoni armies were stronger than their enemies; that they brought their fighting skill from the south-east; that, though the fight might be long, rest would come in the evening; and that the army belonged to the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The fifth song suggested the kind of warning given to warriors by the old men—that they should not give in after a fight, but pursue the enemy and capture their cattle. The sixth song, though the reference to Longiyeka was obscure, was said to be a warning against treachery and revolt in the army. The seventh song had three themes: that death was the lot of every man, and the earth where the grave would be dug was never satisfied (*ukunesa* means 'to be satisfied'); that no one would escape the universal fate of death, from the senior men wearing the head-plumes to the common people and the cattle; and that the ancestors already buried in the land would be joined by those then alive. The terms used in this song to describe the social groups among the Ngoni people were those which will occur throughout this book.

1. No Paramount can be poor because of the spear.
   Then why are you running away?

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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sleeping on mats they slept on grass until the required days were finished, and they scattered to their homes.

This account brings out certain elements in the ritual surrounding the *tonga*. The word *tonga* in the Ngoni language means 'rod', and was used in the very ancient folk tale *Intonga yetusi*, 'The Brass Rod'. There was no rod, however, nor anything representing one, among the medicines or ingredients which together made up the *tonga*. A descendant of one of the early 'guardians' of the *tonga* said about it:

[778]

¶ The *tonga* is the horn of a sheep, and the horn by itself has no real power, but there are other things which give it power like the rib of a lion.

It is clear that in the past the *tonga* was regarded as giving protection to the Ngoni people, particularly by providing medicine at the accession of a new Paramount when he needed medicine for strengthening.

Other informants from the Phungwako clan said that the *tonga* provided the medicine with which the Paramount washed at the time of *incwala*, the feast of the first-fruits. No one alive in the 1930's had seen that ceremony and the special songs had been forgotten. A tradition remained that the Paramount had to undergo seclusion and ritual washing with medicines before the first green crops could be eaten. [178]

Throughout the references to the *tonga* there was no hint that it was ever worshipped or addressed in any way similar to the invocations to the ancestor spirits. It was clearly a 'medicine' possessing great power and guarded as a national treasure. The ingredients of the medicine were kept in a particular way, in a particular place, in the guardianship of a particular person. I have seen the ingredients, the place and the guardian, but I gave a promise not to reveal them. I was allowed to handle the objects and, after doing so, I had to perform the ritual act of washing my hands with cowdung. This was the form of ritual cleansing practised by the Paramount after using the medicines. [515 783]

There were two ways in which these medicines were used by the Paramount to strengthen him on his accession. He washed in the kraal with the medicines whipped into a foam. The old men said that in ancient times the water for making the medicines had to be fetched from the sea. In addition to washing he had to eat meat in which the medicines were mixed. The majority of informants said that beef was used for this ritual eating, while others said that, as in the ritual for preparing the *tonga*, the meat taken was sheep. This ritual was said to have taken place for the last time at the death of Cikusi and the accession of Gomani I, though it was hinted that it had been performed at the accession of the Ngoni chief of the Maseko clan now living in Portuguese territory.

It was clear that the Maseko Paramounts made use of the *tonga* as a royal medicine both at their accession and in time of war. The reference [766]

643 789 766 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

241 796 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *umsindo*, *ligubo*, *incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins everyone sings the songs of *incwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

[643 424] [178]

It began in the middle of the month of *Intokoni* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

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In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ye'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala seigwabulise*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

relationship, described in terms of brotherhood, and this brotherhood was further emphasized by the ban on inter-marriage between the Ngozo and Maseko clans. The significance of the Ngozo boy, when he became a man, building in the *cigodlo* where the Paramount's sons built, was often stressed by informants. Though his huts were in this *cigodlo* section of the royal village, as if he were a son of the Paramount's family, the Paramount never said 'child' to him but invariably 'brother'. 643 644 608

In all the occasions of daily life, as well as in those of special ritual significance, the Ngozo boy stood or sat next to the Paramount. The Ngoni insisted that the status of a man or woman should be expressed in terms of sitting or standing in order of precedence. Sitting or standing next to the Paramount implied that that individual had the highest possible social status. The leading members of the Ngozo clan in their villages displayed an awareness of their social prestige which was very noticeable. This high rank was, however, in the past bought with a price —that of sharing in the dangers of the Paramountcy. This was acknowledged through the gift of cattle to the boy's family, sent at the time when he 'entered the chieftainship' with the Paramount. [554]

The institution of the royal shadow came to an end with the advent of the Europeans. An Ngozo man acted as a royal shadow on the accession of Cikusi but did not die on his funeral pyre. When Cikusi's son Gomani I was installed as *inkosi*, an Ngozo boy 'entered the chieftainship' with him and stood with him 'in the smoke of the *tonga*' when the army went to war. It was this Gomani I who was killed by the British, and there was no royal ritual at this death, and no cremation in a stream in which the Ngozo boy could share. The royal shadow retired in those troubled days to his father's village, where he died in 1937. It was alleged that no Ngozo man stood in this relationship to Gomani II, either at his accession, which took place during the period of Direct Rule, or in 1933 when his Paramount Chieftaincy was recognized. Informants showed a certain hesitation in answering direct questions on this topic, which was attributable partly to the fact that the Paramount was a Christian, and partly to a reluctance to discuss the continued use of 'royal medicines'. The following account of the royal shadow was given by informants of the Nzunga and Ngozo clans. 643 644 178

¶ When the Paramount entered the chieftainship he stood with a man from the Ngozo clan. The Ngozo people are of one blood with the Paramount, because they stand together when entering the chieftainship. When the Paramount of the Maseko dies, he dies together with one of the Ngozo. It was so when there died Ngwana, Mputa, Cikusi.

When the Ngoni came into this country they stopped killing an Ngozo man when the Paramount died. When the Paramount died a young man of the Ngozo clan just stood beside the body of the Paramount, and when making the funeral pyre of the Paramount, he also was there until they set fire to it. If anyone wanted to kill an Ngozo man by the

643 644 [178] water and the pyre, he was refusing, saying 'No, not in these days, but formerly.'

When Magona Ngozo was with Cikusi he was staying with him in the daytime. Magona had his own huts and Cikusi his. When eating, Cikusi ate alone, but afterwards he gave food to Magona. When Cikusi was washing it was together with Magona. When he went to the bush, they went together. When Cikusi was washing with the *tonga*, he was doing it with Magona. When the warriors were going out, Cikusi and Magona stood together, and they made fire for the medicines and they stood together in the smoke and then the warriors went out. So, when mentioning Magona, they said: 'the shadow of Cikusi'. When they were eating in the *bwalo*, the *nsima* (porridge) was brought to Cikusi, but if some *alumuzana* came, the wives of Magona cooked *nsima* and gave it to the *alumuzana*. When Cikusi died, Magona could take his wives if he wanted. The Ngozo man could tell the Paramount anything, good or bad, and stay like the mouth of the Paramount.

[762] When the Paramount died formerly, the Ngozo man dressed in his war-dress. When he came near the fire he danced with the shield in his hand. When the fire blazed up he ran and jumped on the fire. So the Maseko people gave cattle to the Ngozo people, to quieten their hearts because they were brothers. And when another Paramount was installed they gave an Ngozo man to stand with him. The father of the man who died with the Paramount received cattle and villages to rule over and gifts. The Paramounts gave cattle because they said: 'Since our brother is going to stand with the Paramount, if that Paramount dies, he also will be killed, so the Paramount ought to give cattle like *lobola* so they may quieten the hearts of his brothers.' Though these cattle are not given for a woman but for a man, any Maseko man ought not to marry an Ngozo woman because there is this brotherhood.

And this man of the Ngozo clan was like a chief because he had men to manage his affairs at his door, as did the Paramount. And if he died his funeral was like that of a chief. But the day the Paramount died the Ngozo man was killed. When the Paramount washed with medicines, he was washing with the Ngozo man. When drinking beer, he was drinking in the same hut as the Paramount. When the Paramount was sacrificing he was together with the Ngozo man, and they did not leave each other.

The Ngozo people have a thanking name (*isibongo*) Maphonya. It is they who were standing with the Paramounts, and the Ngozo people were [762] in the section of Ziyembe. Their avoidances were the same as all the Ngoni, especially fish and elephant. When Cikusi died Gulo stood with Gomani when he entered the chieftainship. Gulo was the son of Magona.

The royal village and the daily routine of the Paramount

643 361 644 In Part I, Chapter II we referred to the process by which each Paramount, after his accession, went out from his father's village to build his own. The Ngoni called this *ukupumisa inhosi* (to send out the Paramount) and the term used for the new village, *lusungulu* (the needle), was said to signify 'the front village where you expect to find the Paramount'.

643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *izizi zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
684 this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning
178 from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *izinduna* and the *amadoda* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticized each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the
[857] conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *lawini* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organizing his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

631 NGONI OFFICE-BEARERS

622 In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni
645 political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a
[568] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

be used exclusively for either group, and in fact there was considerable overlapping between them. 622 631

We begin with the text by Cibambo which emphasizes the hierarchy of office-bearers in the northern kingdom in pre-European days and illustrates the correlation between the courts and the political administration. 645

¶ The former government of the Ngoni was based on the following:

(1) Above all was the one called *Inkosi* or *UBaba*, because they thought of him as the father of the country, the head.

(2) After him came the *izinduna*. Sometimes there were two or perhaps four. These were very highly honoured and the Paramount feared them greatly: he called them *Bobaba* and their words had great weight with him. They were the ones who gave advice to the Paramount and if any grave matter arose he called them to hear what they thought. The Paramount in his village had also his old men who helped him with everything small that did not need to go to the *izinduna*. If there was word that the Paramount was meeting with the *izinduna* he first of all met with the old men and asked for advice to place before the *izinduna*. And these old men had the right to speak when the Paramount took counsel with the *izinduna*.

(3) After the *izinduna* came the *amakosana*, or lesser chiefs. These were perhaps the younger brothers of the ruling Paramount, and had their districts under him. They also had their *izinduna* and were responsible for their own districts. When the Paramount met with the *izinduna*, the *amakosana* were also there if it was considered fitting.

(4) Then there were the *alumuzana*. These were over villages or smaller districts. Their villages were called *amakanda* (heads) and they had power in their small districts to carry out the laws and they looked to the *izinduna* for instructions.

(5) Lastly the old men (*madoda*) who wore the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) but not all of them; only those who had good sense and understood the ways of the tribe. [888]

All these five divisions had their share in the government of the country. If there was a great court of justice, all these were to be found at it, and took part in the discussions. If fresh matter arose, or new laws, these delivered them to their villages. Also there were men called *amanxusa*, messengers. These were men chosen to run with messages from the Paramount to the *izinduna* or *amakosana*, to go with and return with news. Almost every village or little district had its chosen messengers. All the types (2), (3) and (4) had their messengers. When anything happened, the messenger in the village of the Paramount made a general proclamation and called the *amanxusa* together. When the *amanxusa* had heard the message they scattered throughout all the country. So in the districts and by this way news travelled very quickly. [203]

In the central kingdom one of the big *izinduna* explained the change in their system which occurred after crossing the Zambesi: 178 622 631

¶ When the Ngoni were coming from the south they chose lesser chiefs and *izinduna* from the *amakosana*, who were the Paramount's brothers, 645

178 622 631 645 sons of his father and of his father's brothers. These *amakosana* were honoured next to the Paramount. The *alumuzana* were for justice in the courts, and for being the 'ears of the Paramount' in all the country. The change was made by Mputa because he saw that if the *amakosana* were given power they claimed to be big chiefs themselves. Therefore he chose for the courts and for the leaders in war and for lesser chiefs the *alumuzana* and *izinduna* who were clever and whom they could trust.

184 622 631 645 [698] The diagram on p. 99 relates to the period between 1933 and 1939 and sets out first the officials in the territorial divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms from the Paramount to the headman of a village. In the northern kingdom only the Paramount and the six chiefs had recognized courts, the chiefs' courts operating for their districts and the Paramount's court for the whole kingdom. There were two sets of office-bearers who had no courts but who exercised authority over groups of villages. One group consisted of members of the Jere clan who were not recognized chiefs but were *amakosana*, literally 'children of the chief' but used as a rule for all members of the royal clan. Only certain *amakosana* had villages under them. The other group consisted of the heads of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who owned several villages and sometimes had authority over a large area. Cibambo put this group below that of the chiefs, and other informants confirmed this as the pre-European pattern. But the informants also said that many of the powerful *alumuzana* formerly had their own courts and did not have to bring their cases to the chiefs' courts as they did in the 1930's. At the bottom of the territorial hierarchy came the headmen of single villages. In some cases the village headman had formerly been an *induna* in a large village which had broken up. Some were of the royal clan or of Swazi clans. The majority belonged to the local tribes and were owners of villages which were for the most part villages of one kinship group.

The text about the hierarchy in the central kingdom shows that a deliberate change had been made in the traditional pattern to avoid a struggle between the Paramount and his brothers when they had recognized positions as chiefs. The *alumuzana* who appear in the diagram as chiefs were the six who were recognized in 1933 as Subordinate Native Authorities. There were other *alumuzana* who were not so recognized, and certain members of the royal clan, all of whom owned a number of villages but had to take their cases to the recognized courts. The division caused by setting up the Portuguese boundary in the 1890's left many of the leaders of the Maseko clan on the Portuguese side, with the result that the number of *amakosana* owning villages and taking any prominent part in the life of the kingdom was very small; and another large group of the Maseko clan were in Dedza district under Chief Kacindamoto. The majority of village headmen in the central kingdom were of local tribes, and their villages were as a rule much larger than those in the northern kingdom.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

645 He was a student of Ngoni history and custom, and used his travels as treasurer to collect new information. He always intended to write a history of the central kingdom as Cibambo had done for the northern kingdom, but his public duties never gave him time.

643 In making contact with his people and keeping in touch with his
645 officials the Paramount did not rely only on their visits to the royal
574 village. Two or three times a year he toured his kingdom, accompanied by his *mlomo wenkosi* and the treasurer, and stayed at the head villages of the chiefs and also of other *alumuzana*. The treasurer spoke enthusiastically of the Paramount's habit of making himself known to his people and enabling them to present petitions to him in person. He met village headmen on their own ground, and *alumuzana* who were unostentatiously directing the affairs of their villages and areas, as well as the official chiefs or Subordinate Native Authorities. He saw for himself how his own regulations were being carried out and how the measures for agricultural improvement and cattle-dipping which the Government was promoting were being adopted. These visits in his own territory were followed by visits to Blantyre and Zomba and to the mining centres outside the country where his people were working. He was thus able to check on the conditions in the subordinate chiefs' areas which had been created by the prolonged absence of men from the villages.

The Paramount and changes in law and custom

643 Through his school education at Blantyre, his membership of a
178 Christian church, and through attending the chiefs' course at the Jeanes School in Zomba, the Paramount stood between the old and the new in the changing conditions in his kingdom. After the 1933 Ordinance one of the changes in administration was that a Native Authority had to budget
652 for income and expenditure in his area. The income for 1935 for this
[434] area was £959, made up of a share of the taxes; fifty per cent. of the yearly rental of stores; court fines and fees and beer licences. The expenditure was £832, under items of salaries to the Paramount and subordinate chiefs; salaries for messengers, councillors, clerks and policemen; payment of fourpence per tax to the headmen of the villages so that it was to their advantage to collect the full amount; and a small sum for uniforms, office expenses and such items as cash boxes and handcuffs. This budget for the central Ngoni kingdom was drawn up in consultation with the District Officer by the Paramount and his treasurer. It was a source of great pride to the treasurer that he had, as we have seen, his own key to a safe in the District Office where he put the tax money collected in the area, and drew out sums needed for expenditure in the Paramount's office.

744 In 1933, as already mentioned, a meeting of subordinate chiefs, *alumu-*
653 *zana* and headmen heard the Paramount's proposals for new regulations about village improvement and agreed to them. These regulations were

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

called 'to make a clean village', and were one of the results of the Paramount's visits to his area. They included building latrines, sweeping the open spaces round huts, disposing of rubbish, mending roofs and fences, smooth mudding of houses, digging wells. The Paramount appointed three men who were called *masanitari* to go round the villages to inspect and report to him, and instituted a system of fines for failure to carry out these measures. In addition to promoting clean villages, he ordered that cattle were to be dipped regularly, cultivation was to be carried out by a ridge system instead of mounds, and all sick people, especially women, were to attend hospital. He sent his own daughter to hospital for her confinement, and she attended the baby clinic regularly with her child. 744 653

Some of the changes in local customs which the Paramount ordered were not so easy to enforce as the newer practices in relation to health and hygiene. He forbade drinking at night when quarrelling became rife; he prohibited Cewa dances such as *vinyau* and *malombo* and the Cewa female puberty rite of *cinamwali*. The only dances allowed were the Ngoni dance *ngoma*; the *ligubo* or war-dance at his village; and the individual hero's dance (*ligiya*) when a lion or leopard was brought to his village. Marriages had to be registered, and births and deaths recorded and reported to the Paramount when he visited the villages. 178 643 656 563

It was always possible to start an argument among the senior men sitting on the Paramount's *bwalo*, or on the steps of his court-house, either on the subject of how far Ngoni law and custom had replaced local Ntumba and Cewa custom, or on the advantages and disadvantages of the modern reforms of the Paramount. Some of the older men were anxious to establish that the Ngoni, meaning those of the trans-Zambesi clans, had not only achieved a political conquest but had also changed the practices of the local peoples and made them observe Ngoni customs. They used to assert, among other things, that the local people had become patrilineal, and had adopted a *lobola* form of marriage—statements which could easily be disproved and were laughed at by the onlookers. On the other hand, they were right when they said that Ngoni laws and court procedure were universally approved and followed, and that the younger generations at least were willing to carry out the welfare measures of the Paramount. One constant feature of all such discussions of recent changes was the steady support given by the Ntumba and Tengo clan leaders to the Paramount and his rule. This, more than any other feature, proved that the trans-Zambesi pattern of political rule had triumphed, and that in their loyalty to the Paramount and their practice of Ngoni custom the village headmen and their families could be counted on to support the rulers.

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CHAPTER I

NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF review was given in Chapter III of Part I of the main elements of Ngoni culture, analysed into 'patterns' covering kinship, village layout, ritual, ceremonial, and language. In this section we shall be considering the principal social institutions embodying Ngoni culture: their clans, houses, families and age sets. We shall find evidence in the two kingdoms of an extensive common element in the social organization which the Ngoni brought with them from the south. Some important diversities will be evident also, such as the variations in virilocal residence found in the central kingdom, and the less widespread practice there of *lobola* marriage. Those elements which were common to Ngoni social organization in both kingdoms were often those which distinguished Ngoni culture from that of the neighbouring peoples. Patrilineal descent, the house system, the ranking of clans, the *laweni* organization of boys' life and activities—these were all distinctively Ngoni, practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and sometimes adopted by individuals and families of other clans who had been associated with the Ngoni over long periods. Nevertheless, in many of the villages of the central kingdom there were clearly two cultures existing side by side: the Ngoni culture being that of an aristocratic minority and the local culture that of the majority, who in the kingdom were equally subjects of the Paramount but in their villages possessed inferior social status. 114 121 [563 565]

Indications were to be seen, even in the more conservative and more isolated northern kingdom, that modern influences were affecting Ngoni social institutions. We have already noticed some of the effects of the cessation of warfare on a social system founded on military traditions. The exodus of young men from Ngoni villages to seek work elsewhere was very extensive, especially in the northern kingdom, where the level of education was higher but employment was not available, and this had repercussions on the age of marriage, the distribution of wealth, and the undertaking of family responsibilities, including the care of the old people. The gradual decline in polygyny, largely but not entirely due to the work of missions, was beginning to have its effects on the working of the house system and on the interrelations of the generations within the family group. 178 [595 797]

In the 1930's many of these modern changes were appearing but the traditional institutions were still functioning, and the Ngoni leaders themselves were clear about those forms and activities which were distinctively their own.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

households of her co-wives who were junior to her in the house, and the households of her sons' wives. These women also decided when to undertake certain work in cultivation or in harvesting crops, when to brew beer, when to re-polish the floors of huts and the sitting place in front of the huts, when to replenish the stock of cloth, ornaments and beads, baskets and mats, which were part of the wealth of the house. Other occasions for the exercise of authority were attending and superintending women's confinements and the private puberty rite of the girls, advising on matters of health, and supervising the training of children. 562 571 592

All these activities of the owners of the houses were so much part of the day-to-day life of a village that they could pass almost unnoticed unless a detailed analysis were made. The position and authority of owners of houses was, however, immediately evident on ceremonial occasions. These included the pre-marriage ceremony of *umsindo*, which was abandoned after the Europeans came; the series of visits and exchanges leading up to the marriage ceremony, *mtimba*; brewing beer on a number of occasions, for dancing *ngoma* and *ligubo*, for funerals and subsequent ritual shaving, or for entertaining important visitors whose coming was expected so that beer could be prepared in advance. On all such occasions, the courtyard surrounding the *indlunkulu* was a scene of great activity. Men put on their war-dance equipment there; the beer pots were assembled there; meat and blood for feasts were cooked there, while the less important maize porridge (*usima*) was cooked in subordinate households. From the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* a procession of the *manina* (senior women) led by the owner of the house went out to greet visitors, to go to the beer drink, to take part in the dances, and to perform the ritual connected with births, deaths and marriages. 592 554 571 [178]

Marriage in Ngoni Society

Earlier in this chapter it was said that a new house derived from the marriage of a leading man to his big wife. Since marriage was so closely linked with the continuance and development of houses, and since a new wife when married separated from her own mother's house and became a member of her husband's mother's house, I have included a discussion of marriage in this chapter on houses. 581 182

There were three main principles in Ngoni marriage. It was a binding contract sealed by the exchange of cattle; it established succession in the male line; it formed a link between leading Swazi clans. When we examine in detail the organization of Ngoni marriage we see that its objectives were to build up a series of inter-clan and inter-family relationships. These began with inter-marriage between the leading Swazi clans, in order to strengthen the political and social relationships within that inner circle of Ngoni society. The political allegiance of leading individuals from clans of non-Swazi origin was strengthened by marriage

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593 extended to his brothers' sons, especially if their father was dead. Following the same pattern, a man's sons who were away at work sent back money to their father who bought cattle with it, or spent it as the sons asked. It was clear in the 1930's that Ngoni men rarely sent money directly to their wives, though they frequently asked their father to give money to their wives and to buy for them cloth or needed household equipment.

562 Within the larger orbit of the male family responsibilities women had their more restricted but clearly defined sphere. At a woman's
844 confinement she was looked after by her husband's own mother, aided
593 by his other mothers and by his sisters if they were present in the village. At the 'coming out' of the new member of the family, ten to fourteen days after birth, the woman and the baby, bathed and ritually cleansed, were seated on a mat outside the hut and presented to the
562 male members of the father's family who gave small gifts to the baby.
846 If it was a boy, the father's mother generally carried it to the gate of
593 the kraal where the men were sitting, to present it to them as one who would eventually herd the cattle. On this occasion, or soon after, the
[553] child's name was chosen, usually by the father's father, who prepared and gave to the mother a calf-skin or goat-skin for carrying the child in. The meat of the animal was cooked by the father's mother and a small feast was held for the father's mothers, sisters, brothers and their wives, and any others of the father's family who had helped in the confinement.[1] After the child had thus been acknowledged in its father's family circle, the mother took the baby to visit her own family, who also gave it presents.

593 During the rearing of the child, its father's female relatives assumed responsibility for giving the young mother advice. The father's mother
862 was expected to note the stage at which the child should be weaned, always if possible before the mother's next pregnancy. If the father's mother was unobservant, the other senior women of the husband's family would rebuke her and say 'Look now you are foolish because the child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to it.' These women then took the initiative and insisted on weaning the child. They said to the baby's mother 'We want to wean the child.' They made a paste of ground chillies and put it on the mother's breasts and covered them with a skin or cloth. The child was taken from her after it had tried to
[853] suck and had been refused, and given to the father's mother or sister, who looked after it with the help of a nursemaid. It was fed on cow's milk, *amasi* (milk curds), and gruel.

The publicity given to the weaning and the initiative taken by the senior women of the husband's family were intended to inform others in
[178] the village that the parents were now free to have another child. This was one aspect of the old Ngoni form of family planning and, in describing

[1] This feast was also held when a carrying cloth was given instead of a skin.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and nursemaids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving. 593 862 178

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*laweni*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *laweni*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father. 513 592

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *laweni* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary. 264 [343] [251] 356 593

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she 342 [415]

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show subservience to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss. 562 565 867

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private. 881 836 565 [797] 178 [195] [831]

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony [554]

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by two youths who were friends and who announced their intention, and then were joined by other pairs.

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These forms of an age-set system which the Ngoni brought with them from the south were still in the 1930's a significant element in village life. The greatest change had occurred in the cessation of warfare and, with the enforcement of peace, the recognized stages mentioned in the beginning of this chapter had to a large extent disappeared. Though the boys and men were no longer divided into pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors, the institution of the *laweni* and the important role played by the *madoda* were two distinctive elements in Ngoni village life. So also was the form and content of the training given to Ngoni girls of Swazi clans, which largely determined the role played by the *manina* in village affairs.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 769 764 In the central kingdom there were two instances of a modern adaptation of the ancestor cult, both of which were evidence of its close links with the aristocratic tradition; one related to a *mukumusana* of a Swazi clan, the other to the royal clan. One of the first things which caught the eye of a visitor to the village of Mcakhatha was a large circular brick and cement tomb with a wooden cross on the top, in the middle of the village by the main kraal and within sight of the ruling chief's hut. It was the tomb of Njolomole Nzunga I, son of Golozela Nzunga who gave the cattle for NaMlangeni's *lobola*, and father of the ruling Chief Njolomole Nzunga II. The idea of this memorial originated with Lopati Nzunga, younger brother of Njolomole I and head of the *gogo* section of the village, and he had organized its erection. The bricks and cement were given by Europeans in the neighbourhood, and three beasts were killed for meat for those who carried the materials. The money to pay for the bricklayers' wages was raised by the sale of another beast. The name on the wooden cross was cut by the Chief's brother-in-law who was a carpenter, and Lopati said that the cross was for writing the name on and had no Christian significance. The tomb was declared 'open' to the public in the presence of a large number of people. A beast was presented to the Paramount Chief, and another beast was killed and cooked for a feast in the village. Beer was brewed in the huts of the two leading widows who had been in the big house and second house of Njolomole I.

This tomb was a memorial and not a grave, for Njolomole I had been buried in Ngoni fashion on the edge of the kraal, the fence of which was enlarged to take in the grave. It was regarded as a central point in the village. Ngoni visitors saluted it as they went by with the right arm [576 upraised in Ngoni fashion, and war-dances and *ngoma* dances took place 201] beside it. The idea of a brick tomb with a cross on top was of course a modern concept taken from European cemeteries in Nyasaland which Lopati had seen. It cost six cattle to put it up and 'open' it, and these cattle were taken from the herds of the big house of Njolomole I.

In the chapter on the Paramount (Part II, Chapter II) it was pointed out that in the central kingdom the Paramount Gomani I was shot as a result of the 'war with the English' when he refused to walk to Zomba for his trial. On the Zomba road near the turning to the mission station of Dombole was a track leading into some woods. In an open clearing was a brick and cement tomb to Gomani I, subscribed to by the central Ngoni (including those living in the towns of Blantyre and Zomba). A memorial fund called 'The late Gomani Memorial Fund' was opened in 1926, and three years later those who had organized the fund formed the Angoni Highlands Association, mainly of Ngoni working in Blantyre and Zomba and wishing to maintain their links with their home villages. In discussing the origin of this fund for the memorial informants pointed out that they were aware that Gomani I, unlike his father and grand-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

father, had been a fierce ruler, and had gathered round him bands of young men who were not easily restrained. Though they could judge his character in this objective way, they respected his office, and hence his death and the confiscation of cattle which followed were a deep injury to Ngoni pride. So thirty years after his death they collected money and put up the memorial, and the appeal was supported for three main reasons. One was to commemorate this Paramount who had not had the traditional cremation by a river; another was to remove the shame of his death; the last was to draw together all his people in a common act. Every year numbers of Ngoni gathered at this memorial and held a Christian service which was followed by a general meeting. This memorial service and meeting had a definite link with the ancestor cult, and illustrated in a particular form Ngoni beliefs in the relation of the living and the dead.

In the 1930's, as we saw in Chapter III of Part I, the form of Ngoni funerals and the ritual of mourning were closely related to the ancestor cult and were practised by the Ngoni aristocracy. These forms of ritual and their beliefs they brought with them from the south, and they were an important part of Ngoni culture. We shall see in a later chapter how some of these cultural elements were combined with Christian ritual, both for leading individuals of Swazi clans and for lesser members of those clans.

CHAPTER II

CATTLE AND THE ANCESTOR CULT

THERE are many references throughout this study to the importance of cattle among the Ngoni. In this chapter the place of cattle in Ngoni life will be examined with reference to the ancestor cult, and hence certain limitations have been imposed in the selection of material and its interpretation. There will, for example, be no analysis of the role of cattle in the economic life of Ngoni families and villages. Much of the material discussed has an economic significance which is immediately apparent, but the limitations set will not allow the economic implications of certain practices to be pursued further here. It is important for the main purpose of this chapter to make a brief analysis of some factors in the ownership, care, and use of cattle, and to follow that with references to some of the values and attitudes inherent in the Ngoni ownership and use of cattle. I made a preliminary analysis of these factors in a memorandum on standards of living in the central kingdom, published

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 1930's that the Ngoni did not live as well as they might and had, in fact, an impoverished diet, because they did not make full use, and sometimes very little use, of the milk and meat which they had available. In pre-European days, when the possession of cattle was confined to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading *alumuzana*, there was a continuous slaughter of animals to provide a regular diet of meat and *ulubende*, the cooked blood which the Ngoni liked very much. The heads of the big houses saw that there was always on hand *amasi*, the milk curds which was the form in which adults took their milk, fresh milk being reserved for young children and herd-boys. This provision of meat, *ulubende* and *amasi* was only possible for those who had plenty of cattle, [721] and in both kingdoms wars and raids were carried out partly to obtain fresh supplies of cattle from neighbouring and unconquered tribes. As we saw in the chapter on the Paramount, in pre-European days the *alumuzana* who lived near enough to the royal village made a practice of calling frequently, if not daily, and such calls were rewarded by their being asked to eat with the Paramount, and 'food' in those days was predominantly meat. Between fighting seasons, that is during the rains, the young men (*amajaha*) who were newly recruited to the regiments [883] were kept busy in and around the Paramount's village and the head villages of the *alumuzana*, mending fences, making shields, and clearing new land. When they were thus employed they also were fed by the Paramount or *mulumuzana*, who regarded these periodic feasts for the *amajaha* as one of the first calls on the consumption of his cattle. The Ngoni later rationalized this earlier procedure of restricting meat and milk consumption to certain groups of people by arguing that it made the young warriors strong and able to fight and endure hardships, and they declared that the senior men and women who also shared the Paramount's supplies lived long and had great wisdom and strength of character. This rationalization was not only looking back to a past Utopia. It was also based on the argument that Europeans ate meat regularly and that they were strong, both physically and politically.

262 178 The European criticism in the 1930's that the Ngoni did not make full dietary use of their cattle and their products was justified, but there are two factors to note in this connexion. One was that the number of those who lived well on meat and milk in the old days was relatively small—confined in fact to cattle-owners, women owners of big houses, and warriors. The situation changed after the Europeans came, and a large number of people owned a few cattle and many of the new owners had no tradition about using their products. Among the cattle-owners of the Swazi clans the tradition of cooking blood and making curds continued and both were valued as food, but some of those who had only recently become owners of cattle did not know these practices, and 262 I came across many cattle-owners of local tribes who did not know how 272 to milk a cow. The failure to use milk in the Ngoni diet was due partly

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly
231 related to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
437 of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Money was needed for good
554 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which
the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling,
[453] except among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Values and attitudes in cattle-ownership

114 Any attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquir-
233 ing, caring for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive
565 survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is not possible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba clans whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading clans and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.

The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they repre-
231 sented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able
556 to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of ritual for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

grave with the little shelf at one side, the corpse wrapped in a cow-skin, the *nsuso* and *nyongo* on the neck and forehead, the bent legs and upright sitting position facing south-east, and washing the face of the corpse at the grave side with a bunch of grass. On this occasion the Ngoni form of burial was followed by the Christian burial service after the grave had been filled in. During the digging of the grave hymns set to the tunes of Ngoni war songs were sung by the onlookers until the body was brought out of the house. After that there was complete silence while the corpse was lowered into the grave and the grave was filled up, until the service began. This combination of Christian and Ngoni ritual I witnessed many times. One of the missions set its face against the use of the cow-skin and declared that no Christian could be buried except in a coffin, but even this was sometimes disregarded and the full Ngoni ritual was carried out, followed by a Christian service.

After the body had been put in the grave and when the first calling back of the spirit from the bush had reminded the living that they had to care for this new spirit, a series of further duties faced them. These have been referred to as the first and second shaving. The first shaving we shall consider later as a necessary purification before eating the meat of the funeral rites which brought back the spirit right into the village. The second shaving, which took place from six to twelve months after the funeral, was the prelude to the time when the new ancestral spirit came, or was brought back, to its final lodging. The importance of this last rite was emphasized by Lopati Nzunga in his account of the ritual which took place at the tomb put up to the memory of Gomani I (see p. 165) When the building of the tomb under the supervision of Ngoni in the area was finished, many leading Ngoni from all parts, including those from the towns, gathered there for two days. Every morning before dawn they went up the forest paths singing war songs, as they did later at the time of the death of Bambo Manga, to call back the spirit from the bush where it had spent some thirty years. After a Christian service held by the tomb, the Ngoni *alumuxana* 'brought back' the spirit to Lizulu, Gomani I's village, to the house of NaMagagula his big wife. She was a Christian, so could not take the care of the spirit in her hut, but another of the widows of Gomani I, NaNsambi, who was in the house of NaMagagula, was chosen as guardian. Earlier in the proceedings, when they had decided that the tomb was going to be built, a diviner was consulted, the spirits were addressed in the kraal, the cattle showed that they agreed, and a beast from the herd of the house of NaMagagula was sacrificed and the meat offered to the ancestral spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Then they built a new hut for NaNsambi and put in it new sacrificial vessels. When the spirit of Gomani I was finally brought home it was to this hut and guardianship that it came. They were uncertain about what had happened to the spirit in the thirty years interval and it did not seem advisable to probe

in three age groups on the verandah also came forward and, led by NaNkolosa, a widow of Njolomole I, thanked in the women's language, '*Zimata, zaithwa matwana nwahui.*'

I did not witness any ritual sacrifices in the northern kingdom but the accounts given me by informants corresponded closely with the ritual in M'cakhatha just described. When sacrificing for rain to the spirits of the Paramount, a black ox with no white spot was driven into the kraal in the late afternoon and the chosen spokesman addressed the ancestral spirits of the Jere clan telling them that this was their beast, they must eat the meat and tell UMkulumqango that the people needed rain. While this man prayed to the spirits he stood facing the beast, and everyone else sat looking in front of them and keeping very quiet. The women stayed at home in their huts and the Paramount stayed in his hut 'as if mourning'. When the beast urinated and showed that the spirits had heard, a messenger came and informed the Paramount. The beast was killed early the next morning in the kraal. While the flaying took place, all the huts of the chief wives were smeared with dried cow-dung on the floors and on the smooth place outside the doors. The meat, in two parts, was taken into the *indlunkulu* and left there all night at the back, so that the spirits might lick it. The next morning the meat was cooked in the kraal by the *madoda* and when it was ready they reported to the big *induna*. He called all the people into the kraal and divided them into companies according to their sections and head villages. The meat was given to the head of each head village who divided it among his group. When everyone had finished, one of the leading men stood up and began to praise the spirit using his titles and praise-names (*izitukuso*). The rest stood up and shouted *Bayete*. They then began to dance a war-dance but, the informants added, that was soon stopped by torrents of rain.

These chapters on the Ngoni ancestor cult bring to an end this study of the two Ngoni kingdoms in Nyasaland in the 1930's. We have seen how their distinctiveness as a people depended on the culture which they brought with them from the south and how this culture was found among the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In the topics included in the three sections of this book: the political system, the social organization, and the ancestor cult, the main features of Ngoni culture are most clearly seen. In much of their economic and agricultural life there was little to distinguish them from their neighbours among the other Nyasaland peoples. The changes brought about by the missions, the schools, new forms of local government, and new types of occupation, were all tending to make the Ngoni less distinctive as a people. The conversion of some leading Ngoni to Christianity, as suggested in Chapter V of Part II, and the spread of schools were together the most powerful influences in altering Ngoni traditional culture. The

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organization of houses built on polygynous marriage, the ancestor cult, and other aspects of Ngoni culture, were profoundly affected by the teaching of Christianity and by the ideas and practices expected of adherents of the churches. Some leading Ngoni Christians like Cibambo attempted to make a synthesis between their past and their present, between traditional culture and modern life. Others said 'All is finished now.'

Two points which clearly emerged from a study of the Ngoni in the 1930's might indicate that the Ngoni as a distinct people were not 'finished'. One was their tenacity in adhering to certain traditional practices; the other was the ability they had shown in adapting their culture and political system to the mixed populations in their kingdoms.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182] In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
184 In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance, in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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as young men, and had known the independence and supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'everything is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, ministers and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni way of living, and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes dominated social relationships. There was a determined struggle on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasaland sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

178 culture worth preserving, inspired them to put up a fight
829 against all that threatened the values inherent in their way
177 of living. It was perhaps the struggle of a disappearing aristocracy. But Ngoni fathers thought that the principles of education on which they brought up their children were worth a struggle.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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881 of 'staying together', they did not make the occasion of physical maturity an opportunity for driving home the lesson. According to Ngoni tradition the forms of private ritual for girls and for boys had come with them from the [173] south. At one point in their wanderings, said to be in Tanganyika before they settled in Nyasaland, they gave up the practice of circumcision, also brought from the south. This rite, according to tradition, had coincided with boys passing out from herding cattle and being called up into a regiment.

178 The question naturally arises why the Ngoni adhered to their private ritual at puberty, and never adopted any of the 881 local forms of initation schools, and why they abandoned their only corporate ritual of this type: the circumcision school. Various reasons were given by the Ngoni elders for abandoning the circumcision ritual: that there were no more grass to be found of the sharp kind with which the foreskin was cut; that the school which lasted three to four months delayed for too long the intake of young men into the army; and that the young men of non-Ngoni families, compulsorily absorbed into the army, objected strongly to being circumcised.

After a short description of the private ritual for girls and boys, we will return to answer the question why the Ngoni held to these forms.

Girls' private ritual

881 When a Ngoni girl found she was menstruating for the first time, she stayed in the hut where she was sleeping and called her companion or her friend and told her what was taking place. Ngoni women declared that their girls were as a rule unprepared, and that the flow of blood was unexpected and alarming. Some Ngoni girls agreed that this was true. The majority said, 'We knew about this from our older sisters and companions, but we hid this knowledge from the elders.' The companion or friend found a senior helper in the grandmother's household, generally the one who had supervised the

INTRODUCTION

MARRIAGE among the Ngoni is much the same as anywhere else. It establishes a relationship between a man and a woman, regulates their sexual activities, locates their children in the kinship system and influences the inheritance of their property. These general features, however, do no more than define and identify marriage, and distinguish marriage from concubinage. Our task is to analyse the particular features that distinguish Ngoni marriage from other marriage systems and to relate marriage to other institutions and social processes in Ngoni society.

In Ngoni history there has always been marriage. Indeed men and women look back longingly to a past when people married properly and decorously, and when adulterers were killed, and bemoan the promiscuity of the present when no woman's fidelity is certain. Yet even now old people still expect their juniors to marry and their expectations are fulfilled. Adults are assumed to be married, and the assumption is justified.

Marriage is seen by the Ngoni as part of the natural order. Unmarried adults cannot fill important roles and are regarded as overgrown children whose anomalous condition must be explained by reference to a malady or a physical or moral defect. Yet despite the universal and permanent character of marriage as an Ngoni institution there have been, in the course of the hundred and thirty years which constitute Ngoni history, great changes in the procedures and implications of marriage and in its relations to other aspects of the social life of which it is a part. These changes have been paralleled in other Ngoni institutions, in law, in local organization, in religion and above all in political structure. In this paper we shall attempt to contrast the institution of marriage as seen at two stages in Ngoni history and to relate it to the general plan of social life at these two periods. We shall also discuss some of the processes of change that have brought about the differences we observe and which to some extent are still at work in contemporary Ngoni society.

It is convenient to compare marriage as it was during the 1890's and as it is at the present day. The information relating to the earlier period is contained only to a slight extent in contemporary documents,[1] and consists largely in the recollections of older men and women as recorded by a number of writers from 1914 onwards. The

[1] The most important of these are Wiese's articles, 'Expedicao portugueza a M'Pesène (1889)', in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, x (1891) pp. 235-73, 331-430, 465-97, and xi (1892) pp. 373-399. (All page references cited are from Vol. X); and 'Beitrage zür Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambesi, namentlich der Angoni,' *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1900), pp. 181-200.

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[3]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[3] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
498 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[729] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was,
[581] in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[178] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political
602 ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The recent Captives

855 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband,
593 wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw
631 attention to two features of the residential system which were not,
554 at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man
591 lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features
[178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which
581 agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their
613 own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the
[582] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this.
[178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.17]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass shacks built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

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came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery, and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1898 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the looting of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chiefdoms reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1898, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one instance where the woman ran off with the man called in by her sterile husband. 842 839

4. The legal relationship

Emphasis on sexual partnership is characteristic of the beginning of marriage. Young people are 'foolish', dance all night long and sleep late in the morning. With the arrival of children, man and wife emerge from the tutelage of their elders and non-sexual aspects of their marriage relationship gain in importance. Even then the importance of sexual satisfaction is not forgotten. People say openly of a woman who obstructs her husband when he seeks a second wife, 'She is too fond of his penis', and old widows explain their failure to remarry by saying 'Our joints are too stiff to copulate'. 593 [851]

Nevertheless at all times there is a great deal more in Ngoni marriage than mere sexual partnership. The obligations and duties of husband and wife towards each other and each other's kin are determined by the marriage payments and ratified by the ceremonies of marriage. These obligations persist despite the fluctuations of sexual attraction. We have seen that in 'the time of peace' the two principal transfers were 'snuff-box' and bridewealth. Today the position is different and the rights transferred by the marriage payments are different. For simplicity we may discuss the latter payment first. Bridewealth is still recognized but, as can be seen from Table V, is paid in only about four per cent of all marriages. It consists of a payment of one or more beasts or £6 made by the man to his wife's father.[16] If only one cow is offered and it dies before calving, it must be replaced. Some indication of the range of variation in amounts paid is given by Table VI. 583 178

This sample of only twelve payments is very small, but there is some indication that the amount paid has decreased in recent years. This is of interest in view of the general rise in the standard of wealth and in the amount offered as legalization payment.

By the payment of bridewealth a man ensures that all the children of his wife, by whatever genitor, shall, or rather ought to, belong to his group of relatives and live in his village when they grow up. The payment is made only after several children have been born. In the old days, if this payment was made, the children were legitimate and lived in their father's segment, and if it was not paid they could be claimed by their mother's father's segment. In these days there is no such hard and fast rule. Everyone has in effect a large choice of places where he can live, and the payment or non-payment of bridewealth for his mother is only one factor operating with many others in influencing his decisions. It is not surprising that so few people pay bridewealth. [851]

[16] For comparative figures for the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Native standards of living and African cultural change', *Africa* xi (1938), 3, supplement, p. 33.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 586 Bridewealth is not often returned. A man does not usually consider offering the payment until he is fairly sure that his marriage is a stable and happy one, with little likelihood of divorce. Divorce is more the time for paying bridewealth than for taking it back. If a man has had children by a wife whom he later divorces, then,

Table V. Incidence of bridewealth, by decades

583 178

Bridewealth	Date of marriage									Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–49	Not known	
Offered and accepted ..	–	1	2	2	3	2	2	–	–	12
Offered but refused ..	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1
Not offered ..	1	12	26	53	61	56	113	17	8	347
Total	1	13	28	56	64	58	115	17	8	360
Ratio of offers to total number	0%	8%	7%	5%	5%	3%	2%	0%	—	4%
Not known if offer was made or accepted ..	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

Table VI. Magnitude of bridewealth, by decades

Amount paid	Date of marriage								Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	
Beasts: 1 ..	—	—	—	1	1	2	1	—	5
2 ..	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
3 ..	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
6 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
8 ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
£6 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	2
Total ..	0	1	2	2	3	2	2	0	12

Informants as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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The third payment we have to consider in modern marriage is 'snuff-box', and this nowadays is not important. The word is used in two senses. It may be an alternative name for the legaliza-

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178

Table VII. Magnitude of legalization payment, by decades

Amount paid	Date of marriage									Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	
Beads	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
Cloth	—	1	5	3	—	—	—	—	—	9
A chicken	—	1	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	6
Sheep:										
1	—	—	—	2	1	1	—	—	—	4
3	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Goats:										
1	—	—	—	9	6	3	1	—	—	19
2	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	3
A beast	—	2	—	3	1	3	2	—	—	11
Total non-monetary payments	0	4	7	24	9	8	3	0	0	55
1*s.*	—	—	1	2	1	—	1	—	—	5
2*s.*	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	3
2*s.* 6*d.*	—	—	1	—	—	2	—	—	—	3
3*s.*	—	—	—	1	2	—	1	—	—	4
4*s.*	—	—	—	—	3	—	2	—	—	5
5*s.*	—	—	2	1	4	2	2	—	—	11
6*s.*	—	—	—	1	2	2	—	—	—	5
7*s.*	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
7*s.* 6*d.*	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
9*s.*	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	2
10*s.*	—	—	1	2	5	4	8	—	1	21
12*s.*	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	2
15*s.*	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
£1	—	—	1	—	2	2	4	—	1	10
£1. 10*s.*	—	—	1	1	1	4	49	8	—	64
£2	—	—	—	1	—	1	5	—	—	7
£2. 5*s.*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
£3	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	3	—	5
£3. 10*s.*	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	3

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

£4	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	2
£5	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
£6	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	2
Total monetary payments	0	0	8	10	24	21	80	13	3	159
Unknown	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2
Grand total	1	4	15	34	33	30	83	13	3	216
Median value of monetary payments	—	—	5*s.*	8*s.*	6*s.*	10*s.*	£1.10*s.*	£1.10*s.*	—	£1.10*s.*
Arithmetic means	—	—	9*s.* 6*d.*	12*s.*	13*s.*	20*s.*	29*s.* 6*d.*	41*s.*	14*s.*	24*s.* 6*d.*

Informants as in Table VIII

tion payment, where the payment is made in kind, that is, one beast, and not in money. This is a straightforward continuation of the old usage, for we have seen that it was by the payment of 'snuff-box', consisting of one beast, that a man established his exclusive sexual rights over his wife. Nowadays few people offer a beast as legalization payment. The word can be used in another sense to indicate any small present made by the man to the wife's father at the beginning of the marriage negotiations, as an indication that he intends to make the proper and more substantial legalization payment later on. A present of this kind is not recoverable, and consists of a shilling, a half-crown, a chicken, tobacco or a cloth. It conveys no rights at all.[18]

The legalization payment by no means completely transfers the woman to her husband's group. Her kinsfolk retain an active interest in her welfare, and are her refuge from her husband's wrath. They intervene to preserve the marriage when otherwise it would end in hatred and divorce. The husband must see that they are formally told whenever his wife becomes pregnant, and if she dies

[18] These small presents are also called *camulomo*, or *cavulamulomo*, literally in Nsenga, 'the thing of opening a lip'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 in childbirth the husband is held to be responsible at least in part.
593 He must pay one cow[19] to the dead woman's kin to appease them. It is said that if bridewealth has been paid the man need not pay another beast, but that the woman's relatives would take a beast from the bridewealth and kill that in order to mourn their kinswoman.

593 The separation of interest that continues even after a marriage has been contracted is demonstrated by the payments which husband and wife are required to make to each other. Although they use many things in common, their possessions are thought of as belonging either to the one or the other. A man may own chickens, although his wife looks after them for him, while a woman may own a beast and let her husband care for it. If husband and wife quarrel the one who apologizes may offer a chicken to the other to make peace. These payments are in part enforced by public opinion

Table VIII. Incidence of legalization payment, by decades

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Legalization payment	Date of marriage									Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	
Offered and accepted ..	1	4	15	34	33	30	83	13	3	216
Offered but refused	–	–	–	1	–	1	3	–	–	5
Not offered ..	–	9	12	21	29	27	30	3	4	135
Total	1	13	27	56	62	58	116	16	7	356
Ratio of offers to total number ..	100%	31%	56%	63%	53%	53%	74%	81%	—	62%
Not known if offer was made or accepted ..	1	3	7	6	14	11	17	8	3	70
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

124

Informants

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	122	135	90·4
Women	232	251	92·4
Total	354	386	91·7

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 122

[19] Called *mulumo*, from the Nsenga verb, *ku-luma*, to bite or chew. The corresponding payment among the Cewa is said to be called *mtupa* or *nthupa*. Cf. Young, op. cit., p. 62.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

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badly that she had had to go to hospital. She produced a letter from the White doctor by way of evidence. Ruth's father testified that Ruth was the first wife Zachariah had married, yet despite this he fought her and did not fight with his second wife Naomi. Ruth asked the court to divorce her as she feared she would be killed by Zachariah. A court councillor said that although she and her husband had been to the court before with their troubles, it was not the work of the court to force men and women to divorce one another but to instruct them how to live together in peace. Zachariah was ordered to pay two pounds damages to Ruth and ten shillings fine to the court. Zachariah agreed to pay the fine but refused to pay the damages. The chief, who was in court at the time, asked him if he said this because of his royal descent-name. If Zachariah persisted in his attitude the chief would write to his employer and tell him to deduct the money from his wages. Zachariah then said he would send a boy back to collect the two pounds from his village.

Ruth went to her own village. About this time Zachariah was transferred to another area, distant from Ruth's village. In November Ruth's father began to complain that the two pounds had not yet been paid and said that Zachariah was trying to trap his wife by not visiting her, hoping she would commit adultery.

In February 1948 Ruth took out a summons against Zachariah for failing to come and visit her despite the ruling of the court in October that they were not to be divorced. The summons was sent to Zachariah in another county and Zachariah wrote back to a court councillor to say that he would not come to court as he had heard that Ruth was committing adultery with a certain man. On receiving the letter the chief said nothing could be done about it until Zachariah decided to bring an action for adultery against Ruth.

By this time Zachariah had acquired another wife and when in March he was given leave he took the new wife to his own village where his second wife Naomi had been living all the time.

In December 1948 Ruth brought an action against Zachariah for divorce on the ground of his desertion. Three times the case was down for hearing but Zachariah never appeared. The court then divorced Ruth with no damages to pay.

Hearing this Zachariah went to the District Officer and asked why his wife had been divorced without his knowledge. The District Officer referred him to the chief. Zachariah wrote a rather facetious letter to the chief challenging his right to divorce Ruth. The court clerk read the letter and said that Zachariah ought to be fined for insulting the chief. He observed that Ruth's mother had died in September and that Zachariah must be a cruel man as he had not gone to offer his condolences.

586 It is easier for a woman to prove desertion in a case like this where the man is living in the rural area, than when he is away in the town working and writes sporadically if at all. The court feels that it is under an obligation to the migrant labourers of the tribe not to divorce their wives too easily. But if a husband is in the area and could perfectly easily go and see his wife, it is much easier to demonstrate that the desertion is deliberate and sustained, and not merely forced on a man by the exigencies of earning a living.

586 178 We have seen that the two main grounds for divorce are adultery and desertion. Some Whites express this by saying that these are the main causes of divorce among the Ngoni and other tribes. The Ngoni do not see the matter in this light. The cause of divorce to them is the presence of the White group. Old men deplore the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

apparent ease with which women get divorces and councillors say that they divorce people only because the Administration would interfere if they did not. We can see that in one sense the Ngoni analysis is correct. Whatever may be the precipitating causes of particular divorces, one basic factor is that the old social order in which divorce was rare has been replaced, through a series of events beginning with the White conquest, by a different form of social structure in which wives are relatively mobile from one husband to another. Adultery and desertion lead to divorce because it is no longer necessary to tie down the fertility of women to definite points in a segmentary system based on patrilineal descent, and this is so because the system no longer exists. It is true that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Missions do not recognize divorce but ecclesiastical ceremonies have no force in law, either in the eyes of the Administration or of the Native Courts, and the sanctions utilized by these missions do not entirely prevent their members seeking divorce. 586 198

Immediately after a divorce the couple usually wish to have little to do with one another. After the passage of years the hostility between them fades away and they may talk to one another in the ordinary course of village life. They continue to address each other as *husband* and *wife* and their children, although nominally in the custody of one group or the other continue to visit back and forth and keep the parents informed of each other's doings. A woman now married elsewhere may return to her former husband when their son comes home on leave from work. In her old age a woman may even go back to the man from whom she was divorced a long time ago if she has no one else to turn to for shelter and assistance. More frequently she follows her children to where they are living in her former husband's village but has little to do with him directly, only through their children. 586

8. Co-wives 593

We have seen that the rights of a man over his wife's sexual activities are different from hers over his. Whereas a woman who commits adultery pays damages to her husband, he does not pay her when he commits adultery. This lack of symmetry derives from the polygynous nature of the Ngoni marriage system. A man can always argue that he is seeking another wife, even if the woman he is running after is married to someone else. It is considered no business of his wife to interfere. She may attempt to stop him but all she can use are domestic and mystical sanctions, she cannot appeal to the law. Again, a wife has no right to the sexual monopoly of her husband and cannot prevent him from taking additional wives except by making his life with her so difficult that he decides to abandon the attempt. 595 [684]

As can be seen from Table III, about one man in seven has two or more wives. Although the Christian Missions do not tolerate 595 199

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

595 polygyny, and punish their members who take additional wives,
794 there are still a number of Christian polygynists who for most purposes align themselves with the Christian group.

As in the old days, the wives of a polygynist are ranked in the
595 chronological order of marriage, the first wife married being the
178 great wife. If, however, bridewealth has been paid, the wives married
[583] in this way are all senior to those who are married without it. The arrangement by which a barren or aged wife was given a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) has now almost disappeared. A young girl may still be indicated as a linked co-wife designate at the gall bladder ceremony of her kinswoman and the intestines placed round her neck, but this is now a mere ceremonial, and the girl marries elsewhere when she grows up. As mentioned above a chief negotiated recently for a linked co-wife on the strength of bridewealth paid by his father, but with no success.

593 A man makes his headquarters in his great wife's hut, and keeps
595 his possessions and money in it. During the day it is considered proper that he should sit and chat or entertain visitors on the verandah of her hut. Her hut is likely to be of better design than those of her co-wives, and she is more likely than they to have a separate kitchen. When her husband returns from a journey, he ought to go first to her hut, and if he has brought back goods from Southern Rhodesia, it is in her house that he stores his loads until he has time to divide them among his wives and relatives. A visitor from afar goes first to the great wife's hut and there asks for the man he is seeking. In her husband's absence it is she who must entertain the visitor. This pattern of precedence is followed to greater or lesser extent despite quarrels between husband and wife, and is not affected by where the husband actually sleeps at night.

Apart from this emphasis on the importance of the great wife, the
595 correct behaviour for a man with many wives is impartiality. He must sleep with each wife in rotation, usually for a week at a time, and must not confide in one wife the secrets of his relationship to another. Relationships between co-wives are sometimes strained, and one may use medicines against the others. The medicine[28]
[830] believed to prevent a man from achieving erection with anyone other than the woman who gives it to him is sometimes used by one wife against another. On the other hand, some co-wives help each other in their gardens and many polygynists' households run smoothly. Each wife has her own hut and her own garden and it is possible for them to arrange their affairs so that they can co-operate or act separately as they find best. If they persistently quarrel
[591] their husband may deem it well for them to live in separate villages, so that for example a man may live virilocally with his great wife and uxorilocally with his second wife, going from one village to the

[28] Possibly known as *ndamanga*. The details of this medicine are not known by many men, and I was unable to question any women on this matter.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and widows are subject to the same restrictions
581 and wear the same signs of mourning whether or not their deceased
583 husbands made any payments. The absence of payments does not
[165] automatically deny to a man and woman the status of husband and wife any more than the completed payments automatically ensure marital happiness.

583 As reflected in Table XII, the proportion of marriages in which
581 no payments are offered has decreased in the last twelve years,
ans we know from Table VIII that this is due to an increase in the
595 number of marriages in which the legalization payment is made. It is therefore possible in future there will be a clearer division between marriage, with its legalization payment, and concubinage, with no such payment and with a completely different relationship between the sexual partners and between their respective groups of relatives. We are not in this paper concerned specifically with concubinage and prostitution, but it may at this point be useful to point out that not many women are concubines. In our sample, as set out in Table IV, there was only one concubine, a wedded woman, among 223 wedded women. From Table III, we see that there were no men at all, in our sample of 116 wedded men, living with concubines. The paramour of the concubine in our sample was resident on a nearby farm, and so did not come into the sample of men.

583 *4. Co-operation between affines*

585 The payments and ceremonies of marriages are isolated and memorable events. The ceremonies are public in that neighbours

583 178

Table XII. Incidence of marriage without payment, by decades

Marriage payment	Date of marriage									
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	Total
At least one payment offered	1	6	17	37	38	34	86	14	5	238
None offered ..	–	7	11	19	26	24	29	3	3	122
Ratio of marriages without offer of payment to total	0%	54%	39%	34%	41%	41%	25%	18%	—	34%
Not known if any payments offered	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.105]

CHAPTER V

SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS

1. *Old and new marriage*

WE HAVE described marriage at two periods in Ngoni history, as it was in the 1890's and as it is now. The differences we have found between the two periods are not due to chance except in the sense in which we may speak of all historical incidents as being partly due to chance and partly determined by the limiting conditions imposed by the past. Changes in the field of Ngoni marriage have been paralleled by changes in other aspects of Ngoni social life, have been influenced by other changes and have in turn influenced them. Throughout Ngoni history men and women have always married, but the society in which they married has changed. Marriage in the time of peace was appropriate, more or less, to the general ordering of social life in those days, and modern marriage is appropriate, again more or less, to the social structure of today.

Our task is then a threefold one. We have to show the relationship between old marriage and the rest of the old society, a similar relationship between modern marriage and modern society, and the process by which the transition from one set of conditions to the other has come about. We have outlined in Chapter II some of the internal and external factors responsible for this transition, and the nature of the material available to us on the 1890 period has led us, in Chapter I, to describe the old system largely in analytic terms. In this chapter we shall attempt to clarify our picture of the past in the light of an analysis of modern marriage.

In the old days the residential system provided the framework for political and lineage ties. Marriage was a legitimate means whereby children were recruited into segments of the system. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of fertility from the woman's kin to her husband's kin. Adultery was punishable by death, and divorce was rare. Affinal ties cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system, but while these ties were important, a man could not transfer his allegiance to his wife's or to his mother's group. A man who quarrelled with his kinsmen could not move to another village to live, but could only hive off to form a dependent but recognizable cluster of his own, which still remained part of the same residential segment.

The material apparatus belonging to the system, that is, the great villages with hundreds of huts and central cattle byres, was to a large extent destroyed in 1898 by the British. A few important people in the system were killed, and many of the cattle looted. With the establishment of British rule, it was physically possible for the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178
648

Ngoni to rebuild their old system, yet they did not do so. The social conditions that permitted the old system to operate had disappeared.

The most important new factor was the presence of the Administration in political control of the area and backed by a superior technology. Tribal warfare was no longer possible, so that recruitment into the tribe by capture ceased. Frontiers and land boundaries were established, and free movement across the face of Africa ended. Instead men went off in parties to work in the mines, and either returned or were lost to the tribe. The internal structure of the state was modified by the creation of new posts held by Ngoni and by the actions and exhortations of Administrative officers who did not fully understand the operation of the old system and who were themselves bound by the general plan of Native Administration decided on for the Territory as a whole. The sanctions available to chiefs and headmen were severely curtailed, and in particular they were prevented from killing adulterers. Unrelated groups of neighbours were forced to amalgamate into single villages, while other populated areas were cleared and the land made over to White farmers who began employing labourers from near and far. Cewa captives returned to their old areas while other Cewa entered the area as labourers or seeking places to make their villages. At the same time as these new elements were intruding into the system, mobility within it by traditional processes became more difficult. The old political structure held together because there was provision within it for promotion and demotion, for vertical as well as horizontal social mobility. Successful warriors were rewarded by the chief, and made lieutenants and regional governors. After 1898 this was no longer possible. The chief lost his power to allocate people as dependants to an important or ambitious man, and as it became futile for men to struggle for position within the old system, so they began to struggle outside it, in the Administration, the churches, farms and mines.[1]

These were new phenomena, without structural equivalents in the old order. The most important change was the loss of sovereignty, but this in itself did not directly impinge on the field of marriage. It was no longer possible to divide up the kingdom in terms of the great royal villages under the leadership of senior queens, for the Paramount Chief was a young boy and a Catholic, and by the time he had acquired a number of queens, boundaries had already been drawn and the formation of new villages controlled by the Administration. Royal marriage has ceased to have the political significance that it had in the old days. This is attributable to the confinement of the kingdom within the geographical and administrative bounds of the larger system. But we know from other areas

[1] Cf. Barnes, 'Some aspects of political development among the Fort Jameson Ngoni', *African Studies*, vii (1948), pp. 104-108, 108-109.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

But we know from other areas 121
that loss of sovereignty itself does not necessarily disrupt the marriage arrangements of common people and we must look elsewhere for an explanation.

2. Movement between villages

The old villages formed part of the residential system, and their 621
structure was maintained by the power of the central chieftainship, as expressed through the lieutenants of the royal villages, and by the diffuse sanction of public opinion based on ideas held in common as to the rights conferred by the payment of bridewealth. Nowadays the lieutenants of the royal villages have very much less power, and [178] bridewealth is not often paid. The village is held together by the various ties of kinship and affinity between its members, and to a slight extent by the restriction of movement from one village to another. This control, exercised by the Administration through the [648] system of registration of adult males, is largely ineffective except in the Resettlement Areas.[1] Men and women are more or less free to live wherever they can find relatives, and if they quarrel in one village they can move to another where they hope life will be more pleasant. There is no general rule to which appeal can be made concerning whether a married couple should live uxorilocally or virilocally. Hence a quarrel between man and wife or between affinally related people may lead to a split in the village, and the dissident section may attempt to form a village of its own or attach itself to another village. It is therefore in the interests of the [620] headman that quarrels in his village should be settled as rapidly as possible, and he has therefore an interest in the private lives of his people even though they may not be his close relatives. His interests are represented by his lieutenants and are shared by everyone in the village who wishes his own to be a large prosperous and happy village. The theme of the good and happy village recurs in many [143] of the formal situations of Ngoni life and finds expression in much of local action on a village basis, as for example in the competitive dances, the division of food at a ceremony and the organization of the religious sects.

We find therefore that the headman and his lieutenants participate [620] in the ceremonies of marriage and in marital quarrels. Conversely the headman is brought into relationship with the married couple by the allocation to him of pots of beer whenever there is a general distribution even though he may not be at the ceremony. Other important men and women similarly participate merely because of their common membership of the village. For example, a hoeing party was led by a middle-aged woman who was described as 'an important person' in the son-in-law's village. She was in fact

[1] Areas which have been reopened to settlement by Ngoni and other tribes since 1941 with various restrictions on agricultural methods and on population. About ten per cent of Ngoni live in Resettlement Areas.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 related to him but her participation was explained in terms of her status as an 'important person' and not in terms of this relationship.

591 A man can move from his village to his wife's village if he or she has quarrelled with his kinsfolk, and a quarrel with her relatives may
•178 cause them to move in the reverse direction. These shifts from one kind of residence to another occurred in a different context in the old system. We have seen that there was sometimes a change from uxorilocal to virilocal residence, for at the beginning of his first marriage a man might leave his wife living uxorilocally until he had paid bridewealth. If there was a quarrel between a man and his wife's kin at this stage, they might try to delay his taking the woman to his own village, although they could not entirely prevent him from so doing. Hostility found expression in the desire to keep him under close surveillance, not in the desire to be rid of him. This old idea still persists to some extent, as we have seen in the story of Abner and Esther (p. 79). Esther wanted her husband Abner to live in her village so that her father could see that he looked after her well. A man may refuse to allow his daughter to move to her husband's village until he is satisfied that the young man is a good husband. This line of action, however, now applies only at the beginning of a marriage and in families where a man is determined to maintain his control over his growing children. When there is a quarrel involving a couple who have been married for a long time, it is then too late to hope that a man will improve his behaviour under the eye of his wife's father. If he quarrels with his father-in-law it is better that he should go and live in his own village.

The significance of the reverse move, from virilocality to uxorilocality, was different in the old system from what it is in the new. In the light of what we know of the South-Eastern Bantu and by reference to the present position among the Ngoni it seems probable that in the old days it did happen from time to time that a man sought refuge with his wife's agnates. Yet from the dearth of instances of this in my genealogical material it would seem that this cannot have occurred very often. Once a man had established himself in virilocal residence he usually stayed there. If he quarrelled with his kinsfolk all he could do was to move off and make his own segment distinct from those of his brothers; he could not seek permanent shelter with his wife's kinsfolk. Nowadays he can do so, and it may be easier for him to change to uxorilocal residence than
621 to try to form his own group. In the old days the transition from
178 what we now call a cluster to a division or from a division to a village was a gradual one. Spatial separation between minor segments of the same order was initially a matter of yards and with successive moves in the tribal migration became a matter of miles. Nowadays
648 there is a definite number of villages recognized by the Administration
361 and a man who establishes his own residential cluster of huts is, or at least was until very recently, in danger of punishment for not living in a recognized village. For many years there was an

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village. 648 361 591

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[24] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers. [554]

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased. 591 621 [178]

3. Polygyny

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organise large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance 595 178 [556] [564] [592]

[24] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an expression more of their different matrilateral affiliations than of the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother, although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by his first and third wives [8] were reared by their father's fourth wife's mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of his children. This division is in accord with the statement made frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's. Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace', however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft-reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The facility with which married couples live uxorilocally is no doubt partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxorilocal Cewa and other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

4. *The moral significance of sexual activity*

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die, and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

[8] See above, p. 109

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated with political allegience, and therefore it was inappropriate that her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genetricem* in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genetricem* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem* and bridewealth rights *in genetricem*. Rights *in genetricem* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genetricem* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*.

Whereas the rights *in genetricem* were definite in the old system, in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme they were related to position in a residential system of which one of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession. With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another, and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups, for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people, some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as well as to her husband and his kin, while a man tries to enlist the support of his own kin but not usually of his wife's kin if the dispute has nothing to do with marital affairs. At birth and death the division of labour and responsibility is mainly on sex lines. In general we may say that the elementary family does not emerge as a grouping of importance because there is no system of elementary families in which it can do so. Village is posed against village in dances, songs, the collection of tax, hunts, division of food, and so on. In other situations, one group of kinsmen act as a body in distinction to another group of kinsmen who are their affines. We have demonstrated this for the ceremonial situations of marriage and for the resolution of quarrels. In the intimacies of the hut, man and wife are in a simple and specific dyadic relationship which does not admit of substitution. To some extent, their infant, from conception to weaning, is a helpless appendage of this relationship. From weaning on, children acquire other social relationships of their own. The distinction drawn between marriage and the care of children is well illustrated by the remark made by an old widow when I asked her why she did not marry again. She replied 'I am now too old for marriage. My job is to look after children.' The missions encourage men and women to bring up and care for their own children, particularly where the children's grandparents are pagan. At the same time the importance of the economic ties that link every Ngoni household with the rest of the world is increasing and it is easier for men to find extra money when they are young and middle-aged than when they become grandparents. These two factors may lead to an increase in the importance of the elementary family, but it is also possible that the number of children sent home from Southern Rhodesia to their grandparents may grow as more women go there to join their husbands, thus increasing the responsibilities of the old towards their young grandchildren.

9. Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce

We have seen that whereas in the old days divorce was infrequent, it is now comparatively common. We have also seen that prior to 1898 the kinship structure of the Ngoni was based on localized agnatic and quasi-agnatic lineages, for the captor-captive relationship was similar to that between father and child. These lineages are now no longer effective social groups, and individuals act and live together with cognates and affines related to them in a variety of ways. This parallel change in divorce frequency and in kinship structure provides confirmation for the hypothesis put forward by Gluckman that divorce is rare and difficult in tribes organized on a system of marked father-right, and frequent and easy to obtain in other types.* This hypothesis was suggested by a comparison of different tribes which Gluckman divides into two types. Among

* Gluckman, op. cit., p. 100.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

others, the Zulu and Nuer have agnatic lineages and rare divorce, while the Lozi and Ila lack agnatic lineages and have frequent divorce. The Ngoni before 1898 appear to belong to the first type and the Ngoni of the present-day to the second. In 'the time of peace' the fertility of the married woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth to her husband's lineage segment, and the children whom she produced were recruits to that segment. Her agnates could never claim the children for their matrilateral segment. Associated with this system were the levirate, the sororate, and the right to enforce betrothal on pain of the return of gifts. The simple legal family was a relatively stable unit, and its position within the lineage segment was determined rigidly by the ranking of co-wives. Divorce was rare and could be effected only on the initiative of the husband. By contrast the affiliation of children nowadays is not fixed, and the very groups themselves to which they would formerly have attached themselves are no longer important. The children borne by a woman, whatever marriage payments have or have not been made for her, are potential recruits to local kin groups led by a variety of different relatives. Compared with the past, the simple legal family is unstable and divorce is frequent and easy. As might be expected, the levirate and sororate and enforceable betrothal, the trappings of the old system, have declined in importance.

Gluckman also suggests that in general, marriage payments fall in value with the decreasing dominance of patrilineal descent, although he cites the Ila as a virilocal people with high marriage payments, no agnatic lineages and frequent divorce. He regards the influence of property on marriage payments as secondary, but writes: 'On this hypothesis, which needs more testing, the amount of goods transferred and the divorce rate tend to be directly associated, but both are rooted in the kinship structure. It is rare divorce which allows high marriage payment, rather than high marriage payment which prevents divorce.'[7] The Ngoni material suggests that payments, kinship structure and divorce frequency are connected and that among them, as among the Ila, frequent divorce does not preclude high payments.

We may distinguish three phases in the history of Ngoni marriage payments. Prior to 1898 bridewealth varied in amount from one to a dozen beasts, depending on the status of the woman's father. In addition, recently captured women were married, both by men of high and low status, without payment of cattle. There is no indication that divorce was any less rare in one section of the community than another. In our pre-1898 sample, as set out in Table I, only one marriage out of eighteen ended in divorce, despite the absence of payments in half the marriages. It is true that in the single instance of divorce there were no marriage payments, yet even this marriage does not suggest marital instability as we

[7] Gluckman, op. cit., pp. 192, 200.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have been discussing it. Divorce took place because the man, a recently captured Kunda, ran away back to his former tribe leaving his wife, daughter of one of Mpezeni's lieutenants, behind in her father's village. In 'the time of peace' marriages were stable, with or without payment. The wealthy men were the politically important men, and indeed Wiese's assertion that men married off their daughters so as to gain the maximum number of cattle[8] may be based on the behaviour of socially ambitious fathers in what was largely an upward-mobile society. Political affiliation effected by marriage was ratified by a transfer of wealth appropriate to its importance in the general field of political and social relations. Divorce frequency and kinship structure were the same for rich and poor, aristocrats and captives, and were neutral factors in determining the amount of marriage payment.

The second phase began immediately after the war of 1898 and lasted until about 1930. At the beginning of this period the tribe as a whole was poorer than it has been before or since. Many cattle were looted in the war and for a long time there was little money in circulation. The majority of marriages without payment were contracted during this phase, and it seems reasonable to associate this in part with the poverty of the people. It is difficult to make any precise estimate of divorce frequency at this time, although we know that many Cewa and Nsenga women who had been married before 1898 deserted their husbands and returned home when British control was established. There does not seem to be any evidence for supposing that at this period women moved from one husband to another within the confines of the Ngoni kingdom more quickly than they do now. It is perhaps safe to say that the low level of payments was due partly to poverty but also partly to the general uncertainty about the future, about the kind of society which the White Administration was building for the Ngoni. Evans-Pritchard has stressed that 'It is morals that censure divorce and law that refuses to recognize grounds for divorce which ensure the stability of the union of husband and wife.'[9] The laws and moral code that had been enforced by the old chieftainship had been shaken by the defeat of 1898. The payment of bridewealth had defined legitimate expectations of behaviour, obligations and rights, within an organized system of social relations which had been shattered. While many Ngoni must still have regarded marriage with payment of bridewealth as morally right and desirable, they must also have been aware of the greatly increased risk they were running when making these payments, even if they had the cattle to make them. Rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* which were socially recognized but could not be enforced through the machinery of the State were hardly

[8] See above, p. 3, footnote 3.
[9] Evans-Pritchard, 'Social character of bride-wealth, with special reference to the Azande', *Man*, xxxiv (1934), p. 174.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[10] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group, so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes. Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[10] *Ibid*, p. 172.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rare divorce, has survived despite loss of sovereignty, territorial dispersal, economic impoverishment, high incidence of labour migration, and frequent adultery and illegitimacy.[11] The Ngoni, subjected to similar external processes, but in addition surrounded by matrilineal peoples and themselves largely of matrilineal origin, have lost their agnatic affiliation and, with it, stable marriage.

It is difficult to see exactly where this trend will lead. The third phase, as I have characterized it, is a recent development. There does not seem to have been any sharp rise in marriage payments until the 1939-45 war. During the war many Ngoni men earned higher wages than ever before in the Army and in industry. It may have been this that was decisive in raising the level of payments. It will be remembered that the thirty shillings minimum for the legalization payment was fixed by law during the war. It may, however, be suggested that if it is hoped by raising the level of payments to achieve stability in marriage, this hope is in vain. Payments may rise if people are in a position to pay more. Higher wages permit higher marriage payments without necessitating further changes in economic life, but in fact these changes are already taking place. Money is needed for more clothes, more food, more education, as well as for higher marriage payments. Payments rise as Africans participate increasingly in the general money economy of Southern Africa. The more they participate, the less marriage is constrained by a kinship structure based on morally significant face-to-face relations between agnates. The higher payments rise the more frequent becomes divorce. This is not a long-term prognosis, for I have indicated above that affiliation is not the only possible determining factor, and it is clear that if more people align themselves with those missions which do not permit divorce, the frequency of divorce as a whole may decline. There are other possibilities, but it seems to me unlikely that any of these other social mechanisms will become effective quickly; therefore the most probable concomitant of a rise in marriage payments in the immediate future is more frequent divorce.

Thus we see that at least for the Ngoni, changes in the amount and distribution of property have had a marked effect on the level of marriage payments, and that this effect can to some extent be isolated from that due to changes in kinship structure and in divorce frequency.

10. Attempts to resist change

The major structural changes taking place in Ngoni society in the last fifty years have not come about entirely unopposed. The Administration, the missions, and the Ngoni people themselves have noticed from year to year how the old order was changing and with varying success have made attempts to control the direction of change.

[11] Cf. information from Kark cited by Gluckman, op. cit., p. 204, footnote 1

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 648 change. In the field of marriage we have seen that it was the conscious intervention of the Administration which forced the abolition of the death penalty for adultery. It is to some extent due to the Administration, with its emphasis that women must have rights equal to those of men, that divorce is more frequent than it was, though this result does not seem to have been planned. In the eyes of the Administration the important fact is that it is more difficult for a woman to get a divorce among the Ngoni than among the Cewa. Of recent years it has been more concerned with the increase in concubinage, prostitution and juvenile delinquency in the towns, and has introduced measures designed to check the flow of women and children from the rural areas to the towns. As we have seen, one result has been that it is possible for rights *in genetricem* to be enforced in inter-tribal marriages, and bridewealth has therefore more significance in these marriages than in marriages within the tribe.

889 181 The Ngoni people themselves have, on the whole, accepted the changes passively and regretfully. The one deliberate constructive action appears to have been the law made in about 1944 that the legalization payment shall be at least thirty shillings. Apart from this, the Ngoni appear to have been overwhelmed by events. The frustrations of the present time are all attributed to the coming of the Whites, and this in turn provides the reason why nothing can be done to change things. The past, 'the time of peace', is glorified and simplified, and to some extent reinterpreted in terms of the new values which have been acquired in the interim. Thus, some informants said that the Ngoni never fought other tribes, but only invited people to join the Ngoni kingdom. People like to assert dogmatically that adulterers were always killed, that every man always paid bridewealth, that women always married whom they were told, and only reluctantly admit, on closer questioning, that there were sometimes exceptions to these rules. The imputed rules of the past have become the 'customs' of the present, and the adjective *Ngoni* is applied not to what the Ngoni people do today but to what they like to think they did in the virtuous past. *Ngoni* marriage (*ukwati wacingoni*) is marriage in which all the ceremonial observances are carried out in detail, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth are paid, the woman is obedient and fertile, the man dutiful and respectful towards his wife's parents, and in which the couple 'live well together'. This is contrasted with modern marriage (*ukwati wamakono*) in which there is no bridewealth, few ceremonies, little attention paid to obligations towards kin, and in which the woman sues successfully for divorce. Modern marriage is an invention of the Whites, designed to worry the Ngoni. The Whites have conquered the Ngoni, they are the owners of the country, and there is nothing to be done except to keep alive the knowledge of the past.[18]

[18] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', and 'Traditions and prestige . . .', *passim*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This attitude of resignation, while still very common, has to some extent been replaced by a more constructive attitude among members of the Native Authority bureaucracy. Chiefs, councillors and other officials have considerable political power and are encouraged to use it by the Administration, whose policy it is to strengthen the hand of the Native Authority.[18] Court members introduce changes in law with some confidence, although this is still done under the guise of a re-enforcement of a forgotten traditional law. Chiefs, under increasing pressure from their people and the Administration, endeavour to take action to modify social life in their areas. As yet political action is not very sophisticated, and the workings of the Administration are not well understood. In those fields of activity where Administrative interest is strongest, such as price control, food production, and the amalgamation of villages, the Ngoni response tends to be in moral rather than in political terms. It is wrong that the price of maize should be so low, the good man knows best how to cultivate his own garden, people in a village must live peacefully together. By contrast, in the field of marriage, where the Administration is comparatively disinterested, and where the wishes of the Administration, missions and Ngoni do to a large extent coincide, the bureaucracy has been able to act in a more positive manner. The thirty shillings law is one of the rare legislative acts of the Ngoni chiefs and people, and it is significant that the law was not made until 1944, fifteen years after the passing of the Native Authorities Ordinance. It is said that the law was made so that women could be punished for adultery in the same way as men. At the meeting at which the law was agreed upon, it was also decided that bridewealth should be a minimum of six pounds or one cow. Whereas the ruling about legalization payments is still remembered and increasingly followed, the bridewealth rule has been largely forgotten. This attempt to check adultery by increasing the legalization payment was in general agreement with the wishes of the Administration and more or less with the wishes of the missions. It was possible to envisage a decrease in adultery due to a clarification of rights *in uxorem* without any other major structural changes, whereas the re-introduction of bridewealth as a universal payment could only be envisaged in terms of a return to the patrilineal virilocal residential system of 'the time of peace'. It would hardly have been possible for the Native Authority to have restored the old system had they wished to do so. Ngoni village life is now part of a system wider than the chiefdom and there are other ways of acquiring wealth and status than within the residential system and at the pleasure of the Paramount Chief.

11. *Marriage in an omnidirectional kinship system*

We may characterize the change from the old order to the new

[18] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. 'Some aspects of political development . . .'

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 as one from a graded segmentary society organized on a basis of patrilineal descent and modified by political promotion to a society of villages organized on a basis of omnidirectional kinship. In the past a man lived in the same place as his father and in charge of the
591 segment allocated to him by his father. Now a man lives where he
611 can find relatives of one kind or another who may be related to him
602 agnatically, cognatically, affinally, or by any combination of these ways. He is not even restricted to consanguineal relatives, as in
571 cognatic kinship systems, for he can affiliate himself to some person
178 who is linked cognatically neither to him or to any of his potential descendants, as when he goes to live with his father's wife's mother's brother. Genealogical connexion can be traced along all possible paths and there are no mechanisms by which one path is automatically favoured or by which the length of a path is restricted. In consequence the genealogical constitution of any local group of relatives is complex, and every man is a potential recruit to many local groups. He selects between the numerous possibilities open to him on the basis of his own inclinations and in response to the various pressures exerted on him by his siblings, his parents, his wife, her parents, and others. Once he has made his choice he can always change his mind and move elsewhere if he finds his neighbours
[556] irksome. His wealth, either in cattle or money, is his own and he can take it with him when he moves. There are no rights in land
[423] (with the one exception of dry season gardens) which might otherwise tie him to one particular spot. As with residence, so with marriage
581 payments, the formal and informal procedures of marriages, and the values associated with them. In all, considerable variation is tolerated. Indeed, we may well regard variation as a necessity in
571 this system, for every man is subject to a mass of potential conflicting claims and he cannot possibly honour them all simultaneously. Variation occurs not because of different practices by various sections of the population but rather because of different individual decisions. A man decides for himself whether or not he will pay bridewealth, or take a hoeing party to his wife's mother's garden, or be suspended from the sacraments for marrying a second wife. Yet although he makes these choices himself, he is all the time subject to social pressure from kinsfolk and neighbours who will be affected by his decisions and who therefore try to influence them. A woman is not quite so free as a man, but she too can make many decisions for herself, and her relatives must appeal to her if they wish to influence her, for they cannot force her against her will. Man and wife living together are in a unique relationship which is personal and non-transferable, yet they live in the midst of kinsfolk and the well-being of one relative is the concern of all. The quarrels of a married couple are a danger to the cohesion of the local group in which they live, while the longer they live together, fertile and peaceful, the greater the local solidarity.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

distributed among the women of the party as a recompense for carrying the beer. The married couple drink the beer but do not take any prominent part in the proceedings. The next day the man's father gives a beast or a goat or money to the leader of the party. The animal is killed and the women carry the meat back to their own village where it is divided up by some important relative of the wife. If some of the sprouted maize and flour that were prepared for the brewing remain over, the mother-in-law may brew again, and send it to her son-in-law as before. The second brew of beer is called 'offering'.[1]

606 431 273

Appendix V

ENTERING THE WIFE'S MOTHER'S HUT

As performed nowadays elements are combined from what formerly were two distinct ceremonies. The name of one of these, 'eating together' (*mzyelano*) is now not often heard and the combined ceremony is known by the name of the other, 'entering' (*mngeniso*). It represents the final stage in the acceptance of the man as a satisfactory son-in-law and marks the formal setting aside of the avoidance relationship between him and his wife's mother. It is performed in about one marriage in eight. I attended two of these ceremonies.

606 [118]

Some informants say that like the carrying of beer the ceremony of entering is not performed unless the legalization payment is made. However, I have recorded instances in which the ceremony was performed in the absence of any payment. It almost always occurs after beer has been carried to the man's village once or twice and when the man is living virilocally.

[583]

The parents of the woman send word to the village of the man that on such and such a day there will be beer brewed for him to enter the hut of his mother-in-law. On the day appointed the man and his wife go in procession with other people, singing and dancing, from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession traditionally should be led by the eldest child of the marriage, boy or girl, holding a club aloft, but this is not always done. The man's parents do not go with the party but stay behind in the village. On the outskirts of the woman's parents' village, the party may be met by people dancing out to meet them, and they sometimes pause to drink beer brought out to them. The dancing party go on into the cattle byre, or if there is no byre to some clear space on the fringe of the village. They enter the byre in a rough

[1] *Nzumbe*, an Nsenga word.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE REV. ALEXANDER HETHERWICK, D.D.

114 THE author of the following book has been for some years located among the Nyanja-speaking tribes of British Central Africa at Blantyre, and afterwards in Central Angoniland. His occupation as a member of the African Lakes Corporation has brought him into close contact with the native 122 population of these districts. He has taken advantage of his opportunities to familiarize himself with the native language, of which he has acquired a very competent knowledge. In the course of his 126 studies he made a collection of native folk-lore and stories which illustrate in the fullest degree the various constructions, idioms and grammatical forms of the language. These he has now published with the coöperation of the Directors of the Corporation.

121 The book is of value as containing examples of native life, habits and customs which are rapidly disappearing from the country before the advance of civilization and the work of Christian missions. The coming generation of natives will grow up under [198] new influences, and the habits of thought and belief that ruled the lives of their fathers will soon be forgotten. Collections of folk-lore such as this book contains are therefore invaluable for the light they throw on a state of native life that is rapidly passing away.

To get into the heart of the native mind is a task well-nigh impossible for a European. The nearest

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of European control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The *cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual* weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British. Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly", and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*ngoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

182 As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are [591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition. [606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
693 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their
184 colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here, unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with
692 real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are
671 bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
682 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done
183

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

175 814 is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few. We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of these providing the information.[4] The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in [195] the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope 212 that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin. 175 Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from con- 178 temporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grow shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that "the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory". From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

156 Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations, 182 as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

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4. Read and Wisenhutsen have pointed out that informants from Northern Nyasaland assert that their Paramount Chief is the late *Zwangendaba*, while those from Fort Jameson say that their Chief is the late. Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 46?, and Wisenhutsen, *Outline Histories*, p. 19.

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old indunas[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupulous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African territories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Marawi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

We have also to recognise that the wider connotation of the word is in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction of that name. 101 [829] [565]

III. Ngoni Society as a Cultural Unity. It is evident that the field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong centralized political organization. This society differs radically from that of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state', that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created social structure the principles of centralization and rank were dominant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of systematised law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, political, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history, 128 178 829 [105]

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hamlets. [621]

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *induna* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'tribal [304] [186]

178 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard
829 the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form-
[183] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state,
[177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship
[182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior
648 in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were
[161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[304] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-
[186] piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

difference to-day between the attitude of the Ngoni to the Europeans and that of the Chewa, for example. In the vernacular expression the Ngoni say, 'The Europeans spoiled our country'; the Chewa say, 'The Europeans saved us'.

Chantsabwi, then, was the period of Ngoni supremacy, when they established by force of arms their right to rule over the country and its indigenous inhabitants. There was, however, some difference between the political organization of the Ngoni as a conquering horde on the march, and their organization when they finally settled in their present areas. At both times the focus of their organization was warfare—they were a nation under arms. But once settled on land which they had chosen they began to spread a network of political organization over the country, and to plan in terms of 'countries'[1] instead of mobile villages. To-day when they discuss the advent of the Europeans and the consequent 'spoiling' of their country, they recall the days when extensive tribute was paid to their Paramount Chief, chiefs were free to choose good sites for their very big villages, the outlying areas were ruled by *indunas* and lesser chiefs. It was the partial breaking up of this centralized political organization which they regarded as 'spoiling their country', as well as the economic restrictions with regard to land and the prohibition of raiding for new supplies of cattle.

During this time of Ngoni supremacy Ngoni institutions flourished —those institutions which they had brought with them from the south and preserved through their wanderings. When they are telling to-day about these years they speak fervently and reverently of the part played by the Paramount Chief in every side of life, the training for warfare of all the young men, the instruction and supervision of young chiefs by old *indunas*, Ngoni marriage and initiation ceremonies. It was during this time in Mpezeni's country that the *Inqwala* or first fruits ceremony was regularly observed at Mtenguleni, the village of the mother of old Mpezeni.[2] At this ceremony the Paramount Chief 'opened' the new food season by the ritual eating of new fruits, especially young maize and pumpkins. It was also the

[1] i.e. chiefs' areas.

[2] The description of this *Inqwala* given by men and women who took part in it in their youth shows much similarity to the *Inqwala* of to-day among the Swazi.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mzonvi FR4

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *nis-a-nis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Amangwe* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *isidlale*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chinamwali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *umtindo* or *umgwaw* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chinamwali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

N M [881]

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

N M [191] [562]

N [178]

If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *shawtindwa*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

N 114

[649] in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of
[814] those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Ansuge* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for under-
[609] standing the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognise Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final
[175 humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with
[648 his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot';
[727] and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the *old indunas* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *induna* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic
[178 changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and
[648] demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on
[484] both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand
[167] for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1904.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union. This exodus to the south in its turn brought the Ngoni into touch once more with the Matabele, the Zulu, and the Swazi, and reawakened their consciousness of their southern origin. It is significant that just at the point when their power in their own country received a crushing blow, they came into contact once more in the south with the stock from which they had sprung and to whom they could still speak in their own language. The anthropologist who looks for the reason why the distinctive Ngoni culture did not die out entirely after their military defeat and the advent of the whites, can see at least part of the reason supplied by the results of this economic exodus to work in the south. When the other tribes in the neighbourhood were, in the Ngoni phrase, 'running always to the Boma' and incidentally picking up fragments of European customs, the Ngoni remained, according to their own account, to a great extent aloof and were strengthened in this aloofness by their renewed southern connexions. N 178 177 186

Ngoni supremacy over the country was at an end. The Europeans were the overlords of all the tribes, not the Ngoni. Instead of one big chief in the country, many small ones were now recognized who dared to give themselves airs because they knew the Ngoni could not compel allegiance to their Paramount. Chewa people living under Ngoni chiefs could no longer be forced to stay there, therefore a different attitude towards them was necessary. 'Chewa' could no longer be synonymous with 'slave'. I have heard Ngoni chiefs in court address their *indunas* and headmen many times on behaving well to people of other tribes 'Or they will leave us and to-day we cannot make them return'. A recent case in which a young chief, but a very important one, was summoned to the Paramount's court for insulting a Chewa woman, was made the occasion by the Paramount for a long public discourse on the present relations between Ngoni and Chewa, pointing out that an Ngoni chief whose Chewa subjects left him would 'spoil his country' and 'all his people would be ashamed'. Ngoni prestige, in fact, having lost the support of military power, had to rely on other sanctions. In their own eyes, their prestige was still due to their southern origin, their success in creating the Ngoni state in an alien milieu, and those distinctive institutions which they had retained. To the surrounding people, to the Chewa and other tribes, N M 178 563 648 N M [689] N [829] N M [692]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643]

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, 'because all his chiefs obey him', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chantendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, 'We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes'.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184]

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. 'To pay taxes, that is our war to-day', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the mental adjustments necessary to white contact. They still resent 177
white intrusion and its results, economic, administrative, and mis- 609
sionary. At the same time many of them earnestly wish for a solution of the present tension, but towards such a solution there is no easy short cut.

VIII. Conclusions. Conclusions reached after the first period of 128
field work are generally given with a certain reserve, especially in a 121
complex field such as the Ngoni present. I think, however, that the conclusions in this paper can be stated with some certainty, and as dogmatic statements they form a basis for further field work. For they set the main problems for the detailed study of the Ngoni, and also of the Ngoni as a field for observing culture contact. In this article I hope that the three chief elements in the study have emerged, namely, the problem of Ngoni society as a cultural and political unit; the culture contact problems due to the contact, and part fusion, with local tribes; and the modern culture contact problems due to European penetration.

1. The Ngoni as a group must be regarded from two points of 101
view: those who ethnically have a right to be called Ngoni, whether members of recognized Ngoni clans, with an acknowledged southern origin; and all those who live in the territory of the Ngoni Paramount Chief, and call themselves his people. These last were incorporated into the Ngoni state by the first group, who are still the ruling aristocracy, but the incorporated people now share in Ngoni 'national sentiment' and have made certain sociological changes in order to conform to Ngoni culture. It is their southern origin and their well remembered traditions of the past which confer distinctiveness on the true Ngoni, and on the state which they built. It is to their past they also turn for the charter for those institutions which are recognized as distinctively Ngoni, such as the Paramount Chieftainship, the hierarchy of rank, and patrilineal succession. Their historical origin and military achievements form also the charter for their former position as rulers of the country which they held before the advent of the Europeans.

2. The Europeans in two of the Ngoni areas destroyed the unique 177
position of the Ngoni by defeating their armies. These armies had 178

177 hitherto been the chief sanction for Ngoni supremacy. With their
178 invincibility gone, the regiments broke up and the Ngoni military prestige was at an end. At the same time the direction of political affairs and the relations between the different tribes was assumed by a superior power. Ngoni political ascendancy and their control of economic organization was also at an end. The subject races of the Ngoni who had hitherto either been conquered or submitted voluntarily to the Ngoni had now an ally who was stronger than their former masters.

3. The new situation forced the Ngoni to make drastic readjustments. They had to readjust themselves to new relations with other
177 tribes, and at the same time to the Europeans. In their contact with
178 the Chewa and other subject tribes they could no longer maintain the
186 social exclusiveness which had marked the distinction between Ngoni
648 and slaves. There was therefore less actual resistance to culture fusion, though the dislike of adopting alien customs persisted. This dislike of alien customs was evident to some extent also in white contacts. The missionaries brought a new religion, western education, and western medicine. Other Europeans introduced land reserves, taxation, and working for wages. To the local tribes the European represented security as well as certain material benefits. To the Ngoni these material benefits appeared less welcome in the face of their defeat. There was therefore a psychological conflict set up among the Ngoni
178 —a malaise due to their military and political downfall, together with
181 their determination to preserve certain elements in their own culture.
182 That psychological conflict is evident everywhere to-day, and finds expression in all conversations which turn on the relations of the Ngoni to other tribes or to Europeans. To the persistence of that conflict is due the strength of Ngoni 'national feeling', which has directed the selective process by which some of their political, legal, and social institutions have survived the results of culture contact.

4. Conditions all over Africa are changing and new forms of social
178 and political organization are emerging due to the contact of the
648 Africans with European civilization. What place has the Ngoni state in this emergent African society? Are there still cultural realities in Ngoni society which should be preserved, and can the Ngoni political structure be galvanized into new life through the medium of indirect

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Rule? There might have been a time, before the Ngoni wars, when treaties could have been made with the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs, and the Ngoni state have evolved without defeat. Policy, however, was different in those days, and strong chiefs were crushed. The demand now is for strong tribal organization which can carry on its own administration with the minimum of European interference and direction. The vital question is: has that moment gone for the Ngoni? Has their defeat, not only military, but economic and political, so taken the heart out of them, that they can no longer rebuild their tribal organization and make a success of Indirect Rule?

The answer to that question has two desiderata. One is a thorough intensive study of Ngoni society and Ngoni institutions as they exist to-day, and of the relation of the true Ngoni to those who call themselves Ngoni. The other is the willingness of Europeans, officials, missionaries, and settlers, to show some recognition of Ngoni pride in their past. The Ngoni are not children. They do not want a toy called Indirect Rule handed out to them to play with. If their political aspirations were appreciated and their racial pride acknowledged, they could make a successful synthesis between Ngoni institutions and modern administration with its concomitants of modern education and modern economic methods. They themselves discuss frequently in the men's talking places in the villages such a synthesis of Ngoni and western culture. The attempt in one area in Nyasaland to work out such a synthesis is a sign that it is not impossible. With fuller knowledge and co-operation on both sides the strength of Ngoni national sentiment might be used to make a success of the policy of Indirect Rule.

MARGARET READ.

Résumé

TRADITION ET PRESTIGE CHEZ LES NGONI

Les Ngoni sont une section des Zoulous qui habitent l'Afrique orientale. Le vocable Ngoni désigne aujourd'hui deux groupes: les descendants des chefs originels qui, il y a cent cinquante ans environ, émigrèrent vers le nord et les membres des tribus assujetties et absorbées dans l'état Ngoni. Les Ngoni prétendent être devenus une aristocratie, qui se distingue par la connaissance classique et la connaissance de la langue Ngoni originelle et des traditions historiques de la tribu. Leurs institutions également diffèrent de celles des tribus assujetties

10:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that
[558] of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

691 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and
178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and
161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

691 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political
641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was
[649] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a
641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population
727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There
568 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State.
[567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain economy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set
561 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise
641 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was
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[1] *Mkwena*, pl. *amakwena*. Cf. the Zulu term *umnawenu*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 648 631 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new. Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 634 178 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 [622] Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the headman, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old 647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for [721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime 648 meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mvumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Gouldsbury, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief wife who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first lieutenant of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the
551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni on formal occasions in addition to their other personal names.

To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and
624 there may be in the village one or more lieutenants. The office of lieutenant in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no lieutenants.

In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have
621 consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
582 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time
●178 some of the senior captives became lieutenants of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aristocratic lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aristocratic captors.

Movement

361 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
166 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Forde, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 190: '. . . the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 [671] been made. It is the legalization payment that is recorded on the marriage registration certificate when one is issued.

Often this payment is postponed until some years after marriage and sometimes it is never made at all. It is generally £1. 10s., and is normally provided by the bridegroom himself out of his savings, although in the old days a man would have been helped by his father. The money goes to the bride's father, and there is no legal obligation on him to share the money with his relatives, although he may do so. Marriage ties can be reinforced by a whole series of ceremonies and ceremonial exchanges and payments between the man's people and the woman's people, and a marriage in which all these ceremonies have been performed is regarded as being 'well fixed'. In such a marriage the parents and siblings of the couple have come to know each other, have collaborated in ritual activities, and have probably had occasion to deliberate together as a court of conciliation in settling quarrels between the couple. This line of development is seldom taken in a marriage in which the legalization payment has not been made. If the husband refuses to pay, then the wife's people will not have beer for him and his parents, and will not use their influence with his wife to maintain the marriage. We may say that in a well-fixed marriage the two families are linked together, and that in one that is not well fixed it is only the two individuals who are linked. Indeed when no payments have been made it is common for the bride's relatives to profess ignorance of the name of the husband, or at least of his parents' names. No action can be taken in the court to enforce marriage payments, although in an adultery or divorce case the court may order the legalization payment to be made.

585 476 578 The ceremonies of marriage should not be thought of merely as occasions for harmonious co-operation. They may also become the vehicle for the expression of aggression between the two families involved. This is particularly true of the obligation on the man to bring a party of his friends to hoe in the garden of his father-in-law. The hoeing party may do more harm than good to the crops if the present offered them by the father-in-law is considered inadequate.

583 578 [731] Prior to the conquest of the tribe the principal marriage payment was bride-wealth,[1] consisting of so many head of cattle. In those days, according to informants, no legalization payment was made. Nowadays bride-wealth is paid only in a small proportion of marriages, and rarely until after several children have been born. In the old days

[1] Mukulubele. Cf. the Bala word ulu-lubele and ceremony ukulubela.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

marriages in which bride-wealth was paid were patrilocal, and those in which it was not paid, except for marriages with slave wives, were matrilocal. The matrilocal marriages were made only by recently incorporated Ngoni. The payment of bride-wealth is now significant only in relation to the residence and affiliation of the children of the marriage and does not affect the residence of the couple themselves. It frequently happens that a man goes and lives in the village of his wife whom they are first married and that after a year or so he takes her back to his own village. This practice is fairly common among the matrilineal tribes of the region. A small payment[1] of five shillings or so may be made instead to enable a man to take his bride to his own village without first completing a period of matrilocal residence. Sometimes the legalization payment is considered sufficient to exempt from matrilocal residence. Indeed it is indicative of the wide range of variation in the different payments made and not made and in the significance attached to them that some informants were unable to state with certainty what payments had been made in their own marriages, although they know the amount of money or animals that had been handed over.

in the old days 583 178 [567] 591 583 [184]

This wide range of variation in behaviour in relation to marriage is one instance of the high measure of cultural heterogeneity of the Fort Jameson Ngoni. While present-day conditions are relevant to a study of Ngoni marriage, at the same time the effect of the combination of people with very different conceptions of marriage into a single state must not be overlooked. Among families that are powerful and claim to have migrated with Zwangendaba from the north, patrilocal marriage and the payment of bride-wealth are more frequent than they are among families of more recent incorporation. Cross-cousin marriage is noticeably more frequent in villages with people of Rue descent than in the population as a whole. In Nyamkazi, where there is a sharper cleavage into old Ngoni villages and conquered Cewa villages, the old Ngoni are characterized by a greater, and the Cewa by a lesser, incidence of patrilocal marriage.

184 58

Divorce

In the old days there was no way in which a woman could divorce her husband. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own people. The usual procedure nowadays, except in cases of adultery, is for the man to give his wife sixpence or a shilling

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[1] Malambula.

/4 cont'd/

national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regiments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exodus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to provide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and finger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority living in the Ngoni and Mbundile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical purposes, descent is ambilineal, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

/9 cont'd/

the hunt walks in the middle of the line, with a responsible person posted on each flank. A started animal, if not shot by the guns, usually turns to run parallel to the line of hunters, who hurl spears and knobkerries at it, and send their dogs after it. The chances of escape for a hunted animal are fairly high. Animals are also trapped, usually with a piece of meat tied to the muzzle of a gun. Hunting with nets is sometimes undertaken in the wet season. Rats are caught in small conical traps baited with beans. The rat chews through a piece of string and releases a green stick, thereby strangling itself.

Shields, once the pride of the Ngoni armies, are not carried on hunts and are infrequently seen.

VI

It is only the old men who still wear skin garments, and then only as additions to European style clothing. Men are dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, long trousers, cast-off European clothing, or clothes brought back from the army. Often two shirts are worn on top of one another. Women wear a blouse, a skirt tied on a tape, a cloth wrapped round on top of the skirt, and a small cloth tied round their waist. If carrying a baby, the cloth supporting the child is slung over the left and under the right shoulder, and another cloth may be wrapped round the woman and child under her armpits. Dresses are also worn, and sometimes a singlet under the blouse. Shoes are less common for women than for men. Men /10/ wear a variety of European style hats, but women wear only embroidered cloths or berets, or in the case of poorer women, plain bands of cloth.

Children go naked, or may be draped in whatever garment, of whatever size, happens to be available. If the money is there to pay for them, boys are dressed in shorts and shirts, and girls in little dresses.

In the old days, every adult had slit ears, but this custom has died out. Women nowadays pierce their ears if they wish, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a small slit made as a

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni F25

The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession, the Ngoni have learned to plant also scarce gardens of kavare, for the locusts and drought can scarcely affect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

Those vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white porridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the natives, to get at them, will have down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stopping themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first rains appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertilizer. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

171 The distinctiveness of Ngoni institutions, so often emphasized by the older men and by the early travellers in Nyasaland, was due to cultural affinities with the South-eastern Bantu. The attached table sets out those social and cultural elements in the Ngoni kingdoms which were most distinct from parallel features among the neighbouring peoples, and which had obvious affinity with South-eastern Bantu cultures. The main Ngoni cultural elements have already been referred to in this chapter and will be further discussed in the rest of this study. The corresponding elements among the local peoples are based partly on the [172] earlier sources quoted by Tew and partly on local informants and my 174 own observations. In collecting information about clans, the adenda group consisting of a man with his sisters' children, and the girls' initiation schools, I had no direct contacts with any except Cewa sources.

Variations in cultural conformity among the Ngoni

178 In the Ngoni kingdoms among families with Swazi and trans-Zambezi 189 clan descent names there was considerable variation in the degree to which they maintained Ngoni institutions and practised Ngoni cultural forms. The anthropologist was constantly aware that the time element was an important factor in the consideration of Ngoni practices and in the attitudes developed towards Ngoni culture among the individuals in the different generations. The Ngoni in both kingdoms spoke of the 'older generations' (*ndhudzo wa kale*), 'the middle generations' (*ndhudzo wa ngholi*), and 'the present generation' (*ndhudzo wa tsopano*). The first had grown to adulthood before the Europeans came, and were the older senior men and women in the 1930's; the second had been affected by [172] European administration, traders, and officials while they were young men and women; the third had never known anything but European contacts and many had grown up in European schools. The senior Ngoni of the older generation often expressed the sentiment: *nthu zawo tsopano* [181] (everything is finished now). They included in that saying the regrets of the older Ngoni for their former independence, and their resentment at the domination of European rule and European culture. It is idle to speculate what cultural changes might have taken place in the Ngoni 177 178 kingdoms if European influence had been postponed another twenty to thirty years. Nevertheless it is a vital factor in assessing Ngoni culture that the kingdoms had barely twenty years of independent existence before the Europeans began to penetrate Nyasaland. The older Ngoni looked back on their former independent existence as a golden age in [181] which they were spreading Ngoni customs and culture as well as exercising political supremacy. It is difficult to believe that this was wholly true, in view of the extensive cultural interchange going on in the country as a whole. It is, however, possible that wider acceptance of Ngoni cultural elements was prevented by the advent of the Europeans, in so far as cultural institutions and political dominance were closely

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

After the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterised by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognised. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organisation. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambezi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

Ngoni Warfare in Old Days

"To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligubo* dance along with others.

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128 man and woman. It will give us an opportunity of looking more closely at the values inherent in Ngoni culture and implicit in all the training of their children. I propose here only to put down a brief list of these values, in order that they may be kept in mind during the detailed narrative of the upbringing of children in the following chapters. There
181 were three main group values which Ngoni families and village and national groups had always before them: keeping together as a people; dominating but with paternal benevolence those subject to their rule; and mutual aid and trust between the individuals in the Ngoni groups. Thus there was a strong in-group feeling of interdependence contrasted with a feeling towards the out-group of kindly but firm authority.

In the realm of personal behaviour to others, respect and obedience were always expected towards elders and superiors. Self-control, involving a high degree of restraint, was expected towards superiors, equals and inferiors. Generosity was expected of everyone towards his equals and inferiors.

A group of three qualities which showed Ngoni values were always being quoted as the distinguishing marks of 'true Ngoni' men and women: physical strength with which physical courage was closely associated; persistence and thoroughness in any task undertaken or assigned; and wisdom which was sharply contrasted with being clever, and which included knowledge, good judgement, ability to control people and keep the peace, and skill in using speech.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] headbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear 301 the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took 356 an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain 515 standards in their homes and in their persons, which were 182 held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government [177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 181 356 515 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infect their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again. 825 356 [485]

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene which made them insist that there should be no spitting or nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An ingenious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose. 515 356 [419]

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean. 515 [576]

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up 264

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 learning, and the end product of a system of training, can never be as stereotyped and as uniform as some of the exponents of personality and culture studies would have us believe.

128 The outlines of the ideal Ngoni personality have really been sketched in the narrative chapters, though without stopping to point out specifically that this or that aim in training is to favour a Ngoni personality trait. I shall therefore in this chapter put together these traits, and, to introduce a new element and so avoid too much repetition, some of these traits will be associated with Ngoni proverbs. But before doing this I shall discuss those Ngoni values which I believe were the foundations for their child training.

The Ngoni system of values

121 The chief reason for introducing at the end of this book such
128 an involved and difficult subject as values is to suggest that there is an inevitable connexion in any society or culture between an ideal personality and the values cherished by that society. It is therefore reasonable to follow up, and to some extent to sum up, the preceding narrative chapters of this study with a glance, for it cannot be more than that, at the fundamental beliefs and values which impelled the Ngoni people to pursue certain lines in bringing up their children.

● 181 We have seen that there was a continuous and clear direction in training children which I have called a system. The more deeply one analyses the nature of Ngoni culture and the organization of Ngoni society, the clearer it becomes that there were certain definite values which they clung to as a result of their experience and of their reflection upon their past history and present and future prospects. In so far as these values were integrated into an intelligible whole, we can call them a system of values, but the recognition of such a system does not preclude the recognition also of some isolated values which do not appear to fit into an integrated system.

121 One of the major difficulties in examining the values of a non-literate culture is the inevitable subjective approach of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

§29 individuals upon the cohesion of that society through their behaviour and actions. This was illustrated in the phrase so constantly used by them, and referred to already several times: 'He is spoiling the land,' or the converse, quoted in Chapter I: 'Young people were well taught that this behaviour was right for the upbuilding of the land.'

191 §29 Among these so-called group values the first of all, and pre-eminent above all, was the value of keeping together. Taught by bitter experience that personal quarrels could lead to political secession and to the diminution of the power and influence of the Ngoni kingdoms, the focus of much of their thinking was on maintaining cohesion whether in small units or in large. I think the Ngoni were the only people in Nyasaland where individuals and families were not allowed to leave the villages to live elsewhere without permission of the chief or headman. In the local courts there were frequent cases in which the accused had been guilty of leaving without permission. This illustration could be used also to indicate the second of the group values. I have called it dominance for want of a better term. It involves the exercise of authority, political and legal, over their own and subject peoples, the determination to exact obedience, influenced by a feeling of paternal responsibility for all over whom authority was claimed. This was an ambivalent sentiment affecting the attitude of the ruler and his relations with the ruled, and was the basis of the court case quoted in Chapter VI, when a chief made a judgement against his own son for adultery with a poor man's wife. The third group value was that of mutual aid and trust within the in-group, in order to secure its cohesion. This was the integrating principle of the 'house' system, described briefly in Chapter I and mentioned in many other contexts. Mutual trust and aid had been in the past the main element in the behaviour of men in their own regiments, in the mutual relation of warrior with warrior, both when on campaign and when living together in the villages.

191 577 The four personal values were inherent in the acceptance

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and demonstration of the group values. The first two, physical and moral strength, and working hard and persistently at allotted tasks, were, as we have seen, instilled into children from the stage of second teeth onward. The second two, dignity and wisdom, were to a large extent values implicit in adult life, and in the case of wisdom seen specially in the contribution made by senior men and women to community life. Dignity, however, had an ambivalent meaning, as did dominance among the group values. It covered not only language, deportment, self-control, accepted rank and precedence within the hierarchy on all social occasions, but the more subtle and very typical Ngoni attitude towards 'losing face'. In the sense that young adults and even older children hated being rebuked in public because it made them lose face, it belonged to younger people as well as to older, to those called the 'humble ones' as well as to the 'great ones'.

All the emphases in child training on language, deportment, self-control, manners and inter-personal behaviour of all kinds were related to the value of human dignity, and to the concept of a person's 'human nature' as being something to be respected and built up, and carefully guarded, since it was very vulnerable.

At the end of Chapter II when some Ngoni values were mentioned, wisdom was contrasted with cleverness, and equated with knowledge, good judgement, ability to control others and keep the peace, and skill in the use of speech. The young Ngoni headmaster in the first village described in Chapter I said reflectively one evening, after listening to some of the elders talking with me about Ngoni values, 'Yes, we are different in our generation. We are proud, but they had wisdom.' It was an acknowledgement of the pretensions which his generation had begun to claim as a result of the new knowledge in the schools. It was also a recognition that the accumulated wisdom of the generations of his father and grandfather had in it an understanding of values which the younger generation had not yet acquired.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

181 The four so-called personal values will be reflected in the
577 Ngoni personality traits which we are going on to discuss.
828 There are however two values which did not appear to fit
[182] into any integrated system, and which yet recurred as themes in Ngoni culture, and here and there in the ideas inherent in child training. One was the theme of childhood innocence, which was much deeper and more subtle than merely keeping children in ignorance of sexual life and intercourse. The other was the value set on the 'gentle' man. He was a man who appeared to be almost wholly self-controlled, able to have normal sexual intercourse with his wives but not always thinking about women, showing sternness but without anger, being just but also merciful. These were the qualities looked for in the man responsible for the guardianship of certain head villages where the ancestor cult was
[769] carried on, and who was entrusted with the ritual associated
[778] with the ancestor cult. In the more ancient ritual, such as carrying the sacred emblem before the armies, it was young boys, exemplifying the childhood innocence theme, who were entrusted with this charge. In the more modern con-
[793] texts, many of the outstanding Ngoni ministers in the church were recognised and revered as 'gentle' men.

The Ngoni ideal personality

577 Chapters IV and V, as well as Chapters VI and VII, showed that there were certain elements in the Ngoni ideal of what their children should be like which were common to young men and women, to boys and girls, while others were emphasised only for girls or for boys. Among the common traits we have already seen the outstanding emphasis on 'respect' in all forms of behaviour and in all kinds of contact with older people, and with others who should be 'honoured'. Part of this respect was shown in obedience, and with this obedience in all the detailed inter-personal relations with senior people was associated, in the individual's relations to society as a whole, being law-abiding and complying with Ngoni law.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

unity of full-siblings is the result of the established relationship between their mother and father. A man's relationship with his wife may in turn lead to solidarity between their children, but until his wife has stayed with him for many years and borne him live children their own relationship is always uncertain. He must acknowledge that she too has rights, that she must be clothed and respected and must be slept with. He must not abuse her at a beer party or hit her too often, and he must not try to trap her into adultery. When she runs away, he must go after her to apologize.

8. The support of relatives

It is the tenuousness of the marriage relationship which necessitates the co-operation of the relatives in the marriage. There are occasions when affines quarrel, as when a young woman is encouraged by her husband's kin to remain in their village to be delivered of her first child and at the same time is under pressure from her own relatives to move back to her own village for the confinement. A man who is anxious to build up his own cluster of huts in a village may attempt to force his sons and daughters to bring their spouses to live near him against the wishes of his children's affines. These struggles, where they occur, are expressed in terms of residence, for it is common residence that welds kinsfolk together. But in general affines co-operate rather than quarrel. Litigation about marriage payments is rare, and frequently divorces are granted without consideration of the return of marriage payments. During a marriage it is more important that the married couple should be exhorted to adjust themselves to each other and be tolerant of each other's foibles, than that each side should insist on its formal rights. Old people try to prevent marriages they consider unsuitable, but they do not usually try to make difficulties once a marriage has taken place. The successful marriages of a man's children bring him grandchildren to care for and play with, and *children's parents-in-law* who will welcome him and give him food, even if they do not always add to his own cluster of huts.

To some degree people appear to be afraid of the sorcery of an offended affine, but this is not a well-developed idea, and more frequently people express their reasons for trying to patch up a marriage that is in danger of breaking in terms of the need for everyone to 'live well together', without bringing troubles into the village. The well-being of the village and of the local group of kinsfolk within it has ultimate value for the Ngoni and is an end in itself. It follows that serious quarrels can only be resolved by means of some new residential alignment, involving moves from one cluster to another, and from one village to another. The village itself does not exist in isolation, and a village thrives because of the ties that link it to other villages in the vicinity. Marriages link villages together, by the bonds of affinity which cut across village boundaries, and by the interaction between groups of affines

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

change. In the field of marriage we have seen that it was the conscious intervention of the Administration which forced the abolition of the death penalty for adultery. It is to some extent due to the Administration, with its emphasis that women must have rights equal to those of men, that divorce is more frequent than it was, though this result does not seem to have been planned. In the eyes of the Administration the important fact is that it is more difficult for a woman to get a divorce among the Ngoni than among the Cewa. Of recent years it has been more concerned with the increase in concubinage, prostitution and juvenile delinquency in the towns, and has introduced measures designed to check the flow of women and children from the rural areas to the towns. As we have seen, one result has been that it is possible for rights *in genitrices* to be enforced in inter-tribal marriages, and bridewealth has therefore more significance in these marriages than in marriages within the tribe.

The Ngoni people themselves have, on the whole, accepted the changes passively and regretfully. The one deliberate constructive action appears to have been the law made in about 1944 that the legalization payment shall be at least thirty shillings. Apart from this, the Ngoni appear to have been overwhelmed by events. The frustrations of the present time are all attributed to the coming of the Whites, and this in turn provides the reason why nothing can be done to change things. The past, 'the time of peace', is glorified and simplified, and to some extent reinterpreted in terms of the new values which have been acquired in the interim. Thus, some informants said that the Ngoni never fought other tribes, but only invited people to join the Ngoni kingdom. People like to assert dogmatically that adulterers were always killed, that every man always paid bridewealth, that women always married whom they were told, and only reluctantly admit, on closer questioning, that there were sometimes exceptions to these rules. The imputed rules of the past have become the 'customs' of the present, and the adjective *Ngoni* is applied not to what the Ngoni people do today but to what they like to think they did in the virtuous past. *Ngoni* marriage (*ukwati wacingoni*) is marriage in which all the ceremonial observances are carried out in detail, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth are paid, the woman is obedient and fertile, the man dutiful and respectful towards his wife's parents, and in which the couple 'live well together'. This is contrasted with modern marriage (*ukwati wamakono*) in which there is no bridewealth, few ceremonies, little attention paid to obligations towards kin, and in which the woman sues successfully for divorce. Modern marriage is an invention of the Whites, designed to worry the Ngoni. The Whites have conquered the Ngoni, they are the owners of the country, and there is nothing to be done except to keep alive the knowledge of the past.[18]

[18] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', and 'Traditions and prestige . . .', *passim*.

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned; such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources.

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftainry was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,200 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftainry. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile.

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfuzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipuka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni.

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent.

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do.

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of European control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wina, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes
177 as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there
[769] was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made
648 to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The
186 Ngoni identified themselves with Europeans rather than with their matrilineal
156 neighbours even before the European conquest. Wirsz, himself the main agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[6]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount
[177] Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[7] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not pro-
829 duced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An
183 aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

• 181 Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian
186 neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to rationalize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

6. Wirsz, *Cambiden*, pp. 200 f.
7. Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'ami said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Dean, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 25.

that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British. Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly"; and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwide, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

9: Read E-9 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *ni-ñ-ni* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Indusi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Amaqa* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, twirling their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *isidindi*[1] and for cattle to honour the *indusi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

177 hitherto been the chief sanction for Ngoni supremacy. With their
178 invincibility gone, the regiments broke up and the Ngoni military prestige was at an end. At the same time the direction of political affairs and the relations between the different tribes was assumed by a superior power. Ngoni political ascendancy and their control of economic organisation was also at an end. The subject races of the Ngoni who had hitherto either been conquered or submitted voluntarily to the Ngoni had now an ally who was stronger than their former masters.

3. The new situation forced the Ngoni to make drastic readjustments. They had to readjust themselves to new relations with other
177 tribes, and at the same time to the Europeans. In their contact with
178 the Chewa and other subject tribes they could no longer maintain the
186 social exclusiveness which had marked the distinction between Ngoni
648 and slaves. There was therefore less actual resistance to culture fusion, though the dislike of adopting alien customs persisted. This dislike of alien customs was evident to some extent also in white contacts. The missionaries brought a new religion, western education, and western medicine. Other Europeans introduced land reserves, taxation, and working for wages. To the local tribes the European represented security as well as certain material benefits. To the Ngoni these material benefits appeared less welcome in the face of their defeat. There was therefore a psychological conflict set up among the Ngoni
178 —a malaise due to their military and political downfall, together with
181 their determination to preserve certain elements in their own culture.
182 That psychological conflict is evident everywhere to-day, and finds expression in all conversations which turn on the relations of the Ngoni to other tribes or to Europeans. To the persistence of that conflict is due the strength of Ngoni 'national feeling', which has directed the selective process by which some of their political, legal, and social institutions have survived the results of culture contact.

4. Conditions all over Africa are changing and new forms of social
178 and political organisation are emerging due to the contact of the
648 Africans with European civilisation. What place has the Ngoni state in this emergent African society? Are there still cultural realities in Ngoni society which should be preserved, and can the Ngoni political structure be galvanised into new life through the medium of Indirect

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[231] Yet the position of the old women of the village was a highly honoured one. The mother of the headman was almost more powerful than her son. And we always take good care when we enter a new village to win the kindly favour of the old grandmother first of all. Then we are sure we have found a way to the man's heart. One of the most beautiful things in our tribal life is the honour which is paid to the grey hairs of the village. The best and helpless old men who lived through the glorious fighting [232] days, and understand all precedent and etiquette are the judges and councillors. And no case can be tried, no decision can be made, until the old men give their presence and their opinion. It is hard when the young are leaping ahead of their fathers through education to maintain this veneration for the elders. Yet it is the very backbone of the tribe. There is nothing more contemptible than an African or an Asiatic with a veneer of education who affects to despise the elders of the village. But I know no more pathetic sight than our afternoon schools where grey-haired men and women may be seen peering through faded eyes trying also to learn to read and keep abreast of the young and alert life, while the sun goes down in their eventide.

[233] The Ngoni were first of all a fighting people, and then a pastoral. Their land affords splendid pasture for cattle. And [181] they take great pride in their herds. Round the cattle kraal centre all their ambitions, and highest delights, and best intelligences. They sit and watch the cattle going out in the early morning and coming in in the evening, and know every spot and colour of their beautiful animals. The quietest and most peaceful sight I know is when the sun goes down, and the fierce heat has [234] given place to the welcome cool of the evening. Then you will hear the music of reed pipes, and looking up you see a long line [512] of sleek, solemn cows, with large silken dew laps, and fat humps, slowly coming up the village path lowing for their calves, while boys ride on their backs sitting or standing upright, balancing themselves carefully and blowing on their pipes. Before and behind them runs a troop of goats and sheep bleating with such a human cry. In a moment the village is alive—sheep and goats are chased back and forward till they find the huts where they sleep with their masters. And boys run out with wooden pails [234] into which they milk what the calves have not sucked from their mothers.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FRS Ngoni FRS

learnt out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyamlond as a moral blessing. The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived in an atmosphere that was charged with sin. But when the Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited, many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aboriginal Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fearlessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your privacy. I have heard the old men stoned in a village because some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in whispers. When they address you they always give you your family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly. When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and kindly say, "We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way, and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interest and amusements. During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Two

THE SNOWBALL STATE

1. Manipulation 2. Age-sets 3. Officers of State 4. Continually segmenting systems 5. Lineage systems compared 6. Splitting the State 7. Stability

1. *Manipulation*

In our first chapter we outlined some of the more significant events in Ngoni history prior to the arrival of Europeans. In this chapter we shall examine the political system within which these events took place. It is not the task of social analysis to determine why these or any other events occurred. What we shall attempt is a discussion of how they occurred, and what were the principal social relations involved in them. 121 128

Most of the incidents referred to in the first chapter concerned the State as a whole or the royal family. Nevertheless, when we begin to consider the conditions under which the State endured we have to discuss the social position of ordinary men and women within the State. For the Ngoni State held together as an organized social group, and on occasion failed to hold together, not merely because Zwangendaba was a good leader or his sons quarrelsome or his brothers ambitious, or because his people were bound by custom and knew no better, but also, and in our view mainly, because the State was a viable social entity in its time and place. The arrangement of people into segments and age-sets was not a mere formal and static division, but a means whereby a motley heterogeneous collection of individuals was converted into an organized society with agreed aims. The structure of the State had rules; in other words there was regularity in its social processes. Yet it was a structure which, within these rules, could be manipulated. The structure could be, and was, utilized by individuals for the realization of their private ends at the expense of others as well as providing for the common good. This is probably true of all social systems. We shall begin our analysis by examining the ways in which this manipulation was carried out. 642 182 661 557

In most societies, from the simplest system of hunting bands to the complex societies of the modern world, one of the most significant sets of rights are those relating to fixed natural resources. The structure of rights in land provides a key to the structure of society. 423 [121]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[855] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[67]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[636] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] [701] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[67] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
648 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[684] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[696] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building
361 other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased importance to the Native Authority centre. Already there have been one or two attempts at opening shops near the courts to cater for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, assessors, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amakanda* of the *alumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were allowed to marry and settle down in their villages. [703]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

721 defeated an alliance between the Arabs and the Bemba in which the
175 allies intended to dominate all the territory between the Luangwa river
648 and the lake-shore, driving the Ngoni from their highlands and opening all the country to the slave-trade. In the central kingdom, during the interregnum after Cikusi's death in 1891, a powerful Yao chief raided the kingdom, destroyed six villages and took many captives. In both kingdoms it was necessary for the Ngoni to defend their independence by constant vigilance and preparedness, especially against a combination of Arab slave-raiders and local tribes. Since large numbers of warriors were mobilized every year, these trained armies demanded an outlet, and the policy of aggression served the dual purpose of raiding enemy territory and maintaining a defence force.

727 There was a difference of opinion among informants about the results of raids in terms of spoils of war. In both kingdoms captives were taken in war, especially young men of military age and women. From tsetse-free areas where cattle were to be found, live beasts were brought to add to the herds in the Paramount's village and in those of the chiefs and *ahamuzana*. Ivory for trading and cloth for wearing were two of the most valued forms of booty, and Cibambo mentioned the looting of clothes and weapons from those who had been killed. From accounts by the first Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni burned the villages and killed the inhabitants in the majority of their later raids.

727 If defensive and aggressive military action and the acquisition of valued forms of wealth were two of the main objectives in war, a third
182 was undoubtedly the need to build up a national sentiment within the military kingdoms by success in warfare in the first place, and by intensive training of all young men in the second, thus integrating the youth from conquered units with those who belonged to the trans-Zambesi clans. Again and again, in talking about their past, Ngoni informants from the Paramounts downwards emphasized the discipline and training of the young men in the days of warfare, and expressed their opinion that no other training could take its place. It was not only the common military training which contributed to this national sentiment and held the Ngoni together in a common purpose of preparedness for warfare. The *libuto* or age set within the *libandla* or territorial unit, and the *impi* or national army in which the territorial units were merged, provided a military organization which was adaptable and balanced, and which, through the control of the Paramount, gave the main impetus to centralization, while encouraging pride and initiative among local and age-set groups.

The relics of a military tradition

648 In north Nyasaland the Ngoni never fought against the Europeans, and were not coerced into giving up warfare, but, as a result of their
[797] contacts with the Livingstonia Mission, they finally agreed to give it up voluntarily. When Dr. Laws met the Commissioner near Mponda's at

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

they acknowledged as rulers or direct sons of rulers. The other opposition came from the heads of the Swazi clans who saw their claims to recognition threatened by large numbers of these *makosana*. When such a person was announced a *muhamuzana* might comment to bystanders 'Who is this man? We do not know his father.' Then to save his face as well as that of the visitor, he would send a greeting to him and order beer to be supplied, while avoiding any elaborate form of entertainment. This subtle form of resistance to what were considered undue claims from lesser members of the royal clan was found everywhere. 614 578 574

In both kingdoms the Paramounts and chiefs, especially after 1933, appointed as officials for the kingdom and for the royal village, members of Swazi clans, but also, and increasingly, members of cis-Zambesi and local clans. This practice brought together in the royal villages and in the chiefs' villages men of the ruling aristocracy and men of the lesser clans, to share administrative responsibility, to assist on ceremonial occasions, and to take part on an equal footing in giving and receiving hospitality. This mingling on the official level was one of the reasons why marriages became more frequent between girls of Swazi clans and men of non-Swazi clans whose fathers had been promoted to official positions. The marriage of Paramount Gomani II's daughter to the son of his treasurer was an illustration of this. The daughters of families of Swazi clans were also sought in marriage by men of non-Swazi clans who, through their education, had got well-paid work in the Government or in commercial firms, and could therefore afford to give cattle for *lobola* for the girls. These were two instances of the type of marrying up which in the 1930's was lessening the sharp division in social life between Swazi and other clans. We shall see in Chapter IV, pp. 137, 140) that Ngoni fathers of daughters married to non-Swazi clansmen found a way of keeping their married daughters, as well as their sons, in their villages, particularly in the central kingdom. 582 614 645

Though the Ngoni clan system in the 1930's was, in Dr. Kuper's phrase, 'neither precise nor static', it was an integral part of Ngoni social organization. It was closely related on the one hand to the ruling aristocracy, and on the other to the social hierarchy. Both in the villages and in the national life of the kingdoms individuals belonging to Swazi clans played a leading part in social and ceremonial life, and carried on those distinctive Ngoni practices which their ancestors had brought with them from the south. 614 182

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

households of her co-wives who were junior to her in the house, and the households of her sons' wives. These women also decided when to undertake certain work in cultivation or in harvesting crops, when to brew beer, when to re-polish the floors of huts and the sitting place in front of the huts, when to replenish the stock of cloth, ornaments and beads, baskets and mats, which were part of the wealth of the house. Other occasions for the exercise of authority were attending and superintending women's confinements and the private puberty rite of the girls, advising on matters of health, and supervising the training of children. 562 571 592

All these activities of the owners of the houses were so much part of the day-to-day life of a village that they could pass almost unnoticed unless a detailed analysis were made. The position and authority of owners of houses was, however, immediately evident on ceremonial occasions. These included the pre-marriage ceremony of *umsindo*, which was abandoned after the Europeans came; the series of visits and exchanges leading up to the marriage ceremony, *mtimba*; brewing beer on a number of occasions, for dancing *ngoma* and *ligubo*, for funerals and subsequent ritual shaving, or for entertaining important visitors whose coming was expected so that beer could be prepared in advance. On all such occasions, the courtyard surrounding the *indlunkulu* was a scene of great activity. Men put on their war-dance equipment there; the beer pots were assembled there; meat and blood for feasts were cooked there, while the less important maize porridge (*usima*) was cooked in subordinate households. From the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* a procession of the *manina* (senior women) led by the owner of the house went out to greet visitors, to go to the beer drink, to take part in the dances, and to perform the ritual connected with births, deaths and marriages. 592 554 571 [178]

Marriage in Ngoni Society

Earlier in this chapter it was said that a new house derived from the marriage of a leading man to his big wife. Since marriage was so closely linked with the continuance and development of houses, and since a new wife when married separated from her own mother's house and became a member of her husband's mother's house, I have included a discussion of marriage in this chapter on houses. 581 182

There were three main principles in Ngoni marriage. It was a binding contract sealed by the exchange of cattle; it established succession in the male line; it formed a link between leading Swazi clans. When we examine in detail the organization of Ngoni marriage we see that its objectives were to build up a series of inter-clan and inter-family relationships. These began with inter-marriage between the leading Swazi clans, in order to strengthen the political and social relationships within that inner circle of Ngoni society. The political allegiance of leading individuals from clans of non-Swazi origin was strengthened by marriage

182 with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices
581 which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows
182 by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if
581 the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her
587 needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

182 Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an *nhlanzi*, a substitute or
581 additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give
595 another daughter as *nhlanzi*, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her *nhlanzi*. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an *nhlanzi* might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

58 There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the houses played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

584 The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indicated choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner.
[582] In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi clans marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The three final acts of the *mtimba* were performed for the new wife by the women of her new village. The first took place about two days after the end of the main ceremony and was the occasion for her instruction by her husband's relatives. She sat on a mat by the *indhunkulu*, while the woman of that house dressed her *isihlutu*, anointed her with oil, and clothed her in fresh skins and new beads taken from the store of the house to which she now belonged. They then instructed her in her behaviour to old and young, telling her to avoid selfishness and quarrelling and to be friendly with everyone. 585 182 621

The second act, called *ukufumisa umlobokazi* ((bringing the wife out), took place thirty to forty days later, during which time the wife had been sitting by her hut being watched. All this time she had eaten only a little food, sent to her from her mother-in-law's hut, had been afraid to speak to anyone, and had wept often. Now she was told that she might go anywhere and talk with anyone. She could help her mother-in-law by fetching firewood and by lighting her fire. A pot of water was given to her and an axe to cut firewood, and her mother-in-law gave her the *indlekuza* bead, a sign that she might speak and eat in front of her parents-in-law. But her testing time was not yet over. She was told to fetch a huge bundle of split wood and to lay it down carefully before her mother-in-law's hut without dropping any. As the bundle was on her head, it meant kneeling down and bending forward slowly until she could gently ease the wood on to the ground. Other tests included stripping large quantities of maize, soaking them, and pounding them into stamped maize (*izinhobe*). This testing was called *ukulinga umlobokazi* (watching the new wife), and was in most cases far more exacting than anything she had been made to do in her own home. [482] [252]

The culminating act of the integration process, *ukupekisa umlobokazi*, in which the new wife's hut was recognized as the starting-point of a new house, was the ceremony of making fire in her new hut to cook food for her husband. Two or three months after the marriage, a woman from her father-in-law's *gogo* house suddenly appeared in the doorway of the new wife's hut, carrying three hearth-stones. She fetched fire, kindled it, and began to cook boiled maize. The astonished young wife was expected to cry because she had now been turned away from her mother-in-law's cooking-place, as if she were being put out of the house. The maize cooked on this first fire in the new hut was regarded as having been cooked by the bride, and was divided into portions, one being taken to each section of the village attached to a house. Meanwhile the young wife sat nearby, hanging her head and showing the conventional signs of grief. Nevertheless she was so excited that she went back to her own home as soon as possible to tell them the news. The response of her own people was to prepare food for a feast and bring it to her new village to express to her husband's people their appreciation of this token of confidence in the girl's ability to cook for her husband.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 585 621 The prolonged series of interviews, exchanges and ceremonies emphasized the Ngoni conception of the marriage contract and its binding nature. They also underlined the severance of the new wife from her former family and house, and her gradual assimilation into her mother-in-law's house. This relationship between Ngoni women within the houses provided an effective means of integrating them into a village to which they were strangers.

CHAPTER IV

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

183 59 'THE Ngoni have power and authority over their women and their children.' So began one of the texts on *cingoni*, 'the thing that is Ngoni', by a man of the Ntumba people whose grandfather had been born among the Ngoni when they were in Songea. There was a recognized ideal pattern of an Ngoni family which covered both the individuals included in the family group and the place where they lived. This pattern was patrilineal in descent, virilocal in residence, polygynous in marriage for all men of standing who were not Christians. Other recognized and often-mentioned characteristics were the continued residence of widows in their husband's village after his death, the grouping of families by houses, and the *laweni*, or dormitory system for boys and unmarried young men.

581 593 The young wife wept on the day of her marriage because she was leaving the security and known relationships of her own family for the hazards and uncertainty of entering as a stranger into her husband's family group. The dramatization of these sentiments in the protracted marriage ceremony, and the allusions in the *mtimba* songs, brought out clearly the continuity of the man's relations with all members of his family and the sudden sharp break in the woman's relationship when she married. When her first child was born, and a new individual family group launched, her final integration into her husband's family began. As a mother who had borne a grandchild to her husband's parents she had thenceforward a direct part in the relationships within her husband's family, but as a wife she was always a stranger. The marriage negotiations and ceremonial express the closeness of the family ties, showing on the girl's side the anxiety of her family on parting with her to live among strangers; and on the man's side the hesitancy of the husband's family at taking into their midst an unknown and untried stranger. In addition, the protracted exchanges of cattle and feasts, delaying the final ceremony and building up relationships between the two family groups, illustrate the Ngoni attitude towards marriage as a

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764 184 burned immediately after the burial on the banks of the stream where the living performed their ritual washing. Small children who were related to the dead took charcoal in their hands, and walked up to the grave backwards and threw the charcoal in without looking. Some leaders of the Swazi clans were buried on the edge of the kraal of the house to which they belonged, and the fence was enlarged to include the grave. The Ngoni comment on this place of burial was: 'If we make a grave, we make it outside the kraal, and afterwards build the kraal round that place so that cattle may walk over it and lie on it. Thus it may become flat as if it were nothing, for Ngoni people do not want a grave to [765] be seen from the outside.' The women who were near relatives of the dead were allowed to mourn in the hut where the person had died, or they could if they chose take part in the war-songs and dances which were the only form of mourning allowed to the male relatives and to the men and women of the village who were not closely related to the dead person. The usual procedure was for a group of older women to wail and sob in the hut, but for all the rest, men and women, to mourn in the Ngoni way by taking part in war-dances and songs.

764 182 Much of this ritual appears to have had as its purpose to remove the fear of death from the living. That was the explanation of why the children threw charcoal in the grave—that they should not remember with fear the dead person being put in the earth. The obliteration of the grave site on the edge of the kraal had a dual purpose. One has been already referred to—that the grave should not be seen. The other was to identify the grave of a leading man or woman with the kraal site and the cattle herded there. If the village moved and a new kraal was set up, people would still say 'X was buried here', adding 'He was buried here when we were on Domwe—or in Songea', referring to an earlier site of the village. Placing the corpse facing south-east, and singing Ngoni war-songs which had come from the south, linked the newly dead with the ancestral dead, and emphasized the chain of communication between the living and the dead, which a new ancestral spirit could help to forge. It was establishing this means of communication which was the dominant note in the ritual of the funeral and in the post-burial rites.

When a death took place, the first action taken after the corpse had been prepared and wrapped in a skin was to send out a summons to come and mourn. We saw in the chapter on the Paramount that at his death the summons was in the formula 'The skies have fallen.' For others the announcement was: 'So and so has died. Come and mourn.' The [765] obligation to mourn was binding. If relatives and fellow clansmen could not come at the time of the burial, or were away in the south, one of their first duties on returning to their home village was to go and mourn by the kraal where the dead person was buried. This was intended partly to show sympathy for the bereaved, but also to acknowledge and salute a new ancestral spirit, and to demonstrate the re-integration of

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 [182 764] 765

the group of those living relatives who had performed or were about to perform certain rites for the newly dead.

These rites were the stages of mourning laid down in the Ngoni funeral ritual. They were stages in which all adults took part, and they fulfilled the need to build up the future links with the spirit who had joined the ancestors and to bring together in common acts those from whom death had removed one of their number. The following text by one of the leaders of a Swazi clan in the central kingdom puts together briefly the successive stages of shaving, drinking beer, eating meat, singing war-songs, ritual cleansing and widow inheritance, and bringing back the spirit.

¶ If a man died, the second day they shave; after 5 or 6 months they shave again and cook beer. This means the widows must take off their white *zitambo* (head bands). After 12 months they take off their black *zitambo* and kill a beast to praise the spirit so that he may return to his house. This is also the time for inheriting the widows.

When they take off the white *zitambo*, the brother of the one who died takes sheep dung and sprinkles it in the houses where the widows are sleeping. At the same time the men wash their hands with cattle dung. The meaning of this is to tell the widows to cook food for the brothers of the dead man to send to them when they sit by the kraal. This they do before they can see them.

From the ritual witnessed at many funeral ceremonies, which never altered in its main elements, and from discussions with Ngoni informants, it was possible to gain some idea of Ngoni beliefs about the relation between the living and the dead. It was clear that the attitude of the living towards the dead was one of respect and honour, but not predominantly one of avoidance and fear as among some of the neighbouring tribes. The post-burial ritual culminated in 'bringing back the spirit' to the village, and we shall examine this further in the last chapter of this section. An observer was always conscious of a sense that people were waiting for the return of the spirit, which had to be planned for and carried out by the living. During the interval between the death and bringing back the spirit, it was said to be 'in the bush'. When asked where in fact the spirit was, the answer was always 'We do not know. How can we know?' They admitted that the life of the spirits was unknown to them, and there was evidence of a slightly uneasy relationship during this interval of waiting. When the spirit had been brought back and was being guarded by some woman appointed for that purpose, then it was once more near to the living and their cattle, and it could be addressed correctly. In the absence of any clear concepts about life in a spirit world, the Ngoni clung to the ritual by which they believed they could establish and maintain contact of a safe and respectful nature between the living and the dead. 769 775

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121 in 1938.[1] The sociological and ritual significance of these factors will be
233 the chief emphasis here, with reference to earlier chapters in this book on Ngoni culture and on the structure of Ngoni society.

233 In the sociological significance of cattle-ownership there are certain
554 outstanding points to be emphasized, which will be indicated here and
565 developed further in the analysis which follows. One is the connexion between cattle-ownership and status, illustrated by the dominance of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in village life, since their possession of cattle was related to the kraal and to the siting of huts and to their house organization. The cattle horns on the roof of the *indlunkulu* were no trivial ornament. They were a proud assertion of cattle-ownership attached to the residences of the leading women, with all the implications of 'house herds' of cattle and of *lobola* given and received. Closely related to cattle-ownership and status was the power conferred by the possession of herds. The status of leading families was enhanced by the ability to give feasts, to give *lobola* for their sons' wives, to make sacrifices to the ancestors and, as we saw at the end of the last chapter, to realize cash by the sale of beasts belonging to the herd. Cattle-owners did at times have to decide whether to maintain and augment their herds and thereby be known as wealthy cattle-owning families; or to sell cattle in order to command labour to build a modern brick house, or to buy fine clothes for their wives and display their wealth in another form.

182 In the organization of Ngoni society, cattle were an important factor
233 in uniting groups of persons. We have seen how the house, as a group
621 of men and women, and its variant, the central Ngoni form of *banja*, had common possession of a herd of cattle which formed a source of wealth for all members of the house. Within the house the senior men were bound together by the responsibilities attached to the ownership and care of a herd. Within the village the senior men of a house or *banja* united in the upkeep of the kraal, the supervision of the herd-boys, the tending of sick cattle, and in meeting or resisting the Government's demands for culling or dipping stock. Where cattle were boarded out in another village, ties of association in the care of the beasts and in accountability for them bound together the cattle-owners or cattle-keepers of more than one village. A stage in the adjustment of a young wife to a strange village was reached when she added to the herd of the house she had married into the gift cattle given her by her father and so partly compensated for those which had been given to him by her husband's family. A new wife's standing in a village was thus advanced through any cattle which flowed in the opposite direction from those of the *lobola* cattle. Finally, and this is the main theme of this chapter, cattle were an essential link between the living and the dead.

[1] Read, M. *Native Standards of Living and African Culture Change*. Memorandum XVI of International African Institute, 1938.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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N 182 233 565 563 578

The relation of cattle-ownership to social integration, which was so marked a feature of Ngoni society, was limited to the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. There was evidence that the acquisition of herds by former captives and by the local Cewa and other tribes created conflicts within the society. The following statement was made by an Ntumba village headman, commenting on several court cases relating to cattle-ownership. The reference in the last sentence is to the Ngoni practice in the ownership of cattle.

¶ Sometimes people say 'If your father was caught and was the slave of a certain person, and also if your mother was caught and was a slave of another man, then if you buy cattle and put them in the kraal of your father, those who caught your father say "These cattle are mine (or ours)." And those who caught your mother say "These cattle are ours." ' They all say so because it was they who caught your ancestors. So those cattle do not recognize their real owner. And sometimes those cattle do not bear well, and sometimes they just die.

Then perhaps you die and leave your cattle, and those people are quarrelling to find out who is the owner of those cattle, since there are three people who want those same cattle: your father, the one who caught your father, and the one who caught your mother.

And it is really best if there are many masters that you, a child, should not buy cattle, but just leave off because they are a source of trouble. But one who is a free man without any masters, he ought to buy cattle because there will be no trouble for him.

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Among the local Cewa tribes, when a man wanted to start a herd and had money to buy cattle, he was expected to give the money to his *malume* (mother's brother) who then bought the cattle and took charge of them and regarded them as his.[1] This assertion of ownership of cattle bought with another man's money was part of the services to which the mother's brother was entitled from his sister's children, in return for services which he had performed or would perform for them. If those relationships between a man and his *malume* were not working smoothly and the *malume* was not helping his nephew, there was a tendency for the man to turn to his own father and give him the money and vest the ownership of the cattle in him, often because the father had paid the school fees or a court fine for his son. When the *malume* realized that his position had been usurped and that his chance of owning cattle had gone, his dislike of the man's father and his family showed itself in jealousy and quarrels between the two individuals and friction between the families. The Cewa matrilineal *mbumba* as a cattle-owning group under a senior man had not the continuity of the Ngoni house, for an *mbumba* was said to be 'finished' when a woman and all

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[1] The Cewa believed that if cattle were to survive and increase, they had to be owned and cared for by senior men. On the highlands round Dedza the Cewa had had cattle before the Ngoni came.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

by the stream and swept the ashes into the water. The beast for the sacrifice had been killed early in the morning before the shaving, and the ritual eating of the meat took place. This second shaving and sacrifice were to end the mourning period and to bring back the spirit to the village. A widow of Chief Njolomole I was appointed to guard the spirit and she kept in her hut the baskets which had been used for the sacrifice. 765 769

When asked whether this ritual of bringing back the spirit was followed for everyone who died away from home, the answer was 'No. It was done for this man because he was a big one and he was the son of a chief.' Only for members of leading Swazi clans and some others of trans-Zambesi origin was the ritual invariably followed of recalling the spirit to the village where he had lived and where the clan sacrifices were performed with the cattle of the man's house. The ritual ensured that a new ancestor spirit was recognized, that provision could be made for its guardianship, and that the spirit had been brought back to the village even though the man had died and been buried elsewhere. The ritual was based, not on the assumption that the spirit would be angry if not so treated and might injure his living descendants, but on the belief that absence had weakened the bonds between members of the clan and the house, and that the ritual associated with the making of an ancestor spirit gave an opportunity for strengthening these bonds. This was achieved by bringing together the living to commemorate the dead; by repeating once again the traditional pattern of speaking to the ancestors through the cattle; by giving the spirits their meat which the living shared; and by making sure that the spirit of the dead man would henceforth be taken care of by an appointed guardian. [182]

In the case of important people of the royal clan and chiefs, the second shaving was a preliminary to bringing back the spirit to be taken care of permanently and there were two stages to this last ritual in the making of an ancestral spirit. Three months after the death of Bambo Manga there was an elaborate ceremony of the second shaving which was accompanied by brewing vast amounts of beer. On this occasion there was an offering of beer, not meat, to the ancestral spirits. The ritual began with consulting the diviner first about whether the beer would be good. The diviner reported that two quarrelling women were spoiling it, and the quarrel would have to be resolved before the brewing would be successful. The diviner was also asked which spirit should be offered beer on this occasion, and answered that NaQwana, the mother of Mputa and grandmother of Bambo Manga, was the one to be addressed. The next act was making the ritual fire, since all the beer had to be cooked on newly made fires. Lopati Nzunga took the ritual fire-stick from Bambo Manga's hut, two young men kindled a fire outside and the women took grass from Bambo Manga's fence to build a fire. The women picked up bits of this fire to kindle their own new fires before brewing the beer. 769

Military Service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182 the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641 subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614] clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [589] handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611] descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428] local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591] 'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592] members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597] into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621 sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184 descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701] the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a [563] group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186 cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563 selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182] In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
184 In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance, in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V, will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be interpreted according to the Ngoni social organization, sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle of people forming a young child's contacts was from the beginning much wider than the individual family which a child was born into. When he began to run about and to pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when necessary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related families in other villages, with all members of the same clan [602]
living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads [631]
were also inseparable from the political links between the people and their territorial chief, and between the whole people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence in most villages there were sharp distinctions between stand- [183]
ards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni families.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

All of them made their own axes, knobkerries and catapults for hunting. Some were interested in music and made shepherds' pipes, or one-stringed lyres, or hand pianos of metal strips affixed to a wooden base. They composed their own songs and airs for these instruments. Others showed ingenuity in making elaborate models of lorries and aeroplanes, or in carving heads of animals. Others liked to weave fibre into the wide-brimmed hats some herd-boys wore.

More significant still for their future social relationships, they began now to choose their own intimate friend and to form the friendship pacts which were characteristic of Ngoni society, and regarded by adults as important in the child's development. In the friendship pacts, especially those between boys, there was no implied or manifest restraint. They could have 'joking relations', and hence say outrageous things to each other. They could quarrel and make it up, and defy each other's wishes and decisions, without a final breach. The relationship between friends often lasted into later adult life, and was probably all the stronger for the occasional lapses and outbursts, and by the fact that in the daily companionship of friends the burden of observing 'respect' did not oppress them.

The boys' dormitory

The hut known as the boys' dormitory and the whole system of living which it represented was a traditional feature of Ngoni village life. In their culture it had three main purposes. Formerly, when as they said 'War was our school', it was the place where boys slept and lived together, and where they learned to defend themselves and to obey authority. It was in a sense the preparatory school for the regiment, and the herding of cattle was the basis of the curriculum. Once a boy went to sleep in a dormitory he never left it until he married, unless he was seriously ill. In the days of warfare, he learned in the dormitory and out herding the cattle, a knowledge of the bush and its wild life and of his fellows, and

575 the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which
182 he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount.
342 Dormitory life was therefore rooted in the Ngoni past and though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a necessary training ground for young manhood. In very large vil-
575 [342] [621] lages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys belonged to the dormitory of that section where their parents' household was situated. There were occasional attempts sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory
[797] for boys who were baptized Christians or in an inquirers' class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' development, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled. They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory system except on the geographical lines already mentioned, which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

575 The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they
562 had their second teeth, from the influence of the women.
861 Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and
[177] often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that
[186] dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision at what they considered a crucial stage.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

88 [864] responsible for her, told her how to keep her legs together if she should sleep with a boy, and warned her against full intercourse and possible pregnancy. This warning was followed up with regular examination to see if the hymen was intact, carried out every two months or so by some senior woman of the girl's father's house.

When the simple ritual was over, the grandmother sent for the girl's father and told him what had taken place. He in turn told the male members of his house and the elders of the village. The news 'So and so's daughter is now mature' was received in the village with quiet rejoicing, and the father was congratulated as one who would in time receive cattle on his daughter's marriage.

881 In this ritual the seclusion, washing with cold water and facing south-east in the river were the only strictly ritual 182 acts. Equally important in Ngoni thinking however was the reassertion, at a critical time, of the authority of the women of her father's house over the girl. The girl was also made aware of her new status by being forbidden to perform certain daily functions in the presence of children and younger girls. Later we shall see how the first stages of courtship followed this event.

Boys' private ritual

881 The boys' ritual consisted of two distinct parts. At his first nocturnal emission the boy told one of his age-mates or his friend, who went and told one of the older boys in the dormitory. This older boy told him to go to the river very early in the morning and 'wash strongly', splashing the water all over him, and to do this after each emission. This act, called 'being beaten with water', the Ngoni believed was essential to strengthen the body and assist to control sexual impulse. There was great secrecy observed about this stage, only the boy and his friend and the older boy knowing about it. If other boys said to him 'You have now matured', he denied it vehemently.

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (1)

When the boy's voice began to break, and his father or another older man noticed it, the second part of the ritual took place. The father's brother went to a senior man famed in the village as a herbalist and obtained from him several kinds of roots. These were ground and then cooked either in milk or in the cud from a goat's stomach, usually the latter, for the father liked it to be known that he killed a goat for his son. If the mixture was cooked in milk, a fowl was killed, and in either case the boy was given the meat to eat immediately after the mixture to take away the extremely bitter taste. The cooking took place on a small fire by the kraal gate in the presence of the male members of the father's house. The boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the mixture as it was bubbling in the pan and to lick them quickly. He was not expected to show that he found the mixture very bitter as well as hot to touch. At intervals the boy had to jump over the fire, hitting his elbows and knees with the palms of his hands. The more often he did this, the less often did he have to dip in the pan because the mixture soon dried up, but he had to continue dipping and licking till there was no liquid left. The senior men watched intently all through this performance because they believed the mixture not only helped physical growth and muscular strength but would prevent impotence. When this ritual was performed for the heir of a chief, it was followed by a war-dance in the cattle kraal and the boy had to take a second dose of medicine in the kraal surrounded by the warriors. In such a case a bull was killed instead of the customary goat, and the contents of its stomach used for mixing the medicine. The meat was eaten by the boy and his father's relatives.

As in the case of the girls, this boy's ritual was an occasion for asserting the authority of the father and his kin over the boy. For him there was however no separating off into another group after this maturing. He continued to live in the dormitory, herd cattle, and go to school as before.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4
Cewa

The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual

N 881 182 We now come back to the question of why the Ngoni held to this private ritual for girls and boys at puberty. There were three main reasons. The first was that each Ngoni child belonged to his or her father's house. At this sign of physical maturity, significant for the boy or girl, and for the society, the elders of the house asserted anew their authority over them, performed a brief traditional ritual, and watched during the ritual for evidence of the Ngoni personality traits of courage and physical endurance which they expected to see in young adults. The second reason was that the change at puberty was regarded as marking only one of the stages in the development of growing boys and girls. It is true it had more significance for girls, in that it set the mature girls apart as a separate group. But it was not the prelude to immediate M [881] marriage, as the girls' initiation school was among the neighbouring Cewa people; nor was it in old days the prelude for N [171] the boys joining the army. The third reason was that the Ngoni did not regard fertility as the major dominant factor N [842] in the development of young women, as it undoubtedly was considered among the Cewa. They greatly disliked the ritual and the significance of the Cewa female initiation rites and forbade Ngoni women to have any part in them. Potency N [833] among men, on the other hand, was recognized as important both for the individual and for the social group, and impotence, particularly in leading men, was kept secret and hidden from outside knowledge as far as possible. If an Ngoni N [842] woman after marriage did not bear children, it was not con- [595] sidered a stigma on her, either individually or socially. The [597] common practice of marrying one of her sisters as a 'substitute', or the very common practice of adoption was resorted to. The latter was always referred to as 'putting a child into the house of So and so'.

N 881 171 One of the alleged objects of initiation schools among other ethnic groups was to instruct the young initiates in correct

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especial-
561 ly the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes,
867 but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter
128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there
584 were certain social controls among the Ngoni which operated in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited
835 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers
582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment.
581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptized or under instruction. This last pre-
581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference
● 182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

warrior, was responsible for advising the youth. He indicated seven villages in which there were girls of good family whom he might go and have a look at. He urged him not to marry 'a girl who belonged to another nation', meaning another group, not Ngoni. He wanted him to marry one of several girls in a collateral branch of the royal clan, for whom the youth would have to give several head of cattle in the marriage transfer. The grandfather was quite prepared to sacrifice several of the cattle from his herd in order that the youth might make a good marriage. The young man's mother and his teachers in the mission wanted him to marry a Christian girl. In the time after harvest he went visiting with his agemates, and saw a girl he liked the look of at a wedding dance in another village. He was particularly attracted by this girl's quiet and dignified behaviour, and by the fact, discovered through a 'go-between', that she had been to school and could read and write. The girl was at that time not a baptized Christian but under instruction. She was also not of an Ngoni clan, but of one belonging to a neighbouring ethnic group. He pursued his inquiries and found that her parents had been brought up in an Ngoni village and 'knew Ngoni customs because as children they had grown in Ngoni hands'. He married this girl, greatly to the disappointment of his grandfather, who felt that if the father had been alive he might have been able to find possible choices for the boy which would have reconciled the Ngoni ideal of marriage to a high-ranking clan with a Christian background.

In pre-European days there had been a series of 'dynastic marriages' between the royal clan and the leading clans and the desire to link the aristocratic families in this way was very strong still. It was always alleged that the girl had the right to refuse a suitor if she did not like him. I found several cases however in which the girl's refusal had been overruled by the men of her father's house who desired a 'dynastic marriage'. In two of these cases the girl was finally carried off to her husband's village for the marriage ceremony after

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 parallel of the Jews of the Old Testament preparing the way
177 for the Christian era to illustrate and drive home their belief
797 that they, the Ngoni, had prepared the way for the Christian Gospel in Nyasaland. 'Were we not also a people who hated idols and images? We too tried to reach the Great God through our ancestor spirits, but we failed, until the mission came to teach us.' 'We held together the people of this land under one rule so that the missionaries could travel safely and spread the Gospel teaching.' These beliefs were stated so often that they became almost standard formula, and the incongruity of this picture with some of the warlike situations recorded by the earliest missionaries was ignored and forgotten. In the churches, where the people sat on mats, Sunday by Sunday, facing their Ngoni ministers, rising to sing, in
[533] their typical Ngoni harmonies, Christian hymns set to former Ngoni war tunes—in this setting Ngoni history was brought home, interwoven with the new teaching, to young adults who formed the majority of the congregation. For Ngoni elders it was something more than a reminder of their past. It was setting the Ngoni people in a special relationship to
[186] the European missionaries and the new learning, compensating for the passing of military power and political supremacy by establishing Ngoni cultural superiority over their neighbours. This gave some spiritual reassurance to a people in the throes of political change, and it was a lesson which lost none of its significance for the young adults who heard it.

Ngoni law

671 'There was one law for all the people. No one could be ignorant of the law.' These were the words, quoted in Chapter I, which the Ngoni used frequently to describe the importance
● [182] of law in their culture, its role in the political unification of their own and subject peoples, and the responsibility, laid on all adults, for knowledge of the law and conformity with its demands. An incident in a court of law, which was unfor-
692 gettable to an anthropologist, was a case in which a chief sat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] beadbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear 301 the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took 356 an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain 515 standards in their homes and in their persons, which were 182 held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government [177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 181 356 515 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infect their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again. 825 356 [485]

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene which made them insist that there should be no spitting or nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An ingenious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose. 515 356 [413]

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean. 515 [576]

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up 264

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

181 577 828 [182] The four so-called personal values will be reflected in the Ngoni personality traits which we are going on to discuss. There are however two values which did not appear to fit into any integrated system, and which yet recurred as themes in Ngoni culture, and here and there in the ideas inherent in child training. One was the theme of childhood innocence, which was much deeper and more subtle than merely keeping children in ignorance of sexual life and intercourse. The other was the value set on the 'gentle' man. He was a man who appeared to be almost wholly self-controlled, able to have normal sexual intercourse with his wives but not always thinking about women, showing sternness but without anger, being just but also merciful. These were the qualities looked for in the man responsible for the guardianship of certain head villages where the ancestor cult was [769] carried on, and who was entrusted with the ritual associated with the ancestor cult. In the more ancient ritual, such as [778] carrying the sacred emblem before the armies, it was young boys, exemplifying the childhood innocence theme, who were entrusted with this charge. In the more modern contexts, many of the outstanding Ngoni ministers in the church [793] were recognized and revered as 'gentle' men.

The Ngoni ideal personality

577 Chapters IV and V, as well as Chapters VI and VII, showed that there were certain elements in the Ngoni ideal of what their children should be like which were common to young men and women, to boys and girls, while others were emphasized only for girls or for boys. Among the common traits we have already seen the outstanding emphasis on 'respect' in all forms of behaviour and in all kinds of contact with older people, and with others who should be 'honoured'. Part of this respect was shown in obedience, and with this obedience in all the detailed inter-personal relations with senior people was associated, in the individual's relations to society as a whole, being law-abiding and complying with Ngoni law.

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[2]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[2] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
428 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[722] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was,
[581] in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[178] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political
602 ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

128 from the recollections of informants and the accounts of contemporary writers. Even in a society as rapidly expanding as was the Ngoni 554 before 1898, the majority of the population at any one time consists 581 of people who are politically unimportant. What were remembered and what was recorded at the time were the marriages of leaders 184 and their close relatives. It is they, more than others, who were distinctively Ngoni, and it was by their actions that the values of Ngoni society were emphasized and developed. Their marriages [187] were important in maintaining tribal solidarity and it is the system exemplified in these marriages that we have been describing. But the recent captives, the poor, the unsuccessful warriors, the junior sons of junior sons, they also married and their marriages were at least as numerous as those of their more fortunate brethren, despite the large bands of wives acquired by successful men.

583 The data in our sample provide suggestions as to both the relative frequency of marriage without payment and the kind of relationship 54 that held between payment and status of spouse. The eight cattle were offered by one of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants as bridewealth for the daughter of a man of Nsenga origin. Two junior sons of this lieutenant each offered a beast as legalization payment for a wife, one of whom was the daughter of a divisional head. A legalization payment of unknown magnitude was made in a marriage between a village headman and a daughter of another of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants. These four marriages we may regard as important marriages between people of high status accompanied by marriage payments which usually were substantial. Among persons of low status we find that in six out of the seven marriages in which no payment was made, one or both of the spouses had been captured. Intermediately we have the remaining two marriages in which the legalization payment was made and the one in which 'snuff-box' was paid, all involving people of low or middle status and accompanied by relatively small payments, namely a chicken, some cloth, and tobacco. This positive correlation between status and payment holds for thirteen out of the fourteen marriages, but one marriage without payment was between one of the same junior sons of the lieutenant and the daughter of a man of Kalanga origin.

From such evidence as there is, it seems probable that marriages between people of high status were usually accompanied by substantial payments. At the same time, many of the marriages of people of low status and some of the unimportant marriages of men of high status took place without payments. What proportion of the total these marriages accounted for we cannot now ever hope to know. However since they amount to half of our pre-1898 sample it seems probable that they constituted a considerable fraction of all the marriages contracted at that time.

581 The payment of 'snuff-box' and bridewealth were the crucial events establishing a marriage, but there were a number of other transfers of beer and cattle, and a number of ceremo[illegible]ithout

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *lusiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *nyongo*, from the Zulu *inyongo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 40 and 114, and Scott, *A cyclopaedic dictionary of the Mang'anja language spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 486, both translate the Nyanja word *nyongo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mphehiso*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-phehisa*, to help or make to cook. Weise, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', pp. 473-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *vipeko*. Cf. Zulu *uku-pheka*, to cook.

[17] Called *mngeniso*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *msyelano*, from the Zulu *uku-dlana*, or *kulyelana*, from the Nsenga *ku-lyelana*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [554] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. *The levirate*

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mceka* or *mtoso*. *Mceka* is an Nsenga word meaning a small [192] cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt [291] by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery, and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1898 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the looting of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chiefdoms reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1898, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the [182]
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with 843
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant.
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives 167
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are [837]
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court 692
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [643] [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [182] [693] [562]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another. 486 562

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene 602 in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

N 753 The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugola* 182 supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour 626 which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory N it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use 755 of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man 754 to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, N depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even 626 the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, N although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern [171] Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other N people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can M only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at 626 both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugola* [177] and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[8]

N To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act 753 as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in 834 running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the 164 big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an N efficient deterrent of adultery.

581 Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you N may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable 602 and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[8] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

212 The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish 121 between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

181 Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of Euro- [177] pean control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller 181 looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle- 178 dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung [538] at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now 533 largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs 182 they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in 538 ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is 113 the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women 648 are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The 186 cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewā, Kunda, and so on.

125 We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the 648 whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories 648 are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not 177 only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British. Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly", and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the
693 Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
184 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
692 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done
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8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

under the guise of drawing attention to some good Ngoni custom which has been neglected. Thus, for example, a man came to court saying that he was always quarrelling with his wife and that he wished to divorce her. The bench granted the divorce and awarded the woman 30s. damages. The litigant protested. The junior member of the bench, a man aged about 25 years, said, "Don't you know, it has always been the custom in this court to award 30s. damages against men who divorce their wives?" Yet this was a comparatively recent practice and the litigant's protest seemed, to me, to be quite justified. The young man had been on the bench only about eighteen months. Even without Administrative stimulus, deliberate acts of legislation are not unknown among the Ngoni, but they require considerable discussion and probably a tribal meeting. It is easier, particularly for a court member as junior as the man in question, to appeal to the unwritten corpus of tribal custom when introducing a new rule. An analogous process in our own society is perhaps concealed under the fiction that judges do not make law. Ngoni do not quote specific precedents in court, and in this undocumented environment new decisions, if they are not soon challenged, become part of what has always been the custom since time immemorial.

We may then summarize by saying that their common store of notions about the past provides Ngoni with a means of distinguishing themselves from similar groups at a time when the cultural distinctions between these groups are in fact becoming less and less. In the Courts, appeals to the value of traditional custom are made to gain acceptance for new rulings, while in ordinary life breaches of custom are widespread and are not censured.

When we consider legends associated with particular groups within he tribe the picture is rather different. Separate groups in the population remember, and sometimes act in the light of, particular incidents in the past which link them to other similar groups. Thus village A is linked with village B because of some incident in the past when the erstwhile leader of A captured the leader of B, or because at one time the leaders of A and B were brothers. These incidents, and the present inter-group relations with which they are associated, are not known universally but only by the groups concerned and by those near them. Yet in many ways these incidents are of greater practical significance than the more widely known tribal history. The relationships to which they give rise, or rather such of these relationships as have persisted, are remembered at funerals, in the formal exchanges of beer, and in the settlement of quarrels. There are at first glance no sanctions to maintain relationships of this kind, and indeed the very separate existence of two villages A and B may be due to a quarrel followed by a split. But although, for example, when an old woman dies in A there is no way of directly forcing a messenger to carry the news to B, there is in fact a greal deal of social pressure on both groups to keep alive the connection between them. This arises from the general responsibility placed on everyone to preserve the peace, that is, to preserve the existing social order intact. If there are

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

If there are 829
quarrels in a village the headman is blamed by the chief for not controlling 627
his people well. All disputes are best settled out of court, even if they must be 628
referred to court later on. Therefore a quarrel in village A brings to light all the alliances and cleavages which link A with other villages and differentiate it from them. The headman of A appeals to B for support, invoking the historical incident linking them, and hopes to settle affairs of his village with the authority of B's approval behind him. For if the headman of B is a potential ally he is also a potential rival, and the dissident section in A may themselves invoke their link with B and transfer their allegiance to him. Thus although the details of the relationship between A and B, and the historical incident connected with it, may not be widely known there is considerable external pressure on them to maintain their relationship. Connexions of this kind, mainly between villages, but also between chiefdoms, play a large part in contemporary Ngoni life. Men walk twenty miles to a funeral and women carry pots of beer all day in response to ties of this kind.

Thus we see, on the one hand, that tribal legends are widely known, 829
relate to pre-conquest times, and do not directly influence conduct; and, on 173
the other, that legends associated with inter-group relations are known only 628
by the groups concerned, may relate to either before or after 1898, and do directly influence action. Why is there this difference? We may regard the former legends as of significance mainly in external relations and the latter in internal. Within the tribe, and more particularly within the minor chiefdom, inter-group relations are still largely determined by Ngoni themselves, however much they may have altered in form and content since 1898 and however much Ngoni are part of a wide system. Movement between villages is only slightly controlled by the Administration and in quarrelling, in marriage and adultery, beer-drinking and hoeing, Ngoni men and women choose their own allies and enemies. Incidents in reality give rise to inter-group relations and are subsequently invoked to maintain them. History is written not in books but in the names of groups and in the remembered connexions, between them, and as these connexions gradually change so local legendary history is gradually rewritten.

In external relations the Ngoni never act as a tribe except within the 829
framework of European-controlled institutions. As yet no myth of origin is 182
needed to explain the fact that Ngoni and Cewa representatives sit together on the Provincial Council save that the Administration put them there. The world of external relations is one of cultural heterogeneity and comparative adequate documentation. In this field legends have only a limited social function. They differentiate tribe X from tribe Y but do not relate them to each other.

Lastly we must consider Ngoni history proper. There have been many 175
alleged accounts of Ngoni history published in Europe and South Africa, 819
but these seem to have had little influence on the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Recently several histories have appeared in the vernacular, and tribal history

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few. We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of these providing the information.[6] The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin. Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from contemporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grow shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that "the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory". From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations, as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

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"A Durban Man" (Deare, Major George Russel). "Eighteen months with the last of the slave raiders." *Natal Weekend Advertiser*, 6 April–11 May 1929. (Page reference to typescript in Central African Archives.)

6. Read and Winterbottom have pointed out that informants from Northern Nyasaland assert that their Paramount Chief is the heir of Zwangondaba, while those from Fort Jameson say that their Chief is the heir. Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 467, and Winterbottom, *Outline Histories*, p. 17.

178 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard
829 the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form-
[183] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state,
[177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship
● [182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior
648 in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were
[161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[304] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-
[186] piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 101 186 619 191 Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indunas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the N [123] aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see N [563] how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

N 105 101 186 As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans N M 177 and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of ●182 marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, ' We taught them to honour their sons ' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

N 123 186 After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni. It is nevertheless recognized that the aristocrats, through their kinship links with the past, have the best knowledge; the rest listen and defer to them. For matters relating to history are no antiquarian interest to the Ngoni. It is probable that recalling history and dwelling on the great days of the past is to some extent a compensation for what the Ngoni consider the indignities of their position to-day. Yet it is also a stimulus to them to maintain their separate identity and to revere their institutions. Tradition supports rank, by recognizing the historical importance of certain clans; and rank preserves tradition because intimate knowledge is the proud monopoly of certain families.

V. TRADITION AND LEGEND AS DOCUMENTATION. To the anthropologist who examines the part played by tradition and legend in the culture of a people, Professor Malinowski has given an invaluable lead. He suggests that myths are the charter and documentation for traditional tribal life, 'statements of reality which live in the institutions and pursuits of the people';[1] and that legend is re-interpreted history. All peoples of whatever level of civilization interpret history in the light of their beliefs about themselves, their achievements, and their destiny. The Ngoni are no exception to this. Sometimes they relate factual history which is verifiable and accurate. At other times it is probably part fact, part fiction. Yet at all times the emphasis in, and interpretation of, tradition, has a definite purpose, and it is possible to see how a standardized form of a narrative has come to be accepted and believed in. The version of a narrative at one time was interpreted or moulded to serve a purpose. Having been established, it then moulds the thinking of the people on that particular issue. The vexed question of the supremacy of the two Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera[2] is a case in point. The basis of the story of the original dispute is the same, but the versions as told in each 'country' differ in a succession of minute details, whose arrangement and emphasis prove the point in each case. Mpezeni's historians have arranged the details to prove that he is the rightful *inkosi*; Mwambera's historians

[1] B. Malinowski. Article on Culture in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

[2] The two Paramounts at present holding these titles are grandsons of the first holders, to whom I refer as old Mpezeni.

177 hitherto been the chief sanction for Ngoni supremacy. With their
178 invincibility gone, the regiments broke up and the Ngoni military prestige was at an end. At the same time the direction of political affairs and the relations between the different tribes was assumed by a superior power. Ngoni political ascendancy and their control of economic organization was also at an end. The subject races of the Ngoni who had hitherto either been conquered or submitted voluntarily to the Ngoni had now an ally who was stronger than their former masters.

3. The new situation forced the Ngoni to make drastic readjust-
177 ments. They had to readjust themselves to new relations with other
178 tribes, and at the same time to the Europeans. In their contact with
186 the Chewa and other subject tribes they could no longer maintain the
648 social exclusiveness which had marked the distinction between Ngoni and slaves. There was therefore less actual resistance to culture fusion, though the dislike of adopting alien customs persisted. This dislike of alien customs was evident to some extent also in white contacts. The missionaries brought a new religion, western education, and western medicine. Other Europeans introduced land reserves, taxation, and working for wages. To the local tribes the European represented security as well as certain material benefits. To the Ngoni these material benefits appeared less welcome in the face of their defeat. There was therefore a psychological conflict set up among the Ngoni
178 —a malaise due to their military and political downfall, together with
181 their determination to preserve certain elements in their own culture.
182 That psychological conflict is evident everywhere to-day, and finds expression in all conversations which turn on the relations of the Ngoni to other tribes or to Europeans. To the persistence of that conflict is due the strength of Ngoni 'national feeling', which has directed the selective process by which some of their political, legal, and social institutions have survived the results of culture contact.

4. Conditions all over Africa are changing and new forms of social
178 and political organization are emerging due to the contact of the
648 Africans with European civilization. What place has the Ngoni state in this emergent African society? Are there still cultural realities in Ngoni society which should be preserved, and can the Ngoni political structure be galvanized into new life through the medium of Indirect

/4 cont'd/

national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regiments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exodus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to provide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and finger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority living in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a segment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require considerable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties. Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the Swazi lineage,[41] and perhaps more widely, although in both these societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[41] cf. Holleman, 'Twee-eenheidsbeginsel van die Zulu' and 'Zulu *isigodi*'; Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 729*f*, s.v. *isizinda*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40*f*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

In the 1930's, in the villages of the *alumuzana*, individuals with the same clan name formed patrilineal groups of an extended family type. The original *alumuzana* were the leaders of groups of persons bearing their clan descent name, who crossed the Zambesi under Zwangendaba or Mputa. In Part II we shall see how these *alumuzana* were settled in the Ngoni kingdoms round the royal villages, with the result that a group of villages of mixed ethnic origin came to be associated with the village regarded as the head village of a clan. Reference is made from time to time in this study to clan heads, and to the head villages of certain clans. There was no head of a Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan who was not regarded as a *mulumuzana*. On the ground that his ancestor crossed the Zambesi with his wives and followers, the head of such a clan was always given that title. In addition to the head village of a *mulumuzana* there were a number of other villages connected with the clan, created partly by the working of the *lusungulu* system of village segmentation, and partly by other sections of the larger villages moving off to make new gardens. The association of a number of villages owned by individuals with the same descent name was due to the original settlement of the *alumuzana* who were given land at varying distances from the royal village. When the Ngoni spoke of 'clan areas' this was the connotation they gave to the term. Village censuses showed that small family groups bearing the same descent name were scattered widely over a number of villages in several of the chiefs' areas. There was, however, in connexion with each clan an area of concentration round the head village where a number of families and individuals with that descent name were living. These were sometimes referred to as clan areas, using the name of the clan with the prefix *ma*, meaning the people of that clan, in central Ngoniland, and with the prefix *u*, meaning the land of the clan, in the northern kingdom.

(c) *The ritual pattern*

In the rest of this study there will be descriptions and analyses of Ngoni marriage and funeral rites, of the puberty rites carried out for each boy and girl, but not in groups in initiation schools, and of the rituals associated with the ownership of cattle and with the ancestor cult. The marriage and funeral rites have South-eastern Bantu affinities, and so has the ritual associated with cattle-keeping and the ancestor cult. The northern Ngoni had a tradition that circumcision was practised among them when they left Natal, and that it was given up while they were in Tanganyika. Giving the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) to the men who were allowed to leave the regiments and settle as married men in civilian life was another ritual of southern origin which the Ngoni gave up soon after the kingdoms were established in Nyasaland.[1] The

[1] The early Europeans in Nyasaland reported that head-rings were worn by all the senior Ngoni men.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all
178 the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment
535 of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well pre-
301 served by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or
126 Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom
192 were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used
197 in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to
[194] make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

your people as did your father before you. If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned.' 643

Habuya Dube, the official 'praiser' of Paramount Gomani II, had been present at the funeral of Cikusi, and he confirmed that the ceremony of accession was as described above and added these further details:

« At the time of the burning of the body of Cikusi, Gomani stood up in the smoke, standing on one leg with a shield in his hand. When all had been consumed by the fire, they began to open the waters and the grave-digger swept the ashes. And they picked up Gomani and went with him to the mound so that he should wash. When these things were over, we left the water to go to the house. We were dancing *ligubo* in the open place and Gomani had a headdress of *luve* [1] feathers on his head. And they followed him into the house, but all the people were dancing *ligubo* in the *bwalo* for a whole month. When the mourning was over, Bvumbwe Maseko said 'Now let us establish (*tiimike*) our chief.' So he was established. [766]

The 'standing on one leg' referred to in both texts is the position adopted by other East and South-east African people when resting supported by the spear, with one foot flat against the other knee and the shield in front of the body. Other men inheriting their father's position stood at the grave holding a spear, but only those of the Maseko clan, succeeding the Paramount in the direct line, adopted the position of standing on one leg. 'Placing' or establishing the Paramount was done before a large gathering of people with the warriors in full war-dress, described graphically in terms of the waving head-plumes and the thunder of the shields. It was evident that all discussion of who would or would not be a suitable Paramount went on within the closed circle of the regent and the senior men, and the people were presented with the chosen Paramount whom they acclaimed. [516]

The instruction by the senior men was a reminder to the new Paramount that, though his new powers were extensive and unique in their authority, he should not act like a cruel despot. There are references in the *Nchesu District Note Book* [2] to the passing-over of an elder brother of Gomani I on the grounds that he was of a fierce and cruel disposition, though, according to Ngoni informants, this man Mandala was a younger brother of Cikusi and an uncle of Gomani, and thus was not eligible to be Paramount. In discussing the type of man who was considered suitable to be Paramount, Ngoni informants always laid stress on the need for him not to be fierce and cruel. This pointed to an ideal type of Paramount and did not agree with European accounts of large-scale poison ordeals at Cikusi's court. The instruction to the new Paramount [183]

[1] Feathers worn only by the Paramount. [2] *Nchesu District Note Book*. 1891.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 585 621 The prolonged series of interviews, exchanges and ceremonies emphasized the Ngoni conception of the marriage contract and its binding nature. They also underlined the severance of the new wife from her former family and house, and her gradual assimilation into her mother-in-law's house. This relationship between Ngoni women within the houses provided an effective means of integrating them into a village to which they were strangers.

CHAPTER IV

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

183 59 'THE Ngoni have power and authority over their women and their children.' So began one of the texts on *cingoni*, 'the thing that is Ngoni', by a man of the Ntumba people whose grandfather had been born among the Ngoni when they were in Songea. There was a recognised ideal pattern of an Ngoni family which covered both the individuals included in the family group and the place where they lived. This pattern was patrilineal in descent, virilocal in residence, polygynous in marriage for all men of standing who were not Christians. Other recognized and often-mentioned characteristics were the continued residence of widows in their husband's village after his death, the grouping of families by houses, and the *laweni*, or dormitory system for boys and unmarried young men.

581 593 The young wife wept on the day of her marriage because she was leaving the security and known relationships of her own family for the hazards and uncertainty of entering as a stranger into her husband's family group. The dramatization of these sentiments in the protracted marriage ceremony, and the allusions in the *mtimba* songs, brought out clearly the continuity of the man's relations with all members of his family and the sudden sharp break in the woman's relationship when she married. When her first child was born, and a new individual family group launched, her final integration into her husband's family began. As a mother who had borne a grandchild to her husband's parents she had thenceforward a direct part in the relationships within her husband's family, but as a wife she was always a stranger. The marriage negotiations and ceremonial express the closeness of the family ties, showing on the girl's side the anxiety of her family on parting with her to live among strangers; and on the man's side the hesitancy of the husband's family at taking into their midst an unknown and untried stranger. In addition, the protracted exchanges of cattle and feasts, delaying the final ceremony and building up relationships between the two family groups, illustrate the Ngoni attitude towards marriage as a

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 555 431 away the prize animals in the herd. Their formula in presenting a beast was 'Here is a small sheep.' This belittling of a gift was the social counterpart of their inner desire for a reputation for generosity.

183 422 476 It has been clear from many previous references that mutual assistance among members of a house was inherent in the social pattern of cattle-ownership. The Ngoni attached great value to this reciprocity of service, and it was deeply embedded in their social ethic. Young men in Ngoni villages thought twice before they deliberately took action which would bring them into the courts, because the fine would have to be paid by their elders from the common herd of cattle. The implications of this service proved no ultimate deterrent to hot-headed youth, but the lesson was constantly being rubbed in. After a court case for adultery, when a young man's father and his father's brothers had handed over a beast for a fine, they would grumble in the evening by the kraal at this waste of good cattle, and suggest it was time the young man went off to the south and sent money home to buy more cattle. This was the cycle of mutual help—the elders provided cattle from the herd for *lobola* and fines for the young men, who in turn went off to work and sent back money to buy more cattle. Reference has been made to 'the cloth of the spirits', when cattle were sold to provide cash for a young man who needed it, and the balance was used to buy cloth which was kept in the hut where the ancestral spirit was guarded. This cloth was the common property of all who belonged to the house owning the herd, and was returnable to the hut after it had been worn for some festive occasion. The forms which this mutual help could take were numerous and varied, and they all illustrated the fact that the correct and continuous observance of this reciprocity was considered by the Ngoni as one of the basic values underlying the ownership and use of cattle.

Among the group bound together by cattle-ownership this emphasis on mutual help as a desirable behaviour pattern had its counterpart in the social concept of integration. As we have seen, the Ngoni put a high value on 'staying together', on being united when challenged by a situation which made for disintegration. Within the social units of the house and family, the ownership of cattle and their care and use demanded some degree of co-operation through responsibility for the herd which was held in common. Integration between the living and their ancestors was also provided by the cattle. Common possession of a herd did more than just hold people together. The pattern of family and house organization which was characteristically Ngoni was given some stability through the ownership of cattle, allowing for the subdivision of herds when the new village 'went out', the exchanges at marriage, and the sacrifices at death.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as young men, and had known the independence and 178
supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'every- 184
thing is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when 561
faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the [797] influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, ministers and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and [463] brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni way of living, and many of them had made a successful [183] synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they [156] said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described 178
briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes domin- 829
ated social relationships. There was a determined struggle 177
on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate [861]
these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasa- [186] land sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

answers to them somewhere, then there have been some vital omissions in the narrative. 121

Clues to this study

In relating this study to other field studies and analyses of socialization techniques and processes, I have not attempted to present here any general assessment of similar or related studies, much less any review of the field as a whole, since I have touched on both in earlier publications.[1] Instead I have brought into this chapter one or two clues or guide lines from other sources which seemed to me to elucidate some of my problems, particularly in regard to four main aspects of this study, which have already been mentioned in Chapter I and which to a large extent set the limits and determine the emphases of this book. The 'true Ngoni' were a society within a society, a distinct cultural group within the Ngoni kingdom. This society of theirs had sharp edges, definable and recognizable limits, and that partly accounted for their own awareness of themselves as distinct from, though at so many points connected with, the neighbouring peoples. Their culture, that is their way of living within this society, had definite values which they strove to maintain, and this was one of the reasons why the ideal Ngoni personality pattern, and their endeavour to see it reproduced in each child, was easy to recognize. In order to safeguard their society and maintain their culture they exercised a fairly rigid social control over the upbringing of their children, which resulted in something approaching a 'system' of training and educating children. Set against this conservation of traditional values however was the reality and extent of changes due to external circumstances mentioned at the end of Chapter I. In the face of these changes the Ngoni showed that they could adapt some of them to their own purposes, and they made use of the schools, for example, once they approved of them, to help adjust their

184 186 829 183 [157] [861] 177

[1] See Appendix (i)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of
living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and
the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We
shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the
setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be in-
terpreted according to the Ngoni social organization,
sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my
earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child having in Ngoni 801
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and
who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle
of people forming a young child's contacts was from the
beginning much wider than the individual family which a
child was born into. When he began to run about and to
pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was
as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni
adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when neces-
sary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related
families in other villages, with all members of the same clan [602]
living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship
and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads [631]
were also inseparable from the political links between the
people and their territorial chief, and between the whole
people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-
Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the
villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their
children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence
in most villages there were sharp distinctions between stand- [183]
ards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni
families.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

854 anxious to protect her charge in every way, and with the connivance of the women helpers she made little charms of bits of roots to hang around the baby's neck to make him [751] grow quickly and to ward off sorcery and witchcraft. She [754] threaded pumpkin seeds and tied them around his neck to [856] make his teeth come quickly if they were late in appearing. These charms were generally those used by the local peoples, and Ngoni fathers were contemptuous about their use and efficacy. 'These women are spoiling our children,' they said, and then reassured themselves by remembering that a boy would be free from such women's spoiling once he went into the boys' dormitory.

Variants on the Ngoni pattern

183 This traditional pattern of authority and behaviour in respect [565] of birth, infant care and weaning was essentially that of the true Ngoni, that relatively small aristocratic group who never forgot their superior social status and its foundation in their ancestry. This first stage in the socialization of a child, from 861 birth to weaning, brought out clearly two fundamental 596 features of Ngoni social organization. One was the role played by the senior women who had themselves in their childhood been brought up on strict Ngoni lines. The father of the new baby accepted the role played by his own mother in controlling, and if necessary coercing, his young wife. Though, as we shall see later, every Ngoni boy and young man had a period of virtually complete escape from feminine control, once a man married and his young wife was established within the social group of his mother's house, he acknowledged his mother's authority over her, and particularly over the birth and care of his child. The mother-son relationship of the young father to his own mother dominated the relationship of the young mother to her child. Young Ngoni fathers never questioned their allegiance to their own mothers, cherishing them as they grew older and supporting them in their exercise of authority. Much as he loved his

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway. 596 861

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but which turned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers. 183 596 [184]

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it. 177 563 [845] [841]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 301
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602 855
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

INTRODUCTION

MARRIAGE among the Ngoni is much the same as anywhere else. 581
It establishes a relationship between a man and a woman, regulates their sexual activities, locates their children in the kinship system and influences the inheritance of their property. These general features, however, do no more than define and identify marriage, and distinguish marriage from concubinage. Our task 121
is to analyse the particular features that distinguish Ngoni marriage from other marriage systems and to relate marriage to other institutions and social processes in Ngoni society.

In Ngoni history there has always been marriage. Indeed men and 581
women look back longingly to a past when people married properly 183
and decorously, and when adulterers were killed, and bemoan the promiscuity of the present when no woman's fidelity is certain. Yet even now old people still expect their juniors to marry and their expectations are fulfilled. Adults are assumed to be married, and the assumption is justified.

Marriage is seen by the Ngoni as part of the natural order. [589]
Unmarried adults cannot fill important roles and are regarded as overgrown children whose anomalous condition must be explained by reference to a malady or a physical or moral defect. Yet despite the universal and permanent character of marriage as an Ngoni institution there have been, in the course of the hundred and thirty [178]
years which constitute Ngoni history, great changes in the procedures and implications of marriage and in its relations to other aspects of the social life of which it is a part. These changes have been paralleled in other Ngoni institutions, in law, in local organization, in religion and above all in political structure. In this paper we 121
shall attempt to contrast the institution of marriage as seen at two stages in Ngoni history and to relate it to the general plan of social life at these two periods. We shall also discuss some of the processes of change that have brought about the differences we observe and which to some extent are still at work in contemporary Ngoni society.

It is convenient to compare marriage as it was during the 1890's 129
and as it is at the present day. The information relating to the earlier period is contained only to a slight extent in contemporary [127]
documents,[1] and consists largely in the recollections of older men and women as recorded by a number of writers from 1914 onwards. The

[1] The most important of these are Wiese's articles, 'Expedição portugueza a M'Pesêne (1889)', in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, x (1891) pp. 235-73, 331-430, 465-97, and xi (1892) pp. 373-599. (All page references cited are from Vol. X); and 'Beitrage zür Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambezi, namentlich der Angoni,' *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1900), pp. 181-200.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of [587] his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 851 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriage belonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth his sons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin on behalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim. I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past and when recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

[720] Important men sometimes married female captives and no [554] bridewealth passed. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons founded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bride- ●183 wealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.[13] The infor- [128] mation on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II.

It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was [276] offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898

[13] See pp. 22f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

marriage system. We shall discuss the legalization payment at some length in the succeeding chapters, for it is the most important of all the payments made in modern marriage. A possible explanation of its occurrence in these early marriages is that although the marriages themselves were made before 1898, the payments were made considerably later. The amounts alleged to have been handed over as legalization payments may have been regarded as 'snuff-box' at the time of payment although they are now referred to as legalization payments, either because of the general obsolescence of the term 'snuff-box' or because my informants thought I would know the new term and not the old one. Another possibility is that even before 1898 the vernacular term for legalization payment (*cimalo*) was in use as a synonym for 'snuff-box'. The term itself was certainly in use among neighbouring tribes before 1898.

This is a very small sample from which to draw any conclusions, but it is of value in suggesting where the reality of social life differed

Table I. Pre-1898 marriage payments: incidence

Payments made	Number of marriages
'Snuff-box' only	1
Bridewealth only	1
Legalization payment only	5
None	7
Total	14
Not known if any payments were made or not	4
Grand total	18
In this sample there were no pre-1898 marriages in which more than one kind of payment was made	

Table II. Pre-1898 marriage payments; magnitude

Payment	Magnitude	Number of marriages
'Snuff-box'	Handful of tobacco	1
Bridewealth	8 beasts	1
Legalization payment	1 beast	2
	1 chicken	1
	Cloth	1
	Not known	1
	Total	5

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

But we know from other areas 121
that loss of sovereignty itself does not necessarily disrupt the marriage arrangements of common people and we must look elsewhere for an explanation.

2. Movement between villages

The old villages formed part of the residential system, and their 621
structure was maintained by the power of the central chieftainship, as expressed through the lieutenants of the royal villages, and by the diffuse sanction of public opinion based on ideas held in common as to the rights conferred by the payment of bridewealth. Nowadays the lieutenants of the royal villages have very much less power, and [178] bridewealth is not often paid. The village is held together by the various ties of kinship and affinity between its members, and to a slight extent by the restriction of movement from one village to another. This control, exercised by the Administration through the [648] system of registration of adult males, is largely ineffective except in the Resettlement Areas.[2] Men and women are more or less free to live wherever they can find relatives, and if they quarrel in one village they can move to another where they hope life will be more pleasant. There is no general rule to which appeal can be made concerning whether a married couple should live uxorilocally or virilocally. Hence a quarrel between man and wife or between affinally related people may lead to a split in the village, and the dissident section may attempt to form a village of its own or attach itself to another village. It is therefore in the interests of the [622] headman that quarrels in his village should be settled as rapidly as possible, and he has therefore an interest in the private lives of his people even though they may not be his close relatives. His interests are represented by his lieutenants and are shared by everyone in the village who wishes his own to be a large prosperous and happy village. The theme of the good and happy village recurs in many [183] of the formal situations of Ngoni life and finds expression in much of local action on a village basis, as for example in the competitive dances, the division of food at a ceremony and the organization of the religious sects.

We find therefore that the headman and his lieutenants participate [622] in the ceremonies of marriage and in marital quarrels. Conversely the headman is brought into relationship with the married couple by the allocation to him of pots of beer whenever there is a general distribution even though he may not be at the ceremony. Other important men and women similarly participate merely because of their common membership of the village. For example, a hoeing party was led by a middle-aged woman who was described as 'an important person' in the son-in-law's village. She was in fact

[2] Areas which have been reopened to settlement by Ngoni and other tribes since 1941 with various restrictions on agricultural methods and on population. About ten per cent of Ngoni live in Resettlement Areas.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an expression more of their different matrilateral affiliations than of the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother, although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by his first and third wives [3] were reared by their father's fourth wife's mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of his children. This division is in accord with the statement made frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's. Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace', however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft-reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The facility with which married couples live uxorilocally is no doubt partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxorilocal Cewa and other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

4. *The moral significance of sexual activity*

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die, and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

[3] See above, p. 109

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled
586 affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another
178 in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[10] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the
[436] contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year
[171] of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the
[465] rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in
[435] bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call
[641] on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group, so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for
[581] stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic
613 group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor
[183] sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the
12 Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may
17 be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes.
586 Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[10] *ibid*, p. 172.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

585 bride herself refuses to sit on the mat until she has been given a present. She is joined on the mat by a small girl, aged about ten, from the groom's family, who becomes known as 'the guide'.[1] The leader of the bride's party and one other of the bride's women sit down on the mat, with the bride and the guide between them.

The instruction of the bride now begins, with a speech from some important man in the village, who takes the gall bladder and anoints [237] the head, arms and feet of the bride with the gall, going on to anoint the guide in the same way. They are then sometimes anointed with vaseline by a woman. One person after another, men and women, now proceed to lecture the bride on how she should behave in the [867] village, and each explains to her who he or she is in relation to her. The gall bladder is blown up and stuck in the hair of the bride, where she will keep it until she returns to her own village. Each person who delivers a speech of instruction gives a small present, a threepenny bit or beads, which they put into a plate on the mat at the bride's feet. This situation of formal instruction, often of an [183] abusive nature, accompanied by presents, is a recurrent one in Ngoni ceremonial.[2]

[237] Sometimes the small intestine of the animal is placed round the shoulders of a younger sister of the bride who is a member of her party. This girl is then designated linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) of the bride. This is not always done, and when it is done it does not imply that the girl will later become the real linked co-wife of her elder sister. Although in the two ceremonies I saw this designation of a linked co-wife did not occur, in both a sister of the bride was one of the bridal party.

[262] At the end of the instruction, the bride and her party go back into their own hut, and the leader cooks the liver of the animal, and the blood and fat. This she divides between the two families, sending the portion of the bridegroom's family to their hut for them to eat there. The guide stays in the bride's hut. After they have rested, the bride, guide, and their companions leave the village, taking the meat with them back to the bride's village. Outside her village the party stop, and are met by more women from the bride's family. The guide demands a small present before she will enter the village, usually beads. Inside the village the bride's mother takes the gall bladder from her daughter's head and buries it in the byre. The guide stays in the village for a few days, and demands another small present before she will assist the bride's people with cooking. When a quantity of flour has been pounded for the bride, and some maize half-pounded for the guide, the bride and the guide return quietly to the bridegroom's village. The bride begins to live with her husband, and the guide resumes her normal

[1] *Mpelekezi*, from the verb *ku-pelekeza*, to accompany part of the way. Cf. Zulu *impelesi*, girl accompanying a bride to her wedding.
[2] See above, p. 77.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 take the "child," going with him to a hut to give him instruction, saying, "To-day you stand alone. Look after your people as did your father before you. [183] If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned."

IV

THE UNAMWALI CEREMONY

881 I. When a young girl finds she has become a woman, she goes and stands beside the pathway [leading to the village]. Any one passing finds her there, standing silent. If it be a man who notices her, he goes off and tells some woman, saying to her, "I have come across game, go and lift it." An old woman goes off to speak to her. She finds the girl, her face enveloped in her calico, and giving no answer to any question put to her. Then the old woman knows the girl is now a matured woman, and takes her off to the stream to bathe her. On returning with her from the water she places her in the hut of the head old woman of the village. (The old woman who first found her is the head of the ensuing ceremony.) Then the old woman goes off to inform other elderly women that "the maiden has reached womanhood." The girl remains in the hut six days. Should she be of the clan of [614] *Kuoni*, they give her porridge made from millet only, if of any other clan, porridge made of any [262] grain. In her relish they do not put salt. Her porridge she eats out of an old basket, and the relish from a potsherd. (This old basket will be

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

12. *Customary Licence* (*Ngoni*).

N 836 [183] [684] [583]

Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

N 586 [595]

Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mabeka*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *nakhonse* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mcheka*, *kutendera* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

M [586]

III.—DOMESTIC LIFE: FILIAL.

1. *Infancy*.

M 845

Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*kigelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man at the same time, and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

[582]

M 429

Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *mtsibweni*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

N 429 593

Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes
177 as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there
[769] was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made
648 to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The
186 Ngoni identified themselves with European rather than with their matrilineal
156 neighbours even before the European conquest. Wiese, himself the main agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[4]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount
[197] Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[5] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not pro-
829 duced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An
●183 aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

181 Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian
186 neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to rationalize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

4. Wiese, *Geschichte*, pp. 200 f.

5. Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'zeni said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Deare, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 25.

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
693 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their
184 colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
●183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are
692 bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
183 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done

under the guise of drawing attention to some good Ngoni custom which has been neglected. Thus, for example, a man came to court saying that he was always quarrelling with his wife and that he wished to divorce her. The bench granted the divorce and awarded the woman 30s. damages. The litigant protested. The junior member of the bench, a man aged about 25 years, said, "Don't you know, it has always been the custom in this court to award 30s. damages against men who divorce their wives?" Yet this was a comparatively recent practice and the litigant's protest seemed, to me, to be quite justified. The young man had been on the bench only about eighteen months. Even without Administrative stimulus, deliberate acts of legislation are not unknown among the Ngoni, but they require considerable discussion and probably a tribal meeting. It is easier, particularly for a court member as junior as the man in question, to appeal to the unwritten corpus of tribal custom when introducing a new rule. An analogous process in our own society is perhaps concealed under the fiction that judges do not make law. Ngoni do not quote specific precedents in court, and in this undocumented environment new decisions, if they are not soon challenged, become part of what has always been the custom since time immemorial.

We may then summarize by saying that their common store of notions about the past provides Ngoni with a means of distinguishing themselves from similar groups at a time when the cultural distinctions between these groups are in fact becoming less and less. In the Courts, appeals to the value of traditional custom are made to gain acceptance for new rulings, while in ordinary life breaches of custom are widespread and are not censured.

When we consider legends associated with particular groups within he tribe the picture is rather different. Separate groups in the population remember, and sometimes act in the light of, particular incidents in the past which link them to other similar groups. Thus village A is linked with village B because of some incident in the past when the erstwhile leader of A captured the leader of B, or because at one time the leaders of A and B were brothers. These incidents, and the present inter-group relations with which they are associated, are not known universally but only by the groups concerned and by those near them. Yet in many ways these incidents are of greater practical significance than the more widely known tribal history. The relationships to which they give rise, or rather such of these relationships as have persisted, are remembered at funerals, in the formal exchanges of beer, and in the settlement of quarrels. There are at first glance no sanctions to maintain relationships of this kind, and indeed the very separate existence of two villages A and B may be due to a quarrel followed by a split. But although, for example, when an old woman dies in A there is no way of directly forcing a messenger to carry the news to B, there is in fact a greal deal of social pressure on both groups to keep alive the connection between them. This arises from the general responsibility placed on everyone to preserve the peace, that is, to preserve the existing social order intact. If there are

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni 114
village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no 178
Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all [643]
day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with pro-
found respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children [644]
formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indumas*[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupu- [692]
lous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It [631]
soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was [183]
strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion; that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African terri- 131
tories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni 101
are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[1 [i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

178 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard
829 the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form-
●[183] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state,
[177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship
[182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior
648 in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were
[161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[304] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-
[186] piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In all the diagrams ego is shown as male. There is no difference in the way these terms are used when ego is a woman, except that she calls her spouse *husband* and not *wife*. There is no consensus as to what great-grandparents should be called. Sometimes *father* 601 [183]

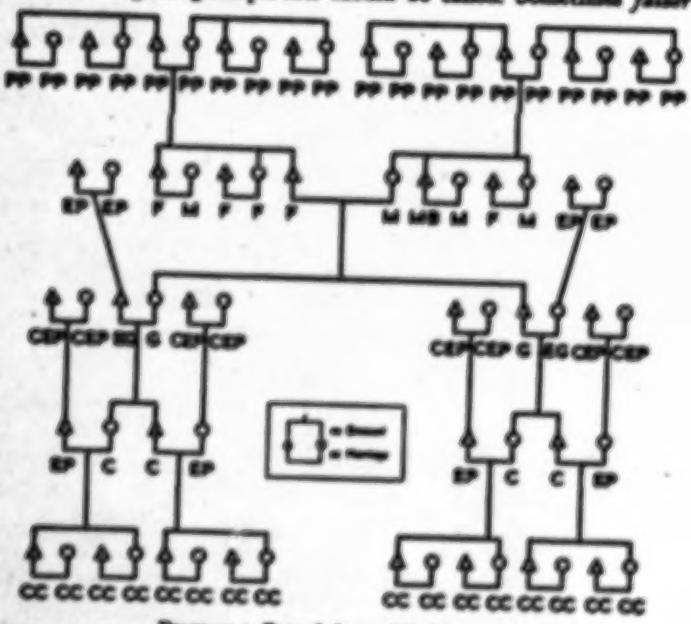

DIAGRAM 5. Extended use of kinship terms

or *mother* is used, according to sex, while others use *grandparent*. Similarly, great-grandchildren are sometimes called *child*, sometimes *grandchild*.

Kinship and Descent-names

A man may not marry anyone whom he calls *mother*, *father*, *mother's brother*, *child*, *sister*, *child's parent-in-law*, and, except for his *cross-cousins*, *sibling*. Marriage with his brother's wife's sister, whom he calls *sibling-in-law*, is allowed, but is thought to be not very satisfactory. As we have seen, these terms can be applied widely, with no theoretical limit to the extent of application. Little interest is shown, however, in tracing genealogical relationships accurately, and the sex and age of the relative referred to may affect the term used. If a 582 835 601

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 is limited by the fact that the Ngoni themselves were without writing, and their warlike disposition discouraged the visits of travellers who might otherwise have left some record of Ngoni life during those times. There is a considerable body of oral tradition [114] which has been reduced to writing since 1891, but for the most part these traditional tales assume a knowlege of Ngoni life and do not explicitly describe it. Our evidence for the main features of Ngoni society during this period of migration is found in three places. First we have the pattern of relationships prevailing at the present time between groups of Ngoni, between villages, chiefdoms and kingdoms. The legends which form the charter of these relations form a coherent and largely consistent corpus of traditional knowledge about events taking place within the last hundred and fifty years from which we can make reliable inferences about the internal history of the Ngoni. In particular we can gain significant information about the manner in which different groups were formed by elucidating the names applied to them. A modified form of genealogical inquiry, applied not to physiological ancestry but to links between dependant and lord and between satellite and parent villages, provides us with a reasonably trustworthy history of inter-group relations.

Secondly, there is the evidence available from the numerous [114] published accounts of Ngoni life which have been written by European and African authors. The traditions they record can be used to supplement the data gained from an analysis of present-day legends. A little information can be gleaned from the traditional histories of tribes attacked by the Ngoni.

Thirdly, we have a certain amount of comparative evidence 171 from other societies. There are about a dozen distinct Ngoni 184 kingdoms in different parts of Africa at the present time. In this 173 book we are concerned directly with only one of these groups, now situated near Fort Jameson in Northern Rhodesia. Much light is, however, thrown on its history by accounts of other Ngoni States, particularly of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, where the old form of society persisted longer than at Fort Jameson and where even now the changes brought about by colonial rule seem not to be so great. Accounts of Ngoni groups farther afield, and of the allied societies of the Swazi and Zulu in South Africa provide less direct evidence.

114 A few isolated events in early Ngoni history can be dated precisely. Captain Cutfield, R.N., met a group of Ngoni on 1737 November 1822 and some Ngoni warriors skirmished with the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him.

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialised services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them.

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo-

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of
[645] councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native
[602] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion
[771] Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living, in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accom-
648 panying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural
[693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Luangwa valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(*d*) '*Those from this country*'

Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. These in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Yao origin.

Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi stock—that is categories (*a*) and (*b*) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged; or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

The second conclusion is that even if the criterion is accepted that the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambesi, the Ngoni kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (*a*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms of culture were found not only in groups (*a*) and (*b*), as would be expected, but often among families in group (*c*) who, through fighting in the Ngoni armies and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual pattern.[1]

[1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpeseni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their travels. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Maseko Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*.

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to
563 the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also
621 a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as
128 Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a
[184 consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations
121 of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy.
563 Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-
583 betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *mlobokazi*. A
593 strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of
[586] a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother.
591 Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was sup-
[592] ported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

171 The distinctiveness of Ngoni institutions, so often emphasized by the older men and by the early travellers in Nyasaland, was due to cultural affinities with the South-eastern Bantu. The attached table sets out those social and cultural elements in the Ngoni kingdoms which were most distinct from parallel features among the neighbouring peoples, and which had obvious affinity with South-eastern Bantu cultures. The main Ngoni cultural elements have already been referred to in this chapter and will be further discussed in the rest of this study. The corresponding elements among the local peoples are based partly on the [127] earlier sources quoted by Tew and partly on local informants and my 114] own observations. In collecting information about clans, the *mbumba* group consisting of a man with his sisters' children, and the girls' initiation schools, I had no direct contacts with any except Cewa sources.

Variations in cultural conformity among the Ngoni

178 In the Ngoni kingdoms among families with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names there was considerable variation in the degree to 184 which they maintained Ngoni institutions and practised Ngoni cultural forms. The anthropologist was constantly aware that the time element was an important factor in the consolidation of Ngoni practices and in the attitudes developed towards Ngoni culture among the individuals in the different generations. The Ngoni in both kingdoms spoke of the 'older generations' (*mibadwo wa kale*), 'the middle generations' (*mibadwo wa mphati*), and 'the present generation' (*mibadwo wa tsopano*). The first had grown to adulthood before the Europeans came, and were the older senior men and women in the 1930's; the second had been affected by [172] European missionaries, traders, and officials while they were young men and women; the third had never known anything but European contacts and many had grown up in European schools. The senior Ngoni of the [181] older generation often expressed the sentiment: *zatha zonse tsopano* (everything is finished now). They included in that saying the regrets of the older Ngoni for their former independence, and their resentment at the domination of European rule and European culture. It is idle to 177 speculate what cultural changes might have taken place in the Ngoni 178 kingdoms if European influence had been postponed another twenty to thirty years. Nevertheless it is a vital factor in assessing Ngoni culture that the kingdoms had barely twenty years of independent existence before the Europeans began to penetrate Nyasaland. The older Ngoni [181] looked back on their former independent existence as a golden age in which they were spreading Ngoni customs and culture as well as exercising political supremacy. It is difficult to believe that this was wholly true, in view of the extensive cultural interchange going on in the country as a whole. It is, however, possible that wider acceptance of Ngoni cultural elements was prevented by the advent of the Europeans, in so far as cultural institutions and political dominance were closely

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

associated. When warfare ceased the Ngoni could no longer force subject peoples to accept their rule and their cultural institutions, and they had to acquiesce in considerable cultural heterogeneity within their kingdoms, which, according to Ngoni informants, would not have been allowed in pre-European days. The illustrations they gave were in terms of the families living 'on the horns of the village', in many cases the families of captives taken in war. Formerly, they said, those families would have been made to marry with *lobola*, to have their ears pierced in Ngoni fashion, to serve in the army, to be associated with one of the house-groups and serve them in the huts or in the gardens. When Ngoni political power declined, and when large villages broke up, some of these groups formed their own villages and reverted to their former practices of matrilineal descent and uxorilocal residence, and of girls' initiation ceremonies. 177 178

In the northern kingdom one section of the peoples under Henga leadership had adopted a patrilineal system before the Ngoni came. The effect of the Ngoni conquest was to strengthen these practices in this northern section, adding marriage by *lobola*, and to extend them to the southern Tumbuka whose kinship and marriage practices were like those of the Cewa who were their neighbours.[1] In the central kingdom, patrilineal descent, marriage by *lobola* and virilocal residence were only practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and they had introduced variations in virilocal residence which will be discussed in Chapter IV, Part III. Within the true Ngoni families in both kingdoms the senior men and women in the 1930's were aware that cultural conformity with Ngoni practices was not as strict as it had been in their parents' days. They spoke of those Ngoni families who were non-conforming as 'people who spoil the land'. [184]

On the other hand, the adoption of Ngoni customs by non-Ngoni in the Ngoni kingdoms, that is by families with descent names from cis-Zambesi and local clans, continued to take place after European rule began. I found several instances of this adoption in the central kingdom, and many of them were related to the acquisition of cattle by former non-Ngoni families. It was chiefly the virilocal form of residence and patrilineal descent which were taken over with *lobola* marriage. When describing the adoption of such Ngoni practices, informants always said it was *monga cingoni* (like the Ngoni). Those who belonged to the Ngoni kingdoms and had largely adopted Ngoni culture expressed strong sentiments of attachment to it; this was particularly true of town-dwellers who had come from the Ngoni kingdoms but were not members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans. Though they adopted many external forms of European culture in dress, houses and food, the consciousness of their association with Ngoni culture and the Ngoni kingdoms was expressed in strongly emotional terms. [186]

[1] Tew, M. op. cit. pp. 107, 109.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the south end of the lake in 1891, he pleaded with him not to use force against the northern Ngoni. 'Don't fight them,' he urged, 'enlist them.' The military commander, Captain Macguire, who was present at the interview, showed interest in the idea of a new recruiting ground for the regular forces in Nyasaland, but his ideas were not pursued as it proved to be easier to continue recruiting the Yao and Tonga who had already shown themselves good military material.

In the central kingdom the first reactions of the Administration towards the Ngoni were favourable. Paramount Cikusi was visited by administrators in 1882 and 1886, and in 1890 concluded a treaty placing himself under British protection. On his death in 1891 his successor Gomani I sent messengers to inform the Administration of his father's death, to declare his allegiance to the British, and to present a bull and a cow, four tusks of ivory and twenty-five men to help in the war against the slave-raiders. In the following year 100 Ngoni warriors were drafted into the regular forces and Mr. H. H. Johnston reported: 'The Ngoni are altogether a splendid people and may be regarded as the backbone of British Central Africa.'[1] But this co-operative relationship did not last. In 1896 it was reported that 'Gomani and a number of his turbulent young headmen were opposed to our influence.'[2] Ngoni armies raided a mission station, an expeditionary force under British officers was sent, the Paramount's village was attacked and his army defeated. He was taken prisoner and, refusing to walk to Zomba, was shot near Dombole in his former kingdom.

In the 1930's the Ngoni of the central kingdom referred repeatedly to the expedition sent against them, the defeat of their army, the death of their Paramount and the seizure of some of their cattle. They nursed a grudge against their conqueror which coloured much of their sentiments towards Europeans. They sometimes referred to the long period of contact of the northern Ngoni kingdom with the Livingstonia Mission, and contrasted it with their contacts with several missions who appeared to them to be in league with the Administration against them and not to take their side in relations with the Government as Dr. Laws had done in the north.

When Cibambo visited the central Ngoni kingdom with me in 1936 he was interested in making comparisons with his own Ngoni of the north. He found that in central Ngoniland there were very few men who knew Ngoni songs well, and that in general the knowledge of the Ngoni language had almost died out. The big shields were not, he thought, as well cut as those in the north. Yet the war-dances were performed correctly, and the war-dress which the dancers wore was more striking than anything which had been preserved in the north.

[1] Johnston, H. H. *Report of the First Three Years' Administration of the Eastern Portion of B.C.A.* 1894, p. 24.
[2] Johnston, H. H. *Report on Trade and General Conditions in Nyasaland*, 1896–7, p. 7.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

571 643 function and authority was largely evolved and built up during the Ngoni migration across the Zambesi and the early settlement in Nyasaland.

643 The office of the Paramount was supported by three typical Ngoni institutions. The first was the regency exercised by the man who was held responsible for the care of the office of the Paramount. He was called 'the one who takes care of the country', 'the one who has to put the new *inkosi* in his place', 'the one who takes care of the young *inkosi* until he enters his father's place'. We shall see later how this principle of regency operated in particular cases in the succession to the Paramountcy. It proved to be an effective provision both in the case of a minor who was recognized as his father's heir, and during an interregnum while the succession was being discussed. The Ngoni showed a clear understanding of what functions the regent ought to perform, and when he exceeded these functions and usurped, or tried to usurp, the Paramount's position they condemned his action as wrong.

The second institution which supported the Paramountcy was the 'big house' from which the heir to the Paramount had to come. We shall see later that it was not always considered essential that the heir should be the actual child of the wife in the big house. A boy could be adopted [597] into the house and, by Ngoni kinship rules, he was then a child of that house and of the woman in it.

643 The third institution, which made the Paramount immortal at death after having been supreme in his life-time, was the Ngoni practice of 769 'guarding his spirit' in a hut, usually in the village where he had lived. The guardianship of a spirit was not practised exclusively for the Paramount. All the chiefs and the heads of the Swazi clans had this provision made for their spirits when they died, but in national crises prayers [782] addressed to the spirits of former Paramounts were of supreme importance.

The royal clan and the big house

643 Among the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans which formed the Ngoni 614 aristocracy the royal clan had a unique position. Not only was it the clan 565 of the Paramount, but its members had social rank and prestige because they belonged to his clan. In the northern kingdom informants showed 184 awareness of the fact that their royal clan of Jere was not one of the well-known clans in the south. Other clan names found among them, such as Ngomezulu, Thole, Nzima, Nqumayo, and many more, were known to be clan names among the South-eastern Bantu. The following explanation was given by Cibambo about the name Jere and was the one most widely accepted:

¶ The Ngoni themselves say that the clan name of Jere was given during the journey, and that it arose out of the number of people who were with Zwangendaba. When the Ngoni want to speak of a large number of people they use two well-known words which are: '*Ngu Shaka*' (it is Shaka);

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

'*Ngu Jere*' (it is Jere). Perhaps Zwangendaba and others took their clan name from this, seeing that they had become a great number. It is certain that the clan name of Jere is not known in Zululand or Swaziland.

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In the northern kingdom all the chiefs recognised as Subordinate Native Authorities were of the royal clan, and hence its political authority was widespread. It was noticed by the early missionaries in northern Ngoniland that the sons of Zwangendaba who were chiefs under their brother, the Paramount, showed some degree of independence in that they wanted to rule their own areas with the minimum of centralized control. The pre-eminence of the Paramount among the other Jere rulers was strengthened as time went on by the remoter kinship relationship of the other Jere chiefs to the Paramount. After Zwangendaba's death they were his brothers of the same father and different mothers. Two generations later they were farther removed from his kinship circle since each of their posts was inherited on a direct father to son principle. The political and social importance of membership of the royal clan tended to go in the direct line of relationship to the Paramount rather than to the collateral branches. Later, in Part III, we shall examine the social prestige of the *amakosana* (lit. children of the *inkosi*). It was the closeness of their relationship to the reigning Paramount which was the basis for their social prestige, though evidence showed that a sister or brother or child from a big house of a former Paramount was also given social recognition as an important personage.

The royal clan of Maseko in the central kingdom was also known in Swaziland. Dr. Kuper refers to it in connexion with the Swazi custom of cremating the body of the Maseko chief at his death on a rock by a river.[1] This custom was brought from the south by the Ngoni under Maseko leadership and carried out for each successive Paramount up to 1891. Among these Ngoni the royal clan had special relationships with other leading clans, but the Paramount did not share his political authority with any others of his clan. His chiefs were all of other clans, and Ngoni informants said that it was a deliberate act of the Paramount Mputa to exclude his brothers from political authority and from disputing with him the control of the kingdom. In the isolated position thus established for the royal clan, two other clans had a ritual relationship with the Paramount. One was the Phungwako clan which was custodian of the Paramount's 'medicines', known as the *tonga*. The other was the Ngozo clan which provided the companion for the Paramount whom I have called the 'royal shadow' (see below, pp. 61–3). Yet another special relationship with the royal clan was that of the Nzunga clan which had *cibale*, or brotherly relations, with the Maseko clan, that involved sharing the same avoidances and excluded inter-marriage.

[766]

The relationship of the Paramount to other leaders of the royal clan

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 86.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 614 565 184 was thus different in the two kingdoms. In the north he was one ruler, though a supreme one, among several ruling kinsmen of the same clan. His position in the past had been strengthened by the prestige shared by his clansmen, but also challenged by his near kinsmen in positions of authority. In the central kingdom the Paramount shared no authority with his fellow clansmen. He was unique among them as a ruler, while sharing special ritual relationships with the two other clans which supported his position without challenging it.

643 614 585 A new Paramount, in order to be installed in his father's place, had to be of the big house as well as of the royal clan. Dr. Kuper described the Swazi practice whereby cattle were contributed by the nation for the mother of the king, so that she was called the 'mother of the people of the country'. She also described the ritual marriage of the first wife of a ruler, who was called *sisulamsiti*, and who was never the mother of the heir.[1] The Ngoni Paramount-elect in the northern kingdom married his first wife when he was a young man and she was called *msulamsizi*, 'the one who takes the darkness off him'. The big wife, who would bear the heir, was married with a large gift of cattle taken from the herd of the big wife of the reigning Paramount and, after marriage, was attached to her big house. We shall discuss in greater detail in the next chapter the relationships of the royal women to the Paramount and to each other. Here it is important to note that the big house owned by the big wife was the place where the future chief was brought up. In the central kingdom the first marriage of the Paramount was traditionally with a woman of the Magagula clan who was said not to bear children. She held an honoured place in the social hierarchy and was married with cattle taken from the herd of the *gogo* house of the reigning Paramount. It was regarded as a ritual marriage, for if she did bear children they were not acknowledged. [842 847] Informants were uncertain whether methods to prevent conception were used, or whether abortion was practised, or whether children, if born, died young or were disposed of or placed out in other households. The last alternatives were unlikely, and one of the first two expedients was in line with the phrase always used of this wife: 'she did not bear children'. The wife who bore the heir was married next and was always of another leading clan, and the cattle for her came from the herd of the big house of the reigning Paramount.

643 614 The reasons were obvious why the remembered genealogies of the Ngoni Paramounts of the royal clans were short compared with the genealogies of some other African royal houses. The remote ancestors of Jere chiefs and Maseko chiefs, who were, as we have seen, not Paramounts before they left the south, were forgotten once the departure had taken place. Only a few names had been handed down and were repeated by the official praisers, whose task it was to call out the names of the direct ancestors of the Paramount before declaiming his *izibongo* or

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. pp. 54 & 91.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Manga. It was a time of great emotional tension and strain, and the absurdities of the jester relieved the solemnity and formality of the visit. This jester was said by informants to be a man of the Moyo clan, who owed his position not to hereditary right but to a ready and witty tongue. 643 644 522

The death of the Paramount

It is in the ceremonies at the death of the Paramount that we find some major differences between the traditional practices of the northern and central Ngoni peoples, which might be attributed to the separate groups in Natal from which they came. I was living in Mcakatha village in the central kingdom at the time of the sickness and death of Bambo Manga, the most important of the royal women among the central Ngoni. The ritual ceremonies at her funeral were said to be almost identical with those at the death of the Paramount, and I was able to check details of similarity and difference with old men who remembered the death of Cikusi, the last Ngoni Paramount in the central kingdom for whom the full ritual was carried out. I was not able after that to pursue further possible parallels and differences among the northern Ngoni. My general impression from informants was that among the northern Ngoni the ritual at the death of a Paramount differed from that of any other prominent man only in certain details of the period and form of mourning. Among the central Ngoni, as Rattray said in a note on the text which will be given, 'such funerals were more of a military pageant than anything else. All outward signs of grief were rigorously excluded.' I can confirm that from my observations at the death of Bambo Manga. 184 643 766 [152]

When the Paramount became ill, a diviner was called to give advice. He might advise that a sacrifice should be made to the ancestor spirits. He might suggest witchcraft as the cause of illness. He might advise calling in a man to give medicine to the Paramount. When, in spite of sacrifices and treatment, the Paramount died, the announcement was made from the edge of his village: *Izulu lidilikile*, 'the heaven has fallen down'. Messengers were sent to all the chiefs and to all the *alumuzana* and other leading men. From the edge of each central village the cry was made, and each chief and *mulumuzana* sent his messengers to make the same announcement in each of the villages under him. [791]

Among the northern Ngoni the actual ceremony of burial does not appear to have been very different from that of any other important man, with one exception, that the Paramount, like other ruling Jere chiefs, was buried at the edge of the cattle kraal in a circular pit of the kind used when digging clay for mudding houses, on one side of which there was a niche where the corpse was placed in a sitting position, facing south-east. This burying in a circular grave on the edge of the kraal was the procedure which I witnessed at the burial of Bambo Manga among the central Ngoni (see below p. 75).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 766 184 Dr. Steele, one of the early medical missionaries in northern Ngoniland, was present at the burial of Mbelwa I and left an account of it which is quoted by Dr. Elmslie.[1] He spoke of the great crowds of men coming to mourn armed with spears and shields, and some with guns. They came in companies, as if they were the military bands coming for mobilization from the head villages. They marched first with their shields held high over their heads, and then laid them down and clasped their hands behind their heads, advancing towards and retreating from the grave and keeping up a continuous mourning cry of '*Baba be*'. Three days elapsed between the death and the burial. During that time two graves were dug, in order that all the Paramount's possessions might be buried with him or beside him. When the graves were ready, the kraal was cleared of all but the married men who had the head-ring. Meantime the wives of the Paramount, carrying his shields, were advancing towards the grave and retreating, a few steps at a time. They finally went back to their houses, dressed themselves in skins, and returned in single file on their hands and knees. They withdrew as the corpse was brought out and placed in the grave, and other women came with the Paramount's possessions, such as pipes, wooden head-rests and shields, and all were put into the graves. The men stood in circles round the graves with their shields over their heads.

Among the central Ngoni Rattray recorded an account of the funeral rites of Cikusi in 1891, which I was able to check with more than one old man who had been present. There was also the funeral of Bambo Manga which I witnessed in 1937, where the ritual followed was identical with that described by the old men for the Paramount Cikusi, with one exception: that her possessions but not her body were cremated by a stream.

The chief differences between the northern and central Ngoni in the funeral rites at the death of the Paramount were that the central Ngoni Paramounts of the Maseko clan were cremated and not buried, and there was no public mourning, but instead a series of war-dances. There [644] were two other distinctive features among the central Ngoni: formerly [786] the individual known as the 'royal shadow' died with the Paramount; and from the time of the actual death to the time of the cremation there was a period of licence and lawlessness called *ciponde*. This latter phenomenon may have existed among the northern Ngoni, but I did not ask about it specifically when I was there, and I did not hear it referred to. I was made aware of it forcibly at the death of Bambo Manga when my cook and houseboy immediately dumped all their possessions in my hut as the only safe place during the time of *ciponde*. Rattray's account of the death of Cikusi also mentioned this practice.

In the traditions of the central Ngoni it was recorded that only the Maseko Paramounts in the direct line were cremated, and not the

[1] Elmslie, W. A. op. cit. p. 270.

brothers of the dead Paramount who acted as regents. Thus Ngwana was cremated in Ulosi before crossing the Zambesi, and Mputa was cremated in the river Lichiningo in Songea in Tanganyika. This was confirmed by an informant of the Gama clan who were for a time under the central Ngoni Paramount in Songea and later were allied with the northern Ngoni. He said 'We killed Mputa, the *inkosi*, when fighting, and his people burned him because it was their custom in burying to burn.' 184 643 766

An old woman who came from Portuguese territory to see me in the central kingdom said that when Zintambira I died the Portuguese made them bury him 'in a box'. The onlookers in Mcakatha at the time of my interview with the old woman said 'Yes, they were not allowed to burn him.' [648]

The central Ngoni leaders referred often to the ritual significance of the cremation of their Paramount, followed by the washing of the ashes into the stream 'to strengthen the land'. On my first arrival in the central kingdom I was questioned closely by several of the big *izinduna* and *ahamuzana* about the practice of cremation in England. They alleged that, under the influence of the local mission, the Paramount Gomani II had said that he wished to be buried in a coffin with Christian burial rites. They were much concerned about this, because of the effect on the strength and status of his successor and on the country as a whole. 'If he is not burned his children will not be honoured and will only be as *ahamuzana*. Is it right that another tribe, the English, should come and change our customs?' Great relief was expressed when I told them that Christians were cremated in England with full Christian ritual, and also when I told them that the ashes of one of the early Scottish missionaries in northern Ngoniland had been brought back by his widow to lie there. [797] [648]

The following account of the funeral of Cikusi was given to Rattray: 643 766

¶ When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them 'the clouds have fallen today'. They do this because they fear, 'if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death'. Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head until it all glitters, and then take the [203] [301]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 622 631 645 sons of his father and of his father's brothers. These *amakosana* were honoured next to the Paramount. The *alumuzana* were for justice in the courts, and for being the 'ears of the Paramount' in all the country. The change was made by Mputa because he saw that if the *amakosana* were given power they claimed to be big chiefs themselves. Therefore he chose for the courts and for the leaders in war and for lesser chiefs the *alumuzana* and *izinduna* who were clever and whom they could trust.

● 184 622 631 645 [698] The diagram on p. 99 relates to the period between 1933 and 1939 and sets out first the officials in the territorial divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms from the Paramount to the headman of a village. In the northern kingdom only the Paramount and the six chiefs had recognized courts, the chiefs' courts operating for their districts and the Paramount's court for the whole kingdom. There were two sets of office-bearers who had no courts but who exercised authority over groups of villages. One group consisted of members of the Jere clan who were not recognized chiefs but were *amakosana*, literally 'children of the chief' but used as a rule for all members of the royal clan. Only certain *amakosana* had villages under them. The other group consisted of the heads of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who owned several villages and sometimes had authority over a large area. Cibambo put this group below that of the chiefs, and other informants confirmed this as the pre-European pattern. But the informants also said that many of the powerful *alumuzana* formerly had their own courts and did not have to bring their cases to the chiefs' courts as they did in the 1930's. At the bottom of the territorial hierarchy came the headmen of single villages. In some cases the village headman had formerly been an *induna* in a large village which had broken up. Some were of the royal clan or of Swazi clans. The majority belonged to the local tribes and were owners of villages which were for the most part villages of one kinship group.

The text about the hierarchy in the central kingdom shows that a deliberate change had been made in the traditional pattern to avoid a struggle between the Paramount and his brothers when they had recognized positions as chiefs. The *alumuzana* who appear in the diagram as chiefs were the six who were recognized in 1933 as Subordinate Native Authorities. There were other *alumuzana* who were not so recognized, and certain members of the royal clan, all of whom owned a number of villages but had to take their cases to the recognized courts. The division caused by setting up the Portuguese boundary in the 1890's left many of the leaders of the Maseko clan on the Portuguese side, with the result that the number of *amakosana* owning villages and taking any prominent part in the life of the kingdom was very small; and another large group of the Maseko clan were in Dedza district under Chief Kacindamoto. The majority of village headmen in the central kingdom were of local tribes, and their villages were as a rule much larger than those in the northern kingdom.

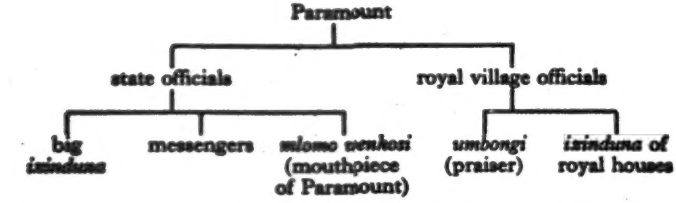
 184

Ngoni territorial office-bearers. 622

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Paramount	Paramount
chiefs (*amahosana*)	*alumuzana* (chiefs)
other *amahosana* and *alumuzana* (no courts)	other *alumuzana* and *amahosana* (no courts)
village headmen	village headmen

631 643 645

Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *izinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only recited the praise-songs at ceremonies in the royal village. 643 645

The big *izinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *izinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below his. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *alumuzana* and *amahosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned. [203] 885

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the 692

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

621 break up into smaller villages, and there were on the whole more villages
593 in the north said to be *wabanja limodzi* (of one family) than among the central Ngoni. On the other hand, the *hunguhu* pattern of village division had almost disappeared among the central Ngoni.

591 A man on his first marriage built a hut for his wife behind his
592 mother's hut, where his brothers by the same mother or by mothers of the same house also built. The family grouping by residence was there-
[361] fore determined by house affiliation. Associated with this residential group based on kinship, there were the residences of the *induna* and his family which had separate alignments on a kinship basis, though for certain common purposes they combined with the family groups related to the house by kinship. The children of the families belonging to the house and the children of the *induna* who took care of it began to intermarry when the prohibitions on marriage within the village ceased to operate. In this way kinship bonds were created within a group which formerly had only residence and certain activities in common, and this process was recognizable in a number of the larger villages, especially in the central kingdom.

593 Within the different types of family groups determined by their residential basis there were certain outstanding relationships between members of the same family. The most important of these was that between father and children; the father, as the biological parent and also the symbol of authority, was the focus of honour and respect, and the one who helped his children when they were in need. The relation between the father and his children among the Ngoni was always a balance between affection and care, and respect and authority. The ideal pattern of a father, as described by informants, included all these elements and also wisdom. This concept of the father relationship was extended to the head of a *banja*, to the headman of a village or a section of a village, to a *mulumuzana* in charge of an area, to a chief, and to the
[576] Paramount himself. The Ngoni greeting to all older men, and the most respectful form of address to a man of any seniority, was *baba*, father, or its Nyanja equivalent *bambo*.

The mother, on the other hand, had a more limited relationship within the family circle. To her own children and to the children of her co-wives, especially of her house, she was the provider of food, and the affectionate 'cherisher'[1] of young children; but she was also treated with respect and, when she reached some seniority, she had considerable authority over her daughters and her younger co-wives. She could never compete, however, with the sisters of her husband or with his mothers, who expected to exercise authority over her children and to
[59] arrange for the ceremonies connected with birth, puberty, and marriage.
184 In villages where virilocal residence was the rule, the husband's sisters were married elsewhere and were only present in the village during

[1] *kulera*, lit. to cherish, is the word used for bringing up children.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 593

visits or on special occasions. In the central kingdom, where an important man's sisters often married in the village and stayed there, it was evident that they often exercised authority over their brother's children. [591] 184

In polygynous Ngoni families the relationship between siblings was marked by strong attachment. Among the boys in the *laweni* brothers united to protect their younger brothers from other boys, and in the families of Swazi clans brothers showed many signs of youthful intolerance and arrogance towards boys of other clans, especially in matters concerning cattle and their herding. Sibling rivalry among boys was to a large extent controlled by two factors. One was the *laweni* system where the age-set principle predominated. The other was the division into the big house and *gogo* house, where the children of the *gogo* house knew that they stood in a different relationship to succession and authority in the village from their brothers and sisters in the big house. Within the big house itself, sons of the big wife knew that succession was regulated by seniority, and that the eldest son would expect to get priority when he married and it was necessary to allot ca[illegible] *lobola*. The brother-sister link between children of the same mother was, as we have seen, a very close one, especially with the older sister of a man who was heir to a high position. This sister in her relation to his children carried almost the same authority as he did. Among sisters of the same family there was less apparent cohesion, except among very high-ranking Swazi clans where the girl children were looked after by special nursemaids and had their instruction in correct behaviour together from the older woman known as their *gogo*. 595 [561]

Ngoni grandparents on the paternal side showed little of the joking relationship with their grandchildren sometimes associated with this tie. When children went to visit their maternal grandparents in another village there was noticeably more ease between them and more indulgence was shown. In their father's village children were always aware that his parents were persons of standing and authority. Girls over six or seven often slept in their paternal grandmother's hut if she was a widow, and were aware that, though she showed kindliness in providing for their needs, she was a firm disciplinarian in all matters of behaviour. 603

Within the family group the male role of leadership was unquestioned. Honour and respect were a man's due from wives as well as from children. In difficult relations within his family, as in the case of divorce, he could count on counsel and support from his brothers, who were also ready to help him if cattle were needed for his own or his son's marriage or for payment of court penalties. This male circle of father and sons, father's brothers and their sons, was a closely knit group which functioned in regulating family affairs and in buying and selling cattle for the house to which they belonged. An obligation to help his sons was recognized by the father of a family and this obligation 562 593 593

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

The tables which follow show the total population of three villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Huts	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Ezwazini .	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Endindeni .	15	9	21	21	51	4	1	4	15
Ehuhangeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	32
Central kingdom									
Cinkwita .	39	22	39	54	115	13	5	4	2
Mangoso .	60	41	63	78	184	9	18	2	4
Mcakhatha	122	71	112	68	251	30	16	14	12

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *hwengala* and *gogo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *banja* was not found in the north.

The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *mahwanana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *mahwanana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

Households[1]

	Total	*Leading clan*
Northern Ngoniland		
Ewwaini	23	15
Endindeni	15	12
Ekhwangeni	37	21
Central Ngoniland		
Cinkwita	39	18
Mangusu	60	26
Moshhatha	122	37

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head.

Ewwaini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Ewwaini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *kwangulu* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother.

Endindeni was a *gupo* village owned by Zibekere Makwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gupo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ubale* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more kraals.

184 wife. The village with its single kraal was 'of one house', and it was
592 widely known as a good village by Ngoni standards, because, as the
621 local people said, 'all the men are Makwakwa men'.

Eluhangeni was a *gugo* village where the spirit of Mtenje Jere, the son of a brother of Zwangendaba, was guarded. The kinship group of Mwanamdoko Jere, the owner of the village, were all of one house, that of his mother who was dead. Her place in the *indlunkulu* had been taken by his big wife who also inherited the guardianship of the spirit of Mtenje. There was one widow of his father in the village, but she had become a Christian and therefore could not guard the spirit. Mwanamdoko had two wives, and three widows of his brothers by the same mother were also in the village. One brother by another mother was the only one of his generation still alive and he had two sons and two grandsons living in the *cigudlo* behind the *indlunkulu*. All Mwanamdoko's family were grouped round one kraal. There were two other kraals with family groups round them in the village, one belonging to the *induna* of his dead mother, and one to an age mate who had been in his regiment. The *induna's* group belonged to the same house as Mwanamdoko, but the pattern of the three distinct groups each with its own kraal was more like that of the *banja* in the central kingdom.

184 In the central kingdom the relationships of the various groups in a
563 village followed a different pattern from that in the north. Instead of
592 the *hanguda* and *gugo* characteristics where the family groups were
621 integrated into houses, the southern pattern was that of a conquered village with the Ngoni element superimposed. In Cinkwita and in Mzakhatha the village headman and his family group had originally been conquered, then established as an outlying village, and finally chosen for the permanent settlement of a family group belonging to an
[36] Ngoni clan when they left the royal village after it broke up. In Cinkwita there were three kraals associated with three *banja*. Two of the *banja* belonged to kinship groups of Ntumba clans, and the head of one was known as the headman of the village. The head of the *banja* of Cinkwita Ndau, the Ngoni clan group, was his eldest son Wilkinson, whose wife was of a leading Swazi clan, the Magwagwa. His family group consisted of his wife, two sons and three daughters; a brother and his two daughters; the widow of a dead brother and his two sons and a daughter; three sisters, one of whom had married the brother of the village headman and one who was a widow; and a widowed sister of his father. This family grouping expressed in terms of households illustrates what has already been referred to several times, namely the tendency of the heads of leading Ngoni families in the central kingdom to keep, in addition to their sons, their sisters and daughters in the village after marriage, even when *lobola* had been given. It also illustrates the comparatively small number of plural marriages in the south among the younger men.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Mangono, as its name suggests, was the head village of the Ngono clan. It had been originally settled by Ngwazi Ngono who brought with him two family groups of Ntumba clans who had been with him in Songea. These two Ntumba family groups each formed a *hanja*, and one had a kraal. The other two *hanja* belonged to two elderly Ngono brothers, sons of Ngwazi and of the same house, who had one kraal between them. The senior of these, Mbiri Ngono, had in his *hanja* a widow of his father, not his own mother, and nine widows of a dead older brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, three grandsons and three granddaughters; and his sister. The *hanja* of Cinyama Ngono included two widows of another brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, one grandson and one granddaughter. The two brothers between them had to support eleven widows of dead brothers.

Mcakhatha had a dual foundation. The village site was originally one of the outlying villages of the section known as Zíyembe. It was also the head village of the Nzungu clan. Three of the five *hanja* into which the village was divided belonged to Ntumba family groups, and the head of one of these was known as the headman of the village. Of the two *hanja* belonging to the Nzungu clan, one was a *gogo hanja*, the other that of the ruling chief who was a Sub-Native Authority.[1] Within the *gogo hanja* was the house of Bambo Mangu in whose hut the spirit of Mputa was guarded. Two other houses in the *gogo hanja* were associated with the guardianship of the spirits of the grandfather and father of the ruling chief. There was therefore a house and a *hanja* formation existing together, in which the *hanja* predominated. The two Nzungu *hanja* consisted of two family groups, one associated with the ruling chief and one with his paternal uncle in charge of the *gogo* section. The chief's *hanja* included his own five wives, one sister and two brothers by the same mother, and two sisters and four brothers by other mothers. The *hanja* of the head of the *gogo* section included his own five wives and two widows whom he had inherited from the former chief, his older brother, who included and two sisters by other mothers; three of his sons. It also included a widow of his father, and nine widows of his dead brother who had not been inherited; and the households of Bambo Mangu and her daughter and granddaughter for whom the father of the ruling chief had assumed responsibility. The Ngoni family pattern of this village was more complex than that of Cinkwita or Mangono because of the clearly marked *gogo* section existing alongside that of the ruling chief. It showed, however, the general characteristics of Ngoni family grouping in the central kingdom, keeping sisters and daughters in the village after marriage while retaining responsibility for widows of fathers and brothers. There were three Nzungu kraals, two in the *gogo hanja* and one in the chief's *hanja*, but the cattle were always referred to

[1] In northern Ngoniland the ruling chief would have moved out of this village on his father's death, leaving the *gogo hanja* in the *gogo* village.

184 as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and
592 the high ranking of the Nzunga clan accounted for the number of
621 *bhola* marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

554 As individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans
565 claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families
614 in the area of a *mahomasana* owning a head village, and the small Ngoni
621 family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received
'honour' (*ulemu*). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and
in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were
[557] a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank
and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was
more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick
to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would
enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of
claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side,
responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and
the *kanja*. Quarrels had to be composed, if possible before they came to
court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for
hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants
emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men
and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be ex-
pected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in
two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the
northern and Mangoto in the central kingdom.

[472] In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members
of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed
mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose
[illegible] were away to work. The [illegible] of the village
economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization
on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and
heads of a *kanja*, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include
the needs of these 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the
northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken
of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradi-
tion emphasized this type of help.

867 In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and rela-
tionships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the
next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty cere-
monies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony
was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents
and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as
far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 with the main activities of the groups, though it did to some extent illustrate mutual relationships.

Age-Set terms

	Northern Ngoni	*Central Ngoni*
All children	*abantwana*	*ana*
[184 104] Young men even if married	*amajaha*	*anyamate*
Young girls before puberty	*tukukazana*	*mukutu*
Young girls past puberty	*intombi*	*mwanaali*
All married women	*abafazi*	*akazi*
Senior men	*amadoda*	*madoda*
Senior women	*amamina*	*mamina*

513 One of the most characteristic forms of Ngoni village organization
561 was the *lawesi*, or boys' dormitory. It included the older boys in the
866 group called 'children' and the young men until they married, who were in fact called *amajaha* after they had left the *lawesi* and married and had huts of their own. The age for entering the *lawesi* was approximately seven years, and was as a rule determined by the age when a child began to get his second teeth. When a child was going about the village with several gaps in his front teeth, his companions jeered at him if he still slept in his grandmother's hut, and his father took the view that it was time he stopped playing like a child and took up seriously the job of herding goats and calves. There was often some hesitation, especially among boys who were not so well grown for their age, at taking the plunge and going to live in the *lawesi*, since once made the step could not be retraced. It was primarily an individual decision. It meant leaving the protective affectionate care of the grandmother in the evenings, and the care-free play all day round the mother's hut with meals provided by her, for a different sort of existence altogether. *Lawesi* life was rigorous and was dominated by the senior boys living in the hut. The younger [illegible] up the hut, sometimes steal food from their mothers' stores, and were beaten if they were slow or careless, or if they threatened to tell the
[626] elders in the village what went on in the *lawesi*. The main weapon to get boys into the *lawesi* was the ridicule of their fellows. Once members of the *lawesi* group they were disciplined into obedience by threats and beating. The age range within a *lawesi* was often considerable, from seven to seventeen years.

233 All the boys in a *lawesi* who were members of houses possessing
857 cattle—and this as a rule included all sons of Ngoni families of trans-
561 Zambezi clans—had to take part in herding. Cattle-herding was a responsible task and could be an arduous one. The boys got up before dawn, opened the gate of the kraal, and took the cattle to water. They milked the cattle on an open space near the village and carried the milk in wooden jars, gourds or petrol tins to the owner of the cattle, keeping

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

ancestor cult in the head village of their clan. If they were asked 'How do you address the spirit (*tete idlosi*)?' they gave the names and genealogy of the former heads of the clan and their attributes if they were known. If they were asked 'Where do you address the spirits?' the reply was always in terms of a particular village where a certain spirit was guarded. 769 614

The occasions on which the Swazi clan ancestors were addressed and sacrifices made were in cases of sickness of an important member of the clan. It was sometimes suggested that there might be trouble in the clan villages for which prayer should be made to the clan spirits, but when pressed the only specific instance informants could give was when the cattle did not thrive. They repudiated immediately any idea of prayer to the clan spirits in cases of drought or epidemics in the clan villages since those troubles, wherever they occurred, could only be helped by the spirits of the Paramounts who were concerned with all the land and all its people. [731]

The procedure followed in the clan head village was the same as that for addressing the spirits of the Paramounts. In that village a diviner was consulted, he named the spirit who should be addressed, a beast was sacrificed and prayers were made. This was the Ngoni pattern of the ancestor cult, and it was limited to the Swazi and some of the trans-Zambesi clans. Its correct observance required that combination of cattle, houses, and known genealogies which only the leading clans possessed. [563]

The living and the dead

At times such as funerals, and when talking about the ancestor cult, the Ngoni often used the phrase: 'Death cannot cut life.' They believed that human spirits had a continued existence after death, and that this existence was related to the place where they had dwelt, the people who were of their family and clan, and the cattle which belonged to their house and village. This continued association was not an automatic process. It had to be assured by the correct performance of the burial rites, the observance of stages of mourning and the deliberate 'bringing back' of the spirit to the village where it would be guarded and honoured after the final mourning ceremony was over. 775 769

In the Ngoni funeral rites there were distinctive elements in the burial of those belonging to Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In handling the corpse the legs were bent and drawn up to the body and the arms folded and crossed each side of the neck, so that the corpse seemed to be sitting and holding its head in its hands. It was wrapped in the skin of a newly killed beast. In the central kingdom men and women of Swazi clans were wrapped first in a sheep-skin, with a cow-skin put over it. The grave was a circular pit, with a small side chamber or shelf where the body was placed in a sitting position, propped up with large stones and facing south-east to the ancestral homeland. Personal possessions, such as skins and shields and baskets, were either put in the grave or taken to be 764 189

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

764 burned immediately after the burial on the banks of the stream where the living performed their ritual washing. Small children who were ●184 related to the dead took charcoal in their hands, and walked up to the grave backwards and threw the charcoal in without looking. Some leaders of the Swazi clans were buried on the edge of the kraal of the house to which they belonged, and the fence was enlarged to include the grave. The Ngoni comment on this place of burial was: 'If we make a grave, we make it outside the kraal, and afterwards build the kraal round that place so that cattle may walk over it and lie on it. Thus it may become flat as if it were nothing, for Ngoni people do not want a grave to [765] be seen from the outside.' The women who were near relatives of the dead were allowed to mourn in the hut where the person had died, or they could if they chose take part in the war-songs and dances which were the only form of mourning allowed to the male relatives and to the men and women of the village who were not closely related to the dead person. The usual procedure was for a group of older women to wail and sob in the hut, but for all the rest, men and women, to mourn in the Ngoni way by taking part in war-dances and songs.

Much of this ritual appears to have had as its purpose to remove the 764 fear of death from the living. That was the explanation of why the 182 children threw charcoal in the grave—that they should not remember with fear the dead person being put in the earth. The obliteration of the grave site on the edge of the kraal had a dual purpose. One has been already referred to—that the grave should not be seen. The other was to identify the grave of a leading man or woman with the kraal site and the cattle herded there. If the village moved and a new kraal was set up, people would still say 'X was buried here', adding 'He was buried here when we were on Dowowe—or in Songea', referring to an earlier site of the village. Placing the corpse facing south-east, and singing Ngoni war-songs which had come from the south, linked the newly dead with the ancestral dead, and emphasized the chain of communication between the living and the dead, which a new ancestral spirit could help to forge. It was establishing this means of communication which was the dominant note in the ritual of the funeral and in the post-burial rites.

When a death took place, the first action taken after the corpse had been prepared and wrapped in a skin was to send out a summons to come and mourn. We saw in the chapter on the Paramount that at his death the summons was in the formula 'The skies have fallen.' For others the announcement was: 'So and so has died. Come and mourn.' The [765] obligation to mourn was binding. If relatives and fellow clansmen could not come at the time of the burial, or were away in the south, one of their first duties on returning to their home village was to go and mourn by the kraal where the dead person was buried. This was intended partly to show sympathy for the bereaved, but also to acknowledge and salute a new ancestral spirit, and to demonstrate the re-integration of

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the
137 rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose
311 it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited
361 their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe
361 formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had
351 a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
[343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

There were two focal points in each village, reproduced
621 on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
[554] the 'big house'[1] at the head of the kraal, where the leading woman had her home.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [583]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a [563]
group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organization, and at their system of training their young men.

In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area. In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance, in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school education leading to paid employment, there was an economic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly wealth had been associated with political power, and the Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and government were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Paramount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934. The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as young men, and had known the independence and supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'everything is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, ministers and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni way of living, and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes dominated social relationships. There was a determined struggle on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasaland sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

answers to them somewhere, then there have been some vital omissions in the narrative. 121

Clues to this study

In relating this study to other field studies and analyses of socialization techniques and processes, I have not attempted to present here any general assessment of similar or related studies, much less any review of the field as a whole, since I have touched on both in earlier publications.[1] Instead I have brought into this chapter one or two clues or guide lines from other sources which seemed to me to elucidate some of my problems, particularly in regard to four main aspects of this study, which have already been mentioned in Chapter I and which to a large extent set the limits and determine the emphases of this book. The 'true Ngoni' were a society within a society, a distinct cultural group within the Ngoni kingdom. This society of theirs had sharp edges, definable and recognizable limits, and that partly accounted for their own awareness of themselves as distinct from, though at so many points connected with, the neighbouring peoples. Their culture, that is their way of living within this society, had definite values which they strove to maintain, and this was one of the reasons why the ideal Ngoni personality pattern, and their endeavour to see it reproduced in each child, was easy to recognize. In order to safeguard their society and maintain their culture they exercised a fairly rigid social control over the upbringing of their children, which resulted in something approaching a 'system' of training and educating children. Set against this conservation of traditional values however was the reality and extent of changes due to external circumstances mentioned at the end of Chapter I. In the face of these changes the Ngoni showed that they could adapt some of them to their own purposes, and they made use of the schools, for example, once they approved of them, to help adjust their

184 186 829 183 [157] [861] 177

[1] See Appendix (i)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be interpreted according to the Ngoni social organization, sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle of people forming a young child's contacts was from the beginning much wider than the individual family which a child was born into. When he began to run about and to pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when necessary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related [602]
families in other villages, with all members of the same clan living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads [631]
were also inseparable from the political links between the people and their territorial chief, and between the whole people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence in most villages there were sharp distinctions between stand- [183]
ards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni families.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 563 [867] families. It was, however, demanded from Ngoni children that they should behave in the socially approved manner to everyone, and not only to their Ngoni kin and fellow clansmen. And it was evident in non-Ngoni families that there was often some attempt to teach Ngoni standards of behaviour to their children, but that such attempts broke down when their family system was not organized to enforce the necessary training.

576 577 [867]

The goals of Ngoni child training

Ngoni adults, and especially the senior men and women who were in control of the training of children and themselves deeply conscious of the traditional values of their society, summed up the aims of the upbringing of children in one word 'respect'. The vernacular term *ulemu*—in the old Ngoni language *hlonipa*—is a concept very difficult to translate adequately, certainly to convey its full meaning in a single English word or phrase. The nearest terms are honour and respect, and though in some contexts it is often translated as politeness, that is too limited a term. In fact they had another vernacular term to express courtesy which was to them one way of showing respect. The concept of *ulemu* included the recognition that a particular person or office was entitled to honour; that all behaviour to that person must express respect; and that by showing respect in language, posture and action, a child or adult so behaving, shared in that honour which they were acknowledging. Conversely, through failing to convey respect, a person, whether child [558] or adult, was 'ashamed' and lost face accordingly. I have just said that a particular person was entitled to honour and therefore to respect in the behaviour of others. The Ngoni said that was the origin of the concept, and it was demonstrated in the punctilious observance of etiquette to all chiefs, and to all leading men and women by everyone else. [858] But there was an extension of this concept to include all older people, and Ngoni children were expected to show

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and massaged them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

845 The other ethnic groups surrounding the Ngoni in Nyasaland considered it disastrous if a child was born face down [184] or with the buttocks first, and twins were dreaded as ill omens. The Ngoni shared none of these beliefs and were particularly considerate for the mother of twins, often killing [262] a beast to give the mother meat and broth to increase her [853] flow of milk. The only notice the Ngoni took of the method of presentation at birth was that they gave a child a name [553] indicative of such a birth. They gave special names for the first and second twin born. If one twin died it was buried under the veranda of the hut and a smooth stone was placed [766] on top. This stone was used for sitting on, and the surviving twin was held on it when being washed.

Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were 783 considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway. 596 861

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but which turned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers. 183 596 [184]

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it. 177 563 [845] [841]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

591 Changes in residence at and after marriage influenced the composition of the group of relatives who assisted at births. In
184 the central kingdom daughters of leading men in the village
844 often stayed in their father's village at marriage. Hence the father's sisters were often present at the birth and the wife's mother and her sisters might be living in the village. If the
[614] wife belonged to a higher ranking Ngoni clan than her husband, her relatives shared responsibility with those of the husband's family.

As may be imagined the struggle between mother-in-law
177 control and western medical practices at childbirth was a
844 protracted one. Even when there was a younger member of the husband's family trained as a nurse or midwife, she by
[759] no means had her way in organizing the conduct of the birth. She might introduce a few hygienic measures such as clean cloths instead of old rags, and sterilized thread for tying the cord. But unless the senior women were frightened, and they seldom were, by prolonged and difficult labour, the Ngoni families were averse to taking a young mother into hospital.
[606] The chief reason was the challenge to the authority of the mother-in-law, especially when the younger women who had some knowledge of western medical practices questioned the advice of the senior women.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and demonstration of the group values. The first two, physical and moral strength, and working hard and persistently at allotted tasks, were, as we have seen, instilled into children from the stage of second teeth onward. The second two, dignity and wisdom, were to a large extent values implicit in adult life, and in the case of wisdom seen specially in the contribution made by senior men and women to community life. Dignity, however, had an ambivalent meaning, as did dominance among the group values. It covered not only language, deportment, self-control, accepted rank and precedence within the hierarchy on all social occasions, but the more subtle and very typical Ngoni attitude towards 'losing face'. In the sense that young adults and even older children hated being rebuked in public because it made them lose face, it belonged to younger people as well as to older, to those called the 'humble ones' as well as to the 'great ones'. 181 577

All the emphases in child training on language, deportment, self-control, manners and inter-personal behaviour of all kinds were related to the value of human dignity, and to the concept of a person's 'human nature' as being something to be respected and built up, and carefully guarded, since it was very vulnerable. [867] [828]

At the end of Chapter II when some Ngoni values were mentioned, wisdom was contrasted with cleverness, and equated with knowledge, good judgement, ability to control others and keep the peace, and skill in the use of speech. The young Ngoni headmaster in the first village described in Chapter I said reflectively one evening, after listening to some of the elders talking with me about Ngoni values, 'Yes, we are different in our generation. We are proud, but they had wisdom.' It was an acknowledgement of the pretensions which his generation had begun to claim as a result of the new knowledge in the schools. It was also a recognition that the accumulated wisdom of the generations of his father and grandfather had in it an understanding of values which the younger generation had not yet acquired. [184]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'. 622 [554]

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders. 463 177 [871]

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the 797 871 [177] 159 797 [577] [796] [184] [851]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

homes, in their communities and in their national life. There are several reasons for this tendency. One is a recognition of the limitations of individual psychology as a guide to the understanding of how children grow up. This arises from the newly perceived importance of culture, in the anthropological sense of that word, as a total way of living of a specific group of people, which may be that of a fairly homogeneous large group, or of several smaller groups, differing culturally from each other but drawn together by political, economic or residential ties. Thus Ngoni culture as described in this book could be regarded as that of a small group within the Ngoni kingdom and within Ngoni villages where other people of differing cultures were to be found. A number of references were made in this study to the cultural differences within Ngoni villages in spite of the proximity of living conditions. We find the same kind of situation in many countries today, whether those of a western way of living or a non-western. The French Swiss in Switzerland for example are a distinct cultural group within the Swiss nation, and they are divided into the sub-cultural groups of Protestants and Catholics, each with a characteristic way of living which shows itself not only in differences of religious belief.

As we look round the world we see societies, even nations or parts of nations like the French Swiss, trying to hold on either to their total culture, or to those parts of it such as language, religion, forms of family life, distinctive dress and food, which seem to them to have special significance for them and their children. No cultures, or virtually none, are unaffected by modern changes brought about by political, economic or social influences and forces. And there are societies and nations anxious to change their culture in order to bring it into line with the demands of modern, mainly western, life. The educationist who is aware of other systems than his own soon realises that an education system and what is taught in it can be used to change culture, or to perpetuate certain elements in it. This attempt to balance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

128 from the recollections of informants and the accounts of contemporary writers. Even in a society as rapidly expanding as was the Ngoni before 1898, the majority of the population at any one time consists 554 of people who are politically unimportant. What were remembered 581 and what was recorded at the time were the marriages of leaders ● 184 and their close relatives. It is they, more than others, who were distinctively Ngoni, and it was by their actions that the values of Ngoni society were emphasized and developed. Their marriages [187] were important in maintaining tribal solidarity and it is the system exemplified in these marriages that we have been describing. But the recent captives, the poor, the unsuccessful warriors, the junior sons of junior sons, they also married and their marriages were at least as numerous as those of their more fortunate brethren, despite the large bands of wives acquired by successful men.

583 The data in our sample provide suggestions as to both the relative 554 frequency of marriage without payment and the kind of relationship that held between payment and status of spouse. The eight cattle were offered by one of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants as bridewealth for the daughter of a man of Nsenga origin. Two junior sons of this lieutenant each offered a beast as legalization payment for a wife, one of whom was the daughter of a divisional head. A legalization payment of unknown magnitude was made in a marriage between a village headman and a daughter of another of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants. These four marriages we may regard as important marriages between people of high status accompanied by marriage payments which usually were substantial. Among persons of low status we find that in six out of the seven marriages in which no payment was made, one or both of the spouses had been captured. Intermediately we have the remaining two marriages in which the legalization payment was made and the one in which 'snuff-box' was paid, all involving people of low or middle status and accompanied by relatively small payments, namely a chicken, some cloth, and tobacco. This positive correlation between status and payment holds for thirteen out of the fourteen marriages, but one marriage without payment was between one of the same junior sons of the lieutenant and the daughter of a man of Kalanga origin.

From such evidence as there is, it seems probable that marriages between people of high status were usually accompanied by substantial payments. At the same time, many of the marriages of people of low status and some of the unimportant marriages of men of high status took place without payments. What proportion of the total these marriages accounted for we cannot now ever hope to know. However since they amount to half of our pre-1898 sample it seems probable that they constituted a considerable fraction of all the marriages contracted at that time.

581 The payment of 'snuff-box' and bridewealth were the crucial events establishing a marriage, but there were a number of other transfers of beer and cattle, and a number of ceremonies without

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Malawi FR4

Cewa dances, speak Cewa, and are to a lesser extent internally organized on Cewa lines. They do not form a distinct class of village in Ngoni country, and are inextricably bound by ties of kinship with their neighbours. But there are fewer traces of the former pre-1898 system of organization in such villages than in those which have a remembered history linking them with the glorious past.[1]

3. *Christianity*

At the same time as Ngoni values were being undermined from within by the Cewa, they were attacked from without by the Whites. The first missionaries to settle in the area arrived in 1899, although there had been some earlier contact. They attempted to convert Ngoni to Christianity, and therefore to monogamy and pre-marital chastity. In chastity the missionaries were allied with the Ngoni against the Cewa; in monogamy the missions fought against Ngoni allied to Cewa. New rituals were introduced and a new hierarchy developed, composed of priests, evangelists and deacons. However, in this region, unlike much of the rest of Africa, the impact of Christianity has not produced a distinctive legal status of persons married by Christian rite. The Administration's earliest piece of marriage legislation was the *North-Eastern Rhodesia Marriage Regulations*, 1903.[2] There was specific provision for monogamous marriages between Africans, with penalties for bigamy and detailed rules for the division of property left by Africans married under these regulations and dying intestate. Few, if any, marriages involving Africans were made in this form, for it seems that the missions did not license themselves under the Regulations and their ceremonies therefore did not have legal significance to the Administration. These elaborate provisions were repealed by the *Northern Rhodesia Marriage Proclamation*, 1918.[3] Since then the only form of marriage performed within Northern Rhodesia between Africans that has legal significance in the eyes of the Administration is marriage 'in accordance with native law and custom'. What constitutes such a marriage has never been rigidly defined.

The missions themselves have differed in their attitude towards indigenous marriage. One mission insists that all 'customary obligations' must be fulfilled in addition to Christian rites, another holds that it is wrong to transfer wealth from one side to another in marriage, while a third holds that the fulfilment or not of any customary obligations is not the concern of the church. The Native

[1] Cf. Read, 'Tradition and prestige' and 'Moral code' for an account of some of these changes in structure and values, based on observations of three Ngoni kingdoms.

[2] Government Notice No. 2 of 1903, *British Central Africa Gazette*, 148, x, 1, 31 January 1903.

[3] N.R. No. 18 of 1918, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, viii, 11, 7 September 1918.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

he has not been brought up by them but by some other relative. In 593
particular a man is reluctant to discuss his affairs directly with his father if he can get his eldest brother to act as his intermediary. The eldest brother is heir to their father and it is considered that he should act as the channel by which the father is approached. He deals with proposals of marriage arising from his younger siblings and if he approves of them, he refers the matter to their father. This [184] pattern of relations seems most marked in aristocratic families.

9. Widows

While it is a man's eldest brother who helps to arrange his marriage, 587
it is his younger brothers who become pro-husbands to his widows. 851
We have seen that in the old days a widow was usually looked after by a younger brother of the dead man but she continued to live in her dead husband's segment, and the children she bore by her pro-husband were grouped with the children of the dead man. This can still happen but it is no longer the invariable rule. As in the old days, if bridewealth has been paid by the first husband and after his death his widow goes to live with someone else, the second husband or pro-husband cannot offer bridewealth and the children he begets belong to the dead husband and take his descent name.

Some indication of the extent to which widows remain with their 587
dead husbands' kin is given by data collected in two villages. All the women now living in these villages had between them experienced widowhood 31 times. In two instances (6 per cent) the widow had been cared for by her dead husband's brother; and in 11 instances (35 per cent) the widow took a new husband not directly related to the dead man. In the remaining 18 instances (58 per cent) [589] the widow had not married again and was living alone.

A man may die at any stage of his marriage. If he is betrothed to 584
a girl and then dies, the betrothal passes to a younger brother. When the girl is old enough, the younger brother marries her as though she had been betrothed to him in the first place and the children he has by her are his own children. Similarly, if a betrothed girl dies before she is married, the betrothal passes to a younger sister.

If a man dies after he has been properly married his widows have 765
definite roles to play. For a month after his death, they must wear the signs of mourning, and they are in danger of *mdulo*[36] if they commit adultery during that time. They must be ready to wail when distant visitors arrive to mourn. At the end of a month they brew beer, and there is a joyous party. A year after the death there is another party, and the fate of the widows is discussed. If none 589
of the younger brothers or kinsmen of the dead man wish to look after the widows, they are free to go their own way, and there may be a formal statement of divorce. They are in any case now spoken

[36] See above, p. 48.

5:Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

N 251 511 [126]

The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages

(February 1941)

N [162]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,710

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [361] N [166]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 311 511

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

L 161 311 511 000

6:Ratray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

In the study of this language, the student is fortunate in having two such scholarly works of reference as *A Practical Manual of the Nyanja Language*, by the Rev. A. Hetherwick, M.A., D.D., F.R.G.S., and *A Cyclopædic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language*, by the Rev. D. C. Scott, M.A., D.D., F.R.S.G.S.; on the other hand, there is a striking want of any good prose work in that language. Of translations of the Bible, and other religious books, there are many, but all such works, in the translation, follow the English text almost literally, and contain so many words from foreign sources as to be of little use to the student who, having mastered the grammar and syntax of the language, seeks to enlarge his vocabulary and knowledge of idiomatic expression by reading some prose work. (The ideal translation of the Bible, or other religious work, would be one in which the English sentence is taken, the meaning got at, and this remodelled and transformed according to the native way of thought and expression.) It is to supply such a want that this little work is intended. The aim throughout has been, in the Chinyanja part, to write each sentence as a raw native would speak it. It is a commonly heard saying, that only boys trained at a Mission talk the language "grammatically." This is correct, if by "grammar" we mean a principle of set rules for the speaking of a language. For to the uncivilized native any such rules as those governing our own, and other languages of civilized countries,

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

191 are unknown, and he talks, "having regard rather
• 194 to the poetical feeling than to the grammatical position and syntax of a word." But enclitics, tense particles, concords, the various forms of the verb (applied, causative, intensive, reversive, etc.), and all those auxiliary particles such as *ba*, *ka*, *ngo*, *dzi*, and enclitic particles such as *-nso*, *-be*, *-tu*, etc., by which all the finer shades of meaning are expressed, he uses absolutely correctly, and it is with a view of understanding, and making oneself understood, to the raw, uneducated element among these natives, that one should go to the trouble of learning this language.

121 The customs, stories, etc., recorded herein are
101 those of the natives inhabiting Central Angoniland. They are descendants, for the most part through intermarriage with the Achewa, of the Zulus who came from south of the Zambezi, scattering as they advanced, under different leaderships; those under *Gwaza* (the father of *Sakambewa*), and his *ndwna Chiwere*, settling at Dowa; *Mpezeni*, a son of *Gwaza*, settling near Fort Jameson. *Mpata*, the father of *Chikusi*, after reaching as far as Lake Chirwa, and raiding the Anguru under *Sinjanbwereka*, came to Domwe, near Dedza, under promise of cattle from *Sosola*, a *Chipeta*, or *Nchewa* chief. (*Chipeta* and *Nchewa* are synonymous, the former word being a sobriquet bestowed on the *Achewa* who came on to the Angoniland plateau, by the *Achewa* who settled on the Lake shore, the latter referring to the former as the *a chipeta*, i. e. they of the *chipeta* (long grass)). Intermingled with these customs, borrowed for the most part by the con-
[199] querors from the conquered, are to be found traces here and there, and here and there a word, which strikes the key-note of their past history, now all but forgotten even by themselves. But what is of their

blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional customs, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition. Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view, a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the elder sons, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni customs in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their opinions. Instead of the stereotypes and economic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here, unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the Administration to follow tribal customs and people know that the courts are bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FRS Ngoni FRS
Maravi FR4

difference to-day between the attitude of the Ngoni to the Europeans and that of the Chewa, for example. In the vernacular expression the Ngoni say, 'The Europeans spoiled our country'; the Chewa say, 'The Europeans saved us'.

Chawandey, then, was the period of Ngoni supremacy, when they established by force of arms their right to rule over the country and its indigenous inhabitants. There was, however, some difference between the political organization of the Ngoni as a conquering horde on the march, and their organization when they finally settled in their present areas. At both times the focus of their organization was warfare—they were a nation under arms. But once settled on land which they had chosen they began to spread a network of political organization over the country, and to plan in terms of 'countries'[7] instead of mobile villages. To-day when they discuss the advent of the Europeans and the consequent 'spoiling' of their country, they recall the days when extensive tribute was paid to their Paramount Chief, chiefs were free to choose good sites for their very big villages, the outlying areas were ruled by *indunas* and lesser chiefs. It was the partial breaking up of this centralized political organization which they regarded as 'spoiling their country', as well as the economic restrictions with regard to land and the prohibition of raiding for new supplies of cattle.

During this time of Ngoni supremacy Ngoni institutions flourished—those institutions which they had brought with them from the south and preserved through their wanderings. When they are telling to-day about these years they speak fervently and reverently of the part played by the Paramount Chief in every side of life, the training for warfare of all the young men, the instruction and supervision of young chiefs by old *indunas*, Ngoni marriage and initiation ceremonies. It was during this time in Mpezeni's country that the *Inpwale* or first fruits ceremony was regularly observed at Mzungulani, the village of the mother of old Mpezeni.[8] At this ceremony the Paramount Chief 'opened' the new food season by the ritual eating of new fruits, especially young maize and pumpkins. It was also the

[7] i.e. chiefs' areas.

[8] The description of this *Inpwale* given by men and women who took part in it in their youth shows much similarity to the *Inpwale* of to-day among the Swazi.

traders and missionaries and officials, they were all impressed with the power of the Ngoni Paramount Chief and the impossibility of getting any footing in the country without his consent and aid. 'Mpezeni[1] is a very powerful chief . . . and shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his governing powers. He has formed a powerful kingdom where his subjects are mainly Chewa, Chipeta and Senga stock, but his power is consolidated by a Zulu and half-Zulu aristocracy.' Such was the official view of the Ngoni state under old Mpezeni expressed by Sir Harry Johnston, and similar impressions are recorded of the Ngoni states in Nyasaland. If this was the European impression of Ngoni supremacy it is easy to picture the feelings of the Ngoni themselves with all their pride of race and of achievements in nation-holding, when for the first time a superior power loomed on their horizon.

VII. The Advent of the Europeans. I have up to the present referred to the three Ngoni areas as if they formed one cultural unit. This is true of their earliest days, and to a large extent of the time called *chawtsadey*. In spite of certain minor differences there was then a form of society and of political organization which was the same in all three areas, and they all possessed the same language, traditions, and aristocratic hierarchy. After the advent of the Europeans, however, it becomes impossible to generalize, as both the manner and the results of white penetration varied so much in the three areas. As a study in culture contact where eye-witnesses, both white and black, are still available as informants, it is most illuminating to compare the effects of white contact in Mpezeni's and Mwamberi's countries. In Mpezeni's the first contact was commercial, in Mwamberi's, missionary. The contrast between Ngoni society in those two districts to-day is startling, and is commented on frequently by the Ngoni themselves. 'See', say Mpezeni's people, 'the Chartterland Company came to us. To Mwamberi's country it was Dr. Laws. And Dr. Laws's men can speak English to-day and we cannot. Our cattle were taken by the Europeans; Mwamberi's were not. That is why they *lobola* their wives to-day with many cattle, and we have only a few cattle.' They often referred to these differences as soon as they knew I was going from

[1] This was the old Mpezeni, son of Zwangendaba.

177 one Ngoni area to another, and it is evident that they are well aware
189 that they met with different kinds of white contact. A frequent topic of discussion in villages is the differences between the administration of N. Rhodesia and of Nyasaland, as well as the policy and attitudes of the different missions.

177 There is, however, one common factor in the situation called culture contact, existing wherever the Ngoni meet any Europeans.
186 Like the Zulu, the Ngoni do not necessarily take kindly to white ways nor desire to make an extensive imitation of white culture. Their racial and cultural pride makes them cling to their own institutions and resent the assertion of white superiority in every sphere of life. This is evident in material culture as well as in the realm of political and social values. The Ngoni are well known for their skill in house-
[342] building, yet they prefer their own of poles and mud, and are slow to take to brick houses. Their houses, both in the villages and on the copper mines, were noticeably bare of 'store goods', and their expenditure on clothes and 'trash' is low in comparison with the wages earned. Their standards of hospitality, of courtesy, and of mutual assistance they believe to be much superior to the Europeans. They carried on their own system of courts by themselves until it was
[692] recognized by the Native Courts Ordinance a few years ago, and they speak with scorn of the chief who cannot decide his own cases and has to have recourse to the Boma. Several times in the villages, when describing their agricultural methods, or hygiene for young men, or moral training of children, they have said to me, 'Write that we knew this before the *Azungu* came'.

On one count they do concede superiority to the Europeans. 'Only
186 in war the *Azungu* knew better', and that to the Ngoni was the acid
726 test. In Mpezeni's and Gomani's countries, where they were conquered by force of arms, they knew they had to yield as they had made others yield in their day. Yet even here they find a cause for pride. 'No one ever conquered us until the *Azungu* came, and no one will conquer us again until they first conquer the *Azungu*.' This I have had said to me many times by men when speaking of their experiences as carriers and as *askari* in the East African campaign. They add as explanation, 'We went to the war of the Germans because the Boma said we should go. But we wanted also to see if the English would

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643]

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, ' because all his chiefs obey him ', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chantrader*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, ' We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes '.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184]

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. ' To pay taxes, that is our war to-day ', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man has to go farther and farther from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of regenerated land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1898 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested areas.

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county chief, and village headman. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headman and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The first people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Rattray, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the new one is gradual, as, unless the distance between the sites is too great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Rattray, *Folk-Lore Stories*, pp. [illegible]. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. [illegible], gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

241 273 476 those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's [465] labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

463 There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no 573 potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neigh- [462] bouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customer may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

285 Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when [462] it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

759 Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical [648] services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using mission-prepared European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

611 The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying [579] bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern prac- [580] tice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were [189] incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

matrilineal matrilocal tribes, and the values associated with these systems of organization were not entirely forgotten. With the decline of the central power of the chieftainship after the conquest, cultural diversity within the tribe increased, so that at the present time we have a wide range of variation in the kinds of family found between one village and the next, and even within the same village. In particular, the irreconcilable difference between the organization of unilineal kin-groups on patrilineal and matrilineal principles appears to have led to a condition in which, for most of the tribe, the only groups of relatives that emerge as corporate groups are stocks, people with a common ancestor from whom they are descended through sons or daughters or both. These stocks are not mutually exclusive, and a man may think of himself at one time as belonging to one stock and at another time to another stock. Frequently alongside the true members of a stock there are other people who claim to belong to the same 'family'[1] who are in fact related affinally to the members of the stock. The organizing factor in domestic affairs is not kinship by itself but common residence combined with genealogical connexion. A stock, with its affinal accretions, emerges as the core of a corporate group of kindred only when its members live near one another and meet each other frequently. The strongest groups are those people of a stock who are living alongside one another in the same part of a village. 611 184

The use made of cable affinal links in establishing attachment to a stock is noticeable. For example, a child will call a man who is his mother's divorced husband's wife's divorced husband by the term *father* (see Diagram below). A man may bring into his village a wife from outside who may come with her children by a former husband. When grown up, these may also bring in wives accompanied by their children from other marriages. These children grow up to regard the village as their own and to think of themselves, in certain contexts, as belonging to the 'family' of the headman of the village. Informants in a village with a most complicated kinship structure will say 'We are all one fully here'. 602 611 [601]

Kinship Terminology

The variation in the kinship systems of the different tribes from which the Ngoni received their members has led to some confusion in the use of kinship terms. Most of the terms now used are in the 601 [197]

[1] *Banja*, pl. *mabanja*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

marriages in which bride-wealth was paid were patrilocal, and those in which it was not paid, except for marriages with slave wives, were matrilocal. The matrilocal marriages were made only by recently incorporated Ngoni. The payment of bride-wealth is now significant only in relation to the residence and affiliation of the children of the marriage and does not affect the residence of the couple themselves. It frequently happens that a man goes and lives in the village of his wife when they are first married and that after a year or so he takes her back to his own village. This practice is fairly common among the matrilineal tribes of the region. A small payment[1] of five shillings or so may be made instead to enable a man to take his bride to his own village without first completing a period of matrilocal residence. Sometimes the legalization payment is considered sufficient to exempt from matrilocal residence. Indeed it is indicative of the wide range of variation in the different payments made and not made and in the significance attached to them that some informants were unable to state with certainty what payments had been made in their own marriages, although they knew the amount of money or animals that had been handed over.

This wide range of variation in behaviour in relation to marriage is one instance of the high measure of cultural heterogeneity of the Fort Jameson Ngoni. While present-day conditions are relevant to a study of Ngoni marriage, at the same time the effect of the combination of people with very different conceptions of marriage into a single state must not be overlooked. Among families that are powerful and claim to have migrated with Zwangendaba from the south, patrilocal marriage and the payment of bride-wealth are more frequent than they are among families of more recent incorporation. Cross-cousin marriage is noticeably more frequent in villages with people of Bisa descent than in the population as a whole. In Nyasaland, where there is a sharper cleavage into old Ngoni villages and conquered Cewa villages, the old Ngoni are characterized by a greater, and the Cewa by a lesser, incidence of patrilocal marriage.

Divorce

In the old days there was no way in which a woman could divorce her husband. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own people. The usual procedure nowadays, except in cases of adultery, is for the man to give his wife sixpence or a shilling

[1] *Mikoshola.*

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province,
166 648 much of it inaccessible and uninhabitable, except for small pockets of fertile soil, was opened to unrestricted settlement by the Ambo and Senga-Kunda peoples. Other areas of poor soils and low carrying capacities in Fort Jameson District were also opened to free settlement up to a population total determined by the carrying capacity.

In Ndola District an area was opened to immediate uncontrolled settlement, in order to relieve acute land shortage and actual starvation in one
L [731] section of the Reserve.

L M A somewhat modified method has been used in parts of Petauke District where dams are the only means of providing water. Here the population
[312] unit consists of three or four villages grouped into a 'parish' and settled
[361] about the watering points. A single land area is demarcated for each of these
[632] groups, instead of allocating a separate block to each village. This method allows of economy in the distribution of watering points, tends to reduce the effect of inter-village movements and, it is hoped, will lead to larger administrative units.

§ 7. *Agricultural Control and Improvement*

N 161 [311] The general object of resettlement is to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of traditional land usage *and the present population numbers*. Obviously, this balance cannot be permanent if the population is increasing; and if it is not increasing something is seriously wrong. Reliable vital statistics are entirely lacking but probably most of the tribes are increasing (the Ngoni may be an exception) at a rate which, judging by the very few available data, may be about ½ per cent per annum, a rate which would double the population in forty-six years.

N 242 654 648 Resettlement is not, and was never regarded as, a substitute for agricultural improvement. The objects are to reduce the agricultural problem to practicable proportions, to relieve acute land shortage, to give time for experiment and the introduction of new methods. The assumption is that an evolutionary process of agricultural improvement will keep pace with natural increase of population, and that this process must be guided by experiment.

Simple measures of agricultural control, and the beginnings of soil conservation and agricultural improvement, have been introduced in each of
N [177] the resettlement areas as a condition of occupation. It need hardly be said that these are not popular with the majority and the existence of such conditions is a deterrent to movement.

N In the case of the earlier settlements in the Fort Jameson District an
648 elementary system of soil conservation was introduced by demarcating the
242 land for cultivation in contour strips separated by untouched belts of grass
[185] (which acquired the name of 'ten-yards' since the original strips were ten
[241] paces wide). This was followed by an attempt to replace the traditional mound system of Ngoni, Chewa and Senga by cultivation on ridges

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 245 671 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds, seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little [177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a [132] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of 311 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush. 648 In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre- 985 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning [622] of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve 361 the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected 362 (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built [342] of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's 648 journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of earning money to pay tax, together with such subsidiary measures as the prohibition of Native smelting, and the pressure on men to clothe themselves in imported clothing, ensured that the old order changed beyond the mere loss of sovereignty. Not only were links established with Southern Rhodesia and later with other parts of Africa, but new patterns of distribution of wealth and power were set up which were incompatible with the old order. The chief who stayed at home ruling his people found himself outclassed by the newly returned labourers from the south, with their display of clothes, money and urban mannerisms. The relationships between one tribe and another which formerly had found expression in fighting had now to find other expressions, and began to be based on different interests.

These general considerations applied throughout North-Eastern Rhodesia. In Ngoniland local variation was supplied more by the presence of the North Charterland than by the fact that the Ngoni had been defeated in war. The North Charterland was interested in the economic development of its concession, whereas the Administration had to consider the needs of other territories governed by the B.S.A. Company, particularly Southern Rhodesia. The same administrative policy was applied to the Ngoni as to neighbouring tribes which had not been conquered by force of arms. Nevertheless in Ngoni eyes the Administration discriminated against Ngoni in favour of Cewa. Many Cewa who had been captured shortly before 1898 moved away from Ngoniland after the war, or at least moved in the direction of their homeland. With the end of Ngoni raiding the no-man's-land round Ngoni country filled up again with Cewa who had been displaced when the Ngoni first arrived in the 1870s. Cewa chieftdoms were re-established and recognised by the Administration, to the chagrin of the Ngoni.

Even the Ngoni themselves were referred to by the Administration as the 'Angoni-Chewa' by way of emphasising their mixed ethnic composition. When the Native Reserve scheme was put forward in 1913 the Ngoni chiefs objected to the Cewa being allotted land of their own, and suggested that all the tribes of the district should be placed in one reserve under Mpezeni II. The Administration did not agree. When villages were moved into the proposed reserves in the 1920s, a few more villages left Ngoniland for Cewa country. At the same time other villages moved into Ngoniland from other chieftdoms in the face of alienation of land or difficulties with the Portuguese Administration. Thus to-day many villages in Ngoniland are of Cewa origin and many villages in Cewa chieftdoms are of Ngoni origin.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

inefficient workers on the local tobacco farms, where the ties that link them to the near-by villages with their marriages, funerals, and beer parties are still operative, and where the wages are much lower than in Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, Ngoni tend to suspect the good intentions of any non-African, however lavish he may be with his presents, and for this reason are reluctant to enter into agreements with them the social consequences of which they cannot foresee.

2. *Rivals of the Paramount Chief*

In pre-conquest times the death of the head of the State was followed by a struggle between rival heirs and by fission of the State. Under British colonial rule these struggles cannot be carried on by force of arms, and it is difficult to split the tribe when there is nowhere for the dissident section to move to and when Administrative recognition is an important condition for political existence. Nevertheless the same struggles continue even if in a different guise.

One of the most interesting incidents in the struggles between rival groups for the chieftainship occurred in 1903 and hinged on an aspect of segmentation within the residential system which we have not so far discussed. It was customary for the heir to a large segment founded by his father to place one wife in the headquarters of that segment as well as establishing his levirs of wives with their own inferior segments. The eldest son of the selected wife grew up to be in charge of the headquarters and came to be identified with his father's father, the founder of the headquarters, as against his father who was lord of its segment. Thus, for example, Zwangendaba, heir to segment 1, founded segment 18 for his own great wife, but also placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 1, the segment founded by his father for his great wife. Similarly Mpezeni, as son of Zwangendaba, placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 4, which by then had replaced the established segment 18. In this matter the Ngoni seem to have differed from the Zulu, for among them, according to Bryant, the *inkinsela*, son of the placed wife, represents his own father as against the father's main heir.[1]

In 1903 the eldest son of Mpezeni I by the selected wife in segment 4 tried to assume the name of his father's father, Zwangendaba. This was in accord with his structural position as representing the interests of the founder of the segment as against those of the

[1] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 80; Bryant, *Dictionary*, s.v. *inkinsela*; cf. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 401. Lancaster implies that the selected wife was called *Sidube*. This seems unlikely in view of the Zulu use of *iQiNdlebe* for the senior left-hand wife.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasised that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organise a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organisation which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

696 In the court itself the magnitude of the penalties imposed and damages awarded is to some extent at the discretion of the court, and political considerations, among others, may influence judgments. Adultery with the wife of a chief is more heavily punished than ordinary adultery, and people from other tribes, particularly the Yao, are discriminated against. Ngoni courts maintain that they recognise only Ngoni law, even though the disputants may belong to other tribes. These ideas are familiar enough, but they indicate that questions of group membership, that is, political affiliation, and relations between groups, do influence the actions of the court. Within a county, hostility between a group having the ear of the court and one lacking it may find expression in procedural obstructions, such as always hearing a particular suit at the end of a day, or of continually postponing the hearing because some minor witness is absent.

The chief and his advisers usually endeavour to maintain a monopoly of access to the Administration, and this endeavour is largely supported by the Administration as a matter of policy. In the particular sphere of legal action, appeal from the Native Court to the District Officer is sometimes regarded as a challenge to this monopoly, and litigants are sometimes punished for stating that they intend to appeal. In a celebrated recent case when a chief was successfully sued in the District Commissioner's court for damages for adultery, his people came to him afterwards to express their condolences, as after a funeral, at the injury done to his high office by this procedure.

Native Courts are formally recognised under Ordinance by the Administration, and hence changes in the indigenous legal system brought about by the Administration are legal changes, in that they have behind them all the paraphernalia of Ordinances, Letters Patent, Orders-in-Council, and Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. This gives a special quality to manipulation of the legal system by the Administration, for this is really only another way of saying that effective sovereignty lies with the British Crown and not with Paramount Chief Mpezeni. But within the framework of analysis of the local situation, the actions of the Administration and of the chiefs in controlling the working of the courts are comparable sociologically.

The Administration is continually exercised about the quality of the work done in Native Courts, and in so far as all cases heard in Native Courts are subject to revision by the District Commissioner a direct check is, or could be, exerted on the way in which the courts operate. But Administrative intervention goes further

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

646 Secretariat or the Legislative Council. The agenda consists of
648 items suggested by the African members and by the Administration. The African members of the Council elect four of their number as
[666] their nominees to the African Representative Council of Northern Rhodesia, which in its turn advises the Governor on the appointment of the African members of Legislative Council. As yet, the Provincial Council meetings attract little attention among the bulk of the African population, and few Ngoni know who their members are. Nevertheless among the chiefs and councillors these meetings, if regarded with suspicion, are of some interest, and for the two delegates they provide an opportunity for stressing in public what they regard as the Ngoni point of view as contrasted with those of other tribes. Many of the Ngoni speeches are phrased in anachro-
[537] nistic terms, and represent more an affirmation of how different
[196] the Ngoni are or used to be rather than a realization of how similar their interests now are to those of their neighbours. However, it is possible as the Council acquires more power and the consequences of its deliberations begin to affect more people directly, Ngoni will take a greater interest in its proceedings.[88] The same comments apply to Ngoni participation on the Provincial Team, an advisory body with representatives from the Administration, the unofficial White community, Indians and Africans.

Ngoniland is almost completely surrounded by Cewa chief-
648 doms. The old no-man's-land which isolated the Ngoni from their neighbours in pre-conquest times has long ago disappeared. On the fringes of Ngoni country there is a great deal of contact between Ngoni villages and their Cewa neighbours and the links of kinship stretch across tribal boundaries without interruption. Within
563 Ngoniland itself, under the control of county chiefs, are some
648 villages which still speak the Cewa language rather than the Nsenga dialect used by most Ngoni. Most of these Cewa-speaking villages
[167] have come into Ngoniland after 1898. Their numbers are indicated in Table VII (p. 133) where it will be seen that on the average about one village in five has entered in this way. The great majority of these are Cewa in origin. Some of them claim that they have returned to ancestral sites, others state that they came as a result of land alienation or of some quarrel with their former chief. Others have been formed by non-Ngoni immigrants who have worked for many years in the township or on the farms and built up their own followings. In Northern Rhodesia villages of this kind form an integral part of Ngoni society. The cultural features which distin-

[88] cf. Barnes, 'History', for a discussion of the way in which Ngoni members act at council meetings.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realize that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni eni eni*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names.

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.'[1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognized areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *alumuzana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *alumuzana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognized as *alumuzana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *alumuzana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognized court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *alumuzana* were recognized as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *alumuzana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*. 1935, p. 56.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177
178

assimilated. When warfare ceased the Ngoni could no longer force subject peoples to accept their rule and their cultural institutions, and they had to acquiesce in considerable cultural heterogeneity within their kingdoms, which, according to Ngoni informants, would not have been allowed in pre-European days. The illustrations they gave were in terms of the families living 'on the horns of the village', in many cases the families of captives taken in war. Formerly, they said, those families would have been made to marry with *lobola*, to have their ears pierced in Ngoni fashion, to serve in the army, to be associated with one of the house-groups and serve them in the hoes or in the gardens. When Ngoni political power declined, and when large villages broke up, some of these groups formed their own villages and reverted to their former practices of matrilineal descent and uxorilocal residence, and of girls' initiation ceremonies.

In the northern kingdom one section of the peoples under Hunga leadership had adopted a patrilineal system before the Ngoni came. The effect of the Ngoni conquest was to strengthen these practices in this northern section, adding marriage by *lobola*, and to extend them to the southern Tumbuka whose kinship and marriage practices were like those of the Cewa who were their neighbours.[1] In the central kingdom, patrilineal descent, marriage by *lobola* and virilocal residence were only practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and they had introduced variations in virilocal residence which will be discussed in Chapter IV, Part III. Within the true Ngoni families in both kingdoms the senior men and women in the 1930's were aware that cultural conformity with Ngoni practices was not as strict as it had been in their parents' days. They spoke of those Ngoni families who were non-conforming as 'people who spoil the land'. [184]

On the other hand, the adoption of Ngoni customs by non-Ngoni in the Ngoni kingdoms, that is by families with descent names from cis-Zambesi and local clans, continued to take place after European rule began. I found several instances of this adoption in the central kingdom, and many of them were related to the acquisition of cattle by former non-Ngoni families. It was chiefly the virilocal form of residence and patrilineal descent which were taken over with *lobola* marriage. When describing the adoption of such Ngoni practices, informants always said it was *mungu cingoni* (like the Ngoni). Those who belonged to the Ngoni kingdoms and had largely adopted Ngoni culture expressed strong sentiments of attachment to it; this was particularly true of town-dwellers who had come from the Ngoni kingdoms but were not members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans. Though they adopted many external forms of European culture in dress, houses and food, the consciousness of their association with Ngoni culture and the Ngoni kingdoms was expressed in strongly emotional terms. [186]

[1] Tew, M. op. cit. pp. 107, 109.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

the south end of the lake in 1891, he pleaded with him not to use force against the northern Ngoni. 'Don't fight them,' he urged, 'enlist them.' The military commander, Captain Maxwell, who was present at the interview, showed interest in the idea of a new recruiting ground for the regular forces in Nyasaland, but his ideas were not pursued as it proved to be easier to continue recruiting the Yao and Tonga who had already shown themselves good military material.

In the central kingdom the first reactions of the Administration towards the Ngoni were favourable. Paramount Cikusi was visited by administrators in 1882 and 1886, and in 1890 concluded a treaty placing himself under British protection. On his death in 1892 his successor Gomani I sent messengers to inform the Administration of his father's death, to declare his allegiance to the British, and to present a bull and a cow, four tusks of ivory and twenty-five men to help in the war against the slave-raiders. In the following year 100 Ngoni warriors were drafted into the regular forces and Mr. H. H. Johnston reported: 'The Ngoni are altogether a splendid people and may be regarded as the backbone of British Central Africa.'[1] But this co-operative relationship did not last. In 1896 it was reported that Gomani and a number of his turbulent young headmen were opposed to our influence.[2] Ngoni armies raided a mission station, an expeditionary force under British officers was sent, the Paramount's village was attacked and his army defeated. He was taken prisoner and, refusing to walk to Zomba, was shot near Domboshe in his former kingdom.

In the 1930's the Ngoni of the central kingdom referred repeatedly to the expedition sent against them, the defeat of their army, the death of their Paramount and the seizure of some of their cattle. They nursed a grudge against their conqueror which coloured much of their sentiments towards Europeans. They sometimes referred to the long period of contact of the northern Ngoni kingdom with the Livingstonia Mission, and contrasted it with their contacts with several missions who appeared to them to be in league with the Administration against them and not to take their side in relations with the Government as Dr. Laws had done in the north.

When Cibambo visited the central Ngoni kingdom with me in 1936 he was interested in making comparisons with his own Ngoni of the north. He found that in central Ngoniland there were very few men who knew Ngoni songs well, and that in general the knowledge of the Ngoni language had almost died out. The big shields were not, he thought, as well cut as those in the north. Yet the war-dances were performed correctly, and the war-dress which the dancers wore was more striking than anything which had been preserved in the north.

[1] Johnston, H. H. *Report of the First Three Years' Administration of the Eastern Portion of B.C.A.* 1894, p. 24.
[2] Johnston, H. H. *Report on Trade and General Conditions in Nyasaland, 1896-7*, p. 7.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

boys and young men, so long as they were in the village. Ngoni men insisted that their children should be correctly trained, and they were contemptuous of Cewa and other tribal groups who left it 'all to the women'. The handing on of correct behaviour by the mother-in-law to her daughter-in-law was, they considered, essential, and one of the reasons why young men in the central kingdom liked to 'marry up' was that they could count on the careful grounding in all the canons of behaviour which their wives had received. 567 [56.6 56.3]

CHAPTER V

AGE SETS

The Ngoni brought with them to Nyasaland an age-set system akin to that among the South-eastern Bantu, which was an important element in their social structure. In pre-European days the division into cattle-herders or pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors or senior men, regulated the tasks and responsibilities of boys and men in other spheres besides those of warfare. At the beginning of this section, when reviewing age sets as one of the constituent forms of Ngoni social organization, I said that some features of an age-set system had persisted. In comparison with age-grouping in the other Nyasaland tribes it was distinctively Ngoni in form; it influenced behaviour patterns in inter-group and intra-group relations; and in it were recognized certain responsibilities and activities belonging to the different groups based on age. 561

Among the distinctively Ngoni elements in the age-set system were the private nature of the puberty ritual and the absence of initiation schools; the organization of boys' life in the *kraal*; the strong tie between age mates up to marriage; the selective principle in designating senior men and women as *mudodo* and *mamise*; and a different kind of selective principle in the formation of friendship pacts between individuals of the same age. In observing the role of age sets in Ngoni village society, the two main groups which were constantly in evidence as groups were the older boys and girls and the senior men and women. These groups not only carried out activities together, but also showed evidence of the strength of the internal ties linking members of an age set. There were, however, no sharp edges to these groups, either in terms of actual age or physiological development or of exclusive membership. The following list of terms applied to age sets in the two main Ngoni areas shows primarily the difference in designation between males and females according to broad age grouping, but it illustrates also the fact that the terminology applied to the age sets did not always coincide [90] [572]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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military forces designed to be the
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 187.
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 441
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [410]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [585]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [928]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a [563]
group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only because they had been conquered, but because they disliked and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were reinforced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village, or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group, many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages, in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni. 105 621 [212] [191]

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'. [162] [592] [186]

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East African. 648 177 [622] [131]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as young men, and had known the independence and supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'everything is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, ministers and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni way of living, and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes dominated social relationships. There was a determined struggle on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasaland sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

answers to them somewhere, then there have been some vital omissions in the narrative. /121

Clues to this study

In relating this study to other field studies and analyses of socialization techniques and processes, I have not attempted to present here any general assessment of similar or related studies, much less any review of the field as a whole, since I have touched on both in earlier publications.[1] Instead I have brought into this chapter one or two clues or guide lines from other sources which seemed to me to elucidate some of my problems, particularly in regard to four main aspects of this study, which have already been mentioned in Chapter I and which to a large extent set the limits and determine the emphases of this book. The 'true Ngoni' were a society within a society, a distinct cultural group within the Ngoni kingdom. This society of theirs had sharp edges, definable and recognizable limits, and that partly accounted for their own awareness of themselves as distinct from, though at so many points connected with, the neighbouring peoples. Their culture, that is their way of living within this society, had definite values which they strove to maintain, and this was one of the reasons why the ideal Ngoni personality pattern, and their endeavour to see it reproduced in each child, was easy to recognise. In order to safeguard their society and maintain their culture they exercised a fairly rigid social control over the upbringing of their children, which resulted in something approaching a 'system' of training and educating children. Set against this conservation of traditional values however was the reality and extent of changes due to external circumstances mentioned at the end of Chapter I. In the face of these changes the Ngoni showed that they could adapt some of them to their own purposes, and they made use of the schools, for example, once they approved of them, to help adjust their

184 186 829 183 [157] [861] 177

[1] See Appendix (i)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount. Dormitory life was therefore rooted in the Ngoni past and, though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a necessary training ground for young manhood. In very large villages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys belonged to the dormitory of that section where their parents' household was situated. There were occasional attempts sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory for boys who were baptised Christians or in an inquirers' class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' development, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled. They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory system except on the geographical lines already mentioned, which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they had their second teeth, from the influence of the women. Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision at what they considered a crucial stage.

Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

VII

The Threshold of Adulthood (ii)

Knowledge and skills

867 868 Towards the end of the last chapter we said that in this following chapter we would be concerned with the knowledge and skills which young adults in Ngoni society needed before they could assume the adult role of setting up and managing a new home, and of taking part in village and national affairs. Here and there in earlier chapters there have been references to 'men's affairs' and the 'world of women', suggesting that there was a range of knowledge, of activities and competence in those activities for which preparation and training was needed for those on the threshold of adulthood.

In talking with the Ngoni about the way in which they were handing on their traditional knowledge to the younger generations, they often distinguished between two kinds of knowledge: one a wide range of perceptions and information necessary to carry out daily and occasional activities in the household and village; and the other, a corpus of traditional lore about natural phenomena, and about their history and law. This is not altogether a valid distinction since both kinds of knowledge were traditional but it is a convenient way of approaching the two kinds of instruction given to young adults. The Ngoni were often apt to stress the importance of 867 this second kind of knowledge because they resented the [186] attitude of many Europeans that the Ngoni, and other African peoples, were 'ignorant' until the schools came. This [577] touched them on a very sore point since they set great store on knowledge and wisdom in men and women, and did

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

821 or other pregnant announcement: 'Listen. Do you hear? The chief says there is a great matter being discussed. It is not here but elsewhere. The case is very important.' Then the women took their poles and struck the tall wooden pounding mortars with resounding blows. A Ngoni elder commented to me: 'Listen. They are washing the moon from its clouds, so that it may come out of the darkness and shine again.' The event was curiously reminiscent of an eclipse during my stay in an Indian village when pots were struck 'to wash the moon'.

Reckoning of numbers

802 The Ngoni used tens as units in counting. They began with the right hand clenched, like the fist they raised in the traditional greeting. One by one they raised from the bent-in position the thumb and each finger in turn, and then did the same with the left hand. When they reached ten they struck one hand against the other with all the fingers extended and said '*ikhumi*' (ten), and for twenty, thirty and so on they struck their hands together the correct number of times. For one hundred they used the word '*ikala*', but it was generally agreed that this had not been in their original counting [177] terms, but had been brought in when the Zulu Bible came to them with the first Scottish missionaries.

Ngoni history

814 To a people like the Ngoni whose remembered past was one of migrations, conquests and settlement in a new country, their history was no dead verbal record but a living reminder [186] of their past achievements, and of their cultural and political differences from the people around them in Nyasaland. There were many occasions in Ngoni village life, especially in the villages of chiefs and heads of leading clans when recitals of history took place. Frequent references were made to historical events in songs, court cases, when visiting Ngoni came, in the vernacular readers used in the Scottish Mission

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

175 parallel of the Jews of the Old Testament preparing the way
171 for the Christian era to illustrate and drive home their belief
797 that they, the Ngoni, had prepared the way for the Christian Gospel in Nyasaland. 'Were we not also a people who hated idols and images? We too tried to reach the Great God through our ancestor spirits, but we failed, until the missions came to teach us.' 'We held together the people of this land under one rule so that the missionaries could travel safely and spread the Gospel teaching.' These beliefs were stated so often that they became almost standard formula, and the incongruity of this picture with some of the warlike situations recorded by the earliest missionaries was ignored and forgotten. In the churches, where the people sat on mats, Sunday by Sunday, facing their Ngoni ministers, rising to sing, in
[593] their typical Ngoni harmonies, Christian hymns set to former Ngoni war tunes—in this setting Ngoni history was brought home, interwoven with the new teaching, to young adults who formed the majority of the congregation. For Ngoni elders it was something more than a reminder of their past. It was setting the Ngoni people in a special relationship to
• [186] the European missionaries and the new learning, compensating for the passing of military power and political supremacy by establishing Ngoni cultural superiority over their neighbours. This gave some spiritual reassurance to a people in the throes of political change, and it was a lesson which lost none of its significance for the young adults who heard it.

Ngoni law

671 'There was one law for all the people. No one could be ignorant of the law.' These were the words, quoted in Chapter I, which the Ngoni used frequently to describe the importance
[182] of law in their culture, its role in the political unification of their own and subject peoples, and the responsibility, laid on all adults, for knowledge of the law and conformity with its demands. An incident in a court of law, which was unfor-
692 gettable to an anthropologist, was a case in which a chief sat

3: Read E-3 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

159 797 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the church and school.

159 815 The younger headmaster of the school had never been threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to some of the lessons in school, watched the boys "drill" in the playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organise his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

[622] [871]

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose personal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

177 797 871 186

Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected their boys who had been to school and had entered European employment away from their homes, to find work which assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

871 463 554

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[1]

The period of the 1880's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1888 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1880's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1888, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1888 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[1] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. D. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpesani
Mapwi FR4
Wisa FR5

her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters,* and *children.*[9] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin.* In the second ascending and descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* and his female *grandchild* as *wife,* and he can, to a slight extent, joke and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. But Ngoni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to marry his female *grandchild,* and do not approve of such marriages among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins.* We have noted above that the Nguni peoples from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Wisa peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organization was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Wisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*banja*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

[9] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, op. cit. pp. 222 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni
MATSVI FR4

N 581 583

Case history 1

Amos* was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kindred.

N 614 613

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N 563

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] M 581 [828] N 186 581

N 595 648 582

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognize these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

* All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

The Fort Jameson Ngoni[1] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821-1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of European control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battledress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

1. I worked among these people during 1946-49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes
177 as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there
[769] was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made
648 to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The
186 Ngoni identified themselves with European rather than with their matrilineal neighbours even before the European conquest. Wiese, himself the main
156 agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[4]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount
[197] Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[5] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not pro-
829 duced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An
183 aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

181 Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian
186 neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to rationalize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

4. Wiese, *Geschichte*, pp. 200 f.

5. Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'zeni said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Deare, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 25.

181 that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered
186 all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British.
Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every
648 present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni
186 say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we
would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes
would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly",
[129] and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated
with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain
that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

538 The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are
814 common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

643 The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also
182 symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his
[551] warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

829 Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths
178 about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather
[583] than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 101 641 N M 101 186 [464] N M [614]

people of Mpezeni '. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is ' the thing ' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, " We are all Ngoni ". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N 829 [614] N 121 101

The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, ' What is the meaning of a clan? ' they reply, ' It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many ' tribes ' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

N M 197 128 N M 101 128

[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word ' clan ' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. ' Tribe ' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which ' tribe ' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the ' blanket term ' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word ' tribe ' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

614 a hierarchy of rank expressed in the clan names, and this rank is
563 evident in the position of houses on a village site, and the degree of authority exercised by the clans and the respect[1] accorded to them. In effect, all those whose ancestors were absorbed before the final
101 break up of the main Ngoni group are recognized as having some
563 claim to the name Ngoni. The rest, that is the clans found in the areas where the Ngoni finally settled are, or rather were, regarded as conquered or slave people.

101 We have seen, however, that there is a much wider sense in which the term Ngoni is used—that is, by all who live under the rule of the
641 Paramount Chief. This extended usage is due to the prestige and
186 honour in which the stricter meaning of Ngoni is held. It was illus-
[643] trated in the instance of the Nyasaland men in Johannesburg, who all claimed to be Ngoni because they had discovered at once that the name commanded respect among the mixture of tribes to be found on the mines. *Indunas* and other leading men sometimes make use of this wider connotation when boasting about the large numbers of people owning allegiance to the Ngoni Paramount Chief, compared with the other petty chieftainships. 'All those in the country of Mpezeni are Ngoni. All are his people.' At the same time they make it clear that there is a distinction between the real Ngoni and the other subjects of the Paramount—a distinction which formerly was much sharper than it is to-day. All are the people of the Paramount, it is true, but in old days the majority of the non-Ngoni were called slaves. To this day the Ngoni when angry may call out to some one, 'Chewa, Chewa', implying 'Slave, slave', and be hauled to the chief's court for insulting language. There the chief will take pains to point out that there are no slaves to-day, and that no Ngoni must 'spoil the country' by insulting the people of the Paramount.

101 It is, I think, clear that there is a connotation in which the term Ngoni can be used with some degree of scientific accuracy—that is, to cover all those clans which are not belonging to the local tribes, or, in an even stricter sense, the clans of indubitably southern origin.

[196] [571] [1] This word 'respect' is constantly in use among the Ngoni. It implies both 'honour' and 'fear', and they sometimes use one word and sometimes the other. It really means, 'to give a person his due', that is, to behave towards him (or her) in the manner which his rank requires.

We have also to recognize that the wider connotation of the word is 101
in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this
article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim [829]
to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real [565]
Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction
of that name.

III. Ngoni Society as a Cultural Unit. It is evident that the 128
field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is
found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing
appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound 178
of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified 829
into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong cen- [105]
tralized political organization. This society differs radically from that
of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has
gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has
remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state',
that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short
period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a
pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty
odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when
they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created
social structure the principles of centralization and rank were domi-
nant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien
milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of
systematized law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal
succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language
foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the
Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed
the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old
men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, poli-
tical, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were
brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history,

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship [621]
group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hamlets.

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *inkosi* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'tribal [304] [186]

178 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard
829 the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form-
[183] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state,
[177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship
[182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior
648 in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were
[161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[304] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-
[186] piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very 121
different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer 648
to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; 411
those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The 181
making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained 563
their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of [643]
the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institu- 101
tions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding 619
tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They 186
point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, [173]
and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. [197]
I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the ex- [191]
ception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 101 186 619 191 Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indunas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the N [123] aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on N [563] family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

N 105 101 186 As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans N and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local M 177 matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of 182 marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, ' We taught them to honour their sons ' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

N 123 186 After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

 123

the reason for this enthusiasm about being 'written up'. 'At last', he said, 'someone will know about us.' He went on to speak with regret about the old days when one or two missionaries and others really knew about the Ngoni and could speak their language. He then spoke with bitterness about the present, lamenting that the Ngoni were no longer regarded as a great people. Gradually it became evident that the Ngoni, being very conscious themselves of their distinctive cultural identity, and of their positive achievements in setting up the Ngoni state, expect other people to recognize this too. They keep constantly before them memories of their past greatness, and they dwell gloomily on the coming of the Europeans which marked the end of their ascendancy. 186

IV. THE HISTORICAL SENSE OF THE NGONI. From the beginning of my stay among the Ngoni the chiefs and leading men impressed on me the importance of knowing about their past. In each area the Paramount Chief arranged that 'historians', that is, old men accredited by him as having correct information, should come to dictate Ngoni history to me. At first this relating of history took place in public before any who liked to listen. The old historians, however, grizzled warriors of many fights, trembled and stammered in giving their accounts, because the Paramount Chief so impressed on them the importance of the occasion, and pulled them up sharply when they hesitated over names or events. At the subsequent private sittings, where the old men could argue fiercely with each other without any fear of causing shame before an audience, the accounts were much more coherent, and, as the Paramount Chief assured me, correct. After one such taking down of history in the Paramount's village, I went to stay in the village of one of these 'historians', a very much respected *mulumuzana* and one of the 'best families'. He gently but firmly put aside my scheme of studying village organization and economic life, saying, 'First you ought to know about our beginnings'.[1] After giving me still more detailed accounts of Ngoni history, he explained that though much of their social life was mixed up to-day with that of other tribes, their history and traditions were distinct and belonged to them alone. Hence I ought to have it written 814 124

[1] He used the verb *kudauka*, which implies root or origin.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni. It is nevertheless recognized that the aristocrats, through their kinship links with the past, have the best knowledge; the rest listen and defer to them. For matters relating to history are no antiquarian interest to the Ngoni. It is probable that recalling history and dwelling on the great days of the past is to some extent a compensation for what the Ngoni consider the indignities of their position to-day. Yet it is also a stimulus to them to maintain their separate identity and to revere their institutions. Tradition supports rank, by recognizing the historical importance of certain clans; and rank preserves tradition because intimate knowledge is the proud monopoly of certain families.

V. Tradition and Legend as Documentation. To the anthropologist who examines the part played by tradition and legend in the culture of a people, Professor Malinowski has given an invaluable lead. He suggests that myths are the charter and documentation for traditional tribal life, 'statements of reality which live in the institutions and pursuits of the people';[1] and that legend is re-interpreted history. All peoples of whatever level of civilization interpret history in the light of their beliefs about themselves, their achievements, and their destiny. The Ngoni are no exception to this. Sometimes they relate factual history which is verifiable and accurate. At other times it is probably part fact, part fiction. Yet at all times the emphasis in, and interpretation of, tradition, has a definite purpose, and it is possible to see how a standardized form of a narrative has come to be accepted and believed in. The version of a narrative at one time was interpreted or moulded to serve a purpose. Having been established, it then moulds the thinking of the people on that particular issue. The vexed question of the supremacy of the two Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera[2] is a case in point. The basis of the story of the original dispute is the same, but the versions as told in each 'country' differ in a succession of minute details, whose arrangement and emphasis prove the point in each case. Mpezeni's historians have arranged the details to prove that he is the rightful *inkosi*; Mwambera's historians

[1] B. Malinowski. Article on Culture in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

[2] The two Paramounts at present holding these titles are grandsons of the first holders, to whom I refer as old Mpezeni.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

returned between the years 1855–1865, to settle in their present habitat. The earlier part of the period was one of exploring and of conquest. The later part was the time of settlement and consolidation, during which the Ngoni 'states' emerged in the form in which they were found, when the Europeans first arrived.

The Ngoni in Mpezeni's country, when speaking of this time, call it *chamtendere* (the time of peace). Any white travellers' tales referring to these years lay stress on the constant raids carried out by the Ngoni, the fierceness of their warriors, and their ravaging of the countryside for slaves and cattle. It was obviously a time of frequent wars. Why then do the Ngoni call it a time of peace? I have asked this question of many men of rank and standing and they give one invariable reply, 'We call it *chamtendere* because the *Azungu* (Europeans) were not there to trouble us'. This statement is in effect the key to Ngoni thinking about the days of pre-white contact, and also about the advent of the Europeans. The way in which they speak of *chamtendere* is itself significant. I first heard it during a long recital of Ngoni history, and stopped the narrator to ask the meaning of the word. There was instantly an embarrassed silence and self-conscious grins in the group. The word had evidently slipped out unawares, for later on they told me that it was a word they only used among themselves. Having once been used, however, it appeared frequently in conversations with me, and proved a useful starting-point for accounts of the organization of their own state and the effects on it of the European advent. 'Ah, *chamtendere*', they say, with a deep sigh, 'then we were people'. It proved also to be a pass-word to their confidence, for whenever I mentioned *chamtendere* to a village headman, he and his notables nudged each other, and laughed and said, 'She can know about us'. When pressed to be more specific about this 'troubling' by the *Azungu* they spoke of taxes, of the ban upon raiding and warfare, of young men being called away to work, of their land being taken for European farms. These restrictions and disabilities caused by white contact they regarded as warfare, that is, as troubled times, because the Europeans forcibly prevented them from doing as they liked, just as they had done in their day to the surrounding tribes. The conquered tribes, on the other hand, naturally hailed the advent of the Europeans as a time of peace and security. Therein lies the chief

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Moravi FR4

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

177 one Ngoni area to another, and it is evident that they are well aware
184 that they met with different kinds of white contact. A frequent topic of discussion in villages is the differences between the administration of N. Rhodesia and of Nyasaland, as well as the policy and attitudes of the different missions.

177 There is, however, one common factor in the situation called culture contact, existing wherever the Ngoni meet any Europeans.
●186 Like the Zulu, the Ngoni do not necessarily take kindly to white ways nor desire to make an extensive imitation of white culture. Their racial and cultural pride makes them cling to their own institutions and resent the assertion of white superiority in every sphere of life. This is evident in material culture as well as in the realm of political and social values. The Ngoni are well known for their skill in house-
[342] building, yet they prefer their own of poles and mud, and are slow to take to brick houses. Their houses, both in the villages and on the copper mines, were noticeably bare of ' store goods ', and their expenditure on clothes and ' trash ' is low in comparison with the wages earned. Their standards of hospitality, of courtesy, and of mutual assistance they believe to be much superior to the Europeans. They carried on their own system of courts by themselves until it was
[692] recognized by the Native Courts Ordinance a few years ago, and they speak with scorn of the chief who cannot decide his own cases and has to have recourse to the Boma. Several times in the villages, when describing their agricultural methods, or hygiene for young men, or moral training of children, they have said to me, ' Write that we knew this before the *Azungu* came '.

On one count they do concede superiority to the Europeans. 'Only
186 in war the *Azungu* knew better ', and that to the Ngoni was the acid
726 test. In Mpezeni's and Gomani's countries, where they were conquered by force of arms, they knew they had to yield as they had made others yield in their day. Yet even here they find a cause for pride. ' No one ever conquered us until the *Azungu* came, and no one will conquer us again until they first conquer the *Azungu*.' This I have had said to me many times by men when speaking of their experiences as carriers and as *askari* in the East African campaign. They add as explanation, ' We went to the war of the Germans because the Boma said we should go. But we wanted also to see if the English would

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'. 186 726

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale. 173 721 726 [713] [727]

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] 173 [186] [648] [423]

[1] In the Report of Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'. [361]

[2] Over 3 miles across. [3] in 1885.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union. This exodus to the south in its turn brought the Ngoni into touch once more with the Matabele, the Zulu, and the Swazi, and reawakened their consciousness of their southern origin. It is significant that just at the point when their power in their own country received a crushing blow, they came into contact once more in the south with the stock from which they had sprung and to whom they could still speak in their own language. The anthropologist who looks for the reason why the distinctive Ngoni culture did not die out entirely after their military defeat and the advent of the whites, can see at least part of the reason supplied by the results of this economic exodus to work in the south. When the other tribes in the neighbourhood were, in the Ngoni phrase, 'running always to the Boma' and incidentally picking up fragments of European customs, the Ngoni remained, according to their own account, to a great extent aloof and were strengthened in this aloofness by their renewed southern connexions.

Ngoni supremacy over the country was at an end. The Europeans were the overlords of all the tribes, not the Ngoni. Instead of one big chief in the country, many small ones were now recognized who dared to give themselves airs because they knew the Ngoni could not compel allegiance to their Paramount. Chewa people living under Ngoni chiefs could no longer be forced to stay there, therefore a different attitude towards them was necessary. 'Chewa' could no longer be synonymous with 'slave'. I have heard Ngoni chiefs in court address their *indunas* and headmen many times on behaving well to people of other tribes 'Or they will leave us and to-day we cannot make them return'. A recent case in which a young chief, but a very important one, was summoned to the Paramount's court for insulting a Chewa woman, was made the occasion by the Paramount for a long public discourse on the present relations between Ngoni and Chewa, pointing out that an Ngoni chief whose Chewa subjects left him would 'spoil his country' and 'all his people would be ashamed'. Ngoni prestige, in fact, having lost the support of military power, had to rely on other sanctions. In their own eyes, their prestige was still due to their southern origin, their success in creating the Ngoni state in an alien milieu, and those distinctive institutions which they had retained. To the surrounding people, to the Chewa and other tribes,

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643] Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, ' because all his chiefs obey him ', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186 The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chamtendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, ' We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes '.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184] Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. ' To pay taxes, that is our war to-day ', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609 Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

177 hitherto been the chief sanction for Ngoni supremacy. With their
178 invincibility gone, the regiments broke up and the Ngoni military prestige was at an end. At the same time the direction of political affairs and the relations between the different tribes was assumed by a superior power. Ngoni political ascendancy and their control of economic organization was also at an end. The subject races of the Ngoni who had hitherto either been conquered or submitted voluntarily to the Ngoni had now an ally who was stronger than their former masters.

3. The new situation forced the Ngoni to make drastic readjust-
177 ments. They had to readjust themselves to new relations with other
178 tribes, and at the same time to the Europeans. In their contact with
186 the Chewa and other subject tribes they could no longer maintain the
648 social exclusiveness which had marked the distinction between Ngoni and slaves. There was therefore less actual resistance to culture fusion, though the dislike of adopting alien customs persisted. This dislike of alien customs was evident to some extent also in white contacts. The missionaries brought a new religion, western education, and western medicine. Other Europeans introduced land reserves, taxation, and working for wages. To the local tribes the European represented security as well as certain material benefits. To the Ngoni these material benefits appeared less welcome in the face of their defeat. There was therefore a psychological conflict set up among the Ngoni
178 —a malaise due to their military and political downfall, together with
181 their determination to preserve certain elements in their own culture.
182 That psychological conflict is evident everywhere to-day, and finds expression in all conversations which turn on the relations of the Ngoni to other tribes or to Europeans. To the persistence of that conflict is due the strength of Ngoni 'national feeling', which has directed the selective process by which some of their political, legal, and social institutions have survived the results of culture contact.

4. Conditions all over Africa are changing and new forms of social
178 and political organization are emerging due to the contact of the
648 Africans with European civilization. What place has the Ngoni state in this emergent African society? Are there still cultural realities in Ngoni society which should be preserved, and can the Ngoni political structure be galvanized into new life through the medium of Indirect

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and [231] chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

● 186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 619 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mulumuzana*, pl. *olumuzana*.
[4] *Ndunu*, pl. *ondunu*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Yao FT7

N Y 648 691

The Yao are mistrusted more than any other tribe, and some of the decisions taken by the courts are harsh on Yao. For example, a Yao man who was married to an Ngoni woman had, it was alleged, caught venereal disease from his wife. His wife then applied to the courts for a divorce, which was granted, together with the custody of the children. No bride-wealth had been paid in the marriage, but the husband now offered to pay in order to retain the children. This bride-wealth was refused by the woman's parents. The Yao appealed, but the judgement was upheld, and in addition he was ordered to go back to Nyasaland at once. He asked for permission to return to the woman's village in order to collect his belongings, and this was granted by the court, after first securing agreement between the couple as to the extent of his possessions, to wit, four plates and two beds. This deportation order was made despite the fact that the Yao had been living with his wife for twenty-one years. If a man of some other tribe had been involved, it is unlikely that he would have been ordered to leave the country, nor would the court have been so suspicious of his trying to take away more than his rightful share of the household possessions.

N Y 648 583

A Yao, who had a good job in Fort Jameson, once offered 30*s.* to the Paramount Chief when he was in the town as the legalization payment for a woman of the royal lineage whom he wished to marry. The Paramount Chief refused the money on the ground that the man was a Yao and he was not going to permit Yao to marry into the royal lineage, despite the protest of one of his lieutenants that the Yao was just a man like anyone else.

N 186 609 N Y 648

The reason that is given for this dislike of Yao is that they are sexually very virile, due to the medicines that they possess for increasing potency. It is perhaps significant that the same is said of Indians, who are also disliked. The Yao are known among the Ngoni for their great knowledge of medicines of all kinds, and the allegation of unnatural sexual vigour may be a rationalization of the fear that the Yao may practise sorcery among the families into which they marry. Another factor that may operate is that the Yao are the only tribe in the region that the Ngoni cannot claim to have conquered.

Political Relations with Other Tribes

N 648 721

Before the European conquest relations between the Ngoni and other tribes were principally those of raiders and raided. The great season for raiding was after the harvest, when the surrounding tribes

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

101 ardly people compared with the wild spirits who remained under
[175] Mombera.

This tribe is variously named Mazitu, Vikoko, Abangoni, and so on, and readers of Livingstone's 'Zambezi and its Tributaries,' will remember his frequent references to the wild marauding bands of Mazitu. The word Abangoni, by which the tribe calls itself, simply means "The people." They reckon themselves the blood-
[186] ed aristocrats of Africa.

[193] The prefix *aba* before ngoni, is simply the plural form of the noun *umgoni*, a single man. The country is called Ubungoni, and the language Chingoni. For the peculiarity of the Bantu languages, is that words alter their number from singular to plural, and character from noun to adjective, not by changing the suffix but the prefix.

197 The language which the Ngoni speak is a slight modification of Zulu—but they only use two clicks—the dental *c* and labial *q*. In our schools therefore we use the Zulu literature in which there are already nearly 40 volumes, and the best of these are the translations left by Bishop Colenso. Zulu is however rapidly dying
[567] out, as the language of the slaves and of the surrounding tribes is becoming the vernacular of the common people. When Mombera's
175 Ngoni settled down in the watershed of the Ruhuru, they soon made their presence disagreeably felt throughout West Nyasa. Their marauding parties were always out on the war path. Dressing
[926] in a frightsome garb of cock feathers, carrying a large shield and two or three stabbing assegais, they terrorised the neighbouring tribes. They used to sleep near some village which they wished to attack, and then in the early morning just before the light had come, with a wild war whoop they would sweep through the village, killing the men and the old people; then when they had seized the women and children and tied them together they would start back for the hills, driving with them all the cattle and sheep and goats that they could find. Their fighting was never done in the open. It generally took the form of a wild and sudden rush, and in a moment bleeding corpses were lying about, and the village was in flames.

The terrified people betook themselves to huge stockaded villages, others piled their villages in the lake itself. The Poka, and Henga
[101] fled to mountain fastnesses, and built on the edges of fearful precipices, the Senga fled to the Luangwa marsh and built great protected villages in the depths of huge thorn thickets. And the land became

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time [191] been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-[162] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger [592] women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces-[361] sible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in-[342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was [871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [797] mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East Africa.

older, on reaching them he had to bend one knee, or sit down, and say in a low but clear voice: 'They are calling you.' If a child was sent to call another child to his father because he had a scolding to administer, the bad child had to listen with head bent down, not saying a word or making a sound until the father had finished all he had to say, whether the accusation was just or not. If the child forgot himself and answered back or made excuses, the onlookers would beat the child for being rude to his father. If when taking a message a child had to pass a line or a group of people, he had always to go in front of them, never behind, bending forward from the waist and murmuring as he went by, 'I am before your eyes.' If a child had to give an adult a food basket or any other object, he had to offer it with both hands and bend slightly over it; and when he received it back he always did so with both hands outstretched and bent head.

857 576 867 202

Acting as messengers constantly, and no child was immune from being called if he or she was in the village, impressed on children from their early years the chief behavioural skills of language and deportment. Taking a message was always a formal occasion, and standards of behaviour in language, posture and gesture were rigidly enforced. We shall see in later chapters how very small children were first taught to thank people for gifts or in response to a greeting, and later to greet people politely themselves. The correct terms in which to address or to refer to relatives formed another stage in learning language skills, and later on came reminders about the use of pronouns and the use of the second person singular and plural of verbs, the first to equals only, the second to all adults, with the third person plural for chiefs and 'great ones'. About the age of five or six a child was told: 'When your mother speaks to a stranger she says "Please (you) sit here". You should speak like this to all people you must honour. Only rude people speak that other way—people who do not know how to thank and how to honour, not like the Ngoni who know these things.'

[191]

264 might be a chore but when it was done in the open it was also an advertisement of high standards.

The art of speech

191 The Ngoni believed that as boys and girls neared adult life they should be well drilled in the art of speaking, because it
195 was regarded as a basic Ngoni characteristic. We have seen how adults watched children tossing riddles at each other to test, among other things, their quickness of speech. Girls had been watched telling stories to see how they held their audience and showed a sense of dramatic values in recitation.

In all the standardized forms of speech such as greetings, messages, announcements, responses, young adults were expected to speak clearly and correctly, without mumbling but not too loudly. When relating an event, such as a visit, a bull-fight, or when giving evidence in the courts, they had to give an orderly account without repetition. Otherwise they were told: 'You are speaking badly. Tell it again, in order, from the beginning.' An ordered sequence of the narrative was always demanded, and, as we shall see in the next chapter, they used proverbs frequently to impress on people speaking the need to get to the point, while leaving out nothing of importance.

The art of words used with music in songs was regarded as
533 a special gift and those who possessed it were encouraged to develop it. Inspiration for words and music was as we have seen something which came 'from the chest' and was regarded almost as if it was a special kind of breathing. Some used this gift to sing with a solo instrument such as a stringed lyre. Others used it to compose new songs for *ngoma* dances.
[177] Others again wrote Christian hymns and composed music for them, or set them to traditional Ngoni tunes.

The art of dancing

535 'Ngoni people think that their dances show their personality,
[828] their manhood, that which was born in them.' Phrases like

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

577 accident. These visits and expressions of sympathy could not be omitted without grave social disapproval. If a young man or woman was absent from the village at the time of death or loss, their first duty on returning was to go and express sympathy with the sufferer. To assist in these condolences so that the speaker and the hearer would readily understand each [538] other, proverbs were used such as: 'If the pot is broken it is broken indeed,' and, 'When water is poured out it cannot be gathered up.' The Ngoni disliked the noisy and unrestrained [765] forms of mourning which they saw among the people round them. To them the quiet visit and the note of resignation in the proverbs used fully conveyed the sympathy they wished to express.

577 All through the later stages of training children and young adults the importance of speaking well was emphasized. 191 This at first referred to correct language and being audible 195 but not noisy. Later, as we saw in Chapter VII, the art of 538 speech was held up as a Ngoni characteristic, and many proverbs brought this out in ordinary conversation as well as on more formal occasions such as giving evidence in the courts. When a group of people, generally women, kept up a continuous meaningless chatter, onlookers, generally men, shrugged their shoulders and said, 'They are preparing meat without salt.' When a person talked on and on about a matter which was being discussed without getting to the point, impatient listeners, or the councillor in the law courts said: 'Your wisdom is like mushrooms which come after the cooking is finished,' or, more scathingly, 'You are the feet of a centipede' which wander aimlessly with many steps but no direction. Proverbs were not always a form of rebuke; they could also be a commendation. When a person brought out clearly the point of an argument the listeners said, 'You have rung a little bell'; and when after a prolonged discussion or the hearing of a case in the courts the audience accepted a decision as conclusive and just, they said, 'The upper and the lower teeth meet together.'

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

In the study of this language, the student is for- 113
tunate in having two such scholarly works of reference as *A Practical Manual of the Nyanja Language*, by the Rev. A. Hetherwick, M.A., D.D., F.R.G.S., and *A Cyclopædic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language*, by the Rev. D. C. Scott, M.A., D.D., F.R.S.G.S.; on the other hand, there is a striking
want of any good prose work in that language. Of 114
translations of the Bible, and other religious books, 121
there are many, but all such works, in the translation, follow the English text almost literally, and contain so many words from foreign sources as to be of little use to the student who, having mastered the grammar and syntax of the language, seeks to enlarge his vocabulary and knowledge of idiomatic
expression by reading some prose work. (The ideal 121
translation of the Bible, or other religious work, would be one in which the English sentence is taken, the meaning got at, and this remodelled and transformed according to the native way of thought and expression.) It is to supply such a want that this little work is intended. The aim throughout has been, in the Chinyanja part, to write each sentence as a raw native would speak it. It is a commonly heard saying, that only boys trained at a Mission
talk the language "grammatically." This is cor- 191
rect, if by "grammar" we mean a principle of set
rules for the speaking of a language. For to the 184
uncivilized native any such rules as those governing our own, and other languages of civilized countries,

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

●191 are unknown, and he talks, "having regard rather
184 to the poetical feeling than to the grammatical position and syntax of a word." But enclitics, tense particles, concords, the various forms of the verb (applied, causative, intensive, reversive, etc.), and all those auxiliary particles such as *ba*, *ka*, *ngo*, *dzi*, and enclitic particles such as *-nso*, *-be*, *-tu*, etc., by which all the finer shades of meaning are expressed, he uses absolutely correctly, and it is with a view of understanding, and making oneself understood, to the raw, uneducated element among these natives, that one should go to the trouble of learning this language.

121 The customs, stories, etc., recorded herein are
101 those of the natives inhabiting Central Angoniland. They are descendants, for the most part through intermarriage with the Achewa, of the Zulus who came from south of the Zambezi, scattering as they advanced, under different leaderships; those under *Gwaza* (the father of *Sakambewa*), and his *nduna Chiwere*, settling at Dowa; *Mpezeni*, a son of *Gwaza*, settling near Fort Jameson. *Mputa*, the father of *Chikusi*, after reaching as far as Lake Chirwa, and raiding the Anguru under *Sinjaubwereka*, came to Domwe, near Dedza, under promise of cattle from *Sosola*, a *Chipeta*, or *Nchewa* chief. (*Chipeta* and *Nchewa* are synonymous, the former word being a sobriquet bestowed on the *Achewa* who came on to the Angoniland plateau, by the *Achewa* who settled on the Lake shore, the latter referring to the former as the *a chipeta*, i. e. they of the *chipeta* (long grass)). Intermingled with these customs, borrowed for the most part by the con-
[177] querors from the conquered, are to be found traces here and there, and here and there a word, which strike the key-note of their past history, now all but forgotten even by themselves. But what is of their

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 101 186 619 191 Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indunas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the N [123] aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on N [563] family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

N 105 101 186 As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans N M 177 182 and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, 'We taught them to honour their sons' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

N 123 186 After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chinamwali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *umsindo* or *umgonxo* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chinamwali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'.

If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chamtendere*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p. v]

PREFACE

THE material on which this book is based was collected during three periods in Nyasaland as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute: May–December 1935; April 1936–June 1937; July 1938–August 1939. 115 121 122

The choice had to be made whether to concentrate on one Ngoni area and omit the other, and also whether to present Ngoni culture as a common element in both areas or to regard them as separate cultural areas. I decided to gather material from northern and central Ngoniland, and accordingly spent about one-third of the time in north Nyasaland and about two-thirds in central Nyasaland. I used the Nyanja language all the time in central Ngoniland, and found that many people understood it in the north. I learned some Zulu, enough to read and hear Ngoni when spoken, but it was dying out as a language except for certain ceremonial and legal terms and expressions. Very few people spoke it in central Ngoniland; most of the older people knew it in the north and in one area it was still the language of the home in 1936. 122 197 [192]

The decision to present Ngoni culture as a common constituent of Ngoni life in all parts of Nyasaland was made after the material had been analysed. I decided also to attempt a reconstruction of Ngoni life at the time of the first European contacts, when the kingdoms were at the height of their power. Men and women were still alive, when I was in Ngoni villages, who had fought as warriors, who had organized large households, who had been present at the accession and death of the Paramounts. Their experiences were part of Ngoni culture and inseparable from much of what was regarded as essentially 'Ngoni' in the 1930's. 121

In both areas the informants were of two kinds: those who welcomed an anthropologist who would collect and record Ngoni history, patterns of social organization, and cultural behaviour of which they were intensely proud; and those who were reluctant at first to give information, either because they were Christians and had been at school and said they had 'forgotten'; or because they were suspicious of all Europeans, and did not want to speak of what to them was a treasured and hidden heritage. 115

Working in more than one language medium and bringing into the open Ngoni terms not as a rule used in the presence of Europeans presented a number of problems both of terminology and orthography. I have included a glossary of Ngoni terms used frequently in the book. There were several variations of the prefixes in common use with Ngoni words, as for example *abahumuzana*, *ahumuzana*, *mahumuzana*, all three of which were used in northern and central Ngoniland. The clicks, 128 193

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all
178 the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment
535 of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well pre-
301 served by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or
126 Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom
● 192 were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used
197 in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to
[194] make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [248] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 177 233 234

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [554] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. *The levirate*

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mceka* or *mtoso*. *Mceka* is an Nsenga word meaning a small [192] cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt [291] by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

578 602 that he was drunk when he quarrelled with his wife and did not mean what he said, the woman may agree to return. If she is adamant, or if a serious issue such as cruelty or adultery is involved, a formal discussion is held in the village of one or the other. Relatives come from both sides and a man of senior status convenes the meeting.[16] Sometimes it may be agreed that the offending spouse must pay nominal damages to the other. The usual procedure is to offer a chicken to the other, but sometimes a few shillings are given instead. If agreement cannot be reached at a meeting like this, the matter can either be referred to the court, or else the issue of the quarrel may be left unresolved in the hope that at some later date a solution may be possible. While the initiative in holding a village meeting lies with the senior relatives of the [694] couple, the only people who can take the matter to the court are the couple themselves. A father may sometimes handle the formalities of laying a case against his son-in-law on his daughter's behalf but it would be difficult for him to do so without her co-operation, and, on the man's side, it is only he and not his father or brother who can effectively sue his wife.

The interests of the two groups of relatives are centred on the successful maintenance of the marriage. It is considered more important that people should live together in peace without quarrelling than that the exact rights of one side or the other, even where these rights can be defined precisely, should be upheld. [684] A man who commits adultery may be censured by his father, who will perhaps refuse to speak to his son if he thinks that the stability of his son's marriage is threatened, even though it is admitted that the man's wife has no legal right to object to her husband's adultery. When there has been a quarrel people do not rush to hold a village meeting since, by doing so, the existence of the quarrel is formally recognized and its seriousness increased. It is better if possible to get the couple to 'change their character', that is, to become reconciled to each other on their own account. Until the woman's sudden departure indicates to the world that they have quarrelled, relatives are reluctant to interfere between man and wife. People gossip about the quarrels of married couples, but even their close kinsmen will hedge and say that these affairs are not their responsibility if pressed for an opinion. The action of the wife in running away is the mechanism by which she begins her appeal to her relatives for support, and she carries it a stage further by refusing to accept her husband's apologies. Finally if the settlement proposed at the meeting is not acceptable she appeals to the court. Men do not run away to their kinsmen and do not rely on relatives to the same extent as do their wives. Yet a man can if he wishes

[16] *Tanda*. This word is used of any formal meeting in a village to settle a [192] quarrel, matrimonial or otherwise, before the issue is referred to the court. Cf. Nsenga *ku-tandala*, to talk or discuss.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

developed as the men's. It is to be expected, therefore, that there would be greater Cewa and Nsenga influence in those affairs controlled by women than in political and military matters, which were organized by men. This is borne out by linguistic evidence, for while many of the words, but not all, pertaining to affairs of state are of Ngoni origin, the words now used in the seclusion of girls are drawn from Cewa and Nsenga.

We find therefore that it is the bearing of children before marriage and to a lesser extent pre-marital impregnation which are disapproved of rather than pre-marital copulation. The real contrast in attitude is between pre-marital copulation and adultery. We have seen that in the old days adulterers were killed by order of the chief. The punishment of adultery was a process involving headmen, lieutenants and other important men. The abhorrence of adultery remains despite its great frequency and the prohibition on killing adulterers. An adulterer is a thief, stealing the rights of another man and endangering his marriage. Even when the wife of a labour migrant bears a child and it is in danger of *mdulo* until it can be 'taken up' (p. 87) she cannot openly call in a man with whom to perform this rite. She must either get a man to come in secret or obtain expensive medicines which remove the danger. In like manner, if her husband is impotent, there must be no public recognition of any extra-marital intercourse, for impotence is shameful and not to be admitted and cannot justify the intervention of another man. It is thought regrettable that a woman should grow old without bearing daughters to help her pound maize and sons to clothe her in her old age. Yet when medicines have been of no avail and her husband calls in a seed-raiser he must come in secret and later be rewarded covertly. Similarly the sexual activities of children must be conducted discreetly. Here, however, a much more tolerant attitude is taken and there is not the same need for secrecy. There is no chaperoning of unmarried girls but only of married women whose husbands are away. There is no inspection of girls at marriage, and one informant said that if after puberty a girl has no lover with whom she can sleep, her grandmother will call in a young man to copulate with the girl in the grandmother's house to see if she is proficient, and that for this he would be rewarded by the grandmother. From one point of view we may say that there is pre-marital freedom, with discretion, and marital restriction of sexual activity. Pre-marital intercourse does, however, have a moral connotation, and it is held that the girl who sleeps too easily with all comers before marriage will continue thus after she is married. The need for discretion in premarital affairs is in some part due to the activities of the missions, working at the village level through deacons, elders and women helpers. Yet in general no action is taken by the local Christian group in the village unless the pre-marital sexual activities of its members are conducted in such a way that it is no longer possible to ignore them.

Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p. v]

PREFACE

THE material on which this book is based was collected during three periods in Nyasaland as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute: May–December 1935; April 1936–June 1937; July 1938–August 1939. 115 121 122

The choice had to be made whether to concentrate on one Ngoni area and omit the other, and also whether to present Ngoni culture as a common element in both areas or to regard them as separate cultural areas. I decided to gather material from northern and central Ngoniland, and accordingly spent about one-third of the time in north Nyasaland and about two-thirds in central Nyasaland. I used the Nyanja language all the time in central Ngoniland, and found that many people understood it in the north. I learned some Zulu, enough to read and hear Ngoni when spoken, but it was dying out as a language except for certain ceremonial and legal terms and expressions. Very few people spoke it in central Ngoniland; most of the older people knew it in the north and in one area it was still the language of the home in 1936. 122 197 [182]

The decision to present Ngoni culture as a common constituent of Ngoni life in all parts of Nyasaland was made after the material had been analysed. I decided also to attempt a reconstruction of Ngoni life at the time of the first European contacts, when the kingdoms were at the height of their power. Men and women were still alive, when I was in Ngoni villages, who had fought as warriors, who had organized large households, who had been present at the accession and death of the Paramounts. Their experiences were part of Ngoni culture and inseparable from much of what was regarded as essentially 'Ngoni' in the 1930's. 121

In both areas the informants were of two kinds: those who welcomed an anthropologist who would collect and record Ngoni history, patterns of social organization, and cultural behaviour of which they were intensely proud; and those who were reluctant at first to give information, either because they were Christians and had been at school and said they had 'forgotten'; or because they were suspicious of all Europeans, and did not want to speak of what to them was a treasured and hidden heritage. 115

Working in more than one language medium and bringing into the open Ngoni terms not as a rule used in the presence of Europeans presented a number of problems both of terminology and orthography. I have included a glossary of Ngoni terms used frequently in the book. There were several variations of the prefixes in common use with Ngoni words, as for example *abalumuzana*, *alumuzana*, *malumuzana*, all three of which were used in northern and central Ngoniland. The clicks, 128 193

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The clicks

193 [194] *c, x, q,* had disappeared in central Ngoniland, and were only pronounced correctly by the older Ngoni in the north. The honorific prefixes before clan names in addressing people, and before first names in reference, also varied according to area, age group and clan ranking. Apparent 104 inconsistencies in spelling which occur in the book reflect these variations.

I have adopted English translations of certain Ngoni expressions and have used them throughout without quotation marks. An obvious example is Paramount for *inkosi*; and the use of 'house' for the Ngoni institution, and 'hut' for the dwelling place.

122 I acknowledge with gratitude the Fellowship given by the International African Institute which made possible the visits to Nyasaland; the grant from the London School of Economics for the research assistants, Miss Ruth Jones and Mr. G. P. Hall, who helped me collate material; the officials and missionaries in Nyasaland who gave hospitality and assisted me in every possible way; and the African people of the Ngoni kingdoms who, as my hosts in the villages and my helpers at all times, welcomed me into their midst and gave me an insight into their Ngoni culture.

London, 1955 MARGARET READ

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

593 167 Some men when they decide to return home from work in the normal course of events do not let their relatives know that they will be arriving. There are a variety of reasons for this, one being that the mystical hazards of the journey home are increased if a man's enemies know that it is taking place. There is also sometimes the desire to check on the fidelity of a wife. A chief returning from the railway line in 1947 reached Fort Jameson and sent on ahead a man to tell the people their chief had returned. A councillor who was with him remarked 'What sort of chief is this who gives his queens time to get back to their own houses? We ought to arrive suddenly and catch them all with their lovers.'

593 167 602 The woman's kin also wish to avoid trouble in her marriage and do what they can to prevent her committing adultery if they think that her husband is still treating her well. They talk to her about her obligations to her absent husband and if they think she cannot be trusted, one of them, perhaps the woman's mother, may sleep in the hut with her to see that she does not entertain lovers there. They may warn her that if she is taken to court for adultery they will not support her.

Thus we see that there is social prescription not only of the ways in which a man and his affines should behave towards each other, but also of the ways in which his affines should behave when the man is away. Similarly a woman and her affines interact in the light of their relationship not only when her husband is present but also when he has been absent for years. As a husband can exceed his rights over his wife, so can an affine go beyond what is tolerated while trying to safeguard the interests of an absent husband. The perseverence of some brothers of absent husbands, and the limitations imposed on their actions by public opinion, are recalled by a girls' song current in 1949.

[533]

> I am wanting to go and sleep,
> What stops me is something in the loins,
> I go to the water, and the one who keeps on following comes,
> He has exceeded his sibling-in-law-ship,[18]
> He has dragged Eleni from the reeds.

Eleni is supposed to be the wife of a labour migrant. Her husband's brother follows her to the stream, where she has gone ostensibly to draw water, as he thinks that she is really going to meet a lover. She hides in the reeds and he drags her out. Such active intervention is inappropriate and dangerous for if there is a struggle the woman is likely to claim that the man was trying to rape her. The astute brother-in-law would have waited his time until he could catch her red-handed with her lover in a village.

[607]

167 837 It is never legitimate for a woman whose husband is a labour migrant to have intercourse with another man. People regret that

[193]

[18] *Ulemu*, the abstract noun formed from *mulemu*, sibling-in-law.

814 621 the villages of certain chiefs in the south were preserved.[1] In Mwambera's country there are the names of villages belonging to nine generations of Jere chiefs, and in Gomani's country for seven generations of Maseko chiefs. Villages holding these historic names are in charge of an individual of high rank who is never called the 'owner' of that village but 'the one who takes care'. I realized how clear to the people is the historical significance of these village names, when I asked a question and they exclaimed, 'What? You do not know about Elangeni being the village of Hlachwayo? But all Ngoni people can know that.'[2]

814 614 [193] [576] 4. Clan names. The clan names, as the Ngoni say, denote a person's 'tribe' and the respect due to him. With the prefix, *e*, *a*, *na* (according to the area) the clan name is used as a respectful form of address, and always when thanking for a gift or favour. The tone of reverence with which the great clan names are thus mentioned is itself an indication of the rank and honour of a person.

814 621 5. Village descent. In old days Ngoni villages were very much larger than to-day. The headman of a village on your first visit will always give you the genealogy of his village, how it split off from A, which split off from B, which was the *chigawa* under *induna* X of the big village of chief Y. Reciting these village genealogies generally leads to some recalling of the past, and the village notables, the *amadoda*, gather round to corroborate or correct the headman's recital.

814 It takes very little to stimulate the Ngoni to historical conversations. I have heard them originate in the return of a villager from Johannesburg, where he met Zulu and Swazi men and found they could speak together and had common traditions; in a sermon preached by an Ngoni minister in which he used illustrations from Ngoni warfare; in a rebuke from the Boma to a headman for trying to move his village from worn out land to a site outside the Reserve on an empty farm. And it is not only the aristocrats who take part in such conversations. Sometimes it is evident that men and boys whose [619] fathers had been slaves are anxious to show their knowledge of Ngoni history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni.

[1] I am not clear yet what was the precise sociological process by which the identity of these villages was preserved.

[2] An idiomatic use which has the force of a double negative 'No one cannot know it'.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

101 [175] ardly people compared with the wild spirits who remained under Mombera.

This tribe is variously named Mazitu, Vikoko, Abangoni, and so on, and readers of Livingstone's 'Zambezi and its Tributaries,' will remember his frequent references to the wild marauding bands of Mazitu. The word Abangoni, by which the tribe calls itself, [186] simply means "The people." They reckon themselves the blooded aristocrats of Africa.

[193] The prefix *aba* before ngoni, is simply the plural form of the noun *umgoni*, a single man. The country is called Ubungoni, and the language Chingoni. For the peculiarity of the Bantu languages, is that words alter their number from singular to plural, and character from noun to adjective, not by changing the suffix but the prefix.

197 The language which the Ngoni speak is a slight modification of Zulu—but they only use two clicks—the dental *c* and labial *q*. In our schools therefore we use the Zulu literature in which there are already nearly 40 volumes, and the best of these are the translations left by Bishop Colenso. Zulu is however rapidly dying [567] out, as the language of the slaves and of the surrounding tribes is becoming the vernacular of the common people. When Mombera's 175 Ngoni settled down in the watershed of the Ruhuru, they soon made their presence disagreeably felt throughout West Nyasa. [126] Their marauding parties were always out on the war path. Dressing in a frightsome garb of cock feathers, carrying a large shield and two or three stabbing assegais, they terrorised the neighbouring tribes. They used to sleep near some village which they wished to attack, and then in the early morning just before the light had come, with a wild war whoop they would sweep through the village, killing the men and the old people; then when they had seized the women and children and tied them together they would start back for the hills, driving with them all the cattle and sheep and goats that they could find. Their fighting was never done in the open. It generally took the form of a wild and sudden rush, and in a moment bleeding corpses were lying about, and the village was in flames.

The terrified people betook themselves to huge stockaded villages, others piled their villages in the lake itself. The Poka, and Henga [101] fled to mountain fastnesses, and built on the edges of fearful precipices, the Senga fled to the Luangwa marsh and built great protected villages in the depths of huge thorn thickets. And the land became

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The clicks

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all
178 the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment
535 of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well pre-
301 served by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or
126 Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom
192 were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used
197 in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to
[194] make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show subservience to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss. 562 565 867

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private. 881 836 565 [797] 178] [195] [831]

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony [554]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

264 might be a chore but when it was done in the open it was also an advertisement of high standards.

The art of speech

191 The Ngoni believed that as boys and girls neared adult life they should be well drilled in the art of speaking, because it
195 was regarded as a basic Ngoni characteristic. We have seen how adults watched children tossing riddles at each other to test, among other things, their quickness of speech. Girls had been watched telling stories to see how they held their audience and showed a sense of dramatic values in recitation.

In all the standardized forms of speech such as greetings, messages, announcements, responses, young adults were expected to speak clearly and correctly, without mumbling but not too loudly. When relating an event, such as a visit, a bull-fight, or when giving evidence in the courts, they had to give an orderly account without repetition. Otherwise they were told: 'You are speaking badly. Tell it again, in order, from the beginning.' An ordered sequence of the narrative was always demanded, and, as we shall see in the next chapter, they used proverbs frequently to impress on people speaking the need to get to the point, while leaving out nothing of importance.

The art of words used with music in songs was regarded as
533 a special gift and those who possessed it were encouraged to develop it. Inspiration for words and music was as we have seen something which came 'from the chest' and was regarded almost as if it was a special kind of breathing. Some used this gift to sing with a solo instrument such as a stringed lyre. Others used it to compose new songs for *ngoma* dances.
[177] Others again wrote Christian hymns and composed music for them, or set them to traditional Ngoni tunes.

The art of dancing

535 'Ngoni people think that their dances show their personality,
[828] their manhood, that which was born in them.' Phrases like

577 accident. These visits and expressions of sympathy could not be omitted without grave social disapproval. If a young man or woman was absent from the village at the time of death or loss, their first duty on returning was to go and express sympathy with the sufferer. To assist in these condolences so that the speaker and the hearer would readily understand each [538] other, proverbs were used such as: 'If the pot is broken it is broken indeed,' and, 'When water is poured out it cannot be gathered up.' The Ngoni disliked the noisy and unrestrained [765] forms of mourning which they saw among the people round them. To them the quiet visit and the note of resignation in the proverbs used fully conveyed the sympathy they wished to express.

577 All through the later stages of training children and young 191 adults the importance of speaking well was emphasized. This at first referred to correct language and being audible ● 195 but not noisy. Later, as we saw in Chapter VII, the art of 538 speech was held up as a Ngoni characteristic, and many proverbs brought this out in ordinary conversation as well as on more formal occasions such as giving evidence in the courts. When a group of people, generally women, kept up a continuous meaningless chatter, onlookers, generally men, shrugged their shoulders and said, 'They are preparing meat without salt.' When a person talked on and on about a matter which was being discussed without getting to the point, impatient listeners, or the councillor in the law courts said: 'Your wisdom is like mushrooms which come after the cooking is finished,' or, more scathingly, 'You are the feet of a centipede' which wander aimlessly with many steps but no direction. Proverbs were not always a form of rebuke; they could also be a commendation. When a person brought out clearly the point of an argument the listeners said, 'You have rung a little bell'; and when after a prolonged discussion or the hearing of a case in the courts the audience accepted a decision as conclusive and just, they said, 'The upper and the lower teeth meet together.'

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

175 is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the
814 recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few. We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of these providing the information.[6] The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in
[195] the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope
212 that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin.
175 Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from con-
178 temporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grow shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that "the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory". From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations,
156 as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people
182 relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

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6. Read and Winterbottom have pointed out that informants from Northern Nyasaland assert that their Paramount Chief is the heir of Zwangondaba, while those from Fort Jameson say that their Chief is the heir. Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 467, and Winterbottom, *Outline Histories*, p. 17.

614 a hierarchy of rank expressed in the clan names, and this rank is
563 evident in the position of houses on a village site, and the degree of authority exercised by the clans and the respect[1] accorded to them. In effect, all those whose ancestors were absorbed before the final
101 break up of the main Ngoni group are recognized as having some
563 claim to the name Ngoni. The rest, that is the clans found in the areas where the Ngoni finally settled are, or rather were, regarded as conquered or slave people.

101 We have seen, however, that there is a much wider sense in which the term Ngoni is used—that is, by all who live under the rule of the
641 Paramount Chief. This extended usage is due to the prestige and
186 honour in which the stricter meaning of Ngoni is held. It was illus-
[643] trated in the instance of the Nyasaland men in Johannesburg, who all claimed to be Ngoni because they had discovered at once that the name commanded respect among the mixture of tribes to be found on the mines. *Indunas* and other leading men sometimes make use of this wider connotation when boasting about the large numbers of people owning allegiance to the Ngoni Paramount Chief, compared with the other petty chieftainships. 'All those in the country of Mpezeni are Ngoni. All are his people.' At the same time they make it clear that there is a distinction between the real Ngoni and the other subjects of the Paramount—a distinction which formerly was much sharper than it is to-day. All are the people of the Paramount, it is true, but in old days the majority of the non-Ngoni were called slaves. To this day the Ngoni when angry may call out to some one, 'Chewa, Chewa', implying 'Slave, slave', and be hauled to the chief's court for insulting language. There the chief will take pains to point out that there are no slaves to-day, and that no Ngoni must 'spoil the country' by insulting the people of the Paramount.

It is, I think, clear that there is a connotation in which the term
101 Ngoni can be used with some degree of scientific accuracy—that is, to cover all those clans which are not belonging to the local tribes, or, in an even stricter sense, the clans of indubitably southern origin.

[196] [571] [1] This word 'respect' is constantly in use among the Ngoni. It implies both 'honour' and 'fear', and they sometimes use one word and sometimes the other. It really means, 'to give a person his due', that is, to behave towards him (or her) in the manner which his rank requires.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p. v]

PREFACE

THE material on which this book is based was collected during three periods in Nyasaland as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute: May–December 1935; April 1936–June 1937; July 1938–August 1939. 115 121 122

The choice had to be made whether to concentrate on one Ngoni area and omit the other, and also whether to present Ngoni culture as a common element in both areas or to regard them as separate cultural areas. I decided to gather material from northern and central Ngoniland, and accordingly spent about one-third of the time in north Nyasaland and about two-thirds in central Nyasaland. I used the Nyanja language all the time in central Ngoniland, and found that many people understood it in the north. I learned some Zulu, enough to read and hear Ngoni when spoken, but it was dying out as a language except for certain ceremonial and legal terms and expressions. Very few people spoke it in central Ngoniland; most of the older people knew it in the north and in one area it was still the language of the home in 1936. 122 197 [192]

The decision to present Ngoni culture as a common constituent of Ngoni life in all parts of Nyasaland was made after the material had been analysed. I decided also to attempt a reconstruction of Ngoni life at the time of the first European contacts, when the kingdoms were at the height of their power. Men and women were still alive, when I was in Ngoni villages, who had fought as warriors, who had organized large households, who had been present at the accession and death of the Paramounts. Their experiences were part of Ngoni culture and inseparable from much of what was regarded as essentially 'Ngoni' in the 1930's. 121

In both areas the informants were of two kinds: those who welcomed an anthropologist who would collect and record Ngoni history, patterns of social organization, and cultural behaviour of which they were intensely proud; and those who were reluctant at first to give information, either because they were Christians and had been at school and said they had 'forgotten'; or because they were suspicious of all Europeans, and did not want to speak of what to them was a treasured and hidden heritage. 115

Working in more than one language medium and bringing into the open Ngoni terms not as a rule used in the presence of Europeans presented a number of problems both of terminology and orthography. I have included a glossary of Ngoni terms used frequently in the book. There were several variations of the prefixes in common use with Ngoni words, as for example *abalumuzana*, *alumuzana*, *malumuzana*, all three of which were used in northern and central Ngoniland. The clicks, 128 193

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 178 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 535 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 301 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well preserved by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

126 192 197 [194]

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 approach is made through the media of such collections as the author of the following pages has made. For this reason the book is commended to all who are interested in the study of native African life and habits.

It is further to be commended for its illustrations of the Nyanja language in which the stories, etc., are written. This language is spoken over the greater part of British Central Africa, or Nyasaland Protectorate, and forms the chief means of communication between the natives of the various districts themselves, as well as between the European settlers and the native population around them. It seems likely to become also the *lingua franca* of the whole of the British possessions in Central Africa that border on the Nyasaland Protectorate. The student of this language will find no better way into the heart of the subject he is dealing with than through the medium of these native stories. To facilitate this use of them, a literal translation is added, and notes are appended illustrating and explaining such idiomatic constructions as would be likely to present difficulty to a learner.

[197]

The writer of this preface has no doubt but that the book will prove its usefulness to the student of the Nyanja tongue, as well as its interest to the student of native African life and thought.

ALEXANDER HETHERWICK.

BLANTYRE MISSION,
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA,
January 1, 1906.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes
177 as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there
[769] was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made
648 to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The
186 Ngoni identified themselves with European rather than with their matrilineal neighbours even before the European conquest. Wiese, himself the main
156 agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[4]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount
[197] Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[5] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not pro-
829 duced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days
183 I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

181 Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian
186 neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to rationalize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

4. Wiese, *Geschichte*, pp. 200 f.

5. Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'zeni said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Deare, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 25.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 101 641 N M 101 186 [464] N M [614]

people of Mpezeni'. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is 'the thing' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, "We are all Ngoni". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N 829 [614] N 121 101

The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, 'What is the meaning of a clan?' they reply, 'It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many 'tribes' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

N M 197 128 N M 101 128

[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word 'clan' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. 'Tribe' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which 'tribe' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the 'blanket term' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word 'tribe' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts?

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *u* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups.

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans.

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and [231] chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 619 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Malamulana*, pl. *alamulana*.
[4] *Nduna*, pl. *induna*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

matrilineal matrilocal tribes, and the values associated with these systems of organization were not entirely forgotten. With the decline of the central power of the chieftainship after the conquest, cultural diversity within the tribe increased, so that at the present time we have a wide range of variation in the kinds of family found between one village and the next, and even within the same village. In particular, the irreconcilable difference between the organization of unilineal kin-groups on patrilineal and matrilineal principles appears to have led to a condition in which, for most of the tribe, the only groups of relatives that emerge as corporate groups are stocks, people with a common ancestor from whom they are descended through sons or daughters or both. These stocks are not mutually exclusive, and a man may think of himself at one time as belonging to one stock and at another time to another stock. Frequently alongside the true members of a stock there are other people who claim to belong to the same 'family'[1] who are in fact related affinally to the members of the stock. The organizing factor in domestic affairs is not kinship by itself but common residence combined with genealogical connexion. A stock, with its affinal accretions, emerges as the core of a corporate group of kindred only when its members live near one another and meet each other frequently. The strongest groups are those people of a stock who are living alongside one another in the same part of a village. 611 184

The use made of double affinal links in establishing attachment to a stock is noticeable. For example, a child will call a man who is his mother's divorced husband's wife's divorced husband by the term *father* (see Diagram 4 below). A man may bring into his village a wife from outside who may come with her children by a former husband. When grown up, the sons may also bring in wives accompanied by their children from former marriages. These children grow up to regard the village as their own and to think of themselves, in certain contexts, as belonging to the 'family' of the headman of the village. Informants in a village with a most complicated kinship structure will say 'We are all one family here'. 602 611 [601]

Kinship Terminology

The variation in the kinship systems of the different tribes from which the Ngoni recruited their members has led to some confusion in the use of kinship terms. Most of the terms now used are in the 601 [197]

[1] *Banja*, pl. *mabanja*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

601 [197] Nsenga language,[1] but Nyanja and old Ngoni terms are also heard. The rules of application of these terms, as formulated by the people, are not always adhered to, and I found that when I challenged the accuracy of some of the kinship terms I heard being used, the speakers were quite ready to admit that the terms had been incorrect by their own rules. Here I propose to give only the Nsenga terms, in the way in which they are used when people are discussing other families, and in which to a lesser extent they are used as forms of address. It is with this meaning that the terms can be used to describe the operation of exogamy. A full account of their use must await further inquiry.

There are ten terms of wide application, and three more used in restricted contexts. These three may be translated as *husband*, *wife*, and *cross-cousin*. *Cross-cousin* is used of mother's brother's child and father's sister's child: usually the child referred to is of the sex opposite to ego. *Wife* refers to own wife, brother's wife, and brother's wife's sister, and similarly *husband* refers to own husband, sister's husband, and sister's husband's brother. Thus *husband* and *wife* are reciprocal terms, and *cross-cousin* is self-reciprocal.

The remaining terms may be grouped as follows.

1. *Father*, *mother*, and *mother's brother*, with a common reciprocal *child*.
2. The reciprocal pair *grandparent* and *grandchild*.
3. Four self-reciprocal terms, *sibling*, *sibling-in-law*, *affine*, and *child's parent-in-law*.

These have the meanings implied in their translation, but are also applied more widely, as is indicated in the diagrams. Throughout, the marriage sign is used to indicate any marriage, whether extant or terminated by death or divorce. The symbols used for vernacular terms are shown in Table II.

The way in which these terms are applied can be seen from the diagrams. In the more distant applications the genealogical connexion to ego ceases to be important, and indeed may be unknown. A man may have been told that he should call such-and-such a woman *mother*. He will then apply kinship terms to her close relatives in a systematic manner which is independent of his genealogical connexion to them. The same procedure is followed with the relatives of people called *father* or *sibling*.

[1] The same Nsenga terms seem to be used differently by the Ngoni and the Nsenga. Cf. Ranger, *Chinsenga Handbook*, pp. 68–9, 108–9.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Marari FR4

N 635 [797] [743] N [438]

time controlled from a mission station just inside Nyasaland, so that many people crossed to attend religious services and receive instruction. From Mpezeni's own county it is easier to get to the hospital at Fort Manning than to the one at Fort Jameson, so that people wanting European medicine tend to go to Nyasaland for treatment rather than to Fort Jameson. Nyasalanders are for their part attracted into Northern Rhodesia by the market for foodstuffs among the urban population, White and Black, of Fort Jameson and by the greater variety of goods on sale there.

Other Ngoni Groups

N 101 173

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are conscious of their links with the other groups of Ngoni scattered over Central Africa, and of their similarity with the Ndebele and the Swazi and Zulu. The Paramount Chief is sometimes praised by the recital in the Ngoni language of the past exploits of the Ngoni, how they crossed the Zambezi, and how they conquered one tribe after another. On one occasion I heard someone who cannot speak Ngoni praise the Paramount by repeating, in Ndebele, which is similar to Ngoni, a praise of Mzilikazi[1] which he had learnt by rote. This oration was accepted without comment by the Paramount. Lancaster has recorded a legend that Lobengula[2] fled to Mpezeni after the second Matebele War, and that he died in the country.[3] Some years after his installation Mpezeni II was visited by a delegation from Mombera, chief of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland, which, it is said, came to ratify Mpezeni's position as Chief of the Fort Jameson section of the Ngoni. An important headman in Mpezeni's county, who bears the same name as Chief Chiwere of the Ngoni of Dowa District, still claims from time to time that because his namesake and alleged relative is a chief, he too ought to be a chief.

Nsenga and Yao

N M 648 [197]

The Ngoni are on more friendly terms with the Nsenga of Petauke District than with the other matrilineal tribes of the region. Some of the kinship ties that were formed as a result of intermarriage between the two tribes in the 1870's can still be traced, and their languages are similar. Mpezeni III went in 1944 with his first lieutenant and twenty-five followers to visit the Nsenga Chief Manjawanthu, and he is expected to return the invitation.

[1] The first Ndebele king. [2] Son of Mzilikazi, defeated by the Whites.

[3] Lancaster, p. 83. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, and Posselt, *Upengula the Scatterer*, pp. 112–24.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173

(19) The *isi-bongo*,[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of [illegible]ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu, and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

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173
643

Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Susera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 16th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Bazaliyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphanza, Mahamunye Mphanza, Mshawa Mwase Shawa, Dede Tole, Mjoko Edwambi Jere, Malwalalche Tembo, Mzenje Nkhawa, Katenda Manynony Mahowane, Kapondela Jozeni Mvula, Machiliha Mphanza, Chhongochane Ngulowe, Chiwere Maimiso, Mauka Jere, Mapulanga Mphanza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Madalmawe, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndawambi Hara, Matrino Kangwere Nkhowa, Pesyani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gawani Mawere, Chingulukani Dimba, Siya Mvula, Ngungu Singa Jere, Mshawa Mphanza, Mzuki Lukhelo, Njombwa Tembo, Adonibwaike Mchanga, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197 ●
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 602 624
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[101] [175] ardly people compared with the wild spirits who remained under Mombera.

This tribe is variously named Mazitu, Vikoko, Abangoni, and so on, and readers of Livingstone's 'Zambezi and its Tributaries,' will remember his frequent references to the wild marauding bands of Mazitu. The word Abangoni, by which the tribe calls itself, [186] simply means "The people." They reckon themselves the blooded aristocrats of Africa.

[193] The prefix *aba* before ngoni, is simply the plural form of the noun *umgoni*, a single man. The country is called Ubungoni, and the language Chingoni. For the peculiarity of the Bantu languages, is that words alter their number from singular to plural, and character from noun to adjective, not by changing the suffix but the prefix.

● 197 The language which the Ngoni speak is a slight modification of Zulu—but they only use two clicks—the dental *c* and labial *q*. In our schools therefore we use the Zulu literature in which there are already nearly 40 volumes, and the best of these are the translations left by Bishop Colenso. Zulu is however rapidly dying [567] out, as the language of the slaves and of the surrounding tribes is becoming the vernacular of the common people. When Mombera's 175 Ngoni settled down in the watershed of the Ruhuru, they soon made their presence disagreeably felt throughout West Nyasa. Their marauding parties were always out on the war path. Dressing [726] in a frightsome garb of cock feathers, carrying a large shield and two or three stabbing assegais, they terrorised the neighbouring tribes. They used to sleep near some village which they wished to attack, and then in the early morning just before the light had come, with a wild war whoop they would sweep through the village, killing the men and the old people; then when they had seized the women and children and tied them together they would start back for the hills, driving with them all the cattle and sheep and goats that they could find. Their fighting was never done in the open. It generally took the form of a wild and sudden rush, and in a moment bleeding corpses were lying about, and the village was in flames.

The terrified people betook themselves to huge stockaded villages, others piled their villages in the lake itself. The Poka, and Henga [101] fled to mountain fastnesses, and built on the edges of fearful precipices, the Senga fled to the Luangwa marsh and built great protected villages in the depths of huge thorn thickets. And the land became

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 857 883 865 868

Herding as preparation for war

Preparation for war began in youth. When boys were about ten or twelve they were sent to herd goats or calves; when they were older they herded the cattle. At this time the boys were in the bush with their elders who were often haughty and fierce. The older herders taught the boys how to fight and how to defend themselves. They taught them to fight with twigs and sticks; the older herders fought with *izinduku* (knobkerries) and *izinkhonjo* (wooden swords). They were not allowed to fight with real spears though some had them. The older herders stirred up the hearts of the younger to fight and taught them to strike each other with knobkerries and to use little shields. If the herders of one village met the herders of another, the bulls were teased till they fought, and the little herders also. The small herders were not allowed to say anything about the herding to their parents. The older herders also loved to fight as in war with those of other villages. At such times the older men and even the elders came out from the village to see the battle and to stir up the hearts of the boys. If the herders of one village ran away they were laughed at, but the winners were greatly praised.

At the time when the cattle ate the refuse in the maize-gardens, after harvest, fighting most often broke out. Some of the boys provoked their neighbours to go and drive the cattle into the maize-fields of another village deliberately. The custom was that cattle might eat in the maize-gardens of their own village and the boys ought to ask if they may go into the fields of others. The herders did this to annoy the other herders and to start a fight. Often a great struggle was the result and the young men of the village who had outgrown herding joined in the fight to help the youngsters of their village. But they did it sensibly, none caused a wound with a spear, for anyone who did that was punished by law.

So the boys grew accustomed to the first steps in fighting which would help them later in war. Those who knew how to protect themselves with a knobkerry and small shield had no scars on their heads, but there were many long ago who had scars from fighting in the herding time. Children of the chief were in the same predicament—if they could not defend themselves they were beaten by their herding companions and possibly got their heads broken. The flowing of blood was not considered very serious, only if one did it in a stealthy way then he had to pay compensation. In this way the boys grew up with stout hearts and loved fighting.

Another thing which excited the boys was the custom of whistling. The boys were very expert and quick in expressing changes of mood in whistling. This was done so that the cattle would go carefully or quickly, but also when they were fighting the herders loved to whistle and even the older men in war did so also. The whistling stirred up the hearts of those who were thinking of running away. There were many ways of whistling and some were very good at it.

[198]

Enlistment

539 702

When the young men reached the age of 21–26 they left off herding. Sometimes it was their fathers who stopped them, sometimes they themselves wished to stay at home. They took their shields (*amahawu*) and

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

clan and for women of leading Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Two of 292
the texts emphasized the distinction conferred on the royal women by 644
special clothing. Cibambo described the use of well-dressed soft skins and of beads and wire, the beads brought with them from the south, the brass wire obtained from the Arabs. In NaNdumbu's text she mentioned cloth bought from the stores. After the Ngoni women gave up wearing soft leather for skirts and the long piece of leather draped from [439] the left shoulder, they used strong cotton cloth of dark blue or black, originally brought by the Arabs and later stocked by the stores. They tied the main cloth under their arms in a draped knot over the breast and on ceremonial occasions they added another fastened on the left shoulder like a plaid. A woman who had been a young girl in the village of Paramount Cikusi, but was not of a leading clan, said that in this village there was a great difference between the royal women and the [565 rest: 'Only the daughters of Cikusi and his big wives could wear dark 689] cloth as the Ngoni do. The others would have been killed if they tried to look like the big women'.

The royal women and the big wives and widows of chiefs and 565
ahumuzana were treated by all with whom they came in contact with 576
the distinction and respect due to their prestige. They were addressed 644
and thanked by the term *Nhomo*, with the clan name and the honorific prefix added, except where, as in the case of Bambo Manga, a title had been conferred. She was thanked '*Nhomo Bambo*'.[1] *Ukuhlonipa*, and its Nyanja equivalent *kulemekeza*, meaning to honour and to behave in a respectful manner towards senior people and those of superior rank, was an expression constantly used by the Ngoni and by the other peoples in the Ngoni kingdoms. The forms of showing respect were partly verbal; partly in the position adopted, with the eyes cast down and a slight curtsey by the women when facing someone; partly in the tone of voice when speaking; and partly in the deliberate and controlled behaviour noticed by several early travellers in Nyasaland. A particular 198
verbal form of respect practised by the royal women was the use of the 565
hlonipa vocabulary. I found this practice surviving only in the Emci- 551
sweni area in northern Ngoniland where the Ngoni language was still 576
spoken, but informants said that it had been common to all married 644
women of trans-Zambesi clans in the northern kingdom when they had spoken Ngoni among themselves. The *hlonipa* vocabulary consisted of the substitution of special words, known only to the women, in order to avoid using a word in which the main syllable of a man's name occurred—a man with whom they were connected by marriage or by affinal relationship.[2] Thus Zwangendaba's wives and widows could

[1] *Bambo* (father) was a term of respect used for important senior men.

[2] *Hlonipa* as a form of special vocabulary was widely practised among the Nguni groups in South Africa. Hoernlé, A. W. 'Social Organisation', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, pp. 74, 77.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

551 565 576 644

never use any word in which *indaba* (meeting or affair) occurred. They substituted *incayo* for *indaba* and spoke of him as Zwangencayo. The women of the Ngomezulu clan could never use the word *ilanga* (sun) for which they substituted *ijiko*, since Langa was the name of the father of Zwide who had married into the Ngomezulu clan.

Though the particular verbal form of *hlonipa* which the Ngoni royal women brought from the south survived only in one area of northern Ngoniland, the concept inherent in it and the attitudes of honour and respect which it implied were expressed in the use of *Nkomo* in thanking and in the other non-verbal forms already mentioned. Manga, the Royal Sister of Cikusi, was as we have seen, thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*' but also with the formula '*Zikomo mntwana wenkosi*' (thanks, child of the Paramount). Among the central Ngoni there were two expressions of thanks which were probably a relic of *hlonipa* vocabulary since they were used only by the leading women. The customary form of thanking, and of taking leave after a conversation or after getting a reply to a question, was '*Zikomo*' with the clan name and honorific prefix added. The royal women in this area, when making the response to this form of thanking, always replied '*Zaithwa*' with the clan name, and they thanked each other by '*Zimata*' with the clan name instead of '*Zikomo*'. When I observed this and used it myself, they nudged each other and said 'She also is one of us.'

644

We have discussed so far the outward signs of respect shown to the royal women, and the visible marks of distinction in their clothes and the number of their attendants. We shall now examine the way in which the authority of the royal women was exercised. This will give some indication of their relationship to the political organization of the kingdoms, in so far as they had certain responsibilities to the people as a whole, and to their husbands and sons within the royal village where they lived. At the royal village the Queen Mother and her co-widows shared with the wives of the two leading houses to the right and left of the *indlunkulu*, the responsibility for preparing and serving food and beer for the Paramount and those whom he called to eat with him. The text by NyaNsangu[1] describes the etiquette of beer drinking in one of the chiefdoms in the northern kingdom, of sending food to the chief when he ate in the cattle kraal, and of assembling the wives in order of precedence according to their houses to take their food. The formality of this etiquette was characteristic of Ngoni eating and drinking, and it was maintained by the organization and forethought of the royal women, the big wives and mothers of the Paramount, who planned the work of their own households and supervised that of the lesser wives who were attached to the two main houses.

[264]

[1] The procedure described in the text applied equally to the Paramount's village and to the villages of ruling chiefs. The Ngoni in that area used the term '*inkosi*' for chief as well as for Paramount.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

198 [223] [233] [533]

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

241 476

The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

476 342 [461] [535]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 769 764 In the central kingdom there were two instances of a modern adaptation of the ancestor cult, both of which were evidence of its close links with the aristocratic tradition; one related to a *mahumusana* of a Swazi clan, the other to the royal clan. One of the first things which caught the eye of a visitor to the village of Mcakhatha was a large circular brick and cement tomb with a wooden cross on the top, in the middle of the village by the main kraal and within sight of the ruling chief's hut. It was the tomb of Njolomole Nzunga I, son of Golozela Nzunga who gave the cattle for NaMlangeni's *lobola*, and father of the ruling Chief Njolomole Nzunga II. The idea of this memorial originated with Lopati Nzunga, younger brother of Njolomole I and head of the *gogo* section of the village, and he had organized its erection. The bricks and cement were given by Europeans in the neighbourhood, and three beasts were killed for meat for those who carried the materials. The money to pay for the bricklayers' wages was raised by the sale of another beast. The name on the wooden cross was cut by the Chief's brother-in-law who was a carpenter, and Lopati said that the cross was for writing the name on and had no Christian significance. The tomb was declared 'open' to the public in the presence of a large number of people. A beast was presented to the Paramount Chief, and another beast was killed and cooked for a feast in the village. Beer was brewed in the huts of the two leading widows who had been in the big house and second house of Njolomole I.

This tomb was a memorial and not a grave, for Njolomole I had been buried in Ngoni fashion on the edge of the kraal, the fence of which was enlarged to take in the grave. It was regarded as a central point in the village. Ngoni visitors saluted it as they went by with the right arm upraised in Ngoni fashion, and war-dances and *ngoma* dances took place beside it. The idea of a brick tomb with a cross on top was of course a modern concept taken from European cemeteries in Nyasaland which Lopati had seen. It cost six cattle to put it up and 'open' it, and these cattle were taken from the herds of the big house of Njolomole I. [576 201]

In the chapter on the Paramount (Part II, Chapter II) it was pointed out that in the central kingdom the Paramount Gomani I was shot as a result of the 'war with the English' when he refused to walk to Zomba for his trial. On the Zomba road near the turning to the mission station of Dombole was a track leading into some woods. In an open clearing was a brick and cement tomb to Gomani I, subscribed to by the central Ngoni (including those living in the towns of Blantyre and Zomba). A memorial fund called 'The late Gomani Memorial Fund' was opened in 1926, and three years later those who had organized the fund formed the Angoni Highlands Association, mainly of Ngoni working in Blantyre and Zomba and wishing to maintain their links with their home villages. In discussing the origin of this fund for the memorial informants pointed out that they were aware that Gomani I, unlike his father and grand-

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 territory, its amalgamation with North-Western Rhodesia, and the transfer of responsibility from the British South Africa Company to the Colonial Office. Statutory instruments issued under these and later Orders have provided legal backing for successive schemes of African Administration.

In 1900 the Fort Jameson Division, containing the country occupied by the Ngoni, Kunda and part of the Cewa tribes, was established as part of the East Luangwa District, stretching from the Nyasaland border to the River Luangwa. The names of these areas were later changed to Fort Jameson District and Eastern Province respectively, and there have been numerous changes in their boundaries during the last fifty years, though none of them have affected the Ngoni. To avoid confusion, we shall use the term District only in its modern usage. In charge of the African population of the District was a Native Commissioner responsible to a Magistrate, posts corresponding roughly to the modern District Commissioner and Provincial Commissioner. The Native Commissioner, with his assistants who were Whites, had a force of Native [202] messengers (otherwise known as boma messengers) attached to his office to convey instructions to the people of the District and to report irregularities to him. The Administrator, head of the Administration, appointed chiefs in charge of tribal districts [622] (smaller than the Administrative Districts already mentioned), and under them were district headmen appointed by the Secretary for Native Affairs. There were also district messengers who lived in [624] their villages, but assisted the Native Commissioner when he toured in their vicinity.

This scheme was regularized by the issue of the Native Commissioners' Regulations of 12 December 1908, made under King's Regulations of the same date. Minor amendments were introduced in 1913 and 1915, and a consolidating Proclamation was issued in 1916. This again was amended slightly in 1919.[13] The substance of the scheme was not altered until the enactment in 1929 of the Native Authorities Ordinance. A more comprehensive Ordinance, with provision for Native Treasuries, replaced this in 1936.[14]

The initiative in setting up, maintaining and modifying the system of administration lay with the Whites, not with the Ngoni, who indeed were only one tribe among many to whom the system applied. Yet the Administration endeavoured to enlist the support of chiefs and others who for the most part were persons of high status in their tribes. As early as 1905, the Administrator wrote of an

[13] Proclamations No. 3 of 1913, 11 of 1915, 8 of 1916, and 6 of 1919.
[14] Ordinances No. 32 of 1929, 9 of 1936.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [361]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy.

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief.

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it.

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Linpusa*. cf. Zulu *i(li)nxusa*, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 140*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of
[645] councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native
[602] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion
[771] Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living, in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
649 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural
[693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
683 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
574 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The
643 man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
484 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
167 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni
567 as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
619 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of
571 the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 867 The moral, which was always repeated at the end as part of the story, was that children were warned not to show unkindness to people but to treat them well so that people would bless them. They were reminded that the older sister showed the qualities of pity, courage and obedience, while the younger sister did not hesitate to display disgust and fear and carelessness. It was the older sister who had her ultimate reward as leading wife of a handsome chief, while the younger sister, as a subsidiary wife, had to take second place.

These two folk-tales were popular among the children, even though they were so different from the animal folk-tales, full of humour and absurdities. The children used to shiver with excitement over the Brass-Rod story, especially the little girls, and the boys sucked in their breath when the wind blew and snapped their fingers for the rattling in the pit. Because the stories were serious and had a didactic purpose, Ngoni fathers approved of them, and encouraged the grandmothers to tell them often in order that the children might remember the moral.

Learning how to behave

203 957 Ngoni villages, like the whole Ngoni kingdom, had an efficient system of communication between individuals and groups, but whereas the kingdom had a network of official [202] messengers continually moving between the capital and the outlying sections, the village 'intercom' depended on the children. At any time of day, from first light till after dark, children were moving about the village from one hut to another, from a hut to the kraal gate, taking messages, summoning people, carrying food, reporting arrivals. The messages and summons were all at the bidding of the adults. 576 957 867 202 When a child was called to take a message, he had to respond immediately wherever he was, and run to hear what he was wanted for. Someone calling a child's name, followed by a long drawn out 'Yo—o—o', punctuated all the hours of daylight in a village. When a child was told to call someone

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

older, on reaching them he had to bend one knee, or sit down, and say in a low but clear voice: 'They are calling you.' If a child was sent to call another child to his father because he had a scolding to administer, the bad child had to listen with head bent down, not saying a word or making a sound until the father had finished all he had to say, whether the accusation was just or not. If the child forgot himself and answered back or made excuses, the onlookers would beat the child for being rude to his father. If when taking a message a child had to pass a line or a group of people, he had always to go in front of them, never behind, bending forward from the waist and murmuring as he went by, 'I am before your eyes.' If a child had to give an adult a food basket or any other object, he had to offer it with both hands and bend slightly over it; and when he received it back he always did so with both hands outstretched and bent head.

Acting as messengers constantly and no child was immune from being called if he or she was in the village, impressed on children from their early years the chief behavioural skills of language and deportment. Taking a message was always a formal occasion, and standards of behaviour in language, posture and gesture were rigidly enforced. We shall see in later chapters how very small children were first taught to thank people for gifts or in response to a greeting, and later to greet people politely themselves. The correct terms in which to address or to refer to relatives formed another stage in learning language skills, and later on came reminders about the use of pronouns and the use of the second person singular and plural of verbs, the first to equals only, the second to all adults, with the third person plural for chiefs and 'great ones'. About the age of five or six a child was told: 'When your mother speaks to a stranger she says "Please (you) sit here". You should speak like this to all people you must honour. Only rude people speak that other way—people who do not know how to thank and how to honour, not like the Ngoni who know these things.'

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

brothers of the dead Paramount who acted as regents. Thus Ngwana was cremated in Ulosi before crossing the Zambesi, and Mputa was cremated in the river Lichiningo in Songea in Tanganyika. This was confirmed by an informant of the Gama clan who were for a time under the central Ngoni Paramount in Songea and later were allied with the northern Ngoni. He said 'We killed Mputa, the *inkosi*, when fighting, and his people burned him because it was their custom in burying to burn.' 184 643 766

An old woman who came from Portuguese territory to see me in the central kingdom said that when Zintambira I died the Portuguese made them bury him 'in a box'. The onlookers in Mcakatha at the time of my interview with the old woman said 'Yes, they were not allowed to burn him.' [648]

The central Ngoni leaders referred often to the ritual significance of the cremation of their Paramount, followed by the washing of the ashes into the stream 'to strengthen the land'. On my first arrival in the central kingdom I was questioned closely by several of the big *izinduna* and *ahumuzana* about the practice of cremation in England. They alleged that, under the influence of the local mission, the Paramount Gomani II had said that he wished to be buried in a coffin with Christian burial rites. They were much concerned about this, because of the effect on the strength and status of his successor and on the country as a whole. 'If he is not burned his children will not be honoured and will only be as *ahumuzana*. Is it right that another tribe, the English, should come and change our customs?' Great relief was expressed when I told them that Christians were cremated in England with full Christian ritual, and also when I told them that the ashes of one of the early Scottish missionaries in northern Ngoniland had been brought back by his widow to lie there. [797] [648]

The following account of the funeral of Cikusi was given to Rattray: 643

¶ When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them 'the clouds have fallen today'. They do this because they fear, 'if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death'. Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head until it all glitters, and then take the 766 [203] [301]

[p. 88]

CHAPTER IV

COURTS AND OFFICIALS

121 177 671 THE Ngoni claimed that when they established their kingdoms in Nyasaland they introduced a new idea of law, a different system of courts, and a different procedure for conducting cases in those courts, from those found among the local peoples. Within their kingdoms they imposed on all their subjects these ideas, courts and legal procedure as part of their government, applied to the conquerors and the conquered alike. We shall consider in this chapter only those aspects of the courts and the legal system which were related to the political structure. The categories of crime, the degree of punishment, the sanctions for enforcement of the law, and the effect of the judicial procedure on the balance of equilibrium in the community, all belong to a specialized study and are not included here.

THE NGONI CONCEPT OF LAW

692 643 671 We begin with two texts, the first from the northern kingdom by Cibambo, the second by Ishmael Mwale the Treasurer of the Paramount in the central kingdom.

¶ (1) The Ngoni seem to have been born with a gift for leadership or rule. Though they were a wandering tribe, yet there was one Paramount from whom proceeded the laws for the good government of the people. All the lesser chiefs and headmen received from him the leadership of the people. [203] Though they had no way of writing to each other, they kept their unity by messengers passing between them. The Paramount had power to call gatherings from time to time, in which they talked of the affairs of the country. In these gatherings the old men and the men of repute who had a point to make were heard in criticism and made suggestions for the building up of the realm. By this means the Paramount and his counsellors learned of and understood the thoughts of their people. It was in such large gatherings that the laws of the country were delivered to the people, so that they might hold fast to them and not be punished unreasonably for breaking them in ignorance. After they came back from these gatherings, the headmen and men of standing gathered together their villages to tell the people what had been spoken in the great council of the Paramount, and told them carefully about the laws which had come from the gathering.

173 671 (2) Before the Ngoni came to this country the villages were small and isolated from one another. There was constant pouncing on people to catch them as slaves. It was unsafe to go even a quarter of a mile from one village to another, because a man might be in hiding and pounce out and catch you and take you off to his village as a slave, and there was no redress and no case was heard. Most people never went beyond the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

boundaries of their own village, and they were afraid to travel even in a large party of twenty or thirty. So no one had any wisdom beyond that of his own village and family. When the Ngoni came they had one law for all people and they had courts to hear cases where this law was enforced. There was freedom to travel in the land where the Ngoni ruled, because they had peace within their boundaries. Therefore, we say: this was the kind of peace we had. 173 671

In these two texts we have one major concept of Ngoni law with three chief ways in which it was implemented. The concept was that there was 'one law for all people' and that the knowledge of and enforcement of this law brought internal peace and resulted in good government in the country. There was one source of law as there was one source of political and military authority—the Paramount. As Cibambo points out, the Paramount delegated his authority for carrying out the law to chiefs and headmen and depended on his 'old men and men of repute' to keep him in touch with the thoughts and desires of all his subjects, so that he might adjust the enforcement of the law to bind the people to him. He also called large gatherings of all the chiefs and *alumuzana* and headmen in order that they might hear from him any new laws and regulations and understand them so that they in turn could make them known to their people. In the intervals between the holding of these large gatherings, which took place not more than once or twice a year, messengers passed constantly from the Paramount's village to all the areas of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, reporting to them about decisions taken at the royal village on matters affecting the country as a whole, and taking back reports to the Paramount on what was happening in the outlying districts. 671 643 692 203

I attended two of these annual meetings of the chiefs and *alumuzana* and headmen in the central kingdom. They took place not at the Paramount's village but at a more central spot for the whole territory. The people were drawn up in a square formation, with the Paramount at one end supported by his 'mouthpiece' (*mlomo wenkosi*), who always spoke for him, with the six Subordinate Native Authority chiefs beside him, and the councillors (*izinduna*) messengers and other officials of his court and of the S.N.A. courts arranged in order of precedence, facing the crowd as they did during court sessions. On the three sides of the square in the front ranks were the *alumuzana* and the headmen of their villages, sitting in territorial groups, and behind each headman were the *madoda* or senior men of the village, and behind them again the *amajaha* or young men. I watched this assembly of 3,000 to 4,000 people being arranged, as they arrived, by the *izinduna* of the Paramount's court and the *izinduna* of the six chiefs. They took up their places as though on a military parade, and once placed there was no further movement. The effect was that of a barrack square in the straightness of lines and orderliness of behaviour. After all was in order the Paramount 631 643 692 645

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

be used exclusively for either group, and in fact there was considerable overlapping between them. 622 631 645

We begin with the text by Cibambo which emphasizes the hierarchy of office-bearers in the northern kingdom in pre-European days and illustrates the correlation between the courts and the political administration.

¶ The former government of the Ngoni was based on the following:

(1) Above all was the one called *Inkosi* or *UBaba*, because they thought of him as the father of the country, the head.

(2) After him came the *izinduna*. Sometimes these were two or perhaps four. These were very highly honoured and the Paramount feared them greatly: he called them *Bobaba* and their words had great weight with him. They were the ones who gave advice to the Paramount and if any grave matter arose he called them to hear what they thought. The Paramount in his village had also his old men who helped him with everything small that did not need to go to the *izinduna*. If there was word that the Paramount was meeting with the *izinduna* he first of all met with the old men and asked for advice to place before the *izinduna*. And these old men had the right to speak when the Paramount took counsel with the *izinduna*.

(3) After the *izinduna* came the *amakosana*, or lesser chiefs. These were perhaps the younger brothers of the ruling Paramount, and had their districts under him. They also had their *izinduna* and were responsible for their own districts. When the Paramount met with the *izinduna*, the *amakosana* were also there if it was considered fitting.

(4) Then there were the *alumuzana*. These were over villages or smaller districts. Their villages were called *amahanda* (heads) and they had power in their small districts to carry out the laws and they looked to the *izinduna* for instructions.

(5) Lastly the old men (*madoda*) who wore the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) but not all of them; only those who had good sense and understood the ways of the tribe. [888]

All these five divisions had their share in the government of the country. If there was a great court of justice, all these were to be found at it, and took part in the discussions. If fresh matter arose, or new laws, these delivered them to their villages. Also there were men called *amanxusa*, messengers. These were men chosen to run with messages from the Paramount to the *izinduna* or *amakosana*, to go with and return with news. Almost every village or little district had its chosen messengers. All the types (2), (3) and (4) had their messengers. When anything happened, the messenger in the village of the Paramount made a general proclamation and called the *amanxusa* together. When the *amanxusa* had heard the message they scattered throughout all the country. So in the districts and by this way news travelled very quickly. [203]

In the central kingdom one of the big *izinduna* explained the change in their system which occurred after crossing the Zambesi: 178 622 631

¶ When the Ngoni were coming from the south they chose lesser chiefs and *izinduna* from the *amakosana*, who were the Paramount's brothers, 645

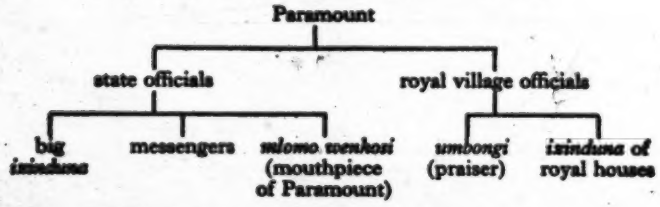
 184

Ngoni territorial office-bearers. 622

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Paramount	Paramount
chiefs (*amahosana*)	*alumuzana* (chiefs)
other *amahosana* and *alumuzana* (no courts)	other *alumuzana* and *amahosana* (no courts)
village headmen	village headmen

631
643
645

Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *izinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only recited the praise-songs at ceremonies in the royal village. 643 645

The big *izinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *izinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below his. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *alumuzana* and *amahosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned. [203] 885

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the 692

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 867 The moral, which was always repeated at the end as part of the story, was that children were warned not to show unkindness to people but to treat them well so that people would bless them. They were reminded that the older sister showed the qualities of pity, courage and obedience, while the younger sister did not hesitate to display disgust and fear and carelessness. It was the older sister who had her ultimate reward as leading wife of a handsome chief, while the younger sister, as a subsidiary wife, had to take second place.

These two folk-tales were popular among the children, even though they were so different from the animal folk-tales, full of humour and absurdities. The children used to shiver with excitement over the Brass-Rod story, especially the little girls, and the boys sucked in their breath when the wind blew and snapped their fingers for the rattling in the pit. Because the stories were serious and had a didactic purpose, Ngoni fathers approved of them, and encouraged the grandmothers to tell them often in order that the children might remember the moral.

Learning how to behave

● 203 857 Ngoni villages, like the whole Ngoni kingdom, had an efficient system of communication between individuals and groups, but whereas the kingdom had a network of official [202] messengers continually moving between the capital and the outlying sections, the village 'intercom' depended on the children. At any time of day, from first light till after dark, children were moving about the village from one hut to another, from a hut to the kraal gate, taking messages, summoning people, carrying food, reporting arrivals. The messages and summons were all at the bidding of the adults. 576 When a child was called to take a message, he had to respond 857 immediately wherever he was, and run to hear what he was 867 wanted for. Someone calling a child's name, followed by a 202 long drawn out 'Yo—o—o', punctuated all the hours of daylight in a village. When a child was told to call someone

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

344
331

PLATE X. Thatching a school roof. The county chief has told men from nearby villages to do this work.

205
493
516

PLATE XI. A mobile post office halted near a county court.

[Facing p. 168]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Council mentioned above spent some tweny years of his life in Johannesburg. Fort Jameson itself is not a sufficiently big town for this process to take place within it, and yet it is only in Fort Jameson or on the tobacco farms that a man can live with a leg in both camps, going home to the village at the week-ends and probably keeping his wife in the village during the wet season to tend her crop. 369 554

On the other hand, there is some rivalry between the traditional leaders and the comparatively prosperous townspeople. The well-clad and well-housed Ngoni of the township are sometimes described scornfully by village people as 'merely White'. There is a feeling that the leading African traders are trying to monopolize the economic opportunities in the villages. Recently the same prominent Ngoni businessman proposed that he should take over the delivery of mail to the Native Authorities, which he claimed he would be able to do more efficiently with a car than can the present postman on a bicycle. The Paramount Chief did not answer this proposal but wrote instead to the Administration to complain against the danger of one man being allowed to earn so much more than anyone else while there were so many people who needed money. At the same time, men whose lives are led principally in the towns complain that in the villages there is 'nothing but jungle', and that the chiefs are old-fashioned and obstructive. 369 578 177 [205 493]

The Administration

The relationship between the Provincial Administration and the Ngoni is characteristically one of superordination and subordination. The District Officer can send for any Ngoni, but not even the Paramount Chief can send for the District Officer. This characteristic arises from two sources, from the premiss which we find held all over Southern Africa, that any White is superior to any Black, and from the supervisory role allotted to the Administration in the Native Authority scheme. These two facets of the same relationship are not always seen separately by the Ngoni, and in many contexts their behaviour towards the Administration is governed entirely by the fact that the District Officer and those above him are all White. Official reports by the Administration during the reign of Mpezeni II repeatedly remarked on the Paramount Chief's distrust of Whites, and this attitude still persists. Any kind of trouble at all, particularly when it is seen as a characteristic of the present times as opposed to the glorious trouble-free past of the days of peace, before the Whites 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native
562 Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws
858 are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one
486 might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly
562 by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to
484 look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives
167 and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko–Missale service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these
205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more
249 than 12 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man
[361] to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 37.

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

805

8	*Ukholo omnsinyane*	Hawks fly and hover
9	*Ukholo omkhulu*	Hawks catch chickens
10	*Isiganyane esincinyane*	Trees begin to flower
11	*Isiganyane esikhulu*	Trees fruiting
12	*Inhlachana*	Trees fruiting
13	*Umgano*	Trees fruiting

The months were more generally grouped in two main [132] seasons: the rains, whose name meant that the earth was 'clothed and decorated with new grass, leaves and flowers'; and the dry season, the time for moving village sites, felling trees and clearing bush for new gardens, castrating oxen. It was the true Ngoni families who knew the names for the months and the relation of months to the seasons. Among these families in every Ngoni village there were men who watched the sun's movements, and noted the hill or tall trees behind which the sun set when it reached its most southerly point. This was for them one of the signals that the rains were near. If the rains did not begin when the sun reached this point, they announced that this year the rains were delayed and the crops would probably suffer. When the *inkaku* bird [825] began to sing, the first man who heard it went to tell his neighbours to repair their hoe handles and begin to clear the fields, for the rains and the planting season was at hand. [824] When a large flat mushroom appeared in the woodland, it too was the herald of rain.

Not only were these months and the seasons they indicated 805 the means of regulating work. They were also the way by ● 211 which the Ngoni reckoned time. They had rods for each month and notches for the days. They took these with them on campaigns, and when returning they produced the rods, and pointing to the notches they said: 'On the sixth day of the seventh month we began fighting against X's village,' or 'We reached that river on the first day of the fifth month.' 211 Ngoni elders were however quick to point out that they were all trained from childhood up to have excellent memories,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the notched sticks were only an *aide-mémoire*, not a necessity. 211

The heavens and the earth

When the Pleiades appeared just before dawn they said the Pleiades were being 'reborn' (the word used for the new moon's appearance and for the initiation of a diviner), and that in this position in the heavens they were heralds of the cold season. They knew the relative positions of Venus as an evening star and a morning star, and watched for the appearance high in the heavens of Jupiter which they knew by its size. Orion they recognized as a man with a spear, a hunter, and the Milky Way as the sands of the sky, since sand was used to denote numbers which cannot be counted. 821

In announcing the death of a great chief by a messenger sent from village to village, the traditional formula was: 'Listen. Do you hear? The heavens have fallen.' Hence when earthquakes were felt, it was believed that some great chief had died, and the earthquake was the trembling when his spirit left the earth for the place of the departed spirits. If it turned out to be no one of their own people, they nevertheless held to the belief that somewhere, unknown to them, a 'great one' had died and his spirit had departed at the time of the earth's trembling. 763 775 823

Eclipses of the sun and moon they also connected with some great event either among their own people or elsewhere, and they used the eclipse year and month to date these events. Their famous crossing of the Zambezi on their northward march, finally and irrevocably cutting off their connexions with the south, was du[illegible] a solar eclipse. In teaching young adults Ngoni history they said: 'When we crossed the Zambezi it became night at noon.' 821 [167]

A lunar eclipse, almost total, occurred when I was in a chief's village, and all the people were called to the kraal and stood watching it. Then the chief's spokesman, his 'mouthpiece', called for silence in the phrase used for a war summons [632]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Adminis- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created,
the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity
as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity
and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[19] were
employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make
arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native
Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of
subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The 692
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as
well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative
legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award [681]
damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish
between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Adminis-
tration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native
Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority
was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni
Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping.
The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction
and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of
messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main
roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production,
for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had
to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries
and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an [647]
assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The
Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the
extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs
their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[19] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapau* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

these need the support and co-operation of the African community. 648
The Administration has consulted Ngoni and other Native Authorities on such matters as agricultural control, the emigration of 645
women to the railway line, provision of better schools, and so on. In 1948 the number of councillor posts was reduced. Instead of employing councillors for general duties, each of the four councillors remaining, now receiving a much higher salary than before, has been given a specific task, the care of roads, the promotion of agriculture, the efficient use of school facilities, and the co-ordination of the work of the Native Authority as a whole. The Administration has attempted to make these four councillors, together with the ten Northern Rhodesian chiefs, into a formal council competent to take decisions without always referring to the people as a whole.

So far this attempt has not been very successful, but the power of the four councillors is certainly greater than that of their more numerous and lower-paid predecessors. The court clerks have been overshadowed by these new men and left behind in these new activities. Literacy is becoming common and clerks are no longer [212]
in demand as secretaries to chiefs. The Native Authority is beginning to employ men whose jobs do not take them to court at all.

The present range of posts whose emoluments are handled by 647
the Native Treasury is shown in Table VIII.

All these posts are filled by the Native Authority in agreement with the Administration. It is easy to show how a large proportion of the employees are connected to the chiefs and senior lieutenants by kinship, but this fact is not as significant as it might appear. The Ngoni possess nowadays what may be called an omni-directional [611]
kinship system in which ties of kinship can be traced as convenient through fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and by any combination of these. It would indeed be surprising if Native Authority employees could not trace genealogical connexion with chiefs and their lieutenants, for so can nearly everyone in Ngoniland. There is no formal selection procedure but a chief may announce at a county meeting that there is a post to be filled and those present may suggest names. Alternatively a chief may discuss the matter with his advisers and then offer the post to the man they decide on. Occasionally a man seeking employment [662]
approaches the Paramount Chief in the hope that there may be a post to be filled. Thus although those who live near the chief, or who make it their business to see him and drink with him frequently stand a greater change of being chosen, choice is not restricted to these people. [see page 152, category 116. —Analyst]

[Text continues on page 153]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East African.

not understand how Europeans could draw such a sharp line 867
and equate ignorance with the absence of a literature and [212]
written traditions. When talking about how they instructed their young people in the traditional knowledge about the natural world and their own national law and history, they pointed out that there were no set periods for this kind of teaching, but that there was a recognition that the young man, before or about the time when he himself became a father, should know what his father knew. We will begin 128
then with some indication of the kind of matters included in this traditional store of knowledge, recognizing that reference can be made only to a small selection from it. We will go on in the second half of the chapter to the other kind of knowledge which was inseparably connected with practical and technical skills.

Ngoni traditional knowledge: the reckoning of time

The Ngoni had a system of reckoning time and a recognized 805
calendar. This consisted of thirteen lunar months in the year, reckoned from the first appearance of each new moon, and beginning with our December as the first month. The names of the months are all related to natural events, and these as the following list shows were in five main groups: when certain wild animals had their young; the time of bitter cold and frosts; when the hawks came to catch chickens; when certain trees fruited; when the new crops were ripe and the former first fruit ceremony took place.

NGONI NAMES FOR MONTHS

1 *Impala*	Antelopes have their young
2 *Inkakani*	Gnu have their young
3 *Inpuzu*	Tasting new crops
4 *Inputi*	Buffaloes have their young
5 *Indlovu*	Elephants have their young
6 *Ikiza elimnyanu*	Beginning of cold weather
7 *Ikiza elikulu*	Great cold weather

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of European control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

175 814 is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few. We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of those providing the information.[6] The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in [195] the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

● 212 175 178 With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin. Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from contemporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grow shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that "the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory". From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

156 182 Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations, as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

REFERENCES

113 "A Durban Man" (Deane, Major George Russel). "Eighteen months with the last of the slave raiders." *Natal Weekend Advertiser*, 6 April–11 May 1929. (Page reference to typescript in Central African Archives.)

6. Read and Wheatcroft have pointed out that informants from Northern Nyasaland assert that their Paramount Chief is the late *Zwangendaba*, while those from Fort Jameson say that their Chief is the late. Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 463, and Wheatcroft, *Outline History*, p. 13.

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the
137 rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

311 In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited
361 their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

361 The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had
351 a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
[343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

621 There were two focal points in each village, reproduced on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
[554] the 'big house' at the head of the kraal, where the leading woman had her home. 18

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to carry it safely when loaded and how to aim carefully. His father, who was a noted preacher, then likened aiming in shooting to aims in life: 'There are many things in the world, and when you see them you will think that you can have them all at once. But you will fail if you have no aim and do not choose what you want to aim at.' 868 224

The 'chase', the main Ngoni form of hunting in a group, took place in the hot dry season, after the grass fires and before the first rains fell. A leading man who wanted to hunt sent messengers to neighbouring villages to announce that a hunt would be held on a certain day in such and such an area. The form of the message was the same as that for mobilization for war. The villagers turned out in companies according to their old military formations; and on the night before the hunt they slept apart from their wives, as when mobilized for a campaign. On reaching the hunting site, the slope of a hill, or the head of a valley, or a shallow depression, the important people were in the centre, the ordinary men around them and the youths on the wing. All could come to the hunt, masters and servants alike. 224 [221]

Etiquette was strict about the kill. The first man who wounded the game with his spear called out his name, the second who inflicted a wound did the same, and so did the man who dealt the final blow. All those three were entitled to some part of the animal according to his share in the killing, and part was set aside for the 'owner' of the hunt. Spears were used in this kind of hunt, and those who had no spears, chiefly the non-Ngoni servants and lesser villagers, used long hunting-knives and knobkerries. No guns were taken on this kind of chase, but dogs accompanied the huntsmen. These dogs were trained for hunting and tracking game, and were lean and fierce but under control by their owners. Accompanying the main body of huntsmen were skilled trackers who knew the area well and could guide the hunt, calling out at intervals one of the Ngoni war-cries: 'Listen. Do you hear me? I say the game is over there.'

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 much opportunity for a man to assess his sweetheart's domestic
584 efficiency and moral character, but he can get information on these
matters from other people who live in her vicinity. When he sees
594 a girl in a distant village where he is staying, he has more leisure to see what she is like and can ask his own hosts about her character. Girls visit in the same way as men, and if a girl is anxious to get a husband and fears she may not find one, she may spend most of her time visiting in different villages hoping to attract a suitable man.
[221] There is more time for visiting and flirting at the end of the dry season when there is little work to do in the gardens, but marriages are contracted throughout the year.[5]

581 Young men say that what they like in a girl is a light skin colour,
a pretty face, and the ability to dance and to copulate well. Some
832 men, however, say that such a girl might be all right to run after, but for marriage one would also need to know that she could cook porridge. Women say they like a man who is well dressed, who has a good job working for a European, and who has a parting in his hair. Women sometimes wear medicines which are believed to attract men, and men who have no good clothes may borrow the clothes of others in order to attract women.

3. Sexual partners

593 The relationship between a man and his wife, at least for the
first years of their marriage, is spoken of principally in sexual terms,
581 and the sexual activities of the couple are more closely defined by the marriage bond than are their residence and their economic life. Informants say that the reason for the existence of marriage is either 'the work in the house', a euphemism for copulation, or else 'clothes', that is, so that a woman may have someone to buy clothes for her. It is, however, much easier to improvise alternative solutions to the problem of clothing than it is to find alternative means of sexual satisfaction without coming into conflict with law and morality. Furthermore, while we have seen in the old days that the main emphasis was on the fertility of the woman, this has now shifted, and it is her skill in copulation rather than her success in childbearing
[842] that is emphasized. Fertility is still valued, but does not appear to form so important a theme in ceremonial, songs, and gossip as among other societies where the principle of unilinear descent has not broken down, and where, therefore, fertility either of a man's wife or of his sister, is a vital necessity for the maintenance of local structure.

593 The husband-wife relationship is one in which the man is apparently superordinate to his wife, but we shall see that in practice this superordination is not as clear-cut as might at first appear. It is furthermore a relationship in which there are certain prescribed mutual obligations, so that if these obligations are neglected, it is

[5] Cf. Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, p. 68.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man has to go farther and farther from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of regenerated land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1898 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested areas.

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county chief, and village headman. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headman and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The first people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Rattray, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the new one is gradual, as, unless the distance between the sites is too great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Rattray, *Folk-Lore Stories*, pp. 109–11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 203–5, gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 widows continue to cultivate the gardens they had before his death. When a man opens up a new garden he may hand over his nearly exhausted old garden to some relative who does not wish to go to the labour of clearing new ground himself. Rights in land cannot be sold, but only given away, and no presents are given to the donor by the recipient of a garden or garden site. They can only be sustained by continued residence in the locality, either by the owner of the rights himself or by his relatives. There are very few court cases concerned with rights in land, and in the courts the only attempt I saw in which a man tried to enforce what he thought to be his rights was met by the statement from the bench that no one had any rights in land, for did not all land belong to the chief?

Maize is planted at the beginning of the rains, and the garden is 241 usually weeded twice over before the maize has grown high enough to surmount the weeds. When the rains end, the stalks are felled and put into large stooks to dry. The cobs are then taken off the stalks and carried back to the village to be stored. Finger millet is grown in ash-fertilized patches scattered through the main garden, and in between the maize ground-nuts, pumpkins, and other crops are grown. Sorghum, bulrush millet, and rice are also grown. Most of the work in the garden is carried on in the rainy season, and after the harvest the garden is more or less deserted until the next season, although a certain amount of new land may be cleared as a garden extension.

Dwellings outside the Village

There are two types of settlement outside the recognized villages 361 that require mention. These are permanently occupied settlements consisting of two or three huts which I shall refer to as hamlets and [578] temporarily occupied huts in the gardens. The hamlets usually arise as a result of quarrels within a village that are resolved by the breaking away of one of the parties to the quarrel. The activities of the Agricul- [648] tural Department have also led to the formation of hamlets of similar size, both of hamlets of persons accepting agricultural control whose co-villagers have all moved off, and the other way about. These hamlets are all attached to proper villages for registration purposes, and participate in many of the collective activities of the villages near by.

221 The damage done to crops in the latter part of the rainy season 361 necessitates the keeping of a continuous watch, particularly at gar- [241] dens that are on the edge of a cultivated area, in order to drive off the monkeys by day and the wild pigs by night. Shelters are erected on

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Shelters are erected on

the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may stay behind to look after the cattle. Streams are in spate at this time of year, and some men build garden byres to which they move their cattle to avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the gardens is important from the point of view of inter-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so that they are adjacent to those of kindred from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in *her* dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organizing public works, and that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as reported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and may be up to 20 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead. Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle

[1] Elmslie, p. 37.

/4 cont'd/

701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
391 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
464 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital
[581] investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

161 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson
621 Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[118] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

342 /5 cont'd/ With both bamboo and Pole huts, The
[962] construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and
[353] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September,
[921] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is co-operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and
[476] help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer,
[465] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

343 Storehouses are built of bamboo or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household
[692] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in
[241] separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

/10 cont'd/

524 after moving other beans out of a hole. A boys' game played in the wet season is played with egg-shaped pieces of mud, with a small flange at one end. These pieces are thrown down on to the water, and ought to make an explosive noise.

/11/ VII

243 Maize, the main crop, is planted with the first steady rains in [221] November, and is harvested soon after the end of the rains in April or May. Under the influence of the Agricultural Department of the [243] Government, planting in small ridges following the contour is increasingly practised, but prior to the introduction of this and other new agricultural methods in the 1930s, planting was carried out in mounds about three feet in diameter and eighteen inches high. Finger millet is grown on patches of soil on which branches and garden 241 trash have been burnt. However, the citemene system, as known in other parts of the country, in which trees are felled over a wide area and burnt to fertilise a small area in the middle, is not practised as a principal method here. Finger millet is the only crop to be planted solely in ash fertilised patches, while the rest of the cleared ground may be planted with beans and nuts, and in the following season, with maize. Gardens last from two up to twenty or more years, depending on the type of soil, and the selection of a garden site is determined to some extent by the nature of the soil and of the vegetation growing on it.

244 In seepage areas, dry season gardens can be cultivated, and it is in such gardens, fenced in to keep out straying animals, that vegetables are grown for sale to Europeans and in the villages. These sites are also used for early planted maize, which is harvested in January and eaten in the form of green mealies. In the villages [249] themselves, small plots of tobacco and castor oil are grown on old hut sites, while abandoned village sites are used as subsidiary gardens for maize and other crops. Mango, banana, and pawpaw trees are 245 found in villages and on the sites of abandoned villages.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VIII. The clerk of a Native Court, with one of the court assessors, sits in the chief's village issuing a permit for selling beer to a man who has come on behalf of his sister.

[222]

PLATE IX. A Native Authority councillor, sitting on the verandah of the Native Court in his county, issues passes to men wishing to collect caterpillars. There are no edible caterpillars in Ngoniland, and Ngoni who wish to collect them provide themselves with passes to show to the Cewa chiefs in whose counties caterpillars are found.

[Facing p. 153]

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [831] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [273] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [251] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [461] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by them- 224 selves and sell the meat.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession, the Ngoni have learned to plant also reserve gardens of kasava, for the locusts and drought can scarcely afect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

These vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white poridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the natives, to get at them, will hew down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stretching themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first clouds appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertiliser. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

224 A falling spear trap for an elephant is called "*mchera*." It is set in the path where elephants pass. They take the weighted spear, and tie it up above, the string for setting it off is on the ground. An elephant, when it passes, will set off the string, and the spear comes down and falls on the spine of the elephant. Men hunt also with a game net; they stretch the net, and take staves and drive them in at the ends and the middle [to keep the net up]. People remain behind and hunt out the game, and when a buck starts up, it goes into the net. Birds 223 are hunted with a little net made tied to two bamboos, which are held in the hands, and (the person hunting) stands still. Others go and drive the birds, and if they go into the net, the man who is holding it swirls it round and kills the birds by squeezing them to his breast, lest they cry out, and meanwhile gives a whistle, and the beaters stand. The kinds of birds caught by a net are *Mpeta*, *Atii* [136] *Madzanjo*, *Mapwiti*, *Kuzikuzi*. *Nkwali* (partridge), *Nkanga* (guinea-fowl), *Mang'ani* (quail), *Njiwa* (pigeon) are hunted with knobkerries; when they fly up, they throw. Birds are also hunted with blunt-headed arrows, and others caught in traps. In the dry season, when there is only a very little water left, all the thirsty birds go to drink water, and always go to the same place. When a person sees they frequent this place, he begins to set about trapping them with birdlime. He rubs it on a stick, and sticks the stick in the water, and when the birds come to drink water, they get stuck by their feet (legs), and also feathers. Mice are also hunted. 224 The *Mende*, and the *Nchenzi* (rat), and the *Sakwi*, are all hunted with "*goba*" traps, which are set on the run. Some go and hunt them out, one stays behind; when a mouse would run away, it goes into the goba trap, and the man squeezes it to death, and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to recover under bush fallow. The long-term carrying capacity of the land before the conquest cannot have been much greater than its present average value of 25 persons to the square mile.[165] Thus it is certain that in pre-conquest times the Ngoni were settled at a density even more in excess of the critical value than it is now, despite alienation. There cannot have been much cultivable land in reserve and the State was exhausting the wealth of its own soil as well as drawing on the resources of its neighbours. Thus even if the large villages had not been burnt, the same number of people could not for long have continued to live in them practising subsistence agriculture. A reduction in the density of population necessarily involved under this economy a reduction in the size of villages, for Ngoni do not like to live more than an hour's walk from their gardens. As it was, the villages were burnt, many Ngoni of Cewa origin left Ngoniland, and much of the more densely settled land, carrying up to 140 persons to the square mile, was alienated to Europeans within six years of the war.[166] The arrangement of persons over the land and the activities they carried on were both dramatically altered by the European conquest. It is, therefore, not surprising that the old society was so drastically changed at the same time. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as we shall see, the forms of grouping of the past have influenced the forms of the new society.

In brief, the old political system was a system of segments, the new one is a system of villages and counties. The county segment links the two systems, but there is no function in the new order for segments embracing several counties or for those that embrace only part of a county. Within the village, the segmentary processes still go on, but at this level of organization we are dealing with kinship rather than politics. When a segment grows beyond the bounds of a single village, it begins to fade away, and we are left with a network of ties which link villages with one another but which do not define mutually exclusive groups as existed in pre-conquest times. The uncertainty about how counties should be divided internally is an indication of the lack of function of these intermediate segments. For some purposes, such as the organization of royal hunts, a county is divided into a number of rural districts. These are geographically defined areas, and it is sometimes possible to say that such-and-such a man, usually a senior lieutenant of the county segment, is the most important person in such-and-such a rural area. However, the recognizable rural districts in a county do not

[165] Allan, *Land Usage*, pp. 16-17.
[166] *N.R.G.G.*, II, 2 (15 March 1904), p. 34.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

independent group of Ngoni. Chibambo mentions how the use of this salutation was discontinued when the head of an erstwhile independent group rejoined his parent group.[16] In recent times people have indicated their disapproval of the Paramount Chief's actions by discontinuing this salutation temporarily.

Despite the security of tenure provided by Administrative recognition, a chief still needs the support of his people. There is an Ngoni maxim, 'chieftainship is people',[16] and commoners are well aware that it is because they support their chief that he has high status. The simplest and most effective sanction that commoners can employ against their chief is to leave him. Movement from one county to another, from one tribe to another, and from the county to the town and back again is crucial in the working of modern Ngoni society. Not all these movements take place as the result of the unpopularity of chiefs, but this is one factor among many. Chibambo records an early example of people moving to segment 8 from the residue of segment 1 in order to share the hospitality of a newly appointed chief, but he goes on to say 'afterwards they found it wise to return to their proper division [segment]'.[17] In more recent times there are several examples, particularly among villages which entered Ngoniland after 1898 and who therefore largely lack segmental affiliation, of villages and clusters that have changed from one county to another for political reasons. More significant at the present time are the numbers of ambitious people who emigrate to the towns because, among other things, they cannot find advancement in the political hierarchy. The most striking instance of this is in the family of the late Mpezeni II. He had six sons who survived him. One is now Paramount Chief, and one is still a boy. The other four, including the chief's deputy, are town-dwellers in other parts of Africa.

5. *Royal hunts*

The royal hunt is the only occasion on which a county, or more usually a rural district or part of a county, functions as an economic unit. Even then the economic element in the enterprise is not very marked. The chief announces, through his messengers, that on such-and-such a day he will hold a royal hunt and that the men of such-and-such villages are to meet in a certain place. The procedure followed on the hunt is exactly the same as on an ordinary hunt, with the chief or someone nominated by him in tactical command, though the number of hunters is greater than on a hunt

[16] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 56.
[17] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 55.
[18] *Ufumu ni ababu.*

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

organised by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt; but occasionally if the field is very poor a chief will summon absentees in his court.

These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as effectively as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but he can call out his men hunting.[10] Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African bureaucracies*

Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

[10] See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 215, for Ngoni hunting methods.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to its use at the *ncwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the former belief in the close connection between the health and strength of the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

The *ncwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibumbo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *ncwala*:

« Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *umtindo*, *lipalo*, *ncwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said 'ncwala is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins everyone sings the songs of *ncwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the Paramount of the whole country. A description of *ncwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Ja.:kwi* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by *nyamta*. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *ipamwe*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *ncwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *ncwala pa'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *ncwala ungumdubulire*, '*ncwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Ekangeni, the village of Nkewaye. They took crops which had been planted in December, *ingwala*, and added the first *ipamwe* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Ekangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.' 914

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous sexpeions from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Ciwere had gone. All the people shouted "Ciwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."' [224] [172]

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Chambo, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. 914 871

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred to historical events which were illustrated in songs or recorded in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni Christian leaders went further than this. They used the 173 597 791 177 175 797

177 natural translation for Ngoni young men to become butchers
233 and dairymen, if they could apprentice themselves to a rela-
234 tive, or if their father could put up the necessary capital outlay for starting independently. This conversion of knowledge and traditional skill into a channel offering higher rewards in cash incomes found the young Ngoni adult well prepared to earn his living.

Hunting

224 There was an aura of manhood and of distinction about all forms of hunting among the Ngoni. They did it because they enjoyed it, and not seriously to augment their family's food supply. There were two main corporate forms of hunting: the chase, when hare and deer were hunted with dogs; and killing lions and leopards. The first was the pursuit of a Ngoni gentleman which no one wanted to miss during the right season; and the second was the act of warriors defending themselves and their cattle and villages from marauders.

Ngoni boys in their herding days acquired some of the
169 skills needed later for hunting with the men. They made
224 traps to catch birds from the hair of cows tails or smeared bird lime on branches. They developed great adroitness at hitting birds on the wing with knobkerries. In these pursuits, which for them were half fun, half to get bits of extra food, they were training their eye, learning to observe the habits of birds and small animals, learning to track them, and developing that combination of patience, prompt action and accuracy of aim essential to successful hunting.

Some of the Ngoni men liked to go off hunting on their own, usually those who had a gun. Fathers used to take their sons on such hunting trips, and use the opportunity to teach them how to track successfully, how to put up with hunger and thirst on long marches, how to load and fire a gun. One young man described how his father used to point out to him on such trips the birds and butterflies in the bush. On one trip his father taught him to use his muzzle-loading gun, how

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to carry it safely when loaded and how to aim carefully. His father, who was a noted preacher, then likened aiming in shooting to aims in life: 'There are many things in the world, and when you see them you will think that you can have them all at once. But you will fail if you have no aim and do not choose what you want to aim at.' 868 224

The 'chase', the main Ngoni form of hunting in a group, took place in the hot dry season, after the grass fires and before the first rains fell. A leading man who wanted to hunt sent messengers to neighbouring villages to announce that a hunt would be held on a certain day in such and such an area. The form of the message was the same as that for mobilization for war. The villagers turned out in companies according to their old military formations; and on the night before the hunt they slept apart from their wives, as when mobilized for a campaign. On reaching the hunting site, the slope of a hill, or the head of a valley, or a shallow depression, the important people were in the centre, the ordinary men around them and the youths on the wing. All could come to the hunt, masters and servants alike. 224 (221)

Etiquette was strict about the kill. The first man who wounded the game with his spear called out his name, the second who inflicted a wound did the same, and so did the man who dealt the final blow. All those three were entitled to some part of the animal according to his share in the killing, and part was set aside for the 'owner' of the hunt. Spears were used in this kind of hunt, and those who had no spears, chiefly the non-Ngoni servants and lesser villagers, used long hunting-knives and knobkerries. No guns were taken on this kind of chase, but dogs accompanied the huntsmen. These dogs were trained for hunting and tracking game, and were lean and fierce but under control by their owners. Accompanying the main body of huntsmen were skilled trackers who knew the area well and could guide the hunt, calling out at intervals one of the Ngoni war-cries: 'Listen. Do you hear me? I say the game is over there.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

224 After the hunt the tally of kills was reckoned up, the game was carried home by the young men, and on the return to [262] the villages the meat was cooked and eaten by the men at the kraal gate. This was the occasion for going over all [521] the episodes of the chase, the skill of So-and-so, the fine organizing of the hunt by its 'owner'. No one mentioned the misses, no one's feelings were hurt, and there was a warm feeling of united and contented sharing in a good day's sport.

Lion-hunting was organized differently. Only former warriors and well-known huntsmen were called, and they sometimes took their sons with them as carriers. Guns as well as spears were taken, though the Ngoni liked to say, and it was often true, that they killed lions with spears only. Tracking a lion was dangerous and difficult, and when it was located in a patch of tall grass or reeds, the huntsmen made a circle round it, ready to attack when it broke cover. As in the chase, the one who stabbed the lion first, second and finally was noted. The dead lion was hoisted on poles slung from the shoulders of young men, and carried to the village where the hunt was organized. Here the party was welcomed and given food, the heroes were acclaimed, and the headman and seniors led the way to the village of the clan head, who called his men together to rejoice. When the augmented party reached the chief's or Paramount's village, [535] where all lions had to be taken, a war-dance took place in [555] the kraal, as of warriors returning from a campaign. The killer of the lion came out in front of the rest and danced his individual war-dance; he was hailed as a hero and new [273] epithets were added to his praise names. The whole party [574] was given beer, a beast was killed for a meat feast, and then the party thanked the Paramount in traditional fashion and went home.

It was in lion-hunting that young adults who were taken along felt the spice of danger, the thrill of success, and witnessed the pride of recognition for the successful killer by the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 241 343 241 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 362 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 373 462 [554] [584] [437]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XI

HUNTING

224 1. When a man wishes to call up a hunting party, he tells the young men of his village, saying, "Go and summon the hunt, and tell the people that it goes in such and such a direction, and it is there we shall assemble." Then the young men get their knobkerries and set out; they are knocking them together, and singing, "Roast, roast, roast," and when they come to a village, the headman comes out and answers, "Roast," and says, "Whose is it?" (the hunt). And they say, "It is so and so's, and goes in such and such a direction, and it is there we shall meet." Next morning, at dawn, they begin to assemble, their dogs are in the leash, and they bring their spears and knobkerries, and make some little child go in front, saying, "Cross your arms over your shoulders." And when they come to where the hunt will start from, they say, "Lie down there, and do not move about." Then every one who comes along takes a branch and piles it upon the child. And that is so that the game may not go and be shy. Then the master of the hunt begins to instruct the hunters, saying, "Look here, some of you have got your dogs; look well at their marks." And then he begins to arrange the hunt, saying, "Let so and so's wing go there, and so and so's there, I myself take the centre." And they start off, advancing all along the line. If a buck start up, and one spear it, and another spear it a second time, he (the second one) has a share in it too. The one who first throws, should he only wound the animal ever so slightly, and his companion then kill it out-

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

right, the animal is the property of him who first [drew blood].

II. Should it be a buck about which there is a dispute, one saying, "My dog was first," another, "My dog was first," then they say, "Come, let us dig up medicine." And they take the medicine, one his lot, the other his, and chew a bit between the teeth, and one blows it out over his dog, saying, "You dog, if it were not you (who caught the buck), you must die; if it were you, you must vomit." And the other man says the same (to his dog), and they see the dog of one of them is dying. Should it chance that two men throw together, and one says, "It was I who began," they say, "Do not let us be always arguing about this; come, let us go to the medicine man." They do not drink (the poison) themselves, but their dogs drink. And when they have finished hunting they say, "Let us be getting back now." All the game they have killed they pile up together, and the master of the hunt begins to "twist off" the legs that are his share. If they see that there is a great quantity of meat, they cut it in strips, and make a drying rack and light a fire (under it), that the meat may dry. When dry, it is taken off the rack and tied into bundles.

III. One way of hunting is with many men and dogs, and another of the single hunter. Others, again, dig game pits, and make long fences leading up to them, leaving gaps here and there where the pits are. Another way of hunting is by cutting off a stretch of bush. A man separates his lot of jungle, [by clearing a bare strip all round it] and when all the bush is burned, it alone remains. The game run away from the bare place and enter the bush patch; when the rains are just about to begin to fall, he goes and sets fire to the cut off bush patch. When the game run for the open, people kill them.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

224 A falling spear trap for an elephant is called "*mchera*." It is set in the path where elephants pass. They take the weighted spear, and tie it up above, the string for setting it off is on the ground. An elephant, when it passes, will set off the string, and the spear comes down and falls on the spine of the elephant. Men hunt also with a game net; they stretch the net, and take staves and drive them in at the ends and the middle [to keep the net up]. People remain behind and hunt out the game, and when a buck starts up, it goes into the net. Birds
223 are hunted with a little net made tied to two bamboos, which are held in the hands, and (the person hunting) stands still. Others go and drive the birds, and if they go into the net, the man who is holding it swirls it round and kills the birds by squeezing them to his breast, lest they cry out, and meanwhile gives a whistle, and the beaters stand. The kinds of birds caught by a net are *Mpeta*, *Atii*
[136] *Madzanjo*, *Mapwiti*, *Kurikuzi*. *Nkwali* (partridge), *Nkanga* (guinea-fowl), *Mang'ani* (quail), *Njiwa* (pigeon) are hunted with knobkerries; when they fly up, they throw. Birds are also hunted with blunt-headed arrows, and others caught in traps. In the dry season, when there is only a very little water left, all the thirsty birds go to drink water, and always go to the same place. When a person sees they frequent this place, he begins to set about trapping them with birdlime. He rubs it on a stick, and sticks the stick in the water, and when the birds come to drink water, they get stuck by their feet (legs), and also feathers. Mice are also hunted.
224 The *Mende*, and the *Nchewzi* (rat), and the *Sakwi*, are all hunted with "gobe" traps, which are set on the run. Some go and hunt them out, one stays behind; when a mouse would run away, it goes into the gobe trap, and the man squeezes it to death, and

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

turns it out. They also trap them with a falling stone trap, and a spring trap, and others they dig for and smoke out. Mice dig out a hole, and a little farther on make a little chamber, where their nest is; farther on still is their escape exit, with just a thin layer of earth between them and the surface, so that when any one starts digging they can just burst out there. Other mice make a nest in the grass. The *Siswiri* mouse people do not eat; it cannot jump a path; if it tries to, it dies.

XII

THE WITCH-FINDER

I. When a person has died, the chief mourner goes off to seek the witch-finder. When he finds him he says, "At my home something awful has happened, and I am saying that perhaps you can follow up the thing that has killed the person." The witch-finder comes very late in the evening. When he comes, the chief mourner gives him children to lead him to the grave. When they come to the grave there, he asks them, saying, "Which way did they come with the body?" And they say they came there. And he puts medicine where they came, and asks again, saying, "Well, and his head, which direction did they lay it?" And they tell him, "His head was in this direction." He again with medicine guards the place. Then the witch-finder makes fire, and kindles it into flame, and pours medicine on it; and he does so lest people see the fire. And then they see the human flesh-eaters

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, ●224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. [231] Pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neighbours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 342 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 323 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2] 285

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Ngonga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 619 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 1-3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mahomanyane*, pl. *ehomanyane*. [4] *Nduna*, pl. *ndunu*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and assessors are nominated by the chiefs on the advice of their lieutenants and some of them are in fact lieutenants or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is literate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lieutenants or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying sixpence for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the county and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [693]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organized system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional governors. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of their people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 431 [278] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend these to people they can trust. All the chiefs organize their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole county, but only part of the county. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organize enough hunts. 622 224 [911] [136]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

call rural districts. By virtue of their membership of rural districts 628
and counties, villages have certain formal relationships with each [631]
other which we may regard as mainly political, and which we have discussed in connexion with the organization of the state. But there are other inter-village activities that are not related directly to the tribal political structure. These include hunting, dancing, drinking, trading, and some co-operative economic activities.

Hunting takes place for the most part in the dry season, but hunts 224
may be organized at any time to deal with predatory animals which 628
are causing damage to crops and livestock. Only men and boys hunt. [962]
Any man who chooses can organize a hunt, but it is usually a man of middle age with some experience and of some standing in his village who sends out word to the neighbouring villages that he proposes to hunt in such-and-such an area on such-and-such a day. The organizer is referred to as the owner of the hunt, and he is in tactical command. He nominates two men to be in charge of the two wings of the hunt, and himself stays in the middle of the single line abreast in which the hunters arrange themselves. Instructions are shouted from the centre and passed out to the wings. Any animals seen are attacked with knobkerries, spears, dogs, and, if there are any, guns. The owner of the hunt has no special privileges over the animals killed, which are divided between the men who actually kill them and the people who carry them back from the hunt to the village. Attendance at such hunts is not enforced, and if the chase is unsuccessful, people tend to drop out half-way. In the main, people distribute themselves along the line of the hunt in village groups, and the leaders of the wings usually bring with them a large band of hunters from their own villages. There are usually about sixty people on a hunt, coming from perhaps ten different villages.

Dancing is an activity that brings people together from many 535
villages. Although girls, and sometimes boys, hold dances in their own 628
villages in the evenings, these dances are thought of as practices rather than as proper dances. The latter take place in connexion with ceremonies of various kinds, and indeed wherever there is beer to [775]
drink there is the probability of some sort of dancing. Dances are also held for their own sake, without reference to other forms of social activity. Of these, two are important in promoting inter-village ties. The first, *ngoma*,[1] the most formal of all dances, was danced by regiments in the days when the regimental system was still operative, but

[1] Cf. the Zulu dance *ingoma*, see Bond, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 50.

/8 cont'd/

352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled
385 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzini tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any
513 headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts
[77] and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

/9/ 1

412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of fur-
[385] naces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used,
[54] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid
493 wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the
[74] village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle,
[94] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of
411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkeries. The gun carriers walk about
224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

/9 cont'd/

28A the hunt walks in the middle of the line, with a responsible person posted on each flank. A started animal, if not shot by the guns, usually turns to run parallel to the line of hunters, who hurl spears and knobkerries at it, and send their dogs after it. The chances of escape for a hunted animal are fairly high. Animals are also trapped, usually with a piece of meat tied to the muzzle of a gun. Hunting with nets is sometimes undertaken in the wet season. Rats are caught in small conical traps baited with beans. The rat chews through a piece of string and releases a green stick, thereby strangling itself.

[114] Shields, once the pride of the Ngoni armies, are not carried on hunts and are infrequently seen.

VI

29 [117] It is only the old men who still wear skin garments, and then only as additions to European style clothing. Men are dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, long trousers, cast-off European clothing, or clothes brought back from the army. Often two shirts are worn on top of one another. Women wear a blouse, a skirt tied on a tape, a cloth wrapped round on top of the skirt, and a small cloth tied

[85A] round their waist. If carrying a baby, the cloth supporting the child is slung over the left and under the right shoulder, and another cloth may be wrapped round the woman and child under her armpits. Dresses are also worn, and sometimes a singlet under the blouse. Shoes are less common for women than for men. Men /10/ wear a

[117] variety of European style hats, but women wear only embroidered cloths or berets, or in the case of poorer women, plain bands of cloth.

Children go naked, or may be draped in whatever garment, of whatever size, happens to be available. If the money is there to pay for them, boys are dressed in shorts and shirts, and girls in little dresses.

30A [118] In the old days, every adult had slit ears, but this custom has died out. Women nowadays pierce their ears if they wish, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a small slit made as a

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [031] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [095] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [351] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [364] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [353] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [464] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 221 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than [231] chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /12/ hunt is divided among the hunters and taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by them- 224 selves and sell the meat.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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[23] society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in [36] any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [30] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

[55] Power in the State was thus power over people rather than [65] over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but [28] even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [26] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [32] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [43] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [44] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers. The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [72] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors [27] kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [49] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [72] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 33.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

captives were retained within the segment. In later years, at least, small-scale raiding organized by segment heads went on without the Paramount Chief's knowledge and it seems unlikely under those conditions that captives would have been sent in to him. 727 [721]

There is confirmatory evidence from other Ngoni groups. Hodgson wrote of the Dowa group that a warrior who had captured three or more people had one returned to him by the chief,[3] from which we may infer that they were at the disposal of the chief. For the Southern Ngoni, who are not so closely related to the Fort Jameson group as are those in northern Nyasaland and Dowa District, Read wrote that the Paramount Chief had a monopoly of slaves taken in war and that he distributed these to successful warriors, his wives and his relatives.[3] [643]

Cattle were handled in much the same way as captives. There was a dogma that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, but they were dispersed among the different villages and kept in the byres there. The lord of a major segment had effective control of the cattle in his own village and, when he chose to exercise it, in the other villages of his segment as well. When the Paramount Chief visited a village, cattle were killed in his honour and he was praised as the giver of the feast, but in the chief's absence the head of the village decided when beasts were to be killed. A lord appointed his lieutenants to look after his cattle as well as his people. When cattle had been taken on a raid, they were driven back to Ngoniland and then allocated to a lord. 231 422 643 727

Cattle for bridewealth were provided for a man by his lord. However it seems possible that a large proportion of the marriages made by politically unimportant people were not ratified by the passage of cattle.[4] 583 231

Such evidence as there is suggests that the Ngoni consumed their cattle faster than many similar cattle people and, as with dependants, they captured cattle more than they reared them. People speak of the days before the conquest as a time when they lived entirely on meat and beer. Poole suggests that the Ngoni produced little or no food in their own country,[5] and while this is plainly contradicted by contemporary evidence, it is probable that they did rely on raiding to supplement their supplies of cattle and cereals, and that therefore many captured cattle were used as food. Thus cattle themselves were a short-term asset and the control of 231 262 727

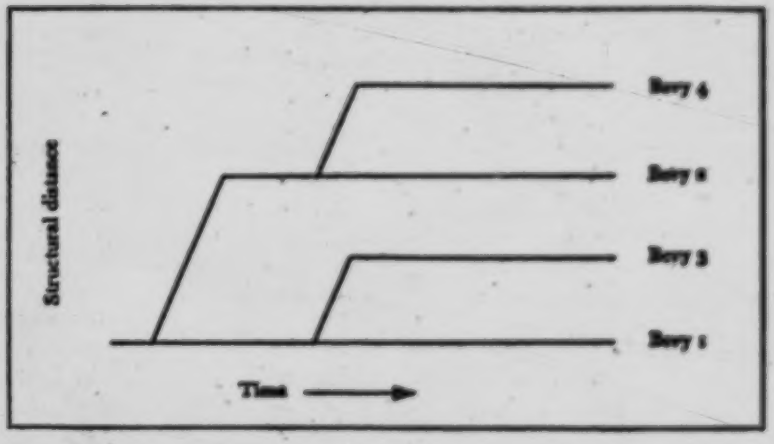
[3] Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 155.
[3] Read, 'Standards of Living', p. 90.
[4] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 7-8.
[5] Poole, 'Human geography of Lundazi and Petauke', p. 13.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231 262 727 cattle did not give rise to any cleavage of interest which was not already present in the residential system.

The system could also be manipulated by disputes about [557] succession. If a man had many bevies of wives there was usually no 595 doubt concerning which was the senior bevy and who was the great 611 wife in it. Yet in general it was not possible to rank a man's bevies in a simple linear order of seniority, any more than the segments

DIAGRAM 3. RANKING OF BEVIES



to which they corresponded could be ordered in this way. In topological terms, ranking of bevies and of segments among the Ngoni was only partially, not simply, ordered. An example, illustrated in Diagram 3, will make this clear.

Suppose a man started with bevy 1 and then took part of it to form bevy 2. Later he took another part of bevy 1 to form bevy 3 and took part of bevy 2 to form bevy 4. With four bevies of wives, his senior bevy was bevy 1 and his great wife was the leader of bevy 1. Her eldest son was his principal heir, and if she had no sons [429] the eldest son by the next wife in her bevy became heir. But suppose there was no son by any wife in bevy 1. Which band provided the principal heir? It seems clear that bevy 4 did not, at least not if there were sons in bevy 2, for bevy 2 was senior to bevy 4. Bevy 2 might be regarded as senior to bevy 3, for it was formed from bevy 1 earlier. On the other hand, with reference to bevy 2, bevy 3 was merely a part of bevy 1 and hence the search for heirs should be continued in bevy 3 before shifting to bevy 2. Unfortunately I

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

B.S.A. Company's administration which now began to operate in Mpezeni's country itself. Each had its own African police force and on one occasion two people who had been taken prisoner by the Administration's police were released by a party of North Charterland police. The North Charterland police then arrested the Administration's police, and it was necessary for troops to come from Nyasaland to release them and arrest the North Charterland men.[110] By the end of 1899, however, conditions had become more settled. The B.S.A. Administration had acquired effective control over the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland.

The military operations in December 1897 and in 1898 were carried out during the wet season and in consequence there was much sickness among the troops. Although it was not the time of year which the Europeans would have chosen for a campaign, according to one of my informants Warringham had been advised by an Ngoni man whose support he had gained that he should arrange for the war to take place while all the warriors were away from the immediate vicinity of Fort Young attending the national first fruits ceremony at the headquarters of segment 4, the village of Zwangendaba's great wife. The descendants of this man are still regarded as traitors by other Ngoni. The first fruits ceremony was usually held about the new year, so that the war may in fact have followed immediately after the ceremony. This view is supported by the remark made by Harding, who arrived in Ngoniland a few months after the war was over. He said that the war 'arose over a highly strung official [presumably Warringham] mistaking an ordinary Native dance for an act of hostility towards the Administration'.[111] Whatever the truth in the matter, the first fruits ceremony would have been an appropriate time for Nsingu to call for an attack on the Whites.

7. *Cattle*

It has been estimated that before the war there were about 20,000 head of cattle in Mpezeni's country.[112] During the fighting many were taken from Ngoni by Protectorate troops. These animals became the subject of much recrimination. Read states that half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot', while Poole states that a large portion of the 14,000 head captured were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners.[113]

[110] 223, fo. 368.
[111] Harding, *For Empire*, p. 82.
[112] 230, p. 69 has 24,000, while *Report on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19, has 15,000-20,000.
[113] Read, 'Tradition', p. 478; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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According to Manning, in his first report on the matter dated 17 February 1898, nearly 12,000 head were captured. It seems clear that at the time Manning thought that the whole of this herd would be used for the benefit of the B.S.A. Company, for he wrote:

> 'I have informed the British South Africa Company that we shall require them to pay the actual expenses incurred by us on account of the campaign. I do not imagine the total cost to the British South Africa Company will be more than 2,000*l*. This will be covered ten times over by the value of the cattle captured by the expedition, so that the British South Africa Company will reap a handsome profit on the campaign.'[114]

There seems, however, to have been considerable discussion among Europeans in the region about the disposal of the cattle. Roberts, a surgeon who had been one of Wiese's companions at Fort Young, was dismissed from the North Charterland shortly after the war ended. Wiese also left the country after the war and lost his North Charterland post worth £900 a year. Manning suggests that these two were anxious to make trouble by attacking the conduct of the war. St. Hill, the North Charterland manager, may have been anxious to forestall any accusations for on 23 April he published in a newspaper a statement admitting that there had been criticism on the capture of the cattle, but pointing out that 'Army regulations provide for a certain amount of loot'. He said that it had been a wonderfully cheap expedition, that the Protectorate men who went in certainly deserved something, and that he expected that the B.S.A. Company would return a very large number of cattle to the Natives.[115] Editorial comment on his article was nevertheless critical. Criticism began to be heard in Britain. A letter was written to the Parliamentary Secretary responsible, a question was asked in the Commons, and an article appeared in *Truth*. According to one account, the military officers said they expected £400 or £500 each from their share of the loot.[116] Whether or not he was influenced by this criticism, Sharpe on leave in England proposed on 12 May that half the captured herds be returned to the Ngoni, the other half to be retained by the B.S.A. Company.[117] On the same day the Foreign Office replied to Manning's dispatch of 17 February, quoted above, with the statement that the B.S.A. Company wanted only three hundred beasts. Manning was asked to

[114] 195.
[115] *Central African Times*, i, 30 (23 April 1898), p. 3.
[116] 216, fo. 8; 217; *Parliamentary Debates*, 4th series, lv (1898), cols. 1240, 1654-5; *Truth*, xlii, 1122 (30 June 1898), pp. 1639-40.
[117] 222.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

consider returning some of the remainder to the Ngoni.[108] Manning replied that representatives of the B.S.A. Company had already made arrangements for driving away five thousand cattle. He proposed to return three thousand to Mpezeni.[109]

The subsequent course of events is not clear. Poole states that due to the opportune arrival and intervention of Selby, a member of the B.S.A. Company's Administration, a large proportion of the cattle were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners. This is in accord with Sharpe's statement on 6 July that 'Mpezeni . . . has had all his cattle returned to him [his underlining]'. A missionary journal published in Blantyre on 15 July stated that probably a considerable part of the cattle had been returned.[110] Manning, who was in a better position to know than Sharpe, who was still on leave, wrote on 31 August that all the cattle had been returned to the Natives with the exception of about a thousand head handed over to the B.S.A. Company as a fine and about two hundred kept for the use of the troops.[111] The matter then seemed to have been settled.

In the next year the North Charterland continued its quarrel with the B.S.A. Company, and the disposal of the captured cattle was discussed again. The North Charterland complained that the whole Ngoni war had been unnecessary and had been provoked by the B.S.A. Company. There had been wholesale looting of cattle which had been disposed of in the interests of the officers concerned, Natives had been expelled from their lands, and in consequence the commercial prospects of the North Charterland had been ruined. The Foreign Office replied to these allegations on 23 August 1899, stating that so far as the cattle were concerned, five thousand head were to be driven out, three thousand returned to Mpezeni, and the balance held at the disposal of the B.S.A. Company, apart from two hundred and fifty head captured inside the Protectorate and driven off for use by the troops. This reply, referring to what would be done rather than what by then presumably had been done, appears to have been based on the arrangements proposed by Manning on 20 May 1898. Either the arrangements he reported on 31 August 1898 were never put into operation or else they were overlooked by mistake when the Foreign Office reply to the North Charterland was drafted a year later. The latter explanation seems more probable.[112]

[108] 223.
[109] 227.
[110] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; 222, fn. 228; *Life and Work in British Central Africa*, 125 (15 July 1898), p. 3.
[111] 229, fn. 456.
[112] 230; 233.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Manning stipulated that cattle handed back to the Ngoni should not be sold, to prevent traders bartering cattle for gunpowder.[186] Nevertheless the majority of the cattle remaining in or returned to Ngoni hands were sold within two years. In April 1898 over 14,000 head of cattle were counted.[187] Whether or not all these were in Ngoni ownership at the time is not clear, although the North Charterland implied in a letter written in 1899 that at least 12,000 belonged to Ngoni.[188] During the next year or so, in spite of Administrative opposition, many thousands of cattle were sold to traders or killed. By 31 March 1900 only 1,024 remained.[189] Thus another of the systems of social relationships, those mediated through cattle, which had sustained the old social order, was undermined.

8. *The end of a system*

Thus ended the Ngoni war and with it the Ngoni State. In the last twelve years of its existence, from 1886 to 1898, three struggles were proceeding simultaneously in linked regions of social space. First there were the traditional processes already described by which Ngoni killed and recruited their neighbours and by which cleavages between segments of their residential system widened and altered with time. Second there was the struggle between Portugal, Great Britain and, peripherally, Germany for the political control of south-central Africa. Third there was a struggle between different groups of financiers in London for the control of the rich economic resources which they believed, quite mistakenly as far as we can now tell, lay waiting to be discovered in Mpezeni's country and round about. Apart from these three major fields of activity, there were two others which affected this particular area to a lesser degree. There were the traders and adventurers like Wiese (until 1896), Matakenya and the Arabs who competed with one another and endeavoured to exploit the region in terms of ivory, gunpowder and slaves. There were also the various missions, representing the interests of their co-religionists and anti-slavery enthusiasts in Europe, competing with each other and with the slave traders for local control. There was even a scheme for colonizing Mpezeni's country with Christian laymen from Britain.[190] All these social fields were interwoven in reality, but in analysis

[186] 207; 208, fn. 15; 255.
[187] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 63.
[188] 230, p. 69. Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 223, implies that all the 14,000 belonged to Ngoni.
[189] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 63.
[190] 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realised what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make."[159]

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfosi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[160]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared.

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[161] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[162] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers

[159] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78.
[160] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[161] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 3 (26 February 1898), p. 1.
[162] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and village headmen looked after them. About half the cattle in Ngoniland were captured during the fighting of 1898 and although many of these were returned to the Ngoni, they were soon disposed of to White traders. To-day, many of the cattle in royal (i.e. capital, regal and chief's) villages are said to belong to the Paramount Chief. This statement of royal ownership is now not merely one referring to political overlordship, for these beasts are contrasted with others which belong to commoners and to other chiefs

TABLE VII. VILLAGES FOUNDED BEFORE AND AFTER 1898

How founded or incorporated in the Ngoni State	*Type of present-day village*					
	Royal			*Cadet*	*Commoner*	*Total*
	Capital	*Regal*	*Chief's*			
Founded by regional governors or their successors prior to creation of the Ngoni State	0	0	0	0	3	3
Founded before 1898 to accommodate other segments of the residential system	1	6	0	1	25	33
Total known to have been founded before 1898	1	6	0	1	28	36
Founded to accommodate segments of the residential system, date unknown	0	0	0	1	11	12
Founded after 1898 to accommodate segments of the residential system or their modern equivalents	0	2	0	4	20	26
Founded outside the Ngoni State, date unknown, entering it after 1898	0	0	0	0	6	6
Founded in Ngoniland by a labour immigrant after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Founded by direct Administrative action after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total known to have been founded or incorporated after 1898	0	2	0	4	28	34
Grand total	1	8	0	6	67	82

Sample collected casually in the general course of fieldwork.

1:Barnes K-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief who is penalized as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small, contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of British rule modified this system, the effect of the omification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1954
FRS Ngoni FRS

to the method of rearing calves by letting them take all the milk they wanted, and partly to the practice of letting the herd-boys have the rest. In villages under a headmanship of a Swazi clan, who had a wife in his big house also of a Swazi clan, the consumption of milk was to some extent organized. These senior women saw that the herd-boys brought them a certain amount of milk each day, and they gave it to young children or invalids, and made some into *amasi*.

Another practice which restricted the use of meat and milk as regular items of diet was that the building up of the herds was regarded as a primary responsibility of the owners and guardians of cattle. Hence calves were given milk, which in western countries would be drawn off for human use, and the killing of beasts, unless they were sick, was restricted to selling the meat for cash or using it in ritual. One of the embarrassments suffered by an anthropologist was being presented with a beast by people who hardly ever killed one for their own use. It was true that a general share-out took place when the beast was killed, but it was none the less one beast fewer in the herd, and it was the maintenance and increase of the herds which was the cattle-owners' chief concern.

This emphasis on numbers rather than quality, which caused so much misunderstanding between government departments and cattle-owners, was closely related to the forms of exchange in cattle. Formerly cattle were handed over either as *lobola* or as penalties for the infringement of laws. Both these forms of transfer continued, but there were additional demands which cattle-owners or potential owners had to be aware of in watching the increase or diminution of their herds. One characteristic of these modern forms of exchange was the ready convertibility of cattle into cash and of cash into cattle. We have seen how young men away at work sent money back to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. We have seen too how the possession of cattle made it possible to sell a beast and obtain cash for various purposes, and the proximity of markets where there were butchers' stalls encouraged this sale of cattle.

One of the most frequent reasons for the conversion of cattle into cash was for the purpose of hiring labour. We saw in Chapter I of this section how Lepati Nyungu killed cattle to feed the men who carried bricks and cement for his brother's tomb and sold another beast to pay wages to the bricklayers. The traditional way of paying labourers had been by feeding them with meat, and the modern method was to pay them cash wages and to find the money for it by the sale of cattle. Such labour could be for cultivating, house-building, fence-building, road-making and other local work. The possession of cattle which were easily convertible into cash made possible this payment of labour, and this relationship between the role of cattle-owner and the role of employer of labour was common.

2: Reid E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly
231 relative to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
237 of the Swazi and trans-Zambezi class. Money was needed for good
994 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which
the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling,
[illegible] among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Value and attitudes in cattle-ownership

An attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquiring, using for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is impossible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambezi class, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba class whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading class and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.

119 The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they represented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able
231 to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of
556 labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of ritual for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

considered it his individual bad luck. On the other hand the house which depended on its herd for mutual help among its members and for the performance of ritual in sickness was deeply concerned at the loss of cattle and at any diminution of its herd. 231 556

Affect security, pleasure and emotional satisfaction were important Ngoni values in relation to cattle. This outlet for interest and enjoyment was very marked among Ngoni men. It began with the young herd-boys and continued until old age. Cattle were an endless topic for discussion, and in remote areas, where few strangers came and local affairs played a predominant part in village life, the fortunes of individual beasts and the progress of herds were talked about continuously. The advent of a letter from a son in the south sending money to his father to buy a beast gave a fillip to village life which little else provided. When the young men themselves came home, they went during their first evening to the kraal where the cattle they had paid for were kept, and showed interest and pleasure in the herd which was shared by all. The older men who had carried the responsibility were there, and on the fringes of the group the herd-boys hung around, listening to their elders, proud of having done their bit for the cattle which were the common concern of all three age-groups.

The Ngoni were aware that security in their cattle and the pleasure they got from them had to be won, and there was a price to pay. Hence they attached great value to knowledge and experience and to the ability to organise. Among the senior men responsible for a herd in a house or *kanja*, some would be known for their knowledge and skill in handling cattle and for their experience in dealing with sick beasts, in castrating bullocks, and in choosing well when buying new beasts. The Ngoni recognised an innate quality of skill, which they called *mphumi* mabwino, 'the good forehead', a term used as an equivalent for the 'green thumb' when talking about crops. They also recognised the knowledge which came from experience and which might or might not be associated with *mphumi* mabwino. In any village where there were cattle, men were pointed out who possessed knowledge about cattle-tending, and the choice of a neighbouring village kraal for boarding out purposes was generally decided on the reputation of the owner of the kraal as a good cattle man. Not all the people who had this specialised knowledge had ability to organise the care of cattle, a characteristic Ngoni quality on which they set a high value. Foresight and planning were necessary in the choice of kraals for boarding out, in the selection of animals for *lobola*, fines, gifts or slaughter, and above all in buying and selling cattle. This kind of organising ability required the possession of information about local markets and about potential sellers or buyers of cattle. It also demanded some nice calculations when sending cattle for *lobola* or giving a beast as a gift. Men were often torn between wishing to appear generous to the point of lavishness, and not wanting to give [H31] 231 555

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Nguni FR5

away the prime animals in the herd. Their formula in presenting a beast was 'Here is a small sheep.' This belittling of a gift was the social counterpart of their inner desire for a reputation for generosity.

It has been clear from many previous references that mutual assistance among members of a house was inherent in the social pattern of cattle-ownership. The Nguni attached great value to this reciprocity of service, and it was deeply embedded in their social ethic. Young men in Nguni villages thought twice before they deliberately took action which would bring them into the courts, because the fine would have to be paid by their elders from the common herd of cattle. The implications of this service proved no ultimate deterrent to hot-headed youth, but the lesson was constantly being rubbed in. After a court case for adultery, when a young man's father and his father's brothers had handed over a beast for a fine, they would grumble in the evening by the kraal at this waste of good cattle, and suggest it was time the young man went off to the south and sent money home to buy more cattle. This was the cycle of mutual help—the elders provided cattle from the herd for *lobolo* and fines for the young men, who in turn went off to work and sent back money to buy more cattle. Reference has been made to 'the cloth of the spirits', when cattle were sold to provide cash for a young man who needed it, and the balance was used to buy cloth which was kept in the hut where the ancestral spirit was guarded. This cloth was the common property of all who belonged to the house owning the herd, and was returnable to the hut after it had been worn for some festive occasion. The forms which this mutual help could take were numerous and varied, and they all illustrated the fact that the correct and continuous observance of this reciprocity was considered by the Nguni as one of the basic values underlying the ownership and use of cattle.

Among the group bound together by cattle-ownership this emphasis on mutual help as a desirable behaviour pattern had its counterpart in the social concept of integration. As we have seen, the Nguni put a high value on 'staying together', on being united when challenged by a situation which made for disintegration. Within the social units of the house and family, the ownership of cattle and their care and use demanded some degree of co-operation through responsibility for the herd which was held in common. Integration between the living and their ancestors was also provided by the cattle. Common possession of a herd did more than just hold people together. The pattern of family and house organization which was characteristically Nguni was given some stability through the ownership of cattle, allowing for the subdivision of herds when the new village 'went out', the exchanges at marriage, and the sacrifices at death.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at night. Some of the Ngoni used carved wooden headrests as pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fascinate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens', and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work in the gardens was an expedition for young children which they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places forbidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven years old, because they found their fathers there and the herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their conditions which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

291 several portions. On branches of fresh leaves, brought by the
861 younger herd-boys, were piled the sections of the animal, down to the last bit of intestine, for distribution according to a fixed Ngoni pattern.

291 A senior man of the house owning the beast, when all was
835 ready, 'counted' all the parts, that is he named each part, head, horns, tail, feet, joints and internal organs, and each was pointed out to him as being present. The herd-boys stand-
[866] ing round learned the names of the organs and the sections of the animal, and heard the names and status of the men to whom the parts were assigned. The herd-boys of the family of the owner were given certain symbolic parts: an ear, an eye and the nose, for hearing, seeing and smelling; parts of an artery and of an intestine as controlling the blood flow and the waste material, and the rectum as ejecting waste; and the feet for walking steadily and fast.

Some of the meat was roasted over a fire, parts like the
252 stomach and intestines were cleaned and boiled, some was
[851] dried slowly on a rack over a fire of green wood, and put in fibre bags for keeping. The blood was taken to the head woman of the house owning the herd. She cooked it with the fat round the kidneys till it coagulated and formed a dish, salty and meaty, much liked by the Ngoni, and rather akin to black pudding. The women also took over any spare fat and rendered it down and clarified it to use as
[278] unguents.

The young adult who had had six or seven years of
235 herding cattle and had advanced to be a senior herd-boy,
868 had acquired not only certain manual skills such as those just described, but also some knowledge of the anatomy of cattle, some idea of the social attitudes towards cattle and their ownership, and some idea of their economic value to the Ngoni. For certain restricted ritual purposes, a cow in calf had to be killed for sacrifice, and herd-boys saw the foetus removed when the cow was cut up. They were also often present at the birth of calves in the bush, and had to wait

[P. 127]

Appendix I

THE GALL BLADDER CEREMONY

This ceremony is known as *lusiwa* or sometimes is referred to by the word for gall bladder, *nyongo*. If it is performed, it takes place after arrangements for the marriage have been completed and before the bride begins to live with her husband. If the couple are Christians, it is held before the banns are called. I observed two of these ceremonies in 1948. 585

The ceremony takes place in the man's village at his mother's hut. In the evening of the day before the ceremony the bride arrives accompanied by three women from her own village. They may be kinswomen or important women of the village. One of these women is in charge of the bridal party. In one instance the leader was the bride's mother's husband's son's wife, and the other two women were another classificatory sister-in-law and a classificatory sister. In the other instance the women were a classificatory grandmother, a father's sister, and a younger sister.

The bridal party are given a hut to sleep in and are fed by the bridegroom's mother. In the morning they remain in their hut and each person who comes in to greet them must do in a special way. They reply with a little song.

The bridegroom's father asks a reliable friend in the village to act as master of ceremonies. The master of ceremonies chooses an animal from the byre of the bridegroom's father and tethers it near the groom's mother's hut. A message is sent to the bridal party, and the leader comes to look at the animal. She accepts it by saying 'Yes', and the master of ceremonies, or the lads who gather round to help him, kill the animal. It is said that the bride's leader could refuse the animal if she thought it a poor one, but to do so would upset all the arrangements for the marriage which has been agreed upon, and I did not hear of any instance of refusal. The animal killed is traditionally a cow, but in the tsetse fly areas where there are no cattle a goat is taken instead. [136]

The animal is killed by slitting its throat, and the blood is collected in a bowl. The intestinal fat of the animal is cut into little pieces and mixed with the blood. The gall bladder is carefully removed. [231] When the animal has been skinned and the meat cut up, the leader of the bride's party is called again from her hut, and makes an allocation of meat, traditionally giving the head and one leg to the bridegroom's father. The rest belongs to her party.

A mat is placed in front of the groom's mother's hut, and the bride comes out of her hut, preceded by the other women of her party. They walk slowly to the mat, and sit down on it. Sometimes the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

life as a young girl. She gives the half-pounded maize to the bride- 585
groom's mother.

In neither of the two ceremonies I saw did the husband play any large part. He did not appear when his bride was instructed. His father sent word to him that all was going well, but he himself stayed out of the way at the other end of the village. Sometimes, however, the bridegroom does sit with his bride on the mat and is instructed with her.

Another gall bladder ceremony which I recorded was held at the time the bride went to live with her husband. This was in an intra-village marriage. In the evening the bride came with important women from her section of the village. The bridegroom's relatives were waiting to receive them, and promised to give them a beast. The bride was then handed over to them. The women went back to their own division, and returned the next day to claim the beast and wash the bride. The beast, an ox, was killed and the intestines [p31] were placed round the neck of a younger sister of the bride who became the designated linked co-wife.

If Christians hold the gall bladder ceremony before the bride begins to live with her husband, it is followed by a ceremony in church. The bride does not come back to live with her husband after the gall bladder ceremony but instead goes with her relatives to the local church, where they meet a party from the man's village, and the arrangements for the marriage are set in hand. After three weeks the couple are married in church. The bride then goes back again to her village and as before she pounds flour. After a few days she comes to live with her husband, or he comes to live with her.

Appendix II

FIRST COOKING

When a woman begins her marriage in her husband's village, 592
she cannot cook food until she has been invited to do so by her 252
husband's parents. Until then, she relies on food cooked by her 593
co-wives or her mother-in-law or grandmother-in-law. This state of affairs may last from a month up to a year. It is ended by the ceremony of 'making to cook' (*mphehiso*). I did not see this ceremony, and I have relied on the accounts of informants. It is said that a man's parents would be ashamed of their poverty if they did not entertain the new bride as a guest until the time had come for her to join in the general run of domestic work in the village.

The man's parents decide when the ceremony shall be held. On the day, the man's sisters, mothers and grandmothers prepare flour, plates, porridge pat and stirring stick in the house of the man's

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftaincies remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional sytems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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"Wage war on the *Afo*,
Hayo, hayo, ho,
They have left him;
They have left him in their midst."

"*Humba*, the mighty medicine man, has gone with them,
He has swallowed a magic horn, has *Humba*."

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry (*kugwira*), they burn on a fire at one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse also is consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief are removed.

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[231]

IV. Next morning all the headmen shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands. Then they allow three days to pass, and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps out and says, "Do you hear, your new chief is so and so" (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then every one shouts, "Hail," and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes (trans. *biriwiri*). Then the elders

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6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 431 porridge for them and it is refused, and they spear goats for them and they eat. Next day they go home. They of the girl's village tell them, saying, "You will hear from us." Now, if the malt for the beer be in readiness, they do not sleep many [273] days, but if not, they let a moon pass. On the day on which the beer is strained they go and call the bodyguard of young warriors, and they come along with the husband (to be) to drink the beer. The man who is to marry the girl they go and hide away in a hut on the edge of the village along with his betrothed, and the beer for them will be drawn in a little pot.

585 III. Now every one comes together at the village court and bring goats. The betrothed sits on a [302] mat. Her grandmother shaves her head, leaving a round patch of hair on the crown. When she has finished shaving her one of the men from the man's [231] village steps out and begins to kill some goats. Should a goat not die immediately it is beaten. Then the goats are skinned, and they take a spleen and let drops fall from it on the head of the girl, and then inflate all the spleens. They take the fat from the belly, and spread it in the sun to dry. Towards evening they take the girl and go with her to the *Kuka* hut, and there they take a frothy medicine, called *chitundu*, and the girl bathes with it, and her little watchman bathes also, and he (the child) takes the spleens and the fat, the inflated spleens are fastened on the girl's head and the fat over her shoulders and under her arms. The little child, when he has finished tying them on, is beaten by the men from the man's village (playfully). Then one of the village elders gets up and speaks, saying, "There you have your mother, we give her you to-day; she is subject to no disease, her illnesses consist of occasional headaches. Should she

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and [231] chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 619 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mulumunana*, pl. *alumunana*. [4] *Nduna*, pl. *aduna*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE I. *Village Types*

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Type of village		*Senior resident*
Royal	Capital	First lieutenant
	Regal	First lieutenant
	Chief's	Chief
Cadet		Royal Headman
Commoner		Commoner Headman

This process of village formation may be illustrated from Mpezeni's own county. The capital of the county is the village founded by Mpezeni I for his chief wife and one or two other wives. His heir Singu was born in this village, and when he married he founded two villages of his own which are now regal villages. In the senior of these two Mpezeni II was born, and in about 1925 he founded a new village which is still the chief's village of the county. There are other regal villages in the county founded in a similar manner. 621

This formation of royal villages would, other things being equal, lead to a dispersal of the population. It seems, however, that the major factor in dispersing the population since 1898 has been the formation of independent commoner villages. Many of these villages have histories that go back to the foundation of the village as an independent unit immediately after 1898, and it seems likely that the unsettled conditions of those days and the burning of villages did much to bring about the breakdown of the old system in which the royal villages were more important than they are today. 161 621

The royal villages are more closely connected with the chieftainships than are the commoner villages, and the chiefs visit in them more frequently than in other villages. A dispute in a royal village is usually settled by a meeting in the village itself attended by the local chief, whereas in the case of an ordinary village dispute the matter would be taken to the chief for him to settle in his own village or court. A chief may be called to a royal village to drink beer. The royal herds of cattle are kept in the royal villages, and the chiefs look to the first lieutenants of their royal villages for the well-being of the royal cattle as well as of the inhabitants of the royal villages. All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself,[1] but in as far as the cattle held by most people are concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that 628 [627] 422 231 643

[1] Cf. Cashead, p. 27.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the lieutenants are more under the control of the chief of the county, who may intervene to depose a lieutenant if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material Setting

361 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the
[343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the
[417] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of aloes.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually *bediman*, pl. *mabediman*; otherwise *mfumu yamunzi*, pl. *mafumu wamunzi*. The specific term for headman of a cadet or commoner village is *mwinimunzi*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XVI

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7. Drying a cow-hide at a funeral. A beast from the herd of the dead man has been killed for the mourners. The skin will be buried on top of the coffin

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8. Later, at the same funeral. The body has been interred and the mourners are sitting round the grave, near the cattle-byre, listening to a sermon by a local preacher of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission

[Facing P. 225]

NGONI

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 [671] been made. It is the legalization payment that is recorded on the marriage registration certificate when one is issued.

Often this payment is postponed until some years after marriage and sometimes it is never made at all. It is generally £1. 10*s.*, and is normally provided by the bridegroom himself out of his savings, although in the old days a man would have been helped by his father. The money goes to the bride's father, and there is no legal obligation on him to share the money with his relatives, although he may do so. Marriage ties can be reinforced by a whole series of ceremonies and ceremonial exchanges and payments between the man's people and the woman's people, and a marriage in which all these ceremonies have been performed is regarded as being 'well fixed'. In such a marriage the parents and siblings of the couple have come to know each other, have collaborated in ritual activities, and have probably had occasion to deliberate together as a court of conciliation in settling quarrels between the couple. This line of development is seldom taken in a marriage in which the legalization payment has not been made. If the husband refuses to pay, then the wife's people will not brew beer for him and his parents, and will not use their influence with his wife to maintain the marriage. We may say that in a well-fixed marriage the two families are linked together, and that in one that is not well fixed it is only the two individuals who are linked. Indeed when no payments have been made it is common for the bride's relatives to profess ignorance of the name of the husband, or at least of his parents' names. No action can be taken in the court to enforce marriage payments, although in an adultery or divorce case the court may order the legalization payment to be made.

585 476 578 The ceremonies of marriage should not be thought of merely as occasions for harmonious co-operation. They may also become the vehicle for the expression of aggression between the two families involved. This is particularly true of the obligation on the man to bring a party of his friends to hoe in the garden of his father-in-law. The hoeing party may do more harm than good to the crops if the present offered them by the father-in-law is considered inadequate.

583 178 [231] Prior to the conquest of the tribe the principal marriage payment was bride-wealth,[1] consisting of so many head of cattle. In those days, according to informants, no legalization payment was made. Nowadays bride-wealth is paid only in a small proportion of marriages, and rarely until after several children have been born. In the old days

[1] *Malowolo.* Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola* and noun *ilobolo.*

/4 cont'd/

701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
241 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
464 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at
[581] present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

161 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson
621 Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[118] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

/6 cont'd/

417 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which [32] there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

231 /7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [136] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

417 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [385] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [25] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder 343 to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may [511] have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasionally open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [231] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [273] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [251] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [464] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and 224 taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by themselves and sell the meat.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI.—*The Zulu of Nyasaland: their Manners and Customs.* By the Rev. DONALD FRASER, of the Livingstonia Mission.

[Read before the Society, 20th February, 1901.]

101 I SHALL take you to-night into British Central Africa, and describe slightly, a most interesting nation of warriors who live in West Nyasaland. To reach them we sail up the Zambezi, and the 13 Shiré to Lake Nyasa. Landing at Bandawe, we strike inland for two days, climbing most of the way. After passing through richly wooded hills and valleys, we arrive at a great plateau, veined by constant sudden ravines through which rivers roar in the wet season, and trickle in the dry. The plateau is almost bared of trees, and is relieved by huge rocky hills which rise precipitously, from the plain. A low scrub covers the face of the land except where [241] gardens are being cultivated, and the whole country is dotted by innumerable ant hills, each as large as a cottage. These are hoed by the villagers, and throughout most of the year, stand out gaunt and bare. Then the landscape is thirsty and inhospitable looking. The earth baked and hard, lies unclothed in the blazing sun. Cattle, [231] sheep, and goats, wander about the river beds, and one looks almost in vain for any sign of vegetation to afford them food. But when the first rains come, the land breaks into smiling. The scrub puts on a dress of the softest green. The gardens and ant hills are [241] covered with springing maize, and a thick garment of foliage, vegetation, and flowers, hides every vestige of the ground. Here we stand from 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. In the cold season, the thermometer falls as low as 40°, and in the hot, rises as high as 98°. But though the sun has a dangerous bite in midsummer, the heat is never oppressive, and the nights are cool and refreshing.

101 The people who live in this country, are a branch of the Zulu tribe, who started north 70 or 80 years ago on a great raid. The 175 causes which led them to desert their own country are wrapped in mystery, and even the old men who can remember the days when they crossed the Zambezi, are unable to give any clear account of their starting. Probably it arose from one of the wars of Chaka, in

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Marayi FR4
Ngoni FR5

M Y 241 M Y [423] N [422]

only implement used. Sowing is done after the first rains, about November; the harvest takes place in May to July. Gardens are at varying distances from the villages, depending partly on the soil becoming exhausted after years of cultivation. Boundaries are marked by leaving a line of uncultivated ground, sowing a line of a different crop, tying knots in the young crops at intervals, ditches, etc. In starting a new garden, woodland is often taken; the trees are cut down, leaving stumps 3 feet high; the undergrowth is cleared away and burnt, the ashes distributed over the land, which is then hoed, really very superficially; the earth is then made up into little heaps with a central hole in each, after the first rains four or five grains of the cereal (maize, millet) are dropped in each and covered with earth; as the young shoots grow the hole is more and more filled in.

FIG. 8.

With the cereal is planted the seed of peas, beans, pumpkins, the former on coming up then grow up the maize stalks. The seed is last year's product and not specially selected.

M Y [343] [417] M Y [251]

Depredations among crops made by elephant, hippopotamus, large antelope (eland and kudu), pigs and baboons, vary in extent in different districts. Little grass huts are built, raised above the ground like a pile-dwelling, in which watchers are stationed. Fences, sometimes extending for miles, are built. The gardens of the chief are hoed by his slaves or the people of the village. Maize is collected in the cob, and after the outer coverings have been removed is stored; so is the *nkokwe*, millet in the head; beans and peas are stored in baskets. Medicine is put on the ground to ensure a good crop, and a piece of stick is sometimes hung up for good luck.

CATTLE, ETC.

N 231 [422]

The keeping of cattle is practically restricted to certain tribes living in districts free from tsetse-fly (Angoni, Wankonde); among these people wealth is reckoned by cattle. The milk is little used; the flesh is eaten only when an animal dies. Marks of ownership are made by cutting the ears (Fig. 8). Cattle are kept in open kraals by Angoni, in a compartment of their houses by Wankonde; they are tended by the small boys as a rule. Goats and sheep are kept all over the country. Castration of cattle is a recognised practice (*kufula*).

N 281

Angoni make their shields from cattle skins; their spear handles are covered with goat hair (beard); hair anklets and armlets in dancing costume are made from goat hair. Skins are used as dress to a small extent.

HUNTING.

M 224

A man intimates to the community around that he is making a hunt by clothing a boy of about ten years in leaves, who precedes him and the men from his own village through adjacent villages; at each village the lad has to lie down and

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Marau; FR4

her daughters had died, and the herd of cattle was either inherited by the senior daughter's eldest son or divided among the sons of different daughters. Cewa informants said that quarrels constantly arose over the ownership of cattle, and two modern developments—the spread of *utengwa*[1] marriage and of a patrilineal form of *mbumba* with its repercussions on cattle acquisition and disposal—caused further tensions in Cewa society.

The role which cattle played in Ngoni social life partly depended on the structure and inter-relationships of the Ngoni social groups. The house and the family within the larger village unit were so organized that group ownership and group disposal of cattle caused no permanent friction. There were arguments about the disposal of cattle, but they were temporary and relatively trivial. The strength of tradition in the concept of ownership, and in the values and attitudes inherent in cattle-owning and keeping, was firmly established and was related to modern needs by the ingenuity of the Ngoni in manipulating traditional practices to suit new situations. Cattle therefore strengthened the integration of existing social units, and helped to preserve that unity and cohesion in Ngoni society which the ancestors were said to commend and to wish for. On this plane of conformity to a required pattern, cattle influenced the living and their behaviour. They also, through the structure and function of the houses, belonged to the spirit who was guarded in a particular house. As we shall see in Chapter IV, the ritual formula of address to the ancestor at the sacrifice of a beast was always 'Here is your beast . . . Here is your meat.' The living and the dead were joined therefore in the common ownership of a herd or part of a herd. The actual practices in social and ritual life where cattle were concerned, and the ideas and concepts from which the practices arose, will take up most of this chapter and form the necessary prelude to the further analysis of the ancestor cult.

Ownership of cattle and care of herds

'The war of the cattle-tax' was the name given in the central kingdom to the installation of dipping tanks in the 1930's and the levying of a tax of a shilling per head of cattle on all cattle-owners. The attempt by the Government to focus responsibility for dipping and to collect the taxes due brought out clearly the difficulties of applying English conceptions of ownership to the Ngoni. In the English meaning of the word ownership, a man can claim as his possession cattle which he has bought or inherited, and their offspring. This individual ownership means that he alone has the right to sell the animals or their milk, to regard the profits from such sale as his, and at any time to kill an animal for meat. He can will them to his descendants or to anyone he chooses after his

[1] Marriages in which the man took his wife to live in his village, but did not give *lobola* for her.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

cattle never came back to the kraal in the evening without one or more of the senior men standing by the gate and watching them and counting them as they went in. Sick cattle were noted and the herd-boys questioned about them. Mating was observed and noted, but not regulated, though poorly developed male beasts were sometimes castrated by one of the men who had acquired skill as a cattle doctor. Such a man would also administer drenches and other medicines, but the responsibility for calling a *sing'anga*, the specialist in medicines, to perform a ritual for a sick beast was taken by the whole group. They also made the decision to call a *sing'anga* to protect the kraal against lions. On several occasions I was in a village where lions attempted to get into the kraal at night, and the next morning the senior men who were responsible for the herd discussed the efficacy of this or that man's 'lion medicine' and decided who should be sent for to make the kraal safe again.

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Many of the uses to which cattle were put and for which they were greatly valued have been referred to in this chapter and in earlier sections of this book. We shall now examine the consumption of meat, milk and blood as food, and the forms of exchange in which cattle were directly exchanged or converted into cash. The ritual use of cattle will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

The testimony of early Europeans in Nyasaland and the accounts by the Ngoni of their life in the pre-European period agree in giving the consumption of meat, milk, and blood a high place in the diet of the cattle-owning families. It was a widespread European criticism in the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

561 with the main activities of the groups, though it did to some extent illustrate mutual relationships.

Age-Set terms

	Northern Ngoni	*Central Ngoni*
All children	*abantwana*	*ana*
[184 Young men even if married	*amajaha*	*anyamata*
104] Young girls before puberty	*inhakazana*	*mabuthu*
Young girls past puberty	*izintombi*	*anamwali*
All married women	*abafazi*	*ahazi*
Senior men	*amadoda*	*madoda*
Senior women	*amanina*	*manina*

513 One of the most characteristic forms of Ngoni village organization
561 was the *laweni*, or boys' dormitory. It included the older boys in the group called 'children' and the young men until they married, who were
866 in fact called *amajaha* after they had left the *laweni* and married and had huts of their own. The age for entering the *laweni* was approximately seven years, and was as a rule determined by the age when a child began to get his second teeth. When a child was going about the village with several gaps in his front teeth, his companions jeered at him if he still slept in his grandmother's hut, and his father took the view that it was time he stopped playing like a child and took up seriously the job of herding goats and calves. There was often some hesitation, especially among boys who were not so well grown for their age, at taking the plunge and going to live in the *laweni*, since once made the step could not be retraced. It was primarily an individual decision. It meant leaving the protective affectionate care of the grandmother in the evenings, and the care-free play all day round the mother's hut with meals provided by her, for a different sort of existence altogether. *Laweni* life was rigorous and was dominated by the senior boys living in the hut. The younger ones were at their mercy, and were made to 'fag' for their elders, clean up the hut, sometimes steal food from their mothers' stores, and were beaten if they were slow or careless, or if they threatened to tell the
[626] elders in the village what went on in the *laweni*. The main weapon to get boys into the *laweni* was the ridicule of their fellows. Once members of the *laweni* group they were disciplined into obedience by threats and beating. The age range within a *laweni* was often considerable, from seven to seventeen years.

233 All the boys in a *laweni* who were members of houses possessing
857 cattle—and this as a rule included all sons of Ngoni families of trans-
561 Zambesi clans—had to take part in herding. Cattle-herding was a responsible task and could be an arduous one. The boys got up before dawn, opened the gate of the kraal, and took the cattle to water. They milked the cattle on an open space near the village and carried the milk in wooden jars, gourds or petrol tins to the owner of the cattle, keeping

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

some for themselves as their perquisite. They then drove the cattle to 233
pasture, and this might be some distance away when grass was scarce in 857
the dry season. They sometimes drove the cattle back near the village to 561
rest at noon under the shade trees, but if the pasture was far away the cattle rested there and went on feeding later. They were brought back to the kraal in the late afternoon and counted by one of the senior men.

The herd-boys taught each other to fight with sticks, to wrestle, to [868]
catch rats and small birds, to use the knobkerry, catapults, and bows and arrows. Sometimes in the afternoon they went to other villages and challenged another herd to a fight between bulls.[1] During the long day's herding, the boys used to drink milk, make *amasi* (milk curds) in a gourd and eat it, bake birds in clay and roast ears of maize taken from their mothers' grain stores. Precedence among the herd-boys depended [554]
first on age and only secondly on the rank and position of the families they belonged to. There was an easily recognizable air of authority and almost of arrogance among the older boys responsible for their fathers' and uncles' cattle. They superintended the process of letting out the cattle, milking them, driving them to pasture and the return to the [492]
kraal in the evening. Mounted on donkeys, wearing large straw hats made by themselves, the senior boys acted like ranch owners bossing up inefficient work hands.

This period of living in the *laweni* was, as we have seen, shared by boys 561
of a wide age group. In a large village where there were two or three or 866
four *laweni*, there was often one in each section, which generally meant that the boys belonging to one *banja* or section shared one *laweni*. This had the effect of dividing them up to some extent on a basis of family and rank, but in a *laweni* serving a whole village all the boys went in together whatever families they came from. There was no respecting of clan [565]
status in the *laweni* and young boys of high-ranking families had to wait on and obey older boys of lower rank. *Laweni* life was therefore a democratizing influence among the boys of the village, and no boys were excused from herding cattle because they belonged to a house which owned cattle. Even if some went to school and others did not, the school-boys had to take their share of herding in the holidays. Ngoni chiefs and leading men laid great emphasis on keeping the boys busy and making them carry out the work allotted to them. The older boys began to listen [867]
in at court cases and to discuss them among themselves. During the wet season from time to time they formed hoeing parties for clearing new ground and for the periodical weeding of gardens. They seldom did any continuous cultivation, as the women and the older men did, and a boy who liked to go off and hoe by himself was pointed out as one with rather peculiar tastes.

During this period of *laweni* life, when in addition to herding the

[1] For the relation between the training of herd-boys and preparation for war, see Part II, Chap. I, p. 30.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

father, had been a fierce ruler, and had gathered round him bands of young men who were not easily restrained. Though they could judge his character in this objective way, they respected his office, and hence his death and the confiscation of cattle which followed were a deep injury to Ngoni pride. So thirty years after his death they collected money and put up the memorial, and the appeal was supported for three main reasons. One was to commemorate this Paramount who had not had the traditional cremation by a river; another was to remove the shame of his death; the last was to draw together all his people in a common act. Every year numbers of Ngoni gathered at this memorial and held a Christian service which was followed by a general meeting. This memorial service and meeting had a definite link with the ancestor cult, and illustrated in a particular form Ngoni beliefs in the relation of the living and the dead.

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In the 1930's, as we saw in Chapter III of Part I, the form of Ngoni funerals and the ritual of mourning were closely related to the ancestor cult and were practised by the Ngoni aristocracy. These forms of ritual and their beliefs they brought with them from the south, and they were an important part of Ngoni culture. We shall see in a later chapter how some of these cultural elements were combined with Christian ritual, both for leading individuals of Swazi clans and for lesser members of those clans.

CHAPTER II

CATTLE AND THE ANCESTOR CULT

There are many references throughout this study to the importance of cattle among the Ngoni. In this chapter the place of cattle in Ngoni life will be examined with reference to the ancestor cult, and hence certain limitations have been imposed in the selection of material and its interpretation. There will, for example, be no analysis of the role of cattle in the economic life of Ngoni families and villages. Much of the material discussed has an economic significance which is immediately apparent, but the limitations set will not allow the economic implications of certain practices to be pursued further here. It is important for the main purpose of this chapter to make a brief analysis of some factors in the ownership, care, and use of cattle, and to follow that with references to some of the values and attitudes inherent in the Ngoni ownership and use of cattle. I made a preliminary analysis of these factors in a memorandum on standards of living in the central kingdom, published

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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121 in 1938.[1] The sociological and ritual significance of these factors will be
233 the chief emphasis here, with reference to earlier chapters in this book on Ngoni culture and on the structure of Ngoni society.

233 In the sociological significance of cattle-ownership there are certain
554 outstanding points to be emphasized, which will be indicated here and
565 developed further in the analysis which follows. One is the connexion between cattle-ownership and status, illustrated by the dominance of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in village life, since their possession of cattle was related to the kraal and to the siting of huts and to their house organization. The cattle horns on the roof of the *indlunkulu* were no trivial ornament. They were a proud assertion of cattle-ownership attached to the residences of the leading women, with all the implications of 'house herds' of cattle and of *lobola* given and received. Closely related to cattle-ownership and status was the power conferred by the possession of herds. The status of leading families was enhanced by the ability to give feasts, to give *lobola* for their sons' wives, to make sacrifices to the ancestors and, as we saw at the end of the last chapter, to realize cash by the sale of beasts belonging to the herd. Cattle-owners did at times have to decide whether to maintain and augment their herds and thereby be known as wealthy cattle-owning families; or to sell cattle in order to command labour to build a modern brick house, or to buy fine clothes for their wives and display their wealth in another form.

182 In the organization of Ngoni society, cattle were an important factor
233 in uniting groups of persons. We have seen how the house, as a group
621 of men and women, and its variant, the central Ngoni form of *banja*, had common possession of a herd of cattle which formed a source of wealth for all members of the house. Within the house the senior men were bound together by the responsibilities attached to the ownership and care of a herd. Within the village the senior men of a house or *banja* united in the upkeep of the kraal, the supervision of the herd-boys, the tending of sick cattle, and in meeting or resisting the Government's demands for culling or dipping stock. Where cattle were boarded out in another village, ties of association in the care of the beasts and in accountability for them bound together the cattle-owners or cattle-keepers of more than one village. A stage in the adjustment of a young wife to a strange village was reached when she added to the herd of the house she had married into the gift cattle given her by her father and so partly compensated for those which had been given to him by her husband's family. A new wife's standing in a village was thus advanced through any cattle which flowed in the opposite direction from those of the *lobola* cattle. Finally, and this is the main theme of this chapter, cattle were an essential link between the living and the dead.

[1] Read, M, *Native Standards of Living and African Culture Change*. Memorandum XVI of International African Institute, 1938.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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The relation of cattle-ownership to social integration, which was so marked a feature of Ngoni society, was limited to the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. There was evidence that the acquisition of herds by former captives and by the local Cewa and other tribes created conflicts within the society. The following statement was made by an Ntumba village headman, commenting on several court cases relating to cattle-ownership. The reference in the last sentence is to the Ngoni practice in the ownership of cattle.

¶ Sometimes people say 'If your father was caught and was the slave of a certain person, and also if your mother was caught and was a slave of another man, then if you buy cattle and put them in the kraal of your father, those who caught your father say "These cattle are mine (or ours)." And those who caught your mother say "These cattle are ours." ' They all say so because it was they who caught your ancestors. So those cattle do not recognize their real owner. And sometimes those cattle do not bear well, and sometimes they just die.

Then perhaps you die and leave your cattle, and those people are quarrelling to find out who is the owner of those cattle, since there are three people who want those same cattle: your father, the one who caught your father, and the one who caught your mother.

And it is really best if there are many masters that you, a child, should not buy cattle, but just leave off because they are a source of trouble. But one who is a free man without any masters, he ought to buy cattle because there will be no trouble for him.

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Among the local Cewa tribes, when a man wanted to start a herd and had money to buy cattle, he was expected to give the money to his *malume* (mother's brother) who then bought the cattle and took charge of them and regarded them as his.[1] This assertion of ownership of cattle bought with another man's money was part of the services to which the mother's brother was entitled from his sister's children, in return for services which he had performed or would perform for them. If those relationships between a man and his *malume* were not working smoothly and the *malume* was not helping his nephew, there was a tendency for the man to turn to his own father and give him the money, and vest the ownership of the cattle in him, often because the father had paid the school fees or a court fine for his son. When the *malume* realized that his position had been usurped and that his chance of owning cattle had gone, his dislike of the man's father and his family showed itself in jealousy and quarrels between the two individuals and friction between the families. The Cewa matrilineal *mbumba* as a cattle-owning group under a senior man had not the continuity of the Ngoni house, for an *mbumba* was said to be 'finished' when a woman and all

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[1] The Cewa believed that if cattle were to survive and increase, they had to be owned and cared for by senior men. On the highlands round Dedza the Cewa had had cattle before the Ngoni came.

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her daughters had died, and the herd of cattle was either inherited by the senior daughter's eldest son or divided among the sons of different daughters. Cewa informants said that quarrels constantly arose over the ownership of cattle, and two modern developments—the spread of *utengwa*[1] marriage and of a patrilineal form of *mbumba* with its repercussions on cattle acquisition and disposal—caused further tensions in Cewa society.

The role which cattle played in Ngoni social life partly depended on the structure and inter-relationships of the Ngoni social groups. The house and the family within the larger village unit were so organized that group ownership and group disposal of cattle caused no permanent friction. There were arguments about the disposal of cattle, but they were temporary and relatively trivial. The strength of tradition in the concept of ownership, and in the values and attitudes inherent in cattle-owning and keeping, was firmly established and was related to modern needs by the ingenuity of the Ngoni in manipulating traditional practices to suit new situations. Cattle therefore strengthened the integration of existing social units, and helped to preserve that unity and cohesion in Ngoni society which the ancestors were said to commend and to wish for. On this plane of conformity to a required pattern, cattle influenced the living and their behaviour. They also, through the structure and function of the houses, belonged to the spirit who was guarded in a particular house. As we shall see in Chapter IV, the ritual formula of address to the ancestor at the sacrifice of a beast was always 'Here is your beast . . . Here is your meat.' The living and the dead were joined therefore in the common ownership of a herd or part of a herd. The actual practices in social and ritual life where cattle were concerned, and the ideas and concepts from which the practices arose, will take up most of this chapter and form the necessary prelude to the further analysis of the ancestor cult.

Ownership of cattle and care of herds

'The war of the cattle-tax' was the name given in the central kingdom to the installation of dipping tanks in the 1930's and the levying of a tax of a shilling per head of cattle on all cattle-owners. The attempt by the Government to focus responsibility for dipping and to collect the taxes due brought out clearly the difficulties of applying English conceptions of ownership to the Ngoni. In the English meaning of the word ownership, a man can claim as his possession cattle which he has bought or inherited, and their offspring. This individual ownership means that he alone has the right to sell the animals or their milk, to regard the profits from such sale as his, and at any time to kill an animal for meat. He can will them to his descendants or to anyone he chooses after his

[1] Marriages in which the man took his wife to live in his village, but did not give *lobola* for her.

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death, or he can give them to anyone he likes during his lifetime. Hence individual acquisition in the English sense involves the legal right of individual disposal; the individual possession of profits from such disposal; and the individual responsibility for complying with any regulations concerning cattle, such as inoculation, slaughter for foot-and-mouth disease, and testing of milk.

In Ngoni usage the concept of ownership involved the acquisition and disposal of, and the responsibility for, cattle, but behind this apparent similarity of terms lay a wide difference in interpretation. Cattle could be acquired by inheritance, by natural increase, by *lobola*, as payment in a court case, as a gift, or by purchase. Formerly cattle could be acquired in warfare and raiding, but never by purchase. With this exception of buying cattle for cash, the methods of acquiring cattle had not altered since the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland. In pre-European days in the Ngoni kingdoms only the Paramount, the subordinate chiefs, the *alumuzana* and the big *izinduna* possessed cattle. Having a herd marked the owner as a leading member of a leading clan, or as a famous warrior of a lesser clan whose distinguished war service had been rewarded by the Paramount giving him cattle, or allowing him to keep some of those he had taken from the enemy. New herds were formed when a Paramount or a chief moved out of his father's village and set up his own *lusungulu* village, taking with him one or more of his mothers who, together with his big wife, set up houses in the new village, and these houses were allotted cattle from the former undivided herd. Another way in which a herd was divided was when a big *induna* in charge of the house of a leading wife of a Paramount or a chief built a kraal for the cattle of that house near his own huts, and added to that herd any cattle which he acquired. Large Ngoni villages in pre-European days usually had one or more kraals on the edge of the village, as well as the big central one. When the large villages broke up and the *induna* moved off to found his own village, he still took care of the cattle of that house. If the house was one where an ancestral spirit was guarded, a successor was always appointed to live in the hut and guard the spirit. Hence the relationship of the house, its spirit guardian, its cattle and the *induna* in charge continued, though the personalities changed through death and for other reasons. This explained how in the 1930's cattle were found in one kraal which were said to belong to a house or a woman guardian of a spirit miles away in another village. Sometimes they were described as the cattle of a man long dead.

It is clear, therefore, that the Ngoni methods of acquiring cattle and building up herds did not result in a concept of individual ownership. Cattle were not willed from father to son, but the son of a Paramount or a chief, when he made his new *lusungulu* village, had the right to receive and to take with him the cattle of his mother's house; and the head of the *gogo* village who stayed behind also received and looked after the

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

233 422 cattle of *his* mother's house and those of other widows of his father, even though the widows remarried and went to live elsewhere. The ownership of a herd, in the sense of authority to acquire and to dispose of the cattle, was in fact vested in the senior male members belonging to each house in whose name cattle were held. This senior male leadership of a house had, in the central kingdom, a parallel in the senior male members of a *banja*. The implication in both was the same—that there was a group of senior men linked by membership of a house or a *banja*, who took responsibility for all the cattle in the herd of that house or *banja* and for all additions to the herd. Any new beasts acquired through natural increase, *lobola*, court payments, gifts, or purchase, by any member of that house went into the herd belonging to it. Thus it was easy for young men working in the south to send back money to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. They knew the choice would be well made and that the cattle would be well cared for until their return.

The right of disposal of cattle in a herd belonging to a house or *banja* was based on the same concept of ownership. The senior male group had to decide which beasts to send for the *lobola* when a young man of [476] their house married. They undertook, as owners of the cattle, to pay fines in court cases when a member of the house was fined. If money was needed, either by the group as a whole or by an individual member, a beast was chosen and sold by the senior men; part of the proceeds was given to the individual who needed help, and part either buried under the floor of the hut of the woman who was head of the house, or converted into cloth and stored in the hut. Gifts of cattle were sometimes [431] given to important visitors, or as an expression of sympathy when mourning at a funeral, or for a sacrifice to the ancestors. On all such occasions the decision to dispose of one or more beasts and the selection of them were in the hands of the senior male group. Though prolonged discussion might go on before a decision to sell or make a gift was made, once there was agreement the selection was often made very quickly. The leading men would go to the kraal, point out the beasts to the herd-boys, and tell them to drive them to the appointed place.

233 The care of the herds was primarily the responsibility of the senior men, though the actual herding was delegated to the herd-boys. Informants said that in pre-European days great care was taken of the animals in the rainy season; the ant-hills in the kraal were preserved so that the animals might get out of the mud, and calf-houses with roofs were always provided for shelter for the calves. I saw some calf-houses of this kind, and some kraals with ant-hills left in them, but neither was common practice, and the reason given was that the kraals and herds were much smaller than in pre-European days.

There were two chief objectives in the care of herds: that the cattle should keep well and avoid disease, and that they should multiply. The

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

cattle never came back to the kraal in the evening without one or more of the senior men standing by the gate and watching them and counting them as they went in. Sick cattle were noted and the herd-boys questioned about them. Mating was observed and noted, but not regulated, though poorly developed male beasts were sometimes castrated by one of the men who had acquired skill as a cattle doctor. Such a man would also administer drenches and other medicines, but the responsibility for calling a *sing'anga*, the specialist in medicines, to perform a ritual for a sick beast was taken by the whole group. They also made the decision to call a *sing'anga* to protect the kraal against lions. On several occasions I was in a village where lions attempted to get into the kraal at night, and the next morning the senior men who were responsible for the herd discussed the efficacy of this or that man's 'lion medicine' and decided who should be sent for to make the kraal safe again.

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The testimony of early Europeans in Nyasaland and the accounts by the Ngoni of their life in the pre-European period agree in giving the consumption of meat, milk, and blood a high place in the diet of the cattle-owning families. It was a widespread European criticism in the

178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly
231 related to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
437 of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Money was needed for good
554 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling,
[453] except among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Values and attitudes in cattle-ownership

114 Any attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquiring, caring for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive
233 survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place
565 in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is not possible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba clans whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading clans and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.

231 The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they repre-
556 sented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of ritual for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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852 Children of Ngoni families, as also these others, chose their
304 own time to have their ears pierced, though sometimes their father or father's sister or father's mother reminded them that it was about time. It was nearly always soon after the second teeth had come, and children who delayed having it done were taunted by their fellows: 'You, are you afraid, my age-mate? See my ears already have bone in them.' This
[237] was a reference to the round plugs of bone inserted when the hole was large enough. A bit of thread was put in at first, then a small bit of grass, then a fine reed, and finally a bone plug. Ear piercing was always done in the cold weather so that the lobe of the ear would heal quickly. It was carried out by a leading woman of one of the Ngoni families, who watched the children to see how they took it. They knew it was a test of courage, and however much they were afraid it would hurt,
[152] they stood like little statues during the operation, with a face as set and expressionless as when they were being beaten.

Accountability for individual behaviour was one aspect of
866 the responsibility which Ngoni adults now began to demand
868 from children. Another aspect was the performance of their allotted tasks. The responsibility for cattle herding was in a sense a corporate responsibility of all the boys whose fathers owned cattle. The older herd-boys had in fact to answer for
[233] the condition of the cattle they brought back every evening to their owners. They passed on, however, a number of small duties, such as care of the calves, sheep and goats, to the younger boys, who in turn were held responsible by the older boys for performing these duties. The boys' world, centred in the dormitory, recognized grades of responsibility from which no one escaped.

Another facet of responsibility which was at a later stage
868 remarked on often by Ngoni adults, was seen in children's
[517] choice of leisure-time occupations, according to their individual manual and intellectual and artistic capacities. They stopped playing childish games and began instead to develope their skills in making things from local materials.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

524 of the riddle. An unexpected reply or a good guess often drew applause, even if it was not the accepted correct answer.

535 Before it was dark, all the herd-boys joined in what they called 'drill' on the flat space where they milked the cows
857 in front of the kraal gate. As a rule this 'drill' was practising for the *ngoma* dance which took place after harvest and was the only dance for boys and girls approved by the Ngoni rulers. Sometimes they varied this dance, practising with swift follow-my-leader manœuvres, turning, twisting, lifting sticks, knocking knobkerries together, stamping, whistling.
[534] As we have said already, the Ngoni had no drums, and all the precision and rhythm in any dances or concerted movements depended on exact timing and following the leader. The accuracy and precision reached was remarkable, and represented a high degree of intense concentration and co-operation among the dancers or 'drillers', who developed an almost intuitive knowledge of what the leader was going to do next. This dancing was practised in front of the men and older youths on purpose. They criticized it freely, and sometimes, though rarely, praised the boys. More often they came forward to show them how to do it better.

233 For the greater part of the day the herd-boys were with the cattle. They rose before it was light, undid the kraal gate,
857 and as dawn broke led the cattle to the river. Then they went to the grazing grounds which according to the season were near or far from the village. As the dry season advanced and the grass became poorer, they had to go farther afield to find grazing. They returned to the village about ten o'clock
[234] and milked the cows and took the milk in gourds to the senior women, keeping some as their own perquisite. The cattle were driven under some trees to rest during the heat of the day, and taken to the grazing ground again about two and brought back about five, watered and put in the kraal and the gate was closed. Variations in this time-table depended on the seasons, the quality of the pasture, and on whether the herd-boys went to school or not.

VILLAGE LIFE FOR OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS

The youngest boys were not expected to herd cattle until they were ten or eleven years old. Their work was to look after the calves, sheep and goats, sometimes following the cattle to the grazing ground, sometimes wandering round the edge of the village, avoiding the cultivated areas until after harvest. At that time cattle, calves, sheep and goats were driven into the stubble and left to forage. 233 857 561

As a result of dormitory life, combined with cattle-herding, a definite ideal herd-boy personality developed. This was fostered by the hero-worship of the older herd-boys by the young ones. It was also built up by the praise or blame meted out for herding well or badly by the older herd-boys to younger ones, and by the cattle-owners. This 'ideal herdsman' was used by Ngoni ministers and teachers living in the villages to relate their teaching about Christianity to the life around them. Prayers near the kraal, conducted by an Ngoni minister each evening, or before people went on a journey, often began with the words 'Jesus our shepherd, keep us well'. Young teachers often said to me how they always listened as boys when a prayer began like this, and that in school their favourite Bible story was that of David the herd-boy. 155 157 157 797

When there was a school in the village or near by which the Ngoni elders approved of, the herd-boys had a busy life. They watered the cattle very early, took them to graze and milked them. Then they went to school from ten to two, taking the cattle out grazing afterwards. In the cold weather they went to school from six to ten and herded cattle the rest of the day, after the sun had dried the dew off the grass. School attendance depended on the attitude of fathers to the new learning, and how the village elders regarded the local mission and its teachers. The boys whose fathers had no cattle, in general the non-Ngoni elements in the village, were free to attend school continuously since they had no herding responsibilities. There was some jeering among the boys in the dormitory at those who only went to school and did not 233 857 872 872

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to establish their hold. The Ngoni elders said the missions did not like it, and alleged that they gave it up for this reason. But they held on to other rituals also not approved by the missions, and it was probably largely due to the fact that there were no longer large herds of cattle to provide lavish feasts. The songs were remembered and sung by the older women when dancing the special dances associated with the ritual, holding in their hands short rods and small rounded shields, and making stiff jerking movements of head and elbows. Such dances as were put on for me were however a relic and not a living tradition. For the Ngoni girl of good family there was no longer any intervening ritual between her private puberty ceremony and the marriage ceremony.

The marriage age of girls, like that of men, was much earlier than formerly, the most usual age being from sixteen upwards. Most of the older women held that this left very little time in which to teach girls all that they were expected to know before being married and leaving their own home and their father's village for good. This was a particular cause of anxiety to the senior women in areas where the young men emigrated soon after marriage, and where the girl had to maintain her own position and reputation among his relatives without his companionship and support.

Young adults in Ngoni society

We have just seen that cultural changes coming from the outside radically altered the traditional pattern of development of Ngoni youths and girls. The net result of these changes was to telescope the period between physical maturity at puberty and full adult status at marriage, to squeeze the former eight to ten years of this intervening period into about two for the girls and four at most for the youths. This shortened period of preparation for full adult life raised a number of problems for the Ngoni elders. They were aware, as was suggested in the beginning of this chapter, that the attainment of physical maturity called for some re-alignment

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

128 point, and other kinds of knowledge which in Ngoni culture were the basis for performing certain traditional activities. This second part of the chapter I have called traditional skills, to avoid the clumsiness of constantly differentiating between knowledge, skill and activities. Again, as in the first part of the chapter, we have to be selective, and I have 128 chosen a few out of the typical Ngoni skills taught to young 868 adults to make them efficient producers in the village economy, able to manage and direct various units of workers, and to be 'good company' in those pursuits which were for leisure time enjoyment. The young men's traditional skills which we [462] shall look at are the care of cattle, hunting and some of their crafts; the young women's are the care of property, the storage and use of food-stuffs and some women's crafts. At the end of the chapter we shall look at certain Ngoni 'arts', which demanded individual and corporate skill of a special nature.

Men's skills: Care of cattle

868 The senior herd-boys, sons of cattle-owners, carried considerable responsibilities for the herds under their care during 233 the day. By the time they gave up herding they had learned a great deal about cattle. Understanding about what constituted good herding had been handed on to them by their seniors, and they were well aware that losing an animal, failing to find good grazing so that the beasts became thin, letting them escape into the cultivated fields—all these were signs of bad herding and they would be punished accordingly by the cattle-owners. The daily scrutiny of the herds by the owners was made the occasion for blame or commendation. Every evening the owners of the cattle stood by the kraal gate as the boys drove the animals in, and the head herd-boys reported to the owners if a cow was sick, or if a bull had been mating.

Cattle-owners, since they were anxious that any cases of illness should be promptly reported, made a point of calling

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

231 561 severed portions. On branches of fresh leaves, brought by the younger herd-boys, were piled the sections of the animal, down to the last bit of intestine, for distribution according to a fixed Ngoni pattern.

231 825 A senior man of the house owning the beast, when all was ready, 'counted' all the parts, that is he named each part, head, horns, tail, feet, joints and internal organs, and each was pointed out to him as being present. The herd-boys stand- [868] ing round learned the names of the organs and the sections of the animal, and heard the names and status of the men to whom the parts were assigned. The herd-boys of the family of the owner were given certain symbolic parts: an ear, an eye and the nose, for hearing, seeing and smelling; parts of an artery and of an intestine as controlling the blood flow and the waste material, and the rectum as ejecting waste; and the foot for walking steadily and fast.

Some of the meat was roasted over a fire, parts like the 252 stomach and intestines were cleaned and boiled, some was [251] dried slowly on a rack over a fire of green wood, and put in fibre bags for keeping. The blood was taken to the head woman of the house owning the herd. She cooked it with the fat round the kidneys till it coagulated and formed a dish, salty and meaty, much liked by the Ngoni, and rather akin to black pudding. The women also took over any spare fat and rendered it down and clarified it to use as [278] unguents.

233 868 The young adult who had had six or seven years of herding cattle and had advanced to be a senior herd-boy, had acquired not only certain manual skills such as those just described, but also some knowledge of the anatomy of cattle, some idea of the social attitudes towards cattle and their ownership, and some idea of their economic value to the Ngoni. For certain restricted ritual purposes, a cow in calf had to be killed for sacrifice, and herd-boys saw the foetus removed when the cow was cut up. They were also often present at the birth of calves in the bush, and had to wait

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [248] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 177 233 234

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 natural translation for Ngoni young men to become butchers
233 and dairymen, if they could apprentice themselves to a rela-
234 tive, or if their father could put up the necessary capital outlay for starting independently. This conversion of knowledge and traditional skill into a channel offering higher rewards in cash incomes found the young Ngoni adult well prepared to earn his living.

Hunting

224 There was an aura of manhood and of distinction about all forms of hunting among the Ngoni. They did it because they enjoyed it, and not seriously to augment their family's food supply. There were two main corporate forms of hunting: the chase, when hare and deer were hunted with dogs; and killing lions and leopards. The first was the pursuit of a Ngoni gentleman which no one wanted to miss during the right season; and the second was the act of warriors defending themselves and their cattle and villages from marauders.

Ngoni boys in their herding days acquired some of the
868 skills needed later for hunting with the men. They made
224 traps to catch birds from the hair of cows tails or smeared bird lime on branches. They developed great adroitness at hitting birds on the wing with knobkerries. In these pursuits, which for them were half fun, half to get bits of extra food, they were training their eye, learning to observe the habits of birds and small animals, learning to track them, and developing that combination of patience, prompt action and accuracy of aim essential to successful hunting.

Some of the Ngoni men liked to go off hunting on their own, usually those who had a gun. Fathers used to take their sons on such hunting trips, and use the opportunity to teach them how to track successfully, how to put up with hunger and thirst on long marches, how to load and fire a gun. One young man described how his father used to point out to him on such trips the birds and butterflies in the bush. On one trip his father taught him to use his muzzle-loading gun, how

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 24 343 24 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 262 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 462 [559] [514] [437]

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
MARAVI FR4

to clear large enough gardens at the new site in the first year a part of the old gardens can be used, for it is easy to travel back and forward between the old and new villages. The majority of the moves were of this order and no assistance was required or given. In the case of longer moves, heavy household goods and food stocks were transported by motor lorry, or in some instances when it was convenient to do so the entire grain stock was bought at the old village and food, purchased locally, was sold at the new site. This enabled the people to give the whole of their time to preparing a large garden acreage in the first year. The great majority of villages moving for moderate or long distances (twenty five to seventy miles) succeeded in preparing large enough gardens and growing sufficient food for themselves in the first year. A few did not, for one reason or another, such as starting too late, a bad season or just plain laziness, and these villages were supplied with food in the first season either in return for work or on promise of repayment after a good harvest. Less than 5 per cent of villages received such relief.

§ 10. *The Progress of Resettlement*

It was estimated that, in order to restore a complete population-land balance, about 141,300 people would have to be moved from the Reserves of the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts. No such movement was, in fact, possible. The total carrying capacity of the land available for resettlement which contained a vast mass of escarpment hills and other large areas of almost useless land, was estimated to be 78,000 people. This land was, of necessity, allocated to the tribal groups in the following way:

Ngoni and Chewa	:	Sufficient land	for	35,000	people
Senga	:	"	"	35,000	"
Ambo	:	"	"	8,000	"

Thus in the case of the Ngoni and Chewa the available land was totally insufficient to allow of the restoration of a population-land balance, while in the case of the other peoples such a balance could be achieved.

Two alternatives were possible; to re-distribute the Ngoni and Chewa populations more or less evenly over the new land and the Reserves, in which case both would be over-populated in relation to their carrying capacities, or to populate the new land to the maximum of its carrying capacity, leaving the Reserves still over-populated. The latter course was adopted for a variety of reasons, including the fact that much of the new land was tsetse infested and the keeping of cattle and development of mixed farming would not be possible at least for a very considerable time. The Reserves, on the other hand, carried many cattle and, with reduction of the population by resettlement, would be able to support their populations on a basis of mixed farming.

Movement was therefore designed to populate the new areas to the maximum of their carrying capacity and to reduce the agricultural problem

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M 575 535 [534]

so that anyone coming that way may see "medicine" and turn aside. After which, all bathe in the stream, and the ceremonies are over.

During a *vingwe* dance six drums are always used, namely, the *mphonje* (five or six feet in length, and beaten at one end only); the *ndewere* (another large drum three feet in length), or the *mbulule*; the *mbondambanda* and the *mtiwiso* (of medium size about two feet long); and two *kambumbu* (small drums eighteen inches in length). These are beaten by men detailed by the headman or *chiwinda*; but there are no special drums appertaining exclusively to particular *milkhunda* or songs. The big village drum always belongs to the headman; the others are privately owned, and are hired out for a small fee, such as an *nacngwe* basket. Before use they are always warmed first at the fire.

M N 423 [425]

4. *Property.*

Land was acquired by the Achewa by occupation and by the Angoni by conquest. It was divided by the paramount chief among his lieutenants, who in turn divided their sections among the heads of lesser groups or families. Each headman now allots land to his villagers; and if they move the village to a new site, everyone retains possession of the garden which he held before. The allottee is entitled to trees, anthcaps, honey or anything else on his plot; and he may sell crops or other produce, but may not sell or lease the land itself. When reaping his crop, he presents a basket of maize to his headman.

M N [422]

In the home, the wife must provide the pots, and they are her personal property. The husband must supply her with baskets, hoes, etc.; but everything which pertains to woman's work belongs to the wife. The produce of a garden is the equal property of both. After a boy has passed through his initiation, he is given a small garden of his own. When, as in the case of the Achewa, he leaves the village to marry, the garden reverts to the chief, who is always spoken of as the owner of the land, since it is he who divides it out among his people.

N [622]

N 422 233

The majority of the cattle owners are Angoni. Possession is individual; but all the animals in one village are kept in one open kraal belonging to the village headman, who selects small boys to look after them. Herdsmen were formerly unpaid; but now, when a beast is sold, killed or otherwise removed, they receive a present from the owner, as also does the headman. There is no fixed fee; but the owner of a dozen head may give the headman a calf every other year, while the owner of one or two only gives him a goat. If a man living in a village where there is no kraal buys cattle, he frequently places them in the care of a friend at a neighbouring village where there is a kraal, instead of handing them over to his own headman. The friend makes his own arrangement with the headman; but the friend is liable to the owner, and the usual payment is made to the friend, who divides it with the headman.

N 672 233

If a beast dies in the kraal, there is no liability, provided that the headman (or responsible friend) informs the owner, so that the latter can make use of the meat. Should the headman or friend fail to do this, he must pay the owner a live animal of the same age and sex. Where loss occurs through the carelessness of a herdsman, a case for damages lies against him. Sometimes cows calve in the kraal, but generally they wander off into the bush for the purpose; if they are then lost, or killed by carnivora, there is no liability. If a cow sold as sound dies

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the headman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good one; and the headman in return hands over three other animals of similar ages. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organization: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Achewa consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'anga* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'anga* under Chief Chiwere was Chimongo, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unawares, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a stout resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'anga* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the *chiwanda* or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connexion with women. Next day, they burned goats' bones, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Shelters are erected on

the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may stay behind to look after the cattle. Streams are in spate at this time of year, and some men build garden byres to which they move their cattle to avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the gardens is important from the point of view of inter-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so that they are adjacent to those of kindred from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in *her* dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organizing public works, and that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as reported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and may be up to 20 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead. Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle

[1] Elmslie, p. 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are 857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve 233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the [868] cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather 628 than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into 233 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between 857 the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between [541] the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

233 In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd- 833 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village 857 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief, 631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sophisticated informant remarked: 'The Cewa are just slaves, they merely eat. The Ngoni are like the Whites; they eat little and drink much.' 273 262 829

Economic Co-operation

There are other activities which entail inter-village ties. Cattle seek their own fodder, but small stock, pigs, goats, and sheep, are fed on husks and other scraps. A man whose animals have increased beyond his ability to feed them will farm out some of them to his friends, either in his own village or in some neighbouring one. The tender of the animals then exercises some control over the disposal of any natural increase and at the end of the arrangement he is entitled to be given one of the animals. The friends whom a man selects for this task are not always close relatives, and may sometimes be people to whom he can trace no genealogical relationship at all, but whom he may have met, for instance, in Southern Rhodesia. Other people acquire a reputation for integrity, and may be given animals to look after by their acquaintances. Cattle are not disposed of so widely, and there is more often a kinship connexion between the owner and the tender. On the other hand, cattle are more susceptible than small stock to tsetse fly, and in consequence there are many people in the new areas that have been recently resettled who have to keep their cattle in the village of a relative or friend who lives in an area free from fly. 233 476 628

Harvesting of crops is carried out by members of the household except in the case of the aged, who will call on their relatives to help them. Hut-building, making a new section of a garden, clearing the ground prior to planting, and, in particular, weeding the garden during the wet season, are activities that are often carried out by collective effort. Women, particularly pairs of widows, may work together in each other's gardens turn and turn about, and a man may be able to call on relatives, particularly his sons-in-law, to help in his garden without paying them for it. Most of the outside assistance that may be required in a garden is raised by means of a beer-party. The man's wife brews beer, and it is made known in the village and round about that on such-and-such a day there will be a party to hoe in their garden. A dozen or so people go to the garden in the morning, and work until the task set by the owner of the garden is completed. They then move to the village, and are refreshed with beer. Attendance at the beer-party is not restricted to those who have worked in the garden, and at some such parties a jar of beer may be specifically allocated to 241 476 602 273 476 241

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

can live in the village and cultivate a garden. The maintenance of 464
contacts is facilitated by the fairly general cessation of work on the 249
farms at the week-ends. Apart from two periods of tobacco slump, the local demand for labour has exceeded the supply ever since the earlier period of European settlement. As early as January 1900 the manager of the North Charterland Exploration Company complained to the Administration that the lack of local labour was very serious, and attributed this to the large number of people who were going away to work in Southern Rhodesia. This theme has been repeated over and over again ever since. The practical effect of this chronic local shortage of labour has been that work on the farms has always been a more easy-going affair than work away on the mines or in the big towns. Men have been able to absent themselves from work to attend to their affairs at home very much as they have pleased. Payment has been either for piece-work or for the number of days worked, so that [465] at one time it was not unusual for a man to take two or three months to complete thirty days' work, for which he had contracted.

Prior to about 1930, there were a few villages located on farm-land, 361
whose inhabitants undertook to work for so many days, with pay, in 465
return for permission to remain on the land. With the completion of 466
the move into reserves, this became rare, and at the present time the bulk of the people who live on farm-land are accommodated in compounds provided for them by the farmer. These people are the labourers on the farm for the time being, their families, and friends. The compound is under the charge of a foreman who is usually an employee of long standing on the farm. On some of the farms there [244]
are small gardens, but none of them, as far as I know, permit the 233
keeping of cattle by the labourers. This means that a man with cattle must continue to keep them at home in his village or in the village of a relative. Cattle are still the principal form of investment, particularly for people who cannot spend their capital in building a brick house, so that it is common to find in a village that many of the cattle in the byre are being tended for the benefit of an absent owner who spends the majority of his time away on a farm and who may not even have a hut in the village.

The demand for labour on the tobacco farms varies considerably 249
with the time of year, being greatest from about Christmas until about 464
June. At the same time, the calls on a man to tend his own garden are greatest from about November until May. Farmers therefore try to get labour for a few days at a time from people who live in villages

/13 cont'd/

273 Beer drinking is one of the most important social occupations, and a considerable proportion of maize is consumed in this way. Brewing takes six days to complete, but two weeks more are required to prepare the sprouted maize that is an essential ingredient. Once brewed, the beer remains drinkable for two or three days, but the partially brewed beer, of smaller alcoholic content, is also drunk. Beer is brewed for many reasons, for working parties in the garden or housebuilding, for selling at threepence a bowl, or as often as not, just for drinking. Finger millet is used in beer making, and if available, the whole maize flour from a grinding machine, as well as the white maize flour of the village. The beer is brewed in large ten-gallon pots, then poured into smaller four-gallon pots that can be carried about, and from these ladled with a gourd into bowls or ornamental gourd cups. Four-gallon petrol tins are sometimes used instead of pots, and large enamelware mugs instead of bowls. Very rarely, beer is drunk from glasses.

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13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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[622] honoured one. The mother of the headman was almost more powerful than her son. And we always take good care when we enter a new village to win the kindly favour of the old grandmother first of all. Then we are sure we have found a way to the son's heart. One of the most beautiful things in our tribal life is the honour which is paid to the grey hairs of the village. The bent and helpless old men who lived through the glorious fighting
[623] days, and understand all precedent and etiquette are the judges and councillors. And no case can be tried, no decision can be made, until the old men give their presence and their opinion. It is hard when the young are leaping ahead of their fathers through education to maintain this veneration for the elders. Yet it is the very backbone of the tribe. There is nothing more contemptible than an African or an Asiastic with a veneer of education who affects to despise the elders of the village. But I know no more pathetic sight than our afternoon schools where grey-haired men and women may be seen peering through faded eyes trying also to learn to read and keep abreast of the young and alert life, while the sun goes down in their eventide.

233 The Ngoni were first of all a fighting people, and then a
[181] pastoral. Their land affords splendid pasture for cattle. And they take great pride in their herds. Round the cattle kraal centre all their ambitions, and highest delights, and best intelligence. They sit and watch the cattle going out in the early morning and coming in in the evening, and know every spot and colour of their beautiful animals. The quietest and most peaceful sight I know is when the sun goes down, and the fierce heat has
[534] given place to the welcome cool of the evening. Then you will hear the music of reed pipes, and looking up you see a long line
[512] of sleek, solemn cows, with large silken dew laps, and fat humps, slowly coming up the village path lowing for their calves, while boys ride on their backs sitting or standing upright, balancing themselves carefully and blowing on their pipes. Before and behind them runs a troop of goats and sheep bleating with such a human cry. In a moment the village is alive—sheep and goats are chased back and forward till they find the huts where they sleep with their masters. And boys run out with wooden pails
[234] into which they milk what the calves have not sucked from their mothers.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

524 of the riddle. An unexpected reply or a good guess often drew applause, even if it was not the accepted correct answer.

535 Before it was dark, all the herd-boys joined in what they called 'drill' on the flat space where they milked the cows
857 in front of the kraal gate. As a rule this 'drill' was practising for the *ngoma* dance which took place after harvest and was the only dance for boys and girls approved by the Ngoni rulers. Sometimes they varied this dance, practising with swift follow-my-leader manœuvres, turning, twisting, lifting sticks, knocking knobkerries together, stamping, whistling.
[534] As we have said already, the Ngoni had no drums, and all the precision and rhythm in any dances or concerted movements depended on exact timing and following the leader. The accuracy and precision reached was remarkable, and represented a high degree of intense concentration and co-operation among the dancers or 'drillers', who developed an almost intuitive knowledge of what the leader was going to do next. This dancing was practised in front of the men and older youths on purpose. They criticized it freely, and sometimes, though rarely, praised the boys. More often they came forward to show them how to do it better.

For the greater part of the day the herd-boys were with
233 the cattle. They rose before it was light, undid the kraal gate,
857 and as dawn broke led the cattle to the river. Then they went to the grazing grounds which according to the season were near or far from the village. As the dry season advanced and the grass became poorer, they had to go farther afield to find grazing. They returned to the village about ten o'clock
[234] and milked the cows and took the milk in gourds to the senior women, keeping some as their own perquisite. The cattle were driven under some trees to rest during the heat of the day, and taken to the grazing ground again about two and brought back about five, watered and put in the kraal and the gate was closed. Variations in this time-table depended on the seasons, the quality of the pasture, and on whether the herd-boys went to school or not.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [248] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 177 233 234

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 natural translation for Ngoni young men to become butchers
233 and dairymen, if they could apprentice themselves to a rela-
234 tive, or if their father could put up the necessary capital outlay for starting independently. This conversion of knowledge and traditional skill into a channel offering higher rewards in cash incomes found the young Ngoni adult well prepared to earn his living.

Hunting

224 There was an aura of manhood and of distinction about all forms of hunting among the Ngoni. They did it because they enjoyed it, and not seriously to augment their family's food supply. There were two main corporate forms of hunting: the chase, when hare and deer were hunted with dogs; and killing lions and leopards. The first was the pursuit of a Ngoni gentleman which no one wanted to miss during the right season; and the second was the act of warriors defending themselves and their cattle and villages from marauders.

Ngoni boys in their herding days acquired some of the
868 skills needed later for hunting with the men. They made
224 traps to catch birds from the hair of cows tails or smeared bird lime on branches. They developed great adroitness at hitting birds on the wing with knobkerries. In these pursuits, which for them were half fun, half to get bits of extra food, they were training their eye, learning to observe the habits of birds and small animals, learning to track them, and developing that combination of patience, prompt action and accuracy of aim essential to successful hunting.

Some of the Ngoni men liked to go off hunting on their own, usually those who had a gun. Fathers used to take their sons on such hunting trips, and use the opportunity to teach them how to track successfully, how to put up with hunger and thirst on long marches, how to load and fire a gun. One young man described how his father used to point out to him on such trips the birds and butterflies in the bush. On one trip his father taught him to use his muzzle-loading gun, how

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 round covered food basket, the side dishes in small covered
[415] earthenware bowls. Among the traditional Ngoni dishes learned by girls were the following:

Gruel made of cow's milk and maize flour (for young
252 children).
262 Whole maize boiled with beans and round peas.
Sweet potatoes boiled, peeled and mashed with tomatoes.
Beans and finger millet flour cooked separately and then stirred together.
Pumpkins cooked with ground-nut paste.
Ground-nut flour cooked with scraps of meat.
Whole tall millet pounded with ground-nuts.
Pot-roast chicken with tomatoes, onions and ground-nuts.

In Ngoni households meat when cooked in large quantities,
262 not just as broth made from bones and titbits, was served on
415 a special wooden meat-dish, round or oblong with rounded ends, and supported on three sturdy legs. This meat-dish was an integral part of the equipment of every 'true Ngoni'
[264] household, and, like the French housewife's omelet pan, was after use wiped clean and polished with clarified fat. The outside of these meat-dishes was often decorated with 'poker
[531] work' designs by the maker, and such decorated and shining meat-dishes were treasured as heirlooms. Other, but rare,
415 heirlooms were hammered brass pots with a flat bottom and turned over edge, of the pattern known in India as *dekchies*. The Ngoni women who owned them declared they had been brought by their ancestors from the south.

All the extra fat when a beast was killed was sent to the
251 women of the 'house' in whose herd it was, and this fat was cooked until it was clarified, and then stored. Butter was made by shaking milk in a gourd, and it was also clarified
[234] for keeping. Formerly milk curds were made daily by the senior women and kept to mature in a jar before being eaten. Only in a few Ngoni households was this still done.

273 Beer was made on special occasions when the women had

/13 cont'd/

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351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the 574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been announced, and from that vantage-point she could command the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front 417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the 343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was [235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep- [554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to- [556] do women would have four or five of them bulging with maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them 351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of [284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of 351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall 412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch children there. There were much smaller mortars for pounding ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes 351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's 415 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow winnowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

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419 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which [136] there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

231 /7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [136] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

419 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [285] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [251] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may 343 have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasional- [511] ly open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

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252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [031] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [073] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [251] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [462] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such ●235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and 224 taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by themselves and sell the meat.

/13 cont'd/

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VIII

233 Cattle are in the care of herdboys, whose ages range from eight to fourteen. They take the cattle out of the byres in the morning and go off with them to look for pasture. The cattle come back in the early afternoon, when the calves suck, and go off again until about five o'clock in the evening, when they are put back in the byre for the night. The calves are looked after by smaller children, and do not usually go so far away from the village as do the fully grown cattle. In the dry season, after the harvest, when there is no danger of spoiling crops, the cattle wander about very much by themselves, and the boys play or do odd jobs in the village. In these days of village schools, suitable boys are not always free to look after cattle, and in this case girls will do the herding.

234 Little use is made of the milk except occasionally for use in porridge, and for sale to Europeans. The European market also pro-
235 vides the only use for eggs.

539 the
727 salutation being '*Amehlo amhlope*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Buyani*', 'Return',
[576] along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebo*' also with the clan name. This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Echigodhlweni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amakanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[824] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Po*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[834] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Po*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of heroes

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
703 then they were called again together to dance the *ligubo*. On that day bulls
[862] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the hero of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the heroes of the sections
[237] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amakanda* of the *alumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were allowed to marry and settle down in their villages. [703]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(*ukuqandisa*). The middle section, the main part of the ceremony, took place in the husband's village while the bridal party was there. In the last part the bride was left in her new home and three ceremonies marked her gradual integration into her new social group. 585

After the number of cattle had been decided upon in the final stage of the betrothal, the initiative was left to the girl's parents to announce the date of the *mtimba*. Eventually a message was sent through the *gogo* house of the girl's village to say that the bridal party would arrive on a certain day. Before the day came, the girl, now addressed as *umlobokazi* (the bride), was called to the *indlunkulu* in her village. There the leading women, her father's mothers, who had called in her father's sisters, gave her final instructions on how to behave in her new home. Ngoni women said that they were told at this time: 'Our child, we are putting you out of our family. We are handing you over to the other people. You were free and now your freedom is over for you are under other people. Where you are going you will meet with many troubles. They will say of you many things which you did not do. It is good to be patient.' During this instruction the girl cried and so did her mother. On the morning of the departure the girl was dressed in freshly prepared skins, her hair was arranged in the *isihlutu* (chignon) to which the gall bladder of a goat was pinned, and the gall bladder of a cow was tied to her elbow. Then, still sobbing and whimpering, and surrounded by her age mates and the female members of her house, she set out for her bridegroom's village, the young men of her village driving a bullock (*mcando*) as a present from the bride's parents to the mother of the bridegroom, in whose herd it was placed. [292 237] [152]

This part of the ceremony, the entry of the bride's party (*ukuqandisa*), was held to be of great importance, since it was the first time the bride's family and friends as a group had met the husband's family. The bride's procession waited by the kraal gate, singing *mtimba* songs, and every now and then a woman of the bride's party, one of her father's sisters, sang the praises of the bride's clan. As the young men driving the bullock entered the kraal, the bridal party joined them and they began to dance in the kraal. 571 585

Now the first overtures were made between the bride's party and the people of the bridegroom's village. The older women of the village approached the older women of the bride's party, greeting them and exchanging, in the Ngoni phrase, 'words which were good and proud and showed the quickness of their tongues'.

After these advances, the men of the village came into the kraal or gathered by the *indlunkulu*. While the bridal party began to sing with their heads bowed, the chief woman from the *indlunkulu* of the bride's village came forward, bending low, and on her knees presented to the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* of the husband's village a basket containing snuff boxes and beads. She made a speech, in which she said, 'Here is [516 431]

As one of the Ngoni said: 'The spirits of the dead Paramounts were the guardians of the whole nation. These *amadlozi* stood between UMkulumqango and the people. They were never worshipped at times of plenty and prosperity, but at the time of crisis and danger.'

In pre-European days there had been two special occasions when the spirits of former Paramounts were addressed on behalf on the whole nation. One was at the time of the *incwala* or first-fruits ceremony, which as we have seen was given up before the final settlement in Nyasaland. This was an occasion uniting all the people with songs and dances at the village of the Paramount. The second occasion was in time of war before the army went out on a raid. This could take place more than once during the fighting season, and always at the Paramount's village.

The remaining occasions for addressing the spirits of former Paramounts on behalf of the nation were when epidemics threatened, when there was a drought, or in the serious illness of the Paramount or of a leading member of his family. In prayer for rain or for the recovery from illness of someone of the royal clan, the diviner had to be consulted about which of the ancestors of the Paramount should be addressed. The ancestor indicated by the diviner had to be named in the ritual, his genealogy given and, as a rule, his particular attributes and his praise-names mentioned. The following account was given to me by Mlonyeni Jere, who prayed for rain in Elangeni in 1935:

¶ When the rain stopped, the *amadoda* spoke among themselves 'What shall be done?' If they could not find out who had made the rain to stop, they said 'We must ask the *isanusi* (diviner). Perhaps it is one of the *amadlozi* (spirits) who are stopping the rain.'

If the *isanusi* finds it is the spirit of Hlacwayo, then all the big people are called to come to the kraal at Elangeni. Then they say 'We should choose a black ox with no white spot and bring it to the kraal.' They appointed a speaker who knows how to speak well all the names of the chiefs who have died. This man says to the spirit 'This cow is yours. You must eat it all. Then you must tell UMkulumqango our troubles.' If it urinates or makes dung, the spirits agree. This praying to the spirits is in the kraal in the evening. At early dawn next day someone is sent to kill the ox. While it was being flayed, the huts of the chief wives were smeared with cow dung on the floors and on the place outside the door. The meat was cooked in the kraal by the *amadoda*. Some of it was taken into the *indlunkulu* and kept there for one night so that the spirit might lick it.

The Paramount had already eaten in the kraal and the meat was divided for the *amadoda* according to their age regiments. After they have eaten, a big man rises up to thank the spirit with his titles and praise-names, and all the people answer *Bayete* and there is a war-dance in the kraal. Then they look up and see clouds coming. Then the rain comes.

This particularizing of the appeal to an individual dead Paramount in the ancestor cult was an essential element in the ritual, and there seemed

791 an *isanusi* today". When he entered the place of his sister, NaNdumbu, he was dreaming. If there was a war he could say "You must not go to that war because all the people will be killed." He was just dreaming and dancing his *isanusi* dance. When he danced that dance on the chief's *bwalo* the people praised him with special praises.'

791 Two informants remembered fragments of the songs sung by NaNdumbu and her brother, and these songs were also sung by the old 533 *isanusi* in the northern kingdom. I give here the Ngoni versions with an English translation, omitting the repetition of lines and the 'sounds' which accompanied the singing:

[539]

Uyezwa mihlolo	Do you see the omens?
Inkanyezo ipuma	The star comes out,
Ipuma yanga	It comes out in the East.
. . . . .	. . . . .
Ubaba uyangibiza	My father is calling me.
Hamba ekaya	Go home.
Indaba zikuyandela	Things have turned against you,
Hamba ekaya	Go home.

791 Although these diviners acted at times on their own initiative, this did not prevent their being called on in time of crisis to diagnose the reason 787 for disaster or sickness. *Isanusi* who used their own medicines to smell 237 could prophesy and speak on their own initiative as well as waiting to be called on. These medicines were said to induce the dreams on which the prophecy was based, and they were generally contained in the tail of a gnu or in a sheep's horn, or some other horn.

787 Below this category of the prophets, whether *abantu benhloko* or *isanusi*, came those who used lots when called on to diagnose a par- 791 ticular situation. These were often men who dreamed, or who used their own medicines to receive messages from their ancestral spirits, but instead of announcing their message directly, they brought with them some form of lots which they used when they were consulted, and gave their diagnosis as a result of observing the lots. Sometimes they sang their own songs, accompanied by dancing, which led to an almost trance-like condition; sometimes they used their lots without any previous working up of an emotional state through song or dance. I never met any of the dreamer type of prophet who used no medicines and no lots. There was general agreement among the Ngoni that they had died out, that their main service had been in times of war, and that the number of men or women who possessed such powers had, even in the past, been very small indeed. I did, however, see one diviner at work who used the song and dance technique with the lots, and two who used the lots without song or dance.

756 The *isanusi* whom I saw in the northern kingdom was divining for 787 sickness at the request of a party of people who had come to consult him

over the age of ten had to avoid the hut and its inhabitants altogether. The husband slept either in the boys' dormitory or with the husband of the woman who was looking after his wife. 846 783

This ritual uncleanness extended to any food once it was carried into the hut. Ngoni women used to demonstrate their love for their husbands by stopping cooked food being carried into the hut, and sending it instead by the child who brought it to her husband where the men were gathered at the gate of the kraal. [593]

Ritual cleansing of a hut and its occupants took place in stages. At the time of 'bringing out the child', which I shall shortly describe, the hut itself was made clean again. It was thoroughly swept, and the floor and veranda were smeared with cowdung. Cowdung was used habitually for smearing on floors, prior to polishing them with a smooth stone. But fresh wet cowdung rubbed on the hands was also used for ritual cleansing after some 'dangerous' act such as touching sacred objects or administering the royal medicines. In the case of its use after childbirth it was undoubtedly used in the ritual sense, for the operation was called 'making the hut safe for the husband to sleep in'. The household goods were then put back in their places, anyone could go into the hut, and the husband returned to sleep there, though on a separate mat on his, the right-hand side, of the fireplace. If the child was a first baby, the husband's return to sleep in the hut was delayed, since the senior women stayed on to instruct the young mother how to take care of the baby at night, and especially how to be careful not to smother it as it lay beside her on her mat. [237]

'Coming out of the hut'

The falling of the cord was the signal that the baby was ready to 'come out of the hut' and be presented to the village. Ngoni women used to hasten the falling of the cord by burning a maize cob, and squeezing into the ashes the juice of the 846 851 278

not enough milk, or was unable to suckle the child, or was 853
ill or died. If a woman died in or just after childbirth, and the child survived, it might be suckled by the paternal grandmother or by another co-wife of the dead woman, but as a rule they resorted to artificial feeding, and often used it to supplement breast feeding. The father of the child took [237] the food pipe of a beast recently killed, washed it and dried [415] it, and handed it over to the women to rub with fat until it was soft and pliable. One end was then tied tightly to close it, it was filled with warm cow's milk, and the other end was tied loosely so that the child could just suck through it. It was kept well washed with warm water, and many infants were brought up successfully with this 'bottle'.

The babies were also given very thin gruel made of millet or maize flour, and curds and whey beaten up together. This [415] was put in a very small gourd, decorated with drawings, with [531] a spout to pour from, and a cover to keep flies and dust out.

Weaning

Studies of weaning in different cultures lay emphasis on the 114
traumatic shock of separation from the mother, not only in terms of being refused the breast, but also of being removed to sleep elsewhere than beside the mother, and perhaps being sent away to stay with another relative.

In the Ngoni pattern of nurse-girl care and of supplement- 862
ary feeding, especially after the first few months, it might seem that the actual weaning was less of a shock than in cultural situations where the baby was with the mother all day, carried about by her and never refused the breast if it cried. Ngoni women, however, and men too, all asserted that weaning was a shock to the child, even if it happened at two years old.

The reasons for this shock were partly that it was done all in one morning at one fell swoop, and partly that the child was sent away from the mother at night. The same nurse girl looked after it all day, but now took it more often to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Some of these
surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some 342
repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage 351
for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several re- [128]
spects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance
of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish
between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of [171]
the household objects were indeed the same as those used by
other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration
about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept
in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural
significance about some of the features of Ngoni households
mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found else-
where.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at
weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was
full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 342
'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right
hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with
interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical
roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and [824]
decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in [237]
four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two
main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling.
Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters
and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which [251]
gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this
platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for
the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots [354]
were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the
back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which
were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots hold- [415]
ing water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut
was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by
the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the
back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front 351
of the hut was a well-swept space, mudded and polished in

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

852 Children of Ngoni families, as also these others, chose their
304 own time to have their ears pierced, though sometimes their father or father's sister or father's mother reminded them that it was about time. It was nearly always soon after the second teeth had come, and children who delayed having it done were taunted by their fellows: 'You, are you afraid, my age-mate? See my ears already have bone in them.' This was a reference to the round plugs of bone inserted when the
[237] hole was large enough. A bit of thread was put in at first, then a small bit of grass, then a fine reed, and finally a bone plug. Ear piercing was always done in the cold weather so that the lobe of the ear would heal quickly. It was carried out by a leading woman of one of the Ngoni families, who watched the children to see how they took it. They knew it was a test of courage, and however much they were afraid it would hurt,
[152] they stood like little statues during the operation, with a face as set and expressionless as when they were being beaten.

Accountability for individual behaviour was one aspect of
866 the responsibility which Ngoni adults now began to demand
868 from children. Another aspect was the performance of their allotted tasks. The responsibility for cattle herding was in a sense a corporate responsibility of all the boys whose fathers owned cattle. The older herd-boys had in fact to answer for
[233] the condition of the cattle they brought back every evening to their owners. They passed on, however, a number of small duties, such as care of the calves, sheep and goats, to the younger boys, who in turn were held responsible by the older boys for performing these duties. The boys' world, centred in the dormitory, recognized grades of responsibility from which no one escaped.

Another facet of responsibility which was at a later stage
868 remarked on often by Ngoni adults, was seen in children's
[517] choice of leisure-time occupations, according to their individual manual and intellectual and artistic capacities. They stopped playing childish games and began instead to develope their skills in making things from local materials.

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (1)

When the boy's voice began to break, and his father or another older man noticed it, the second part of the ritual took place. The father's brother went to a senior man famed in the village as a herbalist and obtained from him several kinds of roots. These were ground and then cooked either in milk or in the cud from a goat's stomach, usually the latter, for the father liked it to be known that he killed a goat for his son. If the mixture was cooked in milk, a fowl was killed, and in either case the boy was given the meat to eat immediately after the mixture to take away the extremely bitter taste. The cooking took place on a small fire by the kraal gate in the presence of the male members of the father's house. The boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the mixture as it was bubbling in the pan and to lick them quickly. He was not expected to show that he found the mixture very bitter as well as hot to touch. At intervals the boy had to jump over the fire, hitting his elbows and knees with the palms of his hands. The more often he did this, the less often did he have to dip in the pan because the mixture soon dried up, but he had to continue dipping and licking till there was no liquid left. The senior men watched intently all through this performance because they believed the mixture not only helped physical growth and muscular strength but would prevent impotence. When this ritual was performed for the heir of a chief, it was followed by a war-dance in the cattle kraal and the boy had to take a second dose of medicine in the kraal surrounded by the warriors. In such a case a bull was killed instead of the customary goat, and the contents of its stomach used for mixing the medicine. The meat was eaten by the boy and his father's relatives.

As in the case of the girls, this boy's ritual was an occasion for asserting the authority of the father and his kin over the boy. For him there was however no separating off into another group after this maturing. He continued to live in the dormitory, herd cattle, and go to school as before.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
881 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
292 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
885 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often
301 trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the premarriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
885 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
556 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after.
593 It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
[836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to
177 say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'
885 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Women's skills: Guardianship of property

Ngoni social organization, as we saw in Chapter I, placed the guardianship of all wealth except cattle in the hands of the women who were heads of houses. As a Ngoni girl grew towards adulthood and the time drew nearer when she would marry and leave her home for a strange village, the leading women of her father's house initiated her into the skills needed to create and preserve the forms of property for which she would some day be responsible. 429 462 868

First among these skills came the care of the hut and compound. The framework and roof of the huts were built by men, but the walls were mudded and the floors of the hut and veranda were strengthened and polished by women. Ngoni women of good family did not often do the actual plastering of mud upon the wooden framework of the hut. It was considered too dirty and exhausting a job for them to do, but they had to know how it should be done, and what standards of good work involved, in order that they might later instruct others. During a hut building Ngoni girls might be seen tucking up their clothes and rather half-heartedly slapping mud on the walls, to the good-humoured jesting of the village women who were vigorous and expert at the job. The girl's grandmother stood by and said at intervals: 'That is too thick; it will fall off. Fill up those cracks. Smooth over those joins,' and so on. The girls shrugged their shoulders and obeyed while Grandmother was watching, but gave up as soon as she went away. 462 342

The flat-ended flails with which the floor was beaten were heavy and girls were generally unable to use them expertly, but they were made to watch the process, with its seemingly endless beating of the earth floor compounded of river mud, ant-hill clay and cowdung. Once the floor was beaten so that it was level and all cracks had disappeared, the Ngoni girls were made to get down on their knees and learn how to polish it with damp ashes and a smear of cowdung, rubbed [413] 356 868 [237]

4; Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *lusiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *nyongo*, from the Zulu *inyongo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 40 and 114, and Scott, *A cyclopaedic dictionary of the Mang'anja language spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 486, both translate the Nyanja word *nyongo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mphekiso*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-phekisa*, to help or make to cook. Weise, op. cit. 'Expediqao . . .', pp. 473-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *vipeko*. Cf. Zulu *uku-pheka*, to cook.

[17] Called *mngeniso*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *mryelano*, from the Zulu *uku-dlana*, or *kulyelana*, from the Nsenga *ku-lyelana*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

585 bride herself refuses to sit on the mat until she has been given a present. She is joined on the mat by a small girl, aged about ten, from the groom's family, who becomes known as 'the guide'.[1] The leader of the bride's party and one other of the bride's women sit down on the mat, with the bride and the guide between them.

The instruction of the bride now begins, with a speech from some [237] important man in the village, who takes the gall bladder and anoints the head, arms and feet of the bride with the gall, going on to anoint the guide in the same way. They are then sometimes anointed with vaseline by a woman. One person after another, men and women, [867] now proceed to lecture the bride on how she should behave in the village, and each explains to her who he or she is in relation to her. The gall bladder is blown up and stuck in the hair of the bride, where she will keep it until she returns to her own village. Each person who delivers a speech of instruction gives a small present, a threepenny bit or beads, which they put into a plate on the mat at the bride's feet. This situation of formal instruction, often of an [183] abusive nature, accompanied by presents, is a recurrent one in Ngoni ceremonial.[2]

[237] Sometimes the small intestine of the animal is placed round the shoulders of a younger sister of the bride who is a member of her party. This girl is then designated linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) of the bride. This is not always done, and when it is done it does not imply that the girl will later become the real linked co-wife of her elder sister. Although in the two ceremonies I saw this designation of a linked co-wife did not occur, in both a sister of the bride was one of the bridal party.

[262] At the end of the instruction, the bride and her party go back into their own hut, and the leader cooks the liver of the animal, and the blood and fat. This she divides between the two families, sending the portion of the bridegroom's family to their hut for them to eat there. The guide stays in the bride's hut. After they have rested, the bride, guide, and their companions leave the village, taking the meat with them back to the bride's village. Outside her village the party stop, and are met by more women from the bride's family. The guide demands a small present before she will enter the village, usually beads. Inside the village the bride's mother takes the gall bladder from her daughter's head and buries it in the byre. The guide stays in the village for a few days, and demands another small present before she will assist the bride's people with cooking. When a quantity of flour has been pounded for the bride, and some maize half-pounded for the guide, the bride and the guide return quietly to the bridegroom's village. The bride begins to live with her husband, and the guide resumes her normal

[1] *Mpelekezi*, from the verb *ku-pelekeza*, to accompany part of the way. Cf. Zulu *impelesi*, girl accompanying a bride to her wedding.
[2] See above, p. 77.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

N 765 [262] On the second day, also, the *mwini malire* takes cows or a goat according to his means, and divides the flesh among the mourners. The bones may not be gnawed, as this would be considered equivalent to eating the dead man, but they are put into an *ngoombe* basket and thrown away into the bush at the end of the feast.

M N [764] [177] On the third and fourth days the male relations surround the grave with a fence of *tsebera* grass known as *chilira*, which is sometimes plastered by the women with mud. The Achewa are now beginning to imitate this custom, and also that of wearing *zinthambo*. Both tribes plant *nkhadzi*[1] trees about the graves in order that the dead may have shade.

N 766 765 ●237 A chief is not buried in the common graveyard, but in the village just outside his hut, and a chair is sometimes placed inside the *chilira*. One of his senior relations kills a goat, and the new prospective chief ties a root along the handle and blade of a knife, with which he cuts a horizontal strip of skin round the quarters of a goat, and wears the strip for two or three months as a belt, the tail hanging down behind. With the same knife the widows cut off the false hoofs together with a small piece of adjacent skin, through which they thread a string, and then bind a false hoof on each wrist and wear them till the end of the period of mourning. The root must remain fastened to the knife throughout this period, at the end of which all are burnt together.

VIII.—Mental Characters.

1. *Reincarnation and Spirits* (*Chewa*).

M 769 [776] [622] [778] [262] *Mizimu* or spirits are invoked as intermediaries between man and God (*Chauta*), and each village contains a hut for the spirits of past chiefs, to whom prayers are generally made because they are powerful and because they are known to everybody. Some of the larger villages have two huts, one for the spirits of men and the other for the spirits of women. A man may also make offerings to the spirits of his own family in his own hut. When the green maize is ready for eating, the people may not taste it until their headman has taken a cob, cooked it in his house and placed it in the spirits' house, where he claps his hands and thanks the spirits for the crop. The cob, like other offerings to spirits, may be eaten next morning by children below the age of initiation.

M 775 If, as frequently happens, a traveller strays—as we should say, absentmindedly—when following a route which he knows quite well, it is the work of a spirit which has been annoyed by him. On one such occasion a police constable of mine, who had been sent to the neighbouring station while his child was ill, found himself wandering several times from the main road, and knew thereby that his child was dead, and that its spirit was troubling him because he should

[1] *Nkhadzi*, euphorbia. These are evergreen, quickly propagated and long lived, and so they serve also as a sign to mark the grave long afterwards. In the Mlanje District the Anyanja and other tribes sometimes plant them in maize fields because they are supposed to be obnoxious to termites. [824]

Livingstone, *loc. cit.*, p. 105, writes that in the Shire Highlands in 1859 they found all Mang'anja villages surrounded by an impenetrable hedge of poisonous euphorbia. He continues: "This tree casts a deep shade, which would render it difficult to bowmen to take aim at the villagers inside. The grass does not grow beneath it, and this may be the reason why it is so universally used, for when dry the grass would convey fire to huts inside; moreover, the hedge acts as a fender to all flying sparks.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Ngoni of northern Nyasaland for a similar situation which ended in the relatively peaceful incorporation of the tribe into the framework of colonial administration. But in northern Nyasaland there were no gold-mines, there were only missionaries. Johnston admits that the presence of mission stations among the northern Nyasaland Ngoni embarrassed him, and he refrained from using force against them in 1895 because this might have interfered with missionary activity.[99] In Mpezeni's country there were no mission stations and, as it happened, no gold-mines worth worrying about either; but by the time this fact had been realized it had ceased to be significant for the Ngoni. The North Charterland was formed in the belief that Mpezeni's country was rich. The capital of the company, not all paid up, was £1,000,000 and in 1897 it offered a reward of £10,000 to the discoverer of the first payable gold-field in its concession.[100] Given the fact that wealth of this magnitude was at stake, that there was gold to be found, and given the tactlessness of Warton and the intransigence of Nsingu, it was likely that war would come sooner or later.

As it was, the end of the Ngoni State as a sovereign political unit and its incorporation within a colonial empire came suddenly. Instead of the gradual formation of new groupings and alignments, the new system began as suddenly as the old system ended. We tend to think of the arrival of Europeans in the backwoods of Africa as a gradual process extending through many decades, and indeed even in Ngoniland there were Europeans for at least thirteen years prior to the war. Yet to old Ngoni of to-day the coming of the Europeans is a precisely defined event which took place on 19 January 1898.

The sequence of events which culminated in the fighting was as follows. In May 1897 some of Mpezeni's people began to build shelters and clear gardens at the headwaters of the River Bua, just inside the Nyasaland Protectorate. Sharpe, who had succeeded Johnston as Commissioner, was at first not greatly pleased, but instructed the Collector at Kotakota to make clear to Mpezeni that he would have to conform to the wishes of the Administration. A peaceful settlement between Mpezeni and the British seemed possible, and on second thoughts Sharpe was pleased to see, as he thought, Mpezeni removed from the sphere of influence of the North Charterland and the B.S.A. Company, who might have taken action against him and precipitated a crisis. However, the Collector was single-handed and it seems that he was unable to

[99] *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 437.
[100] *African Review*, xiii, 254 (2 October 1897), p. 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[127] 178 361 648

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfinsi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[128] [134] [311] [231]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared. [241] [177]

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[129] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[130] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers 161 [131] [311]

[127] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78.
[128] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[129] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 3 (26 February 1898), p. 1.
[130] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the
789 former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of
766 the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

241 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance
796 among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *umsindo*, *ligubo*, *incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said [643 '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins every- 424] one sings the songs of *incwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the [178] Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Intokoni* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for [824 a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up 224] their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ye'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala seigwabuliwe*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women [535 were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuzo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiwe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *zi zi*, *ozi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

198 [223] [233] [533]

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

241 476

The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

476 342 [461] [535]

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part.

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000, live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[1].

[1] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 252 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 [591] [593] Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[19] If the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists [583] to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on [541] beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

581 602 As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they [658] belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly [554] than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[19] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 191-2.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [586] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 491 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, [177] but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [586] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 342 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 356 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require 462 rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a [591] hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 493 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 491 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [343] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 491 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 241 343 241 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 262 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 462 [559] [514] [437]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

660
591 village to another. An indication of the relative frequency with
128 which different types of marriage residence occur is given by Table XIII. This table is based on all the extant marriages involving the 98 married men whose wives were known and the 175 married women, as shown in Tables III and IV. A distinction is made in Table XIII between those marriages in which the man lived with his wife or in a village near her and those in which the man was effectively absent.

We may now assess the relative frequency of virilocal and uxorilocal residence by extracting those marriages falling into either one or other of these residential categories and by then dividing the number of virilocal contracts by the number of uxorilocal. This is done in Table XIV.

591 It will be seen that although there were three marriages in which both spouses lived virilocally for every one in which they both lived uxorilocally, this preponderance of virilocality was reversed in those marriages in which the man was absent. There were approximately three wives who lived uxorilocally while their husbands were away for every two who lived virilocally. This difference between the ratios in the two parts of the sample is not likely to have arisen as a chance result and may be regarded as definitely associated with the whereabouts of the husband.

On the basis of these figures we may continue to call the Ngoni a virilocal rather than an uxorilocal people, but it is evident from the last column of Table XIII that virilocal marriages amount to slightly less than half (47·3 per cent) of all extant marriages. It should also be remembered that by no means all of the couples we have classified as virilocal were living in the village of the man's father. We have included in this category all marriages in which the man had definitely stronger ties to the other inhabitants of their village [128] than had his wife. Our definition of the uxorilocal category is similar and not all uxorilocal couples were living in the woman's mother's village.[8] A more detailed examination of the frequencies with which these different kinds of marriage residence occur will be attempted elsewhere.

549 We have already noted that a man who goes to live in the village
391 of his bride takes on the care of her garden and works in it with her.
423 The produce of the garden is pooled with whoever was looking after the bride, and the young couple draw their food from this common store.[9] A man who does not intend to stay long in his wife's village will usually try to keep his own garden under cultivation near his own village and when he takes his wife back to his village he reverts to his own garden as his main source of supply. If the two villages are a long way apart this may not be practicable, or the man may find it irksome to keep two gardens going, and may lend his own to someone else on the understanding that he will be wanting it back

[8] See below, pp. 75f.
[9] See above, p. 42.

[TEXT CONTINUES on P. 74 --analyst]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

591 after a year or so. If he keeps it going himself he visits his own
241 village for a week or two at a time to tend the garden, and stores the
423 produce with a relative in the village. If, however, a man intends to reside for many years in his wife's village, he gives away his garden and concentrates his labours in his wife's garden. After a year
[343] or two he builds her a storehouse in her village and the couple begin to keep their own supplies separate from those of her relatives.

431 Even when the couple have their own storehouse it is considered
262 proper if from time to time they are given maize by their parents. If a woman living virilocally goes to visit her parents and relatives and returns without maize or flour her husband's relatives are likely to laugh at her and say 'She must come from a very poor family'.

591 Uxorilocal residence is described by the vernacular term *cikomwene*.
606 In its most general usage this word refers to the obligations a man owes to his wife's parents, particularly at the beginning of his marriage. It has three specific meanings:

(i) Uxorilocal residence.

(ii) Assistance rendered from time to time by a man in his wife's mother's garden.

(iii) A hoeing party of men and women from the man's village which works in his wife's mother's garden.

Uxorilocal residence is classed with these other two aspects of affinal obligation and like them it can be avoided completely, shirked, or executed in full. The extent to which the obligations are fulfilled

Table XIV. Virilocality and Uxorilocality, 1948-9

591

Wife's residence	Husband's residence		Total
	Rural	Away	
Virilocal ..	72	14	86
Uxorilocal ..	24	20	44
Total	96	34	130
Ratio of virilocal to uxorilocal wives	3	0·7	1·95

Association between husband's residence and wife's residence

$\chi^2 = 12{\cdot}83$ $P < {\cdot}001$

Informants as in Table XIII

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

L M 166 648 The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, much of it inaccessible and uninhabitable, except for small pockets of fertile soil, was opened to unrestricted settlement by the Ambo and Senga-Kunda peoples. Other areas of poor soils and low carrying capacities in Fort Jameson District were also opened to free settlement up to a population total determined by the carrying capacity.

In Ndola District an area was opened to immediate uncontrolled settlement, in order to relieve acute land shortage and actual starvation in one section of the Reserve. L [731]

L M A somewhat modified method has been used in parts of Petauke District where dams are the only means of providing water. Here the population unit consists of three or four villages grouped into a 'parish' and settled about the watering points. A single land area is demarcated for each of these groups, instead of allocating a separate block to each village. This method allows of economy in the distribution of watering points, tends to reduce the effect of inter-village movements and, it is hoped, will lead to larger administrative units. [312] [361] [632]

§ 7. *Agricultural Control and Improvement*

N 161 [311] The general object of resettlement is to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of traditional land usage *and the present population numbers*. Obviously, this balance cannot be permanent if the population is increasing; and if it is not increasing something is seriously wrong. Reliable vital statistics are entirely lacking but probably most of the tribes are increasing (the Ngoni may be an exception) at a rate which, judging by the very few available data, may be about 1½ per cent per annum, a rate which would double the population in forty-six years.

N 242 654 648 Resettlement is not, and was never regarded as, a substitute for agricultural improvement. The objects are to reduce the agricultural problem to practicable proportions, to relieve acute land shortage, to give time for experiment and the introduction of new methods. The assumption is that an evolutionary process of agricultural improvement will keep pace with natural increase of population, and that this process must be guided by experiment.

Simple measures of agricultural control, and the beginnings of soil conservation and agricultural improvement, have been introduced in each of the resettlement areas as a condition of occupation. It need hardly be said that these are not popular with the majority and the existence of such conditions is a deterrent to movement. N [177] M

N 648 242 [185] [241] In the case of the earlier settlements in the Fort Jameson District an elementary system of soil conservation was introduced by demarcating the land for cultivation in contour strips separated by untouched belts of grass (which acquired the name of 'ten-yardis' since the original strips were ten paces wide). This was followed by an attempt to replace the traditional mound system of Ngoni, Chewa and Senga by cultivation on ridges

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Lamba FQ8

approximately on the contour and parallel to demarcated 'marker' ridges on the true contour. A system of contour cultivation has now been developed which is proving practical and effective. The 'marker' ridges are demarcated at a vertical interval of two feet six inches and are gradually converted by the people into more or less broad-based banks. In the first year the ridge is built up to a base width of six feet and a height of not less than six inches. The base and height are increased until a permanent bank eight feet wide at the base and eighteen inches in height is completed. Villages on the 'ten yardi' system can change over to contour cultivation if the majority of people elect to do so. New villages are allowed to move into resettlement areas in the Eastern Province only on condition that they agree to practice contour cultivation; they are given four or five years to adapt themselves to the new system but in many cases practically the whole of the new gardens are under ridges by the end of the second year. Cultivation practice has been adapted to the new system and, meanwhile, experiments are being made to find the best methods of ridging, spacing and planting of crops for use in conjunctions with the ridge cultivation system. M N 648 242 [241] M N [166]

In the Ndola District gardens are laid off between contour grass strips at vertical intervals of two feet. The people are then encouraged to convert the grass strip into three parallel ridges approximating to the normal dimension of their mounds for subsidiary crops and to plant the ridges with beans and cowpeas; or to make one or two such ridges and plant the remainder of the strip with groundnuts on the flat—a combination of contour ridges and strip cropping. This method, an adaptation of normal Lamba practice was adopted after a series of trials to find the simplest method of erosion control acceptable to these somewhat backward people. The object is not only to check erosion but to restore the cultivation of subsidiary crops, now almost entirely neglected. The planting of the ridges to beans and cowpeas and the strips to groundnuts restores the balance between cereals and legumes and should allow of a small surplus for sale. The idea seems to be less unpopular than one might expect and most villages have made a satisfactory effort to convert the strips into ridges for the cultivation of subsidiary crops. L 242 648 L [177]

Contours are laid off by trained African Assistants of the Department of Agriculture, using road tracers, and it has been found necessary during the initial stages of settlement to have one or two African Assistants* for at least every ten villages or, approximately, for every 600 to 1,000 people. Constant supervision is maintained during the initial phase by the African Agricultural Assistants in co-operation with District Messengers and the Native Authorities. This supervision is irksome and resented by some of the older people but it is, perhaps, significant that at a recent meeting of the African Regional Council of the Western Province after the subject had been freely debated, the council voted by a large majority for an increase in the number of Agricultural Capitaos. L [177]

Fruit tree planting has also been introduced and in the Eastern and Western Provinces laws made by the Native Authorities require each household N 245 648 671

* Usually one and a learner assistant at Ndola.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
MARAVI FR4

to clear large enough gardens at the new site in the first year a part of the old gardens can be used, for it is easy to travel back and forward between the old and new villages. The majority of the moves were of this order and no assistance was required or given. In the case of longer moves, heavy household goods and food stocks were transported by motor lorry, or in some instances when it was convenient to do so the entire grain stock was bought at the old village and food, purchased locally, was sold at the new site. This enabled the people to give the whole of their time to preparing a large garden acreage in the first year. The great majority of villages moving for moderate or long distances (twenty five to seventy miles) succeeded in preparing large enough gardens and growing sufficient food for themselves in the first year. A few did not, for one reason or another, such as starting too late, a bad season or just plain laziness, and these villages were supplied with food in the first season either in return for work or on promise of repayment after a good harvest. Less than 5 per cent of villages received such relief.

§ 10. *The Progress of Resettlement*

It was estimated that, in order to restore a complete population-land balance, about 141,300 people would have to be moved from the Reserves of the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts. No such movement was, in fact, possible. The total carrying capacity of the land available for resettlement which contained a vast mass of escarpment hills and other large areas of almost useless land, was estimated to be 78,000 people. This land was, of necessity, allocated to the tribal groups in the following way:

Ngoni and Chewa	:	Sufficient land	for	35,000	people
Senga	:	"	"	35,000	"
Ambo	:	"	"	8,000	"

Thus in the case of the Ngoni and Chewa the available land was totally insufficient to allow of the restoration of a population-land balance, while in the case of the other peoples such a balance could be achieved.

Two alternatives were possible; to re-distribute the Ngoni and Chewa populations more or less evenly over the new land and the Reserves, in which case both would be over-populated in relation to their carrying capacities, or to populate the new land to the maximum of its carrying capacity, leaving the Reserves still over-populated. The latter course was adopted for a variety of reasons, including the fact that much of the new land was tsetse infested and the keeping of cattle and development of mixed farming would not be possible at least for a very considerable time. The Reserves, on the other hand, carried many cattle and, with reduction of the population by resettlement, would be able to support their populations on a basis of mixed farming.

Movement was therefore designed to populate the new areas to the maximum of their carrying capacity and to reduce the agricultural problem

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The present-day population of the tribe is about 85,000, of whom about 60,000 live in Northern Rhodesia and 25,000 in the Fort Manning area of Nyasaland.[1] In Northern Rhodesia the tribe is largely confined in two demarcated Native Reserves. In 1938 the density of population in these two reserves averaged 68 persons to the square mile,[2] but in some congested or very fertile areas it was 90 or more.[3] Since 1941 the density has been reduced in some of the more congested parts by controlled resettlement in areas outside the reserves.[4] The density of population of the Nyasaland section of the tribe was about 46 persons to the square mile in 1945.[5] 161 131

The region in which the Ngoni live consists of a fairly flat plateau about 3,500 feet above sea-level, with massive granite outcrops rising another 1,000 feet or more. The soils of the region are principally of the types suitable only for shifting or partial cultivation, but there are also belts of more valuable soils.[6] In relation to the customary mode of agriculture, in which maize is the principal crop, the critical density of the land has been calculated to be about 22 persons to the square mile.[7] The annual rainfall at Fort Jameson varies from 27 to 48 inches, averaging about 35 inches. The region contains the meeting of the Luangwa–Nyasa and Luangwa–Zambezi watersheds. Most of the streams that flow down into the Luangwa dry up in July, while the Zambezi and Nyasa streams continue to flow somewhat longer.[8] 133 [134] [241] [132]

The natural vegetation of the region consists principally of *Brachystegia–Isoberlinia* woodlands, with larger trees along the lines of streams. The mean maximum temperature for the region is about 137 132

of the Rhodes–Livingstone Institute. This account was prepared at Oxford, and I am very grateful to Dr. Max Gluckman for criticism of this paper in draft.

[1] In the 1945 Nyasaland census many of the people living in the two Ngoni counties were classified as Cewa. Hence the figure of 5,531 Ngoni in Fort Manning does not represent the total population of these two counties. Cf. *Report on the Census*, Table 4.

[2] Calculated from the figures given in the *Pim Report*, p. 364. These two reserves contain Cewa chieftainships as well as Ngoni, but the average population density of the two tribes is probably of the same order.

[3] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 72.

[4] Fraser, *Land Resettlement*, pp. 47–9.

[5] *Report on the Census*, Table 8. The Fort Manning District contains a Cewa chieftainship as well as the two Ngoni. The figure given above is the average for the whole district.

[6] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, p. 72.

[7] Allan, *African Land Usage*, p. 14.

[8] Poole, *Human Geography*, pp. 1 and 2.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approxi- [231] mately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

619 The important positions in the old political structure were occupied by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mulumuzana*, pl. *alumuzana*. [4] *Nduna*, pl. *induna*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man has to go farther and farther from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of regenerated land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1898 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested areas. 361 166 [311] [768] [648]

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county chief, and village headman. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headman and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The first people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Rattray, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1] [648] [343] [622] [184]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the new one is gradual, as, unless the distance between the sites is too great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there. 221 361 166 241

[1] Rattray, *Folk-Lore Stories*, pp. 109–11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 203–5, gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

361 Huts sometimes become infested with ticks, or the site itself may prove to be intolerably damp. New huts are then built a short distance away or even contiguously to the old site, and no new gardens are made apart from those made among the deserted huts.

Internal Segmentation of the Village

361 We have already seen that the divisions within the village are
621 embryonic new villages. These divisions are most formally indicated in the Nyasaland counties, where there are large villages divided into a distinct number of divisions, with the spatial boundaries between the divisions indicated by a greater interval between the huts, and with each division named and under the charge of a lieutenant or of a patrilineal kinsman of the headman. On the Rhodesian side, however, it is more usual to find that certain small clusters of huts within a village are regarded as being the division of such-and-such a person living in one of them. The bulk of the huts in the village do not belong to any particular cluster but merely to the village as a whole. These clusters do not have any name apart from that of their senior inhabitant, whose close relatives occupy the huts of the cluster. The leader of a cluster may be a lieutenant of the headman or merely some important person with a comparatively large body of dependants. Such clusters, which are often on the periphery of the village, sometimes originate from the grouping together by a polygynist of the huts of his various wives, and grow as their children marry and live alongside their parents. Another mechanism for the formation of clusters is that
[166] of immigration into the village at about the same time by a number of persons related to each other more closely than to the other inhabitants of the village, as, for example, on the break-up of some other village. The immigrants tend to build together if there is room. In this case the leader of the cluster may have little standing in the village. The boundaries of clusters are not always plainly indicated, while a man who is ambitious to make his own village may as a first step try to increase the clarity with which his cluster is defined spatially.

Land Utilization

311 We may divide gardens into three types: main, old village, and moist.
●241 The moist gardens are made near streams, and are fenced to keep out cattle. Tomatoes, cabbages, onions, and other vegetables are grown, and maize is planted during the hot season so that it can be harvested in December or January. These gardens are cultivated only by the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more industrious and usually with a view to sale of vegetables in Fort Jameson. The sites last for many years and are usually abandoned because of the removal of the owner's village to a distant place rather than because of exhaustion of the soil. 311 241

Old-village gardens are made on the site of former huts and byres, in order to take advantage of the high fertility of the soil. These gardens are not usually fenced, except when they are made on the outskirts of some existing village on the site of an old byre. Tobacco is sometimes grown, but for the most part they are cultivated in the same way as are main gardens. The site belongs to the former owner of the hut or byre, so long as the garden continues to be worked. [423]

Main gardens are made from bush clearings, and are chosen with some regard to the type and quantity of the natural vegetation. Land that has been abandoned for long enough, say twenty-five years, regains its natural cover, and if the ownership of former gardens has been forgotten, it is treated as though it were virgin woodland, that is, it is permissible for anyone who wishes to come and cultivate it. A new village site is chosen to be near, if possible, an ample amount of such regenerated land, and at the first selection of gardens the headman of the village may go round the area and see where the new gardens are being made. Gardens tend to be within 2 miles of the village, but there is no one definite area that is associated with a particular village, so that if there are a number of villages in proximity, the gardens of their inhabitants will be intermingled. A man exercises a lien on the area of uncleared land round his garden, and may take up this land himself as he enlarges his garden. Hence at first there are considerable belts of bush left between one garden and the next. With the passage of time, these are cleared, and gardens become contiguous, with boundaries between them that are almost imperceptible at first glance. At the same time as enlargements are made, the least productive parts of the gardens are neglected, so that, as the years go by, the area cultivated by one man may gradually change its position, and fresh areas of resting-land will appear between the gardens. Main gardens vary in size from about 1 to 3 acres. [423] [361] [425]

If a man moves into a village and wishes to start a garden, he is usually given part of the garden of the person to whom he is attached in the village. A son returning from the mines may be given part of his father's garden. Conversely when someone leaves the village, his garden passes to his relatives. In particular, when a man dies, his 423

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 widows continue to cultivate the gardens they had before his death. When a man opens up a new garden he may hand over his nearly exhausted old garden to some relative who does not wish to go to the labour of clearing new ground himself. Rights in land cannot be sold, but only given away, and no presents are given to the donor by the recipient of a garden or garden site. They can only be sustained by continued residence in the locality, either by the owner of the rights himself or by his relatives. There are very few court cases concerned with rights in land, and in the courts the only attempt I saw in which a man tried to enforce what he thought to be his rights was met by the statement from the bench that no one had any rights in land, for did not all land belong to the chief?

241 Maize is planted at the beginning of the rains, and the garden is usually weeded twice over before the maize has grown high enough to surmount the weeds. When the rains end, the stalks are felled and put into large stooks to dry. The cobs are then taken off the stalks and carried back to the village to be stored. Finger millet is grown in ash-fertilized patches scattered through the main garden, and in between the maize ground-nuts, pumpkins, and other crops are grown. Sorghum, bulrush millet, and rice are also grown. Most of the work in the garden is carried on in the rainy season, and after the harvest the garden is more or less deserted until the next season, although a certain amount of new land may be cleared as a garden extension.

Dwellings outside the Village

361 There are two types of settlement outside the recognized villages that require mention. These are permanently occupied settlements consisting of two or three huts which I shall refer to as hamlets and [578] temporarily occupied huts in the gardens. The hamlets usually arise as a result of quarrels within a village that are resolved by the breaking away of one of the parties to the quarrel. The activities of the Agricul- [648] tural Department have also led to the formation of hamlets of similar size, both of hamlets of persons accepting agricultural control whose co-villagers have all moved off, and the other way about. These hamlets are all attached to proper villages for registration purposes, and participate in many of the collective activities of the villages near by.

221 The damage done to crops in the latter part of the rainy season 361 necessitates the keeping of a continuous watch, particularly at gar- [241] dens that are on the edge of a cultivated area, in order to drive off the monkeys by day and the wild pigs by night. Shelters are erected on

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Shelters are erected on

the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may stay behind to look after the cattle. Streams are in spate at this time of year, and some men build garden byres to which they move their cattle to avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the gardens is important from the point of view of inter-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so that they are adjacent to those of kindred from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in *her* dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organizing public works, and that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as reported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and may be up to 20 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead. Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle

[1] Elmslie, p. 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sophisticated informant remarked: 'The Cewa are just slaves, they merely eat. The Ngoni are like the Whites; they eat little and drink much.' 273 262 829

Economic Co-operation

There are other activities which entail inter-village ties. Cattle seek their own fodder, but small stock, pigs, goats, and sheep, are fed on husks and other scraps. A man whose animals have increased beyond his ability to feed them will farm out some of them to his friends, either in his own village or in some neighbouring one. The tender of the animals then exercises some control over the disposal of any natural increase and at the end of the arrangement he is entitled to be given one of the animals. The friends whom a man selects for this task are not always close relatives, and may sometimes be people to whom he can trace no genealogical relationship at all, but whom he may have met, for instance, in Southern Rhodesia. Other people acquire a reputation for integrity, and may be given animals to look after by their acquaintances. Cattle are not disposed of so widely, and there is more often a kinship connexion between the owner and the tender. On the other hand, cattle are more susceptible than small stock to tsetse fly, and in consequence there are many people in the new areas that have been recently resettled who have to keep their cattle in the village of a relative or friend who lives in an area free from fly. 233 476 628

Harvesting of crops is carried out by members of the household except in the case of the aged, who will call on their relatives to help them. Hut-building, making a new section of a garden, clearing the ground prior to planting, and, in particular, weeding the garden during the wet season, are activities that are often carried out by collective effort. Women, particularly pairs of widows, may work together in each other's gardens turn and turn about, and a man may be able to call on relatives, particularly his sons-in-law, to help in his garden without paying them for it. Most of the outside assistance that may be required in a garden is raised by means of a beer-party. The man's wife brews beer, and it is made known in the village and round about that on such-and-such a day there will be a party to hoe in their garden. A dozen or so people go to the garden in the morning, and work until the task set by the owner of the garden is completed. They then move to the village, and are refreshed with beer. Attendance at the beer-party is not restricted to those who have worked in the garden, and at some such parties a jar of beer may be specifically allocated to 241 476 602 273 476 241

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neighbouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern practice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

/4 cont'd/

701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
241 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
464 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital
[581] investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

161 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson
621 Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[178] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

342 /5 cont'd/ With both bamboo and pole huts, the
[962] construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and
[353] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September,
[921] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is co-operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and
[476] help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer,
[465] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

343 Storehouses are built of bamboo or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household
[692] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in
[241] separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

/8 cont'd/

352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled
285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any
513 headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts
[77] and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

/9/ V

412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of fur-
[325] naces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used,
[567] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

493 Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid
[241] wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle,
[490] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of
411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about
224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

/10 cont'd/

524 after moving other beans out of a hole. A boys' game played in the wet season is played with egg-shaped pieces of mud, with a small flange at one end. These pieces are thrown down on to the water, and ought to make an explosive noise.

/11/ VII

243 Maize, the main crop, is planted with the first steady rains in [221] November, and is harvested soon after the end of the rains in April or May. Under the influence of the Agricultural Department of the [242] Government, planting in small ridges following the contour is increasingly practised, but prior to the introduction of this and other new agricultural methods in the 1930s, planting was carried out in mounds about three feet in diameter and eighteen inches high. Finger millet is grown on patches of soil on which branches and garden trash have been burnt. However, the citemene system, as known in 241 other parts of the country, in which trees are felled over a wide area and burnt to fertilise a small area in the middle, is not practised as a principal method here. Finger millet is the only crop to be planted solely in ash fertilised patches, while the rest of the cleared ground may be planted with beans and nuts, and in the following season, with maize. Gardens last from two up to twenty or more years, depending on the type of soil, and the selection of a garden site is determined to some extent by the nature of the soil and of the vegetation growing on it.

244 In seepage areas, dry season gardens can be cultivated, and it is in such gardens, fenced in to keep out straying animals, that vegetables are grown for sale to Europeans and in the villages. These sites are also used for early planted maize, which is harvested in January and eaten in the form of green mealies. In the villages [249] themselves, small plots of tobacco and castor oil are grown on old hut sites, while abandoned village sites are used as subsidiary gardens for maize and other crops. Mango, banana, and pawpaw trees are 245 found in villages and on the sites of abandoned villages.

/11 cont'd/

•241 The busiest time of the year in the garden is at the beginning of the rains, when there is much work to be done planting and weed-
[136] ing, and scaring away the monkeys and wild pigs. Later on, in the new year, after the garden has been weeded twice, it is possible to think of enlarging the garden at one edge, and if it is not too late, the newly cleared portion may be planted with a catch crop. Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out
[476] to some extent co-operatively, either on a mutual help basis between two women, or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner of the garden. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink on the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrive at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subse-
[273] quent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set
[576] aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden.

/12/ Towards the end of the rains, there is less cultivating to be done, but the ravages of wild animals become more serious, and many families sleep for two or three months in the garden, returning to the village only to obtain food. Garden shelters are simple open-sided affairs with a thatched roof, but those owners who intend to
[342] sleep in their gardens for a long time, build small circular huts as in the village, or conical shelters with the roof reaching to the ground.
[419] A few lookout platforms built in trees are used as vantage points for spotting wild animals. If a man has a garden a long way from the village, particularly across a stream which will be in spate in the late rains, he may build a byre for his cattle at the garden.

Maize and ground-nuts are the first crops to be harvested, and later finger millet, root crops, and finally kaffir-corn. Maize is
251 stooked before the cobs are removed, and these are then dried on platforms before being carried to the village to be stored.

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [831] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [813] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [251] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [214] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [840] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 291 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [281] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 295 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and 224 taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by themselves and sell the meat.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI.—*The Zulu of Nyasaland: their Manners and Customs.* By the Rev. DONALD FRASER, of the Livingstonia Mission.

[Read before the Society, 20th February, 1901.]

101 I SHALL take you to-night into British Central Africa, and describe slightly, a most interesting nation of warriors who live in West Nyasaland. To reach them we sail up the Zambezi, and the 13 Shiré to Lake Nyasa. Landing at Bandawe, we strike inland for two days, climbing most of the way. After passing through richly wooded hills and valleys, we arrive at a great plateau, veined by constant sudden ravines through which rivers roar in the wet season, and trickle in the dry. The plateau is almost bared of trees, and is relieved by huge rocky hills which rise precipitously, from the plain. A low scrub covers the face of the land except where [24] gardens are being cultivated, and the whole country is dotted by innumerable ant hills, each as large as a cottage. These are hoed by the villagers, and throughout most of the year, stand out gaunt and bear. Then the landscape is thirsty and inhospitable looking. The earth baked and hard, lies unclothed in the blazing sun. Cattle, [23] sheep, and goats, wander about the river beds, and one looks almost in vain for any sign of vegetation to afford them food. But when the first rains come, the land breaks into smiling. The scrub puts on a dress of the softest green. The gardens and ant hills are [24] covered with springing maize, and a thick garment of foliage, vegetation, and flowers, hides every vestige of the ground. Here we stand from 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. In the cold season, the thermometer falls as low as 40°, and in the hot, rises as high as 98°. But though the sun has a dangerous bite in midsummer, the heat is never oppressive, and the nights are cool and refreshing.

101 The people who live in this country, are a branch of the Zulu FR5 tribe, who started north 70 or 80 years ago on a great raid. The causes which led them to desert their own country are wrapped in mystery, and even the old men who can remember the days when they crossed the Zambezi, are unable to give any clear account of their starting. Probably it arose from one of the wars of Chaka, in

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

241 The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by [178] the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The [567] masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich [34] though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession, [131] the Ngoni have learned to plant also reserve gardens of kasava, for the locusts and drought can scarcely affect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

These vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always 262 maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, [252] ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white porridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the [227] natives, to get at them, will hew down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. 261 A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stretching themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and [264] and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, 243 but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first clouds appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertiliser. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity.
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [821]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [825]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then [753]
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 782
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [241]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [726]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when [243]
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to [177]
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor [177]
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province,
166 648 much of it inaccessible and uninhabitable, except for small pockets of fertile soil, was opened to unrestricted settlement by the Ambo and Senga-Kunda peoples. Other areas of poor soils and low carrying capacities in Fort Jameson District were also opened to free settlement up to a population total determined by the carrying capacity.

In Ndola District an area was opened to immediate uncontrolled settle-
L [731] ment, in order to relieve acute land shortage and actual starvation in one section of the Reserve.

L M A somewhat modified method has been used in parts of Petauke District
[312] where dams are the only means of providing water. Here the population
[361] unit consists of three or four villages grouped into a 'parish' and settled
[632] about the watering points. A single land area is demarcated for each of these groups, instead of allocating a separate block to each village. This method allows of economy in the distribution of watering points, tends to reduce the effect of inter-village movements and, it is hoped, will lead to larger administrative units.

§ 7. *Agricultural Control and Improvement*

N 161 The general object of resettlement is to re-establish a population-land
[311] balance on the basis of traditional land usage *and the present population numbers*. Obviously, this balance cannot be permanent if the population is increasing; and if it is not increasing something is seriously wrong. Reliable vital statistics are entirely lacking but probably most of the tribes are increasing (the Ngoni may be an exception) at a rate which, judging by the very few available data, may be about 1½ per cent per annum, a rate which would double the population in forty-six years.

N Resettlement is not, and was never regarded as, a substitute for agricul-
242 tural improvement. The objects are to reduce the agricultural problem to
654 *practicable proportions, to relieve acute land shortage, to give time for*
648 experiment and the introduction of new methods. The assumption is that an evolutionary process of agricultural improvement will keep pace with natural increase of population, and that this process must be guided by experiment.

Simple measures of agricultural control, and the beginnings of soil con-
N servation and agricultural improvement, have been introduced in each of
[177] the resettlement areas as a condition of occupation. It need hardly be said that these are not popular with the majority and the existence of such condi-
M tions is a deterrent to movement.

N In the case of the earlier settlements in the Fort Jameson District an
648 elementary system of soil conservation was introduced by demarcating the
242 land for cultivation in contour strips separated by untouched belts of grass
[185] (which acquired the name of 'ten-yardis' since the original strips were ten
[241] paces wide). This was followed by an attempt to replace the traditional mound system of Ngoni, Chewa and Senga by cultivation on ridges

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Lamba FQ8

approximately on the contour and parallel to demarcated 'marker' ridges on the true contour. A system of contour cultivation has now been developed which is proving practical and effective. The 'marker' ridges are demarcated at a vertical interval of two feet six inches and are gradually converted by the people into more or less broad-based banks. In the first year the ridge is built up to a base width of six feet and a height of not less than six inches. The base and height are increased until a permanent bank eight feet wide at the base and eighteen inches in height is completed. Villages on the 'ten yardi' system can change over to contour cultivation if the majority of people elect to do so. New villages are allowed to move into resettlement areas in the Eastern Province only on condition that they agree to practice contour cultivation; they are given four or five years to adapt themselves to the new system but in many cases practically the whole of the new gardens are under ridges by the end of the second year. Cultivation practice has been adapted to the new system and, meanwhile, experiments are being made to find the best methods of ridging, spacing and planting of crops for use in conjunctions with the ridge cultivation system.

M N 648 242 [241] M N [166]

In the Ndola District gardens are laid off between contour grass strips at vertical intervals of two feet. The people are then encouraged to convert the grass strip into three parallel ridges approximating to the normal dimension of their mounds for subsidiary crops and to plant the ridges with beans and cowpeas; or to make one or two such ridges and plant the remainder of the strip with groundnuts on the flat—a combination of contour ridges and strip cropping. This method, an adaptation of normal Lamba practice was adopted after a series of trials to find the simplest method of erosion control acceptable to these somewhat backward people. The object is not only to check erosion but to restore the cultivation of subsidiary crops, now almost entirely neglected. The planting of the ridges to beans and cowpeas and the strips to groundnuts restores the balance between cereals and legumes and should allow of a small surplus for sale. The idea seems to be less unpopular than one might expect and most villages have made a satisfactory effort to convert the strips into ridges for the cultivation of subsidiary crops.

L 242 648 L [177]

Contours are laid off by trained African Assistants of the Department of Agriculture, using road tracers, and it has been found necessary during the initial stages of settlement to have one or two African Assistants * for at least every ten villages or, approximately, for every 600 to 1,000 people. Constant supervision is maintained during the initial phase by the African Agricultural Assistants in co-operation with District Messengers and the Native Authorities. This supervision is irksome and resented by some of the older people but it is, perhaps, significant that at a recent meeting of the African Regional Council of the Western Province after the subject had been freely debated, the council voted by a large majority for an increase in the number of Agricultural Capitaos.

L [177]

Fruit tree planting has also been introduced and in the Eastern and Western Provinces laws made by the Native Authorities require each household

N 245 648 671

* Usually one and a learner assistant at Ndola.

/10 cont'd/

524 after moving other beans out of a hole. A boys' game played in the wet season is played with egg-shaped pieces of mud, with a small flange at one end. These pieces are thrown down on to the water, and ought to make an explosive noise.

/11/ VII

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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8. A well-filled grain store

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[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

their relations may dig them out, and place them in 766
some other country.) And they throw them to the 782
back of the cave, and take the corpse and lay it on top of them. Then they begin to fill in, the ones in the cave are groaning, "Alas, alas!" When they have finished filling in, they go to the water to bathe. When they return to the village they dance.

XV

THE CHIEF OF THE KUKA AND THE SON-IN-LAW

I. The chief of the *Kuka* hut and his son-in-law 606
once hoed a garden. When the maize grew up, the 539
father-in-law told his son-in-law to build a watch-tower. Then the father-in-law went off and forged some arrow-heads, and gave them to his son-in-law, saying, "There are some arrows, you must keep a look-out with them in the garden here." And the son-in-law received the arrows, and remained at the watch-tower there. One day the wind came
and flattened down all the maize, and his father-in- [243]
law came to walk on a round of inspection in the garden, and then he saw that the wind had laid the maize, and he clapped his hands and said, "Oh, to-day I see wonders, those arrow-heads I just forged for him to keep by him [and look at]." And then he went up to the watch-tower, where his son-in-law was, and asked him, saying, "Those arrow-heads I forged, I just forged that you might sleep with them on the watch-tower here?" And the son-

/10 cont'd/

504 after moving other beans out of a hole. A boys' game played in the wet season is played with egg-shaped pieces of mud, with a small flange at one end. These pieces are thrown down on to the water, and ought to make an explosive noise.

/11/ VII

243 [221] Maize, the main crop, is planted with the first steady rains in November, and is harvested soon after the end of the rains in April or May. Under the influence of the Agricultural Department of the [242] Government, planting in small ridges following the contour is increasingly practised, but prior to the introduction of this and other new agricultural methods in the 1930s, planting was carried out in mounds about three feet in diameter and eighteen inches high. Finger millet is grown on patches of soil on which branches and garden 241 trash have been burnt. However, the citemene system, as known in other parts of the country, in which trees are felled over a wide area and burnt to fertilise a small area in the middle, is not practised as a principal method here. Finger millet is the only crop to be planted solely in ash fertilised patches, while the rest of the cleared ground may be planted with beans and nuts, and in the following season, with maize. Gardens last from two up to twenty or more years, depending on the type of soil, and the selection of a garden site is determined to some extent by the nature of the soil and of the vegetation growing on it.

244 In seepage areas, dry season gardens can be cultivated, and it is in such gardens, fenced in to keep out straying animals, that vegetables are grown for sale to Europeans and in the villages. These sites are also used for early planted maize, which is harvested in January and eaten in the form of green mealies. In the villages [249] themselves, small plots of tobacco and castor oil are grown on old hut sites, while abandoned village sites are used as subsidiary gardens for maize and other crops. Mango, banana, and pawpaw trees are 245 found in villages and on the sites of abandoned villages.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality 595
of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes
that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have [171]
100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's
matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil
custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And
when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it
must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry 177
till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full [582]
grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But
now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the
Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse
marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this
serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday,
at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock.
But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by
appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have
reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am
satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his 583
father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery
varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would
marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as
much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or
three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages,
for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth,
and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable 562
ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a 565
considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But
the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than
that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out
with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this
exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for 462
many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the [171]
woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women
went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, [243]
while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the
grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. [252]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession, the Ngoni have learned to plant also reserve gardens of ka•ava, for the locusts and drought can scarcely affect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

These vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white porridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the natives, to get at them, will hew down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stretching themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first clouds appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertiliser. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

243 forest is cut down and burnt, and another garden cultivated, and so the country is rapidly being deforested. The crop is largely
273 used to make a heady beer, and although Central Africa has been happily saved from the curse of European liquor, the native beer is a great source of big drunken bouts. Heavy drinking, however, does not bring the evil effects that brandy drunkenness would entail. The drink is a nutritious and a very sustaining food. I know some of the old chiefs who are drunk almost every day of their lives by midday, yet they bear up wonderfully. But
[519] these drunken bouts, when whole villages run riot, are the source of nearly all quarrels, adultery, bloodshed, and every outburst of passion. We have had to denounce the beer drinking as a menace
[177] to the social order of the country, and for lack of the strong restraint of the British Government, which forbids the cutting down of trees, we have preached against the deforesting of the land as a wicked improvidence. The native church has, of its own initiative, taken up the question, and enjoined on the members total abstinence, and the preservation of the forests.

461 Three or four months labour are sufficient to provide a family with food for the year, and the sale of a sheep or a heifer will buy all the clothes the famly requires. There is therefore little necessity to work, and the tendency is to spend the months lounging about the village, talking and trifling. Now, happily a more
100 industrious period is waking, and larger ambitions for cloth and
461 for stock, are drawing out the men to work. As a mission we insist on the duty of labour, we refuse church privileges to a man
797 if he cannot show that he has been engaged for some months each year at some labour centre doing honest work. No moral good is ever effected by pampering African pride and indolence, and one of the first lessons Christianity has to teach the native, is the dignity of labour, and the absolute necessity for the labourer to be industrious and honest in the discharge of his work. A penny a day is the ordinary wage we give a labourer, and even the great majority of my 220 teachers do not receive more than 1/6 a month.

171 Of course many of the Central Africans have industries of their own, smelting, basket making, cloth weaving, wire pulling, and so on. But the Ngoni were a handless people until they got a spear in their hand. Then they drew themselves up as men, and defied the universe. Yet this martial life had an ennobling effect on them. It is a curious thing to notice, and a fact which was

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

can live in the village and cultivate a garden. The maintenance of 464
contacts is facilitated by the fairly general cessation of work on the 249
farms at the week-ends. Apart from two periods of tobacco slump, the local demand for labour has exceeded the supply ever since the earlier period of European settlement. As early as January 1900 the manager of the North Charterland Exploration Company complained to the Administration that the lack of local labour was very serious, and attributed this to the large number of people who were going away to work in Southern Rhodesia. This theme has been repeated over and over again ever since. The practical effect of this chronic local shortage of labour has been that work on the farms has always been a more easy-going affair than work away on the mines or in the big towns. Men have been able to absent themselves from work to attend to their affairs at home very much as they have pleased. Payment has been either for piece-work or for the number of days worked, so that [465] at one time it was not unusual for a man to take two or three months to complete thirty days' work, for which he had contracted.

Prior to about 1930, there were a few villages located on farm-land, 361
whose inhabitants undertook to work for so many days, with pay, in 465
return for permission to remain on the land. With the completion of 466
the move into reserves, this became rare, and at the present time the bulk of the people who live on farm-land are accommodated in compounds provided for them by the farmer. These people are the labourers on the farm for the time being, their families, and friends. The compound is under the charge of a foreman who is usually an employee of long standing on the farm. On some of the farms there [244] ●
are small gardens, but none of them, as far as I know, permit the 233
keeping of cattle by the labourers. This means that a man with cattle must continue to keep them at home in his village or in the village of a relative. Cattle are still the principal form of investment, particularly for people who cannot spend their capital in building a brick house, so that it is common to find in a village that many of the cattle in the byre are being tended for the benefit of an absent owner who spends the majority of his time away on a farm and who may not even have a hut in the village.

The demand for labour on the tobacco farms varies considerably 249
with the time of year, being greatest from about Christmas until about 464
June. At the same time, the calls on a man to tend his own garden are greatest from about November until May. Farmers therefore try to get labour for a few days at a time from people who live in villages

/10 cont'd/

524 after moving other beans out of a hole. A boys' game played in the wet season is played with egg-shaped pieces of mud, with a small flange at one end. These pieces are thrown down on to the water, and ought to make an explosive noise.

/11/ VII

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5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Lamba FQ8

approximately on the contour and parallel to demarcated 'marker' ridges on the true contour. A system of contour cultivation has now been developed which is proving practical and effective. The 'marker' ridges are demarcated at a vertical interval of two feet six inches and are gradually converted by the people into more or less broad-based banks. In the first year the ridge is built up to a base width of six feet and a height of not less than six inches. The base and height are increased until a permanent bank eight feet wide at the base and eighteen inches in height is completed. Villages on the 'ten yardi' system can change over to contour cultivation if the majority of people elect to do so. New villages are allowed to move into resettlement areas in the Eastern Province only on condition that they agree to practice contour cultivation; they are given four or five years to adapt themselves to the new system but in many cases practically the whole of the new gardens are under ridges by the end of the second year. Cultivation practice has been adapted to the new system and, meanwhile, experiments are being made to find the best methods of ridging, spacing and planting of crops for use in conjunctions with the ridge cultivation system.

M N 648 242 [241] M N [166]

In the Ndola District gardens are laid off between contour grass strips at vertical intervals of two feet. The people are then encouraged to convert the grass strip into three parallel ridges approximating to the normal dimension of their mounds for subsidiary crops and to plant the ridges with beans and cowpeas; or to make one or two such ridges and plant the remainder of the strip with groundnuts on the flat—a combination of contour ridges and strip cropping. This method, an adaptation of normal Lamba practice was adopted after a series of trials to find the simplest method of erosion control acceptable to these somewhat backward people. The object is not only to check erosion but to restore the cultivation of subsidiary crops, now almost entirely neglected. The planting of the ridges to beans and cowpeas and the strips to groundnuts restores the balance between cereals and legumes and should allow of a small surplus for sale. The idea seems to be less unpopular than one might expect and most villages have made a satisfactory effort to convert the strips into ridges for the cultivation of subsidiary crops.

L 242 648 L [177]

Contours are laid off by trained African Assistants of the Department of Agriculture, using road tracers, and it has been found necessary during the initial stages of settlement to have one or two African Assistants* for at least every ten villages or, approximately, for every 600 to 1,000 people. Constant supervision is maintained during the initial phase by the African Agricultural Assistants in co-operation with District Messengers and the Native Authorities. This supervision is irksome and resented by some of the older people but it is, perhaps, significant that at a recent meeting of the African Regional Council of the Western Province after the subject had been freely debated, the council voted by a large majority for an increase in the number of Agricultural Capitaos.

L [177]

Fruit tree planting has also been introduced and in the Eastern and Western Provinces laws made by the Native Authorities require each household

N 245 648 671

* Usually one and a learner assistant at Ndola.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 245 671 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds, seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little [177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a [192] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of 311 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush. 648 In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre- 185 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning [622] of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this 361 has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected 362 (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built [342] of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's 648 journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

/10 cont'd/

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [249] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 77 233 234

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market. 571 574 [439] [311]

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. [692] 648 643

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area. 611 178 171 [249] [464]

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the 646 648

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10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native
562 Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws
858 are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one
486 might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly
562 by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to
494 look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives
167 and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko–Mission service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these
205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more
249 than 12 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man
[361] to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 35.

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Prior to about 1930, there were a few villages located on farm-land, 361
whose inhabitants undertook to work for so many days, with pay, in 465
return for permission to remain on the land. With the completion of 466
the move into reserves, this became rare, and at the present time the bulk of the people who live on farm-land are accommodated in compounds provided for them by the farmer. These people are the labourers on the farm for the time being, their families, and friends. The compound is under the charge of a foreman who is usually an employee of long standing on the farm. On some of the farms there [244] are small gardens, but none of them, as far as I know, permit the 233
keeping of cattle by the labourers. This means that a man with cattle must continue to keep them at home in his village or in the village of a relative. Cattle are still the principal form of investment, particularly for people who cannot spend their capital in building a brick house, so that it is common to find in a village that many of the cattle in the byre are being tended for the benefit of an absent owner who spends the majority of his time away on a farm and who may not even have a hut in the village.

The demand for labour on the tobacco farms varies considerably 249
with the time of year, being greatest from about Christmas until about 464
June. At the same time, the calls on a man to tend his own garden are greatest from about November until May. Farmers therefore try to get labour for a few days at a time from people who live in villages

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

240 464 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most [851] [462] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep themselves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

466 To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

584 Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

444 The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

464 651 653 [622] The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another. For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtaining labour for the Administration for essential public works. He adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 578 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

/10 cont'd/

524 after moving other beans out of a hole. A boys' game played in the wet season is played with egg-shaped pieces of mud, with a small flange at one end. These pieces are thrown down on to the water, and ought to make an explosive noise.

/11/ VII

243 Maize, the main crop, is planted with the first steady rains in [291] November, and is harvested soon after the end of the rains in April or May. Under the influence of the Agricultural Department of the [292] Government, planting in small ridges following the contour is increasingly practised, but prior to the introduction of this and other new agricultural methods in the 1930s, planting was carried out in mounds about three feet in diameter and eighteen inches high. Finger millet is grown on patches of soil on which branches and garden 241 trash have been burnt. However, the citemene system, as known in other parts of the country, in which trees are felled over a wide area and burnt to fertilise a small area in the middle, is not practised as a principal method here. Finger millet is the only crop to be planted solely in ash fertilised patches, while the rest of the cleared ground may be planted with beans and nuts, and in the following season, with maize. Gardens last from two up to twenty or more years, depending on the type of soil, and the selection of a garden site is determined to some extent by the nature of the soil and of the vegetation growing on it.

244 In seepage areas, dry season gardens can be cultivated, and it is in such gardens, fenced in to keep out straying animals, that vegetables are grown for sale to Europeans and in the villages. These sites are also used for early planted maize, which is harvested in January and eaten in the form of green mealies. In the villages [249] themselves, small plots of tobacco and castor oil are grown on old hut sites, while abandoned village sites are used as subsidiary gardens for maize and other crops. Mango, banana, and pawpaw trees are 245 found in villages and on the sites of abandoned villages.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *intelezi* was made from the roots of a creeper and a bush which grew on the banks of rivers. These roots were burned over the fire, pounded and mixed with water. The warriors were given some to lick on the tips of their fingers, some was smeared inside their shields, and the rest was beaten in a gourd till it foamed. The 'war doctor' took the tail of a gnu or of a zebra and dipped it in the foam and sprinkled the warriors as they finally passed out of the gateway of the kraal on the campaign. This medicine was for strengthening them and also for making them 'slippery', so that the enemy spears would glide by them and not pierce them, and they could slip between the posts of the enemy stockade. After being sprinkled with the *intelezi* no one could sleep with his wife or any other woman, as he would risk spoiling the effect of the medicine and therefore would be more liable to be killed.

The *inkhwaza* was a spear with a barbed hook. The Paramount threw it in front of the army as they stood in the kraal until all the warriors had left. It was then put back in the *indlunkulu* where it was kept in the care of the owner of that hut.

There were thus three functions to be performed, each by one of the war medicines. The *intelezi* was to strengthen and protect individual warriors. The *intonga* was the symbol of their Paramount and their kingdom leading them to war and weakening the enemy. The *inkhwaza* was the symbol of invincibility, administered by the Paramount.

There were two stages of assembling in the Paramount's village before a campaign. The first followed the initial summons to mobilize, when the local companies (*mahandla*) marched into the kraal, sorted themselves into age regiments (*mabuto*) and sang their regimental songs. Then followed the *ligubo*, the war-dance, when the warriors wore their full war-dress, and the women joined in. There was no individual dancing but a working up of corporate feeling through the dancing and songs. The Ngoni used no drums in their music, relying on achieving rhythm and unison by the stamping of their feet and their singing. After this dance the warriors left for their villages, while at the Paramount's village preparation was made for food and snuff for the campaign. Hard cakes of roasted bulbrush millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts pounded together, and dried meat, were the main supplies carried. At the second summons the warriors returned in their companies with their carriers. These carriers, who were usually young boys, carried the war-dresses and ornaments wrapped in a mat, and the food supplies.

Since on this final meeting depended much of the ultimate success of the campaign, only the warriors and the senior men were present, and all women and young children were excluded from the kraal. After the objectives of the fighting had been explained the warriors were addressed by the old men and exhorted to be brave and to help their comrades, and then the final medication by the 'war doctor' took place. The separation of the army from the civil population was complete until their return

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and nursemaids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving. 593 862 176

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*lomwi*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *lomwi*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father. 513 592

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *lomwi* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary. 264 [343] [251] 356 593 342

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she [115]

surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several respects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of the household objects were indeed the same as those used by other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural significance about some of the features of Ngoni households mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found elsewhere.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling. Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots holding water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front of the hut was a well-swept space, moulded and polished in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 561 severed portions. On branches of fresh leaves, brought by the younger herd-boys, were piled the sections of the animal, down to the last bit of intestine, for distribution according to a fixed Ngoni pattern.

231 835 A senior man of the house owning the beast, when all was ready, counted all the parts, that is he named each part, head, horns, tail, feet, joints and internal organs, and each was pointed out to him as being present. The herd-boys standing round learned the names of the organs and the sections of the animal, and heard the names and status of the men to whom the parts were assigned. The herd-boys of the family of the owner were given certain symbolic parts: an ear, an eye and the nose, for hearing, seeing and smelling; parts of an artery and of an intestine as controlling the blood flow and the waste material, and the rectum as ejecting waste; and the foot for walking steadily and fast.

252 [251] Some of the meat was roasted over a fire, parts like the stomach and intestines were cleaned and boiled, some was dried slowly on a rack over a fire of green wood, and put in fibre bags for keeping. The blood was taken to the head woman of the house owning the herd. She cooked it with the fat round the kidneys till it coagulated and formed a dish, salty and meaty, much liked by the Ngoni, and rather akin to black pudding. The women also took over any spare fat and rendered it down and clarified it to use as unguents.

[278] 235 868 The young adult who had had six or seven years of herding cattle and had advanced to be a senior herd-boy, had acquired not only certain manual skills such as those just described, but also some knowledge of the anatomy of cattle, some idea of the social attitudes towards cattle and their ownership, and some idea of their economic value to the Ngoni. For certain restricted ritual purposes, a cow in calf had to be killed for sacrifice, and herd-boys saw the foetus removed when the cow was cut up. They were also often present at the birth of calves in the bush, and had to wait

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

356 in with a smooth round stone. This too was hard work, but every now and then the grandmother, watching and supervising, handed out a lump of clarified fat which quickly brought up a fine polish. The girls were told that this high polish was necessary so that people might sit with pleasure on the floor, and so that all dust and refuse showed up clearly in the morning sweeping of the hut. The floor of the veranda was similarly polished, and, as we saw in Chapter [351] IV, the more important huts had a smeared and polished space all round the front.

In arranging the inside of the hut girls were taught the 353 right places to put the water-jars and other pots, the baskets and mats, and the bundles of cloth and ornaments belonging to the 'house' wrapped in mats or packed neatly in wooden or tin chests. Brass and bead ornaments, and special cloths [301] for use by men and women on ceremonial occasions, were [292] all kept in the huts of leading women. The ornaments worn [768] by such a woman during her lifetime were returned to the 'house' after her death and looked after in the hut of her successor. These possessions and heirlooms were periodically 356 brought out into the sun, and shaken and aired or polished. A housewife was publicly shamed if she did not take care of such property, and people spread stories that she was careless about keeping the wealth of the house in good repair. Girls were reminded of this when they were called to help at such a 'spring cleaning', and told as a warning: 'So-and-so in that village over there, she let the insects eat the cloth of the house. The mildew spoiled the head-bands and waistcoats. The green rust came on the brass wire. She was shamed when men spoke about it.'

Part of the property of each household was the food stored 251 after harvest or gathered from the bush. Formerly the Ngoni stored their staple cereal in pits dug in the kraal, moulded and fired and covered with a flat rock. The same kind of pit was sometimes made in the side veranda for storing sweet potatoes, but nothing was stored in the kraal.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the 251
tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the [262]
cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV.
Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work [556]
in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and
their presence in the compound conferred importance on
their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of [415]
beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter,
dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs
and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a [323]
shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It
was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when 583
married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats, 577
spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would
show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to
have a high standard of household management in her new
home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households 511
well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they 577
could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some [357]
of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed
their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish 252
was being prepared. They watched every movement of their 868
mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on,
measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred
the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps
and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water
before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day 262
in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish
of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less
often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the [415]

262 round covered food basket, the side dishes in small covered
[415] earthenware bowls. Among the traditional Ngoni dishes learned by girls were the following:

252 Gruel made of cow's milk and maize flour (for young children).
262 Whole maize boiled with beans and round peas.
Sweet potatoes boiled, peeled and mashed with tomatoes.
Beans and finger millet flour cooked separately and then stirred together.
Pumpkins cooked with ground-nut paste.
Ground-nut flour cooked with scraps of meat.
Whole tall millet pounded with ground-nuts.
Pot-roast chicken with tomatoes, onions and ground-nuts.

In Ngoni households meat when cooked in large quantities,
262 not just as broth made from bones and titbits, was served on
415 a special wooden meat-dish, round or oblong with rounded ends, and supported on three sturdy legs. This meat-dish was an integral part of the equipment of every 'true Ngoni'
[264] household, and, like the French housewife's omelet pan, was after use wiped clean and polished with clarified fat. The outside of these meat-dishes was often decorated with 'poker
[531] work' designs by the maker, and such decorated and shining meat-dishes were treasured as heirlooms. Other, but rare,
415 heirlooms were hammered brass pots with a flat bottom and turned over edge, of the pattern known in India as *dekshi*. The Ngoni women who owned them declared they had been brought by their ancestors from the south.

● 251 All the extra fat when a beast was killed was sent to the women of the 'house' in whose herd it was, and this fat was cooked until it was clarified, and then stored. Butter was made by shaking milk in a gourd, and it was also clarified
[234] for keeping. Formerly milk curds were made daily by the senior women and kept to mature in a jar before being eaten. Only in a few Ngoni households was this still done.

275 Beer was made on special occasions when the women had

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

N 251 511 [126]

The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages

(February 1941)

N [142]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,719

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [341]

N [166]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag closely depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 311 511

L 161 311 511 600

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

6.Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

right, the animal is the property of him who first 224
[drew blood].

II. Should it be a buck about which there is a 224
dispute, one saying, "My dog was first," another, 578
"My dog was first," then they say, "Come, let 695
us dig up medicine." And they take the medicine, one his lot, the other his, and chew a bit between the teeth, and one blows it out over his dog, saying, "You dog, if it were not you (who caught the buck), you must die; if it were you, you must vomit." And the other man says the same (to his dog), and they see the dog of one of them is dying. Should it chance that two men throw together, and one says, "It was I who began," they say, "Do not let us be always arguing about this; come, let us go to the medicine man." They do not drink (the poison) themselves, but their dogs drink. And when they have finished hunting they say, "Let us be getting back now." All the game they have killed 224
they pile up together, and the master of the hunt begins to "twist off" the legs that are his share. If they see that there is a great quantity of meat, [257]
they cut it in strips, and make a drying rack and light a fire (under it), that the meat may dry. When dry, it is taken off the rack and tied into bundles.

III. One way of hunting is with many men and dogs, and another of the single hunter. Others, again, dig game pits, and make long fences leading up to them, leaving gaps here and there where the pits are. Another way of hunting is by cutting off a stretch of bush. A man separates his bit of jungle, [by clearing a bare strip all round it] and when all the bush is burned, it alone remains. The game run away from the bare place and enter the bush patch; when the rains are just about to begin to fall, he goes and sets fire to the cut off bush patch. When the game run for the open, people kill them.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIII

251
342
343
415

1. Storing finger millet. The untidily thatched building on the right is a dormitory for boys

273
415
342
354

2. A queen brewing beer. It is only important people who own oil drums

NGONI

[Facing P. 208]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than either of these two drinks, and the drinking of it is essentially a social event. The kind of beer brewed is made from maize, sorghum, and finger millet. It is brewed by women, the process lasting about a week. The beer can be drunk at any time during the week, but it is not regarded as truly beer until after the brewing process has been completed. It remains good to drink for about three days, after which it becomes too sour. About 20 to 30 gallons of beer are brewed at a time. The beer can be sold, used to provide refreshment for participants in some ceremony or other, offered in return for labour or other services, or else just drunk for its own sake. In each case the presence of beer in the village acts as a magnet attracting people from other villages. Beer that is sold is of economic importance as it is the principal way in which women raise funds for themselves. In connexion with a ceremony of some kind, the attraction of the beer is secondary in general to that exerted by the ceremony itself. The provision of beer in return for utilitarian services we shall discuss later. It is in the pattern of behaviour adopted when beer is drunk for its own sake that we can see reflected the structure of social action at the village level.

Beer is stored in earthenware jars of about 7 gallons capacity. A calabash-gourd cup is used to ladle the beer into earthenware bowls holding about 4 pints; from these the beer is drunk. When the beer is ready for drinking, the friendly fellow villagers of the man whose wife has brewed come to the beer-hut, which is usually the women's kitchen, and the owner of the beer drinks the first jar with them. The procedure with each jar is that the owner of the beer gives the jar to someone, almost invariably a man, who becomes known as the divider of the beer, and who calls on someone junior to him to act as the dispenser of the beer. The dispenser sits on the ground and fills up the bowls from the jar under the instruction of the divider of the beer, and then takes them, or points them out to, the people to whom the divider wishes to give the beer. Thus the beer is given away in jars by the owner of the beer to the dividers of the beer, and is then divided into bowlfuls, and given by the dividers to yet other people. The owners of the bowlfuls drink some and pass on the bowls so that other people may drink. Each time these gifts of beer of different quantities are made they are acknowledged by the recipient in the form of a praise, consisting of the syllable *yo* followed by the descent-name of the giver. This is also done when a bowl or a jar is finished, so that when the last bowl of a jar is finished the owner of the bowl is praised, then the divider of the beer, and finally the owner of the beer. The

/6 cont'd/

419 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which [34] there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

831 /7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [39] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

419 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [335] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [351] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder 343 to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may [511] have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasionally open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

/11 cont'd/

241 The busiest time of the year in the garden is at the beginning
[136] of the rains, when there is much work to be done planting and weeding, and scaring away the monkeys and wild pigs. Later on, in the new year, after the garden has been weeded twice, it is possible to think of enlarging the garden at one edge, and if it is not too late, the newly cleared portion may be planted with a catch crop. Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out
[272] to some extent co-operatively, either on a mutual help basis between two women, or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner of the garden. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink on the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrive at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subsequent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set
[373] [274] aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden.

/12/ Towards the end of the rains, there is less cultivating to be done, but the ravages of wild animals become more serious, and many families sleep for two or three months in the garden, returning to the village only to obtain food. Garden shelters are simple open-sided affairs with a thatched roof, but those owners who intend to
[342] sleep in their gardens for a long time, build small circular huts as in the village, or conical shelters with the roof reaching to the ground.
[414] A few lookout platforms built in trees are used as vantage points for spotting wild animals. If a man has a garden a long way from the village, particularly across a stream which will be in spate in the late rains, he may build a byre for his cattle at the garden.

Maize and ground-nuts are the first crops to be harvested, and later finger millet, root crops, and finally kaffir-corn. Maize is
251 stooked before the cobs are removed, and these are then dried on platforms before being carried to the village to be stored.

/12 cont'd/

232 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [233] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [234] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [236] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [235] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 242 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [244] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [253] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [240] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

243 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 245 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 249 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [234] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and 224 taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by themselves and sell the meat.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The three final acts of the *ntimbo* were performed for the new wife by the women of her new village. The first took place about two days after the end of the main ceremony and was the occasion for her instruction by her husband's relatives. She sat on a mat by the *ndlondolo*, while the women of that house dressed her *ndebele*, anointed her with oil, and clothed her in fresh skins and new beads taken from the store of the house to which she now belonged. They then instructed her in her behaviour to old and young, telling her to avoid selfishness and quarrelling and to be friendly with everyone.

The second act, called *ukufumisa umdebekazi* (bringing the wife out), took place thirty to forty days later, during which time the wife had been sitting by her hut being watched. All this time she had eaten only a little food, went to her from her mother-in-law's hut, had been afraid to speak to anyone, and had wept often. Now she was told that she might go anywhere and talk with anyone. She could help her mother-in-law by fetching firewood and by lighting her fire. A pot of water was given to her and an axe to cut firewood, and her mother-in-law gave her the *ndlokazo* bead, a sign that she might speak and eat in front of her parents-in-law. But her testing time was not yet over. She was told to fetch a huge bundle of split wood and to lay it down carefully before her mother-in-law's hut without dropping any. As the bundle was on her head, it meant kneeling down and bending forward slowly until she could gently ease the wood on to the ground. Other tests included stripping large quantities of maize, soaking them, and pounding them into stamped maize (*izinduku*). This testing was called *ukudinga umdebekazi* (watching the new wife), and was in most cases far more exacting than anything she had been made to do in her own home.

The culminating act of the integration process, *ukupekisa umdebekazi*, in which the new wife's hut was recognised as the starting-point of a new house, was the ceremony of making fire in her new hut to cook food for her husband. Two or three months after the marriage, a woman from her father-in-law's *gogo* house suddenly appeared in the doorway of the new wife's hut, carrying three hearth-stones. She fetched fire, kindled it, and began to cook boiled maize. The astonished young wife was expected to cry because she had now been turned away from her mother-in-law's cooking-place, as if she were being put out of the house. The maize cooked on this first fire in the new hut was regarded as having been cooked by the bride, and was divided into portions, one being taken to each section of the village attached to a house. Meanwhile the young wife sat nearby, hanging her head and showing the conventional signs of grief. Nevertheless she was so excited that she went back to her own home as soon as possible to tell them the news. The response of her own people was to prepare food for a feast and bring it to her new village to express to her husband's people their appreciation of this token of confidence in the girl's ability to cook for her husband.

on was placed on it. The meat in the basket and on the gate stayed there all night. 769 782

Following the ritual of offering meat to the spirits came the ritual of cooking and eating the meat, both that offered to the spirits and the rest. After the basket of meat had been left all night in the place of the spirits, the large quantity on the gate was carried away and cooked by an old woman outside the hut of Bambo Manga's granddaughter. The meat in the basket which had been offered to the spirits was put in a pot and cooked on the fire in Bambo Manga's hut. It stayed cooking all day and all night till the following morning. Dzinthenga Phungwako, an old and highly respected *Sikoda*, came to the hut and divided the sacrificial meat among all who were in the house, that is Bambo Manga, her daughter and granddaughter and several senior women. When they had finished the leading women stood up and thanked '*Zikhomo Mawiko*', '*Zikhomo Mapungwe*'. Then they washed their hands and went to their own houses. 252 769 782

The large quantity of meat which had been laid on the gate and cooked on another fire in another *bunda* was carried in a big pot and put down outside Bambo Manga's hut in the late afternoon. Her daughter came outside and divided the meat into three piles: a small one from the breast-bones for the women, a leg for the chief, the head for Kalwani the headman of a neighbouring village, and the rest in a big pot for the men. A boy came to tell Lopati that all was ready and he and the chief went out to the place where the beast was killed, near the gate of the kraal. There were four groups already sitting there and the chief and Lopati made a fifth: the *mudoda*, the senior men; the *majoko*, the young men; the *mukoso*, the herd-boys; and the little boys. Before Lopati divided the meat he and the chief washed elaborately with water brought in a gourd, and then he washed the knife before cutting the meat. He called the *mudoda* to send someone for their portion in a basket, then the young men and the herd-boys were given their portions—a basket for each group, and the small boys had bits put in their hands. The eating was very sedate, there was no snatching of choice bits, and in each group the one who fetched the meat distributed it. There was the general atmosphere of a ritual meal rather than a feast, though the small boys smacked their lips appreciatively. From time to time Lopati called up someone from a group and gave him a bit more to divide up. When it was all eaten, a boy was sent to fetch water and the soapy leaves which the Ngoni used for washing, and the chief and Lopati and the *mudoda* all washed the grease off their fingers. Then Lopati stood up and called out '*Siyabonga baba, nikomo matwana wenkosi*', 'We are praising you, father, thank you child of the Paramount', and the others all agreed and said '*Zikhomo baba*.' Then they all went together to Bambo Manga's hut and stood opposite her door and called out the same thanks. The women who had eaten their meat 431 769 782 [264] [515] [561]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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412
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6, 7. Pounding maize

342

[facing p. 33]

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (1)

When the boy's voice began to break, and his father or another older man noticed it, the second part of the ritual took place. The father's brother went to a senior man famed in the village as a herbalist and obtained from him several kinds of roots. These were ground and then cooked either in milk or in the cud from a goat's stomach, usually the latter, for the father liked it to be known that he killed a goat for his son. If the mixture was cooked in milk, a fowl was killed, and in either case the boy was given the meat to eat immediately after the mixture to take away the extremely bitter taste. The cooking took place on a small fire by the kraal gate in the presence of the male members of the father's house. The boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the mixture as it was bubbling in the pan and to lick them quickly. He was not expected to show that he found the mixture very bitter as well as hot to touch. At intervals the boy had to jump over the fire, hitting his elbows and knees with the palms of his hands. The more often he did this, the less often did he have to dip in the pan because the mixture soon dried up, but he had to continue dipping and licking till there was no liquid left. The senior men watched intently all through this performance because they believed the mixture not only helped physical growth and muscular strength but would prevent impotence. When this ritual was performed for the heir of a chief, it was followed by a war-dance in the cattle kraal and the boy had to take a second dose of medicine in the kraal surrounded by the warriors. In such a case a bull was killed instead of the customary goat, and the contents of its stomach used for mixing the medicine. The meat was eaten by the boy and his father's relatives.

As in the case of the girls, this boy's ritual was an occasion for asserting the authority of the father and his kin over the boy. For him there was however no separating off into another group after this maturing. He continued to live in the dormitory, herd cattle, and go to school as before.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

29 severed portions. On branches of fresh leaves, brought by the
56 younger herd-boys, were piled the sections of the animal, down to the last bit of intestine, for distribution according to a fixed Ngoni pattern.

29 A senior man of the house owning the beast, when all was
82 ready, 'counted' all the parts, that is he named each part, head, horns, tail, feet, joints and internal organs, and each was pointed out to him as being present. The herd-boys stand-
[90] ing round learned the names of the organs and the sections of the animal, and heard the names and status of the men to whom the parts were assigned. The herd-boys of the family of the owner were given certain symbolic parts: an ear, an eye and the nose, for hearing, seeing and smelling; parts of an artery and of an intestine as controlling the blood flow and the waste material, and the rectum as ejecting waste; and the foot for walking steadily and fast.

Some of the meat was roasted over a fire, parts like the
252 stomach and intestines were cleaned and boiled, some was
[251] dried slowly on a rack over a fire of green wood, and put in fibre bags for keeping. The blood was taken to the head woman of the house owning the herd. She cooked it with the fat round the kidneys till it coagulated and formed a dish, salty and meaty, much liked by the Ngoni, and rather akin to black pudding. The women also took over any spare fat and rendered it down and clarified it to use as
[278] unguents.

The young adult who had had six or seven years of
293 herding cattle and had advanced to be a senior herd-boy,
868 had acquired not only certain manual skills such as those just described, but also some knowledge of the anatomy of cattle, some idea of the social attitudes towards cattle and their ownership, and some idea of their economic value to the Ngoni. For certain restricted ritual purposes, a cow in calf had to be killed for sacrifice, and herd-boys saw the foetus removed when the cow was cut up. They were also often present at the birth of calves in the bush, and had to wait

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the 251
tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the [262]
cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV.
Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work [556]
in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and
their presence in the compound conferred importance on
their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of [415]
beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter,
dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs
and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a [323]
shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It
was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when 583
married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats, 577
spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would
show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to
have a high standard of household management in her new
home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households 511
well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they 577
could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some [357]
of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed
their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish 252 ●
was being prepared. They watched every movement of their 868
mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on,
measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred
the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps
and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water
before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day 262
in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish
of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less
often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the [415]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 round covered food basket, the side dishes in small covered
[415] earthenware bowls. Among the traditional Ngoni dishes learned by girls were the following:

252 Gruel made of cow's milk and maize flour (for young children).
262 Whole maize boiled with beans and round peas.
Sweet potatoes boiled, peeled and mashed with tomatoes.
Beans and finger millet flour cooked separately and then stirred together.
Pumpkins cooked with ground-nut paste.
Ground-nut flour cooked with scraps of meat.
Whole tall millet pounded with ground-nuts.
Pot-roast chicken with tomatoes, onions and ground-nuts.

In Ngoni households meat when cooked in large quantities,
262 not just as broth made from bones and tibits, was served on
415 a special wooden meat-dish, round or oblong with rounded ends, and supported on three sturdy legs. This meat-dish was an integral part of the equipment of every 'true Ngoni'
[264] household, and, like the French housewife's omelet pan, was after use wiped clean and polished with clarified fat. The outside of these meat-dishes was often decorated with 'poker
[531] work' designs by the maker, and such decorated and shining meat-dishes were treasured as heirlooms. Other, but rare,
415 heirlooms were hammered brass pots with a flat bottom and turned over edge, of the pattern known in India as *dekchis*. The Ngoni women who owned them declared they had been brought by their ancestors from the south.

All the extra fat when a beast was killed was sent to the
251 women of the 'house' in whose herd it was, and this fat was cooked until it was clarified, and then stored. Butter was made by shaking milk in a gourd, and it was also clarified
[234] for keeping. Formerly milk curds were made daily by the senior women and kept to mature in a jar before being eaten. Only in a few Ngoni households was this still done.

273 Beer was made on special occasions when the women had

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

482
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342
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28. Learning to carry wood

252
412
291

29. Learning to pound

[facing page 145]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *lwiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *nyongo*, from the Zulu *inyongo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 40 and 114, and Scott, *A cyclopaedic dictionary of the Mang'anja language spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 486, both translate the Nyanja word *nyongo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mphekiso*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-phekiso*, to help or make to cook. Weiss, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', pp. 473-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *vipeko*. Cf. Zulu *uku-pheka*, to cook.

[17] Called *mengwiso*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *meyolomo*, from the Zulu *uku-dlema*, or *bolyolomo*, from the Nsenga *bu-lyolema*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946, 1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on 591
rejuvenated land, or enlarge his wn or his wife's garden, depending 241
on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the 343
marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one
nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for
a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can 241
be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. 962
If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his
wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe.

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men
and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden
with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until
they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected
against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend
long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut
down the maize and lift the groundnut crops, but only the woman can
carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing [492]
a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen.

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, 224
there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals 233
have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting 962
is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so.
If a man goes away on a journey he leaves his cattle in charge of his
son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no
trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility,
but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to
her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such
as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife,
and chickens are likely to be in her care.

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection 593
on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about 362
when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite
him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-
supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March.
She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually [252]
burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will
be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really
bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly.

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at 273
least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been 462
mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to
which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any
case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important
men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer [554]
to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But [514]
common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully,
and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised
if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain [437]
money to buy herself clothes, & her husband has no money
to give her.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

life as a young girl. She gives the half-pounded maize to the bride- 585
groom's mother.

In neither of the two ceremonies I saw did the husband play any large part. He did not appear when his bride was instructed. His father sent word to him that all was going well, but he himself stayed out of the way at the other end of the village. Sometimes, however, the bridegroom does sit with his bride on the mat and is instructed with her.

Another gall bladder ceremony which I recorded was held at the time the bride went to live with her husband. This was in an intra-village marriage. In the evening the bride came with important women from her section of the village. The bridegroom's relatives were waiting to receive them, and promised to give them a beast. The bride was then handed over to them. The women went back to their own division, and returned the next day to claim the beast and wash the bride. The beast, an ox, was killed and the intestines [p31] were placed round the neck of a younger sister of the bride who became the designated linked co-wife.

If Christians hold the gall bladder ceremony before the bride begins to live with her husband, it is followed by a ceremony in church. The bride does not come back to live with her husband after the gall bladder ceremony but instead goes with her relatives to the local church, where they meet a party from the man's village, and the arrangements for the marriage are set in hand. After three weeks the couple are married in church. The bride then goes back again to her village and as before she pounds flour. After a few days she comes to live with her husband, or he comes to live with her.

Appendix II

FIRST COOKING

When a woman begins her marriage in her husband's village, 591
she cannot cook food until she has been invited to do so by her 259
husband's parents. Until then, she relies on food cooked by her 593
co-wives or her mother-in-law or grandmother-in-law. This state of affairs may last from a month up to a year. It is ended by the ceremony of 'making to cook' (*mphikise*). I did not see this ceremony, and I have relied on the accounts of informants. It is said that a man's parents would be ashamed of their poverty if they did not entertain the new bride as a guest until the time had come for her to join in the general run of domestic work in the village.

The man's parents decide when the ceremony shall be held. On the day, the man's sisters, mothers and grandmothers prepare flour, plates, porridge pat and stirring stick in the house of the man's

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

mother. One of the man's sisters conducts the wife to her mother-in-law's hut, and under the instruction of the assembled women she begins to cook. Although people speak of her doing the cooking, in practice all she does is to look on while her sisters-in-law do the work. The porridge is divided onto plates and distributed under the directions of the man's mother. One plate is sent to the man's father, one to the husband who eats the porridge with his brothers, and one to the most important woman in the village, while some are taken by the cooks themselves. The man's father is expected to remark on how well the porridge has been cooked, but he may say that it has been poorly prepared and his daughter-in-law must be taught again. This expression of disapproval cannot be more than a way of showing his dislike for his daughter-in-law for whatever he says the ceremony is not repeated and the woman begins to cook regularly for her husband. If the man's relatives are wealthy, they may kill a goat or a sheep on this occasion, or the woman's parents may send a sheep or a goat to be killed and eaten. The woman's parents cannot themselves attend the ceremony.

If the couple begin their marriage unorthodoxally this ceremony does not take place. The bride begins to cook for her husband as soon as he comes to live with her, using her grand-mother's hut as a kitchen.

Appendix III

THE HOEING PARTY

A man is under an obligation to provide once during his marriage a party of hoers who work in his wife's mother's garden for the greater part of one day and who are rewarded by his wife's father. This party is called by the general word for obligations owed by a man towards his parents-in-law, *cikowwere*.[1] The function of this occasion, as a socially sanctioned method of expression of hostility between a man and his affines, has already been discussed. I attended one of these parties and my clerk attended two others.

The man, or a relative of his, tells his father that he is planning to bring a party to hoe on such and such a day. If the father-in-law agrees that the day is suitable he tells his wife to brew beer for the hoers. On the agreed day the hoeing party arrive early in the morning and begin to work in the garden. The father-in-law promises presents to the leader of the hoers, who continue to hoe until they are offered what they consider is sufficient. They then stop, and go to the village to receive the present and drink beer.

[1] See above, p. 74.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the 592
same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are
unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dor-
mitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for [882]
girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their up-
bringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be.
Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their [858]
elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with
another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives,
although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their [595]
chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from
those of their wives. 423

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There 342
is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patri-
local and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable
rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be
referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens
near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cook- [343]
ing and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no [252]
separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the
veranda.

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in 621
which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered,
and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the
village are organized.

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given 621
by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded 103
by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalaweni, meaning
'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are
also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom
they were founded.

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this 621
type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of in- 622
dividuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder [103]
of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate
unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present
headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the
Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary,

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [831] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [273] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [251] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [464] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and 224 taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by themselves and sell the meat.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality 595
of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes
that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have [171]
100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's
matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil
custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And
when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it
must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry 177
till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full [587]
grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But
now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the
Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse
marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this
serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday,
at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock.
But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by
appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have
reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am
satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his 583
father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery
varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would
marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as
much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or
three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages,
for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth,
and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable 562
ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a 565
considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But
the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than
that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out
with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this
exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for 462
many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the [171]
woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women
went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, [243]
while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the
grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. [252]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

241 The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by [178] the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The [567] masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich [134] though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession, [131] the Ngoni have learned to plant also reserve gardens of kasava, for the locusts and drought can scarcely affect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

These vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always 262 maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, [257] ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white porridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the [227] natives, to get at them, will hew down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. 261 A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stretching themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and [264] and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, 243 but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first clouds appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertiliser. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

574 643 came. One of these two officials usually came to greet them. He then informed the Paramount that strangers were present and took back the Paramount's greeting to them and asked their business. This was in turn reported to the Paramount, who arranged for their business to be taken care of and, if they were important people, sent an invitation for them to come to the *bwalo*, to which they were escorted by one of his officials and given seats. In due time the Paramount came out of his house and they gave him the *Bayete* and then he greeted them. As a rule he carried on all conversation through his *mlomo wenkosi*, and, after staying for a short time, often went back into the house and left his officials to entertain the guests. If the guests were visiting chiefs and *alumuzana*, word had gone round when they first arrived, and the senior men of the village, the *madoda*, gathered to greet them, and sat in a group as they did for court cases. Such conversations of a social nature took place as a rule in the courtyard where chairs and mats were placed. If it rained or was very hot they went onto the verandah which ran the whole length of the house. Never, so far as I could discover, did visitors come into the house unless they were close relatives of the Paramount or his wife.

Women visitors who came with the men or by themselves went through the same procedure of announcing themselves and stating their business. Then, if they were important people, they were escorted to the courtyard at the back of the big house where they were greeted by the Paramount's wife and by her daughter, who then settled down to talk with them, either out of doors or on the back verandah, according to the weather. It was usual for the Paramount's wife and daughter also to go and greet the men visitors on the front verandah or in the courtyard. 26 They did not stay, however, and if the visitors had come from far the 574 Paramount told his wife, after she had greeted them, to 'catch a fowl'. 643 When she returned to the back courtyard, children chased hens and there was squawking and yelling until the right number had been caught and killed. Pounding of maize began, the fowls were dressed and put in pots on the fire and other 'relish' was prepared of vegetables and groundnuts, and the flour was cooked to make porridge (*nsima*). The Paramount's wife and her helpers prepared the best pot-roast of chicken I have ever had. Food thus prepared was served to the guests on the front verandah in the traditional style, the porridge in food baskets (*nsengwa*), the chicken and other relish in small covered pots. The Paramount offered the food to his guests and then withdrew into the house. When they received the food, as well as when they had finished eating, they [576] thanked him with the traditional *Bayete nkosi*, adding, if they were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, some of the praise names or *izitokozo* of the Maseko Paramounts. To European visitors, and occasionally to Christian Africans, tea was offered with milk and sugar.

574 643 Viewed from the back *bwalo*, where I lived and watched all this happening and listened to comments, it was evident that the never-ending

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers, The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

captives were retained within the segment. In later years, at least, small-scale raiding organized by segment heads went on without the Paramount Chief's knowledge and it seems unlikely under those conditions that captives would have been sent in to him. 727 [721]

There is confirmatory evidence from other Ngoni groups. Hodgson wrote of the Dowa group that a warrior who had captured three or more people had one returned to him by the chief,[2] from which we may infer that they were at the disposal of the chief. For the Southern Ngoni, who are not so closely related to the Fort Jameson group as are those in northern Nyasaland and Dowa District, Read wrote that the Paramount Chief had a monopoly of slaves taken in war and that he distributed these to successful warriors, his wives and his relatives.[3] [643]

Cattle were handled in much the same way as captives. There was a dogma that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, but they were dispersed among the different villages and kept in the byres there. The lord of a major segment had effective control of the cattle in his own village and, when he chose to exercise it, in the other villages of his segment as well. When the Paramount Chief visited a village, cattle were killed in his honour and he was praised as the giver of the feast, but in the chief's absence the head of the village decided when beasts were to be killed. A lord appointed his lieutenants to look after his cattle as well as his people. When cattle had been taken on a raid, they were driven back to Ngoniland and then allocated to a lord. 231 422 643 727

Cattle for bridewealth were provided for a man by his lord. However it seems possible that a large proportion of the marriages made by politically unimportant people were not ratified by the passage of cattle.[4] 583 231

Such evidence as there is suggests that the Ngoni consumed their cattle faster than many similar cattle people and, as with dependants, they captured cattle more than they reared them. People speak of the days before the conquest as a time when they lived entirely on meat and beer. Poole suggests that the Ngoni produced little or no food in their own country,[5] and while this is plainly contradicted by contemporary evidence, it is probable that they did rely on raiding to supplement their supplies of cattle and cereals, and that therefore many captured cattle were used as food. Thus cattle themselves were a short-term asset and the control of 231 262 727

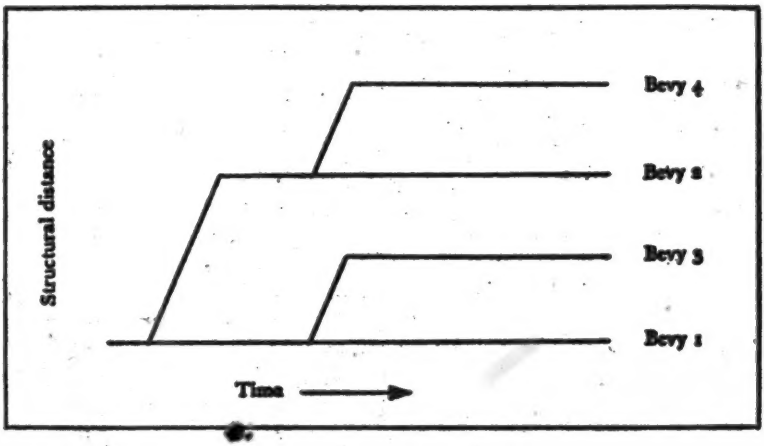
[2] Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 153.
[3] Read, 'Standards of Living', p. 20.
[4] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 7-8.
[5] Poole, 'Human geography of Lundazi and Petauke', p. 13.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231 262 727 cattle did not give rise to any cleavage of interest which was not already present in the residential system.

[557] 595 611 The system could also be manipulated by disputes about succession. If a man had many bevies of wives there was usually no doubt concerning which was the senior bevy and who was the great wife in it. Yet in general it was not possible to rank a man's bevies in a simple linear order of seniority, any more than the segments

DIAGRAM 3. RANKING OF BEVIES



to which they corresponded could be ordered in this way. In topological terms, ranking of bevies and of segments among the Ngoni was only partially, not simply, ordered. An example, illustrated in Diagram 3, will make this clear.

Suppose a man started with bevy 1 and then took part of it to form bevy 2. Later he took another part of bevy 1 to form bevy 3 and took part of bevy 2 to form bevy 4. With four bevies of wives, his senior bevy was bevy 1 and his great wife was the leader of bevy 1. Her eldest son was his principal heir, and if she had no sons the eldest son by the next wife in her bevy became heir. But [429] suppose there was no son by any wife in bevy 1. Which band provided the principal heir? It seems clear that bevy 4 did not, at least not if there were sons in bevy 2, for bevy 2 was senior to bevy 4. Bevy 2 might be regarded as senior to bevy 3, for it was formed from bevy 1 earlier. On the other hand, with reference to bevy 2, bevy 3 was merely a part of bevy 1 and hence the search for heirs should be continued in bevy 3 before shifting to bevy 2. Unfortunately I

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all
178 the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment
535 of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well pre-
292 served by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In
301 both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or
126 Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom
192 were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used
197 in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to
[194] make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

539 the
727 salutation being '*Amehlo amhlope*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Buyani*', 'Return',
along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebo*' also with the clan name.
[576] This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Echigodhlweni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amakanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[824] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Po*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[834] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Po*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of heroes

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
703 then they were called again together to dance the *ligubo*. On that day bulls
[262] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the hero of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the heroes of the sections
[237] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 [198] water and the pyre, he was refusing, saying 'No, not in these days, but formerly.'

When Magona Ngozo was with Cikusi he was staying with him in the daytime. Magona had his own huts and Cikusi his. When eating, Cikusi ate alone, but afterwards he gave food to Magona. When Cikusi was washing it was together with Magona. When he went to the bush, they went together. When Cikusi was washing with the *tonga*, he was doing it with Magona. When the warriors were going out, Cikusi and Magona stood together, and they made fire for the medicines and they stood together in the smoke and then the warriors went out. So, when mentioning Magona, they said: 'the shadow of Cikusi'. When they were eating in the *bwalo*, the *nsima* (porridge) was brought to Cikusi, but if some *alumuzana* came, the wives of Magona cooked *nsima* and gave it to the *alumuzana*. When Cikusi died, Magona could take his wives if he wanted. The Ngozo man could tell the Paramount anything, good or bad, and stay like the mouth of the Paramount.

[762] When the Paramount died formerly, the Ngozo man dressed in his war-dress. When he came near the fire he danced with the shield in his hand. When the fire blazed up he ran and jumped on the fire. So the Maseko people gave cattle to the Ngozo people, to quieten their hearts because they were brothers. And when another Paramount was installed they gave an Ngozo man to stand with him. The father of the man who died with the Paramount received cattle and villages to rule over and gifts. The Paramounts gave cattle because they said: 'Since our brother is going to stand with the Paramount, if that Paramount dies, he also will be killed, so the Paramount ought to give cattle like *lobola* so they may quieten the hearts of his brothers.' Though these cattle are not given for a woman but for a man, any Maseko man ought not to marry an Ngozo woman because there is this brotherhood.

And this man of the Ngozo clan was like a chief because he had men to manage his affairs at his door, as did the Paramount. And if he died his funeral was like that of a chief. But the day the Paramount died the Ngozo man was killed. When the Paramount washed with medicines, he was washing with the Ngozo man. When drinking beer, he was drinking in the same hut as the Paramount. When the Paramount was sacrificing he was together with the Ngozo man, and they did not leave each other.

The Ngozo people have a thanking name (*isibongo*) Maphonya. It is they who were standing with the Paramounts, and the Ngozo people were in the section of Ziyembe. Their avoidances were the same as all the [262] Ngoni, especially fish and elephant. When Cikusi died Gulo stood with Gomani when he entered the chieftainship. Gulo was the son of Magona.

The royal village and the daily routine of the Paramount

643 361 644 In Part I, Chapter II we referred to the process by which each Paramount, after his accession, went out from his father's village to build his own. The Ngoni called this *ukupumisa inkosi* (to send out the Paramount) and the term used for the new village, *lusungulu* (the needle), was said to signify 'the front village where you expect to find the Paramount'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Chief Mtwalo II in the northern kingdom. Two texts are by former big wives of leading men. NyaNsangu was the former big wife of a grandson of Zwangendaba, a member of the royal clan but not a chief, though he owned many villages. NaNdumbu was the former big wife of the head of the Nzunga clan in the central kingdom. The last text by Cibambo gives details of the clothes worn by royal women and leading women in pre-European days, some of which were still in use in the 1930's.

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Life of the Royal Women
by Manga Maseko

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daughter of Mputa, former Paramount of the central kingdom

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¶ Formerly I was just staying for I did not work. I had many slaves and their work was especially to thread beads. Up to today I have not worked except to cook. Our hair was anointed with the fat of cows and of milk. Our food was milk and we drank it in a wooden cup. We were getting cloth when they sold slaves to the Arabs. For honouring each other, the big men were telling the youths: 'You should honour the big people that the country may be rich.' Only the big women were dancing *ngoma*, *msindo* and *ligubo*. If a man married the child of a chief, he gave many cattle, and the poor man could not marry the child of a chief.

[302]
[262]

When NaMlangeni was alive she was a well-known chief and was greatly honoured. When speaking a case, they called her that she might judge. When people went to war and captured slaves and cattle they were giving them to her, and she divided them. For thanking her they said: '*Zaithwa Mai*.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Margaret Jere

granddaughter of Mtwalo I, daughter of Johanne Jere in the northern kingdom

¶ When I was a child I was not allowed to go out quickly in the sun, and when crawling I had to stay in the house. I was very light coloured. The *mlezi* (nurse girl) took me to my mother, UNsulazi Nzima, to be suckled at special times. I slept in the house of Magodise Moyo, my grandmother, who was the widow of Chief Mtwalo. The *isidandani* (attendant) also slept there. My grandmother and others, the *manina* (senior women), were telling me how to behave. A special *isidandani* living in Magodise's house was told by my grandmother to speak specially to me when I had reached puberty. This *isidandani* could speak to me about anything. When nearing marriage a woman was chosen, Hlamseya Nzima, and sent to reveal to me how I was to live in my married state. The sisters of my father, Tinzira and Sayeya Jere, also came and spoke to me at the time of my marriage. Hlamseya Nzima was sent by my grandmother to examine me (for virginity) before marriage. I was allowed to play with those children who lived in the same section of the village and who were known to my mother and grandmother. The *isidandani* did all the work but sometimes I used to pound and fetch water, but not too hard and just for pleasure.

When strangers came, I came and saluted them and then went out of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 the house. If my father came to my mother's house, I would go out, but
565 if he sent for me I would return and he would talk to me and play with
631 me. We learned how to behave well, and were rebuked if we behaved
644 badly. My father would beat a child for not behaving well. My father did not allow his children to be spoiled by being treated differently from others. He said: 'They are all my children.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Mdingase Nsangu

widow of Chinombo Jere, grandson of Zwangendaba in the northern kingdom

565 ¶ The *amakosikazi* were not working. During the day they kept dressing
631 their hair, both the young women and the old. The old women no longer
644 kept their *isihlutu*, or high chignon, but wore the *umzoco*, or long curls.
[300] For the *umzoco* the hair was cut short and not allowed to grow very long. Instead of dressing it upwards they took a blade of grass and kept it pressed down after oil and scent were applied. Their other work was to go to the river and wash.

They also drank beer and some gruel, and afterwards danced *ngoma* in the house where beer was brewed. The men and chief also joined in the *ngoma* and the women were responding to the singing. They began to drink in the morning until the afternoon, but not in the evening. Other people went on drinking until evening, and even some of the *amakosikazi* who were *izidli* (gluttonous) but the rest were sleeping or resting.

When drinking in the house the chief always sat by the right-hand doorpost, and the big *inkosikazi* by the left-hand post. They sat near the door to draw breath easily because there were many people inside. The beer-pot being set halfway between the door and the hearth-stones in the centre, a man was chosen to pour the beer in the gourds for drinking. He was *umtele wocwala*, the beer pourer, and was often the village *induna* or one who was favoured by the chief. When the gourds were full he told the chief, and the chief told him to distribute them. Sometimes there were four or even six for the different classes in the house. They sat in order, the *inkosi* with the *izinduna* and *amadoda*, and the *inkosikazi* with the other wives of the chief and the wives of the *izinduna* and *amadoda*. The chief and the *inkosikazi* kept on inviting the common people to come and drink.
[576] Such invited people thanked the person at the beginning and at the end, others joining him. The *inkosikazi* or other wives of the chief were thanked '*Nkomo*'.

The *amakosikazi* never worked at all, but the lesser wives worked, and pounded grain and fetched firewood. These were the ones who had not yet got attendants in their houses. All the chief *amakosikazi* had attendants who performed all the work of the house. The *amakosikazi* often sat in the verandah or outside under the platform of branches supported by posts.
562 There they ate their food which was *ilambazi* and *umnjinji*, thick gruel of millet; *izinkwa ze nyauti*, bulrush millet ground to a paste; or *izinkobe*, whole grains of maize boiled and pounded. The meat was eaten as a feast on the *egceheni*, the smeared place in front of the house, and all the chief's wives joined in. A mat was spread for the big *amakosikazi* where they sat

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

614 *muhumuzana* was not invariable. Some informants said that *alumuzana*
622 were appointed by the Paramount. Others said that if the ancestor of a Swazi clan was known by name to have crossed the Zambesi with Zwangendaba or Mputa then his descendant in the direct line was always a *muhumuzana*.

614 It was the criterion of having a known ancestor and knowing the genealogy of the clan that was most widely accepted in acknowledging
[769] the head of a Swazi clan as *muhumuzana*. At the clan head village prayers were addressed to this ancestor, his cattle were sacrificed, and the names recited as far back as tradition and memory could recall. Later we shall see that there were said to be about 25 Swazi clans in the northern kingdom and 29 in the central. Among these about 15 in the northern and 12 in the central kingdom had head villages where the ancestor cult was performed. In the central kingdom several of the leading clans had their head villages in Portuguese territory, and therefore did not carry out the cult in the central kingdom.

554 In the hierarchy of the clans the Swazi clans were the acknowledged
614 leaders. In village and national life this leadership was accorded to the royal clans and the clans of the chiefs, and was the reason for the respect shown to *alumuzana* who had no direct political power. Only the heads of Swazi clans possessed *izitokozo* (honorific epithets) which commemorated events in the past history of the clan leaders. On all ceremonial occasions heads of Swazi clans, whether in national or in village affairs, took precedence over the rest when walking in procession, standing for dances, taking part in ritual, or sitting down at feasts. Certain
[766] forms of burial, such as the use of a sheep-skin, and placing the corpse on a shelf in the grave, were observed only for members of the Swazi clans.

582 In arranging marriages, there was, in addition to strict exogamy
614 within a clan, a prohibition on marriage between clans which had *cibale* (brotherhood) relations. In the central kingdom the royal clan, Maseko, had *cibale* with the Ngozo clan which provided the royal shadow, and
[762] with the Nzunga clan. The Nzunga and the Maseko clans shared the same taboos, notably elephant and fish. As well as prohibited marriages between certain clans, there were preferred marriages between certain others. In general there was a preference for marriage between the families of leading Swazi clans. In the northern kingdom the Nqumayo clan had a preference for marrying into the Thole, Nhlane, Maluleka and Pakati clans. It was alleged that formerly they could marry only into these clans, but in the 1930's exceptions were found in a number of villages.

614 The following lists of the names of Swazi clans were collected from informants in the two kingdoms, who were questioned closely about which names should be included under the title of Swazi. This was the grouping claimed by the Ngoni in both kingdoms. They said emphatic-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

cattle never came back to the kraal in the evening without one or more of the senior men standing by the gate and watching them and counting them as they went in. Sick cattle were noted and the herd-boys questioned about them. Mating was observed and noted, but not regulated, though poorly developed male beasts were sometimes castrated by one of the men who had acquired skill as a cattle doctor. Such a man would also administer drenches and other medicines, but the responsibility for calling a *sing'anga*, the specialist in medicines, to perform a ritual for a sick beast was taken by the whole group. They also made the decision to call a *sing'anga* to protect the kraal against lions. On several occasions I was in a village where lions attempted to get into the kraal at night, and the next morning the senior men who were responsible for the herd discussed the efficacy of this or that man's 'lion medicine' and decided who should be sent for to make the kraal safe again.

Important decisions were taken from time to time about placing the cattle belonging to the herd of a house in other kraals. This custom of *kuikilila* (lit. to entrust) was common in the central kingdom and had been adapted to modern needs as one means of evading the cattle-tax by appearing to have few cattle, whereas a number were boarded out in other areas. This boarding out was a long-established custom of the Ngoni and was practised for various reasons. One reason, and probably the most important formerly, was to build up good relations with leading men in the outlying villages by entrusting cattle to their care. The reward if the cattle throve was often the gift of a beast, and this was one means by which men of local tribes could build up a herd. It was also a signal honour to have cattle entrusted in this way and it was acknowledged by sending to such a 'keeper' the head of any beast killed from this herd. Another reason for boarding out was to prevent diseases spreading among a whole herd all kept in one kraal, and yet another was a belief that certain men had latent power with cattle, and that beasts put in their care throve and multiplied. This emphasis on enlarging the herds by natural increase was the main motive for letting the calves have all the milk they needed in order that they might thrive.

The uses of cattle and cattle products

Many of the uses to which cattle were put and for which they were greatly valued have been referred to in this chapter and in earlier sections of this book. We shall now examine the consumption of meat, milk and blood as food, and the forms of exchange in which cattle were directly exchanged or converted into cash. The ritual use of cattle will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

The testimony of early Europeans in Nyasaland and the accounts by the Ngoni of their life in the pre-European period agree in giving the consumption of meat, milk, and blood a high place in the diet of the cattle-owning families. It was a widespread European criticism in the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 1930's that the Ngoni did not live as well as they might and had, in fact, an impoverished diet, because they did not make full use, and sometimes very little use, of the milk and meat which they had available. In pre-European days, when the possession of cattle was confined to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading *ahumuzana*, there was a continuous slaughter of animals to provide a regular diet of meat and *ulubende*, the cooked blood which the Ngoni liked very much. The heads of the big houses saw that there was always on hand *amasi*, the milk curds which was the form in which adults took their milk, fresh milk being reserved for young children and herd-boys. This provision of meat, *ulubende* and *amasi* was only possible for those who had plenty of cattle, [721] and in both kingdoms wars and raids were carried out partly to obtain fresh supplies of cattle from neighbouring and unconquered tribes. As we saw in the chapter on the Paramount, in pre-European days the *ahumuzana* who lived near enough to the royal village made a practice of calling frequently, if not daily, and such calls were rewarded by their being asked to eat with the Paramount, and 'food' in those days was predominantly meat. Between fighting seasons, that is during the rains, the young men (*amajaha*) who were newly recruited to the regiments [883] were kept busy in and around the Paramount's village and the head villages of the *ahumuzana*, mending fences, making shields, and clearing new land. When they were thus employed they also were fed by the Paramount or *muhumuzana*, who regarded these periodic feasts for the *amajaha* as one of the first calls on the consumption of his cattle. The Ngoni later rationalized this earlier procedure of restricting meat and milk consumption to certain groups of people by arguing that it made the young warriors strong and able to fight and endure hardships, and they declared that the senior men and women who also shared the Paramount's supplies lived long and had great wisdom and strength of character. This rationalization was not only looking back to a past Utopia. It was also based on the argument that Europeans ate meat regularly and that they were strong, both physically and politically.

262 178 The European criticism in the 1930's that the Ngoni did not make full dietary use of their cattle and their products was justified, but there are two factors to note in this connexion. One was that the number of those who lived well on meat and milk in the old days was relatively small—confined in fact to cattle-owners, women owners of big houses, and warriors. The situation changed after the Europeans came, and a large number of people owned a few cattle and many of the new owners had no tradition about using their products. Among the cattle-owners of the Swazi clans the tradition of cooking blood and making curds continued and both were valued as food, but some of those who had only recently become owners of cattle did not know these practices, and 262 I came across many cattle-owners of local tribes who did not know how 272 to milk a cow. The failure to use milk in the Ngoni diet was due partly

 262 272

to the method of rearing calves by letting them take all the milk they wanted, and partly to the practice of letting the herd-boys have the rest. In villages under a *mukumuzana* of a Swazi clan, who had a wife in his big house also of a Swazi clan, the consumption of milk was to some extent organized. These senior women saw that the herd-boys brought them a certain amount of milk each day, and they gave it to young children or invalids, and made some into *amasi*.

Another practice which restricted the use of meat and milk as regular items of diet was that the building up of the herds was regarded as a primary responsibility of the owners and guardians of cattle. Hence calves were given milk, which in western countries would be drawn off for human use, and the killing of beasts, unless they were sick, was restricted to selling the meat for cash or using it in ritual. One of the embarrassments suffered by an anthropologist was being presented with a beast by people who hardly ever killed one for their own use. It was true that a general share-out took place when the beast was killed, but it was none the less one beast fewer in the herd, and it was the maintenance and increase of the herds which was the cattle-owners' chief concern. 231 262

This emphasis on numbers rather than quality, which caused so much misunderstanding between government departments and cattle-owners, was closely related to the forms of exchange in cattle. Formerly cattle were handed over either as *lobola* or as penalties for the infringement of laws. Both these forms of transfer continued, but there were additional demands which cattle-owners or potential owners had to be aware of in watching the increase or diminution of their herds. One characteristic of these modern forms of exchange was the ready convertibility of cattle into cash and of cash into cattle. We have seen how young men away at work sent money back to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. We have seen too how the possession of cattle made it possible to sell a beast and obtain cash for various purposes, and the proximity of markets where there were butchers' stalls encouraged this sale of cattle. 231 437

One of the most frequent reasons for the conversion of cattle into cash was for the purpose of hiring labour. We saw in Chapter I of this section how Lopati Nzunga killed cattle to feed the men who carried bricks and cement for his brother's tomb and sold another beast to pay wages to the bricklayers. The traditional way of paying labourers had been by feeding them with meat, and the modern method was to pay them cash wages and to find the money for it by the sale of cattle. Such labour could be for cultivating, house-building, fence-building, road-making and other local work. The possession of cattle which were easily convertible into cash made possible this payment of labour, and this relationship between the role of cattle-owner and the role of employer of labour was common. 231 464 [465]

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and massaged them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

845 The other ethnic groups surrounding the Ngoni in Nyasa-[184] land considered it disastrous if a child was born face down or with the buttocks first, and twins were dreaded as ill omens. The Ngoni shared none of these beliefs and were particularly considerate for the mother of twins, often killing [262] a beast to give the mother meat and broth to increase her [853] flow of milk. The only notice the Ngoni took of the method of presentation at birth was that they gave a child a name [553] indicative of such a birth. They gave special names for the first and second twin born. If one twin died it was buried under the veranda of the hut and a smooth stone was placed [766] on top. This stone was used for sitting on, and the surviving twin was held on it when being washed.

Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and 783 everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

societies maintaining officially a conspiracy of silence, the stories were only standard replies by adults to children, and most adults admitted that children pursued these inquiries among themselves and found out what they wanted to know from each other. 864

Naming the child

After coming out of the hut and being presented to its male kin and to the elders of the village as 'the new stranger', the baby was given a name. The choice of a name was usually left to the baby's paternal grandfather. He sometimes gave it his name or his father's name, if a boy, or if a girl, his mother's name or his father's sister's name. There was no ceremony attached to naming. After the matter had been talked over by the men at the kraal gate, the grandfather came to the hut, and called the mother and child out and said, 'His name is so and so.' The personal name was seldom used in ordinary social intercourse, but in spite of this every child was given a personal name, and sometimes had added to it a descriptive name indicating that it had been born face downwards, or born a twin, or born too soon after the previous baby. 553 [551] [845]

At this time of naming, the father, or more generally the paternal grandfather, prepared a 'carrying skin' for the mother to carry the baby in. It really belonged to the baby rather than to the mother, for it was used by the nurse girl to carry the baby, and she had the child in her charge most of the day. The skin was that of a goat or small calf from the herd owned by the house to which the baby's father belonged. The skin was cleaned and scraped and made soft by rubbing in fat, and handed over to the mother with some of the meat for broth, and the rest of the meat was eaten by the males of that house. The gift in time became a cloth and not a skin, as skins for wearing or household use went out of fashion. The cloth when presented however was still called a 'carrying skin' and a goat or a calf from the herd of the 854 [281] [422] [262]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

IV

Family Life for the Young Child

The women's world

It was the proud boast of the Ngoni aristocrats that their women did no 'work' in the old days. When they spoke thus they were equating 'work' with physical labour, sweeping and cleaning in the hut and compound, fetching wood and water, hoeing in the gardens, and the routine part of preparing and cooking food. The Ngoni women of the former large households had an army of 'helpers' to do all these tasks for them. Though the number of helpers dwindled as the larger households disappeared, the pattern of appropriation of tasks remained in the shrunken households, and hence the Ngoni women were always responsible for a high degree of household management. Larger households in the old days fed fifty to sixty people from their cooking-pots, and though when I lived among them the scale of their households was much smaller, some were still feeding twenty and more people for each meal, apart from the occasional meals served when kinsfolk and strangers came unexpectedly.

I never failed to be impressed with the quiet dignified competence with which Ngoni women managed their household affairs. They did it with an apparent effortlessness, which had its roots in long training and tradition, and in an awareness of responsibility that increased, but weighed less heavily, with age and experience. This competence was always apparent on occasions such as wedding feasts. Then cereal food, meat, vegetable relishes were cooked in vast quantities and served out to the separate groups of guests.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy and therefore to be removed from them when the time came for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with him, they sometimes carried him about while the nurse girl
[262] did something else, they ground bulrush millet or roasted ground-nuts to give him as snacks. They were particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[533] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he addressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
[554] measure of the authority which his father and his father's brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and grandmother's households. There were young children who were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

858 signs of irritation at female control, especially with this pro-
867 hibition on going to the kraal gate. They escaped surveillance and ran off there now and then, only to be caught by one of the men, beaten and brought back to the compound with the remark: 'This child is not yet a herd boy. Keep him with you.'

If the village was near a roadway with traffic on it, or near a river, children were forbidden to go there without some older person with them. They were also warned not to go near fireplaces in case a burning log fell out, and to keep away from the woodpile where there might be snakes.

Training in habits

855 In these surroundings, diversified, orderly, and on the whole safe if forbidden places were avoided, young children's needs were attended to and they were gradually trained to look after themselves. For food, health and sleep, their primary physical needs, they had their older sisters, nurse girls, mothers, grandmothers and helpers all at hand to ensure that these needs were satisfied.

After the post-weaning months were over, and generally
264 though not always after the next baby was born, a young
862 child went back to eat with his mother in her compound and sleep in her hut, though a grandmother, if she had taken a special fancy to a child, might say she was going to keep him to eat and sleep with her. In his mother's compound twice a day the child watched her and her helpers preparing and cooking a meal. In due time he was called to the veranda where the food lay smoking, his hands were wiped, he was made to rinse out his mouth, and he sat down beside his mother or his nurse in a circle round the food basket. This contained the mash of cooked grain, usually maize, and be-
[262] side it were the little pots of cooked 'relish', beans, peas, green vegetables, tomatoes, ground-nuts. At first someone pinched up a little lump of the mash, dipped it in a relish, and popped it into his mouth, telling him to shut his mouth and chew before he swallowed. Later he learned to do this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

himself, with his eyes rather anxiously on the elders, lest he should take too large a lump, or get the relish all over his hand and wrist instead of only on his finger-tips. He learned, however hungry he was, not to stuff himself, and not to eat noisily. If he smacked his lips and gulped audibly, someone in the circle might say: 'I hear the guns of the Tyandla people booming.' They all stopped eating and looked at him, and he learned that a proverb could be a veiled rebuke, and he hung his head, ashamed. 862 264 [539]

Sometimes the smaller children had cow's milk or curds and whey or thin gruel given to them in a tiny gourd between the main meal-times, and through the day nurse girls and older sisters gave them little snacks if they thought of it or if the child whimpered because it was hungry. A favourite snack was ground bulrush millet, creamy and nutty to taste. Throughout this period spent in the women's world the child did not lack food either at or between meals. As he grew more mobile and independent, he went foraging in the compounds of his other mothers and his grandmothers, especially if his own mother had gone to her garden. They always welcomed him and gave him something to go on with. 855 [262]

After set meals the child was made to rinse his mouth, and his hands were cleaned by his nurse girl and his face and chest washed if he had covered himself with food fragments. His nurse girl found him a 'tooth-brush twig' and frayed it for him, and taught him to use it after meals as well as in the early morning. 863

Washing of small children was always done in the compound. While some children squirmed and yelled when washed, others liked it. They sat grinning on the veranda while their mother or nurse splashed water over them, rubbed soapy leaves on their hair, dried them with a cloth, and rubbed cow's fat on their skin. The Ngoni children in well-ordered households shone with cleanliness till they were about six years old. Then the boys dodged these female attentions, their skin became dry and scruffy, and their hair full

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. [146] This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten [272] by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made [262] curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The [867] Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [155] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for authority. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

521 867 men's affairs. The kind of topics discussed by men at the kraal gate included hunting, in the right season; cases heard in the courts and the application of Ngoni law to all subjects of the Ngoni chiefs; the organization of village affairs from tax collecting and dealing with tax evaders to beer drinks and burials and building houses; the sales of cotton, tobacco and cattle at near-by markets and the current prices; the various labour recruiters combing the villages for likely young men and the latest stories brought back by men who had returned from working in the south. Every now and then, particularly when the talk ranged round decisions in the courts or adding to the herds of cattle, references were made to the Ngoni past, to their relations with Europeans, both missionaries and officials, and to the behaviour of the non-Ngoni groups in the Ngoni kingdoms. The older boys listened attentively and as we shall see later in Chapter VII acquired among other things an extensive knowledge about the needs and uses of cattle. The younger ones pricked up their ears now and then when a familiar name or event was mentioned, and stored up questions to ask their father at a time when he was willing to listen and answer.

576 417 There was the usual Ngoni formality about where people sat at the kraal gate. The most senior men sat on each side of the opening, leaning up against the gate-posts, with the rest in decreasing order of rank as they were farther from the gate. The cleared space on each side of the gate and in front of it was all known as the 'gate of the kraal'. The craftsmen [463] who were carving wood or twisting bark rope, making baskets or plaiting mats, sat according to their age and rank on the edges of the senior group or among them. They could have carried on their trade anywhere, but they preferred the company of their fellows and did not want to miss listening to the talk or the arrival of strangers. The herd-boys, when 858 they were present, were on the extreme edges of those sitting [561] there, divided into two groups, 'youths' and boys. Each [262] group made its own fire for boiling milk and roasting sweet potatoes or ground-nuts.96

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (1)

When the boy's voice began to break, and his father or another older man noticed it, the second part of the ritual took place. The father's brother went to a senior man famed in the village as a herbalist and obtained from him several kinds of roots. These were ground and then cooked either in milk or in the cud from a goat's stomach, usually the latter, for the father liked it to be known that he killed a goat for his son. If the mixture was cooked in milk, a fowl was killed, and in either case the boy was given the meat to eat immediately after the mixture to take away the extremely bitter taste. The cooking took place on a small fire by the kraal gate in the presence of the male members of the father's house. The boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the mixture as it was bubbling in the pan and to lick them quickly. He was not expected to show that he found the mixture very bitter as well as hot to touch. At intervals the boy had to jump over the fire, hitting his elbows and knees with the palms of his hands. The more often he did this, the less often did he have to dip in the pan because the mixture soon dried up, but he had to continue dipping and licking till there was no liquid left. The senior men watched intently all through this performance because they believed the mixture not only helped physical growth and muscular strength but would prevent impotence. When this ritual was performed for the heir of a chief, it was followed by a war-dance in the cattle kraal and the boy had to take a second dose of medicine in the kraal surrounded by the warriors. In such a case a bull was killed instead of the customary goat, and the contents of its stomach used for mixing the medicine. The meat was eaten by the boy and his father's relatives.

As in the case of the girls, this boy's ritual was an occasion for asserting the authority of the father and his kin over the boy. For him there was however no separating off into another group after this maturing. He continued to live in the dormitory, herd cattle, and go to school as before.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

224 After the hunt the tally of kills was reckoned up, the game was carried home by the young men, and on the return to [262] the villages the meat was cooked and eaten by the men at the kraal gate. This was the occasion for going over all [521] the episodes of the chase, the skill of So-and-so, the fine organizing of the hunt by its 'owner'. No one mentioned the misses, no one's feelings were hurt, and there was a warm feeling of united and contented sharing in a good day's sport.

Lion-hunting was organized differently. Only former warriors and well-known huntsmen were called, and they sometimes took their sons with them as carriers. Guns as well as spears were taken, though the Ngoni liked to say, and it was often true, that they killed lions with spears only. Tracking a lion was dangerous and difficult, and when it was located in a patch of tall grass or reeds, the huntsmen made a circle round it, ready to attack when it broke cover. As in the chase, the one who stabbed the lion first, second and finally was noted. The dead lion was hoisted on poles slung from the shoulders of young men, and carried to the village where the hunt was organized. Here the party was welcomed and given food, the heroes were acclaimed, and the headman and seniors led the way to the village of the clan head, who called his men together to rejoice. When the augmented party reached the chief's or Paramount's village, [535] where all lions had to be taken, a war-dance took place in [555] the kraal, as of warriors returning from a campaign. The killer of the lion came out in front of the rest and danced his individual war-dance; he was hailed as a hero and new [273] epithets were added to his praise names. The whole party was given beer, a beast was killed for a meat feast, and then [574] the party thanked the Paramount in traditional fashion and went home.

It was in lion-hunting that young adults who were taken along felt the spice of danger, the thrill of success, and witnessed the pride of recognition for the successful killer by the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the 251
tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the [262]
cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV.
Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work [556]
in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and
their presence in the compound conferred importance on
their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of [415]
beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter,
dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs
and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a [323]
shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It
was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when 583
married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats,
spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would 577
show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to
have a high standard of household management in her new
home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households 511
well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they 577
could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some
of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed [357]
their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish 252
was being prepared. They watched every movement of their 868
mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on,
measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred
the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps
and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water
before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day 262.
in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish
of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less
often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the [415]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 round covered food basket, the side dishes in small covered
[415] earthenware bowls. Among the traditional Ngoni dishes learned by girls were the following:

252 Gruel made of cow's milk and maize flour (for young children).
262 Whole maize boiled with beans and round peas.
Sweet potatoes boiled, peeled and mashed with tomatoes.
Beans and finger millet flour cooked separately and then stirred together.
Pumpkins cooked with ground-nut paste.
Ground-nut flour cooked with scraps of meat.
Whole tall millet pounded with ground-nuts.
Pot-roast chicken with tomatoes, onions and ground-nuts.

In Ngoni households meat when cooked in large quantities,
262 not just as broth made from bones and titbits, was served on
415 a special wooden meat-dish, round or oblong with rounded ends, and supported on three sturdy legs. This meat-dish was an integral part of the equipment of every 'true Ngoni'
[264] household, and, like the French housewife's omelet pan, was after use wiped clean and polished with clarified fat. The outside of these meat-dishes was often decorated with 'poker
[531] work' designs by the maker, and such decorated and shining meat-dishes were treasured as heirlooms. Other, but rare,
415 heirlooms were hammered brass pots with a flat bottom and turned over edge, of the pattern known in India as *dekchies*. The Ngoni women who owned them declared they had been brought by their ancestors from the south.

All the extra fat when a beast was killed was sent to the
251 women of the 'house' in whose herd it was, and this fat was cooked until it was clarified, and then stored. Butter was made by shaking milk in a gourd, and it was also clarified
[234] for keeping. Formerly milk curds were made daily by the senior women and kept to mature in a jar before being eaten. Only in a few Ngoni households was this still done.

273 Beer was made on special occasions when the women had

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 24 343 24 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 262 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 462 [559] [574] [437]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

after a year or so. If he keeps it going himself he visits his own village for a week or two at a time to tend the garden, and stores the produce with a relative in the village. If, however, a man intends to reside for many years in his wife's village, he gives away his garden and concentrates his labours in his wife's garden. After a year or two he builds her a storehouse in her village and the couple begin to keep their own supplies separate from those of her relatives.

Even when the couple have their own storehouse it is considered proper if from time to time they are given maize by their parents. If a woman living virilocally goes to visit her parents and relatives and returns without maize or flour her husband's relatives are likely to laugh at her and say 'She must come from a very poor family'.

Uxorilocal residence is described by the vernacular term *cikomwene*. In its most general usage this word refers to the obligations a man owes to his wife's parents, particularly at the beginning of his marriage. It has three specific meanings:

(i) Uxorilocal residence.

(ii) Assistance rendered from time to time by a man in his wife's mother's garden.

(iii) A hoeing party of men and women from the man's village which works in his wife's mother's garden.

Uxorilocal residence is classed with these other two aspects of affinal obligation and like them it can be avoided completely, shirked, or executed in full. The extent to which the obligations are fulfilled

Table XIV. Virilocality and Uxorilocality, 1948-9

Wife's residence	Husband's residence		Total
	Rural	Away	
Virilocal ..	72	14	86
Uxorilocal ..	24	20	44
Total	96	34	130
Ratio of virilocal to uxorilocal wives	3	0·7	1·95

Association between husband's residence and wife's residence

$\chi^2 = 12{\cdot}83$ $P < {\cdot}001$

Informants as in Table XIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

585 bride herself refuses to sit on the mat until she has been given a present. She is joined on the mat by a small girl, aged about ten, from the groom's family, who becomes known as 'the guide'.[1] The leader of the bride's party and one other of the bride's women sit down on the mat, with the bride and the guide between them.

The instruction of the bride now begins, with a speech from some [237] important man in the village, who takes the gall bladder and anoints the head, arms and feet of the bride with the gall, going on to anoint the guide in the same way. They are then sometimes anointed with vaseline by a woman. One person after another, men and women, [867] now proceed to lecture the bride on how she should behave in the village, and each explains to her who he or she is in relation to her. The gall bladder is blown up and stuck in the hair of the bride, where she will keep it until she returns to her own village. Each person who delivers a speech of instruction gives a small present, a threepenny bit or beads, which they put into a plate on the mat at the bride's feet. This situation of formal instruction, often of an [183] abusive nature, accompanied by presents, is a recurrent one in Ngoni ceremonial.[2]

[237] Sometimes the small intestine of the animal is placed round the shoulders of a younger sister of the bride who is a member of her party. This girl is then designated linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) of the bride. This is not always done, and when it is done it does not imply that the girl will later become the real linked co-wife of her elder sister. Although in the two ceremonies I saw this designation of a linked co-wife did not occur, in both a sister of the bride was one of the bridal party.

[262] At the end of the instruction, the bride and her party go back into their own hut, and the leader cooks the liver of the animal, and the blood and fat. This she divides between the two families, sending the portion of the bridegroom's family to their hut for them to eat there. The guide stays in the bride's hut. After they have rested, the bride, guide, and their companions leave the village, taking the meat with them back to the bride's village. Outside her village the party stop, and are met by more women from the bride's family. The guide demands a small present before she will enter the village, usually beads. Inside the village the bride's mother takes the gall bladder from her daughter's head and buries it in the byre. The guide stays in the village for a few days, and demands another small present before she will assist the bride's people with cooking. When a quantity of flour has been pounded for the bride, and some maize half-pounded for the guide, the bride and the guide return quietly to the bridegroom's village. The bride begins to live with her husband, and the guide resumes her normal

[1] *Mpelekezi*, from the verb *ku-pelekeza*, to accompany part of the way. Cf. Zulu *impelesi*, girl accompanying a bride to her wedding.
[2] See above, p. 77.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

592 mother. One of the man's sisters conducts the wife to her mother-
252 in-law's hut, and under the instruction of the assembled women
593 she begins to cook. Although people speak of her doing the cooking, in practice all she does is to look on while her sisters-in-law do the work. The porridge is divided onto plates and distributed under [262] the directions of the man's mother. One plate is sent to the man's father, one to the husband who eats the porridge with his brothers, and one to the most important woman in the village, while some are taken by the cooks themselves. The man's father is expected to remark on how well the porridge has been cooked, but he may say that it has been poorly prepared and his daughter-in-law must be taught again. This expression of disapproval cannot be more than a way of showing his dislike for his daughter-in-law for whatever he says the ceremony is not repeated and the woman begins to cook regularly for her husband. If the man's relatives are wealthy, they may kill a goat or a sheep on this occasion, or the woman's parents may send a sheep or a goat to be killed and eaten. The woman's parents cannot themselves attend the ceremony.

If the couple begin their marriage uxorilocally this ceremony [591] does not take place. The bride begins to cook for her husband as soon as he comes to live with her, using her grand-mother's hut as a kitchen.

Appendix III

THE HOEING PARTY

606 A man is under an obligation to provide once during his marriage
583 a party of hoers who work in his wife's mother's garden for the greater part of one day and who are rewarded by his wife's father. This party is called by the general word for obligations owed by a man towards his parents-in-law, *cikomwene*.[1] The function of this occasion, as a socially sanctioned method of expression of hostility between a man and his affines, has already been discussed. I attended one of these parties and my clerk attended two others.

The man, or a relative of his, tells his father that he is planning to bring a party to hoe on such and such a day. If the father-in-law agrees that the day is suitable he tells his wife to brew beer for the hoers. On the agreed day the hoeing party arrive early in the morning and begin to work in the garden. The father-in-law promises presents to the leader of the hoers, who continue to hoe until they are offered what they consider is sufficient. They then stop, and go to the village to receive the present and drink beer.

[1] See above, p. 74.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 take the "child," going with him to a hut to give him instruction, saying, "To-day you stand alone. Look after your people as did your father before you. [183] If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned."

IV

THE UNAMWALI CEREMONY

881 I. When a young girl finds she has become a woman, she goes and stands beside the pathway [leading to the village]. Any one passing finds her there, standing silent. If it be a man who notices her, he goes off and tells some woman, saying to her, "I have come across game, go and lift it." An old woman goes off to speak to her. She finds the girl, her face enveloped in her calico, and giving no answer to any question put to her. Then the old woman knows the girl is now a matured woman, and takes her off to the stream to bathe her. On returning with her from the water she places her in the hut of the head old woman of the village. (The old woman who first found her is the head of the ensuing ceremony.) Then the old woman goes off to inform other elderly women that "the maiden has reached womanhood." The girl remains in the hut six days. Should she be of the clan of [614] *Kuoni*, they give her porridge made from millet only, if of any other clan, porridge made of any [262] grain. In her relish they do not put salt. Her porridge she eats out of an old basket, and the relish from a potsherd. (This old basket will be

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Then they kill the goat

and take the liver, and lungs, and stomach, and set them down beside the beer, and cut off some meat from a fore-leg, and roast it, and cut off a piece, and give the head of the *Kuka* hut, and cut another piece, and the chief eats it, and another his old men eat, and then they begin to cut off bits for their children. The rest of the meat is put in a basket, and next morning is cut up. 166 782 [262]

III. When the propitiation of the spirits is finished the chief tells his headman, "To-day you must cook some relish, and give it to all the people, and finish the ceremony in connection with the exodus." So he (the headman) sleeps with his wife, and in the morning she takes the relish to give to the chief. All persons of lesser importance come and take theirs from the hut, and any one who is at a distance at the time has his put aside. Now the ceremony is over, and the villagers again resume cohabitation with their wives [broken off since the beginning of the ceremony]. One month passes, and then a great quantity of beer is cooked all over the village, and they have a dance that at the new village the ground may become trampled and hard. When some farther time has elapsed, they cook beer, to demolish the huts of the dead, that were left standing at the old village. At the new village, when a man dies, the first one to do so is buried at the old village; when one of the village elders dies, he is buried at the new settlement, and thereafter all who die are buried there. [834] [766]

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

turns it out. They also trap them with a falling stone trap, and a spring trap, and others they dig for and smoke out. Mice dig out a hole, and a little farther on make a little chamber, where their nest is; farther on still is their escape exit, with just a thin layer of earth between them and the surface, so that when any one starts digging they can just burst out there. Other mice make a nest in the grass. The *Siswiri* mouse people do not eat; it cannot jump a path; if it tries to, it dies. 224 [825] [260]

XII

THE WITCH-FINDER

I. When a person has died, the chief mourner goes off to seek the witch-finder. When he finds him he says, "At my home something awful has happened, and I am saying that perhaps you can follow up the thing that has killed the person." The witch-finder comes very late in the evening. When he comes, the chief mourner gives him children to lead him to the grave. When they come to the grave there, he asks them, saying, "Which way did they come with the body?" And they say they came there. And he puts medicine where they came, and asks again, saying, "Well, and his head, which direction did they lay it?" And they tell him, "His head was in this direction." He again with medicine guards the place. Then the witch-finder makes fire, and kindles it into flame, and pours medicine on it; and he does so lest people see the fire. And then they see the human flesh-eaters 791 539

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

So the attendants came to where the second head was, and cut its throat, and as they return he is decaying; when he would cough he cannot finish, and just goes, "*wopo! 'opo! 'po!*" with a weak voice, and decays, and decays, and dies. 539

XVIII

THE STORY OF KACHIRAMBE

I. Some young girls once said, "Come, let us go and pluck leaves for a relish with our porridge." [262] And when they were gathering them, one of the children saw the egg of a hyæna, and picked it up, and put it in her basket, and said to her companions, "You children, I have got all I want, I am going." And her companions said, "Whenever did you pull them, when you are off so soon?" And she replied, "As for me, I filled my basket some time ago." So her companions bade her go. When she has gone, they saw a hyæna; he has come up to them and asks, saying, "You children, who has taken my egg from there?" And they deny having done so, saying, "We do not know, but she who has gone off perhaps she has taken it." And the hyæna went off. He comes to where she lives, and says, "Who has taken my egg?" And the mother of the girl replies, "But the child, she has come in with an egg, it is on the fire," and the hyæna said, "Well, what am I to do?" And the woman replied, "Wait, when I have a child you shall eat him." And the hyæna said, "Yes, [that is a good arrangement]."

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

N 765 On the second day, also, the *mwini malire* takes cows or a goat according to his means, and divides the flesh among the mourners. The bones may not be gnawed, as this would be [262] considered equivalent to eating the dead man, but they are put into an *ngombe* basket and thrown away into the bush at the end of the feast.

M N [764] [177] On the third and fourth days the male relations surround the grave with a fence of *tinhera* grass known as *chilisa*, which is sometimes plastered by the women with mud. The Achewa are now beginning to imitate this custom, and also that of wearing *sinthembo*. Both tribes plant *nkhadzi*[1] trees about the graves in order that the dead may have shade.

N 766 765 237 A chief is not buried in the common graveyard, but in the village just outside his hut, and a chair is sometimes placed inside the *chilisa*. One of his senior relations kills a goat, and the new prospective chief ties a root along the handle and blade of a knife, with which he cuts a horizontal strip of skin round the quarters of a goat, and wears the strip for two or three months as a belt, the tail hanging down behind. With the same knife the widows cut off the false hoofs together with a small piece of adjacent skin, through which they thread a string, and then bind a false hoof on each wrist and wear them till the end of the period of mourning. The root must remain fastened to the knife throughout this period, at the end of which all are burnt together.

VIII.—MENTAL CHARACTERS.

1. *Reincarnation and Spirits* (*Chewa*).

M 769 [776] [622] [778] [262] *Mitimu* or spirits are invoked as intermediaries between man and God (*Chauta*), and each village contains a hut for the spirits of past chiefs, to whom prayers are generally made because they are powerful and because they are known to everybody. Some of the larger villages have two huts, one for the spirits of men and the other for the spirits of women. A man may also make offerings to the spirits of his own family in his own hut. When the green maize is ready for eating, the people may not taste it until their headman has taken a cob, cooked it in his house and placed it in the spirits' house, where he claps his hands and thanks the spirits for the crop. The cob, like other offerings to spirits, may be eaten next morning by children below the age of initiation.

M 775 If, as frequently happens, a traveller strays—as we should say, absentmindedly—when following a route which he knows quite well, it is the work of a spirit which has been annoyed by him. On one such occasion a police constable of mine, who had been sent to the neighbouring station while his child was ill, found himself wandering several times from the main road, and knew thereby that his child was dead, and that its spirit was troubling him because he should

[824] [1] *Nkhadzi*, euphorbia. These are evergreen, quickly propagated and long lived, and so they serve also as a sign to mark the grave long afterwards. In the Mlanje District the Anyanja and other tribes sometimes plant them in maize fields because they are supposed to be obnoxious to termites.

Livingstone, *loc. cit.*, p. 105, writes that in the Shire Highlands in 1859 they found all Mang'anja villages surrounded by an impenetrable hedge of poisonous euphorbia. He continues: "This tree casts a deep shade, which would render it difficult to bowmen to take aim at the villagers inside. The grass does not grow beneath it, and this may be the reason why it is so universally used, for when dry the grass would convey fire to huts inside; moreover, the hedge acts as a fender to all flying sparks.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

273 recipient usually takes the lead in praising, and his praise is chorused by the rest of the people in the hut.

The first jar, then, is divided by the owner himself and the bowlfuls are given to his village neighbours. The next jar is given to the headman or lieutenant of the village for division, and it is with the drinking of this jar that the party is held really to begin. The first bowl of this second jar is given by the divider of the beer back to the owner of the beer, who praises the divider before drinking. The second bowl goes to some other lieutenant or, if there is no other village lieutenant, to some important woman. Successive bowls go to other important people in the village. Subsequent jars are usually given to important visitors from other villages, who will allocate the bowls to their companions and to people in the host village. The first bowl of each jar goes to the divider of the jar, and the dregs, which are usually taken as the two last bowlfuls in each jar, and which are poured out after the jar has been tilted on its side, go to the dispenser of the beer, and to anyone who has been helping him.

There is a great deal of freedom in the allocation of beer in this way, and the complaints of people who hoped to be given beer and who were unfortunate are an invariable aftermath of any beer-party. It is important to note that the quantity of beer consumed by any individual is to some extent independent of the allocation of the jars and bowls. There are usually two or three bowls in use, and these are all filled up at each round. This means that most people in the hut drink each time. But what is remembered is not the beer drunk, but the method of allocation. Even if a man becomes intoxicated, he may yet complain the next day to his friends that the owner of the beer was miserly and lacking in generosity if no jar or bowl was specifically allocated to him. There is an obligation to return gifts of beer made in
[431] this way, so that a man can ensure a favourable reception for himself in other villages where there is beer, by his generosity and sagacity in distributing when there is beer in his own house.

262 273 The importance attached to beer-drinking is well brought out in some essays written by schoolboys on the topic 'What I want to do when I leave school'. One of the boys wrote: 'Beer and cattle are the food of the Ngoni. . . . If your friend comes and he doesn't get beer and meat, then although he gets porridge, he still says that there was hunger in the house.' Another said: 'I will brew beer very often. Our life depends on drinking beer.' The small importance attached to beer
[829] by the neighbouring Cewa tribe is well known to the Ngoni, and one

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sophisticated informant remarked: 'The Cewa are just slaves, they merely eat. The Ngoni are like the Whites; they eat little and drink much.' 273 262 829

Economic Co-operation

There are other activities which entail inter-village ties. Cattle seek their own fodder, but small stock, pigs, goats, and sheep, are fed on husks and other scraps. A man whose animals have increased beyond his ability to feed them will farm out some of them to his friends, either in his own village or in some neighbouring one. The tender of the animals then exercises some control over the disposal of any natural increase and at the end of the arrangement he is entitled to be given one of the animals. The friends whom a man selects for this task are not always close relatives, and may sometimes be people to whom he can trace no genealogical relationship at all, but whom he may have met, for instance, in Southern Rhodesia. Other people acquire a reputation for integrity, and may be given animals to look after by their acquaintances. Cattle are not disposed of so widely, and there is more often a kinship connexion between the owner and the tender. On the other hand, cattle are more susceptible than small stock to tsetse fly, and in consequence there are many people in the new areas that have been recently resettled who have to keep their cattle in the village of a relative or friend who lives in an area free from fly. 233 476 628

Harvesting of crops is carried out by members of the household except in the case of the aged, who will call on their relatives to help them. Hut-building, making a new section of a garden, clearing the ground prior to planting, and, in particular, weeding the garden during the wet season, are activities that are often carried out by collective effort. Women, particularly pairs of widows, may work together in each other's gardens turn and turn about, and a man may be able to call on relatives, particularly his sons-in-law, to help in his garden without paying them for it. Most of the outside assistance that may be required in a garden is raised by means of a beer-party. The man's wife brews beer, and it is made known in the village and round about that on such-and-such a day there will be a party to hoe in their garden. A dozen or so people go to the garden in the morning, and work until the task set by the owner of the garden is completed. They then move to the village, and are refreshed with beer. Attendance at the beer-party is not restricted to those who have worked in the garden, and at some such parties a jar of beer may be specifically allocated to 241 476 602 273 476 241

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252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [231] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [213] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [251] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [862] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by them- 224 selves and sell the meat.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession, the Ngoni have learned to plant also reserve gardens of kasava, for the locusts and drought can scarcely affect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

These vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white porridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the natives, to get at them, will hew down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stretching themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first clouds appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertiliser. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 585 III. Then they spread a mat and go and bring her husband, and set them down on the mat side by side and begin to shave his head. As the hair falls the people throw down beads. Then they take a stick and lay it across the legs of the man and woman so that each may know it is that stick that will beat them [if they do wrong]. When they have finished shaving the man, they bring oil and rub the bodies of the man and woman. When it is dark the old women escort the girl to her husband's hut. The *ndiwo* relish is cooking on the fire. [723] During the night the woman rises and puts some salt in the pot. Next morning, before dawn, before the villagers have opened their doors, the woman goes off, and gives some of the relish to her mother, and to the old woman who was mistress of the ceremony. This relish she just sets down at the door, and when they open they find it, and rub it on their feet and under their arm-pits; little children just eat it. If she have any relations who are at a distance, they sharpen a little piece of bamboo and stick the relish on the end (and put it aside) that the distant one, when he returns, shall also rub his feet with it. Perhaps the absent one, should he not have heard that these events have happened when he comes to the village, and should say, "Give me water that I may drink," they refuse him, but with a purpose, even though the water is there, and go and bring the relish that first he may rub some on his feet. It may be the woman discovers that her husband is impotent, then she just stays in her hut and does not come forth to distribute the relish. Then the old women [who know the reason] will persuade the man, saying, "Go off to the man with the lots to consult them" [787] [to see what is to be done]. When he goes off (on [837] this errand) some other man is called in, and he

/12 cont'd/

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not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingcwembe*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

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[754]

In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

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In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *izipheko*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izinduna* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

551 never use any word in which *indaba* (meeting or affair) occurred. They
565 substituted *incayo* for *indaba* and spoke of him as Zwangencayo. The
576 women of the Ngomezulu clan could never use the word *ilanga* (sun)
644 for which they substituted *ijiko*, since Langa was the name of the father of Zwide who had married into the Ngomezulu clan.

Though the particular verbal form of *hlonipa* which the Ngoni royal women brought from the south survived only in one area of northern Ngoniland, the concept inherent in it and the attitudes of honour and respect which it implied were expressed in the use of *Nkomo* in thanking and in the other non-verbal forms already mentioned. Manga, the Royal Sister of Cikusi, was as we have seen, thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*' but also with the formula '*Zikomo mntwana wenkosi*' (thanks, child of the Paramount). Among the central Ngoni there were two expressions of thanks which were probably a relic of *hlonipa* vocabulary since they were used only by the leading women. The customary form of thanking, and of taking leave after a conversation or after getting a reply to a question, was '*Zikomo*' with the clan name and honorific prefix added. The royal women in this area, when making the response to this form of thanking, always replied '*Zaithwa*' with the clan name, and they thanked each other by '*Zimata*' with the clan name instead of '*Zikomo*'. When I observed this and used it myself, they nudged each other and said 'She also is one of us.'

644 We have discussed so far the outward signs of respect shown to the royal women, and the visible marks of distinction in their clothes and the number of their attendants. We shall now examine the way in which the authority of the royal women was exercised. This will give some indication of their relationship to the political organization of the kingdoms, in so far as they had certain responsibilities to the people as a whole, and to their husbands and sons within the royal village where they lived. At the royal village the Queen Mother and her co-widows shared with the wives of the two leading houses to the right and left of the *indlunkulu*, the responsibility for preparing and serving food and beer for the Paramount and those whom he called to eat with him. The text by NyaNsangu[1] describes the etiquette of beer drinking in one of the chiefdoms in the northern kingdom, of sending food to the chief when he ate in the cattle kraal, and of assembling the wives in order of
● [264] precedence according to their houses to take their food. The formality of this etiquette was characteristic of Ngoni eating and drinking, and it was maintained by the organization and forethought of the royal women, the big wives and mothers of the Paramount, who planned the work of their own households and supervised that of the lesser wives who were attached to the two main houses.

[1] The procedure described in the text applied equally to the Paramount's village and to the villages of ruling chiefs. The Ngoni in that area used the term '*inhosi*' for chief as well as for Paramount.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount's interest in modern aspects of administration, especially after his visit to the course for chiefs held at the Jeanes School in Zomba in 1934. The old councillors, sceptical though they were of many modern innovations, recognized that they were in line with European ideas of administration, and also that they appealed to the younger educated men in the kingdom who had travelled and seen other countries and ways of living. 643

The Paramount married NaNdau as his big wife, and though, as the text mentions, he married two other wives when urged by the senior men, he sent them away after a year or two and NaNdau remained his only wife. She had an assured position since she bore him five sons and two daughters, the first-born being a daughter and receiving all the respect due to a Royal Sister. One of the brothers of NaNdau was chief of a division, and another was *mlomo wenkosi* to the Paramount. She succeeded in maintaining much of the traditional pattern in the royal village and the big house. Her personal supervision of the household was thorough and competent. She exercised complete authority over the girls and women belonging to the household and arranged that the Ngoni custom of examining the young girls, including her own daughter, at regular intervals should be maintained. Her knowledge of Ngoni songs and dances, and her own skilled and graceful participation in the dances on state occasions, brought her before the people in her role as the big wife. At the feasts given by the Paramount she moved about among the people to serve them, and listened to complaints from the women about affairs in their villages which she then handed on to her husband. [595] [586] 644

The back verandah and all the outbuildings were the domain of the Paramount's wife. When I was there, she had some ten or twelve girls and women as well as several men working for her. They came and went if they had homes elsewhere, and the personnel changed often. All the household work was done by them: bringing water and fuel, pounding maize, and a good deal of the cooking, though this was closely supervised by the Paramount's wife. No beer was made in the household as it was against the rules of the church to which they belonged. In other Ngoni households of subordinate chiefs and *alumuzana* who were not Christian, the brewing of beer was a time-absorbing part of the household tasks and was shared by the different wives under the supervision of the big house. In Maganga, when the Paramount was entertaining unexpected guests and wanted to offer them beer, he inquired from his *induna* if anyone was brewing beer in the village, and sent for some for which he paid. When he knew beforehand that guests were coming who would expect beer to be offered to them as part of the Paramount's hospitality, he told his *induna* to see that beer was made in one of the village households, and he paid for it. [273]

The cooking which went on in the big house kitchens was always extensive. The Paramount, his wife and six children had two meals a 643 574 264

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 day, and so did all the regular helpers in the household. The stream of
574 visitors was incessant, especially on Saturdays when the market was
264 held, and on the days when the Appeal Court was in session at the court-house adjoining the village. Not every caller was given food, but if they came from a distance it was always offered. In the setting of a modern brick house and a Christian household with only one wife, the Paramount had to provide a great deal of hospitality. The old tradition that *alumuzana* and other important men visited the Paramount daily no longer held. But the weekly market and the court meetings, and the lorry service on the main road bringing callers from north and south, as well as administrative affairs which had constantly to be discussed and settled, made the Paramount's house and *bwalo* a very busy place.

Officials of the royal village and state officials

574 When I lived in the royal village for several weeks I was aware of a
643 never-ending stream of persons coming to consult or to work with the Paramount. Well protected as he was by the Ngoni method of indirect
645 approach and the surveillance of the village and *bwalo* by the *induna* of the big house and the *mlomo wenkosi*, the Paramount was still subject to constant inquiries from his office-bearers who needed his counsel, and from persons great and small from all over his kingdom who believed that he could help them. Among the village officials the *induna* of the big house worked closely with the headman of the village, and displayed unremitting efforts to see that all affairs in the immediate neighbourhood of the Paramount should go smoothly. They were constantly on the *bwalo* of the big house, or near the gate of the fence surrounding it. These two always turned up when visitors came, and sat on the verandah or in the *bwalo* with the other senior men, and kept an eye on all that happened. If anything went wrong in the village or the compound when the Paramount was away they were in great distress, as on one occasion when a man ran amok and threatened people with a knife. There was a strong tradition that around the Paramount and his living quarters everything and everyone had to be orderly and peaceable.

645 The *umbongi*, or praiser of the Paramount, was among the royal vil-
574 lage officials, though he only appeared on the *bwalo* when ceremonies took place there. He sometimes came when important visitors arrived if their visit was known in advance. He always came to the big dances and feasts held at the royal village. He was an old man, tall and spare, leaning heavily on a long staff, and many of the onlookers who listened attentively to his praise-songs showed nervousness when he began making personal remarks, for he had a sharp tongue and a flow of language.

Of the state officials the *mlomo wenkosi* was seldom away from the big house or far from the person of the Paramount. He had married the Paramount's sister, and was own brother to the *inkosikazi*, and his

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and nursemaids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving.

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*laweni*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *laweni*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father.

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *laweni* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary.

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she

on was placed on it. The meat in the basket and on the gate stayed there all night.

Following the ritual of offering meat to the spirits came the ritual of cooking and eating the meat, both that offered to the spirits and the rest. After the basket of meat had been left all night in the place of the spirits, the large quantity on the gate was carried away and cooked by an old woman outside the hut of Bambo Manga's granddaughter. The meat in the basket which had been offered to the spirits was put in a pot and cooked on the fire in Bambo Manga's hut. It stayed cooking all day and all night till the following morning. Dzinthenga Phungwako, an old and highly respected *lidoda*, came to the hut and divided the sacrificial meat among all who were in the house, that is Bambo Manga, her daughter and granddaughter and several senior women. When they had finished the leading women stood up and thanked '*Zikhomo Maseko*', '*Zikhomo Magwagwa*'. Then they washed their hands and went to their own houses.

The large quantity of meat which had been laid on the gate and cooked on another fire in another *bwalo* was carried in a big pot and put down outside Bambo Manga's hut in the late afternoon. Her daughter came outside and divided the meat into three piles: a small one from the breast-bones for the women, a leg for the chief, the head for Kabwazi the headman of a neighbouring village, and the rest in a big pot for the men. A boy came to tell Lopati that all was ready and he and the chief went out to the place where the beast was killed, near the gate of the kraal. There were four groups already sitting there and the chief and Lopati made a fifth: the *madoda*, the senior men; the *majaha*, the young men; the *mabusa*, the herd-boys; and the little boys. Before Lopati divided the meat he and the chief washed elaborately with water brought in a gourd, and then he washed the knife before cutting the meat. He called the *madoda* to send someone for their portion in a basket, then the young men and the herd-boys were given their portions—a basket for each group, and the small boys had bits put in their hands. The eating was very sedate, there was no snatching of choice bits, and in each group the one who fetched the meat distributed it. There was the general atmosphere of a ritual meal rather than a feast, though the small boys smacked their lips appreciatively. From time to time Lopati called up someone from a group and gave him a bit more to divide up. When it was all eaten, a boy was sent to fetch water and the soapy leaves which the Ngoni used for washing, and the chief and Lopati and the *madoda* all washed the grease off their fingers. Then Lopati stood up and called out '*Siyadumisa baba, zikomo mntwana wenkosi*', 'We are praising you, father, thank you child of the Paramount', and the others all agreed and said '*Zikhomo baba.*' Then they all went together to Bambo Manga's hut and stood opposite her door and called out the same thanks. The women who had eaten their meat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

562 These skills of management, and of order and dignity in
461 serving, were not however only seen in large-scale operations.
592 The modern young Ngoni wife serving tea and 'scones' to her husband's guests sitting on his veranda showed the same qualities of careful preparation and considerate service as her grandmother had shown presiding over 500 guests at a wedding feast.

562 Household management in Ngoni homes included primarily managing the household staff, allotting their tasks to them, settling their quarrels, looking after them when sick, marrying off the young ones when the time came. In the all-important aspect of feeding a large household and its dependents, Ngoni women assumed responsibility for seeing that there were enough supplies of different kinds of food at hand, for regular consumption and for emergencies. They consulted at times with the 'official' who was in charge of their 'house' about mobilizing supplies or organizing women helpers to cultivate in the gardens. Most significant in the eyes of Ngoni and non-Ngoni alike was the task of Ngoni
[264] women of 'dividing the food' at every meal-time. It was a key concept in Ngoni culture that at all times when food, beer, or other kinds of goods were to be divided out, and enjoyed or used by a large number of people, the 'one who divided' was an important individual. He, or more often she, must be of 'good character', who assumed, or was given, the task because he or she knew how to do it, and no one questioned the justice or the competence with which the dividing was done. Again I was impressed by the almost nonchalant air with which Ngoni women ladled out food for a large number of individuals and groups. It looked
[461] so easy. It was obviously not a simple matter. The results were always accepted and welcomed, and I never heard any grumbles.

593 Central to the organization of the household, and in one sense the axis on which it revolved, was the care and atten-
592 tion the wife gave to her husband. Cooking, including the

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

858 signs of irritation at female control, especially with this pro-
867 hibition on going to the kraal gate. They escaped surveillance and ran off there now and then, only to be caught by one of the men, beaten and brought back to the compound with the remark: 'This child is not yet a herd boy. Keep him with you.'

If the village was near a roadway with traffic on it, or near a river, children were forbidden to go there without some older person with them. They were also warned not to go near fireplaces in case a burning log fell out, and to keep away from the woodpile where there might be snakes.

Training in habits

855 In these surroundings, diversified, orderly, and on the whole safe if forbidden places were avoided, young children's needs were attended to and they were gradually trained to look after themselves. For food, health and sleep, their primary physical needs, they had their older sisters, nurse girls, mothers, grandmothers and helpers all at hand to ensure that these needs were satisfied.

264 After the post-weaning months were over, and generally
862 though not always after the next baby was born, a young child went back to eat with his mother in her compound and sleep in her hut, though a grandmother, if she had taken a special fancy to a child, might say she was going to keep him to eat and sleep with her. In his mother's compound twice a day the child watched her and her helpers preparing and cooking a meal. In due time he was called to the veranda where the food lay smoking, his hands were wiped, he was made to rinse out his mouth, and he sat down beside his mother or his nurse in a circle round the food basket. This contained the mash of cooked grain, usually maize, and be-
[262] side it were the little pots of cooked 'relish', beans, peas, green vegetables, tomatoes, ground-nuts. At first someone pinched up a little lump of the mash, dipped it in a relish, and popped it into his mouth, telling him to shut his mouth and chew before he swallowed. Later he learned to do this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

himself, with his eyes rather anxiously on the elders, lest he should take too large a lump, or get the relish all over his hand and wrist instead of only on his finger-tips. He learned, however hungry he was, not to stuff himself, and not to eat noisily. If he smacked his lips and gulped audibly, someone in the circle might say: 'I hear the guns of the Tyandla people booming.' They all stopped eating and looked at him, and he learned that a proverb could be a veiled rebuke, and he hung his head, ashamed.

Sometimes the smaller children had cow's milk or curds and whey or thin gruel given to them in a tiny gourd between the main meal-times, and through the day nurse girls and older sisters gave them little snacks if they thought of it or if the child whimpered because it was hungry. A favourite snack was ground bulrush millet, creamy and nutty to taste. Throughout this period spent in the women's world the child did not lack food either at or between meals. As he grew more mobile and independent, he went foraging in the compounds of his other mothers and his grandmothers, especially if his own mother had gone to her garden. They always welcomed him and gave him something to go on with.

After set meals the child was made to rinse his mouth, and his hands were cleaned by his nurse girl and his face and chest washed if he had covered himself with food fragments. His nurse girl found him a 'tooth-brush twig' and frayed it for him, and taught him to use it after meals as well as in the early morning.

Washing of small children was always done in the compound. While some children squirmed and yelled when washed, others liked it. They sat grinning on the veranda while their mother or nurse splashed water over them, rubbed soapy leaves on their hair, dried them with a cloth, and rubbed cow's fat on their skin. The Ngoni children in well-ordered households shone with cleanliness till they were about six years old. Then the boys dodged these female attentions, their skin became dry and scruffy, and their hair full

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. [146] This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten [272] by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when [262] milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The [867] Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [155] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for authority. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 round covered food basket, the side dishes in small covered
[415] earthenware bowls. Among the traditional Ngoni dishes learned by girls were the following:

252 Gruel made of cow's milk and maize flour (for young children).
262 Whole maize boiled with beans and round peas.
Sweet potatoes boiled, peeled and mashed with tomatoes.
Beans and finger millet flour cooked separately and then stirred together.
Pumpkins cooked with ground-nut paste.
Ground-nut flour cooked with scraps of meat.
Whole tall millet pounded with ground-nuts.
Pot-roast chicken with tomatoes, onions and ground-nuts.

In Ngoni households meat when cooked in large quantities,
262 not just as broth made from bones and titbits, was served on
415 a special wooden meat-dish, round or oblong with rounded ends, and supported on three sturdy legs. This meat-dish was an integral part of the equipment of every 'true Ngoni'
● [264] household, and, like the French housewife's omelet pan, was after use wiped clean and polished with clarified fat. The outside of these meat-dishes was often decorated with 'poker
[531] work' designs by the maker, and such decorated and shining meat-dishes were treasured as heirlooms. Other, but rare, heirlooms were hammered brass pots with a flat bottom and
415 turned over edge, of the pattern known in India as *dekchies*. The Ngoni women who owned them declared they had been brought by their ancestors from the south.

All the extra fat when a beast was killed was sent to the
251 women of the 'house' in whose herd it was, and this fat was cooked until it was clarified, and then stored. Butter was made by shaking milk in a gourd, and it was also clarified
[234] for keeping. Formerly milk curds were made daily by the senior women and kept to mature in a jar before being eaten. Only in a few Ngoni households was this still done.

273 Beer was made on special occasions when the women had

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 181 356 515 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infect their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again. 825 356 [485]

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene which made them insist that there should be no spitting or nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An ingenious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose. 515 356 [413]

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean. 515 [576]

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up 264

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

264 might be a chore but when it was done in the open it was also an advertisement of high standards.

The art of speech

191 The Ngoni believed that as boys and girls neared adult life they should be well drilled in the art of speaking, because it
195 was regarded as a basic Ngoni characteristic. We have seen how adults watched children tossing riddles at each other to test, among other things, their quickness of speech. Girls had been watched telling stories to see how they held their audience and showed a sense of dramatic values in recitation.

In all the standardized forms of speech such as greetings, messages, announcements, responses, young adults were expected to speak clearly and correctly, without mumbling but not too loudly. When relating an event, such as a visit, a bull-fight, or when giving evidence in the courts, they had to give an orderly account without repetition. Otherwise they were told: 'You are speaking badly. Tell it again, in order, from the beginning.' An ordered sequence of the narrative was always demanded, and, as we shall see in the next chapter, they used proverbs frequently to impress on people speaking the need to get to the point, while leaving out nothing of importance.

The art of words used with music in songs was regarded as
533 a special gift and those who possessed it were encouraged to develop it. Inspiration for words and music was as we have seen something which came 'from the chest' and was regarded almost as if it was a special kind of breathing. Some used this gift to sing with a solo instrument such as a stringed lyre. Others used it to compose new songs for *ngoma* dances.
[177] Others again wrote Christian hymns and composed music for them, or set them to traditional Ngoni tunes.

The art of dancing

535 'Ngoni people think that their dances show their personality,
[828] their manhood, that which was born in them.' Phrases like

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

wife. We have talked in Chapters IV and VII of her duties 577
in organizing food supplies, supervising cooking, and that 592
supreme test of competence: dividing out the food so that
all had a fair share. The same high standard of skill was [264]
expected in the general care and supervision of the compound, the children and the household staff. Ngoni women, like their menfolk, were proud of being able to supervise other people and organize life around them, to control others satisfactorily, to hear complaints and to pacify quarrels. The proverb 'The tooth laughs to no purpose', meaning that [538]
angry people show their teeth but with no merriment, was often heard when Ngoni women intervened to stop two quarrelling girls or to prevent an irate helper getting angry with the nurse girls.

The traits of justice and wisdom were important elements 577
in the foundation of a Ngoni married woman's reputation.
These were judged by her ability to allocate fair shares of 538
food to servants and helpers, and to adjudicate wisely in women's disputes. Two proverbs referred particularly to dividing out food and were said about women who were either careless or stingy, and did not give their helpers a fair share. 'The finger-nails are surfeited' meant that the important people had eaten heartily without thought for others; and 'She has sliced one side only' had the same connotation, that those who had the supplies were keeping too much for themselves. Two other proverbs drove home this principle of *noblesse oblige* when emphasizing the responsibilities of married women: 'The elephant is not made heavy by its trunk,' and 'If the cows do not produce milk the herdsman is responsible.'

The ideal personality of Ngoni men

As we have just said, there was a definite personality pattern 577
for young men whether married or not, which emphasized 562
special qualities looked for in them, since on the whole they 561
had relatively little authority or responsibility in village

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [831] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. [273] The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [251] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [462] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and 224 taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by themselves and sell the meat.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession, the Ngoni have learned to plant also reserve gardens of kasava, for the locusts and drought can scarcely affect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

These vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white porridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the natives, to get at them, will hew down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stretching themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first clouds appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertiliser. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

535 is now danced by villages. The important men in one village suggest
628 to another village that this dance should be held in the latter village. If this is agreed, beer is brewed in the second village and on the prearranged day many people from the first village come in procession from their village to the dance. The visiting dancers enter the cattle byre and start to dance. They are joined by people from the home village. The dancers are arranged in two lines, men on one side and women on the other, and the dance consists of a series of virtuoso performances by two or three men and women at a time in the space between the two lines, to the accompaniment of clapping and anti-
[533] phonal singing. The dance is followed by drinking and more dancing. Later in the year, or in the next year, the host village goes to the home of the visitors, and the performance is repeated.

535 Of more frequent occurrence are dances involving girls only. These
628 are usually held on Sunday afternoons, and as at the *ngoma* dances, at least two villages are involved. Here the initiative is taken not by the
883 important men but by the senior unmarried girl in the village. She invites a girl of similar status in another village with whom she is acquainted, or whom she has seen dancing, to bring a team of girls to dance in her village. This kind of dance is competitive in that the visitors are opposed by a similar team of girls from the home village, who dance separately from the visitors until, at the end of the session, the two teams combine. That team which has danced best is held to be the winner, although there is always great doubt as to which team this is. The girl who invited the visitors is responsible for seeing that the visiting team is fed, although beer is not provided. No work is done in the gardens on Sundays, so that these dances always attract a large number of onlookers. As with *ngoma*, a return match is danced at some later date. The pairs of villages that are linked in these dance exchanges are not always those that contain many people related to one another. One girl may ask an acquaintance in another village to find a team; in one case the girl who made the invitation did not know the name of the girl she was inviting.

Beer-drinking

273 Beer, water, and tea are the three main drinks of the Ngoni. The
[271] ordinary rules of hospitality govern the drinking of water, which is
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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 1930's that the Ngoni did not live as well as they might and had, in fact, an impoverished diet, because they did not make full use, and sometimes very little use, of the milk and meat which they had available. In pre-European days, when the possession of cattle was confined to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading *alumuzana*, there was a continuous slaughter of animals to provide a regular diet of meat and *ulubende*, the cooked blood which the Ngoni liked very much. The heads of the big houses saw that there was always on hand *amasi*, the milk curds which was the form in which adults took their milk, fresh milk being reserved for young children and herd-boys. This provision of meat, *ulubende* and *amasi* was only possible for those who had plenty of cattle, [721] and in both kingdoms wars and raids were carried out partly to obtain fresh supplies of cattle from neighbouring and unconquered tribes. As we saw in the chapter on the Paramount, in pre-European days the *alumuzana* who lived near enough to the royal village made a practice of calling frequently, if not daily, and such calls were rewarded by their being asked to eat with the Paramount, and 'food' in those days was predominantly meat. Between fighting seasons, that is during the rains, the young men (*amajaha*) who were newly recruited to the regiments [883] were kept busy in and around the Paramount's village and the head villages of the *alumuzana*, mending fences, making shields, and clearing new land. When they were thus employed they also were fed by the Paramount or *mulumuzana*, who regarded these periodic feasts for the *amajaha* as one of the first calls on the consumption of his cattle. The Ngoni later rationalized this earlier procedure of restricting meat and milk consumption to certain groups of people by arguing that it made the young warriors strong and able to fight and endure hardships, and they declared that the senior men and women who also shared the Paramount's supplies lived long and had great wisdom and strength of character. This rationalization was not only looking back to a past Utopia. It was also based on the argument that Europeans ate meat regularly and that they were strong, both physically and politically.

262 The European criticism in the 1930's that the Ngoni did not make 178 full dietary use of their cattle and their products was justified, but there are two factors to note in this connexion. One was that the number of those who lived well on meat and milk in the old days was relatively small—confined in fact to cattle-owners, women owners of big houses, and warriors. The situation changed after the Europeans came, and a large number of people owned a few cattle and many of the new owners had no tradition about using their products. Among the cattle-owners of the Swazi clans the tradition of cooking blood and making curds continued and both were valued as food, but some of those who had only recently become owners of cattle did not know these practices, and 262 I came across many cattle-owners of local tribes who did not know how 272 to milk a cow. The failure to use milk in the Ngoni diet was due partly

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

 262

to the method of rearing calves by letting them take all the milk they wanted, and partly to the practice of letting the herd-boys have the rest. In villages under a *mukumuzana* of a Swazi clan, who had a wife in his big house also of a Swazi clan, the consumption of milk was to some extent organized. These senior women saw that the herd-boys brought them a certain amount of milk each day, and they gave it to young children or invalids, and made some into *amasi*. 272

Another practice which restricted the use of meat and milk as regular items of diet was that the building up of the herds was regarded as a primary responsibility of the owners and guardians of cattle. Hence calves were given milk, which in western countries would be drawn off for human use, and the killing of beasts, unless they were sick, was restricted to selling the meat for cash or using it in ritual. One of the embarrassments suffered by an anthropologist was being presented with a beast by people who hardly ever killed one for their own use. It was true that a general share-out took place when the beast was killed, but it was none the less one beast fewer in the herd, and it was the maintenance and increase of the herds which was the cattle-owners' chief concern. 231 262

This emphasis on numbers rather than quality, which caused so much misunderstanding between government departments and cattle-owners, was closely related to the forms of exchange in cattle. Formerly cattle were handed over either as *lobola* or as penalties for the infringement of laws. Both these forms of transfer continued, but there were additional demands which cattle-owners or potential owners had to be aware of in watching the increase or diminution of their herds. One characteristic of these modern forms of exchange was the ready convertibility of cattle into cash and of cash into cattle. We have seen how young men away at work sent money back to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. We have seen too how the possession of cattle made it possible to sell a beast and obtain cash for various purposes, and the proximity of markets where there were butchers' stalls encouraged this sale of cattle. 231 437

One of the most frequent reasons for the conversion of cattle into cash was for the purpose of hiring labour. We saw in Chapter I of this section how Lopati Nzunga killed cattle to feed the men who carried bricks and cement for his brother's tomb and sold another beast to pay wages to the bricklayers. The traditional way of paying labourers had been by feeding them with meat, and the modern method was to pay them cash wages [illegible] to find the money for it by the sale of cattle. Such labour could be for cultivating, house-building, fence-building, road-making and other local work. The possession of cattle which were easily convertible into cash made possible this payment of labour, and this relationship between the role of cattle-owner and the role of employer of labour was common. 231 464 [465]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration. 173 613

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mveleleni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Emcisweni)[18] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emsizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18. 595 621 631 643

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[19] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent 173 595 613 643 [273] [682]

[18] Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 58, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[19] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 6, 34, 94.

NOTES

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mlonyeni, Fort Manning Division.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mlonyeni and present Chief Teleka, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Misholo, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

[see table on page 14.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 delegated a certain amount of responsibility, such as the collection
668 of licence fees or the holding of a court not recognized by the Administration but supplied by the county clerk with the apparatus of official forms. The would-be chief then argues that the rural district in which he lives has always been distinct from the rest of the county and that it is too far for the people in it to attend at the county court. No attempt of this kind since 1920 has been successful, although the recent dispersal of villages into reopened land outside
[693] the reserves has increased the distances some litigants have to travel to the county court, and hence the number of disputes referred to these unrecognized local leaders has increased.

4. *The chief and his people*

634 The chief interacts with his people in a variety of situations. He receives their presents of beer and other valuables, he presides at county meetings, and organizes the royal hunts. He visits them in their villages when there are important celebrations and festivities and they go to him with their requests and complaints.

634 Ngoni offer beer as one of their principal expressions of
574 hospitality, and in a formal beer party the ordered pattern of the
● 273 social structure is acted out in the distribution and dispensation of
[554] the various jars and bowls of beer.[11] One traditional obligation is to provide a jar of beer for the head of the segment. Everyone belongs, or belonged, to a hierarchy of segments so that there were many people who ought to be honoured in this way at every party. In practice, since beer is heavy to carry, few jars move outside the village in which they are brewed, but a distant political superior is sometimes called in to a village to attend a beer party at which he will be honoured in this way. In the chief's own village the chief lives close at hand and beer is provided in much the same way as for the headman in an ordinary village. When beer is brewed by important people in the capital and regal villages they often call the chief to come and visit them and enjoy their hospitality. The chief is not so frequently called to beer in commoner villages, but on an important occasion such as the formal installation of a village official, or the formal announcement that a village has moved to a new site, it is appropriate to invite the chief to attend. A chief may
634 also be honoured by his affines with beer brewed for him in the
554 same way as any other man, but there is some disagreement about the appropriateness of this, for the chief 'has exceeded all others'

[11] See Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 217-19, for the rules of and attitudes towards beer drinking.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE II. Beer party at a chief's house. Standing in the foreground wearing a fez is a Native Authority messenger.

[651]

PLATE III. Collecting tax in a village. The Administrative clerk sits at a table on the verandah of the village headman's hut. Near him stand two Administrative messengers, and seated on the ground are men waiting to pay.

[Facing p. 144]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kinswoman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing. A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present is made by an individual and arises from his own political aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 by this relationship participate in the presentation and consumption
273 of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the
[769] Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all
797 public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the
[557] ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of
[576] honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are
681 diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded
634 as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and
626 other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Paramount Chief is sometimes told of the matter and calls the minor
[643] chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other counties and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner. The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[14] a
643 salutation which symbolizes his former position as head of an
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[14] cf. Zulu *bayede*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VIII. The clerk of a Native Court, with one of the court assessors, sits in the chief's village issuing a permit for selling beer to a man who has come on behalf of his sister.

[222]

PLATE IX. A Native Authority councillor, sitting on the verandah of the Native Court in his county, issues passes to men wishing to collect caterpillars. There are no edible caterpillars in Ngoniland, and Ngoni who wish to collect them provide themselves with passes to show to the Cewa chiefs in whose counties caterpillars are found.

[Facing p. 153]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

of an *ngoma* 'competition' the team was made up of lads and girls of about fourteen to eighteen years old. They went off to another village, having announced their arrival previously, and challenged the 'home team' to dance *ngoma*. The dancing was in the kraal with the adults looking on and acting as judges. It was all very decorous and orderly and the competing teams were in dead earnest. As we have noticed already, the Ngoni danced without drums. The steady beat of the feet of the young men made the rhythm for the dance, but the co-ordination in the long lines of boys in front and girls behind needed assiduous practice to produce harmonious results. In both northern and central Ngoniland the Paramounts had forbidden all dances except Ngoni dances, and in the north the *ngoma* was encouraged by the chiefs because it was considered a 'good dance' for young people. 857 535

After marriage, the young women were absorbed in the care of their huts and young children and only appeared as an age set when they took part in a communal hoeing; on such occasions they were inclined to keep apart from the older women, sometimes on the grounds that they did not drink the full-strength beer, and therefore clustered round a pot of 'sweet' beer when they knocked off work. In most Ngoni villages the young men after marriage went off to find work and, as a group of friends within an age set, they would get together to talk things over, make their preparations and travel to the south. 462 476 561 273

In day-to-day village affairs, as well as on ceremonial occasions, the age sets of the *manina* and *madoda* were very much in evidence. The *madoda* met at meal-times by the gate of the kraal, and they went there to count the cattle when they came back in the evening. The same group could be seen either at the kraal gate or on a verandah talking about village affairs or drinking together, or at a court listening to cases. The *manina* usually gathered in the verandah of the *indlunkulu* to talk over women's affairs or to receive guests. As an age set they met less frequently than the men because the larger part of their tasks lay in their own huts or in the group of women associated with a house. On all occasions when the formal reception of strangers took place, or when ritual feasting or shaving or washing occurred, or when important decisions had to be made, the *manina* and the *madoda* in their separate sets were in evidence. 561

Although the age sets in village life were social units carrying definite responsibilities and performing recognized activities, their chief importance in Ngoni social life was in regulating behavioural patterns and prescribing mutual relationships. Here we have to take note of a selective principle at work among the *manina* and *madoda*. Although in one sense all women and men of forty to forty-five and upwards belonged to these age sets, the individuals who carried out the characteristic activities of these groups did not include all the men and women of that age. The very old people did not continue to exercise any influence in village 561 888

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount's interest in modern aspects of administration, especially 643
after his visit to the course for chiefs held at the Jeanes School in Zomba in 1934. The old councillors, sceptical though they were of many modern innovations, recognized that they were in line with European ideas of administration, and also that they appealed to the younger educated men in the kingdom who had travelled and seen other countries and ways of living.

The Paramount married NaNdau as his big wife, and though, as the [595]
text mentions, he married two other wives when urged by the senior [586]
men, he sent them away after a year or two and NaNdau remained his only wife. She had an assured position since she bore him five sons and two daughters, the first-born being a daughter and receiving all the 644
respect due to a Royal Sister. One of the brothers of NaNdau was chief of a division, and another was *mlomo wenkosi* to the Paramount. She succeeded in maintaining much of the traditional pattern in the royal village and the big house. Her personal supervision of the household was thorough and competent. She exercised complete authority over the girls and women belonging to the household and arranged that the Ngoni custom of examining the young girls, including her own daughter, at regular intervals should be maintained. Her knowledge of Ngoni songs and dances, and her own skilled and graceful participation in the dances on state occasions, brought her before the people in her role as the big wife. At the feasts given by the Paramount she moved about among the people to serve them, and listened to complaints from the women about affairs in their villages which she then handed on to her husband.

The back verandah and all the outbuildings were the domain of the Paramount's wife. When I was there, she had some ten or twelve girls and women as well as several men working for her. They came and went if they had homes elsewhere, and the personnel changed often. All the household work was done by them: bringing water and fuel, pounding maize, and a good deal of the cooking, though this was closely supervised by the Paramount's wife. No beer was made in the household as it was against the rules of the church to which they belonged. In other Ngoni [273] households of subordinate chiefs and *alumuzana* who were not Christian, the brewing of beer was a time-absorbing part of the household tasks and was shared by the different wives under the supervision of the big house. In Maganga, when the Paramount was entertaining unexpected guests and wanted to offer them beer, he inquired from his *induna* if anyone was brewing beer in the village, and sent for some for which he paid. When he knew beforehand that guests were coming who would expect beer to be offered to them as part of the Paramount's hospitality, he told his *induna* to see that beer was made in one of the village households, and he paid for it.

643
The cooking which went on in the big house kitchens was always 574
extensive. The Paramount, his wife and six children had two meals a 264

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to 351
make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, 415
and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, [356]
and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time [513]
sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into
the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at
night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as [352]
pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fasci- [531]
nate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from 351
time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer [285]
was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child [273]
was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. [857]
These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked [231]
and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and
young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped 361
round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay 311
patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens',
and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or 857
grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work
in the gardens was an expedition for young children which
they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places for- 858
bidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone 867
with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep
away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where
the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had
passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of [562]
the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children
strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and
fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went
there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless
a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven
years old, because they found their fathers there and the
herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

224 After the hunt the tally of kills was reckoned up, the game was carried home by the young men, and on the return to [062] the villages the meat was cooked and eaten by the men at the kraal gate. This was the occasion for going over all [521] the episodes of the chase, the skill of So-and-so, the fine organizing of the hunt by its 'owner'. No one mentioned the misses, no one's feelings were hurt, and there was a warm feeling of united and contented sharing in a good day's sport.

Lion-hunting was organized differently. Only former warriors and well-known huntsmen were called, and they sometimes took their sons with them as carriers. Guns as well as spears were taken, though the Ngoni liked to say, and it was often true, that they killed lions with spears only. Tracking a lion was dangerous and difficult, and when it was located in a patch of tall grass or reeds, the huntsmen made a circle round it, ready to attack when it broke cover. As in the chase, the one who stabbed the lion first, second and finally was noted. The dead lion was hoisted on poles slung from the shoulders of young men, and carried to the village where the hunt was organized. Here the party was welcomed and given food, the heroes were acclaimed, and the headman and seniors led the way to the village of the clan head, who called his men together to rejoice. When the augmented party reached the chief's or Paramount's village, [535] where all lions had to be taken, a war-dance took place in [555] the kraal, as of warriors returning from a campaign. The killer of the lion came out in front of the rest and danced his individual war-dance; he was hailed as a hero and new [273] epithets were added to his praise names. The whole party [574] was given beer, a beast was killed for a meat feast, and then the party thanked the Paramount in traditional fashion and went home.

It was in lion-hunting that young adults who were taken along felt the spice of danger, the thrill of success, and witnessed the pride of recognition for the successful killer by the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 round covered food basket, the side dishes in small covered
[415] earthenware bowls. Among the traditional Ngoni dishes learned by girls were the following:

252 Gruel made of cow's milk and maize flour (for young children).
262 Whole maize boiled with beans and round peas.
Sweet potatoes boiled, peeled and mashed with tomatoes.
Beans and finger millet flour cooked separately and then stirred together.
Pumpkins cooked with ground-nut paste.
Ground-nut flour cooked with scraps of meat.
Whole tall millet pounded with ground-nuts.
Pot-roast chicken with tomatoes, onions and ground-nuts.

In Ngoni households meat when cooked in large quantities,
262 not just as broth made from bones and titbits, was served on
415 a special wooden meat-dish, round or oblong with rounded ends, and supported on three sturdy legs. This meat-dish was an integral part of the equipment of every 'true Ngoni'
[264] household, and, like the French housewife's omelet pan, was after use wiped clean and polished with clarified fat. The outside of these meat-dishes was often decorated with 'poker
[531] work' designs by the maker, and such decorated and shining meat-dishes were treasured as heirlooms. Other, but rare,
415 heirlooms were hammered brass pots with a flat bottom and turned over edge, of the pattern known in India as *dekchies*. The Ngoni women who owned them declared they had been brought by their ancestors from the south.

All the extra fat when a beast was killed was sent to the
251 women of the 'house' in whose herd it was, and this fat was cooked until it was clarified, and then stored. Butter was made by shaking milk in a gourd, and it was also clarified
[234] for keeping. Formerly milk curds were made daily by the senior women and kept to mature in a jar before being eaten. Only in a few Ngoni households was this still done.

● 273 Beer was made on special occasions when the women had

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of 273 sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their 281 women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and 294 sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The 177 use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni 301 families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form [531] standardized geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the bead 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once 302 was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and [412] combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

4; Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *lusiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *nyongo*, from the Zulu *inyongo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 40 and 114, and Scott, *A cyclopaedic dictionary of the Mang'anja language spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 488, both translate the Nyanja word *nyongo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mphekiso*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-phekisa*, to help or make to cook. Weise, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', pp. 473-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *vipeho*. Cf. Zulu *uku-pheha*, to cook.

[17] Called *mngeniso*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *msyelano*, from the Zulu *uku-dlana*, or *kulyelana*, from the Nsenga *ku-lyelana*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 241 343 241 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 262 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 462 [559] [574] [437]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 583 offers had been made to the leader of the party through the mother-in-law acting as intermediary for her husband. In the morning the mother-in-law came to the garden to find the hoers still there. She fell to the ground beseeching them to stop. The leader then told the party to stop, which they did with much grumbling. One hoer said 'It would have been better if we had cut down some more maize to cool down our hearts.'

Appendix IV

CARRYING BEER

606 431 273 The carrying of beer is the first formal occasion on which the initiative is taken by the woman's kin and not by the man's. Beer is brewed by the woman's mother and is taken to the husband's father, or if he is not available, to the husband himself. It is known as *vipeko*, a word used to describe any offering of beer sent to a chief or headman in virtue of his position as such as well as beer sent to a a son-in-law. Beer can and is sent in this way more than once, to indicate the continued respect enjoyed by the man in the eyes of his parents-in-law. Members of the Dutch Reformed Church who are not allowed to drink proper beer send instead gifts of porridge to their sons-in-law. The beer, or its porridge equivalent, is sent at least once in about 40 per cent of all marriages. It is usually brewed while the couple are living virilocally.

It is held by some that a man cannot expect beer sent to him until he has made the legalization payment for his wife. In practice, if the woman's parents think that he is treating his wife well, they may brew beer for him despite the absence of legalization payment.

The beer is brewed by the woman's mother, and is carried in jars from one village to another. If the villages are too far apart to make this practicable, the woman's mother comes to stay with some relative in a nearby village and does her brewing there. She herself does not accompany the party carrying the beer.

The party may consist of, say, half-a-dozen women from the village. They carry the beer to the man's village, and halt just outside the village. Sometimes they demand a present before they will agree to enter the village. They are led to the hut of the man's parents or of his grandmother, and there they offer the beer to the man's relatives. They are given somewhere to sleep the night. In the morning people come to greet them, and as in the gall bladder ceremony they reply with a little song. The pots of beer are allocated by the man's father to important people in the village. People who come to drink the beer give presents such as threepenny bits which are collected by the leader of the party and which are

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

distributed among the women of the party as a recompense for carrying the beer. The married couple drink the beer but do not take any prominent part in the proceedings. The next day the man's father gives a beast or a goat or money to the leader of the party. The animal is killed and the women carry the meat back to their own village where it is divided up by some important relative of the wife. If some of the sprouted maize and flour that were prepared for the brewing remain over, the mother-in-law may brew again, and send it to her son-in-law as before. The second brew of beer is called 'offering'.[1]

606 431 213

Appendix V

ENTERING THE WIFE'S MOTHER'S HUT

As performed nowadays elements are combined from what formerly were two distinct ceremonies. The name of one of these, 'eating together' (*mzyelano*) is now not often heard and the combined ceremony is known by the name of the other, 'entering' (*mngeniso*). It represents the final stage in the acceptance of the man as a satisfactory son-in-law and marks the formal setting aside of the avoidance relationship between him and his wife's mother. It is performed in about one marriage in eight. I attended two of these ceremonies.

606 [178]

Some informants say that like the carrying of beer the ceremony of entering is not performed unless the legalization payment is made. However, I have recorded instances in which the ceremony was performed in the absence of any payment. It almost always occurs after beer has been carried to the man's village once or twice and when the man is living virilocally.

[583]

The parents of the woman send word to the village of the man that on such and such a day there will be beer brewed for him to enter the hut of his mother-in-law. On the day appointed the man and his wife go in procession with other people, singing and dancing, from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession traditionally should be led by the eldest child of the marriage, boy or girl, holding a club aloft, but this is not always done. The man's parents do not go with the party but stay behind in the village. On the outskirts of the woman's parents' village, the party may be met by people dancing out to meet them, and they sometimes pause to drink beer brought out to them. The dancing party go on into the cattle byre, or if there is no byre to some clear space on the fringe of the village. They enter the byre in a rough

[1] *Nsembe*, an Nsenga word.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 order, first women, then men, and the couple last. Inside the byre
[273] they are given beer which they drink without praising.[1] They then dance on to the hut of the woman's mother and enter. Beer and a plate of boiled maize have already been put inside. The dancers are joined by a few important people from the family of the woman, but the woman's parents do not come into the hut at this stage. The people from the man's village, including the woman and her husband, sit on one side of the hut and the people from the woman's family on the other. One of the woman's relatives makes a speech about the added responsibilities of the husband, how he must come and visit in their village and must help his parents-in-law. There is sometimes a speech in reply from the man's side. A threepenny bit or a sixpence is placed on a basketwork plate on top of the beer by one of the man's people, and someone from the woman's side does the same. The money is picked up by someone else from the woman's side. Sometimes there is another plate, into which a representative of the man will put the real gift, as opposed to these tokens, which may be as much as one pound. This is also taken up by someone from the woman's side and is later given to the father-in-law.

606 A woman from the wife's side then takes a spoonful of boiled
273 maize and spits it out again. She is followed by a woman from the husband's side, who does the same. This ends the formal stage of the ceremony and drinking begins. The distribution of the beer is controlled by the senior man in the husband's party. If they are so inclined they may go back again into the byre and dance or they may wander round the village dancing. If the father-in-law wishes, he may kill a beast for them.[2] When they are tired and have drunk their fill, they go back to their own village, leaving a walking stick behind them in the hut.

On the next day the party of dancers come back again, this time with the husband's parents. They go back into the wife's mother's house and the wife's parents join them there. There is beer, and the wife's mother fills a bowl and presents it to her son-in-law, kneeling at his feet and drinking from the bowl before handing it over to him, after the usual fashion of offering a bowl of beer to anyone. The son-in-law drinks, and passes the beer round the hut. The rest of the pots of beer are then presented to the son-in-law's
[608] people, and drinking begins again. The two sets of parents sit together, and discuss the characters of their children. There is much plain speaking. When all the beer is finished the party breaks up, and people return to their own villages. The proceedings on the second day are referred to as 'following the dancing-stick',[3]

[1] For the custom of praising when drinking beer, see Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 216 ff. The beer drunk in the byre is called *nhatulo*.
[2] Called *congenela*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenela*, to enter for (something).
[3] *Kulanda zinthonga*. Cf. Zulu *uku-landa*, to follow, and *in-tonga*, a stick.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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the allusion being to the stick which is left overnight in the hut 'to watch over the beer'. In retrospect the people from the man's village talk of having 'fetched a broom there'.[4]

There seems to be considerable variation in the way in which this ceremony of 'entering' is carried out. It is not often performed and people have different ideas of what is correct. The man's people may decide to brew beer on their own account, so that sometimes the dancers are well intoxicated before they even arrive at the woman's village. They then find it difficult to adhere rigidly to any traditional form of behaviour.

[4] *Toyotola mthanyelo.* Cf. Zulu *uhu-tola*, to get, and *umshanelo*, a hand-broom.

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6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

fire and divided out. They again sleep at the hut of the deceased. Next morning they begin to lift away any refuse. The chief mourners do this, throwing away the stuff at the cross-roads [where they set fire to them]. And then the people disperse. 765

IV. The widows live in the hut where the man died; they get up night and morning to go and utter their laments in the bush; if they meet any one, they cover their head with their calico. The chief mourners and the elders of the village now leave off cohabiting with their wives. When perhaps a month has passed, the elders make preparations for soaking the grain for beer. Previous to boiling the beer, they go to the village oracle to consult him, saying, "We are putting the beer-pots on the fire, and we are not sure if it will be successfully made with no hitch, and whether or not the people will quarrel." Then the oracle may say none of these evils will happen, telling them "the beer will be successfully made." Then they also ask, saying, "Who is she who is to set the beer on the fire?" And then the oracle consults the lots, and says, "But she of so and so's clan, it is she who shall set the beer on the fire." Next morning the beer is set on the fire, the following day it still boils, on the third day it stands off the fire, on the fourth the malt is put in. (In making beer not connected with any mourning, should it not ferment, it is allowed to stand over another day, but mourning beer, even should it not ferment well, they just go on boiling it.) On that day they summon the dance, and every one is told that the beer is ready on that evening. Then all the people collect and begin to dance. They beg some beer for "kindling the fire," and some to "pour on the drums." When they have danced some time an old man comes forth and 765 791 273 765 273

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

765 commands silence, saying, "You have all met to-
●273 gether here, look well to what I say. We are a people in affliction, let no one stir up discord; he who has adultery in his heart let him not commit it here, but at his own village." When it is dawn, some more beer, [called] the "bather of the eyes," is brought out. When the sun begins to get hot, all the chief mourners assemble, and a pot of beer, called the "shaving beer," is produced, and some
[302] is poured into a potsherd and used like water (for shaving), that the chief mourners may use it for shaving a small patch from each person's head, and when this is done, one shaves his companion. The womenfolk shave at the hut of the deceased. The widows alone shave their heads somewhere in the bush, and remove the "red" head-bands, and put on new ones, smeared with oil, and go to the water to bathe. Should there still be some beer remaining they again pass the night dancing, that it may be quickly finished, so that the villagers may resume cohabitation with their wives. The widows no longer go to the bush to lament, and they are privileged to commit adultery, provided they remove the head-bands.

V. When they have passed another month, they then begin to hurry on the women, saying, "Now you must make haste with the malt." This beer is that for "bringing back the spirit," and for "knocking down the deceased's hut." When it is
765 ready they put it in a new hut that has been built beside the one the man died in. The elders then meet together in the hut, and one speaks as follows [to the spirit], "This is your new abode, these children you must guard from harm, and not, when they are walking, cause to fall over a snag; should you wish to ask for anything send the (harmless) *mshawa* snake, or the lizard, or the chameleon, and

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 again returning to the old village. That evening
166 they take some of the fire (that they made earlier in
622 the day) to kindle a fire with in the (new) hut (*Kuka*). In kindling it they do not squat down, they blow the faggots into flame from a standing position, and they do this lest the smoke might ever after hang in wreaths over the floor. The womenfolk come every day to cook.

II. When the chief's huts are finished, they build those of the old men, and when these are complete, they bring all the huts [from the old village]. When they see that all the huts are finished, beer is made at the old village, and they go and bring
166 the spirits. He who has a grave pours some beer
782 in a gourd-pot and places it on the grave, saying, "We have gone hence, you must not search for us here, come let us go together." On that day they demolish all the huts that remain, they leave only the huts of which the occupant has lately died. When now the sun begins to slant westward, from the *Kuka* hut they take five gourd-pots, and fill them
[273] with beer and make young women carrying these lead the way. The head old woman of the *Kuka*
[55A] hut goes first, the chief wife of the chief follows *Gogo*, and then come the ones carrying the beer. When they arrive at the new village they set down the gourd-pots and all the people assemble. The elder of the village then begins to propitiate, saying, "There is the beer we down on earth have made, we have gone from yonder, we present to you your new village, all men you will have a care for." Then
[431] the village chief makes a present of a goat and hands it to the old man, and he again speaks, saying, "Here is a goat which your child presents, you will wash it down with the beer." If the goat makes water, that is to say the spirit consents, if it will not they do not kill it. Then they kill the goat

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

VII

MARRIAGE BY PURCHASE

584 I. An Angoni, when he has daughters, makes an arrangement with some man from another village, saying to him, "You are my friend, you must wed one of my children." Then the girl's father makes 584 beer, and they go and summon his friend and set ●273 him in a hut by himself, and the father bids his daughters, "Go and pour out beer for the stranger." The father points out his child [to his friend], saying, "You will see she has on such and such a kind of calico, and then you will know that is the one." Then some other day he tells his child she must go and present herself at her future husband's. When the moon is full all the maidens of the village assemble and come by night to the man's village and sit down at the village court. They sit in a circle, the betrothed in the middle, and cover their heads with their calico. They tell stories and laugh that the villagers may know people have come to the *bwalo* court. Then some young man comes out, and says, "I have found something," and his companion says, "I go halves." Then an elder asks, 584 "What is it?" And the young men reply, "The maidens have come." Then some of the women at the village are sent to ask the girls at the *bwalo* court what they have come for, and they do so, saying, "What is your business here." And they reply, "We have come for so and so." They are naming some very little child. So they ask again, saying, "Are you really meaning that child himself?" And they reply, "No, we mean his big brother." Then they go and tell the elders of the

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 431 porridge for them and it is refused, and they spear goats for them and they eat. Next day they go home. They of the girl's village tell them, saying, "You will hear from us." Now, if the malt for the beer be in readiness, they do not sleep many [273] days, but if not, they let a moon pass. On the day on which the beer is strained they go and call the bodyguard of young warriors, and they come along with the husband (to be) to drink the beer. The man who is to marry the girl they go and hide away in a hut on the edge of the village along with his betrothed, and the beer for them will be drawn in a little pot.

585 III. Now every one comes together at the village court and bring goats. The betrothed sits on a [302] mat. Her grandmother shaves her head, leaving a round patch of hair on the crown. When she has finished shaving her one of the men from the man's [231] village steps out and begins to kill some goats. Should a goat not die immediately it is beaten. Then the goats are skinned, and they take a spleen and let drops fall from it on the head of the girl, and then inflate all the spleens. They take the fat from the belly, and spread it in the sun to dry. Towards evening they take the girl and go with her to the *Kuka* hut, and there they take a frothy medicine, called *chitundu*, and the girl bathes with it, and her little watchman bathes also, and he (the child) takes the spleens and the fat, the inflated spleens are fastened on the girl's head and the fat over her shoulders and under her arms. The little child, when he has finished tying them on, is beaten by the men from the man's village (playfully). Then one of the village elders gets up and speaks, saying, "There you have your mother, we give her you to-day; she is subject to no disease, her illnesses consist of occasional headaches. Should she

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

The final day of the proceedings, *tsiku la kumata*, is known as *tsiku la kumata maliro*. The beer is tested at cockcrow, and *kusiya maliro* begins to dance, followed first by a *chinudze* and then by *mdondo*. At sunrise the dancers proceed to the *dambuwe*, and those who play no further active part may go and bathe, after which they repair to the *liunde*, where they rest and drink till noon. Meanwhile, the relations, accompanied by any other of the men who assisted in digging the grave or were present at the interment, have betaken themselves early to the banks of the stream where they bathed on the former occasion. The women who have worn *zisthambo*[1] burn them in a fire, and scatter the ashes. If they have indulged in sexual intercourse while wearing them, the *zisthambo* refuse to burn. Both sexes bathe separately as before, and all return to the house of the deceased, outside which the men shave each others' heads, as also do the women. About noon one or more *amaliya* come from the *liunde* and dance in the *mzinda*. *Chadzunda* hobbles out, peers round the graveyard, and goes first to the house of the deceased to receive a *supo* from the widow and then to the house of the headman, where he sits on a chair while people come and give him *masupo* and beer. After this refreshment he dances in the *bwalo*, and then retreats to the *liunde* for a rest, returning to dance a second and third time before retiring finally to the *dambuwe*. Then *kusiya maliro* dances for the last time, and is taken to the *dambuwe* and burnt, and those who have handled him bathe. *Viwulze* again bring broken pots from the graveyard, and dance with them in the bush, singing "*Mbiya zodooku*," and the *amaliya* continue dancing for a while. At sunset the ceremonies are ended by the male relations of the deceased burning first the beer fence and then the house. The widow sleeps in someone else's house for a few weeks, until a new house has been built for her by her relations.

M 765 575 M [515] [302] [535] M [768]

5. *Funeral rites (Ngoni).*

The procedure described by Captain Rattray[2] in 1907 is still remembered by the old men; but the younger Angoni are inclined to follow the customs of the Achewa with certain modifications. For example, they place the corpse in a recess cut out from the bottom of the wall of the grave in order that it may not be soiled when the grave is filled in. They do not leave him any food, but place his spear and shield and one or two of his knives in the recess by his side. Part of his remaining property is deposited in the main shaft; but the sons always inherit the knives, except the *chigumbu* (knife for cutting meat), which falls to the head wife.

N 764 [177] N 428

On the second day after the death, the widows send children to cut *mpulupudzu* grass, from which they weave *zisthambo* to bind on their heads. As long as the widows wear these *zisthambo*, they must abstain from sexual intercourse; if they fall from grace, they invariably remove the *zisthambo* first. They must also keep their hands behind their backs when walking abroad, and may only use one hand when gesticulating. They must refrain from conversation and ablution for two or three weeks, at the end of which they brew beer (known as *mos wa zimbidzi*) and invite a few friends to partake of it. [illegible] often a widow's near female relations past the time of childbearing wear *zisthambo* and observe prohibitions in sympathy with her.

N 765 N [273]

[1] Mourning bands of plaited grass (see following section).
[2] "Some Folk Lore Songs and Stories in Chinyanja," pp. 92-99.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and assessors are nominated by the chiefs on the advice of their lieutenants and some of them are in fact lieutenants or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is illiterate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lieutenants or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying sixpence for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the county and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [693]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organized system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional governors. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of their people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 431 [273] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend these to people they can trust. All the chiefs organize their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole county, but only part of the county. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organize enough hunts. 622 224 [411] [136]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIII

251
342
343
415

1. Storing finger millet. The untidily thatched building on the right is a dormitory for boys

273
415
342
354

2. A queen brewing beer. It is only important people who own oil drums

NGONI

[Facing P. 208]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

call rural districts. By virtue of their membership of rural districts and counties, villages have certain formal relationships with each other which we may regard as mainly political, and which we have discussed in connexion with the organization of the state. But there are other inter-village activities that are not related directly to the tribal political structure. These include hunting, dancing, drinking, trading, and some co-operative economic activities. 628 [631]

Hunting takes place for the most part in the dry season, but hunts may be organized at any time to deal with predatory animals which are causing damage to crops and livestock. Only men and boys hunt. Any man who chooses can organize a hunt, but it is usually a man of middle age with some experience and of some standing in his village who sends out word to the neighbouring villages that he proposes to hunt in such-and-such an area on such-and-such a day. The organizer is referred to as the owner of the hunt, and he is in tactical command. He nominates two men to be in charge of the two wings of the hunt, and himself stays in the middle of the single line abreast in which the hunters arrange themselves. Instructions are shouted from the centre and passed out to the wings. Any animals seen are attacked with knobkerries, spears, dogs, and, if there are any, guns. The owner of the hunt has no special privileges over the animals killed, which are divided between the men who actually kill them and the people who carry them back from the hunt to the village. Attendance at such hunts is not enforced, and if the chase is unsuccessful, people tend to drop out half-way. In the main, people distribute themselves along the line of the hunt in village groups, and the leaders of the wings usually bring with them a large band of hunters from their own villages. There are usually about sixty people on a hunt, coming from perhaps ten different villages. 224 628 [462]

Dancing is an activity that brings people together from many villages. Although girls, and sometimes boys, hold dances in their own villages in the evenings, these dances are thought of as practices rather than as proper dances. The latter take place in connexion with ceremonies of various kinds, and indeed wherever there is beer to drink there is the probability of some sort of dancing. Dances are also held for their own sake, without reference to other forms of social activity. Of these, two are important in promoting inter-village ties. The first, *ngoma*,[1] the most formal of all dances, was danced by regiments in the days when the regimental system was still operative, but 535 628 [273]

[1] Cf. the Zulu dance *ingoma*, and Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 52.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

535 628 is now danced by villages. The important men in one village suggest to another village that this dance should be held in the latter village. If this is agreed, beer is brewed in the second village and on the prearranged day many people from the first village come in procession from their village to the dance. The visiting dancers enter the cattle byre and start to dance. They are joined by people from the home village. The dancers are arranged in two lines, men on one side and women on the other, and the dance consists of a series of virtuoso performances by two or three men and women at a time in the space between the two lines, to the accompaniment of clapping and antiphonal singing. [533] The dance is followed by drinking and more dancing. Later in the year, or in the next year, the host village goes to the home of the visitors, and the performance is repeated.

535 628 883 Of more frequent occurrence are dances involving girls only. These are usually held on Sunday afternoons, and as at the *ngoma* dances, at least two villages are involved. Here the initiative is taken not by the important men but by the senior unmarried girl in the village. She invites a girl of similar status in another village with whom she is acquainted, or whom she has seen dancing, to bring a team of girls to dance in her village. This kind of dance is competitive in that the visitors are opposed by a similar team of girls from the home village, who dance separately from the visitors until, at the end of the session, the two teams combine. That team which has danced best is held to be the winner, although there is always great doubt as to which team this is. The girl who invited the visitors is responsible for seeing that the visiting team is fed, although beer is not provided. No work is done in the gardens on Sundays, so that these dances always attract a large number of onlookers. As with *ngoma*, a return match is danced at some later date. The pairs of villages that are linked in these dance exchanges are not always those that contain many people related to one another. One girl may ask an acquaintance in another village to find a team; in one case the girl who made the invitation did not know the name of the girl she was inviting.

Beer-drinking

273 Beer, water, and tea are the three main drinks of the Ngoni. The ordinary rules of hospitality govern the drinking of water, which is provided for the traveller whenever he asks for some. Tea is sold in the roadside stores known as hotels. Beer is more important socially [271] [574] [272]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than either of these two drinks, and the drinking of it is essentially a social event. The kind of beer brewed is made from maize, sorghum, and finger millet. It is brewed by women, the process lasting about a week. The beer can be drunk at any time during the week, but it is not regarded as truly beer until after the brewing process has been completed. It remains good to drink for about three days, after which it becomes too sour. About 20 to 30 gallons of beer are brewed at a time. The beer can be sold, used to provide refreshment for participants in some ceremony or other, offered in return for labour or other services, or else just drunk for its own sake. In each case the presence of beer in the village acts as a magnet attracting people from other villages. Beer that is sold is of economic importance as it is the principal way in which women raise funds for themselves. In connexion with a ceremony of some kind, the attraction of the beer is secondary in general to that exerted by the ceremony itself. The provision of beer in return for utilitarian services we shall discuss later. It is in the pattern of behaviour adopted when beer is drunk for its own sake that we can see reflected the structure of social action at the village level. 273 [462] [434] [796]

Beer is stored in earthenware jars of about 7 gallons capacity. A calabash-gourd cup is used to ladle the beer into earthenware bowls holding about 4 pints; from these the beer is drunk. When the beer is ready for drinking, the friendly fellow villagers of the man whose wife has brewed come to the beer-hut, which is usually the woman's kitchen, and the owner of the beer drinks the first jar with them. The procedure with each jar is that the owner of the beer gives the jar to someone, almost invariably a man, who becomes known as the divider of the beer, and who calls on someone junior to him to act as the dispenser of the beer. The dispenser sits on the ground and fills up the bowls from the jar under the instruction of the divider of the beer, and then takes them, or points them out to, the people to whom the divider wishes to give the beer. Thus the beer is given away in jars by the owner of the beer to the dividers of the beer, and is then divided into bowlfuls, and given by the dividers to yet other people. The owners of the bowlfuls drink some and pass on the bowls so that other people may drink. Each time these gifts of beer of different quantities are made they are acknowledged by the recipient in the form of a praise, consisting of the syllable *yo* followed by the descent-name of the giver. This is also done when a bowl or a jar is finished, so that when the last bowl of a jar is finished the owner of the bowl is praised, then the divider of the beer, and finally the owner of the beer. The [251] [415]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

273 recipient usually takes the lead in praising, and his praise is chorused by the rest of the people in the hut.

The first jar, then, is divided by the owner himself and the bowlfuls are given to his village neighbours. The next jar is given to the headman or lieutenant of the village for division, and it is with the drinking of this jar that the party is held really to begin. The first bowl of this second jar is given by the divider of the beer back to the owner of the beer, who praises the divider before drinking. The second bowl goes to some other lieutenant or, if there is no other village lieutenant, to some important woman. Successive bowls go to other important people in the village. Subsequent jars are usually given to important visitors from other villages, who will allocate the bowls to their companions and to people in the host village. The first bowl of each jar goes to the divider of the jar, and the dregs, which are usually taken as the two last bowlfuls in each jar, and which are poured out after the jar has been tilted on its side, go to the dispenser of the beer, and to anyone who has been helping him.

There is a great deal of freedom in the allocation of beer in this way, and the complaints of people who hoped to be given beer and who were unfortunate are an invariable aftermath of any beer-party. It is important to note that the quantity of beer consumed by any individual is to some extent independent of the allocation of the jars and bowls. There are usually two or three bowls in use, and these are all filled up at each round. This means that most people in the hut drink each time. But what is remembered is not the beer drunk, but the method of allocation. Even if a man becomes intoxicated, he may yet complain the next day to his friends that the owner of the beer was miserly and lacking in generosity if no jar or bowl was specifically allocated to him. There is an obligation to return gifts of beer made in
[431] this way, so that a man can ensure a favourable reception for himself in other villages where there is beer, by his generosity and sagacity in distributing when there is beer in his own house.

The importance attached to beer-drinking is well brought out in
262 some essays written by schoolboys on the topic 'What I want to do
273 when I leave school'. One of the boys wrote: 'Beer and cattle are the food of the Ngoni. . . . If your friend comes and he doesn't get beer and meat, then although he gets porridge, he still says that there was hunger in the house.' Another said: 'I will brew beer very often. Our life depends on drinking beer.' The small importance attached to beer
[829] by the neighbouring Cewa tribe is well known to the Ngoni, and one

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sophisticated informant remarked: 'The Cewa are just slaves, they merely eat. The Ngoni are like the Whites; they eat little and drink much.' 273 262 829

Economic Co-operation

There are other activities which entail inter-village ties. Cattle seek their own fodder, but small stock, pigs, goats, and sheep, are fed on husks and other scraps. A man whose animals have increased beyond his ability to feed them will farm out some of them to his friends, either in his own village or in some neighbouring one. The tender of the animals then exercises some control over the disposal of any natural increase and at the end of the arrangement he is entitled to be given one of the animals. The friends whom a man selects for this task are not always close relatives, and may sometimes be people to whom he can trace no genealogical relationship at all, but whom he may have met, for instance, in Southern Rhodesia. Other people acquire a reputation for integrity, and may be given animals to look after by their acquaintances. Cattle are not disposed of so widely, and there is more often a kinship connexion between the owner and the tender. On the other hand, cattle are more susceptible than small stock to tsetse fly, and in consequence there are many people in the new areas that have been recently resettled who have to keep their cattle in the village of a relative or friend who lives in an area free from fly. 233 476 628

Harvesting of crops is carried out by members of the household except in the case of the aged, who will call on their relatives to help them. Hut-building, making a new section of a garden, clearing the ground prior to planting, and, in particular, weeding the garden during the wet season, are activities that are often carried out by collective effort. Women, particularly pairs of widows, may work together in each other's gardens turn and turn about, and a man may be able to call on relatives, particularly his sons-in-law, to help in his garden without paying them for it. Most of the outside assistance that may be required in a garden is raised by means of a beer-party. The man's wife brews beer, and it is made known in the village and round about that on such-and-such a day there will be a party to hoe in their garden. A dozen or so people go to the garden in the morning, and work until the task set by the owner of the garden is completed. They then move to the village, and are refreshed with beer. Attendance at the beer-party is not restricted to those who have worked in the garden, and at some such parties a jar of beer may be specifically allocated to 241 476 602 273 476 241

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

241 those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their
273 work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory
476 that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's
[465] labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

463 There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no
323 potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neigh-
[462] bouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

285 Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when
[462] it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

759 Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical
[648] services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

611 The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying
[591] bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern prac-
[583] tice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were
[184] incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

/11 cont'd/

241 The busiest time of the year in the garden is at the beginning of the rains, when there is much work to be done planting and weed-
[136] ing, and scaring away the monkeys and wild pigs. Later on, in the new year, after the garden has been weeded twice, it is possible to think of enlarging the garden at one edge, and if it is not too late, the newly cleared portion may be planted with a catch crop. Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out
[476] to some extent co-operatively, either on a mutual help basis between two women, or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner of the garden. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink on the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrive at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subse-
[273] quent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set
[576] aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden.

/12/ Towards the end of the rains, there is less cultivating to be done, but the ravages of wild animals become more serious, and many families sleep for two or three months in the garden, returning to the village only to obtain food. Garden shelters are simple open-sided affairs with a thatched roof, but those owners who intend to
[342] sleep in their gardens for a long time, build small circular huts as in the village, or conical shelters with the *roof reaching to the ground.*
[419] A few lookout platforms built in trees are used as vantage points for spotting wild animals. If a man has a garden a long way from the village, particularly across a stream which will be in spate in the late rains, he may build a byre for his cattle at the garden.

Maize and ground-nuts are the first crops to be harvested, and later finger millet, root crops, and finally kaffir-corn. Maize is
251 stooked before the cobs are removed, and these are then dried on platforms before being carried to the village to be stored.

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [031] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [273] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

[251] The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [462] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 291 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and 224 taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by themselves and sell the meat.

/13 cont'd/

273 Beer drinking is one of the most important social occupations, and a considerable proportion of maize is consumed in this way. Brewing takes six days to complete, but two weeks more are required to prepare the sprouted maize that is an essential ingredient. Once brewed, the beer remains drinkable for two or three days, but the partially brewed beer, of smaller alcoholic content, is also drunk. Beer is brewed for many reasons, for working parties in the garden or housebuilding, for selling at threepence a bowl, or as often as not, just for drinking. Finger millet is used in beer making, and if available, the whole maize flour from a grinding machine, as well as the white maize flour of the village. The beer is brewed in large ten-gallon pots, then poured into smaller four-gallon pots that can be carried about, and from these ladled with a gourd into bowls or ornamental gourd cups. Four-gallon petrol tins are sometimes used instead of pots, and large enamelware mugs instead of bowls. Very rarely, beer is drunk from glasses.

VIII

233 Cattle are in the care of herdboys, whose ages range from eight to fourteen. They take the cattle out of the byres in the morning and go off with them to look for pasture. The cattle come back in the early afternoon, when the calves suck, and go off again until about five o'clock in the evening, when they are put back in the byre for the night. The calves are looked after by smaller children, and do not usually go so far away from the village as do the fully grown cattle. In the dry season, after the harvest, when there is no danger of spoiling crops, the cattle wander about very much by themselves, and the boys play or do odd jobs in the village. In these days of village schools, suitable boys are not always free to look after cattle, and in this case girls will do the herding.

234 Little use is made of the milk except occasionally for use in porridge, and for sale to Europeans. The European market also pro-
235 vides the only use for eggs.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries.

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandom everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace.

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth fourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. When he listens in court to some great indaba his face is expressionless as granite, with an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

243 forest is cut down and burnt, and another garden cultivated, and so the country is rapidly being deforested. The crop is largely used to make a heady beer, and although Central Africa has been 273 happily saved from the curse of European liquor, the native beer is a great source of big drunken bouts. Heavy drinking, however, does not bring the evil effects that brandy drunkenness would entail. The drink is a nutritious and a very sustaining food, I know some of the old chiefs who are drunk almost every day of their lives by midday, yet they bear up wonderfully. But [579] these drunken bouts, when whole villages run riot, are the source of nearly all quarrels, adultery, bloodshed, and every outburst of passion. We have had to denounce the beer drinking as a menace [177] to the social order of the country, and for lack of the strong restraint of the British Government, which forbids the cutting down of trees, we have preached against the deforesting of the land as a wicked improvidence. The native church has, of its own initiative, taken up the question, and enjoined on the members total abstinence, and the preservation of the forests.

461 Three or four months labour are sufficient to provide a family with food for the year, and the sale of a sheep or a heifer will buy all the clothes the family requires. There is therefore little necessity to work, and the tendency is to spend the months lounging about the village, talking and trifling. Now, happily a more 177 industrious period is waking, and larger ambitions for cloth and 461 for stock, are drawing out the men to work. As a mission we insist on the duty of labour, we refuse church privileges to a man 797 if he cannot show that he has been engaged for some months each year at some labour centre doing honest work. No moral good is ever effected by pampering African pride and indolence, and one of the first lessons Christianity has to teach the native, is the dignity of labour, and the absolute necessity for the labourer to be industrious and honest in the discharge of his work. A penny a day is the ordinary wage we give a labourer, and even the great majority of my 220 teachers do not receive more than 1/6 a month.

171 Of course many of the Central Africans have industries of their own, smelting, basket making, cloth weaving, wire pulling, and so on. But the Ngoni were a handless people until they got a spear in their hand. Then they drew themselves up as men, and defied the universe. Yet this martial life had an ennobling effect on them. It is a curious thing to notice, and a fact which was

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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[834]

village in grass-shelters opposite the kraal gate, and no one was allowed to go to a house or to be with his wife. They said that if a man broke this law the army would be unlucky. Even the Paramount if he still went with the army slept there outside. If the Paramount left for the war, his oldest *induna* left his own village and went to the Paramount's and stayed there till the army came back. In the royal village there was continence and all the people were ordered to control themselves in the villages, until the army left.

When the army went out the old men accompanied it, but after they had spoken words of warning they came back to the village. The chief point in it all was that the young men should have courage, and should help each other if one is wounded or there is any other difficulty, and should obey the leaders. They warned the leaders too to begin the fighting wisely and not on a bad or treacherous place. If a leader did that sort of thing and many were killed a case was brought against him. When the army went out two sections were detached to guard the village. These stayed at home along with the companies of old men. They 'kept the tribe', the Paramount and the old people and the stock. [887]

The approach and attack

When the army went out it marched very slowly, and halts for the night were at short intervals. All the sections kept together as ordered by the war *induna*. In all the sections there were scouts to show the way for the army. In each section one or perhaps two were chosen and were put together to walk ahead and look carefully, and come and report any news, especially when they were in enemy country. When the army rested, the scouts went forward to see if there was any danger near. When the army slept in grass-shelters, one or two sections were sent to guard against danger both in front and rear. The army had provision carriers, that is, those who carried food and the coverings of the old men. These were boys and girls, sometimes women from their houses. These were not sent by the Paramount but each household chose its young people to carry the food. The section of the food carriers had another section to protect them when the enemy were attacked or when they went to meet enemies. [724]

When the army was near the enemy stockade the leader ordered them to sit down and rest before they attacked. At such a time the warriors snuffed or smoked hemp. This hemp-smoking was preferred because it maddened the warriors and gave them hearts without fear in facing the enemy. In the enemy stockade the drums would be beating to show that their enemies were angry, but the army of the Ngoni sat and rested as though there were no enemy. [276]

When the army had rested, the war *induna* and the other *izinduna*, or the leader of this army (for all the armies that went out were put under one man of whom they said, the owner of this army is so and so) scouted to see the difficulties of the stockade and to choose a good place for attack.

When it had been carefully chosen and the *izinduna* had agreed together how the attack should begin, then the leader roused the army and began to dance his own praise-dance. The army responded to him. After

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of [581] his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 851 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriagebelonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth hissons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin onbehalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past andwhen recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

[127] [554] Important men sometimes married female captives and no bridewealth pased. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons bunded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 183 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bridewealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.[13] The information on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II. [128]

It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898 [276]

[13] See pp. 221.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173

(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu, and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGU'LA.

159

Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

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Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni U'ka Sosera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. [643] [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Bamliyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphanza, Mahamonye Mphanza, Mahowa Mwaw Shawa, Dede Tole, Mjobo Bdwambi Jere, Malwalalika Tembo, Maraje Nkhawa, Katonda Manyuny Mahowana, Kapondola Jonwi Mvula, Matchilika Mphanza, Chhongwhano Ngalawa, Chiwere Maimba, Mazlan Jere, Magodonga Mphanza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Madumawe, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndawambi Hara, Matrino Kangwere Nkhowa, Pempani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gwani Mawere, Chingulukani Dimba, Siya Mvula, Ngonga Singa Jere, Mahawe Mphanza, Mwaki Lukhalo, Njombwa Tembo, Adonikwaku Mahanga, etc.

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[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries. 175 [101]

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandom everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace. 177 175 797 [643]

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth fourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. When he listens in court to some great indaba his face is expressionless as granite, with an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had to 693 [692] [273] [276] [645]

over the age of ten had to avoid the hut and its inhabitants altogether. The husband slept either in the boys' dormitory or with the husband of the woman who was looking after his wife. 846 783

This ritual uncleanness extended to any food once it was carried into the hut. Ngoni women used to demonstrate their love for their husbands by stopping cooked food being carried into the hut, and sending it instead by the child who brought it to her husband where the men were gathered at the gate of the kraal. [593]

Ritual cleansing of a hut and its occupants took place in stages. At the time of 'bringing out the child', which I shall shortly describe, the hut itself was made clean again. It was thoroughly swept, and the floor and veranda were smeared with cowdung. Cowdung was used habitually for smearing on floors, prior to polishing them with a smooth stone. But fresh wet cowdung rubbed on the hands was also used for ritual cleansing after some 'dangerous' act such as touching sacred objects or administering the royal medicines. In the case of its use after childbirth it was undoubtedly used in the ritual sense, for the operation was called 'making the hut safe for the husband to sleep in'. The household goods were then put back in their places, anyone could go into the hut, and the husband returned to sleep there, though on a separate mat on his, the right-hand side, of the fireplace. If the child was a first baby, the husband's return to sleep in the hut was delayed, since the senior women stayed on to instruct the young mother how to take care of the baby at night, and especially how to be careful not to smother it as it lay beside her on her mat. [237]

'Coming out of the hut'

The falling of the cord was the signal that the baby was ready to 'come out of the hut' and be presented to the village. Ngoni women used to hasten the falling of the cord by burning a maize cob, and squeezing into the ashes the juice of the 846 851 278

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

851 small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was
[846] applied with a feather to the baby's navel.
[278] When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and
[302] the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then
[515] they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a
[431] basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such
[177] presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come
[554] back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grand-
[603] mother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to
[431] the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's
864 lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (1)

When the boy's voice began to break, and his father or another older man noticed it, the second part of the ritual took place. The father's brother went to a senior man famed in the village as a herbalist and obtained from him several kinds of roots. These were ground and then cooked either in milk or in the cud from a goat's stomach, usually the latter, for the father liked it to be known that he killed a goat for his son. If the mixture was cooked in milk, a fowl was killed, and in either case the boy was given the meat to eat immediately after the mixture to take away the extremely bitter taste. The cooking took place on a small fire by the kraal gate in the presence of the male members of the father's house. The boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the mixture as it was bubbling in the pan and to lick them quickly. He was not expected to show that he found the mixture very bitter as well as hot to touch. At intervals the boy had to jump over the fire, hitting his elbows and knees with the palms of his hands. The more often he did this, the less often did he have to dip in the pan because the mixture soon dried up, but he had to continue dipping and licking till there was no liquid left. The senior men watched intently all through this performance because they believed the mixture not only helped physical growth and muscular strength but would prevent impotence. When this ritual was performed for the heir of a chief, it was followed by a war-dance in the cattle kraal and the boy had to take a second dose of medicine in the kraal surrounded by the warriors. In such a case a bull was killed instead of the customary goat, and the contents of its stomach used for mixing the medicine. The meat was eaten by the boy and his father's relatives.

As in the case of the girls, this boy's ritual was an occasion for asserting the authority of the father and his kin over the boy. For him there was however no separating off into another group after this maturing. He continued to live in the dormitory, herd cattle, and go to school as before.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 561 severed portions. On branches of fresh leaves, brought by the younger herd-boys, were piled the sections of the animal, down to the last bit of intestine, for distribution according to a fixed Ngoni pattern.

231 825 A senior man of the house owning the beast, when all was ready, 'counted' all the parts, that is he named each part, head, horns, tail, feet, joints and internal organs, and each was pointed out to him as being present. The herd-boys stand- [868] ing round learned the names of the organs and the sections of the animal, and heard the names and status of the men to whom the parts were assigned. The herd-boys of the family of the owner were given certain symbolic parts: an ear, an eye and the nose, for hearing, seeing and smelling; parts of an artery and of an intestine as controlling the blood flow and the waste material, and the rectum as ejecting waste; and the foot for walking steadily and fast.

Some of the meat was roasted over a fire, parts like the 252 stomach and intestines were cleaned and boiled, some was [251] dried slowly on a rack over a fire of green wood, and put in fibre bags for keeping. The blood was taken to the head woman of the house owning the herd. She cooked it with the fat round the kidneys till it coagulated and formed a dish, salty and meaty, much liked by the Ngoni, and rather akin to black pudding. The women also took over any spare fat and rendered it down and clarified it to use as [278] unguents.

The young adult who had had six or seven years of 233 herding cattle and had advanced to be a senior herd-boy, 868 had acquired not only certain manual skills such as those just described, but also some knowledge of the anatomy of cattle, some idea of the social attitudes towards cattle and their ownership, and some idea of their economic value to the Ngoni. For certain restricted ritual purposes, a cow in calf had to be killed for sacrifice, and herd-boys saw the foetus removed when the cow was cut up. They were also often present at the birth of calves in the bush, and had to wait

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 273 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

844 If a female child, "You have seen a basket." Then the man comes and sits down on the verandah and makes fire. The old fire in the hut is thrown away. The old woman takes up the new fire and kindles with it a new fire in the hut. The husband goes away to another hut. He does not now cohabit with [842] any of his other wives until his wife, who was confined, is seen again in public.

II. When they know the umbilical cord is going to break, when they set the infant on the knees (legs), they lay it on its side so that when the cord breaks it will fall on one side; for if it breaks and falls on the pubes the child will be impotent, or barren. The umbilical cord they bury on the verandah. That day is the one on which they shave the mother and child. They begin with the infant and they shave the mother. On shaving the infant's head they leave a little hair on the fontanel, and [614] should the infant be of the clan *Maseko*, they also leave a little patch on the back of the head, and 553 then his godmother gives the child a name, saying, "My grandchild's name is so and so." This name it will have until such time as it begins to laugh and notice people, then the father, should he wish, will give the child another name. When it grows up still farther it will give itself a name, saying, "Now I am so and so." When the child becomes a man he will once again discard his old name and take another. And if a person calls him by the old name, he says, "He has named me by that thing the wild bush-pigs unearth while digging with their tusks" [meaning something very old]. When they have finished the shaving, the child's grandmother 854 powders some medicine called *pfundabwe*, this she 318 mixes with castor oil and red clay, and then rubs on 761 the fontanel. This medicine they continually renew. When the infant gets strong and big they stop. The

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

reason they put on this medicine is that they fear the sun lest it strike through the skull. They also take a purgative medicine called *chizuzu*, and pour a decoction in a gourd used for cooking the infant's gruel. The gruel is left off once the child gets strong.

854 278 751

III. Now they prepare to steam the infant. They get the roots of the *Nyalinse* tree and the leaves of the *Chipungayunyu*, and put them in a pot of water, and get four large white pebbles, and put them in the fire, and when they are red hot, lift them out between two pieces of stick, and drop them into the pot, and the steam envelops the infant. They do this because they fear a disease called *Tsempo* and *Mauka*. This done, the floor of the hut is replastered [with dung], and they set fire to everything that was left in the hut—baskets, potsherds, and spoons. The fire in the hollow in the centre of the floor, they rake up on the floor level, and remove the ashes only, but when they come to fasten the mkuzi belt round the infant's waist, the fire is completely extinguished, and rekindled from that of some other hut. Then the husband comes and stands upright near the doorway, and little cuts are made on his leg. They begin with his big toe, and cut four little slashes, and four on his shin, and four on his knee, both sides, and do the same on the other leg, and on his chest are cut two little gashes, and on his back two. Into these cuts is rubbed some medicine for a disease called *Chinyalo*. When they do this they fear, should the man step over the spot on the verandah where the umbilical cord and afterbirth are buried, he might take this disease of the legs (Chinyalo). If the man have another wife it is she who twists the belt made from the bark of the *Mpoza* tree and places it underneath the mat where she and her husband sleep. Next morning

846 854 [824] [751] 846 [753] [824]

societies maintaining officially a conspiracy of silence, the stories were only standard replies by adults to children, and most adults admitted that children pursued these inquiries among themselves and found out what they wanted to know from each other. 864

Naming the child

After coming out of the hut and being presented to its male kin and to the elders of the village as 'the new stranger', the baby was given a name. The choice of a name was usually left to the baby's paternal grandfather. He sometimes gave it his name or his father's name, if a boy, or if a girl, his mother's name or his father's sister's name. There was no ceremony attached to naming. After the matter had been talked over by the men at the kraal gate, the grandfather came to the hut, and called the mother and child out and said, 'His name is so and so.' The personal name was seldom used in ordinary social intercourse, but in spite of this every child was given a personal name, and sometimes had added to it a descriptive name indicating that it had been born face downwards, or born a twin, or born too soon after the previous baby. 559 [551] [895]

At this time of naming, the father, or more generally the paternal grandfather, prepared a 'carrying skin' for the mother to carry the baby in. It really belonged to the baby rather than to the mother, for it was used by the nurse girl to carry the baby, and she had the child in her charge most of the day. The skin was that of a goat or small calf from the herd owned by the house to which the baby's father belonged. The skin was cleaned and scraped and made soft by rubbing in fat, and handed over to the mother with some of the meat for broth, and the rest of the meat was eaten by the males of that house. The gift in time became a cloth and not a skin, as skins for wearing or household use went out of fashion. The cloth when presented however was still called a 'carrying skin' and a goat or a calf from the herd of the 854 [281] [922] [262]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft. Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons, wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of 273
sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their 281
women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and 294
sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The 177
use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni 301
families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One [591]
was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form standardized geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the head 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once 302
was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and [412]
combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FRS Hgami FRS
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The third day is known as *tulia lubugulu*.[1] In the morning more shinore is pounded and added to the mass, which is boiled again to make it lumpy. The process is repeated in the afternoon, and the mass is left for the night.

The fourth day is called *tulia lubumbulu*, the day of mixing. Early in the morning more shinore is pounded and cooked separately. When the mass is boiling well, the shinore is poured into the big pot. Then a girl cooks some *ga lipulu* (bone porridge) while her mother stirs the beer. Later in the afternoon they pour the beer from the big pots into the smaller pots, which are then put on one side. As soon as it is cool enough they taste it, and when it is quite cold they taste again.

The fifth day is *tulia lubumu nsu*, the day of drinking the beer. At early dawn it is tasted again, and after the mass *ga lipulu* has been added it is well stirred. It is now quite strong and is called *nsu*, the ordinary name for beer.

On the sixth day it is still called *nsu* and is good for drinking. On the seventh day it is known as *mimbu* and it is not so palatable; and on the eighth day—in the *ubumbi*[2] stage—it begins to go bad. It is usually consumed by the end of the sixth day; but the women who has made it always pours a little into a small pot, which she hides away and preserves for the benefit of her husband and herself.

3. *Iron Smelting (Chewa).*

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When a man wishes to make a furnace he first consults a doctor (*ching'anga*). The *ching'anga* gets medicine in a stripped maize cob, and instructs a small boy to throw it at a pregnant woman. This woman her to have a miscarriage the same evening. The abortion is buried in a cotton hoop in the wood *mwanda*[3]; but the doctor digs it up at night, mixes it with medicine known as *mbungu* (lit. a child), and buries it in a hole in the ground. The furnace is then made by working the clay into a wall rising above this hole; more *mbungu* is poured on to it, and a fowl is killed and also thrown on to it. If the fowl falls so that its head points to the north, the furnace is no good, and another one must be made the following month in a different place. The fowl is then plucked, roasted whole without being gutted, and eaten with their mates (maize porridge) by the people who have made the furnace. Strict continence must be observed by all the workers during the process of smelting. When the hoes have been made, some are given as compensation to the woman who had the miscarriage, but she is not supposed to know the reason for the gift.

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3. *Implements of War.*

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The *kangwi* carried shields or *ulungungu*, made of cowhide. Down the centre of each *ulungungu* runs a bamboo stick, to the top of which is fastened a mesh or binding made from the fur of the gnoot cat (*mwiri*). The stick is kept in place by cross-pieces of bide known as *mamba*. Each side of the shield outside the *mamba* is called the *ngungu*. Their favourite weapon was

[1] *Ku-pulu*, to get better.
[2] *Ku-bumbi*, to be rotten.
[3] Cf. H. A. Bannerman, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1922, vol. xl, p. 241.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FRS Ngoni FRS
Maravi FR4

N 411
N 714 281
M 411 325 [82] [36]
M 714

Their favorite weapon

the spadate or throwing spear, the shaft of which was made of mondo or mangani or other hard wood. The head is bound to the shaft with copper wire; part of an ox tail serves as a grip; and at the top is a plume of goat's hair known as the chawa. Battle axes were also used. Round his waist the warrior wore a mipupu, or kilt composed of strips of skin of leopard, wild cat, monkey, baboon or sheep—some of them straight, and others plaited and twisted. In lieu of a mipupu, a sporran or chikwa cha ku mate might be worn in front with a similar covering styled chikwa cha ku mbuge behind. These were generally made of serval or other wild cat skins. *Njinini* or gaiters, consisting of strips of goat skin threaded with iron bells also known as njinini, were worn below the knee; and mikidwa or earrings of lead completed the fighting man's attire.

The Achewa also carried battle-axes, but they relied mainly on the bow (uta) and arrow (mpalire). The favourite wood for the bow was mukwa, and the bowstring or mutuge was made from the skin of Sharpe's steinbuck or another small antelope. The barbed head (nabete) of the arrow is bound to the bow (shaft of bamboo reed) by hemp string connected with the sap of the wild fig tree. The fork at the butt end is known as ulwa, and is protected by a binding of hemp string called hemp, which is also the name for the hair of an elephant's tail. Chiefs displayed a battle headdress styled ngwai, consisting of the feathers of the turaco, crested crane VIII, 2) and other birds sewn on to a pad of goat skin. An ukwa, or band of cowrie shells, was frequently worn round the forehead.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XVI

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5. Drying a cow-hide at a funeral. A beast from the herd of the dead man has been killed for the mourners. The skin will be buried on top of the coffin

764
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6. Laun, at the same funeral. The body has been covered and the mourners are sitting round the grave, near the cattle-byre, listening to a sermon by a local preacher of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission

[Facing P. 225]

4: Stanner D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Bayi FR4
Boni FR6

M 7 241 only implement used. Sowing is done after the first rains, about November; the harvest takes place in May to July. Gardens are at varying distances from the villages, depending partly on the soil becoming exhausted after years of cultivation. Boundaries are marked by leaving M 7 [923] a line of uncultivated ground, sowing a line of a different crop, tying knots in the young crops at intervals, ditches, etc. In M [922] starting a new garden, woodland is often taken; the trees are cut down, leaving stumps 3 feet high; the undergrowth is cleared away and burnt, the ashes distributed over the land, which is then hoed, really very superficially; the earth is then made up into little heaps with a central hole in each, after the first rains four or five grains of the cereal (maize, millet) are dropped in each and covered with earth; as the young shoots grow the hole is more and more filled in.

FIG. 8.

With the cereal is planted the seed of peas, beans, pumpkins, the former on coming up then grow up the maize stalks. The seed is last year's product and not specially selected.

M 7 [949] [917] Depredations among crops made by elephant, hippopotamus, large antelope (eland and kudu), pigs and baboons, vary in extent in different districts. Little grass huts are built, raised above the ground like a pile-dwelling, in which watchers are stationed. Fences, sometimes extending for miles, are built. The gardens of the chief are hoed by his slaves or the people of the village. Maize is collected M 7 [25] in the cob, and after the outer coverings have been removed is stored, as in the shadow, millet in the hoed; beans and peas are stored in baskets. Medicine is put on the ground to ensure a good crop, and a piece of stick is sometimes hung up for good luck.

CATTLE, ETC.

M 231 [922] The keeping of cattle is practically restricted to certain tribes living in districts free from tsetse-fly (Angoni, Wankonde); among these people wealth is reckoned by cattle. The milk is little used; the flesh is eaten only when an animal dies. Marks of ownership are made by cutting the ears (Fig. 6). Cattle are kept in open kraals by Angoni, in a compartment of their houses by Wankonde; they are tended by the small boys as a rule. Goats and sheep are kept all over the country. Castration of cattle is a recognised practice (Sujiki).

M 287 Angoni make their shields from cattle skins; their spear handles are covered with goat hair (beard); hair anklets and armlets in dancing costume are made from goat hair. Skins are used as dress to a small extent.

HOUSES.

M 224 A man intimate to the community annual that he is making a hunt by sketching a boy of about ten years in horns, who precedes him and the men from his own village through adjacent villages; at each village the lad has to lie down and

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Maravi FR4
Ngoni FR5

M 283 [534] String is used to make their fishing nets, necklaces, and other headwork. For bow strings tendo achillis is used, also strips of skin, sinews. On their musical instruments ordinary string or gut is used to form the strings.

M 472 Needles made of sharpened bamboo were formerly used, the blunt end being chewed into a pulp and then incorporated with chewed end of the thing.

M 285 Netting is done in the ordinary way with a simple shuttle.

Leather.

M ♀ 281 The skins of their domestic animals—cattle, sheep, goats—and of antelopes and leopards are prized. No fish skins are used. Skins are removed from the animals by a median ventral incision and other incisions along the inner sides of the legs. The Yao leaves the hair on the skin, some Chipeta remove it. The only treatment a skin gets is scraping and drying in the sun, then rubbing with stones and beating till worked soft. This is done by the men. I have only once seen an ornamented skin, that of a sinicuaga from Lake Bangwelo, North-east Rhodesia. Skins are but comparatively little used, occasionally to sit upon. In German territory every chief sits on a leopard skin. They are used of course to cover drums, make bags for carrying a supply of grain, and to make bellows for the metalworker. The skins of small animals are used as purses and tobacco pouches. Among the Angoni and Chipeta they are used as loin-cloths, also to support the baby on its mother's back, and of course to make shields.

M [622]

M ♂ ●(281)

Dyeing.

M 336 There is practically none. The root of a certain tree is soaked with grease to give them a black colour, to be used in making mats with patterns; this process has been learned, I think, from the coast.

At Likoma, the root of the red *ximi* tree is boiled in water and the decoction used for staining, and, I think, strengthening their fishing nets. Dyes are not used for any part of the body.

Painting.

M 342 332 Recently decoration of the outside of their houses has come into fashion, red earth and lime being used to depict men, cattle, antelope, elephants and bicycles. Other merely geometrical designs are made, I think by Mohammedan coast people.

Stone-work.

M 329 No stone implements are used, except stones for grinding snuff, some small pots and snuff. There is a lump of stone at Fort Anderson on which holes have been made for playing the *ohwe* game.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river with more whistling and singing.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

951 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut
and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been
announced, and from that vantage-point she could command
the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to
receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
447 of the hut was another drying platform which was large
enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night
and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On
the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up
on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high
and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[552] do women would have four or five of them bulging with
maize cobs. There were smaller circular moulded bins for
ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three
small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
951 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked
against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
951 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not
be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from
one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were
moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch
children there. There were much smaller mortars for pound-
ing ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in
veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger
millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
951 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
416 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow win-
nowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as
large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

343
417
481
285
415

8. A well-filled grain store

342
415
516
291
301
243

[facing page 41]

9. Winnowing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fascinate a small child. 351 415 [356] [513] [352] [531]

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and young children chased them. 351 [295] [273] [857] [231]

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens', and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work in the gardens was an expedition for young children which they delighted in. 361 311 957

In these village surroundings there were some places forbidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven years old, because they found their fathers there and the hard boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed 958 847 [562]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft. Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons, wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up bundles.

Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by unknown practice.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

482
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342
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28. Learning to carry wood

252
412
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29. Learning to pound

[facing page 145]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

1. Preparing meat for a gall-bladder ceremony. The leader of the bride's party sits on the left with her helper while the meat is cut up by the minister of ceremonies.

2. Bride kneeling on mat outside her husband's mother's hut. Standing behind her are the three women of her party.

[Facing P. 106]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and [231] chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neighbours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 272 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 273 ●285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 649 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 649 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 1-3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mukwenkwena*, pl. *ahwenkwena*. [4] *Ndoma*, pl. *ndoma*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

241 273 476 those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's [465] labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

463 There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no 323 potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neigh- [462] bouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

285 Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when [462] it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

759 Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical [648] services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

611 The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying [591] bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern prac- [583] tice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were [184] incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

/6 cont'd/

417 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which [132] there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

231 /7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [136] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

417 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [285] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [251] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may 343 have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasional- [511] ly open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

/1 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household,
415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or
[51] china crockery.

323 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every
[462] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood.
[808] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol
[415] and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves
[824] of the mbwabwa tree.

385 Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men,
[353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be
[462] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings
[491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often
[843] made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /B/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

/8 cont'd/

285 the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found [482] and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

415 In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat 417 porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. [484] Wooden hemispherical pots, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

419 At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzelia quanzensis or Monotes trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is [531] a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four [524] inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones [526] or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are 352 sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make [543] a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

/8 cont'd/

Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the mulai tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

/9/ V

The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of furnaces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used, and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and halted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle, not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [584] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 591 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, [199] but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [362] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 342 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 356 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require 462 rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a [591] hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 253 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 591 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [349] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 591 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

Women wear their cloth folded across the upper level of the breasts from right to left. Men and women often have two cloths, one over the loins, only the second fastening over the chest.

A menstruating woman also wears a small piece of calico corresponding to a diaper supported by string round the waist.* The same thing is worn after childbirth for six months. Angoni women always wear them.

The Angoni, Chipeta wear their cloth toga-fashion, carrying a fold of cloth on the left arm. *Ex Angoni* chief wears three cloth, blue, white and coloured, the first outside, the last next to the skin.

The material used is now practically everywhere European-made calico, formerly bark cloth only was used by Nyasja, though weaving had been accomplished by Angoni, where skins were and are used as articles of clothing.

There is nothing to distinguish men of various grades, etc. Fashions at the present time is very capricious—some patterned cloth being fashionable one month will have no sale a month later; this is true both of men and of women.

There is no class uniform, and no "costumes" are worn save in dancing (p.).

Men are now seen wearing a piece of calico twisted up on the head in turban form, a custom lately introduced from the coast—the only indigenous head-gear in the sitting chief-cap worn by Angoni widows.

Under the heading of dress must be included the head aprons worn by Yao and Angoni. Among the former the use of this garment is restricted to the women, who in the house sometimes wear nothing else; among the Angoni the children often have them and no other clothing.

Sandals are sometimes made of skin and fastened on the foot with a thong when crossing thorny country.

Among Angoni the wounds only used to be worn; this is a small hard-shelled fruit which was hollowed out and worn just covering the glans penis.

Food, etc.

The staple food throughout the country is either maize or rice, the latter only at various spots on the lake shore where it can be grown. Two food meals per diem are taken, at 9 or 10 a.m. and again at 4 p.m.; each consists of maize porridge made from maize flour or rice flour or boiled rice with some *ndiwo* (relish) to which the salt is added. At odd times the native will eat anything that opportunity offers—a piece of cassava root, a boiled sweet potato, a roasted maize cob, etc.

The maize is made by stirring flour (*ufa*) into boiling water till a stiff paste is formed; this is kept cooking for five minutes and then scraped out with a wooden

* Diaper or *mkoto*: a woman keeps five or six; they are never put away in baskets but always hung up; a woman changes every time she bathes, using two or three per diem; they may be given to a female child to wear, but she then not worn again by a woman.

4: Stanner D-5 (ca. 1905) 1910 FT7 Tan
Marrow: FR9
Ngoni: FR5

Mpoko, a basket-shaped vessel in which the mbiki is cooked (d).

Mkhwi, a small *Mpoko*, always kept by the side of the fire with warm water in it. With this the woman washes her husband after intercourse; she may use the same to wash herself, but more usually goes to the ordinary washing-place, a flowing stream.

Mbili, a dish (e).

Of other vessels may be mentioned a jug used by the Wakonga, the gourd bella of universal use (f), and the large wooden mortar, 2 feet 6 inches high, with a pestle 3-4 inches in diameter, employed by all the tribes for pounding grain.

Winning is practised by the *Angoni* only.

Basketwork.—In former days mats were made of split reeds and baskets of bamboo; now the making of mats from palm-leaves has been learnt from coastal natives, and the Chipeta varieties of basket have been copied by other tribes. The following are the principal varieties of basket in use (Fig. 13):—

Nampan, a small tray, used for flour, beans, etc. (a).

Lidoro, a large tray, used as the *Nampan*.

Mkanga, a circular pattern with a square base, for chewings cube (b).

Tumanda, a circular pattern with a wooden rim and cover, for clothes (c).

Chiwandi, a small watertight basket.

Sindi, a large basket, also watertight, for beer.

FIG. 13.

FIG. 14.

There is little ornamentation of the baskets except of the *tumanda*, the heat-wood edges of which have designs cut and burnt on them. Plaited grass bracelets are made, rough cages for carrying chickens, etc., are made from split bamboo (Fig. 13). A form of basketwork is used to make the *ulolwe* or grain store. Fish traps of very complicated design are also constructed. Gourds of various kinds and sizes take partly the place of baskets.

String.—The bark of the *bwezi* tree is cut off and dried in the sun; it is then rolled between the hand and the thigh into string with no other treatment. The bark of the *tinge* tree is used to make string *ne chinyao*; this tree is planted for that purpose. Rope is also made from the baobab tree. Plaited palm leaves, *nyumbulo*, are used for many purposes, and are stretched across the framework of the bed to support the mat.

1:Barnes X-5 (1946-1949)1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

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645

(405)

PLATE 1. Paramount Chief Paulino Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., standing with a man from the chief's capital. The man points upwards and sings that, because they conquered the Ngoni, the Whites must have come from heaven.

[Frontpiece Facing p. i]

Rhodes 1-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

693
651
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624
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PLATE VI. The clerk of a county Native Court checks the whereabouts of men on the tax register of a village with an important man in the village. Standing are a Native Authority messenger with his, and an Administration messenger. The village headman and some of his people in their background.

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691

PLATE VII. Litigants outside a county Native Court wait for hearings to begin.

[Facing p. 152]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

565 [illegible] [301] chaws struck at the top of the *ishlolo*, and round it they put narrow bands of beads (*intsepepe* and *intsumpe*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion chaws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*umuwanga*) which they got from the Arabs, or *inipete*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft dressed leather (*ishlwalo*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped well over. A long piece of soft leather (*ingunyi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *ingunyi* were fastened small bells made of brass (*ingomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inkosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ngoma* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

565 644 The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their households and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indlunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *indunas*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

357 565 644 In addition to the *induna* in charge of the big house, the royal women and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *ahamzanas* were surrounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*mirthe*), girl companions (*inkwadwani*), nurse girls (*ahwi*) and older women attendants (*apugo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1930's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

292 644 The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

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142
411

1. Chief dressed for war-dance

[facing page 16]
[page 16 is blank]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

291
516
[411]

2. Chief dressed for war-dance with wives

3. Chief and his elders in kraal

[facing page 17]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

252
412
291.

A.T. Proceeding smoke

342.

[facing p. 33]

343
417
481
285
415

8. A well-filled grain store

342
415
516
291
301
243

[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

291
516
534
417
857

10. Young musicians

[facing page 49]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

291
516
534
417

11. Young musicians

[342]

[facing page 64]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

142
302
301
291

12. Chiefs' wives wearing leopard claws

535
291
342

13. Chiefs' wives leading in the dance

[facing page 65]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

after the age of four or five, when they might become aware 867
that intercourse was taking place. From this age, when the 864
Ngoni said 'they will now begin to see things and to ask questions', they went to sleep either with a widowed grandmother or senior helper.

During the 'dark half of the month' and in the rains, most 512
people went to bed soon after dark and little children got a 857
long sleep. When the moon was bright and in dry weather, [132]
the whole village was astir, walking around, dancing, talking, visiting. Little children tagged round with their older 513
sisters or nurse girls, and if they were sleepy were either picked up and carried, or put in the hut to sleep on their mat, provided there was no fire burning into which they could fall. During the day, especially in the hot weather, children dropped off to sleep just where they were, on the veranda, under the platform, or in some other shady spot.

It was just before bedtime, in the grandmother's hut, that [538]
traditional folk-tales were told, round the last flickers of a wood fire. Sometimes a child dropped off to sleep before the story was finished. Someone either took him on her lap, or dumped him on his mat and covered him up.

This acquiring of habits, directed consciously by adults, 867
was designed to give the child increasingly a sense of being 858
part of a community which had certain standards of behaviour. There were, in this training, some prohibitions
which a child was expected to observe as soon as he could 864
walk and talk. The most stringent was on any form of sex play between boys and girls. To avoid any likelihood of this, little boys and girls were early encouraged to form separate play groups. The elders kept an eye particularly on the boys, and if they showed any inquisitiveness in their play about the private parts of a girl playmate, they were beaten and reproved and told: 'If you do this again, I shall tell your father.'

Many little boys and girls up to the age of four or five ran 864
about naked, but in leading Ngoni families they wore a scrap 291

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of cloth hanging in front from a bead or grass waistband. They were all taught before that age, and most stringently after it, to sit correctly. For the little girls, this meant kneeling first and then sitting with the legs tucked on one side. They always smoothed down their scrap of cloth so that their genitals were covered. Little boys often squatted, sitting on their heels. Their correct position however, especially when eating food, was to sit with their legs crossed and the soles of their feet pressed against their thighs, and their cloth or skin apron arranged to cover their genitals.

Any rudeness in speech or action towards parents or elders was corrected at once, and the child was told: 'That is not the Ngoni way.' Studied courtesy included looking down when addressed by an elder, and as we saw in Chapter II, never walking behind a group of elders but passing in front of them, bending slightly forward and murmuring: 'I am before your eyes.'

Play places and playthings

In spite of what appeared like a somewhat restrictive régime, Ngoni children were merry and busy all their waking hours. Occasionally lack of health, or an awkward temperament, produced a child who sat around by himself, or glowered at other children, or was spiteful and vindictive. For the most part their nurse girls and older sisters paid them the attention they demanded, were always ready to provide distractions and amusements, and showed them how to use all that lay around them as playthings.

The places where they played depended on their age and mobility. The youngest children stayed round the hut and inside the fence. Occasionally the nurse girls and older sisters in the afternoons took them to a 'playground' on the outskirts of the village, where the older girls were accustomed to meet and practise dancing, or to thread beads and chatter. When the harvest was in, some of the older children about five and six years old, helped by the nurse girls, made 'play

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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14. Mother and babies

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[facing page 96]

15. Nursemaids with their charges

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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16. Traditional hair style

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17. Girls sitting correctly [facing page 97]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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18. Chiefs' wives

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19. Girls dancing *Ngoma*

[facing page 112]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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20. Making lorries

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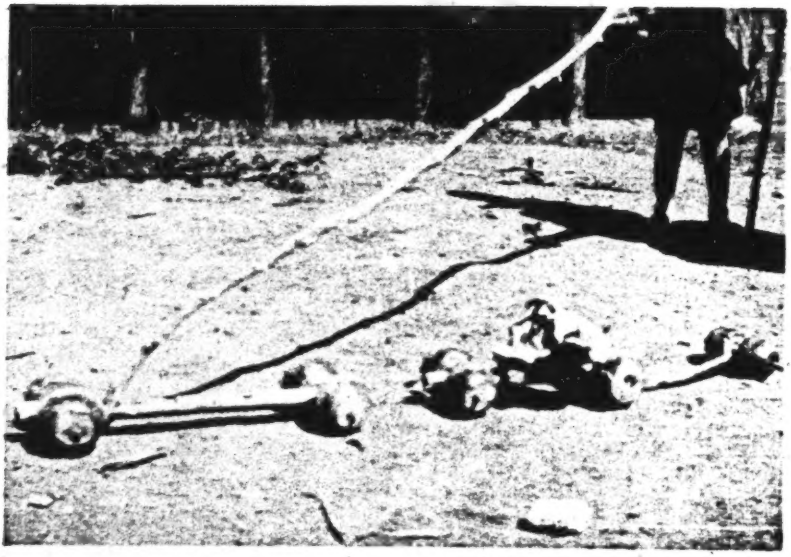

21. Will the wheels work?

[facing page 113]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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22, 23. Herd boys

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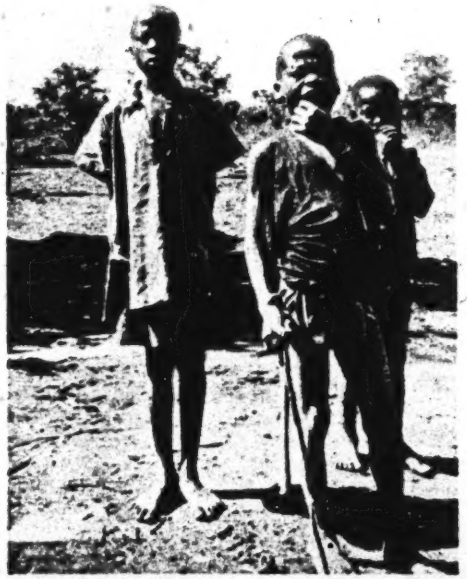

[Facing page 128]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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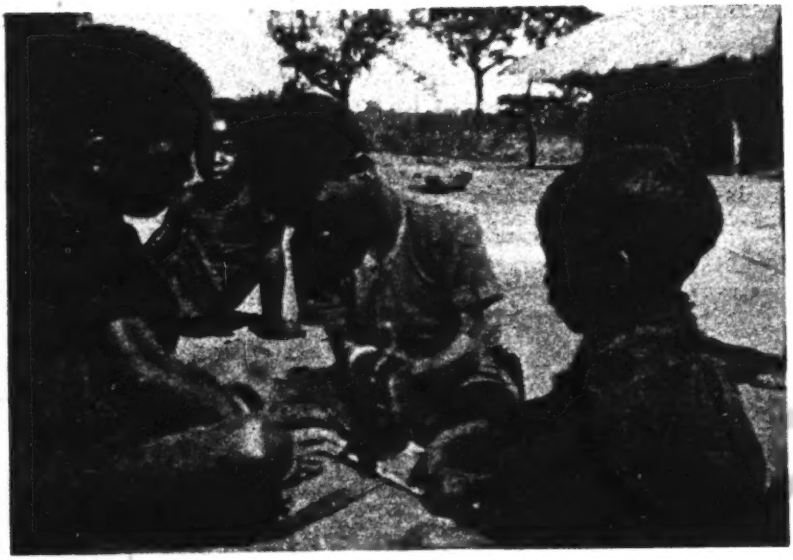

24. Learning to make fire

25. Explaining how to do it

[facing page 129]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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26. Making clay figures

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[facing page 144]

27. Ear piercing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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28. Learning to carry wood

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29. Learning to pound

[facing page 145]

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day
[302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one
[291] fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony,
[516] her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

Many references have been made already to the relation-
577 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife,
602 especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognized by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

Competence in household management, being a success-
577 ful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if
592 she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [554] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. The levirate

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mceha* or *mtoso*. *Mceha* is an Nsenga word meaning a small [192] cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt [291] by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [586] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 291 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, [177] but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [286] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 347 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 356 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require 462 rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a [591] hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 493 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 291 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [343] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 291 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her.

681 In court, when a woman has to pay damages or a fine, she may
593 be able to provide the money from her own resources. If not, she can turn to her husband or to her own kinsfolk. Provided damages for adultery are not involved, her husband, if he is not away working, ought to provide the money and a deliberate refusal to do so would precipitate a major quarrel and the possibility of divorce. If a woman gets into a fight at a party, and has to pay, say, half-a-crown to someone she has hurt, her husband ought to find the money for her. If he refuses to do so though she has no money of her own, the court will say that he no longer loves his wife, and is trying to find an opportunity to divorce her. Indeed, there would be little point in the husband refusing to pay, as those who cannot pay their fines are committed to prison, and he would then lose the services of his wife.

593 A woman can hold property in her own right and a husband honours
421 a well-loved wife by giving her cattle. Gifts that she gets from her own kinsfolk do not pass to her husband, and such things as blankets and mats that she has used, even if her husband bought them, are regarded as her own property. Even the money that her husband gives her to make specific purchases is her own to do as she pleases with, so that a woman may forgo the skirt for which her husband has given her money and instead give it to her sister to buy something else. Husbands do not always like such actions, but they cannot do anything directly to prevent them. One of the ways in which a wife acquires livestock of her own is by buying animals with the money she gets from her husband for clothes. The produce of a wife's wet-season garden, maize, sorghum, millet, root crops, pulses, [291] cucurbits, is in effect held in common by husband and wife, and neither ought to sell any of it without first consulting the other. [586] On divorce the crops are divided between them unless the court decides that one party did not work in the garden, or has deserted the other. The money a woman earns by brewing beer for sale she [465] usually keeps, although some men say that a woman should hand the money over to her husband, lest he find her with it and suspect that she has earned it by prostitution. In practice, most women seem to keep their own earnings and it is not uncommon, where the husband is a drunkard and weak-willed, for his wife to have custody of his money as well. Indeed the simultaneous operation within the husband-wife relationship of structural separation and social co-operation is well demonstrated by the apparently paradoxical situation, of which I saw two instances, in which a man ordered to pay damages to his wife for fighting her had to ask her to hand him over the money so that he could duly hand it back to her.

6. *Mystical links*

593 Symbolic expression of the relationship between man and wife is not greatly developed among the Ngoni, and the mystical bonds

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

I. Preparing meat for a gall-bladder ceremony. The leader of the bride's party sits on the left with her helper while the meat is cut up by the master of ceremonies.

II. Bride kneeling on mat outside her husband's mother's hut. Standing behind her are the three women of her party.

[Facing P. 126]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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III. Anointing the bride's feet with gall. The master of ceremonies rubs gall over the bride, who sits on a mat between a woman of her party and the guide.

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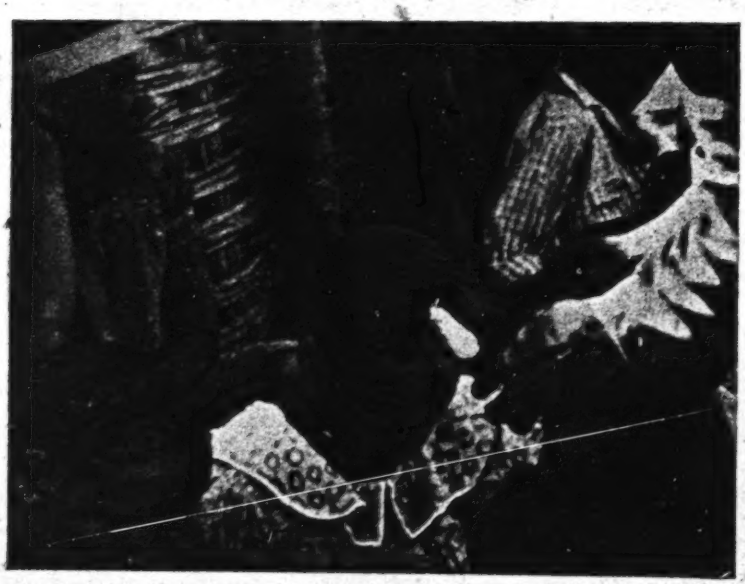

IV. The gall-bladder is safely pinned in the bride's hair. Thus decorated, she will return to her own village.

[Facing p. 127]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIV

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3. Boys crushing ground-nuts. The expressed oil will be used in a bird trap

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4. Boy playing with a toy motor-car made from maize stalks

NGONI

[Facing P.209]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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5. Girls dancing *Citelele* in competition with another village. The girl in the centre has a whistle in her mouth

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6. Young man drumming for a *Jimi Roja* dance at an installation ceremony. This dance, named after an American band leader, is allowed only on important occasions

NGONI

[Facing P. 224]

/9 cont'd/

294 the hunt walks in the middle of the line, with a responsible person posted on each flank. A started animal, if not shot by the guns, usually turns to run parallel to the line of hunters, who hurl spears and knobkerries at it, and send their dogs after it. The chances of escape for a hunted animal are fairly high. Animals are also trapped, usually with a piece of meat tied to the muzzle of a gun. Hunting with nets is sometimes undertaken in the wet season. Rats are caught in small conical traps baited with beans. The rat chews through a piece of string and releases a green stick, thereby strangling itself.

[714] Shields, once the pride of the Ngoni armies, are not carried on hunts and are infrequently seen.

VI

291 [177] It is only the old men who still wear skin garments, and then only as additions to European style clothing. Men are dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, long trousers, cast-off European clothing, or clothes brought back from the army. Often two shirts are worn on top of one another. Women wear a blouse, a skirt tied on a tape, a cloth wrapped round on top of the skirt, and a small cloth tied [854] round their waist. If carrying a baby, the cloth supporting the child is slung over the left and under the right shoulder, and another cloth may be wrapped round the woman and child under her armpits. Dresses are also worn, and sometimes a singlet under the blouse. Shoes are less common for women than for men. Men /10/ wear a [177] variety of European style hats, but women wear only embroidered cloths or berets, or in the case of poorer women, plain bands of cloth.

Children go naked, or may be draped in whatever garment, of whatever size, happens to be available. If the money is there to pay for them, boys are dressed in shorts and shirts, and girls in little dresses.

304 [178] In the old days, every adult had slit ears, but this custom has died out. Women nowadays pierce their ears if they wish, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a small slit made as a

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Maravi FR4
Ngoni FR5
Bemba FQ5

M 301 Necklaces, most commonly for children, are made of a number of little square pieces of hippo ivory strung together, ornamented with geometrical designs.

M 789 Medicine is often carried in a little packet suspended round the neck, as also charms of various kinds. The medicine may be some powdered charred roots or little twigs, leaves, etc., of some tree; these are sometimes now wrapped up in a Y [789] piece of paper on which is written some extract from the Koran (among Mohammedan Yao); this is then sewn in a little piece of calico and adorned with beads and suspended round the neck with a string.

Charms take various forms. Small pieces of wood or, to guard against attack M 301 by lion, teeth are worn. Armlets of the same kind are worn against sickness, and others are worn by Angoni, made of beads to which knives are attached. Bracelets of ivory, plaited grass and elephant tail hairs are also worn.

N 301 Metal and wirework bracelets are commonly worn by Angoni, also twisted wire finger rings and rings of lead and ivory. Heavy brass ankle rings and spiral brass leg and arm rings 6 inches and 8 inches wide are worn by some of the women (Atonga).

B 301 Bracelets cut from the nail of the elephant's foot are worn by Awemba hunters, and little finger rings cut from the scale of the ant-eater are worn as medicine against fever by headmen.

Belts made of wound copper wire are worn round the waists by Wankonde.

M 302 The use of pigments applied to the body is very limited. I have seen stripes of these, white and red, on the faces of young women, boys and dancers, generally after some ceremony. The significance I do not know. Pigments are now obtained M [439] from Indian traders, and I do not know how old the custom is. There is no beautification of face, body, nails, and eyes by pigments. The only application made to the skin is castor and ground-nut oils to keep it soft—no scents are used.

CLOTHING.

M Y N Among tribes of Nyasaland the amount of clothing worn varies very considerably from nothing to European garments.

● 291 Of the large majority, however, including Mafianja people, Yao and Angoni, one [855] may speak generally.

The young children commonly run about naked, or have a strip of cloth covering the pudenda, supported by a string round the waist.

M Y N Among the adult population the amount of clothing depends largely on the affluence of the individual, and those who cannot afford much have little clothing. [556] A man wears a strip of calico supported in front and behind by a string round the waist, a woman a piece of calico 18 inches wide reaching from the middle of the thighs to the umbilicus.

Of the more prosperous, the men wear calico from a little below the knee to the waist, carefully wrapped round the body, and kept in position by some kind of belt; sometimes it is folded across the upper part of the chest or sometimes crossed over in front and two ends tied behind the neck.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Women wear their cloth folded across the upper level of the breasts from right to left. Men and women often have two cloths, one over the loins, only the second fastening over the chest. M Y N 291

A menstruating woman also wears a small piece of calico corresponding to a diaper supported by string round the waist.[1] The same thing is worn after child-birth for six months. Angoni women always wear them. M Y N [841] [846]

The Angoni, Chipeta wear their cloth toga-fashion, carrying a fold of cloth on the left arm. An Angoni chief wears three such, blue, white and coloured, the first outside, the last next to the skin.

The material used is now practically everywhere European-made calico, formerly bark cloth only was used by Nyanja, though weaving had been accomplished by Angoni, where skins were and are used as articles of clothing. M Y N [246]

There is nothing to distinguish men of various grades, etc. Fashion at the present time is very capricious—some patterned cloth being much worn one month will have no sale a month later; this is true both of men and of women.

There is no class uniform, and no "costumes" are worn save in dancing (*q.v.*).

Men are now seen wearing a piece of calico twisted up on the head in turban form, a custom lately introduced from the coast—the only indigenous head-gear is the string skull-cap worn by Angoni widows. N [589]

Under the heading of dress must be included the bead aprons worn by Yao and Angoni. Among the former the use of this garment is restricted to the women, who in the house sometimes wear nothing else; among the Angoni the children often have them and no other clothing.

Sandals are sometimes made of skin and fastened on the feet with a thong when crossing thorny country.

Among Angoni the *mtondo* only used to be worn; this is a small hard-cased fruit which was hollowed out and worn just covering the glans penis. N 291 824

FOOD, ETC.

The staple food throughout the country is either maize or rice, the latter only at various spots on the lake shore where it can be grown. Two fixed meals per diem are taken, at 9 or 10 a.m. and again at 6 p.m.; each consists of *nsima* porridge made from maize flour or rice flour or boiled rice with some *ndiwo* (relish) to which the salt is added. At odd times the native will eat anything that opportunity offers—a piece of cassava root, a boiled sweet potato, a roasted maize cob, etc. M Y 262 [264]

The *nsima* is made by stirring flour (*ufa*) into boiling water till a stiff paste is formed; this is kept cooking for five minutes and then scraped out with a wooden M Y 252

[1] Diaper *ne mthete*: a woman keeps five or six; they are never put away in baskets but always hung up; a woman changes every time she bathes, using two or three per diem; they may be given to a female child to wear, but are then not worn again by a woman.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VI. The clerk of a county Native Court checks the whereabouts of men on the tax register of a village with an important man in the village. Standing are a Native Authority messenger with fez, and an Administrative messenger. The village headman and some of his people sit in the background.

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PLATE VII. Litigants outside a county Native Court wait for hearings to begin.

[Facing p. 152]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 178 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 535 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 301 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well preserved by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in 126 the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom 192 were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used 197 in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to [194] make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

565 302 [301] thorn stuck at the top of the *isibhuta*, and round it they put narrow bands of beads (*intuyuya* and *isincuaye*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion claws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*amasongo*) which they got from the Arabs, 291 or *ixipote*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft 565 dressed leather (*isidwaba*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped [301] well over. A long piece of soft leather (*ingcayi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *ingcayi* [304] were fastened small bells made of brass (*ngomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inhosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ngoma* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

565 The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in 644 these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their households and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indlunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *induna*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

357 In addition to the *induna* in charge of the big house, the royal women 565 and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *ahumuzana* were sur- 644 rounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*micetho*), girl companions (*izidandani*), nurse girls (*alezi*) and older women attendants (*agogo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1930's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

292 The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the 644 clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

clan and for women of leading Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Two of the texts emphasized the distinction conferred on the royal women by special clothing. Cibambo described the use of well-dressed soft skins and of beads and wire, the beads brought with them from the south, the brass wire obtained from the Arabs. In NaNdumbu's text she mentioned cloth bought from the stores. After the Ngoni women gave up wearing soft leather for skirts and the long piece of leather draped from the left shoulder, they used strong cotton cloth of dark blue or black, originally brought by the Arabs and later stocked by the stores. They tied the main cloth under their arms in a draped knot over the breast and on ceremonial occasions they added another fastened on the left shoulder like a plaid. A woman who had been a young girl in the village of Paramount Cikusi, but was not of a leading clan, said that in this village there was a great difference between the royal women and the rest: 'Only the daughters of Cikusi and his big wives could wear dark cloth as the Ngoni do. The others would have been killed if they tried to look like the big women'.

The royal women and the big wives and widows of chiefs and *alumuzana* were treated by all with whom they came in contact with the distinction and respect due to their prestige. They were addressed and thanked by the term *Nkomo*, with the clan name and the honorific prefix added, except where, as in the case of Bambo Manga, a title had been conferred. She was thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*'.[1] *Ukuhlonipa*, and its Nyanja equivalent *kulemekeza*, meaning to honour and to behave in a respectful manner towards senior people and those of superior rank, was an expression constantly used by the Ngoni and by the other peoples in the Ngoni kingdoms. The forms of showing respect were partly verbal; partly in the position adopted, with the eyes cast down and a slight curtsey by the women when facing someone; partly in the tone of voice when speaking; and partly in the deliberate and controlled behaviour noticed by several early travellers in Nyasaland. A particular verbal form of respect practised by the royal women was the use of the *hlonipa* vocabulary. I found this practice surviving only in the Emcisweni area in northern Ngoniland where the Ngoni language was still spoken, but informants said that it had been common to all married women of trans-Zambesi clans in the northern kingdom when they had spoken Ngoni among themselves. The *hlonipa* vocabulary consisted of the substitution of special words, known only to the women, in order to avoid using a word in which the main syllable of a man's name occurred—a man with whom they were connected by marriage or by affinal relationship.[2] Thus Zwangendaba's wives and widows could

[1] *Bambo* (father) was a term of respect used for important senior men.

[2] *Hlonipa* as a form of special vocabulary was widely practised among the Nguni groups in South Africa. Hoernlé, A. W. 'Social Organisation', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, pp. 74, 77.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(*ukuqandisa*). The middle section, the main part of the ceremony, took place in the husband's village while the bridal party was there. In the last part the bride was left in her new home and three ceremonies marked her gradual integration into her new social group. 585

After the number of cattle had been decided upon in the final stage of the betrothal, the initiative was left to the girl's parents to announce the date of the *mtimba*. Eventually a message was sent through the *gogo* house of the girl's village to say that the bridal party would arrive on a certain day. Before the day came, the girl, now addressed as *umlobokazi* (the bride), was called to the *indlunkulu* in her village. There the leading women, her father's mothers, who had called in her father's sisters, gave her final instructions on how to behave in her new home. Ngoni women said that they were told at this time: 'Our child, we are putting you out of our family. We are handing you over to the other people. You were free and now your freedom is over for you are under other people. Where you are going you will meet with many troubles. They will say of you many things which you did not do. It is good to be patient.' During this instruction the girl cried and so did her mother. On the morning of the departure the girl was dressed in freshly prepared skins, her hair was arranged in the *isihlutu* (chignon) to which the gall bladder of a goat was pinned, and the gall bladder of a cow was tied to her elbow. Then, still sobbing and whimpering, and surrounded by her age mates and the female members of her house, she set out for her bridegroom's village, the young men of her village driving a bullock (*mcando*) as a present from the bride's parents to the mother of the bridegroom, in whose herd it was placed. [292 237] [152]

This part of the ceremony, the entry of the bride's party (*ukuqandisa*), was held to be of great importance, since it was the first time the bride's family and friends as a group had met the husband's family. The bride's procession waited by the kraal gate, singing *mtimba* songs, and every now and then a woman of the bride's party, one of her father's sisters, sang the praises of the bride's clan. As the young men driving the bullock entered the kraal, the bridal party joined them and they began to dance in the kraal. 571 585

Now the first overtures were made between the bride's party and the people of the bridegroom's village. The older women of the village approached the older women of the bride's party, greeting them and exchanging, in the Ngoni phrase, 'words which were good and proud and showed the quickness of their tongues'.

After these advances, the men of the village came into the kraal or gathered by the *indlunkulu*. While the bridal party began to sing with their heads bowed, the chief woman from the *indlunkulu* of the bride's village came forward, bending low, and on her knees presented to the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* of the husband's village a basket containing snuff boxes and beads. She made a speech, in which she said, 'Here is [516 431]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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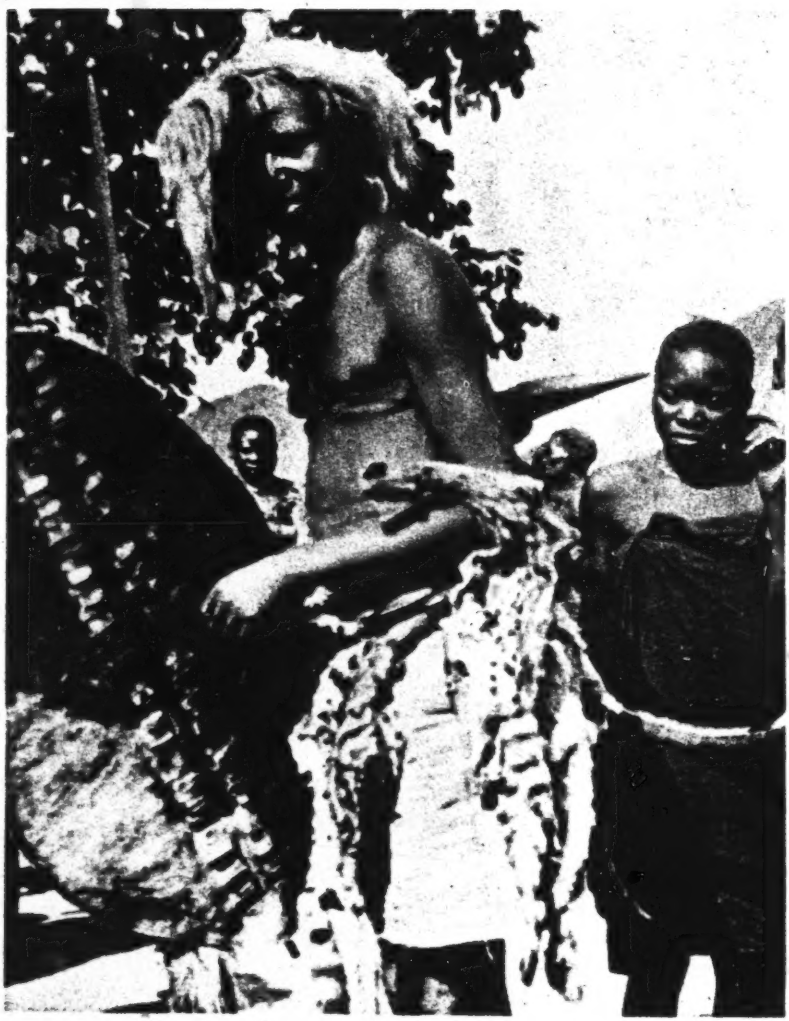

1. Chief dressed for war-dance

[facing page 16]
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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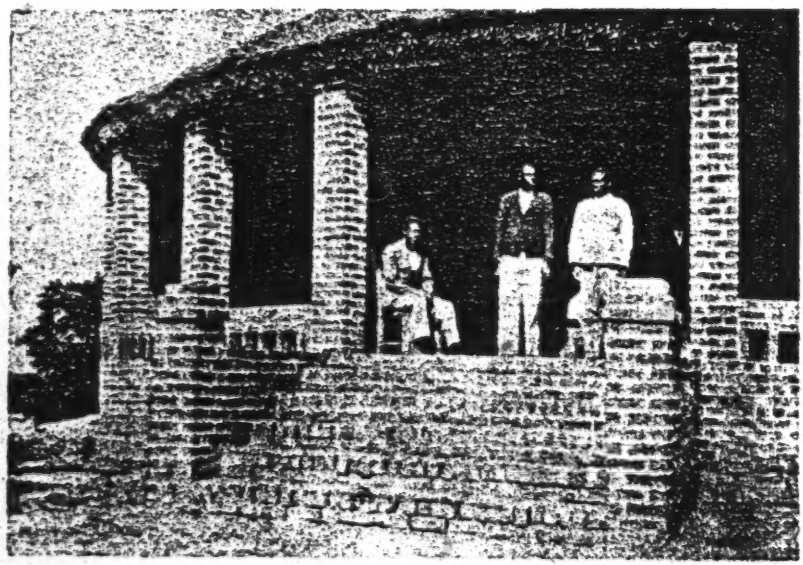
4. Chief waiting to hear cases



5. Chief with his elders in his court-house

[facing page 32]

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
831 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

292 When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
885 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
301 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the pre-marriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

885 In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
556 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
593 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after. It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
[836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'

177 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began
885

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [248] [249] [292] 177

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 233 234

356 in with a smooth round stone. This too was hard work, but every now and then the grandmother, watching and supervising, handed out a lump of clarified fat which quickly brought up a fine polish. The girls were told that this high polish was necessary so that people might sit with pleasure on the floor, and so that all dust and refuse showed up clearly in the morning sweeping of the hut. The floor of the veranda was similarly polished, and, as we saw in Chapter [351] IV, the more important huts had a smeared and polished space all round the front.

In arranging the inside of the hut girls were taught the 353 right places to put the water-jars and other pots, the baskets and mats, and the bundles of cloth and ornaments belonging to the 'house' wrapped in mats or packed neatly in wooden or tin chests. Brass and bead ornaments, and special cloths [301] for use by men and women on ceremonial occasions, were [292] all kept in the huts of leading women. The ornaments worn [768] by such a woman during her lifetime were returned to the 'house' after her death and looked after in the hut of her successor. These possessions and heirlooms were periodically 356 brought out into the sun, and shaken and aired or polished. A housewife was publicly shamed if she did not take care of such property, and people spread stories that she was careless about keeping the wealth of the house in good repair. Girls were reminded of this when they were called to help at such a 'spring cleaning', and told as a warning: 'So-and-so in that village over there, she let the insects eat the cloth of the house. The mildew spoiled the bead-bands and waistcoats. The green rust came on the brass wire. She was shamed when men spoke about it.'

Part of the property of each household was the food stored 251 after harvest or gathered from the bush. Formerly the Ngoni stored their staple cereal in pits dug in the kraal, mudded and fired and covered with a flat rock. The same kind of pit was sometimes made in the side veranda for storing sweet potatoes, but nothing was stored in the kraal.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 to hide his household goods for, says he, "How
695 do we know we shall return from there." And all
791 their beads are taken off. When they see the sun is beginning to rise, every one assembles. And then they begin to pick out some strong young men, saying, "So and so must stay behind, and so and so, they must look after their companions and keep guard over the village, lest the medicine man's children begin to pillage the property of them who do not die." And then they begin to set out to go to the spot the poison is to be drunk at, and they [412] carry in readiness a grain mortar and a pestle (just any mortar), and follow the path in single file, and come to where the witch doctor is, and he begins to arrange them in a line; they do not turn their backs to the sun, the women spread out in one line, the men in another. The place is black with people. [292] The medicine man has his feather head-dress on, and goat's-hair bands are round his wrists. And then some old man gets up to present that for which the medicine is pounded, perhaps a goat, and this is for opening his bag [where he keeps the poison].

III. Thereupon the doctor says, "Give to me the spirit of the dead." Then that old man gets up, and going up to the village chief, tells him "The doctor is seeking the spirit of the dead." And the chief speaks, saying, "Well, and know you not them who have died here?" And then the old man gives him, the doctor, the spirit, saying, "Here so and so, and so and so have died, and it is on their account we summon you." Then the pounder of the poison says, "Give to me the partakers of human flesh who have eaten these ones you name." And then they call up two people, a man and a woman, saying, "Let her of the race of the Hills, and him of such and such a clan come here." And them they thus called come and stand near the mortar. Then

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

about a sick relative. He asked for a preliminary payment in cash from me before he would say anything in front of me, having already received the customary present of fowls from the sick man's relatives. There was an atmosphere of part pantomime, part reluctant performance in front of a stranger whose presence seemed to trouble him more than it did his clients. He wore a python-skin cap with beads dangling from it, and carried the tail of a black cow bound with lead and a small skin bag with the lots in it. At first he sat holding the tail in his hands and sniffing it occasionally. Then he suddenly shook the lots out of the bag—six large beans called *kulumo* and about twenty small round nuts called *mapi*. He put snuff on the top of each bean, sprinkled snuff on the nuts, picked the nuts up in both hands, shook his hands together and threw the nuts on the ground. Some fell near the big beans, others rolled between them. He looked intently at them, then at the group waiting to consult him. 'There is someone who is sick,' he said to them and the group replied '*Siyavuma*' (we agree). They continued to chant *siyavuma* in a low tone over and over again, with an almost mesmeric effect. He meantime went on to describe the sickness, that it was a pain inside the man (the chanting was loud), that it had been on the right side (less response), in the stomach (less response), on the left side (loud response). At intervals he waved the tail in the air and knocked the leaded end on the ground to emphasize the louder response. He did not specify the complaint but advised the people consulting him to go home and kill a goat as a sacrifice to their ancestors, and give the sick man some medicines which he would sell them.

It may have been the mixture of a real consultation with my visit which produced his slightly mountebank performance, and it may also have been his combination of the role of diviner with peddling medicines which the people present for the consultation evidently expected to obtain from him. This aspect of his performance impressed itself on the Ngoni informant who was with me. He was slightly contemptuous throughout, even when the songs were being sung and taken down. He kept on muttering 'This is Nsenga,' and said afterwards as we were going away that this diviner worked only for ordinary people and their sickness, as witnessed by his telling them to sacrifice a goat, and that he would not have been acknowledged by the real Ngoni. He was making comparisons all the time between the 'people of the head' and the diviners of this type, illustrating the Ngoni esteem for the real dreamers, and the slight, sometimes great, contempt for those who combined divining with recommending medicines as remedies.

The contrast between the performance of this diviner and that of the two *izanusi* whom I saw at work in the central kingdom was considerable. My long residence in Mcakhatha and the entrée I had to all that was taking place in connexion with the sickness of Bambo Manga no doubt helped to give confidence to the diviners. The chief and his

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of 273
sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their 281
women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and 294
sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The 177
use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni 301
families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form [531]
standardized geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the bead 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once 302
was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and [412]
combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 The title of regional governor was also awarded by the Paramount Chief to certain of his favoured lieutenants. These promoted lieutenants, with their segments, retained their positions in the residential system unaltered but they were allowed to keep their own captives, a privilege of all regional governors. It seems probable, from incomplete information, that there were about a dozen regional governors of one kind or the other in the Fort Jameson group in 1898.[11] Despite the early date at which some of the regional governors' segments were formed during the migration, they did not expand as rapidly as did the segments led by the chief's queens and lieutenants, and in 1898 they comprised only a small portion of the State. In this respect the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland were organized differently, for there Read writes that the whole country was divided among regional governors, save for a central capital.[12] One of my informants stated that the head of a segment containing more than one village was never known as the lieutenant of his lord but was called, if he were not a kinsman of his lord, by the title regional governor. This is not true to-day, and in view of the large number of present-day commoner villages which claim to have been founded before the conquest, and whose heads are not regional governors, it seems unlikely to have been true earlier. On the other hand, all regional governors to-day are lords of segments containing more than one village, and this may well have been true before 1898 as well.

There were other minor honours similar to the title of regional [554] governor and often awarded to the same people. These were the [301] right to use the royal descent name *jere*, the right to a special praise name *nkhoma*, and the right to wear ox bones as a decoration.[13]

Wiese mentions certain special lieutenants who carried out 645 tasks comparable to those of ministers of State. He describes three 631 officials, one a minister for the interior, apparently responsible for the Paramount Chief's domestic affairs; another a minister of war who was also high priest; and the third a master of ceremonies at national festivals. He says that the ministers carried out these special tasks in addition to their ordinary duties as lieutenants, and gives the names of two of the three, who were the first lieutenants of two major sections.[14] Thus although there was some differen-

[11] See Table VII. The sample used in this table contains more villages founded by regional governors than would occur in a representative sample.

[12] Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[13] Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 479, and 'Geschichte', p. 198.

[14] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70 and 'Geschichte', p. 188. These two men were the first lieutenants of segments 14 and 4.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 178 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 535 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 301 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well preserved by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

126 192 197 [194]

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

539 726 714 301

At the dance the warriors wore their full war-dress. Those who had the head-ring wore a little bunch of black feathers sewn together and attached to a skin and looking like a lion's mane, which came out from under the head-ring on the neck, and they tied a strip of other skin over their eyes. Those who had not the head-ring had their heads completely covered and at the side of their face they put rosettes of feather ends so that the head-dress should not hide their sight. The head-dress was of birds' black feathers, especially ravens; they took out the quills so that they were soft and they sewed them together on cowhide, the man's head resting on the skin. On the body and arms they wore a white skin of goat-hair, or a white belt with long hair, and twisted strips of skin reaching to the knee at the loins. The belts were made from the skins of white goats which had long hair and they stitched them. Round the loins they had whole skins of kids both front and back. Some tied *izinkonde*, hides made to look like a tail, at the back. In their ears they had *isicaso*, earrings of ivory, or sometimes of bone or wood. Truly they looked as terrifying as wild beasts when they stood up. So they ornamented themselves. The oldest of the men stuck a tall feather of a crane in the skin strip above the eyes.

539 726 535

When the dance had begun the women rose to help the men. The Paramount's wives and wives of the men of standing wore the claws of lion and leopard on the top of their hair combed up on the crown and round the [illegible] along with other beads. Ordinary women also wore beads on their heads and necks. All looked very well. Both men and women sang the dance songs and danced. The men spread out in a circle round the edge of the space; the women faced the men at a distance or perhaps they put them in the middle of the ring. All sang, the women commencing, the men joining in or responding. The women had little sticks or reeds in their hands shooting high up. Others came forward and went into the middle of the circle or half circle, and went singing and dancing and shaking their sticks and thrusting out their necks.

539 726

When the dance was over the herald told the army to scatter to their villages until the provisions and snuff had been prepared, and on such and such a day they were to gather again in the Paramount's village. On the day of the gathering of the army they brought their dress and food, the sections dressing as they were in the kraal. The herald called again, '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayihete*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, fall in.' Then all the sections stood up, each by itself but now joined together in close order, shields and spears raised above them. Then the chief *induna* or someone else who had been chosen told them the enemy stockade which it was proposed to attack, and the plan of campaign. When the sections had heard, they began to march out of the kraal one by one.

The whole day the sections had been kept in the kraal, no one was allowed to go to a house and say good-bye. Those outside were not allowed to greet the warriors inside. Children were kept out of the way, lest they should greet their fathers as they went out to war. If a man was greeted as he went out to war, the fear was that he would not come back but would die there.

When the army went out in the evening near sunset it slept near the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

brothers of the dead Paramount who acted as regents. Thus Ngwana was cremated in Ulosi before crossing the Zambesi, and Mputa was cremated in the river Lichiningo in Songea in Tanganyika. This was confirmed by an informant of the Gama clan who were for a time under the central Ngoni Paramount in Songea and later were allied with the northern Ngoni. He said 'We killed Mputa, the *inkosi*, when fighting, and his people burned him because it was their custom in burying to burn.' 184 643 766

An old woman who came from Portuguese territory to see me in the central kingdom said that when Zintambira I died the Portuguese made them bury him 'in a box'. The onlookers in Mcakatha at the time of my interview with the old woman said 'Yes, they were not allowed to burn him.' [648]

The central Ngoni leaders referred often to the ritual significance of the cremation of their Paramount, followed by the washing of the ashes into the stream 'to strengthen the land'. On my first arrival in the central kingdom I was questioned closely by several of the big *izinduna* and *ahumuzana* about the practice of cremation in England. They alleged that, under the influence of the local mission, the Paramount Gomani II had said that he wished to be buried in a coffin with Christian burial rites. They were much concerned about this, because of the effect on the strength and status of his successor and on the country as a whole. 'If he is not burned his children will not be honoured and will only be as *ahumuzana*. Is it right that another tribe, the English, should come and change our customs?' Great relief was expressed when I told them that Christians were cremated in England with full Christian ritual, and also when I told them that the ashes of one of the early Scottish missionaries in northern Ngoniland had been brought back by his widow to lie there. [797] [648]

The following account of the funeral of Cikusi was given to Rattray: 643

'When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them 'the clouds have fallen today'. They do this because they fear, 'if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death'. Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head until it all glitters, and then take the 766 [203] [301]

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when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung. 631 644

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingcwembe*, or big platter of the *inhosihazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *nhlanzi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inhosihazi* called for an *ingcwembe* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njolomole Nzunga I in the central kingdom

¶ Old Njolomole had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361 351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked *nsima* and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [574]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these cloths and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njolomole excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njolomole was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibambo

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¶ Today Ngoni women are not easily recognized because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isihlutu*. The oil was *ipehla*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [301] ● 302 [177]

565 302 thorn stuck at the top of the *isihlutu*, and round it they put narrow bands [301] of beads (*intuyeya* and *isincwayo*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion claws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*amasongo*) which they got from the Arabs, 291 or *izipote*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft 565 dressed leather (*isidwaba*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped [301] well over. A long piece of soft leather (*ingcayi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *ingcayi* [304] were fastened small bells made of brass (*mgomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inkosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ngoma* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

565 The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in 644 these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their households and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indlunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *induna*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

357 In addition to the *induna* in charge of the big house, the royal women 565 and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *alumuzana* were sur- 644 rounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*micetho*), girl companions (*izidandani*), nurse girls (*alezi*) and older women attendants (*agogo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1930's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

292 The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the 644 clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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8. A well-filled grain store

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[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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12. Chiefs' wives wearing leopard claws

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13. Chiefs' wives leading in the dance

[facing page 65]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 901
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 855
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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16. Traditional hair style

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17. Girls sitting correctly [facing page 97]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when asked questions. They took their school work seriously in order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be transferred at their marriage would be greater according to whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daughters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. They and their companions, according to their growth and strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water, grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household, where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores. As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time with the young children, or washing themselves and their clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rubbing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classificatory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage. The friend was always from another compound and of a leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream together. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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18. Chiefs' wives

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[facing page 112]

19. Girls dancing *Ngomu*

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
831 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
292 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
885 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often
301 trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the premarriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
885 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
556 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after.
593 It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
[836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to
177 say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'
885 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

356 in with a smooth round stone. This too was hard work, but every now and then the grandmother, watching and supervising, handed out a lump of clarified fat which quickly brought up a fine polish. The girls were told that this high polish was necessary so that people might sit with pleasure on the floor, and so that all dust and refuse showed up clearly in the morning sweeping of the hut. The floor of the veranda was similarly polished, and, as we saw in Chapter [351] IV, the more important huts had a smeared and polished space all round the front.

353 In arranging the inside of the hut girls were taught the right places to put the water-jars and other pots, the baskets and mats, and the bundles of cloth and ornaments belonging to the 'house' wrapped in mats or packed neatly in wooden or tin chests. Brass and bead ornaments, and special cloths [301] for use by men and women on ceremonial occasions, were [292] all kept in the huts of leading women. The ornaments worn [768] by such a woman during her lifetime were returned to the 'house' after her death and looked after in the hut of her successor. These possessions and heirlooms were periodically 356 brought out into the sun, and shaken and aired or polished. A housewife was publicly shamed if she did not take care of such property, and people spread stories that she was careless about keeping the wealth of the house in good repair. Girls were reminded of this when they were called to help at such a 'spring cleaning', and told as a warning: 'So-and-so in that village over there, she let the insects eat the cloth of the house. The mildew spoiled the bead-bands and waistcoats. The green rust came on the brass wire. She was shamed when men spoke about it.'

251 Part of the property of each household was the food stored after harvest or gathered from the bush. Formerly the Ngoni stored their staple cereal in pits dug in the kraal, mudded and fired and covered with a flat rock. The same kind of pit was sometimes made in the side veranda for storing sweet potatoes, but nothing was stored in the kraal.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of 273
sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their 281
women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and 294
sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The 177
use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni 301 ●
families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One [531]
was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form standardized geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the bead 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once 302
was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and [412]
combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] beadbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They 301 were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain 356 standards in their homes and in their persons, which were 515 held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This 182 emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government [177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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III. Anointing the bride's feet with gall. The master of ceremonies rubs gall over the bride, who sits on a mat between a woman of her party and the guide.

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IV. The gall-bladder is safely pinned in the bride's hair. Thus decorated, she will return to her own village.

[Facing P. 127]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

846 she rises early to go and fasten the belt on the infant. Should the man not have a second wife, the one to put the belt on the child is his (the man's) sister. The man does not immediately see the face of his child; some day these same old women make him take it in his arms [hands]. The father then makes them a present of beads.

854 IV. When they notice the infant is beginning to grow his bottom teeth and to smile at people, the 852 elders tell the father that, "Now you must bring ● 301 the child into the village." The child's grandmother ties up beforehand some *lizango*. She begins with a little strip of calico, and rolls it round and round the medicine charm and along with a piece of string; then takes a little piece of skin and sews it over this, and takes some beads and sews them on the skin. The mother cooks some relish beforehand. That evening the husband and wife sleep together (this is "to bring the child into the village.") She cuts off the old belt the child is wearing, and puts on the new one with the *lizango* medicine in it, some more of the medicine, similarly tied up, is placed under the infant's head. In the morning she takes the relish to present to the two old women, and then takes the *lizango* she had placed under the child's head and ties it round his neck, and then takes a belt of beads, interspersed [189] with little wooden charms, and adorns the child. When in time the *lizango* belt breaks, they do not look for it or replace it. In the event of an infant dying before he has been "brought into the village," 766 they bury it in some open glade, near the edge of some stream, its funeral is attended by women only. Should a man tramp over the spot where the child [153] is buried, he "has taken" the disease known as *nyesi*. Such a grave is known as *nsenye*.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

585 young wife is made cook beer, and on the day it is drunk the spleens are burned and the bead girdle [301] unravelled, and the girl will make bracelets of it.

VIII

MARRIAGE (*Chipeta*)

584 I. WHEN a girl and a man love one another, they make each other presents in secret, and when this has gone on for some time, they say, "But let these things fly away on the wind now and be heard by people." Then the man goes and tells the elders of his village, saying, "Go and ask for me at so and so's. I would live with them, for I am miserable (here)." Then some of the elders go there to ask for him, saying, "Here we have seen a (girl's) basket, and we would remain with you, for where we are we are unhappy." Then the headman replies, "First of all you must return, when we have asked the child if she consents you shall hear again." Then the deputation go off home. The man calls his children, he sees the one who is almost a woman, and asks her, saying, "So and so have come and say they want you to stay with them." And the child answers, "Well, what can I say, words which you may speak I obey." And they from the man's village return again, saying, "We have come about that proposal which we mentioned yesterday; we are most anxious for what we asked." Then the chief says, "Let the man come, he shall live here, I do not refuse." And they go back home and tell the man, saying, "We

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304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
[301] beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
[304] cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkholosa grass. These marks
[302] are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period
of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both
men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
[531] is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent
mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nsenga
[619] tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks.
When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature
shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held
aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and
skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimen-
tal dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen
worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a
single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the
stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys
524 of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out
of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie
stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in
diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long,
terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction,
made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed
along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes,
with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes
scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys con-
sists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao
Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

The Angoni men collect little bunches of hair together and bind them with grass so that they stick up all over the head or are restricted to the front part of the scalp where, when they get long, they hang down over the face. Fancy hair shaving is never seen among the women except those recently from the coast. There is no particular sex difference in methods of "doing the hair"; the coiffure is not altered after marriage and no wigs are used, neither are any colours used to adorn the hair. Ornaments worn in the hair are few, occasionally some bead-work by young girls or a feather by boys, and more especially Angoni. Combs, ornaments with bead-work are found. N 302 N 301

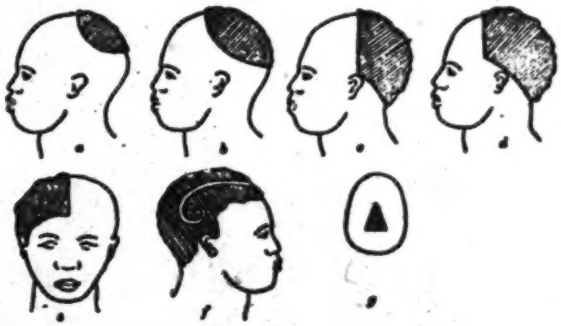

FIG. 7.

(*a*) Chipeta, "Tumbo"; (*b*) Angoni ♂; (*c*) Atonga ♀; (*d*) Mdanja and Mashinga ♀ "Mbalibo"; (*e*) A'mna who has attended one Malivo and must attend another in a few days; (*f*) Fanciful shaving; (*g*) New-born child.

The amount of hair on the face is very variable, and the treatment of it equally so. As a rule there is little, if any. Epilation is commonly practised and a strong growth of hair is shaved. On the other hand beards, etc., of considerable size are seen sometimes, and these are usually not trimmed. The longest beard I measured was 38 cm, from the chin to tip. It was kept rolled up. M 142 302

The Atonga seem to have more hair on face than other tribes, their moustaches resembling those seen on Japanese. M [171]

Body.—Beads are worn by nearly every woman, either at the neck or round the wrist or the waist. M 301

A string of large blue beads is most commonly worn round the neck by girls and women after *Isyago*. At initiation ceremonies ropes of small blue beads are sometimes worn. Those worn round the body are single strings of beads of various kinds. They are not always worn, and the wearing I think is discontinued during menstruation. M [241]

Bead aprons are found. Beads round wrists and ankles are worn in simple strings. Dancing boys sometimes wear a bead necklace, otherwise beads are never seen on males.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Maravi FR4
Ngoni FR5
Bemba FQ5

M 301 Necklaces, most commonly for children, are made of a number of little square pieces of hippo ivory strung together, ornamented with geometrical designs.

M 789 Medicine is often carried in a little packet suspended round the neck, as also charms of various kinds. The medicine may be some powdered charred roots or little twigs, leaves, etc., of some tree; these are sometimes now wrapped up in a Y [789] piece of paper on which is written some extract from the Koran (among Mohammedan Yao); this is then sewn in a little piece of calico and adorned with beads and suspended round the neck with a string.

Charms take various forms. Small pieces of wood or, to guard against attack M 301 by lion, teeth are worn. Armlets of the same kind are worn against sickness, and others are worn by Angoni, made of beads to which knives are attached. Bracelets of ivory, plaited grass and elephant tail hairs are also worn.

N 301 Metal and wirework bracelets are commonly worn by Angoni, also twisted wire finger rings and rings of lead and ivory. Heavy brass ankle rings and spiral brass leg and arm rings 6 inches and 8 inches wide are worn by some of the women (Atonga).

B 301 Bracelets cut from the nail of the elephant's foot are worn by Awemba hunters, and little finger rings cut from the scale of the ant-eater are worn as medicine against fever by headmen.

Belts made of wound copper wire are worn round the waists by Wankonde.

M 302 The use of pigments applied to the body is very limited. I have seen stripes of these, white and red, on the faces of young women, boys and dancers, generally M [439] after some ceremony. The significance I do not know. Pigments are now obtained from Indian traders, and I do not know how old the custom is. There is no beautification of face, body, nails, and eyes by pigments. The only application made to the skin is castor and ground-nut oils to keep it soft—no scents are used.

CLOTHING.

M Y N Among tribes of Nyasaland the amount of clothing worn varies very considerably from nothing to European garments.

291 Of the large majority, however, including Maffanja people, Yao and Angoni, one [855] may speak generally.

The young children commonly run about naked, or have a strip of cloth covering the pudenda, supported by a string round the waist.

M Y N Among the adult population the amount of clothing depends largely on the affluence of the individual, and those who cannot afford much have little clothing. [556] A man wears a strip of calico supported in front and behind by a string round the waist, a woman a piece of calico 18 inches wide reaching from the middle of the thighs to the umbilicus.

Of the more prosperous, the men wear calico from a little below the knee to the waist, carefully wrapped round the body, and kept in position by some kind of belt; sometimes it is folded across the upper part of the chest or sometimes crossed over in front and two ends tied behind the neck.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuzo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyéne*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *zi zi*, *ozi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph; when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it
766 round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors [887] come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre and the flames go roaring up. They place the child [and heir] where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields, and chant their war songs . . .

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry . . ., they burn on a fire on one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse is also consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut [302] roofs belonging to the chief are removed. Next morning all the headmen shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands.

Additional details and slight variations were supplied by Habuya Dube, an old man who was official praiser of Paramount Gomani II. He was also at the funeral.

¶ After some time Cikusi began to be ill and of that same illness he died. And we danced *ligube* for one month, and over a hundred beasts were killed. For a whole week [1] he was in the house, and then soon he began to smell because he was decaying. The grave-diggers, they of the Ngoso clan, burned the fat of the cattle and roasted it on the fire, doing it as if to prevent the smell. And they made him hold a cup of beer in his hand. On a certain day we lifted him up and went with him to the water. Then

[1] Compare the previous account which gave four days between death and cremation. At Bumbo Mange's death it was three days.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Chief Mtwalo II in the northern kingdom. Two texts are by former big wives of leading men. NyaNsangu was the former big wife of a grandson of Zwangendaba, a member of the royal clan but not a chief, though he owned many villages. NaNdumbu was the former big wife of the head of the Nzunga clan in the central kingdom. The last text by Cibambo gives details of the clothes worn by royal women and leading women in pre-European days, some of which were still in use in the 1930's. 565 644 631

Life of the Royal Women
by Manga Maseko

daughter of Mputa, former Paramount of the central kingdom

159 565

¶ Formerly I was just staying for I did not work. I had many slaves and their work was especially to thread beads. Up to today I have not worked except to cook. Our hair was anointed with the fat of cows and of milk. Our food was milk and we drank it in a wooden cup. We were getting cloth when they sold slaves to the Arabs. For honouring each other, the big men were telling the youths: 'You should honour the big people that the country may be rich.' Only the big women were dancing *ngoma*, *mindo* and *ligubo*. If a man married the child of a chief, he gave many cattle, and the poor man could not marry the child of a chief. 631 644 [302] [262]

When NaMlangeni was alive she was a well-known chief and was greatly honoured. When speaking a case, they called her that she might judge. When people went to war and captured slaves and cattle they were giving them to her, and she divided them. For thanking her they said: '*Zaithwa Mai*.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Margaret Jere

granddaughter of Mtwalo I, daughter of Johanne Jere in the northern kingdom

¶ When I was a child I was not allowed to go out quickly in the sun, and when crawling I had to stay in the house. I was very light coloured. The *nalezi* (nurse girl) took me to my mother, UNsulazi Nzima, to be suckled at special times. I slept in the house of Magodise Moyo, my grandmother, who was the widow of Chief Mtwalo. The *isidandani* (attendant) also slept there. My grandmother and others, the *manina* (senior women), were telling me how to behave. A special *isidandani* living in Magodise's house was told by my grandmother to speak specially to me when I had reached puberty. This *isidandani* could speak to me about anything. When nearing marriage a woman was chosen, Hlamseya Nzima, and sent to reveal to me how I was to live in my married state. The sisters of my father, Tinzira and Sayeya Jere, also came and spoke to me at the time of my marriage. Hlamseya Nzima was sent by my grandmother to examine me (for virginity) before marriage. I was allowed to play with those children who lived in the same section of the village and who were known to my mother and grandmother. The *isidandani* did all the work but sometimes I used to pound and fetch water, but not too hard and just for pleasure.

When strangers came, I came and saluted them and then went out of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 565 631 644 the house. If my father came to my mother's house, I would go out, but if he sent for me I would return and he would talk to me and play with me. We learned how to behave well, and were rebuked if we behaved badly. My father would beat a child for not behaving well. My father did not allow his children to be spoiled by being treated differently from others. He said: 'They are all my children.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Mdingase Nsangu

widow of Chinombo Jere, grandson of Zwangendaba in the northern kingdom

565 631 644 [302] ¶ The *amakosikazi* were not working. During the day they kept dressing their hair, both the young women and the old. The old women no longer kept their *isihlutu*, or high chignon, but wore the *umxoco*, or long curls. For the *umxoco* the hair was cut short and not allowed to grow very long. Instead of dressing it upwards they took a blade of grass and kept it pressed down after oil and scent were applied. Their other work was to go to the river and wash.

They also drank beer and some gruel, and afterwards danced *ngoma* in the house where beer was brewed. The men and chief also joined in the *ngoma* and the women were responding to the singing. They began to drink in the morning until the afternoon, but not in the evening. Other people went on drinking until evening, and even some of the *amakosikazi* who were *izidli* (gluttonous) but the rest were sleeping or resting.

When drinking in the house the chief always sat by the right-hand doorpost, and the big *inkosikazi* by the left-hand post. They sat near the door to draw breath easily because there were many people inside. The beer-pot being set halfway between the door and the hearth-stones in the centre, a man was chosen to pour the beer in the gourds for drinking. He was *umtele wocwala*, the beer pourer, and was often the village *induna* or one who was favoured by the chief. When the gourds were full he told the chief, and the chief told him to distribute them. Sometimes there were four or even six for the different classes in the house. They sat in order, the *inkosi* with the *izinduna* and *amadoda*, and the *inkosikazi* with the other wives of the chief and the wives of the *izinduna* and *amadoda*. The chief and the *inkosikazi* kept on inviting the common people to come and drink. [576] Such invited people thanked the person at the beginning and at the end, others joining him. The *inkosikazi* or other wives of the chief were thanked '*Nkomo*'.

The *amakosikazi* never worked at all, but the lesser wives worked, and pounded grain and fetched firewood. These were the ones who had not yet got attendants in their houses. All the chief *amakosikazi* had attendants who performed all the work of the house. The *amakosikazi* often sat in the verandah or outside under the platform of branches supported by posts. [562] There they ate their food which was *ilambazi* and *umnjinji*, thick gruel of millet; *izinkwa ze nyauti*, bulrush millet ground to a paste; or *izinkobe*, whole grains of maize boiled and pounded. The meat was eaten as a feast on the *egcekeni*, the smeared place in front of the house, and all the chief's wives joined in. A mat was spread for the big *amakosikazi* where they sat

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 565 631 644

when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingcwembe*, or big platter of the *inhosihazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *nhlanzi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inhosihazi* called for an *ingcwembe* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njolomole Nzunga I in the central kingdom

¶ Old Njolomole had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361 351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked *nsima* and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [574]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these cloths and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njolomole excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njolomole was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibambo

565 302 [177]

¶ Today Ngoni women are not easily recognized because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isihlutu*. The oil was *ipehla*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [301]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

565 302 thorn stuck at the top of the *isihlutu*, and round it they put narrow bands [301] of beads (*intuyeya* and *isincwayo*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion claws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*amasongo*) which they got from the Arabs, 291 or *izipote*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft 565 dressed leather (*isidwaba*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped [301] well over. A long piece of soft leather (*ingcayi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *ingcayi* [304] were fastened small bells made of brass (*mgomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inkosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ngoma* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

565 The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in 644 these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their households and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indlunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *induna*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

357 In addition to the *induna* in charge of the big house, the royal women 565 and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *abumuzana* were sur- 644 rounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*micetho*), girl companions (*izidandani*), nurse girls (*alezi*) and older women attendants (*agogo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1930's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

292 The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the 644 clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 too closely because of the still bitter feeling against Europeans for having caused the Paramount's death. It was quite clear, however, that since this essential step in the recognition of an ancestral spirit had been omitted at the time of his death, it was considered important to make good the omission, and the 'opening' of the grave appeared as the logical occasion.

765 In Mcakhatha village I witnessed a ritual second shaving for a man of the Nzunga clan, a son of the former chief, Njolomole I. This man 769 had been absent from the village for many years, having left as a young man still living in the *laweni*, and his death in the south was reported by letter from a fellow villager to his relatives in the village. When the letter was received, a diviner was consulted and he advised a sacrifice to the spirits. The first ritual shaving of all members of the Nzunga clan and their affines took place as it would have done on the day after burial if he had died in the village, and a beast was killed and the meat offered to the spirits and ritually eaten. The women of the Nzunga clan and the wives and widows of Nzunga men put on *xitambo* or mourning caps. Six months later the diviner was consulted again, and a day was fixed for the second shaving 'to bring back the spirit'. The spirits of the Nzunga clan were addressed, the beast selected for the sacrifice urinated, the spirits 'agreed', and the shaving of the Nzunga clan members and [302] their affines took place; this time the whole head was shaved whereas the first shaving was only a small patch on the temple. The men were shaved by the kraal, the women near the hut of the dead man's mother which was uninhabited. The women who were relatives or affines of the deceased took off their *xitambo* and unravelled the threads of which the caps were made, collecting in front of each a little heap of hair and thread. Then one of the leading women got up and said '*Tiyeni* (Let us go)', and the women went in procession to the stream, each carrying her little handful of hair and thread. As they passed they pulled a handful of dry grass from the roof of the hut by which they had been sitting to start their fires. By the stream each of the former mourners, eleven in all, made a fire of grass and dried leaves lit from a bunch of smouldering grass carried by one of them, put on it the threads and hair and tended the fire until only ashes were left. All these eleven women stood erect behind their fires facing the stream, except when bending down to fan the flames. When the fires died down each woman swept the ashes into the stream with her hand and splashed water on the site of the fire until no trace was left, lifting overhanging branches to leave a free passage for the ashes on to the water. The leading widow, a descendant of NaNdumbu, the famous woman diviner of Mputa's day, took a look round to see if all traces of the fires had gone, said 'We have finished', and led the way to the washing pool where all the women washed their clothes and their bodies. Meantime the men had been to wash in the stream on the other side of the village and had also burned their hair

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 When the beer was ready, Lopati took from Bambo Manga's hut the gourd cup (another of the ritual objects kept there), filled it with beer and offered it to the spirit of NaQwana, and left it at the right side of the hut where the corpse had been set upright before the burial. Cups of beer from the other houses who were brewing were also put in the hut and drunk during the night by the old women who had slept there continuously since the death of Bambo Manga in order to guard her spirit. The next morning the *ligubo* (war-dance) was danced by the grave at the edge of the kraal. When the time came for shaving, the men [302] were shaved, first a small lock as at the first shaving, and then the whole head. The women were shaved over the whole head and cut the strings of their *xitambo* and unravelled the threads. Ritual washing at the stream and burning of the hair and threads took place as described earlier, but in this case the *nseso* from the beast killed at the death of Bambo Manga was burned on the same fires. Part of the *nseso* had been put round her neck for the burial, but part had been hung at the back of the hut, and this was now taken down and divided up to be burned.

In the final part of the ceremony the men danced *ligubo* in the courtyard of Bambo Manga's hut, while the old women danced *umsindo* at her grave. All this went on for four days as long as the beer lasted, and the way was then clear for bringing back the spirit. The spirit had been 'guarded' in the hut where the old women slept, lest if it were empty the spirit might depart. The spirit was there, but not quite there, and could not be addressed as an ancestral spirit until the final 'bringing back'.

After the second shaving the leading men of the village had a new hut built in which Ciabwe Maseko, the daughter of Cikusi and older sister of Paramount Gomani I, was installed as guardian of the spirit of Bambo Manga. They bought new baskets, cups and a fire-stick, and destroyed the old ones. After the diviner had been consulted and had appointed a day for the sacrifice, a beast was killed and the meat offered to the spirit of Bambo Manga in the new hut in the new baskets. A sheep was killed at the same time and the meat of both was eaten by the men and boys.

We have now seen the process by which the living descendants and kin of a dead person recognized the spirit of that person as an ancestral spirit. This, as we saw, was no automatic process following on death. Ceremonies had to be undertaken and rituals performed which, through successive stages, brought the spirit of the dead into such relationship with the living that they could offer sacrifices and call on its name in the naming of the ancestors in the cult. These were acts performed by the living for the dead to cause the spirit to be settled in a place it knew and guarded by someone held in respect, and the living community hoped the spirit was therefore content and happy and ready to be approached and addressed as an ancestral spirit.

851 small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was
[846] applied with a feather to the baby's navel.
[278] When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and
[302] the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then
[515] they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a
[431] basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for
[177] pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come
[554] back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grand-
[603] mother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to
[431] the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's
864 lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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12. Chiefs' wives wearing leopard claws

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13. Chiefs' wives leading in the dance

[facing page 65]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 901
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 855
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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14. Mother and babies

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[facing page 96]

15. Nursemaids with their charges

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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16. Traditional hair style

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17. Girls sitting correctly [facing page 97]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when 561
asked questions. They took their school work seriously in 872
order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent 565
ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be
transferred at their marriage would be greater according to [583]
whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or
even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daugh- 561
ters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls 857
continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. 592
They and their companions, according to their growth and 512
strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water,
grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household,
where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family
only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores.
As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time
with the young children, or washing themselves and their
clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rub- [302]
bing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass [301]
or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head
bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more
amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' 572
circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they
always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classifica-
tory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this
friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about
her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the
other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage.
The friend was always from another compound and of a
leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and
necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream to-
gether. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were
married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a
violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about
these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic 881
and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards 171
authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past 177
in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasa- 561
land had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded 641
up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior 561
herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at [702]
irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, [464]
during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they 885
were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the [302]
hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to [836]
sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives [591]
in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's [583]
family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of 273
sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their 281
women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and 294
sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The 177
use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni 301
families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One [531]
was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form standardized geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the bead 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once 302
was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and [412]
combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] beadbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear 301 the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took 356 an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain 515 standards in their homes and in their persons, which were 182 held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government [177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day
[302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one
[291] fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony,
[516] her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

Many references have been made already to the relation-
577 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife,
602 especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognized by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

Competence in household management, being a success-
577 ful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if
592 she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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III. Anointing the bride's feet with gall. The master of ceremonies rubs gall over the bride, who sits on a mat between a woman of her party and the guide.

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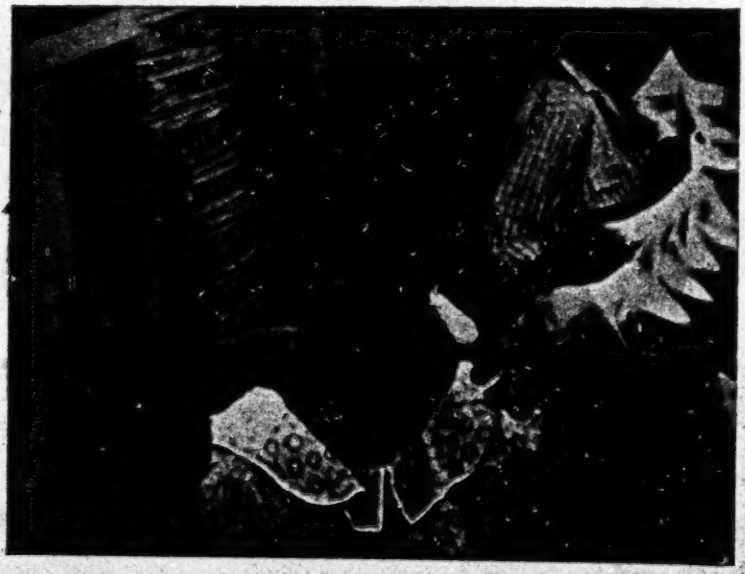

IV. The gall-bladder is safely pinned in the bride's hair. Thus decorated, she will return to her own village.

[Facing P. 127]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

765 commands silence, saying, "You have all met to-
273 gether here, look well to what I say. We are a people in affliction, let no one stir up discord; he who has adultery in his heart let him not commit it here, but at his own village." When it is dawn, some more beer, [called] the "bather of the eyes," is brought out. When the sun begins to get hot, all the chief mourners assemble, and a pot of beer, called the "shaving beer," is produced, and some
[300] is poured into a potsherd and used like water (for shaving), that the chief mourners may use it for shaving a small patch from each person's head, and when this is done, one shaves his companion. The womenfolk shave at the hut of the deceased. The widows alone shave their heads somewhere in the bush, and remove the "red" head-bands, and put on new ones, smeared with oil, and go to the water to bathe. Should there still be some beer remaining they again pass the night dancing, that it may be quickly finished, so that the villagers may resume cohabitation with their wives. The widows no longer go to the bush to lament, and they are privileged to commit adultery, provided they remove the head-bands.

V. When they have passed another month, they then begin to hurry on the women, saying, "Now you must make haste with the malt." This beer is that for "bringing back the spirit," and for "knocking down the deceased's hut." When it is
765 ready they put it in a new hut that has been built beside the one the man died in. The elders then meet together in the hut, and one speaks as follows [to the spirit], "This is your new abode, these children you must guard from harm, and not, when they are walking, cause to fall over a snag; should you wish to ask for anything send the (harmless) *mshawa* snake, or the lizard, or the chameleon, and

6:Rattray E.G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

thrown away the day she comes out of the *tsimba* hut.) 881

II. On the seventh day, before dawn, one of the old women rises and makes a shrill noise with her tongue, then old matrons only collect and go with the girl to the stream. Should the maiden formerly have been of an insolent nature, she is tied up in a bundle of grass and thrown into the water. The old women warm themselves over a fire on the bank. When the sun gets hot, she is taken out, and set on the bank, and they commence to dance and pull her about, and reprove her, saying, "You there, listen; I sent you to go and draw water for me, and you refused. You said, 'I am not a slave.' But could you have come to the water here to-day? She who has brought you here, is not she that very old creature?" Then she is given all sorts of advice. When they have finished they shave her head and pubes, and rub her with oil and adorn her with beads. Then the old woman who is head of the ceremony takes her up on her back, and as they go they sing— [302]

"Wrinkles, mother, wrinkles,
I was at my own home, and never a wrinkle,
I came among the Angoni, [539]
I saw wrinkles, [533]
Wrinkles, O!
Things like this all fall on me.
Maiden cluck like an old sitting hen,
How can I cluck, I am only a young bird?
Cluck."

When they come with her to her mother's house, they sing—

"Tumbling about the things in her mother's hut.
In the hut that is no longer hers."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 431 porridge for them and it is refused, and they spear goats for them and they eat. Next day they go home. They of the girl's village tell them, saying, "You will hear from us." Now, if the malt for the beer be in readiness, they do not sleep many [273] days, but if not, they let a moon pass. On the day on which the beer is strained they go and call the bodyguard of young warriors, and they come along with the husband (to be) to drink the beer. The man who is to marry the girl they go and hide away in a hut on the edge of the village along with his betrothed, and the beer for them will be drawn in a little pot.

585 III. Now every one comes together at the village court and bring goats. The betrothed sits on a [302] mat. Her grandmother shaves her head, leaving a round patch of hair on the crown. When she has finished shaving her one of the men from the man's [231] village steps out and begins to kill some goats. Should a goat not die immediately it is beaten. Then the goats are skinned, and they take a spleen and let drops fall from it on the head of the girl, and then inflate all the spleens. They take the fat from the belly, and spread it in the sun to dry. Towards evening they take the girl and go with her to the *Kaka* hut, and there they take a frothy medicine, called *chitundu*, and the girl bathes with it, and her little watchman bathes also, and he (the child) takes the spleens and the fat, the inflated spleens are fastened on the girl's head and the fat over her shoulders and under her arms. The little child, when he has finished tying them on, is beaten by the men from the man's village (playfully). Then one of the village elders gets up and speaks, saying, "There you have your mother, we give her you to-day; she is subject to no disease, her illnesses consist of occasional headaches. Should she

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
[301] beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
[304] Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
[302] cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkholosa grass. These marks are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
[531] is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nsenga
[619] tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks. When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimental dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

524 Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long, terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction, made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes, with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys consists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao Ngoni FR5
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The Angoni men collect little bunches of hair together and bind them with grass so that they stick up all over the head or are restricted to the front part of the scalp where, when they get long, they hang down over the face. Fancy hair shaving is never seen among the women except those recently from the coast. There is no particular sex difference in methods of "doing the hair"; the coiffure is not altered after marriage and no wigs are used, neither are any colours used to adorn the hair. Ornaments worn in the hair are few, occasionally some bead-work by young girls or a feather by boys, and more especially Angoni. Combs, ornaments with bead-work are found. N 302 N 301

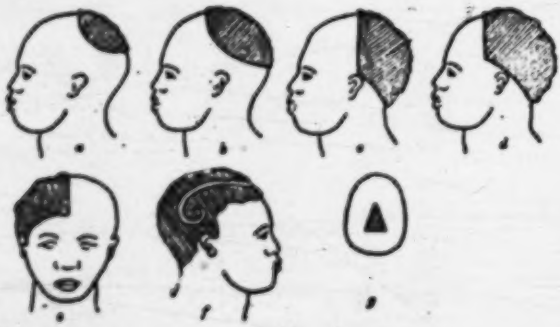

FIG. 7.

(*a*) Chipeta, "Tsumba"; (*b*) Angoni ♂; (*c*) Atonga ♀; (*d*) Makanja and Machinga ♀ "Mdoliso"; (*e*) A'man who has attended one Malivo and must attend another in a few days; (*f*) Fanciful shaving; (*g*) New-born child.

The amount of hair on the face is very variable, and the treatment of it equally so. As a rule there is little, if any. Epilation is commonly practised and a strong growth of hair is shaved. On the other hand beards, etc., of considerable size are seen sometimes, and these are usually not trimmed. The longest beard I measured was 28 cm. from the chin to tip. It was kept rolled up. M 142 302

The Atonga seem to have more hair on face than other tribes, their moustaches resembling those seen on Japanese. M [171]

Body.—Beads are worn by nearly every woman, either at the neck or round the wrist or the waist. M 301

A string of large blue beads is most commonly worn round the neck by girls and women after *Isyaya*. At initiation ceremonies ropes of small blue beads are sometimes worn. These worn round the body are single strings of beads of various kinds. They are not always worn, and the wearing I think is discontinued during menstruation. M [141]

Bead aprons are found. Beads round wrists and ankles are worn in simple strings. Dancing boys sometimes wear a bead necklace, otherwise beads are never seen on males.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

565 302 thorn stuck at the top of the *isihlutu*, and round it they put narrow bands [301] of beads (*intuyeya* and *isincwaye*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion claws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*amasongo*) which they got from the Arabs, 291 or *ixipote*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft 565 dressed leather (*isidwaba*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped [301] well over. A long piece of soft leather (*ingcayi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *ingcayi* [304] were fastened small bells made of brass (*mgomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inkosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ngoma* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

565 The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their house- 644 holds and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indlunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *induna*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

357 In addition to the *induna* in charge of the big house, the royal women and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *alumuzana* were sur- 565 rounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were 644 known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*micetho*), girl companions (*izidandani*), nurse girls (*alezi*) and older women attendants (*agogo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1930's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

292 The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the 644 clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 836 565 emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

Many of the *umsindo* songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni [533] history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

852 The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes 304 practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and [727] annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambesi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

561 After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested 857 in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance *ngoma* in a neighbouring village.

857 In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the *ngoma* dance 535 played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

then meant running out of the compound to the freedom of the village. At that time young children might behave outrageously and be punished for it, but they were not held accountable. The nurse girls and the mother, or some other adult, was blamed for letting the child grow up with such an uncontrolled temper or appetite or tongue. Once children were recognized as having passed the young child stage, that is when they had their second teeth, they themselves were held accountable for their behaviour and punished more severely, even though parents were also blamed for careless upbringing. The social sanctions of rebuke and ridicule, which began to operate in the later years of young childhood to only a limited extent, were now seen in their full force, made use of by adults, and still more effectively by the children's own age-mates. The fear of estrangement, of social ostracism as the penalty for failing to conform to the required manners and ways of living, had increasing force as the children grew older. As little children they were buttressed and protected by adults in their childish quarrels with, and moods and attitudes towards, other children. As boys in the dormitory and as girls in the girls' circle they had no longer such protection, and the result was that they became increasingly sensitive to the opinion of their peers. Professor Wilson in her study of Nyakusa age-villages, has called this social awareness the quality known as 'being good company'—getting on well with their contemporaries.

It was at this stage, at the beginning of the children's newly-found independence, that the ear-piercing ceremony took place. In contrast with the neighbouring peoples, the Ngoni had no facial or body markings, and it was the pierced ears which showed they were true Ngoni. In the days of warfare, captives, especially boys and men, were forcibly made to have their ears pierced, and hence a number of men in the Ngoni kingdoms who were not of Ngoni clans were found with pierced ears. Sometimes their children went to their parents and said, 'We want to be made Ngoni now.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

852 Children of Ngoni families, as also these others, chose their
304 own time to have their ears pierced, though sometimes their father or father's sister or father's mother reminded them that it was about time. It was nearly always soon after the second teeth had come, and children who delayed having it done were taunted by their fellows: 'You, are you afraid, my age-mate? See my ears already have bone in them.' This
[237] was a reference to the round plugs of bone inserted when the hole was large enough. A bit of thread was put in at first, then a small bit of grass, then a fine reed, and finally a bone plug. Ear piercing was always done in the cold weather so that the lobe of the ear would heal quickly. It was carried out by a leading woman of one of the Ngoni families, who watched the children to see how they took it. They knew it was a test of courage, and however much they were afraid it would hurt,
[152] they stood like little statues during the operation, with a face as set and expressionless as when they were being beaten.

Accountability for individual behaviour was one aspect of
866 the responsibility which Ngoni adults now began to demand
868 from children. Another aspect was the performance of their allotted tasks. The responsibility for cattle herding was in a sense a corporate responsibility of all the boys whose fathers owned cattle. The older herd-boys had in fact to answer for
[233] the condition of the cattle they brought back every evening to their owners. They passed on, however, a number of small duties, such as care of the calves, sheep and goats, to the younger boys, who in turn were held responsible by the older boys for performing these duties. The boys' world, centred in the dormitory, recognized grades of responsibility from which no one escaped.

Another facet of responsibility which was at a later stage
868 remarked on often by Ngoni adults, was seen in children's
[517] choice of leisure-time occupations, according to their individual manual and intellectual and artistic capacities. They stopped playing childish games and began instead to develope their skills in making things from local materials.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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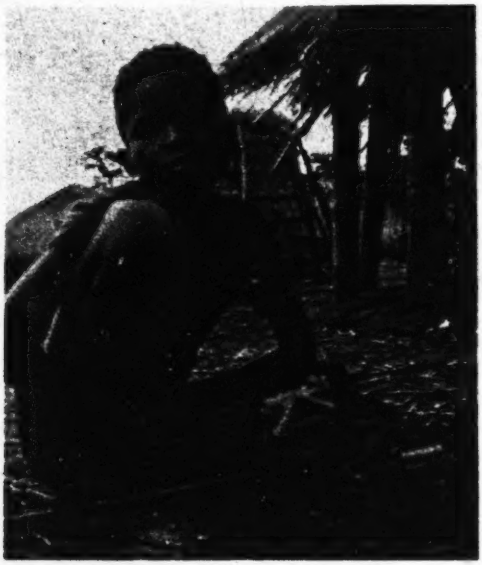

26. Making clay figures

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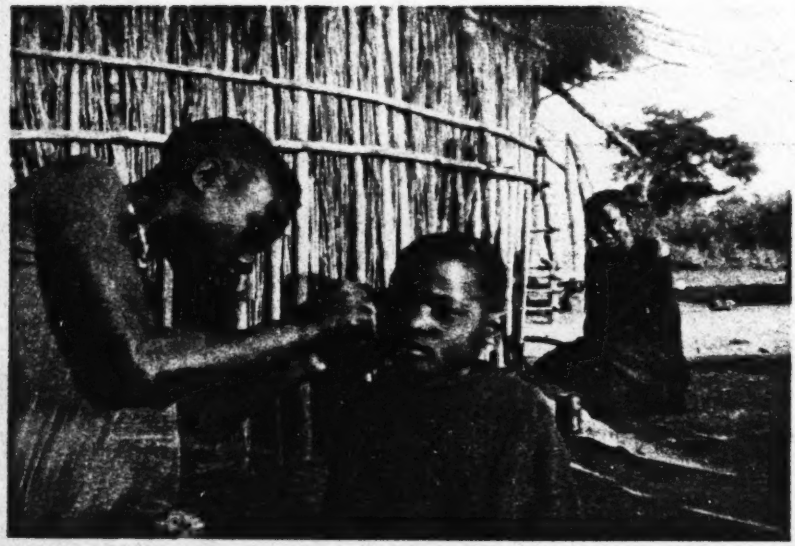

[facing page 144]

27. Ear piercing

Finally, on the *tsiku la kumwa*, after they have taken away *njobu's* five mats, they bring back the boy *anamwali* from the *liunde* to the *mzinda*, each boy carrying a mat. They dance to the drums without *vingwe*, and the women make them small presents (*masupo*). Then they put the *masecke* rattles on the boy *anamwali* and their *aphungu*, who dance till their friends and relations have twice given them *masupo*. Then the youths who were initiated during the preceding year put on the *masecke* and dance till they also have earned *masupo* from their friends and relations. M 881 575 535 431

Then the older ones come and dance again, and receive *masupo* from the women. Finally, all the men and boys join in dancing the *chisamba*, after which they proceed to the *liunde*, where they form a chain, each one grasping the waist of the one in front, the *anamwali* in the middle. Thus they return to the *mzinda*, singing, "*Ndawala mkhoma kuliyede*" (It is good to run about early in the morning), and dance till the women *supa* them. After another retreat to the *liunde*, they return carrying sticks. Armed with these, they go round to every house for presents of beer, beads, etc., picking up en route anything they see lying about, and demanding ransom from the owners. On the morning following the *tsiku la kumwa*, the boys precede the girls to the house of the headman, and each boy receives from his *phungu* the new name which he will henceforth carry through life. During the next two nights, the boys sleep again in the *besalo* hut with their *aphungu*; and for three days they may not see their mothers, nor talk to anyone except their *aphungu* and each other, unless a man or woman first gives them a small present. The *aphungu* similarly may not address men older than themselves. On the third evening, the *aphungu* take each boy to his mother, and tell her, "This is your son; his name is now so-and-so." The boy is told that this is his mother's house, and that he must not go to his father's bed, nor take anything in the absence of his parents, nor ask for anything that he is not given. This exhortation concluded, the mother presents the *aphungu* with a fowl apiece, and they and the boy are free to do as they will. 881 575 431 [535] M [553] M

No form of circumcision is practised either by the Achewa or the Angoni. N [304]

4. *Forbidden and enjoined unions* (*Chewa*).

The Achewa are matrilineal and matrilocal. Grandfather and cousin marriage were formerly in vogue; and every eldest son was obliged first to marry a daughter of his mother's eldest brother, if there was one. After having done this he could choose his other wives himself. Even now this cousin marriage is the common practice, though its non-observance results no longer in a case stated before the chief. A man might marry his father's father's wives, his son's son's wives or his son's daughter, but not his daughter's daughter; nowadays, such cases are rare. M 611 591 M 582

It was formerly deemed incestuous to marry anyone of the same clan, even though of a different tribe, but not to marry anyone of a different clan with the same tabu. This custom, though still favoured by the older men, is now falling into disuse. Incest was sometimes practised to increase the effect of unlawful medicine; but the perpetrator was suspected of witchcraft and, when detected, was always punished by death. It is still considered a serious M [614] M [835] [754]

We have also to recognize that the wider connotation of the word is in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction of that name.

III. NGONI SOCIETY AS A CULTURAL UNIT. It is evident that the field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong centralized political organization. This society differs radically from that of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state', that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created social structure the principles of centralization and rank were dominant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of systematized law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, political, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history,

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hamlets.

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *inkosi* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'tribal

178 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard
829 the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form-
[183] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state,
[177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship
[182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior
648 in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were
[161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[304] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-
[186] piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapele. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere: born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1868/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 643

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Mulowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mackera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

/9 cont'd/

294 the hunt walks in the middle of the line, with a responsible person posted on each flank. A started animal, if not shot by the guns, usually turns to run parallel to the line of hunters, who hurl spears and knobkerries at it, and send their dogs after it. The chances of escape for a hunted animal are fairly high. Animals are also trapped, usually with a piece of meat tied to the muzzle of a gun. Hunting with nets is sometimes undertaken in the wet season. Rats are caught in small conical traps baited with beans. The rat chews through a piece of string and releases a green stick, thereby strangling itself.

[714] Shields, once the pride of the Ngoni armies, are not carried on hunts and are infrequently seen.

VI

294 [177] It is only the old men who still wear skin garments, and then only as additions to European style clothing. Men are dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, long trousers, cast-off European clothing, or clothes brought back from the army. Often two shirts are worn on top of one another. Women wear a blouse, a skirt tied on a tape, a cloth wrapped round on top of the skirt, and a small cloth tied [854] round their waist. If carrying a baby, the cloth supporting the child is slung over the left and under the right shoulder, and another cloth may be wrapped round the woman and child under her armpits. Dresses are also worn, and sometimes a singlet under the blouse. Shoes are less common for women than for men. Men /10/ wear a [177] variety of European style hats, but women wear only embroidered cloths or berets, or in the case of poorer women, plain bands of cloth.

Children go naked, or may be draped in whatever garment, of whatever size, happens to be available. If the money is there to pay for them, boys are dressed in shorts and shirts, and girls in little dresses.

304 [178] In the old days, every adult had slit ears, but this custom has died out. Women nowadays pierce their ears if they wish, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a small slit made as a

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
301 beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
324 cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkholosa grass. These marks
302 are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period
of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both
men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
531 is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent
mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nsenga
619 tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks.
When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature
shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held
aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and
skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimen-
tal dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen
worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a
single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the
stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys
524 of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out
of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie
stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in
diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long,
terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction,
made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed
along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes,
with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes
scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys con-
sists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These events made the inclusion of Mpezeni's country in the British colonial empire highly likely. The way in which this would come about was still not obvious, nor had it yet been decided who should control the economic resources of the area. It was the struggle for economic control which in the end decided the political issue. Here again Wiese played a prominent part. 175 648

3. *Concession hunters*

From 1885, if not before, Wiese lived in Ngoni country and among the neighbouring tribes as a trader.[27] His wife, who lived with him part of the time in Mpezeni's country, was Doña Romana, a black Portuguese lady who owned some hundreds of slaves. Wiese's commercial objectives can be inferred from the conversation he had with Sharpe on this matter in May 1890, when he mentioned that he employed over two hundred and fifty of his wife's slaves as elephant-hunters, and that he was planning to employ two thousand men in trading expeditions to the Luapula, Garanganze and other distant places. He was also at that time planning to make war on a certain Cewa chief.[28] 175 439

According to Wiese's own account, he gained a number of concessions from chiefs and he was granted in 1887 various mining rights by the Portuguese Government in the territory to the south of Mpezeni. On 15 November 1886 Mpezeni orally granted him a concession for ninety-nine years and, Wiese claimed, this agreement was ratified in writing on 14 April 1891. Mpezeni, described as 'Paramount Chief of the Angoni (Zulus) and Sovereign Ruler over Maravia and Western Nyassaland', granted Wiese a concession in 'one part' of his country some 6,700 square miles in extent and reaching to within twelve miles of the Zambezi near Chicoa. In return for exclusive mineral, timber, water, railway and other rights, Wiese agreed to pay Mpezeni £200 annually and 1 per cent of his profits. Mpezeni reserved the rights of sovereignty over his people and the land, water and timber necessary to his subjects were guaranteed.[29] [31]

A few months before this written concession was drawn up, Bowler and Rankin, representing the comprehensively named Upper and Lower Zambezi Navigation, Exploration, Trading, Land-acquiring and Colonization Company, Limited, arrived in

[27] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86, says that Wiese visited Mpezeni in 1881. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 71, in another tentative chronology, follows him, although there is no mention of this visit in the body of Poole's book. Wiese himself appears not to mention any date earlier than 1885. See 4a.

[28] 67, fo. 139; 12, fo. 285.

[29] 32, pp. 17-18.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers, The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[127] 178 361 648

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfinsi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[128] [134] [311] [231]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared. [241] [177]

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[129] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[130] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers 161 [131] [311]

[127] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78.
[128] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[129] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 3 (26 February 1898), p. 1.
[130] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

161 such as Sharpe, Thomson and Deare, and with my own information based on village histories. Combining this with the lowest estimate of population, we arrive at a population density of 100 persons to the square mile, while the highest estimate implies a density of 375. Highly unreliable as these figures are, it is clear that the density of population was considerably greater before the conquest than it is now, when it averages about 68 persons to the square mile. Even the present-day figure is nearly three times the density which the land can sustain in perpetuity.

This dense population was concentrated in large villages. 361 Angus estimated that there were at least a thousand huts in Loan- 162 geni, while Deare estimated that there were sixteen hundred. Read states that it was over three miles across, while Genthe says that Ngoni villages were about five times the size of the average Cewa village. From the top of a mountain, Deare saw eleven villages all about the same size as Loangeni.[161] Thus it seems that there were several villages with populations of the order of three thousand. If Deare and Johnston are right in their estimates of tribal population the majority of the people lived in these big villages.

Yet by September 1898 the only villages left in Mpezeni's country were a few to the east of Fort Young. All the rest had been destroyed by troops, and their former inhabitants were said to be 'still timid' and living in scattered groups in grass shelters.[162] The large pre-conquest settlements were particularly vulnerable to attack by troops armed with guns and intent on burning, the more so because there were no defensive preparations at all. Glave wrote in 1894 that the Ngoni 'have no stockaded village, such protection they deem unnecessary as no enemy can be strong enough to attack them'.[163]

The large villages and the high density of population were appropriate only to a victorious military society, relying for at least part of its subsistence on raided crops and beasts produced outside its borders and for the rest on the maximum exploitation of the land [727] inside them. When its enemies had been plundered and its own [167] lands exhausted, it moved on. We can infer from Angus and from Sharpe, who wrote of 'entirely open' country,[164] that within the 178 settled area most of the cultivable land was in use at the same time. 311 Yet in many parts of the Fort Jameson area the soil is now exhausted after five years under maize and must be left for twenty-five years

[161] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 11 May; Read, 'Tradition', p. 475, f.n. 2; Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1.
[162] Selby, memorandum dated 10 March 1901.
[163] Bk, fn. 329.
[164] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyasa', p. 745. For Angus, see pp. 102*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to recover under bush fallow. The long-term carrying capacity of the land before the conquest cannot have been much greater than its present average value of 25 persons to the square mile.[165] Thus it is certain that in pre-conquest times the Ngoni were settled at a density even more in excess of the critical value than it is now, despite alienation. There cannot have been much cultivable land in reserve and the State was exhausting the wealth of its own soil as well as drawing on the resources of its neighbours. Thus even if the large villages had not been burnt, the same number of people could not for long have continued to live in them practising subsistence agriculture. A reduction in the density of population necessarily involved under this economy a reduction in the size of villages, for Ngoni do not like to live more than an hour's walk from their gardens. As it was, the villages were burnt, many Ngoni of Cewa origin left Ngoniland, and much of the more densely settled land, carrying up to 140 persons to the square mile, was alienated to Europeans within six years of the war.[166] The arrangement of persons over the land and the activities they carried on were both dramatically altered by the European conquest. It is, therefore, not surprising that the old society was so drastically changed at the same time. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as we shall see, the forms of grouping of the past have influenced the forms of the new society.

In brief, the old political system was a system of segments, the new one is a system of villages and counties. The county segment links the two systems, but there is no function in the new order for segments embracing several counties or for those that embrace only part of a county. Within the village, the segmentary processes still go on, but at this level of organization we are dealing with kinship rather than politics. When a segment grows beyond the bounds of a single village, it begins to fade away, and we are left with a network of ties which link villages with one another but which do not define mutually exclusive groups as existed in pre-conquest times. The uncertainty about how counties should be divided internally is an indication of the lack of function of these intermediate segments. For some purposes, such as the organization of royal hunts, a county is divided into a number of rural districts. These are geographically defined areas, and it is sometimes possible to say that such-and-such a man, usually a senior lieutenant of the county segment, is the most important person in such-and-such a rural area. However, the recognizable rural districts in a county do not

[165] Allan, *Land Usage*, pp. 16-17.
[166] *N.R.R.G.G.*, ii, 2 (15 March 1904), p. 34.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

effort to induce them to co-operate actively with the government, and by 1910 he was looking forward to reducing the number of White officials in the Administration by devolving much of the Native work on to the Natives themselves. Co-operation was encouraged by the payment of small stipends to chiefs and others, varying in the 1920s in annual value from £22 10*s.* 0*d.* for Mpezeni down to 6*s.* for district messengers. 648

The Ngoni for the most part neither supported nor opposed this scheme of administration; they merely accepted it. For years the Administration bemoaned the indifference of the Ngoni, but apart from an attempt by a mission to set up its teachers as headmen, there was little attempt to obstruct the work of the Administration. [797]

In matters of land, the authority of the Whites was also dominant, but here the paternal amiability which characterized purely political relations between Administration and Ngoni was lacking. The alienation of land was at the instigation of the North Charterland, who considered themselves the owners of Ngoni country. Fort Jameson was built by the Administration in the middle of Ngoni country and the land round the township, few facilities though the town then had, became more valuable to potential settlers than more fertile but inaccessible tracts. The high density of population in Ngoni country also attracted settlers with the prospect of an adequate labour supply. Thus we find that many of the first tracts of land alienated were located in the middle of Ngoni country, in the most densely populated section. As early as 1 January 1904 the first Commission was appointed to inquire into land questions in Ngoni country.[18] Now that Ngoni had to grow their own food on land which had already been heavily exploited the density of population fell; but in relation to the carrying capacity of the land in perpetuity there was still serious overcrowding. During the unsettled period of the war and its aftermath, the population was dispersed, but from 1900 down to about 1930, in consequence of alienation and the formation of reserves, villages were gradually brought closer together. From 1930 onwards, with the recognition of land shortage by the Administration, villages have been allowed to spread out again. The negotiations concerning where the Ngoni should live have been protracted and complicated; I hope to discuss them in a later work in connexion with the economic background of Ngoni social life. What is here significant about them is that to a very large extent these negotiations have been carried on entirely by Whites, with the Administration representing for the greater part Ngoni

423 439 648 311 [167] 361 648

[18] *N.E.R.G.G.*, 8, 1 (1 January 1904), pp. 30-1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 reserves were amended, and as existing gardens were exhausted.
634 Movement of this kind did not greatly affect political allegiance, so
178 that not all the villages acknowledging the control of a minor chief were built in his vicinity. Coxhead mentions seven defined territorial units in 1914, but by the time I began fieldwork in 1946 their boundaries had been forgotten.[21] Most of the villages in any one county were clustered together, with the capital village and the chief's village somewhere in the middle of the cluster, but there were also more distant villages situated among those belonging to other counties. The next stage of development appears to have been the definition of county boundaries, so that by 1946 it was possible to speak of some villages as situated in one county and owing allegiance to another. Most of these interloping villages, as we may call them, belonged to the segment of the county to which they owed allegiance. They were a bone of contention between chiefs, for although each chief desires as many villages as possible
[311] under his control, he has only a limited amount of land in his county with which to satisfy his people. An analogous situation is found in some Welsh sheep farms, where each farmer likes to own as many sheep as possible but hopes they will graze on someone else's land. The chief in political control of an interloping village endeavoured to maintain his control at a distance and at the same time to make use of the land in the local chief's county, while the latter had to decide between trying to make the interloping village shift its allegiance so as to increase his own following and trying to get it to move away so as to give his people more land. In 1947 and 1948,
[648] to avoid such difficulties between chiefs, the Administration defined county boundaries precisely and insisted that all villages within the area of a county should be under the control of the county chief.

Thus, in the development of the county as a social group, ties
631 of segmentary affiliation have been gradually replaced by those of
634 territorial propinquity. This replacement is not yet complete, nor
648 has it arisen merely as a consequence of Administrative action in
178 the last few years. Village histories show that in many instances a village changed from attachment to the head of its major segment to attachment to the local county chief many years ago and without prompting from the Administration. Villagers marry their neigh-
[582] bours irrespective of county affiliation and thus build up ties which link them to the local county. It may be inconvenient to walk a long way to the court and county meetings of a distant chief, particularly if the local chief appears to listen more readily to his people's complaints and advice.

[21] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22, 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market. 571 574 [439] [311]

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. [692] 648 643

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area. 611 178 171 [249] [464]

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the 646 648

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the
137 rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

311 In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose
361 it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

361 The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe
351 formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
[343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

621 There were two focal points in each village, reproduced on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
[554] the 'big house'[1] at the head of the kraal, where the leading woman had her home.

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to 351
make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, 415
and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, [356]
and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time [513]
sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into
the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at
night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as [352]
pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fasci- [531]
nate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from 351
time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer [285]
was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child [273]
was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. [857]
These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked [231]
and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and
young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped 361
round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay 311
patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens',
and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or 857
grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work
in the gardens was an expedition for young children which
they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places for- 858
bidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone 867
with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep
away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where
the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had
passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of [562]
the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children
strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and
fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went
there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless
a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven
years old, because they found their fathers there and the
herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned: such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources. 000

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile. 114 101 121 161 311 [133]

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfinzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipoka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni. [181]

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent. [797] [427]

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do. [134]

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people. [439]

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The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages

(February 1941)

N [162]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,710

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [361] N [U66]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 311 511

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

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5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, provide similar examples for different systems and land categories. In the second Report of the Ecological Survey (North Eastern Rhodesia, paras. 316–20) Trapnell records a wide range of observations on areas where land degeneration and soil erosion had become marked, in relation to land categories, population densities and the time factor. These observations provide independent evidence of the relatively low carrying capacity of much of our land under the traditional systems, and they accord well with the estimates obtained by the methods outlined in this paper.

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5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
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Lamba FQ8

PART IV

THE RESETTLEMENT OF NATIVE POPULATIONS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

§ 1. *The Problem and its Origin*

L M N 174 166 311

IN Northern Rhodesia and doubtless over a much greater part of Africa before the coming of the Europeans, the population-land pattern was a changing, kaleidoscopic picture. If an area became overcrowded more land was available, or it could be taken from a neighbouring people. A rough balance between land and population was maintained by means of migration, inter-tribal wars, periodic famine and disease.

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With the coming of the European the kaleidoscopic picture was arrested, producing what we may call the primary population-land pattern. This was later modified, by alienation and reservation of land and by the movement of peoples into Native reserves, to produce a secondary pattern. New economic factors have so far modified this secondary pattern only to a minor extent, but it may be expected that they will tend to do so increasingly in the future.

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The secondary population-land pattern was brought about mainly by the movement of the African population into Native reserves. As a result of this movement large areas of Crown Land were left practically uninhabited, and a number of factors operating together brought about mal-distribution and congestion of populations within the reserves themselves.

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So far the problem has been studied in detail only in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province, the Mkushi District of the Central Province and the Ndola District of the Western Province, and it is within these districts that resettlement work—other than the 'Chitemene Control' scheme—has been carried out. The four districts are contiguous and the total area within them to which this discussion refers is about 33,800 square miles (4,000 square miles more than the whole land area of Scotland but only about one-ninth of the area of Northern Rhodesia) with a total population, in round figures, of 290,000 (about one-sixth of the total populaton of the Territory).

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The primary population-land pattern was such that the ten tribes living within this area had ample or much more than ample land, except to a minor extent in the Fort Jameson District where the incursion of the immigrant Ngoni in the later 19th century had created a potential congestion problem. Under former conditions this problem would doubtless have resolved itself as it arose by migration of the Chewa to north and west, under pressure from the Ngoni, but once the kaleidoscopic pattern was arrested no such [167]

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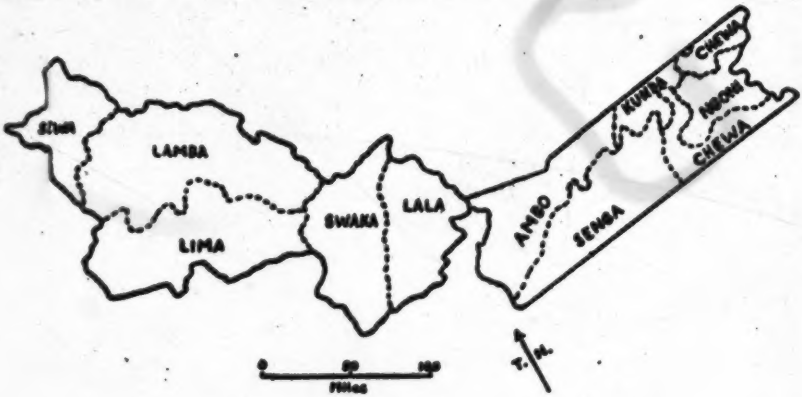

Fig 1.— THE ORIGINAL POPULATION-LAND PATTERN
Showing areas held by tribes.

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movement was possible. The lands of the Ngoni and Chewa were then reduced, by alienation to European settlers and by reservation, to an extent which the following figures illustrate :

Habitable Land held by Tribes (square miles)

	Chewa	*Ngoni* *
Before Ngoni invasion	3,580	–
After Ngoni invasion	2,280	1,300
After land alienation	1,124	878
After creation of reserves	889	675

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Throughout the Petauke and Mkushi Districts the amount of land taken up by European settlers was negligible, but the Senga, Ambo, Lala and Swaka peoples were moved into Reserves some of which proved totally inadequate for the land needs of their traditional agricultural systems.

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In the west (Ndola District) the congestion problem arose largely as a result of displacement of people from the area which is now the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia, a land loss which fell on the Lamba tribe. The land area of Mushiri's section of the Lamba, for example, which formerly included part of the Copperbelt, was reduced from 2,200 to 360 square miles. The Lamba were removed from the new mining areas and this movement accentuated by some migration of more distant peoples attracted by the mines, gave rise to a belt of relatively high population concentration about the southern and eastern margins of the Copperbelt.

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* With a mixture of Chewa and other tribes.

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In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftaincies remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional sytems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

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of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§. 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

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In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 5,600 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mkushi District and 4,800 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§ 3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

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The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

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Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Description of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

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It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population obtains its food only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

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* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 15s. *The Soil, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 1s.

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Crown land, Company land, alienated land and unoccupied Native Reserve. Largely uninhabited.

Land in Native occupation. Largely under-populated.

Land in Native occupation. Over-populated.

Fig 2.— THE SECONDARY POPULATION-LAND PATTERN.

Trust Land for future use of African peoples, Crown lands and alienated land.

Land in Native occupation. Balanced or under-populated.

Remaining areas of over-population, capable of supporting their populations on the basis of improved agriculture.

Fig. 3.— THE POPULATION-LAND PATTERN AFTER RESETTLEMENT.

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climate and by the way in which the land is used. If the limit is exceeded *without a compensating change in the system of land usage* then a process of land degradation is set in operation and ultimately, unless food is obtained from outside the area, population must decline to the limit determined by natural conditions and the system of land use, or to a lower level. This limit, the maximum number of people that a given land area will maintain in perpetuity under a certain system of land usage, has been termed the 'carrying capacity' of the area *for that system*. It will be clear that the term can be used only in relation to a clearly defined system of land usage. Throughout these notes, when no statement to the contrary is made, the expression is used in relation to the traditional agricultural system of the tribes concerned. These systems, and the staple crops which go with them, vary greatly within this relatively small area of 33,800 square miles, and range from a primitive form of axe-agriculture among the Western Lala to comparatively advanced soil selection methods practised by the Eastern tribes. Descriptions of all of these systems will be found in the publications to which reference has already been made.

The term 'population-land balance' hardly requires definition. If the total population of an area is equal to or less than the land capacity for the system of agriculture practised, then a population-land balance exists within that area. When the total population is well below the land carrying capacity the areas may be described as under-populated.

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These concepts, and the methods of survey and of estimating the carrying capacities for the different land categories and agricultural systems, were applied to the problem of resettlement. Rapid reconnaissance surveys were made throughout the populated areas, with the objects of assessing approximately the land carrying capacity for each chief's area and estimating the number of people who would have to be moved to unoccupied land in order to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of the traditional agricultural systems. The estimate indicated that a total of about 160,800 people would have to be moved, as shown in the Table below.

District	*Tribe*	*Number of people to be moved*
Fort Jameson	Chewa	98,300
	Ngoni	
Petauke	Senga	35,000
	Ambo	8,000
Mkushi	Lala	3,200
	Swaka	4,300
Ndola	Lamba	12,000

The estimates make no allowances for the readjustment of population distribution within the old Reserves. Some chieftaincies were in fact much under-populated and in some of the Reserves considerable areas remained almost or completely uninhabited because of water shortage, the occur-

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rence of sleeping sickness or for other easons. It would have been possible by re-distribution of populations within the old Reserves, in conjunction with provision of water supplies and measures against 'fly', materially to reduce the number of people to be noved to unoccupied land. Such a course would have involved serious plitical repercussions and, in view of the amount of land available, it was never contemplated.

The next essential step was to surveythe vacant land available for resettlement, to prepare vegetation-soil mapsof the areas, and to estimate the carrying capacity of each area for the traditional agricultural system of the people who would occupy it. In the Eastern Povince and the Ndola District surveys were made on the basis of parallel stright line traverses, using liquid prismatic compasses and cyclometer whels. Traverse lines were usually one mile apart, but wider intervals up to three miles were used, in order to save time, if the country was relatively uniform or if no high degree of accuracy was required. In some instances, whn very accurate maps were wanted, the traverse interval was reduced to one half or one quarter of a mile. Information on water supplies, the stateof regeneration of land and timber, the former inhabitants and other relevnt details, was collected in the course of these surveys. In the case of Mkush District, where there was an abundance of available land in relation to he needs of the population, sample traverses only were used. The methodof survey and mapping are described in one of the other papers in this serie.

When estimates had been made ofthe number of people to be moved from each of the over-crowded chiefincies and the carrying capacity of the available land, divided into convenient areas, had been ascertained, the planning of population movements becme, in theory, simple. In practice, of course, there were a good many difficities.

Tribal boundaries and the original ownership of the land had to be taken into consideration, though these wer not regarded as sacrosanct and, in fact, a large area formerly occupied bythe Senga was used for the resettlement of a section of the Chewa. Othr factors also limit movement. There is, obviously, a physical limit; fifty miles was regarded as the maximum practical move, but in extreme cases villages were moved as much as seventy miles. Traditional systems of land usuage are, generally, adaptations to particular sets of ecological conditions and people cannot be moved into an environment unsuited to their food crops and method of production. Cattle-owning people will not willingly move to tsetse country leaving their herds behind.

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Water supplies proved to be a very great difficulty over large areas, especially in the Eastern Province. Natural supplies were not sufficient to allow of full utilization of the land on the basis of its carrying capacity, and in some cases practically no settlement was possible before artificial watering points had been provided. It appeared that, in the Eastern Province at least, permanent surface water had greatly diminished in the twelve to twenty years during which the land had lain unoccupied. The old sites of villages and their sources of water supply were noted in the course of the

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surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The fierce late fires which swept through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the dessication.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

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After survey had been completed and before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their food-stocks and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

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Wherever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (25 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mushiri resettlement area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central dam which was stocked with bream (*Tilapia spp.*) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

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§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

L M N 156 166 311

Another difficulty was the occurance of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

N 744 [164]

In the northern part of Fort Jameson Districts, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on compacting pedocal soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

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Mpezeni

Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'fly' country, but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern zone that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. The large available land area in Mkushi enabled the relatively small 'fly' areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'fly' areas of Mkushi. 166 136 164 744

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'fly' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the kraals. Ten herds each of five beasts were used ; the animals were numbered and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomyaisis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'fly' infestation were defined.

§ 6. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in accordance with the general plan to restore the population-land balance as far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers. 166 621 648

Headmen and other representatives of the villagers who had finally elected to move then toured the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villagers almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Vegetation-Soil Map. Blocks of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total villages population, allowing for temporary absentees, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular ; the people are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone beacons, to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features. [622] [311] [423]

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually applied or always possible. The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, 166 648

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

L M 166 648 The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, much of it inaccessible and uninhabitable, except for small pockets of fertile soil, was opened to unrestricted settlement by the Ambo and Senga-Kunda peoples. Other areas of poor soils and low carrying capacities in Fort Jameson District were also opened to free settlement up to a population total determined by the carrying capacity.

L [731] In Ndola District an area was opened to immediate uncontrolled settlement, in order to relieve acute land shortage and actual starvation in one section of the Reserve.

L M [312] [361] [632] A somewhat modified method has been used in parts of Petauke District where dams are the only means of providing water. Here the population unit consists of three or four villages grouped into a 'parish' and settled about the watering points. A single land area is demarcated for each of these groups, instead of allocating a separate block to each village. This method allows of economy in the distribution of watering points, tends to reduce the effect of inter-village movements and, it is hoped, will lead to larger administrative units.

§ 7. *Agricultural Control and Improvement*

N 161 [311] The general object of resettlement is to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of traditional land usage *and the present population numbers*. Obviously, this balance cannot be permanent if the population is increasing; and if it is not increasing something is seriously wrong. Reliable vital statistics are entirely lacking but probably most of the tribes are increasing (the Ngoni may be an exception) at a rate which, judging by the very few available data, may be about 1½ per cent per annum, a rate which would double the population in forty-six years.

N 242 654 648 Resettlement is not, and was never regarded as, a substitute for agricultural improvement. The objects are to reduce the agricultural problem to practicable proportions, to relieve acute land shortage, to give time for experiment and the introduction of new methods. The assumption is that an evolutionary process of agricultural improvement will keep pace with natural increase of population, and that this process must be guided by experiment.

N [177] Simple measures of agricultural control, and the beginnings of soil conservation and agricultural improvement, have been introduced in each of the resettlement areas as a condition of occupation. It need hardly be said that these are not popular with the majority and the existence of such conditions is a deterrent to movement.

N 648 242 [185] [241] In the case of the earlier settlements in the Fort Jameson District an elementary system of soil conservation was introduced by demarcating the land for cultivation in contour strips separated by untouched belts of grass (which acquired the name of 'ten-rardie' since the original strips were ten paces wide). This was followed by an attempt to replace the traditional mound system of Ngoni, Chewa and Senga by cultivation on ridges

648 245 671 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds, seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little [177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a [132] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of 311 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush. 648 In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre- 185 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of water-sheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning [622] of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve 361 the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected 362 (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so [illegible] not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built [342] of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 648 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

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to clear large enough gardens at the new site in the first year a part of the old gardens can be used, for it is easy to travel back and forward between the old and new villages. The majority of the moves were of this order and no assistance was required or given. In the case of longer moves, heavy household goods and food stocks were transported by motor lorry, or in some instances when it was convenient to do so the entire grain stock was bought at the old village and food, purchased locally, was sold at the new site. This enabled the people to give the whole of their time to preparing a large garden acreage in the first year. The great majority of villages moving for moderate or long distances (twenty five to seventy miles) succeeded in preparing large enough gardens and growing sufficient food for themselves in the first year. A few did not, for one reason or another, such as starting too late, a bad season or just plain laziness, and these villages were supplied with food in the first season either in return for work or on promise of repayment after a good harvest. Less than 5 per cent of villages received such relief.

§ 10. *The Progress of Resettlement*

It was estimated that, in order to restore a complete population-land balance, about 141,300 people would have to be moved from the Reserves of the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts. No such movement was, in fact, possible. The total carrying capacity of the land available for resettlement which contained a vast mass of escarpment hills and other large areas of almost useless land, was estimated to be 78,000 people. This land was, of necessity, allocated to the tribal groups in the following way:

Ngoni and Chewa	:	Sufficient land	for	35,000	people
Senga	:	"	"	35,000	"
Ambo	:	"	"	8,000	"

Thus in the case of the Ngoni and Chewa the available land was totally insufficient to allow of the restoration of a population-land balance, while in the case of the other peoples such a balance could be achieved.

Two alternatives were possible; to re-distribute the Ngoni and Chewa populations more or less evenly over the new land and the Reserves, in which case both would be over-populated in relation to their carrying capacities, or to populate the new land to the maximum of its carrying capacity, leaving the Reserves still over-populated. The latter course was adopted for a variety of reasons, including the fact that much of the new land was tsetse infested and the keeping of cattle and development of mixed farming would not be possible at least for a very considerable time. The Reserves, on the other hand, carried many cattle and, with reduction of the population by resettlement, would be able to support their populations on a basis of mixed farming.

Movement was therefore designed to populate the new areas to the maximum of their carrying capacity and to reduce the agricultural problem

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of the Reserves to manageable proportions, leaving an excess of population, but not too great an excess, within the cattle areas.

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In Petauke District, where there is ample land available, the object aimed at is a complete restoration of the population-land balance by controlled movement of some 35,000 Senga and uncontrolled movement of 8,000 Ambo and Senga-Kunda.

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Survey work in the Eastern Province started in 1941 and a few pioneer villages were moved in that year, but the main movement started in 1942 (when over 18,000 people were moved) and it is still in progress. By the end of 1945 the programme was more than half completed; 292 villages (about 32,000 people) had been moved into controlled 'village blocks' or 'parish settlements' in addition to uncontrolled or partially controlled movements in the escarpment area and parts of the Fort Jameson District. The comparatively slow rate of progress is due to water-shortage. Large areas in Petauke District and the north of Fort Jameson have not yet been settled for this reason, while in the latter area there is also some danger of sleeping sickness, and measures for the control of 'fly' (game destruction and clearing of 'hard pan') are in progress. Settlement is continuing at the rate set by provision of water supplies and the control of tsetse.

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The Mkushi District presents an entirely different picture since the available land is about twice as much as the present population require, on the basis of their traditional agricultural practice. Here, instead of village blocks, comparatively large areas have been demarcated to take a number of villages and there is no strict control. The Superior Native Authority has introduced rules intended to bring about a gradual conversion from small circle *chitemene* (a primitive form of *ash*-agriculture) to hoe cultivation of kaffir corn with subsidiary gardens for a variety of crops.

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The land not actually required for immediate use has not been allocated but is being held in reserve against the future needs of the African people and the Native Authorities undertake responsibility for early burning within the reserved land.

The bulk of the necessary population transfers have already been carried out.

In Ndola District also the available land is considerably greater than present needs and some is being held in reserve. Populations moved from the congested zone about the mines have been settled in village blocks and, apart from an area demarcated for immediate settlement in 1943 to relieve actual starvation, there is no uncontrolled settlement.

Movement of 120 villages, having a total estimated population of 11,775, was completed in 1945. It has since been found, however, that the population counts made by a District Officer seconded for the purpose are in fact over-estimated and a considerable number of the blocks are under-populated and further movements may be necessary.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man has to go further and further from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of regenerated land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1898 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested areas.

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county chief, and village headman. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headman and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The first people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Rattray, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the new one is gradual, as, unless the distance between the sites is too great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Rattray, *Folk-Lore Stories*, pp. 109-11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 103-5, gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

361 Huts sometimes become infested with ticks, or the site itself may prove to be intolerably damp. New huts are then built a short distance away or even contiguously to the old site, and no new gardens are made apart from those made among the deserted huts.

Internal Segmentation of the Village

361 621 We have already seen that the divisions within the village are embryonic new villages. These divisions are most formally indicated in the Nyasaland counties, where there are large villages divided into a distinct number of divisions, with the spatial boundaries between the divisions indicated by a greater interval between the huts, and with each division named and under the charge of a lieutenant or of a patrilineal kinsman of the headman. On the Rhodesian side, however, it is more usual to find that certain small clusters of huts within a village are regarded as being the division of such-and-such a person living in one of them. The bulk of the huts in the village do not belong to any particular cluster but merely to the village as a whole. These clusters do not have any name apart from that of their senior inhabitant, whose close relatives occupy the huts of the cluster. The leader of a cluster may be a lieutenant of the headman or merely some important person with a comparatively large body of dependants. Such clusters, which are often on the periphery of the village, sometimes originate from the grouping together by a polygynist of the huts of his various wives, and grow as their children marry and live alongside their parents. Another mechanism for the formation of clusters is that [166] of immigration into the village at about the same time by a number of persons related to each other more closely than to the other inhabitants of the village, as, for example, on the break-up of some other village. The immigrants tend to build together if there is room. In this case the leader of the cluster may have little standing in the village. The boundaries of clusters are not always plainly indicated, while a man who is ambitious to make his own village may as a first step try to increase the clarity with which his cluster is defined spatially.

Land Utilization

311 241 We may divide gardens into three types: main, old village, and moist. The moist gardens are made near streams, and are fenced to keep out cattle. Tomatoes, cabbages, onions, and other vegetables are grown, and maize is planted during the hot season so that it can be harvested in December or January. These gardens are cultivated only by the

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more industrious and usually with a view to sale of vegetables in Fort Jameson. The sites last for many years and are usually abandoned because of the removal of the owner's village to a distant place rather than because of exhaustion of the soil. 311 241

Old-village gardens are made on the site of former huts and byres, in order to take advantage of the high fertility of the soil. These gardens are not usually fenced, except when they are made on the outskirts of some existing village on the site of an old byre. Tobacco is sometimes grown, but for the most part they are cultivated in the same way as are main gardens. The site belongs to the former owner of the hut or byre, so long as the garden continues to be worked. [423]

Main gardens are made from bush clearings, and are chosen with some regard to the type and quantity of the natural vegetation. Land that has been abandoned for long enough, say twenty-five years, regains its natural cover, and if the ownership of former gardens has been forgotten, it is treated as though it were virgin woodland, that is, it is permissible for anyone who wishes to come and cultivate it. A new village site is chosen to be near, if possible, an ample amount of such regenerated land, and at the first selection of gardens the headman of the village may go round the area and see where the new gardens are being made. Gardens tend to be within 2 miles of the village, but there is no one definite area that is associated with a particular village, so that if there are a number of villages in proximity, the gardens of their inhabitants will be intermingled. A man exercises a lien on the area of uncleared land round his garden, and may take up this land himself as he enlarges his garden. Hence at first there are considerable belts of bush left between one garden and the next. With the passage of time, these are cleared, and gardens become contiguous, with boundaries between them that are almost imperceptible at first glance. At the same time as enlargements are made, the least productive parts of the gardens are neglected, so that, as the years go by, the area cultivated by one man may gradually change its position, and fresh areas of resting-land will appear between the gardens. Main gardens vary in size from about 1 to 3 acres. [423] [961] [425]

If a man moves into a village and wishes to start a garden, he is usually given part of the garden of the person to whom he is attached in the village. A son returning from the mines may be given part of his father's garden. Conversely when someone leaves the village, his garden passes to his relatives. In particular, when a man dies, his 423

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

IV. WIDER CONTACTS

Other Local Groups

We have so far in this account been concerned with delineating the main outlines of political and village structure and the kinship system. We have examined the internal constitution of the tribe and have only been concerned secondarily with the external relationships by which the Ngoni are connected with the wider world. But in the Fort Jameson District there are, and have been for many years, people who do not fall within the tribal framework but with whom the Ngoni interact. These include people from the British Isles and South Africa, Indians, and Coloured persons, as well as Africans from other tribes. The Europeans are there as administrators, missionaries, farmers, and traders. Indians are traders and farmers, while Coloured persons are farmers and foremen. Africans from other tribes are, like the Ngoni, labourers on the farms and in the township, as well as subsistence cultivators in their own tribal areas. 563

The land of the District is divided into Native Reserve and Trust land, farm-land, township, and Crown land. Almost all Ngoni villages lie on Reserve or Trust land, and it is in this zone that most of the activities described so far take place. On the farm-land Ngoni participate not as headmen or lieutenants or chiefs, but as labourers and foremen. They still fill the roles of husband, wife, sibling, parent, and child, and sometimes other kinship positions, but the family in the farm compound is on a smaller scale than in the village. In the town of Fort Jameson the range of activity open to them is greater, and there are Ngoni butchers, drivers, clerks, shop assistants, Native Urban Court assessors, and so on. All these roles on farm and in the town are shared with Africans from other tribes in the Eastern Province and from more distant regions. 311 463

The Churches

The influence of the non-African groups extends out beyond the areas in which they live into the reserves. We have already seen how the Administration has affected the life of the tribe. The Christian Church has also had a profound influence. By 1910 there were three denominations at work in Ngoni country: the Dutch Reformed Church Mission,[1] the White Fathers,[2] and the Universities' Mission to 797 795

[1] Algemeene Zending Commissie der Nederduitsche Gereformeerde Kerk in den Oranje Vrijstaat.

[2] Société des Missionnaires de Notre Dame d'Afrique, a Catholic Order.

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rence of sleeping sickness or for other reasons. It would have been possible by re-distribution of populations within the old Reserves, in conjunction with provision of water supplies and measures against 'fly', materially to reduce the number of people to be moved to unoccupied land. Such a course would have involved serious political repercussions and, in view of the amount of land available, it was never contemplated.

The next essential step was to survey the vacant land available for resettlement, to prepare vegetation-soil maps of the areas, and to estimate the carrying capacity of each area for the traditional agricultural system of the people who would occupy it. In the Eastern Province and the Ndola District surveys were made on the basis of parallel straight line traverses, using liquid prismatic compasses and cyclometer wheels. Traverse lines were usually one mile apart, but wider intervals up to three miles were used, in order to save time, if the country was relatively uniform or if no high degree of accuracy was required. In some instances, when very accurate maps were wanted, the traverse interval was reduced to one half or one quarter of a mile. Information on water supplies, the state of regeneration of land and timber, the former inhabitants and other relevant details, was collected in the course of these surveys. In the case of Mkushi District, where there was an abundance of available land in relation to the needs of the population, sample traverses only were used. The methods of survey and mapping are described in one of the other papers in this series.

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§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

L M N 156 166 311

Another difficulty was the occurance of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

N 744 [164]

In the northern part of Fort Jameson Districts, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on compacting pedocal soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

M 166 311 648

of the Reserves to manageable proportions, leaving an excess of population, but not too great an excess, within the cattle areas.

L M 166 311 648

In Petauke District, where there is ample land available, the object aimed at is a complete restoration of the population-land balance by controlled movement of some 35,000 Senga and uncontrolled movement of 8,000 Ambo and Senga-Kunda.

L M N 166 648

Survey work in the Eastern Province started in 1941 and a few pioneer villages were moved in that year, but the main movement started in 1942 (when over 18,000 people were moved) and it is still in progress. By the end of 1945 the programme was more than half completed; 292 villages (about 32,000 people) had been moved into controlled 'village blocks' or 'parish settlements' in addition to uncontrolled or partially controlled movements in the escarpment area and parts of the Fort Jameson District. The comparatively slow rate of progress is due to water-shortage. Large areas in Petauke District and the north of Fort Jameson have not yet been settled for this reason, while in the latter area there is also some danger of sleeping sickness, and measures for the control of 'fly' (game destruction and clearing of 'hard pan') are in progress. Settlement is continuing at the rate set by provision of water supplies and the control of tsetse.

L M N [312] [166]

L 648 311 166

The Mkushi District presents an entirely different picture since the available land is about twice as much as the present population require, on the basis of their traditional agricultural practice. Here, instead of village blocks, comparatively large areas have been demarcated to take a number of villages and there is no strict control. The Superior Native Authority has introduced rules intended to bring about a gradual conversion from small circle *chitemene* (a primitive form of axe-agriculture) to hoe cultivation of kaffir corn with subsidiary gardens for a variety of crops.

L [242]

The land not actually required for immediate use has not been allocated but is being held in reserve against the future needs of the African people and the Native Authorities undertake responsibility for early burning within the reserved land.

The bulk of the necessary population transfers have already been carried out.

In Ndola District also the available land is considerably greater than present needs and some is being held in reserve. Populations moved from the congested zone about the mines have been settled in village blocks and, apart from an area demarcated for immediate settlement in 1943 to relieve actual starvation, there is no uncontrolled settlement.

Movement of 120 villages, having a total estimated population of 11,775, was completed in 1945. It has since been found, however, that the population counts made by a District Officer seconded for the purpose are in fact over-estimated and a considerable number of the blocks are under-populated and further movements may be necessary.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft. Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons, wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the 251
tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the [262]
cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV.
Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work [556]
in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and
their presence in the compound conferred importance on
their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of [415]
beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter,
dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs
and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a [323]
shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It
was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when 583
married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats,
spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would 577
show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to
have a high standard of household management in her new
home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households 511
well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they 577
could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some
of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed [357]
their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish 252
was being prepared. They watched every movement of their 868
mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on,
measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred
the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps
and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water
before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day 262
in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish
of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less
often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the [415]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approxi- [231] mately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 669 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 669 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Tempelhoff, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 1–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mabwanamkulu*, pl. *ubwanamkulu*. [4] *Nduna*, pl. *ndunas*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

241 273 476 those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's [465] labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

463 There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neighbouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for [462] pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

285 [462] Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

759 Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical [648] services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

611 The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying [59] bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern prac- [583] tice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were [184] interpreted after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

/1 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household,
415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or
[51] china crockery.

• 333 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every
[414] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood.
[88] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice
[415] the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves
[82] of the mbwabwa tree.

Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the
385 different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men,
[353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be
[345] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings
[491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often
[343] made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /8/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao :
Marovi FR4
Ngoni FR5

M 251 343 Near the house, which is often surrounded by a fence, either within it or outside, is the grain store or shelter, a cylindrical structure made like a hurdle, set on a platform below, supported on posts 2 feet above the ground. Sometimes the whole, sometimes only the lower part, is mudded over. It is covered by a thatched roof, which can be removed at will. At one point at the base there is commonly a hole to allow of taking out the chewaya (maize) cobs as they are required. These shelter vary in size, average being 6 feet about the platform and diameter 4 feet. There is often also a pigeon house, made of the cylinder of bark removed from a tree; this is put in a tree or supported on poles, and the ends partly closed with crossed sticks, near it will be a broken pot supported on a forked stick, kept filled with water for the birds to drink. Any sheep, goats or cattle are kept in the *khalo* or kraal made of trees, and often pretty strong, and covered with thorny branches to withstand the visits of leopards, etc.

M 352 354 The household furniture consists of little. Near the middle of the hut is the fire, with some big stones on which to set cooking pots; sleeping mats either set out or rolled up; two or three cooking pots and baskets of various sizes; a water pot and gourd bells.

POTTERY.

M 323 415 There is no tradition whence pottery making was introduced. No potter's wheel or mould is used, no tools are used save a knife to score patterns on the pots. The material employed is a kind of clay, to which is added some cattle dung (I presume to get the small pieces of grass). A pot is made at one sitting, building it up from the open mouth. It is done by women, who are potters by trade. Before baking, the pot is dried in the sun, then rubbed over with green leaves, which prevents cracking. Baking is performed by making a fire below and all round the pot as it stands upon end downwards. Among

N [323] Angoni and Atonga some pots are "painted" with plumbago (*chowe*), the *mbale* with *tembo*, a red earth, oxide of iron, before burning. The decoration consists only in a few scored lines near the neck. No pottery figures are made, and no special funeral pots; the deceased's own pots are broken and placed over his grave.

FIG. 11.

The following are the different varieties of pottery vessels (Fig. 11):—

Mbaula, a spherical pot for water (*a*).

Mbati, a larger pot of similar pattern for beer-making (*b*).

/8 cont'd/

352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled
385 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzili tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any
513 [77] headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

/9/ V

412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of fur-
[385] naces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used,
[529] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

493 Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid
[241] wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the
[310] village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle, not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

334 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of
411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about
204 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE X. Thatching a school roof. The county chief has told men from nearby villages to do this work.

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PLATE XI. A mobile post office halted near a county court.

[Facing p. 168]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

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(498)

PLATE I. Paramount Chief Paulino Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., standing with a man from the chief's capital. The man points upwards and sings that, because they conquered the Ngoni, the Whites must have come from heaven.

[Frontpiece Facing p. i]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Ngoni of northern Nyasaland for a similar situation which ended in the relatively peaceful incorporation of the tribe into the framework of colonial administration. But in northern Nyasaland there were no gold-miners, there were only missionaries. Johnston admits that the presence of mission stations among the northern Nyasaland Ngoni embarrassed him, and he refrained from using force against them in 1893 because this might have interfered with missionary activity.[20] In Mpezeni's country there were no mission stations and, as it happened, no gold-mines worth worrying about either; but by the time this fact had been realized it had ceased to be significant for the Ngoni. The North Charterland was formed in the belief that Mpezeni's country was rich. The capital of the company, not all paid up, was £1,000,000 and in 1897 it offered a reward of £10,000 to the discoverer of the first payable gold-field in its concession.[21] Given the fact that wealth of this magnitude was at stake, that there was gold to be found, and given the tactlessness of Warton and the intransigence of Nsingu, it was likely that war would come sooner or later.

As it was, the end of the Ngoni State as a sovereign political unit and its incorporation within a colonial empire came suddenly. Instead of the gradual formation of new groupings and alignments, the new system began as suddenly as the old system ended. We tend to think of the arrival of Europeans in the backwoods of Africa as a gradual process extending through many decades, and indeed even in Ngoniland there were Europeans for at least thirteen years prior to the war. Yet to old Ngoni of to-day the coming of the Europeans is a precisely defined event which took place on 19 January 1898.

The sequence of events which culminated in the fighting was as follows. In May 1897 some of Mpezeni's people began to build shelters and clear gardens at the headwaters of the River Bua, just inside the Nyasaland Protectorate. Sharpe, who had succeeded Johnston as Commissioner, was at first not greatly pleased, but instructed the Collector at Kotakota to make clear to Mpezeni that he would have to conform to the wishes of the Administration. A peaceful settlement between Mpezeni and the British seemed possible, and on second thoughts Sharpe was pleased to see, as he thought, Mpezeni removed from the sphere of influence of the North Charterland and the B.S.A. Company, who might have taken action against him and precipitated a crisis. However, the Collector was single-handed and it seems that he was unable to

[20] *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 437.
[21] *African Review*, xiii, 254 (2 October 1897), p. 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

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[278]

PLATE II. Beer party at a chief's house. Dancing in the foreground owing a fee to a Native Authority messenger.

[50]

PLATE III. Collecting tax in a village. The Administrative clerk sits at a table on the verandah of the village headman's hut. Near him stand two Administrative messengers, and seated on the ground are men waiting to pay.

[Facing p. 144]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F'R5 Mgoni F'R5
Mgoni

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Plate IV. Villagers leaving a meeting to assemble village in preparation for a visit from the District Officer.

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Plate V. A District Officer, with a country chief on his left, talks to village headmen during a tour of villages. In the distance are villagers listening to the conversation.

[Facing p. 145]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

Praise of Hlazwayo, son of Magangazi

Hlazwayo the dwarf who cannot trail his cloth
Whereas the tall people trail their cloths.
Meat eaten with knives of cane,
If it is not eaten with forks it is rotten.
Hlazwayo whose bodily vigour is finished off compared with Hlazwayo of former times.
Grass of deep red colour is not burned with burning; it burns very slowly, drop by drop.

Praise of Ngwanwa, son of Gaqwani

You who cut the trees and who cut the mimba,
You the locust, the grasshopper who fixed in your hair the feathers of the locust,
Who went below and climbed up, and went to bring the morning star of the dawn,
You go, since you are rejected; you go and bring the arrieta of wild animals; those of cattle will be much disputed.
You who remember the fault of long ago.
In descending, you descend together into the mountains.
You who drank the blood of cattle,
You who separated from the people of Shaka, Shaka of Mbelebele kraal,
You who separated from the people of Nyathi the son of Mashobane; it thundered, it was cloudy.
Thou remnhlant cattle which were finished by wolves.
You who originated with the people of Mellikazi,
You who originated with the people of Mpakana son of Lidwaga,
You who originated with the people of Ndwandwe.

CHAPTER III

THE ROYAL WOMEN

An early traveller in central Ngoniland in 1886 remarked on the number of 'true Ngoni women' to be found there, who were 'easily distinguished from the other women by their light colour and by being taller and stouter'. He went on to say: 'The king's houses at Livisini were 30 feet in diameter, built within an enclosure with other huts where the attendants lived. All were kept very clean and well swept.' This tribute to the appearance and achievements of Ngoni women of high rank was borne out by my own observations in the 1930's in central and northern Ngoniland. There was a definite physical type, light in colour, with high cheek-bones and orthognathic profile, tall with an upright carriage of the head. Women with these physical characteristics were in all cases of leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and their influence on their

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the circular court-house in a commanding position on a small hill with a big open space all round it. 361

There were several places in this village which were referred to as the *bwalo*: they included the open space within the reed fence of the Paramount's section, the much larger open and unfenced space round the court-house, and the more restricted spaces round the huts of the *induna* and of the headman. The meaning of the term *bwalo* was always slightly ambiguous in this village since it was often used for the verandah of the royal residence, as well as the open space in front of it. The central Ngoni custom of surrounding the huts of important men and women with high reed fences with a narrow opening, made it easy to say '*ali pa bwalo*', 'he is on the *bwalo*', so that it covered either the verandah of the hut or the space inside the fence. The local usage of *bwalo* by the Cewa people more often denoted the open space in the middle of the village where the men congregated to sit and talk and drink beer.[1] The connotation of *bwalo* in Ngoni villages in the central kingdom was usually in terms of the big house and the space in front of it within the fence.

In Magangu the place to which the name *bwalo* was most often applied was the space within the reed fence surrounding the Paramount's large brick residence and the outbuildings. When I lived in one of the outbuildings at the back of the house, I was said to be living *pa bwalo*; and 643
it was also alluded to as *pa ciqudu*, that is in the enclosure where the 342
Paramount's children lived behind the big house. His daughter's hut 361
was in this section, on the north side, and beyond her hut was that of the *ndomo nwakosi*, who was also the Paramount's brother-in-law, since he had married the Paramount's sister and was the brother of the Paramount's wife. In the other buildings within the reed fence lived several servants of the household, and at the kitchen end of the brick house lived the girls who assisted the Paramount's wife with cooking and looking after her younger children.

When the Paramount built his court-house, he built some offices as 344
part of it for himself, his *ndomo nwakosi*, his treasurer and the court 643
clerk. The intention had been that official business would be carried out there, and relieve the big house of some of its many callers, and also ensure some measure of privacy for those who lived there. It proved very difficult to achieve this separation of public and private affairs, since the tradition that the Paramount was accessible to all his people at all times was persistent.

The entrance to the enclosure or *bwalo* of the big house was guarded 574
in the traditional manner. If strangers (and all visitors were called *alendo* 643
or strangers) arrived on the side road leading off the main road, they inquired from one of the huts there if the headman was present and waited till he arrived. The headman then went to tell the *induna* or the *ndomo nwakosi* that strangers had come, while they waited till the reply

[1] Scott, D. C. *Mang'anja Dictionary*. Edinburgh, 1892.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and serwomids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving.

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*lawwe*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *lawwe*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father.

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *lawwe* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary.

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

The tables which follow show the total population of these villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobolo* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Men	2 Wives	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobolo marriages
Northern Kingdom									
Ravenzani	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Sindwiwani	13	9	21	20	51	4	1	4	15
Ekhanqeni	37	19	36	34	109	11	4	8	30
Central Kingdom									
Cindwini	39	20	39	35	113	13	3	6	9
Mangwan	80	41	75	68	184	9	18	6	4
Mzakhwiba	100	51	110	88	251	30	16	14	13

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *hanqula* and *gqo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *hanja* was not found in the north.

The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *mahawanana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *mahawanana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

3: Read E-3 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

woman had her home. The other was the 'gate'[1] of the kraal 621
at the opposite end of the enclosure to the 'big house'. The [417]
name by which this 'gate' was known applied also to the
space on each side of the gap in the kraal fence through
which the cattle went out and came in—a gap which was
closed at night with heavy poles. Here at the gate the men [512]
of the village sat by day, ate their meals brought to them by
children from their wives' huts, talked, received strangers,
pursued their crafts, and supervised the return of the cattle
in the evenings.

In and around the main huts within the tall reed fences, 342
the life of a Ngoni household went on. Some of the huts
were rectangular, others round. All had a veranda built up
above the ground-level and shaded by the house roof. The
back parts of the veranda were often enclosed with mats to
make additional storage space. In old Ngoni households the 351
open space around the hut was kept swept and moulded and
polished like a floor, so that people could sit there in comfort
and cleanliness as well as on the veranda. Near the house 417
was one or more little reed platforms about five feet above
the ground, where kitchen utensils, gourds and vegetables
were laid to dry, and which were used to sit under as shelter
from the sun in the hot months. Large and small wooden 415
pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape, mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
always to be seen outside and around the hut, as well as
inside.

In each household, within the main hut, there were two 353
places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
door-posts at the entrance. These posts with the hollow for [354]
the fireplace in the centre of the floor divided the hut into
a right-hand and left-hand side—the men's side and the

[1] and [2] A short list of the vernacular terms for some these common Ngoni place-names is given at end of the book.

3 Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

a few weeks. They were both dominated by important Ngoni families, and both the headquarters of subordinate chiefs. They both represented that blend of old and new in Ngoni life which was continually keeping the anthropologist on her toes.

Enkulwini was far from main roads and centres of modern life. When I first went there my lorry cut a swathe of grass knee-high on the so-called road to the village, and the radiator, choked with grass seed, boiled all the time. I lived in the mud-and-wattle hut maintained by the chief for visiting teachers and missionaries opposite the school, a four-standard school under an able young headmaster, well educated and well trained. He and his schoolboys, the resident evangelist and the court clerk represented the new elements in village life. Yet they were not cut off from the Ngoni way of life—on the contrary they were very much part of it and very proud of being Ngoni. The school had been taught in the Ngoni language, akin to old Zulu, until a few years before my visit, and the children were still given Ngoni proverbs to write in their copy-books. Several of the older people had books in their huts written in Zulu as well as in English, and Ngoni was still spoken as the home language in many of the households. The older women knew the traditional special vocabulary used by women only, and dressed their hair in the high chignon style. Proverbs were quoted often in the court and in church; stories of war against the Bemba people in Northern Rhodesia forty years ago were told by the kraal gate as if they happened last year. Several leading Ngoni clans were represented in the village, and each had their own praise songs and forms of addressing their ancestors.

The old evangelist, himself a member of a famous clan, had been threatened, thirty years before, with death by the former chief if he continued to teach and preach. He stayed, notwithstanding, and had become one of the trusted counsellors of the present chief. During the day he joined the

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] [191] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-[162] [592] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces-[361] sible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in-[342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was [871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [797] mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

252
412
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6, 7. Pounding maize

342

[facing p. 33]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

343
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8. A well-filled grain store

342
415
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301
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[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

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516
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417

11. Young musicians

842]

[facing page 64]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

#2
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12. Chiefs' wives wearing leopard claws

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342

13. Chiefs' wives leading in the dance

[facing page 65]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
974 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own
[264] verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[521] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

It was the fathers who decided at what age a child should go to school, and having once enrolled the boy or girl and paid the fees, the fathers insisted on regular attendance. 593 [872]

All Ngoni fathers showed affection for their young children, some consistently and others when it occurred to them. They picked them up and carried them about, held their hand while they tried their first steps, listened to their attempts to speak correctly, held them in their arms when they sat on the veranda. In one village twin boys aged four were devoted to their father and he to them. When he walked about, he held a hand of each. When he sat on the veranda they were always beside him and he had an arm round each. When he was elsewhere, the twins wandered about the compound disconsolately, hand in hand, rejecting the advances of their nurse girls and uncertain what to do until he appeared again.

Ngoni fathers had to be consulted in cases of sickness when the grandmother's remedies had failed and specialist help was needed. Then the father and his brothers and their father decided whether to summon a diviner or a herbalist, and arranged for the throwing of lots or the search for 'medicines', and paid the agreed fee when the cure worked. 593 757

It was part of Ngoni tradition to keep the knowledge of death away from young children. The father was held responsible for seeing that his children were kept away from the hut where the corpse was awaiting burial, and from the funeral itself. When men and women of leading Ngoni families were buried at the edge of the kraal, and the fence enlarged so that the cattle stamped over the grave, the explanation given (though it was not the only reason) was that 'the young children should not know or fear death in this village'. 593 764 858

The physical surroundings of the small child

The two diagrams, overleaf, illustrate the layout of the hut and compound in typical Ngoni households. Some of these 342 351

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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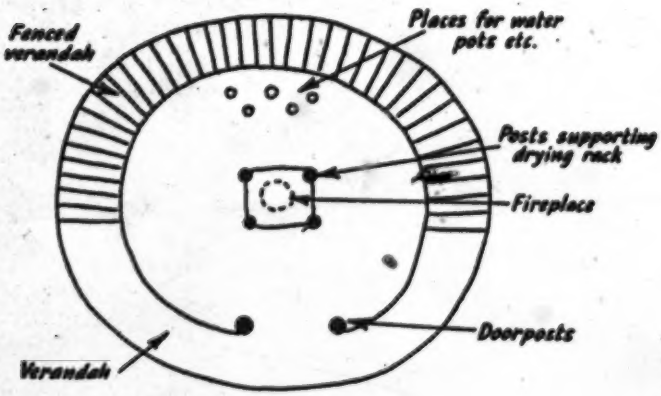

DIAGRAM OF HUT

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417

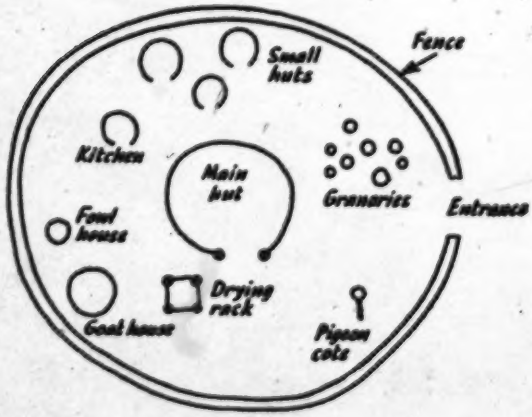

DIAGRAM OF HOUSEHOLD COMPOUND

[p. 74]

Some of these
surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some 342
repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage 351
for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several re- [128]
spects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance
of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish
between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of [171]
the household objects were indeed the same as those used by
other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration
about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept
in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural
significance about some of the features of Ngoni households
mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found else-
where.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at
weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was
full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 342
'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right
hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with
interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical
roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and [824]
decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in [237]
four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two
main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling.
Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters
and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which [251]
gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this
platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for
the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots [354]
were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the
back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which
were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots hold- [415]
ing water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut
was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by
the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the
back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front 351
of the hut was a well-swept space, mudded and polished in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

All of them made their own axes, knobkerries and catapults for hunting. Some were interested in music and made shepherds' pipes, or one-stringed lyres, or hand pianos of metal strips affixed to a wooden base. They composed their own songs and airs for these instruments. Others showed ingenuity in making elaborate models of lorries and aeroplanes, or in carving heads of animals. Others liked to weave fibre into the wide-brimmed hats some herd-boys wore. 868 [411] [534] [533]

More significant still for their future social relationships, they began now to choose their own intimate friend and to form the friendship pacts which were characteristic of Ngoni society, and regarded by adults as important in the child's development. In the friendship pacts, especially those between boys, there was no implied or manifest restraint. They could have 'joking relations', and hence say outrageous things to each other. They could quarrel and make it up, and defy each other's wishes and decisions, without a final breach. The relationship between friends often lasted into later adult life, and was probably all the stronger for the occasional lapses and outbursts, and by the fact that in the daily companionship of friends the burden of observing 'respect' did not oppress them. 572

The boys' dormitory

The hut known as the boys' dormitory and the whole system of living which it represented was a traditional feature of Ngoni village life. In their culture it had three main purposes. Formerly, when as they said 'War was our school', it was the place where boys slept and lived together, and where they learned to defend themselves and to obey authority. It was in a sense the preparatory school for the regiment, and the herding of cattle was the basis of the curriculum. Once a boy went to sleep in a dormitory he never left it until he married, unless he was seriously ill. In the days of warfare, he learned in the dormitory and out herding the cattle, a knowledge of the bush and its wild life and of his fellows, and 182 575 342

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which
182 he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was
called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount.
342 Dormitory life was therefore rooted in the Ngoni past and
though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared
with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the
organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a neces-
575 sary training ground for young manhood. In very large vil-
[342] lages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a
[621] section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys be-
longed to the dormitory of that section where their parents'
household was situated. There were occasional attempts
sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory
[797] for boys who were baptized Christians or in an inquirers'
class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the
Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to
divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an
important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' de-
velopment, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled.
They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory
system except on the geographical lines already mentioned,
which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining
purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

575 The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they
562 had their second teeth, from the influence of the women.
861 Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all
women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in
favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking
Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and
[177] often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and
practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly
in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that
[186] dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract
non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them
so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision
at what they considered a crucial stage.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

142
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14. Mother and babies

142
302
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[facing page 96]

15. Nursemaids with their charges

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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22, 23. Herd boys

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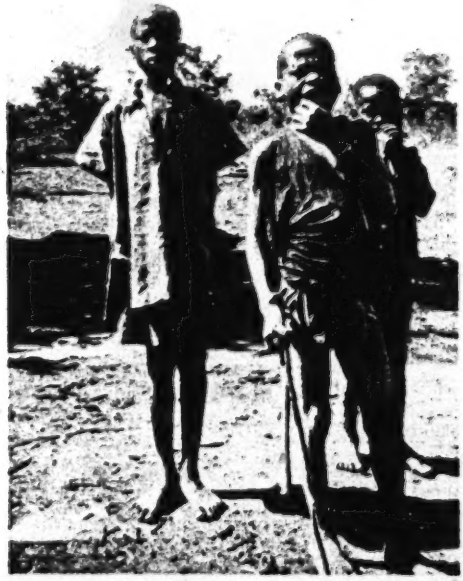

[Facing page 128]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

372
516
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868

24. Learning to make fire

25. Explaining how to do it

[facing page 129]

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

198 [223] [233] [533]

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

241 476

The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

476 342 [461] [535]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

476 having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river
342 with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

463 Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established
[177] and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft.
281 Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from
[411] skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons,
322 wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most
[413] Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what
285 was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope
283 for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

534 Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Women's skills: Guardianship of property

Ngoni social organization, as we saw in Chapter I, placed the guardianship of all wealth except cattle in the hands of the women who were heads of houses. As a Ngoni girl grew towards adulthood and the time drew nearer when she would marry and leave her home for a strange village, the leading women of her father's house initiated her into the skills needed to create and preserve the forms of property for which she would some day be responsible. 429 462 868

First among these skills came the care of the hut and compound. The framework and roof of the huts were built by men, but the walls were mudded and the floors of the hut and veranda were strengthened and polished by women. Ngoni women of good family did not often do the actual plastering of mud upon the wooden framework of the hut. It was considered too dirty and exhausting a job for them to do, but they had to know how it should be done, and what standards of good work involved, in order that they might later instruct others. During a hut building Ngoni girls might be seen tucking up their clothes and rather half-heartedly slapping mud on the walls, to the good-humoured jesting of the village women who were vigorous and expert at the job. The girl's grandmother stood by and said at intervals: 'That is too thick; it will fall off. Fill up those cracks. Smooth over those joins,' and so on. The girls shrugged their shoulders and obeyed while Grandmother was watching, but gave up as soon as she went away. 462 342

The flat-ended flails with which the floor was beaten were heavy and girls were generally unable to use them expertly, but they were made to watch the process, with its seemingly endless beating of the earth floor compounded of river mud, ant-hill clay and cowdung. Once the floor was beaten so that it was level and all cracks had disappeared, the Ngoni girls were made to get down on their knees and learn how to polish it with damp ashes and a smear of cowdung, rubbed [413] 356 868 [237]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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26. Making clay figures

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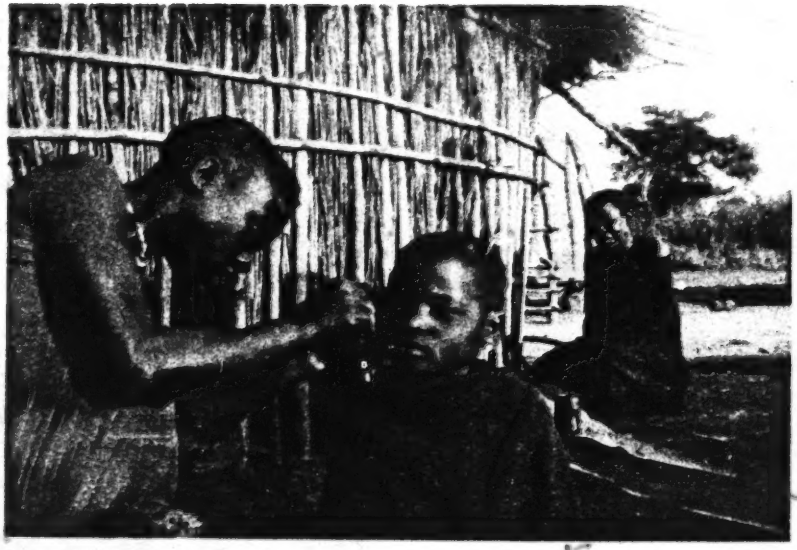

[facing page 144]

27. Ear piercing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

482
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342
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28. Learning to carry wood

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412
291

29. Learning to pound

[facing page 145]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [586] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 291 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, [177] but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [986] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

● 342 The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 356 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 462 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a [591] hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 423 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 241 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [343] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 241 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

I. Preparing meat for a gall-bladder ceremony. The leader of the bride's party sits on the left with her helper while the meat is cut up by the master of ceremonies.

II. Bride kneeling on mat outside her husband's mother's hut. Standing behind her are the three women of her party.

[Facing P. 126]

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds,
245 seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and
671 banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little
[177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a
[132] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of
311 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush.
648 In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre-
185 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning
[622] of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve
361 the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected
362 (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built
[342] of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's
648 journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 one Ngoni area to another, and it is evident that they are well aware
184 that they met with different kinds of white contact. A frequent topic of discussion in villages is the differences between the administration of N. Rhodesia and of Nyasaland, as well as the policy and attitudes of the different missions.

177 There is, however, one common factor in the situation called culture contact, existing wherever the Ngoni meet any Europeans.
186 Like the Zulu, the Ngoni do not necessarily take kindly to white ways nor desire to make an extensive imitation of white culture. Their racial and cultural pride makes them cling to their own institutions and resent the assertion of white superiority in every sphere of life. This is evident in material culture as well as in the realm of political and social values. The Ngoni are well known for their skill in house-
[342] building, yet they prefer their own of poles and mud, and are slow to take to brick houses. Their houses, both in the villages and on the copper mines, were noticeably bare of ' store goods ', and their expenditure on clothes and ' trash ' is low in comparison with the wages earned. Their standards of hospitality, of courtesy, and of mutual assistance they believe to be much superior to the Europeans. They carried on their own system of courts by themselves until it was
[692] recognized by the Native Courts Ordinance a few years ago, and they speak with scorn of the chief who cannot decide his own cases and has to have recourse to the Boma. Several times in the villages, when describing their agricultural methods, or hygiene for young men, or moral training of children, they have said to me, ' Write that we knew this before the *Azungu* came '.

On one count they do concede superiority to the Europeans. 'Only
186 in war the *Azungu* knew better ', and that to the Ngoni was the acid
726 test. In Mpezeni's and Gomani's countries, where they were conquered by force of arms, they knew they had to yield as they had made others yield in their day. Yet even here they find a cause for pride. ' No one ever conquered us until the *Azungu* came, and no one will conquer us again until they first conquer the *Azungu*.' This I have had said to me many times by men when speaking of their experiences as carriers and as *askari* in the East African campaign. They add as explanation, ' We went to the war of the Germans because the Boma said we should go. But we wanted also to see if the English would

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approxi- [231] mately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

619 The important positions in the old political structure were occupied by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mulumuzana*, pl. *alumuzana*. [4] *Nduna*, pl. *induna*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from those of their wives. 592 [882] [858] [595] 423

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cooking and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda. 342 [343] [252]

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized. 621

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalaweni, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were founded. 621 103

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of individuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary, 621 622 [103]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIII

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1. Storing finger millet. The untidily thatched building on the right is a dormitory for boys

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2. A queen brewing beer. It is only important people who own oil drums

NGONI

[Facing P. 208]

/5 cont'd/

614 Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni
551 families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the
506 Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man
438 and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman,
591 although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

361 In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing
351 the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here.
342 Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as
423 well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they
882 have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of
342 the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The
[524] walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used
[353] for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the wealther. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

342 /5 cont'd/ With both bamboo and Pole huts, The
[962] construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and
[353] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September,
[921] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is co-operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and
[476] help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer,
[465] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

343 Storehouses are built of bamboo or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household
[692] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in
[241] separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

/11 cont'd/

241 The busiest time of the year in the garden is at the beginning of the rains, when there is much work to be done planting and weed-
[136] ing, and scaring away the monkeys and wild pigs. Later on, in the new year, after the garden has been weeded twice, it is possible to think of enlarging the garden at one edge, and if it is not too late, the newly cleared portion may be planted with a catch crop. Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out
[476] to some extent co-operatively, either on a mutual help basis between two women, or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner of the garden. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink on the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrive at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subse-
[273] quent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set
[576] aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden.

/12/ Towards the end of the rains, there is less cultivating to be done, but the ravages of wild animals become more serious, and many families sleep for two or three months in the garden, returning to the village only to obtain food. Garden shelters are simple open-sided affairs with a thatched roof, but those owners who intend to
[342] sleep in their gardens for a long time, build small circular huts as in the village, or conical shelters with the roof reaching to the ground.
[417] A few lookout platforms built in trees are used as vantage points for spotting wild animals. If a man has a garden a long way from the village, particularly across a stream which will be in spate in the late rains, he may build a byre for his cattle at the garden.

Maize and ground-nuts are the first crops to be harvested, and later finger millet, root crops, and finally kaffir-corn. Maize is
251 stooked before the cobs are removed, and these are then dried on platforms before being carried to the village to be stored.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and nursemaids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving. 593 862 178

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*laweni*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *laweni*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father. 513 592

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *laweni* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary. 264 [343] [251] 356 593

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she 342 [415]

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the
137 rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

311 In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose
361 it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

361 The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe
351 formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
● [343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

There were two focal points in each village, reproduced
621 on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
[554] the 'big house'[1] at the head of the kraal, where the leading woman had her home.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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8. A well-filled grain store

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[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

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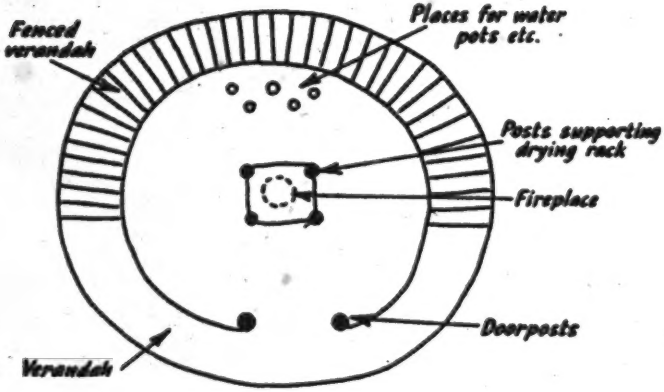

DIAGRAM OF HUT

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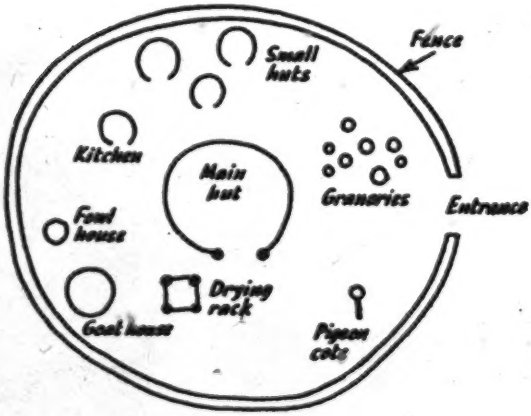

DIAGRAM OF HOUSEHOLD COMPOUND

[p. 74]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been announced, and from that vantage-point she could command the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[556] do women would have four or five of them bulging with maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch children there. There were much smaller mortars for pounding ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
415 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow winnowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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26. Making clay figures

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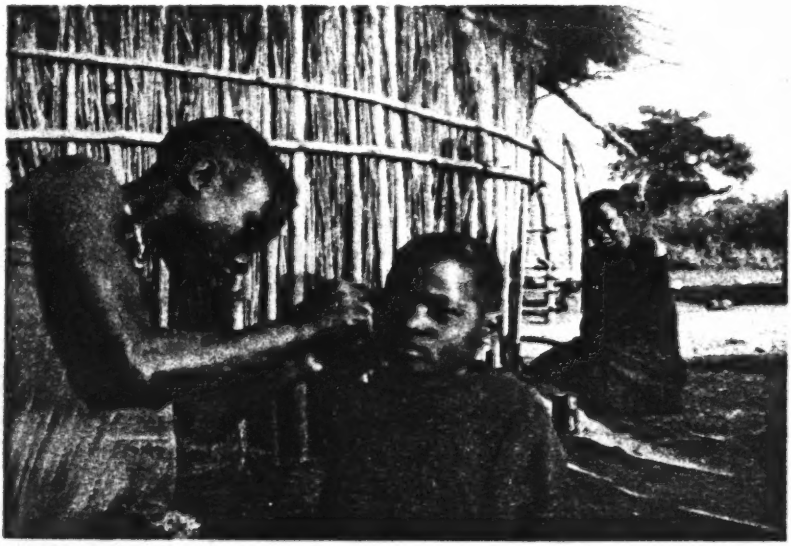

[facing page 144]

27. Ear piercing

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [586] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 291 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, [177] but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [386] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 342 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 356 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require 462 rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a [591] hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 453 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 291 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [343] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 291 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 24 343 241 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 262 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 462 [559] [594] [437]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

after a year or so. If he keeps it going himself he visits his own village for a week or two at a time to tend the garden, and stores the produce with a relative in the village. If, however, a man intends to reside for many years in his wife's village, he gives away his garden and concentrates his labours in his wife's garden. After a year or two he builds her a storehouse in her village and the couple begin to keep their own supplies separate from those of her relatives.

Even when the couple have their own storehouse it is considered proper if from time to time they are given maize by their parents. If a woman living virilocally goes to visit her parents and relatives and returns without maize or flour her husband's relatives are likely to laugh at her and say 'She must come from a very poor family'.

Uxorilocal residence is described by the vernacular term *cikomwene*. In its most general usage this word refers to the obligations a man owes to his wife's parents, particularly at the beginning of his marriage. It has three specific meanings:

(i) Uxorilocal residence.

(ii) Assistance rendered from time to time by a man in his wife's mother's garden.

(iii) A hoeing party of men and women from the man's village which works in his wife's mother's garden.

Uxorilocal residence is classed with these other two aspects of affinal obligation and like them it can be avoided completely, shirked, or executed in full. The extent to which the obligations are fulfilled

Table XIV. Virilocality and Uxorilocality, 1948-9

Wife's residence	Husband's residence		Total
	Rural	Away	
Virilocal ..	72	14	86
Uxorilocal ..	24	20	44
Total	96	34	130
Ratio of virilocal to uxorilocal wives	3	0·7	1·95

Association between husband's residence and wife's residence

$\chi^2 = 12{\cdot}83$ $P < {\cdot}001$

Informants as in Table XIII

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the lieutenants are more under the control of the chief of the county, who may intervene to depose a lieutenant if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material Setting

361 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the [343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the [417] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of aloes.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually *bedinan*, pl. *mabedinan*; otherwise *mfumu yamunzi*, pl. *mafumu wamunzi*. The specific term for headman of a cadet or commoner village is *mwisimunzi*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the 592
same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are
unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dor-
mitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for [882]
girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their up-
bringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be.
Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their [858]
elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with
another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives,
although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their [595]
chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from 423
those of their wives.

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There 342
is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patri-
local and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable
rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be
referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens
near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cook- [343]
ing and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no
separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the [252]
veranda.

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in 621
which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered,
and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the
village are organized.

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given 621
by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded 103
by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalaweni, meaning
'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are
also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom
they were founded.

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this 621
type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of in- 622
dividuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder [103]
of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate
unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present
headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the
Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary,

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIII

251
342
343
415

1. Storing finger millet. The untidily thatched building on the right is a dormitory for boys

273
415
342
354

2. A queen brewing beer. It is only important people who own oil drums

NGONI

[Facing P. 208]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as 361
stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village 166
is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man [311]
has to go farther and farther from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of regenerated land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a [768]
portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1898 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested [648]
areas.

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county [648]
chief, and village headman. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headman and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The first people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till [343]
later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Rattray, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the [622]
headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to [184]
be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and 221
is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the 361
new one is gradual, as, unless the distance between the sites is too 166
great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until 241
they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Rattray, *Folk-Lore Stories*, pp. 109–11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 203–5, gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Shelters are erected on

the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may stay behind to look after the cattle. Streams are in spate at this time of year, and some men build garden byres to which they move their cattle to avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the gardens is important from the point of view of inter-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so that they are adjacent to those of kindred from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in *her* dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organizing public works, and that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as reported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and may be up to 20 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead. Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle

[1] Elmslie, p. 37.

342 /5 cont'd/ With both bamboo and pole huts, the
[962] construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and
[353] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September,
[221] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is
[476] operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer,
[465] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

● 343 Storehouses are built of bamboo or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household
[692] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in
[241] separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

/6 cont'd/

417 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions [136] in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

231 /7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [136] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

417 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [285] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [95] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may 343 have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasional- [511] ly open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Capital, court and chief's village*

634 We have spoken of the headquarters of the county segment as the capital of the county, and this is in accord with vernacular usage. Although each chief is head of his county segment, no chief lives in his capital village. Each has made his segment and set up a village of his own. This process continues with each successive chief, each making his own new village. When brick buildings [344] were made during the 1930s to house the newly recognized Native Courts, these were located near the villages of the reigning chiefs. Some of these are still in office, while others have died and their successors live in their new villages, some of which are as much as two miles away from the court. There are thus in some counties three foci of political interest. There is the capital village, the court, and the chief's village. Associated with each centre are different leaders and different activities. The capital village provides a link with the past, and in particular with that moment in the past at which the segment was founded. The Paramount Chief [643] retains special rights in his capital village and can make a garden for one year on the old site of his county capital whenever it moves to a new one. Most, if not all, capital villages are larger than the average village but the senior lieutenants of the county segments do not live in them, for like the chiefs, they have made their own villages. Nevertheless, the lieutenants who do live in the capital [554] are regarded as people of considerable importance in the county. Meetings are sometimes held in the capital but more frequently at the county court or in the chief's village. The court is the home of the Native Authority, and it is there that the affairs of the Administration are discussed. An incident well illustrates the association of the court with the Administration. I once called at the house of a county chief who had not previously met me. He insisted that I should go to the court to meet him there, as that was where he always met Administrative officials. County meetings are called at the court to discuss matters raised by the Administration in its letters to chiefs, and to formulate requests and complaints for transmission to the Administration. The court clerk, the Native Authority councillors, assessors, and messengers are much in evidence, while the traditional advisers of the chief, his senior lieutenants, may be in the background even if they are not silent. Meetings of this kind are usually called by county chiefs, but occasionally a meeting may be held open to the whole tribe. I have described elsewhere the procedure at a county meeting.[22]

692 648 634 647

[22] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 107-9.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
648 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[684] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[696] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
● 344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building
361 other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased importance to the Native Authority centre. Already there have been one or two attempts at opening shops near the courts to cater for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, assessors, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

344
331

PLATE X. Thatching a school roof. The county chief has told men from nearby villages to do this work.

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493
516

PLATE XI. A mobile post office halted near a county court.

[Facing p. 168]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the circular court-house in a commanding position on a small hill with a big open space all round it. 361

There were several places in this village which were referred to as the *bwalo*: they included the open space within the reed fence of the Paramount's section, the much larger open and unfenced space round the court-house, and the more restricted spaces round the huts of the *induna* and of the headman. The meaning of the term *bwalo* was always slightly ambiguous in this village since it was often used for the verandah of the royal residence, as well as the open space in front of it. The central Ngoni custom of surrounding the huts of important men and women with high reed fences with a narrow opening, made it easy to say '*ali pa bwalo*', 'he is on the *bwalo*', so that it covered either the verandah of the hut or the space inside the fence. The local usage of *bwalo* by the Cewa people more often denoted the open space in the middle of the village where the men congregated to sit and talk and drink beer.[1] The connotation of *bwalo* in Ngoni villages in the central kingdom was usually in terms of the big house and the space in front of it within the fence.

In Maganga the place to which the name *bwalo* was most often applied was the space within the reed fence surrounding the Paramount's large brick residence and the outbuildings. When I lived in one of the outbuildings at the back of the house, I was said to be living *pa bwalo*; and 643
it was also alluded to as *pa cigodlo*, that is in the enclosure where the 342
Paramount's children lived behind the big house. His daughter's hut 361
was in this section, on the north side, and beyond her hut was that of the *mlomo wenkosi*, who was also the Paramount's brother-in-law, since he had married the Paramount's sister and was the brother of the Paramount's wife. In the other buildings within the reed fence lived several servants of the household, and at the kitchen end of the brick house lived the girls who assisted the Paramount's wife with cooking and looking after her younger children.

When the Paramount built his court-house, he built some offices as 344
part of it for himself, his *mlomo wenkosi*, his treasurer and the court 643
clerk. The intention had been that official business would be carried out there, and relieve the big house of some of its many callers, and also ensure some measure of privacy for those who lived there. It proved very difficult to achieve this separation of public and private affairs, since the tradition that the Paramount was accessible to all his people at all times was persistent.

The entrance to the enclosure or *bwalo* of the big house was guarded 574
in the traditional manner. If strangers (and all visitors were called *alendo* 643
or strangers) arrived on the side road leading off the main road, they inquired from one of the huts there if the headman was present and waited till he arrived. The headman then went to tell the *induna* or the *mlomo wenkosi* that strangers had come, while they waited till the reply

[1] Scott, D. C. *Mang'anja Dictionary*. Edinburgh, 1892.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XVI

281
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349
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7. Drying a cow-hide at a funeral. A beast from the herd of the dead man has been killed for the mourners. The skin will be buried on top of the coffin

764
349

8. Later, at the same funeral. The body has been interred and the mourners are sitting round the grave, near the cattle-byre, listening to a sermon by a local preacher of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission

[Facing P. 225]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 565 631 644

when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingcwembe*, or big platter of the *inhosihazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *nhlanzi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inhosihazi* called for an *ingcwembe* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njolomole Nzunga I in the central kingdom

¶ Old Njolomole had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361 351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked *nsima* and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [574]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these cloths and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njolomole excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njolomole was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibambo

565 302

¶ Today Ngoni women are not easily recognized because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isihlutu*. The oil was *ipehla*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [177] [301]

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the
137 rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

311 In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited
361 their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

361 The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had
351 a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
[343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

There were two focal points in each village, reproduced
621 on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
[554] the 'big house'[1] at the head of the kraal, where the leading woman had her home.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

woman had her home. The other was the 'gate'[2] of the kraal 621
at the opposite end of the enclosure to the 'big house'. The [417]
name by which this 'gate' was known applied also to the
space on each side of the gap in the kraal fence through
which the cattle went out and came in—a gap which was
closed at night with heavy poles. Here at the gate the men [512]
of the village sat by day, ate their meals brought to them by
children from their wives' huts, talked, received strangers,
pursued their crafts, and supervised the return of the cattle
in the evenings.

In and around the main huts within the tall reed fences, 342
the life of a Ngoni household went on. Some of the huts
were rectangular, others round. All had a veranda built up
above the ground-level and shaded by the house roof. The
back parts of the veranda were often enclosed with mats to
make additional storage space. In old Ngoni households the 351
open space around the hut was kept swept and mudded and
polished like a floor, so that people could sit there in comfort
and cleanliness as well as on the veranda. Near the house 417
was one or more little reed platforms about five feet above
the ground, where kitchen utensils, gourds and vegetables
were laid to dry, and which were used to sit under as shelter
from the sun in the hot months. Large and small wooden 415
pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape, mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
always to be seen outside and around the hut, as well as
inside.

In each household, within the main hut, there were two 353
places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
door-posts at the entrance. These posts with the hollow for [354]
the fireplace in the centre of the floor divided the hut into
a right-hand and left-hand side—the men's side and the

[1] and [2] A short list of the vernacular terms for some these common Ngoni place-names is given at end of the book.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

It was the fathers who decided at what age a child should go to school, and having once enrolled the boy or girl and paid the fees, the fathers insisted on regular attendance. 593 [872]

All Ngoni fathers showed affection for their young children, some consistently and others when it occurred to them. They picked them up and carried them about, held their hand while they tried their first steps, listened to their attempts to speak correctly, held them in their arms when they sat on the veranda. In one village twin boys aged four were devoted to their father and he to them. When he walked about, he held a hand of each. When he sat on the veranda they were always beside him and he had an arm round each. When he was elsewhere, the twins wandered about the compound disconsolately, hand in hand, rejecting the advances of their nurse girls and uncertain what to do until he appeared again.

Ngoni fathers had to be consulted in cases of sickness when the grandmother's remedies had failed and specialist help was needed. Then the father and his brothers and their father decided whether to summon a diviner or a herbalist, and arranged for the throwing of lots or the search for 'medicines', and paid the agreed fee when the cure worked. 593 757

It was part of Ngoni tradition to keep the knowledge of death away from young children. The father was held responsible for seeing that his children were kept away from the hut where the corpse was awaiting burial, and from the funeral itself. When men and women of leading Ngoni families were buried at the edge of the kraal, and the fence enlarged so that the cattle stamped over the grave, the explanation given (though it was not the only reason) was that 'the young children should not know or fear death in this village'. 593 764 858

The physical surroundings of the small child

The two diagrams, overleaf, illustrate the layout of the hut and compound in typical Ngoni households. Some of these 342 351

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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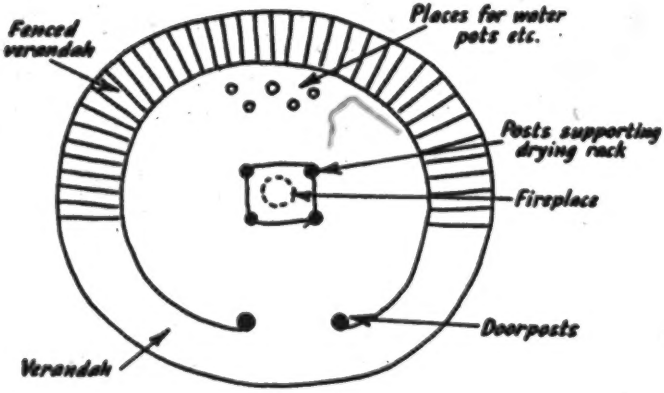

DIAGRAM OF HUT

351
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417

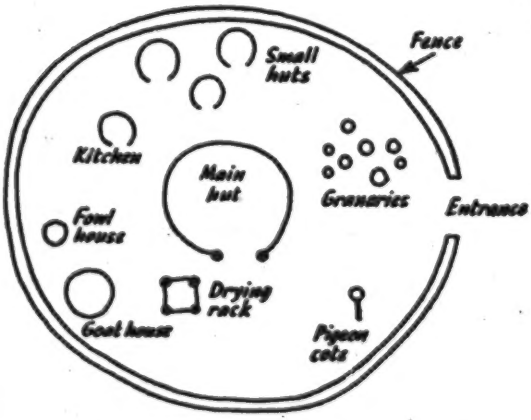

DIAGRAM OF HOUSEHOLD COMPOUND

[p. 74]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several respects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of the household objects were indeed the same as those used by other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural significance about some of the features of Ngoni households mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found elsewhere.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling. Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots holding water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front of the hut was a well-swept space, mudded and polished in

● 351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been announced, and from that vantage-point she could command the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[556] do women would have four or five of them bulging with maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch children there. There were much smaller mortars for pounding ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
415 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow winnowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to 351
make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, 415
and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry,
and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time [356]
sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into [513]
the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at
night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as [352]
pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fasci- [531]
nate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from 351
time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer [285]
was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child [273]
was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. [857]
These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked [231]
and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and
young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped 361
round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay 311
patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens',
and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or 857
grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work
in the gardens was an expedition for young children which
they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places for- 858
bidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone 867
with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep
away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where
the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had
passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of [562]
the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children
strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and
fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went
there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless
a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven
years old, because they found their fathers there and the
herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

356 in with a smooth round stone. This too was hard work, but every now and then the grandmother, watching and supervising, handed out a lump of clarified fat which quickly brought up a fine polish. The girls were told that this high polish was necessary so that people might sit with pleasure on the floor, and so that all dust and refuse showed up clearly in the morning sweeping of the hut. The floor of the veranda was similarly polished, and, as we saw in Chapter [351] IV, the more important huts had a smeared and polished space all round the front.

In arranging the inside of the hut girls were taught the 353 right places to put the water-jars and other pots, the baskets and mats, and the bundles of cloth and ornaments belonging to the 'house' wrapped in mats or packed neatly in wooden or tin chests. Brass and bead ornaments, and special cloths [301] for use by men and women on ceremonial occasions, were [292] all kept in the huts of leading women. The ornaments worn [768] by such a woman during her lifetime were returned to the 'house' after her death and looked after in the hut of her successor. These possessions and heirlooms were periodically 356 brought out into the sun, and shaken and aired or polished. A housewife was publicly shamed if she did not take care of such property, and people spread stories that she was careless about keeping the wealth of the house in good repair. Girls were reminded of this when they were called to help at such a 'spring cleaning', and told as a warning: 'So-and-so in that village over there, she let the insects eat the cloth of the house. The mildew spoiled the bead-bands and waistcoats. The green rust came on the brass wire. She was shamed when men spoke about it.'

Part of the property of each household was the food stored 251 after harvest or gathered from the bush. Formerly the Ngoni stored their staple cereal in pits dug in the kraal, mudded and fired and covered with a flat rock. The same kind of pit was sometimes made in the side veranda for storing sweet potatoes, but nothing was stored in the kraal.

/5 cont'd/

614 Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni
551 families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the
506 Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man
428 and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman,
591 although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

361 In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing
●351 the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here.
392 Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as
423 well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they
882 have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of
342 the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The
[324] walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used
[353] for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the wealther. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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● 352
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PLATE VIII. The clerk of a Native Court, with one of the court assessors, sits in the chief's village issuing a permit for selling beer to a man who has come on behalf of his sister.

[222]

PLATE IX. A Native Authority councillor, sitting on the verandah of the Native Court in his county, issues passes to men wishing to collect caterpillars. There are no edible caterpillars in Ngoniland, and Ngoni who wish to collect them provide themselves with passes to show to the Cewa chiefs in whose counties caterpillars are found.

[Facing p. 153]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fascinate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens', and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work in the gardens was an expedition for young children which they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places forbidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven years old, because they found their fathers there and the herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

/8 cont'd/

285 the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found [482] and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now 415 very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat 412 porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. [531] Wooden hemispherical pats, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

412 At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzilia quanzensis or Monotes trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is [531] a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four [504] inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones [426] or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are 352 sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make [463] a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

/8 cont'd/

352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled 285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any 513 headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts [77] and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

/9/ V

412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of furnaces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used, [325] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa [567] slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid 493 wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the [291] village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle, [493] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of 411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about 224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Maravi FR4
Ngoni FR5

whole frame-work is secured by bark lashings, the walls, inside and out, and the floor are plastered with mud from an ant-hill, mixed with a little cow dung, if possible. In some houses the walls do not reach up to the roof, leaving a space through which smoke may escape and air enter. M 342

At Chipoli and at Mangoche houses were built on piles and in trees respectively to avoid lions. A house is occupied by a man and his wife and any young children; no elder relations are allowed to sleep there. The children, when aged about five years, go to live with the maternal grandmother till their first *isyago*; there may be thus a dozen or more children living with the grandmother, who feeds them and sometimes also provides clothing. Such children are said not to have coitus with each other as they are relations. After *isyago*, if not married, the girls go to live again at their grandmother's house, the boys to the *nyumba ya bwalo*, four to ten or more using such a house as a dormitory. They get their food from the grandmother, visit her and may use her utensils, sit on her bed, but never so with their mother. M 342 592 M [836]

In houses where there are partitions or verandah rooms these smaller rooms are often used as bed chambers, and always as store rooms for baskets, pots, hoes, etc. The native usually sleeps on a mat laid on the ground; in some cases the ground is raised into a kind of dais (Angoni and at Mangoche). Among Yao and many Mañanja, wooden beds are now used, introduced from the coast. The Angoni make wooden stools from conveniently shaped branches (Fig. 10). The native has so few belongings that he makes nothing in the way of shelves, nor hooks for hangings. Clothes are stored in baskets. The hut is kept swept and all refuse deposited on a dust heap near the hut. M 342 352 N [352] Y [352] M [356]

FIG. 10.

The doorway is closed by a door made of reeds and grass bound together. This is placed against the inside of the doorway, and a pole dropped in between two sets of supports. In the day time the door often rests against a fifth support. There are no windows and the smoke finds its way out through the roof thatch. A guest house (*kuka*) with fence (*chimbunde*) round it used to be found in villages, but does not exist any longer. M 342 M [344]

There are no ceremonies connected with the building of a house or the preparation of the materials for its construction. There are no household gods. The fire must be in the middle of the hut, and on one side is the bed. Any people visiting the hut must remain on the opposite side of the fire, except "friends," and on no account must children go round to the other side, because under the bed the woman's diapers are laid to dry. The fire must not be touched by the male children, but is tended by the girls. The fire is generally kept burning continuously, but it is of no consequence if it goes out—a burning branch is brought from a neighbouring hut. At the death of a headman or other person in the village all fires are extinguished, fresh fire is then made in the dead man's house and from this passed from hut to hut. There is only one method of making fire, that is, the fire stick. M 354 [574] M [768] [372]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape, mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
always to be seen outside and around the hut, as well as
inside.

In each household, within the main hut, there were two 353
places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
door-posts at the entrance. These posts with the hollow for [354]
the fireplace in the centre of the floor divided the hut into
a right-hand and left-hand side—the men's side and the

[1] and [2] A short list of the vernacular terms for some these common Ngoni place-names is given at end of the book.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled,
[721] they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[648] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British administration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

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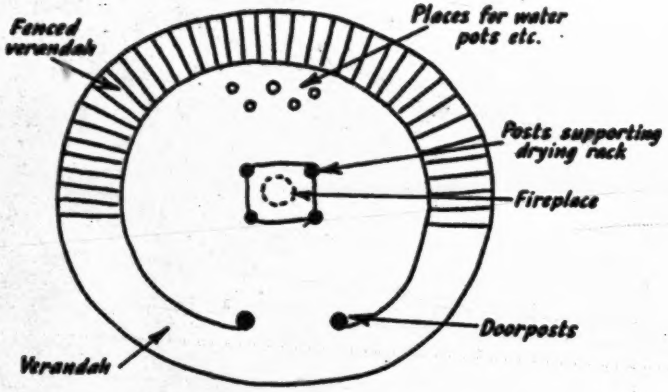

DIAGRAM OF HUT

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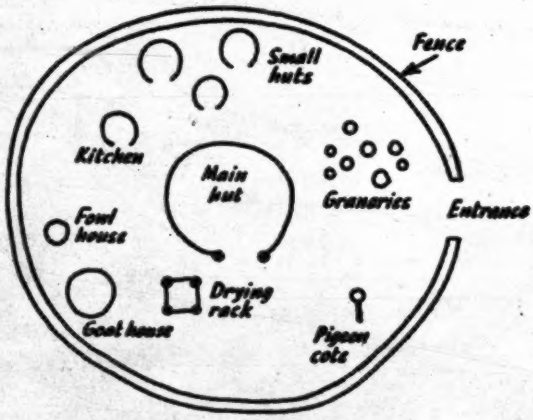

DIAGRAM OF HOUSEHOLD COMPOUND

[p. 74]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

356 in with a smooth round stone. This too was hard work, but every now and then the grandmother, watching and supervising, handed out a lump of clarified fat which quickly brought up a fine polish. The girls were told that this high polish was necessary so that people might sit with pleasure on the floor, and so that all dust and refuse showed up clearly in the morning sweeping of the hut. The floor of the veranda was similarly polished, and, as we saw in Chapter [351] IV, the more important huts had a smeared and polished space all round the front.

353 In arranging the inside of the hut girls were taught the right places to put the water-jars and other pots, the baskets and mats, and the bundles of cloth and ornaments belonging to the 'house' wrapped in mats or packed neatly in wooden or tin chests. Brass and bead ornaments, and special cloths [301] for use by men and women on ceremonial occasions, were [292] all kept in the huts of leading women. The ornaments worn [768] by such a woman during her lifetime were returned to the 'house' after her death and looked after in the hut of her successor. These possessions and heirlooms were periodically 356 brought out into the sun, and shaken and aired or polished. A housewife was publicly shamed if she did not take care of such property, and people spread stories that she was careless about keeping the wealth of the house in good repair. Girls were reminded of this when they were called to help at such a 'spring cleaning', and told as a warning: 'So-and-so in that village over there, she let the insects eat the cloth of the house. The mildew spoiled the bead-bands and waistcoats. The green rust came on the brass wire. She was shamed when men spoke about it.'

Part of the property of each household was the food stored 251 after harvest or gathered from the bush. Formerly the Ngoni stored their staple cereal in pits dug in the kraal, mudded and fired and covered with a flat rock. The same kind of pit was sometimes made in the side veranda for storing sweet potatoes, but nothing was stored in the kraal.

/5 cont'd/

614 Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni
551 families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the
576 Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man
428 and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman,
591 although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

361 In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing
351 the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here.
342 Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as
423 well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they
882 have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of
342 the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The
[524] walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used
[353] for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of pole and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the weather. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

342 /5 cont'd/ With both bamboo and pole huts, the
[962] construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and
[353] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September,
[221] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is co-operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and
[476] help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer,
[465] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

343 Storehouses are built of bamboo or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household
[692] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and ground-
[241] nuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

/7 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household, 415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or [511] china crockery.

323 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every [462] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood. [439] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol [415] and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves [824] of the mbwabwa tree.

285 Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men, [353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be [464] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings [491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often [493] made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /8/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

woman had her home. The other was the 'gate'[1] of the kraal 621
at the opposite end of the enclosure to the 'big house'. The [417]
name by which this 'gate' was known applied also to the
space on each side of the gap in the kraal fence through
which the cattle went out and came in—a gap which was
closed at night with heavy poles. Here at the gate the men [512]
of the village sat by day, ate their meals brought to them by
children from their wives' huts, talked, received strangers,
pursued their crafts, and supervised the return of the cattle
in the evenings.

In and around the main huts within the tall reed fences, 342
the life of a Ngoni household went on. Some of the huts
were rectangular, others round. All had a veranda built up
above the ground-level and shaded by the house roof. The
back parts of the veranda were often enclosed with mats to
make additional storage space. In old Ngoni households the 351
open space around the hut was kept swept and mudded and
polished like a floor, so that people could sit there in comfort
and cleanliness as well as on the veranda. Near the house 417
was one or more little reed platforms about five feet above
the ground, where kitchen utensils, gourds and vegetables
were laid to dry, and which were used to sit under as shelter
from the sun in the hot months. Large and small wooden 415
pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape, mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
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places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
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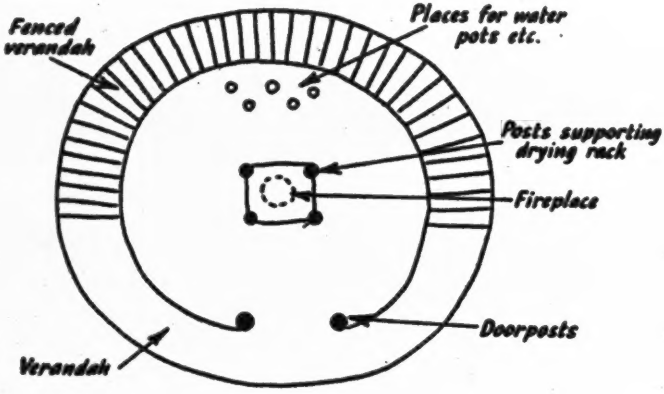

DIAGRAM OF HUT

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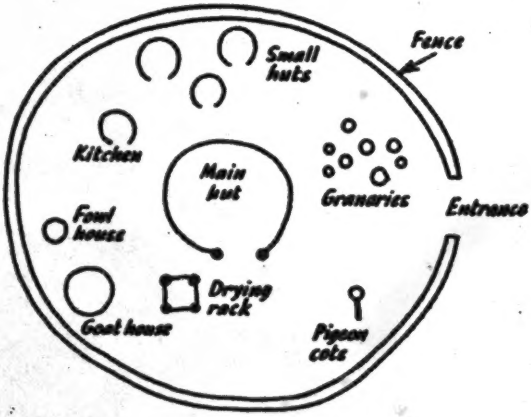

DIAGRAM OF HOUSEHOLD COMPOUND

[p. 74]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Some of these
surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some 342
repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage 351
for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several re- [128]
spects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance
of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish
between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of [171]
the household objects were indeed the same as those used by
other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration
about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept
in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural
significance about some of the features of Ngoni households
mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found else-
where.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at
weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was
full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 342
'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right
hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with
interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical
roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and [824]
decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in [237]
four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two
main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling.
Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters
and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which [251]
gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this
platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for
the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots [354]
were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the
back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which
were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots hold- [415]
ing water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut
was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by
the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the
back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front 351
of the hut was a well-swept space, mudded and polished in

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIII

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415

1. Storing finger millet. The untidily thatched building on the right is a dormitory for boys

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354

2. A queen brewing beer. It is only important people who own oil drums

NGONI

[Facing P. 208]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and nursemaids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving. 593 862 178

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*lawesi*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *lawesi*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father. 513 592

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *lawesi* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary. 264 [343] [251] 356 593

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she 342 [415]

was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

The tables which follow show the total population of three villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Men	2 Women	3 Widows	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Kwenini .	83	10	21	98	39	10	4	6	21
Kudindani .	15	9	21	21	51	4	1	6	13
Ekhungeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	39
Central kingdom									
Cinkwita .	39	20	39	54	113	13	5	4	8
Mangoso .	80	41	63	78	184	9	18	9	4
Mzukhulu	100	71	112	68	251	30	16	14	18

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *hungule* and *gupo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *hanja* was not found in the north.

The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *nsdumuzana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *nsdumuzana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fascinate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens', and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work in the gardens was an expedition for young children which they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places forbidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven years old, because they found their fathers there and the herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Women's skills: Guardianship of property

Ngoni social organization, as we saw in Chapter I, placed the guardianship of all wealth except cattle in the hands of the women who were heads of houses. As a Ngoni girl grew towards adulthood and the time drew nearer when she would marry and leave her home for a strange village, the leading women of her father's house initiated her into the skills needed to create and preserve the forms of property for which she would some day be responsible. 429 462 868

First among these skills came the care of the hut and compound. The framework and roof of the huts were built by men, but the walls were mudded and the floors of the hut and veranda were strengthened and polished by women. Ngoni women of good family did not often do the actual plastering of mud upon the wooden framework of the hut. It was considered too dirty and exhausting a job for them to do, but they had to know how it should be done, and what standards of good work involved, in order that they might later instruct others. During a hut building Ngoni girls might be seen tucking up their clothes and rather half-heartedly slapping mud on the walls, to the good-humoured jesting of the village women who were vigorous and expert at the job. The girl's grandmother stood by and said at intervals: 'That is too thick; it will fall off. Fill up those cracks. Smooth over those joins,' and so on. The girls shrugged their shoulders and obeyed while Grandmother was watching, but gave up as soon as she went away. 462 342

The flat-ended flails with which the floor was beaten were heavy and girls were generally unable to use them expertly, but they were made to watch the process, with its seemingly endless beating of the earth floor compounded of river mud, ant-hill clay and cowdung. Once the floor was beaten so that it was level and all cracks had disappeared, the Ngoni girls were made to get down on their knees and learn how to polish it with damp ashes and a smear of cowdung, rubbed [413] 356 868 [297]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

356 in with a smooth round stone. This too was hard work, but every now and then the grandmother, watching and supervising, handed out a lump of clarified fat which quickly brought up a fine polish. The girls were told that this high polish was necessary so that people might sit with pleasure on the floor, and so that all dust and refuse showed up clearly in the morning sweeping of the hut. The floor of the veranda was similarly polished, and, as we saw in Chapter [351] IV, the more important huts had a smeared and polished space all round the front.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] beadbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear 301 the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took 356 an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain 515 standards in their homes and in their persons, which were 182 held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government [177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 181 356 515 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infect their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again. 825 356 [485]

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene which made them insist that there should be no spitting or nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An ingenious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose. 515 356 [413]

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean. 515 [576]

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up 264

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [586] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 29 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, [177] but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [286] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

342 The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 356 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 462 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a [591] hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 423 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 24 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [343] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 24 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

302 thorn stuck at the top of the *isihlutu*, and round it they put narrow bands
[301] of beads (*intuyeya* and *isincwayo*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion claws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*amasongo*) which they got from the Arabs,
291 or *ixipots*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft
565 dressed leather (*isidwaba*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped
[301] well over. A long piece of soft leather (*ingcayi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *ingcayi*
[304] were fastened small bells made of brass (*mgomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inkosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ngoma* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

565 The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in
644 these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their households and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indlunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *induna*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

●357 In addition to the *induna* in charge of the big house, the royal women
565 and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *alumuzana* were sur-
644 rounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*micetho*), girl companions (*ixidandani*), nurse girls (*alezi*) and older women attendants (*agogo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1930's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

292 The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the
644 clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

group consisted of himself and the mother and her children, including her daughters only until they married. 571 592

The affinal element in a house consisted of the other wives associated with the owner of the house as co-wives, and the wives of the sons of the owner. Both the kinship group and the affinal group were bound together by their rights in the cattle of the herd which was known as 'the cattle of the house of X'. From that herd were taken cattle for the *lobola* of the wives married after the house was founded, and for the wives of the sons and adopted sons of the house. Into that herd came the cattle received for the marriages of the daughters belonging to the house and the gift cattle sent to wives by their fathers after marriage. When the *lobola* had been fully paid up for a daughter of the house, then her relationship with it ceased and she was thenceforth known as belonging to her husband's mother's house. 592 585 571 [591]

Associated with the house in the villages of the Paramounts, the chiefs and the leading *alumuzana* were two other groups of people. One was the *induna* appointed 'to take care of the house' and his family. In the 1930's the *induna* was in charge of the cattle and of the many activities connected with the house, including the organization of male labour in hut-building, in kraal construction and in cultivation; he was consulted by the male members of the house about the selling of cattle and the use of the goods accumulated in the house. The other group associated with the house in pre-European days consisted of captives taken in war and allocated to the house who worked as labourers. The servants who worked for a house in the 1930's assisted with cooking, beer-making and minding the children, and they had huts near that of the owner of the house to which they belonged, placed on the right- or left-hand side of the kraal according to their affiliation with the big house or the second house. Informants said that in the past such association with a house included giving a beast from the herd of the house for the marriage of a servant. The *induna*, through the marriage of his daughters, built up his own herd, which he frequently kept at first with the cattle of the house in the main kraal, later building his own kraal. 592 571 357 [727]

A new house began when a man married his big wife. Although at first he built her a hut at the back of his mother's hut in his father's village, as soon as he moved out to his new village after his father's death, the big wife's hut had the next most important site in the kraal after that of the *indlunkulu*, and the second wife had the third place of importance. In some of the larger villages of the central kingdom, the custom of moving out into a new village after the death of the former owner had been given up, partly because of pressure on the land. The house grouping in relation to the siting of huts then became very complex, but the pattern was nevertheless discernible. The two sections under the big house and the *gogo* house, which had formerly divided into two villages, continued to exist together, and at Mcakhatha this dual 361 592 592 [768] 361 592

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

After this formal visit had taken place, the young mother was free to visit her former home more often, and her relatives could come and see her and her baby in her husband's village. 593 574

Taking care of the baby

There were two special features of infant care among the Ngoni which were not found among the neighbouring peoples. One was the assignment of a nurse girl from outside the circle of relatives to care for a new infant. The nurse girl was chosen by the grandmother from among her dependent household staff, and was allotted to one particular baby. The girl, who was usually in her early teens and unmarried, was supervised by an older woman, also of the grandmother's household. This woman watched over the personal behaviour of several nurse girls, as well as seeing that they did their work properly as nurses. 854 357 [592] [883]

The nurse girl took charge of the baby in the early morning and kept it with her all day until nightfall, bringing it back to the mother at more or less regular intervals for suckling. The mother played with the baby if she felt like it, and sent for the nurse girl to bring it to her if strangers came and she wanted to display the child. The Ngoni commended this practice by saying that their women kept clean because they did not carry babies about all day on their backs. They admitted at the same time that many infants grew greatly attached to their nurse girls, to the extent of being happier with them than with their mother. The nurse girls did not take little babies far afield. They stayed around within the fences of the household or near at hand, helping with domestic chores, chatting to other nurse girls, helping to prepare meals, and eating with the baby's mother and anyone else who formed part of the household eating unit. At night, after she had given the baby to its mother, she went off to sleep in the hut of the older woman who was in charge of her and other nurse girls.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 301
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602 855
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy and therefore to be removed from them when the time came for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with him, they sometimes carried him about while the nurse girl
[262] did something else, they ground bulrush millet or roasted ground-nuts to give him as snacks. They were particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[533] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he addressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
[554] measure of the authority which his father and his father's brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and grandmother's households. There were young children who were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 357
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organized through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

858 upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if
581 the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended not only on her own reputation and character, but on the household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive
561 group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one.
858 The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of
[603] the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training
357 ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl,
855 to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter into all her occupations and amusements. This companion, chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's household, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and ate in the same household.

In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her
561 circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their compan-
872 ions. There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this
[601] group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided that it would also be wise to send their girls to school, especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men, learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daugh-
[565] ters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and dignified behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV. Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and their presence in the compound conferred importance on their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter, dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats, spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to have a high standard of household management in her new home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish was being prepared. They watched every movement of their mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on, measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkucweni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni).

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Loangeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary bevies of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Cimpinga). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Fafazeni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thus Young, writing of the period 1835-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.[36] The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambera's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambera in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of

[36] Young, *History*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 12.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers, The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Para-
622 mount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was
[422] his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable
[446] that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were
[462] concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

361 Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village
622 headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of
[787] selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the
162 Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *nduna*, was used at all levels in the
691 residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet
621 founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant
624 was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was
[608] selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was
[554] created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 203*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*ff*, 109*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 464 648 law and order. In this, not only the Ngoni were concerned. There was a shortage of labour in Nyasaland and Mpezeni's raids prevented labourers reaching that country from the interior. The campaign against Mwase in 1895 was undertaken partly with the aim of opening up labour routes and Mpezeni's defeat carried this a stage further. The Collector at Kotakota wrote shortly after the war: 'It is quite safe to say that no greater assistance has been given to these districts (and in fact to the Protectorate) than this opening up of the Luapula Valley by the conquest of Mpezeni.'[138] Yet the Luapula is 350 miles from Fort Jameson. Even Ngoni technical skill in fighting was of value to the new conquerors, for within six [167] months of the war Ngoni fighting men were in Southern Rhodesia, not as allies of the Ndebele but as part of the British South Africa Police. Within ten months, the headquarters of segment 13 had been moved to make way for the new Administrative capital. With the defeat of Mpezeni, North-Eastern Rhodesia became a country.

178 361 648 A final point requires explication. Granted that the Ngoni social system had to change in this new complex social environment, and granted also that their activities, in particular raiding, had to be adapted to new demands on their labour, why did not the Ngoni continue to live in large villages as they had done hitherto? There are numerous analogies in Africa where segmentary social systems have been fitted into an Administrative framework, and where raiding has given way to migrant labour, and yet the pattern of settlement has remained the same. Why did the big Ngoni villages disappear after 1898?

Part of the answer to this question can be stated in ecological terms. In pre-conquest times, the dense population, human and bovine, the great stretches of cultivated land, and the manifest prosperity of the people impressed themselves vividly on contemporary observers accustomed to the scattered settlements of the surrounding tribes. Angus writes:

> 'Before us lay an undulating valley some miles in breadth, which, as the heavily timbered hills on either side proclaimed, had once been covered with forest, but was now denuded of every vestige of a tree. Village after village surrounded by waving cornfields, and green plains dotted with herds of cattle, stretched away into the distance. Never before in any of my African wanderings had I seen such an extent of land under cultivation; the cornfields seemed unending, and the size and number of the

[138] *B.C.A.G.*, v, 6 (30 April 1898), p. 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[107]

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfinsi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[108]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared.

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[109] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[110] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers

[107] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78.
[108] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[109] Deare, 'Blantyre resident', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.C.*, v, 3 (16 February 1898), p. 1.
[110] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.C.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1898), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

such as Sharpe, Thomson and Deare, and with my own information based on village histories. Combining this with the lowest estimate of population, we arrive at a population density of 100 persons to the square mile, while the highest estimate implies a density of 375. Highly unreliable as these figures are, it is clear that the density of population was considerably greater before the conquest than it is now, when it averages about 68 persons to the square mile. Even the present-day figure is nearly three times the density which the land can sustain in perpetuity.

This dense population was concentrated in large villages. Angus estimated that there were at least a thousand huts in Loangeni, while Deare estimated that there were sixteen hundred. Read states that it was over three miles across, while Genthe says that Ngoni villages were about five times the size of the average Cewa village. From the top of a mountain, Deare saw eleven villages all about the same size as Loangeni.[142] Thus it seems that there were several villages with populations of the order of three thousand. If Deare and Johnston are right in their estimates of tribal population the majority of the people lived in these big villages.

Yet by September 1898 the only villages left in Mpezeni's country were a few to the east of Fort Young. All the rest had been destroyed by troops, and their former inhabitants were said to be 'still timid' and living in scattered groups in grass shelters.[143] The large pre-conquest settlements were particularly vulnerable to attack by troops armed with guns and intent on burning, the more so because there were no defensive preparations at all. Glave wrote in 1894 that the Ngoni 'have no stockaded village, such protection they deem unnecessary as no enemy can be strong enough to attack them'.[144]

The large villages and the high density of population were appropriate only to a victorious military society, relying for at least part of its subsistence on raided crops and beasts produced outside its borders and for the rest on the maximum exploitation of the land inside them. When its enemies had been plundered and its own lands exhausted, it moved on. We can infer from Angus and from Sharpe, who wrote of 'entirely open' country,[145] that within the settled area most of the cultivable land was in use at the same time. Yet in many parts of the Fort Jameson area the soil is now exhausted after five years under maize and must be left for twenty-five years

[142] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 11 May; Read, 'Tradition', p. 475, fn. 2; Genthe, 'Mpezeni', p. 1.
[143] Sutton, memorandum dated 10 March 1901.
[144] Bl, fn. 399.
[145] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyasa', p. 243. For Angus, see pp. 109f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

effort to induce them to co-operate actively with the government, and by 1910 he was looking forward to reducing the number of White officials in the Administration by devolving much of the Native work on to the Natives themselves. Co-operation was encouraged by the payment of small stipends to chiefs and others, varying in the 1920s in annual value from £22 10s. 0d. for Mpezeni down to 6s. for district messengers.

The Ngoni for the most part neither supported nor opposed this scheme of administration; they merely accepted it. For years the Administration bemoaned the indifference of the Ngoni, but apart from an attempt by a mission to set up its teachers as headmen, there was little attempt to obstruct the work of the Administration.

In matters of land, the authority of the Whites was also dominant, but here the paternal amiability which characterized purely political relations between Administration and Ngoni was lacking. The alienation of land was at the instigation of the North Charterland, who considered themselves the owners of Ngoni country. Fort Jameson was built by the Administration in the middle of Ngoni country and the land round the township, few facilities though the town then had, became more valuable to potential settlers than more fertile but inaccessible tracts. The high density of population in Ngoni country also attracted settlers with the prospect of an adequate labour supply. Thus we find that many of the first tracts of land alienated were located in the middle of Ngoni country, in the most densely populated section. As early as 1 January 1904 the first Commission was appointed to inquire into land questions in Ngoni country.[18] Now that Ngoni had to grow their own food on land which had already been heavily exploited the density of population fell; but in relation to the carrying capacity of the land in perpetuity there was still serious overcrowding. During the unsettled period of the war and its aftermath, the population was dispersed, but from 1900 down to about 1930, in consequence of alienation and the formation of [illegible] villages were gradually brought closer together. From 1930 onwards, with the recognition of land shortage by the Administration, villages have been allowed to spread out again. The negotiations concerning where the Ngoni should live have been protracted and complicated; I hope to discuss them in a later work in connexion with the economic background of Ngoni social life. What is here significant about them is that to a very large extent these negotiations have been carried on entirely by Whites, with the Administration representing for the greater part Ngoni

[18] *N.E.R.G.G.*, ii, 1 (1 January 1904), pp. 30-1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

interests and those of neighbouring tribes against the North Charterland and the White settlers. Ngoni themselves have not been in a position to enforce their own point of view.

In the operation of the legal system White control has never been so complete, as we have indicated above. However the support given to the judgments of chiefs and others by the Administration prior to 1929 was political rather than legal, and the courts held by chiefs with or without the approval of the Administration did not form part of the same legal system as the Administration's own courts. In that year Native Courts with defined powers were established as part of the same legal system as other recognized courts in the British Empire, with ultimate connexion to the Privy Council.[10] In matters of religion White dominance has been achieved more slowly and has never been complete. But even in this field the religions brought by the Whites have triumphed over the cult of the chief's ancestors and to-day it is the Christians who are the ritual experts.

A parallel sequence of events has taken place in Nyasaland, save that there the amount of land alienated in the Fort Manning area has been small. A scheme of administration was given a legal basis in 1912, and was similar to that in Northern Rhodesia. It was revised in 1924, and in 1933 Native Authorities and Native Courts were set up.[11] The two principal missions in Fort Jameson District have stations in Nyasaland as well.

In both countries Ngoni have been required to pay tax. A hut tax was introduced on the Rhodesian side of the border in 1901 and at about the same time in Nyasaland. The annual rate has varied in Fort Jameson District from three to ten shillings. The imposition of tax has been of importance, not only in partly meeting the costs of Administration, but also in bringing Ngoni men and women into the wider economic system of farms, mines and offices of southern Africa.

[illegible] of their important external relations. Politics, settlement, litigation, religion and economic activity have all been moulded by the Whites. In many respects this has been a passive process, for little that the Ngoni have done or not done has been significant to the decision to set up Native Courts, or to expand the production of tobacco, or even to open up a mission of some new denomination.

[10] By Ordinance No. 33 of 1929. Subsequent legislation is contained in Ordinances No. 10 of 1936, 18 of 1940, and 21 of 1949.

[11] Legislation is to be found in Ordinances No. 13 of 1912, 11 of 1924, 13 of 1933 and 14 of 1933.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [361]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

[illegible] Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 641 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
648 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[684] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[696] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed
●361 welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased importance to the Native Authority centre. Already there have [illegible] for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, assessors, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 [178] water and the pyre, he was refusing, saying 'No, not in these days, but formerly.'

When Magona Ngozo was with Cikusi he was staying with him in the daytime. Magona had his own huts and Cikusi his. When eating, Cikusi ate alone, but afterwards he gave food to Magona. When Cikusi was washing it was together with Magona. When he went to the bush, they went together. When Cikusi was washing with the *tonga*, he was doing it with Magona. When the warriors were going out, Cikusi and Magona stood together, and they made fire for the medicines and they stood together in the smoke and then the warriors went out. So, when mentioning Magona, they said: 'the shadow of Cikusi'. When they were eating in the *bwalo*, the *nsima* (porridge) was brought to Cikusi, but if some *alumuzana* came, the wives of Magona cooked *nsima* and gave it to the *alumuzana*. When Cikusi died, Magona could take his wives if he wanted. The Ngozo man could tell the Paramount anything, good or bad, and stay like the mouth of the Paramount.

[762] When the Paramount died formerly, the Ngozo man dressed in his war-dress. When he came near the fire he danced with the shield in his hand. When the fire blazed up he ran and jumped on the fire. So the Maseko people gave cattle to the Ngozo people, to quieten their hearts because they were brothers. And when another Paramount was installed they gave an Ngozo man to stand with him. The father of the man who died with the Paramount received cattle and villages to rule over and gifts. The Paramounts gave cattle because they said: 'Since our brother is going to stand with the Paramount, if that Paramount dies, he also will be killed, so the Paramount ought to give cattle like *lobola* so they may quieten the hearts of his brothers.' Though these cattle are not given for a woman but for a man, any Maseko man ought not to marry an Ngozo woman because there is this brotherhood.

And this man of the Ngozo clan was like a chief because he had men to manage his affairs at his door, as did the Paramount. And if he died his funeral was like that of a chief. But the day the Paramount died the Ngozo man was killed. When the Paramount washed with medicines, he was washing with the Ngozo man. When drinking beer, he was drinking in the same hut as the Paramount. When the Paramount was sacrificing he was together with the Ngozo man, and they did not leave each other.

The Ngozo people have a thanking name (*izibongo*) Maphonya. It is they who were standing with the Paramounts, and the Ngozo people were [762] in the section of Ziyembe. Their avoidances were the same as all the Ngoni, especially fish and elephant. When Cikusi died Gulo stood with Gomani when he entered the chieftainship. Gulo was the son of Magona.

The royal village and the daily routine of the Paramount

643 ● 361 644 In Part I, Chapter II we referred to the process by which each Paramount, after his accession, went out from his father's village to build his own. The Ngoni called this *ukupumisa inkosi* (to send out the Paramount) and the term used for the new village, *lusengulu* (the needle), was said to signify 'the front village where you expect to find the Paramount'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Dr. Kuper described the Swazi king making his own capital, but referred also to the existence of several royal villages where the wives of the reigning king lived.[1] The Ngoni system of one royal village which went out from the former royal village resulted in a series of social groups, based on residence, which were related to past Paramounts and their widows and to present Paramounts and their wives. The diagram in Chapter III of Part I shows a very much simplified form of the component parts of a new royal village and their relationship illustrated by the siting of the huts.

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The following text was given by an elderly widow of a grandson of Zwangendaba, in the head village of Chief Mperembe in the northern kingdom.

¶ When a new village, *lusungulu*, was built the *indlunkulu* was first erected and then followed all the other huts of the *inkosi* in order. Those huts which belonged to the *indlunkulu* took the right-hand side facing the kraal. The second house took the left-hand side, and all huts belonging to this one followed it. Such huts could be counted as belonging to the *indlunkulu* and the second house by the cattle that were taken from such houses. To marry a new wife, if the *inkosi* took cattle from the right-hand house that new wife would belong there. All the huts of each house of the *inkosi* were built at the back of the hut of the owner of that house.

When erecting huts, those of the *izinduna* came next and were built next to those of the *inkosi*. After that they built their own according to their *izigawa* or divisions.

All the huts at the back of the *indlunkulu* and behind the other huts were called *cigodlo*. Huts near the gate of the kraal at the left were called *kwa cikulu*.

This text brings out the fact that each new royal village had three main elements in it: the mothers of the Paramount, his wives, and the *izinduna* and their families. The Paramount was always accompanied to his new village by one or more wives of his father, *ukulondolosa mntwana* (to keep the son). One of these was usually his own mother and she occupied the *indlunkulu*. The text points out that the big wife of the Paramount was on the right of the *indlunkulu*, and closely associated with its owner, the Paramount's mother.

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There was no fixed rule for the number of *izinduna* in charge of the houses of the Paramount's mothers and wives. When the Ngoni kingdoms were established in Nyasaland, the royal villages were very large and the divisions of the village, called in the text *izigawa*, were small hamlets. Each division was generally identified with a house, and in that case the *induna* in charge of the house was also in charge of the division. The original composition of royal villages could only be reconstructed by tracing the relationships of separate villages in the 1930's to their former parent village. This will be illustrated in the next chapter on the

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 41.

643 royal women. In the royal villages in the 1930's there was one big
361 *induna* and several lesser ones whose position and functions will be described in Chapter IV.

643 This 'going out' of the new Paramount's village, leaving the former
554 Paramount's village as the *gogo* village, brought about some re-distribu-
644 tion of authority, prestige and material goods. It gave the new Paramount his own village, always to be known as his, even after his death. His village became the focal meeting-place for the territory and for the court and territorial officials who surrounded the Paramount; and it was to the new royal village that the *alumuzana* in pre-European days came frequently to visit the Paramount and report to him on conditions in their areas. His moving out of the *gogo* village, on the other hand, gave his brothers who stayed there, and especially those of the *gogo* house, more freedom and authority within that village as well as responsibility for the conduct of all ritual matters relating to the kingdom. The Para-
[595] mount's big wife had to take her place as the leading woman in the new village and to order the affairs of the wives attached to her house in con-
[542] sultation with the Paramount's mother. Cattle, beer and food for the royal household became the concern of the new village, and the *izinduna* and the royal women had to plan and manage the economy of a capital where political interests converged and where visitors and hangers-on were constantly turning up.

643 The following text by Chief Mtwalo Jere in Mzimba district, helped
644 by Cibambo's older brother, describes the daily routine of the Para-
512 mount and his royal village as they had known it in their youth before the coming of the Europeans:

¶ The *inkosi* had to wash very early before the people came to see him. The *ingceko* was the servant who took care of washing the *inkosi*. He had to go with the *inkosi* to the bush and hide the faeces to prevent any bad person from getting the faeces. The *ingceko* was anyone whom the *inkosi* called for this, and must be one who walks well with the *inkosi*.

Before leaving his house to go to the kraal the *inkosi* had to eat a little porridge. When he went to the kraal a calabash of beer was brought to him. When any beer was brought to the *inkosi*, the *ingceko* tasted it first to see if it was good. The *inkosi* asked 'Is it good beer?' and the *ingceko* said 'Yes *inkosi*' and gave it to the *inkosi* to drink. When the *inkosi* took snuff the big *alumuzana* could beg from him. The other *amadoda* could only touch their noses. Then the *inkosi* knew they were begging snuff from him. Where the *inkosi* sat a mat was spread, and on it was laid a leopard- or a lion-skin. This was called 'the chair of the *inkosi*'. On arrival the big *alumuzana* went straight into the kraal to where the *inkosi* sat and greeted him '*Bayete*', and sat down in front of him.

The *inkosi* could not eat porridge except that cooked by his own wives. In his own hut he ate alone with one wife to serve him. His mothers also came with food every day. He ate twice in his own hut, early and late, and once in the kraal. When he ate in the kraal all could see him. He could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingcwembe*, or big platter of the *inhosikazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *nhlanzi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inhosikazi* called for an *ingcwembe* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njolomole Nzunga I in the central kingdom

« Old Njolomole had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361 351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked *nsima* and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [574]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these cloths and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njolomole excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njolomole was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibambo

565 302 [177]

« Today Ngoni women are not easily recognised because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isikhata*. The oil was *ipehla*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [301]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

885 diagram is that of the *madoda*, the older men who wore the head-ring.
692 Probably in pre-European days they received more recognition than was apparent in the 1930's after the head-ring had been given up. The *madoda* will be referred to in the next chapter on the royal village and in Chapter V of Part III on age sets. In the appeal court of the Paramount and in the chief's court there was always a group of these senior men sitting behind the *izinduna*, to whom the *induna* speaking to the case sometimes turned for advice and consultation.

645 Reference was made to an overlap between territorial office-bearers and national office-bearers. The big *izinduna*, the spokesman of the Paramount, and sometimes the messengers, were members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and often were *abamuzana* who had no courts. This was a method by which in the 1930's those *abamuzana* could be drawn into the circle of officials and receive a small salary for their services.

This set of office-bearers which we have considered in relation to the Paramount, with the exception of his spokesman and his praiser, was duplicated for the chiefs in both kingdoms, whether they were of the royal clan or *abamuzana*. The account of the royal village in the central kingdom which follows in the next chapter will illustrate how these officials functioned in the day-to-day affairs of the Paramount's headquarters.

CHAPTER V

A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933

The Paramount and his village

361 [114] [13] 161 For some weeks in 1935 and in 1936 I lived in the Paramount's village of Magangs in the central kingdom. The central kingdom included all Ncheu district, consisting of 1,092 square miles, a total population of 88,446, and a density of 80·99 per square mile. The village was 300 yards off the main road running from north to south of Nyasaland, and was approached by a hoed motor road flanked by huts. It consisted of three main sections: the Paramount's large brick residence and the surrounding buildings within a palisade or reed fence, including the huts of his daughter and son-in-law, and of his brother-in-law and sister; the huts and kraal in the section of the *induna* of his big house, Kalikombo Mbewe; and the huts and kraal of the original village 'owned' by the headman, Lazaro Dzonzi. On the south of the village was the large open space where the weekly market was held, and where several Indian stores faced the main road. On the north was the dispensary building,

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the circular court-house in a commanding position on a small hill with a big open space all round it. 361

There were several places in this village which were referred to as the *bwalo*: they included the open space within the reed fence of the Paramount's section, the much larger open and unfenced space round the court-house, and the more restricted spaces round the huts of the *indwna* and of the headman. The meaning of the term *bwalo* was always slightly ambiguous in this village since it was often used for the verandah of the royal residence, as well as the open space in front of it. The central Ngoni custom of surrounding the huts of important men and women with high reed fences with a narrow opening, made it easy to say '*ali pa bwalo*', 'he is on the *bwalo*', so that it covered either the verandah of the hut or the space inside the fence. The local usage of *bwalo* by the Cewa people more often denoted the open space in the middle of the village where the men congregated to sit and talk and drink beer.[1] The connotation of *bwalo* in Ngoni villages in the central kingdom was usually in terms of the big house and the space in front of it within the fence.

In Magangs the place to which the name *bwalo* was most often applied was the space within the reed fence surrounding the Paramount's large brick residence and the outbuildings. When I lived in one of the outbuildings at the back of the house, I was said to be living *pa bwalo*; and it was also alluded to as *pa cigodlo*, that is in the enclosure where the Paramount's children lived behind the big house. His daughter's hut was in this section, on the north side, and beyond her hut was that of the *mlomo wenkosi*, who was also the Paramount's brother-in-law, since he had married the Paramount's sister and was the brother of the Paramount's wife. In the other buildings within the reed fence lived several servants of the household, and at the kitchen end of the brick house lived the girls who assisted the Paramount's wife with cooking and looking after her younger children. 643 342 361

When the Paramount built his court-house, he built some offices as part of it for himself, his *mlomo wenkosi*, his treasurer and the court clerk. The intention had been that official business would be carried out there, and relieve the big house of some of its many callers, and also ensure some measure of privacy for those who lived there. It proved very difficult to achieve this separation of public and private affairs, since the tradition that the Paramount was accessible to all his people at all times was persistent. 344 643

The entrance to the enclosure or *bwalo* of the big house was guarded in the traditional manner. If strangers (and all visitors were called *alendo* or strangers) arrived on the side road leading off the main road, they inquired from one of the huts there if the headman was present and waited till he arrived. The headman then went to tell the *indwna* or the *mlomo wenkosi* that strangers had come, while they waited till the reply 574 643

[1] Scott, D. C. *Mang'anja Dictionary*. Edinburgh, 1892.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

797 In 1921 he was baptized by the Rev. J. Botes in the year in which he entered the chieftainship, when Cakumbira, the one who took care of the
643 chieftainship, had died. For entering the chieftainship there was not much to be done. The people gathered together, and the Paramount just stood up and grasped his spear and pointed to the south-east. The people danced *ligubo* and praised the Paramount.

The people began to consider and said 'Seeing that he is a young man, how will he know how to judge the cases?' Ha! But there was confusion in their minds, because his judgements excelled those of the big people who had judged formerly. From 1921 to today in all matters he has the chieftainship and Christianity. He holds both these in his hand to strengthen him.

361 The texts bring out several points relative to the royal village which
643 arose from the circumstances surrounding the early life of the Paramount. Reference has already been made to the large royal village on Domwe which broke up when Cikusi entered the Paramountcy and built his *lusungulu* village at Liwisini near the Kirk Range. The section of the royal village called Lizulu moved out almost due east from Domwe under its big *induna*, Cakumbira Ndau. When Gomani I was killed after a brief reign of five years, the Ndau clan brought to their village the big wives of Gomani I, including NaMagagula his first wife, in whose house the child Philip Gomani was brought up. With the big *induna* of Lizulu of the Ndau clan was Mambeyu Moyo, one of the big war *izinduna* of Cikusi. Lizulu, with NaMagagula living there, was regarded as the *gogo* village of the Paramount, and from there his own *lusungulu* village went out to build at Magangs where there was already a village under a headman of the local tribe. One of the reasons given for building on a village site already occupied was that the Portuguese frontier restricted all movements to the west, and round the village of Lizulu to the east and south a number of outlying villages were already in existence. Proximity to the main north to south Nyasaland road was also considered a good reason for building the Paramount's village on the site at Magangs. Lizulu village had two important aspects. It was the *gogo* village of the Paramount, and it was also the head village of the Ndau
643 clan, and the court of Chief George Ndau who was one of the S.N.A.

[797] The conversion of the Paramount to Christianity was a severe blow for the older officials in his kingdom. They feared that much of the ritual associated with the office of the Paramount would necessarily disappear and that the Ngoni kingdom would become weakened in consequence. Three events partly allayed these fears though the older men were never wholly reconciled. One was his marriage to NaNdau, daughter of Cakumbira Ndau who had hidden him, thus binding the royal line to the powerful Ndau clan which had protected him in his childhood. Another was the recognition in 1933 by the Nyasaland government of the Paramountcy with its Appeal Court. The third was

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER III

HOUSES

361 171 823 WRITING of the social organization of the northern Nguni among the South-eastern Bantu, Mrs. Hoernlé[1] referred to three divisions of the typical village: the *indlunkulu* section where the principal hut was that of the mistress of the village; the *ikhohlo* section on the left-hand side of this hut, and the *inqadi* section on the right. The terminology used by the northern Nguni expressed right and left hand from the point of view of someone looking up from the gate of the kraal. I found that among the Ngoni they used right and left the other way as if the person were at the top of the kraal looking down at the gate, and I have adopted their usage.

171 361 554 Ngoni villages, which were royal villages or the head villages of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, also had a tripartite division into houses related to leading women, as we saw in the village plan in Chapter III of Part I, but there was a major difference between them and the northern Nguni grouping described by Mrs. Hoernlé. In Ngoni villages the *indlunkulu*, the hut at the head of the kraal, was occupied by the mother of the owner of the village, who had 'come out' with him from his father's village. In the right-hand section of the huts round the kraal was the hut of the owner's big wife, and on the left the hut of his next important wife. These three huts, representing three houses, were the focal points of the main divisions of the village. In fact in most villages the owner of the *indlunkulu* had the huts of other widows of her late husband beside her on each side, and the *cipodlo*, or section where the sons of the owner of the village lived, spread over a wide area behind the *indlunkulu* and behind the huts of the two chief wives. The plan used in Chapter III of Part I was necessarily simplified in order to bring out the main points. The grouping of huts in typical Ngoni villages showed varying degrees of elaboration, and it was not always easy at first to trace their connexions with the houses.

592 571 Houses in the Ngoni kingdoms could be considered as divisions of the village, though they did not always cover all the divisions. If we look at the membership of a house, as it was illustrated in a typical Ngoni village, it is clear that it had in it three elements connected by ties of kinship, affinity or association with the owner of the house, who was either a wife or a mother of the male owner of the village. The kinship group related to the *indlunkulu* comprised the male owner of the village, his mother and classificatory mothers with his brothers who had joined him. In the big house and in the second house of his wives the kinship

[1] op. cit. p. 63.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

group consisted of himself and the mother and her children, including her daughters only until they married. 571 592

The affinal element in a house consisted of the other wives associated with the owner of the house as co-wives, and the wives of the sons of the owner. Both the kinship group and the affinal group were bound together by their rights in the cattle of the herd which was known as 'the cattle of the house of X'. From that herd were taken cattle for the *lobola* of the wives married after the house was founded, and for the wives of the sons and adopted sons of the house. Into that herd came the cattle received for the marriages of the daughters belonging to the house and the gift cattle sent to wives by their fathers after marriage. When the *lobola* had been fully paid up for a daughter of the house, then her relationship with it ceased and she was thenceforth known as belonging to her husband's mother's house. 592 585 571 [591]

Associated with the house in the villages of the Paramounts, the chiefs and the leading *alumuzana* were two other groups of people. One was the *induna* appointed 'to take care of the house' and his family. In the 1930's the *induna* was in charge of the cattle and of the many activities connected with the house, including the organization of male labour in hut-building, in kraal construction and in cultivation; he was consulted by the male members of the house about the selling of cattle and the use of the goods accumulated in the house. The other group associated with the house in pre-European days consisted of captives taken in war and allocated to the house who worked as labourers. The servants who worked for a house in the 1930's assisted with cooking, beer-making and minding the children, and they had huts near that of the owner of the house to which they belonged, placed on the right- or left-hand side of the kraal according to their affiliation with the big house or the second house. Informants said that in the past such association with a house included giving a beast from the herd of the house for the marriage of a servant. The *induna*, through the marriage of his daughters, built up his own herd, which he frequently kept at first with the cattle of the house in the main kraal, later building his own kraal. 592 571 357 [727]

A new house began when a man married his big wife. Although at first he built her a hut at the back of his mother's hut in his father's village, as soon as he moved out to his new village after his father's death, the big wife's hut had the next most important site in the kraal after that of the *indlunkulu*, and the second wife had the third place of importance. In some of the larger villages of the central kingdom, the custom of moving out into a new village after the death of the former owner had been given up, partly because of pressure on the land. The house grouping in relation to the siting of huts then became very complex, but the pattern was nevertheless discernible. The two sections under the big house and the *gupe* house, which had formerly divided into two villages, continued to exist together, and at Mzakhetha this dual 361 591 592 [768] 361 592

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 pattern covered two generations including the houses of the former
592 chief and the reigning one.

The houses served several purposes in the organization of village life on the one hand, and on the other, provided an important instrument for regulating succession and inheritance, and for carrying out traditional ceremonies and ritual. It was the eldest son of the second house who would, if the *lusungulu* practice was followed, remain behind with the *gogo* village; and he was responsible for conducting traditional ritual and was expected to be able to carry out ceremonial procedure correctly. This was the main function of the *gogo* village and of the man who was head of the male members of the *gogo* house. The corresponding head of the male members of the big house was the owner of the village, and it was his eldest son by his first wife who would normally succeed him as chief or *mulumuzana*. The members of each house had a stake in the property of that house, particularly in the herd of cattle owned by it, and in any goods, such as cloth, bought by the sale of the cattle of the house. The house united the male members who belonged to it through this common ownership of cattle. In Chapter II of Part IV we shall examine further this aspect of belonging to a house.

554 In the organization of village life in villages belonging to chiefs or
592 *alumuzana* the houses established the status of the wives of the owner
562 of the village, and the status of those of his mothers who had come with him. His mother in the *indlunkulu* hut ranked first among her co-widows. The big wife came next, and the wife of the second house after her. Wives attached to the big house ranked above those attached to the second house.

571 The houses fulfilled their most prominent role in the day-to-day
592 activities of the households associated with them. It was in these daily
627 activities and in planning for future events that the house organization
562 provided the chief channels of authority. The exercise of this authority ranged from instruction in household tasks and emphasis on good standards of housekeeping to settling minor disputes arising from marital quarrels over property and over the custody of children. These minor cases could be settled out of court if the senior women showed that they knew how to listen to complaints and give advice which was accepted, with the result that good relations were restored. The main topics of discussion among the senior women on the verandah of the *indlunkulu* were the ingredients of these minor quarrels and disputes. If, by judicious handling, they could keep the cases out of court, they knew, and so did the village, that their authority was enhanced and their prestige more firmly established.

571 The authority of senior women was further reinforced through their
592 organization of women's labour in household work and in cultivation.
562 This authority in domestic affairs covered a woman's own household and the women and girls attached to it as household servants, the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

621 593 break up into smaller villages, and there were on the whole more villages in the north said to be *wabanja limodzi* (of one family) than among the central Ngoni. On the other hand, the *hungulu* pattern of village division had almost disappeared among the central Ngoni.

591 592 [361] A man on his first marriage built a hut for his wife behind his mother's hut, where his brothers by the same mother or by mothers of the same house also built. The family grouping by residence was therefore determined by house affiliation. Associated with this residential group based on kinship, there were the residences of the *induna* and his family which had separate alignments on a kinship basis, though for certain common purposes they combined with the family groups related to the house by kinship. The children of the families belonging to the house and the children of the *induna* who took care of it began to intermarry when the prohibitions on marriage within the village ceased to operate. In this way kinship bonds were created within a group which formerly had only residence and certain activities in common, and this process was recognizable in a number of the larger villages, especially in the central kingdom.

593 Within the different types of family groups determined by their residential basis there were certain outstanding relationships between members of the same family. The most important of these was that between father and children; the father, as the biological parent and also the symbol of authority, was the focus of honour and respect, and the one who helped his children when they were in need. The relation between the father and his children among the Ngoni was always a balance between affection and care, and respect and authority. The ideal pattern of a father, as described by informants, included all these elements and also wisdom. This concept of the father relationship was extended to the head of a *banja*, to the headman of a village or a section of a village, to a *mulumwanse* in charge of an area, to a chief, and to the [592] Paramount himself. The Ngoni greeting to all older men, and the most respectful form of address to a man of any seniority, was *baba*, father, or its Nyanja equivalent *bambo*.

The mother, on the other hand, had a more limited relationship within the family circle. To her own children and to the children of her co-wives, especially of her house, she was the provider of food, and the affectionate 'cherisher'[1] of young children; but she was also treated with respect and, when she reached some seniority, she had considerable authority over her daughters and her younger co-wives. She could never compete, however, with the sisters of her husband or with his mothers, who expected to exercise authority over her children and to arrange for the ceremonies connected with birth, puberty, and marriage. [591 184] In villages where virilocal residence was the rule, the husband's sisters were married elsewhere and were only present in the village during

[1] *Sadwa*, lit. to cherish, is the word used for bringing up children.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Households[1]

	Total	Leading clan	
Northern Ngoniland			592
Eswazini	23	15	614
Endindeni	15	12	622
Eluhangeni	37	21	631
Central Ngoniland			
Cinkwita	39	18	
Mangozo	60	26	
Mcakhatha	122	37	

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head. [563 565]

Eswazini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Eswazini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *lunogulu* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother. [361] 184 592 621

Endindeni was a *gugo* village owned by Zibekere Makwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gugo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ukuk* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more famil[illegible]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 wife. The village with its single kraal was 'of one house', and it was
592 widely known as a good village by Ngoni standards, because, as the
621 local people said, 'all the men are Makwakwa men'.

Eluhangeni was a *gogo* village where the spirit of Mtenje Jere, the son of a brother of Zwangendaba, was guarded. The kinship group of Mwanamdoko Jere, the owner of the village, were all of one house, that of his mother who was dead. Her place in the *indhukulu* had been taken by his big wife who also inherited the guardianship of the spirit of Mtenje. There was one widow of his father in the village, but she had become a Christian and therefore could not guard the spirit. Mwanamdoko had two wives, and three widows of his brothers by the same mother were also in the village. One brother by another mother was the only one of his generation still alive and he had two sons and two grandsons living in the *cigodlo* behind the *indhukulu*. All Mwanamdoko's family were grouped round one kraal. There were two other kraals with family groups round them in the village, one belonging to the *induna* of his dead mother, and one to an age mate who had been in his regiment. The *induna's* group belonged to the same house as Mwanamdoko, but the pattern of the three distinct groups each with its own kraal was more like that of the *banja* in the central kingdom.

184 In the central kingdom the relationships of the various groups in a
563 village followed a different pattern from that in the north. Instead of
592 the *hawagulu* and *gogo* characteristics where the family groups were
621 integrated into houses, the southern pattern was that of a conquered village with the Ngoni element superimposed. In Cinkwita and in Mtakhatha the village headman and his family group had originally been conquered, then established as an outlying village, and finally chosen for the permanent settlement of a family group belonging to an
[21] Ngoni clan when they left the royal village after it broke up. In Cinkwita there were three kraals associated with three *banja*. Two of the *banja* belonged to kinship groups of Ntumba clans, and the head of one was known as the headman of the village. The head of the *banja* of Cinkwita Ndau, the Ngoni clan group, was his eldest son Wilkinson, whose wife was of a leading Swazi clan, the Magwagwa. His family group consisted of his wife, two sons and three daughters; a brother and his two daughters; the widow of a dead brother and his two sons and a daughter; three sisters, one of whom had married the brother of the village headman and one who was a widow; and a widowed sister of his father. This family grouping expressed in terms of household illustrates what has already been referred to several times, namely the tendency of the heads of leading Ngoni families in the central kingdom to keep, in addition to their sons, their sisters and daughters in the village after marriage, even when *lobola* had been given. It also illustrates the comparatively small number of plural marriages in the south among the younger men.

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the
137 rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose
311 it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited
361 their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe
361 formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had
351 a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
[343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

There were two focal points in each village, reproduced
621 on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
[554] the "big house" at the head of the kraal, where the leading women had her hand.. 18

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] [191] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-[162] [592] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emukatowi was just off a main road and as easily accessible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top [561] in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in-[543] [871] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [797] mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fascinate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens', and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work in the gardens was an expedition for young children which they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places forbidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven years old, because they found their fathers there and the herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him. Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions, villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance. The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters, a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigawa*, pl. *vigawa*, from *ku-gawa*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

The Chief did happily interfere
to some extent in the marriages of those near him and on occasion took away a wife from one man and gave her as wife to another. Nzingu, the heir of Mpezeni I, once took a wife from one of the important men in his mother's royal village and made her his queen. The man committed suicide and Nzingu killed a beast to placate the anger of his mother's lieutenants. Such instances of intervention seem to have been rare and were disliked by the common people.

6. Polygyny

The pattern of growth of the residential system was determined by the grouping of children in the compound family. This grouping was in turn determined by the ranking of wives. It seems that the South-Eastern Bantu system of dividing wives into three groups, a great house and a left- and a right-hand house was not continued. Old men are agreed that in the past wives could be described as either left-hand or right-hand, but there is no agreement on the principles of this division. In discussing the wives of well-known men who flourished about this period, there was no consensus about which women were left-hand wives and which were right. The division cannot in any case have had the same spatial reference to the husband's cattle byre as among the South-Eastern Bantu, since the Ngoni lived in large villages with a central byre containing all the cattle of the village.

Wives were arranged into small groups which we may term 'bands'. A band might contain up to a dozen co-wives and was under the charge of its senior member. Wives in a band lived close to each other in the same cluster of huts. A man might have as many as five or six bands of wives, and the senior wife of one of the bands was the man's great wife, the mother of his heir. We have seen that a cross-cousin was inferior to an unrelated wife, and a wife from the same or related village inferior to one from afar. These two considerations, however, seem only to have influenced a man's choice of senior wives and did not themselves directly determine widely rank. Thus a man could if he wished make a cross-cousin from his own village his great wife or the senior wife of one of his bands, but most men did not do so. The first wife married with bridewealth was the great wife. If there was a wife married earlier for whom no bridewealth had been paid, perhaps a cross-cousin or a recently captured woman, then she became subordinate to the chief wife and was regarded as a member of her band. Wives married subsequently were attached to this band until the husband decided to start another band. He took either one of the wives of his great wife's band or else a newly acquired wife, and established a new cluster of huts for her. Some other members of the great wife's band might be transferred to the new band, as subordinates of the newly promoted wife. As the man continued to take new wives they were allocated to one or other of the existing bands. If the husband was an important man he allocated to each

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

[p.19]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass sheds built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Marsvi FR4

Case history 1

Amos was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kindred.*

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their own sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyanaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever swindlers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognise these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

* All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

related to him but her participation was explained in terms of her status as an 'important person' and not in terms of this relationship.

A man can move from his village to his wife's village if he or she has quarrelled with his kinsfolk, and a quarrel with her relatives may cause them to move in the reverse direction. These shifts from one kind of residence to another occurred in a different context in the old system. We have seen that there was sometimes a change from uxorilocal to virilocal residence, for at the beginning of his first marriage a man might leave his wife living uxorilocally until he had paid bridewealth. If there was a quarrel between a man and his wife's kin at this stage, they might try to delay his taking the woman to his own village, although they could not entirely prevent him from so doing. Hostility found expression in the desire to keep him under close surveillance, not in the desire to be rid of him. This old idea still persists to some extent, as we have seen in the story of Abner and Esther (p. 79). Esther wanted her husband Abner to live in her village so that her father could see that he looked after her well. A man may refuse to allow his daughter to move to her husband's village until he is satisfied that the young man is a good husband. This line of action, however, now applies only at the beginning of a marriage and in families where a man is determined to maintain his control over his growing children. When there is a quarrel involving a couple who have been married for a long time, it is then too late to hope that a man will improve his behaviour under the eye of his wife's father. If he quarrels with his father-in-law it is better that he should go and live in his own village.

The significance of the reverse move, from virilocality to uxorilocality, was different in the old system from what it is in the new. In the light of what we know of the South-Eastern Bantu and by reference to the present position among the Ngoni it seems probable that in the old days it did happen from time to time that a man sought refuge with his wife's agnates. Yet from the dearth of instances of this in my genealogical material it would seem that this cannot have occurred very often. Once a man had established himself in virilocal residence he usually stayed there. If he quarrelled with his kinsfolk all he could do was to move off and make his own segment distinct from those of his brothers; he could not seek permanent shelter with his wife's kinsfolk. Nowadays he can do so, and it may be easier for him to change to uxorilocal residence than to try to form his own group. In the old days the transition from what we now call a cluster to a division or from a division to a village was a gradual one. Spatial separation between minor segments of the same order was initially a matter of yards and with successive moves in the tribal migration became a matter of miles. Nowadays there is a definite number of villages recognised by the Administration and a man who establishes his own residential cluster of huts is, or at least was until very recently, in danger of punishment for not living in a recognised village. For many years there was an

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village.

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's older brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers.

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased.

3. Polygyny

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In bygone days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organise large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance

[* See genealogy, p. 81.

5:Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

N 251 511 [126]

The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages
(February 1941)

N [162]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,719

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [341] N [166]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 311 511

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

L 161 311 511 600

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba
Maravi FR4

rence of sleeping sickness or for other reasons. It would have been possible by re-distribution of populations within the old Reserves, in conjunction with provision of water supplies and measures against 'fly', materially to reduce the number of people to be moved to unoccupied land. Such a course would have involved serious political repercussions and, in view of the amount of land available, it was never contemplated.

The next essential step was to survey the vacant land available for resettlement, to prepare vegetation-soil maps of the areas, and to estimate the carrying capacity of each area for the traditional agricultural system of the people who would occupy it. In the Eastern Province and the Ndola District surveys were made on the basis of parallel straight line traverses, using liquid prismatic compasses and cyclometer wheels. Traverse lines were usually one mile apart, but wider intervals up to three miles were used, in order to save time, if the country was relatively uniform or if no high degree of accuracy was required. In some instances, when very accurate maps were wanted, the traverse interval was reduced to one half or one quarter of a mile. Information on water supplies, the state of regeneration of land and timber, the former inhabitants and other relevant details, was collected in the course of these surveys. In the case of Mkushi District, where there was an abundance of available land in relation to the needs of the population, sample traverses only were used. The methods of survey and mapping are described in one of the other papers in this series.

When estimates had been made of the number of people to be moved from each of the over-crowded chiefdoms and the carrying capacity of the available land, divided into convenient areas, had been ascertained, the planning of population movements became, in theory, simple. In practice, of course, there were a good many difficulties.

Tribal boundaries and the original ownership of the land had to be taken into consideration, though these were not regarded as sacrosanct and, in fact, a large area formerly occupied by the Singa was used for the resettlement of a section of the Chewa. Other factors also limit movement. There is, obviously, a physical limit; fifty miles was regarded as the maximum practical move, but in extreme cases villages were moved as much as seventy miles. Traditional systems of land usage are, generally, adaptations to particular sets of ecological conditions and people cannot be moved into an environment unsuited to their food crops and method of production. Cattle-owning people will not willingly move to tsetse country leaving their herds behind.

Water supplies proved to be a very great difficulty over large areas, especially in the Eastern Province. Natural supplies were not sufficient to allow of full utilisation of the land on the basis of its carrying capacity, and in some cases practically no settlement was possible before artificial watering points had been provided. It appeared that, in the Eastern Province at least, permanent surface water had greatly diminished in the twelve to twenty years during which the land had lain unoccupied. The old sites of villages and their sources of water supply were noted in the course of the

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Lamba FG8
Maravi FR4

surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The fierce late fires which swept through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the desiccation.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

After survey had been completed and before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their food-stocks and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

Wherever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (25 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mushiri resettlement area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central dam which was stocked with bream (*Tilapia* spp.) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

Another difficulty was the occurrence of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

In the northern part of Fort Jameson District, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on compacting pedocal soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

648 295 671 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut in the general rule). Seeds, seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little [177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a [132] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of 311 648 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush. In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre- 185 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of streamsides, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning [622] of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headmen concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 361 362 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built [342] at Kinkuzley Irish. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 648 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's journey of fifteen miles or so, does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

6/Ramsay E.G-S (ca.1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

VI

A VILLAGE EXODUS

1. The village chief, when he wishes to remove the village to a new site, tells the young men of the village beforehand to look out all the building materials necessary. These they will just pile up. Then some day the head old man gets up very early in the morning to go and seek a suitable spot. When he finds a good place, he says, "Yes, this is where I shall build" (lit. "This is my place"). When he goes to the village that evening, he tells them not to break the rules enforced on such occasions, as he wishes to "kindle fire in the forest," as he is tired of the present site of the village. Next morning at dawn he rises very early, along with his brother and the medicine man, and goes to the site of the new village. They begin to walk all round, tying green tufts into little knots and smearing them with medicine, and they make fire where they are going to build the Kuta hut, and they put some medicine on the fire, and bring water, and blow it in a spray out of their mouth. And the reason they thus medicine-guard the village, is for fear of lions and human flesh-eaters. Then the village people come with the building materials, and they are told to "clear the ground." And they do so, and when this is finished, the chief takes the door-posts and sticks them in position, and also the side-posts, when others pull them in (firmly). When the Kuta hut is completed they begin with that of the headman. When dark others leave, going back to the old village. There remain only the chief, and the others who will continue to sleep there, not

6:Ratzmy E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

again returning to the old village. That evening they take some of the fire (that they made earlier in the day) to kindle a fire with in the (new) hut (*Kuka*). In kindling it they do not squat down, they blow the faggots into flame from a standing position, and they do this lest the smoke might ever after hang in wreaths over the floor. The womenfolk come every day to cook.

11. When the chief's huts are finished, they build those of the old men, and when these are complete, they bring all the huts [from the old village]. When they see that all the huts are finished, beer is made at the old village, and they go and bring the spirits. He who has a grave pours some beer in a gourd-pot and places it on the grave, saying, "We have gone hence, you must not search for us here, come let us go together." On that day they demolish all the huts that remain, they leave only the huts of which the occupant has lately died. When now the sun begins to slant westward, from the *Kuka* hut they take five gourd-pots, and fill them with beer and make young women carrying these lead the way. The head old woman of the *Kuka* hut goes first, the chief wife of the chief follows *Gogo*, and then come the ones carrying the beer. When they arrive at the new village they set down the gourd-pots and all the people assemble. The elder of the village then begins to propitiate, saying, "There is the beer we down on earth have made, we have gone from yonder, we present to you your new village, all men you will have a cure for." Then the village chief makes a present of a goat and hands it to the old man, and he again speaks, saying, "Here is a goat which your child presents, you will wash it down with the beer." If the goat makes water, that is to say the spirit consents, if it will not they do not kill it. Then they kill the goat

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no 186
means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely 726
about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'.

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard 173
the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of 721
strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni 726
tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British [713]
superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the [727]
huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale.

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni 173
it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they [186]
dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] [648] [423]

[1] In the Report of Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'.

[2] Over 3 miles across.

[3] In 1889.

[361]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the livestocks are more under the control of the chief of the country, who may intervene to dispose a livestock if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material housing

● 961 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the
[993] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the
[407] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off compounds within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of elms.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to eleven wa

[1] Usually *indunas*, pl. *mahdunas*, *induna* when possessed, pl. *mahdunas* possessed. The specific term for headman of a main or community village is *mahdunas*.

621 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first headman of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the
551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni as formal surname in addition to their other personal names.

To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and
624 there may be in the village one or more headmen. The office of headman in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no headmen.

In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have
621 consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
582 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time
178 some of the senior captives became lineagemen of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aforementioned lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia countries, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland countries this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aforementioned captors.

Movement

961 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
766 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Fortes, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 190: '. . . the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man has to go further and further from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of unpossessed land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1948 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested areas.

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county chief, and village headmen. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitered by the headmen and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The few people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Ramsay, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the headman's kraal is built before the others, but this custom appears to be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the ruins end, and is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the new one is gradual, so, unless the distance between the sites is too great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Ramsay, *Pub-Lore Series*, pp. 109-11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 103-5, gives an account of the building of a new village among Mwaluko's Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

361 Huts sometimes become infested with ticks, or the site itself may prove to be intolerably damp. New huts are then built a short distance away of even contiguously to the old site, and no new gardens are made apart from those made among the deserted huts.

Internal Exploitation of the Village

361 621 We have already seen that the divisions within the village are embryonic new villages. These divisions are most formally indicated in the Nyamkond country, where there are large villages divided into a distinct number of divisions, with the spatial boundaries between the divisions indicated by a greater interval between the huts, and with each division named and under the charge of a lieutenant or of a petitioned kinsman of the headman. On the Rhodesian side, however, it is more usual to find that certain small clusters of huts within a village are regarded as being the division of such-and-such a person living in one of them. The bulk of the huts in the village do not belong to any particular cluster but merely to the village as a whole. These clusters do not have any name apart from that of their senior inhabitant, whose close relatives occupy the huts of the cluster. The leader of a cluster may be a lieutenant of the headman or merely some important person with a comparatively large body of dependants. Such clusters, which are often on the periphery of the village, sometimes originate from the grouping together by a polygynist of the huts of his various wives, and grow as their children marry and live alongside their parents. Another mechanism for the formation of clusters is that [166] of immigration into the village at about the same time by a number of persons related to each other more closely than to the other inhabitants of the village, as, for example, on the break-up of some other village. The immigrants tend to build together if there is room. In this case the leader of the cluster may have little standing in the village. The boundaries of clusters are not always plainly indicated, while a man who is ambitious to make his own village may as a first step try to increase the clarity with which his cluster is defined spatially.

Land Utilization

311 241 We may divide gardens into three types: main, old village, and maize. The maize gardens are made near streams, and are fenced to keep out cattle. Tomatoes, cabbages, onions, and other vegetables are grown, and maize is planted during the hot season so that it can be harvested in December or January. These gardens are cultivated only by the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more industrious and usually with a view to sale of vegetables in Fort Jameson. The sites last for many years and are usually abandoned because of the removal of the owner's village to a distant place rather than because of exhaustion of the soil. 311 241

Old-village gardens are made on the site of former huts and byres, in order to take advantage of the high fertility of the soil. These gardens are not usually fenced, except when they are made on the outskirts of some existing village on the site of an old byre. Tobacco is sometimes grown, but for the most part they are cultivated in the same way as are main gardens. The site belongs to the former owner of the hut or byre, so long as the garden continues to be worked. [423]

Main gardens are made from bush clearings, and are chosen with some regard to the type and quantity of the natural vegetation. Land that has been abandoned for long enough, say twenty-five years, regains its natural cover, and if the ownership of former gardens has been forgotten, it is treated as though it were virgin woodland, that is, it is permissible for anyone who wishes to come and cultivate it. A new village site is chosen to be near, if possible, an ample amount of such regenerated land, and at the first selection of gardens the headman of the village may go round the area and see where the new gardens are being made. Gardens used to be within a mile of the village, but there is no one definite area that is associated with a particular village, so that if there are a number of villages in proximity, the gardens of their inhabitants will be intermingled. A man exercises a lien on the area of unclaimed land round his garden, and may take up this land himself so he enlarges his garden. Hence at first there are considerable belts of bush left between one garden and the next. With the passage of time, these are cleared, and gardens become contiguous, with boundaries between them that are almost impercepible at first glance. At the same time as enlargements are made, the least productive parts of the gardens are neglected, so that, as the years go by, the area cultivated by one man may gradually change its position, and fresh areas of virgin land will appear between the gardens. Main gardens vary in size from about 1 to 3 acres. [961] [423] [425]

If a man moves into a village and wishes to start a garden, he is usually given part of the garden of the person to whom he is attached in the village. A son returning from the mines may be given part of his father's garden. Conversely when someone leaves the village, his garden passes to his relatives. In particular, when a man dies, his 423

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 widows continue to cultivate the gardens they had before his death. When a man opens up a new garden he may hand over his newly cultivated old garden to some relative who does not wish to go to the labour of clearing new ground himself. Rights in land cannot be sold, but only given away, and no presents are given to the donor by the recipient of a garden or garden site. They can only be exercised by continued residence in the locality, either by the owner of the rights himself or by his relatives. There are very few court cases concerned with rights in land, and in the courts the only attempt I saw in which a man tried to enforce what he thought to be his rights was met by the statement from the bench that no one had any rights in land, for did not all land belong to the chief?

241 Maize is planted at the beginning of the rains, and the garden is usually weeded twice over before the maize has grown high enough to surmount the weeds. When the rains end, the stalks are felled and put into large stacks to dry. The cobs are then taken off the stalks and carried back to the village to be stored. Finger millet is grown in sub-fertilized patches scattered through the main garden, and in between the maize ground-nuts, pumpkins, and other crops are grown. Sorghum, bulrush millet, and rice are also grown. Most of the work in the garden is carried on in the rainy season, and after the harvest the garden is more or less deserted until the next season, although a certain amount of new land may be cleared as a garden extension.

Dwellings outside the Village

●361 There are two types of settlement outside the recognized villages that require mention. These are permanently occupied settlements consisting of two or three huts which I shall refer to as hamlets and
[578] temporarily occupied huts in the gardens. The hamlets usually arise as a result of quarrels within a village that are resolved by the heading away of one of the parties to the quarrel. The activities of the Agricul-
[449] tural Department have also led to the formation of hamlets of similar size, both of hamlets of persons accepting agricultural control whose ex-villages have all moved off, and the other way about. These hamlets are all attached to proper villages for registration purposes, and participate in many of the collective activities of the villages near by.

221 The damage done to crops in the latter part of the rainy season necessitates the keeping of a continuous watch, particularly at gar-
361 dens that are on the edge of a cultivated area, in order to drive off the
[341] monkeys by day and the wild pigs by night. Shelters are erected on

the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may stay behind to look after the cattle. Streams are in spate at this time of year, and some men build garden byres to which they move their cattle to avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the garden is important from the point of view of inter-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so that they are adjacent to those of kinsfolk from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in her dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organising public works, and that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as reported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and may be up to 10 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead. Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle

[1] Elmslie, p. 30.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have affected the content of their Christian beliefs and their utilization of Christian institutions, there is now little religious activity that can be called pagan.

The Nyasaland Country

The Fort Jameson Ngoni maintain strong connexion with the two countries under Ngoni chiefs in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District, Nyasaland. When the border was drawn between North-Eastern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, about a quarter of Mpezeni's tribal area fell within Nyasaland. The two countries have been administered separately, so that the ties that have persisted have done so despite the formal division of the area and are in the main derived from sentiments related to pre-conquest times. These ties are seen in operation in the attendance of the Nyasaland chiefs at Mpezeni's village on various formal occasions, as at the ceremony ending the mourning for Mpezeni II and beginning the reign of Mpezeni III. In 1920 a delegation from the Nyasaland chiefs visited Mpezeni, and in 1922 Mpezeni took a party across into Nyasaland to visit the two chiefs, apparently with the idea of discussing the possibility of moving his capital into Nyasaland[1] where there was more land available than there was for him in Northern Rhodesia. From time to time Mpezeni has called on the Nyasaland chiefs to send him maize when his own supplies have run low, and these requests have been met. The Nyasaland Administration has also tried to keep alive the connexion with Mpezeni. In the past the Magistrate at Fort Manning brought the Nyasaland chiefs into Fort Jameson to meet Mpezeni there on such occasions as the King's Birthday, while in 1932 when there was a dispute between the two chiefs as to which was the senior, the District Officer informed them that the question did not arise as they were both only lieutenants of Mpezeni. On the other hand, the Nyasaland Administration has intervened to prevent tribal levies for the benefit of Mpezeni.

There are also relationships across the border that arise principally from the mere territorial contiguity of the two areas. The border, which is the Luangwa-Nyasa watershed, is not easy to follow and there has sometimes been doubt as to where it runs. The villages stretch without interruption across the watershed and there is much coming and going from one village to another. Some villages have moved from one country to the other and many people have relatives on both sides of the border. The Catholic Missions were for a long

[1] Mpezeni I had the same idea. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 1 August 1895, p. 2.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native
562 Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws
858 are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one
486 might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly
562 by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to
484 look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives
167 and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko–Missale service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these
205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more
249 than 12 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man
●[361] to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

can live in the village and cultivate a garden. The maintenance of contacts is facilitated by the fairly general omission of work on the farms at the week-ends. Apart from two periods of tobacco slump, the local demand for labour has exceeded the supply ever since the earliest period of European settlement. As early as January 1910 the manager of the North Charterland Exploration Company complained to the Administration that the lack of local labour was very serious, and attributed this to the large number of people who were going away to work in Southern Rhodesia. This theme has been repeated over and over again ever since. The practical effect of this chronic local shortage of labour has been that work on the farms has always been a more easy-going affair than work away on the mines or in the big towns. Men have been able to absent themselves from work to attend to their affairs at home very much as they have pleased. Payment has been either for piece-work or for the number of days worked, so that at one time it was not unusual for a man to take two or three months to complete thirty days' work, for which he had contracted. 464 249 [465]

Prior to about 1930, there were a few villages located on farm-land, whose inhabitants undertook to work for so many days, with pay, in return for permission to remain on the land. With the completion of the move into reserves, this became rare, and at the present time the bulk of the people who live on farm-land are accommodated in compounds provided for them by the farmer. These people are the labourers on the farm for the time being, their families, and friends. The compound is under the charge of a foreman who is usually an employee of long standing on the farm. On some of the farms there are small gardens, but none of them, as far as I know, permit the keeping of cattle by the labourers. This means that a man with cattle must continue to keep them at home in his village or in the village of a relative. Cattle are still the principal form of investment, particularly for people who cannot spend their capital in building a brick house, so that it is common to find in a village that many of the cattle in the byre are being tended for the benefit of an absent owner who spends the majority of his time away on a farm and who may not even have a hut in the village. 461 465 466 [244] 233

The demand for labour on the tobacco farms varies considerably with the time of year, being greatest from about Christmas until about June. At the same time, the calls on a man to tend his own garden are greatest from about November until May. Farmers therefore try to get labour for a few days at a time from people who live in villages 249 464

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Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman, although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here. Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the weather. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

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where the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards further on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Forefingers, keep your distances."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of bamboo huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

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Mpezeni

to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds, seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush. In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the preservation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are endorsed by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

V. EARNING A LIVING

Intertribal Trade

439 There is little trade between the Ngoni and the neighbouring tribes, whose products are largely the same as their own. Fish is brought up from the Luangwa valley by Kunda and some of it is sold to the Ngoni of the Chipalamba, through whose villages the hawkers pass on their way to Fort Jameson. Branders are sometimes brought from Portuguese East Africa by Chikunda. The main attraction for these hawkers is Fort Jameson itself, and it is the fact that the town is encircled by the Ngoni that gives rise to trading with them. The geographical location of the town has also led to the growth in Ngoni [366] country of many stores and what are known in the vernacular as kunda, where tea and buns can be bought and where sometimes there is shelter for the night.

Of greater importance in the life of the tribe than these intertribal links are those arising from White and Indian economic activities. We may distinguish three zones of interaction, the shops both in Fort Jameson township and scattered throughout the district owned by Whites and Indians, the local tobacco farms, and the mines of Southern Rhodesia. The Ngoni have come to need cloth for clothes which they cannot produce themselves, and it is doubtful if there would be enough animals to provide skins for the tribe even if they did not insist on cloth. The need to earn money with which to buy clothes, soap, and other necessities can be met only by seeking employment on a farm, in Fort Jameson township, or farther off. A few people earn enough by selling vegetables in Fort Jameson, and there is a certain amount of maize and other cereals sold. These sales, however, do not provide sufficient income to reduce materially the extent to which people go out to work.

Control of Movement

101 To the White traveller, Fort Jameson District is an island of tobacco in a sea of bush. To the Ngoni, the island is not so sharply demarcated, and its characteristic property is cattle, not tobacco, yet it still remains an island, surrounded by a sea of other tribes whose 101 traditions are different from their own. The ships that cross this sea 489 are the lorries. In time past, men used to walk to their destinations, [493] going by Feira to Southern Rhodesia, or across the Luangwa to Broken Hill. A few used to go down to Lake Nyasa, and thence to the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

648 principal urban centres on the railway line in Northern Rhodesia who represent the Ngoni Native Authority in the various Native Urban Courts. These representatives are appointed by the Superior Native Authority, that is, by the Paramount Chief and his Secretaries. These posts are regarded in much the same light as those of the minor chiefs except that the tenure of office is not so stable, and the same struggles to gain them take place. There are Ngoni members of the Fort Jameson African Urban Advisory Council, but they are elected by urban Africans and are not appointed by the Native Authority.

Rural and Urban Status

• 969 554 The relatively privileged position of certain individuals in the urban under may raise their status in the life of the tribe. We have already seen how the initiative in religious matters is taken by the deacons and evangelists, and these people are also called upon to lead the prayers that precede all country meetings. The orderlies in the hospitals in Fort Jameson are able to establish private practices and number chiefs and other important people among their clients. The senior shop assistants may find it possible to ascertain important people by offering them European spirits. The clerks of the Administration, as part of the protective screen around the District Officers, can exercise their discretion in allowing pleas to go forward to them.

There seems to be very much less bribery and corruption than has been reported from other parts of Africa. The Ngoni are in the main more interested in and more able to make effective use of medicines and other material goods than they are of advance information. But the fact remains that the African Civil Service and the various commercial undertakings are institutions within which a man of no importance in the village and tribe can rise to a position of influence which will affect his dealings with other tribesmen. The only Ngoni on the African Representative Council, which meets yearly and includes representatives from the whole of Northern Rhodesia, was in 1946 not a headman or lieutenant but was the most prominent African businessman in Fort Jameson.

To some extent this association of high status in the urban community and low status in the rural one is inevitable, since it is only by absence from the district for many years that a man can advance himself sufficiently and acquire sufficient skill and seniority to reach this high urban status. The member of the African Representative

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Cowell mentioned above were some twenty years of his life in Johannesburg. Fort Jameson itself is not a sufficiently big town for this process to take place within it, and yet it is only in Fort Jameson or on the tobacco farms that: man can live with a leg in both camps, going home to the village at the week-ends and probably keeping his wife in the village during the wet season to tend her crop. 369 554

On the other hand, there is some rivalry between the traditional leaders and the comparatively prosperous townspeople. The well-clad and well-housed Ngoni of the township are sometimes described scornfully by village people as 'merely White'. There is a feeling that the leading African traders are trying to monopolize the economic opportunities in the village. Recently the same prominent Ngoni businessman proposed that he should take over the delivery of mail to the Native Authorities, which he claimed he would be able to do more efficiently with a car than can the present postman on a bicycle. The Paramount Chief did not answer this proposal but wrote instead to the Administration to complain against the danger of one man being allowed to earn so much more than anyone else while there were so many people who needed money. At the same time, men whose lives are lived principally in the towns complain that in the villages there is 'nothing but jungle', and that the chiefs are old-fashioned and obstructive. 369 578 177 [205] [493]

The Administration

The relationship between the Provincial Administration and the Ngoni is characteristically one of superordination and subordination. The District Officer can send for any Ngoni, but not even the Paramount Chief can send for the District Officer. This characteristic arises from two sources, from the premise which we find held all over Southern Africa, that any White is superior to any Black, and from the supervisory role allotted to the Administration in the Native Authority scheme. These two facets of the same relationship are not always seen separately by the Ngoni, and in many contexts their behaviour towards the Administration is governed entirely by the fact that the District Officer and those above him are all White. Official reports by the Administration during the reign of Mpezeni II repeatedly remarked on the Paramount Chief's distrust of Whites, and this attitude still persists. Any kind of trouble at all, particularly when it is seen as a characteristic of the present times as opposed to the glorious trouble-free past of the days of peace, before the Whites 648

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

372
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24. Learning to make fire

25. Explaining how to do it

[facing page 129]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

societies were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to conciliate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[40] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[40] Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 156; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, [n.1]; Young, *Henry*, p. 105.

Library E-S (1946-1949)954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

229 organized by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief
476 and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who
639 killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt, but occasionally if the
639 field is very poor a chief will summon absentees in his court.

229 These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic
[136] significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as effectively as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but
[681] he can call out his men hunting.[*] Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with
[411] them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African bureaucrats*

647 Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was
648 little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous
693 leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

[*] See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 105, for Ngoni hunting methods.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

The *intelwa* was made from the roots of a creeper and a bush which grew on the banks of streams. These roots were burned over the fire, pounded and mixed with water. The warriors were given some to lick on the tips of their fingers, some was smeared inside their shields, and the rest was beaten in a gourd till it foamed. The 'war doctor' took the tail of a goat or of a zebra and dipped it in the foam and sprinkled the warriors as they finally passed out of the gateway of the kraal on the campaign. This medicine was for strengthening them and also for making them 'slippery', so that the enemy spears would glide by them and not pierce them, and they could slip between the posts of the enemy stockade. After being sprinkled with the *intelwa* no one could sleep with his wife or any other woman, as he would risk spoiling the effect of the medicine and therefore would be more liable to be killed.

The *inklowa* was a spear with a barbed hook. The Paramount threw it in front of the army as they stood in the kraal until all the warriors had left. It was then put back in the *indlondolo* where it was kept in the care of the owner of that hut.

There were thus three functions to be performed, each by one of the war medicines. The *intelwa* was to strengthen and protect individual warriors. The *intonga* was the symbol of their Paramount and their kingdom leading them to war and weakening the enemy. The *inklowa* was the symbol of invincibility, administered by the Paramount.

There were two stages of assembling in the Paramount's village before a campaign. The first followed the initial summons to mobilize, when the local companies (*mabandla*) marched into the kraal, sorted themselves into age regiments (*mabuto*) and sang their regimental songs. Then followed the *ligubo*, the war-dance, when the warriors wore their full war-dress, and the women joined in. There was no individual dancing but a working up of corporate feeling through the dancing and songs. The Ngoni used no drums in their music, relying on achieving rhythm and unison by the stamping of their feet and their singing. After this dance the warriors left for their villages, while at the Paramount's village preparation was made for food and snuff for the campaign. Hard cakes of roasted bullrush millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts pounded together, and dried meat, were the main supplies carried. At the second summons the warriors returned in their companies with their carriers. These carriers, who were usually young boys, carried the war-dresses and ornaments wrapped in a mat, and the food supplies.

Since on this final meeting depended much of the ultimate success of the campaign, only the warriors and the senior men were present, and all women and young children were excluded from the kraal. After the objectives of the fighting had been explained the warriors were addressed by the old men and exhorted to be brave and to help their comrades, and then the final medication by the 'war doctor' took place. The separation of the army from the civil population was complete until their return

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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1. Chief dressed for war-dance

[facing page 16]
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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[411]

2. Chief dressed for war-dance with wives

3. Chief and his elders in kraal

[facing page 17]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

All of them made their own axes, knobkerries and catapults for hunting. Some were interested in music and made shepherds' pipes, or one-stringed lyres, or hand pianos of metal strips affixed to a wooden base. They composed their own songs and airs for these instruments. Others showed ingenuity in making elaborate models of lorries and aeroplanes, or in carving heads of animals. Others liked to weave fibre into the wide-brimmed hats some herd-boys wore. 868 [411] [534] [533]

More significant still for their future social relationships, they began now to choose their own intimate friend and to form the friendship pacts which were characteristic of Ngoni society, and regarded by adults as important in the child's development. In the friendship pacts, especially those between boys, there was no implied or manifest restraint. They could have 'joking relations', and hence say outrageous things to each other. They could quarrel and make it up, and defy each other's wishes and decisions, without a final breach. The relationship between friends often lasted into later adult life, and was probably all the stronger for the occasional lapses and outbursts, and by the fact that in the daily companionship of friends the burden of observing 'respect' did not oppress them. 572

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The boys' dormitory

The hut known as the boys' dormitory and the whole system of living which it represented was a traditional feature of Ngoni village life. In their culture it had three main purposes. Formerly, when as they said 'War was our school', it was the place where boys slept and lived together, and where they learned to defend themselves and to obey authority. It was in a sense the preparatory school for the regiment, and the herding of cattle was the basis of the curriculum. Once a boy went to sleep in a dormitory he never left it until he married, unless he was seriously ill. In the days of warfare, he learned in the dormitory and out herding the cattle, a knowledge of the bush and its wild life and of his fellows, and 182 575 342

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

476 having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river
342 with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

463 Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established
[177] and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft.
281 Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from
[411] skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons,
322 wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most
[413] Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what
285 was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope
283 for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

534 Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

Their favorite weapon

N 411 the *nyukutu* or throwing spear, the shaft of which was made of *msaka* or *msopani* or other hard wood. The head is bound to the shaft with copper wire; part of an ox tail serves as a grip; and at the top is a plume of goat's hair known as the *chowa*. Battle axes were also used. Round his waist the warrior wore a *miyayo*, or kilt composed of strips of skin of leopard, wild cat, monkey, baboon or sheep—some of them straight, and others plaited and twisted. In lieu of a *miyayo*, a sporran or *chitewe cha ku mato* might be worn in front with a similar covering styled *chitewe cha ku mbuyo* behind. These were generally made of serval or other wild cat skins. *Njiwiri* or garters, consisting of strips of goat skin threaded with iron bells also known as *njiwiri*, were worn below the knee; and *mitobwu* or earrings of lead completed the fighting man's attire.

N 714 281

M 411 825 [824] [381] M 714

The Achewa also carried battle-axes, but they relied mainly on the bow (*uta*) and arrow (*mpaliro*). The favourite wood for the bow was *maduwa*, and the bowstring or *saringa* was made from the skin of Sharpe's steinbuck or another small antelope. The barbed head (*nchato*) of the arrow is bound to the *bano* (shaft of *bango* reed) by *buzzi* string cemented with the sap of the wild fig tree. The fork at the butt end is known as *utera*, and is protected by a binding of *buzzi* string called *buwi*, which is also the name for the hair of an elephant's tail. Chiefs displayed a battle headdress styled *ngoni*, consisting of the feathers of the turaco, coucal (*vide supra* VIII, 2) and other birds sewn on to a pad of goat skin. An *mbera*, or band of cowrie shells, was frequently worn round the forehead.

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and assessors are nominated by the chiefs on the advice of their lieutenants and some of them are in fact lieutenants or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is illiterate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lieutenants or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying sixpence for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the county and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [693]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organized system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional governors. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of their people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 431 [273] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend these to people they can trust. All the chiefs organize their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole county, but only part of the county. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organize enough hunts. 622 224 [411] [136]

/8 cont'd/

352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled 285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any 513 headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts [177] and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

/9/ V

412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of furnaces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used, [325] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa [567] slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

493 Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the [241] village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle, [492] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of 411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about 224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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6, 7. Pounding maize

342

[facing p. 33]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been announced, and from that vantage-point she could command the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[556] do women would have four or five of them bulging with maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
●412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch children there. There were much smaller mortars for pounding ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
415 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow winnowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of 273
sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their 281
women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and 294
sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The 177
use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni 301
families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form [531]
standardized geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the bead 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once 302
was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and [412]
combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

482
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342
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28. Learning to carry wood

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412
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29. Learning to pound

[facing page 145]

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftaincies remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional sytems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 to hide his household goods for, says he, "How
695 do we know we shall return from there." And all
their beads are taken off. When they see the sun
791 is beginning to rise, every one assembles. And then
they begin to pick out some strong young men, saying, "So and so must stay behind, and so and so, they must look after their companions and keep guard over the village, lest the medicine man's children begin to pillage the property of them who do not die." And then they begin to set out to go to the spot the poison is to be drunk at, and they
[412] carry in readiness a grain mortar and a pestle (just any mortar), and follow the path in single file, and come to where the witch doctor is, and he begins to arrange them in a line; they do not turn their backs to the sun, the women spread out in one line, the men in another. The place is black with people.
[242] The medicine man has his feather head-dress on, and goat's-hair bands are round his wrists. And then some old man gets up to present that for which the medicine is pounded, perhaps a goat, and this is for opening his bag [where he keeps the poison].

III. Thereupon the doctor says, "Give to me the spirit of the dead." Then that old man gets up, and going up to the village chief, tells him "The doctor is seeking the spirit of the dead." And the chief speaks, saying, "Well, and know you not them who have died here?" And then the old man gives him, the doctor, the spirit, saying, "Here so and so, and so and so have died, and it is on their account we summon you." Then the pounder of the poison says, "Give to me the partakers of human flesh who have eaten these ones you name." And then they call up two people, a man and a woman, saying, "Let her of the race of the Hills, and him of such and such a clan come here." And them they thus called come and stand near the mortar. Then

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIV

291
412
857
516

3. Boys crushing ground-nuts. The expressed oil will be used in a bird trap

524
857
516

4. Boy playing with a toy motor-car made from maize stalks

NGONI

[Facing P.209]

/8 cont'd/

285 the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found [482] and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

415 In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat 412 porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. [531] Wooden hemispherical pats, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

412 At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzilia quanzensis or Monotes trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is [531] a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four [504] inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones [426] or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are 352 sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make [463] a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

/8 cont'd/

352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled
285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any
513 headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts
[77] and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

/9/ V

412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of fur-
[325] naces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used,
[567] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

493 Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid
[241] wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle,
[492] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of
411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about
224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

476 having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river
342 with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

463 Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established
[177] and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft.
281 Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from
[411] skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons,
322 wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most
[413] Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what
285 was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope
283 for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

534 Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Women's skills: Guardianship of property

Ngoni social organization, as we saw in Chapter I, placed the guardianship of all wealth except cattle in the hands of the women who were heads of houses. As a Ngoni girl grew towards adulthood and the time drew nearer when she would marry and leave her home for a strange village, the leading women of her father's house initiated her into the skills needed to create and preserve the forms of property for which she would some day be responsible. 429 462 868

First among these skills came the care of the hut and compound. The framework and roof of the huts were built by men, but the walls were mudded and the floors of the hut and veranda were strengthened and polished by women. Ngoni women of good family did not often do the actual plastering of mud upon the wooden framework of the hut. It was considered too dirty and exhausting a job for them to do, but they had to know how it should be done, and what standards of good work involved, in order that they might later instruct others. During a hut building Ngoni girls might be seen tucking up their clothes and rather half-heartedly slapping mud on the walls, to the good-humoured jesting of the village women who were vigorous and expert at the job. The girl's grandmother stood by and said at intervals: 'That is too thick; it will fall off. Fill up those cracks. Smooth over those joins,' and so on. The girls shrugged their shoulders and obeyed while Grandmother was watching, but gave up as soon as she went away. 462 342

The flat-ended flails with which the floor was beaten were heavy and girls were generally unable to use them expertly, but they were made to watch the process, with its seemingly endless beating of the earth floor compounded of river mud, ant-hill clay and cowdung. Once the floor was beaten so that it was level and all cracks had disappeared, the Ngoni girls were made to get down on their knees and learn how to polish it with damp ashes and a smear of cowdung, rubbed [413] ● 356 868 [237]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 181 356 515 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infect their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again. 825 356 [485]

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene which made them insist that there should be no spitting or nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An ingenious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose. 515 356 [413]

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean. 515 [576]

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up 264

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and nursemaids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving. 593 862 178

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*laweni*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *laweni*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father. 513 592

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *laweni* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary. 264 [343] [251] 356 593

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she 342 [415]

reminding the spirits that all depended on them. There was no tone of scolding in the words but a respectful plea for attention and help. 769 782

Alas O Paramount, [539]
Alas O Father,
Why do you refuse us?
What do you say about your child?
We say we are your people,
Alas O Paramount.

In prayers for rain the same form of address was used with the three parts of the prayer. The ancestral spirits addressed were those of the line of the Paramounts, since the needs of the whole country were involved. The beast chosen for the offering to the spirits was a black one with no white markings, and in place of the sick person's name, the need for rain was mentioned. In the account given by Mlonyeni Jere (quoted in the first chapter of Part IV) he used this formula, mentioning the names, presenting the cow, and then asking the ancestral spirits to tell UMkulumqango how greatly they were troubled through lack of rain.

The ritual of sacrificing to the spirits

The essential equipment in the ritual of sacrificing was the spear with which the beast was killed; baskets, both the wide winnowing basket (*lichero*) and the food basket (*usengwa*); the wooden dish (*ugcwembe*) on which the meat was placed; and the gourd cups for beer. These have been mentioned already in several contexts as the sacrificial vessels or ritual objects connected with the ancestor cult and kept in the hut of the woman who was guardian of a particular ancestral spirit. In the northern kingdom one of the Nhlane clan who carried out the ritual for sacrifices to UNdina Nhlane at Hoho said that in the hut of UNtani Nzima who died in Swaziland, but whose house had continued, was a spear, a black cloth for rain-making and a wooden meat dish. These were kept on the right-hand side at the back of the hut, and no one passing by could stand erect; he had to bend his back and head 'as men do when passing the *inkosi*'. Since the coming of the missions these had been thrown away. 769 778 782 [415]

In the central kingdom I saw in several houses this collection of ritual vessels. There was always a spear, a food basket, one or more gourds for beer, and one or more of the wide, flat, winnowing baskets on which uncooked flour was carried and which was used for meat if there was no wooden dish. These were kept at the back of the hut hanging on the wall, above the place where sacrificial meat was laid.

The first stage of the ritual sacrifice was killing and flaying the beast. It was killed either in the kraal or just outside the fence, with a thrust from the spear, or more than one if necessary, by some member of the leading clan. At the time of the sacrifice when Bambo Mangs was ill 769 782

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

woman had her home. The other was the 'gate'[1] of the kraal 621
at the opposite end of the enclosure to the 'big house'. The [417]
name by which this 'gate' was known applied also to the
space on each side of the gap in the kraal fence through
which the cattle went out and came in—a gap which was
closed at night with heavy poles. Here at the gate the men [512]
of the village sat by day, ate their meals brought to them by
children from their wives' huts, talked, received strangers,
pursued their crafts, and supervised the return of the cattle
in the evenings.

In and around the main huts within the tall reed fences, 342
the life of a Ngoni household went on. Some of the huts
were rectangular, others round. All had a veranda built up
above the ground-level and shaded by the house roof. The
back parts of the veranda were often enclosed with mats to
make additional storage space. In old Ngoni households the 351
open space around the hut was kept swept and mudded and
polished like a floor, so that people could sit there in comfort
and cleanliness as well as on the veranda. Near the house 417
was one or more little reed platforms about five feet above
the ground, where kitchen utensils, gourds and vegetables
were laid to dry, and which were used to sit under as shelter
from the sun in the hot months. Large and small wooden 415
pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape, mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
always to be seen outside and around the hut, as well as
inside.

In each household, within the main hut, there were two 353
places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
door-posts at the entrance. These posts with the hollow for [354]
the fireplace in the centre of the floor divided the hut into
a right-hand and left-hand side—the men's side and the

[1] and [2] A short list of the vernacular terms for some these common Ngoni place-names is given at end of the book.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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8. A well-filled grain store

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[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

not enough milk, or was unable to suckle the child, or was ill or died. If a woman died in or just after childbirth, and the child survived, it might be suckled by the paternal grandmother or by another co-wife of the dead woman, but as a rule they resorted to artificial feeding, and often used it to supplement breast feeding. The father of the child took the food pipe of a beast recently killed, washed it and dried it, and handed it over to the women to rub with fat until it was soft and pliable. One end was then tied tightly to close it, it was filled with warm cow's milk, and the other end was tied loosely so that the child could just suck through it. It was kept well washed with warm water, and many infants were brought up successfully with this 'bottle'.

The babies were also given very thin gruel made of millet or maize flour, and curds and whey beaten up together. This was put in a very small gourd, decorated with drawings, with a spout to pour from, and a cover to keep flies and dust out.

Weaning

Studies of weaning in different cultures lay emphasis on the traumatic shock of separation from the mother, not only in terms of being refused the breast, but also of being removed to sleep elsewhere than beside the mother, and perhaps being sent away to stay with another relative.

In the Ngoni pattern of nurse-girl care and of supplementary feeding, especially after the first few months, it might seem that the actual weaning was less of a shock than in cultural situations where the baby was with the mother all day, carried about by her and never refused the breast if it cried. Ngoni women, however, and men too, all asserted that weaning was a shock to the child, even if it happened at two years old.

The reasons for this shock were partly that it was done all in one morning at one fell swoop, and partly that the child was sent away from the mother at night. The same nurse girl looked after it all day, but now took it more often to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several respects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of the household objects were indeed the same as those used by other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural significance about some of the features of Ngoni households mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found elsewhere.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling. Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots holding water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front of the hut was a well-swept space, mudded and polished in

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fascinate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens', and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work in the gardens was an expedition for young children which they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places forbidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven years old, because they found their fathers there and the herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been announced, and from that vantage-point she could command the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[556] do women would have four or five of them bulging with maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch children there. There were much smaller mortars for pounding ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
415 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow winnowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the 251
tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the [262]
cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV.
Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work [556]
in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and
their presence in the compound conferred importance on
their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of [415]
beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter,
dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs
and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a [323]
shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It
was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when 583
married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats,
spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would 577
show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to
have a high standard of household management in her new
home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households 511
well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they 577
could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some
of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed [357]
their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish 252
was being prepared. They watched every movement of their 868
mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on,
measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred
the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps
and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water
before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day 262
in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish
of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less
often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the [415]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 round covered food basket, the side dishes in small covered
[415] earthenware bowls. Among the traditional Ngoni dishes learned by girls were the following:

Gruel made of cow's milk and maize flour (for young
252 children).
262 Whole maize boiled with beans and round peas.
Sweet potatoes boiled, peeled and mashed with tomatoes.
Beans and finger millet flour cooked separately and then stirred together.
Pumpkins cooked with ground-nut paste.
Ground-nut flour cooked with scraps of meat.
Whole tall millet pounded with ground-nuts.
Pot-roast chicken with tomatoes, onions and ground-nuts.

In Ngoni households meat when cooked in large quantities,
262 not just as broth made from bones and titbits, was served on
415 a special wooden meat-dish, round or oblong with rounded ends, and supported on three sturdy legs. This meat-dish was an integral part of the equipment of every 'true Ngoni'
[264] household, and, like the French housewife's omelet pan, was after use wiped clean and polished with clarified fat. The outside of these meat-dishes was often decorated with 'poker
[531] work' designs by the maker, and such decorated and shining meat-dishes were treasured as heirlooms. Other, but rare,
415 heirlooms were hammered brass pots with a flat bottom and turned over edge, of the pattern known in India as *dekchies*. The Ngoni women who owned them declared they had been brought by their ancestors from the south.

All the extra fat when a beast was killed was sent to the
251 women of the 'house' in whose herd it was, and this fat was cooked until it was clarified, and then stored. Butter was made by shaking milk in a gourd, and it was also clarified
[234] for keeping. Formerly milk curds were made daily by the senior women and kept to mature in a jar before being eaten. Only in a few Ngoni households was this still done.

273 Beer was made on special occasions when the women had

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIII

251
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1. Storing finger millet. The untidily thatched building on the right is a dormitory for boys

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415
342
354

2. A queen brewing beer. It is only important people who own oil drums

NGONI

[Facing P. 208]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than either of these two drinks, and the drinking of it is essentially a 273
social event. The kind of beer brewed is made from maize, sorghum, and finger millet. It is brewed by women, the process lasting about a [462]
week. The beer can be drunk at any time during the week, but it is not regarded as truly beer until after the brewing process has been completed. It remains good to drink for about three days, after which it becomes too sour. About 20 to 30 gallons of beer are brewed at a time. The beer can be sold, used to provide refreshment for participants in some ceremony or other, offered in return for labour or other services, or else just drunk for its own sake. In each case the presence of beer in the village acts as a magnet attracting people from other villages. Beer that is sold is of economic importance as it is the principal [434]
way in which women raise funds for themselves. In connexion with a [796]
ceremony of some kind, the attraction of the beer is secondary in general to that exerted by the ceremony itself. The provision of beer in return for utilitarian services we shall discuss later. It is in the pattern of behaviour adopted when beer is drunk for its own sake that we can see reflected the structure of social action at the village level.

Beer is stored in earthenware jars of about 7 gallons capacity. A [251]
calabash-gourd cup is used to ladle the beer into earthenware bowls [415]
holding about 4 pints; from these the beer is drunk. When the beer is ready for drinking, the friendly fellow villagers of the man whose wife has brewed come to the beer-hut, which is usually the woman's kitchen, and the owner of the beer drinks the first jar with them. The procedure with each jar is that the owner of the beer gives the jar to someone, almost invariably a man, who becomes known as the divider of the beer, and who calls on someone junior to him to act as the dispenser of the beer. The dispenser sits on the ground and fills up the bowls from the jar under the instruction of the divider of the beer, and then takes them, or points them out to, the people to whom the divider wishes to give the beer. Thus the beer is given away in jars by the owner of the beer to the dividers of the beer, and is then divided into bowlfuls, and given by the dividers to yet other people. The owners of the bowlfuls drink some and pass on the bowls so that other people may drink. Each time these gifts of beer of different quantities are made they are acknowledged by the recipient in the form of a praise, consisting of the syllable *yo* followed by the descent-name of the giver. This is also done when a bowl or a jar is finished, so that when the last bowl of a jar is finished the owner of the bowl is praised, then the divider of the beer, and finally the owner of the beer. The

/7 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household, 415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or [511] china crockery.

323 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every [462] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood. [839] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol [415] and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves [824] of the mbwabwa tree.

Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the 285 different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men, [353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be [467] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings [491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid [993] baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /8/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

/8 cont'd/

285 the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found [482] and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

415 In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat 412 porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. [531] Wooden hemispherical pats, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

412 At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzilia quanzensis or Monotes trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is [531] a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four [524] inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones [426] or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are 352 sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make [463] a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

A widespread variant

on virilocal residence will be discussed later and illustrated in Chapter IV of Part III. 591

(b) *Village pattern*

There was a traditional pattern of Ngoni village organization, which consisted in the siting of the huts in the village and the corresponding social groups formed in the different sections. Informants made it clear that when the Ngoni first settled in the areas where the two kingdoms now exist, the royal villages and the chiefs' villages were very large. Segmentation of these large villages, not only by the *lusungulu* 'going out' as already described, but also by sections of the village breaking off, began before the Europeans came and continued after their arrival. In the 1930's the traditional pattern was sometimes altered by a desire to build a 'model village' laid out in lines instead of in a horse-shoe curve round the kraal. Even in some of these model villages the grouping of huts, though no longer in a series of circles, indicated the house affiliation of their owners and their relationship to the head of the village. 621

The traditional ground-plan of an Ngoni village was based on the main kraal which occupied the centre. The gate of the kraal was on the open end of the horse-shoe formation, and the most important hut, the *indlunkulu*, was at the top of the kraal. On either side of the *indlunkulu* were grouped the huts belonging to the houses associated with the wives of the owner of the village. Behind the *indlunkulu* were the huts of his married sons and those of his brothers who chose to live with him, and this group of huts, known as *cigodlo*, spread round behind the main huts of the owners of houses. Behind each house-group of huts were the huts of the *induna* associated with the house; in large villages he often had a kraal and reproduced a similar small village plan in his own circle of huts. On the wings of the village, curving towards the gate of the kraal and called by the Ngoni 'the horns of the village', were the less important families in the village. The general principle of the village plan in terms of social status and the siting of huts was that the nearer huts were to the *indlunkulu* the higher was the prestige of their owner. The following very much simplified plan of an Ngoni village illustrates the principle of siting the huts in relation to social grouping, as it was when a new *lusungulu* village was set up. In this plan the *indlunkulu* hut was owned by the mother of the owner of the village, one of his father's widows who moved out with him. When she died the big wife on her right might move into the actual *indlunkulu* hut, or stay in her own hut while another widow of her father-in-law entered the *indlunkulu*. There was no invariable rule for this type of succession, but there were only these two possible alternatives. Reference should be made here to one other hut site—that of the *laweni* or boys' dormitory. It was usually sited behind either the big house or the *gogo* house, far enough behind [417] [554]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

woman had her home. The other was the 'gate'[1] of the kraal 621
at the opposite end of the enclosure to the 'big house'. The
name by which this 'gate' was known applied also to the [417]
space on each side of the gap in the kraal fence through
which the cattle went out and came in—a gap which was
closed at night with heavy poles. Here at the gate the men [512]
of the village sat by day, ate their meals brought to them by
children from their wives' huts, talked, received strangers,
pursued their crafts, and supervised the return of the cattle
in the evenings.

In and around the main huts within the tall reed fences, 342
the life of a Ngoni household went on. Some of the huts
were rectangular, others round. All had a veranda built up
above the ground-level and shaded by the house roof. The
back parts of the veranda were often enclosed with mats to
make additional storage space. In old Ngoni households the 351
open space around the hut was kept swept and mudded and
polished like a floor, so that people could sit there in comfort
and cleanliness as well as on the veranda. Near the house 417
was one or more little reed platforms about five feet above
the ground, where kitchen utensils, gourds and vegetables
were laid to dry, and which were used to sit under as shelter
from the sun in the hot months. Large and small wooden 415
pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape; mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
always to be seen outside and around the hut, as well as
inside.

In each household, within the main hut, there were two 353
places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
door-posts at the entrance. These posts with the hollow for [354]
the fireplace in the centre of the floor divided the hut into
a right-hand and left-hand side—the men's side and the

[1] and [2] A short list of the vernacular terms for some these common Ngoni place-names is given at end of the book.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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8. A well-filled grain store

342
415
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243

[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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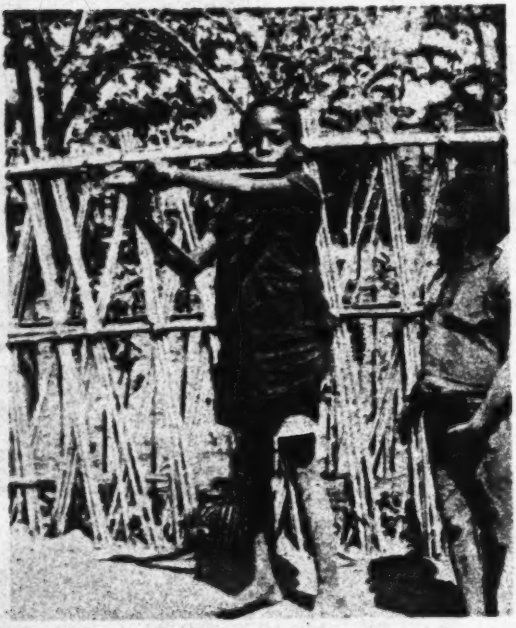

10. Young musicians

[facing page 49]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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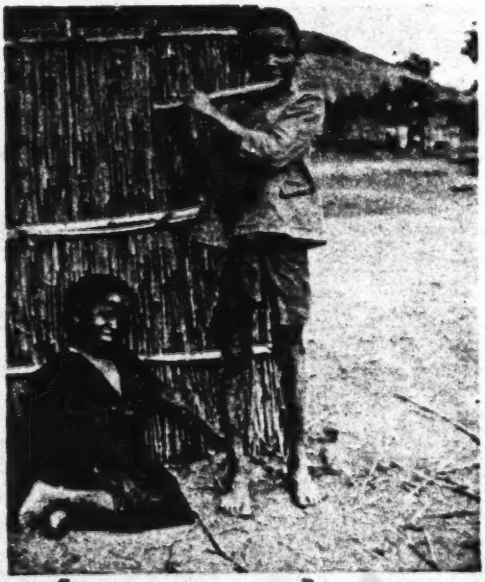
11. Young musicians

[342]



[facing page 64]

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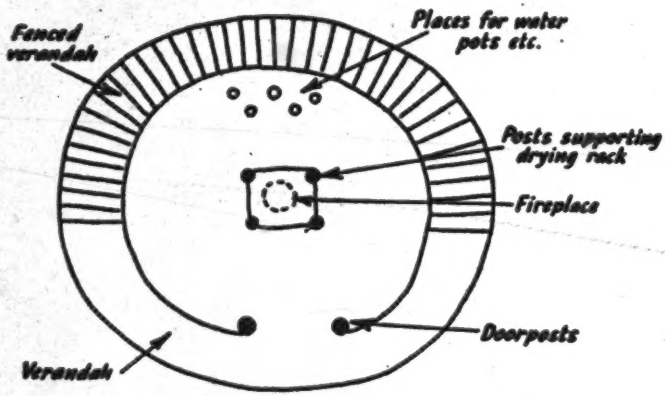

DIAGRAM OF HUT

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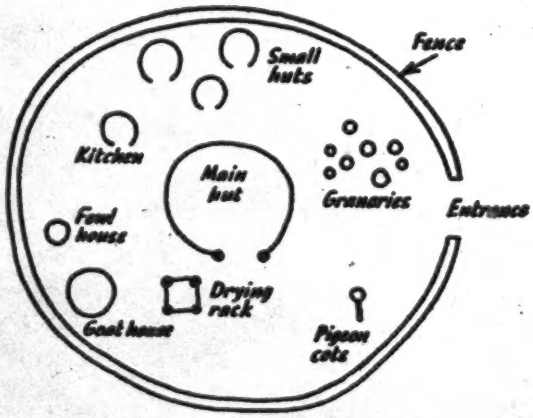

DIASRAM OF HOUSEHOLD COMPOUND

[p. 74]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been announced, and from that vantage-point she could command the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
● 417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[556] do women would have four or five of them bulging with maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch children there. There were much smaller mortars for pounding ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
415 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow winnowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

521 867 men's affairs. The kind of topics discussed by men at the kraal gate included hunting, in the right season; cases heard in the courts and the application of Ngoni law to all subjects of the Ngoni chiefs; the organization of village affairs from tax collecting and dealing with tax evaders to beer drinks and burials and building houses; the sales of cotton, tobacco and cattle at near-by markets and the current prices; the various labour recruiters combing the villages for likely young men and the latest stories brought back by men who had returned from working in the south. Every now and then, particularly when the talk ranged round decisions in the courts or adding to the herds of cattle, references were made to the Ngoni past, to their relations with Europeans, both missionaries and officials, and to the behaviour of the non-Ngoni groups in the Ngoni kingdoms. The older boys listened attentively and as we shall see later in Chapter VII acquired among other things an extensive knowledge about the needs and uses of cattle. The younger ones pricked up their ears now and then when a familiar name or event was mentioned, and stored up questions to ask their father at a time when he was willing to listen and answer.

576 417 There was the usual Ngoni formality about where people sat at the kraal gate. The most senior men sat on each side of the opening, leaning up against the gate-posts, with the rest in decreasing order of rank as they were farther from the gate. The cleared space on each side of the gate and in front of it was all known as the 'gate of the kraal'. The craftsmen [469] who were carving wood or twisting bark rope, making baskets or plaiting mats, sat according to their age and rank on the edges of the senior group or among them. They could have carried on their trade anywhere, but they preferred the company of their fellows and did not want to miss listening 858 to the talk or the arrival of strangers. The herd-boys, when they were present, were on the extreme edges of those sitting [561] there, divided into two groups, 'youths' and boys. Each [262] group made its own fire for boiling milk and roasting sweet potatoes or ground-nuts.96

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the lieutenants are more under the control of the chief of the county, who may intervene to depose a lieutenant if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material Setting

361 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the
[343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the
● [417] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of aloes.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually *bedinan*, pl. *mabedinan*; otherwise *mfumu yamuzi*, pl. *mafumu wamiuzi*. The specific term for headman of a cadet or commoner village is *muvizimuzi*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Shelters are erected on

the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may st. behind to look after the cattle. Streams are in spate at this time of year, and some men build garden byres to which they move their cattle to avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the gardens is important from the point of view of inter-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so that they are adjacent to those of kindred from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in *her* dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organizing public works, and that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as reported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and may be up to 20 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead. Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle

[1] Elmslie, p. 37.

/6 cont'd/

417 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which [136] there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

231 /7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [136] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

417 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [285] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [251] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder 343 to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may [511] have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasionally open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

/11 cont'd/

241 The busiest time of the year in the garden is at the beginning of the rains, when there is much work to be done planting and weed-
[136] ing, and scaring away the monkeys and wild pigs. Later on, in the new year, after the garden has been weeded twice, it is possible to think of enlarging the garden at one edge, and if it is not too late, the newly cleared portion may be planted with a catch crop. Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out
[476] to some extent co-operatively, either on a mutual help basis between two women, or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner of the garden. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink on the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrive at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subse-
[273] quent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set
[576] aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden.

/12/ Towards the end of the rains, there is less cultivating to be done, but the ravages of wild animals become more serious, and many families sleep for two or three months in the garden, returning to the village only to obtain food. Garden shelters are simple open-sided affairs with a thatched roof, but those owners who intend to
[342] sleep in their gardens for a long time, build small circular huts as in the village, or conical shelters with the roof reaching to the ground.
[417] A few lookout platforms built in trees are used as vantage points for spotting wild animals. If a man has a garden a long way from the village, particularly across a stream which will be in spate in the late rains, he may build a byre for his cattle at the garden.

Maize and ground-nuts are the first crops to be harvested, and later finger millet, root crops, and finally kaffir-corn. Maize is
251 stooked before the cobs are removed, and these are then dried on platforms before being carried to the village to be stored.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

000 money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her.

681 593 In court, when a woman has to pay damages or a fine, she may be able to provide the money from her own resources. If not, she can turn to her husband or to her own kinsfolk. Provided damages for adultery are not involved, her husband, if he is not away working, ought to provide the money and a deliberate refusal to do so would precipitate a major quarrel and the possibility of divorce. If a woman gets into a fight at a party, and has to pay, say, half-a-crown to someone she has hurt, her husband ought to find the money for her. If he refuses to do so though she has no money of her own, the court will say that he no longer loves his wife, and is trying to find an opportunity to divorce her. Indeed, there would be little point in the husband refusing to pay, as those who cannot pay their fines are committed to prison, and he would then lose the services of his wife.

593 421 A woman can hold property in her own right and a husband honours a well-loved wife by giving her cattle. Gifts that she gets from her own kinsfolk do not pass to her husband, and such things as blankets and mats that she has used, even if her husband bought them, are regarded as her own property. Even the money that her husband gives her to make specific purchases is her own to do as she pleases with, so that a woman may forgo the skirt for which her husband has given her money and instead give it to her sister to buy something else. Husbands do not always like such actions, but they cannot do anything directly to prevent them. One of the ways in which a wife acquires livestock of her own is by buying animals with the money she gets from her husband for clothes. The produce of a wife's wet-season garden, maize, sorghum, millet, root crops, pulses, [291] cucurbits, is in effect held in common by husband and wife, and neither ought to sell any of it without first consulting the other. [586] On divorce the crops are divided between them unless the court decides that one party did not work in the garden, or has deserted the other. The money a woman earns by brewing beer for sale she usually keeps, although some men say that a woman should hand [465] the money over to her husband, lest he find her with it and suspect that she has earned it by prostitution. In practice, most women seem to keep their own earnings and it is not uncommon, where the husband is a drunkard and weak-willed, for his wife to have custody of his money as well. Indeed the simultaneous operation within the husband-wife relationship of structural separation and social co-operation is well demonstrated by the apparently paradoxical situation, of which I saw two instances, in which a man ordered to pay damages to his wife for fighting her had to ask her to hand him over the money so that he could duly hand it back to her.

6. Mystical links

593 Symbolic expression of the relationship between man and wife is not greatly developed among the Ngoni, and the mystical bonds

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers. The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

captives were retained within the segment. In later years, at least, small-scale raiding organized by segment heads went on without the Paramount Chief's knowledge and it seems unlikely under those conditions that captives would have been sent in to him. 727 [721]

There is confirmatory evidence from other Ngoni groups. Hodgson wrote of the Dowa group that a warrior who had captured three or more people had one returned to him by the chief,[2] from which we may infer that they were at the disposal of the chief. For the Southern Ngoni, who are not so closely related to the Fort Jameson group as are those in northern Nyasaland and Dowa District, Read wrote that the Paramount Chief had a monopoly of slaves taken in war and that he distributed these to successful warriors, his wives and his relatives.[3] [643]

Cattle were handled in much the same way as captives. There was a dogma that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, but they were dispersed among the different villages and kept in the byres there. The lord of a major segment had effective control of the cattle in his own village and, when he chose to exercise it, in the other villages of his segment as well. When the Paramount Chief visited a village, cattle were killed in his honour and he was praised as the giver of the feast, but in the chief's absence the head of the village decided when beasts were to be killed. A lord appointed his lieutenants to look after his cattle as well as his people. When cattle had been taken on a raid, they were driven back to Ngoniland and then allocated to a lord. 231 422 643 727

Cattle for bridewealth were provided for a man by his lord. However it seems possible that a large proportion of the marriages made by politically unimportant people were not ratified by the passage of cattle.[4] 583 231

Such evidence as there is suggests that the Ngoni consumed their cattle faster than many similar cattle people and, as with dependants, they captured cattle more than they reared them. People speak of the days before the conquest as a time when they lived entirely on meat and beer. Poole suggests that the Ngoni produced little or no food in their own country,[5] and while this is plainly contradicted by contemporary evidence, it is probable that they did rely on raiding to supplement their supplies of cattle and cereals, and that therefore many captured cattle were used as food. Thus cattle themselves were a short-term asset and the control of 231 262 727

[2] Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 153.
[3] Read, 'Standards of Living', p. 20.
[4] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 7-8.
[5] Poole, 'Human geography of Lundazi and Petauke', p. 13.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tiation of function between the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief, it is improbable that there were any special political offices outside the residential system. 645 631

Read mentions a political hierarchy with various titles.[15] At least in the Fort Jameson group, three of the four vernacular terms she gives were used in connexion with the residential system. The fourth, *amanxusa*, was used in Zulu for messengers sent by a chief and a dialectical variant of this (*manyusa*) is so used nowadays at Fort Jameson. They have no executive authority and do not seem to have had any in the past. 631 [624]

Fraser, writing of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, says that there were two groups of lieutenants, one composed of men who became Ngoni before the crossing of the Zambezi and which exercised civil power, and the other which included men of more recent incorporation into the Ngoni tribe and which supplied the war leaders. He implies that the war leaders did not take part in the civil administration.

There seems not to have been this distinction between civil and military lieutenants among the Fort Jameson group. Wiese's 'Minister of War', who was referred to as a Commander-in-Chief by other contemporary writers, was a segment head with the same responsibilities towards his people as anyone else. The regiments had leaders responsible for the tactical control of warriors, some of whom were recently incorporated men, and presumably Fraser is referring to them, but his statement that the man often chosen to lead the whole army had no voice in the council conflicts with Elmslie's account of the same place and period. The war leader, Ng'onomo, who is mentioned by Fraser, acted as regent on the death of the Paramount Chief in northern Nyasaland.[16] 631 701

The village as such had an importance independent of the size or order of segment of which it was headquarters or by which it was inhabited. There were no special terms for distinguishing the heads of large or small segments, for all were lords or ladies. But a special term[17] was used for a village headman, irrespective of the order of segment of which he was lord, provided he was not a lieutenant who had become head of the village in the absence of agnatic descendants of the founder. The use of a special term may have been an indication of the village headman's importance, part of which derived from the control he exercised over the cattle 631 622 [422]

[15] Read, 'Tradition', p. 462. cf. her account of the southern Ngoni in 'Standards', p. 16.

[16] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 32. cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 121, 289.

[17] *Inkhosana*. In Zulu, a small or petty chief. cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 622 [422] kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable [476] that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were [462] concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

361 622 Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of [787] selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

162 There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

631 621 624 [608] The term for lieutenant, *nduna*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was [554] created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, pp. 203*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*ff*, 109*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and village headmen looked after them. About half the cattle in Ngoniland were captured during the fighting of 1898 and although many of these were returned to the Ngoni, they were soon disposed of to White traders. To-day, many of the cattle in royal (i.e. capital, regal and chief's) villages are said to belong to the Paramount Chief. This statement of royal ownership is now not merely one referring to political overlordship, for these beasts are contrasted with others which belong to commoners and to other chiefs

TABLE VII. VILLAGES FOUNDED BEFORE AND AFTER 1898

How founded or incorporated in the Ngoni State	*Type of present-day village*					
	Royal			*Cadet*	*Commoner*	*Total*
	Capital	*Regal*	*Chief's*			
Founded by regional governors or their ancestors prior to creation of the Ngoni State	0	0	0	0	3	3
Founded before 1898 to accommodate other segments of the residential system	1	6	0	1	25	33
Total known to have been founded before 1898	1	6	0	1	28	36
Founded to accommodate segments of the residential system, date unknown	0	0	0	1	11	12
Founded after 1898 to accommodate segments of the residential system or their modern equivalents	0	2	0	4	20	26
Founded outside the Ngoni State, date unknown, entering it after 1898	0	0	0	0	6	6
Founded in Ngoniland by a labour immigrant after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Founded by direct Administrative action after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total known to have been founded or incorporated after 1898	0	2	0	4	28	34
Grand total	1	8	0	6	67	82

Sample collected casually in the general course of fieldwork.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small, contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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M 233 576 her daughters had died, and the herd of cattle was either inherited by the senior daughter's eldest son or divided among the sons of different daughters. Cewa informants said that quarrels constantly arose over the ownership of cattle, and two modern developments—the spread of *ulengwa*[1] marriage and of a patrilineal form of *mbumba* with its repercussions on cattle acquisition and disposal—caused further tensions in Cewa society.

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N 233 571 The role which cattle played in Ngoni social life partly depended on the structure and inter-relationships of the Ngoni social groups. The house and the family within the larger village unit were so organized that group ownership and group disposal of cattle caused no permanent friction. There were arguments about the disposal of cattle, but they were temporary and relatively trivial. The strength of tradition in the concept of ownership, and in the values and attitudes inherent in cattle-owning and keeping, was firmly established and was related to modern needs by the ingenuity of the Ngoni in manipulating traditional practices to suit new situations. Cattle therefore strengthened the integration of existing social units, and helped to preserve that unity and cohesion in Ngoni society which the ancestors were said to commend and to wish for. On this plane of conformity to a required pattern, cattle influenced the living and their behaviour. They also, through the structure and function of the houses, belonged to the spirit who was guarded in a particular house. As we shall see in Chapter IV, the ritual formula of address to the ancestor at the sacrifice of a beast was always 'Here is your beast . . . Here is your meat.' The living and the dead were joined therefore in the common ownership of a herd or part of a herd. The actual practices in social and ritual life where cattle were concerned, and the ideas and concepts from which the practices arose, will take up most of this chapter and form the necessary prelude to the further analysis of the ancestor cult.

N

Ownership of cattle and care of herds

171 422 [232 651] 'The war of the cattle-tax' was the name given in the central kingdom to the installation of dipping tanks in the 1930's and the levying of a tax of a shilling per head of cattle on all cattle-owners. The attempt by the Government to focus responsibility for dipping and to collect the taxes due brought out clearly the difficulties of applying English conceptions of ownership to the Ngoni. In the English meaning of the word ownership, a man can claim as his possession cattle which he has bought or inherited, and their offspring. This individual ownership means that he alone has the right to sell the animals or their milk, to regard the profits from such sale as his, and at any time to kill an animal for meat. He can will them to his descendants or to anyone he chooses after his

[1] Marriages in which the man took his wife to live in his village, but did not give lobola for her.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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death, or he can give them to anyone he likes during his lifetime. Hence individual acquisition in the English sense involves the legal right of individual disposal; the individual possession of profits from such disposal; and the individual responsibility for complying with any regulations concerning cattle, such as inoculation, slaughter for foot-and-mouth disease, and testing of milk.

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In Ngoni usage the concept of ownership involved the acquisition and disposal of, and the responsibility for, cattle, but behind this apparent similarity of terms lay a wide difference in interpretation. Cattle could be acquired by inheritance, by natural increase, by *lobola*, as payment in a court case, as a gift, or by purchase. Formerly cattle could be acquired in warfare and raiding, but never by purchase. With this exception of buying cattle for cash, the methods of acquiring cattle had not altered since the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland. In pre-European days in the Ngoni kingdoms only the Paramount, the subordinate chiefs, the *abamusana* and the big *izinduna* possessed cattle. Having a herd marked the owner as a leading member of a leading clan, or as a famous warrior of a lesser clan whose distinguished war service had been rewarded by the Paramount giving him cattle, or allowing him to keep some of those he had taken from the enemy. New herds were formed when a Paramount or a chief moved out of his father's village and set up his own *lunungulu* village, taking with him one or more of his mothers who, together with his big wife, set up houses in the new village, and these houses were allotted cattle from the former undivided herd. Another way in which a herd was divided was when a big *induna* in charge of the house of a leading wife of a Paramount or a chief built a kraal for the cattle of that house near his own huts, and added to that herd any cattle which he acquired. Large Ngoni villages in pre-European days usually had one or more kraals on the edge of the village, as well as the big central one. When the large villages broke up and the *induna* moved off to found his own village, he still took care of the cattle of that house. If the house was one where an ancestral spirit was guarded, a successor was always appointed to live in the hut and guard the spirit. Hence the relationship of the house, its spirit guardian, its cattle and the *induna* in charge continued, though the personalities changed through death and for other reasons. This explained how in the 1930's cattle were found in one kraal which were said to belong to a house or a woman guardian of a spirit miles away in another village. Sometimes they were described as the cattle of a man long dead.

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It is clear, therefore, that the Ngoni methods of acquiring cattle and building up herds did not result in a concept of individual ownership. Cattle were not willed from father to son, but the son of a Paramount or a chief, when he made his new *lunungulu* village, had the right to receive and to take with him the cattle of his mother's house; and the head of the *gogo* village who stayed behind also received and looked after the

233 cattle of *his* mother's house and those of other widows of his father, even though the widows remarried and went to live elsewhere. The 422 ownership of a herd, in the sense of authority to acquire and to dispose of the cattle, was in fact vested in the senior male members belonging to each house in whose name cattle were held. This senior male leadership of a house had, in the central kingdom, a parallel in the senior male members of a *banja*. The implication in both was the same—that there was a group of senior men linked by membership of a house or a *banja*, who took responsibility for all the cattle in the herd of that house or *banja* and for all additions to the herd. Any new beasts acquired through natural increase, *lobola*, court payments, gifts, or purchase, by any member of that house went into the herd belonging to it. Thus it was easy for young men working in the south to send back money to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. They knew the choice would be well made and that the cattle would be well cared for until their return.

The right of disposal of cattle in a herd belonging to a house or *banja* was based on the same concept of ownership. The senior male group had to decide which beasts to send for the *lobola* when a young man of [476] their house married. They undertook, as owners of the cattle, to pay fines in court cases when a member of the house was fined. If money was needed, either by the group as a whole or by an individual member, a beast was chosen and sold by the senior men; part of the proceeds was given to the individual who needed help, and part either buried under the floor of the hut of the woman who was head of the house, or converted into cloth and stored in the hut. Gifts of cattle were sometimes [431] given to important visitors, or as an expression of sympathy when mourning at a funeral, or for a sacrifice to the ancestors. On all such occasions the decision to dispose of one or more beasts and the selection of them were in the hands of the senior male group. Though prolonged discussion might go on before a decision to sell or make a gift was made, once there was agreement the selection was often made very quickly. The leading men would go to the kraal, point out the beasts to the herd-boys, and tell them to drive them to the appointed place.

233 The care of the herds was primarily the responsibility of the senior men, though the actual herding was delegated to the herd-boys. Informants said that in pre-European days great care was taken of the animals in the rainy season; the ant-hills in the kraal were preserved so that the animals might get out of the mud, and calf-houses with roofs were always provided for shelter for the calves. I saw some calf-houses of this kind, and some kraals with ant-hills left in them, but neither was common practice, and the reason given was that the kraals and herds were much smaller than in pre-European days.

There were two chief objectives in the care of herds: that the cattle should keep well and avoid disease, and that they should multiply. The

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 555 431 away the prize animals in the herd. Their formula in presenting a beast was 'Here is a small sheep.' This belittling of a gift was the social counterpart of their inner desire for a reputation for generosity.

183 422 476 It has been clear from many previous references that mutual assistance among members of a house was inherent in the social pattern of cattle-ownership. The Ngoni attached great value to this reciprocity of service, and it was deeply embedded in their social ethic. Young men in Ngoni villages thought twice before they deliberately took action which would bring them into the courts, because the fine would have to be paid by their elders from the common herd of cattle. The implications of this service proved no ultimate deterrent to hot-headed youth, but the lesson was constantly being rubbed in. After a court case for adultery, when a young man's father and his father's brothers had handed over a beast for a fine, they would grumble in the evening by the kraal at this waste of good cattle, and suggest it was time the young man went off to the south and sent money home to buy more cattle. This was the cycle of mutual help—the elders provided cattle from the herd for *lobola* and fines for the young men, who in turn went off to work and sent back money to buy more cattle. Reference has been made to 'the cloth of the spirits', when cattle were sold to provide cash for a young man who needed it, and the balance was used to buy cloth which was kept in the hut where the ancestral spirit was guarded. This cloth was the common property of all who belonged to the house owning the herd, and was returnable to the hut after it had been worn for some festive occasion. The forms which this mutual help could take were numerous and varied, and they all illustrated the fact that the correct and continuous observance of this reciprocity was considered by the Ngoni as one of the basic values underlying the ownership and use of cattle.

Among the group bound together by cattle-ownership this emphasis on mutual help as a desirable behaviour pattern had its counterpart in the social concept of integration. As we have seen, the Ngoni put a high value on 'staying together', on being united when challenged by a situation which made for disintegration. Within the social units of the house and family, the ownership of cattle and their care and use demanded some degree of co-operation through responsibility for the herd which was held in common. Integration between the living and their ancestors was also provided by the cattle. Common possession of a herd did more than just hold people together. The pattern of family and house organization which was characteristically Ngoni was given some stability through the ownership of cattle, allowing for the subdivision of herds when the new village 'went out', the exchanges at marriage, and the sacrifices at death.

because it was implied that her family had not given her 843 152
good instruction and advice before marriage.

The birth of the child

When the senior women were satisfied that labour was about 844
to begin, they took charge of all the preparations. They first
sent out of the hut all the things belonging to the husband,
his clothes, axes, spears, shields, and all the good mats, pots [422]
and baskets. Only old mats and clothes and pots were used
during labour, and the hut was henceforth unclean and [846]
forbidden to the husband and to all males. The mother-in-law directed operations, with the help of her co-wives, the wives of her husband's brothers, widowed sisters of her husband, and some of the wives of the younger generation. The women who took an active part in the actual delivery were the older ones, but several younger women came to assist, or look on, and to encourage the young wife.

She was made to sit on a mat leaning back against the knees of another woman, and the experienced 'midwives' were in front to receive the child in their hands. She was told to bear down and sometimes given a bark rope tied to the rafters to pull on. Though she might be in great pain, she was not expected to cry out or even to groan. The older women talked to her encouragingly, and wiped her face, or gave her a little water to drink. After the birth, the woman knelt forward leaning on her hands until the placenta was born. It was buried in a hole, in the floor at the back of the hut on the women's side.

The baby was washed by a senior woman and oiled with
castor oil. The cord was tied with thread and the baby was
given very thin gruel made of finger millet fried and ground. [853]
This was intended to act as a purgative to get rid of the mucus in the stomach. After this had been ejected, a tiny bit of the sour milk curds was put in the baby's mouth.

The mother was washed and covered with a cloth and left to rest, while the women folded up the delivery mat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

societies maintaining officially a conspiracy of silence, the stories were only standard replies by adults to children, and most adults admitted that children pursued these inquiries among themselves and found out what they wanted to know from each other. 864

Naming the child

After coming out of the hut and being presented to its male kin and to the elders of the village as 'the new stranger', the baby was given a name. The choice of a name was usually left to the baby's paternal grandfather. He sometimes gave it his name or his father's name, if a boy, or if a girl, his mother's name or his father's sister's name. There was no ceremony attached to naming. After the matter had been talked over by the men at the kraal gate, the grandfather came to the hut, and called the mother and child out and said, 'His name is so and so.' The personal name was seldom used in ordinary social intercourse, but in spite of this every child was given a personal name, and sometimes had added to it a descriptive name indicating that it had been born face downwards, or born a twin, or born too soon after the previous baby. 553 [551] [845]

At this time of naming, the father, or more generally the paternal grandfather, prepared a 'carrying skin' for the mother to carry the baby in. It really belonged to the baby rather than to the mother, for it was used by the nurse girl to carry the baby, and she had the child in her charge most of the day. The skin was that of a goat or small calf from the herd owned by the house to which the baby's father belonged. The skin was cleaned and scraped and made soft by rubbing in fat, and handed over to the mother with some of the meat for broth, and the rest of the meat was eaten by the males of that house. The gift in time became a cloth and not a skin, as skins for wearing or household use went out of fashion. The cloth when presented however was still called a 'carrying skin' and a goat or a calf from the herd of the 854 [281] [922] [262]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [248] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 177 233 234

593 payment. It may have been that Nimshi was merely trying to get
583 as much as he could hope for out of Simon, who was a fierce and powerful person. In view, however, of the decline in the incidence of bridewealth and the increasing importance of the legalization payment it is not unlikely that this right to the daughter's legalization payment may soon be separated from bridewealth.

428 It is at the death of a man that his children exercise their particular rights from him as against the claims of other kin. If a man has
[583] paid bridewealth for his wife, then the claim of his eldest son by her to his property is clear. The eldest son by the great wife is the heir, and he takes over control of the dead man's herd, and inherits his money. For inheritance, cattle are more important than money.
[454] Most men keep their money hidden in the ground, and it sometimes happens that a man dies without mentioning where he has put his savings, so that they are lost. Cattle are publicly-owned property,
[422] in that every boy in the village knows the ownership of each beast, and they can be seen in the byre every day. Men sometimes divide their property among their sons before they die, but it is more usual for a man to give one cow to the eldest son of each wife and to leave the rest undivided. The residue then passes to his heir on his death.
[583] If bridewealth has not been paid, the claim of the dead man's eldest son to the herd may be disputed by the dead man's brothers. Succession here does not seem to be determined in the light of the failure to pay bridewealth but by a consideration of residence. If a man is living in the same village as his father then he can expect to inherit his father's cattle when he dies. If he is living elsewhere, and tries to claim his inheritance, he may be opposed by his father's kinsmen resident in his father's village should he try to remove the cattle.

The eldest son inherits, but he has an obligation to help his sisters and younger brothers when they need beasts or money. If the other brothers are scattered in different villages, the herd may be divided among them, but it may be many years after the death that the division takes place. If the eldest son is in Southern Rhodesia the dead man's brothers delay the division of the herd as long as possible in case the rightful heir should return.

[425] Women acquire cattle and other animals with money they have saved or gained by selling beer, or as gifts from their husbands.
[583] If no bridewealth has been paid for a woman any animals she may own pass on her death to her eldest son. If bridewealth has been paid for her the disposal of her property is uncertain. Some people argue that the animals cannot then go to her son, for her son belongs to her husband's group because of the bridewealth, and that they ought to pass to her brother's son. Others say that the animals should go to her eldest son irrespective of bridewealth. Unfortunately I did not record any specific instance of inheritance from a woman.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M 575 335 [534] so that anyone coming that way may see "medicine" and turn aside. After which, all bathe in the stream, and the ceremonies are over.

During a *vingau* dance six drums are always used, namely, the *mphanje* (five or six feet in length, and beaten at one end only); the *ndewere* (another large drum three feet in length), or the *mbalule*; the *mbendambanda* and the *mtiwiso* (of medium size about two feet long); and two *kambumbu* (small drums eighteen inches in length). These are beaten by men detailed by the headman or *chiwinda*; but there are no special drums appertaining exclusively to particular *mikhwala* or songs. The big village drum always belongs to the headman; the others are privately owned, and are hired out for a small fee, such as an *nsengwa* basket. Before use they are always warmed first at the fire.

4. *Property.*

M N 423 [425] Land was acquired by the Achewa by occupation and by the Angoni by conquest. It was divided by the paramount chief among his lieutenants, who in turn divided their sections among the heads of lesser groups or families. Each headman now allots land to his villagers; and if they move the village to a new site, everyone retains possession of the garden which he held before. The allottee is entitled to trees, antheaps, honey or anything else on his plot; and he may sell crops or other produce, but may not sell or lease the land itself. When reaping his crop, he presents a basket of maize to his headman.

M N [422] In the home, the wife must provide the pots, and they are her personal property. The husband must supply her with baskets, hoes, etc.; but everything which pertains to woman's work belongs to the wife. The produce of a garden is the equal property of both. After a boy has passed through his initiation, he is given a small garden of his own. When, as in the case of the Achewa, he leaves the village to marry, the garden reverts to the chief, who is always spoken of as the owner of the land, since it is he who divides it out among his people.

N [622]

N 422 233 The majority of the cattle owners are Angoni. Possession is individual; but all the animals in one village are kept in one open kraal belonging to the village headman, who selects small boys to look after them. Herdsmen were formerly unpaid; but now, when a beast is sold, killed or otherwise removed, they receive a present from the owner, as also does the headman. There is no fixed fee; but the owner of a dozen head may give the headman a calf every other year, while the owner of one or two only gives him a goat. If a man living in a village where there is no kraal buys cattle, he frequently places them in the care of a friend at a neighbouring village where there is a kraal, instead of handing them over to his own headman. The friend makes his own arrangement with the headman; but the friend is liable to the owner, and the usual payment is made to the friend, who divides it with the headman.

N 672 233 If a beast dies in the kraal, there is no liability, provided that the headman (or responsible friend) informs the owner, so that the latter can make use of the meat. Should the headman or friend fail to do this, he must pay the owner a live animal of the same age and sex. Where loss occurs through the carelessness of a herdsman, a case for damages lies against him. Sometimes cows calve in the kraal, but generally they wander off into the bush for the purpose; if they are then lost, or killed by carnivora, there is no liability. If a cow sold as sound dies

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621
622

TABLE 1. *Village Types*

Type of village		*Senior resident*
Royal	Capital	First lieutenant
	Regal	First lieutenant
	Chief's	Chief
Cadet		Royal Headman
Commoner		Commoner Headman

This process of village formation may be illustrated from Mpezeni's own county. The capital of the county is the village founded by Mpezeni I for his chief wife and one or two other wives. His heir Singu was born in this village, and when he married he founded two villages of his own which are now regal villages. In the senior of these two Mpezeni II was born, and in about 1925 he founded a new village which is still the chief's village of the county. There are other regal villages in the county founded in a similar manner. 621

This formation of royal villages would, other things being equal, lead to a dispersal of the population. It seems, however, that the major factor in dispersing the population since 1898 has been the formation of independent commoner villages. Many of these villages have histories that go back to the foundation of the village as an independent unit immediately after 1898, and it seems likely that the unsettled conditions of those days and the burning of villages did much to bring about the breakdown of the old system in which the royal villages were more important than they are today. 161 621

The royal villages are more closely connected with the chieftainships than are the commoner villages, and the chiefs visit in them more frequently than in other villages. A dispute in a royal village is usually settled by a meeting in the village itself attended by the local chief, whereas in the case of an ordinary village dispute the matter would be taken to the chief for him to settle in his own village or court. A chief may be called to a royal village to drink beer. The royal herds of cattle are kept in the royal villages, and the chiefs look to the first lieutenants of their royal villages for the well-being of the royal cattle as well as of the inhabitants of the royal villages. All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself,[1] but in as far as the cattle held by most people are concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that 628 [627] 422 231 643

[1] Cf. Cosh[illegible]ead, p. 27.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the lieutenants are more under the control of the chief of the county, who may intervene to depose a lieutenant if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material Setting

361 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the [343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the [417] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of aloes.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually *bedinan*, pl. *mabediman*; otherwise *mfumu yamunzi*, pl. *mafumu wamunzi*. The specific term for headman of a cadet or commoner village is *mwinimunzi*.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Marayi FR4
NGONI FR5

M Y 241 only implement used. Sowing is done after the first rains, about November; the harvest takes place in May to July. Gardens are at varying distances from the villages, depending partly on the soil becoming exhausted after years of cultivation. Boundaries are marked by leaving a line of uncultivated ground, sowing a line of a different crop, tying knots in the young crops at intervals, ditches, etc. In starting a new garden, woodland is often taken; the trees are cut down, leaving stumps 3 feet high; the undergrowth is cleared away and burnt, the ashes distributed over the land, which is then hoed, really very superficially; the earth is then made up into little heaps with a central hole in each, after the first rains four or five grains of the cereal (maize, millet) are dropped in each and covered with earth; as the young shoots grow the hole is more and more filled in.

M Y [423] N [422]

FIG. 8.

With the cereal is planted the seed of peas, beans, pumpkins, the former on coming up then grow up the maize stalks. The seed is last year's product and not specially selected.

M Y [343] [417] Depredations among crops made by elephant, hippopotamus, large antelope (eland and kudu), pigs and baboons, vary in extent in different districts. Little grass huts are built, raised above the ground like a pile-dwelling, in which watchers are stationed. Fences, sometimes extending for miles, are built. The gardens of the chief are hoed by his slaves or the people of the village. Maize is collected in the cob, and after the outer coverings have been removed is stored; so is the *nkokwe*, millet in the head; beans and peas are stored in baskets. Medicine is put on the ground to ensure a good crop, and a piece of stick is sometimes hung up for good luck.

M Y [251]

CATTLE, ETC.

N 231 [422] The keeping of cattle is practically restricted to certain tribes living in districts free from tsetse-fly (Angoni, Wankonde); among these people wealth is reckoned by cattle. The milk is little used; the flesh is eaten only when an animal dies. Marks of ownership are made by cutting the ears (Fig. 8). Cattle are kept in open kraals by Angoni, in a compartment of their houses by Wankonde; they are tended by the small boys as a rule. Goats and sheep are kept all over the country. Castration of cattle is a recognised practice (*kufula*).

N 281 Angoni make their shields from cattle skins; their spear handles are covered with goat hair (beard); hair anklets and armlets in dancing costume are made from goat hair. Skins are used as dress to a small extent.

HUNTING.

M 224 A man intimates to the community around that he is making a hunt by clothing a boy of about ten years in leaves, who precedes him and the men from his own village through adjacent villages; at each village the lad has to lie down and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Two

THE SNOWBALL STATE

1. Manipulation 2. Age-sets 3. Officers of State 4. Continually segmenting systems 5. Lineage systems compared 6. Splitting the State 7. Stability

1. *Manipulation*

In our first chapter we outlined some of the more significant events in Ngoni history prior to the arrival of Europeans. In this chapter we shall examine the political system within which these events took place. It is not the task of social analysis to determine why these or any other events occurred. What we shall attempt is a discussion of how they occurred, and what were the principal social relations involved in them.

Most of the incidents referred to in the first chapter concerned the State as a whole or the royal family. Nevertheless, when we begin to consider the conditions under which the State endured we have to discuss the social position of ordinary men and women within the State. For the Ngoni State held together as an organized social group, and on occasion failed to hold together, not merely because Zwangendaba was a good leader or his sons quarrelsome or his brothers ambitious, or because his people were bound by custom and knew no better, but also, and in our view mainly, because the State was a viable social entity in its time and place. The arrangement of people into segments and age-sets was not a mere formal and static division, but a means whereby a motley heterogeneous collection of individuals was converted into an organized society with agreed aims. The structure of the State had rules; in other words there was regularity in its social processes. Yet it was a structure which, within these rules, could be manipulated. The structure could be, and was, utilized by individuals for the realization of their private ends at the expense of others as well as providing for the common good. This is probably true of all social systems. We shall begin our analysis by examining the ways in which this manipulation was carried out.

In most societies, from the simplest system of hunting bands to the complex societies of the modern world, one of the most significant sets of rights are those relating to fixed natural resources. The structure of rights in land provides a key to the structure of society.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers, The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

effort to induce them to co-operate actively with the government, and by 1910 he was looking forward to reducing the number of White officials in the Administration by devolving much of the Native work on to the Natives themselves. Co-operation was encouraged by the payment of small stipends to chiefs and others, varying in the 1920s in annual value from £22 10*s.* 0*d.* for Mpezeni down to 6*s.* for district messengers. 648

The Ngoni for the most part neither supported nor opposed this scheme of administration; they merely accepted it. For years the Administration bemoaned the indifference of the Ngoni, but apart from an attempt by a mission to set up its teachers as headmen, there was little attempt to obstruct the work of the Administration. [797]

In matters of land, the authority of the Whites was also dominant, but here the paternal amiability which characterized purely political relations between Administration and Ngoni was lacking. The alienation of land was at the instigation of the North Charterland, who considered themselves the owners of Ngoni country. Fort Jameson was built by the Administration in the middle of Ngoni country and the land round the township, few facilities though the town then had, became more valuable to potential settlers than more fertile but inaccessible tracts. The high density of population in Ngoni country also attracted settlers with the prospect of an adequate labour supply. Thus we find that many of the first tracts of land alienated were located in the middle of Ngoni country, in the most densely populated section. As early as 1 January 1904 the first Commission was appointed to inquire into land questions in Ngoni country.[16] Now that Ngoni had to grow their own food on land which had already been heavily exploited the density of population fell; but in relation to the carrying capacity of the land in perpetuity there was still serious overcrowding. During the unsettled period of the war and its aftermath, the population was dispersed, but from 1900 down to about 1930, in consequence of alienation and the formation of reserves, villages were gradually brought closer together. From 1930 onwards, with the recognition of land shortage by the Administration, villages have been allowed to spread out again. The negotiations concerning where the Ngoni should live have been protracted and complicated; I hope to discuss them in a later work in connexion with the economic background of Ngoni social life. What is here significant about them is that to a very large extent these negotiations have been carried on entirely by Whites, with the Administration representing for the greater part Ngoni

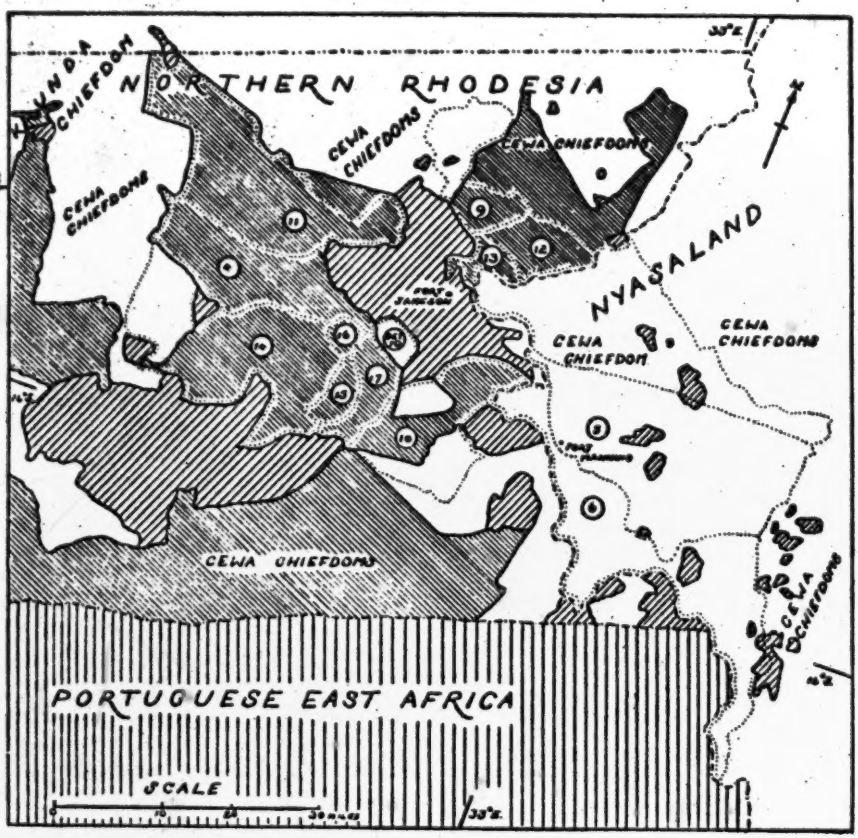
423 439 648 311 [167] 361 648

[16] *N.E.R.G.G.*, ii, 1 (1 January 1904), pp. 30-1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP D. STATUTORY DIVISION OF LAND, FORT JAMIESON 1949

102
423
631
439
634
101



- International Boundary.
- N. Charterland Concession, Northern Boundary.
- Statutory Division Boundary.
- County Boundary.
- Farmland in non-African ownership.
- Native Reserves.
- Native Trust land, crown land and disputed land, treated as if it were Native Trust land.
- Portuguese East Africa.
- County numbers.

[p. 120]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [586] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 291 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, [177] but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [986] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

342 The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 356 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 462 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a [591] hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 423 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 291 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [343] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 291 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

village to another. An indication of the relative frequency with which different types of marriage residence occur is given by Table XIII. This table is based on all the extant marriages involving the 98 married men whose wives were known and the 175 married women, as shown in Tables III and IV. A distinction is made in Table XIII between those marriages in which the man lived with his wife or in a village near her and those in which the man was effectively absent.

We may now assess the relative frequency of virilocal and uxorilocal residence by extracting those marriages falling into either one or other of these residential categories and by then dividing the number of virilocal contracts by the number of uxorilocal. This is done in Table XIV.

It will be seen that although there were three marriages in which both spouses lived virilocally for every one in which they both lived uxorilocally, this preponderance of virilocality was reversed in those marriages in which the man was absent. There were approximately three wives who lived uxorilocally while their husbands were away for every two who lived virilocally. This difference between the ratios in the two parts of the sample is not likely to have arisen as a chance result and may be regarded as definitely associated with the whereabouts of the husband.

On the basis of these figures we may continue to call the Ngoni a virilocal rather than an uxorilocal people, but it is evident from the last column of Table XIII that virilocal marriages amount to slightly less than half (47·3 per cent) of all extant marriages. It should also be remembered that by no means all of the couples we have classified as virilocal were living in the village of the man's father. We have included in this category all marriages in which the man had definitely stronger ties to the other inhabitants of their village than had his wife. Our definition of the uxorilocal category is similar and not all uxorilocal couples were living in the woman's mother's village.[8] A more detailed examination of the frequencies with which these different kinds of marriage residence occur will be attempted elsewhere.

We have already noted that a man who goes to live in the village of his bride takes on the care of her garden and works in it with her. The produce of the garden is pooled with whoever was looking after the bride, and the young couple draw their food from this common store.[9] A man who does not intend to stay long in his wife's village will usually try to keep his own garden under cultivation near his own village and when he takes his wife back to his village he reverts to his own garden as his main source of supply. If the two villages are a long way apart this may not be practicable, or the man may find it irksome to keep two gardens going, and may lend his own to someone else on the understanding that he will be wanting it back

[8] See below, pp. 75f.
[9] See above, p. 42.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 94 --analyst]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

after a year or so. If he keeps it going himself he visits his own village for a week or two at a time to tend the garden, and stores the produce with a relative in the village. If, however, a man intends to reside for many years in his wife's village, he gives away his garden and concentrates his labours in his wife's garden. After a year or two he builds her a storehouse in her village and the couple begin to keep their own supplies separate from those of her relatives.

Even when the couple have their own storehouse it is considered proper if from time to time they are given maize by their parents. If a woman living virilocally goes to visit her parents and relatives and returns without maize or flour her husband's relatives are likely to laugh at her and say 'She must come from a very poor family'.

Uxorilocal residence is described by the vernacular term *cikomwene*. In its most general usage this word refers to the obligations a man owes to his wife's parents, particularly at the beginning of his marriage. It has three specific meanings:

(i) Uxorilocal residence.

(ii) Assistance rendered from time to time by a man in his wife's mother's garden.

(iii) A hoeing party of men and women from the man's village which works in his wife's mother's garden.

Uxorilocal residence is classed with these other two aspects of affinal obligation and like them it can be avoided completely, shirked, or executed in full. The extent to which the obligations are fulfilled

Table XIV. Virilocality and Uxorilocality, 1948-9

Wife's residence	Husband's residence		Total
	Rural	Away	
Virilocal ..	72	14	86
Uxorilocal ..	24	20	44
Total	96	34	130
Ratio of virilocal to uxorilocal wives	3	0·7	1·95

Association between husband's residence and wife's residence

$\chi^2 = 12{\cdot}83$ $P < {\cdot}001$

Informants as in Table XIII

198 as one from a graded segmentary society organized on a basis of patrilineal descent and modified by political promotion to a society of villages organized on a basis of omnidirectional kinship. In the past a man lived in the same place as his father and in charge of the 591 segment allocated to him by his father. Now a man lives where he 611 can find relatives of one kind or another who may be related to him agnatically, cognatically, affinally, or by any combination of these 602 ways. He is not even restricted to consanguineal relatives, as in 571 cognatic kinship systems, for he can affiliate himself to some person 178 who is linked cognatically neither to him or to any of his potential descendants, as when he goes to live with his father's wife's mother's brother. Genealogical connexion can be traced along all possible paths and there are no mechanisms by which one path is automatically favoured or by which the length of a path is restricted. In consequence the genealogical constitution of any local group of relatives is complex, and every man is a potential recruit to many local groups. He selects between the numerous possibilities open to him on the basis of his own inclinations and in response to the various pressures exerted on him by his siblings, his parents, his wife, her parents, and others. Once he has made his choice he can always change his mind and move elsewhere if he finds his neighbours [551] irksome. His wealth, either in cattle or money, is his own and he can take it with him when he moves. There are no rights in land [823] (with the one exception of dry season gardens) which might otherwise tie him to one particular spot. As with residence, so with marriage 581 payments, the formal and informal procedures of marriages, and the values associated with them. In all, considerable variation is tolerated. Indeed, we may well regard variation as a necessity in 591 this system, for every man is subject to a mass of potential conflicting claims and he cannot possibly honour them all simultaneously. Variation occurs not because of different practices by various sections of the population but rather because of different individual decisions. A man decides for himself whether or not he will pay bridewealth, or take a hoeing party to his wife's mother's garden, or be suspended from the sacraments for marrying a second wife. Yet although he makes these choices himself, he is all the time subject to social pressure from kinsfolk and neighbours who will be affected by his decisions and who therefore try to influence them. A woman is not quite so free as a man, but she too can make many decisions for herself, and her relatives must appeal to her if they wish to influence her, for they cannot force her against her will. Man and wife living together are in a unique relationship which is personal and non-transferable, yet they live in the midst of kinsfolk and the well-being of one relative is the concern of all. The quarrels of a married couple are a danger to the cohesion of the local group in which they live, while the longer they live together, fertile and peaceful, the greater the local solidarity.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§. 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 5,600 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mkushi District and 4,800 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§ 3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Description of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population obtains its food only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 15s. *The Soil, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 5s.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

Lamba FQ8

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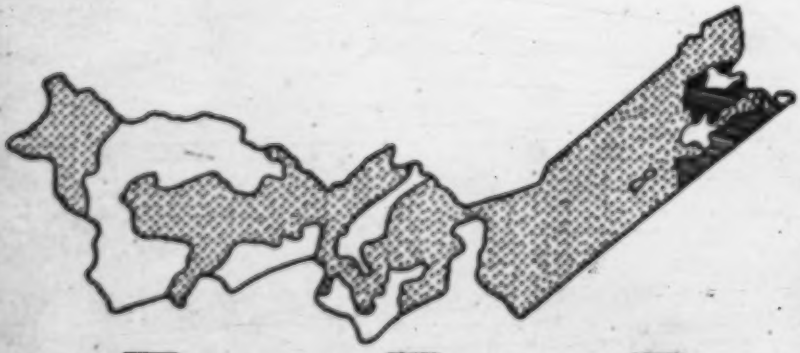
Crown land, Company land, alienated land and unoccupied Native Reserve. Largely uninhabited.

Land in Native occupation. Largely under-populated.

Land in Native occupation. Over-populated.

Fig 2.— THE SECONDARY POPULATION-LAND PATTERN.



Trust Land for future use of African peoples, Crown lands and alienated land.

Land in Native occupation. Balanced or under-populated.

Remaining areas of over-population, capable of supporting their populations on the basis of improved agriculture.

Fig. 3.— THE POPULATION-LAND PATTERN AFTER RESETTLEMENT.

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'fly' country, but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern zone that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. The large available land area in Mkushi enabled the relatively small 'fly' areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'fly' areas of Mkushi. 166 136 164 744

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'fly' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the kraals. Ten herds each of five beasts were used; the animals were numbered and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomyaisis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'fly' infestation were defined.

§ 6. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in accordance with the general plan to restore the population-land balance as far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers. 166 621 648

Headmen and other representatives of the villagers who had finally elected to move then toured the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villagers almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Vegetation-Soil Map. Blocks of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total villages population, allowing for temporary absentees, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular; the people are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone beacons, to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features. [622] [311] [423]

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually applied or always possible. The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, 166 648

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M 575 535 [534]

so that anyone coming that way may see "medicine" and turn aside. After which, all bathe in the stream, and the ceremonies are over.

During a *vinyau* dance six drums are always used, namely, the *mphonje* (five or six feet in length, and beaten at one end only); the *ndewere* (another large drum three feet in length), or the *mbulule*; the *mbandambanda* and the *mtiuriso* (of medium size about two feet long); and two *kambumbu* (small drums eighteen inches in length). These are beaten by men detailed by the headman or *chiwinda*; but there are no special drums appertaining exclusively to particular *mikhwala* or songs. The big village drum always belongs to the headman; the others are privately owned, and are hired out for a small fee, such as an *nsengwa* basket. Before use they are always warmed first at the fire.

4. *Property.*

M N 423 [425]

Land was acquired by the Achewa by occupation and by the Angoni by conquest. It was divided by the paramount chief among his lieutenants, who in turn divided their sections among the heads of lesser groups or families. Each headman now allots land to his villagers; and if they move the village to a new site, everyone retains possession of the garden which he held before. The allottee is entitled to trees, anthoaps, honey or anything else on his plot; and he may sell crops or other produce, but may not sell or lease the land itself. When reaping his crop, he presents a basket of maize to his headman.

M N [422]

In the home, the wife must provide the pots, and they are her personal property. The husband must supply her with baskets, hoes, etc.; but everything which pertains to woman's work belongs to the wife. The produce of a garden is the equal property of both. After a boy has passed through his initiation, he is given a small garden of his own. When, as in the case of the

N [622]

Achewa, he leaves the village to marry, the garden reverts to the chief, who is always spoken of as the owner of the land, since it is he who divides it out among his people.

N 422 233

The majority of the cattle owners are Angoni. Possession is individual; but all the animals in one village are kept in one open kraal belonging to the village headman, who selects small boys to look after them. Herdsmen were formerly unpaid; but now, when a beast is sold, killed or otherwise removed, they receive a present from the owner, as also does the headman. There is no fixed fee; but the owner of a dozen head may give the headman a calf every other year, while the owner of one or two only gives him a goat. If a man living in a village where there is no kraal buys cattle, he frequently places them in the care of a friend at a neighbouring village where there is a kraal, instead of handing them over to his own headman. The friend makes his own arrangement with the headman; but the friend is liable to the owner, and the usual payment is made to the friend, who divides it with the headman.

N 672 233

If a beast dies in the kraal, there is no liability, provided that the headman (or responsible friend) informs the owner, so that the latter can make use of the meat. Should the headman or friend fail to do this, he must pay the owner a live animal of the same age and sex. Where loss occurs through the carelessness of a herdsman, a case for damages lies against him. Sometimes cows calve in the kraal, but generally they wander off into the bush for the purpose; if they are then lost, or killed by carnivora, there is no liability. If a cow sold as sound dies

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no 186
means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely 726
about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'.

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard 173
the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of 721
strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni 726
tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British [713]
superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the [727]
huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale.

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni 173
it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they [186]
dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] [648] [423]

[1] In the Report of Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'. [361]

[2] Over 3 miles across.

[3] in 1885.

173 made friends with old Mpezeni and finally made Luangeni, Mpezeni's
648 head village, his head-quarters. He obtained mining rights in the land
[423] from Mpezeni, by word of mouth, but Mpezeni signed no deed of gift or transfer. This legal point which subsequently became one of the major points at issue in the North Charterland Company case has been emphasized again and again to me in the villages. 'Mpezeni was writing nothing. He was only giving presents to Weise, and
[491] Weise gave presents to him, and Mpezeni was saying, "You may travel in my country and dig for gold. You are my friend."' They add further, 'Mpezeni did not want to make friends with the British
[648] because he had heard from the Matabele and from Nyasaland what they were doing. Weise said "I am not from the British", and so Mpezeni was making promises with him.' So deeply is this tradition of friendship between Mpezeni and Weise, with its consequences of betrayal and disaster, embedded in the Ngoni thinking, that when I stayed in the Paramount Chief's village and exchanged presents with
[123] him, many old people shook their heads and warned the young people, 'The *Azungu* war will come again. This is how that other war was beginning.'

175 Weise failed to establish his claim to mining rights in Mpezeni's
648 territory with Sir Harry Johnston, then Commissioner for all British territories north of the Zambezi. Meantime the British South Africa Company obtained a new charter to extend its field north of the Zambezi, and sent an emissary to Mpezeni's kraal to make a treaty with him. Mpezeni refused. He also refused Sir Harry Johnston's emissary who met Weise at Mpezeni's kraal with a view to getting Mpezeni to make a treaty direct with the British Crown. The mining rights in Mpezeni's country were potentially valuable, and on Mpezeni's refusal to grant them were claimed by the British South Africa Company[1] on the ground of treaties made with the conquered Chewa people, whom Mpezeni had dispossessed.[2] Weise was at this time at Mpezeni's with one or two Portuguese traders and officials, making hay while the sun shone.

[1] 'Finding Mpezeni obdurate the British South Africa Company concluded treaties with all the surrounding indigenous chiefs whom Mpezeni had dispossessed. We consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief.'

[2] F.O. 6537.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the 592
same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for [882]
girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their [858]
elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their [595]
chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from 423
those of their wives.

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There 342
is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens
near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cook- [343]
ing and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no [252]
separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda.

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in 621
which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized.

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given 621
by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded 103
by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalaweni, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were founded.

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this 621
type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of in- 622
dividuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder [103]
of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary,

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more industrious and usually with a view to sale of vegetables in Fort Jameson. The sites last for many years and are usually abandoned because of the removal of the owner's village to a distant place rather than because of exhaustion of the soil. 311 241

Old-village gardens are made on the site of former huts and byres, in order to take advantage of the high fertility of the soil. These gardens are not usually fenced, except when they are made on the outskirts of some existing village on the site of an old byre. Tobacco is sometimes grown, but for the most part they are cultivated in the same way as are main gardens. The site belongs to the former owner of the hut or byre, so long as the garden continues to be worked. [423]

Main gardens are made from bush clearings, and are chosen with some regard to the type and quantity of the natural vegetation. Land that has been abandoned for long enough, say twenty-five years, regains its natural cover, and if the ownership of former gardens has been forgotten, it is treated as though it were virgin woodland, that is, it is permissible for anyone who wishes to come and cultivate it. A new village site is chosen to be near, if possible, an ample amount of such regenerated land, and at the first selection of gardens the headman of the village may go round the area and see where the new gardens are being made. Gardens tend to be within 2 miles of the village, but there is no one definite area that is associated with a particular village, so that if there are a number of villages in proximity, the gardens of their inhabitants will be intermingled. A man exercises a lien on the area of uncleared land round his garden, and may take up this land himself as he enlarges his garden. Hence at first there are considerable belts of bush left between one garden and the next. With the passage of time, these are cleared, and gardens become contiguous, with boundaries between them that are almost imperceptible at first glance. At the same time as enlargements are made, the least productive parts of the gardens are neglected, so that, as the years go by, the area cultivated by one man may gradually change its position, and fresh areas of resting-land will appear between the gardens. Main gardens vary in size from about 1 to 3 acres. [423] [361] [425]

If a man moves into a village and wishes to start a garden, he is usually given part of the garden of the person to whom he is attached in the village. A son returning from the mines may be given part of his father's garden. Conversely when someone leaves the village, his garden passes to his relatives. In particular, when a man dies, his 423

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 widows continue to cultivate the gardens they had before his death. When a man opens up a new garden he may hand over his nearly exhausted old garden to some relative who does not wish to go to the labour of clearing new ground himself. Rights in land cannot be sold, but only given away, and no presents are given to the donor by the recipient of a garden or garden site. They can only be sustained by continued residence in the locality, either by the owner of the rights himself or by his relatives. There are very few court cases concerned with rights in land, and in the courts the only attempt I saw in which a man tried to enforce what he thought to be his rights was met by the statement from the bench that no one had any rights in land, for did not all land belong to the chief?

241 Maize is planted at the beginning of the rains, and the garden is usually weeded twice over before the maize has grown high enough to surmount the weeds. When the rains end, the stalks are felled and put into large stooks to dry. The cobs are then taken off the stalks and carried back to the village to be stored. Finger millet is grown in ash-fertilized patches scattered through the main garden, and in between the maize ground-nuts, pumpkins, and other crops are grown. Sorghum, bulrush millet, and rice are also grown. Most of the work in the garden is carried on in the rainy season, and after the harvest the garden is more or less deserted until the next season, although a certain amount of new land may be cleared as a garden extension.

Dwellings outside the Village

361 There are two types of settlement outside the recognized villages that require mention. These are permanently occupied settlements consisting of two or three huts which I shall refer to as hamlets and [578] temporarily occupied huts in the gardens. The hamlets usually arise as a result of quarrels within a village that are resolved by the breaking away of one of the parties to the quarrel. The activities of the Agricul- [648] tural Department have also led to the formation of hamlets of similar size, both of hamlets of persons accepting agricultural control whose co-villagers have all moved off, and the other way about. These hamlets are all attached to proper villages for registration purposes, and participate in many of the collective activities of the villages near by.

221 361 [241] The damage done to crops in the latter part of the rainy season necessitates the keeping of a continuous watch, particularly at gardens that are on the edge of a cultivated area, in order to drive off the monkeys by day and the wild pigs by night. Shelters are erected on

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 159 173 562

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Angonga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlenze*.

N M 171 643 842 851

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlenze* Soora Nqumayo, a younger sister of Lozwana, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadowe, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Soora was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son, and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtengaleni Uka Soora close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

N 159 173 562 [595] N [764] [423]

Soora is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *nshlze* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

After Zongendaba's death, Soora chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawana Mazamba, as a good mother, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Juve; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 595 842 602

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lava Ngoma and Ngando Mhawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

N 159 173 644

/5 cont'd/

Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman, although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here. Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The banboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the veranda may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the weather. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

/6 cont'd/

417 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which [136] there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

231 /7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [136] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

417 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [285] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [251] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may 343 have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasional- [511] ly open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

643 789 766 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

241 796 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *umsindo*, *ligubo*, *incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said [643 424] '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins everyone sings the songs of *incwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the [178] Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Intokoni* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for [824 224] a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ye'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala seigwabuliwe*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women [535] were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 583 payment. It may have been that Nimshi was merely trying to get as much as he could hope for out of Simon, who was a fierce and powerful person. In view, however, of the decline in the incidence of bridewealth and the increasing importance of the legalization payment it is not unlikely that this right to the daughter's legalization payment may soon be separated from bridewealth.

428 It is at the death of a man that his children exercise their particular rights from him as against the claims of other kin. If a man has [583] paid bridewealth for his wife, then the claim of his eldest son by her to his property is clear. The eldest son by the great wife is the heir, and he takes over control of the dead man's herd, and inherits his money. For inheritance, cattle are more important than money. Most men keep their money hidden in the ground, and it sometimes [454] happens that a man dies without mentioning where he has put his savings, so that they are lost. Cattle are publicly-owned property, [422] in that every boy in the village knows the ownership of each beast, and they can be seen in the byre every day. Men sometimes divide their property among their sons before they die, but it is more usual for a man to give one cow to the eldest son of each wife and to leave the rest undivided. The residue then passes to his heir on his death. [583] If bridewealth has not been paid, the claim of the dead man's eldest son to the herd may be disputed by the dead man's brothers. Succession here does not seem to be determined in the light of the failure to pay bridewealth but by a consideration of residence. If a man is living in the same village as his father then he can expect to inherit his father's cattle when he dies. If he is living elsewhere, and tries to claim his inheritance, he may be opposed by his father's kinsmen resident in his father's village should he try to remove the cattle.

The eldest son inherits, but he has an obligation to help his sisters and younger brothers when they need beasts or money. If the other brothers are scattered in different villages, the herd may be divided among them, but it may be many years after the death that the division takes place. If the eldest son is in Southern Rhodesia the dead man's brothers delay the division of the herd as long as possible in case the rightful heir should return.

[425] Women acquire cattle and other animals with money they have saved or gained by selling beer, or as gifts from their husbands. [583] If no bridewealth has been paid for a woman any animals she may own pass on her death to her eldest son. If bridewealth has been paid for her the disposal of her property is uncertain. Some people argue that the animals cannot then go to her son, for her son belongs to her husband's group because of the bridewealth, and that they ought to pass to her brother's son. Others say that the animals should go to her eldest son irrespective of bridewealth. Unfortunately I did not record any specific instance of inheritance from a woman.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M 575 535 [534] so that anyone coming that way may see "medicine" and turn aside. After which, all bathe in the stream, and the ceremonies are over.

During a *vingwe* dance six drums are always used, namely, the *mphonje* (five or six feet in length, and beaten at one end only); the *ndewere* (another large drum three feet in length), or the *mbalule*; the *mbandambanda* and the *mtiwiso* (of medium size about two feet long); and two *hambumbo* (small drums eighteen inches in length). These are beaten by men detailed by the headman or *chiwinda*; but there are no special drums appertaining exclusively to particular *mithwala* or songs. The big village drum always belongs to the headman; the others are privately owned, and are hired out for a small fee, such as an *nsengwe* basket. Before use they are always warmed first at the fire.

4. *Property.*

M N 423 [425] Land was acquired by the Achewa by occupation and by the Angoni by conquest. It was divided by the paramount chief among his lieutenants, who in turn divided their sections among the heads of lesser groups or families. Each headman now allots land to his villagers; and if they move the village to a new site, everyone retains possession of the garden which he held before. The allottee is entitled to trees, antheaps, honey or anything else on his plot; and he may sell crops or other produce, but may not sell or lease the land itself. When reaping his crop, he presents a basket of maize to his headman.

M N [422] In the home, the wife must provide the pots, and they are her personal property. The husband must supply her with baskets, hoes, etc.; but everything which pertains to woman's work belongs to the wife. The produce of a garden is the equal property of both. After a boy has passed through his initiation, he is given a small garden of his own. When, as in the case of the M [622] Achewa, he leaves the village to marry, the garden reverts to the chief, who is always spoken of as the owner of the land, since it is he who divides it out among his people.

N 422 233 The majority of the cattle owners are Angoni. Possession is individual; but all the animals in one village are kept in one open kraal belonging to the village headman, who selects small boys to look after them. Herdsmen were formerly unpaid; but now, when a beast is sold, killed or otherwise removed, they receive a present from the owner, as also does the headman. There is no fixed fee; but the owner of a dozen head may give the headman a calf every other year, while the owner of one or two only gives him a goat. If a man living in a village where there is no kraal buys cattle, he frequently places them in the care of a friend at a neighbouring village where there is a kraal, instead of handing them over to his own headman. The friend makes his own arrangement with the headman; but the friend is liable to the owner, and the usual payment is made to the friend, who divides it with the headman.

N 672 233 If a beast dies in the kraal, there is no liability, provided that the headman (or responsible friend) informs the owner, so that the latter can make use of the meat. Should the headman or friend fail to do this, he must pay the owner a live animal of the same age and sex. Where loss occurs through the carelessness of a herdsman, a case for damages lies against him. Sometimes cows calve in the kraal, but generally they wander off into the bush for the purpose; if they are then lost, or killed by carnivora, there is no liability. If a cow sold as sound dies

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more industrious and usually with a view to sale of vegetables in Fort Jameson. The sites last for many years and are usually abandoned because of the removal of the owner's village to a distant place rather than because of exhaustion of the soil. 311 241

Old-village gardens are made on the site of former huts and byres, in order to take advantage of the high fertility of the soil. These gardens are not usually fenced, except when they are made on the outskirts of some existing village on the site of an old byre. Tobacco is sometimes grown, but for the most part they are cultivated in the same way as are main gardens. The site belongs to the former owner of the hut or byre, so long as the garden continues to be worked. [423]

Main gardens are made from bush clearings, and are chosen with some regard to the type and quantity of the natural vegetation. Land that has been abandoned for long enough, say twenty-five years, regains its natural cover, and if the ownership of former gardens has been forgotten, it is treated as though it were virgin woodland, that is, it is permissible for anyone who wishes to come and cultivate it. A new village site is chosen to be near, if possible, an ample amount of such regenerated land, and at the first selection of gardens the headman of the village may go round the area and see where the new gardens are being made. Gardens tend to be within 2 miles of the village, but there is no one definite area that is associated with a particular village, so that if there are a number of villages in proximity, the gardens of their inhabitants will be intermingled. A man exercises a lien on the area of uncleared land round his garden, and may take up this land himself as he enlarges his garden. Hence at first there are considerable belts of bush left between one garden and the next. With the passage of time, these are cleared, and gardens become contiguous, with boundaries between them that are almost imperceptible at first glance. At the same time as enlargements are made, the least productive parts of the gardens are neglected, so that, as the years go by, the area cultivated by one man may gradually change its position, and fresh areas of resting-land will appear between the gardens. Main gardens vary in size from about 1 to 3 acres. [361] [425]

If a man moves into a village and wishes to start a garden, he is usually given part of the garden of the person to whom he is attached in the village. A son returning from the mines may be given part of his father's garden. Conversely when someone leaves the village, his garden passes to his relatives. In particular, when a man dies, his 423

/8 cont'd/

285 the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found [482] and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now 415 very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat 412 porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. [531] Wooden hemispherical pats, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

412 At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzilia quanzensis or Monotes trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is [531] a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four [504] inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones [426] or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are 352 sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make [463] a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

In the particular

427 field of urban housing, however, the forms of marriage become
581 important and a man may be required to show that he is legally married before he can rent married quarters.

The work of the court is, in the words of the councillor hearing the
692 pleas of Ruth (p. 54), 'not . . . to force men and women to divorce
581 each other, but to instruct them how to live well together'. Whereas kinsfolk have an interest in a particular marriage, the court is concerned with the well-being of the tribe as a whole, and the maintenance of Ngoni values. It has a particular interest in those aspects of marriage in which the Native Authority bureaucracy is concerned, namely the issue of marriage certificates and the handing over of the legalization payment. In court as yet, no inquiry is made as to whether a marriage certificate has been issued in respect of any particular marriage. These certificates were first introduced only a few years ago, and if a married couple want one they must make a visit to the court accompanied by one or two relatives, and pay sixpence fee. They do not go to this trouble until they need one for the journey away from Fort Jameson. This may be after several years of married life.[27] In village discussions of marriage I never heard mention of marriage certificates, nor did I see a litigant produce one in court. One man, obtaining a certificate for his marriage that had taken place a year previously remarked that in these days one could not be sure of damages for adultery unless one had a certificate. I think he was ahead of custom in this matter, but as the same individuals issue certificates and try cases, it seems probable that such a development will take place. But even with the increased importance of the issue of certificates, it seems likely that the role of the court as primarily a conciliatory body will continue for some time, so long as court members do not become a body of specialists differentiated from the rest of the population.

The court is reluctant to grant divorce to a woman on the ground
692 of her husband's desertion if he is a labour migrant until it can be
586 shown that she has made efforts to trace him and has given him a chance of re-establishing contact with her. Therefore, women are made to write to their husbands informing them of their intention to proceed with a divorce. These letters are sometimes shown to the court as evidence that they have been written. It is only after an adjournment of several months that the court will take up the case, and the wise woman, during this time, avoids any indication that she has a new husband in view. It is, as it were, assumed that there is always a suspicion of adultery, but if her husband's kin cannot marshal any evidence against her, the court will grant her plea. It is felt by some court members that the attention paid to the pleas of women is forced on them by the Administration, and they are anxious to show that they do not divorce women too

[27] Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 84.

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned: such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources. 000

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile. 114 101 121 161 311 [133]

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfinzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipuka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni. [181]

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organisation had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent. [797] [427]

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do. [134]

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people. [439]

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the headman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good one; and the headman in return hands over three other animals of similar age. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organization: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Achewa consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'anga* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'anga* under Chief Chiwere was Chimunga, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unaware, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a stout resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

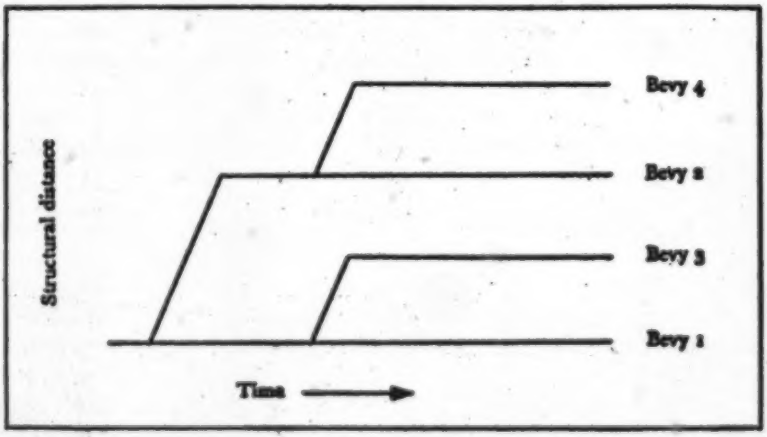
On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'anga* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the shiwanda or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connexion with women. Next day, they burned goats' horns, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231 262 727 cattle did not give rise to any cleavage of interest which was not already present in the residential system.

The system could also be manipulated by disputes about [557] succession. If a man had many bevies of wives there was usually no 595 doubt concerning which was the senior bevy and who was the great 611 wife in it. Yet in general it was not possible to rank a man's bevies in a simple linear order of seniority, any more than the segments

DIAGRAM 3. RANKING OF BEVIES



to which they corresponded could be ordered in this way. In topological terms, ranking of bevies and of segments among the Ngoni was only partially, not simply, ordered. An example, illustrated in Diagram 3, will make this clear.

Suppose a man started with bevy 1 and then took part of it to form bevy 2. Later he took another part of bevy 1 to form bevy 3 and took part of bevy 2 to form bevy 4. With four bevies of wives, his senior bevy was bevy 1 and his great wife was the leader of bevy 1. Her eldest son was his principal heir, and if she had no sons the eldest son by the next wife in her bevy became heir. But [429] suppose there was no son by any wife in bevy 1. Which band provided the principal heir? It seems clear that bevy 4 did not, at least not if there were sons in bevy 2, for bevy 2 was senior to bevy 4. Bevy 2 might be regarded as senior to bevy 3, for it was formed from bevy 1 earlier. On the other hand, with reference to bevy 2, bevy 3 was merely a part of bevy 1 and hence the search for heirs should be continued in bevy 3 before shifting to bevy 2. Unfortunately I

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [589]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always [563]
a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
498 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[722] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was,
[581] in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[178] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political
602 ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

589 of as being divorced from the dead man. If they do not themselves wish to be inherited they cannot be forced to remain.

587 If a widow is cared for by a younger brother of her dead husband, and that man already has a wife of his own, the widow is regarded as inferior in status to the man's own wife. Yet any children she has by him count as if they were children by the dead husband, and as such they inherit his cattle and offices before the brother's children by his own wife. This apparent paradox is due to the nature of Ngoni seniority. Seniority was always associated with position in a definite segment in the old residential system. The widow belongs to the segment of her dead husband, and even today if she is a queen she ought to stay there after she has been given a pro-husband. If she moves to live in proximity to her pro-husband, she comes into the ranking system of which the pro-huband's great wife is the superior. Her children are, however, still associated with the segment from whence she came.

851 428 554

The new husband, whether he is a kinsman of the dead man or not, pays one goat, also known as 'snuff-box', on taking the woman, and this animal she keeps herself, and does not hand on to her father or brother. If no bridewealth was paid by the first husband, the children borne to the second take the descent name of their own father and his rights in the marriage are the same as if he were marrying the woman for the first time and had made the legalization payment.

587 583 851

There is then an opportunity for the marriage to continue after the death of the man if his wife and his kinsmen are both agreeable. If the widow wishes to go her own way, she can do so, and if his kinsmen do not wish to care for her, they need not. Even if they do not like the woman they cannot turn her out of the village, and she can go on living in her dead husband's hut and cultivating the same garden as before. She may even re-marry and bring in her new husband to live with her in her dead spouse's village. The extent to which this can be done without quarrelling depends very much on the personalities of the people involved. If the widow decides to go back to her own village, her husband's kin may try to prevent her removing possessions of which the ownership is not certain, and she should discuss with them how much of the crops she can take away from her garden.

589

Nowadays the death of a wife brings the marriage to an end. We have seen that in the old days the dead woman was replaced by a linked co-wife, and that this institution has now all but disappeared. There is no other form of sororate, and although a man may sometimes in jest address his wife's sister as *wife*, he has no rights over her.

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The specific responsibilities of brothers towards a man's marriage are demonstrated in the role of the elder brother as a marriage negotiator and of the younger brother as potential husbands for a man's widows. A man would not, save in exceptional circumstances,

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593 583 payment. It may have been that Nimshi was merely trying to get as much as he could hope for out of Simon, who was a fierce and powerful person. In view, however, of the decline in the incidence of bridewealth and the increasing importance of the legalization payment it is not unlikely that this right to the daughter's legalization payment may soon be separated from bridewealth.

428 It is at the death of a man that his children exercise their particular rights from him as against the claims of other kin. If a man has [583] paid bridewealth for his wife, then the claim of his eldest son by her to his property is clear. The eldest son by the great wife is the heir, and he takes over control of the dead man's herd, and inherits his money. For inheritance, cattle are more important than money. [454] Most men keep their money hidden in the ground, and it sometimes happens that a man dies without mentioning where he has put his savings, so that they are lost. Cattle are publicly-owned property, [422] in that every boy in the village knows the ownership of each beast, and they can be seen in the byre every day. Men sometimes divide their property among their sons before they die, but it is more usual for a man to give one cow to the eldest son of each wife and to leave the rest undivided. The residue then passes to his heir on his death. [583] If bridewealth has not been paid, the claim of the dead man's eldest son to the herd may be disputed by the dead man's brothers. Succession here does not seem to be determined in the light of the failure to pay bridewealth but by a consideration of residence. If a man is living in the same village as his father then he can expect to inherit his father's cattle when he dies. If he is living elsewhere, and tries to claim his inheritance, he may be opposed by his father's kinsmen resident in his father's village should he try to remove the cattle.

The eldest son inherits, but he has an obligation to help his sisters and younger brothers when they need beasts or money. If the other brothers are scattered in different villages, the herd may be divided among them, but it may be many years after the death that the division takes place. If the eldest son is in Southern Rhodesia [illegible] possible in case the rightful heir should return.

[305] Women acquire cattle and other animals with money they have saved or gained by selling beer, or as gifts from their husbands. [583] If no bridewealth has been paid for a woman any animals she may own pass on her death to her eldest son. If bridewealth has been paid for her the disposal of her property is uncertain. Some people argue that the animals cannot then go to her son, for her son belongs to her husband's group because of the bridewealth, and that they ought to pass to her brother's son. Others say that the animals should go to her eldest son irrespective of bridewealth. Unfortunately I did not record any specific instance of inheritance from a woman.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated with political allegience, and therefore it was inappropriate that her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genetricem* in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genetricem* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem* and bridewealth rights *in genetricem*. Rights *in genetricem* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genetricem* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*.

Whereas the rights *in genetricem* were definite in the old system, in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme they were related to position in a residential system of which one of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession. With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups, for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people, some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

7: Hodgson G-5 (926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

2. *Inheritance.*

When a Chewa woman dies, her personal property is inherited by her mother's eldest brother; but he must always give something to the deceased's eldest brother, and may then present a share, first to her other brothers and sisters, and then to his own brothers and sisters, if there is enough to go round. If the woman is married and leaves children, they may also share, if the inheritance is sufficiently large. A man's land and crops at his wife's village are always inherited by the widow; his personal property falls to his mother's eldest brother or, in default, to his own eldest brother; but the deceased's eldest son must always receive a share. M 428

Among the Angoni, a man's land is inherited by his eldest son, or by his eldest surviving brother, if he has no son. His personal property goes first to his eldest son, or, if he has no son, to his eldest daughter. If he dies childless, his father inherits; if the father is dead, the deceased's eldest surviving brother; if he leaves no brothers, then the father's eldest living brother; and if all these are dead, their sons are taken in order. On the death of a woman, the husband takes the children; but her father takes all her personal property, including her share of the proceeds of the joint property of her husband and herself. N 428

IV.—Social Organization: Political and Legal.

1. *Political Organization and Class (Chewa).*

The tribal life of the Achewa and of the other descendants of the Amaravi has always been a disintegrated one. They have lived normally in small family communities, uniting under a common leader only when obliged by an emergency to do so. After the passing of the emergency, the leader has retained, nevertheless, a certain amount of influence, and has been regarded in some respects and in a small degree as a paramount chief. M 571 621 643

Their tradition as to the origin of their chiefs is that long ago they had no instruments of war, hunting or agriculture. In try were at a disadvantage and an easy prey to their enemies, but at length God showed them so, and they devised a smelting furnace (*ng'anjo*) (*vide infra* IX, 2). By this means men began to acquire wealth and power, whereby they became chiefs; and chiefs, the name given to thirsu so made, is the word now used to signify any kind of wealth. M 773 [325] [556]

The Achewa are divided into various clans, or *chiwanga* (*sing. chiwanga*). The common clan-names were devised in order that people might know their relations. Formerly, restrictions in the matter of diet were imposed upon adult members of a clan; but these restrictions are now generally ignored, and in many cases they have been forgotten. Marriage with a member of the same *chiwanga* was strictly prohibited, but it is now of common occurrence. M 614 [262] [582]

The clan-names are the same as those of the Anyanja and Among'anja. In some cases they correspond with those of the Wayao, who are a different tribe speaking a different language and, though the distinctions of the clan are falling daily deeper into disregard, an Mchewa will treat an Myao of the same clan as his sahale, or brother; and recently, when the Chewa chief, M [171] M [648]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

The final day of the proceedings, *tsiku la kumuna*, is known as *tsiku la kumuta maliro*. The beer is tested at cockcrow, and *kasiya maliro* begins to dance, followed first by a *chisudzo* and then by *mdondo*. At sunrise the dancers proceed to the *dambwe*, and those who play no further active part may go and bathe, after which they repair to the *liunda*, where they rest and drink till noon. Meanwhile, the relations, accompanied by any other of the men who assisted in digging the grave or were present at the interment, have betaken themselves early to the banks of the stream where they bathed on the former occasion. The women who have worn *zinthambo*[1] burn them in a fire, and scatter the ashes. If they have indulged in sexual intercourse while wearing them, the *zinthambo* refuse to burn. Both sexes bathe separately as before, and all return to the house of the deceased, outside which the men shave each others' heads, as also do the women. About noon one or more *amaliya* come from the *liunde* and dance in the *mzinda*. *Chadzunda* hobbles out, peers round the graveyard, and goes first to the house of the deceased to receive a *supo* from the widow and then to the house of the headman, where he sits on a chair while people come and give him *masupo* and beer. After this refreshment he dances in the *bwalo*, and then retreats to the *liunde* for a rest, returning to dance a second and third time before retiring finally to the *dambwe*. Then *kasiya maliro* dances for the last time, and is taken to the *dambwe* and burnt, and those who have handled him bathe. *Visudzo* again bring broken pots from the graveyard, and dance with them in the bush, singing "*Mbiya zodoolu*," and the *amaliya* continue dancing for a while. At sunset the ceremonies are ended by the male relations of the deceased burning first the beer fence and then the house. The widow sleeps in someone else's house for a few weeks, until a new house has been built for her by her relations.

M 765 575 M [515] [302] [535] M [768]

5. *Funeral rites* (*Ngoni*).

The procedure described by Captain Rattray[2] in 1907 is still remembered by the old men; but the younger Angoni are inclined to follow the customs of the Achewa with certain modifications. For example, they place the corpse in a recess cut out from the bottom of the wall of the grave in order that it may not be soiled when the grave is filled in. They do not leave him any food, but place his spear and shield and one or two of his knives in the recess by his side. Part of his remaining property is deposited in the main shaft; but the sons always inherit the knives, except the *chipumbu* (knife for cutting meat), which falls to the head wife.

N 764 [177] N 428

On the second day after the death, the widows send children to cut *mpulupulwa* grass, from which they weave *zinthambo* to bind on their heads. As long as the widows wear these *zinthambo*, they must abstain from sexual intercourse; if they fail from grace, they invariably remove the *zinthambo* first. They must also keep their hands behind their backs when walking abroad, and may only use one hand when gesticulating. They must refrain from conversation and ablution for two or three weeks, at the end of which they brew beer (known as *mow wa zinthambo*) and invite a few friends to partake of it. Very often a widow's near female relations past the time of childbearing wear *zinthambo* and observe prohibitions in sympathy with her.

N 765 N [273]

[1] Mourning bands of plaited grass (see following section).
[2] "Some Folk Lore Songs and Stories in Chinyanja," pp. 92-99.

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
578 Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
643 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
648 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.

In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwisi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo.
[805] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Maseko, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Msafwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766 and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinalusi River. On his death bed he gave
[428 his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loaiwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
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614 Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni
551 families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the
576 Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man
438 and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman,
591 although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

361 In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing
351 the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here.
342 Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as
423 well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they
882 have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of
342 the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The
[324] walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used
[353] for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the wealther. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Women's skills: Guardianship of property

Ngoni social organization, as we saw in Chapter I, placed the guardianship of all wealth except cattle in the hands of the women who were heads of houses. As a Ngoni girl grew towards adulthood and the time drew nearer when she would marry and leave her home for a strange village, the leading women of her father's house initiated her into the skills needed to create and preserve the forms of property for which she would some day be responsible. 429 462 868

First among these skills came the care of the hut and compound. The framework and roof of the huts were built by men, but the walls were mudded and the floors of the hut and veranda were strengthened and polished by women. Ngoni women of good family did not often do the actual plastering of mud upon the wooden framework of the hut. It was considered too dirty and exhausting a job for them to do, but they had to know how it should be done, and what standards of good work involved, in order that they might later instruct others. During a hut building Ngoni girls might be seen tucking up their clothes and rather half-heartedly slapping mud on the walls, to the good-humoured jesting of the village women who were vigorous and expert at the job. The girl's grandmother stood by and said at intervals: 'That is too thick; it will fall off. Fillup those cracks. Smooth over those joins,' and so on. The girls shrugged their shoulders and obeyed while Grandmother was watching, but gave up as soon as she went away. 462 342

The flat-ended flails with which the floor was beaten were heavy and girls were generally unable to use them expertly, but they were made to watch the process, with its seemingly endless beating of the earth floor compounded of river mud, ant-hill clay and cowdung. Once the floor was beaten so that it was level and all cracks had disappeared, the Ngoni girls were made to get down on their knees and learn how to polish it with damp ashes and a smear of cowdung, rubbed [413] 356 868 [237]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

12. *Customary Licence* (*Ngoni*).

N 836 [183] [684] [583]

Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

N 586 [595]

Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mabola*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *nakhonse* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mabola*, *kutenderu* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

M [586]

III.—DOMESTIC LIFE: FILIAL.

1. *Infancy*.

M 845

Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*Kigelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man at the same time, and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

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M 429

Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *mwibwesi*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

N 429 593

Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kinswoman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing. A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman complained to the chief that the beast[13] had not been paid. The chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants are sometimes cited as a modern *form of tribute*, but while these presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present is made by an individual and arises from his own political aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[13] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[14] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

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not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingonombe*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *indumo* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

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In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

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In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *isiphoko*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izinduna* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imisindo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 turn were invited to eat with the Paramount or summoned to special
651 feasts. On the other hand there were people who seemed to have noth-
431 ing, and who came in the hope of getting invited to eat food if they just
527 sat in the kraal and looked hungry. Cibambo called them 'the notable
571 people' and 'the poor people'. This contrast in behaviour ran right through Ngoni society and reflected the social standing of individuals who behaved in such different ways. There was a good deal of cadging for gifts and of gate-crashing at feasts on the part of people who had no intention, or no possibility, of making any adequate return. An Ngoni proverb illustrated the public attitude to reciprocal giving as distinct from begging: 'To say: Give, give, is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.'

571 The bringing of tribute to the Paramount was only one aspect of the
643 reciprocal relationships which ran right through Ngoni society, namely
651 the bringing of gifts by a man in an inferior social position to his
431 superior, with the expectation of receiving food or favour and of standing well with this superior. It was recognized that tribute was of two kinds, one of which was voluntary. If a *nduna* or other notable wanted to please the Paramount he brought him presents—grain, flour, meat, beer. It was always emphasized that this was a free gift, with the added proviso that the giver wished to keep on good terms with the Paramount. Ngoni informants declared that the only compulsory form of tribute in pre-European days was that whenever a lion or a leopard was killed it had to be brought to the royal village through a succession of intermediaries, as described below.

These two principles of free giving and compulsory giving, and the attitudes engendered, are compared with the feeling about compulsory taxes under European rule in this text by Cibambo.

« Although people hate giving taxes to strangers in this land, yet tribute (*imitulo*) was given to their *inkosi* and to other chiefs. Such tribute was given in an indirect way, that is the *isindwa* did not mark out those who gave and who did not give tribute. The Ngoni did not wish that every male should give tribute as is done by Europeans today. They were just pleased if the village headman or *nduna* had given something even though other people in his village did not give anything. Even the *ndunas* themselves gave something at the time they thought it was convenient to themselves to give. There was no fixed time of the month or year. Much that was given as tribute was beer, meat, ivory, hoes and cloth, also cattle, sheep and goats after raids, and other loot from war.

[828] Power to 'eat' (*ukudla*) lion- and leopard-skins was given to certain people of the Swazi clans, but all the rest were obliged to bring them in. The lion- or leopard-skin had to be given first to the village headman. He went with it to the *chief* or *nduna*. This one brought it to the *inkosi* along with his *amadula* or *amajuba* of all his villages, the older men and
[554] younger men. This was like going as warriors and they went with dancing (*Igube*). The one who first stabbed the animal was pointed out, and the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

second and third, and the finisher, at the place of dancing in the kraal. At such times each one when called rose and danced *ingiya*, repeating his names. This was called *ukubika isinkalipi*, reporting the heroes or the fierce ones. This is still being done today. The *inkosi* thanked the people who brought the skins by giving them a beast or a goat. When they were dressing the meat and eating it, they kept on dancing *ligubo* and crying the war-cry. At such times the women went along with the men to help them dance *ligubo*. They made the responses to the songs and jerked their necks. 571 643 651 431 [559]

All such things the *inkosi* divided among his houses. The big house had a big share, but especially his mother's house. She should have most. Even if his real mother was dead, the big share had to go there, to her house, where her successor lived.

Visits to the Paramount, whether for a particular occasion or as a matter of routine, were hedged about with ceremonial. It was expected that *ahumuzana* and other important people who lived near enough would visit the Paramount frequently and, according to some informants, they went every day in pre-European times. 643 574 576 644

No one could approach the Paramount except through one of the *izinduna* of the royal village, and the correct person to approach was the *induna* of the *indlunkulu*. Visitors were expected to wait at the gate of the kraal and put down their spears. When they were brought by the *induna* to the Paramount, they greeted him with '*Bayete*'. Then they sat down and the Paramount told the *induna* to greet them, and they replied '*Yebo, inkosi*'. This custom of indirect approach to the Paramount has been maintained. Early travellers in Nyasaland spoke of observing it, and when I was there it was considered outrageous manners on the part of any European if he penetrated immediately to the presence of the Paramount, without going through the accustomed channels. 643 644

The Paramount was both greeted and thanked for gifts of food, beer or snuff, with '*Bayete*'. If he moved from the kraal, all present said '*Bayete*'. If anyone had to leave his presence, he crouched low and murmured '*Bayete*' as he went out. Cibambo described this punctilious formality of thanking for gifts in the Ngoni manner. 643 644 431

¶ When receiving presents the Ngoni thanked the giver by taking them with two hands, even though it was a small present. Afterwards they thanked the giver by his *inkongo*, clan name, openly. They said that receiving a thing with one hand showed that you derided it and did not put any value on it. When receiving a present from bigger people or from a chief, some words of respect were added to the *inkongo*, such as '*Baba*', '*Nkosi yami*', '*E-Jwe*'. Often the receiver if he was much pleased with the present added some *izitukuse* to the clan name, if he knew them. Those near him or some further away helped the receiver by thanking loudly after him. If what he received was food, he thanked at the beginning, and after eating the food he thanked again. If such a present of food was given to a body of people, the leader in the company first led the others in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 thanking, and then all thundered the thanking together. This included all
644 the rest who were in the neighbourhood though they did not take part in
the food or the present. The leader would first thank '*E-Jere*' and then all
431 would follow together, '*E-Jere*', or the clan name of the one who was the
giver. The Paramount, if he gave presents to the people, was not thanked
by his clan name as other people. He was thanked by '*Bayete*' as was done
when saluting him. Likewise those who received the title *Nkosa* were
thanked by that title when they gave presents to people.

643 On ceremonial occasions, visitors to the royal village heard the
644 *izibongo* or praise-songs of the Paramount. These were songs referring
533 to great deeds and notable incidents both in the lifetime of the reigning
576 Paramount and in the lives of his predecessors. They were distinct from
the *izinkomo*, which were honorific epithets added to the clan name and
spoken when thanking a well-known man or woman for their gifts. The
izinkomo could be said by anyone, since each person of note had his own
which were well known. The *izibongo* could only be spoken or sung by
an *umbongi* or official 'praiser'. Such a person was a man of good
[826] memory and possessing eloquence. The chest was thought to be the seat
of wisdom and eloquence, and a man who composed praise-songs, as
distinct from repeating well-known ones, had to have the faculty of
finding the right words, since new songs of this kind were generally
invented on a sudden inspiration.

The occasions when the praise-songs were recited were when important visitors came to the royal village; when beasts were slaughtered in the ancestor cult; at special dances at the royal village or at the feasts of the Paramount. On such occasions the official praiser stood up in the kraal, everyone kept silence and did not move, and after a pause he began to call out '*Bayakonga inkosi*', 'let us praise the Paramount'. In repeating the praise-songs he began with those of the immediate ancestor of the Paramount, and then went on to those of earlier ancestors. At the end he shouted '*Bayete*' and all the people replied '*Bayete*'. Examples of the praise-songs of Zwangendaba and his father Hlacwayo of the northern kingdom and of Ngwana, father of Mputa, of the central Ngoni kingdom are given at the end of the chapter.

The tension caused by the extreme formality in the behaviour of the
643 Paramount, his courtiers and his visitors was lightened by the presence
644 of a court jester. Informants were agreed that such an individual was
usually present to amuse the Paramount with his sallies and gestures and
522 clown-like tumbling about. Dr. Laws referred to such a jester at the court of Mbelwa I when the Livingstonia Mission was making its first settlement in northern Nguniland.[1] I saw a jester who came with Paramount Zintambira Masuko from Portuguese territory when he and his officials visited Mzukhatha for the war-dance at the mourning for Rambo

[1] Livingstone, W. P. *Laws of Livingstonia*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1921, p. [illegible].

(*ukuqendisa*). The middle section, the main part of the ceremony, took place in the husband's village while the bridal party was there. In the last part the bride was left in her new home and three ceremonies marked her gradual integration into her new social group. 585

After the number of cattle had been decided upon in the final stage of the betrothal, the initiative was left to the girl's parents to announce the date of the *ntimba*. Eventually a message was sent through the *gqo* house of the girl's village to say that the bridal party would arrive on a certain day. Before the day came, the girl, now addressed as *umkhokheli* (the bride), was called to the *indlunkulu* in her village. There the leading women, her father's mothers, who had called in her father's sisters, gave her final instructions on how to behave in her new home. Ngoni women said that they were told at this time: 'Our child, we are putting you out of our family. We are handing you over to the other people. You were free and now your freedom is over for you are under other people. Where you are going you will meet with many troubles. They will say of you many things which you did not do. It is good to be patient.' During this instruction the girl cried and so did her mother. On the morning of the departure the girl was dressed in freshly prepared skins, her hair was arranged in the *ikhkatu* (chignon) to which the gall bladder of a goat was pinned, and the gall bladder of a cow was tied to her elbow. Then, still sobbing and whimpering, and surrounded by her age mates and the female members of her house, she set out for her bridegroom's village, the young men of her village driving a bullock (*mcanda*) as a present from the bride's parents to the mother of the bridegroom, in whose herd it was placed. [292 237] [152]

This part of the ceremony, the entry of the bride's party (*ukuqendisa*), was held to be of great importance, since it was the first time the bride's family and friends as a group had met the husband's family. The bride's procession waited by the kraal gate, singing *ntimba* songs, and every now and then a woman of the bride's party, one of her father's sisters, sang the praises of the bride's clan. As the young men driving the bullock entered the kraal, the bridal party joined them and they began to dance in the kraal. 571 585

Now the first overtures were made between the bride's party and the people of the bridegroom's village. The older women of the village approached the older women of the bride's party, greeting them and exchanging, in the Ngoni phrase, 'words which were good and proud and showed the quickness of their tongues'.

After these advances, the men of the village came into the kraal or gathered by the *indlunkulu*. While the bridal party began to sing with their heads bowed, the chief woman from the *indlunkulu* of the bride's village came forward, bending low, and on her knees presented to the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* of the husband's village a basket containing snuff boxes and beads. She made a speech, in which she said, 'Here is [516 431]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

293 cattle of *his* mother's house and those of other widows of his father, 420 even though the widows remarried and went to live elsewhere. The ownership of a herd, in the sense of authority to acquire and to dispose of the cattle, was in fact vested in the senior male members belonging to each house in whose name cattle were held. This senior male leadership of a house had, in the central kingdom, a parallel in the senior male members of a *hanja*. The implication in both was the same—that there was a group of senior men linked by membership of a house or a *hanja*, who took responsibility for all the cattle in the herd of that house or *hanja* and for all additions to the herd. Any new beasts acquired through natural increase, *lobola*, court payments, gifts, or purchase, by any member of that house went into the herd belonging to it. Thus it was easy for young men working in the south to send back money to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. They knew the choice would be well made and that the cattle would be well cared for until their return.

The right of disposal of cattle in a herd belonging to a house or *hanja* was based on the same concept of ownership. The senior male group had to decide which beasts to send for the *lobola* when a young man of [412] their house married. They undertook, as owners of the cattle, to pay fines in court cases when a member of the house was fined. If money was needed, either by the group as a whole or by an individual member, a beast was chosen and sold by the senior men; part of the proceeds was given to the individual who needed help, and part either buried under the floor of the hut of the woman who was head of the house, or converted into cloth and stored in the hut. Gifts of cattle were sometimes [431] given to important visitors, or as an expression of sympathy when mourning at a funeral, or for a sacrifice to the ancestors. On all such occasions the decision to dispose of one or more beasts and the selection of them were in the hands of the senior male group. Though prolonged discussion might go on before a decision to sell or make a gift was made, once there was agreement the selection was often made very quickly. The leading men would go to the kraal, point out the beasts to the herd-boys, and tell them to drive them to the appointed place.

232 The care of the herds was primarily the responsibility of the senior men, though the actual herding was delegated to the herd-boys. Informants said that in pre-European days great care was taken of the animals in the rainy season; the ant-hills in the kraal were preserved so that the animals might get out of the mud, and calf-houses with roofs were always provided for shelter for the calves. I saw some calf-houses of this kind, and some kraals with ant-hills left in them, but neither was common practice, and the reason given was that the kraals and herds were much smaller than in pre-European days.

There were two chief objectives in the care of herds: that the cattle should keep well and avoid disease, and that they should multiply. The

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

considered it his individual bad luck. On the other hand the house which depended on its herd for mutual help among its members and for the performance of ritual in sickness was deeply concerned at the loss of cattle and at any diminution of its herd. 231 556

After security, pleasure and emotional satisfaction were important Ngoni values in relation to cattle. This outlet for interest and enjoyment was very marked among Ngoni men. It began with the young herd-boys and continued until old age. Cattle were an endless topic for discussion, and in remote areas, where few strangers came and local affairs played a predominant part in village life, the fortunes of individual beasts and the progress of herds were talked about continuously. The advent of a letter from a son in the south sending money to his father to buy a beast gave a fillip to village life which little else provided. When the young men themselves came home, they went during their first evening to the kraal where the cattle they had paid for were kept, and showed interest and pleasure in the herd which was shared by all. The older men who had carried the responsibility were there, and on the fringes of the group the herd-boys hung around, listening to their elders, proud of having done their bit for the cattle which were the common concern of all three age-groups.

The Ngoni were aware that security in their cattle and the pleasure they got from them had to be won, and there was a price to pay. Hence they attached great value to knowledge and experience and to the ability to organize. Among the senior men responsible for a herd in a house or *kanja*, some would be known for their knowledge and skill in handling cattle and for their experience in dealing with sick beasts, in castrating bullocks, and in choosing well when buying new beasts. The Ngoni recognized an innate quality of skill, which they called *nghomi nabuzinu*, 'the good forehead', a term used as an equivalent for the 'green thumb' when talking about crops. They also recognized the knowledge which came from experience and which might or might not be associated with *nghomi nabuzinu*. In any village where there were cattle, men were pointed out who possessed knowledge about cattle-tending, and the choice of a neighbouring village kraal for boarding out purposes was generally decided on the reputation of the owner of the kraal as a good cattle man. Not all the people who had this specialized knowledge had ability to organize the care of cattle, a characteristic Ngoni quality on which they set a high value. Foresight and planning were necessary in the choice of kraals for boarding out, in the selection of animals for *lobola*, fines, gifts or slaughter, and above all in buying and selling cattle. This kind of organizing ability required the possession of information about local markets and about potential sellers or buyers of cattle. It also demanded some nice calculations when sending cattle for *lobola* or giving a beast as a gift. Men were often torn between wishing to appear generous to the point of lavishness, and not wanting to give 231 555 [431]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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away the prize animals in the herd. Their formula in presenting a beast was 'Here is a small sheep.' This belittling of a gift was the social counterpart of their inner desire for a reputation for generosity.

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It has been clear from many previous references that mutual assistance among members of a house was inherent in the social pattern of cattle-ownership. The Ngoni attached great value to this reciprocity of service, and it was deeply embedded in their social ethic. Young men in Ngoni villages thought twice before they deliberately took action which would bring them into the courts, because the fine would have to be paid by their elders from the common herd of cattle. The implications of this service proved no ultimate deterrent to hot-headed youth, but the lesson was constantly being rubbed in. After a court case for adultery, when a young man's father and his father's brothers had handed over a beast for a fine, they would grumble in the evening by the kraal at this waste of good cattle, and suggest it was time the young man went off to the south and sent money home to buy more cattle. This was the cycle of mutual help—the elders provided cattle from the herd for *lobola* and fines for the young men, who in turn went off to work and sent back money to buy more cattle. Reference has been made to 'the cloth of the spirits', when cattle were sold to provide cash for a young man who needed it, and the balance was used to buy cloth which was kept in the hut where the ancestral spirit was guarded. This cloth was the common property of all who belonged to the house owning the herd, and was returnable to the hut after it had been worn for some festive occasion. The forms which this mutual help could take were numerous and varied, and they all illustrated the fact that the correct and continuous observance of this reciprocity was considered by the Ngoni as one of the basic values underlying the ownership and use of cattle.

Among the group bound together by cattle-ownership this emphasis on mutual help as a desirable behaviour pattern had its counterpart in the social concept of integration. As we have seen, the Ngoni put a high value on 'staying together', on being united when challenged by a situation which made for disintegration. Within the social units of the house and family, the ownership of cattle and their care and use demanded some degree of co-operation through responsibility for the herd which was held in common. Integration between the living and their ancestors was also provided by the cattle. Common possession of a herd did more than just hold people together. The pattern of family and house organization which was characteristically Ngoni was given some stability through the ownership of cattle, allowing for the subdivision of herds when the new village 'went out', the exchanges at marriage, and the sacrifices at death.

on was placed on it. The meat in the basket and on the gate stayed there all night. 769 782

Following the ritual of offering meat to the spirits came the ritual of cooking and eating the meat, both that offered to the spirits and the rest. After the basket of meat had been left all night in the place of the spirits, the large quantity on the gate was carried away and cooked by an old woman outside the hut of Bambo Mangs's granddaughter. The meat in the basket which had been offered to the spirits was put in a pot and cooked on the fire in Bambo Mangs's hut. It stayed cooking all day and all night till the following morning. Dzinthengs Phungwako, an old and highly respected *likoda*, came to the hut and divided the sacrificial meat among all who were in the house, that is Bambo Mangs, her daughter and granddaughter and several senior women. When they had finished the leading women stood up and thanked '*Zikhomo Mazeko*', '*Zikhomo Magwagwa*'. Then they washed their hands and went to their own houses. 252 769 782

The large quantity of meat which had been laid on the gate and cooked on another fire in another *bwalo* was carried in a big pot and put down outside Bambo Mangs's hut in the late afternoon. Her daughter came outside and divided the meat into three piles: a small one from the breast-bones for the women, a leg for the chief, the head for Kabwani the headman of a neighbouring village, and the rest in a big pot for the men. A boy came to tell Lopati that all was ready and he and the chief went out to the place where the beast was killed, near the gate of the kraal. There were four groups already sitting there and the chief and Lopati made a fifth: the *mudoda*, the senior men; the *majoba*, the young men; the *mabuse*, the herd-boys; and the little boys. Before Lopati divided the meat he and the chief washed elaborately with water brought in a gourd, and then he washed the knife before cutting the meat. He called the *mudoda* to send someone for their portion in a basket, then the young men and the herd-boys were given their portions—a basket for each group, and the small boys had bits put in their hands. The eating was very sedate, there was no snatching of choice bits, and in each group the one who fetched the meat distributed it. There was the general atmosphere of a ritual meal rather than a feast, though the small boys smacked their lips appreciatively. From time to time Lopati called up someone from a group and gave him a bit more to divide up. When it was all eaten, a boy was sent to fetch water and the soapy leaves which the Ngoni used for washing, and the chief and Lopati and the *mudoda* all washed the grease off their fingers. Then Lopati stood up and called out '*Siyabonga baba, sikomo nentsana nenkosi*', 'We are praising you, father, thank you child of the Paramount', and the others all agreed and said '*Zikhomo baba*.' Then they all went together to Bambo Mangs's hut and stood opposite her door and called out the same thanks. The women who had eaten their meat 431 769 782 [204] [515] [561]

431 in three age groups on the verandah also came forward and, led by
769 NaNkoloma, a widow of Njokomule I, thanked in the women's language,
782 564 '*Zimuta, zaikwa matuuma mwhoi.*'

I did not witness any ritual sacrifices in the northern kingdom but
769 the accounts given me by informants corresponded closely with the
782 ritual in Mzukhatha just described. When sacrificing for rain to the
spirits of the Paramount, a black ox with no white spot was driven into
[825] the kraal in the late afternoon and the chosen spokesman addressed the
ancestral spirits of the Jere clan telling them that this was their beast,
they must eat the meat and tell UMkulumqango that the people needed
rain. While this man prayed to the spirits he stood facing the beast, and
everyone else sat looking in front of them and keeping very quiet. The
women stayed at home in their huts and the Paramount stayed in his
hut 'as if mourning'. When the beast urinated and showed that the
spirits had heard, a messenger came and informed the Paramount. The
beast was killed early the next morning in the kraal. While the flaying
took place, all the huts of the chief wives were smeared with dried cow-
dung on the floors and on the smooth place outside the doors. The meat,
in two parts, was taken into the *indlunkulu* and left there all night at the
back, so that the spirits might lick it. The next morning the meat was
cooked in the kraal by the *mudude* and when it was ready they reported
to the big *indunu*. He called all the people into the kraal and divided
them into companies according to their sections and head villages. The
meat was given to the head of each head village who divided it among
his group. When everyone had finished, one of the leading men stood
up and began to praise the spirit using his titles and praise-names
(*isitukuso*). The rest stood up and shouted *Bayete*. They then began to
dance a war-dance but, the informants added, that was soon stopped by
torrents of rain.

114 These chapters on the Ngoni ancestor cult bring to an end this study
118 of the two Ngoni kingdoms in Nyasaland in the 1950's. We have seen
how their distinctiveness as a people depended on the culture which
they brought with them from the south and how this culture was found
among the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In the topics
included in the three sections of this book: the political system, the
social organization, and the ancestor cult, the main features of Ngoni
culture are most clearly seen. In much of their economic and agricultural
life there was little to distinguish them from their neighbours among
the other Nyasaland peoples. The changes brought about by the mis-
sions, the schools, new forms of local government, and new types of
occupation, were all tending to make the Ngoni less distinctive as a
people. The conversion of some leading Ngoni to Christianity, as sug-
gested in Chapter V of Part II, and the spread of schools were together
the most powerful influences in altering Ngoni traditional culture. The

[851] small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was
[941] applied with a feather to the baby's navel.
[278] When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and
[302] the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then
[515] they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a
• [431] basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for
[177] pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come
[594] back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grand-
[603] mother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to
[431] the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

964 When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

854 house was still killed and eaten. The cloth came out of the
[432] store of cloth bought when cattle were sold, and kept in the hut of the senior woman of the father's house.

Visit to the mother's home

593 If, as was always the case in earlier days, the mother of the
574 new baby had come from a distant village, she did not see her own mother or her relatives, and they did not see the child until it was several weeks old, and considered by the senior women strong enough to undertake a journey. Then a visit involving much ceremony took place, for the wife's
[604] mother-in-law headed the party. The stiff and formal relations between the two sets of 'in-laws' had been eased slightly through the series of feasts and exchanges which preceded and followed the marriage ceremony. Face-to-face
[571] intercourse was, however, still very formal between the two families, and this first visit with the grandchild was in one sense an act of condescension on the part of the husband's family, since the child belonged to them. It was also a human and natural recognition of the eagerness of the young mother to see her own mother and display her child. Word was sent in advance by a messenger from the husband's village to announce the visit, so that the wife's family could make due preparation.

The main object of this visit was, in the Ngoni phrase, 'to show the child at its mother's home'. The young mother and baby, with her mother-in-law in the place of honour, sat
[604] outside the big house of the girl's father's family. Her father and his male relatives came to salute the child and to give it
[431] presents of beads, and in modern times small gifts of money
[603] as well. If the girl's father owned many cattle, he killed a beast, and they feasted that night, and the visitors carried home meat with them as well as the presents to the child. It was all very formal and correct, except when the young mother escaped for a short time to the circle of her sisters and girlhood friends, and exchanged confidences with them.

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[The Ngoni engage in gift giving and gift exchanges on frequent occasions, and the relevant information is scattered throughout the text. Since only a few major instances have been marked for this category, the interested reader should consult category 116.]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *lusiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *wyungo*, from the Zulu *iwyungo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 49 and 114, and Scott, *A syntagmatic dictionary of the Mang'anja language spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 486, both translate the Nyanja word *wyungo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mphokiso*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-phokiso*, to help or make to cook. Weiss, op. cit. 'Expeditions . . .', pp. 473-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *ulipako*. Cf. Zulu *uku-phaka*, to cook.

[17] Called *nungwinie*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *uwyalanu*, from the Zulu *uku-dlana*, or *kulyalana*, from the Bunga *ku-lyalana*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 wherever they decide to settle. Children are still valuable. A barren woman is pitied, and a man's impotence is whispered about behind his back. Men and women seek fertility, and a man tries to conceal his impotence. A woman who does not want to bear children is regarded as irresponsible.

We have seen that the traditional solution for barrenness was to introduce a linked co-wife, but this is now rarely done. A woman can either look for medicines[14] to make her fertile, or, if she is unsuccessful, she may beg children from a fertile sister. These children will stay with her while they are young, but they are not thought of or talked about as being her own children.

No clear distinction is drawn between impotence and sterility, and men who are said to be impotent are also known to commit adultery. A sterile husband does not find favour with his wife or with her relatives, who want her to have children to care for her when she grows old. If medicines fail to cure a man's sterility, and it is thought that the lack of children is due to him and not to his wife, then he may call in an acquaintance to sleep with his wife so that [839] she may conceive. For this task, it is said that a man will choose a person whose discretion he can trust, but one on the fringe of his acquaintance who will not feel disposed to gossip maliciously about the incident afterwards. Thus it is said that a man would never ask his brother to do this. If the woman bears a child then at some later date the husband gives a goat to the progenitor, hoping that [931] people will not connect the present with the birth of the child.

Sterility is a shameful thing and men do not easily admit to it. [128] My information on the procedure followed in specific instances is based only on village gossip and not on admissions by the men and women concerned. Although it is agreed that a sterile man may feel 842 forced to call in a seed-raiser the whole matter must remain secret. 839 There must be no loophole by which adultery might be condoned. In the words of an informant,

> A man may be impotent and may ask someone to copulate with his wife so that she may have children. This man coming to copulate with his wife comes in secret as it is considered a disgraceful thing among the people of the family and the rest of the village if they know, yet the people in the village know very well sometimes. In the old days the same thing happened, but if a man coming to sleep with the woman came in an open way, and everyone knew of his sleeping with the wife of an impotent man, he was to be killed by the chief, even though the impotent man asked him to do this work for him. The person coming to do this work of copulating with this woman was to be paid a cow or a goat for the work that he did. In these days it happens.

The sterile husband takes the risk that his friend will continue sleeping with the woman after she has conceived. I have recorded

[14] Called *ciawa*. The first child born after the successful administration of this medicine is sometimes called Ciawa.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

after a year or so. If he keeps it going himself he visits his own village for a week or two at a time to tend the garden, and stores the produce with a relative in the village. If, however, a man intends to reside for many years in his wife's village, he gives away his garden and concentrates his labours in his wife's garden. After a year or two he builds her a storehouse in her village and the couple begin to keep their own supplies separate from those of her relatives.

Even when the couple have their own storehouse it is considered proper if from time to time they are given maize by their parents. If a woman living virilocally goes to visit her parents and relatives and returns without maize or flour her husband's relatives are likely to laugh at her and say 'She must come from a very poor family'.

Uxorilocal residence is described by the vernacular term *cikomwewe*. In its most general usage this word refers to the obligations a man owes to his wife's parents, particularly at the beginning of his marriage. It has three specific meanings:

(i) Uxorilocal residence.

(ii) Assistance rendered from time to time by a man in his wife's mother's garden.

(iii) A hoeing party of men and women from the man's village which works in his wife's mother's garden.

Uxorilocal residence is classed with these other two aspects of affinal obligation and like them it can be avoided completely, shirked, or executed in full. The extent to which the obligations are fulfilled

Table XIV. Virilocality and Uxorilocality, 1945-9

Wife's residence	Husband's residence		Total
	Rural	Away	
Virilocal ..	72	14	86
Uxorilocal ..	24	20	44
Total	96	34	130
Ratio of virilocal to uxorilocal wives	3	0·7	1·95
Association between husband's residence and wife's residence $\chi^2 = 12{\cdot}83$ $P < {\cdot}001$			
Informants as in Table XIII			

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

becomes her husband's *sibling* so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere* an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her *sibling*. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court. 835

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages. 578 602 851 [583] [589] 431 586

8. Other Kinsfolk

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of 602

* See Barnes, op. cit. p. 192

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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offers had been made to the leader of the party through the mother-in-law acting as intermediary for her husband. In the morning the mother-in-law came to the garden to find the hoers still there. She fell to the ground beseeching them to stop. The leader then told the party to stop, which they did with much grumbling. One hoer said 'It would have been better if we had cut down some more maize to cool down our hearts.'

Appendix IV

CARRYING BEER

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The carrying of beer is the first formal occasion on which the initiative is taken by the woman's kin and not by the man's. Beer is brewed by the woman's mother and is taken to the husband's father, or if he is not available, to the husband himself. It is known as *vipeke*, a word used to describe any offering of beer sent to a chief or headman in virtue of his position as such as well as beer sent to a a son-in-law. Beer can and is sent in this way more than once, to indicate the continued respect enjoyed by the man in the eyes of his parents-in-law. Members of the Dutch Reformed Church who are not allowed to drink proper beer send instead gifts of porridge to their sons-in-law. The beer, or its porridge equivalent, is sent at least once in about 40 per cent of all marriages. It is usually brewed while the couple are living virilocally.

It is held by some that a man cannot expect beer sent to him until he has made the legalization payment for his wife. In practice, if the woman's parents think that he is treating his wife well, they may brew beer for him despite the absence of legalization payment.

The beer is brewed by the woman's mother, and is carried in jars from one village to another. If the villages are too far apart to make this practicable, the woman's mother comes to stay with some relative in a nearby village and does her brewing there. She herself does not accompany the party carrying the beer.

The party may consist of, say, half-a-dozen women from the village. They carry the beer to the man's village, and halt just outside the village. Sometimes they demand a present before they will agree to enter the village. They are led to the hut of the man's parents or of his grandmother, and there they offer the beer to the man's relatives. They are given somewhere to sleep the night. In the morning people come to greet them, and as in the gall bladder ceremony they reply with a little song. The pots of beer are allocated by the man's father to important people in the village. People who come to drink the beer give presents such as threepenny bits which are collected by the leader of the party and which are

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

distributed among the women of the party as a recompense for carrying the beer. The married couple drink the beer but do not take any prominent part in the proceedings. The next day the man's father gives a beast or a goat or money to the leader of the party. The animal is killed and the women carry the meat back to their own village where it is divided up by some important relative of the wife. If some of the sprouted maize and flour that were prepared for the brewing remain over, the mother-in-law may brew again, and send it to her son-in-law as before. The second brew of beer is called 'offering'.[1]

Appendix V

ENTERING THE WIFE'S MOTHER'S HUT

As performed nowadays elements are combined from what formerly were two distinct ceremonies. The name of one of these, 'eating together' (*mayelana*) is now not often heard and the combined ceremony is known by the name of the other, 'entering' (*magenise*). It represents the final stage in the acceptance of the man as a satisfactory son-in-law and marks the formal setting aside of the avoidance relationship between him and his wife's mother. It is performed in about one marriage in eight. I attended two of these ceremonies.

Some informants say that like the carrying of beer the ceremony of entering is not performed unless the legalization payment is made. However, I have recorded instances in which the ceremony was performed in the absence of any payment. It almost always occurs after beer has been carried to the man's village once or twice and when the man is living virilocally.

The parents of the woman send word to the village of the man that on such and such a day there will be beer brewed for him to enter the hut of his mother-in-law. On the day appointed the man and his wife go in procession with other people, singing and dancing, from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession traditionally should be led by the eldest child of the marriage, boy or girl, holding a club aloft, but this is not always done. The man's parents do not go with the party but stay behind in the village. On the outskirts of the woman's parents' village, the party may be met by people dancing out to meet them, and they sometimes pause to drink beer brought out to them. The dancing party go on into the cattle byre, or if there is no byre to some clear space on the fringe of the village. They enter the byre in a rough

[1] *N'ambo*, an Hanga word.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

%4 and take a large flat stone and set the corpse on it, and take a millstone and place it on his head. If it be he has children, they are made to take charcoal in their hands, and this they cast into the grave (this is to cause them to forget). Then some old man takes up a hoe, and strikes the ground at one side of the grave and again at the other, when many begin to fill in the earth, the chief mourners trampling it down.

III. When they have finished filling in, they knock out the hoe heads, and set off for the stream. They who carry the hoes and household belongings of the deceased go first. When they reach the water, the chief mourners bathe first, then every one else; the men bathe up-stream, the women down-stream. They do not rub each other's backs. When
%8 they have finished bathing, they take the calico, sporran, and "nzengwa" baskets the dead man used to eat out of, and set fire to them, and splash the ashes with water. Then they set out for the village, wailing. When they come to the grave, the medicine man looks for medicine to remove the evil
[918] influence of the spirit of the dead; [this medicine] he breaks up, puts in a potsherd, pours on water, and stirs. The chief mourner begins to rub it on his
%5 legs, face, and hands, then others come and do the same. If the deceased had children of his own, they also rub some of the medicine on. They again keep wake at the hut in which the man died. Next morning at dawn the nearest relation of the dead
•[931] takes goats and fowls and gives them to the chief mourners, who then begin to shave a little patch of hair from the side of each person's head, when the people will then shave each other quite bald. The widows go to some spot in the bush to weave the "red" bands and to shave. When every one has quite finished shaving, the meat is taken from the

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 again returning to the old village. That evening
166 they take some of the fire (that they made earlier in
the day) to kindle a fire with in the (new) hut
602 (*Kuka*). In kindling it they do not squat down, they blow the faggots into flame from a standing position, and they do this lest the smoke might ever after hang in wreaths over the floor. The womenfolk come every day to cook.

II. When the chief's huts are finished, they build those of the old men, and when these are complete, they bring all the huts [from the old village]. When they see that all the huts are finished, beer is made at the old village, and they go and bring
166 the spirits. He who has a grave pours some beer
in a gourd-pot and places it on the grave, saying, "We have gone hence, you must not search for us here, come let us go together." On that day they demolish all the huts that remain, they leave only the huts of which the occupant has lately died. When now the sun begins to slant westward, from the *Kuka* hut they take five gourd-pots, and fill them
[613] with beer and make young women carrying these
lead the way. The head old woman of the *Kuka*
[554] hut goes first, the chief wife of the chief follows *Gogo*, and then come the ones carrying the beer. When they arrive at the new village they set down the gourd-pots and all the people assemble. The elder of the village then begins to propitiate, saying, "There is the beer we down on earth have made, we have gone from yonder, we present to you your new village, all men you will have a care for." Then
[131] the village chief makes a present of a goat and
hands it to the old man, and he again speaks, saying, "Here is a goat which your child presents, you will wash it down with the beer." If the goat makes water, that is to say the spirit consents, if it will not they do not kill it. Then they kill the goat

6:Rattray E,G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

village that "The people who have come to the village court are saying they wish so and so." Then the elders say, "Put them in a hut." Next morning they cook for them whole maize, the betrothed does not eat with them, and when the old women see she is dying of hunger, they take her to a hut on the outskirts of the village and give her beer. 584

II. On the following morning they from the man's village take an offering of two goats, and go with them to the girl's village. These goats are accepted, for they say, "They are only the spirits, and no doubt the price of the girl must be behind." When the young braves leave, they leave behind a child to guard the betrothed, and follow her about, and when they return to their own village they take other goats and go with them (to the girl's home), and when they come with them there they sit at the *bwalo* court, then one of the village elders makes a little gap in the grass fence (that surrounds all Angoni huts) and peeps out. When he sees the goats he tells the village chief that there are such and such a number, and the chief tells him not to receive them. Then the young warriors, when they have waited and waited, go off to their own village. At the outskirts they stand to await the escort of young girls, and then they go and say to the man who wishes to marry the girl, "They did not receive from us." So next morning they take more goats and go with them. The old man again looks out, and when he sees that more goats have come he goes and tells the girl's father, "To-day such and such a number have arrived." And the man answers, "Go and take them and put them in the kraal." (When this is done) the old man comes and takes the knobkerry from one of the men (who brought the goats) and puts it in a hut, and the men follow the knobkerry, and they cook 584 431

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 porridge for them and it is refused, and they spear
● 431 goats for them and they eat. Next day they go home. They of the girl's village tell them, saying, "You will hear from us." Now, if the malt for the beer be in readiness, they do not sleep many
[213] days, but if not, they let a moon pass. On the day on which the beer is strained they go and call the bodyguard of young warriors, and they come along with the husband (to be) to drink the beer. The man who is to marry the girl they go and hide away in a hut on the edge of the village along with his betrothed, and the beer for them will be drawn in a little pot.

585 III. Now every one comes together at the village court and bring goats. The betrothed sits on a
[302] mat. Her grandmother shaves her head, leaving a round patch of hair on the crown. When she has finished shaving her one of the men from the man's
[231] village steps out and begins to kill some goats. Should a goat not die immediately it is beaten. Then the goats are skinned, and they take a spleen and let drops fall from it on the head of the girl, and then inflate all the spleens. They take the fat from the belly, and spread it in the sun to dry. Towards evening they take the girl and go with her to the *Kuka* hut, and there they take a frothy medicine, called *chitundu*, and the girl bathes with it, and her little watchman bathes also, and he (the child) takes the spleens and the fat, the inflated spleens are fastened on the girl's head and the fat over her shoulders and under her arms. The little child, when he has finished tying them on, is beaten by the men from the man's village (playfully). Then one of the village elders gets up and speaks, saying, "There you have your mother, we give her you to-day; she is subject to no disease, her illnesses consist of occasional headaches. Should she

10. *Prohibited and Enjoined Unions (Ngani).*

The *Angani* are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngani-Chawa marriage the child always takes the class (*tribe-lights*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achawa, so also with the *Angani* it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same class. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage (Ngani).*

When an Ngani wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headmen to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *ambassa* with a present to the *ambassa* of the girl. There are always two *ambassa* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is *indaphlo*; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ka-ungu*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 583

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several older women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commemoration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ka-ta-fere*, and sends a cloth (known as *ambaka*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. 574 431

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. 833

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. 833

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kalumbo*, or *kapumbo ambaka*. The *ambaka*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngani girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 582

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 253 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the herdsman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good cow; and the herdsman in return hands over three other animals of similar age. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organization: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Ankwere consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'ongo* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'ongo* under Chief Chiwere was Chimwanga, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unawares, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a short resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'ongo* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the shiwanda or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connection with women. Next day, they burned goats' horns, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

173 made friends with old Mpezeni and finally made Lusengeni, Mpezeni's
649 head village, his head-quarters. He obtained mining rights in the land
[423] from Mpezeni, by word of mouth, but Mpezeni signed no deed of gift or transfer. This legal point which subsequently became one of the major points at issue in the North Charterland Company case has been emphasized again and again to me in the villages. 'Mpezeni was writing nothing. He was only giving presents to Weise, and
[425] Weise gave presents to him, and Mpezeni was saying, "You may travel in my country and dig for gold. You are my friend."' They add further, 'Mpezeni did not want to make friends with the British
[649] because he had heard from the Matabele and from Nyasaland what they were doing. Weise said "I am not from the British", and so Mpezeni was making promises with him.' So deeply is this tradition of friendship between Mpezeni and Weise, with its consequences of betrayal and disaster, embedded in the Ngoni thinking, that when I stayed in the Paramount Chief's village and exchanged presents with
[129] him, many old people shook their heads and warned the young people, 'The *Ansuge* war will come again. This is how that other war was beginning.'

175 Weise failed to establish his claim to mining rights in Mpezeni's
648 territory with Sir Harry Johnston, then Commissioner for all British territories north of the Zambezi. Meantime the British South Africa Company obtained a new charter to extend its field north of the Zambezi, and sent an emissary to Mpezeni's kraal to make a treaty with him. Mpezeni refused. He also refused Sir Harry Johnston's emissary who met Weise at Mpezeni's kraal with a view to getting Mpezeni to make a treaty direct with the British Crown. The mining rights in Mpezeni's country were potentially valuable, and on Mpezeni's refusal to grant them were claimed by the British South Africa Company[1] on the ground of treaties made with the conquered Chewa people, whom Mpezeni had dispossessed.[2] Weise was at this time at Mpezeni's with one or two Portuguese traders and officials, making hay while the sun shone.

[1] 'Finding Mpezeni obdurate the British South Africa Company concluded treaties with all the surrounding indigenous chiefs whom Mpezeni had dispossessed. We consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief.'

[2] F.O. 6337.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and sub-chiefs are nominated by the chiefs on the advice of their lieutenants and some of them are in fact lieutenants or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is literate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lieutenants or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying deposits for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the country and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [695]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organised system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional governors. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of their people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 431 [273] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend these to people they can trust. All the chiefs organise their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole county, but only part of the county. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organise enough hunts. 622 224 [911] [136]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

273 recipient usually takes the lead in praising, and his praise is chorused by the rest of the people in the hut.

The first jar, then, is divided by the owner himself and the bowlfuls are given to his village neighbours. The next jar is given to the headman or lieutenant of the village for division, and it is with the drinking of this jar that the party is held really to begin. The first bowl of this second jar is given by the *divider* of the beer back to the owner of the beer, who praises the *divider* before drinking. The second bowl goes to some other lieutenant or, if there is no other village lieutenant, to some important woman. Successive bowls go to other important people in the village. Subsequent jars are usually given to important visitors from other villages, who will allocate the bowls to their companions and to people in the host village. The first bowl of each jar goes to the *divider* of the jar, and the dregs, which are usually taken as the two last bowlfuls in each jar, and which are poured out after the jar has been tilted on its side, go to the dispenser of the beer, and to anyone who has been helping him.

There is a great deal of freedom in the allocation of beer in this way, and the complaints of people who hoped to be given beer and who were unfortunate are an invariable aftermath of any beer-party. It is important to note that the quantity of beer consumed by any individual is to some extent independent of the allocation of the jars and bowls. There are usually two or three bowls in use, and these are all filled up at each round. This means that most people in the hut drink each time. But what is remembered is not the beer drunk, but the method of allocation. Even if a man becomes intoxicated, he may yet complain the next day to his friends that the owner of the beer was miserly and lacking in generosity if no jar or bowl was specifically allocated to him. There is an obligation to return gifts of beer made in
● [431] this way, so that a man can ensure a favourable reception for himself in other villages where there is beer, by his generosity and sagacity in distributing when there is beer in his own house.

The importance attached to beer-drinking is well brought out in
262 some essays written by schoolboys on the topic 'What I want to do
273 when I leave school'. One of the boys wrote: 'Beer and cattle are the food of the Ngoni. . . . If your friend comes and he doesn't get beer and meat, then although he gets porridge, he still says that there was hunger in the house.' Another said: 'I will brew beer very often. Our life depends on drinking beer.' The small importance attached to beer
[829] by the neighbouring Cewa tribe is well known to the Ngoni, and one

854 house was still killed and eaten. The cloth came out of the
[432] store of cloth bought when cattle were sold, and kept in the hut of the senior woman of the father's house.

Visit to the mother's home

593 If, as was always the case in earlier days, the mother of the
574 new baby had come from a distant village, she did not see her own mother or her relatives, and they did not see the child until it was several weeks old, and considered by the senior women strong enough to undertake a journey. Then a visit involving much ceremony took place, for the wife's
[604] mother-in-law headed the party. The stiff and formal relations between the two sets of 'in-laws' had been eased slightly through the series of feasts and exchanges which preceded and followed the marriage ceremony. Face-to-face
[571] intercourse was, however, still very formal between the two families, and this first visit with the grandchild was in one sense an act of condescension on the part of the husband's family, since the child belonged to them. It was also a human and natural recognition of the eagerness of the young mother to see her own mother and display her child. Word was sent in advance by a messenger from the husband's village to announce the visit, so that the wife's family could make due preparation.

The main object of this visit was, in the Ngoni phrase, 'to show the child at its mother's home'. The young mother and
[606] baby, with her mother-in-law in the place of honour, sat outside the big house of the girl's father's family. Her father
[431] and his male relatives came to salute the child and to give it
[603] presents of beads, and in modern times small gifts of money as well. If the girl's father owned many cattle, he killed a beast, and they feasted that night, and the visitors carried home meat with them as well as the presents to the child. It was all very formal and correct, except when the young mother escaped for a short time to the circle of her sisters and girlhood friends, and exchanged confidences with them.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal.

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned.

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk.

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit.

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a

/4 cont'd/

701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[168] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
241 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
424 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at
[581] present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

141 The population of the tribe is about 80,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Mtandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson
681 Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[178] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

/1 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household, 415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamenned gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or [51] china crockery.

303 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every [414] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood. [308] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol [415] and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves [324] of the mbwabwa tree.

285 Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the [355] different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men, [246] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be [491] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings [343] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /B/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

645 He was a student of Ngoni history and custom, and used his travels as treasurer to collect new information. He always intended to write a history of the central kingdom as Cibambo had done for the northern kingdom, but his public duties never gave him time.

643 645 974 In making contact with his people and keeping in touch with his officials the Paramount did not rely only on their visits to the royal village. Two or three times a year he toured his kingdom, accompanied by his *ndunu nendusi* and the treasurer, and stayed at the head villages of the chiefs and also of other *ahwenzane*. The treasurer spoke enthusiastically of the Paramount's habit of making himself known to his people and enabling them to present petitions to him in person. He met village headmen on their own ground, and *ahwenzane* who were unconstitutionally directing the affairs of their villages and areas, as well as the official chiefs or subordinate Native Authorities. He saw for himself how his own regulations were being carried out and how the measures for agricultural improvement and cattle-dipping which the Government was promoting were being adopted. These visits in his own territory were followed by visits to Blantyre and Zomba and to the mining centres outside the country where his people were working. He was thus able to check on the conditions in the subordinate chiefs' areas which had been created by the prolonged absence of men from the villages.

The Paramount and changes in law and custom

643 178 Through his school education at Blantyre, his membership of a Christian church, and through attending the chiefs' course at the Jeanes School in Zomba, the Paramount stood between the old and the new in the changing conditions in his kingdom. After the 1933 Ordinance one of the changes in administration was that a Native Authority had to budget for income and expenditure in his area. The income for 1935 for this 652 area was £959, made up of a share of the taxes; fifty per cent. of the yearly 934 rental of stores; court fines and fees and beer licences. The expenditure was £832, under items of salaries to the Paramount and subordinate chiefs; salaries for messengers, councillors, clerks and policemen; payment of fourpence per tax to the headmen of the villages so that it was to their advantage to collect the full amount; and a small sum for uniforms, office expenses and such items as cash bonus and handcuffs. This budget for the central Ngoni kingdom was drawn up in consultation with the District Officer by the Paramount and his treasurer. It was a source of great pride to the treasurer that he had, as we have seen, his own key to a safe in the District Office where he put the tax money collected in the area, and drew out sums needed for expenditure in the Paramount's office.

744 653 In 1933, as already mentioned, a meeting of subordinate chiefs, *ahwenzane* and headmen heard the Paramount's proposals for new regulations about village improvement and agreed to them. These regulations were

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organization, and at their system of training their young men.

In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area. In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance, in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school education leading to paid employment, there was an economic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly wealth had been associated with political power, and the Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and government were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Paramount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934. The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[87] The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a
[561] money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and
[464] the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate
—these were a series of events which radically altered the
prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling,
[871] if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons
[434] at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or
[585] seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs.
This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for
taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over
at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at
least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly,
being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that
[885] earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded
as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the head-
ring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature
status, there was no longer any prohibition on marriage until
[582] a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the
age of marriage became economic ones instead of military
and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry
from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their
wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormi-
tory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no
[167] wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in
the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge
from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen
upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to
find work before they married, they left from and returned
to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant
and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture
familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in
their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

463 177 [434] [571] foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group involved the earning, spending and sharing of money incomes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

624 695 In local government and in the courts, which formed an integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom, ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain [827] [562] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

622 In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

S: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FO8
Marawi FR4

In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftaincies remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional systems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

10: Barnes E-S (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

than either of these two drinks, and the drinking of it is essentially a social event. The kind of beer brewed is made from maize, sorghum, and finger millet. It is brewed by women, the process lasting about a week. The beer can be drunk at any time during the week, but it is not regarded as truly beer until after the brewing process has been completed. It remains good to drink for about three days, after which it becomes too sour. About 20 to 30 gallons of beer are brewed at a time. The beer can be sold, used to provide refreshment for participants in some ceremony or other, offered in return for labour or other services, or else just drunk for its own sake. In each case the presence of beer in the village acts as a magnet attracting people from other villages. Beer that is sold is of economic importance as it is the principal way in which women raise funds for themselves. In connexion with a ceremony of some kind, the attraction of the beer is secondary in general to that exerted by the ceremony itself. The provision of beer in return for utilitarian services we shall discuss later. It is in the pattern of behaviour adopted when beer is drunk for its own sake that we can see reflected the structure of social action at the village level.

Beer is stored in earthenware jars of about 7 gallons capacity. A calabash-gourd cup is used to ladle the beer into earthenware bowls holding about 4 pints; from these the beer is drunk. When the beer is ready for drinking, the friendly fellow villagers of the man whose wife has brewed come to the beer-hut, which is usually the woman's kitchen, and the owner of the beer drinks the first jar with them. The procedure with each jar is that the owner of the beer gives the jar to someone, almost invariably a man, who becomes known as the divider of the beer, and who calls on someone junior to him to act as the dispenser of the beer. The dispenser sits on the ground and fills up the bowls from the jar under the instruction of the divider of the beer, and then takes them, or points them out to, the people to whom the divider wishes to give the beer. Thus the beer is given away in jars by the owner of the beer to the dividers of the beer, and is then divided into bowlfuls, and given by the dividers to yet other people. The owners of the bowlfuls drink some and pass on the bowls so that other people may drink. Each time these gifts of beer of different quantities are made they are acknowledged by the recipient in the form of a praise, consisting of the syllable *yo* followed by the descent-name of the giver. This is also done when a bowl or a jar is finished, so that when the last bowl of a jar is finished the owner of the bowl is praised, then the divider of the beer, and finally the owner of the beer. The

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled
586 affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another
178 in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[10] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the
[436] contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year
[191] of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the
[465] rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in
[435] bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call
[641] on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group, so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for
[581] stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic
613 group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor
[183] sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the
121 Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may
17 be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes.
586 Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[10] *ibid*, p. 172.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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[641] on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group,
[581] so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic
[613] group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor
[183] sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the
121 Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may
17 be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes.
586 Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[10] *ibid*, p. 172.

to the method of rearing calves by letting them take all the milk they wanted, and partly to the practice of letting the herd-boys have the rest. In villages under a *muhumuzana* of a Swazi clan, who had a wife in his big house also of a Swazi clan, the consumption of milk was to some extent organized. These senior women saw that the herd-boys brought them a certain amount of milk each day, and they gave it to young children or invalids, and made some into *amasi*.

Another practice which restricted the use of meat and milk as regular items of diet was that the building up of the herds was regarded as a primary responsibility of the owners and guardians of cattle. Hence calves were given milk, which in western countries would be drawn off for human use, and the killing of beasts, unless they were sick, was restricted to selling the meat for cash or using it in ritual. One of the embarrassments suffered by an anthropologist was being presented with a beast by people who hardly ever killed one for their own use. It was true that a general share-out took place when the beast was killed, but it was none the less one beast fewer in the herd, and it was the maintenance and increase of the herds which was the cattle-owners' chief concern.

This emphasis on numbers rather than quality, which caused so much misunderstanding between government departments and cattle-owners, was closely related to the forms of exchange in cattle. Formerly cattle were handed over either as *lobola* or as penalties for the infringement of laws. Both these forms of transfer continued, but there were additional demands which cattle-owners or potential owners had to be aware of in watching the increase or diminution of their herds. One characteristic of these modern forms of exchange was the ready convertibility of cattle into cash and of cash into cattle. We have seen how young men away at work sent money back to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. We have seen too how the possession of cattle made it possible to sell a beast and obtain cash for various purposes, and the proximity of markets where there were butchers' stalls encouraged this sale of cattle.

One of the most frequent reasons for the conversion of cattle into cash was for the purpose of hiring labour. We saw in Chapter I of this section how Lopati Nzunga killed cattle to feed the men who carried bricks and cement for his brother's tomb and sold another beast to pay wages to the bricklayers. The traditional way of paying labourers had been by feeding them with meat, and the modern method was to pay them cash wages and to find the money for it by the sale of cattle. Such labour could be for cultivating, house-building, fence-building, road-making and other local work. The possession of cattle which were easily convertible into cash made possible this payment of labour, and this relationship between the role of cattle-owner and the role of employer of labour was common.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly
231 related to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
437 of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Money was needed for good
554 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which
the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling,
[453] except among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Values and attitudes in cattle-ownership

114 Any attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquiring, caring for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive
233 survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place
565 in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is not possible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba clans whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading clans and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.

231 The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they repre-
556 sented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of ritual for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 24 343 241 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 262 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 462 [554] [574] [437]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

hospitality involved both planning and expense. The Paramount's wife had to keep enough food stocks on hand not only to feed her own large family and household, but also to be able to respond to expected and unexpected guests. The Paramount's personal annual salary at that time was £60, out of which he had to keep his family and household in food and clothes and school fees, and pay for the upkeep of his house. The bulk of the cereals and some of the beans and other vegetables used in his house came from his fields worked by hired labour. Another source of food supply was the market 'custom', a small toll levied on the produce sold in the weekly market, which was paid chiefly in kind and put in the storehouses on the Paramount's *bwalo* to be used to feed his guests.[1]

The Paramount not only gave food and drink to the expected and unexpected visitors to the royal village. From time to time he gave a feast to which the Christians of the congregation of the mission church were invited, as on one New Year's Day when I was staying there. He gave a feast to all the neighbourhood on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. From time to time he invited all his people to dance *ligubo* or *ngoma* at the royal village and provided beer for all and food for the *alumuzana* and the chiefs and their wives. The organization of these big feasts demanded planning on a generous scale and a large outlay in maize for porridge and meat for relish. No feast at the Paramount's village was complete without meat enough to satisfy everyone.

The visitors, the feasts, the dances, all had their focal point in the royal residence in the royal village. There were two other focal points in the village where large numbers of people came regularly, and made the place where the Paramount lived a centre which brought his people together and brought him before them as their ruler. These were the market and the court-house which also housed his offices.

Before 1939 the market in the royal village was unique in the area for its size and the service which it rendered to the countryside. At any one time on a Saturday there would be 600 to 1,000 people present. In 1938 a second market was opened by the Paramount at Nsipe at the southern end of his territory. They were definitely his markets in that he allotted space for them; fixed the days on which they were held; controlled the policing of the market and the strangers' huts where sellers arriving overnight could sleep; fixed the prices according to seasonal variations in supply; and, as we have seen, collected 'custom' in lieu of rents for sites. The market at Maganga served an area extending roughly 15 miles to the east, 15 to the west and 10 miles to the north and south. It stretched in the east to below the escarpment whence came bamboo and

[1] An average weekly amount of custom reckoned over several weeks was 10*s.* in cash, and a quantity of bananas, sugar-cane, vegetables and cereals amounting to two sackfuls and sometimes three. The cash was levied on meat, 1*s.* 9*d.* per cow, 1*s.* 6*d.* per goat or pig; and on mats, baskets, etc. at roughly 1*d.* in the 1*s.*

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

443 438 sugar cane, and fish from the lake. From the west came sellers of foodstuffs, mainly maize and vegetables, from the villages in Portuguese territory. Whether by accident or design the sellers took up their stands in the market-place on the side to which they first came. Thus on the east side were the fish-sellers, who had carried their fish up the two escarpments from the lake during the night. Near them were the sellers of bamboo and bark-rope, reed and raffia mats, baskets of all kinds, wooden spoons and hoe handles. The vegetable sellers mostly from Portuguese villages were on the western edge of the market. In the centre under some trees were the butchers selling meat and cutting up the cattle, pigs and goats which they had killed in the early morning. Pottery was in another section, thread for bead-work and grass hats and bangles in another. On the edge of the market site were the Indian stores where, on market days, people with cash in hand from their sales bought cloth and had it made up by the tailors sitting with their sewing machines on the verandahs of the stores.

The Paramount's early life and marriage

643 The officials surrounding the Paramount in the central kingdom were aware that he had begun his rule under difficulties owing to the death of his father. Two texts on this follow, the first by the *induna* of the royal village, Kalilombe Mbewe, and the second by Ishmael Mwale the treasurer of the Paramount, neither of them members of trans-Zambesi clans, but both imbued with Ngoni sentiments and sense of values and devoted to the royal clan.[1] The first text emphasizes the action taken by the two big *izinduna* of the Paramount to hide and protect the young heir to the Paramountcy, and to look after the wives of the big house.

¶ Formerly we were on Domwe, and when we left there, we built the first village here and its name was Lizulu. When Gomani I was taken by the Europeans his *izinduna* Cakumbira Ndau and Mambeyu Moyo were here at Lizulu. When Gomani I was taken, his son Phillip Gomani was a young child. He stayed with Cakumbira Ndau, so did the big wives of Gomani I. Other wives of Gomani I went to their own families. Cakumbira took with him from Domwe his own cattle and those of the Paramount. When Gomani I was killed the Europeans did not ask about the child who would enter his place. Later when the people were accustomed to the Europeans, the Europeans asked: 'Who is the child who should enter his place?' And the senior men brought him out from hiding and said 'This is he.' The senior men revealed this because they knew that the war had finished and that he could not be killed.

The text by the treasurer takes up the story from the times when the existence of the heir to the Paramount was made known, and covers

[1] The fathers of both these men had been taken by the Ngoni from near the Kirk Range, and trained as warriors in Songea before returning to Nyasaland to the royal village on Domwe mountain.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
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Mpezeni
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N 635 [797] [743] N [438]

time controlled from a mission station just inside Nyasaland, so that many people crossed to attend religious services and receive instruction. From Mpezeni's own county it is easier to get to the hospital at Fort Manning than to the one at Fort Jameson, so that people wanting European medicine tend to go to Nyasaland for treatment rather than to Fort Jameson. Nyasalanders are for their part attracted into Northern Rhodesia by the market for foodstuffs among the urban population, White and Black, of Fort Jameson and by the greater variety of goods on sale there.

Other Ngoni Groups

N 101 173

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are conscious of their links with the other groups of Ngoni scattered over Central Africa, and of their similarity with the Ndebele and the Swazi and Zulu. The Paramount Chief is sometimes praised by the recital in the Ngoni language of the past exploits of the Ngoni, how they crossed the Zambezi, and how they conquered one tribe after another. On one occasion I heard someone who cannot speak Ngoni praise the Paramount by repeating, in Ndebele, which is similar to Ngoni, a praise of Mzilikazi[1] which he had learnt by rote. This oration was accepted without comment by the Paramount. Lancaster has recorded a legend that Lobengula[2] fled to Mpezeni after the second Matebele War, and that he died in the country.[3] Some years after his installation Mpezeni II was visited by a delegation from Mombera, chief of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland, which, it is said, came to ratify Mpezeni's position as Chief of the Fort Jameson section of the Ngoni. An important headman in Mpezeni's county, who bears the same name as Chief Chiwere of the Ngoni of Dowa District, still claims from time to time that because his namesake and alleged relative is a chief, he too ought to be a chief.

Nsenga and Yao

N M 648 [197]

The Ngoni are on more friendly terms with the Nsenga of Petauke District than with the other matrilineal tribes of the region. Some of the kinship ties that were formed as a result of intermarriage between the two tribes in the 1870's can still be traced, and their languages are similar. Mpezeni III went in 1944 with his first lieutenant and twenty-five followers to visit the Nsenga Chief Manjawanthu, and he is expected to return the invitation.

[1] The first Ndebele king. [2] Son of Mzilikazi, defeated by the Whites.
[3] Lancaster, p. 83. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, and Posselt, *Upengula the Scatterer*, pp. 112–24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

2. *Portugal or Britain*

175 Several European powers were interested in the country into which the Ngoni moved in the 1870s. France and Germany both had a general interest in central Africa, and although their areas of greatest activity were elsewhere, they did not leave the country round Mpezeni entirely alone. The French explorer Giraud travelled through what is now the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia and down the Shire Valley in 1883-5, and his compatriot Foà was in the region between Mpezeni and the Zambezi at various times between 1891 and 1897. The White Fathers, a Catholic order at that time recruited largely in France, began work in Bemba country to the north of Mpezeni, and on the Zambezi to the south, during the 1890s. In 1892 Major von Wissmann travelled up the Shire Valley on his way to consolidate the German interest in south-western Tanganyika.

The fate of the plateau bounded by the Luangwa, Zambezi and Shire valleys, with its healthy climate, good pastures, and alleged deposits of gold was, however, the particular concern not of France or Germany, but of Portugal and Britain. The Portuguese settlements on the east coast of Africa guarding the long route to India had been founded in the sixteenth century. The Portuguese soon discovered, or were shown by the Arabs who had been there before them, the Missale gold-mines some forty miles south of present-day Ngoniland. These mines could not compare with the richer treasures discovered south of the Zambezi but they were worth exploiting and there was always the prospect of further discoveries in the vicinity. However in the middle of the eighteenth century the Jesuits, who had been the most penetrating of the Portuguese explorers, were expelled from all Portuguese possessions, and interest in the region lapsed. At the end of the century the quest began for a route to link the Portuguese settlements on the east and west coasts. Pereira and Lacerda passed through Missale in 1796 and 1798 on their visits to the Lunda chief Kazembe and similar routes were followed by Baptista and Jose in 1811, by Monteiro and Gamitto in 1831 and by Silva Porto in 1854. These [439] travellers were interested mainly in ivory and minerals and in securing unmolested passage for their caravans from coast to coast. Although the Portuguese were anxious to keep Britain out of central Africa, the only attempt they made to colonize this portion of the interior was at a short-lived military post, north of Mpezeni's future country in the Luangwa Valley, occupied from 1827 to 1829 and then abandoned.[4]

[4] Poole, 'Portuguese settlement', p. 164. See Map B.

[Text continues on page 68]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 Livingstone was the first Briton to reach this area. In 1866 he passed through what was to become Mpezeni's country,[5] and in his journals he makes frequent references to Ngoni raids. Unfortunately his carriers would not take him to Ngoni villages and all he saw of Ngoni activity were burnt-out huts and dead bodies killed in battle. The accounts of his journeys stimulated British interest in the region round Lake Nyasa, a centre for the slave trade, and led to the arrival there of missionaries and settlers. In 1874 the [797] Livingstonia Mission was founded and in 1883 a British consul was first appointed to the Shire Highlands.[6]

Mpezeni's country lay some distance from the main centres of British and Portuguese activity, but was not without importance. Apart from Missale, it was thought that there were other gold deposits to be found in the area. In contrast with their harried neighbours, [132] the prosperous Ngoni with their herds of cattle attracted travellers while the pleasant climate of the plateau, compared with the hot valleys of Luangwa, Zambezi, and Nyasa, made it suitable for European colonization. Yet the Ngoni army was formidable, and had to be neutralized in some way if other settlements were to be safe. Mpezeni's country flanked several trade routes of importance from the Zambezi and Lake Nyasa inland to the sources of slaves [439] and ivory. For these various reasons Mpezeni's country attracted the attention of traders and governments, those interested in 175 benefiting by the slave trade as well as those seeking to end it. In 648 addition towards the end of the century when it became clear that Africa was to be completely divided between the Powers, any territory, however inhospitable, that had not already been claimed attracted the attention of treaty-making explorers.

The first move towards incorporating the Fort Jameson Ngoni in a colonial empire was made by the Portuguese who had been stimulated by the increasing British interest in Nyasaland. In November 1888 the Governor-General of Moçambique instructed Wiese, a German[7] trader who had already made contact with Mpezeni, to lead an expedition to him. According to Johnston, Wiese and an associate were offered £2,000 to secure Mpezeni's submission to Portugal.[8] Wiese was well received and distributed flags to Mpezeni and his sons. The Portuguese regarded the

[5] *Last Journals*, i, p. 150.

[6] Johnston, *British Central Africa*, pp. 55-69.

[7] In *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, p. 683, the Portuguese Foreign Minister describes Wiese as a Dutchman. This appears to be incorrect in the light of Wiese's contacts with the German Legation in Lisbon.

[8] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 235; 49, p. 13. (To save space, all public records will be identified by a serial number printed **bold face**, taken from the first column of the Bibliography, List C.)

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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guese, Mpezeni refused to see Sharpe, while according to Johnston Sharpe had used up his stock of presents before reaching Mpezeni and hence did not attempt to negotiate with him. Sharpe found Wiese at Mpezeni's with a Portuguese officer and on 11 December 1889 witnessed the formal presentation of a Portuguese flag to one of Nsingu's lieutenants, though, 'for reasons of correctness', he was not asked to sign the document officially recording the incident.[15]

Although Wiese was leading the Portuguese party, he spoke bitterly to Sharpe of the way in which the Portuguese had treated him and indicated to him and in a letter to Johnston that he might consider working in the British interest. Johnston replied in January 1890 with a letter of 'a non-compromising but vaguely reassuring character'.[16]

In March 1890 Sharpe began another journey to Mpezeni, this time with instructions from Johnston to make a treaty with Mpezeni and to 'buy' Wiese with an offer of up to £1,000 a year for three years. He arrived at Mpezeni's village on 24 March, only to find that Wiese had left for Tete over a month earlier, leaving behind him the Portuguese officer. Mpezeni kept Sharpe waiting for an interview until 4 April, and although friendly he refused to discuss a treaty or accept a British flag. Sharpe left a letter for Wiese, offering him £300 a year for his services, and departed for the Luangwa Valley. After an unprofitable trip he returned to Mpezeni's on 21 May, to find Wiese and the Portuguese officer on the point of leaving for a trading-trip to Kasungu. Wiese rejected Sharpe's offer of £300 a year and Sharpe was forced to return to Nyasa with both the principal aims of his expedition unaccomplished. He had, however, made a few treaties with non-Ngoni chiefs.[17] Thomson, another explorer who, like Sharpe, was employed by Rhodes's British South Africa Company, arrived in Ngoni country in December 1890 after a successful trip to the Lala. Thomson was greeted with hostility, sheltered with Wiese, and fled during the night.[18]

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Johnston played a dual role in Nyasaland, for besides representing the British Foreign Office he was also responsible for the interests of Rhodes and the British South Africa Company, from

[15] 15, fo. 26-7; 16, fo. 144; *Boletim Official de Moçambique*, 21 (24 May 1890), p. 239.

[16] Wiese may have offered his services to Johnston before Sharpe arrived at Mpezeni's. cf. 49; 158, p. 62; 16, fo. 145-6.

[17] 9, fo. 30; 16, fo. 146; 12, fo. 274-95; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyassa', pp. 745, 749; Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 89; Wiese, 'Expedição', xi, pp. 412-31, 464-80.

[18] Thomson, 'Lake Bangweolo', p. 114; Wiese, 'Expedição', xi, p. 588.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

whom he received a subsidy. When that company was granted its first charter on 29 October 1889, its sphere of operations was restricted to south of the Zambezi. When Johnston began work north of the river the future division of responsibility between the Foreign Office and the B.S.A. Company was uncertain. On 21 September 1889 Buchanan, on Johnston's instructions, proclaimed a British Protectorate over the region round the Shire Highlands, and on 14 May 1891 this was superseded by the proclamation of a British Protectorate over approximately the whole of present-day Nyasaland. In April 1891 the Foreign Office sanctioned the extension of the B.S.A. Company's operations to the north of the Zambezi within the British sphere of influence, excluding Nyasaland. It was, however, still uncertain whether or not the administration of the Protectorate was to remain permanently separate from that of the B.S.A. Company's territory to the west. A complicated story of financial negotiations and of a quarrel between Johnston and Rhodes ended in an agreement whereby after 30 June 1895 all administrative connexion between the two territories ceased.[19]

The western boundary of the Protectorate proclaimed in 1891 was based on that laid down for the Conventional Basin of the Congo[20] at the Berlin West African Conference in 1885. This line, the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, passed through the eastern portion of Mpezeni's country, leaving the greater portion of Ngoniland outside the Protectorate. The dividing line between the British and Portuguese spheres of influence was not finally determined until the Anglo-Portuguese agreement of 11 June 1891. Despite the Portuguese flags and Wiese's affirmations of friendship, the whole of Mpezeni's country was placed by this agreement in the British and not in the Portuguese sphere, as it had also been in the unratified convention of 20 August 1890.[21] As a consequence, then, of the proclamation of the Nyasaland Protectorate, the extension northwards of the B.S.A. Company's sphere of activity, and the Anglo-Portuguese agreement, Mpezeni's country was divided between the Protectorate and the B.S.A. Company's territory. In consequence of the agreement, or because Mpezeni was tired of them, Wiese and the Portuguese expedition left Ngoniland.

Despite this formal division Mpezeni had as yet, as Johnston was to point out six years later, 'ceded nothing to anybody'.[22] On

[19] *State papers*, lxxxi, p. 1009, No. 243; *London Gazette*, 15 May 1891 and 24 February 1893; *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 634-40; *A & P*, 1895, lxxi, pp. 565-8; Johnston, *Story of my life*, p. 497.
[20] *A & P*, 1884-5, lv, p. 439.
[21] *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, pp. 589, 625; *A & P*, 1890-1, xcvi, p. 420.
[22] 158, p. 63. cf. 132, p. 59.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These events made the inclusion of Mpezeni's country in the British colonial empire highly likely. The way in which this would come about was still not obvious, nor had it yet been decided who should control the economic resources of the area. It was the struggle for economic control which in the end decided the political issue. Here again Wiese played a prominent part. 175 648

3. *Concession hunters*

From 1885, if not before, Wiese lived in Ngoni country and among the neighbouring tribes as a trader.[27] His wife, who lived with him part of the time in Mpezeni's country, was Doña Romana, a black Portuguese lady who owned some hundreds of slaves. Wiese's commercial objectives can be inferred from the conversation he had with Sharpe on this matter in May 1890, when he mentioned that he employed over two hundred and fifty of his wife's slaves as elephant-hunters, and that he was planning to employ two thousand men in trading expeditions to the Luapula, Garanganze and other distant places. He was also at that time planning to make war on a certain Cewa chief.[28] 175 439

According to Wiese's own account, he gained a number of concessions from chiefs and he was granted in 1887 various mining rights by the Portuguese Government in the territory to the south of Mpezeni. On 15 November 1886 Mpezeni orally granted him a concession for ninety-nine years and, Wiese claimed, this agreement was ratified in writing on 14 April 1891. Mpezeni, described as 'Paramount Chief of the Angoni (Zulus) and Sovereign Ruler over Maravia and Western Nyassaland', granted Wiese a concession in 'one part' of his country some 6,700 square miles in extent and reaching to within twelve miles of the Zambezi near Chicoa. In return for exclusive mineral, timber, water, railway and other rights, Wiese agreed to pay Mpezeni £200 annually and 1 per cent of his profits. Mpezeni reserved the rights of sovereignty over his people and the land, water and timber necessary to his subjects were guaranteed.[29] [31]

A few months before this written concession was drawn up, Bowler and Rankin, representing the comprehensively named Upper and Lower Zambezi Navigation, Exploration, Trading, Land-acquiring and Colonization Company, Limited, arrived in

[27] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86, says that Wiese visited Mpezeni in 1881. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 71, in another tentative chronology, follows him, although there is no mention of this visit in the body of Poole's book. Wiese himself appears not to mention any date earlier than 1885. See 40.

[28] 67, fo. 139; 22, fo. 285.

[29] 31, pp. 17-18.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 the country.[30] They joined Wiese in collecting concessions from
439 the surrounding chiefs.[31]

A legal procedure for registering and recognizing concessions
175 within the British sphere was established by Johnston on 18 July
439 1891.[32] Without recognition by Johnston's Land Court, a con-
648 cession did not of itself establish a clear right to title under British law. The issue of this proclamation may have been prompted by Wiese's actions. In June, shortly before it was issued, Wiese was travelling to Europe with his concessions. He met Johnston at Quilimane and asked him to recognize them.[33] Johnston refused to do this. He particularly objected to the concession from Mpezeni, not only for its monopolies but also because it had not been signed by Mpezeni but only by a Portuguese allegedly acting on the chief's behalf, and because Mpezeni did not control the large area mentioned in the concession. Such land as he did control he had obtained only by dispossessing the earlier inhabitants. Johnston regarded Wiese as a slave trader who forced chiefs to make their mark on documents without explaining what the documents meant and without making any payment for the concessions obtained. He maintained that Mpezeni had never granted any rights to Wiese and wrote of the concession: 'I always refused to recognize his preposterous document.' He complained that Wiese tried to 'bounce the British Government into recognition of his (wholly unfounded) claims'. Johnston later argued that in order to conclude eight of his other treaties, Wiese must have travelled five hundred miles between 20 December and 23 January, an improbable occurrence.[34] Acting on this policy Johnston insisted, at Quilimane, that he must examine Wiese's concessions before he could pronounce on them. Wiese made a declaration before Johnston's deputy describing the concessions and went on his way to Europe, he maintaining he had thereby registered his concessions and Johnston maintaining he had not.[35]

Wiese's agents in London began corresponding with the Foreign Office in December 1891 pressing for the recognition of his

[30] Hole, *Making of Rhodesia*, p. 241; 17, fo. 390-1.

[31] Bradley, 'Salute to adventurers', p. 54, says Wiese bought concessions from Bowler and Rankin.

[32] 36; 58, fo. 420.

[33] 40, p. 33; 49, p. 14; 67, fo. 140; 81, fo. 144-5.

[34] 49; 81, fo. 148.

[35] There is some uncertainty about the date on which Wiese made his statement at Quilimane. Johnston refers to a declaration sworn to by Wiese before the Acting Vice-Consul on 7 June 1891. Bowler's letter to the Foreign Office was supported by a copy of a receipt for a fee paid for witnessing a signature, dated 27 June. cf. 35; 48, p. 15; 71.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

concessions. In January 1892 Wiese offered his services to Johnston as an agent, and in March repeated the offer. He seems to have mentioned the possibility of his leading the Ngoni in battle on behalf of the Administration. Johnston rejected these offers contemptuously along with similar offers made by Bowler, saying that he wanted Bowler and Wiese to remain in Europe. He also remained adamant in his refusal to recognize Wiese's concessions, although the Foreign Office itself continued to prevaricate on this issue.[36]

In 1891 or 1892 Wiese visited Lisbon in an effort to collect the £2,000 owing to him for his services to the Portuguese during 1888 and the following years. It was, however, in London that he tried to obtain financial backing so that he could begin to exploit his concessions, with or without recognition from Johnston. According to Johnston, Wiese offered his concessions to the Central African and Zoutpansberg Exploration Company, with which the naval explorer Cameron was connected. In August 1892 Wiese told Johnston that he was no longer personally interested in the fate of the concessions. According to a Foreign Office minute, Wiese offered the concessions to the B.S.A. Company for a small sum in January 1893. The search for financial support ended on 18 February 1893 when the Mozambique Gold Land and Concessions Company Limited was incorporated in London to operate Wiese's concessions, for which they paid him £1,500.[37]

The Mozambique Company approached the Foreign Office and were instructed first to register their concessions in Nyasaland. According to Johnston, early in 1893 Bowler sent copies of the concessions to Johnston, who replied that he must produce the originals or certified copies. In April and May 1893 there was an exchange of letters between Wiese and Johnston about the recognition of the concessions, and in the autumn Bowler wrote again on the matter. However, according to Johnston, between June and October 1891 the African Lakes and British South Africa companies had placed claims before his Land Court for recognition in the prescribed manner and no counter-claims were registered there.[38] Therefore, on 25 September 1893 Johnston granted a certificate of claim to the B.S.A. Company, in its commercial capacity, entitling them to exercise mining and other rights throughout the greater part of what was to become North-Eastern Rhodesia and including the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland.

[36] 39; 42; 46, fo. 7; 47, fo. 36; 48; 49; 51; 52; 64, fo. 85-6.

[37] 67, fo. 140; 81, fo. 145; 64, fo. 89 (minute); 230, p. 69; *Maugham report*, p. 6.

[38] 80; 81, fo. 144, 146; 82.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 The B.S.A. Company produced in its support treaties made by
439 Sharpe and Stevenson with six chiefs, Mpezeni not among them.
648 Johnston's argument for including Mpezeni's country within the area of the grant appears to have been that the land had been wrested by Mpezeni from the treaty-making chiefs. None of the six chiefs mentioned by name in the certificate made any claim in the treaties to rights in Mpezeni's country, and indeed only one of them, Muliro, a minor Nsenga-Ambo chief, bordered on Mpezeni.

However Johnston also refers in the certificate of claim to 'similar privileges obtained through treaties concluded by the African Lakes Company and transferred by them to the British South Africa Company (the said treaties have received separate confirmation at my hands)'. These additional treaties are not specified in the certificate but later Johnston wrote, in connexion with the North Charterland Concession granted by the B.S.A. Company, that 'the B.S.A. Company would base its right to grant this concession on its recognized treaties with Undi, Mwasi Kazungu and ... (I forget the names), the indigenous and partially dispossessed chiefs of Mpezeni's country'. Sharpe had made a treaty with Undi
131 on 15 April 1891, in which the northern boundary of Undi's
175 territory was said to be the parallel of latitude 14° S. or thereabouts,
439 thus cutting into the southern fringe of the no-man's-land round
648 Mpezeni. Mwase made two treaties, one on 17 September 1885 with Stevenson as agent of the African Lakes Company and another on 30 November 1889 with the British Crown. In the earlier treaty the extent of Mwase's country is not stated but when the benefits of this treaty were transferred to the B.S.A. Company in 1893, Mwase's country was said to be bounded on the west by the water-parting between the Luangwa and Zambezi-Nyasa basins and on the south by the Anglo-Portuguese border. This water-parting does not meet the Anglo-Portuguese frontier until as far west as about 31° 15′ E., in what is now Petauke District, and in Ngoniland it runs approximately east-west on latitude 13° 49′ S. In the area controlled by Mpezeni, Mwase's territory, as defined in the transfer agreement, included the whole portion claimed by Undi in 1891 and in addition a strip of land to the north of Undi's claim, forming the southern margin of the Ngoni settled area. The main concentration of Ngoni villages, in the valleys of the Lutem-
175 bwe, Lunthwele and Msipazi rivers, lay just north of the territory
439 claimed for Mwase. Thus the grant of rights to the B.S.A. Company
648 in Mpezeni's country appears to have been based for the most part on treaties made with chiefs whose names Johnston forgot,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and possibly also on the 1889 treaty between Mwase and the British Crown.[39]

Johnston granted a second certificate of claim, completed on 28 September 1893, to the African Lakes and B.S.A. companies jointly, based on the 1891 treaty with Undi and on another made a week later with a neighbouring chief. The area mentioned in this certificate conforms to that laid down in the treaty.[40]

Therefore when Warton arrived in Nyasaland in 1894 as emissary of the Mozambique Company and tried to secure recognition of Wiese's concessions, he found that the area claimed by his company had already been granted to its rivals. He succeeded in registering the concessions but not in gaining recognition of their validity.

Johnston registered, but did not recognize, the Wiese concessions. On the other hand the concessions acquired by the B.S.A. Company, though registered and recognized by Johnston, were not yet confirmed by the Foreign Office. Johnston's conduct of the affair did not meet with approval from his superiors at home, who thought that Warton had been unfairly treated.[41] One consideration influencing the Foreign Office may have been Wiese's German nationality. There had been an Anglo-German Agreement in 1891[42] defining the spheres of influence of these two countries in central Africa, but Maugham suggests that the Foreign Office thought that Wiese, after offering his services to Portugal and Britain, might now turn to Germany who could then use his concessions as the basis of a claim to the territory. At the same time the Foreign Office thought it might be unwise to declare the concessions invalid, since they might sometime be acquired by the B.S.A. Company and be used to strengthen its hand. Wiese, who according to Johnston had run away from Germany to evade conscription, had nevertheless received the support of the German Minister in Lisbon in securing rights to extensive estates in Portuguese East Africa in lieu of the £2,000 he had been promised originally by the Portuguese Government. Johnston suspected Wiese of trying to introduce German methods on his estates and wrote that it would be 'awkward' if the land between Nyasaland and the coast were 'in the hands of a stronger Power than Portugal and one

[39] 73; 75, fo. 180-1; 76; 7, fo. 33; 158, p. 61. I am much indebted to Sir Dougal Malcolm and the British South Africa Company for permission to cite the 1885 treaty and the transfer agreement of 1893. Unfortunately I have been unable to trace the 1889 treaty.

[40] 74.

[41] 85.

[42] *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 24-31.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 far less likely to yield its pretensions'. These considerations found
439 expression in the agreement of 24 November 1894, allowing the
648 B.S.A. Company to take over from Johnston the administration of its sphere north of the Zambezi. The Foreign Office stipulated that sanction for the treaties made by the B.S.A. Company's agents was to be without prejudice to Wiese's possible claims.[43]

The Mozambique Company opened negotiations with the B.S.A. Company with these registered but unrecognized concessions as their asset. Agreement was reached on 8 May 1895. In return for any rights they might have in the British sphere under Wiese's concessions, and conditional on their raising certain capital, the Mozambique Company were granted mineral and land rights in a block of land ten thousand square miles in extent within the B.S.A. Company's territory. The rights of Natives were to be respected. Any rights the Mozambique Company might have in Portuguese territory were not to be exercised. A new company, the North Charterland Exploration Company, in which the B.S.A. Company had an interest, was formed to operate the grant of land. Thus the North Charterland Concession came into being. The whole of Mpezeni's country, except for that portion included in the Nyasaland Protectorate, came within the Concession.[44]

Some thirty-five years later, Mr. Justice Maugham was to rule that this grant to the Mozambique Company could only have been potential, not actual, since at that time the B.S.A. Company did not yet possess the mineral and other rights they were making over. At the time this consideration carried no weight. In April 1895, even before agreement with the B.S.A. Company had been concluded, the Mozambique Company's pioneer party reached Tete. They arrived in Ngoniland in the following year.[45]

4. *European consolidation*

175 In Nyasaland fighting continued sporadically in an attempt to
439 end the slave trade. From 1891 onwards Johnston's troops fought
567 a series of engagements with Arabs, Yao and southern Ngoni.
648 Mpezeni was regarded not only as a robber with whom no treaties
721 were necessary but also as a partner in the slave trade, for one of the main routes used by Arabs and their African colleagues ran near Mpezeni's country.[46] All Ngoni raids were interpreted by the Nyasaland Administration as raids for slaves and Sharpe, describing his second visit to Mpezeni, wrote that the chief did a brisk

[43] 67, fo. 141-2; 95, p. 48.
[44] 99; 100.
[45] *Maugham report*, pp. 6-7.
[46] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 3 (1 February 1896), p. 2, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

trade in slaves, selling them to the Arabs.[47] Wiese's evidence on this point is contradictory. In 1881 he wrote that Arab caravans continually visited Mpezeni and that most of the raids were to capture slaves for sale to the Arabs. In 1900, he wrote in one place that some captives were sold to the Arabs and in another that Mpezeni scarcely knew of the permanent slave hunters and that the sole object of major raids was to gain captives to cultivate the Ngoni fields.[48] Few tales of the Arabs and no nicknames have survived to the present time among the Ngoni, and it is probable that Sharpe was overestimating the importance to Mpezeni of the external slave trade. Although Livingstone knew it, Wiese and Kerr are the only contemporary writers who were aware that captives were assimilated,[49] for other writers do not distinguish between captives and slaves. Whether or not the raids were made for Ngoni recruits or for slaves to be sold to the Arabs, it is clear that they were often made into Nyasaland and thus challenged the Administration there. Towards the end of 1895 the Collector at Kotakota opened a campaign against Mwase Kasungu, the Cewa chief whose territory lay between Mpezeni and the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. It is alleged that Mpezeni offered to help Mwase in this campaign, but it seems that no help arrived. On 31 December 1895 the fortified village of Kasungu was captured and Chabisa, a chief who had been helping Mwase, fled to Mpezeni.[51]

Chabisa may have been the moving spirit behind the delegation which early in 1896 went from Mpezeni to the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland calling on them to rise with him and Chabisa against the British.[52] The Livingstonia Mission had already been working among the northern Ngoni for eighteen years, and the delegation found little support.

As well as Chabisa, other refugees arrived from the south, after the First Matabele War of 1893 in Southern Rhodesia. According to some accounts the Ndebele Paramount Chief, Lobengula, was with them, only to die a few months later.[53]

[47] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 745. cf. Perham, *Ten Africans*, p. 96.
[48] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478 and 'Geschichte', pp. 188 and 197.
[49] Livingstone, *Narrative*, p. 385; Kerr, 'Upper Zambesi', p. 396.
[51] Swann, the Collector, in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1; and *A & P*, 1896, lviii, pp. 417, 418, describes Chabisa and Mwase as Ngoni and Zulu chiefs. Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168, say Mwase and Chabisa were brothers. It is unlikely that either was Ngoni. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 144, calls Mwase a Cewa but says he had many Ngoni headmen under him, thereby amending his earlier statements that Mwase and Undi were Ngoni. See 10, fo. 129; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 412. [52] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 292.
[53] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2; Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 83; Posselt, *Upengula*, pp. 112-24; 98; 121, fo. 193.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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Meanwhile there was a lull in European activity in Mpezeni's country itself. After Wiese and the Portuguese officer left in mid-1891 a Portuguese trader remained behind. He was subsequently killed, either by accident or on Mpezeni's instructions.[54] After sending envoys to Johnston on Lake Nyasa in January 1890 and reporting the death of the Portuguese trader, Mpezeni seems not to have made any attempts to get in touch with Europeans for some years. Johnston sent an influential Swahili headman to visit Mpezeni in 1891, but Mpezeni threatened to behead the messenger if he entered Ngoniland, and he turned back before reaching the country.[55] In 1892 Ngoni patrols sweeping to the south in Undi's country came in touch with a French explorer living there and some of them were killed by his men. In 1895 they made contact with him again and he visited a senior lieutenant of segment 4.[56]

But the Frenchman was a bird of passage. It was not until 5 December 1895 that prospectors arrived with the intention of remaining in the country. They represented the Rhodesia Concessions Company and began to build Fort Partridge at Mafuta's, only twenty miles to the north of Mpezeni.[57] In the face of Johnston's opposition they had been allowed to bring Maxim guns with them. Despite the threat to Mpezeni implicit in this, they were at first received hospitably. Later the Ngoni became less friendly towards them, due, they thought, to the arrival of Chabisa and the Ndebele refugees and also because of the news reaching Mpezeni of increasing British activity in Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia. In May 1896 the prospectors thought that they might all be massacred and appealed for help to Kotakota. Troops were moved up from the Lake to Kasungu but, as we have mentioned above, they withdrew when it was found that the prospectors were in no danger. Nevertheless the prospectors left Ngoniland on 13 June, not for fear of Mpezeni but because the North Charterland complained that they were poaching on its preserves.[58] Thus the control of Europeans in his country had already passed out of Mpezeni's hands.

There were a number of transient visitors to Mpezeni in 1896,[59] and the B.S.A. Company's representative paid a visit, but

[54] 67, fo. 140.

[55] 81, fo. 147-8.

[56] Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, p. 281, and *Big game*, pp. 84, 105. In another account, 'Traversée de l'Afrique', p. 113, Foà says he visited the lieutenant in 1892.

[57] See Map C.

[58] 97; 101, fo. 483; 102, fo. 479; 113, fo. 41; 115, fo. 281; 125; 126; 148a, fo. 141; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2, and iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 2; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 12.

[59] McClonnie, Smith and Fraser, reported in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 1, and iii, 13 (1 July 1896), p. 2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most serious intrusion was from the direction of Tete. After his return to Africa in 1892, Wiese had occupied himself with his newly won estates in the Zambezi Valley, where his activities attracted the unfavourable attention of Johnston. His interests in Mpezeni's country took second place for a while, despite his letter to Johnston about them on 14 May 1893. It appears that when the Mozambique Company's party arrived at Tete in April 1895 they made contact with Wiese. Thereafter he was closely connected with the activities of the Mozambique Company and of its successor, the North Charterland. The exact course of events is not clear. Johnston reported on 24 March 1896 that Wiese had broken with the North Charterland, yet when Warton visited Mpezeni four months later as leader of the North Charterland delegation, Wiese was with him as interpreter.[60]

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At the beginning of 1896 representatives of the North Charterland first arrived in Ngoni country. After a short time, one of them was expelled by Mpezeni. On 5 July 1896 Warton with the main party established the North Charterland headquarters at a camp, later known as Fort Young, in the heart of Ngoniland adjacent to Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10.[61]

At first Mpezeni treated the North Charterland party kindly and provided them with carriers to bring up their loads from Tete.[62] According to the Foreign Office, whose sources of information I cannot trace, Mpezeni was friendly because Wiese emphasized that he was a German and offered himself and the expedition as a bulwark against British expansion. Warton, the ex-secretary of a cricket team and sometime lieutenant-colonel, posed, it was said, as Wiese's elder brother.[63] These allegations were denied by Warton and Wiese. They pointed out that the first member of the North Charterland party to enter Ngoniland had been an Englishman and maintained that Mpezeni was too intelligent not to recognize for himself the difference between an Englishman and a German. Warton had been introduced by Wiese merely as *okullo-ango* [*mkulu iwangu*, my superior]. They maintained that the British flag had always been flown with the North Charterland's own flag.[64] Warton and Wiese's testimony conflicts with the Ngoni recollection

[60] *Maugham report*, p. 7; 221, fo. 192; 163; 164; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12*f*.

[61] 221, fo. 192; 163; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 71. Deare, who never mentions Warton or Wiese by name, claims to have been first to build the fort. Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.

[62] Forbes in *C.A.P.*, 15 November 1896; Warton in *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April; 148a, fo. 141.

[63] 160, p. 64; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 12; Read, 'Tradition', p. 478.

[64] 163; 164.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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439 of these events, as recorded by Read, and with the contemporary
648 account of Genthe. Genthe was a German traveller who always flew a British flag in central Africa. There was no flag at Warton's camp when he visited it in 1897 and the North Charterland asked him not to display his Union Jack. Whatever may really have happened, an explanation of the North Charterland's success by reference to its anti-British pose conflicts with the evidence of Mpezeni's missions of friendship to the Collector at Kotakota. Deare, one of the North Charterland party, gives the impression that the success of the expedition was due to his ability to speak Zulu, make the right presents, and diagnose the cause of illness in Mpezeni's cattle. This explanation seems just as likely.[65]

It seems probable that Mpezeni was prepared to be friendly with the British at a distance but did not want them on his doorstep. We have noted his deputation to Johnston in January 1890. Early in 1896 Mpezeni sent a mission to the Collector at Kotakota asking for a British flag. Surprisingly this overture seems not to have been followed up. Swann, the Collector, did, however, send twelve beasts as a present to Mpezeni who replied, after prompting from Swann, with a gift of ivory.[66] In September Mpezeni sent word to the Collector that he had punished his warriors who had attacked some B.S.A. Company's carriers. In October his envoys told the Collector that he did not allow raiding and that he was glad to hear of raiders being punished when they were caught, while in February 1897 he appealed through his messengers to the Administration for help in restraining his people from raiding inside Nyasaland.

Wiese accompanied Mpezeni's envoys on this last trip to Kotakota and according to a North Charterland account of their mission, Mpezeni then consented to the introduction of a British garrison in his territory.[67] Even towards Warringham, the B.S.A. Company's representative, he was friendly at first. In about June 1896 he exchanged presents with him and made many expressions of good will, though telling Warringham that he was not afraid to meet him in war if necessary.[68]

[65] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1; 165; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 20, 27 April, 4 May.

[66] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 427; Swann, *Slave hunters*, pp. 315-16.

[67] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 12 (15 June 1896), p. 1; iii, 18 (1 October 1896), p. 2; iii, 22 (1 December 1896), p. 3; iv, 4 (1 March 1897), p. 3; and iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1; 165.

[68] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 15 (1 August 1896), p. 3; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Friction*

On 14 May 1897 Mpezeni wrote to the Collector at Kotakota that he wished to move across the border into the Protectorate. He said, 'If you agree to my removing . . . I shall not raid anywhere.' He was prepared to pay tax if called upon to do so.[69] He may have been led to take this drastic step by his growing annoyance at the activities of Warton and the North Charterland party. In 1896 Warton had apparently enjoyed Mpezeni's approval but he soon began to displease him. Johnston, who had no high opinion of his fellow-men, described Warton as 'that not very capable or prudent man', and as 'not a bad man but not very trustworthy'. The North Charterland was a purely commercial company and Warton had no administrative powers. These were reserved under the charter to the B.S.A. Company and were exercised on its behalf by Johnston until 1 July 1895, when Forbes was appointed Administrator for the B.S.A. Company's sphere. As yet, however, in Johnston's view, the B.S.A. Company had no governing rights in Mpezeni's country, as neither Mpezeni, nor the chiefs he was held to have displaced, had ceded them.[70] Forbes's nearest representatives were Warringham and Middleton, who in March 1896 made a camp sixty miles to the north of Mpezeni in the country of Cinunda, a Cewa chief. Forbes visited Mpezeni in September 1896, but with no success.[71] Warton considered that in the absence of any action by the B.S.A. Company he must set up his own administration. He drew up elaborate plans for developing the country, calling for an armed police force and for a hut tax of 5*s*.[72] He believed, he said, that if Mpezeni were convinced that the North Charterland had sufficient force available, he would not resist them.[73] He may have been influenced in adopting this attitude by the remark he attributed to the chief that if he was seriously threatened by Europeans he would give way. This conflicts with Mpezeni's remark to Warringham that he was quite prepared to fight, which we have noted above. According to Johnston, Warton tried to force a flag on Mpezeni and to stop him raiding for slaves. Johnston seems not to have been impressed with the delegations to Kotakota and maintained that Mpezeni organized raids to spite Warton.[74]

[69] 167.

[70] 169, fo. 63; 171, fo. 161; 158, p. 63; *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 2, cols. 1 and 3; *A & P.*, 1896, lviii, p. 425.

[71] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 71; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 19 (15 October 1896), p. 2.

[72] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12-13.

[73] 122.

[74] 132, p. 59; 158, p. 62.

[Text continues on page 85]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

6. *Fighting*

The European travellers who came to Ngoniland did not come alone. They brought with them their own retinues of servants and carriers, usually not Ngoni, who took orders only from their own masters and over whose misdoings there was continual friction with the Ngoni.[75] Wiese had an armed guard of a hundred and twenty Makua, though later this was disbanded.[76] Mpezeni insisted that the so-called Fort Young should not have a stockade but only a low reed fence, presumably to prevent the North Charterland from putting themselves beyond the reach of his warriors.[77] On the other hand Warton and the North Charterland directors were insistent that their employees should be armed, sought permission from the Foreign Office to import arms through Nyasaland, and even threatened to withdraw if the B.S.A. Company did not make adequate arrangements for their protection. Johnston was firmly opposed to private armies and private wars, and the Foreign Office advocated that if the North Charterland was in a precarious position it should withdraw until an administration had been established. Eventually Johnston came round to the view that the B.S.A. Company was so committed in Southern Rhodesia that it could not provide the North Charterland with the protection it was entitled to, and that, therefore, the North Charterland had a reasonable claim to arms of its own. Accordingly in July 1896, he reluctantly approved the import of two Maxim guns 'for eventual use against Mpezeni'. These Maxims seem never to have arrived, but Deare successfully smuggled in thirty rifles.[78] Thus the stage was set for struggle by persuasion to give way to struggle by arms.

At the same time as they were thus altering the distribution of power within Ngoni country, the European intruders were developing external relations with other African groups which were incompatible with the raided-raiding relationship existing between them and the Ngoni. Wiese had trading-stations in other tribal areas,[79] and we have already noted his plans for building up a large trading business based on the labour of his wife's slaves. Genthe was friendly with Cewa and Kunda chiefs and on that account tried to represent their interests to Mpezeni after they had been raided.[80] Deare went to visit Cimwala and Undi, Cewa chiefs, in about January

[75] e.g. the affair of the stolen red blankets, described by Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[76] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.
[77] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[78] 122, pp. 57-8; 129-33; 139-42; 149; 155; 156.
[79] 42.
[80] *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), pp. 1-2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 1897 and some time later they came to visit him at Fort Young.
439 Deare gave them presents, presumably to gain their support for his
648 own enterprises, and makes no mention of their seeing Mpezeni.[82] Undi was the chief who claimed part of Mpezeni's country in his
[72] treaty with Sharpe and who in 1892, when Foà was living in his village, was raided by Ngoni several times a month.[83] Thus the Europeans in Ngoniland were affiliated not only to European groups in Nyasaland and in England out of direct touch with Mpezeni but also with African groups with whom he was in contact. There was an essential contradiction in the situation in which, for example, Deare was friendly with both Mpezeni and Undi while Mpezeni was at war with Undi. Everywhere, not only in Nyasaland, the traditional Ngoni pattern of external relations was becoming incompatible with their relations with Europeans in their midst.

The leader of the opposition to the North Charterland was Nsingu, Mpezeni's heir.[84] Nsingu was at first friendly towards Warton but later his attitude changed. Deare, before establishing the North Charterland camp in 1896, had passed through Nsingu's
[576] village, by Ngoni standards an insulting thing to do, and later quarrelled with him, finally flogging him.[85] Genthe, the German traveller, met Nsingu on a path and only grudgingly gave way to let him pass.[86] While Mpezeni remained comparatively friendly, Nsingu and the warriors whose interests he came to represent became increasingly hostile towards all Europeans. At the same time Mpezeni's control over his lieutenants seems not to have been effective, as evidenced by his apparent inability to prevent unauthorized raiding. Deare, according to his own account, enjoyed Mpezeni's favour and was almost forced to marry one of his daughters, and yet Mashanga, the second lieutenant of segment 10, twice tried to kill him.[86] According to Genthe, Mpezeni sent repeatedly for some army leaders who had been raiding and they failed to appear. This may have been deliberate procrastination arranged by Mpezeni, who treated him coldly, but Genthe thought that Mpezeni was only a dummy whose lieutenants did what they liked.[87] With Deare there seems to have been a genuine difference in attitude between Mashanga on the one side and on the other Mpezeni, supported by Mcekwani, the first lieutenant over

[82] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[83] Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, pp. 280-1.
[84] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[85] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[86] *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1.
[86] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. cf. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.
[87] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mashanga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tsonga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tsinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[88] Swann's report for 1896, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.

[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.

[90] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 24; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 23; cf. Young, *History*, p. 112, who reverses the role played by witch-finders in this incident.

[91] As reported by Warton in June 1896, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.

[92] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 493.

[93] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingu, Nzermane, and Madzimawi.

[94] 181, fo. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

171 643 between rival heirs even while the occupant of the throne was still alive. The brothers Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fought for the heirship while their father Mpande was still chief.[95]

175 643 648 669 The apparent ineffectiveness of Mpezeni's rule may well have been due to the increasing segmentation of the State as it expanded and to the growing differentiation of interest between one major segment and another. As it happened, there was no civil war and the tribe did not split, at least not in these terms. A cleavage in the royal house did reveal itself later, in 1903, after British rule had begun, when Madzimawi tried to take the name of Zwangendaba and was opposed by the supporters of Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu. But by then the form of the State was already determined by political forces other than the balanced opposition of segments. It is significant of the changed situation that Madzimawi did not send his armed followers against the new Mpezeni to challenge his succession. Instead he applied to the Native Commissioner for permission to take the name of his grandfather.[96]

Instead of dividing in civil war the whole country united against the European interlopers. Mpezeni alone tried to protect his friend Wiese. The effective cleavage was not between rival heirs but between the Paramount Chief and his people. He was now a man in his sixties who seemed not to want war and who perhaps benefited more than his people from the presents made by Europeans. The Ngoni people continued to believe and teach that fighting was the proper occupation for men. An attempt to exploit this cleavage was made in 1897 when Wiese, perhaps remembering his earlier attempt to serve Portugal and Britain simultaneously, offered his services to the B.S.A. Company. Forbes thought that if Wiese was given troops, he would be supported by Mpezeni, who would then be in a position to hold Nsingu and the Ngoni warriors in check.[97] But this plan was overtaken by events.

64 721 175 439 648 We saw in the previous chapter that the organization of the State was based on warfare, not only on war as an activity bringing prestige to successful warriors but also on war as a method of recruitment to the ever-widening segments of the residential system. Without warfare to eliminate the unsuccessful and to bring promotion and dependants to those who survived, the system could not keep going. It was in no sense inevitable that the Fort Jameson Ngoni and the British should fight; we have only to turn to the

[95] Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', pp. 35-6, and *Malinowski's Sociological Theories*, pp. 19-20; Krige, *Social system of the Zulu*, p. 19.
[96] See pp. 139 *f*.
[97] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Ngoni of northern Nyasaland for a similar situation which ended in the relatively peaceful incorporation of the tribe into the framework of colonial administration. But in northern Nyasaland there were no gold-mines, there were only missionaries. Johnston admits that the presence of mission stations among the northern Nyasaland Ngoni embarrassed him, and he refrained from using force against them in 1895 because this might have interfered with missionary activity.[99] In Mpezeni's country there were no mission stations and, as it happened, no gold-mines worth worrying about either; but by the time this fact had been realized it had ceased to be significant for the Ngoni. The North Charterland was formed in the belief that Mpezeni's country was rich. The capital of the company, not all paid up, was £1,000,000 and in 1897 it offered a reward of £10,000 to the discoverer of the first payable gold-field in its concession.[100] Given the fact that wealth of this magnitude was at stake, that there was gold to be found, and given the tactlessness of Warton and the intransigence of Nsingu, it was likely that war would come sooner or later.

As it was, the end of the Ngoni State as a sovereign political unit and its incorporation within a colonial empire came suddenly. Instead of the gradual formation of new groupings and alignments, the new system began as suddenly as the old system ended. We tend to think of the arrival of Europeans in the backwoods of Africa as a gradual process extending through many decades, and indeed even in Ngoniland there were Europeans for at least thirteen years prior to the war. Yet to old Ngoni of to-day the coming of the Europeans is a precisely defined event which took place on 19 January 1898.

The sequence of events which culminated in the fighting was as follows. In May 1897 some of Mpezeni's people began to build shelters and clear gardens at the headwaters of the River Bua, just inside the Nyasaland Protectorate. Sharpe, who had succeeded Johnston as Commissioner, was at first not greatly pleased, but instructed the Collector at Kotakota to make clear to Mpezeni that he would have to conform to the wishes of the Administration. A peaceful settlement between Mpezeni and the British seemed possible, and on second thoughts Sharpe was pleased to see, as he thought, Mpezeni removed from the sphere of influence of the North Charterland and the B.S.A. Company, who might have taken action against him and precipitated a crisis. However, the Collector was single-handed and it seems that he was unable to

[99] *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 437.
[100] *African Review*, xiii, 254 (2 October 1897), p. 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 visit Mpezeni to arrange a peaceful settlement with him.[101] In any case, although some movement of population may well have taken place, Mpezeni and the greater part of his people remained outside the Protectorate and in the Concession. In October 1897 Warringham, the B.S.A. Company's Collector at Cinunda's, moved in closer to Ngoniland and occupied the abandoned Fort Partridge, twenty miles north of Mpezeni. A month or so later, he appears to have found it prudent to move back again to Cinunda's.[102]

In December Manning, acting as Commissioner while Sharpe was on leave, was told by a North Charterland official at Chikwakwa, on the Shire, that Mpezeni's warriors were said to have murdered two Europeans on their way from Tete. This report was not confirmed. On 28 December[103] news arrived from Warringham that he at Cinunda's and Wiese at Fort Young were in danger of attack and could not communicate with each other. On 4 January there was news that Wiese was safe. According to his own account, Wiese was secretly warned by Mpezeni of the planned attack on him and had time 'on the next dark night' to build a small fortification into which he retired.[104] However, Wiese and his two European companions thought themselves still in danger and on 9 January wrote to the North Charterland general manager and to Warringham at Cinunda's asking for help and arms.[105]

Meanwhile a force of about seven hundred troops was organized 175 by Manning in Nyasaland. Warringham at Cinunda's was reinforced but on 9 January he reported that Ngoni raids were preventing him from collecting provisions. The next day there was news that Wiese, now with three other Europeans, was still surrounded at Fort Young and that the Ngoni had mustered fully forty thousand fighting men. The rear troops, whose progress

[101] 172, fo. 61; 172a, fo. 172; 173.

[102] Poole implies, but does not specifically mention, the move back to Cinunda's. In 1897 Genthe referred to the Cinunda camp as Fort Jameson and according to Poole this name was transferred to Fort Partridge when Warringham moved there. If so, the name must have been transferred back again with Warringham, for the Fort Jameson mentioned in reports of the fighting, both by Poole and in *B.C.A.G.* and dispatches, is the Cinunda camp. On the other hand, the new Fort Jameson established at Kapatamoyo's after the war is said to have been some twenty miles south of the earlier station of the same name. cf. *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 14-15, 19. The name Fort Young was also moved about, being at first applied to a camp near Missale. cf. *C.A.P.*, 15 November 1896, p. 5, and 1 December 1896, p. 3.

[103] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 15, says this message reached Kotakota on 21 December. This seems unlikely, for Manning states that he received the news at Zomba by wire from Kotakota on the morning of 28 December. cf. 174; 175, fo. 376; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1 (15 January 1898), p. 1.

[104] Wiese, 'Geschichte', pp. 156*ff*.

[105] 177-80.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

towards Ngoniland had been halted after the report of 4 January, resumed their march. 175 648

Four companies under Captain Brake reached Cinunda's on 17 January and left the next day for Fort Partridge, which was burnt by Ngoni as they arrived. On 19 January they moved on towards Fort Young. After some skirmishing they arrived there at 5.20 p.m. and relieved Wiese and his companions. Fort Young was only a few hundred yards outside Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10, and in the morning Brake found that this village and others near by, including Nsingu's, were full of warriors. Accordingly he decided not to withdraw to Fort Partridge as he had intended and sent his troops to clear the villages and burn them down. Later in the day there was organized fighting but in the face of fire from seven-pounders and Maxims the Ngoni lost heavily. The number of Ngoni warriors involved was estimated at from 4,000 to 5,000.[106] 726 439

On the next day, 21 January, Mpezeni sent messengers to Captain Brake with a present of a sheep. Brake regarded this poor present as an insult and insisted that he would negotiate only with important lieutenants. The next day, five messengers arrived with twelve head of cattle, but Brake regarded the messengers as slaves and said that if a lieutenant did not come the next day, he would deal with Cimpinga, headquarters of segment 15 where Mpezeni was living, as he had dealt with Nsingu's village. On 23 January a lieutenant and an important man arrived to see Brake and were interviewed by him the next day. They stated that Mpezeni was weary of the war brought on by the misconduct of his sons, and that he placed himself in Brake's hands to impose what conditions of peace he might choose. When Brake arrived at Cimpinga on 25 January he was met by two men who said that Mpezeni had gone into hiding outside the village. Brake told them to tell Mpezeni to come, otherwise the village would be destroyed. Brake waited until 5 p.m. and then burnt the village except for Mpezeni's own hut and those of his wives. The next day Lt. Sharp, with five men, succeeded in encountering Mpezeni, who had fifty men with him. Mpezeni asked for twenty minutes' grace while his wives got away and managed to slip away himself. 175 439 648 728

The main body of troops under Manning arrived at Cimpinga on 28 January. Manning sent out messengers to inform the Ngoni that unless Nsingu was handed over by the night of 30 January, troops would 'penetrate to every valley in Mpezeni's country and punish every village where opposition was encountered'. Manning

[106] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 475; Bradley, *Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 44-5.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 439 648 728

received defiant answers to his messages and on 31 January dispatched four columns each of about two hundred men to sweep the eastern portion of the country. On 3 February Nsingu was surrounded by troops and surrendered to them. Manning tried Nsingu by court martial for murder, instigating to murder and raiding in British territory. He was found guilty and shot on 4 February in the presence of all captured lieutenants. On 5 February another column visited the southern portion of the country. Manning left the country the next day. He recommended, possibly on Deare's advice, that Mpezeni should be allowed to return as chief.

Mpezeni voluntarily surrendered to Brake on 9 February and was told he would be allowed to resettle and that his people could reoccupy their villages. A great number of these must, however, have been burnt by the troops, for even on 23 January Brake had reported that in one district there was hardly a village or hut left standing. More villages had been destroyed by the columns sent out by Manning.[107]

After Mpezeni's surrender, Brake continued trying to capture other important people thought to have been supporters of Nsingu, but it seems no more villages were burnt. Some leaders went into hiding, other like Madzimawi fled west to Nsenga country, while Mlonyeni, head of segment 6, went to Mwambera's country in northern Nyasaland. Mpezeni had at first been instructed to live in a village near his former home at Cimpinga, but was later moved to an Ngoni village near Fort Manning, which Brake was then building just inside the Nyasaland border. After a year he was allowed to return to the centre of his country and was reinstated as chief. He died from natural causes soon afterwards on 21 September 1900.[108] The leaders who had fled drifted back and no further action was taken against them. Some people began to cultivate their gardens again and to make shelters.[109] Others, particularly Cewa who had been captured only a short while before 1898, left Ngoniland and either returned to their former tribal areas or moved on elsewhere.

175 439 648

Although fighting between Ngoni and British ceased, there was still some scrapping between the North Charterland and the

[107] For the preceding paragraphs. see 176, fo. 372-4; 181; 184-90; 193-5; 198; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1-3 (15 January, 5 and 26 February 1898), p. 1 of each issue; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 14-16, 71; Baxter, 'Angoni rebellion', p. 17 (map); Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

[108] *B.C.A.G.*, 118, vii, 9 (30 September 1900), p. 3. In view of this newspaper report the statement that Mpezeni died in October, made in *Reports on the Administration* 31 *March* 1902 and followed by Poole and others, must be wrong.

[109] 201; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 42; Stigand, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 126.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

B.S.A. Company's administration which now began to operate in Mpezeni's country itself. Each had its own African police force and on one occasion two people who had been taken prisoner by the Administration's police were released by a party of North Charterland police. The North Charterland police then arrested the Administration's police, and it was necessary for troops to come from Nyasaland to release them and arrest the North Charterland men.[110] By the end of 1899, however, conditions had become more settled. The B.S.A. Administration had acquired effective control over the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland. 175 439 648

The military operations in December 1897 and in 1898 were carried out during the wet season and in consequence there was much sickness among the troops. Although it was not the time of year which the Europeans would have chosen for a campaign, according to one of my informants Warringham had been advised by an Ngoni man whose support he had gained that he should arrange for the war to take place while all the warriors were away from the immediate vicinity of Fort Young attending the national first fruits ceremony at the headquarters of segment 4, the village of Zwangendaba's great wife. The descendants of this man are still regarded as traitors by other Ngoni. The first fruits ceremony was usually held about the new year, so that the war may in fact have followed immediately after the ceremony. This view is supported by the remark made by Harding, who arrived in Ngoniland a few months after the war was over. He said that the war 'arose over a highly strung official [presumably Warringham] mistaking an ordinary Native dance for an act of hostility towards the Administration'.[111] Whatever the truth in the matter, the first fruits ceremony would have been an appropriate time for Nsingu to call for an attack on the Whites. [796]

7. *Cattle*

It has been estimated that before the war there were about 20,000 head of cattle in Mpezeni's country.[112] During the fighting many were taken from Ngoni by Protectorate troops. These animals became the subject of much recrimination. Read states that half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot', while Poole states that a large portion of the 14,000 head captured were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners.[113] 231 648 727 439

[110] 223, fo. 368.
[111] Harding, *Far Bugles*, p. 82.
[112] 232, p. 69 has 24,000, while *Report on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19, has 15,000-20,000.
[113] Read, 'Tradition', p. 478; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231
727
648
439

According to Manning, in his first report on the matter dated 17 February 1898, nearly 12,000 head were captured. It seems clear that at the time Manning thought that the whole of this herd would be used for the benefit of the B.S.A. Company, for he wrote:

> 'I have informed the British South Africa Company that we shall require them to pay the actual expenses incurred by us on account of the campaign. I do not imagine the total cost to the British South Africa Company will be more than 2,000*l*. This will be covered ten times over by the value of the cattle captured by the expedition, so that the British South Africa Company will reap a handsome profit on the campaign.'[114]

There seems, however, to have been considerable discussion among Europeans in the region about the disposal of the cattle. Roberts, a surgeon who had been one of Wiese's companions at Fort Young, was dismissed from the North Charterland shortly after the war ended. Wiese also left the country after the war and lost his North Charterland post worth £900 a year. Manning suggests that these two were anxious to make trouble by attacking the conduct of the war. St. Hill, the North Charterland manager, may have been anxious to forestall any accusations for on 23 April he published in a newspaper a statement admitting that there had been criticism on the capture of the cattle, but pointing out that 'Army regulations provide for a certain amount of loot'. He said that it had been a wonderfully cheap expedition, that the Protectorate men who went in certainly deserved something, and that he expected that the B.S.A. Company would return a very large number of cattle to the Natives.[115] Editorial comment on his article was nevertheless critical. Criticism began to be heard in Britain. A letter was written to the Parliamentary Secretary responsible, a question was asked in the Commons, and an article appeared in *Truth*. According to one account, the military officers said they expected £400 or £500 each from their share of the loot.[116] Whether or not he was influenced by this criticism, Sharpe on leave in England proposed on 12 May that half the captured herds be returned to the Ngoni, the other half to be retained by the B.S.A. Company.[117] On the same day the Foreign Office replied to Manning's dispatch of 17 February, quoted above, with the statement that the B.S.A. Company wanted only three hundred beasts. Manning was asked to

[114] 195.
[115] *Central African Times*, i, 30 (23 April 1898), p. 3.
[116] 216, fo. 8; 217; *Parliamentary Debates, 4th series*, lv (1898), cols. 1240, 1654-5; *Truth*, xliii, 1122 (30 June 1898), pp. 1639-40.
[117] 202.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

consider returning some of the remainder to the Ngoni.[118] Manning replied that representatives of the B.S.A. Company had already made arrangements for driving away five thousand cattle. He proposed to return three thousand to Mpezeni.[119]

251
727
648
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The subsequent course of events is not clear. Poole states that due to the opportune arrival and intervention of Selby, a member of the B.S.A. Company's Administration, a large proportion of the cattle were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners. This is in accord with Sharpe's statement on 6 July that 'Mpezeni . . . has had all his cattle returned to him [his underlining]'. A missionary journal published in Blantyre on 15 July stated that probably a considerable part of the cattle had been returned.[120] Manning, who was in a better position to know than Sharpe, who was still on leave, wrote on 31 August that all the cattle had been returned to the Natives with the exception of about a thousand head handed over to the B.S.A. Company as a fine and about two hundred kept for the use of the troops.[121] The matter then seemed to have been settled.

In the next year the North Charterland continued its quarrel with the B.S.A. Company, and the disposal of the captured cattle was discussed again. The North Charterland complained that the whole Ngoni war had been unnecessary and had been provoked by the B.S.A. Company. There had been wholesale looting of cattle which had been disposed of in the interests of the officers concerned, Natives had been expelled from their lands, and in consequence the commercial prospects of the North Charterland had been ruined. The Foreign Office replied to these allegations on 23 August 1899, stating that so far as the cattle were concerned, five thousand head were to be driven out, three thousand returned to Mpezeni, and the balance held at the disposal of the B.S.A. Company, apart from two hundred and fifty head captured inside the Protectorate and driven off for use by the troops. This reply, referring to what would be done rather than what by then presumably had been done, appears to have been based on the arrangements proposed by Manning on 20 May 1898. Either the arrangements he reported on 31 August 1898 were never put into operation or else they were overlooked by mistake when the Foreign Office reply to the North Charterland was drafted a year later. The latter explanation seems more probable.[122]

[118] 203.
[119] 207.
[120] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; 211, fo. 228; *Life and Work in British Central Africa*, 125 (15 July 1898), p. 3.
[121] 219, fo. 456.
[122] 230; 233.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231 439 648 727 Manning stipulated that cattle handed back to the Ngoni should not be sold, to prevent traders bartering cattle for gunpowder.[123] Nevertheless the majority of the cattle remaining in or returned to Ngoni hands were sold within two years. In April 1898 over 14,000 head of cattle were counted.[124] Whether or not all these were in Ngoni ownership at the time is not clear, although the North Charterland implied in a letter written in 1899 that at least 12,000 belonged to Ngoni.[125] During the next year or so, in spite of Administrative opposition, many thousands of cattle were sold to traders or killed. By 31 March 1900 only 1,224 remained.[126] [177] Thus another of the systems of social relationships, those mediated through cattle, which had sustained the old social order, was undermined.

8. *The end of a system*

178 648 Thus ended the Ngoni war and with it the Ngoni State. In the last twelve years of its existence, from 1886 to 1898, three struggles were proceeding simultaneously in linked regions of social space. First there were the traditional processes already described by which Ngoni killed and recruited their neighbours and by which cleavages between segments of their residential system widened and altered with time. Second there was the struggle between Portugal, Great Britain and, peripherally, Germany for the political control of south-central Africa. Third there was a struggle between [439] different groups of financiers in London for the control of the rich economic resources which they believed, quite mistakenly as far as we can now tell, lay waiting to be discovered in Mpezeni's country and round about. Apart from these three major fields of activity, there were two others which affected this particular area to a lesser degree. There were the traders and adventurers like Wiese (until 1896), Matakenya and the Arabs who competed with one another and endeavoured to exploit the region in terms of ivory, gunpowder and slaves. There were also the various missions, [179] representing the interests of their co-religionists and anti-slavery enthusiasts in Europe, competing with each other and with the slave traders for local control. There was even a scheme for colonizing Mpezeni's country with Christian laymen from Britain.[127] All these social fields were interwoven in reality, but in analysis

[123] 207; 208, fo. 15; 233.
[124] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[125] 230, p. 69. Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 393, implies that all the 14,000 belonged to Ngoni.
[126] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[127] 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

our task is to separate them out. Yet even in analysis we have to show how each field interlocks with the other two, how events in one field set up movements in others. [178 648]

The material apparatus used in the various fields was distinct. The traditional processes were decided ultimately by resort to spears and shields. Portugal and Britain fought with artillery, embargoes, customs dues and treaties. The North Charterland fought its rivals with concessions, certificates of claim and share capital.[180] Mpezeni, who knew how to fight with spears, was asked to sign pieces of paper which would then be negotiable in a property system of which he knew nothing, and the manipulators of which knew little of him. The treaty-collectors imagined a patchwork of stationary chiefdoms spread over the region, each with a chief powerful enough to sell his country, whereas in fact there was only an unstable series of groups of shifting cultivators, each liable to attack from the migrating Ngoni. [739 648]

Yet despite the differences in technique and despite the lack of knowledge of each other's systems of government, the various groups involved continued to pursue their own ends as best they could. Mpezeni may not have known what a flag was, yet the issue between Portugal and Britain was decided, and decided in Lisbon rather than in Ngoniland. The treaties may have been made beyond the competence, and the understanding, of the chiefs who signed them, and yet the B.S.A. Company did gain control of the country. Mpezeni never made his mark on a document, yet the North Charterland acquired its ten thousand square miles of land. On the other hand, the Ngoni regiments tried to win another battle like the others they had won before, and this time they failed. In consequence of the war of 1898 there was a revolution, a change of structural form, in Ngoni society, whereas in the histories of Portugal and Britain, and even of the B.S.A. Company, the event passed almost unnoticed. [721 669]

In northern Nyasaland an analogous process of incorporation within a wider system was taking place. Here also there was an intruding European group and the same distant interest of the Nyasaland Administration. Yet in many ways the chain of events in northern Nyasaland was simpler than at Fort Jameson. In the north, there was only one set of resident Whites, the Livingstonia missionaries, there was no Wiese willing to play for both sides at once, and there was no North Charterland. In consequence the [797]

[180] cf. Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, p. 24: 'Swazi were subjugated through concessions, a type of economic warfare eventually sanctioned by powerful European governments.'

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 648 relationship between Ngoni and Europeans was of a somewhat different kind, and one of its most interesting features was an attempt by the Ngoni, persisted in for many years, to establish a monopoly over the missionaries, at the expense of another tribe with whom they were at war.[129] In Fort Jameson the social field was more complex. One of Mpezeni's sons tried to sell ivory to Wiese illegally without his father's knowledge,[130] and we may look on this as an attempt to establish a relationship with him differentiated from the wider relationship between Wiese and the Ngoni as a whole, or perhaps as an attempt on Wiese's part to penetrate Ngoni society along its lines of structural cleavage. His and Deare's support for a candidate for the heirship was similar in intention. [661] Mpezeni's efforts to gain support from Kotakota against his people was a more noticeable attempt to utilize the power of the Whites in his own sectional interest. Similarly the readiness with which raided chiefs made treaties was certainly related to their weak position in relation to the Ngoni and their hope of support against them. Even with the traders, as distinct from the treaty-collectors, this consideration was relevant. Deare relates how he asked Mpezeni to prevent raiding near the North Charterland supply route which passed through Undi's country. When later he visited Undi, he was welcomed for stopping the raids and was given ivory. Thus although at Fort Jameson no one group had a monopoly of access to the Europeans, there were these attempts to establish specific relations with them to the advantage of the different groups concerned.

For as soon as two groups are brought into contact, and for [178] some reason neither group annihilates the other, there is a change in the structure of the social field in which they act. Life can no longer go on as before, for every man has new potential allies and new potential enemies. There is no established order to which appeal can be made, for a new order has to be created. A new set of alignments, a new social structure, emerges from the manoeuvring and intriguing of the transition period which must differ from the old because of the new interests and new relationships which it contains.

Thus Europeans discriminated between one African group and another. Similarly the Ngoni established different relations with different European groups. From the beginning it was clear that the Portuguese and the British were to be distinguished, and Mpezeni preferred the inaction of the former to the efficiency of

[129] cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 97, 129, 237 and 245.
[130] Wiese, 'Expedição', x, pp. 491-2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the latter. This alignment established, it was natural that Warton, 439
though not himself a party to the Imperial struggle, should utilize 648
it by arriving in the country from Tete, in Portuguese territory, rather than from Nyasaland, that he should pose as Wiese's brother, and, assuming that the Foreign Office was correctly informed, that he should fly a Portuguese flag. Genthe played a similar game with his Union Jack, but in a different area among the raided tribes. Even among the British, Mpezeni had three groups to deal with, North Charterland, B.S.A. Company, and the Nyasaland Administration. He was initially friendly and later hostile towards the first, unyielding to the second, and appealed for help to the third, although, or perhaps because, it was farthest away.

The effective cleavage within the Ngoni chiefdom was between 439
the chief and his eldest son. We might have expected the major 578
cleavage to have been between one son and another, particularly 648
in view of North Charterland support for one son rather than 668
another. We have some information concerning who Wiese and Deare thought were their friends, but some of these people appear to have taken a prominent part in the fighting. Mpezeni was certainly not entirely deserted by his own people, for he was able to send emissaries to Kotakota and to warn Wiese and Deare of plots against their lives.[121] The situation in which one section of the population supported the chief and the remainder supported his son may have been facilitated by the existence of what we have called rump segments in the residential system. For in this system the dependants of a segment head were not completely divided up among his heirs; there was a remainder who even after the death of the head constituted a rump segment and represented his interests as against those of his sons. Thus it may be that Mpezeni was supported by those who remained in his great wife's village, or perhaps in his father's great wife's village, as against those who had broken out from it. In the absence of satisfactory evidence, our hypothesis remains unverified. Such evidence as there is, is contradictory. Deare made friends, eventually, with the two senior lieutenants of segment 10, the segment of Mpezeni's great wife; this would support our thesis, as does Wiese's mention of the senior of these as one of his friends. Yet both of them, according to my informants, descendants of these men, were shot in the course of the campaign; this points against our thesis. In the list of friends and enemies which Wiese and his companions gave Brake, segments 4 and 10 each have members in both lists. Among those listed as friends are Ciboma msitini, regional governor in segment 4 and

[121] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186; 287, fo. 137; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10.
578 Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant
648 of segment 4, and Kamzembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional
668 governor in segment 10.[123] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[123] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour
[721] peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell
[178] their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs
439 traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid
648 Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with
567 Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[124] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[123] 287, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[123] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[124] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Karonga in 1895 and although slave trading went on through Portuguese territory even after 1900, Arabs never made any effort to maintain this trade in the Fort Jameson area. 439 648 [567]

When Wiese left the country in 1898 his work was done. His departure symbolized the end of the pioneering stage of colonialism and the beginning of the stage of settled paternal administration. Mpezeni was reinstated after the war, but there was no position into which Wiese could have been reinstated, nor anyone who wanted to reinstate him. Unlike Mpezeni, Wiese did not represent the long-term interests of any powerful group. In the history of empires there are many examples of men like Wiese who succeeded in weathering the transition from one phase to another and ended their lives in honour and glory. But Wiese had sold his assets before the war began. When it was over, his one saleable attribute, his friendship with Mpezeni, had been compromised and was no longer of value. He departed from a scene which had no place for him.

An examination of how the Imperial and the financial struggles were inter-connected would take us beyond the bounds of Ngoniland and of our subject. We have, however, shown that the three social fields were inter-connected, and that moves in one field were affected by and in turn inspired moves in another. It is important to realize that this inter-connection was not due merely to geographical accident. From one point of view it was accidental that Ngoniland should lie near so many frontiers and that there should be an ancient gold-mine in the vicinity. But Britain, the North Charterland, and Nsingu were all struggling partly for the same thing, control of the Ngoni people. Even Warton understood this. At the end of 1896 he was asked: 'The Natives, I understand, are friendly?' He replied: 'I am glad to say that, so far, we have succeeded in establishing most friendly relations with M'Pesene. . . . Fighting would not only be costly, but we should lose our labourers if we engaged in hostilities. So you see on selfish, as well as humanitarian grounds, we have every reason to avoid warfare and bloodshed.'[125] The mineral resources of Mpezeni's country may have been largely illusory but the human resources were real. Ngoni men could fight for slaves, for dependants, for cattle and for glory; they could carry loads from Tete and prepare to work in the North Charterland's mines; or they could migrate to Southern Rhodesia to work there: but they could not do all these things simultaneously. The fight to destroy the Ngoni army was as much one to secure a labour supply for European capital investment as it was to secure 439 464 648

[125] *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 law and order. In this, not only the Ngoni were concerned. There
464 was a shortage of labour in Nyasaland and Mpezeni's raids pre-
648 vented labourers reaching that country from the interior. The campaign against Mwase in 1895 was undertaken partly with the aim of opening up labour routes and Mpezeni's defeat carried this a stage further. The Collector at Kotakota wrote shortly after the war: 'It is quite safe to say that no greater assistance has been given to these districts (and in fact to the Protectorate) than this opening up of the Luapula Valley by the conquest of Mpezeni.'[126] Yet the Luapula is 350 miles from Fort Jameson. Even Ngoni technical skill in fighting was of value to the new conquerors, for within six
[167] months of the war Ngoni fighting men were in Southern Rhodesia, not as allies of the Ndebele but as part of the British South Africa Police. Within ten months, the headquarters of segment 13 had been moved to make way for the new Administrative capital. With the defeat of Mpezeni, North-Eastern Rhodesia became a country.

A final point requires explication. Granted that the Ngoni
178 social system had to change in this new complex social environment,
361 and granted also that their activities, in particular raiding, had to
648 be adapted to new demands on their labour, why did not the Ngoni continue to live in large villages as they had done hitherto? There are numerous analogies in Africa where segmentary social systems have been fitted into an Administrative framework, and where raiding has given way to migrant labour, and yet the pattern of settlement has remained the same. Why did the big Ngoni villages disappear after 1898?

Part of the answer to this question can be stated in ecological terms. In pre-conquest times, the dense population, human and bovine, the great stretches of cultivated land, and the manifest prosperity of the people impressed themselves vividly on contemporary observers accustomed to the scattered settlements of the surrounding tribes. Angus writes:

> 'Before us lay an undulating valley some miles in breadth, which, as the heavily timbered hills on either side proclaimed, had once been covered with forest, but was now denuded of every vestige of a tree. Village after village surrounded by waving cornfields, and green plains dotted with herds of cattle, stretched away into the distance. Never before in any of my African wanderings had I seen such an extent of land under cultivation; the cornfields seemed unending, and the size and number of the

[126] *B.C.A.G.*, v, 6 (30 April 1898), p. 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Four

TRANSITION

1. Administrative policy 2. White control 3. Chiefs 4. County segments 5. Relative status of chiefs 6. Counties as territorial units 7. Villages

1. *Administrative policy*

THE DEFEAT of the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1898 was followed by the establishment of an Administration under the British South Africa Company. The greater part of the Nyasaland troops who had done the fighting left the area in April 1898[1] but the North Charterland party remained at their old headquarters at Fort Young, the B.S.A. Company made a base at Fort Patrick a few miles away, and in Nyasaland the Protectorate Administration maintained a station at Fort Manning. The new township of Fort Jameson was established in October 1898[2] and the first mission station was opened by the Dutch Reformed Church Mission at Magwero in 1899, in response to a request for a mission made the previous year by Mpezeni.[3] From these bases, White administrators, traders and missionaries, aided by their Black assistants, began to alter the form of Ngoni life. We are here particularly concerned with political organization, and it was the Administration which was particularly influential in determining what form the new Ngoni political organization would take. But political systems do not exist in isolation, and the kinds of political relationship which we find existing to-day have been influenced by the changing economic, commercial and religious relationships which have been determined more specifically by traders, labour recruiters, planters and missionaries as well as by the exertions of administrators.

The Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia was in the hands of the B.S.A. Company, and the policy adopted was to some extent influenced by developments in other territories administered by the Company. Southern Rhodesia was much more accessible from the sea than North-Eastern Rhodesia, more capital had been invested in it, and its mineral wealth appeared to be considerably greater. North-Eastern Rhodesia was therefore

[1] 220, fo. 67.
[2] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71.
[3] Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and,
648 possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop
[464] the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that
[643] the cheapest way of running the country was through the
[622] indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[4] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all
[692] kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the
[651] most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black
[464] leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with
[797] establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

177 Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration
464 to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity
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648

[4] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of earning money to pay tax, together with such subsidiary measures as the prohibition of Native smelting, and the pressure on men to clothe themselves in imported clothing, ensured that the old order changed beyond the mere loss of sovereignty. Not only were links established with Southern Rhodesia and later with other parts of Africa, but new patterns of distribution of wealth and power were set up which were incompatible with the old order. The chief who stayed at home ruling his people found himself outclassed by the newly returned labourers from the south, with their display of clothes, money and urban mannerisms. The relationships between one tribe and another which formerly had found expression in fighting had now to find other expressions, and began to be based on different interests. 177 439 464 648 [556]

These general considerations applied throughout North-Eastern Rhodesia. In Ngoniland local variation was supplied more by the presence of the North Charterland than by the fact that the Ngoni had been defeated in war. The North Charterland was interested in the economic development of its concession, whereas the Administration had to consider the needs of other territories governed by the B.S.A. Company, particularly Southern Rhodesia. The same administrative policy was applied to the Ngoni as to neighbouring tribes which had not been conquered by force of arms. Nevertheless in Ngoni eyes the Administration discriminated against Ngoni in favour of Cewa. Many Cewa who had been captured shortly before 1898 moved away from Ngoniland after the war, or at least moved in the direction of their homeland. With the end of Ngoni raiding the no-man's-land round Ngoni country filled up again with Cewa who had been displaced when the Ngoni first arrived in the 1870s. Cewa chiefdoms were re-established and recognized by the Administration, to the chagrin of the Ngoni. 439 648 [186]

Even the Ngoni themselves were referred to by the Administration as the 'Angoni-Chewa' by way of emphasizing their mixed ethnic composition. When the Native Reserve scheme was put forward in 1913 the Ngoni chiefs objected to the Cewa being allotted land of their own, and suggested that all the tribes of the district should be placed in one reserve under Mpezeni II. The Administration did not agree. When villages were moved into the proposed reserves in the 1920s, a few more villages left Ngoniland for Cewa country. At the same time other villages moved into Ngoniland from other chiefdoms in the face of alienation of land or difficulties with the Portuguese Administration. Thus to-day many villages in Ngoniland are of Cewa origin and many villages in Cewa chiefdoms are of Ngoni origin. 648 [167]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 Ngoni origin. The sharp cleavage between the Ngoni and their neighbours has gone.

Another relic of the privileged position enjoyed by the Ngoni 439 before the conquest which did not long survive their defeat was 648 the subsidy paid to Mpezeni. Under the terms of Wiese's alleged 651 concession of 14 April 1891, Mpezeni was to be paid £200 a year and one per cent of Wiese's profits. Wiese made presents to Mpezeni, but there is no record of any substantial payment. When the provisional grant of 10,000 square miles of land was made by the B.S.A. Company to the Mozambique Company on 8 May 1895, the latter agreed not to exercise any rights it might have under Wiese's concessions, but there was no mention of the disposal of any possible obligations. Warton continued Wiese's practice of giving presents to Mpezeni, but there was no regular payment. As Wiese's concession had never been recognized it would seem that there was no legal obligation on either the North Charterland or the B.S.A. Company to pay an annual subsidy. Nevertheless after the Ngoni war the two companies must have come to some agreement on the matter. In April 1898, according to the answer to a question in the Commons, the B.S.A. Company were ready to pay Mpezeni £200 a year 'for the present'. In January 1900 the Administrator stated that the Collector at Fort Jameson had spent only £50 during the current financial year on payments to Mpezeni and 'his loyal indunas'. He proposed to spend a further £50 during the year and the remaining £100 of the subsidy was to be distributed among the surrounding tribes in the interests of the North Charterland.[5] These special arrangements were presumably superseded in 1903 when, under the scheme of Native Administration drawn up in that year, provision was made for the payment of all recognized chiefs from the general funds of the Territory.

Similarly, the military organization of the Ngoni broke down 648 after the conquest. One of the first acts of the Administration was 701 to forbid Ngoni to carry weapons of war.[6] Four new age-set 561 regiments were formed between 1898 and 1914 but they were little more than dancing societies, singing the old songs which had excited their seniors in the 'time of peace' before the conquest but unable to emulate their military achievements. During the 1914-18 war the majority of young Ngoni men who might have formed a [464] new age-set were enrolled as carriers and soldiers on the Allied side.

[5] *Parliamentary Debates, 4th Series*, lv (1898), cols. 1654-5; report of a meeting between Administrator and North Charterland manager, 15 January 1900 (Lusaka archives); cf. Poole, MS., 'Tribes of East Luangwa Province'.

[6] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 201.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

effort to induce them to co-operate actively with the government, and by 1910 he was looking forward to reducing the number of White officials in the Administration by devolving much of the Native work on to the Natives themselves. Co-operation was encouraged by the payment of small stipends to chiefs and others, varying in the 1920s in annual value from £22 10*s.* 0*d.* for Mpezeni down to 6*s.* for district messengers. 648

The Ngoni for the most part neither supported nor opposed this scheme of administration; they merely accepted it. For years the Administration bemoaned the indifference of the Ngoni, but apart from an attempt by a mission to set up its teachers as headmen, there was little attempt to obstruct the work of the Administration. [797]

In matters of land, the authority of the Whites was also dominant, but here the paternal amiability which characterized purely political relations between Administration and Ngoni was lacking. The alienation of land was at the instigation of the North Charterland, who considered themselves the owners of Ngoni country. Fort Jameson was built by the Administration in the middle of Ngoni country and the land round the township, few facilities though the town then had, became more valuable to potential settlers than more fertile but inaccessible tracts. The high density of population in Ngoni country also attracted settlers with the prospect of an adequate labour supply. Thus we find that many of the first tracts of land alienated were located in the middle of Ngoni country, in the most densely populated section. As early as 1 January 1904 the first Commission was appointed to inquire into land questions in Ngoni country.[15] Now that Ngoni had to grow their own food on land which had already been heavily exploited the density of population fell; but in relation to the carrying capacity of the land in perpetuity there was still serious overcrowding. During the unsettled period of the war and its aftermath, the population was dispersed, but from 1900 down to about 1930, in consequence of alienation and the formation of reserves, villages were gradually brought closer together. From 1930 onwards, with the recognition of land shortage by the Administration, villages have been allowed to spread out again. The negotiations concerning where the Ngoni should live have been protracted and complicated; I hope to discuss them in a later work in connexion with the economic background of Ngoni social life. What is here significant about them is that to a very large extent these negotiations have been carried on entirely by Whites, with the Administration representing for the greater part Ngoni

423 439 648 311 [167] 361 648

[15] *N.E.R.G.G.*, ii, 1 (1 January 1904), pp. 30-1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

557 648 This process was facilitated by the actions of some heads of major segments. It had always been correct procedure for one important person to deal with another through intermediaries, at least in the opening stages of negotiation, so that lieutenants and others were [624] frequently sent as ambassadors for their lords to the headquarters of other major segments. There was particular point in adopting this procedure in dealing with the Administration since its demands on a man sent to it were unpredictable and apt to be onerous. Thus in many instances a lieutenant or other dependant was presented to the Administration as the headman of an area or a group of villages. This nominee was regarded by the Administration as the rightful leader of the area concerned, a belief often fostered by the nominee himself. In this way effective control of an area passed from the head of a segment to one of his dependants.

Unfortunately, few records of the early administrative arrange- 648 ments have survived. From 1883, when a British consul was first 114 appointed to Nyasaland, down to the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898, the doings of the tribe were of political significance to Britain, and were reported on at length in dispatches which are now public records. After 1898, events of similar importance within the tribe to those that had been reported earlier, the death of this lieutenant or the movement of that village from one site to another, were no longer of any interest to Whitehall or even to the Directors of the British South Africa Company. Thus there was a drastic reduction in the scale of reporting. At the same time the loss of sovereignty, of independent action, involved a reduction in the kind of events which were likely to be recorded. The Ngoni no longer made war or sold slaves. They did pay tax and work in the mines, but this they did not as an independent tribe but as part of Fort Jameson District and the Eastern Province, and such records as there are relate to these administrative units rather than to specific tribes. The B.S.A. [439] Company lacked the long tradition of administration enjoyed by the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, and its reports were scanty by comparison. Thus the only published report of any kind on affairs in North-Eastern Rhodesia for the year 1905-6 is a mere fifteen lines long, and there is only one sentence on African administration: 'The conduct of the Natives has continued to be satisfactory.'[18] It is not until 1928 that annual reports on African affairs began to be published. Our account of Ngoni history from 1898 until recent times therefore cannot be as complete as we would wish.

[18] *Directors' Report and Accounts*, 1906, p. 7.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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631
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634
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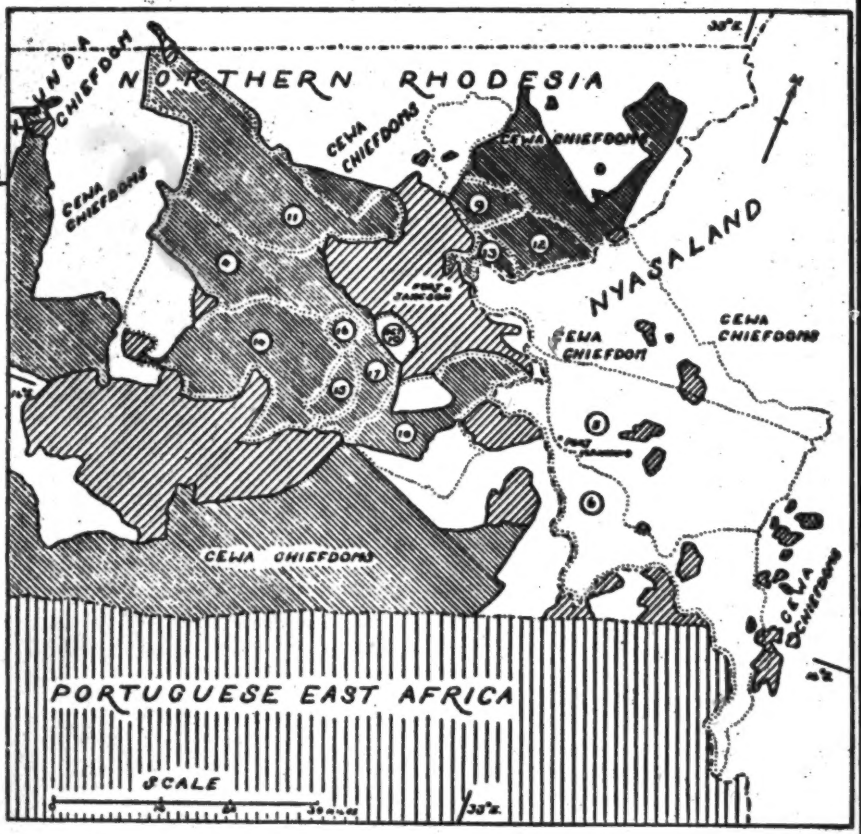
Map D. STATUTORY DIVISION OF LAND, FORT JAMIESON 1949



International Boundary.

N. Charterland Concession, Northern Boundary.

Statutory Division Boundary.

County Boundary.

Farmland in non-African ownership.

Native Reserves.

Native Trust land, crown land and disputed land, treated as if it were Native Trust land.

Portuguese East Africa.

County numbers.

[p. 120]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market.

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area.

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE XII. The customs post at Fort Manning, on the border between Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. The passengers on a lorry, mainly women, have put their luggage on the ground for inspection by the customs clerk.

[Facing p. 169]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

clan and for women of leading Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Two of the texts emphasized the distinction conferred on the royal women by special clothing. Cibambo described the use of well-dressed soft skins and of beads and wire, the beads brought with them from the south, the brass wire obtained from the Arabs. In NaNdumbu's text she mentioned cloth bought from the stores. After the Ngoni women gave up wearing soft leather for skirts and the long piece of leather draped from the left shoulder, they used strong cotton cloth of dark blue or black, originally brought by the Arabs and later stocked by the stores. They tied the main cloth under their arms in a draped knot over the breast and on ceremonial occasions they added another fastened on the left shoulder like a plaid. A woman who had been a young girl in the village of Paramount Cikusi, but was not of a leading clan, said that in this village there was a great difference between the royal women and the rest: 'Only the daughters of Cikusi and his big wives could wear dark cloth as the Ngoni do. The others would have been killed if they tried to look like the big women'.

The royal women and the big wives and widows of chiefs and *ahumuzana* were treated by all with whom they came in contact with the distinction and respect due to their prestige. They were addressed and thanked by the term *Nkomo*, with the clan name and the honorific prefix added, except where, as in the case of Bambo Manga, a title had been conferred. She was thanked 'Nkomo Bambo'.[1] *Ukuhlonipa*, and its Nyanja equivalent *kulemekeza*, meaning to honour and to behave in a respectful manner towards senior people and those of superior rank, was an expression constantly used by the Ngoni and by the other peoples in the Ngoni kingdoms. The forms of showing respect were partly verbal; partly in the position adopted, with the eyes cast down and a slight curtsey by the women when facing someone; partly in the tone of voice when speaking; and partly in the deliberate and controlled behaviour noticed by several early travellers in Nyasaland. A particular verbal form of respect practised by the royal women was the use of the *hlonipa* vocabulary. I found this practice surviving only in the Emcisweni area in northern Ngoniland where the Ngoni language was still spoken, but informants said that it had been common to all married women of trans-Zambesi clans in the northern kingdom when they had spoken Ngoni among themselves. The *hlonipa* vocabulary consisted of the substitution of special words, known only to the women, in order to avoid using a word in which the main syllable of a man's name occurred—a man with whom they were connected by marriage or by affinal relationship.[2] Thus Zwangendaba's wives and widows could

[1] *Bambo* (father) was a term of respect used for important senior men.

[2] *Hlonipa* as a form of special vocabulary was widely practised among the Nguni groups in South Africa. Hoernlé, A. W. 'Social Organisation', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, pp. 74, 77.

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but 121
continually changing system of social relationships which we may
call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point
in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage
to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader
analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part.

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in 101
this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in
Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage
arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern
Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000, [161]
live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the
Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their 131
country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E
to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history
of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under 167
Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about
1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader [648]
of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, [643]
Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftain- 631
ships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief
has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with
maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold 241
to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of [439]
Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work
on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the 464
railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all
men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[3].

[3] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 252 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.17]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass shacks built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned: such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources. 000

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile. 114 101 121 161 311 [133]

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfinzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipoka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni. [181]

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent. [797] [427]

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do. [134]

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people. [439]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

V. EARNING A LIVING

Intertribal Trade

●439 There is little trade between the Ngoni and the neighbouring tribes, whose products are largely the same as their own. Fish is brought up from the Luangwa valley by Kunda and some of it is sold to the Ngoni of the Cipalamba, through whose villages the hawkers pass on their way to Fort Jameson. Bracelets are sometimes brought from Portuguese East Africa by Chikunda. The main attraction for these hawkers is Fort Jameson itself, and it is the fact that the town is encircled by the Ngoni that gives rise to trading with them. The geographical location of the town has also led to the growth in Ngoni [366] country of many stores and what are known in the vernacular as hotels, where tea and buns can be bought and where sometimes there is shelter for the night.

Of greater importance in the life of the tribe than these intertribal links are those arising from White and Indian economic activities. We may distinguish three zones of interaction, the shops both in Fort Jameson township and scattered throughout the district owned by Whites and Indians, the local tobacco farms, and the mines of Southern Rhodesia. The Ngoni have come to need cloth for clothes which they cannot produce themselves, and it is doubtful if there would be enough animals to provide skins for the tribe even if they did not insist on cloth. The need to earn money with which to buy clothes, soap, and other necessities can be met only by seeking employment on a farm, in Fort Jameson township, or farther off. A few people earn enough by selling vegetables in Fort Jameson, and there is a certain amount of maize and other cereals sold. These sales, however, do not provide sufficient income to reduce materially the extent to which people go out to work.

Control of Movement

101 To the White traveller, Fort Jameson District is an island of tobacco in a sea of bush. To the Ngoni, the island is not so sharply demarcated, and its characteristic property is cattle, not tobacco, yet it still remains an island, surrounded by a sea of other tribes whose 101 traditions are different from their own. The ships that cross this sea 489 are the lorries. In time past, men used to walk to their destinations, [493] going by Feira to Southern Rhodesia, or across the Luangwa to Broken Hill. A few used to go down to Lake Nyasa, and thence to the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

hospitality involved both planning and expense. The Paramount's wife had to keep enough food stocks on hand not only to feed her own large family and household, but also to be able to respond to expected and unexpected guests. The Paramount's personal annual salary at that time was £60, out of which he had to keep his family and household in food and clothes and school fees, and pay for the upkeep of his house. The bulk of the cereals and some of the beans and other vegetables used in his house came from his fields worked by hired labour. Another source of food supply was the market 'custom', a small toll levied on the produce sold in the weekly market, which was paid chiefly in kind and put in the storehouses on the Paramount's *bwalo* to be used to feed his guests.[1]

The Paramount not only gave food and drink to the expected and unexpected visitors to the royal village. From time to time he gave a feast to which the Christians of the congregation of the mission church were invited, as on one New Year's Day when I was staying there. He gave a feast to all the neighbourhood on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. From time to time he invited all his people to dance *ligubo* or *ngoma* at the royal village and provided beer for all and food for the *ahumuzana* and the chiefs and their wives. The organization of these big feasts demanded planning on a generous scale and a large outlay in maize for porridge and meat for relish. No feast at the Paramount's village was complete without meat enough to satisfy everyone.

The visitors, the feasts, the dances, all had their focal point in the royal residence in the royal village. There were two other focal points in the village where large numbers of people came regularly, and made the place where the Paramount lived a centre which brought his people together and brought him before them as their ruler. These were the market and the court-house which also housed his offices.

Before 1939 the market in the royal village was unique in the area for its size and the service which it rendered to the countryside. At any one time on a Saturday there would be 600 to 1,000 people present. In 1938 a second market was opened by the Paramount at Nsipe at the southern end of his territory. They were definitely his markets in that he allotted space for them; fixed the days on which they were held; controlled the policing of the market and the strangers' huts where sellers arriving overnight could sleep; fixed the prices according to seasonal variations in supply; and, as we have seen, collected 'custom' in lieu of rents for sites. The market at Maganga served an area extending roughly 15 miles to the east, 15 to the west and 10 miles to the north and south. It stretched in the east to below the escarpment whence came bamboo and

[1] An average weekly amount of custom reckoned over several weeks was 10*s.* in cash, and a quantity of bananas, sugar-cane, vegetables and cereals amounting to two sackfuls and sometimes three. The cash was levied on meat, 1*s.* 9*d.* per cow, 1*s.* 6*d.* per goat or pig; and on mats, baskets, etc. at roughly 1*d.* in the 1*s.*

443 438 sugar cane, and fish from the lake. From the west came sellers of foodstuffs, mainly maize and vegetables, from the villages in Portuguese territory. Whether by accident or design the sellers took up their stands in the market-place on the side to which they first came. Thus on the east side were the fish-sellers, who had carried their fish up the two escarpments from the lake during the night. Near them were the sellers of bamboo and bark-rope, reed and raffia mats, baskets of all kinds, wooden spoons and hoe handles. The vegetable sellers mostly from Portuguese villages were on the western edge of the market. In the centre under some trees were the butchers selling meat and cutting up the cattle, pigs and goats which they had killed in the early morning. Pottery was in another section, thread for bead-work and grass hats and bangles in another. On the edge of the market site were the Indian stores where, on market days, people with cash in hand from their sales bought cloth and had it made up by the tailors sitting with their sewing machines on the verandahs of the stores.

The Paramount's early life and marriage

643 The officials surrounding the Paramount in the central kingdom were aware that he had begun his rule under difficulties owing to the death of his father. Two texts on this follow, the first by the *induna* of the royal village, Kalilombe Mbewe, and the second by Ishmael Mwale the treasurer of the Paramount, neither of them members of trans-Zambesi clans, but both imbued with Ngoni sentiments and sense of values and devoted to the royal clan.[1] The first text emphasizes the action taken by the two big *izinduna* of the Paramount to hide and protect the young heir to the Paramountcy, and to look after the wives of the big house.

¶ Formerly we were on Domwe, and when we left there, we built the first village here and its name was Lizulu. When Gomani I was taken by the Europeans his *izinduna* Cakumbira Ndau and Mambeyu Moyo were here at Lizulu. When Gomani I was taken, his son Phillip Gomani was a young child. He stayed with Cakumbira Ndau, so did the big wives of Gomani I. Other wives of Gomani I went to their own families. Cakumbira took with him from Domwe his own cattle and those of the Paramount. When Gomani I was killed the Europeans did not ask about the child who would enter his place. Later when the people were accustomed to the Europeans, the Europeans asked: 'Who is the child who should enter his place?' And the senior men brought him out from hiding and said 'This is he.' The senior men revealed this because they knew that the war had finished and that he could not be killed.

The text by the treasurer takes up the story from the times when the existence of the heir to the Paramount was made known, and covers

[1] The fathers of both these men had been taken by the Ngoni from near the Kirk Range, and trained as warriors in Songea before returning to Nyasaland to the royal village on Domwe mountain.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

/7 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household,
415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or
[511] china crockery.

323 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every
[462] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood.
[439] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol
[415] and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves
[824] of the mbwabwa tree.

285 Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men,
[353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be
[462] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings
[491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid
[943] baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for //8/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

/13 cont'd/

463 Other specialised activities carried out in the village, apart from those mentioned, are such things as shoe mending, bicycle repairing, and carpentry. These trades are followed by men who learnt them in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and are carried on as part-time occupations. Village stores are modest affairs, with goods for sale that have been bought retail from Indian traders in Fort Jameson, and have been brought out to the village on bicycle. Larger stores on the main roads may be able to buy wholesale, and may employ a tailor making up cloth bought in the store. Shops called in the vernacular "hotels," where tea and scones are sold and perhaps bread, also lie on the main roads.

443

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[857] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly
231 related to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
487 of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Money was needed for good
554 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which
the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling,
[453] except among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Values and attitudes in cattle-ownership

114 Any attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquir-
ing, caring for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive
233 survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place
565 in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is not possible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba clans whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading clans and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.

231 The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they repre-
sented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able
556 to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of rites for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 payment. It may have been that Nimshi was merely trying to get
583 as much as he could hope for out of Simon, who was a fierce and powerful person. In view, however, of the decline in the incidence of bridewealth and the increasing importance of the legalization payment it is not unlikely that this right to the daughter's legalization payment may soon be separated from bridewealth.

428 It is at the death of a man that his children exercise their particular rights from him as against the claims of other kin. If a man has
[583] paid bridewealth for his wife, then the claim of his eldest son by her to his property is clear. The eldest son by the great wife is the heir, and he takes over control of the dead man's herd, and inherits his money. For inheritance, cattle are more important than money. Most men keep their money hidden in the ground, and it sometimes
[454] happens that a man dies without mentioning where he has put his savings, so that they are lost. Cattle are publicly-owned property,
[422] in that every boy in the village knows the ownership of each beast, and they can be seen in the byre every day. Men sometimes divide their property among their sons before they die, but it is more usual for a man to give one cow to the eldest son of each wife and to leave the rest undivided. The residue then passes to his heir on his death.
[583] If bridewealth has not been paid, the claim of the dead man's eldest son to the herd may be disputed by the dead man's brothers. Succession here does not seem to be determined in the light of the failure to pay bridewealth but by a consideration of residence. If a man is living in the same village as his father then he can expect to inherit his father's cattle when he dies. If he is living elsewhere, and tries to claim his inheritance, he may be opposed by his father's kinsmen resident in his father's village should he try to remove the cattle.

The eldest son inherits, but he has an obligation to help his sisters and younger brothers when they need beasts or money. If the other brothers are scattered in different villages, the herd may be divided among them, but it may be many years after the death that the division takes place. If the eldest son is in Southern Rhodesia the dead man's brothers delay the division of the herd as long as possible in case the rightful heir should return.

[425] Women acquire cattle and other animals with money they have saved or gained by selling beer, or as gifts from their husbands.
[583] If no bridewealth has been paid for a woman any animals she may own pass on her death to her eldest son. If bridewealth has been paid for her the disposal of her property is uncertain. Some people argue that the animals cannot then go to her son, for her son belongs to her husband's group because of the bridewealth, and that they ought to pass to her brother's son. Others say that the animals should go to her eldest son irrespective of bridewealth. Unfortunately I did not record any specific instance of inheritance from a woman.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 support those of his colleagues. However, chiefs and others do
[661] sometimes manage to play off one administrator against another where there are differences of interest between different departments of the Administration, and occasionally appeals by Ngoni chiefs to high Administrative officials against the actions of their juniors are successful. It is easier for Ngoni to exploit the much greater differences of interest between the different sections of the non-African community, officials, missions, planters and European and Indian traders.

648 In the early years of this century it appears that the chiefs were
662 approached by labour recruiters, planters, and missionaries who wished to gain their favour and utilize this to their own advantage. It is difficult to gauge to what extent this practice continues. There are one or two recent instances where the missions have clearly
[797] recognized the importance to them of securing the goodwill of an Ngoni in high authority, and it would also appear that some high-placed Ngoni have utilized their position to gain from the missions services which might not otherwise have been so readily available to them. With the cessation of labour recruiting there has been no
[464] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[466] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[574] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

inefficient workers on the local tobacco farms, where the ties that link them to the near-by villages with their marriages, funerals, and beer parties are still operative, and where the wages are much lower than in Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, Ngoni tend to suspect the good intentions of any non-African, however lavish he may be with his presents, and for this reason are reluctant to enter into agreements with them the social consequences of which they cannot foresee.

648 662 [461] [186]

2. *Rivals of the Paramount Chief*

In pre-conquest times the death of the head of the State was followed by a struggle between rival heirs and by fission of the State. Under British colonial rule these struggles cannot be carried on by force of arms, and it is difficult to split the tribe when there is nowhere for the dissident section to move to and when Administrative recognition is an important condition for political existence. Nevertheless the same struggles continue even if in a different guise.

643 648

One of the most interesting incidents in the struggles between rival groups for the chieftainship occurred in 1903 and hinged on an aspect of segmentation within the residential system which we have not so far discussed. It was customary for the heir to a large segment founded by his father to place one wife in the headquarters of that segment as well as establishing his bevies of wives with their own inferior segments. The eldest son of the selected wife grew up to be in charge of the headquarters and came to be identified with his father's father, the founder of the headquarters, as against his father who was lord of its segment. Thus, for example, Zwangendaba, heir to segment 1, founded segment 18 for his own great wife, but also placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 1, the segment founded by his father for *his* great wife. Similarly Mpezeni, as son of Zwangendaba, placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 4, which by then had replaced the annihilated segment 18. In this matter the Ngoni seem to have differed from the Zulu, for among them, according to Bryant, the *isizinda*, son of the placed wife, represents his own father as against the father's main heir.[1]

611 643

In 1903 the eldest son of Mpezeni I by the selected wife in segment 4 tried to assume the name of his father's father, Zwangendaba. This was in accord with his structural position as representing the interests of the founder of the segment as against those of the

[1] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 80; Bryant, *Dictionary*, s.v. *isi-zinda*. cf. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 401. Lancaster implies that the selected wife was called *ikohlwa*. This seems unlikely in view of the Zulu use of *i(li)khohlwa* for the senior left-hand wife.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

IV

Family Life for the Young Child

The women's world

It was the proud boast of the Ngoni aristocrats that their women did no 'work' in the old days. When they spoke thus they were equating 'work' with physical labour, sweeping and cleaning in the hut and compound, fetching wood and water, hoeing in the gardens, and the routine part of preparing and cooking food. The Ngoni women of the former large households had an army of 'helpers' to do all these tasks for them. Though the number of helpers dwindled as the larger households disappeared, the pattern of appropriation of tasks remained in the shrunken households, and hence the Ngoni women were always responsible for a high degree of household management. Larger households in the old days fed fifty to sixty people from their cooking-pots, and though when I lived among them the scale of their households was much smaller, some were still feeding twenty and more people for each meal, apart from the occasional meals served when kinsfolk and strangers came unexpectedly.

I never failed to be impressed with the quiet dignified competence with which Ngoni women managed their household affairs. They did it with an apparent effortlessness, which had its roots in long training and tradition, and in an awareness of responsibility that increased, but weighed less heavily, with age and experience. This competence was always apparent on occasions such as wedding feasts. Then cereal food, meat, vegetable relishes were cooked in vast quantities and served out to the separate groups of guests.

562 These skills of management, and of order and dignity in
461 serving, were not however only seen in large-scale operations.
592 The modern young Ngoni wife serving tea and 'scones' to her husband's guests sitting on his veranda showed the same qualities of careful preparation and considerate service as her grandmother had shown presiding over 500 guests at a wedding feast.

562 Household management in Ngoni homes included primarily managing the household staff, allotting their tasks to them, settling their quarrels, looking after them when sick, marrying off the young ones when the time came. In the all-important aspect of feeding a large household and its dependents, Ngoni women assumed responsibility for seeing that there were enough supplies of different kinds of food at hand, for regular consumption and for emergencies. They consulted at times with the 'official' who was in charge of their 'house' about mobilizing supplies or organizing women helpers to cultivate in the gardens. Most significant in the eyes of Ngoni and non-Ngoni alike was the task of Ngoni
[264] women of 'dividing the food' at every meal-time. It was a key concept in Ngoni culture that at all times when food, beer, or other kinds of goods were to be divided out, and enjoyed or used by a large number of people, the 'one who divided' was an important individual. He, or more often she, must be of 'good character', who assumed, or was given, the task because he or she knew how to do it, and no one questioned the justice or the competence with which the dividing was done. Again I was impressed by the almost nonchalant air with which Ngoni women ladled out food for a large number of individuals and groups. It looked
[461] so easy. It was obviously not a simple matter. The results were always accepted and welcomed, and I never heard any grumbles.

593 Central to the organization of the household, and in one
592 sense the axis on which it revolved, was the care and attention the wife gave to her husband. Cooking, including the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Labour Ordinances, he can only do so through the District Commissioner's court at Fort Jameson, which may take up more of his time than he thinks the matter worth. In consequence, few actions are brought by farmers against their African labourers and if a man breaks his contract and deserts, no action may be taken against him. 691 578

It is not surprising that the efficiency of labour operating under these conditions is low, and that the wages are also low. These two conditions react on one another, and it is misleading to regard the low wages as the only cause of the inefficiency, or the inefficiency as the only cause of the low wages. The practical effect is that men who wish to earn more money than they can get as labourers on the farms at 14*s.* a month with food go away to Southern Rhodesia. It must be observed, however, that men started going to Southern Rhodesia long before the tobacco farms were opened up to their present extent. 461 [465]

Labour Migration

Prior to the European conquest, the only men who had worked for Whites were those employed as carriers by the handful of travellers who passed through the country before 1896, and as carriers and labourers by the North Charterland Exploration Company from 1896 onwards. But immediately after the end of the fighting in 1898, recruiting started among the Ngoni for police work in Southern Rhodesia, and there has been a continual flow of labour migrants south ever since. 167 464

There have been considerable fluctuations in the number of men going south since that time, particularly during the two world wars, when the military requirements of the Territory exercised a greater claim. The latest figures for the Eastern Province as a whole show that, in 1946, 23 per cent. of the taxable males registered in the province were absent from the province. Another 17½ per cent. were at work within the province.[1] In May 1947, in two Ngoni counties with a combined total of 1,739 registered taxable males, it was found that 30 per cent. of them were at work in the Eastern Province and a further 42 per cent. were away elsewhere, a total of 72 per cent. away from their villages. Half of those living outside the Eastern Province were classified as 'lost', in that their present whereabouts were unknown to the people at home.[2] These figures exclude all men who have been 'lost' for more than five years.

[1] Labour Department, *Annual Report, 1946*, p. 12.
[2] These figures were given me by the District Commissioner, Fort Jameson.

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [831] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [875] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

[851] The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [864] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [864] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 291 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 292 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and 224 taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by themselves and sell the meat.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

243 forest is cut down and burnt, and another garden cultivated, and so the country is rapidly being deforested. The crop is largely used to make a heady beer, and although Central Africa has been 213 happily saved from the curse of European liquor, the native beer is a great source of big drunken bouts. Heavy drinking, however, does not bring the evil effects that brandy drunkenness would entail. The drink is a nutritious and a very sustaining food, I know some of the old chiefs who are drunk almost every day of their lives by midday, yet they bear up wonderfully. But [579] these drunken bouts, when whole villages run riot, are the source of nearly all quarrels, adultery, bloodshed, and every outburst of passion. We have had to denounce the beer drinking as a menace [177] to the social order of the country, and for lack of the strong restraint of the British Government, which forbids the cutting down of trees, we have preached against the deforesting of the land as a wicked improvidence. The native church has, of its own initiative, taken up the question, and enjoined on the members total abstinence, and the preservation of the forests.

461 Three or four months labour are sufficient to provide a family with food for the year, and the sale of a sheep or a heifer will buy all the clothes the family requires. There is therefore little necessity to work, and the tendency is to spend the months lounging about the village, talking and trifling. Now, happily a more 197 industrious period is waking, and larger ambitions for cloth and 461 for stock, are drawing out the men to work. As a mission we insist on the duty of labour, we refuse church privileges to a man 797 if he cannot show that he has been engaged for some months each year at some labour centre doing honest work. No moral good is ever effected by pampering African pride and indolence, and one of the first lessons Christianity has to teach the native, is the dignity of labour, and the absolute necessity for the labourer to be industrious and honest in the discharge of his work. A penny a day is the ordinary wage we give a labourer, and even the great majority of my 120 teachers do not receive more than 1/6 a month.

171 Of course many of the Central Africans have industries of their own, smelting, basket making, cloth weaving, wire pulling, and so on. But the Ngoni were a handless people until they got a spear in their hand. Then they drew themselves up as men, and defied the universe. Yet this martial life had an ennobling effect on them. It is a curious thing to notice, and a fact which was

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *nduna*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 203*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*ff*, 103*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of an *ngoma* 'competition' the team was made up of lads and girls of about fourteen to eighteen years old. They went off to another village, having announced their arrival previously, and challenged the 'home team' to dance *ngoma*. The dancing was in the kraal with the adults looking on and acting as judges. It was all very decorous and orderly and the competing teams were in dead earnest. As we have noticed already, the Ngoni danced without drums. The steady beat of the feet of the young men made the rhythm for the dance, but the co-ordination in the long lines of boys in front and girls behind needed assiduous practice to produce harmonious results. In both northern and central Ngoniland the Paramounts had forbidden all dances except Ngoni dances, and in the north the *ngoma* was encouraged by the chiefs because it was considered a 'good dance' for young people.

After marriage, the young women were absorbed in the care of their huts and young children and only appeared as an age set when they took part in a communal hoeing; on such occasions they were inclined to keep apart from the older women, sometimes on the grounds that they did not drink the full-strength beer, and therefore clustered round a pot of 'sweet' beer when they knocked off work. In most Ngoni villages the young men after marriage went off to find work and, as a group of friends within an age set, they would get together to talk things over, make their preparations and travel to the south.

In day-to-day village affairs, as well as on ceremonial occasions, the age sets of the *manina* and *madoda* were very much in evidence. The *madoda* met at meal-times by the gate of the kraal, and they went there to count the cattle when they came back in the evening. The same group could be seen either at the kraal gate or on a verandah talking about village affairs or drinking together, or at a court listening to cases. The *manina* usually gathered in the verandah of the *indlunkulu* to talk over women's affairs or to receive guests. As an age set they met less frequently than the men because the larger part of their tasks lay in their own huts or in the group of women associated with a house. On all occasions when the formal reception of strangers took place, or when ritual feasting or shaving or washing occurred, or when important decisions had to be made, the *manina* and the *madoda* in their separate sets were in evidence.

Although the age sets in village life were social units carrying definite responsibilities and performing recognized activities, their chief importance in Ngoni social life was in regulating behavioural patterns and prescribing mutual relationships. Here we have to take note of a selective principle at work among the *manina* and *madoda*. Although in one sense all women and men of forty to forty-five and upwards belonged to these age sets, the individuals who carried out the characteristic activities of these groups did not include all the men and women of that age. The very old people did not continue to exercise any influence in village

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

128 point, and other kinds of knowledge which in Ngoni culture were the basis for performing certain traditional activities. This second part of the chapter I have called traditional skills, to avoid the clumsiness of constantly differentiating between knowledge, skill and activities. Again, as in the first part of the chapter, we have to be selective, and I have
128 chosen a few out of the typical Ngoni skills taught to young
868 adults to make them efficient producers in the village economy, able to manage and direct various units of workers, and to be 'good company' in those pursuits which were for leisure time enjoyment. The young men's traditional skills which we
[462] shall look at are the care of cattle, hunting and some of their crafts; the young women's are the care of property, the storage and use of food-stuffs and some women's crafts. At the end of the chapter we shall look at certain Ngoni 'arts', which demanded individual and corporate skill of a special nature.

Men's skills: Care of cattle

868 The senior herd-boys, sons of cattle-owners, carried consider-
233 able responsibilities for the herds under their care during the day. By the time they gave up herding they had learned a great deal about cattle. Understanding about what constituted good herding had been handed on to them by their seniors, and they were well aware that losing an animal, failing to find good grazing so that the beasts became thin, letting them escape into the cultivated fields—all these were signs of bad herding and they would be punished accordingly by the cattle-owners. The daily scrutiny of the herds by the owners was made the occasion for blame or commendation. Every evening the owners of the cattle stood by the kraal gate as the boys drove the animals in, and the head herd-boys reported to the owners if a cow was sick, or if a bull had been mating.

Cattle-owners, since they were anxious that any cases of illness should be promptly reported, made a point of calling

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Women's skills: Guardianship of property

Ngoni social organization, as we saw in Chapter I, placed the guardianship of all wealth except cattle in the hands of the women who were heads of houses. As a Ngoni girl grew towards adulthood and the time drew nearer when she would marry and leave her home for a strange village, the leading women of her father's house initiated her into the skills needed to create and preserve the forms of property for which she would some day be responsible. 429 462 868

First among these skills came the care of the hut and compound. The framework and roof of the huts were built by men, but the walls were mudded and the floors of the hut and veranda were strengthened and polished by women. Ngoni women of good family did not often do the actual plastering of mud upon the wooden framework of the hut. It was considered too dirty and exhausting a job for them to do, but they had to know how it should be done, and what standards of good work involved, in order that they might later instruct others. During a hut building Ngoni girls might be seen tucking up their clothes and rather half-heartedly slapping mud on the walls, to the good-humoured jesting of the village women who were vigorous and expert at the job. The girl's grandmother stood by and said at intervals: 'That is too thick; it will fall off. Fill up those cracks. Smooth over those joins,' and so on. The girls shrugged their shoulders and obeyed while Grandmother was watching, but gave up as soon as she went away. 462 342

The flat-ended flails with which the floor was beaten were heavy and girls were generally unable to use them expertly, but they were made to watch the process, with its seemingly endless beating of the earth floor compounded of river mud, ant-hill clay and cowdung. Once the floor was beaten so that it was level and all cracks had disappeared, the Ngoni girls were made to get down on their knees and learn how to polish it with damp ashes and a smear of cowdung, rubbed [413] 356 868 [237]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 24 343 241 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 262 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 462 [559] [514] [437]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

call rural districts. By virtue of their membership of rural districts and counties, villages have certain formal relationships with each other which we may regard as mainly political, and which we have discussed in connexion with the organization of the state. But there are other inter-village activities that are not related directly to the tribal political structure. These include hunting, dancing, drinking, trading, and some co-operative economic activities. 628 [631]

Hunting takes place for the most part in the dry season, but hunts may be organized at any time to deal with predatory animals which are causing damage to crops and livestock. Only men and boys hunt. Any man who chooses can organize a hunt, but it is usually a man of middle age with some experience and of some standing in his village who sends out word to the neighbouring villages that he proposes to hunt in such-and-such an area on such-and-such a day. The organizer is referred to as the owner of the hunt, and he is in tactical command. He nominates two men to be in charge of the two wings of the hunt, and himself stays in the middle of the single line abreast in which the hunters arrange themselves. Instructions are shouted from the centre and passed out to the wings. Any animals seen are attacked with knobkerries, spears, dogs, and, if there are any, guns. The owner of the hunt has no special privileges over the animals killed, which are divided between the men who actually kill them and the people who carry them back from the hunt to the village. Attendance at such hunts is not enforced, and if the chase is unsuccessful, people tend to drop out half-way. In the main, people distribute themselves along the line of the hunt in village groups, and the leaders of the wings usually bring with them a large band of hunters from their own villages. There are usually about sixty people on a hunt, coming from perhaps ten different villages. 224 628 [462]

Dancing is an activity that brings people together from many villages. Although girls, and sometimes boys, hold dances in their own villages in the evenings, these dances are thought of as practices rather than as proper dances. The latter take place in connexion with ceremonies of various kinds, and indeed wherever there is beer to drink there is the probability of some sort of dancing. Dances are also held for their own sake, without reference to other forms of social activity. Of these, two are important in promoting inter-village ties. The first, *ngoma*,[1] the most formal of all dances, was danced by regiments in the days when the regimental system was still operative, but 535 628 [273]

[1] Cf. the Zulu dance *ingoma*, and Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 52.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than either of these two drinks, and the drinking of it is essentially a 273
social event. The kind of beer brewed is made from maize, sorghum, and finger millet. It is brewed by women, the process lasting about a [462]
week. The beer can be drunk at any time during the week, but it is not regarded as truly beer until after the brewing process has been completed. It remains good to drink for about three days, after which it becomes too sour. About 20 to 30 gallons of beer are brewed at a time. The beer can be sold, used to provide refreshment for participants in some ceremony or other, offered in return for labour or other services, or else just drunk for its own sake. In each case the presence of beer in the village acts as a magnet attracting people from other villages. Beer that is sold is of economic importance as it is the principal [434]
way in which women raise funds for themselves. In connexion with a [796]
ceremony of some kind, the attraction of the beer is secondary in general to that exerted by the ceremony itself. The provision of beer in return for utilitarian services we shall discuss later. It is in the pattern of behaviour adopted when beer is drunk for its own sake that we can see reflected the structure of social action at the village level.

Beer is stored in earthenware jars of about 7 gallons capacity. A [251]
calabash-gourd cup is used to ladle the beer into earthenware bowls [415]
holding about 4 pints; from these the beer is drunk. When the beer is ready for drinking, the friendly fellow villagers of the man whose wife has brewed come to the beer-hut, which is usually the woman's kitchen, and the owner of the beer drinks the first jar with them. The procedure with each jar is that the owner of the beer gives the jar to someone, almost invariably a man, who becomes known as the divider of the beer, and who calls on someone junior to him to act as the dispenser of the beer. The dispenser sits on the ground and fills up the bowls from the jar under the instruction of the divider of the beer, and then takes them, or points them out to, the people to whom the divider wishes to give the beer. Thus the beer is given away in jars by the owner of the beer to the dividers of the beer, and is then divided into bowlfuls, and given by the dividers to yet other people. The owners of the bowlfuls drink some and pass on the bowls so that other people may drink. Each time these gifts of beer of different quantities are made they are acknowledged by the recipient in the form of a praise, consisting of the syllable *yo* followed by the descent-name of the giver. This is also done when a bowl or a jar is finished, so that when the last bowl of a jar is finished the owner of the bowl is praised, then the divider of the beer, and finally the owner of the beer. The

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neighbouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern practice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[857] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

342 /5 cont'd/ With both bamboo and Pole huts, The
[612] construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and
[353] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September,
[221] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is co-operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and
[416] help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer,
[465] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

343 Storehouses are built of bamboo or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household
[692] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in
[241] separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

/7 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household,
415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or
[511] china crockery.

323 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every
[462] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood.
[432] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol
[415] and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves
[824] of the mbwabwa tree.

Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the
285 different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men,
[353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be
[462] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings
[491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often
[443] made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /8/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [231] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after [273] the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [251] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [461] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and 224 taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by themselves and sell the meat.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have 100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it must disappear. 595 [171]

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday, at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock. But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am satisfied the banns are published and they are married. 177 [587]

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages, for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth, and pay for his wife. 583

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed. 562 565

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. 462 [171] [243] [252]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE VIII. PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS TO BE PAID BY NGONI NATIVE TREASURY, 1949

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Description of post	*Number of posts*	*Mean annual salary in £s, to nearest £*
Chief	10	72
Councillor	4	60
Treasury clerk	2½(*a*)	57
Artisan	2	42
Court clerk	10	25
Messenger	22	25
Assessor	20	24
School attendance officer	5	24
Road foreman	2	24
Office boy	1	24
Mail runner	2	16
Nursery keeper (fruit trees)	1	15
School matron	6	9(*b*)
Total number of full-time posts	87½	

(*a*) One tax-collecting clerk whose work was in Fort Jameson Township was paid jointly by the Ngoni and Cewa Native Treasuries.
(*b*) Including £1½ contributed by missions.

This table is based on the approved estimates for 1949 and it is possible that not all the posts were filled. In previous years all posts had been filled without difficulty, except for the matrons.
The emoluments shown here do not include allowances paid for bicycles, lorry fares, and rent-free housing available for some employees.
Not included in the table are the sums paid to a few employees at the Demonstration Farm, and the provision made for 240 man-months of casual labour on the roads at 25*s.* a month and 360 man-days of carrier labour at 10*d.* a day.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as young men, and had known the independence and 178
supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'every- 184
thing is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when 561
faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the [797] influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, mini- [463] sters and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni [183] way of living, and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they [156] said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described 178
briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes domin- 829
ated social relationships. There was a determined struggle 177
on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate [861]
these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasa- [186] land sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

521 867 men's affairs. The kind of topics discussed by men at the kraal gate included hunting, in the right season; cases heard in the courts and the application of Ngoni law to all subjects of the Ngoni chiefs; the organization of village affairs from tax collecting and dealing with tax evaders to beer drinks and burials and building houses; the sales of cotton, tobacco and cattle at near-by markets and the current prices; the various labour recruiters combing the villages for likely young men and the latest stories brought back by men who had returned from working in the south. Every now and then, particularly when the talk ranged round decisions in the courts or adding to the herds of cattle, references were made to the Ngoni past, to their relations with Europeans, both missionaries and officials, and to the behaviour of the non-Ngoni groups in the Ngoni kingdoms. The older boys listened attentively and as we shall see later in Chapter VII acquired among other things an extensive knowledge about the needs and uses of cattle. The younger ones pricked up their ears now and then when a familiar name or event was mentioned, and stored up questions to ask their father at a time when he was willing to listen and answer.

576 417 There was the usual Ngoni formality about where people sat at the kraal gate. The most senior men sat on each side of the opening, leaning up against the gate-posts, with the rest in decreasing order of rank as they were farther from the gate. The cleared space on each side of the gate and in front of it was all known as the 'gate of the kraal'. The craftsmen [469] who were carving wood or twisting bark rope, making baskets or plaiting mats, sat according to their age and rank on the edges of the senior group or among them. They could have carried on their trade anywhere, but they preferred the company of their fellows and did not want to miss listening to the talk or the arrival of strangers. The herd-boys, when 858 they were present, were on the extreme edges of those sitting [561] there, divided into two groups, 'youths' and boys. Each [262] group made its own fire for boiling milk and roasting sweet potatoes or ground-nuts.96

476 having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river
342 with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

463 Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established
[177] and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft.
281 Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from
[411] skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons,
322 wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most
[413] Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what
285 was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope
283 for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

534 Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

action of the hoe. 'They are our kin according to their eyes' was said as a reminder of misplaced trust in those who appeared to be helpful but were not really. 577 538 829

Readiness to take advice both from their age-mates and from older men was another quality held to be desirable in young men. Proverbs illustrating this were: 'He that refuses instruction will be surprised by blood,' and 'He remembers that he fell; he forgot that he was hurt.' As often with proverbs, there were others with a contrary emphasis which were sometimes used as a retort to the former ones, or in self-defence. 'The inheritance was eaten by those worthy of it' was intended as a rejoinder not to interfere in other people's affairs, when unwanted advice was offered. 'The body is felt by its owner' was sometimes said to encourage a man to stick to his own opinion. On the other hand a too abrupt rejoinder, especially to an older person, was regarded as discourteous, and onlookers said 'You cause the spittle to be dry' to express extreme disapproval.

Ngoni personality in a changing culture

The direction of the training of boys had been formerly towards military life, and towards the qualities which made effective fighting men, and emphasized loyalty to leaders and camaraderie in the regiments. This emphasis on military preparedness was however never the sole emphasis in Ngoni training, and hence when warfare came to an end, there remained traditional spheres of influence and activity which were an integral part of life in the Ngoni kingdoms, as well as new spheres of activity opened up by missions, the administration, the trading companies and the labour recruiters. 867 177 [703]

The traditional forms of activity were found in Ngoni local government which included the chief's administration and the courts of law; family and village affairs including the building up of herds and buying and selling cattle; and ritual life. The new kinds of activity included occupations such as teacher, minister, clerk, store assistant, houseboy, 463 177

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

463 foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group
177 involved the earning, spending and sharing of money in-
[434] comes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered
[571] opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

624 In local government and in the courts, which formed an
693 integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom, ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain
[827] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial
[562] ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

622 In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'. 622 [554]

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders. 463 177 [871]

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptise younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the 797 871 [177] 159 797 [577] [796] [184] [851]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the
797 church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been
159 threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition
875 and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary
[622] behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to
[871] some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organize his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described
177 in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose
797 partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or
871 ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools
186 were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose personal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

871 Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected
463 their boys who had been to school and had entered European
554 employment away from their homes, to find work which assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

position. They wanted them to be, or to become, senior clerks, trusted store assistants, valued houseboys, foremen in charge of other men, hospital assistants. They wanted them, in other words, to be in positions where Ngoni traits would be appreciated, and where good behaviour and self-control, ability to supervise others, responsibility and initiative, obedience to orders, would be recognized and rewarded.

In conclusion here is a record of a conversation I heard in the village of a very senior chief, so senior that he was given the title of *Inkosi* when his subjects addressed him. The chief, who was then in his seventies, but active and vigorous, was sitting in a chair on the veranda of his hut, out of the sun's glare, with several of the senior men of the village behind him. Two young teachers in charge of a school came to greet him. They bent one knee as they squatted in front of him, as they had been taught to do as children, gave him the customary greeting, and waited in silence till he spoke.

'How is your school?'

'The classes are full and the children are learning well, *Inkosi*.'

'How do they behave?'

'Like Ngoni children, *Inkosi*.'

'What do they learn?'

'They learn reading, writing and arithmetic, scripture and geography and drill.'

'Is that education?'

'It is education, *Inkosi*.'

'No! No! Education is *very* broad, *very* deep. It is not only in books, it is learning to live. I am an old man. When I was a boy I went with the army to the Bemba war. Then the mission came and I went to school. I became a teacher. Then I was a chief. I have seen this country change, and now the young men go away to work. I tell you Ngoni children must learn how to live, and how to work and earn money, and how to build up our land. *Uyezwa na?*' (Do you hear?)

'*Yebo Inkosi*.' (Yes, O chief.)

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neighbouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern practice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

IV. WIDER CONTACTS

Other Local Groups

We have so far in this account been concerned with delineating the main outlines of political and village structure and the kinship system. We have examined the internal constitution of the tribe and have only been concerned secondarily with the external relationships by which the Ngoni are connected with the wider world. But in the Fort Jameson District there are, and have been for many years, people who do not fall within the tribal framework but with whom the Ngoni interact. These include people from the British Isles and South Africa, Indians, and Coloured persons, as well as Africans from other tribes. The Europeans are there as administrators, missionaries, farmers, and traders. Indians are traders and farmers, while Coloured persons are farmers and foremen. Africans from other tribes are, like the Ngoni, labourers on the farms and in the township, as well as subsistence cultivators in their own tribal areas. 563

The land of the District is divided into Native Reserve and Trust land, farm-land, township, and Crown land. Almost all Ngoni villages lie on Reserve or Trust land, and it is in this zone that most of the activities described so far take place. On the farm-land Ngoni participate not as headmen or lieutenants or chiefs, but as labourers and foremen. They still fill the roles of husband, wife, sibling, parent, and child, and sometimes other kinship positions, but the family in the farm compound is on a smaller scale than in the village. In the town of Fort Jameson the range of activity open to them is greater, and there are Ngoni butchers, drivers, clerks, shop assistants, Native Urban Court assessors, and so on. All these roles on farm and in the town are shared with Africans from other tribes in the Eastern Province and from more distant regions. 311 463

The Churches

The influence of the non-African groups extends out beyond the areas in which they live into the reserves. We have already seen how the Administration has affected the life of the tribe. The Christian Church has also had a profound influence. By 1910 there were three denominations at work in Ngoni country: the Dutch Reformed Church Mission,[1] the White Fathers,[2] and the Universities' Mission to 797 795

[1] Algemeene Zending Commissie der Nederduitsche Gereformeerde Kerk in den Oranje Vrijstaat.

[2] Société des Missionaires de Notre Dame d'Afrique, a Catholic Order.

/8 cont'd/

285 the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found [487] and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now 415 very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat 412 porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. [531] Wooden hemispherical pats, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

412 At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzilia quanzensis or Monotes trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is [531] a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four [504] inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones [426] or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are 352 sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make [463] a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

/13 cont'd/

463 Other specialised activities carried out in the village, apart from those mentioned, are such things as shoe mending, bicycle repairing, and carpentry. These trades are followed by men who learnt them in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and are carried on as part-time occupations. Village stores are modest affairs, with goods for sale that have been bought retail from Indian traders in Fort Jameson, and have been brought out to the village on bicycle. Larger stores on the main roads may be able to buy wholesale, and may employ a tailor making up cloth bought in the store. Shops called in the vernacular "hotels," where tea and scones are sold and perhaps bread, also lie on the main roads.

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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Karonga in 1895 and although slave trading went on through Portuguese territory even after 1900, Arabs never made any effort to maintain this trade in the Fort Jameson area. 439 648 [567]

When Wiese left the country in 1898 his work was done. His departure symbolized the end of the pioneering stage of colonialism and the beginning of the stage of settled paternal administration. Mpezeni was reinstated after the war, but there was no position into which Wiese could have been reinstated, nor anyone who wanted to reinstate him. Unlike Mpezeni, Wiese did not represent the long-term interests of any powerful group. In the history of empires there are many examples of men like Wiese who succeeded in weathering the transition from one phase to another and ended their lives in honour and glory. But Wiese had sold his assets before the war began. When it was over, his one saleable attribute, his friendship with Mpezeni, had been compromised and was no longer of value. He departed from a scene which had no place for him.

An examination of how the Imperial and the financial struggles were inter-connected would take us beyond the bounds of Ngoniland and of our subject. We have, however, shown that the three social fields were inter-connected, and that moves in one field were affected by and in turn inspired moves in another. It is important to realize that this inter-connection was not due merely to geographical accident. From one point of view it was accidental that Ngoniland should lie near so many frontiers and that there should be an ancient gold-mine in the vicinity. But Britain, the North Charterland, and Nsingu were all struggling partly for the same thing, control of the Ngoni people. Even Warton understood this. At the end of 1896 he was asked: 'The Natives, I understand, are friendly?' He replied: 'I am glad to say that, so far, we have succeeded in establishing most friendly relations with M'Pesene. . . . Fighting would not only be costly, but we should lose our labourers if we engaged in hostilities. So you see on selfish, as well as humanitarian grounds, we have every reason to avoid warfare and bloodshed.'[155] The mineral resources of Mpezeni's country may have been largely illusory but the human resources were real. Ngoni men could fight for slaves, for dependants, for cattle and for glory; they could carry loads from Tete and prepare to work in the North Charterland's mines; or they could migrate to Southern Rhodesia to work there: but they could not do all these things simultaneously. The fight to destroy the Ngoni army was as much one to secure a labour supply for European capital investment as it was to secure 439 464 648

[155] *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 law andorder. In this, not only the Ngoni were concerned. There
464 was a sortage of labour in Nyasaland and Mpezeni's raids pre-
648 vented abourers reaching that country from the interior. The campaign against Mwase in 1895 was undertaken partly with the aim of oening up labour routes and Mpezeni's defeat carried this a stage urther. The Collector at Kotakota wrote shortly after the war: 'Its quite safe to say that no greater assistance has been given to these listricts (and in fact to the Protectorate) than this opening up of th Luapula Valley by the conquest of Mpezeni.'[126] Yet the Luapulais 350 miles from Fort Jameson. Even Ngoni technical skill in ghting was of value to the new conquerors, for within six
[167] months f the war Ngoni fighting men were in Southern Rhodesia, not as aies of the Ndebele but as part of the British South Africa Police. Within ten months, the headquarters of segment 13 had been mved to make way for the new Administrative capital. With th defeat of Mpezeni, North-Eastern Rhodesia became a country.

A fial point requires explication. Granted that the Ngoni
178 social synem had to change in this new complex social environment,
361 and grated also that their activities, in particular raiding, had to
648 be adaptd to new demands on their labour, why did not the Ngoni continueo live in large villages as they had done hitherto? There are numrous analogies in Africa where segmentary social systems have ben fitted into an Administrative framework, and where raiding as given way to migrant labour, and yet the pattern of settlemer has remained the same. Why did the big Ngoni villages disappea after 1898?

Partof the answer to this question can be stated in ecological terms. I pre-conquest times, the dense population, human and bovine, ie great stretches of cultivated land, and the manifest prosperit of the people impressed themselves vividly on contemporary oservers accustomed to the scattered settlements of the surrounding tribes. Angus writes:

> 'Before us lay an undulating valley some miles in breadth, which, as the heavily timbered hills on either side proclaimed, had once been covered with forest, but was now denuded of every vestige of a tree. Village after village surrounded by waving cornfields, and green plains dotted with herds of cattle, stretched away into the distance. Never before in any of my African wanderings had I seen such an extent of land under cultivation; the cornfields seemed unending, and the size and number of the

[126] *B.C.A.G.*, v, 6 (30 April 1898), p. 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Four

TRANSITION

1. Administrative policy 2. White control 3. Chiefs 4. County segments
5. Relative status of chiefs 6. Counties as territorial units 7. Villages

1. *Administrative policy*

THE DEFEAT of the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1898 was followed by the establishment of an Administration under the British South Africa Company. The greater part of the Nyasaland troops who had done the fighting left the area in April 1898[1] but the North Charterland party remained at their old headquarters at Fort Young, the B.S.A. Company made a base at Fort Patrick a few miles away, and in Nyasaland the Protectorate Administration maintained a station at Fort Manning. The new township of Fort Jameson was established in October 1898[2] and the first mission station was opened by the Dutch Reformed Church Mission at Magwero in 1899, in response to a request for a mission made the previous year by Mpezeni.[3] From these bases, White administrators, traders and missionaries, aided by their Black assistants, began to alter the form of Ngoni life. We are here particularly concerned with political organization, and it was the Administration which was particularly influential in determining what form the new Ngoni political organization would take. But political systems do not exist in isolation, and the kinds of political relationship which we find existing to-day have been influenced by the changing economic, commercial and religious relationships which have been determined more specifically by traders, labour recruiters, planters and missionaries as well as by the exertions of administrators.

The Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia was in the hands of the B.S.A. Company, and the policy adopted was to some extent influenced by developments in other territories administered by the Company. Southern Rhodesia was much more accessible from the sea than North-Eastern Rhodesia, more capital had been invested in it, and its mineral wealth appeared to be considerably greater. North-Eastern Rhodesia was therefore

[1] 210, fo. 67.
[2] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71.
[3] Brewer, *Mbiri*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and,
648 possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop
[464] the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that
[643] the cheapest way of running the country was through the
[622] indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[4] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all
[692] kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the
[651] most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black
[464] leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to *a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies* was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with
[797] establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

177 Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration
464 to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity
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[4] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of earning money to pay tax, together with such subsidiary measures as the prohibition of Native smelting, and the pressure on men to clothe themselves in imported clothing, ensured that the old order changed beyond the mere loss of sovereignty. Not only were links established with Southern Rhodesia and later with other parts of Africa, but new patterns of distribution of wealth and power were set up which were incompatible with the old order. The chief who stayed at home ruling his people found himself outclassed by the newly returned labourers from the south, with their display of clothes, money and urban mannerisms. The relationships between one tribe and another which formerly had found expression in fighting had now to find other expressions, and began to be based on different interests. 177 439 464 648 [556]

These general considerations applied throughout North-Eastern Rhodesia. In Ngoniland local variation was supplied more by the presence of the North Charterland than by the fact that the Ngoni had been defeated in war. The North Charterland was interested in the economic development of its concession, whereas the Administration had to consider the needs of other territories governed by the B.S.A. Company, particularly Southern Rhodesia. The same administrative policy was applied to the Ngoni as to neighbouring tribes which had not been conquered by force of arms. Nevertheless in Ngoni eyes the Administration discriminated against Ngoni in favour of Cewa. Many Cewa who had been captured shortly before 1898 moved away from Ngoniland after the war, or at least moved in the direction of their homeland. With the end of Ngoni raiding the no-man's-land round Ngoni country filled up again with Cewa who had been displaced when the Ngoni first arrived in the 1870s. Cewa chiefdoms were re-established and recognized by the Administration, to the chagrin of the Ngoni. 439 648 [186]

Even the Ngoni themselves were referred to by the Administration as the 'Angoni-Chewa' by way of emphasizing their mixed ethnic composition. When the Native Reserve scheme was put forward in 1913 the Ngoni chiefs objected to the Cewa being allotted land of their own, and suggested that all the tribes of the district should be placed in one reserve under Mpezeni II. The Administration did not agree. When villages were moved into the proposed reserves in the 1920s, a few more villages left Ngoniland for Cewa country. At the same time other villages moved into Ngoniland from other chiefdoms in the face of alienation of land or difficulties with the Portuguese Administration. Thus to-day many villages in Ngoniland are of Cewa origin and many villages in Cewa chiefdoms are of 648 [167]

Ngoni origin.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 Ngoni origin. The sharp cleavage between the Ngoni and their neighbours has gone.

Another relic of the privileged position enjoyed by the Ngoni 439 before the conquest which did not long survive their defeat was 648 the subsidy paid to Mpezeni. Under the terms of Wiese's alleged 651 concession of 14 April 1891, Mpezeni was to be paid £200 a year and one per cent of Wiese's profits. Wiese made presents to Mpezeni, but there is no record of any substantial payment. When the provisional grant of 10,000 square miles of land was made by the B.S.A. Company to the Mozambique Company on 8 May 1895, the latter agreed not to exercise any rights it might have under Wiese's concessions, but there was no mention of the disposal of any possible obligations. Warton continued Wiese's practice of giving presents to Mpezeni, but there was no regular payment. As Wiese's concession had never been recognized it would seem that there was no legal obligation on either the North Charterland or the B.S.A. Company to pay an annual subsidy. Nevertheless after the Ngoni war the two companies must have come to some agreement on the matter. In April 1898, according to the answer to a question in the Commons, the B.S.A. Company were ready to pay Mpezeni £200 a year 'for the present'. In January 1900 the Administrator stated that the Collector at Fort Jameson had spent only £50 during the current financial year on payments to Mpezeni and 'his loyal indunas'. He proposed to spend a further £50 during the year and the remaining £100 of the subsidy was to be distributed among the surrounding tribes in the interests of the North Charterland.[5] These special arrangements were presumably superseded in 1903 when, under the scheme of Native Administration drawn up in that year, provision was made for the payment of all recognized chiefs from the general funds of the Territory.

Similarly, the military organization of the Ngoni broke down 648 after the conquest. One of the first acts of the Administration was 701 to forbid Ngoni to carry weapons of war.[6] Four new age-set 561 regiments were formed between 1898 and 1914 but they were little more than dancing societies, singing the old songs which had excited their seniors in the 'time of peace' before the conquest but unable to emulate their military achievements. During the 1914-18 war the majority of young Ngoni men who might have formed a [464] new age-set were enrolled as carriers and soldiers on the Allied side.

[5] *Parliamentary Debates, 4th Series*, lv (1898), cols. 1654-5; report of a meeting between Administrator and North Charterland manager, 15 January 1900 (Lusaka archives); cf. Poole, MS., 'Tribes of East Luangwa Province'.

[6] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 201.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

After the war an age-set was formed but its activities conflicted with the demands of the churches and schools and it was not a success. No further attempts have been made to carry on the system. Ngoni now say, 'What need have we of regiments now that there are no other tribes for us to fight?'

2. *White control*

Apart from the squabble over cattle, the surrender of Mpezeni on 9 February 1898 marked the end of the Ngoni war. The Nyasaland troops did not pursue the leaders who fled, although Brake moved Mpezeni to the vicinity of Fort Manning. In May he wrote, perhaps over-optimistically, that in the central part of Ngoniland rebuilding had begun.[7]

It is clear that at first the Ngoni acquiesced in their defeat. Whereas prior to the war Whites had lived in their country on sufferance, now their right to be there was not challenged. Only a few months after the war Harding arrived, recruiting police for service in Southern Rhodesia. He was received in a 'most friendly manner by the chief in charge who gave an ocular demonstration of his loyalty by voluntarily and immediately handing over to my charge 200 of his young men for my newly formed Police Force...'.[8] After the death of Mpezeni I, his lieutenants waited the traditional period of a year. Mpezeni's heir Nangu and his wife Mkucwa had both been shot during the war, and in September 1901 the lieutenants petitioned the Administration to appoint their eldest son, Ciloa, aged about 10 years, as chief. On 23 July 1903 the Native Commissioner held a meeting at which Madzimawi, son of Mpezeni I in the residue of segment 4, asked to be allowed to take the name Zwangendaba.[9] Thus even at that early date the over-riding authority of the Administration was acknowledged in matters concerning the chieftainship.

The establishment of an Administration based on Fort Jameson in 1898 was governed, in so far as the British legal system was concerned, by the legislation consolidated in the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890.[10] Relations between the Administration and its African subjects were controlled by the Africa Order in Council 1889.[11] This was superseded by later Orders in 1900, 1911 and 1924,[12] marking the delimitation of North-Eastern Rhodesia as a separate

[7] 198; see, fo. 69.
[8] Harding, *For Bugles*, p. 82.
[9] *Reports on the Administration*, 1900-2, p. 408; see pp. 1390f.
[10] 53 & 54 Vict., c. 37.
[11] *S.R. & O.*, Rev., 1890, iii, pp. 239-332.
[12] *S.R. & O.*, 89 of 1900, 438 of 1911 and 324 of 1924.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 support those of his colleagues. However, chiefs and others do
[661] sometimes manage to play off one administrator against another where there are differences of interest between different departments of the Administration, and occasionally appeals by Ngoni chiefs to high Administrative officials against the actions of their juniors are successful. It is easier for Ngoni to exploit the much greater differences of interest between the different sections of the non-African community, officials, missions, planters and European and Indian traders.

648 In the early years of this century it appears that the chiefs were
662 approached by labour recruiters, planters, and missionaries who wished to gain their favour and utilize this to their own advantage. It is difficult to gauge to what extent this practice continues. There are one or two recent instances where the missions have clearly
[791] recognized the importance to them of securing the goodwill of an Ngoni in high authority, and it would also appear that some high-placed Ngoni have utilized their position to gain from the missions services which might not otherwise have been so readily available to them. With the cessation of labour recruiting there has been no
[464] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[466] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[574] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

they might give their support to the enforcement of law. Murder has always been a public delict in Ngoni society and before the conquest, a murderer was usually tried by senior lieutenants at the headquarters of either segment 4 or 10 and if found guilty was executed by the first lieutenant of the segment. Ngoni still think that murderers ought to be brought to justice, but the investigation of murder, a matter for the Northern Rhodesia Police, is likely to be obstructed even though the investigation may be carried out entirely by Africans. Those affected by the murder wish to see the murderer punished, but they also want to keep clear of the legal process involved. 696 648 [682]

10. *External links*

The death of Zwangendaba was followed by a dispersal of Ngoni groups into various parts of east and central Africa. The present dispersal of Ngoni men and women from Fort Jameson over southern Africa arises from a different social situation and takes place in a different way. The early mining enterprises of Southern Rhodesia, like those in the Union of South Africa before them, were based on migratory labour. As we have noted, Ngoni began going to Southern Rhodesia only a few months after they had been conquered, and they have continued to go ever since. Although the first batch of migrants were apparently ordered to go by someone in authority, the great bulk of men who have gone away subsequently have gone as individuals, even if they were recruited in batches of a hundred or more at a time. Thus, the dispersal of population is not directly related to the political system of the tribe, as was the pre-conquest dispersal. There has been a certain amount of regional preference, one county supplying more than its share of migrants to the Northern Rhodesia Copperbelt, the Nyasaland counties supplying proportionately more migrants to the Union as compared with the Northern Rhodesia counties, and so on, but these preferences are not marked. The inhabitants of each county, and indeed of nearly every village, have kinsfolk who are scattered over the towns and farms of the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, the Transvaal and farther south. 167 464

Ngoni men and women are thus bound by many ties to other persons and groups located far away from the villages of Ngoniland. For the most part these ties bind individuals, for each person has distant attachments which are not the same as his neighbours. In this volume we are concerned primarily with politics, with social relations between enduring groups, and we shall reserve our discussion of the social implications of migration for a later work in 167 87 464

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is sometimes called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and other Ngoni groups. In 1914, envoys came from the northern Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market.

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area.

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 262

to the method of rearing calves by letting them take all the milk they wanted, and partly to the practice of letting the herd-boys have the rest. In villages under a *nakomazana* of a Swazi clan, who had a wife in his big house also of a Swazi clan, the consumption of milk was to some extent organized. These senior women saw that the herd-boys brought them a certain amount of milk each day, and they gave it to young children or invalids, and made some into *amasi*. 272

Another practice which restricted the use of meat and milk as regular items of diet was that the building up of the herds was regarded as a primary responsibility of the owners and guardians of cattle. Hence calves were given milk, which in western countries would be drawn off for human use, and the killing of beasts, unless they were sick, was restricted to selling the meat for cash or using it in ritual. One of the embarrassments suffered by an anthropologist was being presented with a beast by people who hardly ever killed one for their own use. It was true that a general share-out took place when the beast was killed, but it was none the less one beast fewer in the herd, and it was the maintenance and increase of the herds which was the cattle-owners' chief concern. 231 262

This emphasis on numbers rather than quality, which caused so much misunderstanding between government departments and cattle-owners, was closely related to the forms of exchange in cattle. Formerly cattle were handed over either as *lobola* or as penalties for the infringement of laws. Both these forms of transfer continued, but there were additional demands which cattle-owners or potential owners had to be aware of in watching the increase or diminution of their herds. One characteristic of these modern forms of exchange was the ready convertibility of cattle into cash and of cash into cattle. We have seen how young men away at work sent money back to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. We have seen too how the possession of cattle made it possible to sell a beast and obtain cash for various purposes, and the proximity of markets where there were butchers' stalls encouraged this sale of cattle. 231 437

One of the most frequent reasons for the conversion of cattle into cash was for the purpose of hiring labour. We saw in Chapter I of this section how Lepati Nzungu killed cattle to feed the men who carried bricks and cement for his brother's tomb and sold another beast to pay wages to the bricklayers. The traditional way of paying labourers had been by feeding them with meat, and the modern method was to pay them cash wages and to find the money for it by the sale of cattle. Such labour could be for cultivating, house-building, fence-building, road-making and other local work. The possession of cattle which were easily convertible into cash made possible this payment of labour, and this relationship between the role of cattle-owner and the role of employer of labour was common. 231 464 [465]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182] In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Para-
mount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity,
under several missions, never achieved, especially in educa-
tion, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved
among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans
had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils
from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered
villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn
money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command
financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment
which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the
1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they
called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here
to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the genera-
tion of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasaland had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

[77 561 464] The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, [871 434 585] if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that [885] earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the headring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any prohibition on marriage until [582] a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no [167] wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part.

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000 live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other*.

* For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 202 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. The punishment of adultery

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognized other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognized and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. Labour migration

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Rhodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 101 641

people of Mpezeni '. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is ' the thing ' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, " We are all Ngoni ". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N M 101 186 [464] N M [614]

N 829 [614]

The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, ' What is the meaning of a clan? ' they reply, ' It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many ' tribes ' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

N 121 101

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[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word ' clan ' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. ' Tribe ' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which ' tribe ' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the ' blanket term ' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word ' tribe ' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

N M 101 128

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of
814 those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Azungu* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for under-
[609] standing the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognize Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final
175 humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with
648 his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot';
[727] and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the old *indunas* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *inkosi* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic
178 changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and
[648] demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on
[464] both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand
[167] for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1924.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 562 858 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one 486 might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly 562 by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to 484 look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives 167 and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko-Mtoko service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these 205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 249 [361] No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more than 10 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 33.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

can live in the village and cultivate a garden. The maintenance of 464
contacts is facilitated by the fairly general cessation of work on the 249
farms at the week-ends. Apart from two periods of tobacco slump, the local demand for labour has exceeded the supply ever since the earlier period of European settlement. As early as January 1910 the manager of the North Charterland Exploration Company complained to the Administration that the lack of local labour was very serious, and attributed this to the large number of people who were going away to work in Southern Rhodesia. This theme has been repeated over and over again ever since. The practical effect of this chronic local shortage of labour has been that work on the farms has always been a more easy-going affair than work away on the mines or in the big towns. Men have been able to absent themselves from work to attend to their affairs at home very much as they have pleased. Payment has [465]
been either for piece-work or for the number of days worked, so that at one time it was not unusual for a man to take two or three months to complete thirty days' work, for which he had contracted.

Prior to about 1930, there were a few villages located on farm-land, 461
whose inhabitants undertook to work for so many days, with pay, in 465
return for permission to remain on the land. With the completion of 466
the move into reserves, this became rare, and at the present time the bulk of the people who live on farm-land are accommodated in compounds provided for them by the farmer. These people are the labourers on the farm for the time being, their families, and friends. The compound is under the charge of a foreman who is usually an employee of long standing on the farm. On some of the farms there [241]
are small gardens, but none of them, as far as I know, permit the 235
keeping of cattle by the labourers. This means that a man with cattle must continue to keep them at home in his village or in the village of a relative. Cattle are still the principal form of investment, particularly for people who cannot spend their capital in building a brick house, so that it is common to find in a village that many of the cattle in the byre are being tended for the benefit of an absent owner who spends the majority of his time away on a farm and who may not even have a hut in the village.

The demand for labour on the tobacco farms varies considerably 249
with the time of year, being greatest from about Christmas until about 464
June. At the same time, the calls on a man to tend his own garden are greatest from about November until May. Farmers therefore try to get labour for a few days at a time from people who live in villages

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
857 boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
462 selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headmen responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Labour Ordinances, he can only do so through the District Commissioner's court at Fort Jameson, which may take up more of his time than he thinks the matter worth. In consequence, few actions are brought by farmers against their African labourers and if a man breaks his contract and deserts, no action may be taken against him. 691 578

It is not surprising that the efficiency of labour operating under these conditions is low, and that the wages are also low. These two conditions react on one another, and it is misleading to regard the low wages as the only cause of the inefficiency, or the inefficiency as the only cause of the low wages. The practical effect is that men who wish to earn more money than they can get as labourers on the farms at 14*s.* a month with food go away to Southern Rhodesia. It must be observed, however, that men started going to Southern Rhodesia long before the tobacco farms were opened up to their present extent. 461 [465]

Labour Migration

Prior to the European conquest, the only men who had worked for Whites were those employed as carriers by the handful of travellers who passed through the country before 1896, and as carriers and labourers by the North Charterland Exploration Company from 1896 onwards. But immediately after the end of the fighting in 1898, recruiting started among the Ngoni for police work in Southern Rhodesia, and there has been a continual flow of labour migrants south ever since. 167 464

There have been considerable fluctuations in the number of men going south since that time, particularly during the two world wars, when the military requirements of the Territory exercised a greater claim. The latest figures for the Eastern Province as a whole show that, in 1946, 23 per cent. of the taxable males registered in the province were absent from the province. Another 17½ per cent. were at work within the province.[1] In May 1947, in two Ngoni counties with a combined total of 1,739 registered taxable males, it was found that 30 per cent. of them were at work in the Eastern Province and a further 42 per cent. were away elsewhere, a total of 72 per cent. away from their villages. Half of those living outside the Eastern Province were classified as 'lost', in that their present whereabouts were unknown to the people at home.[2] These figures exclude all men who have been 'lost' for more than five years.

[1] Labour Department, *Annual Report*, 1946, p. 12.
[2] These figures were given me by the District Commissioner, Fort Jameson.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

484 167 Looked at from the point of view of the individual, we find that all adult men have at some time or other been away to work, and that the majority have been to Southern Rhodesia once or twice.

Conclusion

466 In their lives on the farms and in Fort Jameson, Ngoni mix with men from other tribes, and their position is largely subsumed under the conditions common to all African labourers on all European-controlled farms. The Administration does not support the Ngoni more [648] than the Cewa, or one chief more than another. As the content of the relationship becomes more and more related to the world-wide polity and economy, so the nature of the relationship becomes common to a wider group. Ngoni living in Fort Jameson Compound live lives that are closer to the lives led by other tribes in compounds in other towns than they are to those led in the villages 5 miles away. 464 The phenomenon of labour migration greatly affects Ngoni social [167] structure, but is not a distinctively Ngoni institution in the same way as the Ngoni village is distinctively Ngoni. When Ngoni ex- [728] soldiers complain that when they were recruited they were promised that after the war they would get good jobs, and now find they do not get them, their sentiments derive more from their status as ex-soldiers, which they share with some millions of others, than they do from their status as Ngoni.

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701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
241 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
464 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital
[581] investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

161 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Mbandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four
681 huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[178] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after Nsingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important segment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

465 634 648 personal emoluments, there is usually some discussion. Thus the relative amounts paid to each chief provide us with some indication of the importance attached to him by the Administration and his colleagues. The salaries paid in 1946 are set out in Table VI together with the number of villages in each county in 1938, the last year for which I have that information.

TABLE VI. SALARIES OF CHIEFS AND VILLAGES IN THEIR COUNTIES

[643]

County segment	*Number of villages in county, 1938*	*Salary of county chief in £s per annum, 1946*
10	87	120 (a)
14	101	97½
4	88	82½
11	77	67½
12	42	52½
17	35	37½
13	30	27 (b)
15	28	27 (b)
9	19	30
16	19	30
Total	526	571½
Mean	52.6	57.15

(a) Paramount Chief.
(b) Calculated from monthly rate. Both these chieftainships were vacant for part of 1946.

It will be seen that the amount of a minor chief's salary is closely correlated with the number of villages in his county. The chiefs of counties 13 and 15 appear to be underpaid in relation to the number of their villages, and this may be related to efforts which the Administration had been making about that time to eliminate these two chieftainships and to amalgamate their chiefdoms with others. This arrangement also conforms to the alignment of segments. The Paramount Chief is in charge of county 10 but he is also head of primal segment 4 which includes all the others, and it is therefore appropriate that he should be paid most. Chief 14 is

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpeseni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16.

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kopili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpeseni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief.

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units*

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1950 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE VIII. PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS TO BE PAID BY NGONI NATIVE TREASURY, 1949

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Description of post	*Number of posts*	*Mean annual salary in £s, to nearest £*
Chief	10	72
Councillor	4	60
Treasury clerk	2½(a)	57
Artisan	2	48
Court clerk	10	25
Messenger	22	25
Assessor	20	24
School attendance officer	5	24
Road foreman	2	24
Office boy	1	24
Mail runner	2	16
Nursery keeper (fruit trees)	1	15
School matron	6	9(b)
Total number of full-time posts	87½	

(a) One tax-collecting clerk whose work was in Fort Jameson Township was paid jointly by the Ngoni and Cewa Native Treasuries.
(b) Including £1½ contributed by missions.

This table is based on the approved estimates for 1949 and it is possible that not all the posts were filled. In previous years all posts had been filled without difficulty, except for the matrons.
The emoluments shown here do not include allowances paid for bicycles, lorry fares, and rent-free housing available for some employees.
Not included in the table are the sums paid to a few employees at the Demonstration Farm, and the provision made for 240 man-months of casual labour on the roads at 25s. a month and 360 man-days of carrier labour at 10d. a day.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

hospitality involved both planning and expense. The Paramount's wife had to keep enough food stocks on hand not only to feed her own large family and household, but also to be able to respond to expected and unexpected guests. The Paramount's personal annual salary at that time was £60, out of which he had to keep his family and household in food and clothes and school fees, and pay for the upkeep of his house. The bulk of the cereals and some of the beans and other vegetables used in his house came from his fields worked by hired labour. Another source of food supply was the market 'customs', a small toll levied on the produce sold in the weekly market, which was paid chiefly in kind and put in the storehouses on the Paramount's farms to be used to feed his guests.[1]

The Paramount not only gave food and drink to the expected and unexpected visitors to the royal village. From time to time he gave a feast to which the Christians of the congregation of the mission church were invited, as on one New Year's Day when I was staying there. He gave a feast to all the neighbourhood on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. From time to time he invited all his people to dance *ngoma* or *ngomo* at the royal village and provided beer for all and food for the headmen and the chiefs and their wives. The organization of these big feasts demanded planning on a generous scale and a large outlay in maize for porridge and meat for relish. No feast at the Paramount's village was complete without meat enough to satisfy everyone.

The visitors, the feasts, the dances, all had their focal point in the royal residence in the royal village. There were two other focal points in the village where large numbers of people came regularly, and made the place where the Paramount lived a centre which brought his people together and brought him before them as their ruler. These were the market and the court-house which also housed his offices.

Before 1939 the market in the royal village was unique in the area for its size and the service which it rendered to the countryside. At any one time on a Saturday there would be 600 to 1,000 people present. In 1938 a second market was opened by the Paramount at Naipe at the southern end of his territory. They were definitely his markets in that he allotted space for them; fixed the days on which they were held; controlled the policing of the market and the strangers' huts where sellers arriving overnight could sleep; fixed the prices according to seasonal variations in supply; and, as we have seen, collected 'customs' in lieu of rents for sites. The market at Magwaga served an area extending roughly 15 miles to the east, 15 to the west and 10 miles to the north and south. It stretched in the east to below the escarpment whence came bamboo and

[1] An average weekly amount of customs collected over several weeks was 120, in cash, and a quantity of bananas, sugar-cane, vegetables and cereals amounting to two sackfuls and sometimes more. The cash was levied on meat, 1s. 3d. per cow, 1s. 6d. per goat or pig, and on mats, baskets, etc. at roughly 1d. in the 1s.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to the method of rearing calves by letting them take all the milk they wanted, and partly to the practice of letting the herd-boys have the rest. In villages under a *mukamanga* of a Swazi clan, who had a wife in his big house also of a Swazi clan, the consumption of milk was to some extent organised. These senior women saw that the herd-boys brought them a certain amount of milk each day, and they gave it to young children or invalids, and made some into *amasi*.

Another practice which restricted the use of meat and milk as regular items of diet was that the building up of the herds was regarded as a primary responsibility of the owners and guardians of cattle. Hence calves were given milk, which in western countries would be drawn off for human use, and the killing of beasts, unless they were sick, was restricted to selling the meat for cash or using it in ritual. One of the embarrassments suffered by an anthropologist was being presented with a beast by people who hardly ever killed one for their own use. It was true that a general share-out took place when the beast was killed, but it was none the less one beast fewer in the herd, and it was the maintenance and increase of the herds which was the cattle-owners' chief concern.

This emphasis on numbers rather than quality, which caused so much misunderstanding between government departments and cattle-owners, was closely related to the forms of exchange in cattle. Formerly cattle were handed over either as *lobola* or as penalties for the infringement of laws. Both these forms of transfer continued, but there were additional demands which cattle-owners or potential owners had to be aware of in watching the increase or diminution of their herds. One characteristic of these modern forms of exchange was the ready convertibility of cattle into cash and of cash into cattle. We have seen how young men away at work sent money back to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. We have seen too how the possession of cattle made it possible to sell a beast and obtain cash for various purposes, and the proximity of markets where there were butchers' stalls encouraged this sale of cattle.

One of the most frequent reasons for the conversion of cattle into cash was for the purpose of hiring labour. We saw in Chapter I of this section how Lopati Nzungu killed cattle to feed the men who carried bricks and cement for his brother's tomb and sold another beast to pay wages to the bricklayers. The traditional way of paying labourers had been by feeding them with meat, and the modern method was to pay them cash wages and to find the money for it by the sale of cattle. Such labour could be for cultivating, house-building, fence-building, road-making and other local work. The possession of cattle which were easily convertible into cash made possible this payment of labour, and this relationship between the role of cattle-owner and the role of employer of labour was common.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [248] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 177 233 234

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her.

681 593 In court, when a woman has to pay damages or a fine, she may be able to provide the money from her own resources. If not, she can turn to her husband or to her own kinsfolk. Provided damages for adultery are not involved, her husband, if he is not away working, ought to provide the money and a deliberate refusal to do so would precipitate a major quarrel and the possibility of divorce. If a woman gets into a fight at a party, and has to pay, say, half-a-crown to someone she has hurt, her husband ought to find the money for her. If he refuses to do so though she has no money of her own, the court will say that he no longer loves his wife, and is trying to find an opportunity to divorce her. Indeed, there would be little point in the husband refusing to pay, as those who cannot pay their fines are committed to prison, and he would then lose the services of his wife.

593 421 A woman can hold property in her own right and a husband honours a well-loved wife by giving her cattle. Gifts that she gets from her own kinsfolk do not pass to her husband, and such things as blankets and mats that she has used, even if her husband bought them, are regarded as her own property. Even the money that her husband gives her to make specific purchases is her own to do as she pleases with, so that a woman may forgo the skirt for which her husband has given her money and instead give it to her sister to buy something else. Husbands do not always like such actions, but they cannot do anything directly to prevent them. One of the ways in which a wife acquires livestock of her own is by buying animals with the money she gets from her husband for clothes. The produce of a wife's wet-season garden, maize, sorghum, millet, root crops, pulses, [591] cucurbits, is in effect held in common by husband and wife, and neither ought to sell any of it without first consulting the other. [586] On divorce the crops are divided between them unless the court decides that one party did not work in the garden, or has deserted the other. The money a woman earns by brewing beer for sale she usually keeps, although some men say that a woman should hand [465] the money over to her husband, lest he find her with it and suspect that she has earned it by prostitution. In practice, most women seem to keep their own earnings and it is not uncommon, where the husband is a drunkard and weak-willed, for his wife to have custody of his money as well. Indeed the simultaneous operation within the husband-wife relationship of structural separation and social co-operation is well demonstrated by the apparently paradoxical situation, of which I saw two instances, in which a man ordered to pay damages to his wife for fighting her had to ask her to hand him over the money so that he could duly hand it back to her.

6. *Mystical links*

593 Symbolic expression of the relationship between man and wife is not greatly developed among the Ngoni, and the mystical bonds

rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[18] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group, so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes. Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[18] *ibid*, p. 172.

241 those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their
273 work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory
476 that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's
[485] labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

453 There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no
523 potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neigh-
[462] bouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

285 Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when
[462] it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

759 Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical
[648] services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

611 The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying
[591] bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern prac-
[583] tice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were
[184] incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

can live in the village and cultivate a garden. The maintenance of contacts is facilitated by the fairly general cessation of work on the farms at the week-ends. Apart from two periods of tobacco slump, the local demand for labour has exceeded the supply ever since the earliest period of European settlement. As early as January 1900 the manager of the North Charterland Exploration Company complained to the Administration that the lack of local labour was very serious, and attributed this to the large number of people who were going away to work in Southern Rhodesia. This theme has been repeated over and over again ever since. The practical effect of this chronic local shortage of labour has been that work on the farms has always been a more easy-going affair than work away on the mines or in the big towns. Men have been able to absent themselves from work to attend to their affairs at home very much as they have pleased. Payment has been either for piece-work or for the number of days worked, so that at one time it was not unusual for a man to take two or three months to complete thirty days' work, for which he had contracted.

Prior to about 1930, there were a few villages located on farm-land, whose inhabitants undertook to work for so many days, with pay, in return for permission to remain on the land. With the completion of the move into reserves, this became rare, and at the present time the bulk of the people who live on farm-land are accommodated in compounds provided for them by the farmer. These people are the labourers on the farm for the time being, their families, and friends. The compound is under the charge of a foreman who is usually an employee of long standing on the farm. On some of the farms there are small gardens, but none of them, as far as I know, permit the keeping of cattle by the labourers. This means that a man with cattle must continue to keep them at home in his village or in the village of a relative. Cattle are still the principal form of investment, particularly for people who cannot spend their capital in building a brick house, so that it is common to find in a village that many of the cattle in the byre are being tended for the benefit of an absent owner who spends the majority of his time away on a farm and who may not even have a hut in the village.

The demand for labour on the tobacco farms varies considerably with the time of year, being greatest from about Christmas until about June. At the same time, the calls on a man to tend his own garden are greatest from about November until May. Farmers therefore try to get labour for a few days at a time from people who live in villages

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Labour Ordinance, he can only do so through the District Commissioner's court at Fort Jameson, which may take up more of his time than he thinks the matter worth. In consequence, few actions are brought by farmers against their African labourers and if a man breaks his contract and deserts, no action may be taken against him. 691 578

It is not surprising that the efficiency of labour operating under these conditions is low, and that the wages are also low. These two conditions react on one another, and it is misleading to regard the low wages as the only cause of the inefficiency, or the inefficiency as the only cause of the low wages. The practical effect is that men who wish to earn more money than they can get as labourers on the farms at 14s. a month with food go away to Southern Rhodesia. It must be observed, however, that men started going to Southern Rhodesia long before the tobacco farms were opened up to their present extent. 461 [465]

Labour Migration

Prior to the European conquest, the only men who had worked for Whites were those employed as carriers by the handful of travellers who passed through the country before 1896, and as carriers and labourers by the North Charterland Exploration Company from 1896 onwards. But immediately after the end of the fighting in 1898, recruiting started among the Ngoni for police work in Southern Rhodesia, and there has been a continual flow of labour migrants south ever since. 167 464

There have been considerable fluctuations in the number of men going south since that time, particularly during the two world wars, when the military requirements of the Territory exercised a greater claim. The latest figures for the Eastern Province as a whole show that, in 1946, 23 per cent. of the taxable males registered in the province were absent from the province. Another 17½ per cent. were at work within the province.[1] In May 1947, in two Ngoni counties with a combined total of 1,759 registered taxable males, it was found that 30 per cent. of them were at work in the Eastern Province and a further 42 per cent. were away elsewhere, a total of 72 per cent. away from their villages. Half of those living outside the Eastern Province were classified as 'lost', in that their present whereabouts were unknown to the people at home.[2] These figures exclude all men who have been 'lost' for more than five years.

[1] Labour Department, *Annual Report, 1946*, p. 12.
[2] These figures were given me by the District Commissioner, Fort Jameson.

342 [842] /5 cont'd/ with both bamboo and pole huts, the construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and [353] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September, [901] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is co-operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and [474] help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer, [445] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

343 Storehouses are built of bamboo or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household [592] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and ground-[241] nuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

698 support those of his colleagues. However, chiefs and others do
[661] sometimes manage to play off one administrator against another where there are differences of interest between different departments of the Administration, and occasionally appeals by Ngoni chiefs to high Administrative officials against the actions of their juniors are successful. It is easier for Ngoni to exploit the much greater differences of interest between the different sections of the non-African community, officials, missions, planters and European and Indian traders.

698 In the early years of this century it appears that the chiefs were
662 approached by labour recruiters, planters, and missionaries who wished to gain their favour and utilise this to their own advantage. It is difficult to gauge to what extent this practice continues. There are one or two recent instances where the missions have clearly
[791] recognised the importance to them of securing the goodwill of an Ngoni in high authority, and it would also appear that some high-placed Ngoni have utilized their position to gain from the missions services which might not otherwise have been so readily available to them. With the cessation of labour recruiting there has been no
[564] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[566] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[574] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

A: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. *Headmen*

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.'

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village.

12. *The Court*

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular

19: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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one live in the village and cultivate a garden. The maintenance of contacts is facilitated by the fairly general custom of work on the farms at the week-ends. Apart from two periods of tobacco slump, the local demand for labour has exceeded the supply ever since the earliest period of European settlement. As early as January 1900 the manager of the North Charterland Exploration Company complained to the Administration that the lack of local labour was very serious, and attributed this to the large number of people who were going away to work in Southern Rhodesia. This theme has been repeated over and over again ever since. The practical effect of this chronic local shortage of labour has been that work on the farms has always been a more easy-going affair than work away on the mines or in the big towns. Men have been able to absent themselves from work to attend to their affairs at home very much as they have pleased. Payment has been either fixed-piece-work or for the number of days worked, so that at one time it was not unusual for a man to take two or three months to complete thirty days' work, for which he had contracted. [465]

Prior to about 1930, there were a few villages located on farm-land, whose inhabitants undertook to work for so many days, with pay, in return for permission to remain on the land. With the completion of the move into reserves, this became rare, and at the present time the bulk of the people who live on farm-land are accommodated in compounds provided for them by the farmer. These people are the labourers on the farm for the time being, their families, and friends. The compound is under the charge of a foreman who is usually an employee of long standing on the farm. On some of the farms there are small gardens, but none of them, as far as I know, permit the keeping of cattle by the labourers. This means that a man with cattle must continue to keep them at home in his village or in the village of a relative. Cattle are still the principal form of investment, particularly for people who cannot spend their capital in building a brick house, so that it is common to find in a village that many of the cattle in the herd are being tended for the benefit of an absent owner who spends the majority of his time away on a farm and who may not even have a hut in the village.

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The demand for labour on the tobacco farms varies considerably with the time of year, being greatest from about Christmas until about June. At the same time, the calls on a man to tend his own garden are greatest from about November until May. Farmers therefore try to get labour for a few days at a time from people who live in villages

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10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[85 7] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognised by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

484 167 Looked at from the point of view of the individual, we find that all adult men have at some time or other been away to work, and that the majority have been to Southern Rhodesia once or twice.

(Continuing

466 In their lives on the farms and in Fort Jameson, Ngoni mix with men from other tribes, and their position is largely subsumed under the conditions common to all African labourers on all European-controlled farms. The Administration does not support the Ngoni more [498] than the Cows, or one chief more than another. As the content of the relationship becomes more and more related to the world-wide policy and economy, so the nature of the relationship becomes common to a wider group. Ngoni living in Fort Jameson Compound live lives that are closer to the lives led by other tribes in compounds in other towns than they are to those led in the villages 5 miles away. 464 The phenomenon of labour migration greatly affects Ngoni social [167] structure, but is not a distinctively Ngoni institution in the same way as the Ngoni village is distinctively Ngoni. When Ngoni ex-[729] soldiers complain that when they were recruited they were promised that after the war they would get good jobs, and now find they do not get them, their sentiments derive more from their status as ex-soldiers, which they share with some millions of others, than they do from their status as Ngoni.

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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[28]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[29] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[30] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *ndusa*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[28] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[29] Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, pp. 103*f*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*f*, 103*f*, 196*f*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedition', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[30] See pp. 103*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

independent group of Ngoni. Chibambo mentions how the use of this education was discontinued when the head of an erstwhile independent group rejoined his parent group.[34] In recent times people have indicated their disapproval of the Paramount Chief's actions by discontinuing this education temporarily.

Despite the security of tenure provided by Administrative recognition, a chief still needs the support of his people. There is an Ngoni maxim, 'chieftainship is people',[35] and commoners are well aware that it is because they support their chief that he has high status. The simplest and most effective sanction that commoners can employ against their chief is to leave him. Movement from one county to another, from one tribe to another, and from the county to the town and back again is crucial in the working of modern Ngoni society. Not all these movements take place as the result of the unpopularity of chiefs, but this is one factor among many. Chibambo records an early example of people moving to segment 8 from the residue of segment 1 in order to share the hospitality of a newly appointed chief, but he goes on to say 'afterwards they found it wise to return to their proper division [segment]'.[36] In more recent times there are several examples, particularly among villages which entered Ngoniland after 1898 and who therefore largely lack segmental affiliation, of villages and clusters that have changed from one county to another for political reasons. More significant at the present time are the numbers of ambitious people who emigrate to the towns because, among other things, they cannot find advancement in the political hierarchy. The most striking instance of this is in the family of the late Mpezeni II. He had six sons who survived him. One is now Paramount Chief, and one is still a boy. The other four, including the chief's deputy, are town-dwellers in other parts of Africa.

5. *Royal hunts*

The royal hunt is the only occasion on which a county, or more usually a rural district or part of a county, functions as an economic unit. Even then the economic element in the enterprise is not very marked. The chief announces, through his messengers, that on such-and-such a day he will hold a royal hunt and that the men of such-and-such villages are to meet in a certain place. The procedure followed on the hunt is exactly the same as on an ordinary hunt, with the chief or someone nominated by him in tactical command, though the number of hunters is greater than on a hunt

[34] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 56.
[35] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 35.
[36] *Ufumu wa Ngoni*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

organised by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt, but occasionally if the field is very poor a chief will summon absentees in his court.

These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as effectively as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but he can call out his men hunting.[10] Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African bureaucracies*

Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

[10] See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 215, for Ngoni hunting methods.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and
592 the high ranking of the Nzunga clan accounted for the number of
621 *lobola* marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

554 As individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans
565 claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families
614 in the area of a *mulumuzana* owning a head village, and the small Ngoni
621 family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received 'honour' (*ulemu*). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were [557] a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side, responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and the *banja*. Quarrels had to be composed, if possible before they came to court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be expected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the northern and Mangozo in the central kingdom.

[470] In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose husbands were away at work. The dislocation caused to the village economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and heads of a *banja*, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include the needs of these 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradition emphasized this type of help.

867 In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and relationships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty ceremonies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

of an *ngoma* 'competition' the team was made up of lads and girls of about fourteen to eighteen years old. They went off to another village, having announced their arrival previously, and challenged the 'home team' to dance *ngoma*. The dancing was in the kraal with the adults looking on and acting as judges. It was all very decorous and orderly and the competing teams were in dead earnest. As we have noticed already, the Ngoni danced without drums. The steady beat of the feet of the young men made the rhythm for the dance, but the co-ordination in the long lines of boys in front and girls behind needed assiduous practice to produce harmonious results. In both northern and central Ngoniland the Paramounts had forbidden all dances except Ngoni dances, and in the north the *ngoma* was encouraged by the chiefs because it was considered a 'good dance' for young people. 857 535

After marriage, the young women were absorbed in the care of their huts and young children and only appeared as an age set when they took part in a communal hoeing; on such occasions they were inclined to keep apart from the older women, sometimes on the grounds that they did not drink the full-strength beer, and therefore clustered round a pot of 'sweet' beer when they knocked-off work. In most Ngoni villages the young men after marriage went off to find work and, as a group of friends within an age set, they would get together to talk things over, make their preparations and travel to the south. 462 [476 561 273]

In day-to-day village affairs, as well as on ceremonial occasions, the age sets of the *manina* and *madoda* were very much in evidence. The *madoda* met at meal-times by the gate of the kraal, and they went there to count the cattle when they came back in the evening. The same group could be seen either at the kraal gate or on a verandah talking about village affairs or drinking together, or at a court listening to cases. The *manina* usually gathered in the verandah of the *indlunkulu* to talk over women's affairs or to receive guests. As an age set they met less frequently than the men because the larger part of their tasks lay in their own huts or in the group of women associated with a house. On all occasions when the formal reception of strangers took place, or when ritual feasting or shaving or washing occurred, or when important decisions had to be made, the *manina* and the *madoda* in their separate sets were in evidence. 561

Although the age sets in village life were social units carrying definite responsibilities and performing recognized activities, their chief importance in Ngoni social life was in regulating behavioural patterns and prescribing mutual relationships. Here we have to take note of a selective principle at work among the *manina* and *madoda*. Although in one sense all women and men of forty to forty-five and upwards belonged to these age sets, the individuals who carried out the characteristic activities of these groups did not include all the men and women of that age. The very old people did not continue to exercise any influence in village 561 888

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

233 cattle of *his* mother's house and those of other widows of his father,
422 even though the widows remarried and went to live elsewhere. The ownership of a herd, in the sense of authority to acquire and to dispose of the cattle, was in fact vested in the senior male members belonging to each house in whose name cattle were held. This senior male leadership of a house had, in the central kingdom, a parallel in the senior male members of a *banja*. The implication in both was the same—that there was a group of senior men linked by membership of a house or a *banja*, who took responsibility for all the cattle in the herd of that house or *banja* and for all additions to the herd. Any new beasts acquired through natural increase, *lobola*, court payments, gifts, or purchase, by any member of that house went into the herd belonging to it. Thus it was easy for young men working in the south to send back money to their fathers or fathers' brothers to buy cattle. They knew the choice would be well made and that the cattle would be well cared for until their return.

The right of disposal of cattle in a herd belonging to a house or *banja* was based on the same concept of ownership. The senior male group had to decide which beasts to send for the *lobola* when a young man of
[478] their house married. They undertook, as owners of the cattle, to pay fines in court cases when a member of the house was fined. If money was needed, either by the group as a whole or by an individual member, a beast was chosen and sold by the senior men; part of the proceeds was given to the individual who needed help, and part either buried under the floor of the hut of the woman who was head of the house, or converted into cloth and stored in the hut. Gifts of cattle were sometimes
[431] given to important visitors, or as an expression of sympathy when mourning at a funeral, or for a sacrifice to the ancestors. On all such occasions the decision to dispose of one or more beasts and the selection of them were in the hands of the senior male group. Though prolonged discussion might go on before a decision to sell or make a gift was made, once there was agreement the selection was often made very quickly. The leading men would go to the kraal, point out the beasts to the herd-boys, and tell them to drive them to the appointed place.

233 The care of the herds was primarily the responsibility of the senior men, though the actual herding was delegated to the herd-boys. Informants said that in pre-European days great care was taken of the animals in the rainy season; the ant-hills in the kraal were preserved so that the animals might get out of the mud, and calf-houses with roofs were always provided for shelter for the calves. I saw some calf-houses of this kind, and some kraals with ant-hills left in them, but neither was common practice, and the reason given was that the kraals and herds were much smaller than in pre-European days.

There were two chief objectives in the care of herds: that the cattle should keep well and avoid disease, and that they should multiply. The

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 555 431 away the prize animals in the herd. Their formula in presenting a beast was 'Here is a small sheep.' This belittling of a gift was the social counterpart of their inner desire for a reputation for generosity.

183 422 476 It has been clear from many previous references that mutual assistance among members of a house was inherent in the social pattern of cattle-ownership. The Ngoni attached great value to this reciprocity of service, and it was deeply embedded in their social ethic. Young men in Ngoni villages thought twice before they deliberately took action which would bring them into the courts, because the fine would have to be paid by their elders from the common herd of cattle. The implications of this service proved no ultimate deterrent to hot-headed youth, but the lesson was constantly being rubbed in. After a court case for adultery, when a young man's father and his father's brothers had handed over a beast for a fine, they would grumble in the evening by the kraal at this waste of good cattle, and suggest it was time the young man went off to the south and sent money home to buy more cattle. This was the cycle of mutual help—the elders provided cattle from the herd for *lobola* and fines for the young men, who in turn went off to work and sent back money to buy more cattle. Reference has been made to 'the cloth of the spirits', when cattle were sold to provide cash for a young man who needed it, and the balance was used to buy cloth which was kept in the hut where the ancestral spirit was guarded. This cloth was the common property of all who belonged to the house owning the herd, and was returnable to the hut after it had been worn for some festive occasion. The forms which this mutual help could take were numerous and varied, and they all illustrated the fact that the correct and continuous observance of this reciprocity was considered by the Ngoni as one of the basic values underlying the ownership and use of cattle.

Among the group bound together by cattle-ownership this emphasis on mutual help as a desirable behaviour pattern had its counterpart in the social concept of integration. As we have seen, the Ngoni put a high value on 'staying together', on being united when challenged by a situation which made for disintegration. Within the social units of the house and family, the ownership of cattle and their care and use demanded some degree of co-operation through responsibility for the herd which was held in common. Integration between the living and their ancestors was also provided by the cattle. Common possession of a herd did more than just hold people together. The pattern of family and house organization which was characteristically Ngoni was given some stability through the ownership of cattle, allowing for the subdivision of herds when the new village 'went out', the exchanges at marriage, and the sacrifices at death.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

476 having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river
342 with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

463 Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established
[177] and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft.
281 Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from
[411] skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons,
322 wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most
[413] Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what
285 was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope
283 for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

534 Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sophisticated informant remarked: 'The Cewa are just slaves, they merely eat. The Ngoni are like the Whites; they eat little and drink much.' 273 262 829

Economic Co-operation

There are other activities which entail inter-village ties. Cattle seek their own fodder, but small stock, pigs, goats, and sheep, are fed on husks and other scraps. A man whose animals have increased beyond his ability to feed them will farm out some of them to his friends, either in his own village or in some neighbouring one. The tender of the animals then exercises some control over the disposal of any natural increase and at the end of the arrangement he is entitled to be given one of the animals. The friends whom a man selects for this task are not always close relatives, and may sometimes be people to whom he can trace no genealogical relationship at all, but whom he may have met, for instance, in Southern Rhodesia. Other people acquire a reputation for integrity, and may be given animals to look after by their acquaintances. Cattle are not disposed of so widely, and there is more often a kinship connexion between the owner and the tender. On the other hand, cattle are more susceptible than small stock to tsetse fly, and in consequence there are many people in the new areas that have been recently resettled who have to keep their cattle in the village of a relative or friend who lives in an area free from fly. 233 476 628

Harvesting of crops is carried out by members of the household except in the case of the aged, who will call on their relatives to help them. Hut-building, making a new section of a garden, clearing the ground prior to planting, and, in particular, weeding the garden during the wet season, are activities that are often carried out by collective effort. Women, particularly pairs of widows, may work together in each other's gardens turn and turn about, and a man may be able to call on relatives, particularly his sons-in-law, to help in his garden without paying them for it. Most of the outside assistance that may be required in a garden is raised by means of a beer-party. The man's wife brews beer, and it is made known in the village and round about that on such-and-such a day there will be a party to hoe in their garden. A dozen or so people go to the garden in the morning, and work until the task set by the owner of the garden is completed. They then move to the village, and are refreshed with beer. Attendance at the beer-party is not restricted to those who have worked in the garden, and at some such parties a jar of beer may be specifically allocated to 241 476 602 273 476 241

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neighbouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern practice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 [671] been made. It is the legalization payment that is recorded on the marriage registration certificate when one is issued.

Often this payment is postponed until some years after marriage and sometimes it is never made at all. It is generally £1. 10s., and is normally provided by the bridegroom himself out of his savings, although in the old days a man would have been helped by his father. The money goes to the bride's father, and there is no legal obligation on him to share the money with his relatives, although he may do so. Marriage ties can be reinforced by a whole series of ceremonies and ceremonial exchanges and payments between the man's people and the woman's people, and a marriage in which all these ceremonies have been performed is regarded as being 'well fixed'. In such a marriage the parents and siblings of the couple have come to know each other, have collaborated in ritual activities, and have probably had occasion to deliberate together as a court of conciliation in settling quarrels between the couple. This line of development is seldom taken in a marriage in which the legalization payment has not been made. If the husband refuses to pay, then the wife's people will not brew beer for him and his parents, and will not use their influence with his wife to maintain the marriage. We may say that in a well-fixed marriage the two families are linked together, and that in one that is not well fixed it is only the two individuals who are linked. Indeed when no payments have been made it is common for the bride's relatives to profess ignorance of the name of the husband, or at least of his parents' names. No action can be taken in the court to enforce marriage payments, although in an adultery or divorce case the court may order the legalization payment to be made.

585 476 578 The ceremonies of marriage should not be thought of merely as occasions for harmonious co-operation. They may also become the vehicle for the expression of aggression between the two families involved. This is particularly true of the obligation on the man to bring a party of his friends to hoe in the garden of his father-in-law. The hoeing party may do more harm than good to the crops if the present offered them by the father-in-law is considered inadequate.

583 178 [231] Prior to the conquest of the tribe the principal marriage payment was bride-wealth,[1] consisting of so many head of cattle. In those days, according to informants, no legalization payment was made. Nowadays bride-wealth is paid only in a small proportion of marriages, and rarely until after several children have been born. In the old days

[1] *Malowolo*. Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola* and noun *ilobolo*.

342 /5 cont'd/ With both bamboo and Pole huts, The
[562] construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and
[353] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September,
[201] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is co-operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and
[476] help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer,
[465] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

343 Storehouses are built of bamboo or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household
[592] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in
[241] separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

/11 cont'd/

241 The busiest time of the year in the garden is at the beginning
[136] of the rains, when there is much work to be done planting and weeding, and scaring away the monkeys and wild pigs. Later on, in the new year, after the garden has been weeded twice, it is possible to think of enlarging the garden at one edge, and if it is not too late, the newly cleared portion may be planted with a catch crop. Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out
[416] to some extent co-operatively, either on a mutual help basis between two women, or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner of the garden. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink on the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrive at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subse-
[273] quent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set
[576] aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden.

/12/ Towards the end of the rains, there is less cultivating to be done, but the ravages of wild animals become more serious, and many families sleep for two or three months in the garden, returning to the village only to obtain food. Garden shelters are simple open-sided affairs with a thatched roof, but those owners who intend to
[342] sleep in their gardens for a long time, build small circular huts as in the village, or conical shelters with the roof reaching to the ground.
[417] A few lookout platforms built in trees are used as vantage points for spotting wild animals. If a man has a garden a long way from the village, particularly across a stream which will be in spate in the late rains, he may build a byre for his cattle at the garden.

Maize and ground-nuts are the first crops to be harvested, and later finger millet, root crops, and finally kaffir-corn. Maize is
251 stooked before the cobs are removed, and these are then dried on platforms before being carried to the village to be stored.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited,
[302] advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving
[291] visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the
[516] village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony, her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

Many references have been made already to the relation-
577 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife,
602 especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognized by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

577 Competence in household management, being a success-
592 ful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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8. A well-filled grain store

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[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The three final acts of the *ntimba* were performed for the new wife by the women of her new village. The first took place about two days after the end of the main ceremony and was the occasion for her instruction by her husband's relatives. She sat on a mat by the *indlunkulu*, while the woman of that house dressed her *isihlutu*, anointed her with oil, and clothed her in fresh skins and new beads taken from the store of the house to which she now belonged. They then instructed her in her behaviour to old and young, telling her to avoid selfishness and quarrelling and to be friendly with everyone. 585 182 621

The second act, called *ukufumisa umlobokazi* ((bringing the wife out), took place thirty to forty days later, during which time the wife had been sitting by her hut being watched. All this time she had eaten only a little food, sent to her from her mother-in-law's hut, had been afraid to speak to anyone, and had wept often. Now she was told that she might go anywhere and talk with anyone. She could help her mother-in-law by fetching firewood and by lighting her fire. A pot of water was given to her and an axe to cut firewood, and her mother-in-law gave her the *indlekuza* bead, a sign that she might speak and eat in front of her parents-in-law. But her testing time was not yet over. She was told to fetch a huge bundle of split wood and to lay it down carefully before her mother-in-law's hut without dropping any. As the bundle was on her head, it meant kneeling down and bending forward slowly until she could gently ease the wood on to the ground. Other tests included stripping large quantities of maize, soaking them, and pounding them into stamped maize (*izinkobe*). This testing was called *ukulinga umlobokazi* (watching the new wife), and was in most cases far more exacting than anything she had been made to do in her own home. [482] [252]

The culminating act of the integration process, *ukupekisa umlobokazi*, in which the new wife's hut was recognized as the starting-point of a new house, was the ceremony of making fire in her new hut to cook food for her husband. Two or three months after the marriage, a woman from her father-in-law's *gogo* house suddenly appeared in the doorway of the new wife's hut, carrying three hearth-stones. She fetched fire, kindled it, and began to cook boiled maize. The astonished young wife was expected to cry because she had now been turned away from her mother-in-law's cooking-place, as if she were being put out of the house. The maize cooked on this first fire in the new hut was regarded as having been cooked by the bride, and was divided into portions, one being taken to each section of the village attached to a house. Meanwhile the young wife sat nearby, hanging her head and showing the conventional signs of grief. Nevertheless she was so excited that she went back to her own home as soon as possible to tell them the news. The response of her own people was to prepare food for a feast and bring it to her new village to express to her husband's people their appreciation of this token of confidence in the girl's ability to cook for her husband.

/8 cont'd/

285 the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found [482] and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

415 In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat 412 porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. [531] Wooden hemispherical pats, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

412 At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzilia quanzensis or Monotes trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is [531] a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four [524] inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones [426] or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are 352 sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make [463] a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

482
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28. Learning to carry wood

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29. Learning to pound

[facing page 145]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern
693 Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
574 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
643 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
464 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and
167 other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
567 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
619 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of
571 the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

162 563 (35,107). It is difficult not to assume that many Nyanja had formerly called themselves Ngoni.

Table II

	1926	1931	1945
Mzimba district			
Ngoni	25,484	24,627	44,948
Tumbuka	46,029	78,483	89,135
Cewa	14,041	2,411	21,891
Yao	20	—	—
Tonga	3,052	605	32
Nkonde	141	—	—
Others	334	156	202
Total	89,101	106,282	156,208
Ncheu district			
Ngoni	64,023	46,308	15,242
Cewa	11	4,372	2,815
Nyanja	334	25,393	60,400
Cikunda	360	940	1,336
Yao	203	1,064	3,267
Nguru, etc.	—	—	4,448
Others	13	278	182
Total	64,944	78,355	87,690

631 Since the two Ngoni kingdoms are the subject of this book and not the secession states, the position of the rulers of those states as Native Authorities and the circumstances of their secession from the two main groups will not be examined here. The three secession states in the north were under Chiefs Ciwere and Msakambewa in Dowa district and Jere in Kotakota district. The four connected formerly with the central Ngoni were under Chiefs Kacere and Kacindamoto in Dedza, Masula in Lilongwe and Vumbwe in Cholo.

484 [114] In the 1930's, when I was living sometimes in the northern kingdom, sometimes in the central, and for a time in the Ngoni state under Chief Jere, I was aware that the existence of the two kingdoms and of the seven secession states did not preclude a great deal of contact between the Ngoni of the different areas. The stream of travel in Nyasaland from south to north and from north to south along the one trunk road, brought Ngoni as visitors from one kingdom to the other, from the smaller states to both kingdoms, and from 'the Ngoni of the dispersion' living in towns to visit their relatives and friends in the Ngoni kingdoms and states. These visits might be social, to see parents or to marry 574 a wife; they might be for economic purposes, to invest in or sell cattle, to supervise cotton or tobacco marketing; or they might be for ritual purposes such as mourning. When I travelled in the central Ngoni 814 kingdom in 1936 with Y. M. Cibambo, the historian of the northern

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 562 858 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

486 562 The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

484 167 The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko–Missale service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these 205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 249 [361] No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more than 12 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

484 Looked at from the point of view of the individual, we find that all
167 adult men have at some time or other been away to work, and that the majority have been to Southern Rhodesia once or twice.

Conclusion

466 In their lives on the farms and in Fort Jameson, Ngoni mix with men from other tribes, and their position is largely subsumed under the conditions common to all African labourers on all European-controlled farms. The Administration does not support the Ngoni more [648] than the Cewa, or one chief more than another. As the content of the relationship becomes more and more related to the world-wide polity and economy, so the nature of the relationship becomes common to a wider group. Ngoni living in Fort Jameson Compound live lives that are closer to the lives led by other tribes in compounds in other towns than they are to those led in the villages 5 miles away. 464 The phenomenon of labour migration greatly affects Ngoni social [167] structure, but is not a distinctively Ngoni institution in the same way as the Ngoni village is distinctively Ngoni. When Ngoni ex-[729] soldiers complain that when they were recruited they were promised that after the war they would get good jobs, and now find they do not get them, their sentiments derive more from their status as ex-soldiers, which they share with some millions of others, than they do from their status as Ngoni.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was 181
not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more 356
because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, 515
and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with 825
ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding 356
them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infect [485] their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again.

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene 515
which made them insist that there should be no spitting or 356
nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An in- [413] genious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose.

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire 515
for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made [576] when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean.

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen 264
in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [643] [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [182] [693] [562]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another. 486 562

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 if the latter is unable to leave the area legally.[28] Various devices
562 have been introduced to prevent women from using other people's passes, such as recording finger-prints on the certificate. On the other hand there are a great variety of ways in which women contrive to leave the area without a proper pass, such as marrying the bus driver for the duration of the journey, getting off the bus and walking round the control points, and so on.

13. The Administration and the missions

648 Under the Laws of Northern Rhodesia, which guide the Adminis-
671 tration, the only valid marriages between Africans are those
581 performed in accordance with 'customary tribal law'. There has never been any systematic attempt to codify the rules implied by this
586 phrase, and in any particular case that comes before the Administration's courts, the views of individual African assessors must carry weight. The tendency has been to try and discover what used to happen in the old days rather than what was the *de facto* law at the time. On the other hand, there appears to have been a feeling that women were entitled to certain rights in equity that may perhaps have been associated with the proviso that 'customary tribal law' shall not be administered when it is 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. The Administration has certainly been sympathetic towards deserted wives seeking divorce and has encouraged Native Courts to allow their pleas where the husband has been many years away and has not written home. In the past the District Officer on tour has divorced batches of women who had applied in vain to the Native Courts for divorce on the ground of desertion. It has been argued by the Administration that since chiefs depend on the gifts of returned labour migrants to supplement their own income, they are reluctant to offend men by divorcing their wives in their absence. There are fewer divorces, in relation to the same number
[671] of pleas, granted in Ngoni courts than among the neighbouring Cewa, who are subject to the same Administrative and mission influences. The Ngoni find no consolation in this comparison. They merely observe that there are more divorces now than there used to be, and blame the Whites for the change.

791 The missions are all concerned with the development of Christian
581 marriage, but their ideas as to what this is differ from one denomination to another, as do their views on the relationship
586 of Christian to other types of marriage. The White Fathers and the Universities Mission to Central Africa do not allow divorce, while the Dutch Reformed Church Mission does. The U.M.C.A. insist that all 'customary obligations' shall be fulfilled before a marriage can be solemnized between Christians, the White Fathers

[28] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 245f for the rules regulating the movement of women beyond Fort Jameson District.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Lupa goldfields and Dar-es-Salaam. Nowadays almost everyone goes by lorry, but now as then a man has to go a long way before he can arrive at an island of friends in one of the urban centres. This means that, for the Ngoni, emigration is a definite event, and does not occur as a result of a gradual drifting farther and farther away from the tribal area. Lorries run from Fort Jameson to Lusaka and to Lilongwe, and from Missale to Mtoko in Southern Rhodesia. There is also a lorry service from Lundazi to Fort Jameson, but this does not lead anywhere else, and is not used by Mpezeni's people except locally. Lusaka is on a railway line, Lilongwe is connected by bus and train to Blantyre, while Mtoko is on the way to Salisbury. It is these lorry routes which now provide the links with the outside world, and along which people and goods travel, the people in both directions, and the goods, apart from tobacco, mainly inwards. Use of these routes is controlled by the chiefs, the Administration, by economic factors, and by the weather. This last has been less important of late, and the roads are seldom impassable for more than a week at a time, however heavy the rains. In order to travel on the lorries from Fort Jameson a man must have a ticket, which costs £1 for the journey to Lusaka, and less for the trip to Lilongwe. The lorry service from Missale to Mtoko is free.

101 489 [167] 489

The Administration exercise control by insisting that no man shall leave the Territory of Northern Rhodesia unless he is in possession of an identification certificate endorsed by the Administration permitting him to do so. In practice, such endorsements are not usually made unless the man can produce written permission from the chief that he is free to go. This working arrangement is intended to ensure that men do not flee the country when there are cases pending against them, and to prevent unjustifiable desertion of wives and children. In fact men are sometimes given permission to go while cases in which they are involved are still unheard.

486 166

The emigration of women and children is further controlled in that there is a law[1] forbidding a woman to leave the tribal area except in the company of her husband, or with a pass to leave from the Native Authority. Sucking children are allowed to accompany their mothers, but other children under the age of sixteen are not allowed to leave the province without permission of the Native Authority,[2] while boys

486 562 858

[1] Ngoni Native Authority Order 24.

[2] Ngoni N. A. Order 39. The child must be either accompanied by its parents or else accompanied by a guardian on the way to join its parents.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
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486 562 858 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one 486 might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly 562 by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

484 The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives 167 and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko–Missale service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these 205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 249 [361] No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more than 12 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE IV. Villagers hoeing a path to another village in preparation for a visit from the District Officer.

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PLATE V. A District Officer, with a county chief on his left, talks to village headmen during a tour of villages. In the distance are villagers listening to the conversation.

[Facing p. 145]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

I

Ngoniland and the People who lived in it

The homeland

The little country of Nyasaland in Central Africa received its name from the lake by which Livingstone and those who followed him penetrated into the interior and reached the lands and people living round the lake. On the west side there is a narrow strip of low-lying coastal land. Then a series of escarpments begin, and up them roads and paths wind through steep wooded valleys, until the final scarp leads to the grasslands of the high plateau. Here on the high plateau the Ngoni settled about the middle of the nineteenth century, after nearly forty years of trekking from Natal to Tanganyika. They turned south again at the shores of Lake Victoria and returned to this land which they had passed through on their northward march. This high plateau has great diversity of scenery, and much of it reminded the Ngoni of the hills and valleys and grasslands of Natal. There are high mountains with sharp peaks and massive granite shoulders. Between the ranges of lower grass-covered hills are shallow valleys where the rain washes down good soil to the valley bottoms. Sweeps of grassland, bare of trees, alternate with river valleys where there is a continuous flow of water, fed by springs and mountain streams.

In the dry season, from April to November, the trees lose their leaves and the grass gradually dries up till the prevailing colours are gold and brown against the black and grey

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

V. EARNING A LIVING

Intertribal Trade

439 There is little trade between the Ngoni and the neighbouring tribes, whose products are largely the same as their own. Fish is brought up from the Luangwa valley by Kunda and some of it is sold to the Ngoni of the Cipalamba, through whose villages the hawkers pass on their way to Fort Jameson. Bracelets are sometimes brought from Portuguese East Africa by Chikunda. The main attraction for these hawkers is Fort Jameson itself, and it is the fact that the town is encircled by the Ngoni that gives rise to trading with them. The geographical location of the town has also led to the growth in Ngoni [366] country of many stores and what are known in the vernacular as hotels, where tea and buns can be bought and where sometimes there is shelter for the night.

Of greater importance in the life of the tribe than these intertribal links are those arising from White and Indian economic activities. We may distinguish three zones of interaction, the shops both in Fort Jameson township and scattered throughout the district owned by Whites and Indians, the local tobacco farms, and the mines of Southern Rhodesia. The Ngoni have come to need cloth for clothes which they cannot produce themselves, and it is doubtful if there would be enough animals to provide skins for the tribe even if they did not insist on cloth. The need to earn money with which to buy clothes, soap, and other necessities can be met only by seeking employment on a farm, in Fort Jameson township, or farther off. A few people earn enough by selling vegetables in Fort Jameson, and there is a certain amount of maize and other cereals sold. These sales, however, do not provide sufficient income to reduce materially the extent to which people go out to work.

Control of Movement

101 To the White traveller, Fort Jameson District is an island of tobacco in a sea of bush. To the Ngoni, the island is not so sharply demarcated, and its characteristic property is cattle, not tobacco, yet it still remains an island, surrounded by a sea of other tribes whose 101 traditions are different from their own. The ships that cross this sea 489 are the lorries. In time past, men used to walk to their destinations, [493] going by Feira to Southern Rhodesia, or across the Luangwa to Broken Hill. A few used to go down to Lake Nyasa, and thence to the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
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FR5 Ngoni FR5
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[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 37.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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Maravi FR4

L M N 312 361 surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The fierce late fires which swept through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the dessication.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

L M N 648 491 After survey had been completed and before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their food-stocks and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

L M N 648 312 653 Wherever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (25 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mushiri resettlement area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central L [228] dam which was stocked with bream (*Tilapia spp.*) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

L M N 136 166 311 Another difficulty was the occurance of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

N 744 [164] In the northern part of Fort Jameson Districts, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on compacting pedocal soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

/7 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household,
415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or
[511] china crockery.

323 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every
[461] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood.
[489] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice
[415] the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves
[824] of the mbwabwa tree.

Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the
285 different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men,
[353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be
[467] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings
[491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often
[493] made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /8/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

some for themselves as their perquisite. They then drove the cattle to 233
pasture, and this might be some distance away when grass was scarce in 857
the dry season. They sometimes drove the cattle back near the village to 561
rest at noon under the shade trees, but if the pasture was far away the cattle rested there and went on feeding later. They were brought back to the kraal in the late afternoon and counted by one of the senior men.

The herd-boys taught each other to fight with sticks, to wrestle, to [868]
catch rats and small birds, to use the knobkerry, catapults, and bows and arrows. Sometimes in the afternoon they went to other villages and challenged another herd to a fight between bulls.[1] During the long day's herding, the boys used to drink milk, make *amasi* (milk curds) in a gourd and eat it, bake birds in clay and roast ears of maize taken from their mothers' grain stores. Precedence among the herd-boys depended [554]
first on age and only secondly on the rank and position of the families they belonged to. There was an easily recognizable air of authority and almost of arrogance among the older boys responsible for their fathers' and uncles' cattle. They superintended the process of letting out the cattle, milking them, driving them to pasture and the return to the [492]
kraal in the evening. Mounted on donkeys, wearing large straw hats made by themselves, the senior boys acted like ranch owners bossing up inefficient work hands.

This period of living in the *laweni* was, as we have seen, shared by boys 561
of a wide age group. In a large village where there were two or three or 866
four *laweni*, there was often one in each section, which generally meant that the boys belonging to one *banja* or section shared one *laweni*. This had the effect of dividing them up to some extent on a basis of family and rank, but in a *laweni* serving a whole village all the boys went in together whatever families they came from. There was no respecting of clan [565]
status in the *laweni* and young boys of high-ranking families had to wait on and obey older boys of lower rank. *Laweni* life was therefore a democratizing influence among the boys of the village, and no boys were excused from herding cattle because they belonged to a house which owned cattle. Even if some went to school and others did not, the school-boys had to take their share of herding in the holidays. Ngoni chiefs and leading men laid great emphasis on keeping the boys busy and making them carry out the work allotted to them. The older boys began to listen [867]
in at court cases and to discuss them among themselves. During the wet season from time to time they formed hoeing parties for clearing new ground and for the periodical weeding of gardens. They seldom did any continuous cultivation, as the women and the older men did, and a boy who liked to go off and hoe by himself was pointed out as one with rather peculiar tastes.

During this period of *laweni* life, when in addition to herding the

[1] For the relation between the training of herd-boys and preparation for war, see Part II, Chap. I, p. 30.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 24 343 24 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 262 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 462 [559] [574] [437]

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352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled 285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any 513 [177] headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

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412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of furnaces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used, [325] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa [567] slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

493 Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the [241] village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle, [493] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of 411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about 224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE I. Paramount Chief Pontino Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., standing with a man from the chief's capital. The man points upwards and sings that, because they conquered the Ngoni, the Whites must have come from heaven.

[Frontpiece Facing p. i]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE X. Thatching a school roof. The county chief has told men from nearby villages to do this work.

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PLATE XI. A mobile post office halted near a county court.

[Facing p. 168]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Council mentioned above spent some tweny years of his life in Johannesburg. Fort Jameson itself is not a sufficiently big town for this process to take place within it, and yet it is only in Fort Jameson or on the tobacco farms that a man can live with a leg in both camps, going home to the village at the week-ends and probably keeping his wife in the village during the wet season to tend her crop. 369 554

On the other hand, there is some rivalry between the traditional leaders and the comparatively prosperous townspeople. The well-clad and well-housed Ngoni of the township are sometimes described scornfully by village people as 'merely White'. There is a feeling that the leading African traders are trying to monopolize the economic opportunities in the villages. Recently the same prominent Ngoni businessman proposed that he should take over the delivery of mail to the Native Authorities, which he claimed he would be able to do more efficiently with a car than can the present postman on a bicycle. The Paramount Chief did not answer this proposal but wrote instead to the Administration to complain against the danger of one man being allowed to earn so much more than anyone else while there were so many people who needed money. At the same time, men whose lives are led principally in the towns complain that in the villages there is 'nothing but jungle', and that the chiefs are old-fashioned and obstructive. 369 578 177 [205 493]

The Administration

The relationship between the Provincial Administration and the Ngoni is characteristically one of superordination and subordination. The District Officer can send for any Ngoni, but not even the Paramount Chief can send for the District Officer. This characteristic arises from two sources, from the premiss which we find held all over Southern Africa, that any White is superior to any Black, and from the supervisory role allotted to the Administration in the Native Authority scheme. These two facets of the same relationship are not always seen separately by the Ngoni, and in many contexts their behaviour towards the Administration is governed entirely by the fact that the District Officer and those above him are all White. Official reports by the Administration during the reign of Mpezeni II repeatedly remarked on the Paramount Chief's distrust of Whites, and this attitude still persists. Any kind of trouble at all, particularly when it is seen as a characteristic of the present times as opposed to the glorious trouble-free past of the days of peace, before the Whites 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

V. EARNING A LIVING

Intertribal Trade

439 There is little trade between the Ngoni and the neighbouring tribes, whose products are largely the same as their own. Fish is brought up from the Luangwa valley by Kunda and some of it is sold to the Ngoni of the Cipalamba, through whose villages the hawkers pass on their way to Fort Jameson. Bracelets are sometimes brought from Portuguese East Africa by Chikunda. The main attraction for these hawkers is Fort Jameson itself, and it is the fact that the town is encircled by the Ngoni that gives rise to trading with them. The geographical location of the town has also led to the growth in Ngoni [366] country of many stores and what are known in the vernacular as hotels, where tea and buns can be bought and where sometimes there is shelter for the night.

Of greater importance in the life of the tribe than these intertribal links are those arising from White and Indian economic activities. We may distinguish three zones of interaction, the shops both in Fort Jameson township and scattered throughout the district owned by Whites and Indians, the local tobacco farms, and the mines of Southern Rhodesia. The Ngoni have come to need cloth for clothes which they cannot produce themselves, and it is doubtful if there would be enough animals to provide skins for the tribe even if they did not insist on cloth. The need to earn money with which to buy clothes, soap, and other necessities can be met only by seeking employment on a farm, in Fort Jameson township, or farther off. A few people earn enough by selling vegetables in Fort Jameson, and there is a certain amount of maize and other cereals sold. These sales, however, do not provide sufficient income to reduce materially the extent to which people go out to work.

Control of Movement

101 To the White traveller, Fort Jameson District is an island of tobacco in a sea of bush. To the Ngoni, the island is not so sharply demarcated, and its characteristic property is cattle, not tobacco, yet it still remains an island, surrounded by a sea of other tribes whose 101 traditions are different from their own. The ships that cross this sea 489 are the lorries. In time past, men used to walk to their destinations, [493] going by Feira to Southern Rhodesia, or across the Luangwa to Broken Hill. A few used to go down to Lake Nyasa, and thence to the

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352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled
285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any
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[567] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

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411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about
224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Circa

1889. Mpezeni visited by Sir Alfred Sharp.

1890. Death of Mtwalu.

1891. Death of Mombera. Chikusi, son of Mputa, deposed. Mperembe acting chief of Mombera's Ngoni.

1893. Birth of Chilos Mpezeni Jere, son of Tsingu Jere by his wife, Nkuchwa. Matebele War.

1894. Death of Lobengula Kumalo.

1895. Ngungunyana, King of the Aba-Gaza, deposed by the Portuguese.

1896. Matabele Rebellion. Defeat of Mwase at Kasungu by Alston and Swann.

1897. Ngoni Revolt. British South Africa Company at Chinunda (Fort Jameson Dist.)

1898. Mpezeni surrenders; exiled to Fort Manning. Tsingu Jere captured and shot. Nkuchwa, his wife, shot by Lt. Poole's troop in the Vubwi Valley. Revolt ended. Fort Jameson established.

1900. Mpezeni I. released and returned to his village. Death of Mpezeni I. Death of Sosera Nqumayo, mother of Ntutu Mpezeni Jere (Mpezeni I) and widow of Chief Zongendaba.

1901. Succession of Chilos Mpezeni II (Jere).

1902. Chief Madzimawe claims the name of Zongendaba, but is refused by the Government.

1904. Death of Lupoko, wife of Mpezeni, at Lupoko village.

1906. Death of Ngungunyana.

1925. Chilos Mpezeni II present at the indaba given in honour of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales at Broken Hill, N. Rhodesia.

1934. The Paramount, Chilos Mpezeni II, presented with his "Staff of Office" by H.R.H. Prince George at Livingstone, N. Rhodesia.

1935. Great meeting of old Ngoni chiefs with Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, to discuss the chief's ancestors and the crossing of the Zambesi river in 1835. This being the Centenary. The Ngoni were well acquainted with native dug-outs (boats) before they left their tribal area which is now known as Northern Zululand. [501]

Authorities consulted:—Bryant; Elliott; Seymour; Thomas; Marshall Hole; Theal.

113

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most part all external relations were warlike. The State, as it were, was internally an organization of segments and externally stood posed against an undifferentiated hostile world. Even with the Maseko Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, the Ngoni group spatially nearest to Mpezeni, relations were warlike. 173 648 721

Despite this hostility, it seems probable that some individuals from the neighbouring tribes did leave their own country and join the Ngoni of their own free will. I was given accounts of this in a number of family and village histories, and while it is possible that some of those people whose ancestors were captured may now think it preferable to speak of voluntary attachment to the Ngoni State rather than capture, I do not think this can be the complete explanation. In the first place, very many Ngoni of to-day are quite prepared to admit that their ancestors were captured on Ngoni raids, so that the desire to conceal the capture of an ancestor, if it exists at all, cannot be widespread. On the contrary, some Cewa chiefs and notables who are now politically independent of the Ngoni and live in their own chiefdoms will recount with great interest how their ancestors were captured by the Ngoni. Secondly, some of those who claim that their ancestors joined the Ngoni of their own volition come from places a long way distant from Ngoni country, where the frequency of Ngoni raids cannot have been high, even if the Ngoni ever raided there at all. For instance, one village claims that its people came voluntarily from as far away as Fingoe, in Portuguese East Africa. Thirdly, there is a well-known instance of a son and other close relatives of an Nsenga chief who joined the Ngoni and rose to high position in the State. The Ngoni Paramount Chief and some of the minor chiefs are still friendly with the descendants of this Nsenga chief, Kalindawalo, and the story that these Nsenga nobles were not captured but were instructed by their own chief to transfer their allegiance to the Ngoni seems probably to be true, despite a contrary tradition among the Nsenga that these men were taken as captives.[39] Lastly there is the evidence of Glave, writing in 1894, who says that a host of villages had given themselves up to the Ngoni rather than submit to the constant anxiety of attack.[40] Thus provision was made for men and women to join the State other than as captives. These volunteers were treated in the same way as captives. They were allocated, either as individuals or in small groups, to a segment and came under the orders of a lord or lady. The Ngoni lived at a much higher standard 173 167 648 727 [511]

[39] cf. Field, *Visitilans*, p. 16; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 42-4.
[40] 86, fo. 329. See p. p. 68, f.n. 8. See also Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 of life than their neighbours, largely at the expense of those neigh-
167 bours. It is therefore not surprising that at least some of the more
648 adventurous of the hunted should have decided to join the ranks of
727 the hunters.
[511]

In Tanganyika the activities of the Arabs and other slave traders brought about significant changes in Ngoni society earlier
173 than in the less accessible Nyasa region. The Ngoni in Tanganyika
648 did not regard their neighbours merely as enemies. Ngoni warriors formed part of the army of Mirambo, the Nyamwezi slave trader. An elaborate network of joking relationships seems to have regulated intercourse between the tribes of Tanganyika and the Tanganyika Ngoni were linked to many of their neighbours in this way.[41] Joking relationships of this kind did not develop among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. In recent times, however, Ngoni from Fort Jameson have come into contact on the Copperbelt and elsewhere with tribes such as the Bemba who have developed a joking relationship with other Ngoni groups. These joking relationships are now extended to the Fort Jameson men.

From this historical account we are able to gain some idea of
173 Ngoni polity during the mid-nineteenth century. We have restricted
128 our attention to the relations existing between major portions of the State and between the State and its neighbours. We have seen how forms of organization, in particular the lineage system, with which the Ngoni began their march, were modified in conformity with the peculiar conditions of migrant brigandage. In the next chapter we shall look more closely at the internal organization of the State and attempt to analyse the social processes at work within it.

[41] See the writings of Moreau, Pedler, Scrivenor and Spies.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the 251
tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the [262]
cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV.
Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work [556]
in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and
their presence in the compound conferred importance on
their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of [415]
beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter,
dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs
and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a [323]
shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It
was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when 583
married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats,
spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would 577
show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to
have a high standard of household management in her new
home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households 511
well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they 577
could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some
of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed [357]
their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish 252
was being prepared. They watched every movement of their 868
mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on,
measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred
the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps
and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water
before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day 262
in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish
of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less
often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the [415]

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8

N 251 511 [126]

The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages
(February 1941)

N [162]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,710

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [361] N [166]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 311 511

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

L 161 311 511 000

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, provide similar examples for different systems and land categories. In the second Report of the Ecological Survey (North Eastern Rhodesia, paras. 316–20) Trapnell records a wide range of observations on areas where land degeneration and soil erosion had become marked, in relation to land categories, population densities and the time factor. These observations provide independent evidence of the relatively low carrying capacity of much of our land under the traditional systems, and they accord well with the estimates obtained by the methods outlined in this paper. 161 311 511 [114] [128]

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(2) C. G. Trapnell & J. N. Clothier, *Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia.* Lusaka: Government Printer, 1937.

C. G. Trapnell, *Soils Vegetation and Agriculture of North Eastern Rhodesia.* Lusaka: Government Printer, 1943.

(3) H. H. Bennet, 'Agriculture', *Jour.-Min. Agric.* November 1943.

(4) United States Dept. of Agric. Misc. Publication No. 321.

(5) *United States Year Book of Agriculture*, 1938.

(6) *Report on Nineteen Surveys Done in Small Agricultural Areas*, Entebbe: Government Printer, 1938.

(7) N. Humphrey, *The Kikuyu Lands*, Nairobi: Government Printer, 1945.

(8) Lord Lugard, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, Blackwood & Sons, 1926.

(9) L. S. B. Leakey, *Kenya: Contrasts and Problems*, Methuen & Co., 1936

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftaincies remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional sytems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§. 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 5,600 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mkushi District and 4,800 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§ 3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Description of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population obtains its food only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 15s. *The Soil, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 5s.

/6 cont'd/

417 Byres for the cattle are placed on the edge of the village, with a separate division for calves at the side of the main byre. The robustness with which the byre is built depends on the extent to which there are marauding animals, particularly hyenas, leopards and lions [132] in the vicinity. The usual method of construction is using poles some ten to twenty feet long, placed close together in a circle of about twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. Thorn branches are placed on the outside of the fence, and the gate is a simple affair of several upright poles leaning in a slot made by two cross-poles. If an anthill is available, the byre will be made round it, so that the cattle may to some extent be able to clamber up out of the mud, which in the wet season may come up to their bellies. The building of a byre is undertaken by the men who will keep their cattle in it, and when a village moves to a new site, this is the first job to be tackled. Each owner of seven or eight head of cattle may have his [403] own byre, but a man with many cattle may share a byre with his brothers. Owners of one or two head keep their cattle with their relatives.

231 /7/ Small domestic animals, such as pigs, goats, sheep and chickens, are kept in the village, near the hut of their owner, and their pens are provided with roofs and sometimes a fence as well, for [136] protection against hyenas. Deserted dwelling huts, whose owners have gone away or have died, are used as shelters for calves and other animals.

417 Drying platforms are built to provide a stand for reed mats on [385] which flour can be dried in the sun. If no platform has been built, [351] the mats are placed on the ground where the flour is at the mercy of straying animals. Pigeon houses are built on platforms about six 235 feet off the ground, with small holes to allow entry for the pigeons. Chicken houses are also sometimes built in this way, with a ladder 343 to enable the chicken to ascend. The more prosperous villagers may have other buildings, such as latrines, washing shelters, or occasional- [511] ly open-sided shelters for sitting in and gossiping.

/7 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household, 415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or [511] china crockery.

323 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every [469] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood. [489] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice [415] the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves [824] of the mbwabwa tree.

285 Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men, [353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be [469] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings [491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid [343] baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /8/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

643 royal women. In the royal villages in the 1930's there was one big
361 *induna* and several lesser ones whose position and functions will be described in Chapter IV.

643 This 'going out' of the new Paramount's village, leaving the former
554 Paramount's village as the *gogo* village, brought about some re-distribu-
644 tion of authority, prestige and material goods. It gave the new Paramount his own village, always to be known as his, even after his death. His village became the focal meeting-place for the territory and for the court and territorial officials who surrounded the Paramount; and it was to the new royal village that the *alumuzana* in pre-European days came frequently to visit the Paramount and report to him on conditions in their areas. His moving out of the *gogo* village, on the other hand, gave his brothers who stayed there, and especially those of the *gogo* house, more freedom and authority within that village as well as responsibility for the conduct of all ritual matters relating to the kingdom. The Para-
[695] mount's big wife had to take her place as the leading woman in the new village and to order the affairs of the wives attached to her house in con-
[592] sultation with the Paramount's mother. Cattle, beer and food for the royal household became the concern of the new village, and the *izinduna* and the royal women had to plan and manage the economy of a capital where political interests converged and where visitors and hangers-on were constantly turning up.

643 The following text by Chief Mtwalo Jere in Mzimba district, helped
644 by Cibambo's older brother, describes the daily routine of the Para-
512 mount and his royal village as they had known it in their youth before the coming of the Europeans:

¶ The *inkosi* had to wash very early before the people came to see him. The *ingceko* was the servant who took care of washing the *inkosi*. He had to go with the *inkosi* to the bush and hide the faeces to prevent any bad person from getting the faeces. The *ingceko* was anyone whom the *inkosi* called for this, and must be one who walks well with the *inkosi*.

Before leaving his house to go to the kraal the *inkosi* had to eat a little porridge. When he went to the kraal a calabash of beer was brought to him. When any beer was brought to the *inkosi*, the *ingceko* tasted it first to see if it was good. The *inkosi* asked 'Is it good beer?' and the *ingceko* said 'Yes *inkosi*' and gave it to the *inkosi* to drink. When the *inkosi* took snuff the big *alumuzana* could beg from him. The other *amadoda* could only touch their noses. Then the *inkosi* knew they were begging snuff from him. Where the *inkosi* sat a mat was spread, and on it was laid a leopard- or a lion-skin. This was called 'the chair of the *inkosi*'. On arrival the big *alumuzana* went straight into the kraal to where the *inkosi* sat and greeted him '*Bayete*', and sat down in front of him.

The *inkosi* could not eat porridge except that cooked by his own wives. In his own hut he ate alone with one wife to serve him. His mothers also came with food every day. He ate twice in his own hut, early and late, and once in the kraal. When he ate in the kraal all could see him. He could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingcwembe*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

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In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

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In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *izipheko*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izinduna* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

woman had her home. The other was the 'gate'[2] of the kraal 621
at the opposite end of the enclosure to the 'big house'. The [417]
name by which this 'gate' was known applied also to the
space on each side of the gap in the kraal fence through
which the cattle went out and came in—a gap which was
closed at night with heavy poles. Here at the gate the men [512]
of the village sat by day, ate their meals brought to them by
children from their wives' huts, talked, received strangers,
pursued their crafts, and supervised the return of the cattle
in the evenings.

In and around the main huts within the tall reed fences, 342
the life of a Ngoni household went on. Some of the huts
were rectangular, others round. All had a veranda built up
above the ground-level and shaded by the house roof. The
back parts of the veranda were often enclosed with mats to
make additional storage space. In old Ngoni households the 351
open space around the hut was kept swept and mudded and
polished like a floor, so that people could sit there in comfort
and cleanliness as well as on the veranda. Near the house 417
was one or more little reed platforms about five feet above
the ground, where kitchen utensils, gourds and vegetables
were laid to dry, and which were used to sit under as shelter
from the sun in the hot months. Large and small wooden 415
pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape, mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
always to be seen outside and around the hut, as well as
inside.

In each household, within the main hut, there were two 353
places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
door-posts at the entrance. These posts with the hollow for [354]
the fireplace in the centre of the floor divided the hut into
a right-hand and left-hand side—the men's side and the

[1] and [2] A short list of the vernacular terms for some these common Ngoni place-names is given at end of the book.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
● 512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

after the age of four or five, when they might become aware 867
that intercourse was taking place. From this age, when the 864
Ngoni said 'they will now begin to see things and to ask questions', they went to sleep either with a widowed grandmother or senior helper.

During the 'dark half of the month' and in the rains, most 512
people went to bed soon after dark and little children got a 857
long sleep. When the moon was bright, and in dry weather, [132]
the whole village was astir, walking around, dancing, talking, visiting. Little children tagged round with their older 513
sisters or nurse girls, and if they were sleepy were either picked up and carried, or put in the hut to sleep on their mat, provided there was no fire burning into which they could fall. During the day, especially in the hot weather, children dropped off to sleep just where they were, on the veranda, under the platform, or in some other shady spot.

It was just before bedtime, in the grandmother's hut, that [538]
traditional folk-tales were told, round the last flickers of a wood fire. Sometimes a child dropped off to sleep before the story was finished. Someone either took him on her lap, or dumped him on his mat and covered him up.

This acquiring of habits, directed consciously by adults, 867
was designed to give the child increasingly a sense of being 858
part of a community which had certain standards of behaviour. There were, in this training, some prohibitions
which a child was expected to observe as soon as he could 864
walk and talk. The most stringent was on any form of sex play between boys and girls. To avoid any likelihood of this, little boys and girls were early encouraged to form separate play groups. The elders kept an eye particularly on the boys, and if they showed any inquisitiveness in their play about the private parts of a girl playmate, they were beaten and reproved and told: 'If you do this again, I shall tell your father.'

Many little boys and girls up to the age of four or five ran 864
about naked, but in leading Ngoni families they wore a scrap 291

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when 561
asked questions. They took their school work seriously in 872
order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent 565
ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be [583]
transferred at their marriage would be greater according to
whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or
even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daugh- 561
ters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls 857
continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. 592
They and their companions, according to their growth and 512
strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water,
grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household,
where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family
only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores.
As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time
with the young children, or washing themselves and their
clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rub- [302]
bing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass [301]
or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head
bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more
amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' 572
circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they
always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classifica-
tory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this
friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about
her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the
other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage.
The friend was always from another compound and of a
leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and
necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream to-
gether. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were
married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a
violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about
these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

888 Yet the position of the old women of the village was a highly
[622] honoured one. The mother of the headman was almost more powerful than her son. And we always take good care when we enter a new village to win the kindly favour of the old grandmother first of all. Then we are sure we have found a way to the son's heart. One of the most beautiful things in our tribal life is the honour which is paid to the grey hairs of the village. The bent and helpless old men who lived through the glorious fighting
[623] days, and understand all precedent and etiquette are the judges and councillors. And no case can be tried, no decision can be made, until the old men give their presence and their opinion. It is hard when the young are leaping ahead of their fathers through education to maintain this veneration for the elders. Yet it is the very backbone of the tribe. There is nothing more contemptible than an African or an Asiastic with a veneer of education who affects to despise the elders of the village. But I know no more pathetic sight than our afternoon schools where grey-haired men and women may be seen peering through faded eyes trying also to learn to read and keep abreast of the young and alert life, while the sun goes down in their eventide.

233 The Ngoni were first of all a fighting people, and then a
[181] pastoral. Their land affords splendid pasture for cattle. And they take great pride in their herds. Round the cattle kraal centre all their ambitions, and highest delights, and best intelligence. They sit and watch the cattle going out in the early morning and coming in in the evening, and know every spot and colour of their beautiful animals. The quietest and most peaceful sight I know is when the sun goes down, and the fierce heat has
[534] given place to the welcome cool of the evening. Then you will hear the music of reed pipes, and looking up you see a long line
[512] of sleek, solemn cows, with large silken dew laps, and fat humps, slowly coming up the village path lowing for their calves, while boys ride on their backs sitting or standing upright, balancing themselves carefully and blowing on their pipes. Before and behind them runs a troop of goats and sheep bleating with such a human cry. In a moment the village is alive—sheep and goats are chased back and forward till they find the huts where they sleep with their masters. And boys run out with wooden pails
[234] into which they milk what the calves have not sucked from their mothers.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and nursemaids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving.

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*laweni*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *laweni*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father.

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *laweni* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary.

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she

561 with the main activities of the groups, though it did to some extent illustrate mutual relationships.

Age-Set terms

	Northern Ngoni	*Central Ngoni*
[184 All children	*abantwana*	*ana*
104] Young men even if married	*amajaha*	*anyamata*
Young girls before puberty	*inkahazana*	*mabuthu*
Young girls past puberty	*izintombi*	*anamwali*
All married women	*abafazi*	*ahazi*
Senior men	*amadoda*	*madoda*
Senior women	*amanina*	*manina*

●513 One of the most characteristic forms of Ngoni village organization
561 was the *laweni*, or boys' dormitory. It included the older boys in the
866 group called 'children' and the young men until they married, who were in fact called *amajaha* after they had left the *laweni* and married and had huts of their own. The age for entering the *laweni* was approximately seven years, and was as a rule determined by the age when a child began to get his second teeth. When a child was going about the village with several gaps in his front teeth, his companions jeered at him if he still slept in his grandmother's hut, and his father took the view that it was time he stopped playing like a child and took up seriously the job of herding goats and calves. There was often some hesitation, especially among boys who were not so well grown for their age, at taking the plunge and going to live in the *laweni*, since once made the step could not be retraced. It was primarily an individual decision. It meant leaving the protective affectionate care of the grandmother in the evenings, and the care-free play all day round the mother's hut with meals provided by her, for a different sort of existence altogether. *Laweni* life was rigorous and was dominated by the senior boys living in the hut. The younger ones were at their mercy, and were made to 'fag' for their elders, clean up the hut, sometimes steal food from their mothers' stores, and were
[626] beaten if they were slow or careless, or if they threatened to tell the elders in the village what went on in the *laweni*. The main weapon to get boys into the *laweni* was the ridicule of their fellows. Once members of the *laweni* group they were disciplined into obedience by threats and beating. The age range within a *laweni* was often considerable, from seven to seventeen years.

233 All the boys in a *laweni* who were members of houses possessing
857 cattle—and this as a rule included all sons of Ngoni families of trans-
561 Zambesi clans—had to take part in herding. Cattle-herding was a responsible task and could be an arduous one. The boys got up before dawn, opened the gate of the kraal, and took the cattle to water. They milked the cattle on an open space near the village and carried the milk in wooden jars, gourds or petrol tins to the owner of the cattle, keeping

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to 351
make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, 415
and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, [356]
and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time [513]
sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into
the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at
night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as [352]
pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fasci- [531]
nate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from 351
time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer [285]
was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child [273]
was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. [857]
These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked [231]
and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and
young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped 361
round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay 311
patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens',
and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or 857
grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work
in the gardens was an expedition for young children which
they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places for- 858
bidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone 867
with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep
away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where
the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had
passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of [562]
the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children
strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and
fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went
there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless
a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven
years old, because they found their fathers there and the
herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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VILLAGE LIFE FOR OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS

There was no doubt that this abrupt transition, like the sudden weaning, was a shock for many boys between six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half. From having been impudent, well-fed, self-confident and spoiled youngsters among the women many of them quickly became skinny, scruffy, subdued and with a hunted expression. The subdued and hunted looks passed off as they adjusted themselves to their new environment and there were boys, generally those exceptionally well grown and physically strong, who showed no apparent signs of shock. They all, however, showed the effects of irregular and inadequate feeding. The younger boys were chronically hungry and their hair and skin and bony knees and ribs were eloquent of calory, protein and vitamin shortages. 575 156 [146]

The other main purpose of dormitory life in Ngoni culture was to mix up all the boys in the village and let the common life together teach them how to get on with their age-mates and knuckle under to their superiors in age. Age and strength were the only criteria for authority. Older brothers might try to protect and intercede for younger brothers but it was not encouraged. All the young ones had to take their chance equally, without regard for their family name or their father's position. 575 858

The dormitory was primarily a sleeping-place, but through the group of boys who slept there the herding of cattle was organized and the off-duty amusements and occupations of the older boys were planned. The young ones had to 'fag' for the rest, fetching wood and water, keeping fires going, sweeping the hut, taking messages, huddling in a corner at night when the oldest boys brought girls in, and submitting to beatings both as a warning and as a punishment. They were usually beaten once or twice soon after their arrival and then threatened with much worse if they ever divulged what went on in the dormitory. It was not however a torture house, far from it, and the boys boasted of belonging to 'our dormitory' and were proud of having their own hidden life 575 [513] [857]

/8 cont'd/

352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled
285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any
513 [77] headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

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412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of fur-
[325] naces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used,
[567] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

493 Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid
[241] wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle,
[492] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of
411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about
224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

863 of dust, and many of them began to suffer from sores, itch and sore eyes. The girls however, had already begun to like a clean and shining skin for the sake of being beautiful, and their ablutions were no longer under duress.

The smallest children urinated and defecated wherever they happened to be. From the age of three or four, however, they were taught to tell someone if they wanted to defecate, and taken outside the hut. Maize cobs or soft leaves or grass were used to clean the child, and then thrown on the fire. When the child began to look after himself, he was shown how to use the left hand only when cleaning himself, [826] and told it was 'the hand of shame, only used for bad things'. From the age of four or five small girls and boys went with their mothers and the other women to the section of the sur- [514] rounding bush reserved for the women's toilet. At about the same age boys and girls were taught to withdraw from the public gaze when urinating, and to conceal themselves behind a hut or in some other hiding-place. The Ngoni were [514] extremely prudish about all physical acts connected with [834] evacuating or sex, and began to demand correct behaviour from children at an early age.

If a child was constipated, or had diarrhoea, or was vomi- 757 ting, or had a fever or stomach-ache, the nurse girl reported 603 it to his mother who went to tell the child's paternal grandmother. For all the range of usual childish ailments the grandmother prescribed and carried out standard treatments, such as whey used as a purgative, or very thin gruel to check diarrhoea. The Ngoni women had a number of herbal remedies which they used for themselves and their children. They also used hot poultices, cupping, and forms of massage. Only when the known household remedies failed, did the grandmother tell the child's father and he, as we have seen, took the responsibility for calling in 'specialists'.

Sleep, the little child's third major need, was sometimes 867 well ordered and sometimes erratic. It was not considered 864 proper for children to sleep in the same hut as their parents

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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sleeping on mats they slept on grass until the required days were finished, and they scattered to their homes.

This account brings out certain elements in the ritual surrounding the *tonga*. The word *tonga* in the Ngoni language means 'rod', and was used in the very ancient folk tale *Intonga yetusi*, 'The Brass Rod'. There was no rod, however, nor anything representing one, among the medicines or ingredients which together made up the *tonga*. A descendant of one of the early 'guardians' of the *tonga* said about it:

[778]

« The *tonga* is the horn of a sheep, and the horn by itself has no real power, but there are other things which give it power like the rib of a lion.

It is clear that in the past the *tonga* was regarded as giving protection to the Ngoni people, particularly by providing medicine at the accession of a new Paramount when he needed medicine for strengthening.

Other informants from the Phungwako clan said that the *tonga* provided the medicine with which the Paramount washed at the time of *incwala*, the feast of the first-fruits. No one alive in the 1930's had seen that ceremony and the special songs had been forgotten. A tradition remained that the Paramount had to undergo seclusion and ritual washing with medicines before the first green crops could be eaten. [178]

Throughout the references to the *tonga* there was no hint that it was ever worshipped or addressed in any way similar to the invocations to the ancestor spirits. It was clearly a 'medicine' possessing great power and guarded as a national treasure. The ingredients of the medicine were kept in a particular way, in a particular place, in the guardianship of a particular person. I have seen the ingredients, the place and the guardian, but I gave a promise not to reveal them. I was allowed to handle the objects and, after doing so, I had to perform the ritual act of washing my hands with cowdung. This was the form of ritual cleansing practised by the Paramount after using the medicines. [515 783]

There were two ways in which these medicines were used by the Paramount to strengthen him on his accession. He washed in the kraal with the medicines whipped into a foam. The old men said that in ancient times the water for making the medicines had to be fetched from the sea. In addition to washing he had to eat meat in which the medicines were mixed. The majority of informants said that beef was used for this ritual eating, while others said that, as in the ritual for preparing the *tonga*, the meat taken was sheep. This ritual was said to have taken place for the last time at the death of Cikusi and the accession of Gomani I, though it was hinted that it had been performed at the accession of the Ngoni chief of the Maseko clan now living in Portuguese territory.

It was clear that the Maseko Paramounts made use of the *tonga* as a royal medicine both at their accession and in time of war. The reference [766]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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on was placed on it. The meat in the basket and on the gate stayed there all night.

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Following the ritual of offering meat to the spirits came the ritual of cooking and eating the meat, both that offered to the spirits and the rest. After the basket of meat had been left all night in the place of the spirits, the large quantity on the gate was carried away and cooked by an old woman outside the hut of Bambo Mangs's granddaughter. The meat in the basket which had been offered to the spirits was put in a pot and cooked on the fire in Bambo Mangs's hut. It stayed cooking all day and all night till the following morning. Dzinthengs Phungwako, [illegible] sacrificial meat among all who were in the house, that is Bambo Mangs, her daughter and granddaughter and several senior women. When they had finished the leading women stood up and thanked '*Zikhomo Maseko*', '*Zikhomo Magwagwa*'. Then they washed their hands and went to their own houses.

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The large quantity of meat which had been laid on the gate and cooked on another fire in another *bwalo* was carried in a big pot and put down outside Bambo Mangs's hut in the late afternoon. Her daughter came outside and divided the meat into three piles: a small one from the breast-bones for the women, a leg for the chief, the head for Kabwazi the headman of a neighbouring village, and the rest in a big pot for the men. A boy came to tell Lopati that all was ready and he and the chief went out to the place where the beast was killed, near the gate of the kraal. There were four groups already sitting there and the chief and Lopati made a fifth: the *madoda*, the senior men; the *majaka*, the young men; the *mabwa*, the herd-boys; and the little boys. Before Lopati divided the meat he and the chief washed elaborately with water brought in a gourd, and then he washed the knife before cutting the meat. He called the *madoda* to send someone for their portion in a basket, then the young men and the herd-boys were given their portions—a basket for each group, and the small boys had bits put in their hands. The eating was very sedate, there was no snatching of choice bits, and in each group the one who fetched the meat distributed it. There was the general atmosphere of a ritual meal rather than a feast, though the small boys smacked their lips appreciatively. From time to time Lopati called up someone from a group and gave him a bit more to divide up. When it was all eaten, a boy was sent to fetch water and the soapy leaves which the Ngoni used for washing, and the chief and Lopati and the *madoda* all washed the grease off their fingers. Then Lopati stood up and called out '*Siyabonga baba, nikomo matwana mankosi*', 'We are praising you, father, thank you child of the Paramount', and the others all agreed and said '*Zikhomo baba.*' Then they all went together to Bambo Mangs's hut and stood opposite her door and called out the same thanks. The women who had eaten their meat

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851 small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was
[846] applied with a feather to the baby's navel.
[278] When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and
[302] the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then
[515] they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a
[431] basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such
[177] presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come
[594] back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grand-
[603] mother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to
[431] the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's
864 lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 901
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 855
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. [146] This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when [272] milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made [262] curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [867] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for autho- [155] rity. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] beadbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear 301 the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took 356 an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain standards in their homes and in their persons, which were ● 515 held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This 182 emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government [177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 181 356 515 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infect their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again. 825 356 [485]

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene which made them insist that there should be no spitting or nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An ingenious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose. 515 356 [413]

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean. 515 [576]

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up 264

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE II. Beer party at a chief's house. Standing in the foreground wearing a fez is a Native Authority messenger.

[651]

PLATE III. Collecting tax in a village. The Administrative clerk sits at a table on the verandah of the village headman's hut. Near him stand two Administrative messengers, and seated on the ground are men waiting to pay.

[Facing p. 144]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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PLATE IV. Villagers hoeing a path to another village in preparation for a visit from the District Officer.

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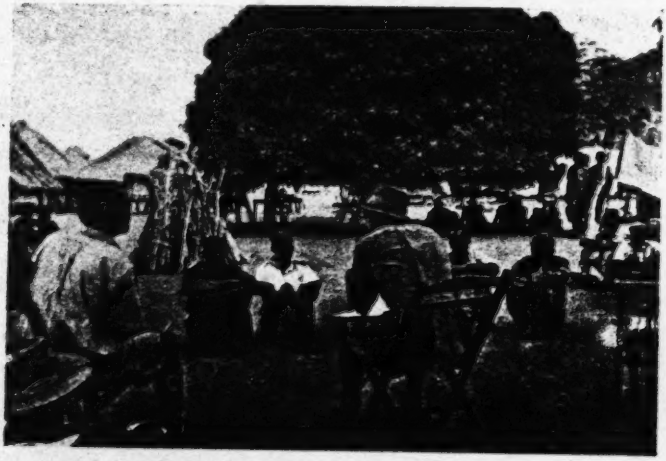

PLATE V. A District Officer, with a county chief on his left, talks to village headmen during a tour of villages. In the distance are villagers listening to the conversation.

[Facing p. 145]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VI. The clerk of a county Native Court checks the whereabouts of men on the tax register of a village with an important man in the village. Standing are a Native Authority messenger with fez, and an Administrative messenger. The village headman and some of his people sit in the background.

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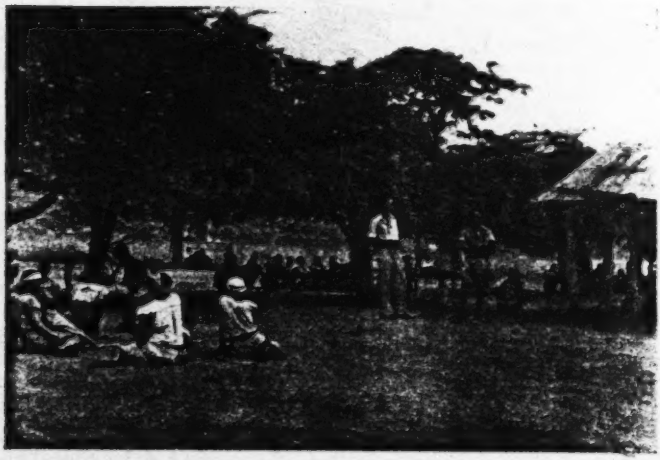

PLATE VII. Litigants outside a county Native Court wait for hearings to begin.

[Facing p. 152]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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PLATE VIII. The clerk of a Native Court, with one of the court assessors, sits in the chief's village issuing a permit for selling beer to a man who has come on behalf of his sister.

[222]

PLATE IX. A Native Authority councillor, sitting on the verandah of the Native Court in his county, issues passes to men wishing to collect caterpillars. There are no edible caterpillars in Ngoniland, and Ngoni who wish to collect them provide themselves with passes to show to the Cewa chiefs in whose counties caterpillars are found.

[Facing p. 153]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE X. Thatching a school roof. The county chief has told men from nearby villages to do this work.

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PLATE XI. A mobile post office halted near a county court.

[Facing p. 168]

643 When the European Mr. Walker asked the big people whether Gomani I left any children, those big people refused to tell and said 'He did not leave children, they died when they were small.' They feared lest perhaps the Europeans wanted to kill the children too. Mr. Walker (they called him Cipyoza, 'the thing that goes on boring a hole') did not stop asking because he said 'Gomani was my friend and I want to help his children.' On his second journey they revealed to him that there were two children in the village here, and they named the heir Philip Gomani and his younger brother William Gomani who died in 1919. Then Mr. Walker rejoiced. When they brought the children out before his eyes, he gave them gifts which he brought for them, clothes and other things.

The accession of the Paramount and the royal medicines

When the succession of the new Paramount had been decided according to the principles just discussed, the regent had the further responsibility of presenting the new Paramount to the people. This presentation was the act of accession and, as we have seen, it might take place a short time or a longer time after the death of the former Paramount. In describing the accession and the ritual accompanying it, I shall use illustrations from the central kingdom, partly because the material there was more co-ordinated and more complete, especially that relating to the religious and magical significance of the ritual, and also because the unique feature of the 'royal shadow' in relation to the Paramount was, so far as I could tell, peculiar to that area.

The actual accession of the new Paramount had four main elements in it. The first was the decision as to the individual who was to succeed, which was taken by the regent and the senior men. The second was the 'placing' (*kuimika*) of the chosen successor, which was the announcement to the people that he was the Paramount. The third was the instruction by the senior men, and the fourth was the administering of 'medicines' to strengthen the Paramount.

The two following accounts relate to the accession of Gomani I. The first is by Captain Rattray and was included in his collection of Nyanja texts.[1] It was dictated to him by a man who was present at the death and cremation of Cikusi. At the end of this text there is a brief reference to the acknowledgment of the new Paramount:

[516] ‹ They allow three days to pass [after the funeral], and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps out and says, 'Do you hear? Your new chief is so and so' (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then everyone shouts '*Bayete*', and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes. Then the elders take the 'child', going with him to a hut to give him instruction, saying 'Today you stand alone. Look after

[1] Rattray, R. S. *Some Folklore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja*. London, S.P.C.K. 1907.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

your people as did your father before you. If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned.' 643

Habuya Dube, the official 'praiser' of Paramount Gomani II, had been present at the funeral of Cikusi, and he confirmed that the ceremony of accession was as described above and added these further details:

¶ At the time of the burning of the body of Cikusi, Gomani stood up in the smoke, standing on one leg with a shield in his hand. When all had been consumed by the fire, they began to open the waters and the grave-digger swept the ashes. And they picked up Gomani and went with him to the mound so that he should wash. When these things were over, we left the water to go to the house. We were dancing *ligubo* in the open place and Gomani had a headdress of *luve* [1] feathers on his head. And they followed him into the house, but all the people were dancing *ligubo* in the *bwalo* for a whole month. When the mourning was over, Bvumbwe Maseko said 'Now let us establish (*tiimike*) our chief.' So he was established. [766]

The 'standing on one leg' referred to in both texts is the position adopted by other East and South-east African people when resting supported by the spear, with one foot flat against the other knee and the shield in front of the body. Other men inheriting their father's position stood at the grave holding a spear, but only those of the Maseko clan, succeeding the Paramount in the direct line, adopted the position of standing on one leg. 'Placing' or establishing the Paramount was done before a large gathering of people with the warriors in full war-dress, described graphically in terms of the waving head-plumes and the thunder of the shields. It was evident that all discussion of who would or would not be a suitable Paramount went on within the closed circle of the regent and the senior men, and the people were presented with the chosen Paramount whom they acclaimed. [516]

The instruction by the senior men was a reminder to the new Paramount that, though his new powers were extensive and unique in their authority, he should not act like a cruel despot. There are references in the *Ncheu District Note Book* [2] to the passing-over of an elder brother of Gomani I on the grounds that he was of a fierce and cruel disposition, though, according to Ngoni informants, this man Mandala was a younger brother of Cikusi and an uncle of Gomani, and thus was not eligible to be Paramount. In discussing the type of man who was considered suitable to be Paramount, Ngoni informants always laid stress on the need for him not to be fierce and cruel. This pointed to an ideal type of Paramount and did not agree with European accounts of large-scale poison ordeals at Cikusi's court. The instruction to the new Paramount [183]

[1] Feathers worn only by the Paramount.

[2] *Ncheu District Note Book*. 1891.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and appeals were uncommon. Chiefs did not allow a man to come by himself with his case to them, he had to come with his headman. Even those in danger of death went first to the headmen and these brought them to the chiefs. 692

The Ngoni hated bribes. If any *induna* was found to have taken bribes from people he was condemned and punished. [687]

The hearing of the cases was like what it is today. The one who brought the case to the court spoke first, then the one with whom he was quarrelling. If there were elders there from their village they also spoke telling out how these people quarrelled, saying so-and-so began to quarrel in such-and-such a way, and then showed how they had been unable to judge it in the village. They did not go into details of the quarrel, that was done by the men themselves. After those who had quarrelled had told of the beginning of the case any who knew of it were asked to say how it appeared to them in the village. These were the witnesses both for and against. 695

When this had been done, all who were implicated or interested in the case remained silent. It is the custom of the Ngoni that all who spoke in a case should stand and have a stick, and as they spoke they should walk about and limp with the stick or sometimes stand all together, but in that case the hand which held the stick should shake and stick it into the ground. Only women spoke seated. No one at the hearing of a case was allowed to lie down, everyone, even the Paramount, sat. They did this because they were afraid that otherwise the case would not finish quickly. The court was held in the cattle kraal. Women were not allowed into the kraal for cases, but sat outside opposite where the old men were gathered, even though they were the wives of the Paramount. 695 516

After the litigants and the witnesses had spoken it was the turn of the elders of the court. They questioned and agreed with or criticized the men who had quarrelled but they did not pronounce judgement. They waited for the Paramount who first of all sat silent and noticed those who unravelled or twisted the case. Afterwards when the people had finished speaking, the elders delivered the story to the Paramount or judge. The judge then delivered his judgement and condemned those who had twisted the case. He delivered his judgement sitting not standing like the other people and when he had finished all thanked him, or rather saluted him with a loud '*Bayete*' or with the surname if to lesser chiefs. Sometimes he sent an elder to tell the court the judgement. When the case had been judged no one criticized the judgement. The one who began to give thanks for the judgement was the one who was found guilty: this he did to show submission and repentance. The custom of today that the one who wins the case gives the thanks is not good because the man who has lost goes away in resentment and threatening and often the case crops up again. 695 [576]

If an *induna* or man of standing went secretly to the Paramount to accuse somebody that he deserved death (perhaps for witchcraft), very often the Paramount sent a man in secret to warn the condemned man to run to a chief's village and hide his head. In this way many left their fathers and went to build with the chiefs and when they went they took 643 682 692

all their things

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(*ukuqandisa*). The middle section, the main part of the ceremony, took place in the husband's village while the bridal party was there. In the last part the bride was left in her new home and three ceremonies marked her gradual integration into her new social group. 585

After the number of cattle had been decided upon in the final stage of the betrothal, the initiative was left to the girl's parents to announce the date of the *mtimba*. Eventually a message was sent through the *gogo* house of the girl's village to say that the bridal party would arrive on a certain day. Before the day came, the girl, now addressed as *umlobokazi* (the bride), was called to the *indlunkulu* in her village. There the leading women, her father's mothers, who had called in her father's sisters, gave her final instructions on how to behave in her new home. Ngoni women said that they were told at this time: 'Our child, we are putting you out of our family. We are handing you over to the other people. You were free and now your freedom is over for you are under other people. Where you are going you will meet with many troubles. They will say of you many things which you did not do. It is good to be patient.' During this instruction the girl cried and so did her mother. On the morning of the departure the girl was dressed in freshly prepared skins, her hair was arranged in the *isihlutu* (chignon) to which the gall bladder of a goat was pinned, and the gall bladder of a cow was tied to her elbow. Then, still sobbing and whimpering, and surrounded by her age mates and the female members of her house, she set out for her bridegroom's village, the young men of her village driving a bullock (*mcando*) as a present from the bride's parents to the mother of the bridegroom, in whose herd it was placed. [292 237] [152]

This part of the ceremony, the entry of the bride's party (*ukuqandisa*), was held to be of great importance, since it was the first time the bride's family and friends as a group had met the husband's family. The bride's procession waited by the kraal gate, singing *mtimba* songs, and every now and then a woman of the bride's party, one of her father's sisters, sang the praises of the bride's clan. As the young men driving the bullock entered the kraal, the bridal party joined them and they began to dance in the kraal. 571 585

Now the first overtures were made between the bride's party and the people of the bridegroom's village. The older women of the village approached the older women of the bride's party, greeting them and exchanging, in the Ngoni phrase, 'words which were good and proud and showed the quickness of their tongues'.

After these advances, the men of the village came into the kraal or gathered by the *indlunkulu*. While the bridal party began to sing with their heads bowed, the chief woman from the *indlunkulu* of the bride's village came forward, bending low, and on her knees presented to the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* of the husband's village a basket containing snuff boxes and beads. She made a speech, in which she said, 'Here is [516 431]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 the killing and the flaying were done just outside the kraal by young
782 men of the Nzunga clan, younger brothers of the chief. The cow ran backward as she was stabbed and a second blow killed her, and she was dragged round when she fell to lie with her head to the south-east. Some of the blood from the wound was collected immediately by Lopati and taken by him and put in Bambo Manga's hut in 'the place of the spirits'. The cow was skinned with a few neat strokes of the knife, and a thin strip of meat about six inches wide was cut from the back. This Lopati put in the sacrificial food basket and he and the chief went with it to Bambo Manga's house. The three firestones were removed and the meat was spread on the glowing logs till it was cooked through and quite white. Bambo Manga, who was lying on her mat, washed her hands and face with water brought by her daughter and rinsed out her mouth. Two small pieces of the meat were given to her to eat, and the rest was cut up in small pieces and eaten by Lopati, the chief, his sister and Bambo Manga's daughter. This meat could only be eaten by that inner group.

The men who had skinned the beast cut it up and, following an Ngoni practice, laid all the meat on the gate of the reed fence surrounding the *bwalo*, and carried it to the hut and laid it outside the door. Holding the sacrificial winnowing basket Lopati directed the men to put in it three right ribs, a piece of liver, both stomachs, the heart and lungs, the fat from round the kidneys, a bit of the intestine and the spleen. The head of the beast was arranged facing towards Kabwazi's village, since he had always kraaled some of the Nzunga cattle.

Lopati took the basket into the hut and was followed by the head herd-boy holding the tip of the tail and the gall bladder. The basket with the meat in it was put on the floor at the back of the hut in 'the place of the spirits'. Lopati and the chief squatted on their haunches
[516] nearby, and Bambo Manga knelt on her mat while her daughter wiped the soles of her feet, and she went forward on her knees to the place of the spirits. Lopati intervened and said 'Please walk upright', but she refused and said 'I will do as my ancestors did'. Her daughter knelt behind her.

Then Lopati began to praise the spirits, calling on Mputa by name, saying 'Here is your meat. Please eat. We praise you. We are your children.' The rest ejaculated '*Wena Nhosi*', '*Wena, Gumede*' as if supporting him, keeping quite still and facing the place of the spirits. After the invocation Bambo Manga went back to her mat, and Lopati took the gall bladder and sprinkled the juice round her, and then round the meat basket and round the hearth-stones. The gall bladder was then put in a small pot with water in it and laid on the floor, and the tip of the tail was tied above the place of the spirits. The skin of the beast, which had been washed but not scraped, was brought in and laid on the ground between the firestones and the wall and the gate with the meat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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[41]

2. Chief dressed for war-dance with wives

3. Chief and his elders in kraal

[facing page 17]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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8. A well-filled grain store

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[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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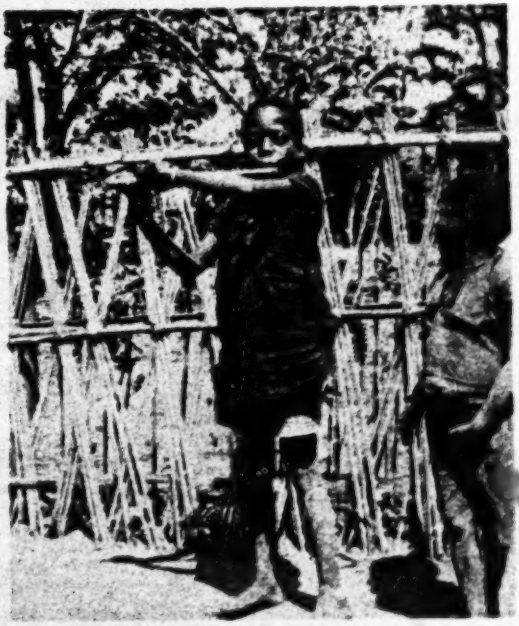

10. Young musicians

[facing page 49]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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11. Young musicians

[342]

[facing page 64]

of cloth hanging in front from a bead or grass waistband. They were all taught before that age, and most stringently after it, to sit correctly. For the little girls, this meant kneeling first and then sitting with the legs tucked on one side. They always smoothed down their scrap of cloth so that their genitals were covered. Little boys often squatted, sitting on their heels. Their correct position however, especially when eating food, was to sit with their legs crossed and the soles of their feet pressed against their thighs, and their cloth or skin apron arranged to cover their genitals.

Any rudeness in speech or action towards parents or elders was corrected at once, and the child was told: 'That is not the Ngoni way.' Studied courtesy included looking down when addressed by an elder, and as we saw in Chapter II, never walking behind a group of elders but passing in front of them, bending slightly forward and murmuring: 'I am before your eyes.'

Play places and playthings

In spite of what appeared like a somewhat restrictive régime, Ngoni children were merry and busy all their waking hours. Occasionally lack of health, or an awkward temperament, produced a child who sat around by himself, or glowered at other children, or was spiteful and vindictive. For the most part their nurse girls and older sisters paid them the attention they demanded, were always ready to provide distractions and amusements, and showed them how to use all that lay around them as playthings.

The places where they played depended on their age and mobility. The youngest children stayed round the hut and inside the fence. Occasionally the nurse girls and older sisters in the afternoons took them to a 'playground' on the outskirts of the village, where the older girls were accustomed to meet and practise dancing, or to thread beads and chatter. When the harvest was in, some of the older children about five and six years old, helped by the nurse girls, made 'play

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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16. Traditional hair style

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17. Girls sitting correctly [facing page 97]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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18. Chiefs' wives

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[facing page 112]

19. Girls dancing Ngoma

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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20. Making lorries

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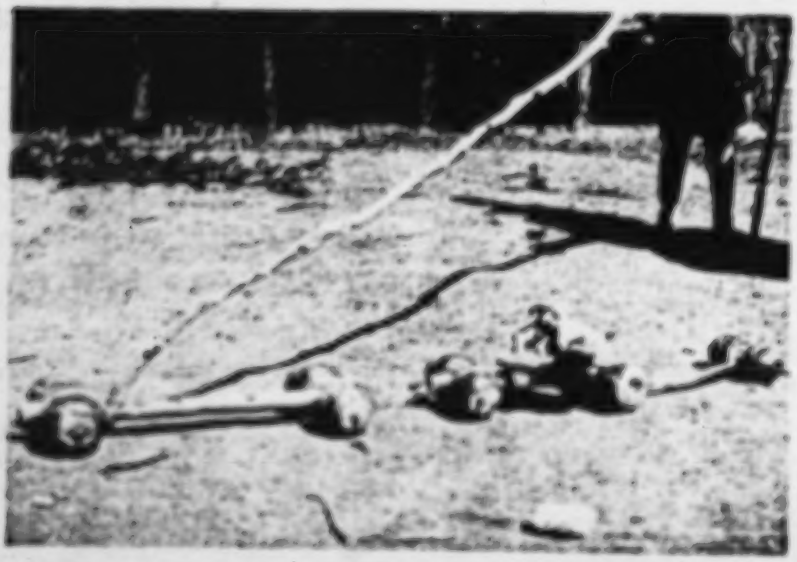

21. Will the wheels work?

[facing page 113]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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22, 23. Herd boys

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[Facing page 128]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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24. Learning to make fire

25. Explaining how to do it

[facing page 129]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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26. Making clay figures

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[facing page 1444]

27. Ear piercing

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day
[302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving
[291] visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony,
[516] her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

577 Many references have been made already to the relation-
602 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife, especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognized by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

577 Competence in household management, being a success-
592 ful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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1. Preparing meat for a gall-bladder ceremony. The leader of the bride's party sits on the left with her helper while the meat is cut up by the master of ceremonies.

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2. Bride kneeling on mat outside her husband's mother's hut. Standing behind her are the three women of her party.

[Facing P. 106]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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III. Anointing the bride's feet with gall. The master of ceremonies rubs gall over the bride, who sits on a mat between a woman of her party and the guide.

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IV. The gall-bladder is safely pinned in the bride's hair. Thus decorated, she will return to her own village.

[Facing P. 127]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIV

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3. Boys crushing ground-nuts. The expressed oil will be used in a bird trap

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4. Boy playing with a toy motor-car made from maize stalks

NGONI

[Facing p.209]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XVI

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7. Drying a cow-hide at a funeral. A beast from the herd of the dead man has been killed for the mourners. The skin will be buried on top of the coffin

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8. Later, at the same funeral. The body has been interred and the mourners are sitting round the grave, near the cattle-byre, listening to a sermon by a local preacher of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission

[Facing P. 225]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

852 Children of Ngoni families, as also these others, chose their
304 own time to have their ears pierced, though sometimes their father or father's sister or father's mother reminded them that it was about time. It was nearly always soon after the second teeth had come, and children who delayed having it done were taunted by their fellows: 'You, are you afraid, my age-mate? See my ears already have bone in them.' This
[231] was a reference to the round plugs of bone inserted when the hole was large enough. A bit of thread was put in at first, then a small bit of grass, then a fine reed, and finally a bone plug. Ear piercing was always done in the cold weather so that the lobe of the ear would heal quickly. It was carried out by a leading woman of one of the Ngoni families, who watched the children to see how they took it. They knew it was a test of courage, and however much they were afraid it would hurt,
[152] they stood like little statues during the operation, with a face as set and expressionless as when they were being beaten.

Accountability for individual behaviour was one aspect of
866 the responsibility which Ngoni adults now began to demand
868 from children. Another aspect was the performance of their allotted tasks. The responsibility for cattle herding was in a sense a corporate responsibility of all the boys whose fathers owned cattle. The older herd-boys had in fact to answer for
[235] the condition of the cattle they brought back every evening to their owners. They passed on, however, a number of small duties, such as care of the calves, sheep and goats, to the younger boys, who in turn were held responsible by the older boys for performing these duties. The boys' world, centred in the dormitory, recognized grades of responsibility from which no one escaped.

Another facet of responsibility which was at a later stage
868 remarked on often by Ngoni adults, was seen in children's
[517] choice of leisure-time occupations, according to their individual manual and intellectual and artistic capacities. They stopped playing childish games and began instead to develope their skills in making things from local materials.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXV

SOME RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

I. "Come, let us give riddles to-day," some one says, and then every one collects, and the hut is packed. One begins to say, "Such and such a thing, what is it?" And should his companions give up, then (the one who gave the riddle) says, "Then kill me so and so's cattle." And they do so (in pretence), saying, "Go and eat what's his name's." And he has them stabbed, the meat is all over the place, and eats and eats, and says, "The answer is so and so." 517

Some Riddles

Q. Something without a spoor; what is that? 539
A. An arrow.

Q. Something that cannot be bound.
A. The winds. (Perhaps water, or smoke.)

Q. Something with a very keen scent; for even if you hide away some little thing you have, it goes and finds it out. What is that?
A. A fly.

Q. Something which warms itself with its back to the fire.
A. The shelf above the fire, in a hut.

Q. A war which baffles all of you; there is one little thing, spoiling for a fight, that goes and tackles it. What is that?
A. The porridge stick.

Q. A person shoots his arrow up in the air, and when it returns, it does so without its shaft.
A. Winged white ant. (Because when it flies off it has wings, but falls without its wings.)

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

There was considerable latent, and at times overt, antagonism from the 575
younger towards the older group. This was to some extent [578]
mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in
cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of import-
ance, called in for consultations with the adults who were [858]
cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went
with them to market when beasts were sold. These older
boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger
ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good
care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones', [555]
with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle,
skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive 865
impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. 526
They fought with 'rods', like single-sticks, and became adept
at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days
there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the
elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There
was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting
made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard
out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the
edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal.
Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leader- [555]
ship among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a
[illegible] championship, hotly contested, until every-
one agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to
school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case
they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to
hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not 858
only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They 521
entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they con-
ducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge
of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about
Men's affairs.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

521 867 men's affairs. The kind of topics discussed by men at the kraal gate included hunting, in the right season; cases heard in the courts and the application of Ngoni law to all subjects of the Ngoni chiefs; the organization of village affairs from tax collecting and dealing with tax evaders to beer drinks and burials and building houses; the sales of cotton, tobacco and cattle at near-by markets and the current prices; the various labour recruiters combing the villages for likely young men and the latest stories brought back by men who had returned from working in the south. Every now and then, particularly when the talk ranged round decisions in the courts or adding to the herds of cattle, references were made to the Ngoni past, to their relations with Europeans, both missionaries and officials, and to the behaviour of the non-Ngoni groups in the Ngoni kingdoms. The older boys listened attentively and as we shall see later in Chapter VII acquired among other things an extensive knowledge about the needs and uses of cattle. The younger ones pricked up their ears now and then when a familiar name or event was mentioned, and stored up questions to ask their father at a time when he was willing to listen and answer.

576 417 There was the usual Ngoni formality about where people sat at the kraal gate. The most senior men sat on each side of the opening, leaning up against the gate-posts, with the rest in decreasing order of rank as they were farther from the gate. The cleared space on each side of the gate and in front of it was all known as the 'gate of the kraal'. The craftsmen [463] who were carving wood or twisting bark rope, making baskets or plaiting mats, sat according to their age and rank on the edges of the senior group or among them. They could have carried on their trade anywhere, but they preferred the company of their fellows and did not want to miss listening to the talk or the arrival of strangers. The herd-boys, when 858 they were present, were on the extreme edges of those sitting [561] there, divided into two groups, 'youths' and boys. Each [262] group made its own fire for boiling milk and roasting sweet potatoes or ground-nuts 596

224 After the hunt the tally of kills was reckoned up, the game was carried home by the young men, and on the return to [262] the villages the meat was cooked and eaten by the men at the kraal gate. This was the occasion for going over all [521] the episodes of the chase, the skill of So-and-so, the fine organizing of the hunt by its 'owner'. No one mentioned the misses, no one's feelings were hurt, and there was a warm feeling of united and contented sharing in a good day's sport.

Lion-hunting was organized differently. Only former warriors and well-known huntsmen were called, and they sometimes took their sons with them as carriers. Guns as well as spears were taken, though the Ngoni liked to say, and it was often true, that they killed lions with spears only. Tracking a lion was dangerous and difficult, and when it was located in a patch of tall grass or reeds, the huntsmen made a circle round it, ready to attack when it broke cover. As in the chase, the one who stabbed the lion first, second and finally was noted. The dead lion was hoisted on poles slung from the shoulders of young men, and carried to the village where the hunt was organized. Here the party was welcomed and given food, the heroes were acclaimed, and the headman and seniors led the way to the village of the clan head, who called his men together to rejoice. When the augmented party reached the chief's or Paramount's village, [535] where all lions had to be taken, a war-dance took place in [555] the kraal, as of warriors returning from a campaign. The killer of the lion came out in front of the rest and danced his individual war-dance; he was hailed as a hero and new [273] epithets were added to his praise names. The whole party [574] was given beer, a beast was killed for a meat feast, and then the party thanked the Paramount in traditional fashion and went home.

It was in lion-hunting that young adults who were taken along felt the spice of danger, the thrill of success, and witnessed the pride of recognition for the successful killer by the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 thanking, and then all thundered the thanking together. This included all
644 the rest who were in the neighbourhood though they did not take part in
the food or the present. The leader would first thank '*E-Jere*' and then all
431 would follow together, '*E-Jere*', or the clan name of the one who was the
giver. The Paramount, if he gave presents to the people, was not thanked
by his clan name as other people. He was thanked by '*Bayete*' as was done
when saluting him. Likewise those who received the title *Nkosa* were
thanked by that title when they gave presents to people.

643 On ceremonial occasions, visitors to the royal village heard the
644 *izibongo* or praise-songs of the Paramount. These were songs referring
533 to great deeds and notable incidents both in the lifetime of the reigning
576 Paramount and in the lives of his predecessors. They were distinct from
the *izinkomo*, which were honorific epithets added to the clan name and
spoken when thanking a well-known man or woman for their gifts. The
izinkomo could be said by anyone, since each person of note had his own
which were well known. The *izibongo* could only be spoken or sung by
an *umbongi* or official 'praiser'. Such a person was a man of good
[826] memory and possessing eloquence. The chest was thought to be the seat
of wisdom and eloquence, and a man who composed praise-songs, as
distinct from repeating well-known ones, had to have the faculty of
finding the right words, since new songs of this kind were generally
invented on a sudden inspiration.

The occasions when the praise-songs were recited were when important visitors came to the royal village; when beasts were slaughtered in the ancestor cult; at special dances at the royal village or at the feasts of the Paramount. On such occasions the official praiser stood up in the kraal, everyone kept silence and did not move, and after a pause he began to call out '*Bayabonga Inkosi*', 'let us praise the Paramount'. In repeating the praise-songs he began with those of the immediate ancestor of the Paramount, and then went on to those of earlier ancestors. At the end he shouted '*Bayete*' and all the people replied '*Bayete*'. Examples of the praise-songs of Zwangendaba and his father Hlocwayo of the northern kingdom and of Ngwane, father of Mpezeni, of the central Ngoni kingdom are given at the end of the chapter.

The tension caused by the extreme formality in the behaviour of the
643 Paramount, his courtiers and his visitors was lightened by the presence
644 of a court jester. Informants were agreed that such an individual was
usually present to amuse the Paramount with his antics and gestures and
● 522 clown-like tumbling about. Dr. Laws referred to such a jester at the
court of Mlowa I when the Livingstonia Mission was making its first
settlement in northern Nyasaland.[1] I saw a jester who came with Paramount Zimambiza Mnenko from Portuguese territory when he and his officials visited Mtakataka for the war-dance at the mourning for Bandwe

[1] Livingstone, W. P. *Laws of Livingstonia*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1922, p. [illegible].

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Manga. It was a time of great emotional tension and strain, and the absurdities of the jester relieved the solemnity and formality of the visit. This jester was said by informants to be a man of the Moyo clan, who owed his position not to hereditary right but to a ready and witty tongue.

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The death of the Paramount

It is in the ceremonies at the death of the Paramount that we find some major differences between the traditional practices of the northern and central Ngoni peoples, which might be attributed to the separate groups in Natal from which they came. I was living in Mcakatha village in the central kingdom at the time of the sickness and death of Bambo Manga, the most important of the royal women among the central Ngoni. The ritual ceremonies at her funeral were said to be almost identical with those at the death of the Paramount, and I was able to check details of similarity and difference with old men who remembered the death of Cikusi, the last Ngoni Paramount in the central kingdom for whom the full ritual was carried out. I was not able after that to pursue further possible parallels and differences among the northern Ngoni. My general impression from informants was that among the northern Ngoni the ritual at the death of a Paramount differed from that of any other prominent man only in certain details of the period and form of mourning. Among the central Ngoni, as Rattray said in a note on the text which will be given, 'such funerals were more of a military pageant than anything else. All outward signs of grief were rigorously excluded.' I can confirm that from my observations at the death of Bambo Manga.

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When the Paramount became ill, a diviner was called to give advice. He might advise that a sacrifice should be made to the ancestor spirits. He might suggest witchcraft as the cause of illness. He might advise calling in a man to give medicine to the Paramount. When, in spite of sacrifices and treatment, the Paramount died, the announcement was made from the edge of his village: *Izulu lidikhile*, 'the heaven has fallen down'. Messengers were sent to all the chiefs and to all the *ohamuzana*, and other leading men. From the edge of each central village the cry was made, and each chief and *mahwazana* sent his messengers to make the same announcement in each of the villages under him.

[791]

Among the northern Ngoni the actual ceremony of burial does not appear to have been very different from that of any other important man, with one exception, that the Paramount, like other ruling Jere chiefs, was buried at the edge of the cattle kraal in a circular pit of the kind used when digging clay for mudding houses, on one side of which there was a niche where the corpse was placed in a sitting position, facing south-east. This burying in a circular grave on the edge of the kraal was the procedure which I witnessed at the burial of Bambo Manga among the central Ngoni (see below p. 75).

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

houses' among the maize stalks, tying the stalks together to make conical shelters. There they played house, pretending to cook and pound. But the enthusiasm for these playhouses was shortlived, and on the whole the children and their nurse girls preferred to be in the village where they could see and hear what was going on. The older boys in this age-group seldom went to the playground, and pursued their games in the open spaces of the village. §57

The small girls had 'dolls' which they treated as little babies. Sometimes it was a maize cob tucked into a bit of cloth and carried on their backs. More realistic dolls were made of a bundle of reeds tied together with the hard round shell of a fruit fitted on top and painted with eyes, nose and mouth. Older girls made these dolls for the little ones, and showed them how to feed the doll from a tiny gourd and taught them lullabies to sing while they jogged the dolls on their back or nursed them on their lap. 524 ●

Little boys had a wider range of toys, made for them by older brothers and quickly copied by the children themselves. They made windmills from maize sheaths which twirled on a stick as they ran. They had hoops of bamboo peelings, trundled with a notched stick, and a small round solid wooden wheel with a hole in it which they pushed with a long-handled crook. They had tops of wood and whipped them with lengths of bark rope. They were for ever collecting scraps of iron from wherever men were working. These they sharpened on stones, and used as knives, or bound them to a haft, as a little axe, with fragments of skin which they scrounged when a shield was being cut, or an ox flayed. The small boys were the tinkers of the village, collecting whatever scrap they thought they could use, and hiding it each in his own safe and secret place, and fighting savagely if anyone robbed a secret store. Many boys spent hours making clay figures, men, cattle, monkeys, dogs, and there were certain conventions which allowed little variety governing their style and shape. Sometimes they drew, or 'wrote' as they §57 §57 §57 532

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

In the dry season which was the [illegible] season children from three and four years upwards spent hours watching the older boys and girls dancing. On the edge of the main group small boys particularly would with intense solemnity and exaggerated movements practise steps and postures, singing meanwhile. The Ngoni used no drums and no musical instruments in their dancing, and despised the users of drums. All their rhythm and synchrony was achieved by perfect unison of action and voice. The little boys practising solo on the edge of a dance-group listened intently every now and then to get the rhythm correctly, shifted their feet and stamped with the rest.

The little girls were collected together by older girls now and then, and sometimes joined by the boys, to play games of catch and various miming games such as choosing a lover, hen and chickens, slave-raiding, baboons in the maize garden. These were accompanied by songs in which the leader, or 'owner', of the game sang the story and the rest joined in the refrains. Many of these mimming games called for alertness and co-operation, and the slow and solitary were soon shown up and laughed at. Another set of songs with refrains were ballads or stories without action, and these were listened to by the hour by the younger children towards the end of the day, especially if the singer of the ballad was a lively narrator.

Girl children of this age-group spent a lot of their time watching adults and older girls doing their household work. In time they learned to imitate the actions of pounding and grinding, using a small pole or a stone, of sweeping with a frayed-out stalk, of winnowing or sieving with a little basket, or ladling food with a tiny wooden spoon. When they went to the gardens with their mother, they were given a small branch to carry home on their heads for the fire. Later the little girls had a tiny pot put on their head, perched on a miniature grass carrying-ring and went to the water-hole with their nurse girl to fill it and carry it home without spilling the water.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

potatoes or ground-nuts. Round their fire when dusk came on, the boys who were under fourteen asked each other riddles. The children, for girls did it in their own groups too, called riddles 'our lovely sitting game', 'our lovely wise sayings for little children', 'our wise sayings which were puzzles'. The use of riddles and their enjoyment was confined to children between about seven and fourteen, never older, and was only a game for after dark, never played in daylight. About the age of fourteen they suddenly dropped them, and if asked about them said, 'Yes, we once played at riddles, when we were young'.

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Here are a few from the vast number of riddles known to the Ngoni children:

The live thing bore a dead thing and the dead thing bore a live thing—the fowl and the egg.

[539

A large garden reaped into the hands—a man's hair.

My mother's food is sweet and cool in the morning and the evening but hot at midday—the sun.

What is it that goes on four legs in the morning, on two at midday, and on three in the evening?—a man, who crawls on hands and knees in childhood, walks erect when grown, and with the aid of a stick in his old age.

The hut of my mother has no door—an egg.

The little birds drink at one well—the reed rafters which meet at the top.

The roof is leaky—a basket-work beer-strainer.

Sitting round in a circle so that they all faced towards towards each other, the children flung these riddles into the group, sometimes expecting anyone to reply, sometimes pointing at one child and addressing the riddle to him: 'There, there. Listen.' They jeered at slow and inept replies, and applauded quickness and correct answers. It was clear that riddles were partly a test of intelligence and of memory, partly a play on words with a humorous twist in question and answer, and partly a test of alertness to catch the meaning

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

528 of the riddle. An unexpected reply or a good guess often drew applause, even if it was not the accepted correct answer.

595 Before it was dark, all the herd-boys joined in what they
857 called 'drill' on the flat space where they milked the cows in front of the kraal gate. As a rule this 'drill' was practising for the *ngoma* dance which took place after harvest and was the only dance for boys and girls approved by the Ngoni rulers. Sometimes they varied this dance, practising with swift follow-my-leader manœuvres, turning, twirling, lifting sticks, knocking knobkerries together, stamping, whistling.
[534] As we have said already, the Ngoni had no drums, and all the precision and rhythm in any dances or concerted movements depended on exact timing and following the leader. The accuracy and precision reached was remarkable, and represented a high degree of intense concentration and co-operation among the dancers or 'drillers', who developed an almost intuitive knowledge of what the leader was going to do next. This dancing was practised in front of the men and older youths on purpose. They criticized it freely, and sometimes, though rarely, praised the boys. More often they came forward to show them how to do it better.

For the greater part of the day the herd-boys were with
235 the cattle. They rose before it was light, undid the kraal gate,
857 and as dawn broke led the cattle to the river. Then they went to the grazing grounds which according to the season were near or far from the village. As the dry season advanced and the grass became poorer, they had to go farther afield to find grazing. They returned to the village about ten o'clock
[234] and milked the cows and took the milk in gourds to the senior women, keeping some as their own perquisite. The cattle were driven under some trees to rest during the heat of the day, and taken to the grazing ground again about two and brought back about five, watered and put in the kraal and the gate was closed. Variations in this time-table depended on the seasons, the quality of the pasture, and on whether the herd-boys went to school or not.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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20. Making barrier

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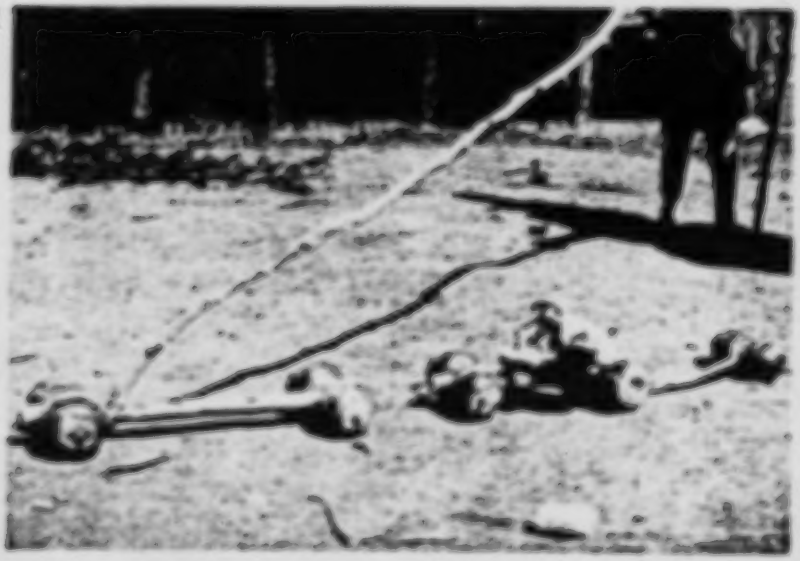

21. Will the wheels work?

[facing page 113]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIV

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b. Boys crushing ground-nuts. The expressed oil will be used in a bird trap

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a. Boy playing with a toy money-car made from maize stalks

NGONI

[Facing P.209]

/8 cont'd/

285 the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found [482] and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

415 In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat 412 porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. [531] Wooden hemispherical pats, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

412 At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzelia quanzensis or Monotes trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is [531] a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four [534] inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones [532] or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are 350 sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make [363] a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
[301] beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
[534] Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
[300] cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkhoiosa grass. These marks are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent
[531] mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nenga
[519] tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks. When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimental dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

• 524 Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long, terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction, made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes, with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys consists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

/10 cont'd/

324 after moving other beams out of a hole. A boys' game played in the wet season is played with egg-shaped pieces of mud, with a small flange at one end. These pieces are thrown down on to the water, and ought to make an explosive noise.

/11/ VII

243 Maize, the main crop, is planted with the first steady rains in
[241] November, and is harvested soon after the end of the rains in April or May. Under the influence of the Agricultural Department of the
[242] Government, planting in small ridges following the contour is increasingly practised, but prior to the introduction of this and other new agricultural methods in the 1930s, planting was carried out in mounds about three feet in diameter and eighteen inches high. Finger millet is grown on patches of soil on which branches and garden
241 trash have been burnt. However, the citemene system, as known in other parts of the country, in which trees are felled over a wide area and burnt to fertilise a small area in the middle, is not practised as a principal method here. Finger millet is the only crop to be planted solely in ash fertilised patches, while the rest of the cleared ground may be planted with beans and nuts, and in the following season, with maize. Gardens last from two up to twenty or more years, depending on the type of soil, and the selection of a garden site is determined to some extent by the nature of the soil and of the vegetation growing on it.

244 In seepage areas, dry season gardens can be cultivated, and it is in such gardens, fenced in to keep out straying animals, that vegetables are grown for sale to Europeans and in the villages. These sites are also used for early planted maize, which is harvested in January and eaten in the form of green mealies. In the villages
[247] themselves, small plots of tobacco and castor oil are grown on old hut sites, while abandoned village sites are used as subsidiary gardens for maize and other crops. Mango, banana, and pawpaw trees are
245 found in villages and on the sites of abandoned villages.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

siderable latent, and at times overt, antagonism from the younger towards the older group. This was to some extent mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of importance, called in for consultations with the adults who were cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went with them to market when beasts were sold. These older boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones', with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle, skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. They fought with 'rods', like single-sticks, and became adept at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal. Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leadership among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a kind of knock-out championship, hotly contested, until everyone agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they conducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about

not eat as much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingwendo*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *indoma* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

643 644 512

In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

643 [754] [664 574]

In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *inqubelo*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

643 651 431 527 571

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izindunai* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *indiki* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* would give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be seen there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 651 431 ●524 571 turn were invited to eat with the Paramount or summoned to special feasts. On the other hand there were people who seemed to have nothing, and who came in the hope of getting invited to eat food if they just sat in the kraal and looked hungry. Cibumbu called them 'the notable people' and 'the poor people'. This contrast in behaviour ran right through Ngoni society and reflected the social standing of individuals who behaved in such different ways. There was a good deal of cadging for gifts and of gate-crashing at feasts on the part of people who had no intention, or no possibility, of making any adequate return. An Ngoni proverb illustrated the public attitude to reciprocal giving as distinct from begging: 'To say: Give, give, is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.'

571 643 651 431 The bringing of tribute to the Paramount was only one aspect of the reciprocal relationships which ran right through Ngoni society, namely the bringing of gifts by a man in an inferior social position to his superior, with the expectation of receiving food or favour and of standing well with this superior. It was recognized that tribute was of two kinds, one of which was voluntary. If a headman or other notable wanted to please the Paramount he brought him presents—grain, flour, meat, beer. It was always emphasized that this was a free gift, with the added proviso that the giver wished to keep on good terms with the Paramount. Ngoni informants declared that the only compulsory form of tribute in pre-European days was that whenever a lion or a leopard was killed it had to be brought to the royal village through a succession of intermediaries, as described below.

These two principles of free giving and compulsory giving, and the attitudes engendered, are compared with the feeling about compulsory taxes under European rule in this text by Cibumbu.

« Although people hate giving taxes to strangers in this land, yet tribute (*lisalabi*) was given to their *induna* and to other chiefs. Such tribute was given in an indirect way, that is the *induna* did not mark out those who gave and who did not give tribute. The Ngoni did not wish that every male should give tribute as is done by Europeans today. They were just pleased if the village headman or *induna* had given something even though other people in his village did not give anything. Even the *induna* themselves gave something at the time they thought it was convenient to themselves to give. There was no fixed time of the month or year. Much that was given as tribute was beer, meat, honey, beer and cloth, also cattle, sheep and goats also maize, and other last from war.

[629] Power to 'eat' (*ukudla*) lion- and leopard-skins was given to certain people of the Swazi clans, but all the men were obliged to bring them in. The lion- or leopard-skin had to be given first to the village headman. He went with it to the chief or *induna*. This one brought it to the *induna* along with his *amadula* or *amajuba* of all his villages, the older men and younger men. This was like going as warriors and they went with dancing (*ligubo*). The one who first stabbed the animal was painted red, and the [559]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

hospitality involved both planning and expense. The Paramount's wife had to keep enough food stocks on hand not only to feed her own large family and household, but also to be able to respond to expected and unexpected guests. The Paramount's personal annual salary at that time was £60, out of which he had to keep his family and household in food and clothes and school fees, and pay for the upkeep of his house. The bulk of the cereals and some of the beans and other vegetables used in his house came from his fields worked by hired labour. Another source of food supply was the market 'tolls', a small toll levied on the produce sold in the weekly market, which was paid chiefly in kind and put in the storehouses on the Paramount's *boma* to be used to feed his guests.[1]

The Paramount not only gave food and drink to the expected and unexpected visitors to the royal village. From time to time he gave a feast to which the Christians of the congregation of the mission church were invited, as on one New Year's Day when I was staying there. He gave a feast to all the neighbourhood on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. From time to time he invited all his people to dance *lipoko* or *ngoma* at the royal village and provided beer for all and food for the headmen and the chiefs and their wives. The organization of these big feasts demanded planning on a generous scale and a large outlay in maize for porridge and meat for relish. No feast at the Paramount's village was complete without meat enough to satisfy everyone.

The visitors, the feasts, the dances, all had their focal point in the royal residence in the royal village. There were two other focal points in the village where large numbers of people came regularly, and made the place where the Paramount lived a centre which brought his people together and brought him before them as their ruler. These were the market and the court-house which also housed his offices.

Before 1939 the market in the royal village was unique in the area for its size and the service which it rendered to the countryside. At any one time on a Saturday there would be 500 to 1,000 people present. In 1938 a second market was opened by the Paramount at Naipe at the southern end of his territory. They were definitely his markets in that he allotted space for them, fixed the days on which they were held, controlled the policing of the market and the *mangwe* huts where sellers arriving overnight could sleep, fixed the prices according to seasonal variations in supply, and, as we have seen, collected 'tolls' in lieu of rents for stalls. The market at Mbangwe served an area extending roughly 15 miles to the east, 15 to the west and 10 miles to the north and south. It stretched in the east to below the escarpment whence came bamboo and

[1] The average monthly amount of tolls collected over several months was 10s. in cash, and a quantity of beans, maize meal, vegetables and cereals amounting to two sackfuls and sometimes more. The tolls were levied as follows: 1s. 6d. per cow, 1s. 6d. per goat or pig and on mats, baskets, etc. at roughly 1d. in the 1s.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Shelters are erected on 561
the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, 221
returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the [548]
gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are [527]
largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may stay
behind to look after the cattle. Streams are in spate at this time of year,
and some must build garden byres to which they move their cattle to
avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the gardens is important from the point of view of 628
later-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden 361
shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, 241
who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so 221
that they are adjacent to those of kindred from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in her dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the 221
garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for 361
a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the
end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organising public works, and [653]
that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round 233
it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as re- 417
ported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found 361
at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages
now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed
on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures
open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and
may be up to 20 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or [593]
in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead.
Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each
cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle 233

[1] Elmslie, p. 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

It is therefore appropriate that, when a man has proved himself to be a good son-in-law by fulfilling his obligations to his parents-in-law and by treating their daughter well, he is invited to make a formal entry into the house of his wife's parents. This is the occasion for much dancing and speech-making. The salient features of the ceremony[1] are as follows. The married couple come in procession with their relatives and neighbours from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession is led by the eldest child of the couple carrying a knobkerry. They dance in the cattle byre and then enter the hut of the woman's parents. Here after some drinking and dancing, during which the visitors keep themselves more or less to one side of the hut and leave the other side for the relatives of the woman, there is a ceremony in which a gift is offered by the man's people to the woman's people, and in which a female relative of the man takes a spoonful of boiled maize from a dish and then spits it out again. She is followed by a female relative of the woman, who does the same. The two people who do this are close relatives of the couple, sometimes sisters. The knobkerry stays in the hut overnight, and the next day the man's parents come and they formally enter the woman's parents' hut. The couple also come into the hut with their friends and the woman's mother offers beer to the man in the usual way by kneeling at his feet and drinking to him. He then drinks from the bowl, and it is passed round for everyone in the hut to drink.

The completion of this ceremony marks the setting aside of the avoidance taboos to the greatest extent allowed. The man may still not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law but he can now talk to her and can come into her hut. It is, as it were, the final reward of the good son-in-law and marks the end of the series of adjustments in relative status that began with the small gifts that the man made before the legalization payment was fixed. The hostility between the two families has been reduced by carrying out through the years their reciprocal rights and duties, and their common interest in the children of the marriage is symbolized by the eldest child who leads the procession from one village to the other.

Even on such a family occasion as this, village, as distinct from kinship, ties remain important. At one ceremony I attended the leader of the first delegation from the man's village was described as being just as important woman in the village and not related to him.

[1] *Mpezeni.* Cf. the Zulu *ukuhlonipha*, to enter another person's house (Colenso).

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[614]

(19) The *ini-bongo*,[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1850, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zwangendaba. The chief *ini-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Ngwenyama, Tshe (said to be the eye of an ox), Ndlovu, Gama, Mhlabaqi, Ndhlovu, and Nkosi.

[576]
[197]
[643]

The *inkosazana*[2] now little used were Nkosi and Mangwe.

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-zulu.

The Paramount Chief, Ngwenyi II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home.

(20) Ba-Pale people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of green hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-zulu, which was not the language of the Ba-Pale; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were Sabuti's people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

Information Here or where or Lowanda.

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693

Lobengula, Chief of the Amaswati. It is stated as follows.

Lobengula crossed the Zambezi at Mangwaro Drift and arrived at the Mangwaro Ulu Nanza village on the Lutwadzwa River in January, 1866. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and became like those of a woman heavy in milk. He could not walk, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Ngwenyi visited him he used to court on his knees and kneel to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Nagha Kwaja spirit and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Nagha is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the spirit and fallen rock. [142]
[276]
[168]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambezi in 1868. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Kapa, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1931. This story is but little known and scanty all knowledge is denied of this subject.

[166]
[115]

One of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 26th, 27th and 28th of January, 1933, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Kwangwala, Chief Gwanda Lowanda, Chief Mpezeni, Chief Mbelwa, Headman Kapatula, Headman Mzuza, Headman Gwa, Headman Mbelwa, Headman Ngwenyama, Headman Ngwenyi, Headman Mpezeni, Headman Mzuza, Headman Kapatula

not enough milk, or was unable to suckle the child, or was 853
ill or died. If a woman died in or just after childbirth, and the child survived, it might be suckled by the paternal grandmother or by another co-wife of the dead woman, but as a rule they resorted to artificial feeding, and often used it to supplement breast feeding. The father of the child took [237] the food pipe of a beast recently killed, washed it and dried [415] it, and handed it over to the women to rub with fat until it was soft and pliable. One end was then tied tightly to close it, it was filled with warm cow's milk, and the other end was tied loosely so that the child could just suck through it. It was kept well washed with warm water, and many infants were brought up successfully with this 'bottle'.

The babies were also given very thin gruel made of millet or maize flour, and curds and whey beaten up together. This [415] was put in a very small gourd, decorated with drawings, with [581] a spout to pour from, and a cover to keep flies and dust out.

Weaning

Studies of weaning in different cultures lay emphasis on the 114
traumatic shock of separation from the mother, not only in terms of being refused the breast, but also of being removed to sleep elsewhere than beside the mother, and perhaps being sent away to stay with another relative.

In the Ngoni pattern of nurse-girl care and of supplement- 862
ary feeding, especially after the first few months, it might seem that the actual weaning was less of a shock than in cultural situations where the baby was with the mother all day, carried about by her and never refused the breast if it cried. Ngoni women, however, and men too, all asserted that weaning was a shock to the child, even if it happened at two years old.

The reasons for this shock were partly that it was done all in one morning at one fell swoop, and partly that the child was sent away from the mother at night. The same nurse girl looked after it all day, but now took it more often to

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fascinate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens', and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work in the gardens was an expedition for young children which they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places forbidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven years old, because they found their fathers there and the herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 round covered food basket, the side dishes in small covered
[415] earthenware bowls. Among the traditional Ngoni dishes learned by girls were the following:

252 Gruel made of cow's milk and maize flour (for young children).
262 Whole maize boiled with beans and round peas.
Sweet potatoes boiled, peeled and mashed with tomatoes.
Beans and finger millet flour cooked separately and then stirred together.
Pumpkins cooked with ground-nut paste.
Ground-nut flour cooked with scraps of meat.
Whole tall millet pounded with ground-nuts.
Pot-roast chicken with tomatoes, onions and ground-nuts.

In Ngoni households meat when cooked in large quantities,
262 not just as broth made from bones and tibits, was served on
415 a special wooden meat-dish, round or oblong with rounded ends, and supported on three sturdy legs. This meat-dish was an integral part of the equipment of every 'true Ngoni'
[264] household, and, like the French housewife's omelet pan, was after use wiped clean and polished with clarified fat. The outside of these meat-dishes was often decorated with 'poker
● [531] work' designs by the maker, and such decorated and shining meat-dishes were treasured as heirlooms. Other, but rare,
415 heirlooms were hammered brass pots with a flat bottom and turned over edge, of the pattern known in India as *dekshis*. The Ngoni women who owned them declared they had been brought by their ancestors from the south.

All the extra fat when a beast was killed was sent to the
251 women of the 'house' in whose herd it was, and this fat was cooked until it was clarified, and then stored. Butter was made by shaking milk in a gourd, and it was also clarified
[234] for keeping. Formerly milk curds were made daily by the senior women and kept to mature in a jar before being eaten. Only in a few Ngoni households was this still done.

273 Beer was made on special occasions when the women had

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of 273
sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their 291
women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and 294
sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The 177
use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni 301
families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form [591]
standardised geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the head 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once 302
was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and [412]
combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

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the porridge inside warm. For straining beer, a special wide mesh basket is used, either conical or hemispherical in shape. Round and rectangular baskets of various sizes, with flat lids, are also found and are used for carrying small quantities of food on a journey.

In former times, wooden plates were used, but these are now very rare. Wooden spoons are still made and used, and large flat porridge stirrers, with geometrical ornamentation, are common. Wooden hemispherical pots, with a handle, are used for smoothing cooked porridge.

At the back of the hut, or on the verandah outside, are the pestle and mortar used for reducing maize and other cereals to flour. Mortars range in height from one to four feet, the smaller mortars being used by children or for crushing ground-nuts. They are usually of about one foot in diameter, and are made from single blocks of wood, usually from Afzelia quanzensis or Mimosa trees. The inside of the block is hollowed out to leave a receptacle for the maize that is nearly as deep as the mortar is high. The only decoration is a ridge of wood about an inch wide left encircling the base three or four inches from the ground. Pestles are undecorated cylinders of wood, made from Terminalia sericea or Kigelia pinnata trees. They may be as much as six feet long, and range in thickness from four inches down to the half-inch pestles used by young children playing at pounding.

The hard residue of maize that cannot be reduced to flour by pounding is ground between two stones, and these grinding stones are also kept in the hut. Not every woman has her own grindstones or her own pestle and mortar, and these objects are loaned and borrowed within the village.

Most huts contain some form of chair or stool, but these are sometimes very small indeed, standing only two inches off the ground. Petrol boxes are used to sit on, and deck chairs, known in the vernacular as "sleeping chairs," are common. Carpenters make a small folding chair that is fairly common. European upright chairs, basket chairs and Morris chairs are sometimes seen, but these are not made locally.

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
305 beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
306 Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
307 cheeks by pressing on to them strips of chlorophyll green. These marks
are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period
of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both
men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
531 is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent
532 mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Ngonga
tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks.
When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature
shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held
aloft. Less frequently seen are the waist and ankle wrappings, and
skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimen-
tal dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen
worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ment to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a
single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the
stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys
534 of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out
of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie
stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in
diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long,
terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction,
made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed
along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes,
with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes
scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys con-
sists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

houses' among the maize stalks, tying the stalks together to make conical shelters. There they played house, pretending to cook and pound. But the enthusiasm for these playhouses was shortlived, and on the whole the children and their nurse girls preferred to be in the village where they could see and hear what was going on. The older boys in this age-group seldom went to the playground, and pursued their games in the open spaces of the village. 857

The small girls had 'dolls' which they treated as little babies. Sometimes it was a maize cob tucked into a bit of cloth and carried on their backs. More realistic dolls were made of a bundle of reeds tied together with the hard round shell of a fruit fitted on top and painted with eyes, nose and mouth. Older girls made these dolls for the little ones, and showed them how to feed the doll from a tiny gourd and taught them lullabies to sing while they jogged the dolls on their back or nursed them on their lap. 524

Little boys had a wider range of toys, made for them by older brothers and quickly copied by the children themselves. They made windmills from maize sheaths which twisted on a stick as they ran. They had hoops of bamboo peelings, trundled with a notched stick, and a small round solid wooden wheel with a hole in it which they pushed with a long-handled crook. They had tops of wood and whipped them with lengths of bark rope. They were for ever collecting scraps of iron from wherever men were working. These they sharpened on stones, and used as knives, or bound them to a haft, as a little axe, with fragments of skin which they scrounged when a shield was being cut, or an ox flayed. The small boys were the tinkers of the village, collecting whatever scrap they thought they could use, and hiding it each in his own safe and secret place, and fighting savagely if anyone robbed a secret store. Many boys spent hours making clay figures, men, cattle, monkeys, dogs, and there were certain conventions which allowed little variety governing their style and shape. Sometimes they drew, or 'wrote' as they 857 857 532

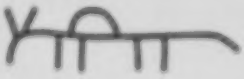
857 said, in the sand more conventional figures of men and
532 animals which are reproduced here. Their ingenuity in the use of local materials was boundless, and led later to remarkably accurate scale models of lorries and aeroplanes made from pith, bamboo and thorns.

A man

A wild pig

A baboon

A dog



A cow

857 Most of the games such as tops and hoops were seasonal. They appeared suddenly in the village, lasted for a few weeks and then ceased as abruptly as they had begun. A perennial amusement among Ngoni boys of five to seven was playing at law courts. They sat round in traditional style with a 'chief' and his elders facing the court, the plaintiffs and defendants presenting their case, and the counsellors conducting proceedings and cross-examining witnesses. In their high squeaky voices the little boys imitated their fathers whom they had seen in the courts, and they gave judgements, imposing heavy penalties, and keeping order in the court with ferocious severity. Another game which the boys of five to seven enjoyed was a form of tug-of-war, two gangs pulling on a bark rope, until one gave way, with shouting, whistling and a final cry: 'The strong ones. They prevail.'

000 In the dry season which was the dancing season children

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 Ngoni tradition placed the departure of the two main groups under the leadership of Zwangendaba Jere and Ngwana Maseko during Shaka's wars, according to some traditions just before, and to others just after, the death of Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. The separate departure of the two Ngoni groups which later formed the two kingdoms was determined partly by their separate leadership under the Jere and Maseko clans, partly by their march by different routes to the Zambezi and after crossing it, and partly by the clan descent names of the Swazi element in the two kingdoms, which with few exceptions were different.

[533] Two traditional songs, sung at marriages, or dances at the Paramounts' villages, and the first in the church of the Scottish mission at Ekwendeni in north Nyasaland, reminded the Ngoni of their departure from Natal, of their separation from the Ndwandwe people under Zwide, and of the hardship of a small military band fighting its way northwards.

589

All the nations
Are gathered together against us.
How shall we fight?
They are called together against us.
Whence shall we summon help?
The big hunky cows, ha!
They are called together against us.
We are reinforced by whom?

It is because of Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people
That though I lie down I cannot sleep.
O Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people!
Though I lie down I cannot sleep.
Shaka scatters us among the forests of Sukungawe land.

173 There were several informants in both Ngoni kingdoms who had preserved the story of the departure of the Ngoni from the south. Y. M. Cibambo in his book gathered together the traditions and gave what he considered the most authentic version of the departure. One [114] text from the northern kingdom is given here, partly because it was typical of the kind of material Cibambo had to work on, and also because the author, Mlonyeni Jere, had heard it from his mother who, as a young girl, had lived at the court of Zwangendaba. The text gives the genealogy of Zwangendaba, and the connexion of his line with Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. It emphasizes the immediate cause of Zwangendaba's departure—namely the fear of meeting Shaka and his warriors in open battle, and the fact that he was not called a chief until he had made a breach with Zwide. The summons to the [57] mourning for his uncle Mafu, which he ignored, was considered by the Ngoni to be the final act by which Zwangendaba cut himself off from

2: Rad E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(d) *The ceremonial pattern*

Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *Ingoma*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The spoons dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well preserved by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional head ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their clothes on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*isinkubi*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(e) *The linguistic pattern*

In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Chambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *bl*.

The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

had been killed it was not permitted to show his grief before the army had returned and mobilized in the kraal.

When the sections marched back to the village the first sections to go out to war came last and the one that had been last now led the way. The army never entered the Paramount's village in the afternoon but in the morning or before midday. They did this because it took a long time to tell all the news of the war, so if the army arrived near the village in the afternoon they slept in grass-shelters outside.

When the army was ready to enter, the sections were set in order, each one told off to follow another and each one chose its own song for the entry. When they sang the warriors covered their heads with their shields, with their spears in the middle of the shields. While they were singing one warrior of the section would jump out in front and dance his own praise-dance and the others let him; when he had fallen into the ranks again, they took up the section-song. The songs sung at the entry to the kraal were called *indaba*. These were different from *ligubo* for they were sung by mouth only, whereas a *ligubo* was sung with stamping of the feet.

When the warriors marched on the cattle track there was heard a confused noise of singing and shouting praises. All the warriors marched very slowly as they sang, section by section but crowding together. When they came close to the gateway they stood and waited to let those who had not bloodied their spears have their dance out, because once inside only the 'killers' might dance before the Paramount and the headmen. When they stood they were as though the kraal were built of men but they left a space in the middle for the Paramount and headmen to sit and watch. For a little time the warriors danced their own praise-dances and these were chiefly those whose bravery was well known.

After these had danced a little there was a shout for silence, and all kept silent waiting for the words of the war *induna*. He came out from the throng and began to dance while all the warriors responded to his war-cry or praise-names. After he had finished he began to tell the story. He began by saying that in such and such a section, so and so had been first to enter the stockade, or to throw a spear first which killed a man inside. In all the sections he went over those whose names had been taken by the *induna*; if he forgot anything or the name of a 'killer' he went and asked the *induna* of the section to help him. Whenever he mentioned a name, the warrior jumped forward and danced so as to be known to the Paramount and all the men. Then the Paramount and the headmen chose one of themselves to reply and thank the army; sometimes it was the chief *induna*. Before he began he also danced a little, then spoke praising or blaming. After he had finished he danced again and sat down among his peers. This the Ngoni called *ukudumisela impi*, thanking in respect for the army.

Demobilization and purification

When all was finished in the kraal the warriors scattered and went to their villages to take off all their war equipment and to put their shields on the *mpalane*, the resting place or bedstead of shields. Then they sat down by their big house and were greeted by their wives, parents, children and friends. The custom was the same as that on the birth of a child, the

The *intelwi* was made from the roots of a creeper and a bush which grew on the banks of *ziwen*. These roots were burned over the fire, pounded and mixed with water. The warriors were given some to lick on the tips of their fingers, some was smeared inside their shields, and the rest was beaten in a gourd till it foamed. The 'war doctor' took the tail of a gnu or of a zebra and dipped it in the foam and sprinkled the warriors as they finally passed out of the gateway of the kraal on the campaign. This medicine was for strengthening them and also for making them 'slippery', so that the enemy spears would glide by them and not pierce them, and they could slip between the posts of the enemy stockade. After being sprinkled with the *intelwi* no one could sleep with his wife or any other woman, as he would risk spoiling the effect of the medicine and therefore would be more liable to be killed.

The *inklewa* was a spear with a barbed hook. The Paramount threw it in front of the army as they stood in the kraal until all the warriors had left. It was then put back in the *inklewahale* where it was kept in the care of the owner of that hut.

There were thus three functions to be performed, each by one of the war medicines. The *intelwi* was to strengthen and protect individual warriors. The *intengo* was the symbol of their Paramount and their kingdom leading them to war and weakening the enemy. The *inklewa* was the symbol of invincibility, administered by the Paramount.

There were two stages of assembling in the Paramount's village before a campaign. The first followed the initial summons to mobilize, when the local companies (*mabandla*) marched into the kraal, sorted themselves into age regiments (*mabuto*) and sang their regimental songs. Then followed the *ligubo*, the war-dance, when the warriors wore their full war-dress, and the women joined in. There was no individual dancing but a working up of corporate feeling through the dancing and songs. The Ngoni used no drums in their music, relying on achieving rhythm and unison by the stamping of their feet and their singing. After this dance the warriors left for their villages, while at the Paramount's village preparation was made for food and stuff for the campaign. Hard cakes of roasted bullrush millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts pounded together, and dried meat, were the main supplies carried. At the second summons the warriors returned in their companies with their carriers. These carriers, who were usually young boys, carried the war-dresses and ornaments wrapped in a mat, and the food supplies.

Since on this final meeting depended much of the ultimate success of the campaign, only the warriors and the senior men were present, and all women and young children were excluded from the kraal. After the objectives of the fighting had been explained the warriors were addressed by the old men and exhorted to be brave and to help their comrades, and then the final medication by the 'war doctor' took place. The separation of the army from the civil population was complete until their return

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

fresh detachment came into the village from another part of the country. The corpse was finally carried in a cow-skin from the hut to the grave between a double line of warriors singing *Ngoko* songs and thundering with their shields knocking against their knees.

The only relics, therefore, of the military tradition which could be observed in the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's were related either to the national gatherings at the Paramount's village, or to the mourning ritual for the royal line. The knowledge of the songs and the war-drums was preserved by the senior leading men and women of the *tsana-Zanbani* class. The songs which follow were sung, except for the last one, in both Ngoni kingdoms, and not only when *Ngoko* dances took place. Some were sung at marriage ceremonies, and some formerly as *umtindo* songs at the pre-marriage rite for girls. In northern Ngoniland the last two songs were sung in the churches, and tunes of other well-known war songs were used in the churches of the Scottish mission with different words written for them. Most of the songs when translated sound very brief. They were less brief when sung in the Ngoni language since there was repetition of certain lines, with repeated refrains, and with a series of 'sounds' such as *heyo ho, ai, yo yo* which accompanied the stamping of feet and the clash of shields. These untranslatable 'sounds' were sometimes the only part of the song which was known by the younger men who had never used the Ngoni language, and they chanted them in the right places as a chorus.

The first four songs were all intended to encourage the warriors at the time of mobilisation before going out on a campaign. They reminded the singers that in the use of the short stabbing spear the Ngoni armies were stronger than their enemies; that they brought their fighting skill from the south-east; that, though the fight might be long, rest would come in the evening; and that the army belonged to the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The fifth song suggested the kind of warning given to warriors by the old men—that they should not give in after a fight, but pursue the enemy and capture their cattle. The sixth song, though the reference to Longiyeka was obscure, was said to be a warning against treachery and revolt in the army. The seventh song had three themes: that death was the lot of every man, and the earth where the grave would be dug was never satisfied (*ukwanwa* means 'to be satisfied'); that no one would escape the universal fate of death, from the senior men wearing the head-plumes to the common people and the cattle; and that the ancestors already buried in the land would be joined by those then alive. The terms used in this song to describe the social groups among the Ngoni people were those which will occur throughout this book.

1. No Paramount can be poor because of the spear.
   Then why are you running away?

The *induni* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 291 796 [643] 3[illegible]

When the time for closing the *inwanda* came, they again took the fruit-grounds and threw it in among the dancers and called out 'Inwanda mwa-*Ngoni*', 'the *inwanda* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the soups on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *inwanda* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *ai ai, eai ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 291 533 539

1. He comes the one who bears the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *induni* of the Mazeko clan and a member of the Ngoao clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngoao, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mwawi* was the one most frequently used. *Mwawi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mwawiwawi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngoao boy was *mwapo mwawi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did with the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 522

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngoao man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngoao clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngoao family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

2: Reed E-9 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 thanking, and then all thanked the thanking together. This included all
644 the men who were in the household though they did not take part in
the food or the present. The latter would first thank '*Ejiwe*' and then all
521 would follow together, '*Ejiwe*', or the clan name of the man who was the
giver. The Paramount, if he gave presents to the people, was not thanked
by his clan name as other people. He was thanked by '*Bayete*' as was done
when saluting him. Likewise those who received the title *Nkosa* were
thanked by that title when they gave presents to people.

643 On ceremonial occasions visitors to the royal village heard the
644 *izibongo* or praise-songs of the Paramount. These were songs referring
to great deeds and notable incidents both in the lifetime of the reigning
● 533 Paramount and in the lives of his predecessors. They were distinct from
576 the *izitabeni*, which were lyrical epithets added to the clan names and
spoken when thanking a well-known man or woman for their gifts. The
izitabeni could be said by anyone, since each person of note had his own
which were well known. The *izibongo* could only be spoken or sung by
an *umbongi* or official 'praiser'. Such a person was a man of good
[illegible] memory and possessing eloquence. The chief was thought to be the seat
of wisdom and eloquence, and a man who composed praise-songs, as
distinct from repeating well-known ones, had to have the faculty of
finding the right words, while new songs of this kind were generally
invented on a sudden inspiration.

The occasions when the praise-songs were recited were when important visitors came to the royal village; when beasts were slaughtered in the ancestor cult; at special dances at the royal village or at the feasts of the Paramount. On such occasions the official praiser stood up in the kraal, everyone kept silent and did not move, and after a pause he began to call out '*Bayabonga inkosi*', 'let us praise the Paramount'. In repeating the praise-songs he began with those of the immediate ancestor of the Paramount, and then went on to those of earlier ancestors. At the end he shouted '*Bayete*' and all the people replied '*Bayete*'. Examples of the praise-songs of Zwangendaba and his father Hlacwayo of the northern kingdom and of Ngwana, father of Mputa, of the central Ngoni kingdom are given at the end of the chapter.

643 The tension caused by the extreme formality in the behaviour of the
644 Paramount, his courtiers and his visitors was lightened by the presence
of a court jester. Informants were agreed that such an individual was
usually present to amuse the Paramount with his sallies and gestures and
522 clown-like tumbling about. Dr. Laws referred to such a jester at the
court of Mbelwa I when the Livingstonia Mission was making its first
settlement in northern Nyasaland.[1] I saw a jester who came with Paramount Zimambira Masko from Portuguese territory when he and his officials visited Mzukhulu for the war-dance at the mourning for Bambo

[1] Livingstone, W. P. *Laws of Livingstonia*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1921, p. [illegible].

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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kingdom and from Portuguese territory arrived to mourn. The grave was made at the edge of the kraal and the kraal fence enlarged to take it in so that the cattle might walk on it.

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In this chapter I have tried to bring together some of the chief elements in the position of the Paramount, and in the performance of his duties, which were remembered by the old men as having been characteristic of pre-European days. Some of these features, as I have indicated, had disappeared in the 1930's. Others survived and will be illustrated in Chapter V. Chapters III and IV on the royal women and on the officials in the kingdoms will illustrate the importance of the leading women in the Ngoni kingdoms, and the hierarchy of officials already mentioned in Chapter II of Part I.

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The texts of the praise-songs which conclude this chapter are given because in the 1930's they were still recited in the royal villages and were a feature of all public ceremonies. Most of the allusions in the texts were obscure. Cibambo, who translated them for me and who consulted other older men, did not recognize some of the names or the meaning of the attributes. Some names corresponded with those given in Part I in the texts about the departure of the Ngoni in their two groups from Natal (see pp. 7, 8), such as the Nqumeyo people whom Zwide ruled over, Ngaba who left with Ngwana, Nyathi who tried to prevent Ngwana from leaving. But in the way in which they were used in the 1930's these praise-songs had little meaning for those who heard them except as a form of salutation to the Paramount.

Praises of Zwangendaba, son of Hlumayo

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Zwangendaba whose intention is to be black who denies it to be light.
Go away, let us go, you the rejected one.
We are like a man of the Hlungwa, a fat one; there the people die as fat ones.
Ngaba you must eat people. Leave the cattle.
Ngaba son of Lombwana, there was confusion.
There he is, there he is, where do they see him? They see him in the fences of his mothers.
One who is angry because the cattle have gone with the calves.
His great cunning overcomes the magic stones of the doctors.
I have gone away until I have seen Lebombo Mountains.
We are suffering on account of the great dispute with the Nqumeyo people.
You are seeing the hoes which are waiting for you, the hoes which cannot be used for hoeing.
He saw it, the short grass, he was biting it hastily.
He saw it, the ditch, his foot slipped into it.
He who divided the water with a stick at the Zambesi.
He who remembered the cattle of the Baburjana.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Praises of Hlawayo, son of Magangane

Hlawayo the dwarf who cannot twill his cloth
Whereas the tall people twill their clothes.
Most cannot with knives of iron,
If it is not cannot with forks it is cannot.
Hlawayo whose bodily vigour is finished off compared with Hlawayo of former times.
Gums of deep red colour is not burned with burning; it burns very slowly, drop by drop.

Praises of Ngwane, son of Gaqwani

You who cut the trees and who cut the mimbo,
You the locust, the grasshopper who fixed in your hair the feathers of the locust,
Who went below and climbed up, and went to bring the morning star of the dawn,
You go, since you are rejected; you go and bring the armies of wild animals; those of cattle will be much disposed.
You who remember the feuds of long ago.
In descending, you descend together into the mountains.
You who drank the blood of cattle,
You who separated from the people of Shaka, Shaka of Mbelebele kraal,
You who separated from the people of Nyathi the son of Mashobane; it thundered, it was cloudy.
Thou resembles cattle which were finished by wolves.
You who originated with the people of Mellikazi,
You who originated with the people of Mpakana son of Lidunga,
You who originated with the people of Ndwandwe.

CHAPTER III

THE ROYAL WOMEN

An early traveller in central Ngoniland in 1886 remarked on the number of 'true Ngoni women' to be found there, who were 'easily distinguished from the other women by their light colour and by being taller and stouter'. He went on to say: 'The king's houses at Livinini were 30 feet in diameter, built within an enclosure with other huts where the attendants lived. All were kept very clean and well swept.' This tribute to the appearance and achievements of Ngoni women of high rank was borne out by my own observations in the 1930's in central and northern Ngoniland. There was a definite physical type, light in colour, with high cheek-bones and orthognathic profile, tall with an upright carriage of the head. Women with these physical characteristics were in all cases of leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and their influence on their

571 our child who is now leaving her home. She has no father now. She is
585 leaving his care. We expect you to cherish her now as her father would.' In reply the *induna* assured them, 'Now she is here we will cherish her, but she must respect the owner of this house and be under her in all things.' Speeches about the absence of disease in either village were then made and the men took snuff. The bridal party and the villagers all remained seated and began to sing *umbedlo* songs (songs to be sung sitting).

585 At the marriage at Ezondweni, where I was present, the girls of the bridal party began to shiver as night fell, and a woman of the village [533] brought a sleeping mat as an invitation to go into the huts. Singing as they went, the women of the bridal party were shown a place to sleep, and the bride slept among them for that night. The bride's party went off the next morning to the church at Elangeni for the church marriage [797] service, while the bridegroom with a party from Ezondweni went by a separate route. In the days before the mission came, they used to spend the morning dancing in the kraal, while the husband's family killed a beast, or more than one, for the feast. During the day's dancing in the kraal, the leader of the village women took the husband's spear, came into the kraal with the village party and touched the bride gently on the shoulder. This was a sign that the bride was now one of the village [152] group, and the correct response was for her party to turn their backs and weep to show their grief because she had left them.

In Ezondweni, when the parties returned from church in the afternoon, a large crowd had assembled. The bridal party danced and sang in the kraal and outside the *indlunkulu* and now and then a leading woman of the bridegroom's village joined in. The bride and two supporting friends were given a mat to sit on, the husband and the *madoda* also sat down, the minister from the church prayed and they sang a hymn. Then the food, bowls of *nsima* with large pieces of meat on top, was divided. The names of the divisions of Ezondweni were called out and the leaders of the divisions of that village and of other villages came to get the portions for their people.

Dancing continued after the feast until the bride's party took the bride to the husband's hut and left her there. The next morning the [533] bridal party returned home singing. Formerly the bride came to the door of the hut where she had slept with her husband, and called out the praise-names of her father. She then sang the *ummekezo* song (song of the deflowering) and the husband stood in the doorway behind her. Then he went into the kraal and sat facing the bridal party, who were singing. When the bride came in with a gourd of water there was silence while she poured water for him to wash his hands, mouth and eyes. This was the first public act of service for the husband after the consummation of the marriage and ended the main part of the ceremony, after which the bridal party went home.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 836 565 emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

Many of the *umsindo* songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni [533] history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

852 304 The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and [727] annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambesi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

561 857 After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance *ngoma* in a neighbouring village.

857 535 In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the *ngoma* dance played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

791 an *isanusi* today". When he entered the place of his sister, NaNdumbu, he was dreaming. If there was a war he could say "You must not go to that war because all the people will be killed." He was just dreaming and dancing his *isanusi* dance. When he danced that dance on the chief's *bwalo* the people praised him with special praises.'

791 Two informants remembered fragments of the songs sung by NaNdumbu and her brother, and these songs were also sung by the old
● 533 *izanusi* in the northern kingdom. I give here the Ngoni versions with an English translation, omitting the repetition of lines and the 'sounds' which accompanied the singing:

[539]

Uyezwa mihlolo	Do you see the omens?
Inhanyezo ipuma	The star comes out,
Ipuma yanga	It comes out in the East.
. . . . .	. . . . .
Ubaba uyangibiza	My father is calling me.
Hamba ekaya	Go home.
Indaba zikuyandela	Things have turned against you,
Hamba ekaya	Go home.

791 Although these diviners acted at times on their own initiative, this did not prevent their being called on in time of crisis to diagnose the reason
787 for disaster or sickness. *Izanusi* who used their own medicines to smell
237 could prophesy and speak on their own initiative as well as waiting to be called on. These medicines were said to induce the dreams on which the prophecy was based, and they were generally contained in the tail of a gnu or in a sheep's horn, or some other horn.

787 Below this category of the prophets, whether *abantu benhloko* or *izanusi*, came those who used lots when called on to diagnose a par-
791 ticular situation. These were often men who dreamed, or who used their own medicines to receive messages from their ancestral spirits, but instead of announcing their message directly, they brought with them some form of lots which they used when they were consulted, and gave their diagnosis as a result of observing the lots. Sometimes they sang their own songs, accompanied by dancing, which led to an almost trance-like condition; sometimes they used their lots without any previous working up of an emotional state through song or dance. I never met any of the dreamer type of prophet who used no medicines and no lots. There was general agreement among the Ngoni that they had died out, that their main service had been in times of war, and that the number of men or women who possessed such powers had, even in the past, been very small indeed. I did, however, see one diviner at work who used the song and dance technique with the lots, and two who used the lots without song or dance.

756 The *isanusi* whom I saw in the northern kingdom was divining for
787 sickness at the request of a party of people who had come to consult him

854 When the baby cried, and it was not time to take him to his mother for suckling, the nurse girl jogged him up and 533 down on her back, and walked to and fro with him endlessly, crooning little lullabies to soothe the baby. Some of these lullabies were traditional, handed down from the older women, others were improvised by a nurse girl or copied by her from another.

539 Two traditional lullabies, well know in the Northern Ngoni kingdom, were as follows:

Hush my child;
Never mind, never mind,
Hush my child;
Never mind, never mind,
There is a busybody gossiping
There is a busybody gossiping
Ho! We reap the maize

Kholwane, Kholwane, son of Makhwaphuna,
What are you carrying?
I am carrying the food of the baby
For someone may go about defiling it
In the dark paths.

The following is an example of an impromptu lullaby which I heard from a nurse girl in the Northern kingdom:

Bu, bu, bu, bu,
The baby cries for its nurse and not for its mother.
Bu, bu, bu, bu,
She is coming to make gruel for the baby.
There she comes,
Bu, bu, bu, bu;
The baby sleeps.

853 The reference to the baby's food in two of the lullabies belongs to the second special feature of Ngoni infant care, the provision of baby food to supplement the mother's milk, and the arrangements for artificial feeding if the mother had

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy and therefore to be removed from them when the time came for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with him, they sometimes carried him abov the nurse girl
[262] did something else, they ground bul t or roasted ground-nuts to give him as snacks. Th e particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[533] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he addressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
[554] measure of the authority which his father and his father's brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and grandmother's households. There were young children who were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

In the dry season which was the dancing season children from three and four years upwards spent hours watching the 535 older boys and girls dancing. On the edge of the main group 868 small boys particularly would with intense solemnity and exaggerated movements practise steps and postures, singing meanwhile. The Ngoni used no drums and no musical instruments in their dancing, and despised the users of drums. [534] All their rhythm and synchrony was achieved by perfect unison of action and voice. The little boys practising solo on the edge of a dance-group listened intently every now and then to get the rhythm correctly, shifted their feet and stamped with the rest.

The little girls were collected together by older girls now 524 and then, and sometimes joined by the boys, to play games 533 of catch and various miming games such as choosing a lover, 857 hen and chickens, slave-raiding, baboons in the maize gardens. These were accompanied by songs in which the leader, or 'owner', of the game sang the story and the rest joined in the refrains. Many of these miming games called for alertness and co-operation, and the slow and solitary were soon shown up and laughed at. Another set of songs with refrains were ballads or stories without action, and these were listened to by the hour by the younger children towards the end of the day, especially if the singer of the ballad was a lively narrator.

Girl children of this age-group spent a lot of their time 868 watching adults and older girls doing their household work. In time they learned to imitate the actions of pounding and grinding, using a small pole or a stone, of sweeping with a frayed-out stalk, of winnowing or sieving with a little basket, or ladling food with a tiny wooden spoon. When they went to the gardens with their mother, they were given a small branch to carry home on their heads for the fire. Later the little girls had a tiny pot put on their head, perched on a miniature grass carrying-ring and went to the water-hole with their nurse girl to fill it and carry it home without spilling the water.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

All of them made their own axes, knobkerries and catapults for hunting. Some were interested in music and made shepherds' pipes, or one-stringed lyres, or hand pianos of metal strips affixed to a wooden base. They composed their own songs and airs for these instruments. Others showed ingenuity in making elaborate models of lorries and aeroplanes, or in carving heads of animals. Others liked to weave fibre into the wide-brimmed hats some herd-boys wore. 868 [411] [534] [533]

More significant still for their future social relationships, they began now to choose their own intimate friend and to form the friendship pacts which were characteristic of Ngoni society, and regarded by adults as important in the child's development. In the friendship pacts, especially those between boys, there was no implied or manifest restraint. They could have 'joking relations', and hence say outrageous things to each other. They could quarrel and make it up, and defy each other's wishes and decisions, without a final breach. The relationship between friends often lasted into later adult life, and was probably all the stronger for the occasional lapses and outbursts, and by the fact that in the daily companionship of friends the burden of observing 'respect' did not oppress them. 572

The boys' dormitory

The hut known as the boys' dormitory and the whole system of living which it represented was a traditional feature of Ngoni village life. In their culture it had three main purposes. Formerly, when as they said 'War was our school', it was the place where boys slept and lived together, and where they learned to defend themselves and to obey authority. It was in a sense the preparatory school for the regiment, and the herding of cattle was the basis of the curriculum. Once a boy went to sleep in a dormitory he never left it until he married, unless he was seriously ill. In the days of warfare, he learned in the dormitory and out herding the cattle, a knowledge of the bush and its wild life and of his fellows, and 182 575 342

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
831 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
292 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
885 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often
301 trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the premarriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
885 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
556 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after.
593 It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
[836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'

177
885 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 parallel of the Jews of the Old Testament preparing the way
177 for the Christian era to illustrate and drive home their belief
797 that they, the Ngoni, had prepared the way for the Christian Gospel in Nyasaland. 'Were we not also a people who hated idols and images? We too tried to reach the Great God through our ancestor spirits, but we failed, until the mission came to teach us.' 'We held together the people of this land under one rule so that the missionaries could travel safely and spread the Gospel teaching.' These beliefs were stated so often that they became almost standard formula, and the incongruity of this picture with some of the warlike situations recorded by the earliest missionaries was ignored and forgotten. In the churches, where the people sat on mats, Sunday by Sunday, facing their Ngoni ministers, rising to sing, in
[533] their typical Ngoni harmonies, Christian hymns set to former Ngoni war tunes—in this setting Ngoni history was brought home, interwoven with the new teaching, to young adults who formed the majority of the congregation. For Ngoni elders it was something more than a reminder of their past. It was setting the Ngoni people in a special relationship to
[186] the European missionaries and the new learning, compensating for the passing of military power and political supremacy by establishing Ngoni cultural superiority over their neighbours. This gave some spiritual reassurance to a people in the throes of political change, and it was a lesson which lost none of its significance for the young adults who heard it.

Ngoni law

671 'There was one law for all the people. No one could be ignorant of the law.' These were the words, quoted in Chapter I, which the Ngoni used frequently to describe the importance
[182] of law in their culture, its role in the political unification of their own and subject peoples, and the responsibility, laid on all adults, for knowledge of the law and conformity with its demands. An incident in a court of law, which was unfor-
692 gettable to an anthropologist, was a case in which a chief sat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

264 might be a chore but when it was done in the open it was also an advertisement of high standards.

The art of speech

191 The Ngoni believed that as boys and girls neared adult life they should be well drilled in the art of speaking, because it
195 was regarded as a basic Ngoni characteristic. We have seen how adults watched children tossing riddles at each other to test, among other things, their quickness of speech. Girls had been watched telling stories to see how they held their audience and showed a sense of dramatic values in recitation.

In all the standardized forms of speech such as greetings, messages, announcements, responses, young adults were expected to speak clearly and correctly, without mumbling but not too loudly. When relating an event, such as a visit, a bull-fight, or when giving evidence in the courts, they had to give an orderly account without repetition. Otherwise they were told: 'You are speaking badly. Tell it again, in order, from the beginning.' An ordered sequence of the narrative was always demanded, and, as we shall see in the next chapter, they used proverbs frequently to impress on people speaking the need to get to the point, while leaving out nothing of importance.

The art of words used with music in songs was regarded as
533 a special gift and those who possessed it were encouraged to develop it. Inspiration for words and music was as we have seen something which came 'from the chest' and was regarded almost as if it was a special kind of breathing. Some used this gift to sing with a solo instrument such as a stringed lyre. Others used it to compose new songs for *ngoma* dances.
[177] Others again wrote Christian hymns and composed music for them, or set them to traditional Ngoni tunes.

The art of dancing

535 'Ngoni people think that their dances show their personality,
[828] their manhood, that which was born in them.' Phrases like

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

If a women believes that her husband is committing adultery with another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages. Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13] The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mototo*, a root, and *kajelejele*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cihapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kapahapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 167 Some men when they decide to return home from work in the normal course of events do not let their relatives know that they will be arriving. There are a variety of reasons for this, one being that the mystical hazards of the journey home are increased if a man's enemies know that it is taking place. There is also sometimes the desire to check on the fidelity of a wife. A chief returning from the railway line in 1947 reached Fort Jameson and sent on ahead a man to tell the people their chief had returned. A councillor who was with him remarked 'What sort of chief is this who gives his queens time to get back to their own houses? We ought to arrive suddenly and catch them all with their lovers.'

593 167 602 The woman's kin also wish to avoid trouble in her marriage and do what they can to prevent her committing adultery if they think that her husband is still treating her well. They talk to her about her obligations to her absent husband and if they think she cannot be trusted, one of them, perhaps the woman's mother, may sleep in the hut with her to see that she does not entertain lovers there. They may warn her that if she is taken to court for adultery they will not support her.

Thus we see that there is social prescription not only of the ways in which a man and his affines should behave towards each other, but also of the ways in which his affines should behave when the man is away. Similarly a woman and her affines interact in the light of their relationship not only when her husband is present but also when he has been absent for years. As a husband can exceed his rights over his wife, so can an affine go beyond what is tolerated while trying to safeguard the interests of an absent husband. The perseverence of some brothers of absent husbands, and the limitations imposed on their actions by public opinion, are recalled by a girls' song current in 1949.

[533]

> I am wanting to go and sleep,
> What stops me is something in the loins,
> I go to the water, and the one who keeps on following comes,
> He has exceeded his sibling-in-law-ship,[18]
> He has dragged Eleni from the reeds.

Eleni is supposed to be the wife of a labour migrant. Her husband's brother follows her to the stream, where she has gone ostensibly to draw water, as he thinks that she is really going to meet a lover. [607] She hides in the reeds and he drags her out. Such active intervention is inappropriate and dangerous for if there is a struggle the woman is likely to claim that the man was trying to rape her. The astute brother-in-law would have waited his time until he could catch her red-handed with her lover in a village.

167 837 It is never legitimate for a woman whose husband is a labour migrant to have intercourse with another man. People regret that

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[18] *Ulamu*, the abstract noun formed from *mulamu*, sibling-in-law.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

766 wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head till it all glitters, and then take the skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

II. The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day, they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre, and the flames go roaring up. They place the child [and heir] where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields and chant their war songs—

766 539 533 III. "This thing (that has befallen),
Have you heard these things, wife of an old man?"

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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"Wage war on the *Afo*,
Hayo, hayo, ho,
They have left him;
They have left him in their midst."

"*Humba*, the mighty medicine man, has gone with them,
He has swallowed a magic horn, has *Humba*."

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The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry (*kugwira*), they burn on a fire at one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse also is consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people [231] still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief are removed.

IV. Next morning all the headmen shave their 765 heads, and then the people from the different 766 villages. The widows put on the red head-bands. Then they allow three days to pass, and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps 643 out and says, "Do you hear, your new chief is so and so" (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then every one shouts, "Hail," and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes (trans. *biriwiri*). Then the elders

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

thrown away the day she comes out of the *tsimba* hut.) 881

II. On the seventh day, before dawn, one of the old women rises and makes a shrill noise with her tongue, then old matrons only collect and go with the girl to the stream. Should the maiden formerly have been of an insolent nature, she is tied up in a bundle of grass and thrown into the water. The old women warm themselves over a fire on the bank. When the sun gets hot, she is taken out, and set on the bank, and they commence to dance and pull her about, and reprove her, saying, "You there, listen; I sent you to go and draw water for me, and you refused. You said, 'I am not a slave.' But could you have come to the water here to-day? She who has brought you here, is not she that very old creature?" Then she is given all sorts of advice. When they have finished they shave her head and pubes, and rub her with oil and adorn her with beads. Then the old woman who is head of the ceremony takes her up on her back, and as they go they sing— [302]

"Wrinkles, mother, wrinkles,
I was at my own home, and never a wrinkle, [539]
I came among the Angoni,
I saw wrinkles, [533]
Wrinkles, O!
Things like this all fall on me.
Maiden cluck like an old sitting hen,
How can I cluck, I am only a young bird?
Cluck."

When they come with her to her mother's house, they sing—

"Tumbling about the things in her mother's hut.
In the hut that is no longer hers."

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

must perish indeed. Give your children the rains, there is the beer we have given you." Then the people begin to clap their hands and sound the *nkulungwani;* they sing, swaying their bodies backwards and forwards, and keep saying, "Pardon, pardon." When they have finished propitiating, they take the beer that remains and dip a cup in and give every one to drink, just a little, no one is short, and even the children are made to sip it. When they have finished they take branches of trees and commence to dance and sing—

"This little cloud, and this,
This little cloud, and this,
Let the rains come with this little cloud.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Kröle.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Kröle."

When they come to the village they find an old woman has drawn water in readiness, and put it at the doorway, and the people begin to dip in their branches and wave them aloft, scattering the drops, and then they see the rain come in heavy storm-clouds.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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feather head-dress, and in her hand she holds a little stick (for a spear), and her calico is tied round her waist, and her breasts swing free. The songs they sing at the Kanonomera dance go thus—

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What knocks off the dew,
Comes at the early dawn.—(*Repeat.*)

Looking, gazing, we just gaze one at the other.
(*Repeat.*)

When the drum sounds it is the *choinjoli* drum
that brings the spirit.—(*Repeat.*)

Far away there, far away,
Far away there, far away,
Far away where shines white that little cloud,
Far away there, is my bow.

Little quail, little quail, you are picking up the
little grains.
And what if he is,
Are they not his eyes?
It broke his leg for him;
Only hunger, only hunger.

Oh no, indeed, indeed,
Two wives have been too many for him indeed;
Two wives have been too many for him indeed.

You hate me,
You hate me for my being so old.—(*Repeat.*)

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Little maiden, whom war has given me,
Should you refuse to be mine,
I am as a slave in my grief,
And then what must you do?

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We were far away;
Our companions had cut off their head rings.

XXVII

THE NTETEREZI DANCE

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[764]

It is danced only at a funeral.

Scrape out the beer pot and give me.
Have some sense, the beer is finished.

He is the husband who favours your companion
(*i.e.* his second wife),
And you, you only cook and give him, all in silence;
And here you return,
And weep against the hut post.

Should you be a childless man,
Do not be hitting your neighbour's child,
That's so, father.
Don't you think you should go and beat that maize you planted?
That's so, father.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 She has left him sleeping there, de de;
533 She has left the home he made her, de de;
She has left him.

The man who is in my home;
Yes, yes, father.
From the way he leans against the hut post (all indifferent to my charms)
You would think he had been drinking beer.

What, you say you would marry *me?*—
You of the goat-skin (loin cloth).
No, father; oh no, father;
You of the goat-skin.

Mother! mother!
Did she go to send you,
Saying, "When he comes you must abuse him?"

Oh stop that fidgeting and turning;
Stop saying, "I must so."
Stop saying, "I must thus."
We do not want that.

You have brought in vain your wooden pillow;
I do not wish you,
I do not want you.

Should you kill a little mouse, go and give it to your sister.
With one's wives it's do this, do that for them, and then they leave you.
We have said so; we have said so.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVIII

THE KANDENGA DANCE

In dancing this dance the women stand in line on one side, the men in a line on another, the drums are where the men are; then a woman goes and takes the knobkerry from a man, and the man goes back with her to where the women are, and again they return and stand close together. The man places one hand on the woman's shoulder, and they dance thus, and when they have done dancing the woman turns round and hands the man his knobkerry. The Kandenga is danced at a funeral, but also just for fun when the moon is shining. 535 [764]

A white-haired man is malt;
On his coming, let him make beer;
Yes, father.
On his coming he shall make beer. 539 533

Towards the river to *Likongwe*
A cloud shines white like some little bird, maybe,
But it's those Angoni; they always said
"That's a rich little spot where the *Nsugudzi* flows."

I am an unmarried maiden, and one of Njolo's men will be my lord,
De, de.
The youths from here think too much of themselves.
Did not one say, I was his,
De, de.
The youths of here are too conceited.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 Place your hand upon her shoulder in the dance.
533 Place your hand up her shoulder whom you love.
This season there is no bow (*i.e.* war).

Oh, oh, oh.
I have come to the wedding.
The porridge they have cooked with the finger.
(It is so badly made.)

Oh belt, belt, belt,
Belt, belt,
Why should I not borrow the belt,
When the dance has sounded?

XXIX

THE CHITOTO DANCE

535 THEY dance it at a mourning, and even just for
[534] fun. They do not have drums, but fasten rattles on
their legs.

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539 One perhaps has taken the other,
533 Summoned him for love of him,
And to-day we mourn, love;
Yes, father,
And the cock crows.

Should your neighbour's son not have a wife,
Look after his belly,
His belly,
His belly, wo, ha, ho!
I have sung.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Should you have no child by your neighbour's daughter, 539 533
Give her your friend, and he shall wed her;
As for you, you be happy with the beer pot,
With the beer pot, wo, ha, ho!
You be content with the beer pot.

XXX

THE KUNJU DANCE

MEN do not dance it, but only women, with the men looking on. [535]

You, Nzinyai, you, Nzinyai;
Nzinyai, she refuses hospitality to the strangers,
You, Nzinyai.
The porridge which I have not seen;
Nzinyai, return whence you came.

The man who is in my hut begins to refuse his food; when I only dish him out two helpings of porridge, he looks aside;
When I dish him out three (he says), "Give me the water (to wash his hands). I shall give the child his."
But that child he is wise,
"Eat up your porridge," says he; "was it not you who scolded at me?"
Now, what do you think of that? My child he knows how to conduct a quarrel.
A quarrel they settle at the village court.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXXI

OTHER SONGS

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533 Moon, you must shine, shine that I may eat the tadpoles;
I sit on a stone, and my bones all rattle.
If it were not for my big mouth,
The maidens would be crying for me.

(The song of the night-jar.)

That great bird has gone in there,
Gone to the other side there,
Gone and got a snake there;
The very snake that told me of misfortune,
Told me of misfortune, e! e! e!
Which foretold evil at the site of the deserted village.

Frog you, frog you,
Your friend, your friend.
Frog you, frog you,
He is calling his wife.
Jump squat, jump squat,
He is calling his wife.

(The frog's song.)

Dawn, day; dawn, day;
The Tsambe mouse is finishing other folk's food.

(The song of the *ndongera* mouse, that eats during the day.)

Stay a little yet, night; stay a little yet, night;
While I eat with you.

(The song of the *Tsambe* mouse, that eats only at night.)

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of European control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewā, Kunda, and so on.

We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

portant chiefs. The Paramounts have told me that occasionally at 814
their biannual 'meeting of chiefs' and *indunas*, some recital of history is made, especially if they want to quote a precedent or examine an old custom with a view to change. This historical tradition therefore is alive and has a recognized function in regulating Ngoni life. In one area part of it has been written in the vernacular and is used as a school history book.[1] In the other areas the Paramounts have spoken of the need for something of the same kind, as they recognize that with the coming of modern education it is an effective way of training the young in the traditions of the Ngoni past.

In addition to recitals of tradition by 'historians' there are many other reminders of the Ngoni past which are constantly before the people. An adequate examination of Ngoni history as it is expressed in their institutions and standardized behaviour would need an article to itself. I shall only mention here some ways and occasions through which tradition and old Ngoni institutions are brought before the people.

1. The praise songs of chiefs, war songs, regimental songs, names [533]
of famous regiments, and prayers for rain. These contain references, often rather obscure, to events and persons in the past. The praise songs are sung, or rather shouted, on special occasions, as when thanking the chief for beer, by members of important clans who alone know the words. The war songs and regimental songs recall the great days of conquest, and are sung and danced in war dress at big gatherings at the Paramount's village or at other chief's villages. The prayers for rain invoke the names of great chiefs in old days, but are [782]
now only a memory as they are no longer used in ceremonies—at least in none that I have found so far.

2. The names of prominent landmarks, such as hills and rivers [823]
where great chiefs built their villages and fights took place. Herd boys will point out a river and say, 'That is where Mtwalo built when he came from Choma', or 'That hill is where Singu hid in the Azungu war'. The historical events attached to these places are widely known and constantly before people's eyes in the diversified landscape of hills and valleys.

3. Important village names. During the trek north, the names of [621]

[1] In Mwambera's country.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

535 628 is now danced by villages. The important men in one village suggest to another village that this dance should be held in the latter village. If this is agreed, beer is brewed in the second village and on the prearranged day many people from the first village come in procession from their village to the dance. The visiting dancers enter the cattle byre and start to dance. They are joined by people from the home village. The dancers are arranged in two lines, men on one side and women on the other, and the dance consists of a series of virtuoso performances by two or three men and women at a time in the space between the two lines, to the accompaniment of clapping and antiphonal singing. [533] The dance is followed by drinking and more dancing. Later in the year, or in the next year, the host village goes to the home of the visitors, and the performance is repeated.

535 628 883 Of more frequent occurrence are dances involving girls only. These are usually held on Sunday afternoons, and as at the *ngoma* dances, at least two villages are involved. Here the initiative is taken not by the important men but by the senior unmarried girl in the village. She invites a girl of similar status in another village with whom she is acquainted, or whom she has seen dancing, to bring a team of girls to dance in her village. This kind of dance is competitive in that the visitors are opposed by a similar team of girls from the home village, who dance separately from the visitors until, at the end of the session, the two teams combine. That team which has danced best is held to be the winner, although there is always great doubt as to which team this is. The girl who invited the visitors is responsible for seeing that the visiting team is fed, although beer is not provided. No work is done in the gardens on Sundays, so that these dances always attract a large number of onlookers. As with *ngoma*, a return match is danced at some later date. The pairs of villages that are linked in these dance exchanges are not always those that contain many people related to one another. One girl may ask an acquaintance in another village to find a team; in one case the girl who made the invitation did not know the name of the girl she was inviting.

Beer-drinking

273 [271] [574] [272] Beer, water, and tea are the three main drinks of the Ngoni. The ordinary rules of hospitality govern the drinking of water, which is provided for the traveller whenever he asks for some. Tea is sold in the roadside stores known as hotels. Beer is more important socially

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

797 Central Africa. The U.M.C.A. subsequently concentrated its activi-
795 ties in another part of the District, so that the two main denominations are now the Dutch Reformed Church and the Catholic Church. There was for a time a branch of the Livingstonia Mission (Free Church of Scotland) in the area, while more recently a Seventh Day Adventist Mission has begun work. Since 1924 there have been some adherents to the Watch Tower[1] amongst the Ngoni, but this movement did not become important until some years later.

797 Primary education is carried on in mission schools subsidized by
872 the Administration, but there is also a Native Authority school over which the chiefs exercise some influence and which is to some extent supported by Native Treasury funds. The teachers in the elementary
[875] schools live in the villages, but they do not exercise very much influence outside their classrooms. This does not appear to have been the case in the past, when there was greater hostility between the different missions and when the missions tended to disregard the tribal authorities. The teachers then seem to have set themselves up as headmen on their own, and schools were built without the permission of the local headmen. In many cases where the issue between the missions was undecided, there were two schools in the same village. In the middle 'thirties many of these so-called schools were closed on the initiative of the Administration and the teachers who remain are now more interested in education than in politics.

872 A village school serves more than one village, so that the children of a neighbourhood containing, say, half a dozen villages get to know each other and visit in each other's villages. Certain dances and songs,
[595] known as *konsert*, are performed by parties of schoolchildren going from
[593] one village to another, and this leads to similar inter-village dancing in the evenings organized by groups of boys. At the end of term a number of schools of the same denomination combine to perform a rather more elaborate programme of songs and dances, and these displays are attended by many adults.

797 The deacons and evangelists are of greater importance in the
794 political life of the tribe than are the school teachers. Deacons take a certain initiative in settling disputes in the village, and they report to their missions deaths and serious sins that affect their people. They arrange for religious instruction for catechumens and may on occasion organize opposition to some practice that has been declared wrong by
797 the mission. Evangelists are responsible for a number of villages and

[1] The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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10. Young musicians

[facing page 49]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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● 534
417

11. Young musicians

[342]

[facing page 64]

In the dry season which was the dancing season children from three and four years upwards spent hours watching the 535 older boys and girls dancing. On the edge of the main group 868 small boys particularly would with intense solemnity and exaggerated movements practise steps and postures, singing meanwhile. The Ngoni used no drums and no musical instruments in their dancing, and despised the users of drums. [534] All their rhythm and synchrony was achieved by perfect unison of action and voice. The little boys practising solo on the edge of a dance-group listened intently every now and then to get the rhythm correctly, shifted their feet and stamped with the rest.

The little girls were collected together by older girls now 524 and the[illegible] and sometimes joined by the boys, to play games 533 of catch and various miming games such as choosing a lover, 857 hen and chickens, slave-raiding, baboons in the maize gardens. These were accompanied by songs in which the leader, or 'owner', of the game sang the story and the rest joined in the refrains. Many of these miming games called for alertness and co-operation, and the slow and solitary were soon shown up and laughed at. Another set of songs with refrains were ballads or stories without action, and these were listened to by the hour by the younger children towards the end of the day, especially if the singer of the ballad was a lively narrator.

Girl children of this age-group spent a lot of their time 868 watching adults and older girls doing their household work. In time they learned to imitate the actions of pounding and grinding, using a small pole or a stone, of sweeping with a frayed-out stalk, of winnowing or sieving with a little basket, or ladling food with a tiny wooden spoon. When they went to the gardens with their mother, they were given a small branch to carry home on their heads for the fire. Later the little girls had a tiny pot put on their head, perched on a miniature grass carrying-ring and went to the water-hole with their nurse girl to fill it and carry it home without spilling the water.

All of them made their own axes, knobkerries and catapults for hunting. Some were interested in music and made shepherds' pipes, or one-stringed lyres, or hand pianos of metal strips affixed to a wooden base. They composed their own songs and airs for these instruments. Others showed ingenuity in making elaborate models of lorries and aeroplanes, or in carving heads of animals. Others liked to weave fibre into the wide-brimmed hats some herd-boys wore. 868 [411] [534] [533]

More significant still for their future social relationships, they began now to choose their own intimate friend and to form the friendship pacts which were characteristic of Ngoni society, and regarded by adults as important in the child's development. In the friendship pacts, especially those between boys, there was no implied or manifest restraint. They could have 'joking relations', and hence say outrageous things to each other. They could quarrel and make it up, and defy each other's wishes and decisions, without a final breach. The relationship between friends often lasted into later adult life, and was probably all the stronger for the occasional lapses and outbursts, and by the fact that in the daily companionship of friends the burden of observing 'respect' did not oppress them. 572

The boys' dormitory

The hut known as the boys' dormitory and the whole system of living which it represented was a traditional feature of Ngoni village life. In their culture it had three main purposes. Formerly, when as they said 'War was our school', it was the place where boys slept and lived together, and where they learned to defend themselves and to obey authority. It was in a sense the preparatory school for the regiment, and the herding of cattle was the basis of the curriculum. Once a boy went to sleep in a dormitory he never left it until he married, unless he was seriously ill. In the days of warfare, he learned in the dormitory and out herding the cattle, a knowledge of the bush and its wild life and of his fellows, and 182 575 342

524 of the riddle. An unexpected reply or a good guess often drew applause, even if it was not the accepted correct answer.

535 Before it was dark, all the herd-boys joined in what they called 'drill' on the flat space where they milked the cows
857 in front of the kraal gate. As a rule this 'drill' was practising for the *ngoma* dance which took place after harvest and was the only dance for boys and girls approved by the Ngoni rulers. Sometimes they varied this dance, practising with swift follow-my-leader manœuvres, turning, twisting, lifting sticks, knocking knobkerries together, stamping, whistling.
[534] As we have said already, the Ngoni had no drums, and all the precision and rhythm in any dances or concerted movements depended on exact timing and following the leader. The accuracy and precision reached was remarkable, and represented a high degree of intense concentration and co-operation among the dancers or 'drillers', who developed an almost intuitive knowledge of what the leader was going to do next. This dancing was practised in front of the men and older youths on purpose. They criticized it freely, and sometimes, though rarely, praised the boys. More often they came forward to show them how to do it better.

For the greater part of the day the herd-boys were with
233 the cattle. They rose before it was light, undid the kraal gate,
857 and as dawn broke led the cattle to the river. Then they went to the grazing grounds which according to the season were near or far from the village. As the dry season advanced and the grass became poorer, they had to go farther afield to find grazing. They returned to the village about ten o'clock
[234] and milked the cows and took the milk in gourds to the senior women, keeping some as their own perquisite. The cattle were driven under some trees to rest during the heat of the day, and taken to the grazing ground again about two and brought back about five, watered and put in the kraal and the gate was closed. Variations in this time-table depended on the seasons, the quality of the pasture, and on whether the herd-boys went to school or not.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

476 having finished their task, and going off to wash in the river
342 with more whistling and singing.

Specialized crafts

463 Ngoni elders said that in old days there were no specialists in the villages, except the iron workers who were mostly captured people, and that all men knew how to work in leather, wood, and fibres. By the time schools had been established
[177] and a variety of careers lay open to boys, it was rare to find ex-schoolboys taking up village crafts with a view to making a cash income from them. A few did, however, and their choice of a craft was attributed either to wishing to work with a relative, or to an inborn skill and liking for the craft.
281 Tanning skins was one such craft, scraping them, rubbing in ashes and stretching them on frames. Cutting shields from
[411] skins and interlacing the front with different coloured skins was considered a highly skilled job. Making wooden spoons,
322 wooden meat dishes, headrests for pillows, hafts for spears and knives, and sheaths for knives, was carried on in most
[413] Ngoni villages by two or three specialists using small sharp axes. They were assisted by a youth or two who liked the work, showed some aptitude for it and enjoyed sitting by the kraal gate, intent on their job, but missing nothing of what
285 was going on. In remote villages many men made mats and baskets for household use and for sale and paid their taxes from such sales. Every man knew how to make bark rope
283 for binding loads, fastening the grass on roofs, tying up beasts.

● 534 Musical instruments were another specialized craft, inseparable from being a musician and knowing how to perform on them. Small hand pianos of strips of metal on a wooden base, single stringed and several stringed lyres strung over a hollow gourd—these were solo instruments to accompany songs. A boy might all of a sudden decide to make such an instrument and learn how to play it by assiduous practice.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 Place your hand upon her shoulder in the dance.
533 Place your hand up her shoulder whom you love.
This season there is no bow (*i.e.* war).

Oh, oh, oh.
I have come to the wedding.
The porridge they have cooked with the finger.
(It is so badly made.)

Oh belt, belt, belt,
Belt, belt,
Why should I not borrow the belt,
When the dance has sounded?

XXIX

THE CHITOTO DANCE

535 They dance it at a mourning, and even just for
[534] fun. They do not have drums, but fasten rattles on
their legs.

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539 One perhaps has taken the other,
533 Summoned him for love of him,
And to-day we mourn, love;
Yes, father,
And the cock crows.

Should your neighbour's son not have a wife,
Look after his belly,
His belly,
His belly, wo, ha, ho!
I have sung.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XV

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291
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5. Girls dancing *Citelele* in competition with another village. The girl in the centre has a whistle in her mouth

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[535 / 177] 6. Young man drumming for a *Jimi Roja* dance at an installation ceremony. This dance, named after an American band leader, is allowed only on important occasions

NGONI

[Facing P. 224]

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
[301] beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
[824] cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkholosa grass. These marks
[302] are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
[531] is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nsenga
[619] tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks. When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimental dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys
524 of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long, terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction, made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes, with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys consists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

888 Yet the position of the old women of the village was a highly
[622] honoured one. The mother of the headman was almost more powerful than her son. And we always take good care when we enter a new village to win the kindly favour of the old grandmother first of all. Then we are sure we have found a way to the son's heart. One of the most beautiful things in our tribal life is the honour which is paid to the grey hairs of the village. The bent and helpless old men who lived through the glorious fighting
[623] days, and understand all precedent and etiquette are the judges and councillors. And no case can be tried, no decision can be made, until the old men give their presence and their opinion. It is hard when the young are leaping ahead of their fathers through education to maintain this veneration for the elders. Yet it is the very backbone of the tribe. There is nothing more contemptible than an African or an Asiastic with a veneer of education who affects to despise the elders of the village. But I know no more pathetic sight than our afternoon schools where grey-haired men and women may be seen peering through faded eyes trying also to learn to read and keep abreast of the young and alert life, while the sun goes down in their eventide.

233 The Ngoni were first of all a fighting people, and then a
[181] pastoral. Their land affords splendid pasture for cattle. And they take great pride in their herds. Round the cattle kraal centre all their ambitions, and highest delights, and best intelligence. They sit and watch the cattle going out in the early morning and coming in in the evening, and know every spot and colour of their beautiful animals. The quietest and most peaceful sight I know is when the sun goes down, and the fierce heat has
[534] given place to the welcome cool of the evening. Then you will hear the music of reed pipes, and looking up you see a long line
[512] of sleek, solemn cows, with large silken dew laps, and fat humps, slowly coming up the village path lowing for their calves, while boys ride on their backs sitting or standing upright, balancing themselves carefully and blowing on their pipes. Before and behind them runs a troop of goats and sheep bleating with such a human cry. In a moment the village is alive—sheep and goats are chased back and forward till they find the huts where they sleep with their masters. And boys run out with wooden pails
[234] into which they milk what the calves have not sucked from their mothers.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all
178 the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment
535 of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well pre-
301 served by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or
126 Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom
192 were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used
197 in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to
[194] make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their spears and gathered together; they went to the kraal and began to dance the *ligubo* war dance. Sometimes they set themselves in order as though they were out on a raid; they came out at the right middle of the kraal and went *pa lisango*, toward the gate, singing, marching, and shaking their shields and spears. Sometimes they retreated as though running from the enemy, then turned about as though running to meet the enemy again. This was done to show how they could fight and defend themselves from the enemy. It showed that the boys were now young men and of the warrior class, and they were asking to be admitted to the status of grown men. If the old men agreed that their prayer should be granted they were formed into a new regiment (*libandla*) and were given a senior to lead and govern them.

539 702 [884]

The Army

All the war companies were under the Paramount. He had the power to call the whole army to go out against enemies. But all big villages and villages of men of reputation had their own companies, like Zulu Gama, Njerenjere Sibande and many others. These companies were under the war *induna* of the Paramount and when they were called they came quickly to the village of the Paramount which was the central meeting place. A *libandla* (company) was divided into *mabuto* (sections) sometimes of 100 or more. For each section there was an *induna* who led it in war, judged all disputes, and spoke for it to the war *induna*. The war *induna* was the eye of the Paramount in all that pertained to war.

539 704 [643]

The army was divided into companies corresponding to the districts or chiefs' villages and all the company leaders were under the war *induna*. All the parts of the army were divided in lesser parts in accordance with the generation of the young men, *amajaha*, and the older men, *amadoda*.

Mobilization

If desired the Paramount had power to send a summons through the whole country that his army should mobilize in his village in order that he might see it. The lesser chiefs had the same power for their districts. The man who delivered the summons went into the kraal and shouted that the Paramount wished the army to gather at the central meeting place. The message was spread everywhere. Then all the sections in the villages and in the districts of the lesser chiefs and clan heads hastened to come at the appointed time. The Paramount prepared cattle to be killed for the army. As the sections were marching in they sang the songs called *imihubo*. Section by section they chose their *muhubo* for arriving and entering the kraal and each section drew up by itself. An open space was left between the sections so that they might be known.

539 726

When they had all gathered in their places the herald rose and shouted '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayigube*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, let them dance.' This was to tell the sections to begin the war-dance. Each section got up with one heart and made a wide circle and began to dance. One of them began a song which he remembered on the spur of the moment from the *ligubo* and led off, the whole section took it up waving their shields and thrusting with their spears now right now left according to their step and each foot stamping the ground.

[535]

539 726 714 301

At the dance the warriors wore their full war-dress. Those who had the head-ring wore a little bunch of black feathers sewn together and attached to a skin and looking like a lion's mane, which came out from under the head-ring on the neck, and they tied a strip of other skin over their eyes. Those who had not the head-ring had their heads completely covered and at the side of their face they put rosettes of feather ends so that the head-dress should not hide their sight. The head-dress was of birds' black feathers, especially ravens; they took out the quills so that they were soft and they sewed them together on cowhide, the man's head resting on the skin. On the body and arms they wore a white skin of goat-hair, or a white belt with long hair, and twisted straps of skin reaching to the knee at the loins. The belts were made from the skins of white goats which had long hair and they stitched them. Round the loins they had whole skins of kids both front and back. Some tied *isinkondo*, hides made to look like a tail, at the back. In their ears they had *isicazo*, earrings of ivory, or sometimes of bone or wood. Truly they looked as terrifying as wild beasts when they stood up. So they ornamented themselves. The oldest of the men stuck a tail feather of a crane in the skin strip above the eyes.

539 726 535

When the dance had begun the women rose to help the men. The Paramount's wives and wives of the men of standing wore the claws of lion and leopard on the top of their hair combed up on the crown and round the neck along with other beads. Ordinary women also wore beads on their heads and necks. All looked very well. Both men and women sang the dance songs and danced. The men spread out in a circle round the edge of the space; the women faced the men at a distance or perhaps they put them in the middle of the ring. All sang, the women commencing, the men joining in or responding. The women had little sticks or reeds in their hands shooting high up. Others came forward and went into the middle of the circle or half circle, and went singing and dancing and shaking their sticks and thrusting out their necks.

539 726

When the dance was over the herald told the army to scatter to their villages until the provisions and snuff had been prepared, and on such and such a day they were to gather again in the Paramount's village. On the day of the gathering of the army they brought their dress and food, the sections dressing as they were in the kraal. The herald called again, '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, usi, Ayihete*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, fall in.' Then all the sections stood up, each by itself but now joined together in close order, shields and spears raised above them. Then the chief *induna* or someone else who had been chosen told them the enemy stockade which it was proposed to attack, and the plan of campaign. When the sections had heard, they began to march out of the kraal one by one.

The whole day the sections had been kept in the kraal, no one was allowed to go to a house and say good-bye. Those outside were not allowed to greet the warriors inside. Children were kept out of the way, lest they should greet their fathers as they went out to war. If a man was greeted as he went out to war, the fear was that he would not come back but would die there.

When the army went out in the evening near sunset it slept near the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 797 He was present with me in November 1936 at a big *ligubo* dance in the royal village of Maganga. It took place on the open space in front of the court-house. The Provincial Commissioner brought a party of Europeans to see it, and some members of a South African mission a few miles away were persuaded to come. Some of the missionaries before coming had been afraid that the dances and songs would be obscene, but when they saw the translations of the Ngoni songs which with Cibambo's help I had prepared, and watched the rhythm and dignity of the dances they were so favourably impressed that they asked the Paramount to send senior men to teach the songs and dances to the boys in the mission school.

535 At this *ligubo* dance contingents came from all over the central kingdom. The men came in groups based on the head villages of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, with young carriers bringing their war-dress fastened up in rolls of mats. They put on this war-dress in the neighbouring village of Lizulu, the *gogo* village from which Magonga had 'gone out', using the compounds of the huts belonging to the houses of the senior women for their robing. They climbed the steep path up to Maganga in companies, and near the Paramount's house they advanced in close formation with their shields held over their heads, while an official 'praiser' called out the *izibongo*, the praise names of the Paramount and his ancestors. On the open space in front of the court-house, the different detachments came together and formed a crescent facing the Paramount and his guests. The dance was chiefly a rhythmic stamping of the feet, with from time to time a slow movement of a few steps to the right and then to the left. A number of women of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, including the Paramount's wife, danced in front of the warriors, facing them, carrying small sticks and small shields, and co-ordinating their steps with a rhythmic jerking of the right arm and neck, described by Cibambo as the women's dance in his account of warfare in old days. Every now and then one of the men leaped out in front, jumping high in the air, brandishing his spear and shield, and singing his own war song, the *ligiya*, the dance of the individual warrior. At intervals one of the official praisers came forward and sang the praise-songs of the Maseko line of Paramounts.

535 764 The *ligubo*, as a war-dance, could only be danced at the Paramount's village, or at the funeral of the Paramount or of his older sister by the same mother. In 1937 the older sister of the former Paramount Cikusi died, and the *ligubo* was danced during the mourning ceremonies which took place in the village of Mcakhatha.

During these funeral ceremonies the *ligubo* was danced continually from the moment when the corpse was wrapped in skins after death, until it was lowered into the grave three days later. *Ligubo*, the individual *ligiya*, and the songs of the army going out to war, went on all day and much of the night, and broke out with renewed vigour every time a

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

fresh detachment came into the village from another part of the country. The corpse was finally carried in a cow-skin from the hut to the grave between a double line of warriors singing *ligubo* songs and thundering with their shields knocking against their knees.

The only relics, therefore, of the military tradition which could be observed in the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's were related either to the national gatherings at the Paramount's village, or to the mourning ritual for the royal line. The knowledge of the songs and the war-dresses was preserved by the senior leading men and women of the trans-Zambesi clans. The songs which follow were sung, except for the last one, in both Ngoni kingdoms, and not only when *ligubo* dances took place. Some were sung at marriage ceremonies, and some formerly as *umsindo* songs at the pre-marriage rite for girls. In northern Ngoniland the last two songs were sung in the churches, and tunes of other well-known war songs were used in the churches of the Scottish mission with different words written for them. Most of the songs when translated sound very brief. They were less brief when sung in the Ngoni language since there was repetition of certain lines, with repeated refrains, and with a series of 'sounds' such as *inyo ho, zi, ye ye* which accompanied the stamping of feet and the clash of shields. These untranslatable 'sounds' were sometimes the only part of the song which was known by the younger men who had never used the Ngoni language, and they chanted them in the right places as a chorus.

The first four songs were all intended to encourage the warriors at the time of mobilization before going out on a campaign. They reminded the singers that in the use of the short stabbing spear the Ngoni armies were stronger than their enemies; that they brought their fighting skill from the south-east; that, though the fight might be long, rest would come in the evening; and that the army belonged to the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The fifth song suggested the kind of warning given to warriors by the old men—that they should not give in after a fight, but pursue the enemy and capture their cattle. The sixth song, though the reference to Longiyeka was obscure, was said to be a warning against treachery and revolt in the army. The seventh song had three themes: that death was the lot of every man, and the earth where the grave would be dug was never satisfied (*ukunona* means 'to be satisfied'); that no one would escape the universal fate of death, from the senior men wearing the head-plumes to the common people and the cattle; and that the ancestors already buried in the land would be joined by those then alive. The terms used in this song to describe the social groups among the Ngoni people were those which will occur throughout this book.

1. No Paramount can be poor because of the spear.
   Then why are you running away?

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 789 766 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

241 796 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *umsindo*, *ligubo*, *incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said [643 424] '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins everyone sings the songs of *incwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the [178] Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Intokoni* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for [824 224] a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ye'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala seigwabuliwe*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, [535] wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

Many of the *umsindo* songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambesi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance *ngoma* in a neighbouring village.

In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the *ngoma* dance played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of an *ngoma* 'competition' the team was made up of lads and girls of about fourteen to eighteen years old. They went off to another village, having announced their arrival previously, and challenged the 'home team' to dance *ngoma*. The dancing was in the kraal with the adults looking on and acting as judges. It was all very decorous and orderly and the competing teams were in dead earnest. As we have noticed already, the Ngoni danced without drums. The steady beat of the feet of the young men made the rhythm for the dance, but the co-ordination in the long lines of boys in front and girls behind needed assiduous practice to produce harmonious results. In both northern and central Ngoniland the Paramounts had forbidden all dances except Ngoni dances, and in the north the *ngoma* was encouraged by the chiefs because it was considered a 'good dance' for young people. 857 535

After marriage, the young women were absorbed in the care of their huts and young children and only appeared as an age set when they took part in a communal hoeing; on such occasions they were inclined to keep apart from the older women, sometimes on the grounds that they did not drink the full-strength beer, and therefore clustered round a pot of 'sweet' beer when they knocked off work. In most Ngoni villages the young men after marriage went off to find work and, as a group of friends within an age set, they would get together to talk things over, make their preparations and travel to the south. 462 [476 561 273]

In day-to-day village affairs, as well as on ceremonial occasions, the age sets of the *manina* and *madoda* were very much in evidence. The *madoda* met at meal-times by the gate of the kraal, and they went there to count the cattle when they came back in the evening. The same group could be seen either at the kraal gate or on a verandah talking about village affairs or drinking together, or at a court listening to cases. The *manina* usually gathered in the verandah of the *indlunkulu* to talk over women's affairs or to receive guests. As an age set they met less frequently than the men because the larger part of their tasks lay in their own huts or in the group of women associated with a house. On all occasions when the formal reception of strangers took place, or when ritual feasting or shaving or washing occurred, or when important decisions had to be made, the *manina* and the *madoda* in their separate sets were in evidence. 561

Although the age sets in village life were social units carrying definite responsibilities and performing recognized activities, their chief importance in Ngoni social life was in regulating behavioural patterns and prescribing mutual relationships. Here we have to take note of a selective principle at work among the *manina* and *madoda*. Although in one sense all women and men of forty to forty-five and upwards belonged to these age sets, the individuals who carried out the characteristic activities of these groups did not include all the men and women of that age. The very old people did not continue to exercise any influence in village 561 888

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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12. Chiefs' wives wearing leopard claws

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13. Chiefs' wives leading in the dance

[facing page 65]

In the dry season which was the dancing season children from three and four years upwards spent hours watching the 535 older boys and girls dancing. On the edge of the main group 468 small boys particularly would with intense solemnity and exaggerated movements practise steps and postures, singing meanwhile. The Ngoni used no drums and no musical instruments in their dancing, and despised the users of drums. [534] All their rhythm and synchrony was achieved by perfect unison of action and voice. The little boys practising solo on the edge of a dance-group listened intently every now and then to get the rhythm correctly, shifted their feet and stamped with the rest.

The little girls were collected together by older girls now 524 and then, and sometimes joined by the boys, to play games 533 of catch and various miming games such as choosing a lover, 857 hen and chickens, slave-raiding, baboons in the maize gardens. These were accompanied by songs in which the leader, or 'owner', of the game sang the story and the rest joined in the refrains. Many of these miming games called for alertness and co-operation, and the slow and solitary were soon shown up and laughed at. Another set of songs with refrains were ballads or stories without action, and these were listened to by the hour by the younger children towards the end of the day, especially if the singer of the ballad was a lively narrator.

Girl children of this age-group spent a lot of their time 868 watching adults and older girls doing their household work. In time they learned to imitate the actions of pounding and grinding, using a small pole or a stone, of sweeping with a frayed-out stalk, of winnowing or sieving with a little basket, or ladling food with a tiny wooden spoon. When they went to the gardens with their mother, they were given a small branch to carry home on their heads for the fire. Later the little girls had a tiny pot put on their head, perched on a miniature grass carrying-ring and went to the water-hole with their nurse girl to fill it and carry it home without spilling the water.

524 of the riddle. An unexpected reply or a good guess often drew applause, even if it was not the accepted correct answer.

535 Before it was dark, all the herd-boys joined in what they called 'drill' on the flat space where they milked the cows
857 in front of the kraal gate. As a rule this 'drill' was practising for the *ngoma* dance which took place after harvest and was the only dance for boys and girls approved by the Ngoni rulers. Sometimes they varied this dance, practising with swift follow-my-leader manœuvres, turning, twisting, lifting sticks, knocking knobkerries together, stamping, whistling.
[534] As we have said already, the Ngoni had no drums, and all the precision and rhythm in any dances or concerted movements depended on exact timing and following the leader. The accuracy and precision reached was remarkable, and represented a high degree of intense concentration and co-operation among the dancers or 'drillers', who developed an almost intuitive knowledge of what the leader was going to do next. This dancing was practised in front of the men and older youths on purpose. They criticized it freely, and sometimes, though rarely, praised the boys. More often they came forward to show them how to do it better.

For the greater part of the day the herd-boys were with
233 the cattle. They rose before it was light, undid the kraal gate,
857 and as dawn broke led the cattle to the river. Then they went to the grazing grounds which according to the season were near or far from the village. As the dry season advanced and the grass became poorer, they had to go farther afield to find grazing. They returned to the village about ten o'clock
[234] and milked the cows and took the milk in gourds to the senior women, keeping some as their own perquisite. The cattle were driven under some trees to rest during the heat of the day, and taken to the grazing ground again about two and brought back about five, watered and put in the kraal and the gate was closed. Variations in this time-table depended on the seasons, the quality of the pasture, and on whether the herd-boys went to school or not.

872 go herding. School was sometimes regarded as an easy option where you sat still all day and repeated things after the teacher. This was far from being the case in a village like [875] Enkodlweni where the headmaster was well trained and kept the boys on their toes. In such schools the boys themselves were enthusiastic about learning, and regarded going to school as a dignified and worth-while occupation, and not a childish amusement.

Girls' life in the village

858 When the girls had their second teeth and were acknowledged to have reached the new stage in their development, there was no abrupt transition for them, as for their brothers, from the household circle to the dormitory, or from the women's world to the men's world. They continued as part of the women's world; they changed their occupations and their daily routine on the whole very little; and they went on sleeping in the hut of a widowed aunt or grandmother. All that was said however in the earlier part of the chapter about accountability for their behaviour was as true as for the boys.

561 The Ngoni girls of leading families formed a distinct group, called in the age-set terms 'children' until they were about [565] eleven and then 'immature girls' until they reached puberty. There was in Ngoni thought and practice a clear division between immature and mature girls, and we shall see what this involved in girls' life in Chapters VI and VII. The age-set terms used to distinguish between children and immature girls did not imply any real differences in ways of living, manners and occupations. The girls between about seven and fourteen were looked on as belonging to a 'girls' circle', and this girls' circle had certain distinctive features.

561 In the first place the tendency of the girls to draw apart 562 from the boys of their own age, already evident before the ● 535 coming of the second teeth, was now more or less complete 628 with the boys' withdrawal into dormitory life and their preoccupation with herding. Later, about the age of twelve

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grandmother with whom they slept, but the other practice was more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan [611] name of their father continued to live in the compound of their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan. In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to remain as a distinctive group. They were members of their [583] father's house until they married; and when that took place it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd belonging to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the carelessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597] grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisability of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

535 The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called 571 the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group, [578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

865 The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

157 One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect- 538 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell- 555 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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18. Chiefs' wives

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19. Girls dancing *Ngoma*

[facing page 112]

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to establish their hold. The Ngoni elders said the missions did not like it, and alleged that they gave it up for this reason. But they held on to other rituals also not approved by the missions, and it was probably largely due to the fact that there were no longer large herds of cattle to provide lavish feasts. The songs were remembered and sung by the older women when dancing the special dances associated with the ritual, holding in their hands short rods and small rounded shields, and making stiff jerking movements of head and elbows. Such dances as were put on for me were however a relic and not a living tradition. For the Ngoni girl of good family there was no longer any intervening ritual between her private puberty ceremony and the marriage ceremony.

The marriage age of girls, like that of men, was much earlier than formerly, the most usual age being from sixteen upwards. Most of the older women held that this left very little time in which to teach girls all that they were expected to know before being married and leaving their own home and their father's village for good. This was a particular cause of anxiety to the senior women in areas where the young men emigrated soon after marriage, and where the girl had to maintain her own position and reputation among his relatives without his companionship and support.

Young adults in Ngoni society

We have just seen that cultural changes coming from the outside radically altered the traditional pattern of development of Ngoni youths and girls. The net result of these changes was to telescope the period between physical maturity at puberty and full adult status at marriage, to squeeze the former eight to ten years of this intervening period into about two for the girls and four at most for the youths. This shortened period of preparation for full adult life raised a number of problems for the Ngoni elders. They were aware, as was suggested in the beginning of this chapter, that the attainment of physical maturity called for some re-alignment

224 After the hunt the tally of kills was reckoned up, the game was carried home by the young men, and on the return to [262] the villages the meat was cooked and eaten by the men at the kraal gate. This was the occasion for going over all [521] the episodes of the chase, the skill of So-and-so, the fine organizing of the hunt by its 'owner'. No one mentioned the misses, no one's feelings were hurt, and there was a warm feeling of united and contented sharing in a good day's sport.

Lion-hunting was organized differently. Only former warriors and well-known huntsmen were called, and they sometimes took their sons with them as carriers. Guns as well as spears were taken, though the Ngoni liked to say, and it was often true, that they killed lions with spears only. Tracking a lion was dangerous and difficult, and when it was located in a patch of tall grass or reeds, the huntsmen made a circle round it, ready to attack when it broke cover. As in the chase, the one who stabbed the lion first, second and finally was noted. The dead lion was hoisted on poles slung from the shoulders of young men, and carried to the village where the hunt was organized. Here the party was welcomed and given food, the heroes were acclaimed, and the headman and seniors led the way to the village of the clan head, who called his men together to rejoice. When the augmented party reached the chief's or Paramount's village, [535] where all lions had to be taken, a war-dance took place in [555] the kraal, as of warriors returning from a campaign. The killer of the lion came out in front of the rest and danced his individual war-dance; he was hailed as a hero and new epithets were added to his praise names. The whole party [273] was given beer, a beast was killed for a meat feast, and then [574] the party thanked the Paramount in traditional fashion and went home.

It was in lion-hunting that young adults who were taken along felt the spice of danger, the thrill of success, and witnessed the pride of recognition for the successful killer by the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders.

the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders. Part of their excitement was expressed by the youths in whistling, an accomplishment much esteemed by the Ngoni. Herd-boys learned to whistle in one fashion in imitation of birds to lure them to the traps. They whistled in another way to make the cattle move faster to and from the grazing grounds, and in a more provocative way to stir up the bulls to fight. They whistled signals to each other over long distances across the valleys, and they practised whistling at all kinds of times 'to make the tongue more nimble'. By the time they were young men they were skilled whistlers, ready to perform as an accompaniment to the individual dancers celebrating a lion kill, or to the team of youths and girls in the *ngoma* dance.

198 [223] [233] [533]

Other skills

After the wealth to be earned from cattle, the excitement of the chase and the fame acquired by lion-hunts, most other pursuits seemed tame to young Ngoni men, especially those related to cultivation. They got some fun however out of the occasional communal hoeing-parties for clearing new land, or terracing land already cleared. A gang of young men would challenge another to do an appointed task in a given time. The two parties would fall to, hoeing in a line, shouting encouragement to each other and insults to their rivals such as: 'You! You are just women. See how you hoe with your arms bent'—with bursts of whistling and singing to keep up the tempo of work.

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The same gang spirit, calling for swift co-ordination and good humour, showed in the role played by young men when a hut was being built. Their part was to dig a wide shallow pit, break up the clods of earth, and pour in water carried to them by the women. Then they trampled the mud until it was mixed ready for the women to plaster on the walls. As they trampled they sang and whistled and stamped with the high knee-bending movement of the *ngoma* dance, emerging finally red-brown from toe to thigh, laughing at

476 342 [461] [535]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

264 might be a chore but when it was done in the open it was also an advertisement of high standards.

The art of speech

191 The Ngoni believed that as boys and girls neared adult life they should be well drilled in the art of speaking, because it
195 was regarded as a basic Ngoni characteristic. We have seen how adults watched children tossing riddles at each other to test, among other things, their quickness of speech. Girls had been watched telling stories to see how they held their audience and showed a sense of dramatic values in recitation.

In all the standardized forms of speech such as greetings, messages, announcements, responses, young adults were expected to speak clearly and correctly, without mumbling but not too loudly. When relating an event, such as a visit, a bull-fight, or when giving evidence in the courts, they had to give an orderly account without repetition. Otherwise they were told: 'You are speaking badly. Tell it again, in order, from the beginning.' An ordered sequence of the narrative was always demanded, and, as we shall see in the next chapter, they used proverbs frequently to impress on people speaking the need to get to the point, while leaving out nothing of importance.

The art of words used with music in songs was regarded as
533 a special gift and those who possessed it were encouraged to develop it. Inspiration for words and music was as we have seen something which came 'from the chest' and was regarded almost as if it was a special kind of breathing. Some used this gift to sing with a solo instrument such as a stringed lyre. Others used it to compose new songs for *agoma* dances.
[177] Others again wrote Christian hymns and composed music for them, or set them to traditional Ngoni tunes.

The art of dancing

535 'Ngoni people think that their dances show their personality,
[828] their manhood, that which was born in them.' Phrases like

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

this were used by Ngoni elders to try to express their feelings about their own dances, and were often said to me when we were watching youths and girls practising the *ngoma* dance, the only one allowed in the Ngoni kingdoms for Ngoni young people. On moonlight nights or in the late afternoons, young men and girls took very seriously the perfection of this art of dancing, through practising over and over again a special movement, or a section of the dance. As we have seen, they danced without drums, and all movements and changes of movement were made by a change of voice in the singing, prompted by a sudden impulse in the leader. 535

The competitive *ngoma* dances took place after harvest in the dry season, and were heralded by one village sending a message to another: 'The *ngoma* of the village of X will come to dance on such and such a day.' As many as fifty girls and sixty or more young men formed a village 'team', and in some dances which I saw they walked eight to ten miles to the other village, and then danced all day. Both teams wore their best clothes, with bead ornaments and headbands, coloured scarves and headcloths. The young men in the dance carried small shields and knobkerries or small axes. The girls had long rods or spears held upside down. 535 628

The visiting team danced first, and the adults of the home village were the audience and the judges, deciding, after both teams had performed, which one had 'danced most strongly'. The singing was kept up continuously, the song changing to mark a change of dance step, or a change in the relative positions of the girls' and boys' lines. The points of excellence, as judged by the spectators, were the perfect timing of girls and youths together, and the strong beating of the youths' feet on the dry dung floor of the kraal. When the verdict was announced, the leader of the defeated team went up to the leader of the victorious team and shook hands in Ngoni fashion, saying: 'Yes, we are defeated. Your *ngoma* was stronger.'

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European. 595 648 582

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules. 799 582

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls. 621 582 [554] 628 589 535

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide 628 589 574

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

If a women believes that her husband is committing adultery with
837 another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She
578 usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

864 The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged
[897] five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages.
[533] Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they
[535] also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a
881 girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a
864 month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

864 There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only
[531] specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

842 Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use
830 of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl
[864] learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13]
881 The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour
593 of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her
[535] erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mlololo*, a root, and *kajelejele*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cikapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kapakapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVI

THE KANONOMERA DANCE

If a person is ill, they go and consult the lots, 753
and then he of the lots says, "It is the spirit of his 791
grandmother, it is wanting a dance; when you dance 755
that dance, you can take it from us the child is 782
sitting up." And they go to the village and take a basket of grain, and with it they address the spirit, saying, "There is the grain for which you are killing a person; when we have made beer, let us see the person (who is ill) sitting up." And then they assemble every one, and the day the beer is strained, they all come together, and that evening they enter the hut (where the sick person is), and begin to clap their hands to rouse the spirit, and then they see the sick one is trembling and crying out, and then the people say (to the spirit), "You must not come with war, it is we who have called you; see here at the village the drums have come, but let them depart again without anything happening to mar the dance." And when they have finished
clapping their hands the dance comes forth, and the 535
drums begin to sound, and they are dancing. He 755
who remembers a song sings it; when one is pos- 782
sessed by a spirit, down he falls, and they drag him 787
out of the dance, and deck him with calico and skins of animals, and he again enters the circle and dances. When a person is possessed by a child's spirit, they bind his calico tightly round him that it be strong, because that person is wishing to strip it off, and dance naked, as a child does not wear anything. Should a woman be seized by a man's spirit, saying, "I am so and so," they deck her with a

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 755 782 787 feather head-dress, and in her hand she holds a little stick (for a spear), and her calico is tied round her waist, and her breasts swing free. The songs they sing at the Kanonomera dance go thus—

533 755 539 What knocks off the dew,
Comes at the early dawn.—(*Repeat.*)

Looking, gazing, we just gaze one at the other.
(*Repeat.*)

When the drum sounds it is the *choinjoli* drum
that brings the spirit.—(*Repeat.*)

Far away there, far away,
Far away there, far away,
Far away where shines white that little cloud,
Far away there, is my bow.

Little quail, little quail, you are picking up the
little grains.
And what if he is,
Are they not his eyes?
It broke his leg for him;
Only hunger, only hunger.

Oh no, indeed, indeed,
Two wives have been too many for him indeed;
Two wives have been too many for him indeed.

You hate me,
You hate me for my being so old.—(*Repeat.*)

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVIII

THE KANDENGA DANCE

In dancing this dance the women stand in line on one side, the men in a line on another, the drums are where the men are; then a woman goes and takes the knobkerry from a man, and the man goes back with her to where the women are, and again they return and stand close together. The man places one hand on the woman's shoulder, and they dance thus, and when they have done dancing the woman turns round and hands the man his knobkerry. The Kandenga is danced at a funeral, but also just for fun when the moon is shining.

A white-haired man is malt;
On his coming, let him make beer;
  Yes, father.
On his coming he shall make beer.

Towards the river to *Likongwe*
A cloud shines white like some little bird, maybe,
But it's those Angoni; they always said
  "That's a rich little spot where the *Nsugudzi* flows."

I am an unmarried maiden, and one of Njolo's men
  will be my lord,
  De, de.
The youths from here think too much of themselves.
Did not one say, I was his,
  De, de.
The youths of here are too conceited.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 Place your hand upon her shoulder in the dance.
533 Place your hand up her shoulder whom you love.
This season there is no bow (*i.e.* war).

Oh, oh, oh.
I have come to the wedding.
The porridge they have cooked with the finger.
(It is so badly made.)

Oh belt, belt, belt,
Belt, belt,
Why should I not borrow the belt,
When the dance has sounded?

XXIX

THE CHITOTO DANCE

535 THEY dance it at a mourning, and even just for
[534] fun. They do not have drums, but fasten rattles on their legs.

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539 One perhaps has taken the other,
533 Summoned him for love of him,
And to-day we mourn, love;
Yes, father,
And the cock crows.

Should your neighbour's son not have a wife,
Look after his belly,
His belly,
His belly, wo, ha, ho!
I have sung.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Should you have no child by your neighbour's 539
daughter, 533
Give her your friend, and he shall wed her;
As for you, you be happy with the beer pot,
With the beer pot, wo, ha, ho!
You be content with the beer pot.

XXX

THE KUNJU DANCE

MEN do not dance it, but only women, with the [535] men looking on.

You, Nzinyai, you, Nzinyai;
Nzinyai, she refuses hospitality to the strangers,
You, Nzinyai.
The porridge which I have not seen;
Nzinyai, return whence you came.

The man who is in my hut begins to refuse his food; when I only dish him out two helpings of porridge, he looks aside;
When I dish him out three (he says), "Give me the water (to wash his hands). I shall give the child his."
But that child he is wise,
"Eat up your porridge," says he; "was it not you who scolded at me?"
Now, what do you think of that? My child he knows how to conduct a quarrel.
A quarrel they settle at the village court.

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

call rural districts. By virtue of their membership of rural districts 628
and counties, villages have certain formal relationships with each [631]
other which we may regard as mainly political, and which we have discussed in connexion with the organization of the state. But there are other inter-village activities that are not related directly to the tribal political structure. These include hunting, dancing, drinking, trading, and some co-operative economic activities.

Hunting takes place for the most part in the dry season, but hunts 224
may be organized at any time to deal with predatory animals which 628
are causing damage to crops and livestock. Only men and boys hunt. [462]
Any man who chooses can organize a hunt, but it is usually a man of middle age with some experience and of some standing in his village who sends out word to the neighbouring villages that he proposes to hunt in such-and-such an area on such-and-such a day. The organizer is referred to as the owner of the hunt, and he is in tactical command. He nominates two men to be in charge of the two wings of the hunt, and himself stays in the middle of the single line abreast in which the hunters arrange themselves. Instructions are shouted from the centre and passed out to the wings. Any animals seen are attacked with knobkerries, spears, dogs, and, if there are any, guns. The owner of the hunt has no special privileges over the animals killed, which are divided between the men who actually kill them and the people who carry them back from the hunt to the village. Attendance at such hunts is not enforced, and if the chase is unsuccessful, people tend to drop out half-way. In the main, people distribute themselves along the line of the hunt in village groups, and the leaders of the wings usually bring with them a large band of hunters from their own villages. There are usually about sixty people on a hunt, coming from perhaps ten different villages.

Dancing is an activity that brings people together from many 535 ●
villages. Although girls, and sometimes boys, hold dances in their own 628
villages in the evenings, these dances are thought of as practices rather than as proper dances. The latter take place in connexion with ceremonies of various kinds, and indeed wherever there is beer to [273]
drink there is the probability of some sort of dancing. Dances are also held for their own sake, without reference to other forms of social activity. Of these, two are important in promoting inter-village ties. The first, *ngoma*,[1] the most formal of all dances, was danced by regiments in the days when the regimental system was still operative, but

[1] Cf. the Zulu dance *ingoma*, and Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 52.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

535 628 is now danced by villages. The important men in one village suggest to another village that this dance should be held in the latter village. If this is agreed, beer is brewed in the second village and on the prearranged day many people from the first village come in procession from their village to the dance. The visiting dancers enter the cattle byre and start to dance. They are joined by people from the home village. The dancers are arranged in two lines, men on one side and women on the other, and the dance consists of a series of virtuoso performances by two or three men and women at a time in the space between the two lines, to the accompaniment of clapping and antiphonal singing. [533] The dance is followed by drinking and more dancing. Later in the year, or in the next year, the host village goes to the home of the visitors, and the performance is repeated.

535 628 883 Of more frequent occurrence are dances involving girls only. These are usually held on Sunday afternoons, and as at the *ngoma* dances, at least two villages are involved. Here the initiative is taken not by the important men but by the senior unmarried girl in the village. She invites a girl of similar status in another village with whom she is acquainted, or whom she has seen dancing, to bring a team of girls to dance in her village. This kind of dance is competitive in that the visitors are opposed by a similar team of girls from the home village, who dance separately from the visitors until, at the end of the session, the two teams combine. That team which has danced best is held to be the winner, although there is always great doubt as to which team this is. The girl who invited the visitors is responsible for seeing that the visiting team is fed, although beer is not provided. No work is done in the gardens on Sundays, so that these dances always attract a large number of onlookers. As with *ngoma*, a return match is danced at some later date. The pairs of villages that are linked in these dance exchanges are not always those that contain many people related to one another. One girl may ask an acquaintance in another village to find a team; in one case the girl who made the invitation did not know the name of the girl she was inviting.

Beer-drinking

273 Beer, water, and tea are the three main drinks of the Ngoni. The ordinary rules of hospitality govern the drinking of water, which is provided for the traveller whenever he asks for some. Tea is sold in the roadside stores known as hotels. Beer is more important socially

[271] [574] [272]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XV

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291
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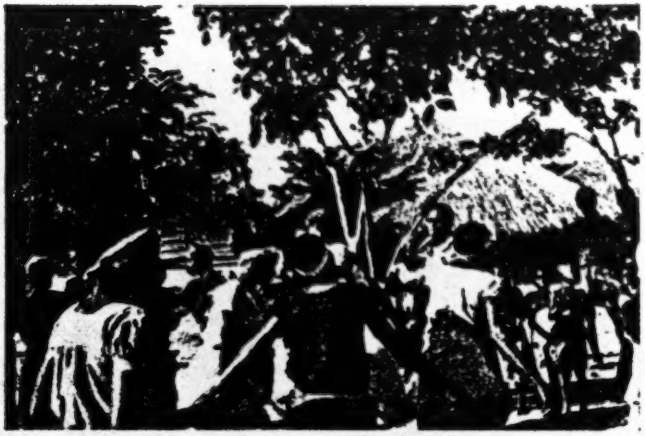

5. Girls dancing *Citelele* in competition with another village. The girl in the centre has a whistle in her mouth

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6. Young man drumming for a *Jimi Roja* dance at an installation ceremony. This dance, named after an American band leader, is allowed only on important occasions

NGONI

[Facing P. 224]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

797 Central Africa. The U.M.C.A. subsequently concentrated its activi-
795 ties in another part of the District, so that the two main denominations are now the Dutch Reformed Church and the Catholic Church. There was for a time a branch of the Livingstonia Mission (Free Church of Scotland) in the area, while more recently a Seventh Day Adventist Mission has begun work. Since 1924 there have been some adherents to the Watch Tower[1] amongst the Ngoni, but this movement did not become important until some years later.

797 Primary education is carried on in mission schools subsidized by
872 the Administration, but there is also a Native Authority school over which the chiefs exercise some influence and which is to some extent supported by Native Treasury funds. The teachers in the elementary
[875] schools live in the villages, but they do not exercise very much influence outside their classrooms. This does not appear to have been the case in the past, when there was greater hostility between the different missions and when the missions tended to disregard the tribal authorities. The teachers then seem to have set themselves up as headmen on their own, and schools were built without the permission of the local headmen. In many cases where the issue between the missions was undecided, there were two schools in the same village. In the middle 'thirties many of these so-called schools were closed on the initiative of the Administration and the teachers who remain are now more interested in education than in politics.

872 A village school serves more than one village, so that the children of a neighbourhood containing, say, half a dozen villages get to know each other and visit in each other's villages. Certain dances and songs,
[535] known as *konsert*, are performed by parties of schoolchildren going from
[533] one village to another, and this leads to similar inter-village dancing in the evenings organized by groups of boys. At the end of term a number of schools of the same denomination combine to perform a rather more elaborate programme of songs and dances, and these displays are attended by many adults.

797 The deacons and evangelists are of greater importance in the
794 political life of the tribe than are the school teachers. Deacons take a certain initiative in settling disputes in the village, and they report to their missions deaths and serious sins that affect their people. They arrange for religious instruction for catechumens and may on occasion organize opposition to some practice that has been declared wrong by
797 the mission. Evangelists are responsible for a number of villages and

[1] The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
[301] beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
[324] cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkholosa grass. These marks
[302] are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period
of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both
men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
[531] is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent
mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nsenga
[619] tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks.
When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature
shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held
aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and
skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimen-
tal dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen
worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a
single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the
stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

534 Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys
of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out
of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie
stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in
diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long,
terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction,
made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed
along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes,
with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes
scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys con-
sists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 wait for six or seven years before the procrastinating headmen
[645] could lay aside jealousies, and actually place him in the authority of his father. Then when he is crowned he cannot sit in judgment
[692] or give a decision unless his councillors have been summoned, and have deliberated with him. Many a time in the old fierce days the councillors and chief argued and defied one another for weeks at a time over the question as to whether the white man was to be tolerated in the country, and it was the strong affection of old Mombera for Dr. Laws, and Wm. Koyi which alone held in the dogs of war, and prevented his councillors from going forth on an exterminating expedition. Yet in spite of the great power of the chief he lives as father of the people with all the villagers as his children. His house is like their own, built right in the centre of
[567] the village. The poorest slave has access to him, and he hands his beer pot or his snuff to the meanest villager when he would show him friendliness.

[622] Under the paramount chief there are four great sub-chiefs, and
[634] each of them has his councillors and headmen. Then these headmen have each a group of villages under their control. They
[692] hear and dispose of petty quarrels between the villagers. Cases in which headmen are involved go to the sub-chief, and cases in which the sub-chiefs are involved, and all great tribal affairs,
645 go to the paramount chief. The tribal council is an impressive sight. Just before I came here I had the privilege of being present in one of these great gatherings of the tribe. It had met to discuss the advisability of coming under the British Protectorate. The great chief, Chimtunga, had sent out his messengers to call to council all the sub-chiefs and headmen. They marched into the
[634] chief's kraal on the appointed day, each sub-chief followed by his councillors and hundreds of armed warriors, all walking in single file, and dressed in their gaudiest clothes. They sat round the
[643] kraal till thousands were present. By-and-bye the paramount chief walked in, followed by his brothers and council. He was greeted by a roar of salutation, and took his seat. When the case was opened, and the subject introduced, the fathers of the people rose one after the other and saluted the chief, and then addressed the people. The speakers walked up and down, speaking with
[537] considerable incisiveness and eloquence, their language full of metaphors and traditional allusions. Then the chief spoke, closing the discussion. Immediately it was ended and the royal
[635] salutation given, a warrior leapt into the circle with a war cry, fell

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

down at the chief's feet, and with a shout dashed up again and danced a furious war dance. His eyes fixed and staring with passion, every muscle distended, he stabbed into the air with his spear, tossed the dust of the kraal about, and leapt hither and thither in a frenzy of passion. All the while he kept shouting his battle-cry, and the thousands of fighting men around beat their spears and chanted a chorus. When he had exhausted himself, another headman leapt into the circle and went through his own peculiar wild dance, and then another and another, and for half-an-hour or more these fantastic exhibitions were maintained. Then the chief rose. A great roar of salutation greeted him. Gathering his clothes about him he walked in procession from the kraal, and the council broke up.

In the olden days the power of the chiefs was maintained by a wholesome dread of his warriors, and the laws were enforced with a consistent severity. One result of this is that the Ngoni tribe has always had a higher standard of morality than any Central Africa people. Some persons were stealing mission cattle and complaints were made to the chief. After a time a thief was caught, and then in spite of the pleadings of the missionary the highest penalty was meted out to him. He was hanged on a tree opposite the mission house, and it was forbidden to remove his body. The hyenas wore a path round the foot of the tree trying to get at the carcase, and there he hung, a terrible example to the neighbourhood, until the white ants ate the rope by which he hung, and the body fell to the waiting hyenas.

I have seen a chief receive news of the adultery of one of his wives, turn to his executioner, and give him instructions, and in a few minutes both man and woman were lying dead outside the village. I have myself begged for the life of a woman who had sinned, and she was spared only after a great fine in cattle was levied instead.

These were harsh and terrible punishments, necessary for rough times. And now when the chief is loosing some of his old authority, and dare not exercise capital punishment because of the overshadowing British Government, one fears that except where the power of religion has taken the place of the old dread, a weaker morality is apt to sap the vitality of the tribe. The punishments were not arbitrary. They were fixed by precedent. And all the past quarrels for forty or fifty years back would be quoted to prove the right of a plaintiff or defender. And now

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

borne out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful 171
and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the
fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. [648]
The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a
moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to [777]
hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land
they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where
family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived
in an atmosphere that was charged with vice. But when the
Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were
punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited,
many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally
a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. 565
His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fear- 181
lessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your
privacy. I have heard the old men storm in a village because
some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a 576
superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in
whispers. When they address you they always give you your
family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each
sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at
the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a
long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that 574
the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come
out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly.
When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain
silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a
decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say,
"We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the
whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would
rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they
reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous
and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way,
and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interests and amusements. 692
During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in
open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual [537]
speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus
of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance 535
is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 challenge is sent from one group of villages to another. And on the day appointed the strangers arrive walking in procession. The girls and women are dressed in their gaudiest clothes, and their heads and arms are decked with bright coloured beads, and the claws of lions and leopards. The lads carry dancing sticks and miniature shields. The strangers open the dance. The girls standing together and holding reed wands in their hands sing in chorus, while the men arranged in a great semi-circle dance and sing. Their dance is wonderfully energetic and graceful, and is executed with a rythm and unison which is fascinating. You can hear a long way off the hundred feet come down on the earth of the kraal with a thud as of one man. When they have danced for about an hour they give way to their rivals. The home villagers step in and dance for another hour. And so on they go from ten o'clock till about four. There is no mingling of men and women. And the whole exercise is chaste, healthful, and beautiful. It is quite the show piece of our village life.

181 And now a few remarks in conclusion on their religious beliefs. I do not intend to say much on this point as one only can get at the inner meaning of their faith after long and careful investigation,
771 and with a thorough knowledge of their language. Their religion was not formulated. If you ask them about it they can tell you little or nothing. They will deny that they knew anything of God until we came. Their observances were scarcely recognised by themselves, they were the spontaneous and almost unconscious expression of a people groping after the unknown God if haply they might find Him. They recognise a spirit who presides over the universe.

776 They have a name for Him which means the great great one. But the ordinary name is the one which south of the Zambesi is used for all white men, and seems also to imply some feeling of wisdom and greatness. But they seem to have no idea of God's imminence in the world. He is rather the mighty far away Spirit
771 to whom men cannot come. Along with this, homage is made to great mountains and ancient trees, and to the strong elemental forces, as thunder and lightening. But this seems to me to be an
[177] addition which has come through their residence among the Tumbuka.

769 The great pervading article in their religious life is reverence and dread of the ancestral spirits. The whole land is full of their presence. And offerings are continually made to them to appease

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

646 Secretariat or the Legislative Council. The agenda consists of
648 items suggested by the African members and by the Administration. The African members of the Council elect four of their number as
[666] their nominees to the African Representative Council of Northern Rhodesia, which in its turn advises the Governor on the appointment of the African members of Legislative Council. As yet, the Provincial Council meetings attract little attention among the bulk of the African population, and few Ngoni know who their members are. Nevertheless among the chiefs and councillors these meetings, if regarded with suspicion, are of some interest, and for the two delegates they provide an opportunity for stressing in public what they regard as the Ngoni point of view as contrasted with those of other tribes. Many of the Ngoni speeches are phrased in anachro-
[537] nistic terms, and represent more an affirmation of how different
[196] the Ngoni are or used to be rather than a realisation of how similar their interests now are to those of their neighbours. However, it is possible as the Council acquires more power and the consequences of its deliberations begin to affect more people directly, Ngoni will take a greater interest in its proceedings.[38] The same comments apply to Ngoni participation on the Provincial Team, an advisory body with representatives from the Administration, the unofficial White community, Indians and Africans.

Ngoniland is almost completely surrounded by Cewa chief-
648 doms. The old no-man's-land which isolated the Ngoni from their neighbours in pre-conquest times has long ago disappeared. On the fringes of Ngoni country there is a great deal of contact between Ngoni villages and their Cewa neighbours and the links of kinship stretch across tribal boundaries without interruption. Within Ngoniland itself, under the control of county chiefs, are some
563 villages which still speak the Cewa language rather than the Nsenga
649 dialect used by most Ngoni. Most of these Cewa-speaking villages
[167] have come into Ngoniland after 1898. Their numbers are indicated in Table VII (p. 133) where it will be seen that on the average about one village in five has entered in this way. The great majority of these are Cewa in origin. Some of them claim that they have returned to ancestral sites, others state that they came as a result of land alienation or of some quarrel with their former chief. Others have been formed by non-Ngoni immigrants who have worked for many years in the township or on the farms and built up their own followings. In Northern Rhodesia villages of this kind form an integral part of Ngoni society. The cultural features which distin-

[38] cf. Barnes, 'History', for a discussion of the way in which Ngoni members act at council meetings.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

fresh detachment came into the village from another part of the country. 535
The corpse was finally carried in a cow-skin from the hut to the grave 764
between a double line of warriors singing *ligubo* songs and thundering with their shields knocking against their knees.

The only relics, therefore, of the military tradition which could be 178
observed in the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's were related either to the national gatherings at the Paramount's village, or to the mourning ritual for the royal line. The knowledge of the songs and the war-dresses was preserved by the senior leading men and women of the trans-Zambesi *clans. The songs which follow were sung, except for the last one, in both* 533
Ngoni kingdoms, and not only when *ligubo* dances took place. Some were sung at marriage ceremonies, and some formerly as *swindo* songs at the pre-marriage rite for girls. In northern Ngoniland the last two songs were sung in the churches, and tunes of other well-known war songs were used in the churches of the Scottish mission with different words written for them. Most of the songs when translated sound very brief. They were less brief when sung in the Ngoni language since there was repetition of certain lines, with repeated refrains, and with a series of 'sounds' such as *inyo ho, si, ye ye* which accompanied the stamping of feet and the clash of shields. These untranslatable 'sounds' were sometimes the only part of the song which was known by the younger men who had never used the Ngoni language, and they chanted them in the right places as a chorus.

The first four songs were all intended to encourage the warriors at the 537
time of mobilization before going out on a campaign. They reminded the singers that in the use of the short stabbing spear the Ngoni armies were stronger than their enemies; that they brought their fighting skill from the south-east; that, though the fight might be long, rest would come in the evening; and that the army belonged to the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The fifth song suggested the kind of warning given to warriors by the old men—that they should not give in after a fight, but pursue the enemy and capture their cattle. The sixth song, though the reference to Longiyoka was obscure, was said to be a warning against treachery and revolt in the army. The seventh song had three themes: that death was the lot of every man, and the earth where the grave would be dug was never satisfied (*ukumma* means 'to be satisfied'); that no one would escape the universal fate of death, from the senior men wearing the head-plumes to the common people and the cattle; and that the ancestors already buried in the land would be joined by those then alive. The terms used in this song to describe the social groups among the Ngoni people were those which will occur throughout this book.

1. No Paramount can be poor because of the spear.
Then why are you running away?

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

537 2. Do you hear?
The Ngoni come from the south-east.

3. What are we contending for?
In this way in the sky
The sun is setting.

4. O alas! the Paramount!
We fight for our Paramount only that.

5. The cattle run away, you cowards.
Those yonder; they run, you cowards.
The cattle, see, do they run? They run, you cowards.
Is your young manhood over? They run.
You are left with the carriers. They run.
Look at the cattle, they run, they run;
You have eyes only for the food-stuffs. They run.

6. They are talking, they are talking
Throughout the land.
Listen, keep silent, be still.
They are talking.
It will be spoken, it will be spoken
Throughout the land.
Longiyeka, you keep silent, you be still.
People are being talked about.

7. The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of those who wear the head-plumes.
We shall die on the earth.
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of those who die as heroes.
Shall we all die on the earth?
Listen, O earth! We shall mourn because of you.
Listen, O earth! Shall we all die on the earth?

The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the chiefs.
Shall we die on the earth?
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the women chiefs.
Shall we die on the earth?
Listen, O earth! We shall mourn because of you.
Listen, O earth! Shall we all die on the earth?

The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of nobles.
Shall we die on the earth?
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the royal women.
Shall we die on the earth?
Listen, O earth! We shall mourn because of you.
Listen, O earth! Shall we all die on the earth?

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 537

The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the common people.
Shall we die on the earth?
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of all beasts.
Shall we die on the earth?
Listen, you who are asleep, who are left tightly closed in the land!
Shall we all sink into the earth?
Listen, O earth! The sun is setting tightly.
We shall all enter into the earth.

CHAPTER II

THE PARAMOUNT

Introduction

M 643 622

THE Cewa term for chief (*mfumu*) was widely used in Nyasaland for chiefs of all ranks, as well as for village headmen and, occasionally, as an honorific form of address to an important individual. Among the Cewa a man could 'become a chief' by acquiring, through marriage or purchase, the right to own a site, known as a *mzinda*, on which female initiation rites were carried out. This concept of the office of chieftainship among the Cewa and other local tribes was in sharp contrast to the centralized and unified concept inherent in the Ngoni term *inkosi*. I have translated *inkosi* here as Paramount because the term Paramount Chief was adopted by the Administration to denote a ruler who had recognized subordinate chiefs under him and whose court was an appeal court for their courts. It is necessary to emphasize here how distinctive the office of Paramount was among the various types of chiefs in Nyasaland, both in official recognition, and still more in the Ngoni ideas about their Paramount. We saw in Chapter II of Part I that no Nyasaland chiefs, except the Ngoni Paramounts, had Subordinate Native Authorities under them.

N M 643

N 571 643

When the Ngoni left the south, a number of small chiefdoms there were gradually being overcome by Shaka and, based on his armies, he had set up a new and unique type of *inkosi*. The leaders of military bands who left him—Mzilikazi, Soshangane, Zwangendaba and Ngwana—had little recognition before they left, except as military and clan leaders. Yet after the Ngoni left, Zwangendaba and Ngwana received from their followers recognition of their political leadership as *inkosi*, and this was expressed by giving to the Paramount the salute of *Bayete*. Throughout their recitals of traditions and in their accounts of their political system, Ngoni informants in both kingdoms emphasized that for each kingdom there was one *inkosi* to whom alone the *Bayete* was given. We assume, therefore, that the later Ngoni concept of the Paramount and his

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. 814
Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on [224]
Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry [172]
grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous secessions from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Ciwere had gone. All the people shouted "Ciwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni 814
succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the 871
schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Cibambo, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred 173
to historical events which were illustrated in songs or record- 537
ed in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, 791
called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni 177
Christian leaders went further than this. They used the 173
797

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 wait for six or seven years before the procrastinating headmen
[695] could lay aside jealousies, and actually place him in the authority of his father. Then when he is crowned he cannot sit in judgment
[692] or give a decision unless his councillors have been summoned, and have deliberated with him. Many a time in the old fierce days the councillors and chief argued and defied one another for weeks at a time over the question as to whether the white man was to be tolerated in the country, and it was the strong affection of old Mombera for Dr. Laws, and Wm. Koyi which alone held in the dogs of war, and prevented his councillors from going forth on an exterminating expedition. Yet in spite of the great power of the chief he lives as father of the people with all the villagers as his children. His house is like their own, built right in the centre of
[567] the village. The poorest slave has access to him, and he hands his beer pot or his snuff to the meanest villager when he would show him friendliness.

[622] Under the paramount chief there are four great sub-chiefs, and
[634] each of them has his councillors and headmen. Then these headmen have each a group of villages under their control. They
[692] hear and dispose of petty quarrels between the villagers. Cases in which headmen are involved go to the sub-chief, and cases in which the sub-chiefs are involved, and all great tribal affairs,
645 go to the paramount chief. The tribal council is an impressive sight. Just before I came here I had the privilege of being present in one of these great gatherings of the tribe. It had met to discuss the advisability of coming under the British Protectorate. The great chief, Chimtunga, had sent out his messengers to call to council all the sub-chiefs and headmen. They marched into the
[634] chief's kraal on the appointed day, each sub-chief followed by his councillors and hundreds of armed warriors, all walking in single file, and dressed in their gaudiest clothes. They sat round the kraal till thousands were present. By-and-bye the paramount
[643] chief walked in, followed by his brothers and council. He was greeted by a roar of salutation, and took his seat. When the case was opened, and the subject introduced, the fathers of the people rose one after the other and saluted the chief, and then addressed the people. The speakers walked up and down, speaking with
[537] considerable incisiveness and eloquence, their language full of metaphors and traditional allusions. Then the chief spoke, closing the discussion. Immediately it was ended and the royal
[635] salutation given, a warrior leapt into the circle with a war cry, fell

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

borne out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful 171
and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the
fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. [648]
The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a [777]
moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to
hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land
they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where
family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived
in an atmosphere that was charged with vice. But when the
Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were
punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited,
many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally
a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. 565
His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fear- 181
lessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your
privacy. I have heard the old men storm in a village because
some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a 576
superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in
whispers. When they address you they always give you your
family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each
sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at
the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a
long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that 574
the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come
out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly.
When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain
silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a
decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say,
"We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the
whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would
rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they
reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous
and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way,
and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interests and amusements. 692
During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in
open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual [537]
speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus
of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance 535
is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

867 Correction of bad behaviour, even if thoughtless or careless, was just as often carried out by older children as by [123] adults. I used to hold a 'children's hour' now and then round the fire in my compound, or a honey party if I had been given some wild honey. These occasions were open to all and were enthusiastically organized by the older children of leading Ngoni families. They pushed the children into some sort of order, whether sitting or standing, or marching round the honey-pot to stick one finger in and lick it as they passed. When we were sitting round the fire there was always due regard for family ranking, the places immediately on my right and left being the places of honour. Children of non-Ngoni families were sharply rebuked if they failed to respond to my greeting or say farewell, and shyness was never admitted as an excuse. Scathing remarks were dealt out to any who did not say the correct formal thanks for the honey. 'You, fellow-villager, you are with the Ngoni now. Say "thank you" to the lady or she will think you are a wild animal from the bush, unable to speak.' Bad behaviour was not only corrected by adults with beating and rebukes. Sometimes the more 867 indirect form of a proverb was used, especially to correct un- 538 kindness, lack of generosity, boasting or bragging. When someone said with biting emphasis: 'Strength breaks the handle,' it was enough to deflate a young (or an old) braggart. When children plagued their elders to give them something, they rounded on the children with: 'Give! Give! that is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.' This was invariably effective with Ngoni children who hung their heads in shame at the very idea of being thought the child of a captive. Proverbs, except ones like those quoted which were very often used, were generally enigmatic, and the meaning was hidden rather than obvious. In a mixed gathering of children and adults, a proverb might suddenly be dropped like a stone into a pond. The conversation rippled away into silence, and the boy or girl who had refused to share some peanuts or had been boasting began to wonder

to himself: 'Can that be for me? No? Yes? It *is* me. I am ashamed.' No one said anything but the shamed one took the first chance of slipping away to avoid further public notice. The use of proverbs in this way were an effective way of making a child learn for himself and apply the lesson; and with children, as with adults, the use of proverbs was a way of 'saving face' when a direct rebuke in the presence of others would have caused overwhelming shame.

Ngoni ideas about nature and nurture

This fixed code of social behaviour between persons was instilled by Ngoni adults into their children from their early years. By the time they had their second teeth, a significant stage to the Ngoni, they were expected to conduct themselves towards other people according to this code. Their behaviour, in public at any rate, should be predictable, if those responsible for the teaching of 'respect' had carried out their task conscientiously. But, as the Ngoni themselves recognized, it was one thing to have a system of training with a desired goal in view. It was another thing to see how each individual child responded to the training, and either conformed to the code or resisted it. The Ngoni thought that the clue to conformity or resistance lay in the individual's character, and they talked a great deal about the character of their children. Such conversations generally arose when adults were watching a group of boys and girls carrying out a socially required or self-appointed task. They might be bringing back the cattle in the evening, practising for the *ngoma* dance, grinding bulrush millet for snacks for the little children, asking each other riddles or telling a story. Some of the tasks called for intelligence, some for physical strength, some for initiative or organizing ability, some for eloquence.

Character, so the Ngoni thought, came from two sources, inborn qualities and acquired qualities. The first they called *mabadidwe*, literally those things which an individual was born with. These included physical resemblances to their

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

mother's household if the mother showed obvious signs of being a 'bad character'. They might take the child away and put her with some relative of acknowledged 'good character', in the hope of offsetting the effects of heredity by careful training. 828 867

In later childhood and especially on the threshold of adulthood, as we shall see in Chapters VI and VII, boys and girls were expected to learn and practise traditional Ngoni skills and to be conversant with traditional Ngoni knowledge. Skills and knowledge, or rather the ability to use them, might be inherited from a parent, but they were generally regarded as acquired qualities. In any case, they needed careful training and direction in order that they might be fully developed. 868 828 827

Ngoni cultural values

After the Scottish Mission had been in North Nyasaland for some time, and the Bible and other Christan literature had been translated into the vernacular, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* became one of the most popular and widely read books in Ngoniland, both by older children and by adults. The reason was that its imagery portrayed so many ideas and situations which the Ngoni recognized as being relevant for them in the new world to which they had to adapt themselves. It became for Ngoni Christians, and for many others too since it was told far more often than it was read, a new kind of folk-tale, and was told as such to children in school and in the villages. The themes of striving towards a goal, and fighting lions and giants on the way, and listening to good advice as well as hearing bad—these and other themes were recognized as in the Ngoni tradition although in such a different setting. 177 538

In the final chapter of this book we shall talk about personality and character among the Ngoni, looking at the ideas of basic personality as set out by Linton and others, and trying to see how training at different stages of childhood had been converging towards the ideal personality of the Ngoni 128

after the age of four or five, when they might become aware 867
that intercourse was taking place. From this age, when the 864
Ngoni said 'they will now begin to see things and to ask questions', they went to sleep either with a widowed grandmother or senior helper.

During the 'dark half of the month' and in the rains, most 512
people went to bed soon after dark and little children got a 857
long sleep. When the moon was bright, and in dry weather, [132]
the whole village was astir, walking around, dancing, talking, visiting. Little children tagged round with their older 513
sisters or nurse girls, and if they were sleepy were either picked up and carried, or put in the hut to sleep on their mat, provided there was no fire burning into which they could fall. During the day, especially in the hot weather, children dropped off to sleep just where they were, on the veranda, under the platform, or in some other shady spot.

It was just before bedtime, in the grandmother's hut, that [538]
traditional folk-tales were told, round the last flickers of a wood fire. Sometimes a child dropped off to sleep before the story was finished. Someone either took him on her lap, or dumped him on his mat and covered him up.

This acquiring of habits, directed consciously by adults, 867
was designed to give the child increasingly a sense of being 858
part of a community which had certain standards of behaviour. There were, in this training, some prohibitions
which a child was expected to observe as soon as he could 864
walk and talk. The most stringent was on any form of sex play between boys and girls. To avoid any likelihood of this, little boys and girls were early encouraged to form separate play groups. The elders kept an eye particularly on the boys, and if they showed any inquisitiveness in their play about the private parts of a girl playmate, they were beaten and reproved and told: 'If you do this again, I shall tell your father.'

Many little boys and girls up to the age of four or five ran 864
about naked, but in leading Ngoni families they wore a scrap 291

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

535 The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or
571 near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group,
[578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

865 The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

157 One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect-
●538 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell-
555 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

As we saw in Chapter VII ignorance of the law was no excuse 577
for breaking the law, and the positive virtue of being law-abiding was constantly emphasized in families, villages and in the kingdom generally. Inherent in showing respect and being obedient and law-abiding was the much stressed quality of self-control. Early travellers remarked on the restrained, dignified and courteous behaviour in Ngoni villages, which was my experience also, and especially in the vicinity of leading Ngoni families. This kind of self-control was taught as we have seen in a great variety of contexts, [867] from avoiding greedy and noisy eating as young children to putting up with being ordered about in the boys' dormitory, and from the insistence on the decorous forms of greeting and thanks to the suppression of any overt fear or pain at the puberty ceremonies.

Two other qualities were emphasized in child training since they were expected of all Ngoni people in inter-personal relations. One was generosity in sharing anything that a person had. It was a quality demanded of everyone, from the small child who was made to unclench his fist in which he was hiding three ground-nuts and give two of them to his fellows, to the big chief whose duty at a feast was to see that everyone had enough and to send food from his own portion to anyone who looked hungry. A number of proverbs called 577
attention to the value of generosity and to the social attitude 538
towards meanness, which was felt to be despicable. 'If you do not play with other people the grass will grow round your hut' implied that isolation and social ostracism would be the retaliation to a mean man. The reciprocal element in generosity was always implicit in the teaching and the practice and was illustrated in the proverb, often said hopefully by visitors when hospitality was not very readily forthcoming: 'I have sent my food basket to someone; the basket will return to me.'

The other quality was the conventional display of sympathy, especially at times of mourning for the dead, but also 577
on occasions of severe loss, such as cattle dying, or illness or

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

577 accident. These visits and expressions of sympathy could not be omitted without grave social disapproval. If a young man or woman was absent from the village at the time of death or loss, their first duty on returning was to go and express sympathy with the sufferer. To assist in these condolences so that the speaker and the hearer would readily understand each other, proverbs were used such as: 'If the pot is broken it is broken indeed,' and, 'When water is poured out it cannot be gathered up.' The Ngoni disliked the noisy and unrestrained forms of mourning which they saw among the people round them. To them the quiet visit and the note of resignation in the proverbs used fully conveyed the sympathy they wished to express.

[538] [765]

All through the later stages of training children and young adults the importance of speaking well was emphasized. This at first referred to correct language and being audible but not noisy. Later, as we saw in Chapter VII, the art of speech was held up as a Ngoni characteristic, and many proverbs brought this out in ordinary conversation as well as on more formal occasions such as giving evidence in the courts. When a group of people, generally women, kept up a continuous meaningless chatter, onlookers, generally men, shrugged their shoulders and said, 'They are preparing meat without salt.' When a person talked on and on about a matter which was being discussed without getting to the point, impatient listeners, or the councillor in the law courts said: 'Your wisdom is like mushrooms which come after the cooking is finished,' or, more scathingly, 'You are the feet of a centipede' which wander aimlessly with many steps but no direction. Proverbs were not always a form of rebuke; they could also be a commendation. When a person brought out clearly the point of an argument the listeners said, 'You have rung a little bell'; and when after a prolonged discussion or the hearing of a case in the courts the audience accepted a decision as conclusive and just, they said, 'The upper and the lower teeth meet together.'

577 191 195 538

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

wife. We have talked in Chapters IV and VII of her duties 577
in organizing food supplies, supervising cooking, and that 592
supreme test of competence: dividing out the food so that
all had a fair share. The same high standard of skill was [264]
expected in the general care and supervision of the compound, the children and the household staff. Ngoni women, like their menfolk, were proud of being able to supervise other people and organize life around them, to control others satisfactorily, to hear complaints and to pacify quarrels. The proverb 'The tooth laughs to no purpose', meaning that [538]
angry people show their teeth but with no merriment, was often heard when Ngoni women intervened to stop two quarrelling girls or to prevent an irate helper getting angry with the nurse girls.

The traits of justice and wisdom were important elements 577
in the foundation of a Ngoni married woman's reputation. 538
These were judged by her ability to allocate fair shares of food to servants and helpers, and to adjudicate wisely in women's disputes. Two proverbs referred particularly to dividing out food and were said about women who were either careless or stingy, and did not give their helpers a fair share. 'The finger-nails are surfeited' meant that the important people had eaten heartily without thought for others; and 'She has sliced one side only' had the same connotation, that those who had the supplies were keeping too much for themselves. Two other proverbs drove home this principle of *noblesse oblige* when emphasizing the responsibilities of married women: 'The elephant is not made heavy by its trunk,' and 'If the cows do not produce milk the herdsman is responsible.'

The ideal personality of Ngoni men

As we have just said, there was a definite personality pattern 577
for young men whether married or not, which emphasized 562
special qualities looked for in them, since on the whole they 561
had relatively little authority or responsibility in village

577 affairs. Boys and young men were expected to be physically
562 strong, and tough in the sense of being able to do hard tasks,
561 walk long distances, dance for hours on end, and put up
[827] with hardships without grumbling. The senior men, as we saw earlier in this chapter hated to see idleness and set great store by young men working hard and persistently at any tasks undertaken. Several proverbs illustrated this quality
● [538] and were used with effect when boys were found hanging round in the village doing nothing: 'Loitering eats the owner,' 'Laziness is eating dung,' 'The garden will not be tilled if you stop hoeing it.'

577 Other qualities desired in young men were all connected
829 with the values of staying together as a family and as a village group, and of fostering mutual aid and trust within the groups of males in the dormitory and in the 'house'. It was believed that they ought to be acutely sensitive to the opinion of their contemporaries, a lesson which they learned from early days in the dormitory. To an insensitive person, showing intolerance and hard-heartedness they said: 'Were you made with dog's bones?' for dogs' bones were thought
[538] to be hard and unfeeling; or, 'You have a heart like a crocodile.' A fear of social ostracism was fostered all the time and expressed in the proverb: 'The bird eats in his own field.'

577 There were innumerable proverbs about willingness to
829 co-operate in all the necessary tasks which fell to the young
538 men, such as communal hoeing described in Chapter VII, or digging the grave at a funeral. 'The eyes for seeing,' 'One arm cannot crush a louse,' 'A river grows by its little streams,' 'The heifer grows by giving it more food'—these and many others were used to admonish those who held back and to encourage those who joined in willingly. Other proverbs warned against promises of help which were not kept. 'You will eat those of the axe but not those of the hoe' was said to someone who had counted on noisy assertions of forthcoming help, like the sounds made by the chopping of an axe, and not in quiet persistent help, like the smooth almost silent

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

action of the hoe. 'They are our kin according to their eyes' was said as a reminder of misplaced trust in those who appeared to be helpful but were not really. 577 538 829

Readiness to take advice both from their age-mates and from older men was another quality held to be desirable in young men. Proverbs illustrating this were: 'He that refuses instruction will be surprised by blood,' and 'He remembers that he fell; he forgot that he was hurt.' As often with proverbs, there were others with a contrary emphasis which were sometimes used as a retort to the former ones, or in self-defence. 'The inheritance was eaten by those worthy of it' was intended as a rejoinder not to interfere in other people's affairs, when unwanted advice was offered. 'The body is felt by its owner' was sometimes said to encourage a man to stick to his own opinion. On the other hand a too abrupt rejoinder, especially to an older person, was regarded as discourteous, and onlookers said 'You cause the spittle to be dry' to express extreme disapproval.

Ngoni personality in a changing culture

The direction of the training of boys had been formerly towards military life, and towards the qualities which made effective fighting men, and emphasized loyalty to leaders and camaraderie in the regiments. This emphasis on military preparedness was however never the sole emphasis in Ngoni training, and hence when warfare came to an end, there remained traditional spheres of influence and activity which were an integral part of life in the Ngoni kingdoms, as well as new spheres of activity opened up by missions, the administration, the trading companies and the labour recruiters. 867 177 [703]

The traditional forms of activity were found in Ngoni local government which included the chief's administration and the courts of law; family and village affairs including the building up of herds and buying and selling cattle; and ritual life. The new kinds of activity included occupations such as teacher, minister, clerk, store assistant, houseboy, 463 177

212 The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish
121 between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

181 Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of Euro-
[177] pean control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller
181 looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-
178 dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung
● [538] at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now
533 largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs
182 they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in
538 ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is
173 the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women
648 are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The
186 cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewā, Kunda, and so on.

175 We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the
648 whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories
648 are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not
179 only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

181 that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered
186 all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British.
Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every
648 present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni
186 say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we
would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes
would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly",
[929] and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated
with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain
that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

● 538 The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are
814 common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

643 The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also
182 symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He [illegible] the name of his
[551] warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his [illegible]tionship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

829 Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths
178 about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather
[583] than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity. When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about teaching the people the words of God." There was something very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow, so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there. So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees, and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more. Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(a) 'Those from the south'

These were the descendants of the leaders of the two main Ngoni groups represented by the two Nguni kingdoms, with their followers, who left Natal during the wars of Shaka. They were South-eastern Bantu of Nguni stock, and when they were first encountered by Europeans in Nyasaland, the Europeans called them Zulus and spoke of their language as Zulu. Ngoni informants in the 1930's who were regarded as most reliable repudiated their relationship with the Zulu, and always referred to their ethnic origin as a people of Swazi stock. Y. M. Cibambo whose knowledge of Nguni traditions was unrivalled, said in his book *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*—'Very many of them [the Ngoni] came from Swaziland, which is north of Zululand'.[1] A nostalgic refrain occurred in more than one of their traditional songs:

> Come let us go to Swaziland
> Where the people die fat.[2]

Cultural affinities between the Ngoni in Nyasaland and the people now living in Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, with the Zulu, will be examined in several chapters of this book. In the chapter on clan descent names in Part III, we shall compare the clan names called Swazi by the Ngoni with the lists of clan names given by Bryant in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*[3] and with the list given by Kuper, in *An African Aristocracy*,[4] of the Swazi and pre-Swazi clans. The military organization of the Ngoni, the age-set system which formed part of it, and other cultural features which will be discussed in Chapter III of this section, all show a general cultural affinity with the peoples of the northern Nguni group of the South-eastern Bantu.

The separation of the Ngoni group from the parent stock, which took place at about the same time as the Ndebele and the Shangaan groups fought their way north, occurred before the Swazi and Zulu kingdoms took final form. It is more correct, therefore, to say that Ngoni cultural affinities were with the northern Nguni group as a whole than to say they were off-shoots of either the Zulu or the Swazi. The Ngoni themselves used the designation 'Swazi' for the people with clan descent names whose ancestors left the south with the original party. Some of the older men remembered their fathers and grandfathers speaking of their clan as having belonged to the Ntungwa group, the Mtetwa group, the Mzane group, before the departure of the Ngoni took place. This differentiation into pre-Swazi tribal and clan groupings was not in the 1930's one to which the Ngoni gave much attention. In talking about their southern origin it was the Swazi connexion which they emphasized.

[1] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Lutterworth Press, 1942, p. 8.
[2] Read, M. 'Songs of the Ngoni People.' *Bantu Studies*, March 1937, p. 10.
[3] Bryant, A. T. *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*. Longmans, 1929, pp. 681–97.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*. O.U.P., 1947, p. 233.

173 Ngoni tradition placed the departure of the two main groups under the leadership of Zwangendaba Jere and Ngwana Maseko during Shaka's wars, according to some traditions just before, and to others just after, the death of Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. The separate departure of the two Ngoni groups which later formed the two kingdoms was determined partly by their separate leadership under the Jere and Maseko clans, partly by their march by different routes to the Zambesi and after crossing it; and partly by the clan descent names of the Swazi element in the two kingdoms, which with few exceptions were different.

[533] Two traditional songs, sung at marriages, at dances at the Paramounts' villages, and the first in the church of the Scottish mission at Ekwendeni in north Nyasaland, reminded the Ngoni of their departure from Natal, of their separation from the Ndwandwe people under Zwide, and of the hazards of a small military band fighting its way northwards.

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All the nations
Are gathered together against us.
How shall we fight?
They are called together against us.
Whence shall we summon help?
The big husky ones, ho!
They are called together against us.
We are reinforced by whom?

It is because of Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people
That though I lie down I cannot sleep.
O Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people!
Though I lie down I cannot sleep.
Shaka scatters us among the forests of Soshangane land.

173 There were several informants in both Ngoni kingdoms who had preserved the story of the departure of the Ngoni from the south. Y. M. Cibambo in his book gathered together the traditions and gave what he considered the most authentic version of the departure. One [114] text from the northern kingdom is given here, partly because it was typical of the kind of material Cibambo had to work on, and also because the author, Mlonyeni Jere, had heard it from his mother who, as a young girl, had lived at the court of Zwangendaba. The text gives the genealogy of Zwangendaba, and the connexion of his line with Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. It emphasizes the immediate cause of Zwangendaba's departure—namely the fear of meeting Shaka and his warriors in open battle, and the fact that he was not called a chief until he had made a breach with Zwide. The summons to the [57] mourning for his uncle Mafu, which he ignored, was considered by the Ngoni to be the final act by which Zwangendaba cut himself off from

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

After the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterised by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognised. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cihambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cihambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

Ngoni Warfare in Old Days

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligubo* dance along with others.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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Herding as preparation for war

Preparation for war began in youth. When boys were about ten or twelve they were sent to herd goats or calves; when they were older they herded the cattle. At this time the boys were in the bush with their elders who were often haughty and fierce. The older herders taught the boys how to fight and how to defend themselves. They taught them to fight with twigs and sticks; the older herders fought with *izinduku* (knobkerries) and *izinkhonjo* (wooden swords). They were not allowed to fight with real spears though some had them. The older herders stirred up the hearts of the younger to fight and taught them to strike each other with knobkerries and to use little shields. If the herders of one village met the herders of another, the bulls were teased till they fought, and the little herders also. The small herders were not allowed to say anything about the herding to their parents. The older herders also loved to fight as in war with those of other villages. At such times the older men and even the elders came out from the village to see the battle and to stir up the hearts of the boys. If the herders of one village ran away they were laughed at, but the winners were greatly praised.

At the time when the cattle ate the refuse in the maize-gardens, after harvest, fighting most often broke out. Some of the boys provoked their neighbours to go and drive the cattle into the maize-fields of another village deliberately. The custom was that cattle might eat in the maize-gardens of their own village and the boys ought to ask if they may go into the fields of others. The herders did this to annoy the other herders and to start a fight. Often a great struggle was the result and the young men of the village who had outgrown herding joined in the fight to help the youngsters of their village. But they did it sensibly, none caused a wound with a spear, for anyone who did that was punished by law.

So the boys grew accustomed to the first steps in fighting which would help them later in war. Those who knew how to protect themselves with a knobkerry and small shield had no scars on their heads, but there were many long ago who had scars from fighting in the herding time. Children of the chief were in the same predicament—if they could not defend themselves they were beaten by their herding companions and possibly got their heads broken. The flowing of blood was not considered very serious, only if one did it in a stealthy way then he had to pay compensation. In this way the boys grew up with stout hearts and loved fighting.

Another thing which excited the boys was the custom of whistling. The boys were very expert and quick in expressing changes of mood in whistling. This was done so that the cattle would go carefully or quickly, but also when they were fighting the herders loved to whistle and even the older men in war did so also. The whistling stirred up the hearts of those who were thinking of running away. There were many ways of whistling and some were very good at it.

[198]

Enlistment

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When the young man reached the age of 21–26 they left off herding. Sometimes it was their fathers who stopped them, sometimes they themselves wished to stay at home. They took their shields (*umahawu*) and

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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their spears and gathered together; they went to the kraal and began to dance the *ligubo* war dance. Sometimes they set themselves in order as though they were out on a raid; they came out at the right middle of the kraal and went *pa lisango*, toward the gate, singing, marching, and shaking their shields and spears. Sometimes they retreated as though running from the enemy, then turned about as though running to meet the enemy again. This was done to show how they could fight and defend themselves from the enemy. It showed that the boys were now young men and of the warrior class, and they were asking to be admitted to the status of grown men. If the old men agreed that their prayer should be granted they were formed into a new regiment (*libandla*) and were given a senior to lead and govern them. 539 702 [884]

The Army

All the war companies were under the Paramount. He had the power to call the whole army to go out against enemies. But all big villages and villages of men of reputation had their own companies, like Zulu Gama, Njerenjere Sibande and many others. These companies were under the war *induna* of the Paramount and when they were called they came quickly to the village of the Paramount which was the central meeting place. A *libandla* (company) was divided into *mabuto* (sections) sometimes of 100 or more. For each section there was an *induna* who led it in war, judged all disputes, and spoke for it to the war *induna*. The war *induna* was the eye of the Paramount in all that pertained to war. 539 704 [643]

The army was divided into companies corresponding to the districts or chiefs' villages and all the company leaders were under the war *induna*. All the parts of the army were divided in lesser parts in accordance with the generation of the young men, *amajaha*, and the older men, *amadoda*.

Mobilisation

If desired the Paramount had power to send a summons through the whole country that his army should mobilise in his village in order that he might see it. The lesser chiefs had the same power for their districts. The man who delivered the summons went into the kraal and shouted that the Paramount wished the army to gather at the central meeting place. The message was spread everywhere. Then all the sections in the villages and in the districts of the lesser chiefs and clan heads hastened to come at the appointed time. The Paramount prepared cattle to be killed for the army. As the sections were marching in they sang the songs called *imihubo*. Section by section they chose their *mabuto* for arriving and entering the kraal and each section drew up by itself. An open space was left between the sections so that they might be known. 539 726

When they had all gathered in their places the herald rose and shouted '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, ati, Ayigubo*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, let them dance.' This was to tell the sections to begin the war-dance. Each section got up with one heart and made a wide circle and began to dance. One of them began a song which he remembered on the spur of the moment from the *ligubo* and led off, the whole section took it up waving their shields and thrusting with their spears now right now left according to their step and each foot stamping the ground. [535]

539 326 714 301 At the dance the warriors wore their full war-dress. Those who had the head-ring wore a little bunch of black feathers sewn together and attached to a skin and looking like a lion's mane, which came out from under the head-ring on the neck, and they tied a strip of other skin over their eyes. Those who had not the head-ring had their heads completely covered and at the side of their face they put rosettes of feather ends so that the head-dress should not hide their sight. The head-dress was of birds' black feathers, especially ravens; they took out the quills so that they were soft and they sewed them together on cowhide, the man's head resting on the skin. On the body and arms they wore a white skin of goat-hair, or a white belt with long hair, and twisted strips of skin reaching to the knee at the loins. The belts were made from the skins of white goats which had long hair and they stitched them. Round the loins they had whole skins of kids both front and back. Some tied *irishondo*, hides made to look like a tail, at the back. In their ears they had *isicaso*, earrings of ivory, or sometimes of bone or wood. Truly they looked as terrifying as wild beasts when they stood up. So they ornamented themselves. The oldest of the men stuck a tall feather of a crane in the skin strip above the eyes.

539 326 535 When the dance had begun the women rose to help the men. The Paramount's wives and wives of the men of standing wore the claws of lion and leopard on the top of their hair combed up on the crown and round the neck along with other beads. Ordinary women also wore beads on their heads and necks. All looked very well. Both men and women sang the dance songs and danced. The men spread out in a circle round the edge of the space; the women faced the men at a distance or perhaps they put them in the middle of the ring. All sang, the women commencing, the men joining in or responding. The women had little sticks or reeds in their hands shooting high up. Others came forward and went into the middle of the circle or half circle, and went singing and dancing and shaking their sticks and thrusting out their necks.

539 326 When the dance was over the herald told the army to scatter to their villages until the provisions and snuff had been prepared, and on such and such a day they were to gather again in the Paramount's village. On the day of the gathering of the army they brought their dress and food, the sections dressing as they were in the kraal. The herald called again, '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utshe njalo yenkosi, ati, Ayikuta*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, fall in.' Then all the sections stood up, each by itself but now joined together in close order, shields and spears raised above them. Then the chief *induna* or someone else who had been chosen told them the enemy stockade which it was proposed to attack, and the plan of campaign. When the meeting had dissolved they began to march out of the kraal one by one.

The whole day the sections had been kept in the kraal, no one was allowed to go to a house and say good-bye. Those outside were not allowed to greet the warriors inside. Children were kept out of the way, lest they should greet their fathers as they went out to war. If a man was greeted as he went out to war, the fear was that he would not come back but would die there.

When the army went out in the evening near sunset it slept near the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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village in grass-shelters opposite the kraal gate, and no one was allowed to go to a house or to be with his wife. They said that if a man broke this law the army would be unlucky. Even the Paramount if he still went with the army slept there outside. If the Paramount left for the war, his oldest *induna* left his own village and went to the Paramount's and stayed there till the army came back. In the royal village there was continence and all the people were ordered to control themselves in the villages, until the army left.

When the army went out the old men accompanied it, but after they had spoken words of warning they came back to the village. The chief point in it all was that the young men should have courage, and should help each other if one is wounded or there is any other difficulty, and should obey the leaders. They warned the leaders too to begin the fighting wisely and not on a bad or treacherous place. If a leader did that sort of thing and many were killed a case was brought against him. When the army went out two sections were detached to guard the village. These stayed at home along with the companies of old men. They 'kept the tribe', the Paramount and the old people and the stock.

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The approach and attack

When the army went out it marched very slowly, and halts for the night were at short intervals. All the sections kept together as ordered by the war *induna*. In all the sections there were scouts to show the way for the army. In each section one or perhaps two were chosen and were put together to walk ahead and look carefully, and come and report any news, especially when they were in enemy country. When the army rested, the scouts went forward to see if there was any danger near. When the army slept in grass-shelters, one or two sections were sent to guard against danger both in front and rear. The army had provision carriers, that is, those who carried food and the coverings of the old men. These were boys and girls, sometimes women from their houses. These were not sent by the Paramount but each household chose its young people to carry the food. The section of the food carriers had another section to protect them when the enemy were attacked or when they went to meet enemies.

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When the army was near the enemy stockade the leader ordered them to sit down and rest before they attacked. At such a time the warriors snuffed or smoked hemp. This hemp-smoking was preferred because it maddened the warriors and gave them hearts without fear in facing the enemy. In the enemy stockade the drums would be beating to show that their enemies were angry, but the army of the Ngoni sat and rested as though there were no enemy.

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When the army had rested, the war *induna* and the other *izinduna*, or the leader of this army (for all the armies that went out were put under one man of whom they said, the owner of this army is so and so) scouted to see the difficulties of the stockade and to choose a good place for attack.

When it had been carefully chosen and the *izinduna* had agreed together how the attack should begin, then the leader roused the army and began to dance his own praise-dance. The army responded to him. After

539 726 he had danced before all the sections he began to call '*Uyezwa, uti, Aiyime ncgito*', 'Do you hear? Stand to arms.' Immediately section by section got up and rushed forward with noise and whistling deafening the ears. The warriors stood in crowds near the stockade and almost surrounding it. When the army was small, they stood in the shape of a young crescent moon. While they did so, they were blowing their horns and whistling to drown the noise in the stockade.

Very soon the message was heard: '*Utsho njalo yena, uti, Aziqwebane*', 'Thus it is said, let the bulls fight.' On these words the warriors ran at the stockade with one heart and a noise like wind and the country was filled with the tread of their feet. For a short time there would sometimes be silence, then a shout would be heard from a section: '*Nginga pakati: kuti loko*', 'I am inside: I of such and such a village.' The man who was first in the stockade would name his village. Then there would be heard, '*Nginawe, mnakwetu*', 'I am with you, comrade.' All the *izinduna* and warriors fought in their own sections but once the army was inside they began to ask for the name of the first man in and those who had been near gave the name of the heroes. So each *induna* knew all about what had happened in his own section before he met the war *induna*, and when the latter reported to the Paramount at home he could tell everything.

Return from war

539 727 Long ago all that was found in the village or stockade (goats, sheep and cattle) belonged of right to the man who had entered first. That was easy when they sent only one company to the attack. All the other things belonged to the finder. Afterwards when all the warriors went to the attack together, it was difficult to distinguish who had got in first and so the spoils went to the man who reached them first. The Paramount had [643] his portion of everything taken. Outside the stockade those who had taken cattle put aside two or three which they said were *amahloma ankosi*, the first taste to the Paramount.

On the return all who had dipped their spears in the blood of their enemies carried what the killed had been wearing and their weapons or bows. If a man had killed a woman he wore her things (that is her ornaments, bark-cloth, etc.). These things were done to fulfil a taboo. When [783] the end of the time of purification came, all those things that were worthless were thrown away or burned, but the beautiful things were kept. Only the very old people wore the clothes of the killed.

When the army was on the way home it looked for bones of animals and burned them and ground them fine like flour, and also made charcoal dust. On the day of arrival some flour was kneaded and bone dust and the charcoal dust each by itself. They painted themselves on the face and on the body. This custom was to show those who had speared an enemy in the fight.

When the army was near their own country the war *induna* chose some messengers to go and give the news of the fighting and the names of those who had been killed. These messengers went to the important *izinduna*, and from them the news went quickly to the Paramount, headmen, and elders. The women were not told quietly; even if a man knew that his son

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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had been killed it was not permitted to show his grief before the army had returned and mobilized in the kraal.

When the sections marched back to the village the first sections to go out to war came last and the one that had been last now led the way. The army never entered the Paramount's village in the afternoon but in the morning or before midday. They did this because it took a long time to tell all the news of the war, so if the army arrived near the village in the afternoon they slept in grass-shelters outside.

When the army was ready to enter, the sections were set in order, each one told off to follow another and each one chose its own song for the entry. When they sang the warriors covered their heads with their shields, with their spears in the middle of the shields. While they were singing one warrior of the section would jump out in front and dance his own praise-dance and the others let him; when he had fallen into the ranks again, they took up the section-song. The songs sung at the entry to the kraal were called *imihubo*. These were different from *ligubo* for they were sung by mouth only, whereas a *ligubo* was sung with stamping of the feet. [533]

When the warriors marched on the cattle track there was heard a confused noise of singing and shouting praises. All the warriors marched very slowly as they sang, section by section but crowding together. When they came close to the gateway they stood and waited to let those who had not blooded their spears have their dance out, because once inside only the 'killers' might dance before the Paramount and the headmen. When they stood they were as though the kraal were built of men but they left a space in the middle for the Paramount and headmen to sit and watch. For a little time the warriors danced their own praise-dances and these were chiefly those whose bravery was well known.

After these had danced a little there was a shout for silence, and all kept silent waiting for the words of the war *induna*. He came out from the throng and began to dance while all the warriors responded to his war-cry or praise-names. After he had finished he began to tell the story. He began by saying that in such and such a section, so and so had been first to enter the stockade, or to throw a spear first which killed a man inside. In all the sections he went over those whose names had been taken by the *izinduna*; if he forgot anything or the name of a 'killer' he went and asked the *induna* of the section to help him. Whenever he mentioned a name, the warrior jumped forward and danced so as to be known to the Paramount and all the men. Then the Paramount and the headmen chose one of themselves to reply and thank the army; sometimes it was the chief *induna*. Before he began he also danced a little, then spoke praising or blaming. After he had finished he danced again and sat down among his peers. This the Ngoni called *ukudumisela impi*, thanking in respect for the army.

Demobilization and purification

When all was finished in the kraal the warriors scattered and went to their villages to take off all their war equipment and to put their shields on the *mpalane*, the resting place or bedstead of shields. Then they sat down by their big house and were greeted by their wives, parents, children and friends. The custom was the same as that on the birth of a child, the

539 the
727 salutation being '*Amehlo amhlope*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Buyani*', 'Return',
along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebo*' also with the clan name.
[576] This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Echigodhlweni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amakanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[824] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Po*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[834] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Po*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of heroes

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
703 then they were called again together to dance the *ligubo*. On that day bulls
[912] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the hero of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the heroes of the sections
[237] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amabandla* of the *abumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were allowed to marry and settle down in their villages. [703]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuzo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiwe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *zi zi, ozi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To trash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 kingdom and from Portuguese territory arrived to mourn. The grave
766 was made at the edge of the kraal and the kraal fence enlarged to take it in so that the cattle might walk on it.

643 In this chapter I have tried to bring together some of the chief
174 elements in the position of the Paramount, and in the performance of his duties, which were remembered by the old men as having been characteristic of pre-European days. Some of these features, as I have indicated, had disappeared in the 1930's. Others survived and will be illustrated in Chapter V. Chapters III and IV on the royal women and on the officials in the kingdoms will illustrate the importance of the leading women in the Ngoni kingdoms, and the hierarchy of officials already mentioned in Chapter II of Part I.

643 The texts of the praise-songs which conclude this chapter are given
533 because in the 1930's they were still recited in the royal villages and were a feature of all public ceremonies. Most of the allusions in the texts were obscure. Cibambo, who translated them for me and who consulted other older men, did not recognize some of the names or the meaning of the attributes. Some names corresponded with those given in Part I in the texts about the departure of the Ngoni in their two groups from Natal (see pp. 7, 8), such as the Nqumayo people whom Zwide ruled over, Nqaba who left with Ngwana, Nyathi who tried to prevent Ngwana from leaving. But in the way in which they were used in the 1930's these praise-songs had little meaning for those who heard them except as a form of salutation to the Paramount.

Praises of Zwangendaba, son of Hlacwayo

643 Zwangendaba whose intention it is to be black who denies it to be light.
533 Go away, let us go, you the rejected one.
539 We are like a man of the Ntungwa, a fat one; there the people die as fat ones.
Nqaba you must eat people. Leave the cattle.
Nqaba son of Lushwana, there was confusion.
There he is, there he is, where do they see him? They see him in the fences of his mothers.
One who is angry because the cattle have gone with the calves.
His great cunning overcomes the magic stones of the doctors.
I have gone away until I have seen Lebombo Mountains.
We are suffering on account of the great dispute with the Nqumayo people.
You are seeing the hoes which are waiting for you, the hoes which cannot be used for hoeing.
He saw it, the short grass, he was biting it hastily.
He saw it, the ditch, his foot slipped into it.
He who divided the water with a stick at the Zambesi.
He who remembered the cattle of the Balunjana.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Praises of Hlacwayo, son of Magangata

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Hlacwayo the dwarf who cannot trail his cloth
Whereas the tall people trail their cloths.
Meat eaten with knives of axes,
If it is not eaten with forks it is rotten.
Hlacwayo whose bodily vigour is finished off compared with Hlacwayo of former times.
Grass of deep red colour is not burned with burning; it burns very slowly, drop by drop.

Praises of Ngwana, son of Goqweni

You who cut the trees and who cut the mouths,
You the locust, the grasshopper who fixed in your hair the feathers of the locust,
Who went below and climbed up, and went to bring the morning star of the dawn,
You go, since you are rejected; you go and bring the armlets of wild animals; those of cattle will be much disputed.
You who remember the fault of long ago.
In descending, you descend together into the mountains.
You who drank the blood of cattle,
You who separated from the people of Shaka, Shaka of Mbelebele kraal,
You who separated from the people of Nyathi the son of Mashobane; it thundered, it was cloudy.
Thou resemblest cattle which were finished by wolves.
You who originated with the people of Mzilikazi,
You who originated with the people of Mpakana son of Lidonga,
You who originated with the people of Ndwandwe.

CHAPTER III

THE ROYAL WOMEN

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An early traveller in central Ngoniland in 1886 remarked on the number of 'true Ngoni women' to be found there, who were 'easily distinguished from the other women by their light colour and by being taller and stouter'. He went on to say: 'The king's houses at Livisini were 30 feet in diameter, built within an enclosure with other huts where the attendants lived. All were kept very clean and well swept.' This tribute to the appearance and achievements of Ngoni women of high rank was borne out by my own observations in the 1930's in central and northern Ngoniland. There was a definite physical type, light in colour, with high cheek-bones and orthognathic profile, tall with an upright carriage of the head. Women with these physical characteristics were in all cases of leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and their influence on their

791 an *isanusi* today". When he entered the place of his sister, NaNdumbu, he was dreaming. If there was a war he could say "You must not go to that war because all the people will be killed." He was just dreaming and dancing his *isanusi* dance. When he danced that dance on the chief's *bwalo* the people praised him with special praises.'

791 Two informants remembered fragments of the songs sung by NaNdumbu and her brother, and these songs were also sung by the old 533 *izanusi* in the northern kingdom. I give here the Ngoni versions with an English translation, omitting the repetition of lines and the 'sounds' which accompanied the singing:

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Uyezwa mihlolo	Do you see the omens?
Inhanyezo ipuma	The star comes out,
Ipuma yanga	It comes out in the East.
. . . . .	. . . . .
Ubaba uyangibiza	My father is calling me.
Hamba ekaya	Go home.
Indaba zikuyandela	Things have turned against you,
Hamba ekaya	Go home.

791 Although these diviners acted at times on their own initiative, this did not prevent their being called on in time of crisis to diagnose the reason 787 for disaster or sickness. *Izanusi* who used their own medicines to smell 237 could prophesy and speak on their own initiative as well as waiting to be called on. These medicines were said to induce the dreams on which the prophecy was based, and they were generally contained in the tail of a gnu or in a sheep's horn, or some other horn.

787 Below this category of the prophets, whether *abantu benhloko* or *izanusi*, came those who used lots when called on to diagnose a par- 791 ticular situation. These were often men who dreamed, or who used their own medicines to receive messages from their ancestral spirits, but instead of announcing their message directly, they brought with them some form of lots which they used when they were consulted, and gave their diagnosis as a result of observing the lots. Sometimes they sang their own songs, accompanied by dancing, which led to an almost trance-like condition; sometimes they used their lots without any previous working up of an emotional state through song or dance. I never met any of the dreamer type of prophet who used no medicines and no lots. There was general agreement among the Ngoni that they had died out, that their main service had been in times of war, and that the number of men or women who possessed such powers had, even in the past, been very small indeed. I did, however, see one diviner at work who used the song and dance technique with the lots, and two who used the lots without song or dance.

756 The *isanusi* whom I saw in the northern kingdom was divining for 787 sickness at the request of a party of people who had come to consult him

769 more were driven out of the kraal before the invocation of the spirits,
782 one had been selected for the sacrifice, and the spirits' attention was drawn to this animal. They were reminded that it was their beast because it belonged to the herd of the house which guarded their spirits, and it was also their beast because it was to be killed and its meat offered to them if they showed agreement.

The third part of the prayer was mentioning the needs of the person on whose behalf the spirits were being addressed. The following words were used by Lopati Nzunga when he spoke this prayer to the spirits when Bambo Manga was ill:

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O thou Gumede!
O thou Mputa!
O thou great chief!
Here is your beast.
That your child may be healed,
Look on what is yours.
May you remain well
And your child recover.
We do not know,
We do not know.
If you say that she will die,
She is yours, this child of yours.
It is your affair.
As for us, we long that your child may recover.
If she dies, this child of yours,
We can only speak your names.
We cry to you for her.

769 Bambo Manga was there and her daughter and Chief Njolomole,
782 and while Lopati Nzunga addressed the spirits, the rest murmured the names '*Wena Gumede*', '*Wena Mputa*', and added '*Matwanayako*' (your child), '*Inkomoyako*' (your beast). The form of the prayer varied, and might be a sequence of address and petition as in this one, or a series of ejaculations with little consecutive thought. It depended on the eloquence and skill of the speaker of the prayer, and that form of eloquence was a well-recognized characteristic among the Ngoni. In the central kingdom before the Europeans came, the head of the Phungwako clan had addressed the spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Since the Phungwako chiefs had separated from Gomani's kingdom, the Nzunga clan performed this ritual for Bambo Manga in their head village. In addition to speaking the prayer, the same man had to see that all was done in order, the cattle driven out, the chief people assembled, and the subsequent action taken in accordance with the sign given by the spirits, either to kill a beast for sacrifice, or to find out from the diviners why the spirits had failed to agree. When the spirits 'refused' the first time Lopati Nzunga addressed them, he concluded the proceedings by gently

reminding the spirits that all depended on them. There was no tone of scolding in the words but a respectful plea for attention and help. 769 782

Alas O Paramount, [539]
Alas O Father,
Why do you refuse us?
What do you say about your child?
We say we are your people,
Alas O Paramount.

In prayers for rain the same form of address was used with the three parts of the prayer. The ancestral spirits addressed were those of the line of the Paramounts, since the needs of the whole country were involved. The beast chosen for the offering to the spirits was a black one with no white markings, and in place of the sick person's name, the need for rain was mentioned. In the account given by Mlonyeni Jere (quoted in the first chapter of Part IV) he used this formula, mentioning the names, presenting the cow, and then asking the ancestral spirits to tell UMkulumqango how greatly they were troubled through lack of rain.

The ritual of sacrificing to the spirits

The essential equipment in the ritual of sacrificing was the spear with which the beast was killed; baskets, both the wide winnowing basket (*lichero*) and the food basket (*nsengwa*); the wooden dish (*ngcwembe*) on which the meat was placed; and the gourd cups for beer. These have been mentioned already in several contexts as the sacrificial vessels or ritual objects connected with the ancestor cult and kept in the hut of the woman who was guardian of a particular ancestral spirit. In the northern kingdom one of the Nhlane clan who carried out the ritual for sacrifices to UNdina Nhlane at Hoho said that in the hut of UNtani Nzima who died in Swaziland, but whose house had continued, was a spear, a black cloth for rain-making and a wooden meat dish. These were kept on the right-hand side at the back of the hut, and no one passing by could stand erect; he had to bend his back and head 'as men do when passing the *inkosi*'. Since the coming of the missions these had been thrown away. 769 778 782 [415]

In the central kingdom I saw in several houses this collection of ritual vessels. There was always a spear, a food basket, one or more gourds for beer, and one or more of the wide, flat, winnowing baskets on which uncooked flour was carried and which was used for meat if there was no wooden dish. These were kept at the back of the hut hanging on the wall, above the place where sacrificial meat was laid.

The first stage of the ritual sacrifice was killing and flaying the beast. It was killed either in the kraal or just outside the fence, with a thrust from the spear, or more than one if necessary, by some member of the leading clan. At the time of the sacrifice when Bambo Manga was ill 769 782

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their 576
family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If 577
children did not so behave to old and poor people, they 858
were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had [867]
failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early 576
travellers in Ngoniland to the good manners found in Ngoni 828
households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the 829
Ngoni because they liked living together without any scat- 867
tering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . .
Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of
being beaten, but because all children were well taught that
this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of
the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion 829
between personal behaviour and the integrity and pros-
perity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were
talking about child training and its effect on the future of the
Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who
spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof
off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was
built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated
the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within
their society, so that harmonious relations would build up
the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and
indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic seces-
sions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are
perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human socie-
ties from the individual family outwards. We see this how-
ever in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were
acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences
of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about 539
keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining 829
their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who [115]

115 had heard it from his grandmother. She had been a young
539 Ngoni woman at the time the Ngoni crossed the Zambezi,
929 and hence this story was said to have had its origin in the Ngoni former homeland in Natal.

The story of Heva

539 At the beginning of the creation of the world there was a woman of reddish colour whose name was Golela, and she had two children. The name of the older one was Heva, and of the second one Malusi. My grandmother, Madakacha, said that Malusi was the cause of our herds of cattle becoming smaller. When Malusi was herding cattle on the river plains where they were feeding, he kept on disturbing them and driving some away from the rest.

At this time Heva was staying with his mother. Her work was to keep watch over the sun so that the birds did not peck it, and Heva helped her by flapping away the flies which were troubling her.

Their mother Golela asked Heva, 'Where is your brother? What is he doing?' Heva replied, 'There he is yonder, disturbing your cattle on the river plain.' Then Golela called Malusi and said to him, 'Go. Choose what you want and depart. Go with them far away. What is left here is for Heva.'

After Malusi went away, all that remained on the river plain belonged to Heva, including the animals and the birds and the crops, but the cattle were reduced in number.

My grandmother used to say about this story, 'We who are descended from Heva are the victims of this separation between the brothers. Because Malusi in the beginning of the world took away many of the cattle of his mother's house, we have never had large herds of cattle since then.'

The Ngoni saw in the archaic form of this folk-tale several meanings. It was one of their traditional creation myths. It supported their belief that they were once owners of vast

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

herds of cattle. It emphasized the relationships between brothers in their mothers' 'house', and the vesting of the rights over cattle in the male members of the house. But the chief reason why it was told to the children was as a warning against quarrels between brothers, which led to their separating from each other and dividing the property of a house instead of keeping it intact.

The second folk-tale was always known as the story of Brass-Rod, the translation of the name of the elder sister.

The story of Brass-Rod

A certain chief had two daughters. The name of the older one was Ntonga-ye-Tusi, and the younger one was Mhikasi. Ntonga-ye-Tusi, because she was the daughter of a chief, wanted to go and seek in marriage a chief who had a country of his own. So she set out on her travels, leaving her younger sister at home. When she met crippled people on the road, she was polite to all of them, and helped them and made them comfortable.

When she arrived at a certain place she went to the men of the village and they asked her, 'What have you come here for?' She replied, 'I want to seek a chief in marriage.' The man said, 'Well, our chief is a snake, but don't be afraid. When he visits you in the hut he will come with a whistling wind.'

They made her enter a hut and she stayed there quietly saying nothing, while they prepared for the wedding. Suddenly she heard the wind and knew it was the coming of the chief. The chief asked the elders of the village 'Whose wedding are you preparing for?' They said, 'It is for your wedding O Chief and yonder is your bride.' Ntonga-ye-Tusi stayed silent in her hut. She 'sewed up her heart' and was brave. Suddenly the snake-chief entered the hut and coiled round her body and put his head on her heart, saying to himself, 'Let me listen. Perhaps she is afraid.' But she was not afraid.

● 539 So they took each other in marriage. The people told her, 'Now then, give him watery gruel for his food and put it for him in the fire hole.' When the gruel was poured out there, he sucked it up because he had no teeth.

Some time after this Ntonga-ye-Tusi rose up to go and see the people at her home. When she got there her younger sister saw her fine clothes and was jealous of her. She said to herself, 'I too am going to the place where my big sister went to get married.'

So Mbikazi rose up and went on her travels. But she treated badly all the crippled people she met, and did not pity those who were carrying heavy loads, and used insulting language to many. When she arrived at the village of the chief who was a snake, the people received her politely and made her go into a hut for the wedding. They told her, as they had told her sister, that she should 'sew up her panic' and not be afraid because the chief was a big snake who came with a wind. When the chief came Mbikazi did not receive him quietly as her sister had done. She ran to and fro in the hut and cried out 'Alas! Alas! What have I found?' Then she trod on the tail of the snake-chief and he was angry and said, 'In what manner have you come? Were you come with insults to call me names and to tread on me?' He caught her and beat her so hard that the village elders begged him to spare her. So he left her in the hut.

When Mbikazi cooked gruel for the chief, she was careless and left a lump in it. The chief sucked his gruel but the lump stuck in his throat and choked him. He wriggled and fainted. The girl ran away, but the people of the village gathered round him, lamenting. Then the small lump came out and the chief recovered, and said, 'Where has she gone?'

He went after her until he reached her home and there he coiled up near the well. When the women went to draw water, they threw down their pots and ran away, and reported that there was a wild beast at the well. Ntonga-ye-Tusi wondered if it could be her husband, so she went to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the well and sat near her husband, and they touched hands and saluted each other. 539

At first the village people ridiculed Ntonga-ye-Tusi because she had played such a trick on them and had gone off and married a wild beast. But she paid no attention and took her husband into her hut.

Then the village people said to her, 'We want to make your husband all right, so that he may stand upright. Don't be afraid and don't weep'—for she was already weeping, fearing that they might harm her husband.

They made the chief go into another hut and they shut the door and set fire to the hut and burned it. His bones burst asunder, and they picked them up and put them in a pit with a gourd full of oil and some iron rattles. Then they sat beside the pit. Suddenly they heard the rattles ringing far down inside and they hurried to take off the stone covering the pit. They saw coming out of the pit a good-looking man of a very handsome red appearance, wearing a head-ring.[1] They acclaimed him and said, 'Here indeed is our son-in-law.' This chief was courteous and well clad. He became the husband of Ntonga-ye-Tusi, later he married Mlikazi also.

This story had many allusions to Ngoni culture past and present. The emphasis on 'red colour' here, as in the story of Hova, recalled the Ngoni belief that they were originally a red, not a black, people. In old days, chiefs' daughters sometimes chose their own husbands, so Brass-Rod and her sister were following an old custom. When the snake-chief, after his transformation, married the younger sister, it was as a subsidiary wife, called by the special title of *nkenzi*. Such a marriage to a sister of the first wife was regarded as a compliment to the parents of the girl and a recognition of of their careful training of the first wife.

[1] The head-ring was the distinguishing mark of the warrior who had served in the army and was allowed to marry.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 867 The moral, which was always repeated at the end as part of the story, was that children were warned not to show unkindness to people but to treat them well so that people would bless them. They were reminded that the older sister showed the qualities of pity, courage and obedience, while the younger sister did not hesitate to display disgust and fear and carelessness. It was the older sister who had her ultimate reward as leading wife of a handsome chief, while the younger sister, as a subsidiary wife, had to take second place.

These two folk-tales were popular among the children, even though they were so different from the animal folk-tales, full of humour and absurdities. The children used to shiver with excitement over the Brass-Rod story, especially the little girls, and the boys sucked in their breath when the wind blew and snapped their fingers for the rattling in the pit. Because the stories were serious and had a didactic purpose, Ngoni fathers approved of them, and encouraged the grandmothers to tell them often in order that the children might remember the moral.

Learning how to behave

203 957 Ngoni villages, like the whole Ngoni kingdom, had an efficient system of communication between individuals and groups, but whereas the kingdom had a network of official [202] messengers continually moving between the capital and the outlying sections, the village 'intercom' depended on the children. At any time of day, from first light till after dark, children were moving about the village from one hut to another, from a hut to the kraal gate, taking messages, summoning people, carrying food, reporting arrivals. The messages and summons were all at the bidding of the adults. 576 When a child was called to take a message, he had to respond 957 immediately wherever he was, and run to hear what he was 867 wanted for. Someone calling a child's name, followed by a 202 long drawn out 'Yo—o—o', punctuated all the hours of daylight in a village. When a child was told to call someone

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

854 When the baby cried, and it was not time to take him to
585 his mother for suckling, the nurse girl jogged him up and down on her back, and walked to and fro with him endlessly, crooning little lullabies to soothe the baby. Some of these lullabies were traditional, handed down from the older women, others were improvised by a nurse girl or copied by her from another.

589 Two traditional lullabies, well know in the Northern Ngoni kingdom, were as follows:

Hush my child;
Never mind, never mind,
Hush my child;
Never mind, never mind,
There is a busybody gossiping
There is a busybody gossiping
Ho! We reap the maize

Khalume, Khalume, son of Mukhumphume,
What are you carrying?
I am carrying the food of the baby
For someone may go about defiling it
In the dark paths.

The following is an example of an impromptu lullaby which I heard from a nurse girl in the Northern kingdom:

Bu, bu, bu, bu,
The baby cries for its nurse and not for its mother.
Bu, bu, bu, bu,
She is coming to make gruel for the baby.
There she comes,
Bu, bu, bu, bu;
The baby sleeps.

853 The reference to the baby's food in two of the lullabies belongs to the second special feature of Ngoni infant care, the provision of baby food to supplement the mother's milk, and the arrangements for artificial feeding if the mother had

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

himself, with his eyes rather anxiously on the elders, lest he should take too large a lump, or get the relish all over his hand and wrist instead of only on his finger-tips. He learned, however hungry he was, not to stuff himself, and not to eat noisily. If he smacked his lips and gulped audibly, someone in the circle might say: 'I hear the guns of the Tyandla people booming.' They all stopped eating and looked at him, and he learned that a proverb could be a veiled rebuke, and he hung his head, ashamed. 862 264 [519]

Sometimes the smaller children had cow's milk or curds and whey or thin gruel given to them in a tiny gourd between the main meal-times, and through the day nurse girls and older sisters gave them little snacks if they thought of it or if the child whimpered because it was hungry. A favourite snack was ground bulrush millet, creamy and nutty to taste. Throughout this period spent in the women's world the child did not lack food either at or between meals. As he grew more mobile and independent, he went foraging in the compounds of his other mothers and his grandmothers, especially if his own mother had gone to her garden. They always welcomed him and gave him something to go on with. 855 [262]

After set meals the child was made to rinse his mouth, and his hands were cleaned by his nurse girl and his face and chest washed if he had covered himself with food fragments. His nurse girl found him a 'tooth-brush twig' and frayed it for him, and taught him to use it after meals as well as in the early morning. 863

Washing of small children was always done in the compound. While some children squirmed and yelled when washed, others liked it. They sat grinning on the veranda while their mother or nurse splashed water over them, rubbed soapy leaves on their hair, dried them with a cloth, and rubbed cow's fat on their skin. The Ngoni children in well-ordered households shone with cleanliness till they were about six years old. Then the boys dodged these female attentions, their skin became dry and scruffy, and their hair fell

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

potatoes or ground-nuts. Round their fire when dusk came on, the boys who were under fourteen asked each other riddles. The children, for girls did it in their own groups too, called riddles 'our lovely sitting game', 'our lovely wise sayings for little children', 'our wise sayings which were puzzles'. The use of riddles and their enjoyment was confined to children between about seven and fourteen, never older, and was only a game for after dark, never played in daylight. About the age of fourteen they suddenly dropped them, and if asked about them said, 'Yes, we once played at riddles, when we were young'. 000 524

Here are a few from the vast number of riddles known to the Ngoni children:

The live thing bore a dead thing and the dead thing bore a live thing—the fowl and the egg. [539

A large garden reaped into the hands—a man's hair.

My mother's food is sweet and cool in the morning and the evening but hot at midday—the sun.

What is it that goes on four legs in the morning, on two at midday, and on three in the evening?—a man, who crawls on hands and knees in childhood, walks erect when grown, and with the aid of a stick in his old age.

The hut of my mother has no door—an egg.

The little birds drink at one well—the roof rafters which meet at the top.

The roof is leaky—a basket-work beer-strainer.

Sitting round in a circle so that they all faced inwards towards each other, the children flung these riddles into the group, sometimes expecting anyone to reply, sometimes pointing at one child and addressing the riddle to him: 'There, there. Listen.' They jeered at slow and inept replies, and applauded quickness and correct answers. It was clear that riddles were partly a test of intelligence and of memory, partly a play on words with a humorous twist in question and answer, and partly a test of alertness to catch the meaning

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country.

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village.

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained.

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the pounder of the ordeal poison opens his monkey-skin wallet, pulls out the poison bark, and breaks it off into the mortar with a hippo's tooth. When he is chipping it off, he does not finish all the bark he has in his hand, he chips off a little and leaves the rest. When he is doing this the bark jumps, and falls on the left, and again on the right. They surely know that here to-day wonders will befall and that men will die and women. Then the medicine man says, "Give us men to go and draw water." Then the old man asks, "How many men shall we bring?" And perhaps he says, "Bring three, because the people are many," and the doctor tells them, "You must not glance behind, but just draw the water and return." (Lest they give warning to the flesh-eaters.) When he has finished cutting down the bark, he bids his attendant "begin to pound." They do not pound the poison bark as they would grain, they pound, thud! thud! and turn the pestle in the hands. While the attendant is pounding, the pounder of the bark keeps tapping, tat, tat, tat, on the mortar, with his monkey stick [which monkeys use for digging roots], and chants—

IV. "You have heard mother of children,
Mother of children of *Kundawa*.
Indiscriminate slaughter is the game war plays,
It slew the baboon at *Bongwe*,
When you slay let your victims fall backward and not forward.
Bag, make the poison hear my words.
You are come into the village, you are their advocate.
They say, that here so and so and so and so have died.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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It is to plead for them you have been summoned.
There they are, she of the house of the Hills, and he of so and so's clan.
She of the Hills, it is she who has taken the basket.
He, the man, took the little sharp knife,
If it be not you, on the spot, on the spot, you must vomit,
If it be you,
Oh slay, slay, slay."

When they come with the water, the medicine man takes a water-jar full, and pours it into the mortar. You can hear the froth come foaming up, and then he draws a cup of the poison and struts about stirring it with his monkey stick, and uttering this incantation—

"Pick them out, pick them out, pick them out,
You see only the morning's sun, its rays when sinking in the west you must not see.
Are you not that one?
You went to Zomba,
You beat the drum,
It was heard in the 'Never-reach-there country' of the fly,
The spurred fly.
There is a squint-eyed lizard there.
If it were not you who beat that drum,
You must vomit.
If it were you,
You must die.

V. "You went into the regions of the air,
You captured a ray of the sun,
You likened it unto a girdle,
Saying, 'Do you be my strength,
That when the poison comes,

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

You will give me the mastery over it, 754
I shall win, 695
This girdle do you sever, sever, sever.' 791
You swallowed the egg of a fish-eagle, 539
That the poison when it came might become as naught,
This egg you must smash.

"You took the spleen of a crocodile,
You laid it in your heart,
You took a python's belly,
You swallowed it, that power might be yours,
Do you [my poison bark] rend these.

"You took WAX,
You smeared it on your feet,
Going in your neighbours' fields,
Going with stealthy tread to gather up his grain,
To dust off again in your own garden,
Your companions are in want,
You have wealth to overflowing.

VI. "When you see your neighbour's child,
You say, 'Why should he walk thus at large?'
But surely I had better have eaten him
He who thinks thus shall enter here [into the mortar].

"The broken gourd-cups off the grave you beat together, that they might turn into snakes.
Was it not you who sang the song, saying,
'If it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy,
They go about rolling it,
If it be small and light, they just lift it' [the corpse].

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Was it not you who sang so?
I seem to think I heard you.

"That little razor have you brought it now?
No, I have forgotten it [supposed answer].

"Maiden, beautiful maiden, E! E! E!
You took the arm-bones of the children of men,
You used to go and dance with them,
The squint-eyed lizard is on his seat, and
Sounding the drum,
Wheeling ever one way.
Now in the opposite direction, see they have rent the drum.

"There is a thing that walks by night,
There is something that comes by day,
It has seen him."

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VII. "No, to-day we have met each other, the boundary is there, from the east to the zenith is yours, from the zenith to the west is mine alone." He kneels down where one of the human flesh-eaters is, he does not address the demon himself, but talks with another who is next him, and says, "My child, where did you get your black magic; did you get it that you might be all-powerful, you alone?" When he gets up he exclaims, "I have got you, you must not escape, you must go in there, in there, you must enter here" [into the mortar]. When he sees that his attendant has finished pounding the poison, he takes some water and pours it into the mortar, and stirs it, and removes the drugs and takes two gourd-cups, and fills them with the poison. The woman and the man, they are the first to drink. Then the doctor makes every one else do so. Two men drink, he draws again, and gives two women. And so on until all have partaken.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

766 wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head till it all glitters, and then take the skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

II. The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day, they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre, and the flames go roaring up. They place the child (and heir) where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields and chant their war songs—

766 III. "This thing (that has befallen),
Have you heard these things, wife of an old man?"

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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"Wage war on the *Afo*,
Hayo, hayo, ho,
They have left him;
They have left him in their midst."

"*Humba*, the mighty medicine man, has gone with them,
He has swallowed a magic horn, has *Humba*."

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry (*kuguira*), they burn on a fire at one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse also is consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tuft of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief is removed. 966 [231]

IV. Next morning all the headmen shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows cut on the red head-bands. Then they allow three days to pass, and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps out and says, "Do you hear, your new chief is so and so" (naming his by his clan-animal name). Then every one shouts, "Hail," and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes (*ivuwi*). Then the elders 965 962 643

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

thrown away the day she comes out of the *tsimba* hut.) 881

II. On the seventh day, before dawn, one of the old women rises and makes a shrill noise with her tongue, then old matrons only collect and go with the girl to the stream. Should the maiden formerly have been of an insolent nature, she is tied up in a bundle of grass and thrown into the water. The old women warm themselves over a fire on the bank. When the sun gets hot, she is taken out, and set on the bank, and they commence to dance and pull her about, and reprove her, saying, "You there, listen; I sent you to go and draw water for me, and you refused. You said, 'I am not a slave.' But could you have come to the water here to-day? She who has brought you here, is not she that very old creature?" Then she is given all sorts of advice. When they have finished they shave her head and pubes, and rub her with oil and adorn her with beads. Then the old woman who is head of the ceremony takes her up on her back, and as they go they sing— [302]

"Wrinkles, mother, wrinkles,
I was at my own home, and never a wrinkle, [539]
I came among the Angoni,
I saw wrinkles, [538]
Wrinkles, O!
Things like this all fall on me.
Maiden cluck like an old sitting hen,
How can I cluck, I am only a young bird?
Cluck."

When they come with her to her mother's house, they sing—

"Tumbling about the things in her mother's hut.
In the hut that is no longer hers."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

must perish indeed. Give your children the rains, there is the beer we have given you." Then the people begin to clap their hands and sound the *nkulungwini*; they sing, swaying their bodies backwards and forwards, and keep saying, "Pardon, pardon." When they have finished propitiating, they take the beer that remains and dip a cup in and give every one to drink, just a little, no one is short, and even the children are made to sip it. When they have finished they take branches of trees and commence to dance and sing—

"This little cloud, and this,
This little cloud, and this,
Let the rains come with this little cloud.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Krôle.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Krôle."

When they come to the village they find an old woman has drawn water in readiness, and put it at the doorway, and the people begin to dip in their branches and wave them aloft, scattering the drops, and then they see the rain come in heavy storm-clouds.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

turns it out. They also trap them with a falling stone trap, and a spring trap, and others they dig for and smoke out. Mice dig out a hole, and a little farther on make a little chamber, where their nest is; farther on still is their escape exit, with just a thin layer of earth between them and the surface, so that when any one starts digging they can just burst out there. Other mice make a nest in the grass. The *Siswiri* mouse people do not eat; it cannot jump a path; if it tries to, it dies.

XII

THE WITCH-FINDER

I. When a person has died, the chief mourner goes off to seek the witch-finder. When he finds him he says, "At my home something awful has happened, and I am saying that perhaps you can follow up the thing that has killed the person." The witch-finder comes very late in the evening. When he comes, the chief mourner gives him children to lead him to the grave. When they come to the grave there, he asks them, saying, "Which way did they come with the body?" And they say they came there. And he puts medicine where they came, and asks again, saying, "Well, and his head, which direction did they lay it?" And they tell him, "His head was in this direction." He again with medicine guards the place. Then the witch-finder makes fire, and kindles it into flame, and pours medicine on it; and he does so lest people see the fire. And then they see the human flesh-eaters

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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are coming; they stand a long way off, and then they call the dead man by his old name, the one he was born with, saying, "Come forth so and so." And the dead man begins to come out of the grave. Then the witch-finder says, "You must not come forth; I am your redeemer." And he returns to the bottom of his grave again. Those flesh-eaters call him again, and he would come forth, but the witch-finder again says the same. Then the human flesh-eaters say, "Who is it that is making our meat to refuse [to step forth]?" And they throw two little pieces of wood, and they turn into lions; they keep coming and clawing (the ground) and roaring, and then the witch-finder sees they are come quite close, and he takes his medicine and scatters it, and these wild beasts turn into little bits of wood, and he takes the bits of wood and puts them in his horn. They send all the wild beasts, but they effect nothing. Then they say, "Whoever can it be who is more powerful than we? Come, come, come, let us see him." Then they come, as it were there, and stand in line, and send one; say they, "Go you and dance and wriggle." And he, when he would wriggle and dance, was not able, and he comes and says, "No, no, no, I cannot dance." (The witch-finder and his fire are glimmering.) "Let another go and try, if it be you think I am lying." And the other, when he would dance, is made to fall just the same. Then the witch-finder says, "I am tired of them." And he takes his (medicine) tail and waves it, and they are dead, and he commences to identify them, saying, "That is so and so, and that so and so." And then he asks, "Well, what shall we do with them—shall we kill them, shall we leave them?" Then perhaps he whose case it is (*wanini wake*) says, "Kill them." The witch-doctor takes sharpened sticks and drives them in

6:Ratzzay E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

between their legs, and begins one by one, and tells him, "You, you will let three days elapse, the fourth you will die;" and tells another, "You will let four days pass, and on the fifth you die." All of them he speaks to thus. Then he takes some medicine and scatters it, and they rise and begin to run off, and the witch-finder also runs away. At the village, when they have slept three days, they hear so and so is dead, and when four days have gone they hear so and so is dead. 791 539

XIII

AN ANGONI PRAYER FOR RAIN

1. When rain does not come, they go to the man with the lots to consult them. He of the lots says, "It is the great spirit; it is she who is keeping the rain from coming." Then all the elders assemble. In the morning at dawn, an ox is taken from the kraal, and the chief stands up and says, "This ox I have given you, our ancestor, seeing that you are keeping the rain from us; give us, your children, rain; look, all men are afflicted because of you." And the elders utter a response, saying, "Hail, chief, spare us, help us, thy people." And when they are answering (thus) the ox makes water, and then people know the spirit has heard. Should it not make water, they say the spirit refused (to do as asked), and leave the ox, and go again to consult the lots. And they kill the ox, and cut of its tail, and put it in a basket, and take also the liver, and put in the basket, and those they go off to be Kuka 789 791 792

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

their relations may dig them out, and place them in some other country.) And they throw them to the back of the cave, and take the corpse and lay it on top of them. Then they begin to fill in, the ones in the cave are groaning "Alas, alas!" When they have finished filling in, they go to the water to bathe. When they return to the village they dance. 766 782

XV

THE CHIEF OF THE KUKA AND THE SON-IN-LAW

I. The chief of the *Kuka* hut and his son-in-law once hoed a garden. When the maize grew up, the father-in-law told his son-in-law to build a watch-tower. Then the father-in-law went off and forged some arrow-heads, and gave them to his son-in-law, saying, "There are some arrows, you must keep a look-out with them in the garden here." And the son-in-law received the arrows, and remained at the watch-tower there. One day the wind came and flattened down all the maize, and his father-in-law came to walk on a round of inspection in the garden, and then he saw that the wind had laid the maize, and he clapped his hands and said, "Oh, to-day I see wonders, those arrow-heads I just forged for him to keep by him [and look at]." And then he went up to the watch-tower, where his son-in-law was, and asked him, saying, "Those arrow-heads I forged, I just forged that you might sleep with them on the watch-tower here?" And the son- 606 539 [243]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngumi FRS

606 in-law replied, "And how am I to wound the
●539 winds?"

II. When the father-in-law had gone off, the son-in-law took some maize and went off to set some falling-traps, and one of his traps caught a guinea-fowl, and he took it out, and went and gave it to his wife, saying, "There is a guinea-fowl, cook it; I am going away a long way; I shall be away four days, and for my share you must harden some of the gravy over the fire, the meat you can eat yourself." Then the woman went off and told her father, saying, "That fellow has killed a guinea-fowl, and he tells me I must brown the gravy before the fire for him, and the meat I am to eat, and where he has gone he will remain four days." And the father said, "And how can you brown gravy over a fire, my child?"

III. When the son-in-law returned, he told his wife, "Cook some porridge." And the woman did so, and went with it to her husband. But he looked into the dish and said, "Where is my gravy, that I told you to brown before the fire?" Then the woman went off to tell her father, saying, "He is
539 asking for the gravy." Then the father went off
607 to tell the villagers, "You must settle a case for
606 me." So the people assembled at the village court in crowds, and (one) said, "Chief of the *Kuka* hut, state your case that we may hear." Then the chief of the *Kuka* hut took up his case and began to speak, saying, "As for me, I bid you ask my son-in-law there, on my account, the things which he has in his heart." Then the people spoke, laying the charge before the son-in-law. And he replied, "Yes, what he says is true about me, but I was at the watch-tower, and I saw the chief of the *Kuka* hut, and he asks of me, saying, "You there, do you just sleep on the watch-tower here, and not keep a look-out over the garden? The arrows I went

6.Satuey E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Ngoni PRS

and forged that you might just keep them by you, 539
and not keep a look-out for what is eating up the
maize in the garden." And as for me, I replied,
saying, "And you, how do you wound the winds?"
So I also went and caught some "meat," that they
in their turn should brown some gravy for me, for,
seeing they know how to wound the wind with an
arrow, they could also brown gravy before a fire;
and that is what the case against me is." And the
elders said, "That is his complaint, is it? The chief
of the *Kuka* hut was in the wrong."

XVI

THE TORTOISE AND THE ANTELOPE

I. A Tortoise and an Antelope once had an 539
argument. The Antelope said, "Tortoise, are you
able to run along with me?" And the Tortoise
replied, "Yes, I am able." Then the Tortoise went
off to tell his companions, and he said, "We have
had a discussion with the Antelope (about running),
and he says we must race together, and you, my
friends, come along, you must give me your assistance." And the Tortoise began to place them in a
long line, and they reached to the plain which they
had agreed upon [as the scene of the race]. Then
the Antelope said, "Tortoise, come on, let us begin
to run." Then the Antelope set off as hard as he
could; he runs and runs, and at length calls out,
"Hallo, Tortoise!" And the Tortoise replied far
in front, "Hallo! I passed long ago." And the
Antelope set off again, and again called out, "Where

Editing E, G-S (ca. 1900) 1917 PRS Ngoni PRS

539 are you, Tortoise?" And the Tortoise replied, "As for me, I passed long ago." So the Antelope had just to give up.

XVII

THE TWO-HEADED PYTHON

1. Once upon a time there was a Python with two heads; he was very long, and sang a song, which said—

> "*Ngingirangi* when walking,
> He says '*Ngingirangi*,'
> Walking he says, '*Ngingirangi*.'"

And from his back some one repeated just the same (song). And he made up a pipe of hemp and coughed *wopo! wopo! wopo!* and from behind him he heard *wopo! wopo! wopo!* And he asked, "Who is that trying to imitate me?" And he sent his attendants, telling them, "Go see [who it was], and when you have found him, kill him." And they went off, following their master's [body], and at length came to where it ended, and they say, "Must we kill him; if we do so, will not he [our master] die? Come, let us leave him." And they went to tell him, and said, "Well, his body and yours are one and the same, how shall we kill him?" But the Python was angry, saying, "Why did you spare him? I wish you to kill him." And then he lit his pipe again and coughed *wopo!* and said, "Go, you must not spare him again; to-day go and kill him."

6.Ramsay E.G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

So the attendants came to where the second head was, and cut its throat, and as they return he is decaying; when he would cough he cannot finish, and just goes, "*wopo! 'opo! 'po!*" with a weak voice, and decays, and decays, and dies. 539 ●

XVIII

THE STORY OF KACHIRAMBE

1. Some young girls once said, "Come, let us go and pluck leaves for a relish with our porridge." And when they were gathering them, one of the children saw the egg of a hyæna, and picked it up, and put it in her basket, and said to her companions, "You children, I have got all I want, I am going." And her companions said, "Whenever did you pull them, when you are off so soon?" And she replied, "As for me, I filled my basket some time ago." So her companions bade her go. When she has gone, they saw a hyæna; he has come up to them and asks, saying, "You children, who has taken my egg from there?" And they deny having done so, saying, "We do not know, but she who has gone off perhaps she has taken it." And the hyæna went off. He comes to where she lives, and says, "Who has taken my egg?" And the mother of the girl replies, "But the child, she has come in with an egg, it is on the fire," and the hyæna said, "Well, what am I to do?" And the woman replied, "Wait, when I have a child you shall eat him." And the hyæna said, "Yes, [that is a good arrangement]."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 II. Another day, when the mother went to the water, the hyæna asked her if she had had the child, and the woman replied, "No, not yet." And every day the hyæna is asking the same thing, and then one day he said, "If you do not quickly have that child you are the one I shall eat." And then the woman saw a boil on her shin bone, it is all swollen and soft. And it burst, and there came forth a child. He has a bow, and a quiver full of arrows, and a little gourd of medicine, and a knife and dogs, and he said, "I have come forth, I, Kachirambe, the child born on a shin bone." Then the mother of this Kachirambe was again asked by the hyæna, when she went to the stream, if she had had the child, and she replied, "Yes, and the child is very clever, you cannot catch him, but I myself shall deceive him for you; you I tie up in a bundle of grass and then I shall go and tell Kachirambe, 'Go and lift the bundle of grass which is on the path there.'" Then she tied up the hyæna in a grass bundle, and went off to the village and told her child, "Go and lift the bundle of grass that is on the path." Then Kachirambe went, and stood a long way off, and said, "You bundle, get up that I may lift you easily." And the bundle got up by itself, and Kachirambe said, "What bundle is it that gets up alone? As for me, I have not seen such a one, and I do not intend to lift it." And off he went to the village.

III. And the hyæna came along, and told the woman that her child was a clever one indeed. And she told him that to-day she would cheat him over a falling stone trap for killing rats. And she said to Kachirambe, "Go, set a falling trap, see the rats are finishing the baskets." Then Kachirambe got a large flat stone, and a forked stick, and the stick to lay across it, and bark string, and got the

8/Ratray E,G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

little bit of stick which sets the trap, and ties it on, and takes the bait and puts it in the trap, and has finished. In the evening the hyæna comes to the trap, and causes it to fall, and Kachirambe's mother called out, "Kachirambe, the trap has fallen." Then Kachirambe said, "You trap fall again, that I may know a rat has been caught." And the hyæna is at the trap, heave ho, bang! And Kachirambe said, "What trap is it that falls twice? I have not yet seen one of that kind."

IV. Then Kachirambe's mother again told the hyæna, saying, "Go and wait at the bean-tree, and I shall go and tell my child to go and pull beans." So Kachirambe went, and got his basket, and transformed himself into a fly, and the hyæna just keeps looking out for him, saying, "I wonder (wpalo) if he will come." He sees not a sign, and then Kachirambe got all he wanted, and came to the village, and his mother was again astonished, saying, "Where did he get the beans when there is only one tree of them?" Then the mother said, "To-day I shall deceive him telling him to go and bring firewood, and you (hyæna) will corner him there." And she said to Kachirambe, "Go and get wood in the bush." But that child had a dream, that to-day he would go to his death, and he took his bow, and quiver, and little medicine gourd, and his great big knife, and went off, and climbed into a tree, and began to cut; and then he saw the hyæna has come, and says, "You have died to-day, you do not escape. I shall eat you, come down quickly from up there." And Kachirambe cut off (a piece of) wood and said, "I am coming down, you gape." And the hyæna gaped, and said, "Come down." And Kachirambe answered, "Yes, I am coming." And he threw the lump of wood and it entered the mouth of the

6:Ratray E, G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngani FRS

539 hyena, and it died; and his dogs, when they would have bitten it, died also. And Kachiramba came down, and took his medicine, and scattered it over his dogs, and they got up. When he went to the village he shot an arrow, saying, "What did I say to you when you must needs send wild beasts against me to eat me?" And his mother begged pardon (of him), saying, "Pardon, my child, my apologies suffice without the case being brought up for trial." [Lit. the case is finished at the mouth.]

XIX

THE RABBIT AND THE LION

I. A Rabbit once dug a game-pit that he might kill game, and carefully covered it over, and then he took his axe and stuck it up on a tree, and began to cry, saying, "Mother, mother!" Then a Bush-buck came along and asked why he was crying, and the Rabbit said, "There came a Reed-buck and he has put my axe up there out of my reach." And the Bush-buck said, "There, and you have given up trying to get it down by yourself, but I shall bring it down for you." But when he made to bring it down, he fell into the game-pit, and the Rabbit jumped and got his axe, and cut at the Bush-buck, and again stuck his axe up, and covered over the game pit anew, and again began to cry. And a Buffalo came along. "Why are you crying, child?" And the Rabbit said, "A Sable-antelope came, and he has put my axe up above out of my reach. And the Buffalo said, "There, wait, I shall

G.Barnay E.G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Signed FRS

get it down for you." And when he was about to do so, he went down the game-pit, and the Rabbit jumped up again, got his axe, and killed the Buffalo with it. And a Lion comes by. "Why do you weep, Rabbit?" And he replied, "There came past an Elephant, and he has placed my axe up aloft out of my reach." And the Lion said, "Wait a bit, I shall get it down for you." And when he would do so, he fell into the game-pit, but (this time) the Rabbit also fell in there, and the Lion seized him, and said, "How comes it you deceived me so that I fell? As for me, now I kill you." And the Rabbit said, "Pardon, great chief, I am yours; if it be you have children, I shall look after them for you." And the Lion answered, "My children are two, and them you shall nurse."

II. And then they went to the Lion's village, and he was told, "You there, the children you have to nurse, there they are." The Lion went to the forest to hunt game, and on his return called the Rabbit to take the game (he had killed) to his cubs, saying, "You Rabbit, go and eat the bones, the children you must go and give the flesh to, because their teeth are not yet strong." But the Rabbit went off, and said, "You cubs, there is a bone for you, you will eat that you may harden your teeth; as for me I shall eat the flesh." Next morning the Rabbit said to the cubs, "Come, let us go to the stream to play." And when they came to the water, he said, "Come, let us wrestle to see who is the strongest." And a cub knocked down the Rabbit, and he said, "You must not kill me; if you kill me, who will show you the way to the village?" So he was spared, but the Rabbit in his turn overcame the cub, and twisted his neck, and then took the other one and went off with it to the hut. Then the father called him,

S.Ramay E, G-S (ra. 1909) 1907 FES Signal FES

539 and said, "There is some meat, go and give it to the children, and I also come there to see my children." Then the Rabbit held up a cub, and showed it him, saying, "Look, there you have one." He lifts it up again, and says, "There is another." But he held up the one (both times). Another day the Rabbit said, "Come, let us battle again." And they began again to play about, and the cub knocked the Rabbit down, and said, "You supposed back there you had killed my brother for me." And the Rabbit said, "If you kill me, whom do you go with to the village?" So the cub spared him, and the Rabbit then got on top and killed him. Then he said, "How now, seeing I have killed them all, can I go and deceive them at the village? But I shall just climb into a thorn tree, and get all scratched." So he climbed up, and threw himself down, crashing through the branches, and scratched all his body, and ran to inform the Lion, saying, "Sir, I have not seen what is good to-day; the cubs, they have killed them to-day. Look, I barely managed to escape, they would have killed me also." And the Lion said, "Have you recognized them?" And the Rabbit replied, "I knew some of them, I go (now) to identify them."

III. So he went off, and came to the village of the Baboons, and finds the villagers playing at throwing tops at maize cobs, and saying as they threw, "Hands!" Then the Rabbit said, "Friends, let us throw together, all of us, and when I throw, when I say, "Who ate the Lion's cub?" you must say, "It was I, it was I"; that is the proper thing to say, and as for us, we always say so." When leaving, the Rabbit said, "You fellows, I come back to-morrow and we shall throw again." Then the Rabbit went back to the Lion, and said, "They who killed the children I have cornered to-day."

Ramsay E.G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

And the Lion said, "Come, let us all go that I may go and see." But the Rabbit said, "I must tie you up in a bundle." And he tied him up, and took some fruit and stuck them here and there in the bundle, that the Baboons might rejoice, saying, "Our friend has come with something to eat to-day." So they came to the Baboon's village, and the Rabbit said, "I have come, get out the tops that we may throw them." And he began to throw, saying, "Who ate the Lion's cub, and here and here he has not yet come back?" And the Baboons replied, "It was I, it was I." And the Rabbit also said, "Listen, my bundle, yourself." And the bundle began to unfasten, and the Lion burst out, and seized all the Baboons.

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XX

THE RABBIT AND THE ELEPHANT

1. Without there was a drought, and the ground became hard, without any water, and all the animals were in distress, and the Elephant said, "You all, we shall die, come let us scrape out a hole, to see if the water will come." Then all the animals collected, and went to an open plain, and the Elephant said, "I must begin to stamp." (And as he stamped) he said, "Let me stamp there, there is water, let me stamp there, there is water." And they just see clouds of dust. Then the Rhino said, "Wait, I am going to try to stamp." And he began, "Let me tramp there, and there is water." But he just gave up too. All the animals

6.Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngwel FRS

539 failed, and then the Rabbit said, "Wait a bit, let me tramp." Then the great ones (of the forest) rebuked him, saying, "What you, you would stamp (with) your tiny little feet? Look at my foot, it is like the bottom of a grain mortar." And the Rabbit replied, "I can only try, if it be too much for me, let me fail, having made the attempt." And he began to tramp—

"I must tramp there, (and) there is water,
I must tramp there, (and) there is water."

And they saw the damp soil was showing up. And the Elephant came and said, "Get out, I must stamp." And he stamped and tramped, and again they just saw dust rolling up, and he said, "Come here, Rabbit, you shall try again." And then they saw a pool, stretching far away, and all the animals drank. And the elephant issued a proclamation, and said, "Let not one other Rabbit be seen drinking water here, except that Rabbit who got down to the water, he shall drink." Then the Rabbits said, "As for us, we have not yet seen the like, the water which our kinsman pierced through to, it, they must say, the Rabbits must not drink." Then the Elephant said, "I shall be watchman and shall see who comes to drink water here." And then the Rabbits talked together for a little, and said, "Come, children, let us take our battle-axes, and be off and dig for honey."

II. (Some time after) a Rabbit came along (to the pool) and hailed, and the Elephant said, "And who are you?" And the Rabbit said, "It is I, and I have got something sweet to suck, for giving the great ones (of the forest) to sip when once they have been bound." And the Elephant said, "Let me see, and have tasted it first." And the Rabbit gave him a little gourd-cup (with some honey in it),

Schaumay E.G-S (ca. 1950) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

saying, "There." And the Elephant put in his trunk, and licked it, and said, "Yes, indeed it is good, tie me up." Then the Rabbit took his string and bound him, and went and had a drink, and cleared off, and the Elephant said, "Rabbit, you are going off without giving me (the honey)." But the Rabbit just went off, taking no notice. Then the Elephant called out, "Children, come and unbind me." And his companions came, and said, "Who has tied you?" And the Elephant replied, "The Rabbit came along with something sweet for sucking, and he said it was for giving the great one of the forest to suck, but they must first be bound, and I said, 'Well, bind me,' and he bound me, and drank his fill of water, and ran off." Then the Tortoise spoke, saying, "I must wait here to-day." And the Elephant said, "Child Tortoise, you who shuffle along, is it you who would catch the Rabbit?" And the Tortoise replied, "Never mind, stick bees' wax on me, I shall catch him on this very spot." Then his companions rubbed wax over him, and set him by the water, and he just remained with his back sticking up above the water, plain to be seen. And then the Rabbit came along and said, "Hallo, there!" He sees (lit. has seen) everything is quiet. So he came to the water, that he might look and look, but found there was no one. Then he said, "But I must drink from the stone there." And he comes, and jumps on the back of the Tortoise, and drinks and drinks, and when he would say, "Now I must be off," he found he was stuck fast. And then the Tortoise began to shout out, "I have got him, I have got him, come all of you." Then all the animals came and pulled out the Tortoise along with the Rabbit, and one seized the Tortoise, and another the Rabbit, and pulled them apart, and

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6.Sarony E, G-5 (ca. 1905) 1907 FRS Signal FRS

539 the Rabbit said, "You all, if you are going to kill me, and you go and seize me by the head, I shall live, if you seize me by the leg I shall live, but if you catch hold of my tail, that is my death."

III. So they caught hold of his tail, and when they would dash him down his tail stripped off. So the Rabbit ran off home and told his companions, saying, "There has come a tail-stripper (into the country); look at mine there, I have long ago pulled it off, he declares. Should he see a person who has not his tail stripped off, that one he seizes, he says." So it came to pass, at their village there, the Rabbits stripped off each other's tails, all of them. Then the Elephant came—he is following the spoor of the Rabbit on the damp soil, and he says, "I have you to-day, who was that one who came to drink water?" Then the Rabbit said, "How do we know? we are not proper rabbits; look, we all are without a tail. Should you see one with a tail, he is not of our village." So the Elephant just gave up the quest, and went home. And the story ends there.

XXI

THE COCK AND THE SWALLOW

I. A Cock and a Swallow once struck up a friendship, and the Cock called the Swallow, and said, "You must come along to my home, and we shall chat." And the Cock told his wife, that when the Swallow came, she was to say to him, "Your friend, is not that he there? He says he has cut off his head, as he has had a great shock." Then the

6.Kenney E.G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FES Signal FES

Swallow came and asked for his friend. (The Cock had taken his head and put it under his wing, so that his friend must come and say he had cut it off with a knife.) Then the Cock's wife said, "Is not that he there? He says he has cut off his head, as he has had a great shock." And the Swallow sat and sat, and waited and waited, and at last went off home without seeing him. And the Swallow in his turn went to his hut, and told his wife, "To-day I am going to call my friend the Cock, and when he came there, you will say to him, that his friend had cut off his head, as he had received a great shock over something." And the Cock came, and asked the Swallow's wife where his friend was, and she said, "Is not that he, there? He says he has cut off his head, as he had a shock over something he had seen." And however the Cock may look and look he does not see the slightest movement, because the Swallow had taken a knife and cut off his head. Then the Cock went off home and remained there three days, and came to the Swallow's hut, and said, "How is our friend now? We do not see him coming to our home to talk over things." And the Swallow's wife replied, "I do not know, he is still lying there as before." And that is how the Swallow went away (from this earth).

II. But a kinsman of the Swallow's also struck up a friendship with the Cock, saying, "Let me see [what I can do to get even with him]." And he said to the Cock, "You and I indeed love each other, we shall never part." Then the Swallow told his wife that to-day she was to cook pumpkins as he was going to summon his friend the Cock, and when he came and should ask where his friend was, she was to say, "Your friend is in there" (in the pot). Then the Cock arrived and asked

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539 where his friend was, and the woman said, "Your friend is in here." The Cock may look, he finds the pot is boiling with the fire, and he was astonished, saying, "My friend must come out of the pot here?" Then the woman uncovered the pot, and the Swallow darted forth; he enters the middle of the smoke, just as if he is coming out of the pot, and sat down and said, "Ah, we were in there, and we heard you talking. Wife, dish out the pumpkin, we shall eat with the visitor." And the woman served out the pumpkin, and gave it them, and the Swallow began to eat with his friend. But the Cock went home, and told his wife that to-morrow she must cook pumpkins as he was going to eat his friend, and him she was to put in the pot, and when the Swallow came she was to say that her lord was in the pot. And the woman asked if he should not be cooked, and he replied, "No, for my friend acted thus, his wife cooked him, and I in my turn tell you you have got to cook me, and when the Swallow comes you must uncover me (in the pot) and I, I shall come forth with he smoke." And so the woman took some pumpkins, and sliced them up in a pot, and put it on the fire, and poured in water, and got fire-wood and broke it up at the fire, and put her husband in the pot and covered it over. And then her pot began to boil, but the Cock began to flap about in the pot, and at last died in it, and the woman just kept piling on the wood. Then his friend the Swallow came and said, "Where is my friend?" And the woman said, "He is in the pot there." And when she uncovered the pot, she saw the feathers all loose, and she said, "Is this life?" And she began to dish out, and saw her husband did not rise, he is all limp. And the Swallow said, "Have you cooked our friend?" And the Cock's wife said,

6.Ratuay E.G-5 (ra. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

"He would insist on telling me, saying 'Cook.' I asked him if he should not be burned, and he said 'No, my friend did this, I shall not burn.'" And the Swallow said, "You have acted badly." But when he went off to his own home he told the story to his companions, saying, "I made a fool of the Cock, and his wife cooked him. He used to say he had fooled us, we on our part have fooled him and he has died, even as our kinsman died long ago."

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XXII

THE TORTOISE AND THE BABOON

I. A Tortoise and a Baboon made a covenant of friendship, and the Baboon told the Tortoise, "you must come to my home and drink beer." So when the beer was ready, the Tortoise set out (to visit) the Baboons, and he found they had already climbed into a tree, and taken their beer with them. And the Tortoise they addressed, saying, "Climb up here, for we do not drink beer on the ground." And the Tortoise when he would climb, slips, and at length gives up. And the Baboons said, "See, there is the beer, it is your own fault if you leave it." Then the Tortoise went off home and cooked beer of his own and summoned the Baboons; then he set fire to grass, and set his beer down in the centre of the burned patch, and then thoroughly washed the cup (for drinking the beer with). And the Baboons, when they came, trampled all over the burned place, and then the Tortoise told them, "Look here, this cup belongs to some one else,

6.Ramsay E.G-6 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngani 783

539 and he says you must not catch hold of it with dirty hands, first of all go and wash your hands. And the Baboons went off to wash; coming back they came and trod again on the burned place, and finally the Tortoise says, "It is your own fault if you leave the beer."

XXIII

THE TORTOISE AND THE LEMUR

I. A Tortoise once married at a certain village, and a Lemur also asked for a wife at the very same place, and the reason they "acted the son-in-law" was that they were poor; had they had wealth they would have got a wife by purchase. Then their mother-in-law divided out a garden for them, saying, "The Tortoise will hoe and go in that direction, the Lemur will hoe and go in that." So they commenced to hoe in their gardens, and the Tortoise sang—

"Shuffling along I go, they at the village will say he is hoeing." (*Repeat.*)

And the Lemur sang—

"Chop! I have cut, Lemur you just hate me."

And people saw, in the direction of the Lemur, a clear open space, but in that of the Tortoise the bush was thick. Then one day, their mother-in-law said she wished to go and see in the gardens where her sons-in-law were hoeing. When she

Gilstrap E.G-S (ca. 1909) 1907 FRS Digest FRS

came there, she saw where the Lemur was, was hoed, and where the Tortoise was, there was not a day's hoeing done, and she said, "It seems I have chosen a man who cannot hoe; now the Lemur he is a man, he tries to hoe." And she told the Tortoise to go and cut down a tree which was in the middle of the garden, and told him, if he did not fell it, he should clear out from there. Then the Tortoise pondered, saying, "How shall I go and cut down the tree, as if I could climb up aloft; but I must make friends with some person, and perhaps he may go and cut it down for me."

II. And then the Tortoise saw a Wild-cat, and said, "Cat, you are my friend, you must go and cut down for me the tree that is in my mother-in-law's garden." And the Wild-cat got up very early in the morning, when the cold morning wind was blowing, and came to the tree, and cut and cut. When it was quite light outside, the Tortoise took his axe, saying, "I must go and cut down my tree." So he went off, he crawls along, his axe he throws in front of him, and shuffles up to it. When he got to the tree, he found that the Wild-cat had cut it down, and lopped off all the branches, and then the Wild-cat went off, and the Tortoise remained; he listlessly cuts. When he sees his mother-in-law (coming) he strives with all his might. The mother-in-law was surprised, saying, "What, the Tortoise has cut down that tree in this manner, now he is my son-in-law, he does not again leave me." And again at the Wild-cat's home there was a mourning. And the Wild-cat went to call the Tortoise, and told him, saying, "At my home they are electing a new chief, and you, my friend, in your turn, will go and ransom me to-day, (for) when the other children come and speak their names (at the grave) you will remain silent; when you hear me saying,

G.Barney E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1967 F85 Signed F85

539 'I, the Wild-cat, have come, that I may guide the people,' you shall answer, and the chieftainship will be mine." And the Tortoise went off in the very middle of the night, and burrowed at the grave, and went in. Next morning at dawn a great crowd assembled, and one child came out and said, "I, so and so, have come and I say I must rule the people." And at the grave yonder they saw not a sign. Then there came forth another child and said, "I, so and so, have come that I may rule your village." At the grave there is not a sound. And then the Wild-cat got up and said, "I, the Wild-cat, am come, and I say I must rule your people." Thereupon all the people heard at the grave there speaking, saying, "Yes, I am wishing for you, my child, the Wild-cat, that you should rule my people well, in my stead." Then every one rejoiced, and they lifted up the Wild-cat and put him on their shoulders, and that evening the Tortoise came out (of the grave) to go home.

III. Then at the Wild-cat's they made beer, and went and called the Tortoise, and the Tortoise told the children of the village, saying, "Come, my friend has summoned me, we must go and drink beer." Then the children of the village taunted him, saying, "You, where will you see a friend?" And the Tortoise said, "Come, you must go and see my friend, he is greater than any of you." So the Tortoise went off with the children from the village, and came to the village of the Wild-cat, and the Wild-cat got a mat in readiness and spread it down for him. Then he got out beer, and set it down before the Tortoise, saying, "There is food." And the Tortoise in his turn passed it to the children from his village, and they drank and drank the beer, and then he bade his friend farewell. And when he has come to his village these children (who had

G.Barnsey E.G-S (ca. 1960) 1987 FRS Ripon FRS

always laughed at him) spread a good report, saying, "The Tortoise is a chief; you must not always be annoying and contradicting him, for we to-day have seen with our own eyes, the friend of the Tortoise is a very great chief."

XXIV

THE BLIND MAN AND THE HUNCHBACK

1. Long ago a chief built his village, and to the village there used to come lions to seize people. And the chief said, "What are we to do with these lions?" And his people said, "Speak with them." Then the chief asked them, saying, "How is it you are always seizing people?" And the lions said, "We are saying you must give us your two daughters whom you love, and when you give us the children we shall not come back to catch people." Then the chief took his two children, and went and made a rough grass hut for them at the hill where the lions came forth from. And from another country there set out two men, one blind and the other hunchbacked, and they were on their way to the chief's village. And Hunchback saw a tortoise on the path, and he told his comrade, "There is a tortoise here." And Blind-eyes said, "Pick it up." And Hunchback refused. Then Blind-eyes said, "Pick it up for me." And he picked it up for him, and put it in his wallet. And they walked and walked, and came to another place, and found that a porcupine had died there. And Hunchback said, "There is a porcupine here." And his companion

Kearney E, G-4 (ca. 1960) 1907 FRS Signal FRS

●539 said, "Pick up one of his spines." But he refused, and Blind-eyes said, "Well, pick it up for me." And he did so, and put it in his bag, and they went elsewhere, and found there had died an elephant there, and the man who had wounded the elephant, he also was dead, and his gun was there, and Hunchback again said, "There has died an elephant here, and the man and his gun are on the same spot." And his companion said, "Pick up the gun and one tusk." And he refused, and Blind-eyes said, "Pick them up for me."

II. When they saw the sun was setting, Hunchback climbed a hill, and he saw on the other side there was smoke rising, and they went there and found two maidens in a grass hut, and they said, "Darkness has overtaken us, and we wish somewhere to sleep." But the girls refused, saying, "You must not sleep here; as for us, our father built us the hut, that when the lions come they may come and eat us." But they refused (to be warned), and said, "We sleep here." When they would have talked on, they find the lions have come, they are roaring, and then one asks, "Who is it talking in the hut? Let us eat them up together." Then Blind-eyes said, "You are not able to eat us; and as for us, we only came here to find sleeping-room." And the lion said, "I shall throw one of my lice at you, and you will be frightened (enough then)." Thereupon they all fainted with the exception of Blind-eyes; and then the lion threw a louse, and Blind-eyes felt about with his hand for it, and picked it up, and said, "That tiny little thing! See, I go and cast it on the fire." And when he did so, it gave a crack, and he said, "Now, in my turn, I am going to throw you my louse." And he got out the tortoise and threw it; and the lion picks it up, looks at it, and says (aside), "Ah yes, he has

Kitsuney E.G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Signal FRS

huge lion." But he says, "No, I am not afraid; now I am going to throw a hair of mine for you (to see). And he pulled out one hair, saying, "There it is, I have thrown it for you (to see)." And Blind-eyes feels about for it, and says, "That is what I am to fear! look at mine." And he takes the porcupine quill, and throws it at the lion, and the lion picks it up, looks at it, and says, "Yes, indeed" (aside). But he says, "No; even though you can do such things I am not going to spare you." And he takes a tooth and throws it, and Blind-eyes feels about for it, picks it up, and says, "I am to fear this, am I? Wait till I throw you mine."

III. Then he cast the tusk of the elephant at him, and the lion gave a jump, saying, "Ha! yes, indeed, the fellow has a fearsome tooth" (aside). But he said, "Now I am going to let you hear my voice." And he began to roar, and Blind-eyes said, "The other—let it sound its voice too, that I may hear you." Then he said, "I have heard, and now come close that you may hear my voice." Then the lions came up close, and Blind-eyes said, "Where are you?" And they said, "We are here." And he said, "Lay your heads together." Then he took his gun and pointed it in their direction, and said, "Now listen, I am going to talk my words." And he fired the gun, and killed the lot. Said he, "Have you heard my words?" He finds all is silence. Then he roused his companions who had fainted, saying, "Get up, I have killed those wild beasts." And they contradict him, saying, "You are deceiving us." And Blind-eyes said, "You people, do get up; you must open the door for me, and I can go and look myself." And they did so, and he goes and feels, and says, "This is the male, this the female. Come outside, that you may see for yourselves."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 IV. Next morning, they went off; one of the maidens carried Blind-eyes, and the other Hunchback, on their backs. When they came to the village their father saw them, and said, "What, you have come back again, though I said you were to remain there; now I shall kill you all." And the children told him that (the men) had killed those wild beasts, and the father asked if that was indeed true, and they said, "May I be struck dead if it is not." And the father sent men to see. And they came and found them, and cut off their tails, and went and told the chief, saying, "There are the tails; it is quite true they killed them." Then the chief held a consultation with his people, saying, "Well, those people who killed the wild beasts, what are we to do about them?" And they said, "You must just give them these maidens in marriage." So they gave Blind-eyes his, and Hunchback his, and took six shells, saying, "One, three, the other, three, and you must go and build your village there." And as they went along the road, Hunchback said, "They have given us five shells, and they say, two are yours, and three are mine." And Blind-eyes said, "Oh, you are cheating me; did not the chief say he had given us six?—mine three, and yours three; how comes it you deceive me, insomuch as when I said, 'Pick up this,' you refused?" Then Hunchback stood up and hit him on the eyes, and straightway Blind-eyes found his eyes were opened; and he took his knobkerry and hit his companion, and Hunchback found his back had straightened. And thereupon they grasped hands in token of friendship.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXV

SOME RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

I. "COME, let us give riddles to-day," some one says, and then every one collects, and the hut is packed. One begins to say, "Such and such a thing, what is it?" And should his companions give up, then (the one who gave the riddle) says, "Then kill me so and so's cattle." And they do so (in pretence), saying, "Go and eat what's his name's." And he has them stabbed, the meat is all over the place, and eats and eats, and says, "The answer is so and so." 517

SOME RIDDLES

Q. Something without a spoor; what is that? 539 ●
A. An arrow.

Q. Something that cannot be bound.
A. The winds. (Perhaps water, or smoke.)

Q. Something with a very keen scent; for even if you hide away some little thing you have, it goes and finds it out. What is that?
A. A fly.

Q. Something which warms itself with its back to the fire.
A. The shelf above the fire, in a hut.

Q. A war which baffles all of you; there is one little thing, spoiling for a fight, that goes and tackles it. What is that?
A. The porridge stick.

Q. A person shoots his arrow up in the air, and when it returns, it does so without its shaft.
A. Winged white ant. (Because when it flies off it has wings, but falls without its wings.)

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

●539 *Q.* A little thing, yet that cannot be lifted.
A. A shadow.

Q. A tree which grows out of a companion tree.
A. The *ulimbo* tree.

Q. Up down, up down. What is that?
A. A pestle (for pounding grain).

Q. The house has been burned, and there remains only the cross-beam.
A. A path. (Because when the bush is burned the road-way is there stretching away.)

Q. I built a hut with only one post to prop up the roof. What is that?
A. A mushroom.

Q. Two people support a huge thing. What is that?
A. The two pair of supports of a grain store.

Q. The stone trap has fallen over and over again to-day alone. What is that?
A. The eyelid.

Q. Something which no number of people can lift, yet there is one person who can do so.
A. Water.

Q. Something which comes from far away, and finds us here.
A. The rain.

Q. A man who hoes many gardens in one day without being tired.
A. A barber.

Q. Something which finds the way by itself; it does not go wide of the mark even though it is dark.
A. The hand. (Because it does not forget the mouth.)

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Q. One axe handle, but ten axe heads.
A. A bunch of bananas.

Q. A hut without a doorway.
A. An egg.

Q. Something you cannot tell whence it fell from.
A. A cloud.

Q. A little thing of such importance that, when you wish it, you go and take it with both hands.
A. A ground nut.

Q. An old fellow who cuts the grass with his belly, and smoothes it down with his back.
A. A spoon (used for dishing out the porridge).

Q. A tree which you cut down to-day, and the next it begins to sprout.
A. Hair.

Q. However far away it be, this very day this thing reaches there.
A. Memories.

Q. You go in this direction, I go in that, and we must meet.
A. A belt.

Q. Some great beast which dies in the dry season, and the scent of which reaches us here.
A. The first of the rains.

Q. The animals meet each other at the water (where they all come to drink).
A. Men and women. (When there is a common place for drawing water, where those from different villages get their supply.)

Q. A chief sent a person to bring a goat, and some maize, and a leopard, and when he came to the river, he found only a small boat, and he said, "What must I begin with? Should I begin with the leopard, the goat will eat the maize, and if I

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 begin with the maize, the leopard will eat the goat, but I must begin with the goat." So he takes the goat and ferries it over, and again he began to think, saying, "Now, if I take the maize over, the goat will eat it, and should I take the leopard the goat will be eaten." Well, what did the man do?

A. First of all he ferried over the goat, it goes across, and he returns and takes the leopard, and also takes the goat back in the boat to the other side there, and leaves it there, taking over the maize, and comes back once more for the goat.

Some Proverbs

If water gets spilt, they do not gather it up.

Where a tree has fallen, you cannot hide the fall thereof.

That little you have is what you have eaten up beforehand; if you do not eat it up, it is some one else's. (*i.e.* "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die.")

O earth, I should not have eaten you (for yourself); I am only eating you because you are mixed up along with the honey.

You all start on an equality when it is a question of racing in the sand.

What has seen your friend to-day has gone off, to-morrow it will pay you a visit. (*i.e.* Do not laugh at a companion in trouble; your turn may come next.)

You gain wealth from my tusks, and yet you do not eat my flesh.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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feather head-dress, and in her hand she holds a little stick (for a spear), and her calico is tied round her waist, and her breasts swing free. The songs they sing at the Kanonomera dance go thus—

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What knocks off the dew,
Comes at the early dawn.—(*Repeat.*)

Looking, gazing, we just gaze one at the other.
(*Repeat.*)

When the drum sounds it is the *choinjoli* drum
that brings the spirit.—(*Repeat.*)

Far away there, far away,
Far away there, far away,
Far away where shines white that little cloud,
Far away there, is my bow.

Little quail, little quail, you are picking up the
little grains.
And what if he is,
Are they not his eyes?
It broke his leg for him;
Only hunger, only hunger.

Oh no, indeed, indeed,
Two wives have been too many for him indeed;
Two wives have been too many for him indeed.

You hate me,
You hate me for my being so old.—(*Repeat.*)

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Little maiden, whom war has given me,
Should you refuse to be mine,
I am as a slave in my grief,
And then what must you do?

We were far away;
Our companions had cut off their head rings.

XXVII

THE NTETEREZI DANCE

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[764]

It is danced only at a funeral.

Scrape out the beer pot and give me.
Have some sense, the beer is finished.

He is the husband who favours your companion
(*i.e.* his second wife),
And you, you only cook and give him, all in
silence;
And here you return,
And weep against the hut post.

Should you be a childless man,
Do not be hitting your neighbour's child,
That's so, father.
Don't you think you should go and beat that
maize you planted?
That's so, father.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 She has left him sleeping there, de de;
533 She has left the home he made her, de de;
She has left him.

The man who is in my home;
Yes, yes, father.
From the way he leans against the hut post (all indifferent to my charms)
You would think he had been drinking beer.

What, you say you would marry *me?*—
You of the goat-skin (loin cloth).
No, father; oh no, father;
You of the goat-skin.

Mother! mother!
Did she go to send you,
Saying, "When he comes you must abuse him?"

Oh stop that fidgeting and turning;
Stop saying, "I must so."
Stop saying, "I must thus."
We do not want that.

You have brought in vain your wooden pillow;
I do not wish you,
I do not want you.

Should you kill a little mouse, go and give it to your sister.
With one's wives it's do this, do that for them, and then they leave you.
We have said so; we have said so.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVIII

THE KANDENGA DANCE

In dancing this dance the women stand in line on one side, the men in a line on another, the drums are where the men are; then a woman goes and takes the knobkerry from a man, and the man goes back with her to where the women are, and again they return and stand close together. The man places one hand on the woman's shoulder, and they dance thus, and when they have done dancing the woman turns round and hands the man his knobkerry. The Kandenga is danced at a funeral, but also just for fun when the moon is shining. 535 [764]

A white-haired man is malt;
On his coming, let him make beer;
Yes, father.
On his coming he shall make beer. 539 533

Towards the river to *Likongwe*
A cloud shines white like some little bird, maybe,
But it's those Angoni; they always said
"That's a rich little spot where the *Nsugudzi* flows."

I am an unmarried maiden, and one of Njolo's men will be my lord,
De, de.
The youths from here think too much of themselves.
Did not one say, I was his,
De, de.
The youths of here are too conceited.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 Place your hand upon her shoulder in the dance.
533 Place your hand up her shoulder whom you love.
This season there is no bow (*i.e.* war).

Oh, oh, oh.
I have come to the wedding.
The porridge they have cooked with the finger.
(It is so badly made.)

Oh belt, belt, belt,
Belt, belt,
Why should I not borrow the belt,
When the dance has sounded?

XXIX

THE CHITOTO DANCE

535 THEY dance it at a mourning, and even just for
[534] fun. They do not have drums, but fasten rattles on
their legs.

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539 One perhaps has taken the other,
533 Summoned him for love of him,
And to-day we mourn, love;
Yes, father,
And the cock crows.

Should your neighbour's son not have a wife,
Look after his belly,
His belly,
His belly, wo, ha, ho!
I have sung.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Should you have no child by your neighbour's 539
daughter, 533
Give her your friend, and he shall wed her;
As for you, you be happy with the beer pot,
With the beer pot, wo, ha, ho!
You be content with the beer pot.

XXX

THE KUNJU DANCE

MEN do not dance it, but only women, with the [535]
men looking on.

You, Nzinyai, you, Nzinyai,
Nzinyai, she refuses hospitality to the strangers,
You, Nzinyai.
The porridge which I have not seen;
Nzinyai, return whence you came.

The man who is in my hut begins to refuse his
food; when I only dish him out two helpings
of porridge, he looks aside;
When I dish him out three (he says), "Give me
the water (to wash his hands). I shall give
the child his."
But that child he is wise,
"Eat up your porridge," says he; "was it not
you who scolded at me?"
Now, what do you think of that? My child he
knows how to conduct a quarrel.
A quarrel they settle at the village court.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXXI

OTHER SONGS

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Moon, you must shine, shine that I may eat the tadpoles;
I sit on a stone, and my bones all rattle.
If it were not for my big mouth,
The maidens would be crying for me.

(The song of the night-jar.)

That great bird has gone in there,
Gone to the other side there,
Gone and got a snake there;
The very snake that told me of misfortune,
Told me of misfortune, e! e! e!
Which foretold evil at the site of the deserted village.

Frog you, frog you,
Your friend, your friend.
Frog you, frog you,
He is calling his wife.
Jump squat, jump squat,
He is calling his wife.

(The frog's song.)

Dawn, day; dawn, day;
The Tsambe mouse is finishing other folk's food.

(The song of the *ndongera* mouse, that eats during the day.)

Stay a little yet, night; stay a little yet, night;
While I eat with you.

(The song of the *Tsambe* mouse, that eats only at night.)

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity.
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [871]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [825]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then [753]
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 787
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [241]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [726]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when [843]
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to [177]
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor [177]
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are 857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve 233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the [868] cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

628 There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into 233 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between 857 the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between [541] the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

233 In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd- 833 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village 857 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief, 631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izinduna* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

631 643 645 692 [648] [543]

This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izinduna* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambesi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

563 643 645 671 692

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.22]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [826] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [828] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance [162] of women over men caused by labour migration.

Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner 128 or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 257 and 121 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs concerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 [621] residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles away from the other two.

[1] *Cisilu*, pl. *visilu*, or else *wantu watyalatyala*. Cf. Nsenga *silu*, pl. *masilu*, idiot.

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591 village to another. An indication of the relative frequency with
128 which different types of marriage residence occur is given by Table XIII. This table is based on all the extant marriages involving the 98 married men whose wives were known and the 175 married women, as shown in Tables III and IV. A distinction is made in Table XIII between those marriages in which the man lived with his wife or in a village near her and those in which the man was effectively absent.

We may now assess the relative frequency of virilocal and uxorilocal residence by extracting those marriages falling into either one or other of these residential categories and by then dividing the number of virilocal contracts by the number of uxorilocal. This is done in Table XIV.

591 It will be seen that although there were three marriages in which both spouses lived virilocally for every one in which they both lived uxorilocally, this preponderance of virilocality was reversed in those marriages in which the man was absent. There were approximately three wives who lived uxorilocally while their husbands were away for every two who lived virilocally. This difference between the ratios in the two parts of the sample is not likely to have arisen as a chance result and may be regarded as definitely associated with the whereabouts of the husband.

On the basis of these figures we may continue to call the Ngoni a virilocal rather than an uxorilocal people, but it is evident from the last column of Table XIII that virilocal marriages amount to slightly less than half (47·3 per cent) of all extant marriages. It should also be remembered that by no means all of the couples we have classified as virilocal were living in the village of the man's father. We have included in this category all marriages in which the man had definitely stronger ties to the other inhabitants of their village
[128] than had his wife. Our definition of the uxorilocal category is similar and not all uxorilocal couples were living in the woman's mother's village.[8] A more detailed examination of the frequencies with which these different kinds of marriage residence occur will be attempted elsewhere.

599 We have already noted that a man who goes to live in the village
591 of his bride takes on the care of her garden and works in it with her.
423 The produce of the garden is pooled with whoever was looking after the bride, and the young couple draw their food from this common store.[9] A man who does not intend to stay long in his wife's village will usually try to keep his own garden under cultivation near his own village and when he takes his wife back to his village he reverts to his own garden as his main source of supply. If the two villages are a long way apart this may not be practicable, or the man may find it irksome to keep two gardens going, and may lend his own to someone else on the understanding that he will be wanting it back

[8] See below, pp. 75f.
[9] See above, p. 42.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 74 --analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[10] 173 167

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*isithakazelo*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapundi, Bangoni, Batuta, Bazowa, Bunga, Landeens, Landims, Machendi, Mafiti, Mafitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara, 101

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820'S

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Soshangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

[551] [643]

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Maviti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Nguni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became 173 613 [727] [622] [631]

[10] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-16; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] See Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 93.
[12] *Mabunzana*, pl. *abunzana*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzana*, village headman; also Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16.

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kupili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief.

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units*

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1930 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy. 634 645

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief. 202 634 624

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it. 611 643 551 634 [648] [645]

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has 634 668

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Liyuua*. cf. Zulu *i(li)nxusa*, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 140*f*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

clan and for women of leading Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Two of the texts emphasized the distinction conferred on the royal women by special clothing. Cibambo described the use of well-dressed soft skins and of beads and wire, the beads brought with them from the south, the brass wire obtained from the Arabs. In NaNdumbu's text she mentioned cloth bought from the stores. After the Ngoni women gave up wearing soft leather for skirts and the long piece of leather draped from the left shoulder, they used strong cotton cloth of dark blue or black, originally brought by the Arabs and later stocked by the stores. They tied the main cloth under their arms in a draped knot over the breast and on ceremonial occasions they added another fastened on the left shoulder like a plaid. A woman who had been a young girl in the village of Paramount Cikusi, but was not of a leading clan, said that in this village there was a great difference between the royal women and the rest: 'Only the daughters of Cikusi and his big wives could wear dark cloth as the Ngoni do. The others would have been killed if they tried to look like the big women'.

The royal women and the big wives and widows of chiefs and *ahumuzana* were treated by all with whom they came in contact with the distinction and respect due to their prestige. They were addressed and thanked by the term *Nkomo*, with the clan name and the honorific prefix added, except where, as in the case of Bambo Manga, a title had been conferred. She was thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*'.[1] *Ukuhlonipa*, and its Nyanja equivalent *kulemekeza*, meaning to honour and to behave in a respectful manner towards senior people and those of superior rank, was an expression constantly used by the Ngoni and by the other peoples in the Ngoni kingdoms. The forms of showing respect were partly verbal; partly in the position adopted, with the eyes cast down and a slight curtsey by the women when facing someone; partly in the tone of voice when speaking; and partly in the deliberate and controlled behaviour noticed by several early travellers in Nyasaland. A particular verbal form of respect practised by the royal women was the use of the *hlonipa* vocabulary. I found this practice surviving only in the Emcisweni area in northern Ngoniland where the Ngoni language was still spoken, but informants said that it had been common to all married women of trans-Zambesi clans in the northern kingdom when they had spoken Ngoni among themselves. The *hlonipa* vocabulary consisted of the substitution of special words, known only to the women, in order to avoid using a word in which the main syllable of a man's name occurred—a man with whom they were connected by marriage or by affinal relationship.[2] Thus Zwangendaba's wives and widows could

[1] *Bambo* (father) was a term of respect used for important senior men.

[2] *Hlonipa* as a form of special vocabulary was widely practised among the Nguni groups in South Africa. Hoernlé, A. W. 'Social Organisation', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, pp. 74, 77.

551 565 576 644

never use any word in which *indaba* (meeting or affair) occurred. They substituted *incayo* for *indaba* and spoke of him as Zwangencayo. The women of the Ngomezulu clan could never use the word *ilanga* (sun) for which they substituted *ijiko*, since Langa was the name of the father of Zwide who had married into the Ngomezulu clan.

Though the particular verbal form of *hlonipa* which the Ngoni royal women brought from the south survived only in one area of northern Ngoniland, the concept inherent in it and the attitudes of honour and respect which it implied were expressed in the use of *Nkomo* in thanking and in the other non-verbal forms already mentioned. Manga, the Royal Sister of Cikusi, was as we have seen, thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*' but also with the formula '*Zikomo mntwana wenkosi*' (thanks, child of the Paramount). Among the central Ngoni there were two expressions of thanks which were probably a relic of *hlonipa* vocabulary since they were used only by the leading women. The customary form of thanking, and of taking leave after a conversation or after getting a reply to a question, was '*Zikomo*' with the clan name and honorific prefix added. The royal women in this area, when making the response to this form of thanking, always replied '*Zaithwa*' with the clan name, and they thanked each other by '*Zimata*' with the clan name instead of '*Zikomo*'. When I observed this and used it myself, they nudged each other and said 'She also is one of us.'

644 We have discussed so far the outward signs of respect shown to the royal women, and the visible marks of distinction in their clothes and the number of their attendants. We shall now examine the way in which the authority of the royal women was exercised. This will give some indication of their relationship to the political organization of the kingdoms, in so far as they had certain responsibilities to the people as a whole, and to their husbands and sons within the royal village where they lived. At the royal village the Queen Mother and her co-widows shared with the wives of the two leading houses to the right and left of the *indlunkulu*, the responsibility for preparing and serving food and beer for the Paramount and those whom he called to eat with him. The text by NyaNsangu[1] describes the etiquette of beer drinking in one of the chiefdoms in the northern kingdom, of sending food to the chief when he ate in the cattle kraal, and of assembling the wives in order of [264] precedence according to their houses to take their food. The formality of this etiquette was characteristic of Ngoni eating and drinking, and it was maintained by the organization and forethought of the royal women, the big wives and mothers of the Paramount, who planned the work of their own households and supervised that of the lesser wives who were attached to the two main houses.

[1] The procedure described in the text applied equally to the Paramount's village and to the villages of ruling chiefs. The Ngoni in that area used the term '*ishosi*' for chief as well as for Paramount.

societies maintaining officially a conspiracy of silence, the stories were only standard replies by adults to children, and most adults admitted that children pursued these inquiries among themselves and found out what they wanted to know from each other. 864

Naming the child

After coming out of the hut and being presented to its male kin and to the elders of the village as 'the new stranger', the baby was given a name. The choice of a name was usually left to the baby's paternal grandfather. He sometimes gave it his name or his father's name, if a boy, or if a girl, his mother's name or his father's sister's name. There was no ceremony attached to naming. After the matter had been talked over by the men at the kraal gate, the grandfather came to the hut, and called the mother and child out and said, 'His name is so and so.' The personal name was seldom used in ordinary social intercourse, but in spite of this every child was given a personal name, and sometimes had added to it a descriptive name indicating that it had been born face downwards, or born a twin, or born too soon after the previous baby. 553 [551] [845]

At this time of naming, the father, or more generally the paternal grandfather, prepared a 'carrying skin' for the mother to carry the baby in. It really belonged to the baby rather than to the mother, for it was used by the nurse girl to carry the baby, and she had the child in her charge most of the day. The skin was that of a goat or small calf from the herd owned by the house to which the baby's father belonged. The skin was cleaned and scraped and made soft by rubbing in fat, and handed over to the mother with some of the meat for broth, and the rest of the meat was eaten by the males of that house. The gift in time became a cloth and not a skin, as skins for wearing or household use went out of fashion. The cloth when presented however was still called a 'carrying skin' and a goat or a calf from the herd of the 854 [281] [422] [262]

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British. Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly", and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief wife who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first lieutenant of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the
551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni on formal occasions in addition to their other personal names.

To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and
624 there may be in the village one or more lieutenants. The office of lieutenant in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no lieutenants.

In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have
621 consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
582 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time
178 some of the senior captives became lieutenants of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aristocratic lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aristocratic captors.

Movement

361 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
166 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Fortes, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 192: '. . . the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

582 proposed marriage appears to conflict with these rules of incest, be-
835 cause of some distant relationship between the couple, the connexion
may be conveniently forgotten by the parties concerned. Incestuous
601 liaisons between people whose parents are still alive are hampered
from becoming proper marriages by the refusal of the woman's parents
to accept any marriage payments from the man. Similar liaisons between older people may alter the relative kinship status of other couples so that their marriages become incestuous, and they will appeal to the courts. For example, an old man married his son's wife's mother, whom he called *child's parent-in-law*. In consequence, his son and his son's wife became *sibling* to each other. The young woman refused to go on sleeping with her husband, who appealed to the court. The old man was then ordered to give up his newly acquired wife, so that his son's marriage might continue.

[601] At its widest extension, the term *sibling* is applied to any person of
551 the same descent-name as ego and of approximately the same age.
614 The other kinship terms are then applied to the relatives of this
582 nominal sibling in the usual way. However, there is no rule of exogamy applying to these nominal relatives. These descent-names have been referred to by other writers on the Ngoni as clan-names and the aggregate of people with the same descent-name as a clan. The Ngoni term for such names, *vi-ŵongo*, is related to the Zulu *isi-bongo*, and many of the Ngoni descent-names are the same as the names of the clans described for the South-Eastern and Central Bantu.[1] However, among the Fort Jameson Ngoni at the present time, the category of persons formed by all those holding the same descent-name does not have any of the attributes generally attributed by modern writers to the clan. There are no clan heads, no clan exogamy, no clan taboos, no beliefs in a common origin from a legendary ancestor, no clan totems, and no correlation between clan and territory. In these conditions it seems better to use the term descent-name, as has been done for the Lozi.[2] Informants state that even in the old days, when there was a closer approximation to a clan system, there was no clan exogamy. These names are normally inherited by the child from its father, and some of the names are not very common in the tribe, so that it happens that all the people bearing the one name may be the patrilineal descendants of one man. Such groups are exogamic, but this is

[1] Cf. Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, p. 143, for a classification of some of these names, on the basis of ethnic origin.

[2] Gluckman, *Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*, pp. 84–5.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [848]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name *sulu* for a man becomes *swula* for a woman in certain areas.

[2] *Cimalo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

He

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

643 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment;
551 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment; Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief
[643] Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[645] Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black oxhide,
[701] white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Susera Nqumayo,
[595] Great Wife; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu;
[593] Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku?; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndauya Mbanzima, Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nquaneleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.
167 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
551 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
593 Chief Diviner or *Isanusi*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadose, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595] Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere; Mtizwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere; Maiwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727] 1898. Grandson:—Chiloa Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

[727] Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near Msesa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsaswe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayunge (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu,
704 Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Masoho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera, Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

173

(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nxima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu, and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazela*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGU'LA.

159

Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

173

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Sosera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. 643 [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Kangwindula:—Bandlyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphanza, Mshawanya Mphanza, Mshawa Mwase Shawa, Dodo Tole, Mjuka Mdwandi Jere, Mabuchikwe Tembo, Mwenje Nkhawa, Katanda Manyanny Mshawana, Kapandula Jamal Mvula, Machilika Mphanza, Chikangwhanse Ngubwa, Chiwere Malunka, Mzuka Jere, Magalanga Mphanza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Mudumanwa, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Mdwandi Hara, Matthew Kangwere Mkhawa, Pangani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gawani Mawera, Chingulubani Mzuka, Jiya Mvula, Ngungu Singa Jere, Mshawa Mphanza, Mzuki Lukhula, Njombwa Tembo, Adamkwanko Mdungu, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

/5 cont'd/

Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman, although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here. Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the wealther. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

593 extended to his brothers' sons, especially if their father was dead. Following the same pattern, a man's sons who were away at work sent back money to their father who bought cattle with it, or spent it as the sons asked. It was clear in the 1930's that Ngoni men rarely sent money directly to their wives, though they frequently asked their father to give money to their wives and to buy for them cloth or needed household equipment.

562 Within the larger orbit of the male family responsibilities women had their more restricted but clearly defined sphere. At a woman's
844 confinement she was looked after by her husband's own mother, aided
593 by his other mothers and by his sisters if they were present in the village. At the 'coming out' of the new member of the family, ten to fourteen days after birth, the woman and the baby, bathed and ritually
562 cleansed, were seated on a mat outside the hut and presented to the male members of the father's family who gave small gifts to the baby.
846 If it was a boy, the father's mother generally carried it to the gate of
593 the kraal where the men were sitting, to present it to them as one who would eventually herd the cattle. On this occasion, or soon after, the
[553] child's name was chosen, usually by the father's father, who prepared and gave to the mother a calf-skin or goat-skin for carrying the child in. The meat of the animal was cooked by the father's mother and a small feast was held for the father's mothers, sisters, brothers and their wives, and any others of the father's family who had helped in the confinement.[1] After the child had thus been acknowledged in its father's family circle, the mother took the baby to visit her own family, who also gave it presents.

593 During the rearing of the child, its father's female relatives assumed responsibility for giving the young mother advice. The father's mother
862 was expected to note the stage at which the child should be weaned, always if possible before the mother's next pregnancy. If the father's mother was unobservant, the other senior women of the husband's family would rebuke her and say 'Look now you are foolish because the child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to it.' These women then took the initiative and insisted on weaning the child. They said to the baby's mother 'We want to wean the child.' They made a paste of ground chillies and put it on the mother's breasts and covered them with a skin or cloth. The child was taken from her after it had tried to
[853] suck and had been refused, and given to the father's mother or sister, who looked after it with the help of a nursemaid. It was fed on cow's milk, *amasi* (milk curds), and gruel.

The publicity given to the weaning and the initiative taken by the senior women of the husband's family were intended to inform others in
[178] the village that the parents were now free to have another child. This was one aspect of the old Ngoni form of family planning and, in describing

[1] This feast was also held when a carrying cloth was given instead of a skin.

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and massaged them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

845 The other ethnic groups surrounding the Ngoni in Nyasa-[184] land considered it disastrous if a child was born face down or with the buttocks first, and twins were dreaded as ill omens. The Ngoni shared none of these beliefs and were particularly considerate for the mother of twins, often killing [262] a beast to give the mother meat and broth to increase her [853] flow of milk. The only notice the Ngoni took of the method of presentation at birth was that they gave a child a name [553] indicative of such a birth. They gave special names for the first and second twin born. If one twin died it was buried under the veranda of the hut and a smooth stone was placed [766] on top. This stone was used for sitting on, and the surviving twin was held on it when being washed.

Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and 783 everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

societies maintaining officially a conspiracy of silence, the stories were only standard replies by adults to children, and most adults admitted that children pursued these inquiries among themselves and found out what they wanted to know from each other. 864

Naming the child

After coming out of the hut and being presented to its male kin and to the elders of the village as 'the new stranger', the baby was given a name. The choice of a name was usually left to the baby's paternal grandfather. He sometimes gave it his name or his father's name, if a boy, or if a girl, his mother's name or his father's sister's name. There was no ceremony attached to naming. After the matter had been talked over by the men at the kraal gate, the grandfather came to the hut, and called the mother and child out and said, 'His name is so and so.' The personal name was seldom used in ordinary social intercourse, but in spite of this every child was given a personal name, and sometimes had added to it a descriptive name indicating that it had been born face downwards, or born a twin, or born too soon after the previous baby. 553 [551] [845]

At this time of naming, the father, or more generally the paternal grandfather, prepared a 'carrying skin' for the mother to carry the baby in. It really belonged to the baby rather than to the mother, for it was used by the nurse girl to carry the baby, and she had the child in her charge most of the day. The skin was that of a goat or small calf from the herd owned by the house to which the baby's father belonged. The skin was cleaned and scraped and made soft by rubbing in fat, and handed over to the mother with some of the meat for broth, and the rest of the meat was eaten by the males of that house. The gift in time became a cloth and not a skin, as skins for wearing or household use went out of fashion. The cloth when presented however was still called a 'carrying skin' and a goat or a calf from the herd of the 854 [281] [422] [262]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

844 If a female child, "You have seen a basket." Then the man comes and sits down on the verandah and makes fire. The old fire in the hut is thrown away. The old woman takes up the new fire and kindles with it a new fire in the hut. The husband goes away to another hut. He does not now cohabit with [846] any of his other wives until his wife, who was confined, is seen again in public.

II. When they know the umbilical cord is going to break, when they set the infant on the knees (legs), they lay it on its side so that when the cord breaks it will fall on one side; for if it breaks and falls on the pubes the child will be impotent, or barren. The umbilical cord they bury on the verandah. That day is the one on which they shave the mother and child. They begin with the infant and they shave the mother. On shaving the infant's head they leave a little hair on the fontanel, and [614] should the infant be of the clan *Maseko*, they also leave a little patch on the back of the head, and ● 553 then his godmother gives the child a name, saying, "My grandchild's name is so and so." This name it will have until such time as it begins to laugh and notice people, then the father, should he wish, will give the child another name. When it grows up still farther it will give itself a name, saying, "Now I am so and so." When the child becomes a man he will once again discard his old name and take another. And if a person calls him by the old name, he says, "He has named me by that thing the wild bush-pigs unearth while digging with their tusks" [meaning something very old]. When they have finished the shaving, the child's grandmother 854 powders some medicine called *pfundabwe*, this she 218 mixes with castor oil and red clay, and then rubs on 751 the fontanel. This medicine they continually renew. When the infant gets strong and big they stop. The

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible 595
that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy 611
over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in bevies 2 and 3 but not in bevy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in bevy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in bevy 2 and the other by the heir in bevy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I [578] recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were 578
sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should 611
be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious 595
fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of 578
dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this 557
particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who [648] exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs 578
arising from the method of ranking bevies. The same principle of 611
ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to bevies of 621
wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain 554
situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

554 and in other situations that which was founded last. The head-
579 quarters of the highest segment was in some sense capital of the
611 nation, yet chieftainship had already passed from it and it was less
621 important in other ways than the headquarters founded by the
[643] reigning chief. This apparent contradiction applied within every large segment. We have endeavoured to isolate these different contexts by our distinction between primal and residual segments, but as soon as we attempt to arrange villages or bevies of wives in a linear order without reference to the relationship of their associated segments to one another, the contradiction reappears.

A clear and accepted sequence of heirs would have been
621 appropriate to a segmentary system in which segments continued to
611 hold together in all circumstances. Ngoni segments did not do this, and the simple linear sequence of heirs was lacking. The successive formation of inferior segments implied increased structural separation between the first inferior segment to be formed and the headquarters, and hence less likelihood that the former would provide the main heir. As in lineage systems, the farther back the point of departure from the main line the greater the structural separation from it. But whereas in lineage systems it is the junior lines which are continually diverging from the main stem, in the Ngoni system the main heir was the first to break away from his father, who remained longer in close contact with his junior sons. Seniority within the newly formed undivided segment implied early differentiation within it, and hence early separation from its headquarters. Thus, the general principle of increasing separation with the passage of time, together with the particular principle of segment formation in order of seniority, combined to make a system of great flexibility despite essential regularity and uniformity. On the death of each segment head there was a shift of power within his segment and to some extent a formal recognition of the structural separation which had proceeded gradually during his lifetime. The headquarters founded by successive heads of segments persisted as the home of groups whose interests they symbolized. The history of the segments and of the nation itself was embodied in the relationships enduring between successive headquarters.

When a small segment was founded it was usually manned by
557 people drawn from the rump of the immediately superior segment,
611 that is, from those men and women in the superior segment who
621 had not already been allocated to some inferior segment within it. However it is clear that this rule was often over-ridden. When the
[622] lord of a large segment formed a new inferior segment for a wife or son he was able to command the services of everyone within his

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sectors attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8] 561 701

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights. [562]

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken. 561 796 [726]

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked. 561 701 727

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs, 561 701 621 [643]

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Naingu's regiment. [114]
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Maola. Wiese and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Maiyiza. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Wiese gives two other regimental names. His Madouda or Madoda is merely the status term *madoda*, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madginga or Madjinga, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatakulu, Mang'ombe, Izimpisi, Makebe, Mahacu, Zimfezi, Manyoni. [559]
Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 39.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38. - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 The title of regional governor was also awarded by the Paramount Chief to certain of his favoured lieutenants. These promoted lieutenants, with their segments, retained their positions in the residential system unaltered but they were allowed to keep their own captives, a privilege of all regional governors. It seems probable, from incomplete information, that there were about a dozen regional governors of one kind or the other in the Fort Jameson group in 1898.[11] Despite the early date at which some of the regional governors' segments were formed during the migration, they did not expand as rapidly as did the segments led by the chief's queens and lieutenants, and in 1898 they comprised only a small portion of the State. In this respect the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland were organized differently, for there Read writes that the whole country was divided among regional governors, save for a central capital.[12] One of my informants stated that the head of a segment containing more than one village was never known as the lieutenant of his lord but was called, if he were not a kinsman of his lord, by the title regional governor. This is not true to-day, and in view of the large number of present-day commoner villages which claim to have been founded before the conquest, and whose heads are not regional governors, it seems unlikely to have been true earlier. On the other hand, all regional governors to-day are lords of segments containing more than one village, and this may well have been true before 1898 as well.

[554] [301] There were other minor honours similar to the title of regional governor and often awarded to the same people. These were the right to use the royal descent name *jere*, the right to a special praise name *nkhoma*, and the right to wear ox bones as a decoration.[13]

645 631 Wiese mentions certain special lieutenants who carried out tasks comparable to those of ministers of State. He describes three officials, one a minister for the interior, apparently responsible for the Paramount Chief's domestic affairs; another a minister of war who was also high priest; and the third a master of ceremonies at national festivals. He says that the ministers carried out these special tasks in addition to their ordinary duties as lieutenants, and gives the names of two of the three, who were the first lieutenants of two major sections.[14] Thus although there was some differen-

[11] See Table VII. The sample used in this table contains more villages founded by regional governors than would occur in a representative sample.

[12] Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[13] Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 479, and 'Geschichte', p. 198.

[14] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70 and 'Geschichte', p. 188. These two men were the first lieutenants of segments 14 and 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Para-
622 mount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was
[422] his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable
[476] that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were
[462] concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

361 Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village
622 headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of
[787] selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

162 There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

691 The term for lieutenant, *nduna*, was used at all levels in the
621 residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet
624 founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was
[608] selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was
[554] created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 203*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*ff*, 109*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have
121 a segmentary social organization'.[35]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[36] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesser segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similarities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumstances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follow the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A societies as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political system may now be handled as a separate question, providing a classification cutting across the division into states and stateless societies.

642 We have spoken throughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a state, and this usage is in accord with the definition of a state given
[643] here. The Paramount Chief with his lieutenants exercised supreme
[622] authority, there was a highly organized administrative machine, and there was an organized method of settling disputes within the
[556] State. There were only slight variations in wealth except in the
[554] control of cattle, but privilege and status were expressed in the residential system and were inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

121 The presence or absence of a segmentary political system can itself be divided into two questions; was there a segmentary
631 system, and if so, was it the political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, then it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[35] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 234.

[36] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 201, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 34, diagrams.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648
had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after 178
Nsingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. 631
This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to 634
that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the [643]
second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important seg- [557]
ment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this 178
transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by 648
which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely 557
unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to [634]
be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the [632]
formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can [554]
intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget 465
meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and 634
a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is 648
suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16.

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kupili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief.

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units*

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1930 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 delegated a certain amount of responsibility, such as the collection
668 of licence fees or the holding of a court not recognized by the Administration but supplied by the county clerk with the apparatus of official forms. The would-be chief then argues that the rural district in which he lives has always been distinct from the rest of the county and that it is too far for the people in it to attend at the county court. No attempt of this kind since 1920 has been successful, although the recent dispersal of villages into reopened land outside
[693] the reserves has increased the distances some litigants have to travel to the county court, and hence the number of disputes referred to these unrecognized local leaders has increased.

4. *The chief and his people*

634 The chief interacts with his people in a variety of situations. He receives their presents of beer and other valuables, he presides at county meetings, and organizes the royal hunts. He visits them in their villages when there are important celebrations and festivities and they go to him with their requests and complaints.

634 Ngoni offer beer as one of their principal expressions of
574 hospitality, and in a formal beer party the ordered pattern of the
273 social structure is acted out in the distribution and dispensation of
[554] the various jars and bowls of beer.[11] One traditional obligation is to provide a jar of beer for the head of the segment. Everyone belongs, or belonged, to a hierarchy of segments so that there were many people who ought to be honoured in this way at every party. In practice, since beer is heavy to carry, few jars move outside the village in which they are brewed, but a distant political superior is sometimes called in to a village to attend a beer party at which he will be honoured in this way. In the chief's own village the chief lives close at hand and beer is provided in much the same way as for the headman in an ordinary village. When beer is brewed by important people in the capital and regal villages they often call the chief to come and visit them and enjoy their hospitality. The chief is not so frequently called to beer in commoner villages, but on an important occasion such as the formal installation of a village official, or the formal announcement that a village has moved to a new site, it is appropriate to invite the chief to attend. A chief may
634 also be honoured by his affines with beer brewed for him in the
554 same way as any other man, but there is some disagreement about the appropriateness of this, for the chief 'has exceeded all others'

[11] See Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 217-19, for the rules of and attitudes towards beer drinking.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kins- 634
woman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political 554
significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound 634
by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife 683
while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded 578
him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing. A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment 634
and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are 273
protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief 576
himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the [626]
reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants 431
are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these 662
presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, 634
they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present is made by an individual and arises from his own political aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an 634
affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village 273
or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni/ FR5
Mpezeni

651 marriages and for selling beer, and from fines and fees taken in court. In some years there has been a local levy on all men liable for Native tax.

642 The Native Authority, the Native Court and the Native Treasury form a single system of what is essentially local government. The judicial aspect of government has always been to the 693 fore, for the hearing of cases is an activity which has gone on without serious interruption since before the conquest. The first people to be appointed as assessors were in many instances the people who had been hearing cases with the chief for many years. They were joined in this by the councillors, for there was no separation between judicial and administrative organization in pre-conquest times and none had emerged by that time. Since the court clerk needed to be at least partially literate, he was usually a younger man who had been to school but, in some instances at least, he had close kinship ties with those in high office. He acted as a member of the bench as much as the councillors and assessors. In some courts other close supporters of the chief, particularly those who lived near their courts, also attended regularly to hear cases although they were not paid to do so, and in at least one instance a chief paid a regular salary out of his own pocket to a member of his court who was not recognized as such by the Administration.

Thus the court was the nucleus round which the Native Authority grew. The court clerk was employed as secretary to the chief and the Native Authority, and he had charge of the rubber stamps which came to be the new symbols of political power. He toured the county looking for dogs and bicycles without licences, for since he was literate he was considered the man to handle the money accruing from court fines, fees and licences. Sometimes he combined with these duties others that had nothing to do with court work, such as seeing that villages were swept clean or paths hoed. Because of his work in court he was well informed on disputes in the county, and since he made frequent trips to the township so that his accounts could be checked by the Administration, he was well briefed on what was going on there. The office of court clerk [554] came in this way to have a greater importance than its formal duties implied.

Yet in recent years the relative status of the court clerk has declined. The executive, as opposed to the judicial and fiscal, 648 functions of the Native Authority have become more numerous. 645 The activities of the Administration, instead of being confined mainly to tax collecting and the punishment of major crimes, have expanded to include a variety of social services for Africans and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

166 closeness of the ties linking them to the areas in which they find
582 themselves. To give two extreme examples, an agricultural demonstrator, after a few months in a rural compound, sought to marry a daughter of a near-by village headman. A policeman, sent to a village to investigate a murder, married a woman related to the dead man. Marriages of this kind are made partly because there is no other way by which a stranger in a village can be certain of getting enough to eat, but they also serve to broaden and diversify the relationship between the stranger and the people among whom he finds himself. Some of these marriages are terminated when the stranger is moved to another district, but there are a number of instances where Ngoni wives have gone with their stranger husbands to distant mines and towns. This process is, of course, merely part of the much wider one by which many Ngoni women follow their
[167] husbands when they leave their villages to seek work in Southern Rhodesia.

Similarly, chiefs and other important rural leaders endeavour
647 to establish enduring relations with members of the African Civil
557 Service. Some civil servants are their kinsmen, for one way by which a junior son of an important man can gain the position he desires but which is denied him by the rule of primogeniture is to enter the Civil Service or to seek advancement in one of the churches. Others are related by affinity, while yet others may go out of the way to offer hospitality to visiting political leaders when they need food and shelter in town. Some Ngoni civil servants maintain large households in the villages, which they visit at week-ends, and which they hope will have grown into recognized villages by the time they come to retire.

Thus there are two distinct groups of Africans concerned with
554 public affairs, the African Civil Service and the Native Authority
557 bureaucracy. They are in intimate association with one another,
647 and both exercise considerable political power. Both are formally distinct from the old political system. But status in traditional terms, as chief or village headman or head of a division or cluster, is still recognized in the face-to-face relations of people generally, and hence there is a continual attempt to bring the two systems into congruence with one another. Clerks aspire to become headmen when they retire, while headmen aspire to be the fathers and fathers-in-law of clerks. This is no new development, for as early as 1907 Stigand reported that a Swahili, whose home was near Zanzibar, and who had been a soldier, had founded a small village close to Fort Manning.[20]

[20] Stigand, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 125. See p. 118.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Capital, court and chief's village*

634 We have spoken of the headquarters of the county segment as the capital of the county, and this is in accord with vernacular usage. Although each chief is head of his county segment, no chief lives in his capital village. Each has made his segment and set up a village of his own. This process continues with each successive chief, each making his own new village. When brick buildings [344] were made during the 1930s to house the newly recognized Native Courts, these were located near the villages of the reigning chiefs. Some of these are still in office, while others have died and their successors live in their new villages, some of which are as much as two miles away from the court. There are thus in some counties three foci of political interest. There is the capital village, the court, and the chief's village. Associated with each centre are different leaders and different activities. The capital village provides a link with the past, and in particular with that moment in the past at which the segment was founded. The Paramount Chief [643] retains special rights in his capital village and can make a garden for one year on the old site of his county capital whenever it moves to a new one. Most, if not all, capital villages are larger than the average village but the senior lieutenants of the county segments do not live in them, for like the chiefs, they have made their own villages. Nevertheless, the lieutenants who do live in the capital ●[554] are regarded as people of considerable importance in the county. Meetings are sometimes held in the capital but more frequently at the county court or in the chief's village. The court is the home of 692 the Native Authority, and it is there that the affairs of the Administration are discussed. An incident well illustrates the association of 648 the court with the Administration. I once called at the house of a 634 county chief who had not previously met me. He insisted that I 647 should go to the court to meet him there, as that was where he always met Administrative officials. County meetings are called at the court to discuss matters raised by the Administration in its letters to chiefs, and to formulate requests and complaints for transmission to the Administration. The court clerk, the Native Authority councillors, assessors, and messengers are much in evidence, while the traditional advisers of the chief, his senior lieutenants, may be in the background even if they are not silent. Meetings of this kind are usually called by county chiefs, but occasionally a meeting may be held open to the whole tribe. I have described elsewhere the procedure at a county meeting.[22]

[22] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 107-9.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and settled where another village already existed.[1] In both forms, this new settlement was called the *lusungulu* village, 'the one which goes in front'; and the village which was left was known as the *gogo* village. This use of the term *gogo* (literally 'grandparent') for house and village had a common basic connotation. It expressed the concept of being left behind to look after something, the *gogo* house being passed over for the heir to the Paramountcy or chieftainship but charged with ritual and ceremonial duties; and the *gogo* village being left behind to take care of the traditions and generally also of most of the widows of the deceased Paramount or chief. Each *lusungulu* village eventually divided on the death of its owner, part 'going forward' with the new successor, part remaining behind. The main groups in the village which went ahead or which remained were the houses connected with the new Paramount or chief or *mulumuzana* and those connected with his dead father. In the chapter on houses (Chapter III, Part III) this process will be examined in greater detail.

The third related institution was the provision for guarding the spirit of a dead Paramount or chief and those of some leading *alumuzana*. A senior woman was always guardian of such a spirit and in her hut were kept the ritual objects: spear, wooden dish, baskets, fire-stick, which were used in sacrifices to the ancestors. The guardianship of the spirit of a dead Paramount was always associated with the village which had been his *lusungulu*. His corpse was buried on the edge of the kraal containing the cattle of the house where he had grown up, and this village became the *gogo* village associated with him, where his spirit was guarded in a hut, probably though not necessarily belonging to one of his widows. The recognition of such a woman guardian was a matter for selection and appointment, and was the responsibility of the senior men of the *gogo* house in that village in consultation with the senior men of the *gogo* house in the dead man's father's village. The concept of guarding the spirits of important men, and the means by which such guardianship was practised, will be more fully discussed in Part IV in connexion with the ancestor cult.

THE NGONI KINGDOMS AND AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS

In the final section of this chapter we shall look at the Ngoni kingdoms in their relationship to other African kingdoms and states such as those described in *African Political Systems*.[2] A methodological problem arises here. In this study a number of references are made to the Ngoni kingdoms in pre-European times, especially in connexion

[1] This form of the institution was found in densely populated areas and the incoming households dominated the original ones.

[2] Fortes, M., & Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (ed.). *African Political Systems*. O.U.P., 1940 pp. 9–23.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

A widespread variant

on virilocal residence will be discussed later and illustrated in Chapter IV of Part III. 591

(*b*) *Village pattern*

There was a traditional pattern of Ngoni village organization, which consisted in the siting of the huts in the village and the corresponding social groups formed in the different sections. Informants made it clear that when the Ngoni first settled in the areas where the two kingdoms now exist, the royal villages and the chiefs' villages were very large. Segmentation of these large villages, not only by the *lusungulu* 'going out' as already described, but also by sections of the village breaking off, began before the Europeans came and continued after their arrival. In the 1930's the traditional pattern was sometimes altered by a desire to build a 'model village' laid out in lines instead of in a horse-shoe curve round the kraal. Even in some of these model villages the grouping of huts, though no longer in a series of circles, indicated the house affiliation of their owners and their relationship to the head of the village. 621

The traditional ground-plan of an Ngoni village was based on the main kraal which occupied the centre. The gate of the kraal was on the open end of the horse-shoe formation, and the most important hut, the *indlunkulu*, was at the top of the kraal. On either side of the *indlunkulu* were grouped the huts belonging to the houses associated with the wives of the owner of the village. Behind the *indlunkulu* were the huts of his married sons and those of his brothers who chose to live with him, and this group of huts, known as *cigodlo*, spread round behind the main huts of the owners of houses. Behind each house-group of huts were the huts of the *induna* associated with the house; in large villages he often had a kraal and reproduced a similar small village plan in his own circle of huts. On the wings of the village, curving towards the gate of the kraal and called by the Ngoni 'the horns of the village', were the less important families in the village. The general principle of the village plan in terms of social status and the siting of huts was that the nearer huts were to the *indlunkulu* the higher was the prestige of their owner. The following very much simplified plan of an Ngoni village illustrates the principle of siting the huts in relation to social grouping, as it was when a new *lusungulu* village was set up. In this plan the *indlunkulu* hut was owned by the mother of the owner of the village, one of his father's widows who moved out with him. When she died the big wife on her right might move into the actual *indlunkulu* hut, or stay in her own hut while another widow of her father-in-law entered the *indlunkulu*. There was no invariable rule for this type of succession, but there were only these two possible alternatives. Reference should be made here to one other hut site—that of the *laweni* or boys' dormitory. It was usually sited behind either the big house or the *gogo* house, far enough behind [717] [554]

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

AFTER the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

NGONI WARFARE IN OLD DAYS

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligubo* dance along with others.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

relationship, described in terms of brotherhood, and this brotherhood was further emphasized by the ban on inter-marriage between the Ngozo and Maseko clans. The significance of the Ngozo boy, when he became a man, building in the *cigodlo* where the Paramount's sons built, was often stressed by informants. Though his huts were in this *cigodlo* section of the royal village, as if he were a son of the Paramount's family, the Paramount never said 'child' to him but invariably 'brother'. 643 644 608

In all the occasions of daily life, as well as in those of special ritual significance, the Ngozo boy stood or sat next to the Paramount. The Ngoni insisted that the status of a man or woman should be expressed in terms of sitting or standing in order of precedence. Sitting or standing next to the Paramount implied that that individual had the highest possible social status. The leading members of the Ngozo clan in their villages displayed an awareness of their social prestige which was very noticeable. This high rank was, however, in the past bought with a price —that of sharing in the dangers of the Paramountcy. This was acknowledged through the gift of cattle to the boy's family, sent at the time when he 'entered the chieftainship' with the Paramount. [554]

The institution of the royal shadow came to an end with the advent of the Europeans. An Ngozo man acted as a royal shadow on the accession of Cikusi but did not die on his funeral pyre. When Cikusi's son Gomani I was installed as *inkosi*, an Ngozo boy 'entered the chieftainship' with him and stood with him 'in the smoke of the *tonga*' when the army went to war. It was this Gomani I who was killed by the British, and there was no royal ritual at this death, and no cremation in a stream in which the Ngozo boy could share. The royal shadow retired in those troubled days to his father's village, where he died in 1937. It was alleged that no Ngozo man stood in this relationship to Gomani II, either at his accession, which took place during the period of Direct Rule, or in 1933 when his Paramount Chieftaincy was recognized. Informants showed a certain hesitation in answering direct questions on this topic, which was attributable partly to the fact that the Paramount was a Christian, and partly to a reluctance to discuss the continued use of 'royal medicines'. The following account of the royal shadow was given by informants of the Nzunga and Ngozo clans. 643 644 178

¶ When the Paramount entered the chieftainship he stood with a man from the Ngozo clan. The Ngozo people are of one blood with the Paramount, because they stand together when entering the chieftainship. When the Paramount of the Maseko dies, he dies together with one of the Ngozo. It was so when there died Ngwana, Mputa, Cikusi.

When the Ngoni came into this country they stopped killing an Ngozo man when the Paramount died. When the Paramount died a young man of the Ngozo clan just stood beside the body of the Paramount, and when making the funeral pyre of the Paramount, he also was there until they set fire to it. If anyone wanted to kill an Ngozo man by the

royal women. In the royal villages in the 1930's there was one big *induna* and several lesser ones whose position and functions will be described in Chapter IV.

This 'going out' of the new Paramount's village, leaving the former Paramount's village as the *gogo* village, brought about some re-distribution of authority, prestige and material goods. It gave the new Paramount his own village, always to be known as his, even after his death. His village became the focal meeting-place for the territory and for the court and territorial officials who surrounded the Paramount; and it was to the new royal village that the *alumuzana* in pre-European days came frequently to visit the Paramount and report to him on conditions in their areas. His moving out of the *gogo* village, on the other hand, gave his brothers who stayed there, and especially those of the *gogo* house, more freedom and authority within that village as well as responsibility for the conduct of all ritual matters relating to the kingdom. The Paramount's big wife had to take her place as the leading woman in the new village and to order the affairs of the wives attached to her house in consultation with the Paramount's mother. Cattle, beer and food for the royal household became the concern of the new village, and the *izinduna* and the royal women had to plan and manage the economy of a capital where political interests converged and where visitors and hangers-on were constantly turning up.

The following text by Chief Mtwalo Jere in Mzimba district, helped by Cibambo's older brother, describes the daily routine of the Paramount and his royal village as they had known it in their youth before the coming of the Europeans:

¶ The *inkosi* had to wash very early before the people came to see him. The *ingceko* was the servant who took care of washing the *inkosi*. He had to go with the *inkosi* to the bush and hide the faeces to prevent any bad person from getting the faeces. The *ingceko* was anyone whom the *inkosi* called for this, and must be one who walks well with the *inkosi*.

Before leaving his house to go to the kraal the *inkosi* had to eat a little porridge. When he went to the kraal a calabash of beer was brought to him. When any beer was brought to the *inkosi*, the *ingceko* tasted it first to see if it was good. The *inkosi* asked 'Is it good beer?' and the *ingceko* said 'Yes *inkosi*' and gave it to the *inkosi* to drink. When the *inkosi* took snuff the big *alumuzana* could beg from him. The other *amadoda* could only touch their noses. Then the *inkosi* knew they were begging snuff from him. Where the *inkosi* sat a mat was spread, and on it was laid a leopard- or a lion-skin. This was called 'the chair of the *inkosi*'. On arrival the big *alumuzana* went straight into the kraal to where the *inkosi* sat and greeted him '*Bayete*', and sat down in front of him.

The *inkosi* could not eat porridge except that cooked by his own wives. In his own hut he ate alone with one wife to serve him. His mothers also came with food every day. He ate twice in his own hut, early and late, and once in the kraal. When he ate in the kraal all could see him. He could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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643 turn were invited to eat with the Paramount or summoned to special
651 feasts. On the other hand there were people who seemed to have noth-
431 ing, and who came in the hope of getting invited to eat food if they just
527 sat in the kraal and looked hungry. Cibambo called them 'the notable
571 people' and 'the poor people'. This contrast in behaviour ran right through Ngoni society and reflected the social standing of individuals who behaved in such different ways. There was a good deal of cadging for gifts and of gate-crashing at feasts on the part of people who had no intention, or no possibility, of making any adequate return. An Ngoni proverb illustrated the public attitude to reciprocal giving as distinct from begging: 'To say: Give, give, is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.'

571 The bringing of tribute to the Paramount was only one aspect of the
643 reciprocal relationships which ran right through Ngoni society, namely
651 the bringing of gifts by a man in an inferior social position to his
431 superior, with the expectation of receiving food or favour and of standing well with this superior. It was recognized that tribute was of two kinds, one of which was voluntary. If a *mulumuzana* or other notable wanted to please the Paramount he brought him presents—grain, flour, meat, beer. It was always emphasized that this was a free gift, with the added proviso that the giver wished to keep on good terms with the Paramount. Ngoni informants declared that the only compulsory form of tribute in pre-European days was that whenever a lion or a leopard was killed it had to be brought to the royal village through a succession of intermediaries, as described below.

These two principles of free giving and compulsory giving, and the attitudes engendered, are compared with the feeling about compulsory taxes under European rule in this text by Cibambo.

¶ Although people hate giving taxes to strangers in this land, yet tribute (*imitulo*) was given to their *inkosi* and to other chiefs. Such tribute was given in an indirect way, that is the *izinduna* did not mark out those who gave and who did not give tribute. The Ngoni did not wish that every male should give tribute as is done by Europeans today. They were just pleased if the village headman or *mulumuzana* had given something even though other people in his village did not give anything. Even the *alumuzana* themselves gave something at the time they thought it was convenient to themselves to give. There was no fixed time of the month or year. Much that was given as tribute was beer, meat, ivory, hoes and cloth, also cattle, sheep and goats after raids, and other loot from war.

[825] Power to 'eat' (*ukudla*) lion- and leopard-skins was given to certain people of the Swazi clans, but all the rest were obliged to bring them in. The lion- or leopard-skin had to be given first to the village headman. He went with it to the chief or *mulumuzana*. This one brought it to the *inkosi* along with his *amadoda* or *amajaha* of all his villages, the older men and younger men. This was like going as warriors and they went with dancing [554] (*ligubo*). The one who first stabbed the animal was pointed out, and the

second and third, and the finisher, at the place of dancing in the kraal. At such times each one when called rose and danced *umgiya*, repeating his names. This was called *ukubika izinkalipi*, reporting the heroes or the fierce ones. This is still being done today. The *inkosi* thanked the people who brought the skins by giving them a beast or a goat. When they were dressing the meat and eating it, they kept on dancing *ligubo* and crying the war-cry. At such times the women went along with the men to help them dance *ligubo*. They made the responses to the songs and jerked their necks. 571 643 651 431 [557]

All such things the *inkosi* divided among his houses. The big house had a big share, but especially his mother's house. She should have most. Even if his real mother was dead, the big share had to go there, to her house, where her successor lived.

Visits to the Paramount, whether for a particular occasion or as a matter of routine, were hedged about with ceremonial. It was expected that *alumuzana* and other important people who lived near enough would visit the Paramount frequently and, according to some informants, they went every day in pre-European times. 643 574 576 644

No one could approach the Paramount except through one of the *izinduna* of the royal village, and the correct person to approach was the *induna* of the *indlunkulu*. Visitors were expected to wait at the gate of the kraal and put down their spears. When they were brought by the *induna* to the Paramount, they greeted him with '*Bayete*'. Then they sat down and the Paramount told the *induna* to greet them, and they replied '*Yebo, inkosi*'. This custom of indirect approach to the Paramount has been maintained. Early travellers in Nyasaland spoke of observing it, and when I was there it was considered outrageous manners on the part of any European if he penetrated immediately to the presence of the Paramount, without going through the accustomed channels. 643 644

The Paramount was both greeted and thanked for gifts of food, beer or snuff, with '*Bayete*'. If he moved from the kraal, all present said '*Bayete*'. If anyone had to leave his presence, he crouched low and murmured '*Bayete*' as he went out. Cibambo described this punctilious formality of thanking for gifts in the Ngoni manner. 643 644 431

¶ When receiving presents the Ngoni thanked the giver by taking them with two hands, even though it was a small present. Afterwards they thanked the giver by his *isibongo*, clan name, openly. They said that receiving a thing with one hand showed that you derided it and did not put any value on it. When receiving a present from bigger people or from a chief, some words of respect were added to the *isibongo*, such as '*Baba*', '*Nkosi yami*', '*E-Jere*'. Often the receiver if he was much pleased with the present added some *izitokozo* to the clan name, if he knew them. Those near him or some further away helped the receiver by thanking loudly after him. If what he received was food, he thanked at the beginning, and after eating the food he thanked again. If such a present of food was given to a body of people, the leader in the company first led the others in

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

614 622 *muhumuzana* was not invariable. Some informants said that *alumuzana* were appointed by the Paramount. Others said that if the ancestor of a Swazi clan was known by name to have crossed the Zambesi with Zwangendaba or Mputa then his descendant in the direct line was always a *muhumuzana*.

614 [769] It was the criterion of having a known ancestor and knowing the genealogy of the clan that was most widely accepted in acknowledging the head of a Swazi clan as *muhumuzana*. At the clan head village prayers were addressed to this ancestor, his cattle were sacrificed, and the names recited as far back as tradition and memory could recall. Later we shall see that there were said to be about 25 Swazi clans in the northern kingdom and 29 in the central. Among these about 15 in the northern and 12 in the central kingdom had head villages where the ancestor cult was performed. In the central kingdom several of the leading clans had their head villages in Portuguese territory, and therefore did not carry out the cult in the central kingdom.

554 614 In the hierarchy of the clans the Swazi clans were the acknowledged leaders. In village and national life this leadership was accorded to the royal clans and the clans of the chiefs, and was the reason for the respect shown to *alumuzana* who had no direct political power. Only the heads of Swazi clans possessed *izitokozo* (honorific epithets) which commemorated events in the past history of the clan leaders. On all ceremonial occasions heads of Swazi clans, whether in national or in village affairs, took precedence over the rest when walking in procession, standing for dances, taking part in ritual, or sitting down at feasts. Certain [766] forms of burial, such as the use of a sheep-skin, and placing the corpse on a shelf in the grave, were observed only for members of the Swazi clans.

582 614 In arranging marriages, there was, in addition to strict exogamy within a clan, a prohibition on marriage between clans which had *cibale* (brotherhood) relations. In the central kingdom the royal clan, Maseko, had *cibale* with the Ngozo clan which provided the royal shadow, and [762] with the Nzunga clan. The Nzunga and the Maseko clans shared the same taboos, notably elephant and fish. As well as prohibited marriages between certain clans, there were preferred marriages between certain others. In general there was a preference for marriage between the families of leading Swazi clans. In the northern kingdom the Nqumayo clan had a preference for marrying into the Thole, Nhlane, Maluleka and Pakati clans. It was alleged that formerly they could marry only into these clans, but in the 1930's exceptions were found in a number of villages.

614 The following lists of the names of Swazi clans were collected from informants in the two kingdoms, who were questioned closely about which names should be included under the title of Swazi. This was the grouping claimed by the Ngoni in both kingdoms. They said emphatic-

CHAPTER III

HOUSES

361 171 823 WRITING of the social organization of the northern Nguni among the South-eastern Bantu, Mrs. Hoernlé[1] referred to three divisions of the typical village: the *indlunkulu* section where the principal hut was that of the mistress of the village; the *ikhohlo* section on the left-hand side of this hut, and the *inqadi* section on the right. The terminology used by the northern Nguni expressed right and left hand from the point of view of someone looking up from the gate of the kraal. I found that among the Ngoni they used right and left the other way as if the person were at the top of the kraal looking down at the gate, and I have adopted their usage.

171 361 554 Ngoni villages, which were royal villages or the head villages of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, also had a tripartite division into houses related to leading women, as we saw in the village plan in Chapter III of Part I, but there was a major difference between them and the northern Nguni grouping described by Mrs. Hoernlé. In Ngoni villages the *indlunkulu*, the hut at the head of the kraal, was occupied by the mother of the owner of the village, who had 'come out' with him from his father's village. In the right-hand section of the huts round the kraal was the hut of the owner's big wife, and on the left the hut of his next important wife. These three huts, representing three houses, were the focal points of the main divisions of the village. In fact in most villages the owner of the *indlunkulu* had the huts of other widows of her late husband beside her on each side, and the *cigodlo*, or section where the sons of the owner of the village lived, spread over a wide area behind the *indlunkulu* and behind the huts of the two chief wives. The plan used in Chapter III of Part I was necessarily simplified in order to bring out the main points. The grouping of huts in typical Ngoni villages showed varying degrees of elaboration, and it was not always easy at first to trace their connexions with the houses.

592 571 Houses in the Ngoni kingdoms could be considered as divisions of the village, though they did not always cover all the divisions. If we look at the membership of a house, as it was illustrated in a typical Ngoni village, it is clear that it had in it three elements connected by ties of kinship, affinity or association with the owner of the house, who was either a wife or a mother of the male owner of the village. The kinship group related to the *indlunkulu* comprised the male owner of the village, his mother and classificatory mothers with his brothers who had joined him. In the big house and in the second house of his wives the kinship

[1] op. cit. p. 85.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 pattern covered two generations including the houses of the former
592 chief and the reigning one.

The houses served several purposes in the organization of village life on the one hand, and on the other, provided an important instrument for regulating succession and inheritance, and for carrying out traditional ceremonies and ritual. It was the eldest son of the second house who would, if the *lusungulu* practice was followed, remain behind with the *gogo* village; and he was responsible for conducting traditional ritual and was expected to be able to carry out ceremonial procedure correctly. This was the main function of the *gogo* village and of the man who was head of the male members of the *gogo* house. The corresponding head of the male members of the big house was the owner of the village, and it was his eldest son by his first wife who would normally succeed him as chief or *mulumuzana*. The members of each house had a stake in the property of that house, particularly in the herd of cattle owned by it, and in any goods, such as cloth, bought by the sale of the cattle of the house. The house united the male members who belonged to it through this common ownership of cattle. In Chapter II of Part IV we shall examine further this aspect of belonging to a house.

554 In the organization of village life in villages belonging to chiefs or
592 *alumuzana* the houses established the status of the wives of the owner
562 of the village, and the status of those of his mothers who had come with him. His mother in the *indlunkulu* hut ranked first among her co-widows. The big wife came next, and the wife of the second house after her. Wives attached to the big house ranked above those attached to the second house.

The houses fulfilled their most prominent role in the day-to-day
571 activities of the households associated with them. It was in these daily
592 affairs and in planning for future events that the house organization
627 provided the chief channels of authority. The exercise of this authority
562 ranged from instruction in household tasks and emphasis on good standards of housekeeping to settling minor disputes arising from marital quarrels over property and over the custody of children. These minor cases could be settled out of court if the senior women showed that they knew how to listen to complaints and give advice which was accepted, with the result that good relations were restored. The main topics of discussion among the senior women on the verandah of the *indlunkulu* were the ingredients of these minor quarrels and disputes. If, by judicious handling, they could keep the cases out of court, they knew, and so did the village, that their authority was enhanced and their prestige more firmly established.

571 The authority of senior women was further reinforced through their
592 organization of women's labour in household work and in cultivation.
562 This authority in domestic affairs covered a woman's own household and the women and girls attached to it as household servants, the

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

households of her co-wives who were junior to her in the house, and the households of her sons' wives. These women also decided when to undertake certain work in cultivation or in harvesting crops, when to brew beer, when to re-polish the floors of huts and the sitting place in front of the huts, when to replenish the stock of cloth, ornaments and beads, baskets and mats, which were part of the wealth of the house. Other occasions for the exercise of authority were attending and superintending women's confinements and the private puberty rite of the girls, advising on matters of health, and supervising the training of children. 562 571 592

All these activities of the owners of the houses were so much part of the day-to-day life of a village that they could pass almost unnoticed unless a detailed analysis were made. The position and authority of owners of houses was, however, immediately evident on ceremonial occasions. These included the pre-marriage ceremony of *umsindo*, which was abandoned after the Europeans came; the series of visits and exchanges leading up to the marriage ceremony, *mtimba*; brewing beer on a number of occasions, for dancing *ngoma* and *ligubo*, for funerals and subsequent ritual shaving, or for entertaining important visitors whose coming was expected so that beer could be prepared in advance. On all such occasions, the courtyard surrounding the *indlunkulu* was a scene of great activity. Men put on their war-dance equipment there; the beer pots were assembled there; meat and blood for feasts were cooked there, while the less important maize porridge (*usima*) was cooked in subordinate households. From the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* a procession of the *manina* (senior women) led by the owner of the house went out to greet visitors, to go to the beer drink, to take part in the dances, and to perform the ritual connected with births, deaths and marriages. 592 554 571 [178]

Marriage in Ngoni Society

Earlier in this chapter it was said that a new house derived from the marriage of a leading man to his big wife. Since marriage was so closely linked with the continuance and development of houses, and since a new wife when married separated from her own mother's house and became a member of her husband's mother's house, I have included a discussion of marriage in this chapter on houses. 581 182

There were three main principles in Ngoni marriage. It was a binding contract sealed by the exchange of cattle; it established succession in the male line; it formed a link between leading Swazi clans. When we examine in detail the organization of Ngoni marriage we see that its objectives were to build up a series of inter-clan and inter-family relationships. These began with inter-marriage between the leading Swazi clans, in order to strengthen the political and social relationships within that inner circle of Ngoni society. The political allegiance of leading individuals from clans of non-Swazi origin was strengthened by marriage

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

found opportunities for visiting the village and looking at the girl, and 584
having decided in her favour, he then proceeded to court her along the following recognized and definite lines:

1. He courted the girl and if she was willing she eventually agreed to marry him.
2. He informed a member of the *gogo* house of his father's family, usually an older brother of his father.
3. This elder informed the man's father.
4. At the father's request, this elder went to the girl's village and sought out a corresponding elder of her family, usually an older brother of her father and always someone belonging to the *gogo* house.
5. This elder in the girl's village informed her father and mother and, when this was done, told the elder from the man's village, who then went home.
6. The girl's parents asked her if she agreed to the marriage and, if she gave her consent, they considered the matter and finally gave their consent.
7. The man's elder returned to the girl's village and the girl's parents told him they had consented and he then went home again.
8. He returned soon with a beast, called 'the snuff box', as a gift from the man's father. This elder now had several companions with him, but no one from the man's immediate family circle or from his house.
9. The beast was killed and the betrothal feast was held in the girl's village, after which her parents and the elders of her village said, 'We have snuffed.'
10. The man's father sent another elder to 'call the girl' and she was then addressed as 'daughter-in-law'.
11. The girl's father and his brothers decided what the *lobola* should be and informed the man's parents how many beasts they wanted.

Men of the *gogo* house in each village played the major part as go-betweens in the negotiations between the two families, opening the way for the new relationship which was felt to be full of difficulties. Once the betrothal feast had been held, the leading function of the *gogo* house gave way to more direct participation by the man's house, where the male members had now to find the cattle for the *lobola*, the amount [554] of which had been fixed by the girl's family. This amount was in direct relationship to the status of the girl's family and clan. In the 1930's for a girl of the royal clan it was up to fifteen beasts; for girls of other Swazi clans from three to nine beasts; and for girls of non-Swazi clans from one to three—the variation depending on the status of her father in his village, and on the house from which he came. It was to the herd belonging to this house that the cattle of the *lobola* were allocated. The

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and
592 the high ranking of the Nzunga clan accounted for the number of
621 *lobola* marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

●554 As individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans
565 claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families
614 in the area of a *mulumuzana* owning a head village, and the small Ngoni
621 family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received
'honour' (*ulemu*). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and
in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were
[557] a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank
and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was
more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick
to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would
enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side, responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and the *banja*. Quarrels had to be composed, if possible before they came to court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be expected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the northern and Mangozo in the central kingdom.

[476] In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose husbands were away at work. The dislocation caused to the village economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and heads of a *banja*, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include the needs of these 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradition emphasized this type of help.

867 In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and relationships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty ceremonies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

some for themselves as their perquisite. They then drove the cattle to 233
pasture, and this might be some distance away when grass was scarce in 857
the dry season. They sometimes drove the cattle back near the village to 561
rest at noon under the shade trees, but if the pasture was far away the cattle rested there and went on feeding later. They were brought back to the kraal in the late afternoon and counted by one of the senior men.

The herd-boys taught each other to fight with sticks, to wrestle, to [868]
catch rats and small birds, to use the knobkerry, catapults, and bows and arrows. Sometimes in the afternoon they went to other villages and challenged another herd to a fight between bulls.[1] During the long day's herding, the boys used to drink milk, make *amasi* (milk curds) in a gourd and eat it, bake birds in clay and roast ears of maize taken from their mothers' grain stores. Precedence among the herd-boys depended [554]
first on age and only secondly on the rank and position of the families they belonged to. There was an easily recognizable air of authority and almost of arrogance among the older boys responsible for their fathers' and uncles' cattle. They superintended the process of letting out the cattle, milking them, driving them to pasture and the return to the [492]
kraal in the evening. Mounted on donkeys, wearing large straw hats made by themselves, the senior boys acted like ranch owners bossing up inefficient work hands.

This period of living in the *laweni* was, as we have seen, shared by boys 561
of a wide age group. In a large village where there were two or three or 866
four *laweni*, there was often one in each section, which generally meant that the boys belonging to one *banja* or section shared one *laweni*. This had the effect of dividing them up to some extent on a basis of family and rank, but in a *laweni* serving a whole village all the boys went in together whatever families they came from. There was no respecting of clan [565]
status in the *laweni* and young boys of high-ranking families had to wait on and obey older boys of lower rank. *Laweni* life was therefore a democratizing influence among the boys of the village, and no boys were excused from herding cattle because they belonged to a house which owned cattle. Even if some went to school and others did not, the school-boys had to take their share of herding in the holidays. Ngoni chiefs and leading men laid great emphasis on keeping the boys busy and making them carry out the work allotted to them. The older boys began to listen [867]
in at court cases and to discuss them among themselves. During the wet season from time to time they formed hoeing parties for clearing new ground and for the periodical weeding of gardens. They seldom did any continuous cultivation, as the women and the older men did, and a boy who liked to go off and hoe by himself was pointed out as one with rather peculiar tastes.

During this period of *laweni* life, when in addition to herding the

[1] For the relation between the training of herd-boys and preparation for war, see Part II, Chap. I, p. 30.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show subservience to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss. 562 565 867

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private. 881 836 565 [797] 178] [195] [831]

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony [554]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 in 1938.[1] The sociological and ritual significance of these factors will be
233 the chief emphasis here, with reference to earlier chapters in this book on Ngoni culture and on the structure of Ngoni society.

233 In the sociological significance of cattle-ownership there are certain outstanding points to be emphasized, which will be indicated here and
554 developed further in the analysis which follows. One is the connexion
565 between cattle-ownership and status, illustrated by the dominance of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in village life, since their possession of cattle was related to the kraal and to the siting of huts and to their house organization. The cattle horns on the roof of the *indhunkulu* were no trivial ornament. They were a proud assertion of cattle-ownership attached to the residences of the leading women, with all the implications of 'house herds' of cattle and of *lobola* given and received. Closely related to cattle-ownership and status was the power conferred by the possession of herds. The status of leading families was enhanced by the ability to give feasts, to give *lobola* for their sons' wives, to make sacrifices to the ancestors and, as we saw at the end of the last chapter, to realize cash by the sale of beasts belonging to the herd. Cattle-owners did at times have to decide whether to maintain and augment their herds and thereby be known as wealthy cattle-owning families; or to sell cattle in order to command labour to build a modern brick house, or to buy fine clothes for their wives and display their wealth in another form.

182 In the organization of Ngoni society, cattle were an important factor in uniting groups of persons. We have seen how the house, as a group
233 of men and women, and its variant, the central Ngoni form of *banja*,
621 had common possession of a herd of cattle which formed a source of wealth for all members of the house. Within the house the senior men were bound together by the responsibilities attached to the ownership and care of a herd. Within the village the senior men of a house or *banja* united in the upkeep of the kraal, the supervision of the herd-boys, the tending of sick cattle, and in meeting or resisting the Government's demands for culling or dipping stock. Where cattle were boarded out in another village, ties of association in the care of the beasts and in accountability for them bound together the cattle-owners or cattle-keepers of more than one village. A stage in the adjustment of a young wife to a strange village was reached when she added to the herd of the house she had married into the gift cattle given her by her father and so partly compensated for those which had been given to him by her husband's family. A new wife's standing in a village was thus advanced through any cattle which flowed in the opposite direction from those of the *lobola* cattle. Finally, and this is the main theme of this chapter, cattle were an essential link between the living and the dead.

[1] Read, M. *Native Standards of Living and African Culture Change*. Memorandum XVI of International African Institute, 1938.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

death, or he can give them to anyone he likes during his lifetime. Hence individual acquisition in the English sense involves the legal right of individual disposal; the individual possession of profits from such disposal; and the individual responsibility for complying with any regulations concerning cattle, such as inoculation, slaughter for foot-and-mouth disease, and testing of milk.

In Ngoni usage the concept of ownership involved the acquisition and disposal of, and the responsibility for, cattle, but behind this apparent similarity of terms lay a wide difference in interpretation. Cattle could be acquired by inheritance, by natural increase, by *lobola*, as payment in a court case, as a gift, or by purchase. Formerly cattle could be acquired in warfare and raiding, but never by purchase. With this exception of buying cattle for cash, the methods of acquiring cattle had not altered since the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland. In pre-European days in the Ngoni kingdoms only the Paramount, the subordinate chiefs, the *abumuzana* and the big *ixinduna* possessed cattle. Having a herd marked the owner as a leading member of a leading clan, or as a famous warrior of a lesser clan whose distinguished war service had been rewarded by the Paramount giving him cattle, or allowing him to keep some of those he had taken from the enemy. New herds were formed when a Paramount or a chief moved out of his father's village and set up his own *lusungulu* village, taking with him one or more of his mothers who, together with his big wife, set up houses in the new village, and these houses were allotted cattle from the former undivided herd. Another way in which a herd was divided was when a big *induna* in charge of the house of a leading wife of a Paramount or a chief built a kraal for the cattle of that house near his own huts, and added to that herd any cattle which he acquired. Large Ngoni villages in pre-European days usually had one or more kraals on the edge of the village, as well as the big central one. When the large villages broke up and the *induna* moved off to found his own village, he still took care of the cattle of that house. If the house was one where an ancestral spirit was guarded, a successor was always appointed to live in the hut and guard the spirit. Hence the relationship of the house, its spirit guardian, its cattle and the *induna* in charge continued, though the personalities changed through death and for other reasons. This explained how in the 1930's cattle were found in one kraal which were said to belong to a house or a woman guardian of a spirit miles away in another village. Sometimes they were described as the cattle of a man long dead.

It is clear, therefore, that the Ngoni methods of acquiring cattle and building up herds did not result in a concept of individual ownership. Cattle were not willed from father to son, but the son of a Paramount or a chief, when he made his new *lusungulu* village, had the right to receive and to take with him the cattle of his mother's house; and the head of the *gogo* village who stayed behind also received and looked after the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

cattle never came back to the kraal in the evening without one or more of the senior men standing by the gate and watching them and counting them as they went in. Sick cattle were noted and the herd-boys questioned about them. Mating was observed and noted, but not regulated, though poorly developed male beasts were sometimes castrated by one of the men who had acquired skill as a cattle doctor. Such a man would also administer drenches and other medicines, but the responsibility for calling a *sing'anga*, the specialist in medicines, to perform a ritual for a sick beast was taken by the whole group. They also made the decision to call a *sing'anga* to protect the kraal against lions. On several occasions I was in a village where lions attempted to get into the kraal at night, and the next morning the senior men who were responsible for the herd discussed the efficacy of this or that man's 'lion medicine' and decided who should be sent for to make the kraal safe again.

Important decisions were taken from time to time about placing the cattle belonging to the herd of a house in other kraals. This custom of *kuikihila* (lit. to entrust) was common in the central kingdom and had been adapted to modern needs as one means of evading the cattle-tax by appearing to have few cattle, whereas a number were boarded out in other areas. This boarding out was a long-established custom of the Ngoni and was practised for various reasons. One reason, and probably the most important formerly, was to build up good relations with leading men in the outlying villages by entrusting cattle to their care. The reward if the cattle throve was often the gift of a beast, and this was one means by which men of local tribes could build up a herd. It was also a signal honour to have cattle entrusted in this way and it was acknowledged by sending to such a 'keeper' the head of any beast killed from this herd. Another reason for boarding out was to prevent diseases spreading among a whole herd all kept in one kraal, and yet another was a belief that certain men had latent power with cattle, and that beasts put in their care throve and multiplied. This emphasis on enlarging the herds by natural increase was the main motive for letting the calves have all the milk they needed in order that they might thrive.

The uses of cattle and cattle products

Many of the uses to which cattle were put and for which they were greatly valued have been referred to in this chapter and in earlier sections of this book. We shall now examine the consumption of meat, milk and blood as food, and the forms of exchange in which cattle were directly exchanged or converted into cash. The ritual use of cattle will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

The testimony of early Europeans in Nyasaland and the accounts by the Ngoni of their life in the pre-European period agree in giving the consumption of meat, milk, and blood a high place in the diet of the cattle-owning families. It was a widespread European criticism in the

178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly
231 related to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
437 of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Money was needed for good
554 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which
the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling,
[453] except among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Values and attitudes in cattle-ownership

Any attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquir-
114 ing, caring for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive
233 survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place
565 in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is not possible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba clans whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading clans and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.

The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they repre-
231 sented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able
556 to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of ritual for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

untrue, to say that all the prophets were false. Some were true go-betweens 791
between the land of the spirits and the land of men. They received in dreams, sometimes in visions, things that related to the people of their time. God himself agreed to make them his workers and messengers even though these men sought for him in twisty ways.

The real go-betweens or prophets were called *isanusi*, 'those who smell something', and *abantu benhloko*, 'people of the head, people of dreams'. These men were considered to meet with the spirits in dreams or by their medicines which lifted them up to see the things of the spirit land. The people thought that these men received news from the spirits which they were to give to the earth people.

These men who had the gift of seeing in dreams were not allowed to live in big villages where there were often noises, but the chiefs sent them out to build for themselves a little distance from the chief's village along with their family. They were afraid that people would be disturbing them and making a noise when they met with the spirits. They were also afraid that in the big villages there would be many people who did not walk in an orderly way, and so these men, meeting those people, would spoil their own good sense.

These men did not talk with the spirits all the time. Often they did not receive any messages, but on other days their heads were stirred up and they spoke.

In the central kingdom there had been in the past the same distinction mentioned by Cibambo between diviners who dreamed, and those who used medicines to smell before giving their message. Informants said that there was also a distinction between those who took the initiative in announcing that they had something to say, and those who waited to be called for consultation. In pre-European days, in the hierarchy of [554] diviners, the highest esteem was given to those who dreamed only (*abantu benhloko*) and who announced as a result of their dreams that they had something of importance to tell the Paramount. The Maseko line of Paramounts had, in the days of Mputa, a famous woman diviner called NaNdumbu who was of a Swazi clan. She went north to Tanganyika with the Paramount Mputa and was regarded as the *isanusi* for the whole country who foretold events as a result of her dreams. An informant who had seen her described her after she had had a dream or a vision coming into the *bwalo*, the open space in front of the Paramount's hut, and dancing with the little stick which the women carry in the *umsindo* dance. When the Paramount saw her dancing thus he came out to her and she spoke with him alone, telling him of her dream. Then, when the people around were silent, she lifted up her stick high with an outstretched arm, and the Paramount told the people what she had told him, and when they heard it they knocked their sticks on the ground and said '*e e e e*'. After she died her brother took her place as *isanusi*, and his daughter was living in Mcakhatha when I was there. This woman said of her father 'When I was young they told me "Your father has become

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

about a sick relative. He asked for a preliminary payment in cash from me before he would say anything in front of me, having already received the customary present of fowls from the sick man's relatives. There was an atmosphere of part pantomime, part reluctant performance in front of a stranger whose presence seemed to trouble him more than it did his clients. He wore a python-skin cap with beads dangling from it, and carried the tail of a black cow bound with lead and a small skin bag with the lots in it. At first he sat holding the tail in his hands and sniffing it occasionally. Then he suddenly shook the lots out of the bag—six large beans called *kuhumo* and about twenty small round nuts called *mapi*. He put snuff on the top of each bean, sprinkled snuff on the nuts, picked the nuts up in both hands, shook his hands together and threw the nuts on the ground. Some fell near the big beans, others rolled between them. He looked intently at them, then at the group waiting to consult him. 'There is someone who is sick,' he said to them and the group replied '*Siyavuma*' (we agree). They continued to chant *siyavuma* in a low tone over and over again, with an almost mesmeric effect. He meantime went on to describe the sickness, that it was a pain inside the man (the chanting was loud), that it had been on the right side (less response), in the stomach (less response), on the left side (loud response). At intervals he waved the tail in the air and knocked the leaded end on the ground to emphasize the louder response. He did not specify the complaint but advised the people consulting him to go home and kill a goat as a sacrifice to their ancestors, and give the sick man some medicines which he would sell them.

It may have been the mixture of a real consultation with my visit which produced his slightly mountebank performance, and it may also have been his combination of the role of diviner with peddling medicines which the people present for the consultation evidently expected to obtain from him. This aspect of his performance impressed itself on the Ngoni informant who was with me. He was slightly contemptuous throughout, even when the songs were being sung and taken down. He kept on muttering 'This is Nsenga,' and said afterwards as we were going away that this diviner worked only for ordinary people and their sickness, as witnessed by his telling them to sacrifice a goat, and that he would not have been acknowledged by the real Ngoni. He was making comparisons all the time between the 'people of the head' and the diviners of this type, illustrating the Ngoni esteem for the real dreamers, and the slight, sometimes great, contempt for those who combined divining with recommending medicines as remedies.

The contrast between the performance of this diviner and that of the two *izanusi* whom I saw at work in the central kingdom was considerable. My long residence in Mcakhatha and the entrée I had to all that was taking place in connexion with the sickness of Bambo Manga no doubt helped to give confidence to the diviners. The chief and his

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the
137 rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

311 In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose
361 it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

361 The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe
351 formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
[343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

There were two focal points in each village, reproduced
621 on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
● [554] the 'big house'[1] at the head of the kraal, where the leading woman had her home.

851 small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was
[846] applied with a feather to the baby's navel.
[278] When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and
[302] the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then
[515] they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a
[431] basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such
[177] presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come
● [554] back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grand-
[603] mother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to
[431] the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's
864 lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy and therefore to be removed from them when the time came for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with him, they sometimes carried him about while the nurse girl
[262] did something else, they ground bulrush millet or roasted ground-nuts to give him as snacks. They were particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[533] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he addressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
● [554] measure of the authority which his father and his father's brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and grandmother's households. There were young children who were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been announced, and from that vantage-point she could command the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[556] do women would have four or five of them bulging with maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch children there. There were much smaller mortars for pounding ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
415 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow winnowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (1)

When the boy's voice began to break, and his father or another older man noticed it, the second part of the ritual took place. The father's brother went to a senior man famed in the village as a herbalist and obtained from him several kinds of roots. These were ground and then cooked either in milk or in the cud from a goat's stomach, usually the latter, for the father liked it to be known that he killed a goat for his son. If the mixture was cooked in milk, a fowl was killed, and in either case the boy was given the meat to eat immediately after the mixture to take away the extremely bitter taste. The cooking took place on a small fire by the kraal gate in the presence of the male members of the father's house. The boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the mixture as it was bubbling in the pan and to lick them quickly. He was not expected to show that he found the mixture very bitter as well as hot to touch. At intervals the boy had to jump over the fire, hitting his elbows and knees with the palms of his hands. The more often he did this, the less often did he have to dip in the pan because the mixture soon dried up, but he had to continue dipping and licking till there was no liquid left. The senior men watched intently all through this performance because they believed the mixture not only helped physical growth and muscular strength but would prevent impotence. When this ritual was performed for the heir of a chief, it was followed by a war-dance in the cattle kraal and the boy had to take a second dose of medicine in the kraal surrounded by the warriors. In such a case a bull was killed instead of the customary goat, and the contents of its stomach used for mixing the medicine. The meat was eaten by the boy and his father's relatives.

As in the case of the girls, this boy's ritual was an occasion for asserting the authority of the father and his kin over the boy. For him there was however no separating off into another group after this maturing. He continued to live in the dormitory, herd cattle, and go to school as before.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] beadbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear 301 the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took 356 an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain 515 standards in their homes and in their persons, which were 182 held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government [177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'.

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders.

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the
797 church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been
159 threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition
875 and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary
[622] behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to
[871] some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organize his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described
177 in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose
797 partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or
871 ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools
186 were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose personal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

871 Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected
463 their boys who had been to school and had entered European
554 employment away from their homes, to find work which assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

position. They wanted them to be, or to become, senior clerks, trusted store assistants, valued houseboys, foremen in charge of other men, hospital assistants. They wanted them, in other words, to be in positions where Ngoni traits would be appreciated, and where good behaviour and self-control, ability to supervise others, responsibility and initiative, obedience to orders, would be recognized and rewarded. 871 463 554 [577]

In conclusion here is a record of a conversation I heard in the village of a very senior chief, so senior that he was given the title of *Inkosi* when his subjects addressed him. The chief, who was then in his seventies, but active and vigorous, was sitting in a chair on the veranda of his hut, out of the sun's glare, with several of the senior men of the village behind him. Two young teachers in charge of a school came to greet him. They bent one knee as they squatted in front of him, as they had been taught to do as children, gave him the customary greeting, and waited in silence till he spoke. 622 871

'How is your school?'

'The classes are full and the children are learning well, *Inkosi*.'

'How do they behave?'

'Like Ngoni children, *Inkosi*.'

'What do they learn?'

'They learn reading, writing and arithmetic, scripture and geography and drill.'

'Is that education?'

'It is education, *Inkosi*.'

'No! No! Education is *very* broad, *very* deep. It is not only in books, it is learning to live. I am an old man. When I was a boy I went with the army to the Bemba war. Then the mission came and I went to school. I became a teacher. Then I was a chief. I have seen this country change, and now the young men go away to work. I tell you Ngoni children must learn how to live, and how to work and earn money, and how to build up our land. *Uyezwa na?*' (Do you hear?)

'*Yebo Inkosi*.' (Yes, O chief.)

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived 361
in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a
central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut [585]
and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts
were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a
few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership [592]
of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an
important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and [554]
their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped [727]
into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. 621
Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates
of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or [624]
his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who
were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions [622]
made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The
village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman
or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him.
Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the
headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where 631
there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions,
villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential [728]
system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the [17]
Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same 631
cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to
establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in 571
importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their
clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be
contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves
as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself
affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who
established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained
a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance.
The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters,
a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relation-
ships of superordination and subordination between persons remained
the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigaûa*, pl. *cigaûa*, from *ku-gaûa*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of [581] his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 851 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriage belonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth his sons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin on behalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim. I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past and when recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

[129] Important men sometimes married female captives and no [554] bridewealth passed. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons founded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bride-183 wealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.[13] The infor-[128] mation on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II.

It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was [276] offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898

[13] See pp. 22f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

128 from the recollections of informants and the accounts of contemporary writers. Even in a society as rapidly expanding as was the Ngoni 554 before 1898, the majority of the population at any one time consists 581 of people who are politically unimportant. What were remembered 184 and what was recorded at the time were the marriages of leaders and their close relatives. It is they, more than others, who were distinctively Ngoni, and it was by their actions that the values of Ngoni society were emphasized and developed. Their marriages [187] were important in maintaining tribal solidarity and it is the system exemplified in these marriages that we have been describing. But the recent captives, the poor, the unsuccessful warriors, the junior sons of junior sons, they also married and their marriages were at least as numerous as those of their more fortunate brethren, despite the large bands of wives acquired by successful men.

583 The data in our sample provide suggestions as to both the relative 554 frequency of marriage without payment and the kind of relationship that held between payment and status of spouse. The eight cattle were offered by one of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants as bridewealth for the daughter of a man of Nsenga origin. Two junior sons of this lieutenant each offered a beast as legalization payment for a wife, one of whom was the daughter of a divisional head. A legalization payment of unknown magnitude was made in a marriage between a village headman and a daughter of another of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants. These four marriages we may regard as important marriages between people of high status accompanied by marriage payments which usually were substantial. Among persons of low status we find that in six out of the seven marriages in which no payment was made, one or both of the spouses had been captured. Intermediately we have the remaining two marriages in which the legalization payment was made and the one in which 'snuff-box' was paid, all involving people of low or middle status and accompanied by relatively small payments, namely a chicken, some cloth, and tobacco. This positive correlation between status and payment holds for thirteen out of the fourteen marriages, but one marriage without payment was between one of the same junior sons of the lieutenant and the daughter of a man of Kalanga origin.

From such evidence as there is, it seems probable that marriages between people of high status were usually accompanied by substantial payments. At the same time, many of the marriages of people of low status and some of the unimportant marriages of men of high status took place without payments. What proportion of the total these marriages accounted for we cannot now ever hope to know. However since they amount to half of our pre-1898 sample it seems probable that they constituted a considerable fraction of all the marriages contracted at that time.

581 The payment of 'snuff-box' and bridewealth were the crucial events establishing a marriage, but there were a number of other transfers of beer and cattle, and a number of ceremonies without

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place
[591] of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[19] If
[593] the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists
[583] to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on
[941] beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

581 As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction
602 between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they
[858] belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who
[554] had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[19] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 191-2.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors. 581 602 554

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system. 62 581 571 [611] [591] [554]

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[20] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere [121] 582 [114] [561] [643]

[20] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [564] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. *The levirate*

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mceka* or *mtoso*. *Mceka* is an Nsenga word meaning a small [192] cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt [291] by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 589
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return [851]
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired 554
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The recent captives

855 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband,
593 wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw
631 attention to two features of the residential system which were not,
554 at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man
591 lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features
[178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which
581 agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their
613 own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the
[582] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this.
[178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one mining town to the next, sleeps for a night with a prostitute and 581
lives for years with a concubine. What is at least relatively 571
permanent is his relationship to his wife and to his children by her.
Men still hope that they will be able to gather their children about [593]
them as they grow old, and build up new villages so that their names
will be remembered. Status is still measured in terms of dependants, [554]
and the most certain of all dependants are legitimate children.
Ngoni marriage no longer automatically ensures that a man will
have custody of his children, but without marriage he has no hope
at all of retaining them.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a 595
proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years 648
ago had earlier been the mistress of a European. 582

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic 799
girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A 582
Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules.

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The 621
bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from 582
within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is [554]
said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact 628
are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are 584
inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young 535
people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls.

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off 628
to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has 584
kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom 574
to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on 591
rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending 24
on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the 343
marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one
nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for 24
a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can 462
be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her.
If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his
wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe.

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing [492]
a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen.

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, 224
there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals 233
have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting 462
is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so.
If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care.

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection 593
on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about 262
when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite
him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-
supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March.
She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually [252]
burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will
be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly.

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at 273
least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been 462
mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to
which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any
case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important
men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer [554]
to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But [514]
common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully,
and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised
if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain [437]
money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

589 of as being divorced from the dead man. If they do not themselves wish to be inherited they cannot be forced to remain.

587 If a widow is cared for by a younger brother of her dead husband, and that man already has a wife of his own, the widow is regarded as inferior in status to the man's own wife. Yet any children she 851 has by him count as if they were children by the dead husband, and as such they inherit his cattle and offices before the brother's children 428 by his own wife. This apparent paradox is due to the nature of 554 Ngoni seniority. Seniority was always associated with position in a definite segment in the old residential system. The widow belongs to the segment of her dead husband, and even today if she is a queen she ought to stay there after she has been given a pro-husband. If she moves to live in proximity to her pro-husband, she comes into the ranking system of which the pro-huband's great wife is the superior. Her children are, however, still associated with the segment from whence she came.

The new husband, whether he is a kinsman of the dead man or 587 not, pays one goat, also known as 'snuff-box', on taking the woman, 583 and this animal she keeps herself, and does not hand on to her father or brother. If no bridewealth was paid by the first husband, the 851 children borne to the second take the descent name of their own father and his rights in the marriage are the same as if he were marrying the woman for the first time and had made the legalization payment.

589 There is then an opportunity for the marriage to continue after the death of the man if his wife and his kinsmen are both agreeable. If the widow wishes to go her own way, she can do so, and if his kinsmen do not wish to care for her, they need not. Even if they do not like the woman they cannot turn her out of the village, and she can go on living in her dead husband's hut and cultivating the same garden as before. She may even re-marry and bring in her new husband to live with her in her dead spouse's village. The extent to which this can be done without quarrelling depends very much on the personalities of the people involved. If the widow decides to go back to her own village, her husband's kin may try to prevent her removing possessions of which the ownership is not certain, and she should discuss with them how much of the crops she can take away from her garden.

587 Nowadays the death of a wife brings the marriage to an end. We have seen that in the old days the dead woman was replaced by a linked co-wife, and that this institution has now all but disappeared. There is no other form of sororate, and although a man may sometimes in jest address his wife's sister as *wife*, he has no rights over her.

593 The specific responsibilities of brothers towards a man's marriage are demonstrated in the role of the elder brother as a marriage negotiator and of the younger brother as potential husbands for a man's widows. A man would not, save in exceptional circumstances,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village. 648 361 591

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[16] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers. [754]

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased. 591 621 [178]

3. *Polygyny*

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organize large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance 595 178 [556] [554] [592]

[16] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have been discussing it. Divorce took place because the man, a recently captured Kunda, ran away back to his former tribe leaving his wife, daughter of one of Mpezeni's lieutenants, behind in her father's village. In 'the time of peace' marriages were stable, with or without payment. The wealthy men were the politically important men, and indeed Wiese's assertion that men married off their daughters so as to gain the maximum number of cattle[8] may be based on the behaviour of socially ambitious fathers in what was largely an upward-mobile society. Political affiliation effected by marriage was ratified by a transfer of wealth appropriate to its importance in the general field of political and social relations. Divorce frequency and kinship structure were the same for rich and poor, aristocrats and captives, and were neutral factors in determining the amount of marriage payment.

The second phase began immediately after the war of 1898 and lasted until about 1930. At the beginning of this period the tribe as a whole was poorer than it has been before or since. Many cattle were looted in the war and for a long time there was little money in circulation. The majority of marriages without payment were contracted during this phase, and it seems reasonable to associate this in part with the poverty of the people. It is difficult to make any precise estimate of divorce frequency at this time, although we know that many Cewa and Nsenga women who had been married before 1898 deserted their husbands and returned home when British control was established. There does not seem to be any evidence for supposing that at this period women moved from one husband to another within the confines of the Ngoni kingdom more quickly than they do now. It is perhaps safe to say that the low level of payments was due partly to poverty but also partly to the general uncertainty about the future, about the kind of society which the White Administration was building for the Ngoni. Evans-Pritchard has stressed that 'It is morals that censure divorce and law that refuses to recognize grounds for divorce which ensure the stability of the union of husband and wife.'[9] The laws and moral code that had been enforced by the old chieftainship had been shaken by the defeat of 1898. The payment of bridewealth had defined legitimate expectations of behaviour, obligations and rights, within an organized system of social relations which had been shattered. While many Ngoni must still have regarded marriage with payment of bridewealth as morally right and desirable, they must also have been aware of the greatly increased risk they were running when making these payments, even if they had the cattle to make them. Rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* which were socially recognized but could not be enforced through the machinery of the State were hardly

[8] See above, p. 3, footnote 3.
[9] Evans-Pritchard, 'Social character of bride-wealth, with special reference to the Azande', *Man*, xxxiv (1934), p. 174.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 again returning to the old village. That evening
166 they take some of the fire (that they made earlier in
the day) to kindle a fire with in the (new) hut
622 (*Kuka*). In kindling it they do not squat down, they blow the faggots into flame from a standing position, and they do this lest the smoke might ever after hang in wreaths over the floor. The womenfolk come every day to cook.

II. When the chief's huts are finished, they build those of the old men, and when these are complete, they bring all the huts [from the old village]. When they see that all the huts are finished, beer is made at the old village, and they go and bring
166 the spirits. He who has a grave pours some beer
782 in a gourd-pot and places it on the grave, saying, "We have gone hence, you must not search for us here, come let us go together." On that day they demolish all the huts that remain, they leave only the huts of which the occupant has lately died. When now the sun begins to slant westward, from the *Kuka* hut they take five gourd-pots, and fill them
[273] with beer and make young women carrying these lead the way. The head old woman of the *Kuka*
[554] hut goes first, the chief wife of the chief follows *Gogo*, and then come the ones carrying the beer. When they arrive at the new village they set down the gourd-pots and all the people assemble. The elder of the village then begins to propitiate, saying, "There is the beer we down on earth have made, we have gone from yonder, we present to you your new village, all men you will have a care for." Then
[431] the village chief makes a present of a goat and hands it to the old man, and he again speaks, saying, "Here is goat which your child presents, you will wash it down with the beer." If the goat makes water, that is to say the spirit consents, if it will not they do not kill it. Then they kill the goat

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approxi- [231] mately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

619 The important positions in the old political structure were occupied by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Malumuzana*, pl. *alumuzana*. [4] *Nduna*, pl. *nduna*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

 619 631 534

the absence of any definite internal land boundaries between the territories of one political segment and another. The constant elements were the residential groups that we now know as villages,[1] and we may liken them to ships of different sizes and importance that preserve a loose formation while the fleet sails from place to place. Villages, discrete clusters of dwellings in comparative proximity and separated from one another by uninhabited stretches of garden-land and bush, were internally divided into divisions,[2] and from time to time these divisions broke away from one another or from their parent village to form new villages of their own. This process of divisional fission was characteristic of the commoner villages. Royal villages were usually formed by a parallel process by which an important member of the royal lineage established a new village for one or more of queens by recruitment from his own natal village. The eldest son by the senior queen in that village then became the head of the segment of the royal lineage associated with the village. Thus the segmentation of the royal lineage was reflected in a proliferation of royal villages. 631

In the period immediately prior to the conquest of the tribe by British forces in 1898, there were four important royal villages, with populations of probably several thousands each. One belonged to a brother of Mpezeni, and the other three were controlled by groups of Mpezeni's own queens and their sons. Associated with each royal village were several regional governors, each of whom was responsible for the well-being of a group of lesser villages, and who resided among them in a village of his own. These lesser villages were commoner villages, each under its own headman. Each large royal village had also a number of lesser royal villages attached to it, and also many commoner villages were attached to a royal village of some sort directly, and not through a regional governor.[3]

Each important person, chief, member of the royal lineage, regional governor, or headman was assisted by a number of lieutenants, trusted subordinates who were usually not patrilineal kinsmen of their principal but who were sometimes related affinally. These lieutenants were ranked in order of the creation of their posts by their principal and assisted him in the control of his unit of administration. In the case of Mpezeni himself, however, there were two kinds of lieutenants. Those people known as the lieutenants of Mpezeni were 64

[1] *Mumi*, pl. *mimi*.
[2] *Cigodu*, pl. *vigodu*.
[3] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66, for a similar system among the Swazi.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 principal urban centres on the railway line in Northern Rhodesia who represent the Ngoni Native Authority in the various Native Urban Courts. These representatives are appointed by the Superior Native Authority, that is, by the Paramount Chief and his lieutenants. These posts are regarded in much the same light as those of the minor chiefs except that the tenure of office is not so stable, and the same struggles to gain them take place. There are Ngoni members of the Fort Jameson African Urban Advisory Council, but they are elected by urban Africans and are not appointed by the Native Authority.

Rural and Urban Status

369 554 The relatively privileged position of certain individuals in the urban order may raise their status in the life of the tribe. We have already seen how the initiative in religious matters is taken by the deacons and evangelists, and these people are also called upon to lead the prayers that precede all county meetings. The orderlies in the hospitals in Fort Jameson are able to establish private practices and number chiefs and other important people among their clients. The senior shop assistants may find it possible to entertain important people by offering them European spirits. The clerks of the Administration, as part of the protective screen around the District Officers, can exercise their discretion in allowing pleas to go forward to them.

There seems to be very much less bribery and corruption than has been reported from other parts of Africa. The Ngoni are in the main more interested in and more able to make effective use of medicines and other material goods than they are of advance information. But the fact remains that the African Civil Service and the various commercial undertakings are institutions within which a man of no importance in the village and tribe can rise to a position of influence which will affect his dealings with other tribesmen. The only Ngoni on the African Representative Council, which meets yearly and includes representatives from the whole of Northern Rhodesia, was in 1946 not a headman or lieutenant but was the most prominent African businessman in Fort Jameson.

To some extent this association of high status in the urban community and low status in the rural one is inevitable, since it is only by absence from the district for many years that a man can advance himself sufficiently and acquire sufficient skill and seniority to reach this high urban status. The member of the African Representative

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Council mentioned above spent some twenty years of his life in Johannesburg. Fort Jameson itself is not a sufficiently big town for this process to take place within it, and yet it is only in Fort Jameson or on the tobacco farms that a man can live with a leg in both camps, going home to the village at the week-ends and probably keeping his wife in the village during the wet season to tend her crop. 369 554

On the other hand, there is some rivalry between the traditional leaders and the comparatively prosperous townspeople. The well-clad and well-housed Ngoni of the township are sometimes described scornfully by village people as 'merely White'. There is a feeling that the leading African traders are trying to monopolise the economic opportunities in the villages. Recently the same prominent Ngoni businessman proposed that he should take over the delivery of mail to the Native Authorities, which he claimed he would be able to do more efficiently with a car than can the present postman on a bicycle. The Paramount Chief did not answer this proposal but wrote instead to the Administration to complain against the danger of one man being allowed to earn so much more than anyone else while there were so many people who needed money. At the same time, men whose lives are led principally in the towns complain that in the villages there is 'nothing but jungle', and that the chiefs are old-fashioned and obstructive. 369 578 177 [205 493]

The Administration

The relationship between the Provincial Administration and the Ngoni is characteristically one of superordination and subordination. The District Officer can send for any Ngoni, but not even the Paramount Chief can send for the District Officer. This characteristic arises from two sources, from the premise which we find held all over Southern Africa, that any White is superior to any Black, and from the supervisory role allotted to the Administration in the Native Authority scheme. These two facets of the same relationship are not always seen separately by the Ngoni, and in many contexts their behaviour towards the Administration is governed entirely by the fact that the District Officer and those above him are all White. Official reports by the Administration during the reign of Mpezeni II repeatedly remarked on the Paramount Chief's distrust of Whites, and this attitude still persists. Any kind of trouble at all, particularly when it is seen as a characteristic of the present times as opposed to the glorious trouble-free past of the days of peace, before the Whites 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tribe is represented to the Administration in the person of its chief, and the fact that it is through him that the Administration articulates with the tribe is realized by thinking people. In a wider sense, he represents the tribe to the White community as a whole. When I first started work in the area there were many formalities at my meetings with the Paramount Chief, so that I should understand the importance of his position. Mpezeni II is said never to have allowed a White to see him dancing, because of the mystical and social dangers involved. At a county meeting, held while the Paramount Chief was away in Livingstone, the court clerk reminded headmen that the month of May was approaching, and that he would soon be wanting people to hoe the Native Authority roads. When the time came, he did not want headmen to say they had no people. He continued: 'If the people do not obey the laws, then Mpezeni will not be well regarded by the Whites. Then when the Administration wants to make bad laws, Mpezeni will not protest, as he will want to punish his own people.' 648

If the chief is too attentive to the requirements of the Administration, then his standing with his own people is likely to suffer. A chief's court was once described as 'just a White court' because of its alleged bias in favour of the Administration's interpretation of native custom. On the other hand, this identification with the White Administration is not accepted by the chiefs and their advisers. In an adultery case, in which the husband did not want to divorce his wife but she refused to go back to him, Mpezeni, who was present, ordered the woman to return to her husband. A councillor asked the woman what she had to say. She said she loved the co-respondent. The councillor was annoyed, and asked her, 'Do you know who Mpezeni is?' The woman said, 'He 's a chief', using the usual word for chief, *sefumu*, current all over north-eastern Rhodesia. The councillor replied: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a chief, everyone is a chief nowadays.' The woman then said, 'He 's a White.' The councillor answered: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a White whose orders can be sometimes obeyed and sometimes ignored. Mpezeni is *ndabazi*, the great chief of the Ngoni, whose commands must always be carried out.' 643 554 177

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FRS Ngoni FRS

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lava Ngoma of the Amanga tribe worked for Soweto when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1888, the year of the crossing. Ngonga Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Soweto. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngonga Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about 60 years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the Jimbiwa wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mqamacha Ntima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambezi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalo, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Mashaya Inthi. Father, Njabowera (Njabowera); mother and wife, not known; sons, Mankambewa and Chitete.

[554] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his [578] instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1848.

159 173 167 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nayalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambaw Gama) before the Zambezi crossing. They had no issue.

On the upward trek after crossing the Zambezi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nayalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Lusanjati near Mainba.

After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed [578] by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langwalang, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1848. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Mwaba was killed by [554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 [10] [646] (6) Njakwane Ntilla. Father, Mhange, a brother of Hintshwaya; mother, Manyowazana; wife, Mtanga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sendwani, Kaya Chafumula, Chain, Mow, Mazwi. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zungwala regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Kpambala Hill, Rufunsa River, in the year 1864.

(7) Mgai Komalo. Father, Hintshwaya; mother, unknown; wife, Bhibi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majakwana. Died in the Ulipa Country 1848.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

considered it his individual bad luck. On the other hand the house which depended on its herd for mutual help among its members and for the performance of ritual in sickness was deeply concerned at the loss of cattle and at any diminution of its herd. 231 556

After security, pleasure and emotional satisfaction were important Ngoni values in relation to cattle. This outlet for interest and enjoyment was very marked among Ngoni men. It began with the young herd-boys and continued until old age. Cattle were an endless topic for discussion, and in remote areas, where few strangers came and local affairs played a predominant part in village life, the fortunes of individual beasts and the progress of herds were talked about continuously. The advent of a letter from a son in the south sending money to his father to buy a beast gave a fillip to village life which little else provided. When the young men themselves came home, they went during their first evening to the kraal where the cattle they had paid for were kept, and showed interest and pleasure in the herd which was shared by all. The older men who had carried the responsibility were there, and on the fringes of the group the herd-boys hung around, listening to their elders, proud of having done their bit for the cattle which were the common concern of all three age-groups.

The Ngoni were aware that security in their cattle and the pleasure they got from them had to be won, and there was a price to pay. Hence they attached great value to knowledge and experience and to the ability to organise. Among the senior men responsible for a herd in a house or *kanja*, some would be known for their knowledge and skill in handling cattle and for their experience in dealing with sick beasts, in castrating bullocks, and in choosing well when buying new beasts. The Ngoni recognised an innate quality of skill, which they called *mphumi wabwino*, 'the good forehead', a term used as an equivalent for the 'green thumb' when talking about crops. They also recognised the knowledge which came from experience and which might or might not be associated with *mphumi wabwino*. In any village where there were cattle, men were pointed out who possessed knowledge about cattle-tending, and the choice of a neighbouring village kraal for boarding out purposes was generally decided on the reputation of the owner of the kraal as a good cattle man. Not all the people who had this specialised knowledge had ability to organise the care of cattle, a characteristic Ngoni quality on which they put a high value. Foresight and planning were necessary in the choice of kraals for boarding out, in the selection of animals for *lobola*, fines, gifts or slaughter, and above all in buying and selling cattle. This kind of organising ability required the possession of information about local markets and about potential sellers or buyers of cattle. It also demanded some nice calculations when sending cattle for *lobola* or giving a beast as a gift. Men were often torn between wishing to appear generous to the point of lavishness, and not wanting to give 231 555 [431]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 555 431 away the prize animals in the herd. Their formula in presenting a beast was 'Here is a small sheep.' This belittling of a gift was the social counterpart of their inner desire for a reputation for generosity.

183 422 476 It has been clear from many previous references that mutual assistance among members of a house was inherent in the social pattern of cattle-ownership. The Ngoni attached great value to this reciprocity of service, and it was deeply embedded in their social ethic. Young men in Ngoni villages thought twice before they deliberately took action which would bring them into the courts, because the fine would have to be paid by their elders from the common herd of cattle. The implications of this service proved no ultimate deterrent to hot-headed youth, but the lesson was constantly being rubbed in. After a court case for adultery, when a young man's father and his father's brothers had handed over a beast for a fine, they would grumble in the evening by the kraal at this waste of good cattle, and suggest it was time the young man went off to the south and sent money home to buy more cattle. This was the cycle of mutual help—the elders provided cattle from the herd for *lobola* and fines for the young men, who in turn went off to work and sent back money to buy more cattle. Reference has been made to 'the cloth of the spirits', when cattle were sold to provide cash for a young man who needed it, and the balance was used to buy cloth which was kept in the hut where the ancestral spirit was guarded. This cloth was the common property of all who belonged to the house owning the herd, and was returnable to the hut after it had been worn for some festive occasion. The forms which this mutual help could take were numerous and varied, and they all illustrated the fact that the correct and continuous observance of this reciprocity was considered by the Ngoni as one of the basic values underlying the ownership and use of cattle.

Among the group bound together by cattle-ownership this emphasis on mutual help as a desirable behaviour pattern had its counterpart in the social concept of integration. As we have seen, the Ngoni put a high value on 'staying together', on being united when challenged by a situation which made for disintegration. Within the social units of the house and family, the ownership of cattle with their care and use demanded some degree of co-operation through responsibility for the herd which was held in common. Integration between the living and their ancestors was also provided by the cattle. Common possession of a herd did more than just hold people together. The pattern of family and house organization which was characteristically Ngoni was given some stability through the ownership of cattle, allowing for the subdivision of herds when the new village 'went out', the exchanges at marriage, and the sacrifices at death.

That was con-
siderable latent, and at times overt, antagonism from the 575
younger towards the older group. This was to some extent [578]
mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in
cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of import-
ance, called in for consultations with the adults who were [858]
cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went
with them to market when beasts were sold. These older
boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger
ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good
care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones', [555]
with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle,
skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive 865
impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. 526
They fought with 'rods', like single-sticks, and became adept
at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days
there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the
elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There
was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting
made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard
out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the
edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal.
Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leader- [555]
ship among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a
kind of knock-out championship, hotly contested, until every-
one agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to
school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case
they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to
hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not 858
only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They 521
entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they con-
ducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge
of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about
men's affairs.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

535 The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called
571 the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group,
[578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

865 The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

157 One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect-
538 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell-
555 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

224 After the hunt the tally of kills was reckoned up, the game was carried home by the young men, and on the return to [262] the villages the meat was cooked and eaten by the men at the kraal gate. This was the occasion for going over all [521] the episodes of the chase, the skill of So-and-so, the fine organizing of the hunt by its 'owner'. No one mentioned the misses, no one's feelings were hurt, and there was a warm feeling of united and contented sharing in a good day's sport.

Lion-hunting was organized differently. Only former warriors and well-known huntsmen were called, and they sometimes took their sons with them as carriers. Guns as well as spears were taken, though the Ngoni liked to say, and it was often true, that they killed lions with spears only. Tracking a lion was dangerous and difficult, and when it was located in a patch of tall grass or reeds, the huntsmen made a circle round it, ready to attack when it broke cover. As in the chase, the one who stabbed the lion first, second and finally was noted. The dead lion was hoisted on poles slung from the shoulders of young men, and carried to the village where the hunt was organized. Here the party was welcomed and given food, the heroes were acclaimed, and the headman and seniors led the way to the village of the clan head, who called his men together to rejoice. When the augmented party reached the chief's or Paramount's village, [535] where all lions had to be taken, a war-dance took place in [555] the kraal, as of warriors returning from a campaign. The killer of the lion came out in front of the rest and danced his individual war-dance; he was hailed as a hero and new epithets were added to his praise names. The whole party [273] was given beer, a beast was killed for a meat feast, and then [574] the party thanked the Paramount in traditional fashion and went home.

It was in lion-hunting that young adults who were taken along felt the spice of danger, the thrill of success, and witnessed the pride of recognition for the successful killer by the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have
121 a segmentary social organization'.[25]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[26] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesser segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similarities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumstances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follow the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A societies as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political system may now be handled as a separate question, providing a classification cutting across the division into states and stateless societies.

642 We have spoken throughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a state, and this usage is in accord with the definition of a state given
[643] here. The Paramount Chief with his lieutenants exercised supreme
[622] authority, there was a highly organized administrative machine, and there was an organized method of settling disputes within the State. There were only slight variations in wealth except in the
[556] control of cattle, but privilege and status were expressed in the
[554] residential system and were inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

121 The presence or absence of a segmentary political system can itself be divided into two questions; was there a segmentary
631 system, and if so, was it the political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, then it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[25] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 234.

[26] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 201, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 34, diagrams.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of earning money to pay tax, together with such subsidiary measures as the prohibition of Native smelting, and the pressure on men to clothe themselves in imported clothing, ensured that the old order changed beyond the mere loss of sovereignty. Not only were links established with Southern Rhodesia and later with other parts of Africa, but new patterns of distribution of wealth and power were set up which were incompatible with the old order. The chief who stayed at home ruling his people found himself outclassed by the newly returned labourers from the south, with their display of clothes, money and urban mannerisms. The relationships between one tribe and another which formerly had found expression in fighting had now to find other expressions, and began to be based on different interests. 177 439 464 648 [556]

These general considerations applied throughout North-Eastern Rhodesia. In Ngoniland local variation was supplied more by the presence of the North Charterland than by the fact that the Ngoni had been defeated in war. The North Charterland was interested in the economic development of its concession, whereas the Administraton had to consider the needs of other territories governed by the B.S.A. Company, particularly Southern Rhodesia. The same administrative policy was applied to the Ngoni as to neighbouring tribes which had not been conquered by force of arms. Nevertheless in Ngoni eyes the Administration discriminated against Ngoni in favour of Cewa. Many Cewa who had been captured shortly before 1898 moved away from Ngoniland after the war, or at least moved in the direction of their homeland. With the end of Ngoni raiding the no-man's-land round Ngoni country filled up again with Cewa who had been displaced when the Ngoni first arrived in the 1870s. Cewa chiefdoms were re-established and recognized by the Administration, to the chagrin of the Ngoni. 439 648 [186]

Even the Ngoni themselves were referred to by the Administration as the 'Angoni-Chewa' by way of emphasizing their mixed ethnic composition. When the Native Reserve scheme was put forward in 1913 the Ngoni chiefs objected to the Cewa being allotted land of their own, and suggested that all the tribes of the district should be placed in one reserve under Mpezeni II. The Administration did not agree. When villages were moved into the proposed reserves in the 1920s, a few more villages left Ngoniland for Cewa country. At the same time other villages moved into Ngoniland from other chiefdoms in the face of alienation of land or difficulties with the Portuguese Administration. Thus to-day many villages in Ngoniland are of Cewa origin and many villages in Cewa chiefdoms are of Ngoni origin. 648 [167]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 support those of his colleagues. However, chiefs and others do
[661] sometimes manage to play off one administrator against another where there are differences of interest between different departments of the Administration, and occasionally appeals by Ngoni chiefs to high Administrative officials against the actions of their juniors are successful. It is easier for Ngoni to exploit the much greater differences of interest between the different sections of the non-African community, officials, missions, planters and European and Indian traders.

648 In the early years of this century it appears that the chiefs were
662 approached by labour recruiters, planters, and missionaries who wished to gain their favour and utilize this to their own advantage. It is difficult to gauge to what extent this practice continues. There are one or two recent instances where the missions have clearly
[797] recognized the importance to them of securing the goodwill of an Ngoni in high authority, and it would also appear that some high-placed Ngoni have utilized their position to gain from the missions services which might not otherwise have been so readily available to them. With the cessation of labour recruiting there has been no
[464] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[466] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[574] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly
231 related to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
437 of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Money was needed for good
554 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling,
[453] except among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Values and attitudes in cattle-ownership

114 Any attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquir-
233 ing, caring for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive
565 survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is not possible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba clans whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading clans and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.

231 The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they repre-
556 sented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of ritual for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

considered it his individual bad luck. On the other hand the house which depended on its herd for mutual help among its members and for the performance of ritual in sickness was deeply concerned at the loss of cattle and at any diminution of its herd. 231 556

After security, pleasure and emotional satisfaction were important Ngoni values in relation to cattle. This outlet for interest and enjoyment was very marked among Ngoni men. It began with the young herd-boys and continued until old age. Cattle were an endless topic for discussion, and in remote areas, where few strangers came and local affairs played a predominant part in village life, the fortunes of individual beasts and the progress of herds were talked about continuously. The advent of a letter from a son in the south sending money to his father to buy a beast gave a fillip to village life which little else provided. When the young men themselves came home, they went during their first evening to the kraal where the cattle they had paid for were kept, and showed interest and pleasure in the herd which was shared by all. The older men who had carried the responsibility were there, and on the fringes of the group the herd-boys hung around, listening to their elders, proud of having done their bit for the cattle which were the common concern of all three age-groups.

The Ngoni were aware that security in their cattle and the pleasure they got from them had to be won, and there was a price to pay. Hence they attached great value to knowledge and experience and to the ability to organize. Among the senior men responsible for a herd in a house or *banja*, some would be known for their knowledge and skill in handling cattle and for their experience in dealing with sick beasts, in castrating bullocks, and in choosing well when buying new beasts. The Ngoni recognized an innate quality of skill, which they called *mphumi wabwino*, 'the good forehead', a term used as an equivalent for the 'green thumb' when talking about crops. They also recognized the knowledge which came from experience and which might or might not be associated with *mphumi wabwino*. In any village where there were cattle, men were pointed out who possessed knowledge about cattle-tending, and the choice of a neighbouring village kraal for boarding out purposes was generally decided on the reputation of the owner of the kraal as a good cattle man. Not all the people who had this specialized knowledge had ability to organize the care of cattle, a characteristic Ngoni quality on which they set a high value. Foresight and planning were necessary in the choice of kraals for boarding out, in the selection of animals for *lobola*, fines, gifts or slaughter, and above all in buying and selling cattle. This kind of organizing ability required the possession of information about local markets and about potential sellers or buyers of cattle. It also demanded some nice calculations when sending cattle for *lobola* or giving a beast as a gift. Men were often torn between wishing to appear generous to the point of lavishness, and not wanting to give 231 555 [431]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182]

In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
●556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been announced, and from that vantage-point she could command the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[556] do women would have four or five of them bulging with maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch children there. There were much smaller mortars for pounding ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
416 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow winnowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
831 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
292 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
885 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often
301 trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the premarriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
885 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
● 556 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after.
593 It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
[836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'

177 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began
885

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [249] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 177 233 234

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the 251
tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the [262]
cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV.
Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work [556]
in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and
their presence in the compound conferred importance on
their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of [415]
beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter,
dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs
and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a [323]
shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It
was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when 583
married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats,
spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would 577
show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to
have a high standard of household management in her new
home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households 511
well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they 577
could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some
of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed [357]
their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish 252
was being prepared. They watched every movement of their 868
mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on,
measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred
the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps
and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water
before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day 262
in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish
of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less
often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the [415]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village.

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[38] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers.

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased.

3. Polygyny

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organise large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance

[38] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 in different villages. This distinction between the two groups
602 linked by marriage is symbolised by their spatial separation, and by
581 the existence of 'the man's village' and 'the woman's village', and we have seen how in the story of Daniel and Deborah (p. 82), Daniel wanted Deborah to be warned not in his village but in her own. He wished her own kinsfolk and her own local community to express their condemnation of her conduct, and this could only be done on their own ground. Without their co-operation it would have seemed that it was merely Daniel's relatives who were accusing Deborah, and trying to make trouble for her for no good reason. With the co-operation of her relatives it was possible to pass censure on Deborah with less fear that the marriage might come to an end.

599 It is because the marriage relationship is one which involves other kinsfolk as well as the married couple themselves that the elementary family is not an important grouping in Ngoni society. We have seen that in the old days children left their mother's hut on weaning and went to live with their grandmother or their parents' captor's great wife. A man slept in the same hut as his wife and their unweaned child, but their waking lives were spent with other people. Nowadays the pattern is more variable. Some children stay with their parents until they are old enough to sleep in a dormitory with other children of the same sex. They are fed and clothed by their parents from infancy until they grow up. Yet most old women still gather round themselves groups of three or four grandchildren for whose food and shelter they are responsible. The provision of clothes and school fees is a more difficult thing for an old woman to manage, and for these a child usually turns to its father, if the father is living near. Even the children who live in their parent's hut, however, soon join a play group and spend much of their time away from their parents. Other boys and girls who are
[602] sent home from Southern Rhodesia may have to rely entirely on their grandparents for clothes if their parents do not send money for them. A man who is richer than his neighbours, particularly
[556] if his riches are in money rather than in cattle, is entreated by his relatives to buy them clothes and other necessities, and he may make himself responsible for the clothing of his siblings' children.

Financially, then, the elementary family is a more distinct grouping than in the days when the only form of wealth was cattle, controlled by the heads of segments. But even financially it is not yet a very clear cut grouping and the same is true in other fields of activity. A man and his wife work together in their garden, and they and their children live on its produce, more or less. On the other hand, at the beginning of a marriage they may be dependent on the parents of one or the other for their food and may pool their resources with them. Many meals are taken in common in the village, a group of neighbours cooking for each other in turn and feeding themselves and their children and grandchildren from the same dishes. In court, a woman looks for support to her own kinsfolk

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR
Mpezeni

as one from a graded segmentary society organized on a basis of patrilineal descent and modified by political promotion to a society of villages organized on a basis of omnidirectional kinship. In the past a man lived in the same place as his father and in charge of the segment allocated to him by his father. Now a man lives where he can find relatives of one kind or another who may be related to him agnatically, cognatically, affinally, or by any combination of these ways. He is not even restricted to consanguineal relatives, as in cognatic kinship systems, for he can affiliate himself to some person who is linked cognatically neither to him or to any of his potential descendants, as when he goes to live with his father's wife's mother's brother. Genealogical connexion can be traced along all possible paths and there are no mechanisms by which one path is automatically favoured or by which the length of a path is restricted. In consequence the genealogical constitution of any local group of relatives is complex, and every man is a potential recruit to many local groups. He selects between the numerous possibilities open to him on the basis of his own inclinations and in response to the various pressures exerted on him by his siblings, his parents, his wife, her parents, and others. Once he has made his choice he can always change his mind and move elsewhere if he finds his neighbours irksome. His wealth, either in cattle or money, is his own and he can take it with him when he moves. There are no rights in land (with the one exception of dry season gardens) which might otherwise tie him to one particular spot. As with residence, so with marriage payments, the formal and informal procedures of marriages, and the values associated with them. In all, considerable variation is tolerated. Indeed, we may well regard variation as a necessity in this system, for every man is subject to a mass of potential conflicting claims and he cannot possibly honour them all simultaneously. Variation occurs not because of different practices by various sections of the population but rather because of different individual decisions. A man decides for himself whether or not he will pay bridewealth, or take a hoeing party to his wife's mother's garden, or be suspended from the sacraments for marrying a second wife. Yet although he makes these choices himself, he is all the time subject to social pressure from kinsfolk and neighbours who will be affected by his decisions and who therefore try to influence them. A woman is not quite so free as a man, but she too can make many decisions for herself, and her relatives must appeal to her if they wish to influence her, for they cannot force her against her will. Man and wife living together are in a unique relationship which is personal and non-transferable, yet they live in the midst of kinsfolk and the well-being of one relative is the concern of all. The quarrels of a married couple are a danger to the cohesion of the local group in which they live, while the longer they live together, fertile and peaceful, the greater the local solidarity.

4: Stanna D-5 (ca. 1905)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Marori F24
Ngoni F25
Senba F25

M 501 Necklaces, most commonly for children, are made of a number of little square pieces of hippo ivory strung together, ornamented with geometrical designs.

M 759 Medicine is often carried in a little packet suspended round the neck, as also charms of various kinds. The medicine may be some powdered charred roots or little twigs, leaves, etc., of some tree; these are sometimes now wrapped up in a piece of paper on which is written some extract from the Koran (among Mohammedan Yao); this is then sewn in a little piece of calico and adorned with beads and suspended round the neck with a string.

Y [759] Charms take various forms. Small pieces of wood or, to guard against attack by lion, teeth are worn. Armlets of the same kind are worn against sickness, and others are worn by Angoni, made of beads to which knives are attached. Bracelets of ivory, plaited grass and elephant tail hairs are also worn.

M 501 Metal and wirework bracelets are commonly worn by Angoni, also twisted wire finger rings and rings of lead and ivory. Heavy brass ankle rings and spiral brass leg and arm rings 6 inches and 8 inches wide are worn by some of the women (Atonga).

M 501 Bracelets cut from the nail of the elephant's foot are worn by Awemba women, and little finger rings cut from the scale of the ant-eater are worn as medicine against fever by Awemba.

Belts made of wound copper wire are worn round the waists by Wankonde.

M 502 The use of pigments applied to the body is very limited. I have seen stripes of them, white and red, on the faces of young women, boys and dancers, generally after some ceremony. The significance I do not know. Pigments are now obtained from Indian traders, and I do not know how old the custom is. There is no beautification of face, body, nails, and eyes by pigments. The only application made to the skin is water and ground-nut oils to keep it soft—no scents are used.

M [498] Y

Clothing.

M Among tribes of Nyamlani the amount of clothing worn varies very considerably from nothing to European garments.

Y

M 291 [855] Of the large majority, however, including Mahenje people, Yao and Angoni, one may speak generally.

The young children commonly run about naked, or have a strip of cloth covering the pudenda, supported by a string round the waist.

M Among the adult population the amount of clothing depends largely on the affluence of the individual, and those who cannot afford much have little clothing. A man wears a strip of calico supported in front and behind by a string round the waist, a woman a piece of calico 18 inches wide reaching from the middle of the thighs to the ankles.

Y

M [556]

Of the more prosperous, the men wear calico from a little below the knee to the waist, carefully wrapped round the body, and kept in position by some kind of belt; sometimes it is folded across the upper part of the chest or sometimes crossed over in front and two ends tied behind the neck.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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Chapter Two

THE SNOWBALL STATE

1. Manipulation 2. Age-sets 3. Officers of State 4. Continually regenerating systems 5. Lineage systems compared 6. Splitting the State 7. Stability

1. *Manipulation*

In our first chapter we outlined some of the more significant events in Ngoni history prior to the arrival of Europeans. In this chapter we shall examine the political system within which these events took place. It is not the task of social analysis to determine why these or any other events occurred. What we shall attempt is a discussion of how they occurred, and what were the principal social relations involved in them.

Most of the incidents referred to in the first chapter concerned the State as a whole or the royal family. Nevertheless, when we begin to consider the conditions under which the State endured we have to discuss the social position of ordinary men and women within the State. For the Ngoni State held together as an organized social group, and on occasion failed to hold together, not merely because Zwangendaba was a good leader or his sons quarrelsome or his brothers ambitious, or because his people were bound by custom and knew no better, but also, and in our view mainly, because the State was a viable social entity in its time and place. The arrangement of people into segments and age-sets was not a mere formal and static division, but a means whereby a motley heterogeneous collection of individuals was converted into an organized society with agreed aims. The structure of the State had rules; in other words there was regularity in its social processes. Yet it was a structure which, within these rules, could be manipulated. The structure could be, and was, utilized by individuals for the realization of their private ends at the expense of others as well as providing for the common good. This is probably true of all social systems. We shall begin our analysis by examining the ways in which this manipulation was carried out.

In most societies, from the simplest system of hunting bands to the complex societies of the modern world, one of the most significant sets of rights are those relating to fixed natural resources. The structure of rights in land provides a key to the structure of society.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 651 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 281 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [646] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers. The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [722] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

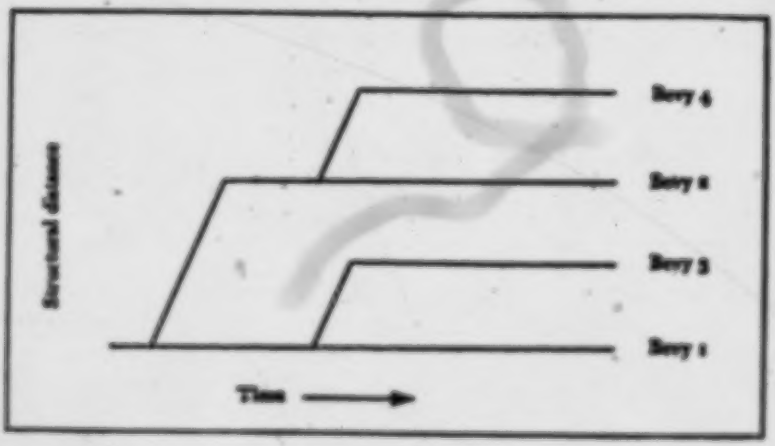
[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 33.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

cattle did not give rise to any cleavage of interest which was not already present in the residential system.

The system could also be manipulated by disputes about succession. If a man had many bevies of wives there was usually no doubt concerning which was the senior bevy and who was the great wife in it. Yet in general it was not possible to rank a man's bevies in a simple linear order of seniority, any more than the segments

DIAGRAM 3. RANKING OF BEVIES



to which they corresponded could be ordered in this way. In topological terms, ranking of bevies and of segments among the Ngoni was only partially, not simply, ordered. An example, illustrated in Diagram 3, will make this clear.

Suppose a man started with bevy 1 and then took part of it to form bevy 2. Later he took another part of bevy 1 to form bevy 3 and took part of bevy 2 to form bevy 4. With four bevies of wives, his senior bevy was bevy 1 and his great wife was the leader of bevy 1. Her eldest son was his principal heir, and if she had no sons the eldest son by the next wife in her bevy became heir. But suppose there was no son by any wife in bevy 1. Which bevy provided the principal heir? It seems clear that bevy 4 did not, at least not if there were sons in bevy 2, for bevy 2 was senior to bevy 4. Bevy 2 might be regarded as senior to bevy 3, for it was formed from bevy 1 earlier. On the other hand, with reference to bevy 2, bevy 3 was merely a part of bevy 1 and hence the search for heirs should be continued in bevy 3 before shifting to bevy 2. Unfortunately I

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in bevies 2 and 3 but not in bevy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in bevy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in bevy 2 and the other by the heir in bevy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs arising from the method of ranking bevies. The same principle of ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to bevies of wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mezeni

559 and in other situations that which was founded last. The head-
579 quarters of the highest segment was in some sense capital of the
611 nation, yet chieftainship had already passed from it and it was less
621 important in other ways than the headquarters founded by the
[643] reigning chief. This apparent contradiction applied within every large segment. We have endeavoured to isolate these different contexts by our distinction between primal and residual segments, but as soon as we attempt to arrange villages or bevies of wives in a linear order without reference to the relationship of their associated segments to one another, the contradiction reappears.

A clear and accepted sequence of heirs would have been
621 appropriate to a segmentary system in which segments continued to
611 hold together in all circumstances. Ngoni segments did not do this, and the simple linear sequence of heirs was lacking. The successive formation of inferior segments implied increased structural separation between the first inferior segment to be formed and the headquarters, and hence less likelihood that the former would provide the main heir. As in lineage systems, the farther back the point of departure from the main line the greater the structural separation from it. But whereas in lineage systems it is the junior lines which are continually diverging from the main stem, in the Ngoni system the main heir was the first to break away from his father, who remained longer in close contact with his junior sons. Seniority within the newly formed undivided segment implied early differentiation within it, and hence early separation from its headquarters. Thus, the general principle of increasing separation with the passage of time, together with the particular principle of segment formation in order of seniority, combined to make a system of great flexibility despite essential regularity and uniformity. On the death of each segment head there was a shift of power within his segment and to some extent a formal recognition of the structural separation which had proceeded gradually during his lifetime. The headquarters founded by successive heads of segments persisted as the home of groups whose interests they symbolized. The history of the segments and of the nation itself was embodied in the relationships enduring between successive headquarters.

When a small segment was founded it was usually manned by
557 people drawn from the rump of the immediately superior segment,
611 that is, from those men and women in the superior segment who
621 had not already been allocated to some inferior segment within it.

However it is clear that this rule was often over-ridden. When the
[672] head of a large segment formed a new inferior segment for a wife or son he was able to command the services of everyone within his

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment, even of those who had been allocated to existing inferior segments. If he thought fit he could shift them from one inferior segment to another within his own segment. This process was particularly relevant to the formation of new segments for the great wives of men who were the heirs or lords of large segments. A new lord, making his great wife's segment after the death of his father, did not confine himself to the rump of his father's segment but selected men he thought he could trust from anywhere within his father's primal segment, whether or not they had made segments of their own. Similarly a lord sometimes took a man who occupied an unimportant position in the segment of one of his wives and promoted him to be lieutenant in a newly formed bevy. The more important the lord or heir, the greater the structural distance his dependants could be moved. Thus while the processes by which the Paramount Chief and a man with only a few followers made segments for bevies of wives were formally the same, the consequences were quite different. In the former case, many hundreds of people were involved and many key men were shifted in their allegiance in order to provide the new segment with lieutenants and followers. In the latter, few people were concerned and the event was not of general interest. The formal processes remained the same at all levels in society, but what in one case was essentially a political action in which a Paramount Chief acted as head of a State was in the other largely a matter of domestic reorganization. It is characteristic of the Ngoni State that the transition from one state of affairs to the other was a gradual one.

Occasionally a man moved himself from one segment to another on his own initiative. This happened only infrequently and it seems probable that it was only when a man who had quarrelled with his own segment sought asylum with the reigning chief that a move of this kind could be made. Chihambo records an incident in which many men transferred from their former segments to one newly formed by the reigning chief, but adds that later they returned to their old segments. A similar incident from the Fort Jameson group is noted below.[9] Despite these exceptions it nevertheless remains true that for the most part a man's affiliation to his segment was fixed and could be altered only by the actions of his political superiors.

We have spoken of the formation of segments, but not yet of their disappearance. Many minor segments faded away because their members died or because they were moved elsewhere by a lord. Sometimes a segment ceased to be an effective social unit

[9] Chihambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 55; see p. 140.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

because of a divergence of interest between one or more of its inferior segments and the residue. In some instances all the people in the segment were killed, as presumably was the intention when Zwangendaba sent warriors to destroy segment 18. In other instances not everyone was killed and those whose lives were spared were drafted to some other part of a major segment to which they belonged. In the only examples I know of, in which either of these last two alternatives was adopted, action was taken by the highest lieutenants in the segments founded for the great wives of reigning chiefs, and was prompted by allegedly hostile acts directed against the chief. Heads of lesser segments could not readily act in this way for although the Paramount Chief and his lieutenants did not possess a monopoly of this power, they regarded its exercise by others with suspicion as a threat to the unity of the State.

If some of the members of an eliminated segment escaped annihilation, they might presently reform themselves into a new segment and begin a separate existence again. If they were not kinsmen of their lord, no structural complications ensued. If, however, relatives of the lord were concerned, then there might be conflict between the position required of them because of their relationship and that in which their new segment was formed. Thus, if the village of a great wife was annihilated and later a new village was founded for her, this could never replace the original one. Her subordinate heads of co-wives had formed their villages by breaking out from her original village, and that had been their headquarters. The new village was founded after they had made their own, and was not their headquarters, even though they still acknowledged that its head was their great co-wife. As we have seen, such a sequence of events occurred at a critical stage of Ngoni history, and may have influenced the way in which the State split.

9. *Age-sets*

The residential system was dominant in dividing the allegiance of persons in most situations, but the waging of war and execution of certain ceremonies were organized on a different basis. The army was divided into age-set regiments. About every three or four years,[1] depending on the military requirements and on the availability of lads of the right age, a new regiment was formed from all the boys aged about fifteen years old. They assembled at the Paramount Chief's great wife's village and were inducted into the army. The chief gave them a regimental name and they came under the orders of his senior lieutenants. An experienced warrior

[1] cf. Wilson, 'Rapidshift', p. 470.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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from a senior regiment was given command of the new regiment. 561
This post seems not to have been politically so important as it was 701
among the Zulu, where princes commanded regiments. In major [702]
battles, regiments fought as tactical units.

A list of regimental names is given in Table III. Some regiments had more than one proper name, and sometimes that portion of a regiment belonging to a single major segment was given a name of its own.

The regimental system was more formally prescribed than the 561
residential system, in that every lad had to join, and his regiment 557
was, at least initially, fixed for him by his apparent age. But even 701
here there was some possibility of manipulation. Men were expected to defer to members of senior age-sets and a well-favoured warrior might gain promotion from one regiment to the next above, either because of his own prowess in war or because the senior regiment was short of men. There were some offices of leadership within a regiment, but I was unable to discover what they were or how they were filed. Certain warriors were selected for special tasks, such as spying or scouting or forming an advance guard. But the greatest measure of flexibility derived from the nature of the activities carried on under this system. Some men fought well, others did not. Some survived and some were killed in battle. The successful warrior was rewarded by his superiors with dependants and thus he established his own segment. Thus success in one system led to advancement in the other.

On national raids one or more regiments were mobilized and 561
were commanded by a senior lieutenant from the Paramount Chief's 701
great wife's segment. Some informants said that in the line of battle [726]
men from the same segment were separated, so that there would be less chances of their being killed all at once. However within a regiment there must have been cleavages on segmentary lines, for at least in later years the leader of a major segment would from time to time mobilize all the men in his segment belonging to certain regiments and send them off raiding. Thus the Ngoni military system differed from the Zulu, in which the king alone was able to mobilize age-sets. Some of the segmentary divisions within Ngoni regiments had their own proper names. In battle, the men of a regiment might be divided for tactical reasons but this was not a lasting arrangement, and the only permanent cleavages within a regiment appear o have been those determined by the residential system. There des not seem to have been any system of non-territorial sections, nor was there any organization, apart from the State-organized regiments, by which men of a single segment

[Text continues on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These decisions have been taken within frames of reference beyond the reach of our analysis and beyond the reach of Ngoni persuasion. We are here concerned with the way in which Ngoni society has been adapted and has adapted itself to these diverse intrusions from outside.

3. *Chiefs*

In the old residential system there was no definite category of persons whom we regard as chiefs. In the literature the lords of major segments are sometimes called chiefs, sometimes induna (i.e. lieutenants), but it is clear that the importance of any particular segment varied from one time and situation to another, and that the only constant relations between positions in the social structure were vertical ones, between lord and dependant, and not horizontal, between persons at the same level in the hierarchy but in different parts of it. The administrative scheme introduced by the Whites provided for horizontal categorization as well as vertical grouping. There were to be a definite number of chiefs, district headmen, and later village headmen, whose names would appear on the Administration's files. The only indigenous categories of this kind were those of Paramount Chief and regional governor, and for this reason alone it was inevitable that the relationship between the old and new systems should be complex. Although the young Mpezeni II was not the only person to be called chief, his superior status was always recognized and later received formal ratification in the qualification Paramount. The regional governors may, perhaps, have formed a category of persons at the same level in the old hierarchy, but they were not very numerous, perhaps only a dozen in number, and under the new dispensation some managed to become chiefs or district headmen, while others failed to do so. Village headmen in the old system were lords of segments of many different orders of segmentation and of varying importance. If the large pre-conquest villages had continued, then perhaps their heads might have secured Administrative recognition. As it was, post-conquest settlements were all much smaller and there were more of them.

Apart from these formal considerations, the peculiar circumstances of the war introduced distortion. Some important people were killed in the fighting, others ran away, and the followers of others were scattered. More significantly, the arrival of the Administration, of traders and missions, provided means whereby people whose segments were of minor importance could advance themselves politically and gain control of large sections of the population.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

557 648 This process was facilitated by the actions of some heads of major segments. It had always been correct procedure for one important person to deal with another through intermediaries, at least in the opening stages of negotiation, so that lieutenants and others were [624] frequently sent as ambassadors for their lords to the headquarters of other major segments. There was particular point in adopting this procedure in dealing with the Administration since its demands on a man sent to it were unpredictable and apt to be onerous. Thus in many instances a lieutenant or other dependant was presented to the Administration as the headman of an area or a group of villages. This nominee was regarded by the Administration as the rightful leader of the area concerned, a belief often fostered by the nominee himself. In this way effective control of an area passed from the head of a segment to one of his dependants.

648 114 Unfortunately, few records of the early administrative arrangements have survived. From 1883, when a British consul was first appointed to Nyasaland, down to the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898, the doings of the tribe were of political significance to Britain, and were reported on at length in dispatches which are now public records. After 1898, events of similar importance within the tribe to those that had been reported earlier, the death of this lieutenant or the movement of that village from one site to another, were no longer of any interest to Whitehall or even to the Directors of the British South Africa Company. Thus there was a drastic reduction in the scale of reporting. At the same time, the loss of sovereignty, of independent action, involved a reduction in the kind of events which were likely to be recorded. The Ngoni no longer made war or sold slaves. They did pay tax and work in the mines, but this they did not as an independent tribe but as part of Fort Jameson District and the Eastern Province, and such records as there are relate to these administrative units rather than to specific tribes. The B.S.A. [439] Company lacked the long tradition of administration enjoyed by the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, and its reports were scanty by comparison. Thus the only published report of any kind on affairs in North-Eastern Rhodesia for the year 1905-6 is a mere fifteen lines long, and there is only one sentence on African administration: 'The conduct of the Natives has continued to be satisfactory.'[30] It is not until 1908 that annual reports on African affairs began to be published. Our account of Ngoni history from 1898 until recent times therefore cannot be as complete as we would wish.

[30] *Directors' Report and Accounts*, 1908, p. 3.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between their leaders are influenced by both their relative position in the Native Authority scheme and the position of the county segments, as well as by new interests that have emerged. The formal relationship between the alignments of segments and counties is set out in Diagram 4. This diagram also shows the relationship, at a higher level, between some of the other independent Ngoni groups and the major political divisions of British Africa.

In each county the chief, who does not live in the capital but in a village of his own, is head of the county segment and it seems probable that during the early years of the Administration it was the affiliation of villages within their old residential segments that provided the basis for the groupings of convenience which eventually crystallised into counties. In one or two instances succession to headship of the segment and county has been plainly manipulated, but the traditional rules of succession have not been outraged. Where the county segment is a residual one, the county chief may be also head of some segment of higher order. Thus the chief of county 11 is head of primal segment 11 although his county is only the residual segment after the formation of segment 16; county chief 14 is head of primal segment 14; and the Paramount Chief is head of primal segments 4 and 10.

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[1] These Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba are not shown on this diagram.

(a) A group under Magodi separated itself from either segment 2 or 3 and is now settled in Lundazi District, Northern Rhodesia.

(b) A group led by Zulu Gama is now settled in Songea District, Tanganyika Territory. The segment corresponding to this group appears to have been formed within segment 1, but I do not know what relation it bears to the other segments nor by what process it was formed. The western part of this group is still led by a descendant of Zulu Gama, but a descendant of one of his associates named Mbunamali now leads the eastern part.

(c) A group under Chawle ashikowa is settled in Dowa District, Nyasaland. Some authority say it was formed within segment 4, others within the residue of segment 1. He was a descendant of either Zwangendaba or Mpezeni.

The two Ngoni groups which do not stem from Zwangendaba cannot be fitted into the diagram. They are located as follows.

(d) The Southern Nyasaland Ngoni, who broke away from the Southern Rhodesia Ndebele and who were led originally by Mpezeni, are now settled in Ncheu and Dedza Districts, Nyasaland, and in Chiromanzila of Angoche, District of Tete, Portuguese East Africa.

(e) The Ngoni group led by Sodwangane are now settled in the lower Limpopo Valley, Gazaland, Portuguese East Africa.

There are a few small Ngoni groups in the Shire Valley, Nyasaland, some of which have their own minor chiefs. There are also many Ngoni men and women in the towns of southern and central Africa, but they are not organised into political groups on a tribal basis.

[These notes refer to the chart on page 122.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after Nsingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important segment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1900s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they could intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is suggested by the Administration, but on issues of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

by this relationship participate in the presentation and consumption of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Paramount Chief is sometimes told of the matter and calls the minor chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other countries and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner. The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[14] a salutation which symbolizes his former position as head of an

[14] cf. Table Appendix.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

independent group of Ngoni. Chibambo mentions how the use of this salutation was discontinued when the head of an erstwhile independent group rejoined his parent group.[14] In recent times people have indicated their disapproval of the Paramount Chief's actions by discontinuing this salutation temporarily.

Despite the security of tenure provided by Administrative recognition, a chief still needs the support of his people. There is an Ngoni maxim, 'chieftainship is people',[15] and commoners are well aware that it is because they support their chief that he has high status. The simplest and most effective sanction that commoners can employ against their chief is to leave him. Movement from one county to another, from one tribe to another, and from the county to the town and back again is crucial in the working of modern Ngoni society. Not all these movements take place as the result of the unpopularity of chiefs, but this is one factor among many. Chibambo records an early example of people moving to segment 8 from the residue of segment 1 in order to share the hospitality of a newly appointed chief, but he goes on to say 'afterwards they found it wise to return to their proper division [segment]'.[16] In more recent times there are several examples, particularly among villages which entered Ngoniland after 1898 and who therefore largely lack segmental affiliation, of villages and clusters that have changed from one county to another for political reasons. More significant at the present time are the numbers of ambitious people who emigrate to the towns because, among other things, they cannot find advancement in the political hierarchy. The most striking instance of this is in the family of the late Mpezeni II. He had six sons who survived him. One is now Paramount Chief, and one is still a boy. The other four, including the chief's deputy, are town-dwellers in other parts of Africa.

3. *Royal hunts*

The royal hunt is the only occasion on which a county, or more usually a rural district or part of a county, functions as an economic unit. Even then the economic element in the enterprise is not very marked. The chief announces, through his messengers, that on such-and-such a day he will hold a royal hunt and that the men of such-and-such villages are to meet in a certain place. The procedure followed on the hunt is exactly the same as on an ordinary hunt, with the chief or someone nominated by him in tactical command, though the number of hunters is greater than on a hunt

[14] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 36. [15] *Ubuhosi ni Abantu.*
[16] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 35.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

166 closeness of the ties linking them to the areas in which they find
582 themselves. To give two extreme examples, an agricultural demonstrator, after a few months in a rural compound, sought to marry a daughter of a near-by village headman. A policeman, sent to a village to investigate a murder, married a woman related to the dead man. Marriages of this kind are made partly because there is no other way by which a stranger in a village can be certain of getting enough to eat, but they also serve to broaden and diversify the relationship between the stranger and the people among whom he finds himself. Some of these marriages are terminated when the stranger is moved to another district, but there are a number of instances where Ngoni wives have gone with their stranger husbands to distant mines and towns. This process is, of course, merely part of the much wider one by which many Ngoni women follow their
[167] husbands when they leave their villages to seek work in Southern Rhodesia.

Similarly, chiefs and other important rural leaders endeavour
647 to establish enduring relations with members of the African Civil
557 Service. Some civil servants are their kinsmen, for one way by which a junior son of an important man can gain the position he desires but which is denied him by the rule of primogeniture is to enter the Civil Service or to seek advancement in one of the churches. Others are related by affinity, while yet others may go out of the way to offer hospitality to visiting political leaders when they need food and shelter in town. Some Ngoni civil servants maintain large households in the villages, which they visit at week-ends, and which they hope will have grown into recognized villages by the time they come to retire.

Thus there are two distinct groups of Africans concerned with
557 public affairs, the African Civil Service and the Native Authority
557 bureaucracy. They are in intimate association with one another,
647 and both exercise considerable political power. Both are formally distinct from the old political system. But status in traditional terms, as chief or village headman or head of a division or cluster, is still recognized in the face-to-face relations of people generally, and hence there is a continual attempt to bring the two systems into congruence with one another. Clerks aspire to become headmen when they retire, while headmen aspire to be the fathers and fathers-in-law of clerks. This is no new development, for as early as 1907 Seigund reported that a Swahili, whose home was near Zanzibar, and who had been a soldier, had founded a small village close to Fort Manning.[30]

[30] Seigund, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 103. See p. 108.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between political and judicial actions is not surprising. There is a connexion of this kind in every society, and the connexion is a particularly close one in societies like the Ngoni, where the same individuals act as legislators, administrators, and judges, and where the court does not confine itself merely to the legal issues in a dispute but examines the whole network of social relationships which are involved, with the object of restoring social order. 692

There are three ways in which this connexion can be seen. First, the court may be used as a vehicle for implementing the policy of the Native Authority. Secondly, the Administration may use the court to implement its policy. Thirdly, positions in the court may be used to satisfy men who seek political authority. We have to deal with the third point in our discussion of the development of the Native Authority. [557]

A chief anxious to gain favour with the Administration sees that his court enforces with heavy penalties the various regulations with which, for the time being, the Administration is concerned, such as those relating to agricultural control, and school attendance. A chief who does not wish to co-operate will neglect these regulations. Thus a few years ago there was a regulation that once a child had begun a two-year course at school, he or she must stay to finish it. In one county this rule was enforced much as the letter of the law indicated, in another it was completely ignored despite the protests of school-teachers, and in a third it was interpreted to mean that every child must go to school. About a year later the Administration thinked that as promulgated the rule was ultra vires, and said it must be withdrawn. Nevertheless in some counties it is still enforced. These chiefs and courts are not being merely capricious. Some chiefs support the missions and their schools, others oppose them; some are in alliance with the school-teachers and other intelligentsia in their counties, others oppose them. These various attitudes and alignments are reflected in the way in which they respond to a new law. This is particularly noticeable when public delicts, such as absence from school, are concerned, for in general the court is its own law-enforcing agency. There is no independent police force to bring offenders to court whether or not the court wants to see them, but only the assessors, court clerk, messengers and others who, when they are not busy about their own affairs, may if they are so inclined wander through the villages looking for unlicensed dogs and unlicensed beer. Thus the enforcement of law relating to public delicts depends largely on the relationship between the Native Authority and the common people. 696 557 644 692 [872] [625] [693]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is sometimes called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kindolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 631 new external factors are operating. There has been a change in the scale of social relationships, and Ngoni men and women form part of a large-scale society in which events in one distant part of the system affect events in another part. The history and analysis of this change lies largely outside the scope of this study, and we have restricted ourselves to the way in which the political system of the tribe has adapted itself and been adapted in the changing society. [64] The Ngoni sovereign State has become more and more like a rural district council in a backward area; foreign policy has given place to Native policy; social mobility has been restricted to the lowest [557] caste in a plural society; and the great warrior chief has become in effect the only member of the Administration who never goes home [643] to Britain on leave. But in the eyes of his people, the Paramount Chief still belongs to the Ngoni, and not to the Administration.

incorporated into the nation'. This, as we saw in Chapter I of Part I, was what took place in the Ngoni kingdoms. By the time they settled in Nyasaland, a hierarchical relationship had been built up between the clans based on the length of time they had formed part of the Ngoni kingdom. As the Swazi had their true Swazi, 'those found ahead', and late comers, so the Ngoni had their 'Swazi' clans, others from across the Zambesi, those who joined from this side, and the local peoples. 614 171

Dr. Kuper [1] summarized her description of the Swazi clan hierarchy by saying that it was 'neither precise nor static . . . a certain degree of mobility is recognized amongst the élite'. The Ngoni too had their own ways of adjusting a somewhat rigid system to suit their needs in spite of their recognition of the ranking of clans, and the fact that in the 1930's the kingdoms were ruled by an aristocracy. As among the Swazi, officials were appointed who did not belong to Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans. Much importance was attached, as also among the Swazi, to 'marrying up' and a number of instances of this were recorded, particularly in the central kingdom. In such cases a man, when explaining who he was, often gave the name of his mother as well as that of his father in order to impress upon the inquirer that he came from Swazi stock on one side, though his clan name, being his father's, did not show it. 171 557 614

Since some discussion of clans comes into every section of this book it will be useful to summarize here the main characteristics of the Ngoni clans in the two kingdoms. We shall be referring exclusively to the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, except when others are specifically mentioned. 614

Each clan was primarily a group of people with a common name. The families bearing this name might be found throughout the Ngoni kingdoms and states, in the towns and elsewhere, as the census figures quoted in Chapter I, Part I show. Their kinship was recognized firstly through clan exogamy, and secondly through the fact that when Ngoni people met a fellow clansman, they greeted him with particular warmth and both individuals were prepared to render each other mutual service. I met a number of the younger educated Ngoni who set out on a journey in Nyasaland, or to Northern or Southern Rhodesia, with the express purpose of looking for fellow clansmen, getting hospitality from them, and inviting them to visit Nyasaland and receive return hospitality. I was present at one or two such meetings in Nyasaland between Ngoni from the two kingdoms and the conversation began by establishing what branch of the Moyo or Gama clan they belonged to, and where the head village was situated. Within each kingdom each clan had a head village, and the head of that village was the head of the clan. In most of the Swazi clans the head of the clan was acknowledged as a *mulumuzana*. This correlation between being head of a Swazi clan and being a [574] 614 623

[1] ibid. p. 233.

184 as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and
592 the high ranking of the Nzunga clan accounted for the number of
621 *lobola* marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

559 As individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans
565 claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families
614 in the area of a *mukwamuna* owning a head village, and the small Ngoni
621 family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received
"honour" (*ulemu*). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and
in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were
[559] a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank
and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was
more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick
to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would
enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side, responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and the *kanjo*. Quarrels had to be compound, if possible before they came to court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be expected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the northern and Mangusu in the central kingdom.

[472] In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose husbands were away at work. The dislocation caused to the village economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and heads of a *kanjo*, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include the needs of these 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradition emphasized this type of help.

367 In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and relationships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty ceremonies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

[564] 563 [847] families. It was, however, demanded from Ngoni children that they should behave in the socially approved manner to everyone, and not only to their Ngoni kin and fellow clansmen. And it was evident in non-Ngoni families that there was often some attempt to teach Ngoni standards of behaviour to their children, but that such attempts broke down when their family system was not organized to enforce the necessary training.

576 577 [847] *The goals of Ngoni child training*

Ngoni adults, and especially the senior men and women who were in control of the training of children and themselves deeply conscious of the traditional values of their society, summed up the aims of the upbringing of children in one word 'respect'. The vernacular term *ulemu*—in the old Ngoni language *hlonipa*—is a concept very difficult to translate adequately, certainly to convey its full meaning in a single English word or phrase. The nearest terms are honour and respect, and though in some contexts it is often translated as politeness, that is too limited a term. In fact they had another vernacular term to express courtesy which was to them one way of showing respect. The concept of *ulemu* included the recognition that a particular person or office was entitled to honour; that all behaviour to that person must express respect; and that by showing respect in language, posture and action, a child or adult so behaving, shared in that honour which they were acknowledging. Conversely, through failing to convey respect, a person, whether child or adult, was 'ashamed' and lost face accordingly. I have just said that a particular person was entitled to honour and therefore to respect in the behaviour of others. The Ngoni said that was the origin of the concept, and it was demonstrated in the punctilious observance of etiquette to all chiefs, and to all leading men and women by everyone else. But there was an extension of this concept to include all older people, and Ngoni children were expected to show

[559] [859]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'85 Ngoni F'85
Mpezeni

One reason why the two bureaucracies remain separate is that members of the Civil Service are moved from one headquarters to another as the exigencies of the service demand, whereas a Native Authority councillor or foreman cannot, in general, seek similar employment in another tribe. In 1951 an Ngoni Native treasury clerk was transferred to a similar post in a neighbouring tribe, but moves of this kind are still exceptional, and almost out of the question where chiefs' posts are concerned. Clerks and messengers employed by the Administration are more likely to be moved at short notice, and the whole process of adaptation has to be begun again. The Ngoni clerk who is moved away from Ngoni country has to settle down to life in a strange district, and the stranger who comes to Fort Jameson has to find his way around the complexities of Ngoni society.

This factor of movement is even more significant in the case of the White administrators. Most of them spend only a few years in Nyasaland, and to them the Ngoni are merely one tribe among the many that they meet with in the course of their professional lives. Most of them can speak Nyanja, which most Ngoni can understand, so that there is not the added complication of interaction through interpreters, with the interpreter in a key social position, as Mitchell points out for the Nyasaland Yao.[*] But even though they can speak directly to Ngoni, it takes time for them to learn the faces of the people they see in the various Native Courts and at tribal meetings, and it also takes time to determine how these faces are related in a political system. Thus of necessity administrators are forced to rely on the advice of the African Civil Service, principally the messengers and clerks, and of the important chiefs whom they need local knowledge to guide them. Chiefs and clerks attempt to establish firm relations with the administrators with whom they work; but owing to the great social distance which separates Black and White throughout southern Africa, there is little scope for this. Some messengers like to suggest that it is they, and not the White administrators, who really decide what shall be done. While this may have been partially true at one time, it is not true now. As Ngoni society has changed gradually in the direction of something with which administrators are more familiar, and as the content of administrative action has become less and less restricted to such simple activities as collecting tax and making roads, so the power of the district messenger has declined.[**]

[*] Mitchell, 'Political Organization of the Yao', pp. 133-4.

[**] Bradley, *Diary of a District Officer*, records in interesting fashion the relationship between himself, as District Officer, and Head Messenger Kachaje of Fort Jameson.

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the
[558] holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

681 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and
178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and
161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

681 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political
641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was
[684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a
641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population
777 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There
563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State.
[567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain
563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set
641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise
701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Manna*, pl. *amanna*. Cf. the Zulu term *nnanna*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

kingdom under Soshangane I and Mzwati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Ngoni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Ngoni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Ngoni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Ngoni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or induna, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division. He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[6]

The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women, perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were, as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly alignments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organization, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[6] Based on Bryant, *Olden times*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

1:Barnes E-5 [1946-1949]954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

173 worship. They allowed the local chiefs to govern their people
756 according to their own laws and customs, but under the authority
727 of the Ngoni. They followed the method of governing which Europeans call "indirect rule".' They also took selected children from the conquered peoples and reared them as Ngoni in Ngoni villages. Young's account supports this.[28] Whether or not this method of government was wise is clearly a matter of opinion. It is perhaps significant that for Mpezeni's people the evidence provided by the present disposition of persons claiming descent from different ethnic groups suggests that a different policy was followed there. Chibambo and Young talk of groups of warriors under Mwambera belonging to various subjugated tribes; in Mpezeni's area captured men appear to have been drafted into
[561] the various age-set regiments, so that men from the same tribe were distributed throughout the army and did not form a distinct group.
173 Territorially, the dispersion of captives from the same tribe was not
983 so complete, for it appears that in Mpezeni's group the major
727 segment settled on the east of the Ngoni area raided mostly to the east, and the western segment to the west, and so on, so that many of the captives taken from a particular locality were to be found in the major segment of the State nearest their homeland. Yet even this concentration of captives with the same ethnic origin was not complete, and representatives from all the principal tribes with whom the Ngoni came into contact are nowadays to be found in all parts of Mpezeni's Ngoniland. We suggest that this policy of assimilation, practised to a much greater degree by Mpezeni than by Mwambera, may be correlated with the fact that in Mpezeni's group there were no revolts by groups of captives of common origin, whereas in Mwambera's there were three such revolts, by Lake Tonga, Kamanga and Hronga tribesmen.

173 Mwambera attacked the Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu some
721 time round about 1860, and was driven off in the face of fire from
648 guns Mwase had obtained from Arabs. He subsequently came to an agreement with Mwase whereby the Cewa chief became his 'child' and lent him soldiers armed with guns to assist in Ngoni raids. Travellers suggest that later Mwase came to an agreement with Mpezeni as well, but this is not so certain. Mpezeni does seem to have established peaceful relations with one or two minor chieftains during the period of early European contact,[29] but for

[28] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 39-41; Young, *History*, p. 119.

[29] e.g. Cuanda, a Kunda chief and Moses, who had Kunda and Nsenga concubines. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 11; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyasa', p. 746.

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Mpezeni

because of a divergence of interest between one or more of its inferior segments and the residue. In some instances all the people in the segment were killed, as presumably was the intention when Zwangendaba sent warriors to destroy segment 18. In other instances not everyone was killed and those whose lives were spared were divided to some other part of a major segment to which they belonged. In the only examples I know of, in which either of these last two alternatives was adopted, action was taken by the highest lieutenants in the segments founded for the great wives of reigning chiefs, and was prompted by allegedly hostile acts directed against the chief. Heads of lesser segments could not readily act in this way for although the Paramount Chief and his lieutenants did not possess a monopoly of this power, they regarded its exercise by others with suspicion as a threat to the unity of the State.

If some of the members of an eliminated segment escaped annihilation, they might presently reform themselves into a new segment and begin a separate existence again. If they were not kinsmen of their lord, no structural complications ensued. If, however, relatives of the lord were concerned, there might be conflict between the position required of them because of their relationship and that in which their new segment was formed. Thus, if the village of a great wife was annihilated and later a new village was founded for her, this could never replace the original one. Her subordinate hands of co-wives had formed their villages by breaking out from her original village, and that had been their headquarters. The new village was founded after they had made their own, and was not their headquarters, even though they still acknowledged that its head was their great co-wife. As we have seen, such a sequence of events occurred at a critical stage of Ngoni history, and may have influenced the way in which the State split.

2. *Age-sets*

The residential system was dominant in deciding the alignment of persons in most situations, but the waging of war and execution of certain ceremonies were organized on a different basis. The army was divided into age-set regiments. About every three or four years,[1] depending on the military requirements and on the availability of lads of the right age, a new regiment was formed from all the boys aged about fifteen years old. They assembled at the Paramount Chief's great wife's village and were inducted into the army. The chief gave them a regimental name and they came under the orders of his senior lieutenants. An experienced warrior

[1] cf. Wilson, 'Expedição', p. 470.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

from a senior regiment was given command of the new regiment. This post seems not to have been politically so important as it was among the Zulu, where princes commanded regiments. In major battles, regiments fought as tactical units.

A list of regimental names is given in Table III. Some regiments had more than one proper name, and sometimes that portion of a regiment belonging to a single major segment was given a name of its own.

The regimental system was more formally prescribed than the residential system, in that every lad had to join, and his regiment was, at least initially, fixed for him by his apparent age. But even here there was some possibility of manipulation. Men were expected to defer to members of senior age-sets and a well-favoured warrior might gain promotion from one regiment to the next above, either because of his own prowess in war or because the senior regiment was short of men. There were some offices of leadership within a regiment, but I was unable to discover what they were or how they were filled. Certain warriors were selected for special tasks, such as spying or scouting or forming an advance guard. But the greatest measure of flexibility derived from the nature of the activities carried on under this system. Some men fought well, others did not. Some survived and some were killed in battle. The successful warrior was rewarded by his superiors with dependants and thus he established his own segment. Thus success in one system led to advancement in the other.

On national raids one or more regiments were mobilized and were commanded by a senior lieutenant from the Paramount Chief's great wife's segment. Some informants said that in the line of battle men from the same segment were separated, so that there would be less chance of their being killed all at once. However within a regiment there must have been cleavages on segmentary lines, for at least in later years the leader of a major segment would from time to time mobilize all the men in his segment belonging to certain regiments and send them off raiding. Thus the Ngoni military system differed from the Zulu, in which the king alone was able to mobilize age-sets. Some of the segmentary divisions within Ngoni regiments had their own proper names. In battle, the men of a regiment might be divided for tactical reasons but this was not a lasting arrangement, and the only permanent cleavages within a regiment appear to have been those determined by the residential system. There does not seem to have been any system of non-territorial sectors, nor was there any organization, apart from the State-organized regiments, by which men of a single segment

[Text continues on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

TABLE III. REGIMENTAL NAMES

Men's regiments		Approximate year of formation	Women's regiments	
Information poor	Information good		Information good	Information poor
Majikwana		1801		
Zikhumbe		1809		
Sambala		1817		
Machaya		1830		
Imiti				
Zimpondo		1833		
Malungu		1838		
Ngwenengwe, Mawilungu		1839		
Mangoni, Magoni		1840		
Malungu, Mazimba (a)		1843		
Mawoni, Mashugi		1848		
Manyoka, Zinyoka		1851		
Manyima, Manyim		1854		
Majowola		1857		
Majungu, Mayungu		1859		
Maiyisa (c)		1861		
	Zinkhondo, Maraiya	1863		
Mawia		1866		
	Mazuma	1869		
Mawia (d)		1871		
Zinyati	Manyoka	1874		
	Malewa (b)	1877		Mazuma
Mawia (d)		1879		
Mawu, Mawu		1882		
	Kalawonda	1885	Mashambina	Mazubwa
	Malitshawoni	1889	Magaleta	Mashawa
Lembani, Maiyisa (e)	Cimale, Lembalembe	1892	Mashawula	Makanya
	Mzani, Cozamono	1895	Mairkwa	Mrkela ng'ombe
	Azola	1900	Maraiya	
	Ngwana (c)	1906	Mambanya	
	Ngwaiaiya	1910	Mazuma	
	Ciwombola, Ngwaya	1914		Mrkela
	Kalumbo, Mazokoto	1920	Gwaula	

[Footnotes on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sections attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[1]

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights.

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken.

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked.

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs,

[1] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Nzunga's regiment.
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Mazia. Wilson and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Malyisa. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Wilson gives two other regimental names. He Madwala or Madwala is merely the status term madwala, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madjingo or Madjingo, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatakuku, Mang'ombe, Inimpini, Makrko, Mahaco, Zimfini, Manyoni.
Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wilson, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 59.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38. - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regimental system that recent captives, both men and women, were indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appropriate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their [70] comrades. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*ukweshi*) was organized on an age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [71] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social [67] system, and the relationship between them was a political one. When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [72] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *ingwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) b54 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpeneni

and the Ngoni did not seek to vanquish other tribes as states but rather to enhance them by continued attrition. In later years it appears that a few minor chiefs who lived near the Fort Jameson group did manage to come to some agreement with it, for the Ngoni seem to have raided them only sporadically although warriors passed through their territory *en route* for more distant objectives; but this may have been due to the intervention of European traders. The powerful Cewa chief, Mwase Kazungu, may also have come to some arrangement with the Fort Jameson group even as he did with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland.

Thus for the most part the external relations of the Ngoni State were warlike. The Ngoni did not trade with their neighbours, or send ambassadors to them, or enter into alliances with them; they merely killed or captured them.[10] The army was organized on a basis of age-sets, but the age-sets as such did not enter into political relations with their enemies. They merely executed the policy of the State or of the major segment to which they belonged.

3. *Officers of State*

The residential and age-set systems formed the structure of the State and there was no separate administrative system. There was little specialization of function among those who wielded power in the State, and those who did have special governmental tasks were all the lords of large segments.

The nearest approach to special political officers is to be found among the regional governors. A few of Zwangendaba's followers were with him from the beginning of his journey from Natal. Some of these were his agnates, but the descendants of others have now forgotten what relationship, if any, they bore to him. These early followers did not stand in the lord-lieutenant relationship to Zwangendaba, for in Ngoni usage all lieutenants were captives, or the descendants of captives, of their lords. They were organized in segments in the same way as everyone else, but the heads of some of these segments were known by the special term *mulumuzana* which I have translated as regional governor. Segments headed by regional governors were attached like other large segments to the various royal headquarters, and thus became primary divisions of the segments formed for queens. They differed from the lieutenants of the royal headquarters not only in their title but also in the greater freedom they were allowed in their segments. They kept their own villages separate from the royal villages to which they were attached politically.

[10] See pp. 15f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[44] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[44] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 196; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, [n1]; Young, *History*, p. 125.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [773]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [582] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[853] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[47]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[636] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-
[701] professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[47] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 Ngoni origin. The sharp cleavage between the Ngoni and their neighbours has gone.

Another relic of the privileged position enjoyed by the Ngoni 439 before the conquest which did not long survive their defeat was 648 the subsidy paid to Mpezeni. Under the terms of Wiese's alleged 651 concession of 14 April 1891, Mpezeni was to be paid £200 a year and one per cent of Wiese's profits. Wiese made presents to Mpezeni, but there is no record of any substantial payment. When the provisional grant of 10,000 square miles of land was made by the B.S.A. Company to the Mozambique Company on 8 May 1895, the latter agreed not to exercise any rights it might have under Wiese's concessions, but there was no mention of the disposal of any possible obligations. Warton continued Wiese's practice of giving presents to Mpezeni, but there was no regular payment. As Wiese's concession had never been recognized it would seem that there was no legal obligation on either the North Charterland or the B.S.A. Company to pay an annual subsidy. Nevertheless after the Ngoni war the two companies must have come to some agreement on the matter. In April 1898, according to the answer to a question in the Commons, the B.S.A. Company were ready to pay Mpezeni £200 a year 'for the present'. In January 1900 the Administrator stated that the Collector at Fort Jameson had spent only £50 during the current financial year on payments to Mpezeni and 'his loyal indunas'. He proposed to spend a further £50 during the year and the remaining £100 of the subsidy was to be distributed among the surrounding tribes in the interests of the North Charterland.[5] These special arrangements were presumably superseded in 1903 when, under the scheme of Native Administration drawn up in that year, provision was made for the payment of all recognized chiefs from the general funds of the Territory.

Similarly, the military organization of the Ngoni broke down 648 after the conquest. One of the first acts of the Administration was 701 to forbid Ngoni to carry weapons of war.[6] Four new age-set 561 regiments were formed between 1898 and 1914 but they were little more than dancing societies, singing the old songs which had excited their seniors in the 'time of peace' before the conquest but unable to emulate their military achievements. During the 1914-18 war the majority of young Ngoni men who might have formed a [464] new age-set were enrolled as carriers and soldiers on the Allied side.

[5] *Parliamentary Debates, 4th Series*, lv (1898), cols. 1654-5; report of a meeting between Administrator and North Charterland manager, 15 January 1900 (Lusaka archives); cf. Poole, MS., 'Tribes of East Luangwa Province'.

[6] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 201.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

After the war an age-set was formed but its activities conflicted with the demands of the churches and schools and it was not a success. No further attempts have been made to carry on the system. Ngoni now say, 'What need have we of regiments now that there are no other tribes for us to fight?'

2. *White control*

Apart from the squabble over cattle, the surrender of Mpezeni on 9 February 1898 marked the end of the Ngoni war. The Nyasaland troops did not pursue the leaders who fled, although Brake moved Mpezeni to the vicinity of Fort Manning. In May he wrote, perhaps over-optimistically, that in the central part of Ngoniland rebuilding had begun.[7]

It is clear that at first the Ngoni acquiesced in their defeat. Whereas prior to the war Whites had lived in their country on sufferance, now their right to be there was not challenged. Only a few months after the war Harding arrived, recruiting police for service in Southern Rhodesia. He was received in a 'most friendly manner by the chief in charge who gave an ocular demonstration of his loyalty by voluntarily and immediately handing over to my charge 200 of his young men for my newly formed Police Force...'.[8] After the death of Mpezeni I, his lieutenants waited the traditional period of a year. Mpezeni's heir Nsingu and his wife Mkucwa had both been shot during the war, and in September 1901 the lieutenants petitioned the Administration to appoint their eldest son, Ciloa, aged about 10 years, as chief. On 23 July 1903 the Native Commissioner held a meeting at which Madzimawi, son of Mpezeni I in the residue of segment 4, asked to be allowed to take the name Zwangendaba.[9] Thus even at that early date the over-riding authority of the Administration was acknowledged in matters concerning the chieftainship.

The establishment of an Administration based on Fort Jameson in 1898 was governed, in so far as the British legal system was concerned, by the legislation consolidated in the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890.[10] Relations between the Administration and its African subjects were controlled by the Africa Order in Council 1889.[11] This was superseded by later Orders in 1900, 1911 and 1924,[12] marking the delimitation of North-Eastern Rhodesia as a separate

[7] 198; 201, fo. 69.
[8] Harding, *Far Bugles*, p. 82.
[9] *Reports on the Administration*, 1900-2, p. 408; see pp. 1390*f*.
[10] 53 & 54 Vict., c. 37.
[11] *S.R. & O.*, Rev., 1890, iii, pp. 259-332.
[12] *S.R. & O.*, 89 of 1900, 438 of 1911 and 324 of 1924.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

701 allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.[1] Since he also had the
643 sole right of forming a new regiment of young men and giving it a name,
702 he controlled the intake to the army as well as the discharge of seasoned warriors.

The big war *induna* served directly under the Paramount. Associated
701 with him were other subordinate war leaders or *izinduna*, one of whom was always at the head of each regiment. Considerable emphasis was laid by Cibambo and other Ngoni informants on the essentially military character, in pre-European days, of the office and function of the *izinduna*, who were officials serving the whole kingdom. We shall see in Chapters III, IV and V how the term *induna* was also used for civil
[642] officials at the royal village and in the courts, as well as for the men in charge of sections of a village and of houses.

The account of the mobilization of the army shows that the Ngoni
701 had changed the system of military barracks concentrated about the
171 capital, described by Gluckman as typical of the Zulu military organization and by Kuper for the Swazi. Gluckman said that the chiefs assembled their people in territorial, not age, divisions, and that the age regiments belonged to the king alone and lived in or near his capital.[2] In pre-European days the Ngoni, according to Cibambo and to other informants, had in their armies territorial divisions as well as age regiments, and there was no concentration of young warriors by age regiments round the Paramount's village.[3]

When a summons to war went forth, the warriors in the territory of
726 each chief or *mulumuzana* assembled at his head village as a *libandla*.
704 This included the warriors from the outlying villages and from the head
561 village. Cibambo's use of the term *libandla* emphasized that it was a territorial unit, divided into *mabuto* (which he called sections) on the basis of age.

When each *libandla* arrived at the Paramount's village ready for warfare, the different age groups within it joined up with their parallel age groups from other *mabandla* to form regiments. The Ngoni term for these national regiments was *mabuto*, the same term as that used for the age divisions of the *mabandla*. Old men who had been warriors in their youth expressed to me many times their immense pride in their own
[703] *libuto*, and it had for them something of the tradition and prestige of a famous school. They would recite the names of other *mabuto*, beginning with their own as the most recent, and going backwards through ten or more regimental names to those who had crossed the Zambesi with

703 [1] Cibambo in the text spoke of warriors wearing the head-ring. The usual practice, according to informants, was to give the head-ring at the end of service in the army. Cibambo may have been referring to former warriors with a head-ring putting on war-dress for a ceremony.

[2] Gluckman, M. 'The Kingdom of the Zulu', in *African Political Systems*, 1940, p. 31.

[3] One example of a concentration of young men was reported at the village of the Queen Mother in the central kingdom in 1898 in *The Central African Times*, see Memorandum XVI, International African Institute, 1938, p. 18.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Zwangendaba or Mputa. Some informants showed that there was not always agreement about the use of the terms *mabandla* and *mabuto* when relating stories of the past, and the connotation of age regiment was sometimes given to *mabandla*. Cibambo and the other Ngoni historians who used the Ngoni language habitually were, however, quite clear about the differentiation between the two terms, one being territorial and the other denoting an age group. This use of the term *libuto* was confirmed by Dr. Kuper in her account of Swazi military organization.[1]

The organization of Ngoni warfare included the use of divining and of medicines to ensure success in war, and the summoning of the men charged to carry out these functions. In both Ngoni kingdoms there were men alive at the time of my visits who knew the medicines for war and had performed the functions of a 'war-medicine doctor'. According to these informants there was no sharp division between the functions of the diviner and the 'doctor' in relation to their services to the kingdom and to the army. There were individuals who had acted in both capacities. The diviner's task was to prophesy about probable success in war and about attacks from the enemy. He might, and sometimes did, combine this with 'doctoring' the army.

The preparation and administering of medicines to strengthen the army were discussed by informants in terms of two main types of medicine and a third which was less often referred to. The two main types were *intonga* and *intelezi* and the third one *inklenza*. In the northern kingdom Mopo Jere, who had been a 'war doctor' and was the son of a former famous 'war doctor', insisted that the term *intonga* could be used in several different ways: for medicines made of roots; for a rod or stick (*nduku*) which was medicated; and occasionally for the 'doctor' who used these objects. He also emphasized that each chief or *nduna* had his own *intonga* and performed ceremonies for his own warriors before they left his kraal for that of the Paramount, where they went through another ceremony of having medicines administered to them before going on the campaign.

Formerly the *intonga*, that is, the stick or rod, was treated with the root of a shrub ground up and mixed with water. A beast was then killed, the Paramount ate the meat in the kraal with his senior men, and the skin was made into a bag in which the medicated *intonga* was placed. This skin bag containing the *intonga* was carried in front of the army when it was on the march. It could only be carried and handled when with the army by boys who had not yet reached puberty. The *intonga* in its bag was pointed at the enemy, as the army drew near, to make his warriors tremble and feel powerless and take to their heels. Its potency to make men powerless was so strong that no man from the Ngoni army dared walk in front of it, lest he too should lose all his strength.

[1] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organization in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 274.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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visits or on special occasions. In the central kingdom, where an important man's sisters often married in the village and stayed there, it was evident that they often exercised authority over their brother's children. [591 184]

In polygynous Ngoni families the relationship between siblings was marked by strong attachment. Among the boys in the *laweni* brothers united to protect their younger brothers from other boys, and in the families of Swazi clans brothers showed many signs of youthful intolerance and arrogance towards boys of other clans, especially in matters concerning cattle and their herding. Sibling rivalry among boys was to a large extent controlled by two factors. One was the *laweni* system where the age-set principle predominated. The other was the division into the big house and *gogo* house, where the children of the *gogo* house knew that they stood in a different relationship to succession and authority in the village from their brothers and sisters in the big house. Within the big house itself, sons of the big wife knew that succession was regulated by seniority, and that the eldest son would expect to get priority when he married and it was necessary to allot cattle for *lobola*. The brother-sister link between children of the same mother was, as we have seen, a very close one, especially with the older sister of a man who was heir to a high position. This sister in her relation to his children carried almost the same authority as he did. Among sisters of the same family there was less apparent cohesion, except among very high-ranking Swazi clans where the girl children were looked after by special nursemaids and had their instruction in correct behaviour together from the older woman known as their *gogo*. 595 [561]

Ngoni grandparents on the paternal side showed little of the joking relationship with their grandchildren sometimes associated with this tie. When children went to visit their maternal grandparents in another village there was noticeably more ease between them and more indulgence was shown. In their father's village children were always aware that his parents were persons of standing and authority. Girls over six or seven often slept in their paternal grandmother's hut if she was a widow, and were aware that, though she showed kindliness in providing for their needs, she was a firm disciplinarian in all matters of behaviour. 603

Within the family group the male role of leadership was unquestioned. Honour and respect were a man's due from wives as well as from children. In difficult relations within his family, as in the case of divorce, he could count on counsel and support from his brothers, who were also ready to help him if cattle were needed for his own or his son's marriage or for payment of court penalties. This male circle of father and sons, father's brothers and their sons, was a closely knit group which functioned in regulating family affairs and in buying and selling cattle for the house to which they belonged. An obligation to help his sons was recognized by the father of a family and this obligation 562 593 593

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

boys and young men, so long as they were in the village. Ngoni men insisted that their children should be correctly trained, and they were contemptuous of Cewa and other tribal groups who left it 'all to the women'. The handing on of correct behaviour by the mother-in-law to her daughter-in-law was, they considered, essential, and one of the reasons why young men in the central kingdom liked to 'marry up' was that they could count on the careful grounding in all the canons of behaviour which their wives had received. 867 [186 563]

CHAPTER V

AGE SETS

THE Ngoni brought with them to Nyasaland an age-set system akin to that among the South-eastern Bantu, which was an important element in their social structure. In pre-European days the division into cattle-herders or pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors or senior men, regulated the tasks and responsibilities of boys and men in other spheres besides those of warfare. At the beginning of this section, when reviewing age sets as one of the constituent forms of Ngoni social organization, I said that some features of an age-set system had persisted. In comparison with age-grouping in the other Nyasaland tribes it was distinctively Ngoni in form; it influenced behaviour patterns in inter-group and intra-group relations; and in it were recognized certain responsibilities and activities belonging to the different groups based on age. 561

Among the distinctively Ngoni elements in the age-set system were the private nature of the puberty ritual and the absence of initiation schools; the organization of boys' life in the *laweni*; the strong ties between age mates up to marriage; the selective principle in designating senior men and women as *madoda* and *manina*; and a different kind of selective principle in the formation of friendship pacts between individuals of the same age. In observing the role of age sets in Ngoni village society, the two main groups which were constantly in evidence as groups were the older boys and girls and the senior men and women. These groups not only carried out activities together, but also showed evidence of the strength of the internal ties linking members of an age set. There were, however, no sharp edges to these groups, either in terms of actual age or physiological development or of exclusive membership. The following list of terms applied to age sets in the two main Ngoni areas shows primarily the difference in designation between males and females according to broad age grouping, but it illustrates also the fact that the terminology applied to the age sets did not always coincide [881] [572]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 with the main activities of the groups, though it did to some extent illustrate mutual relationships.

Age-Set terms

	Northern Ngoni	*Central Ngoni*
All children	*abantwana*	*ana*
Young men even if married	*amajaha*	*anyamata*
Young girls before puberty	*inkakazana*	*mabuthu*
Young girls past puberty	*izintombi*	*anamwali*
All married women	*abafazi*	*ahazi*
Senior men	*amadoda*	*madoda*
Senior women	*amanina*	*manina*

[184 104]

513 561 866 One of the most characteristic forms of Ngoni village organization was the *laweni*, or boys' dormitory. It included the older boys in the group called 'children' and the young men until they married, who were in fact called *amajaha* after they had left the *laweni* and married and had huts of their own. The age for entering the *laweni* was approximately seven years, and was as a rule determined by the age when a child began to get his second teeth. When a child was going about the village with several gaps in his front teeth, his companions jeered at him if he still slept in his grandmother's hut, and his father took the view that it was time he stopped playing like a child and took up seriously the job of herding goats and calves. There was often some hesitation, especially among boys who were not so well grown for their age, at taking the plunge and going to live in the *laweni*, since once made the step could not be retraced. It was primarily an individual decision. It meant leaving the protective affectionate care of the grandmother in the evenings, and the care-free play all day round the mother's hut with meals provided by her, for a different sort of existence altogether. *Laweni* life was rigorous and was dominated by the senior boys living in the hut. The younger ones were at their mercy, and were made to 'fag' for their elders, clean up the hut, sometimes steal food from their mothers' stores, and were beaten if they were slow or careless, or if they threatened to tell the elders in the village what went on in the *laweni*. The main weapon to get boys into the *laweni* was the ridicule of their fellows. Once members of the *laweni* group they were disciplined into obedience by threats and beating. The age range within a *laweni* was often considerable, from seven to seventeen years.

[626]

233 857 561 All the boys in a *laweni* who were members of houses possessing cattle—and this as a rule included all sons of Ngoni families of trans-Zambesi clans—had to take part in herding. Cattle-herding was a responsible task and could be an arduous one. The boys got up before dawn, opened the gate of the kraal, and took the cattle to water. They milked the cattle on an open space near the village and carried the milk in wooden jars, gourds or petrol tins to the owner of the cattle, keeping

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

some for themselves as their perquisite. They then drove the cattle to 233
pasture, and this might be some distance away when grass was scarce in 857
the dry season. They sometimes drove the cattle back near the village to 561
rest at noon under the shade trees, but if the pasture was far away the cattle rested there and went on feeding later. They were brought back to the kraal in the late afternoon and counted by one of the senior men.

The herd-boys taught each other to fight with sticks, to wrestle, to [868]
catch rats and small birds, to use the knobkerry, catapults, and bows and arrows. Sometimes in the afternoon they went to other villages and challenged another herd to a fight between bulls.[1] During the long day's herding, the boys used to drink milk, make *amasi* (milk curds) in a gourd and eat it, bake birds in clay and roast ears of maize taken from their mothers' grain stores. Precedence among the herd-boys depended [554]
first on age and only secondly on the rank and position of the families they belonged to. There was an easily recognizable air of authority and almost of arrogance among the older boys responsible for their fathers' and uncles' cattle. They superintended the process of letting out the cattle, milking them, driving them to pasture and the return to the [492]
kraal in the evening. Mounted on donkeys, wearing large straw hats made by themselves, the senior boys acted like ranch owners bossing up inefficient work hands.

This period of living in the *laweni* was, as we have seen, shared by boys 561
of a wide age group. In a large village where there were two or three or 866
four *laweni*, there was often one in each section, which generally meant that the boys belonging to one *banja* or section shared one *laweni*. This had the effect of dividing them up to some extent on a basis of family and rank, but in a *laweni* serving a whole village all the boys went in together whatever families they came from. There was no respecting of clan [565]
status in the *laweni* and young boys of high-ranking families had to wait on and obey older boys of lower rank. *Laweni* life was therefore a democratizing influence among the boys of the village, and no boys were excused from herding cattle because they belonged to a house which owned cattle. Even if some went to school and others did not, the school-boys had to take their share of herding in the holidays. Ngoni chiefs and leading men laid great emphasis on keeping the boys busy and making them carry out the work allotted to them. The older boys began to listen [867]
in at court cases and to discuss them among themselves. During the wet season from time to time they formed hoeing parties for clearing new ground and for the periodical weeding of gardens. They seldom did any continuous cultivation, as the women and the older men did, and a boy who liked to go off and hoe by himself was pointed out as one with rather peculiar tastes.

During this period of *laweni* life, when in addition to herding the

[1] For the relation between the training of herd-boys and preparation for war, see Part II, Chap. I, p. 30.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 boys took more interest and more part in adult occupations and affairs,
866 the emergence of leadership among Ngoni boys of high-ranking families was watched by their elders and recognized by their age mates. This was the formative period when a boy's capacity to succeed his father in a position of authority was carefully observed and judged. The Ngoni had ways of passing over a man who was a physical weakling, a coward in face of danger, a sadistic bully to weaker men, a pursuer of women and a breaker-up of marriages. The *madoda* in a Ngoni village, who appeared to let the boys in the *laweni* manage their own affairs without interfering, had nevertheless a shrewd idea of who was making good and who was proving disappointing. Their comments, showing continued observation over a long period, were often expressed when two or three friends and age mates from the *laweni* decided to go off to the south to work together. The *madoda* would then say: 'We hope they will come back soon and not be "lost". So and so is like his father and he will help us here in the village'; or they might comment: 'Good riddance, they were always hanging round the girls—worthless ones, indeed' (*wa chabe ndithu*).

881 It has already been pointed out that there was no circumcision school
856 nor public initiation rite among the Ngoni. At puberty the ritual observed was a private and personal affair. On a boy's first nocturnal emission his age mates informed an older boy in the *laweni*, who told him to go at once before it was light and bathe in the river, and to do so
[823 each morning after an emission. This use of cold water was believed to
827] give a boy strength and virility. The boy was also instructed by the older boys in the *laweni* on how to behave to his equals and his elders and to women. This stage was called *ukuchayiwa nga' manzi*, 'to be beaten with water', and was not reported to the older people. When the older people noticed that the boy's voice was breaking, his father inquired whether he had passed puberty and, on being assured of this, he found a man who knew the *uludengele* medicine. The father killed a goat, and the medicine man took some of the unchewed cud from the goat's stomach, mixed it with the bitter *uludengele* root and put it on a pan over a fire. This took place near the gate of the kraal or near the parents' hut, with the father and the father's male relatives standing by. When the mixture boiled, the boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the pan one after the other and lick each one quickly. At the same time he kept jumping over the fire and striking his elbows against his sides. The Ngoni believed that this medicine gave boys physical strength and stamina and they administered it to their servants' sons as well. It was still practised in the 1930's among Ngoni who were educated and partly westernized.

867 While the organization of the *laweni* catered for all boys from their
881 second teeth till their marriage, including boys from the age sets called *abantwana* and *amajaha*, the organization of girls' life followed a

different pattern. They also went to sleep with a grandmother or some other older member of the family when they were old enough to be excluded from their mother's hut at night, and they shared with their small brothers the grandmother's care and her story-telling round the fire in the evenings. During the day the girls continued as part of their mother's household group, eating with her and the younger children. As little girls they were taught to sit down carefully and to smooth down the cloth which they wore round their waists. They were trained to speak correctly and to know the right forms of address, to greet strangers politely, to avoid touching their father's mats or bed, to eat tidily and with restraint. The emphasis was on exclusiveness for these high-born Ngoni girls, lest, as a result of mixing too freely with everyone, they should forget the teaching given and the behaviour which was expected of them. In contrast to their brothers' rigorous training in the *laweni*, Ngoni girls, as they showed signs of approaching puberty, were guarded and looked after and instructed further in correct behaviour.

When a girl found that she was menstruating for the first time, she told one of her age mates and sent her to tell her *gogo*.[1] The *gogo* told her to stay in the hut during the period and showed her how to wear a cloth between her legs, which she had henceforth to wear always whether menstruating or not. She was told to sleep from now on in a different part of the hut from the smaller children and never to bathe with younger girls. At the end of her first period the girl was escorted to the women's bathing-place by her father's sisters and other female members of her father's family. She was made to wash in the stream and squat in the cold water while doing so. I saw more than one child trying to control her shivering while her relatives watched to see if she would be strong and brave, or weak and cowardly. When she was in the water she was made to face south-east—the quarter which the Ngoni called *kwathu* (our home). After this ceremony the girl's father and mother were informed, and her father informed the head of his *banja* and the head of the village. The news was greeted with rejoicing and made generally public.

From about the age of ten or eleven, the Ngoni girl belonged to an age set distinguished by a separate name. She was no longer included in the group of children, as were her brothers of the same age, but was marked out by belonging to the age set called *inkakazana* or *mabuthu*. After her first menstruation she belonged to the age set called *izintombi* or *anamwali*. From this stage, Ngoni girls were under the close supervision of the older women. The association of a *gogo* or older woman with each house in a Ngoni village meant that the girls of the house were under her special care, particularly after they had passed puberty. There

[1] *gogo* in this context is used for grandmother or for the elderly woman to whose care the girl was assigned.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

836 emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in
565 their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

Many of the *umsindo* songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni
[533] history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

852 The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the
304 age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and
[727] annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambesi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

561 After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups
857 developed on their separate lines until their members became interested in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance *ngoma* in a neighbouring village.

857 In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the *ngoma* dance
535 played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of an *ngoma* 'competition' the team was made up of lads and girls of about fourteen to eighteen years old. They went off to another village, having announced their arrival previously, and challenged the 'home team' to dance *ngoma*. The dancing was in the kraal with the adults looking on and acting as judges. It was all very decorous and orderly and the competing teams were in dead earnest. As we have noticed already, the Ngoni danced without drums. The steady beat of the feet of the young men made the rhythm for the dance, but the co-ordination in the long lines of boys in front and girls behind needed assiduous practice to produce harmonious results. In both northern and central Ngoniland the Paramounts had forbidden all dances except Ngoni dances, and in the north the *ngoma* was encouraged by the chiefs because it was considered a 'good dance' for young people.

After marriage, the young women were absorbed in the care of their huts and young children and only appeared as an age set when they took part in a communal hoeing; on such occasions they were inclined to keep apart from the older women, sometimes on the grounds that they did not drink the full-strength beer, and therefore clustered round a pot of 'sweet' beer when they knocked off work. In most Ngoni villages the young men after marriage went off to find work and, as a group of friends within an age set, they would get together to talk things over, make their preparations and travel to the south.

In day-to-day village affairs, as well as on ceremonial occasions, the age sets of the *manina* and *madoda* were very much in evidence. The *madoda* met at meal-times by the gate of the kraal, and they went there to count the cattle when they came back in the evening. The same group could be seen either at the kraal gate or on a verandah talking about village affairs or drinking together, or at a court listening to cases. The *manina* usually gathered in the verandah of the *indlunkulu* to talk over women's affairs or to receive guests. As an age set they met less frequently than the men because the larger part of their tasks lay in their own huts or in the group of women associated with a house. On all occasions when the formal reception of strangers took place, or when ritual feasting or shaving or washing occurred, or when important decisions had to be made, the *manina* and the *madoda* in their separate sets were in evidence.

Although the age sets in village life were social units carrying definite responsibilities and performing recognized activities, their chief importance in Ngoni social life was in regulating behavioural patterns and prescribing mutual relationships. Here we have to take note of a selective principle at work among the *manina* and *madoda*. Although in one sense all women and men of forty to forty-five and upwards belonged to these age sets, the individuals who carried out the characteristic activities of these groups did not include all the men and women of that age. The very old people did not continue to exercise any influence in village

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 888 affairs unless they were exceptionally vigorous mentally and physically, or the kind of dominating personality who could not be overlooked. It was evident also that individuals of weak character or evil disposition were not included in the group. I saw one or two such persons who bore a bad reputation in village society turned away from a senior group which was talking over a difficult village affair, with the caustic comment: 'Who is that worthless one? We cannot know him.' On the other hand, on social occasions when food or beer was being dispensed, all the old ones and the less reputable ones would be given their share, though sometimes with a cutting remark about the people who never missed a party but never did any work.

Selection in the senior age sets was intended to show that only persons who could be trusted, that is who were of known good character, were qualified to supervise the growing up of boys and girls, for whom the village elders as a group felt responsible. The maintenance of Ngoni standards of behaviour in young people was in the hands of this older group, who could and did exercise authority over and above that of the family and house. There were no more ardent supporters of Ngoni behaviour patterns than some of the older men and women of Ntumba clans in the central kingdom who had been brought up in the houses of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and were recognized as *manina* and *madoda* in their villages.

561 576 Among the younger people below the group of elders, it was common to hear them address each other as *ntanga yami*, or *mnzanga*, 'my age mate'. Boys shouted it at each other on the cattle ground, young women called to each other in those terms when pounding maize, and when on a visit as an *ngoma* dance team it was a frequent form of address among the youths and girls. There was inherent in that form of address an ease of relationship, an absence of seniority or inferiority, and an acknowledgement of a tie which went beyond that of the family or house or clan. It was most commonly used within a village, but it was sometimes used between young people of different villages.

561 572 Within these groups of youths and girls and among young married men and women, there was a recognized friendship relation, *cibwenzi*, which existed as a rule between pairs of individuals of the same sex and age. It was sometimes a continuation of a playmate companionship; sometimes an expression of the need of a young boy in a *laweni* or a young married woman for a confidante or sympathizer. Most often it was a spontaneous specialized liking for another person, expressed invariably through an exchange of small gifts and generally of confidences, and often by going off together to bathe or cut firewood or catapult small birds. Such friendships were said as a rule to be permanent, though girls and women sometimes referred contemptuously to someone as 'She was my friend. Now she hates me and does not give me anything.' The decision to go off in search of work was often taken

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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by two youths who were friends and who announced their intention, and then were joined by other pairs.

These forms of an age-set system which the Ngoni brought with them from the south were still in the 1930's a significant element in village life. The greatest change had occurred in the cessation of warfare and, with the enforcement of peace, the recognized stages mentioned in the beginning of this chapter had to a large extent disappeared. Though the boys and men were no longer divided into pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors, the institution of the *laweni* and the important role played by the *madoda* were two distinctive elements in Ngoni village life. So also was the form and content of the training given to Ngoni girls of Swazi clans, which largely determined the role played by the *manina* in village affairs.

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on was placed on it. The meat in the basket and on the gate stayed there 782
all night.

Following the ritual of offering meat to the spirits came the ritual of 252
cooking and eating the meat, both that offered to the spirits and the
rest. After the basket of meat had been left all night in the place of the 769
spirits, the large quantity on the gate was carried away and cooked by 782
an old woman outside the hut of Bambo Manga's granddaughter. The meat in the basket which had been offered to the spirits was put in a pot and cooked on the fire in Bambo Manga's hut. It stayed cooking all day and all night till the following morning. Dzinthenga Phungwako, an old and highly respected *lidoda*, came to the hut and divided the sacrificial meat among all who were in the house, that is Bambo Manga, her daughter and granddaughter and several senior women. When they had finished the leading women stood up and thanked '*Zikhomo Maziko*', '*Zikhomo Magwagwa*'. Then they washed their hands and went to their own houses.

The large quantity of meat which had been laid on the gate and 431
cooked on another fire in another *bwalo* was carried in a big pot and put
down outside Bambo Manga's hut in the late afternoon. Her daughter 769
came outside and divided the meat into three piles: a small one from 782
the breast-bones for the women, a leg for the chief, the head for Kabwazi the headman of a neighbouring village, and the rest in a big pot for the men. A boy came to tell Lopati that all was ready and he and the chief went out to the place where the beast was killed, near the gate of the kraal. There were four groups already sitting there and the chief and Lopati made a fifth: the *madoda*, the senior men; the *majaha*, the young men; the *mabusa*, the herd-boys; and the little boys. Before Lopati divided the meat he and the chief washed elaborately with water brought in a gourd, and then he washed the knife before cutting the meat. He called the *madoda* to send someone for their portion in a basket, then the young men and the herd-boys were given their portions—a basket for each group, and the small boys had bits put in
their hands. The eating was very sedate, there was no snatching of [264]
choice bits, and in each group the one who fetched the meat distributed it. There was the general atmosphere of a ritual meal rather than a feast, though the small boys smacked their lips appreciatively. From time to time Lopati called up someone from a group and gave him a bit
more to divide up. When it was all eaten, a boy was sent to fetch water [515]
and the soapy leaves which the Ngoni used for washing, and the chief and Lopati and the *madoda* all washed the grease off their fingers. Then Lopati stood up and called out '*Siyadumisa baba, zikomo mntwana wenkosi*', 'We are praising you, father, thank you child of the Paramount', and the others all agreed and said '*Zikhomo baba*.' Then they
all went together to Bambo Manga's hut and stood opposite her door [561]
and called out the same thanks. The women who had eaten their meat

in three age groups on the verandah also came forward and, led by NaNkoloma, a widow of Njolomole I, thanked in the women's language, '*Zimata, zaithwa mntwana wenkosi.*'

I did not witness any ritual sacrifices in the northern kingdom but the accounts given me by informants corresponded closely with the ritual in Mcakhatha just described. When sacrificing for rain to the spirits of the Paramount, a black ox with no white spot was driven into the kraal in the late afternoon and the chosen spokesman addressed the ancestral spirits of the Jere clan telling them that this was their beast, they must eat the meat and tell UMkulumqango that the people needed rain. While this man prayed to the spirits he stood facing the beast, and everyone else sat looking in front of them and keeping very quiet. The women stayed at home in their huts and the Paramount stayed in his hut 'as if mourning'. When the beast urinated and showed that the spirits had heard, a messenger came and informed the Paramount. The beast was killed early the next morning in the kraal. While the flaying took place, all the huts of the chief wives were smeared with dried cow-dung on the floors and on the smooth place outside the doors. The meat, in two parts, was taken into the *indlunkulu* and left there all night at the back, so that the spirits might lick it. The next morning the meat was cooked in the kraal by the *madoda* and when it was ready they reported to the big *induna*. He called all the people into the kraal and divided them into companies according to their sections and head villages. The meat was given to the head of each head village who divided it among his group. When everyone had finished, one of the leading men stood up and began to praise the spirit using his titles and praise-names (*izitokozo*). The rest stood up and shouted *Bayete*. They then began to dance a war-dance but, the informants added, that was soon stopped by torrents of rain.

These chapters on the Ngoni ancestor cult bring to an end this study of the two Ngoni kingdoms in Nyasaland in the 1930's. We have seen how their distinctiveness as a people depended on the culture which they brought with them from the south and how this culture was found among the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In the topics included in the three sections of this book: the political system, the social organization, and the ancestor cult, the main features of Ngoni culture are most clearly seen. In much of their economic and agricultural life there was little to distinguish them from their neighbours among the other Nyasaland peoples. The changes brought about by the missions, the schools, new forms of local government, and new types of occupation, were all tending to make the Ngoni less distinctive as a people. The conversion of some leading Ngoni to Christianity, as suggested in Chapter V of Part II, and the spread of schools were together the most powerful influences in altering Ngoni traditional culture. The

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182] In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as young men, and had known the independence and supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'everything is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, ministers and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni way of living, and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes dominated social relationships. There was a determined struggle on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasaland sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 901
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 855
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy and therefore to be removed from them when the time came for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with him, they sometimes carried him about while the nurse girl
[262] did something else, they ground bulrush millet or roasted ground-nuts to give him as snacks. They were particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[533] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he addressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
[554] measure of the authority which his father and his father's brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and grandmother's households. There were young children who were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561 ●
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 357
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organized through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Young Ngoni children among their siblings and age-mates

593 855 The hard-worked theme of sibling rivalry among small children in a family was not obvious among young Ngoni children. I expected to see outbursts of jealousy when the ex-baby returned after weaning to his mother's compound and found another baby installed there. But even with the new baby present, the mother seemed to have time to pet the ex-baby, telling the nurse girl to leave him with her, and there were few overt signs of emotional tension. This was certainly due to a large extent to the nurse-girl pattern, the fenced compound which was the child's home, and the interest of older sisters in their younger brothers and sisters. Young children growing up, as we have seen, were the focus of attention for a group of girls and women of different ages. They were hardly ever in a situation in which they had to struggle to assert themselves against a sibling, or, in their early years, against their age-mates. If they felt slighted or miserable or hungry or tired they could always go to someone to be petted or fed.

Hence their emotional needs for affection and attention never seemed to be unsatisfied. They were accustomed to having their physical needs supplied by any one of several women, and did not depend only on their mother for these needs. Nurse girls and older sisters were often demonstrative to small children, and they got more actual petting from them than from their mother or grandmother. Young children in turn often petted one smaller than themselves, or a new baby, and there was a contented affectionate relationship between children in the home which indicated the absence of any acute sibling rivalry.

857 561 From about the age of five or six, boys, who were escaping from the restrictions and security of the compound to the freedom and competition of village life, found a new challenge in a large group of their own age-mates, also just coming out of the younger child seclusion of the home. Boys

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this age, escaping from the women, showed their independence in their choice of games and occupations, many of which, as we have seen, were of an individual nature. They were not much inclined to join together as an age-group except for occasional gang enterprises. If one boy interfered with another's game of tops or took away his axe or hoop, there was an immediate short sharp fight. The defeated one either ran home to be comforted, with the jeers of the victor in his ears, or he stood and sulked for a moment, and then went on with his pursuit. It was outside in the open village spaces and not behind the fences of the compounds that small boys learned to put up with each other, to meet aggression and to be aggresive in turn, and then suddenly to gang up with a group and play happily together. 857 561

The test for boys of correct Ngoni training in the childhood stage, between weaning and second teeth, was their ability to get on with their age-mates and fellow villagers when they went to live in the dormitory. One boy went to live for long periods with his maternal grandmother in his mother's home village, after an argument in which for once his father was overruled by his wife and her family. This boy was indulged and spoiled by his maternal relatives who were afraid to correct him and to discipline him because he was the child of their son-in-law. The result was that when the boy came back about the age of seven, on his father's insisting that he should take part in herding and live in the dormitory, he was selfish, rude and disobedient, and failed to fit in with the other boys. This and similar stories were often quoted to show the importance of the father's family being in sole control during the early stages of childhood. 858 867

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

521 867 men's affairs. The kind of topics discussed by men at the kraal gate included hunting, in the right season; cases heard in the courts and the application of Ngoni law to all subjects of the Ngoni chiefs; the organization of village affairs from tax collecting and dealing with tax evaders to beer drinks and burials and building houses; the sales of cotton, tobacco and cattle at near-by markets and the current prices; the various labour recruiters combing the villages for likely young men and the latest stories brought back by men who had returned from working in the south. Every now and then, particularly when the talk ranged round decisions in the courts or adding to the herds of cattle, references were made to the Ngoni past, to their relations with Europeans, both missionaries and officials, and to the behaviour of the non-Ngoni groups in the Ngoni kingdoms. The older boys listened attentively and as we shall see later in Chapter VII acquired among other things an extensive knowledge about the needs and uses of cattle. The younger ones pricked up their ears now and then when a familiar name or event was mentioned, and stored up questions to ask their father at a time when he was willing to listen and answer.

576 417 There was the usual Ngoni formality about where people sat at the kraal gate. The most senior men sat on each side of the opening, leaning up against the gate-posts, with the rest in decreasing order of rank as they were farther from the gate. The cleared space on each side of the gate and in front of it was all known as the 'gate of the kraal'. The craftsmen [469] who were carving wood or twisting bark rope, making baskets or plaiting mats, sat according to their age and rank on the edges of the senior group or among them. They could have carried on their trade anywhere, but they preferred the company of their fellows and did not want to miss listening to the talk or the arrival of strangers. The herd-boys, when 858 they were present, were on the extreme edges of those sitting [561] there, divided into two groups, 'youths' and boys. Each [262] group made its own fire for boiling milk and roasting sweet potatoes or ground-nuts.96

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The youngest boys were not expected to herd cattle until 233
they were ten or eleven years old. Their work was to look 857
after the calves, sheep and goats, sometimes following the 561
cattle to the grazing ground, sometimes wandering round the edge of the village, avoiding the cultivated areas until after harvest. At that time cattle, calves, sheep and goats were driven into the stubble and left to forage.

As a result of dormitory life, combined with cattle-herding, 155
a definite ideal herd-boy personality developed. This was 157
fostered by the hero-worship of the older herd-boys by the young ones. It was also built up by the praise or blame meted out for herding well or badly by the older herd-boys to younger ones, and by the cattle-owners. This 'ideal herds- 157
man' was used by Ngoni ministers and teachers living in the 797
villages to relate their teaching about Christianity to the life around them. Prayers near the kraal, conducted by an Ngoni minister each evening, or before people went on a journey, often began with the words 'Jesus our shepherd, keep us well'. Young teachers often said to me how they always listened as boys when a prayer began like this, and that in school their favourite Bible story was that of David the herd-boy.

When there was a school in the village or near by which 233
the Ngoni elders approved of, the herd-boys had a busy life. 857
They watered the cattle very early, took them to graze and 872
milked them. Then they went to school from ten to two, taking the cattle out grazing afterwards. In the cold weather they went to school from six to ten and herded cattle the rest of the day, after the sun had dried the dew off the grass. School attendance depended on the attitude of fathers to the new learning, and how the village elders regarded the local mission and its teachers. The boys whose fathers had no 872
cattle, in general the non-Ngoni elements in the village, were free to attend school continuously since they had no herding responsibilities. There was some jeering among the boys in the dormitory at those who only went to school and did not

872 go herding. School was sometimes regarded as an easy option where you sat still all day and repeated things after the teacher. This was far from being the case in a village like [875] Enkodlweni where the headmaster was well trained and kept the boys on their toes. In such schools the boys themselves were enthusiastic about learning, and regarded going to school as a dignified and worth-while occupation, and not a childish amusement.

Girls' life in the village

858 When the girls had their second teeth and were acknowledged to have reached the new stage in their development, there was no abrupt transition for them, as for their brothers, from the household circle to the dormitory, or from the women's world to the men's world. They continued as part of the women's world; they changed their occupations and their daily routine on the whole very little; and they went on sleeping in the hut of a widowed aunt or grandmother. All that was said however in the earlier part of the chapter about accountability for their behaviour was as true as for the boys.

561 The Ngoni girls of leading families formed a distinct group, called in the age-set terms 'children' until they were about [565] eleven and then 'immature girls' until they reached puberty. There was in Ngoni thought and practice a clear division between immature and mature girls, and we shall see what this involved in girls' life in Chapters VI and VII. The age-set terms used to distinguish between children and immature girls did not imply any real differences in ways of living, manners and occupations. The girls between about seven and fourteen were looked on as belonging to a 'girls' circle', and this girls' circle had certain distinctive features.

561 In the first place the tendency of the girls to draw apart
562 from the boys of their own age, already evident before the
535 coming of the second teeth, was now more or less complete
628 with the boys' withdrawal into dormitory life and their preoccupation with herding. Later, about the age of twelve

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grandmother with whom they slept, but the other practice was more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611] their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan. In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to remain as a distinctive group. They were members of their father's house until they married; and when that took place [583] it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd belonging to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the carelessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597] grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisability of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

858 upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if
581 the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended not only on her own reputation and character, but on the household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive
561 group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one.
858 The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of
[603] the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training
357 ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl,
855 to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter into all her occupations and amusements. This companion, chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's household, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and ate in the same household.

In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her
561 circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their compan-
872 ions. There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this
[601] group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided that it would also be wise to send their girls to school, especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men, learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daugh-
[565] ters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and dignified behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when 561
asked questions. They took their school work seriously in 872
order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent 565
ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be [583]
transferred at their marriage would be greater according to
whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or
even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daugh- 561
ters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls 857
continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. 592
They and their companions, according to their growth and 512
strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water,
grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household,
where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family
only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores.
As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time
with the young children, or washing themselves and their
clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rub- [302]
bing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass [301]
or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head
bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more
amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' 572
circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they
always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classifica-
tory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this
friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about
her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the
other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage.
The friend was always from another compound and of a
leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and
necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream to-
gether. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were
married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a
violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about
these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic 881
and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards 171
authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past 177
in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasa- 561
land had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded 641
up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior 561
herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at [702]
irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, [464]
during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they 885
were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the [302]
hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to [836]
sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives [591]
in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's [583]
family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

177 561 464 The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, [871] if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons [434] at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or [583] seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that [885] earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the headring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any probition on marriage until [582] a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no [167] wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to establish their hold. The Ngoni elders said the missions did not like it, and alleged that they gave it up for this reason. But they held on to other rituals also not approved by the missions, and it was probably largely due to the fact that there were no longer large herds of cattle to provide lavish feasts. The songs were remembered and sung by the older women when dancing the special dances associated with the ritual, holding in their hands short rods and small rounded shields, and making stiff jerking movements of head and elbows. Such dances as were put on for me were however a relic and not a living tradition. For the Ngoni girl of good family there was no longer any intervening ritual between her private puberty ceremony and the marriage ceremony.

The marriage age of girls, like that of men, was much earlier than formerly, the most usual age being from sixteen upwards. Most of the older women held that this left very little time in which to teach girls all that they were expected to know before being married and leaving their own home and their father's village for good. This was a particular cause of anxiety to the senior women in areas where the young men emigrated soon after marriage, and where the girl had to maintain her own position and reputation among his relatives without his companionship and support.

Young adults in Ngoni society

We have just seen that cultural changes coming from the outside radically altered the traditional pattern of development of Ngoni youths and girls. The net result of these changes was to telescope the period between physical maturity at puberty and full adult status at marriage, to squeeze the former eight to ten years of this intervening period into about two for the girls and four at most for the youths. This shortened period of preparation for full adult life raised a number of problems for the Ngoni elders. They were aware, as was suggested in the beginning of this chapter, that the attainment of physical maturity called for some re-alignment

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especially the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes, 561 but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and 867 competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter 128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there 584 were certain social controls among the Ngoni which operated in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited 835 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers 582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment. 581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptized or under instruction. This last pre- 581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference 182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 severed portions. On branches of fresh leaves, brought by the
561 younger herd-boys, were piled the sections of the animal, down to the last bit of intestine, for distribution according to a fixed Ngoni pattern.

231 A senior man of the house owning the beast, when all was ready, 'counted' all the parts, that is he named each part,
825 head, horns, tail, feet, joints and internal organs, and each was pointed out to him as being present. The herd-boys stand-
[868] ing round learned the names of the organs and the sections of the animal, and heard the names and status of the men to whom the parts were assigned. The herd-boys of the family of the owner were given certain symbolic parts: an ear, an eye and the nose, for hearing, seeing and smelling; parts of an artery and of an intestine as controlling the blood flow and the waste material, and the rectum as ejecting waste; and the foot for walking steadily and fast.

Some of the meat was roasted over a fire, parts like the
252 stomach and intestines were cleaned and boiled, some was
[251] dried slowly on a rack over a fire of green wood, and put in fibre bags for keeping. The blood was taken to the head woman of the house owning the herd. She cooked it with the fat round the kidneys till it coagulated and formed a dish, salty and meaty, much liked by the Ngoni, and rather akin to black pudding. The women also took over any spare fat and rendered it down and clarified it to use as
[278] unguents.

The young adult who had had six or seven years of
233 herding cattle and had advanced to be a senior herd-boy,
868 had acquired not only certain manual skills such as those just described, but also some knowledge of the anatomy of cattle, some idea of the social attitudes towards cattle and their ownership, and some idea of their economic value to the Ngoni. For certain restricted ritual purposes, a cow in calf had to be killed for sacrifice, and herd-boys saw the foetus removed when the cow was cut up. They were also often present at the birth of calves in the bush, and had to wait

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

When the Ngoni talked about the separate ideal personalities of men and women, they emphasized the training needed for younger men, and to some extent also for younger women. Senior men and women were expected to possess special qualities due to their age and status and experience. It was recognized that the limited responsibilities of young men before marriage gave them little authority in village and family affairs. Since each family however was bringing up its girls to leave them on marriage and to take the good name of the family elsewhere, there was less distinction made between the qualities desired in younger married women and older ones than there was between the two groups of men.

The ideal personality of Ngoni women

This had four main aspects: physical capacity and appearance, relationship to her husband and his relatives, competence in household management, and general reputation for justice and wisdom.

We talked in Chapter III about the connexion in Ngoni thinking between women being healthy and strong and being able to bear healthy children. In the marriage negotiations and even at the final ceremony itself in the bridegroom's village, there were formalized standard questions put by the bridegroom's representatives about the health of the girl and her family, and these were replied to also in conventional phrases. Such inquiries about health had been made secretly long before the final ceremony, and indeed before any formal approaches had been made which led to the betrothal. But the fact that they were made in public on two distinct occasions, at the preliminary visit of the man's representatives and at the marriage itself, underlined the importance of health and its relation to child-bearing capacity in the ideal Ngoni woman.

We saw in the last chapter that physical strength for continuous hard manual work in the household and in the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

wife. We have talked in Chapters IV and VII of her duties 577
in organizing food supplies, supervising cooking, and that 592
supreme test of competence: dividing out the food so that
all had a fair share. The same high standard of skill was [264]
expected in the general care and supervision of the compound, the children and the household staff. Ngoni women, like their menfolk, were proud of being able to supervise other people and organize life around them, to control others satisfactorily, to hear complaints and to pacify quarrels. The proverb 'The tooth laughs to no purpose', meaning that [538]
angry people show their teeth but with no merriment, was often heard when Ngoni women intervened to stop two quarrelling girls or to prevent an irate helper getting angry with the nurse girls.

The traits of justice and wisdom were important elements 577
in the foundation of a Ngoni married woman's reputation.
These were judged by her ability to allocate fair shares of 538
food to servants and helpers, and to adjudicate wisely in women's disputes. Two proverbs referred particularly to dividing out food and were said about women who were either careless or stingy, and did not give their helpers a fair share. 'The finger-nails are surfeited' meant that the important people had eaten heartily without thought for others; and 'She has sliced one side only' had the same connotation, that those who had the supplies were keeping too much for themselves. Two other proverbs drove home this principle of *noblesse oblige* when emphasizing the responsibilities of married women: 'The elephant is not made heavy by its trunk,' and 'If the cows do not produce milk the herdsman is responsible.'

The ideal personality of Ngoni men

As we have just said, there was a definite personality pattern 577
for young men whether married or not, which emphasized 562
special qualities looked for in them, since on the whole they 561
had relatively little authority or responsibility in village

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

577 affairs. Boys and young men were expected to be physically
562 strong, and tough in the sense of being able to do hard tasks,
561 walk long distances, dance for hours on end, and put up
[827] with hardships without grumbling. The senior men, as we saw earlier in this chapter hated to see idleness and set great store by young men working hard and persistently at any tasks undertaken. Several proverbs illustrated this quality
[538] and were used with effect when boys were found hanging round in the village doing nothing: 'Loitering eats the owner,' 'Laziness is eating dung,' 'The garden will not be tilled if you stop hoeing it.'

577 Other qualities desired in young men were all connected
829 with the values of staying together as a family and as a village group, and of fostering mutual aid and trust within the groups of males in the dormitory and in the 'house'. It was believed that they ought to be acutely sensitive to the opinion of their contemporaries, a lesson which they learned from early days in the dormitory. To an insensitive person, showing intolerance and hard-heartedness they said: 'Were you made with dog's bones?' for dogs' bones were thought
[538] to be hard and unfeeling; or, 'You have a heart like a crocodile.' A fear of social ostracism was fostered all the time and expressed in the proverb: 'The bird eats in his own field.'

577 There were innumerable proverbs about willingness to
829 co-operate in all the necessary tasks which fell to the young
538 men, such as communal hoeing described in Chapter VII, or digging the grave at a funeral. 'The eyes for seeing,' 'One arm cannot crush a louse,' 'A river grows by its little streams,' 'The heifer grows by giving it more food'—these and many others were used to admonish those who held back and to encourage those who joined in willingly. Other proverbs warned against promises of help which were not kept. 'You will eat those of the axe but not those of the hoe' was said to someone who had counted on noisy assertions of forthcoming help, like the sounds made by the chopping of an axe, and not in quiet persistent help, like the smooth almost silent

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound, (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 122). 128 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582]

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajaha*

young girls before puberty: *inkakazana*

young girls after puberty: *izintombi*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AKULU	the important people
ALEZI	nursemaids
GOGO	grandparent or any very senior person
HLONIPA	respect
INDLUNKULU	chief hut in a village
INDUNA	official in village
IZIDANDANI	girl attendants
LAWENI	boys' dormitory
MWINI	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors.

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system.

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[20] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere

[20] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE III. REGIMENTAL NAMES

Men's regiments		Approximate year of formation	Women's regiments	
Information poor	Information good		Information good	Information poor
Majekwane		1821		
Ziolomba		1824		
Somfula		1827		
Machaya Imiti		1830		
Zimpofu		1833		
Makupu		1836		
Ngowongo, Macihungu		1839		
Mangazi, Magazi		1842		
Malunge, Mavimba (a)		1845		
Masapi, Mashapi		1848		
Manyoka, Zinyoka		1851		
Manyinsa, Manyisa		1854		
Majuwela		1857		
Majunge, Mayunge		1859		
Maiyiza (c)		1861		
	Zinkhondo, Macaiya	1863		
Masala		1866		
	Macona	1869		
Maola (d)		1871		
Zinyati	Manyela	1874		
	Mabema (b)	1877		Mateza
Maola (d)		1879		
Masoo, Mazoo		1882		
	Kabaenda	1885	Mashambisa	Matukwa
	Mafelakudeni	1889	Magalela	Mashaose
Lembani, Maiyiza (e)	Cimale, Lembalemba	1892	Mashuimela	Makanya
	Mtani, Cotamoto	1895	Maiekesa	Mekela ng'ombe
	Azola	1900	Macaiya	
	Ngazaza (c)	1906	Mambonya	
	Ngaziaiya	1912	Mtetema	
	Ciwombola, Nganya	1914		Mekela
	Kalusilo, Msolokoto	1920	Gwaula	

[Footnotes on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sectors attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8] 561 701

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights. [562]

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken. 561 796 [726]

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked. 561 701 727

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs, 561 701 621 [643]

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

1

(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Naingu's regiment. [114]
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Maola. Wiese and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Maiyiza. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Wiese gives two other regimental names. His Madouda or Madoda is merely the status term *madoda*, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madginga or Madjinga, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatakulu, Mang'ombe, Izimpini, Makeke, Mahacu, Zimfezi, Manyoni. [554]
Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 59.

1 [Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38, - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562] 611 602

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 pattern covered two generations including the houses of the former
592 chief and the reigning one.

The houses served several purposes in the organization of village life on the one hand, and on the other, provided an important instrument for regulating succession and inheritance, and for carrying out traditional ceremonies and ritual. It was the eldest son of the second house who would, if the *lusungulu* practice was followed, remain behind with the *gogo* village; and he was responsible for conducting traditional ritual and was expected to be able to carry out ceremonial procedure correctly. This was the main function of the *gogo* village and of the man who was head of the male members of the *gogo* house. The corresponding head of the male members of the big house was the owner of the village, and it was his eldest son by his first wife who would normally succeed him as chief or *muhumuzana*. The members of each house had a stake in the property of that house, particularly in the herd of cattle owned by it, and in any goods, such as cloth, bought by the sale of the cattle of the house. The house united the male members who belonged to it through this common ownership of cattle. In Chapter II of Part IV we shall examine further this aspect of belonging to a house.

554 In the organization of village life in villages belonging to chiefs or
592 *ahumuzana* the houses established the status of the wives of the owner
562 of the village, and the status of those of his mothers who had come with him. His mother in the *indlunkulu* hut ranked first among her co-widows. The big wife came next, and the wife of the second house after her. Wives attached to the big house ranked above those attached to the second house.

571 The houses fulfilled their most prominent role in the day-to-day
592 activities of the households associated with them. It was in these daily
627 affairs and in planning for future events that the house organization
562 provided the chief channels of authority. The exercise of this authority ranged from instruction in household tasks and emphasis on good standards of housekeeping to settling minor disputes arising from marital quarrels over property and over the custody of children. These minor cases could be settled out of court if the senior women showed that they knew how to listen to complaints and give advice which was accepted, with the result that good relations were restored. The main topics of discussion among the senior women on the verandah of the *indlunkulu* were the ingredients of these minor quarrels and disputes. If, by judicious handling, they could keep the cases out of court, they knew, and so did the village, that their authority was enhanced and their prestige more firmly established.

571 The authority of senior women was further reinforced through their
592 organization of women's labour in household work and in cultivation.
562 This authority in domestic affairs covered a woman's own household and the women and girls attached to it as household servants, the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

households of her co-wives who were junior to her in the house, and the households of her sons' wives. These women also decided when to undertake certain work in cultivation or in harvesting crops, when to brew beer, when to re-polish the floors of huts and the sitting place in front of the huts, when to replenish the stock of cloth, ornaments and beads, baskets and mats, which were part of the wealth of the house. Other occasions for the exercise of authority were attending and superintending women's confinements and the private puberty rite of the girls, advising on matters of health, and supervising the training of children.

All these activities of the owners of the houses were so much part of the day-to-day life of a village that they could pass almost unnoticed unless a detailed analysis were made. The position and authority of owners of houses was, however, immediately evident on ceremonial occasions. These included the pre-marriage ceremony of *umsindo*, which was abandoned after the Europeans came; the series of visits and exchanges leading up to the marriage ceremony, *mtimba*; brewing beer on a number of occasions, for dancing *ngoma* and *ligubo*, for funerals and subsequent ritual shaving, or for entertaining important visitors whose coming was expected so that beer could be prepared in advance. On all such occasions, the courtyard surrounding the *indlunkulu* was a scene of great activity. Men put on their war-dance equipment there; the beer pots were assembled there; meat and blood for feasts were cooked there, while the less important maize porridge (*nsima*) was cooked in subordinate households. From the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* a procession of the *manina* (senior women) led by the owner of the house went out to greet visitors, to go to the beer drink, to take part in the dances, and to perform the ritual connected with births, deaths and marriages.

Marriage in Ngoni Society

Earlier in this chapter it was said that a new house derived from the marriage of a leading man to his big wife. Since marriage was so closely linked with the continuance and development of houses, and since a new wife when married separated from her own mother's house and became a member of her husband's mother's house, I have included a discussion of marriage in this chapter on houses.

There were three main principles in Ngoni marriage. It was a binding contract sealed by the exchange of cattle; it established succession in the male line; it formed a link between leading Swazi clans. When we examine in detail the organization of Ngoni marriage we see that its objectives were to build up a series of inter-clan and inter-family relationships. These began with inter-marriage between the leading Swazi clans, in order to strengthen the political and social relationships within that inner circle of Ngoni society. The political allegiance of leading individuals from clans of non-Swazi origin was strengthened by marriage

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

visits or on special occasions. In the central kingdom, where an important man's sisters often married in the village and stayed there, it was evident that they often exercised authority over their brother's children.

In polygynous Ngoni families the relationship between siblings was marked by strong attachment. Among the boys in the *laweni* brothers united to protect their younger brothers from other boys, and in the families of Swazi clans brothers showed many signs of youthful intolerance and arrogance towards boys of other clans, especially in matters concerning cattle and their herding. Sibling rivalry among boys was to a large extent controlled by two factors. One was the *laweni* system where the age-set principle predominated. The other was the division into the big house and *gogo* house, where the children of the *gogo* house knew that they stood in a different relationship to succession and authority in the village from their brothers and sisters in the big house. Within the big house itself, sons of the big wife knew that succession was regulated by seniority, and that the eldest son would expect to get priority when he married and it was necessary to allot cattle for *lobola*. The brother-sister link between children of the same mother was, as we have seen, a very close one, especially with the older sister of a man who was heir to a high position. This sister in her relation to his children carried almost the same authority as he did. Among sisters of the same family there was less apparent cohesion, except among very high-ranking Swazi clans where the girl children were looked after by special nursemaids and had their instruction in correct behaviour together from the older woman known as their *gogo*.

Ngoni grandparents on the paternal side showed little of the joking relationship with their grandchildren sometimes associated with this tie. When children went to visit their maternal grandparents in another village there was noticeably more ease between them and more indulgence was shown. In their father's village children were always aware that his parents were persons of standing and authority. Girls over six or seven often slept in their paternal grandmother's hut if she was a widow, and were aware that, though she showed kindliness in providing for their needs, she was a firm disciplinarian in all matters of behaviour.

Within the family group the male role of leadership was unquestioned. Honour and respect were a man's due from wives as well as from children. In difficult relations within his family, as in the case of divorce, he could count on counsel and support from his brothers, who were also ready to help him if cattle were needed for his own or his son's marriage or for payment of court penalties. This male circle of father and sons, father's brothers and their sons, was a closely knit group which functioned in regulating family affairs and in buying and selling cattle for the house to which they belonged. An obligation to help his sons was recognized by the father of a family and this obligation

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

593 extended to his brothers' sons, especially if their father was dead. Following the same pattern, a man's sons who were away at work sent back money to their father who bought cattle with it, or spent it as the sons asked. It was clear in the 1930's that Ngoni men rarely sent money directly to their wives, though they frequently asked their father to give money to their wives and to buy for them cloth or needed household equipment.

● 562 Within the larger orbit of the male family responsibilities women had their more restricted but clearly defined sphere. At a woman's 844 confinement she was looked after by her husband's own mother, aided 593 by his other mothers and by his sisters if they were present in the village. At the 'coming out' of the new member of the family, ten to fourteen days after birth, the woman and the baby, bathed and ritually 562 cleansed, were seated on a mat outside the hut and presented to the male members of the father's family who gave small gifts to the baby. 846 If it was a boy, the father's mother generally carried it to the gate of 593 the kraal where the men were sitting, to present it to them as one who would eventually herd the cattle. On this occasion, or soon after, the [553] child's name was chosen, usually by the father's father, who prepared and gave to the mother a calf-skin or goat-skin for carrying the child in. The meat of the animal was cooked by the father's mother and a small feast was held for the father's mothers, sisters, brothers and their wives, and any others of the father's family who had helped in the confinement.[1] After the child had thus been acknowledged in its father's family circle, the mother took the baby to visit her own family, who also gave it presents.

593 During the rearing of the child, its father's female relatives assumed responsibility for giving the young mother advice. The father's mother 862 was expected to note the stage at which the child should be weaned, always if possible before the mother's next pregnancy. If the father's mother was unobservant, the other senior women of the husband's family would rebuke her and say 'Look now you are foolish because the child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to it.' These women then took the initiative and insisted on weaning the child. They said to the baby's mother 'We want to wean the child.' They made a paste of ground chillies and put it on the mother's breasts and covered them with a skin or cloth. The child was taken from her after it had tried to [853] suck and had been refused, and given to the father's mother or sister, who looked after it with the help of a nursemaid. It was fed on cow's milk, *amasi* (milk curds), and gruel.

The publicity given to the weaning and the initiative taken by the senior women of the husband's family were intended to inform others in [178] the village that the parents were now free to have another child. This was one aspect of the old Ngoni form of family planning and, in describing

[1] This feast was also held when a carrying cloth was given instead of a skin.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

565 836 864 881 were clearly defined aims in this care of girls after puberty, including instruction in personal hygiene and in pre-marital sexual relations. A girl's father's sisters and her own mother wanted to be able to say, when marriage negotiations began: *Ngombe zake zidzala*, 'her cattle are full', which was the comment made when girls were examined periodically to see if they were still virgin. To achieve this they constantly said to her: '*Mudzinunge, mudzileteze*', 'take care of yourself, control yourself'; and the *gogo* explained to the girl how she could protect herself. In one area where I lived, the chief's daughter was examined every week, with her *izidandani* or companions, and the girls who helped in the big house were examined every month. The strict behaviour required of Ngoni girls of good family was expected also of those of the same age who were members of the same household, either appointed to be with them as companions or as servants in the big house.

868 881 565 Looking forward to marriage involved not only preservation of her virginity. An Ngoni girl going to a strange village had to know how to perform women's work in the home, how to do it herself as well as how to direct others, and she had to be carefully trained in that meticulous and exclusive social behaviour required of Ngoni women of good family. She might be going to marry a man who intended to 'marry up', in which case she might be thought in one sense to be 'marrying below her station'. Yet her personal position as a member of her father's clan and family could not be altered by her marriage, and she was well aware that she was conferring something on the man and on the family she married into.

While the boys were learning their roles in later life in the democratic [562] atmosphere of the *laweni* and of the boys' pursuits in the village, the girls in the later stage of their training after puberty were treated more individually, and were not left to find their level in a group of their age mates. The adult women took an active part in telling them how to behave, how to dress and how to cook. The girls of high-ranking families sometimes pounded maize with their age mates, singing as they did so, but more for fun than because their food depended on it. They learned to dress their hair and put on clothes, and to walk and dance in company with other girls, but always with the critical eye of their *gogo* upon them. Their lower-ranking companions could make mistakes and be careless, and walk and dance in an exaggerated fashion. Ngoni girls might never pass certain bounds of decorum, and the standard expected of them was high and exacting. I have heard *manina* of leading clans scold young girls many times for careless behaviour and badly done work.

562 565 867 In this training, as throughout that of the boys, there was a deliberate preparation for leadership. A girl's character and ability were being watched and, while an awareness of her personal dignity and position was being fostered, it was accompanied by requirements of obedience

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show subservience to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss. 562 565 867

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private. 881 836 565 [797] [178] [195] [831]

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony [554]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[721] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

III

'A New Stranger has come'

In these words the father's mother announced from the door of the hut that a child had been born. From inside the hut the women assisting the mother at the time of delivery had given a single cry if it was a boy and two cries for a girl. If the birth had been delayed till late afternoon towards sunset, the women in the hut said to the mother, if it was a boy: 'See the baby has been awaiting the return of the cattle, because it is he who will tend the cattle.' 844 851

The new baby was at first regarded as a stranger, born by a woman who had herself come to the village as a stranger when she married. In later years, when speaking of his parents, the child would say: 'X is my father, and I am of the womb of A, and G and H they are my brother and my sister of one womb.' This particularization of a full brother and sister was used to correct the extended use of the kinship terms, and also to convey the idea that having been born from the womb of one woman gave children a special relationship important in Ngoni thinking. 851 593 [591] [601]

Preparation for birth

When an Ngoni wife was aware that she was pregnant she did not say anything to her husband, and indeed endeavoured to conceal her condition from him as long as possible, continuing the normal sleeping arrangements and intercourse. Ngoni women liked to assert their authority and ascendancy on those occasions, and therefore excluded the men from knowledge of the coming event and from all preparations for it. The senior women used to say, 'Men are 843 593 562

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

843 little children. They are not able to hear those things which
593 belong to pregnancy.' The men on their part accepted the
562 role of being ignorant of what was coming, though they were generally aware of it. It was an elaborate piece of role-playing, standardized by custom, emphasizing the separation of the men's and women's worlds in Ngoni life, and giving control and authority into the experienced hands of the senior women.

843 The Ngoni culture pattern forbade the wife to tell her
606 mother-in-law herself about her condition. She had, as so
572 often in the Ngoni pattern, to approach first a friend who was her confidante, who might be another young wife or a helper in the household. This friend had to tell her mother-in-law, the future paternal grandmother of the baby, who was destined to play a big part in the child's upbringing.

During the months of pregnancy a Ngoni woman carried on with her normal work in the household, including cooking for her husband. If she feared a miscarriage, and suffered from what was called 'a shaking inside', she stayed quietly in the hut, and, saying that she had a headache, asked her husband to call her friend. Then the friend told the mother-in-law who sent for a 'doctor' to bring medicines 'to make the inside not shake'. A young Ngoni woman did not expect
843 to have miscarriages, and feared that her husband's relatives
152 would blame her home for not giving her enough food before marriage to make her strong and healthy in child-bearing.

The fear of invidious comparisons with her own home and upbringing also operated when the wife felt herself near to labour. She would keep on working up to the last minute, for if she told her friend that her time was come, and the friend summoned the senior women, they came to examine her. Should they find on examination that she was not about to deliver, they looked at her and said, 'What are you afraid of? Did you call us for fear?' The young wife was ashamed of being thought fearful, both for her own reputation and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

IV

Family Life for the Young Child

The women's world

It was the proud boast of the Ngoni aristocrats that their women did no 'work' in the old days. When they spoke thus they were equating 'work' with physical labour, sweeping and cleaning in the hut and compound, fetching wood and water, hoeing in the gardens, and the routine part of preparing and cooking food. The Ngoni women of the former large households had an army of 'helpers' to do all these tasks for them. Though the number of helpers dwindled as the larger households disappeared, the pattern of appropriation of tasks remained in the shrunken households, and hence the Ngoni women were always responsible for a high degree of household management. Larger households in the old days fed fifty to sixty people from their cooking-pots, and though when I lived among them the scale of their households was much smaller, some were still feeding twenty and more people for each meal, apart from the occasional meals served when kinsfolk and strangers came unexpectedly.

I never failed to be impressed with the quiet dignified competence with which Ngoni women managed their household affairs. They did it with an apparent effortlessness, which had its roots in long training and tradition, and in an awareness of responsibility that increased, but weighed less heavily, with age and experience. This competence was always apparent on occasions such as wedding feasts. Then cereal food, meat, vegetable relishes were cooked in vast quantities and served out to the separate groups of guests.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

562 These skills of management, and of order and dignity in
461 serving, were not however only seen in large-scale operations.
592 The modern young Ngoni wife serving tea and 'scones' to her husband's guests sitting on his veranda showed the same qualities of careful preparation and considerate service as her grandmother had shown presiding over 500 guests at a wedding feast.

562 Household management in Ngoni homes included primarily managing the household staff, allotting their tasks to them, settling their quarrels, looking after them when sick, marrying off the young ones when the time came. In the all-important aspect of feeding a large household and its dependents, Ngoni women assumed responsibility for seeing that there were enough supplies of different kinds of food at hand, for regular consumption and for emergencies. They consulted at times with the 'official' who was in charge of their 'house' about mobilizing supplies or organizing women helpers to cultivate in the gardens. Most significant in the eyes of Ngoni and non-Ngoni alike was the task of Ngoni
[264] women of 'dividing the food' at every meal-time. It was a key concept in Ngoni culture that at all times when food, beer, or other kinds of goods were to be divided out, and enjoyed or used by a large number of people, the 'one who divided' was an important individual. He, or more often she, must be of 'good character', who assumed, or was given, the task because he or she knew how to do it, and no one questioned the justice or the competence with which the dividing was done. Again I was impressed by the almost nonchalant air with which Ngoni women ladled out food for a large number of individuals and groups. It looked
[461] so easy. It was obviously not a simple matter. The results were always accepted and welcomed, and I never heard any grumbles.

593 Central to the organization of the household, and in one sense the axis on which it revolved, was the care and atten-
592 tion the wife gave to her husband. Cooking, including the

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 901
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602 855
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to 351
make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, 415
and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry,
and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time [356]
sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into [513]
the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at
night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as [352]
pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fasci- [531]
nate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from 351
time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer [285]
was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child [273]
was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. [857]
These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked [231]
and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and
young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped 361
round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay 311
patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens',
and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or 857
grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work
in the gardens was an expedition for young children which
they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places for- 858
bidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone 867
with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep
away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where
the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had
passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of [562]
the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children
strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and
fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went
there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless
a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven
years old, because they found their fathers there and the
herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which
182 he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was
called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount.
342 Dormitory life was therefore rooted in the Ngoni past and
though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared
with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the
organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a neces-
575 sary training ground for young manhood. In very large vil-
[342] lages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a
[621] section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys be-
longed to the dormitory of that section where their parents'
household was situated. There were occasional attempts
sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory
[797] for boys who were baptized Christians or in an inquirers'
class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the
Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to
divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an
important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' de-
velopment, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled.
They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory
system except on the geographical lines already mentioned,
which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining
purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

575 The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they
had their second teeth, from the influence of the women.
562 Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all
861 women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in
favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking
Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and
[177] often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and
practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly
in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that
[186] dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract
non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them
so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision
at what they considered a crucial stage.

872 go herding. School was sometimes regarded as an easy option where you sat still all day and repeated things after the [875] teacher. This was far from being the case in a village like Enkodlweni where the headmaster was well trained and kept the boys on their toes. In such schools the boys themselves were enthusiastic about learning, and regarded going to school as a dignified and worth-while occupation, and not a childish amusement.

Girls' life in the village

858 When the girls had their second teeth and were acknowledged to have reached the new stage in their development, there was no abrupt transition for them, as for their brothers, from the household circle to the dormitory, or from the women's world to the men's world. They continued as part of the women's world; they changed their occupations and their daily routine on the whole very little; and they went on sleeping in the hut of a widowed aunt or grandmother. All that was said however in the earlier part of the chapter about accountability for their behaviour was as true as for the boys.

The Ngoni girls of leading families formed a distinct group, 561 called in the age-set terms 'children' until they were about [565] eleven and then 'immature girls' until they reached puberty. There was in Ngoni thought and practice a clear division between immature and mature girls, and we shall see what this involved in girls' life in Chapters VI and VII. The age-set terms used to distinguish between children and immature girls did not imply any real differences in ways of living, manners and occupations. The girls between about seven and fourteen were looked on as belonging to a 'girls' circle', and this girls' circle had certain distinctive features.

561 In the first place the tendency of the girls to draw apart
562 from the boys of their own age, already evident before the
535 coming of the second teeth, was now more or less complete
628 with the boys' withdrawal into dormitory life and their preoccupation with herding. Later, about the age of twelve

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grandmother with whom they slept, but the other practice was more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611] their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan. In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to remain as a distinctive group. They were members of their father's house until they married; and when that took place [583] it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd belonging to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the carelessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597] grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisability of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

When the Ngoni talked about the separate ideal personalities of men and women, they emphasized the training needed for younger men, and to some extent also for younger women. Senior men and women were expected to possess special qualities due to their age and status and experience. It was recognized that the limited responsibilities of young men before marriage gave them little authority in village and family affairs. Since each family however was bringing up its girls to leave them on marriage and to take the good name of the family elsewhere, there was less distinction made between the qualities desired in younger married women and older ones than there was between the two groups of men.

The ideal personality of Ngoni women

This had four main aspects: physical capacity and appearance, relationship to her husband and his relatives, competence in household management, and general reputation for justice and wisdom.

We talked in Chapter III about the connexion in Ngoni thinking between women being healthy and strong and being able to bear healthy children. In the marriage negotiations and even at the final ceremony itself in the bridegroom's village, there were formalized standard questions put by the bridegroom's representatives about the health of the girl and her family, and these were replied to also in conventional phrases. Such inquiries about health had been made secretly long before the final ceremony, and indeed before any formal approaches had been made which led to the betrothal. But the fact that they were made in public on two distinct occasions, at the preliminary visit of the man's representatives and at the marriage itself, underlined the importance of health and its relation to child-bearing capacity in the ideal Ngoni woman.

We saw in the last chapter that physical strength for continuous hard manual work in the household and in the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

wife. We have talked in Chapters IV and VII of her duties 577
in organizing food supplies, supervising cooking, and that 592
supreme test of competence: dividing out the food so that
all had a fair share. The same high standard of skill was [264]
expected in the general care and supervision of the compound, the children and the household staff. Ngoni women, like their menfolk, were proud of being able to supervise other people and organize life around them, to control others satisfactorily, to hear complaints and to pacify quarrels. The proverb 'The tooth laughs to no purpose', meaning that [538]
angry people show their teeth but with no merriment, was often heard when Ngoni women intervened to stop two quarrelling girls or to prevent an irate helper getting angry with the nurse girls.

The traits of justice and wisdom were important elements 577
in the foundation of a Ngoni married woman's reputation. 538
These were judged by her ability to allocate fair shares of food to servants and helpers, and to adjudicate wisely in women's disputes. Two proverbs referred particularly to dividing out food and were said about women who were either careless or stingy, and did not give their helpers a fair share. 'The finger-nails are surfeited' meant that the important people had eaten heartily without thought for others; and 'She has sliced one side only' had the same connotation, that those who had the supplies were keeping too much for themselves. Two other proverbs drove home this principle of *noblesse oblige* when emphasizing the responsibilities of married women: 'The elephant is not made heavy by its trunk,' and 'If the cows do not produce milk the herdsman is responsible.'

The ideal personality of Ngoni men

As we have just said, there was a definite personality pattern 577
for young men whether married or not, which emphasized 562
special qualities looked for in them, since on the whole they 561
had relatively little authority or responsibility in village

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

577 affairs. Boys and young men were expected to be physically
562 strong, and tough in the sense of being able to do hard tasks,
561 walk long distances, dance for hours on end, and put up
[827] with hardships without grumbling. The senior men, as we saw earlier in this chapter hated to see idleness and set great store by young men working hard and persistently at any tasks undertaken. Several proverbs illustrated this quality
[538] and were used with effect when boys were found hanging round in the village doing nothing: 'Loitering eats the owner,' 'Laziness is eating dung,' 'The garden will not be tilled if you stop hoeing it.'

577 Other qualities desired in young men were all connected
829 with the values of staying together as a family and as a village group, and of fostering mutual aid and trust within the groups of males in the dormitory and in the 'house'. It was believed that they ought to be acutely sensitive to the opinion of their contemporaries, a lesson which they learned from early days in the dormitory. To an insensitive person, showing intolerance and hard-heartedness they said: 'Were you made with dog's bones?' for dogs' bones were thought
[538] to be hard and unfeeling; or, 'You have a heart like a crocodile.' A fear of social ostracism was fostered all the time and expressed in the proverb: 'The bird eats in his own field.'

577 There were innumerable proverbs about willingness to
829 co-operate in all the necessary tasks which fell to the young
538 men, such as communal hoeing described in Chapter VII, or digging the grave at a funeral. 'The eyes for seeing,' 'One arm cannot crush a louse,' 'A river grows by its little streams,' 'The heifer grows by giving it more food'—these and many others were used to admonish those who held back and to encourage those who joined in willingly. Other proverbs warned against promises of help which were not kept. 'You will eat those of the axe but not those of the hoe' was said to someone who had counted on noisy assertions of forthcoming help, like the sounds made by the chopping of an axe, and not in quiet persistent help, like the smooth almost silent

463 foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group
177 involved the earning, spending and sharing of money in-
[434] comes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered
[571] opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

In local government and in the courts, which formed an
624 integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom,
693 ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain
[827] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands,
[562] sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were
622 responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound, (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 122). 128 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582]

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajaha*

young girls before puberty: *inkakazana*

young girls after puberty: *izintombi*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AKULU	the important people
ALEZI	nursemaids
GOGO	grandparent or any very senior person
HLONIPA	respect
INDLUNKULU	chief hut in a village
INDUNA	official in village
IZIDANDANI	girl attendants
LAWENI	boys' dormitory
MWINI	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
842 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

567 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nhlanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshlanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanti* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedicao . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]
OBD

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

has the money to do so. Sometimes a wife brings her husband 586
to court seeking damages from him for cruelty without asking for a divorce.

The woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of desertion is usually the wife of a labour migrant. Her struggle is not with her husband himself but with her affines, his kinsfolk who try to protect his interests for him while he is away. We shall consider this type of situation in the next chapter, where we deal with the relationship between a woman and her husband's kin. Here it will suffice to say that provided the man has been away for about four years without writing the divorce is usually granted.

Actions for adultery are always liable to turn into divorce cases, 684
and the amount of damages awarded depends on whether or not a 586
divorce is granted. If adultery is proved, and it is easier to prove than to disprove it, the woman and her lover each pay 30*s*. to the husband and 5*s*. fine to the court. If the woman is divorced on the ground of the adultery, the damages are increased to £3 each to the husband and 10*s*. each to the court. In court the woman is usually asked 'Which man do you love?' and if she selects her lover, the divorce is granted. Sometimes the husband protests that he wants his wife back, but if the court is persuaded that to send the woman back would only lead to more trouble, they will divorce the woman despite the protests of the husband.

When divorce is granted the legalization payment, if it has been 586
made, should be returned. The court does not, however, make any 583
definite order on this point unless called upon to do so by the man or his relatives, and it seems that in the absence of definite instructions to hand over the money, it is retained by the woman's relatives. This is particularly true when the divorce is on the ground of the man's desertion when it is likely that his interests will be poorly represented by his relatives.

If the husband has brought his wife to court in order to divorce 586
her on some ground other than adultery, the court may merely tell 692
the couple that they are divorced, without awarding damages to 562
either party. But the law on this point appears to be changing, and the rule followed in one court is not always followed in another. Even in the same court the decisions given at one time may conflict with those given at another. If the court decides that the woman is at fault she may be ordered to pay £3 damages to her husband. If the man is at fault then, more rarely, the man is ordered to pay £3 damages to his wife. Occasionally, although the fault is held to lie with the man, the woman is ordered to pay £3 damages to secure her divorce. The factors influencing these decisions appear to be the readiness of any particular court to listen to the pleas of a woman, and its opinion of the character of the woman. A woman who is regarded as foolish, or given to quarrelling over nothing, or promiscuous, is sometimes ordered to pay damages to her husband

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 692 562 although the evidence presented during the hearing of the case has established the husband's fault as the ground for divorce.

Only if there is dispute over the matter will the court make an order about the division of crops. The principles of division are 586 that the crops belong to those who worked hard to grow them and that the children of the marriage have to be fed by the parent with whom they live, whoever may eventually have their custody. Thus in a case in which a woman successfully pleaded for divorce because of her husband's cruelty, the court awarded all the crops in the couple's garden to the husband, as the woman had been lazy and had done only a little towards their cultivation.

Bridewealth is not automatically returned on divorce and as we [583] have seen, divorce is the time for paying bridewealth rather than for retrieving it. The disposal of the children of a divorced couple is regarded as a separate issue and to be treated on its own merits.

It is useful to have some quantitive estimate of divorce frequency, [128] but the construction of a satisfactory measure is not easy. One aspect of the occurrence of divorce is presented in Tables IX and X, where the number of divorces experienced by wedded men and women of different ages is set out.

It will be seen that, considering only those wedded men and women whose divorces are known, the mean number of divorces per head of wedded population is 0·49 (51/104) for men and 0·30 (62/210) for women. This difference may be due in part to a greater reluctance on the part of women to admit to divorce, but is also due to the greater mobility of men. While women stay at home, their husbands go off to marry in the towns, divorcing their urban wives when they return home or when the strange rural environment proves intolerable to the women from the towns.

By considering the number of years that marriages have lasted, 581 it is possible to say what is the mean duration of marriage. The 586 necessary information was available for 403 marriages extant as well as completed, experienced by men and women who were resident in the sample villages. The mean duration of all these marriages is 15·6 years, and the mean duration of the marriages that ended in divorce is 6·6 years. The median duration of all marriages is, to the nearest year, 8 years, and of marriages ended in divorce, 5 years. More divorces occurred in the period from four-and-a-half years to five-and-a-half years after marriage than in any other similar one-year period.[25]

128 For comparison with other societies, we can express as a ratio the relationship between the number of marriages that ended in divorce and the number that did not or have not yet done so. This can be done in three ways, as set out in Table XI.

[25] There is no space here to give the method by which these calculations were made, but see my 'Measures of divorce frequency in simple Societies" *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, lxxix (1949) (pp. 37-62).

602 the parents of the couple. If the parents are not available other kinsfolk can substitute for them, but in general it is a man's or woman's father who represents the interests of their local group of kin in situations in which these interests are contrasted with those of the spouse's kin. It is the woman's father who receives all the different payments made in marriage, and he is free to keep the payments or to distribute them among his relatives as he thinks fit. If a woman's father is dead or away at work the payments are made to her brother or her father's brother or her mother or some other relative who, in this situation, is prepared to assume the responsibilities that would otherwise be borne by him. Similarly, most men find the money for marriage payments themselves, but if a man is too poor to do this, it is first to his father that he turns for assistance. If, however, his father is dead or poverty-stricken or unwilling to provide the money, he can ask some other relative for help. Here we are dealing with situations in which the father or his substitute [591] is acting as the representative of the loosely structured local group of kin in situations in which his own children are specifically involved. There are, however, certain specific kinship relations which we can separate out from the general operation of local kinship and which impinge on the marriage relationship. A grandmother has a particular interest in the sexual aspect of marriage. The eldest brother acts as intermediary between a man and his father in the marriage negotiations. Younger brothers are interested in the disposal of widows. Children have rights in the property of a married couple. These are more specific obligations and rights, and while it is possible to find substitutes if the genealogically correct relatives are not there, there is more rigidity in these matters than in those in which the initiative lies with the local group of kinsfolk whoever they may be.

603 We have mentioned that the grandmother who rears a girl may be in charge of her seclusion at puberty (p. 32). Even when some other old woman is in charge, the girl's grandmother has some responsibility for her sexual behaviour. If a man does not sleep with his wife she complains to his grandmother, and although a man is not instructed in sexual matters by his grandmother, he can discuss them more freely with her than with any other kinswoman. Grandmothers sometimes play an important part in the resolution of a marital quarrel in the village, and they often act as midwives. It is a man's grandmother who complains to him if his wife is not bearing children, and it is to her that he may turn for advice about medicines. In the courts, however, grandmothers do not play so important a role. They are women, and important women use their influence more in village situations than in court, where men are in [562] control and male councillors look to a man's brothers and father for confirmation of evidence.

593 There is considerable formality in the relationship between a man and his own parents and this formality appears to be greater if

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586 [643]

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. [182] Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. [693] [562] My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village.

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. 671 583 684 It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. 581 583 In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained.

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. 486 With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. 562 These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 if the latter is unable to leave the area legally.[20] Various devices
560 have been introduced to prevent women from using other people's passes, such as recording finger-prints on the certificate. On the other hand there are a great variety of ways in which women contrive to leave the area without a proper pass, such as marrying the bus driver for the duration of the journey, getting off the bus and walking round the control points, and so on.

13. The Administration and the missions

648 Under the Laws of Northern Rhodesia, which guide the Adminis-
671 tration, the only valid marriages between Africans are those
581 performed in accordance with 'customary tribal law'. There has never been any systematic attempt to codify the rules implied by this
586 phrase, and in any particular case that comes before the Administration's courts, the views of individual African assessors must carry weight. The tendency has been to try and discover what used to happen in the old days rather than what was the *de facto* law at the time. On the other hand, there appears to have been a feeling that women were entitled to certain rights in equity that may perhaps have been associated with the proviso that 'customary tribal law' shall not be administered when it is 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. The Administration has certainly been sympathetic towards deserted wives seeking divorce and has encouraged Native Courts to allow their pleas where the husband has been many years away and has not written home. In the past the District Officer on tour has divorced batches of women who had applied in vain to the Native Courts for divorce on the ground of desertion. It has been argued by the Administration that since chiefs depend on the gifts of returned labour migrants to supplement their own income, they are reluctant to offend men by divorcing their wives in their absence. There are fewer divorces, in relation to the same number
[671] of pleas, granted in Ngoni courts than among the neighbouring Cewa, who are subject to the same Administrative and mission influences. The Ngoni find no consolation in this comparison. They merely observe that there are more divorces now than there used to be, and blame the Whites for the change.

791 The missions are all concerned with the development of Christian
581 marriage, but their ideas as to what this is differ from one denomination to another, as do their views on the relationship
586 of Christian to other types of marriage. The White Fathers and the Universities Mission to Central Africa do not allow divorce, while the Dutch Reformed Church Mission does. The U.M.C.A. insist that all 'customary obligations' shall be fulfilled before a marriage can be solemnized between Christians, the White Fathers

[20] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 245f for the rules regulating the movement of women beyond Fort Jameson District.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 595 178 of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an expression more of their different matrilateral affiliations than of the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its N 855 own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother, although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by his first and third wives [3] were reared by their father's fourth wife's mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally N a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of 855 his children. This division is in accord with the statement made 183 frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's. Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace', however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft- N reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make M these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal 591 identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The 177 facility with which married couples live uxorilocally is no doubt partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxorilocal Cewa and other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

N M *4. The moral significance of sexual activity*

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to 836 be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa 177 believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die, and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa N view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives M and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to 562 have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so 177 carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

[3] See above, p. 109

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

developed as the men's. It is to be expected, therefore, that there would be greater Cewa and Nsenga influence in those affairs controlled by women than in political and military matters, which were organized by men. This is borne out by linguistic evidence, for while many of the words, but not all, pertaining to affairs of state are of Ngoni origin, the words now used in the seclusion of girls are drawn from Cewa and Nsenga.

We find therefore that it is the bearing of children before marriage and to a lesser extent pre-marital impregnation which are disapproved of rather than pre-marital copulation. The real contrast in attitude is between pre-marital copulation and adultery. We have seen that in the old days adulterers were killed by order of the chief. The punishment of adultery was a process involving headmen, lieutenants and other important men. The abhorrence of adultery remains despite its great frequency and the prohibition on killing adulterers. An adulterer is a thief, stealing the rights of another man and endangering his marriage. Even when the wife of a labour migrant bears a child and it is in danger of *mdulo* until it can be 'taken up' (p. 87) she cannot openly call in a man with whom to perform this rite. She must either get a man to come in secret or obtain expensive medicines which remove the danger. In like manner, if her husband is impotent, there must be no public recognition of any extra-marital intercourse, for impotence is shameful and not to be admitted and cannot justify the intervention of another man. It is thought regrettable that a woman should grow old without bearing daughters to help her pound maize and sons to clothe her in her old age. Yet when medicines have been of no avail and her husband calls in a seed-raiser he must come in secret and later be rewarded covertly. Similarly the sexual activities of children must be conducted discreetly. Here, however, a much more tolerant attitude is taken and there is not the same need for secrecy. There is no chaperoning of unmarried girls but only of married women whose husbands are away. There is no inspection of girls at marriage, and one informant said that if after puberty a girl has no lover with whom she can sleep, her grandmother will call in a young man to copulate with the girl in the grandmother's house to see if she is proficient, and that for this he would be rewarded by the grandmother. From one point of view we may say that there is pre-marital freedom, with discretion, and marital restriction of sexual activity. Pre-marital intercourse does, however, have a moral connotation, and it is held that the girl who sleeps too easily with all comers before marriage will continue thus after she is married. The need for discretion in premarital affairs is in some part due to the activities of the missions, working at the village level through deacons, elders and women helpers. Yet in general no action is taken by the local Christian group in the village unless the pre-marital sexual activities of its members are conducted in such a way that it is no longer possible to ignore them.

Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 173 829 177 [582]

this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chinamwali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *umsindo* or *umgonxo* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chinamwali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

N M [881]

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

N M [191] [562]

N [178]

N 114

If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chamtendere*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Lupa goldfields and Dar-es-Salaam. Nowadays almost everyone goes 101
by lorry, but now as then a man has to go a long way before he can 489
arrive at an island of friends in one of the urban centres. This means
that, for the Ngoni, emigration is a definite event, and does not occur
as a result of a gradual drifting farther and farther away from the [167]
tribal area. Lorries run from Fort Jameson to Lusaka and to Lilongwe, 489
and from Missale to Mtoko in Southern Rhodesia. There is also a
lorry service from Lundazi to Fort Jameson, but this does not lead
anywhere else, and is not used by Mpezeni's people except locally.
Lusaka is on a railway line, Lilongwe is connected by bus and train to
Blantyre, while Mtoko is on the way to Salisbury. It is these lorry
routes which now provide the links with the outside world, and along
which people and goods travel, the people in both directions, and the
goods, apart from tobacco, mainly inwards. Use of these routes is
controlled by the chiefs, the Administration, by economic factors, and
by the weather. This last has been less important of late, and the roads
are seldom impassable for more than a week at a time, however heavy
the rains. In order to travel on the lorries from Fort Jameson a man
must have a ticket, which costs £1 for the journey to Lusaka, and
less for the trip to Lilongwe. The lorry service from Missale to Mtoko
is free.

The Administration exercise control by insisting that no man shall 486
leave the Territory of Northern Rhodesia unless he is in possession of 166
an identification certificate endorsed by the Administration permit-
ting him to do so. In practice, such endorsements are not usually made
unless the man can produce written permission from the chief that he
is free to go. This working arrangement is intended to ensure that
men do not flee the country when there are cases pending against them,
and to prevent unjustifiable desertion of wives and children. In fact
men are sometimes given permission to go while cases in which they
are involved are still unheard.

The emigration of women and children is further controlled in that 486
there is a law[1] forbidding a woman to leave the tribal area except in 562
the company of her husband, or with a pass to leave from the Native 858
Authority. Sucking children are allowed to accompany their mothers,
but other children under the age of sixteen are not allowed to leave the
province without permission of the Native Authority,[2] while boys

[1] Ngoni Native Authority Order 24.

[2] Ngoni N. A. Order 39. The child must be either accompanied by its parents or else accompanied by a guardian on the way to join its parents.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 562 858 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one 486 might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly 562 by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to 484 look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives 167 and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko–Missale service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these 205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 249 [361] No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more than 12 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 37.

Ib Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mallikazi near the border of Portuguese
161 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mallikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
578 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
643 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.
648 In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo. In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the
[805] Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Masako, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaza Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Msafwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyimalusi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Soeers), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
173
● 562

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 159 173 562 N M 171 643 842 851

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigule, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other *major* wife is not blessed with children. In those cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the *major* wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Awenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlunze*.

N 159 173 562 [595]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlunze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Luziwana, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkwana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtengulenl Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

N [764] [A23]

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *nchize* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

N 159 173 595 842 602

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sewaza Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jesu; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 644

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambezi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Anengo tribe worked for Somera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Somera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the *ikohlwa* wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamache Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Inili. Father, Nzyekwaza (Njekwaza), mother and wife, not known; sons, Maukambewa and Chitete.

[554] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his

[578] instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1848.

159 173 167 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambowe Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Lusanjazi near Mzimba.

After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed

[578] by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Mawko was killed by

[554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 [701] [645] (6) Njekwane Ntilla. Father, Mphangu, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyuwsazane; wife, Mtongu Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mow, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpindaka Hill, Matambazi River, in the year 1866.

(7) Mgai Komalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bidi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majekwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality 595
of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes
that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have [171]
100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry 177
till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full [582]
grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday, at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock. But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his 583
father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages, for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth, and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable 562
ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a 565
considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for 462
many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the [171]
women to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women
went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, [243]
while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the
grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. [252]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 worship. They allowed the local chiefs to govern their people
636 according to their own laws and customs, but under the authority
727 of the Ngoni. They followed the method of governing which Europeans call "indirect rule".' They also took selected children from the conquered peoples and reared them as Ngoni in Ngoni villages. Young's account supports this.[37] Whether or not this method of government was wise is clearly a matter of opinion. It is perhaps significant that for Mpezeni's people the evidence provided by the present disposition of persons claiming descent from different ethnic groups suggests that a different policy was followed there. Chibambo and Young talk of groups of warriors under Mwambera belonging to various subjugated tribes; in Mpezeni's area captured men appear to have been drafted into
[561] the various age-set regiments, so that men from the same tribe were distributed throughout the army and did not form a distinct group.
173 Territorially, the dispersion of captives from the same tribe was not
563 so complete, for it appears that in Mpezeni's group the major
727 segment settled on the east of the Ngoni area raided mostly to the east, and the western segment to the west, and so on, so that many of the captives taken from a particular locality were to be found in the major segment of the State nearest their homeland. Yet even this concentration of captives with the same ethnic origin was not complete, and representatives from all the principal tribes with whom the Ngoni came into contact are nowadays to be found in all parts of Mpezeni's Ngoniland. We suggest that this policy of assimilation, practised to a much greater degree by Mpezeni than by Mwambera, may be correlated with the fact that in Mpezeni's group there were no revolts by groups of captives of common origin, whereas in Mwambera's there were three such revolts, by Lake Tonga, Kamanga and Henga tribesmen.

173 Mwambera attacked the Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu some
721 time round about 1860, and was driven off in the face of fire from
648 guns Mwase had obtained from Arabs. He subsequently came to an agreement with Mwase whereby the Cewa chief became his 'child' and lent him soldiers armed with guns to assist in Ngoni raids. Travellers suggest that later Mwase came to an agreement with Mpezeni as well, but this is not so certain. Mpezeni does seem to have established peaceful relations with one or two minor chieftains during the period of early European contact,[38] but for

[37] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 39-41; Young, *History*, p. 119.

[38] e.g. Cuaula, a Kunda chief and Msoro, who had Kunda and Nsenga connexions. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 11; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyassa', p. 746.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[855] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[47]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[626] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-
[701] professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[47] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

646 Secretariat or the Legislative Council. The agenda consists of
648 items suggested by the African members and by the Administration. The African members of the Council elect four of their number as
[666] their nominees to the African Representative Council of Northern Rhodesia, which in its turn advises the Governor on the appointment of the African members of Legislative Council. As yet, the Provincial Council meetings attract little attention among the bulk of the African population, and few Ngoni know who their members are. Nevertheless among the chiefs and councillors these meetings, if regarded with suspicion, are of some interest, and for the two delegates they provide an opportunity for stressing in public what they regard as the Ngoni point of view as contrasted with those of other tribes. Many of the Ngoni speeches are phrased in anachro-
[537] nistic terms, and represent more an affirmation of how different
[186] the Ngoni are or used to be rather than a realization of how similar their interests now are to those of their neighbours. However, it is possible as the Council acquires more power and the consequences of its deliberations begin to affect more people directly, Ngoni will take a greater interest in its proceedings.[88] The same comments apply to Ngoni participation on the Provincial Team, an advisory body with representatives from the Administration, the unofficial White community, Indians and Africans.

Ngoniland is almost completely surrounded by Cewa chief-
648 doms. The old no-man's-land which isolated the Ngoni from their neighbours in pre-conquest times has long ago disappeared. On the fringes of Ngoni country there is a great deal of contact between Ngoni villages and their Cewa neighbours and the links of kinship stretch across tribal boundaries without interruption. Within
563 Ngoniland itself, under the control of county chiefs, are some
648 villages which still speak the Cewa language rather than the Nsenga dialect used by most Ngoni. Most of these Cewa-speaking villages
[167] have come into Ngoniland after 1898. Their numbers are indicated in Table VII (p. 133) where it will be seen that on the average about one village in five has entered in this way. The great majority of these are Cewa in origin. Some of them claim that they have returned to ancestral sites, others state that they came as a result of land alienation or of some quarrel with their former chief. Others have been formed by non-Ngoni immigrants who have worked for many years in the township or on the farms and built up their own followings. In Northern Rhodesia villages of this kind form an integral part of Ngoni society. The cultural features which distin-

[88] cf. Barnes, 'History', for a discussion of the way in which Ngoni members act at council meetings.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

guish them from their neighbours are no more significant than the many varieties of custom and belief which are to be found in every Ngoni village. They do not form a group among themselves, their members participate in all communal activities in their counties and are to be found at all levels of the Native Authority organization below that of chief. They are linked by kinship to their neighbours. The two Nyasaland counties, however, include relatively large areas where there are only Cewa-speaking villages, and many of these claim that they have been placed under Ngoni rule only by Administrative action. From time to time they have made efforts to break away and to attach themselves to some neighbouring Cewa chief or to establish a separate chiefdom. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the Ngoni chiefs, with the villages in their county segments, and their Cewa-speaking subjects. It will be remembered that the two Nyasaland chiefdoms represent the head of the eastern movement of Mpezeni's group, and that some of the settlement across the border took place as late as 1897. It is not surprising therefore that in these two counties assimilation of Cewa captives and immigrants has not proceeded so far as in the longer established counties in Northern Rhodesia.

11. *Conclusion*

In this study we have attempted to show what has happened in Ngoni political life during a period of 130 years. To-day Ngoni society is changing but this has not always been so. Prior to the arrival of Wiese in 1886, the actually existing social relations were changing, but the form of the social structure remained the same. Each new segment developed along lines that were already known and each time the State split, the new States were copies of the old. A system of this kind could not have lasted for long, for the supply of new recruits to the Ngoni States must have sooner or later been exhausted. In Africa, even if the overall conditions facilitated the emergence of this kind of migratory militarism, they were particularly unfavourable for its prolonged continuation. The Arabs and the European Powers behind them were closing in on the centre of Africa, and Ngoni days were numbered. Then came the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898 and the emergence of a new system, in which some of the actually existing political groups, and the relations between them, appear to have a much greater stability than before. But at the same time society as a whole has become much more diversified, the spatial distribution of men and women in significant relationship with one another has become highly complicated, and

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

131 the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found
101 in three separate states in the Dowa and Kotakota districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpeseni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

162 According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with
131 the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,891. Leaving out the Fort
167 Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the
167 main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

101 The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It
121 was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliation survives political dispersal? The chief
128 problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

619 There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, dis-
563 tinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambesi', 'those from the march' and 'those from this country'. The
[614] Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the
619 Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Luangwa valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(*d*) '*Those from this country*'

619 Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland
563 who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. These in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Yao origin.

101 Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition
128 of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi stock—that is categories (*a*) and (*b*) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would
[161] probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged; or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

101 The second conclusion is that even if the criterion is accepted that
563 the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambesi, the Ngoni
184 kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (*a*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms
[172] of culture were found not only in groups (*a*) and (*b*), as would be expected, but often among families in group (*c*) who, through fighting in the Ngoni armies and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual pattern.[1]

174 [1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpeseni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their travels. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Maseko Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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CHAPTER II

THE NGONI KINGDOMS

In 1933, by the Native Authorities Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance, Mbelwa was recognized as Paramount of the northern Ngoni kingdom with six Subordinate Native Authorities under him, and his court was constituted the appeal court for their six courts. The same procedure was followed in the central kingdom for Paramount Gomani with six Subordinate Native Authorities, and his court as the appeal court for their courts. They were the only rulers in Nyasaland with S.N.A.[1] under them. Two other chiefs, Cikulamayembe of the Henga in Mzimba district and Kyungu of the Ngonde in North Nyasa district, had respectively four and five courts subordinate to them, but the chiefs owning these courts were not recognized as their subordinates. The Ngoni comment on these ordinances was 'Ha! Now they see what big chiefs we have. Only our chiefs are called *inkosi*.'

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The northern kingdom was in Mzimba district, and Paramount Mbelwa's royal village was at the southern end of his kingdom. The central kingdom included the whole of Ncheu district with Paramount Gomani's royal village at the northern end. This kingdom had Portuguese territory on its western frontier, close to the royal village. When the Portuguese boundary was fixed in 1891, the Ngoni kingdom under the Maseko Paramount was cut in two and a section under a Maseko ruler became a separate kingdom under the Portuguese. There was constant trouble in the 1930's over this Portuguese frontier, for Gomani's Ngoni visited their relatives, grazed their cattle and hoed gardens on the Portuguese side; and from time to time claims by the Portuguese for rent for gardens and grazing lands and disputes about taxation, needed judicious handling in the District Commissioner's court.

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The figures in Table II for Mzimba and Ncheu districts in 1926, 1931, and 1945 show the changes in the ethnic composition of the districts, some of which are difficult to account for. In Mzimba district the Henga under Cikulamayembe were included in the figures for the Tumbuka and hence the northern Ngoni kingdom did not include all the 156,208 in the district. In Ncheu, the total district population of 87,690 were all included in the central Ngoni kingdom, showing the mixed ethnic elements, among which the Ngoni, or those who were enumerated as Ngoni, had declined from 64,023 in 1926 to 15,242 in 1945. Between 1931 and 1945 the decrease in the number of Ngoni (31,066) was almost balanced by the increase in the number of Nyanja

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[1] This abbreviation will be used henceforward in referring to Subordinate Native Authorities.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

162 563 (35,107). It is difficult not to assume that many Nyanja had formerly called themselves Ngoni.

Table II

	1926	1931	1945
Mzimba district			
Ngoni	25,484	24,627	44,948
Tumbuka	46,029	78,483	89,135
Cewa	14,041	2,411	21,891
Yao	20	—	—
Tonga	3,052	605	32
Nkonde	141	—	—
Others	334	156	202
Total	89,101	106,282	156,208
Ncheu district			
Ngoni	64,023	46,308	15,242
Cewa	11	4,372	2,815
Nyanja	334	25,393	60,400
Cikunda	360	940	1,336
Yao	203	1,064	3,267
Nguru, etc.	—	—	4,448
Others	13	278	182
Total	64,944	78,355	87,690

631 Since the two Ngoni kingdoms are the subject of this book and not the secession states, the position of the rulers of those states as Native Authorities and the circumstances of their secession from the two main groups will not be examined here. The three secession states in the north were under Chiefs Ciwere and Msakambewa in Dowa district and Jere in Kotakota district. The four connected formerly with the central Ngoni were under Chiefs Kacere and Kacindamoto in Dedza, Masula in Lilongwe and Vumbwe in Cholo.

484 [114] In the 1930's, when I was living sometimes in the northern kingdom, sometimes in the central, and for a time in the Ngoni state under Chief Jere, I was aware that the existence of the two kingdoms and of the seven secession states did not preclude a great deal of contact between the Ngoni of the different areas. The stream of travel in Nyasaland from south to north and from north to south along the one trunk road, brought Ngoni as visitors from one kingdom to the other, from the smaller states to both kingdoms, and from 'the Ngoni of the dispersion' living in towns to visit their relatives and friends in the Ngoni kingdoms and states. These visits might be social, to see parents or to marry 574 a wife; they might be for economic purposes, to invest in or sell cattle, to supervise cotton or tobacco marketing; or they might be for ritual purposes such as mourning. When I travelled in the central Ngoni 814 kingdom in 1936 with Y. M. Cibambo, the historian of the northern

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 with the military organization and the Paramountcy. The main emphasis in the study is, however, on the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's, when the Paramount and the administrative organization under him were recognized by the Nyasaland government. Though certain elements in 642 the kingdoms, as for example the position and authority of the *ahamu-* 648 *zana*, were not recognized by the ordinance, the supreme authority of the Paramounts and the position of their appeal courts received additional support from the colonial officials, from the financial basis of the administration, and from the many new responsibilities of the Paramount for his people illustrated by the bye-laws made and the welfare measures carried out.

121 It is the Ngoni kingdoms as they functioned in the 1930's which will be compared with other African political systems, bearing in mind all the time that behind the Ngoni kingdoms lay the authority and power of the colonial government. The comparison will be made with the general characteristics of what were called by the editors of *African Political Systems*, in their introductory essay, 'Group A systems', and the references will be to the criteria and concepts in that introduction.

The main characteristics cited of the Group A systems were all to be [642] found in the Ngoni kingdoms: centralized authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions. These will be the chief material in Part II of this book on the Ngoni political system. In *African Political Systems* the editors stated that all the societies described in the book which were in the category of Group A systems were 'an amalgam of different peoples, each aware of its unique origin and history, and all except the Zulu and Bemba are still today culturally heterogenous'. Such a definition was appropriate for the Ngoni kingdoms, where [563] political authority was wielded over several different peoples, as the ethnic grouping in the 1945 census showed, and where there was cultural heterogeneity among the different peoples. This second characteristic will be examined more fully in Chapter III of this section, dealing with Ngoni culture. To the factor of diversity within the Ngoni 121 kingdoms should be added two other points made by the editors 571 towards the end of their introduction where they said: 'Community of language and culture does not necessarily give rise to political unity, any more than linguistic and cultural dissimilarity prevents political unity.' In the next chapter we shall be discussing the relation of language and culture among the Ngoni, and between them and other Nyasaland peoples. The second point in the essay which is also applicable to the Ngoni kingdoms and their neighbours was stated in these terms: 'The overlapping and interlocking of societies is due to the fact that where political relations end is not the point at which all social relations cease.' The relevance of this statement to the Ngoni in Nyasaland has already been mentioned in connexion with the visiting which goes on between individuals from the Ngoni kingdoms and states. It

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also 563 a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the 621 chiefs and *ahumuzana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of 128 interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a [184 consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations 121 of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual 563 pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-583 betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *mlobokazi*. A 593 strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of [586 a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. 591 Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was sup-[592 ported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izinduna* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izinduna* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambesi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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were, however, and they realized it at such assemblies, the people of the Paramount, and he was to them the visible symbol of their unity in one kingdom.

The Court System of the Ngoni

692 The enforcement of the laws as announced and discussed at these assemblies was the business of the courts, where the laws themselves were interpreted and often elaborated on occasions of an open breach.

The relationships of the courts in the kingdom followed the hierarchical pattern of the political organization. All minor cases were heard and, whenever possible, settled at the village level. If the plaintiff failed to get satisfaction, or if the village headman was unable to get his judgement accepted, he had to go with the litigants to the chief's court, and [698] if he failed there, the case could be taken to the appeal court of the Paramount. There were certain cases, such as murder and witchcraft, which in pre-European days could only be dealt with in the Paramount's court.

Some confusion arose over the use of one term 'court' for every type of institution which exercised judicial functions. The Nyanja term used in central Ngoniland for the courts at the lowest level was *bwalo*, literally the open space in front of the *indhunkulu* in any Ngoni village. Nothing could be apparently more informal than the discussion among a group of senior men called together by the headman, on a verandah or under a big tree, in order to settle quarrels and hear complaints. No formal records were kept, there was no clerk, and there was no summing up or pronouncement of judgement. There was, if the meeting was successful, general agreement about the action necessary and about who ought to initiate action. Above the level of this village headman's court were the courts of the *ahumuzana* held at their head villages, and above them again the chiefs' courts. After 1933 the courts of the *ahumuzana* gave place to the courts at the head villages of the chiefs. The proceedings there were more formal and included presenting evidence, defending the case and pronouncing judgement on cases rather than, as in the villages, talking things over and appealing to certain principles to re-establish equilibrium and resolve disputes.

The Ngoni nevertheless always recognized these courts at the village [622] level as an integral part of their system. It was the mark of a good headman that he should be able to settle the minor cases in his village without [563] constant reference to higher authority. The majority of villages under Ngoni rule were villages of local tribes who had surrendered to, or been conquered by, the Ngoni. The headmen were therefore of the local tribe, as a rule surrounded by their kinsmen, and their position carried with it the necessity of relating local tribal custom, especially in matters involving marriage and family affairs, to the legal principles and procedure of the Ngoni courts. Many cases came before the courts in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

called 'to make a clean village', and were one of the results of the Paramount's visits to his area. They included building latrines, sweeping the open spaces round huts, disposing of rubbish, mending roofs and fences, smooth mudding of houses, digging wells. The Paramount appointed three men who were called *masanitari* to go round the villages to inspect and report to him, and instituted a system of fines for failure to carry out these measures. In addition to promoting clean villages, he ordered that cattle were to be dipped regularly, cultivation was to be carried out by a ridge system instead of mounds, and all sick people, especially women, were to attend hospital. He sent his own daughter to hospital for her confinement, and she attended the baby clinic regularly with her child.

Some of the changes in local customs which the Paramount ordered were not so easy to enforce as the newer practices in relation to health and hygiene. He forbade drinking at night when quarrelling became rife; he prohibited Cewa dances such as *vinyau* and *malombo* and the Cewa female puberty rite of *cinamwali*. The only dances allowed were the Ngoni dance *ngoma*; the *ligubo* or war-dance at his village; and the individual hero's dance (*ligiya*) when a lion or leopard was brought to his village. Marriages had to be registered, and births and deaths recorded and reported to the Paramount when he visited the villages.

It was always possible to start an argument among the senior men sitting on the Paramount's *bwalo*, or on the steps of his court-house, either on the subject of how far Ngoni law and custom had replaced local Ntumba and Cewa custom, or on the advantages and disadvantages of the modern reforms of the Paramount. Some of the older men were anxious to establish that the Ngoni, meaning those of the trans-Zambesi clans, had not only achieved a political conquest but had also changed the practices of the local peoples and made them observe Ngoni customs. They used to assert, among other things, that the local people had become patrilineal, and had adopted a *lobola* form of marriage—statements which could easily be disproved and were laughed at by the onlookers. On the other hand, they were right when they said that Ngoni laws and court procedure were universally approved and followed, and that the younger generations at least were willing to carry out the welfare measures of the Paramount. One constant feature of all such discussions of recent changes was the steady support given by the Ntumba and Tengo clan leaders to the Paramount and his rule. This, more than any other feature, proved that the trans-Zambesi pattern of political rule had triumphed, and that in their loyalty to the Paramount and their practice of Ngoni custom the village headmen and their families could be counted on to support the rulers.

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CHAPTER I

NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF review was given in Chapter III of Part I of the main elements of Ngoni culture, analysed into 'patterns' covering kinship, village layout, ritual, ceremonial, and language. In this section we shall be considering the principal social institutions embodying Ngoni culture: their clans, houses, families and age sets. We shall find evidence in the two kingdoms of an extensive common element in the social organization which the Ngoni brought with them from the south. Some important diversities will be evident also, such as the variations in virilocal residence found in the central kingdom, and the less widespread practice there of *lobola* marriage. Those elements which were common to Ngoni social organization in both kingdoms were often those which distinguished Ngoni culture from that of the neighbouring peoples. Patrilineal descent, the house system, the ranking of clans, the *laweni* organization of boys' life and activities—these were all distinctively Ngoni, practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and sometimes adopted by individuals and families of other clans who had been associated with the Ngoni over long periods. Nevertheless, in many of the villages of the central kingdom there were clearly two cultures existing side by side: the Ngoni culture being that of an aristocratic minority and the local culture that of the majority, who in the kingdom were equally subjects of the Paramount but in their villages possessed inferior social status. 114 121 [563 565]

Indications were to be seen, even in the more conservative and more isolated northern kingdom, that modern influences were affecting Ngoni social institutions. We have already noticed some of the effects of the cessation of warfare on a social system founded on military traditions. The exodus of young men from Ngoni villages to seek work elsewhere was very extensive, especially in the northern kingdom, where the level of education was higher but employment was not available, and this had repercussions on the age of marriage, the distribution of wealth, and the undertaking of family responsibilities, including the care of the old people. The gradual decline in polygyny, largely but not entirely due to the work of missions, was beginning to have its effects on the working of the house system and on the interrelations of the generations within the family group. 178 [595 797]

In the 1930's many of these modern changes were appearing but the traditional institutions were still functioning, and the Ngoni leaders themselves were clear about those forms and activities which were distinctively their own.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

Households[1]

	Total	Leading clan
Northern Ngoniland		
Eswazini	23	15
Endindeni	15	12
Eluhangeni	37	21
Central Ngoniland		
Cinkwita	39	18
Mangozo	60	26
Mcakhatha	122	37

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head.

Eswazini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* [illegible] head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Eswazini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *lusungulu* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother.

Endindeni was a *gogo* village owned by Zibekere Makwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gogo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ubale* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more *lawani*.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 wife. The village with its single kraal was 'of one house', and it was
592 widely known as a good village by Ngoni standards, because, as the
621 local people said, 'all the men are Makwakwa men'.

Eluhangeni was a *gogo* village where the spirit of Mtenje Jere, the son of a brother of Zwangendaba, was guarded. The kinship group of Mwanamdoko Jere, the owner of the village, were all of one house, that of his mother who was dead. Her place in the *indlunkulu* had been taken by his big wife who also inherited the guardianship of the spirit of Mtenje. There was one widow of his father in the village, but she had become a Christian and therefore could not guard the spirit. Mwanamdoko had two wives, and three widows of his brothers by the same mother were also in the village. One brother by another mother was the only one of his generation still alive and he had two sons and two grandsons living in the *cigodlo* behind the *indlunkulu*. All Mwanamdoko's family were grouped round one kraal. There were two other kraals with family groups round them in the village, one belonging to the *induna* of his dead mother, and one to an age mate who had been in his regiment. The *induna's* group belonged to the same house as Mwanamdoko, but the pattern of the three distinct groups each with its own kraal was more like that of the *banja* in the central kingdom.

184 In the central kingdom the relationships of the various groups in a
563 village followed a different pattern from that in the north. Instead of
592 the *lusungulu* and *gogo* characteristics where the family groups were
621 integrated into houses, the southern pattern was that of a conquered village with the Ngoni element superimposed. In Cinkwita and in Mcakhatha the village headman and his family group had originally been conquered, then established as an outlying village, and finally chosen for the permanent settlement of a family group belonging to an
[361] Ngoni clan when they left the royal village after it broke up. In Cinkwita there were three kraals associated with three *banja*. Two of the *banja* belonged to kinship groups of Ntumba clans, and the head of one was known as the headman of the village. The head of the *banja* of Cinkwita Ndau, the Ngoni clan group, was his eldest son Wilkinson, whose wife was of a leading Swazi clan, the Magwagwa. His family group consisted of his wife, two sons and three daughters; a brother and his two daughters; the widow of a dead brother and his two sons and a daughter; three sisters, one of whom had married the brother of the village headman and one who was a widow; and a widowed sister of his father. This family grouping expressed in terms of households illustrates what has already been referred to several times, namely the tendency of the heads of leading Ngoni families in the central kingdom to keep, in addition to their sons, their sisters and daughters in the village after marriage, even when *lobola* had been given. It also illustrates the comparatively small number of plural marriages in the south among the younger men.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

boys and young men, so long as they were in the village. Ngoni men insisted that their children should be correctly trained, and they were contemptuous of Cewa and other tribal groups who left it 'all to the women'. The handing on of correct behaviour by the mother-in-law to her daughter-in-law was, they considered, essential, and one of the reasons why young men in the central kingdom liked to 'marry up' was that they could count on the careful grounding in all the canons of behaviour which their wives had received. 867 [186 563]

CHAPTER V

AGE SETS

THE Ngoni brought with them to Nyasaland an age-set system akin to that among the South-eastern Bantu, which was an important element in their social structure. In pre-European days the division into cattle-herders or pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors or senior men, regulated the tasks and responsibilities of boys and men in other spheres besides those of warfare. At the beginning of this section, when reviewing age sets as one of the constituent forms of Ngoni social organization, I said that some features of an age-set system had persisted. In comparison with age-grouping in the other Nyasaland tribes it was distinctively Ngoni in form; it influenced behaviour patterns in inter-group and intra-group relations; and in it were recognized certain responsibilities and activities belonging to the different groups based on age. 561

Among the distinctively Ngoni elements in the age-set system were the private nature of the puberty ritual and the absence of initiation schools; the organization of boys' life in the *laweni*; the strong ties between age mates up to marriage; the selective principle in designating senior men and women as *madoda* and *manina*; and a different kind of selective principle in the formation of friendship pacts between individuals of the same age. In observing the role of age sets in Ngoni village society, the two main groups which were constantly in evidence as groups were the older boys and girls and the senior men and women. These groups not only carried out activities together, but also showed evidence of the strength of the internal ties linking members of an age set. There were, however, no sharp edges to these groups, either in terms of actual age or physiological development or of exclusive membership. The following list of terms applied to age sets in the two main Ngoni areas shows primarily the difference in designation between males and females according to broad age grouping, but it illustrates also the fact that the terminology applied to the age sets did not always coincide [881] [572]

[P. 157 P.156 is blank]

CHAPTER I

THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS AND THE ARISTOCRATIC TRADITION

THIS section is not an account of Ngoni religion. It would require a study in itself to examine their beliefs about supernatural beings, their ideas on cosmogony, their concepts of the causes of disaster and sickness, their approach to and practice of forms of magic, and their attitude to witchcraft. Living in Ngoni villages, listening to individuals of different ages discussing prosperity and disaster, the seen and the unseen, the known and the feared, it was clear that it would be difficult to isolate a comprehensive system of beliefs and say that these were distinctively Ngoni beliefs concerning religion and magic and witchcraft. The observer was always aware of the intermingling of ideas and practices from the many Nyasaland tribal peoples who lived side by side and were in constant contact with one another in all those spheres of thought and action which demanded explanation and some remedial or therapeutic treatment. Among the Nyasaland tribes in the 1930's the influence of sixty years of Christian teaching by the missions played an important part, since the missions had introduced western medicine and education as well as a new religion and ethic, and so had influenced both thinking and action among their converts and their families. 114 771

In this complex situation it was virtually impossible to say: this is the Cewa religion, this is the Tumbuka cosmogony, this is Ntumba magic. It was nevertheless clear that there was an Ngoni cult of their ancestral spirits, which was not shared, in the form in which they practised it, by any of the neighbouring peoples, and the Ngoni had their own selective methods of relating it to Christian beliefs and practices. One reason why the Ngoni ancestor cult could be singled out as peculiar to them was its foundation in their aristocratic tradition. As long as the Ngoni political and social structure and organization survived, including the reciprocal roles of leading men and important women, the concept of houses with their ownership of cattle, and the role of the *gogo* house in maintaining tradition and carrying out ritual, the performance of the cult of ancestral spirits was assured. The eminent ancestors whose spirits were guarded in a village and who were known and remembered were addressed in times of trouble, and meat was offered to them as a form of sacrifice from the herd of cattle associated with the house to which they had belonged. This section will deal with the cult of ancestral spirits of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who formed the political and social aristocracy. Thus, in the form described here, the cult is 771 769 [563] [565]

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

ancestor cult in the head village of their clan. If they were asked 'How do you address the spirit (*tete idlosi*)?' they gave the names and genealogy of the former heads of the clan and their attributes if they were known. If they were asked 'Where do you address the spirits?' the reply was always in terms of a particular village where a certain spirit was guarded. 769 614

The occasions on which the Swazi clan ancestors were addressed and sacrifices made were in cases of sickness of an important member of the clan. It was sometimes suggested that there might be trouble in the clan villages for which prayer should be made to the clan spirits, but when pressed the only specific instance informants could give was when the cattle did not thrive. They repudiated immediately any idea of prayer to the clan spirits in cases of drought or epidemics in the clan villages since those troubles, wherever they occurred, could only be helped by the spirits of the Paramounts who were concerned with all the land and all its people. [131]

The procedure followed in the clan head village was the same as that for addressing the spirits of the Paramounts. In that village a diviner was consulted, he named the spirit who should be addressed, a beast was sacrificed and prayers were made. This was the Ngoni pattern of the ancestor cult, and it was limited to the Swazi and some of the trans-Zambesi clans. Its correct observance required that combination of cattle, houses, and known genealogies which only the leading clans possessed. [563]

The living and the dead

At times such as funerals, and when talking about the ancestor cult, the Ngoni often used the phrase: 'Death cannot cut life.' They believed that human spirits had a continued existence after death, and that this existence was related to the place where they had dwelt, the people who were of their family and clan, and the cattle which belonged to their house and village. This continued association was not an automatic process. It had to be assured by the correct performance of the burial rites, the observance of stages of mourning and the deliberate 'bringing back' of the spirits to the village where it would be guarded and honoured when the final mourning ceremony was over. 775 769

In the Ngoni funeral rites there were distinctive elements in the burial of those belonging to Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In handling the corpse the legs were bent and drawn up to the body and the arms folded and crossed each side of the neck, so that the corpse seemed to be sitting and holding its head in its hands. It was wrapped in the skin of a newly killed beast. In the central kingdom men and women of Swazi clans were wrapped first in a sheep-skin, with a cow-skin put over it. The grave was a circular pit, with a small side chamber or shelf where the body was placed in a sitting position, propped up with large stones and facing south-east to the ancestral homeland. Personal possessions, such as skins and shields and baskets, were either put in the grave or taken to be 764 184

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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N 182 233 565 563 578

The relation of cattle-ownership to social integration, which was so marked a feature of Ngoni society, was limited to the Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans. There was evidence that the acquisition of herds by former captives and by the local Cewa and other tribes created conflicts within the society. The following statement was made by an Ntumba village headman, commenting on several court cases relating to cattle-ownership. The reference in the last sentence is to the Ngoni practice in the ownership of cattle.

« Sometimes people say 'If your father was caught and was the slave of a certain person, and also if your mother was caught and was a slave of another man, then if you buy cattle and put them in the kraal of your father, those who caught your father say "These cattle are mine (or ours)." And those who caught your mother say "These cattle are ours." ' They all say so because it was they who caught your ancestors. So those cattle do not recognize their real owner. And sometimes those cattle do not bear well, and sometimes they just die.

Then perhaps you die and leave your cattle, and those people are quarrelling to find out who is the owner of those cattle, since there are three people who want those same cattle: your father, the one who caught your father, and the one who caught your mother.

And it is really best if there are many masters that you, a child, should not buy cattle, but just leave off because they are a source of trouble. But one who is a free man without any masters, he ought to buy cattle because there will be no trouble for him.

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Among the local Cewa tribes, when a man wanted to start a herd and had money to buy cattle, he was expected to give the money to his *makwe* (mother's brother) who then bought the cattle and took charge of them and regarded them as his.[1] This assertion of ownership of cattle bought with another man's money was part of the services to which the mother's brother was entitled from his sister's children, in return for services which he had performed or would perform for them. If these relationships between a man and his *makwe* were not working smoothly and the *makwe* was not helping his nephew, there was a tendency for the man to turn to his own father and give him the money, and vest the ownership of the cattle in him, often because the father had paid the school fees or a court fine for his son. When the *makwe* realized that his position had been usurped and that his chance of owning cattle had gone, his dislike of the man's father and his family showed itself in jealousy and quarrels between the two individuals and friction between the families. The Cewa matrilineal *mbumba* as a cattle-owning group under a senior man had not the continuity of the Ngoni house, for an *mbumba* was said to be 'finished' when a woman and all

M 233 578

[1] The Cewa believed that if cattle were to survive and increase, they had to be owned and cared for by senior men. On the highlands around Dedza the Cewa had had cattle before the Ngoni came.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military Service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [589]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same [701]
regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always [563]
a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be interpreted according to the Ngoni social organization, sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle of people forming a young child's contacts was from the beginning much wider than the individual family which a child was born into. When he began to run about and to pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when necessary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related
families in other villages, with all members of the same clan [602]
living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads
were also inseparable from the political links between the [631]
people and their territorial chief, and between the whole people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their [867]
children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence
in most villages there were sharp distinctions between stand- [183]
ards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni
families.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 families. It was, however, demanded from Ngoni children
563 that they should behave in the socially approved manner to
[867] everyone, and not only to their Ngoni kin and fellow clansmen. And it was evident in non-Ngoni families that there was often some attempt to teach Ngoni standards of behaviour to their children, but that such attempts broke down when their family system was not organized to enforce the necessary training.

576 *The goals of Ngoni child training*

577 Ngoni adults, and especially the senior men and women who
[867] were in control of the training of children and themselves deeply conscious of the traditional values of their society, summed up the aims of the upbringing of children in one word 'respect'. The vernacular term *ulemu*—in the old Ngoni language *hlonipa*—is a concept very difficult to translate adequately, certainly to convey its full meaning in a single English word or phrase. The nearest terms are honour and respect, and though in some contexts it is often translated as politeness, that is too limited a term. In fact they had another vernacular term to express courtesy which was to them one way of showing respect. The concept of *ulemu* included the recognition that a particular person or office was entitled to honour; that all behaviour to that person must express respect; and that by showing respect in language, posture and action, a child or adult so behaving, shared in that honour which they were acknowledging. Conversely, through failing to convey respect, a person, whether child
[558] or adult, was 'ashamed' and lost face accordingly. I have just said that a particular person was entitled to honour and therefore to respect in the behaviour of others. The Ngoni said that was the origin of the concept, and it was demonstrated in the punctilious observance of etiquette to all chiefs, and to all leading men and women by everyone else.
[858] But there was an extension of this concept to include all older people, and Ngoni children were expected to show

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway. 596 861

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but which turned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers. 183 596 [184]

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it. 177 563 [845] [841]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

113 2. *Growing up in New Guinea.* Kegan Paul, 1939—Penguin, 1954. These were two pioneer studies in the Pacific.
3. *New Worlds for Old.* Gollancz, 1956. The New Guinea area was revisited after 25 years. See especially chapters V, XIII and XIV for Dr. Mead's assessment of her former study.

RAUM, OTTO, *Chaga Childhood*, Oxford University Press, 1940. A pioneer study of child training in Tanganyika. His introductory survey of literature has been superseded by that of H. M. Ammar.

READ, MARGARET, 1. *The Ngoni of Nyasaland.* Oxford University Press, 1956. A full scale study of Ngoni culture and social organization.
2. *Education and Social Change in Tropical Areas.* Nelson, 1955. See especially the papers on Anthropology and Education (page 68), and Cultural Contacts in Education (page 96).
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II
DEFINITIONS

128 CULTURE, the total way of living of a people, including kinship relations, economy, religion and magic, law, government, language, myths, child training etc.

[563] ETHNIC GROUP, used here instead of tribe because the Ngoni kingdoms and villages included several tribes. (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 1–6).

614 565 CLAN, exogamous group related through male line with a common clan name used in address. True Ngoni clans formed the aristocracy (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 116).

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediqao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 583

Case history 1

Amos[9] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

N 614 613 [582] [601]

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N ●563

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] M [581] [428] N 186 581 N

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognize these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

[595 628 582]

[9] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

True Ngoni.

(1) *Jere*, the clan of Songandaw, which includes also chiefs Mzakimbewa, Mscostengenji, Zamstynin and Chitete. *Jere* means a bangle; but the name is said to be derived from the words of Songandawe when he crossed the Zambezi with all his prisoners, "Ningujere," or "We are many." Members of the clan did not eat or kill the domestic pigeon, because when surrounding a village they attached burning barkcloth to these birds which, when released, ew on to the houses and set them on fire. 614

(2) *Gama* (Maliwa). (3) *Mgomerin* (Chatambalala). (4) *Nkhosi* (Njolomole).

Of the Sutu Tribe.

(1) *Mugai*. (2) *Mkipa* (Mvuyani) 614 563

Of the Swazi Tribe.

(1) *Ngwenya* (Mjawi). (2) *Gwai* (Chiwenga). (3) *Mengatewa* (Mtumani). (4) *Mafokoko* (Kodman). (5) *Gwenu* (Zembi).

Of the Thonga Tribe.

(1) *Sumbo* (Marumbeka). (2) *Inkomo* (Kalaniklo). (3) *Sungwazi* (Ndawambi). (4) *Mpumulo* (Mapilani). (5) *Inogu* (Machila). (6) *Maliengo* (Mtekatoka).

Of the Kalanga Tribe.

(1) *Hawa* (Mahanjira). (2) *Moyo*, meaning heart (Mundolilo). Members of these two clans might not eat the heat or liver, or drink the blood of any animal. (3) *Sobo*, a monkey, (Chikuni). They might not eat monkeys, or baboons, or any food plucked by them. (4) *Nzeza* (Chinye II). (5) *Shawa* (Nakutepa). Tabu: the eland. (6) *Hondo* (Kalichero). (7) *Mapulo* (Simakumi).

Of the Sengu Tribe.

(1) *Mvula*, meaning rain (Nchiwa). (2) *Khinda* (Zimumbo). (3) *Longu* (Chiponda). (4) *Mumba* (Fikani). (5) *Ntwazu* (Chingwo). (6) *Sokola* (Chimongo). (7) *Muondya* (Mgubo). (8) *Nguruwe*, meaning a bushpig, which was tabu, as was also any foodstuff *squeezed by bushpigs*. (Mrakula II.) (9) *Ngwena* (Dzinazmaleka). (10) *Shawa* (Chidzuyo). (11) *Mbe* (Mzumbo). (12) *Tembo* (Chikumumbu). (13) *Kumda* (Gwiremi). (14) *Njobwa*, meaning an elephant, the meat of which was prohibited. To this clan belong Chiefs Chiwewe, Mtulimanja and Makarani. (15) *Mbewa* (Funzani II). (16) *Mahoko* (Mbirintengenji). (17) *Mhuzuzi* (Chimangamzasa). (18) *Mkunja* (Wata).

Of the Tumbuka Tribe.

(1) *Ngulumbe* (Gwiremi). (2) *Chirwa*. (3) *Chungu*.

Of the Senjwe Tribe.

(1) *Mandwiwa* (Mpamwe). (2) *Sungu* (Manjaka).

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi

N 614 563 *Of the Mandewere Tribe.*

(1) *Chimbalo* (Chimbalangs).

Of the Sukuma Tribe.

(1) *Nthera*, meaning the frame put over an antheap. Tabu: termites (Kamkwamba, Yekoniya). (2) *Chisi* (Kampimbi, Funzani). (3) *Mpkepo* (Lichapa). (4) *Chipeta* (Chinyanya). (5) *Chiwa* (Njumbula). (6) *Ng'ombe* (Manyuza). (7) *Chiba* (Dumbo). (8) *Liwinda* (Kalinda). (9) *Mlenje* (Mgubo).

Of the Tonga Tribe. (A tribe allied to the Atumbuka living in the North of Nyasaland, not to be confused with the Aba-thonga south of the Zambezi).

(1) *Manda.* (2) *Nikata.*

3. *Secret Societies: the Vinyau.*

M 575 535 [825] [764] [881] The word *vinyau* (sing. *chinyau*) signifies "representations of animals." It serves also as the name of a dance in which large figures of grass and wicker, masks and other disguises play the principal part. This dance has a wide range and has long been performed by the Achewa in connexion with funerals. Latterly it has been introduced into initiation ceremonies as well. It is not danced by the Ngoni or Tumbuka tribes to the north; but the Dowa Angoni, who have not preserved their own nationality, tribal forms and customs to any great extent, have adopted it generally for funerals and sometimes for initiations. The most prevalent explanation of its origin is that when God made the country and its people He also instituted the *vinyau*. Consequently, the life of the people is bound up with it, and its secrets must be guarded zealously, initiates being warned that if they disclose them, not only will they themselves perish, but also their fathers and mothers and all their relations with them.

N [575] [177]

M [114] [775] In 1907 Captain R. S. Rattray referred to this dance in his "Folk Lore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja," pp. 178 and 179, and expressed the opinion that it was undoubtedly in some way connected with totemism, the grass animals being reincarnations of the dead. He observed that the secrets were scrupulously kept, and that natives accustomed to speak freely on their other customs refused absolutely to discuss the *vinyau*. During the last twenty years of contact with European civilization, its devotees have greatly increased in number; the dance itself has diverged to some extent from its original purpose and degenerated into a mere amusement; and the educated native of to-day does not believe so readily in the mysterious properties of a grass animal, and is therefore comparatively ready to impart his knowledge on the subject.[1]

M [178]

M [171] [1] Dr. Stannus makes a brief reference to the *vinyau*, and in Harvard African Studies III, *loc. cit.*, p. 252, he describes one of the corresponding Yao *unyago* figures, viz., the *nambende*, which is a "representation of an animal made of bark on a framework covered with mud and painted with flour in spiral markings, hence the name (*nambende* is part of a spiral shell from the Zanzibar coast much prized by natives as an ornament)." In the following pages he gives a list of the other *unyago* figures, nearly all of which represent various animals, and states that they are used at the *lupande* (initiation of boys) for instructional purposes, the Wayao denying any totemic origin. The Yao word *unyago* is, of course, the same as the Chewa *vinyau*.

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts? 121 101

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *u* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups. 101 [197] [173] [829]

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore 101 619 614 563 [114] [621]

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans. [113]

614 a hierarchy of rank expressed in the clan names, and this rank is
563 evident in the position of houses on a village site, and the degree of authority exercised by the clans and the respect[1] accorded to them. In effect, all those whose ancestors were absorbed before the final
101 break up of the main Ngoni group are recognized as having some
563 claim to the name Ngoni. The rest, that is the clans found in the areas where the Ngoni finally settled are, or rather were, regarded as conquered or slave people.

101 We have seen, however, that there is a much wider sense in which the term Ngoni is used—that is, by all who live under the rule of the
641 Paramount Chief. This extended usage is due to the prestige and
186 honour in which the stricter meaning of Ngoni is held. It was illus-
[643] trated in the instance of the Nyasaland men in Johannesburg, who all claimed to be Ngoni because they had discovered at once that the name commanded respect among the mixture of tribes to be found on the mines. *Indunas* and other leading men sometimes make use of this wider connotation when boasting about the large numbers of people owning allegiance to the Ngoni Paramount Chief, compared with the other petty chieftainships. 'All those in the country of Mpezeni are Ngoni. All are his people.' At the same time they make it clear that there is a distinction between the real Ngoni and the other subjects of the Paramount—a distinction which formerly was much sharper than it is to-day. All are the people of the Paramount, it is true, but in old days the majority of the non-Ngoni were called slaves. To this day the Ngoni when angry may call out to some one, 'Chewa, Chewa', implying 'Slave, slave', and be hauled to the chief's court for insulting language. There the chief will take pains to point out that there are no slaves to-day, and that no Ngoni must 'spoil the country' by insulting the people of the Paramount.

101 It is, I think, clear that there is a connotation in which the term Ngoni can be used with some degree of scientific accuracy—that is, to cover all those clans which are not belonging to the local tribes, or, in an even stricter sense, the clans of indubitably southern origin.

[196] [571] [1] This word 'respect' is constantly in use among the Ngoni. It implies both 'honour' and 'fear', and they sometimes use one word and sometimes the other. It really means, 'to give a person his due', that is, to behave towards him (or her) in the manner which his rank requires.

We have also to recognize that the wider connotation of the word is in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction of that name.

III. Ngoni Society as a Cultural Unit. It is evident that the field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong centralized political organization. This society differs radically from that of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state', that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created social structure the principles of centralization and rank were dominant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of systematized law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, political, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history,

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hamlets.

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *inkosi* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'tribal

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardy existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what in extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikwamayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 101 186 619 191 Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indunas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the N [123] aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see N how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on ●[563] family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

N 105 101 186 As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans N and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local M 177 matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. 182 The Ngoni say proudly, 'We taught them to honour their sons' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

N 123 186 After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union. This exodus to the south in its turn brought the Ngoni into touch once more with the Matabele, the Zulu, and the Swazi, and reawakened their consciousness of their southern origin. It is significant that just at the point when their power in their own country received a crushing blow, they came into contact once more in the south with the stock from which they had sprung and to whom they could still speak in their own language. The anthropologist who looks for the reason why the distinctive Ngoni culture did not die out entirely after their military defeat and the advent of the whites, can see at least part of the reason supplied by the results of this economic exodus to work in the south. When the other tribes in the neighbourhood were, in the Ngoni phrase, 'running always to the Boma' and incidentally picking up fragments of European customs, the Ngoni remained, according to their own account, to a great extent aloof and were strengthened in this aloofness by their renewed southern connexions.

Ngoni supremacy over the country was at an end. The Europeans were the overlords of all the tribes, not the Ngoni. Instead of one big chief in the country, many small ones were now recognized who dared to give themselves airs because they knew the Ngoni could not compel allegiance to their Paramount. Chewa people living under Ngoni chiefs could no longer be forced to stay there, therefore a different attitude towards them was necessary. 'Chewa' could no longer be synonymous with 'slave'. I have heard Ngoni chiefs in court address their *indunas* and headmen many times on behaving well to people of other tribes '*Or they will leave us and to-day we cannot* make them return'. A recent case in which a young chief, but a very important one, was summoned to the Paramount's court for insulting a Chewa woman, was made the occasion by the Paramount for a long public discourse on the present relations between Ngoni and Chewa, pointing out that an Ngoni chief whose Chewa subjects left him would 'spoil his country' and 'all his people would be ashamed'. Ngoni prestige, in fact, having lost the support of military power, had to rely on other sanctions. In their own eyes, their prestige was still due to their southern origin, their success in creating the Ngoni state in an alien milieu, and those distinctive institutions which they had retained. To the surrounding people, to the Chewa and other tribes,

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643]

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, ' because all his chiefs obey him ', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chamtendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, ' We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes '.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184]

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. ' To pay taxes, that is our war to-day ', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that [611] of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the [558] holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and 178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and 161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political 641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was [684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a 641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population 727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There 563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State. [567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain 563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set 641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise 701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Mnumu*, pl. *amanumu*. Cf. the Zulu term *umnumzane*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made in the regimental system, which was organized on a national basis. A person of low ethnic status, that is, of comparatively late incorporation into the tribe but of senior regiment, was considered to be, in most circumstances, as good as a man of more aristocratic family but of a junior regiment. New regiments were formed about every four years. 563 641 701

Development of Minor Chieftainships

The defeat of the Ngoni army at the hands of the British in 1898 and the subsequent establishment of British control led to the partial breakdown of this system. The population was dispersed by the fighting and by the unsettled conditions that followed, and part of the kingdom was cleared for European occupation. The Administration recognized the grandson of Mpezeni I as the chief of the tribe, and also worked through a number of men known as Divisional Headmen, who were made responsible for small areas. Some of these divisional headmen were regional governors, some lieutenants of Mpezeni, some members of the royal lineage, and others were upstarts. It is not clear from the rather meagre records that remain or from the statements of informants exactly what happened between 1898 and 1914, but we know that by the latter date the Administration had come to recognize six men as local chiefs, apart from Mpezeni, and that four of them were said to be sons of Mpezeni I.[1] In 1929, when the term Native Authority was introduced, nine minor chiefs were appointed, of whom four were descended from Mpezeni I and one from the father of Mpezeni I. Two of the other minor chiefs have the descent-name *jere* that belongs to the royal lineage, and may be regarded as belonging to assimilated lineages. One is descended from a regional governor, the other from a policeman. Two minor chiefs do not have this descent-name, one being descended from a lieutenant of Zwangendaba and the other from a regional governor. This arrangement of one Paramount Chief and nine minor chiefs persists to the present day. With each of the ten chiefs is associated a more or less defined area within which most of the villages are said to belong to the chief of the area. What appears to have happened during the thirty years after the conquest is that the central power declined and that certain political and territorial segments achieved a degree of autonomy. The ten areas belonging to the different chiefs, which I shall refer to as counties, represent 175 648 631

[1] Cotterill, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22 and 24.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

IV. WIDER CONTACTS

Other Local Groups

We have so far in this account been concerned with delineating the main outlines of political and village structure and the kinship system. We have examined the internal constitution of the tribe and have only been concerned secondarily with the external relationships by which the Ngoni are connected with the wider world. But in the Port Jameson District there are, and have been for many years, people who do not fall within the tribal framework but with whom the Ngoni interact. These include people from the British Isles and South Africa, Indians, and Coloured persons, as well as Africans from other tribes. The Europeans are there as administrators, missionaries, farmers, and traders. Indians are traders and farmers, while Coloured persons are farmers and foremen. Africans from other tribes are, like the Ngoni, labourers on the farms and in the township, as well as subsistence cultivators in their own tribal areas. 563

The land of the District is divided into Native Reserve and Trust land, farm-land, township, and Crown land. Almost all Ngoni villages lie on Reserve or Trust land, and it is in this zone that most of the activities described so far take place. On the farm-land Ngoni participate not as headmen or lieutenants or chiefs, but as labourers and foremen. They still fill the roles of husband, wife, sibling, parent, and child, and sometimes other kinship positions, but the family in the farm compound is on a smaller scale than in the village. In the town of Port Jameson the range of activity open to them is greater, and there are Ngoni butchers, drivers, clerks, shop assistants, Native Urban Court assessors, and so on. All these roles on farm and in the town are shared with Africans from other tribes in the Eastern Province and from more distant regions. 311 463

The Churches

The influence of the non-African groups extends out beyond the areas in which they live into the reserves. We have already seen how the Administration has affected the life of the tribe. The Christian Church has also had a profound influence. By 1910 there were three denominations at work in Ngoni country: the Dutch Reformed Church Mission,[1] the White Fathers,[2] and the Universities' Mission to 797 795

[1] Algemeene Zending Commissie der Nederduitsche Gereformeerde Kerk in den Oranje Vrijstaat.

[2] Société des Missionaires de Notre Dame d'Afrique, a Catholic Order.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as diagnostic of the presence of the kind of segmentary society in which we are interested. All the societies included by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard in their stateless category, i.e. Logoli, Tallensi and Nuer, have continually segmenting political systems. Of the societies with government, the Zulu were like the Ngoni in being a State and yet having a political system which was continually segmenting. Both of these states were organized by a segmentary system even at the highest level, so that it does not seem necessary to follow Fortes in restricting segmentary systems to only the subdivisions of states. In Shaka's time various changes came about in Zululand, such as the concentration of the army in a central area, which lessened the importance of the segmentary organization. But in the eighteenth century large-scale relations between and within the Ngoni chiefdoms were governed by the agnatic segmentary organization, that is, by the division of the people into clans, sub-clans, and lineages and by the continual transfer of allegiance by lineage segments from one chief to another. Even during the period of the Zulu empire, the continual segmentation of the constituent tribes was important in maintaining the power of the central government over them.[28]

If one of the main characteristics of the well-known African lineage systems, both in stateless societies like the Nuer, Tallensi, Logoli and Gusii, and in primitive states like the Zulu, is their political function, we may well inquire if these systems are not also one type in a more general category of political systems. Although lineage relations are essentially distinct from kinship relations, a lineage system defines political relations in the idiom of kinship. Thus in agnatic systems, the relationship between territorial groups may be expressed in terms of the relationships between founding ancestors who were brothers or fathers and sons. We have seen how among the Ngoni the relationship between captor and captive, between lord and dependant, and hence the relationship between the segments they founded, was expressed in agnatic terms. The relationship between husband and wife, lord and lady, was employed to define the relationship between the political groups they led, and in this respect the Ngoni system may be seen as taking one stage further the process employed in lineage systems, where most relationships of this kind are phrased agnatically. Among the south-eastern Bantu, however, the relationship between lineage segments founded by paternal half-brothers is defined in terms of their mothers' position as co-wives. Among some central African peoples, this process has been carried even further than

[28] Gluckman, 'Modern Zululand', pp. 157-54.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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571 643 function and authority was largely evolved and built up during the Ngoni migration across the Zambezi and the early settlement in Nyasaland.

643 The office of the Paramount was supported by three typical Ngoni institutions. The first was the regency exercised by the man who was held responsible for the care of the office of the Paramount. He was called 'the one who takes care of the country', 'the one who has to put the new *induni* in his place', 'the one who takes care of the young *induni* until he enters his father's place'. We shall see later how this principle of regency operated in particular cases in the succession to the Paramountcy. It proved to be an effective provision both in the case of a minor who was recognized as his father's heir, and during an interregnum while the succession was being discussed. The Ngoni showed a clear understanding of what functions the regent ought to perform, and when he exceeded these functions and usurped, or tried to usurp, the Paramount's position they condemned his action as wrong.

The second institution which supported the Paramountcy was the 'big house' from which the heir to the Paramount had to come. We shall see later that it was not always considered essential that the heir should be the actual child of the wife in the big house. A boy could be adopted into the house and, by Ngoni kinship rules, he was then a child of that house and of the woman in it. [892]

The third institution, which made the Paramount immortal at death after having been supreme in his life-time, was the Ngoni practice of 643 769 'guarding his spirit' in a hut, usually in the village where he had lived. The guardianship of a spirit was not practised exclusively for the Paramount. All the chiefs and the heads of the Swazi clans had this provision made for their spirits when they died, but in national crises prayers addressed to the spirits of former Paramounts were of supreme importance. [282]

The royal clan and the big house

643 644 586 189 Among the Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans which formed the Ngoni aristocracy the royal clan had a unique position. Not only was it the clan of the Paramount, but its members had social rank and prestige because they belonged to his clan. In the northern kingdom informants showed awareness of the fact that their royal clan of Jere was not one of the well-known clans in the south. Other clan names found among them, such as Ngomezulu, Thole, Nzima, Ngumayo, and many more, were known to be clan names among the South-eastern Bantu. The following explanation was given by Chambo about the name Jere and was the one most widely accepted:

'The Ngoni themselves say that the clan name of Jere was given during the journey, and that it arose out of the number of people who were with Zwangendaba. When the Ngoni want to speak of a large number of people they use two well-known words which are: '*Nga Jindele*' (it is Hindu);

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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'Mpu Jere' (it is Jere). Perhaps Zwangendaba and others took their clan name from this, seeing that they had become a great number. It is certain that the clan name of Jere is not known in Zululand or Swaziland.

In the northern kingdom all the chiefs recognized as Subordinate Native Authorities were of the royal clan, and hence its political authority was widespread. It was noticed by the early missionaries in northern Ngoniland that the sons of Zwangendaba who were chiefs under their brother, the Paramount, showed some degree of independence in that they wanted to rule their own areas with the minimum of controlled control. The pre-eminence of the Paramount among the other Jere rulers was strengthened as time went on by the remoter kinship relationship of the other Jere chiefs to the Paramount. After Zwangendaba's death they were his brothers of the same father and different mothers. Two generations later they were further removed from his kinship circle since each of their posts was inherited on a direct father to son principle. The political and social importance of membership of the royal clan tended to go in the direct line of relationship to the Paramount rather than to the collateral branches. Later, in Part III, we shall examine the social prestige of the *amakosana* (lit. children of the *inkosi*). It was the closeness of their relationship to the reigning Paramount which was the basis for their social prestige, though evidence showed that a sister or brother or child from a big house of a former Paramount was also given social recognition as an important personage.

The royal clan of Maseko in the central kingdom was also known in Swaziland. Dr. Kuper refers to it in connexion with the Swazi custom of cremating the body of the Maseko chief at his death on a rock by a river.[1] This custom was brought from the south by the Ngoni under Maseko leadership and carried out for each successive Paramount up to 1890. Among these Ngoni the royal clan had special relationships with other leading clans, but the Paramount did not share his political authority with any others of his clan. His chiefs were all of other clans, and Ngoni informants said that it was a deliberate act of the Paramount Mpezeni to exclude his brothers from political authority and from disputing with him the control of the kingdom. In the isolated position thus established for the royal clan, two other clans had a *circuit* relationship with the Paramount. One was the Phungwako clan which was controller of the Paramount's 'medicines', known as the *tengo*. The other was the Ngwato clan which provided the companion for the Paramount whom I have called the 'royal shadow' (see below, pp. 61–3). Yet another special relationship with the royal clan was that of the Nsunga clan which had *ukuli*, or brotherly relations, with the Maseko clan, that involved sharing the same residence and excluded inter-marriage.

The relationship of the Paramount to other leaders of the royal clan

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 96.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 614 565 184 was thus different in the two kingdoms. In the north he was one ruler, though a supreme one, among several ruling kinsmen of the same clan. His position in the past had been strengthened by the prestige shared by his clansmen, but also challenged by his near kinsmen in positions of authority. In the central kingdom the Paramount shared no authority with his fellow clansmen. He was unique among them as a ruler, while sharing special ritual relationships with the two other clans which supported his position without challenging it.

643 614 585 A new Paramount, in order to be installed in his father's place, had to be of the big house as well as of the royal clan. Dr. Kuper described the Swazi practice whereby cattle were contributed by the nation for the mother of the king, so that she was called the 'mother of the people of the country'. She also described the ritual marriage of the first wife of a ruler, who was called *sindlunkiti*, and who was never the mother of the heir.[1] The Ngoni Paramount-elect in the northern kingdom married his first wife when he was a young man and she was called *mudumsisi*, 'the one who takes the darkness off him'. The big wife, who would bear the heir, was married with a large gift of cattle taken from the herd of the big wife of the reigning Paramount and, after marriage, was attached to her big house. We shall discuss in greater detail in the next chapter the relationships of the royal women to the Paramount and to each other. Here it is important to note that the big house owned by the big wife was the place where the future chief was brought up. In the central kingdom the first marriage of the Paramount was traditionally with a woman of the Magagula clan who was said not to bear children. She held an honoured place in the social hierarchy and was married with cattle taken from the herd of the *gogo* house of the reigning Paramount. It was regarded as a ritual marriage, for if she did bear children they were not acknowledged. [843 847] Informants were uncertain whether methods to prevent conception were used, or whether abortion was practised, or whether children, if born, died young or were disposed of or placed out in other households. The last alternatives were unlikely, and one of the first two expedients was in line with the phrase always used of this wife: 'she did not bear children'. The wife who bore the heir was married next and was always of another leading clan, and the cattle for her came from the herd of the big house of the reigning Paramount.

643 614 The reasons were obvious why the remembered genealogies of the Ngoni Paramounts of the royal clans were short compared with the genealogies of some other African royal houses. The remote ancestors of Jere chiefs and Maseko chiefs, who were, as we have seen, not Paramounts before they left the south, were forgotten once the departure had taken place. Only a few names had been handed down and were repeated by the official praisers, whose task it was to call out the names of the direct ancestors of the Paramount before declaiming his *dzibwego* or

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. pp. 34 & 91.

we dammed the stream and made a pool and a mound. And we put him on a rock, and on top of him we put cowhide shields and left them so. And we put firewood above. Then Ngwazi Ngozo took fire and lit that fire. Then *ligube* was danced and the women were singing. They sang songs of *ligube* and the *amadoda* danced (*amagiya*). The owner of the country did not cry, no, and the big people did not cry. Only the wives and other women cried. 643 766

Habuya Dube added later that everyone came with one piece of wood and put it on the pyre; and that they killed a cow and took the fat and put it on the wood, and used the skin to wrap the body in.

In discussing the ceremony of cremation with informants among the central Ngoni, there was no reference to the suggestion made by Dr. Kuper, that cremating was a substitute for embalming to avoid the corruption of the body of the king. They regarded the act of burning as an essential element in the continuing strength of the royal line, since the heir stood in the smoke from the pyre, and in the continuing fertility and strength of the country, since the ashes were swept into the river. The concept was that the royal ruler had been strengthened with the *tonga* medicine, and thereafter his body and its strength was the symbol of the unity and strength and fertility of his country.

On the question of mourning or no mourning they were equally emphatic. 'Death cannot cut life' was an expression often on their lips during the funeral ceremonies of Bambo Mangu, when great care was taken to carry out the traditional ritual as far as possible in every detail. They were shocked at the idea of mourning and wailing at such a time by any of the big people. The leading Ngoni women were expected to join the *ligube* dances in the courtyard. Some old women of lower social rank in the village, together with the daughter of Bambo Mangu, sat in the house with the corpse sobbing and crying '*Mayi, mayi*' and many of them became quite ill and others hysterical with prolonged sobbing. The leading Ngoni men were contemptuous of this display of grief. They admitted it was correct behaviour for her daughter because of the close kinship tie, but of the behaviour of the rest they said 'Ha, just like the Ntumbo people.' The only behaviour which was considered correct was to dance in the courtyard openly before the house of Bambo Mangu, or to slip off quietly home and rest before returning to take up the dance. 643 765 565 766 [52]

The traditional ritual procedure at the death of the Paramount, with the exception of the cremation of the corpse, I saw in all its details at the death of Bambo Mangu. The corpse was placed in the same position in the hut as described at Cikusi's death, and was wrapped in a sheep-skin first with a cow-skin over, the spleen, gall-bladder and fat decorating the head and neck. The dancing of *ligube* by the men with shields and spears, and by the women, was continuous from the moment of death to the burial, and afterwards whenever fresh companies from the central 643 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Praises of Hlacwayo, son of Magangata

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Hlacwayo the dwarf who cannot trail his cloth
Whereas the tall people trail their cloths.
Meat eaten with knives of axes,
If it is not eaten with forks it is rotten.
Hlacwayo whose bodily vigour is finished off compared with Hlacwayo of former times.
Grass of deep red colour is not burned with burning; it burns very slowly, drop by drop.

Praises of Ngwana, son of Gogwani

You who cut the trees and who cut the mouths,
You the locust, the grasshopper who fixed in your hair the feathers of the locust,
Who went below and climbed up, and went to bring the morning star of the dawn,
You go, since you are rejected; you go and bring the armlets of wild animals; those of cattle will be much disputed.
You who remember the fault of long ago.
In descending, you descend together into the mountains.
You who drank the blood of cattle,
You who separated from the people of Shaka, Shaka of Mhelebele kraal,
You who separated from the people of Nyathi the son of Mashobane; it thundered, it was cloudy.
Thou resembliest cattle which were finished by wolves.
You who originated with the people of Maikhasi,
You who originated with the people of Mpakana son of Lidongo,
You who originated with the people of Ndwandwe.

CHAPTER III

THE ROYAL WOMEN

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An early traveller in central Ngoniland in 1886 remarked on the number of 'true Ngoni women' to be found there, who were 'easily distinguished from the other women by their light colour and by being taller and smarter'. He went on to say: 'The king's houses at Loviani were 30 feet in diameter, built within an enclosure with other huts where the attendants lived. All were kept very clean and well swept.' This tribute to the appearance and achievements of Ngoni women of high rank was borne out by my own observations in the 1930's in central and northern Ngoniland. There was a definite physical type, light in colour, with high cheek-bones and orthognathic profile, tall with an upright carriage of the head. Women with these physical characteristics were in all cases of leading Swazi or trans-Zambezi clans, and their influence on their

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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142 565 surroundings, their families, and the behaviour of those for whom they were responsible was most noticeable. Not all of these women were in the category of royal women, nor did all the royal women conform to this distinctive physical type, though the association of high-ranking family, physical appearance and pride of bearing was striking.

644 565 There were three main classes of royal women, all associated with the Paramount in a special relationship. These showed some parallels with the classes of royal women among the Swazi described by Dr. Kuper. I have not adopted her terms for distinguishing them, with the exception of the term Queen Mother, which I have used in the English sense of the widow of a former ruler and mother of the existing ruler. The chief women associated with the Paramount in the Ngoni kingdoms were the Royal Sister, the Queen Mother, and the big wife. This same association of these leading women with a ruling chief or *nduna*wamne was found in the subordinate chieftainships under the Paramount, and in the head villages of the Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans. It was a definite Ngoni pattern, associating women of high rank with the men who carried political responsibility. Their positions in the Ngoni patrilineal and virilocal social structure was markedly different from the position of the leading women in the matrilineal and uxorilocal societies of other Nyasaland peoples, especially in their relationship to their husbands, sons and brothers.

644 593 The relationships of the Queen Mother and the big wife to the Paramount were of a different character from that of the Royal Sister to her brother, since she was of the royal clan and they were not. We shall first consider the position in the Ngoni kingdoms of the Queen Mother and the big wife, since reference has been made to them already in the previous chapter. In the new *kumpulo* village of the Paramount there was a close connexion between the Queen Mother, who moved out with him, and his own big wife. His big wife was of the same house as the Queen Mother, since the cattle for her *lobolo* had been taken from the herd of the Queen Mother. At this time of moving out into the new village the big wife began to be head of her own house. Other wives, married with cattle from the herd which had been built up for her, and kraaled with those belonging to the Queen Mother, were attached to her house, and their huts were built near her own. She was the mother, actual or potential, of the future Paramount. If she failed to have a male child, or if her sons died, a male child would be taken from another wife's hut and brought up in her hut and would be known as the child of her house. Since she was the mother of the heir she had a special relationship to the *induna* appointed to look after her house. It was the house of the Paramount elect and also she would probably, when the Queen Mother died, succeed to the ownership of the *indlunkulu* hut. Her *induna* would then become one of the most important men in the village as he would receive all guests and strangers.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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644 guardianship of his father's spirit, or she could take over the *inlumbulu* while a co-widow of the Queen Mother inherited the guardianship of the spirit in her own hut. The second alternative was the one followed in all the instances remembered by informants. In both kingdoms the spirits of the main line of the Paramounts were guarded by someone appointed to that task, chosen on the grounds of reputation and reliability. There was yet another variant in the central kingdom, where, as we have seen, it was Mangu, the daughter of Mpeta, who succeeded to her mother's guardianship of his spirit. The one principle which emerged from a number of cases cited in both kingdoms, was that occupancy of the *inlumbulu* and guardianship of a spirit might be undertaken by the same person, but generally it did not work out that way.

The Royal Sister, a title equivalent to the English Princess Royal, was the older full sister of the Paramount by the same mother, or his older sister by his father's big wife if she had borne no son. She was always referred to as 'the one who would have been chief if she had been a man'. She stood in a special relationship to the reigning Paramount
[601] and to the Paramount-elect. She was in constant touch with the Paramount's children who used the name *dadabazi* (female father) when addressing her or referring to her. Dr. Kuper [1] reported that the Royal Sister among the Swazi was addressed by the same term, and that she came next in rank to the big wife and the leading wives. My informants and my own observations in both Ngoni kingdoms put the Royal Sister next to the big wife and before the other wives. She visited the royal village at frequent intervals to see her brother and his children, and was consulted about their affairs. She took a leading part in the puberty ritual for the daughters of her brother and was prominent at *Ipulo* and other dances, and at mourning ceremonies. She was married with an exchange of cattle to a man of a leading Swazi or trans-Zambezi clan, and during his lifetime lived in his village, visiting the royal village often.

[605] 644 631 The position of the royal women in the Ngoni kingdoms has been discussed in terms of the sister, mother and big wife of the Paramount. The same relationships were found in the families of the chiefs and headmen. There the equivalent of the Royal Sister was the older full sister by the same mother of the chief or headman, and his own big wife and his father's big wife played similar roles, within their own spheres, to those played in the Paramount's village by the Queen Mother and his big wife.

Five texts follow which illustrate the life and activities of leading women who filled roles equivalent to those of Royal Sister, big wife and Queen Mother. One of the texts is by a Royal Sister—Sandu Mangu, who was the sister of Paramount Chief in the central kingdom. Margaret Jere was the older full sister of the heir to the chieftainship of

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 50.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Chief Mtwalo II in the northern kingdom. Two texts are by former big wives of leading men. Nyhlanga was the former big wife of a grandson of Zwangendaba, a member of the royal clan but not a chief, though he owned many villages. Nalchambu was the former big wife of the head of the Nzunga clan in the central kingdom. The last text by Cibambo gives details of the clothes worn by royal women and leading women in pre-European days, some of which were still in use in the 1930's.

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Life of the Royal Women
by Mangu Masuku

daughter of Mjuza, former Paramount of the central kingdom

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❦ Formerly I was just staying for I did not work. I had many slaves and their work was especially to thread beads. Up to today I have not worked except to cook. Our hair we anointed with the fat of cows and of milk. Our food was milk and we drank it in a wooden cup. We were getting cloth when they sold slaves to the Arabs. For honouring each other, the big men were telling the people: 'You should honour the big people that the country may be rich. Only the big women were dancing *ngoma*, *umtshado* and *lipalo*. If a man married the child of a chief, he gave many cattle, and the poor man could not marry the child of a chief.

When Nalhlangani was alive she was a well-known chief and was greatly honoured. When seeking a case, they called her that she might judge. When people went to war and captured slaves and cattle they were giving them to her, and she divided them. For thanking her they said: '*Zulubwe Mbai*.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Margaret Jere

granddaughter of Mtwalo I, daughter of Johanna Jere in the northern kingdom

❦ When I was a child I was not allowed to go out quickly in the sun, and when travelling I had to sit in the house. I was very light coloured. The *ndumi* (young girl) took me very mother, Ulwandani Naima, to be suckled at special times. I slept in the house of Magdaline Moyo, my grandmother, who was the widow of Chief Mtwalo. The *inkondwani* (attendant) also slept there. My grandmothe and others, the *nsunsu* (senior women), were telling me how to behave. A special *inkondwani* living in Magdaline's house was told by my grandmothe to speak specially to me when I had reached puberty. This *inkondwani* told speak to me about anything. When nearing marriage a woman was chosen, Hlamenya Naima, and sent to reveal to me how I was to live in my married state. The sisters of my father, Tizaiwe and Sayoya Jere, also *nsunsu* spoke to me at the time of my marriage. Hlamenya Naima was sent by my grandmother to examine me (for virginity) before marriage. I was allowed to play with those children who lived in the same section of the village and who were known to my mother and grandmother. The *inkondwani* did all the work but sometimes I used to pound and fetch water, it not too hard and just for pleasure.

When strangers came, I saw and saluted them and then went out of

159 the house. If my father came to my mother's house, I would go out, but
565 if he sent for me I would return and he would talk to me and play with
631 me. We learned how to behave well, and were rebuked if we behaved
644 badly. My father would beat a child for not behaving well. My father did not allow his children to be spoiled by being treated differently from others. He said: 'They are all my children.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Mdinguse Nsungu

widow of Chinombo Jere, grandson of Zwangendaba in the northern kingdom

565 ¶ The *amakosikazi* were not working. During the day they kept dressing
631 their hair, both the young women and the old. The old women no longer
644 kept their *isikatu*, or high chignon, but wore the *umsoro*, or long curls.
[300] For the *umsoro* the hair was cut short and not allowed to grow very long. Instead of dressing it upwards they took a blade of grass and kept it pressed down after oil and scent were applied. Their other work was to go to the river and wash.

They also drank beer and some gruel, and afterwards danced *ngoma* in the house where beer was brewed. The men and chief also joined in the *ngoma* and the women were responding to the singing. They began to drink in the morning until the afternoon, but not in the evening. Other people went on drinking until evening, and even some of the *amakosikazi* who were *isidli* (gluttonous) but the rest were sleeping or resting.

When drinking in the house the chief always sat by the right-hand doorpost, and the big *inkosikazi* by the left-hand post. They sat near the door to draw breath easily because there were many people inside. The beer-pot being set halfway between the door and the hearth-stones in the centre, a man was chosen to pour the beer in the gourds for drinking. He was *umtshi wamowa*, the beer pourer, and was often the village *induna* or one who was favoured by the chief. When the gourds were full he told the chief, and the chief told him to distribute them. Sometimes there were four or even six for the different classes in the house. They sat in order, the *inkosi* with the *izinduna* and *amindole*, and the *inkosikazi* with the other wives of the chief and the wives of the *izinduna* and *amindole*. The chief and the *inkosikazi* kept on inviting the common people to come and drink.
[572] Each invited people thanked the person at the beginning and at the end, others joining him. The *inkosikazi* or other wives of the chief were thanked 'Nkosi'.

The *amakosikazi* never worked at all, but the lesser wives worked, and pounded grain and fetched firewood. These were the ones who had not yet got attendants in their houses. All the chief *amakosikazi* had attendants who performed all the work of the house. The *amakosikazi* often sat in the *ozwendab* or outside under the platform of branches supported by posts.
[573] There they ate their food which was *ilombwa* and *umsuqui*, thick gruel of millet; *izinkwa ze ngwani*, bulrush millet ground to a paste; or *isindwa*, whole grains of maize boiled and pounded. The meat was eaten as a feast on the *ngwakwi*, the smoothed place in front of the house, and all the chief's wives joined in. A mat was spread for the big *amakosikazi* where they sat

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingwendu*, or big platter of the *inkosikazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *ukuzwi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inkosikazi* called for an *ingwendu* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njokomulo Ngungu I in the central kingdom

¶ Old Njokomulo had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361 351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked meiwa and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [578]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many clothes to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those clothes were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these clothes and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njokomulo excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njokomulo was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, these women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine clothes, but they cannot dance with poor clothes, no. So when people dance they just look on. These women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yonaya Chimulo

565 302 [179]

¶ Today Ngoni women are not easily recognized because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *ishlolo*. The oil was *ipuhlo*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [301]

565 302 [301] thorn stuck at the top of the *inkhata*, and round it they put narrow bands of beads (*intsweya* and *isiwenye*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion claws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*amasongo*) which they got from the Arabs, or *isipete*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft dressed leather (*isikhuba*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped well over. A long piece of soft leather (*isgayi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *isgayi* were fastened small bells made of brass (*ugomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inkosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ugomo* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

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565 644 The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their households and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indlunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *indoda*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

357 565 644 In addition to the *indoda* in charge of the big house, the royal women and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *abamasoka* were surrounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*mizithe*), girl companions (*indlondlo*), nurse girls (*ukwi*) and older women attendants (*ugogo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1950's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

292 644 The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

clan and for women of leading Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans. Two of the texts emphasized the distinction conferred on the royal women by special clothing. Cibambo described the use of well-dressed soft skins and of beads and wire, the beads brought with them from the south, the brass wire obtained from the Arabs. In NaNdumbu's text she mentioned cloth bought from the stores. After the Ngoni women gave up wearing soft leather for skirts and the long piece of leather draped from the left shoulder, they used strong cotton cloth of dark blue or black, originally brought by the Arabs and later stocked by the stores. They tied the main cloth under their arms in a draped knot over the breast and on ceremonial occasions they added another fastened on the left shoulder like a plaid. A woman who had been a young girl in the village of Paramount Cikuni, but was not of a leading clan, said that in this village there was a great difference between the royal women and the rest: 'Only the daughters of Cikuni and his big wives could wear dark cloth as the Ngoni do. The others would have been killed if they tried to look like the big women'.

292 644 [339] [565 681]

The royal women and the big wives and widows of chiefs and headmen were treated by all with whom they came in contact with the distinction and respect due to their prestige. They were addressed and thanked by the term *Nkosi*, with the clan name and the honorific prefix added, except where, as in the case of Bambo Mzuga, a title had been conferred. She was thanked '*Nkosi Bambo*'.[1] *Ukuhlonipa*, and its Nyanja equivalent *kulemekeza*, meaning to honour and to behave in a respectful manner towards senior people and those of superior rank, was an expression constantly used by the Ngoni and by the other peoples in the Ngoni kingdoms. The forms of showing respect were partly verbal; partly in the position adopted, with the eyes cast down and a slight curtsey by the women when facing someone; partly in the tone of voice when speaking; and partly in the deliberate and controlled behaviour noticed by several early travellers in Nyasaland. A particular verbal form of respect practised by the royal women was the use of the *Ahlonipa* vocabulary. I found this practice surviving only in the Emtwenni area in northern Ngoniland where the Ngoni language was still spoken, but informants said that it had been common to all married women of trans-Zambezi clans in the northern kingdom when they had spoken Ngoni among themselves. The *Ahlonipa* vocabulary consisted of the substitution of special words, known only to the women, in order to avoid using a word in which the main syllable of a man's name occurred—a man with whom they were connected by marriage or by affinal relationship.[2] Thus Zwangendaba's wives and widows could

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[1] *Bambo* (father) was a name of respect used for important senior men.
[2] *Ahlonipa* as a form of special vocabulary was widely practised among the Ngoni groups in South Africa. Hunter, A. W. 'Social Organization', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, pp. 74, 75.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

never use any word in which *indaba* (meeting or affair) occurred. They substituted *inceye* for *indaba* and spoke of him as Zwangumcayo. The women of the Ngumbezulu clan could never use the word *ilanga* (sun) for which they substituted *ijiba*, since Langa was the name of the father of Zwide who had married into the Ngumbezulu clan.

Though the particular verbal form of *hlonipa* which the Ngoni royal women brought from the south survived only in one area of northern Ngoniland, the concept inherent in it and the attitudes of honour and respect which it implied were expressed in the use of *Nkosi* in thanking and in the other non-verbal forms already mentioned. Mangu, the Royal Sister of Chiwi, was as we have seen, thanked '*Nkosi Bambo*' but also with the formula '*Zikosi nomzwe wenkosi*' (thanks, child of the Paramount). Among the central Ngoni there were two expressions of thanks which were probably a relic of *hlonipa* vocabulary since they were used only by the leading women. The customary form of thanking, and of taking leave after a conversation or after getting a reply to a question, was '*Zikosi*' with the clan name and honorific prefix added. The royal women in this area, when making the response to this form of thanking, always replied '*Zaikosi*' with the clan name, and they thanked each other by '*Zimata*' with the clan name instead of '*Zikosi*'. When I observed this and used it myself, they nudged each other and said 'She also is one of us.'

We have discussed so far the outward signs of respect shown to the royal women, and the visible marks of distinction in their clothes and the number of their attendants. We shall now examine the way in which the authority of the royal women was exercised. This will give some indication of their relationship to the political organization of the kingdoms, in so far as they had certain responsibilities to the people as a whole, and to their husbands and sons within the royal village where they lived. At the royal village the Queen Mother and her co-widows shared with the wives of the two leading houses to the right and left of the *indlunkulu*, the responsibility for preparing and serving food and beer for the Paramount and those whom he called to eat with him. The text by Nyathwange[1] describes the etiquette of beer drinking in one of the chiefdoms in the northern kingdom, of sending food to the chief when he ate in the cattle kraal, and of assembling the wives in order of precedence according to their houses to take their food. The formality of this etiquette was characteristic of Ngoni eating and drinking, and it was maintained by the organization and forethought of the royal women, the big wives and mothers of the Paramount, who planned the work of their own households and supervised that of the lesser wives who were attached to the two main houses.

[1] The procedure described in the text applied equally to the Paramount's village and to the villages of ruling chiefs. The Ngoni to this day used the term 'inkosi' for chief as well as for Paramount.

all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *ziini zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the headmen of the villages that they should not announce their people to death because they covered their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *induna* and the *amadode* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgments given. They criticized each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *lomwi* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organizing his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

Ngoni office-holders

In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

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CHAPTER I

NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF review was given in Chapter III of Part I of the main elements of Ngoni culture, analysed into 'patterns' covering kinship, village layout, ritual, ceremonial, and language. In this section we shall be considering the principal social institutions embodying Ngoni culture: their clans, houses, families and age sets. We shall find evidence in the two kingdoms of an extensive common element in the social organization which the Ngoni brought with them from the south. Some important divergences will be evident also, such as the variations in virilocal residence found in the central kingdom, and the less widespread practice there of *lobolo* marriage. Those elements which were common to Ngoni social organization in both kingdoms were often those which distinguished Ngoni culture from that of the neighbouring peoples. Patrilineal descent, the house system, the ranking of clans, the *lumwi* organization of boys' life and activities—these were all distinctively Ngoni, practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, and sometimes adopted by individuals and families of other clans who had been associated with the Ngoni over long periods. Nevertheless, in many of the villages of the central kingdom there were clearly two cultures existing side by side: the Ngoni culture being that of an aristocratic minority and the local culture that of the majority, who in the kingdom were equally subjects of the Paramount but in their villages possessed inferior social status.

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Influences were to be seen, even in the more conservative and more isolated northern kingdom, that modern influences were affecting Ngoni social institutions. We have already noticed some of the effects of the cessation of warfare on a social system founded on military traditions. The exodus of young men from Ngoni villages to seek work elsewhere was very extensive, especially in the northern kingdom, where the level of education was higher but employment was not available, and this had repercussions on the age of marriage, the distribution of wealth, and the undertaking of family responsibilities, including the care of the old people. The gradual decline in polygyny, largely but not entirely due to the work of missions, was beginning to have its effects on the working of the house system and on the interrelations of the generations within the family group.

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In the 1950's many of these modern changes were appearing but the traditional institutions were still functioning, and the Ngoni leaders themselves were clear about those forms and activities which were distinctively their own.

Households[1]

	Total	*Leading clan*
Northern Ngoniland		
Ewenini	93	15
Endindeni	15	10
Ehlangeni	37	21
Central Ngoniland		
Cinkwita	39	18
Mangwe	60	26
Mzokhaba	110	37

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head.

Ewenini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Ewenini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *kwangula* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same lineage as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother.

Endindeni was a *gqo* village owned by Zibokwe Mdwedwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gqo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ukuli* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibokwe's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more houses.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and the high ranking of the Nsunga clan accounted for the number of *lobolo* marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

An individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families in the area of a sub-chiefdom owning a head village, and the small Ngoni family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received 'honour' (*ulemu*). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side, responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and the *kraal*. Quarrels had to be compound, if possible before they came to court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be expected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the northern and Mangwaro in the central kingdom.

In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose husbands were away at work. The dislocation caused to the village economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and heads of a *kraal*, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include the needs of those 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradition emphasized this type of help.

In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and relationships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty ceremonies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

some for themselves as their perquisite. They then drove the cattle to pasture, and this might be some distance away when grass was scarce in the dry season. They sometimes drove the cattle back near the village to rest at noon under the shade trees, but if the pasture was far away the cattle rested there and went on feeding later. They were brought back to the kraal in the late afternoon and counted by one of the senior men. 233 857 561

The herd-boys taught each other to fight with sticks, to wrestle, to catch rats and small birds, to use the knobkerry, catapults, and bows and arrows. Sometimes in the afternoon they went to other villages and challenged another herd to a fight between bulls.[1] During the long day's herding, the boys used to drink milk, make *amasi* (milk curds) in a gourd and eat it, bake birds in clay and roast ears of maize taken from their mothers' grain stores. Precedence among the herd-boys depended first on age and only secondly on the rank and position of the families they belonged to. There was an easily recognizable air of authority and almost of arrogance among the older boys responsible for their fathers' and uncles' cattle. They superintended the process of letting out the cattle, milking them, driving them to pasture and the return to the kraal in the evening. Mounted on donkeys, wearing large straw hats made by themselves, the senior boys acted like ranch owners bossing up inefficient work hands. [868] [554] [492]

This period of living in the *lamwi* was, as we have seen, shared by boys of a wide age group. In a large village where there were two or three or four *lamwi*, there was often one in each section, which generally meant that the boys belonging to one *kanja* or section shared one *lamwi*. This had the effect of dividing them up to some extent on a basis of family and rank, but in a *lamwi* serving a whole village all the boys went in together whatever families they came from. There was no respecting of clan status in the *lamwi* and young boys of high-ranking families had to wait on and obey older boys of lower rank. *Lamwi* life was therefore a democratising influence among the boys of the village, and no boys were exempt from herding cattle because they belonged to a house which owned cattle. Even if some went to school and others did not, the school-boys had to take their share of herding in the holidays. Ngoni chiefs and leading men laid great emphasis on keeping the boys busy and making them carry out the work allotted to them. The older boys began to listen in at court cases and to discuss them among themselves. During the wet season from time to time they formed hoeing parties for clearing new ground and for the periodical weeding of gardens. They seldom did any continuous cultivation, as the women and the older men did, and a boy who liked to go off and hoe by himself was pointed out as one with rather peculiar tastes. 561 866 [565] [867]

During this period of *lamwi* life, when in addition to herding the

[1] For the relation between the training of herd-boys and preparation for war, see Part II, Chap. I, p. 90.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

different pattern. They also went to sleep with a grandmother or some other older member of the family when they were old enough to be excluded from their mother's hut at night, and they shared with their small brothers the grandmother's care and her story-telling round the fire in the evenings. During the day the girls continued as part of their mother's household group, eating with her and the younger children. As little girls they were taught to sit down carefully and to smooth down the cloth which they wore round their waists. They were trained to speak correctly and to know the right forms of address, to greet strangers politely, to avoid touching their father's mats or bed, to eat tidily and with restraint. The emphasis was on exclusiveness for these high-born Ngoni girls, lest, as a result of mixing too freely with everyone, they should forget the teaching given and the behaviour which was expected of them. In contrast to their brothers' rigorous training in the *lamesi*, Ngoni girls, as they showed signs of approaching puberty, were guarded and looked after and instructed further in correct behaviour.

When a girl found that she was menstruating for the first time, she told one of her age mates and sent her to tell her *gogo*.[1] The *gogo* told her to stay in the hut during the period and showed her how to wear a cloth between her legs, which she had henceforth to wear always whether menstruating or not. She was told to sleep from now on in a different part of the hut from the smaller children and never to bathe with younger girls. At the end of her first period the girl was escorted to the women's bathing-place by her father's sisters and other female members of her father's family. She was made to wash in the stream and squat in the cold water while doing so. I saw more than one child trying to control her shivering while her relatives watched to see if she would be strong and brave, or weak and cowardly. When she was in the water she was made to face south-east—the quarter which the Ngoni called *kwathu* (our home). After this ceremony the girl's father and mother were informed, and her father informed the head of his *banja* and the head of the village. The news was greeted with rejoicing and made generally public.

From about the age of ten or eleven, the Ngoni girl belonged to an age set distinguished by a separate name. She was no longer included in the group of children, as were her brothers of the same age, but was marked out by belonging to the age set called *isikahazana* or *nabuthu*. After her first menstruation she belonged to the age set called *isintombi* or *anamwali*. From this stage, Ngoni girls were under the close supervision of the older women. The association of a *gogo* or older woman with each house in a Ngoni village meant that the girls of the house were under her special care, particularly after they had passed puberty. There

[1] *gogo* in this context is used for grandmother or for the elderly woman to whose care the girl was assigned.

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565 were clearly defined aims in this care of girls after puberty, including
836 instruction in personal hygiene and in pre-marital sexual relations. A
864 girl's father's sisters and her own mother wanted to be able to say, when
838 marriage negotiations began: *Ngombe zake zidzala*, 'her cattle are full', which was the comment made when girls were examined periodically to see if they were still virgin. To achieve this they constantly said to her: '*Modzisunge, modzilolere*', 'take care of yourself, control yourself'; and the *gogo* explained to the girl how she could protect herself. In one area where I lived, the chief's daughter was examined every week, with her *ziidzadzadzi* or companions, and the girls who helped in the big house were examined every month. The strict behaviour required of Ngoni girls of good family was expected also of those of the same age who were members of the same household, either appointed to be with them as companions or as servants in the big house.

868 Looking forward to marriage involved not only preservation of her
881 virginity. An Ngoni girl going to a strange village had to know how to
565 perform women's work in the home, how to do it herself as well as how to direct others, and she had to be carefully trained in that meticulous and exclusive social behaviour required of Ngoni women of good family. She might be going to marry a man who intended to 'marry up', in which case she might be thought in one sense to be 'marrying below her station'. Yet her personal position as a member of her father's clan and family could not be altered by her marriage, and she was well aware that she was conferring something on the man and on the family she married into.

While the boys were learning their roles in later life in the democratic
[562] atmosphere of the *lawwi* and of the boys' pursuits in the village, the girls in the later stage of their training after puberty were treated more individually, and were not left to find their level in a group of their age mates. The adult women took an active part in telling them how to behave, how to dress and how to cook. The girls of high-ranking families sometimes pounded maize with their age mates, singing as they did so, but more for fun than because their food depended on it. They learned to dress their hair and put on clothes, and to walk and dance in company with other girls, but always with the critical eye of their *gogo* upon them. Their lower-ranking companions could make mistakes and be careless, and walk and dance in an exaggerated fashion. Ngoni girls might never pass certain bounds of decorum, and the standard expected of them was high and exacting. I have heard *manina* of leading clans scold young girls many times for careless behaviour and badly done work.

562 In this training, as throughout that of the boys, there was a deliberate
565 preparation for leadership. A girl's character and ability were being
867 watched and, while an awareness of her personal dignity and position was being fostered, it was accompanied by requirements of obedience

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show submissiveness to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss.

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of license or strictly in private.

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 F36 565 emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

[539] Many of the seemingly songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

952 304 The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and scattered, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambezi class, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

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541 957 After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance ngoma in a neighbouring village.

857 535 In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the ngoma dance played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

CHAPTER I

THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS AND THE ARISTOCRATIC TRADITION

This section is not an account of Ngoni religion. It would require a study in itself to examine their beliefs about supernatural beings, their ideas on cosmogony, their concepts of the causes of disease and sickness, their approach to and practice of forms of magic, and their attitude to witchcraft. Living in Ngoni villages, listening to individuals of different ages discussing prosperity and disaster, the seen and the unseen, the known and the feared, it was clear that it would be difficult to isolate a comprehensive system of beliefs and say that these were distinctively Ngoni beliefs concerning religion and magic and witchcraft. The observer was always aware of the intermingling of ideas and practices from the many Nyasaland tribal peoples who lived side by side and were in constant contact with one another in all those spheres of thought and action which demanded explanation and some remedial or therapeutic treatment. Among the Nyasaland tribes in the 1930's the influence of sixty years of Christian teaching by the missions played an important part, since the missions had introduced western medicine and education as well as a new religion and ethic, and so had influenced both thinking and action among their converts and their families.

In this complex situation it was virtually impossible to say: this is the Ngoni religion, this is the Tumbuka cosmogony, this is Ntumbu magic. It was nevertheless clear that there was an Ngoni cult of their ancestral spirits, which was not shared, in the form in which they practised it, by any of the neighbouring peoples, and the Ngoni had their own selective methods of relating it to Christian beliefs and practices. One reason why the Ngoni ancestor cult could be singled out as peculiar to them was its foundation in their aristocratic tradition. As long as the Ngoni political and social structure and organization survived, including the reciprocal roles of leading men and important women, the concept of houses with their ownership of cattle, and the role of the *gupa* house in maintaining tradition and carrying out ritual, the performance of the cult of ancestral spirits was assured. The eminent ancestors whose spirits were guarded in a village and who were known and remembered were addressed in times of trouble, and meat was offered to them as a form of sacrifice from the herd of cattle associated with the house to which they had belonged. This section will deal with the cult of ancestral spirits of the Swazi and trans-Zambezi class who formed the political and social aristocracy. Thus, in the form described here, the cult is

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565 769 771 exclusively related to the aristocratic tradition, and no account will be given or analysis made of ancestor cults practised by those groups in the two Ngoni kingdoms who were not of the leading clans. In the ancestor cult, as it will be described here, the emphasis was always on known and named spirits of the dead, associated with the village where the ritual was performed. In the approach to these known and named spirits—an approach which I have called a cult—there were three essential components: the diviner, the ritual address and the cattle. The diviner's role we shall discuss in Chapter III and the ritual forms of addressing the ancestors in Chapter IV. The Ngoni believed they could not approach their ancestral spirits except through their cattle, which had first to [569] show that the spirits agreed to prayers being made, and the sign was that the beast urinated. The sacrifice of a beast was an integral part of the rite, which was concluded by the supplicants eating the meat together. *At no point in their common life did the Ngoni more clearly demonstrate their dependence on their cattle than in the ritual of addressing their ancestral spirits. For this reason, in Chapter II we shall review the place of cattle in Ngoni life and relate it to their role in the ancestor cult.*

Ancestral spirits of the Ngoni Paramounts.

643 769 776 The reigning Paramount and his predecessors in that office held an unchallenged supremacy in the hierarchy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The Ngoni believed that the line of dead Paramounts similarly led the hierarchy of the ancestral spirits, and that the dead Paramounts had power to help the Ngoni nation in time of need. It was taken for granted that when Paramounts died they would continue to be powerful and held in great respect, and that their position in the spirit world would enable them to influence UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit. This Great Spirit was believed to be the creator of all things and the ultimate source of power, particularly of sending rain, success in war, and deliverance from pestilence; and he was in general regarded as the giver of health and strength to mankind. The Ngoni held that those ancestors who were nearest to the living in time, whose names they knew, possessed less power than the remote ancestors whose names had been forgotten. On the same principle UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit, the originator of all creation, possessed more power than any other being, but, since he was so far removed in time from the living, no one could know his praise-names or his genealogy, and therefore he could not be addressed directly. In the same way the remotest ancestors of the Paramount could not be addressed directly because their praise-names were unknown to living men. Only those direct ancestors of the Paramount, whose names and genealogy and praise-names were known, could be addressed correctly and they could be counted on to use their influence with remoter and more powerful ancestral spirits and with the Great Spirit himself.

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121 in 1958.[1] The sociological and ritual significance of these factors will be
233 the chief emphasis here, with reference to earlier chapters in this book on Ngoni culture and on the structure of Ngoni society.

233 In the sociological significance of cattle-ownership there are certain
234 outstanding points to be emphasized, which will be indicated here and
235 developed further in the analysis which follows. One is the connexion between cattle-ownership and status, illustrated by the dominance of the Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans in village life, since their possession of cattle was related to the kraal and to the siting of huts and to their house organization. The cattle horns on the roof of the *indlunkulu* were no trivial ornament. They were a proud association of cattle-ownership attached to the residences of the leading wives, with all the implications of 'house herds' of cattle and of *lobola* given and received. Closely related to cattle-ownership and status was the power conferred by the possession of herds. The status of leading families was enhanced by the ability to give feasts, to give *lobola* for their senior wives, to make sacrifices to the ancestors and, as we saw at the end of the last chapter, to realize cash by the sale of beasts belonging to the herd. Cattle-owners did at times have to decide whether to maintain and augment their herds and thereby be known as wealthy cattle-owning families, or to sell cattle in order to command labour to build a modern brick house, or to buy fine clothes for their wives and display their wealth in another form.

182 In the organization of Ngoni society, cattle were an important factor
233 in uniting groups of persons. We have seen how the house, as a group
621 of men and women, and its variant, the central Ngoni form of *kanja*, had common possession of a herd of cattle which formed a source of wealth for all members of the house. Within the house the senior men were bound together by the responsibilities attached to the ownership and care of a herd. Within the village the senior men of a house or *kanja* united in the upkeep of the kraal, the supervision of the herd-boys, the tending of sick cattle, and in meeting or resisting the Government's demands for culling or dipping stock. Where cattle were boarded out in another village, ties of association in the care of the beasts and in accountability for them bound together the cattle-owners or cattle-keepers of more than one village. A stage in the adjustment of a young wife to a strange village was reached when she added to the herd of the house she had married into the gift cattle given her by her father and so partly compensated for those which had been given to him by her husband's family. A new wife's standing in a village was thus advanced through any cattle which flowed in the opposite direction from those of the *lobola* cattle. Finally, and this is the main theme of this chapter, cattle were an essential link between the living and the dead.

[1] Read, M. *Native Standards of Living and African Culture Change*. Memorandum XVI of International African Institute, 1938.

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The relation of cattle-ownership to social integration, which was so marked a feature of Ngoni society, was limited to the Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans. There was evidence that the acquisition of herds by former captives and by the local Cewa and other tribes created conflicts within the society. The following statement was made by an Ntumbu village headman, commenting on several court cases relating to cattle-ownership. The reference in the last sentence is to the Ngoni practice in the ownership of cattle.

« Sometimes people say 'If your father was caught and was the slave of a certain person, and also if your mother was caught and was a slave of another man, then if you buy cattle and put them in the kraal of your father, those who caught your father say "These cattle are mine (or ours)." And those who caught your mother say "These cattle are ours." ' They all say so because it was they who caught your ancestors. So those cattle do not recognize their real owner. And sometimes those cattle do not bear well, and sometimes they just die.

Then perhaps you die and leave your cattle, and those people are quarrelling to find out who is the owner of those cattle, since there are three people who want those same cattle: your father, the one who caught your father, and the one who caught your mother.

And it is really best if there are many masters that you, a child, should not buy cattle, but just leave off because they are a source of trouble. But one who is a free man without any masters, he ought to buy cattle because there will be no trouble for him.

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Among the local Cewa tribes, when a man wanted to start a herd and had money to buy cattle, he was expected to give the money to his *malume* (mother's brother) who then bought the cattle and took charge of them and regarded them as his.[1] This assertion of ownership of cattle bought with another man's money was part of the services to which the mother's brother was entitled from his sister's children, in return for services which he had performed or would perform for them. If these relationships between a man and his *malume* were not working smoothly and the *malume* was not helping his nephew, there was a tendency for the man to turn to his own father and give him the money, and vest the ownership of the cattle in him, often because the father had paid the school fees or a court fine for his son. When the *malume* realized that his position had been usurped and that his chance of owning cattle had gone, his dislike of the man's father and his family showed itself in jealousy and quarrels between the two individuals and friction between the families. The Cewa matrilineal *mbumba* as a cattle-owning group under a senior man had not the continuity of the Ngoni house, for an *mbumba* was said to be 'finished' when a woman and all

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[1] The Cewa believed that if cattle were to survive and increase, they had to be owned and cared for by senior men. On the highlands round Dedza the Cewa had had cattle before the Ngoni came.

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death, or he can give them to anyone he likes during his lifetime. Hence individual acquisition in the English sense involves the legal right of individual disposal; the individual possession of profits from such disposal; and the individual responsibility for complying with any regulations concerning cattle, such as inoculation, slaughter for foot-and-mouth disease, and tasting of milk.

In Ngoni usage the concept of ownership involved the acquisition and disposal of, and the responsibility for, cattle, but behind this apparent similarity of terms lay a wide difference in interpretation. Cattle could be acquired by inheritance, by natural increase, by *lobola*, as payment in a court case, as a gift, or by purchase. Formerly cattle could be acquired in warfare and raiding, but never by purchase. With this exception of buying cattle for cash, the methods of acquiring cattle had not altered since the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland. In pre-European days in the Ngoni kingdoms only the Paramount, the subordinate chiefs, the *ohosomas* and the big *indunas* possessed cattle. Having a herd marked the owner as a leading member of a leading clan, or as a famous warrior of a lesser clan whose distinguished war service had been rewarded by the Paramount giving him cattle, or allowing him to keep some of those he had taken from the enemy. New herds were formed when a Paramount or a chief moved out of his father's village and set up his own *hamgulo* village, taking with him one or more of his mothers who, together with his big wife, set up houses in the new village, and those houses were allotted cattle from the former undivided herd. Another way in which a herd was divided was when a big *induna* in charge of the house of a leading wife of a Paramount or a chief built a kraal for the cattle of that house near his own huts, and added to that herd any cattle which he acquired. Large Ngoni villages in pre-European days usually had one or more kraals on the edge of the village, as well as the big central one. When the large villages broke up and the *induna* moved off to found his own village, he still took care of the cattle of that house. If the house was one where an ancestral spirit was guarded, a successor was always appointed to live in the hut and guard the spirit. Hence the relationship of the house, its spirit guardian, its cattle and the *induna* in charge continued, though the personalities changed through death and for other reasons. This explained how in the 1930's cattle were found in one kraal which were said to belong to a house or a woman guardian of a spirit miles away in another village. Sometimes they were described as the cattle of a man long dead.

It is clear, therefore, that the Ngoni methods of acquiring cattle and building up herds did not result in a concept of individual ownership. Cattle were not willed from father to son, but the son of a Paramount or a chief, when he made his new *hamgulo* village, had the right to receive and to take with him the cattle of his mother's house; and the head of the *gugo* village who stayed behind also received and looked after the

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178 The pressure on the Ngoni to possess ready cash was directly related to their prestige in the villages and kingdoms, and to the status
231 of the Swazi and trans-Zambezi class. Money was needed for good
437 buildings and good clothing, two of the modern signs of status which
594 the Ngoni could not ignore. Faced with this situation, and unwilling, [illegible] except among the urban Ngoni, to invest savings in banks,[1] they manipulated their cattle tradition to suit the new situation in several ways. In place of the frequent slaughter for food, there were occasional sales for cash. Money earned in wages was invested in cattle. The drive therefore was all the time to increase the herds, in order to be able to convert them into cash when the need arose.

Values and attitudes in cattle-ownership

119 *Any attempt to probe below the surface of current practices in acquiring, caring for and using cattle should be preceded by an extensive*
228 *survey of cattle-keeping, including the full implications of their place*
555 *in the economy of Ngoni village and family life. Since a complete survey is not possible here, the assessment of the values inherent in the ownership of cattle and the resultant attitudes towards their acquisition and use is related in this chapter to the relationships between the living Ngoni and their ancestors. These values were primarily those of the senior men and women of Swazi and trans-Zambezi class, and hence those of the aristocracy. They were reflected in the attitudes of groups who owned cattle in the villages. Further analysis would show variations in the attitudes of individual members of those groups who possessed cattle, and would also show an approximation to the Ngoni attitudes by members of other groups, for example, village headmen of Ntumba class whose fathers had journeyed and fought with the Ngoni in the past. The spread of cattle-keeping beyond the former exclusive monopoly of the leading class and of leading men in them resulted in a number of different attitudes towards the acquisition and use of cattle. Some of these variations were suggested earlier in this chapter in the brief comparisons of Cewa and Ngoni ownership of cattle.*

231 The primary value of cattle to the Ngoni was the security they repre-
556 sented. This security lay in assurance of social position, in being able to meet penalties imposed by the courts, in the potential command of labour, in the enjoyment of much prized food, in the performance of ritual for the dead and in sacrifices to the ancestors. The converse of this security was the fear of losing cattle, and this was primarily a group attitude rather than an individual one. A man living in a town who had sent money to his father to buy cattle, and who heard that they had died, very often shrugged his shoulders when he heard of the loss and

[1] The Ngoni in Blantyre put about half of their savings into banks and sent the rest to their home villages to buy cattle.

about a sick relative. He asked for a preliminary payment in cash from 756
me before he would say anything in front of me, having already received 787
the customary present of fowls from the sick man's relatives. There was
an atmosphere of pit pantomime, part reluctant performance in front
of a stranger whose presence seemed to trouble him more than it did his
clients. He wore python-skin cap with beads dangling from it, and [293]
carried the tail of a black cow bound with lead and a small skin bag with
the bone in it. At first he sat holding the tail in his hands and smiling it
occasionally. Then suddenly shook the bone out of the bag—six large
bones called *dukwanni* about twenty small round nuts called *mapi*. He
put snuff on the tip of each bone, sprinkled snuff on the nuts, picked
the nuts up in both hands, shook his hands together and threw the nuts
on the ground. Some fell near the big bones, others rolled between them.
He looked intently at them, then at the group waiting to consult him.
'There is someone who is sick,' he said to them and the group replied
'*Siyavuma*' (we agr). They continued to chant *siyavuma* in a low tone
over and over again with an almost mesmeric effect. He meanwhile went
on to describe the sickness, that it was a pain inside the man (the chant-
ing was loud), that had been on the right side (less response), in the
stomach (less response), on the left side (loud response). At intervals he
waved the tail in the air and knocked the leaded end on the ground to
emphasize the loud response. He did not specify the complaint but
advised the people consulting him to go home and kill a goat as a
sacrifice to their ancestors, and give the sick man some medicines which
he would sell them.

It may have been the mixture of a real consultation with my visit
which produced a slightly mountebank performance, and it may also
have been his combination of the role of diviner with peddling medi-
cines which the people present for the consultation evidently expected
to obtain from him. This aspect of his performance impressed itself on
the Ngoni informant who was with me. He was slightly contemptuous [565]
throughout, even when the songs were being sung and taken down. He
kept on muttering 'This is Nsenga,' and said afterwards as we were
going away that this diviner worked only for ordinary people and their
sickness, as witnessed by his telling them to sacrifice a goat, and that he
would not have been acknowledged by the real Ngoni. He was making [554]
comparisons all the time between the 'people of the head' and the
diviners of this type illustrating the Ngoni esteem for the real dreamers,
and the slight, sometimes great, contempt for those who combined
divining with recommending medicines as remedies.

The contrast between the performance of this diviner and that of the 123
two *inanga* whom I saw at work in the central kingdom was consider- 791
able. My long residence in Mzakhatha and the entrée I had to all that
was taking place in connexion with the sickness of Bambo Mangs no
doubt helped to give confidence to the diviners. The chief and his

in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only because they had been conquered, but because they disliked and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were reinforced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village, or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group, many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages, in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

854 anxious to protect her charge in every way, and with the connivance of the women helpers she made little charms of bits of roots to hang around the baby's neck to make him [951] grow quickly and to ward off sorcery and witchcraft. She [754] threaded pumpkin seeds and tied them around his neck to [856] make his teeth come quickly if they were late in appearing. These charms were generally those used by the local peoples, and Ngoni fathers were contemptuous about their use and efficacy. 'These women are spoiling our children,' they said, and then reassured themselves by remembering that a boy would be free from such women's spoiling once he went into the boys' dormitory.

Variants on the Ngoni pattern

183 This traditional pattern of authority and behaviour in respect of birth, infant care and weaning was essentially that of the [845] true Ngoni, that relatively small aristocratic group who never forgot their superior social status and its foundation in their ancestry. This first stage in the socialization of a child, from 861 birth to weaning, brought out clearly two fundamental 596 features of Ngoni social organization. One was the role played by the senior women who had themselves in their childhood been brought up on strict Ngoni lines. The father of the new baby accepted the role played by his own mother in controlling, and if necessary coercing, his young wife. Though, as we shall see later, every Ngoni boy and young man had a period of virtually complete escape from feminine control, once a man married and his young wife was established within the social group of his mother's house, he acknowledged his mother's authority over her, and particularly over the birth and care of his child. The mother-son relationship of the young father to his own mother dominated the relationship of the young mother to her child. Young Ngoni fathers never questioned their allegiance to their own mothers, cherishing them as they grew older and supporting them in their exercise of authority. Much as he loved his

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 957
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 642
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 501
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author-
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their [565]
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 855
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

872 go herding. School was sometimes regarded as an easy option where you sat still all day and repeated things after the teacher. This was far from being the case in a village like [876] Eskadhweni where the headmaster was well trained and kept the boys on their toes. In such schools the boys themselves were enthusiastic about learning, and regarded going to school as a dignified and worth-while occupation, and not a childish amusement.

Girls' life in the village

858 When the girls had their second teeth and were acknowledged to have reached the new stage in their development, there was no abrupt transition for them, as for their brothers, from the household circle to the dormitory, or from the women's world to the men's world. They continued as part of the women's world; they changed their occupations and their daily routine on the whole very little; and they went on sleeping in the hut of a widowed aunt or grandmother. All that was said however in the earlier part of the chapter about accountability for their behaviour was as true as for the boys.

The Ngoni girls of leading families formed a distinct group, 561 called in the age-set terms 'children' until they were about [565] eleven and then 'immature girls' until they reached puberty. There was in Ngoni thought and practice a clear division between immature and mature girls, and we shall see what this involved in girls' life in Chapters VI and VII. The age-set terms used to distinguish between children and immature girls did not imply any real differences in ways of living, manners and occupations. The girls between about seven and fourteen were looked on as belonging to a 'girls' circle', and this girls' circle had certain distinctive features.

561 In the first place the tendency of the girls to draw apart 562 from the boys of their own age, already evident before the 535 coming of the second teeth, was now more or less complete 628 with the boys' withdrawal into dormitory life and their preoccupation with herding. Later, about the age of twelve

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

858 upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if
581 the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a
careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended
not only on her own reputation and character, but on the
household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive
561 group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one.
858 The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of
[601] the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to
see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training
557 ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl,
855 to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than
the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter
into all her occupations and amusements. This companion,
chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's house-
hold, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some
extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and
ate in the same household.

In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her
561 circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their compan-
872 ions. There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this
[601] group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who
decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided
that it would also be wise to send their girls to school,
especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and
leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth
of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually
won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the
relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also
from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they
grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The
Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men,
learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daugh-
● [565] ters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily
distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and digni-
fied behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when asked questions. They took their school work seriously in order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be transferred at their marriage would be greater according to whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daughters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. They and their companions, according to their growth and strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water, grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household, where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores. As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time with the young children, or washing themselves and their clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rubbing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classificatory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage. The friend was always from another compound and of a leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream together. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

113 2. *Growing up in New Guinea.* Kegan Paul, 1939—Penguin, 1954. These were two pioneer studies in the Pacific.
3. *New Worlds for Old.* Gollancz, 1956. The New Guinea area was revisited after 25 years. See especially chapters V, XIII and XIV for Dr. Mead's assessment of her former study.

RAUM, OTTO, *Chaga Childhood*, Oxford University Press, 1940. A pioneer study of child training in Tanganyika. His introductory survey of literature has been superseded by that of H. M. Ammar.

READ, MARGARET, 1. *The Ngoni of Nyasaland.* Oxford University Press, 1956. A full scale study of Ngoni culture and social organization.
2. *Education and Social Change in Tropical Areas.* Nelson, 1955. See especially the papers on Anthropology and Education (page 68), and Cultural Contacts in Education (page 96).
3. *Education and Cultural Tradition.* Evans, 1950. Inaugural lecture on the study of child training in non-literate societies.

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II
DEFINITIONS

128 CULTURE, the total way of living of a people, including kinship relations, economy, religion and magic, law, government, language, myths, child training etc.

[563] ETHNIC GROUP, used here instead of tribe because the Ngoni kingdoms and villages included several tribes. (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 1–6).

614 565 CLAN, exogamous group related through male line with a common clan name used in address. True Ngoni clans formed the aristocracy (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 116).

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni. It is nevertheless recognized that the aristocrats, through their kinship links with the past, have the best knowledge; the rest listen and defer to them. For matters relating to history are no antiquarian interest to the Ngoni. It is probable that recalling history and dwelling on the great days of the past is to some extent a compensation for what the Ngoni consider the indignities of their position to-day. Yet it is also a stimulus to them to maintain their separate identity and to revere their institutions. Tradition supports rank, by recognizing the historical importance of certain clans; and rank preserves tradition because intimate knowledge is the proud monopoly of certain families.

V. Tradition and Legend as Documentation. To the anthropologist who examines the part played by tradition and legend in the culture of a people, Professor Malinowski has given an invaluable lead. He suggests that myths are the charter and documentation for traditional tribal life, 'statements of reality which live in the institutions and pursuits of the people';[1] and that legend is re-interpreted history. All peoples of whatever level of civilization interpret history in the light of their beliefs about themselves, their achievements, and their destiny. The Ngoni are no exception to this. Sometimes they relate factual history which is verifiable and accurate. At other times it is probably part fact, part fiction. Yet at all times the emphasis in, and interpretation of, tradition, has a definite purpose, and it is possible to see how a standardized form of a narrative has come to be accepted and believed in. The version of a narrative at one time was interpreted or moulded to serve a purpose. Having been established, it then moulds the thinking of the people on that particular issue. The vexed question of the supremacy of the two Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera[2] is a case in point. The basis of the story of the original dispute is the same, but the versions as told in each 'country' differ in a succession of minute details, whose arrangement and emphasis prove the point in each case. Mpezeni's historians have arranged the details to prove that he is the rightful *inkosi*; Mwambera's historians

[1] B. Malinowski. Article on Culture in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

[2] The two Paramounts at present holding these titles are grandsons of the first holders, to whom I refer as old Mpezeni.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality 595
of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes
that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have [171]
100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's
matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil
custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And
when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it
must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry 177
till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full [582]
grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But
now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the
Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse
marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this
serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday,
at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock.
But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by
appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have
reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am
satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his 583
father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery
varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would
marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as
much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or
three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages,
for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth,
and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable 562
ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a 565
considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But
the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than
that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out
with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this
exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for 462
many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the [171]
woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women
went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, [243]
while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the
grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. [252]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

borne out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful 171
and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the
fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. [648]
The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a
moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to [177]
hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land
they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where
family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived
in an atmosphere that was charged with vice. But when the
Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were
punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited,
many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally
a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. 565
His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fear- 181
lessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your
privacy. I have heard the old men storm in a village because
some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a 576
superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in
whispers. When they address you they always give you your
family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each
sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at
the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a
long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that 574
the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come
out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly.
When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain
silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a
decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say,
"We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the
whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would
rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they
reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous
and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way,
and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interests and amusements. 692
During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in
open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual [537]
speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus
of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance 535
is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 439 648 far less likely to yield its pretensions'. These considerations found expression in the agreement of 24 November 1894, allowing the B.S.A. Company to take over from Johnston the administration of its sphere north of the Zambezi. The Foreign Office stipulated that sanction for the treaties made by the B.S.A. Company's agents was to be without prejudice to Wiese's possible claims.[43]

The Mozambique Company opened negotiations with the B.S.A. Company with these registered but unrecognized concessions as their asset. Agreement was reached on 8 May 1895. In return for any rights they might have in the British sphere under Wiese's concessions, and conditional on their raising certain capital, the Mozambique Company were granted mineral and land rights in a block of land ten thousand square miles in extent within the B.S.A. Company's territory. The rights of Natives were to be respected. Any rights the Mozambique Company might have in Portuguese territory were not to be exercised. A new company, the North Charterland Exploration Company, in which the B.S.A. Company had an interest, was formed to operate the grant of land. Thus the North Charterland Concession came into being. The whole of Mpezeni's country, except for that portion included in the Nyasaland Protectorate, came within the Concession.[44]

Some thirty-five years later, Mr. Justice Maugham was to rule that this grant to the Mozambique Company could only have been potential, not actual, since at that time the B.S.A. Company did not yet possess the mineral and other rights they were making over. At the time this consideration carried no weight. In April 1895, even before agreement with the B.S.A. Company had been concluded, the Mozambique Company's pioneer party reached Tete. They arrived in Ngoniland in the following year.[45]

4. *European consolidation*

175 439 567 648 721 In Nyasaland fighting continued sporadically in an attempt to end the slave trade. From 1891 onwards Johnston's troops fought a series of engagements with Arabs, Yao and southern Ngoni. Mpezeni was regarded not only as a robber with whom no treaties were necessary but also as a partner in the slave trade, for one of the main routes used by Arabs and their African colleagues ran near Mpezeni's country.[46] All Ngoni raids were interpreted by the Nyasaland Administration as raids for slaves and Sharpe, describing his second visit to Mpezeni, wrote that the chief did a brisk

[43] 67, fo. 141-2; 95, p. 48.
[44] 99; 100.
[45] *Maugham report*, pp. 6-7.
[46] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 3 (1 February 1896), p. 2, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

trade in slaves, selling them to the Arabs.[47] Wiese's evidence on this point is contradictory. In 1881 he wrote that Arab caravans continually visited Mpezeni and that most of the raids were to capture slaves for sale to the Arabs. In 1900, he wrote in one place that some captives were sold to the Arabs and in another that Mpezeni scarcely knew of the permanent slave hunters and that the sole object of major raids was to gain captives to cultivate the Ngoni fields.[48] Few tales of the Arabs and no nicknames have survived to the present time among the Ngoni, and it is probable that Sharpe was overestimating the importance to Mpezeni of the external slave trade. Although Livingstone knew it, Wiese and Kerr are the only contemporary writers who were aware that captives were assimilated,[49] for other writers do not distinguish between captives and slaves. Whether or not the raids were made for Ngoni recruits or for slaves to be sold to the Arabs, it is clear that they were often made into Nyasaland and thus challenged the Administration there. Towards the end of 1895 the Collector at Kotakota opened a campaign against Mwase Kasungu, the Cewa chief whose territory lay between Mpezeni and the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. It is alleged that Mpezeni offered to help Mwase in this campaign, but it seems that no help arrived. On 31 December 1895 the fortified village of Kasungu was captured and Chabisa, a chief who had been helping Mwase, fled to Mpezeni.[51]

Chabisa may have been the moving spirit behind the delegation which early in 1896 went from Mpezeni to the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland calling on them to rise with him and Chabisa against the British.[52] The Livingstonia Mission had already been working among the northern Ngoni for eighteen years, and the delegation found little support.

As well as Chabisa, other refugees arrived from the south, after the First Matabele War of 1893 in Southern Rhodesia. According to some accounts the Ndebele Paramount Chief, Lobengula, was with them, only to die a few months later.[53]

[47] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 745. cf. Perham, *Ten Africans*, p. 96.
[48] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478 and 'Geschichte', pp. 188 and 197.
[49] Livingstone, *Narrative*, p. 385; Kerr, 'Upper Zambesi', p. 396.
[51] Swann, the Collector, in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1; and *A & P*, 1896, lviii, pp. 417, 418, describes Chabisa and Mwase as Ngoni and Zulu chiefs. Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168, say Mwase and Chabisa were brothers. It is unlikely that either was Ngoni. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 144, calls Mwase a Cewa but says he had many Ngoni headmen under him, thereby amending his earlier statements that Mwase and Undi were Ngoni. See 20, fo. 129; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 412.
[52] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 292.
[53] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2; Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 83; Posselt, *Upengula*, pp. 112-24; 98; 121, fo. 193.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10.
578 Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant
648 of segment 4, and Kamzembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional
668 governor in segment 10.[132] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[133] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour
[721] peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell
[178] their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

439 In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid
648 Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with
567 Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[134] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[132] 187, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[133] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[134] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Karonga in 1895 and although slave trading went on through Portuguese territory even after 1900, Arabs never made any effort to maintain this trade in the Fort Jameson area. 439 648 [567]

When Wiese left the country in 1898 his work was done. His departure symbolized the end of the pioneering stage of colonialism and the beginning of the stage of settled paternal administration. Mpezeni was reinstated after the war, but there was no position into which Wiese could have been reinstated, nor anyone who wanted to reinstate him. Unlike Mpezeni, Wiese did not represent the long-term interests of any powerful group. In the history of empires there are many examples of men like Wiese who succeeded in weathering the transition from one phase to another and ended their lives in honour and glory. But Wiese had sold his assets before the war began. When it was over, his one saleable attribute, his friendship with Mpezeni, had been compromised and was no longer of value. He departed from a scene which had no place for him.

An examination of how the Imperial and the financial struggles were inter-connected would take us beyond the bounds of Ngoniland and of our subject. We have, however, shown that the three social fields were inter-connected, and that moves in one field were affected by and in turn inspired moves in another. It is important to realize that this inter-connection was not due merely to geographical accident. From one point of view it was accidental that Ngoniland should lie near so many frontiers and that there should be an ancient gold-mine in the vicinity. But Britain, the North Charterland, and Nsingu were all struggling partly for the same thing, control of the Ngoni people. Even Warton understood this. At the end of 1896 he was asked: 'The Natives, I understand, are friendly?' He replied: 'I am glad to say that, so far, we have succeeded in establishing most friendly relations with M'Pesene. . . . Fighting would not only be costly, but we should lose our labourers if we engaged in hostilities. So you see on selfish, as well as humanitarian grounds, we have every reason to avoid warfare and bloodshed.'[126] The mineral resources of Mpezeni's country may have been largely illusory but the human resources were real. Ngoni men could fight for slaves, for dependants, for cattle and for glory; they could carry loads from Tete and prepare to work in the North Charterland's mines; or they could migrate to Southern Rhodesia to work there: but they could not do all these things simultaneously. The fight to destroy the Ngoni army was as much one to secure a labour supply for European capital investment as it was to secure 439 464 648

[126] *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

they might give their support to the enforcement of law. Murder has always been a public delict in Ngoni society and before the conquest, a murderer was usually tried by senior lieutenants at the headquarters of either segment 4 or 10 and if found guilty was executed by the first lieutenant of the segment. Ngoni still think that murderers ought to be brought to justice, but the investigation of murder, a matter for the Northern Rhodesia Police, is likely to be obstructed even though the investigation may be carried out entirely by Africans. Those affected by the murder wish to see the murderer punished, but they also want to keep clear of the legal process involved.

10. *External links*

The death of Zwangendaba was followed by a dispersal of Ngoni groups into various parts of east and central Africa. The present dispersal of Ngoni men and women from Fort Jameson over southern Africa arises from a different social situation and takes place in a different way. The early mining enterprises of Southern Rhodesia, like those in the Union of South Africa before them, were based on migratory labour. As we have noted, Ngoni began going to Southern Rhodesia only a few months after they had been conquered, and they have continued to go ever since. Although the first batch of migrants were apparently ordered to go by someone in authority, the great bulk of men who have gone away subsequently have gone as individuals, even if they were recruited in batches of a hundred or more at a time. Thus, the dispersal of population is not directly related to the political system of the tribe, as was the pre-conquest dispersal. There has been a certain amount of regional preference, one county supplying more than its share of migrants to the Northern Rhodesia Copperbelt, the Nyasaland counties supplying proportionately more migrants to the Union as compared with the Northern Rhodesia counties, and so on, but these preferences are not marked. The inhabitants of each county, and indeed of nearly every village, have kinsfolk who are scattered over the towns and farms of the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, the Transvaal and farther south.

Ngoni men and women are thus bound by many ties to other persons and groups located far away from the villages of Ngoniland. For the most part these ties bind individuals, for each person has distant attachments which are not the same as his neighbours. In this volume we are concerned primarily with politics, with social relations between enduring groups, and we shall reserve our discussion of the social implications of migration for a later work in

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern
693 Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
574 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
643 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
484 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and
167 other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
567 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
619 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of
571 the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

AFTER the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

NGONI WARFARE IN OLD DAYS

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligubo* dance along with others.

[P. 28 is blank]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the [558] holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and 178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and 161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political 641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was [684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a 641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population 727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There 563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State. [567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain 563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set 641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise 701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Mnewa*, pl. *anewa*. Cf. the Zulu term *umnewa*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In the old days

marriages in which bride-wealth was paid were patrilocal, and those 583
in which it was not paid, except for marriages with slave wives, were 178
matrilocal. The matrilocal marriages were made only by recently [567]
incorporated Ngoni. The payment of bride-wealth is now significant
only in relation to the residence and affiliation of the children of the 591
marriage and does not affect the residence of the couple themselves. 583
It frequently happens that a man goes and lives in the village of his wife when they are first married and that after a year or so he takes her back to his own village. This practice is fairly common among the matrilineal tribes of the region. A small payment[1] of five shillings or so may be made instead to enable a man to take his bride to his own village without first completing a period of matrilocal residence. Sometimes the legalization payment is considered sufficient to exempt from matrilocal residence. Indeed it is indicative of the wide range of variation in the different payments made and not made and in the [184] significance attached to them that some informants were unable to state with certainty what payments had been made in their own marriages, although they knew the amount of money or animals that had been handed over.

This wide range of variation in behaviour in relation to marriage 184
is one instance of the high measure of cultural heterogeneity of the 58
Fort Jameson Ngoni. While present-day conditions are relevant to a study of Ngoni marriage, at the same time the effect of the combination of people with very different conceptions of marriage into a single state must not be overlooked. Among families that are powerful and claim to have migrated with Zwangendaba from the south, patrilocal marriage and the payment of bride-wealth are more frequent than they are among families of more recent incorporation. Cross-cousin marriage is noticeably more frequent in villages with people of Bisa descent than in the population as a whole. In Nyasaland, where there is a sharper cleavage into old Ngoni villages and conquered Cewa villages, the old Ngoni are characterized by a greater, and the Cewa by a lesser, incidence of patrilocal marriage.

Divorce

In the old days there was no way in which a woman could divorce 586
her husband. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own people. The usual procedure nowadays, except in cases of adultery, is for the man to give his wife sixpence or a shilling

[1] *Ntabakula.*

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Ansenga tribe worked for Sosera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Sosera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the *ikhlulu* wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamache Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Imiti. Father, Nzyekezera (Njekerezera), mother and wife, not known; sons, Masakambewa and Chitete.

[554] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his

[578] instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1846.

159 173 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambose Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

167 On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed

[578] by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Maseko was killed by

[554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 (6) Njekwane Ntilila. Father, Mphange, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyuwazana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mene, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu

[701] regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpinduka Hill, Matambazi River,

[645] in the year 1868.

(7) Mgai Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majekwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza ; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo ; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo ; mother, unknown ; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo ; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan ; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere : born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833 ? Father, Zongendaba ; mother, Nqutu Nzima ; wife, Magodise ; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa) ; born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi ; father, Zongendaba : half-sister, Mphangela ; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed ; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River ; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1888/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 643

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Malowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country ; she resided on the Mckera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave ; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

/8 cont'd/

352 Beds are owned in general by the younger generation only, and then at the rate of one per household. Otherwise, everyone sleeps on the floor on a reed mat. During the day, the mat is rolled 285 up except when needed for drying flour in the sun. These mats are made from reeds that grow near streams. The reeds are split in four, and are threaded with a thin rope made from the inner bark of the nzizi tree. Wooden headrests are now a rarity, and if any 513 headrests at all is used, it is a European pillow. Blankets, quilts [77] and, less frequently, sheets, are bought from stores.

/9/ V

412 The chief tool for use in the garden is the hoe. Ruins of fur- naces for smelting iron ore are still to be seen, but are not now used, [325] and are said to have been worked in the old days only by Chewa [567] slaves. Hoe blades are bought in the stores, and hafted with a handle made in the village. Handle making is a man's job, but one that every man knows how to do. Axes are made from blades bought in the store, or else from a worn down hoe blade, with a home-made handle. Adzes are used for mortar making, and young boys make miniature adzes as toys. A pointed blade hafted on to the end of a straight handle is used for making holes in the ground when building.

Sledges and, less commonly, unarticulated carts with solid 493 wheels are made for transporting the harvest from the fields to the [241] village, and for collecting firewood. These are pulled by cattle, [493] not always oxen, using simple yokes made of wood and sinew, with a wooden drawbar.

224 Hunting is carried on in the dry season, particularly towards the end, when the grass burns easily. Guns of varying degrees of 411 antiquity are used, but none of these are made by Ngoni, although the Chewa still make guns. On a hunt, the rank and file are armed with throwing spears and knobkerries. The gun carriers walk about 224 two hundred yards in front of the main body, who are spread on a single line at right angles to the line of advance. The leader of

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

101 [175] ardly people compared with the wild spirits who remained under Mombera.

This tribe is variously named Mazitu, Vikoko, Abangoni, and so on, and readers of Livingstone's 'Zambezi and its Tributaries,' will remember his frequent references to the wild marauding bands of Mazitu. The word Abangoni, by which the tribe calls itself, [186] simply means "The people." They reckon themselves the blooded aristocrats of Africa.

[193] The prefix *aba* before ngoni, is simply the plural form of the noun *umgoni*, a single man. The country is called Ubungoni, and the language Chingoni. For the peculiarity of the Bantu languages, is that words alter their number from singular to plural, and character from noun to adjective, not by changing the suffix but the prefix.

197 The language which the Ngoni speak is a slight modification of Zulu—but they only use two clicks—the dental *c* and labial *q*. In our schools therefore we use the Zulu literature in which there are already nearly 40 volumes, and the best of these are the translations left by Bishop Colenso. Zulu is however rapidly dying ●[547] out, as the language of the slaves and of the surrounding tribes is becoming the vernacular of the common people. When Mombera's 175 Ngoni settled down in the watershed of the Ruhuru, they soon made their presence disagreeably felt throughout West Nyasa. [126] Their marauding parties were always out on the war path. Dressing in a frightsome garb of cock feathers, carrying a large shield and two or three stabbing assegais, they terrorised the neighbouring tribes. They used to sleep near some village which they wished to attack, and then in the early morning just before the light had come, with a wild war whoop they would sweep through the village, killing the men and the old people; then when they had seized the women and children and tied them together they would start back for the hills, driving with them all the cattle and sheep and goats that they could find. Their fighting was never done in the open. It generally took the form of a wild and sudden rush, and in a moment bleeding corpses were lying about, and the village was in flames.

The terrified people betook themselves to huge stockaded villages, others piled their villages in the lake itself. The Poka, and Henga [101] fled to mountain fastnesses, and built on the edges of fearful precipices, the Senga fled to the Luangwa marsh and built great protected villages in the depths of huge thorn thickets. And the land became

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 wait for six or seven years before the procrastinating headmen
[645] could lay aside jealousies, and actually place him in the authority of his father. Then when he is crowned he cannot sit in judgment
[692] or give a decision unless his councillors have been summoned, and have deliberated with him. Many a time in the old fierce days the councillors and chief argued and defied one another for weeks at a time over the question as to whether the white man was to be tolerated in the country, and it was the strong affection of old Mombera for Dr. Laws, and Wm. Koyi which alone held in the dogs of war, and prevented his councillors from going forth on an exterminating expedition. Yet in spite of the great power of the chief he lives as father of the people with all the villagers as his children. His house is like their own, built right in the centre of
[567] the village. The poorest slave has access to him, and he hands his beer pot or his snuff to the meanest villager when he would show him friendliness.

[692] Under the paramount chief there are four great sub-chiefs, and
[634] each of them has his councillors and headmen. Then these headmen have each a group of villages under their control. They
[692] hear and dispose of petty quarrels between the villagers. Cases in which headmen are involved go to the sub-chief, and cases in which the sub-chiefs are involved, and all great tribal affairs,
645 go to the paramount chief. The tribal council is an impressive sight. Just before I came here I had the privilege of being present in one of these great gatherings of the tribe. It had met to discuss the advisability of coming under the British Protectorate. The great chief, Chimtunga, had sent out his messengers to call to council all the sub-chiefs and headmen. They marched into the
[634] chief's kraal on the appointed day, each sub-chief followed by his councillors and hundreds of armed warriors, all walking in single file, and dressed in their gaudiest clothes. They sat round the
[643] kraal till thousands were present. By-and-bye the paramount chief walked in, followed by his brothers and council. He was greeted by a roar of salutation, and took his seat. When the case was opened, and the subject introduced, the fathers of the people rose one after the other and saluted the chief, and then addressed the people. The speakers walked up and down, speaking with
[537] considerable incisiveness and eloquence, their language full of metaphors and traditional allusions. Then the chief spoke, closing the discussion. Immediately it was ended and the royal
[535] salutation given, a warrior leapt into the circle with a war cry, fell

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession, the Ngoni have learned to plant also reserve gardens of kavava, for the locusts and drought can scarcely affect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

These vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white porridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the natives, to get at them, will hew down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stretching themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first clouds appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertiliser. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. 611 The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments 602 [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern
683 Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
574 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
643 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
484 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and
167 other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
567 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni
619 as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
571 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market.

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area.

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 Ngoni tradition placed the departure of the two main groups under the leadership of Zwangendaba Jere and Ngwana Maseko during Shaka's wars, according to some traditions just before, and to others just after, the death of Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. The separate departure of the two Ngoni groups which later formed the two kingdoms was determined partly by their separate leadership under the Jere and Maseko clans, partly by their march by different routes to the Zambesi and after crossing it; and partly by the clan descent names of the Swazi element in the two kingdoms, which with few exceptions were different.

[533] Two traditional songs, sung at marriages, at dances at the Paramounts' villages, and the first in the church of the Scottish mission at Ekwendeni in north Nyasaland, reminded the Ngoni of their departure from Natal, of their separation from the Ndwandwe people under Zwide, and of the hazards of a small military band fighting its way northwards.

539

All the nations
Are gathered together against us.
How shall we fight?
They are called together against us.
Whence shall we summon help?
The big husky ones, ho!
They are called together against us.
We are reinforced by whom?

It is because of Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people
That though I lie down I cannot sleep.
O Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people!
Though I lie down I cannot sleep.
Shaka scatters us among the forests of Soshangane land.

173 There were several informants in both Ngoni kingdoms who had preserved the story of the departure of the Ngoni from the south. Y. M. Cibambo in his book gathered together the traditions and gave what he considered the most authentic version of the departure. One [114] text from the northern kingdom is given here, partly because it was typical of the kind of material Cibambo had to work on, and also because the author, Mlonyeni Jere, had heard it from his mother who, as a young girl, had lived at the court of Zwangendaba. The text gives the genealogy of Zwangendaba, and the connexion of his line with Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. It emphasizes the immediate cause of Zwangendaba's departure—namely the fear of meeting Shaka and his warriors in open battle, and the fact that he was not called a chief until he had made a breach with Zwide. The summons to the [57] mourning for his uncle Mafu, which he ignored, was considered by the Ngoni to be the final act by which Zwangendaba cut himself off from

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

his kinsfolk who remained in the south. This breach with his former kin and the assumption of chieftainship marked out Zwangendaba as a leader and his followers as a separate group. 173 57/●

THE DEPARTURE OF THE NGONI
by Mlonyeni Jere 173

¶ Zwangendaba was the son of Hlacwayo, the son of Magangata, the son of Magalela, the son of Cenge of Enhlekisweni.

Magangata had three sons, they were borne by one mother. The first-born was Gumede, the second was Hlacwayo, and the third was Mafu. Gumede did not marry, he hated them badly, he did not eat the food that was cooked by the women, and the same Gumede was the chief of all Magangata's sons. He did not love his brother Hlacwayo. He said that Hlacwayo was black and also he was dwarf, but he said Mafu will be the one to take his chieftainship. Mafu was refusing to take that possession while his brother was still alive and he said that though the people say that Hlacwayo is black, he is not black to me but he is red. And also though they say he is dwarf he is not dwarf to me, but he is tall. When Gumede died the chieftainship was taken by Hlacwayo and Mafu was his second since they were all born from one mother.

Magalela was at Ndwandwe the village of Langa. Langa was the father of Zwide and Zwide was a very bad chief. Zwide did not treat Zwangendaba well. When Hlacwayo died his chieftainship was taken by Zwangendaba his son. Zwide was called Nxumalo, and these people of Nxumalo were strong men there in Natal and some were afraid of them.

Dingiswayo, the son of Jobe of Elangeni, went to Zwide for a visit at Ndwandwe. As soon as he appeared Zwide caught him and killed him. When Shaka heard that Zwide had killed Dingiswayo, he grew angry for Shaka had grown up there at Dingiswayo's. He said ' Zwide has killed the chief who taught me how to fight better.' At the same time he ordered warriors to go and fight against Zwide at Ndwandwe.

Zwangendaba refused to fight with Shaka because he heard the story of Shaka, that he was a great warrior. Then he told his father Mafu that he must go away from Zwide. Zwide was troubling the Jere people. When they cooked beer he was snatching it, and when a man married a good girl he was snatching her, and when they killed a cow he was snatching the meat and taking it to Ndwandwe. When Zwide quarrelled with Shaka, Zwangendaba was glad that he had found a way of going away from Zwide. Zwide fought against Shaka and Zwangendaba ran away. The leaving of Zwangendaba nobody knew and nobody followed him. Also there was no one to follow him for Zwide was busy with war against Shaka.

They sent a message to Zwangendaba that Mafu had died:—'Come to the mourning.' Zwangendaba did not go back to the mourning. All the people who were in Mafu's villages did not follow Zwangendaba. They also went on their own way, and we do not know where they went. Zwangendaba came with only two sons of Mafu, Cenge and Mgayi. Thus many children of Mafu stayed in Natal.

Zwangendaba was with his brother Ntabeni when leaving Natal.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in the political organization. Some of these officials were also members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but many were not. The officials served the Paramount in his court and his administration, and also the chiefs, and formed the lines of communication between them. This created a network of relationships between the Paramount and the chiefs at the top level, and between the chiefs and the village headmen under them at the lower level. From this network were excluded, in the northern kingdom, all the *alumuzana* and, in the central kingdom, all those *alumuzana* who were not chiefs. In the two kingdoms the *alumuzana* exercised unofficial control over a varying number of villages, and were inclined to assert their social superiority because they were excluded from official recognition.

The foundations of the political structure within which the ruling aristocracy operated were a series of related institutions which will be described and analysed later in the book, but which must be referred to here, partly in order to explain the terminology used. The South-eastern Bantu, whose culture the Ngoni brought with them, had an institution in all important villages known as 'houses', which was a grouping of huts and of the wives owning them round the hut of one or more of the leading women. This institution, with its variations among the southern and northern Nguni people, was described by Mrs. Hoernlé in the chapter on 'Social Organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa.*[1] The Ngoni institution of houses had developed from the basic pattern among the South-eastern Bantu into an independent form. In the first place it was only found in relation to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading men of the royal clan, and the *alumuzana.* It did not, as in South Africa, form the basic pattern of all villages in the Ngoni kingdoms. Where, as in most villages owned by *alumuzana*, mixed ethnic groups lived together, the house system existed only for the head of the clan, his brothers and his successor. It was specifically an Ngoni institution in the cultural and social sense. In the second place, the terms 'right-hand' and 'left-hand' house, common among the South-eastern Bantu, were not used by the Ngoni in the 1930's. The two terms they used were the 'big house' and the '*gogo* house', and I propose to use these terms here. The principle behind the use of these terms was that the big house was the one from which the heir should come to succeed the Paramount, the chief, or the *mulumuzana.* The *gogo* house was the one which was responsible for maintaining tradition and performing ritual.

Another institution, closely related to that of the houses, was the *lusungulu* and *gogo* villages. The Paramounts, the chiefs, and the leading *alumuzana*, when they succeeded their father after his death, moved out of his village and made their own new village, or took their households

[1] Schapera, I. (ed.). *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa.* Routledge, 1937, chap. IV.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and settled where another village already existed.[1] In both forms, this new settlement was called the *lusungulu* village, 'the one which goes in front'; and the village which was left was known as the *gogo* village. This use of the term *gogo* (literally 'grandparent') for house and village had a common basic connotation. It expressed the concept of being left behind to look after something, the *gogo* house being passed over for the heir to the Paramountcy or chieftainship but charged with ritual and ceremonial duties; and the *gogo* village being left behind to take care of the traditions and generally also of most of the widows of the deceased Paramount or chief. Each *lusungulu* village eventually divided on the death of its owner, part 'going forward' with the new successor, part remaining behind. The main groups in the village which went ahead or which remained were the houses connected with the new Paramount or chief or *mulumuzana* and those connected with his dead father. In the chapter on houses (Chapter III, Part III) this process will be examined in greater detail. 621 571

The third related institution was the provision for guarding the spirit of a dead Paramount or chief and those of some leading *alumuzana*. A senior woman was always guardian of such a spirit and in her hut were kept the ritual objects: spear, wooden dish, baskets, fire-stick, which were used in sacrifices to the ancestors. The guardianship of the spirit of a dead Paramount was always associated with the village which had been his *lusungulu*. His corpse was buried on the edge of the kraal containing the cattle of the house where he had grown up, and this village became the *gogo* village associated with him, where his spirit was guarded in a hut, probably though not necessarily belonging to one of his widows. The recognition of such a woman guardian was a matter for selection and appointment, and was the responsibility of the senior men of the *gogo* house in that village in consultation with the senior men of the *gogo* house in the dead man's father's village. The concept of guarding the spirits of important men, and the means by which such guardianship was practised, will be more fully discussed in Part IV in connexion with the ancestor cult. 769 554 775 [766]

THE NGONI KINGDOMS AND AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS

In the final section of this chapter we shall look at the Ngoni kingdoms in their relationship to other African kingdoms and states such as those described in *African Political Systems*.[2] A methodological problem arises here. In this study a number of references are made to the Ngoni kingdoms in pre-European times, especially in connexion 121

[1] This form of the institution was found in densely populated areas and the incoming households dominated the original ones.

[2] Fortes, M., & Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (ed.). *African Political Systems*. O.U.P., 1940 pp. 9–23.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 with the military organization and the Paramountcy. The main emphasis in the study is, however, on the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's, when the Paramount and the administrative organization under him were recognized by the Nyasaland government. Though certain elements in 642 the kingdoms, as for example the position and authority of the *ahamu-* 648 *zana*, were not recognized by the ordinance, the supreme authority of the Paramounts and the position of their appeal courts received additional support from the colonial officials, from the financial basis of the administration, and from the many new responsibilities of the Paramount for his people illustrated by the bye-laws made and the welfare measures carried out.

121 It is the Ngoni kingdoms as they functioned in the 1930's which will be compared with other African political systems, bearing in mind all the time that behind the Ngoni kingdoms lay the authority and power of the colonial government. The comparison will be made with the general characteristics of what were called by the editors of *African Political Systems*, in their introductory essay, 'Group A systems', and the references will be to the criteria and concepts in that introduction.

The main characteristics cited of the Group A systems were all to be [642] found in the Ngoni kingdoms: centralized authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions. These will be the chief material in Part II of this book on the Ngoni political system. In *African Political Systems* the editors stated that all the societies described in the book which were in the category of Group A systems were 'an amalgam of different peoples, each aware of its unique origin and history, and all except the Zulu and Bemba are still today culturally heterogenous'. Such a definition was appropriate for the Ngoni kingdoms, where [563] political authority was wielded over several different peoples, as the ethnic grouping in the 1945 census showed, and where there was cultural heterogeneity among the different peoples. This second characteristic will be examined more fully in Chapter III of this section, dealing with Ngoni culture. To the factor of diversity within the Ngoni 121 kingdoms should be added two other points made by the editors 571 towards the end of their introduction where they said: 'Community of language and culture does not necessarily give rise to political unity, any more than linguistic and cultural dissimilarity prevents political unity.' In the next chapter we shall be discussing the relation of language and culture among the Ngoni, and between them and other Nyasaland peoples. The second point in the essay which is also applicable to the Ngoni kingdoms and their neighbours was stated in these terms: 'The overlapping and interlocking of societies is due to the fact that where political relations end is not the point at which all social relations cease.' The relevance of this statement to the Ngoni in Nyasaland has already been mentioned in connexion with the visiting which goes on between individuals from the Ngoni kingdoms and states. It

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

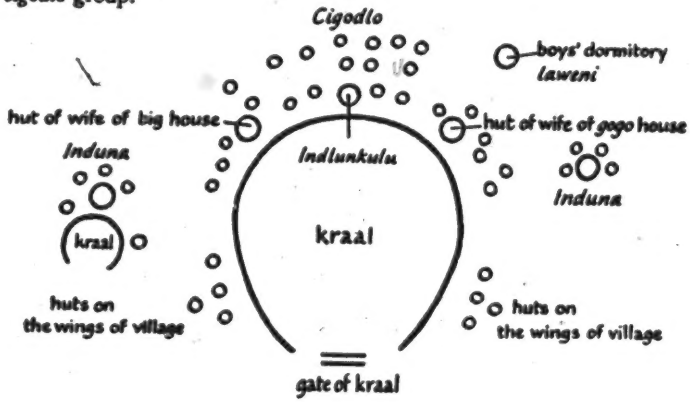
was still more clearly demonstrated by the attitude of the Ngoni 'of the dispersion', who returned for visits, some frequently and others at varying intervals, to their former homes though they were no longer in a political sense subjects of the Ngoni Paramount. 121 571

In the Group A systems, not only is the Paramount the political head of a culturally and ethnically heterogeneous state, but he is also a territorial ruler, and everyone living within the boundaries of his state is his subject. This was peculiarly a characteristic of the so-called conquest states, when effective administrative control was established within recognized boundaries after the conquest or surrender of neighbouring peoples. In the chapter on the military organization of the Ngoni, it will be seen how the nature of the military tenure of *alumuzana*, and the relation of groups of conquered villages known as *amilaga* to the central villages of the Paramount and *alumuzana*, emphasized the limits within which Ngoni authority was effective. One of the often repeated grievances of the older Ngoni was that the Europeans 'arrived too soon', before the Ngoni were able to establish effective authority over the whole country. 121 643 642

Two further points emerge in the introductory essay to *African Political Systems* which relate to the balance of forces within the Group A type of state and to the position of the Paramount. Both these points will be illustrated in Part II. The first concerns the relationship of the subordinate chiefs (called 'local chiefs' in the essay) to the central authority. They represented the central authority in the areas where they ruled, and they represented the people under them and their needs to the central authority. When the older Ngoni were talking about the Paramount in pre-European days, much emphasis was laid on his control of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, and on the obligation they felt to visit the Paramount in his village frequently, in order that they might appear to be carrying out his orders and not usurping undue authority. The older Ngoni also laid stress on the accessibility of the Paramount to all his people, provided—and it was an important proviso—that a man came to him with an intermediary, either his headman or his *mulumuzana*.

The final point of comparison between Group A systems and the Ngoni kingdoms is the mystical values bound up with kingship. This will be discussed in the chapter on the Paramount (Chapter II, Part II) and it is related also to the ancestor cult. The Ngoni Paramounts were more than ruling monarchs; they were the symbol of the unity of their state; in pre-European days the Paramount was the head of the army; and the ritual at the accession and at the death of a Paramount was related to the fertility of the land and the prosperity of the people. 121 643 829

621 the main circle round the kraal to emphasize its connexion with the *cigodlo* group.



621 The group referred to as 'a house' has already been defined in its
571 relation to the Paramount and his *lusungulu* village, and it will be illustrated and examined further in Chapter III of Part III. As an Ngoni institution the big house was an integral factor in the succession to high office, and the *gogo* house played an essential role in ceremonial and ritual life. Houses were also one of the most important components in village grouping. Men, women and children regarded themselves as associated with a house in one of three ways. They were related to it by descent or by marriage; or they were members of the family of the *induna* who looked after its affairs; or they served the house as servants or labourers, and were possibly the descendants of captives caught in war and assigned to that house. Thus it often happened that the people living on the wings of the village had some relationship to the house on the side of the kraal where their huts were sited. There were many Ngoni villages where all the inhabitants were said to belong to one of the two or three or more houses, even though the majority of the inhabitants had no kinship or official relationship with a house.

614 The term 'clan' or 'clan descent group' has been used already many times and some explanation and definition is needed as a guide to its use in Part II before it is discussed further in Chapter II of Part III. The Ngoni considered that the clan of a person was of great importance for several reasons. The use of the clan descent name was the normal mode
[576] of address between all adults. The Ngoni said they could not speak to any stranger until they knew his clan name, and they used it in all social intercourse, except when addressing the Paramount. Exogamy was strict
[635] for people with the same clan name, and sexual relations between such individuals was regarded as incest.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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N 537

The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the common people.
Shall we die on the earth?
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of all beasts.
Shall we die on the earth?
Listen, you who are asleep, who are left tightly closed in the land!
Shall we all sink into the earth?
Listen, O earth! The sun is setting tightly.
We shall all enter into the earth.

CHAPTER II

THE PARAMOUNT

Introduction

M 643 622

THE Cewa term for chief (*mfumu*) was widely used in Nyasaland for chiefs of all ranks, as well as for village headmen and, occasionally, as an honorific form of address to an important individual. Among the Cewa a man could 'become a chief' by acquiring, through marriage or purchase, the right to own a site, known as a *mzinda*, on which female initiation rites were carried out. This concept of the office of chieftainship among the Cewa and other local tribes was in sharp contrast to the centralized and unified concept inherent in the Ngoni term *inkosi*. I have translated *inkosi* here as Paramount because the term Paramount Chief was adopted by the Administration to denote a ruler who had recognized subordinate chiefs under him and whose court was an appeal court for their courts. It is necessary to emphasize here how distinctive the office of Paramount was among the various types of chiefs in Nyasaland, both in official recognition, and still more in the Ngoni ideas about their Paramount. We saw in Chapter II of Part I that no Nyasaland chiefs, except the Ngoni Paramounts, had Subordinate Native Authorities under them.

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When the Ngoni left the south, a number of small chiefdoms there were gradually being overcome by Shaka and, based on his armies, he had set up a new and unique type of *inkosi*. The leaders of military bands who left him—Mzilikazi, Soshangane, Zwangendaba and Ngwana—had little recognition before they left, except as military and clan leaders. Yet after the Ngoni left, Zwangendaba and Ngwana received from their followers recognition of their political leadership as *inkosi*, and this was expressed by giving to the Paramount the salute of *Bayete*. Throughout their recitals of traditions and in their accounts of their political system, Ngoni informants in both kingdoms emphasized that for each kingdom there was one *inkosi* to whom alone the *Bayete* was given. We assume, therefore, that the later Ngoni concept of the Paramount and his

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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571 643 function and authority was largely evolved and built up during the Ngoni migration across the Zambesi and the early settlement in Nyasaland.

643 The office of the Paramount was supported by three typical Ngoni institutions. The first was the regency exercised by the man who was held responsible for the care of the office of the Paramount. He was called 'the one who takes care of the country', 'the one who has to put the new *inkosi* in his place', 'the one who takes care of the young *inkosi* until he enters his father's place'. We shall see later how this principle of regency operated in particular cases in the succession to the Paramountcy. It proved to be an effective provision both in the case of a minor who was recognized as his father's heir, and during an interregnum while the succession was being discussed. The Ngoni showed a clear understanding of what functions the regent ought to perform, and when he exceeded these functions and usurped, or tried to usurp, the Paramount's position they condemned his action as wrong.

The second institution which supported the Paramountcy was the 'big house' from which the heir to the Paramount had to come. We shall see later that it was not always considered essential that the heir should be the actual child of the wife in the big house. A boy could be adopted [597] into the house and, by Ngoni kinship rules, he was then a child of that house and of the woman in it.

643 The third institution, which made the Paramount immortal at death after having been supreme in his life-time, was the Ngoni practice of 769 'guarding his spirit' in a hut, usually in the village where he had lived. The guardianship of a spirit was not practised exclusively for the Paramount. All the chiefs and the heads of the Swazi clans had this provision made for their spirits when they died, but in national crises prayers [282] addressed to the spirits of former Paramounts were of supreme importance.

The royal clan and the big house

643 Among the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans which formed the Ngoni 614 aristocracy the royal clan had a unique position. Not only was it the clan 565 of the Paramount, but its members had social rank and prestige because 184 they belonged to his clan. In the northern kingdom informants showed awareness of the fact that their royal clan of Jere was not one of the well-known clans in the south. Other clan names found among them, such as Ngomezulu, Thole, Nzima, Nqumayo, and many more, were known to be clan names among the South-eastern Bantu. The following explanation was given by Cibambo about the name Jere and was the one most widely accepted:

¶ The Ngoni themselves say that the clan name of Jere was given during the journey, and that it arose out of the number of people who were with Zwangendaba. When the Ngoni want to speak of a large number of people they use two well-known words which are: '*Ngu Shaka*' (it is Shaka);

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingcwembe*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

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In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

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In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *izipheko*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izinduna* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 turn were invited to eat with the Paramount or summoned to special
651 feasts. On the other hand there were people who seemed to have noth-
431 ing, and who came in the hope of getting invited to eat food if they just sat in the kraal and looked hungry. Cibambo called them 'the notable
527 people' and 'the poor people'. This contrast in behaviour ran right
571 through Ngoni society and reflected the social standing of individuals who behaved in such different ways. There was a good deal of cadging for gifts and of gate-crashing at feasts on the part of people who had no intention, or no possibility, of making any adequate return. An Ngoni proverb illustrated the public attitude to reciprocal giving as distinct from begging: 'To say: Give, give, is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.'

571 The bringing of tribute to the Paramount was only one aspect of the
643 reciprocal relationships which ran right through Ngoni society, namely the bringing of gifts by a man in an inferior social position to his
651 superior, with the expectation of receiving food or favour and of stand-
431 ing well with this superior. It was recognized that tribute was of two kinds, one of which was voluntary. If a *mulumuzana* or other notable wanted to please the Paramount he brought him presents—grain, flour, meat, beer. It was always emphasized that this was a free gift, with the added proviso that the giver wished to keep on good terms with the Paramount. Ngoni informants declared that the only compulsory form of tribute in pre-European days was that whenever a lion or a leopard was killed it had to be brought to the royal village through a succession of intermediaries, as described below.

These two principles of free giving and compulsory giving, and the attitudes engendered, are compared with the feeling about compulsory taxes under European rule in this text by Cibambo.

¶ Although people hate giving taxes to strangers in this land, yet tribute (*imitulo*) was given to their *inkosi* and to other chiefs. Such tribute was given in an indirect way, that is the *izinduna* did not mark out those who gave and who did not give tribute. The Ngoni did not wish that every male should give tribute as is done by Europeans today. They were just pleased if the village headman or *mulumuzana* had given something even though other people in his village did not give anything. Even the *alumuzana* themselves gave something at the time they thought it was convenient to themselves to give. There was no fixed time of the month or year. Much that was given as tribute was beer, meat, ivory, hoes and cloth, also cattle, sheep and goats after raids, and other loot from war.

[825] Power to 'eat' (*ukudla*) lion- and leopard-skins was given to certain people of the Swazi clans, but all the rest were obliged to bring them in. The lion- or leopard-skin had to be given first to the village headman. He went with it to the chief or *mulumuzana*. This one brought it to the *inkosi* along with his *amadoda* or *amajaha* of all his villages, the older men and
[554] younger men. This was like going as warriors and they went with dancing (*ligubo*). The one who first stabbed the animal was pointed out, and the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

second and third, and the finisher, at the place of dancing in the kraal. At such times each one when called rose and danced *umgiya*, repeating his names. This was called *ukubiha izinhalipi*, reporting the heroes or the fierce ones. This is still being done today. The *inkosi* thanked the people who brought the skins by giving them a beast or a goat. When they were dressing the meat and eating it, they kept on dancing *ligubo* and crying the war-cry. At such times the women went along with the men to help them dance *ligubo*. They made the responses to the songs and jerked their necks. 571 643 651 431 [557]

All such things the *inkosi* divided among his houses. The big house had a big share, but especially his mother's house. She should have most. Even if his real mother was dead, the big share had to go there, to her house, where her successor lived.

Visits to the Paramount, whether for a particular occasion or as a matter of routine, were hedged about with ceremonial. It was expected that *alumusana* and other important people who lived near enough would visit the Paramount frequently and, according to some informants, they went every day in pre-European times. 643 574 576 644

No one could approach the Paramount except through one of the *izinduna* of the royal village, and the correct person to approach was the *induna* of the *indlunkulu*. Visitors were expected to wait at the gate of the kraal and put down their spears. When they were brought by the *induna* to the Paramount, they greeted him with '*Bayete*'. Then they sat down and the Paramount told the *induna* to greet them, and they replied '*Yebo, inkosi*'. This custom of indirect approach to the Paramount has been maintained. Early travellers in Nyasaland spoke of observing it, and when I was there it was considered outrageous manners on the part of any European if he penetrated immediately to the presence of the Paramount, without going through the accustomed channels. 643 644

The Paramount was both greeted and thanked for gifts of food, beer or snuff, with '*Bayete*'. If he moved from the kraal, all present said '*Bayete*'. If anyone had to leave his presence, he crouched low and murmured '*Bayete*' as he went out. Cibambo described this punctilious formality of thanking for gifts in the Ngoni manner. 643 644 431

¶ When receiving presents the Ngoni thanked the giver by taking them with two hands, even though it was a small present. Afterwards they thanked the giver by his *isibongo*, clan name, openly. They said that receiving a thing with one hand showed that you derided it and did not put any value on it. When receiving a present from bigger people or from a chief, some words of respect were added to the *isibongo*, such as '*Baba*', '*Nkosi yami*', '*E-Jere*'. Often the receiver if he was much pleased with the present added some *izitohozo* to the clan name, if he knew them. Those near him or some further away helped the receiver by thanking loudly after him. If what he received was food, he thanked at the beginning, and after eating the food he thanked again. If such a present of food was given to a body of people, the leader in the company first led the others in

CHAPTER III

HOUSES

361 171 823 WRITING of the social organization of the northern Nguni among the South-eastern Bantu, Mrs. Hoernlé[1] referred to three divisions of the typical village: the *indhunkulu* section where the principal hut was that of the mistress of the village; the *ikhohlo* section on the left-hand side of this hut, and the *inqadi* section on the right. The terminology used by the northern Nguni expressed right and left hand from the point of view of someone looking up from the gate of the kraal. I found that among the Ngoni they used right and left the other way as if the person were at the top of the kraal looking down at the gate, and I have adopted their usage.

171 361 554 Ngoni villages, which were royal villages or the head villages of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, also had a tripartite division into houses related to leading women, as we saw in the village plan in Chapter III of Part I, but there was a major difference between them and the northern Nguni grouping described by Mrs. Hoernlé. In Ngoni villages the *indhunkulu*, the hut at the head of the kraal, was occupied by the mother of the owner of the village, who had 'come out' with him from his father's village. In the right-hand section of the huts round the kraal was the hut of the owner's big wife, and on the left the hut of his next important wife. These three huts, representing three houses, were the focal points of the main divisions of the village. In fact in most villages the owner of the *indhunkulu* had the huts of other widows of her late husband beside her on each side, and the *cigodlo*, or section where the sons of the owner of the village lived, spread over a wide area behind the *indhunkulu* and behind the huts of the two chief wives. The plan used in Chapter III of Part I was necessarily simplified in order to bring out the main points. The grouping of huts in typical Ngoni villages showed varying degrees of elaboration, and it was not always easy at first to trace their connexions with the houses.

592 571 Houses in the Ngoni kingdoms could be considered as divisions of the village, though they did not always cover all the divisions. If we look at the membership of a house, as it was illustrated in a typical Ngoni village, it is clear that it had in it three elements connected by ties of kinship, affinity or association with the owner of the house, who was either a wife or a mother of the male owner of the village. The kinship group related to the *indhunkulu* comprised the male owner of the village, his mother and classificatory mothers with his brothers who had joined him. In the big house and in the second house of his wives the kinship

[1] op. cit. p. 83.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

group consisted of himself and the mother and her children, including her daughters only until they married.

The affinal element in a house consisted of the other wives associated with the owner of the house as co-wives, and the wives of the sons of the owner. Both the kinship group and the affinal group were bound together by their rights in the cattle of the herd which was known as 'the cattle of the house of X'. From that herd were taken cattle for the *lobola* of the wives married after the house was founded, and for the wives of the sons and adopted sons of the house. Into that herd came the cattle received for the marriages of the daughters belonging to the house and the gift cattle sent to wives by their fathers after marriage. When the *lobola* had been fully paid up for a daughter of the house, then her relationship with it ceased and she was thenceforth known as belonging to her husband's mother's house.

Associated with the house in the villages of the Paramounts, the chiefs and the leading *alumuzana* were two other groups of people. One was the *induna* appointed 'to take care of the house' and his family. In the 1930's the *induna* was in charge of the cattle and of the many activities connected with the house, including the organization of male labour in hut-building, in kraal construction and in cultivation; he was consulted by the male members of the house about the selling of cattle and the use of the goods accumulated in the house. The other group associated with the house in pre-European days consisted of captives taken in war and allocated to the house who worked as labourers. The servants who worked for a house in the 1930's assisted with cooking, beer-making and minding the children, and they had huts near that of the owner of the house to which they belonged, placed on the right- or left-hand side of the kraal according to their affiliation with the big house or the second house. Informants said that in the past such association with a house included giving a beast from the herd of the house for the marriage of a servant. The *induna*, through the marriage of his daughters, built up his own herd, which he frequently kept at first with the cattle of the house in the main kraal, later building his own kraal.

A new house began when a man married his big wife. Although at first he built her a hut at the back of his mother's hut in his father's village, as soon as he moved out to his new village after his father's death, the big wife's hut had the next most important site in the kraal after that of the *indlunkulu*, and the second wife had the third place of importance. In some of the larger villages of the central kingdom, the custom of moving out into a new village after the death of the former owner had been given up, partly because of pressure on the land. The house grouping in relation to the siting of huts then became very complex, but the pattern was nevertheless discernible. The two sections under the big house and the *gogo* house, which had formerly divided into two villages, continued to exist together, and at Mcakhatha this dual

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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361 pattern covered two generations including the houses of the former
592 chief and the reigning one.

The houses served several purposes in the organization of village life on the one hand, and on the other, provided an important instrument for regulating succession and inheritance, and for carrying out traditional ceremonies and ritual. It was the eldest son of the second house who would, if the *husungulu* practice was followed, remain behind with the *gogo* village; and he was responsible for conducting traditional ritual and was expected to be able to carry out ceremonial procedure correctly. This was the main function of the *gogo* village and of the man who was head of the male members of the *gogo* house. The corresponding head of the male members of the big house was the owner of the village, and it was his eldest son by his first wife who would normally succeed him as chief or *muhumuzana*. The members of each house had a stake in the property of that house, particularly in the herd of cattle owned by it, and in any goods, such as cloth, bought by the sale of the cattle of the house. The house united the male members who belonged to it through this common ownership of cattle. In Chapter II of Part IV we shall examine further this aspect of belonging to a house.

554 In the organization of village life in villages belonging to chiefs or
592 *ahumuzana* the houses established the status of the wives of the owner
562 of the village, and the status of those of his mothers who had come with him. His mother in the *indlunkulu* hut ranked first among her co-widows. The big wife came next, and the wife of the second house after her. Wives attached to the big house ranked above those attached to the second house.

● 571 The houses fulfilled their most prominent role in the day-to-day
592 activities of the households associated with them. It was in these daily
627 affairs and in planning for future events that the house organization
562 provided the chief channels of authority. The exercise of this authority ranged from instruction in household tasks and emphasis on good standards of housekeeping to settling minor disputes arising from marital quarrels over property and over the custody of children. These minor cases could be settled out of court if the senior women showed that they knew how to listen to complaints and give advice which was accepted, with the result that good relations were restored. The main topics of discussion among the senior women on the verandah of the *indlunkulu* were the ingredients of these minor quarrels and disputes. If, by judicious handling, they could keep the cases out of court, they knew, and so did the village, that their authority was enhanced and their prestige more firmly established.

571 The authority of senior women was further reinforced through their
592 organization of women's labour in household work and in cultivation.
562 This authority in domestic affairs covered a woman's own household and the women and girls attached to it as household servants, the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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households of her co-wives who were junior to her in the house, and the households of her sons' wives. These women also decided when to undertake certain work in cultivation or in harvesting crops, when to brew beer, when to re-polish the floors of huts and the sitting place in front of the huts, when to replenish the stock of cloth, ornaments and beads, baskets and mats, which were part of the wealth of the house. Other occasions for the exercise of authority were attending and superintending women's confinements and the private puberty rite of the girls, advising on matters of health, and supervising the training of children. 562 571 592

All these activities of the owners of the houses were so much part of the day-to-day life of a village that they could pass almost unnoticed unless a detailed analysis were made. The position and authority of owners of houses was, however, immediately evident on ceremonial occasions. These included the pre-marriage ceremony of *umzindo*, which was abandoned after the Europeans came; the series of visits and exchanges leading up to the marriage ceremony, *mtimba*; brewing beer on a number of occasions, for dancing *ngoma* and *ligubo*, for funerals and subsequent ritual shaving, or for entertaining important visitors whose coming was expected so that beer could be prepared in advance. On all such occasions, the courtyard surrounding the *indlunkulu* was a scene of great activity. Men put on their war-dance equipment there; the beer pots were assembled there; meat and blood for feasts were cooked there, while the less important maize porridge (*nsima*) was cooked in subordinate households. From the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* a procession of the *manina* (senior women) led by the owner of the house went out to greet visitors, to go to the beer drink, to take part in the dances, and to perform the ritual connected with births, deaths and marriages. 592 554 571 [178]

Marriage in Ngoni Society

Earlier in this chapter it was said that a new house derived from the marriage of a leading man to his big wife. Since marriage was so closely linked with the continuance and development of houses, and since a new wife when married separated from her own mother's house and became a member of her husband's mother's house, I have included a discussion of marriage in this chapter on houses. 581 182

There were three main principles in Ngoni marriage. It was a binding contract sealed by the exchange of cattle; it established succession in the male line; it formed a link between leading Swazi clans. When we examine in detail the organization of Ngoni marriage we see that its objectives were to build up a series of inter-clan and inter-family relationships. These began with inter-marriage between the leading Swazi clans, in order to strengthen the political and social relationships within that inner circle of Ngoni society. The political allegiance of leading individuals from clans of non-Swazi origin was strengthened by marriage

584 period within which the handing over of cattle was completed varied according to the demands of the girl's father and the capacity of the man's father to find the required number. Informants agreed that when only a few beasts were demanded, the transfer took place before or immediately after the main ceremony. In addition to this formal transfer agreed on and carried out as part of the marriage contract, there was also an informal reciprocal transfer which had two main purposes. At the time of the main ceremony the bride's party brought with them a beast, called *mcando*, which was put into the herd of the bridegroom's mother's house to which the bride would henceforth belong. Later, when the two families ate together for the first time, one or more additional beasts were brought from the girl's former house and put into the herd of the house to which she now belonged. In this way, the new wife began to have cattle in the herd of her mother-in-law's house which were known as hers and which would be taken to form a new herd when she went out with her husband to his *lusungulu* village. As soon as these cattle were in the kraal of the house to which she now belonged, the new wife was able to eat *amasi* in her husband's village, which she had not been allowed to do since leaving her father's village.

571 585 In the series of feasts which marked the stages in the marriage relationship and which facilitated the coming together of the two families, the major part was played by the *indlunkulu* in each village. Many households in the girl's village shared in the preparation of food for the betrothal feast, but it was assembled when cooked and divided out by the woman owner of the *indlunkulu*, assisted by the men and women belonging to the girl's father's house. The next feast was in the man's village, and formed part of the main ceremony, before the bride's party returned to their home. The third feast was to celebrate the 'showing of the hearth-stones', when the young wife was allowed to cook in her husband's village for the first time. The food was collected in her parents' village and carried to her new village, where it was cooked by the women of the house into which she had married, and served in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu*. In the two final feasts—the *umncengo* which was a beer drink, and the *izinyongo*, a feast of beer and food—the beer was brewed and the food collected in the wife's village and cooked and [602] eaten in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* in the husband's village. These two feasts finally broke down the barrier between the parents-in-law and were the first occasion on which they ate and drank beer together.

585 The main ceremony (*mtimba*) had three distinct parts.[1] The first part included the preparation of the girl in her own village (*ukuconga*); the entrance of her party into the man's village and the presenting of snuff

[1] I was present at an *mtimba* in Esondweni in the northern kingdom when the traditional ritual carried out in full was combined with a church wedding. The bridegroom was a man of the Dlamini clan from Swaziland, who had been adopted by Chief Mtwalo and had built a hut in the *cigodlo* of the big house.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(*ukuqandisa*). The middle section, the main part of the ceremony, took place in the husband's village while the bridal party was there. In the last part the bride was left in her new home and three ceremonies marked her gradual integration into her new social group. 585

After the number of cattle had been decided upon in the final stage of the betrothal, the initiative was left to the girl's parents to announce the date of the *mtimba*. Eventually a message was sent through the *gogo* house of the girl's village to say that the bridal party would arrive on a certain day. Before the day came, the girl, now addressed as *umlobokazi* (the bride), was called to the *indlunkulu* in her village. There the leading women, her father's mothers, who had called in her father's sisters, gave her final instructions on how to behave in her new home. Ngoni women said that they were told at this time: 'Our child, we are putting you out of our family. We are handing you over to the other people. You were free and now your freedom is over for you are under other people. Where you are going you will meet with many troubles. They will say of you many things which you did not do. It is good to be patient.' During this instruction the girl cried and so did her mother. On the morning of the departure the girl was dressed in freshly prepared skins, her hair was arranged in the *isihlutu* (chignon) to which the gall bladder of a goat was pinned, and the gall bladder of a cow was tied to her elbow. Then, still sobbing and whimpering, and surrounded by her age mates and the female members of her house, she set out for her bridegroom's village, the young men of her village driving a bullock (*mcando*) as a present from the bride's parents to the mother of the bridegroom, in whose herd it was placed. [292 237] [152]

This part of the ceremony, the entry of the bride's party (*ukuqandisa*), was held to be of great importance, since it was the first time the bride's family and friends as a group had met the husband's family. The bride's procession waited by the kraal gate, singing *mtimba* songs, and every now and then a woman of the bride's party, one of her father's sisters, sang the praises of the bride's clan. As the young men driving the bullock entered the kraal, the bridal party joined them and they began to dance in the kraal. 571 585

Now the first overtures were made between the bride's party and the people of the bridegroom's village. The older women of the village approached the older women of the bride's party, greeting them and exchanging, in the Ngoni phrase, 'words which were good and proud and showed the quickness of their tongues'.

After these advances, the men of the village came into the kraal or gathered by the *indlunkulu*. While the bridal party began to sing with their heads bowed, the chief woman from the *indlunkulu* of the bride's village came forward, bending low, and on her knees presented to the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* of the husband's village a basket containing snuff boxes and beads. She made a speech, in which she said, 'Here is [516 431]

571 our child who is now leaving her home. She has no father now. She is
585 leaving his care. We expect you to cherish her now as her father would.' In reply the *induna* assured them, 'Now she is here we will cherish her, but she must respect the owner of this house and be under her in all things.' Speeches about the absence of disease in either village were then made and the men took snuff. The bridal party and the villagers all remained seated and began to sing *umbedlo* songs (songs to be sung sitting).

585 At the marriage at Ezondweni, where I was present, the girls of the bridal party began to shiver as night fell, and a woman of the village brought a sleeping mat as an invitation to go into the huts. Singing as [533] they went, the women of the bridal party were shown a place to sleep, and the bride slept among them for that night. The bride's party went off the next morning to the church at Elangeni for the church marriage [797] service, while the bridegroom with a party from Ezondweni went by a separate route. In the days before the mission came, they used to spend the morning dancing in the kraal, while the husband's family killed a beast, or more than one, for the feast. During the day's dancing in the kraal, the leader of the village women took the husband's spear, came into the kraal with the village party and touched the bride gently on the shoulder. This was a sign that the bride was now one of the village [152] group, and the correct response was for her party to turn their backs and weep to show their grief because she had left them.

In Ezondweni, when the parties returned from church in the afternoon, a large crowd had assembled. The bridal party danced and sang in the kraal and outside the *indlunkulu* and now and then a leading woman of the bridegroom's village joined in. The bride and two supporting friends were given a mat to sit on, the husband and the *madoda* also sat down, the minister from the church prayed and they sang a hymn. Then the food, bowls of *usima* with large pieces of meat on top, was divided. The names of the divisions of Ezondweni were called out and the leaders of the divisions of that village and of other villages came to get the portions for their people.

Dancing continued after the feast until the bride's party took the bride to the husband's hut and left her there. The next morning the [533] bridal party returned home singing. Formerly the bride came to the door of the hut where she had slept with her husband, and called out the praise-names of her father. She then sang the *ummekezo* song (song of the deflowering) and the husband stood in the doorway behind her. Then he went into the kraal and sat facing the bridal party, who were singing. When the bride came in with a gourd of water there was silence while she poured water for him to wash his hands, mouth and eyes. This was the first public act of service for the husband after the consummation of the marriage and ended the main part of the ceremony, after which the bridal party went home.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

her daughters had died, and the herd of cattle was either inherited by the senior daughter's eldest son or divided among the sons of different daughters. Cewa informants said that quarrels constantly arose over the ownership of cattle, and two modern developments—the spread of *utengwa*[1] marriage and of a patrilineal form of *mbumba* with its repercussions on cattle acquisition and disposal—caused further tensions in Cewa society.

The role which cattle played in Ngoni social life partly depended on the structure and inter-relationships of the Ngoni social groups. The house and the family within the larger village unit were so organized that group ownership and group disposal of cattle caused no permanent friction. There were arguments about the disposal of cattle, but they were temporary and relatively trivial. The strength of tradition in the concept of ownership, and in the values and attitudes inherent in cattle-owning and keeping, was firmly established and was related to modern needs by the ingenuity of the Ngoni in manipulating traditional practices to suit new situations. Cattle therefore strengthened the integration of existing social units, and helped to preserve that unity and cohesion in Ngoni society which the ancestors were said to commend and to wish for. On this plane of conformity to a required pattern, cattle influenced the living and their behaviour. They also, through the structure and function of the houses, belonged to the spirit who was guarded in a particular house. As we shall see in Chapter IV, the ritual formula of address to the ancestor at the sacrifice of a beast was always 'Here is your beast . . . Here is your meat.' The living and the dead were joined therefore in the common ownership of a herd or part of a herd. The actual practices in social and ritual life where cattle were concerned, and the ideas and concepts from which the practices arose, will take up most of this chapter and form the necessary prelude to the further analysis of the ancestor cult.

Ownership of cattle and care of herds

'The war of the cattle-tax' was the name given in the central kingdom to the installation of dipping tanks in the 1930's and the levying of a tax of a shilling per head of cattle on all cattle-owners. The attempt by the Government to focus responsibility for dipping and to collect the taxes due brought out clearly the difficulties of applying English conceptions of ownership to the Ngoni. In the English meaning of the word ownership, a man can claim as his possession cattle which he has bought or inherited, and their offspring. This individual ownership means that he alone has the right to sell the animals or their milk, to regard the profits from such sale as his, and at any time to kill an animal for meat. He can will them to his descendants or to anyone he chooses after his

[1] Marriages in which the man took his wife to live in his village, but did not give *lobola* for her.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of
living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and
the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We
shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the
setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be in-
terpreted according to the Ngoni social organization,
sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my
earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and
who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle
of people forming a young child's contacts was from the
beginning much wider than the individual family which a
child was born into. When he began to run about and to
pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was
as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni
adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when neces-
sary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related
families in other villages, with all members of the same clan [602]
living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship
and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads
were also inseparable from the political links between the [631]
people and their territorial chief, and between the whole
people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-
Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the
villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their
children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence
in most villages there were sharp distinctions between stand- [183]
ards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni
families.

854 house was still killed and eaten. The cloth came out of the
[432] store of cloth bought when cattle were sold, and kept in the hut of the senior woman of the father's house.

Visit to the mother's home

593 If, as was always the case in earlier days, the mother of the
574 new baby had come from a distant village, she did not see her own mother or her relatives, and they did not see the child until it was several weeks old, and considered by the senior women strong enough to undertake a journey. Then a visit involving much ceremony took place, for the wife's
[606] mother-in-law headed the party. The stiff and formal relations between the two sets of 'in-laws' had been eased slightly through the series of feasts and exchanges which preceded and followed the marriage ceremony. Face-to-face
[571] intercourse was, however, still very formal between the two families, and this first visit with the grandchild was in one sense an act of condescension on the part of the husband's family, since the child belonged to them. It was also a human and natural recognition of the eagerness of the young mother to see her own mother and display her child. Word was sent in advance by a messenger from the husband's village to announce the visit, so that the wife's family could make due preparation.

The main object of this visit was, in the Ngoni phrase, 'to show the child at its mother's home'. The young mother and
[606] baby, with her mother-in-law in the place of honour, sat outside the big house of the girl's father's family. Her father
[431] and his male relatives came to salute the child and to give it
[603] presents of beads, and in modern times small gifts of money as well. If the girl's father owned many cattle, he killed a beast, and they feasted that night, and the visitors carried home meat with them as well as the presents to the child. It was all very formal and correct, except when the young mother escaped for a short time to the circle of her sisters and girlhood friends, and exchanged confidences with them.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

535 The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called
● 571 the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group,
[578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

865 The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

157 One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect-
538 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell-
555 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

463 foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group
177 involved the earning, spending and sharing of money in-
[434] comes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered
[571] opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

624 In local government and in the courts, which formed an
693 integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom, ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain
[827] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial
[562] ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

622 In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived 361
in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a [585]
central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut
and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts
were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a [592]
few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership
of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an [554]
important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and
their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped [727]
into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. 621
Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates
of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or [624]
his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who
were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions [622]
made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The
village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman
or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him.
Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the
headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where 631
there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions,
villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential [728]
system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the [171]
Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same 631
cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to 571
establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in
importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their
clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be
contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves
as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself
affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who
established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained
a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance.
The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters,
a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relation-
ships of superordination and subordination between persons remained
the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.

[2] *Cigawa*, pl. *vigawa*, from *ku-gawa*, to divide.

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
428 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[724] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount
[581] Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was, in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[178] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife
602 fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors. 581 602 554

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system. 621 581 571 [611] [591] [554]

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[20] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere [121] 582 [114] [561] [643]

[20] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The recent captives

855 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband,
593 wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw
631 attention to two features of the residential system which were not,
554 at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man
591 lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features
[178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which
581 agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their
613 own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the
[582] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this.
[178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

[P.17]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass shacks built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery, and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1898 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the looting of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chiefdoms reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1898, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. *The punishment of adultery*

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognized other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognized and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. *Labour migration*

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Rhodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one mining town to the next, sleeps for a night with a prostitute and lives for years with a concubine. What is at least relatively permanent is his relationship to his wife and to his children by her. Men still hope that they will be able to gather their children about them as they grow old, and build up new villages so that their names will be remembered. Status is still measured in terms of dependants, and the most certain of all dependants are legitimate children. Ngoni marriage no longer automatically ensures that a man will have custody of his children, but without marriage he has no hope at all of retaining them.

602 parents have different fields of interest, but the two fields overlap in the well-being of the married couple. At first there is much formality between them, and intermediaries are used whenever possible. Later they become more friendly. In the setting of the village meeting some parents appear to see themselves as allied in wisdom with the opposite parents against the foolishness of the younger generation whose immature behaviour has been the cause of the meeting. At other times, they may act to defend the rights and happiness of their child against the claims of the rival kin group. We have seen in the story of Daniel and Deborah [21] how yet another alignment can occur when both sets of parents support one spouse against the other. There is no simple way in which these different alignments can be predicted, for they are in fact the outcome of
829 the continually changing pattern of social relationships within the local community. In general, all people wish to preserve the existing configuration of relationships, to support the interests of their children and to maintain the values of their society. In any particular situation, these goals may be mutually incompatible, and there is
• 571 no over-riding principle, such as agnatic descent or a state-enforced code of law, to which all decisions can be referred. The tenuousness of the cohesion of the local group of kin is reflected in the varying alignments of parents in marital quarrels.

578 We tend to think of quarrels as socially disruptive, and in so far as
571 they are not resolved they do lead to the break-up of existing groupings and the formation of new ones. Yet from another point of view, quarrelling is as much a cohesive process as is common participation in marriage ceremonial. Indeed, just as we have seen already [22] that a ceremony of marriage may be a vehicle for expressing hostility between kin groups as well as recognition of common interest, so a quarrel may lead to increased solidarity between kin groups as well as express hostility between spouses. By taking steps to resolve a quarrel, one kin group is brought into face-to-face contact with the other; there is visiting between their villages and mutual hospitality in somewhat the same way as in marriage ceremonial. The two groups may join to censure the erring spouse. The censured person may feel deserted by his (or her) parents but his father and his father-in-law may have come closer together.

602 The formality that characterizes relations between parents at the beginning of a marriage gradually disappears. A man or woman can always seek shelter and hospitality at the hut of a *child's parent-in-law* and in the final ceremony of marriage, when the married couple enter the wife's mother's hut, the two pairs of parents sit together and discuss the merits and limitations of their respective
835 offspring. It is regarded as incestuous for a man to marry a woman whom he calls *child's parent-in-law*. By so doing his son's wife

[21] See above, p. 82.
[22] See above, pp. 76f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 the parents of the couple. If the parents are not available other kinsfolk can substitute for them, but in general it is a man's or woman's father who represents the interests of their local group of kin in situations in which these interests are contrasted with those of the spouse's kin. It is the woman's father who receives all the different payments made in marriage, and he is free to keep the payments or to distribute them among his relatives as he thinks fit. If a woman's father is dead or away at work the payments are made to her brother or her father's brother or her mother or some other relative who, in this situation, is prepared to assume the responsibilities that would otherwise be borne by him. Similarly, most men find the money for marriage payments themselves, but if a man is too poor to do this, it is first to his father that he turns for assistance. If, however, his father is dead or poverty-stricken or unwilling to provide the money, he can ask some other relative for help. Here we are dealing with situations in which the father or his substitute [591] is acting as the representative of the loosely structured local group of kin in situations in which his own children are specifically involved. There are, however, certain specific kinship relations which we can separate out from the general operation of local kinship and which impinge on the marriage relationship. A grandmother has a particular interest in the sexual aspect of marriage. The eldest brother acts as intermediary between a man and his father in the marriage negotiations. Younger brothers are interested in the disposal of widows. Children have rights in the property of a married couple. These are more specific obligations and rights, and while it is possible to find substitutes if the genealogically correct relatives are not there, there is more rigidity in these matters than in those in which the initiative lies with the local group of kinsfolk whoever they may be.

603 We have mentioned that the grandmother who rears a girl may be in charge of her seclusion at puberty (p. 32). Even when some other old woman is in charge, the girl's grandmother has some responsibility for her sexual behaviour. If a man does not sleep with his wife she complains to his grandmother, and although a man is not instructed in sexual matters by his grandmother, he can discuss them more freely with her than with any other kinswoman. Grandmothers sometimes play an important part in the resolution of a marital quarrel in the village, and they often act as midwives. It is a man's grandmother who complains to him if his wife is not bearing children, and it is to her that he may turn for advice about medicines. In the courts, however, grandmothers do not play so important a role. They are women, and important women use their influence more in village situations than in court, where men are in [592] control and male councillors look to a man's brothers and father for confirmation of evidence.

593 There is considerable formality in the relationship between a man and his own parents and this formality appears to be greater if

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

teach that the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of marriage payments is no concern of the Church, while the D.R.C.M. have a rule that bridewealth shall not be paid although this rule does not seem to be enforced. In general, in the village and in the court, the obligations of Christians are thought of as supplementary to their obligations as ordinary men and women, and Christian ceremonies to some extent supplement, but do not replace, traditional ceremonies. Thus there may be a church wedding in addition to a gall bladder ceremony, and a divorce in the eyes of the mission following after a divorce in court. Pressure has sometimes been put on chiefs and court members to act in accordance with the teaching of the mission, as in a past attempt on the part of the Catholic White Fathers to prevent courts from granting divorces to Catholics.[29] This type of intervention has applied particularly to courts where the chief was himself a Catholic. The Administration has opposed this pressure, and does not itself recognize any legal significance in religious ceremonies.

14. Spouses and kinsfolk

We may see the married couple in the middle of a system of relationships which connects them with persons and institutions each interested in their behaviour and in the maintenance of the marriage tie. By living peacefully together, by producing children, and by fulfilling their obligations to their kinsfolk and affines, they can, with discretion, satisfy the divergent claims implicit in this system of relationships. If they begin to quarrel, their kinsmen and neighbours attempt in the first instance to reconcile them. Only when this is impossible do those interested in the marriage begin to split up into groups with differing interests whose rival claims must be weighed by the court. Even then it is hoped that reconciliation will be possible, that a wife will return to her husband after she has paid him damages for adultery, and a husband return to his wife after many years of neglect. Whereas in the old days marriage was related to a fairly definite residential system, and rights and obligations were clear cut, nowadays the forces holding together a body of kinsfolk are weaker, and the danger of disruption of the group because of quarrelling is greater. The genealogical composition of the group is more variable and alters from year to year. Marriage, as one of the mechanisms by which local groups are built up, is part of the general political process, and is affected by inter-group and inter-personal relations that at first sight appear to have little to do with marriage. We observed that tribal and religious affiliation are significant criteria in a possible spouse. The divergent interests of less permanent groups, such as cliques and factions, influence choice of marriage partner and behaviour within marriage, as we have seen in the stories of Absolom and Mary (p. 60) and Amos and Eve (p. 28). Conversely, marital interests affect non-

[29] *Cf.* Richards, op. cit. pp. 83-4, for similar events among the Bemba.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 marital behaviour, as for example when a new-acquired wife
593 persuaded her husband to seek work with her in Southern Rhodesia
so that she might enjoy his prosperity to the exclusion of her senior
602 co-wives who were left in the village.

511 Within the kinship system itself, ties of affinity compete with and are affected by ties of consanguinity. A quarrel between a married couple may lead to further quarrelling between affinally-linked relatives, and a dispute between a man and his wife's relatives may lead to a quarrel with his wife. Yet on the other hand a man who merely finds a woman and marries her without reference to her relatives is uncertain of his rights in the marriage and cannot appeal to her relatives if she misbehaves. There can be no ceremonies of marriage, and he must resort to subterfuge to get a marriage certificate. If he sends his children to his wife's parents to be cared for, they will accept them, but by so doing they do not accept him as a son-in-law. His wife's parents will deny that they know his name and if he takes his wife to court, they will mock him by saying 'We do not know this man'. Irrespective of marriage payments, a man cannot be validly and effectively married in the rural area without establishing his relationship to his affines. For a woman this is not always so, for her husband may have come from afar to work in the area, or he may earlier have broken away from his kinsmen. But without the support of his own kinsmen a man is dependent on his wife's kin for assistance in the marriage and, though the marriage may last, he is still one man living alone in a strange village.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.105]

CHAPTER V

SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS

1. Old and new marriage

WE HAVE described marriage at two periods in Ngoni history, as it was in the 1890's and as it is now. The differences we have found between the two periods are not due to chance except in the sense in which we may speak of all historical incidents as being partly due to chance and partly determined by the limiting conditions imposed by the past. Changes in the field of Ngoni marriage have been paralleled by changes in other aspects of Ngoni social life, have been influenced by other changes and have in turn influenced them. Throughout Ngoni history men and women have always married, but the society in which they married has changed. Marriage in the time of peace was appropriate, more or less, to the general ordering of social life in those days, and modern marriage is appropriate, again more or less, to the social structure of today.

Our task is then a threefold one. We have to show the relationship between old marriage and the rest of the old society, a similar relationship between modern marriage and modern society, and the process by which the transition from one set of conditions to the other has come about. We have outlined in Chapter II some of the internal and external factors responsible for this transition, and the nature of the material available to us on the 1890 period has led us, in Chapter I, to describe the old system largely in analytic terms. In this chapter we shall attempt to clarify our picture of the past in the light of an analysis of modern marriage.

In the old days the residential system provided the framework for political and lineage ties. Marriage was a legitimate means whereby children were recruited into segments of the system. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of fertility from the woman's kin to her husband's kin. Adultery was punishable by death, and divorce was rare. Affinal ties cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system, but while these ties were important, a man could not transfer his allegiance to his wife's or to his mother's group. A man who quarrelled with his kinsmen could not move to another village to live, but could only hive off to form a dependent but recognizable cluster of his own, which still remained part of the same residential segment.

The material apparatus belonging to the system, that is, the great villages with hundreds of huts and central cattle byres, was to a large extent destroyed in 1898 by the British. A few important people in the system were killed, and many of the cattle looted. With the establishment of British rule, it was physically possible for the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have been discussing it. Divorce took place because the man, a recently captured Kunda, ran away back to his former tribe leaving his wife, daughter of one of Mpezeni's lieutenants, behind in her father's village. In 'the time of peace' marriages were stable, with or without payment. The wealthy men were the politically important men, and indeed Wiese's assertion that men married off their daughters so as to gain the maximum number of cattle[8] may be based on the behaviour of socially ambitious fathers in what was largely an upward-mobile society. Political affiliation effected by marriage was ratified by a transfer of wealth appropriate to its importance in the general field of political and social relations. Divorce frequency and kinship structure were the same for rich and poor, aristocrats and captives, and were neutral factors in determining the amount of marriage payment.

The second phase began immediately after the war of 1898 and lasted until about 1930. At the beginning of this period the tribe as a whole was poorer than it has been before or since. Many cattle were looted in the war and for a long time there was little money in circulation. The majority of marriages without payment were contracted during this phase, and it seems reasonable to associate this in part with the poverty of the people. It is difficult to make any precise estimate of divorce frequency at this time, although we know that many Cewa and Nsenga women who had been married before 1898 deserted their husbands and returned home when British control was established. There does not seem to be any evidence for supposing that at this period women moved from one husband to another within the confines of the Ngoni kingdom more quickly than they do now. It is perhaps safe to say that the low level of payments was due partly to poverty but also partly to the general uncertainty about the future, about the kind of society which the White Administration was building for the Ngoni. Evans-Pritchard has stressed that 'It is morals that censure divorce and law that refuses to recognise grounds for divorce which ensure the stability of the union of husband and wife.'[9] The laws and moral code that had been enforced by the old chieftainship had been shaken by the defeat of 1898. The payment of bridewealth had defined legitimate expectations of behaviour, obligations and rights, within an organized system of social relations which had been shattered. While many Ngoni must still have regarded marriage with payment of bridewealth as morally right and desirable, they must also have been aware of the greatly increased risk they were running when making these payments, even if they had the cattle to make them. Rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* which were socially recognized but could not be enforced through the machinery of the State were hardly

[8] See above, p. 3, footnote 3.
[9] Evans-Pritchard, 'Social character of bride-wealth, with special reference to the Azande', *Man*, xxxiv (1934), p. 174.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This attitude of resignation, while still very common, has to some extent been replaced by a more constructive attitude among members of the Native Authority bureaucracy. Chiefs, councillors and other officials have considerable political power and are encouraged to use it by the Administration, whose policy it is to strengthen the hand of the Native Authority.[18] Court members introduce changes in law with some confidence, although this is still done under the guise of a re-enforcement of a forgotten traditional law. Chiefs, under increasing pressure from their people and the Administration, endeavour to take action to modify social life in their areas. As yet political action is not very sophisticated, and the workings of the Administration are not well understood. In those fields of activity where Administrative interest is strongest, such as price control, food production, and the amalgamation of villages, the Ngoni response tends to be in moral rather than in political terms. It is wrong that the price of maize should be so low, the good man knows best how to cultivate his own garden, people in a village must live peacefully together. By contrast, in the field of marriage, where the Administration is comparatively disinterested, and where the wishes of the Administration, missions and Ngoni do to a large extent coincide, the bureaucracy has been able to act in a more positive manner. The thirty shillings law is one of the rare legislative acts of the Ngoni chiefs and people, and it is significant that the law was not made until 1944, fifteen years after the passing of the Native Authorities Ordinance. It is said that the law was made so that women could be punished for adultery in the same way as men. At the meeting at which the law was agreed upon, it was also decided that bridewealth should be a minimum of six pounds or one cow. Whereas the ruling about legalization payments is still remembered and increasingly followed, the bridewealth rule has been largely forgotten. This attempt to check adultery by increasing the legalization payment was in general agreement with the wishes of the Administration and more or less with the wishes of the missions. It was possible to envisage a decrease in adultery due to a clarification of rights *in uxorem* without any other major structural changes, whereas the re-introduction of bridewealth as a universal payment could only be envisaged in terms of a return to the patrilineal virilocal residential system of 'the time of peace'. It would hardly have been possible for the Native Authority to have restored the old system had they wished to do so. Ngoni village life is now part of a system wider than the chiefdom and there are other ways of acquiring wealth and status than within the residential system and at the pleasure of the Paramount Chief.

11. Marriage in an omnidirectional kinship system

We may characterize the change from the old order to the new

[18]Cf. Barnes, op. cit. 'Some aspects of political development . . .'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 5
Mpezeni

as one from a graded segmentary society organized on a basis of patrilineal descent and modified by political promotion to a society of villages organized on a basis of omnidirectional kinship. In the past a man lived in the same place as his father and in charge of the segment allocated to him by his father. Now a man lives where he can find relatives of one kind or another who may be related to him agnatically, cognatically, affinally, or by any combination of these ways. He is not even restricted to consanguineal relatives, as in cognatic kinship systems, for he can affiliate himself to some person who is linked cognatically neither to him or to any of his potential descendants, as when he goes to live with his father's wife's mother's brother. Genealogical connexion can be traced along all possible paths and there are no mechanisms by which one path is automatically favoured or by which the length of a path is restricted. In consequence the genealogical constitution of any local group of relatives is complex, and every man is a potential recruit to many local groups. He selects between the numerous possibilities open to him on the basis of his own inclinations and in response to the various pressures exerted on him by his siblings, his parents, his wife, her parents, and others. Once he has made his choice he can always change his mind and move elsewhere if he finds his neighbours irksome. His wealth, either in cattle or money, is his own and he can take it with him when he moves. There are no rights in land (with the one exception of dry season gardens) which might otherwise tie him to one particular spot. As with residence, so with marriage payments, the formal and informal procedures of marriages, and the values associated with them. In all, considerable variation is tolerated. Indeed, we may well regard variation as a necessity in this system, for every man is subject to a mass of potential conflicting claims and he cannot possibly honour them all simultaneously. Variation occurs not because of different practices by various sections of the population but rather because of different individual decisions. A man decides for himself whether or not he will pay bridewealth, or take a hoeing party to his wife's mother's garden, or be suspended from the sacraments for marrying a second wife. Yet although he makes these choices himself, he is all the time subject to social pressure from kinsfolk and neighbours who will be affected by his decisions and who therefore try to influence them. A woman is not quite so free as a man, but she too can make many decisions for herself, and her relatives must appeal to her if they wish to influence her, for they cannot force her against her will. Man and wife living together are in a unique relationship which is personal and non-transferable, yet they live in the midst of kinsfolk and the well-being of one relative is the concern of all. The quarrels of a married couple are a danger to the cohesion of the local group in which they live, while the longer they live together, fertile and peaceful, the greater the local solidarity.

614 a hierarchy of rank expressed in the clan names, and this rank is
563 evident in the position of houses on a village site, and the degree of authority exercised by the clans and the respect[1] accorded to them. In effect, all those whose ancestors were absorbed before the final
101 break up of the main Ngoni group are recognized as having some
563 claim to the name Ngoni. The rest, that is the clans found in the areas where the Ngoni finally settled are, or rather were, regarded as conquered or slave people.

101 We have seen, however, that there is a much wider sense in which the term Ngoni is used—that is, by all who live under the rule of the
641 Paramount Chief. This extended usage is due to the prestige and
186 honour in which the stricter meaning of Ngoni is held. It was illus-
[643] trated in the instance of the Nyasaland men in Johannesburg, who all claimed to be Ngoni because they had discovered at once that the name commanded respect among the mixture of tribes to be found on the mines. *Indunas* and other leading men sometimes make use of this wider connotation when boasting about the large numbers of people owning allegiance to the Ngoni Paramount Chief, compared with the other petty chieftainships. 'All those in the country of Mpezeni are Ngoni. All are his people.' At the same time they make it clear that there is a distinction between the real Ngoni and the other subjects of the Paramount—a distinction which formerly was much sharper than it is to-day. All are the people of the Paramount, it is true, but in old days the majority of the non-Ngoni were called slaves. To this day the Ngoni when angry may call out to some one, 'Chewa, Chewa', implying 'Slave, slave', and be hauled to the chief's court for insulting language. There the chief will take pains to point out that there are no slaves to-day, and that no Ngoni must 'spoil the country' by insulting the people of the Paramount.

101 It is, I think, clear that there is a connotation in which the term Ngoni can be used with some degree of scientific accuracy—that is, to cover all those clans which are not belonging to the local tribes, or, in an even stricter sense, the clans of indubitably southern origin.

[196] [571] [1] This word 'respect' is constantly in use among the Ngoni. It implies both 'honour' and 'fear', and they sometimes use one word and sometimes the other. It really means, 'to give a person his due', that is, to behave towards him (or her) in the manner which his rank requires.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [848]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name *mulu* for a man becomes *mwulu* for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimulo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage. [606] The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a 593 matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it 691 is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the 578 brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on [586] grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although 593 they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other. 571 In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative 578 in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a [684] woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

boys and young men, so long as they were in the village. Ngoni men insisted that their children should be correctly trained, and they were contemptuous of Cewa and other tribal groups who left it 'all to the women'. The handing on of correct behaviour by the mother-in-law to her daughter-in-law was, they considered, essential, and one of the reasons why young men in the central kingdom liked to 'marry up' was that they could count on the careful grounding in all the canons of behaviour which their wives had received. 867 [186 563]

CHAPTER V

AGE SETS

THE Ngoni brought with them to Nyasaland an age-set system akin to that among the South-eastern Bantu, which was an important element in their social structure. In pre-European days the division into cattle-herders or pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors or senior men, regulated the tasks and responsibilities of boys and men in other spheres besides those of warfare. At the beginning of this section, when reviewing age sets as one of the constituent forms of Ngoni social organization, I said that some features of an age-set system had persisted. In comparison with age-grouping in the other Nyasaland tribes it was distinctively Ngoni in form; it influenced behaviour patterns in inter-group and intra-group relations; and in it were recognized certain responsibilities and activities belonging to the different groups based on age. 561

Among the distinctively Ngoni elements in the age-set system were the private nature of the puberty ritual and the absence of initiation schools; the organization of boys' life in the *laweni*; the strong ties between age mates up to marriage; the selective principle in designating senior men and women as *madoda* and *manina*; and a different kind of selective principle in the formation of friendship pacts between individuals of the same age. In observing the role of age sets in Ngoni village society, the two main groups which were constantly in evidence as groups were the older boys and girls and the senior men and women. These groups not only carried out activities together, but also showed evidence of the strength of the internal ties linking members of an age set. There were, however, no sharp edges to these groups, either in terms of actual age or physiological development or of exclusive membership. The following list of terms applied to age sets in the two main Ngoni areas shows primarily the difference in designation between males and females according to broad age grouping, but it illustrates also the fact that the terminology applied to the age sets did not always coincide [881] [572]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 affairs unless they were exceptionally vigorous mentally and physically,
888 or the kind of dominating personality who could not be overlooked. It was evident also that individuals of weak character or evil disposition were not included in the group. I saw one or two such persons who bore a bad reputation in village society turned away from a senior group which was talking over a difficult village affair, with the caustic comment: 'Who is that worthless one? We cannot know him.' On the other hand, on social occasions when food or beer was being dispensed, all the old ones and the less reputable ones would be given their share, though sometimes with a cutting remark about the people who never missed a party but never did any work.

Selection in the senior age sets was intended to show that only persons who could be trusted, that is who were of known good character, were qualified to supervise the growing up of boys and girls, for whom the village elders as a group felt responsible. The maintenance of Ngoni standards of behaviour in young people was in the hands of this older group, who could and did exercise authority over and above that of the family and house. There were no more ardent supporters of Ngoni behaviour patterns than some of the older men and women of Ntumba clans in the central kingdom who had been brought up in the houses of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and were recognized as *manina* and *madoda* in their villages.

561 Among the younger people below the group of elders, it was common
576 to hear them address each other as *ntanga yami*, or *mnzanga*, 'my age mate'. Boys shouted it at each other on the cattle ground, young women called to each other in those terms when pounding maize, and when on a visit as an *ngoma* dance team it was a frequent form of address among the youths and girls. There was inherent in that form of address an ease of relationship, an absence of seniority or inferiority, and an acknowledgement of a tie which went beyond that of the family or house or clan. It was most commonly used within a village, but it was sometimes used between young people of different villages.

561 Within these groups of youths and girls and among young married
572 men and women, there was a recognized friendship relation, *cibwenzi*, which existed as a rule between pairs of individuals of the same sex and age. It was sometimes a continuation of a playmate companionship; sometimes an expression of the need of a young boy in a *laweni* or a young married woman for a confidante or sympathizer. Most often it was a spontaneous specialized liking for another person, expressed invariably through an exchange of small gifts and generally of confidences, and often by going off together to bathe or cut firewood or catapult small birds. Such friendships were said as a rule to be permanent, though girls and women sometimes referred contemptuously to someone as 'She was my friend. Now she hates me and does not give me anything.' The decision to go off in search of work was often taken

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

by two youths who were friends and who announced their intention, and then were joined by other pairs. 561 572

These forms of an age-set system which the Ngoni brought with them from the south were still in the 1930's a significant element in village life. The greatest change had occurred in the cessation of warfare and, with the enforcement of peace, the recognized stages mentioned in the beginning of this chapter had to a large extent disappeared. Though the boys and men were no longer divided into pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors, the institution of the *lawenì* and the important role played by the *madoda* were two distinctive elements in Ngoni village life. So also was the form and content of the training given to Ngoni girls of Swazi clans, which largely determined the role played by the *manina* in village affairs. 561 178

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

843 little children. They are not able to hear those things which
593 belong to pregnancy.' The men on their part accepted the
562 role of being ignorant of what was coming, though they were generally aware of it. It was an elaborate piece of role-playing, standardized by custom, emphasizing the separation of the men's and women's worlds in Ngoni life, and giving control and authority into the experienced hands of the senior women.

843 The Ngoni culture pattern forbade the wife to tell her
606 mother-in-law herself about her condition. She had, as so
572 often in the Ngoni pattern, to approach first a friend who was her confidante, who might be another young wife or a helper in the household. This friend had to tell her mother-in-law, the future paternal grandmother of the baby, who was destined to play a big part in the child's upbringing.

During the months of pregnancy a Ngoni woman carried on with her normal work in the household, including cooking for her husband. If she feared a miscarriage, and suffered from what was called 'a shaking inside', she stayed quietly in the hut, and, saying that she had a headache, asked her husband to call her friend. Then the friend told the mother-in-law who sent for a 'doctor' to bring medicines 'to make the inside not shake'. A young Ngoni woman did not expect
843 to have miscarriages, and feared that her husband's relatives
152 would blame her home for not giving her enough food before marriage to make her strong and healthy in child-bearing.

The fear of invidious comparisons with her own home and upbringing also operated when the wife felt herself near to labour. She would keep on working up to the last minute, for if she told her friend that her time was come, and the friend summoned the senior women, they came to examine her. Should they find on examination that she was not about to deliver, they looked at her and said, 'What are you afraid of? Did you call us for fear?' The young wife was ashamed of being thought fearful, both for her own reputation and

606 handle them, as well as how to conform to required behaviour. So she put up with present restrictions for the sake of future peace and harmony. Her lot was to live there with her husband's people, and the birth of the child was a strong link in the chain which bound her to them. Meantime she [572] found some relief in her friends among the other young wives, and particularly with the one in whom she placed her confidence, and who acted as her go-between with her mother-in-law.

Wife to husband

593 Throughout the intricate and often vexing relations with her mother-in-law and other senior women, the husband-wife relationship remained for the young mother a steadying and constant factor. She had been attracted to him in courtship; [58] she had had the chance of accepting or refusing him when the marriage proposals were made; the cattle had been handed over to her father to seal the marriage contract. For all these and other reasons she held on to her love for her husband and her relationship with him, whatever overbearing behaviour might be shown her by his relatives. Hence she took care of his possessions in the hut they shared, helping the senior women to send them out of the hut just before the confinement. She redirected food towards him when it was sent to her during her confinement, gladly going short herself in order to prove her devotion. She was glad that after coming out of the hut, having a nurse girl meant that she could keep her body and her clothes clean and sweet-smelling and therefore pleasing to him. She was happy when the ritual cleansing of the hut and of herself made it possible for her to cook for her husband again and endear him to her by that means. When weaning the child caused her pain and frustration, there was at the same time a deep satisfaction that full intercourse was now officially permitted [834] between her and her husband, and that they were free to have another child.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

All of them made their own axes, knobkerries and catapults for hunting. Some were interested in music and made shepherds' pipes, or one-stringed lyres, or hand pianos of metal strips affixed to a wooden base. They composed their own songs and airs for these instruments. Others showed ingenuity in making elaborate models of lorries and aeroplanes, or in carving heads of animals. Others liked to weave fibre into the wide-brimmed hats some herd-boys wore.

More significant still for their future social relationships, they began now to choose their own intimate friend and to form the friendship pacts which were characteristic of Ngoni society, and regarded by adults as important in the child's development. In the friendship pacts, especially those between boys, there was no implied or manifest restraint. They could have 'joking relations', and hence say outrageous things to each other. They could quarrel and make it up, and defy each other's wishes and decisions, without a final breach. The relationship between friends often lasted into later adult life, and was probably all the stronger for the occasional lapses and outbursts, and by the fact that in the daily companionship of friends the burden of observing 'respect' did not oppress them.

The boys' dormitory

The hut known as the boys' dormitory and the whole system of living which it represented was a traditional feature of Ngoni village life. In their culture it had three main purposes. Formerly, when as they said 'War was our school', it was the place where boys slept and lived together, and where they learned to defend themselves and to obey authority. It was in a sense the preparatory school for the regiment, and the herding of cattle was the basis of the curriculum. Once a boy went to sleep in a dormitory he never left it until he married, unless he was seriously ill. In the days of warfare, he learned in the dormitory and out herding the cattle, a knowledge of the bush and its wild life and of his fellows, and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when asked questions. They took their school work seriously in order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be transferred at their marriage would be greater according to whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daughters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. They and their companions, according to their growth and strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water, grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household, where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores. As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time with the young children, or washing themselves and their clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rubbing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classificatory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage. The friend was always from another compound and of a leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream together. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

535 The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or
571 near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group,
[578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

865 The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

157 One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect-
538 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell-
555 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 support those of his colleagues. However, chiefs and others do
[661] sometimes manage to play off one administrator against another where there are differences of interest between different departments of the Administration, and occasionally appeals by Ngoni chiefs to high Administrative officials against the actions of their juniors are successful. It is easier for Ngoni to exploit the much greater differences of interest between the different sections of the non-African community, officials, missions, planters and European and Indian traders.

648 In the early years of this century it appears that the chiefs were
662 approached by labour recruiters, planters, and missionaries who wished to gain their favour and utilize this to their own advantage. It is difficult to gauge to what extent this practice continues. There are one or two recent instances where the missions have clearly
[797] recognized the importance to them of securing the goodwill of an Ngoni in high authority, and it would also appear that some high-placed Ngoni have utilized their position to gain from the missions services which might not otherwise have been so readily available to them. With the cessation of labour recruiting there has been no
[464] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[466] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[574] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 delegated a certain amount of responsibility, such as the collection
668 of licence fees or the holding of a court not recognized by the Administration but supplied by the county clerk with the apparatus of official forms. The would-be chief then argues that the rural district in which he lives has always been distinct from the rest of the county and that it is too far for the people in it to attend at the county court. No attempt of this kind since 1920 has been successful, although the recent dispersal of villages into reopened land outside
[693] the reserves has increased the distances some litigants have to travel to the county court, and hence the number of disputes referred to these unrecognized local leaders has increased.

4. *The chief and his people*

634 The chief interacts with his people in a variety of situations. He receives their presents of beer and other valuables, he presides at county meetings, and organizes the royal hunts. He visits them in their villages when there are important celebrations and festivities and they go to him with their requests and complaints.

634 Ngoni offer beer as one of their principal expressions of
574 hospitality, and in a formal beer party the ordered pattern of the
273 social structure is acted out in the distribution and dispensation of
[554] the various jars and bowls of beer.[11] One traditional obligation is to provide a jar of beer for the head of the segment. Everyone belongs, or belonged, to a hierarchy of segments so that there were many people who ought to be honoured in this way at every party. In practice, since beer is heavy to carry, few jars move outside the village in which they are brewed, but a distant political superior is sometimes called in to a village to attend a beer party at which he will be honoured in this way. In the chief's own village the chief lives close at hand and beer is provided in much the same way as for the headman in an ordinary village. When beer is brewed by important people in the capital and regal villages they often call the chief to come and visit them and enjoy their hospitality. The chief is not so frequently called to beer in commoner villages, but on an important occasion such as the formal installation of a village official, or the formal announcement that a village has moved to a new site, it is appropriate to invite the chief to attend. A chief may
634 also be honoured by his affines with beer brewed for him in the
554 same way as any other man, but there is some disagreement about the appropriateness of this, for the chief 'has exceeded all others'

[11] See Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 217-19, for the rules of and attitudes towards beer drinking.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
693 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
574 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The
643 man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
484 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
167 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni
567 as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
619 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of
571 the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market.

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area.

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

162 563 (35,107). It is difficult not to assume that many Nyanja had formerly called themselves Ngoni.

Table II

	1926	1931	1945
Mzimba district			
Ngoni	25,484	24,627	44,948
Tumbuka	46,029	78,483	89,135
Cewa	14,041	2,411	21,891
Yao	20	—	—
Tonga	3,032	605	32
Nkonde	141	—	—
Others	334	156	202
Total	89,101	106,282	156,208
Ncheu district			
Ngoni	64,023	46,308	15,242
Cewa	11	4,372	2,815
Nyanja	334	25,393	60,400
Cikunda	360	940	1,376
Yao	203	1,064	3,267
Nguru, etc.	—	—	4,448
Others	13	278	182
Total	64,944	78,355	87,690

631 Since the two Ngoni kingdoms are the subject of this book and not the secession states, the position of the rulers of those states as Native Authorities and the circumstances of their secession from the two main groups will not be examined here. The three secession states in the north were under Chiefs Ciwere and Maakambewa in Dowa district and Jere in Kotakota district. The four connected formerly with the central Ngoni were under Chiefs Kacere and Kacindamoto in Dedza, Mseula in Lilongwe and Vumbwe in Cholo.

484 [114] In the 1930's, when I was living sometimes in the northern kingdom, sometimes in the central, and for a time in the Ngoni state under Chief Jere, I was aware that the existence of the two kingdoms and of the seven secession states did not preclude a great deal of contact between the Ngoni of the different areas. The stream of travel in Nyasaland from south to north and from north to south along the one trunk road, brought Ngoni as visitors from one kingdom to the other, from the smaller states to both kingdoms, and from 'the Ngoni of the dispersion' living in towns to visit their relatives and friends in the Ngoni kingdoms and states. These visits might be social, to see parents or to marry a wife; they might be for economic purposes, to invest in or sell cattle, to supervise cotton or tobacco marketing; or they might be for ritual purposes such as mourning. When I travelled in the central Ngoni kingdom in 1936 with Y. M. Cibambo, the historian of the northern

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumpé of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingcomulo*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *indunas* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *isiphekelo*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izindunu* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

second and third, and the finisher, at the place of dancing in the kraal. At such times each one when called rose and danced *umgiya*, repeating his names. This was called *ukubiha izinkalipi*, reporting the heroes or the fierce ones. This is still being done today. The *inkosi* thanked the people who brought the skins by giving them a beast or a goat. When they were dressing the meat and eating it, they kept on dancing *ligubo* and crying the war-cry. At such times the women went along with the men to help them dance *ligubo*. They made the responses to the songs and jerked their necks. 571 643 651 431 [557]

All such things the *inkosi* divided among his houses. The big house had a big share, but especially his mother's house. She should have most. Even if his real mother was dead, the big share had to go there, to her house, where her successor lived.

Visits to the Paramount, whether for a particular occasion or as a matter of routine, were hedged about with ceremonial. It was expected that *alumuzana* and other important people who lived near enough would visit the Paramount frequently and, according to some informants, they went every day in pre-European times. 643 574 576 644

No one could approach the Paramount except through one of the *izinduna* of the royal village, and the correct person to approach was the *induna* of the *indlunkulu*. Visitors were expected to wait at the gate of the kraal and put down their spears. When they were brought by the *induna* to the Paramount, they greeted him with '*Bayete*'. Then they sat down and the Paramount told the *induna* to greet them, and they replied '*Yebo, inkosi*'. This custom of indirect approach to the Paramount has been maintained. Early travellers in Nyasaland spoke of observing it, and when I was there it was considered outrageous manners on the part of any European if he penetrated immediately to the presence of the Paramount, without going through the accustomed channels. 643 644

The Paramount was both greeted and thanked for gifts of food, beer or snuff, with '*Bayete*'. If he moved from the kraal, all present said '*Bayete*'. If anyone had to leave his presence, he crouched low and murmured '*Bayete*' as he went out. Cibambo described this punctilious formality of thanking for gifts in the Ngoni manner. 643 644 431

When receiving presents the Ngoni thanked the giver by taking them with two hands, even though it was a small present. Afterwards they thanked the giver by his *isibongo*, clan name, openly. They said that receiving a thing with one hand showed that you derided it and did not put any value on it. When receiving a present from bigger people or from a chief, some words of respect were added to the *isibongo*, such as '*Baba*', '*Nkosi yami*', '*E-Jere*'. Often the receiver if he was much pleased with the present added some *isitokozo* to the clan name, if he knew them. Those near him or some further away helped the receiver by thanking loudly after him. If what he received was food, he thanked at the beginning, and after eating the food he thanked again. If such a present of food was given to a body of people, the leader in the company first led the others in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 565 631 644

when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingcwembe*, or big platter of the *inkosikazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *nhlanzi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inkosikazi* called for an *ingcwembe* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njolomole Nzunga I in the central kingdom

¶ Old Njolomole had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361 351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked *nsima* and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [574]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these cloths and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njolomole excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njolomole was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibambo

565 302 [179]

¶ Today Ngoni women are not easily recognized because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isihlutu*. The oil was *ipehla*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [301]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the circular court-house in a commanding position on a small hill with a big open space all round it. 361

There were several places in this village which were referred to as the *bwalo*: they included the open space within the reed fence of the Paramount's section, the much larger open and unfenced space round the court-house, and the more restricted spaces round the huts of the *induna* and of the headman. The meaning of the term *bwalo* was always slightly ambiguous in this village since it was often used for the verandah of the royal residence, as well as the open space in front of it. The central Ngoni custom of surrounding the huts of important men and women with high reed fences with a narrow opening, made it easy to say '*ali pa bwalo*', 'he is on the *bwalo*', so that it covered either the verandah of the hut or the space inside the fence. The local usage of *bwalo* by the Cewa people more often denoted the open space in the middle of the village where the men congregated to sit and talk and drink beer.[1] The connotation of *bwalo* in Ngoni villages in the central kingdom was usually in terms of the big house and the space in front of it within the fence.

In Maganga the place to which the name *bwalo* was most often applied was the space within the reed fence surrounding the Paramount's large brick residence and the outbuildings. When I lived in one of the outbuildings at the back of the house, I was said to be living *pa bwalo*; and 643 it was also alluded to as *pa cigodlo*, that is in the enclosure where the 242 Paramount's children lived behind the big house. His daughter's hut 361 was in this section, on the north side, and beyond her hut was that of the *mlomo wenkosi*, who was also the Paramount's brother-in-law, since he had married the Paramount's sister and was the brother of the Paramount's wife. In the other buildings within the reed fence lived several servants of the household, and at the kitchen end of the brick house lived the girls who assisted the Paramount's wife with cooking and looking after her younger children.

When the Paramount built his court-house, he built some offices as 344 part of it for himself, his *mlomo wenkosi*, his treasurer and the court 643 clerk. The intention had been that official business would be carried out there, and relieve the big house of some of its many callers, and also ensure some measure of privacy for those who lived there. It proved very difficult to achieve this separation of public and private affairs, since the tradition that the Paramount was accessible to all his people at all times was persistent.

The entrance to the enclosure or *bwalo* of the big house was guarded 574 in the traditional manner. If strangers (and all visitors were called *alendo* 643 or strangers) arrived on the side road leading off the main road, they inquired from one of the huts there if the headman was present and waited till he arrived. The headman then went to tell the *induna* or the *mlomo wenkosi* that strangers had come, while they waited till the reply

[1] Scott, D. C. *Mang'anja Dictionary*. Edinburgh, 1892.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

574 643 came. One of these two officials usually came to greet them. He then informed the Paramount that strangers were present and took back the Paramount's greeting to them and asked their business. This was in turn reported to the Paramount, who arranged for their business to be taken care of and, if they were important people, sent an invitation for them to come to the *bwalo*, to which they were escorted by one of his officials and given seats. In due time the Paramount came out of his house and they gave him the *Bayete* and then he greeted them. As a rule he carried on all conversation through his *mlomo wenkosi*, and, after staying for a short time, often went back into the house and left his officials to entertain the guests. If the guests were visiting chiefs and *alumuzana*, word had gone round when they first arrived, and the senior men of the village, the *madoda*, gathered to greet them, and sat in a group as they did for court cases. Such conversations of a social nature took place as a rule in the courtyard where chairs and mats were placed. If it rained or was very hot they went onto the verandah which ran the whole length of the house. Never, so far as I could discover, did visitors come into the house unless they were close relatives of the Paramount or his wife.

Women visitors who came with the men or by themselves went through the same procedure of announcing themselves and stating their business. Then, if they were important people, they were escorted to the courtyard at the back of the big house where they were greeted by the Paramount's wife and by her daughter, who then settled down to talk with them, either out of doors or on the back verandah, according to the weather. It was usual for the Paramount's wife and daughter also to go and greet the men visitors on the front verandah or in the courtyard. 26 They did not stay, however, and if the visitors had come from far the 574 Paramount told his wife, after she had greeted them, to 'catch a fowl'. 643 When she returned to the back courtyard, children chased hens and there was squawking and yelling until the right number had been caught and killed. Pounding of maize began, the fowls were dressed and put in pots on the fire and other 'relish' was prepared of vegetables and groundnuts, and the flour was cooked to make porridge (*nsima*). The Paramount's wife and her helpers prepared the best pot-roast of chicken I have ever had. Food thus prepared was served to the guests on the front verandah in the traditional style, the porridge in food baskets (*nsengwa*), the chicken and other relish in small covered pots. The Paramount offered the food to his guests and then withdrew into the house. When they received the food, as well as when they had finished eating, they [576] thanked him with the traditional *Bayete nkosi*, adding, if they were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, some of the praise names or *izitokozo* of the Maseko Paramounts. To European visitors, and occasionally to Christian Africans, tea was offered with milk and sugar.

574 643 Viewed from the back *bwalo*, where I lived and watched all this happening and listened to comments, it was evident that the never-ending

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

hospitality involved both planning and expense. The Paramount's wife had to keep enough food stocks on hand not only to feed her own large family and household, but also to be able to respond to expected and unexpected guests. The Paramount's personal annual salary at that time was £60, out of which he had to keep his family and household in food and clothes and school fees, and pay for the upkeep of his house. The bulk of the cereals and some of the beans and other vegetables used in his house came from his fields worked by hired labour. Another source of food supply was the market 'custom', a small toll levied on the produce sold in the weekly market, which was paid chiefly in kind and put in the storehouses on the Paramount's *bwalo* to be used to feed his guests.[1]

574 643 [465]

The Paramount not only gave food and drink to the expected and unexpected visitors to the royal village. From time to time he gave a feast to which the Christians of the congregation of the mission church were invited, as on one New Year's Day when I was staying there. He gave a feast to all the neighbourhood on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. From time to time he invited all his people to dance *ligubo* or *ngoma* at the royal village and provided beer for all and food for the *ahumuzana* and the chiefs and their wives. The organization of these big feasts demanded planning on a generous scale and a large outlay in maize for porridge and meat for relish. No feast at the Paramount's village was complete without meat enough to satisfy everyone.

[527]

The visitors, the feasts, the dances, all had their focal point in the royal residence in the royal village. There were two other focal points in the village where large numbers of people came regularly, and made the place where the Paramount lived a centre which brought his people together and brought him before them as their ruler. These were the market and the court-house which also housed his offices.

Before 1939 the market in the royal village was unique in the area for its size and the service which it rendered to the countryside. At any one time on a Saturday there would be 600 to 1,000 people present. In 1938 a second market was opened by the Paramount at Nsipe at the southern end of his territory. They were definitely his markets in that he allotted space for them; fixed the days on which they were held; controlled the policing of the market and the strangers' huts where sellers arriving overnight could sleep; fixed the prices according to seasonal variations in supply; and, as we have seen, collected 'custom' in lieu of rents for sites. The market at Maganga served an area extending roughly 15 miles to the east, 15 to the west and 10 miles to the north and south. It stretched in the east to below the escarpment whence came bamboo and

443 438 [643]

[1] An average weekly amount of custom reckoned over several weeks was 10*s.* in cash, and a quantity of bananas, sugar-cane, vegetables and cereals amounting to two sackfuls and sometimes three. The cash was levied on meat, 1*s.* 9*d.* per cow, 1*s.* 6*d.* per goat or pig; and on mats, baskets, etc. at roughly 1*d.* in the 1*s.*

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount's interest in modern aspects of administration, especially after his visit to the course for chiefs held at the Jeanes School in Zomba in 1934. The old councillors, sceptical though they were of many modern innovations, recognized that they were in line with European ideas of administration, and also that they appealed to the younger educated men in the kingdom who had travelled and seen other countries and ways of living. 643

The Paramount married NaNdau as his big wife, and though, as the text mentions, he married two other wives when urged by the senior men, he sent them away after a year or two and NaNdau remained his only wife. She had an assured position since she bore him five sons and two daughters, the first-born being a daughter and receiving all the respect due to a Royal Sister. One of the brothers of NaNdau was chief of a division, and another was *ntlomo wenkosi* to the Paramount. She succeeded in maintaining much of the traditional pattern in the royal village and the big house. Her personal supervision of the household was thorough and competent. She exercised complete authority over the girls and women belonging to the household and arranged that the Ngoni custom of examining the young girls, including her own daughter, at regular intervals should be maintained. Her knowledge of Ngoni songs and dances, and her own skilled and graceful participation in the dances on state occasions, brought her before the people in her role as the big wife. At the feasts given by the Paramount she moved about among the people to serve them, and listened to complaints from the women about affairs in their villages which she then handed on to her husband. [595] [586] 644

The back verandah and all the outbuildings were the domain of the Paramount's wife. When I was there, she had some ten or twelve girls and women as well as several men working for her. They came and went if they had homes elsewhere, and the personnel changed often. All the household work was done by them: bringing water and fuel, pounding maize, and a good deal of the cooking, though this was closely supervised by the Paramount's wife. No beer was made in the household as it was against the rules of the church to which they belonged. In other Ngoni households of subordinate chiefs and *alumuzana* who were not Christian, the brewing of beer was a time-absorbing part of the household tasks and was shared by the different wives under the supervision of the big house. In Maganga, when the Paramount was entertaining unexpected guests and wanted to offer them beer, he inquired from his *induna* if anyone was brewing beer in the village, and sent for some for which he paid. When he knew beforehand that guests were coming who would expect beer to be offered to them as part of the Paramount's hospitality, he told his *induna* to see that beer was made in one of the village households, and he paid for it. [273]

The cooking which went on in the big house kitchens was always extensive. The Paramount, his wife and six children had two meals a 643 574 264

643 day, and so did all the regular helpers in the household. The stream of
●574 visitors was incessant, especially on Saturdays when the market was
264 held, and on the days when the Appeal Court was in session at the court-house adjoining the village. Not every caller was given food, but if they came from a distance it was always offered. In the setting of a modern brick house and a Christian household with only one wife, the Paramount had to provide a great deal of hospitality. The old tradition that *alumuzana* and other important men visited the Paramount daily no longer held. But the weekly market and the court meetings, and the lorry service on the main road bringing callers from north and south, as well as administrative affairs which had constantly to be discussed and settled, made the Paramount's house and *bwalo* a very busy place.

Officials of the royal village and state officials

574 When I lived in the royal village for several weeks I was aware of a
643 never-ending stream of persons coming to consult or to work with the Paramount. Well protected as he was by the Ngoni method of indirect
645 approach and the surveillance of the village and *bwalo* by the *induna* of the big house and the *mlomo wenkosi*, the Paramount was still subject to constant inquiries from his office-bearers who needed his counsel, and from persons great and small from all over his kingdom who believed that he could help them. Among the village officials the *induna* of the big house worked closely with the headman of the village, and displayed unremitting efforts to see that all affairs in the immediate neighbourhood of the Paramount should go smoothly. They were constantly on the *bwalo* of the big house, or near the gate of the fence surrounding it. These two always turned up when visitors came, and sat on the verandah or in the *bwalo* with the other senior men, and kept an eye on all that happened. If anything went wrong in the village or the compound when the Paramount was away they were in great distress, as on one occasion when a man ran amok and threatened people with a knife. There was a strong tradition that around the Paramount and his living quarters everything and everyone had to be orderly and peaceable.

645 The *umbongi*, or praiser of the Paramount, was among the royal vil-
574 lage officials, though he only appeared on the *bwalo* when ceremonies took place there. He sometimes came when important visitors arrived if their visit was known in advance. He always came to the big dances and feasts held at the royal village. He was an old man, tall and spare, leaning heavily on a long staff, and many of the onlookers who listened attentively to his praise-songs showed nervousness when he began making personal remarks, for he had a sharp tongue and a flow of language.

Of the state officials the *mlomo wenkosi* was seldom away from the big house or far from the person of the Paramount. He had married the Paramount's sister, and was own brother to the *inkosikazi*, and his

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

kinship links strengthened and facilitated his official relations. If the Paramount went away visiting, he generally went with him, and if he were very busy or resting, then the *mlomo wenkosi* would act as his assistant and endeavour to meet the needs of the applicants. He was known on the register of Native Administration employees as the Paramount's assistant. 645 574

The other state officials who were constantly at the royal village included the clerk of the Appeal Court, the four councillors, the three messengers, and the treasurer. The clerk was in his office on most days, and when the court was sitting he kept the records. He also came to the big house when important visitors arrived and sat with the senior men. The four councillors and three messengers were all senior men, five of them of trans-Zambesi clans. The councillors conducted the cases in the court and reported to the Paramount, and spoke for him when he gave judgement. They and the messengers always came to the big house before the court opened, and returned there to eat food after the sessions were over. This was invariably an occasion for discussing cases and judgements and the general state of the country. The fact that the court was an Appeal Court, to which cases were referred from the six subordinate courts, enabled the councillors to estimate the efficiency of these courts in various parts of the country. Their private comments on the abilities of the respective chiefs to maintain order and judge cases in their courts were often caustic.

Several references have been made to the treasurer of the Paramount, a title assumed by Ishmael Mwale in view of his financial responsibilities for the central kingdom. The District Commissioner in his report for 1935 said: 645

> During the year the financial responsibility of the Native Authority was increased: he was handed over the keys of his safe at the Boma, and the District Commissioner only handled his cash for the purpose of checking. Gomani's clerk has acquired or given himself the name of 'Treasurer', and in this capacity frequently visits the Subordinate Authorities to make a financial inspection of their books, and to collect money which is surplus to their needs and bring it on charge in the main account. The District Commissioner's role has in consequence become akin to that of an auditor.
>
> Ishmael Mwale, the 'Treasurer', has shown ability for his duties. Not only is he capable of abstracting the revenue and expenditure of the Subordinate Authorities into a common ledger, but the time has now come when he should be fully capable of preparing draft estimates for the consideration of the District Commissioner.

The treasurer knew the country and the people of the different regions in a way that no other official of the Paramount knew them, and was therefore often called in for advice when petitions were brought in or complaints made. His eldest son married the Paramount's older daughter, and there was therefore a close tie between the two families.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

645 He was a student of Ngoni history and custom, and used his travels as treasurer to collect new information. He always intended to write a history of the central kingdom as Cibambo had done for the northern kingdom, but his public duties never gave him time.

643 In making contact with his people and keeping in touch with his
645 officials the Paramount did not rely only on their visits to the royal village. Two or three times a year he toured his kingdom, accompanied
574 by his *mlomo wenkosi* and the treasurer, and stayed at the head villages of the chiefs and also of other *alumuzana*. The treasurer spoke enthusiastically of the Paramount's habit of making himself known to his people and enabling them to present petitions to him in person. He met village headmen on their own ground, and *alumuzana* who were unostentatiously directing the affairs of their villages and areas, as well as the official chiefs or Subordinate Native Authorities. He saw for himself how his own regulations were being carried out and how the measures for agricultural improvement and cattle-dipping which the Government was promoting were being adopted. These visits in his own territory were followed by visits to Blantyre and Zomba and to the mining centres outside the country where his people were working. He was thus able to check on the conditions in the subordinate chiefs' areas which had been created by the prolonged absence of men from the villages.

The Paramount and changes in law and custom

643 Through his school education at Blantyre, his membership of a
178 Christian church, and through attending the chiefs' course at the Jeanes School in Zomba, the Paramount stood between the old and the new in the changing conditions in his kingdom. After the 1933 Ordinance one of the changes in administration was that a Native Authority had to budget
652 for income and expenditure in his area. The income for 1935 for this
[434] area was £959, made up of a share of the taxes; fifty per cent. of the yearly rental of stores; court fines and fees and beer licences. The expenditure was £832, under items of salaries to the Paramount and subordinate chiefs; salaries for messengers, councillors, clerks and policemen; payment of fourpence per tax to the headmen of the villages so that it was to their advantage to collect the full amount; and a small sum for uniforms, office expenses and such items as cash boxes and handcuffs. This budget for the central Ngoni kingdom was drawn up in consultation with the District Officer by the Paramount and his treasurer. It was a source of great pride to the treasurer that he had, as we have seen, his own key to a safe in the District Office where he put the tax money collected in the area, and drew out sums needed for expenditure in the Paramount's office.

744 In 1933, as already mentioned, a meeting of subordinate chiefs, *alumu-*
653 *zana* and headmen heard the Paramount's proposals for new regulations about village improvement and agreed to them. These regulations were

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

incorporated into the nation'. This, as we saw in Chapter I of Part I, was what took place in the Ngoni kingdoms. By the time they settled in Nyasaland, a hierarchical relationship had been built up between the clans based on the length of time they had formed part of the Ngoni kingdom. As the Swazi had their true Swazi, 'those found ahead', and late comers, so the Ngoni had their 'Swazi' clans, others from across the Zambesi, those who joined from this side, and the local peoples. 614 171

Dr. Kuper [1] summarized her description of the Swazi clan hierarchy by saying that it was 'neither precise nor static . . . a certain degree of mobility is recognized amongst the élite'. The Ngoni too had their own ways of adjusting a somewhat rigid system to suit their needs in spite of their recognition of the ranking of clans, and the fact that in the 1930's the kingdoms were ruled by an aristocracy. As among the Swazi, officials were appointed who did not belong to Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans. Much importance was attached, as also among the Swazi, to 'marrying up' and a number of instances of this were recorded, particularly in the central kingdom. In such cases a man, when explaining who he was, often gave the name of his mother as well as that of his father in order to impress upon the inquirer that he came from Swazi stock on one side, though his clan name, being his father's, did not show it. 171 557 614

Since some discussion of clans comes into every section of this book it will be useful to summarize here the main characteristics of the Ngoni clans in the two kingdoms. We shall be referring exclusively to the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, except when others are specifically mentioned. 614

Each clan was primarily a group of people with a common name. The families bearing this name might be found throughout the Ngoni kingdoms and states, in the towns and elsewhere, as the census figures quoted in Chapter I, Part I show. Their kinship was recognized firstly through clan exogamy, and secondly through the fact that when Ngoni people met a fellow clansman, they greeted him with particular warmth and both individuals were prepared to render each other mutual service. I met a number of the younger educated Ngoni who set out on a journey in Nyasaland, or to Northern or Southern Rhodesia, with the express purpose of looking for fellow clansmen, getting hospitality from them, and inviting them to visit Nyasaland and receive return hospitality. I was present at one or two such meetings in Nyasaland between Ngoni from the two kingdoms and the conversation began by establishing what branch of the Moyo or Gama clan they belonged to, and where the head village was situated. Within each kingdom each clan had a head village, and the head of that village was the head of the clan. In most of the Swazi clans the head of the clan was acknowledged as a *mulumuzana*. This correlation between being head of a Swazi clan and being a [574] 614 622

[1] ibid. p. 233.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

614 The Ngoni were, as I have said, emphatic that the names on this second list should be included among the Swazi clans. It was headed in the northern kingdom by the royal clan and in the central kingdom by one of the most honoured clans, and all the clan names were in fact held in great respect. There are three possible explanations for their non-occurrence in the Kuper and Bryant lists. One is that the clan name and the *isitakazelo*, the ceremonial or address name, may have been interchanged, and the original clan name forgotten. Another explanation may be that fission of the clans took place on the march, and as a result new clan names appeared. Both these were likely and may account for some of the omissions. The third reason may be that on the march and after settlement the Ngoni may have forgotten the correct pronunciation even of their famous clan names, and the anthropologist may have made mistakes in transcribing them.

Reference was made earlier in the chapter to the fact that social mobility was found among the Ngoni aristocracy. One form in which this took place affected the position of individuals belonging to the royal clan. In the northern kingdom the chiefs as well as the Paramount all belonged to the royal clan, and descendants of the sons and grandsons of Zwangendaba and his brothers were found all over the kingdom. In the central kingdom, where none of the chiefs were of the royal clan, the descendants of Cidyawonga, the brother of Cikusi, were in the secession state under Chief Kacindamoto, and the children of the brothers of Cikusi and Gomani I were most of them living in the Portuguese Ngoni kingdom. Thus there were large numbers of the royal clan in the northern kingdom, some in the family groups of the chiefs, others living in their own or other villages; while in the central kingdom members of the royal clan were comparatively few in number and were excluded from all political power unless they were of the Paramount's immediate family. Members of other Swazi clans in the north felt they had to assert themselves against the dominance of the royal clan in social as well as political life. In the central kingdom it was the royal clan who asserted themselves socially because they had no political rights in the chiefdoms.

614 578 574 There was a general opinion that individuals bearing the royal clan name who were not of the immediate family of the Paramount or, in the north, were not among his subordinate chiefs, ought not to trade on their name. This meant in effect expecting to get hospitality and other formal recognition when visiting other villages. As one informant said 'If they come to a village they like people to tremble and say "A chief has come".' They wanted to be recognized everywhere as *makosana*, children of chiefs. The popular resistance to these claims came from two sources. One was the general public who did not see why an ever-increasing number of people bearing the royal clan name should get free food and beer—gifts which they would not hesitate to give to people

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

they acknowledged as rulers or direct sons of rulers. The other opposition came from the heads of the Swazi clans who saw their claims to recognition threatened by large numbers of these *makosana*. When such a person was announced a *muhmuzana* might comment to bystanders 'Who is this man? We do not know his father.' Then to save his face as well as that of the visitor, he would send a greeting to him and order beer to be supplied, while avoiding any elaborate form of entertainment. This subtle form of resistance to what were considered undue claims from lesser members of the royal clan was found everywhere. 614 578 574

In both kingdoms the Paramounts and chiefs, especially after 1933, appointed as officials for the kingdom and for the royal village, members of Swazi clans, but also, and increasingly, members of cis-Zambesi and local clans. This practice brought together in the royal villages and in the chiefs' villages men of the ruling aristocracy and men of the lesser clans, to share administrative responsibility, to assist on ceremonial occasions, and to take part on an equal footing in giving and receiving hospitality. This mingling on the official level was one of the reasons why marriages became more frequent between girls of Swazi clans and men of non-Swazi clans whose fathers had been promoted to official positions. The marriage of Paramount Gomani II's daughter to the son of his treasurer was an illustration of this. The daughters of families of Swazi clans were also sought in marriage by men of non-Swazi clans who, through their education, had got well-paid work in the Government or in commercial firms, and could therefore afford to give cattle for *lobola* for the girls. These were two instances of the type of marrying up which in the 1930's was lessening the sharp division in social life between Swazi and other clans. We shall see in Chapter IV, pp. 137, 140) that Ngoni fathers of daughters married to non-Swazi clansmen found a way of keeping their married daughters, as well as their sons, in their villages, particularly in the central kingdom. 582 614 645

Though the Ngoni clan system in the 1930's was, in Dr. Kuper's phrase, 'neither precise nor static', it was an integral part of Ngoni social organization. It was closely related on the one hand to the ruling aristocracy, and on the other to the social hierarchy. Both in the villages and in the national life of the kingdoms individuals belonging to Swazi clans played a leading part in social and ceremonial life, and carried on those distinctive Ngoni practices which their ancestors had brought with them from the south. 614 182

854 house was still killed and eaten. The cloth came out of the
[432] store of cloth bought when cattle were sold, and kept in the hut of the senior woman of the father's house.

Visit to the mother's home

593 If, as was always the case in earlier days, the mother of the
574 new baby had come from a distant village, she did not see her own mother or her relatives, and they did not see the child until it was several weeks old, and considered by the senior women strong enough to undertake a journey. Then a visit involving much ceremony took place, for the wife's
[606] mother-in-law headed the party. The stiff and formal relations between the two sets of 'in-laws' had been eased slightly through the series of feasts and exchanges which preceded and followed the marriage ceremony. Face-to-face
[571] intercourse was, however, still very formal between the two families, and this first visit with the grandchild was in one sense an act of condescension on the part of the husband's family, since the child belonged to them. It was also a human and natural recognition of the eagerness of the young mother to see her own mother and display her child. Word was sent in advance by a messenger from the husband's village to announce the visit, so that the wife's family could make due preparation.

The main object of this visit was, in the Ngoni phrase, 'to show the child at its mother's home'. The young mother and
[606] baby, with her mother-in-law in the place of honour, sat outside the big house of the girl's father's family. Her father
[431] and his male relatives came to salute the child and to give it presents of beads, and in modern times small gifts of money
[603] as well. If the girl's father owned many cattle, he killed a beast, and they feasted that night, and the visitors carried home meat with them as well as the presents to the child. It was all very formal and correct, except when the young mother escaped for a short time to the circle of her sisters and girlhood friends, and exchanged confidences with them.

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

After this formal visit had taken place, the young mother was free to visit her former home more often, and her relatives could come and see her and her baby in her husband's village. 593 574

Taking care of the baby

There were two special features of infant care among the Ngoni which were not found among the neighbouring peoples. One was the assignment of a nurse girl from outside the circle of relatives to care for a new infant. The nurse girl was chosen by the grandmother from among her dependent household staff, and was allotted to one particular baby. The girl, who was usually in her early teens and unmarried, was supervised by an older woman, also of the grandmother's household. This woman watched over the personal behaviour of several nurse girls, as well as seeing that they did their work properly as nurses. 854 357 [592] [885]

The nurse girl took charge of the baby in the early morning and kept it with her all day until nightfall, bringing it back to the mother at more or less regular intervals for suckling. The mother played with the baby if she felt like it, and sent for the nurse girl to bring it to her if strangers came and she wanted to display the child. The Ngoni commended this practice by saying that their women kept clean because they did not carry babies about all day on their backs. They admitted at the same time that many infants grew greatly attached to their nurse girls, to the extent of being happier with them than with their mother. The nurse girls did not take little babies far afield. They stayed around within the fences of the household or near at hand, helping with domestic chores, chatting to other nurse girls, helping to prepare meals, and eating with the baby's mother and anyone else who formed part of the household eating unit. At night, after she had given the baby to its mother, she went off to sleep in the hut of the older woman who was in charge of her and other nurse girls.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
● 574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

351 old Ngoni families, and shining like marble, as did the hut and veranda floors. On this polished space, or else on the
574 veranda, the child's grandmother sat when callers had been announced, and from that vantage-point she could command the entrance through the surrounding fence, and agree to receive callers who had asked for admittance. Also in front
417 of the hut was another drying platform which was large enough to offer shelter from the sun in hot weather; the
343 dovecot where the 'royal pigeons' lived if the household was
[235] of the royal clan or distinguished enough to aspire to keep-
[554] ing pigeons. Off to one side was a hut for the goats at night and another, hoisted up on a platform, for the poultry. On the other side of the main hut were the grain stores, built up on low platforms. The maize stores were up to ten feet high and ten feet in diameter in these big households, and well-to-
[556] do women would have four or five of them bulging with maize cobs. There were smaller circular mudded bins for ground-nuts and millet. Behind the hut were two or three small huts where some of the helpers slept, and one of them
351 was generally a kitchen hut. Piles of wood, and bundles of
[284] thatching grass bound neatly with bark rope, were stacked against the fence.

There were innumerable objects around the compound of
351 interest to the small child prowling about. Two or three tall
412 wooden pounding mortars, so heavy that they could not be lifted and had to be trundled on their circular base from one place to another, stood near the kitchen hut, or were moved to the front if the women pounding had to watch children there. There were much smaller mortars for pounding ground-nuts, kept when not in use in the fenced-in veranda; and one or more large flat stones for grinding finger millet and bulrush millet. Baskets were of all sizes and shapes
351 from the small round food basket with a lid in which father's
415 food was carried to the kraal gate, to the wide shallow winnowing baskets, the deep round carrying baskets some as large as two feet in diameter, and the porous baskets used as

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

224 After the hunt the tally of kills was reckoned up, the game was carried home by the young men, and on the return to [262] the villages the meat was cooked and eaten by the men at the kraal gate. This was the occasion for going over all [521] the episodes of the chase, the skill of So-and-so, the fine organizing of the hunt by its 'owner'. No one mentioned the misses, no one's feelings were hurt, and there was a warm feeling of united and contented sharing in a good day's sport.

Lion-hunting was organized differently. Only former warriors and well-known huntsmen were called, and they sometimes took their sons with them as carriers. Guns as well as spears were taken, though the Ngoni liked to say, and it was often true, that they killed lions with spears only. Tracking a lion was dangerous and difficult, and when it was located in a patch of tall grass or reeds, the huntsmen made a circle round it, ready to attack when it broke cover. As in the chase, the one who stabbed the lion first, second and finally was noted. The dead lion was hoisted on poles slung from the shoulders of young men, and carried to the village where the hunt was organized. Here the party was welcomed and given food, the heroes were acclaimed, and the headman and seniors led the way to the village of the clan head, who called his men together to rejoice. When the augmented party reached the chief's or Paramount's village, [535] where all lions had to be taken, a war-dance took place in [555] the kraal, as of warriors returning from a campaign. The killer of the lion came out in front of the rest and danced his individual war-dance; he was hailed as a hero and new epithets were added to his praise names. The whole party [273] was given beer, a beast was killed for a meat feast, and then [574] the party thanked the Paramount in traditional fashion and went home.

It was in lion-hunting that young adults who were taken along felt the spice of danger, the thrill of success, and witnessed the pride of recognition for the successful killer by the Paramount and all the Ngoni leaders.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *fasiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *nyongo*, from the Zulu *inyongo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 40 and 114, and Scott, *A cyclopaedic dictionary of the Mang'anja languages spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 486, both translate the Nyanja word *nyongo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mphakisa*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-phakisa*, to help or make to cook. Weise, op. cit. 'Expedisao . . .', pp. 473-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *sipeko*. Cf. Zulu *uku-phaka*, to cook.

[17] Called *mngenisa*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *mnyolesa*, from the Zulu *uku-dlesa*, or *kulyelana*, from the Nsenga *ku-lyelana*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European.

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptised person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules.

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls.

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 much opportunity for a man to assess his sweetheart's domestic
584 efficiency and moral character, but he can get information on these
matters from other people who live in her vicinity. When he sees
●579 a girl in a distant village where he is staying, he has more leisure to
see what she is like and can ask his own hosts about her character.
Girls visit in the same way as men, and if a girl is anxious to get a
husband and fears she may not find one, she may spend most of her
time visiting in different villages hoping to attract a suitable man.
[921] There is more time for visiting and flirting at the end of the dry
season when there is little work to do in the gardens, but marriages
are contracted throughout the year.[6]

581 Young men say that what they like in a girl is a light skin colour,
a pretty face, and the ability to dance and to copulate well. Some
832 men, however, say that such a girl might be all right to run after,
but for marriage one would also need to know that she could cook
porridge. Women say they like a man who is well dressed, who
has a good job working for a European, and who has a parting in his
hair. Women sometimes wear medicines which are believed to
attract men, and men who have no good clothes may borrow the
clothes of others in order to attract women.

3. Sexual partners

593 The relationship between a man and his wife, at least for the
581 first years of their marriage, is spoken of principally in sexual terms,
and the sexual activities of the couple are more closely defined by
the marriage bond than are their residence and their economic life.
Informants say that the reason for the existence of marriage is
either 'the work in the house', a euphemism for copulation, or else
'clothes', that is, so that a woman may have someone to buy clothes
for her. It is, however, much easier to improvise alternative solutions
to the problem of clothing than it is to find alternative means of
sexual satisfaction without coming into conflict with law and
morality. Furthermore, while we have seen in the old days that the
main emphasis was on the fertility of the woman, this has now shifted,
and it is her skill in copulation rather than her success in childbearing
[942] that is emphasized. Fertility is still valued, but does not appear to
form so important a theme in ceremonial, songs, and gossip as among
other societies where the principle of unilinear descent has not
broken down, and where, therefore, fertility either of a man's wife
or of his sister, is a vital necessity for the maintenance of local
structure.

593 The husband-wife relationship is one in which the man is apparently
superordinate to his wife, but we shall see that in practice this
superordination is not as clear-cut as might at first appear. It is
furthermore a relationship in which there are certain prescribed
mutual obligations, so that if these obligations are neglected, it is

[6] Cf. Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, p. 66.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 241 343 241 962

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 962

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 262 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But commoner men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 962 [554] [544] [437]

10. *Forbidden and Enjoined Unions (Ngoni).*

The Angoni are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*vide infra*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the Angoni it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage (Ngoni).*

When an Mngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headman to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *anikhosee* with a present to the *anikhosee* of the girl. There are always two *anikhosee* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ku-ongo*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several elder women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commemoration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ku-tewera*, and sends a cloth (known as *nekeke*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kukonda*, or *kupereka nakeke*. The *nakeke*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

535 is now danced by villages. The important men in one village suggest
628 to another village that this dance should be held in the latter village. If this is agreed, beer is brewed in the second village and on the prearranged day many people from the first village come in procession from their village to the dance. The visiting dancers enter the cattle byre and start to dance. They are joined by people from the home village. The dancers are arranged in two lines, men on one side and women on the other, and the dance consists of a series of virtuoso performances by two or three men and women at a time in the space between the two lines, to the accompaniment of clapping and anti-
[533] phonal singing. The dance is followed by drinking and more dancing. Later in the year, or in the next year, the host village goes to the home of the visitors, and the performance is repeated.

535 Of more frequent occurrence are dances involving girls only. These
628 are usually held on Sunday afternoons, and as at the *ngoma* dances, at
883 least two villages are involved. Here the initiative is taken not by the important men but by the senior unmarried girl in the village. She invites a girl of similar status in another village with whom she is acquainted, or whom she has seen dancing, to bring a team of girls to dance in her village. This kind of dance is competitive in that the visitors are opposed by a similar team of girls from the home village, who dance separately from the visitors until, at the end of the session, the two teams combine. That team which has danced best is held to be the winner, although there is always great doubt as to which team this is. The girl who invited the visitors is responsible for seeing that the visiting team is fed, although beer is not provided. No work is done in the gardens on Sundays, so that these dances always attract a large number of onlookers. As with *ngoma*, a return match is danced at some later date. The pairs of villages that are linked in these dance exchanges are not always those that contain many people related to one another. One girl may ask an acquaintance in another village to find a team; in one case the girl who made the invitation did not know the name of the girl she was inviting.

Beer-drinking

273 Beer, water, and tea are the three main drinks of the Ngoni. The
[271] ordinary rules of hospitality govern the drinking of water, which is
[574] provided for the traveller whenever he asks for some. Tea is sold in
[272] the roadside stores known as hotels. Beer is more important socially

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

borne out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful 171
and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the
fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. [648]
The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a [177]
moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to
hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land
they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where
family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived
in an atmosphere that was charged with vice. But when the
Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were
punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited,
many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally
a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. 565
His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fear- 181
lessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your
privacy. I have heard the old men storm in a village because
some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a 576
superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in
whispers. When they address you they always give you your
family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each
sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at
the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a
long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that 574
the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come
out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly.
When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain
silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a
decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say,
"We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the
whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would
rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they
reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous
and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way,
and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interests and amusements. 692
During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in
open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual [537]
speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus
of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance 535
is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

All of them made their own axes, knobkerries and catapults for hunting. Some were interested in music and made shepherds' pipes, or one-stringed lyres, or hand pianos of metal strips affixed to a wooden base. They composed their own songs and airs for these instruments. Others showed ingenuity in making elaborate models of lorries and aeroplanes, or in carving heads of animals. Others liked to weave fibre into the wide-brimmed hats some herd-boys wore. 868 [411] [534] [533]

More significant still for their future social relationships, they began now to choose their own intimate friend and to form the friendship pacts which were characteristic of Ngoni society, and regarded by adults as important in the child's development. In the friendship pacts, especially those between boys, there was no implied or manifest restraint. They could have 'joking relations', and hence say outrageous things to each other. They could quarrel and make it up, and defy each other's wishes and decisions, without a final breach. The relationship between friends often lasted into later adult life, and was probably all the stronger for the occasional lapses and outbursts, and by the fact that in the daily companionship of friends the burden of observing 'respect' did not oppress them. 572

The boys' dormitory

The hut known as the boys' dormitory and the whole system of living which it represented was a traditional feature of Ngoni village life. In their culture it had three main purposes. Formerly, when as they said 'War was our school', it was the place where boys slept and lived together, and where they learned to defend themselves and to obey authority. It was in a sense the preparatory school for the regiment, and the herding of cattle was the basis of the curriculum. Once a boy went to sleep in a dormitory he never left it until he married, unless he was seriously ill. In the days of warfare, he learned in the dormitory and out herding the cattle, a knowledge of the bush and its wild life and of his fellows, and 182 575 342

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 182 342 the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount. Dormitory life was therefore rooted in the Ngoni past and though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a necessary training ground for young manhood. In very large villages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys belonged to the dormitory of that section where their parents' household was situated. There were occasional attempts sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory for boys who were baptized Christians or in an inquirers' class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' development, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled. They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory system except on the geographical lines already mentioned, which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

575 [342] [621] [797]

575 562 861 The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they had their second teeth, from the influence of the women. Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision at what they considered a crucial stage.

[177] [186]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There was no doubt that this abrupt transition, like the sudden weaning was a shock for many boys between six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half. From having been impudent, well-fed, self-confident and spoiled youngsters among the women many of them quickly became skinny, scruffy, subdued and with a hunted expression. The subdued and hunted looks passed off as they adjusted themselves to their new environment and there were boys, generally those exceptionally well grown and physically strong, who showed no apparent signs of shock. They all, however, showed the effects of irregular and inadequate feeding. The younger boys were chronically hungry and their hair and skin and bony knees and ribs were eloquent of calory, protein and vitamin shortages. 575 156 [146]

The other main purpose of dormitory life in Ngoni culture was to mix up all the boys in the village and let the common life together teach them how to get on with their age-mates and knuckle under to their superiors in age. Age and strength were the only criteria for authority. Older brothers might try to protect and intercede for younger brothers but it was not encouraged. All the young ones had to take their chance equally, without regard for their family name or their father's position. 575 858

The dormitory was primarily a sleeping-place, but through the group of boys who slept there the herding of cattle was organized and the off-duty amusements and occupations of the older boys were planned. The young ones had to 'fag' for the rest, fetching wood and water, keeping fires going, sweeping the hut, taking messages, huddling in a corner at night when the oldest boys brought girls in, and submitting to beatings both as a warning and as a punishment. They were usually beaten once or twice soon after their arrival and then threatened with much worse if they ever divulged what went on in the dormitory. It was not however a torture house, far from it, and the boys boasted of belonging to 'our dormitory' and were proud of having their own hidden life 575 [513] [857]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten [146] by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when [272] milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made [262] curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [867] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for autho- [155] rity. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There was con-
siderable latent, and at times overt, antagonism from the 575
younger towards the older group. This was to some extent [578]
mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in
cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of import-
ance, called in for consultations with the adults who were [858]
cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went
with them to market when beasts were sold. These older
boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger
ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good
care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones', [555]
with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle,
skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive 865
impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. 526
They fought with 'rods', like single-sticks, and became adept
at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days
there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the
elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There
was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting
made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard
out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the
edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal.
Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leader- [555]
ship among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a
kind of knock-out championship, hotly contested, until every-
one agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to
school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case
they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to
hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not 858
only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They 521
entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they con-
ducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge
of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about
men's affairs.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi

N 614 563

Of the Mandawere Tribe.

(1) *Chimbale* (Chimbalanga).

Of the Sukuma Tribe.

(1) *Nthera*, meaning the frame put over an antheap. Tabu: termites (Kamkwamba, Yekoniya). (2) *Chisi* (Kampimbi, Funzani). (3) *Mphopo* (Lichapa). (4) *Chipeta* (Chinyanya). (5) *Chinsu* (Njumbula). (6) *Ng'ombe* (Manyusa). (7) *Chibu* (Dumbo). (8) *Liwinda* (Kalinda). (9) *Mkanje* (Mgubo).

Of the Tonga Tribe. (A tribe allied to the Atumbuka living in the North of Nyasaland, not to be confused with the Aba-thonga south of the Zambezi).

(1) *Manda.* (2) *Nkhata.*

3. *Secret Societies: the Viungu.*

M 575 535 [825] [764] [881] N [575] [177]

The word *viungu* (sing. *chiungu*) signifies "representations of animals." It serves also as the name of a dance in which large figures of grass and wicker, masks and other disguises play the principal part. This dance has a wide range and has long been performed by the Achewa in connexion with funerals. Latterly it has been introduced into initiation ceremonies as well. It is not danced by the Ngoni or Tumbuka tribes to the north; but the Dowa Angoni, who have not preserved their own nationality, tribal forms and customs to any great extent, have adopted it generally for funerals and sometimes for initiations. The most prevalent explanation of its origin is that when God made the country and its people He also instituted the *viungu*. Consequently, the life of the people is bound up with it, and its secrets must be guarded zealously, initiates being warned that if they disclose them, not only will they themselves perish, but also their fathers and mothers and all their relations with them.

M [114] [775] M [178]

In 1907 Captain R. S. Rattray referred to this dance in his "Folk Lore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja," pp. 178 and 179, and expressed the opinion that it was undoubtedly in some way connected with totemism, the grass animals being reincarnations of the dead. He observed that the secrets were scrupulously kept, and that natives accustomed to speak freely on their other customs refused absolutely to discuss the *viungu*. During the last twenty years of contact with European civilization, its devotees have greatly increased in number; the dance itself has diverged to some extent from its original purpose and degenerated into a mere amusement; and the educated native of to-day does not believe so readily in the mysterious proportion of a grass animal, and is therefore comparatively ready to impart his knowledge on the subject.[1]

M [171]

[1] Dr. Sharpe makes a brief reference to the *viungu*, and in Harvard African Studies III, loc. cit., p. 202, he describes one of the corresponding Yao *ungwaje* figures, viz., the *mnikinde*, which is a "representation of an animal made of bark on a framework covered with reed and painted with flour in spiral markings, hence the name (*nikinde* is part of a spiral shell from the Zanzibar coast much prized by natives as an ornament)." In the following pages he gives a list of the other *ungwaje* figures, nearly all of which represent various animals, and states that they are used at the *lupanda* (initiation of boys) for instructional purposes, the Wayao denying any totemic origin. The Yao word *ungwaje* is, of course, the same as the Chewa *viungu*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 1897 and some time later they came to visit him at Fort Young.
439 Deare gave them presents, presumably to gain their support for his
own enterprises, and makes no mention of their seeing Mpezeni.[82]
648 Undi was the chief who claimed part of Mpezeni's country in his
treaty with Sharpe and who in 1892, when Foà was living in his
[72] village, was raided by Ngoni several times a month.[83] Thus the Europeans in Ngoniland were affiliated not only to European groups in Nyasaland and in England out of direct touch with Mpezeni but also with African groups with whom he was in contact. There was an essential contradiction in the situation in which, for example, Deare was friendly with both Mpezeni and Undi while Mpezeni was at war with Undi. Everywhere, not only in Nyasaland, the traditional Ngoni pattern of external relations was becoming incompatible with their relations with Europeans in their midst.

The leader of the opposition to the North Charterland was Nsingu, Mpezeni's heir.[84] Nsingu was at first friendly towards Warton but later his attitude changed. Deare, before establishing the North Charterland camp in 1896, had passed through Nsingu's
[576] village, by Ngoni standards an insulting thing to do, and later quarrelled with him, finally flogging him.[85] Genthe, the German traveller, met Nsingu on a path and only grudgingly gave way to let him pass.[86] While Mpezeni remained comparatively friendly, Nsingu and the warriors whose interests he came to represent became increasingly hostile towards all Europeans. At the same time Mpezeni's control over his lieutenants seems not to have been effective, as evidenced by his apparent inability to prevent unauthorized raiding. Deare, according to his own account, enjoyed Mpezeni's favour and was almost forced to marry one of his daughters, and yet Mashanga, the second lieutenant of segment 10, twice tried to kill him.[87] According to Genthe, Mpezeni sent repeatedly for some army leaders who had been raiding and they failed to appear. This may have been deliberate procrastination arranged by Mpezeni, who treated him coldly, but Genthe thought that Mpezeni was only a dummy whose lieutenants did what they liked.[88] With Deare there seems to have been a genuine difference in attitude between Mashanga on the one side and on the other Mpezeni, supported by Mzekwani, the first lieutenant over

[82] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[83] Fok, *Les Ngoni*, pp. 280-1.
[84] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[85] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[86] *B.C.A.C.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1.
[87] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. cf. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.
[88] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kinswoman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing. A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present is made by an individual and arises from his own political aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 by this relationship participate in the presentation and consumption
273 of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the
[769] Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all
797 public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the
[557] ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of
[576] honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are
681 diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded
634 as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and
626 other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Para-
[643] chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other counties and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner.
643 The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[16] a
576 salutation which symbolises his former position as head of an

[16] cf. Table Appendix.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

independent group of Ngoni. Chibambo mentions how the use of this salutation was discontinued when the head of an erstwhile independent group rejoined his parent group.[14] In recent times people have indicated their disapproval of the Paramount Chief's actions by discontinuing this salutation temporarily. 643 976

Despite the security of tenure provided by Administrative recognition, a chief still needs the support of his people. There is an Ngoni maxim, 'chieftainship is people',[15] and commoners are well aware that it is because they support their chief that he has high status. The simplest and most effective sanction that commoners can employ against their chief is to leave him. Movement from one county to another, from one tribe to another, and from the county to the town and back again is crucial in the working of modern Ngoni society. Not all these movements take place as the result of the unpopularity of chiefs, but this is one factor among many. Chibambo records an early example of people moving to segment 8 from the residue of segment 1 in order to share the hospitality of a newly appointed chief, but he goes on to say 'afterwards they found it wise to return to their proper division [segment]'.[16] In more recent times there are several examples, particularly among villages which entered Ngoniland after 1898 and who therefore largely lack segmental affiliation, of villages and clusters that have changed from one county to another for political reasons. More significant at the present time are the numbers of ambitious people who emigrate to the towns because, among other things, they cannot find advancement in the political hierarchy. The most striking instance of this is in the family of the late Mpezeni II. He had six sons who survived him. One is now Paramount Chief, and one is still a boy. The other four, including the chief's [illegible] 634 626 [166] [557] [447]

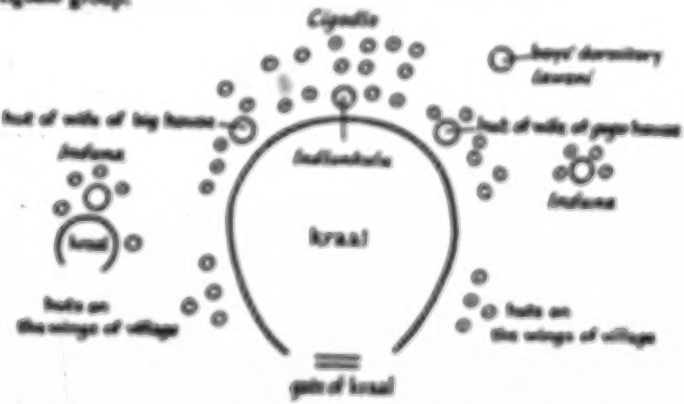
[illegible] in other parts of Africa.

5. *Royal hunts*

The royal hunt is the only occasion on which a county, or more usually a rural district or part of a county, functions as an economic unit. Even then the economic element in the enterprise is not very marked. The chief announces, through his messengers, that on such-and-such a day he will hold a royal hunt and that the men of such-and-such villages are to meet in a certain place. The procedure followed on the hunt is exactly the same as on an ordinary hunt, with the chief or someone nominated by him in tactical command, though the number of hunters is greater than on a hunt 224 976 634

[14] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 98. [15] [illegible]
[16] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 55.

621 the main circle round the kraal to emphasise its connexion with the *cigudlo* group.



621 The group referred to as 'a house' has already been defined in its
571 relation to the Paramount and his *kungwalo* village, and it will be illustrated and examined further in Chapter III of Part III. As an Ngoni institution the big house was an integral factor in the succession to high office, and the *gupo* house played an essential role in ceremonial and ritual life. Houses were also one of the most important components in village grouping. Men, women and children regarded themselves as associated with a house in one of three ways. They were related to it by descent or by marriage; or they were members of the family of the *induna* who looked after its affairs; or they served the house as servants or labourers, and were possibly the descendants of captives caught in [illegible] throughout the state territory. It was a common happenstance that the people living on the wings of the village had some relationship to the house on the side of the kraal where their huts were sited. There were many Ngoni villages where all the inhabitants were said to belong to one of the two or three or more houses, even though the majority of the inhabitants had no kinship or official relationship with a house.

614 The term 'clan' or 'clan descent group' has been used already many times and some explanation and definition is needed as a guide to its use in Part II before it is discussed further in Chapter II of Part III. The Ngoni considered that the clan of a person was of great importance for several reasons. The use of the clan descent name was the normal mode
(576 of address between all adults. The Ngoni said they could not speak to any stranger until they knew his clan name, and they used it in all social intercourse, except when addressing the Paramount. Exogamy was strict for people with the same clan name, and sexual relations between such
735 individuals was regarded as incest.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

183 178 The national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

533 535 Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

292 301 Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well preserved by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

262 Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ubhemde*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

197 In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *bl*.

576 The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4
Tumbuka FR6

N 52

leave after meeting, withdrawing after a case in court, and initiating or concluding many other formal or less formal occasions. Children were taught to use the correct expressions and rebuked if they made a mistake, and it was one of the requirements in Ngoni families that a uniform standard of verbal politeness should accompany correct behaviour in posture.

CULTURAL AFFINITIES AND DIFFERENCES

N M 121 122

The anthropologist working in Nyasaland is aware of the problems inherent in any attempt to isolate cultural features within any of the larger ethnic groups found there. There were no ethnographic field studies published of any of the other ethnic groups when I was working among the Ngoni. Mary Tew, in *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*,[1] referred to scattered sources published before 1939, to which I had access; and from time to time Cewa informants wrote accounts of particular social institutions or ritual, from which I was able to make certain comparisons with Ngoni ritual and institutions. Some of the earlier accounts, such as that by Hodgson on the Cewa and Ngoni in the Dowa district,[2] assumed that all the cultural changes and 'borrowings' had been by the Ngoni from their Cewa neighbours, whereas I found in that area in 1939 Cewa villages where Ngoni cultural elements had been adopted.

N M 119 177

N M T 105

Ngoni cultural affinities with South-eastern Bantu	*Local tribal differences*	
Paramount and subordinate chiefs	Chiefs; no central authority except in Henga and Ngonde	
Patrilineal descent Virilocal residence Marriage by *lobola*	Cewa and southern Tumbuka	Matrilineal descent, uxorilocal residence, marriage witnesses
	Henga	Patrilineal descent and virilocal residence
Clan exogamy " hierarchy Houses Age sets	Cewa	No clan exogamy " " hierarchy *Mbumba* group Girls' initiation schools
Cattle complex Ancestor cult associated with cattle	Tumbuka Cewa in Dedza district	Formerly cattle-owners but no terminology left and no association with ancestor cult
Burial customs: in skin near kraal	Cewa and Tumbuka	Graves outside village; buried in a mat

[1] Tew, M., op. cit.
[2] Hodgson, A. G. O. 'Notes on the Achewa and Angoni of Dowa District, Nyasaland.' *J. Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1932, pp. 126–64.

539 [illegible] being '*Amakhi onkhipi*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Beyond*', '*Return*',
702 along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebe*' also with the clan name.
[374] This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The
warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or
killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to
the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell
the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Ezhigodhi-
weni there; of Elangeni there; of Emaleweni there; but the sections from
the villages of the crocksrole went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
702 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
703 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be
unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[404] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in
a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire,
and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and
began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first
lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on
their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the
frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Fu*'. This was said to drive away
the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid
that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint,
but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[274] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their
children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the
words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more
of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Fu*'. After that they rubbed
themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed
they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good
things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the
killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the
paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of
taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live
with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of horns

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
702 then they were called again together to dance the *Ngoda*. On that day bulls
[212] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it
was killed by the horn of the section. While it was being skinned and
cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and
taken off the fire all the army was headed with eating it, each company by
itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to
dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the horns of the sections
[232] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns
had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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second and third, and the finisher, at the place of dancing in the kraal. At such times each one where called rose and danced singlye, repeating his names. This was called *ukubika ibikhalipi*, reporting the heroes or the brave ones. This is still being done today. The *induna* thanked the people who brought the skins by giving them a beast or a goat. When they were dressing the meat and eating it, they kept on dancing *Ngoba* and crying the war-cry. At such times the women were along with the men to help them dance *Ngoba*. They made the responses to the songs and jerked their necks.

All such things the *induna* divided among his kraals. The big house had a big share, but especially his mother's house. She should have meat. Even if his real mother was dead, the big share had to go there, to her house, where her successor lived.

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Visits to the Paramount, whether for a particular occasion or as a matter of routine, were hedged about with ceremonial. It was expected that *abamnumu* and other important people who lived near enough would visit the Paramount frequently and, according to some informants, they went every day in pre-European times.

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No one could approach the Paramount except through one of the *izindunas* of the royal village, and the correct person to approach was the *induna* of the *indlunkulu*. Visitors were expected to wait at the gate of the kraal and put down their spears. When they were brought by the *induna* to the Paramount, they greeted him with '*Bayete*'. Then they sat down and the Paramount told the *induna* to greet them, and they replied '*Yebo, induna*'. This custom of indirect approach to the Paramount has been maintained. Early travellers in Nyasaland spoke of observing it, and when I was there it was considered outrageous manners on the part of any European if he penetrated immediately to the presence of the Paramount, without going through the accustomed channels.

The Paramount was both greeted and thanked for gifts of food, beer or snuff, with '*Bayete*'. If he moved from the kraal, all present said '*Bayete*'. If anyone had to leave his presence, he crouched low and murmured '*Bayete*' as he went out. Chiumbu described this punctilious formality of thanking for gifts in the Ngoni manner.

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4 When receiving presents the Ngoni thanked the giver by taking them with two hands, even though it was a small present. Afterwards they thanked the giver by his *inkungu*, clan name, openly. They said that receiving a thing with one hand showed that you decided it and did not put any value on it. When receiving a present from bigger people or from a chief, again words of respect were added to the *inkungu*, such as '*Baba*', '*Wheel panel*', '*B.Jere*'. Often the receiver if he was much pleased with the present added some *inkuduwe* to the clan name, if he knew them. Those near him or were further away helped the receiver by thanking loudly after him. If what he received was food, he thanked at the beginning, and after eating the food he thanked again. If such a present of food was given to a body of people, the leader in the company first led the others in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 thanking, and then all thanked the thanking together. This included all
644 the men who were in the neighbourhood though they did not take part in
the food or the present. The leader would first thank '*E-fwe*' and then all
431 would follow together, '*E-fwe*', or the clan name of the man who was the
giver. The Paramount, if he gave presents to the people, was not thanked
by his clan name as other people. He was thanked by '*Bayete*' as was done
when saluting him. Likewise those who received the title *Nkosa* were
thanked by that title when they gave presents to people.

643 On ceremonial occasions, visitors to the royal village heard the
644 *izibongo* or praise-songs of the Paramount. These were songs referring
533 to great deeds and notable incidents both in the lifetime of the reigning
Paramount and in the lives of his predecessors. They were distinct from
576 the *izitshoba*, which were honorific epithets added to the clan name and
spoken when thanking a well-known man or woman for their gifts. The
izitshoba could be said by anyone, since each person of note had his own
which were well known. The *izibongo* could only be spoken or sung by
an *undongi* or official 'praiser'. Such a person was a man of good
[822] memory and possessing eloquence. The chief was thought to be the seat
of wisdom and eloquence, and a man who composed praise-songs, as
distinct from repeating well-known ones, had to have the faculty of
finding the right words, since new songs of this kind were generally
invented on a sudden inspiration.

The occasions when the praise-songs were recited were when important visitors came to the royal village; when beasts were slaughtered in the ancestor cult; at special dances at the royal village or at the feasts of the Paramount. On such occasions the official praiser stood up in the kraal, everyone kept silence and did not move, and after a pause he began to call out '*Bayabonga inkosi*', 'let us praise the Paramount'. In reciting the praise-songs he began with those of the immediate ancestor of the Paramount, and then went on to those of earlier ancestors. At the end he shouted '*Bayete*' and all the people replied '*Bayete*'. Examples of the praise-songs of Zwangendaba and his father Hlaweyo of the northern kingdom and of Ngwane, father of Mpezeni, of the central Ngoni kingdom are given at the end of the chapter.

643 The tension caused by the extreme formality in the behaviour of the
644 Paramount, his courtiers and his visitors was lightened by the presence
522 of a court jester. Informants were agreed that such an individual was
usually present to amuse the Paramount with his antics and gestures and
clown-like tumbling about. Dr. Laws referred to such a jester at the
court of Mbelwa I when the Livingstonia Mission was making its first
settlement in northern Nyasaland.[1] I saw a jester who came with Paramount Kwamdzira Mwenda from Portuguese territory when he and his officials visited Mzolokhela for the war-dance at the mourning for Bandu

[1] Livingstone, W. P. *Laws of Livingstonia*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1921, p. [illegible].

159 the house. If my father came to my mother's house, I would go out, but
565 if he went for me I would return and he would talk to me and play with
631 me. We learned how to behave well, and were rebuked if we behaved
604 badly. My father would beat a child for not behaving well. My father did not allow his children to be spoiled by being treated differently from others. He said: 'They are all my children.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Mkingane Nsungu

widow of Chimombo Jere, grandson of Zwangendaba in the northern kingdom

565 ¶ The *ambokhosi* were not working. During the day they kept dressing
631 their hair, both the young women and the old. The old women no longer
604 kept their *ishlalu*, or high chignon, but wore the *umuwo*, or long curls.
[368] For the *umuwo* the hair was cut short and not allowed to grow very long. Instead of dressing in *ugwayle* they took a blade of grass and kept it pressed down after oil and ocre were applied. Their other work was to go to the river and wash.

They also drank beer and some gruel, and afterwards danced *ngoma* in the house where beer was brewed. The *nsuo* and *chief* also joined in the *ngoma* and the women were responding to the singing. They began to drink in the morning until the afternoon, but not in the evening. Other people were on drinking until evening, and even some of the *ambokhosi* who were *indili* (glutinous) but the *nsuo* were sleeping or resting.

When drinking in the house the *chief* always sat by the right-hand doorpost, and the big *inkosikazi* by the left-hand post. They sat near the door so that beneath each *inkosikazi* there were many people inside. The beer-pot being set halfway between the door and the hearth-stone in the centre, a man was allowed to pour the beer in the gourds for drinking. He was outside *umuzinda*, the beer-pourer, and was often the village headman or one who was favoured by the *chief*. When the gourds were full he told the *chief*, and the *chief* told him to distribute them. Sometimes there were four or even six for the different classes in the house. They sat in order, the *inkosi* with the headmen and *umuzinda*, and the *inkosikazi* with the other wives of the *chief* and the wives of the headmen and *umuzinda*. The *chief* and the *inkosikazi* kept on inviting the common people to come and drink.
● [378] Both invited people thanked the pourer at the beginning and at the end, others joining him. The *inkosikazi* or other wives of the *chief* were thanked 'Wawa'.

The *ambokhosi* never worked at all, but the lesser wives worked, and pounded grain and fetched firewood. There were the ones who had not yet got attendants in their houses. All the *chief ambokhosi* had attendants who performed all the work of the house. The *ambokhosi* often sat in the *umuzinda* or outside under the platform of branches supported by posts.
[368] There they ate their food which was *ilambazi* and *umqinji*, thick gruel of millet; *indebe* or sweet, bubbly millet gruel to a paste; or *isitabula*, whole grains of maize boiled and pounded. The *nsuo* was seen as a front on the *ugwabati*, the assured place in front of the house, and all the *chief's* wives joined in. A mat was spread for the big *ambokhosi* where they sat

clan and for women of leading Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans. Two of the texts emphasized the distinction conferred on the royal women by special clothing. Cikumbo described the use of well-dressed soft skins and of beads and wire, the beads brought with them from the south, the brass wire obtained from the Arabs. In NaNdumbo's text she mentioned cloth bought from the stores. After the Ngoni women gave up wearing soft leather for skirts and the long piece of leather draped from the left shoulder, they used strong cotton cloth of dark blue or black, originally brought by the Arabs and later stocked by the stores. They tied the main cloth under their arms in a draped knot over the breast and on ceremonial occasions they added another fastened on the left shoulder like a plaid. A woman who had been a young girl in the village of Paramount Cikusi, but was not of a leading clan, said that in this village there was a great difference between the royal women and the rest: 'Only the daughters of Cikusi and his big wives could wear dark cloth as the Ngoni do. The others would have been killed if they tried to look like the big women'.

The royal women and the big wives and widows of chiefs and headmen were treated by all with whom they came in contact with the distinction and respect due to their prestige. They were addressed and thanked by the term *Nkosi*, with the clan name and the honorific prefix added, except where, as in the case of Bambo Mangu, a title had been conferred. She was thanked '*Nkosi Bambo*'.[1] *Ukuhlonipa*, and its Nyanja equivalent *kulemekeza*, meaning to honour and to behave in a respectful manner towards senior people and those of superior rank, was an expression constantly used by the Ngoni and by the other peoples in the Ngoni kingdoms. The forms of showing respect were partly verbal; partly in the position adopted, with the eyes cast down and a slight curtsey by the women when facing someone; partly in the tone of voice when speaking; and partly in the deliberate and controlled behaviour noticed by several early travellers in Nyasaland. A particular verbal form of respect practised by the royal women was the use of the *hlonipa* vocabulary. I found this practice surviving only in the Emtiwenni area in northern Ngoniland where the Ngoni language was still spoken, but informants said that it had been common to all married women of trans-Zambezi clans in the northern kingdom when they had spoken Ngoni among themselves. The *hlonipa* vocabulary consisted of the substitution of special words, known only to the women, in order to avoid using a word in which the main syllable of a man's name occurred—a man with whom they were connected by marriage or by affinal relationship.[2] Thus Zwangendaba's wives and widows could

[1] *Bambo* (father) was a term of respect used for important senior men.

[2] *Hlonipa* as a form of special vocabulary was widely practised among the Ngoni groups in South Africa. Hunter, A. W., 'Social Organization', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, pp. 74, 77.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

never use any word in which *indaba* (meeting or affair) occurred. They substituted *ewaya* for *indaba* and spoke of him as Zwangenaya. The women of the Ngumezulu clan could never use the word *dlanga* (sun) for which they substituted *gibo*, since Langa was the name of the father of Zwide who had married into the Ngumezulu clan.

Though the particular verbal form of *Mnojpa* which the Ngoni royal women brought from the south survived only in one area of northern Nguniland, the concept inherent in it and the attitudes of honour and respect which it implied were expressed in the use of *Nkosi* in thanking and in the other non-verbal forms already mentioned. Mangu, the Royal Sister of Cikuni, was as we have seen, thanked '*Nkosi Bambo*' but also with the formula '*Zikosi wotsuna wowbon*' (thanks, child of the Paramount). Among the central Ngoni there were two expressions of thanks which were probably a relic of *Mnojpa* vocabulary since they were used only by the leading women. The customary form of thanking, and of taking leave after a conversation or after getting a reply to a question, was '*Zikosi*' with the clan name and honorific prefix added. The royal women in this area, when making the response to this form of thanking, always replied '*Zoikosi*' with the clan name, and they thanked each other by '*Zimate*' with the clan name instead of '*Zikosi*'. When I observed this and used it myself, they nudged each other and said 'She also is one of us.'

We have discussed so far the outward signs of respect shown to the royal women, and the visible marks of distinction in their clothes and the number of their attendants. We shall now examine the way in which the authority of the royal women was exercised. This will give some indication of their relationship to the political organization of the kingdom, in so far as they had certain responsibilities to the people as a whole, and to their husbands and sons within the royal village where they lived. At the royal village the Queen Mother and her co-widows shared with the wives of the two leading houses to the right and left of the *indlunkulu*, the responsibility for preparing and serving food and beer for the Paramount and those whom he called to eat with him. The text by NyaNsangu[1] describes the etiquette of beer drinking in one of the chiefdoms in the northern kingdom, of sending food to the chief when he sat in the cattle kraal, and of assembling the wives in order of precedence according to their houses to take their food. The formality of this etiquette was characteristic of Ngoni eating and drinking, and it was maintained by the organization and forethought of the royal women, the big wives and mothers of the Paramount, who planned the work of their own households and supervised that of the lesser wives who were attached to the two main houses.

[1] The procedure described in the text applied equally to the Paramount's village and to the villages of ruling chiefs. The Ngoni in their area used the term '*induna*' for chief as well as for Paramount.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and appeals were unknown. Chiefs did not allow a man to come by himself with his case to them, he had to come with his headman. Even those in danger of death went first to the headmen and these brought them to the chiefs. 692

The Ngoni hated bribes. If any indaba was found to have taken bribes from people he was condemned and punished. 687

The hearing of the cases was like what it is today. The one who brought the case to the court spoke first, then the one with whom he was quarrelling. If there were elders there from their village they also spoke telling out how these people quarrelled, saying so-and-so began to quarrel in such-and-such a way, and then showed how they had been unable to judge it in the village. They did not go into details of the quarrel, that was done by the men themselves. After those who had quarrelled had told of the beginning of the case any who knew of it were asked to say how it appeared to them in the village. These were the witnesses both for and against. 695

When this had been done, all who were implicated or interested in the case remained silent. It is the custom of the Ngoni that all who spoke in a case should stand and have a stick, and as they spoke they should walk about and limp with the stick or sometimes stand all together, but in that case the hand which held the stick should shake and stick is into the ground. Only women spoke seated. No one at the hearing of a case was allowed to lie down, everyone, even the Paramount, sat. They did this because they were afraid that otherwise the case would not finish quickly. The court was held in the cattle kraal. Women were not allowed into the kraal for cases, but sat outside opposite where the old men were gathered, even though they were the wives of the Paramount. 695 516

After the litigants and the witnesses had spoken it was the turn of the elders of the court. They questioned and agreed with or criticised the men who had quarrelled but they did not pronounce judgement. They waited for the Paramount who first of all sat silent and noticed those who quarrelled or twisted the case. Afterwards when the people had finished speaking, the elders delivered the story to the Paramount or judge. The judge then delivered his judgement and condemned those who had twisted the case. He delivered his judgement sitting not standing like the other people and when he had finished all thanked him, or rather saluted him with a loud 'Bayete' or with the surname if to lower chiefs. Sometimes he sent an elder to tell the court the judgement. When the case had been judged no one criticised the judgement. The one who began to give thanks for the judgement was the one who was found guilty: this he did to show submission and repentance. The custom of today that the one who wins the case gives the thanks is not good because the man who has lost goes away in resentment and threatening and often the case crops up again. 695 [697]

If an indaba or man of standing were sensible to the Paramount to assume somebody that he deserved death (perhaps for witchcraft), very often the Paramount sent a man in secret to warn the condemned man to run to a chief's village and hide his head. In this way many left their kraals and went to build with the chiefs and where they went they took 693 693 693

all their things

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

574 60 came. One of these two officials usually came to greet them. He then informed the Paramount that strangers were present and took back the Paramount's greeting to them and asked their business. This was in turn reported to the Paramount, who arranged for their business to be taken care of and, if they were important people, sent an invitation for them to come to the *bandu*, to which they were escorted by one of his officials and given seats. In due time the Paramount came out of his house and they gave him the *Bayete* and then he greeted them. As a rule he carried on all conversation through his *mlomo mukhosi*, and, after staying for a short time, often went back into the house and left his officials to entertain the guests. If the guests were visiting chiefs and elsewanas, word had gone round when they first arrived, and the senior men of the village, the *mabodla*, gathered to greet them, and sat in a group as they did for court cases. Such conversations of a social nature took place as a rule in the courtyard where chairs and mats were placed. If it rained or was very hot they went onto the verandah which ran the whole length of the house. Never, so far as I could discover, did visitors come into the house unless they were close relatives of the Paramount or his wife.

Women visitors who came with the men or by themselves went through the same procedure of announcing themselves and stating their business. Then, if they were important people, they were escorted to the courtyard at the back of the big house where they were greeted by the Paramount's wife and by her daughter, who then settled down to talk with them, either out of doors or on the back verandah, according to the weather. It was usual for the Paramount's wife and daughter also to go and greet the men visitors on the front verandah or in the courtyard. They did not stay, however, and if the visitors had come from far the Paramount told his wife, after she had greeted them, to 'catch a fowl'. When she returned to the back courtyard, children chased hens and there was squawking and yelling until the right number had been caught and killed. Pounding of maize began, the fowls were drawn and put in pots on the fire and other 'relish' was prepared of vegetables and groundnuts, and the flour was cooked to make porridge (*nsima*). The Paramount's wife and her helpers prepared the best pot-roast of chicken I have ever had. Food thus prepared was served to the guests on the front verandah in the traditional style, the porridge in food baskets (*mangwe*), the chicken and other relish in small covered pots. The Paramount offered the food to his guests and then withdrew into the house. When they received the food, as well as when they had finished eating, they thanked him with the traditional *Bayete* aloud, adding, if they were of Swazi or cross-Zambezi clans, some of the praise names or isibongo of the Mandebe Paramounts. To European visitors, and occasionally to Christian Africans, tea was offered with milk and sugar.

26 574 60

574 60 Viewed from the back *bandu*, where I lived and watched all this happening and listened to comments, it was evident that the never-ending

[p.11]

CHAPTER II

CLANS

In Chapter III of Part I we saw that the Ngoni clans had a particular role in their political and social organization. These clans had certain characteristics which distinguished them from the clans of the local peoples, and which they had in common with the Ngoni group of the South-eastern Bantu. The use of the clan name in address and in thanking for gifts, the strict exogamy in the clans, and the hierarchy of rank among the clans—these were all of southern origin. Mrs. Hunter,[1] writing of the social organization among the northern Ngoni, said that the clan was called ishongo, 'a word referring more particularly to the name of the group'. The Ngoni spoke of their clan name as their ishongo, and they generally added 'that is my thanking name'. Dr. Kuper[2] used the term clan for 'the furthest extension of kinship traced through the father or the mother'. She referred also to the sub-division of clans among the Swazi—a process of fission by which a section of a clan was known by a double name, so that the Nkosi clan became the Nkosi Gininsa, the Nkosi Mandlela, with other sub-divisions. These divisions eventually became recognized as separate clans, so that marriage could take place between them, and so that the heads of the sub-clans could achieve independence from the head of the original clan. It is possible that some development of this kind took place after the Ngoni left Natal for, as we shall see later in this chapter, there were among the Ngoni a number of clan names which they said emphatically were Swazi but which were not among those noted by Dr. Kuper[3] or by Bryant.[4] In tracing the early history of the Swazi Dr. Kuper[5] distinguished between two periods: the first, when small patrilineal clans were migrating southwards, and the second, when rival clan heads became petty chiefs having non-clansmen among their subjects. At the beginning of their northward march Zwangendaba and Ngwane, in addition to being military leaders, were petty chiefs of this type, each including among his followers members of his own clan as well as others.

The Swazi became a heterogeneous nation composed of people from over 70 clan descent groups, of which one-fifth were true Swazi, one-seventh were prior inhabitants of the territory, and the rest were migrants into the kingdom. The clan hierarchy which was part of the structure of the nation showed, as Dr. Kuper[6] pointed out, 'some connexion between the rank of a clan and the period at which it was

[1] Hunter, A. W., 'Social organization', in The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa, p. 80.
[2] Op. cit., p. [illegible].
[3] Kuper, H., op. cit., p. [illegible].
[4] Bryant, A. T., The African Dictionary, p. [illegible].
[5] Other Tribes in Swaziland and Natal, pp. [illegible].
[6] Ibid. p. [illegible].

601 913 break up into smaller villages, and there were on the whole more villages in the north said to be *wabanja limodzi* (of one family) than among the central Ngoni. On the other hand, the *banungule* pattern of village division had almost disappeared among the central Ngoni.

591 592 593 A man on his first marriage built a hut for his wife behind his mother's hut, where his brothers by the same mother or by mothers of the same house also built. The family grouping by residence was therefore determined by house affiliation. Associated with this residential group based on kinship, there were the residences of the *indoma* and his family which had separate alignments on a kinship basis, though for certain common purposes they combined with the family groups related to the house by kinship. The children of the families belonging to the house and the children of the *indoma* who took care of it began to intermarry when the prohibitions on marriage within the village ceased to operate. In this way kinship bonds were created within a group which formerly had only residence and certain activities in common, and this process was recognizable in a number of the larger villages, especially in the central kingdom.

913 Within the different types of family groups determined by their residential basis there were certain outstanding relationships between members of the same family. The most important of these was that between father and children; the father, as the biological parent and also the symbol of authority, was the focus of honour and respect, and the one who helped his children when they were in need. The relation between the father and his children among the Ngoni was always a balance between affection and care, and respect and authority. The ideal person of a father, as described by informants, included all these elements and also wisdom. This concept of the father relationship was extended to the head of a *banja*, to the headman of a village or a section of a village, to a *mabwanamkulu* in charge of an area, to a chief, and to the Paramount himself. The Ngoni greeting to all older men, and the most respectful form of address to a man of any seniority, was *baba*, father, or its Nyanja equivalent *bambo*.

The mother, on the other hand, had a more limited relationship within the family circle. To her own children and to the children of her co-wives, especially of her house, she was the provider of food, and the affectionate 'cherisher'* of young children; but she was also treated with respect and, when she reached some seniority, she had considerable authority over her daughters and her younger co-wives. She could never compete, however, with the sisters of her husband or with his mother, who expected to exercise authority over her children and to arrange for the ceremonies connected with birth, puberty, and marriage. 591 In villages where virilocal residence was the rule, the husband's sisters were carried elsewhere and were only present in the village during

* *Indoma*, lit. to cherish, is the word used for bringing up children.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 885 affairs unless they were exceptionally vigorous mentally and physically, or the kind of dominating personality who could not be overlooked. It was evident also that individuals of weak character or evil disposition were not included in the group. I saw one or two such persons who bore a bad reputation in village society turned away from a senior group which was talking over a difficult village affair, with the caustic comment: 'Who is that worthless one? We cannot know him.' On the other hand, on social occasions when food or beer was being dispensed, all the old ones and the less reputable ones would be given their share, though sometimes with a cutting remark about the people who never missed a party but never did any work.

Selection in the senior age sets was intended to show that only persons who could be trusted, that is who were of known good character, were qualified to supervise the growing up of boys and girls, for whom the village elders as a group felt responsible. The maintenance of Ngoni standards of behaviour in young people was in the hands of this older group, who could and did exercise authority over and above that of the family and house. There were no more ardent supporters of Ngoni behaviour patterns than some of the older men and women of Ntumbu clans in the central kingdom who had been brought up in the houses of Swazi or trans-Zambezi clans, and were recognized as *mainas* and *madala* in their villages.

561 576 Among the younger people below the group of elders, it was common to hear them address each other as *mangu yami*, or *mwanaga*, 'my age mate'. Boys shouted it at each other on the cattle ground, young women called to each other in these terms when pounding maize, and when on a visit as an *ngoma* dance team it was a frequent form of address among the youths and girls. There was inherent in that form of address an sense of relationship, an absence of seniority or inferiority, and an acknowledgement of a tie which went beyond that of the family or house or clan. It was most commonly used within a village, but it was sometimes used between young people of different villages.

561 972 Within these groups of youths and girls and among young married men and women, there was a recognized friendship relation, *ubwenzi*, which existed as a rule between pairs of individuals of the same sex and age. It was sometimes a continuation of a playmate companionship, sometimes an expression of the need of a young boy in a *kraal* or a young married woman for a confidante or sympathizer. Most often it was a spontaneous specialized liking for another person, expressed invariably through an exchange of small gifts and generally of confidences, and often by going off together to bathe or cut firewood or catapult small birds. Such friendships were said as a rule to be permanent, though girls and women sometimes referred contemptuously to someone as 'She was my friend. Now she hates me and does not give me anything.' The decision to go off in search of work was often taken

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 In the central kingdom there were two instances of a modern adaptation of the ancestor cult, both of which were evidence of its close links with the aristocratic tradition; one related to a *mahwanawa* of a Swazi clan, the other to the royal clan. One of the first things which caught the eye of a visitor to the village of Mzukhatha was a large circular brick and cement tomb with a wooden cross on the top, in the middle of the village by the main kraal and within sight of the ruling chief's hut. It was the tomb of Njokomzole Nzungu I, son of Gokomzle Nzungu who gave the cattle for Nahllangeni's *lobola*, and father of the ruling Chief Njokomzole Nzungu II. The idea of this memorial originated with Lopati Nzungu, younger brother of Njokomzole I and head of the *pupu* section of the village, and he had organized its erection. The bricks and cement were given by Europeans in the neighbourhood, and three beasts were killed for meat for those who carried the materials. The money to pay for the bricklayers' wages was raised by the sale of another beast. The name on the wooden cross was cut by the Chief's brother-in-law who was a carpenter, and Lopati said that the cross was for writing the name on and had no Christian significance. The tomb was declared 'open' to the public in the presence of a large number of people. A beast was presented to the Paramount Chief, and another beast was killed and cooked for a feast in the village. Beer was brewed in the huts of the two leading widows who had been in the big house and second house of Njokomzole I.

This tomb was a memorial and not a grave, for Njokomzole I had been buried in Ngoni fashion on the edge of the kraal, the fence of which was enlarged to take in the grave. It was regarded as a central point in the village. Ngoni visitors saluted it as they went by with the right arm [576 201] upraised in Ngoni fashion, and war-dances and spears dances took place beside it. The idea of a brick tomb with a cross on top was of course a modern concept taken from European cemeteries in Nyasaland which Lopati had seen. It cost six cattle to put it up and 'open' it, and these cattle were taken from the herds of the big house of Njokomzole I.

In the chapter on the Paramount (Part II, Chapter II) it was pointed out that in the central kingdom the Paramount Gomani I was shot as a result of the 'war with the English' when he refused to walk to Zomba for his trial. On the Zomba road near the turning to the mission station of Domboshi was a track leading into some woods. In an open clearing was a brick and cement tomb to Gomani I, subscribed to by the central Ngoni (including those living in the towns of Blantyre and Zomba). A memorial fund called 'The late Gomani Memorial Fund' was opened in 1918, and three years later those who had organized the fund formed the Angoni Highlands Association, mainly of Ngoni working in Blantyre and Zomba and wishing to maintain their links with their home villages. In discussing the origin of this fund for the memorial informants pointed out that they were aware that Gomani I, unlike his father and grand-

184 563 [847] families. It was, however, demanded from Ngoni children that they should behave in the socially approved manner to everyone, and not only to their Ngoni kin and fellow clansmen. And it was evident in non-Ngoni families that there was often some attempt to teach Ngoni standards of behaviour to their children, but that such attempts broke down when their family system was not organised to enforce the necessary training.

● 576 577 [847]

The goals of Ngoni child training

Ngoni adults, and especially the senior men and women who were in control of the training of children and themselves deeply conscious of the traditional values of their society, summed up the aims of the upbringing of children in one word 'respect'. The vernacular term *ulemu*—in the old Ngoni language *hlonipo*—is a concept very difficult to translate adequately, certainly to convey its full meaning in a single English word or phrase. The nearest terms are honour and respect, and though in some contexts it is often translated as politeness, that is too limited a term. In fact they had another vernacular term to express courtesy which was to them one way of showing respect. The concept of *ulemu* included the recognition that a particular person or office was entitled to honour; that all behaviour to that person must express respect; and that by showing respect in language, gesture and action, a child or adult so behaving, shared in that honour which they were acknowledging. Conversely, through failing to convey respect, a person, whether child or adult, was 'ashamed' and lost face accordingly. I have just said that a particular person was entitled to honour and therefore to respect in the behaviour of others. The Ngoni said that was the origin of the concept, and it was demonstrated in the punctilious observance of etiquette to all chiefs, and to all leading men and women by everyone else. But there was an extension of this concept to include all older people, and Ngoni children were expected to show

[558] [858]

respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their 576
family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If 577
children did not so behave to old and poor people, they 858
were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had [867]
failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early 576
travellers in Nguniland to the good manners found in Ngoni 828
households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the 829
Ngoni because they liked living together without any wan- 867
tering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . .
Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of being beaten, but because all children were well taught that this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion 829
between personal behaviour and the integrity and prosperity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were talking about child training and its effect on the future of the Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within their society, so that harmonious relations would build up the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic secessions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human societies from the individual family outwards. We see this however in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about 539
keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining 829
their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who [115]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 The moral, which was always repeated at the end as part
167 of the story, was that children were warned not to show unkindness to people but to treat them well so that people would bless them. They were reminded that the older sister showed the qualities of pity, courage and obedience, while the younger sister did not hesitate to display disgust and fear and carelessness. It was the older sister who had her ultimate reward as leading wife of a handsome chief, while the younger sister, as a subsidiary wife, had to take second place.

These two folk-tales were popular among the children, even though they were so different from the animal folk-tales, full of humour and absurdities. The children used to shiver with excitement over the Brass-Rod story, especially the little girls, and the boys sucked in their breath when the wind blew and snapped their fingers for the rattling in the pit. Because the stories were serious and had a didactic purpose, Ngoni fathers approved of them, and encouraged the grandmothers to tell them often in order that the children might remember the moral.

Learning how to behave

205 Ngoni villages, like the whole Ngoni kingdom, had an ef-
367 ficient system of communication between individuals and groups, but whereas the kingdom had a network of official
[207] messengers continually moving between the capital and the outlying sections, the village 'intercom' depended on the children. At any time of day, from first light till after dark, children were moving about the village from one hut to another, from a hut to the kraal gate, taking messages, summoning people, carrying food, reporting arrivals. The messages and summons were all at the bidding of the adults.
576 When a child was called to take a message, he had to respond
157 immediately wherever he was, and run to hear what he was
367 wanted for. Someone calling a child's name, followed by a
280 long drawn out 'Yo—o—o', punctuated all the hours of daylight in a village. When a child was told to call someone

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

older, on reaching them he had to bend one knee, or sit down, and say in a low but clear voice: 'They are calling you.' If a child was sent to call another child to his father because he had a scolding to administer, the bad child had to listen with head bent down, not saying a word or making a sound, until the father had finished all he had to say, whether the accusation was just or not. If the child forgot himself and answered back or made excuses, the onlookers would beat the child for being rude to his father. If when taking a message a child had to pass a line or a group of people, he had always to go in front of them, never behind, bending forward from the waist and murmuring as he went by, 'I am before your eyes.' If a child had to give an adult a food basket or any other object, he had to offer it with both hands and bend slightly over it; and when he received it back he always did so with both hands outstretched and bent head.

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Acting as messengers constantly, and no child was immune from being called if he or she was in the village, impressed on children from their early years the chief behavioural skills of language and deportment. Taking a message was always a formal occasion, and standards of behaviour in language, posture and gesture were rigidly enforced. We shall see in later chapters how very small children were first taught to thank people for gifts or in response to a greeting, and later to greet people politely themselves. The correct terms in which to address or to refer to relatives formed another stage in learning language skills, and later on came reminders about the use of pronouns and the use of the second person singular and plural of verbs, the first to equals only, the second to all adults, with the third person plural for chiefs and 'great ones'. About the age of five or six a child was told: 'When your mother speaks to a strangor she says "Please (you) sit here". You should speak like this to all people you meet however. Only rude people speak that other way—people who do not know how to thank and how to honour, not like the Ngoni who know these things.'

[191]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

521 867 men's affairs. The kind of topics discussed by men at the kraal gate included hunting, in the right season; cases heard in the courts and the application of Ngoni law to all subjects of the Ngoni chieftaincy; the organisation of village affairs from tax collecting and dealing with tax evaders to beer drinks and burials and building houses; the sales of cotton, tobacco and cattle at near-by markets and the current prices; the various labour recruiters combing the villages for likely young men and the latest stories brought back by men who had returned from working in the south. Every now and then, particularly when the talk ranged round decisions in the courts or adding to the herds of cattle, references were made to the Ngoni past, to their relations with Europeans, both missionaries and officials, and to the behaviour of the non-Ngoni groups in the Ngoni kingdoms. The older boys listened attentively and as we shall see later in Chapter VII acquired among other things an extensive knowledge about the needs and uses of cattle. The younger ones pricked up their ears now and then when a familiar name or event was mentioned, and stored up questions to ask their father at a time when he was willing to listen and answer.

576 417 There was the usual Ngoni formality about where people sat at the kraal gate. The most senior men sat on each side of the opening, leaning up against the gate-posts, with the rest in decreasing order of rank as they were further from the gate. The cleared space on each side of the gate and in front of it was all known as the 'gate of the kraal'. The craftsmen [469] who were carving wood or twisting bark rope, making baskets or plaiting mats, sat according to their age and rank on the edges of the senior group or among them. They could have carried on their trade anywhere, but they preferred the company of their fellows and did not want to miss listening to the talk or the arrival of strangers. The herd-boys, where 858 they were present, were on the extreme edges of those sitting [561] there, divided into two groups, 'youths' and boys. Each [562] group made its own fire for boiling milk and roasting sweet potatoes or groundnuts

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 181 356 515 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infest their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again. 825 356 [485]

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene which made them insist that there should be no spitting or nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An ingenious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose. 515 356 [419]

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean. 515 [576]

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up 264

the villages of certain chiefs in the south were preserved.[1] In Mwamlowy's country there are the names of villages belonging to nine generations of Jere chiefs, and in Gomani's country for seven generations of Maseko chiefs. Villages holding these historic names are in charge of an individual of high rank who is never called the 'owner' of that village but 'the one who takes care'. I realized how clear to the people is the historical significance of these village names, when I asked a question and they exclaimed, 'What? You do not know about Elangeni being the village of Hlachwayo? But all Ngoni people can know that.'[2]

4. Clan names. The clan names, as the Ngoni say, denote a person's 'tribe' and the respect due to him. With the prefix, *e, a, ne* (according to the sex) the clan name is used as a respectful form of address, and always when thanking for a gift or favour. The tone of reverence with which the great clan names are thus mentioned is itself an indication of the rank and honour of a person.

5. Village descent. In old days Ngoni villages were very much larger than to-day. The headman of a village on your first visit will always give you the genealogy of his village, how it split off from A, which split off from B, which was the *chigwe* under *induna* X of the big village of chief Y. Reciting these village genealogies generally leads to some recalling of the past, and the village notables, the *amadala*, gather round to corroborate or correct the headman's recital.

It takes very little to stimulate the Ngoni to historical conversations. I have heard them originate in the return of a villager from Johannesburg, where he met Zulu and Swazi men and found they could speak together and had common traditions; in a sermon preached by an Ngoni minister in which he used illustrations from Ngoni warfare; in a rebuke from the Boma to a headman for trying to move his village from worn out land to a site outside the Reserve on an empty farm. And it is not only the aristocrats who take part in such conversations. Sometimes it is evident that men and boys whose fathers had been slaves are anxious to show their knowledge of Ngoni history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni.

[1] I am not clear yet what was the precise ontological process by which the identity of these villages was preserved.

[2] An idiomatic one which has the force of a double negative 'No one cannot know it'.

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(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1800, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zwangendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Ngumuyo, Tshe (said to be the eye of an ox), Xelesa, Gama, Mhlongo, Ndhlovu, and Mbeni. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] most little used were Mdala and Nzungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own house. [643]

(20) Ba-Pale people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pale; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were Balozi people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

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INTERMITTENT RISE OF DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

Lobengula, Chief of the Amaswati. It is stated as follows.

Lobengula crossed the Zambezi at Mazwanyane Drift and arrived at the Mzingwane. The Gamu village on the Lutendwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to stand on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambezi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropa, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1937. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

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List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 16th, 17th and 18th of January, 1936, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zwangendaba:—Mzolisa Jere, Mzungwa Ndhlovu, Mdumanyane Ndhlovu, Mdaweni Mvuo Mbeni, Gwale Tshe, Mpako Mdumanyane Jere, Mdumabhlebe Tshe, Sheqe Ndhlovu, Kalanda Mzungwa Ndhlovu, Kapandula Jiyani Mvuo, Mandhlela Ndhlovu, Chimangadzwe Ngulubane, Chimoto Mdumbu, Mzolisa Jere, Mzungwane Ndhlovu, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Mzolisamvu, Andrew Kapumanyepo Jere, Jonas Mdumanyane Mvuo, Mdumbu Kangwere Ndhlovu, Pongwi Mvuo, Adhlyoma Phiri, Mdumbulele Gwinani Mzungu, Chingulubani Mvuo, Nyo Mvuo, Nyanga Nyo Jere, Mdaweni Ndhlovu, Mvuo Lukhele, Nyambwe Tembe, Mdumbulele Mzungu, etc.

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name - Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

/5 cont'd/

614 Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni
551 families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the
576 Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man
438 and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman,
591 although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

361 In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing
351 the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here.
342 Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as
433 well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they
882 have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of
342 the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The
[624] walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used
[353] for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the wealther. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

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241 The busiest time of the year in the garden is at the beginning
[136] of the rains, when there is much work to be done planting and weeding, and scaring away the monkeys and wild pigs. Later on, in the new year, after the garden has been weeded twice, it is possible to think of enlarging the garden at one edge, and if it is not too late, the newly cleared portion may be planted with a catch crop. Weeding and clearing new ground are both activities that are carried out
[476] to some extent co-operatively, either on a mutual help basis between two women, or more frequently in return for beer provided by the owner of the garden. On the day before the party, a few men and women come to the garden and do their share of the work in advance, in the belief that it is better not to have to work and drink on the same day. The next day, the bulk of the party arrive at the garden, and the wife of the owner brings out a pot of beer from the village. When the first half of the garden has been finished, there is a pause, and the beer is drunk. On completion of the whole garden, the party returns to the village and drinking begins in earnest. It is not necessary to have worked in the garden to be able to attend the subsequent drinking, and the well-mannered host will specifically set
[373] [576] aside certain pots of beer for those who have not been to the garden.

/12/ Towards the end of the rains, there is less cultivating to be done, but the ravages of wild animals become more serious, and many families sleep for two or three months in the garden, returning to the village only to obtain food. Garden shelters are simple open-sided affairs with a thatched roof, but those owners who intend to
[342] sleep in their gardens for a long time, build small circular huts as in the village, or conical shelters with the roof reaching to the ground.
[414] A few lookout platforms built in trees are used as vantage points for spotting wild animals. If a man has a garden a long way from the village, particularly across a stream which will be in spate in the late rains, he may build a byre for his cattle at the garden.

Maize and ground-nuts are the first crops to be harvested, and later finger millet, root crops, and finally kaffir-corn. Maize is
251 stooked before the cobs are removed, and these are then dried on platforms before being carried to the village to be stored.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
F85 Ngoni F85

bows out in Roman days also, that the bandits, and more artful and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the fighting men. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived in an atmosphere that was charged with sin. But when the Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited, many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fearlessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your privacy. I have heard the old men sneer in a village because some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in whispers. When they address you they always give you your family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly. When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say, "We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way, and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interest and amusement. During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

Across the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were lessen and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambezi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the rituals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last forward regiments.

Ngoni Warfare in Old Days

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that round discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the figure dance along with others.

[P. 28 is blank]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

child behaviour. Five of them appear to suggest values some of which have a place either in Nyakusa or Ngoni ideal personality patterns: self-reliance, obedience, responsibility, sociability, dominance. But there is at least one major difference between the approaches of Professor Wilson and Dr Whiting to the training of children. Professor Wilson is describing the values of Nyakusa adults and their effect on the bringing up of children. Dr Whiting has selected from a series of cultures certain typical or common forms of behaviour which might be displayed by children. These forms of behaviour might represent general social values, but they are not set in the context of any one culture, and the criterion is whether an observer saw a child displaying sociability rather than whether the society desired their children to show sociability and took steps to encourage it. This book was after all a manual to be usable in a number of cultural situations. His emphasis is nevertheless on the observed behaviour of selected children, and illustrates my point made in the early pages of this chapter; whereas Professor Wilson's emphasis was on the adult ideal personality to which, it was hoped, Nyakusa children would conform.

The existence of a 'system' in the upbringing of children, a system set up by a society and under its control, posed a number of questions. Clyde Kluckhohn in several of his books has for a long time provided me with clues in the study of 'systems', and many of these clues are summarized in the chapter on Personality and Culture in his book *Mirror for Man*. Especially in two directions these clues have proved helpful: in his distinction between two kinds of cultural learning, technical and regulatory, or acquiring skills and learning to behave, the latter taking place in the early years of childhood, and acquiring skills in later years; and in his theme of predictability, illustrated in this quotation: 'A definition of socialization in any culture is the predictability of an individual's daily behaviour in various defined situations. . . . When a person behaves most of the

[564] families. It was, however, demanded from Ngoni children
563 that they should behave in the socially approved manner to
everyone, and not only to their Ngoni kin and fellow clans-
[847] men. And it was evident in non-Ngoni families that there was
often some attempt to teach Ngoni standards of behaviour
to their children, but that such attempts broke down when
their family system was not organised to enforce the necess-
ary training.

576 *The goals of Ngoni child training*

577 Ngoni adults, and especially the senior men and women who
[847] were in control of the training of children and themselves
deeply conscious of the traditional values of their society,
summed up the aims of the upbringing of children in one
word 'respect'. The vernacular term *ulemu*—in the old
Ngoni language *hlonipe*—is a concept very difficult to trans-
late adequately, certainly to convey its full meaning in a
single English word or phrase. The nearest terms are honour
and respect, and though in some contexts it is often trans-
lated as politeness, that is too limited a term. In fact they
had another vernacular term to express courtesy which was
to them one way of showing respect. The concept of *ulemu*
included the recognition that a particular person or office
was entitled to honour; that all behaviour to that person
must express respect; and that by showing respect in lango-
age, posture and action, a child or adult so behaving, shared
in that honour which they were acknowledging. Conversely,
through failing to convey respect, a person, whether child
[559] or adult, was 'ashamed' and lost face accordingly. I have
just said that a particular person was entitled to honour and
therefore to respect in the behaviour of others. The Ngoni
said that was the origin of the concept, and it was demon-
strated in the punctilious observance of etiquette to all
chiefs, and to all leading men and women by everyone else.
[858] But there was an extension of this concept to include all
older people, and Ngoni children were expected to show

respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their 576
family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If 577
children did not so behave to old and poor people, they 958
were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had [967]
failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early 576
travellers in Ngoniland to the good manners found in Ngoni 928
households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the 929
Ngoni because they liked living together without any scat- 967
tering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . .
Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of being beaten, but because all children were well taught that this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion 929
between personal behaviour and the integrity and prosperity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were talking about child training and its effect on the future of the Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within their society, so that harmonious relations would build up the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic secessions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human societies from the individual family outwards. We see this however in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about 539
keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining 929
their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who [115]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VII

The Threshold of Adulthood (ii)

Knowledge and skills

867 868 Towards the end of the last chapter we said that in this following chapter we would be concerned with the knowledge and skills which young adults in Ngoni society needed before they could assume the adult role of setting up and managing a new home, and of taking part in village and national affairs. Here and there in earlier chapters there have been references to 'men's affairs' and the 'world of women', suggesting that there was a range of knowledge, of activities and of competence in those activities for which preparation and training was needed for those on the threshold of adulthood.

In talking with the Ngoni about the way in which they were handing on their traditional knowledge to the younger generations, they often distinguished between two kinds of knowledge: one a wide range of perceptions and information necessary to carry out daily and occasional activities in the household and village; and the other, a corpus of traditional lore about natural phenomena, and about their history and law. This is not altogether a valid distinction since both kinds of knowledge were traditional but it is a convenient way of approaching the two kinds of instruction given to young adults. The Ngoni were often apt to stress the importance of 967 [186] this second kind of knowledge because they resented the attitude of many Europeans that the Ngoni, and other African peoples, were 'ignorant' until the schools came. This [577] touched them on a very sore point since they set great store on knowledge and wisdom in men and women, and did

3: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

in judgement on his own son, a young man of twenty-one, 692
for committing adultery with the wife of a man of a former
slave family. The husband brought the case against the [684]
chief's son, and the chief ordered the man to speak truly and [694]
not be afraid. The case was heard amid the most deathly [695]
silence. In awarding a heavy penalty of compensation against
his son, the chief spoke of the central position of law in Ngoni
life, and of the fact, so sharply brought out by the case, that
the law was no respecter of persons.

Young adults, boys and girls, were held personally re- 672
sponsible for breaches of the law which they had committed.
Penalties were awarded against them as individuals, even
though they often could not pay the compensation without
the help of their father and his family. They were expected 867
to become acquainted with the law in various ways. One
was by conformity to accepted social codes of behaviour, in-
stilled into them by their elders, particularly in such matters
as sex relations, respect for property, avoidance of slander
and of injury by violence. Another way of learning how the
law operated, as well as the principles upon which the case-
law was built, was by attending the courts, and listening
carefully to the cross-examinations as well as to the judge- [695]
ments. Young people were expected also to ask their fathers,
and elders generally, about points of law which they had not
understood, or had confused with some of the practices of the
local people. The onus was upon young adults for acquiring
this knowledge of the law as well as for behaving in accord-
ance with it. We shall see in the next chapter how the Ngoni
regarded being law-abiding as one of their basic cultural [577]
traits, as well as being evidence of the individual character
of a young adult.

Ngoni traditional skills

We made a distinction, albeit a rather tentative one, at the 128
beginning of this chapter between certain kinds of tradi-
tional knowledge which we have been describing up to this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the 251
tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the [262]
cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV.
Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work
in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and [556]
their presence in the compound conferred importance on
their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of [415]
beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter,
dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs
and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a [323]
shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It
was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when
married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats, 583
spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would 577
show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to
have a high standard of household management in her new
home.

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households 511
well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they 577
could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some
of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed [357]
their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and show-
ed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish 252
was being prepared. They watched every movement of their 868
mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on,
measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred
the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps
and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water
before using it again.

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day 262
in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish
of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less
often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the [415]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 individuals upon the cohesion of that society through their behaviour and actions. This was illustrated in the phrase so constantly used by them, and referred to already several times: 'He is spoiling the land,' or the converse, quoted in Chapter I: 'Young people were well taught that this behaviour was right for the upbuilding of the land.'

181 829 Among these so-called group values the first of all, and pre-eminent above all, was the value of keeping together. Taught by bitter experience that personal quarrels could lead to political secession and to the diminution of the power and influence of the Ngoni kingdoms, the focus of much of their thinking was on maintaining cohesion whether in small units or in large. I think the Ngoni were the only people in Nyasaland where individuals and families were not allowed to leave the villages to live elsewhere without permission of the chief or headman. In the local courts there were frequent cases in which the accused had been guilty of leaving without permission. This illustration could be used also to indicate the second of the group values. I have called it dominance for want of a better term. It involves the exercise of authority, political and legal, over their own and subject peoples, the determination to exact obedience, influenced by a feeling of paternal responsibility for all over whom authority was claimed. This was an ambivalent sentiment affecting the attitude of the ruler and his relations with the ruled, and was the basis of the court case quoted in Chapter VI, when a chief made a judgment against his own son for adultery with a poor man's wife. The third group value was that of mutual aid and trust within the in-group, in order to secure its cohesion. This was the integrating principle of the 'house' system, described briefly in Chapter I and mentioned in many other contexts. Mutual trust and aid had been in the past the main element in the behaviour of men in their own regiments, in the mutual relation of warrior with warrior, both when on campaign and when living together in the villages.

181 The four personal values were inherent in the acceptance

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FRS Ngoni FRS

and demonstration of the group values. The first two, physical and moral strength, and working hard and persistently at allotted tasks, were, as we have seen, instilled into children from the stage of second teeth onward. The second two, dignity and wisdom, were to a large extent values implicit in adult life, and in the case of wisdom seen specially in the contribution made by senior men and women to community life. Dignity, however, had an ambivalent meaning, as did dominance among the group values. It covered not only language, deportment, self-control, accepted rank and precedence within the hierarchy on all social occasions, but the more subtle and very typical Ngoni attitude towards 'losing face'. In the sense that young adults and even older children hated being rebuked in public because it made them lose face, it belonged to younger people as well as to older, to those called the 'humble ones' as well as to the 'great ones'. 181 577

All the emphases in child training on language, deportment, self-control, manners and inter-personal behaviour of all kinds were related to the value of human dignity, and to the concept of a person's 'human nature' as being something to be respected and built up, and carefully guarded, since it was very vulnerable. [967] [928]

At the end of Chapter II when some Ngoni values were mentioned, wisdom was contrasted with cleverness, and equated with knowledge, good judgement, ability to control others and keep the peace, and skill in the use of speech. The young Ngoni headmaster in the first village described in Chapter I said reflectively one evening, after listening to some of the elders talking with me about Ngoni values, 'Yes, we are different in our generation. We are proud, but they had wisdom.' It was an acknowledgement of the pretensions which his generation had begun to claim as a result of the new knowledge in the schools. It was also a recognition that the accumulated wisdom of the generations of his father and grandfather had in it an understanding of values which the younger generation had not yet acquired. [184]

181 577 728 [192] The four so-called personal values will be reflected in the Ngoni personality traits which we are going on to discuss. There are however two values which did not appear to fit into any integrated system, and which yet recurred, as themes in Ngoni culture, and here and there in the ideas inherent in child training. One was the theme of childhood innocence, which was much deeper and more subtle than merely keeping children in ignorance of sexual life and intercourse. The other was the value set on the 'gentle' man. He was a man who appeared to be almost wholly self-controlled, able to have normal sexual intercourse with his wives but not always thinking about women, showing strongness but without anger, being just but also merciful. These were the qualities looked for in the man responsible for the guardianship of certain head villages where the ancestor cult was [764] carried on, and who was entrusted with the ritual associated [774] with the ancestor cult. In the more ancient ritual, such as carrying the sacred emblem before the armies, it was young boys, exemplifying the childhood innocence theme, who were entrusted with this charge. In the more modern contexts, many of the outstanding Ngoni ministers in the church [799] were recognized and revered as 'gentle' men.

The Ngoni ideal personality

577 Chapters IV and V, as well as Chapters VI and VII, showed that there were certain elements in the Ngoni ideal of what their children should be like which were common to young men and women, to boys and girls, while others were emphasized only for girls or for boys. Among the common traits we have already seen the outstanding emphasis on 'respect' in all forms of behaviour and in all kinds of contact with older people, and with others who should be 'honoured'. Part of this respect was shown in obedience, and with this obedience in all the detailed inter-personal relations with senior people was associated, in the individual's relations to society as a whole, being law-abiding and complying with Ngoni law.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR3 Ngoni FR3

As we saw in Chapter VII ignorance of the law was no excuse for breaking the law, and the positive virtue of being law-abiding was constantly emphasized in families, villages and in the kingdom generally. Inherent in showing respect and being obedient and law-abiding was the much stressed quality of self-control. Early travellers remarked on the restrained, dignified and courteous behaviour in Ngoni villages, which was my experience also, and especially in the vicinity of leading Ngoni families. This kind of self-control was taught as we have seen in a great variety of contexts, from avoiding greedy and noisy eating as young children to putting up with being ordered about in the boys' dormitory, and from the insistence on the decorous forms of courting and thanks to the suppression of any overt fear or pain at the puberty ceremonies. 577 [867]

Two other qualities were emphasized in child training since they were expected of all Ngoni people in inter-personal relations. One was generosity in sharing anything that a person had. It was a quality demanded of everyone, from the small child who was made to unclench his fist in which he was hiding three ground-nuts and give two of them to his fellows, to the big chief whose duty at a feast was to see that everyone had enough and to send food from his own portion to anyone who looked hungry. A number of proverbs called attention to the value of generosity and to the social attitude towards meanness, which was felt to be despicable. 'If you do not play with other people the grass will grow round your hut' implied that isolation and social ostracism would be the retaliation to a mean man. The reciprocal element in generosity was always implicit in the teaching and the practice and was illustrated in the proverb, often said hopefully by visitors when hospitality was not very readily forthcoming: 'I have sent my food basket to someone; the basket will return to me.' 577 598

The other quality was the conventional display of sympathy, especially at times of mourning for the dead, but also on occasions of severe loss, such as cattle dying, or illness or 577

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577 accident. These visits and expressions of sympathy could not be omitted without great social disapproval. If a young man or woman was absent from the village at the time of death or loss, their first duty on returning was to go and express sympathy with the sufferer. To assist in these condolences so that the speaker and the hearer would readily understand each [578] other, proverbs were used such as: 'If the pot is broken it is broken indeed,' and, 'when water is poured out it cannot be gathered up.' The Ngoni disliked the noisy and uncontrolled [265] forms of mourning which they saw among the people round them. To them the quiet visit and the note of resignation in the proverbs used fully conveyed the sympathy they wished to express.

577 All through the later stages of training children and young 791 adults the importance of speaking well was emphasized. 195 This at first referred to correct language and being audible 558 but not noisy. Later, as we saw in Chapter VII, the art of speech was held up as a Ngoni characteristic, and many proverbs brought this out in ordinary conversation as well as on more formal occasions such as giving evidence in the courts. When a group of people, generally women, kept up a continuous meaningless chatter, onlookers, generally men, shrugged their shoulders and said, 'They are preparing meat without salt.' When a person talked on and on about a matter which was being discussed without getting to the point, impatient listeners, or the councillor in the law courts said: 'Your wisdom is like mushrooms which come after the cooking is finished,' or, more scathingly, 'You are the feet of a centipede' which wander aimlessly with many steps but no direction. Proverbs were not always a form of rebuke; they could also be a commendation. When a person brought out clearly the point of an argument the listeners said, 'You have rung a little bell'; and when after a prolonged discussion or the hearing of a case in the courts the audience accepted a decision as conclusive and just, they said, 'The upper and the lower teeth meet together.'

3: Reed E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

When the Ngoni talked about the separate ideal personalities of men and women, they emphasized the training needed for younger men, and to some extent also for younger women. Senior men and women were expected to possess special qualities due to their age and status and experience. It was recognized that the limited responsibilities of young men before marriage gave them little authority in village and family affairs. Since each family however was bringing up its girls to leave them on marriage and to take the good name of the family elsewhere, there was less distinction made between the qualities desired in younger married women and older ones than there was between the two groups of men. 577 562 561

The ideal personality of Ngoni women

This had four main aspects: physical capacity and appearance, relationship to her husband and his relatives, competence in household management, and general reputation for justice and wisdom. 562 577

We talked in Chapter III about the connexion in Ngoni thinking between women being healthy and strong and being able to bear healthy children. In the marriage negotiations and even at the final ceremony itself in the bridegroom's village, there were formalized standard questions put by the bridegroom's representatives about the health of the girl and her family, and these were replied to also in conventional phrases. Such inquiries about health had been made secretly long before the final ceremony, and indeed before any formal approaches had been made which led to the betrothal. But the fact that they were made in public on two distinct occasions, at the preliminary visit of the man's representatives and at the marriage itself, underlined the importance of health and its relation to child-bearing capacity in the ideal Ngoni woman. 577 942 581

We saw in the last chapter that physical strength for continuous hard manual work in the household and in the 827 577

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

827 577 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 581 [826] In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day [302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one [291] fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony, [516] her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian [481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

577 602 Many references have been made already to the relationship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife, especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognised by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

577 592 Competence in household management, being a successful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

wife. We have talked in Chapters IV and VII of her duties 577
in organizing food supplies, supervising cooking, and that 592
supreme test of competence: dividing out the food so that
all had a fair share. The same high standard of skill was [264]
expected in the general care and supervision of the compound, the children and the household staff. Ngoni women, like their menfolk, were proud of being able to supervise other people and organize life around them, to control others satisfactorily, to hear complaints and to pacify quarrels. The proverb 'The tooth laughs to no purpose', meaning that [538]
angry people show their teeth but with no merriment, was often heard when Ngoni women intervened to stop two quarrelling girls or to prevent an irate helper getting angry with the nurse girls.

The traits of justice and wisdom were important elements 577
in the foundation of a Ngoni married woman's reputation.
These were judged by her ability to allocate fair shares of 538
food to servants and helpers, and to adjudicate wisely in women's disputes. Two proverbs referred particularly to dividing out food and were said about women who were either careless or stingy, and did not give their helpers a fair share. 'The finger-nails are surfeited' meant that the important people had eaten heartily without thought for others; and 'She has sliced one side only' had the same connotation, that those who had the supplies were keeping too much for themselves. Two other proverbs drove home this principle of *noblesse oblige* when emphasizing the responsibilities of married women: 'The elephant is not made heavy by its trunk,' and 'If the cows do not produce milk the herdsman is responsible.'

The ideal personality of Ngoni men

As we have just said, there was a definite personality pattern 577
for young men whether married or not, which emphasized 562
special qualities looked for in them, since on the whole they 561
had relatively little authority or responsibility in village

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

577 affairs. Boys and young men were expected to be physically
562 strong, and tough in the sense of being able to do hard tasks,
561 walk long distances, dance for hours on end, and put up
[827] with hardships without grumbling. The senior men, as we saw earlier in this chapter hated to see idleness and set great store by young men working hard and persistently at any tasks undertaken. Several proverbs illustrated this quality
[538] and were used with effect when boys were found hanging round in the village doing nothing: 'Loitering eats the owner,' 'Laziness is eating dung,' 'The garden will not be tilled if you stop hoeing it.'

577 Other qualities desired in young men were all connected
829 with the values of staying together as a family and as a village group, and of fostering mutual aid and trust within the groups of males in the dormitory and in the 'house'. It was believed that they ought to be acutely sensitive to the opinion of their contemporaries, a lesson which they learned from early days in the dormitory. To an insensitive person, showing intolerance and hard-heartedness they said: 'Were you made with dog's bones?' for dogs' bones were thought
[538] to be hard and unfeeling; or, 'You have a heart like a crocodile.' A fear of social ostracism was fostered all the time and expressed in the proverb: 'The bird eats in his own field.'

577 There were innumerable proverbs about willingness to
829 co-operate in all the necessary tasks which fell to the young
538 men, such as communal hoeing described in Chapter VII, or digging the grave at a funeral. 'The eyes for seeing,' 'One arm cannot crush a louse,' 'A river grows by its little streams,' 'The heifer grows by giving it more food'—these and many others were used to admonish those who held back and to encourage those who joined in willingly. Other proverbs warned against promises of help which were not kept. 'You will eat those of the axe but not those of the hoe' was said to someone who had counted on noisy assertions of forthcoming help, like the sounds made by the chopping of an axe, and not in quiet persistent help, like the smooth almost silent

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

action of the hoe. 'They are our kin according to their eyes' was said as a reminder of misplaced trust in those who appeared to be helpful but were not really. 577 538 829

Readiness to take advice both from their age-mates and from older men was another quality held to be desirable in young men. Proverbs illustrating this were: 'He that refuses instruction will be surprised by blood,' and 'He remembers that he fell; he forgot that he was hurt.' As often with proverbs, there were others with a contrary emphasis which were sometimes used as a retort to the former ones, or in self-defence. 'The inheritance was eaten by those worthy of it' was intended as a rejoinder not to interfere in other people's affairs, when unwanted advice was offered. 'The body is felt by its owner' was sometimes said to encourage a man to stick to his own opinion. On the other hand a too abrupt rejoinder, especially to an older person, was regarded as discourteous, and onlookers said 'You cause the spittle to be dry' to express extreme disapproval.

Ngoni personality in a changing culture

The direction of the training of boys had been formerly towards military life, and towards the qualities which made effective fighting men, and emphasized loyalty to leaders and camaraderie in the regiments. This emphasis on military preparedness was however never the sole emphasis in Ngoni training, and hence when warfare came to an end, there remained traditional spheres of influence and activity which were an integral part of life in the Ngoni kingdoms, as well as new spheres of activity opened up by missions, the administration, the trading companies and the labour recruiters. 867 177 [703]

The traditional forms of activity were found in Ngoni local government which included the chief's administration and the courts of law; family and village affairs including the building up of herds and buying and selling cattle; and ritual life. The new kinds of activity included occupations such as teacher, minister, clerk, store assistant, houseboy, 463 177

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'.

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders.

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

position. They wanted them to be, or to become, senior clerks, trusted store assistants, valued houseboys, foremen in charge of other men, hospital assistants. They wanted them, in other words, to be in positions where Ngoni traits would be appreciated, and where good behaviour and self-control, ability to supervise others, responsibility and initiative, obedience to orders, would be recognized and rewarded.

In conclusion here is a record of a conversation I heard in the village of a very senior chief, so senior that he was given the title of *Inkosi* when his subjects addressed him. The chief, who was then in his seventies, but active and vigorous, was sitting in a chair on the veranda of his hut, out of the sun's glare, with several of the senior men of the village behind him. Two young teachers in charge of a school came to greet him. They bent one knee as they squatted in front of him, as they had been taught to do as children, gave him the customary greeting, and waited in silence till he spoke.

'How is your school?'

'The classes are full and the children are learning well, *Inkosi*.'

'How do they behave?'

'Like Ngoni children, *Inkosi*.'

'What do they learn?'

'They learn reading, writing and arithmetic, scripture and geography and drill.'

'Is that education?'

'It is education, *Inkosi*.'

'No! No! Education is *very* broad, *very* deep. It is not only in books, it is learning to live. I am an old man. When I was a boy I went with the army to the Bemba war. Then the mission came and I went to school. I became a teacher. Then I was a chief. I have seen this country change, and now the young men go away to work. I tell you Ngoni children must learn how to live, and how to work and earn money, and how to build up our land. *Uyezwa na?*' (Do you hear?)

'*Yebo Inkosi*.' (Yes, O chief.)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

parents and the community, the children and the community, and the community and the school. There are a number of clues to follow in examining the different groups of people involved in a child's growing up, and discovering some kind of consistent pattern of relationship between them. The clues are not difficult to trace for they begin in such information as the amount of time a child spends with each group, what he learns from each group, how much authority and responsibility the group assumes for him, and so on. In this analysis it is not enough to relate each group to the children. It is important too to be aware of the personal relations between parents, relatives, community, school authorities, in terms of their opportunities for mutual contact and discussion, and their attitude towards culture change and cultural conservation. Out of such potential contacts arise the formulation of aims for home and school training, and their harmony or their conflict, and the resultant effects on the growing up of a child. 12)

These two lines to be followed up, which we have just indicated, are familiar to most teachers and to many parents. The third line arising out of this study, and common to most other studies of growing up, is related to research on personality and culture and on national character. This field of studies is more controversial and more complex than the former. In the case of the Ngoni they had a more or less distinct ideal personality rooted in their culture and answering the question: what kind of people are the Ngoni and how do they want others to regard them? This ideal personality was the goal of their child-training as described in this book, but it was in the process of being modified by school teaching, by Christian teaching, and perhaps more profoundly still by the growth of Nyasaland African nationalism. The sharp outlines of the ideal personality type of Ngoni men and women were already blurred by these political and educational developments. 577 177

For readers of this book the relevance of this aspect of 157

833 Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within the marriage bond it is not merely permitted, it is right and proper and positively sanctioned. All intercourse is dangerous, whether marital or not, and indeed it is perhaps the licit social significance of marital intercourse that leads to the attribution of mystical 843 significance. While a woman is pregnant, her husband can and indeed should sleep with her and with her co-wives, for it is not her husband's mere copulation with others that endangers her child, but frivolous and illicit intercourse with the wife of another or with some woman he has no intention of marrying. The moral code supports the social order, and the infant is born live into a righteous and well-regulated family. Otherwise it will not be born, or be born dead. Thus runs the belief.

5. Christian marriage

794 We have noted that, whatever were the intentions of the framers of the 1903 Regulations, Christian marriage ceremonies do not now have 581 any legal significance, either in the Administration's courts or in the Native Courts. They are, however, significant in the eyes of the missions concerned, and sanctions are employed to ensure that all Christians are married in church. Marriages usually take place at the mission itself and there is some sort of preparation beforehand to verify that the couple concerned are aware of the religious implications of the marriage. Important people are sometimes married in a village church and the ceremony is attended by many people. These rites, both at the mission and in the village, involve the local groups of Christians and serve to integrate the members. The barriers against marriage outside the sectarian group might under some conditions lead to Christian or even sectarian endogamy but among the Ngoni this has not taken place. If a couple are anxious to marry and cannot by reason of a religious disparity, the pagan will usually join the church and then proceed to marriage as soon as the rules of the denomination permit. After marriage, a number then cease active participation in the affairs of the church, although they usually continue to regard themselves and are regarded as Christians. The fairly rapid growth of Christianity in the last fifty years makes it impossible to tell as yet whether an endogamous community will be formed. In any case, the Christian community stretches like the rest of Ngoni society to the Copperbelt and the towns of Southern Rhodesia, and there are facilities for Christian labour migrants who wish to marry Christian girls in the towns.

799 The missions have attacked polygyny, the inheritance of widows, the ceremony of 'taking up the child', belief in *mdulo* and pre-marital [597] copulation. In addition, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission has opposed the drinking of beer, and in theory but not as yet in practice, payment of bridewealth. The prohibition on the drinking of beer has led to the exchange of gifts of cooked food between the two sides in the various ceremonies of marriage, without making any important difference to their content and meaning. The missions have had

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible 595
that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy 611
over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in bevies 2 and 3 but not in bevy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in bevy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in bevy 2 and the other by the heir in bevy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I [578] recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were 578
sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should 611
be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious 595
fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of 578
dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this 557
particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who [648] exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs 578
arising from the method of ranking bevies. The same principle of 611
ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to bevies of 621
wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain 554
situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and in other situations that which was founded last. The headquarters of the highest segment was in some sense capital of the nation, yet chieftainship had already passed from it and it was less important in other ways than the headquarters founded by the reigning chief. This apparent contradiction applied within every large segment. We have endeavoured to isolate these different contexts by our distinction between primal and residual segments, but as soon as we attempt to arrange villages or bevies of wives in a linear order without reference to the relationship of their associated segments to one another, the contradiction reappears.

A clear and accepted sequence of heirs would have been appropriate to a segmentary system in which segments continued to hold together in all circumstances. Ngoni segments did not do this, and the simple linear sequence of heirs was lacking. The successive formation of inferior segments implied increased structural separation between the first inferior segment to be formed and the headquarters, and hence less likelihood that the former would provide the main heir. As in lineage systems, the farther back the point of departure from the main line the greater the structural separation from it. But whereas in lineage systems it is the junior lines which are continually diverging from the main stem, in the Ngoni system the main heir was the first to break away from his father, who remained longer in close contact with his junior sons. Seniority within the newly formed undivided segment implied early differentiation within it, and hence early separation from its headquarters. Thus, the general principle of increasing separation with the passage of time, together with the particular principle of segment formation in order of seniority, combined to make a system of great flexibility despite essential regularity and uniformity. On the death of each segment head there was a shift of power within his segment and to some extent a formal recognition of the structural separation which had proceeded gradually during his lifetime. The headquarters founded by successive heads of segments persisted as the home of groups whose interests they symbolized. The history of the segments and of the nation itself was embodied in the relationships enduring between successive headquarters.

When a small segment was founded it was usually manned by people drawn from the rump of the immediately superior segment, that is, from those men and women in the superior segment who had not already been allocated to some inferior segment within it. However it is clear that this rule was often over-ridden. When the lord of a large segment formed a new inferior segment for a wife or son he was able to command the services of everyone within his

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mashanga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tsonga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tsinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[88] Swann's report for 1896, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.
[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.
[90] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 24; Chibambo, *Mr Ngoni*, p. 23; cf. Young, *History*, p. 112, who reverses the role played by witch-finders in this incident.
[91] As reported by Warton in June 1896, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[92] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 493.
[93] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingu, Nzermane, and Madzimawi.
[94] 281, fo. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the latter. This alignment established, it was natural that Warton, 439
though not himself a party to the Imperial struggle, should utilize 648
it by arriving in the country from Tete, in Portuguese territory, rather than from Nyasaland, that he should pose as Wiese's brother, and, assuming that the Foreign Office was correctly informed, that he should fly a Portuguese flag. Genthe played a similar game with his Union Jack, but in a different area among the raided tribes. Even among the British, Mpezeni had three groups to deal with, North Charterland, B.S.A. Company, and the Nyasaland Administration. He was initially friendly and later hostile towards the first, unyielding to the second, and appealed for help to the third, although, or perhaps because, it was farthest away.

The effective cleavage within the Ngoni chiefdom was between 439
the chief and his eldest son. We might have expected the major 578
cleavage to have been between one son and another, particularly 648
in view of North Charterland support for one son rather than 668
another. We have some information concerning who Wiese and Deare thought were their friends, but some of these people appear to have taken a prominent part in the fighting. Mpezeni was certainly not entirely deserted by his own people, for he was able to send emissaries to Kotakota and to warn Wiese and Deare of plots against their lives.[121] The situation in which one section of the population supported the chief and the remainder supported his son may have been facilitated by the existence of what we have called rump segments in the residential system. For in this system the dependants of a segment head were not completely divided up among his heirs; there was a remainder who even after the death of the head constituted a rump segment and represented his interests as against those of his sons. Thus it may be that Mpezeni was supported by those who remained in his great wife's village, or perhaps in his father's great wife's village, as against those who had broken out from it. In the absence of satisfactory evidence, our hypothesis remains unverified. Such evidence as there is, is contradictory. Deare made friends, eventually, with the two senior lieutenants of segment 10, the segment of Mpezeni's great wife; this would support our thesis, as does Wiese's mention of the senior of these as one of his friends. Yet both of them, according to my informants, descendants of these men, were shot in the course of the campaign; this points against our thesis. In the list of friends and enemies which Wiese and his companions gave Brake, segments 4 and 10 each have members in both lists. Among those listed as friends are Ciboma msitini, regional governor in segment 4 and

[121] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186; 187, fo. 137; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10.
578 Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant
648 of segment 4, and Kamzembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional
668 governor in segment 10.[123] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[124] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour
[721] peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell
[178] their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs
439 traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid
648 Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with
567 Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[124] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[123] 187, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[124] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[124] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's villages*, as I have defined them elsewhere.[24] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[24] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 reigning lord of the segment. It is probable that in this instance
643 the divergence of interest had been increased by the shooting of Nsingu, for Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu and grandson of Mpezeni I, was only a young boy and in the hands of guardians who were commoners and who might respond to pressure from their ward's father's paternal half-brother. So far as can be gathered from the published account of the meeting called by the Administration to
[648] discuss the matter, the young Paramount was supported by the lords of segments 12, 14 and 17 and by the senior lieutenants of segment 10. He was opposed by the heads of segments 9, 13 and 16 and by the senior lieutenant of segment 4. Segment 15 seems not to have taken part in the dispute. Thus the main cleavage appears to have been between segments 10 and 12 on the one hand and the residue of 4 on the other. Segment 13, in terms of its structural position, was on the wrong side; this may have been connected with the fact that the regional governor of Mpezeni I who led segment 13 was born in the headquarters of segment 4. After a quarrel about succession to his father's office of lieutenant in that segment, he moved to segment 10 where he found favour with the chief and was later promoted to regional governor. In the 1903 dispute he apparently transferred his support back to his natal segment.[2]

The attempt to assume the name Zwangendaba failed. The young chief's supporters outnumbered their opponents at the meeting and his spokesmen argued that he had been recognized by all the other chiefs and by the Administration as Paramount of the whole Ngoni country. If his rival took the name he would be led to usurp the authority of the young Paramount. The Native Commissioner then ruled that the name could not be taken.

Throughout his reign Mpezeni II was opposed by a half-
643 brother, a son of Nsingu by a different mother. This man was older
611 than Mpezeni and claimed that his mother had really been Nsingu's
754 great wife, or at least that Nsingu had intended to make her so
669 before he was shot in 1898. This rivalry took two forms. He
578 endeavoured to bring destruction to the chief and his cattle by sorcery, and on one occasion made what seems to have been a half-hearted attempt to kill him with a spear. At the same time he endeavoured to establish his own segment as a county of its own, and in this he was assisted by others who fancied themselves as chief of the proposed new county.[3] The sorcery failed, not only because it was merely sorcery, but also because sorcery and

[2] *N.E.R.G.G.*, i, 4 (1 August 1903), Supplement. See p. 35.
[3] See pp. 143*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kins- 634
woman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political 554
significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound 634
by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife 683
while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded 578
him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing. A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment 634
and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are 273
protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief 576
himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the [626]
reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants 431
are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these 662
presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, 634
they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present is made by an individual and arises from his own political aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an 634
affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village 273
or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

l:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In contrast to this, the private affairs of the chieftainship, matters connected with royal cattle, disputes among the chief's wives and quarrels between the chief and his affines or close supporters are discussed at the chief's village. Quarrels of an apparently trivial nature, such as a chief's wife's running away with a lorry driver, would in the old days have threatened the whole internal structure of the county segment, and they are still treated as questions of State by the lieutenants and kinsmen of the chief who attend these meetings. The contrast between these two kinds of assembly is striking. They are described by different vernacular terms,[24] and while any man can attend and speak at a meeting at the court, it would be considered inappropriate for him to intervene in a meeting at the chief's village unless his position in the old residential system was a high one. Women listen to court meetings, but rarely if ever speak, for the Administration works very largely through men and it is men who discuss the kinds of thing in which the Administration is interested. At the chief's village, the interests of the chief's kinswomen and wives are often directly concerned and they themselves contribute to the discussion. The marriages of chiefs established, and to a lesser extent do still reinforce and establish, affinal ties which cut across the cleavages between segments and which were crucial to the balance of power within the State. A quarrel between a chief and his wife was a matter of political, and not merely domestic, significance and must therefore be discussed by the chief's political advisers.

The sanction of deportation appears to be employed only in connexion with offences against the chieftainship. Thus a lieutenant who embezzled some royal cattle was called before a meeting at his chief's village attended by the important lieutenants in the county, and ordered to leave the country. Similarly, a man who was found drinking with a chief's wife under suspicious circumstances was ordered to leave the country by a tribunal of this kind. He moved first to another county, but was forced to move on again out of Ngoniland. Such actions are sometimes taken without reference to recognized Native Courts or to the Administration, and the effectiveness of the tribunal's decision depends on the support it has from the people as a whole and from the Native Authority organization rather than on the ultimate sanctions wielded by the Administration. However, when matters of this

[24] A meeting to discuss matters of general interest is *msonkhano*; one to discuss affairs of the chieftainship is *luwan.ya*. cf. *ku-sonkhana*, to assemble (Nyanja) and *i(li)bandla*, assembly (Zulu). The different derivation of the words, from Nyanja and Zulu, is significant. *Luwan.ya* also means age-set.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

696 In the court itself the magnitude of the penalties imposed and damages awarded is to some extent at the discretion of the court, and political considerations, among others, may influence judgments. Adultery with the wife of a chief is more heavily punished [681] than ordinary adultery, and people from other tribes, particularly [186] the Yao, are discriminated against. Ngoni courts maintain that they recognize only Ngoni law, even though the disputants may belong to other tribes. These ideas are familiar enough, but they indicate that questions of group membership, that is, political affiliation, and relations between groups, do influence the actions of the court. Within a county, hostility between a group having [578] the ear of the court and one lacking it may find expression in procedural obstructions, such as always hearing a particular suit at the end of a day, or of continually postponing the hearing because some minor witness is absent.

The chief and his advisers usually endeavour to maintain a 661 monopoly of access to the Administration, and this endeavour is 648 largely supported by the Administration as a matter of policy. In 696 the particular sphere of legal action, appeal from the Native Court to the District Officer is sometimes regarded as a challenge to this monopoly, and litigants are sometimes punished for stating that they intend to appeal. In a celebrated recent case when a chief was successfully sued in the District Commissioner's court for damages for adultery, his people came to him afterwards to express their condolences, as after a funeral, at the injury done to his high office by this procedure.

Native Courts are formally recognized under Ordinance by 692 the Administration, and hence changes in the indigenous legal 648 system brought about by the Administration are legal changes, in that they have behind them all the paraphernalia of Ordinances, Letters Patent, Orders-in-Council, and Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. This gives a special quality to manipulation of the legal system by the Administration, for this is really only another way of saying that effective sovereignty lies with the British Crown and not with Paramount Chief Mpezeni. But within the framework of analysis of the local situation, the actions of the Administration and of the chiefs in controlling the working of the courts are comparable sociologically.

The Administration is continually exercised about the quality of the work done in Native Courts, and in so far as all cases heard in Native Courts are subject to revision by the District Commissioner a direct check is, or could be, exerted on the way in which the courts operate. But Administrative intervention goes further

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been the case. It could be argued that the unsettled conditions on the northward journey made it necessary to modify rules of succession in favour of the 'strong man'. Europeans have tried to detect an element of popular choice in the appointment of the *inkosi*, or at least of a popular verdict in favour of or against a proposed candidate. Another element suggested by Ngoni informants was nomination of his heir by the dying Paramount. 643

There were, however, certain principles which were clear in the accounts given by informants. One was that immediately on the death of a Paramount a regent took charge of the country, of the office of the Paramount, and of the person of the heir elect, and also of the funeral rites of the dead Paramount. The provision for a regency allowed for a period of delay before announcing the successor. There was no 'The king is dead. Long live the king.' The office of the Paramount was clearly in suspense during this interregnum which had been known to last a few days, a few months, or even years—the last in the case of a successor who was a minor. During this period the regent was responsible for carrying on the work of the Paramount, and for consultation with heads of leading clans about the successor. In the past the regent was usually a brother of the dead Paramount. The traditions of the central Ngoni were, as we have seen, that after Ngwana had led them out of the south, he died before crossing the Zambesi. Two of his brothers, Magadlera who died before the Zambesi crossing and Mgoola who died near Domwe, successively acted as regents until Mputa was old enough to enter his father's place. When the time came for the end of the interregnum, it was the regent's responsibility to summon the people and present the heir to them as the new Paramount.

The assumption of authority by a regent and the provision for an interregnum make it clear that the identity of the successor was seldom a foregone conclusion even though the heir-apparent stood with a spear at his father's grave. Among the principles of succession which determined the choice of the new Paramount, one was that he should come from the big house. This could be 'arranged' by adopting him into it if there was no likely heir who had been born there. Another principle was a less easily defined qualification, that of suitability. This was discussed by the regent with the leading clan heads, who took into account the wishes of the late Paramount and the character and personality already displayed by the proposed successor, who had stood by his father's grave. Informants made it clear that responsibility for this selection weighed heavily on the regent and the leading men, for the choice once made was final, the power of the Paramount was very great, the 'medicines' used at his accession set him aside as a person of potential supernatural power, and the prosperity of the country and of everyone in it depended on this decision.

Two famous cases of disputed succesaion in the past had led to major 643 578

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643
578

divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first occurred in the north on the death of Zwangendaba, when his brother Ntabeni became regent, and this dispute revolved round the principle that the heir should come from the big house. It led to the final split between Mpeseni and Mbelwa, the setting up of two kingdoms, and the giving of the '*Bayete*' to two Paramounts of the Jere clan. The following account was given by Chief Mtwalo Jere, son of the Mtwalo mentioned, and he told it to me in his own village of Ezondweni. It brings out the function and position of the regent; the relation of 'house' to 'village'; the influence of the popular verdict on the choice of a successor; the magnanimous attitude of other possible rivals for the Paramountcy; and the effect of personal quarrels on a national matter.

¶ Ntabeni went to the house of Munene, the mother of Mbelwa. She insulted him and would not give him beer. Zwangendaba went to bathe and when he returned Ntabeni said to him 'I have been insulted by your wife. She called me "Sutu".' This is a great insult among the Ngoni.[1] Zwangendaba was very angry, and he took a pan and fried groundnuts, and said to his wife 'You must take the groundnuts in your hand.' Her hands were very burnt because the groundnuts were too hot. 'You are burnt because you must not abuse this your brother-in-law. You are punished.' Zwangendaba died. Ntabeni was taking care of the country. He was the right man to put the *inkosi*. He said to Mbelwa: 'You are not a chief because your mother abused me.' So Mpeseni was *inkosi*, and the second was Mtwalo. They chased away Mbelwa. When Mpeseni was elected to be *inkosi* all the people were complaining because they said the chieftainship should be for the village of Elangeni. The people of Elangeni and of Ekwendeni did not want Mpeseni as *inkosi*.

Ntabeni died. The people of Elangeni and of Ekwendeni wanted to fight Ntabeni's people because they were not told of his death, and when he was buried they were not there. The Ntabeni people went away to Tanganyika. All the rest left Ufipa and came to Cidlodlo. Mpeseni and Mperembe stayed there and the rest came to Coma. Then Mperembe returned from Mpeseni.

Mtwalo said to Mbelwa 'You are the right man to be *inkosi*. I am not the right man because through jealousy Ntabeni gave the *inkosi* to Mpeseni.' Then they gave '*Bayete*' to Mbelwa.

Cibambo, whose father was *mlomo wenkosi* (mouthpiece of the chief) in Ekwendeni for old Mtwalo mentioned above, confirmed this part of the story of the succession and the role played by Ntabeni as regent. He also gave in his book [2] the most coherent account of an earlier dispute about which wife of Zwangendaba was the big wife—a dispute which illustrated the significance of the house in the succession.

[1] Bryant, in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, said (p. 134) that 'Butu' was an insult because it meant 'barbarian'—one who had not had his ears pierced according to the custom of the Zulu.

[2] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. London, 1942, chaps. V & VI.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

643
578

A disputed succession in the central kingdom arose over a struggle between Cikusi, the son of the Paramount Mputa, and Cifisi, the son of the regent Cidyawonga who took care of the kingdom after Mputa's death. When the regent died, his son Cifisi claimed the succession and war broke out between the followers of the two claimants. After fighting had continued through two generations of claimants the state under Cifisi seceded and became independent, though the '*Bayete*' was only given to Cikusi and his descendants of Mputa's main line. The following account was given in the royal village of the central kingdom by a former regent assisted by an official reciter of tradition. It related to the succession to Mputa, who died in the Songea district of Tanganyika, and to the defeat of these Ngoni by the followers of Zulu Gama. After this defeat the Ngoni under Cidyawonga returned to the west side of the lake and built on Domwe mountain.

« When they burned the body of Mputa, Cidyawonga stood with Cikusi, and that was the sign that Cikusi was still young but was *inkosi*. Cidyawonga was the brother of Mputa. The people told Cidyawonga 'We are in war. You must help us.' They took Cikusi and put him in the big house, because there were no children there.

Cidyawonga was the regent when they built on Domwe. When he was about to die he said to the people 'Now I leave this country in the hands of the owner, because I was only appointed to keep it for him. This is your leader.' He sent for Cikusi and gave him his father's spear, saying to him 'This country is yours.' He said to Cifisi, his own son, 'You my son do not struggle with Cikusi. He is the only Paramount here.' Cidyawonga we did not burn because he had cared for the Paramountcy. And when Cidyawonga died we put Cikusi in his place.

643

The relation between the regent and the Paramount emerged again from the confusion following the death of Paramount Gomani I in 1896 at the hands of the British. The record in the *Ncheu District Note Book* said that authority was divided between the dead Paramount's brother, Mandala, and NaMlangeni, the mother of Cikusi the former Paramount. After the Portuguese-Nyasaland boundary was fixed dividing the Ngoni territory, the Portuguese entered their section to administer it. NaMlangeni and Mandala resisted their entry and were taken prisoners and died. Meantime a big *mulumuzana* of Paramount Gomani I had acted as regent for his heir who had been placed in the big house. The following account by the treasurer of Gomani II described the situation during the early years of the minority of the Paramount.

« Chief Gomani II was born in 1893. The country was destroyed by the Europeans when this child was three years old, and he was taken care of by the big *mulumuzana* of his father, Cakumbira Mpalale Ndau. When the war of the Europeans had finished, they built the village of Lizulu, near Mlanda mountain, where the Dutch mission is today. The child was with them in that village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

614 The Ngoni were, as I have said, emphatic that the names on this second list should be included among the Swazi clans. It was headed in the northern kingdom by the royal clan and in the central kingdom by one of the most honoured clans, and all the clan names were in fact held in great respect. There are three possible explanations for their non-occurrence in the Kuper and Bryant lists. One is that the clan name and the *isitakazelo*, the ceremonial or address name, may have been interchanged, and the original clan name forgotten. Another explanation may be that fission of the clans took place on the march, and as a result new clan names appeared. Both these were likely and may account for some of the omissions. The third reason may be that on the march and after settlement the Ngoni may have forgotten the correct pronunciation even of their famous clan names, and the anthropologist may have made mistakes in transcribing them.

Reference was made earlier in the chapter to the fact that social mobility was found among the Ngoni aristocracy. One form in which this took place affected the position of individuals belonging to the royal clan. In the northern kingdom the chiefs as well as the Paramount all belonged to the royal clan, and descendants of the sons and grandsons of Zwangendaba and his brothers were found all over the kingdom. In the central kingdom, where none of the chiefs were of the royal clan, the descendants of Cidyawonga, the brother of Cikusi, were in the secession state under Chief Kacindamoto, and the children of the brothers of Cikusi and Gomani I were most of them living in the Portuguese Ngoni kingdom. Thus there were large numbers of the royal clan in the northern kingdom, some in the family groups of the chiefs, others living in their own or other villages; while in the central kingdom members of the royal clan were comparatively few in number and were excluded from all political power unless they were of the Paramount's immediate family. Members of other Swazi clans in the north felt they had to assert themselves against the dominance of the royal clan in social as well as political life. In the central kingdom it was the royal clan who asserted themselves socially because they had no political rights in the chiefdoms.

614 578 574 There was a general opinion that individuals bearing the royal clan name who were not of the immediate family of the Paramount or, in the north, were not among his subordinate chiefs, ought not to trade on their name. This meant in effect expecting to get hospitality and other formal recognition when visiting other villages. As one informant said 'If they come to a village they like people to tremble and say "A chief has come".' They wanted to be recognized everywhere as *makosana*, children of chiefs. The popular resistance to these claims came from two sources. One was the general public who did not see why an ever-increasing number of people bearing the royal clan name should get free food and beer—gifts which they would not hesitate to give to people

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

they acknowledged as rulers or direct sons of rulers. The other opposition came from the heads of the Swazi clans who saw their claims to recognition threatened by large numbers of these *makosana*. When such a person was announced a *muhumuzana* might comment to bystanders 'Who is this man? We do not know his father.' Then to save his face as well as that of the visitor, he would send a greeting to him and order beer to be supplied, while avoiding any elaborate form of entertainment. This subtle form of resistance to what were considered undue claims from lesser members of the royal clan was found everywhere. 614 578 574

In both kingdoms the Paramounts and chiefs, especially after 1933, appointed as officials for the kingdom and for the royal village, members of Swazi clans, but also, and increasingly, members of cis-Zambesi and local clans. This practice brought together in the royal villages and in the chiefs' villages men of the ruling aristocracy and men of the lesser clans, to share administrative responsibility, to assist on ceremonial occasions, and to take part on an equal footing in giving and receiving hospitality. This mingling on the official level was one of the reasons why marriages became more frequent between girls of Swazi clans and men of non-Swazi clans whose fathers had been promoted to official positions. The marriage of Paramount Gomani II's daughter to the son of his treasurer was an illustration of this. The daughters of families of Swazi clans were also sought in marriage by men of non-Swazi clans who, through their education, had got well-paid work in the Government or in commercial firms, and could therefore afford to give cattle for *lobola* for the girls. These were two instances of the type of marrying up which in the 1930's was lessening the sharp division in social life between Swazi and other clans. We shall see in Chapter IV, pp. 137, 140) that Ngoni fathers of daughters married to non-Swazi clansmen found a way of keeping their married daughters, as well as their sons, in their villages, particularly in the central kingdom. 582 614 645

Though the Ngoni clan system in the 1930's was, in Dr. Kuper's phrase, 'neither precise nor static', it was an integral part of Ngoni social organization. It was closely related on the one hand to the ruling aristocracy, and on the other to the social hierarchy. Both in the villages and in the national life of the kingdoms individuals belonging to Swazi clans played a leading part in social and ceremonial life, and carried on those distinctive Ngoni practices which their ancestors had brought with them from the south. 614 182

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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The relation of cattle-ownership to social integration, which was so marked a feature of Ngoni society, was limited to the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. There was evidence that the acquisition of herds by former captives and by the local Cewa and other tribes created conflicts within the society. The following statement was made by an Ntumba village headman, commenting on several court cases relating to cattle-ownership. The reference in the last sentence is to the Ngoni practice in the ownership of cattle.

¶ Sometimes people say 'If your father was caught and was the slave of a certain person, and also if your mother was caught and was a slave of another man, then if you buy cattle and put them in the kraal of your father, those who caught your father say "These cattle are mine (or ours)." And those who caught your mother say "These cattle are ours." ' They all say so because it was they who caught your ancestors. So those cattle do not recognize their real owner. And sometimes those cattle do not bear well, and sometimes they just die.

Then perhaps you die and leave your cattle, and those people are quarrelling to find out who is the owner of those cattle, since there are three people who want those same cattle: your father, the one who caught your father, and the one who caught your mother.

And it is really best if there are many masters that you, a child, should not buy cattle, but just leave off because they are a source of trouble. But one who is a free man without any masters, he ought to buy cattle because there will be no trouble for him.

M 233 578 604

Among the local Cewa tribes, when a man wanted to start a herd and had money to buy cattle, he was expected to give the money to his *malume* (mother's brother) who then bought the cattle and took charge of them and regarded them as his.[1] This assertion of ownership of cattle bought with another man's money was part of the services to which the mother's brother was entitled from his sister's children, in return for services which he had performed or would perform for them. If those relationships between a man and his *malume* were not working smoothly and the *malume* was not helping his nephew, there was a tendency for the man to turn to his own father and give him the money, and vest the ownership of the cattle in him, often because the father had paid the school fees or a court fine for his son. When the *malume* realized that his position had been usurped and that his chance of owning cattle had gone, his dislike of the man's father and his family showed itself in jealousy and quarrels between the two individuals and friction between the families. The Cewa matrilineal *mbumba* as a cattle-owning group under a senior man had not the continuity of the Ngoni house, for an *mbumba* was said to be 'finished' when a woman and all

M 233 578

[1] The Cewa believed that if cattle were to survive and increase, they had to be owned and cared for by senior men. On the highlands round Dedza the Cewa had had cattle before the Ngoni came.

There was considerable latent, and at times overt, antagonism from the 575
younger towards the older group. This was to some extent [578]
mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in
cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of importance, called in for consultations with the adults who were [858]
cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went with them to market when beasts were sold. These older boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones', [555]
with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle, skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive 865
impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. 526
They fought with 'rods', like single-sticks, and became adept at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal. Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leader- [555]
ship among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a kind of knock-out championship, hotly contested, until everyone agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not 858
only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They 521
entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they conducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about
men's affairs.

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

535 The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called
571 the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group,
[578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

865 The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

157 One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect-
538 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell-
555 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.000

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women 584
married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that 114
marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristo- 581
cratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence 565
of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages 580
between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class [563]
but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter 581
so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From 836
the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other [191]
Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values [183]
between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared [177]
to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if [578]
she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer 842
of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren 595
special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

If a women believes that her husband is committing adultery with another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages. Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13] The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mtototo*, a root, and *hajelejele*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cikapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kapakapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her husband's village, the occasion must be recognized in a more elaborate manner. Her husband or his relatives buy her a new cloth. Wearing this cloth she stands at the door of her husband's hut, and is undressed by her husband's grandmother. The old woman rubs castor oil on her abdomen and dresses her again. A small girl from her husband's kin goes with her to her own village, and their arrival there, with the woman dressed in her new cloth, indicates formally to her parents that she is pregnant. They stay at the woman's village for about a week, and then return to her husband's village.[14] Her parents have thus been made socially aware of her pregnancy, and the man can legitimately look to them for help if she becomes ill or fractious.

If the woman does die in childbirth, her husband has to offer a beast to her parents even though they were told of her pregnancy.[15] The husband may confess to adultery when called upon to do so by the midwife, but this does not absolve him from the obligation to pay the beast. Confession absolves him from the charge of having caused the death of his wife by his careless behaviour, but he must still recompense his parents-in-law for the death of their daughter. It is recognized that a woman may die in childbirth despite the absence of adultery during pregnancy or despite full confession of adultery by both the woman and her husband. She dies just because God lets her die, and not because of any human misconduct. Yet she reaches the situation in which there is the danger of death because of her position as the wife of her husband. It is the 'work' of married women to bear children, and it is the 'work' of the husband if his wife dies in childbirth to offer a beast to her parents so that they may mourn their daughter.

5. Quarrels

We see then that a woman is not severed utterly from her own group when she marries, but that her kinsfolk retain an interest in her welfare and have certain rights in her and in her husband. The recognition of these rights by their son-in-law increases his esteem in their eyes, and enables him to appeal to them with confidence when he needs their support. The common interest of all is in the successful maintenance of the marriage, and the mutual recognition of rights and fulfilment of obligations consolidate the social relationships established between people related by marriage. Quarrels threaten the continued existence of the marriage, and it is therefore in the common interest that they should be settled as expeditiously as possible. The intervention of affines in a personal quarrel between husband and wife is characteristic of a system in which most neighbours are kinsfolk and in which the spatial concentration of people into compact villages, where abuse shouted at one

[14] This ceremony is called *ngayi*, which means 'breast-cloth' in Nsenga.
[15] See above, pp. 39f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

end of the village can be heard at the other, ensures that all quarrels soon become public knowledge. The quarrels of any members of the village are known to, and in greater or lesser degree are the concern of, everyone else in the village. Beyond the confines of the village, kinsfolk living in neighbouring villages can soon be called in and in any case soon come to hear of a serious dispute. In a quarrel between man and wife there are certain restrictions on the extent to which affines can intervene, and there are certain regularities in the way in which they are brought into the ambit of the quarrel. 578 602

When a woman has a serious quarrel with her husband, she runs away. If the couple are living uxorilocally she may not go very far, and may take shelter with a friend or relative at the other end of the village but the consequences are much the same as if she had gone off to a kinsman several miles away. As a woman flees from the anger of one relative by seeking refuge with another or with her affines, so she flees from her husband to the shelter of a kinsman or kinswoman. Occasionally a woman will go to someone to whom she is bound only by bonds of quasi-kinship, as for example to a former playmate or school friend whom she addresses by a kinship term, but this is not common. If her husband makes no effort to persuade her to return, it is assumed that he does not want her back and that he is trying to trap her into committing adultery. A woman can sue for divorce if her husband has allowed her to stay away after a quarrel and has not tried to get her back again. [586]

Case history 8

Abner was married to Esther and had paid the legalization payment. Abner suspected her of copulating with another man in the village and fought her. He then told her he was contemplating taking another wife. Esther ran off to her father's village about eight miles away and stayed there five months. Abner did not come to see her and she complained to the court. Abner was asked in court why he did not go to visit Esther and replied that he had had no time to do so as he had been ill. Esther said that Abner always suspected her of being a prostitute, but she wanted Abner as her husband; the trouble was that Abner did not want her or else he would have followed her to her village. The court agreed that Abner did not want Esther as a wife and was merely setting a trap for her, hoping to get damages for adultery when Esther had been left alone a long time. Abner was ordered to divorce his wife. He refused to do so, saying that he still liked her. Esther said that if Abner still wanted her he must come and live with her in her father's village where her father could see how he looked after her. Abner refused to go and live there. The court then divorced Esther without awarding any damages to Abner.

The correct behaviour for a husband when he finds that his wife has run away is to inquire from her friends in the village where she has gone, and then to hurry after her himself. It would not be considered right for him to send an intermediary; he must himself go and apologize. Arriving at the hut of the relative with whom his wife is sheltering, he does not speak to his wife but first asks the relative to intercede with her. They discuss the cause of the quarrel, and if it can be settled easily, as for instance when the man admits

578 602 that he was drunk when he quarrelled with his wife and did not mean what he said, the woman may agree to return. If she is adamant, or if a serious issue such as cruelty or adultery is involved, a formal discussion is held in the village of one or the other. Relatives come from both sides and a man of senior status convenes the meeting.[16] Sometimes it may be agreed that the offending spouse must pay nominal damages to the other. The usual procedure is to offer a chicken to the other, but sometimes a few shillings are given instead. If agreement cannot be reached at a meeting like this, the matter can either be referred to the court, or else the issue of the quarrel may be left unresolved in the hope that at some later date a solution may be possible. While the initiative in holding a village meeting lies with the senior relatives of the [694] couple, the only people who can take the matter to the court are the couple themselves. A father may sometimes handle the formalities of laying a case against his son-in-law on his daughter's behalf but it would be difficult for him to do so without her co-operation, and, on the man's side, it is only he and not his father or brother who can effectively sue his wife.

The interests of the two groups of relatives are centred on the successful maintenance of the marriage. It is considered more important that people should live together in peace without quarrelling than that the exact rights of one side or the other, even where these rights can be defined precisely, should be upheld. [684] A man who commits adultery may be censured by his father, who will perhaps refuse to speak to his son if he thinks that the stability of his son's marriage is threatened, even though it is admitted that the man's wife has no legal right to object to her husband's adultery. When there has been a quarrel people do not rush to hold a village meeting since, by doing so, the existence of the quarrel is formally recognized and its seriousness increased. It is better if possible to get the couple to 'change their character', that is, to become reconciled to each other on their own account. Until the woman's sudden departure indicates to the world that they have quarrelled, relatives are reluctant to interfere between man and wife. People gossip about the quarrels of married couples, but even their close kinsmen will hedge and say that these affairs are not their responsibility if pressed for an opinion. The action of the wife in running away is the mechanism by which she begins her appeal to her relatives for support, and she carries it a stage further by refusing to accept her husband's apologies. Finally if the settlement proposed at the meeting is not acceptable she appeals to the court. Men do not run away to their kinsmen and do not rely on relatives to the same extent as do their wives. Yet a man can if he wishes

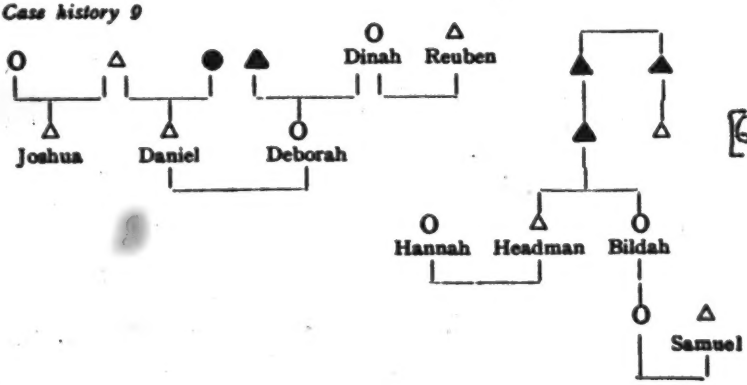
[16] *Tanda*. This word is used of any formal meeting in a village to settle a [192] quarrel, matrimonial or otherwise, before the issue is referred to the court. *Cf.* Nsenga *ku-tandala*, to talk or discuss.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

precipitate an open quarrel by staying away from his wife, by eating elsewhere or by threatening divorce. Fights in the village, provided the parties concerned do not hurry off to court, are dealt with first at a village meeting, and even where the combatants are not man and wife, the elucidation of the cause of the fight may bring to light a latent marital quarrel which must then be dealt with by the relatives. Accusations of adultery must be denied, and a woman may call in her relatives to protect her from the slander of a jealous woman. 578 602

The processes by which a quarrel between man and wife comes to light, and the attempts of kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, are well illustrated by the following account of an adulterous wife. 578 602 159

Case history 9



[601]

Daniel was a labour migrant in Southern Rhodesia and his wife Deborah was living meanwhile in the village of her mother's husband Reuben. The headman of this village had himself returned from the railway line a year previously. At a beer party Deborah quarrelled with Hannah the headman's wife, who accused Deborah of sleeping with the headman and who started to fight her. A meeting was held in the village to settle the affair. Deborah denied that she had ever slept with the headman and the headman denied that he had ever slept with her. Hannah retorted that she did not like to see her husband running after other women and always talking to Deborah. Reuben and a neighbour of his said that they could say nothing in the matter as Deborah was a married woman, and they called on Joshua, who was Daniel's father's son, to speak. He had come from his own village to attend the meeting. Joshua said that Hannah had not actually caught Deborah sleeping with her husband the headman, and that therefore Hannah had done wrong in accusing Deborah without good reason. Hannah had also erred in making accusations that would make Deborah's brothers-in-law think that Deborah was committing adultery. The headman had also erred and should stop talking to Deborah, or else the brothers-in-law of Deborah would take him to court for drinking beer at night with Deborah, who was a married woman.

Hannah then admitted that she had done wrong in fighting Deborah. Another man in the village, Samuel, the headman's sister's daughter's husband, spoke, and said that Hannah must offer a chicken to Deborah because if Hannah had really known that Deborah was sleeping with the headman, surely she would have seen that Deborah was taken to court.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

598
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159

Hannah sent her son to catch a chicken, which was put at the feet of Samuel and a lieutenant of the village, who called on Deborah to accept it. Deborah was stopped from doing so by Reuben, who said that the village was now a bad village since the headman had returned to it, and that he did not want his daughter to accept the chicken. The chicken was released, and the meeting broke up. Reuben subsequently explained his action by saying that if he had let Deborah take the chicken, there would be hatred between Deborah and Hannah, and more quarrels would ensue. People would quarrel in the village just to get chickens.

Two months later Daniel returned from Southern Rhodesia, and Deborah went back to Daniel's village to live with him there. Soon he quarrelled with her, and accused her of committing adultery while he was away. A meeting was held at the house of Daniel's father to deal with the quarrel. Daniel said that he had brought back with him medicine which he had put under Deborah's pillow while she was asleep. Under the influence of the medicine Deborah talked in her sleep and disclosed the names of the men with whom she had slept while Daniel had been away. Daniel said that he did not like to take these men to court on the evidence of this medicine alone. Reuben, who had been called from his village to attend the meeting, said that the matter was not one in which he could act and it was up to Daniel to decide what he wanted to do, as Deborah was his wife. Daniel's father said that as Deborah had children by Daniel she ought to be forgiven and warned not to do it again. The headman of Daniel's village observed that women had been committing adultery long before there was any labour migration, and that as this was Deborah's first offence she should just be warned. Daniel said that Deborah should be warned not in his village but in her own village, and that she should be warned not by himself or his father but by her father Reuben. Daniel wrote down the names of the people he had heard mentioned by Deborah, but he did not show this list at the meeting. An informant who claimed that he saw the list said that it contained, among others, the name of the headman of Reuben's village.

A month later a meeting was held in Reuben's village to continue the discussion. Some of the important people in the village attended, but not the headman or his lieutenant. This ommission was explained by Reuben as being because all the people concerned were Christians and they must decide it among themselves without reference to the headman, a pagan. Daniel's father opened the discussions by saying that Daniel wanted to know about the adulteries of Deborah while he was away in Southern Rhodesia. Daniel then said that he wanted to take to court the people who had slept with his wife. He had found medicines in the house on his return, and these he produced as evidence. He said he had asked his wife what sort of medicines these were, and at first she had refused to tell him. He had pressed her and she had then said that some were medicines she had got from people in another country for headache, and that others were roots of love medicine she had got from other women in the village. Daniel said he did not believe his wife when she told him this, as a woman would not make love medicine if her husband were away. He had found other medicines hidden in the roof of the storehouse which Deborah had refused to explain to him.

Deborah spoke and said that she admitted sleeping with two men, Gideon and Balaam. (They were both men from other villages.) Another man from the village, the headman's father's father's brother's son, who had been invited to the meeting (but who was not a Christian) said that these people Gideon and Balaam ought to be taken to court as Daniel had suggested, for a case like this could not be settled in the village.

Daniel then went on to say that he thought his wife was pregnant and he wanted to know who had impregnated her. Deborah said that she was sure it was Gideon and Balaam who had made her pregnant. Daniel's father remarked that they had best wait before bringing a case against

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Gideon as Gideon's village was on the point of moving from one county to another and they wanted to begin the case in the right court. 578 602 159

Dinah, Deborah's mother, addressed her daughter:

'My daughter, ever since I married my husband, I have never committed adultery with anyone who was not my husband, and I have never asked anyone to give me medicines so that Reuben would love me. My husband loves me because I obey him, and he looks after me well. In addition he looks after you, who are not his real daughter. Believe my words, when Reuben dies, you will not find me married to such a good husband who can look after me and all my children. I used to tell you not to drink beer all night long because your husband was away working. You did not obey me, and see now you have done wrong to both parents, your own parents and the parents of your husband. We will regard you as a bad child who has not been well instructed; and the parents of your husband will regard us as bad people for not instructing you well. Now it is up to you because you are a fully grown person.'

Daniel's father said that the men who had made Deborah pregnant would be punished by the court, and that now Daniel and Deborah must be told to live in peace. Daniel said that he had nothing more to say as the people who had been sleeping with his wife had been identified. He would take them to court and would live peacefully with his wife. The meeting then ended.

Two months later Daniel took Balaam to court, and Deborah and Balaam were each ordered to pay Daniel thirty shillings damages.

We see in this account the constant interest of the kinsfolk in maintaining the marriage. Divorce was never mentioned. Instead, Deborah was told to change her ways. Her father-in-law argued that she should be forgiven as she had already borne children to Daniel. Her mother's husband, although he was more diffident about the matter than if she had been his own daughter, tried to prevent her quarrel with Hannah from worsening when he prevented her taking the chicken offered her. Although Reuben was only her step-father Daniel considered him, rather than his own father, the proper person to deliver a reproof to Deborah.

Occasionally the aftermath of a marital quarrel is neither reconciliation nor divorce but a state of affairs we may call separation. 586 If a wife runs away, or if her husband goes off to work and avoids her on his return, there may be attempts at reconciliation which may fail or there may even be no attempts. Not every woman in this position seeks divorce. Some still hope that their husbands will return, particularly if there are growing children to be cared for, while others may be bound by the rules of their religion against divorce. If a woman is old and does not wish to take another husband, she may be disinclined to take the trouble to obtain a divorce. It will be seen from Table IV that there are only a few women in this condition. They live with their own relatives and sometimes maintain indirect contact with their husbands through their children who visit back and forth. This category of separation is applicable only where the husband is living near his wife. If a man is in Southern Rhodesia and does not write, we cannot say whether or not he is, in this sense, separated from his wife. His

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the [182]
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with 843
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant.
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives 167
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are [837]
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent 692
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

602 that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address
593 of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife,
684 the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration.
692 Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

593 The general principle that no court action involving the husband's
684 sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

578 Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their
602 relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both
[845] from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman
[787] had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who
[754] was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go
167 away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great
602 deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 parents have different fields of interest, but the two fields overlap in the well-being of the married couple. At first there is much formality between them, and intermediaries are used whenever possible. Later they become more friendly. In the setting of the village meeting some parents appear to see themselves as allied in wisdom with the opposite parents against the foolishness of the younger generation whose immature behaviour has been the cause of the meeting. At other times, they may act to defend the rights and happiness of their child against the claims of the rival kin group. We have seen in the story of Daniel and Deborah [21] how yet another alignment can occur when both sets of parents support one spouse against the other. There is no simple way in which these different alignments can be predicted, for they are in fact the outcome of
829 the continually changing pattern of social relationships within the local community. In general, all people wish to preserve the existing configuration of relationships, to support the interests of their children and to maintain the values of their society. In any particular situation, these goals may be mutually incompatible, and there is
571 no over-riding principle, such as agnatic descent or a state-enforced code of law, to which all decisions can be referred. The tenuousness of the cohesion of the local group of kin is reflected in the varying alignments of parents in marital quarrels.

578 We tend to think of quarrels as socially disruptive, and in so far as
571 they are not resolved they do lead to the break-up of existing groupings and the formation of new ones. Yet from another point of view, quarrelling is as much a cohesive process as is common participation in marriage ceremonial. Indeed, just as we have seen already [22] that a ceremony of marriage may be a vehicle for expressing hostility between kin groups as well as recognition of common interest, so a quarrel may lead to increased solidarity between kin groups as well as express hostility between spouses. By taking steps to resolve a quarrel, one kin group is brought into face-to-face contact with the other; there is visiting between their villages and mutual hospitality in somewhat the same way as in marriage ceremonial. The two groups may join to censure the erring spouse. The censured person may feel deserted by his (or her) parents but his father and his father-in-law may have come closer together.

602 The formality that characterizes relations between parents at the beginning of a marriage gradually disappears. A man or woman can always seek shelter and hospitality at the hut of a *child's parent-in-law* and in the final ceremony of marriage, when the married couple enter the wife's mother's hut, the two pairs of parents sit together and discuss the merits and limitations of their respective
835 offspring. It is regarded as incestuous for a man to marry a woman whom he calls *child's parent-in-law*. By so doing his son's wife

[21] See above, p. 82.
[22] See above, pp. 76f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

becomes her husband's *sibling* so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere[23] an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her *sibling*. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court. 835

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages. 578 602 851 [583] [589] 431 586

8. Other Kinsfolk

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of 602

[23] See Barnes, op. cit. p. 232

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.' 622 624 585

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village. 622 578 [621]

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular 692 648 797 466

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

right, the animal is the property of him who first 224
[drew blood].

II. Should it be a buck about which there is a 224
dispute, one saying, "My dog was first," another, 578
"My dog was first," then they say, "Come, let 695
us dig up medicine." And they take the medicine, one his lot, the other his, and chew a bit between the teeth, and one blows it out over his dog, saying, "You dog, if it were not you (who caught the buck), you must die; if it were you, you must vomit." And the other man says the same (to his dog), and they see the dog of one of them is dying. Should it chance that two men throw together, and one says, "It was I who began," they say, "Do not let us be always arguing about this; come, let us go to the medicine man." They do not drink (the poison) themselves, but their dogs drink. And when they have finished hunting they say, "Let us be getting back now." All the game they have killed 224
they pile up together, and the master of the hunt begins to "twist off" the legs that are his share. If they see that there is a great quantity of meat, [251]
they cut it in strips, and make a drying rack and light a fire (under it), that the meat may dry. When dry, it is taken off the rack and tied into bundles.

III. One way of hunting is with many men and dogs, and another of the single hunter. Others, again, dig game pits, and make long fences leading up to them, leaving gaps here and there where the pits are. Another way of hunting is by cutting off a stretch of bush. A man separates his bit of jungle, [by clearing a bare strip all round it] and when all the bush is burned, it alone remains. The game run away from the bare place and enter the bush patch; when the rains are just about to begin to fall, he goes and sets fire to the cut off bush patch. When the game run for the open, people kill them.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 widows continue to cultivate the gardens they had before his death. When a man opens up a new garden he may hand over his nearly exhausted old garden to some relative who does not wish to go to the labour of clearing new ground himself. Rights in land cannot be sold, but only given away, and no presents are given to the donor by the recipient of a garden or garden site. They can only be sustained by continued residence in the locality, either by the owner of the rights himself or by his relatives. There are very few court cases concerned with rights in land, and in the courts the only attempt I saw in which a man tried to enforce what he thought to be his rights was met by the statement from the bench that no one had any rights in land, for did not all land belong to the chief?

Maize is planted at the beginning of the rains, and the garden is
241 usually weeded twice over before the maize has grown high enough to surmount the weeds. When the rains end, the stalks are felled and put into large stooks to dry. The cobs are then taken off the stalks and carried back to the village to be stored. Finger millet is grown in ash-fertilized patches scattered through the main garden, and in between the maize ground-nuts, pumpkins, and other crops are grown. Sorghum, bulrush millet, and rice are also grown. Most of the work in the garden is carried on in the rainy season, and after the harvest the garden is more or less deserted until the next season, although a certain amount of new land may be cleared as a garden extension.

Dwellings outside the Village

There are two types of settlement outside the recognized villages
361 that require mention. These are permanently occupied settlements consisting of two or three huts which I shall refer to as hamlets and temporarily occupied huts in the gardens. The hamlets usually arise
●[578] as a result of quarrels within a village that are resolved by the breaking away of one of the parties to the quarrel. The activities of the Agricul-
[648] tural Department have also led to the formation of hamlets of similar size, both of hamlets of persons accepting agricultural control whose co-villagers have all moved off, and the other way about. These hamlets are all attached to proper villages for registration purposes, and participate in many of the collective activities of the villages near by.

221 The damage done to crops in the latter part of the rainy season
361 necessitates the keeping of a continuous watch, particularly at gar-
[241] dens that are on the edge of a cultivated area, in order to drive off the monkeys by day and the wild pigs by night. Shelters are erected on

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 [671] been made. It is the legalization payment that is recorded on the marriage registration certificate when one is issued.

Often this payment is postponed until some years after marriage and sometimes it is never made at all. It is generally £1. 10*s.*, and is normally provided by the bridegroom himself out of his savings, although in the old days a man would have been helped by his father. The money goes to the bride's father, and there is no legal obligation on him to share the money with his relatives, although he may do so. Marriage ties can be reinforced by a whole series of ceremonies and ceremonial exchanges and payments between the man's people and the woman's people, and a marriage in which all these ceremonies have been performed is regarded as being 'well fixed'. In such a marriage the parents and siblings of the couple have come to know each other, have collaborated in ritual activities, and have probably had occasion to deliberate together as a court of conciliation in settling quarrels between the couple. This line of development is seldom taken in a marriage in which the legalization payment has not been made. If the husband refuses to pay, then the wife's people will not brew beer for him and his parents, and will not use their influence with his wife to maintain the marriage. We may say that in a well-fixed marriage the two families are linked together, and that in one that is not well fixed it is only the two individuals who are linked. Indeed when no payments have been made it is common for the bride's relatives to profess ignorance of the name of the husband, or at least of his parents' names. No action can be taken in the court to enforce marriage payments, although in an adultery or divorce case the court may order the legalization payment to be made.

585 476 578 The ceremonies of marriage should not be thought of merely as occasions for harmonious co-operation. They may also become the vehicle for the expression of aggression between the two families involved. This is particularly true of the obligation on the man to bring a party of his friends to hoe in the garden of his father-in-law. The hoeing party may do more harm than good to the crops if the present offered them by the father-in-law is considered inadequate.

583 178 [231] Prior to the conquest of the tribe the principal marriage payment was bride-wealth,[1] consisting of so many head of cattle. In those days, according to informants, no legalization payment was made. Nowadays bride-wealth is paid only in a small proportion of marriages, and rarely until after several children have been born. In the old days

[1] *Malobola*. Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola* and noun *ilobolo*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage. [606] The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

593 691 578 [586] While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

593 571 578 [684] Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other. In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Council mentioned above spent some tweny years of his life in Johannesburg. Fort Jameson itself is not a sufficiently big town for this process to take place within it, and yet it is only in Fort Jameson or on the tobacco farms that a man can live with a leg in both camps, going home to the village at the week-ends and probably keeping his wife in the village during the wet season to tend her crop. 369 554

On the other hand, there is some rivalry between the traditional leaders and the comparatively prosperous townspeople. The well-clad and well-housed Ngoni of the township are sometimes described scornfully by village people as 'merely White'. There is a feeling that the leading African traders are trying to monopolize the economic opportunities in the villages. Recently the same prominent Ngoni businessman proposed that he should take over the delivery of mail to the Native Authorities, which he claimed he would be able to do more efficiently with a car than can the present postman on a bicycle. The Paramount Chief did not answer this proposal but wrote instead to the Administration to complain against the danger of one man being allowed to earn so much more than anyone else while there were so many people who needed money. At the same time, men whose lives are led principally in the towns complain that in the villages there is 'nothing but jungle', and that the chiefs are old-fashioned and obstructive. 369 578 177 [205] [493]

The Administration

The relationship between the Provincial Administration and the Ngoni is characteristically one of superordination and subordination. The District Officer can send for any Ngoni, but not even the Paramount Chief can send for the District Officer. This characteristic arises from two sources, from the premiss which we find held all over Southern Africa, that any White is superior to any Black, and from the supervisory role allotted to the Administration in the Native Authority scheme. These two facets of the same relationship are not always seen separately by the Ngoni, and in many contexts their behaviour towards the Administration is governed entirely by the fact that the District Officer and those above him are all White. Official reports by the Administration during the reign of Mpezeni II repeatedly remarked on the Paramount Chief's distrust of Whites, and this attitude still persists. Any kind of trouble at all, particularly when it is seen as a characteristic of the present times as opposed to the glorious trouble-free past of the days of peace, before the Whites 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[857] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Labour Ordinances, he can only do so through the District Commissioner's court at Fort Jameson, which may take up more of his time than he thinks the matter worth. In consequence, few actions are brought by farmers against their African labourers and if a man breaks his contract and deserts, no action may be taken against him. 691 578

It is not surprising that the efficiency of labour operating under these conditions is low, and that the wages are also low. These two conditions react on one another, and it is misleading to regard the low wages as the only cause of the inefficiency, or the inefficiency as the only cause of the low wages. The practical effect is that men who wish to earn more money than they can get as labourers on the farms at 14s. a month with food go away to Southern Rhodesia. It must be observed, however, that men started going to Southern Rhodesia long before the tobacco farms were opened up to their present extent. 461 [465]

Labour Migration

Prior to the European conquest, the only men who had worked for Whites were those employed as carriers by the handful of travellers who passed through the country before 1896, and as carriers and labourers by the North Charterland Exploration Company from 1896 onwards. But immediately after the end of the fighting in 1898, recruiting started among the Ngoni for police work in Southern Rhodesia, and there has been a continual flow of labour migrants south ever since. 167 464

There have been considerable fluctuations in the number of men going south since that time, particularly during the two world wars, when the military requirements of the Territory exercised a greater claim. The latest figures for the Eastern Province as a whole show that, in 1946, 23 per cent. of the taxable males registered in the province were absent from the province. Another 17½ per cent. were at work within the province.[1] In May 1947, in two Ngoni counties with a combined total of 1,739 registered taxable males, it was found that 30 per cent. of them were at work in the Eastern Province and a further 42 per cent. were away elsewhere, a total of 72 per cent. away from their villages. Half of those living outside the Eastern Province were classified as 'lost', in that their present whereabouts were unknown to the people at home.[2] These figures exclude all men who have been 'lost' for more than five years.

[1] Labour Department, *Annual Report, 1946*, p. 12.
[2] These figures were given me by the District Commissioner, Fort Jameson.

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
578 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
643 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.
648

In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo.
[805] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Maseko, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction
[645] was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[684] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Masfwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinaluzi River. On his death bed he gave
[766] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was
[428] then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
173
562

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Ansenga tribe worked for Sosera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Sosera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the *ikohlus* wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamache Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Imiti. Father, Nzyekezera (Njekerezera); mother and wife, not known; sons, Masakambewa and Chitete.

[554] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1846. [578]

159 173 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambose Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

167 On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Maseko was killed by Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor. [578] [554]

159 173 [701] [645] (6) Njekwane Ntilila. Father, Mphange, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyuwazana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mene, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpinduka Hill, Matambazi River, in the year 1868.

(7) Mgai Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majekwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 646 to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various bevies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

643 627 644 The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the [622] village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot inter- [624] vene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[22] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended [579] by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[23]

62 63 Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[22] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.

[23] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

243 forest is cut down and burnt, and another garden cultivated, and so the country is rapidly being deforested. The crop is largely used to make a heady beer, and although Central Africa has been 213 happily saved from the curse of European liquor, the native beer is a great source of big drunken bouts. Heavy drinking, however, does not bring the evil effects that brandy drunkenness would entail. The drink is a nutritious and a very sustaining food, I know some of the old chiefs who are drunk almost every day of their lives by midday, yet they bear up wonderfully. But [579] these drunken bouts, when whole villages run riot, are the source of nearly all quarrels, adultery, bloodshed, and every outburst of passion. We have had to denounce the beer drinking as a menace [197] to the social order of the country, and for lack of the strong restraint of the British Government, which forbids the cutting down of trees, we have preached against the deforesting of the land as a wicked improvidence. The native church has, of its own initiative, taken up the question, and enjoined on the members total abstinence, and the preservation of the forests.

461 Three or four months labour are sufficient to provide a family with food for the year, and the sale of a sheep or a heifer will buy all the clothes the family requires. There is therefore little necessity to work, and the tendency is to spend the months lounging about the village, talking and trifling. Now, happily a more 197 industrious period is waking, and larger ambitions for cloth and 461 for stock, are drawing out the men to work. As a mission we insist on the duty of labour, we refuse church privileges to a man 797 if he cannot show that he has been engaged for some months each year at some labour centre doing honest work. No moral good is ever effected by pampering African pride and indolence, and one of the first lessons Christianity has to teach the native, is the dignity of labour, and the absolute necessity for the labourer to be industrious and honest in the discharge of his work. A penny a day is the ordinary wage we give a labourer, and even the great majority of my 220 teachers do not receive more than 1/6 a month.

171 Of course many of the Central Africans have industries of their own, smelting, basket making, cloth weaving, wire pulling, and so on. But the Ngoni were a handless people until they got a spear in their hand. Then they drew themselves up as men, and defied the universe. Yet this martial life had an ennobling effect on them. It is a curious thing to notice, and a fact which was

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices
581 which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows
182 by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if
581 the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this in-
587 heritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an *nhlanzi*, a substitute or
182 additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been
581 handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give
595 another daughter as *nhlanzi*, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her *nhlanzi*. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an *nhlanzi* might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

58 There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the houses played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

584 The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indicated choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner.
[582] In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi clans marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

606 handle them, as well as how to conform to required behaviour. So she put up with present restrictions for the sake of future peace and harmony. Her lot was to live there with her husband's people, and the birth of the child was a strong link in the chain which bound her to them. Meantime she [572] found some relief in her friends among the other young wives, and particularly with the one in whom she placed her confidence, and who acted as her go-between with her mother-in-law.

Wife to husband

593 Throughout the intricate and often vexing relations with her mother-in-law and other senior women, the husband-wife relationship remained for the young mother a steadying and constant factor. She had been attracted to him in courtship; [58] she had had the chance of accepting or refusing him when the marriage proposals were made; the cattle had been handed over to her father to seal the marriage contract. For all these and other reasons she held on to her love for her husband and her relationship with him, whatever overbearing behaviour might be shown her by his relatives. Hence she took care of his possessions in the hut they shared, helping the senior women to send them out of the hut just before the confinement. She redirected food towards him when it was sent to her during her confinement, gladly going short herself in order to prove her devotion. She was glad that after coming out of the hut, having a nurse girl meant that she could keep her body and her clothes clean and sweet-smelling and therefore pleasing to him. She was happy when the ritual cleansing of the hut and of herself made it possible for her to cook for her husband again and endear him to her by that means. When weaning the child caused her pain and frustration, there was at the same time a deep satisfaction that full intercourse was now officially permitted [834] between her and her husband, and that they were free to have another child.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In the old days

marriages in which bride-wealth was paid were patrilocal, and those 583
in which it was not paid, except for marriages with slave wives, were 178
matrilocal. The matrilocal marriages were made only by recently [567]
incorporated Ngoni. The payment of bride-wealth is now significant
only in relation to the residence and affiliation of the children of the 591
marriage and does not affect the residence of the couple themselves. 583
It frequently happens that a man goes and lives in the village of his wife when they are first married and that after a year or so he takes her back to his own village. This practice is fairly common among the matrilineal tribes of the region. A small payment[1] of five shillings or so may be made instead to enable a man to take his bride to his own village without first completing a period of matrilocal residence. Sometimes the legalization payment is considered sufficient to exempt from matrilocal residence. Indeed it is indicative of the wide range of variation in the different payments made and not made and in the [184]
significance attached to them that some informants were unable to state with certainty what payments had been made in their own marriages, although they knew the amount of money or animals that had been handed over.

This wide range of variation in behaviour in relation to marriage 184
is one instance of the high measure of cultural heterogeneity of the 58
Fort Jameson Ngoni. While present-day conditions are relevant to a study of Ngoni marriage, at the same time the effect of the combination of people with very different conceptions of marriage into a single state must not be overlooked. Among families that are powerful and claim to have migrated with Zwangendaba from the south, patrilocal marriage and the payment of bride-wealth are more frequent than they are among families of more recent incorporation. Cross-cousin marriage is noticeably more frequent in villages with people of Bisa descent than in the population as a whole. In Nyasaland, where there is a sharper cleavage into old Ngoni villages and conquered Cewa villages, the old Ngoni are characterized by a greater, and the Cewa by a lesser, incidence of patrilocal marriage.

Divorce

In the old days there was no way in which a woman could divorce 586
her husband. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own people. The usual procedure nowadays, except in cases of adultery, is for the man to give his wife sixpence or a shilling

[1] *Ntbakula.*

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

households of her co-wives who were junior to her in the house, and the households of her sons' wives. These women also decided when to undertake certain work in cultivation or in harvesting crops, when to brew beer, when to re-polish the floors of huts and the sitting place in front of the huts, when to replenish the stock of cloth, ornaments and beads, baskets and mats, which were part of the wealth of the house. Other occasions for the exercise of authority were attending and superintending women's confinements and the private puberty rite of the girls, advising on matters of health, and supervising the training of children. 562 571 592

All these activities of the owners of the houses were so much part of the day-to-day life of a village that they could pass almost unnoticed unless a detailed analysis were made. The position and authority of owners of houses was, however, immediately evident on ceremonial occasions. These included the pre-marriage ceremony of *umsindo*, which was abandoned after the Europeans came; the series of visits and exchanges leading up to the marriage ceremony, *mtimba*; brewing beer on a number of occasions, for dancing *ngoma* and *ligubo*, for funerals and subsequent ritual shaving, or for entertaining important visitors whose coming was expected so that beer could be prepared in advance. On all such occasions, the courtyard surrounding the *indlunkulu* was a scene of great activity. Men put on their war-dance equipment there; the beer pots were assembled there; meat and blood for feasts were cooked there, while the less important maize porridge (*nsima*) was cooked in subordinate households. From the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* a procession of the *manina* (senior women) led by the owner of the house went out to greet visitors, to go to the beer drink, to take part in the dances, and to perform the ritual connected with births, deaths and marriages. 592 554 571 [178]

Marriage in Ngoni Society

Earlier in this chapter it was said that a new house derived from the marriage of a leading man to his big wife. Since marriage was so closely linked with the continuance and development of houses, and since a new wife when married separated from her own mother's house and became a member of her husband's mother's house, I have included a discussion of marriage in this chapter on houses. 581 182

There were three main principles in Ngoni marriage. It was a binding contract sealed by the exchange of cattle; it established succession in the male line; it formed a link between leading Swazi clans. When we examine in detail the organization of Ngoni marriage we see that its objectives were to build up a series of inter-clan and inter-family relationships. These began with inter-marriage between the leading Swazi clans, in order to strengthen the political and social relationships within that inner circle of Ngoni society. The political allegiance of leading individuals from clans of non-Swazi origin was strengthened by marriage

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 585 621 The prolonged series of interviews, exchanges and ceremonies emphasized the Ngoni conception of the marriage contract and its binding nature. They also underlined the severance of the new wife from her former family and house, and her gradual assimilation into her mother-in-law's house. This relationship between Ngoni women within the houses provided an effective means of integrating them into a village to which they were strangers.

CHAPTER IV

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

183 59 'THE Ngoni have power and authority over their women and their children.' So began one of the texts on *cingoni*, 'the thing that is Ngoni', by a man of the Ntumba people whose grandfather had been born among the Ngoni when they were in Songea. There was a recognised ideal pattern of an Ngoni family which covered both the individuals included in the family group and the place where they lived. This pattern was patrilineal in descent, virilocal in residence, polygynous in marriage for all men of standing who were not Christians. Other recognized and often-mentioned characteristics were the continued residence of widows in their husband's village after his death, the grouping of families by houses, and the *laweni*, or dormitory system for boys and unmarried young men.

581 593 The young wife wept on the day of her marriage because she was leaving the security and known relationships of her own family for the hazards and uncertainty of entering as a stranger into her husband's family group. The dramatization of these sentiments in the protracted marriage ceremony, and the allusions in the *mtimba* songs, brought out clearly the continuity of the man's relations with all members of his family and the sudden sharp break in the woman's relationship when she married. When her first child was born, and a new individual family group launched, her final integration into her husband's family began. As a mother who had borne a grandchild to her husband's parents she had thenceforward a direct part in the relationships within her husband's family, but as a wife she was always a stranger. The marriage negotiations and ceremonial express the closeness of the family ties, showing on the girl's side the anxiety of her family on parting with her to live among strangers; and on the man's side the hesitancy of the husband's family at taking into their midst an unknown and untried stranger. In addition, the protracted exchanges of cattle and feasts, delaying the final ceremony and building up relationships between the two family groups, illustrate the Ngoni attitude towards marriage as a

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

binding contract. In theory at least the girl left her family for good once the agreed *lobola* was handed over, and the responsibility for adjustment to the family she had entered was hers, first as wife and then as mother.

Investigation of the terminology associated with the Ngoni concept of family immediately poses problems of relating group structure to individual and group relationships. Dr. Kuper did not refer to any single term for family among the Swazi. The nearest was the term *umuti* used for homestead[1] which covered a recognized leader and his dependents, in terms of common residence, mutual relations and economic activities. The Cewa term *banja*,[2] widely used in Nyasaland in the 1930's to translate 'family', in its general use was more akin to the Swazi *umuti* since it denoted the relationships of a group of people to one man, and their common residence in a single village or a section of a village. *Banja* was used to express relationship to one man by kinship and marriage, but when it was used among the central Ngoni it also applied to other individuals, such as his age mates and the descendants of his father's former captives who lived in the same village. Another Cewa term *mbumba* was used in two distinct senses. The common use was to express the relationship of one man with his sisters and their children who inherited his position and his property and looked to him for assistance. A much less common use of the term was found sometimes in central Nyasaland and occasionally in north Nyasaland to cover the group of a man and his children and his brothers and their children—a patrilineal concept of a kinship group which was usually but not always associated with common residence.

There was one major difference between the Ngoni concept inherent in their use of *banja* and that of the Cewa and other matrilineal peoples. When an important man or woman died among the Cewa, someone always 'entered their place' in the kinship system, and this acquiring of a new position involved a shift in actual relationships and in terminology throughout the group of kin. There was no such change among the Ngoni in the use of kinship terms. When a man or woman among the Ngoni entered a dead person's place it was in order to perform his functions and not to assume the dead person's kinship relationships.

The village lay-out in different types of Ngoni village illustrates the way in which family grouping could be recognized in the sharing of the same hut, in the grouping of huts, and in the relations with neighbouring villages. Later in this chapter illustrations will be given from the northern and central Ngoni kingdoms to show how certain patterns of residential grouping on a family basis were evolving from the divisions of mixed tribal groups characteristic of the former large villages of pre-European days. The general tendency in northern Ngoniland was to

[1] op. cit. p. 36.
[2] Scott and Hetherwick in their dictionary translate *banja*: house, home, household, family.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grandmother with whom they slept, but the other practice was more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611] their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan. In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to remain as a distinctive group. They were members of their father's house until they married; and when that took place [583] it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd belonging to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the carelessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597] grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisability of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

858 upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if
581 the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended not only on her own reputation and character, but on the household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

561 The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive
858 group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one. The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of
[603] the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training
357 ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl,
855 to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter into all her occupations and amusements. This companion, chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's household, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and ate in the same household.

561 In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their compan-
872 ions. There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this
[601] group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided that it would also be wise to send their girls to school, especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men, learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daugh-
[565] ters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and dignified behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especial-
561 ly the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes,
867 but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter
128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there
584 were certain social controls among the Ngoni which operated in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited
835 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers
582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment.
581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptized or under instruction. This last pre-
581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference
182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

warrior, was responsible for advising the youth. He indicated seven villages in which there were girls of good family whom he might go and have a look at. He urged him not to marry 'a girl who belonged to another nation', meaning another group, not Ngoni. He wanted him to marry one of several girls in a collateral branch of the royal clan, for whom the youth would have to give several head of cattle in the marriage transfer. The grandfather was quite prepared to sacrifice several of the cattle from his herd in order that the youth might make a good marriage. The young man's mother and his teachers in the mission wanted him to marry a Christian girl. In the time after harvest he went visiting with his age-mates, and saw a girl he liked the look of at a wedding dance in another village. He was particularly attracted by this girl's quiet and dignified behaviour, and by the fact, discovered through a 'go-between', that she had been to school and could read and write. The girl was at that time not a baptized Christian but under instruction. She was also not of an Ngoni clan, but of one belonging to a neighbouring ethnic group. He pursued his inquiries and found that her parents had been brought up in an Ngoni village and 'knew Ngoni customs because as children they had grown in Ngoni hands'. He married this girl, greatly to the disappointment of his grandfather, who felt that if the father had been alive he might have been able to find possible choices for the boy which would have reconciled the Ngoni ideal of marriage to a high-ranking clan with a Christian background. 581 182

In pre-European days there had been a series of 'dynastic marriages' between the royal clan and the leading clans and the desire to link the aristocratic families in this way was very strong still. It was always alleged that the girl had the right to refuse a suitor if she did not like him. I found several cases however in which the girl's refusal had been overruled by the men of her father's house who desired a 'dynastic marriage'. In two of these cases the girl was finally carried off to her husband's village for the marriage ceremony after 584

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 a strenuous resistance, during which one of them earned the name which stuck to her ever afterwards of 'the biting spider'. Considerations in choosing a mate, both for youths and girls, were not only influenced by the Ngoni desire, ● 581 especially strong among the senior people, for linking Ngoni clans and families together by marriage. The high proportion of young people, boys especially, who had been to school and were Christian, weighed the scales in favour of an educated Christian wife or husband. As always, however, the factor of personal liking was very strong. Attraction first, and then liking based on further acquaintance, was held as most important by the youths and girls themselves. It was partly the question of the transfer of cattle to seal the mar- [583] riage contract which inclined the young men to listen to the advice of their elders, for they were dependent on them, at least in the first instance, for providing the cattle.

836 The other direction in which social control operated in relations between the sexes was in the forms of courtship 584 tolerated and permitted. In pre-European days, and for a long time after the missions came, the age of marriage was, as we have seen, postponed for many years after puberty. In those days there was a recognized and socially accepted pattern of sexual freedom before marriage, which we have already mentioned. A girl could indicate to a young man, who had recently joined a regiment, and had shown in various ways that he was attracted by her, that she was willing to take him as a lover. Often this relationship led eventually to marriage between the two, but it was not always the case. These two slept together from time to time in the dormitory, practising limited intercourse. The fear of being deflowered and still more of being pregnant before marriage acted as a [848] very strong deterrent to the girls not to let the young man, in the Ngoni phrase, 'harm her in any way'. If this occurred the girls knew they would have no pre-marriage rite and no full public wedding ceremony, and this would bring shame not only on them but on their father's family and house.

PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

When the Ngoni talked about the separate ideal personalities of men and women, they emphasized the training needed for younger men, and to some extent also for younger women. Senior men and women were expected to possess special qualities due to their age and status and experience. It was recognized that the limited responsibilities of young men before marriage gave them little authority in village and family affairs. Since each family however was bringing up its girls to leave them on marriage and to take the good name of the family elsewhere, there was less distinction made between the qualities desired in younger married women and older ones than there was between the two groups of men. 577 562 561

The ideal personality of Ngoni women

This had four main aspects: physical capacity and appearance, relationship to her husband and his relatives, competence in household management, and general reputation for justice and wisdom. 562 577

We talked in Chapter III about the connexion in Ngoni thinking between women being healthy and strong and being able to bear healthy children. In the marriage negotiations and even at the final ceremony itself in the bridegroom's village, there were formalized standard questions put by the bridegroom's representatives about the health of the girl and her family, and these were replied to also in conventional phrases. Such inquiries about health had been made secretly long before the final ceremony, and indeed before any formal approaches had been made which led to the betrothal. But the fact that they were made in public on two distinct occasions, at the preliminary visit of the man's representatives and at the marriage itself, underlined the importance of health and its relation to child-bearing capacity in the ideal Ngoni woman. 577 842 581

We saw in the last chapter that physical strength for continuous hard manual work in the household and in the 827 577

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day
[302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one
[291] fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony,
[516] her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

Many references have been made already to the relation-
577 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife,
602 especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognized by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

Competence in household management, being a success-
577 ful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if
592 she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

INTRODUCTION

MARRIAGE among the Ngoni is much the same as anywhere else. It establishes a relationship between a man and a woman, regulates their sexual activities, locates their children in the kinship system and influences the inheritance of their property. These general features, however, do no more than define and identify marriage, and distinguish marriage from concubinage. Our task is to analyse the particular features that distinguish Ngoni marriage from other marriage systems and to relate marriage to other institutions and social processes in Ngoni society.

In Ngoni history there has always been marriage. Indeed men and women look back longingly to a past when people married properly and decorously, and when adulterers were killed, and bemoan the promiscuity of the present when no woman's fidelity is certain. Yet even now old people still expect their juniors to marry and their expectations are fulfilled. Adults are assumed to be married, and the assumption is justified.

Marriage is seen by the Ngoni as part of the natural order. Unmarried adults cannot fill important roles and are regarded as overgrown children whose anomalous condition must be explained by reference to a malady or a physical or moral defect. Yet despite the universal and permanent character of marriage as an Ngoni institution there have been, in the course of the hundred and thirty years which constitute Ngoni history, great changes in the procedures and implications of marriage and in its relations to other aspects of the social life of which it is a part. These changes have been paralleled in other Ngoni institutions, in law, in local organization, in religion and above all in political structure. In this paper we shall attempt to contrast the institution of marriage as seen at two stages in Ngoni history and to relate it to the general plan of social life at these two periods. We shall also discuss some of the processes of change that have brought about the differences we observe and which to some extent are still at work in contemporary Ngoni society.

It is convenient to compare marriage as it was during the 1890's and as it is at the present day. The information relating to the earlier period is contained only to a slight extent in contemporary documents,[1] and consists largely in the recollections of older men and women as recorded by a number of writers from 1914 onwards. The

[1] The most important of these are Wiese's articles, 'Expedição portugueza a M'Pesêne (1889)', in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, x (1891) pp. 235-73, 331-430, 465-97, and xi (1892) pp. 373-599. (All page references cited are from Vol. X); and 'Beitrage zür Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambezi, namentlich der Angoni,' *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1900), pp. 181-200.

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[3]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[3] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
428 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[727] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was,
[581] in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[178] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political
602 ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

128 from the recollections of informants and the accounts of contemporary writers. Even in a society as rapidly expanding as was the Ngoni before 1898, the majority of the population at any one time consists 554 of people who are politically unimportant. What were remembered 581 and what was recorded at the time were the marriages of leaders 184 and their close relatives. It is they, more than others, who were distinctively Ngoni, and it was by their actions that the values of Ngoni society were emphasized and developed. Their marriages [182] were important in maintaining tribal solidarity and it is the system exemplified in these marriages that we have been describing. But the recent captives, the poor, the unsuccessful warriors, the junior sons of junior sons, they also married and their marriages were at least as numerous as those of their more fortunate brethren, despite the large bands of wives acquired by successful men.

583 The data in our sample provide suggestions as to both the relative frequency of marriage without payment and the kind of relationship 554 that held between payment and status of spouse. The eight cattle were offered by one of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants as bridewealth for the daughter of a man of Nsenga origin. Two junior sons of this lieutenant each offered a beast as legalization payment for a wife, one of whom was the daughter of a divisional head. A legalization payment of unknown magnitude was made in a marriage between a village headman and a daughter of another of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants. These four marriages we may regard as important marriages between people of high status accompanied by marriage payments which usually were substantial. Among persons of low status we find that in six out of the seven marriages in which no payment was made, one or both of the spouses had been captured. Intermediately we have the remaining two marriages in which the legalization payment was made and the one in which 'snuff-box' was paid, all involving people of low or middle status and accompanied by relatively small payments, namely a chicken, some cloth, and tobacco. This positive correlation between status and payment holds for thirteen out of the fourteen marriages, but one marriage without payment was between one of the same junior sons of the lieutenant and the daughter of a man of Kalanga origin.

From such evidence as there is, it seems probable that marriages between people of high status were usually accompanied by substantial payments. At the same time, many of the marriages of people of low status and some of the unimportant marriages of men of high status took place without payments. What proportion of the total these marriages accounted for we cannot now ever hope to know. However since they amount to half of our pre-1898 sample it seems probable that they constituted a considerable fraction of all the marriages contracted at that time.

581 The payment of 'snuff-box' and bridewealth were the crucial events establishing a marriage, but there were a number of other transfers of beer and cattle, and a number of ceremonies without

4; Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *lusiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *nyongo*, from the Zulu *inyongo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 40 and 114, and Scott, *A cyclopaedic dictionary of the Mang'anja language spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 486, both translate the Nyanja word *nyongo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mphekiso*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-phekisa*, to help or make to cook. Weise, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', pp. 473-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *vipeko*. Cf. Zulu *uku-pheka*, to cook.

[17] Called *mngeniso*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *mzyelano*, from the Zulu *uku-dlana*, or *kulyelana*, from the Nsenga *ku-lyelana*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place
591 of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[19] If
593 the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists
583 to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on
941 beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

581 As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction
602 between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they
858 belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who
554 had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[19] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 191-2.

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors. 581 602 554

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system. 62 581 571 [611] [591] [554]

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[20] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere [721] 582 [114] [561] [43]

[20] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [559] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. The levirate

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mceka* or *mtoso*. *Mceka* is an Nsenga word meaning a small [192] cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt [291] by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The recent captives

855 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband,
593 wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw
631 attention to two features of the residential system which were not,
554 at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man
591 lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features
[178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

581 Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which
613 agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the
[582] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this.
[178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Cewa dances, speak Cewa, and are to a lesser extent internally organized on Cewa lines. They do not form a distinct class of village in Ngoni country, and are inextricably bound by ties of kinship with their neighbours. But there are fewer traces of the former pre-1898 system of organization in such villages than in those which have a remembered history linking them with the glorious past.[1]

3. Christianity

At the same time as Ngoni values were being undermined from within by the Cewa, they were attacked from without by the Whites. The first missionaries to settle in the area arrived in 1899, although there had been some earlier contact. They attempted to convert Ngoni to Christianity, and therefore to monogamy and pre-marital chastity. In chastity the missionaries were allied with the Ngoni against the Cewa; in monogamy the missions fought against Ngoni allied to Cewa. New rituals were introduced and a new hierarchy developed, composed of priests, evangelists and deacons. However, in this region, unlike much of the rest of Africa, the impact of Christianity has not produced a distinctive legal status of persons married by Christian rite. The Administration's earliest piece of marriage legislation was the *North-Eastern Rhodesia Marriage Regulations*, 1903.[2] There was specific provision for monogamous marriages between Africans, with penalties for bigamy and detailed rules for the division of property left by Africans married under these regulations and dying intestate. Few, if any, marriages involving Africans were made in this form, for it seems that the missions did not license themselves under the Regulations and their ceremonies therefore did not have legal significance to the Administration. These elaborate provisions were repealed by the *Northern Rhodesia Marriage Proclamation*, 1918.[3] Since then the only form of marriage performed within Northern Rhodesia between Africans that has legal significance in the eyes of the Administration is marriage 'in accordance with native law and custom'. What constitutes such a marriage has never been rigidly defined.

The missions themselves have differed in their attitude towards indigenous marriage. One mission insists that all 'customary obligations' must be fulfilled in addition to Christian rites, another holds that it is wrong to transfer wealth from one side to another in marriage, while a third holds that the fulfilment or not of any customary obligations is not the concern of the church. The Native

[1] Cf. Read, 'Tradition and prestige' and 'Moral code' for an account of some of these changes in structure and values, based on observations of three Ngoni kingdoms.

[2] Government Notice No. 2 of 1903, *British Central Africa Gazette*, 146, x, 1, 31 January 1903.

[3] N.R. No. 18 of 1918, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, viii, 11, 7 September 1918.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

799 courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of
694 Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to
[586] pressure from the missions.

4. The punishment of adultery

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers.
648 Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without speci-
689 fying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position
692 of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognized other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognized and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their
[593] husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. Labour migration

167 Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been
593 a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining
464 towns of Southern Rhodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

581 In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an
571 established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one mining town to the next, sleeps for a night with a prostitute and lives for years with a concubine. What is at least relatively permanent is his relationship to his wife and to his children by her. Men still hope that they will be able to gather their children about them as they grow old, and build up new villages so that their names will be remembered. Status is still measured in terms of dependants, and the most certain of all dependants are legitimate children. Ngoni marriage no longer automatically ensures that a man will have custody of his children, but without marriage he has no hope at all of retaining them.

[P.22]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [826] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [828] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance [162] of women over men caused by labour migration.

128 Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically 121 from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 257 and 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs concerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 [621] residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles away from the other two.

[1] *Cisilu*, pl. *visilu*, or else *ŵantu ŵatyalatyala*. Cf. Nsenga *silu*, pl. *masilu*, idiot.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

away from the other two. They were the four most accessible 121
from my base camp, built at a site chosen by the Administration. I was able to compare their size, history, and kinship structure with those of many other villages I visited, and as far as I could tell they were in these respects fairly typical Ngoni villages. They form a 128
sample of approximately one per cent of the whole of the Fort Jameson Ngoni.

The tables in which the units are individuals or extant marriages (III, IV, IX, X, XIII and XIV) are based on the marital histories of the men and woman normally resident in those villages during the latter part of 1948, in one village, and during the earlier part of 1949 in the other five. In Tables I, II, V to VIII, XI and XII, where the units are marriages and not individuals, I have drawn on the histories of men and women who lived in these villages as wedded people for at least part of the time from 1946 to 1949. I endeavoured to interview the whole population but failed to do so for various reasons. I was [124] however, able to determine who was, and who was not, a resident in these villages, and can therefore indicate the number of people who could have been included in this six-village sample had more been known about them. Some of my interviews were only partial.

In Tables V to VIII, which deal with the incidence and magnitude of marriage payments, each marriage is classified by the decade in which it began. This is not necessarily the decade in which the payment was made, for as we have noted payments are sometime made after many years of marriage. Unfortunately I do not have enough information to classify by the decade of payment.

In the tables I have used the word 'wedded' to refer to all people who had ever been married, whether or not they were currently married at the time of inquiry.

It will be seen from Table III that in this sample there was no 162
unwedded man over the age of twenty-four, and, out of a total of 589
116 wedded men, there were only one widower and seven men whose last marriage had ended in divorce and who had not remarried. From Table IV we see that there was only one unwedded woman over the age of nineteen, but that there were as many as 31 widows who had not remarried. Only about a half, 122 out of 223, of the wedded women were living with their husbands.

Marriage is then an experience that sooner or later comes to nearly 581
every man or woman, although not every adult lives all the time in a simple family of procreation. Nevertheless, the ties forged by marriage remain, and the results of marriage extend beyond the wedding ceremony and beyond the domestic association of man and wife. It is the sexual activities of individuals that are most closely regulated by the fact of marriage. In succession to office and wealth, marriage, as we shall see, plays nowadays a permissive rather than a determining role. It is only by means of the symbolic acts which form part of marriage that a man can be reasonably sure of acquiring rights over his wife and the custody of his children. Yet he may,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 on the one hand, acquire that custody without undertaking any of these symbolic acts, and on the other hand he may have full rights over his wife without ever getting control of his children.

2. Choice

582 Marriage involves choice and selection. There are prescribed 'preferential marriages' in the usual terminology, but as applied to the Ngoni this nomenclature is misleading, for, as in the old days, a woman who marries her cross-cousin does not have such high status in her husband's compound family as a wife who is not related to her husband. A man behaves in some respects towards his female cross-cousins as though they were his wives or potential wives, but it is incorrect to say that Ngoni men prefer to marry their cross-

Table III. Marital status of males by age, 1948-9

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586
589
595

Age in years	Marital Status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Number of wives						Total wedded men	
		0		1	2	3	Not known		
		Divorced men	Widowers						
0-4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	51
5-9	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	61
10-14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	55
15-19	28	1	–	2	–	–	–	3	31
20-24	14	–	–	6	–	–	–	6	20
25-29	–	2	–	13	–	–	1	16	16
30-34	–	1	–	7	–	–	–	8	8
35-39	–	–	–	13	3	1	–	17	17
40-44	–	–	–	4	2	2	–	8	8
45-49	–	–	–	8	–	–	1	9	9
50-54	–	1	–	4	–	–	1	6	6
55-59	–	–	–	8	1	–	1	10	10
60-64	–	–	–	9	2	–	–	11	11
65-69	–	1	1	6	1	1	–	10	10
70-74	–	1	–	1	1	–	–	3	3
75-79	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	2	2
Not known	–	–	–	1	–	–	6	7	7
Total	209	7	1	83	11	4	10	116	325

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 583

Case history 1

Amos[3] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

N 614 613 [582] [601]

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N 563

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] M [581] [438] N 186 581 N

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognize these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

[595] 608 582

[3] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

much opportunity for a man to assess his sweetheart's domestic efficiency and moral character, but he can get information on these matters from other people who live in her vicinity. When he sees a girl in a distant village where he is staying, he has more leisure to see what she is like and can ask his own hosts about her character. Girls visit in the same way as men, and if a girl is anxious to get a husband and fears she may not find one, she may spend most of her time visiting in different villages hoping to attract a suitable man. There is more time for visiting and flirting at the end of the dry season when there is little work to do in the gardens, but marriages are contracted throughout the year.[8]

Young men say that what they like in a girl is a light skin colour, a pretty face, and the ability to dance and to copulate well. Some men, however, say that such a girl might be all right to run after, but for marriage one would also need to know that she could cook porridge. Women say they like a man who is well dressed, who has a good job working for a European, and who has a parting in his hair. Women sometimes wear medicines which are believed to attract men, and men who have no good clothes may borrow the clothes of others in order to attract women.

3. Sexual partners

The relationship between a man and his wife, at least for the first years of their marriage, is spoken of principally in sexual terms, and the sexual activities of the couple are more closely defined by the marriage bond than are their residence and their economic life. Informants say that the reason for the existence of marriage is either 'the work in the house', a euphemism for copulation, or else 'clothes', that is, so that a woman may have someone to buy clothes for her. It is, however, much easier to improvise alternative solutions to the problem of clothing than it is to find alternative means of sexual satisfaction without coming into conflict with law and morality. Furthermore, while we have seen in the old days that the main emphasis was on the fertility of the woman, this has now shifted, and it is her skill in copulation rather than her success in childbearing that is emphasized. Fertility is still valued, but does not appear to form so important a theme in ceremonial, songs, and gossip as among other societies where the principle of unilinear descent has not broken down, and where, therefore, fertility either of a man's wife or of his sister, is a vital necessity for the maintenance of local structure.

The husband-wife relationship is one in which the man is apparently superordinate to his wife, but we shall see that in practice this superordination is not as clear-cut as might at first appear. It is furthermore a relationship in which there are certain prescribed mutual obligations, so that if these obligations are neglected, it is

[8] Cf. Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, p. 69.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

will die. The child is in danger from the illness known as *mdulo* throughout the period from birth until the resumption of intercourse between its parents. It is not until after this ceremony, known as 'taking up the child'[23] that the mystical link between man, wife, and child is broken and the man free to commit adultery without mystical retribution. Thus while there are definite rights and obligations between husband and wife which can be enforced in the courts or are susceptible to the pressure of public opinion there are also in the critical situations of pregnancy and childbirth other mystical forces operating which unite the couple to a greater extent than at any other time. To a lesser extent the same principle operates when a woman menstruates. Her husband is in danger from her menstrual blood. She may not lie on the same mat with him and if he has a bed she must lie on the floor. If he has intercourse with her while she is menstruating he will contract an illness called *lugola*[24] whose symptoms are a very black face, nasal discharge, and continual feeling of cold. After death a man's widows are in danger of *mdulo* if they commit adultery during the first month of mourning.

We see then that the relationship between a man and his wife is partly defined in legal terms, with mutual duties and rights that are enforceable in the courts. This relationship is documentated and validated by the transfer of money and cattle from one group to the other and by the performance of the various marriage ceremonies. Because of the relationship between them, man and wife live together, sleep together, eat together and work together. But above all, together they produce and rear children. It is primarily because of these children that the kin of man and wife are concerned in the marriage relationship. It is during the long process of producing children that the two spouses are most closely associated with each other, and actions of the one in some mystical way directly and automatically influence the well-being of the other.

When a marriage grows out of flirtation between a young man and a young woman, there is at first sexual attraction between them. With the passage of time this may give place to a broader sentiment of mutual affection and respect. To this extent we may say that man and wife come to love each other. But whereas young men frequently discuss with other men the attraction they experience towards women, unmarried or married, they do not do this when they have settled down and begun to acquire prestige in the community. A man may quarrel with his wife in public, but he never expresses his affection for her, save in the intimacies of the hut. Men and women mourn their spouses with great lamentation at funerals, but while this may sometimes be the expression of a personal

[23] *Kutola mwana*. Cf. *kutenga mwana* among the Cewa.

[24] Cf. Read, op. cit., 'The moral code . . .', p. 19, where she describes a medicine called *ugola* with which men doctored their wives so that their lovers would die of a wasting sickness. Also cf. Zulu *ulugola*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 692 562 although the evidence presented during the hearing of the case has established the husband's fault as the ground for divorce.

Only if there is dispute over the matter will the court make an order about the division of crops. The principles of division are 586 that the crops belong to those who worked hard to grow them and that the children of the marriage have to be fed by the parent with whom they live, whoever may eventually have their custody. Thus in a case in which a woman successfully pleaded for divorce because of her husband's cruelty, the court awarded all the crops in the couple's garden to the husband, as the woman had been lazy and had done only a little towards their cultivation.

Bridewealth is not automatically returned on divorce and as we [583] have seen, divorce is the time for paying bridewealth rather than for retrieving it. The disposal of the children of a divorced couple is regarded as a separate issue and to be treated on its own merits.

It is useful to have some quantitive estimate of divorce frequency, [128] but the construction of a satisfactory measure is not easy. One aspect of the occurrence of divorce is presented in Tables IX and X, where the number of divorces experienced by wedded men and women of different ages is set out.

It will be seen that, considering only those wedded men and women whose divorces are known, the mean number of divorces per head of wedded population is 0·49 (51/104) for men and 0·30 (62/210) for women. This difference may be due in part to a greater reluctance on the part of women to admit to divorce, but is also due to the greater mobility of men. While women stay at home, their husbands go off to marry in the towns, divorcing their urban wives when they return home or when the strange rural environment proves intolerable to the women from the towns.

By considering the number of years that marriages have lasted, 581 it is possible to say what is the mean duration of marriage. The 586 necessary information was available for 403 marriages extant as well as completed, experienced by men and women who were resident in the sample villages. The mean duration of all these marriages is 15·6 years, and the mean duration of the marriages that ended in divorce is 6·6 years. The median duration of all marriages is, to the nearest year, 8 years, and of marriages ended in divorce, 5 years. More divorces occurred in the period from four-and-a-half years to five-and-a-half years after marriage than in any other similar one-year period.[25]

128 For comparison with other societies, we can express as a ratio the relationship between the number of marriages that ended in divorce and the number that did not or have not yet done so. This can be done in three ways, as set out in Table XI.

[25] There is no space here to give the method by which these calculations were made, but see my 'Measures of divorce frequency in simple Societies" *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, LXXIX (1949) (pp. 37-62).

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The precise significance of these ratios need not concern us here. It is sufficient to note that they indicate that divorce among the Ngoni is more frequent than it is among the Nguni people from whom they first came where divorce is said to be 'rare'.[26] The Ngoni ratios are closer to the Lamba and Bemba than to the Tswana.[27] The indication is that Ngoni informants are right when they assert that divorce is much more frequent than it used to be, for it seems legitimate to suppose that in former times the Ngoni were more like their Nguni forbears, in this as in other things, than they are now.

Once agreed upon, either at the court or in the village, divorce

Table IX. Marital experience of males, by age, 1948-9

Present age in years	Marital experience													
	All males								Wedded males only					
	Number of marriages entered into since birth								Number of divorces experienced since birth					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0–4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	51	–	–	–	–	–	0
5–9	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	61	–	–	–	–	–	0
10–14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	55	–	–	–	–	–	0
15–19	28	3	–	–	–	–	–	31	2	1	–	–	–	3
20–24	14	5	–	–	–	–	1	20	5	–	–	–	1	6
25–29	–	12	3	–	–	–	1	16	11	4	–	–	1	16
30–34	–	6	2	–	–	–	–	8	4	4	–	–	–	8
35–39	–	8	6	1	2	–	–	17	10	6	1	–	–	17
40–44	–	3	1	2	1	1	–	8	4	3	1	–	–	8
45–49	–	4	3	–	1	–	1	9	5	2	1	–	1	9
50–54	–	3	2	–	–	–	1	6	4	1	–	–	1	6
55–59	–	5	1	2	–	1	1	10	5	3	–	1	1	10
60–64	–	3	3	3	1	1	–	11	7	2	–	2	–	11
65–69	–	1	5	1	3	–	–	10	4	6	–	–	–	10
70–74	–	–	1	1	1	–	–	3	1	1	1	–	–	3
75–79	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	2	1	1	–	–	–	2
Not known	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	7	–	–	–	–	7	7
Total	209	53	28	11	9	3	12	325	63	34	4	3	12	116

[26] Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage among the Lozi of Northern Rhodesia and the Zulu of Natal', in Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, eds., *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 204.

[27] Gluckman in Mitchell and Barnes, 'The Lamba Village: report of a social survey' (*Communications from the School of African Studies*, University of Cape Town, new series No. 24), pp. 15 ff., and Richards, op. cit. p. 120.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 is normally irrevocable and couples do not often go back to each other. If a wife does go back soon after a divorce people laugh at her for having caused trouble over nothing. A husband may sometimes assert that his wife has been divorced without his approval, perhaps while he was away working, but such complaints go unanswered for it is in the interests of the court to uphold its own decisions. Even if a man is living in the rural area his wife may get a divorce if he refuses to go to court to defend his case. In addition he runs the risk of a fine for contempt of court. The somewhat lengthy process by which a woman can get her divorce despite the obstruction of her husband is illustrated by the following account of a court case.

Case history 2

159 593 586 In April 1946 Zachariah, a man holding the royal descent-name and married to Ruth and Naomi, began to make advances to a recently divorced

Table X. Marital experience of females, by age, 1948-9

162 581 586

Present age in years	Marital experience													
	All females								Wedded females only					
	Number of marriages entered into since birth								Number of divorces experienced since birth					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0-4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	58	–	–	–	–	–	0
5-9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	65	–	–	–	–	–	0
10-14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	54	–	–	–	–	–	0
15-19	20	23	1	–	–	–	1	45	23	1	–	–	1	25
20-24	–	20	3	–	–	–	1	24	19	2	2	–	1	24
25-29	–	24	4	–	–	–	1	29	23	4	1	–	1	29
30-34	1	15	4	1	–	–	2	23	16	4	–	–	2	22
35-39	–	12	7	2	–	–	2	23	16	4	1	–	2	23
40-44	–	10	5	2	1	–	–	18	10	6	2	–	–	18
45-49	–	5	11	–	1	–	–	17	11	5	–	1	–	17
50-54	–	6	7	–	1	–	–	14	7	5	1	1	–	14
55-59	–	7	5	1	–	–	–	13	10	2	–	1	–	13
60-64	–	9	4	1	–	–	1	15	12	1	1	–	1	15
65-69	–	5	5	–	–	1	–	11	8	2	–	–	1	11
70-74	–	3	3	–	–	–	–	6	6	–	–	–	–	6
75-79	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	1
80-84	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	4	–	–	–	–	4	4
Total	198	140	60	7	3	1	12	421	162	37	8	3	13	223

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.58]

CHAPTER IV

KINSFOLK, AFFINES AND NEIGHBOURS

1. *The setting of marriage*

581 602 WHEN a man marries he acquires not only a wife but also affinal relatives. His kinsfolk become her affines and both groups of relatives become kin of the children of the marriage. Husband and wife do not exist in isolation but are the centre of a network of relationships by which one group is articulated with the other. The common interest of the two groups is in the well-being of the couple and of the family which they found. This is true of all societies but among the Ngoni the relatives of a married couple play a more important part in the marriage than they do, for example, in Western society. The importance of the kin is increased by the custom of sending children away to live with their grandparents as soon as they have been weaned, and by the fact that husband and [591] wife do not set up their residence entirely on their own but follow their relatives and live in close proximity to one or more of them. We have said that in the old days the elementary family did not emerge as an important grouping in society. This proposition is still true to-day, although our grounds for making it have shifted somewhat. In the towns the old pattern of kinship cannot operate and husband [594] and wife live their lives much more as an isolated pair, cut off from their kin and alone responsible for their children. But in villages neighbours are kinsmen and a quarrel between man and wife brings kinsfolk from all around seeking to establish the rights and wrongs of the quarrel and to effect reconciliation. Many children are not sent to live with their grandparents, but even they grow up with their age-mates in the village, are fed by many different women, sleep in [855] different huts, and visit to and fro with their relatives in other villages. The difficulties of rearing children in the towns have led to the rise of a new pattern in which children born in Southern Rhodesia are brought back hundreds of miles to the village to be cared for by rural kinsfolk. The quarrels of spouses in the towns are referred home to the village for discussion.

It is the kinsfolk of the pair who are most directly concerned with their marriage, but there are other persons and groups who are also interested. In the village the headman and his lieutenants, even if they are not close kinsmen of one of the spouses, have an interest in the good behaviour of the couple, and they too may intervene in a quarrel. They participate in the ceremonials of marriage, and may receive part of the meat and beer given by one side to the other. CDO Beyond the village the Native Courts deal to a great extent with

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Beyond the Village The Native Courts deal to a great extent with matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the development of Christian marriage.

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who rears him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are responsible for their own actions before the court, and that truant schoolboys can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peaceably with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms.

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage.

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later

[1] Called *cidumu*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

848 that if the lover is thought to be very desirable as a husband, the girl
689 and her parents will begin to act as though she had in fact been married by him. Few cases of seduction come before the courts, perhaps because of the fact that it is only pre-marital pregnancy that can lead to action in the court and not merely pre-marital copulation. If the lover agrees to marry the girl it is in the interests of her kin to let him do so, rather than take the matter to court when they may be awarded more damages but where also their daughter will appear as a foolish and indiscreet person. It is said that some girls hand on to their parents some of the presents they receive from their lovers, and that therefore the parents take no action against the lovers, but I have no information as to the extent of this practice.

The kin of a woman have therefore an interest in her sexual activities before she is married, and to a lesser extent a man's relatives have a similar interest. The main concern of a man, however, is that he shall not get himself into such serious trouble that he has to find the money for damages in the court and that he will not be forced to marry an unsuitable girl whom he has impregnated.

2. The marriages of children

• 581 At marriage itself a person's relatives may act on his or her behalf in choosing a spouse, and the factors that influence their choice are different from those which operate when people choose their own spouses. A man's relatives stress that the wife-to-be must be hardworking, polite to her superiors and not given to promiscuity. The fact that a girl begins to sleep with her lover may influence her lover's parents against her for they argue that if she sleeps so easily with their son she will soon tire of him and run off after someone else. They pay more attention to the character of her parents and siblings and look to see what sort of wives her sisters have made. Similarly the parents of the girl may look critically at the young man and they too argue that as he has already begun to sleep with their daughter he will soon begin running after other women and leave his wife 'alone in her hut'. If a relative of the girl has already married a relative of the man and that marriage has not been a success, their kinsfolk may try to prevent a second marriage.

Case history 4

Absolom, who works in South Africa, wrote to his brother saying he wanted to marry Mary. The brother, who was married to Mary's sister, approached Mary's father who said that he could not agree. Mary's father later said that he opposed the marriage as Absolom's brother had infected his wife with syphilis and he did not want another of his daughters to marry into that family.

[164]

584 If a man is away working he may write home and ask his father or some other relative to find a wife for him. A marriage arranged in this way does not necessarily find favour with the man when he finds out who his bride is to be, but a number of soldiers successfully

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

married women chosen for them by their kinsfolk while they were 584
away during the 1939-45 war. If the woman selected for him by one relative is unsatisfactory, a man may turn to another relative for help, as is shown in the following incident.

Case history 5

Ahab, a young man of about twenty, was working in Fort Jameson. He wrote to his father in the village enclosing money for the legalization payment, asking that his father should find him a wife. His father spoke to a friend living in another village who had an unmarried daughter. The friend agreed that his daughter should marry Ahab, but the girl said that she wanted to see Ahab before making up her mind about him. Ahab was [581] told of the arrangement but refused to agree to it, saying that he knew that the girl chosen was a prostitute.

Ahab then asked a classificatory grandmother to find him a wife. This woman found a girl and when Ahab came home from work he and a friend went for a walk to the girl's village to spy her out. The friend, on seeing the girl, advised Ahab against marrying her and the negotiations again fell through.

Ahab asked his grandmother to try again and this time he approved of the girl selected. The legalization payment was made and the girl came to live in Ahab's village with his grandmother. After a week or so, she was [591] taken by the grandmother and other important women of the village into the township to start living with Ahab.

On the other hand a man may desist from marrying the girl of his choice in the face of parental opposition. For example, the first girl that Amos found for himself was opposed by his father because [154] her father was a sorcerer; the second on the ground that her parents were unreliable and that she was a cross-cousin, a point against [581] her in that Amos's brother had married a cross-cousin and the marriage was not a success; only with the third choice did the father agree to his marriage.

The initiative in arranging a marriage lies with the man and his kin rather than with the woman, and a girl who goes too much out of her way to attract a husband risks her reputation and may be regarded as a potential prostitute. On elopement, it is the woman 583 who runs off to the man's village or to his place of work, and it might be expected that her relatives would initiate action to bring her back or to claim damages for abduction. Sometimes a man does take action against the lover with whom his daughter has run away, and the lover pays a beast. Another man, however, may take no steps to follow his runaway daughter, merely refusing to recognize the existence of any marriage between her and her lover, and sometimes denying any knowledge of the lover's name. If the woman shows no sign of returning to her own village, efforts may be made to bring her children back to her parents to be brought up. Sometimes a man who has eloped with a woman later approaches her parents, apologizes for his precipitate action and makes them gifts, after which they may decide to recognize him as a son-in-law.

If a man shows his intention of marrying despite the disapproval 584 of his close kin, they can retaliate by not helping him financially,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 approval of his father before he offers, and as in the case of Amos and Eve (p. 28), the father may sometimes disapprove. If the man is from another part of the territory or from abroad the parents of
583 the woman, even if they accept the legalization payment, may be reluctant to allow their grandchildren to go a long way away from
603 them to live among their son-in-law's kin. This consideration applies
593 particularly to strangers in the township who marry Ngoni women. When they leave their jobs or retire they try to take their wives and children with them. They may be frustrated in the removal of their children by the woman's parents, who refuse the bridewealth. The courts support the claims of Ngoni grandparents for the retention of their grandchildren under these conditions and a returning Yao or Cipeta man may be forced to travel without his children and sometimes without his wife. I have recorded elsewhere [2] an incident in which a Yao man who had been married to an Ngoni woman for twenty-one years was divorced by her and his offer of bridewealth refused by her parents. The police who check the movements of women and children by bus and lorry away from Fort Jameson are in touch with the Native Courts and may be on the look out if it seems likely that a man from a strange tribe will attempt to smuggle his wife and children away from their Ngoni kin.

● 581 Thus we see that the kinsfolk are directly concerned with marriage. When the children are still toddlers, they are paired off in fun by their
[858] adult relatives as they sit playing. For a week or month or even longer a woman will laughingly call her neighbour *child's parent-in-law* because their children have been nominated *husband* and *wife* in this way. As a child grows older, so the interest of its relatives in its marriage become clearer. Before marriage the relatives of a
684 girl hold rights in her that are violated if she is seduced and bears
848 a child. It is to them that the girl's lover pays the beast of seduction to recompense them for the wrong he has done by impregnating the girl, but he does not gain custody of the child. On the other hand,
836 no one brings a case against a man merely because he sleeps with an unmarried girl. It is only when she becomes pregnant that an action can be laid against him. A man caught *in flagrante delicto* by one of the unmarried girl's kin can expect abuse and possibly blows but unless he is provocative he need not fear action in the courts. The hostility directed towards him seems to be due in part to his having behaved so indiscreetly as to be caught and having forced the girl's kin to take cognizance of what was happening.

At marriage the woman's kin grant rights in her sexual activities
581 to her husband. These rights are unambiguously transferred by the
583 legalization payment, and the woman's kin are therefore in a position to delay or facilitate the tranfser of these rights by their attitude towards the payment. There is no corresponding right in an unmarried man held by his kin, and at marriage there is no corres-

[2] Barnes, op. cit. p. 238

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

ponding payment through which they can attempt to control the relationship between the couple. Yet both groups of kin are interested in the successful outcome of the marriage, and therefore attempt to influence the choice of marriage partner. 581 583

3. Formal interaction

In the formal negotiations that precede a marriage, and in the ceremonies that mark its stages of development, the kinsfolk are always involved. The married couple depend on their kin for economic assistance, and are under obligations to help their kin. The place of residence of the couple is determined by the disposition of their kin in different villages. If the man is a labour migrant his interests are represented by his rural kinsfolk. In general it is the fathers of the couple who are most directly concerned, if they are available, but in all Ngoni situations in which a man (or woman) appeals to his kin for support there are no hard and fast rules about the genealogical positions his supporters should occupy. If a man's father is old he turns to his elder brother. If his genealogically close kinsmen live far away, he turns to those who live nearer although they may be further removed from him in genealogical terms. If there is no male kinsman available he may seek the support of an old kinswoman. 581 602

The formal situations which require the co-operation of kinsfolk are the matchmaking, the gall bladder ceremony (which we may perhaps regard as the wedding), the ceremony of first cooking, the hoeing party, the announcement of first pregnancy, the carrying of beer and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. Betrothal is another formal situation requiring the presence of the woman's kin, but as nowadays very few girls are betrothed, we shall omit this from our analysis. It will be recalled that even in the old days betrothal applied only to girls under puberty and that a girl who reached puberty without becoming betrothed proceeded to marriage without passing through any intermediate stage. The matchmaking, at which the marriage is arranged, is carried on in a formal manner but there is little ceremonial. The carrying of beer is a visit from one group to the other that can be repeated as many times as they wish, but all the other ceremonies occur but once in a marriage, if they occur at all. The hoeing party has a certain economic value but the other ceremonies are largely symbolic in content. As with the marriage payments, the marriage ceremonials can all be dispensed with and yet there be a marriage which to all intents and purposes is valid. What cannot be omitted so easily from a marriage are the patterns of respect and avoidance between the couple and their affines, particularly between a man and his wife's mother. Even here, however, there is some variation in practice. 602 [585] [584] [581] [606]

The usual procedure in matchmaking is that first the man and the woman agree between themselves that they will get married. They reach this agreement in secret without reference to their kinsfolk 584

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

At the hoeing party, her husband goes with kinsfolk and neighbours to work in the garden of her mother for a day and they are rewarded by her father. In the carrying of beer, a party of women from the wife's village carry beer brewed by her mother to her husband's father, who rewards them. At the final ceremony of entering the wife's mother's hut, a party of men and women from the man's village go to the woman's parents' village and are entertained by them. The husband enters his mother-in-law's hut, a woman from his village eats together from the same spoon with a woman from the wife's village, and his parents sit with her parents and discuss the marriage of their children.[4] It will be noted that these ceremonies are similar to those mentioned in connexion with marriage in 'the time of peace'[5] except that what was formerly a distinct rite, at which a man ate with his wife's mother, has now become part of the ceremony of entering her hut.

581 606

All these ceremonies can be omitted, and the man and woman still be validly married to each other. It often happens that a woman dies before her daughter's husband has entered her hut, and in this ceremony no one can act as a substitute for her. If a man's parents-in-law die soon after his marriage, he will never receive beer from them, while even if they remain alive but live far away, the ceremony may never be performed. If a man quarrels with his parents-in-law, they may decide not to send him beer though he is living near them. A migrant labourer who returns home for a short holiday of a month or so may not feel inclined to get up a party to work in his wife's mother's garden. Marriages often begin in Southern Rhodesia, and it is only when a couple come home, sometimes with children, that the man initiates the formal approach to his wife's parents and makes the offer of the legalization payment. In a marriage of this kind it is too late to hold the gall bladder ceremony, and it is never performed. If a man acquiesces without enthusiasm in the marriage of his son to a girl of whom he does not really approve, he may not go to the trouble of arranging the gall bladder ceremony for her and the couple begin their married life together in the village of one of them without any ceremony at all. The absence of these ceremonies, even less than the absence of marriage payments, does not invalidate the legal rights of husband and wife. It does, however, mean that they are less sure of the informal support of their kinsmen. The kinsfolk express their participation in the marriage of the couple by these formalized patterns of behaviour. Their interests in the marriage may remain without this formal articulation with it, and the interests may find expression in other ways, as by intervention in quarrels, support in litigation, care of children, visits, and so on. Ngoni believe that the

606

[4] See Appendices for accounts of the formal procedures at the marriage ceremonies.

[5] See above, p. 9.

606 good man behaves towards his father-in-law with obedience and respect, and that he is rewarded by the gifts of beer sent to his father by his wife's father. If these gifts are not made, then the man must be 'bad' or his father-in-law 'fierce' or 'cruel'.

581 829 There is one type of marriage in which none of these ceremonies are performed. This is what is known as the 'poorly fixed marriage'* which lies on the borderland between marriage and concubinage. People do not expect a 'poorly fixed' marriage to last long, and this expectation is based more on their estimation of the characters of the couple involved than on a consideration of the absence of marriage ceremonies and payments. If a couple, who have shown by their general behaviour that they are fickle and quarrelsome, begin to live together without going through any of the formalities of marriage, people speak of their marriage as 'poorly fixed'. If the union breaks up there is no divorce procedure and the couple merely go their own separate ways. The categorization 'poorly fixed' is not applied to all marriages in which there are no marriage [583] payments, for poverty is usually regarded as a valid excuse for not offering money or animals or for not brewing beer. It is rather poverty of character and love of promiscuity and fickleness that lead to 'poorly fixed' marriages.

581 Sometimes a marriage which begins as 'poorly fixed' lasts for some time and becomes accepted as a proper marriage. An example of this is the marriage of Rachel and Esau (p. 63). In 1946 I was told this was a 'poorly fixed' marriage and that it would not last. In 1949 opinion had changed, and as we have seen, Esau succeeded in making the legalization payment for his wife. Even if his money had been refused his position would still have been better than it was in 1946 for he had shown that he could live with Rachel for three years without an undue amount of quarrelling and she had not drifted off to some other man. By making the legalization payment [583] Esau made his rights over her more certain.

[829] People who live in 'poorly fixed' marriages are not despised for doing so, but are rather pitied for their moral inability to make a 'well fixed' marriage. They are never so sure of the support of their relatives and neighbours as they would be otherwise. A man who 586 has not made the legalization payment may be supported by his wife's relatives when she commits adultery if they think that he is a good husband and that it is she who is at fault in the matter. But if a man neglects his obligations towards his wife's parents and [606] in particular does not approach them formally at the beginning of the marriage to tell them of his desire to marry their daughter, they may turn on him if he tries to exercise rights over the woman. In court, the wife's father may look at his son-in-law, who perhaps has been his neighbour for many years, and say 'Who is this man? We do not know him'; and the court will refuse to recognize his claims.

* *Ukwati owayawaya.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

claims. In retrospect, when discussing an erstwhile 'poorly fixed' marriage that has broken up, people will say 'That was not a proper marriage', and 'She was just his friend'. In all the tables we have excluded 'poorly fixed' marriages from consideration.

The initiative in strengthening a 'poorly fixed' marriage lies with the man and not with the woman's relatives. If their daughter is living with a man who has not made the legalization payment they cannot bring him to court and force him to pay. If their daughter has only just passed puberty there may be grounds for an abduction suit, but if she has been married before or is considered old enough to decide for herself, her relatives are unlikely to take any action in the courts against her husband. The woman cannot be forced to return to her own people. Similarly if no bridewealth has been paid, the children cannot be forced to live in one village rather than in the other. They can be asked to do so, but they cannot be taken to court if they refuse.

All 'poorly fixed' marriages are marriages without payments, but not all marriages without payment are 'poorly fixed'. It will be seen from Table XII that no payments at all have been offered in about a third of the marriages in our sample. In some of the marriages for which there have been offers of payment, these consist only of the small present given as 'snuff-box'[7] in modern marriage. Yet these marriages are valid despite the paucity or absence of payment. Many of them have lasted for a long time and the lack of payment is almost forgotten. It would be an act of maliciousness on the part of the woman's relatives if after twenty years of happy married life they began to remind her husband that he had not yet made the legalization payment. With the increasing importance of marriage certificates on which the legalization payment is recorded, and the rise in power of the Native Authority, the position may well change in years to come. At present, most marriages without payments are more like marriages with payment than they are like the unions of men with concubines and prostitutes. The persevering inquirer may unearth the lack of payments, but in the day-to-day life of the village, as well as in many of the formal situations of marriage, this lack is not significant. In the work of the garden, in the sharing of food, on festive occasions when there is beer and dancing, there is no distinction between wives married in one way or the other. More significantly, we find instances where despite the absence of any payments, beer has been brewed for a daughter's husband and he has been invited to go through the ceremony of 'entering the wife's mother's hut'. Some marriages are solemnized in church, with the approval of the parents on both sides, without any payments being made. The rules of avoidance between a man and his wife's mother operate independently of the marriage payments, and widows are subject to the same restrictions

[7] *Mfuko, camulomo, cavulamulomo.* See above, p. 39, n. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 and widows are subject to the same restrictions
583 and wear the same signs of mourning whether or not their deceased
[165] husbands made any payments. The absence of payments does not automatically deny to a man and woman the status of husband and wife any more than the completed payments automatically ensure marital happiness.

583 As reflected in Table XII, the proportion of marriages in which
581 no payments are offered has decreased in the last twelve years,
595 ans we know from Table VIII that this is due to an increase in the number of marriages in which the legalization payment is made. It is therefore possible in future there will be a clearer division between marriage, with its legalization payment, and concubinage, with no such payment and with a completely different relationship between the sexual partners and between their respective groups of relatives. We are not in this paper concerned specifically with concubinage and prostitution, but it may at this point be useful to point out that not many women are concubines. In our sample, as set out in Table IV, there was only one concubine, a wedded woman, among 223 wedded women. From Table III, we see that there were no men at all, in our sample of 116 wedded men, living with concubines. The paramour of the concubine in our sample was resident on a nearby farm, and so did not come into the sample of men.

4. Co-operation between affines

583 585 The payments and ceremonies of marriages are isolated and memorable events. The ceremonies are public in that neighbours

Table XII. Incidence of marriage without payment, by decades

583 198

Marriage payment	Date of marriage									
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	Total
At least one payment offered	1	6	17	37	38	34	86	14	5	238
None offered ..	–	7	11	19	26	24	29	3	3	122
Ratio of marriages without offer of payment to total	0%	54%	39%	34%	41%	41%	25%	18%	—	34%
Not known if any payments offered	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

843 her husband's village, the occasion must be recognized in a more elaborate manner. Her husband or his relatives buy her a new cloth. Wearing this cloth she stands at the door of her husband's hut, and is undressed by her husband's grandmother. The old woman rubs castor oil on her abdomen and dresses her again. A small girl from her husband's kin goes with her to her own village, and their arrival there, with the woman dressed in her new cloth, indicates formally to her parents that she is pregnant. They stay at the woman's village for about a week, and then return to her husband's village.[14] Her parents have thus been made socially aware of her pregnancy, and the man can legitimately look to them for help if she becomes ill or fractious.

844 761 606 684 If the woman does die in childbirth, her husband has to offer a beast to her parents even though they were told of her pregnancy.[15] The husband may confess to adultery when called upon to do so by the midwife, but this does not absolve him from the obligation to pay the beast. Confession absolves him from the charge of having caused the death of his wife by his careless behaviour, but he must still recompense his parents-in-law for the death of their daughter. It is recognized that a woman may die in childbirth despite the absence of adultery during pregnancy or despite full confession of adultery by both the woman and her husband. She dies just because God lets her die, and not because of any human misconduct. Yet she reaches the situation in which there is the danger of death because of her position as the wife of her husband. It is the 'work' of married women to bear children, and it is the 'work' of the husband if his wife dies in childbirth to offer a beast to her parents so that they may mourn their daughter.

5. Quarrels

581 We see then that a woman is not severed utterly from her own group when she marries, but that her kinsfolk retain an interest in her welfare and have certain rights in her and in her husband. The recognition of these rights by their son-in-law increases his esteem in their eyes, and enables him to appeal to them with confidence when he needs their support. The common interest of all is in the successful maintenance of the marriage, and the mutual recognition of rights and fulfilment of obligations consolidate the social relationships established between people related by marriage. Quarrels threaten the continued existence of the marriage, 578 and it is therefore in the common interest that they should be settled 602 as expeditiously as possible. The intervention of affines in a personal quarrel between husband and wife is characteristic of a system in which most neighbours are kinsfolk and in which the spatial concentration of people into compact villages, where abuse shouted at one

[14] This ceremony is called *ngayi*, which means 'breast-cloth' in Nsenga.
[15] See above, pp. 39f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

migrant sons, and villagers mourn for a dead kinsman of whose death in the towns they have just heard. 167 602

Although it is possible for a couple to keep in contact with their rural kin if they are diligent in writing, the amount of interaction between the couple and their kin is much less under these conditions than when they are living in the village. Even when only the man is away and his wife is living at home, the ties linking relatives by marriage cannot in general be as strong as when the individual through whom those ties pass is present in face-to-face contact with his affines. None of the ceremonies of marriage, except the obtaining of a marriage certificate, can be performed if the man is away from the village and they must wait until he returns. Ngoni say 'You cannot send beer on a lorry'. When the man returns for a rest his wife's parents sometimes seize the opportunity to send him beer, but if he has been away a long time, they may be reluctant to brew for a man they do not know very well and whose character may have changed in the treacherous environment of the towns. Even if the man is working as near as Fort Jameson township, he may have difficulty in getting away from his job just at the time his parents-in-law want him at home. [585]

Some men marry women they meet in the towns. Often an unmarried man leaves the village and a year or so later the news comes that he now has a wife. If the woman is from another tribe it is unlikely that the relatives at home will be told her name, and if the children of the marriage remain in Southern Rhodesia, they too will be unknown at home in the village. Sometimes, however, a man may marry a woman who comes from his own neighbourhood who has been visiting relatives in Southern Rhodesia or who has been divorced from another labour migrant. There is then more chance that the rural kin will be made aware of the marriage, and the children born to the couple may be sent home to one or other grandparent. If and when the man brings his bride back to the village, he goes to her village to give her relatives formal notification of what has happened, how he was in Southern Rhodesia and saw her and how they married there. Men sometimes offer the legalization payment for wives married in Southern Rhodesia when they return home. If the woman's relatives see that the man is treating his wife well, that she is well clothed and that the man is not running after other women, they may accept the marriage and brew beer for the man. If they do not approve of him there is little direct action they can take but they may try to start a quarrel sooner or later. 581 602

7. Child's parents-in-law

On either side of the married couple are their kin groups, and there is a special term to express the relationship between the parents of one spouse and the parents of the other. This relationship is thought of as one of limited co-operation. The two pairs of 602

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In the particular

field of urban housing, however, the forms of marriage become important and a man may be required to show that he is legally married before he can rent married quarters.

The work of the court is, in the words of the councillor hearing the pleas of Ruth (p. 54), 'not . . . to force men and women to divorce each other, but to instruct them how to live well together'. Whereas kinsfolk have an interest in a particular marriage, the court is concerned with the well-being of the tribe as a whole, and the maintenance of Ngoni values. It has a particular interest in those aspects of marriage in which the Native Authority bureaucracy is concerned, namely the issue of marriage certificates and the handing over of the legalization payment. In court as yet, no inquiry is made as to whether a marriage certificate has been issued in respect of any particular marriage. These certificates were first introduced only a few years ago, and if a married couple want one they must make a visit to the court accompanied by one or two relatives, and pay sixpence fee. They do not go to this trouble until they need one for the journey away from Fort Jameson. This may be after several years of married life.[27] In village discussions of marriage I never heard mention of marriage certificates, nor did I see a litigant produce one in court. One man, obtaining a certificate for his marriage that had taken place a year previously remarked that in these days one could not be sure of damages for adultery unless one had a certificate. I think he was ahead of custom in this matter, but as the same individuals issue certificates and try cases, it seems probable that such a development will take place. But even with the increased importance of the issue of certificates, it seems likely that the role of the court as primarily a conciliatory body will continue for some time, so long as court members do not become a body of specialists differentiated from the rest of the population.

The court is reluctant to grant divorce to a woman on the ground of her husband's desertion if he is a labour migrant until it can be shown that she has made efforts to trace him and has given him a chance of re-establishing contact with her. Therefore, women are made to write to their husbands informing them of their intention to proceed with a divorce. These letters are sometimes shown to the court as evidence that they have been written. It is only after an adjournment of several months that the court will take up the case, and the wise woman, during this time, avoids any indication that she has a new husband in view. It is, as it were, assumed that there is always a suspicion of adultery, but if her husband's kin cannot marshal any evidence against her, the court will grant her plea. It is felt by some court members that the attention paid to the pleas of women is forced on them by the Administration, and they are anxious to show that they do not divorce women too

[27] Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 84.

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [643] [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [182] [693] [562]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another. 486 562

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

if the latter is unable to leave the area legally.[50] Various devices have been introduced to prevent women from using other people's passes, such as recording finger-prints on the certificate. On the other hand there are a great variety of ways in which women contrive to leave the area without a proper pass, such as marrying the bus driver for the duration of the journey, getting off the bus and walking round the control points, and so on.

13. *The Administration and the missions*

Under the Laws of Northern Rhodesia, which guide the Administration, the only valid marriages between Africans are those performed in accordance with 'customary tribal law'. There has never been any systematic attempt to codify the rules implied by this phrase, and in any particular case that comes before the Administration's courts, the views of individual African assessors must carry weight. The tendency has been to try and discover what used to happen in the old days rather than what was the *de facto* law at the time. On the other hand, there appears to have been a feeling that women were entitled to certain rights in equity that may perhaps have been associated with the proviso that 'customary tribal law' shall not be administered when it is 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. The Administration has certainly been sympathetic towards deserted wives seeking divorce and has encouraged Native Courts to allow their pleas where the husband has been many years away and has not written home. In the past the District Officer on tour has divorced batches of women who had applied in vain to the Native Courts for divorce on the ground of desertion. It has been argued by the Administration that since chiefs depend on the gifts of returned labour migrants to supplement their own income, they are reluctant to offend men by divorcing their wives in their absence. There are fewer divorces, in relation to the same number of pleas, granted in Ngoni courts than among the neighbouring Cewa, who are subject to the same Administrative and mission influences. The Ngoni find no consolation in this comparison. They merely observe that there are more divorces now than there used to be, and blame the Whites for the change.

The missions are all concerned with the development of Christian marriage, but their ideas as to what this is differ from one denomination to another, as do their views on the relationship of Christian to other types of marriage. The White Fathers and the Universities Mission to Central Africa do not allow divorce, while the Dutch Reformed Church Mission does. The U.M.C.A. insist that all 'customary obligations' shall be fulfilled before a marriage can be solemnized between Christians, the White Fathers

[50] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 248f for the rules regulating the movement of women beyond Fort Jameson District.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

teach that the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of marriage payments is no concern of the Church, while the D.R.C.M. have a rule that bridewealth shall not be paid although this rule does not seem to be enforced. In general, in the village and in the court, the obligations of Christians are thought of as supplementary to their obligations as ordinary men and women, and Christian ceremonies to some extent supplement, but do not replace, traditional ceremonies. Thus there may be a church wedding in addition to a gall bladder ceremony, and a divorce in the eyes of the mission following after a divorce in court. Pressure has sometimes been put on chiefs and court members to act in accordance with the teaching of the mission, as in a past attempt on the part of the Catholic White Fathers to prevent courts from granting divorces to Catholics.[33] This type of intervention has applied particularly to courts where the chief was himself a Catholic. The Administration has opposed this pressure, and does not itself recognize any legal significance in religious ceremonies.

14. Spouses and kinsfolk

We may see the married couple in the middle of a system of relationships which connects them with persons and institutions each interested in their behaviour and in the maintenance of the marriage tie. By living peacefully together, by producing children, and by fulfilling their obligations to their kinsfolk and affines, they can, with discretion, satisfy the divergent claims implicit in this system of relationships. If they begin to quarrel, their kinsmen and neighbours attempt in the first instance to reconcile them. Only when this is impossible do those interested in the marriage begin to split up into groups with differing interests whose rival claims must be weighed by the court. Even then it is hoped that reconciliation will be possible, that a wife will return to her husband after she has paid him damages for adultery, and a husband return to his wife after many years of neglect. Whereas in the old days marriage was related to a fairly definite residential system, and rights and obligations were clear cut, nowadays the forces holding together a body of kinsfolk are weaker, and the danger of disruption of the group because of quarrelling is greater. The genealogical composition of the group is more variable and alters from year to year. Marriage, as one of the mechanisms by which local groups are built up, is part of the general political process, and is affected by inter-group and inter-personal relations that at first sight appear to have little to do with marriage. We observed that tribal and religious affiliation are significant criteria in a possible spouse. The divergent interests of less permanent groups, such as cliques and factions, influence choice of marriage partner and behaviour within marriage, as we have seen in the stories of Absolom and Mary (p. 60) and Amos and Eve (p. 28). Conversely, marital interests affect non-

[33] Cf. Richards, op. cit. pp. 83-4, for similar events among the Bemba.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 marital behaviour, as for example when a new-acquired wife
593 persuaded her husband to seek work with her in Southern Rhodesia
602 so that she might enjoy his prosperity to the exclusion of her senior
co-wives who were left in the village.
511 Within the kinship system itself, ties of affinity compete with and are affected by ties of consanguinity. A quarrel between a married couple may lead to further quarrelling between affinally-linked relatives, and a dispute between a man and his wife's relatives may lead to a quarrel with his wife. Yet on the other hand a man who merely finds a woman and marries her without reference to her relatives is uncertain of his rights in the marriage and cannot appeal to her relatives if she misbehaves. There can be no ceremonies of marriage, and he must resort to subterfuge to get a marriage certificate. If he sends his children to his wife's parents to be cared for, they will accept them, but by so doing they do not accept him as a son-in-law. His wife's parents will deny that they know his name and if he takes his wife to court, they will mock him by saying 'We do not know this man'. Irrespective of marriage payments, a man cannot be validly and effectively married in the rural area without establishing his relationship to his affines. For a woman this is not always so, for her husband may have come from afar to work in the area, or he may earlier have broken away from his kinsmen. But without the support of his own kinsmen a man is dependent on his wife's kin for assistance in the marriage and, though the marriage may last, he is still one man living alone in a strange village.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.105]

CHAPTER V

SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS

1. *Old and new marriage*

WE HAVE described marriage at two periods in Ngoni history, as it was in the 1890's and as it is now. The differences we have found between the two periods are not due to chance except in the sense in which we may speak of all historical incidents as being partly due to chance and partly determined by the limiting conditions imposed by the past. Changes in the field of Ngoni marriage have been paralleled by changes in other aspects of Ngoni social life, have been influenced by other changes and have in turn influenced them. Throughout Ngoni history men and women have always married, but the society in which they married has changed. Marriage in the time of peace was appropriate, more or less, to the general ordering of social life in those days, and modern marriage is appropriate, again more or less, to the social structure of today. 581 178

Our task is then a threefold one. We have to show the relationship between old marriage and the rest of the old society, a similar relationship between modern marriage and modern society, and the process by which the transition from one set of conditions to the other has come about. We have outlined in Chapter II some of the internal and external factors responsible for this transition, and the nature of the material available to us on the 1890 period has led us, in Chapter I, to describe the old system largely in analytic terms. In this chapter we shall attempt to clarify our picture of the past in the light of an analysis of modern marriage. 171 128

In the old days the residential system provided the framework for political and lineage ties. Marriage was a legitimate means whereby children were recruited into segments of the system. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of fertility from the woman's kin to her husband's kin. Adultery was punishable by death, and divorce was rare. Affinal ties cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system, but while these ties were important, a man could not transfer his allegiance to his wife's or to his mother's group. A man who quarrelled with his kinsmen could not move to another village to live, but could only hive off to form a dependent but recognizable cluster of his own, which still remained part of the same residential segment. 591

The material apparatus belonging to the system, that is, the great villages with hundreds of huts and central cattle byres, was to a large extent destroyed in 1898 by the British. A few important people in the system were killed, and many of the cattle looted. With the establishment of British rule, it was physically possible for the 722 698 178 698

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

833 Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within the marriage bond it is not merely permitted, it is right and proper and positively sanctioned. All intercourse is dangerous, whether marital or not, and indeed it is perhaps the licit social significance of marital intercourse that leads to the attribution of mystical 843 significance. While a woman is pregnant, her husband can and indeed should sleep with her and with her co-wives, for it is not her husband's mere copulation with others that endangers her child, but frivolous and illicit intercourse with the wife of another or with some woman he has no intention of marrying. The moral code supports the social order, and the infant is born live into a righteous and well-regulated family. Otherwise it will not be born, or be born dead. Thus runs the belief.

5. Christian marriage

794 We have noted that, whatever were the intentions of the framers of the 1903 Regulations, Christian marriage ceremonies do not now have 581 any legal significance, either in the Administration's courts or in the Native Courts. They are, however, significant in the eyes of the missions concerned, and sanctions are employed to ensure that all Christians are married in church. Marriages usually take place at the mission itself and there is some sort of preparation beforehand to verify that the couple concerned are aware of the religious implications of the marriage. Important people are sometimes married in a village church and the ceremony is attended by many people. These rites, both at the mission and in the village, involve the local groups of Christians and serve to integrate the members. The barriers against marriage outside the sectarian group might under some conditions lead to Christian or even sectarian endogamy but among the Ngoni this has not taken place. If a couple are anxious to marry and cannot by reason of a religious disparity, the pagan will usually join the church and then proceed to marriage as soon as the rules of the denomination permit. After marriage, a number then cease active participation in the affairs of the church, although they usually continue to regard themselves and are regarded as Christians. The fairly rapid growth of Christianity in the last fifty years makes it impossible to tell as yet whether an endogamous community will be formed. In any case, the Christian community stretches like the rest of Ngoni society to the Copperbelt and the towns of Southern Rhodesia, and there are facilities for Christian labour migrants who wish to marry Christian girls in the towns.

799 The missions have attacked polygyny, the inheritance of widows, [517] the ceremony of 'taking up the child', belief in *mdulo* and pre-marital copulation. In addition, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission has opposed the drinking of beer, and in theory but not as yet in practice, payment of bridewealth. The prohibition on the drinking of beer has led to the exchange of gifts of cooked food between the two sides in the various ceremonies of marriage, without making any important difference to their content and meaning. The missions have had

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tion for associating children with one parent rather than the other. 611
There is only the one proud dogma that the Ngoni, unlike their 591
neighbours, are a patrilineal virilocal people. This reflects the 602
actual dominance of the virilocal mode of residence but does not furnish a rule to which appeal can be made in specific cases. The only definite unit to which a man can be said to belong is his village, [621] and such few attempts as are made to enforce rights *in genetricem* are expressed in terms of residence in villages. In marriages that are made outside the tribe, rights *in genetricem* become significant, 648 for a child is not likely to wander to and fro between one tribe and 583 another hundreds of miles away in the same way as children change from one village to another within the kingdom. Here then we find more attention paid to the payment of bridewealth and to rights *in genetricem* and these rights are enforceable through the police checks on buses and lorries.

If a man is away working his interests are represented by his 593 kinsfolk. They cannot exercise his rights *in uxorem* for him, but if they are violated they can act on his behalf. His permission is necessary, however, before they can proceed to the court, and if they are awarded damages then they are under some sort of obligation to hand over the money to him when he returns. There was no situation comparable to this in the old system, for men did not go away for years at a time, and the violation of rights *in uxorem* was punishable by death.

The position of the man as holder of rights *in uxorem* over his 593 wife is reinforced to some extent by mystical ties believed to connect 581 the couple, and at the same time the man can fortify his rights by the use of medicines to ensure fidelity. During pregnancy, for a short while after childbirth, and during menstruation, the actions of man and wife affect one another automatically, and each is placed in danger of illness by the failure of the other to observe their mutual obligations. To protect his rights *in uxorem* a man may doctor his wife so that possible violators may be deterred by the fear of mystical retribution as well as action in the courts.

7. *Mystical beliefs and marriage stability*

The mystical connexion believed to exist between a man and his 581 wife serves to define their relationship more closely, for this same 602 connexion does not hold between a woman and her husband's kin or between a man and his wife's kin. The adultery of a pregnant woman's brother-in-law, like her husband's adultery, may threaten the peace of her local group of relatives and friends, and may even lead her to change her village or go to the court as a supporter. The important distinction between the adultery of her husband's brother and her husband's adultery is that the former does not automatically endanger her delivery while the latter does. A man confesses his adultery when his own wife gives birth, not when her sister is in labour. This connexion is definite, and is not extended

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 602 to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

N 753 182 626 N 755 754 N 626 The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugola* supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men; lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, N although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern [171] Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other N people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can M only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at 626 both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugola* [177] and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[8]

N 753 834 164 To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an N efficient deterrent of adultery.

581 Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you N may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable 602 and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[8] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unity of full-siblings is the result of the established relationship 602
between their mother and father. A man's relationship with his
wife may in turn lead to solidarity between their children, but until
his wife has stayed with him for many years and borne him live 593
children their own relationship is always uncertain. He must
acknowledge that she too has rights, that she must be clothed and
respected and must be slept with. He must not abuse her at a beer
party or hit her too often, and he must not try to trap her into
adultery. When she runs away, he must go after her to apologize.

8. The support of relatives

It is the tenuousness of the marriage relationship which necessitates 581
the co-operation of the relatives in the marriage. There are occasions 602
when affines quarrel, as when a young woman is encouraged by her
husband's kin to remain in their village to be delivered of her first
child and at the same time is under pressure from her own relatives
to move back to her own village for the confinement. A man who
is anxious to build up his own cluster of huts in a village may attempt
to force his sons and daughters to bring their spouses to live near
him against the wishes of his children's affines. These struggles, [591]
where they occur, are expressed in terms of residence, for it is common
residence that welds kinsfolk together. But in general affines
co-operate rather than quarrel. Litigation about marriage payments
is rare, and frequently divorces are granted without consideration
of the return of marriage payments. During a marriage it is more
important that the married couple should be exhorted to adjust
themselves to each other and be tolerant of each other's foibles,
than that each side should insist on its formal rights. Old people
try to prevent marriages they consider unsuitable, but they do not
usually try to make difficulties once a marriage has taken place.
The successful marriages of a man's children bring him grand-
children to care for and play with, and *children's parents-in-law*
who will welcome him and give him food, even if they do not always
add to his own cluster of huts.

To some degree people appear to be afraid of the sorcery of an [754]
offended affine, but this is not a well-developed idea, and more
frequently people express their reasons for trying to patch up a 581
marriage that is in danger of breaking in terms of the need for 621
everyone to 'live well together', without bringing troubles into the
village. The well-being of the village and of the local group of [181]
kinsfolk within it has ultimate value for the Ngoni and is an end in
itself. It follows that serious quarrels can only be resolved by
means of some new residential alignment, involving moves from
one cluster to another, and from one village to another. The
village itself does not exist in isolation, and a village thrives because 628
of the ties that link it to other villages in the vicinity. Marriages 602
link villages together, by the bonds of affinity which cut across 581
village boundaries, and by the interaction between groups of affines

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 in different villages. This distinction between the two groups
602 linked by marriage is symbolised by their spatial separation, and by
581 the existence of 'the man's village' and 'the woman's village', and we have seen how in the story of Daniel and Deborah (p. 82), Daniel wanted Deborah to be warned not in his village but in her own. He wished her own kinsfolk and her own local community to express their condemnation of her conduct, and this could only be done on their own ground. Without their co-operation it would have seemed that it was merely Daniel's relatives who were accusing Deborah, and trying to make trouble for her for no good reason. With the co-operation of her relatives it was possible to pass censure on Deborah with less fear that the marriage might come to an end.

594 It is because the marriage relationship is one which involves other kinsfolk as well as the married couple themselves that the elementary family is not an important grouping in Ngoni society. We have seen that in the old days children left their mother's hut on weaning and went to live with their grandmother or their parents' captor's great wife. A man slept in the same hut as his wife and their unweaned child, but their waking lives were spent with other people. Nowadays the pattern is more variable. Some children stay with their parents until they are old enough to sleep in a dormitory with other children of the same sex. They are fed and clothed by their parents from infancy until they grow up. Yet most old women still gather round themselves groups of three or four grandchildren for whose food and shelter they are responsible. The provision of clothes and school fees is a more difficult thing for an old woman to manage, and for these a child usually turns to its father, if the father is living near. Even the children who live in their parent's hut, however, soon join a play group and spend much of their time away from their parents. Other boys and girls who are
[603] sent home from Southern Rhodesia may have to rely entirely on their grandparents for clothes if their parents do not send money for them. A man who is richer than his neighbours, particularly
[556] if his riches are in money rather than in cattle, is entreated by his relatives to buy them clothes and other necessities, and he may make himself responsible for the clothing of his siblings' children.

Financially, then, the elementary family is a more distinct grouping than in the days when the only form of wealth was cattle, controlled by the heads of segments. But even financially it is not yet a very clear cut grouping and the same is true in other fields of activity. A man and his wife work together in their garden, and they and their children live on its produce, more or less. On the other hand, at the beginning of a marriage they may be dependent on the parents of one or the other for their food and may pool their resources with them. Many meals are taken in common in the village, a group of neighbours cooking for each other in turn and feeding themselves and their children and grandchildren from the same dishes. In court, a woman looks for support to her own kinsfolk

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled
586 affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another
178 in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[10] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the
[436] contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year
[171] of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the
[465] rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in
[435] bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call
[641] on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group,
[581] so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for
613 stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic
[183] group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

121 The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the
121 Ngoni is due mainy to the breakdown of their agnatic system may be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes.
586 Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[10] *Ibid*, p. 172.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rare divorce, has survived despite loss of sovereignty, territorial dispersal, economic impoverishment, high incidence of labour migration, and frequent adultery and illegitimacy.[11] The Ngoni, subjected to similar external processes, but in addition surrounded by matrilineal peoples and themselves largely of matrilineal origin, have lost their agnatic affiliation and, with it, stable marriage.

It is difficult to see exactly where this trend will lead. The third phase, as I have characterized it, is a recent development. There does not seem to have been any sharp rise in marriage payments until the 1939-45 war. During the war many Ngoni men earned higher wages than ever before in the Army and in industry. It may have been this that was decisive in raising the level of payments. It will be remembered that the thirty shillings minimum for the legalization payment was fixed by law during the war. It may, however, be suggested that if it is hoped by raising the level of payments to achieve stability in marriage, this hope is in vain. Payments may rise if people are in a position to pay more. Higher wages permit higher marriage payments without necessitating further changes in economic life, but in fact these changes are already taking place. Money is needed for more clothes, more food, more education, as well as for higher marriage payments. Payments rise as Africans participate increasingly in the general money economy of Southern Africa. The more they participate, the less marriage is constrained by a kinship structure based on morally significant face-to-face relations between agnates. The higher payments rise the more frequent becomes divorce. This is not a long-term prognosis, for I have indicated above that affiliation is not the only possible determining factor, and it is clear that if more people align themselves with those missions which do not permit divorce, the frequency of divorce as a whole may decline. There are other possibilities, but it seems to me unlikely that any of these other social mechanisms will become effective quickly; therefore the most probable concomitant of a rise in marriage payments in the immediate future is more frequent divorce.

Thus we see that at least for the Ngoni, changes in the amount and distribution of property have had a marked effect on the level of marriage payments, and that this effect can to some extent be isolated from that due to changes in kinship structure and in divorce frequency.

10. Attempts to resist change

The major structural changes taking place in Ngoni society in the last fifty years have not come about entirely unopposed. The Administration, the missions, and the Ngoni people themselves have noticed from year to year how the old order was changing and with varying success have made attempts to control the direction of change.

[11] Cf. information from Kark cited by Gluckman, op. cit., p. 204, footnote 1

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as one from a graded segmentary society organized on a basis of patrilineal descent and modified by political promotion to a society of villages organized on a basis of omnidirectional kinship. In the past a man lived in the same place as his father and in charge of the segment allocated to him by his father. Now a man lives where he can find relatives of one kind or another who may be related to him agnatically, cognatically, affinally, or by any combination of these ways. He is not even restricted to consanguineal relatives, as in cognatic kinship systems, for he can affiliate himself to some person who is linked cognatically neither to him or to any of his potential descendants, as when he goes to live with his father's wife's mother's brother. Genealogical connexion can be traced along all possible paths and there are no mechanisms by which one path is automatically favoured or by which the length of a path is restricted. In consequence the genealogical constitution of any local group of relatives is complex, and every man is a potential recruit to many local groups. He selects between the numerous possibilities open to him on the basis of his own inclinations and in response to the various pressures exerted on him by his siblings, his parents, his wife, her parents, and others. Once he has made his choice he can always change his mind and move elsewhere if he finds his neighbours irksome. His wealth, either in cattle or money, is his own and he can take it with him when he moves. There are no rights in land (with the one exception of dry season gardens) which might otherwise tie him to one particular spot. As with residence, so with marriage payments, the formal and informal procedures of marriages, and the values associated with them. In all, considerable variation is tolerated. Indeed, we may well regard variation as a necessity in this system, for every man is subject to a mass of potential conflicting claims and he cannot possibly honour them all simultaneously. Variation occurs not because of different practices by various sections of the population but rather because of different individual decisions. A man decides for himself whether or not he will pay bridewealth, or take a hoeing party to his wife's mother's garden, or be suspended from the sacraments for marrying a second wife. Yet although he makes these choices himself, he is all the time subject to social pressure from kinsfolk and neighbours who will be affected by his decisions and who therefore try to influence them. A woman is not quite so free as a man, but she too can make many decisions for herself, and her relatives must appeal to her if they wish to influence her, for they cannot force her against her will. Man and wife living together are in a unique relationship which is personal and non-transferable, yet they live in the midst of kinsfolk and the well-being of one relative is the concern of all. The quarrels of a married couple are a danger to the cohesion of the local group in which they live, while the longer they live together, fertile and peaceful, the greater the local solidarity.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 segments in what we shall term the Ngoni residential system. The
613 constituent segments of their lineages formed the nuclei of minor
631 segments of the residential system. Using the adjectives 'superior' and 'inferior' to indicate merely relative position, we may say that each Nguni agnatic lineage segment was in general contained within superior segments of greater span and at the same time contained within itself smaller but similar inferior units. This formation is characteristic of all lineage systems, as is well known. The segments of the residential system were arranged in the same way but whereas there were several distinct agnatic lineages, or parts of such lineages, under the political leadership of Zwangendaba, in the residential system all, or nearly all, of these distinct lineages were included within the largest residential segment. In other words, the largest segment of the residential system contained almost the whole of Zwangendaba's following, his regional governors, his and their captives and other followers, as well as his own agnatic kinsmen. Again, whereas the various lineage segments contained only the agnatic relatives of the head of the segment, each segment in the residential system included many captives, men, women and children, as well as an agnatic core.

The segments or units of the residential system were enduring social groups which, by analogy with the usual terminology for lineage systems, we shall call primal segments.[12] The segment of highest order was the State itself (or the greater portion thereof), consisting in 1898 of some 75,000 people, while many of the lowest order segments contained only half a dozen people. Each member of a segment belonged not only to that segment but also to all the superior segments of which it was a part.

173 We shall refer to the man in charge of, or the founder of, a
613 segment as a lord (*mfumu*) and to the members of his segment as his
622 dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord
631 except the Paramount Chief, Zwangendaba, was a dependant of some other lord higher in the hierarchy. A lord was politically responsible for all the men and women in his segment. He was related agnatically to some of the men in his segment and towards
[608] his captives he stood in a quasi-agnatic relationship in that, although he had the same rights and duties towards them as if he had been their father, it was nevertheless possible, and indeed quite usual,
[582] for his captives to marry one another and for him to marry one of his woman captives. In the absence of true agnatic descendants a lord was sometimes succeeded by a quasi-related dependant.

[12] *Cigaŵa*, pl. *vigaŵa*, from *ku-gaŵa*, to divide. cf. Nsenga, *ku-gaŵa*, to divide, and Zulu, *isi-gaba*, section or portion divided off from the whole.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 reserves were amended, and as existing gardens were exhausted.
634 Movement of this kind did not greatly affect political allegiance, so
178 that not all the villages acknowledging the control of a minor chief were built in his vicinity. Coxhead mentions seven defined territorial units in 1914, but by the time I began fieldwork in 1946 their boundaries had been forgotten.[21] Most of the villages in any one county were clustered together, with the capital village and the chief's village somewhere in the middle of the cluster, but there were also more distant villages situated among those belonging to other counties. The next stage of development appears to have been the definition of county boundaries, so that by 1946 it was possible to speak of some villages as situated in one county and owing allegiance to another. Most of these interloping villages, as we may call them, belonged to the segment of the county to which they owed allegiance. They were a bone of contention between chiefs, for although each chief desires as many villages as possible
[311] under his control, he has only a limited amount of land in his county with which to satisfy his people. An analogous situation is found in some Welsh sheep farms, where each farmer likes to own as many sheep as possible but hopes they will graze on someone else's land. The chief in political control of an interloping village endeavoured to maintain his control at a distance and at the same time to make use of the land in the local chief's county, while the latter had to decide between trying to make the interloping village shift its allegiance so as to increase his own following and trying to get it to move away so as to give his people more land. In 1947 and 1948,
[648] to avoid such difficulties between chiefs, the Administration defined county boundaries precisely and insisted that all villages within the area of a county should be under the control of the county chief.

Thus, in the development of the county as a social group, ties
631 of segmentary affiliation have been gradually replaced by those of
634 territorial propinquity. This replacement is not yet complete, nor
648 has it arisen merely as a consequence of Administrative action in
178 the last few years. Village histories show that in many instances a village changed from attachment to the head of its major segment to attachment to the local county chief many years ago and without prompting from the Administration. Villagers marry their neigh-
[582] bours irrespective of county affiliation and thus build up ties which link them to the local county. It may be inconvenient to walk a long way to the court and county meetings of a distant chief, particularly if the local chief appears to listen more readily to his people's complaints and advice.

[21] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22, 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local 647
Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these 624
duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in 648
conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary [693]
Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and [651]
to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand
some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary
for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native
Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees
of other technical departments of the Administration, such as
Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two
police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are [625]
mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White
farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder,
have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it 648
were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to 647
each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely
to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information
concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and
townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of
the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent
employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For
the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the
indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which
smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are
content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of
life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the
villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work 167
in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not 582
are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus
the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land
messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an
administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every
social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this
when the social distance between the two persons involved is small.
Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are
posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some
remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around 166
them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the 582

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

166 closeness of the ties linking them to the areas in which they find
●582 themselves. To give two extreme examples, an agricultural demonstrator, after a few months in a rural compound, sought to marry a daughter of a near-by village headman. A policeman, sent to a village to investigate a murder, married a woman related to the dead man. Marriages of this kind are made partly because there is no other way by which a stranger in a village can be certain of getting enough to eat, but they also serve to broaden and diversify the relationship between the stranger and the people among whom he finds himself. Some of these marriages are terminated when the stranger is moved to another district, but there are a number of instances where Ngoni wives have gone with their stranger husbands to distant mines and towns. This process is, of course, merely part of the much wider one by which many Ngoni women follow their
[167] husbands when they leave their villages to seek work in Southern Rhodesia.

647 Similarly, chiefs and other important rural leaders endeavour
557 to establish enduring relations with members of the African Civil Service. Some civil servants are their kinsmen, for one way by which a junior son of an important man can gain the position he desires but which is denied him by the rule of primogeniture is to enter the Civil Service or to seek advancement in one of the churches. Others are related by affinity, while yet others may go out of the way to offer hospitality to visiting political leaders when they need food and shelter in town. Some Ngoni civil servants maintain large households in the villages, which they visit at week-ends, and which they hope will have grown into recognized villages by the time they come to retire.

Thus there are two distinct groups of Africans concerned with
554 public affairs, the African Civil Service and the Native Authority
557 bureaucracy. They are in intimate association with one another,
647 and both exercise considerable political power. Both are formally distinct from the old political system. But status in traditional terms, as chief or village headman or head of a division or cluster, is still recognized in the face-to-face relations of people generally, and hence there is a continual attempt to bring the two systems into congruence with one another. Clerks aspire to become headmen when they retire, while headmen aspire to be the fathers and fathers-in-law of clerks. This is no new development, for as early as 1907 Stigand reported that a Swahili, whose home was near Zanzibar, and who had been a soldier, had founded a small village close to Fort Manning.[30]

[30] Stigand, 'Natives of Nyassaland', p. 125. See p. 118.

643 cause, 'to quieten them'. Thereafter this Nguno boy did everything with
644 the Paramount. He began by washing with the royal medicine at the
time of the accession. He drank beer with him, he ate with him, he
762 'stood with him' (*amaima naye*) on all important occasions, such as
766 sending out the army and judging cases. He slept in his own hut which was in the *cipudlo*, where the Paramount's sons built, and when he married he built huts for his wives in that same section of the royal village. At the death of the Paramount, he lanced the war-dance in full war-dress and leaped on to the pyre to perish with the dead Paramount in the flames.

Informants sometimes said of this Nguno boy that he was 'of one
[582] blood' with the Maseko clan. They described the relationship between the two clans as that of *cihale*, brotherhood, which excluded all possi-
[602] bility of inter-marriage. Between the Paramount and the Nguno boy was established a joking relationship, so that the Nguno boy could say 'good and bad things to the Paramount'.

It was clear that the ritual and social aspects of this relationship com-
643 plemented and supported each other. The recurrent emphasis on the
644 taking of medicine at the accession, on the participation in the war medicines, and most of all on the death on the Paramount's funeral pyre, were all evidence of this ritual relationship. Informants repudiated any idea of a scapegoat which involved protecting the Paramount from poison by eating before him. They reiterated several times that the Nguno boy did not eat *before* the Paramount; in fact he ate after him though sharing his food dishes. Surrounding the Paramount were other boys called *mcetho*, who performed the duties of pages or personal servants. The Nguno boy was always distinct from them, and the distinction lay in the combined ritual and social relationship.

The concept of a 'shadow' was of something very close to a person, almost indistinguishable from the person himself. In referring to the Nguno boy in the terms 'he was as the shadow of the *inkosi*; he was as himself' informants emphasized the extreme closeness of the tie between the two men. It seemed as if the royal shadow existed to meet a need for strengthening the Paramount by giving him a second self. It emphasized also the dangerous sphere of life and action in which the Paramount lived, due to the medicines he had used, his powers to protect the land and its fertility, and his power to give strength to the army through the use of the *nuga* medicine. No one else in the royal family shared these dangers and there was inherent in the relationship of royal shadow to *inkosi* the sense of some security through a companionship where protective medicines were shared as well as the hazardous occasions for which they gave protection.

643 This intense and dangerous ritual relationship was buttressed by
644 the social ties binding the Nguno boy to the Paramount. We have seen
602 that between them as individuals there was that freedom of a joking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

mahomazana was not invariable. Some informants said that *alumazana* were appointed by the Paramount. Others said that if the ancestor of a Swazi clan was known by name to have crossed the Zambesi with Zwangendaba or Mputa then his descendant in the direct line was always a *mahomazana*.

It was the criterion of having a known ancestor and knowing the genealogy of the clan that was most widely accepted in acknowledging the head of a Swazi clan as *mahomazana*. At the clan head village prayers were addressed to this ancestor, his cattle were sacrificed, and the names recited as far back as tradition and memory could recall. Later we shall see that there were said to be about 25 Swazi clans in the northern kingdom and 29 in the central. Among these about 15 in the northern and 12 in the central kingdom had head villages where the ancestor cult was performed. In the central kingdom several of the leading clans had their head villages in Portuguese territory, and therefore did not carry out the cult in the central kingdom.

In the hierarchy of the clans the Swazi clans were the acknowledged leaders. In village and national life this leadership was accorded to the royal clans and the clans of the chiefs, and was the reason for the respect shown to *alumazana* who had no direct political power. Only the heads of Swazi clans possessed *isitukuso* (honorific epithets) which commemorated events in the past history of the clan leaders. On all ceremonial occasions heads of Swazi clans, whether in national or in village affairs, took precedence over the rest when walking in procession, standing for dances, taking part in ritual, or sitting down at feasts. Certain forms of burial, such as the use of a sheep-skin, and placing the corpse on a shelf in the grave, were observed only for members of the Swazi clans.

In arranging marriages, there was, in addition to strict exogamy within a clan, a prohibition on marriage between clans which had *cibale* (brotherhood) relations. In the central kingdom the royal clan, Maseko, had *cibale* with the Ngumo clan which provided the royal shadow, and with the Nzungu clan. The Nzungu and the Maseko clans shared the same taboos, notably elephant and fish. As well as prohibited marriages between certain clans, there were preferred marriages between certain others. In general there was a preference for marriage between the families of leading Swazi clans. In the northern kingdom the Nqumayo clan had a preference for marrying into the Thole, Nhlane, Malulcka and Pakati clans. It was alleged that formerly they could marry only into these clans, but in the 1930's exceptions were found in a number of villages.

The following lists of the names of Swazi clans were collected from informants in the two kingdoms, who were questioned closely about which names should be included under the title of Swazi. This was the grouping claimed by the Ngoni in both kingdoms. They said emphatic-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

they acknowledged as rulers or direct sons of rulers. The other opposition came from the heads of the Swazi clans who saw their claims to recognition threatened by large numbers of these *mahosana*. When such a person was announced a *mahosana* might comment to bystanders 'Who is this man? We do not know his father.' Then to save his face as well as that of the visitor, he would send a greeting to him and order beer to be supplied, while avoiding any elaborate form of entertainment. This subtle form of resistance to what were considered undue claims from lesser members of the royal clan was found everywhere.

In both kingdoms the Paramounts and chiefs, especially after 1933, appointed as officials for the kingdom and for the royal village, members of Swazi clans, but also, and increasingly, members of cis-Zambesi and local clans. This practice brought together in the royal villages and in the chiefs' villages men of the ruling aristocracy and men of the lesser clans, to share administrative responsibility, to assist on ceremonial occasions, and to take part on an equal footing in giving and receiving hospitality. This mingling on the official level was one of the reasons why marriages became more frequent between girls of Swazi clans and men of non-Swazi clans whose fathers had been promoted to official positions. The marriage of Paramount Gomani II's daughter to the son of his treasurer was an illustration of this. The daughters of families of Swazi clans were also sought in marriage by men of non-Swazi clans who, through their education, had got well-paid work in the Government or in commercial firms, and could therefore afford to give cattle for *lobola* for the girls. These were two instances of the type of marrying up which in the 1930's was lessening the sharp division in social life between Swazi and other clans. We shall see in Chapter IV, pp. 137, 140) that Ngoni fathers of daughters married to non-Swazi clansmen found a way of keeping their married daughters, as well as their sons, in their villages, particularly in the central kingdom.

Though the Ngoni clan system in the 1930's was, in Dr. Kuper's phrase, 'neither precise nor static', it was an integral part of Ngoni social organization. It was closely related on the one hand to the ruling aristocracy, and on the other to the social hierarchy. Both in the villages and in the national life of the kingdoms individuals belonging to Swazi clans played a leading part in social and ceremonial life, and carried on those distinctive Ngoni practices which their ancestors had brought with them from the south.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an *ukhwezi*, a substitute or additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give another daughter as *ukhwezi*, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her *ukhwezi*. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an *ukhwezi* might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the houses played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indicated choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner. In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi clans marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In all the diagrams ego is shown as male. There is no difference in the way these terms are used when ego is a woman, except that she calls her spouse *husband* and not *wife*. There is no consensus as to what great-grandparents should be called. Sometimes *father* 601 [183]

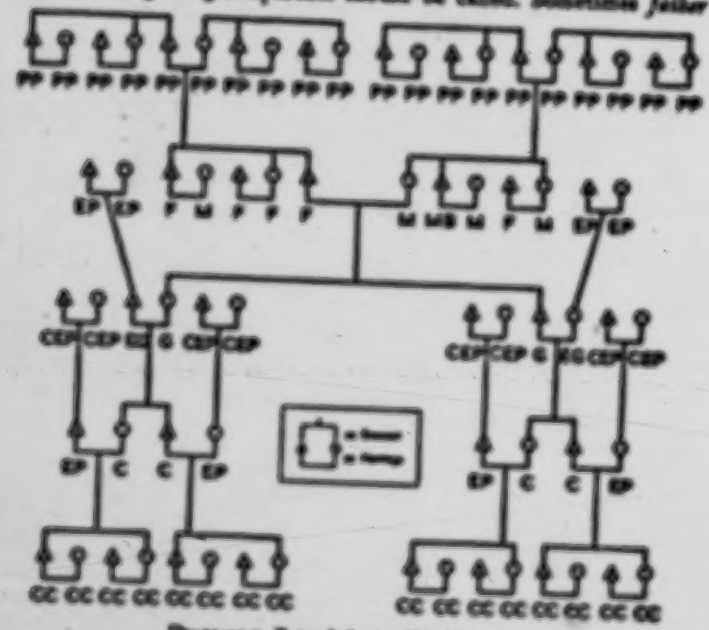

Diagram 3. Extended use of kinship terms

or *mother* is used, according to sex, while others use *grandparent*. Similarly, great-grandchildren are sometimes called *child*, sometimes *grandchild*.

Kinship and Descent-names

A man may not marry anyone whom he calls *mother*, *father*, *mother's brother*, *child*, *sister*, *child's parent-in-law*, and, except for his *cross-cousins*, *sibling*. Marriage with his brother's wife's sister, whom he calls *sibling-in-law*, is allowed, but is thought to be not very satisfactory. As we have seen, these terms can be applied widely, with no theoretical limit to the extent of application. Little interest is shown, however, in tracing genealogical relationships accurately, and the sex and age of the relative referred to may affect the term used. If a 582 935 601

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

18 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[193] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

12 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background
for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for
a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[77] The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the head-ring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any prohibition on marriage until a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Eskadweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

[871] [434] [585] [885] [582] [167]

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, anticipated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's house sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

to establish their hold. The Ngoni elders said the missions did not like it, and alleged that they gave it up for this reason. But they held on to other rituals also not approved by the missions, and it was probably largely due to the fact that there were no longer large herds of cattle to provide lavish feasts. The songs were remembered and sung by the older women when dancing the special dances associated with the ritual, holding in their hands short rods and small rounded shields, and making stiff jerking movements of head and elbows. Such dances as were put on for me were however a relic and not a living tradition. For the Ngoni girl of good family there was no longer any intervening ritual between her private puberty ceremony and the marriage ceremony.

The marriage age of girls, like that of men, was much earlier than formerly, the most usual age being from sixteen upwards. Most of the older women held that this left very little time in which to teach girls all that they were expected to know before being married and leaving their own home and their father's village for good. This was a particular cause of anxiety to the senior women in areas where the young men emigrated soon after marriage, and where the girl had to maintain her own position and reputation among his relatives without his companionship and support.

Young adults in Ngoni society

We have just seen that cultural changes coming from the outside radically altered the traditional pattern of development of Ngoni youths and girls. The net result of these changes was to telescope the period between physical maturity at puberty and full adult status at marriage, to squeeze the former eight to ten years of this intervening period into about two for the girls and four at most for the youths. This shortened period of preparation for full adult life raised a number of problems for the Ngoni elders. They were aware, as was suggested in the beginning of this chapter, that the attainment of physical maturity called for some re-alignment

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especial-
561 ly the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes,
867 but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter
128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there
584 were certain social controls among the Ngoni which operated in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited
895 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers
582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment.
581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptised or under instruction. This last pre-
581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference
182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The missionaries, and through their influence Ngoni Christian teachers and ministers, tried to put a stop to this form of courtship. It was very difficult to convince Ngoni elders and young people that a practice which had been considered socially correct and was under some measure of social control, was now wrong and must be given up. They saw it as something quite distinct from casual and promiscuous intercourse, which they discouraged and despised. A young Christian teacher, speaking of his own youth, said: 'The Christian rule forbade boys and girls to sleep together at night and to play as our fathers played. We did not keep those rules, and we visited girls at night who wanted us, but we were careful not to harm them.' The Ngoni Christian leaders who were aware of the problems on both sides finally threw their weight into advocating much earlier marriages while supporting the carrying out of the private puberty rituals. As we have seen, marriage became usual at about sixteen for girls and from eighteen upwards for youths. This as a rule, though not invariably, ensured that the girls were virgin at marriage which was a very strict Ngoni requirement. But it brought in its train a number of other difficulties which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound. (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 122). 128 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582] ●

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajide*

young girls before puberty: *intakazana*

young girls after puberty: *ijinsuki*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AMENLE	the important people
ALIKE	unmarriable
BABO	grandparent or any very senior person
BLANDWA	respect
BONLAWENDLE	chief hut in a village
BOPWA	official in village
CHIMAMBANE	girl attendants
LAWENE	boys' dormitory
NWENE	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole naton, were not found among the Ngoni.000

Informants are agreed that n the old days young men and women married whom they were tol and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplificzion. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in thosedays than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely imperative It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had he right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dyingout and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so a to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[8] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed here never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggeste that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[9]

A girl was expected to be haste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by theZulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likelythat girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[8] and Read makes a similar statement.[9] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult o establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has bee obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern lantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the tim, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, tho believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to dicuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appal to his wife's relatives for another

[8] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expeditionen . . . p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[9] See below, p. 130.
[8] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 111.
[9] Margaret Read, 'The moral role of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xii (1939), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors.

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system.

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[88] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere

[88] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expeditionen . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

855 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband,
593 wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

631 In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw
554 attention to two features of the residential system which were not,
591 at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features
[178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

581 Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which
613 agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the
[593] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this.
[178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 on the one hand, acquire that custody without undertaking any of these symbolic acts, and on the other hand he may have full rights over his wife without ever getting control of his children.

2. Choice

582 Marriage involves choice and selection. There are prescribed 'preferential marriages' in the usual terminology, but as applied to the Ngoni this nomenclature is misleading, for, as in the old days, a woman who marries her cross-cousin does not have such high status in her husband's compound family as a wife who is not related to her husband. A man behaves in some respects towards his female cross-cousins as though they were his wives or potential wives, but it is incorrect to say that Ngoni men prefer to marry their cross-

Table III. Marital status of males by age, 1948-9

162
586
589
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Age in years	Marital Status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Number of wives						Total wedded men	
		0		1	2	3	Not known		
		Divorced men	Widowers						
0-4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	51
5-9	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	61
10-14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	55
15-19	28	1	–	2	–	–	–	3	31
20-24	14	–	–	6	–	–	–	6	20
25-29	–	2	–	13	–	–	1	16	16
30-34	–	1	–	7	–	–	–	8	8
35-39	–	–	–	13	3	1	–	17	17
40-44	–	–	–	4	2	2	–	8	8
45-49	–	–	–	8	–	–	1	9	9
50-54	–	1	–	4	–	–	1	6	6
55-59	–	–	–	8	1	–	1	10	10
60-64	–	–	–	9	2	–	–	11	11
65-69	–	1	1	6	1	1	–	10	10
70-74	–	1	–	1	1	–	–	3	3
75-79	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	2	2
Not known	–	–	–	1	–	–	6	7	7
Total	[illegible]	7	1	[illegible]	11	4	10	116	[illegible]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

cousins. Whether a man decides to marry a cross-cousin or an unrelated woman, he still has to decide just exactly whom he will try to marry, and similarly a woman has also to make up her own mind about whom she will accept as husband. The initiative in choosing lies very largely with the couple themselves, and not with their parents and kinsmen. If a man is diffident about asking a woman to marry him, he may ask his father or elder brother to seek out a woman for him, or a woman may have a spouse presented to

Table IV. Marital status of females, by age, 1948-9

Age in years	Marital status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Divorced women living alone	Widows living alone	Divorced women living as husband	Married women			Total wedded women	
					HH	HA	HS		
0-4	50	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	50
5-9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	65
10-14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	54
15-19	30	–	1	–	14	9	1	25	45
20-24	–	3	–	–	10	11	–	24	24
25-29	–	1	–	1	17	8	1	29	29
30-34	1	–	–	–	14	8	–	22	23
35-39	–	–	–	–	19	3	1	23	23
40-44	–	2	1	–	13	1	1	16	16
45-49	–	–	2	–	13	2	–	17	17
50-54	–	2	–	–	7	5	1	14	14
55-59	–	1	2	–	6	–	1	13	13
60-64	–	1	2	–	9	1	1	15	15
65-69	–	2	2	–	1	–	–	11	11
70-74	–	–	2	–	1	–	–	4	4
75-79	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
80-84	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	4	4
Total	199	14	21	1	128	48	7	223	421

Legend

HH (Husband at Home) Husband living within thirty miles of his wife, in a village, and not separated from her

HA (Husband Away) Husband living permanently on a farm, or in Fort Jameson, or more than thirty miles away

HS (Husband Separated) Husband living within thirty miles, in a village, but separated from his wife

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Wisa FQ5

her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters,* and *children.*[1] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin.* In he second ascending and descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* and his female *grandchild* as *wife,* and he can, to a slight extent, joke and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. But Ngoni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to marry his female *grandchild,* and do not approve of such marriages among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins.* We have noted above that the Ngoni peoples from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Wisa peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organisation was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Wisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*bwje*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

[1] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, op. cit. pp. 222 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Malawi FR4

cousin comes from another village she can become the great wife. This lack of consensus about the appropriateness of payments may be due to the difference between the traditional views of the Nguni aristocrats and of their more recent captives. The Nguni tribes, although not allowing cross-cousin marriage, did require transfers of marriage cattle. In contrast to them, the Cewa and others who approved of cross-cousin marriages did not make large marriage payments. It may be that neither view has prevailed over the other among the present-day Ngoni.

When I began my inquiries into marriage I hoped to express numerically the frequencies with which people married their cross-cousins and other relatives. As my inquiries proceeded, it became clear that this was not the simple matter I had thought it to be. There was little consistency in the way in which the word *mayala*, which I have translated as cross-cousin, was used by different informants. Sometimes one spouse would say that the other was a cross-cousin and the other would deny it. In addition to the expected use of the term to refer to father's own or classificatory sister's child, and to mother's own or classificatory brother's child, it was also used for 'person with a parent with the same descent-name as mine', 'person from the same tribe', 'person with the same captor', and so on. Some informants regarded the alleged cross-cousin relationship as a primary one that could not necessarily be broken down into a series of links between parents and children and between siblings. If pressed, informants would often say in explanation 'One of us came from the side of the man and the other from the side of the woman'; yet they would be unable to decide who came from the man's side and who from the woman's. This complexity of reference of the term for cross-cousin applies to a lesser extent to the terms for other relatives with whom marriage takes place. In view of the lack of consensus and of the large number of possible referents of single vernacular terms, I have thought it best to postpone publication of any frequencies until later, when I hope to deal with the general problem of inter-connectedness between local groups of kin.

We have mentioned above the prohibitions against marrying certain relatives and the partial encouragement to marry a cross-cousin. In addition, a man should not marry his brother's wife's sister, and some people say that a man ought not to marry his sister's husband's sister. Both these women he calls *sibling-in-law*. These are not exactly definite prohibitions, but rather pieces of traditional advice. Marriage with these relatives does occur. No specific reason was given for this prohibition, but I noticed that a quarrel in one marriage tended to have repercussions in the marriages of the spouses' siblings, and the objection to these types of marriage may be based on some consideration of this kind.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Margvi FR4

N 581 583

Case history 1

Amos[a] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

N 614 613 [582] [601]

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N 523

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] N 581 [828] N 581

N 595 593 608 582

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognise these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

[a] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European.

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptised Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptised Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptised person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended.[6] Other missions have similar rules.

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls.

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide

[6] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 114 ff

the husband and wife are secluded in their hut for two nights and a day; if obliged to leave, they must avoid being seen. On the second day, still keeping out of sight, they go off to the bush or down and remain there till dusk. The following day they do the same; but in the evening the girl's mother takes them with some fresh food to the hut-door; they make obeisance to him, and receive a present of cloth. Next morning they show themselves in the village and display fitting humility. Whenever the girl meets another adult woman, she prostrates herself, hiding her face in her hands; the other woman whispers in her ear, and she stands up again. The ephemeps are similarly constructed before women older than themselves. Every time the girl meets given her a small present, such as a penny or a little mirror; in acknowledgment she may not speak, but shape her hands, and lie also shape her. Neither husband nor wife may speak to anyone on that day, but on the fifth morning they remove a second existence.

The Chewa girls are usually married a few months before puberty. The *kupsei* in the olden days were not wed till several years later; but now they generally marry shortly after puberty, and in some cases they have begun to follow the custom of the Achewa.

If a Chewa girl is not married when she first menstruates, a temporary substitute must be found. On the fourth day, after the *kuchilisi* medicine has been procured, her father asks her which mentoved cands to find a *fisi*? This man is generally a friend decided upon beforehand by the parents, and is usually middle-aged, or, if he were a youth, the girl might want to marry him, contrary to custom. He receives a fowl from the cands, and visits the girl by stealth that night and the next one; no one must be allowed to discover his identity, and after the second night he must not come near her again. If the girl does not like the look of the *fisi* on either occasion, and refuses to have anything to do with him, he goes away and complains to the cands, from whom he receives a fowl as compensation for the insult. The cands reports the objection to the ephemps, or cows, and reports it to the mother next morning. The mother then interviews the girl, who names a man she is willing to accept as a *fisi*, and he is called on the following evening; but in the interval and until she has received the *fisi*, the ephemps leave her, and she must remain by herself, so that all the people know she has refused her *fisi*.

If she is still unmarried at the later ceremony, she is known as a *kalipali*, and may not be danced alone, but only in the company of one or more married girls. A second *fisi* must be chosen in the same way to sleep with her on the two nights following the close of the ceremony; but he observes the same secrecy, and plays no part taken by the husband in public.

* Cf. also Monteiro, *Corres. Rep. Antiloope*, Ind., 1884, vol. vi, p. 104. When a Kyanja widow has been shaved in the course of the funeral ceremonies, the following night "she has to sleep with a man paid by her relations. He is called *Fisi*, because he steals his relations."

This man matrons chosen among the Wayao, in order that the widow may be clean for her prospective husband. The paid man is called Shem, which is the Yao word for hyena (Bowman, Shamal African Studies (1), loc. cit., p. 107).

The word Shem may also convey a sense of impurtunity. It is said to denote the body of an unborn child, or of a child who dies before its father and mother have secured sexual relations. (Shamal African Studies (1), loc. cit., p. 107)

10. *Prohibited and Expected Unions (Ngoni).*

The *Angoni* are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*mbo-tapha*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the *Angoni* it is no longer considered incestuous to marry women of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage (Ngoni).*

When an Ngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relatives and headmen to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *ambassa* with a present to the *ambassa* of the girl. There are always two *ambassa* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ku-ongo*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several elder women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commemoration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ku-tawfwa*, and sends a cloth (known as *nsalabo*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without commemoration having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kulowola*, or *kupawola nsalabo*. The *nsalabo*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FRS Ngoni FRS
Maravi FRY

N M 173 529 177 [582] this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chisawali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *swindo* or *swguwo* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chisawali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

N M [881]

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

N M [191] [562]

N [178]

If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chamtendere*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

N 114

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first lieutenant of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the
551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni on formal occasions in addition to their other personal names.

To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and
624 there may be in the village one or more lieutenants. The office of lieutenant in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no lieutenants.

In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have
621 consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
● 582 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time
178 some of the senior captives became lieutenants of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aristocratic lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aristocratic capture.

Movement

361 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
166 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Forde, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 190: '... the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

582 855 601 proposed marriage appears to conflict with these rules of incest, because of some distant relationship between the couple, the connexion may be conveniently forgotten by the parties concerned. Incestuous liaisons between people whose parents are still alive are hampered from becoming proper marriages by the refusal of the woman's parents to accept any marriage payments from the man. Similar liaisons between older people may alter the relative kinship status of other couples so that their marriages become incestuous, and they will appeal to the courts. For example, an old man married his son's wife's mother, whom he called *chifi'; parent-in-law*. In consequence, his son and his son's wife became *chifiing* to each other. The young woman refused to go on sleeping with her husband, who appealed to the court. The old man was then ordered to give up his newly acquired wife, so that his son's marriage might continue.

[601] 551 614 582 At its widest extension, the term *chifiing* is applied to any person of the same descent-name as ego and of approximately the same age. The other kinship terms are then applied to the relatives of this nominal *chifiing* in the usual way. However, there is no rule of exogamy applying to these nominal relatives. These descent-names have been referred to by other writers on the Ngoni as clan-names and the aggregate of people with the same descent-name as a clan. The Ngoni term for such names, *ni-dzogo*, is related to the Zulu *izi-dzogo*, and many of the Ngoni descent-names are the same as the names of the clans described for the South-Eastern and Central Bantu.[1] However, among the Fort Jameson Ngoni at the present time, the category of persons formed by all those holding the same descent-name does not have any of the attributes generally attributed by modern writers to the clan. There are no clan heads, no clan exogamy, no clan taboos, no beliefs in a common origin from a legendary ancestor, no clan totems, and no correlation between clan and territory. In these conditions it seems better to use the term descent-name, as has been done for the Lozi.[2] Informants state that even in the old days, when there was a closer approximation to a clan system, there was no clan exogamy. These names are normally inherited by the child from its father, and some of the names are not very common in the tribe, so that it happens that all the people bearing the one name may be the patrilineal descendants of one man. Such groups are exogamic, but this is

[1] Cf. Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, p. 143, for a classification of some of these names, on the basis of ethnic origin.

[2] Gluckman, *Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*, pp. 84-5.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *ombo*, *longo*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-name of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [848]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connection with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939-45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connection with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name made for a man becomes female for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimadu*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

13.Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901-
FRS Ngoni FRS

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality 595
of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes [191]
that the Tongs or others went to when a single chief would have
ten wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's
sensuous ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil
custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And
when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it
must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry 177
till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full [582]
grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But
now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the
Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse
marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this
serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday,
at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock.
But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by
appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have
reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am
satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his 583
father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery
varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would
marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as
much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or
three goats. This also was a great restraint on early marriages,
for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth,
and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable 562
ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a 565
considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But
the lot of the wives of the commoners was little better than
that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out
with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and smoked, and from this
exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for 462
many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the [171]
women to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women
went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, [243]
while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the
grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. [254]

4: Dawson D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao
Marsh: F24
Ngoni: F25

M 251 549 A boy having an omission in the right will take his soiled cloth to the headman of the village. He says, if the stain be black, that the boy must not marry or he will be impotent. A man who has no erection when overcoming the hymen thinks himself ill, and will seek medicine.

M 241 195 [211] Menstruation usually commences from twelve to fourteen years, when the breasts develop and hair appears on the pubes. I am inclined to put it later than has commonly been stated.* The women dance, and instruction is given to the girl who has just arrived at puberty. The Yao no longer hold a dance. Menstruation is said to appear in those who grow fastest at a somewhat earlier age. It is said never to be delayed. Women state that they menstruate once every moon, the flow lasting from three to seven days; if for a longer time it is due to some sickness (metrorrhagia is not uncommon). There is no purification after menstruation, but a wife sleeps apart from her husband, *i.e.*, on another bed, and she may not put salt into the food.

M 195 Boys, I should say, attain puberty at fourteen to fifteen years, when change in the voice takes place. The average age at marriage I should judge at seventeen and fifteen respectively in male and female. This of course only refers to first marriages, and where no kinsmen enter. [Among the Angoni a man was not allowed to marry until thirty years of age, a woman twenty.] The child-bearing period lasts about twenty years.

N ● [212]

M 211 It is believed that the child is formed only from what the man introduces into the woman—the semen. The average number of children in a family is three to five; out of every five, only three survive to adult age. The number of boys born is greater than the number of girls. Pregnancy in a woman is said to be known by the head woman, by her becoming pale. After pregnancy is detected, husband and wife live together, and coitus continues to take place, for some time; with some only for the first six weeks.

M 253 M 243

M 494 Labour takes place either in the woman's own house or in that of her mother. She is assisted by a midwife, generally an old woman (not her mother). The patient sits on the floor of the hut or an old mat naked, half reclining on the midwife, who bends down behind her and presses her abdomen with both hands. No internal examination is made, and no assistance is given in cases of difficulty. The duration of labour is from one hour to five days, ending in death. Mortality from obstructed labour is high, in contradiction to the ease with which natives are usually said to give birth to children. The umbilical cord is not divided until after the birth of the placenta, and then close to its placental attachment; it is not tied. The whole length is bound to the abdomen of the child by some cotton, separating about the seventh day; medicine is then applied to the umbilical scar, consisting of the charred root of a tree mixed with oil.

M [195]

M [278]

* It has been told me that menstruation used not to occur until the age of seventeen, but that of late years, on account of free sexual intercourse before puberty, it is earlier, and therefore the child-bearing age is earlier, sixteen instead of eighteen.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

captives were retained within the segment. In later years, at least, small-scale raiding organized by segment heads went on without the Paramount Chief's knowledge and it seems unlikely under these conditions that captives would have been sent in to him.

There is confirmatory evidence from other Ngoni groups. Hodgson wrote of the Dowa group that a warrior who had captured three or more people had one returned to him by the chief,[3] from which we may infer that they were at the disposal of the chief. For the Southern Ngoni, who are not so closely related to the Fort Jameson group as are those in northern Nyasaland and Dowa District, Read wrote that the Paramount Chief had a monopoly of slaves taken in war and that he distributed these to successful warriors, his wives and his relatives.[4]

Cattle were handled in much the same way as captives. There was a dogma that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, but they were dispersed among the different villages and kept in the byres there. The lord of a major segment had effective control of the cattle in his own village and, when he chose to exercise it, in the other villages of his segment as well. When the Paramount Chief visited a village, cattle were killed in his honour and he was praised as the giver of the feast, but in the chief's absence the head of the village decided when beasts were to be killed. A lord appointed his lieutenants to look after his cattle as well as his people. When cattle had been taken on a raid, they were driven back to Ngoniland and then allocated to a lord.

Cattle for bridewealth were provided for a man by his lord. However it seems possible that a large proportion of the marriages made by politically unimportant people were not ratified by the passage of cattle.[5]

Such evidence as there is suggests that the Ngoni consumed their cattle faster than many similar cattle people and, as with dependants, they captured cattle more than they reared them. People speak of the days before the conquest as a time when they lived entirely on meat and beer. Poole suggests that the Ngoni produced little or no food in their own country,[6] and while this is plainly contradicted by contemporary evidence, it is probable that they did rely on raiding to supplement their supplies of cattle and cereals, and that therefore many captured cattle were used as food. Thus cattle themselves were a short-term asset and the control of

[3] Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 153.
[4] Read, 'Standards of Living', p. 10.
[5] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 7-8.
[6] Poole, 'Human geography of Lundazi and Petauke', p. 13.

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

Amongst the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambezian origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and headmen, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the hom in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal, in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions, and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *ndobolozi*. A strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was supported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uiting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngonisociety

Although all people living n the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, nly those who could trace their descent from families who ossed the Zambezi River were recognised as 'true Ngoni'. Fur main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group fm the rest. The first was their [619]
clan name, giving them an uthentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was marriage contract sealed by [585]
handing over cattle, whichestablished the offspring as 'children of their fathers', or, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are ts'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [928]
local residence at marriage,so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's eople and village. The fourth was membership of a 'hous', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families ith their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it or life, the women until their marriage. Fur special reasns children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the ne into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villges of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts,all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or moreformer warriors in the same [701]
regiment, who had chosen tnet up their own villages after the British had taken over th country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni lifeould be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always a mixture of peoples in the irger villages, dominated by a [563]
group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these vllages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinctfrom the other ethnic elements 621

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in some dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they
joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to
correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at
the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their
mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and
sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grand-
mother with whom they slept, but the other practice was
more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan
name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611]
their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan.
In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister
kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to re-
main as a distinctive group. They were members of their
father's house until they married; and when that took place [583]
it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd be-
longing to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the
girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the
training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the care-
lessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the
grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisa- [597]
bility of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another
household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when asked questions. They took their school work seriously in order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be transferred at their marriage would be greater according to whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daughters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. They and their companions, according to their growth and strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water, grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household, where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores. As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time with the young children, or washing themselves and their clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rubbing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classificatory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage. The friend was always from another compound and of a leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream together. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasaland had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers now that their sons at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the heading was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any prohibition on marriage until a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

584 a strenuous endeavour, during which they of them earned the
names which stuck to her ever afterwards of 'the biting
spider'. Considerations in choosing a mate, both for youths
581 and girls, were not only influenced by the Ngoni desire,
especially strong among the senior people, for linking Ngoni
clans and families together by marriage. The high proportion
of young people, boys especially, who had been to school
and were Christian, weighed the scale in favour of an edu-
cated Christian wife or husband. As always, however, the
factor of personal liking was very strong. Attraction first,
and then liking based on further acquaintance, was held as
most important by the youths and girls themselves. It was
partly the question of the transfer of cattle to seal the mar-
•[583] riage contract which inclined the young men to listen to the
advice of their elders, for they were dependent on them, at
least in the first instance, for providing the cattle.

The other direction in which social control operated in
586 relations between the sexes was in the forms of courtship
584 tolerated and permitted. In pre-European days, and for a
long time after the missions came, the age of marriage was,
as we have seen, postponed for many years after puberty. In
these days there was a recognized and socially accepted pat-
tern of sexual freedom before marriage, which we have al-
ready mentioned. A girl could indicate to a young man, who
had recently joined a regiment, and had shown in various
ways that he was attracted by her, that she was willing to
take him as a lover. Often this relationship led eventually to
marriage between the two, but it was not always the case.
These two slept together from time to time in the dormitory,
practising limited intercourse. The fear of being deflowered
and still more of being pregnant before marriage acted as a
[589] very strong deterrent to the girls not to let the young man, in
the Ngoni phrase, 'harm her in any way'. If this occurred the
girls knew they would have no pre-marriage rite and no full
public wedding ceremony, and this would bring shame not
only on them but on their father's family and house.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV. Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and their presence in the compound conferred importance on their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter, dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats, spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to have a high standard of household management in her new home.

251 [262] [556] [415] [323] 583 577

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

511 577 [357]

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish was being prepared. They watched every movement of their mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on, measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water before using it again.

252 868

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the

262 [415]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

new wife to replace the divorced woman. Divorce however seems to have been rare, and in the genealogies I collected I met with only one instance of divorce at this period.

3. *Payments and ceremonies*

Betrothal[10] was a preliminary to marriage but was not compulsory. A girl was betrothed only if she was sought in marriage before puberty and the marriage then did not take place until some years after puberty. If a girl passed puberty without being betrothed she was subsequently married without a betrothal period. A man was expected to make presents to the girl he had betrothed and he began to adopt avoidance relationships towards her parents. If after puberty the girl or her parents wished to break off the engagement they could do so but were then under an obligation to return the man's presents. The ceremony at which an aristocratic girl after puberty chose her own husband has been described by Wiese.[11]

In the marriage itself there are two main stages marked by two distinct transfers of cattle. The first transfer was called 'snuff-box', *ufuko*. The name of the payment is based on the practice of begging snuff from one's friends and acquaintances and indicates something trifling and not recoverable. It consisted of one beast. Payment of 'snuff-box' established the man's rights to bring an action against an adulterer but it did not give him the right to take his wife away to his own village nor to the custody of any children she might bear him. These rights were obtained only by the payment of bride-wealth, *malowolo*,[12] which consisted of from one to a dozen beasts depending on the status of the woman's father. Both payments, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth, were made by the man or, if he was a young man, by his father to his wife's father. No specifically defined relatives were obliged to help a man find his marriage cattle but a man with few cattle of his own looked for assistance to the head of his cluster. Similarly there were no definite rules of distribution of the marriage cattle among the woman's relatives and the matter

[10] The verb is *ku-komeka* for a man, and the passive *ku-komekwa* for a woman. Cf. Bemba *ukw-ikeka* and *ukw-ikekwa* in Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Present Economic Conditions* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Four), p. 61.

[11] In his later paper he calls the ceremony *twyowonde*. In the earlier paper he calls the ceremony held at first menstruation *ukowonde* and says that after this ceremony the girl went with others to choose the man she liked. The vernacular words he mentions are presumably connected with the modern Nyanja *cinawondi*, which is now sometimes applied to three ceremonies held (1) at first menstruation, (2) six months later, *cinawondi cacisanu*, and (3) after first pregnancy, *cinawondi cachulu*. The abstract noun *unawondi* is sometimes used in place of the concrete *cinawondi*. Cf. Wiese, op. cit., 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191; Rattray, op. cit. pp. 192 and 190; Stigand, 'Notes on the natives of Nyasaland, N.E. Rhodesia, and Portuguese Zambesia, their arts, customs and modes of subsistence', *JRAI*, xxxvii (1907), p. 121; Read, 'Tradition and prestige among the Ngoni', *Africa*, ix (1936), p. 472; Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, pp. 22-4.

[12] Cf. the Zulu verb *ukw-lobola*; also Rattray, op. cit. p. 190.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 851 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriage belonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth his sons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin on behalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim. I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past and when recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

Important men sometimes married female captives and no bridewealth passed. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons founded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 183 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bridewealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.[13] The information on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II.

It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898

[13] See pp. 22f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

marriage system. We shall discuss the legalization payment at some length in the succeeding chapters, for it is the most important of all the payments made in modern marriage. A possible explanation of its occurrence in these early marriages is that although the marriages themselves were made before 1898, the payments were made considerably later. The amounts alleged to have been handed over as legalization payments may have been regarded as 'snuff-box' at the time of payment although they are now referred to as legalization payments, either because of the general obsolescence of the term 'snuff-box' or because my informants thought I would know the new term and not the old one. Another possibility is that even before 1898 the vernacular term for legalization payment (*cimalo*) was in use as a synonym for 'snuff-box'. The term itself was certainly in use among neighbouring tribes before 1898.

This is a very small sample from which to draw any conclusions, but it is of value in suggesting where the reality of social life differed

Table I. Pre-1898 marriage payments: incidence

Payments made	Number of marriages
'Snuff-box' only	1
Bridewealth only	1
Legalization payment only	5
None	7
Total	14
Not known if any payments were made or not	4
Grand total	18
In this sample there were no pre-1898 marriages in which more than one kind of payment was made	

Table II. Pre-1898 marriage payments; magnitude

Payment	Magnitude	Number of marriages
'Snuff-box'	Handful of tobacco	1
Bridewealth	8 beasts	1
Legalization payment	1 beast	2
	1 chicken	1
	Cloth	1
	Not known	1
	Total	5

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

128 from the recollections of informants and the accounts of contemporary writers. Even in a society as rapidly expanding as was the Ngoni before 1898, the majority of the population at any one time consists 554 of people who are politically unimportant. What were remembered 581 and what was recorded at the time were the marriages of leaders 184 and their close relatives. It is they, more than others, who were distinctively Ngoni, and it was by their actions that the values of Ngoni society were emphasized and developed. Their marriages [182] were important in maintaining tribal solidarity and it is the system exemplified in these marriages that we have been describing. But the recent captives, the poor, the unsuccessful warriors, the junior sons of junior sons, they also married and their marriages were at least as numerous as those of their more fortunate brethren, despite the large bands of wives acquired by successful men.

583 The data in our sample provide suggestions as to both the relative frequency of marriage without payment and the kind of relationship 554 that held between payment and status of spouse. The eight cattle were offered by one of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants as bridewealth for the daughter of a man of Nsenga origin. Two junior sons of this lieutenant each offered a beast as legalization payment for a wife, one of whom was the daughter of a divisional head. A legalization payment of unknown magnitude was made in a marriage between a village headman and a daughter of another of Mpezeni's senior lieutenants. These four marriages we may regard as important marriages between people of high status accompanied by marriage payments which usually were substantial. Among persons of low status we find that in six out of the seven marriages in which no payment was made, one or both of the spouses had been captured. Intermediately we have the remaining two marriages in which the legalization payment was made and the one in which 'snuff-box' was paid, all involving people of low or middle status and accompanied by relatively small payments, namely a chicken, some cloth, and tobacco. This positive correlation between status and payment holds for thirteen out of the fourteen marriages, but one marriage without payment was between one of the same junior sons of the lieutenant and the daughter of a man of Kalanga origin.

From such evidence as there is, it seems probable that marriages between people of high status were usually accompanied by substantial payments. At the same time, many of the marriages of people of low status and some of the unimportant marriages of men of high status took place without payments. What proportion of the total these marriages accounted for we cannot now ever hope to know. However since they amount to half of our pre-1898 sample it seems probable that they constituted a considerable fraction of all the marriages contracted at that time.

581 The payment of 'snuff-box' and bridewealth were the crucial events establishing a marriage, but there were a number of other transfers of beer and cattle, and a number of ceremonies without

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place
[591] of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[19] If
[593] the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists
[583] to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on
[641] beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

581 As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction
602 between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they
[858] belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who
[554] had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[19] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 191-2

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [554] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. The levirate

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mceka* or *mtoso*. *Mceka* is an Nsenga word meaning a small [192] cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt [291] by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Wisa FQ5

N 584 her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is N 582 trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship N [601] term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, affines,* and *children.*[3] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin.* In the second ascending and N 603 descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* and his female *grandchild* as *wife,* and he can, to a slight extent, joke 602 and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. N [582] But Ngoni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to marry his female *grandchild,* and do not approve of such marriages [186] among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

N 605 A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins.* We have noted above that the Nguni peoples W M from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not 582 allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Ŵisa peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organization was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Ŵisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage N with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. 582 The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage 583 is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*banja*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

[3] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, op. cit. pp. 222 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

cousin comes from another village she can become the great wife. This lack of consensus about the appropriateness of payments may be due to the difference between the traditional views of the Nguni aristocrats and of their more recent captives. The Nguni tribes, although not allowing cross-cousin marriage, did require transfers of marriage cattle. In contrast to them, the Cewa and others who approved of cross-cousin marriages did not make large marriage payments. It may be that neither view has prevailed over the other among the present-day Ngoni.

When I began my inquiries into marriage I hoped to express numerically the frequencies with which people married their cross-cousins and other relatives. As my inquiries proceeded, it became clear that this was not the simple matter I had thought it to be. There was little consistency in the way in which the word *mvyala*, which I have translated as cross-cousin, was used by different informants. Sometimes one spouse would say that the other was a cross-cousin and the other would deny it. In addition to the expected use of the term to refer to father's own or classificatory sister's child, and to mother's own or classificatory brother's child, it was also used for 'person with a parent with the same descent-name as mine', 'person from the same tribe', 'person with the same captor', and so on. Some informants regarded the alleged cross-cousin relationship as a primary one that could not necessarily be broken down into a series of links between parents and children and between siblings. If pressed, informants would often say in explanation 'One of us came from the side of the man and the other from the side of the woman'; yet they would be unable to decide who came from the man's side and who from the woman's. This complexity of reference of the term for cross-cousin applies to a lesser extent to the terms for other relatives with whom marriage takes place. In view of the lack of consensus and of the large number of possible referents of single vernacular terms, I have thought it best to postpone publication of any frequencies until later, when I hope to deal with the general problem of inter-connectedness between local groups of kin.

We have mentioned above the prohibitions against marrying certain relatives and the partial encouragement to marry a cross-cousin. In addition, a man should not marry his brother's wife's sister, and some people say that a man ought not to marry his sister's husband's sister. Both these women he calls *sibling-in-law*. These are not exactly definite prohibitions, but rather pieces of traditional advice. Marriage with these relatives does occur. No specific reason was given for this prohibition, but I noticed that a quarrel in one marriage tended to have repercussions in the marriages of the spouses' siblings, and the objection to these types of marriage may be based on some consideration of this kind.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 583

Case history 1

Amos[a] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

N 614 613 [582] [601]

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N 563

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] M [581] [428] N 186 581 N

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognize these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

[a] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

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4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one instance where the woman ran off with the man called in by her sterile husband. 842 839

4. The legal relationship

Emphasis on sexual partnership is characteristic of the beginning of marriage. Young people are 'foolish', dance all night long and sleep late in the morning. With the arrival of children, man and wife emerge from the tutelage of their elders and non-sexual aspects of their marriage relationship gain in importance. Even then the importance of sexual satisfaction is not forgotten. People say openly of a woman who obstructs her husband when he seeks a second wife, 'She is too fond of his penis', and old widows explain their failure to remarry by saying 'Our joints are too stiff to copulate'. 593 [851]

Nevertheless at all times there is a great deal more in Ngoni marriage than mere sexual partnership. The obligations and duties of husband and wife towards each other and each other's kin are determined by the marriage payments and ratified by the ceremonies of marriage. These obligations persist despite the fluctuations of sexual attraction. We have seen that in 'the time of peace' the two principal transfers were 'snuff-box' and bridewealth. Today the position is different and the rights transferred by the marriage payments are different. For simplicity we may discuss the latter payment first. Bridewealth is still recognized but, as can be seen from Table V, is paid in only about four per cent of all marriages. It consists of a payment of one or more beasts or £6 made by the man to his wife's father.[14] If only one cow is offered and it dies before calving, it must be replaced. Some indication of the range of variation in amounts paid is given by Table VI. 583 178

This sample of only twelve payments is very small, but there is some indication that the amount paid has decreased in recent years. This is of interest in view of the general rise in the standard of wealth and in the amount offered as legalization payment.

By the payment of bridewealth a man ensures that all the children of his wife, by whatever genitor, shall, or rather ought to, belong to his group of relatives and live in his village when they grow up. The payment is made only after several children have been born. In the old days, if this payment was made, the children were legitimate and lived in their father's segment, and if it was not paid they could be claimed by their mother's father's segment. In these days there is no such hard and fast rule. Everyone has in effect a large choice of places where he can live, and the payment or non-payment of bridewealth for his mother is only one factor operating with many others in influencing his decisions. It is not surprising that so few people pay bridewealth. [851]

[14] For comparative figures for the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Native standards of living and African cultural change', *Africa* xi (1938), 3, supplement, p. 33.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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Bridewealth is not often returned. A man does not usually consider offering the payment until he is fairly sure that his marriage is a stable and happy one, with little likelihood of divorce. Divorce is more the time for paying bridewealth than for taking it back. If a man has had children by a wife whom he later divorces, then,

Table V. Incidence of bridewealth, by decades

583
178

Bridewealth	Date of marriage									Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–49	Not known	
Offered and accepted ..	–	1	2	2	3	2	2	–	–	12
Offered but refused ..	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1
Not offered ..	1	12	26	53	61	56	113	17	8	347
Total	1	13	28	56	64	58	115	17	8	360
Ratio of offers to total number	0%	8%	7%	5%	5%	3%	2%	0%	—	4%
Not known if offer was made or accepted ..	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

Table VI. Magnitude of bridewealth, by decades

Amount paid	Date of marriage								Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	
Beasts: 1 ..	—	—	—	1	1	2	1	—	5
2 ..	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
3 ..	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
6 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
8 ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
£8 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	2
Total ..	0	1	2	2	3	2	2	0	12

Informants as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unless he has paid bridewealth, the children will go to her relatives, whatever the cause of the divorce and whichever party is at fault. He can then offer bridewealth to secure custody of the children at the same time as he loses the services of his wife. 583 586

Bridewealth to-day is almost entirely concerned with the custody of children of the marriage and does not affect the rights of a man in his wife. These rights are determined by a payment which probably did not exist in the old marriage system and which we may call the legalization payment.[17] This payment is now the most important in marriage and is the only one recorded on the printed marriage certificates issued by the Administration through the Native Authorities. The Ngoni believe that the word has been taken from the Cewa, although the Cewa use the word differently. A law was made in about 1944 by the Ngoni chiefs fixing the amount of the legalization payment at a minimum of thirty shillings. Prior to this edict smaller amounts were more usual. The way in which the magnitude of the payment has varied through time can be seen from Table VII. Some people do not follow the law and pay less than thirty shillings; the majority pay the legal amount, in some areas thirty-five shillings is more usual, and recently a few fathers have successfully demanded much higher sums, up to £10, for their daughters. The edict implied that at least thirty shillings should be offered in every marriage, but marriages have been and still are being contracted without any legalization payment, as can be seen from Table VIII. However, from this table it appears that in the last twelve years legalization payments have been offered in a greater proportion of marriages than previously. 583 [671]

The most important right established by this payment is that to damages in the event of adultery. If a man has made the legalization payment he is sure that when his wife commits adultery the court will order both the woman and her lover to pay him damages. Adultery suits are the commonest heard in court and the legalization payment clearly establishes the fact that the man and woman are married in the eyes of the law. If the first payment a man makes is bridewealth, the legalization payment falls away, and he gains the exclusive right of sexual access to his wife without any further payment. In this respect we can see a carry-over from the old system in which bridewealth followed after 'snuff-box', and adultery was punishable by death. Usually if bridewealth is paid in a subsisting marriage, it comes after the legalization payment and is additional to it. The one payment relates to the custody of the children, the other to the sexual services of the woman. We have noted that bridewealth can be offered on the occasion of divorce when perhaps no legalization payment has ever been made. 583 684 [692] 583

[17] *Cimalo.* Cf. Young, *Notes on the customs and folk-lore of the Tumbuka-Kamanga peoples*, p. 61; Coxhead, *The Native tribes of North-Eastern Rhodesia; their laws and customs* (Occasional Papers No. Five, Royal Anthropological Institute), p. 25; Barnes, op. cit. p. 227

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 The third payment we have to consider in modern marriage is 'snuff-box', and this nowadays is not important. The word is used in two senses. It may be an alternative name for the legaliza-

Table VII. Magnitude of legalization payment, by decades

583
178

Amount paid	Date of marriage									Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	
Beads	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
Cloth	—	1	5	3	—	—	—	—	—	9
A chicken	—	1	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	6
Sheep:										
1	—	—	—	2	1	1	—	—	—	4
3	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Goats:										
1	—	—	—	9	6	3	1	—	—	19
2	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	3
A beast	—	2	—	3	1	3	2	—	—	11
Total non-monetary payments	0	4	7	24	9	8	3	0	0	55
1s.	—	—	1	2	1	—	1	—	—	5
2s.	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	3
2s. 6d.	—	—	1	—	—	2	—	—	—	3
3s.	—	—	—	1	2	—	1	—	—	4
4s.	—	—	—	—	3	—	2	—	—	5
5s.	—	—	2	1	4	2	2	—	—	11
6s.	—	—	—	1	2	2	—	—	—	5
7s.	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
7s. 6d.	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
9s.	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	2
10s.	—	—	1	2	5	4	8	—	1	21
12s.	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	2
15s.	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
£1	—	—	1	—	2	2	4	—	1	10
£1. 10s.	—	—	1	1	1	4	49	8	—	64
£2	—	—	—	1	—	1	5	—	—	7
£2. 5s.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
£3	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	3	—	5
£3. 10s.	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	3

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

£4	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	2
£5	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
£6	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	2
Total monetary payments	0	0	8	10	24	21	80	13	3	159
Unknown	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2
Grand total	1	4	15	34	33	30	83	13	3	216
Median value of monetary payments	—	—	5*s.*	8*s.*	6*s.*	10*s.*	£1.10*s.*	£1.10*s.*	—	£1.10*s.*
Arithmetic-means	—	—	9*s.* 6*d.*	12*s.*	13*s.*	20*s.*	29*s.*6*d.*	41*s.*	14*s.*	24*s.*6*d.*

Informants as in Table VIII

tion payment, where the payment is made in kind, that is, one beast, and not in money. This is a straightforward continuation of the old usage, for we have seen that it was by the payment of 'snuff-box', consisting of one beast, that a man established his exclusive sexual rights over his wife. Nowadays few people offer a beast as legalization payment. The word can be used in another sense to indicate any small present made by the man to the wife's father at the beginning of the marriage negotiations, as an indication that he intends to make the proper and more substantial legalization payment later on. A present of this kind is not recoverable, and consists of a shilling, a half-crown, a chicken, tobacco or a cloth. It conveys no rights at all.[18]

The legalization payment by no means completely transfers the woman to her husband's group. Her kinsfolk retain an active interest in her welfare, and are her refuge from her husband's wrath. They intervene to preserve the marriage when otherwise it would end in hatred and divorce. The husband must see that they are formally told whenever his wife becomes pregnant, and if she dies

[18] These small presents are also called *camulomo*, or *cavulamulomo*, literally in Nsenga, 'the thing of opening a lip'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 in childbirth the husband is held to be responsible at least in part.
593 He must pay one cow[10] to the dead woman's kin to appease them. It is said that if bridewealth has been paid the man need not pay another beast, but that the woman's relatives would take a beast from the bridewealth and kill that in order to mourn their kinswoman.

593 The separation of interest that continues even after a marriage has been contracted is demonstrated by the payments which husband and wife are required to make to each other. Although they use many things in common, their possessions are thought of as belonging either to the one or the other. A man may own chickens, although his wife looks after them for him, while a woman may own a beast and let her husband care for it. If husband and wife quarrel the one who apologizes may offer a chicken to the other to make peace. These payments are in part enforced by public opinion

Table VIII. Incidence of legalization payment, by decades

583
178

Legalization payment	Date of marriage									Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	
Offered and accepted ..	1	4	15	34	33	30	83	13	3	216
Offered but refused	–	–	–	1	–	1	3	–	–	5
Not offered ..	–	9	12	21	29	27	30	3	4	135
Total	1	13	27	56	62	58	116	16	7	356
Ratio of offers to total number ..	100%	31%	56%	63%	53%	53%	74%	81%	—	62%
Not known if offer was made or accepted ..	1	3	7	6	14	11	17	8	3	70
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

124

Informants

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	122	135	90·4
Women	232	251	92·4
Total	354	386	91·7

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 122

[10] Called *mulumo*, from the Nsenga verb, *ku-luma*, to bite or chew. The corresponding payment among the Cewa is said to be called *mtupa* or *ntupa*. Cf. Young, op. cit., p. 62.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

has the money to do so. Sometimes a wife brings her husband to court seeking damages from him for cruelty without asking for a divorce. 586

The woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of desertion is usually the wife of a labour migrant. Her struggle is not with her husband himself but with her affines, his kinsfolk who try to protect his interests for him while he is away. We shall consider this type of situation in the next chapter, where we deal with the relationship between a woman and her husband's kin. Here it will suffice to say that provided the man has been away for about four years without writing the divorce is usually granted.

Actions for adultery are always liable to turn into divorce cases, and the amount of damages awarded depends on whether or not a divorce is granted. If adultery is proved, and it is easier to prove than to disprove it, the woman and her lover each pay 30s. to the husband and 5s. fine to the court. If the woman is divorced on the ground of the adultery, the damages are increased to £3 each to the husband and 10s. each to the court. In court the woman is usually asked 'Which man do you love?' and if she selects her lover, the divorce is granted. Sometimes the husband protests that he wants his wife back, but if the court is persuaded that to send the woman back would only lead to more trouble, they will divorce the woman despite the protests of the husband. 684 586

When divorce is granted the legalization payment, if it has been made, should be returned. The court does not, however, make any definite order on this point unless called upon to do so by the man or his relatives, and it seems that in the absence of definite instructions to hand over the money, it is retained by the woman's relatives. This is particularly true when the divorce is on the ground of the man's desertion when it is likely that his interests will be poorly represented by his relatives. 586 583

If the husband has brought his wife to court in order to divorce her on some ground other than adultery, the court may merely tell the couple that they are divorced, without awarding damages to either party. But the law on this point appears to be changing, and the rule followed in one court is not always followed in another. Even in the same court the decisions given at one time may conflict with those given at another. If the court decides that the woman is at fault she may be ordered to pay £3 damages to her husband. If the man is at fault then, more rarely, the man is ordered to pay £3 damages to his wife. Occasionally, although the fault is held to lie with the man, the woman is ordered to pay £3 damages to secure her divorce. The factors influencing these decisions appear to be the readiness of any particular court to listen to the pleas of a woman, and its opinion of the character of the woman. A woman who is regarded as foolish, or given to quarrelling over nothing, or promiscuous, is sometimes ordered to pay damages to her husband 586 692 562

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 692 562 although the evidence presented during the hearing of the case has established the husband's fault as the ground for divorce.

Only if there is dispute over the matter will the court make an order about the division of crops. The principles of division are 586 that the crops belong to those who worked hard to grow them and that the children of the marriage have to be fed by the parent with whom they live, whoever may eventually have their custody. Thus in a case in which a woman successfully pleaded for divorce because of her husband's cruelty, the court awarded all the crops in the couple's garden to the husband, as the woman had been lazy and had done only a little towards their cultivation.

Bridewealth is not automatically returned on divorce and as we [583] have seen, divorce is the time for paying bridewealth rather than for retrieving it. The disposal of the children of a divorced couple is regarded as a separate issue and to be treated on its own merits.

It is useful to have some quantitive estimate of divorce frequency, [128] but the construction of a satisfactory measure is not easy. One aspect of the occurrence of divorce is presented in Tables IX and X, where the number of divorces experienced by wedded men and women of different ages is set out.

It will be seen that, considering only those wedded men and women whose divorces are known, the mean number of divorces per head of wedded population is 0·49 (51/104) for men and 0·30 (62/210) for women. This difference may be due in part to a greater reluctance on the part of women to admit to divorce, but is also due to the greater mobility of men. While women stay at home, their husbands go off to marry in the towns, divorcing their urban wives when they return home or when the strange rural environment proves intolerable to the women from the towns.

By considering the number of years that marriages have lasted, 581 it is possible to say what is the mean duration of marriage. The 586 necessary information was available for 403 marriages extant as well as completed, experienced by men and women who were resident in the sample villages. The mean duration of all these marriages is 15·6 years, and the mean duration of the marriages that ended in divorce is 6·6 years. The median duration of all marriages is, to the nearest year, 8 years, and of marriages ended in divorce, 5 years. More divorces occurred in the period from four-and-a-half years to five-and-a-half years after marriage than in any other similar one-year period.[25]

128 For comparison with other societies, we can express as a ratio the relationship between the number of marriages that ended in divorce and the number that did not or have not yet done so. This can be done in three ways, as set out in Table XI.

[25] There is no space here to give the method by which these calculations were made, but see my 'Measures of divorce frequency in simple Societies" *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, lxxix (1949) (pp. 37-62).

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

595 polygyny, and punish their members who take additional wives,
799 there are still a number of Christian polygynists who for most purposes align themselves with the Christian group.

As in the old days, the wives of a polygynist are ranked in the
595 chronological order of marriage, the first wife married being the
178 great wife. If, however, bridewealth has been paid, the wives married
[583] in this way are all senior to those who are married without it. The arrangement by which a barren or aged wife was given a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) has now almost disappeared. A young girl may still be indicated as a linked co-wife designate at the gall bladder ceremony of her kinswoman and the intestines placed round her neck, but this is now a mere ceremonial, and the girl marries elsewhere when she grows up. As mentioned above a chief negotiated recently for a linked co-wife on the strength of bridewealth paid by his father, but with no success.

593 A man makes his headquarters in his great wife's hut, and keeps
595 his possessions and money in it. During the day it is considered proper that he should sit and chat or entertain visitors on the verandah of her hut. Her hut is likely to be of better design than those of her co-wives, and she is more likely than they to have a separate kitchen. When her husband returns from a journey, he ought to go first to her hut, and if he has brought back goods from Southern Rhodesia, it is in her house that he stores his loads until he has time to divide them among his wives and relatives. A visitor from afar goes first to the great wife's hut and there asks for the man he is seeking. In her husband's absence it is she who must entertain the visitor. This pattern of precedence is followed to greater or lesser extent despite quarrels between husband and wife, and is not affected by where the husband actually sleeps at night.

Apart from this emphasis on the importance of the great wife, the
595 correct behaviour for a man with many wives is impartiality. He must sleep with each wife in rotation, usually for a week at a time, and must not confide in one wife the secrets of his relationship to another. Relationships between co-wives are sometimes strained, and one may use medicines against the others. The medicine[28]
[830] believed to prevent a man from achieving erection with anyone other than the woman who gives it to him is sometimes used by one wife against another. On the other hand, some co-wives help each other in their gardens and many polygynists' households run smoothly. Each wife has her own hut and her own garden and it is possible for them to arrange their affairs so that they can co-operate or act separately as they find best. If they persistently quarrel
[591] their husband may deem it well for them to live in separate villages, so that for example a man may live virilocally with his great wife and uxorilocally with his second wife, going from one village to the

[28] Possibly known as *ndamanga*. The details of this medicine are not known by many men, and I was unable to question any women on this matter.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

married women chosen for them by their kinsfolk while they were 584
away during the 1939-45 war. If the woman selected for him by one relative is unsatisfactory, a man may turn to another relative for help, as is shown in the following incident.

Case history 5

Ahab, a young man of about twenty, was working in Fort Jameson. He wrote to his father in the village enclosing money for the legalization payment, asking that his father should find him a wife. His father spoke to a friend living in another village who had an unmarried daughter. The friend agreed that his daughter should marry Ahab, but the girl said that she wanted to see Ahab before making up her mind about him. Ahab was [581] told of the arrangement but refused to agree to it, saying that he knew that the girl chosen was a prostitute.

Ahab then asked a classificatory grandmother to find him a wife. This woman found a girl and when Ahab came home from work he and a friend went for a walk to the girl's village to spy her out. The friend, on seeing the girl, advised Ahab against marrying her and the negotiations again fell through.

Ahab asked his grandmother to try again and this time he approved of the girl selected. The legalization payment was made and the girl came to live in Ahab's village with his grandmother. After a week or so, she was [591] taken by the grandmother and other important women of the village into the township to start living with Ahab.

On the other hand a man may desist from marrying the girl of his choice in the face of parental opposition. For example, the first girl that Amos found for himself was opposed by his father because [759] her father was a sorcerer; the second on the ground that her parents were unreliable and that she was a cross-cousin, a point against [581] her in that Amos's brother had married a cross-cousin and the marriage was not a success; only with the third choice did the father agree to his marriage.

The initiative in arranging a marriage lies with the man and his kin rather than with the woman, and a girl who goes too much out of her way to attract a husband risks her reputation and may be regarded as a potential prostitute. On elopement, it is the woman 583 who runs off to the man's village or to his place of work, and it might be expected that her relatives would initiate action to bring her back or to claim damages for abduction. Sometimes a man does take action against the lover with whom his daughter has run away, and the lover pays a beast. Another man, however, may take no steps to follow his runaway daughter, merely refusing to recognize the existence of any marriage between her and her lover, and sometimes denying any knowledge of the lover's name. If the woman shows no sign of returning to her own village, efforts may be made to bring her children back to her parents to be brought up. Sometimes a man who has eloped with a woman later approaches her parents, apologizes for his precipitate action and makes them gifts, after which they may decide to recognize him as a son-in-law.

If a man shows his intention of marrying despite the disapproval 584 of his close kin, they can retaliate by not helping him financially,

584 by not visiting him, by refusing his presents of beer, and even by refusing to speak to him. Provided the man can find the money for the legalization payment himself, they cannot prevent the money from being handed over. The woman's kin are in rather a
584 different position for they can try to prevent her from marrying against their wish by refusing to accept the legalization payment.
583 It will be seen from Table VIII that this happened in four per cent (5/135) of the marriages in our sample. The woman's father may sometimes think the sum offered is too small and may refuse to accept until it is increased. The man can either give way and offer the larger sum or, if he thinks the demand is excessive or beyond his resources, he may start living with her without any legalization payment at all. He is then not so sure of his rights over his wife as he would be otherwise and his wife's parents may try to break up the marriage. Should quarrels lead to a divorce it will be easier to obtain because of the absence of payments.

583 The woman's relatives may, however, refuse to accept the offered legalization payment irrespective of the amount. They do this
586 if they feel that the marriage has no chance at all of success, either because of the unsatisfactory character of the man or of the well-established unreliability of their kinswoman. By refusing the payment they hope to protect themselves against the call for damages which they feel sure is bound to come when their daughter commits adultery and her husband wants to divorce her. Even at the monetary level the amount they are likely to get as legalization payment is only thirty shillings while the damages they will be called upon to find will be three pounds. If, however, no legalization payment has been made, then the divorce should be granted without the award of damages against the woman. Thus her relatives protect themselves financially by refusing the payment, but at the same time by so doing they are trying to avoid trouble in the group of kin and quarrels with their newly-found affines. If a man before making his legalization payment shows himself to be unsuitable as a husband, or if it is plain that his wife will not be satisfactory to him, her kin will not put any pressure on him to pay and begin to hope that the marriage will end before too much trouble ensues. If the payment is made, some of the woman's relatives may refuse any part of it offered to them, hoping thereby to avoid future financial responsibility for her adultery.

Case history 6

Job works in the township and had two wives. He then married the girl Rebecca. She lived with him in town for a month or two and then Job sent her back to her village to be taught to cook properly. Her mother's mother remarked 'Ever since she reached puberty we told Rebecca she must learn to cook properly but she took no notice. The other wives of Job often laugh at her.' Her mother's mother's elder sister said 'It is a good thing for us that we did not accept any legalization payment from this man.' A month or so later the marriage broke up and Rebecca was divorced.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Where a woman has already troubled her relatives by her adultery, they may try to avoid further expense by refusing the legalization payment offered for her. 583 586 [837]

Case history 7

Rachel had had two husbands and had been divorced from them both. She had also lived with a White for some years. In 1946 she began to live with Esau, who already had three wives. In 1948 Esau approached an important man in Rachel's village and asked him to act as intermediary as he wished to offer the legalization payment to Rachel's brother. This man refused to do so, and in the end Esau approached his brother-in-law himself. The brother-in-law said that he had known his sister Rachel a long time and she was just a prostitute. He would not take the money for her. Esau said he would speak to his wife and ask her to change her character. Eventually the brother-in-law agreed to accept the thirty shillings offered.

Although the kinsfolk of the man or woman can exercise social pressure to prevent a marriage it is difficult for them to force a girl to marry against her will, and impossible in the case of a man. We have noted that in the old days, according to informants, people married whom they were told and did not refuse. Even if this was ever true, it is true no longer. A man can move off to the towns in the face of pressure and a woman can always run away to other relatives if her parents are insistent on an unwanted marriage. The Administration does not allow girls to be married against their will, but I do not know of any recent instance in which it has intervened on this issue. A girl's relatives can show their anger by abusing her and by scaring off her own preferred mate, but they cannot detain her against her will and they cannot force her to go through the ceremonies of marriage. They cannot appeal to the court to punish the girl for disobedience. 584

In some instances pressure is put on a man by a woman's kin to force him into marrying her. If a woman bears a pre-marital child, and it is known that the genitor is an important man or chief, her kinsfolk begin to adopt towards the genitor's family the patterns of respect and avoidance which would be appropriate if he were their affine. This procedure may be adopted although it is plain to people in general that the genitor has no intention of marrying the woman. If it is unsuccessful in forcing the hand of the genitor, the formal attitudes of the woman's kinsfolk come to be generally ridiculed and they abandon the pretence. 848 602

So far we have considered only the attitude of kinsfolk towards a proposed marriage and the legalization payment associated with it. The factors influencing the acceptance or refusal of bridewealth are different. Bridewealth, when offered, is not often refused. Table V shows that in our sample this happened in only one out of 360 marriages. We must remember that bridewealth is paid only in about four per cent of all marriages, and that a man is usually on good terms with his affines and has lived in peace for many years with his wife before he offers it. A youngish man may seek the 583

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 approval of his father before he offers, and as in the case of Amos and Eve (p. 28), the father may sometimes disapprove. If the man is from another part of the territory or from abroad the parents of
583 the woman, even if they accept the legalization payment, may be
603 reluctant to allow their grandchildren to go a long way away from them to live among their son-in-law's kin. This consideration applies
593 particularly to strangers in the township who marry Ngoni women. When they leave their jobs or retire they try to take their wives and children with them. They may be frustrated in the removal of their children by the woman's parents, who refuse the bridewealth. The courts support the claims of Ngoni grandparents for the retention of their grandchildren under these conditions and a returning Yao or Cipeta man may be forced to travel without his children and sometimes without his wife. I have recorded elsewhere [2] an incident in which a Yao man who had been married to an Ngoni woman for twenty-one years was divorced by her and his offer of bridewealth refused by her parents. The police who check the movements of women and children by bus and lorry away from Fort Jameson are in touch with the Native Courts and may be on the look out if it seems likely that a man from a strange tribe will attempt to smuggle his wife and children away from their Ngoni kin.

581 Thus we see that the kinsfolk are directly concerned with marriage. When the children are still toddlers, they are paired off in fun by their
[858] adult relatives as they sit playing. For a week or month or even longer a woman will laughingly call her neighbour *child's parent-in-law* because their children have been nominated *husband* and *wife* in this way. As a child grows older, so the interest of its relatives in its marriage become clearer. Before marriage the relatives of a
684 girl hold rights in her that are violated if she is seduced and bears
848 a child. It is to them that the girl's lover pays the beast of seduction to recompense them for the wrong he has done by impregnating the girl, but he does not gain custody of the child. On the other hand,
836 no one brings a case against a man merely because he sleeps with an unmarried girl. It is only when she becomes pregnant that an action can be laid against him. A man caught *in flagrante delicto* by one of the unmarried girl's kin can expect abuse and possibly blows but unless he is provocative he need not fear action in the courts. The hostility directed towards him seems to be due in part to his having behaved so indiscreetly as to be caught and having forced the girl's kin to take cognizance of what was happening.

At marriage the woman's kin grant rights in her sexual activities
581 to her husband. These rights are unambiguously transferred by the
583 legalization payment, and the woman's kin are therefore in a position to delay or facilitate the tranfser of these rights by their attitude towards the payment. There is no corresponding right in an unmarried man held by his kin, and at marriage there is no corres-

[2] Barnes, op. cit. p. 238

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

ponding payment through which they can attempt to control the relationship between the couple. Yet both groups of kin are interested in the successful outcome of the marriage, and therefore attempt to influence the choice of marriage partner. 581 583

3. Formal interaction

In the formal negotiations that precede a marriage, and in the ceremonies that mark its stages of development, the kinsfolk are always involved. The married couple depend on their kin for economic assistance, and are under obligations to help their kin. The place of residence of the couple is determined by the disposition of their kin in different villages. If the man is a labour migrant his interests are represented by his rural kinsfolk. In general it is the fathers of the couple who are most directly concerned, if they are available, but in all Ngoni situations in which a man (or woman) appeals to his kin for support there are no hard and fast rules about the genealogical positions his supporters should occupy. If a man's father is old he turns to his elder brother. If his genealogically close kinsmen live far away, he turns to those who live nearer although they may be further removed from him in genealogical terms. If there is no male kinsman available he may seek the support of an old kinswoman. 581 602

The formal situations which require the co-operation of kinsfolk are the matchmaking, the gall bladder ceremony (which we may perhaps regard as the wedding), the ceremony of first cooking, the hoeing party, the announcement of first pregnancy, the carrying of beer and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. Betrothal is another formal situation requiring the presence of the woman's kin, but as nowadays very few girls are betrothed, we shall omit this from our analysis. It will be recalled that even in the old days betrothal applied only to girls under puberty and that a girl who reached puberty without becoming betrothed proceeded to marriage without passing through any intermediate stage. The matchmaking, at which the marriage is arranged, is carried on in a formal manner but there is little ceremonial. The carrying of beer is a visit from one group to the other that can be repeated as many times as they wish, but all the other ceremonies occur but once in a marriage, if they occur at all. The hoeing party has a certain economic value but the other ceremonies are largely symbolic in content. As with the marriage payments, the marriage ceremonials can all be dispensed with and yet there be a marriage which to all intents and purposes is valid. What cannot be omitted so easily from a marriage are the patterns of respect and avoidance between the couple and their affines, particularly between a man and his wife's mother. Even here, however, there is some variation in practice. 602 [585] [584] [581] [606]

The usual procedure in matchmaking is that first the man and the woman agree between themselves that they will get married. They reach this agreement in secret without reference to their kinsfolk 584

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

584 or friends. If the man is away working or in the Army he may make his proposal by letter. When agreement has been reached negotiations can proceed although they are carried on as if there had been no prior agreement and the proposal was entirely a new one.

A man tells his eldest brother of his intention to marry, or, if he is the eldest son, he may approach his father direct. He does not [593] speak to his mother about this matter, for a man does not confide in his mother about anything connected with sex, but she is told of his intention by her husband. A man ought to tell his grand- [603] mother at an early stage, particularly the grandmother who reared him. A woman tells her sisters and her grandmother, and her eldest sister will tell her eldest brother. The man's father or eldest brother may decide on who shall act as intermediaries in the matchmaking, or else the man may himself ask important people in the village to act. There is no definite rule as to who they should be, and either men or women or both may make up the party. Usually two or three people go, and a man will try and choose people who are reliable and sober and tactful. Marriage intermediaries do not have the same important responsibilities for the marriage as do the marriage [191] sureties (or witnesses) among the Nyanja and Yao although they are known by the same term.[8] The intermediaries go to the woman's village and consult her senior relatives. Traditionally they should go to the woman's grandmother, either her father's mother or her mother's mother, depending on who lives in the village and who is the more important. They tell her that they have heard that such-and-such a marriage has been contemplated. The girl's grandmother tells the girl's father that the intermediaries have come, and if nothing has arisen to jeopardize the marriage, the visiting party are told that all is well and that they must come back again. They return to their own village, and the next day, or the next week if it is a long way to walk, they go again, bringing with them a gift or some- times the legalization payment. The gift or money is handed to the [583] person leading the negotiations on the woman's side who passes it on to the woman's father. Arrangements are made about the gall bladder ceremony and a date fixed. The intermediaries then go back to their village.

585 At the gall bladder ceremony the bride receives formal advice [591] from her affines and the people in their village. Shortly afterwards she begins to live with her husband in either his or her village. If they live virilocally she does not at first cook for her husband, but the couple rely on food prepared by his other wives or his mother or [593] grandmother. It may be up to a year later that the woman first cooks for her husband and husband's father, the latter commenting on her cooking. When she first becomes pregnant she is anointed 843 by her husband's grandmother, and goes with a young girl from her husband's kinsfolk to announce her pregnancy to her own kin.

[8] *Nkhoswe.*

606 good man behaves towards his father-in-law with obedience and respect, and that he is rewarded by the gifts of beer sent to his father by his wife's father. If these gifts are not made, then the man must be 'bad' or his father-in-law 'fierce' or 'cruel'.

581 829 There is one type of marriage in which none of these ceremonies are performed. This is what is known as the 'poorly fixed marriage'* which lies on the borderland between marriage and concubinage. People do not expect a 'poorly fixed' marriage to last long, and this expectation is based more on their estimation of the characters of the couple involved than on a consideration of the absence of marriage ceremonies and payments. If a couple, who have shown by their general behaviour that they are fickle and quarrelsome, begin to live together without going through any of the formalities of marriage, people speak of their marriage as 'poorly fixed'. If the union breaks up there is no divorce procedure and the couple merely go their own separate ways. The categorization 'poorly fixed' is not applied to all marriages in which there are no marriage [583] payments, for poverty is usually regarded as a valid excuse for not offering money or animals or for not brewing beer. It is rather poverty of character and love of promiscuity and fickleness that lead to 'poorly fixed' marriages.

581 Sometimes a marriage which begins as 'poorly fixed' lasts for some time and becomes accepted as a proper marriage. An example of this is the marriage of Rachel and Esau (p. 63). In 1946 I was told this was a 'poorly fixed' marriage and that it would not last. In 1949 opinion had changed, and as we have seen, Esau succeeded in making the legalization payment for his wife. Even if his money had been refused his position would still have been better than it was in 1946 for he had shown that he could live with Rachel for three years without an undue amount of quarrelling and she had not drifted off to some other man. By making the legalization payment [583] Esau made his rights over her more certain.

People who live in 'poorly fixed' marriages are not despised for [829] doing so, but are rather pitied for their moral inability to make a 'well fixed' marriage. They are never so sure of the support of their relatives and neighbours as they would be otherwise. A man who has not made the legalization payment may be supported by his 586 wife's relatives when she commits adultery if they think that he is a good husband and that it is she who is at fault in the matter. But if a man neglects his obligations towards his wife's parents and in particular does not approach them formally at the beginning [606] of the marriage to tell them of his desire to marry their daughter, they may turn on him if he tries to exercise rights over the woman. In court, the wife's father may look at his son-in-law, who perhaps has been his neighbour for many years, and say 'Who is this man? We do not know him'; and the court will refuse to recognize his claims.

* *Ukwati owayawaya.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

claims. In retrospect, when discussing an erstwhile 'poorly fixed' marriage that has broken up, people will say 'That was not a proper marriage', and 'She was just his friend'. In all the tables we have excluded 'poorly fixed' marriages from consideration. 586 128

The initiative in strengthening a 'poorly fixed' marriage lies with the man and not with the woman's relatives. If their daughter is living with a man who has not made the legalization payment they cannot bring him to court and force him to pay. If their daughter has only just passed puberty there may be grounds for an abduction suit, but if she has been married before or is considered old enough to decide for herself, her relatives are unlikely to take any action in the courts against her husband. The woman cannot be forced to return to her own people. Similarly if no bridewealth has been paid, the children cannot be forced to live in one village rather than in the other. They can be asked to do so, but they cannot be taken to court if they refuse. 581 583

All 'poorly fixed' marriages are marriages without payments, but not all marriages without payment are 'poorly fixed'. It will be seen from Table XII that no payments at all have been offered in about a third of the marriages in our sample. In some of the marriages for which there have been offers of payment, these consist only of the small present given as 'snuff-box' [7] in modern marriage. Yet these marriages are valid despite the paucity or absence of payment. Many of them have lasted for a long time and the lack of payment is almost forgotten. It would be an act of maliciousness on the part of the woman's relatives if after twenty years of happy married life they began to remind her husband that he had not yet made the legalization payment. With the increasing importance of marriage certificates on which the legalization payment is recorded, and the rise in power of the Native Authority, the position may well change in years to come. At present, most marriages without payments are more like marriages with payment than they are like the unions of men with concubines and prostitutes. The persevering inquirer may unearth the lack of payments, but in the day-to-day life of the village, as well as in many of the formal situations of marriage, this lack is not significant. In the work of the garden, in the sharing of food, on festive occasions when there is beer and dancing, there is no distinction between wives married in one way or the other. More significantly, we find instances where despite the absence of any payments, beer has been brewed for a daughter's husband and he has been invited to go through the ceremony of 'entering the wife's mother's hut'. Some marriages are solemnized in church, with the approval of the parents on both sides, without any payments being made. The rules of avoidance between a man and his wife's mother operate independently of the marriage payments, and widows are subject to the same restrictions [606]

[7] *Mfuko, camulomo, cavulamulomo.* See above, p. 39, n. 18.

and widows are subject to the same restrictions
581 and wear the same signs of mourning whether or not their deceased
583 husbands made any payments. The absence of payments does not
[165] automatically deny to a man and woman the status of husband and wife any more than the completed payments automatically ensure marital happiness.

583 As reflected in Table XII, the proportion of marriages in which
581 no payments are offered has decreased in the last twelve years, ans we know from Table VIII that this is due to an increase in the
595 number of marriages in which the legalization payment is made. It is therefore possible in future there will be a clearer division between marriage, with its legalization payment, and concubinage, with no such payment and with a completely different relationship between the sexual partners and between their respective groups of relatives. We are not in this paper concerned specifically with concubinage and prostitution, but it may at this point be useful to point out that not many women are concubines. In our sample, as set out in Table IV, there was only one concubine, a wedded woman, among 223 wedded women. From Table III, we see that there were no men at all, in our sample of 116 wedded men, living with concubines. The paramour of the concubine in our sample was resident on a nearby farm, and so did not come into the sample of men.

4. Co-operation between affines

583 585 The payments and ceremonies of marriages are isolated and memorable events. The ceremonies are public in that neighbours

Table XII. Incidence of marriage without payment, by decades

583 178

Marriage payment	Date of marriage									Total
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	
At least one payment offered	1	6	17	37	38	34	86	14	5	238
None offered ..	–	7	11	19	26	24	29	3	3	122
Ratio of marriages without offer of payment to total	0%	54%	39%	34%	41%	41%	25%	18%	—	34%
Not known if any payments offered	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR5

see them and to a large extent participate in them, joining in the dancing and drinking, giving presents and advice to the bride, and so on. Less spectacular are the continual patterns of interaction between a man and his affines arising from his partial dependence on them and his obligations towards them as expressed in everyday life. A man must avoid his mother-in-law and help his father-in-law with garden work, and if he is living uxorilocally he may be dependent on his affines for food and housing. If they move from one village to another he moves with them.

Avoidance is most marked between a man and his wife's mother. He must not speak to her, sit near her, pass in front of or enter her hut, and he should endeavour not to meet her on the path. Above all he must never sit on her mat, for sitting on a woman's mat is regarded as symbolically equivalent to sleeping with her. To a lesser extent a man must avoid his father-in-law, but it is not considered amiss for a man to sit at one end of a verandah while his father-in-law sits at the other. They can talk to each other if necessary. A woman is comparatively free with her parents-in-law and does not avoid their hut. The formalities of relationship between a man and his parents-in-law begin when he starts to negotiate his marriage, or earlier if their daughter is betrothed to him while she is still a child. With the passage of time a man avoids his mother-in-law less, and after the ceremony of entering her hut he can sit and chat to her. Even then it is still considered shameful for him to sit on her mat.

The Ngoni regard uxorilocal residence as part of the obligation a man has towards his wife's parents. Many couples spend their whole married life virilocally and others live permanently in uxorilocal marriage, but in describing where a couple ought to live, Ngoni speak always in virilocal terms. We have seen that in the old days virilocal residence was the rule but that a man might live uxorilocally for a while at the beginning of his first marriage after paying 'snuff-box' until he paid bridewealth (p. 5). The Cewa lived uxorilocally, but it was possible for a Cewa man to make a small payment some years after marriage permitting him to take his wife to his own village. Nowadays among the Ngoni some men, but not all, begin their marriages uxorilocally. A man may do so either because he finds it more convenient, due to lack of suitable accommodation in his own village, quarrels with his kin or shortage of food, or else because he is made to do so by his parents-in-law. A parent who does not approve of his (or her) daughter's suitor may accept the young man on condition that the couple live under his eye for a while so that he can assure himself that his daughter will be well treated by her husband. Sometimes it is said that a man who has not yet made the legalization payment must live uxorilocally until he can find the money, but this is not always done and some couples whose marriages are only 'poorly fixed' live virilocally.

The proportion of couples who live virilocally varies from one village to another.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

depends as much on the compliance of the man as on the insistence of his father-in-law. 591 606

A payment[10] of about five shillings is sometimes made by a man to his wife's father enabling him to take his wife to his own village. This is made either at the beginning of the marriage or after one or two years of uxorilocal residence, but in some marriages the payment is never made at all, and in some villages even the vernacular term is unknown. In those villages where the payment is recognized there is no consensus of opinion as to the rights granted by it. Some people hold that the payment is equivalent to a year or two of uxorilocal residence, and that, therefore, the money should be offered when the marriage is arranged, so that it may be begun virilocally. They go on to say that when a man has completed his period of uxorilocal residence, he is free to take his wife to his own village without making this payment. Other people say that a man ought to remain living uxorilocally until he makes this payment, which should therefore be done a year or so after marriage, or at some time later when the man wishes to move. Where the payment is not recognized, people either say that a man ought to live uxorilocally for a while and cannot buy himself out of this obligation, or else assert that the Ngoni, unlike the Cewa, do not marry uxorilocally and that the legalization payment allows a man to take a bride to his village as soon as he chooses. There is a wide variation in the norms held, or at least expressed, on this matter and an equally wide variation in actual behaviour. Men select their course of action by reference to the total situation in which they find themselves when they marry. A man may try to enforce one rule on one son-in-law and another rule on another. I observed one extreme case in which a man allowed one of his daughters, married to a man from her own village, to move to her husband's cluster after only a few months of uxorilocal residence in his own cluster. At the same time he would not allow another daughter to move to her husband's village after four years of uxorilocal residence, despite the offer of ten shillings payment to him. He approved of the first son-in-law while disliking the second, who had failed to report to him when his daughter first became pregnant. 583 591

We have talked of the man's village and the woman's village. It is perhaps necessary to stress that what is meant by, say, the man's village is a village to which the man's ties are stronger than those of his wife. It is likely to be a village where some relative of his is living, but the relative may be his father or his mother or his father's mother or his mother's father or some more distant connexion. Sometimes a man goes to live in his first wife's village and then brings in his second wife. The second wife is then said to be living virilocally, in the village of her husband rather than in her own, although the man is himself living in his first wife's village, 591 602

[10] *Nthakula*. Cf. Barnes, op. cit. p. 229

591 that is, in uxorilocal marriage. In the man's village there are likely to be relatives of his wife already established, but it is she who is 602 said to 'follow' her husband to the village and not he who 'follows' her, since his ties to the village, and to the cluster in the village within which they set up their household, are stronger than hers. Similarly a man may have relatives of his own living in his wife's village and yet be spoken of as living uxorilocally. If a woman's father is living in her village, he will be the focus of her husband's obligations. But if he lives a long way away and the woman has been dependent on her grandparents, or on her mother's brother, then it is they who will act towards her husband to some extent in [606] the role of substitute parents-in-law. However, a man does not avoid his substitute mother-in-law as thoroughly as he would his wife's own mother.

606 The obligation on a man to help his wife's parents in their garden 583 is expressed in two ways. Once during the marriage the man must provide a party of people to hoe for the greater part of one day in his wife's mother's garden. He must also be prepared to work in this garden from time to time when he is called upon, and his wife may work with him. While the labour given by the man and his wife is useful labour, the work done by the hoeing party is only partly useful and may do more damage than good. The procedure is that the man, or a relative of his, tells his father-in-law that he proposes to bring a party to hoe on such-and-such a day. By agreeing to this the father-in-law tacitly agrees also to provide the party with beer and presents. On the appointed day, early in the morning, the party arrives and begins work. When the father-in-law thinks the work has gone on long enough, he sends an intermediary to offer a present to the leader of the hoers. If the present is considered sufficient the party stops hoeing and returns to the father-in-law's village. If not, it continues to hoe with renewed vigour. At intervals the father-in-law sends intermediaries with higher and higher offers until at last the hoers are satisfied or exhausted and they come into the village to collect their presents and beer. As often as not the hoers try to force the father-in-law to offer a present at the limit of his resources, for example a beast, and, as the offers mount, the workers become more and more excited and their hoeing less and less useful. At the end of a day, with the light failing, physically exhausted hoers begin to root up the maize with the weeds, and the mother-in-law's garden may be seriously damaged. If the father-in-law is obstinate and does not offer them what they want the hoers may spend the night sleeping out in the garden. By the next morning everyone is too tired to continue the matter further, and the party disperses.[11]

[154] This sort of hoeing party may not facilitate the cultivation of good maize but it is of great significance to the married couple and the

[11] See Appendix III for an account of two of these parties.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

two groups of relatives. In the partial destruction of the father-in-law's crop by the man's friends, the latent hostility between the two groups is canalized into a form that is just socially acceptable. In the later stages of hoeing the men and women in the party act wildly, dance round and round anyone who tries to interfere with them and throw earth all over them. At first all contact between the father-in-law and the leader of the party is through intermediaries, and if all goes well, and there is no crisis, the father-in-law will always remain in the background. But with rising tempers the tension increases, and the father-in-law may himself go to cajole and threaten the party. When they do decide to stop and go into the village, an attempt is made to establish peaceful relations again, and the leader of the party begins to protest that they never really intended holding out for such a large present, that they knew it was getting dark and that they could not hoe at night. They settle down to drink the beer provided by the father-in-law and in the morning go back to their own village. It is significant that the man himself cannot be the leader of the party, so that he does not come into direct contact with his father-in-law. He shelters behind the party leader, so that the chances of an open breach between him and his father-in-law are lessened.

The formalized expression of hostility, which is a feature of many Ngoni ceremonials,[12] appears most clearly in marriage in the custom of the hoeing party, but is present in some other situations, as in the instruction of the bride at the gall bladder ceremony, when she is sometimes told she has a bad character, is mean and deceitful. Even the carrying of beer can be used to express hostility, as is indicated by Reuben's remark towards the end of his son-in-law's hoeing party, that he would tell his wife to brew beer and send it to his son-in-law's village, where the women bringing beer would demand a present even greater than the one demanded by the leader of the hoers.[13]

Men and women wish their daughters to bear children, and are reluctant to marry them to impotent men. Yet childbirth is hazardous, and a woman may die in labour because of her adultery or the adultery of her husband. It is important, therefore, that a woman's parents should be informed whenever she becomes pregnant, lest the woman die and her parents hear of her death without being forewarned of the danger. It is not sufficient that the woman's parents should hear from others that their daughter is pregnant. She must go to them on a special visit to tell them the news herself. This formal notification takes place every time she is pregnant, but if, when she becomes pregnant for the first time, she is living in

[12] For another example, see the installation of the headman's deputy described in Gluckman, Mitchell and Barnes, 'The village headman in British Central Africa', *Africa*, xix (1949), pp. 100-106.
[13] See Appendix III, p. 131.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

becomes her husband's *sibling* so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere[33] an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her *sibling*. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court. 835

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages. 578 602 851 [583] [589] 431 586

8. Other Kinsfolk 602

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of

[33] See Barnes, op. cit. p. 232

589 of as being divorced from the dead man. If they do not themselves wish to be inherited they cannot be forced to remain.

587 If a widow is cared for by a younger brother of her dead husband, and that man already has a wife of his own, the widow is regarded as inferior in status to the man's own wife. Yet any children she 851 has by him count as if they were children by the dead husband, and 428 as such they inherit his cattle and offices before the brother's children by his own wife. This apparent paradox is due to the nature of 554 Ngoni seniority. Seniority was always associated with position in a definite segment in the old residential system. The widow belongs to the segment of her dead husband, and even today if she is a queen she ought to stay there after she has been given a pro-husband. If she moves to live in proximity to her pro-husband, she comes into the ranking system of which the pro-huband's great wife is the superior. Her children are, however, still associated with the segment from whence she came.

The new husband, whether he is a kinsman of the dead man or 587 not, pays one goat, also known as 'snuff-box', on taking the woman, 583 and this animal she keeps herself, and does not hand on to her father 851 or brother. If no bridewealth was paid by the first husband, the children borne to the second take the descent name of their own father and his rights in the marriage are the same as if he were marrying the woman for the first time and had made the legalization payment.

There is then an opportunity for the marriage to continue after 589 the death of the man if his wife and his kinsmen are both agreeable. If the widow wishes to go her own way, she can do so, and if his kinsmen do not wish to care for her, they need not. Even if they do not like the woman they cannot turn her out of the village, and she can go on living in her dead husband's hut and cultivating the same garden as before. She may even re-marry and bring in her new husband to live with her in her dead spouse's village. The extent to which this can be done without quarrelling depends very much on the personalities of the people involved. If the widow decides to go back to her own village, her husband's kin may try to prevent her removing possessions of which the ownership is not certain, and she should discuss with them how much of the crops she can take away from her garden.

Nowadays the death of a wife brings the marriage to an end. We 587 have seen that in the old days the dead woman was replaced by a linked co-wife, and that this institution has now all but disappeared. There is no other form of sororate, and although a man may sometimes in jest address his wife's sister as *wife*, he has no rights over her.

593 The specific responsibilities of brothers towards a man's marriage are demonstrated in the role of the elder brother as a marriage negotiator and of the younger brother as potential husbands for a man's widows. A man would not, save in exceptional circumstances,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

848

to a farm to work and while there had a child by a man working on the farm. When Laban returned from Southern Rhodesia people said to him, 'You have a bad wife, she has borne a child by a man while you have been away.' Laban said 'It does not matter, I love my wife and I will look after the child.'

The rights of children born in adultery to inherit their pater's property on his death are never certain. If there is enmity between them and the true sons of their pater, they may be denied any assistance from the estate of the dead man.

593 583 A man acquires rights *in genetricem* in his wife,[25] that is, rights in her as a mother, by the payment of bridewealth. We have seen that bridewealth is not often paid and that the rights exercised by a man over his children by virtue of this payment are ill defined.[26] Ngoni argue that in theory when a woman marries, the marriage payments should be paid to her mother's brother and not to her father if he has not paid bridewealth for her mother. Rights in a woman *in genetricem* are held to include the right to the marriage payments of the woman's daughters. In practice this aspect of rights *in genetricem* is as ill defined as rights to determine where children shall live. If a girl is living in the same village as her father or even her mother's husband, the fact that he may not have paid bridewealth is overlooked when the time comes for the girl to marry. Her suitor does not inquire into the affairs of her relatives before he marries her and indeed if her parents are divorced or dead he may never know their names. He respects his affines and does not probe into their secrets. He offers the legalization payment to whosoever appears to be responsible for his bride, her father or her mother's husband or her mother's brother or some other relative, depending on how and where she is living. At the level of the next generation, if a man treats his wife well, her relatives will not want to make trouble in the marriage by insisting on their theoretical rights when his daughters get married. If the man is prudent he gives them some of the money and they are content. On the other hand, if there is a quarrel between affines and the case is taken to court, it may be possible to establish rights *in genetricem*. The court holds that to take the legalization payment of a daughter is to exercise rights *in genetricem* in her mother. The following case concerns a man who exercised rights *in genetricem* that he did not possess.[26a]

Here the award of £3 damages against Nebo is due partly to his having initiated the action for divorce without any substantial complaint against his wife, and partly because he had taken the legalization payment which should have gone to her relatives.

Cases like this are not common, and the interest of the court is more often focussed on the legalization payment than on bridewealth. The legalization payment is becoming the more important payment

[25] See below, p. 113.
[26] See above, p. 35. and Table V.
[26a] See p. 97.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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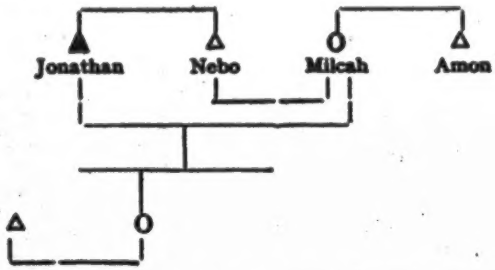
Case history 12



[601]

Nebo inherited the wife, Milcah, of his elder brother Jonathan. Neither brother paid bridewealth. One of the daughters of Jonathan and Milcah was married and the legalization payment for her taken by Nebo. In 1947 Nebo brought his wife to court to divorce her. He said that she was always committing adultery and he was afraid that one day he would kill her in anger. Milcah's brother Amon complained that Nebo had taken the legalization payment of Jonathan's daughter, and insisted that if there was a divorce custody of all Milcah's children should be given to him. This was accepted by the court, who told Nebo that if he wanted the children he must pay bridewealth. The divorce was granted and £3 damages awarded to Milcah. The payment of bridewealth was left undecided. [586]

in marriage, and some people are beginning to confuse the rights originally transferred by it with the rights *in genetricem* associated with bridewealth. The vernacular term for the legalization payment (*cimalo*) is common to many tribes in the Eastern Province, whereas that for bridewealth (*malowolo*) is peculiar to the Ngoni. Bridewealth is not recorded on the marriage certificate whereas the legalization payment is. It is possible that while the rights *in genetricem* relating to the residence of the children of the marriage will remain indefinite and unenforceable, rights *in genetricem* relating to the acceptance of legalization payments for the daughters of the marriage will become attached to the legalization payment itself. This trend is illustrated by the following incident. [191]

Case history 13

Simon had been married for many years and his daughter was being sought in marriage. Simon's wife's brother Nimshi came to see him to remind him that he had not yet handed over either the legalization payment or bridewealth for his wife. Simon admitted this. Nimshi said that someone would soon be offering a legalization payment for Simon's daughter. If Simon wanted to keep the money he must first offer the legalization payment in his own marriage. Simon paid Nimshi and kept the payment for his daughter.

Here Nimshi held that the legalization payment offered by Simon entitled Simon to keep the legalization payment offered for his daughter. According to traditional usage Nimshi should have insisted that Simon paid bridewealth not merely the legalization

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 payment. It may have been that Nimshi was merely trying to get as much as he could hope for out of Simon, who was a fierce and
583 powerful person. In view, however, of the decline in the incidence of bridewealth and the increasing importance of the legalization payment it is not unlikely that this right to the daughter's legalization payment may soon be separated from bridewealth.

428 It is at the death of a man that his children exercise their particular rights from him as against the claims of other kin. If a man has
[583] paid bridewealth for his wife, then the claim of his eldest son by her to his property is clear. The eldest son by the great wife is the heir, and he takes over control of the dead man's herd, and inherits his money. For inheritance, cattle are more important than money.
[454] Most men keep their money hidden in the ground, and it sometimes happens that a man dies without mentioning where he has put his savings, so that they are lost. Cattle are publicly-owned property,
[422] in that every boy in the village knows the ownership of each beast, and they can be seen in the byre every day. Men sometimes divide their property among their sons before they die, but it is more usual for a man to give one cow to the eldest son of each wife and to leave the rest undivided. The residue then passes to his heir on his death.
[583] If bridewealth has not been paid, the claim of the dead man's eldest son to the herd may be disputed by the dead man's brothers. Succession here does not seem to be determined in the light of the failure to pay bridewealth but by a consideration of residence. If a man is living in the same village as his father then he can expect to inherit his father's cattle when he dies. If he is living elsewhere, and tries to claim his inheritance, he may be opposed by his father's kinsmen resident in his father's village should he try to remove the cattle.

The eldest son inherits, but he has an obligation to help his sisters and younger brothers when they need beasts or money. If the other brothers are scattered in different villages, the herd may be divided among them, but it may be many years after the death that the division takes place. If the eldest son is in Southern Rhodesia the dead man's brothers delay the division of the herd as long as possible in case the rightful heir should return.

[425] Women acquire cattle and other animals with money they have saved or gained by selling beer, or as gifts from their husbands.
[583] If no bridewealth has been paid for a woman any animals she may own pass on her death to her eldest son. If bridewealth has been paid for her the disposal of her property is uncertain. Some people argue that the animals cannot then go to her son, for her son belongs to her husband's group because of the bridewealth, and that they ought to pass to her brother's son. Others say that the animals should go to her eldest son irrespective of bridewealth. Unfortunately I did not record any specific instance of inheritance from a woman,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [643] [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [182] [693] [562]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another 486 562

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with 797
dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of [595]
monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general [587]
change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for [836]
premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a 854
consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of 177
hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used [278]
to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that 581
there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the 177
matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some 182
points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage 583
payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment 593
of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in* 613
uxorem in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated
593 proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated
613 with political allegience, and therefore it was inappropriate that
her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired
[591] rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genetricem* in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genetricem* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem*
[428] and bridewealth rights *in genetricem*. Rights *in genetricem* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother
[587] willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genetricem* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*.

611 Whereas the rights *in genetricem* were definite in the old system,
591 in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme
602 they were related to position in a residential system of which one
178 of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession. With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another, and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours
611 cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups,
591 for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership
602 of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people, some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tion for associating children with one parent rather than the other. 611
There is only the one proud dogma that the Ngoni, unlike their 591
neighbours, are a patrilineal virilocal people. This reflects the 602
actual dominance of the virilocal mode of residence but does not
furnish a rule to which appeal can be made in specific cases. The
only definite unit to which a man can be said to belong is his village, [621]
and such few attempts as are made to enforce rights *in genetricem*
are expressed in terms of residence in villages. In marriages that
are made outside the tribe, rights *in genetricem* become significant, 648
for a child is not likely to wander to and fro between one tribe and 583
another hundreds of miles away in the same way as children change
from one village to another within the kingdom. Here then we find
more attention paid to the payment of bridewealth and to rights
in genetricem and these rights are enforceable through the police
checks on buses and lorries.

If a man is away working his interests are represented by his 593
kinsfolk. They cannot exercise his rights *in uxorem* for him, but
if they are violated they can act on his behalf. His permission is
necessary, however, before they can proceed to the court, and if they
are awarded damages then they are under some sort of obligation
to hand over the money to him when he returns. There was no
situation comparable to this in the old system, for men did not go
away for years at a time, and the violation of rights *in uxorem* was
punishable by death.

The position of the man as holder of rights *in uxorem* over his 593
wife is reinforced to some extent by mystical ties believed to connect 581
the couple, and at the same time the man can fortify his rights by
the use of medicines to ensure fidelity. During pregnancy, for a
short while after childbirth, and during menstruation, the actions
of man and wife affect one another automatically, and each is placed
in danger of illness by the failure of the other to observe their mutual
obligations. To protect his rights *in uxorem* a man may doctor his
wife so that possible violators may be deterred by the fear of mystical
retribution as well as action in the courts.

7. *Mystical beliefs and marriage stability*

The mystical connexion believed to exist between a man and his 581
wife serves to define their relationship more closely, for this same 602
connexion does not hold between a woman and her husband's kin
or between a man and his wife's kin. The adultery of a pregnant
woman's brother-in-law, like her husband's adultery, may threaten
the peace of her local group of relatives and friends, and may even
lead her to change her village or go to the court as a supporter.
The important distinction between the adultery of her husband's
brother and her husband's adultery is that the former does not
automatically endanger her delivery while the latter does. A man
confesses his adultery when his own wife gives birth, not when her
sister is in labour. This connexion is definite, and is not extended

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

others, the Zulu and Nuer have agnatic lineages and rare divorce, while the Lozi and Ila lack agnatic lineages and have frequent divorce. The Ngoni before 1898 appear to belong to the first type and the Ngoni of the present-day to the second. In 'the time of peace' the fertility of the married woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth to her husband's lineage segment, and the children whom she produced were recruits to that segment. Her agnates could never claim the children for their matrilateral segment. Associated with this system were the levirate, the sororate, and the right to enforce betrothal on pain of the return of gifts. The simple legal family was a relatively stable unit, and its position within the lineage segment was determined rigidly by the ranking of co-wives. Divorce was rare and could be effected only on the initiative of the husband. By contrast the affiliation of children nowadays is not fixed, and the very groups themselves to which they would formerly have attached themselves are no longer important. The children borne by a woman, whatever marriage payments have or have not been made for her, are potential recruits to local kin groups led by a variety of different relatives. Compared with the past, the simple legal family is unstable and divorce is frequent and easy. As might be expected, the levirate and sororate and enforceable betrothal, the trappings of the old system, have declined in importance.

Gluckman also suggests that in general, marriage payments fall in value with the decreasing dominance of patrilineal descent, although he cites the Ila as a virilocal people with high marriage payments, no agnatic lineages and frequent divorce. He regards the influence of property on marriage payments as secondary, but writes: 'On this hypothesis, which needs more testing, the amount of goods transferred and the divorce rate tend to be directly associated, but both are rooted in the kinship structure. It is rare divorce which allows high marriage payment, rather than high marriage payment which prevents divorce.'[7] The Ngoni material suggests that payments, kinship structure and divorce frequency are connected and that among them, as among the Ila, frequent divorce does not preclude high payments.

We may distinguish three phases in the history of Ngoni marriage payments. Prior to 1898 bridewealth varied in amount from one to a dozen beasts, depending on the status of the woman's father. In addition, recently captured women were married, both by men of high and low status, without payment of cattle. There is no indication that divorce was any less rare in one section of the community than another. In our pre-1898 sample, as set out in Table I, only one marriage out of eighteen ended in divorce, despite the absence of payments in half the marriages. It is true that in the single instance of divorce there were no marriage payments, yet even this marriage does not suggest marital instability as we

[7] Gluckman, op. cit., pp. 192, 200.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

have been discussing it. Divorce took place because the man, a recently captured Kunda, ran away back to his former tribe leaving his wife, daughter of one of Mpezeni's lieutenants, behind in her father's village. In 'the time of peace' marriages were stable, with or without payment. The wealthy men were the politically important men, and indeed Wiese's assertion that men married off their daughters so as to gain the maximum number of cattle[8] may be based on the behaviour of socially ambitious fathers in what was largely an upward-mobile society. Political affiliation effected by marriage was ratified by a transfer of wealth appropriate to its importance in the general field of political and social relations. Divorce frequency and kinship structure were the same for rich and poor, aristocrats and captives, and were neutral factors in determining the amount of marriage payment.

The second phase began immediately after the war of 1898 and lasted until about 1930. At the beginning of this period the tribe as a whole was poorer than it has been before or since. Many cattle were looted in the war and for a long time there was little money in circulation. The majority of marriages without payment were contracted during this phase, and it seems reasonable to associate this in part with the poverty of the people. It is difficult to make any precise estimate of divorce frequency at this time, although we know that many Cewa and Nsenga women who had been married before 1898 deserted their husbands and returned home when British control was established. There does not seem to be any evidence for supposing that at this period women moved from one husband to another within the confines of the Ngoni kingdom more quickly than they do now. It is perhaps safe to say that the low level of payments was due partly to poverty but also partly to the general uncertainty about the future, about the kind of society which the White Administration was building for the Ngoni. Evans-Pritchard has stressed that 'It is morals that censure divorce and law that refuses to recognize grounds for divorce which ensure the stability of the union of husband and wife.'[9] The laws and moral code that had been enforced by the old chieftainship had been shaken by the defeat of 1898. The payment of bridewealth had defined legitimate expectations of behaviour, obligations and rights, within an organized system of social relations which had been shattered. While many Ngoni must still have regarded marriage with payment of bridewealth as morally right and desirable, they must also have been aware of the greatly increased risk they were running when making these payments, even if they had the cattle to make them. Rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* which were socially recognized but could not be enforced through the machinery of the State were hardly

[8] See above, p. 3, footnote 3.

[9] Evans-Pritchard, 'Social character of bride-wealth, with special reference to the Azande', *Man*, xxxiv (1934), p. 174.

583 rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled
586 affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another
178 in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[10] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the
[436] contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year
[171] of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the
[465] rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in
[435] bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call
[641] on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group, so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for
[581] stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic
613 group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor
183 sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the
121 Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may
17 be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes.
586 Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[10] *ibid*, p. 172.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rare divorce, has survived despite loss of sovereignty, territorial dispersal, economic impoverishment, high incidence of labour migration, and frequent adultery and illegitimacy.[11] The Ngoni, subjected to similar external processes, but in addition surrounded by matrilineal peoples and themselves largely of matrilineal origin, have lost their agnatic affiliation and, with it, stable marriage.

It is difficult to see exactly where this trend will lead. The third phase, as I have characterized it, is a recent development. There does not seem to have been any sharp rise in marriage payments until the 1939-45 war. During the war many Ngoni men earned higher wages than ever before in the Army and in industry. It may have been this that was decisive in raising the level of payments. It will be remembered that the thirty shillings minimum for the legalization payment was fixed by law during the war. It may, however, be suggested that if it is hoped by raising the level of payments to achieve stability in marriage, this hope is in vain. Payments may rise if people are in a position to pay more. Higher wages permit higher marriage payments without necessitating further changes in economic life, but in fact these changes are already taking place. Money is needed for more clothes, more food, more education, as well as for higher marriage payments. Payments rise as Africans participate increasingly in the general money economy of Southern Africa. The more they participate, the less marriage is constrained by a kinship structure based on morally significant face-to-face relations between agnates. The higher payments rise the more frequent becomes divorce. This is not a long-term prognosis, for I have indicated above that affiliation is not the only possible determining factor, and it is clear that if more people align themselves with those missions which do not permit divorce, the frequency of divorce as a whole may decline. There are other possibilities, but it seems to me unlikely that any of these other social mechanisms will become effective quickly; therefore the most probable concomitant of a rise in marriage payments in the immediate future is more frequent divorce.

Thus we see that at least for the Ngoni, changes in the amount and distribution of property have had a marked effect on the level of marriage payments, and that this effect can to some extent be isolated from that due to changes in kinship structure and in divorce frequency.

10. Attempts to resist change

The major structural changes taking place in Ngoni society in the last fifty years have not come about entirely unopposed. The Administration, the missions, and the Ngoni people themselves have noticed from year to year how the old order was changing and with varying success have made attempts to control the direction of change.

[11] Cf. information from Kark cited by Gluckman, op. cit., p. 204, footnote 1

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

592 252 593 [262] mother. One of the man's sisters conducts the wife to her mother-in-law's hut, and under the instruction of the assembled women she begins to cook. Although people speak of her doing the cooking, in practice all she does is to look on while her sisters-in-law do the work. The porridge is divided onto plates and distributed under the directions of the man's mother. One plate is sent to the man's father, one to the husband who eats the porridge with his brothers, and one to the most important woman in the village, while some are taken by the cooks themselves. The man's father is expected to remark on how well the porridge has been cooked, but he may say that it has been poorly prepared and his daughter-in-law must be taught again. This expression of disapproval cannot be more than a way of showing his dislike for his daughter-in-law for whatever he says the ceremony is not repeated and the woman begins to cook regularly for her husband. If the man's relatives are wealthy, they may kill a goat or a sheep on this occasion, or the woman's parents may send a sheep or a goat to be killed and eaten. The woman's parents cannot themselves attend the ceremony.

If the couple begin their marriage uxorilocally this ceremony [591] does not take place. The bride begins to cook for her husband as soon as he comes to live with her, using her grand-mother's hut as a kitchen.

Appendix III

THE HOEING PARTY

606 583 A man is under an obligation to provide once during his marriage a party of hoers who work in his wife's mother's garden for the greater part of one day and who are rewarded by his wife's father. This party is called by the general word for obligations owed by a man towards his parents-in-law, *cikomwene*.[1] The function of this occasion, as a socially sanctioned method of expression of hostility between a man and his affines, has already been discussed. I attended one of these parties and my clerk attended two others.

The man, or a relative of his, tells his father that he is planning to bring a party to hoe on such and such a day. If the father-in-law agrees that the day is suitable he tells his wife to brew beer for the hoers. On the agreed day the hoeing party arrive early in the morning and begin to work in the garden. The father-in-law promises presents to the leader of the hoers, who continue to hoe until they are offered what they consider is sufficient. They then stop, and go to the village to receive the present and drink beer.

[1] See above, p. 74.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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One day in December 1946 a party of eight men and two women arrived at 6.30 a.m. in the garden of Dinah.[8] They included Goliath, a young man recently married to a daughter of Dinah and Reuben. The party was led by one of the women. They hoed in the garden continuously but not very actively until 3 p.m. Reuben then asked Samuel, who lived in the village, to offer sixpence to the hoers. This offer was refused, and a little later Samuel came back again with the offer of a shilling. This was also refused, as was the next offer brought by Samuel, of ten shillings and sixpence. One of the hoers hinted to Samuel that they really wanted a beast. Samuel returned to the village and asked Bildah, his wife's mother and the village headman's eldest sister, to go and repeat the offer, lest Reuben should think that it was Samuel who was egging on the hoers. Bildah went with a number of people from the village and on seeing her the hoers began working frantically. They ceased to distinguish between maize and weeds and uprooted both. The hoers attacked Deborah, daughter of Dinah by a former husband, who tried to stop them, by throwing earth over her and hoeing round her as if she were a mound. One of the hoers tried to borrow my lamp so that they could continue working through the night. The people who had come from the village withdrew, followed by taunts from the hoers, 'You will find us here in the morning.' It began to get dark and at 7 p.m. when it was quite dark Reuben himself came out to speak to the hoers. He told the leader that if she insisted on a beast, he would give it them, but that he would also tell his wife to start brewing beer the next day; when his party brought the beer to their village, they would demand an even bigger present before they would go home. These remarks were met with derision and the hoers called for beer and cigarettes to sustain them through the night.

About half an hour later, the hoeing party appeared in the village and entered the hut of Goliath, who was living uxorilocally at the time. The leader of the party was called to Reuben's hut. On the verandah the money was counted out and handed over to her. She then said that they had never intended to demand a beast but had been only pretending. In Goliath's hut drinking began with beer provided by Dinah. Soon an argument broke out, some of the hoers protesting that they ought to have kept on hoeing until Reuben had given them a certain beast he was keeping in Goliath's own village.

In December 1947, in a nearby village, a man agreed that his son-in-law should bring a party to hoe, but did not brew any beer for the occasion. He offered them seven shillings and sixpence, but this was refused. He then offered the same amount again, and this was accepted, but the leader of the party said that they would go on hoeing until something else was added to the present. They went on hoeing all night long, sleeping at intervals. Both

[8] See above, p. 81, for the genealogical connexions of this group of people.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 offers had been made to the leader of the party through the
583 mother-in-law acting as intermediary for her husband. In the morning the mother-in-law came to the garden to find the hoers still there. She fell to the ground beseeching them to stop. The leader then told the party to stop, which they did with much grumbling. One hoer said 'It would have been better if we had cut down some more maize to cool down our hearts.'

Appendix IV

CARRYING BEER

606 The carrying of beer is the first formal occasion on which the
431 initiative is taken by the woman's kin and not by the man's. Beer
273 is brewed by the woman's mother and is taken to the husband's father, or if he is not available, to the husband himself. It is known as *vipeko*, a word used to describe any offering of beer sent to a chief or headman in virtue of his position as such as well as beer sent to a a son-in-law. Beer can and is sent in this way more than once, to indicate the continued respect enjoyed by the man in the eyes of his parents-in-law. Members of the Dutch Reformed Church who are not allowed to drink proper beer send instead gifts of porridge to their sons-in-law. The beer, or its porridge equivalent, is sent at least once in about 40 per cent of all marriages. It is usually brewed while the couple are living virilocally.

It is held by some that a man cannot expect beer sent to him until he has made the legalization payment for his wife. In practice, if the woman's parents think that he is treating his wife well, they may brew beer for him despite the absence of legalization payment.

The beer is brewed by the woman's mother, and is carried in jars from one village to another. If the villages are too far apart to make this practicable, the woman's mother comes to stay with some relative in a nearby village and does her brewing there. She herself does not accompany the party carrying the beer.

The party may consist of, say, half-a-dozen women from the village. They carry the beer to the man's village, and halt just outside the village. Sometimes they demand a present before they will agree to enter the village. They are led to the hut of the man's parents or of his grandmother, and there they offer the beer to the man's relatives. They are given somewhere to sleep the night. In the morning people come to greet them, and as in the gall bladder ceremony they reply with a little song. The pots of beer are allocated by the man's father to important people in the village. People who come to drink the beer give presents such as threepenny bits which are collected by the leader of the party and which are

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

distributed among the women of the party as a recompense for carrying the beer. The married couple drink the beer but do not take any prominent part in the proceedings. The next day the man's father gives a beast or a goat or money to the leader of the party. The animal is killed and the women carry the meat back to their own village where it is divided up by some important relative of the wife. If some of the sprouted maize and flour that were prepared for the brewing remain over, the mother-in-law may brew again, and send it to her son-in-law as before. The second brew of beer is called 'offering'.[1]

Appendix V

ENTERING THE WIFE'S MOTHER'S HUT

As performed nowadays elements are combined from what formerly were two distinct ceremonies. The name of one of these, 'eating together' (*mzyelano*) is now not often heard and the combined ceremony is known by the name of the other, 'entering' (*mngeniso*). It represents the final stage in the acceptance of the man as a satisfactory son-in-law and marks the formal setting aside of the avoidance relationship between him and his wife's mother. It is performed in about one marriage in eight. I attended two of these ceremonies.

Some informants say that like the carrying of beer the ceremony of entering is not performed unless the legalization payment is made. However, I have recorded instances in which the ceremony was performed in the absence of any payment. It almost always occurs after beer has been carried to the man's village once or twice and when the man is living virilocally.

The parents of the woman send word to the village of the man that on such and such a day there will be beer brewed for him to enter the hut of his mother-in-law. On the day appointed the man and his wife go in procession with other people, singing and dancing, from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession traditionally should be led by the eldest child of the marriage, boy or girl, holding a club aloft, but this is not always done. The man's parents do not go with the party but stay behind in the village. On the outskirts of the woman's parents' village, the party may be met by people dancing out to meet them, and they sometimes pause to drink beer brought out to them. The dancing party go on into the cattle byre, or if there is no byre to some clear space on the fringe of the village. They enter the byre in a rough

[1] *Nsembe*, an Nsenga word.

10. *Forbidden and Enjoined Unions* (*Ngoni*).

The Angoni are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*vide infra*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the Angoni it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

When an Mngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headman to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *ankhowe* with a present to the *ankhowe* of the girl. There are always two *ankhowe* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ku-onga*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several elder women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commensuration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ku-tendera*, and sends a cloth (known as *ochebu*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kulowola*, or *kupereka mabeku*. The *mabeku*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

12. *Customary Licence* (*Ngoni*).

N 836 [183] [684] [583] Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

N 586 [595] Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mabeka*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *nakhosse* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mabeka*, *kutenderu* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. M [586] But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

III.—Domestic Life: Filial.

1. *Infancy*.

M 845 Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*kigelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man [582] at the same time, and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

M 429 Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *mtsibweni*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

N 429 593 Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British. Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly", and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

241 those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their
273 work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory
476 that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's
[465] labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

463 There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no
323 potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neigh-
[462] bouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

285 Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when
[462] it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

759 Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical
[648] services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

611 The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying
[591] bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern prac-
[583] tice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were
[184] incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [848]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name *mulu* for a man becomes *mvulu* for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimalo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 [671] been made. It is the legalization payment that is recorded on the marriage registration certificate when one is issued.

Often this payment is postponed until some years after marriage and sometimes it is never made at all. It is generally £1. 10*s*., and is normally provided by the bridegroom himself out of his savings, although in the old days a man would have been helped by his father. The money goes to the bride's father, and there is no legal obligation on him to share the money with his relatives, although he may do so. Marriage ties can be reinforced by a whole series of ceremonies and ceremonial exchanges and payments between the man's people and the woman's people, and a marriage in which all these ceremonies have been performed is regarded as being 'well fixed'. In such a marriage the parents and siblings of the couple have come to know each other, have collaborated in ritual activities, and have probably had occasion to deliberate together as a court of conciliation in settling quarrels between the couple. This line of development is seldom taken in a marriage in which the legalization payment has not been made. If the husband refuses to pay, then the wife's people will not brew beer for him and his parents, and will not use their influence with his wife to maintain the marriage. We may say that in a well-fixed marriage the two families are linked together, and that in one that is not well fixed it is only the two individuals who are linked. Indeed when no payments have been made it is common for the bride's relatives to profess ignorance of the name of the husband, or at least of his parents' names. No action can be taken in the court to enforce marriage payments, although in an adultery or divorce case the court may order the legalization payment to be made.

585 476 578 The ceremonies of marriage should not be thought of merely as occasions for harmonious co-operation. They may also become the vehicle for the expression of aggression between the two families involved. This is particularly true of the obligation on the man to bring a party of his friends to hoe in the garden of his father-in-law. The hoeing party may do more harm than good to the crops if the present offered them by the father-in-law is considered inadequate.

583 178 [231] Prior to the conquest of the tribe the principal marriage payment was bride-wealth,[1] consisting of so many head of cattle. In those days, according to informants, no legalization payment was made. Nowadays bride-wealth is paid only in a small proportion of marriages, and rarely until after several children have been born. In the old days

[1] *Malobolo*. Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola* and noun *ilobolo*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In the old days

marriages in which bride-wealth was paid were patrilocal, and those 583
in which it was not paid, except for marriages with slave wives, were 178
matrilocal. The matrilocal marriages were made only by recently [567]
incorporated Ngoni. The payment of bride-wealth is now significant
only in relation to the residence and affiliation of the children of the 591
marriage and does not affect the residence of the couple themselves. 583
It frequently happens that a man goes and lives in the village of his wife when they are first married and that after a year or so he takes her back to his own village. This practice is fairly common among the matrilineal tribes of the region. A small payment[1] of five shillings or so may be made instead to enable a man to take his bride to his own village without first completing a period of matrilocal residence. Sometimes the legalization payment is considered sufficient to exempt from matrilocal residence. Indeed it is indicative of the wide range of variation in the different payments made and not made and in the [184]
significance attached to them that some informants were unable to state with certainty what payments had been made in their own marriages, although they knew the amount of money or animals that had been handed over.

This wide range of variation in behaviour in relation to marriage 184
is one instance of the high measure of cultural heterogeneity of the 58
Fort Jameson Ngoni. While present-day conditions are relevant to a study of Ngoni marriage, at the same time the effect of the combination of people with very different conceptions of marriage into a single state must not be overlooked. Among families that are powerful and claim to have migrated with Zwangendaba from the south, patrilocal marriage and the payment of bride-wealth are more frequent than they are among families of more recent incorporation. Cross-cousin marriage is noticeably more frequent in villages with people of Bisa descent than in the population as a whole. In Nyasaland, where there is a sharper cleavage into old Ngoni villages and conquered Cewa villages, the old Ngoni are characterized by a greater, and the Cewa by a lesser, incidence of patrilocal marriage.

Divorce

In the old days there was no way in which a woman could divorce 586
her husband. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own people. The usual procedure nowadays, except in cases of adultery, is for the man to give his wife sixpence or a shilling

[1] *Ndakula.*

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Yao FT7

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The Yao are mistrusted more than any other tribe, and some of the decisions taken by the courts are harsh on Yao. For example, a Yao man who was married to an Ngoni woman had, it was alleged, caught venereal disease from his wife. His wife then applied to the courts for a divorce, which was granted, together with the custody of the children. No bride-wealth had been paid in the marriage, but the husband now offered to pay in order to retain the children. This bride-wealth was refused by the woman's parents. The Yao appealed, but the judgement was upheld, and in addition he was ordered to go back to Nyasaland at once. He asked for permission to return to the woman's village in order to collect his belongings, and this was granted by the court, after first securing agreement between the couple as to the extent of his possessions, to wit, four plates and two beds. This deportation order was made despite the fact that the Yao had been living with his wife for twenty-one years. If a man of some other tribe had been involved, it is unlikely that he would have been ordered to leave the country, nor would the court have been so suspicious of his trying to take away more than his rightful share of the household possessions.

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A Yao, who had a good job in Fort Jameson, once offered 30*s.* to the Paramount Chief when he was in the town as the legalization payment for a woman of the royal lineage whom he wished to marry. The Paramount Chief refused the money on the ground that the man was a Yao and he was not going to permit Yao to marry into the royal lineage, despite the protest of one of his lieutenants that the Yao was just a man like anyone else.

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The reason that is given for this dislike of Yao is that they are sexually very virile, due to the medicines that they possess for increasing potency. It is perhaps significant that the same is said of Indians, who are also disliked. The Yao are known among the Ngoni for their great knowledge of medicines of all kinds, and the allegation of unnatural sexual vigour may be a rationalization of the fear that the Yao may practise sorcery among the families into which they marry. Another factor that may operate is that the Yao are the only tribe in the region that the Ngoni cannot claim to have conquered.

Political Relations with Other Tribes

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Before the European conquest relations between the Ngoni and other tribes were principally those of raiders and raided. The great season for raiding was after the harvest, when the surrounding tribes

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere: born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1888/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 643

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Malowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mskera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

/4 cont'd/

701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
291 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
464 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital
[681] investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

161 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson
621 Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[108] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality 595
of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes
that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have [171]
100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry 177
till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full [587]
grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday, at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock. But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his 583
father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages, for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth, and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable 562
ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a 565
considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for 462
many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the [171]
woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women
went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, [243]
while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the
grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. [252]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices
581 which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows
182 by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if
581 the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her
587 needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

182 Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an *shlanzi*, a substitute or
581 additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give
595 another daughter as *shlanzi*, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her *shlanzi*. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an *shlanzi* might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

58 There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the houses played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

● 584 The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indicated choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner.
[582] In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi clans marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

found opportunities for visiting the village and looking at the girl, and having decided in her favour, he then proceeded to court her along the following recognized and definite lines: 584

1. He courted the girl and if she was willing she eventually agreed to marry him.
2. He informed a member of the *gogo* house of his father's family, usually an older brother of his father.
3. This elder informed the man's father.
4. At the father's request, this elder went to the girl's village and sought out a corresponding elder of her family, usually an older brother of her father and always someone belonging to the *gogo* house.
5. This elder in the girl's village informed her father and mother and, when this was done, told the elder from the man's village, who then went home.
6. The girl's parents asked her if she agreed to the marriage and, if she gave her consent, they considered the matter and finally gave their consent.
7. The man's elder returned to the girl's village and the girl's parents told him they had consented and he then went home again.
8. He returned soon with a beast, called 'the snuff box', as a gift from the man's father. This elder now had several companions with him, but no one from the man's immediate family circle or from his house.
9. The beast was killed and the betrothal feast was held in the girl's village, after which her parents and the elders of her village said, 'We have snuffed.'
10. The man's father sent another elder to 'call the girl' and she was then addressed as 'daughter-in-law'.
11. The girl's father and his brothers decided what the *lobola* should be and informed the man's parents how many beasts they wanted.

Men of the *gogo* house in each village played the major part as go-betweens in the negotiations between the two families, opening the way for the new relationship which was felt to be full of difficulties. Once the betrothal feast had been held, the leading function of the *gogo* house gave way to more direct participation by the man's house, where the male members had now to find the cattle for the *lobola*, the amount of which had been fixed by the girl's family. This amount was in direct relationship to the status of the girl's family and clan. In the 1930's for a girl of the royal clan it was up to fifteen beasts; for girls of other Swazi clans from three to nine beasts; and for girls of non-Swazi clans from one to three—the variation depending on the status of her father in his village, and on the house from which he came. It was to the herd belonging to this house that the cattle of the *lobola* were allocated. The [554]

584 period within which the handing over of cattle was completed varied according to the demands of the girl's father and the capacity of the man's father to find the required number. Informants agreed that when only a few beasts were demanded, the transfer took place before or immediately after the main ceremony. In addition to this formal transfer agreed on and carried out as part of the marriage contract, there was also an informal reciprocal transfer which had two main purposes. At the time of the main ceremony the bride's party brought with them a beast, called *mcando*, which was put into the herd of the bridegroom's mother's house to which the bride would henceforth belong. Later, when the two families ate together for the first time, one or more additional beasts were brought from the girl's former house and put into the herd of the house to which she now belonged. In this way, the new wife began to have cattle in the herd of her mother-in-law's house which were known as hers and which would be taken to form a new herd when she went out with her husband to his *lusungulu* village. As soon as these cattle were in the kraal of the house to which she now belonged, the new wife was able to eat *amasi* in her husband's village, which she had not been allowed to do since leaving her father's village.

571 585 In the series of feasts which marked the stages in the marriage relationship and which facilitated the coming together of the two families, the major part was played by the *indlunkulu* in each village. Many households in the girl's village shared in the preparation of food for the betrothal feast, but it was assembled when cooked and divided out by the woman owner of the *indlunkulu*, assisted by the men and women belonging to the girl's father's house. The next feast was in the man's village, and formed part of the main ceremony, before the bride's party returned to their home. The third feast was to celebrate the 'showing of the hearth-stones', when the young wife was allowed to cook in her husband's village for the first time. The food was collected in her parents' village and carried to her new village, where it was cooked by the women of the house into which she had married, and served in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu*. In the two final feasts—the *umscengo* which was a beer drink, and the *izinyongo*, a feast of beer and food—the beer was brewed and the food collected in the wife's village and cooked and [602] eaten in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* in the husband's village. These two feasts finally broke down the barrier between the parents-in-law and were the first occasion on which they ate and drank beer together.

585 The main ceremony (*mtimba*) had three distinct parts.[1] The first part included the preparation of the girl in her own village (*ukuconga*); the entrance of her party into the man's village and the presenting of snuff

[1] I was present at an *mtimba* in Ezondwini in the northern kingdom when the traditional ritual carried out in full was combined with a church wedding. The bridegroom was a man of the Dlamini clan from Swaziland, who had been adopted by Chief Mtwalo and had built a hut in the *cigodlo* of the big house.

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especial-
561 ly the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes,
867 but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter
128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there were certain social controls among the Ngoni which opera-
584 ted in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited
835 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers
582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment.
581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptized or under instruction. This last pre-
581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference
182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

warrior, was responsible for advising the youth. He indicated seven villages in which there were girls of good family whom he might go and have a look at. He urged him not to marry 'a girl who belonged to another nation', meaning another group, not Ngoni. He wanted him to marry one of several girls in a collateral branch of the royal clan, for whom the youth would have to give several head of cattle in the marriage transfer. The grandfather was quite prepared to sacrifice several of the cattle from his herd in order that the youth might make a good marriage. The young man's mother and his teachers in the mission wanted him to marry a Christian girl. In the time after harvest he went visiting with his agemates, and saw a girl he liked the look of at a wedding dance in another village. He was particularly attracted by this girl's quiet and dignified behaviour, and by the fact, discovered through a 'go-between', that she had been to school and could read and write. The girl was at that time not a baptized Christian but under instruction. She was also not of an Ngoni clan, but of one belonging to a neighbouring ethnic group. He pursued his inquiries and found that her parents had been brought up in an Ngoni village and 'knew Ngoni customs because as children they had grown in Ngoni hands'. He married this girl, greatly to the disappointment of his grandfather, who felt that if the father had been alive he might have been able to find possible choices for the boy which would have reconciled the Ngoni ideal of marriage to a high-ranking clan with a Christian background.

In pre-European days there had been a series of 'dynastic marriages' between the royal clan and the leading clans and the desire to link the aristocratic families in this way was very strong still. It was always alleged that the girl had the right to refuse a suitor if she did not like him. I found several cases however in which the girl's refusal had been overruled by the men of her father's house who desired a 'dynastic marriage'. In two of these cases the girl was finally carried off to her husband's village for the marriage ceremony after

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 a strenuous resistance, during which one of them earned the name which stuck to her ever afterwards of 'the biting spider'. Considerations in choosing a mate, both for youths and girls, were not only influenced by the Ngoni desire, 581 especially strong among the senior people, for linking Ngoni clans and families together by marriage. The high proportion of young people, boys especially, who had been to school and were Christian, weighed the scales in favour of an educated Christian wife or husband. As always, however, the factor of personal liking was very strong. Attraction first, and then liking based on further acquaintance, was held as most important by the youths and girls themselves. It was partly the question of the transfer of cattle to seal the mar- [583] riage contract which inclined the young men to listen to the advice of their elders, for they were dependent on them, at least in the first instance, for providing the cattle.

The other direction in which social control operated in 836 relations between the sexes was in the forms of courtship 584 tolerated and permitted. In pre-European days, and for a long time after the missions came, the age of marriage was, as we have seen, postponed for many years after puberty. In those days there was a recognized and socially accepted pattern of sexual freedom before marriage, which we have already mentioned. A girl could indicate to a young man, who had recently joined a regiment, and had shown in various ways that he was attracted by her, that she was willing to take him as a lover. Often this relationship led eventually to marriage between the two, but it was not always the case. These two slept together from time to time in the dormitory, practising limited intercourse. The fear of being deflowered and still more of being pregnant before marriage acted as a [848] very strong deterrent to the girls not to let the young man, in the Ngoni phrase, 'harm her in any way'. If this occurred the girls knew they would have no pre-marriage rite and no full public wedding ceremony, and this would bring shame not only on them but on their father's family and house.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The missionaries, and through their influence Ngoni Christian teachers and ministers, tried to put a stop to this form of courtship. It was very difficult to convince Ngoni elders and young people that a practice which had been considered socially correct and was under some measure of social control, was now wrong and must be given up. They saw it as something quite distinct from casual and promiscuous intercourse, which they discouraged and despised. A young Christian teacher, speaking of his own youth, said: 'The Christian rule forbade boys and girls to sleep together at night and to play as our fathers played. We did not keep those rules, and we visited girls at night who wanted us, but we were careful not to harm them.' The Ngoni Christian leaders who were aware of the problems on both sides finally threw their weight into advocating much earlier marriages while supporting the carrying out of the private puberty rituals. As we have seen, marriage became usual at about sixteen for girls and from eighteen upwards for youths. This as a rule, though not invariably, ensured that the girls were virgin at marriage which was a very strict Ngoni requirement. But it brought in its train a number of other difficulties which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

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4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
842 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

562 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nhlanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshlanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanti* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedicao . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

new wife to replace the divorced woman. Divorce however seems to have been rare, and in the genealogies I collected I met with only one instance of divorce at this period. 586

3. *Payments and ceremonies*

Betrothal[10] was a preliminary to marriage but was not compulsory. A girl was betrothed only if she was sought in marriage before puberty and the marriage then did not take place until some years after puberty. If a girl passed puberty without being betrothed she was subsequently married without a betrothal period. A man was expected to make presents to the girl he had betrothed and he began to adopt avoidance relationships towards her parents. If after puberty the girl or her parents wished to break off the engagement they could do so but were then under an obligation to return the man's presents. The ceremony at which an aristocratic girl after puberty chose her own husband has been described by Wiese.[11] 584

In the marriage itself there are two main stages marked by two distinct transfers of cattle. The first transfer was called 'snuff-box', *mfuko*. The name of the payment is based on the practice of begging snuff from one's friends and acquaintances and indicates something trifling and not recoverable. It consisted of one beast. Payment of 'snuff-box' established the man's rights to bring an action against an adulterer but it did not give him the right to take his wife away to his own village nor to the custody of any children she might bear him. These rights were obtained only by the payment of bride-wealth, *malowolo*,[12] which consisted of from one to a dozen beasts depending on the status of the woman's father. Both payments, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth, were made by the man or, if he was a young man, by his father to his wife's father. No specifically defined relatives were obliged to help a man find his marriage cattle but a man with few cattle of his own looked for assistance to the head of his cluster. Similarly there were no definite rules of distribution of the marriage cattle among the woman's relatives and the matter 583 [591] [851]

[10] The verb is *ku-komeka* for a man, and the passive *ku-komekewa* for a woman. Cf. Bemba *uku-kobeka* and *uku-kobekwa* in Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Present Economic Conditions* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Four), p. 61.

[11] In his later paper he calls the ceremony *inyamuale*. In the earlier paper he calls the ceremony held at first menstruation *inhamuale* and says that after this ceremony the girl went with others to choose the man she liked. The vernacular words he mentions are presumably connected with the modern Nyanja *cinamwali*, which is now sometimes applied to three ceremonies held (1) at first menstruation, (2) six months later, *cinamwali caciwaye*, and (3) after first pregnancy, *cinamwali cacihulu*. The abstract noun *unamwali* is sometimes used in place of the concrete *cinamwali*. Cf. Wiese, op. cit., 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191; Rattray, op. cit. pp. 102 and 190; Stigand, 'Notes on the natives of Nyasaland, N.E. Rhodesia, and Portuguese Zambezia, their arts, customs and modes of subsistence', *JRAI*, xxxvii (1907), p. 121; Read, 'Tradition and prestige among the Ngoni', *Africa*, ix (1936), p. 472; Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, pp. 22-4. 881

[12] Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola*; also Rattray, op. cit. p. 199.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her pro-husband. If there was no younger brother the pro-husband was one of her husband's junior patrilineal kinsmen of his own generation. She could not refuse a pro-husband although her husband's brothers could choose not to provide her with a pro-husband if they so wished. The widow continued to live in her own cluster where her pro-husband came to visit her. Rattray states that widows waited one year after their husband's death before their re-marriage was settled[23] and this is nowadays the traditional procedure. Wiese, however, writes that widows waited four years before they could marry again.[24] The children begotten by the pro-husband were regarded as children of the dead man for social purposes but the identity of their genitor was not disguised. They called him *father*, but this was as much because he was their dead pater's brother and their mother's pro-husband as because he was their genitor.

The same principle of substitution was applied to betrothal. If a man died before marrying a girl to whom he was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger brother or a classificatory brother. If a girl died before marrying the man to whom she was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger sister. Unlike the operation of the levirate, however, the children of this type of marriage were regarded as the children of their genitor and genetrix for all purposes, as though their parents had been betrothed to each other in the first place. Again, unlike the levirate, if a man considered himself too old when his betrothed became marriageable he might give her instead to his son as a wife. The children of this marriage were also regarded for all purposes as the children of their genitor and genetrix.

Occasionally a woman whose husband died young, went to live with a man who was not her dead husband's brother, real or classificatory. The pro-husband gave a goat to the woman, but if bride-wealth had been offered for her by her first husband, the pro-husband could never gain permanent custody of the children. The children that she bore by him belonged to the segment of the dead man, took his descent name, and when old enough went to live in his segment. When the dead man's kinsmen claimed these children, they gave a beast to their genitor 'to straighten his back', that is, for his labour in begetting them. This arrangement is in some ways analagous to Nuer widow-concubinage[25] but with the important difference that the pro-husband, although not a kinsman of the dead man, had rights in the widow as a wife and an exclusive right to her sexual services. It seems that the status of a widow living in this kind of union was not low. In one instance I heard of, very aristocratic families were involved, and the arrangement appears to have been

[23] Rattray, op. cit., p. 97.
[24] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 474, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192.
[25] Cf. Evans-Pritchard, *Some Aspects of Marriage and Family Among the Nuer* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Eleven), p. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

cousins. Whether a man decides to marry a cross-cousin or an unrelated woman, he still has to decide just exactly whom he will try to marry, and similarly a woman has also to make up her own mind about whom she will accept as husband. The initiative in choosing lies very largely with the couple themselves, and not with their parents and kinsmen. If a man is diffident about asking a woman to marry him, he may ask his father or elder brother to seek out a woman for him, or a woman may have a spouse presented to

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Table IV. Marital status of females, by age, 1948-9

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Age in years	Marital status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Divorced women living alone	Widows living alone	Divorced woman living as concubine	Married women			Total wedded women	
					HH	HA	HS		
0–4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	58
5–9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	65
10–14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	54
15–19	20	–	1	–	14	9	1	25	45
20–24	–	3	–	–	10	11	–	24	24
25–29	–	1	–	1	17	8	1	29	29
30–34	1	–	–	–	14	8	–	22	23
35–39	–	–	–	–	19	3	1	23	23
40–44	–	2	1	–	13	1	1	18	18
45–49	–	–	2	–	13	2	–	17	17
50–54	–	3	–	–	7	3	1	14	14
55–59	–	1	5	–	6	–	1	13	13
60–64	–	1	8	–	3	1	1	15	15
65–69	–	2	8	–	1	–	–	11	11
70–74	–	–	5	–	1	–	–	6	6
75–79	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
80–84	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	4	4
Total	198	14	31	1	122	46	7	223	421

Legend

HH (Husband at Home)	Husband living within thirty miles of his wife, in a village, and not separated from her
HA (Husband Away)	Husband living permanently on a farm, or in Fort Jameson, or more than thirty miles away
HS (Husband Separated)	Husband living within thirty miles, in a village, but separated from his wife

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Wisa FQ5

N 584 her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is N 582 trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship N [601] term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, affines,* and *children.*[3] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry N any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin.* In the second ascending and 603 descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* 602 and his female *grandchild* as *wife,* and he can, to a slight extent, joke and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. N [582] But Ngoni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to marry his female *grandchild,* and do not approve of such marriages [186] among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

N 605 A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins.* We have noted above that the Nguni peoples W M from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not 582 allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Ŵisa peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organization was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Ŵisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage N with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. 582 The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage 583 is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*banja*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

[3] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, op. cit. pp. 222 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European. 595 648 582

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules. 799 582

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls. 621 582 [554] 628 584 535

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide 628 584 574

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

much opportunity for a man to assess his sweetheart's domestic efficiency and moral character, but he can get information on these matters from other people who live in her vicinity. When he sees a girl in a distant village where he is staying, he has more leisure to see what she is like and can ask his own hosts about her character. Girls visit in the same way as men, and if a girl is anxious to get a husband and fears she may not find one, she may spend most of her time visiting in different villages hoping to attract a suitable man. There is more time for visiting and flirting at the end of the dry season when there is little work to do in the gardens, but marriages are contracted throughout the year.[5]

Young men say that what they like in a girl is a light skin colour, a pretty face, and the ability to dance and to copulate well. Some men, however, say that such a girl might be all right to run after, but for marriage one would also need to know that she could cook porridge. Women say they like a man who is well dressed, who has a good job working for a European, and who has a parting in his hair. Women sometimes wear medicines which are believed to attract men, and men who have no good clothes may borrow the clothes of others in order to attract women.

3. Sexual partners

The relationship between a man and his wife, at least for the first years of their marriage, is spoken of principally in sexual terms, and the sexual activities of the couple are more closely defined by the marriage bond than are their residence and their economic life. Informants say that the reason for the existence of marriage is either 'the work in the house', a euphemism for copulation, or else 'clothes', that is, so that a woman may have someone to buy clothes for her. It is, however, much easier to improvise alternative solutions to the problem of clothing than it is to find alternative means of sexual satisfaction without coming into conflict with law and morality. Furthermore, while we have seen in the old days that the main emphasis was on the fertility of the woman, this has now shifted, and it is her skill in copulation rather than her success in childbearing that is emphasized. Fertility is still valued, but does not appear to form so important a theme in ceremonial, songs, and gossip as among other societies where the principle of unilinear descent has not broken down, and where, therefore, fertility either of a man's wife or of his sister, is a vital necessity for the maintenance of local structure.

The husband-wife relationship is one in which the man is apparently superordinate to his wife, but we shall see that in practice this superordination is not as clear-cut as might at first appear. It is furthermore a relationship in which there are certain prescribed mutual obligations, so that if these obligations are neglected, it is

[5] Cf. Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, p. 69.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Beyond the village the Native Courts deal to a great extent with matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the development of Christian marriage.

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who rears him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are responsible for their own actions before the court, and that truant schoolboys can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peaceably with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms.

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage.

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later

[1] Called *cidumu*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

848 684 that if the lover is thought to be very desirable as a husband, the girl and her parents will begin to act as though she had in fact been married by him. Few cases of seduction come before the courts, perhaps because of the fact that it is only pre-marital pregnancy that can lead to action in the court and not merely pre-marital copulation. If the lover agrees to marry the girl it is in the interests of her kin to let him do so, rather than take the matter to court when they may be awarded more damages but where also their daughter will appear as a foolish and indiscreet person. It is said that some girls hand on to their parents some of the presents they receive from their lovers, and that therefore the parents take no action against the lovers, but I have no information as to the extent of this practice.

The kin of a woman have therefore an interest in her sexual activities before she is married, and to a lesser extent a man's relatives have a similar interest. The main concern of a man, however, is that he shall not get himself into such serious trouble that he has to find the money for damages in the court and that he will not be forced to marry an unsuitable girl whom he has impregnated.

2. The marriages of children

581 At marriage itself a person's relatives may act on his or her behalf in choosing a spouse, and the factors that influence their choice are different from those which operate when people choose their own spouses. A man's relatives stress that the wife-to-be must be hardworking, polite to her superiors and not given to promiscuity. The fact that a girl begins to sleep with her lover may influence her lover's parents against her for they argue that if she sleeps so easily with their son she will soon tire of him and run off after someone else. They pay more attention to the character of her parents and siblings and look to see what sort of wives her sisters have made. Similarly the parents of the girl may look critically at the young man and they too argue that as he has already begun to sleep with their daughter he will soon begin running after other women and leave his wife 'alone in her hut'. If a relative of the girl has already married a relative of the man and that marriage has not been a success, their kinsfolk may try to prevent a second marriage.

Case history 4

Absolom, who works in South Africa, wrote to his brother saying he wanted to marry Mary. The brother, who was married to Mary's sister, approached Mary's father who said that he could not agree. Mary's father later said that he opposed the marriage as Absolom's brother had infected his wife with syphilis and he did not want another of his daughters to marry into that family. [164]

584 If a man is away working he may write home and ask his father or some other relative to find a wife for him. A marriage arranged in this way does not necessarily find favour with the man when he finds out who his bride is to be, but a number of soldiers successfully

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

married women chosen for them by their kinsfolk while they were 584
away during the 1939-45 war. If the woman selected for him by one relative is unsatisfactory, a man may turn to another relative for help, as is shown in the following incident.

Case history 5

Ahab, a young man of about twenty, was working in Fort Jameson. He wrote to his father in the village enclosing money for the legalization payment, asking that his father should find him a wife. His father spoke to a friend living in another village who had an unmarried daughter. The friend agreed that his daughter should marry Ahab, but the girl said that she wanted to see Ahab before making up her mind about him. Ahab was [581]
told of the arrangement but refused to agree to it, saying that he knew that the girl chosen was a prostitute.

Ahab then asked a classificatory grandmother to find him a wife. This woman found a girl and when Ahab came home from work he and a friend went for a walk to the girl's village to spy her out. The friend, on seeing the girl, advised Ahab against marrying her and the negotiations again fell through.

Ahab asked his grandmother to try again and this time he approved of the girl selected. The legalization payment was made and the girl came to live in Ahab's village with his grandmother. After a week or so, she was [591]
taken by the grandmother and other important women of the village into the township to start living with Ahab.

On the other hand a man may desist from marrying the girl of his choice in the face of parental opposition. For example, the first girl that Amos found for himself was opposed by his father because [759]
her father was a sorcerer; the second on the ground that her parents were unreliable and that she was a cross-cousin, a point against [581]
her in that Amos's brother had married a cross-cousin and the marriage was not a success; only with the third choice did the father agree to his marriage.

The initiative in arranging a marriage lies with the man and his kin rather than with the woman, and a girl who goes too much out of her way to attract a husband risks her reputation and may be regarded as a potential prostitute. On elopement, it is the woman 583
who runs off to the man's village or to his place of work, and it might be expected that her relatives would initiate action to bring her back or to claim damages for abduction. Sometimes a man does take action against the lover with whom his daughter has run away, and the lover pays a beast. Another man, however, may take no steps to follow his runaway daughter, merely refusing to recognize the existence of any marriage between her and her lover, and sometimes denying any knowledge of the lover's name. If the woman shows no sign of returning to her own village, efforts may be made to bring her children back to her parents to be brought up. Sometimes a man who has eloped with a woman later approaches her parents, apologizes for his precipitate action and makes them gifts, after which they may decide to recognize him as a son-in-law.

If a man shows his intention of marrying despite the disapproval 584
of his close kin, they can retaliate by not helping him financially,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

584 by not visiting him, by refusing his presents of beer, and even by refusing to speak to him. Provided the man can find the money for the legalization payment himself, they cannot prevent the money from being handed over. The woman's kin are in rather a different position for they can try to prevent her from marrying against their wish by refusing to accept the legalization payment. It will be seen from Table VIII that this happened in four per cent (5/135) of the marriages in our sample. The woman's father may sometimes think the sum offered is too small and may refuse to accept until it is increased. The man can either give way and offer the larger sum or, if he thinks the demand is excessive or beyond his resources, he may start living with her without any legalization payment at all. He is then not so sure of his rights over his wife as he would be otherwise and his wife's parents may try to break up the marriage. Should quarrels lead to a divorce it will be easier to obtain because of the absence of payments.

584 583

583 The woman's relatives may, however, refuse to accept the offered legalization payment irrespective of the amount. They do this if they feel that the marriage has no chance at all of success, either because of the unsatisfactory character of the man or of the well-established unreliability of their kinswoman. By refusing the payment they hope to protect themselves against the call for damages which they feel sure is bound to come when their daughter commits adultery and her husband wants to divorce her. Even at the monetary level the amount they are likely to get as legalization payment is only thirty shillings while the damages they will be called upon to find will be three pounds. If, however, no legalization payment has been made, then the divorce should be granted without the award of damages against the woman. Thus her relatives protect themselves financially by refusing the payment, but at the same time by so doing they are trying to avoid trouble in the group of kin and quarrels with their newly-found affines. If a man before making his legalization payment shows himself to be unsuitable as a husband, or if it is plain that his wife will not be satisfactory to him, her kin will not put any pressure on him to pay and begin to hope that the marriage will end before too much trouble ensues. If the payment is made, some of the woman's relatives may refuse any part of it offered to them, hoping thereby to avoid future financial responsibility for her adultery.

586

Case history 6

Job works in the township and had two wives. He then married the girl Rebecca. She lived with him in town for a month or two and then Job sent her back to her village to be taught to cook properly. Her mother's mother remarked 'Ever since she reached puberty we told Rebecca she must learn to cook properly but she took no notice. The other wives of Job often laugh at her.' Her mother's mother's elder sister said 'It is a good thing for us that we did not accept any legalization payment from this man.' A month or so later the marriage broke up and Rebecca was divorced.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Where a woman has already troubled her relatives by her adultery, they may try to avoid further expense by refusing the legalization payment offered for her. 583 586 [837]

Case history 7

Rachel had had two husbands and had been divorced from them both. She had also lived with a White for some years. In 1946 she began to live with Esau, who already had three wives. In 1948 Esau approached an important man in Rachel's village and asked him to act as intermediary as he wished to offer the legalization payment to Rachel's brother. This man refused to do so, and in the end Esau approached his brother-in-law himself. The brother-in-law said that he had known his sister Rachel a long time and she was just a prostitute. He would not take the money for her. Esau said he would speak to his wife and ask her to change her character. Eventually the brother-in-law agreed to accept the thirty shillings offered.

Although the kinsfolk of the man or woman can exercise social pressure to prevent a marriage it is difficult for them to force a girl to marry against her will, and impossible in the case of a man. We have noted that in the old days, according to informants, people married whom they were told and did not refuse. Even if this was ever true, it is true no longer. A man can move off to the towns in the face of pressure and a woman can always run away to other relatives if her parents are insistent on an unwanted marriage. The Administration does not allow girls to be married against their will, but I do not know of any recent instance in which it has intervened on this issue. A girl's relatives can show their anger by abusing her and by scaring off her own preferred mate, but they cannot detain her against her will and they cannot force her to go through the ceremonies of marriage. They cannot appeal to the court to punish the girl for disobedience. 584

In some instances pressure is put on a man by a woman's kin to force him into marrying her. If a woman bears a pre-marital child, and it is known that the genitor is an important man or chief, her kinsfolk begin to adopt towards the genitor's family the patterns of respect and avoidance which would be appropriate if he were their affine. This procedure may be adopted although it is plain to people in general that the genitor has no intention of marrying the woman. If it is unsuccessful in forcing the hand of the genitor, the formal attitudes of the woman's kinsfolk come to be generally ridiculed and they abandon the pretence. 848 602

So far we have considered only the attitude of kinsfolk towards a proposed marriage and the legalization payment associated with it. The factors influencing the acceptance or refusal of bridewealth are different. Bridewealth, when offered, is not often refused. Table V shows that in our sample this happened in only one out of 360 marriages. We must remember that bridewealth is paid only in about four per cent of all marriages, and that a man is usually on good terms with his affines and has lived in peace for many years with his wife before he offers it. A youngish man may seek the 583

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

ponding payment through which they can attempt to control the relationship between the couple. Yet both groups of kin are interested in the successful outcome of the marriage, and therefore attempt to influence the choice of marriage partner. 581 583

3. Formal interaction

In the formal negotiations that precede a marriage, and in the ceremonies that mark its stages of development, the kinsfolk are always involved. The married couple depend on their kin for economic assistance, and are under obligations to help their kin. The place of residence of the couple is determined by the disposition of their kin in different villages. If the man is a labour migrant his interests are represented by his rural kinsfolk. In general it is the fathers of the couple who are most directly concerned, if they are available, but in all Ngoni situations in which a man (or woman) appeals to his kin for support there are no hard and fast rules about the genealogical positions his supporters should occupy. If a man's father is old he turns to his elder brother. If his genealogically close kinsmen live far away, he turns to those who live nearer although they may be further removed from him in genealogical terms. If there is no male kinsman available he may seek the support of an old kinswoman. 581 602

The formal situations which require the co-operation of kinsfolk are the matchmaking, the gall bladder ceremony (which we may perhaps regard as the wedding), the ceremony of first cooking, the hoeing party, the announcement of first pregnancy, the carrying of beer and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. Betrothal is another formal situation requiring the presence of the woman's kin, but as nowadays very few girls are betrothed, we shall omit this from our analysis. It will be recalled that even in the old days betrothal applied only to girls under puberty and that a girl who reached puberty without becoming betrothed proceeded to marriage without passing through any intermediate stage. The matchmaking, at which the marriage is arranged, is carried on in a formal manner but there is little ceremonial. The carrying of beer is a visit from one group to the other that can be repeated as many times as they wish, but all the other ceremonies occur but once in a marriage, if they occur at all. The hoeing party has a certain economic value but the other ceremonies are largely symbolic in content. As with the marriage payments, the marriage ceremonials can all be dispensed with and yet there be a marriage which to all intents and purposes is valid. What cannot be omitted so easily from a marriage are the patterns of respect and avoidance between the couple and their affines, particularly between a man and his wife's mother. Even here, however, there is some variation in practice. 602 [585] [584] [581] [606]

The usual procedure in matchmaking is that first the man and the woman agree between themselves that they will get married. They reach this agreement in secret without reference to their kinsfolk 584

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

584 or friends. If the man is away working or in the Army he may make his proposal by letter. When agreement has been reached negotiations can proceed although they are carried on as if there had been no prior agreement and the proposal was entirely a new one.

A man tells his eldest brother of his intention to marry, or, if he is the eldest son, he may approach his father direct. He does not [593] speak to his mother about this matter, for a man does not confide in his mother about anything connected with sex, but she is told of his intention by her husband. A man ought to tell his grand- [603] mother at an early stage, particularly the grandmother who reared him. A woman tells her sisters and her grandmother, and her eldest sister will tell her eldest brother. The man's father or eldest brother may decide on who shall act as intermediaries in the matchmaking, or else the man may himself ask important people in the village to act. There is no definite rule as to who they should be, and either men or women or both may make up the party. Usually two or three people go, and a man will try and choose people who are reliable and sober and tactful. Marriage intermediaries do not have the same important responsibilities for the marriage as do the marriage [191] sureties (or witnesses) among the Nyanja and Yao although they are known by the same term.* The intermediaries go to the woman's village and consult her senior relatives. Traditionally they should go to the woman's grandmother, either her father's mother or her mother's mother, depending on who lives in the village and who is the more important. They tell her that they have heard that such-and-such a marriage has been contemplated. The girl's grandmother tells the girl's father that the intermediaries have come, and if nothing has arisen to jeopardize the marriage, the visiting party are told that all is well and that they must come back again. They return to their own village, and the next day, or the next week if it is a long way to walk, they go again, bringing with them a gift or some- times the legalization payment. The gift or money is handed to the [583] person leading the negotiations on the woman's side who passes it on to the woman's father. Arrangements are made about the gall bladder ceremony and a date fixed. The intermediaries then go back to their village.

585 At the gall bladder ceremony the bride receives formal advice [591] from her affines and the people in their village. Shortly afterwards she begins to live with her husband in either his or her village. If they live virilocally she does not at first cook for her husband, but the couple rely on food prepared by his other wives or his mother or [593] grandmother. It may be up to a year later that the woman first cooks for her husband and husband's father, the latter commenting 843 on her cooking. When she first becomes pregnant she is anointed by her husband's grandmother, and goes with a young girl from her husband's kinsfolk to announce her pregnancy to her own kin.

* Nikaseme.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

he has not been brought up by them but by some other relative. In 593
particular a man is reluctant to discuss his affairs directly with his father if he can get his eldest brother to act as his intermediary. The eldest brother is heir to their father and it is considered that he should act as the channel by which the father is approached. He deals with proposals of marriage arising from his younger siblings and if he approves of them, he refers the matter to their father. This [184]
pattern of relations seems most marked in aristocratic families.

9. Widows

While it is a man's eldest brother who helps to arrange his marriage, 587
he is his younger brothers who become pro-husbands to his widows.
We have seen that in the old days a widow was usually looked after 851
by a younger brother of the dead man but she continued to live in her dead husband's segment, and the children she bore by her pro-husband were grouped with the children of the dead man. This can still happen but it is no longer the invariable rule. As in the old days, if bridewealth has been paid by the first husband and after his death his widow goes to live with someone else, the second husband or pro-husband cannot offer bridewealth and the children he begets belong to the dead husband and take his descent name.

Some indication of the extent to which widows remain with their 587
dead husbands' kin is given by data collected in two villages. All the women now living in these villages had between them experienced widowhood 31 times. In two instances (6 per cent) the widow had been cared for by her dead husband's brother; and in 11 instances (35 per cent) the widow took a new husband not directly related to the dead man. In the remaining 18 instances (58 per cent) [589]
the widow had not married again and was living alone.

A man may die at any stage of his marriage. If he is betrothed to 584
a girl and then dies, the betrothal passes to a younger brother. When the girl is old enough, the younger brother marries her as though she had been betrothed to him in the first place and the children he has by her are his own children. Similarly, if a betrothed girl dies before she is married, the betrothal passes to a younger sister.

If a man dies after he has been properly married his widows have 765
definite roles to play. For a month after his death, they must wear the signs of mourning, and they are in danger of *mdulo*[96] if they commit adultery during that time. They must be ready to wail when distant visitors arrive to mourn. At the end of a month they brew beer, and there is a joyous party. A year after the death there is another party, and the fate of the widows is discussed. If none 589
of the younger brothers or kinsmen of the dead man wish to look after the widows, they are free to go their own way, and there may be a formal statement of divorce. They are in any case now spoken

[96] See above, p. 68.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

VII

MARRIAGE BY PURCHASE

584 I. An Angoni, when he has daughters, makes an arrangement with some man from another village, saying to him, "You are my friend, you must wed one of my children." Then the girl's father makes 584 beer, and they go and summon his friend and set 873 him in a hut by himself, and the father bids his daughters, "Go and pour out beer for the stranger." The father points out his child [to his friend], saying, "You will see she has on such and such a kind of calico, and then you will know that is the one." Then some other day he tells his child she must go and present herself at her future husband's. When the moon is full all the maidens of the village assemble and come by night to the man's village and sit down at the village court. They sit in a circle, the betrothed in the middle, and cover their heads with their calico. They tell stories and laugh that the villagers may know people have come to the *bwalo* court. Then some young man comes out, and says, "I have found something," and his companion says, "I go halves." Then an elder asks, "What is it?" And the young men reply, "The 584 maidens have come." Then some of the women at the village are sent to ask the girls at the *bwalo* court what they have come for, and they do so, saying, "What is your business here." And they reply, "We have come for so and so." They are naming some very little child. So they ask again, saying, "Are you really meaning that child himself?" And they reply, "No, we mean his big brother." Then they go and tell the elders of the

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

village that "The people who have come to the village court are saying they wish so and so." Then the elders say, "Put them in a hut." Next morning they cook for them whole maize, the betrothed does not eat with them, and when the old women see she is dying of hunger, they take her to a hut on the outskirts of the village and give her beer. 584

II. On the following morning they from the man's village take an offering of two goats, and go with them to the girl's village. These goats are accepted, for they say, "They are only the spirits, and no doubt the price of the girl must be behind." When the young braves leave, they leave behind a child to guard the betrothed, and follow her about, and when they return to their own village they take other goats and go with them (to the girl's home), and when they come with them there they sit at the *bwalo* court, then one of the village elders makes a little gap in the grass fence (that surrounds all Angoni huts) and peeps out. When he sees the goats he tells the village chief that there are such and such a number, and the chief tells him not to receive them. Then the young warriors, when they have waited and waited, go off to their own village. At the outskirts they stand to await the escort of young girls, and then they go and say to the man who wishes to marry the girl, "They did not receive from us." So next morning they take more goats and go with them. The old man again looks out, and when he sees that more goats have come he goes and tells the girl's father, "To-day such and such a number have arrived." And the man answers, "Go and take them and put them in the kraal." (When this is done) the old man comes and takes the knobkerry from one of the men (who brought the goats) and puts it in a hut, and the men follow the knobkerry, and they cook 584 431

6;Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 431 porridge for them and it is refused, and they spear goats for them and they eat. Next day they go home. They of the girl's village tell them, saying, "You will hear from us." Now, if the malt for the beer be in readiness, they do not sleep many [273] days, but if not, they let a moon pass. On the day on which the beer is strained they go and call the bodyguard of young warriors, and they come along with the husband (to be) to drink the beer. The man who is to marry the girl they go and hide away in a hut on the edge of the village along with his betrothed, and the beer for them will be drawn in a little pot.

585 III. Now every one comes together at the village court and bring goats. The betrothed sits on a [302] mat. Her grandmother shaves her head, leaving a round patch of hair on the crown. When she has finished shaving her one of the men from the man's [231] village steps out and begins to kill some goats. Should a goat not die immediately it is beaten. Then the goats are skinned, and they take a spleen and let drops fall from it on the head of the girl, and then inflate all the spleens. They take the fat from the belly, and spread it in the sun to dry. Towards evening they take the girl and go with her to the *Kuka* hut, and there they take a frothy medicine, called *chitundu*, and the girl bathes with it, and her little watchman bathes also, and he (the child) takes the spleens and the fat, the inflated spleens are fastened on the girl's head and the fat over her shoulders and under her arms. The little child, when he has finished tying them on, is beaten by the men from the man's village (playfully). Then one of the village elders gets up and speaks, saying, "There you have your mother, we give her you to-day; she is subject to no disease, her illnesses consist of occasional headaches. Should she

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

585 young wife is made cook beer, and on the day it is drunk the spleens are burned and the bead girdle [301] unravelled, and the girl will make bracelets of it.

VIII

MARRIAGE (*Chipeta*)

584 I. WHEN a girl and a man love one another, they make each other presents in secret, and when this has gone on for some time, they say, "But let these things fly away on the wind now and be heard by people." Then the man goes and tells the elders of his village, saying, "Go and ask for me at so and so's. I would live with them, for I am miserable (here)." Then some of the elders go there to ask for him, saying, "Here we have seen a (girl's) basket, and we would remain with you, for where we are we are unhappy." Then the headman replies, "First of all you must return, when we have asked the child if she consents you shall hear again." Then the deputation go off home. The man calls his children, he sees the one who is almost a woman, and asks her, saying, "So and so have come and say they want you to stay with them." And the child answers, "Well, what can I say, words which you may speak I obey." And they from the man's village return again, saying, "We have come about that proposal which we mentioned yesterday; we are most anxious for what we asked." Then the chief says, "Let the man come, he shall live here, I do not refuse." And they go back home and tell the man, saying, "We

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

went across there, and heard what he told us. He 584
says you must go and live there." And the man says, "We shall do so, it's not far to the water." Then the old men (who are negotiating the affair) return there and say, "We shall stay with you, there is water, and it is not far away." And the village chief says, "Let him come, this is not some other land that eats up a man." Then the old men return, and bring their child and take him to the chief, saying, "Here is your man, and he has no other words [meaning complaining, bad-tempered words]; all he ever says is, 'Cook me porridge, for I am hungry.'" And the chief replies, "For our part, our one has not one little thing (against her), cooking is her forte and pounding flour, and, perhaps, even hoeing, but as to that we do not know for certain as we have not yet seen her with a hoe in her hand."

II. Then the old men return, going back to their own village, and leave the child. He must sleep in the quarters of the young unmarried men, and his wife will cook his food for him until he has built his hut. He does not cohabit with her. When he has finished building it, they put him in it. At 585 606
the village where he is, he does not ever see his mother-in-law, they always run away from each other. When he says, "Now I am sick of this running away, let us 'uncover' each other." Then the mother-in-law cooks beer, and the son-in-law gets some calico, and they go and call the people from the man's village, telling them that now they wish "to uncover." Then the people from the man's village come and take the man and go with him to his mother-in-law's hut. His head is still covered with his calico and the mother-in-law's also is still over her head. Then the man's brother goes and uncovers the mother-in-law and takes the

10. *Forbidden and Enjoined Unions (Ngoni).*

The Angoni are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*vide infra*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the Angoni it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage (Ngoni).*

When an Mngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headman to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *ankhosue* with a present to the *ankhosue* of the girl. There are always two *ankhosue* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ku-onga*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several elder women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commensuration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ku-tenlera*, and sends a cloth (known as *mcheka*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kulowola*, or *kupereka mabeka*. The *mabeka*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [848]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name *mula* for a man becomes *mvula* for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimala*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[857] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
691 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the
578

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 614 565 184 was thus different in the two kingdoms. In the north he was one ruler, though a supreme one, among several ruling kinsmen of the same clan. His position in the past had been strengthened by the prestige shared by his clansmen, but also challenged by his near kinsmen in positions of authority. In the central kingdom the Paramount shared no authority with his fellow clansmen. He was unique among them as a ruler, while sharing special ritual relationships with the two other clans which supported his position without challenging it.

643 614 585 A new Paramount, in order to be installed in his father's place, had to be of the big house as well as of the royal clan. Dr. Kuper described the Swazi practice whereby cattle were contributed by the nation for the mother of the king, so that she was called the 'mother of the people of the country'. She also described the ritual marriage of the first wife of a ruler, who was called *sisulamsiti*, and who was never the mother of the heir.[1] The Ngoni Paramount-elect in the northern kingdom married his first wife when he was a young man and she was called *msulamsizi*, 'the one who takes the darkness off him'. The big wife, who would bear the heir, was married with a large gift of cattle taken from the herd of the big wife of the reigning Paramount and, after marriage, was attached to her big house. We shall discuss in greater detail in the next chapter the relationships of the royal women to the Paramount and to each other. Here it is important to note that the big house owned by the big wife was the place where the future chief was brought up. In the central kingdom the first marriage of the Paramount was traditionally with a woman of the Magagula clan who was said not to bear children. She held an honoured place in the social hierarchy and was married with cattle taken from the herd of the *gogo* house of the reigning Paramount. It was regarded as a ritual marriage, for if she did bear children they were not acknowledged. [842 847] Informants were uncertain whether methods to prevent conception were used, or whether abortion was practised, or whether children, if born, died young or were disposed of or placed out in other households. The last alternatives were unlikely, and one of the first two expedients was in line with the phrase always used of this wife: 'she did not bear children'. The wife who bore the heir was married next and was always of another leading clan, and the cattle for her came from the herd of the big house of the reigning Paramount.

643 614 The reasons were obvious why the remembered genealogies of the Ngoni Paramounts of the royal clans were short compared with the genealogies of some other African royal houses. The remote ancestors of Jere chiefs and Maseko chiefs, who were, as we have seen, not Paramounts before they left the south, were forgotten once the departure had taken place. Only a few names had been handed down and were repeated by the official praisers, whose task it was to call out the names of the direct ancestors of the Paramount before declaiming his *izibongo* or

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. pp. 54 & 91.

631 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in
643 his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning
to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount
692 by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one
645 by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first 'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then it was open for any of the *alumuzana* or headmen to speak 'from the floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with freedom.

The topics covered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from
[744] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits. Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said, would have that leader recognized as a headman. This drew a number of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme, others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognized in the new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages. 'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our headmen. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant afterthought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Para-
[651 mount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few
585 shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the *izinduna* had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among the audience during and after this discussion and the *izinduna* had to call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese
[648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

group consisted of himself and the mother and her children, including her daughters only until they married. 571 592

The affinal element in a house consisted of the other wives associated with the owner of the house as co-wives, and the wives of the sons of the owner. Both the kinship group and the affinal group were bound together by their rights in the cattle of the herd which was known as 'the cattle of the house of X'. From that herd were taken cattle for the *lobola* of the wives married after the house was founded, and for the wives of the sons and adopted sons of the house. Into that herd came the cattle received for the marriages of the daughters belonging to the house and the gift cattle sent to wives by their fathers after marriage. When the *lobola* had been fully paid up for a daughter of the house, then her relationship with it ceased and she was thenceforth known as belonging to her husband's mother's house. 592 585 571 [591]

Associated with the house in the villages of the Paramounts, the chiefs and the leading *alumuzana* were two other groups of people. One was the *induna* appointed 'to take care of the house' and his family. In the 1930's the *induna* was in charge of the cattle and of the many activities connected with the house, including the organization of male labour in hut-building, in kraal construction and in cultivation; he was consulted by the male members of the house about the selling of cattle and the use of the goods accumulated in the house. The other group associated with the house in pre-European days consisted of captives taken in war and allocated to the house who worked as labourers. The servants who worked for a house in the 1930's assisted with cooking, beer-making and minding the children, and they had huts near that of the owner of the house to which they belonged, placed on the right- or left-hand side of the kraal according to their affiliation with the big house or the second house. Informants said that in the past such association with a house included giving a beast from the herd of the house for the marriage of a servant. The *induna*, through the marriage of his daughters, built up his own herd, which he frequently kept at first with the cattle of the house in the main kraal, later building his own kraal. 592 571 357 [727]

A new house began when a man married his big wife. Although at first he built her a hut at the back of his mother's hut in his father's village, as soon as he moved out to his new village after his father's death, the big wife's hut had the next most important site in the kraal after that of the *indlunkulu*, and the second wife had the third place of importance. In some of the larger villages of the central kingdom, the custom of moving out into a new village after the death of the former owner had been given up, partly because of pressure on the land. The house grouping in relation to the siting of huts then became very complex, but the pattern was nevertheless discernible. The two sections under the big house and the *gogo* house, which had formerly divided into two villages, continued to exist together, and at Mcakhatha this dual 361 591 592 [768] 361 592

584 period within which the handing over of cattle was completed varied according to the demands of the girl's father and the capacity of the man's father to find the required number. Informants agreed that when only a few beasts were demanded, the transfer took place before or immediately after the main ceremony. In addition to this formal transfer agreed on and carried out as part of the marriage contract, there was also an informal reciprocal transfer which had two main purposes. At the time of the main ceremony the bride's party brought with them a beast, called *mcando*, which was put into the herd of the bridegroom's mother's house to which the bride would henceforth belong. Later, when the two families ate together for the first time, one or more additional beasts were brought from the girl's former house and put into the herd of the house to which she now belonged. In this way, the new wife began to have cattle in the herd of her mother-in-law's house which were known as hers and which would be taken to form a new herd when she went out with her husband to his *lusungulu* village. As soon as these cattle were in the kraal of the house to which she now belonged, the new wife was able to eat *amasi* in her husband's village, which she had not been allowed to do since leaving her father's village.

571 In the series of feasts which marked the stages in the marriage relationship and which facilitated the coming together of the two families,
585 the major part was played by the *indlunkulu* in each village. Many households in the girl's village shared in the preparation of food for the betrothal feast, but it was assembled when cooked and divided out by the woman owner of the *indlunkulu*, assisted by the men and women belonging to the girl's father's house. The next feast was in the man's village, and formed part of the main ceremony, before the bride's party returned to their home. The third feast was to celebrate the 'showing of the hearth-stones', when the young wife was allowed to cook in her husband's village for the first time. The food was collected in her parents' village and carried to her new village, where it was cooked by the women of the house into which she had married, and served in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu*. In the two final feasts—the *umncengo* which was a beer drink, and the *izinyongo*, a feast of beer and food—the beer was brewed and the food collected in the wife's village and cooked and
[602] eaten in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* in the husband's village. These two feasts finally broke down the barrier between the parents-in-law and were the first occasion on which they ate and drank beer together.

585 The main ceremony (*mtimba*) had three distinct parts.[1] The first part included the preparation of the girl in her own village (*ukuconga*); the entrance of her party into the man's village and the presenting of snuff

[1] I was present at an *mtimba* in Ezondweni in the northern kingdom when the traditional ritual carried out in full was combined with a church wedding. The bridegroom was a man of the Dlamini clan from Swaziland, who had been adopted by Chief Mtwalo and had built a hut in the *cigodlo* of the big house.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(*ukuqandisa*). The middle section, the main part of the ceremony, took place in the husband's village while the bridal party was there. In the last part the bride was left in her new home and three ceremonies marked her gradual integration into her new social group. 585

After the number of cattle had been decided upon in the final stage of the betrothal, the initiative was left to the girl's parents to announce the date of the *mtimba*. Eventually a message was sent through the *gogo* house of the girl's village to say that the bridal party would arrive on a certain day. Before the day came, the girl, now addressed as *umlobokazi* (the bride), was called to the *indlunkulu* in her village. There the leading women, her father's mothers, who had called in her father's sisters, gave her final instructions on how to behave in her new home. Ngoni women said that they were told at this time: 'Our child, we are putting you out of our family. We are handing you over to the other people. You were free and now your freedom is over for you are under other people. Where you are going you will meet with many troubles. They will say of you many things which you did not do. It is good to be patient.' During this instruction the girl cried and so did her mother. On the morning of the departure the girl was dressed in freshly prepared skins, her hair was arranged in the *isihlutu* (chignon) to which the gall bladder of a goat was pinned, and the gall bladder of a cow was tied to her elbow. Then, still sobbing and whimpering, and surrounded by her age mates and the female members of her house, she set out for her bridegroom's village, the young men of her village driving a bullock (*mcando*) as a present from the bride's parents to the mother of the bridegroom, in whose herd it was placed. [292 237] [152]

This part of the ceremony, the entry of the bride's party (*ukuqandisa*), was held to be of great importance, since it was the first time the bride's family and friends as a group had met the husband's family. The bride's procession waited by the kraal gate, singing *mtimba* songs, and every now and then a woman of the bride's party, one of her father's sisters, sang the praises of the bride's clan. As the young men driving the bullock entered the kraal, the bridal party joined them and they began to dance in the kraal. 571 585

Now the first overtures were made between the bride's party and the people of the bridegroom's village. The older women of the village approached the older women of the bride's party, greeting them and exchanging, in the Ngoni phrase, 'words which were good and proud and showed the quickness of their tongues'.

After these advances, the men of the village came into the kraal or gathered by the *indlunkulu*. While the bridal party began to sing with their heads bowed, the chief woman from the *indlunkulu* of the bride's village came forward, bending low, and on her knees presented to the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* of the husband's village a basket containing snuff boxes and beads. She made a speech, in which she said, 'Here is [516 431]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

571 our child who is now leaving her home. She has no father now. She is
585 leaving his care. We expect you to cherish her now as her father would.' In reply the *induna* assured them, 'Now she is here we will cherish her, but she must respect the owner of this house and be under her in all things.' Speeches about the absence of disease in either village were then made and the men took snuff. The bridal party and the villagers all remained seated and began to sing *umbedlo* songs (songs to be sung sitting).

585 At the marriage at Ezondweni, where I was present, the girls of the bridal party began to shiver as night fell, and a woman of the village [533] brought a sleeping mat as an invitation to go into the huts. Singing as they went, the women of the bridal party were shown a place to sleep, and the bride slept among them for that night. The bride's party went off the next morning to the church at Elangeni for the church marriage [797] service, while the bridegroom with a party from Ezondweni went by a separate route. In the days before the mission came, they used to spend the morning dancing in the kraal, while the husband's family killed a beast, or more than one, for the feast. During the day's dancing in the kraal, the leader of the village women took the husband's spear, came into the kraal with the village party and touched the bride gently on the shoulder. This was a sign that the bride was now one of the village [152] group, and the correct response was for her party to turn their backs and weep to show their grief because she had left them.

In Ezondweni, when the parties returned from church in the afternoon, a large crowd had assembled. The bridal party danced and sang in the kraal and outside the *indlunkulu* and now and then a leading woman of the bridegroom's village joined in. The bride and two supporting friends were given a mat to sit on, the husband and the *madoda* also sat down, the minister from the church prayed and they sang a hymn. Then the food, bowls of *usima* with large pieces of meat on top, was divided. The names of the divisions of Ezondweni were called out and the leaders of the divisions of that village and of other villages came to get the portions for their people.

Dancing continued after the feast until the bride's party took the bride to the husband's hut and left her there. The next morning the [533] bridal party returned home singing. Formerly the bride came to the door of the hut where she had slept with her husband, and called out the praise-names of her father. She then sang the *ummekezo* song (song of the deflowering) and the husband stood in the doorway behind her. Then he went into the kraal and sat facing the bridal party, who were singing. When the bride came in with a gourd of water there was silence while she poured water for him to wash his hands, mouth and eyes. This was the first public act of service for the husband after the consummation of the marriage and ended the main part of the ceremony, after which the bridal party went home.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The three final acts of the *mtimba* were performed for the new wife by the women of her new village. The first took place about two days after the end of the main ceremony and was the occasion for her instruction by her husband's relatives. She sat on a mat by the *indlunkulu*, while the woman of that house dressed her *isihlutu*, anointed her with oil, and clothed her in fresh skins and new beads taken from the store of the house to which she now belonged. They then instructed her in her behaviour to old and young, telling her to avoid selfishness and quarrelling and to be friendly with everyone. 585 182 621

The second act, called *ukufumisa umlobokazi* ((bringing the wife out), took place thirty to forty days later, during which time the wife had been sitting by her hut being watched. All this time she had eaten only a little food, sent to her from her mother-in-law's hut, had been afraid to speak to anyone, and had wept often. Now she was told that she might go anywhere and talk with anyone. She could help her mother-in-law by fetching firewood and by lighting her fire. A pot of water was given to her and an axe to cut firewood, and her mother-in-law gave her the *indlekuza* bead, a sign that she might speak and eat in front of her parents-in-law. But her testing time was not yet over. She was told to fetch a huge bundle of split wood and to lay it down carefully before her mother-in-law's hut without dropping any. As the bundle was on her head, it meant kneeling down and bending forward slowly until she could gently ease the wood on to the ground. Other tests included stripping large quantities of maize, soaking them, and pounding them into stamped maize (*izinkobe*). This testing was called *ukulinga umlobokazi* (watching the new wife), and was in most cases far more exacting than anything she had been made to do in her own home. [482] [252]

The culminating act of the integration process, *ukupekisa umlobokazi*, in which the new wife's hut was recognized as the starting-point of a new house, was the ceremony of making fire in her new hut to cook food for her husband. Two or three months after the marriage, a woman from her father-in-law's *gogo* house suddenly appeared in the doorway of the new wife's hut, carrying three hearth-stones. She fetched fire, kindled it, and began to cook boiled maize. The astonished young wife was expected to cry because she had now been turned away from her mother-in-law's cooking-place, as if she were being put out of the house. The maize cooked on this first fire in the new hut was regarded as having been cooked by the bride, and was divided into portions, one being taken to each section of the village attached to a house. Meanwhile the young wife sat nearby, hanging her head and showing the conventional signs of grief. Nevertheless she was so excited that she went back to her own home as soon as possible to tell them the news. The response of her own people was to prepare food for a feast and bring it to her new village to express to her husband's people their appreciation of this token of confidence in the girl's ability to cook for her husband.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 585 621 The prolonged series of interviews, exchanges and ceremonies emphasized the Ngoni conception of the marriage contract and its binding nature. They also underlined the severance of the new wife from her former family and house, and her gradual assimilation into her mother-in-law's house. This relationship between Ngoni women within the houses provided an effective means of integrating them into a village to which they were strangers.

CHAPTER IV

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

183 59 'THE Ngoni have power and authority over their women and their children.' So began one of the texts on *cingoni*, 'the thing that is Ngoni', by a man of the Ntumba people whose grandfather had been born among the Ngoni when they were in Songea. There was a recognized ideal pattern of an Ngoni family which covered both the individuals included in the family group and the place where they lived. This pattern was patrilineal in descent, virilocal in residence, polygynous in marriage for all men of standing who were not Christians. Other recognized and often-mentioned characteristics were the continued residence of widows in their husband's village after his death, the grouping of families by houses, and the *laweni*, or dormitory system for boys and unmarried young men.

581 593 The young wife wept on the day of her marriage because she was leaving the security and known relationships of her own family for the hazards and uncertainty of entering as a stranger into her husband's family group. The dramatization of these sentiments in the protracted marriage ceremony, and the allusions in the *mtimba* songs, brought out clearly the continuity of the man's relations with all members of his family and the sudden sharp break in the woman's relationship when she married. When her first child was born, and a new individual family group launched, her final integration into her husband's family began. As a mother who had borne a grandchild to her husband's parents she had thenceforward a direct part in the relationships within her husband's family, but as a wife she was always a stranger. The marriage negotiations and ceremonial express the closeness of the family ties, showing on the girl's side the anxiety of her family on parting with her to live among strangers; and on the man's side the hesitancy of the husband's family at taking into their midst an unknown and untried stranger. In addition, the protracted exchanges of cattle and feasts, delaying the final ceremony and building up relationships between the two family groups, illustrate the Ngoni attitude towards marriage as a

342 356 593 was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

162 585 595 184 The tables which follow show the total population of three villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Huts	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Eswazini .	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Endindeni .	15	9	21	21	51	4	1	4	15
Eluhangeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	32
Central kingdom									
Cinkwita .	39	22	39	54	115	13	5	4	2
Mangozo .	60	41	65	78	184	9	18	2	4
Mcakhatha	122	71	112	68	251	30	16	14	12

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *luungulu* and *gogo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *banja* was not found in the north.

592 614 622 631 The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *mulumuzana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *mulumuzana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived 361
in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a
central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut [585]
and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts
were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a
few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership [592]
of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an
important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and [554]
their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped [727]
into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. 621
Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates
of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or [624]
his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who
were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions
made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The [602]
village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman
or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him.
Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the
headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where 631
there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions,
villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential [128]
system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the [171]
Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same 631
cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to 571
establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in
importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their
clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be
contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves
as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself
affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who
established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained
a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance.
The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters,
a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained
the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigaba*, pl. *zigaba*, from *ku-gaba*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *furiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *nyongo*, from the Zulu *isongo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 40 and 114, and Scott, *A cynonymic dictionary of the Mang'anja language spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 486, both translate the Nyanja word *nyongo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mpikiso*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-pikisa*, to help or make to cook. Weise, op. cit. 'Expedisjoe . . .', pp. 479-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *ripako*. Cf. Zulu *uku-pheka*, to cook.

[17] Called *ungwenio*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *unyalasa*, from the Zulu *uku-dlala*, or *kulyalasa*, from the Nsenga *ku-lyalasa*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

ponding payment through which they can attempt to control the relationship between the couple. Yet both groups of kin are interested in the successful outcome of the marriage, and therefore attempt to influence the choice of marriage partner. 581 583

3. Formal interaction

In the formal negotiations that precede a marriage, and in the ceremonies that mark its stages of development, the kinsfolk are always involved. The married couple depend on their kin for economic assistance, and are under obligations to help their kin. The place of residence of the couple is determined by the disposition of their kin in different villages. If the man is a labour migrant his interests are represented by his rural kinsfolk. In general it is the fathers of the couple who are most directly concerned, if they are available, but in all Ngoni situations in which a man (or woman) appeals to his kin for support there are no hard and fast rules about the genealogical positions his supporters should occupy. If a man's father is old he turns to his elder brother. If his genealogically close kinsmen live far away, he turns to those who live nearer although they may be further removed from him in genealogical terms. If there is no male kinsman available he may seek the support of an old kinswoman. 581 602

The formal situations which require the co-operation of kinsfolk are the matchmaking, the gall bladder ceremony (which we may perhaps regard as the wedding), the ceremony of first cooking, the hoeing party, the announcement of first pregnancy, the carrying of beer and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. Betrothal is another formal situation requiring the presence of the woman's kin, but as nowadays very few girls are betrothed, we shall omit this from our analysis. It will be recalled that even in the old days betrothal applied only to girls under puberty and that a girl who reached puberty without becoming betrothed proceeded to marriage without passing through any intermediate stage. The matchmaking, at which the marriage is arranged, is carried on in a formal manner but there is little ceremonial. The carrying of beer is a visit from one group to the other that can be repeated as many times as they wish, but all the other ceremonies occur but once in a marriage, if they occur at all. The hoeing party has a certain economic value but the other ceremonies are largely symbolic in content. As with the marriage payments, the marriage ceremonials can all be dispensed with and yet there be a marriage which to all intents and purposes is valid. What cannot be omitted so easily from a marriage are the patterns of respect and avoidance between the couple and their affines, particularly between a man and his wife's mother. Even here, however, there is some variation in practice. 602 [585] [584] [581] [606]

The usual procedure in matchmaking is that first the man and the woman agree between themselves that they will get married. They reach this agreement in secret without reference to their kinsfolk 584

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

584 or friends. If the man is away working or in the Army he may make his proposal by letter. When agreement has been reached negotiations can proceed although they are carried on as if there had been no prior agreement and the proposal was entirely a new one.

A man tells his eldest brother of his intention to marry, or, if he is the eldest son, he may approach his father direct. He does not [593] speak to his mother about this matter, for a man does not confide in his mother about anything connected with sex, but she is told [603] of his intention by her husband. A man ought to tell his grandmother at an early stage, particularly the grandmother who reared him. A woman tells her sisters and her grandmother, and her eldest sister will tell her eldest brother. The man's father or eldest brother may decide on who shall act as intermediaries in the matchmaking, or else the man may himself ask important people in the village to act. There is no definite rule as to who they should be, and either men or women or both may make up the party. Usually two or three people go, and a man will try and choose people who are reliable and sober and tactful. Marriage intermediaries do not have the same important responsibilities for the marriage as do the marriage [191] sureties (or witnesses) among the Nyanja and Yao although they are known by the same term.* The intermediaries go to the woman's village and consult her senior relatives. Traditionally they should go to the woman's grandmother, either her father's mother or her mother's mother, depending on who lives in the village and who is the more important. They tell her that they have heard that such-and-such a marriage has been contemplated. The girl's grandmother tells the girl's father that the intermediaries have come, and if nothing has arisen to jeopardize the marriage, the visiting party are told that all is well and that they must come back again. They return to their own village, and the next day, or the next week if it is a long way to walk, they go again, bringing with them a gift or sometimes the legalization payment. [583] The gift or money is handed to the person leading the negotiations on the woman's side who passes it on to the woman's father. Arrangements are made about the gall bladder ceremony and a date fixed. The intermediaries then go back to their village.

585 At the gall bladder ceremony the bride receives formal advice [591] from her affines and the people in their village. Shortly afterwards she begins to live with her husband in either his or her village. If they live virilocally she does not at first cook for her husband, but the couple rely on food prepared by his other wives or his mother or [593] grandmother. It may be up to a year later that the woman first cooks for her husband and husband's father, the latter commenting 843 on her cooking. When she first becomes pregnant she is anointed by her husband's grandmother, and goes with a young girl from her husband's kinsfolk to announce her pregnancy to her own kin.

* *Nikhomo.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and widows are subject to the same restrictions
581 583 585 and wear the same signs of mourning whether or not their deceased husbands made any payments. The absence of payments does not automatically deny to a man and woman the status of husband and wife any more than the completed payments automatically ensure marital happiness.

583 581 595 As reflected in Table XII, the proportion of marriages in which no payments are offered has decreased in the last twelve years, as we know from Table VIII that this is due to an increase in the number of marriages in which the legalization payment is made. It is therefore possible in future there will be a clearer division between marriage, with its legalization payment, and concubinage, with no such payment and with a completely different relationship between the sexual partners and between their respective groups of relatives. We are not in this paper concerned specifically with concubinage and prostitution, but it may at this point be useful to point out that not many women are concubines. In our sample, as set out in Table IV, there was only one concubine, a wedded woman, among 223 wedded women. From Table III, we see that there were no men at all, in our sample of 116 wedded men, living with concubines. The paramour of the concubine in our sample was resident on a nearby farm, and so did not come into the sample of men.

4. Co-operation between affines

583 585 The payments and ceremonies of marriages are isolated and memorable events. The ceremonies are public in that neighbours

583 178

Table XII. Incidence of marriage without payment, by decades

Marriage payment	Date of marriage									
	1879-87	1888-97	1898-1907	1908-17	1918-27	1928-37	1938-47	1948-9	Not known	Total
At least one payment offered	1	6	17	37	38	34	80	14	5	232
None offered ..	–	7	11	19	26	24	29	3	3	122
Ratio of marriages without offer of payment to total	0%	54%	39%	34%	41%	41%	35%	18%	—	34%
Not known if any payments offered	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR5

N 583 585 N 606 [591]

see them and to a large extent participate in them, joining in the dancing and drinking, giving presents and advice to the bride, and so on. Less spectacular are the continual patterns of interaction between a man and his affines arising from his partial dependence on them and his obligations towards them as expressed in everyday life. A man must avoid his mother-in-law and help his father-in-law with garden work, and if he is living uxorilocally he may be dependent on his affines for food and housing. If they move from one village to another he moves with them.

Avoidance is most marked between a man and his wife's mother. He must not speak to her, sit near her, pass in front of or enter her hut, and he should endeavour not to meet her on the path. Above all he must never sit on her mat, for sitting on a woman's mat is regarded as symbolically equivalent to sleeping with her. To a lesser extent a man must avoid his father-in-law, but it is not considered amiss for a man to sit at one end of a verandah while his father-in-law sits at the other. They can talk to each other if necessary. A woman is comparatively free with her parents-in-law and does not avoid their hut. The formalities of relationship between a man and his parents-in-law begin when he starts to negotiate his marriage, or earlier if their daughter is betrothed to him while she is still a child. With the passage of time a man avoids his mother-in-law less, and after the ceremony of entering her hut he can sit and chat to her. Even then it is still considered shameful for him to sit on her mat.

N 591

The Ngoni regard uxorilocal residence as part of the obligation a man has towards his wife's parents. Many couples spend their whole married life virilocally and others live permanently in uxorilocal marriage, but in describing where a couple ought to live, Ngoni speak always in virilocal terms. We have seen that in the old days virilocal residence was the rule but that a man might live uxorilocally for a while at the beginning of his first marriage after paying 'snuff-box' until he paid bridewealth (p. 5). The Cewa lived uxorilocally, but it was possible for a Cewa man to make a small payment some years after marriage permitting him to take his wife to his own village. Nowadays among the Ngoni some men, but not all, begin their marriages uxorilocally. A man may do so either because he finds it more convenient, due to lack of suitable accommodation in his own village, quarrels with his kin or shortage of food, or else because he is made to do so by his parents-in-law. A parent who does not approve of his (or her) daughter's suitor may accept the young man on condition that the couple live under his eye for a while so that he can assure himself that his daughter will be well treated by her husband. Sometimes it is said that a man who has not yet made the legalization payment must live uxorilocally until he can find the money, but this is not always done and some couples whose marriages are only 'poorly fixed' live virilocally.

M [591]

The proportion of couples who live virilocally varies from one village to another.

F

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

migrant sons, and villagers mourn for a dead kinsman of whose death in the towns they have just heard. 167 602

Although it is possible for a couple to keep in contact with their rural kin if they are diligent in writing, the amount of interaction between the couple and their kin is much less under these conditions than when they are living in the village. Even when only the man is away and his wife is living at home, the ties linking relatives by marriage cannot in general be as strong as when the individual through whom those ties pass is present in face-to-face contact with his affines. None of the ceremonies of marriage, except the obtaining of a marriage certificate, can be performed if the man is away from the village and they must wait until he returns. Ngoni say 'You cannot send beer on a lorry'. When the man returns for a rest his wife's parents sometimes seize the opportunity to send him beer, but if he has been away a long time, they may be reluctant to brew for a man they do not know very well and whose character may have changed in the treacherous environment of the towns. Even if the man is working as near as Fort Jameson township, he may have difficulty in getting away from his job just at the time his parents-in-law want him at home. [585]

Some men marry women they meet in the towns. Often an unmarried man leaves the village and a year or so later the news comes that he now has a wife. If the woman is from another tribe it is unlikely that the relatives at home will be told her name, and if the children of the marriage remain in Southern Rhodesia, they too will be unknown at home in the village. Sometimes, however, a man may marry a woman who comes from his own neighbourhood who has been visiting relatives in Southern Rhodesia or who has been divorced from another labour migrant. There is then more chance that the rural kin will be made aware of the marriage, and the children born to the couple may be sent home to one or other grandparent. If and when the man brings his bride back to the village, he goes to her village to give her relatives formal notification of what has happened, how he was in Southern Rhodesia and saw her and how they married there. Men sometimes offer the legalization payment for wives married in Southern Rhodesia when they return home. If the woman's relatives see that the man is treating his wife well, that she is well clothed and that the man is not running after other women, they may accept the marriage and brew beer for the man. If they do not approve of him there is little direct action they can take but they may try to start a quarrel sooner or later. 581 602

7. Child's parents-in-law

On either side of the married couple are their kin groups, and there is a special term to express the relationship between the parents of one spouse and the parents of the other. This relationship is thought of as one of limited co-operation. The two pairs of 602

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.'

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village.

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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I. Preparing meat for a gall-bladder ceremony. The leader of the bride's party sits on the left with her helper while the meat is cut up by the master of ceremonies.

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II. Bride kneeling on mat outside her husband's mother's hut. Standing behind her are the three women of her party.

[Facing P. 126]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

516
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III. Anointing the bride's feet with gall. The master of ceremonies rubs gall over the bride, who sits on a mat between a woman of her party and the guide.

301
302
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IV. The gall-bladder is safely pinned in the bride's hair. Thus decorated, she will return to her own village.

[Facing p. 127]

[P. 127]

Appendix I

THE GALL BLADDER CEREMONY

This ceremony is known as *lusiwa* or sometimes is referred to by the word for gall bladder, *nyongo*. If it is performed, it takes place after arrangements for the marriage have been completed and before the bride begins to live with her husband. If the couple are Christians, it is held before the banns are called. I observed two of these ceremonies in 1948. 585

The ceremony takes place in the man's village at his mother's hut. In the evening of the day before the ceremony the bride arrives accompanied by three women from her own village. They may be kinswomen or important women of the village. One of these women is in charge of the bridal party. In one instance the leader was the bride's mother's husband's son's wife, and the other two women were another classificatory sister-in-law and a classificatory sister. In the other instance the women were a classificatory grandmother, a father's sister, and a younger sister.

The bridal party are given a hut to sleep in and are fed by the bridegroom's mother. In the morning they remain in their hut and each person who comes in to greet them must do in a special way. They reply with a little song.

The bridegroom's father asks a reliable friend in the village to act as master of ceremonies. The master of ceremonies chooses an animal from the byre of the bridegroom's father and tethers it near the groom's mother's hut. A message is sent to the bridal party, and the leader comes to look at the animal. She accepts it by saying 'Yes', and the master of ceremonies, or the lads who gather round to help him, kill the animal. It is said that the bride's leader could refuse the animal if she thought it a poor one, but to do so would upset all the arrangements for the marriage which has been agreed upon, and I did not hear of any instance of refusal. The animal killed is traditionally a cow, but in the tsetse fly areas where there are no cattle a goat is taken instead. [136]

The animal is killed by slitting its throat, and the blood is collected in a bowl. The intestinal fat of the animal is cut into little pieces and mixed with the blood. The gall bladder is carefully removed. When the animal has been skinned and the meat cut up, the leader of the bride's party is called again from her hut, and makes an allocation of meat, traditionally giving the head and one leg to the bridegroom's father. The rest belongs to her party. [231]

A mat is placed in front of the groom's mother's hut, and the bride comes out of her hut, preceded by the other women of her party. They walk slowly to the mat, and sit down on it. Sometimes the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

585 bride herself refuses to sit on the mat until she has been given a present. She is joined on the mat by a small girl, aged about ten, from the groom's family, who becomes known as 'the guide'.[1] The leader of the bride's party and one other of the bride's women sit down on the mat, with the bride and the guide between them.

The instruction of the bride now begins, with a speech from some [237] important man in the village, who takes the gall bladder and anoints the head, arms and feet of the bride with the gall, going on to anoint the guide in the same way. They are then sometimes anointed with vaseline by a woman. One person after another, men and women, [867] now proceed to lecture the bride on how she should behave in the village, and each explains to her who he or she is in relation to her. The gall bladder is blown up and stuck in the hair of the bride, where she will keep it until she returns to her own village. Each person who delivers a speech of instruction gives a small present, a threepenny bit or beads, which they put into a plate on the mat at the bride's feet. This situation of formal instruction, often of an [183] abusive nature, accompanied by presents, is a recurrent one in Ngoni ceremonial.[2]

[237] Sometimes the small intestine of the animal is placed round the shoulders of a younger sister of the bride who is a member of her party. This girl is then designated linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) of the bride. This is not always done, and when it is done it does not imply that the girl will later become the real linked co-wife of her elder sister. Although in the two ceremonies I saw this designation of a linked co-wife did not occur, in both a sister of the bride was one of the bridal party.

[262] At the end of the instruction, the bride and her party go back into their own hut, and the leader cooks the liver of the animal, and the blood and fat. This she divides between the two families, sending the portion of the bridegroom's family to their hut for them to eat there. The guide stays in the bride's hut. After they have rested, the bride, guide, and their companions leave the village, taking the meat with them back to the bride's village. Outside her village the party stop, and are met by more women from the bride's family. The guide demands a small present before she will enter the village, usually beads. Inside the village the bride's mother takes the gall bladder from her daughter's head and buries it in the byre. The guide stays in the village for a few days, and demands another small present before she will assist the bride's people with cooking. When a quantity of flour has been pounded for the bride, and some maize half-pounded for the guide, the bride and the guide return quietly to the bridegroom's village. The bride begins to live with her husband, and the guide resumes her normal

[1] *Mpelekezi*, from the verb *ku-pelekeza*, to accompany part of the way. Cf. Zulu *impelesi*, girl accompanying a bride to her wedding.
[2] See above, p. 77.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

life as a young girl. She gives the half-pounded maize to the bridegroom's mother. 585

In neither of the two ceremonies I saw did the husband play any large part. He did not appear when his bride was instructed. His father sent word to him that all was going well, but he himself stayed out of the way at the other end of the village. Sometimes, however, the bridegroom does sit with his bride on the mat and is instructed with her.

Another gall bladder ceremony which I recorded was held at the time the bride went to live with her husband. This was in an intra-village marriage. In the evening the bride came with important women from her section of the village. The bridegroom's relatives were waiting to receive them, and promised to give them a beast. The bride was then handed over to them. The women went back to their own division, and returned the next day to claim the beast and wash the bride. The beast, an ox, was killed and the intestines were placed round the neck of a younger sister of the bride who became the designated linked co-wife. [231]

If Christians hold the gall bladder ceremony before the bride begins to live with her husband, it is followed by a ceremony in church. The bride does not come back to live with her husband after the gall bladder ceremony but instead goes with her relatives to the local church, where they meet a party from the man's village, and the arrangements for the marriage are set in hand. After three weeks the couple are married in church. The bride then goes back again to her village and as before she pounds flour. After a few days she comes to live with her husband, or he comes to live with her.

Appendix II

FIRST COOKING

When a woman begins her marriage in her husband's village, she cannot cook food until she has been invited to do so by her husband's parents. Until then, she relies on food cooked by her co-wives or her mother-in-law or grandmother-in-law. This state of affairs may last from a month up to a year. It is ended by the ceremony of 'making to cook' (*mphekiso*). I did not see this ceremony, and I have relied on the accounts of informants. It is said that a man's parents would be ashamed of their poverty if they did not entertain the new bride as a guest until the time had come for her to join in the general run of domestic work in the village. 592 252 593

The man's parents decide when the ceremony shall be held. On the day, the man's sisters, mothers and grandmothers prepare flour, plates, porridge pat and stirring stick in the house of the man's

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 III. Then they spread a mat and go and bring
585 her husband, and set them down on the mat side by side and begin to shave his head. As the hair falls the people throw down beads. Then they take a stick and lay it across the legs of the man and woman so that each may know it is that stick that will beat them [if they do wrong]. When they have finished shaving the man, they bring oil and rub the bodies of the man and woman. When it is dark the old women escort the girl to her husband's
[263] hut. The *ndiwo* relish is cooking on the fire. During the night the woman rises and puts some salt in the pot. Next morning, before dawn, before the villagers have opened their doors, the woman goes off, and gives some of the relish to her mother, and to the old woman who was mistress of the ceremony. This relish she just sets down at the door, and when they open they find it, and rub it on their feet and under their arm-pits; little children just eat it. If she have any relations who are at a distance, they sharpen a little piece of bamboo and stick the relish on the end (and put it aside) that the distant one, when he returns, shall also rub his feet with it. Perhaps the absent one, should he not have heard that these events have happened when he comes to the village, and should say, "Give me water that I may drink," they refuse him, but with a purpose, even though the water is there, and go and bring the relish that first he may rub some on his feet. It may be the woman discovers that her husband is impotent, then she just stays in her hut and does not come forth to distribute the relish. Then the old women [who know the reason] will persuade the man, saying, "Go
[787] off to the man with the lots to consult them"
[837] [to see what is to be done]. When he goes off (on this errand) some other man is called in, and he

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

will finish the ceremony [that the relish may be given out]. Should the girl, before she came to maturity, not have been betrothed to any man, the matrons tell her she must go to some lover; this is known as "chigango." In the evening she takes her cooking pot and relish and goes to the quarters of the young unmarried men, who for the night sleep somewhere else. In the morning the girl goes back to the *Kuka* hut.

V

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

I. When a woman becomes pregnant, the matrons of the village tell the husband "he must now no longer cohabit with her." If the man have another wife he goes off to her house. When the time draws near for the woman's accouchement, she bids her husband leave her. He goes to one of the village matrons and tells her, "My wife is very ill." Then old women go to the hut and begin to take out all the cooking utensils and household goods. Should the woman have difficulty in giving birth the old women bid her confess, saying, "Speak, child, lest you die; who committed adultery with you?" Should she have been faithless she confesses, saying, "I sinned with so and so." The matrons hide such confessions. When she is safely delivered they bathe the infant, then one old woman goes off to tell the husband, "Your wife is well." Perhaps the woman has given birth to a male child, then she tells him, "You have seen a knobkerry."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 431 porridge for them and it is refused, and they spear goats for them and they eat. Next day they go home. They of the girl's village tell them, saying, "You will hear from us." Now, if the malt for the beer be in readiness, they do not sleep many [273] days, but if not, they let a moon pass. On the day on which the beer is strained they go and call the bodyguard of young warriors, and they come along with the husband (to be) to drink the beer. The man who is to marry the girl they go and hide away in a hut on the edge of the village along with his betrothed, and the beer for them will be drawn in a little pot.

585 III. Now every one comes together at the village court and bring goats. The betrothed sits on a [302] mat. Her grandmother shaves her head, leaving a round patch of hair on the crown. When she has finished shaving her one of the men from the man's [231] village steps out and begins to kill some goats. Should a goat not die immediately it is beaten. Then the goats are skinned, and they take a spleen and let drops fall from it on the head of the girl, and then inflate all the spleens. They take the fat from the belly, and spread it in the sun to dry. Towards evening they take the girl and go with her to the *Kuka* hut, and there they take a frothy medicine, called *chitundu*, and the girl bathes with it, and her little watchman bathes also, and he (the child) takes the spleens and the fat, the inflated spleens are fastened on the girl's head and the fat over her shoulders and under her arms. The little child, when he has finished tying them on, is beaten by the men from the man's village (playfully). Then one of the village elders gets up and speaks, saying, "There you have your mother, we give her you to-day; she is subject to no disease, her illnesses consist of occasional headaches. Should she

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

go and get *tsempo*, well, we shall know she got it at your village, for here there is no *tsempo*." Thereupon all the men from the man's village, and all the women from that of the betrothed, set out to escort their "sister." On the way the betrothed is carried on the back [of some person]. When they arrive at the bridegroom's village, they are given the hut they had when they first came, and the betrothed sleeps there with all her (girl) companions. Next day four matrons come—two from the girl's home and two from the man's—and take the girl aside [into the bush]. If all is well and they find "the cattle are there," they shrilly sound the *nkulungwani* and say, "The cattle are there, the cattle are there." [That is to say they consider the girl a virgin.] Should, however, they find that "the cattle are finished" (*i.e.* must be returned to the man), the girl's father must return two or three goats, or, should the man demand it, "shave another maiden for him." In some retreat in the bush they dance the *nsindo* dance. They then go to the open village court that the bride may dance with a spear in her hand before the eyes of all men, and when she has done so her little watchman steps up and takes the spear from her hand, then the girl kneels down, and the child takes a shallow basket and begins to remove the spleens and fat the girl is adorned with (putting them in the basket), and these they place in the *Kuka* hut. They bring calico and dress the maiden and go with her to her husband's hut, and that evening he cuts the bead girdle and it is left lying on the mat. On the following morning the woman takes a jar of water and goes and freshly plasters the floor of the *Kuka* hut. An old woman comes and gets the girdle of beads and places them beside the spleens and the fat. When some time has elapsed the

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6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

585 young wife is made cook beer, and on the day it is drunk the spleens are burned and the bead girdle [301] unravelled, and the girl will make bracelets of it.

VIII

MARRIAGE (*Chipeta*)

584 I. When a girl and a man love one another, they make each other presents in secret, and when this has gone on for some time, they say, "But let these things fly away on the wind now and be heard by people." Then the man goes and tells the elders of his village, saying, "Go and ask for me at so and so's. I would live with them, for I am miserable (here)." Then some of the elders go there to ask for him, saying, "Here we have seen a (girl's) basket, and we would remain with you, for where we are we are unhappy." Then the headman replies, "First of all you must return, when we have asked the child if she consents you shall hear again." Then the deputation go off home. The man calls his children, he sees the one who is almost a woman, and asks her, saying, "So and so have come and say they want you to stay with them." And the child answers, "Well, what can I say, words which you may speak I obey." And they from the man's village return again, saying, "We have come about that proposal which we mentioned yesterday; we are most anxious for what we asked." Then the chief says, "Let the man come, he shall live here, I do not refuse." And they go back home and tell the man, saying, "We

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

went across there, and heard what he old us. He says you must go and live there." And the man says, "We shall do so, it's not far to the water." Then the old men (who are negotiating the affair) return there and say, "We shall stay with you, there is water, and it is not far away." And the village chief says, "Let him come, this is not some other land that eats up a man." Then the old men return, and bring their child and take him to the chief, saying, "Here is your man, and he has no other words [meaning complaining, bad-tempered words]; all he ever says is, 'Cook me porridge, for I am hungry.'" And the chief replies "For our part, our one has not one little thing (gainst her), cooking is her forte and pounding flour, and, perhaps, even hoeing, but as to that we do not know for certain as we have not yet seen her with a hoe in her hand." 584

II. Then the old men return, going back to their own village, and leave the child. He must sleep in the quarters of the young unmarried men, and his wife will cook his food for him until he has built his hut. He does not cohabit with her. When he has finished building it, they put him in it. At the village where he is, he does not ever see his mother-in-law, they always run away from each other. When he says, "Now I am sick of this running away, let us 'uncover' each other." Then the mother-in-law cooks beer, and the son-in-law gets some calico, and they go and call the people from the man's village, telling them that now they wish "to uncover." Then the people from the man's village come and take the man and go with him to his mother-in-law's hut. His head is still covered with his calico and the mother-in-law's also is still over her head. Then the man's brother goes and uncovers the mother-in-law and takes the 585 606

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

585 606 present of calico and gives it her. The mother-in-law pours out a little pot of beer and gives it to her "little" son-in-law, and he drinks and drinks, and one drinks and hands to the other. The brother is still sitting (covered up). When this is finished the mother-in-law goes out and the man then gets up and drinks with his companions, saying, "Now we have 'uncovered' each other, and the state of mother-in-lawship requiring one to run away from the other is finished." They now honour each other.

IX

THE RAIN TEMPLE

789 I. If the rains do not come people say, "Look at this, the rain keeps refusing to fall from above; come, let us try to propitiate the rain spirit, and perhaps the rain may come." Then they begin to make ready, saying, "Let all of you collect a few handfuls of grain, we can at least try; if we fail we shall do so having at least made the attempt." Then they begin to collect the maize, the very same day it is ground and pounded, and they boil the beer and pour it in a gourd-cup. Next morning at dawn every one comes together and they go to the rain temple. They clear away the grass that the ground may be open. He who is chief of the ceremony sits in the middle and first draws some of the beer and pours it in a pot buried in the ground, and says, "Master, *Chauta*, you have hardened your heart towards us, what would you have us do? We

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 [671] been made. It is the legalization payment that is recorded on the marriage registration certificate when one is issued.

Often this payment is postponed until some years after marriage and sometimes it is never made at all. It is generally £1. 10s., and is normally provided by the bridegroom himself out of his savings, although in the old days a man would have been helped by his father. The money goes to the bride's father, and there is no legal obligation on him to share the money with his relatives, although he may do so. Marriage ties can be reinforced by a whole series of ceremonies and ceremonial exchanges and payments between the man's people and the woman's people, and a marriage in which all these ceremonies have been performed is regarded as being 'well fixed'. In such a marriage the parents and siblings of the couple have come to know each other, have collaborated in ritual activities, and have probably had occasion to deliberate together as a court of conciliation in settling quarrels between the couple. This line of development is seldom taken in a marriage in which the legalization payment has not been made. If the husband refuses to pay, then the wife's people will not brew beer for him and his parents, and will not use their influence with his wife to maintain the marriage. We may say that in a well-fixed marriage the two families are linked together, and that in one that is not well fixed it is only the two individuals who are linked. Indeed when no payments have been made it is common for the bride's relatives to profess ignorance of the name of the husband, or at least of his parents' names. No action can be taken in the court to enforce marriage payments, although in an adultery or divorce case the court may order the legalization payment to be made.

585 476 578 The ceremonies of marriage should not be thought of merely as occasions for harmonious co-operation. They may also become the vehicle for the expression of aggression between the two families involved. This is particularly true of the obligation on the man to bring a party of his friends to hoe in the garden of his father-in-law. The hoeing party may do more harm than good to the crops if the present offered them by the father-in-law is considered inadequate.

583 178 [231] Prior to the conquest of the tribe the principal marriage payment was bride-wealth,[1] consisting of so many head of cattle. In these days, according to informants, no legalization payment was made. Nowadays bride-wealth is paid only in a small proportion of marriages, and rarely until after several children have been born. In the old days

[1] *Malobolo*. Cf. the Zulu *umb'olo-lobolo* and some dialects.

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

Among the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambezi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and headmen, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal, in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of interwoven patterns of social organisation and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *ndebekazi*. A strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was supported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount's interest in modern aspects of administration, especially 643
after his visit to the course for chiefs held at the Jeanes School in Zomba in 1934. The old councillors, sceptical though they were of many modern innovations, recognized that they were in line with European ideas of administration, and also that they appealed to the younger educated men in the kingdom who had travelled and seen other countries and ways of living.

The Paramount married NaNdau as his big wife, and though, as the [595]
text mentions, he married two other wives when urged by the senior [586]
men, he sent them away after a year or two and NaNdau remained his only wife. She had an assured position since she bore him five sons and
two daughters, the first-born being a daughter and receiving all the 644
respect due to a Royal Sister. One of the brothers of NaNdau was chief of a division, and another was *ndumo wenkosi* to the Paramount. She succeeded in maintaining much of the traditional pattern in the royal village and the big house. Her personal supervision of the household was thorough and competent. She exercised complete authority over the girls and women belonging to the household and arranged that the Ngoni custom of examining the young girls, including her own daughter, at regular intervals should be maintained. Her knowledge of Ngoni songs and dances, and her own skilled and graceful participation in the dances on state occasions, brought her before the people in her role as the big wife. At the feasts given by the Paramount she moved about among the people to serve them, and listened to complaints from the women about affairs in their villages which she then handed on to her husband.

The back verandah and all the outbuildings were the domain of the Paramount's wife. When I was there, she had some ten or twelve girls and women as well as several men working for her. They came and went if they had homes elsewhere, and the personnel changed often. All the household work was done by them: bringing water and fuel, pounding maize, and a good deal of the cooking, though this was closely supervised by the Paramount's wife. No beer was made in the household as it was [273]
against the rules of the church to which they belonged. In other Ngoni households of subordinate chiefs and *ahamwanas* who were not Christian, the brewing of beer was a time-absorbing part of the household tasks and was shared by the different wives under the supervision of the big house. In Magangu, when the Paramount was entertaining unexpected guests and wanted to offer them beer, he inquired from his *induna* if anyone was brewing beer in the village, and sent for some for which he paid. When he knew beforehand that guests were coming who would expect beer to be offered to them as part of the Paramount's hospitality, he told his *induna* to see that beer was made in one of the village households, and he paid for it.

643
The cooking which went on in the big house kitchens was always 574
extensive. The Paramount, his wife and six children had two meals a 264

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

Father's family to child

Ngoni children were indeed the children of their fathers 596
from the time of their birth onwards. They were born into a 'house', of which their father was a member. If their father divorced his wife or she ran away, the children remained in [586]
the custody of his family. We have seen how the paternal grandmother took charge of all the preparations for birth, and of the actual birth itself. It was her proud duty to present the child to the public after the 'coming out of the hut' ceremony, when she took it to the kraal gate where the assembled elders were sitting. The other senior women of Ngoni families held her responsible for advising on the spac- 342
ing between the birth of this new baby and the next, so that 596
the interests of this child should be safeguarded. If it was suspected that the young wife was pregnant again before the grandmother had planned to wean the child, the other senior women said to her: 'Look now. You are foolish. The child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to him.' That touched her on a very vital point, and she in turn accused the young parents of harming the present child. Having rebuked them, generally in public, she followed it up with a box on the ear for her son and his wife. When this [858]
next child was born it was called 'the destroyer', because by following on too quickly, it had injured the prospects of the first child.

Baby to nurse girl and women helpers

The baby, as we have seen, spent a great deal of its time in 854
the company of its nurse girl, and after weaning she was its constant companion. She and the older woman helpers who supervised her formed a counterbalancing influence to the paternal grandmother, though outwardly they obeyed her instructions about the care of the child. The nurse girl especially was inclined to be indulgent; she was young and playful; the baby was her only responsibility. She was

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (ukoseni)[1] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seducer was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[2]

As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were always killed;[3] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[1] Read, in her 'Social code', p. 18 translates this word (ukoseni) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as sukoseni. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word sukoseni as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not sukoseni, and some sukoseni are not substitutes.

[2] See below, p. 34.

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Experiences . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 180-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

new wife to replace the divorced woman. Divorce however seems to have been rare, and in the genealogies I collected I met with only one instance of divorce at this period. 586

3. *Payments and ceremonies*

Betrothal[*] was a preliminary to marriage but was not compulsory. A girl was betrothed only if she was sought in marriage before puberty and the marriage then did not take place until some years after puberty. If a girl passed puberty without being betrothed she was subsequently married without a betrothal period. A man was expected to make presents to the girl he had betrothed and he began to adopt avoidance relationships towards her parents. If after puberty the girl or her parents wished to break off the engagement they could do so but were then under an obligation to return the man's presents. The ceremony at which an aristocratic girl after puberty chose her own husband has been described by Wiese.[**] 584

In the marriage itself there are two main stages marked by two distinct transfers of cattle. The first transfer was called 'snuff-box', *mfuko*. The name of the payment is based on the practice of begging snuff from one's friends and acquaintances and indicates something trifling and not recoverable. It consisted of one beast. Payment of 'snuff-box' established the man's rights to bring an action against an adulterer but it did not give him the right to take his wife away to his own village nor to the custody of any children she might bear him. These rights were obtained only by the payment of bride-wealth, *malowolo*,[***] which consisted of from one to a dozen beasts depending on the status of the woman's father. Both payments, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth, were made by the man or, if he was a young man, by his father to his wife's father. No specifically defined relatives were obliged to help a man find his marriage cattle but a man with few cattle of his own looked for assistance to the head of his cluster. Similarly there were no definite rules of distribution of the marriage cattle among the woman's relatives and the matter 583 [591] [551]

[*] The verb is *ku-lomola* for a man, and the passive *ku-lomolowa* for a woman. Cf. Hendu *ulu-lolola* and *ulu-lololwa* in Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Present Economic Conditions* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Four), p. 41.

[**] In his later paper he calls the ceremony *isyawusale*. In the earlier paper he calls the ceremony held at first menstruation *ukwesala* and says that after this ceremony the girl went with others to choose the man she liked. The vernacular words for marriage are presumably connected with the modern Nyanja *ciwusalo*, which is now sometimes applied to three ceremonies held (1) at first menstruation, (2) six months later, *ciwusalo cachepa*, and (3) after first pregnancy, *ciwusalo cachibale*. The abstract noun *ciwusalo* is sometimes used in place of the concrete *ciwusalo*. Cf. Wiese, op. cit., 'Kopulation . . .', p. 472, and 'Geschichte . . . .', p. 191; Railway, op. cit. pp. 192 and 196; Stigand, 'Notes on the natives of Nyasaland, N.E. Rhodesia, and Portuguese Zambesia, their arts, customs and modes of subsistence', *JRAI*, xxxvii (1907), p. 131; Read, 'Tradition and prestige among the Ngoni', *Africa*, ix (1936), p. 472; Young and Hendu, *Our African Way of Life*, pp. 22-4. 591

[***] Cf. the *Zulu* verb *ulu-lobola*; also Railway, op. cit. p. 196. 551

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. The punishment of adultery

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognised other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognised and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. Labour migration

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Rhodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 on the one hand, acquire that custody without undertaking any of these symbolic acts, and on the other hand he may have full rights over his wife without ever getting control of his children.

2. Choice

584 Marriage involves choice and selection. There are prescribed 'preferential marriages' in the usual terminology, but as applied to the Ngoni this nomenclature is misleading, for, as in the old days, a woman who marries her cross-cousin does not have such high status in her husband's compound family as a wife who is not related to her husband. A man behaves in some respects towards his female cross-cousins as though they were his wives or potential wives, but it is incorrect to say that Ngoni men prefer to marry their cross-

Table III. Marital status of males by age, 1948-9

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Age in years	Marital Status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Number of wives						Total wedded men	
		0		1	2	3	Not known		
		Divorced men	Widowers						
0-4	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
5-9	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
10-14	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55
15-19	38	1	-	3	-	-	-	3	32
20-24	14	-	-	6	-	-	-	6	20
25-29	-	2	-	13	-	-	1	16	16
30-34	-	1	-	7	-	-	-	8	8
35-39	-	-	-	13	3	1	-	17	17
40-44	-	-	-	4	2	2	-	8	8
45-49	-	-	-	8	-	-	1	9	9
50-54	-	1	-	4	-	-	1	6	6
55-59	-	-	-	8	1	-	1	10	10
60-64	-	-	-	9	2	-	-	11	11
65-69	-	1	1	6	1	1	-	10	10
70-74	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	3	3
75-79	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	2
Not known	-	-	-	1	-	-	6	7	7
Total	200	7	1	89	11	4	10	116	323

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

cousins. Whether a man decides to marry a cross-cousin or an unrelated woman, he still has to decide just exactly whom he will try to marry, and similarly a woman has also to make up her own mind about whom she will accept as husband. The initiative in choosing lies very largely with the couple themselves, and not with their parents and kinsmen. If a man is diffident about asking a woman to marry him, he may ask his father or elder brother to seek out a woman for him, or a woman may have a spouse presented to

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Table IV. Marital status of females, by age, 1948-9

Age in years	Marital status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Divorced women living alone	Widows living alone	Divorced women living as concubines	Married women			Total wedded women	
					HH	HA	HS		
0-4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	58
5-9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	65
10-14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	54
15-19	20	–	1	–	14	9	1	25	45
20-24	–	3	–	–	10	11	–	24	24
25-29	–	1	–	1	17	8	1	29	29
30-34	1	–	–	–	14	8	–	22	23
35-39	–	–	–	–	19	3	1	23	23
40-44	–	2	1	–	13	1	1	16	16
45-49	–	–	2	–	13	2	–	17	17
50-54	–	3	–	–	7	3	1	14	14
55-59	–	1	3	–	6	–	1	13	13
60-64	–	1	3	–	3	1	1	15	15
65-69	–	2	3	–	1	–	–	11	11
70-74	–	–	5	–	1	–	–	6	6
75-79	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
80-84	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	4	4
Total	198	14	21	1	122	46	7	223	421

Legend

HH (Husband at Home)	Husband living within thirty miles of his wife, in a village, and not separated from her
HA (Husband Away)	Husband living permanently on a farm, or in Fort Jameson, or more than thirty miles away
HS (Husband Separated)	Husband living within thirty miles, in a village, but separated from his wife

162
586
589
591

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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Bridewealth is not often returned. A man does not usually consider offering the payment until he is fairly sure that his marriage is a stable and happy one, with little likelihood of divorce. Divorce is more the time for paying bridewealth than for taking it back. If a man has had children by a wife whom he later divorces, then,

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Table V. Incidence of bridewealth, by decades

Bridewealth	Date of marriage									Total
	1875–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–49	Not known	
Offered and accepted ..	–	1	2	2	3	2	2	–	–	12
Offered but refused ..	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1
Not offered ..	1	12	26	53	61	56	113	17	8	347
Total	1	13	28	56	64	58	115	17	8	360
Ratio of offers to total number	0%	8%	7%	5%	5%	3%	2%	0%	—	4%
Not known if offer was made or accepted ..	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

Table VI. Magnitude of bridewealth, by decades

Amount paid	Date of marriage								Total
	1875–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	
Beasts: 1 ..	—	—	—	1	1	2	1	—	5
2 ..	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
3 ..	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
4 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
5 ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
£5 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	2
Total ..	0	1	2	2	3	2	2	0	12

Informants as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unless he has paid bridewealth, the children will go to her relatives, whatever the cause of the divorce and whichever party is at fault. He can then offer bridewealth to secure custody of the children at the same time as he loses the services of his wife.

Bridewealth to-day is almost entirely concerned with the custody of children of the marriage and does not affect the rights of a man in his wife. These rights are determined by a payment which probably did not exist in the old marriage system and which we may call the legalization payment.[17] This payment is now the most important in marriage and is the only one recorded on the printed marriage certificates issued by the Administration through the Native Authorities. The Ngoni believe that the word has been taken from the Cewa, although the Cewa use the word differently. A law was made in about 1944 by the Ngoni chiefs fixing the amount of the legalization payment at a minimum of thirty shillings. Prior to this edict smaller amounts were more usual. The way in which the magnitude of the payment has varied through time can be seen from Table VII. Some people do not follow the law and pay less than thirty shillings; the majority pay the legal amount, in some areas thirty-five shillings is more usual, and recently a few fathers have successfully demanded much higher sums, up to £10, for their daughters. The edict implied that at least thirty shillings should be offered in every marriage, but marriages have been and still are being contracted without any legalization payment, as can be seen from Table VIII. However, from this table it appears that in the last twelve years legalization payments have been offered in a greater proportion of marriages than previously.

The most important right established by this payment is that to damages in the event of adultery. If a man has made the legalization payment he is sure that when his wife commits adultery the court will order both the woman and her lover to pay him damages. Adultery suits are the commonest heard in court and the legalization payment clearly establishes the fact that the man and woman are married in the eyes of the law. If the first payment a man makes is bridewealth, the legalization payment falls away, and he gains the exclusive right of sexual access to his wife without any further payment. In this respect we can see a carry-over from the old system in which bridewealth followed after 'snuff-box', and adultery was punishable by death. Usually if bridewealth is paid in a subsisting marriage, it comes after the legalization payment and is additional to it. The one payment relates to the custody of the children, the other to the sexual services of the woman. We have noted that bridewealth can be offered on the occasion of divorce when perhaps no legalization payment has ever been made.

[17] Cimade. Cf. Young, *Notes on the customs and folk-lore of the Tumbuka-Kamanga peoples*, p. 61; Cockrill, *The Native tribes of North-Eastern Rhodesia; their laws and customs* (Occasional Papers No. Five, Royal Anthropological Institute), p. 59; Barnes, op. cit. p. 237

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [586] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 491 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, [199] but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [302] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

342 The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 356 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 462 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a [591] hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 453 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 341 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [343] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 341 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her.

681 593 In court, when a woman has to pay damages or a fine, she may be able to provide the money from her own resources. If not, she can turn to her husband or to her own kinsfolk. Provided damages for adultery are not involved, her husband, if he is not away working, ought to provide the money and a deliberate refusal to do so would precipitate a major quarrel and the possibility of divorce. If a woman gets into a fight at a party, and has to pay, say, half-a-crown to someone she has hurt, her husband ought to find the money for her. If he refuses to do so though she has no money of her own, the court will say that he no longer loves his wife, and is trying to find an opportunity to divorce her. Indeed, there would be little point in the husband refusing to pay, as those who cannot pay their fines are committed to prison, and he would then lose the services of his wife.

593 421 A woman can hold property in her own right and a husband honours a well-loved wife by giving her cattle. Gifts that she gets from her own kinsfolk do not pass to her husband, and such things as blankets and mats that she has used, even if her husband bought them, are regarded as her own property. Even the money that her husband gives her to make specific purchases is her own to do as she pleases with, so that a woman may forgo the skirt for which her husband has given her money and instead give it to her sister to buy something else. Husbands do not always like such actions, but they cannot do anything directly to prevent them. One of the ways in which a wife acquires livestock of her own is by buying animals with the money she gets from her husband for clothes. The produce of a wife's wet-season garden, maize, sorghum, millet, root crops, pulses, cucurbits, is in effect held in common by husband and wife, and neither ought to sell any of it without first consulting the other. On divorce the crops are divided between them unless the court decides that one party did not work in the garden, or has deserted the other. The money a woman earns by brewing beer for sale she usually keeps, although some men say that a woman should hand the money over to her husband, lest he find her with it and suspect that she has earned it by prostitution. In practice, most women seem to keep their own earnings and it is not uncommon, where the husband is a drunkard and weak-willed, for his wife to have custody of his money as well. Indeed the simultaneous operation within the husband-wife relationship of structural separation and social co-operation is well demonstrated by the apparently paradoxical situation, of which I saw two instances, in which a man ordered to pay damages to his wife for fighting her had to ask her to hand him over the money so that he could duly hand it back to her.

6. *Mystical links*

593 Symbolic expression of the relationship between man and wife is not greatly developed among the Ngoni, and the mystical bonds

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sorrow, it is not necessarily always so, for loud wailing and tears are appropriate at the death of all neighbours and kinsfolk, whether friends or enemies. Men do not usually seek the companionship of their wives at dances and beer parties, although there are some men who do. In our own society we think of a man earning his living in company with other men, but spending his leisure with his wife. By contrast Ngoni men work in the gardens with their wives but seek other company for recreation.

7. Divorce

The relationship between husband and wife can be terminated by death or by divorce. If one spouse dies, then his or her interest in the marriage is guarded by the surviving kinsfolk, and we shall deal with their actions in our next chapter as part of the intervention of affines in a marriage. In divorce, however, except in cases of desertion, both husband and wife are themselves involved and it is primarily by their own actions, rather than by the actions of their kinsmen, that the marriage is terminated.

While a marriage is established without reference to the Ngoni state organization, except insofar as the issue of a marriage certificate is concerned, divorce most frequently involves resort to the Native courts. It is possible to effect divorce without taking the matter to the court, and in the past, before the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy had begun, many people were divorced in the village. Kinsfolk of the two parties meet together in the village of one or other party, discuss the marriage, and agree among themselves that the couple are to be divorced. The formal act of divorce is made by the couple shaking hands with each other, while those present tell them to stop hating each other. The woman is told 'If this man comes as a traveller to your house, and asks for water, do not refuse him'.

It is more usual for a divorce to be referred to the court. Attempts are made by the kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, if quarrel there is, and when the attempts fail the group seeking the divorce or hoping to get damages from the other side take the matter to the county Native Court. It is open to either the man or the woman to take the initiative in this matter. The court hears the case, awards damages as appropriate, and, if it thinks fit, declares the couple divorced. The formal act of shaking hands is sometimes performed in court, but is often dispensed with.

Divorce takes place in the village only when there is substantial agreement on both sides that it would be a mistake to allow the marriage to continue. The meeting of kinsfolk in the village may reach agreement about the return of the legalization payment or even the award of damages but it is only the court that has power to enforce decisions of this kind, and it is to the court that disputants turn when they cannot agree. When a man wishes to divorce his wife on the ground of her adultery he usually does so through the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 692 court. Women whose husbands have threatened them with divorce often bring the matter to court so that the divorce may be ratified and their grievance brought to light, or in the hope that they may be awarded damages for cruelty. If a woman does not wish to be divorced she may hope that the court will persuade her husband to take her back. In some areas where the Native Court is powerful, divorces are referred to it even after they have been agreed to in the village. The Dutch Reformed Church Mission sometimes allows divorce, but its members first seek divorce in the Native courts [994] and then, when the divorce has been granted, apply to the Mission for divorce in the eyes of the Church.

586 After a quarrel between a man and his wife he may give her a present of sixpence or a shilling and tell her that she is divorced and must go home. This act does not of itself constitute a certain divorce unless the man takes no steps to persuade her to return after she has stayed at her own village for a month or more. If the man does not go to her kinsfolk to apologize and ask them to intercede with the woman on his behalf, then it is plain that he meant what he said, and the woman may feel free to seek a new husband. A woman divorced in this way is not, however, so sure of her position as if she had been divorced in court or by agreement at a meeting of kinsfolk and there is always the possibility that her old husband may bring a suit of adultery against her and the new husband. The gift and the husband's statement 'I divorce you' constitute really only a threat of divorce, and a woman who returns to her own people after such a threat and who is not followed by an apologetic husband will, if she is sensible, take steps to clarify her status. Her kinsfolk may go to her husband's kin and discuss the quarrel with them and attempt a reconciliation or they refer the matter to the court.

A man does not need any specific grounds for divorcing his wife and if the marriage has lasted only a short time he may just say that he does not like her or does not want her as a wife. If no marriage payments have been made a man may merely say he is tired of his wife and send her home. The more common reasons given when divorce occurs soon after marriage are that a wife is always quarrelling, is lazy about preparing food, is disrespectful, or is always running off to her own village. Where the marriage has lasted longer, the most common grounds for divorce are adultery by the wife and desertion by the husband.

A woman usually seeks divorce on the grounds of cruelty or desertion. It is not sufficient for her to claim that her husband is a leper, or is mad, or has syphilis, for the court will argue that she ought to seek out the proper medicine to cure her husband. If her husband has been sent to prison, the court will argue that he went against his will and that his wife must wait for him to come out. She is more likely to get a divorce if she can prove that he is continually beating her or that he does not clothe her although he

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

has the money to do so. Sometimes a wife brings her husband to court seeking damages from him for cruelty without asking for a divorce.

The woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of desertion is usually the wife of a labour migrant. Her struggle is not with her husband himself but with her affines, his kinsfolk who try to protect his interests for him while he is away. We shall consider this type of situation in the next chapter, where we deal with the relationship between a woman and her husband's kin. Here it will suffice to say that provided the man has been away for about four years without writing the divorce is usually granted.

Actions for adultery are always liable to turn into divorce cases, and the amount of damages awarded depends on whether or not a divorce is granted. If adultery is proved, and it is easier to prove than to disprove it, the woman and her lover each pay 30s. to the husband and 5s. fine to the court. If the woman is divorced on the ground of the adultery, the damages are increased to £3 each to the husband and 10s. each to the court. In court the woman is usually asked 'Which man do you love?' and if she selects her lover, the divorce is granted. Sometimes the husband protests that he wants his wife back, but if the court is persuaded that to send the woman back would only lead to more trouble, they will divorce the woman despite the protests of the husband.

When divorce is granted the legalisation payment, if it has been made, should be returned. The court does not, however, make any definite order on this point unless called upon to do so by the man or his relatives, and it seems that in the absence of definite instructions to hand over the money, it is retained by the woman's relatives. This is particularly true when the divorce is on the ground of the man's desertion when it is likely that his interests will be poorly represented by his relatives.

If the husband has brought his wife to court in order to divorce her on some ground other than adultery, the court may merely tell the couple that they are divorced, without awarding damages to either party. But the law on this point appears to be changing, and the rule followed in one court is not always followed in another. Even in the same court the decisions given at one time may conflict with those given at another. If the court decides that the woman is at fault she may be ordered to pay £3 damages to her husband. If the man is at fault then, more rarely, the man is ordered to pay £3 damages to his wife. Occasionally, although the fault is held to lie with the man, the woman is ordered to pay £3 damages to secure her divorce. The factors influencing these decisions appear to be the readiness of any particular court to listen to the pleas of a woman, and its opinion of the character of the woman. A woman who is regarded as foolish, or given to quarrelling over nothing, or promiscuous, is sometimes ordered to pay damages to her husband

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

although the evidence presented during the hearing of the case has established the husband's fault as the ground for divorce.

Only if there is dispute over the matter will the court make an order about the division of crops. The principles of division are that the crops belong to those who worked hard to grow them and that the children of the marriage have to be fed by the parent with whom they live, whoever may eventually have their custody. Thus in a case in which a woman successfully pleaded for divorce because of her husband's cruelty, the court awarded all the crops in the couple's garden to the husband, as the woman had been lazy and had done only a little towards their cultivation.

Bridewealth is not automatically returned on divorce and as we have seen, divorce is the time for paying bridewealth rather than for retrieving it. The disposal of the children of a divorced couple is regarded as a separate issue and to be treated on its own merits.

It is useful to have some quantitive estimate of divorce frequency, but the construction of a satisfactory measure is not easy. One aspect of the occurrence of divorce is presented in Tables IX and X, where the number of divorces experienced by wedded men and women of different ages is set out.

It will be seen that, considering only those wedded men and women whose divorces are known, the mean number of divorces per head of wedded population is 0·49 (51/104) for men and 0·30 (62/210) for women. This difference may be due in part to a greater reluctance on the part of women to admit to divorce, but is also due to the greater mobility of men. While women stay at home, their husbands go off to marry in the towns, divorcing their urban wives when they return home or when the strange rural environment proves intolerable to the women from the towns.

By considering the number of years that marriages have lasted, it is possible to say what is the mean duration of marriage. The necessary information was available for 402 marriages extant as well as completed, experienced by men and women who were resident in the sample villages. The mean duration of all these marriages is 11·0 years, and the mean duration of the marriages that ended in divorce is 6·6 years. The median duration of all marriages is, to the nearest year, 8 years, and of marriages ended in divorce, 5 years. More divorces occurred in the period from four-and-a-half years to five-and-a-half years after marriage than in any other similar one-year period.*

For comparison with other societies, we can express as a ratio the relationship between the number of marriages that ended in divorce and the number that did not or have not yet done so. This can be done in three ways, as set out in Table XI.

* There is no space here to give the method by which these calculations were made, but see my 'Measures of divorce frequency in simple societies' *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, lxxix (1949) (pp. 37-62).

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The precise significance of these ratios need not concern us here. It is sufficient to note that they indicate that divorce among the Ngoni is more frequent than it is among the Ngoni people from whom they first came where divorce is said to be 'rare'.[38] The Ngoni ratios are closer to the Lamba and Bemba than to the Tswana.[39] The indication is that Ngoni informants are right when they assert that divorce is much more frequent than it used to be, for it seems legitimate to suppose that in former times the Ngoni were more like their Ngoni forbears, in this as in other things, than they are now.

Once agreed upon, either at the court or in the village, divorce

Table IX. Marital experience of males, by age, 1948-9

Present age in years	Marital experience													
	All males								Wedded males only					
	Number of marriages entered into since birth								Number of divorces experienced since birth					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0-4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	51	–	–	–	–	–	0
5-9	41	–	–	–	–	–	–	41	–	–	–	–	–	0
10-14	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	58	–	–	–	–	–	0
15-19	28	3	–	–	–	–	–	31	2	1	–	–	–	3
20-24	14	5	–	–	–	–	1	20	3	–	–	–	1	4
25-29	–	12	3	–	–	–	1	16	11	4	–	–	1	16
30-34	–	6	2	–	–	–	–	8	4	4	–	–	–	8
35-39	–	6	6	1	3	–	–	17	10	6	1	–	–	17
40-44	–	3	1	2	1	1	–	8	4	3	1	–	–	8
45-49	–	4	3	–	1	–	1	9	5	2	1	–	1	9
50-54	–	3	3	–	–	–	1	7	4	1	–	–	1	6
55-59	–	5	1	2	–	1	1	10	8	3	–	1	1	10
60-64	–	3	3	3	1	1	–	11	7	3	–	1	–	11
65-69	–	1	3	1	3	–	–	10	4	6	–	–	–	10
70-74	–	–	1	1	1	–	–	3	1	1	1	–	–	3
75-79	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	2	1	1	–	–	–	2
Not known	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	7	–	–	–	–	7	7
Total	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	11	9	3	12	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	4	1	12	116

[38] Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage among the Lozi of Northern Rhodesia and the Zulu of Natal', in Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, eds., *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage* (1950).

[39] Gluckman in Mitchell and Barnes, 'The Lamba Village: report of a social survey' (*Communications from the School of African Studies, University of Cape Town*, new series No. 24), pp. 18 ff., and Richards, op. cit. p. 130.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

is normally irreversible and couples do not often go back to each other. If a wife does go back soon after a divorce people laugh at her for having caused trouble over nothing. A husband may sometimes assert that his wife has been divorced without his approval, perhaps while he was away working, but such complaints go unanswered for it is in the interests of the court to uphold its own decisions. Even if a man is living in the rural area his wife may get a divorce if he refuses to go to court to defend his case. In addition he runs the risk of a fine for contempt of court. The somewhat lengthy process by which a woman can get her divorce despite the obstruction of her husband is illustrated by the following account of a court case.

Case history 2

In April 1946 Zachariah, a man holding the royal descent-name and married to Ruth and Naomi, began to make advances to a recently divorced

Table X. Marital experience of females, by age, 1945-9

Pre-adult age in years	Marital experience: All females: Number of marriages entered into since birth: 0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	Married females only: Number of divorces experienced since birth: 0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0-4	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	58	-	-	-	-	-	0
5-9	65	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	-	-	-	-	-	0
10-14	54	-	-	-	-	-	-	54	-	-	-	-	-	0
15-19	30	12	1	-	-	-	1	45	23	1	-	-	1	25
20-24	-	30	3	-	-	-	1	34	19	3	2	-	1	24
25-29	-	24	6	-	-	-	1	39	22	4	1	-	1	29
30-34	1	15	4	1	-	-	2	23	16	4	-	-	2	22
35-39	-	12	7	2	-	-	2	23	16	4	1	-	2	23
40-44	-	10	6	2	1	-	-	19	10	6	2	-	-	18
45-49	-	6	11	-	1	-	-	17	11	3	-	1	-	17
50-54	-	6	7	-	1	-	-	14	7	5	1	1	-	14
55-59	-	7	8	1	-	-	-	16	10	2	-	1	-	13
60-64	-	9	4	1	-	-	1	15	12	1	1	-	1	15
65-69	-	3	8	-	-	1	-	12	8	2	-	-	1	11
70-74	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	6
75-79	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
80-84	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1
Not known	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	4	4
Total	188	140	60	7	3	1	12	411	162	37	8	3	13	223

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

159
593
58%

woman who lived near the place where he was working, with the idea of taking her as his third wife. Ruth, the great wife, was living with Zachariah at the time, and tried to prevent him from marrying this woman. Zachariah desisted but then became so angry with Ruth that he gave her expense and said she was divorced. She went back to her village, saying she would get a divorce in the court. She stayed at her father's village for some time and then went back to her husband.

In October there was another quarrel between Ruth and Zachariah. According to Zachariah he told his wife to bring some tobacco from inside the hut and she refused, whereupon there was a fight. Ruth took the matter to court, complaining that in the fight Zachariah had hurt her so

58%

Table XI. Divorce ratios

Ratio	Value
A	10·5% (115/[illegible])
B	11·8% (115/[illegible])
C	36·9% (115/312)

Legend

A The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages

B The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all completed marriages

C The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages except those ended by death

124

Intermarriage

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	117	196	59·6
Women	222	331	66·4
Total	339	527	63·4

Number of marriages in which both partners were intermarried 111

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

159
583
593
582

badly that she had had to go to hospital. She produced a letter from the White doctor by way of evidence. Ruth's father testified that Ruth was the first wife Zachariah had married, yet despite this he bought her and did not fight with his second wife Naomi. Ruth asked the court to divorce her as she feared she would be killed by Zachariah. A court councillor said that although she and her husband had been to the court before with their troubles, it was not the work of the court to force men and women to divorce one another but to instruct them how to live together in peace. Zachariah was ordered to pay two pounds damages to Ruth and ten shillings fine to the court. Zachariah agreed to pay the fine but refused to pay the damages. The chief, who was in court at the time, asked him if he said this because of his royal descent-name. If Zachariah persisted in his attitude the chief would write to his employer and tell him to deduct the money from his wages. Zachariah then said he would send a boy back to collect the two pounds from his village.

Ruth went to her own village. About this time Zachariah was transferred to another area, distant from Ruth's village. In November Ruth's father began to complain that the two pounds had not yet been paid and said that Zachariah was trying to trap his wife by not visiting her, hoping she would commit adultery.

In February 1948 Ruth took out a summons against Zachariah for failing to come and visit her despite the ruling of the court in October that they were not to be divorced. The summons was sent to Zachariah in another county and Zachariah wrote back to a court councillor to say that he would not come to court as he had heard that Ruth was committing adultery with a certain man. On receiving the letter the chief said nothing could be done about it until Zachariah decided to bring an action for adultery against Ruth.

By this time Zachariah had acquired another wife and when in March he was given leave he took the new wife to his own village where his second wife Naomi had been living all the time.

In December 1948 Ruth brought an action against Zachariah for divorce on the ground of his desertion. Three times the case was down for hearing but Zachariah never appeared. The court then divorced Ruth with no damages to pay.

Hearing this Zachariah went to the District Officer and asked why his wife had been divorced without his knowledge. The District Officer referred him to the chief. Zachariah wrote a rather facetious letter to the chief challenging his right to divorce Ruth. The court clerk read the letter and said that Zachariah ought to be fined for insulting the chief. He observed that Ruth's mother had died in September and that Zachariah must be a cruel man as he had not gone to other his condolences.

592

It is easier for a woman to prove desertion in a case like this where the man is living in the rural area, than when he is away in the town working and writes sporadically if at all. The court feels that it is under an obligation to the migrant labourers of the tribe not to divorce their wives too easily. But if a husband is in the area and could perfectly easily go and see his wife, it is much easier to demonstrate that the desertion is deliberate and sustained, and not merely forced on a man by the exigencies of earning a living.

592
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We have seen that the two main grounds for divorce are adultery and desertion. Some Whites express this by saying that these are the main causes of divorce among the Ngoni and other tribes. The Ngoni do not see the matter in this light. The cause of divorce to them is the presence of the White group. Old men deplore the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

apparent ease with which women get divorces and councillors say that they divorce people only because the Administration would interfere if they did not. We can see that in one sense the Ngoni analysis is correct. Whatever may be the precipitating causes of particular divorces, one basic factor is that the old social order in which divorce was rare has been replaced, through a series of events beginning with the White conquest, by a different form of social structure in which wives are relatively mobile from one husband to another. Adultery and desertion lead to divorce because it is no longer necessary to tie down the fertility of women to definite points in a segmentary system based on patrilineal descent, and this is so because the system no longer exists. It is true that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Missions do not recognise divorce but ecclesiastical ceremonies have no force in law, either in the eyes of the Administration or of the Native Courts, and the sanctions utilized by these missions do not entirely prevent their members seeking divorce.

Immediately after a divorce the couple usually wish to have little to do with one another. After the passage of years the hostility between them fades away and they may talk to one another in the ordinary course of village life. They continue to address each other as *husband* and *wife* and their children, although nominally in the custody of one group or the other continue to visit back and forth and keep the parents informed of each other's doings. A woman now married elsewhere may return to her former husband when their son comes home on leave from work. In her old age a woman may even go back to the man from whom she was divorced a long time ago if she has no one else to turn to for shelter and assistance. More frequently she follows her children to where they are living in her former husband's village but has little to do with him directly, only through their children.

B. Co-wives

We have seen that the rights of a man over his wife's sexual activities are different from hers over his. Whereas a woman who commits adultery pays damages to her husband, he does not pay her when he commits adultery. This lack of symmetry derives from the polygynous nature of the Ngoni marriage system. A man can always argue that he is seeking another wife, even if the woman he is running after is married to someone else. It is considered no business of his wife to interfere. She may attempt to stop him but all she can use are domestic and mystical sanctions, she cannot appeal to the law. Again, a wife has no right to the sexual monopoly of her husband and cannot prevent him from taking additional wives except by making his life with her so difficult that he decides to abandon the attempt.

As can be seen from Table III, about one man in seven has two or more wives. Although the Christian Missions do not tolerate

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS' Mpezeni

by not visiting him, by refusing his presents of beer, and even by refusing to speak to him. Provided the man can find the money for the legalization payment himself, they cannot prevent the money from being handed over. The woman's kin are in rather a different position for they can try to prevent her from marrying against their wish by refusing to accept the legalization payment. It will be seen from Table VIII that this happened in four per cent (5/120) of the marriages in our sample. The woman's father may sometimes think the sum offered is too small and may refuse to accept until it is increased. The man can either give way and offer the larger sum or, if he thinks the demand is excessive or beyond his resources, he may start living with her without any legalization payment at all. He is then not so sure of his rights over his wife as he would be otherwise and his wife's parents may try to break up the marriage. Should quarrels lead to a divorce it will be easier to obtain because of the absence of payments.

The woman's relatives may, however, refuse to accept the offered legalization payment irrespective of the amount. They do this if they feel that the marriage has no chance at all of success, either because of the unsatisfactory character of the man or of the well-established unreliability of their kinswoman. By refusing the payment they hope to protect themselves against the call for damages which they feel sure is bound to come when their daughter commits adultery and her husband wants to divorce her. Even at the monetary level the amount they are likely to get as legalization payment is only thirty shillings while the damages they will be called upon to find will be three pounds. If, however, no legalization payment has been made, then the divorce should be granted without the award of damages against the woman. Thus her relatives protect themselves financially by refusing the payment, but at the same time by so doing they are trying to avoid trouble in the group of kin and quarrels with their newly-found affines. If a man before making his legalization payment shows himself to be unsuitable as a husband, or if it is plain that his wife will not be satisfactory to him, her kin will not put any pressure on him to pay and begin to hope that the marriage will end before too much trouble comes. If the payment is made, some of the woman's relatives may refuse any part of it offered to them, hoping thereby to avoid future financial responsibility for her adultery.

Case history 6

Job works in the township and had two wives. He then married the girl Rebecca. She lived with him in town for a month or two and then Job sent her back to her village to be taught to cook properly. Her mother's mother remarked 'Ever since she reached puberty we told Rebecca she must learn to cook properly but she took no notice. The other wives of Job often laugh at her.' Her mother's mother's elder sister said 'It is a good thing for us that we did not accept any legalization payment from this man.' A month or so later the marriage broke up and Rebecca was divorced.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Where a woman has already troubled her relatives by her adultery, they may try to avoid further expense by refusing the legalisation payment offered for her. 583 587 587 837

Case history 7

Rachel had had two husbands and had been divorced from them both. She had also lived with a White for some years. In 1946 she began to live with Enoa, who already had three wives. In 1948 Enoa approached an important man in Rachel's village and asked him to act as intermediary as he wished to offer the legalisation payment to Rachel's brother. This man refused to do so, and in the end Enoa approached his brother-in-law himself. The brother-in-law said that he had known his sister Rachel a long time and she was just a prostitute. He would not take the money for her. Enoa said he would speak to his wife and ask her to change her character. Eventually the brother-in-law agreed to accept the thirty shillings offered.

Although the kinsfolk of the man or woman can exercise social pressure to prevent a marriage it is difficult for them to force a girl to marry against her will, and impossible in the case of a man. We have noted that in the old days, according to informants, people married whom they were told and did not refuse. Even if this was ever true, it is true no longer. A man can move off to the towns in the face of pressure and a woman can always run away to other relatives if her parents are insistent on an unwanted marriage. The Administration does not allow girls to be married against their will, but I do not know of any recent instance in which it has intervened on this issue. A girl's relatives can show their anger by abusing her and by scaring off her own preferred mate, but they cannot detain her against her will and they cannot force her to go through the ceremonies of marriage. They cannot appeal to the court to punish the girl for disobedience. 584

In some instances pressure is put on a man by a woman's kin to force him into marrying her. If a woman bears a pre-marital child, and it is known that the genitor is an important man or chief, her kinsfolk begin to adopt towards the genitor's family the patterns of respect and avoidance which would be appropriate if he were their affine. This procedure may be adopted although it is plain to people in general that the genitor has no intention of marrying the woman. If it is unsuccessful in forcing the hand of the genitor, the formal attitudes of the woman's kinsfolk come to be generally ridiculed and they abandon the pretence. 848 848 602

So far we have considered only the attitude of kinsfolk towards a proposed marriage and the legalisation payment associated with it. The factors influencing the acceptance or refusal of bridewealth are different. Bridewealth, when offered, is not often refused. Table V shows that in our sample this happened in only one out of 360 marriages. We must remember that bridewealth is paid only in about four per cent of all marriages, and that a man is usually on good terms with his affines and has lived in peace for many years with his wife before he offers it. A youngish man may seek the 583

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 good man behaves towards his father-in-law with obedience and respect, and that he is rewarded by the gifts of beer sent to his father by his wife's father. If these gifts are not made, then the man must be 'bad' or his father-in-law 'fierce' or 'cruel'.

581 829 There is one type of marriage in which none of these ceremonies are performed. This is what is known as the 'poorly fixed marriage'* which lies on the borderland between marriage and concubinage. People do not expect a 'poorly fixed' marriage to last long, and this expectation is based more on their estimation of the characters of the couple involved than on a consideration of the absence of marriage ceremonies and payments. If a couple, who have shown by their general behaviour that they are fickle and quarrelsome, begin to live together without going through any of the formalities of marriage, people speak of their marriage as 'poorly fixed'. If the union breaks up there is no divorce procedure and the couple merely go their own separate ways. The categorization 'poorly fixed' is not applied to all marriages in which there are no marriage [583] payments, for poverty is usually regarded as a valid excuse for not offering money or animals or for not brewing beer. It is rather poverty of character and love of promiscuity and fickleness that lead to 'poorly fixed' marriages.

581 Sometimes a marriage which begins as 'poorly fixed' lasts for some time and becomes accepted as a proper marriage. An example of this is the marriage of Rachel and Esau (p. 63). In 1946 I was told this was a 'poorly fixed' marriage and that it would not last. In 1949 opinion had changed, and as we have seen, Esau succeeded in making the legalization payment for his wife. Even if his money had been refused his position would still have been better than it was in 1946 for he had shown that he could live with Rachel for three years without an undue amount of quarrelling and she had not drifted off to some other man. By making the legalization payment [583] Esau made his rights over her more certain.

[829] People who live in 'poorly fixed' marriages are not despised for doing so, but are rather pitied for their moral inability to make a 'well fixed' marriage. They are never so sure of the support of their relatives and neighbours as they would be otherwise. A man who ●586 has not made the legalization payment may be supported by his wife's relatives when she commits adultery if they think that he is a good husband and that it is she who is at fault in the matter. But if a man neglects his obligations towards his wife's parents and in particular does not approach them formally at the beginning [606] of the marriage to tell them of his desire to marry their daughter, they may turn on him if he tries to exercise rights over the woman. In court, the wife's father may look at his son-in-law, who perhaps has been his neighbour for many years, and say 'Who is this man? We do not know him'; and the court will refuse to recognize his claims.

* *Ukuti owayowaya.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

claims. In retrospect, when discussing an erstwhile 'poorly fixed' marriage that has broken up, people will say 'That was not a proper marriage', and 'She was just his friend'. In all the tables we have excluded 'poorly fixed' marriages from consideration.

The initiative in strengthening a 'poorly fixed' marriage lies with the man and not with the woman's relatives. If their daughter is living with a man who has not made the legalization payment they cannot bring him to court and force him to pay. If their daughter has only just passed puberty there may be grounds for an abduction suit, but if she has been married before or is considered old enough to decide for herself, her relatives are unlikely to take any action in the courts against her husband. The woman cannot be forced to return to her own people. Similarly if no bridewealth has been paid, the children cannot be forced to live in one village rather than in the other. They can be asked to do so, but they cannot be taken to court if they refuse.

All 'poorly fixed' marriages are marriages without payments, but not all marriages without payment are 'poorly fixed'. It will be seen from Table XII that no payments at all have been offered in about a third of the marriages in our sample. In some of the marriages for which there have been offers of payment, these consist only of the small present given as 'snuff-box'[7] in modern marriage. Yet these marriages are valid despite the paucity or absence of payment. Many of them have lasted for a long time and the lack of payment is almost forgotten. It would be an act of maliciousness on the part of the woman's relatives if after twenty years of happy married life they began to remind her husband that he had not yet made the legalization payment. With the increasing importance of marriage certificates on which the legalization payment is recorded, and the rise in power of the Native Authority, the position may well change in years to come. At present, most marriages without payments are more like marriages with payment than they are like the unions of men with concubines and prostitutes. The persevering inquirer may unearth the lack of payments, but in the day-to-day life of the village, as well as in many of the formal situations of marriage, this lack is not significant. In the work of the garden, in the sharing of food, on festive occasions when there is beer and dancing, there is no distinction between wives married in one way or the other. More significantly, we find instances where despite the absence of any payments, beer has been brewed for a daughter's husband and he has been invited to go through the ceremony of 'entering the wife's mother's hut'. Some marriages are solemnized in church, with the approval of the parents on both sides, without any payments being made. The rules of avoidance between a man and his wife's mother operate independently of the marriage payments, and widows are subject to the same restrictions

[7] *Mfuko, ceremoni, ceremoniomo.* See above, p. 88, n. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

and of the village can be heard at the other, ensures that all quarrels soon become public knowledge. The quarrels of any members of the village are known to, and in greater or lesser degree are the concern of, everyone else in the village. Beyond the confines of the village, kinsfolk living in neighbouring villages can soon be called in and in any case soon come to hear of a serious dispute. In a quarrel between man and wife there are certain restrictions on the extent to which affines can intervene, and there are certain regularities in the way in which they are brought into the ambit of the quarrel.

When a woman has a serious quarrel with her husband, she runs away. If the couple are living uxorilocally she may not go very far, and may take shelter with a friend or relative at the other end of the village but the consequences are much the same as if she had gone off to a kinsman several miles away. As a woman flees from the anger of one relative by seeking refuge with another or with her affines, so she flees from her husband to the shelter of a kinsman or kinswoman. Occasionally a woman will go to someone to whom she is bound only by bonds of quasi-kinship, as for example to a former playmate or school friend whom she addresses by a kinship term, but this is not common. If her husband makes no effort to persuade her to return, it is assumed that he does not want her back and that he is trying to trap her into committing adultery. A woman can sue for divorce if her husband has allowed her to stay away after a quarrel and has not tried to get her back again.

Case history 5

Abner was married to Esther and had paid the legalization payment. Abner suspected her of cavorting with another man in the village and beaten her. He then told her he was contemplating taking another wife. Esther ran off to her father's village about eight miles away and stayed there five months. Abner did not come to see her and she complained to the court. Abner was asked in court why he did not go to visit Esther and replied that he had had no time to do so as he had been ill. Esther said that Abner always suspected her of being a prostitute, but she wanted Abner as her husband; the trouble was that Abner did not want her or she he would have followed her to her village. The court agreed that Abner did not want Esther as a wife and was merely setting a trap for her, hoping to get damages for adultery when Esther had been left alone a long time. Abner was ordered to divorce his wife. He refused to do so, saying that he still liked her. Esther said that if Abner still wanted her he must come and live with her in her father's village where her father could see how he looked after her. Abner refused to go and live there. The court then divorced Esther without awarding any damages to Abner.

The correct behaviour for a husband when he finds that his wife has run away is to inquire from her friends in the village where she has gone, and then to hurry after her himself. It would not be considered right for him to send an intermediary; he must himself go and apologise. Arriving at the hut of the relative with whom his wife is sheltering, he does not speak to his wife but first asks the relative to intercede with her. They discuss the cause of the quarrel, and if it can be settled easily, as for instance when the man admits

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

Gideon as Gideon's village was on the point of moving from one country to another and they resolved to begin the case in the right court.

Dinah, Deborah's mother, admonished her daughter:

'My daughter, ever since I married my husband, I have never committed adultery with anyone who was not my husband, and I have never asked anyone to give me medicines so that Reuben would love me. My husband loves me because I obey him, and he looks after me well. In addition he looks after you, who are not his real daughter. Believe my words, when Reuben dies, you will not find me married to such a good husband who can look after me and all my children. I want to tell you not to drink beer all night long because your husband was away working. You did not obey me, and see now you have done wrong to both parents, your own parents and the parents of your husband. We will regard you as a bad child who has not been well instructed; and the parents of your husband will regard us as bad people for not instructing you well. Now it is up to you because you are a fully grown person.'

Daniel's father said that the man who had made Deborah pregnant would be punished by the court, and that now Daniel and Deborah must be told to live in peace. Daniel said that he had nothing more to say as the people who had been sleeping with his wife had been identified. He would take them to court and would live peacefully with his wife. The meeting then ended.

Two months later Daniel took Sulwane to court, and Deborah and Sulwane were each ordered to pay Daniel thirty shillings damages.

We see in this account the constant interest of the kinship in maintaining the marriage. Divorce was never mentioned. Instead, Deborah was told to change her ways. Her father-in-law argued that she should be forgiven as she had already borne children to Daniel. Her mother's husband, although he was more diffident about the matter than if she had been his own daughter, tried to prevent her quarrel with Hannah from worsening when he prevented her taking the chicken offered her. Although Reuben was only her step-father Daniel considered him, rather than his own father, the proper person to deliver a reprimand to Deborah.

Occasionally the aftermath of a marital quarrel is neither reconciliation nor divorce but a state of affairs we may call separation. If a wife runs away, or if her husband goes off to work and avoids her on his return, there may be attempts at reconciliation which may fail or there may even be no attempts. Not every woman in this position seeks divorce. Some still hope that their husbands will return, particularly if there are growing children to be cared for, while others may be bound by the rules of their religion against divorce. If a woman is old and does not wish to take another husband, she may be disinclined to take the trouble to obtain a divorce. It will be seen from Table IV that there are only a few women in this condition. They live with their own relatives and sometimes maintain indirect contact with their husbands through their children who visit back and forth. This category of separation is applicable only where the husband is living near his wife. If a man is in Southern Rhodesia and does not write, we cannot say whether or not he is, in this sense, separated from his wife. His

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Hgood FRS
Mpesseni

attitude towards her can be tested only when, if ever, he returns to the rural area.

A man whose wife runs away and who will not return may likewise continue to hope that one day she will change her mind and return to him, and for this reason will not divorce her. Unlike a woman, a man in this condition does not jeopardise his chances by taking a fresh spouse, and therefore it is rare to find a man whose only wife is one separated from him. It will be seen from Table III that there were no men separated from all their wives included in the sample.

In both separation and in the procedure by which a man "leaves his wife in disgust",[*] sexual intercourse ceases between the couple. In other respects the two procedures are quite distinct. When a man "leaves his wife in disgust", he stops sleeping with her but he continues to treat her as his wife. She has her hut next to her co-wives, her husband sits on her verandah, and she can rely on his help in the garden and in the care of her children. If she is separated from him, she must fend for herself. Her status as wife is significant only in that she does not marry anyone else.

6. The absent husband

A man appeals to his kinsfolk for support, but they do not replace him in the marriage relationship. His wife is linked mystically to him but not to them, and the right of sexual access to her is held by him alone. It cannot be exercised on his behalf by his kinsmen. He takes the initiative in appealing to them in a marital dispute, and his agreement is necessary at each fresh stage of events. If, however, the man is not there, his kin act on his behalf as far as they are able.

Most adult men, at some time or other, go away to work in the towns or mines. Some men take their wives with them but at any one time, as can be seen from Table IV, between a quarter and a third of all married women living in the rural area have their husbands away working either in Fort Jameson township, in the towns of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, or living permanently on the tobacco farms around Fort Jameson. When a man goes away to work, no one can tell when he will return. Some men go off and never write or come home again. Others write regularly, send home money and clothes, come home themselves for visits, and remain in close contact with those at home. Friends and relatives may give news of a long vanished migrant whom they have met in Southern Rhodesia.

For at least the first two or three years the assumption is made that a man intends to return, even if he does not write. If his wife is living uxorilocally she will probably continue to do so. If she is living in her husband's village, as long as she stays there she can depend to some extent on the support of her husband's relatives, who may help her with her hut and garden, and if they are kind-hearted

[*] See above, p. 41.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

and have the money to spare, they may buy her clothes. The only way in which she can raise money easily for herself are by brewing beer, making pots, and working on the farms. To work on a farm she must, however, remove herself from the surveillance of her husband's kin, and unless she goes to join a contingent from their village working at the farm, they may think she is running away from them to seek a lover or new husband. We have seen, however, from Table XIV that significantly more wives whose husbands are away live unmarkedly. 593 167 591

Lazy husbands write home, not only to their wives, and some emit postal orders and bank-notes. A man may get a friend who is returning from Southern Rhodesia to take home blankets and other baby articles to be handed over to his wife. He may send presents like these direct to his wife or he may think it more prudent to send them to his father or brother and allow them to hand on to his wife as much as they think fit. The woman must then behave herself in the eyes of her affines if she wishes to receive her husband's presents. The acceptance of these gifts is taken as proof that the woman is still dependent on her husband however long he stays away. If the woman applies to the court for a divorce on the ground of desertion, the presents will be cited by her husband's kinsfolk as evidence that there is no intention on his part to desert. Gluckman reports from the Lozi that even if a man sends goods, after a statutory period the court will hold that 'a woman marries a man and not a blanket', that is, the husband must return to live with and sleep with his wife as well as send clothes to her. This argument is not used among the Ngoni. A woman who complains that she is not satisfied with marriage under these conditions is told to write to her absent husband and ask him for the fare to join him in Southern Rhodesia. 596 191

Case history 10

Gwel was working in Nyasaland. He sent home to his wife 7s. 6d. for clothes. Later she wrote to him saying she wanted him to return. He sent her 18s., being 6s. for clothes and 10s. bus fare so that she could join him. She did not go and later went to the court complaining she had been deserted. Her husband's relatives argued, to the satisfaction of the court, that as her husband had sent her these gifts he was still taking care of her. The court dismissed her plea as she had refused to go to Nyasaland when the fare had been sent. 596

The husband's relatives try to watch carefully the movements of the woman so that they may prevent or at least report any adultery on her part. If they are in touch with the husband, they write to him should they suspect infidelity. Sometimes the husband ignores their letter, sometimes he gives them instructions how they should proceed in the matter, and sometimes he returns to the village to see for himself what is going on. He arrives without warning and hopes to catch his wife in the act. If all is well and he is satisfied that his wife has been faithful he usually goes back to work again. 593 167 602

4: Barnes E-S (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

because her husband's sibling so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere* an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her sibling. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court.

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages.

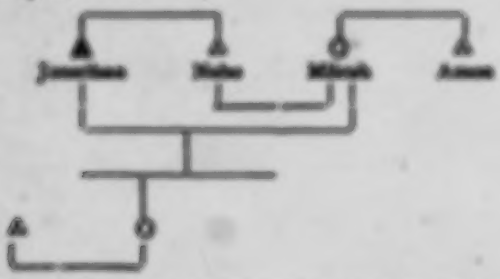
8. Other Kinsfolk

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of

* See Barnes, op. cit. p. 232

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Case history 12



Nuhu inherited the wife, Mikeh, of his elder brother Jonathan. Neither brother paid bridewealth. One of the daughters of Jonathan and Mikeh was married and the legalization payment for her taken by Nuhu. In 1947 Nuhu brought his wife to court in divorce law. He said that she was always committing adultery and he was afraid that one day he would kill her in anger. Mikeh's brother Amos complained that Nuhu had taken the legalization payment of Jonathan's daughter, and insisted that if there was a divorce custody of all Mikeh's children should be given to him. This was accepted by the court, who told Nuhu that if he wanted the children he must pay bridewealth. The divorce was granted and £5 damages awarded to Mikeh. The payment of bridewealth was left undecided.

in marriage, and some people are beginning to confuse the rights originally transferred by it with the rights *in genitrices* associated with bridewealth. The vernacular term for the legalization payment (*ximale*) is common to many tribes in the Eastern Province, whereas that for bridewealth (*malowale*) is peculiar to the Ngoni. Bridewealth is not recorded on the marriage certificate whereas the legalization payment is. It is possible that while the rights *in genitrices* relating to the residence of the children of the marriage will remain indefinite and unenforceable, rights *in genitrices* relating to the acceptance of legalization payments for the daughters of the marriage will become attached to the legalization payment itself. This trend is illustrated by the following incident.

Case history 13

Simon had been married for many years and his daughter was being sought in marriage. Simon's wife's brother Nimshi came to see him to remind him that he had not yet handed over either the legalization payment or bridewealth for his wife. Simon admitted this. Nimshi said that someone would soon be offering a legalization payment for Simon's daughter. If Simon wanted to keep the money he must first offer the legalization payment in his own marriage. Simon paid Nimshi and kept the payment for his daughter.

Here Nimshi held that the legalization payment offered by Simon entitled Simon to keep the legalization payment offered for his daughter. According to traditional usage Nimshi should have insisted that Simon paid bridewealth not merely the legalization

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

In the particular

427 field of urban housing, however, the form of marriage becomes
581 important and a man may be required to show that he is legally married before he can rent married quarters.

The work of the court is, in the words of the councillor hearing the
693 plea of Ruth (p. 84), 'not . . . to force men and women to divorce
581 each other, but to instruct them how to live well together'. Whereas kinsfolk have an interest in a particular marriage, the court is concerned with the well-being of the tribe as a whole, and the maintenance of Ngoni values. It has a particular interest in those aspects of marriage in which the Native Authority bureaucracy is concerned, namely the issue of marriage certificates and the handing over of the legalization payment. In court as yet, no inquiry is made as to whether a marriage certificate has been issued in respect of any particular marriage. These certificates were first introduced only a few years ago, and if a married couple want one they must make a visit to the court accompanied by one or two relatives, and pay sixpence fee. They do not go to this trouble until they need one for the journey away from Fort Jameson. This may be after several years of married life.* In village discussions of marriage I never heard mention of marriage certificates, nor did I see a litigant produce one in court. One man, obtaining a certificate for his marriage that had taken place a year previously remarked that in these days one could not be sure of damages for adultery unless one had a certificate. I think he was ahead of custom in this matter, but as the same individuals issue certificates and try cases, it seems probable that such a development will take place. But even with the increased importance of the issue of certificates, it seems likely that the role of the court as primarily a conciliatory body will continue for some time, so long as court members do not become a body of specialists differentiated from the rest of the population.

693 The court is reluctant to grant divorce to a woman on the ground
581 of her husband's desertion if he is a labour migrant until it can be shown that she has made efforts to trace him and has given him a chance of re-establishing contact with her. Therefore, women are made to write to their husbands informing them of their intention to proceed with a divorce. These letters are sometimes shown to the court as evidence that they have been written. It is only after an adjournment of several months that the court will take up the case, and the wise woman, during this time, avoids any indication that she has a new husband in view. It is, as it were, assumed that there is always a suspicion of adultery, but if her husband's kin cannot marshal any evidence against her, the court will grant her plea. It is felt by some court members that the attention paid to the pleas of women is forced on them by the Administration, and they are anxious to show that they do not divorce women too

* Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 84.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

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ously. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both the and your parents. You do no good to your families by deserting them all when you are in a strange country.

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, sub-chiefs, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village.

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The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained.

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One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another

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4: Barnes 1-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

if the latter is able to leave the area legally.[*] Various devices have been introduced to prevent women from using other people's passes, such as recording finger-prints on the certificate. On the other hand there is a great variety of ways in which women contrive to leave the area without a proper pass, such as marrying the bus driver for the duration of the journey, getting off the bus and walking round the checkpoints, and so on.

13. The Administration and the missions

Under the Lawful Northern Rhodesia, which guide the Administration, the only valid marriages between Africans are those performed in accordance with 'customary tribal law'. There has never been any systematic attempt to codify the rules implied by this phrase, and in no particular case that comes before the Administration's courts, the views of individual African assessors must carry weight. The tendency has been to try and discover what used to happen in the oldtime rather than what was the *de facto* law at the time. On the only hand, there appears to have been a feeling that women were entitled to certain rights in equity that may perhaps have been connived with the proviso that 'customary tribal law' shall not be administered when it is 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. The Administration has certainly been sympathetic towards deserted wives seeking divorce and has encouraged Native Courts to allow their pleas where the husband has been many years away and has no written home. In the past the District Officer on tour has divorced batches of women who had applied in vain to the Native Courts for divorce on the ground of desertion. It has been argued by the Administration that since chiefs depend on the gifts of returned labour migrants to supplement their own income, they are reluctant to offend men by divorcing their wives in their absence. There are fewer divorces, in relation to the same number of pleas, granted in Ngoni courts than among the neighbouring Cewa, who are subject to the same Administrative and mission influences. The Ngoni find a consolation in this comparison. They merely observe that there are more divorces now than there used to be, and blame the Whites for the change.

The missions are all concerned with the development of Christian marriage, but their ideas as to what this is differ from one denomination to another, as do their views on the relationship of Christian to other types of marriage. The White Fathers and the Universities Mission to Central Africa do not allow divorce, while the Dutch Reformed Church Mission does. The U.M.C.A. insist that all 'customary obligations' shall be fulfilled before a marriage can be sacramented between Christians, the White Fathers

[*] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 245f for the rules regulating the movement of women beyond Fort Jameson District.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

teach that the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of marriage payments is no concern of the Church, while the D.R.C.M. have a rule that bridewealth shall not be paid although this rule does not seem to be enforced. In general, in the village and in the court, the obligations of Christians are thought of as supplementary to their obligations as ordinary men and women, and Christian ceremonies to some extent supplement, but do not replace, traditional ceremonies. Thus there may be a church wedding in addition to a gall bladder ceremony, and a divorce in the eyes of the mission following after a divorce in court. Pressure has sometimes been put on chiefs and court members to act in accordance with the teaching of the mission, as in a past attempt on the part of the Catholic White Fathers to prevent courts from granting divorces to Catholics.[99] This type of intervention has applied particularly to courts where the chief was himself a Catholic. The Administration has opposed this pressure, and does not itself recognise any legal significance in religious ceremonies.

14. Spouses and kinsfolk

We may see the married couple in the middle of a system of relationships which connects them with persons and institutions each interested in their behaviour and in the maintenance of the marriage tie. By living peacefully together, by producing children, and by fulfilling their obligations to their kinsfolk and affines, they can, with discretion, satisfy the divergent claims implicit in this system of relationships. If they begin to quarrel, their kinsmen and neighbours attempt in the first instance to reconcile them. Only when this is impossible do those interested in the marriage begin to split up into groups with differing interests whose rival claims must be weighed by the court. Even then it is hoped that reconciliation will be possible, that a wife will return to her husband after she has paid him damages for adultery, and a husband return to his wife after many years of neglect. Whereas in the old days marriage was related to a fairly definite residential system, and rights and obligations were clear cut, nowadays the forces holding together a body of kinsfolk are weaker, and the danger of disruption of the group because of quarrelling is greater. The genealogical composition of the group is more variable and alters from year to year. Marriage, as one of the mechanisms by which local groups are built up, is part of the general political process, and is affected by inter-group and inter-personal relations that at first sight appear to have little to do with marriage. We observed that tribal and religious affiliation are significant criteria in a possible spouse. The divergent interests of less permanent groups, such as cliques and factions, influence choice of marriage partner and behaviour within marriage, as we have seen in the stories of Absolom and Mary (p. 60) and Amos and Eve (p. 28). Conversely, marital interests affect non-

[99] Cf. Richards, op. cit. pp. 83-4, for similar events among the Bemba.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

as well as to her husband and his kin, while a man tries to enlist the support of his own kin but not usually of his wife's kin if the dispute has nothing to do with marital affairs. At birth and death the division of labour and responsibility is mainly on sex lines. In general we may say that the elementary family does not emerge as a grouping of importance because there is no system of elementary families in which it can do so. Village is pitted against village in dances, songs, the collection of tax, beags, division of food, and so on. In other situations, here group of kinsmen act as a body in distinction to another group of kinsmen who are their affines. We have demonstrated this for the ceremonial situations of marriage and for the resolution of quarrels. In the intimacies of the hut, man and wife are in a simple and specific dyadic relationship which does not admit of substitution. To some extent, their infant, from conception to weaning, is a helpless appendage of this relationship. From weaning on, children acquire other social relationships of their own. The distinction drawn between marriage and the care of children is well illustrated by the remark made by an old widow when I asked her why she did not marry again. She replied 'I am now too old for marriage. My job is to look after children.' The missions encourage men and women to bring up and care for their own children, particularly where the children's grandparents are pagan. At the same time the importance of the economic ties that link every Ngoni household with the rest of the world is increasing and it is easier for men to find extra money when they are young and middle-aged than when they become grandparents. These two factors may lead to an increase in the importance of the elementary family, but it is also possible that the number of children sent home from Southern Rhodesia to their grandparents may grow as more women go there to join their husbands, thus increasing the responsibilities of the old towards their young grandchildren.

9. *Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce*

We have seen that whereas in the old days divorce was infrequent, it is now comparatively common. We have also seen that prior to 1898 the kinship structure of the Ngoni was based on localized agnatic and quasi-agnatic lineages, for the captor-captive relationship was similar to that between father and child. These lineages are now no longer effective social groups, and individuals act and live together with cognates and affines related to them in a variety of ways. This parallel change in divorce frequency and in kinship structure provides confirmation for the hypothesis put forward by Gluckman that divorce is rare and difficult in tribes organized on a system of marked father-right, and frequent and easy to obtain in other types.* This hypothesis was suggested by a comparison of different tribes which Gluckman divides into two types. Among

* Gluckman, op. cit., p. 190.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

others, the Zulu and Nuer have agnatic lineages and rare divorce, while the Lozi and Ila lack agnatic lineages and have frequent divorce. The Ngoni before 1888 appear to belong to the first type and the Ngoni of the present-day to the second. In 'the time of peace' the fertility of the married woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth to her husband's lineage segment, and the children whom she produced were recruits to that segment. Her agnates could never claim the children for their matrilateral segment. Associated with this system were the levirate, the sororate, and the right to enforce betrothal on pain of the return of gifts. The simple legal family was a relatively stable unit, and its position within the lineage segment was determined rigidly by the ranking of co-wives. Divorce was rare and could be effected only on the initiative of the husband. By contrast the affiliation of children nowadays is not fixed, and the very groups themselves to which they would formerly have attached themselves are no longer important. The children borne by a woman, whatever marriage payments have or have not been made for her, are potential recruits to local kin groups led by a variety of different relatives. Compared with the past, the simple legal family is unstable and divorce is frequent and easy. As might be expected, the levirate and sororate and enforceable betrothal, the trappings of the old system, have declined in importance.

Gluckman also suggests that in general, marriage payments fall in value with the decreasing dominance of patrilineal descent, although he cites the Ila as a virilocal people with high marriage payments, no agnatic lineages and frequent divorce. He regards the influence of property on marriage payments as secondary, but writes: 'On this hypothesis, which needs more testing, the amount of goods transferred and the divorce rate tend to be directly associated, but both are rooted in the kinship structure. It is rare divorce which allows high marriage payment, rather than high marriage payment which prevents divorce.'[9] The Ngoni material suggests that payments, kinship structure and divorce frequency are connected and that among them, as among the Ila, frequent divorce does not preclude high payments.

We may distinguish three phases in the history of Ngoni marriage payments. Prior to 1888 bridewealth varied in amount from one to a dozen beasts, depending on the status of the woman's father. In addition, recently captured women were married, both by men of high and low status, without payment of cattle. There is no indication that divorce was any less rare in one section of the community than another. In our pre-1888 sample, as set out in Table I, only one marriage out of eighteen ended in divorce, despite the absence of payments in half the marriages. It is true that in the single instance of divorce there were no marriage payments, yet even this marriage does not suggest marital instability as we

[9] Gluckman, op. cit., pp. 192, 200.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

have been discussing it. Divorce took place because the man, a recently captured Kunda, ran away back to his former tribe leaving his wife, daughter of one of Mpezeni's lieutenants, behind in her father's village. In 'the time of peace' marriages were stable, with or without payment. The wealthy men were the politically important men, and indeed Wren's assertion that men married off their daughters so as to gain the maximum number of cattle[8] may be based on the behaviour of socially ambitious fathers in what was largely an upward-mobile society. Political affiliation effected by marriage was ratified by a transfer of wealth appropriate to its importance in the general field of political and social relations. Divorce frequency and kinship structure were the same for rich and poor, aristocrats and captives, and were neutral factors in determining the amount of marriage payment.

The second phase began immediately after the war of 1896 and lasted until about 1930. At the beginning of this period the tribe as a whole was poorer than it has been before or since. Many cattle were lusted in the war and for a long time there was little money in circulation. The majority of marriages without payment were contracted during this phase, and it seems reasonable to associate this in part with the poverty of the people. It is difficult to make any precise estimate of divorce frequency at this time, although we know that many Cewa and Nsenga women who had been married before 1896 deserted their husbands and returned home when British control was established. There does not seem to be any evidence for supposing that at this period women moved from one husband to another within the confines of the Ngoni kingdom more quickly than they do now. It is perhaps safe to say that the low level of payments was due partly to poverty but also partly to the general uncertainty about the future, about the kind of society which the White Administration was building for the Ngoni. Evans-Pritchard has stressed that 'It is morals that ensure divorce and law that refuses to recognise grounds for divorce which ensure the stability of the union of husband and wife.'[9] The laws and moral code that had been enforced by the old chieftainship had been shaken by the defeat of 1896. The payment of bridewealth had defined legitimate expectations of behaviour, obligations and rights, within an organised system of social relations which had been shattered. While many Ngoni must still have regarded marriage with payment of bridewealth as morally right and desirable, they must also have been aware of the greatly increased risk they were running when making these payments, even if they had the cattle to make them. Rights *in rem* and *in personam* which were socially recognized but could not be enforced through the machinery of the State were hardly

[8] See above, p. 3, footnote 3.
[9] Evans-Pritchard, 'Social character of bride-wealth, with special reference to the Azande', *Man*, xxxiv (1934), p. 174.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled already related groups of kin to 'become the behaviour of one another in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[14] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call on their agnatic agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group, so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stabilising marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes. Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 172.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

rare divorce, has survived despite loss of sovereignty, territorial dispersal, economic impoverishment, high incidence of labour migration, and frequent adultery and illegitimacy.[11] The Ngoni, subjected to similar external processes, but in addition surrounded by matrilineal peoples and themselves largely of matrilineal origin, have lost their agnatic affiliation and, with it, stable marriage.

It is difficult to see exactly where this trend will lead. The third phase, as I have characterized it, is a recent development. There does not seem to have been any sharp rise in marriage payments until the 1939-45 war. During the war many Ngoni men earned higher wages than ever before in the Army and in industry. It may have been this that was decisive in raising the level of payments. It will be remembered that the thirty shillings minimum for the legalization payment was fixed by law during the war. It may, however, be suggested that if it is hoped by raising the level of payments to achieve stability in marriage, this hope is in vain. Payments may rise if people are in a position to pay more. Higher wages permit higher marriage payments without necessitating further changes in economic life, but in fact these changes are already taking place. Money is needed for more clothes, more food, more education, as well as for higher marriage payments. Payments rise as Africans participate increasingly in the general money economy of Southern Africa. The more they participate, the less marriage is constrained by a kinship structure based on morally significant face-to-face relations between agnates. The higher payments rise the more frequent becomes divorce. This is not a long-term prognosis, for I have indicated above that affiliation is not the only possible determining factor, and it is clear that if more people align themselves with those missions which do not permit divorce, the frequency of divorce as a whole may decline. There are other possibilities, but it seems to me unlikely that any of these other social mechanisms will become effective quickly; therefore the most probable concomitant of a rise in marriage payments in the immediate future is more frequent divorce.

Thus we see that at least for the Ngoni, changes in the amount and distribution of property have had a marked effect on the level of marriage payments, and that this effect can to some extent be isolated from that due to changes in kinship structure and in divorce frequency.

10. Attempts to resist change

The major structural changes taking place in Ngoni society in the last fifty years have not come about entirely unopposed. The Administration, the missions, and the Ngoni people themselves have noticed from year to year how the old order was changing and with varying success have made attempts to control the direction of change.

[11] Cf. information from Kark cited by Gluckman, op. cit., p. 204, footnote 1

otherwise outside of the child will still vomit. Medicine is taken also by women who are unable to conceive. If it fails, it is because a spirit has entered the womb; and lots are taken to find whose spirit it is, after which sacrifices are offered until the desired result is obtained.

5. *Dissolution of Marriage (Chem).*

586 The Ashowa have no form of legal separation by agreement, and a divorce can be effected only where adequate reason exists. A husband may not divorce his wife on account of barrenness; but he may divorce her for adultery or desertion; or if she persistently neglects to cook food, bring water or perform her other work; or if she is offensively and perpetually jealous. A wife may divorce her husband if he is impotent; or if he fails to maintain a habitable house, or to do his share of the work; or if he fails to pay her tax, feed and clothe her properly; or on account of desertion or ill-treatment. Effect is given to the divorce after the hearing of the case by the husband handing over a fowl or other token, always known as *ladoo*[1] (an arrow), in the presence of the *ashimon*, to the wife's father, who passes it on to her *ashimon*.[2] The wife always keeps the children, even if she has been at fault; though exceptions in very flagrant cases one or more fully-grown children may be awarded to the husband; and in adultery the co-respondent is obliged to pay heavy damages as compensation for the loss of the children, and the value of several years' tax is refunded by the *ashimon*. A woman may not be divorced while she is pregnant.

[664]

6. *Marriage of Widows (Chem).*

587 A widow may not be married until after the conclusion of the funeral ceremonies described in Section VII. When, a few months later, she has to make her choice, she leaves home at her own house, and on the evening of the rules *kekenabolo* her sisters, friends and relations foregather outside; the oldest female relation holds before her pieces of *ladoo*[1] grass, and tells her which of the suitors each piece represents. Then she signifies her choice by taking the appropriate piece in her hand; and the old woman proceeds to the house of the chosen one, selects therefrom a knife or other small article, and hands it to the widow. In due course the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, brings a cow, sheep, goat or fowl, according to his means, and ties it to the centre post of the widow's house, in order to get rid of the spirit of her late husband; otherwise, he will not be able to beget a child. The widow brings out beer; her relations subsequently remove the animal from the centre post, and at night the bridal pair sleep apart in the house. Next day they procure medicine from a doctor and put it in a big pot in the house; and in the evening first the man and then the woman bathe in it. That night they again abstain from conjugal intercourse; but at cockcrow, after bathing a second time in the pot, they take it outside the village to a place where two paths meet, and break it there, thus finally and completely ridding themselves of the spirit of the first husband. They return to the village before it is light, and then commence their married life.

[778] [872]

[1] Cf. H. S. Hasson, *Journ. Rep. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 300.
[2] Fathers, a long coarse grass used for thatching.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

12. *Customary Licence* (*Ngoni*).

N 836 [183] [684] [583] Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

N 586 [595] Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mabeka*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *achhowe* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mabeka*, *kutenders* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

M [586]

III.—DOMESTIC LIFE: FILIAL.

1. *Infancy*.

M 845 Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*kigelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man at the same time, and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

[582]

M 429 Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *mtoibweni*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

N 429 593 Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

under the guise of drawing attention to some good Ngoni custom which has been neglected. Thus, for example, a man came to court saying that he was always quarrelling with his wife and that he wished to divorce her. The bench granted the divorce and awarded the woman 30*s.* damages. The litigant protested. The junior member of the bench, a man aged about 25 years, said, "Don't you know, it has always been the custom in this court to award 30*s.* damages against men who divorce their wives?" Yet this was a comparatively recent practice and the litigant's protest seemed, to me, to be quite justified. The young man had been on the bench only about eighteen months. Even without Administrative stimulus, deliberate acts of legislation are not unknown among the Ngoni, but they require considerable discussion and probably a tribal meeting. It is easier, particularly for a court member as junior as the man in question, to appeal to the unwritten corpus of tribal custom when introducing a new rule. An analogous process in our own society is perhaps concealed under the fiction that judges do not make law. Ngoni do not quote specific precedents in court, and in this undocumented environment new decisions, if they are not soon challenged, become part of what has always been the custom since time immemorial.

We may then summarize by saying that their common store of notions about the past provides Ngoni with a means of distinguishing themselves from similar groups at a time when the cultural distinctions between these groups are in fact becoming less and less. In the Courts, appeals to the value of traditional custom are made to gain acceptance for new rulings, while in ordinary life breaches of custom are widespread and are not censured.

When we consider legends associated with particular groups within he tribe the picture is rather different. Separate groups in the population remember, and sometimes act in the light of, particular incidents in the past which link them to other similar groups. Thus village A is linked with village B because of some incident in the past when the erstwhile leader of A captured the leader of B, or because at one time the leaders of A and B were brothers. These incidents, and the present inter-group relations with which they are associated, are not known universally but only by the groups concerned and by those near them. Yet in many ways these incidents are of greater practical significance than the more widely known tribal history. The relationships to which they give rise, or rather such of these relationships as have persisted, are remembered at funerals, in the formal exchanges of beer, and in the settlement of quarrels. There are at first glance no sanctions to maintain relationships of this kind, and indeed the very separate existence of two villages A and B may be due to a quarrel followed by a split. But although, for example, when an old woman dies in A there is no way of directly forcing a messenger to carry the news to B, there is in fact a greal deal of social pressure on both groups to keep alive the connection between them. This arises from the general responsibility placed on everyone to preserve the peace, that is, to preserve the existing social order intact. If there are

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In the old days

marriages in which bride-wealth was paid were patrilocal, and those in which it was not paid, except for marriages with slave wives, were matrilocal. The matrilocal marriages were made only by recently incorporated Ngoni. The payment of bride-wealth is now significant only in relation to the residence and affiliation of the children of the marriage and does not affect the residence of the couple themselves. It frequently happens that a man goes and lives in the village of his wife when they are first married and that after a year or so he takes her back to his own village. This practice is fairly common among the matrilineal tribes of the region. A small payment[1] of five shillings or so may be made instead to enable a man to take his bride to his own village without first completing a period of matrilocal residence. Sometimes the legalization payment is considered sufficient to exempt from matrilocal residence. Indeed it is indicative of the wide range of variation in the different payments made and not made and in the significance attached to them that some informants were unable to state with certainty what payments had been made in their own marriages, although they knew the amount of money or animals that had been handed over.

583 178 [567] 571 583 [184]

This wide range of variation in behaviour in relation to marriage is one instance of the high measure of cultural heterogeneity of the Fort Jameson Ngoni. While present-day conditions are relevant to a study of Ngoni marriage, at the same time the effect of the combination of people with very different conceptions of marriage into a single state must not be overlooked. Among families that are powerful and claim to have migrated with Zwangendaba from the south, patrilocal marriage and the payment of bride-wealth are more frequent than they are among families of more recent incorporation. Cross-cousin marriage is noticeably more frequent in villages with people of Bisa descent than in the population as a whole. In Nyasaland, where there is a sharper cleavage into old Ngoni villages and conquered Cewa villages, the old Ngoni are characterized by a greater, and the Cewa by a lesser, incidence of patrilocal marriage.

184 58

Divorce

In the old days there was no way in which a woman could divorce her husband. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own people. The usual procedure nowadays, except in cases of adultery, is for the man to give his wife sixpence or a shilling

586

[1] *Ntbakula.*

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 and inform her that she is divorced. If the wife has committed adultery, the husband can take the case to court. If the adultery is proved he is 586 684 usually awarded £3 damages against his wife and £3 against the co-respondent, and the woman is divorced. On the other hand, a woman can seek a divorce in the courts on the grounds of desertion or cruelty. The court will award a divorce if the desertion or cruelty is proved, but may also rule that the woman must pay £3 to her husband's family.

If a man does not wish to divorce his adulterous wife, the court will award him damages of £1. 10*s*. against his wife and £1. 10*s*. against the co-respondent. In adultery cases in which a divorce is granted the damages awarded against the woman are often met by the co-respondent, who then marries the woman, but where there is no divorce the woman will appeal to her father or brothers to help her pay her husband.

If a woman runs away from her husband there is nothing that the husband can do to force her back, and if methods of conciliation fail, he has little hope of redress, except in cases of seduction or abduction. If the woman refuses to rejoin her husband the court may award damages against her, but such a marriage usually ends in adultery on the part of the woman and a divorce on that ground.

It has been observed by District Officers that divorce is not so 586 frequent among the Ngoni as compared with their Cewa neighbours. 593 Nevertheless, divorce must be considered as a frequent occurrence among the Ngoni, and is so regarded by the people themselves. There is a maxim that a man ought to rely on his brothers, not on his wife, and one informant remarked: 'Never trust your wife; perhaps tomorrow you will divorce her.'

The Wife's Mother

The tensions between the two groups linked by a marriage find 606 their most formal expression in the attitude prescribed for a man to his wife's mother. While a woman can speak to her parents-in-law and enter their house, a man cannot do so. In his contacts with his father-in-law he must be quiet and reserved, and although face-to-face contact is not considered shocking, it should be as rare as possible. But a man must go out of his way to avoid his mother-in-law, and this injunction is in the main observed in practice. The avoidance is usually phrased in terms of a prohibition on the entry into the hut of the mother-in-law. A man who has to pass by this hut will normally go round the back of it.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage. [606] The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a 593 matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it 691 is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the 578 brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on ●[586] grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although 593 they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other. 571 In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative 578 in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a [684] woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices
581 which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows
182 by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if
581 the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her
587 needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

182 Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an *nhlanzi*, a substitute or
581 additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give
595 another daughter as *nhlanzi*, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her *nhlanzi*. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an *nhlanzi* might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

58 There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the houses played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

584 The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indicated choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner.
[582] In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi clans marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
842 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

562 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nhlanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshlanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanti* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedicao . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of [581] his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 851 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriage belonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth his sons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin on behalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim. I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past and when recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

[120] [54] Important men sometimes married female captives and no bridewealth passed. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons founded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 183 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bridewealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.[13] The information on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II. [128]

It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898 [276]

[13] See pp. 22f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [554] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. *The levirate*

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mceka* or *mtoso*. *Mceka* is an Nsenga word meaning a small [192] cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt [291] by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her pro-husband. If there was no younger brother the pro-husband was one of her husband's junior patrilineal kinsmen of his own generation. She could not refuse a pro-husband although her husband's brothers could choose not to provide her with a pro-husband if they so wished. The widow continued to live in her own cluster where her pro-husband came to visit her. Rattray states that widows waited one year after their husband's death before their re-marriage was settled[23] and this is nowadays the traditional procedure. Wiese, however, writes that widows waited four years before they could marry again.[24] The children begotten by the pro-husband were regarded as children of the dead man for social purposes but the identity of their genitor was not disguised. They called him *father*, but this was as much because he was their dead pater's brother and their mother's pro-husband as because he was their genitor.

The same principle of substitution was applied to betrothal. If a man died before marrying a girl to whom he was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger brother or a classificatory brother. If a girl died before marrying the man to whom she was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger sister. Unlike the operation of the levirate, however, the children of this type of marriage were regarded as the children of their genitor and genetrix for all purposes, as though their parents had been betrothed to each other in the first place. Again, unlike the levirate, if a man considered himself too old when his betrothed became marriageable he might give her instead to his son as a wife. The children of this marriage were also regarded for all purposes as the children of their genitor and genetrix.

Occasionally a woman whose husband died young, went to live with a man who was not her dead husband's brother, real or classificatory. The pro-husband gave a goat to the woman, but if bride-wealth had been offered for her by her first husband, the pro-husband could never gain permanent custody of the children. The children that she bore by him belonged to the segment of the dead man, took his descent name, and when old enough went to live in his segment. When the dead man's kinsmen claimed these children, they gave a beast to their genitor 'to straighten his back', that is, for his labour in begetting them. This arrangement is in some ways analagous to Nuer widow-concubinage[25] but with the important difference that the pro-husband, although not a kinsman of the dead man, had rights in the widow as a wife and an exclusive right to her sexual services. It seems that the status of a widow living in this kind of union was not low. In one instance I heard of, very aristocratic families were involved, and the arrangement appears to have been

[23] Rattray, op. cit., p. 97.
[24] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 474, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192.
[25] Cf. Evans-Pritchard, *Some Aspects of Marriage and Family Among the Nuer* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Eleven), p. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired 554
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

he has not been brought up by them but by some other relative. In 593
particular a man is reluctant to discuss his affairs directly with his father if he can get his eldest brother to act as his intermediary. The eldest brother is heir to their father and it is considered that he should act as the channel by which the father is approached. He deals with proposals of marriage arising from his younger siblings and if he approves of them, he refers the matter to their father. This [184]
pattern of relations seems most marked in aristocratic families.

9. Widows

While it is a man's eldest brother who helps to arrange his marriage, 587 ●
it is his younger brothers who become pro-husbands to his widows. 851
We have seen that in the old days a widow was usually looked after by a younger brother of the dead man but she continued to live in her dead husband's segment, and the children she bore by her pro-husband were grouped with the children of the dead man. This can still happen but it is no longer the invariable rule. As in the old days, if bridewealth has been paid by the first husband and after his death his widow goes to live with someone else, the second husband or pro-husband cannot offer bridewealth and the children he begets belong to the dead husband and take his descent name.

Some indication of the extent to which widows remain with their 587
dead husbands' kin is given by data collected in two villages. All the women now living in these villages had between them experienced widowhood 31 times. In two instances (6 per cent) the widow had been cared for by her dead husband's brother; and in 11 instances (35 per cent) the widow took a new husband not directly related to the dead man. In the remaining 18 instances (58 per cent) [589]
the widow had not married again and was living alone.

A man may die at any stage of his marriage. If he is betrothed to 584
a girl and then dies, the betrothal passes to a younger brother. When the girl is old enough, the younger brother marries her as though she had been betrothed to him in the first place and the children he has by her are his own children. Similarly, if a betrothed girl dies before she is married, the betrothal passes to a younger sister.

If a man dies after he has been properly married his widows have 765
definite roles to play. For a month after his death, they must wear the signs of mourning, and they are in danger of *mdulo*[24] if they commit adultery during that time. They must be ready to wail when distant visitors arrive to mourn. At the end of a month they brew beer, and there is a joyous party. A year after the death there is another party, and the fate of the widows is discussed. If none 589
of the younger brothers or kinsmen of the dead man wish to look after the widows, they are free to go their own way, and there may be a formal statement of divorce. They are in any case now spoken

[24] See above, p. 46.

589 of as being divorced from the dead man. If they do not themselves wish to be inherited they cannot be forced to remain.

589 If a widow is cared for by a younger brother of her dead husband, and that man already has a wife of his own, the widow is regarded as inferior in status to the man's own wife. Yet any children she has by him count as if they were children by the dead husband, and as such they inherit his cattle and offices before the brother's children by his own wife. This apparent paradox is due to the nature of Ngoni seniority. Seniority was always associated with position in a definite segment in the old residential system. The widow belongs to the segment of her dead husband, and even today if she is a queen she ought to stay there after she has been given a pro-husband. If she moves to live in proximity to her pro-husband, she comes into the ranking system of which the pro-huband's great wife is the superior. Her children are, however, still associated with the segment from whence she came.

851 428 554

587 The new husband, whether he is a kinsman of the dead man or not, pays one goat, also known as 'snuff-box', on taking the woman, and this animal she keeps herself, and does not hand on to her father or brother. If no bridewealth was paid by the first husband, the children borne to the second take the descent name of their own father and his rights in the marriage are the same as if he were marrying the woman for the first time and had made the legalization payment.

583 851

589 There is then an opportunity for the marriage to continue after the death of the man if his wife and his kinsmen are both agreeable. If the widow wishes to go her own way, she can do so, and if his kinsmen do not wish to care for her, they need not. Even if they do not like the woman they cannot turn her out of the village, and she can go on living in her dead husband's hut and cultivating the same garden as before. She may even re-marry and bring in her new husband to live with her in her dead spouse's village. The extent to which this can be done without quarrelling depends very much on the personalities of the people involved. If the widow decides to go back to her own village, her husband's kin may try to prevent her removing possessions of which the ownership is not certain, and she should discuss with them how much of the crops she can take away from her garden.

587 Nowadays the death of a wife brings the marriage to an end. We have seen that in the old days the dead woman was replaced by a linked co-wife, and that this institution has now all but disappeared. There is no other form of sororate, and although a man may sometimes in jest address his wife's sister as *wife*, he has no rights over her.

593 The specific responsibilities of brothers towards a man's marriage are demonstrated in the role of the elder brother as a marriage negotiator and of the younger brother as potential husbands for a man's widows. A man would not, save in exceptional circumstances,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated with political allegience, and therefore it was inappropriate that her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genetricem* in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genetricem* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem* and bridewealth rights *in genetricem*. Rights *in genetricem* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genetricem* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*.

Whereas the rights *in genetricem* were definite in the old system, in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme they were related to position in a residential system of which one of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession. With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another, and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups, for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people, some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

when they see these they will consult the village lots, and the oracle will tell them it is the spirit of their relation who is asking for beer." And when the beer is finished they honour (use *kuonga*) him by saying, "Hail to him of so and so's clan-animal name." Then the chief mourners commence to pull down the hut in which the man died, and when they have done so they take water and wash their hands. Then they take a little pot and dig a hole at the hut door (they have just demolished), and put the pot in, and fill in the earth, the rim only of the pot being visible, and they knock a hole in the bottom of the pot, and they take beer and pour it into the pot, and it goes right through into the ground; and they take a potsherd and cover over the pot, and over that place the old grass door, and pin down the door with a bamboo stick, and take a gourd-cup, and having broken the handle, hang it on the bamboo. When they have done all this they bring out the beer of the chief mourners and dance, perhaps the *Chitoto* dance.

VI. On that day the widows may again meet face to face with men. For another year they hoe by themselves, and then some old person comes to speak to them, saying, "The mourning is now long past, get some malt, and look out for another husband (use *kugana*); when water gets spilt (people) do not pick it up." And then they begin to hurry on the beer, and when it is ready all the chief mourners (and all who took part in the funeral) come and spend the night dancing. The widows get up early in the morning, and take a gourd of beer and go with it to the stream, and take off their bands, and set fire to them and quench the fire with the beer. Then the elders say, "Come, let us take the widows, who are now eligible for marriage again." And they tell some very old women to go to the *Kuka*

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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hut and tell the women that so and so is wishing to marry them, and take the place of him who died. At first the women refuse, saying, "We do not want (to marry again) but to go on mourning," and the old women go off and tell the men, who are congregated at the village court. The men say, "Oh, that is what they say, is it?" and they take their knobkerries and give them to the old women, who go off again to the women and produce the knobkerries. Say they, "This is so and so's, this so and so's." And the women take the one of him they wish to marry. When they have received the stick, the old women come out again to say, "She, who is now an eligible widow, wants so and so." And he, the man, then sends some one to bring out the beer from the hut [where the women are]. The man whom she loves then goes off to the medicine man to get medicine, and takes that for which the medicine is pounded. And the doctor gives him it, saying, "But go and bathe your former wife (or wives), before you enter the hut of her who is a widow." And he takes the medicine, and goes and gives it to his former wife, saying, "There is medicine, you must go and bathe." And he goes to the hut of his new wife, and takes a potsherd and sets it on the fire near the doorway. When it gets hot he pours in some water, and then some of the medicine. Then the man takes some of the mixture, puts his fingers to his lips, and smears his knees with it. Then the woman does the same. Some other medicine is in a pot. The woman stirs it round with a stick which has a little piece of wood fastened to one end, which she revolves in the hands (as if making fire); this pot she then lifts, and goes with it to where cross-roads meet, and here the man bathes, and then the woman. In the evening they take a hen and put it at one end of

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the hut "towards the feet," and then they sleep together. Next morning a relation of the man who died comes and takes away the fowl, going with it to the house of the man's mother. The spirit follows the fowl. When the man has lived some time with the woman, and if he does not get on with her, he just leaves her, and his companions say, "He only went to get his bows." If the woman wants to marry any one else she can do so, without any further medicine. 765 587

III

THE FUNERAL OF AN ANGONI CHIEF

I. When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them "the clouds have fallen to-day." They do this because they fear, "if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death." Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup, and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not 766

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni

842 otherwise *mdulo* of the child will still result. Medicine is taken also by women who are unable to conceive. If it fails, it is because a spirit has entered the womb; and lots are taken to find whose spirit it is, after which sacrifices are offered until the desired result is obtained.

8. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Chewa*).

586 The Achewa have no form of legal separation by agreement, and a divorce can be effected only where adequate reason exists. A husband may not divorce his wife on account of barrenness; but he may divorce her for adultery or desertion; or if she persistently neglects to cook food, bring water or perform her other work; or if she is offensively and perpetually jealous. A wife may divorce her husband if he is impotent; or if he fails to maintain a habitable house, or to do his share of the work; or if he fails to pay her tax, feed and clothe her properly; or on account of desertion or ill-treatment. Effect is given to the divorce after the hearing of the case by the husband handing over a fowl or other token, always known as *mubei*[1] (an arrow), in the presence of the *anhkoswi*[2] to the wife's father, who passes it on to her *mtsibweni*. The wife always keeps the children, even if she has been at fault; though sometimes in very flagrant cases one or more fully-grown children may be awarded to the husband; and in adultery the co-respondent is obliged to pay heavy damages as compensation for the loss of the children, [684] and the value of several years' tax is refunded by the *mtsibweni*. A woman may not be divorced while she is pregnant.

9. *Marriage of Widows* (*Chewa*).

587 A widow may not be courted until after the conclusion of the funeral ceremonies described in Section VII. When, a few months later, she has to make her choice, she brews beer at her own house, and on the evening of the *tsiku lokumbula* her suitors, friends and relations foregather outside; the eldest female relation holds before her pieces of (*ishera*) grass, and tells her which of the suitors each piece represents. Then she signifies her choice by taking the appropriate piece in her hand; and the old woman proceeds to the house of the chosen one, selects therefrom a knife or other small article, and hands it to the widow. In due course the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, brings a cow, sheep, goat or fowl, according to his [775] means, and ties it to the centre post of the widow's house, in order to get rid of the spirit [842] of her late husband; otherwise, he will not be able to beget a child. The widow brings out beer; her relations subsequently remove the animal from the centre post, and at night the bridal pair sleep apart in the house. Next day they procure medicine from a doctor and put it in a big pot in the house; and in the evening first the man and then the woman bathes in it. That night they again abstain from conjugal intercourse; but at cockcrow, after bathing a second time in the pot, they take it outside the village to a place where two paths meet, and break it there, thus finally and completely ridding themselves of the spirit of the first husband. They return to the village before it is light, and then commence their married life.

[1] Cf. H. S. Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 308.
[2] *Tadwa*, a long coarse grass used for thatching.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
428 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[722] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was,
[58] in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[178] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife
602 fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

INTRODUCTION

MARRIAGE among the Ngoni is much the same as anywhere else. It establishes a relationship between a man and a woman, regulates their sexual activities, locates their children in the kinship system and influences the inheritance of their property. These general features, however, do no more than define and identify marriage, and distinguish marriage from concubinage. Our task is to analyse the particular features that distinguish Ngoni marriage from other marriage systems and to relate marriage to other institutions and social processes in Ngoni society.

In Ngoni history there has always been marriage. Indeed men and women look back longingly to a past when people married properly and decorously, and when adulterers were killed, and bemoan the promiscuity of the present when no woman's fidelity is certain. Yet even now old people still expect their juniors to marry and their expectations are fulfilled. Adults are assumed to be married, and the assumption is justified.

Marriage is seen by the Ngoni as part of the natural order. Unmarried adults cannot fill important roles and are regarded as overgrown children whose anomalous condition must be explained by reference to a malady or a physical or moral defect. Yet despite the universal and permanent character of marriage as an Ngoni institution there have been, in the course of the hundred and thirty years which constitute Ngoni history, great changes in the procedures and implications of marriage and in its relations to other aspects of the social life of which it is a part. These changes have been paralleled in other Ngoni institutions, in law, in local organization, in religion and above all in political structure. In this paper we shall attempt to contrast the institution of marriage as seen at two stages in Ngoni history and to relate it to the general plan of social life at these two periods. We shall also discuss some of the processes of change that have brought about the differences we observe and which to some extent are still at work in contemporary Ngoni society.

It is convenient to compare marriage as it was during the 1890's and as it is at the present day. The information relating to the earlier period is contained only to a slight extent in contemporary documents,[1] and consists largely in the recollections of older men and women as recorded by a number of writers from 1914 onwards. The

[1] The most important of these are Wiese's articles, 'Expedição portugueza a M'Pesêne (1889)', in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, x (1891) pp. 235-73, 331-430, 465-97, and xi (1892) pp. 373-599. (All page references cited are from Vol. X); and 'Beitrage zür Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambezi, namentlich der Angoni,' *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii (1900), pp. 181-200.

[P.22]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [826] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [828] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance [162] of women over men caused by labour migration.

Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner 128 or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 257 and 121 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs con- [621] cerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles away from the other two.

[1] *Cisilu*, pl. *visilu*, or else *ŵantu ŵatyalatyala*. Cf. Nsenga *silu*, pl. *masilu*, idiot.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

away from the other two. They were the four most accessible 121
from my base camp, built at a site chosen by the Administration. I was able to compare their size, history, and kinship structure with those of many other villages I visited, and as far as I could tell they were in these respects fairly typical Ngoni villages. They form a 128
sample of approximately one per cent of the whole of the Fort Jameson Ngoni.

The tables in which the units are individuals or extant marriages (III, IV, IX, X, XIII and XIV) are based on the marital histories of the men and woman normally resident in those villages during the latter part of 1948, in one village, and during the earlier part of 1949 in the other five. In Tables I, II, V to VIII, XI and XII, where the units are marriages and not individuals, I have drawn on the histories of men and women who lived in these villages as wedded people for at least part of the time from 1946 to 1949. I endeavoured to inter- [124]
view the whole population but failed to do so for various reasons. I was however, able to determine who was, and who was not, a resident in these villages, and can therefore indicate the number of people who could have been included in this six-village sample had more been known about them. Some of my interviews were only partial.

In Tables V to VIII, which deal with the incidence and magnitude of marriage payments, each marriage is classified by the decade in which it began. This is not necessarily the decade in which the payment was made, for as we have noted payments are sometime made after many years of marriage. Unfortunately I do not have enough information to classify by the decade of payment.

In the tables I have used the word 'wedded' to refer to all people who had ever been married, whether or not they were currently married at the time of inquiry.

It will be seen from Table III that in this sample there was no 162
unwedded man over the age of twenty-four, and, out of a total of 589
116 wedded men, there were only one widower and seven men whose last marriage had ended in divorce and who had not remarried. From Table IV we see that there was only one unwedded woman over the age of nineteen, but that there were as many as 31 widows who had not remarried. Only about a half, 122 out of 223, of the wedded women were living with their husbands.

Marriage is then an experience that sooner or later comes to nearly 581
every man or woman, although not every adult lives all the time in a simple family of procreation. Nevertheless, the ties forged by marriage remain, and the results of marriage extend beyond the wedding ceremony and beyond the domestic association of man and wife. It is the sexual activities of individuals that are most closely regulated by the fact of marriage. In succession to office and wealth, marriage, as we shall see, plays nowadays a permissive rather than a determining role. It is only by means of the symbolic acts which form part of marriage that a man can be reasonably sure of acquiring rights over his wife and the custody of his children. Yet he may,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 on the one hand, acquire that custody without undertaking any of these symbolic acts, and on the other hand he may have full rights over his wife without ever getting control of his children.

2. Choice

582 Marriage involves choice and selection. There are prescribed 'preferential marriages' in the usual terminology, but as applied to the Ngoni this nomenclature is misleading, for, as in the old days, a woman who marries her cross-cousin does not have such high status in her husband's compound family as a wife who is not related to her husband. A man behaves in some respects towards his female cross-cousins as though they were his wives or potential wives, but it is incorrect to say that Ngoni men prefer to marry their cross-

Table III. Marital status of males by age, 1948-9

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Age in years	Marital Status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Number of wives						Total wedded men	
		0		1	2	3	Not known		
		Divorced men	Widowers						
0-4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	51
5-9	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	61
10-14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	55
15-19	28	1	–	2	–	–	–	3	31
20-24	14	–	–	6	–	–	–	6	20
25-29	–	2	–	13	–	–	1	16	16
30-34	–	1	–	7	–	–	–	8	8
35-39	–	–	–	13	3	1	–	17	17
40-44	–	–	–	4	2	2	–	8	8
45-49	–	–	–	8	–	–	1	9	9
50-54	–	1	–	4	–	–	1	6	6
55-59	–	–	–	8	1	–	1	10	10
60-64	–	–	–	9	2	–	–	11	11
65-69	–	1	1	6	1	1	–	10	10
70-74	–	1	–	1	1	–	–	3	3
75-79	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	2	2
Not known	–	–	–	1	–	–	6	7	7
Total	209	7	1	83	11	4	10	116	325

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

cousins. Whether a man decides to marry a cross-cousin or an unrelated woman, he still has to decide just exactly whom he will try to marry, and similarly a woman has also to make up her own mind about whom she will accept as husband. The initiative in choosing lies very largely with the couple themselves, and not with their parents and kinsmen. If a man is diffident about asking a woman to marry him, he may ask his father or elder brother to seek out a woman for him, or a woman may have a spouse presented to

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Table IV. Marital status of females, by age, 1948-9

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Age in years	Marital status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Divorced women living alone	Widows living alone	Divorced woman living as concubine	Married women			Total wedded women	
					HH	HA	HS		
0–4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	58
5–9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	65
10–14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	54
15–19	20	–	1	–	14	9	1	25	45
20–24	–	3	–	–	10	11	–	24	24
25–29	–	1	–	1	17	8	1	29	29
30–34	1	–	–	–	14	8	–	22	23
35–39	–	–	–	–	19	3	1	23	23
40–44	–	2	1	–	13	1	1	18	18
45–49	–	–	2	–	13	2	–	17	17
50–54	–	3	–	–	7	3	1	14	14
55–59	–	1	5	–	6	–	1	13	13
60–64	–	1	8	–	3	1	1	15	15
65–69	–	2	8	–	1	–	–	11	11
70–74	–	–	5	–	1	–	–	6	6
75–79	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
80–84	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	4	4
Total	198	14	31	1	122	46	7	223	421

Legend

HH (Husband at Home)	Husband living within thirty miles of his wife, in a village, and not separated from her
HA (Husband Away)	Husband living permanently on a farm, or in Fort Jameson, or more than thirty miles away
HS (Husband Separated)	Husband living within thirty miles, in a village, but separated from his wife

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

becomes her husband's *sibling* so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere[23] an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her *sibling*. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court. 835

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages.

578 602 851 [583] [589] 431 586

8. Other Kinsfolk

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of 602

[23] See Barnes, op. cit. p. 232

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

he has not been brought up by them but by some other relative. In 593
particular a man is reluctant to discuss his affairs directly with his father if he can get his eldest brother to act as his intermediary. The eldest brother is heir to their father and it is considered that he should act as the channel by which the father is approached. He deals with proposals of marriage arising from his younger siblings and if he approves of them, he refers the matter to their father. This [184]
pattern of relations seems most marked in aristocratic families.

9. Widows

While it is a man's eldest brother who helps to arrange his marriage, 587
it is his younger brothers who become pro-husbands to his widows. 851
We have seen that in the old days a widow was usually looked after by a younger brother of the dead man but she continued to live in her dead husband's segment, and the children she bore by her pro-husband were grouped with the children of the dead man. This can still happen but it is no longer the invariable rule. As in the old days, if bridewealth has been paid by the first husband and after his death his widow goes to live with someone else, the second husband or pro-husband cannot offer bridewealth and the children he begets belong to the dead husband and take his descent name.

Some indication of the extent to which widows remain with their 587
dead husbands' kin is given by data collected in two villages. All the women now living in these villages had between them experienced widowhood 31 times. In two instances (6 per cent) the widow had been cared for by her dead husband's brother; and in 11 instances (35 per cent) the widow took a new husband not directly related to the dead man. In the remaining 18 instances (58 per cent) [589]
the widow had not married again and was living alone.

A man may die at any stage of his marriage. If he is betrothed to 584
a girl and then dies, the betrothal passes to a younger brother. When the girl is old enough, the younger brother marries her as though she had been betrothed to him in the first place and the children he has by her are his own children. Similarly, if a betrothed girl dies before she is married, the betrothal passes to a younger sister.

If a man dies after he has been properly married his widows have 765
definite roles to play. For a month after his death, they must wear the signs of mourning, and they are in danger of *mdulo*[26] if they commit adultery during that time. They must be ready to wail when distant visitors arrive to mourn. At the end of a month they brew beer, and there is a joyous party. A year after the death there is another party, and the fate of the widows is discussed. If none 589
of the younger brothers or kinsmen of the dead man wish to look after the widows, they are free to go their own way, and there may be a formal statement of divorce. They are in any case now spoken

[26] See above, p. 46.

589 of as being divorced from the dead man. If they do not themselves wish to be inherited they cannot be forced to remain.

587 If a widow is cared for by a younger brother of her dead husband, and that man already has a wife of his own, the widow is regarded as inferior in status to the man's own wife. Yet any children she 851 has by him count as if they were children by the dead husband, and 428 as such they inherit his cattle and offices before the brother's children by his own wife. This apparent paradox is due to the nature of 554 Ngoni seniority. Seniority was always associated with position in a definite segment in the old residential system. The widow belongs to the segment of her dead husband, and even today if she is a queen she ought to stay there after she has been given a pro-husband. If she moves to live in proximity to her pro-husband, she comes into the ranking system of which the pro-huband's great wife is the superior. Her children are, however, still associated with the segment from whence she came.

587 The new husband, whether he is a kinsman of the dead man or not, pays one goat, also known as 'snuff-box', on taking the woman, 583 and this animal she keeps herself, and does not hand on to her father 851 or brother. If no bridewealth was paid by the first husband, the children borne to the second take the descent name of their own father and his rights in the marriage are the same as if he were marrying the woman for the first time and had made the legalization payment.

589 There is then an opportunity for the marriage to continue after the death of the man if his wife and his kinsmen are both agreeable. If the widow wishes to go her own way, she can do so, and if his kinsmen do not wish to care for her, they need not. Even if they do not like the woman they cannot turn her out of the village, and she can go on living in her dead husband's hut and cultivating the same garden as before. She may even re-marry and bring in her new husband to live with her in her dead spouse's village. The extent to which this can be done without quarrelling depends very much on the personalities of the people involved. If the widow decides to go back to her own village, her husband's kin may try to prevent her removing possessions of which the ownership is not certain, and she should discuss with them how much of the crops she can take away from her garden.

587 Nowadays the death of a wife brings the marriage to an end. We have seen that in the old days the dead woman was replaced by a linked co-wife, and that this institution has now all but disappeared. There is no other form of sororate, and although a man may sometimes in jest address his wife's sister as *wife*, he has no rights over her.

593 The specific responsibilities of brothers towards a man's marriage are demonstrated in the role of the elder brother as a marriage negotiator and of the younger brother as potential husbands for a man's widows. A man would not, save in exceptional circumstances,

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Women wear their cloth folded across the upper level of the breasts from right to left. Men and women often have two cloths, one over the loins, only the second fastening over the chest. M Y N 291

A menstruating woman also wears a small piece of calico corresponding to a diaper supported by string round the waist.[1] The same thing is worn after child-birth for six months. Angoni women always wear them. M Y N [841] [846]

The Angoni, Chipeta wear their cloth toga-fashion, carrying a fold of cloth on the left arm. An Angoni chief wears three such, blue, white and coloured, the first outside, the last next to the skin.

The material used is now practically everywhere European-made calico, formerly bark cloth only was used by Nyanja, though weaving had been accomplished by Angoni, where skins were and are used as articles of clothing. M Y N [246]

There is nothing to distinguish men of various grades, etc. Fashion at the present time is very capricious—some patterned cloth being much worn one month will have no sale a month later; this is true both of men and of women.

There is no class uniform, and no "costumes" are worn save in dancing (*q.v.*).

Men are now seen wearing a piece of calico twisted up on the head in turban form, a custom lately introduced from the coast—the only indigenous head-gear is the string skull-cap worn by Angoni widows. N [589]

Under the heading of dress must be included the bead aprons worn by Yao and Angoni. Among the former the use of this garment is restricted to the women, who in the house sometimes wear nothing else; among the Angoni the children often have them and no other clothing.

Sandals are sometimes made of skin and fastened on the feet with a thong when crossing thorny country.

Among Angoni the *mwendo* only used to be worn; this is a small hard-cased fruit which was hollowed out and worn just covering the glans penis. N 291 824

FOOD, ETC.

The staple food throughout the country is either maize or rice, the latter only at various spots on the lake shore where it can be grown. Two fixed meals per diem are taken, at 9 or 10 a.m. and again at 6 p.m.; each consists of *usima* porridge made from maize flour or rice flour or boiled rice with some *ndiwo* (relish) to which the salt is added. At odd times the native will eat anything that opportunity offers—a piece of cassava root, a boiled sweet potato, a roasted maize cob, etc. M Y 262 [264]

The *usima* is made by stirring flour (*ufa*) into boiling water till a stiff paste is formed; this is kept cooking for five minutes and then scraped out with a wooden M Y 252

[1] Diaper = *mthete*: a woman keeps five or six; they are never put away in baskets but always hung up; a woman changes every time she bathes, using two or three per diem; they may be given to a female child to wear, but are then not worn again by a woman.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 585 621 The prolonged series of interviews, exchanges and ceremonies emphasized the Ngoni conception of the marriage contract and its binding nature. They also underlined the severance of the new wife from her former family and house, and her gradual assimilation into her mother-in-law's house. This relationship between Ngoni women within the houses provided an effective means of integrating them into a village to which they were strangers.

CHAPTER IV

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

183 59 'THE Ngoni have power and authority over their women and their children.' So began one of the texts on *cingoni*, 'the thing that is Ngoni', by a man of the Ntumba people whose grandfather had been born among the Ngoni when they were in Songea. There was a recognised ideal pattern of an Ngoni family which covered both the individuals included in the family group and the place where they lived. This pattern was patrilineal in descent, virilocal in residence, polygynous in marriage for all men of standing who were not Christians. Other recognized and often-mentioned characteristics were the continued residence of widows in their husband's village after his death, the grouping of families by houses, and the *laweni*, or dormitory system for boys and unmarried young men.

581 593 The young wife wept on the day of her marriage because she was leaving the security and known relationships of her own family for the hazards and uncertainty of entering as a stranger into her husband's family group. The dramatization of these sentiments in the protracted marriage ceremony, and the allusions in the *mtimba* songs, brought out clearly the continuity of the man's relations with all members of his family and the sudden sharp break in the woman's relationship when she married. When her first child was born, and a new individual family group launched, her final integration into her husband's family began. As a mother who had borne a grandchild to her husband's parents she had thenceforward a direct part in the relationships within her husband's family, but as a wife she was always a stranger. The marriage negotiations and ceremonial express the closeness of the family ties, showing on the girl's side the anxiety of her family on parting with her to live among strangers; and on the man's side the hesitancy of the husband's family at taking into their midst an unknown and untried stranger. In addition, the protracted exchanges of cattle and feasts, delaying the final ceremony and building up relationships between the two family groups, illustrate the Ngoni attitude towards marriage as a

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[39] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[40]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[39] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[40] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-5; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Shona kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a segment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require considerable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties. Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the Swazi lineage,[41] and perhaps more widely, although in both these societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[41] cf. Holleman, 'Twee-eenheidsbeginsel van die Zulu' and 'Zulu *inqadi*'; Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 729*f*, s.v. *isizinda*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40*f*.

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to 563 the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also 621 a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as 128 Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a [184 consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations 121] of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual 563 pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-583 betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *mlobokazi*. A 593 strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of [586] a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. 591 Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was sup-[592] ported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

A widespread variant

on virilocal residence will be discussed later and illustrated in Chapter IV of Part III. 591

(b) *Village pattern*

There was a traditional pattern of Ngoni village organization, which consisted in the siting of the huts in the village and the corresponding social groups formed in the different sections. Informants made it clear that when the Ngoni first settled in the areas where the two kingdoms now exist, the royal villages and the chiefs' villages were very large. Segmentation of these large villages, not only by the *lusungulu* 'going out' as already described, but also by sections of the village breaking off, began before the Europeans came and continued after their arrival. In the 1930's the traditional pattern was sometimes altered by a desire to build a 'model village' laid out in lines instead of in a horse-shoe curve round the kraal. Even in some of these model villages the grouping of huts, though no longer in a series of circles, indicated the house affiliation of their owners and their relationship to the head of the village. 621

The traditional ground-plan of an Ngoni village was based on the main kraal which occupied the centre. The gate of the kraal was on the open end of the horse-shoe formation, and the most important hut, the *indlunkulu*, was at the top of the kraal. On either side of the *indlunkulu* were grouped the huts belonging to the houses associated with the wives of the owner of the village. Behind the *indlunkulu* were the huts of his married sons and those of his brothers who chose to live with him, and this group of huts, known as *cigodlo*, spread round behind the main huts of the owners of houses. Behind each house-group of huts were the huts of the *induna* associated with the house; in large villages he often had a kraal and reproduced a similar small village plan in his own circle of huts. On the wings of the village, curving towards the gate of the kraal and called by the Ngoni 'the horns of the village', were the less important families in the village. The general principle of the village plan in terms of social status and the siting of huts was that the nearer huts were to the *indlunkulu* the higher was the prestige of their owner. The following very much simplified plan of an Ngoni village illustrates the principle of siting the huts in relation to social grouping, as it was when a new *lusungulu* village was set up. In this plan the *indlunkulu* hut was owned by the mother of the owner of the village, one of his father's widows who moved out with him. When she died the big wife on her right might move into the actual *indlunkulu* hut, or stay in her own hut while another widow of her father-in-law entered the *indlunkulu*. There was no invariable rule for this type of succession, but there were only these two possible alternatives. Reference should be made here to one other hut site—that of the *laweni* or boys' dormitory. It was usually sited behind either the big house or the *gogo* house, far enough behind [417] [554]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

group consisted of himself and the mother and her children, including her daughters only until they married. 571 592

The affinal element in a house consisted of the other wives associated with the owner of the house as co-wives, and the wives of the sons of the owner. Both the kinship group and the affinal group were bound together by their rights in the cattle of the herd which was known as 'the cattle of the house of X'. From that herd were taken cattle for the *lobola* of the wives married after the house was founded, and for the wives of the sons and adopted sons of the house. Into that herd came the cattle received for the marriages of the daughters belonging to the house and the gift cattle sent to wives by their fathers after marriage. When the *lobola* had been fully paid up for a daughter of the house, then her relationship with it ceased and she was thenceforth known as belonging to her husband's mother's house. 592 585 571 [591]

Associated with the house in the villages of the Paramounts, the chiefs and the leading *alumuzana* were two other groups of people. One was the *induna* appointed 'to take care of the house' and his family. In the 1930's the *induna* was in charge of the cattle and of the many activities connected with the house, including the organization of male labour in hut-building, in kraal construction and in cultivation; he was consulted by the male members of the house about the selling of cattle and the use of the goods accumulated in the house. The other group associated with the house in pre-European days consisted of captives taken in war and allocated to the house who worked as labourers. The servants who worked for a house in the 1930's assisted with cooking, beer-making and minding the children, and they had huts near that of the owner of the house to which they belonged, placed on the right- or left-hand side of the kraal according to their affiliation with the big house or the second house. Informants said that in the past such association with a house included giving a beast from the herd of the house for the marriage of a servant. The *induna*, through the marriage of his daughters, built up his own herd, which he frequently kept at first with the cattle of the house in the main kraal, later building his own kraal. 592 571 357 [727]

A new house began when a man married his big wife. Although at first he built her a hut at the back of his mother's hut in his father's village, as soon as he moved out to his new village after his father's death, the big wife's hut had the next most important site in the kraal after that of the *indhunkulu*, and the second wife had the third place of importance. In some of the larger villages of the central kingdom, the custom of moving out into a new village after the death of the former owner had been given up, partly because of pressure on the land. The house grouping in relation to the siting of huts then became very complex, but the pattern was nevertheless discernible. The two sections under the big house and the *gogo* house, which had formerly divided into two villages, continued to exist together, and at Mcakhatha this dual 361 591 592 [768] 361 592

621 break up into smaller villages, and there were on the whole more villages
593 in the north said to be *wabanja limodzi* (of one family) than among the central Ngoni. On the other hand, the *lusungulu* pattern of village division had almost disappeared among the central Ngoni.

591 A man on his first marriage built a hut for his wife behind his
592 mother's hut, where his brothers by the same mother or by mothers of the same house also built. The family grouping by residence was there-
[361] fore determined by house affiliation. Associated with this residential group based on kinship, there were the residences of the *induna* and his family which had separate alignments on a kinship basis, though for certain common purposes they combined with the family groups related to the house by kinship. The children of the families belonging to the house and the children of the *induna* who took care of it began to intermarry when the prohibitions on marriage within the village ceased to operate. In this way kinship bonds were created within a group which formerly had only residence and certain activities in common, and this process was recognizable in a number of the larger villages, especially in the central kingdom.

593 Within the different types of family groups determined by their residential basis there were certain outstanding relationships between members of the same family. The most important of these was that between father and children; the father, as the biological parent and also the symbol of authority, was the focus of honour and respect, and the one who helped his children when they were in need. The relation between the father and his children among the Ngoni was always a balance between affection and care, and respect and authority. The ideal pattern of a father, as described by informants, included all these elements and also wisdom. This concept of the father relationship was extended to the head of a *banja*, to the headman of a village or a section of a village, to a *mulumuzana* in charge of an area, to a chief, and to the
[576] Paramount himself. The Ngoni greeting to all older men, and the most respectful form of address to a man of any seniority, was *baba*, father, or its Nyanja equivalent *bambo*.

The mother, on the other hand, had a more limited relationship within the family circle. To her own children and to the children of her co-wives, especially of her house, she was the provider of food, and the affectionate 'cherisher'[1] of young children; but she was also treated with respect and, when she reached some seniority, she had considerable authority over her daughters and her younger co-wives. She could never compete, however, with the sisters of her husband or with his mothers, who expected to exercise authority over her children and to
[591 arrange for the ceremonies connected with birth, puberty, and marriage.
184] In villages where virilocal residence was the rule, the husband's sisters were married elsewhere and were only present in the village during

[1] *Sulwa*, lit. to cherish, is the word used for bringing up children.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 593

visits or on special occasions. In the central kingdom, where an important man's sisters often married in the village and stayed there, it was evident that they often exercised authority over their brother's children. [591 184]

In polygynous Ngoni families the relationship between siblings was marked by strong attachment. Among the boys in the *laweni* brothers united to protect their younger brothers from other boys, and in the families of Swazi clans brothers showed many signs of youthful intolerance and arrogance towards boys of other clans, especially in matters concerning cattle and their herding. Sibling rivalry among boys was to a large extent controlled by two factors. One was the *laweni* system where the age-set principle predominated. The other was the division into the big house and *gogo* house, where the children of the *gogo* house knew that they stood in a different relationship to succession and authority in the village from their brothers and sisters in the big house. Within the big house itself, sons of the big wife knew that succession was regulated by seniority, and that the eldest son would expect to get priority when he married and it was necessary to allot cattle for *lobola*. The brother-sister link between children of the same mother was, as we have seen, a very close one, especially with the older sister of a man who was heir to a high position. This sister in her relation to his children carried almost the same authority as he did. Among sisters of the same family there was less apparent cohesion, except among very high-ranking Swazi clans where the girl children were looked after by special nursemaids and had their instruction in correct behaviour together from the older woman known as their *gogo*. 595 [561]

Ngoni grandparents on the paternal side showed little of the joking relationship with their grandchildren sometimes associated with this tie. When children went to visit their maternal grandparents in another village there was noticeably more ease between them and more indulgence was shown. In their father's village children were always aware that his parents were persons of standing and authority. Girls over six or seven often slept in their paternal grandmother's hut if she was a widow, and were aware that, though she showed kindliness in providing for their needs, she was a firm disciplinarian in all matters of behaviour. 603

Within the family group the male role of leadership was unquestioned. Honour and respect were a man's due from wives as well as from children. In difficult relations within his family, as in the case of divorce, he could count on counsel and support from his brothers, who were also ready to help him if cattle were needed for his own or his son's marriage or for payment of court penalties. This male circle of father and sons, father's brothers and their sons, was a closely knit group which functioned in regulating family affairs and in buying and selling cattle for the house to which they belonged. An obligation to help his sons was recognized by the father of a family and this obligation 562 593 593

Military service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [583]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always [563]
a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

III

'A New Stranger has come'

In these words the father's mother announced from the door of the hut that a child had been born. From inside the hut the women assisting the mother at the time of delivery had given a single cry if it was a boy and two cries for a girl. If the birth had been delayed till late afternoon towards sunset, the women in the hut said to the mother, if it was a boy: 'See the baby has been awaiting the return of the cattle, because it is he who will tend the cattle.' 844 851

The new baby was at first regarded as a stranger, born by a woman who had herself come to the village as a stranger when she married. In later years, when speaking of his parents, the child would say: 'X is my father, and I am of the womb of A, and G and H they are my brother and my sister of one womb.' This particularization of a full brother and sister was used to correct the extended use of the kinship terms, and also to convey the idea that having been born from the womb of one woman gave children a special relationship important in Ngoni thinking. 851 593 [591] [601]

Preparation for birth

When an Ngoni wife was aware that she was pregnant she did not say anything to her husband, and indeed endeavoured to conceal her condition from him as long as possible, continuing the normal sleeping arrangements and intercourse. Ngoni women liked to assert their authority and ascendancy on those occasions, and therefore excluded the men from knowledge of the coming event and from all preparations for it. The senior women used to say, 'Men are 843 593 562

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

591 184 844 Changes in residence at and after marriage influenced the composition of the group of relatives who assisted at births. In the central kingdom daughters of leading men in the village often stayed in their father's village at marriage. Hence the father's sisters were often present at the birth and the wife's mother and her sisters might be living in the village. If the [614] wife belonged to a higher ranking Ngoni clan than her husband, her relatives shared responsibility with those of the husband's family.

177 844 As may be imagined the struggle between mother-in-law control and western medical practices at childbirth was a protracted one. Even when there was a younger member of [759] the husband's family trained as a nurse or midwife, she by no means had her way in organizing the conduct of the birth. She might introduce a few hygienic measures such as clean cloths instead of old rags, and sterilized thread for tying the cord. But unless the senior women were frightened, and they seldom were, by prolonged and difficult labour, the Ngoni families were averse to taking a young mother into hospital. [606] The chief reason was the challenge to the authority of the mother-in-law, especially when the younger women who had some knowledge of western medical practices questioned the advice of the senior women.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grandmother with whom they slept, but the other practice was more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611] their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan. In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to remain as a distinctive group. They were members of their father's house until they married; and when that took place [583] it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd belonging to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the carelessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597] grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisability of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave. 881 171

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasaland had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's family were taken from the herd belonging to that house. 177 561 641 561 [702] [464] 885 [302] [836] [591] [583]

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound, (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 122). 128 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582]

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajaha*

young girls before puberty: *inkakazana*

young girls after puberty: *izintombi*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AKULU	the important people
ALEZI	nursemaids
GOGO	grandparent or any very senior person
HLONIPA	respect
INDLUNKULU	chief hut in a village
INDUNA	official in village
IZIDANDANI	girl attendants
LAWENI	boys' dormitory
MWINI	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

new wife to replace the divorced woman. Divorce however seems to have been rare, and in the genealogies I collected I met with only one instance of divorce at this period. 586

3. *Payments and ceremonies*

Betrothal[10] was a preliminary to marriage but was not compulsory. A girl was betrothed only if she was sought in marriage before puberty and the marriage then did not take place until some years after puberty. If a girl passed puberty without being betrothed she was subsequently married without a betrothal period. A man was expected to make presents to the girl he had betrothed and he began to adopt avoidance relationships towards her parents. If after puberty the girl or her parents wished to break off the engagement they could do so but were then under an obligation to return the man's presents. The ceremony at which an aristocratic girl after puberty chose her own husband has been described by Wiese.[11] 584

In the marriage itself there are two main stages marked by two distinct transfers of cattle. The first transfer was called 'snuff-box', *mfuko*. The name of the payment is based on the practice of begging snuff from one's friends and acquaintances and indicates something trifling and not recoverable. It consisted of one beast. Payment of 'snuff-box' established the man's rights to bring an action against an adulterer but it did not give him the right to take his wife away to his own village nor to the custody of any children she might bear him. These rights were obtained only by the payment of bride-wealth, *malowolo*,[12] which consisted of from one to a dozen beasts depending on the status of the woman's father. Both payments, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth, were made by the man or, if he was a young man, by his father to his wife's father. No specifically defined relatives were obliged to help a man find his marriage cattle but a man with few cattle of his own looked for assistance to the head of his cluster. Similarly there were no definite rules of distribution of the marriage cattle among the woman's relatives and the matter 583 [591] [851]

[10] The verb is *ku-homeka* for a man, and the passive *ku-homekewa* for a woman. Cf. Bemba *uku-kobeka* and *uku-kobekwa* in Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Present Economic Conditions* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Four), p. 61.

[11] In his later paper he calls the ceremony *inyamuale*. In the earlier paper he calls the ceremony held at first menstruation *inhamuale* and says that after this ceremony the girl went with others to choose the man she liked. The vernacular words he mentions are presumably connected with the modern Nyanja *cinamwali*, which is now sometimes applied to three ceremonies held (1) at first menstruation, (2) six months later, *cinamwali caciwaye*, and (3) after first pregnancy, *cinamwali cacikulu*. The abstract noun *unamwali* is sometimes used in place of the concrete *cinamwali*. Cf. Wiese, op. cit., 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191; Rattray, op. cit. pp. 102 and 190; Stigand, 'Notes on the natives of Nyasaland, N.E. Rhodesia, and Portuguese Zambezia, their arts, customs and modes of subsistence', *JRAI*, xxxvii (1907), p. 121; Read, 'Tradition and prestige among the Ngoni', *Africa*, ix (1936), p. 472; Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, pp. 22-4. 881

[12] Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola*; also Rattray, op. cit. p. 199.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place
[591] of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[19] If
[593] the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists
[583] to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on
[941] beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

581 As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction
602 between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they
[858] belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who
[554] had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[19] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 191-2.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors.

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system.

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[20] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere

[20] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her pro-husband. If there was no younger brother the pro-husband was one of her husband's junior patrilineal kinsmen of his own generation. She could not refuse a pro-husband although her husband's brothers could choose not to provide her with a pro-husband if they so wished. The widow continued to live in her own cluster where her pro-husband came to visit her. Rattray states that widows waited one year after their husband's death before their re-marriage was settled[23] and this is nowadays the traditional procedure. Wiese, however, writes that widows waited four years before they could marry again.[24] The children begotten by the pro-husband were regarded as children of the dead man for social purposes but the identity of their genitor was not disguised. They called him *father*, but this was as much because he was their dead pater's brother and their mother's pro-husband as because he was their genitor.

The same principle of substitution was applied to betrothal. If a man died before marrying a girl to whom he was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger brother or a classificatory brother. If a girl died before marrying the man to whom she was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger sister. Unlike the operation of the levirate, however, the children of this type of marriage were regarded as the children of their genitor and genetrix for all purposes, as though their parents had been betrothed to each other in the first place. Again, unlike the levirate, if a man considered himself too old when his betrothed became marriageable he might give her instead to his son as a wife. The children of this marriage were also regarded for all purposes as the children of their genitor and genetrix.

Occasionally a woman whose husband died young, went to live with a man who was not her dead husband's brother, real or classificatory. The pro-husband gave a goat to the woman, but if bride-wealth had been offered for her by her first husband, the pro-husband could never gain permanent custody of the children. The children that she bore by him belonged to the segment of the dead man, took his descent name, and when old enough went to live in his segment. When the dead man's kinsmen claimed these children, they gave a beast to their genitor 'to straighten his back', that is, for his labour in begetting them. This arrangement is in some ways analagous to Nuer widow-concubinage[25] but with the important difference that the pro-husband, although not a kinsman of the dead man, had rights in the widow as a wife and an exclusive right to her sexual services. It seems that the status of a widow living in this kind of union was not low. In one instance I heard of, very aristocratic families were involved, and the arrangement appears to have been

[23] Rattray, op. cit., p. 97.
[24] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 474, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192.
[25] Cf. Evans-Pritchard, *Some Aspects of Marriage and Family Among the Nuer* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Eleven), p. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

cousins. Whether a man decides to marry a cross-cousin or an unrelated woman, he still has to decide just exactly whom he will try to marry, and similarly a woman has also to make up her own mind about whom she will accept as husband. The initiative in choosing lies very largely with the couple themselves, and not with their parents and kinsmen. If a man is diffident about asking a woman to marry him, he may ask his father or elder brother to seek out a woman for him, or a woman may have a spouse presented to

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Table IV. Marital status of females, by age, 1948-9

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Age in years	Marital status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Divorced women living alone	Widows living alone	Divorced woman living as concubine	Married women			Total wedded women	
					HH	HA	HS		
0–4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	58
5–9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	65
10–14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	54
15–19	20	–	1	–	14	9	1	25	45
20–24	–	3	–	–	10	11	–	24	24
25–29	–	1	–	1	17	8	1	29	29
30–34	1	–	–	–	14	8	–	22	23
35–39	–	–	–	–	19	3	1	23	23
40–44	–	2	1	–	13	1	1	18	18
45–49	–	–	2	–	13	2	–	17	17
50–54	–	3	–	–	7	3	1	14	14
55–59	–	1	5	–	6	–	1	13	13
60–64	–	1	8	–	3	1	1	15	15
65–69	–	2	8	–	1	–	–	11	11
70–74	–	–	5	–	1	–	–	6	6
75–79	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
80–84	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	4	4
Total	198	14	31	1	122	46	7	223	421

Legend

HH (Husband at Home)	Husband living within thirty miles of his wife, in a village, and not separated from her
HA (Husband Away)	Husband living permanently on a farm, or in Fort Jameson, or more than thirty miles away
HS (Husband Separated)	Husband living within thirty miles, in a village, but separated from his wife

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is [586] usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her 291 neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, [177] but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. [286] There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his 342 wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. 356 Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require 462 rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a [591] hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

593 Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, 423 her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their 291 own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the [343] garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been 591 living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, 291 the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, 343 and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on 591
rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending 241
on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the 343
marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one
nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for 241
a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can 462
be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her.
If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his
wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe.

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing [492]
a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen.

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, 224
there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals 233
have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting 462
is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so.
If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care.

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection 593
on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about 262
when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite
him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually [252]
burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly.

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at 273
least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been 462
mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to
which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important [554]
men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer [514]
to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain [437]
money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her.

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Mpezeni

595 polygyny, and punish their members who take additional wives,
799 there are still a number of Christian polygynists who for most purposes align themselves with the Christian group.

As in the old days, the wives of a polygynist are ranked in the
595 chronological order of marriage, the first wife married being the
178 great wife. If, however, bridewealth has been paid, the wives married
[583] in this way are all senior to those who are married without it. The arrangement by which a barren or aged wife was given a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) has now almost disappeared. A young girl may still be indicated as a linked co-wife designate at the gall bladder ceremony of her kinswoman and the intestines placed round her neck, but this is now a mere ceremonial, and the girl marries elsewhere when she grows up. As mentioned above a chief negotiated recently for a linked co-wife on the strength of bridewealth paid by his father, but with no success.

593 A man makes his headquarters in his great wife's hut, and keeps
595 his possessions and money in it. During the day it is considered proper that he should sit and chat or entertain visitors on the verandah of her hut. Her hut is likely to be of better design than those of her co-wives, and she is more likely than they to have a separate kitchen. When her husband returns from a journey, he ought to go first to her hut, and if he has brought back goods from Southern Rhodesia, it is in her house that he stores his loads until he has time to divide them among his wives and relatives. A visitor from afar goes first to the great wife's hut and there asks for the man he is seeking. In her husband's absence it is she who must entertain the visitor. This pattern of precedence is followed to greater or lesser extent despite quarrels between husband and wife, and is not affected by where the husband actually sleeps at night.

Apart from this emphasis on the importance of the great wife, the
595 correct behaviour for a man with many wives is impartiality. He must sleep with each wife in rotation, usually for a week at a time, and must not confide in one wife the secrets of his relationship to another. Relationships between co-wives are sometimes strained, and one may use medicines against the others. The medicine[38]
[830] believed to prevent a man from achieving erection with anyone other than the woman who gives it to him is sometimes used by one wife against another. On the other hand, some co-wives help each other in their gardens and many polygynists' households run smoothly. Each wife has her own hut and her own garden and it is possible for them to arrange their affairs so that they can co-operate or act separately as they find best. If they persistently quarrel
[591] their husband may deem it well for them to live in separate villages, so that for example a man may live virilocally with his great wife and uxorilocally with his second wife, going from one village to the

[38] Possibly known as *ndamanga*. The details of this medicine are not known by many men, and I was unable to question any women on this matter.

[P.58]

CHAPTER IV

KINSFOLK, AFFINES AND NEIGHBOURS

1. The setting of marriage

[581 602] When a man marries he acquires not only a wife but also affinal relatives. His kinsfolk become her affines and both groups of relatives become kin of the children of the marriage. Husband and wife do not exist in isolation but are the centre of a network of relationships by which one group is articulated with the other. The common interest of the two groups is in the well-being of the couple and of the family which they found. This is true of all societies but among the Ngoni the relatives of a married couple play a more important part in the marriage than they do, for example, in Western society. The importance of the kin is increased by the custom of sending children away to live with their grandparents as soon as they have been weaned, and by the fact that husband and wife do not set up their residence entirely on their own but follow their [591] relatives and live in close proximity to one or more of them. We have said that in the old days the elementary family did not emerge as an important grouping in society. This proposition is still true to-day, although our grounds for making it have shifted somewhat. In the towns the old pattern of kinship cannot operate and husband [594] and wife live their lives much more as an isolated pair, cut off from their kin and alone responsible for their children. But in villages neighbours are kinsmen and a quarrel between man and wife brings kinsfolk from all around seeking to establish the rights and wrongs of the quarrel and to effect reconciliation. Many children are not sent to live with their grandparents, but even they grow up with their age-mates in the village, are fed by many different women, sleep in [855] different huts, and visit to and fro with their relatives in other villages. The difficulties of rearing children in the towns have led to the rise of a new pattern in which children born in Southern Rhodesia are brought back hundreds of miles to the village to be cared for by rural kinsfolk. The quarrels of spouses in the towns are referred home to the village for discussion.

It is the kinsfolk of the pair who are most directly concerned with their marriage, but there are other persons and groups who are also interested. In the village the headman and his lieutenants, even if they are not close kinsmen of one of the spouses, have an interest in the good behaviour of the couple, and they too may intervene in a quarrel. They participate in the ceremonials of marriage, and may receive part of the meat and beer given by one side to the other. CBD Beyond the village the Native Courts deal to a great extent with

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Mpezeni

married women chosen for them by their kinsfolk while they were 584
away during the 1939-45 war. If the woman selected for him by one relative is unsatisfactory, a man may turn to another relative for help, as is shown in the following incident.

Case history 5

Ahab, a young man of about twenty, was working in Fort Jameson. He wrote to his father in the village enclosing money for the legalization payment, asking that his father should find him a wife. His father spoke to a friend living in another village who had an unmarried daughter. The friend agreed that his daughter should marry Ahab, but the girl said that she wanted to see Ahab before making up her mind about him. Ahab was [581]
told of the arrangement but refused to agree to it, saying that he knew that the girl chosen was a prostitute.

Ahab then asked a classificatory grandmother to find him a wife. This woman found a girl and when Ahab came home from work he and a friend went for a walk to the girl's village to spy her out. The friend, on seeing the girl, advised Ahab against marrying her and the negotiations again fell through.

Ahab asked his grandmother to try again and this time he approved of the girl selected. The legalization payment was made and the girl came to live in Ahab's village with his grandmother. After a week or so, she was [591]
taken by the grandmother and other important women of the village into the township to start living with Ahab.

On the other hand a man may desist from marrying the girl of his choice in the face of parental opposition. For example, the first girl that Amos found for himself was opposed by his father because [154]
her father was a sorcerer; the second on the ground that her parents were unreliable and that she was a cross-cousin, a point against [581]
her in that Amos's brother had married a cross-cousin and the marriage was not a success; only with the third choice did the father agree to his marriage.

The initiative in arranging a marriage lies with the man and his kin rather than with the woman, and a girl who goes too much out of her way to attract a husband risks her reputation and may be regarded as a potential prostitute. On elopement, it is the woman 583
who runs off to the man's village or to his place of work, and it might be expected that her relatives would initiate action to bring her back or to claim damages for abduction. Sometimes a man does take action against the lover with whom his daughter has run away, and the lover pays a beast. Another man, however, may take no steps to follow his runaway daughter, merely refusing to recognize the existence of any marriage between her and her lover, and sometimes denying any knowledge of the lover's name. If the woman shows no sign of returning to her own village, efforts may be made to bring her children back to her parents to be brought up. Sometimes a man who has eloped with a woman later approaches her parents, apologizes for his precipitate action and makes them gifts, after which they may decide to recognize him as a son-in-law.

If a man shows his intention of marrying despite the disapproval 584
of his close kin, they can retaliate by not helping him financially,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

584 or friends. If the man is away working or in the Army he may make his proposal by letter. When agreement has been reached negotiations can proceed although they are carried on as if there had been no prior agreement and the proposal was entirely a new one.

A man tells his eldest brother of his intention to marry, or, if he is the eldest son, he may approach his father direct. He does not [593] speak to his mother about this matter, for a man does not confide in his mother about anything connected with sex, but she is told of his intention by her husband. A man ought to tell his grand- [603] mother at an early stage, particularly the grandmother who reared him. A woman tells her sisters and her grandmother, and her eldest sister will tell her eldest brother. The man's father or eldest brother may decide on who shall act as intermediaries in the matchmaking, or else the man may himself ask important people in the village to act. There is no definite rule as to who they should be, and either men or women or both may make up the party. Usually two or three people go, and a man will try and choose people who are reliable and sober and tactful. Marriage intermediaries do not have the same important responsibilities for the marriage as do the marriage [191] sureties (or witnesses) among the Nyanja and Yao although they are known by the same term.[3] The intermediaries go to the woman's village and consult her senior relatives. Traditionally they should go to the woman's grandmother, either her father's mother or her mother's mother, depending on who lives in the village and who is the more important. They tell her that they have heard that such-and-such a marriage has been contemplated. The girl's grandmother tells the girl's father that the intermediaries have come, and if nothing has arisen to jeopardize the marriage, the visiting party are told that all is well and that they must come back again. They return to their own village, and the next day, or the next week if it is a long way to walk, they go again, bringing with them a gift or some- [583] times the legalization payment. The gift or money is handed to the person leading the negotiations on the woman's side who passes it on to the woman's father. Arrangements are made about the gall bladder ceremony and a date fixed. The intermediaries then go back to their village.

585 At the gall bladder ceremony the bride receives formal advice [591] from her affines and the people in their village. Shortly afterwards she begins to live with her husband in either his or her village. If they live virilocally she does not at first cook for her husband, but the couple rely on food prepared by his other wives or his mother or [593] grandmother. It may be up to a year later that the woman first cooks for her husband and husband's father, the latter commenting 843 on her cooking. When she first becomes pregnant she is anointed by her husband's grandmother, and goes with a young girl from her husband's kinsfolk to announce her pregnancy to her own kin.

[3] *Nkhosuw.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR5

see them and to a large extent participate in them, joining in the dancing and drinking, giving presents and advice to the bride, and so on. Less spectacular are the continual patterns of interaction between a man and his affines arising from his partial dependence on them and his obligations towards them as expressed in everyday life. A man must avoid his mother-in-law and help his father-in-law with garden work, and if he is living uxorilocally he may be dependent on his affines for food and housing. If they move from one village to another he moves with them.

Avoidance is most marked between a man and his wife's mother. He must not speak to her, sit near her, pass in front of or enter her hut, and he should endeavour not to meet her on the path. Above all he must never sit on her mat, for sitting on a woman's mat is regarded as symbolically equivalent to sleeping with her. To a lesser extent a man must avoid his father-in-law, but it is not considered amiss for a man to sit at one end of a verandah while his father-in-law sits at the other. They can talk to each other if necessary. A woman is comparatively free with her parents-in-law and does not avoid their hut. The formalities of relationship between a man and his parents-in-law begin when he starts to negotiate his marriage, or earlier if their daughter is betrothed to him while she is still a child. With the passage of time a man avoids his mother-in-law less, and after the ceremony of entering her hut he can sit and chat to her. Even then it is still considered shameful for him to sit on her mat.

The Ngoni regard uxorilocal residence as part of the obligation a man has towards his wife's parents. Many couples spend their whole married life virilocally and others live permanently in uxorilocal marriage, but in describing where a couple ought to live, Ngoni speak always in virilocal terms. We have seen that in the old days virilocal residence was the rule but that a man might live uxorilocally for a while at the beginning of his first marriage after paying 'snuff-box' until he paid bridewealth (p. 5). The Cewa lived uxorilocally, but it was possible for a Cewa man to make a small payment some years after marriage permitting him to take his wife to his own village. Nowadays among the Ngoni some men, but not all, begin their marriages uxorilocally. A man may do so either because he finds it more convenient, due to lack of suitable accommodation in his own village, quarrels with his kin or shortage of food, or else because he is made to do so by his parents-in-law. A parent who does not approve of his (or her) daughter's suitor may accept the young man on condition that the couple live under his eye for a while so that he can assure himself that his daughter will be well treated by her husband. Sometimes it is said that a man who has not yet made the legalization payment must live uxorilocally until he can find the money, but this is not always done and some couples whose marriages are only 'poorly fixed' live virilocally.

The proportion of couples who live virilocally varies from one village to another.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

village to another. An indication of the relative frequency with which different types of marriage residence occur is given by Table XIII. This table is based on all the extant marriages involving the 98 married men whose wives were known and the 175 married women, as shown in Tables III and IV. A distinction is made in Table XIII between those marriages in which the man lived with his wife or in a village near her and those in which the man was effectively absent.

We may now assess the relative frequency of virilocal and uxorilocal residence by extracting those marriages falling into either one or other of these residential categories and by then dividing the number of virilocal contracts by the number of uxorilocal. This is done in Table XIV.

It will be seen that although there were three marriages in which both spouses lived virilocally for every one in which they both lived uxorilocally, this preponderance of virilocality was reversed in those marriages in which the man was absent. There were approximately three wives who lived uxorilocally while their husbands were away for every two who lived virilocally. This difference between the ratios in the two parts of the sample is not likely to have arisen as a chance result and may be regarded as definitely associated with the whereabouts of the husband.

On the basis of these figures we may continue to call the Ngoni a virilocal rather than an uxorilocal people, but it is evident from the last column of Table XIII that virilocal marriages amount to slightly less than half (47·3 per cent) of all extant marriages. It should also be remembered that by no means all of the couples we have classified as virilocal were living in the village of the man's father. We have included in this category all marriages in which the man had definitely stronger ties to the other inhabitants of their village than had his wife. Our definition of the uxorilocal category is similar and not all uxorilocal couples were living in the woman's mother's village.[8] A more detailed examination of the frequencies with which these different kinds of marriage residence occur will be attempted elsewhere.

We have already noted that a man who goes to live in the village of his bride takes on the care of her garden and works in it with her. The produce of the garden is pooled with whoever was looking after the bride, and the young couple draw their food from this common store.[9] A man who does not intend to stay long in his wife's village will usually try to keep his own garden under cultivation near his own village and when he takes his wife back to his village he reverts to his own garden as his main source of supply. If the two villages are a long way apart this may not be practicable, or the man may find it irksome to keep two gardens going, and may lend his own to someone else on the understanding that he will be wanting it back

[8] See below, pp. 75f.
[9] See above, p. 42.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 94--analyst]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Table XIII. Residence of husband and wife, 1948-9

591

Wife's residence	Husband's residence: Rural	Husband's residence: Away	Total
Intra-village	22·8% (31)	26% (12)	23·6% (43)
Virilocal	52·9% (72)	30% (14)	47·3% (86)
Uxorilocal	17·6% (24)	43% (20)	24·2% (44)
Neither related ..	1·5% (2)	0% (0)	1·1% (2)
Separated	5·1% (7)	—	3·8% (7)
Total	100·0% (136)	100% (46)	100·0% (182)

Legend

Rural	Husband living in a village within thirty miles of his wife, either permanently or part-time.
Away	Husband living permanently on a farm, in Fort Jameson township or more than thirty miles away from his wife.
Intra-village	Wife living in a village to which both she and her husband belong.
Virilocal	Wife living in her husband's village which is not her own village.
Uxorilocal	Wife living in her own village which is not her husband's village.
Neither related	Wife living in a village to which neither she nor her husband belong.
Separated	Wife and husband living in different villages and separated from each other.

124

Informants	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	98	108	91
Women	175	175	100
Total	273	283	96

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 110

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

after a year or so. If he keeps it going himself he visits his own village for a week or two at a time to tend the garden, and stores the produce with a relative in the village. If, however, a man intends to reside for many years in his wife's village, he gives away his garden and concentrates his labours in his wife's garden. After a year or two he builds her a storehouse in her village and the couple begin to keep their own supplies separate from those of her relatives.

Even when the couple have their own storehouse it is considered proper if from time to time they are given maize by their parents. If a woman living virilocally goes to visit her parents and relatives and returns without maize or flour her husband's relatives are likely to laugh at her and say 'She must come from a very poor family'.

Uxorilocal residence is described by the vernacular term *cikomwene*. In its most general usage this word refers to the obligations a man owes to his wife's parents, particularly at the beginning of his marriage. It has three specific meanings:

(i) Uxorilocal residence.

(ii) Assistance rendered from time to time by a man in his wife's mother's garden.

(iii) A hoeing party of men and women from the man's village which works in his wife's mother's garden.

Uxorilocal residence is classed with these other two aspects of affinal obligation and like them it can be avoided completely, shirked, or executed in full. The extent to which the obligations are fulfilled

Table XIV. Virilocality and Uxorilocality, 1948-9

Wife's residence	Husband's residence		Total
	Rural	Away	
Virilocal ..	72	14	86
Uxorilocal ..	24	20	44
Total	96	34	130
Ratio of virilocal to uxorilocal wives	3	0·7	1·95

Association between husband's residence and wife's residence

$\chi^2 = 12{\cdot}83$ $P < {\cdot}001$

Informants as in Table XIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

depends as much on the compliance of the man as on the insistence of his father-in-law. 591 606

A payment[10] of about five shillings is sometimes made by a man to his wife's father enabling him to take his wife to his own village. This is made either at the beginning of the marriage or after one or two years of uxorilocal residence, but in some marriages the payment is never made at all, and in some villages even the vernacular term is unknown. In those villages where the payment is recognized there is no consensus of opinion as to the rights granted by it. Some people hold that the payment is equivalent to a year or two of uxorilocal residence, and that, therefore, the money should be offered when the marriage is arranged, so that it may be begun virilocally. They go on to say that when a man has completed his period of uxorilocal residence, he is free to take his wife to his own village without making this payment. Other people say that a man ought to remain living uxorilocally until he makes this payment, which should therefore be done a year or so after marriage, or at some time later when the man wishes to move. Where the payment is not recognized, people either say that a man ought to live uxorilocally for a while and cannot buy himself out of this obligation, or else assert that the Ngoni, unlike the Cewa, do not marry uxorilocally and that the legalization payment allows a man to take a bride to his village as soon as he chooses. There is a wide variation in the norms held, or at least expressed, on this matter and an equally wide variation in actual behaviour. Men select their course of action by reference to the total situation in which they find themselves when they marry. A man may try to enforce one rule on one son-in-law and another rule on another. I observed one extreme case in which a man allowed one of his daughters, married to a man from her own village, to move to her husband's cluster after only a few months of uxorilocal residence in his own cluster. At the same time he would not allow another daughter to move to her husband's village after four years of uxorilocal residence, despite the offer of ten shillings payment to him. He approved of the first son-in-law while disliking the second, who had failed to report to him when his daughter first became pregnant. 583 591

We have talked of the man's village and the woman's village. It is perhaps necessary to stress that what is meant by, say, the man's village is a village to which the man's ties are stronger than those of his wife. It is likely to be a village where some relative of his is living, but the relative may be his father or his mother or his father's mother or his mother's father or some more distant connexion. Sometimes a man goes to live in his first wife's village and then brings in his second wife. The second wife is then said to be living virilocally, in the village of her husband rather than in her own, although the man is himself living in his first wife's village, 591 602

[10] *Nikalula*. Cf. Barnes, op. cit. p. 229

591 602 that is, in uxorilocal marriage. In the man's village there are likely to be relatives of his wife already established, but it is she who is said to 'follow' her husband to the village and not he who 'follows' her, since his ties to the village, and to the cluster in the village within which they set up their household, are stronger than hers. Similarly a man may have relatives of his own living in his wife's village and yet be spoken of as living uxorilocally. If a woman's father is living in her village, he will be the focus of her husband's obligations. But if he lives a long way away and the woman has been dependent on her grandparents, or on her mother's brother, then it is they who will act towards her husband to some extent in [606] the role of substitute parents-in-law. However, a man does not avoid his substitute mother-in-law as thoroughly as he would his wife's own mother.

606 583 The obligation on a man to help his wife's parents in their garden is expressed in two ways. Once during the marriage the man must provide a party of people to hoe for the greater part of one day in his wife's mother's garden. He must also be prepared to work in this garden from time to time when he is called upon, and his wife may work with him. While the labour given by the man and his wife is useful labour, the work done by the hoeing party is only partly useful and may do more damage than good. The procedure is that the man, or a relative of his, tells his father-in-law that he proposes to bring a party to hoe on such-and-such a day. By agreeing to this the father-in-law tacitly agrees also to provide the party with beer and presents. On the appointed day, early in the morning, the party arrives and begins work. When the father-in-law thinks the work has gone on long enough, he sends an intermediary to offer a present to the leader of the hoers. If the present is considered sufficient the party stops hoeing and returns to the father-in-law's village. If not, it continues to hoe with renewed vigour. At intervals the father-in-law sends intermediaries with higher and higher offers until at last the hoers are satisfied or exhausted and they come into the village to collect their presents and beer. As often as not the hoers try to force the father-in-law to offer a present at the limit of his resources, for example a beast, and, as the offers mount, the workers become more and more excited and their hoeing less and less useful. At the end of a day, with the light failing, physically exhausted hoers begin to root up the maize with the weeds, and the mother-in-law's garden may be seriously damaged. If the father-in-law is obstinate and does not offer them what they want the hoers may spend the night sleeping out in the garden. By the next morning everyone is too tired to continue the matter further, and the party disperses.[11]

[154] This sort of hoeing party may not facilitate the cultivation of good maize but it is of great significance to the married couple and the

[11] See Appendix III for an account of two of these parties.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 attitude towards her can be tested only when, if ever, he returns to the rural area.

A man whose wife runs away and who will not return may likewise continue to hope that one day she will change her mind and return to him, and for this reason will not divorce her. Unlike a woman, a man in this condition does not jeopardize his chances by taking a fresh spouse, and therefore it is rare to find a man whose only wife is one separated from him. It will be seen from Table III that there were no men separated from all their wives included in the sample.

593 In both separation and in the procedure by which a man 'leaves his wife in disgust',[17] sexual intercourse ceases between the couple. In other respects the two procedures are quite distinct. When a man 'leaves his wife in disgust', he stops sleeping with her but he continues to treat her as his wife. She has her hut next to her co-wives, her husband sits on her verandah, and she can rely on his help in the garden and in the care of her children. If she is separated from him, she must fend for herself. Her status as wife is significant only in that she does not marry anyone else.

6. The absent husband

A man appeals to his kinsfolk for support, but they do not replace him in the marriage relationship. His wife is linked mystically to him but not to them, and the right of sexual access to her is held by him alone. It cannot be exercised on his behalf by his kinsmen. He takes the initiative in appealing to them in a marital dispute, and his agreement is necessary at each fresh stage of events. If, however, the man is not there, his kin act on his behalf as far as they are able.

593 Most adult men, at some time or other, go away to work in the towns
167 or mines. Some men take their wives with them but at any one time, as can be seen from Table IV, between a quarter and a third of all married women living in the rural area have their husbands away working either in Fort Jameson township, in the towns of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, or living permanently on the tobacco farms around Fort Jameson. When a man goes away to work, no one can tell when he will return. Some men go off and never write or come home again. Others write regularly, send home money and clothes, come home themselves for visits, and remain in close contact with those at home. Friends and relatives may give news of a long vanished migrant whom they have met in Southern Rhodesia.

For at least the first two or three years the assumption is made that a man intends to return, even if he does not write. If his wife
[591] is living uxorilocally she will probably continue to do so. If she is living in her husband's village, as long as she stays there she can depend to some extent on the support of her husband's relatives, who may help her with her hut and garden, and if they are kind-hearted

[17] See above, p. 41.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and have the money to spare, they may buy her clothes. The only ways in which she can raise money easily for herself are by brewing beer, making pots, and working on the farms. To work on a farm she must, however, remove herself from the surveillance of her husband's kin, and unless she goes to join a contingent from their village working at the farm, they may think she is running away from them to seek a lover or new husband. We have seen, however, from Table XIV that significantly more wives whose husbands are away live uxorilocally. 593 167 [591]

Many husbands write home, not only to their wives, and some remit postal orders and bank-notes. A man may get a friend who is returning from Southern Rhodesia to take home blankets and other bulky articles to be handed over to his wife. He may send presents like these direct to his wife or he may think it more prudent to send them to his father or brother and allow them to hand on to his wife as much as they think fit. The woman must then behave herself in the eyes of her affines if she wishes to receive her husband's presents. The acceptance of these gifts is taken as proof that the woman is still dependent on her husband however long he stays away. If the woman applies to the court for a divorce on the ground of desertion, the presents will be cited by her husband's kinsfolk as evidence that there is no intention on his part to desert. Gluckman reports from the Lozi that even if a man sends goods, after a statutory period the court will hold that 'a woman marries a man and not a blanket', that is, the husband must return to look after and sleep with his wife as well as send clothes to her. This argument is not used among the Ngoni. A woman who complains that she is not satisfied with marriage under these conditions is told to write to her absent husband and ask him for the fare to join him in Southern Rhodesia. [586] [171]

Case history 10

Saul was working in Nyasaland. He sent home to his wife 7*s*. 6*d*. for clothes. Later she wrote to him saying she wanted him to return. He sent her 15*s*., being 5*s*. for clothes and 10*s*. bus fare so that she could join him. She did not go and later went to the court complaining she had been deserted. Her husband's relatives argued, to the satisfaction of the court, that as her husband had sent her these gifts he was still taking care of her. The court dismissed her plea as she had refused to go to Nyasaland when the fare had been sent. [586]

The husband's relatives try to watch carefully the movements of the woman so that they may prevent or at least report any adultery on her part. If they are in touch with the husband, they write to him should they suspect infidelity. Sometimes the husband ignores their letter, sometimes he gives them instructions how they should proceed in the matter, and sometimes he returns to the village to see for himself what is going on. He arrives without warning and hopes to catch his wife in the act. If all is well and he is satisfied that his wife has been faithful he usually goes back to work again. 593 167 602

621 related to him but her participation was explained in terms of her status as an 'important person' and not in terms of this relationship.

591 178 A man can move from his village to his wife's village if he or she has quarrelled with his kinsfolk, and a quarrel with her relatives may cause them to move in the reverse direction. These shifts from one kind of residence to another occurred in a different context in the old system. We have seen that there was sometimes a change from uxorilocal to virilocal residence, for at the beginning of his first marriage a man might leave his wife living uxorilocally until he had paid bridewealth. If there was a quarrel between a man and his wife's kin at this stage, they might try to delay his taking the woman to his own village, although they could not entirely prevent him from so doing. Hostility found expression in the desire to keep him under close surveillance, not in the desire to be rid of him. This old idea still persists to some extent, as we have seen in the story of Abner and Esther (p. 79). Esther wanted her husband Abner to live in her village so that her father could see that he looked after her well. A man may refuse to allow his daughter to move to her husband's village until he is satisfied that the young man is a good husband. This line of action, however, now applies only at the beginning of a marriage and in families where a man is determined to maintain his control over his growing children. When there is a quarrel involving a couple who have been married for a long time, it is then too late to hope that a man will improve his behaviour under the eye of his wife's father. If he quarrels with his father-in-law it is better that he should go and live in his own village.

The significance of the reverse move, from virilocality to uxorilocality, was different in the old system from what it is in the new. In the light of what we know of the South-Eastern Bantu and by reference to the present position among the Ngoni it seems probable that in the old days it did happen from time to time that a man sought refuge with his wife's agnates. Yet from the dearth of instances of this in my genealogical material it would seem that this cannot have occurred very often. Once a man had established himself in virilocal residence he usually stayed there. If he quarrelled with his kinsfolk all he could do was to move off and make his own segment distinct from those of his brothers; he could not seek permanent shelter with his wife's kinsfolk. Nowadays he can do so, and it may be easier for him to change to uxorilocal residence than to try to form his own group. In the old days the transition from 621 178 what we now call a cluster to a division or from a division to a village was a gradual one. Spatial separation between minor segments of the same order was initially a matter of yards and with successive moves in the tribal migration became a matter of miles. Nowadays 648 there is a definite number of villages recognized by the Administration 361 and a man who establishes his own residential cluster of huts is, or at least was until very recently, in danger of punishment for not living in a recognized village. For many years there was an

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village.

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[56] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers.

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased.

3. *Polygyny*

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organize large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance

[56] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an expression more of their different matrilateral affiliations than of the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother, although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by his first and third wives [3] were reared by their father's fourth wife's mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of his children. This division is in accord with the statement made frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's. Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace', however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft-reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The facility with which married couples live uxorilocally is no doubt partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxorilocal Cewa and other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

4. *The moral significance of sexual activity*

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die, and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

[3] See above, p. 109

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated
593 proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated
613 with political allegience, and therefore it was inappropriate that her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genetricem* [591] in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genetricem* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem* [428] and bridewealth rights *in genetricem*. Rights *in genetricem* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother [580] willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genetricem* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*.

611 Whereas the rights *in genetricem* were definite in the old system,
591 in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme
602 they were related to position in a residential system of which one
178 of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession. With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another, and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours
611 cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups,
591 for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership
602 of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people, some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tion for associating children with one parent rather than the other. There is only the one proud dogma that the Ngoni, unlike their neighbours, are a patrilineal virilocal people. This reflects the actual dominance of the virilocal mode of residence but does not furnish a rule to which appeal can be made in specific cases. The only definite unit to which a man can be said to belong is his village, and such few attempts as are made to enforce rights *in genetricem* are expressed in terms of residence in villages. In marriages that are made outside the tribe, rights *in genetricem* become significant, for a child is not likely to wander to and fro between one tribe and another hundreds of miles away in the same way as children change from one village to another within the kingdom. Here then we find more attention paid to the payment of bridewealth and to rights *in genetricem* and these rights are enforceable through the police checks on buses and lorries.

If a man is away working his interests are represented by his kinsfolk. They cannot exercise his rights *in uxorem* for him, but if they are violated they can act on his behalf. His permission is necessary, however, before they can proceed to the court, and if they are awarded damages then they are under some sort of obligation to hand over the money to him when he returns. There was no situation comparable to this in the old system, for men did not go away for years at a time, and the violation of rights *in uxorem* was punishable by death.

The position of the man as holder of rights *in uxorem* over his wife is reinforced to some extent by mystical ties believed to connect the couple, and at the same time the man can fortify his rights by the use of medicines to ensure fidelity. During pregnancy, for a short while after childbirth, and during menstruation, the actions of man and wife affect one another automatically, and each is placed in danger of illness by the failure of the other to observe their mutual obligations. To protect his rights *in uxorem* a man may doctor his wife so that possible violators may be deterred by the fear of mystical retribution as well as action in the courts.

7. *Mystical beliefs and marriage stability*

The mystical connexion believed to exist between a man and his wife serves to define their relationship more closely, for this same connexion does not hold between a woman and her husband's kin or between a man and his wife's kin. The adultery of a pregnant woman's brother-in-law, like her husband's adultery, may threaten the peace of her local group of relatives and friends, and may even lead her to change her village or go to the court as a supporter. The important distinction between the adultery of her husband's brother and her husband's adultery is that the former does not automatically endanger her delivery while the latter does. A man confesses his adultery when his own wife gives birth, not when her sister is in labour. This connexion is definite, and is not extended

unity of full-siblings is the result of the established relationship 602
between their mother and father. A man's relationship with his
wife may in turn lead to solidarity between their children, but until
his wife has stayed with him for many years and borne him live 593
children their own relationship is always uncertain. He must
acknowledge that she too has rights, that she must be clothed and
respected and must be slept with. He must not abuse her at a beer
party or hit her too often, and he must not try to trap her into
adultery. When she runs away, he must go after her to apologize.

8. The support of relatives

It is the tenuousness of the marriage relationship which necessitates 581
the co-operation of the relatives in the marriage. There are occasions
when affines quarrel, as when a young woman is encouraged by her 602
husband's kin to remain in their village to be delivered of her first
child and at the same time is under pressure from her own relatives
to move back to her own village for the confinement. A man who
is anxious to build up his own cluster of huts in a village may attempt
to force his sons and daughters to bring their spouses to live near
him against the wishes of his children's affines. These struggles, [591]
where they occur, are expressed in terms of residence, for it is common
residence that welds kinsfolk together. But in general affines
co-operate rather than quarrel. Litigation about marriage payments
is rare, and frequently divorces are granted without consideration
of the return of marriage payments. During a marriage it is more
important that the married couple should be exhorted to adjust
themselves to each other and be tolerant of each other's foibles,
than that each side should insist on its formal rights. Old people
try to prevent marriages they consider unsuitable, but they do not
usually try to make difficulties once a marriage has taken place.
The successful marriages of a man's children bring him grand-
children to care for and play with, and *children's parents-in-law*
who will welcome him and give him food, even if they do not always
add to his own cluster of huts.

To some degree people appear to be afraid of the sorcery of an [754]
offended affine, but this is not a well-developed idea, and more
frequently people express their reasons for trying to patch up a 581
marriage that is in danger of breaking in terms of the need for
everyone to 'live well together', without bringing troubles into the 621
village. The well-being of the village and of the local group of
kinsfolk within it has ultimate value for the Ngoni and is an end in [181]
itself. It follows that serious quarrels can only be resolved by
means of some new residential alignment, involving moves from
one cluster to another, and from one village to another. The
village itself does not exist in isolation, and a village thrives because 628
of the ties that link it to other villages in the vicinity. Marriages 602
link villages together, by the bonds of affinity which cut across
village boundaries, and by the interaction between groups of affines 581

178 as one from a graded segmentary society organized on a basis of patrilineal descent and modified by political promotion to a society of villages organized on a basis of omnidirectional kinship. In the past a man lived in the same place as his father and in charge of the 591 segment allocated to him by his father. Now a man lives where he 611 can find relatives of one kind or another who may be related to him agnatically, cognatically, affinally, or by any combination of these 602 ways. He is not even restricted to consanguineal relatives, as in 571 cognatic kinship systems, for he can affiliate himself to some person 178 who is linked cognatically neither to him or to any of his potential descendants, as when he goes to live with his father's wife's mother's brother. Genealogical connexion can be traced along all possible paths and there are no mechanisms by which one path is automatically favoured or by which the length of a path is restricted. In consequence the genealogical constitution of any local group of relatives is complex, and every man is a potential recruit to many local groups. He selects between the numerous possibilities open to him on the basis of his own inclinations and in response to the various pressures exerted on him by his siblings, his parents, his wife, her parents, and others. Once he has made his choice he can always change his mind and move elsewhere if he finds his neighbours [556] irksome. His wealth, either in cattle or money, is his own and he can take it with him when he moves. There are no rights in land [623] (with the one exception of dry season gardens) which might otherwise tie him to one particular spot. As with residence, so with marriage 581 payments, the formal and informal procedures of marriages, and the values associated with them. In all, considerable variation is tolerated. Indeed, we may well regard variation as a necessity in 591 this system, for every man is subject to a mass of potential conflicting claims and he cannot possibly honour them all simultaneously. Variation occurs not because of different practices by various sections of the population but rather because of different individual decisions. A man decides for himself whether or not he will pay bridewealth, or take a hoeing party to his wife's mother's garden, or be suspended from the sacraments for marrying a second wife. Yet although he makes these choices himself, he is all the time subject to social pressure from kinsfolk and neighbours who will be affected by his decisions and who therefore try to influence them. A woman is not quite so free as a man, but she too can make many decisions for herself, and her relatives must appeal to her if they wish to influence her, for they cannot force her against her will. Man and wife living together are in a unique relationship which is personal and non-transferable, yet they live in the midst of kinsfolk and the well-being of one relative is the concern of all. The quarrels of a married couple are a danger to the cohesion of the local group in which they live, while the longer they live together, fertile and peaceful, the greater the local solidarity.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

592 252 593 [267] mother. One of the man's sisters conducts the wife to her mother-in-law's hut, and under the instruction of the assembled women she begins to cook. Although people speak of her doing the cooking, in practice all she does is to look on while her sisters-in-law do the work. The porridge is divided onto plates and distributed under the directions of the man's mother. One plate is sent to the man's father, one to the husband who eats the porridge with his brothers, and one to the most important woman in the village, while some are taken by the cooks themselves. The man's father is expected to remark on how well the porridge has been cooked, but he may say that it has been poorly prepared and his daughter-in-law must be taught again. This expression of disapproval cannot be more than a way of showing his dislike for his daughter-in-law for whatever he says the ceremony is not repeated and the woman begins to cook regularly for her husband. If the man's relatives are wealthy, they may kill a goat or a sheep on this occasion, or the woman's parents may send a sheep or a goat to be killed and eaten. The woman's parents cannot themselves attend the ceremony.

[591] If the couple begin their marriage uxorilocally this ceremony does not take place. The bride begins to cook for her husband as soon as he comes to live with her, using her grand-mother's hut as a kitchen.

Appendix III

THE HOEING PARTY

606 583 A man is under an obligation to provide once during his marriage a party of hoers who work in his wife's mother's garden for the greater part of one day and who are rewarded by his wife's father. This party is called by the general word for obligations owed by a man towards his parents-in-law, *cikomwene*.[1] The function of this occasion, as a socially sanctioned method of expression of hostility between a man and his affines, has already been discussed. I attended one of these parties and my clerk attended two others.

The man, or a relative of his, tells his father that he is planning to bring a party to hoe on such and such a day. If the father-in-law agrees that the day is suitable he tells his wife to brew beer for the hoers. On the agreed day the hoeing party arrive early in the morning and begin to work in the garden. The father-in-law promises presents to the leader of the hoers, who continue to hoe until they are offered what they consider is sufficient. They then stop, and go to the village to receive the present and drink beer.

[1] See above, p. 74.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5

10. *Forbidden and Enjoined Unions (Ngoni).*

The Angoni are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*vide infra*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the Angoni it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage (Ngoni).*

When an Mngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headman to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *ankhosse* with a present to the *ankhosse* of the girl. There are always two *ankhosse* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ku-ongu*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several elder women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commensuration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ku-tewlera*, and sends a cloth (known as *ncheka*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kulowola*, or *kupereka mabeka*. The *mabeka*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the
693 Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
184 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
692 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done
183

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

241 those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their
273 work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory
476 that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's
[465] labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

463 There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no
323 potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neigh-
[462] bouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

285 Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when
[462] it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

759 Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical
[648] services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

611 The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying
[591] bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern prac-
[583] tice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were
[184] incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In the old days

marriages in which bride-wealth was paid were patrilocal, and those in which it was not paid, except for marriages with slave wives, were matrilocal. The matrilocal marriages were made only by recently incorporated Ngoni. The payment of bride-wealth is now significant only in relation to the residence and affiliation of the children of the marriage and does not affect the residence of the couple themselves. It frequently happens that a man goes and lives in the village of his wife when they are first married and that after a year or so he takes her back to his own village. This practice is fairly common among the matrilineal tribes of the region. A small payment[1] of five shillings or so may be made instead to enable a man to take his bride to his own village without first completing a period of matrilocal residence. Sometimes the legalization payment is considered sufficient to exempt from matrilocal residence. Indeed it is indicative of the wide range of variation in the different payments made and not made and in the significance attached to them that some informants were unable to state with certainty what payments had been made in their own marriages, although they knew the amount of money or animals that had been handed over.

583 178 [567] 591 ● 583 [184]

This wide range of variation in behaviour in relation to marriage is one instance of the high measure of cultural heterogeneity of the Fort Jameson Ngoni. While present-day conditions are relevant to a study of Ngoni marriage, at the same time the effect of the combination of people with very different conceptions of marriage into a single state must not be overlooked. Among families that are powerful and claim to have migrated with Zwangendaba from the south, patrilocal marriage and the payment of bride-wealth are more frequent than they are among families of more recent incorporation. Cross-cousin marriage is noticeably more frequent in villages with people of Bisa descent than in the population as a whole. In Nyasaland, where there is a sharper cleavage into old Ngoni villages and conquered Cewa villages, the old Ngoni are characterized by a greater, and the Cewa by a lesser, incidence of patrilocal marriage.

184 58

Divorce

In the old days there was no way in which a woman could divorce her husband. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own people. The usual procedure nowadays, except in cases of adultery, is for the man to give his wife sixpence or a shilling

586

[1] *Ndhakula.*

/5 cont'd/

Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman, although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here. Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the weather. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also 563 621 a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and *ahmuzana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of 128 interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a [184 consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations 121 of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual 563 pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-583 betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *mlobokazi*. A 593 strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of [586 a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. 591 Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was supported by the house system whereby the male members of each house [592 formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Dr. Kuper described the Swazi king making his own capital, but referred also to the existence of several royal villages where the wives of the reigning king lived.[1] The Ngoni system of one royal village which went out from the former royal village resulted in a series of social groups, based on residence, which were related to past Paramounts and their widows and to present Paramounts and their wives. The diagram in Chapter III of Part I shows a very much simplified form of the component parts of a new royal village and their relationship illustrated by the siting of the huts. 643 361 644

The following text was given by an elderly widow of a grandson of Zwangendaba, in the head village of Chief Mperembe in the northern kingdom.

« When a new village, *lusungulu*, was built the *indlunkulu* was first erected and then followed all the other huts of the *inkosi* in order. Those huts which belonged to the *indlunkulu* took the right-hand side facing the kraal. The second house took the left-hand side, and all huts belonging to this one followed it. Such huts could be counted as belonging to the *indlunkulu* and the second house by the cattle that were taken from such houses. To marry a new wife, if the *inkosi* took cattle from the right-hand house that new wife would belong there. All the huts of each house of the *inkosi* were built at the back of the hut of the owner of that house.

When erecting huts, those of the *isinduna* came next and were built next to those of the *inkosi*. After that they built their own according to their *izigawa* or divisions.

All the huts at the back of the *indlunkulu* and behind the other huts were called *cigodlo*. Huts near the gate of the kraal at the left were called *kwa cikulu*.

This text brings out the fact that each new royal village had three main elements in it: the mothers of the Paramount, his wives, and the *isinduna* and their families. The Paramount was always accompanied to his new village by one or more wives of his father, *ukalondolwa matwana* (to keep the son). One of these was usually his own mother and she occupied the *indlunkulu*. The text points out that the big wife of the Paramount was on the right of the *indlunkulu*, and closely associated with its owner, the Paramount's mother. [592 644]

There was no fixed rule for the number of *isinduna* in charge of the houses of the Paramount's mothers and wives. When the Ngoni kingdoms were established in Nyasaland, the royal villages were very large and the divisions of the village, called in the text *izigawa*, were small hamlets. Each division was generally identified with a house, and in that case the *induna* in charge of the house was also in charge of the division. The original composition of royal villages could only be reconstructed by tracing the relationships of separate villages in the 1930's to their former parent village. This will be illustrated in the next chapter on the

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 41.

643 royal women. In the royal villages in the 1930's there was one big
361 *induna* and several lesser ones whose position and functions will be described in Chapter IV.

643 This 'going out' of the new Paramount's village, leaving the former
554 Paramount's village as the *gogo* village, brought about some re-distribu-
644 tion of authority, prestige and material goods. It gave the new Paramount his own village, always to be known as his, even after his death. His village became the focal meeting-place for the territory and for the court and territorial officials who surrounded the Paramount; and it was to the new royal village that the *alumuzana* in pre-European days came frequently to visit the Paramount and report to him on conditions in their areas. His moving out of the *gogo* village, on the other hand, gave his brothers who stayed there, and especially those of the *gogo* house, more freedom and authority within that village as well as responsibility for the conduct of all ritual matters relating to the kingdom. The Para-
[595] mount's big wife had to take her place as the leading woman in the new village and to order the affairs of the wives attached to her house in con-
[592] sultation with the Paramount's mother. Cattle, beer and food for the royal household became the concern of the new village, and the *izinduna* and the royal women had to plan and manage the economy of a capital where political interests converged and where visitors and hangers-on were constantly turning up.

643 The following text by Chief Mtwalo Jere in Mzimba district, helped
644 by Cibambo's older brother, describes the daily routine of the Para-
512 mount and his royal village as they had known it in their youth before the coming of the Europeans:

¶ The *inkosi* had to wash very early before the people came to see him. The *ingceko* was the servant who took care of washing the *inkosi*. He had to go with the *inkosi* to the bush and hide the faeces to prevent any bad person from getting the faeces. The *ingceko* was anyone whom the *inkosi* called for this, and must be one who walks well with the *inkosi*.

Before leaving his house to go to the kraal the *inkosi* had to eat a little porridge. When he went to the kraal a calabash of beer was brought to him. When any beer was brought to the *inkosi*, the *ingceko* tasted it first to see if it was good. The *inkosi* asked 'Is it good beer?' and the *ingceko* said 'Yes *inkosi*' and gave it to the *inkosi* to drink. When the *inkosi* took snuff the big *alumuzana* could beg from him. The other *amadoda* could only touch their noses. Then the *inkosi* knew they were begging snuff from him. Where the *inkosi* sat a mat was spread, and on it was laid a leopard- or a lion-skin. This was called 'the chair of the *inkosi*'. On arrival the big *alumuzana* went straight into the kraal to where the *inkosi* sat and greeted him '*Bayete*', and sat down in front of him.

The *inkosi* could not eat porridge except that cooked by his own wives. In his own hut he ate alone with one wife to serve him. His mothers also came with food every day. He ate twice in his own hut, early and late, and once in the kraal. When he ate in the kraal all could see him. He could

CHAPTER III

HOUSES

361 171 823 WRITING of the social organization of the northern Nguni among the South-eastern Bantu, Mrs. Hoernlé[1] referred to three divisions of the typical village: the *indlunkulu* section where the principal hut was that of the mistress of the village; the *ikhohlo* section on the left-hand side of this hut, and the *inqadi* section on the right. The terminology used by the northern Nguni expressed right and left hand from the point of view of someone looking up from the gate of the kraal. I found that among the Ngoni they used right and left the other way as if the person were at the top of the kraal looking down at the gate, and I have adopted their usage.

171 361 554 Ngoni villages, which were royal villages or the head villages of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, also had a tripartite division into houses related to leading women, as we saw in the village plan in Chapter III of Part I, but there was a major difference between them and the northern Nguni grouping described by Mrs. Hoernlé. In Ngoni villages the *indlunkulu*, the hut at the head of the kraal, was occupied by the mother of the owner of the village, who had 'come out' with him from his father's village. In the right-hand section of the huts round the kraal was the hut of the owner's big wife, and on the left the hut of his next important wife. These three huts, representing three houses, were the focal points of the main divisions of the village. In fact in most villages the owner of the *indlunkulu* had the huts of other widows of her late husband beside her on each side, and the *cigodlo*, or section where the sons of the owner of the village lived, spread over a wide area behind the *indlunkulu* and behind the huts of the two chief wives. The plan used in Chapter III of Part I was necessarily simplified in order to bring out the main points. The grouping of huts in typical Ngoni villages showed varying degrees of elaboration, and it was not always easy at first to trace their connexions with the houses.

592 571 Houses in the Ngoni kingdoms could be considered as divisions of the village, though they did not always cover all the divisions. If we look at the membership of a house, as it was illustrated in a typical Ngoni village, it is clear that it had in it three elements connected by ties of kinship, affinity or association with the owner of the house, who was either a wife or a mother of the male owner of the village. The kinship group related to the *indlunkulu* comprised the male owner of the village, his mother and classificatory mothers with his brothers who had joined him. In the big house and in the second house of his wives the kinship

[1] op. cit. p. 83.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

571 group consisted of himself and the mother and her children, including 592 her daughters only until they married.

The affinal element in a house consisted of the other wives associated 592 with the owner of the house as co-wives, and the wives of the sons of 585 the owner. Both the kinship group and the affinal group were bound 571 together by their rights in the cattle of the herd which was known as 'the cattle of the house of X'. From that herd were taken cattle for the *lobola* of the wives married after the house was founded, and for the wives of the sons and adopted sons of the house. Into that herd came the cattle received for the marriages of the daughters belonging to the house and the gift cattle sent to wives by their fathers after marriage. When the *lobola* had been fully paid up for a daughter of the house, [591] then her relationship with it ceased and she was thenceforth known as belonging to her husband's mother's house.

Associated with the house in the villages of the Paramounts, the chiefs 592 and the leading *alumuzana* were two other groups of people. One was 571 the *induna* appointed 'to take care of the house' and his family. In the 357 1930's the *induna* was in charge of the cattle and of the many activities connected with the house, including the organization of male labour in hut-building, in kraal construction and in cultivation; he was consulted by the male members of the house about the selling of cattle and the use of the goods accumulated in the house. The other group associated with [527] the house in pre-European days consisted of captives taken in war and allocated to the house who worked as labourers. The servants who worked for a house in the 1930's assisted with cooking, beer-making and minding the children, and they had huts near that of the owner of the house to which they belonged, placed on the right- or left-hand side of the kraal according to their affiliation with the big house or the second house. Informants said that in the past such association with a house included giving a beast from the herd of the house for the marriage of a servant. The *induna*, through the marriage of his daughters, built up his own herd, which he frequently kept at first with the cattle of the house in the main kraal, later building his own kraal.

A new house began when a man married his big wife. Although at 361 first he built her a hut at the back of his mother's hut in his father's 591 village, as soon as he moved out to his new village after his father's 592 death, the big wife's hut had the next most important site in the kraal after that of the *indlunkulu*, and the second wife had the third place of importance. In some of the larger villages of the central kingdom, the [768] custom of moving out into a new village after the death of the former owner had been given up, partly because of pressure on the land. The 361 house grouping in relation to the siting of huts then became very com- 592 plex, but the pattern was nevertheless discernible. The two sections under the big house and the *gogo* house, which had formerly divided into two villages, continued to exist together, and at Mcakhatha this dual

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 pattern covered two generations including the houses of the former
592 chief and the reigning one.

The houses served several purposes in the organization of village life on the one hand, and on the other, provided an important instrument for regulating succession and inheritance, and for carrying out traditional ceremonies and ritual. It was the eldest son of the second house who would, if the *lusungulu* practice was followed, remain behind with the *gogo* village; and he was responsible for conducting traditional ritual and was expected to be able to carry out ceremonial procedure correctly. This was the main function of the *gogo* village and of the man who was head of the male members of the *gogo* house. The corresponding head of the male members of the big house was the owner of the village, and it was his eldest son by his first wife who would normally succeed him as chief or *mulumuzana*. The members of each house had a stake in the property of that house, particularly in the herd of cattle owned by it, and in any goods, such as cloth, bought by the sale of the cattle of the house. The house united the male members who belonged to it through this common ownership of cattle. In Chapter II of Part IV we shall examine further this aspect of belonging to a house.

554 In the organization of village life in villages belonging to chiefs or
592 *alumuzana* the houses established the status of the wives of the owner
562 of the village, and the status of those of his mothers who had come with him. His mother in the *indlunkulu* hut ranked first among her co-widows. The big wife came next, and the wife of the second house after her. Wives attached to the big house ranked above those attached to the second house.

571 The houses fulfilled their most prominent role in the day-to-day
592 activities of the households associated with them. It was in these daily
627 affairs and in planning for future events that the house organization
562 provided the chief channels of authority. The exercise of this authority ranged from instruction in household tasks and emphasis on good standards of housekeeping to settling minor disputes arising from marital quarrels over property and over the custody of children. These minor cases could be settled out of court if the senior women showed that they knew how to listen to complaints and give advice which was accepted, with the result that good relations were restored. The main topics of discussion among the senior women on the verandah of the *indlunkulu* were the ingredients of these minor quarrels and disputes. If, by judicious handling, they could keep the cases out of court, they knew, and so did the village, that their authority was enhanced and their prestige more firmly established.

571 The authority of senior women was further reinforced through their
592 organization of women's labour in household work and in cultivation.
562 This authority in domestic affairs covered a woman's own household and the women and girls attached to it as household servants, the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

households of her co-wives who were junior to her in the house, and the households of her sons' wives. These women also decided when to undertake certain work in cultivation or in harvesting crops, when to brew beer, when to re-polish the floors of huts and the sitting place in front of the huts, when to replenish the stock of cloth, ornaments and beads, baskets and mats, which were part of the wealth of the house. Other occasions for the exercise of authority were attending and superintending women's confinements and the private puberty rite of the girls, advising on matters of health, and supervising the training of children. 562 571 592

All these activities of the owners of the houses were so much part of the day-to-day life of a village that they could pass almost unnoticed unless a detailed analysis were made. The position and authority of owners of houses was, however, immediately evident on ceremonial occasions. These included the pre-marriage ceremony of *umsindo*, which was abandoned after the Europeans came; the series of visits and exchanges leading up to the marriage ceremony, *mtimba*; brewing beer on a number of occasions, for dancing *ngoma* and *ligubo*, for funerals and subsequent ritual shaving, or for entertaining important visitors whose coming was expected so that beer could be prepared in advance. On all such occasions, the courtyard surrounding the *indlunkulu* was a scene of great activity. Men put on their war-dance equipment there; the beer pots were assembled there; meat and blood for feasts were cooked there, while the less important maize porridge (*nsima*) was cooked in subordinate households. From the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* a procession of the *manina* (senior women) led by the owner of the house went out to greet visitors, to go to the beer drink, to take part in the dances, and to perform the ritual connected with births, deaths and marriages. 592 554 571 [178]

Marriage in Ngoni Society

Earlier in this chapter it was said that a new house derived from the marriage of a leading man to his big wife. Since marriage was so closely linked with the continuance and development of houses, and since a new wife when married separated from her own mother's house and became a member of her husband's mother's house, I have included a discussion of marriage in this chapter on houses. 581 182

There were three main principles in Ngoni marriage. It was a binding contract sealed by the exchange of cattle; it established succession in the male line; it formed a link between leading Swazi clans. When we examine in detail the organization of Ngoni marriage we see that its objectives were to build up a series of inter-clan and inter-family relationships. These began with inter-marriage between the leading Swazi clans, in order to strengthen the political and social relationships within that inner circle of Ngoni society. The political allegiance of leading individuals from clans of non-Swazi origin was strengthened by marriage

621 break up into smaller villages, and there were on the whole more villages
593 in the north said to be *wabanja limodzi* (of one family) than among the central Ngoni. On the other hand, the *lusungulu* pattern of village division had almost disappeared among the central Ngoni.

591 A man on his first marriage built a hut for his wife behind his
592 mother's hut, where his brothers by the same mother or by mothers of the same house also built. The family grouping by residence was there-
[361] fore determined by house affiliation. Associated with this residential group based on kinship, there were the residences of the *induna* and his family which had separate alignments on a kinship basis, though for certain common purposes they combined with the family groups related to the house by kinship. The children of the families belonging to the house and the children of the *induna* who took care of it began to intermarry when the prohibitions on marriage within the village ceased to operate. In this way kinship bonds were created within a group which formerly had only residence and certain activities in common, and this process was recognizable in a number of the larger villages, especially in the central kingdom.

593 Within the different types of family groups determined by their residential basis there were certain outstanding relationships between members of the same family. The most important of these was that between father and children; the father, as the biological parent and also the symbol of authority, was the focus of honour and respect, and the one who helped his children when they were in need. The relation between the father and his children among the Ngoni was always a balance between affection and care, and respect and authority. The ideal pattern of a father, as described by informants, included all these elements and also wisdom. This concept of the father relationship was extended to the head of a *banja*, to the headman of a village or a section of a village, to a *mulumuzana* in charge of an area, to a chief, and to the
[576] Paramount himself. The Ngoni greeting to all older men, and the most respectful form of address to a man of any seniority, was *baba*, father, or its Nyanja equivalent *bambo*.

The mother, on the other hand, had a more limited relationship within the family circle. To her own children and to the children of her co-wives, especially of her house, she was the provider of food, and the affectionate 'cherisher'[1] of young children; but she was also treated with respect and, when she reached some seniority, she had considerable authority over her daughters and her younger co-wives. She could never compete, however, with the sisters of her husband or with his mothers, who expected to exercise authority over her children and to
[591 arrange for the ceremonies connected with birth, puberty, and marriage.
184] In villages where virilocal residence was the rule, the husband's sisters were married elsewhere and were only present in the village during

[1] *hulwa*, lit. to cherish, is the word used for bringing up children.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and nursemaids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving. 593 862 178

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*laweni*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *laweni*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father. 513 592

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *laweni* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary. 264 [343] [251] 356 593

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she 342 [415]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

342 356 593 was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

162 585 595 184 The tables which follow show the total population of three villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Huts	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Eswazini .	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Endindeni .	15	9	21	21	51	4	1	4	15
Eluhangeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	32
Central kingdom									
Cinkwita .	39	22	39	54	115	13	5	4	2
Mangozo .	60	41	65	78	184	9	18	2	4
Mcakhatha	122	71	112	68	251	30	16	14	12

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *lusungulu* and *gogo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *banja* was not found in the north.

592 614 622 631 The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *mulumuzana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *mulumuzana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Households[1]

	Total	*Leading clan*	
Northern Ngoniland			592
Eswazini	23	15	614
Endindeni	15	12	622
Eluhangeni	37	21	631
Central Ngoniland			
Cinkwita	39	18	
Mangoso	60	26	
Mcakhatha	122	37	

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head. [563 565]

Eswazini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Eswazini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *lusungulu* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother. [361] 184 592 621

Endindeni was a *gogo* village owned by Zibekere Makwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gogo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ubale* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more *lawani*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 wife. The village with its single kraal was 'of one house', and it was
● 592 widely known as a good village by Ngoni standards, because, as the
621 local people said, 'all the men are Makwakwa men'.

Eluhangeni was a *gogo* village where the spirit of Mtenje Jere, the son of a brother of Zwangendaba, was guarded. The kinship group of Mwanamdoko Jere, the owner of the village, were all of one house, that of his mother who was dead. Her place in the *indlunkulu* had been taken by his big wife who also inherited the guardianship of the spirit of Mtenje. There was one widow of his father in the village, but she had become a Christian and therefore could not guard the spirit. Mwanamdoko had two wives, and three widows of his brothers by the same mother were also in the village. One brother by another mother was the only one of his generation still alive and he had two sons and two grandsons living in the *cigodlo* behind the *indlunkulu*. All Mwanamdoko's family were grouped round one kraal. There were two other kraals with family groups round them in the village, one belonging to the *induna* of his dead mother, and one to an age mate who had been in his regiment. The *induna's* group belonged to the same house as Mwanamdoko, but the pattern of the three distinct groups each with its own kraal was more like that of the *banja* in the central kingdom.

184 In the central kingdom the relationships of the various groups in a
563 village followed a different pattern from that in the north. Instead of
592 the *lusungulu* and *gogo* characteristics where the family groups were
621 integrated into houses, the southern pattern was that of a conquered village with the Ngoni element superimposed. In Cinkwita and in Mcakhatha the village headman and his family group had originally been conquered, then established as an outlying village, and finally chosen for the permanent settlement of a family group belonging to an
[361] Ngoni clan when they left the royal village after it broke up. In Cinkwita there were three kraals associated with three *banja*. Two of the *banja* belonged to kinship groups of Ntumba clans, and the head of one was known as the headman of the village. The head of the *banja* of Cinkwita Ndau, the Ngoni clan group, was his eldest son Wilkinson, whose wife was of a leading Swazi clan, the Magwagwa. His family group consisted of his wife, two sons and three daughters; a brother and his two daughters; the widow of a dead brother and his two sons and a daughter; three sisters, one of whom had married the brother of the village headman and one who was a widow; and a widowed sister of his father. This family grouping expressed in terms of households illustrates what has already been referred to several times, namely the tendency of the heads of leading Ngoni families in the central kingdom to keep, in addition to their sons, their sisters and daughters in the village after marriage, even when *lobola* had been given. It also illustrates the comparatively small number of plural marriages in the south among the younger men.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Mangozo, as its name suggests, was the head village of the Ngozo clan. It had been originally settled by Ngwazi Ngozo who brought with him two family groups of Ntumba clans who had been with him in Songea. These two Ntumba family groups each formed a *banja*, and one had a kraal. The other two *banja* belonged to two elderly Ngozo brothers, sons of Ngwazi and of the same house, who had one kraal between them. The senior of these, Mbiri Ngozo, had in his *banja* a widow of his father, not his own mother, and nine widows of a dead older brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, three grandsons and three granddaughters; and his sister. The *banja* of Cinyama Ngozo included two widows of another brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, one grandson and one granddaughter. The two brothers between them had to support eleven widows of dead brothers. 184 592 621 [614]

Mcakhatha had a dual foundation. The village site was originally one of the outlying villages of the section known as Ziyembe. It was also the head village of the Nzunga clan. Three of the five *banja* into which the village was divided belonged to Ntumba family groups, and the head of one of these was known as the headman of the village. Of the two *banja* belonging to the Nzunga clan, one was a *gogo banja*, the other that of the ruling chief who was a Sub-Native Authority.[1] Within the *gogo banja* was the house of Bambo Manga in whose hut the spirit of Mputa was guarded. Two other houses in the *gogo banja* were associated with the guardianship of the spirits of the grandfather and father of the ruling chief. There was therefore a house and a *banja* formation existing together, in which the *banja* predominated. The two Nzunga *banja* consisted of two family groups, one associated with the ruling chief and one with his paternal uncle in charge of the *gogo* section. The chief's *banja* included his own five wives, one sister and two brothers by the same mother, and two sisters and four brothers by other mothers. The *banja* of the head of the *gogo* section included his own five wives and two widows whom he had inherited from the former chief, his older brother; three brothers and two sisters by other mothers; three of his sons. It also included a widow of his father, and nine widows of his dead brother who had not been inherited; and the households of Bambo Manga and her daughter and granddaughter for whom the father of the ruling chief had assumed responsibility. The Ngoni family pattern of this village was more complex than that of Cinkwita or Mangozo because of the clearly marked *gogo* section existing alongside that of the ruling chief. It showed, however, the general characteristics of Ngoni family grouping in the central kingdom, keeping sisters and daughters in the village after marriage while retaining responsibility for widows of fathers and brothers. There were three Nzunga kraals, two in the *gogo banja* and one in the chief's *banja*, but the cattle were always referred to [614]

[1] In northern Ngoniland the ruling chief would have moved out of this village on his father's death, leaving the *gogo banja* as the *gogo* village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and
592 the high ranking of the Nzunga clan accounted for the number of
621 *lobola* marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

554 As individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans
565 claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families
614 in the area of a *mulumuzana* owning a head village, and the small Ngoni
621 family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received 'honour' (*ulemu*). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were [557] a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side, responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and the *banja*. Quarrels had to be composed, if possible before they came to court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be expected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the northern and Mangozo in the central kingdom.

[476] In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose husbands were away at work. The dislocation caused to the village economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and heads of a *banja*, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include the needs of these 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradition emphasized this type of help.

867 In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and relationships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty ceremonies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

woman had her home. The other was the 'gate'[1] of the kraal 621
at the opposite end of the enclosure to the 'big house'. The [417]
name by which this 'gate' was known applied also to the
space on each side of the gap in the kraal fence through
which the cattle went out and came in—a gap which was
closed at night with heavy poles. Here at the gate the men [512]
of the village sat by day, ate their meals brought to them by
children from their wives' huts, talked, received strangers,
pursued their crafts, and supervised the return of the cattle
in the evenings.

In and around the main huts within the tall reed fences, 342
the life of a Ngoni household went on. Some of the huts
were rectangular, others round. All had a veranda built up
above the ground-level and shaded by the house roof. The
back parts of the veranda were often enclosed with mats to
make additional storage space. In old Ngoni households the 351
open space around the hut was kept swept and mudded and
polished like a floor, so that people could sit there in comfort
and cleanliness as well as on the veranda. Near the house 417
was one or more little reed platforms about five feet above
the ground, where kitchen utensils, gourds and vegetables
were laid to dry, and which were used to sit under as shelter
from the sun in the hot months. Large and small wooden 415
pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape, mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
always to be seen outside and around the hut, as well as
inside.

In each household, within the main hut, there were two 353
places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
door-posts at the entrance. These posts with the hollow for [354]
the fireplace in the centre of the floor divided the hut into
a right-hand and left-hand side—the men's side and the

[1] and [2] A short list of the vernacular terms for some these common Ngoni place-names is given at end of the book.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side, ● 592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the [562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the [778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the [769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, [721] they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad- [648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the [162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern [643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the [671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was [692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from [702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his [691] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war 600 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military Service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [583]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always [563]
a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] [191] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-[162] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger [592] women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was the [illegible] both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces-[361] sible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in-[342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was [871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [797] mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East African.

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

After this formal visit had taken place, the young mother was free to visit her former home more often, and her relatives could come and see her and her baby in her husband's village. 593 594

Taking care of the baby

There were two special features of infant care among the Ngoni which were not found among the neighbouring peoples. One was the assignment of a nurse girl from outside the circle of relatives to care for a new infant. The nurse girl was chosen by the grandmother from among her dependent household staff, and was allotted to one particular baby. The girl, who was usually in her early teens and unmarried, was supervised by an older woman, also of the grandmother's household. This woman watched over the personal behaviour of several nurse girls, as well as seeing that they did their work properly as nurses. 854 857 [592] [885]

The nurse girl took charge of the baby in the early morning and kept it with her all day until nightfall, bringing it back to the mother at more or less regular intervals for suckling. The mother played with the baby if she felt like it, and sent for the nurse girl to bring it to her if strangers came and she wanted to display the child. The Ngoni commended this practice by saying that their women kept clean because they did not carry babies about all day on their backs. They admitted at the same time that many infants grew greatly attached to their nurse girls, to the extent of being happier with them than with their mother. The nurse girls did not take little babies far afield. They stayed around within the fences of the household or near at hand, helping with domestic chores, chatting to other nurse girls, helping to prepare meals, and eating with the baby's mother and anyone else who formed part of the household eating unit. At night, after she had given the baby to its mother, she went off to sleep in the hut of the older woman who was in charge of her and other nurse girls.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

IV

Family Life for the Young Child

The woman's world

It was the proud boast of the Ngoni aristocrats that their 562
women did no 'work' in the old days. When they spoke thus 461
they were equating 'work' with physical labour, sweeping 592
and cleaning in the hut and compound, fetching wood and water, hoeing in the gardens, and the routine part of preparing and cooking food. The Ngoni women of the former large households had an army of 'helpers' to do all these tasks for them. Though the number of helpers dwindled as the larger households disappeared, the pattern of appropriation of tasks remained in the shrunken households, and hence the Ngoni women were always responsible for a high degree of household management. Larger households in the old days fed fifty to sixty people from their cooking-pots, and though when I lived among them the scale of their households was much smaller, some were still feeding twenty and more people for each meal, apart from the occasional meals served when kinsfolk and strangers came unexpectedly.

I never failed to be impressed with the quiet dignified competence with which Ngoni women managed their household affairs. They did it with an apparent effortlessness, which had its roots in long training and tradition, and in an awareness of responsibility that increased, but weighed less heavily, with age and experience. This competence was always apparent on occasions such as wedding feasts. Then [262]
cereal food, meat, vegetable relishes were cooked in vast quantities and served out to the separate groups of guests.

562 These skills of management, and of order and dignity in
461 serving, were not however only seen in large-scale operations.
592 The modern young Ngoni wife serving tea and 'scones' to her husband's guests sitting on his veranda showed the same qualities of careful preparation and considerate service as her grandmother had shown presiding over 500 guests at a wedding feast.

562 Household management in Ngoni homes included primarily managing the household staff, allotting their tasks to them, settling their quarrels, looking after them when sick, marrying off the young ones when the time came. In the all-important aspect of feeding a large household and its dependents, Ngoni women assumed responsibility for seeing that there were enough supplies of different kinds of food at hand, for regular consumption and for emergencies. They consulted at times with the 'official' who was in charge of their 'house' about mobilizing supplies or organizing women helpers to cultivate in the gardens. Most significant in the eyes of Ngoni and non-Ngoni alike was the task of Ngoni
[264] women of 'dividing the food' at every meal-time. It was a key concept in Ngoni culture that at all times when food, beer, or other kinds of goods were to be divided out, and enjoyed or used by a large number of people, the 'one who divided' was an important individual. He, or more often she, must be of 'good character', who assumed, or was given, the task because he or she knew how to do it, and no one questioned the justice or the competence with which the dividing was done. Again I was impressed by the almost nonchalant air with which Ngoni women ladled out food
[461] for a large number of individuals and groups. It looked so easy. It was obviously not a simple matter. The results were always accepted and welcomed, and I never heard any grumbles.

593 Central to the organization of the household, and in one
592 sense the axis on which it revolved, was the care and attention the wife gave to her husband. Cooking, including the

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an-
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be- [183]
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 357
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead 592
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 901
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 855
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
matched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when 561
asked questions. They took their school work seriously in 872
order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent 565
ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be [583]
transferred at their marriage would be greater according to
whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or
even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daugh- 561
ters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls 857
continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. 592
They and their companions, according to their growth and 512
strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water,
grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household,
where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family
only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores.
As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time
with the young children, or washing themselves and their
clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rub- [302]
bing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass [301]
or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head
bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more
amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' 572
circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they
always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classifica-
tory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this
friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about
her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the
other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage.
The friend was always from another compound and of a
leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and
necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream to-
gether. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were
married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a
violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about
these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day
[302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one
[291] fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony,
[516] her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

Many references have been made already to the relation-
577 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife,
602 especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognised by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

577 Competence in household management, being a success-
592 ful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house-

wife. We have talked in Chapters IV and VII of her duties 577
in organizing food supplies, supervising cooking, and that 592
supreme test of competence: dividing out the food so that
all had a fair share. The same high standard of skill was [264]
expected in the general care and supervision of the compound, the children and the household staff. Ngoni women, like their menfolk, were proud of being able to supervise other people and organize life around them, to control others satisfactorily, to hear complaints and to pacify quarrels. The proverb 'The tooth laughs to no purpose', meaning that [538]
angry people show their teeth but with no merriment, was often heard when Ngoni women intervened to stop two quarrelling girls or to prevent an irate helper getting angry with the nurse girls.

The traits of justice and wisdom were important elements 577
in the foundation of a Ngoni married woman's reputation.
These were judged by her ability to allocate fair shares of 538
food to servants and helpers, and to adjudicate wisely in women's disputes. Two proverbs referred particularly to dividing out food and were said about women who were either careless or stingy, and did not give their helpers a fair share. 'The finger-nails are surfeited' meant that the important people had eaten heartily without thought for others; and 'She has sliced one side only' had the same connotation, that those who had the supplies were keeping too much for themselves. Two other proverbs drove home this principle of *noblesse oblige* when emphasizing the responsibilities of married women: 'The elephant is not made heavy by its trunk,' and 'If the cows do not produce milk the herdsman is responsible.'

The ideal personality of Ngoni men

As we have just said, there was a definite personality pattern 577
for young men whether married or not, which emphasized 562
special qualities looked for in them, since on the whole they 561
had relatively little authority or responsibility in village

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound, (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 122). 128 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582]

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajaha*

young girls before puberty: *inkakazana*

young girls after puberty: *izintombi*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AKULU	the important people
ALEZI	nursemaids
GOGO	grandparent or any very senior person
HLONIPA	respect
IMDLUNKULU	chief hut in a village
INDUNA	official in village
IZIDANDANI	girl attendants
LAWENI	boys' dormitory
MWINI	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived 361
in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a
central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut [585]
and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts
were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a
few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership [592]
of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an
important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and [554]
their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped [727]
into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. 621
Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates
of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or [624]
his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who
were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions [622]
made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The
village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman
or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him.
Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the
headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where 631
there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions,
villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential [728]
system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the [171]
Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same 631
cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to
establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in 571
importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their
clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be
contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves
as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself
affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who
established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained
a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance.
The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters,
a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relation-
ships of superordination and subordination between persons remained
the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigaŵa*, pl. *vigaŵa*, from *ku-gaŵa*, to divide.

The chief did however interfere
643 to some extent in the marriages of those near him and on occasion took away a wife from one man and gave her as wife to another. Nsingu, the heir of Mpezeni I, once took a wife from one of the important men in his mother's royal village and made her his queen. [362] The man committed suicide and Nsingu killed a beast to placate the anger of his mother's lieutenants. Such instances of intervention seem to have been rare and were disliked by the common people.

6. Polygyny

592 The pattern of growth of the residential system was determined by the grouping of children in the compound family. This grouping was in turn determined by the ranking of wives. It seems that the
595 South-Eastern Bantu system of dividing wives into three groups, a great house and a left- and a right-hand house was not continued. [171] Old men are agreed that in the past wives could be described as either left-hand or right-hand, but there is no agreement on the principles of this division. In discussing the wives of well-known men who flourished about this period, there was no consensus about which women were left-hand wives and which were right. The division cannot in any case have had the same spatial reference to the husband's cattle byre as among the South-Eastern Bantu, [361] since the Ngoni lived in large villages with a central byre containing all the cattle of the village.

595 Wives were arranged into small groups which we may term 'bands'. A band might contain up to a dozen co-wives and was
592 under the charge of its senior member. Wives in a band lived close to each other in the same cluster of huts. A man might have as many as five or six bands of wives, and the senior wife of one of the bands was the man's great wife, the mother of his heir. We have seen that a cross-cousin was inferior to an unrelated wife, and a wife from the same or related village inferior to one from afar. These two considerations, however, seem only to have influenced a man's choice of senior wives and did not themselves directly determine wifely rank. Thus a man could if he wished make a cross-cousin from his own village his great wife or the senior wife of one of his bands, but most men did not do so. The first wife married with bridewealth was the great wife. If there was a wife married earlier for whom no bridewealth had been paid, perhaps a cross-cousin or a recently captured woman, then she became subordinate to the chief wife and was regarded as a member of her band. Wives married subsequently were attached to this band until the husband decided to start another band. He took either one of the wives of his great wife's band or else a newly acquired wife, and established a new cluster of huts for her. Some other members of the great wife's band might be transferred to the new band, as subordinates of the newly promoted wife. As the man continued to take new wives they were allocated to one or other of the existing bands. If the husband was an important man he allocated to each

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [564] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. *The levirate*

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mcsha* or *mtoso*. *Mcsha* is an Nsenga word meaning a small cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language. [192] [291]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 589
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village. 648 361 591

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[20] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers. [554]

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased. 591 621 [198]

3. *Polygyny*

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influenes is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organize large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance 595 178 [556] [554] [592]

[20] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

life as a young girl. She gives the half-pounded maize to the bridegroom's mother. 585

In neither of the two ceremonies I saw did the husband play any large part. He did not appear when his bride was instructed. His father sent word to him that all was going well, but he himself stayed out of the way at the other end of the village. Sometimes, however, the bridegroom does sit with his bride on the mat and is instructed with her.

Another gall bladder ceremony which I recorded was held at the time the bride went to live with her husband. This was in an intra-village marriage. In the evening the bride came with important women from her section of the village. The bridegroom's relatives were waiting to receive them, and promised to give them a beast. The bride was then handed over to them. The women went back to their own division, and returned the next day to claim the beast and wash the bride. The beast, an ox, was killed and the intestines were placed round the neck of a younger sister of the bride who became the designated linked co-wife. [231]

If Christians hold the gall bladder ceremony before the bride begins to live with her husband, it is followed by a ceremony in church. The bride does not come back to live with her husband after the gall bladder ceremony but instead goes with her relatives to the local church, where they meet a party from the man's village, and the arrangements for the marriage are set in hand. After three weeks the couple are married in church. The bride then goes back again to her village and as before she pounds flour. After a few days she comes to live with her husband, or he comes to live with her.

Appendix II

FIRST COOKING

When a woman begins her marriage in her husband's village, she cannot cook food until she has been invited to do so by her husband's parents. Until then, she relies on food cooked by her co-wives or her mother-in-law or grandmother-in-law. This state of affairs may last from a month up to a year. It is ended by the ceremony of 'making to cook' (*mphekiso*). I did not see this ceremony, and I have relied on the accounts of informants. It is said that a man's parents would be ashamed of their poverty if they did not entertain the new bride as a guest until the time had come for her to join in the general run of domestic work in the village. 592 261 593

The man's parents decide when the ceremony shall be held. On the day, the man's sisters, mothers and grandmothers prepare flour, plates, porridge pat and stirring stick in the house of the man's

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

592 252 593 [062] mother. One of the man's sisters conducts the wife to her mother-in-law's hut, and under the instruction of the assembled women she begins to cook. Although people speak of her doing the cooking, in practice all she does is to look on while her sisters-in-law do the work. The porridge is divided onto plates and distributed under the directions of the man's mother. One plate is sent to the man's father, one to the husband who eats the porridge with his brothers, and one to the most important woman in the village, while some are taken by the cooks themselves. The man's father is expected to remark on how well the porridge has been cooked, but he may say that it has been poorly prepared and his daughter-in-law must be taught again. This expression of disapproval cannot be more than a way of showing his dislike for his daughter-in-law for whatever he says the ceremony is not repeated and the woman begins to cook regularly for her husband. If the man's relatives are wealthy, they may kill a goat or a sheep on this occasion, or the woman's parents may send a sheep or a goat to be killed and eaten. The woman's parents cannot themselves attend the ceremony.

[591] If the couple begin their marriage uxorilocally this ceremony does not take place. The bride begins to cook for her husband as soon as he comes to live with her, using her grand-mother's hut as a kitchen.

Appendix III

THE HOEING PARTY

606 583 A man is under an obligation to provide once during his marriage a party of hoers who work in his wife's mother's garden for the greater part of one day and who are rewarded by his wife's father. This party is called by the general word for obligations owed by a man towards his parents-in-law, *cikomwene*.[1] The function of this occasion, as a socially sanctioned method of expression of hostility between a man and his affines, has already been discussed. I attended one of these parties and my clerk attended two others.

The man, or a relative of his, tells his father that he is planning to bring a party to hoe on such and such a day. If the father-in-law agrees that the day is suitable he tells his wife to brew beer for the hoers. On the agreed day the hoeing party arrive early in the morning and begin to work in the garden. The father-in-law promises presents to the leader of the hoers, who continue to hoe until they are offered what they consider is sufficient. They then stop, and go to the village to receive the present and drink beer.

[1] See above, p. 74.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the lieutenants are more under the control of the chief of the county, who may intervene to depose a lieutenant if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material Setting

361 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the
[343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the
[417] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of aloes.

● 592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually *kalinze*, pl. *makalinze*; otherwise *nfumu yamuzi*, pl. *mafumu amuzi*. The specific term for headman of a cadet or commoner village is *mwinimuzi*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from those of their wives. 592 [882] [858] [595] 423

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cooking and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda. 342 [343] [252]

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized. 621

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngulewani, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were founded. 621 103

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of individuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary, 621 622 [103]

342 /5 cont'd/ with both bamboo and pole huts, the
[342] construction of the walls and roof is the work of men, while women are responsible for plastering walls, floor and verandah, and for collecting the grass for the roof. Pole huts are more often than not plastered on the outside as well as on the inside of the /6/ wall, and
[343] women like to make designs on them in plasters of different colour, with inscriptions and drawings.

The favourite time for hut building is from June to September,
[901] when there is comparatively little work to do in the gardens. A man may undertake the major part of the work himself, but if his wife is co-operative and brews beer, he will also get his friends to come and
[344] help him, as a working party. Perhaps fifteen or twenty people will come, the men cutting and carrying poles and fixing them in place, the women bringing grass for thatching. If many people attend, then the walls will be put up, and the thatching started, but if the friends are few, then the beer will be finished while the roof of the house is still not thatched, and the owner will have to finish the work himself. In any case, he will need to offer at a later date, either more beer,
[345] or salt, or meat, or sometimes money, to women to come and plaster the walls and floor. Building may however be an operation spread over many months, and if the work is started late in the season, the rains may come before the roof is on. In this case, the building may be left until the following year, when there is again time to spare for building, and good supplies of thatching grass are available. Alternatively, the owner may become discouraged, and use the poles for firewood. A well-built pole hut will last five years and a bamboo hut longer.

343 *Storehouses are built of bamboo* or of thick grass, and are sometimes plastered. They have a detachable roof that acts as a lid, and the whole construction is built on a plastered platform about two feet off the ground. Separate storehouses are used for each household
[346] and for different crops, maize, finger millet, kaffir-corn and ground-
[347] nuts. If a man has two maize gardens, he may keep the produce in separate storehouses. Unmarried and newlywed persons store with their parents. Storehouses last two or three years.

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to 563 the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also 621 a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and *ndunazana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as 128 Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a [184] consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations 121 of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. 563 Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-593 betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *ndokokazi*. A 593 strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of [594] a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. 591 Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was sup-[592] ported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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142 545 surroundings, their families, and the behaviour of those for whom they were responsible was most noticeable. Not all of these women were in the category of royal women, nor did all the royal women conform to this distinctive physical type, though the association of high-ranking family, physical appearance and pride of bearing was striking.

644 565 There were three main classes of royal women, all associated with the Paramount in a special relationship. These showed some parallels with the classes of royal women among the Swazi described by Dr. Kuper. I have not adopted her terms for distinguishing them, with the exception of the term Queen Mother, which I have used in the English sense of the widow of a former ruler and mother of the existing ruler. The chief women associated with the Paramount in the Ngoni kingdoms were the Royal Sister, the Queen Mother, and the big wife. This same association of three leading women with a ruling chief or *nduna*nsana was found in the subordinate chieftainships under the Paramount, and in the head villages of the Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans. It was a definite Ngoni pattern, associating women of high rank with the men who carried political responsibility. Their positions in the Ngoni patrilineal and virilocal social structure was markedly different from the position of the leading women in the matrilineal and uxorilocal societies of other Nyasaland peoples, especially in their relationship to their husbands, sons and brothers.

644 593 The relationships of the Queen Mother and the big wife to the Paramount were of a different character from that of the Royal Sister to her brother, since she was of the royal clan and they were not. We shall first consider the position in the Ngoni kingdoms of the Queen Mother and the big wife, since reference has been made to them already in the previous chapter. In the new *kumpule* village of the Paramount there was a close connexion between the Queen Mother, who moved out with him, and his own big wife. His big wife was of the same house as the Queen Mother, since the cattle for her *lobola* had been taken from the herd of the Queen Mother. At this time of moving out into the new village the big wife began to be head of her own house. Other wives, married with cattle from the herd which had been built up for her, and kraaled with those belonging to the Queen Mother, were attached to her house, and their huts were built near her own. She was the mother, actual or potential, of the future Paramount. If she failed to have a male child, or if her sons died, a male child would be taken from another wife's hut and brought up in her hut and would be known as the child of her house. Since she was the mother of the heir she had a special relationship to the *induna* appointed to look after her house. It was the house of the Paramount *chief* and she *she* would probably, when the Queen Mother died, succeed to the ownership of the *indlunkulu* hut. Her *induna* would then become one of the most important men in the village as he would receive all guests and strangers.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 585 621 The prolonged series of interviews, exchanges and ceremonies emphasized the Ngoni conception of the marriage contract and its binding nature. They also underlined the severance of the new wife from her former family and house, and her gradual assimilation into her mother-in-law's house. This relationship between Ngoni women within the houses provided an effective means of integrating them into a village to which they were strangers.

CHAPTER IV

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

183 59 'THE Ngoni have power and authority over their women and their children.' So began one of the texts on *ungoni*, 'the thing that is Ngoni', by a man of the Ntumbu people whose grandfather had been born among the Ngoni when they were in Songea. There was a recognized ideal pattern of an Ngoni family which covered both the individuals included in the family group and the place where they lived. This pattern was patrilineal in descent, virilocal in residence, polygynous in marriage for all men of standing who were not Christians. Other recognized and often-mentioned characteristics were the continued residence of widows in their husband's village after his death, the grouping of families by houses, and the *lomwi*, or dormitory system for boys and unmarried young men.

581 593 The young wife wept on the day of her marriage because she was leaving the security and known relationships of her own family for the hazards and uncertainty of entering as a stranger into her husband's family group. The dramatization of these sentiments in the protracted marriage ceremony, and the allusions in the *ntimbo* songs, brought out clearly the continuity of the man's relations with all members of his family and the sudden sharp break in the woman's relationship when she married. When her first child was born, and a new individual family group launched, her final integration into her husband's family began. As a mother who had borne a grandchild to her husband's parents she had thenceforward a direct part in the relationships within her husband's family, but as a wife she was always a stranger. The marriage negotiations and ceremonial express the closeness of the family ties, showing on the girl's side the anxiety of her family on parting with her to live among strangers; and on the man's side the hesitancy of the husband's family at taking into their midst an unknown and untried stranger. In addition, the protracted exchanges of cattle and beers, delaying the final ceremony and building up relationships between the two family groups, illustrate the Ngoni attitude towards marriage as a

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

581
binding contract. In theory at least the girl left her family for good once 593
the agreed *lobola* was handed over, and the responsibility for adjustment to the family she had entered was hers, first as wife and then as mother.

593
Investigation of the terminology associated with the Ngoni concept 171
of family immediately poses problems of relating group structure to individual and group relationships. Dr. Kuper did not refer to any single term for family among the Swazi. The nearest was the term *umuti* used for homestead[1] which covered a recognised leader and his dependants, in terms of common residence, mutual relations and economic activities. The Cewa term *banja*,[2] widely used in Nyasaland in the 1930's to translate 'family', in its general use was more akin to the Swazi *umuti* since it denoted the relationships of a group of people to one man, and their common residence in a single village or a section of a village. *Banja* was used to express relationship to one man by kinship and marriage, but when it was used among the central Ngoni it also applied to other individuals, such as his age mates and the descendants of his father's former captives who lived in the same village. Another Cewa term *mbumba* was used in two distinct senses. The common use was to express the relationship of one man with his sisters and their children who inherited his position and his property and looked to him for assistance. A much less common use of the term was found sometimes in central Nyasaland and occasionally in north Nyasaland to cover the group of a man and his children and his brothers and their children—a patrilineal concept of a kinship group which was usually but not always associated with common residence.

171
There was one major difference between the Ngoni concept inherent 768
in their use of *banja* and that of the Cewa and other matrilineal peoples. 602
When an important man or woman died among the Cewa, someone 593
always 'entered their place' in the kinship system, and this acquiring of a new position involved a shift in actual relationships and in terminology throughout the group of kin. There was no such change among the Ngoni in the use of kinship terms. When a man or woman among the Ngoni entered a dead person's place it was in order to perform his functions and not to assume the dead person's kinship relationships.

621
The village lay-out in different types of Ngoni village illustrates the 593
way in which family grouping could be recognized in the sharing of the same hut, in the grouping of huts, and in the relations with neighbouring villages. Later in this chapter illustrations will be given from the northern and central Ngoni kingdoms to show how certain patterns of residential grouping on a family basis were evolving from the divisions of mixed tribal groups characteristic of the former large villages of pre-European days. The general tendency in northern Ngoniland was to

[1] op. cit. p. 98.
[2] Doke and Mathewson in their dictionary translate *banja*: house, home, household, family.

621 break up into smaller villages, and there were on the whole more villages
593 in the north said to be *nobunja limodzi* (of one family) than among the central Ngoni. On the other hand, the *bunguwe* pattern of village division had almost disappeared among the central Ngoni.

591 A man on his first marriage built a hut for his wife behind his
592 mother's hut, where his brothers by the same mother or by mothers of
[361] the same house also built. The family grouping by residence was therefore determined by house affiliation. Associated with this residential group based on kinship, there were the residences of the *induna* and his family which had separate alignments on a kinship basis, though for certain common purposes they combined with the family groups related to the house by kinship. The children of the families belonging to the house and the children of the *induna* who took care of it began to intermarry when the prohibitions on marriage within the village ceased to operate. In this way kinship bonds were created within a group which formerly had only residence and certain activities in common, and this process was recognizable in a number of the larger villages, especially in the central kingdom.

593 Within the different types of family groups determined by their residential basis there were certain outstanding relationships between members of the same family. The most important of these was that between father and children; the father, as the biological parent and also the symbol of authority, was the focus of honour and respect, and the one who helped his children when they were in need. The relation between the father and his children among the Ngoni was always a balance between affection and care, and respect and authority. The ideal pattern of a father, as described by informants, included all these elements and also wisdom. This concept of the father relationship was extended to the head of a *bunja*, to the headman of a village or a section of a village, to a *nobunzunse* in charge of an area, to a chief, and to the
[596] Paramount himself. The Ngoni greeting to all older men, and the most respectful form of address to a man of any seniority, was *baba*, father, or its Nyanja equivalent *bambo*.

The mother, on the other hand, had a more limited relationship within the family circle. To her own children and to the children of her co-wives, especially of her house, she was the provider of food, and the affectionate 'cherisher'[1] of young children; but she was also treated with respect and, when she reached some seniority, she had considerable authority over her daughters and her younger co-wives. She could never compete, however, with the sisters of her husband or with his mothers, who expected to exercise authority over her children and to
[591 184] arrange for the ceremonies connected with birth, puberty, and marriage. In villages where virilocal residence was the rule, the husband's sisters were married elsewhere and were only present in the village during

[1] *Andwe*, lit. to cherish, is the word used for bringing up children.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

visits or on special occasions. In the central kingdom, where an important man's sisters often married in the village and stayed there, it was evident that they often exercised authority over their brother's children.

In polygynous Ngoni families the relationship between siblings was marked by strong attachment. Among the boys in the *kanwi* brothers united to protect their younger brothers from other boys, and in the families of Swazi clans brothers showed many signs of youthful insolence and arrogance towards boys of other clans, especially in matters concerning cattle and their herding. Sibling rivalry among boys was to a large extent controlled by two factors. One was the *kanwi* system where the age-set principle predominated. The other was the division into the big house and *papa* house, where the children of the *papa* house knew that they stood in a different relationship to succession and authority in the village from their brothers and sisters in the big house. Within the big house itself, some of the big wife knew that succession was regulated by seniority, and that the eldest son would expect to get priority when he married and it was necessary to allot cattle for *lobolo*. The brother-sister link between children of the same mother was, as we have seen, a very close one, especially with the older sister of a man who was heir to a high position. This sister in her relation to his children carried almost the same authority as he did. Among sisters of the same family there was less apparent cohesion, except among very high-ranking Swazi clans where the girl children were looked after by special nursemaids and had their instruction in correct behaviour together from the older woman known as their *papa*.

Ngoni grandparents on the paternal side showed little of the joking relationship with their grandchildren sometimes associated with this tie. When children went to visit their maternal grandparents in another village there was noticeably more ease between them and more indulgence was shown. In their father's village children were always aware that his parents were persons of standing and authority. Girls over six or seven often slept in their paternal grandmother's hut if she was a widow, and were aware that, though she showed kindliness in providing for their needs, she was a firm disciplinarian in all matters of behaviour.

Within the family group the male role of leadership was unquestioned. Honour and respect were a man's due from wives as well as from children. In difficult relations within his family, as in the case of divorce, he could count on counsel and support from his brothers, who were also ready to help him if cattle were needed for his own or his son's marriage or for payment of court penalties. This male circle of father and sons, father's brothers and their sons, was a closely knit group which functioned in regulating family affairs and in buying and selling cattle for the house to which they belonged. An obligation to help his sons was recognized by the father of a family and this obligation

extended to his brothers' sons, especially if their father was dead. Following the same pattern, a man's sons who were away at work sent back money to their father who bought cattle with it, or spent it as the sons asked. It was clear in the 1930's that Ngoni men rarely sent money directly to their wives, though they frequently asked their father to give money to their wives and to buy for them cloth or needed household equipment.

Within the larger orbit of the male family responsibilities women had their more restricted but clearly defined sphere. At a woman's confinement she was looked after by her husband's own mother, aided by his other mothers and by his sisters if they were present in the village. At the 'opening out' of the new member of the family, ten to fourteen days after birth, the woman and the baby, bathed and ritually cleansed, were seated on a mat outside the hut and presented to the male members of the father's family who gave small gifts to the baby. If it was a boy, the father's mother generally carried it to the gate of the kraal where the men were sitting, to present it to them as one who would eventually herd the cattle. On this occasion, or soon after, the child's name was chosen, usually by the father's father, who prepared and gave to the mother a calf-skin or goat-skin for carrying the child in. The meat of the animal was cooked by the father's mother and a small feast was held for the father's mothers, sisters, brothers and their wives, and any others of the father's family who had helped in the confinement.[1] After the child had thus been acknowledged in its father's family circle, the mother took the baby to visit her own family, who also gave it presents.

During the rearing of the child, its father's female relatives assumed responsibility for giving the young mother advice. The father's mother was expected to note the stage at which the child should be weaned, always if possible before the mother's next pregnancy. If the father's mother was undersexual, the other senior women of the husband's family would rebuke her and say 'Look now you are foolish because the child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to it.' These women then took the initiative and insisted on weaning the child. They said to the baby's mother 'We want to wean the child.' They made a paste of ground chillies and put it on the mother's breasts and covered them with a skin or cloth. The child was taken from her after it had tried to suck and had been refused, and given to the father's mother or sister, who looked after it with the help of a servant-maid. It was fed on cow's milk, amasi (milk curds), and gruel.

The publicity given to the weaning and the initiative taken by the senior women of the husband's family were intended to inform others in the village that the parents were now free to have another child. This was one aspect of the old Ngoni form of family planning and, in describing

[1] This feast was also held when a carrying cloth was given instead of a skin.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and concubines were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving.

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*lomwi*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *lomwi*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father.

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the oven, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *lomwi* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to build a roof or build a granary.

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain, food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only because they had been conquered, but because they disliked and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were reinforced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village, or widows of former headmen. This senior women's group, many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages, in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

III

'A New Stranger has come'

In these words the father's mother announced from the door of the hut that a child had been born. From inside the hut the women assisting the mother at the time of delivery had given a single cry if it was a boy and two cries for a girl. If the birth had been delayed till late afternoon towards sunset, the women in the hut said to the mother, if it was a boy: 'See the baby has been awaiting the return of the cattle, because it is he who will tend the cattle.' 844 851

The new baby was at first regarded as a stranger, born by a woman who had herself come to the village as a stranger when she married. In later years, when speaking of his parents, the child would say: 'X is my father, and I am of the womb of A, and G and H they are my brother and my sister of one womb.' This particularization of a full brother and sister was used to correct the extended use of the kinship terms, and also to convey the idea that having been born from the womb of one woman gave children a special relationship important in Ngoni thinking. 851 593 [591] [601]

Preparation for birth

When an Ngoni wife was aware that she was pregnant she did not say anything to her husband, and indeed endeavoured to conceal her condition from him as long as possible, continuing the normal sleeping arrangements and intercourse. Ngoni women liked to assert their authority and ascendancy on these occasions, and therefore excluded the men from knowledge of the coming event and from all preparations for it. The senior women used to say, 'Men are 843 599 562

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

342 356 593 was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

162 585 595 184 The tables which follow show the total population of three villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Huts	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Ewessini .	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Endindeni .	13	9	21	21	51	4	1	4	13
Ekhangeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	32
Central kingdom									
Cinkwita .	39	22	39	54	115	13	3	4	8
Mangum .	80	41	63	78	184	9	18	8	4
Mankhetha	122	71	119	68	251	30	16	14	18

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambezi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *hawagula* and *gupe* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *hanje* was not found in the north.

592 614 622 631 The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *nduna*, in another a son of a great war *nduna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *nduna*, in another a grandson of a great war *nduna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

843 little children. They are not able to hear those things which
593 belong to pregnancy.' The men on their part accepted the
562 role of being ignorant of what was coming, though they were generally aware of it. It was an elaborate piece of role-playing, standardized by custom, emphasizing the separation of the men's and women's worlds in Ngoni life, and giving control and authority into the experienced hands of the senior women.

843 The Ngoni culture pattern forbade the wife to tell her
606 mother-in-law herself about her condition. She had, as so
572 often in the Ngoni pattern, to approach first a friend who was her confidante, who might be another young wife or a helper in the household. This friend had to tell her mother-in-law, the future paternal grandmother of the baby, who was destined to play a big part in the child's upbringing.

During the months of pregnancy a Ngoni woman carried on with her normal work in the household, including cooking for her husband. If she feared a miscarriage, and suffered from what was called 'a shaking inside', she stayed quietly in the hut, and, saying that she had a headache, asked her husband to call her friend. Then the friend told the mother-in-law who sent for a 'doctor' to bring medicines 'to make the inside not shake'. A young Ngoni woman did not expect
843 to have miscarriages, and feared that her husband's relatives
152 would blame her home for not giving her enough food before marriage to make her strong and healthy in child-bearing.

The fear of invidious comparisons with her own home and upbringing also operated when the wife felt herself near to labour. She would keep on working up to the last minute, for if she told her friend that her time was come, and the friend summoned the senior women, they came to examine her. Should they find on examination that she was not about to deliver, they looked at her and said, 'What are you afraid of? Did you call us for fear?' The young wife was ashamed of being thought fearful, both for her own reputation and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

over the age of ten had to avoid the hut and its inhabitants altogether. The husband slept either in the boys' dormitory or with the husband of the woman who was looking after his wife. 846 783

This ritual uncleanness extended to any food once it was carried into the hut. Ngoni women used to demonstrate their love for their husbands by stopping cooked food being carried into the hut, and sending it instead by the child who brought it to her husband where the men were gathered at the gate of the kraal. [599]

Ritual cleansing of a hut and its occupants took place in stages. At the time of 'bringing out the child', which I shall shortly describe, the hut itself was made clean again. It was thoroughly swept, and the floor and veranda were smeared with cowdung. Cowdung was used habitually for smearing on floors, prior to polishing them with a smooth stone. But fresh wet cowdung rubbed on the hands was also used for ritual cleansing after some 'dangerous' act such as touching sacred objects or administering the royal medicines. In the case of its use after childbirth it was undoubtedly used in the ritual sense, for the operation was called 'making the hut safe for the husband to sleep in'. The household goods were then put back in their places, anyone could go into the hut, and the husband returned to sleep there, though on a separate mat on his, the right-hand side, of the fireplace. If the child was a first baby, the husband's return to sleep in the hut was delayed, since the senior women stayed on to instruct the young mother how to take care of the baby at night, and especially how to be careful not to smother it as it lay beside her on her mat. [257]

'Coming out of the hut'

The falling of the cord was the signal that the baby was ready to 'come out of the hut' and be presented to the village. Ngoni women used to hasten the falling of the cord by burning a maize cob, and squeezing into the ashes the juice of the 846 851 278

854 house was still killed and eaten. The cloth came out of the
[432] store of cloth bought when cattle were sold, and kept in the hut of the senior woman of the father's house.

Visit to the mother's home

593 If, as was always the case in earlier days, the mother of the
574 new baby had come from a distant village, she did not see her own mother or her relatives, and they did not see the child until it was several weeks old, and considered by the senior women strong enough to undertake a journey. Then a visit involving much ceremony took place, for the wife's
[604] mother-in-law headed the party. The stiff and formal relations between the two sets of 'in-laws' had been eased slightly through the series of feasts and exchanges which preceded and followed the marriage ceremony. Face-to-face
[571] intercourse was, however, still very formal between the two families, and this first visit with the grandchild was in one sense an act of condescension on the part of the husband's family, since the child belonged to them. It was also a human and natural recognition of the eagerness of the young mother to see her own mother and display her child. Word was sent in advance by a messenger from the husband's village to announce the visit, so that the wife's family could make due preparation.

The main object of this visit was, in the Ngoni phrase, 'to show the child at its mother's home'. The young mother and
[604] baby, with her mother-in-law in the place of honour, sat outside the big house of the girl's father's family. Her father
[451] and his male relatives came to salute the child and to give it
[603] presents of beads, and in modern times small gifts of money as well. If the girl's father owned many cattle, he killed a beast, and they feasted that night, and the visitors carried home meat with them as well as the presents to the child. It was all very formal and correct, except when the young mother escaped for a short time to the circle of her sisters and girlhood friends, and exchanged confidences with them.

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

After this formal visit had taken place, the young mother was free to visit her former home more often, and her relatives could come and see her and her baby in her husband's village. 593 594

Taking care of the baby

There were two special features of infant care among the Ngoni which were not found among the neighbouring peoples. One was the assignment of a nurse girl from outside the circle of relatives to care for a new infant. The nurse girl was chosen by the grandmother from among her dependent household staff, and was allotted to one particular baby. The girl, who was usually in her early teens and unmarried, was supervised by an older woman, also of the grandmother's household. This woman watched over the personal behaviour of several nurse girls, as well as seeing that they did their work properly as nurses. 354 357 [592] [585]

The nurse girl took charge of the baby in the early morning and kept it with her all day until nightfall, bringing it back to the mother at more or less regular intervals for suckling. The mother played with the baby if she felt like it, and sent for the nurse girl to bring it to her if strangers came and she wanted to display the child. The Ngoni commended this practice by saying that their women kept clean because they did not carry babies about all day on their backs. They admitted at the same time that many infants grew greatly attached to their nurse girls, to the extent of being happier with them than with their mother. The nurse girls did not take little babies far afield. They stayed around within the fences of the household or near at hand, helping with domestic chores, chatting to other nurse girls, helping to prepare meals, and eating with the baby's mother and anyone else who formed part of the household eating unit. At night, after she had given the baby to its mother, she went off to sleep in the hut of the older woman who was in charge of her and other nurse girls.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

862 other compounds, so that the child should not 'see the mother's breasts and cry for them'. Nevertheless they did cry, some of them day and night at first, and many for weeks at night when the indulgent warmth of the mother on her mat was exchanged for the kindly but somewhat stern care [608] of the grandmother or another older woman. Paternal grandmothers did not believe in spoiling Ngoni children, and the child was often left to cry itself to sleep.

● 593 The Ngoni used to say: 'On the day when a child was weaned, all the village knew. It was not a secret. People 862 spoke about it to show that the parents were now free to have another child.' The mother-in-law and the other senior 606 women of the father's family took the initiative as well as assuming responsibility for deciding the moment for weaning. Those same senior women who had assisted at the birth of the child arrived one morning on the veranda of the mother's hut and announced, 'We want to wean this child.' Apparently the mother was sometimes capable of refusing to co-operate. She did not want to give up suckling the child, so she picked it up and ran out of the hut past the women, and hid herself and her child with some of her friends. The senior women did not stoop to argument. They formed into a procession and filed out of the compound saying, 'Well, she has refused. She can now find the proper time herself, with her husband.' The young mother, who had yielded to a sudden impulse, found herself on reflection in great difficulty. It was considered a 'shame' for her to do the weaning herself, and her husband was jeered at by his brothers and friends for having a rebellious wife who did not pay attention to the claims of his family on the child.

So when the senior women announced that they had come 862 to do the weaning, most young mothers meekly submitted, whatever their personal sentiments were. The senior women pounded chillies and put the hot paste on the mother's breasts, and held the child near enough to smell the chillies, even to touch them. They said to the child, 'Leave it alone.

606 handle them, as well as how to conform to required behaviour. So she put up with present restrictions for the sake of future peace and harmony. Her lot was to live there with her husband's people, and the birth of the child was a strong link in the chain which bound her to them. Meantime she [572] found some relief in her friends among the other young wives, and particularly with the one in whom she placed her confidence, and who acted as her go-between with her mother-in-law.

Wife to husband

593 Throughout the intricate and often vexing relations with her mother-in-law and other senior women, the husband-wife relationship remained for the young mother a steadying and constant factor. She had been attracted to him in courtship; [58] she had had the chance of accepting or refusing him when the marriage proposals were made; the cattle had been handed over to her father to seal the marriage contract. For all these and other reasons she held on to her love for her husband and her relationship with him, whatever overbearing behaviour might be shown her by his relatives. Hence she took care of his possessions in the hut they shared, helping the senior women to send them out of the hut just before the confinement. She redirected food towards him when it was sent to her during her confinement, gladly going short herself in order to prove her devotion. She was glad that after coming out of the hut, having a nurse girl meant that she could keep her body and her clothes clean and sweet-smelling and therefore pleasing to him. She was happy when the ritual cleansing of the hut and of herself made it possible for her to cook for her husband again and endear him to her by that means. When weaning the child caused her pain and frustration, there was at the same time a deep satisfaction that full intercourse was now officially permitted [894] between her and her husband, and that they were free to have another child.

562 These skills of management, and of order and dignity in
461 serving, were not however only seen in large-scale operations.
592 The modern young Ngoni wife serving tea and 'scones' to her husband's guests sitting on his veranda showed the same qualities of careful preparation and considerate service as her grandmother had shown presiding over 500 guests at a wedding feast.

562 Household management in Ngoni homes included primarily managing the household staff, allotting their tasks to them, settling their quarrels, looking after them when sick, marrying off the young ones when the time came. In the all-important aspect of feeding a large household and its dependents, Ngoni women assumed responsibility for seeing that there were enough supplies of different kinds of food at hand, for regular consumption and for emergencies. They consulted at times with the 'official' who was in charge of their 'house' about mobilizing supplies or organizing women helpers to cultivate in the gardens. Most significant in the eyes of Ngoni and non-Ngoni alike was the task of Ngoni
[269] women of 'dividing the food' at every meal-time. It was a key concept in Ngoni culture that at all times when food, beer, or other kinds of goods were to be divided out, and enjoyed or used by a large number of people, the 'one who divided' was an important individual. He, or more often she, must be of 'good character', who assumed, or was given, the task because he or she knew how to do it, and no one questioned the justice or the competence with which the dividing was done. Again I was impressed by the almost nonchalant air with which Ngoni women ladled out food for a large number of individuals and groups. It looked
[461] so easy. It was obviously not a simple matter. The results were always accepted and welcomed, and I never heard any grumbles.

● 593 Central to the organization of the household, and in one
592 sense the axis on which it revolved, was the care and attention the wife gave to her husband. Cooking, including the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an-
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be- [181]
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 357
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead 592
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 592
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 501
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author-
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their [545]
well-groomed appearance from the "workers" and "helpers"
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 402
up in a woman's world of the kind just described. His mother 595
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [406]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [544]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

842 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' became a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who had acquired chairs, among other modern household furniture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they continued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accelerated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher conducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

It was the fathers who decided at what age a child should go to school, and having once enrolled the boy or girl and paid the fees, the fathers insisted on regular attendance. 593 [872]

All Ngoni fathers showed affection for their young children, some consistently and others when it occurred to them. They picked them up and carried them about, held their hand while they tried their first steps, listened to their attempts to speak correctly, held them in their arms when they sat on the veranda. In one village twin boys aged four were devoted to their father and he to them. When he walked about, he held a hand of each. When he sat on the veranda they were always beside him and he had an arm round each. When he was elsewhere, the twins wandered about the compound disconsolately, hand in hand, rejecting the advances of their nurse girls and uncertain what to do until he appeared again.

Ngoni fathers had to be consulted in cases of sickness when the grandmother's remedies had failed and specialist help was needed. Then the father and his brothers and their father decided whether to summon a diviner or a herbalist, and arranged for the throwing of lots or the search for 'medicines', and paid the agreed fee when the cure worked. 593 757

It was part of Ngoni tradition to keep the knowledge of death away from young children. The father was held responsible for seeing that his children were kept away from the hut where the corpse was awaiting burial, and from the funeral itself. When men and women of leading Ngoni families were buried at the edge of the kraal, and the fence enlarged so that the cattle stamped over the grave, the explanation given (though it was not the only reason) was that 'the young children should not know or fear death in this village'. 593 764 858

The physical surroundings of the small child

The two diagrams, overleaf, illustrate the layout of the hut and compound in typical Ngoni households. Some of these 342 351

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Young Ngoni children among their siblings and age-mates

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The hard-worked theme of sibling rivalry among small children in a family was not obvious among young Ngoni children. I expected to see outbursts of jealousy when the ex-baby returned after weaning to his mother's compound and found another baby installed there. But even with the new baby present, the mother seemed to have time to pet the ex-baby, telling the nurse girl to leave him with her, and there were few overt signs of emotional tension. This was certainly due to a large extent to the nurse-girl pattern, the fenced compound which was the child's home, and the interest of older sisters in their younger brothers and sisters. Young children growing up, as we have seen, were the focus of attention for a group of girls and women of different ages. They were hardly ever in a situation in which they had to struggle to assert themselves against a sibling, or, in their early years, against their age-mates. If they felt slighted or miserable or hungry or tired they could always go to someone to be petted or fed.

Hence their emotional needs for affection and attention never seemed to be unsatisfied. They were accustomed to having their physical needs supplied by any one of several women, and did not depend only on their mother for these needs. Nurse girls and older sisters were often demonstrative to small children, and they got more actual petting from them than from their mother or grandmother. Young children in turn often petted one smaller than themselves, or a new baby, and there was a contented affectionate relationship between children in the home which indicated the absence of any acute sibling rivalry.

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From about the age of five or six, boys, who were escaping from the restrictions and security of the compound to the freedom and competition of village life, found a new challenge in a large group of their own age-mates, also just coming out of the younger child seclusion of the home. Boys

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events. Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt, cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the pre-marriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after. It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'

This ritual was given up about the time the missions began

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[*] If the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[*] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedition . . .', p. 478, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 181-2.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

E. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organised kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

855 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband,
593 wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

631 In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw
554 attention to two features of the residential system which were not,
591 at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features
[178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

581 Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which
613 agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the
[582] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this.
[178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. The punishment of adultery

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognised other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporise and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognised and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilised' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. Labour migration

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Rhodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

one mining town to the next, sleeps for a night with a prostitute and lives for years with a concubine. What is at least relatively permanent is his relationship to his wife and to his children by her. Men still hope that they will be able to gather their children about them as they grow old, and build up new villages so that their names will be remembered. Status is still measured in terms of dependants, and the most certain of all dependants are legitimate children. Ngoni marriage no longer automatically ensures that a man will have custody of his children, but without marriage he has no hope at all of retaining them.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

578 much opportunity for a man to assess his sweetheart's domestic
579 efficiency and moral character, but he can get information on these
579 matters from other people who live in her vicinity. When he sees
579 a girl in a distant village where he is staying, he has more leisure to
see what she is like and can ask his own hosts about her character.
Girls visit in the same way as men, and if a girl is anxious to get a
husband and fears she may not find one, she may spend most of her
time visiting in different villages hoping to attract a suitable man.
[p.31] There is more time for visiting and flirting at the end of the dry
season when there is little work to do in the gardens, but marriages
are contracted throughout the year.[5]

581 Young men say that what they like in a girl is a light skin colour,
a pretty face, and the ability to dance and to copulate well. Some
639 men, however, say that such a girl might be all right to run after,
but for marriage one would also need to know that she could cook
porridge. Women say they like a man who is well dressed, who
has a good job working for a European, and who has a parting in his
hair. Women sometimes wear medicines which are believed to
attract men, and men who have no good clothes may borrow the
clothes of others in order to attract women.

3. Sexual partners

593 The relationship between a man and his wife, at least for the
581 first years of their marriage, is spoken of principally in sexual terms,
and the sexual activities of the couple are more closely defined by
the marriage bond than are their residence and their economic life.
Informants say that the reason for the existence of marriage is
either 'the work in the house', a euphemism for copulation, or else
'clothes', that is, so that a woman may have someone to buy clothes
for her. It is, however, much easier to improvise alternative solutions
to the problem of clothing than it is to find alternative means of
sexual satisfaction without coming into conflict with law and
morality. Furthermore, while we have seen in the old days that the
main emphasis was on the fertility of the woman, this has now shifted,
and it is her skill in copulation rather than her success in childbearing
[p.42] that is emphasized. Fertility is still valued, but does not appear to
form so important a theme in ceremonial, songs, and gossip as among
other societies where the principle of unilinear descent has not
broken down, and where, therefore, fertility either of a man's wife
or of his sister, is a vital necessity for the maintenance of local
structure.

593 The husband-wife relationship is one in which the man is apparently
superordinate to his wife, but we shall see that in practice this
superordination is not as clear-cut as might at first appear. It is
furthermore a relationship in which there are certain prescribed
mutual obligations, so that if these obligations are neglected, it is

[5] Cf. Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, p. 60.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

necessary to take formal action to restore harmony. Husband and wife still remain separate persons, separated socially by their distinct roles. Yet they are bound together by economic ties, by symbolic procedures, and by mystical connexion.

The sexual rights and obligations of husband and wife in each other are not symmetrical. A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, but a woman cannot gain exclusive sexual rights over her husband. Her husband can take other wives, or commit adultery, and she has no ground in law for complaint unless at the same time he neglects her. The most she can do is to make life so unpleasant for him that rather than face her anger he decides to sleep with her alone. Mystical procedures are available to both man and wife, and while a husband may use medicines to safeguard that which is his by right, a wife uses medicines to augment her other sanctions, such as the threat of not cooking food for her husband or of running away to her relatives. There is one class of medicines[8] which a man can administer to his wife by cicatrisation which it is believed will cause any lover of the woman to die. Another magical procedure is stated to prevent the lover from withdrawing after coitus, so that the adulterous pair will have to reveal themselves to their neighbours in order to gain medical assistance. These medicines are said to be favoured by men going off to Southern Rhodesia without their wives. It is difficult to tell to what extent they are actually administered, but the belief in their efficacy is wide-spread, and people would comment that so-and-so who was ill had become so because he had slept with a woman doctored in this way, and that the scars on such-and-such a woman were made when her husband had given her this sort of medicine. On the other hand a woman may use medicine[9] to prevent her husband from copulating with anyone else, and there are other medicines which act as love charms or which encourage the husband to stay at home at night.[9] The beliefs about difficult labour and *mdulo*[10] also have a stabilising effect in that the man may fear for the fate of his child and for that reason be faithful to his wife while she is pregnant. On the other hand it is believed that a rejected lover can give medicine[10] to a woman who resists his approaches, so that she will die or have difficulties in childbirth. The only way for a woman to avoid this hazard is to live demurely and not to excite the attention of other men.

If a woman believes that her husband is committing adultery with

[8] Known as *lukwakha*. There are at least four varieties of this, associated with different maladies all of which are fatal to the adulterer. Cf. *lukwakha* in Colson, *Marriage among the Plateau Tonga* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers—forthcoming).

[9] *Ndamanga*. See below, p. 58.

[9] E.g., medicine made from the bones lizard (*mkulukulu*) and the domesticated cat, because these animals are always in the house and do not wander about.

[9] See below, p. 48.

[10] *Kalowatila*, from the name of the species of frog from which it is made.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

believes that her husband is committing adultery with another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages. Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *ciwawagalala*,[13] which is performed only indoors. At a girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *ciwawagalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[14] A girl learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[15] The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her erotic proficiency by dancing[16] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[13] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[14] Such as *mitoto*, a root, and *hajelejele*, a plant.
[15] *Mphungu*.
[16] The dance is called *sikapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kapakapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Narrative FR4

Girls are not examined to see if they have been deflowered. Many girls have love affairs with young boys before they reach puberty, and at one time children built play-houses, after the manner of the Cewa, where they pretended to be adults playing at cooking and copulation. The Cewa encouraged this among their own children and at puberty Cewa girls, if not already deflowered, had their hymen forcibly ruptured in a prescribed manner. We have seen that the Ngoni formerly expected girls to be chaste before marriage while the Cewa believed that if a girl did not copulate at puberty she would die. It seems nowadays that adults expect that pre-pubescent boys and girls will play together sexually and that, provided this takes place with a certain amount of discretion, nothing is done to stop it. Boys and girls visit each other in dormitories, hoping that their voices will not be recognized by people in neighbouring huts. After puberty young men and women continue to flirt together, individuals varying in the extent to which they copulate. Grown men do not usually sleep with young girls, nor grown women with young boys, and if this does happen and is discovered there is always the suspicion of sorcery. The Ngoni believe, with most of their neighbours, that in order to make many of the anti-social medicines of sorcery effective, a sorcerer must copulate with some partner morally forbidden to him (or her), such as a close relative or a person of greatly disparate age or an animal. With this background of belief, Ngoni say that after puberty young men and women naturally like to frolic together and not with their juniors. Within this framework of tolerated covert activity no particular arrangements are made at puberty, save that if a man is betrothed to a young girl he will be invited formally to come and sleep with her once while she is secluded.

Thus from an early age their future roles as husbands and wives condition the sexual activities of boys and girls. A girl who allows herself to be seduced too easily is regarded as foolish and a man who is for ever chasing unmarried girls when he should be founding a family is regarded as immature. But sexual activity is taken for granted, and the only stipulations are that it should be conducted discreetly so that the older people in the village are not forced to notice it, and that unmarried girls should not bear live children. Knowledge of abortifacients seems to be fairly common and recently contraceptives, issued originally to soldiers in the 1939-45 war, have come into use. Few cases of seduction of unmarried girls come before the courts.

Despite the emphasis on sexual satisfaction rather than on fertility, Ngoni men and women still desire children. This is so for men despite the low incidence of bridewealth payments and the uncertainty about the custody of children. A man's children may decide to live with their mother's people, but they are still his children and he can always follow them from village to village in his old age wherever they decide to settle.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one instance where the woman ran off with the man called in by her sterile husband.

4. The legal relationship

Emphasis on sexual partnership is characteristic of the beginning of marriage. Young people are 'foolish', dance all night long and sleep late in the morning. With the arrival of children, man and wife emerge from the tutelage of their elders and non-sexual aspects of their marriage relationship gain in importance. Even then the importance of sexual satisfaction is not forgotten. People say openly of a woman who obstructs her husband when he seeks a second wife, 'She is too fond of his penis', and old widows explain their failure to remarry by saying 'Our joints are too stiff to copulate'.

Nevertheless at all times there is a great deal more in Ngoni marriage than mere sexual partnership. The obligations and duties of husband and wife towards each other and each other's kin are determined by the marriage payments and ratified by the ceremonies of marriage. These obligations persist despite the fluctuations of sexual attraction. We have seen that in 'the time of peace' the two principal transfers were 'snuff-box' and bridewealth. Today the position is different and the rights transferred by the marriage payments are different. For simplicity we may discuss the latter payment first. Bridewealth is still recognised but, as can be seen from Table V, is paid in only about four per cent of all marriages. It consists of a payment of one or more beasts or £8 made by the man to his wife's father.[10] If only one cow is offered and it dies before calving, it must be replaced. Some indication of the range of variation in amounts paid is given by Table VI.

This sample of only twelve payments is very small, but there is some indication that the amount paid has decreased in recent years. This is of interest in view of the general rise in the standard of wealth and in the amount offered as legalization payment.

By the payment of bridewealth a man ensures that all the children of his wife, by whatever genitor, shall, or rather ought to, belong to his group of relatives and live in his village when they grow up. The payment is made only after several children have been born. In the old days, if this payment was made, the children were legitimate and lived in their father's segment, and if it was not paid they could be claimed by their mother's father's segment. In these days there is no such hard and fast rule. Everyone has in effect a large choice of places where he can live, and the payment or non-payment of bridewealth for his mother is only one factor operating with many others in influencing his decisions. It is not surprising that so few people pay bridewealth.

[10] For comparative figures for the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Native standards of living and African cultural change', *Africa* xi (1938), 3, supplement, p. 38.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS Mpezeni

	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	1
	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	2
Total married women	0	0	8	10	24	31	80	12	3	168
Unknown	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2
Grand total	1	4	15	24	33	30	89	12	3	214
Median value of marriage payments	—	—	8s.	8s.	6s.	10s.	£1.10s.	£1.10s.	—	£1.10s.
Average value	—	—	8s. 6d.	12s.	13s.	20s.	28s.6d.	45s.	14s.	34s.6d.

Informants as in Table VIII

583

tion payment, where the payment is made in kind, that is, one beast, and not in money. This is a straightforward continuation of the old usage, for we have seen that it was by the payment of 'snuff-box', consisting of one beast, that a man established his exclusive sexual rights over his wife. Nowadays few people offer a beast as legalization payment. The word can be used in another sense to indicate any small present made by the man to the wife's father at the beginning of the marriage negotiations, as an indication that he intends to make the proper and more substantial legalization payment later on. A present of this kind is not recoverable, and consists of a shilling, a half-crown, a chicken, tobacco or a cloth. It conveys no rights at all.[16]

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The legalization payment by no means completely transfers the woman to her husband's group. Her kinsfolk retain an active interest in her welfare, and are her refuge from her husband's wrath. They intervene to preserve the marriage when otherwise it would end in hatred and divorce. The husband must see that they are formally told whenever his wife becomes pregnant, and if she dies

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[16] These small presents are also called *cawulomo*, or *cawulomulomo*, literally in Nsenga, 'the thing of opening a lip'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS Mpezeni

583 in childbirth the husband is held to be responsible at least in part. He must pay one cow[19] to the dead woman's kin to appease them. It is said that if bridewealth has been paid the man need not pay another beast, but that the woman's relatives would take a beast from the bridewealth and kill that in order to mourn their kinswoman.

583 The separation of interest that continues even after a marriage has been contracted is demonstrated by the payments which husband and wife are required to make to each other. Although they use many things in common, their possessions are thought of as belonging either to the one or the other. A man may own chickens, although his wife looks after them for him, while a woman may own a beast and let her husband care for it. If husband and wife quarrel the one who apologizes may offer a chicken to the other to make peace. These payments are in part enforced by public opinion

583 178 Table VIII. Incidence of legislative payment, by decades

Legislative payment	Date of marriage									Total
	1879-87	1888-97	1898-1907	1908-17	1918-27	1928-37	1938-47	1948-9	Not known	
Offered and accepted ..	1	4	18	34	33	24	63	13	3	194
Offered but refused	–	–	–	1	–	1	2	–	–	4
Not offered ..	–	9	13	21	20	27	36	3	4	133
Total	1	13	37	56	43	50	101	16	7	331
Ratio of offers to total number ..	100%	31%	56%	63%	53%	53%	74%	81%	—	62%
Not known if offer was made or accepted ..	1	3	7	6	14	11	17	8	3	70
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

124 Informants

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	122	135	90·4
Women	232	251	92·4
Total	354	386	91·7

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 122

[19] Called *mulomo*, from the Nsenga verb, *ku-luma*, to bite or chew. The corresponding payment among the Cewa is said to be called *mlupa* or *nlupa*. Cf. Young, op. cit., p. 62.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and pressure from kinsmen, but also occur within the intimacy of life in the hut. Husband and wife shave each other's pubic hair and if either cuts the flesh of the other, he or she must offer a chicken in compensation. It is said that if this is not done, then the injured person will shame the other by telling people about the incident. A man cannot take the produce of his wife's garden without her permission, even though he may have done most of the work in it and have originally provided the land for her. In court, a woman may be ordered to pay her husband damages, or a husband to pay his wife, and this is done without terminating the marriage, and despite the general principle that a husband ought to be financially responsible for his wife.

The social distance that separates man and wife never completely vanishes, while on the other hand there are formal ways of increasing it. When the divergence of interest becomes too great divorce is the usual solution, but before that stage is reached there are various procedures by which the danger of open conflict is reduced. A wife expresses her dissatisfaction with her husband by failing to cook food for him or by running away from him, that is, by non-co-operation in the domestic unit. For his part he can retaliate by staying away from her night after night, by not clothing her, and so on. When the stage in the quarrel is reached at which the man 'leaves his wife in disgust',[88] he formally indicates that he cannot maintain friendly relations with her, but that he does not wish to divorce her. It is re-establishment of the marriage relationship at a different level. He never sleeps with her, but he must continue to clothe her and to help her in her garden. If she is his great wife he must appear on her verandah during the daytime. Outwardly the position has not changed. Yet everyone knows that they do not sleep together and that there is coldness between them. The state of affairs can be ended if and when the couple become reconciled on their own account or because of the pressure of kinsfolk. It is a procedure favoured by chiefs, who have many wives and who do not wish to incur the disgrace still attaching to divorce in aristocratic circles. Some men purport to adopt this procedure when their real intention is to provoke their wives into committing adultery.

5. *Co-operation between husband and wife*

Despite the separation between the couple there is a very great deal of co-operation between them. A man must see that his wife is clothed and housed, and that she has a garden of her own; and to a large extent he is responsible before the court for her actions. A woman must feed her husband, provide hospitality for his friends, and

[88] *Kudwala mhazi.* The verb *ku-dwala* is also used when a man eating porridge sees a visitor coming and hides the porridge rather than share it with him. The verb may perhaps be derived from the same root as the Zulu *uku-dwala*, to ignore, leave unnoticed.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

an adequate garden for his wife. He may clear a fresh garden on rejuvenated land, or enlarge his own or his wife's garden, depending on how they are placed. It is usually not until much later in the marriage that a man starts a garden of his own, distinct from the one nominally owned by his wife. The work of clearing a new place for a garden is not, among the Ngoni, necessarily a man's job, and can be undertaken by a woman alone if she has no man to assist her. If the husband is present, he does most of the tree felling, and his wife breaks up the new ground with her hoe. 591 24 343 241 462

The planting, weeding, and cultivating are all done by both men and women, and during the wet season a man goes to the garden with his wife early in the morning and they both work there until they are tired. Later, when the growing crop has to be protected against monkeys by day and wild pigs by night, they both spend long hours on watch in the garden shelter. At harvest, both cut down the maize and lift the ground crops, but only the woman can carry the produce to the village. If the man helps, it is by bringing a cart or sledge and taking home a large load pulled by oxen. [492]

In the other subsistence pursuits of animal husbandry and hunting, there is no co-operation between husband and wife until the animals have been killed, when the woman has to cook the meat. Hunting is entirely a male occupation, and animal husbandry largely so. If a man goes away on a journey, he leaves his cattle in charge of his son or brother or father rather than with his wife. If there is no trustworthy man available, then they become his wife's responsibility, but all she in fact does is to see that the senior herdboy reports to her every evening about the state of the beasts. Small stock such as goats and sheep and pigs may be looked after entirely by the wife, and chickens are likely to be in her care. 224 233 233 462

A man looks to his wife to feed him, and it is considered a reflection on her industry if he does not get enough and has to hang about when his companions are eating in the hope that they will invite him to join them. She feeds him within the exigencies of the food-supply, which often involves semi-starvation in February and March. She is expected to cook competently, and if a woman continually burns the porridge which forms the basis of every meal, there will be strife between her and her husband. If she proves to be a really bad cook her husband may send her home again to be taught properly. 593 362 [252]

Beer-brewing is the work of women, and is a process lasting at least six days even after all the correct ingredients have been mustered. There is some variation with status in the extent to which husbands require their wives to brew beer, and it is in any case a matter in which the woman can take the initiative. Important men and chiefs who have many visitors like to be able to offer beer to their guests, so that queens spend much time brewing. But common men need to conserve their food supplies more carefully, and know that their visitors will be disappointed but not surprised if there is no beer. A woman sometimes brews to sell the beer and gain money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her. 273 462 [55A] [5A] [437]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her.

661 913 In court, when a woman has to pay damages or a fine, she may be able to provide the money from her own resources. If not, she can turn to her husband or to her own kinsfolk. Provided damages for adultery are not involved, her husband, if he is not away working, ought to provide the money and a deliberate refusal to do so would precipitate a major quarrel and the possibility of divorce. If a woman gets into a fight at a party, and has to pay, say, half-a-crown to someone she has hurt, her husband ought to find the money for her. If he refuses to do so though she has no money of her own, the court will say that he no longer loves his wife, and is trying to find an opportunity to divorce her. Indeed, there would be little point in the husband refusing to pay, as those who cannot pay their fines are committed to prison, and he would then lose the services of his wife.

593 421 A woman can hold property in her own right and a husband honours a well-loved wife by giving her cattle. Gifts that she gets from her own kinsfolk do not pass to her husband, and such things as blankets and mats that she has used, even if her husband bought them, are regarded as her own property. Even the money that her husband gives her to make specific purchases is her own to do as she pleases with, so that a woman may forgo the skirt for which her husband has given her money and instead give it to her sister to buy something else. Husbands do not always like such actions, but they cannot do anything directly to prevent them. One of the ways in which a wife acquires livestock of her own is by buying animals with the money she gets from her husband for clothes. The produce of a wife's wet-season garden, maize, sorghum, millet, root crops, pulses, cucurbits, is in effect held in common by husband and wife, and neither ought to sell any of it without first consulting the other. On divorce the crops are divided between them unless the court decides that one party did not work in the garden, or has deserted the other. The money a woman earns by brewing beer for sale she usually keeps, although some men say that a woman should hand the money over to her husband, lest he find her with it and suspect that she has earned it by prostitution. In practice, most women seem to keep their own earnings and it is not uncommon, where the husband is a drunkard and weak-willed, for his wife to have custody of his money as well. Indeed the simultaneous operation within the husband-wife relationship of structural separation and social co-operation is well demonstrated by the apparently paradoxical situation, of which I saw two instances, in which a man ordered to pay damages to his wife for fighting her had to ask her to hand him over the money so that he could duly hand it back to her.

[291] [386] [465]

6. *Mystical links*

593 Symbolic expression of the relationship between man and wife is not greatly developed among the Ngoni, and the mystical bonds

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

uniting a married couple are weak as compared with say, the Bemba.[38] The bride is anointed with gall, and carries the gall bladder in her hair back to her own village as a sign that she has been through the marriage ceremony and has been instructed in her wifely duties by her husband's kinsfolk and neighbours. But the husband himself is usually not there, 'that day is not his work', and I once saw a man quietly drinking on one side of the village while his bride was being anointed on the other. In general it is not until much later that husband and wife appear together in ceremonial situations. The personal association of husband and wife begins in darkness and the privacy of the hut. Later the wife will have validated her status as a married woman, and can appear as such in public alongside her husband without embarrassment.

It is when a woman is pregnant that her husband's actions are most liable to affect her mystically. In general a man may commit adultery and his wife has no case against him; but when she is pregnant he is under a moral obligation to sleep only with her and, if he is a polygynist, with his other wives. His adultery endangers her life, for it is believed that her labour will be difficult and she or the child may die. The pregnant woman is in mortal danger if she herself commits adultery and there is a common obligation of fidelity on both man and wife throughout pregnancy, accompanied in the eyes of some people by a positive obligation to copulate together so that the foetus may grow strong in the womb. When labour proves difficult, the midwife calls on the husband to confess the adulteries he committed while his wife was pregnant so that the child can be born. She may also tell the woman to confess.[39] If the child is born dead, the woman's relatives begin to suspect that the man confessed only some of his adulteries and concealed others, thereby killing the child. We have already noted that if the woman dies the husband must offer a beast to her kinsfolk (pp. 200).

From the birth of the child until its umbilical cord has fallen off and it has been doctored, the husband should not sleep with anyone at all, not even with his other wives. He can resume sexual relations with them after the cord has fallen but he does not sleep with the mother of the child until about three months after the birth, when he has ritual intercourse with her and the child is again doctored. While the infant is sleeping the husband has *coitus interruptus* with its mother and allows his semen to fall on her thighs. She smears the semen over her thighs and then takes up the child and gives it to her husband, who rests it on his hips. After a moment he hands the infant back to his wife who also rests it on her hips. The child is then put back to sleep on the mat beside the couple. This ritual intercourse is obligatory in that if it is omitted it is believed the child

[38] Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 113.
[39] Cf. Rattray, op. cit., p. 105, and H. F. Barnes, 'The birth of a Ngoni child' *Man*, xlix (1949), p. 80.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

will die. The child is in danger from the illness known as *ndulo* throughout the period from birth until the resumption of intercourse between its parents. It is not until after this ceremony, known as 'taking up the child'* that the mystical link between man, wife, and child is broken and the man free to commit adultery without mystical retribution. Thus while there are definite rights and obligations between husband and wife which can be enforced in the courts or are susceptible to the pressure of public opinion there are also in the critical situations of pregnancy and childbirth other mystical forces operating which unite the couple to a greater extent than at any other time. To a lesser extent the same principle operates when a woman menstruates. Her husband is in danger from her menstrual blood. She may not lie on the same mat with him and if he has a bed she must lie on the floor. If he has intercourse with her while she is menstruating he will contract an illness called *lugala*** whose symptoms are a very black face, nasal discharge, and continual feeling of cold. After death a man's widows are in danger of *ndulo* if they commit adultery during the first month of mourning.

We see then that the relationship between a man and his wife is partly defined in legal terms, with mutual duties and rights that are enforceable in the courts. This relationship is documentated and validated by the transfer of money and cattle from one group to the other and by the performance of the various marriage ceremonies. Because of the relationship between them, man and wife live together, sleep together, eat together and work together. But above all, together they produce and rear children. It is primarily because of these children that the kin of man and wife are concerned in the marriage relationship. It is during the long process of producing children that the two spouses are most closely associated with each other, and actions of the one in some mystical way directly and automatically influence the well-being of the other.

When a marriage grows out of flirtation between a young man and a young woman, there is at first sexual attraction between them. With the passage of time this may give place to a broader sentiment of mutual affection and respect. To this extent we may say that man and wife come to love each other. But whereas young men frequently discuss with other men the attraction they experience towards women, unmarried or married, they do not do this when they have settled down and begun to acquire prestige in the community. A man may quarrel with his wife in public, but he never expresses his affection for her, save in the intimacies of the hut. Men and women mourn their spouses with great lamentation at funerals, but while this may sometimes be the expression of a personal

* *Kutola mwana.* Cf. *kutenga mwana* among the Cewa.

** Cf. Read, op. cit., 'The moral code . . . .', p. 19, where she describes a medicine called *ugala* with which men doctored their wives so that their lovers would die of a wasting sickness. Also cf. Zulu *ulugala*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpesani

narrow, it is not necessarily always so, for loud wailing and tears are appropriate at the death of all neighbours and kinsfolk, whether friends or enemies. Men do not usually seek the companionship of their wives at dances and beer parties, although there are some men who do. In our own society we think of a man earning his living in company with other men, but spending his leisure with his wife. By contrast Ngoni men work in the gardens with their wives but seek other company for recreation.

7. Divorce

The relationship between husband and wife can be terminated by death or by divorce. If one spouse dies, then his or her interest in the marriage is guarded by the surviving kinsfolk, and we shall deal with their actions in our next chapter as part of the intervention of affines in a marriage. In divorce, however, except in cases of desertion, both husband and wife are themselves involved and it is primarily by their own actions, rather than by the actions of their kinsmen, that the marriage is terminated.

While a marriage is established without reference to the Ngoni state organization, except in so far as the issue of a marriage certificate is concerned, divorce more frequently involves resort to the Native courts. It is possible to effect divorce without taking the matter to the court, and in the past, before the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy had begun, many people were divorced in the village. Kinsfolk of the two parties meet together in the village of one or other party, discuss the marriage, and agree among themselves that the couple are to be divorced. The formal act of divorce is made by the couple shaking hands with each other, while those present tell them to stop hating each other. The woman is told 'If this man comes as a traveller to your house, and asks for water, do not refuse him'.

It is more usual for a divorce to be referred to the court. Attempts are made by the kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, if quarrel there is, and when the attempts fail, the group seeking the divorce or hoping to get damages from the other side take the matter to the county Native Court. It is open to either the man or the woman to take the initiative in this matter. The court hears the case, awards damages as appropriate, and, if it thinks fit, declares the couple divorced. The formal act of shaking hands is sometimes performed in court, but is often dispensed with.

Divorce takes place in the village only when there is substantial agreement on both sides that it would be a mistake to allow the marriage to continue. The meeting of kinsfolk in the village may reach agreement about the return of the legalization payment or even the award of damages, but it is only the court that has power to enforce decisions of this kind, and it is to the court that disputants turn when they cannot agree. When a man wishes to divorce his wife on the ground of her adultery he usually does so through the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

is normally irrevocable and couples do not often go back to each other. If a wife does go back soon after a divorce people laugh at her for having caused trouble over nothing. A husband may sometimes assert that his wife has been divorced without his approval, perhaps while he was away working, but such complaints go unanswered for it is in the interests of the court to uphold its own decisions. Even if a man is living in the rural area his wife may get a divorce if he refuses to go to court to defend his case. In addition he runs the risk of a fine for contempt of court. The somewhat lengthy process by which a woman can get her divorce despite the obstruction of her husband is illustrated by the following account of a court case.

Case history 2

In April 1946 Zachariah, a man holding the royal dormit-name and married to Ruth and Naomi, began to make advances to a recently divorced

Table X. Marital experience of females, by age, 1948-9

Present age in years	Marital experience: All females — Number of marriages entered into since birth: 0	1	2	3	4	5	Not known	Total	Married females only — Number of divorces experienced since birth: 0	1	2	3	Not known	Total
0-4	58	–	–	–	–	–	–	58	–	–	–	–	–	0
5-9	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	65	–	–	–	–	–	0
10-14	54	–	–	–	–	–	–	54	–	–	–	–	–	0
15-19	39	22	1	–	–	–	1	43	23	1	–	–	1	25
20-24	–	30	3	–	–	–	1	34	19	2	2	–	1	24
25-29	–	24	4	–	–	–	1	29	23	4	1	–	1	29
30-34	1	18	4	1	–	–	2	22	16	4	–	–	2	22
35-39	–	12	7	2	–	–	2	23	16	4	1	–	2	23
40-44	–	10	5	2	1	–	–	18	10	6	2	–	–	18
45-49	–	5	11	–	1	–	–	17	11	5	–	1	–	17
50-54	–	6	7	–	1	–	–	14	7	5	1	1	–	14
55-59	–	7	5	1	–	–	–	13	10	2	–	1	–	13
60-64	–	9	4	1	–	–	1	15	12	1	1	–	1	15
65-69	–	5	5	–	–	1	–	11	8	2	–	–	1	11
70-74	–	3	3	–	–	–	–	6	6	–	–	–	–	6
75-79	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	1
80-84	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	4	–	–	–	–	4	4
Total	196	140	60	7	3	1	12	421	162	37	8	3	13	223

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

woman who lived near the place where he was working, with the idea of taking her as his third wife. Ruth, the great wife, was living with Zachariah at the time, and tried to prevent him from marrying this woman. Zachariah desisted but then became so angry with Ruth that he gave her sixpence and said she was divorced. She went back to her village, saying she would get a divorce in the court. She stayed at her father's village for some time and then went back to her husband. 159 593 586

In October there was another quarrel between Ruth and Zachariah. According to Zachariah he told his wife to bring some tobacco from inside the hut and she refused, whereupon there was a fight. Ruth took the matter to court, complaining that in the fight Zachariah had hurt her so

Table XI. Divorce ratios

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Ratio	Value
A	28·5% (115/403)
B	55·8% (115/206)
C	36·9% (115/312)

Legend

A The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages

B The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all completed marriages

C The number of marriages ended in divorce expressed as a percentage of all marriages except those ended by death

124

Informants

	Used	Potential	% Used
Men	117	136	86·0
Women	222	251	88·4
Total	339	387	87·6

Number of marriages in which both partners were informants 111

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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badly that she had had to go to hospital. She produced a letter from the White doctor by way of evidence. Ruth's father testified that Ruth was the first wife Zachariah had married, yet despite this he fought her and did not fight with his second wife Naomi. Ruth asked the court to divorce her as she feared she would be killed by Zachariah. A court councillor said that although she and her husband had been to the court before with their troubles, it was not the work of the court to force men and women to divorce one another but to instruct them how to live together in peace. Zachariah was ordered to pay two pounds damages to Ruth and ten shillings fine to the court. Zachariah agreed to pay the fine but refused to pay the damages. The chief, who was in court at the time, asked him if he said this because of his royal descent-name. If Zachariah persisted in his attitude the chief would write to his employer and tell him to deduct the money from his wages. Zachariah then said he would send a boy back to collect the two pounds from his village.

Ruth went to her own village. About this time Zachariah was transferred to another area, distant from Ruth's village. In November Ruth's father began to complain that the two pounds had not yet been paid and said that Zachariah was trying to trap his wife by not visiting her, hoping she would commit adultery.

In February 1948 Ruth took out a summons against Zachariah for failing to come and visit her despite the ruling of the court in October that they were not to be divorced. The summons was sent to Zachariah in another county and Zachariah wrote back to a court councillor to say that he would not come to court as he had heard that Ruth was committing adultery with a certain man. On receiving the letter the chief said nothing could be done about it until Zachariah decided to bring an action for adultery against Ruth.

By this time Zachariah had acquired another wife and when in March he was given leave he took the new wife to his own village where his second wife Naomi had been living all the time.

In December 1948 Ruth brought an action against Zachariah for divorce on the ground of his desertion. Three times the case was down for hearing but Zachariah never appeared. The court then divorced Ruth with no damages to pay.

Hearing this Zachariah went to the District Officer and asked why his wife had been divorced without his knowledge. The District Officer referred him to the chief. Zachariah wrote a rather facetious letter to the chief challenging his right to divorce Ruth. The court clerk read the letter and said that Zachariah ought to be fined for insulting the chief. He observed that Ruth's mother had died in September and that Zachariah must be a cruel man as he had not gone to offer his condolences.

586 It is easier for a woman to prove desertion in a case like this where the man is living in the rural area, than when he is away in the town working and writes sporadically if at all. The court feels that it is under an obligation to the migrant labourers of the tribe not to divorce their wives too easily. But if a husband is in the area and could perfectly easily go and see his wife, it is much easier to demonstrate that the desertion is deliberate and sustained, and not merely forced on a man by the exigencies of earning a living.

586 178 We have seen that the two main grounds for divorce are adultery and desertion. Some Whites express this by saying that these are the main causes of divorce among the Ngoni and other tribes. The Ngoni do not see the matter in this light. The cause of divorce to them is the presence of the White group. Old men deplore the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

apparent ease with which women get divorces and councillors say that they divorce people only because the Administration would interfere if they did not. We can see that in one sense the Ngoni analysis is correct. Whatever may be the precipitating causes of particular divorces, one basic factor is that the old social order in which divorce was rare has been replaced, through a series of events beginning with the White conquest, by a different form of social structure in which wives are relatively mobile from one husband to another. Adultery and desertion lead to divorce because it is no longer necessary to tie down the fertility of women to definite points in a segmentary system based on patrilineal descent, and this is so because the system no longer exists. It is true that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Missions do not recognize divorce but ecclesiastical ceremonies have no force in law, either in the eyes of the Administration or of the Native Courts, and the sanctions utilized by these missions do not entirely prevent their members seeking divorce. 586 198

Immediately after a divorce the couple usually wish to have little to do with one another. After the passage of years the hostility between them fades away and they may talk to one another in the ordinary course of village life. They continue to address each other as *husband* and *wife* and their children, although nominally in the custody of one group or the other continue to visit back and forth and keep the parents informed of each other's doings. A woman now married elsewhere may return to her former husband when their son comes home on leave from work. In her old age a woman may even go back to the man from whom she was divorced a long time ago if she has no one else to turn to for shelter and assistance. More frequently she follows her children to where they are living in her former husband's village but has little to do with him directly, only through their children. 586

8. Co-wives

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We have seen that the rights of a man over his wife's sexual activities are different from hers over his. Whereas a woman who commits adultery pays damages to her husband, he does not pay her when he commits adultery. This lack of symmetry derives from the polygynous nature of the Ngoni marriage system. A man can always argue that he is seeking another wife, even if the woman he is running after is married to someone else. It is considered no business of his wife to interfere. She may attempt to stop him but all she can use are domestic and mystical sanctions, she cannot appeal to the law. Again, a wife has no right to the sexual monopoly of her husband and cannot prevent him from taking additional wives except by making his life with her so difficult that he decides to abandon the attempt. [584]

As can be seen from Table III, about one man in seven has two or more wives. Although the Christian Missions do not tolerate 595 199

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

595 polygyny, and punish their members who take additional wives,
794 there are still a number of Christian polygynists who for most purposes align themselves with the Christian group.

As in the old days, the wives of a polygynist are ranked in the
595 chronological order of marriage, the first wife married being the
178 great wife. If, however, bridewealth has been paid, the wives married
[583] in this way are all senior to those who are married without it. The arrangement by which a barren or aged wife was given a linked co-wife (*nshanri*) has now almost disappeared. A young girl may still be indicated as a linked co-wife designate at the gall bladder ceremony of her kinswoman and the intestines placed round her neck, but this is now a mere ceremonial, and the girl marries elsewhere when she grows up. As mentioned above a chief negotiated recently for a linked co-wife on the strength of bridewealth paid by his father, but with no success.

593 A man makes his headquarters in his great wife's hut, and keeps
595 his possessions and money in it. During the day it is considered proper that he should sit and chat or entertain visitors on the verandah of her hut. Her hut is likely to be of better design than those of her co-wives, and she is more likely than they to have a separate kitchen. When her husband returns from a journey, he ought to go first to her hut, and if he has brought back goods from Southern Rhodesia, it is in her house that he stores his loads until he has time to divide them among his wives and relatives. A visitor from afar goes first to the great wife's hut and there asks for the man he is seeking. In her husband's absence it is she who must entertain the visitor. This pattern of precedence is followed to greater or lesser extent despite quarrels between husband and wife, and is not affected by where the husband actually sleeps at night.

Apart from this emphasis on the importance of the great wife, the
595 correct behaviour for a man with many wives is impartiality. He must sleep with each wife in rotation, usually for a week at a time, and must not confide in one wife the secrets of his relationship to another. Relationships between co-wives are sometimes strained, and one may use medicines against the others. The medicine[33]
[830] believed to prevent a man from achieving erection with anyone other than the woman who gives it to him is sometimes used by one wife against another. On the other hand, some co-wives help each other in their gardens and many polygynists' households run smoothly. Each wife has her own hut and her own garden and it is possible for them to arrange their affairs so that they can co-operate or act separately as they find best. If they persistently quarrel
[591] their husband may deem it well for them to live in separate villages, so that for example a man may live virilocally with his great wife and uxorilocally with his second wife, going from one village to the

[33] Possibly known as *udamanga*. The details of this medicine are not known by many men, and I was unable to question any women on this matter.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

 Beyond the 59

Village The Native Courts deal to a great extent with 692
matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage 581
certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The [797]
missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the development of Christian marriage.

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who 858
rears him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are 593
responsible for their own actions before the court, and that truant schoolboys can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peaceably with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms.

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and 593
independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole 584
more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage.

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, 882
and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes 848
pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. 684
It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later

[1] Called *cidumu*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 approval of his father before he offers, and as in the case of Amos and Eve (p. 28), the father may sometimes disapprove. If the man is from another part of the territory or from abroad the parents of
583 the woman, even if they accept the legalization payment, may be reluctant to allow their grandchildren to go a long way away from
603 them to live among their son-in-law's kin. This consideration applies
•593 particularly to strangers in the township who marry Ngoni women. When they leave their jobs or retire they try to take their wives and children with them. They may be frustrated in the removal of their children by the woman's parents, who refuse the bridewealth. The courts support the claims of Ngoni grandparents for the retention of their grandchildren under these conditions and a returning Yao or Cipeta man may be forced to travel without his children and sometimes without his wife. I have recorded elsewhere[2] an incident in which a Yao man who had been married to an Ngoni woman for twenty-one years was divorced by her and his offer of bridewealth refused by her parents. The police who check the movements of women and children by bus and lorry away from Fort Jameson are in touch with the Native Courts and may be on the look out if it seems likely that a man from a strange tribe will attempt to smuggle his wife and children away from their Ngoni kin.

581 Thus we see that the kinsfolk are directly concerned with marriage. When the children are still toddlers, they are paired off in fun by their
[858] adult relatives as they sit playing. For a week or month or even longer a woman will laughingly call her neighbour *child's parent-in-law* because their children have been nominated *husband* and *wife* in this way. As a child grows older, so the interest of its relatives in its marriage become clearer. Before marriage the relatives of a
684 girl hold rights in her that are violated if she is seduced and bears
848 a child. It is to them that the girl's lover pays the beast of seduction to recompense them for the wrong he has done by impregnating the girl, but he does not gain custody of the child. On the other hand,
836 no one brings a case against a man merely because he sleeps with an unmarried girl. It is only when she becomes pregnant that an action can be laid against him. A man caught *in flagrante delicto* by one of the unmarried girl's kin can expect abuse and possibly blows but unless he is provocative he need not fear action in the courts. The hostility directed towards him seems to be due in part to his having behaved so indiscreetly as to be caught and having forced the girl's kin to take cognizance of what was happening.

At marriage the woman's kin grant rights in her sexual activities
581 to her husband. These rights are unambiguously transferred by the
583 legalization payment, and the woman's kin are therefore in a position to delay or facilitate the tranfser of these rights by their attitude towards the payment. There is no corresponding right in an unmarried man held by his kin, and at marriage there is no corres-

[2] Barnes, op. cit. p. 238

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

584 or friends. If the man is away working or in the Army he may make his proposal by letter. When agreement has been reached negotiations can proceed although they are carried on as if there had been no prior agreement and the proposal was entirely a new one.

A man tells his eldest brother of his intention to marry, or, if he is the eldest son, he may approach his father direct. He does not [593] speak to his mother about this matter, for a man does not confide in his mother about anything connected with sex, but she is told [603] of his intention by her husband. A man ought to tell his grandmother at an early stage, particularly the grandmother who reared him. A woman tells her sisters and her grandmother, and her eldest sister will tell her eldest brother. The man's father or eldest brother may decide on who shall act as intermediaries in the matchmaking, or else the man may himself ask important people in the village to act. There is no definite rule as to who they should be, and either men or women or both may make up the party. Usually two or three people go, and a man will try and choose people who are reliable and sober and tactful. Marriage intermediaries do not have the same important responsibilities for the marriage as do the marriage [191] sureties (or witnesses) among the Nyanja and Yao although they are known by the same term.[3] The intermediaries go to the woman's village and consult her senior relatives. Traditionally they should go to the woman's grandmother, either her father's mother or her mother's mother, depending on who lives in the village and who is the more important. They tell her that they have heard that such-and-such a marriage has been contemplated. The girl's grandmother tells the girl's father that the intermediaries have come, and if nothing has arisen to jeopardize the marriage, the visiting party are told that all is well and that they must come back again. They return to their own village, and the next day, or the next week if it is a long way to walk, they go again, bringing with them a gift or sometimes the legalization payment. The gift or money is handed to the [583] person leading the negotiations on the woman's side who passes it on to the woman's father. Arrangements are made about the gall bladder ceremony and a date fixed. The intermediaries then go back to their village.

585 At the gall bladder ceremony the bride receives formal advice [591] from her affines and the people in their village. Shortly afterwards she begins to live with her husband in either his or her village. If they live virilocally she does not at first cook for her husband, but the couple rely on food prepared by his other wives or his mother or [593] grandmother. It may be up to a year later that the woman first cooks for her husband and husband's father, the latter commenting 843 on her cooking. When she first becomes pregnant she is anointed by her husband's grandmother, and goes with a young girl from her husband's kinsfolk to announce her pregnancy to her own kin.

[3] *Nkhoswe.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

586 attitude towards her can be tested only when, if ever, he returns to the rural area.

A man whose wife runs away and who will not return may likewise continue to hope that one day she will change her mind and return to him, and for this reason will not divorce her. Unlike a woman, a man in this condition does not jeopardize his chances by taking a fresh spouse, and therefore it is rare to find a man whose only wife is one separated from him. It will be seen from Table III that there were no men separated from all their wives included in the sample.

593 In both separation and in the procedure by which a man 'leaves his wife in disgust',[17] sexual intercourse ceases between the couple. In other respects the two procedures are quite distinct. When a man 'leaves his wife in disgust', he stops sleeping with her but he continues to treat her as his wife. She has her hut next to her co-wives, her husband sits on her verandah, and she can rely on his help in the garden and in the care of her children. If she is separated from him, she must fend for herself. Her status as wife is significant only in that she does not marry anyone else.

6. The absent husband

A man appeals to his kinsfolk for support, but they do not replace him in the marriage relationship. His wife is linked mystically to him but not to them, and the right of sexual access to her is held by him alone. It cannot be exercised on his behalf by his kinsmen. He takes the initiative in appealing to them in a marital dispute, and his agreement is necessary at each fresh stage of events. If, however, the man is not there, his kin act on his behalf as far as they are able.

593 Most adult men, at some time or other, go away to work in the towns
167 or mines. Some men take their wives with them but at any one time, as can be seen from Table IV, between a quarter and a third of all married women living in the rural area have their husbands away working either in Fort Jameson township, in the towns of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, or living permanently on the tobacco farms around Fort Jameson. When a man goes away to work, no one can tell when he will return. Some men go off and never write or come home again. Others write regularly, send home money and clothes, come home themselves for visits, and remain in close contact with those at home. Friends and relatives may give news of a long vanished migrant whom they have met in Southern Rhodesia.

For at least the first two or three years the assumption is made that a man intends to return, even if he does not write. If his wife
[591] is living uxorilocally she will probably continue to do so. If she is living in her husband's village, as long as she stays there she can depend to some extent on the support of her husband's relatives, who may help her with her hut and garden, and if they are kind-hearted

[17] See above, p. 41.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and have the money to spare, they may buy her clothes. The only ways in which she can raise money easily for herself are by brewing beer, making pots, and working on the farms. To work on a farm she must, however, remove herself from the surveillance of her husband's kin, and unless she goes to join a contingent from their village working at the farm, they may think she is running away from them to seek a lover or new husband. We have seen, however, from Table XIV that significantly more wives whose husbands are away live uxorilocally. 593 167 [591]

Many husbands write home, not only to their wives, and some remit postal orders and bank-notes. A man may get a friend who is returning from Southern Rhodesia to take home blankets and other bulky articles to be handed over to his wife. He may send presents like these direct to his wife or he may think it more prudent to send them to his father or brother and allow them to hand on to his wife as much as they think fit. The woman must then behave herself in the eyes of her affines if she wishes to receive her husband's presents. The acceptance of these gifts is taken as proof that the woman is still dependent on her husband however long he stays away. If the woman applies to the court for a divorce on the ground of desertion, the presents will be cited by her husband's kinsfolk as evidence that there is no intention on his part to desert. Gluckman reports from the Lozi that even if a man sends goods, after a statutory period the court will hold that 'a woman marries a man and not a blanket', that is, the husband must return to look after and sleep with his wife as well as send clothes to her. This argument is not used among the Ngoni. A woman who complains that she is not satisfied with marriage under these conditions is told to write to her absent husband and ask him for the fare to join him in Southern Rhodesia. [586] [171]

Case history 10

Saul was working in Nyasaland. He sent home to his wife 7*s*. 6*d*. for clothes. Later she wrote to him saying she wanted him to return. He sent her 15*s*., being 5*s*. for clothes and 10*s*. bus fare so that she could join him. She did not go and later went to the court complaining she had been deserted. Her husband's relatives argued, to the satisfaction of the court, that as her husband had sent her these gifts he was still taking care of her. The court dismissed her plea as she had refused to go to Nyasaland when the fare had been sent. [586]

The husband's relatives try to watch carefully the movements of the woman so that they may prevent or at least report any adultery on her part. If they are in touch with the husband, they write to him should they suspect infidelity. Sometimes the husband ignores their letter, sometimes he gives them instructions how they should proceed in the matter, and sometimes he returns to the village to see for himself what is going on. He arrives without warning and hopes to catch his wife in the act. If all is well and he is satisfied that his wife has been faithful he usually goes back to work again. 593 167 602

593 167 Some men when they decide to return home from work in the normal course of events do not let their relatives know that they will be arriving. There are a variety of reasons for this, one being that the mystical hazards of the journey home are increased if a man's enemies know that it is taking place. There is also sometimes the desire to check on the fidelity of a wife. A chief returning from the railway line in 1947 reached Fort Jameson and sent on ahead a man to tell the people their chief had returned. A councillor who was with him remarked 'What sort of chief is this who gives his queens time to get back to their own houses? We ought to arrive suddenly and catch them all with their lovers.'

593 167 602 The woman's kin also wish to avoid trouble in her marriage and do what they can to prevent her committing adultery if they think that her husband is still treating her well. They talk to her about her obligations to her absent husband and if they think she cannot be trusted, one of them, perhaps the woman's mother, may sleep in the hut with her to see that she does not entertain lovers there. They may warn her that if she is taken to court for adultery they will not support her.

Thus we see that there is social prescription not only of the ways in which a man and his affines should behave towards each other, but also of the ways in which his affines should behave when the man is away. Similarly a woman and her affines interact in the light of their relationship not only when her husband is present but also when he has been absent for years. As a husband can exceed his rights over his wife, so can an affine go beyond what is tolerated while trying to safeguard the interests of an absent husband. The perseverence of some brothers of absent husbands, and the limitations imposed on their actions by public opinion, are recalled by a girls' song current in 1949.

[533]

I am wanting to go and sleep,
What stops me is something in the loins,
I go to the water, and the one who keeps on following comes,
He has exceeded his sibling-in-law-ship,[18]
He has dragged Eleni from the reeds.

Eleni is supposed to be the wife of a labour migrant. Her husband's brother follows her to the stream, where she has gone ostensibly to draw water, as he thinks that she is really going to meet a lover. [607] She hides in the reeds and he drags her out. Such active intervention is inappropriate and dangerous for if there is a struggle the woman is likely to claim that the man was trying to rape her. The astute brother-in-law would have waited his time until he could catch her red-handed with her lover in a village.

167 It is never legitimate for a woman whose husband is a labour migrant to have intercourse with another man. People regret that

[193] [18] *Ulamu*, the abstract noun formed from *mulamu*, sibling-in-law.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the [182]
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with 843
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant.
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child 167
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are [837]
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 607
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court 692
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address
593 of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife,
684 the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration.
692 Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

593 The general principle that no court action involving the husband's
684 sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

578 Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their
602 relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both
[845] from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman
[787] had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who
[754] was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go
167 away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great
602 deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 the parents of the couple. If the parents are not available other kinsfolk can substitute for them, but in general it is a man's or woman's father who represents the interests of their local group of kin in situations in which these interests are contrasted with those of the spouse's kin. It is the woman's father who receives all the different payments made in marriage, and he is free to keep the payments or to distribute them among his relatives as he thinks fit. If a woman's father is dead or away at work the payments are made to her brother or her father's brother or her mother or some other relative who, in this situation, is prepared to assume the responsibilities that would otherwise be borne by him. Similarly, most men find the money for marriage payments themselves, but if a man is too poor to do this, it is first to his father that he turns for assistance. If, however, his father is dead or poverty-stricken or unwilling to provide the money, he can ask some other relative for help. Here we are dealing with situations in which the father or his substitute [591] is acting as the representative of the loosely structured local group of kin in situations in which his own children are specifically involved. There are, however, certain specific kinship relations which we can separate out from the general operation of local kinship and which impinge on the marriage relationship. A grandmother has a particular interest in the sexual aspect of marriage. The eldest brother acts as intermediary between a man and his father in the marriage negotiations. Younger brothers are interested in the disposal of widows. Children have rights in the property of a married couple. These are more specific obligations and rights, and while it is possible to find substitutes if the genealogically correct relatives are not there, there is more rigidity in these matters than in those in which the initiative lies with the local group of kinsfolk whoever they may be.

603 We have mentioned that the grandmother who rears a girl may be in charge of her seclusion at puberty (p. 32). Even when some other old woman is in charge, the girl's grandmother has some responsibility for her sexual behaviour. If a man does not sleep with his wife she complains to his grandmother, and although a man is not instructed in sexual matters by his grandmother, he can discuss them more freely with her than with any other kinswoman. Grandmothers sometimes play an important part in the resolution of a marital quarrel in the village, and they often act as midwives. It is a man's grandmother who complains to him if his wife is not bearing children, and it is to her that he may turn for advice about medicines. In the courts, however, grandmothers do not play so important a role. They are women, and important women use their influence more in village situations than in court, where men are in [560] control and male councillors look to a man's brothers and father for confirmation of evidence.

593 There is considerable formality in the relationship between a man and his own parents and this formality appears to be greater if

he has not been brought up by them but by some other relative. In particular a man is reluctant to discuss his affairs directly with his father if he can get his eldest brother to act as his intermediary. The eldest brother is heir to their father and it is considered that he should act as the channel by which the father is approached. He deals with proposals of marriage arising from his younger siblings and if he approves of them, he refers the matter to their father. This pattern of relations seems most marked in aristocratic families. 593 [184]

9. Widows

While it is a man's eldest brother who helps to arrange his marriage, it is his younger brothers who become pro-husbands to his widows. We have seen that in the old days a widow was usually looked after by a younger brother of the dead man but she continued to live in her dead husband's segment, and the children she bore by her pro-husband were grouped with the children of the dead man. This can still happen but it is no longer the invariable rule. As in the old days, if bridewealth has been paid by the first husband and after his death his widow goes to live with someone else, the second husband or pro-husband cannot offer bridewealth and the children he begets belong to the dead husband and take his descent name. 587 851

Some indication of the extent to which widows remain with their dead husbands' kin is given by data collected in two villages. All the women now living in these villages had between them experienced widowhood 31 times. In two instances (6 per cent) the widow had been cared for by her dead husband's brother; and in 11 instances (35 per cent) the widow took a new husband not directly related to the dead man. In the remaining 18 instances (58 per cent) the widow had not married again and was living alone. 587 [589]

A man may die at any stage of his marriage. If he is betrothed to a girl and then dies, the betrothal passes to a younger brother. When the girl is old enough, the younger brother marries her as though she had been betrothed to him in the first place and the children he has by her are his own children. Similarly, if a betrothed girl dies before she is married, the betrothal passes to a younger sister. 584

If a man dies after he has been properly married his widows have definite roles to play. For a month after his death, they must wear the signs of mourning, and they are in danger of *mdulo*[34] if they commit adultery during that time. They must be ready to wail when distant visitors arrive to mourn. At the end of a month they brew beer, and there is a joyous party. A year after the death there is another party, and the fate of the widows is discussed. If none of the younger brothers or kinsmen of the dead man wish to look after the widows, they are free to go their own way, and there may be a formal statement of divorce. They are in any case now spoken 765 589

[34] See above, p. 48.

589 of as being divorced from the dead man. If they do not themselves wish to be inherited they cannot be forced to remain.

587 If a widow is cared for by a younger brother of her dead husband, and that man already has a wife of his own, the widow is regarded as inferior in status to the man's own wife. Yet any children she 851 has by him count as if they were children by the dead husband, and 428 as such they inherit his cattle and offices before the brother's children by his own wife. This apparent paradox is due to the nature of 554 Ngoni seniority. Seniority was always associated with position in a definite segment in the old residential system. The widow belongs to the segment of her dead husband, and even today if she is a queen she ought to stay there after she has been given a pro-husband. If she moves to live in proximity to her pro-husband, she comes into the ranking system of which the pro-huband's great wife is the superior. Her children are, however, still associated with the segment from whence she came.

587 The new husband, whether he is a kinsman of the dead man or not, pays one goat, also known as 'snuff-box', on taking the woman, 583 and this animal she keeps herself, and does not hand on to her father or brother. If no bridewealth was paid by the first husband, the 851 children borne to the second take the descent name of their own father and his rights in the marriage are the same as if he were marrying the woman for the first time and had made the legalization payment.

589 There is then an opportunity for the marriage to continue after the death of the man if his wife and his kinsmen are both agreeable. If the widow wishes to go her own way, she can do so, and if his kinsmen do not wish to care for her, they need not. Even if they do not like the woman they cannot turn her out of the village, and she can go on living in her dead husband's hut and cultivating the same garden as before. She may even re-marry and bring in her new husband to live with her in her dead spouse's village. The extent to which this can be done without quarrelling depends very much on the personalities of the people involved. If the widow decides to go back to her own village, her husband's kin may try to prevent her removing possessions of which the ownership is not certain, and she should discuss with them how much of the crops she can take away from her garden.

587 Nowadays the death of a wife brings the marriage to an end. We have seen that in the old days the dead woman was replaced by a linked co-wife, and that this institution has now all but disappeared. There is no other form of sororate, and although a man may sometimes in jest address his wife's sister as *wife*, he has no rights over her.

593 The specific responsibilities of brothers towards a man's marriage are demonstrated in the role of the elder brother as a marriage negotiator and of the younger brother as potential husbands for a man's widows. A man would not, save in exceptional circumstances,

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

turn to a younger brother for help in arranging a marriage, but 593
although it is said that a man cannot marry the widow of a younger brother, this is sometimes done. The position of children born in a union of this kind is anomalous and there is likely to be dissension in the family if the elder brother has no children by his own wives.

10. Rights in wives and children

The new-born child sleeps in its mother's hut, is in danger from its 854
father's adultery, and is held by its parents at their ritual resumption of sexual intercourse. It is carried to the garden on its mother's back and at mealtimes sucks porridge from her finger. Perhaps its father may play a little with it, but this is not very likely. After [862]
weaning, which takes place about the age of two, it may be sent to a grandparent or some other relative, or may perhaps remain in the parental hut for a few more years. But already it has been handled and probably suckled by many women, has learnt to play 857
with the other young children in the village, and has gone off with them into the bush or to the stream. It has learnt also the correct kinship terms for most people in the village and has seen its village teams dance against those of other villages. It has gone visiting in other villages with its parents and has begun to explore its web of kinship, of which it is the centre.

The growing child therefore does not see its parents as sharply 593
distinguished from all other adults in the vicinity, but merely as the two people to whom its ties are closest and on whom it is most dependent. If a child whose parents are dead or are living in Southern Rhodesia is brought up by a relative, it may not learn their names until it is adult, if then. Parents are important to their children only when they live near them or with them. It is when children grow up in the village of their parents that they rely on them for school fees, clothes and medicines. Later a boy may ask his father for financial help or may use him as a banker, handing over his wages to him.

This is true not only of a man's own children of whom he is both 848
genitor and pater, but also of his wife's adulterine and pre-marital children, if he chooses to accept them into his household. It is clear that if a man has paid bridewealth, he has custody of all the children borne by his wife, in adultery as well as in wedlock. If he has not paid bridewealth, then adulterine children like legitimate children belong in theory to his wife's relatives. In practice a man can either accept or spurn them. If he has been away a long time and returns to find his wife with illegitimate children, he may decide to accept the children as his own. They then take his descent name and not that of their genitor. The biological parentage of such children is not mentioned openly, but is remembered in malicious gossip.

Case history 11

Laban went away to work in Southern Rhodesia. His wife Sara went

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

848

to a farm to work and while there had a child by a man working on the farm. When Laban returned from Southern Rhodesia people said to him, 'You have a bad wife, she has borne a child by a man while you have been away.' Laban said 'It does not matter, I love my wife and I will look after the child.'

The rights of children born in adultery to inherit their pater's property on his death are never certain. If there is enmity between them and the true sons of their pater, they may be denied any assistance from the estate of the dead man.

593 583 A man acquires rights *in genetricem* in his wife,[25] that is, rights in her as a mother, by the payment of bridewealth. We have seen that bridewealth is not often paid and that the rights exercised by a man over his children by virtue of this payment are ill defined.[26] Ngoni argue that in theory when a woman marries, the marriage payments should be paid to her mother's brother and not to her father if he has not paid bridewealth for her mother. Rights in a woman *in genetricem* are held to include the right to the marriage payments of the woman's daughters. In practice this aspect of rights *in genetricem* is as ill defined as rights to determine where children shall live. If a girl is living in the same village as her father or even her mother's husband, the fact that he may not have paid bridewealth is overlooked when the time comes for the girl to marry. Her suitor does not inquire into the affairs of her relatives before he marries her and indeed if her parents are divorced or dead he may never know their names. He respects his affines and does not probe into their secrets. He offers the legalization payment to whosoever appears to be responsible for his bride, her father or her mother's husband or her mother's brother or some other relative, depending on how and where she is living. At the level of the next generation, if a man treats his wife well, her relatives will not want to make trouble in the marriage by insisting on their theoretical rights when his daughters get married. If the man is prudent he gives them some of the money and they are content. On the other hand, if there is a quarrel between affines and the case is taken to court, it may be possible to establish rights *in genetricem*. The court holds that to take the legalization payment of a daughter is to exercise rights *in genetricem* in her mother. The following case concerns a man who exercised rights *in genetricem* that he did not possess.[26a]

Here the award of £3 damages against Nebo is due partly to his having initiated the action for divorce without any substantial complaint against his wife, and partly because he had taken the legalization payment which should have gone to her relatives.

Cases like this are not common, and the interest of the court is more often focussed on the legalization payment than on bridewealth. The legalization payment is becoming the more important payment

[25] See below, p. 113.
[26] See above, p. 35, and Table V.
[26a] See p. 97.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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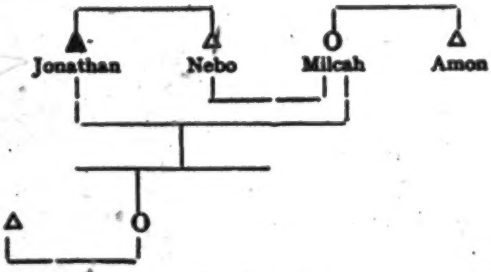
583

Case history 12



[601]

Nebo inherited the wife, Milcah, of his elder brother Jonathan. Neither brother paid bridewealth. One of the daughters of Jonathan and Milcah was married and the legalization payment for her taken by Nebo. In 1947 Nebo brought his wife to court to divorce her. He said that she was always committing adultery and he was afraid that one day he would kill her in anger. Milcah's brother Amon complained that Nebo had taken the legalization payment of Jonathan's daughter, and insisted that if there was a divorce custody of all Milcah's children should be given to him. This was accepted by the court, who told Nebo that if he wanted the children he must pay bridewealth. The divorce was granted and £3 damages awarded to Milcah. The payment of bridewealth was left undecided. [586]

in marriage, and some people are beginning to confuse the rights originally transferred by it with the rights *in genetricem* associated with bridewealth. The vernacular term for the legalization payment (*cimalo*) is common to many tribes in the Eastern Province, whereas that for bridewealth (*malowolo*) is peculiar to the Ngoni. Bridewealth is not recorded on the marriage certificate whereas the legalization payment is. It is possible that while the rights *in genetricem* relating to the residence of the children of the marriage will remain indefinite and unenforceable, rights *in genetricem* relating to the acceptance of legalization payments for the daughters of the marriage will become attached to the legalization payment itself. This trend is illustrated by the following incident. [191]

Case history 13

Simon had been married for many years and his daughter was being sought in marriage. Simon's wife's brother Nimshi came to see him to remind him that he had not yet handed over either the legalization payment or bridewealth for his wife. Simon admitted this. Nimshi said that someone would soon be offering a legalization payment for Simon's daughter. If Simon wanted to keep the money he must first offer the legalization payment in his own marriage. Simon paid Nimshi and kept the payment for his daughter.

Here Nimshi held that the legalization payment offered by Simon entitled Simon to keep the legalization payment offered for his daughter. According to traditional usage Nimshi should have insisted that Simon paid bridewealth not merely the legalization

593 payment. It may have been that Nimshi was merely trying to get
583 as much as he could hope for out of Simon, who was a fierce and powerful person. In view, however, of the decline in the incidence of bridewealth and the increasing importance of the legalization payment it is not unlikely that this right to the daughter's legalization payment may soon be separated from bridewealth.

498 It is at the death of a man that his children exercise their particular rights from him as against the claims of other kin. If a man has
[583] paid bridewealth for his wife, then the claim of his eldest son by her to his property is clear. The eldest son by the great wife is the heir, and he takes over control of the dead man's herd, and inherits his money. For inheritance, cattle are more important than money. Most men keep their money hidden in the ground, and it sometimes
[454] happens that a man dies without mentioning where he has put his savings, so that they are lost. Cattle are publicly-owned property,
[422] in that every boy in the village knows the ownership of each beast, and they can be seen in the byre every day. Men sometimes divide their property among their sons before they die, but it is more usual for a man to give one cow to the eldest son of each wife and to leave the rest undivided. The residue then passes to his heir on his death.
[583] If bridewealth has not been paid, the claim of the dead man's eldest son to the herd may be disputed by the dead man's brothers. Succession here does not seem to be determined in the light of the failure to pay bridewealth but by a consideration of residence. If a man is living in the same village as his father then he can expect to inherit his father's cattle when he dies. If he is living elsewhere, and tries to claim his inheritance, he may be opposed by his father's kinsmen resident in his father's village should he try to remove the cattle.

The eldest son inherits, but he has an obligation to help his sisters and younger brothers when they need beasts or money. If the other brothers are scattered in different villages, the herd may be divided among them, but it may be many years after the death that the division takes place. If the eldest son is in Southern Rhodesia the dead man's brothers delay the division of the herd as long as possible in case the rightful heir should return.

[425] Women acquire cattle and other animals with money they have saved or gained by selling beer, or as gifts from their husbands.
[583] If no bridewealth has been paid for a woman any animals she may own pass on her death to her eldest son. If bridewealth has been paid for her the disposal of her property is uncertain. Some people argue that the animals cannot then go to her son, for her son belongs to her husband's group because of the bridewealth, and that they ought to pass to her brother's son. Others say that the animals should go to her eldest son irrespective of bridewealth. Unfortunately I did not record any specific instance of inheritance from a woman.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

teach that the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of marriage payments is no concern of the Church, while the D.R.C.M. have a rule that bridewealth shall not be paid although this rule does not seem to be enforced. In general, in the village and in the court, the obligations of Christians are thought of as supplementary to their obligations as ordinary men and women, and Christian ceremonies to some extent supplement, but do not replace, traditional ceremonies. Thus there may be a church wedding in addition to a gall bladder ceremony, and a divorce in the eyes of the mission following after a divorce in court. Pressure has sometimes been put on chiefs and court members to act in accordance with the teaching of the mission, as in a past attempt on the part of the Catholic White Fathers to prevent courts from granting divorces to Catholics.[29] This type of intervention has applied particularly to courts where the chief was himself a Catholic. The Administration has opposed this pressure, and does not itself recognize any legal significance in religious ceremonies.

14. Spouses and kinsfolk

We may see the married couple in the middle of a system of relationships which connects them with persons and institutions each interested in their behaviour and in the maintenance of the marriage tie. By living peacefully together, by producing children, and by fulfilling their obligations to their kinsfolk and affines, they can, with discretion, satisfy the divergent claims implicit in this system of relationships. If they begin to quarrel, their kinsmen and neighbours attempt in the first instance to reconcile them. Only when this is impossible do those interested in the marriage begin to split up into groups with differing interests whose rival claims must be weighed by the court. Even then it is hoped that reconciliation will be possible, that a wife will return to her husband after she has paid him damages for adultery, and a husband return to his wife after many years of neglect. Whereas in the old days marriage was related to a fairly definite residential system, and rights and obligations were clear cut, nowadays the forces holding together a body of kinsfolk are weaker, and the danger of disruption of the group because of quarrelling is greater. The genealogical composition of the group is more variable and alters from year to year. Marriage, as one of the mechanisms by which local groups are built up, is part of the general political process, and is affected by inter-group and inter-personal relations that at first sight appear to have little to do with marriage. We observed that tribal and religious affiliation are significant criteria in a possible spouse. The divergent interests of less permanent groups, such as cliques and factions, influence choice of marriage partner and behaviour within marriage, as we have seen in the stories of Absolom and Mary (p. 60) and Amos and Eve (p. 28). Conversely, marital interests affect non-

[29] *Cf.* Richards, op. cit. pp. 83-4, for similar events among the Bemba.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 marital behaviour, as for example when a new-acquired wife
593 persuaded her husband to seek work with her in Southern Rhodesia
602 so that she might enjoy his prosperity to the exclusion of her senior
571 co-wives who were left in the village.

Within the kinship system itself, ties of affinity compete with and are affected by ties of consanguinity. A quarrel between a married couple may lead to further quarrelling between affinally-linked relatives, and a dispute between a man and his wife's relatives may lead to a quarrel with his wife. Yet on the other hand a man who merely finds a woman and marries her without reference to her relatives is uncertain of his rights in the marriage and cannot appeal to her relatives if she misbehaves. There can be no ceremonies of marriage, and he must resort to subterfuge to get a marriage certificate. If he sends his children to his wife's parents to be cared for, they will accept them, but by so doing they do not accept him as a son-in-law. His wife's parents will deny that they know his name and if he takes his wife to court, they will mock him by saying 'We do not know this man'. Irrespective of marriage payments, a man cannot be validly and effectively married in the rural area without establishing his relationship to his affines. For a woman this is not always so, for her husband may have come from afar to work in the area, or he may earlier have broken away from his kinsmen. But without the support of his own kinsmen a man is dependent on his wife's kin for assistance in the marriage and, though the marriage may last, he is still one man living alone in a strange village.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated
593 proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated
613 with political allegience, and therefore it was inappropriate that her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired
[591] rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genetricem* in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genetricem* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem*
[428] and bridewealth rights *in genetricem*. Rights *in genetricem* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother
[587] willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genetricem* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*.

611 Whereas the rights *in genetricem* were definite in the old system,
591 in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme they were related to position in a residential system of which one
602 of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession.
178 With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another, and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours
611 cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups,
591 for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people,
602 some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tion for associating children with one parent rather than the other. 611
There is only the one proud dogma that the Ngoni, unlike their 591
neighbours, are a patrilineal virilocal people. This reflects the 602
actual dominance of the virilocal mode of residence but does not
furnish a rule to which appeal can be made in specific cases. The
only definite unit to which a man can be said to belong is his village, [621]
and such few attempts as are made to enforce rights *in genetricem*
are expressed in terms of residence in villages. In marriages that
are made outside the tribe, rights *in genetricem* become significant, 648
for a child is not likely to wander to and fro between one tribe and 583
another hundreds of miles away in the same way as children change
from one village to another within the kingdom. Here then we find
more attention paid to the payment of bridewealth and to rights
in genetricem and these rights are enforceable through the police
checks on buses and lorries.

If a man is away working his interests are represented by his 593
kinsfolk. They cannot exercise his rights *in uxorem* for him, but
if they are violated they can act on his behalf. His permission is
necessary, however, before they can proceed to the court, and if they
are awarded damages then they are under some sort of obligation
to hand over the money to him when he returns. There was no
situation comparable to this in the old system, for men did not go
away for years at a time, and the violation of rights *in uxorem* was
punishable by death.

The position of the man as holder of rights *in uxorem* over his 593
wife is reinforced to some extent by mystical ties believed to connect 581
the couple, and at the same time the man can fortify his rights by
the use of medicines to ensure fidelity. During pregnancy, for a
short while after childbirth, and during menstruation, the actions
of man and wife affect one another automatically, and each is placed
in danger of illness by the failure of the other to observe their mutual
obligations. To protect his rights *in uxorem* a man may doctor his
wife so that possible violators may be deterred by the fear of mystical
retribution as well as action in the courts.

7. *Mystical beliefs and marriage stability*

The mystical connexion believed to exist between a man and his 581
wife serves to define their relationship more closely, for this same 602
connexion does not hold between a woman and her husband's kin
or between a man and his wife's kin. The adultery of a pregnant
woman's brother-in-law, like her husband's adultery, may threaten
the peace of her local group of relatives and friends, and may even
lead her to change her village or go to the court as a supporter.
The important distinction between the adultery of her husband's
brother and her husband's adultery is that the former does not
automatically endanger her delivery while the latter does. A man
confesses his adultery when his own wife gives birth, not when her
sister is in labour. This connexion is definite, and is not extended

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unity of full-siblings is the result of the established relationship 602
between their mother and father. A man's relationship with his
wife may in turn lead to solidarity between their children, but until
his wife has stayed with him for many years and borne him live 593
children their own relationship is always uncertain. He must
acknowledge that she too has rights, that she must be clothed and
respected and must be slept with. He must not abuse her at a beer
party or hit her too often, and he must not try to trap her into
adultery. When she runs away, he must go after her to apologize.

8. The support of relatives

It is the tenuousness of the marriage relationship which necessitates 581
the co-operation of the relatives in the marriage. There are occasions 602
when affines quarrel, as when a young woman is encouraged by her
husband's kin to remain in their village to be delivered of her first
child and at the same time is under pressure from her own relatives
to move back to her own village for the confinement. A man who
is anxious to build up his own cluster of huts in a village may attempt
to force his sons and daughters to bring their spouses to live near
him against the wishes of his children's affines. These struggles, [591]
where they occur, are expressed in terms of residence, for it is common
residence that welds kinsfolk together. But in general affines
co-operate rather than quarrel. Litigation about marriage payments
is rare, and frequently divorces are granted without consideration
of the return of marriage payments. During a marriage it is more
important that the married couple should be exhorted to adjust
themselves to each other and be tolerant of each other's foibles,
than that each side should insist on its formal rights. Old people
try to prevent marriages they consider unsuitable, but they do not
usually try to make difficulties once a marriage has taken place.
The successful marriages of a man's children bring him grand-
children to care for and play with, and *children's parents-in-law*
who will welcome him and give him food, even if they do not always
add to his own cluster of huts.

To some degree people appear to be afraid of the sorcery of an [754]
offended affine, but this is not a well-developed idea, and more
frequently people express their reasons for trying to patch up a 581
marriage that is in danger of breaking in terms of the need for
everyone to 'live well together', without bringing troubles into the 621
village. The well-being of the village and of the local group of
kinsfolk within it has ultimate value for the Ngoni and is an end in [181]
itself. It follows that serious quarrels can only be resolved by
means of some new residential alignment, involving moves from
one cluster to another, and from one village to another. The
village itself does not exist in isolation, and a village thrives because 628
of the ties that link it to other villages in the vicinity. Marriages 602
link villages together, by the bonds of affinity which cut across
village boundaries, and by the interaction between groups of affines 581

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

life as a young girl. She gives the half-pounded maize to the bridegroom's mother. 585

In neither of the two ceremonies I saw did the husband play any large part. He did not appear when his bride was instructed. His father sent word to him that all was going well, but he himself stayed out of the way at the other end of the village. Sometimes, however, the bridegroom does sit with his bride on the mat and is instructed with her.

Another gall bladder ceremony which I recorded was held at the time the bride went to live with her husband. This was in an intra-village marriage. In the evening the bride came with important women from her section of the village. The bridegroom's relatives were waiting to receive them, and promised to give them a beast. The bride was then handed over to them. The women went back to their own division, and returned the next day to claim the beast and wash the bride. The beast, an ox, was killed and the intestines were placed round the neck of a younger sister of the bride who became the designated linked co-wife. [231]

If Christians hold the gall bladder ceremony before the bride begins to live with her husband, it is followed by a ceremony in church. The bride does not come back to live with her husband after the gall bladder ceremony but instead goes with her relatives to the local church, where they meet a party from the man's village, and the arrangements for the marriage are set in hand. After three weeks the couple are married in church. The bride then goes back again to her village and as before she pounds flour. After a few days she comes to live with her husband, or he comes to live with her.

Appendix II

FIRST COOKING

When a woman begins her marriage in her husband's village, 592 she cannot cook food until she has been invited to do so by her 252 husband's parents. Until then, she relies on food cooked by her 593 co-wives or her mother-in-law or grandmother-in-law. This state of affairs may last from a month up to a year. It is ended by the ceremony of 'making to cook' (*mphekiso*). I did not see this ceremony, and I have relied on the accounts of informants. It is said that a man's parents would be ashamed of their poverty if they did not entertain the new bride as a guest until the time had come for her to join in the general run of domestic work in the village.

The man's parents decide when the ceremony shall be held. On the day, the man's sisters, mothers and grandmothers prepare flour, plates, porridge pat and stirring stick in the house of the man's

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

592 mother. One of the man's sisters conducts the wife to her mother-
252 in-law's hut, and under the instruction of the assembled women
593 she begins to cook. Although people speak of her doing the cooking, in practice all she does is to look on while her sisters-in-law do
[262] the work. The porridge is divided onto plates and distributed under the directions of the man's mother. One plate is sent to the man's father, one to the husband who eats the porridge with his brothers, and one to the most important woman in the village, while some are taken by the cooks themselves. The man's father is expected to remark on how well the porridge has been cooked, but he may say that it has been poorly prepared and his daughter-in-law must be taught again. This expression of disapproval cannot be more than a way of showing his dislike for his daughter-in-law for whatever he says the ceremony is not repeated and the woman begins to cook regularly for her husband. If the man's relatives are wealthy, they may kill a goat or a sheep on this occasion, or the woman's parents may send a sheep or a goat to be killed and eaten. The woman's parents cannot themselves attend the ceremony.

[591] If the couple begin their marriage uxorilocally this ceremony does not take place. The bride begins to cook for her husband as soon as he comes to live with her, using her grand-mother's hut as a kitchen.

Appendix III

THE HOEING PARTY

606 A man is under an obligation to provide once during his marriage
583 a party of hoers who work in his wife's mother's garden for the greater part of one day and who are rewarded by his wife's father. This party is called by the general word for obligations owed by a man towards his parents-in-law, *cikomwene*.[1] The function of this occasion, as a socially sanctioned method of expression of hostility between a man and his affines, has already been discussed. I attended one of these parties and my clerk attended two others.

The man, or a relative of his, tells his father that he is planning to bring a party to hoe on such and such a day. If the father-in-law agrees that the day is suitable he tells his wife to brew beer for the hoers. On the agreed day the hoeing party arrive early in the morning and begin to work in the garden. The father-in-law promises presents to the leader of the hoers, who continue to hoe until they are offered what they consider is sufficient. They then stop, and go to the village to receive the present and drink beer.

[1] See above, p. 74.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

will finish the ceremony [that the relish may be given out]. Should the girl, before she came to maturity, not have been betrothed to any man, the matrons tell her she must go to some lover; this is known as "chigango." In the evening she takes her cooking pot and relish and goes to the quarters of the young unmarried men, who for the night sleep somewhere else. In the morning the girl goes back to the *Kuka* hut.

881 585 [837]

V

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

I. When a woman becomes pregnant, the matrons of the village tell the husband "he must now no longer cohabit with her." If the man have another wife he goes off to her house. When the time draws near for the woman's accouchement, she bids her husband leave her. He goes to one of the village matrons and tells her, "My wife is very ill." Then old women go to the hut and begin to take out all the cooking utensils and household goods. Should the woman have difficulty in giving birth the old women bid her confess, saying, "Speak, child, lest you die; who committed adultery with you?" Should she have been faithless she confesses, saying, "I sinned with so and so." The matrons hide such confessions. When she is safely delivered they bathe the infant, then one old woman goes off to tell the husband, "Your wife is well." Perhaps the woman has given birth to a male child, then she tells him, "You have seen a knobkerry."

843 593 844 [845]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

12. *Customary Licence* (*Ngoni*).

N 836 [183] [684] [583] Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

N 586 [595] Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mchoka*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *nakhonse* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mchoka*, *kutendera* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. M [586] But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

III.—DOMESTIC LIFE: FILIAL.

1. *Infancy*.

M 845 Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*kigelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man at the same time, [582] and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

M 429 Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *nsibweni*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

N 429 593 Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 and inform her that she is divorced. If the wife has committed adultery, the husband can take the case to court. If the adultery is proved he is 586 usually awarded £3 damages against his wife and £3 against the co-684 respondent, and the woman is divorced. On the other hand, a woman can seek a divorce in the courts on the grounds of desertion or cruelty. The court will award a divorce if the desertion or cruelty is proved, but may also rule that the woman must pay £3 to her husband's family.

If a man does not wish to divorce his adulterous wife, the court will award him damages of £1. 10*s*. against his wife and £1. 10*s*. against the co-respondent. In adultery cases in which a divorce is granted the damages awarded against the woman are often met by the co-respondent, who then marries the woman, but where there is no divorce the woman will appeal to her father or brothers to help her pay her husband.

If a woman runs away from her husband there is nothing that the husband can do to force her back, and if methods of conciliation fail, he has little hope of redress, except in cases of seduction or abduction. If the woman refuses to rejoin her husband the court may award damages against her, but such a marriage usually ends in adultery on the part of the woman and a divorce on that ground.

It has been observed by District Officers that divorce is not so 586 frequent among the Ngoni as compared with their Cewa neighbours. 593 Nevertheless, divorce must be considered as a frequent occurrence among the Ngoni, and is so regarded by the people themselves. There is a maxim that a man ought to rely on his brothers, not on his wife, and one informant remarked: 'Never trust your wife; perhaps tomorrow you will divorce her.'

The Wife's Mother

The tensions between the two groups linked by a marriage find 606 their most formal expression in the attitude prescribed for a man to his wife's mother. While a woman can speak to her parents-in-law and enter their house, a man cannot do so. In his contacts with his father-in-law he must be quiet and reserved, and although face-to-face contact is not considered shocking, it should be as rare as possible. But a man must go out of his way to avoid his mother-in-law, and this injunction is in the main observed in practice. The avoidance is usually phrased in terms of a prohibition on the entry into the hut of the mother-in-law. A man who has to pass by this hut will normally go round the back of it.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage. [606] The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

593 691 578 While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on [586] grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

593 571 578 Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other. In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a [684] woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Ansenga tribe worked for Sosera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Sosera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the *ikohlwe* wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamache Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Imiti. Father, Nzyekezera (Njekerezera), mother and wife, not known; sons, Masakambewa and Chitete.

[554] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his [578] instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1846.

159 173 167 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambose Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed [578] by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Maseko was killed by [554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 [701] [645] (6) Njekwane Ntilila. Father, Mphange, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyuwazana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mene, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpinduka Hill, Matambazi River, in the year 1868.

(7) Mgai Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majekwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

He

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

643 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment;
551 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment; Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[643] Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black oxhide,
[645] white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives
[701] of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Sosera Nqumayo,
Great Wife; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu;
[595] Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku?; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndauya Mbanzima,
[543] Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nquaneleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.
167 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
551 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
543 Chief Diviner or *Isanusi*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadose, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595] Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere; Mtizwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere; Maiwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727] 1898. Grandson:—Chiloa Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near
[727] Maesa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsaswe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayunge (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu,
Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Masoho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera,
704 Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent and succession were traced through males, the pattern of segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetuated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594●
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

[P.58]

CHAPTER IV

KINSFOLK, AFFINES AND NEIGHBOURS

1. *The setting of marriage*

581 602 WHEN a man marries he acquires not only a wife but also affinal relatives. His kinsfolk become her affines and both groups of relatives become kin of the children of the marriage. Husband and wife do not exist in isolation but are the centre of a network of relationships by which one group is articulated with the other. The common interest of the two groups is in the well-being of the couple and of the family which they found. This is true of all societies but among the Ngoni the relatives of a married couple play a more important part in the marriage than they do, for example, in Western society. The importance of the kin is increased by the custom of sending children away to live with their grandparents as soon as they have been weaned, and by the fact that husband and wife do not set up their residence entirely on their own but follow their [591] relatives and live in close proximity to one or more of them. We have said that in the old days the elementary family did not emerge as an important grouping in society. This proposition is still true to-day, although our grounds for making it have shifted somewhat. In the towns the old pattern of kinship cannot operate and husband [594] and wife live their lives much more as an isolated pair, cut off from their kin and alone responsible for their children. But in villages neighbours are kinsmen and a quarrel between man and wife brings kinsfolk from all around seeking to establish the rights and wrongs of the quarrel and to effect reconciliation. Many children are not sent to live with their grandparents, but even they grow up with their age-mates in the village, are fed by many different women, sleep in [855] different huts, and visit to and fro with their relatives in other villages. The difficulties of rearing children in the towns have led to the rise of a new pattern in which children born in Southern Rhodesia are brought back hundreds of miles to the village to be cared for by rural kinsfolk. The quarrels of spouses in the towns are referred home to the village for discussion.

It is the kinsfolk of the pair who are most directly concerned with their marriage, but there are other persons and groups who are also interested. In the village the headman and his lieutenants, even if they are not close kinsmen of one of the spouses, have an interest in the good behaviour of the couple, and they too may intervene in a quarrel. They participate in the ceremonials of marriage, and may receive part of the meat and beer given by one side to the other. 000 Beyond the village the Native Courts deal to a great extent with

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 in different villages. This distinction between the two groups
602 linked by marriage is symbolised by their spatial separation, and by
581 the existence of 'the man's village' and 'the woman's village', and we have seen how in the story of Daniel and Deborah (p. 82), Daniel wanted Deborah to be warned not in his village but in her own. He wished her own kinsfolk and her own local community to express their condemnation of her conduct, and this could only be done on their own ground. Without their co-operation it would have seemed that it was merely Daniel's relatives who were accusing Deborah, and trying to make trouble for her for no good reason. With the co-operation of her relatives it was possible to pass censure on Deborah with less fear that the marriage might come to an end.

594 It is because the marriage relationship is one which involves other kinsfolk as well as the married couple themselves that the elementary family is not an important grouping in Ngoni society. We have seen that in the old days children left their mother's hut on weaning and went to live with their grandmother or their parents' captor's great wife. A man slept in the same hut as his wife and their unweaned child, but their waking lives were spent with other people. Nowadays the pattern is more variable. Some children stay with their parents until they are old enough to sleep in a dormitory with other children of the same sex. They are fed and clothed by their parents from infancy until they grow up. Yet most old women still gather round themselves groups of three or four grandchildren for whose food and shelter they are responsible. The provision of clothes and school fees is a more difficult thing for an old woman to manage, and for these a child usually turns to its father, if the father is living near. Even the children who live in their parent's hut, however, soon join a play group and spend much of their time away from their parents. Other boys and girls who are
[603] sent home from Southern Rhodesia may have to rely entirely on their grandparents for clothes if their parents do not send money for them. A man who is richer than his neighbours, particularly
[556] if his riches are in money rather than in cattle, is entreated by his relatives to buy them clothes and other necessities, and he may make himself responsible for the clothing of his siblings' children.

Financially, then, the elementary family is a more distinct grouping than in the days when the only form of wealth was cattle, controlled by the heads of segments. But even financially it is not yet a very clear cut grouping and the same is true in other fields of activity. A man and his wife work together in their garden, and they and their children live on its produce, more or less. On the other hand, at the beginning of a marriage they may be dependent on the parents of one or the other for their food and may pool their resources with them. Many meals are taken in common in the village, a group of neighbours cooking for each other in turn and feeding themselves and their children and grandchildren from the same dishes. In court, a woman looks for support to her own kinsfolk

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as well as to her husband and his kin, while a man tries to enlist the support of his own kin but not usually of his wife's kin if the dispute has nothing to do with marital affairs. At birth and death the division of labour and responsibility is mainly on sex lines. In general we may say that the elementary family does not emerge as a grouping of importance because there is no system of elementary families in which it can do so. Village is posed against village in dances, songs, the collection of tax, hunts, division of food, and so on. In other situations, one group of kinsmen act as a body in distinction to another group of kinsmen who are their affines. We have demonstrated this for the ceremonial situations of marriage and for the resolution of quarrels. In the intimacies of the hut, man and wife are in a simple and specific dyadic relationship which does not admit of substitution. To some extent, their infant, from conception to weaning, is a helpless appendage of this relationship. From weaning on, children acquire other social relationships of their own. The distinction drawn between marriage and the care of children is well illustrated by the remark made by an old widow when I asked her why she did not marry again. She replied 'I am now too old for marriage. My job is to look after children.' The missions encourage men and women to bring up and care for their own children, particularly where the children's grandparents are pagan. At the same time the importance of the economic ties that link every Ngoni household with the rest of the world is increasing and it is easier for men to find extra money when they are young and middle-aged than when they become grandparents. These two factors may lead to an increase in the importance of the elementary family, but it is also possible that the number of children sent home from Southern Rhodesia to their grandparents may grow as more women go there to join their husbands, thus increasing the responsibilities of the old towards their young grandchildren.

594 [628] [199]

9. Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce

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We have seen that whereas in the old days divorce was infrequent, it is now comparatively common. We have also seen that prior to 1898 the kinship structure of the Ngoni was based on localized agnatic and quasi-agnatic lineages, for the captor-captive relationship was similar to that between father and child. These lineages are now no longer effective social groups, and individuals act and live together with cognates and affines related to them in a variety of ways. This parallel change in divorce frequency and in kinship structure provides confirmation for the hypothesis put forward by Gluckman that divorce is rare and difficult in tribes organized on a system of marked father-right, and frequent and easy to obtain in other types.* This hypothesis was suggested by a comparison of different tribes which Gluckman divides into two types. Among

[586] [613] 121 114

* Gluckman, op. cit., p. 190.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 together in a cluster of huts, and several clusters together formed a
621 division, inhabited by members of a segment of greater span.
631 Larger segments corresponded to complete villages and the largest segments of all contained many separate villages. The same general pattern of settlement was repeated at successive halting places on the migration, but as a segment grew in size by natural increase and by the addition of more captives, so its settlement grew from a cluster to a division and from a single village to a group of villages. In a large segment with many villages, the constituent inferior segments remained under the political leadership of the lord of the large segment but achieved a certain amount of autonomy. On many occasions the interests of one or more inferior segments diverged from those of the rest of the large segment, from what we shall term the *residue* of the large segment. This divergence of interest sometimes led to the disappearance of the large segment as an effective social unit and, at the highest level in the residential system, to splits in the State itself.

173 The first bevy of wives formed by a lord ranked senior to other
595 bevies, and the wife in charge was the lord's great wife. Her eldest
613 son was his main heir and the eldest son of each bevy leader was
621 heir in its own segment. Yet sons, whether heirs or not, were able to
631 establish segments of their own for their wives when they married and these segments remained as distinct social groups when an heir succeeded. Thus a man could be lord of a segment founded by his father and at the same time lord of a smaller segment, within the first, which he had founded himself. This arrangement was of fundamental importance in the working of the residential system, particularly in the formation of those large and politically dominant segments with which we are mainly concerned in this book, and still finds expression in the new villages founded by each reigning county chief. When the Paramount Chief, or one of his sons, founded a segment for a bevy of queens, the new segment was of village size and many men were called by the chief from existing segments to join the new one. As the segment grew in size, minor segments within it broke out to form separate villages of their own and the parent village became the headquarters of the group of villages and of the segment they formed. The headquarters of all large dispersed segments endured as social groups, as villages, despite the continual throwing off of more and more satellites. Thus the number of large villages, each the headquarters of a segment founded for a bevy of a reigning chief, increased as time went on. These villages remain to-day, and Ngoni history is largely the story of the formation and development of the segments associated with them.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Under Zwangendaba's leadership*

When the Ngoni migration began, the greater portion of Zwangendaba's followers belonged to the primal segment founded for the great wife of Hlatshwayo, father of Zwangendaba. When the migration began there were perhaps a thousand people in this segment (this figure is largely guesswork). For convenience of reference we shall refer to the various historically significant segments by numbers. Thus segment 1, with the proper name of Elangeni, is that of Hlatshwayo's great wife. The structural relationship of seventeen numbered segments to each other and to the royal genealogy is shown in Diagram 1. A list of their proper names and of the names of the lords and ladies associated with them, is given in Table II, together with information on three segments supesior to segment 1 and on three other segments which cannot be placed on Diagram 1 for lack of information.

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This diagram and the accompanying table are skeletons, showing only those few men and women who were heads of major groups which, partly fortuitously, have endured to the present day and are now large chiefdoms. There were many more queens than the ten shown on the diagram and very many more sons of chiefs, regional governors, lieutenants and other less exalted men and women all of whom were in charge of named segments, many of which still survive, forming part of a single system. The same principles of organization applied at all levels in the residential system. Here we have set out the names and positions of only the major limbs of the tree of State. We must not forget that the minor branches and little twigs were part of the same growing whole.

Segment 1 included the greater portion of the State, but it is clear from Elmslie and Fraser, and made explicit by Read, that the headquarters of several superior segments were also present on the march north. Read states that villages belonging to nine generations of chiefs were still in existence in northern Nyasaland in 1936. There is no direct evidence from Fort Jameson, for there are no headquarters of ancient royal segments there, but there are several villages belonging to the lieutenants of segments founded by Zwangendaba's father. I have therefore included in Table II the three superior segments whose names are given by Chibambo.[17] It is probable that Zwangendaba had succeeded to the position of

[Text continues on page 15]

[17] Read, 'Tradition', pp. 465 f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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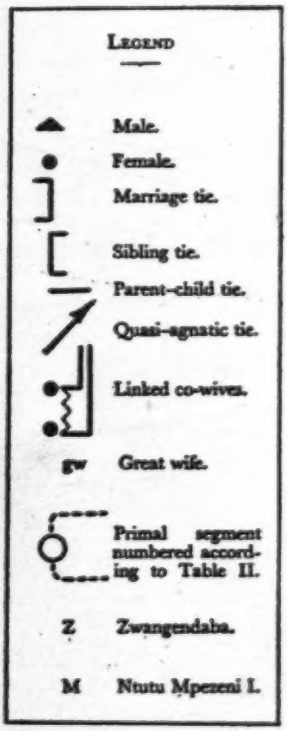
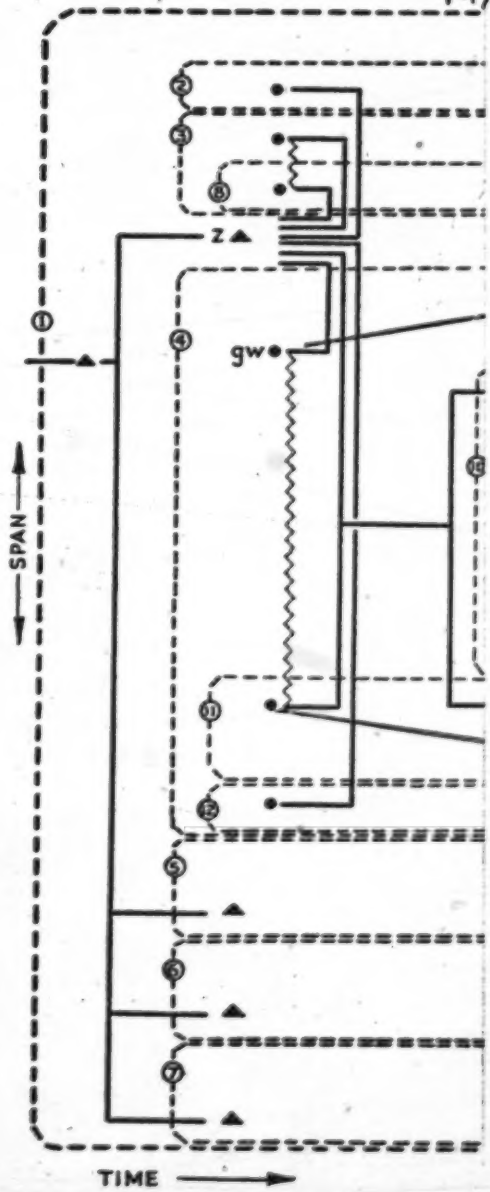
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

SEGMENTS 1-17





[Diagram I (a)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

DIAGRAM 1. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM
SEGMENTS 1–17

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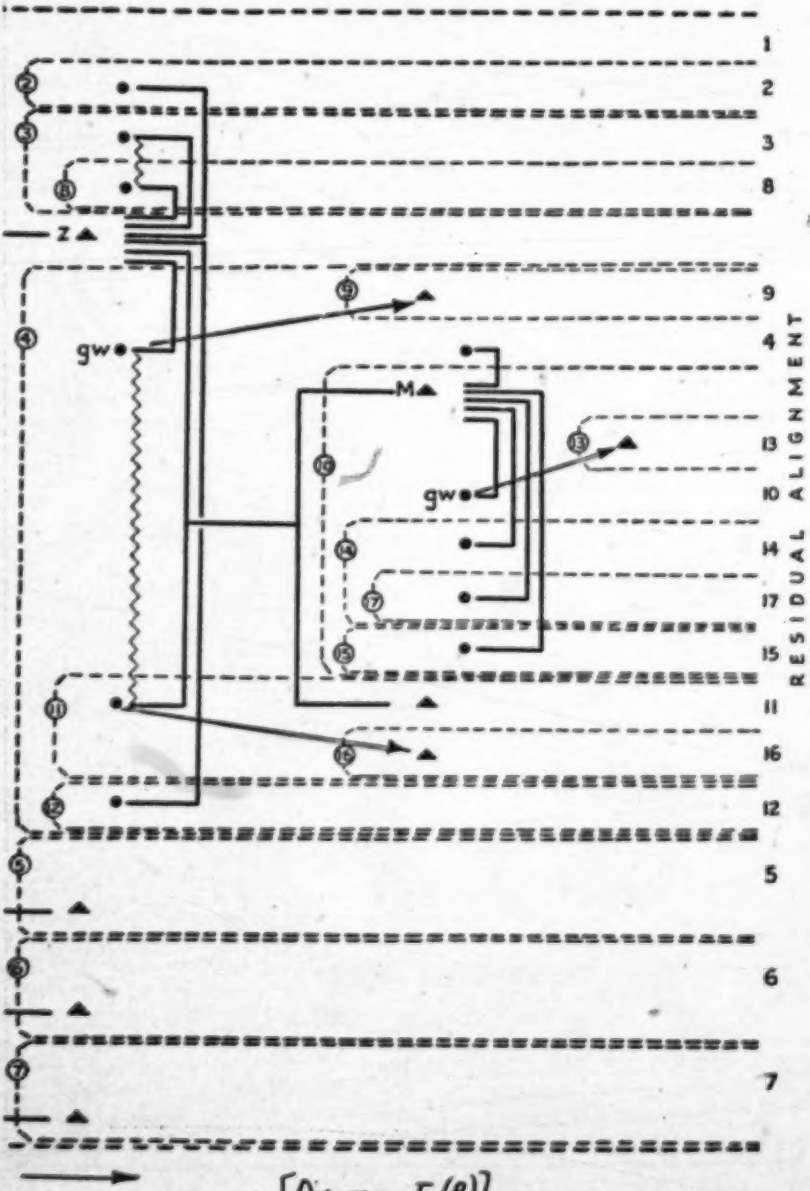
631
643



[Diagram I (B)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration. 173 613

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mveleleni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Emcisweni)[18] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emsizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18. 595 621 631 643

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[19] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent 173 595 613 643 [273] [682]

[18] Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 58, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[19] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 6, 34, 94.

NOTES

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mlonyeni, Fort Manning Division.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mlonyeni and present Chief Teleka, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Misholo, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

[see table on page 14.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 parts of the segment, namely segments 2, 3 and 19, survived as
613 independent inferior segments within segment 1. The lieutenant
595 in charge of the warriors spared the pregnant queen and hid her.
643 She bore a son, Ntutu Mpezeni, and later was shown to Zwangendaba who received her kindly and, according to Chibambo, ordered her to live with her son in the headquarters of segment 1. She was not in charge of a bevy of wives, and as by this time the great wife was dead, the bevy in segment 3 now became Zwangendaba's senior bevy. Mwambera, eldest son of the leader of this bevy, was thus a candidate for the main heirship but owing to the disappearance of segment 18 and the subsequent reconciliation between Zwangendaba and Mpezeni's mother, the relative status of the two sons was uncertain. This uncertainty may have been one of the precipitating causes in the subsequent break-up of the State.

Rangeley's verson of this incident is that after he had been
[114] shown Mpezeni, Zwangendaba ordered the headquarters of segment 18 to be rebuilt. This seems less likely to be true than the version we have followed, since there is, as far as I know, no present-day village which we can identify as the headquarters of this segment.[20]

From Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba went up the Limpopo
173 Valley into Mashonaland. He fought with Kalanga and other
167 Shona peoples and there was renewed fighting with other refugee
721 groups under Soshangane and Nxaba. In 1835 Zwangendaba's group crossed over to the north side of the River Zambezi near Zumbo and settled in Nsenga country for four years. They moved on again along the eastern rim of the Luangwa basin and eventually arrived in about 1842 in Ufipa, on the east side of Lake Tanganyika. Here in about 1845 Zwangendaba died.

Two points of historical detail may be mentioned here. There is reliable
114 evidence for a raid made on a Portuguese fort at Delagoa Bay on 22 October 1833
173 by some of Soshangane's people.[21] Poole and Winterbottom state explicitly that
167 Zwangendaba's men also took part in this attack, and Lancaster seems to imply the same. According to the chronology adopted by Young and by Poole himself
721 Zwangendaba was at this time four hundred and fifty miles away in the Kalanga country of Southern Rhodesia and it therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he participated in this raid. Elmslie, Young and Chibambo do not mention it at all, and Bryant refers only to Soshangane's part in it.

A few years after Zwangendaba left Natal, he was followed by Mzilikazi, a chief who for a while fought under Shaka and then fled from him with his followers.

[20] Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', pp. 126*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 26*f*; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 58*f*.
[21] Theal, *Portuguese in South Africa*, pp. 279*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group
67 consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the
631 now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of
643 Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4. It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwambera's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group,
[648] for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes
173 of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the
613 head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not
643 lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife.
644 However this woman was prompted to independent status by the
595 formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingeni) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkucweni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni).

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Loangeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary bevies of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Cimpinga). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Fafazeni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thus Young, writing of the period 1835-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.[38] The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambera's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambera in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of

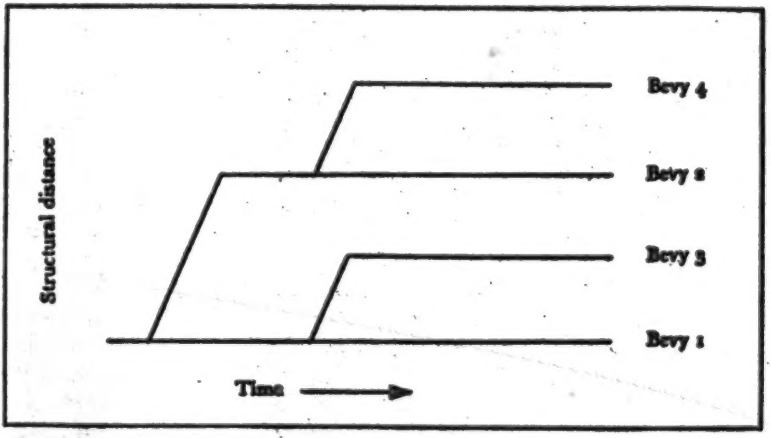
[38] Young, *History*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231 262 727 cattle did not give rise to any cleavage of interest which was not already present in the residential system.

The system could also be manipulated by disputes about [557] succession. If a man had many bevies of wives there was usually no 595 doubt concerning which was the senior bevy and who was the great 611 wife in it. Yet in general it was not possible to rank a man's bevies in a simple linear order of seniority, any more than the segments

DIAGRAM 3. RANKING OF BEVIES



to which they corresponded could be ordered in this way. In topological terms, ranking of bevies and of segments among the Ngoni was only partially, not simply, ordered. An example, illustrated in Diagram 3, will make this clear.

Suppose a man started with bevy 1 and then took part of it to form bevy 2. Later he took another part of bevy 1 to form bevy 3 and took part of bevy 2 to form bevy 4. With four bevies of wives, his senior bevy was bevy 1 and his great wife was the leader of bevy 1. Her eldest son was his principal heir, and if she had no sons [429] the eldest son by the next wife in her bevy became heir. But suppose there was no son by any wife in bevy 1. Which band provided the principal heir? It seems clear that bevy 4 did not, at least not if there were sons in bevy 2, for bevy 2 was senior to bevy 4. Bevy 2 might be regarded as senior to bevy 3, for it was formed from bevy 1 earlier. On the other hand, with reference to bevy 2, bevy 3 was merely a part of bevy 1 and hence the search for heirs should be continued in bevy 3 before shifting to bevy 2. Unfortunately I

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible 595
that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy 611
over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in bevies 2 and 3 but not in bevy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in bevy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in bevy 2 and the other by the heir in bevy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I [578] recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were 578
sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should 611
be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious 595
fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of 578
dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this 557
particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who [648] exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs 578
arising from the method of ranking bevies. The same principle of 611
ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to bevies of 621
wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain 554
situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's villages*, as I have defined them elsewhere.[24] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[24] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the same processes we have seen at work in the formation of segments. Those villages are linked which have a common origin, and the mechanism of dispersal is still the same as in pre-conquest times. Sons of a headman still break out of their natal village and lieutenants and others move off to make their own villages. However, with the decline in polygyny, fewer new villages arise from the formation of new bands of wives by a headman.

Secondly, the village has become more important than before, and village membership is now critical in a wide variety of situations. Thirdly, because it has become easier to move from one village to another than to form a new village, the genealogical structure of the village has become highly diversified as compared with segments of similar size in the old system.

Thus, the transition has been from a State based on a continuously segmenting political system to a minor unit of administration in a modern State. The new order has grown out of the old, not as the result of any professed policy of preserving indigenous forms of political organization, but because the aims of the Administration were essentially conservative, because it was concerned with preserving order in the country as cheaply as possible and did not wish to introduce economic and political changes which would conflict with the supply of labour to other areas scheduled for earlier development; and because for the most part those individuals who occupied powerful positions in the old régime were best able to survive in the struggle for power which determined the eventual form of the new. Therefore, although their entry into the colonial empire was so much more abrupt than that of their matrilineal neighbours, the political system to which Ngoni are now subject bears many more superficial similarities to its former condition than is the case among the Cewa and others. The changes have been great, as we have seen, but the symbols and names remain, with changed significance, to remind Ngoni of their past.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount's interest in modern aspects of administration, especially after his visit to the course for chiefs held at the Jeanes School in Zomba in 1934. The old councillors, sceptical though they were of many modern innovations, recognized that they were in line with European ideas of administration, and also that they appealed to the younger educated men in the kingdom who had travelled and seen other countries and ways of living. 643

The Paramount married NaNdau as his big wife, and though, as the text mentions, he married two other wives when urged by the senior men, he sent them away after a year or two and NaNdau remained his only wife. She had an assured position since she bore him five sons and two daughters, the first-born being a daughter and receiving all the respect due to a Royal Sister. One of the brothers of NaNdau was chief of a division, and another was *mlomo wenkosi* to the Paramount. She succeeded in maintaining much of the traditional pattern in the royal village and the big house. Her personal supervision of the household was thorough and competent. She exercised complete authority over the girls and women belonging to the household and arranged that the Ngoni custom of examining the young girls, including her own daughter, at regular intervals should be maintained. Her knowledge of Ngoni songs and dances, and her own skilled and graceful participation in the dances on state occasions, brought her before the people in her role as the big wife. At the feasts given by the Paramount she moved about among the people to serve them, and listened to complaints from the women about affairs in their villages which she then handed on to her husband. [595] [586] 644

The back verandah and all the outbuildings were the domain of the Paramount's wife. When I was there, she had some ten or twelve girls and women as well as several men working for her. They came and went if they had homes elsewhere, and the personnel changed often. All the household work was done by them: bringing water and fuel, pounding maize, and a good deal of the cooking, though this was closely supervised by the Paramount's wife. No beer was made in the household as it was against the rules of the church to which they belonged. In other Ngoni households of subordinate chiefs and *alumuzana* who were not Christian, the brewing of beer was a time-absorbing part of the household tasks and was shared by the different wives under the supervision of the big house. In Maganga, when the Paramount was entertaining unexpected guests and wanted to offer them beer, he inquired from his *induna* if anyone was brewing beer in the village, and sent for some for which he paid. When he knew beforehand that guests were coming who would expect beer to be offered to them as part of the Paramount's hospitality, he told his *induna* to see that beer was made in one of the village households, and he paid for it. [273]

The cooking which went on in the big house kitchens was always extensive. The Paramount, his wife and six children had two meals a 643 574 264

643 royal women. In the royal villages in the 1930's there was one big
361 *induna* and several lesser ones whose position and functions will be described in Chapter IV.

643 This 'going out' of the new Paramount's village, leaving the former
554 Paramount's village as the *gogo* village, brought about some re-distribu-
644 tion of authority, prestige and material goods. It gave the new Paramount his own village, always to be known as his, even after his death. His village became the focal meeting-place for the territory and for the court and territorial officials who surrounded the Paramount; and it was to the new royal village that the *alumuzana* in pre-European days came frequently to visit the Paramount and report to him on conditions in their areas. His moving out of the *gogo* village, on the other hand, gave his brothers who stayed there, and especially those of the *gogo* house, more freedom and authority within that village as well as responsibility for the conduct of all ritual matters relating to the kingdom. The Para-
[595] mount's big wife had to take her place as the leading woman in the new village and to order the affairs of the wives attached to her house in con-
[542] sultation with the Paramount's mother. Cattle, beer and food for the royal household became the concern of the new village, and the *izinduna* and the royal women had to plan and manage the economy of a capital where political interests converged and where visitors and hangers-on were constantly turning up.

643 The following text by Chief Mtwalo Jere in Mzimba district, helped
644 by Cibambo's older brother, describes the daily routine of the Para-
512 mount and his royal village as they had known it in their youth before the coming of the Europeans:

¶ The *inkosi* had to wash very early before the people came to see him. The *ingceko* was the servant who took care of washing the *inkosi*. He had to go with the *inkosi* to the bush and hide the faeces to prevent any bad person from getting the faeces. The *ingceko* was anyone whom the *inkosi* called for this, and must be one who walks well with the *inkosi*.

Before leaving his house to go to the kraal the *inkosi* had to eat a little porridge. When he went to the kraal a calabash of beer was brought to him. When any beer was brought to the *inkosi*, the *ingceko* tasted it first to see if it was good. The *inkosi* asked 'Is it good beer?' and the *ingceko* said 'Yes *inkosi*' and gave it to the *inkosi* to drink. When the *inkosi* took snuff the big *alumuzana* could beg from him. The other *amadoda* could only touch their noses. Then the *inkosi* knew they were begging snuff from him. Where the *inkosi* sat a mat was spread, and on it was laid a leopard- or a lion-skin. This was called 'the chair of the *inkosi*'. On arrival the big *alumuzana* went straight into the kraal to where the *inkosi* sat and greeted him '*Bayete*', and sat down in front of him.

The *inkosi* could not eat porridge except that cooked by his own wives. In his own hut he ate alone with one wife to serve him. His mothers also came with food every day. He ate twice in his own hut, early and late, and once in the kraal. When he ate in the kraal all could see him. He could

[p. 115]
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CHAPTER I

NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF review was given in Chapter III of Part I of the main elements of Ngoni culture, analysed into 'patterns' covering kinship, village layout, ritual, ceremonial, and language. In this section we shall be considering the principal social institutions embodying Ngoni culture: their clans, houses, families and age sets. We shall find evidence in the two kingdoms of an extensive common element in the social organization which the Ngoni brought with them from the south. Some important diversities will be evident also, such as the variations in virilocal residence found in the central kingdom, and the less widespread practice there of *lobola* marriage. Those elements which were common to Ngoni social organization in both kingdoms were often those which distinguished Ngoni culture from that of the neighbouring peoples. Patrilineal descent, the house system, the ranking of clans, the *laweni* organization of boys' life and activities—these were all distinctively Ngoni, practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and sometimes adopted by individuals and families of other clans who had been associated with the Ngoni over long periods. Nevertheless, in many of the villages of the central kingdom there were clearly two cultures existing side by side: the Ngoni culture being that of an aristocratic minority and the local culture that of the majority, who in the kingdom were equally subjects of the Paramount but in their villages possessed inferior social status. 114 121 [563 565]

Indications were to be seen, even in the more conservative and more isolated northern kingdom, that modern influences were affecting Ngoni social institutions. We have already noticed some of the effects of the cessation of warfare on a social system founded on military traditions. The exodus of young men from Ngoni villages to seek work elsewhere was very extensive, especially in the northern kingdom, where the level of education was higher but employment was not available, and this had repercussions on the age of marriage, the distribution of wealth, and the undertaking of family responsibilities, including the care of the old people. The gradual decline in polygyny, largely but not entirely due to the work of missions, was beginning to have its effects on the working of the house system and on the interrelations of the generations within the family group. 178 [595 797]

In the 1930's many of these modern changes were appearing but the traditional institutions were still functioning, and the Ngoni leaders themselves were clear about those forms and activities which were distinctively their own.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices
581 which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows
182 by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if
581 the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her
587 needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an *nhlanzi*, a substitute or
182 additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been
581 handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give
595 another daughter as *nhlanzi*, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her *nhlanzi*. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an *nhlanzi* might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

58 There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the houses played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

584 The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indicated choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner.
[582] In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi clans marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

2· Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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visits or on special occasions. In the central kingdom, where an important man's sisters often married in the village and stayed there, it was evident that they often exercised authority over their brother's children. [591 184]

In polygynous Ngoni families the relationship between siblings was marked by strong attachment. Among the boys in the *laweni* brothers united to protect their younger brothers from other boys, and in the families of Swazi clans brothers showed many signs of youthful intolerance and arrogance towards boys of other clans, especially in matters concerning cattle and their herding. Sibling rivalry among boys was to a large extent controlled by two factors. One was the *laweni* system where the age-set principle predominated. The other was the division into the big house and *gogo* house, where the children of the *gogo* house knew that they stood in a different relationship to succession and authority in the village from their brothers and sisters in the big house. Within the big house itself, sons of the big wife knew that succession was regulated by seniority, and that the eldest son would expect to get priority when he married and it was necessary to allot cattle for *lobola*. The brother-sister link between children of the same mother was, as we have seen, a very close one, especially with the older sister of a man who was heir to a high position. This sister in her relation to his children carried almost the same authority as he did. Among sisters of the same family there was less apparent cohesion, except among very high-ranking Swazi clans where the girl children were looked after by special nursemaids and had their instruction in correct behaviour together from the older woman known as their *gogo*. 595 [561]

Ngoni grandparents on the paternal side showed little of the joking relationship with their grandchildren sometimes associated with this tie. When children went to visit their maternal grandparents in another village there was noticeably more ease between them and more indulgence was shown. In their father's village children were always aware that his parents were persons of standing and authority. Girls over six or seven often slept in their paternal grandmother's hut if she was a widow, and were aware that, though she showed kindliness in providing for their needs, she was a firm disciplinarian in all matters of behaviour. 603

Within the family group the male role of leadership was unquestioned. Honour and respect were a man's due from wives as well as from children. In difficult relations within his family, as in the case of divorce, he could count on counsel and support from his brothers, who were also ready to help him if cattle were needed for his own or his son's marriage or for payment of court penalties. This male circle of father and sons, father's brothers and their sons, was a closely knit group which functioned in regulating family affairs and in buying and selling cattle for the house to which they belonged. An obligation to help his sons was recognized by the father of a family and this obligation 562 593 593

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

The tables which follow show the total population of three villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Huts	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Eswazini .	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Endindeni .	15	9	21	21	51	4	1	4	15
Eluhangeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	32
Central kingdom									
Cinkwita .	39	22	39	54	115	13	5	4	2
Mangozo .	60	41	65	78	184	9	18	2	4
Mcakhatha	122	71	112	68	251	30	16	14	12

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *lusungulu* and *gogo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *banja* was not found in the north.

The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *muhumuzana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *muhumuzana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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Cewa

The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual

N 881 182 We now come back to the question of why the Ngoni held to this private ritual for girls and boys at puberty. There were three main reasons. The first was that each Ngoni child belonged to his or her father's house. At this sign of physical maturity, significant for the boy or girl, and for the society, the elders of the house asserted anew their authority over them, performed a brief traditional ritual, and watched during the ritual for evidence of the Ngoni personality traits of courage and physical endurance which they expected to see in young adults. The second reason was that the change at puberty was regarded as marking only one of the stages in the development of growing boys and girls. It is true it had more significance for girls, in that it set the mature girls apart as a separate group. But it was not the prelude to immediate M [881] marriage, as the girls' initiation school was among the neighbouring Cewa people; nor was it in old days the prelude for N [171] the boys joining the army. The third reason was that the Ngoni did not regard fertility as the major dominant factor N [842] in the development of young women, as it undoubtedly was considered among the Cewa. They greatly disliked the ritual and the significance of the Cewa female initiation rites and forbade Ngoni women to have any part in them. Potency N [833] among men, on the other hand, was recognized as important both for the individual and for the social group, and impotence, particularly in leading men, was kept secret and hidden from outside knowledge as far as possible. If an Ngoni N [842] woman after marriage did not bear children, it was not considered a stigma on her, either individually or socially. The [595] common practice of marrying one of her sisters as a 'substi- [597] tute', or the very common practice of adoption was resorted to. The latter was always referred to as 'putting a child into the house of So and so'.

N 881 171 One of the alleged objects of initiation schools among other ethnic groups was to instruct the young initiates in correct

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.000

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women 584 married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that 114 marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristo- 581 cratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence 565 of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages 582 between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class [563] but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter 581 so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From 836 the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other [191] Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values [183] between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared [177] to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the [578] Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer 842 of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren 595 special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

842 If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
837 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

839 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On
684 this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

567 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[594] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nshanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanzi* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedieze . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The chief did however interfere
643 to some extent in the marriages of those near him and on occasion took away a wife from one man and gave her as wife to another. Nsingu, the heir of Mpezeni I, once took a wife from one of the important men in his mother's royal village and made her his queen.
[762] The man committed suicide and Nsingu killed a beast to placate the anger of his mother's lieutenants. Such instances of intervention seem to have been rare and were disliked by the common people.

6. Polygyny

592 The pattern of growth of the residential system was determined by the grouping of children in the compound family. This grouping was in turn determined by the ranking of wives. It seems that the
595 South-Eastern Bantu system of dividing wives into three groups,
[171] a great house and a left- and a right-hand house was not continued. Old men are agreed that in the past wives could be described as either left-hand or right-hand, but there is no agreement on the principles of this division. In discussing the wives of well-known men who flourished about this period, there was no consensus about which women were left-hand wives and which were right. The division cannot in any case have had the same spatial reference to the husband's cattle byre as among the South-Eastern Bantu,
[361] since the Ngoni lived in large villages with a central byre containing all the cattle of the village.

595 Wives were arranged into small groups which we may term 'bands'. A band might contain up to a dozen co-wives and was
592 under the charge of its senior member. Wives in a band lived close to each other in the same cluster of huts. A man might have as many as five or six bands of wives, and the senior wife of one of the bands was the man's great wife, the mother of his heir. We have seen that a cross-cousin was inferior to an unrelated wife, and a wife from the same or related village inferior to one from afar. These two considerations, however, seem only to have influenced a man's choice of senior wives and did not themselves directly determine wifely rank. Thus a man could if he wished make a cross-cousin from his own village his great wife or the senior wife of one of his bands, but most men did not do so. The first wife married with bridewealth was the great wife. If there was a wife married earlier for whom no bridewealth had been paid, perhaps a cross-cousin or a recently captured woman, then she became subordinate to the chief wife and was regarded as a member of her band. Wives married subsequently were attached to this band until the husband decided to start another band. He took either one of the wives of his great wife's band or else a newly acquired wife, and established a new cluster of huts for her. Some other members of the great wife's band might be transferred to the new band, as subordinates of the newly promoted wife. As the man continued to take new wives they were allocated to one or other of the existing bands. If the husband was an important man he allocated to each

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. *The levirate*

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mcsha* or *mtoso*. *Mcsha* is an Nsenga word meaning a small cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 589
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 on the one hand, acquire that custody without undertaking any of these symbolic acts, and on the other hand he may have full rights over his wife without ever getting control of his children.

2. Choice

582 Marriage involves choice and selection. There are prescribed 'preferential marriages' in the usual terminology, but as applied to the Ngoni this nomenclature is misleading, for, as in the old days, a woman who marries her cross-cousin does not have such high status in her husband's compound family as a wife who is not related to her husband. A man behaves in some respects towards his female cross-cousins as though they were his wives or potential wives, but it is incorrect to say that Ngoni men prefer to marry their cross-

Table III. Marital status of males by age, 1948-9

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Age in years	Marital Status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Number of wives						Total wedded men	
		0		1	2	3	Not known		
		Divorced men	Widowers						
0-4	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	51
5-9	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	61
10-14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	55
15-19	28	1	–	2	–	–	–	3	31
20-24	14	–	–	6	–	–	–	6	20
25-29	–	2	–	13	–	–	1	16	16
30-34	–	1	–	7	–	–	–	8	8
35-39	–	–	–	13	3	1	–	17	17
40-44	–	–	–	4	2	2	–	8	8
45-49	–	–	–	8	–	–	1	9	9
50-54	–	1	–	4	–	–	1	6	6
55-59	–	–	–	8	1	–	1	10	10
60-64	–	–	–	9	2	–	–	11	11
65-69	–	1	1	6	1	1	–	10	10
70-74	–	1	–	1	1	–	–	3	3
75-79	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	2	2
Not known	–	–	–	1	–	–	6	7	7
Total	209	7	1	83	11	4	10	116	325

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

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Case history 1

Amos[2] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

N 614 613 [582] [601]

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N 563

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] M [581] [428] N 186 581 N

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognize these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

595 648 582

[2] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European. 595 648 582

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules. 799 582

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls. 621 582 [554] 628 584 535

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide 628 584 574

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

apparent ease with which women get divorces and councillors say that they divorce people only because the Administration would interfere if they did not. We can see that in one sense the Ngoni analysis is correct. Whatever may be the precipitating causes of particular divorces, one basic factor is that the old social order in which divorce was rare has been replaced, through a series of events beginning with the White conquest, by a different form of social structure in which wives are relatively mobile from one husband to another. Adultery and desertion lead to divorce because it is no longer necessary to tie down the fertility of women to definite points in a segmentary system based on patrilineal descent, and this is so because the system no longer exists. It is true that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Missions do not recognize divorce but ecclesiastical ceremonies have no force in law, either in the eyes of the Administration or of the Native Courts, and the sanctions utilized by these missions do not entirely prevent their members seeking divorce. 586 178

Immediately after a divorce the couple usually wish to have little to do with one another. After the passage of years the hostility between them fades away and they may talk to one another in the ordinary course of village life. They continue to address each other as *husband* and *wife* and their children, although nominally in the custody of one group or the other continue to visit back and forth and keep the parents informed of each other's doings. A woman now married elsewhere may return to her former husband when their son comes home on leave from work. In her old age a woman may even go back to the man from whom she was divorced a long time ago if she has no one else to turn to for shelter and assistance. More frequently she follows her children to where they are living in her former husband's village but has little to do with him directly, only through their children. 586

8. Co-wives

593 595

We have seen that the rights of a man over his wife's sexual activities are different from hers over his. Whereas a woman who commits adultery pays damages to her husband, he does not pay her when he commits adultery. This lack of symmetry derives from the polygynous nature of the Ngoni marriage system. A man can always argue that he is seeking another wife, even if the woman he is running after is married to someone else. It is considered no business of his wife to interfere. She may attempt to stop him but all she can use are domestic and mystical sanctions, she cannot appeal to the law. Again, a wife has no right to the sexual monopoly of her husband and cannot prevent him from taking additional wives except by making his life with her so difficult that he decides to abandon the attempt. [684]

As can be seen from Table III, about one man in seven has two or more wives. Although the Christian Missions do not tolerate 595 194

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

595 polygyny, and punish their members who take additional wives,
794 there are still a number of Christian polygynists who for most purposes align themselves with the Christian group.

As in the old days, the wives of a polygynist are ranked in the
595 chronological order of marriage, the first wife married being the
178 great wife. If, however, bridewealth has been paid, the wives married
[583] in this way are all senior to those who are married without it. The arrangement by which a barren or aged wife was given a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) has now almost disappeared. A young girl may still be indicated as a linked co-wife designate at the gall bladder ceremony of her kinswoman and the intestines placed round her neck, but this is now a mere ceremonial, and the girl marries elsewhere when she grows up. As mentioned above a chief negotiated recently for a linked co-wife on the strength of bridewealth paid by his father, but with no success.

593 A man makes his headquarters in his great wife's hut, and keeps
595 his possessions and money in it. During the day it is considered proper that he should sit and chat or entertain visitors on the verandah of her hut. Her hut is likely to be of better design than those of her co-wives, and she is more likely than they to have a separate kitchen. When her husband returns from a journey, he ought to go first to her hut, and if he has brought back goods from Southern Rhodesia, it is in her house that he stores his loads until he has time to divide them among his wives and relatives. A visitor from afar goes first to the great wife's hut and there asks for the man he is seeking. In her husband's absence it is she who must entertain the visitor. This pattern of precedence is followed to greater or lesser extent despite quarrels between husband and wife, and is not affected by where the husband actually sleeps at night.

Apart from this emphasis on the importance of the great wife, the
595 correct behaviour for a man with many wives is impartiality. He must sleep with each wife in rotation, usually for a week at a time, and must not confide in one wife the secrets of his relationship to another. Relationships between co-wives are sometimes strained, and one may use medicines against the others. The medicine[28]
[830] believed to prevent a man from achieving erection with anyone other than the woman who gives it to him is sometimes used by one wife against another. On the other hand, some co-wives help each other in their gardens and many polygynists' households run smoothly. Each wife has her own hut and her own garden and it is possible for them to arrange their affairs so that they can co-operate or act separately as they find best. If they persistently quarrel
[591] their husband may deem it well for them to live in separate villages, so that for example a man may live virilocally with his great wife and uxorilocally with his second wife, going from one village to the

[28] Possibly known as *ndamanga*. The details of this medicine are not known by many men, and I was unable to question any women on this matter.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

595

other for a week at a time. Men working permanently in the township or with trading stores in strange villages take one wife at a time with them, and there is a change round every month.

It is the newcomer to a group of wives who is likely to be the target of hostility. The other co-wives sometimes combine to make life so difficult for her and their husband that he may decide to abandon the idea of marrying her. One way out of this situation is to go off to a farm or to Fort Jameson township. The couple live there until the man's other wives have calmed down and accepted the inevitable. When the arrival of a new co-wife is agreed to by the old wives she is expected to live in peace with them. They take part in her gall-bladder ceremony and instruct her in her duties as a wife. The kind of sentiments expressed by a woman to her new co-wife are illustrated in the following speech.

Case history 3

Jehu had two wives and had just married another. The new bride, who came from Ishmael village, arrived at Jehu's village for her gall bladder ceremony. She was instructed by many people including Jehu's great wife, who said

'I am the great wife of Jehu and I have a co-wife married to the same husband. We have never quarrelled since we were married to Jehu. Perhaps you will be the first to start quarrelling in our home. If you are a quarrelsome person, when you go back to your home today, go and leave it [your quarrelsomeness] there and come back here with a good heart. Women who are married to one husband ought to love one another and sit together without backbiting. We have never held a meeting in this village because of a quarrel between us two [co-wives]. Leave all your jealousy at your home in Ishmael village and do not bring it here.'

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and widows are subject to the same restrictions
581 and wear the same signs of mourning whether or not their deceased
583 husbands made any payments. The absence of payments does not
[165] automatically deny to a man and woman the status of husband and wife any more than the completed payments automatically ensure marital happiness.

583 As reflected in Table XII, the proportion of marriages in which
581 no payments are offered has decreased in the last twelve years,
ans we know from Table VIII that this is due to an increase in the number of marriages in which the legalization payment is made.
595 It is therefore possible in future there will be a clearer division between marriage, with its legalization payment, and concubinage, with no such payment and with a completely different relationship between the sexual partners and between their respective groups of relatives. We are not in this paper concerned specifically with concubinage and prostitution, but it may at this point be useful to point out that not many women are concubines. In our sample, as set out in Table IV, there was only one concubine, a wedded woman, among 223 wedded women. From Table III, we see that there were no men at all, in our sample of 116 wedded men, living with concubines. The paramour of the concubine in our sample was resident on a nearby farm, and so did not come into the sample of men.

4. Co-operation between affines

583 585 The payments and ceremonies of marriages are isolated and memorable events. The ceremonies are public in that neighbours

583 198

Table XII. Incidence of marriage without payment, by decades

Marriage payment	Date of marriage									
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	Total
At least one payment offered	1	6	17	37	38	34	86	14	5	238
None offered ..	–	7	11	19	26	24	29	3	3	122
Ratio of marriages without offer of payment to total	0%	54%	39%	34%	41%	41%	25%	18%	—	34%
Not known if any payments offered	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village. 648 361 591

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[38] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers. [554]

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased. 591 621 [178]

3. *Polygyny*

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organize large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance 595 178 [556] [554] [592]

[38] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 595 178 of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an expression more of their different matrilateral affiliations than of the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its N [855] own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother, although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by his first and third wives [3] were reared by their father's fourth wife's mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally N a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of 855 his children. This division is in accord with the statement made 183 frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's. Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace', however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft- N reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make M these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal 591 identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The 177 facility with which married couples live uxorilocally is no doubt partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxorilocal Cewa and other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

N M *4. The moral significance of sexual activity*

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to 836 be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa 177 believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die, and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa N view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives M and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to 569 have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so 177 carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

[3] See above, p. 109

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

12. *Customary Licence* (*Ngoni*).

N 836 [183] [684] [583]

Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

N 586 [595]

Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mabeba*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *nakhonse* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mabeba*, *kutendera* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

M [586]

III.—DOMESTIC LIFE: FILIAL.

1. *Infancy*.

M 845

Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*kigelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man at the same time, and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

[582]

M 429

Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *mtsibweni*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

N 429 593

Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the 592
same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are
unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dor-
mitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for [882]
girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their up-
bringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be.
Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their [858]
elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with
another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, [595]
although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their
chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from 423
those of their wives.

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There 342
is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patri-
local and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable
rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be
referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens
near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cook- [343]
ing and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no [252]
separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the
veranda.

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in 621
which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered,
and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the
village are organized.

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given 621
by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded 103
by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalaweni, meaning
'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are
also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom
they were founded.

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this 621
type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of in- 622
dividuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder [103]
of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate
unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present
headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the
Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary,

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed. 101 123 643

NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa. 159 167

Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1825. 173 643 648

In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques. [721]

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son. [595]

1 [induna=military leader--Analyst]

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 159 173 562 N M 171 643 842 851

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze*.

N 159 173 562 [595]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Loziwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtenguleni Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

N [764] [423]

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchizu* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

N 159 173 595 842 602

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jere; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 644

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

He

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

643 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment;
551 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment; Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[643] Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black cowhide,
[645] white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives
[701] of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Soseza Nqumayo, Great Wife; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu;
[595] Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku?; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndanya Mbanzima,
[593] Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nquaneleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.

Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
551 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
593 Chief Diviner or *Isanusi*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadose, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595] Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere; Mtiawa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere; Maiwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727] 1898. Grandson:—Chibia Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near
[727] Massa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsaswe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayunge (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machibungu,
Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Masoho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera,
704 Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have 100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it must disappear. 595 [191]

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday, at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock. But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am satisfied the banns are published and they are married. 177 [582]

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or three goats This also was a great restraint on early marriages, for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth, and pay for his wife. 583

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and snuffed, and from this exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed. 562 565

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it. 462 [171] [243] [254]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

In the 1930's, in the villages of the *ahamuzana*, individuals with the same clan name formed patrilineal groups of an extended family type. The original *ahamuzana* were the leaders of groups of persons bearing their clan descent name, who crossed the Zambesi under Zwangendaba or Mputa. In Part II we shall see how these *ahamuzana* were settled in the Ngoni kingdoms round the royal villages, with the result that a group of villages of mixed ethnic origin came to be associated with the village regarded as the head village of a clan. Reference is made from time to time in this study to clan heads, and to the head villages of certain clans. There was no head of a Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan who was not regarded as a *mahamuzana*. On the ground that his ancestor crossed the Zambesi with his wives and followers, the head of such a clan was always given that title. In addition to the head village of a *mahamuzana* there were a number of other villages connected with the clan, created partly by the working of the *hunengulu* system of village segmentation, and partly by other sections of the larger villages moving off to make new gardens. The association of a number of villages owned by individuals with the same descent name was due to the original settlement of the *ahamuzana* who were given land at varying distances from the royal village. When the Ngoni spoke of 'clan areas' this was the connotation they gave to the term. Village censuses showed that small family groups bearing the same descent name were scattered widely over a number of villages in several of the chiefs' areas. There was, however, in connexion with each clan an area of concentration round the head village where a number of families and individuals with that descent name were living. These were sometimes referred to as clan areas, using the name of the clan with the prefix *ma*, meaning the people of that clan, in central Ngoniland, and with the prefix *u*, meaning the land of the clan, in the northern kingdom.

(*c*) *The ritual pattern*

In the rest of this study there will be descriptions and analyses of Ngoni marriage and funeral rites, of the puberty rites carried out for each boy and girl, but not in groups in initiation schools, and of the rituals associated with the ownership of cattle and with the ancestor cult. The marriage and funeral rites have South-eastern Bantu affinities, and so has the ritual associated with cattle-keeping and the ancestor cult. The northern Ngoni had a tradition that circumcision was practised among them when they left Natal, and that it was given up while they were in Tanganyika. Giving the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) to the men who were allowed to leave the regiments and settle as married men in civilian life was another ritual of southern origin which the Ngoni gave up soon after the kingdoms were established in Nyasaland.[1] The

[1] The early Europeans in Nyasaland reported that head-rings were worn by all the senior Ngoni men.

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

Father's family to child

Ngoni children were indeed the children of their fathers 596
from the time of their birth onwards. They were born into a 'house', of which their father was a member. If their father divorced his wife or she ran away, the children remained in [586]
the custody of his family. We have seen how the paternal grandmother took charge of all the preparations for birth, and of the actual birth itself. It was her proud duty to present the child to the public after the 'coming out of the hut' ceremony, when she took it to the kraal gate where the assembled elders were sitting. The other senior women of Ngoni families held her responsible for advising on the spac- 842
ing between the birth of this new baby and the next, so that 596
the interests of this child should be safeguarded. If it was suspected that the young wife was pregnant again before the grandmother had planned to wean the child, the other senior women said to her: 'Look now. You are foolish. The child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to him.' That touched her on a very vital point, and she in turn accused the young parents of harming the present child. Having rebuked them, generally in public, she followed it up with a box on the ear for her son and his wife. When this [858]
next child was born it was called 'the destroyer', because by following on too quickly, it had injured the propects of the first child.

Baby to nurse girl and women helpers

The baby, as we have seen, spent a great deal of its time in 854
the company of its nurse girl, and after weaning she was its constant companion. She and the older woman helpers who supervised her formed a counterbalancing influence to the paternal grandmother, though outwardly they obeyed her instructions about the care of the child. The nurse girl especially was inclined to be indulgent; she was young and playful; the baby was her only responsibility. She was

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

854 anxious to protect her charge in every way, and with the connivance of the women helpers she made little charms of bits of roots to hang around the baby's neck to make him [751] grow quickly and to ward off sorcery and witchcraft. She [754] threaded pumpkin seeds and tied them around his neck to [856] make his teeth come quickly if they were late in appearing. These charms were generally those used by the local peoples, and Ngoni fathers were contemptuous about their use and efficacy. 'These women are spoiling our children,' they said, and then reassured themselves by remembering that a boy would be free from such women's spoiling once he went into the boys' dormitory.

Variants on the Ngoni pattern

183 This traditional pattern of authority and behaviour in respect [565] of birth, infant care and weaning was essentially that of the true Ngoni, that relatively small aristocratic group who never forgot their superior social status and its foundation in their ancestry. This first stage in the socialization of a child, from 861 birth to weaning, brought out clearly two fundamental 596 features of Ngoni social organization. One was the role played by the senior women who had themselves in their childhood been brought up on strict Ngoni lines. The father of the new baby accepted the role played by his own mother in controlling, and if necessary coercing, his young wife. Though, as we shall see later, every Ngoni boy and young man had a period of virtually complete escape from feminine control, once a man married and his young wife was established within the social group of his mother's house, he acknowledged his mother's authority over her, and particularly over the birth and care of his child. The mother-son relationship of the young father to his own mother dominated the relationship of the young mother to her child. Young Ngoni fathers never questioned their allegiance to their own mothers, cherishing them as they grew older and supporting them in their exercise of authority. Much as he loved his

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway. 596 861

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but which turned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers. 183 596 [184]

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it. 177 563 [845] [841]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organized themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[37] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[38] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[37] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[38] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[46] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and
619 the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree
[597] of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[46] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. 611 The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments 602 [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

571 643 function and authority was largely evolved and built up during the Ngoni migration across the Zambesi and the early settlement in Nyasaland.

643 The office of the Paramount was supported by three typical Ngoni institutions. The first was the regency exercised by the man who was held responsible for the care of the office of the Paramount. He was called 'the one who takes care of the country', 'the one who has to put the new *inkosi* in his place', 'the one who takes care of the young *inkosi* until he enters his father's place'. We shall see later how this principle of regency operated in particular cases in the succession to the Paramountcy. It proved to be an effective provision both in the case of a minor who was recognized as his father's heir, and during an interregnum while the succession was being discussed. The Ngoni showed a clear understanding of what functions the regent ought to perform, and when he exceeded these functions and usurped, or tried to usurp, the Paramount's position they condemned his action as wrong.

The second institution which supported the Paramountcy was the 'big house' from which the heir to the Paramount had to come. We shall see later that it was not always considered essential that the heir should be the actual child of the wife in the big house. A boy could be adopted [597] into the house and, by Ngoni kinship rules, he was then a child of that house and of the woman in it.

643 The third institution, which made the Paramount immortal at death after having been supreme in his life-time, was the Ngoni practice of 769 'guarding his spirit' in a hut, usually in the village where he had lived. The guardianship of a spirit was not practised exclusively for the Paramount. All the chiefs and the heads of the Swazi clans had this provision made for their spirits when they died, but in national crises prayers [282] addressed to the spirits of former Paramounts were of supreme importance.

The royal clan and the big house

643 Among the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans which formed the Ngoni 614 aristocracy the royal clan had a unique position. Not only was it the clan 565 of the Paramount, but its members had social rank and prestige because 184 they belonged to his clan. In the northern kingdom informants showed awareness of the fact that their royal clan of Jere was not one of the well-known clans in the south. Other clan names found among them, such as Ngomezulu, Thole, Nzima, Nqumayo, and many more, were known to be clan names among the South-eastern Bantu. The following explanation was given by Cibambo about the name Jere and was the one most widely accepted:

¶ The Ngoni themselves say that the clan name of Jere was given during the journey, and that it arose out of the number of people who were with Zwangendaba. When the Ngoni want to speak of a large number of people they use two well-known words which are: '*Ngu Shaka*' (it is Shaka);

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military service, obedience to the law, 182
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [589]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always [563]
a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they
joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to
correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at
the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their
mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and
sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grand-
mother with whom they slept, but the other practice was
more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan
name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611]
their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan.
In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister
kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to re-
main as a distinctive group. They were members of their
father's house until they married; and when that took place [583]
it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd be-
longing to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the
girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the
training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the care-
lessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597]
grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisa-
bility of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another
household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4
Cewa

The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual

N 881 182 We now come back to the question of why the Ngoni held to this private ritual for girls and boys at puberty. There were three main reasons. The first was that each Ngoni child belonged to his or her father's house. At this sign of physical maturity, significant for the boy or girl, and for the society, the elders of the house asserted anew their authority over them, performed a brief traditional ritual, and watched during the ritual for evidence of the Ngoni personality traits of courage and physical endurance which they expected to see in young adults. The second reason was that the change at puberty was regarded as marking only one of the stages in the development of growing boys and girls. It is true it had more significance for girls, in that it set the mature girls apart as a separate group. But it was not the prelude to immediate M [881] marriage, as the girls' initiation school was among the neighbouring Cewa people; nor was it in old days the prelude for N [171] the boys joining the army. The third reason was that the Ngoni did not regard fertility as the major dominant factor N [842] in the development of young women, as it undoubtedly was considered among the Cewa. They greatly disliked the ritual and the significance of the Cewa female initiation rites and forbade Ngoni women to have any part in them. Potency N [833] among men, on the other hand, was recognized as important both for the individual and for the social group, and impotence, particularly in leading men, was kept secret and hidden from outside knowledge as far as possible. If an Ngoni N [842] woman after marriage did not bear children, it was not con- [595] sidered a stigma on her, either individually or socially. The [597] common practice of marrying one of her sisters as a 'substitute', or the very common practice of adoption was resorted to. The latter was always referred to as 'putting a child into the house of So and so'.

N 881 171 One of the alleged objects of initiation schools among other ethnic groups was to instruct the young initiates in correct

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[39] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[40]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[39] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[40] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-5; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Hera kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [361]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 621 648 [601] agnation of the small segments to what I have termed an omni-directional system), has increased the importance of the single village. After 1898 the Administration endeavoured to bring the people back into villages of moderate size which could be easily supervised by the Administration acting through chiefs.[22] In 1912 a comprehensive scheme of Native reserves was proposed. To facilitate the introduction of the scheme, many small villages were amalgamated with others near by to form units of forty huts or more. The larger groups of composite villages were to form the nuclei of the reserves.[23] After 1930, when villages began to spread out again, many of the enforced amalgamations came to an end. The Administrative rules that every man must live in a recognized village and that a village with less than ten tax-paying men could not be recognized were not always enforced, although they were not repealed until 1945. Administrative recognition has been an important consideration in determining the size of villages but it has not been the only one.

621 631 178 In the residential system, the process of segmentation did not stop with the founding of the segments we now know as county segments. Already in 1898 there were very many more segments in being than the few we have shown in Diagram 1. There we have indicated the position of the major branches of the tree of State but have omitted the hundreds of minor limbs and thousands of twigs which made up the whole. Even if we restrict our attention to segments founded before 1898 we find within any county segment to-day many smaller groups, some of them divisions, others single villages, and a few containing several villages, which are in fact inferior segments formed by one or other of the processes we discussed in Chapter I. Lieutenants and others have made their own segments, junior sons have left their natal villages, and so on. The processes of segment formation since 1898 have not been identical with those prevailing before the conquest, for the quasi-agnatic structure of segments has been modified and segments of recent formation, if in fact we can legitimately call them segments at all, are not organized in the same hierarchical manner as in the old residential system. We shall discuss the formation of small social groups in a later part of our study, the analysis of village life. 178 634 622 Here, at the county level, we have to deal with what is essentially a continuation of a pre-conquest process. Each successive head of a county segment, i.e. each county chief, has formed his own new segment within that of his predecessor. Thus, for instance, where

[22] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902, p. 2, and 1903, p. 2.
[23] *M.R.A.*, p. 108.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

644 guardianship of his father's spirit, or she could take over the *indlunkulu* while a co-widow of the Queen Mother inherited the guardianship of the spirit in her own hut. The second alternative was the one followed in all the instances remembered by informants. In both kingdoms the spirits of the main line of the Paramounts were guarded by someone appointed to that task, chosen on the grounds of reputation and reliability. There was yet another variant in the central kingdom, where, as we have seen, it was Manga, the daughter of Mputa, who succeeded to her mother's guardianship of his spirit. The one principle which emerged from a number of cases cited in both kingdoms, was that occupancy of the *indlunkulu* and guardianship of a spirit might be undertaken by the same person, but generally it did not work out that way.

The Royal Sister, a title equivalent to the English Princess Royal, was the older full sister of the Paramount by the same mother, or his older sister by his father's big wife if she had borne no son. She was always referred to as 'the one who would have been chief if she had been a man'. She stood in a special relationship to the reigning Paramount [601] and to the Paramount-elect. She was in constant touch with the Paramount's children who used the name *dadakazi* (female father) when addressing her or referring to her. Dr. Kuper [1] reported that the Royal Sister among the Swazi was addressed by the same term, and that she came next in rank to the big wife and the leading wives. My informants and my own observations in both Ngoni kingdoms put the Royal Sister next to the big wife and before the other wives. She visited the royal village at frequent intervals to see her brother and his children, and was consulted about their affairs. She took a leading part in the puberty ritual for the daughters of her brother and was prominent at *ligubo* and other dances, and at mourning ceremonies. She was married with an exchange of cattle to a man of a leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan, and during his lifetime lived in his village, visiting the royal village often.

565 The position of the royal women in the Ngoni kingdoms has been
644 discussed in terms of the sister, mother and big wife of the Paramount.
631 The same relationships were found in the families of the chiefs and *alumuzana*. There the equivalent of the Royal Sister was the older full sister by the same mother of the chief or *mulumuzana*, and his own big wife and his father's big wife played similar roles, within their own spheres, to those played in the Paramount's village by the Queen Mother and his big wife.

Five texts follow which illustrate the life and activities of leading women who filled roles equivalent to those of Royal Sister, big wife and Queen Mother. One of the texts is by a Royal Sister—Bambo Manga, who was the sister of Paramount Cikusi in the central kingdom. Margaret Jere was the elder full sister of the heir to the chieftanship of

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 59.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

III

'A New Stranger has come'

In these words the father's mother announced from the door of the hut that a child had been born. From inside the hut the women assisting the mother at the time of delivery had given a single cry if it was a boy and two cries for a girl. If the birth had been delayed till late afternoon towards sunset, the women in the hut said to the mother, if it was a boy: 'See the baby has been awaiting the return of the cattle, because it is he who will tend the cattle.' 844 851

The new baby was at first regarded as a stranger, born by a woman who had herself come to the village as a stranger when she married. In later years, when speaking of his parents, the child would say: 'X is my father, and I am of the womb of A, and G and H they are my brother and my sister of one womb.' This particularization of a full brother and sister was used to correct the extended use of the kinship terms, and also to convey the idea that having been born from the womb of one woman gave children a special relationship important in Ngoni thinking. 851 593 [591] [601]

Preparation for birth

When an Ngoni wife was aware that she was pregnant she did not say anything to her husband, and indeed endeavoured to conceal her condition from him as long as possible, continuing the normal sleeping arrangements and intercourse. Ngoni women liked to assert their authority and ascendancy on those occasions, and therefore excluded the men from knowledge of the coming event and from all preparations for it. The senior women used to say, 'Men are 843 593 562

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy and therefore to be removed from them when the time came for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with him, they sometimes carried him about while the nurse girl
[262] did something else, they ground bulrush millet or roasted ground-nuts to give him as snacks. They were particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[533] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he addressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
[554] measure of the authority which his father and his father's brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and grandmother's households. There were young children who were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 957
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him tithits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organised through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

858 upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if
581 the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended not only on her own reputation and character, but on the household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive
561 group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one.
858 The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of
[603] the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training
557 ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl,
855 to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter into all her occupations and amusements. This companion, chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's household, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and ate in the same household.

In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her
561 circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their companions.
872 There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this
[601] group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided that it would also be wise to send their girls to school, especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men, learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daugh-
[565] ters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and dignified behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound, (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 102). 128 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582]

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajaha*

young girls before puberty: *inkakazana*

young girls after puberty: *izintombi*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AKULU	the important people
ALEZI	nursemaids
GOGO	grandparent or any very senior person
HLONIPA	respect
INDLUNKULU	chief hut in a village
INDUNA	official in village
ISIDANDANI	girl attendants
LAWENI	boys' dormitory
NWINI	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her pro-husband. If there was no younger brother the pro-husband was one of her husband's junior patrilineal kinsmen of his own generation. She could not refuse a pro-husband although her husband's brothers could choose not to provide her with a pro-husband if they so wished. The widow continued to live in her own cluster where her pro-husband came to visit her. Rattray states that widows waited one year after their husband's death before their re-marriage was settled[32] and this is nowadays the traditional procedure. Wiese, however, writes that widows waited four years before they could marry again.[33] The children begotten by the pro-husband were regarded as children of the dead man for social purposes but the identity of their genitor was not disguised. They called him *father*, but this was as much because he was their dead pater's brother and their mother's pro-husband as because he was their genitor.

The same principle of substitution was applied to betrothal. If a man died before marrying a girl to whom he was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger brother or a classificatory brother. If a girl died before marrying the man to whom she was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger sister. Unlike the operation of the levirate, however, the children of this type of marriage were regarded as the children of their genitor and genetrix for all purposes, as though their parents had been betrothed to each other in the first place. Again, unlike the levirate, if a man considered himself too old when his betrothed became marriageable he might give her instead to his son as a wife. The children of this marriage were also regarded for all purposes as the children of their genitor and genetrix.

Occasionally a woman whose husband died young, went to live with a man who was not her dead husband's brother, real or classificatory. The pro-husband gave a goat to the woman, but if bride-wealth had been offered for her by her first husband, the pro-husband could never gain permanent custody of the children. The children that she bore by him belonged to the segment of the dead man, took his descent name, and when old enough went to live in his segment. When the dead man's kinsmen claimed these children, they gave a beast to their genitor 'to straighten his back', that is, for his labour in begetting them. This arrangement is in some ways analagous to Nuer widow-concubinage[34] but with the important difference that the pro-husband, although not a kinsman of the dead man, had rights in the widow as a wife and an exclusive right to her sexual services. It seems that the status of a widow living in this kind of union was not low. In one instance I heard of, very aristocratic families were involved, and the arrangement appears to have been

[32] Rattray, op. cit., p. 97.
[33] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 474, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192.
[34] Cf. Evans-Pritchard, *Some Aspects of Marriage and Family Among the Nuer* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Eleven), p. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Mangvi FR4
Wisa FR5

N 589 her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is N 582 trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship N term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers*, [601] *fathers*, *mothers*, *brothers*, *affines*, and *children*.[1] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin*. In the second ascending and N descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* 603 and his female *grandchild* as *wife*, and he can, to a slight extent, joke 602 and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. N But Ngoni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to [582] marry his female *grandchild*, and do not approve of such marriages [186] among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

N 605 A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins*. We have noted above that the Nguni peoples W from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not M 582 allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Wisa peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organization was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Wisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage N with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. 582 The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage 583 is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*hawja*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

[1] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, op. cit. pp. 222 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Mandvi FR4

cousin comes from another village she can become the great wife. N 582
This lack of consensus about the appropriateness of payments may 583
be due to the difference between the traditional views of the Nguni aristocrats and of their more recent captives. The Nguni tribes, although not allowing cross-cousin marriage, did require transfers of marriage cattle. In contrast to them, the Cewa and others who M approved of cross-cousin marriages did not make large marriage 583
payments. It may be that neither view has prevailed over the other among the present-day Ngoni.

When I began my inquiries into marriage I hoped to express N 128
numerically the frequencies with which people married their cross-cousins and other relatives. As my inquiries proceeded, it became clear that this was not the simple matter I had thought it to be. N
There was little consistency in the way in which the word *mayala*, 601
which I have translated as cross-cousin, was used by different informants. Sometimes one spouse would say that the other was a cross-cousin and the other would deny it. In addition to the expected use of the term to refer to father's own or classificatory sister's child, and to mother's own or classificatory brother's child, it was also used for 'person with a parent with the same descent-name as mine', 'person from the same tribe', 'person with the same captor', and so on. Some informants regarded the alleged cross-cousin relationship as a primary one that could not necessarily be broken down into a series of links between parents and children and between siblings. If pressed, informants would often say in explanation 'One of us came from the side of the man and the other from the side of the woman'; yet they would be unable to decide who came from the man's side and who from the woman's. This complexity of reference of the term for cross-cousin applies to a lesser extent to N
the terms for other relatives with whom marriage takes place. In 128
view of the lack of consensus and of the large number of possible referents of single vernacular terms, I have thought it best to postpone publication of any frequencies until later, when I hope to deal with the general problem of inter-connectedness between local groups of kin.

We have mentioned above the prohibitions against marrying N 582
certain relatives and the partial encouragement to marry a cross-cousin. In addition, a man should not marry his brother's wife's sister, and some people say that a man ought not to marry his sister's N
husband's sister. Both these women he calls *sibling-in-law*. These 801
are not exactly definite prohibitions, but rather pieces of traditional advice. Marriage with these relatives does occur. No specific reason was given for this prohibition, but I noticed that a quarrel in one marriage tended to have repercussions in the marriages of the spouses' siblings, and the objection to these types of marriage may be based on some consideration of this kind.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Marqvi FR4

N 581 583

Case history 1

Amos[1] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

N 614 613 [582] [601]

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N 563

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] N [581] [828] N 186 581 N

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognise these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

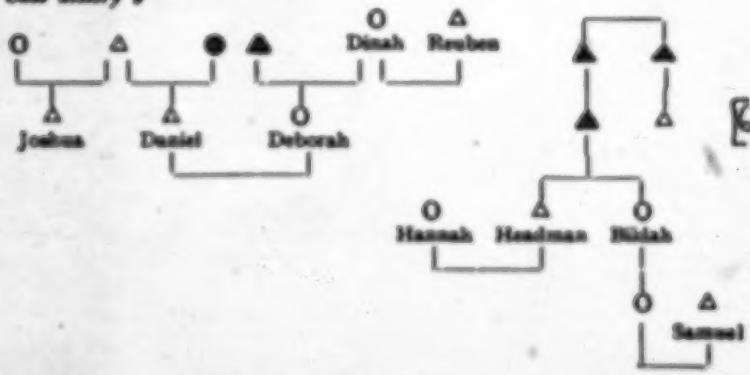
[1] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

precipitate an open quarrel by staying away from his wife, by eating elsewhere or by threatening divorce. Fights in the village, provided the parties concerned do not hurry off to court, are dealt with first at a village meeting, and even where the combatants are not man and wife, the elucidation of the cause of the fight may bring to light a latent marital quarrel which must then be dealt with by the relatives. Accusations of adultery must be denied, and a woman may call in her relatives to protect her from the slander of a jealous woman. 578 602

The processes by which a quarrel between man and wife comes to light, and the attempts of kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, are well illustrated by the following account of an adulterous wife. 578 602 159

Case history 9



[601]

Daniel was a labour migrant in Southern Rhodesia and his wife Deborah was living meanwhile in the village of her mother's husband Reuben. The headman of this village had himself returned from the railway line a year previously. At a beer party Deborah quarrelled with Hannah the headman's wife, who accused Deborah of sleeping with the headman and who started to fight her. A meeting was held in the village to settle the affair. Deborah denied that she had ever slept with the headman and the headman denied that he had ever slept with her. Hannah retorted that she did not like to see her husband running after other women and always talking to Deborah. Reuben and a neighbour of his said that they could say nothing in the matter as Deborah was a married woman, and they called on Joshua, who was Daniel's father's son, to speak. He had come from his own village to attend the meeting. Joshua said that Hannah had not actually caught Deborah sleeping with her husband the headman, and that therefore Hannah had done wrong in accusing Deborah without good reason. Hannah had also erred in making accusations that would make Deborah's brothers-in-law think that Deborah was committing adultery. The headman had also erred and should stop talking to Deborah, or else the brothers-in-law of Deborah would take him to court for drinking beer at night with Deborah, who was a married woman.

Hannah then admitted that she had done wrong in fighting Deborah. Another man in the village, Samuel, the headman's sister's daughter's husband, spoke, and said that Hannah must offer a chicken to Deborah because if Hannah had really known that Deborah was sleeping with the headman, surely she would have seen that Deborah was taken to court.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

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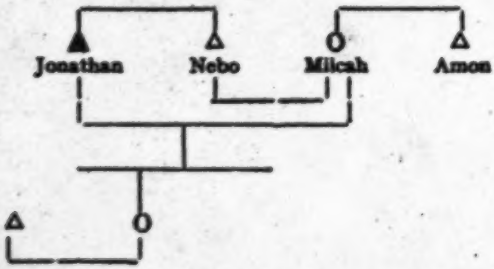
583

Case history 12



[601]

Nebo inherited the wife, Milcah, of his elder brother Jonathan. Neither brother paid bridewealth. One of the daughters of Jonathan and Milcah was married and the legalization payment for her taken by Nebo. In 1947 Nebo brought his wife to court to divorce her. He said that she was always committing adultery and he was afraid that one day he would kill her in anger. Milcah's brother Amon complained that Nebo had taken the legalization payment of Jonathan's daughter, and insisted that if there was a divorce custody of all Milcah's children should be given to him. This was accepted by the court, who told Nebo that if he wanted the children he must pay bridewealth. The divorce was granted and £3 damages awarded to Milcah. The payment of bridewealth was left undecided. [586]

in marriage, and some people are beginning to confuse the rights originally transferred by it with the rights *in genetricem* associated with bridewealth. The vernacular term for the legalization payment (*cimalo*) is common to many tribes in the Eastern Province, whereas that for bridewealth (*malowolo*) is peculiar to the Ngoni. Bridewealth is not recorded on the marriage certificate whereas the legalization payment is. It is possible that while the rights *in genetricem* relating to the residence of the children of the marriage will remain indefinite and unenforceable, rights *in genetricem* relating to the acceptance of legalization payments for the daughters of the marriage will become attached to the legalization payment itself. This trend is illustrated by the following incident. [171]

Case history 13

Simon had been married for many years and his daughter was being sought in marriage. Simon's wife's brother Nimshi came to see him to remind him that he had not yet handed over either the legalization payment or bridewealth for his wife. Simon admitted this. Nimshi said that someone would soon be offering a legalization payment for Simon's daughter. If Simon wanted to keep the money he must first offer the legalization payment in his own marriage. Simon paid Nimshi and kept the payment for his daughter.

Here Nimshi held that the legalization payment offered by Simon entitled Simon to keep the legalization payment offered for his daughter. According to traditional usage Nimshi should have insisted that Simon paid bridewealth not merely the legalization

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

matrilineal matrilocal tribes, and the values associated with these systems of organization were not entirely forgotten. With the decline of the central power of the chieftainship after the conquest, cultural diversity within the tribe increased, so that at the present time we have a wide range of variation in the kinds of family found between one village and the next, and even within the same village. In particular, the irreconcilable difference between the organization of unilineal kin-groups on patrilineal and matrilineal principles appears to have led to a condition in which, for most of the tribe, the only groups of relatives that emerge as corporate groups are stocks, people with a common ancestor from whom they are descended through sons or daughters or both. These stocks are not mutually exclusive, and a man may think of himself at one time as belonging to one stock and at another time to another stock. Frequently alongside the true members of a stock there are other people who claim to belong to the same 'family'[1] who are in fact related affinally to the members of the stock. The organizing factor in domestic affairs is not kinship by itself but common residence combined with genealogical connexion. A stock, with its affinal accretions, emerges as the core of a corporate group of kindred only when its members live near one another and meet each other frequently. The strongest groups are those people of a stock who are living alongside one another in the same part of a village. 611 184

The use made of double affinal links in establishing attachment to a stock is noticeable. For example, a child will call a man who is his mother's divorced husband's wife's divorced husband by the term *father* (see Diagram 4 below). A man may bring into his village a wife from outside who may come with her children by a former husband. When grown up, the sons may also bring in wives accompanied by their children from former marriages. These children grow up to regard the village as their own and to think of themselves, in certain contexts, as belonging to the 'family' of the headman of the village. Informants in a village with a most complicated kinship structure will say 'We are all one family here'. 602 611 [601]

Kinship Terminology

The variation in the kinship systems of the different tribes from which the Ngoni recruited their members has led to some confusion in the use of kinship terms. Most of the terms now used are in the 601 [197]

[1] *Ranje*, pl. *maranje*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

601 [197] Nsenga language,[1] but Nyanja and old Ngoni terms are also heard. The rules of application of these terms, as formulated by the people, are not always adhered to, and I found that when I challenged the accuracy of some of the kinship terms I heard being used, the speakers were quite ready to admit that the terms had been incorrect by their own rules. Here I propose to give only the Nsenga terms, in the way in which they are used when people are discussing other families, and in which to a lesser extent they are used as forms of address. It is with this meaning that the terms can be used to describe the operation of exogamy. A full account of their use must await further inquiry.

There are ten terms of wide application, and three more used in restricted contexts. These three may be translated as *husband*, *wife*, and *cross-cousin*. *Cross-cousin* is used of mother's brother's child and father's sister's child: usually the child referred to is of the sex opposite to ego. *Wife* refers to own wife, brother's wife, and brother's wife's sister, and similarly *husband* refers to own husband, sister's husband, and sister's husband's brother. Thus *husband* and *wife* are reciprocal terms, and *cross-cousin* is self-reciprocal.

The remaining terms may be grouped as follows.

1. *Father*, *mother*, and *mother's brother*, with a common reciprocal *child*.
2. The reciprocal pair *grandparent* and *grandchild*.
3. Four self-reciprocal terms, *sibling*, *sibling-in-law*, *affine*, and *child's parent-in-law*.

These have the meanings implied in their translation, but are also applied more widely, as is indicated in the diagrams. Throughout, the marriage sign is used to indicate any marriage, whether extant or terminated by death or divorce. The symbols used for vernacular terms are shown in Table II.

The way in which these terms are applied can be seen from the diagrams. In the more distant applications the genealogical connexion to ego ceases to be important, and indeed may be unknown. A man may have been told that he should call such-and-such a woman *mother*. He will then apply kinship terms to her close relatives in a systematic manner which is independent of his genealogical connexion to them. The same procedure is followed with the relatives of people called *father* or *sibling*.

[1] The same Nsenga terms seem to be used differently by the Ngoni and the Nsenga. Cf. Ranger, *Chinsenga Handbook*, pp. 68–9, 108–9.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

601

TABLE II. *Principal kinship terms in Nyanga language*

Symbol	*Vernacular term*	*Basic referent used as translation*	*Reciprocal term*
F	*ataate*	father	child
M	*amaama*	mother	child
C	*mwana*	child	father, mother, mother's brother
PP	*anakuya*	grandparent	grandchild
CC	*mwakulu*	grandchild	grandparent
O	*ukwanu*[1]	sibling	sibling
EO	*mulonu*	sibling-in-law	sibling-in-law
EP	*upongwi*	affine	affine
CEP	*ambale*	child's parent-in-law	child's parent-in-law
H	*mulume*	husband	wife
W	*akazi*	wife	husband
FZC	*mwpale*	cross-cousin	cross-cousin
MB	*malume*	mother's brother	child

[1] *ukwanu* means 'our sibling'. The terms for 'your sibling' and 'his or their sibling' are *ukwanu* and *ukwalo* respectively.

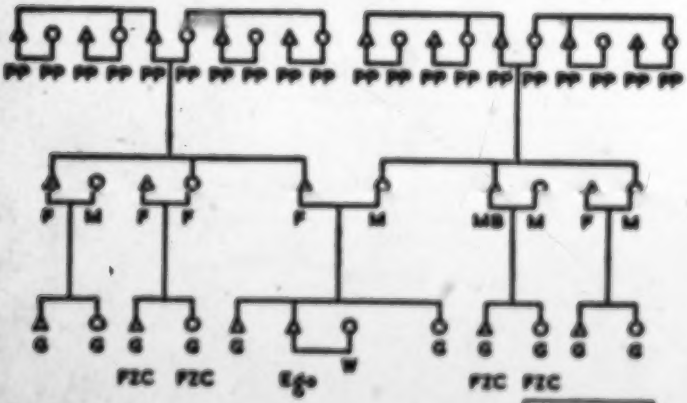


DIAGRAM 1. Kinship terms for ego's kindred

The terms for the generations after ego follow from the rule that *grandchild* is the reciprocal of *grandparent*, and *child* of *father*, *mother*, *mother's brother*. The term *sibling* is often used in place of *cross-cousin* when referring to a cousin of the same sex as ego.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
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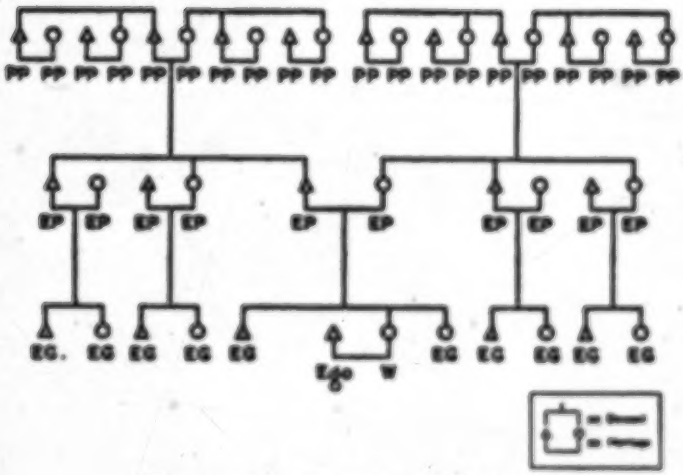

Diagram 2. Kinship terms for wife's kindred

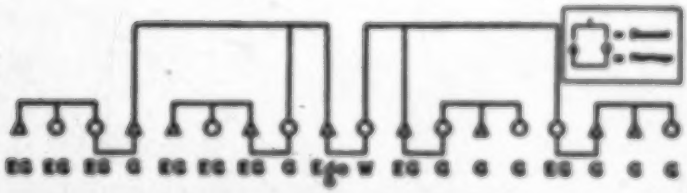

Diagram 3. Siblings and siblings-in-law

The use of sibling to describe ego's spouse's sibling's spouse is more common by men than by women.

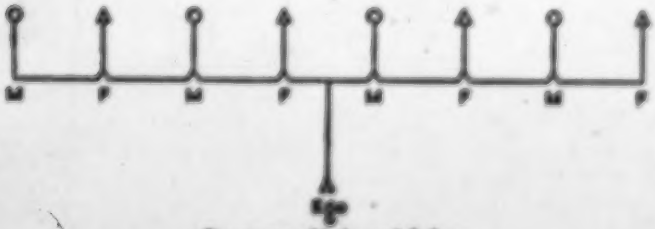

Diagram 4. Mother and father

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In all the diagrams ego is shown as male. There is no difference in the way these terms are used when ego is a woman, except that she calls her spouse *husband* and not *wife*. There is no consensus as to what great-grandparents should be called. Sometimes *father* 601 [183]

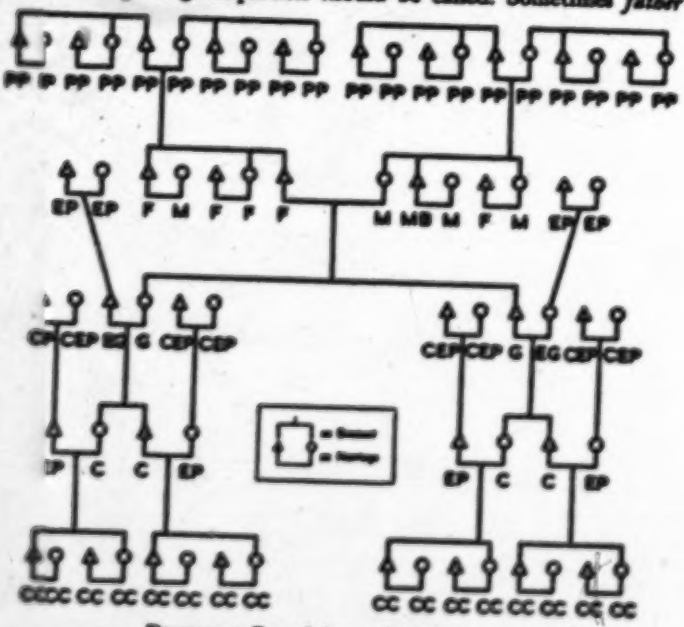

DIAGRAM 5. Extended use of kinship terms

or *mother* is used, according to sex, while *others use grandparent*. Similarly, great-grandchildren are sometimes called *child*, sometimes *grandchild*.

Exogamy and Descent-names

A man may not marry anyone whom he calls *mother*, *father*, *mother's brother*, *child*, *sister*, *child's parent-in-law*, and, except for his *cross-cousins*, *sibling*. Marriage with his brother's wife's sister, whom he calls *sibling-in-law*, is allowed, but is thought to be not very satisfactory. As we have seen, these terms can be applied widely, with no theoretical limit to the extent of application. Little interest is shown, however, in tracing genealogical relationships accurately, and the sex and age of the relative referred to may affect the term used. If a 582 835 601

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

582 proposed marriage appears to conflict with these rules of incest, be-
835 cause of some distant relationship between the couple, the connexion
601 may be conveniently forgotten by the parties concerned. Incestuous liaisons between people whose parents are still alive are hampered from becoming proper marriages by the refusal of the woman's parents to accept any marriage payments from the man. Similar liaisons between older people may alter the relative kinship status of other couples so that their marriages become incestuous, and they will appeal to the courts. For example, an old man married his son's wife's mother, whom he called *child's parent-in-law*. In consequence, his son and his son's wife became *sibling* to each other. The young woman refused to go on sleeping with her husband, who appealed to the court. The old man was then ordered to give up his newly acquired wife, so that his son's marriage might continue.

[601] At its widest extension, the term *sibling* is applied to any person of
551 the same descent-name as ego and of approximately the same age.
614 The other kinship terms are then applied to the relatives of this
582 nominal sibling in the usual way. However, there is no rule of exogamy applying to these nominal relatives. These descent-names have been referred to by other writers on the Ngoni as clan-names and the aggregate of people with the same descent-name as a clan. The Ngoni term for such names, *vi-ôongo*, is related to the Zulu *izi-bongo*, and many of the Ngoni descent-names are the same as the names of the clans described for the South-Eastern and Central Bantu.[1] However, among the Fort Jameson Ngoni at the present time, the category of persons formed by all those holding the same descent-name does not have any of the attributes generally attributed by modern writers to the clan. There are no clan heads, no clan exogamy, no clan taboos, no beliefs in a common origin from a legendary ancestor, no clan totems, and no correlation between clan and territory. In these conditions it seems better to use the term descent-name, as has been done for the Lozi.[2] Informants state that even in the old days, when there was a closer approximation to a clan system, there was no clan exogamy. These names are normally inherited by the child from its father, and some of the names are not very common in the tribe, so that it happens that all the people bearing the one name may be the patrilineal descendants of one man. Such groups are exogamic, but this is

[1] Cf. Young, *History of the Tembuka-Kamanga*, p. 143, for a classification of some of these names, on the basis of ethnic origin.

[2] Gluckman, *Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*, pp. 84–5.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as diagnostic of the presence of the kind of segmentary society in which we are interested. All the societies included by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard in their stateless category, i.e. Logoli, Tallensi and Nuer, have continually segmenting political systems. Of the societies with government, the Zulu were like the Ngoni in being a State and yet having a political system which was continually segmenting. Both of these states were organized by a segmentary system even at the highest level, so that it does not seem necessary to follow Fortes in restricting segmentary systems to only the sub-divisions of states. In Shaka's time various changes came about in Zululand, such as the concentration of the army in a central area, which lessened the importance of the segmentary organization. But in the eighteenth century large-scale relations between and within the Nguni chiefdoms were governed by the agnatic segmentary organization, that is, by the division of the people into clans, sub-clans, and lineages and by the continual transfer of allegiance by lineage segments from one chief to another. Even during the period of the Zulu empire, the continual segmentation of the constituent tribes was important in maintaining the power of the central government over them.[22]

If one of the main characteristics of the well-known African lineage systems, both in stateless societies like the Nuer, Tallensi, Logoli and Gusii, and in primitive states like the Zulu, is their political function, we may well inquire if these systems are not also one type in a more general category of political systems. Although lineage relations are essentially distinct from kinship relations, a lineage system defines political relations in the idiom of kinship. Thus in agnatic systems, the relationship between territorial groups may be expressed in terms of the relationships between founding ancestors who were brothers or fathers and sons. We have seen how among the Ngoni the relationship between captor and captive, between lord and dependant, and hence the relationship between the segments they founded, was expressed in agnatic terms. The relationship between husband and wife, lord and lady, was employed to define the relationship between the political groups they led, and in this respect the Ngoni system may be seen as taking one stage further the process employed in lineage systems, where most relationships of this kind are phrased agnatically. Among the south-eastern Bantu, however, the relationship between lineage segments founded by paternal half-brothers is defined in terms of their mothers' position as co-wives. Among some central African peoples, this process has been carried even further than

[22] Gluckman, 'Modern Zululand', pp. 147-54.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

among the Ngoni. Thus the device of perpetual kinship among the Yao, by which the holders of certain chiefly offices stand in relation to one another in a fixed arrangement of kinship positions, of Paramount Chief to son and to sister's son and to brother,[33] would seem to be an example of what is essentially the same process as that by which the dominant lineage in one part of Nuerland is conceived of as descended from a brother of the founding ancestor of another dominant lineage. Where a political relationship is expressed in terms of the connexion between husband and wife, rather than between brothers' or sisters' sons, we may find that a woman is used to embody the political relationship, and she then plays what is essentially a political role. The many wives of the Ngoni Paramount Chief were clearly used in roles of this kind. Not only were they rapporteurs for the Chief, as Deare points out,[34] but they were also living symbols of the political relationship between their segments and the State as a whole. Another central African example of this is the Lele institution of 'wife of the village' by which a village, as a group, may stand as daughter's husband or wife's parent to its chief.[35]

Wherever political relationships of this kind are embodied in persons who have private lives of their own, be they queens or sons-in-law of the village, there is bound to be some domestic and inter-personal relationship alongside the corresponding political relationship. But that should not obscure from us the essentially political role played by individuals in these positions. The analogy with the dynastic marriages of Western Europe is clear.

One of the characteristics of lineage systems and of the Ngoni residential system is that the transition from the ties of domesticity and close kinship to purely political relations is a gradual one. The same principle of organization applies at all levels, and it is gradually with the passage of time and with increasing structural separation and internal segmentation that inter-personal relations are replaced by those between groups, and actions based on sentiments of love and hate give way to those based ultimately on an appeal to force. Relations between the larger segments of a lineage, although expressed in the idiom of kinship, and although possibly explainable historically in kinship terms, are relations between political units, whereas the relationship between brothers living under the same roof is not governed by political considerations. The critical point at which relationships of increasing scale become dominantly

[33] Mitchell, 'Social organization of the Yao'
[34] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[35] Tew, 'Polyandry among the Lele'

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

political would seem to be for example, at the medial lineage among the Tallensi, beyond which generation differences are not recognized; and at the village among the Nuer. It seems probable that in the old Ngoni system the village was also the significant unit, above which relationships were dominantly political and below which they were largely determined by the multiplex sentiments and activities arising out of kinship and domestic association. This is certainly so in modern Ngoniland, although the same principles of organizaton no longer apply at all levels. 602 631 121 171

I have described elsewhere the critical position of the modern Ngoni headman, linking the political system with the network of ties of kinship and co-residence operative within the village, and similar conditions have been reported elsewhere by Gluckman and Mitchell. Above the village, whether in a state or in a stateless society, relations are in the main between enduring groups and are defined with respect to interests vital to the survival of these groups, even if expressed in the idiom of kinship.[36] 622 631

Granted the existence of primitive states with continually segmenting political systems, such as the Zulu and Ngoni, it is then possible to look at from another point of view the various African political systems for which there is adequate information. In terms of political segmentation on a unilineal basis, states like the Ngoni and Zulu are closer in form to the stateless societies of the Nuer, Tallensi, Gusii and Lozoli than to the Nupe and Kede states with their administrative systems largely independent of unilineal affiliation. To document this point fully would take us beyond the scope of this book; our purpose here is merely to emphasize the importance in comparative sudies of examining political structures from more than one point of view. 121 171 631

When talking of states, we make the convenient distinction between internal and external political relations. No such simple distinction can be made with stateless societies, for in them relations which are external to one segment are internal to the next higher segment, and yet may still legitimately be regarded as political relations. The pre-Shakan chiefdoms of Zululand formed a system similar to the Tallensi maximal lineages, and we may speak therefore in that instance of a segmentary system regulating political relations between states. Ngoni external relations were not regulated in this way, for the Ngoni were isolated and unique in a region 631 174 648

[36] For this section, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* and 'Kinship among the Nuer'; Fortes, *Web of kinship*; Wagner, *Bantu of North Kavirondo*; Mayer, *Lineage principle in Gusii society*; Gluckman, 'Analysis of a social situation' and 'Kingdom of the Zulu'; Gluckman, *et al.*, 'Village headman'.

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Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [582] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[855] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[27]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organisation of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[626] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-
[701] professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Ngwa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[27] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native
[645] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people
[602] and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of rules to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion
[771] Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living, in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
649 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural
[673] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In contrast to this, the private affairs of the chieftainship, matters connected with royal cattle, disputes among the chief's wives and quarrels between the chief and his affines or close supporters are discussed at the chief's village. Quarrels of an apparently trivial nature, such as a chief's wife's running away with a lorry driver, would in the old days have threatened the whole internal structure of the county segment, and they are still treated as questions of State by the lieutenants and kinsmen of the chief who attend these meetings. The contrast between these two kinds of assembly is striking. They are described by different vernacular terms,[*] and while any man can attend and speak at a meeting at the court, it would be considered inappropriate for him to intervene in a meeting at the chief's village unless his position in the old residential system was a high one. Women listen to court meetings, but rarely if ever speak, for the Administration works very largely through men and it is men who discuss the kinds of thing in which the Administration is interested. At the chief's village, the interests of the chief's kinswomen and wives are often directly concerned and they themselves contribute to the discussion. The marriages of chiefs established, and to a lesser extent do still reinforce and establish, affinal ties which cut across the cleavages between segments and which were crucial to the balance of power within the State. A quarrel between a chief and his wife was a matter of political, and not merely domestic, significance and must therefore be discussed by the chief's political advisers.

The sanction of deportation appears to be employed only in connexion with offences against the chieftainship. Thus a lieutenant who embezzled some royal cattle was called before a meeting at his chief's village attended by the important lieutenants in the county, and ordered to leave the country. Similarly, a man who was found drinking with a chief's wife under suspicious circumstances was ordered to leave the country by a tribunal of this kind. He moved first to another county, but was forced to move on again out of Ngoniland. Such actions are sometimes taken without reference to recognized Native Courts or to the Administration, and the effectiveness of the tribunal's decision depends on the support it has from the people as a whole and from the Native Authority organization rather than on the ultimate sanctions wielded by the Administration. However, when matters of this

[*] A meeting to discuss matters of general interest is *mandhwana*; one to discuss affairs of the chieftainship is *bulungwa*, *ol. bu-mdhlana*, to assemble (Nyanja) and *ol(i)bandla*, assembly (Zulu). The different derivation of the words, from Nyanja and Zulu, is significant. *Lulungwa* also means *ngwani*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

guish them from their neighbours are no more significant than the many varieties of custom and belief which are to be found in every Ngoni village. They do not form a group among themselves, their members participate in all communal activities in their counties and are to be found at all levels of the Native Authority organization below that of chief. They are linked by kinship to their neighbours. The two Nyasaland counties, however, include relatively large areas where there are only Cewa-speaking villages, and many of these claim that they have been placed under Ngoni rule only by Administrative action. From time to time they have made efforts to break away and to attach themselves to some neighbouring Cewa chief or to establish a separate chiefdom. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the Ngoni chiefs, with the villages in their county segments, and their Cewa-speaking subjects. It will be remembered that the two Nyasaland chiefdoms represent the head of the eastern movement of Mpezeni's group, and that some of the settlement across the border took place as late as 1897. It is not surprising therefore that in these two counties assimilation of Cewa captives and immigrants has not proceeded so far as in the longer established counties in Northern Rhodesia.

563 648 [602]

11. *Conclusion*

In this study we have attempted to show what has happened in Ngoni political life during a period of 130 years. To-day Ngoni society is changing but this has not always been so. Prior to the arrival of Wiese in 1886, the actually existing social relations were changing, but the form of the social structure remained the same. Each new segment developed along lines that were already known and each time the State split, the new States were copies of the old. A system of this kind could not have lasted for long, for the supply of new recruits to the Ngoni States must have sooner or later been exhausted. In Africa, even if the overall conditions facilitated the emergence of this kind of migratory militarism, they were particularly unfavourable for its prolonged continuation. The Arabs and the European Powers behind them were closing in on the centre of Africa, and Ngoni days were numbered. Then came the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898 and the emergence of a new system, in which some of the actually existing political groups, and the relations between them, appear to have a much greater stability than before. But at the same time society as a whole has become much more diversified, the spatial distribution of men and women in significant relationship with one another has become highly complicated, and

17 [631] [647] 631 178

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 came, 'to quieten them'. Thereafter this Ngozo boy did everything with
644 the Paramount. He began by washing with the royal medicine at the
762 time of the accession. He drank beer with him, he ate with him, he
766 'stood with him' (*amaina naye*) on all important occasions, such as sending out the army and judging cases. He slept in his own hut which was in the *cigodlo*, where the Paramount's sons built, and when he married he built huts for his wives in that same section of the royal village. At the death of the Paramount, he danced the war-dance in full war-dress and leaped on to the pyre to perish with the dead Paramount in the flames.

Informants sometimes said of this Ngozo boy that he was 'of one
[582] blood' with the Maseko clan. They described the relationship between the two clans as that of *cibale*, brotherhood, which excluded all possi-
[602] bility of inter-marriage. Between the Paramount and the Ngozo boy was established a joking relationship, so that the Ngozo boy could say 'good and bad things to the Paramount'.

It was clear that the ritual and social aspects of this relationship com-
643 plemented and supported each other. The recurrent emphasis on the
644 taking of medicine at the accession, on the participation in the war medicines, and most of all on the death on the Paramount's funeral pyre, were all evidence of this ritual relationship. Informants repudiated any idea of a scapegoat which involved protecting the Paramount from poison by eating before him. They reiterated several times that the Ngozo boy did not eat *before* the Paramount; in fact he ate after him though sharing his food dishes. Surrounding the Paramount were other boys called *sicotho*, who performed the duties of pages or personal servants. The Ngozo boy was always distinct from them, and the distinction lay in the combined ritual and social relationship.

The concept of a 'shadow' was of something very close to a person, almost indistinguishable from the person himself. In referring to the Ngozo boy in the terms 'he was as the shadow of the *inkosi*; he was as himself', informants emphasized the extreme closeness of the tie between the two men. It seemed as if the royal shadow existed to meet a need for strengthening the Paramount by giving him a second self. It emphasized also the dangerous sphere of life and action in which the Paramount lived, due to the medicines he had used, his powers to protect the land and its fertility, and his power to give strength to the army through the use of the *tonga* medicine. No one else in the royal family shared these dangers and there was inherent in the relationship of royal shadow to *inkosi* the sense of some security through a companionship where protective medicines were shared as well as the hazardous occasions for which they gave protection.

643 This intense and dangerous ritual relationship was buttressed by
644 the social ties binding the Ngozo boy to the Paramount. We have seen
608 that between them as individuals there was that freedom of a joking

584 period within which the handing over of cattle was completed varied according to the demands of the girl's father and the capacity of the man's father to find the required number. Informants agreed that when only a few beasts were demanded, the transfer took place before or immediately after the main ceremony. In addition to this formal transfer agreed on and carried out as part of the marriage contract, there was also an informal reciprocal transfer which had two main purposes. At the time of the main ceremony the bride's party brought with them a beast, called *mcumdu*, which was put into the herd of the bridegroom's mother's house to which the bride would henceforth belong. Later, when the two families ate together for the first time, one or more additional beasts were brought from the girl's former house and put into the herd of the house to which she now belonged. In this way, the new wife began to have cattle in the herd of her mother-in-law's house which were known as hers and which would be taken to form a new herd when she went out with her husband to his *kwangwale* village. As soon as these cattle were in the kraal of the house to which she now belonged, the new wife was able to eat *amasi* in her husband's village, which she had not been allowed to do since leaving her father's village.

571 515 In the series of feasts which marked the stages in the marriage relationship and which facilitated the coming together of the two families, the major part was played by the *indlunkulu* in each village. Many households in the girl's village shared in the preparation of food for the betrothal feast, but it was assembled when cooked and divided out by the woman owner of the *indlunkulu*, assisted by the men and women belonging to the girl's father's house. The next feast was in the man's village, and formed part of the main ceremony, before the bride's party returned to their home. The third feast was to celebrate the 'showing of the hearth-stones', when the young wife was allowed to cook in her husband's village for the first time. The food was collected in her parents' village and carried to her new village, where it was cooked by the women of the house into which she had married, and served in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu*. In the two final feasts—the *umcwangu* which was a beer drink, and the *isiyongo*, a feast of beer and food—the beer was brewed and the food collected in the wife's village and cooked and [602] eaten in the courtyard of the *indlunkulu* in the husband's village. These two feasts finally broke down the barrier between the parents-in-law and were the first occasion on which they ate and drank beer together.

515 The main ceremony (*mtimba*) had three distinct parts.[1] The first part included the preparation of the girl in her own village (*ukwenga*), the entrance of her party into the man's village and the presenting of snuff

[1] I was present at an *mtimba* in Swaziland in the northern kingdom when the traditional ritual carried out in full was combined with a church wedding. The bridegroom was a man of the Dlamini clan from Swaziland, who had been adopted by Chief Mbovane and had built a hut in the *ugudu* of the big house.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

binding contract. In theory at least the girl left her family for good once the agreed *lobola* was handed over, and the responsibility for adjustment to the family she had entered was hers, first as wife and then as mother.

Investigation of the terminology associated with the Ngoni concept of family immediately poses problems of relating group structure to individual and group relationships. Dr. Kuper did not refer to any single term for family among the Swazi. The nearest was the term *umuti* used for homestead[1] which covered a recognized leader and his dependents, in terms of common residence, mutual relations and economic activities. The Cewa term *banja*,[2] widely used in Nyasaland in the 1930's to translate 'family', in its general use was more akin to the Swazi *umuti* since it denoted the relationships of a group of people to one man, and their common residence in a single village or a section of a village. *Banja* was used to express relationship to one man by kinship and marriage, but when it was used among the central Ngoni it also applied to other individuals, such as his age mates and the descendants of his father's former captives who lived in the same village. Another Cewa term *mbumba* was used in two distinct senses. The common use was to express the relationship of one man with his sisters and their children who inherited his position and his property and looked to him for assistance. A much less common use of the term was found sometimes in central Nyasaland and occasionally in north Nyasaland to cover the group of a man and his children and his brothers and their children—a patrilineal concept of a kinship group which was usually but not always associated with common residence.

There was one major difference between the Ngoni concept inherent in their use of *banja* and that of the Cewa and other matrilineal peoples. When an important man or woman died among the Cewa, someone always 'entered their place' in the kinship system, and this acquiring of a new position involved a shift in actual relationships and in terminology throughout the group of kin. There was no such change among the Ngoni in the use of kinship terms. When a man or woman among the Ngoni entered a dead person's place it was in order to perform his functions and not to assume the dead person's kinship relationships.

The village lay-out in different types of Ngoni village illustrates the way in which family grouping could be recognized in the sharing of the same hut, in the grouping of huts, and in the relations with neighbouring villages. Later in this chapter illustrations will be given from the northern and central Ngoni kingdoms to show how certain patterns of residential grouping on a family basis were evolving from the divisions of mixed tribal groups characteristic of the former large villages of pre-European days. The general tendency in northern Ngoniland was to

[1] See ch. 2, p. 38.
[2] Kerr and Kachuwanda in their dictionary translate *banja* house, home, household, family.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be interpreted according to the Ngoni social organization, sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle of people forming a young child's contacts was from the beginning much wider than the individual family which a child was born into. When he began to run about and to pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when necessary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related families in other villages, with all members of the same clan living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads were also inseparable from the political links between the people and their territorial chief, and between the whole people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence in most villages there were sharp distinctions between standards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling sa- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 957
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead 592
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 575
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 901
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [545]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 402
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 855
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [404]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [544]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy and therefore to be removed from them when the time came for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with him, they sometimes carried him about while the nurse girl
[262] did something else, they ground bulrush millet or roasted ground-nuts to give him as snacks. They were particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[893] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he addressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
[554] measure of the authority which his father and his father's brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and grandmother's households. There were young children who were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 357
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
"This is *our* child."

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organised through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day
[302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one
[291] fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony,
[516] her dignity of bearing and poised head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

Many references have been made already to the relation-
577 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife,
● 602 especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognized by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

Competence in household management, being a success-
577 ful 'chatelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if
592 she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Succession to office within this system was from a man to his eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture. Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was, in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organised patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (ushawi)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
527 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

842 If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
842 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seducer was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On
this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

527 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
603 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was allowed progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

527 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[831] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'blood ends', p. 19 translates this word (ushawi) as 'substitute'. Lawrence, 'Tentative chronology', p. 70, gives the word as ushawi. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 30 translates the Swazi word ushawi as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not ushawi, and some ushawi are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 58.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expeditions . . .', p. 451, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 188-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[1] If the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[1] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedition . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 191-2.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognised and institutionalised. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors.

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system.

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[10] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organised into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere

[10] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expeditionen . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
MaraVi FR4

came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery, and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1898 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the losing of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chiefdoms reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1898, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Mayavi FR4
Wisa FR5

N 584 N 580 her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

N [601] A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, affines*, and *children*.[1] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin*. In the second ascending and descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* and his female *grandchild* as *wife*, and he can, to a slight extent, joke and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. But Ngoni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to marry his female *grandchild*, and do not approve of such marriages among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

N 603 N 602 N 580 N 180

N 605 A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins*. We have noted above that the Ngoni peoples from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Wisa peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organization was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Wisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*banja*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

N 582 N 583

[1] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, op. cit. pp. 119 f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.58]

CHAPTER IV

KINSFOLK, AFFINES AND NEIGHBOURS

1. *The setting of marriage*

[581] [600] When a man marries he acquires not only a wife but also affinal relatives. His kinsfolk become her affines and both groups of relatives become kin of the children of the marriage. Husband and wife do not exist in isolation but are the centre of a network of relationships by which one group is articulated with the other. The common interest of the two groups is in the well-being of the couple and of the family which they found. This is true of all societies but among the Ngoni the relatives of a married couple play a more important part in the marriage than they do, for example, in Western society. The importance of the kin is increased by the custom of sending children away to live with their grandparents as soon as they have been weaned, and by the fact that husband and wife do not set up their residence entirely on their own but follow their [591] relatives and live in close proximity to one or more of them. We have said that in the old days the elementary family did not emerge as an important grouping in society. This proposition is still true to-day, although our grounds for making it have shifted somewhat. In the towns the old pattern of kinship cannot operate and husband [594] and wife live their lives much more as an isolated pair, cut off from their kin and alone responsible for their children. But in villages neighbours are kinsmen and a quarrel between man and wife brings kinsfolk from all around seeking to establish the rights and wrongs of the quarrel and to effect reconciliation. Many children are not sent to live with their grandparents, but even they grow up with their age-mates in the village, are fed by many different women, sleep in [595] different huts, and visit to and fro with their relatives in other villages. The difficulties of rearing children in the towns have led to the rise of a new pattern in which children born in Southern Rhodesia are brought back hundreds of miles to the village to be cared for by rural kinsfolk. The quarrels of spouses in the towns are referred home to the village for discussion.

It is the kinsfolk of the pair who are most directly concerned with their marriage, but there are other persons and groups who are also interested. In the village the headman and his lieutenants, even if they are not close kinsmen of one of the spouses, have an interest in the good behaviour of the couple, and they too may intervene in a quarrel. They participate in the ceremonials of marriage, and may receive part of the meat and beer given by one side to the other. [597] Beyond the village the Native Courts deal to a great extent with

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Where a woman has already troubled her relatives by her adultery, they may try to avoid further expense by refusing the legalisation payment offered for her.

Case history 7

Rachel had had two husbands and had been divorced from them both. She had also lived with a White for some years. In 1948 she began to live with Enos, who already had three wives. In 1948 Enos approached an important man in Rachel's village and asked him to act as intermediary as he wished to offer the legalisation payment to Rachel's brother. This man refused to do so, and in the end Enos approached his brother-in-law himself. The brother-in-law said that he had known his sister Rachel a long time and she was just a prostitute. He would not take the money for her. Enos said he would speak to his wife and ask her to change her character. Eventually the brother-in-law agreed to accept the thirty shillings offered.

Although the kinsfolk of the man or woman can exercise social pressure to prevent a marriage it is difficult for them to force a girl to marry against her will, and impossible in the case of a man. We have noted that in the old days, according to informants, people married whom they were told and did not refuse. Even if this was ever true, it is true no longer. A man can move off to the towns in the face of pressure and a woman can always run away to other relatives if her parents are insistent on an unwanted marriage. The Administration does not allow girls to be married against their will, but I do not know of any recent instance in which it has intervened on this issue. A girl's relatives can show their anger by abusing her and by scaring off her own preferred mate, but they cannot detain her against her will and they cannot force her to go through the ceremonies of marriage. They cannot appeal to the court to punish the girl for disobedience.

In some instances pressure is put on a man by a woman's kin to force him into marrying her. If a woman bears a pre-marital child, and it is known that the genitor is an important man or chief, her kinsfolk begin to adopt towards the genitor's family the patterns of respect and avoidance which would be appropriate if he were their affine. This procedure may be adopted although it is plain to people in general that the genitor has no intention of marrying the woman. If it is unsuccessful in forcing the hand of the genitor, the formal attitudes of the woman's kinsfolk come to be generally ridiculed and they abandon the pretence.

So far we have considered only the attitude of kinsfolk towards a proposed marriage and the legalisation payment associated with it. The factors influencing the acceptance or refusal of bridewealth are different. Bridewealth, when offered, is not often refused. Table V shows that in our sample this happened in only one out of 300 marriages. We must remember that bridewealth is paid only in about four per cent of all marriages, and that a man is usually on good terms with his affines and has lived in peace for many years with his wife before he offers it. A youngish man may seek the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

pending payment through which they can attempt to control the relationship between the couple. Yet both groups of kin are interested in the successful outcome of the marriage, and therefore attempt to influence the choice of marriage partner.

3. Formal interaction

In the formal negotiations that precede a marriage, and in the ceremonies that mark its stages of development, the kinsfolk are always involved. The married couple depend on their kin for economic assistance, and are under obligations to help their kin. The place of residence of the couple is determined by the disposition of their kin in different villages. If the man is a labour migrant his interests are represented by his rural kinsfolk. In general it is the fathers of the couple who are most directly concerned, if they are available, but in all Ngoni situations in which a man (or woman) appeals to his kin for support there are no hard and fast rules about the genealogical positions his supporters should occupy. If a man's father is old he turns to his elder brother. If his genealogically close kinsmen live far away, he turns to those who live nearer although they may be further removed from him in genealogical terms. If there is no male kinsman available he may seek the support of an old kinswoman.

The formal situations which require the co-operation of kinsfolk are the matchmaking, the gall bladder ceremony (which we may perhaps regard as the wedding), the ceremony of first cooking, the hoeing party, the announcement of first pregnancy, the carrying of beer and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. Betrothal is another formal situation requiring the presence of the woman's kin, but as nowadays very few girls are betrothed, we shall omit this from our analysis. It will be recalled that even in the old days betrothal applied only to girls under puberty and that a girl who reached puberty without becoming betrothed proceeded to marriage without passing through any intermediate stage. The matchmaking, at which the marriage is arranged, is carried on in a formal manner but there is little ceremonial. The carrying of beer is a visit from one group to the other that can be repeated as many times as they wish, but all the other ceremonies occur but once in a marriage, if they occur at all. The hoeing party has a certain economic value but the other ceremonies are largely symbolic in content. As with the marriage payments, the marriage ceremonials can all be dispensed with and yet there be a marriage which to all intents and purposes is valid. What cannot be omitted so easily from a marriage are the patterns of respect and avoidance between the couple and their affines, particularly between a man and his wife's mother. Even here, however, there is some variation in practice.

The usual procedure in matchmaking is that first the man and the woman agree between themselves that they will get married. They reach this agreement in secret without reference to their kinsfolk

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

depends as much on the compliance of the man as on the insistence of his father-in-law.

A payment[14] of about five shillings is sometimes made by a man to his wife's father enabling him to take his wife to his own village. This is made either at the beginning of the marriage or after one or two years of uxorilocal residence, but in some marriages the payment is never made at all, and in some villages even the vernacular term is unknown. In those villages where the payment is recognized there is no consensus of opinion as to the rights granted by it. Some people hold that the payment is equivalent to a year or two of uxorilocal residence, and that, therefore, the money should be offered when the marriage is arranged, so that it may be begun virilocally. They go on to say that when a man has completed his period of uxorilocal residence, he is free to take his wife to his own village without making this payment. Other people say that a man ought to remain living uxorilocally until he makes this payment, which should therefore be done a year or so after marriage, or at some time later when the man wishes to move. Where the payment is not recognized, people either say that a man ought to live uxorilocally for a while and cannot buy himself out of this obligation, or else assert that the Ngoni, unlike the Cewa, do not marry uxorilocally and that the legalization payment allows a man to take a bride to his village as soon as he chooses. There is a wide variation in the norms held, or at least expressed, on this matter and an equally wide variation in actual behaviour. Men select their course of action by reference to the total situation in which they find themselves when they marry. A man may try to enforce one rule on one son-in-law and another rule on another. I observed one extreme case in which a man allowed one of his daughters, married to a man from her own village, to move to her husband's cluster after only a few months of uxorilocal residence in his own cluster. At the same time he would not allow another daughter to move to her husband's village after four years of uxorilocal residence, despite the offer of ten shillings payment to him. He approved of the first son-in-law while disliking the second, who had failed to report to him when his daughter first became pregnant.

We have talked of the man's village and the woman's village. It is perhaps necessary to stress that what is meant by, say, the man's village is a village to which the man's ties are stronger than those of his wife. It is likely to be a village where some relative of his is living, but the relative may be his father or his mother or his father's mother or his mother's father or some more distant connexion. Sometimes a man goes to live in his first wife's village and then brings in his second wife. The second wife is then said to be living virilocally, in the village of her husband rather than in her own, although the man is himself living in his first wife's village.

[14] Mikakale. Cf. Barnes, op. cit. p. 229

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

that is, in uxorilocal marriage. In the man's village there are likely to be relatives of his wife already established, but it is she who is said to 'follow' her husband to the village and not he who 'follows' her, since his ties to the village, and to the cluster in the village within which they set up their household, are stronger than hers. Similarly a man may have relatives of his own living in his wife's village and yet be spoken of as living uxorilocally. If a woman's father is living in her village, he will be the focus of her husband's obligations. But if he lives a long way away and the woman has been dependent on her grandparents, or on her mother's brother, then it is they who will act towards her husband to some extent in the role of substitute parents-in-law. However, a man does not avoid his substitute mother-in-law as thoroughly as he would his wife's own mother.

The obligation on a man to help his wife's parents in their garden is expressed in two ways. Once during the marriage the man must provide a party of people to hoe for the greater part of one day in his wife's mother's garden. He must also be prepared to work in this garden from time to time when he is called upon, and his wife may work with him. While the labour given by the man and his wife is useful labour, the work done by the hoeing party is only partly useful and may do more damage than good. The procedure is that the man, or a relative of his, tells his father-in-law that he proposes to bring a party to hoe on such-and-such a day. By agreeing to this the father-in-law tacitly agrees also to provide the party with beer and presents. On the appointed day, early in the morning, the party arrives and begins work. When the father-in-law thinks the work has gone on long enough, he sends an intermediary to offer a present to the leader of the hoers. If the present is considered sufficient the party stops hoeing and returns to the father-in-law's village. If not, it continues to hoe with renewed vigour. At intervals the father-in-law sends intermediaries with higher and higher offers until at last the hoers are satisfied or exhausted and they come into the village to collect their presents and beer. As often as not the hoers try to force the father-in-law to offer a present at the limit of his resources, for example a beast, and, as the offers mount, the workers become more and more excited and their hoeing less and less useful. At the end of a day, with the light failing, physically exhausted hoers begin to root up the maize with the weeds, and the mother-in-law's garden may be seriously damaged. If the father-in-law is obstinate and does not offer them what they want the hoers may spend the night sleeping out in the garden. By the next morning everyone is too tired to continue the matter further, and the party disperses.[10]

This sort of hoeing party may not facilitate the cultivation of good maize but it is of great significance to the married couple and the

[10] See Appendix III for an account of two of these parties.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her husband's village, the occasion must be recognized in a more elaborate manner. Her husband or his relatives buy her a new cloth. Wearing this cloth she stands at the door of her husband's hut, and is undressed by her husband's grandmother. The old woman rubs castor oil on her abdomen and dresses her again. A small girl from her husband's kin goes with her to her own village, and their arrival there, with the woman dressed in her new cloth, indicates formally to her parents that she is pregnant. They stay at the woman's village for about a week, and then return to her husband's village.[14] Her parents have thus been made socially aware of her pregnancy, and the man can legitimately look to them for help if she becomes ill or fractious.

If the woman does die in childbirth, her husband has to offer a beast to her parents even though they were told of her pregnancy.[15] The husband may confess to adultery when called upon to do so by the midwife, but this does not absolve him from the obligation to pay the beast. Confession absolves him from the charge of having caused the death of his wife by his careless behaviour, but he must still recompense his parents-in-law for the death of their daughter. It is recognized that a woman may die in childbirth despite the absence of adultery during pregnancy or despite full confession of adultery by both the woman and her husband. She dies just because God lets her die, and not because of any human misconduct. Yet she reaches the situation in which there is the danger of death because of her position as the wife of her husband. It is the 'work' of married women to bear children, and it is the 'work' of the husband if his wife dies in childbirth to offer a beast to her parents so that they may mourn their daughter.

5. Quarrels

We see then that a woman is not severed utterly from her own group when she marries, but that her kinsfolk retain an interest in her welfare and have certain rights in her and in her husband. The recognition of these rights by their son-in-law increases his esteem in their eyes, and enables him to appeal to them with confidence when he needs their support. The common interest of all is in the successful maintenance of the marriage, and the mutual recognition of rights and fulfilment of obligations consolidate the social relationships established between people related by marriage. Quarrels threaten the continued existence of the marriage, and it is therefore in the common interest that they should be settled as expeditiously as possible. The intervention of affines in a personal quarrel between husband and wife is characteristic of a system in which most neighbours are kinsfolk and in which the spatial concentration of people into compact villages, where abuse shouted at one

[14] This ceremony is called *ngoyi*, which means 'breast-cloth' in Nsenga.
[15] See above, pp. 200.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and of the village can be heard at the other, ensures that all quarrels soon become public knowledge. The quarrels of any members of the village are known to, and in greater or lesser degree are the concern of, everyone else in the village. Beyond the confines of the village, kinsfolk living in neighbouring villages can soon be called in and in any case soon come to hear of a serious dispute. In a quarrel between man and wife there are certain restrictions on the extent to which affines can intervene, and there are certain regularities in the way in which they are brought into the ambit of the quarrel. 578 602

When a woman has a serious quarrel with her husband, she runs away. If the couple are living uxoriocally she may not go very far, and may take shelter with a friend or relative at the other end of the village but the consequences are much the same as if she had gone off to a kinsman several miles away. As a woman flees from the anger of one relative by seeking refuge with another or with her affines, so she flees from her husband to the shelter of a kinsman or kinswoman. Occasionally a woman will go to someone to whom she is bound only by bonds of quasi-kinship, as for example to a former playmate or school friend whom she addresses by a kinship term, but this is not common. If her husband makes no effort to persuade her to return, it is assumed that he does not want her back and that he is trying to trap her into committing adultery. A woman can [586] use for divorce if her husband has allowed her to stay away after a quarrel and has not tried to get her back again.

Case history 4

Abner was married to Esther and had paid the legalisation payment. Abner suspected her of consulting with another man in the village and fought her. He then told her he was contemplating taking another wife. Esther ran off to her father's village about eight miles away and stayed there five months. Abner did not come to see her and she complained to the court. Abner was asked in court why he did not go to visit Esther and replied that he had had no time to do so as he had been ill. Esther said that Abner always suspected her of being a prostitute, but she wanted Abner as her husband; the trouble was that Abner did not want her or else he would have followed her to her village. The court agreed that Abner did not want Esther as a wife and was merely setting a trap for her, hoping to get damages for adultery when Esther had been left alone a long time. Abner was ordered to divorce his wife. He refused to do so, saying that he still liked her. Esther said that if Abner still wanted her he must come and live with her in her father's village where her father could see how he looked after her. Abner refused to go and live there. The court then divorced Esther without awarding any damages to Abner.

The correct behaviour for a husband when he finds that his wife has run away is to inquire from her friends in the village where she has gone, and then to hurry after her himself. It would not be considered right for him to send an intermediary; he must himself go and apologise. Arriving at the hut of the relative with whom his wife is sheltering, he does not speak to his wife but first asks the relative to intervene with her. They discuss the cause of the quarrel, and if it can be settled easily, as for instance when the man admits

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

578 602 that he was drunk when he quarrelled with his wife and did not mean what he said, the woman may agree to return. If she is adamant, or if a serious issue such as cruelty or adultery is involved, a formal discussion is held in the village of one or the other. Relatives come from both sides and a man of senior status convenes the meeting.[18] Sometimes it may be agreed that the offending spouse must pay nominal damages to the other. The usual procedure is to offer a chicken to the other, but sometimes a few shillings are given instead. If agreement cannot be reached at a meeting like this, the matter can either be referred to the court, or else the issue of the quarrel may be left unresolved in the hope that at some later date a solution may be possible. While the initiative in holding a village meeting lies with the senior relatives of the [699] couple, the only people who can take the matter to the court are the couple themselves. A father may sometimes handle the formalities of laying a case against his son-in-law on his daughter's behalf but it would be difficult for him to do so without her co-operation, and, on the man's side, it is only he and not his father or brother who can effectively sue his wife.

The interests of the two groups of relatives are centred on the successful maintenance of the marriage. It is considered more important that people should live together in peace without quarrelling than that the exact rights of one side or the other, even where these rights can be defined precisely, should be upheld. [684] A man who commits adultery may be censured by his father, who will perhaps refuse to speak to his son if he thinks that the stability of his son's marriage is threatened, even though it is admitted that the man's wife has no legal right to object to her husband's adultery. When there has been a quarrel people do not rush to hold a village meeting since, by doing so, the existence of the quarrel is formally recognized and its seriousness increased. It is better if possible to get the couple to 'change their character', that is, to become reconciled to each other on their own account. Until the woman's sudden departure indicates to the world that they have quarrelled, relatives are reluctant to interfere between man and wife. People gossip about the quarrels of married couples, but even their close kinsmen will hedge and say that these affairs are not their responsibility if pressed for an opinion. The action of the wife in running away is the mechanism by which she begins her appeal to her relatives for support, and she carries it a stage further by refusing to accept her husband's apologies. Finally if the settlement proposed at the meeting is not acceptable she appeals to the court. Men do not run away to their kinsmen and do not rely on relatives to the same extent as do their wives. Yet a man can if he wishes

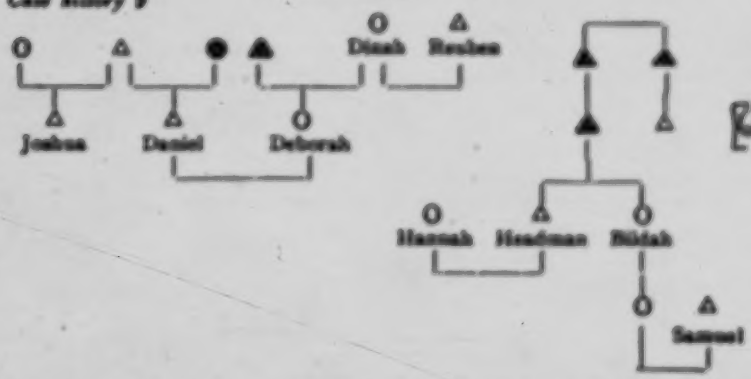
[18] *Tanda.* This word is used of any formal meeting in a village to settle a [192] quarrel, matrimonial or otherwise, before the issue is referred to the court. Cf. Nsenga *ku-tandala*, to talk or discuss.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

precipitate an open quarrel by staying away from his wife, by eating elsewhere or by threatening divorce. Fights in the village, provided the parties concerned do not hurry off to court, are dealt with first at a village meeting, and even where the combatants are not man and wife, the elucidation of the cause of the fight may bring to light a latent marital quarrel which must then be dealt with by the relatives. Accusations of adultery must be denied, and a woman may call in her relatives to protect her from the slander of a jealous woman.

The processes by which a quarrel between man and wife comes to light, and the attempts of kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, are well illustrated by the following account of an adulterous wife.

Case history 9



Daniel was a labour migrant in Southern Rhodesia and his wife Deborah was living meanwhile in the village of her mother's husband Reuben. The headman of this village had himself returned from the railway line a year previously. At a beer party Deborah quarrelled with Hannah the headman's wife, who accused Deborah of sleeping with the headman and who started to fight her. A meeting was held in the village to settle the affair. Deborah denied that she had ever slept with the headman and the headman denied that he had ever slept with her. Hannah retorted that she did not like to see her husband running after other women and always talking to Deborah. Reuben and a neighbour of his said that they could say nothing in the matter as Deborah was a married woman, and they called on Joshua, who was Daniel's father's son, to speak. He had come from his own village to attend the meeting. Joshua said that Hannah had not actually caught Deborah sleeping with her husband the headman, and that therefore Hannah had done wrong in accusing Deborah without good reason. Hannah had also erred in making accusations that would make Deborah's brothers-in-law think that Deborah was committing adultery. The headman had also erred and should stop talking to Deborah, or else the brothers-in-law of Deborah would take him to court for drinking beer at night with Deborah, who was a married woman.

Hannah then admitted that she had done wrong in fighting Deborah. Another man in the village, Samuel, the headman's sister's daughter's husband, spoke, and said that Hannah must offer a chicken to Deborah because if Hannah had really known that Deborah was sleeping with the headman, surely she would have seen that Deborah was taken to court.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

578
402
159

Hannah sent her son to catch a chicken, which was pet of the feet of Samuel and a lieutenant of the village, who called on Deborah to accept it. Deborah was stopped from doing so by Reuben, who said that the village was now a bad village since the headman had returned to it, and that he did not want his daughter to accept the chicken. The chicken was released, and the meeting broke up. Reuben subsequently explained his action by saying that if he had let Deborah take the chicken, there would be hatred between Deborah and Hannah, and more quarrels would come. People would quarrel in the village just to get chickens.

Two months later Daniel returned from Southern Rhodesia, and Deborah went back to Daniel's village to live with him there. Soon he quarrelled with her, and accused her of committing adultery while he was away. A meeting was held at the house of Daniel's father to deal with the quarrel. Daniel said that he had brought back with him medicine which he had put under Deborah's pillow while she was asleep. Under the influence of the medicine Deborah talked in her sleep and disclosed the names of the men with whom she had slept while Daniel had been away. Daniel said that he did not like to take these men to court on the evidence of this medicine alone. Reuben, who had been called from his village to attend the meeting, said that the matter was not one in which he could act and it was up to Daniel to decide what he wanted to do, as Deborah was his wife. Daniel's father said that as Deborah had children by Daniel she ought to be forgiven and warned not to do it again. The headman of Daniel's village observed that women had been committing adultery long before there was any labour migration, and that as this was Deborah's first offence she should just be warned. Daniel said that Deborah should be warned not in his village but in her own village, and that she should be warned not by himself or his father but by her father Reuben. Daniel wrote down the names of the people he had heard mentioned by Deborah, but he did not show this list at the meeting. An informant who claimed that he saw the list said that it contained, among others, the name of the headman of Reuben's village.

A month later a meeting was held in Reuben's village to continue the discussion. Some of the important people in the village attended, but not the headman or his lieutenant. This omission was explained by Reuben as being because all the people concerned were Christians and they must decide it among themselves without reference to the headman, a pagan. Daniel's father opened the discussion by saying that Daniel wanted to know about the adulteries of Deborah while he was away in Southern Rhodesia. Daniel then said that he wanted to take to court the people who had slept with his wife. He had found medicines in the house on his return, and these he produced as evidence. He said he had asked his wife what sort of medicines these were, and at first she had refused to tell him. He had pressed her and she had then said that some were medicines she had got from people in another country for headache, and that others were roots of love medicine she had got from other women in the village. Daniel said he did not believe his wife when she told him this, as a woman would not make love medicine if her husband were away. He had found other medicines hidden in the roof of the storehouse which Deborah had refused to explain to him.

Deborah spoke and said that she admitted sleeping with two men, Gideon and Balaam. (They were both men from other villages.) Another man from the village, the headman's father's father's brother's son, who had been invited to the meeting (but who was not a Christian) said that these people Gideon and Balaam ought to be taken to court as Daniel had suggested, for a case like this could not be settled in the village.

Daniel then went on to say that he thought his wife was pregnant and he wanted to know who had impregnated her. Deborah said that she was sure it was Gideon and Balaam who had made her pregnant. Daniel's father remarked that they had best wait before bringing a case against

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Gideon as Gideon's village was on the point of moving from one country to another and they wanted to begin the case in the right court.

Dinah, Deborah's mother, admonished her daughter:

'My daughter, ever since I married my husband, I have never committed adultery with anyone who was not my husband, and I have never asked anyone to give me medicines so that Reuben would love me. My husband loves me because I obey him, and he looks after me well. In addition he looks after you, who are not his real daughter. Believe my words, when Reuben dies, you will not find one married to such a good husband who can look after me and all my children. I used to tell you not to drink beer all night long because your husband was away working. You did not obey me, and see now you have done wrong to both parents, your own parents and the parents of your husband. We will regard you as a bad child who has not been well instructed; and the parents of your husband will regard us as bad people for not instructing you well. Now it is up to you because you are a fully grown person.'

Daniel's father said that the man who had made Deborah pregnant would be punished by the court, and that now Daniel and Deborah must be told to live in peace. Daniel said that he had nothing more to say as the people who had been sleeping with his wife had been identified. He would take them to court and would live peacefully with his wife. The meeting then ended.

Two months later Daniel took Balaam to court, and Deborah and Balaam were each ordered to pay Daniel thirty shillings damages.

We see in this account the constant interest of the kindolk in maintaining the marriage. Divorce was never mentioned. Instead, Deborah was told to change her ways. Her father-in-law argued that she should be forgiven as she had already borne children to Daniel. Her mother's husband, although he was more diffident about the matter than if she had been his own daughter, tried to prevent her quarrel with Hannah from worsening when he prevented her taking the chicken offered her. Although Reuben was only her step-father Daniel considered him, rather than his own father, the proper person to deliver a reproof to Deborah.

Occasionally the aftermath of a marital quarrel is neither reconciliation nor divorce but a state of affairs we may call separation. If a wife runs away, or if her husband goes off to work and avoids her on his return, there may be attempts at reconciliation which may fail or there may even be no attempts. Not every woman in this position seeks divorce. Some still hope that their husbands will return, particularly if there are growing children to be cared for, while others may be bound by the rules of their religion against divorce. If a woman is old and does not wish to take another husband, she may be disinclined to take the trouble to obtain a divorce. It will be seen from Table IV that there are only a few women in this condition. They live with their own relatives and sometimes maintain indirect contact with their husbands through their children who visit back and forth. This category of separation is applicable only where the husband is living near his wife. If a man is in Southern Rhodesia and does not write, we cannot say whether or not he is, in this sense, separated from his wife. His

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

and have the money to spare, they may buy her clothes. The only ways in which she can raise money easily for herself are by brewing beer, making pots, and working on the farms. To work on a farm she must, however, remove herself from the surveillance of her husband's kin, and unless she goes to join a contingent from their village working at the farm, they may think she is running away from them to seek a lover or new husband. We have seen, however, from Table XIV that significantly more wives whose husbands are away live vacillionally.

Many husbands write home, not only to their wives, and some remit postal orders and bank-notes. A man may get a friend who is returning from Southern Rhodesia to take home blankets and other bulky articles to be handed over to his wife. He may send presents like these direct to his wife or he may think it more prudent to send them to his father or brother and allow them to hand on to his wife as much as they think fit. The woman must then behave herself in the eyes of her affines if she wishes to receive her husband's presents. The acceptance of these gifts is taken as proof that the woman is still dependent on her husband however long he stays away. If the woman applies to the court for a divorce on the ground of desertion, the presents will be cited by her husband's kinsfolk as evidence that there is no intention on his part to desert. Gluckman reports from the Lozi that even if a man sends goods, after a statutory period the court will hold that 'a woman marries a man and not a blanket', that is, the husband must return to look after and sleep with his wife as well as send clothes to her. This argument is not used among the Ngoni. A woman who complains that she is not satisfied with marriage under these conditions is told to write to her absent husband and ask him for the fare to join him in Southern Rhodesia.

Case history 19

Saul was working in Nyasaland. He sent home to his wife 7s. 6d. for clothes. Later she wrote to him saying she wanted him to return. He sent her 15s., being 5s. for clothes and 10s. bus fare so that she could join him. She did not go and later went to the court complaining she had been deserted. The husband's relatives argued, to the satisfaction of the court, that as her husband had sent her these gifts he was still taking care of her. The court dismissed her plea as she had refused to go to Nyasaland when the fare had been sent.

The husband's relatives try to watch carefully the movements of the woman so that they may prevent or at least report any adultery on her part. If they are in touch with the husband, they write to him should they suspect infidelity. Sometimes the husband ignores their letter, sometimes he gives them instructions how they should proceed in the matter, and sometimes he returns to the village to see for himself what is going on. He arrives without warning and hopes to catch his wife in the act. If all is well and he is satisfied that his wife has been faithful he usually goes back to work again.

592 593 167 Some men when they decide to return home from work in the normal course of events do not let their relatives know that they will be arriving. There are a variety of reasons for this, one being that the mystical hazards of the journey home are increased if a man's enemies know that it is taking place. There is also sometimes the desire to check on the fidelity of a wife. A chief returning from the railway line in 1947 reached Fort Jameson and sent on ahead a man to tell the people their chief had returned. A councillor who was with him remarked 'What sort of chief is this who gives his queens time to get back to their own houses? We ought to arrive suddenly and catch them all with their lovers.'

593 167 602 The woman's kin also wish to avoid trouble in her marriage and do what they can to prevent her committing adultery if they think that her husband is still treating her well. They talk to her about her obligations to her absent husband and if they think she cannot be trusted, one of them, perhaps the woman's mother, may sleep in the hut with her to see that she does not entertain lovers there. They may warn her that if she is taken to court for adultery they will not support her.

Thus we see that there is social prescription not only of the ways in which a man and his affines should behave towards each other, but also of the ways in which his affines should behave when the man is away. Similarly a woman and her affines interact in the light of their relationship not only when her husband is present but also when he has been absent for years. As a husband can exceed his rights over his wife, so can an affine go beyond what is tolerated while trying to safeguard the interests of an absent husband. The perseverence of some brothers of absent husbands, and the limitations imposed on their actions by public opinion, are recalled by a girls' song current in 1949.

[593]

> I am wanting to go and sleep,
> What stops me is something in the loins,
> I go to the water, and the one who keeps on following comes,
> He has exceeded his sibling-in-law-ship,*
> He has dragged Eleni from the reeds.

Eleni is supposed to be the wife of a labour migrant. Her husband's brother follows her to the stream, where she has gone ostensibly to draw water, as he thinks that she is really going to meet a lover. [607] She hides in the reeds and he drags her out. Such active intervention is inappropriate and dangerous for if there is a struggle the woman is likely to claim that the man was trying to rape her. The astute brother-in-law would have waited his time until he could catch her red-handed with her lover in a village.

167 822 It is never legitimate for a woman whose husband is a labour migrant to have intercourse with another man. People regret that

[193] * *Ulawa*, the abstract noun formed from *mulawa*, sibling-in-law.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Doesn't respect that

a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant. This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman. These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for 'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery. The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 48f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife, the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration.

Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

The general principle that no court action involving the husband's sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

migrant sons, and villagers mourn for a dead kinsman of whose death in the towns they have just heard. 602

Although it is possible for a couple to keep in contact with their rural kin if they are diligent in writing, the amount of interaction between the couple and their kin is much less under these conditions than when they are living in the village. Even when only the man is away and his wife is living at home, the ties linking relatives by marriage cannot in general be as strong as when the individual through whom these ties pass is present in face-to-face contact with his affines. None of the ceremonies of marriage, except the obtaining of a marriage certificate, can be performed if the man is away from the village and they must wait until he returns. Ngoni say 'You cannot send beer on a lorry'. When the man returns for a rest his wife's parents sometimes seize the opportunity to send him beer, but if he has been away a long time, they may be reluctant to brew for a man they do not know very well and whose character may have changed in the treacherous environment of the towns. Even if the man is working as near as Fort Jameson township, he may have difficulty in getting away from his job just at the time his parents-in-law want him at home. [585]

Some men marry women they meet in the towns. Often an unmarried man leaves the village and a year or so later the news comes that he now has a wife. If the woman is from another tribe it is unlikely that the relatives at home will be told her name, and if the children of the marriage remain in Southern Rhodesia, they too will be unknown at home in the village. Sometimes, however, a man may marry a woman who comes from his own neighbourhood who has been visiting relatives in Southern Rhodesia or who has been divorced from another labour migrant. There is then more chance that the rural kin will be made aware of the marriage, and the children born to the couple may be sent home to one or other grandparent. If and when the man brings his bride back to the village, he goes to her village to give her relatives formal notification of what has happened, how he was in Southern Rhodesia and saw her and how they married there. Men sometimes offer the legalization payment for wives married in Southern Rhodesia when they return home. If the woman's relatives see that the man is treating his wife well, that she is well clothed and that the man is not running after other women, they may accept the marriage and brew beer for the man. If they do not approve of him there is little direct action they can take but they may try to start a quarrel sooner or later. 581 602

7. *Child's parents-in-law*

On either side of the married couple are their kin groups, and there is a special term to express the relationship between the parents of one spouse and the parents of the other. This relationship is thought of as one of limited co-operation. The two pairs of 602

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

602 parents have different fields of interest, but the two fields overlap in the well-being of the married couple. At first there is much formality between them, and intermediaries are used whenever possible. Later they become more friendly. In the setting of the village meeting some parents appear to see themselves as allied in wisdom with the opposite parents against the foolishness of the younger generation whose immature behaviour has been the cause of the meeting. At other times, they may act to defend the rights and happiness of their child against the claims of the rival kin group. We have seen in the story of Daniel and Deborah [30] how yet another alignment can occur when both sets of parents support one spouse against the other. There is no simple way in which these different alignments can be predicted, for they are in fact the outcome of
809 the continually changing pattern of social relationships within the local community. In general, all people wish to preserve the existing configuration of relationships, to support the interests of their children and to maintain the values of their society. In any particular
571 situation, these goals may be mutually incompatible, and there is no over-riding principle, such as agnatic descent or a state-enforced code of law, to which all decisions can be referred. The tenuousness of the cohesion of the local group of kin is reflected in the varying alignments of parents in marital quarrels.

578 We tend to think of quarrels as socially disruptive, and in so far as
571 they are not resolved they do lead to the break-up of existing groupings and the formation of new ones. Yet from another point of view, quarrelling is as much a cohesive process as is common participation in marriage ceremonial. Indeed, just as we have seen already [31] that a ceremony of marriage may be a vehicle for expressing hostility between kin groups as well as recognition of common interest, so a quarrel may lead to increased solidarity between kin groups as well as express hostility between spouses. By taking steps to resolve a quarrel, one kin group is brought into face-to-face contact with the other; there is visiting between their villages and mutual hospitality in somewhat the same way as in marriage ceremonial. The two groups may join to censure the erring spouse. The censured person may feel deserted by his (or her) parents but his father and his father-in-law may have come closer together.

602 The formality that characterizes relations between parents at the beginning of a marriage gradually disappears. A man or woman can always seek shelter and hospitality at the hut of a *child's parent-in-law* and in the final ceremony of marriage, when the married couple enter the wife's mother's hut, the two pairs of parents sit together and discuss the merits and limitations of their respective
835 offspring. It is regarded as incestuous for a man to marry a woman whom he calls *child's parent-in-law*. By so doing his son's wife

[30] See above, p. 82.
[31] See above, pp. 76f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

becomes her husband's sibling so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere[20] an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her *sibling*. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court.

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages.

8. *Other Kinsfolk*

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of

[20] See Barnes, op. cit. p. 232

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

603 the parents of the couple. If the parents are not available other kinsfolk can substitute for them, but in general it is a man's or woman's father who represents the interests of their local group of kin in situations in which these interests are contrasted with those of the spouse's kin. It is the woman's father who receives all the different payments made in marriage, and he is free to keep the payments or to distribute them among his relatives as he thinks fit. If a woman's father is dead or away at work the payments are made to her brother or her father's brother or her mother or some other relative who, in this situation, is prepared to assume the responsibilities that would otherwise be borne by him. Similarly, most men find the money for marriage payments themselves, but if a man is too poor to do this, it is first to his father that he turns for assistance. If, however, his father is dead or poverty-stricken or unwilling to provide the money, he can ask some other relative for help. Here we are dealing with situations in which the father or his substitute
[591] is acting as the representative of the loosely structured local group of kin in situations in which his own children are specifically involved. There are, however, certain specific kinship relations which we can separate out from the general operation of local kinship and which impinge on the marriage relationship. A grandmother has a particular interest in the sexual aspect of marriage. The eldest brother acts as intermediary between a man and his father in the marriage negotiations. Younger brothers are interested in the disposal of widows. Children have rights in the property of a married couple. These are more specific obligations and rights, and while it is possible to find substitutes if the genealogically correct relatives are not there, there is more rigidity in these matters than in those in which the initiative lies with the local group of kinsfolk whoever they may be.

603 We have mentioned that the grandmother who rears a girl may be in charge of her seclusion at puberty (p. 32). Even when some other old woman is in charge, the girl's grandmother has some responsibility for her sexual behaviour. If a man does not sleep with his wife she complains to his grandmother, and although a man is not instructed in sexual matters by his grandmother, he can discuss them more freely with her than with any other kinswoman. Grandmothers sometimes play an important part in the resolution of a marital quarrel in the village, and they often act as midwives. It is a man's grandmother who complains to him if his wife is not bearing children, and it is to her that he may turn for advice about medicines. In the courts, however, grandmothers do not play so important a role. They are women, and important women use their influence more in village situations than in court, where men are in
[592] control and male councillors look to a man's brothers and father for confirmation of evidence.

593 There is considerable formality in the relationship between a man and his own parents and this formality appears to be greater if

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

teach that the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of marriage payments is no concern of the Church, while the D.R.C.M. have a rule that bridewealth shall not be paid although this rule does not seem to be enforced. In general, in the village and in the court, the obligations of Christians are thought of as supplementary to their obligations as ordinary men and women, and Christian ceremonies to some extent supplement, but do not replace, traditional ceremonies. Thus there may be a church wedding in addition to a gall bladder ceremony, and a divorce in the eyes of the mission following after a divorce in court. Pressure has sometimes been put on chiefs and court members to act in accordance with the teaching of the mission, as in a past attempt on the part of the Catholic White Fathers to prevent courts from granting divorces to Catholics.[10] This type of intervention has applied particularly to courts where the chief was himself a Catholic. The Administration has opposed this pressure, and does not itself recognize any legal significance in religious ceremonies.

14. Spouses and kinsfolk

We may see the married couple in the middle of a system of relationships which connects them with persons and institutions each interested in their behaviour and in the maintenance of the marriage tie. By living peacefully together, by producing children, and by fulfilling their obligations to their kinsfolk and affines, they can, with discretion, satisfy the divergent claims implicit in this system of relationships. If they begin to quarrel, their kinsmen and neighbours attempt in the first instance to reconcile them. Only when this is impossible do those interested in the marriage begin to split up into groups with differing interests whose rival claims must be weighed by the court. Even then it is hoped that reconciliation will be possible, that a wife will return to her husband after she has paid him damages for adultery, and a husband return to his wife after many years of neglect. Whereas in the old days marriage was related to a fairly definite residential system, and rights and obligations were clear cut, nowadays the forces holding together a body of kinsfolk are weaker, and the danger of disruption of the group because of quarrelling is greater. The genealogical composition of the group is more variable and alters from year to year. Marriage, as one of the mechanisms by which local groups are built up, is part of the general political process, and is affected by inter-group and inter-personal relations that at first sight appear to have little to do with marriage. We observed that tribal and religious affiliation are significant criteria in a possible spouse. The divergent interests of less permanent groups, such as cliques and factions, influence choice of marriage partner and behaviour within marriage, as we have seen in the stories of Absolom and Mary (p. 60) and Amos and Eve (p. 28). Conversely, marital interests affect non-

[10] *Cf.* Richards, op. cit. pp. 83-4, for similar events among the Bemba.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

marital behaviour, as for example when a new-acquired wife persuaded her husband to seek work with her in Southern Rhodesia so that she might enjoy his prosperity to the exclusion of her senior co-wives who were left in the village.

Within the kinship system itself, ties of affinity compete with and are affected by ties of consanguinity. A quarrel between a married couple may lead to further quarrelling between affinally-linked relatives, and a dispute between a man and his wife's relatives may lead to a quarrel with his wife. Yet on the other hand a man who merely finds a woman and marries her without reference to her relatives is uncertain of his rights in the marriage and cannot appeal to her relatives if she misbehaves. There can be no ceremonies of marriage, and he must resort to subterfuge to get a marriage certificate. If he sends his children to his wife's parents to be cared for, they will accept them, but by so doing they do not accept him as a son-in-law. His wife's parents will deny that they know his name and if he takes his wife to court, they will mock him by saying 'We do not know this man'. Irrespective of marriage payments, a man cannot be validly and effectively married in the rural area without establishing his relationship to his affines. For a woman this is not always so, for her husband may have come from afar to work in the area, or he may earlier have broken away from his kinsmen. But without the support of his own kinsmen a man is dependent on his wife's kin for assistance in the marriage and, though the marriage may last, he is still one man living alone in a strange village.

4: Barnes E-S (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated with political allegiance, and therefore it was inappropriate that her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genitrices* in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genitrices* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genitrices* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genitrices* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem* and bridewealth rights *in genitrices*. Rights *in genitrices* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genitrices* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genitrices*.

Whereas the rights *in genitrices* were definite in the old system, in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme they were related to position in a residential system of which one of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession. With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another, and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups, for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people, some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

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Mpezeni

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tion for associating children with one parent rather than the other. There is only the one proud dogma that the Ngoni, unlike their neighbours, are a patrilineal virilocal people. This reflects the actual dominance of the virilocal mode of residence but does not furnish a rule to which appeal can be made in specific cases. The only definite unit to which a man can be said to belong is his village, and such few attempts as are made to enforce rights *in genitricem* are expressed in terms of residence in villages. In marriages that are made outside the tribe, rights *in genitricem* become significant for a child is not likely to wander to and fro between one tribe and another hundreds of miles away in the same way as children change from one village to another within the kingdom. Here then we find more attention paid to the payment of bridewealth and to rights *in genitricem* and these rights are enforceable through the police checks on boats and borders.

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If a man is away working his interests are represented by his kinsfolk. They cannot exercise his rights *in uxorem* for him, but if they are violated they can act on his behalf. His permission is necessary, however, before they can proceed to the court, and if they are awarded damages then they are under some sort of obligation to hand over the money to him when he returns. There was no situation comparable to this in the old system, for men did not go away for years at a time, and the violation of rights *in uxorem* was punishable by death.

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The position of the man as holder of rights *in uxorem* over his wife is reinforced to some extent by mystical ties believed to connect the couple, and at the same time the man can fortify his rights by the use of medicines to ensure fidelity. During pregnancy, for a short while after childbirth, and during menstruation, the actions of man and wife affect one another automatically, and each is placed in danger of illness by the failure of the other to observe their mutual obligations. To protect his rights *in uxorem* a man may doctor his wife so that possible violators may be deterred by the fear of mystical retribution as well as action in the courts.

7. *Mystical beliefs and marriage stability*

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The mystical connexion believed to exist between a man and his wife serves to define their relationship more closely, for this same connexion does not hold between a woman and her husband's kin or between a man and his wife's kin. The adultery of a pregnant woman's brother-in-law, like her husband's adultery, may threaten the peace of her local group of relatives and friends, and may even lead her to change her village or go to the court as a supporter. The important distinction between the adultery of her husband's brother and her husband's adultery is that the former does not automatically endanger her delivery while the latter does. A man confesses his adultery when his own wife gives birth, not when her sister is in labour. This connexion is definite, and is not extended

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
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to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugula* supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugula* and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[6]

To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an efficient deterrent of adultery.

Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[6] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

unity of full-siblings is the result of the established relationship between their mother and father. A man's relationship with his wife may in turn lead to solidarity between their children, but until his wife has stayed with him for many years and borne him live children their own relationship is always uncertain. He must acknowledge that she too has rights, that she must be clothed and respected and must be slept with. He must not abuse her at a beer party or hit her too often, and he must not try to trap her into adultery. When she runs away, he must go after her to apologise. 602 993

8. The support of relatives

It is the tenuousness of the marriage relationship which necessitates the co-operation of the relatives in the marriage. There are occasions when affines quarrel, as when a young woman is encouraged by her husband's kin to remain in their village to be delivered of her first child and at the same time is under pressure from her own relatives to move back to her own village for the confinement. A man who is anxious to build up his own cluster of huts in a village may attempt to force his sons and daughters to bring their spouses to live near him against the wishes of his children's affines. These struggles, where they occur, are expressed in terms of residence, for it is common residence that welds kinsfolk together. But in general affines co-operate rather than quarrel. Litigation about marriage payments is rare, and frequently divorces are granted without consideration of the return of marriage payments. During a marriage it is more important that the married couple should be exhorted to adjust themselves to each other and be tolerant of each other's foibles, than that each side should insist on its formal rights. Old people try to prevent marriages they consider unsuitable, but they do not usually try to make difficulties once a marriage has taken place. The successful marriages of a man's children bring him grandchildren to care for and play with, and *children's parents-in-law* who will welcome him and give him food, even if they do not always add to his own cluster of huts. 581 602 [991]

To some degree people appear to be afraid of the sorcery of an offended affine, but this is not a well-developed idea, and more frequently people express their reasons for trying to patch up a marriage that is in danger of breaking in terms of the need for everyone to 'live well together', without bringing troubles into the village. The well-being of the village and of the local group of kinsfolk within it has ultimate value for the Ngoni and is an end in itself. It follows that serious quarrels can only be resolved by means of some new residential alignment, involving moves from one cluster to another, and from one village to another. The village itself does not exist in isolation, and a village thrives because of the ties that link it to other villages in the vicinity. Marriages link villages together, by the bonds of affinity which cut across village boundaries, and by the interaction between groups of affines [954] 581 621 [181] 628 607 581

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 in different villages. This distinction between the two groups
602 linked by marriage is symbolised by their spatial separation, and by
581 the existence of 'the man's village' and 'the woman's village', and we have seen how in the story of Daniel and Deborah (p. 82), Daniel wanted Deborah to be warned not in his village but in her own. He wished her own kinsfolk and her own local community to express their condemnation of her conduct, and this could only be done on their own ground. Without their co-operation it would have seemed that it was merely Daniel's relatives who were accusing Deborah, and trying to make trouble for her for no good reason. With the co-operation of her relatives it was possible to pass censure on Deborah with less fear that the marriage might come to an end.

594 It is because the marriage relationship is one which involves other kinsfolk as well as the married couple themselves that the elementary family is not an important grouping in Ngoni society. We have seen that in the old days children left their mother's hut on weaning and went to live with their grandmother or their parents' captor's great wife. A man slept in the same hut as his wife and their unweaned child, but their waking lives were spent with other people. Nowadays the pattern is more variable. Some children stay with their parents until they are old enough to sleep in a dormitory with other children of the same sex. They are fed and clothed by their parents from infancy until they grow up. Yet most old women still gather round themselves groups of three or four grandchildren for whose food and shelter they are responsible. The provision of clothes and school fees is a more difficult thing for an old woman to manage, and for these a child usually turns to its father, if the father is living near. Even the children who live in their parent's hut, however, soon join a play group and spend much of their time away from their parents. Other boys and girls who are
[603] sent home from Southern Rhodesia may have to rely entirely on their grandparents for clothes if their parents do not send money for them. A man who is richer than his neighbours, particularly
[556] if his riches are in money rather than in cattle, is entreated by his relatives to buy them clothes and other necessities, and he may make himself responsible for the clothing of his siblings' children.

Financially, then, the elementary family is a more distinct grouping than in the days when the only form of wealth was cattle, controlled by the heads of segments. But even financially it is not yet a very clear cut grouping and the same is true in other fields of activity. A man and his wife work together in their garden, and they and their children live on its produce, more or less. On the other hand, at the beginning of a marriage they may be dependent on the parents of one or the other for their food and may pool their resources with them. Many meals are taken in common in the village, a group of neighbours cooking for each other in turn and feeding themselves and their children and grandchildren from the same dishes. In court, a woman looks for support to her own kinsfolk

others, the Zulu and Nuer have agnatic lineages and rare divorce, while the Lozi and Ila lack agnatic lineages and have frequent divorce. The Ngoni before 1898 appear to belong to the first type and the Ngoni of the present-day to the second. In 'the time of peace' the fertility of the married woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth to her husband's lineage segment, and the children whom she produced were recruits to that segment. Her agnates could never claim the children for their matrilateral segment. Associated with this system were the levirate, the sororate, and the right to enforce betrothal on pain of the return of gifts. The simple legal family was a relatively stable unit, and its position within the lineage segment was determined rigidly by the ranking of co-wives. Divorce was rare and could be effected only on the initiative of the husband. By contrast the affiliation of children nowadays is not fixed, and the very groups themselves to which they would formerly have attached themselves are no longer important. The children borne by a woman, whatever marriage payments have or have not been made for her, are potential recruits to local kin groups led by a variety of different relatives. Compared with the past, the simple legal family is unstable and divorce is frequent and easy. As might be expected, the levirate and sororate and enforceable betrothal, the trappings of the old system, have declined in importance.

Gluckman also suggests that in general, marriage payments fall in value with the decreasing dominance of patrilineal descent, although he cites the Ila as a virilocal people with high marriage payments, no agnatic lineages and frequent divorce. He regards the influence of property on marriage payments as secondary, but writes: 'On this hypothesis, which needs more testing, the amount of goods transferred and the divorce rate tend to be directly associated, but both are rooted in the kinship structure. It is rare divorce which allows high marriage payment, rather than high marriage payment which prevents divorce.'[7] The Ngoni material suggests that payments, kinship structure and divorce frequency are connected and that among them, as among the Ila, frequent divorce does not preclude high payments.

We may distinguish three phases in the history of Ngoni marriage payments. Prior to 1898 bridewealth varied in amount from one to a dozen beasts, depending on the status of the woman's father. In addition, recently captured women were married, both by men of high and low status, without payment of cattle. There is no indication that divorce was any less rare in one section of the community than another. In our pre-1898 sample, as set out in Table I, only one marriage out of eighteen ended in divorce, despite the absence of payments in half the marriages. It is true that in the single instance of divorce there were no marriage payments, yet even this marriage does not suggest marital instability as we

[7] Gluckman, op. cit., pp. 192, 200.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR
Mpezeni

as one from a graded segmentary society organized on a basis of patrilineal descent and modified by political promotion to a society of villages organized on a basis of omnidirectional kinship. In the past a man lived in the same place as his father and in charge of the segment allocated to him by his father. Now a man lives where he can find relatives of one kind or another who may be related to him agnatically, cognatically, affinally, or by any combination of these ways. He is not even restricted to consanguineal relatives, as in cognatic kinship systems, for he can affiliate himself to some person who is linked cognatically neither to him or to any of his potential descendants, as when he goes to live with his father's wife's mother's brother. Genealogical connexion can be traced along all possible paths and there are no mechanisms by which one path is automatically favoured or by which the length of a path is restricted. In consequence the genealogical constitution of any local group of relatives is complex, and every man is a potential recruit to many local groups. He selects between the numerous possibilities open to him on the basis of his own inclinations and in response to the various pressures exerted on him by his siblings, his parents, his wife, her parents, and others. Once he has made his choice he can always change his mind and move elsewhere if he finds his neighbours irksome. His wealth, either in cattle or money, is his own and he can take it with him when he moves. There are no rights in land (with the one exception of dry season gardens) which might otherwise tie him to one particular spot. As with residence, so with marriage payments, the formal and informal procedures of marriages, and the values associated with them. In all, considerable variation is tolerated. Indeed, we may well regard variation as a necessity in this system, for every man is subject to a mass of potential conflicting claims and he cannot possibly honour them all simultaneously. Variation occurs not because of different practices by various sections of the population but rather because of different individual decisions. A man decides for himself whether or not he will pay bridewealth, or take a hoeing party to his wife's mother's garden, or be suspended from the sacraments for marrying a second wife. Yet although he makes these choices himself, he is all the time subject to social pressure from kinsfolk and neighbours who will be affected by his decisions and who therefore try to influence them. A woman is not quite so free as a man, but she too can make many decisions for herself, and her relatives must appeal to her if they wish to influence her, for they cannot force her against her will. Man and wife living together are in a unique relationship which is personal and non-transferable, yet they live in the midst of kinsfolk and the well-being of one relative is the concern of all. The quarrels of a married couple are a danger to the cohesion of the local group in which they live, while the longer they live together, fertile and peaceful, the greater the local solidarity.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 [273] order, first women, then men, and the couple last. Inside the byre they are given beer which they drink without praising.[1] They then dance on to the hut of the woman's mother and enter. Beer and a plate of boiled maize have already been put inside. The dancers are joined by a few important people from the family of the woman, but the woman's parents do not come into the hut at this stage. The people from the man's village, including the woman and her husband, sit on one side of the hut and the people from the woman's family on the other. One of the woman's relatives makes a speech about the added responsibilities of the husband, how he must come and visit in their village and must help his parents-in-law. There is sometimes a speech in reply from the man's side. A threepenny bit or a sixpence is placed on a basketwork plate on top of the beer by one of the man's people, and someone from the woman's side does the same. The money is picked up by someone else from the woman's side. Sometimes there is another plate, into which a representative of the man will put the real gift, as opposed to these tokens, which may be as much as one pound. This is also taken up by someone from the woman's side and is later given to the father-in-law.

606 273 A woman from the wife's side then takes a spoonful of boiled maize and spits it out again. She is followed by a woman from the husband's side, who does the same. This ends the formal stage of the ceremony and drinking begins. The distribution of the beer is controlled by the senior man in the husband's party. If they are so inclined they may go back again into the byre and dance or they may wander round the village dancing. If the father-in-law wishes, he may kill a beast for them.[2] When they are tired and have drunk their fill, they go back to their own village, leaving a walking stick behind them in the hut.

On the next day the party of dancers come back again, this time with the husband's parents. They go back into the wife's mother's house and the wife's parents join them there. There is beer, and the wife's mother fills a bowl and presents it to her son-in-law, kneeling at his feet and drinking from the bowl before handing it over to him, after the usual fashion of offering a bowl of beer to anyone. The son-in-law drinks, and passes the beer round the hut. The rest of the pots of beer are then presented to the son-in-law's [607] people, and drinking begins again. The two sets of parents sit together, and discuss the characters of their children. There is much plain speaking. When all the beer is finished the party breaks up, and people return to their own villages. The proceedings on the second day are referred to as 'following the dancing-stick',[3]

[1] For the custom of praising when drinking beer, see Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 216 ff. The beer drunk in the byre is called *nkatulo*.
[2] Called *congenela*. Cf. Zulu *ukhu-ngenela*, to enter for (something).
[3] *Kulanda zinthonga*. Cf. Zulu *ukhu-landa*, to follow, and *in-tonga*, a stick.

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N 251 511 [126]

The people in the original area were short of food but by no means at starvation level. This was ascertained by taking seven sample villages at random within the congested area and weighing their entire food stocks during the first fortnight of February. From these samples the following data were obtained.

Grain Stocks of Seven Ngoni Villages
(February 1941)

N [162]

Total population			Total grain stocks
Men	Women	Children	lb.
292	389	531	24,710

Making no allowance for a special reserve of seed against a possible need for replanting, or for loss in preparing flour and for other reasons, the grain stock represents not more than 20 days usage, and supplies would probably be exhausted by early March. There was much variation between villages; one exceptional village had enough grain for 46 days while in another the grain stocks represented only 4 days supply. It will be remembered, however, that in an African social system, kinship obligations tend to even out the distribution of food supplies.

N [184] [602]

In striking contrast to these samples, a village which had recently made an illicit move to unoccupied private land was found to have, at the end of February, grain stocks representing 81 days supply. The effects of falling yields first make themselves felt in the bad years and it should be noted that the sampling was done in a year following a good climatic season. It will also be noted that villages which would in all probability have reached the starvation level had already transferred themselves.

N [361] N [166]

There is, then, a time lag between the beginning of over-crowded conditions and the point at which obvious symptoms of land degeneration and soil erosion appear. The length of this time lag clearly depends on a number of factors acting together; the type of land and the system used on it, the degree of congestion, the original population density and the rate of population increase, if any. A further variable time lag elapses before conditions of general food shortage are reached. Under some conditions the process of land degradation may result in food shortage within a very few years, while in other cases this result may not appear for twenty years or more.

N 161 311 511

Within ten years of the creation of reserves in the Mkushi District obvious land degradation and recurrent food shortages in some areas had reached such a stage as to attract the attention of District Officers, missionaries and other interested persons, and to create an insistent demand for additional land. The population densities in these areas were 18 to 25 persons per square mile. Other areas of the Territory, notably the reserves of the

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10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sophisticated informant remarked: 'The Cewa are just slaves, they merely eat. The Ngoni are like the Whites; they eat little and drink much.' 273 262 829

Economic Co-operation

There are other activities which entail inter-village ties. Cattle seek their own fodder, but small stock, pigs, goats, and sheep, are fed on husks and other scraps. A man whose animals have increased beyond his ability to feed them will farm out some of them to his friends, either in his own village or in some neighbouring one. The tender of the animals then exercises some control over the disposal of any natural increase and at the end of the arrangement he is entitled to be given one of the animals. The friends whom a man selects for this task are not always close relatives, and may sometimes be people to whom he can trace no genealogical relationship at all, but whom he may have met, for instance, in Southern Rhodesia. Other people acquire a reputation for integrity, and may be given animals to look after by their acquaintances. Cattle are not disposed of so widely, and there is more often a kinship connexion between the owner and the tender. On the other hand, cattle are more susceptible than small stock to tsetse fly, and in consequence there are many people in the new areas that have been recently resettled who have to keep their cattle in the village of a relative or friend who lives in an area free from fly. 233 476 628

Harvesting of crops is carried out by members of the household except in the case of the aged, who will call on their relatives to help them. Hut-building, making a new section of a garden, clearing the ground prior to planting, and, in particular, weeding the garden during the wet season, are activities that are often carried out by collective effort. Women, particularly pairs of widows, may work together in each other's gardens turn and turn about, and a man may be able to call on relatives, particularly his sons-in-law, to help in his garden without paying them for it. Most of the outside assistance that may be required in a garden is raised by means of a beer-party. The man's wife brews beer, and it is made known in the village and round about that on such-and-such a day there will be a party to hoe in their garden. A dozen or so people go to the garden in the morning, and work until the task set by the owner of the garden is completed. They then move to the village, and are refreshed with beer. Attendance at the beer-party is not restricted to those who have worked in the garden, and at some such parties a jar of beer may be specifically allocated to 241 476 602 273 476 241

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

matrilineal matrilocal tribes, and the values associated with these systems of organization were not entirely forgotten. With the decline of the central power of the chieftainship after the conquest, cultural diversity within the tribe increased, so that at the present time we have a wide range of variation in the kinds of family found between one village and the next, and even within the same village. In particular, the irreconcilable difference between the organization of unilineal kin-groups on patrilineal and matrilineal principles appears to have led to a condition in which, for most of the tribe, the only groups of relatives that emerge as corporate groups are stocks, people with a common ancestor from whom they are descended through sons or daughters or both. These stocks are not mutually exclusive, and a man may think of himself at one time as belonging to one stock and at another time to another stock. Frequently alongside the true members of a stock there are other people who claim to belong to the same 'family'[1] who are in fact related affinally to the members of the stock. The organizing factor in domestic affairs is not kinship by itself but common residence combined with genealogical connexion. A stock, with its affinal accretions, emerges as the core of a corporate group of kindred only when its members live near one another and meet each other frequently. The strongest groups are those people of a stock who are living alongside one another in the same part of a village. 611 184

The use made of double affinal links in establishing attachment to a stock is noticeable. For example, a child will call a man who is his mother's divorced husband's wife's divorced husband by the term *father* (see Diagram 4 below). A man may bring into his village a wife from outside who may come with her children by a former husband. When grown up, the sons may also bring in wives accompanied by their children from former marriages. These children grow up to regard the village as their own and to think of themselves, in certain contexts, as belonging to the 'family' of the headman of the village. Informants in a village with a most complicated kinship structure will say 'We are all one family here'. 602● 611 [601]

Kinship Terminology

The variation in the kinship systems of the different tribes from which the Ngoni recruited their members has led to some confusion in the use of kinship terms. Most of the terms now used are in the 601 [197]

[1] *Baaja*, pl. *mabaaja*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [848]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name *mulu* for a man becomes *moula* for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimalo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

 N

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze*.

159 173 562 N M 171 643 842 851

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Lozwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtenguleni Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

N 159 173 562 [595] N [764] [A23]

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchizu* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawasa Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jere; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 595 842 602

It is agreed by the old Indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

N 159 173 644

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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visits or on special occasions. In the central kingdom, where an important man's sisters often married in the village and stayed there, it was evident that they often exercised authority over their brother's children. [591 184]

In polygynous Ngoni families the relationship between siblings was marked by strong attachment. Among the boys in the *laweni* brothers united to protect their younger brothers from other boys, and in the families of Swazi clans brothers showed many signs of youthful intolerance and arrogance towards boys of other clans, especially in matters concerning cattle and their herding. Sibling rivalry among boys was to a large extent controlled by two factors. One was the *laweni* system where the age-set principle predominated. The other was the division into the big house and *gogo* house, where the children of the *gogo* house knew that they stood in a different relationship to succession and authority in the village from their brothers and sisters in the big house. Within the big house itself, sons of the big wife knew that succession was regulated by seniority, and that the eldest son would expect to get priority when he married and it was necessary to allot cattle for *lobola*. The brother-sister link between children of the same mother was, as we have seen, a very close one, especially with the older sister of a man who was heir to a high position. This sister in her relation to his children carried almost the same authority as he did. Among sisters of the same family there was less apparent cohesion, except among very high-ranking Swazi clans where the girl children were looked after by special nursemaids and had their instruction in correct behaviour together from the older woman known as their *gogo*. 595 [561]

Ngoni grandparents on the paternal side showed little of the joking relationship with their grandchildren sometimes associated with this tie. When children went to visit their maternal grandparents in another village there was noticeably more ease between them and more indulgence was shown. In their father's village children were always aware that his parents were persons of standing and authority. Girls over six or seven often slept in their paternal grandmother's hut if she was a widow, and were aware that, though she showed kindliness in providing for their needs, she was a firm disciplinarian in all matters of behaviour. 603

Within the family group the male role of leadership was unquestioned. Honour and respect were a man's due from wives as well as from children. In difficult relations within his family, as in the case of divorce, he could count on counsel and support from his brothers, who were also ready to help him if cattle were needed for his own or his son's marriage or for payment of court penalties. This male circle of father and sons, father's brothers and their sons, was a closely knit group which functioned in regulating family affairs and in buying and selling cattle for the house to which they belonged. An obligation to help his sons was recognized by the father of a family and this obligation 562 593 593

small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was applied with a feather to the baby's navel.

When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grandmother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

854 house was still killed and eaten. The cloth came out of the
[432] store of cloth bought when cattle were sold, and kept in the hut of the senior woman of the father's house.

Visit to the mother's home

593 If, as was always the case in earlier days, the mother of the
574 new baby had come from a distant village, she did not see her own mother or her relatives, and they did not see the child until it was several weeks old, and considered by the senior women strong enough to undertake a journey. Then a visit involving much ceremony took place, for the wife's
[606] mother-in-law headed the party. The stiff and formal relations between the two sets of 'in-laws' had been eased slightly through the series of feasts and exchanges which preceded and followed the marriage ceremony. Face-to-face
[571] intercourse was, however, still very formal between the two families, and this first visit with the grandchild was in one sense an act of condescension on the part of the husband's family, since the child belonged to them. It was also a human and natural recognition of the eagerness of the young mother to see her own mother and display her child. Word was sent in advance by a messenger from the husband's village to announce the visit, so that the wife's family could make due preparation.

The main object of this visit was, in the Ngoni phrase, 'to show the child at its mother's home'. The young mother and
[606] baby, with her mother-in-law in the place of honour, sat outside the big house of the girl's father's family. Her father
[431] and his male relatives came to salute the child and to give it presents of beads, and in modern times small gifts of money
[603] as well. If the girl's father owned many cattle, he killed a beast, and they feasted that night, and the visitors carried home meat with them as well as the presents to the child. It was all very formal and correct, except when the young mother escaped for a short time to the circle of her sisters and girlhood friends, and exchanged confidences with them.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

862 other compounds, so that the child should not 'see the mother's breasts and cry for them'. Nevertheless they did cry, some of them day and night at first, and many for weeks at night when the indulgent warmth of the mother on her mat was exchanged for the kindly but somewhat stern care [603] of the grandmother or another older woman. Paternal grandmothers did not believe in spoiling Ngoni children, and the child was often left to cry itself to sleep.

The Ngoni used to say: 'On the day when a child was 593 weaned, all the village knew. It was not a secret. People 862 spoke about it to show that the parents were now free to have another child.' The mother-in-law and the other senior 606 women of the father's family took the initiative as well as assuming responsibility for deciding the moment for weaning. Those same senior women who had assisted at the birth of the child arrived one morning on the veranda of the mother's hut and announced, 'We want to wean this child.' Apparently the mother was sometimes capable of refusing to co-operate. She did not want to give up suckling the child, so she picked it up and ran out of the hut past the women, and hid herself and her child with some of her friends. The senior women did not stoop to argument. They formed into a procession and filed out of the compound saying, 'Well, she has refused. She can now find the proper time herself, with her husband.' The young mother, who had yielded to a sudden impulse, found herself on reflection in great difficulty. It was considered a 'shame' for her to do the weaning herself, and her husband was jeered at by his brothers and friends for having a rebellious wife who did not pay attention to the claims of his family on the child.

So when the senior women announced that they had come 862 to do the weaning, most young mothers meekly submitted, whatever their personal sentiments were. The senior women pounded chillies and put the hot paste on the mother's breasts, and held the child near enough to smell the chillies, even to touch them. They said to the child, 'Leave it alone.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

863 of dust, and many of them began to suffer from sores, itch and sore eyes. The girls however, had already begun to like a clean and shining skin for the sake of being beautiful, and their ablutions were no longer under duress.

The smallest children urinated and defecated wherever they happened to be. From the age of three or four, however, they were taught to tell someone if they wanted to defecate, and taken outside the hut. Maize cobs or soft leaves or grass were used to clean the child, and then thrown on the fire. When the child began to look after himself, he was shown how to use the left hand only when cleaning himself, [826] and told it was 'the hand of shame, only used for bad things'. From the age of four or five small girls and boys went with [514] their mothers and the other women to the section of the surrounding bush reserved for the women's toilet. At about the same age boys and girls were taught to withdraw from the public gaze when urinating, and to conceal themselves behind a hut or in some other hiding-place. The Ngoni were [514] [834] extremely prudish about all physical acts connected with evacuating or sex, and began to demand correct behaviour from children at an early age.

757 If a child was constipated, or had diarrhoea, or was vomiting, or had a fever or stomach-ache, the nurse girl reported 603 it to his mother who went to tell the child's paternal grandmother. For all the range of usual childish ailments the grandmother prescribed and carried out standard treatments, such as whey used as a purgative, or very thin gruel to check diarrhoea. The Ngoni women had a number of herbal remedies which they used for themselves and their children. They also used hot poultices, cupping, and forms of massage. Only when the known household remedies failed, did the grandmother tell the child's father and he, as we have seen, took the responsibility for calling in 'specialists'.

867 Sleep, the little child's third major need, was sometimes well ordered and sometimes erratic. It was not considered 864 proper for children to sleep in the same hut as their parents

upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended not only on her own reputation and character, but on the household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one. The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl, to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter into all her occupations and amusements. This companion, chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's household, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and ate in the same household.

In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their companions. There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided that it would also be wise to send their girls to school, especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men, learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daughters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and dignified behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return [851]
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Wisa FQ5

N 584 her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is N 582 trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship N term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending [601] generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, affines*, and *children*.[3] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry N any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin*. In the second ascending and ●603 descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* 602 and his female *grandchild* as *wife*, and he can, to a slight extent, joke N and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. [582] But Ngoni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to [186] marry his female *grandchild*, and do not approve of such marriages among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

N 605 A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins*. We have noted above that the Nguni peoples W from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not M allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Ŵisa 582 peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organization was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Ŵisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage N with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. 582 The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage 583 is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*banja*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

[3] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, op. cit. pp. 222 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 approval of his father before he offers, and as in the case of Amos and Eve (p. 28), the father may sometimes disapprove. If the man is from another part of the territory or from abroad the parents of the woman, even if they accept the legalization payment, may be 583 reluctant to allow their grandchildren to go a long way away from 603 them to live among their son-in-law's kin. This consideration applies 593 particularly to strangers in the township who marry Ngoni women. When they leave their jobs or retire they try to take their wives and children with them. They may be frustrated in the removal of their children by the woman's parents, who refuse the bridewealth. The courts support the claims of Ngoni grandparents for the retention of their grandchildren under these conditions and a returning Yao or Cipeta man may be forced to travel without his children and sometimes without his wife. I have recorded elsewhere [2] an incident in which a Yao man who had been married to an Ngoni woman for twenty-one years was divorced by her and his offer of bridewealth refused by her parents. The police who check the movements of women and children by bus and lorry away from Fort Jameson are in touch with the Native Courts and may be on the look out if it seems likely that a man from a strange tribe will attempt to smuggle his wife and children away from their Ngoni kin.

581 Thus we see that the kinsfolk are directly concerned with marriage. When the children are still toddlers, they are paired off in fun by their [858] adult relatives as they sit playing. For a week or month or even longer a woman will laughingly call her neighbour *child's parent-in-law* because their children have been nominated *husband* and *wife* in this way. As a child grows older, so the interest of its relatives in its marriage become clearer. Before marriage the relatives of a 684 girl hold rights in her that are violated if she is seduced and bears 848 a child. It is to them that the girl's lover pays the beast of seduction to recompense them for the wrong he has done by impregnating the girl, but he does not gain custody of the child. On the other hand, 836 no one brings a case against a man merely because he sleeps with an unmarried girl. It is only when she becomes pregnant that an action can be laid against him. A man caught *in flagrante delicto* by one of the unmarried girl's kin can expect abuse and possibly blows but unless he is provocative he need not fear action in the courts. The hostility directed towards him seems to be due in part to his having behaved so indiscreetly as to be caught and having forced the girl's kin to take cognizance of what was happening.

581 At marriage the woman's kin grant rights in her sexual activities 583 to her husband. These rights are unambiguously transferred by the legalization payment, and the woman's kin are therefore in a position to delay or facilitate the tranfser of these rights by their attitude towards the payment. There is no corresponding right in an unmarried man held by his kin, and at marriage there is no corres-

[2] Barnes, op. cit. p. 238

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

584 or friends. If the man is away working or in the Army he may make his proposal by letter. When agreement has been reached negotiations can proceed although they are carried on as if there had been no prior agreement and the proposal was entirely a new one.

A man tells his eldest brother of his intention to marry, or, if he is the eldest son, he may approach his father direct. He does not [593] speak to his mother about this matter, for a man does not confide in his mother about anything connected with sex, but she is told of his intention by her husband. A man ought to tell his grand- [603] mother at an early stage, particularly the grandmother who reared him. A woman tells her sisters and her grandmother, and her eldest sister will tell her eldest brother. The man's father or eldest brother may decide on who shall act as intermediaries in the matchmaking, or else the man may himself ask important people in the village to act. There is no definite rule as to who they should be, and either men or women or both may make up the party. Usually two or three people go, and a man will try and choose people who are reliable and sober and tactful. Marriage intermediaries do not have the same important responsibilities for the marriage as do the marriage [191] sureties (or witnesses) among the Nyanja and Yao although they are known by the same term.[3] The intermediaries go to the woman's village and consult her senior relatives. Traditionally they should go to the woman's grandmother, either her father's mother or her mother's mother, depending on who lives in the village and who is the more important. They tell her that they have heard that such-and-such a marriage has been contemplated. The girl's grandmother tells the girl's father that the intermediaries have come, and if nothing has arisen to jeopardize the marriage, the visiting party are told that all is well and that they must come back again. They return to their own village, and the next day, or the next week if it is a long way to walk, they go again, bringing with them a gift or some- times the legalization payment. The gift or money is handed to the [583] person leading the negotiations on the woman's side who passes it on to the woman's father. Arrangements are made about the gall bladder ceremony and a date fixed. The intermediaries then go back to their village.

585 At the gall bladder ceremony the bride receives formal advice from her affines and the people in their village. Shortly afterwards [591] she begins to live with her husband in either his or her village. If they live virilocally she does not at first cook for her husband, but the couple rely on food prepared by his other wives or his mother or [593] grandmother. It may be up to a year later that the woman first cooks for her husband and husband's father, the latter commenting on her cooking. When she first becomes pregnant she is anointed 843 by her husband's grandmother, and goes with a young girl from her husband's kinsfolk to announce her pregnancy to her own kin.

[3] *Nkhoswe.*

602 the parents of the couple. If the parents are not available other kinsfolk can substitute for them, but in general it is a man's or woman's father who represents the interests of their local group of kin in situations in which these interests are contrasted with those of the spouse's kin. It is the woman's father who receives all the different payments made in marriage, and he is free to keep the payments or to distribute them among his relatives as he thinks fit. If a woman's father is dead or away at work the payments are made to her brother or her father's brother or her mother or some other relative who, in this situation, is prepared to assume the responsibilities that would otherwise be borne by him. Similarly, most men find the money for marriage payments themselves, but if a man is too poor to do this, it is first to his father that he turns for assistance. If, however, his father is dead or poverty-stricken or unwilling to provide the money, he can ask some other relative for help. Here we are dealing with situations in which the father or his substitute [591] is acting as the representative of the loosely structured local group of kin in situations in which his own children are specifically involved. There are, however, certain specific kinship relations which we can separate out from the general operation of local kinship and which impinge on the marriage relationship. A grandmother has a particular interest in the sexual aspect of marriage. The eldest brother acts as intermediary between a man and his father in the marriage negotiations. Younger brothers are interested in the disposal of widows. Children have rights in the property of a married couple. These are more specific obligations and rights, and while it is possible to find substitutes if the genealogically correct relatives are not there, there is more rigidity in these matters than in those in which the initiative lies with the local group of kinsfolk whoever they may be.

603 We have mentioned that the grandmother who rears a girl may be in charge of her seclusion at puberty (p. 32). Even when some other old woman is in charge, the girl's grandmother has some responsibility for her sexual behaviour. If a man does not sleep with his wife she complains to his grandmother, and although a man is not instructed in sexual matters by his grandmother, he can discuss them more freely with her than with any other kinswoman. Grandmothers sometimes play an important part in the resolution of a marital quarrel in the village, and they often act as midwives. It is a man's grandmother who complains to him if his wife is not bearing children, and it is to her that he may turn for advice about medicines. In the courts, however, grandmothers do not play so important a role. They are women, and important women use their influence more in village situations than in court, where men are in [592] control and male councillors look to a man's brothers and father for confirmation of evidence.

593 There is considerable formality in the relationship between a man and his own parents and this formality appears to be greater if

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

638 in different villages. This distinction between the two groups
602 linked by marriage is symbolised by their spatial separation, and by
581 the existence of 'the man's village' and 'the woman's village', and we have seen how in the story of Daniel and Deborah (p. 82), Daniel wanted Deborah to be warned not in his village but in her own. He wished her own kinsfolk and her own local community to express their condemnation of her conduct, and this could only be done on their own ground. Without their co-operation it would have seemed that it was merely Daniel's relatives who were accusing Deborah, and trying to make trouble for her for no good reason. With the co-operation of her relatives it was possible to pass censure on Deborah with less fear that the marriage might come to an end.

594 It is because the marriage relationship is one which involves other kinsfolk as well as the married couple themselves that the elementary family is not an important grouping in Ngoni society. We have seen that in the old days children left their mother's hut on weaning and went to live with their grandmother or their parents' captor's great wife. A man slept in the same hut as his wife and their unweaned child, but their waking lives were spent with other people. Nowadays the pattern is more variable. Some children stay with their parents until they are old enough to sleep in a dormitory with other children of the same sex. They are fed and clothed by their parents from infancy until they grow up. Yet most old women still gather round themselves groups of three or four grandchildren for whose food and shelter they are responsible. The provision of clothes and school fees is a more difficult thing for an old woman to manage, and for these a child usually turns to its father, if the father is living near. Even the children who live in their parent's hut, however, soon join a play group and spend much of their time away from their parents. Other boys and girls who are
[603] sent home from Southern Rhodesia may have to rely entirely on their grandparents for clothes if their parents do not send money for them. A man who is richer than his neighbours, particularly
[556] if his riches are in money rather than in cattle, is entreated by his relatives to buy them clothes and other necessities, and he may make himself responsible for the clothing of his siblings' children.

Financially, then, the elementary family is a more distinct grouping than in the days when the only form of wealth was cattle, controlled by the heads of segments. But even financially it is not yet a very clear cut grouping and the same is true in other fields of activity. A man and his wife work together in their garden, and they and their children live on its produce, more or less. On the other hand, at the beginning of a marriage they may be dependent on the parents of one or the other for their food and may pool their resources with them. Many meals are taken in common in the village, a group of neighbours cooking for each other in turn and feeding themselves and their children and grandchildren from the same dishes. In court, a woman looks for support to her own kinsfolk

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage. [606] The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a 593 matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it 691 is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the 578 brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on [586] grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although 593 they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other. 571 In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative 578 in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a [684] woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

girl's former nurse girl and had continued to take an interest 881
in the girl. This woman came to the hut, gave the girl a cloth to wear, told her to stay in the hut until the period was over, and instructed her companion to stay with her, bring her food, and look after her other needs. When the period was over, the companion told the senior helper who in the meantime had informed the girl's paternal grandmother, her father's sister (to whom a special message was sent to the village where she lived), and the girl's own mother. The information was always given in the phrase, 'This child has now matured.' The father's sister, who made a special visit for the [604] purpose, came into the hut and told the girl to get up and follow her. A little procession formed, the father's sister leading, the girl immediately behind her, then the grandmother and other senior women of the father's house, the senior helper who had attended the girl, and finally the girl's mother. At the river the girl was made to take off her clothes and sit in shallow water, facing south-east, the ritual position [823] adopted in all Ngoni crises of life and death. On the bank the women stood in silence and watched the girl splashing herself with water and trying to control her shivering, until she was allowed to come out and given clean clothes to put on.

Back at the grandmother's hut, the women sat on the veranda, the girl in front of them, legs tucked in sideways, head bent in a respectful attitude. The father's sister led off with some matter-of-fact instructions to the girl. At subsequent periods she would not be in seclusion but she would take every care to conceal her condition from everyone. She must always wear a cloth between her legs, whether menstruating or not, and she must now consider herself separated from the children's and the immature girls' groups. She would sleep only with mature girls in a senior helper's hut, and must wash in the river only with them, and never anywhere near young children or immature girls. Later on, not on this 881
occasion, the senior helper who had assisted her and felt 864

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 county the senior lieutenants of the county segment are well-
643 known figures, usually headmen of large villages, and often seen at
645 the chief's house. There are also the lieutenants of the segments of lower order founded for their great wives by successive heads of the county segment, and in particular the lieutenants of the reigning chief's great wife's segment. There are individuals who for some reason or other have become friendly with the chief, and there are those occupying posts paid by the Native Treasury. There are the kinsmen of the chief, including the chief's deputy. All these categories contribute to the circle round the chief which keeps him informed of what is going on in his county, advises him what he should do and travels with him on journeys. The constitution of this group is not fixed and there is no formal council to which persons definitely do or do not belong. An Administrative officer once asked Mpezeni II who constituted the tribal council, and the Paramount Chief is said to have found difficulty in thinking of any names. Not all the people who might be expected to advise the chief do so, for there are always quarrels and preferences within each category. In particular, the lieutenants of regal segments seem to play a comparatively minor part. They do not represent the interests of the county as a whole, as do the lieutenants of the county segment, nor of the reigning chief, as do the lieutenants of his own village. They are the favourites of former chiefs and the segments that they represent are not functionally significant under the present scheme of administration.

In recent years the Administration has endeavoured from time
[648] to time to discuss affairs with the chiefs and the four newly appointed Native Authority councillors in isolation from the rest of the tribe.[4] In most situations in which matters of common interest are discussed there is, however, no restriction on who can offer advice to the chief or to the meeting. Any man can stand up and say what he wishes, but unless he is in an important social position people will listen to him attentively only if his counsel seems sound.[5]

It is the custom for a chief to nominate one of his agnatic
[605] kinsmen, usually a father's son or father's brother's son, as his deputy.[6] Although this appears to have been a traditional post, I
634 do not know what role was played by an important man's deputy
645 in pre-conquest times. Nowadays the deputy of a chief may help in his various official duties and represents the interests of the chief's agnatic kin as against those of his lieutenants. In village affairs

[4] See p. 151.
[5] See pp. 158f.
[6] *Mnawa*. cf. Zulu *umnawu*, younger sibling.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Wisa FQ5

N 584 her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is N 582 trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship N [601] term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, affines,* and *children.*[3] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin.* In the second ascending and N 603 descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* 602 and his female *grandchild* as *wife,* and he can, to a slight extent, joke and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. N [582] But Ngoni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to marry his female *grandchild,* and do not approve of such marriages [186] among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

N ● 605 A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins.* We have noted above that the Nguni peoples W M 582 from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Ŵisa peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organization was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Ŵisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage N with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. 582 The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage 583 is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*banja*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

[3] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, op. cit. pp. 222 ff

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

843 little children. They are not able to hear those things which
593 belong to pregnancy.' The men on their part accepted the
562 role of being ignorant of what was coming, though they were generally aware of it. It was an elaborate piece of role-playing, standardized by custom, emphasizing the separation of the men's and women's worlds in Ngoni life, and giving control and authority into the experienced hands of the senior women.

843 The Ngoni culture pattern forbade the wife to tell her mother-in-law herself about her condition. She had, as so
● 606 often in the Ngoni pattern, to approach first a friend who
572 was her confidante, who might be another young wife or a helper in the household. This friend had to tell her mother-in-law, the future paternal grandmother of the baby, who was destined to play a big part in the child's upbringing.

During the months of pregnancy a Ngoni woman carried on with her normal work in the household, including cooking for her husband. If she feared a miscarriage, and suffered from what was called 'a shaking inside', she stayed quietly in the hut, and, saying that she had a headache, asked her husband to call her friend. Then the friend told the mother-in-law who sent for a 'doctor' to bring medicines 'to make the inside not shake'. A young Ngoni woman did not expect
843 to have miscarriages, and feared that her husband's relatives
152 would blame her home for not giving her enough food before marriage to make her strong and healthy in child-bearing.

The fear of invidious comparisons with her own home and upbringing also operated when the wife felt herself near to labour. She would keep on working up to the last minute, for if she told her friend that her time was come, and the friend summoned the senior women, they came to examine her. Should they find on examination that she was not about to deliver, they looked at her and said, 'What are you afraid of? Did you call us for fear?' The young wife was ashamed of being thought fearful, both for her own reputation and

854 house was still killed and eaten. The cloth came out of the
[432] store of cloth bought when cattle were sold, and kept in the hut of the senior woman of the father's house.

Visit to the mother's home

593 If, as was always the case in earlier days, the mother of the
574 new baby had come from a distant village, she did not see her own mother or her relatives, and they did not see the child until it was several weeks old, and considered by the senior women strong enough to undertake a journey. Then a visit involving much ceremony took place, for the wife's
● [606] mother-in-law headed the party. The stiff and formal relations between the two sets of 'in-laws' had been eased slightly through the series of feasts and exchanges which preceded and followed the marriage ceremony. Face-to-face
[571] intercourse was, however, still very formal between the two families, and this first visit with the grandchild was in one sense an act of condescension on the part of the husband's family, since the child belonged to them. It was also a human and natural recognition of the eagerness of the young mother to see her own mother and display her child. Word was sent in advance by a messenger from the husband's village to announce the visit, so that the wife's family could make due preparation.

The main object of this visit was, in the Ngoni phrase, 'to show the child at its mother's home'. The young mother and baby, with her mother-in-law in the place of honour, sat
[606] outside the big house of the girl's father's family. Her father and his male relatives came to salute the child and to give it
[431] presents of beads, and in modern times small gifts of money
[603] as well. If the girl's father owned many cattle, he killed a beast, and they feasted that night, and the visitors carried home meat with them as well as the presents to the child. It was all very formal and correct, except when the young mother escaped for a short time to the circle of her sisters and girlhood friends, and exchanged confidences with them.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

862 other compounds, so that the child should not 'see the mother's breasts and cry for them'. Nevertheless they did cry, some of them day and night at first, and many for weeks at night when the indulgent warmth of the mother on her mat was exchanged for the kindly but somewhat stern care [603] of the grandmother or another older woman. Paternal grandmothers did not believe in spoiling Ngoni children, and the child was often left to cry itself to sleep.

The Ngoni used to say: 'On the day when a child was 593 weaned, all the village knew. It was not a secret. People 862 spoke about it to show that the parents were now free to have another child.' The mother-in-law and the other senior 606 women of the father's family took the initiative as well as assuming responsibility for deciding the moment for weaning. Those same senior women who had assisted at the birth of the child arrived one morning on the veranda of the mother's hut and announced, 'We want to wean this child.' Apparently the mother was sometimes capable of refusing to co-operate. She did not want to give up suckling the child, so she picked it up and ran out of the hut past the women, and hid herself and her child with some of her friends. The senior women did not stoop to argument. They formed into a procession and filed out of the compound saying, 'Well, she has refused. She can now find the proper time herself, with her husband.' The young mother, who had yielded to a sudden impulse, found herself on reflection in great difficulty. It was considered a 'shame' for her to do the weaning herself, and her husband was jeered at by his brothers and friends for having a rebellious wife who did not pay attention to the claims of his family on the child.

So when the senior women announced that they had come 862 to do the weaning, most young mothers meekly submitted, whatever their personal sentiments were. The senior women pounded chillies and put the hot paste on the mother's breasts, and held the child near enough to smell the chillies, even to touch them. They said to the child, 'Leave it alone.

This breast is now bad'—and they spat downwards as they did when something was really bad. While the child was howling with fright and frustration, the mother's breasts were covered with a cloth. The child was then picked up and carried away in its carrying cloth to the compound of its paternal grandmother, or a widowed paternal aunt, attended by its own nurse girl. If it had a feeding bottle, or one could be made for it, it was given cow's milk, as well as gruel, and curds and whey. The Ngoni women believed that if a weaned child was given cow's milk it would forget its mother's breasts quickly, but they admitted that it was a conventional belief and not always justified. 862 [853]

Social relationships involved in the birth of a child: Wife to husband's family

Throughout the period of pregnancy, during childbirth and after, up to and including weaning, the mother of a new baby was made to feel her position as a stranger among her husband's relatives. Before marriage it had been impressed on her by her own family that, at any rate in the early years of marriage, she must be obedient and humble, not only to establish her own present and future position among her husband's people, but for the sake of the reputation of her own family from whom she was now separated. The key relationship in this cycle of pregnancy, birth, weaning and new conception was that between her and her mother-in-law. If she showed respect by being humble and obedient, she could establish a behaviour pattern which in the end rewarded her by giving her self-respect because she was doing her duty in accepting the authority of her husband's mother. It was no easy path for a high-spirited girl who had had freedom and indulgence in her own home. She knew however that these first few years of marriage and child-bearing were the critical ones. She could see for herself how women who had been married longer had more freedom from the authority of their mothers-in-law because they had learned how to 606

606 handle them, as well as how to conform to required behaviour. So she put up with present restrictions for the sake of future peace and harmony. Her lot was to live there with her husband's people, and the birth of the child was a strong link in the chain which bound her to them. Meantime she [572] found some relief in her friends among the other young wives, and particularly with the one in whom she placed her confidence, and who acted as her go-between with her mother-in-law.

Wife to husband

593 Throughout the intricate and often vexing relations with her mother-in-law and other senior women, the husband-wife relationship remained for the young mother a steadying and constant factor. She had been attracted to him in courtship; [58] she had had the chance of accepting or refusing him when the marriage proposals were made; the cattle had been handed over to her father to seal the marriage contract. For all these and other reasons she held on to her love for her husband and her relationship with him, whatever overbearing behaviour might be shown her by his relatives. Hence she took care of his possessions in the hut they shared, helping the senior women to send them out of the hut just before the confinement. She redirected food towards him when it was sent to her during her confinement, gladly going short herself in order to prove her devotion. She was glad that after coming out of the hut, having a nurse girl meant that she could keep her body and her clothes clean and sweet-smelling and therefore pleasing to him. She was happy when the ritual cleansing of the hut and of herself made it possible for her to cook for her husband again and endear him to her by that means. When weaning the child caused her pain and frustration, there was at the same time a deep satisfaction that full intercourse was now officially permitted [834] between her and her husband, and that they were free to have another child.

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

591 Changes in residence at and after marriage influenced the
184 composition of the group of relatives who assisted at births. In
844 the central kingdom daughters of leading men in the village often stayed in their father's village at marriage. Hence the father's sisters were often present at the birth and the wife's mother and her sisters might be living in the village. If the
[614] wife belonged to a higher ranking Ngoni clan than her husband, her relatives shared responsibility with those of the husband's family.

177 As may be imagined the struggle between mother-in-law
844 control and western medical practices at childbirth was a protracted one. Even when there was a younger member of
[759] the husband's family trained as a nurse or midwife, she by no means had her way in organizing the conduct of the birth. She might introduce a few hygienic measures such as clean cloths instead of old rags, and sterilized thread for tying the cord. But unless the senior women were frightened, and they seldom were, by prolonged and difficult labour, the Ngoni families were averse to taking a young mother into hospital.
[606] The chief reason was the challenge to the authority of the mother-in-law, especially when the younger women who had some knowledge of western medical practices questioned the advice of the senior women.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 801
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 855
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

842 If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

567 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nhlanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshlanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanti* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedicao . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

which the marriage lacked substance. We may look on these rites as fulfilling two social functions. Firstly they affirmed the position of the bride as wife of her husband, and secondly they emphasized the role of her parents as parents-in-law. In all the ceremonies of marriage the man and his wife were supported by members of their own groups, but we do not know exactly who these supporters were. They may have been agnatic kin, maternal kin, neighbours, or political superiors. From what we know of modern marriage it is likely that the composition of these groups of supporters was never rigidly determined.

The beginning of the marriage was announced at a ceremony which we may refer to as the gall bladder rite. It was held in the man's village and, after a beast had been killed, the bride was anointed with its gall and intestinal fat.[14] Another rite, which took place up to a year later, was held when the bride cooked food for her husband for the first time.[15] Before this ceremony she relied for her food on the man's other wives or his mother or grandmother. If the marriage was a successful one, that is, if the woman had borne live children and the husband was treating her well, the woman's parents showed their appreciation of their son-in-law by sending him, from time to time, presents of beer.[16] The son-in-law, or his father, rewarded the women who brought the beer with a present of meat. Later, the wife's parents brewed beer for the son-in-law and called him to their village so that he might formally enter his wife's mother's hut.[17] Later still, a ceremony was held at which the man and his wife's mother ate together.[18] At these rites of entering into the mother-in-law's hut or eating with her, a beast was sometimes killed by the father-in-law for the benefit of the man.

4. *Relationship to affines*

Apart from the specific ceremonial obligations there were continuing obligations of hospitality and assistance between the two groups. There was always visiting between them, and indeed

[14] This ceremony is called *lusiwa*, a word said to be of Zulu origin whose meaning I have been unable to trace. Informants were unable to say what it meant. The gall bladder is called *nyongo*, from the Zulu *inyongo*. Rattray, op. cit. pp. 40 and 114, and Scott, *A cyclopaedic dictionary of the Mang'anja language spoken in British Central Africa*, p. 486, both translate the Nyanja word *nyongo* as spleen, but from Rattray's description of a marriage ceremony it seems that a gall bladder must have also been in use among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

[15] *Mphehiso*. Cf. the Zulu *uku-phehisa*, to help or make to cook. Weise, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', pp. 473-4, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192 describes what seems to be a similar ceremony, which he says took place a few days after marriage.

[16] All offerings of beer which are carried from one place to another, to a son-in-law or to a headman or chief, are called *vipeko*. Cf. Zulu *uku-pheka*, to cook.

[17] Called *mngeniso*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenisa*, to enter another person's hut.

[18] Called either *muyelano*, from the Zulu *uku-dlana*, or *hulyelana*, from the Nsenga *ku-lyelana*, both verbs meaning 'to eat together'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 [591] Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[19] If [593] the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists [583] to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on [941] beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

581 602 As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they [858] belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who [554] had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[19] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 191-2.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

ponding payment through which they can attempt to control the relationship between the couple. Yet both groups of kin are interested in the successful outcome of the marriage, and therefore attempt to influence the choice of marriage partner. 581 583

3. Formal interaction

In the formal negotiations that precede a marriage, and in the ceremonies that mark its stages of development, the kinsfolk are always involved. The married couple depend on their kin for economic assistance, and are under obligations to help their kin. The place of residence of the couple is determined by the disposition of their kin in different villages. If the man is a labour migrant his interests are represented by his rural kinsfolk. In general it is the fathers of the couple who are most directly concerned, if they are available, but in all Ngoni situations in which a man (or woman) appeals to his kin for support there are no hard and fast rules about the genealogical positions his supporters should occupy. If a man's father is old he turns to his elder brother. If his genealogically close kinsmen live far away, he turns to those who live nearer although they may be further removed from him in genealogical terms. If there is no male kinsman available he may seek the support of an old kinswoman. 581 602

The formal situations which require the co-operation of kinsfolk are the matchmaking, the gall bladder ceremony (which we may perhaps regard as the wedding), the ceremony of first cooking, the hoeing party, the announcement of first pregnancy, the carrying of beer and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. Betrothal is another formal situation requiring the presence of the woman's kin, but as nowadays very few girls are betrothed, we shall omit this from our analysis. It will be recalled that even in the old days betrothal applied only to girls under puberty and that a girl who reached puberty without becoming betrothed proceeded to marriage without passing through any intermediate stage. The matchmaking, at which the marriage is arranged, is carried on in a formal manner but there is little ceremonial. The carrying of beer is a visit from one group to the other that can be repeated as many times as they wish, but all the other ceremonies occur but once in a marriage, if they occur at all. The hoeing party has a certain economic value but the other ceremonies are largely symbolic in content. As with the marriage payments, the marriage ceremonials can all be dispensed with and yet there be a marriage which to all intents and purposes is valid. What cannot be omitted so easily from a marriage are the patterns of respect and avoidance between the couple and their affines, particularly between a man and his wife's mother. Even here, however, there is some variation in practice. 602 [585] [584] [581] [606]

The usual procedure in matchmaking is that first the man and the woman agree between themselves that they will get married. They reach this agreement in secret without reference to their kinsfolk 584

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

At the hoeing party, her husband goes with kinsfolk and neighbours to work in the garden of her mother for a day and they are rewarded by her father. In the carrying of beer, a party of women from the wife's village carry beer brewed by her mother to her husband's father, who rewards them. At the final ceremony of entering the wife's mother's hut, a party of men and women from the man's village go to the woman's parents' village and are entertained by them. The husband enters his mother-in-law's hut, a woman from his village eats together from the same spoon with a woman from the wife's village, and his parents sit with her parents and discuss the marriage of their children.[4] It will be noted that these ceremonies are similar to those mentioned in connexion with marriage in 'the time of peace'[5] except that what was formerly a distinct rite, at which a man ate with his wife's mother, has now become part of the ceremony of entering her hut. 581 606

All these ceremonies can be omitted, and the man and woman still be validly married to each other. It often happens that a woman dies before her daughter's husband has entered her hut, and in this ceremony no one can act as a substitute for her. If a man's parents-in-law die soon after his marriage, he will never receive beer from them, while even if they remain alive but live far away, the ceremony may never be performed. If a man quarrels with his parents-in-law, they may decide not to send him beer though he is living near them. A migrant labourer who returns home for a short holiday of a month or so may not feel inclined to get up a party to work in his wife's mother's garden. Marriages often begin in Southern Rhodesia, and it is only when a couple come home, sometimes with children, that the man initiates the formal approach to his wife's parents and makes the offer of the legalization payment. In a marriage of this kind it is too late to hold the gall bladder ceremony, and it is never performed. If a man acquiesces without enthusiasm in the marriage of his son to a girl of whom he does not really approve, he may not go to the trouble of arranging the gall bladder ceremony for her and the couple begin their married life together in the village of one of them without any ceremony at all. The absence of these ceremonies, even less than the absence of marriage payments, does not invalidate the legal rights of husband and wife. It does, however, mean that they are less sure of the informal support of their kinsmen. The kinsfolk express their participation in the marriage of the couple by these formalized patterns of behaviour. Their interests in the marriage may remain without this formal articulation with it, and the interests may find expression in other ways, as by intervention in quarrels, support in litigation, care of children, visits, and so on. Ngoni believe that the 606

[4] See Appendices for accounts of the formal procedures at the marriage ceremonies.

[5] See above, p. 9.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

•606 good man behaves towards his father-in-law with obedience and respect, and that he is rewarded by the gifts of beer sent to his father by his wife's father. If these gifts are not made, then the man must be 'bad' or his father-in-law 'fierce' or 'cruel'.

There is one type of marriage in which none of these ceremonies
581 are performed. This is what is known as the 'poorly fixed marriage'*
829 which lies on the borderland between marriage and concubinage. People do not expect a 'poorly fixed' marriage to last long, and this expectation is based more on their estimation of the characters of the couple involved than on a consideration of the absence of marriage ceremonies and payments. If a couple, who have shown by their general behaviour that they are fickle and quarrelsome, begin to live together without going through any of the formalities of marriage, people speak of their marriage as 'poorly fixed'. If the union breaks up there is no divorce procedure and the couple merely go their own separate ways. The categorization 'poorly fixed' is not applied to all marriages in which there are no marriage
[583] payments, for poverty is usually regarded as a valid excuse for not offering money or animals or for not brewing beer. It is rather poverty of character and love of promiscuity and fickleness that lead to 'poorly fixed' marriages.

581 Sometimes a marriage which begins as 'poorly fixed' lasts for some time and becomes accepted as a proper marriage. An example of this is the marriage of Rachel and Esau (p. 63). In 1946 I was told this was a 'poorly fixed' marriage and that it would not last. In 1949 opinion had changed, and as we have seen, Esau succeeded in making the legalization payment for his wife. Even if his money had been refused his position would still have been better than it was in 1946 for he had shown that he could live with Rachel for three years without an undue amount of quarrelling and she had not drifted off to some other man. By making the legalization payment
[583] Esau made his rights over her more certain.

People who live in 'poorly fixed' marriages are not despised for
[829] doing so, but are rather pitied for their moral inability to make a 'well fixed' marriage. They are never so sure of the support of their relatives and neighbours as they would be otherwise. A man who
586 has not made the legalization payment may be supported by his wife's relatives when she commits adultery if they think that he is a good husband and that it is she who is at fault in the matter. But if a man neglects his obligations towards his wife's parents and
[606] in particular does not approach them formally at the beginning of the marriage to tell them of his desire to marry their daughter, they may turn on him if he tries to exercise rights over the woman. In court, the wife's father may look at his son-in-law, who perhaps has been his neighbour for many years, and say 'Who is this man? We do not know him'; and the court will refuse to recognize his claims.

* *Ukwali owayawaya.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

claims. In retrospect, when discussing an erstwhile 'poorly fixed' marriage that has broken up, people will say 'That was not a proper marriage', and 'She was just his friend'. In all the tables we have excluded 'poorly fixed' marriages from consideration. 586 128

The initiative in strengthening a 'poorly fixed' marriage lies with the man and not with the woman's relatives. If their daughter is living with a man who has not made the legalization payment they cannot bring him to court and force him to pay. If their daughter has only just passed puberty there may be grounds for an abduction suit, but if she has been married before or is considered old enough to decide for herself, her relatives are unlikely to take any action in the courts against her husband. The woman cannot be forced to return to her own people. Similarly if no bridewealth has been paid, the children cannot be forced to live in one village rather than in the other. They can be asked to do so, but they cannot be taken to court if they refuse. 581 583

All 'poorly fixed' marriages are marriages without payments, but not all marriages without payment are 'poorly fixed'. It will be seen from Table XII that no payments at all have been offered in about a third of the marriages in our sample. In some of the marriages for which there have been offers of payment, these consist only of the small present given as 'snuff-box' [7] in modern marriage. Yet these marriages are valid despite the paucity or absence of payment. Many of them have lasted for a long time and the lack of payment is almost forgotten. It would be an act of maliciousness on the part of the woman's relatives if after twenty years of happy married life they began to remind her husband that he had not yet made the legalization payment. With the increasing importance of marriage certificates on which the legalization payment is recorded, and the rise in power of the Native Authority, the position may well change in years to come. At present, most marriages without payments are more like marriages with payment than they are like the unions of men with concubines and prostitutes. The persevering inquirer may unearth the lack of payments, but in the day-to-day life of the village, as well as in many of the formal situations of marriage, this lack is not significant. In the work of the garden, in the sharing of food, on festive occasions when there is beer and dancing, there is no distinction between wives married in one way or the other. More significantly, we find instances where despite the absence of any payments, beer has been brewed for a daughter's husband and he has been invited to go through the ceremony of 'entering the wife's mother's hut'. Some marriages are solemnized in church, with the approval of the parents on both sides, without any payments being made. The rules of avoidance between a man and his wife's mother operate independently of the marriage payments, and widows are subject to the same restrictions [606]

[7] *Mfuko, camulomo, cavulamulomo.* See above, p. 39, n. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR5

see them and to a large extent participate in them, joining in the dancing and drinking, giving presents and advice to the bride, and so on. Less spectacular are the continual patterns of interaction between a man and his affines arising from his partial dependence on them and his obligations towards them as expressed in everyday life. A man must avoid his mother-in-law and help his father-in-law with garden work, and if he is living uxorilocally he may be dependent on his affines for food and housing. If they move from one village to another he moves with them.

Avoidance is most marked between a man and his wife's mother. He must not speak to her, sit near her, pass in front of or enter her hut, and he should endeavour not to meet her on the path. Above all he must never sit on her mat, for sitting on a woman's mat is regarded as symbolically equivalent to sleeping with her. To a lesser extent a man must avoid his father-in-law, but it is not considered amiss for a man to sit at one end of a verandah while his father-in-law sits at the other. They can talk to each other if necessary. A woman is comparatively free with her parents-in-law and does not avoid their hut. The formalities of relationship between a man and his parents-in-law begin when he starts to negotiate his marriage, or earlier if their daughter is betrothed to him while she is still a child. With the passage of time a man avoids his mother-in-law less, and after the ceremony of entering her hut he can sit and chat to her. Even then it is still considered shameful for him to sit on her mat.

The Ngoni regard uxorilocal residence as part of the obligation a man has towards his wife's parents. Many couples spend their whole married life virilocally and others live permanently in uxorilocal marriage, but in describing where a couple ought to live, Ngoni speak always in virilocal terms. We have seen that in the old days virilocal residence was the rule but that a man might live uxorilocally for a while at the beginning of his first marriage after paying 'snuff-box' until he paid bridewealth (p. 5). The Cewa lived uxorilocally, but it was possible for a Cewa man to make a small payment some years after marriage permitting him to take his wife to his own village. Nowadays among the Ngoni some men, but not all, begin their marriages uxorilocally. A man may do so either because he finds it more convenient, due to lack of suitable accommodation in his own village, quarrels with his kin or shortage of food, or else because he is made to do so by his parents-in-law. A parent who does not approve of his (or her) daughter's suitor may accept the young man on condition that the couple live under his eye for a while so that he can assure himself that his daughter will be well treated by her husband. Sometimes it is said that a man who has not yet made the legalization payment must live uxorilocally until he can find the money, but this is not always done and some couples whose marriages are only 'poorly fixed' live virilocally.

The proportion of couples who live virilocally varies from one village to another.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

after a year or so. If he keeps it going himself he visits his own village for a week or two at a time to tend the garden, and stores the produce with a relative in the village. If, however, a man intends to reside for many years in his wife's village, he gives away his garden and concentrates his labours in his wife's garden. After a year or two he builds her a storehouse in her village and the couple begin to keep their own supplies separate from those of her relatives.

Even when the couple have their own storehouse it is considered proper if from time to time they are given maize by their parents. If a woman living virilocally goes to visit her parents and relatives and returns without maize or flour her husband's relatives are likely to laugh at her and say 'She must come from a very poor family'.

Uxorilocal residence is described by the vernacular term *cikomwene*. In its most general usage this word refers to the obligations a man owes to his wife's parents, particularly at the beginning of his marriage. It has three specific meanings:

(i) Uxorilocal residence.

(ii) Assistance rendered from time to time by a man in his wife's mother's garden.

(iii) A hoeing party of men and women from the man's village which works in his wife's mother's garden.

Uxorilocal residence is classed with these other two aspects of affinal obligation and like them it can be avoided completely, shirked, or executed in full. The extent to which the obligations are fulfilled

Table XIV. Virilocality and Uxorilocality, 1948-9

Wife's residence	Husband's residence		Total
	Rural	Away	
Virilocal ..	72	14	86
Uxorilocal ..	24	20	44
Total	96	34	130
Ratio of virilocal to uxorilocal wives	3	0·7	1·95

Association between husband's residence and wife's residence

$\chi^2 = 12{\cdot}83$ $P < {\cdot}001$

Informants as in Table XIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

depends as much on the compliance of the man as on the insistence of his father-in-law. 591 606

A payment[10] of about five shillings is sometimes made by a man to his wife's father enabling him to take his wife to his own village. This is made either at the beginning of the marriage or after one or two years of uxorilocal residence, but in some marriages the payment is never made at all, and in some villages even the vernacular term is unknown. In those villages where the payment is recognized there is no consensus of opinion as to the rights granted by it. Some people hold that the payment is equivalent to a year or two of uxorilocal residence, and that, therefore, the money should be offered when the marriage is arranged, so that it may be begun virilocally. They go on to say that when a man has completed his period of uxorilocal residence, he is free to take his wife to his own village without making this payment. Other people say that a man ought to remain living uxorilocally until he makes this payment, which should therefore be done a year or so after marriage, or at some time later when the man wishes to move. Where the payment is not recognized, people either say that a man ought to live uxorilocally for a while and cannot buy himself out of this obligation, or else assert that the Ngoni, unlike the Cewa, do not marry uxorilocally and that the legalization payment allows a man to take a bride to his village as soon as he chooses. There is a wide variation in the norms held, or at least expressed, on this matter and an equally wide variation in actual behaviour. Men select their course of action by reference to the total situation in which they find themselves when they marry. A man may try to enforce one rule on one son-in-law and another rule on another. I observed one extreme case in which a man allowed one of his daughters, married to a man from her own village, to move to her husband's cluster after only a few months of uxorilocal residence in his own cluster. At the same time he would not allow another daughter to move to her husband's village after four years of uxorilocal residence, despite the offer of ten shillings payment to him. He approved of the first son-in-law while disliking the second, who had failed to report to him when his daughter first became pregnant. 583 591

We have talked of the man's village and the woman's village. It is perhaps necessary to stress that what is meant by, say, the man's village is a village to which the man's ties are stronger than those of his wife. It is likely to be a village where some relative of his is living, but the relative may be his father or his mother or his father's mother or his mother's father or some more distant connexion. Sometimes a man goes to live in his first wife's village and then brings in his second wife. The second wife is then said to be living virilocally, in the village of her husband rather than in her own, although the man is himself living in his first wife's village, 591 602

[10] *Nthakula*. Cf. Barnes, op. cit. p. 229

591 that is, in uxorilocal marriage. In the man's village there are likely to be relatives of his wife already established, but it is she who is 602 said to 'follow' her husband to the village and not he who 'follows' her, since his ties to the village, and to the cluster in the village within which they set up their household, are stronger than hers. Similarly a man may have relatives of his own living in his wife's village and yet be spoken of as living uxorilocally. If a woman's father is living in her village, he will be the focus of her husband's obligations. But if he lives a long way away and the woman has been dependent on her grandparents, or on her mother's brother, then it is they who will act towards her husband to some extent in [606] the role of substitute parents-in-law. However, a man does not avoid his substitute mother-in-law as thoroughly as he would his wife's own mother.

606 583 The obligation on a man to help his wife's parents in their garden is expressed in two ways. Once during the marriage the man must provide a party of people to hoe for the greater part of one day in his wife's mother's garden. He must also be prepared to work in this garden from time to time when he is called upon, and his wife may work with him. While the labour given by the man and his wife is useful labour, the work done by the hoeing party is only partly useful and may do more damage than good. The procedure is that the man, or a relative of his, tells his father-in-law that he proposes to bring a party to hoe on such-and-such a day. By agreeing to this the father-in-law tacitly agrees also to provide the party with beer and presents. On the appointed day, early in the morning, the party arrives and begins work. When the father-in-law thinks the work has gone on long enough, he sends an intermediary to offer a present to the leader of the hoers. If the present is considered sufficient the party stops hoeing and returns to the father-in-law's village. If not, it continues to hoe with renewed vigour. At intervals the father-in-law sends intermediaries with higher and higher offers until at last the hoers are satisfied or exhausted and they come into the village to collect their presents and beer. As often as not the hoers try to force the father-in-law to offer a present at the limit of his resources, for example a beast, and, as the offers mount, the workers become more and more excited and their hoeing less and less useful. At the end of a day, with the light failing, physically exhausted hoers begin to root up the maize with the weeds, and the mother-in-law's garden may be seriously damaged. If the father-in-law is obstinate and does not offer them what they want the hoers may spend the night sleeping out in the garden. By the next morning everyone is too tired to continue the matter further, and the party disperses.[11]

[154] This sort of hoeing party may not facilitate the cultivation of good maize but it is of great significance to the married couple and the

[11] See Appendix III for an account of two of these parties.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

two groups of relatives. In the partial destruction of the father-in-law's crop by the man's friends, the latent hostility between the two groups is canalized into a form that is just socially acceptable. In the later stages of hoeing the men and women in the party act wildly, dance round and round anyone who tries to interfere with them and throw earth all over them. At first all contact between the father-in-law and the leader of the party is through intermediaries, and if all goes well, and there is no crisis, the father-in-law will always remain in the background. But with rising tempers the tension increases, and the father-in-law may himself go to cajole and threaten the party. When they do decide to stop and go into the village, an attempt is made to establish peaceful relations again, and the leader of the party begins to protest that they never really intended holding out for such a large present, that they knew it was getting dark and that they could not hoe at night. They settle down to drink the beer provided by the father-in-law and in the morning go back to their own village. It is significant that the man himself cannot be the leader of the party, so that he does not come into direct contact with his father-in-law. He shelters behind the party leader, so that the chances of an open breach between him and his father-in-law are lessened.

The formalized expression of hostility, which is a feature of many Ngoni ceremonials,[12] appears most clearly in marriage in the custom of the hoeing party, but is present in some other situations, as in the instruction of the bride at the gall bladder ceremony, when she is sometimes told she has a bad character, is mean and deceitful. Even the carrying of beer can be used to express hostility, as is indicated by Reuben's remark towards the end of his son-in-law's hoeing party, that he would tell his wife to brew beer and send it to his son-in-law's village, where the women bringing beer would demand a present even greater than the one demanded by the leader of the hoers.[13]

Men and women wish their daughters to bear children, and are reluctant to marry them to impotent men. Yet childbirth is hazardous, and a woman may die in labour because of her adultery or the adultery of her husband. It is important, therefore, that a woman's parents should be informed whenever she becomes pregnant, lest the woman die and her parents hear of her death without being forewarned of the danger. It is not sufficient that the woman's parents should hear from others that their daughter is pregnant. She must go to them on a special visit to tell them the news herself. This formal notification takes place every time she is pregnant, but if, when she becomes pregnant for the first time, she is living in

[12] For another example, see the installation of the headman's deputy described in Gluckman, Mitchell and Barnes, 'The village headman in British Central Africa', *Africa*, xix (1949), pp. 100-106.
[13] See Appendix III, p. 131.

843 her husband's village, the occasion must be recognized in a more elaborate manner. Her husband or his relatives buy her a new cloth. Wearing this cloth she stands at the door of her husband's hut, and is undressed by her husband's grandmother. The old woman rubs castor oil on her abdomen and dresses her again. A small girl from her husband's kin goes with her to her own village, and their arrival there, with the woman dressed in her new cloth, indicates formally to her parents that she is pregnant. They stay at the woman's village for about a week, and then return to her husband's village.[14] Her parents have thus been made socially aware of her pregnancy, and the man can legitimately look to them for help if she becomes ill or fractious.

844 761 606 684 If the woman does die in childbirth, her husband has to offer a beast to her parents even though they were told of her pregnancy.[15] The husband may confess to adultery when called upon to do so by the midwife, but this does not absolve him from the obligation to pay the beast. Confession absolves him from the charge of having caused the death of his wife by his careless behaviour, but he must still recompense his parents-in-law for the death of their daughter. It is recognized that a woman may die in childbirth despite the absence of adultery during pregnancy or despite full confession of adultery by both the woman and her husband. She dies just because God lets her die, and not because of any human misconduct. Yet she reaches the situation in which there is the danger of death because of her position as the wife of her husband. It is the 'work' of married women to bear children, and it is the 'work' of the husband if his wife dies in childbirth to offer a beast to her parents so that they may mourn their daughter.

5. *Quarrels*

581 We see then that a woman is not severed utterly from her own group when she marries, but that her kinsfolk retain an interest in her welfare and have certain rights in her and in her husband. The recognition of these rights by their son-in-law increases his esteem in their eyes, and enables him to appeal to them with confidence when he needs their support. The common interest of all is in the successful maintenance of the marriage, and the mutual recognition of rights and fulfilment of obligations consolidate the social relationships established between people related by marriage. Quarrels threaten the continued existence of the marriage, 578 and it is therefore in the common interest that they should be settled 602 as expeditiously as possible. The intervention of affines in a personal quarrel between husband and wife is characteristic of a system in which most neighbours are kinsfolk and in which the spatial concentration of people into compact villages, where abuse shouted at one

[14] This ceremony is called *ngayi*, which means 'breast-cloth' in Nsenga.
[15] See above, pp. 39f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

592 252 593 [062] mother. One of the man's sisters conducts the wife to her mother-in-law's hut, and under the instruction of the assembled women she begins to cook. Although people speak of her doing the cooking, in practice all she does is to look on while her sisters-in-law do the work. The porridge is divided onto plates and distributed under the directions of the man's mother. One plate is sent to the man's father, one to the husband who eats the porridge with his brothers, and one to the most important woman in the village, while some are taken by the cooks themselves. The man's father is expected to remark on how well the porridge has been cooked, but he may say that it has been poorly prepared and his daughter-in-law must be taught again. This expression of disapproval cannot be more than a way of showing his dislike for his daughter-in-law for whatever he says the ceremony is not repeated and the woman begins to cook regularly for her husband. If the man's relatives are wealthy, they may kill a goat or a sheep on this occasion, or the woman's parents may send a sheep or a goat to be killed and eaten. The woman's parents cannot themselves attend the ceremony.

[591] If the couple begin their marriage uxorilocally this ceremony does not take place. The bride begins to cook for her husband as soon as he comes to live with her, using her grand-mother's hut as a kitchen.

Appendix III

THE HOEING PARTY

606 583 A man is under an obligation to provide once during his marriage a party of hoers who work in his wife's mother's garden for the greater part of one day and who are rewarded by his wife's father. This party is called by the general word for obligations owed by a man towards his parents-in-law, *cikomwene*.[1] The function of this occasion, as a socially sanctioned method of expression of hostility between a man and his affines, has already been discussed. I attended one of these parties and my clerk attended two others.

The man, or a relative of his, tells his father that he is planning to bring a party to hoe on such and such a day. If the father-in-law agrees that the day is suitable he tells his wife to brew beer for the hoers. On the agreed day the hoeing party arrive early in the morning and begin to work in the garden. The father-in-law promises presents to the leader of the hoers, who continue to hoe until they are offered what they consider is sufficient. They then stop, and go to the village to receive the present and drink beer.

[1] See above, p. 74.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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One day in December 1946 a party of eight men and two women arrived at 6.30 a.m. in the garden of Dinah.[2] They included Goliath, a young man recently married to a daughter of Dinah and Reuben. The party was led by one of the women. They hoed in the garden continuously but not very actively until 3 p.m. Reuben then asked Samuel, who lived in the village, to offer sixpence to the hoers. This offer was refused, and a little later Samuel came back again with the offer of a shilling. This was also refused, as was the next offer brought by Samuel, of ten shillings and sixpence. One of the hoers hinted to Samuel that they really wanted a beast. Samuel returned to the village and asked Bildah, his wife's mother and the village headman's eldest sister, to go and repeat the offer, lest Reuben should think that it was Samuel who was egging on the hoers. Bildah went with a number of people from the village and on seeing her the hoers began working frantically. They ceased to distinguish between maize and weeds and uprooted both. The hoers attacked Deborah, daughter of Dinah by a former husband, who tried to stop them, by throwing earth over her and hoeing round her as if she were a mound. One of the hoers tried to borrow my lamp so that they could continue working through the night. The people who had come from the village withdrew, followed by taunts from the hoers, 'You will find us here in the morning.' It began to get dark and at 7 p.m. when it was quite dark Reuben himself came out to speak to the hoers. He told the leader that if she insisted on a beast, he would give it them, but that he would also tell his wife to start brewing beer the next day; when his party brought the beer to their village, they would demand an even bigger present before they would go home. These remarks were met with derision and the hoers called for beer and cigarettes to sustain them through the night.

About half an hour later, the hoeing party appeared in the village and entered the hut of Goliath, who was living uxorilocally at the time. The leader of the party was called to Reuben's hut. On the verandah the money was counted out and handed over to her. She then said that they had never intended to demand a beast but had been only pretending. In Goliath's hut drinking began with beer provided by Dinah. Soon an argument broke out, some of the hoers protesting that they ought to have kept on hoeing until Reuben had given them a certain beast he was keeping in Goliath's own village.

In December 1947, in a nearby village, a man agreed that his son-in-law should bring a party to hoe, but did not brew any beer for the occasion. He offered them seven shillings and sixpence, but this was refused. He then offered the same amount again, and this was accepted, but the leader of the party said that they would go on hoeing until something else was added to the present. They went on hoeing all night long, sleeping at intervals. Both

[2] See above, p. 81, for the genealogical connexions of this group of people.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 583 offers had been made to the leader of the party through the mother-in-law acting as intermediary for her husband. In the morning the mother-in-law came to the garden to find the hoers still there. She fell to the ground beseeching them to stop. The leader then told the party to stop, which they did with much grumbling. One hoer said 'It would have been better if we had cut down some more maize to cool down our hearts.'

Appendix IV

CARRYING BEER

606 431 273 The carrying of beer is the first formal occasion on which the initiative is taken by the woman's kin and not by the man's. Beer is brewed by the woman's mother and is taken to the husband's father, or if he is not available, to the husband himself. It is known as *vipeko*, a word used to describe any offering of beer sent to a chief or headman in virtue of his position as such as well as beer sent to a a son-in-law. Beer can and is sent in this way more than once, to indicate the continued respect enjoyed by the man in the eyes of his parents-in-law. Members of the Dutch Reformed Church who are not allowed to drink proper beer send instead gifts of porridge to their sons-in-law. The beer, or its porridge equivalent, is sent at least once in about 40 per cent of all marriages. It is usually brewed while the couple are living virilocally.

It is held by some that a man cannot expect beer sent to him until he has made the legalization payment for his wife. In practice, if the woman's parents think that he is treating his wife well, they may brew beer for him despite the absence of legalization payment.

The beer is brewed by the woman's mother, and is carried in jars from one village to another. If the villages are too far apart to make this practicable, the woman's mother comes to stay with some relative in a nearby village and does her brewing there. She herself does not accompany the party carrying the beer.

The party may consist of, say, half-a-dozen women from the village. They carry the beer to the man's village, and halt just outside the village. Sometimes they demand a present before they will agree to enter the village. They are led to the hut of the man's parents or of his grandmother, and there they offer the beer to the man's relatives. They are given somewhere to sleep the night. In the morning people come to greet them, and as in the gall bladder ceremony they reply with a little song. The pots of beer are allocated by the man's father to important people in the village. People who come to drink the beer give presents such as threepenny bits which are collected by the leader of the party and which are

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

distributed among the women of the party as a recompense for carrying the beer. The married couple drink the beer but do not take any prominent part in the proceedings. The next day the man's father gives a beast or a goat or money to the leader of the party. The animal is killed and the women carry the meat back to their own village where it is divided up by some important relative of the wife. If some of the sprouted maize and flour that were prepared for the brewing remain over, the mother-in-law may brew again, and send it to her son-in-law as before. The second brew of beer is called 'offering'.[1]

606 431 273

Appendix V

ENTERING THE WIFE'S MOTHER'S HUT

As performed nowadays elements are combined from what formerly were two distinct ceremonies. The name of one of these, 'eating together' (*mzyelano*) is now not often heard and the combined ceremony is known by the name of the other, 'entering' (*mngeniso*). It represents the final stage in the acceptance of the man as a satisfactory son-in-law and marks the formal setting aside of the avoidance relationship between him and his wife's mother. It is performed in about one marriage in eight. I attended two of these ceremonies.

606 [178]

Some informants say that like the carrying of beer the ceremony of entering is not performed unless the legalization payment is made. However, I have recorded instances in which the ceremony was performed in the absence of any payment. It almost always occurs after beer has been carried to the man's village once or twice and when the man is living virilocally.

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The parents of the woman send word to the village of the man that on such and such a day there will be beer brewed for him to enter the hut of his mother-in-law. On the day appointed the man and his wife go in procession with other people, singing and dancing, from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession traditionally should be led by the eldest child of the marriage, boy or girl, holding a club aloft, but this is not always done. The man's parents do not go with the party but stay behind in the village. On the outskirts of the woman's parents' village, the party may be met by people dancing out to meet them, and they sometimes pause to drink beer brought out to them. The dancing party go on into the cattle byre, or if there is no byre to some clear space on the fringe of the village. They enter the byre in a rough

[1] *Nsembe*, an Nsenga word.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

•606 [273] order, first women, then men, and the couple last. Inside the byre they are given beer which they drink without praising.[1] They then dance on to the hut of the woman's mother and enter. Beer and a plate of boiled maize have already been put inside. The dancers are joined by a few important people from the family of the woman, but the woman's parents do not come into the hut at this stage. The people from the man's village, including the woman and her husband, sit on one side of the hut and the people from the woman's family on the other. One of the woman's relatives makes a speech about the added responsibilities of the husband, how he must come and visit in their village and must help his parents-in-law. There is sometimes a speech in reply from the man's side. A threepenny bit or a sixpence is placed on a basketwork plate on top of the beer by one of the man's people, and someone from the woman's side does the same. The money is picked up by someone else from the woman's side. Sometimes there is another plate, into which a representative of the man will put the real gift, as opposed to these tokens, which may be as much as one pound. This is also taken up by someone from the woman's side and is later given to the father-in-law.

606 273 A woman from the wife's side then takes a spoonful of boiled maize and spits it out again. She is followed by a woman from the husband's side, who does the same. This ends the formal stage of the ceremony and drinking begins. The distribution of the beer is controlled by the senior man in the husband's party. If they are so inclined they may go back again into the byre and dance or they may wander round the village dancing. If the father-in-law wishes, he may kill a beast for them.[2] When they are tired and have drunk their fill, they go back to their own village, leaving a walking stick behind them in the hut.

On the next day the party of dancers come back again, this time with the husband's parents. They go back into the wife's mother's house and the wife's parents join them there. There is beer, and the wife's mother fills a bowl and presents it to her son-in-law, kneeling at his feet and drinking from the bowl before handing it over to him, after the usual fashion of offering a bowl of beer to anyone. The son-in-law drinks, and passes the beer round the hut. The rest of the pots of beer are then presented to the son-in-law's [608] people, and drinking begins again. The two sets of parents sit together, and discuss the characters of their children. There is much plain speaking. When all the beer is finished the party breaks up, and people return to their own villages. The proceedings on the second day are referred to as 'following the dancing-stick',[3]

[1] For the custom of praising when drinking beer, see Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 216 ff. The beer drunk in the byre is called *nkatulo*.
[2] Called *congenela*. Cf. Zulu *uku-ngenela*, to enter for (something).
[3] *Kulanda zinthonga*. Cf. Zulu *uku-landa*, to follow, and *in-tonga*, a stick.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the allusion being to the stick which is left overnight in the hut 'to watch over the beer'. In retrospect the people from the man's village talk of having 'fetched a broom there'.[4] 606 273

There seems to be considerable variation in the way in which this ceremony of 'entering' is carried out. It is not often performed and people have different ideas of what is correct. The man's people may decide to brew beer on their own account, so that sometimes the dancers are well intoxicated before they even arrive at the woman's village. They then find it difficult to adhere rigidly to any traditional form of behaviour.

[4] *Tayotola mthanyelo.* Cf. Zulu *uku-tola*, to get, and *umshanelo*, a hand-broom.

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6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

went across there, and heard what he told us. He 584
says you must go and live there." And the man says, "We shall do so, it's not far to the water." Then the old men (who are negotiating the affair) return there and say, "We shall stay with you, there is water, and it is not far away." And the village chief says, "Let him come, this is not some other land that eats up a man." Then the old men return, and bring their child and take him to the chief, saying, "Here is your man, and he has no other words [meaning complaining, bad-tempered words]; all he ever says is, 'Cook me porridge, for I am hungry.'" And the chief replies, "For our part, our one has not one little thing (against her), cooking is her forte and pounding flour, and, perhaps, even hoeing, but as to that we do not know for certain as we have not yet seen her with a hoe in her hand."

II. Then the old men return, going back to their own village, and leave the child. He must sleep in the quarters of the young unmarried men, and his wife will cook his food for him until he has built his hut. He does not cohabit with her. When he has finished building it, they put him in it. At 585 606
the village where he is, he does not ever see his mother-in-law, they always run away from each other. When he says, "Now I am sick of this running away, let us 'uncover' each other." Then the mother-in-law cooks beer, and the son-in-law gets some calico, and they go and call the people from the man's village, telling them that now they wish "to uncover." Then the people from the man's village come and take the man and go with him to his mother-in-law's hut. His head is still covered with his calico and the mother-in-law's also is still over her head. Then the man's brother goes and uncovers the mother-in-law and takes the

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

585 606 present of calico and gives it her. The mother-in-law pours out a little pot of beer and gives it to her "little" son-in-law, and he drinks and drinks, and one drinks and hands to the other. The brother is still sitting (covered up). When this is finished the mother-in-law goes out and the man then gets up and drinks with his companions, saying, "Now we have 'uncovered' each other, and the state of mother-in-lawship requiring one to run away from the other is finished." They now honour each other.

IX

THE RAIN TEMPLE

789 I. If the rains do not come people say, "Look at this, the rain keeps refusing to fall from above; come, let us try to propitiate the rain spirit, and perhaps the rain may come." Then they begin to make ready, saying, "Let all of you collect a few handfuls of grain, we can at least try; if we fail we shall do so having at least made the attempt." Then they begin to collect the maize, the very same day it is ground and pounded, and they boil the beer and pour it in a gourd-cup. Next morning at dawn every one comes together and they go to the rain temple. They clear away the grass that the ground may be open. He who is chief of the ceremony sits in the middle and first draws some of the beer and pours it in a pot buried in the ground, and says, "Master, *Chauta*, you have hardened your heart towards us, what would you have us do? We

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

their relations may dig them out, and place them in 766
some other country.) And they throw them to the 782
back of the cave, and take the corpse and lay it on top of them. Then they begin to fill in, the ones in the cave are groaning, "Alas, alas!" When they have finished filling in, they go to the water to bathe. When they return to the village they dance.

XV

THE CHIEF OF THE KUKA AND THE SON-IN-LAW

I. The chief of the *Kuka* hut and his son-in-law 606 ●
once hoed a garden. When the maize grew up, the 539
father-in-law told his son-in-law to build a watch-tower. Then the father-in-law went off and forged some arrow-heads, and gave them to his son-in-law, saying, "There are some arrows, you must keep a look-out with them in the garden here." And the son-in-law received the arrows, and remained at the watch-tower there. One day the wind came [243]
and flattened down all the maize, and his father-in-law came to walk on a round of inspection in the garden, and then he saw that the wind had laid the maize, and he clapped his hands and said, "Oh, to-day I see wonders, those arrow-heads I just forged for him to keep by him [and look at]." And then he went up to the watch-tower, where his son-in-law was, and asked him, saying, "Those arrow-heads I forged, I just forged that you might sleep with them on the watch-tower here?" And the son-

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

606 539 in-law replied, "And how am I to wound the winds?"

II. When the father-in-law had gone off, the son-in-law took some maize and went off to set some falling-traps, and one of his traps caught a guinea-fowl, and he took it out, and went and gave it to his wife, saying, "There is a guinea-fowl, cook it; I am going away a long way; I shall be away four days, and for my share you must harden some of the gravy over the fire, the meat you can eat yourself." Then the woman went off and told her father, saying, "That fellow has killed a guinea-fowl, and he tells me I must brown the gravy before the fire for him, and the meat I am to eat, and where he has gone he will remain four days." And the father said, "And how can you brown gravy over a fire, my child?"

III. When the son-in-law returned, he told his wife, "Cook some porridge." And the woman did so, and went with it to her husband. But he looked into the dish and said, "Where is my gravy, that I told you to brown before the fire?" Then the woman went off to tell her father, saying, "He is
539 asking for the gravy." Then the father went off
627 to tell the villagers, "You must settle a case for
606 me." So the people assembled at the village court in crowds, and (one) said, "Chief of the *Kuka* hut, state your case that we may hear." Then the chief of the *Kuka* hut took up his case and began to speak, saying, "As for me, I bid you ask my son-in-law there, on my account, the things which he has in his heart." Then the people spoke, laying the charge before the son-in-law. And he replied, "Yes, what he says is true about me, but I was at the watch-tower, and I saw the chief of the *Kuka* hut, and he asks of me, saying, "You there, do you just sleep on the watch-tower here, and not keep a look-out over the garden? The arrows I went

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

and forged that you might just keep them by you, 539
and not keep a look-out for what is eating up the 627
maize in the garden." And as for me, I replied, 606
saying, "And you, how do you wound the winds?"
So I also went and caught some "meat," that they in their turn should brown some gravy for me, for, seeing they know how to wound the wind with an arrow, they could also brown gravy before a fire; and that is what the case against me is." And the elders said, "That is his complaint, is it? The chief of the *Kuka* hut was in the wrong."

XVI

THE TORTOISE AND THE ANTELOPE

I. A TORTOISE and an Antelope once had an 539
argument. The Antelope said, "Tortoise, are you able to run along with me?" And the Tortoise replied, "Yes, I am able." Then the Tortoise went off to tell his companions, and he said, "We have had a discussion with the Antelope (about running), and he says we must race together, and you, my friends, come along, you must give me your assistance." And the Tortoise began to place them in a long line, and they reached to the plain which they had agreed upon [as the scene of the race]. Then the Antelope said, "Tortoise, come on, let us begin to run." Then the Antelope set off as hard as he could; he runs and runs, and at length calls out, "Hallo, Tortoise!" And the Tortoise replied far in front, "Hallo! I passed long ago." And the Antelope set off again, and again called out, "Where

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
647 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its
619 own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
693 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their
184 colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
692 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done
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10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 and inform her that she is divorced. If the wife has committed adultery, the husband can take the case to court. If the adultery is proved he is 586 usually awarded £3 damages against his wife and £3 against the co-684 respondent, and the woman is divorced. On the other hand, a woman can seek a divorce in the courts on the grounds of desertion or cruelty. The court will award a divorce if the desertion or cruelty is proved, but may also rule that the woman must pay £3 to her husband's family.

If a man does not wish to divorce his adulterous wife, the court will award him damages of £1. 10*s.* against his wife and £1. 10*s.* against the co-respondent. In adultery cases in which a divorce is granted the damages awarded against the woman are often met by the co-respondent, who then marries the woman, but where there is no divorce the woman will appeal to her father or brothers to help her pay her husband.

If a woman runs away from her husband there is nothing that the husband can do to force her back, and if methods of conciliation fail, he has little hope of redress, except in cases of seduction or abduction. If the woman refuses to rejoin her husband the court may award damages against her, but such a marriage usually ends in adultery on the part of the woman and a divorce on that ground.

It has been observed by District Officers that divorce is not so 586 frequent among the Ngoni as compared with their Cewa neighbours. 593 Nevertheless, divorce must be considered as a frequent occurrence among the Ngoni, and is so regarded by the people themselves. There is a maxim that a man ought to rely on his brothers, not on his wife, and one informant remarked: 'Never trust your wife; perhaps tomorrow you will divorce her.'

The Wife's Mother

The tensions between the two groups linked by a marriage find ● 606 their most formal expression in the attitude prescribed for a man to his wife's mother. While a woman can speak to her parents-in-law and enter their house, a man cannot do so. In his contacts with his father-in-law he must be quiet and reserved, and although face-to-face contact is not considered shocking, it should be as rare as possible. But a man must go out of his way to avoid his mother-in-law, and this injunction is in the main observed in practice. The avoidance is usually phrased in terms of a prohibition on the entry into the hut of the mother-in-law. A man who has to pass by this hut will normally go round the back of it.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

It is therefore appropriate that, when a man has proved himself to be a good son-in-law by fulfilling his obligations to his parents-in-law and by treating their daughter well, he is invited to make a formal entry into the house of his wife's parents. This is the occasion for much dancing and speech-making. The salient features of the ceremony[1] are as follows. The married couple come in procession with their relatives and neighbours from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession is led by the eldest child of the couple carrying a knobkerry. They dance in the cattle byre and then enter the hut of the woman's parents. Here after some drinking and dancing, during which the visitors keep themselves more or less to one side of the hut and leave the other side for the relatives of the woman, there is a ceremony in which a gift is offered by the man's people to the woman's people, and in which a female relative of the man takes a spoonful of boiled maize from a dish and then spits it out again. She is followed by a female relative of the woman, who does the same. The two people who do this are close relatives of the couple, sometimes sisters. The knobkerry stays in the hut overnight, and the next day the man's parents come and they formally enter the woman's parents' hut. The couple also come into the hut with their friends and the woman's mother offers beer to the man in the usual way by kneeling at his feet and drinking to him. He then drinks from the bowl, and it is passed round for everyone in the hut to drink.

606 527

The completion of this ceremony marks the setting aside of the avoidance taboos to the greatest extent allowed. The man may still not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law but he can now talk to her and can come into her hut. It is, as it were, the final reward of the good son-in-law and marks the end of the series of adjustments in relative status that began with the small gifts that the man made before the legalization payment was fixed. The hostility between the two families has been reduced by carrying out through the years their reciprocal rights and duties, and their common interest in the children of the marriage is symbolized by the eldest child who leads the procession from one village to the other.

Even on such a family occasion as this, village, as distinct from kinship, ties remain important. At one ceremony I attended the leader of the first delegation from the man's village was described as being just an important woman in the village and not related to him.

[621]

[1] *Magwala*. Cf. the Zulu verb ukw-agwala, to enter another person's house (Colenso).

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage. [606] The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a 593 matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it 691 is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the 578 brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on [586] grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although 593 they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other. 571 In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative 578 in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a [684] woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

593 167 Some men when they decide to return home from work in the normal course of events do not let their relatives know that they will be arriving. There are a variety of reasons for this, one being that the mystical hazards of the journey home are increased if a man's enemies know that it is taking place. There is also sometimes the desire to check on the fidelity of a wife. A chief returning from the railway line in 1947 reached Fort Jameson and sent on ahead a man to tell the people their chief had returned. A councillor who was with him remarked 'What sort of chief is this who gives his queens time to get back to their own houses? We ought to arrive suddenly and catch them all with their lovers.'

593 167 602 The woman's kin also wish to avoid trouble in her marriage and do what they can to prevent her committing adultery if they think that her husband is still treating her well. They talk to her about her obligations to her absent husband and if they think she cannot be trusted, one of them, perhaps the woman's mother, may sleep in the hut with her to see that she does not entertain lovers there. They may warn her that if she is taken to court for adultery they will not support her.

Thus we see that there is social prescription not only of the ways in which a man and his affines should behave towards each other, but also of the ways in which his affines should behave when the man is away. Similarly a woman and her affines interact in the light of their relationship not only when her husband is present but also when he has been absent for years. As a husband can exceed his rights over his wife, so can an affine go beyond what is tolerated while trying to safeguard the interests of an absent husband. The perseverence of some brothers of absent husbands, and the limitations imposed on their actions by public opinion, are recalled by a girls' song current in 1949.

[533]

> I am wanting to go and sleep,
> What stops me is something in the loins,
> I go to the water, and the one who keeps on following comes,
> He has exceeded his sibling-in-law-ship,[16]
> He has dragged Eleni from the reeds.

Eleni is supposed to be the wife of a labour migrant. Her husband's brother follows her to the stream, where she has gone ostensibly to draw water, as he thinks that she is really going to meet a lover. [607] She hides in the reeds and he drags her out. Such active intervention is inappropriate and dangerous for if there is a struggle the woman is likely to claim that the man was trying to rape her. The astute brother-in-law would have waited his time until he could catch her red-handed with her lover in a village.

167 It is never legitimate for a woman whose husband is a labour migrant to have intercourse with another man. People regret that

[193]

[16] *Ulamu*, the abstract noun formed from *mulamu*, sibling-in-law.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 segments in what we shall term the Ngoni residential system. The
613 constituent segments of their lineages formed the nuclei of minor
631 segments of the residential system. Using the adjectives 'superior' and 'inferior' to indicate merely relative position, we may say that each Nguni agnatic lineage segment was in general contained within superior segments of greater span and at the same time contained within itself smaller but similar inferior units. This formation is characteristic of all lineage systems, as is well known. The segments of the residential system were arranged in the same way but whereas there were several distinct agnatic lineages, or parts of such lineages, under the political leadership of Zwangendaba, in the residential system all, or nearly all, of these distinct lineages were included within the largest residential segment. In other words, the largest segment of the residential system contained almost the whole of Zwangendaba's following, his regional governors, his and their captives and other followers, as well as his own agnatic kinsmen. Again, whereas the various lineage segments contained only the agnatic relatives of the head of the segment, each segment in the residential system included many captives, men, women and children, as well as an agnatic core.

The segments or units of the residential system were enduring social groups which, by analogy with the usual terminology for lineage systems, we shall call primal segments.[13] The segment of highest order was the State itself (or the greater portion thereof), consisting in 1898 of some 75,000 people, while many of the lowest order segments contained only half a dozen people. Each member of a segment belonged not only to that segment but also to all the superior segments of which it was a part.

173 We shall refer to the man in charge of, or the founder of, a
613 segment as a lord (*mfumu*) and to the members of his segment as his
622 dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord
631 except the Paramount Chief, Zwangendaba, was a dependant of some other lord higher in the hierarchy. A lord was politically responsible for all the men and women in his segment. He was related agnatically to some of the men in his segment and towards
[608] his captives he stood in a quasi-agnatic relationship in that, although he had the same rights and duties towards them as if he had been their father, it was nevertheless possible, and indeed quite usual,
[582] for his captives to marry one another and for him to marry one of his woman captives. In the absence of true agnatic descendants a lord was sometimes succeeded by a quasi-related dependant.

[13] *Cigaîva*, pl. *vigaîva*, from *ku-gaîva*, to divide. cf. Nsenga, *ku-yaîva*, to divide, and Zulu, *isi-gaba*, section or portion divided off from the whole.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Para-
622 mount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was
[422] his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable
[476] that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were
[462] concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

361 Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village
622 headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of
[787] selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

162 There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

691 The term for lieutenant, *nduna*, was used at all levels in the
621 residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet
624 founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was
[608] selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was
[554] created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 203*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*ff*, 109*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 762 766 came, 'to quieten them'. Thereafter this Ngozo boy did everything with the Paramount. He began by washing with the royal medicine at the time of the accession. He drank beer with him, he ate with him, he 'stood with him' (*amaima naye*) on all important occasions, such as sending out the army and judging cases. He slept in his own hut which was in the *cigodlo*, where the Paramount's sons built, and when he married he built huts for his wives in that same section of the royal village. At the death of the Paramount, he danced the war-dance in full war-dress and leaped on to the pyre to perish with the dead Paramount in the flames.

Informants sometimes said of this Ngozo boy that he was 'of one [582] blood' with the Maseko clan. They described the relationship between the two clans as that of *cibale*, brotherhood, which excluded all possi- [602] bility of inter-marriage. Between the Paramount and the Ngozo boy was established a joking relationship, so that the Ngozo boy could say 'good and bad things to the Paramount'.

643 644 It was clear that the ritual and social aspects of this relationship complemented and supported each other. The recurrent emphasis on the taking of medicine at the accession, on the participation in the war medicines, and most of all on the death on the Paramount's funeral pyre, were all evidence of this ritual relationship. Informants repudiated any idea of a scapegoat which involved protecting the Paramount from poison by eating before him. They reiterated several times that the Ngozo boy did not eat *before* the Paramount; in fact he ate after him though sharing his food dishes. Surrounding the Paramount were other boys called *micetho*, who performed the duties of pages or personal servants. The Ngozo boy was always distinct from them, and the distinction lay in the combined ritual and social relationship.

The concept of a 'shadow' was of something very close to a person, almost indistinguishable from the person himself. In referring to the Ngozo boy in the terms 'he was as the shadow of the *inkosi*; he was as himself', informants emphasized the extreme closeness of the tie between the two men. It seemed as if the royal shadow existed to meet a need for strengthening the Paramount by giving him a second self. It emphasized also the dangerous sphere of life and action in which the Paramount lived, due to the medicines he had used, his powers to protect the land and its fertility, and his power to give strength to the army through the use of the *tonga* medicine. No one else in the royal family shared these dangers and there was inherent in the relationship of royal shadow to *inkosi* the sense of some security through a companionship where protective medicines were shared as well as the hazardous occasions for which they gave protection.

643 644 608 This intense and dangerous ritual relationship was buttressed by the social ties binding the Ngozo boy to the Paramount. We have seen that between them as individuals there was that freedom of a joking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

relationship, described in terms of brotherhood, and this brotherhood was further emphasized by the ban on inter-marriage between the Ngozo and Maseko clans. The significance of the Ngozo boy, when he became a man, building in the *cigodlo* where the Paramount's sons built, was often stressed by informants. Though his huts were in this *cigodlo* section of the royal village, as if he were a son of the Paramount's family, the Paramount never said 'child' to him but invariably 'brother'. 643 644 608

In all the occasions of daily life, as well as in those of special ritual significance, the Ngozo boy stood or sat next to the Paramount. The Ngoni insisted that the status of a man or woman should be expressed in terms of sitting or standing in order of precedence. Sitting or standing next to the Paramount implied that that individual had the highest possible social status. The leading members of the Ngozo clan in their villages displayed an awareness of their social prestige which was very noticeable. This high rank was, however, in the past bought with a price —that of sharing in the dangers of the Paramountcy. This was acknowledged through the gift of cattle to the boy's family, sent at the time when he 'entered the chieftainship' with the Paramount. [554]

The institution of the royal shadow came to an end with the advent of the Europeans. An Ngozo man acted as a royal shadow on the accession of Cikusi but did not die on his funeral pyre. When Cikusi's son Gomani I was installed as *inkosi*, an Ngozo boy 'entered the chieftainship' with him and stood with him 'in the smoke of the *tonga*' when the army went to war. It was this Gomani I who was killed by the British, and there was no royal ritual at this death, and no cremation in a stream in which the Ngozo boy could share. The royal shadow retired in those troubled days to his father's village, where he died in 1937. It was alleged that no Ngozo man stood in this relationship to Gomani II, either at his accession, which took place during the period of Direct Rule, or in 1933 when his Paramount Chieftaincy was recognized. Informants showed a certain hesitation in answering direct questions on this topic, which was attributable partly to the fact that the Paramount was a Christian, and partly to a reluctance to discuss the continued use of 'royal medicines'. The following account of the royal shadow was given by informants of the Nzunga and Ngozo clans. 643 644 178

¶ When the Paramount entered the chieftainship he stood with a man from the Ngozo clan. The Ngozo people are of one blood with the Paramount, because they stand together when entering the chieftainship. When the Paramount of the Maseko dies, he dies together with one of the Ngozo. It was so when there died Ngwana, Mputa, Cikusi.

When the Ngoni came in this country they stopped killing an Ngozo man when the Paramount died. When the Paramount died a young man of the Ngozo clan just stood beside the body of the Paramount, and when making the funeral pyre of the Paramount, he also was there until they set fire to it. If anyone wanted to kill an Ngozo man by the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 357
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organized through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

648 in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of
814 those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Azungu* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts
[609] of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for understanding the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognize Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final
175 humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with
648 his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot';
[727] and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the old *indunas* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *inkosi* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic
178 changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and
[648] demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on
[464] both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand
[167] for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1924.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643]

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, ' because all his chiefs obey him ', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chamtendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, ' We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes '.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184]

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. ' To pay taxes, that is our war to-day ', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the mental adjustments necessary to white contact. They still resent 177
white intrusion and its results, economic, administrative, and mis- 609
sionary. At the same time many of them earnestly wish for a solution of the present tension, but towards such a solution there is no easy short cut.

VIII. Conclusions. Conclusions reached after the first period of 128
field work are generally given with a certain reserve, especially in a 121
complex field such as the Ngoni present. I think, however, that the conclusions in this paper can be stated with some certainty, and as dogmatic statements they form a basis for further field work. For they set the main problems for the detailed study of the Ngoni, and also of the Ngoni as a field for observing culture contact. In this article I hope that the three chief elements in the study have emerged, namely, the problem of Ngoni society as a cultural and political unit; the culture contact problems due to the contact, and part fusion, with local tribes; and the modern culture contact problems due to European penetration.

1. The Ngoni as a group must be regarded from two points of 101
view: those who ethnically have a right to be called Ngoni, who are members of recognized Ngoni clans, with an acknowledged southern origin; and all those who live in the territory of the Ngoni Paramount Chief, and call themselves his people. These last were incorporated into the Ngoni state by the first group, who are still the ruling aristocracy, but the incorporated people now share in Ngoni 'national sentiment' and have made certain sociological changes in order to conform to Ngoni culture. It is their southern origin and their well remembered traditions of the past which confer distinctiveness on the true Ngoni, and on the state which they built. It is to their past they also turn for the charter for those institutions which are recognized as distinctively Ngoni, such as the Paramount Chieftainship, the hierarchy of rank, and patrilineal succession. Their historical origin and military achievements form also the charter for their former position as rulers of the country which they held before the advent of the Europeans.

2. The Europeans in two of the Ngoni areas destroyed the unique 177
position of the Ngoni by defeating their armies. These armies had 178

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The Yao are mistrusted more than any other tribe, and some of the decisions taken by the courts are harsh on Yao. For example, a Yao man who was married to an Ngoni woman had, it was alleged, caught venereal disease from his wife. His wife then applied to the courts for a divorce, which was granted, together with the custody of the children. No bride-wealth had been paid in the marriage, but the husband now offered to pay in order to retain the children. This bride-wealth was refused by the woman's parents. The Yao appealed, but the judgement was upheld, and in addition he was ordered to go back to Nyasaland at once. He asked for permission to return to the woman's village in order to collect his belongings, and this was granted by the court, after first securing agreement between the couple as to the extent of his possessions, to wit, four plates and two beds. This deportation order was made despite the fact that the Yao had been living with his wife for twenty-one years. If a man of some other tribe had been involved, it is unlikely that he would have been ordered to leave the country, nor would the court have been so suspicious of his trying to take away more than his rightful share of the household possessions.

N
Y
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A Yao, who had a good job in Fort Jameson, once offered 30*s.* to the Paramount Chief when he was in the town as the legalization payment for a woman of the royal lineage whom he wished to marry. The Paramount Chief refused the money on the ground that the man was a Yao and he was not going to permit Yao to marry into the royal lineage, despite the protest of one of his lieutenants that the Yao was just a man like anyone else.

N
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N
Y
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The reason that is given for this dislike of Yao is that they are sexually very virile, due to the medicines that they possess for increasing potency. It is perhaps significant that the same is said of Indians, who are also disliked. The Yao are known among the Ngoni for their great knowledge of medicines of all kinds, and the allegation of unnatural sexual vigour may be a rationalization of the fear that the Yao may practise sorcery among the families into which they marry. Another factor that may operate is that the Yao are the only tribe in the region that the Ngoni cannot claim to have conquered.

Political Relations with Other Tribes

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Before the European conquest relations between the Ngoni and other tribes were principally those of raiders and raided. The great season for raiding was after the harvest, when the surrounding tribes

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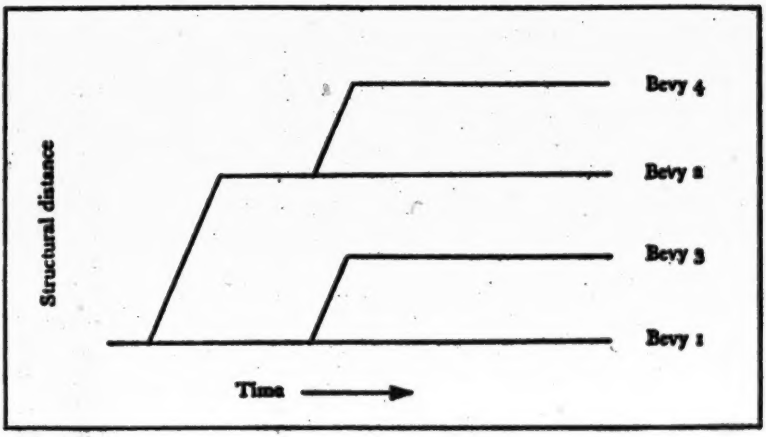
Mpezeni

231 262 727 cattle did not give rise to any cleavage of interest which was not already present in the residential system.

[557] 595 611 The system could also be manipulated by disputes about succession. If a man had many bevies of wives there was usually no doubt concerning which was the senior bevy and who was the great wife in it. Yet in general it was not possible to rank a man's bevies in a simple linear order of seniority, any more than the segments

DIAGRAM 3. RANKING OF BEVIES



to which they corresponded could be ordered in this way. In topological terms, ranking of bevies and of segments among the Ngoni was only partially, not simply, ordered. An example, illustrated in Diagram 3, will make this clear.

Suppose a man started with bevy 1 and then took part of it to form bevy 2. Later he took another part of bevy 1 to form bevy 3 and took part of bevy 2 to form bevy 4. With four bevies of wives, his senior bevy was bevy 1 and his great wife was the leader of bevy 1. Her eldest son was his principal heir, and if she had no sons the eldest son by the next wife in her bevy became heir. But [429] suppose there was no son by any wife in bevy 1. Which band provided the principal heir? It seems clear that bevy 4 did not, at least not if there were sons in bevy 2, for bevy 2 was senior to bevy 4. Bevy 2 might be regarded as senior to bevy 3, for it was formed from bevy 1 earlier. On the other hand, with reference to bevy 2, bevy 3 was merely a part of bevy 1 and hence the search for heirs should be continued in bevy 3 before shifting to bevy 2. Unfortunately I

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Mpezeni

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible 595
that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy 611
over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in bevies 2 and 3 but not in bevy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in bevy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in bevy 2 and the other by the heir in bevy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I [578] recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were 578
sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should 611
be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious 595
fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of 578
dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this 557
particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who [648] exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs 578
arising from the method of ranking bevies. The same principle of 611
ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to bevies of 621
wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain 554
situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and in other situations that which was founded last. The headquarters of the highest segment was in some sense capital of the nation, yet chieftainship had already passed from it and it was less important in other ways than the headquarters founded by the reigning chief. This apparent contradiction applied within every large segment. We have endeavoured to isolate these different contexts by our distinction between primal and residual segments, but as soon as we attempt to arrange villages or bevies of wives in a linear order without reference to the relationship of their associated segments to one another, the contradiction reappears.

A clear and accepted sequence of heirs would have been appropriate to a segmentary system in which segments continued to hold together in all circumstances. Ngoni segments did not do this, and the simple linear sequence of heirs was lacking. The successive formation of inferior segments implied increased structural separation between the first inferior segment to be formed and the headquarters, and hence less likelihood that the former would provide the main heir. As in lineage systems, the farther back the point of departure from the main line the greater the structural separation from it. But whereas in lineage systems it is the junior lines which are continually diverging from the main stem, in the Ngoni system the main heir was the first to break away from his father, who remained longer in close contact with his junior sons. Seniority within the newly formed undivided segment implied early differentiation within it, and hence early separation from its headquarters. Thus, the general principle of increasing separation with the passage of time, together with the particular principle of segment formation in order of seniority, combined to make a system of great flexibility despite essential regularity and uniformity. On the death of each segment head there was a shift of power within his segment and to some extent a formal recognition of the structural separation which had proceeded gradually during his lifetime. The headquarters founded by successive heads of segments persisted as the home of groups whose interests they symbolized. The history of the segments and of the nation itself was embodied in the relationships enduring between successive headquarters.

When a small segment was founded it was usually manned by people drawn from the rump of the immediately superior segment, that is, from those men and women in the superior segment who had not already been allocated to some inferior segment within it. However it is clear that this rule was often over-ridden. When the lord of a large segment formed a new inferior segment for a wife or son he was able to command the services of everyone within his

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment, even of those who had been allocated to existing inferior segments. If he thought fit he could shift them from one inferior segment to another within his own segment. This process was particularly relevant to the formation of new segments for the great wives of men who were the heirs or lords of large segments. A new lord, making his great wife's segment after the death of his father, did not confine himself to the rump of his father's segment but selected men he thought he could trust from anywhere within his father's primal segment, whether or not they had made segments of their own. Similarly a lord sometimes took a man who occupied an unimportant position in the segment of one of his wives and promoted him to be lieutenant in a newly formed bevy. The more important the lord or heir, the greater the structural distance his dependants could be moved. Thus while the processes by which the Paramount Chief and a man with only a few followers made segments for bevies of wives were formally the same, the consequences were quite different. In the former case, many hundreds of people were involved and many key men were shifted in their allegiance in order to provide the new segment with lieutenants and followers. In the latter, few people were concerned and the event was not of general interest. The formal processes remained the same at all levels in society, but what in one case was essentially a political action in which a Paramount Chief acted as head of a State was in the other largely a matter of domestic reorganization. It is characteristic of the Ngoni State that the transition from one state of affairs to the other was a gradual one.

Occasionally a man moved himself from one segment to another on his own initiative. This happened only infrequently and it seems probable that it was only when a man who had quarrelled with his own segment sought asylum with the reigning chief that a move of this kind could be made. Chibambo records an incident in which many men transferred from their former segments to one newly formed by the reigning chief, but adds that later they returned to their old segments. A similar incident from the Fort Jameson group is noted below.[6] Despite these exceptions it nevertheless remains true that for the most part a man's affiliation to his segment was fixed and could be altered only by the actions of his political superiors.

We have spoken of the formation of segments, but not yet of their disappearance. Many minor segments faded away because their members died or because they were moved elsewhere by a lord. Sometimes a segment ceased to be an effective social unit

[6] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 55; see p. 140.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organized themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[27] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[28] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[27] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[28] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

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The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[59] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[60]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[59] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[60] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-3; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Hlubi kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a segment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require considerable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties. Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the Swazi lineage,[41] and perhaps more widely, although in both these societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[41] cf. Holleman, 'Twee-eenheidsbeginsel van die Zulu' and 'Zulu *isigodi*'; Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 729*f*, s.v. *isizinda*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

successive head of a major segment memorialized in this way, but the major divisions of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When splits occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fission had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fission in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fission we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[42] Fission in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fission was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fission did not bring into being any new segments, but merely dissolved the highest segment of all as a cohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fission was a hazardous

[42] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a *state* of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fission' to refer to the *process* of internal subdivision. cf. Fortes, *Web of kinship, passim.* I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[46] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
619 and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to
[597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[46] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[855] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[47]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[636] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-
[701] professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[47] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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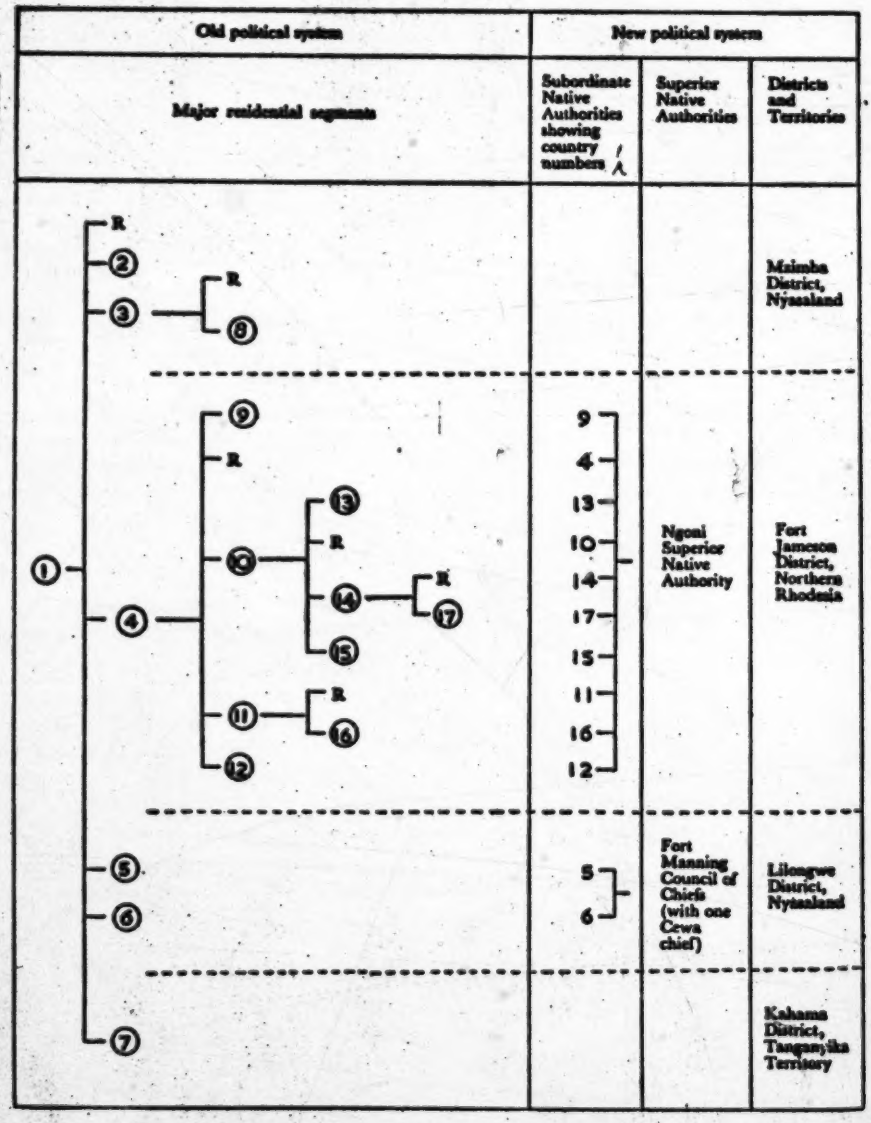
Diagram 4. OLD AND NEW POLITICAL SYSTEMS RELATED



⑨ Residential segment, numbered as in Table II.

9 County.

R Residual segment.

[County numbers correspond to those on map on page 120 ostegory 116.-Analyst]

[p. 122]

[The notes to this chart are on page 123.-Analyst]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between their leaders are influenced by both their relative position in the Native Authority scheme and the position of the county segments, as well as by new interests that have emerged. The formal relationship between the alignments of segments and counties is set out in Diagram 4. This diagram also shows the relationship, at a higher level, between some of the other independent Ngoni groups and the major political divisions of British Africa. 621 631 634

In each county the chief, who does not live in the capital but in a village of his own, is head of the county segment and it seems probable that during the early years of the Administration it was the affiliation of villages within their old residential segments that provided the basis for the groupings of convenience which eventually crystallized into counties. In one or two instances succession to headship of the segment and county has been plainly manipulated, but the traditional rules of succession have not been outraged. Where the county segment is a residual one, the county chief may be also head of some segment of higher order. Thus the chief of county 11 is head of primal segment 11 although his county is only the residual segment after the formation of segment 16; county chief 14 is head of primal segment 14; and the Paramount Chief is head of primal segments 4 and 10. [648] [557]

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[1] Three Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba are not shown on this diagram. 611 621 631

(a) A group under Magodi separated itself from either segment 2 or 3 and is now settled in Lundazi District, Northern Rhodesia.

(b) A group led by Zulu Gama is now settled in Songea District, Tanganyika Territory. The segment corresponding to this group appears to have been formed within segment 1, but I do not know what relation it bears to the other segments nor by what process it was formed. The western part of this group is still led by a descendant of Zulu Gama, but a descendant of one of his associates named Mboanani now leads the eastern part.

(c) A group under Ciwele ndhlovu is settled in Dowa District, Nyasaland. Some writers say it was formed within segment 4, others within the residue of segment 1. He was a lieutenant of either Zwangendaba or Mpezeni.

The two Ngoni groups which do not stem from Zwangendaba cannot be fitted into the diagram. They are located as follows.

(d) The Southern Nyasaland Ngoni, who broke away from the Southern Rhodesia Ndebele and who were led originally by Mputa, are now settled in Ncheu and Dedza Districts, Nyasaland, and in Circunscracão of Angónia, District of Tete, Portuguese East Africa.

(e) The Ngoni group led by Soshangane are now settled in the lower Limpopo Valley, Gazaland, Portuguese East Africa.

There are a few small Ngoni groups in the Shire Valley, Nyasaland, some of which have their own minor chiefs. There are also many Ngoni men and women in the towns of southern and eastern Africa, but they are not organized into political groups on a tribal basis.

[These notes refer to the chart on page 122.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's villages*, as I have defined them elsewhere.[24] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[24] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

inefficient workers on the local tobacco farms, where the ties that link them to the near-by villages with their marriages, funerals, and beer parties are still operative, and where the wages are much lower than in Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, Ngoni tend to suspect the good intentions of any non-African, however lavish he may be with his presents, and for this reason are reluctant to enter into agreements with them the social consequences of which they cannot foresee.

2. *Rivals of the Paramount Chief*

In pre-conquest times the death of the head of the State was followed by a struggle between rival heirs and by fission of the State. Under British colonial rule these struggles cannot be carried on by force of arms, and it is difficult to split the tribe when there is nowhere for the dissident section to move to and when Administrative recognition is an important condition for political existence. Nevertheless the same struggles continue even if in a different guise.

One of the most interesting incidents in the struggles between rival groups for the chieftainship occurred in 1903 and hinged on an aspect of segmentation within the residential system which we have not so far discussed. It was customary for the heir to a large segment founded by his father to place one wife in the headquarters of that segment as well as establishing his bevies of wives with their own inferior segments. The eldest son of the selected wife grew up to be in charge of the headquarters and came to be identified with his father's father, the founder of the headquarters, as against his father who was lord of its segment. Thus, for example, Zwangendaba, heir to segment 1, founded segment 18 for his own great wife, but also placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 1, the segment founded by his father for *his* great wife. Similarly Mpezeni, as son of Zwangendaba, placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 4, which by then had replaced the annihilated segment 18. In this matter the Ngoni seem to have differed from the Zulu, for among them, according to Bryant, the *isizinda*, son of the placed wife, represents his own father as against the father's main heir.[1]

In 1903 the eldest son of Mpezeni I by the selected wife in segment 4 tried to assume the name of his father's father, Zwangendaba. This was in accord with his structural position as representing the interests of the founder of the segment as against those of the

[1] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 80; Bryant, *Dictionary*, s.v. *isi-zinda*. cf. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 401. Lancaster implies that the selected wife was called *ikhlulu*. This seems unlikely in view of the Zulu use of *i(li)khlulu* for the senior left-hand wife.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 643 reigning lord of the segment. It is probable that in this instance the divergence of interest had been increased by the shooting of Nsingu, for Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu and grandson of Mpezeni I, was only a young boy and in the hands of guardians who were commoners and who might respond to pressure from their ward's father's paternal half-brother. So far as can be gathered from the published account of the meeting called by the Administration to [648] discuss the matter, the young Paramount was supported by the lords of segments 12, 14 and 17 and by the senior lieutenants of segment 10. He was opposed by the heads of segments 9, 13 and 16 and by the senior lieutenant of segment 4. Segment 15 seems not to have taken part in the dispute. Thus the main cleavage appears to have been between segments 10 and 12 on the one hand and the residue of 4 on the other. Segment 13, in terms of its structural position, was on the wrong side; this may have been connected with the fact that the regional governor of Mpezeni I who led segment 13 was born in the headquarters of segment 4. After a quarrel about succession to his father's office of lieutenant in that segment, he moved to segment 10 where he found favour with the chief and was later promoted to regional governor. In the 1903 dispute he apparently transferred his support back to his natal segment.[2]

The attempt to assume the name Zwangendaba failed. The young chief's supporters outnumbered their opponents at the meeting and his spokesmen argued that he had been recognized by all the other chiefs and by the Administration as Paramount of the whole Ngoni country. If his rival took the name he would be led to usurp the authority of the young Paramount. The Native Commissioner then ruled that the name could not be taken.

Throughout his reign Mpezeni II was opposed by a half-
643 brother, a son of Nsingu by a different mother. This man was older
611 than Mpezeni and claimed that his mother had really been Nsingu's
754 great wife, or at least that Nsingu had intended to make her so
669 before he was shot in 1898. This rivalry took two forms. He
578 endeavoured to bring destruction to the chief and his cattle by sorcery, and on one occasion made what seems to have been a half-hearted attempt to kill him with a spear. At the same time he endeavoured to establish his own segment as a county of its own, and in this he was assisted by others who fancied themselves as chief of the proposed new county.[3] The sorcery failed, not only because it was merely sorcery, but also because sorcery and

[2] *N.E.R.G.G.*, i, 4 (1 August 1903), Supplement. See p. 35.
[3] See pp. 143*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy.

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief.

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it.

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Linyusa*. cf. Zulu *i(li)nxusa*, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 140*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

these need the support and co-operation of the African community. 648
The Administration has consulted Ngoni and other Native Authorities on such matters as agricultural control, the emigration of 645
women to the railway line, provision of better schools, and so on. In 1948 the number of councillor posts was reduced. Instead of employing councillors for general duties, each of the four councillors remaining, now receiving a much higher salary than before, has been given a specific task, the care of roads, the promotion of agriculture, the efficient use of school facilities, and the co-ordination of the work of the Native Authority as a whole. The Administration has attempted to make these four councillors, together with the ten Northern Rhodesian chiefs, into a formal council competent to take decisions without always referring to the people as a whole.

So far this attempt has not been very successful, but the power of the four councillors is certainly greater than that of their more numerous and lower-paid predecessors. The court clerks have been overshadowed by these new men and left behind in these new activities. Literacy is becoming common and clerks are no longer [212]
in demand as secretaries to chiefs. The Native Authority is beginning to employ men whose jobs do not take them to court at all.

The present range of posts whose emoluments are handled by 647
the Native Treasury is shown in Table VIII.

All these posts are filled by the Native Authority in agreement with the Administration. It is easy to show how a large proportion of the employees are connected to the chiefs and senior lieutenants by kinship, but this fact is not as significant as it might appear. The Ngoni possess nowadays what may be called an omni-directional [611]
kinship system in which ties of kinship can be traced as convenient through fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and by any combination of these. It would indeed be surprising if Native Authority employees could not trace genealogical connexion with chiefs and their lieutenants, for so can nearly everyone in Ngoniland. There is no formal selection procedure but a chief may announce at a county meeting that there is a post to be filled and those present may suggest names. Alternatively a chief may discuss the matter with his advisers and then offer the post to the man they decide on. Occasionally a man seeking employment [662]
approaches the Paramount Chief in the hope that there may be a post to be filled. Thus although those who live near the chief, or who make it their business to see him and drink with him frequently stand a greater change of being chosen, choice is not restricted to these people. [see page 152, category 116. —Analyst]

[Text continues on page 153]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market. 571 574 [439] [311]

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. [692] 648 643

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area. 611 178 171 [249] [464]

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the 646 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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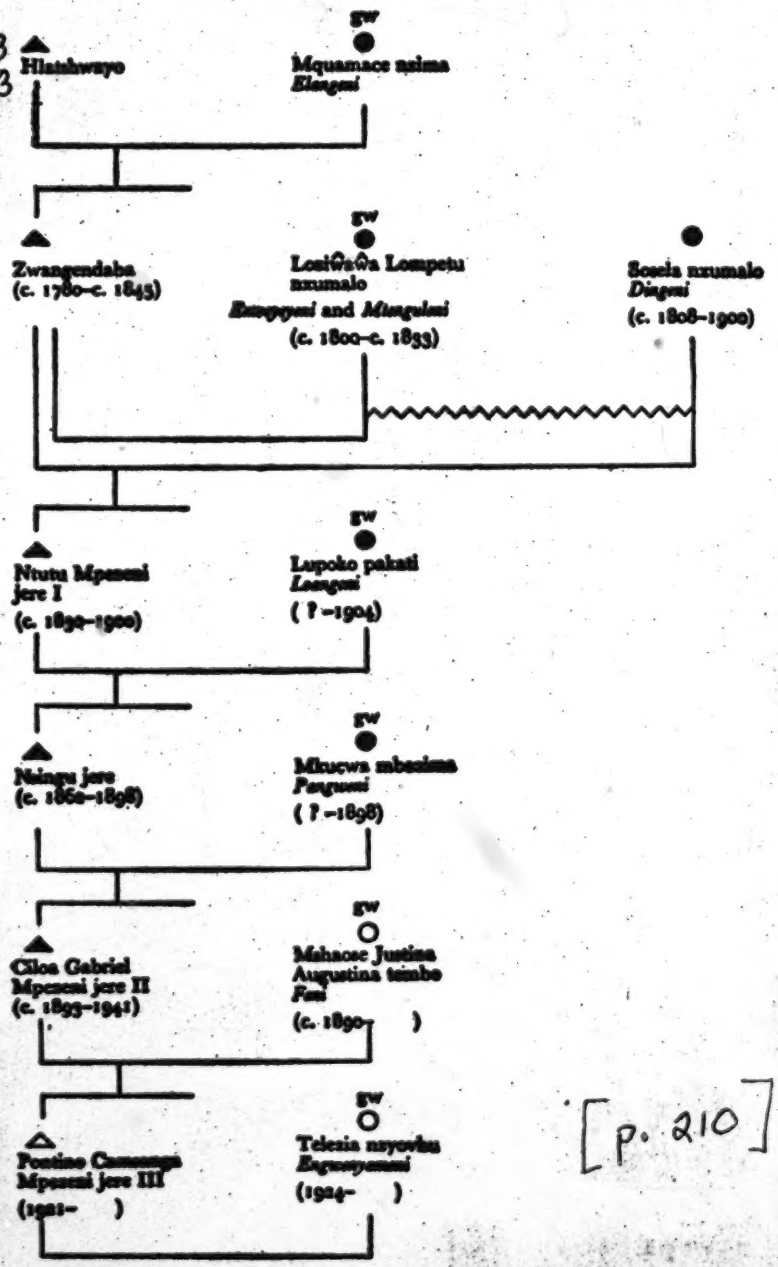
SKELETON GENEALOGY OF MPEZENI CHIEFTAINSHIP



[p. 210]

(Names of segments founded for queens shown in *italics*; other symbols as in Diagram 1 rotated through ninety degrees. Years of birth and death shown in brackets.)

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to 563 the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also 621 a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as 128 Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a [184 consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations 121 of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. 563 Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-583 betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *mlobokazi*. A 593 strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of [586] a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. 591 Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was sup-[592] ported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military Service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the [614]
Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by handing over cattle, which established the offspring as [583]
'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a [563]
group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grandmother with whom they slept, but the other practice was more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611] ●
their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan. In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to remain as a distinctive group. They were members of their
father's house until they married; and when that took place [583]
it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd belonging to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the carelessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the
grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisa- [597]
bility of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors. 581 602 554

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system. 621 581 571 [611] [591] [554]

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[50] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere [121] 582 [114] [561] [643]

[50] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated
593 proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated
613 with political allegience, and therefore it was inappropriate that
her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired
[591] rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genetricem* in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genetricem* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

[428] Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem* and bridewealth rights *in genetricem*. Rights *in genetricem* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother
[587] willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genetricem* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*.

611 Whereas the rights *in genetricem* were definite in the old system,
591 in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme
602 they were related to position in a residential system of which one
178 of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession. With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another, and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours
611 cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups,
591 for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people,
602 some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tion for associating children with one parent rather than the other. There is only the one proud dogma that the Ngoni, unlike their neighbours, are a patrilineal virilocal people. This reflects the actual dominance of the virilocal mode of residence but does not furnish a rule to which appeal can be made in specific cases. The only definite unit to which a man can be said to belong is his village, and such few attempts as are made to enforce rights *in genetricem* are expressed in terms of residence in villages. In marriages that are made outside the tribe, rights *in genetricem* become significant, for a child is not likely to wander to and fro between one tribe and another hundreds of miles away in the same way as children change from one village to another within the kingdom. Here then we find more attention paid to the payment of bridewealth and to rights *in genetricem* and these rights are enforceable through the police checks on buses and lorries.

If a man is away working his interests are represented by his kinsfolk. They cannot exercise his rights *in uxorem* for him, but if they are violated they can act on his behalf. His permission is necessary, however, before they can proceed to the court, and if they are awarded damages then they are under some sort of obligation to hand over the money to him when he returns. There was no situation comparable to this in the old system, for men did not go away for years at a time, and the violation of rights *in uxorem* was punishable by death.

The position of the man as holder of rights *in uxorem* over his wife is reinforced to some extent by mystical ties believed to connect the couple, and at the same time the man can fortify his rights by the use of medicines to ensure fidelity. During pregnancy, for a short while after childbirth, and during menstruation, the actions of man and wife affect one another automatically, and each is placed in danger of illness by the failure of the other to observe their mutual obligations. To protect his rights *in uxorem* a man may doctor his wife so that possible violators may be deterred by the fear of mystical retribution as well as action in the courts.

7. *Mystical beliefs and marriage stability*

The mystical connexion believed to exist between a man and his wife serves to define their relationship more closely, for this same connexion does not hold between a woman and her husband's kin or between a man and his wife's kin. The adultery of a pregnant woman's brother-in-law, like her husband's adultery, may threaten the peace of her local group of relatives and friends, and may even lead her to change her village or go to the court as a supporter. The important distinction between the adultery of her husband's brother and her husband's adultery is that the former does not automatically endanger her delivery while the latter does. A man confesses his adultery when his own wife gives birth, not when her sister is in labour. This connexion is definite, and is not extended

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR
Mpezeni

as one from a graded segmentary society organized on a basis of patrilineal descent and modified by political promotion to a society of villages organized on a basis of omnidirectional kinship. In the past a man lived in the same place as his father and in charge of the segment allocated to him by his father. Now a man lives where he can find relatives of one kind or another who may be related to him agnatically, cognatically, affinally, or by any combination of these ways. He is not even restricted to consanguineal relatives, as in cognatic kinship systems, for he can affiliate himself to some person who is linked cognatically neither to him or to any of his potential descendants, as when he goes to live with his father's wife's mother's brother. Genealogical connexion can be traced along all possible paths and there are no mechanisms by which one path is automatically favoured or by which the length of a path is restricted. In consequence the genealogical constitution of any local group of relatives is complex, and every man is a potential recruit to many local groups. He selects between the numerous possibilities open to him on the basis of his own inclinations and in response to the various pressures exerted on him by his siblings, his parents, his wife, her parents, and others. Once he has made his choice he can always change his mind and move elsewhere if he finds his neighbours irksome. His wealth, either in cattle or money, is his own and he can take it with him when he moves. There are no rights in land (with the one exception of dry season gardens) which might otherwise tie him to one particular spot. As with residence, so with marriage payments, the formal and informal procedures of marriages, and the values associated with them. In all, considerable variation is tolerated. Indeed, we may well regard variation as a necessity in this system, for every man is subject to a mass of potential conflicting claims and he cannot possibly honour them all simultaneously. Variation occurs not because of different practices by various sections of the population but rather because of different individual decisions. A man decides for himself whether or not he will pay bridewealth, or take a hoeing party to his wife's mother's garden, or be suspended from the sacraments for marrying a second wife. Yet although he makes these choices himself, he is all the time subject to social pressure from kinsfolk and neighbours who will be affected by his decisions and who therefore try to influence them. A woman is not quite so free as a man, but she too can make many decisions for herself, and her relatives must appeal to her if they wish to influence her, for they cannot force her against her will. Man and wife living together are in a unique relationship which is personal and non-transferable, yet they live in the midst of kinsfolk and the well-being of one relative is the concern of all. The quarrels of a married couple are a danger to the cohesion of the local group in which they live, while the longer they live together, fertile and peaceful, the greater the local solidarity.

10. *Forbidden and Enjoined Unions (Ngoni).*

The Angoni are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*vide infra*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the Angoni it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage (Ngoni).*

When an Mngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headman to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *anhkosee* with a present to the *anhkosee* of the girl. There are always two *anhkosee* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ku-oapa*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several other women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commemoration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ku-tra-lova*, and sends a cloth (known as *ankeda*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kukonda*, or *kupawka ankeda*. The *ankeda*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods, and is varied according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that [558] of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and 178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and 161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

691 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political 641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was [684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a 641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population 727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There 563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State. [561] Apart from the aforementioned families which owned abaqhaqhwa dated to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain 563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set 641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise 701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Mawa*, pl. *amawa*. Cf. the Zulu term *nwamna*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

241 those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their
273 work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory
476 that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's
[465] labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

463 There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no
323 potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neigh-
[462] bouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

285 Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when
[462] it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and
759 basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical
[648] services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

● 611 The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying
[591] bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern prac-
[583] tice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were
[184] incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

matrilineal matrilocal tribes, and the values associated with these systems of organization were not entirely forgotten. With the decline of the central power of the chieftainship after the conquest, cultural diversity within the tribe increased, so that at the present time we have a wide range of variation in the kinds of family found between one village and the next, and even within the same village. In particular, the irreconcilable difference between the organization of unilineal kin-groups on patrilineal and matrilineal principles appears to have led to a condition in which, for most of the tribe, the only groups of relatives that emerge as corporate groups are stocks, people with a common ancestor from whom they are descended through sons or daughters or both. These stocks are not mutually exclusive, and a man may think of himself at one time as belonging to one stock and at another time to another stock. Frequently alongside the true members of a stock there are other people who claim to belong to the same 'family'[1] who are in fact related affinally to the members of the stock. The organizing factor in domestic affairs is not kinship by itself but common residence combined with genealogical connexion. A stock, with its affinal accretions, emerges as the core of a corporate group of kindred only when its members live near one another and meet each other frequently. The strongest groups are those people of a stock who are living alongside one another in the same part of a village. 611 184

The use made of double affinal links in establishing attachment to a stock is noticeable. For example, a child will call a man who is his mother's divorced husband's wife's divorced husband by the term *father* (see Diagram 4 below). A man may bring into his village a wife from outside who may come with her children by a former husband. When grown up, the sons may also bring in wives accompanied by their children from former marriages. These children grow up to regard the village as their own and to think of themselves, in certain contexts, as belonging to the 'family' of the headman of the village. Informants in a village with a most complicated kinship structure will say 'We are all one family here'. 602 611 [601]

Kinship Terminology

The variation in the kinship systems of the different tribes from which the Ngoni recruited their members has led to some confusion in the use of kinship terms. Most of the terms now used are in the 601 [197]

[1] *Banja*, pl. *mabanja*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [848]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name *nsala* for a man becomes *mvula* for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimala*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

/4 cont'd/

701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
221 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
464 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital
[681] investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

161 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson
621 Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[178] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually
[561] a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

173 Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had
631 obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local
[613] matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels
[627] between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division.
[621] He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other
[619] chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the
[701] regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[5]

178 The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women,
619 perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages
[613] disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not
[621] to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were, as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly align-
[561] ments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organi-
[701] zation, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the
178 bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the
621 former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[5] Based on Bryant, *Olden times*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[10] 173 167

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*isithakazelo*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapundi, Bangoni, Batuta, Bazowa, Bunga, Landeens, Landims, Machendi, Mafiti, Mafitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara, 101

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820'S

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Soshangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

[551] [643]

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Maviti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Nguni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became 173 613 [727] [622] [631]

[10] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-16; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] See Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 93.
[12] *Mulumuzana*, pl. *alumuzana*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzana*, village headman; also Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 segments in what we shall term the Ngoni residential system. The
613 constituent segments of their lineages formed the nuclei of minor
631 segments of the residential system. Using the adjectives 'superior' and 'inferior' to indicate merely relative position, we may say that each Nguni agnatic lineage segment was in general contained within superior segments of greater span and at the same time contained within itself smaller but similar inferior units. This formation is characteristic of all lineage systems, as is well known. The segments of the residential system were arranged in the same way but whereas there were several distinct agnatic lineages, or parts of such lineages, under the political leadership of Zwangendaba, in the residential system all, or nearly all, of these distinct lineages were included within the largest residential segment. In other words, the largest segment of the residential system contained almost the whole of Zwangendaba's following, his regional governors, his and their captives and other followers, as well as his own agnatic kinsmen. Again, whereas the various lineage segments contained only the agnatic relatives of the head of the segment, each segment in the residential system included many captives, men, women and children, as well as an agnatic core.

The segments or units of the residential system were enduring social groups which, by analogy with the usual terminology for lineage systems, we shall call primal segments.[13] The segment of highest order was the State itself (or the greater portion thereof), consisting in 1898 of some 75,000 people, while many of the lowest order segments contained only half a dozen people. Each member of a segment belonged not only to that segment but also to all the superior segments of which it was a part.

173 We shall refer to the man in charge of, or the founder of, a
613 segment as a lord (*mfumu*) and to the members of his segment as his
622 dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord
631 except the Paramount Chief, Zwangendaba, was a dependant of some other lord higher in the hierarchy. A lord was politically responsible for all the men and women in his segment. He was related agnatically to some of the men in his segment and towards
[608] his captives he stood in a quasi-agnatic relationship in that, although he had the same rights and duties towards them as if he had been their father, it was nevertheless possible, and indeed quite usual,
[582] for his captives to marry one another and for him to marry one of his woman captives. In the absence of true agnatic descendants a lord was sometimes succeeded by a quasi-related dependant.

[13] *Cigaûa*, pl. *vigaûa*, from *ku-gaûa*, to divide. cf. Nsenga, *ku-gaûa*, to divide, and Zulu, *isi-gaba*, section or portion divided off from the whole.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*mwavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*nkosikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Nduna*, pl. *induna*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 470, 472, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 621 631 together in a cluster of huts, and several clusters together formed a division, inhabited by members of a segment of greater span. Larger segments corresponded to complete villages and the largest segments of all contained many separate villages. The same general pattern of settlement was repeated at successive halting places on the migration, but as a segment grew in size by natural increase and by the addition of more captives, so its settlement grew from a cluster to a division and from a single village to a group of villages. In a large segment with many villages, the constituent inferior segments remained under the political leadership of the lord of the large segment but achieved a certain amount of autonomy. On many occasions the interests of one or more inferior segments diverged from those of the rest of the large segment, from what we shall term the *residue* of the large segment. This divergence of interest sometimes led to the disappearance of the large segment as an effective social unit and, at the highest level in the residential system, to splits in the State itself.

173 595 613 621 631 The first bevy of wives formed by a lord ranked senior to other bevies, and the wife in charge was the lord's great wife. Her eldest son was his main heir and the eldest son of each bevy leader was heir in its own segment. Yet sons, whether heirs or not, were able to establish segments of their own for their wives when they married and these segments remained as distinct social groups when an heir succeeded. Thus a man could be lord of a segment founded by his father and at the same time lord of a smaler segment, within the first, which he had founded himself. This arrangement was of fundamental importance in the working of the residential system, particularly in the formation of those large and politically dominant segments with which we are mainly concerned in this book, and still finds expression in the new villages founded by each reigning county chief. When the Paramount Chief, or one of his sons, founded a segment for a bevy of queens, the new segment was of village size and many men were called by the chief from existing segments to join the new one. As the segment grew in size, minor segments within it broke out to form separate villages of their own and the parent village became the headquarters of the group of villages and of the segment they formed. The headquarters of all large dispersed segments endured as social groups, as villages, despite the continual throwing off of more and more satellites. Thus the number of large villages, each the headquarters of a segment founded for a bevy of a reigning chief, increased as time went on. These villages remain to-day, and Ngoni history is largely the story of the formation and development of the segments associated with them.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Under Zwangendaba's leadership*

When the Ngoni migration began, the greater portion of Zwangendaba's followers belonged to the primal segment founded for the great wife of Hlatshwayo, father of Zwangendaba. When the migration began there were perhaps a thousand people in this segment (this figure is largely guesswork). For convenience of reference we shall refer to the various historically significant segments by numbers. Thus segment 1, with the proper name of Elangeni, is that of Hlatshwayo's great wife. The structural relationship of seventeen numbered segments to each other and to the royal genealogy is shown in Diagram 1. A list of their proper names and of the names of the lords and ladies associated with them, is given in Table II, together with information on three segments superior to segment 1 and on three other segments which cannot be placed on Diagram 1 for lack of information.

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This diagram and the accompanying table are skeletons, showing only those few men and women who were heads of major groups which, partly fortuitously, have endured to the present day and are now large chiefdoms. There were many more queens than the ten shown on the diagram and very many more sons of chiefs, regional governors, lieutenants and other less exalted men and women all of whom were in charge of named segments, many of which still survive, forming part of a single system. The same principles of organization applied at all levels in the residential system. Here we have set out the names and positions of only the major limbs of the tree of State. We must not forget that the minor branches and little twigs were part of the same growing whole.

Segment 1 included the greater portion of the State, but it is clear from Elmslie and Fraser, and made explicit by Read, that the headquarters of several superior segments were also present on the march north. Read states that villages belonging to nine generations of chiefs were still in existence in northern Nyasaland in 1936. There is no direct evidence from Fort Jameson, for there are no headquarters of ancient royal segments there, but there are several villages belonging to the lieutenants of segments founded by Zwangendaba's father. I have therefore included in Table II the three superior segments whose names are given by Chibambo.[17] It is probable that Zwangendaba had succeeded to the position of

[Text continues on page 15]

[17] Read, 'Tradition', pp. 463f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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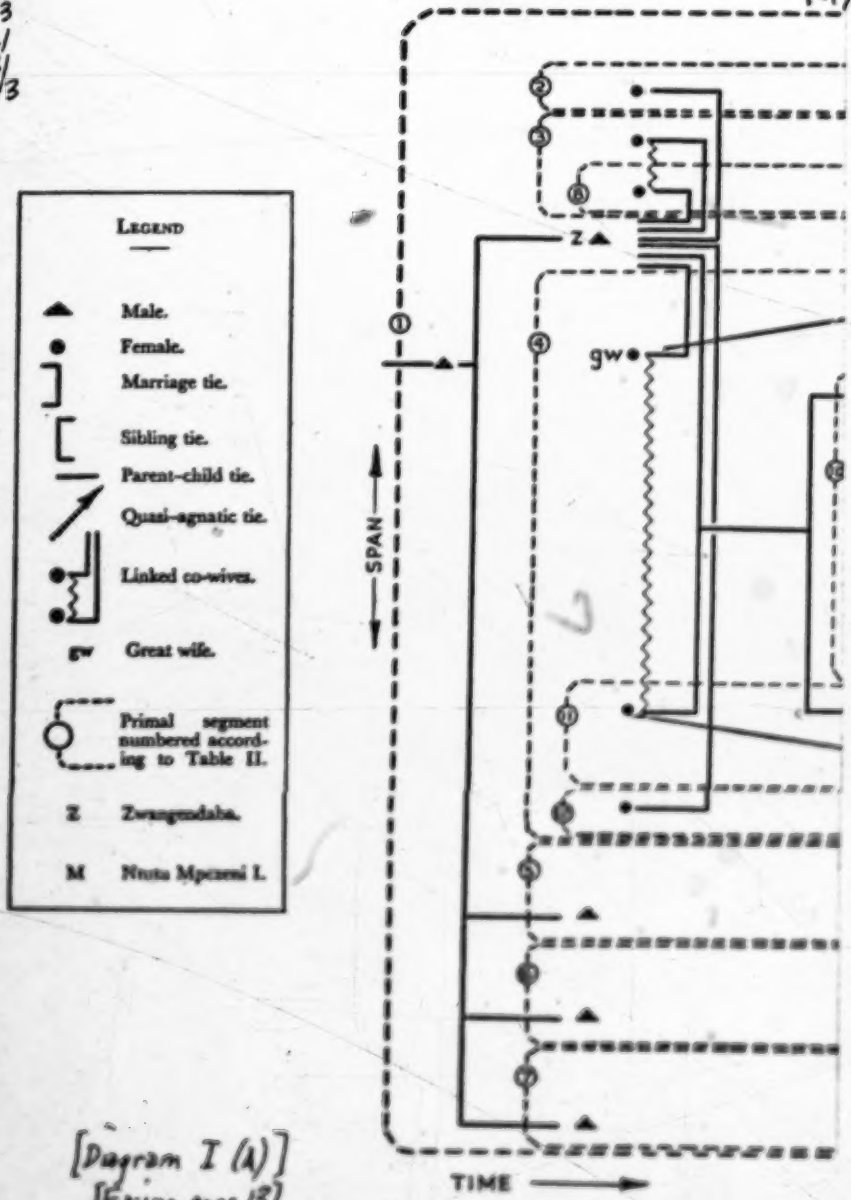
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

SEGMENTS 1-17



[Diagram I (a)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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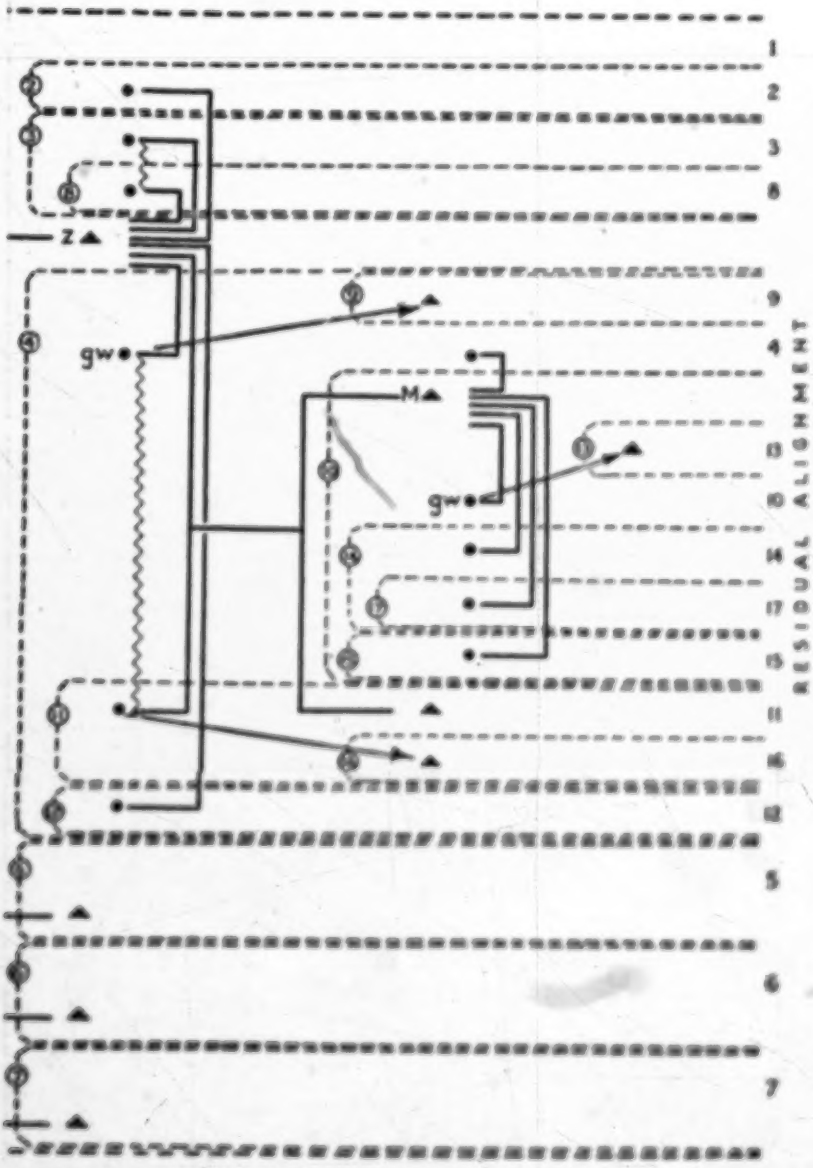
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM
SEGMENTS 1-17



[Diagram I (B)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE II. RESIDENTIAL SEGMENTS OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

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Segment		Lady's husband (in brackets when segment was not the first founded by him)	Lady	Lady's kin
Number	Proper name			
(x)	Enhlakuti	Lonyanda	?	Magalela
(x)	Enhlekheni	Magalela	?	Magangata
(x)	Hobo	Magangata	?	Hlatshwayo
1	Elangeni	Hlatshwayo	Mqamache zaima	Zwangendaba
2	Emciweni	(Zwangendaba)	Mhambwe	Mpezeni or ? Ndindana
3	Ekwendeni	(Zwangendaba)	Muneme zaima, later Cutu zaima	Mwambera Mtwalo
4	Mengaleni	(Zwangendaba)	Lozikwa Lompetu zaymalo	Mpezeni (son of her linked co-wife)
5	Kanyeni	Lomapela	?	Magwambane
6	Nyangweni	Sombola	?	Mlonyeni(s)
7	Engwenyameni (d)	Ntabeni	?	Ngodoyi
8	Erigulhiweni or Emchakachakeni	(Zwangendaba)	Muneme zaima	Mwambera
9	Cikenkheni	Mzukwa maryupa	?	?
10	Loangeni	Ntutu Mpezeni I	Lupeko pakati	Naiaga
11	Diangeni	(Zwangendaba)	Ssaela zaymalo	Nayoshu (second son)
12	Mbarbweni or ? Emangeni	(Zwangendaba)	Zinkhwe mahlangane	Mlabolo (s)
13	Tomdweni	Kapatamoyo	?	?
14	Fumbeni	(Mpezeni I)	Mdowa soko	Nzermane
15	Chimpingo	(Mpezeni I)	Kokoya Kapili zaula	Seyili
16	Fulazeni	Mahambulani (h)	?	?
17	Ngiyeweni	(Mpezeni I)	Faimbo	Magoya
18(x)	Emweyeyeni or Mwebeleni or ? Mwewemi	Zwangendaba	Lozikwa zaymalo	——
19(x)	Emaloni	(Zwangendaba)	Mchazana mahlinga	?
20(x)	Emaskeheweni	Mgoyi	?	?

[Notes to table are on page 15.-Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration. 173 613

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mvelelemi) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Emciweni)[10] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emsizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18. 595 621 631 643

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[11] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent 173 595 613 643 [273] [682]

[10] Rangeley, 'Mbwela', p. 58, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[11] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 6, 34, 94.

Notes

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mbenyeni, Fort Manning Division.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mbenyeni and present Chief Tsiska, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Mdabola, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

[see table on page 14 - [illegible]]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 parts of the segment, namely segments 2, 3 and 19, survived as
613 independent inferior segments within segment 1. The lieutenant
595 in charge of the warriors spared the pregnant queen and hid her.
643 She bore a son, Ntutu Mpezeni, and later was shown to Zwangendaba who received her kindly and, according to Chibambo, ordered her to live with her son in the headquarters of segment 1. She was not in charge of a bevy of wives, and as by this time the great wife was dead, the bevy in segment 3 now became Zwangendaba's senior bevy. Mwambera, eldest son of the leader of this bevy, was thus a candidate for the main heirship but owing to the disappearance of segment 18 and the subsequent reconciliation between Zwangendaba and Mpezeni's mother, the relative status of the two sons was uncertain. This uncertainty may have been one of the precipitating causes in the subsequent break-up of the State.

Rangeley's verson of this incident is that after he had been
[114] shown Mpezeni, Zwangendaba ordered the headquarters of segment 18 to be rebuilt. This seems less likely to be true than the version we have followed, since there is, as far as I know, no present-day village which we can identify as the headquarters of this segment.[20]

From Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba went up the Limpopo
173 Valley into Mashonaland. He fought with Kalanga and other
167 Shona peoples and there was renewed fighting with other refugee
721 groups under Soshangane and Nxaba. In 1835 Zwangendaba's group crossed over to the north side of the River Zambezi near Zumbo and settled in Nsenga country for four years. They moved on again along the eastern rim of the Luangwa basin and eventually arrived in about 1842 in Ufipa, on the east side of Lake Tanganyika. Here in about 1845 Zwangendaba died.

Two points of historical detail may be mentioned here. There is reliable
114 evidence for a raid made on a Portuguese fort at Delagoa Bay on 22 October 1833
173 by some of Soshangane's people.[21] Poole and Winterbottom state explicitly that
167 Zwangendaba's men also took part in this attack, and Lancaster seems to imply
721 the same. According to the chronology adopted by Young and by Poole himself Zwangendaba was at this time four hundred and fifty miles away in the Kalanga country of Southern Rhodesia and it therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he participated in this raid. Elmslie, Young and Chibambo do not mention it at all, and Bryant refers only to Soshangane's part in it.

A few years after Zwangendaba left Natal, he was followed by Mzilikazi, a chief who for a while fought under Shaka and then fled from him with his followers.

[20] Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', pp. 126f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 96f; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 58f.
[21] Theal, *Portuguese in South Africa*, pp. 279f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group
67 consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the
631 now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of
643 Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4. It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwambera's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group,
[648] for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes
173 of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the
613 head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not
643 lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife.
644 However this woman was prompted to independent status by the
595 formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingeni) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkuewni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni).

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Loangeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary levies of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Gimpinga). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Fafazeni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thus Young, writing of the period 1895-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.[20] The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambera's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambera in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of

[20] Young, *History*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organised themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[*] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[**] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[*] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[**] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[*] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[**]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[*] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[**] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 222-5; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Hellmann, *Native kinship*, pp. 1-18; Fortes, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a segment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require considerable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties. Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the Swazi lineage,[41] and perhaps more widely, although in both these societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[41] cf. Hulleman, 'Twee-eenheidsbegrippen van die Zulu' and 'Zulu *isigodi*'; Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 709f, s.v. *isizinda*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
498 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[729] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was,
[581] in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the
[108] old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political
602 ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return [851]
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent and succession were traced through males, the pattern of segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetuated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary [849]
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [803]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

855 The recent captives
593 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband, wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

631 In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw
554 attention to two features of the residential system which were not,
591 at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features
[178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

581 Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which
613 agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the
[593] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this.
[178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Margvi FR4

N 581 583

Case history 1

Amos[1] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

N 614 613 [583] [601]

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N 563

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] M [581] [828] N 186 581 N

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognize these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

595 608 582

[1] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in usufructum* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[6] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[6] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation' *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 273 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated with political allegience, and therefore it was inappropriate that her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights *in genetricem* in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of bridewealth. The holder of the rights both *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* was the husband, but on his death the rights *in uxorem* passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while the rights *in genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been recompensed for the transfer of rights *in genetricem* to provide another wife whose children occupied the position of children of the barren wife.

Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights *in uxorem* and bridewealth rights *in genetricem*. Rights *in genetricem* are inherited in the same way as before, but rights *in uxorem* do not pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother willing to have her, then he acquires rights *in uxorem* over her without any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them. When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires his rights *in uxorem*. If rights *in genetricem* have already been transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its acceptance transfers both rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*.

Whereas the rights *in genetricem* were definite in the old system, in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme they were related to position in a residential system of which one of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession. With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another. The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related, who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another, and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups, for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people, some of them patrilateral kin, some matrilateral, and some affines, whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as well as to her husband and his kin, while a man tries to enlist the support of his own kin but not usually of his wife's kin if the dispute has nothing to do with marital affairs. At birth and death the division of labour and responsibility is mainly on sex lines. In general we may say that the elementary family does not emerge as a grouping of importance because there is no system of elementary families in which it can do so. Village is posed against village in dances, songs, the collection of tax, hunts, division of food, and so on. In other situations, one group of kinsmen act as a body in distinction to another group of kinsmen who are their affines. We have demonstrated this for the ceremonial situations of marriage and for the resolution of quarrels. In the intimacies of the hut, man and wife are in a simple and specific dyadic relationship which does not admit of substitution. To some extent, their infant, from conception to weaning, is a helpless appendage of this relationship. From weaning on, children acquire other social relationships of their own. The distinction drawn between marriage and the care of children is well illustrated by the remark made by an old widow when I asked her why she did not marry again. She replied 'I am now too old for marriage. My job is to look after children.' The missions encourage men and women to bring up and care for their own children, particularly where the children's grandparents are pagan. At the same time the importance of the economic ties that link every Ngoni household with the rest of the world is increasing and it is easier for men to find extra money when they are young and middle-aged than when they become grandparents. These two factors may lead to an increase in the importance of the elementary family, but it is also possible that the number of children sent home from Southern Rhodesia to their grandparents may grow as more women go there to join their husbands, thus increasing the responsibilities of the old towards their young grandchildren.

9. *Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce*

We have seen that whereas in the old days divorce was infrequent, it is now comparatively common. We have also seen that prior to 1898 the kinship structure of the Ngoni was based on localized agnatic and quasi-agnatic lineages, for the captor-captive relationship was similar to that between father and child. These lineages are now no longer effective social groups, and individuals act and live together with cognates and affines related to them in a variety of ways. This parallel change in divorce frequency and in kinship structure provides confirmation for the hypothesis put forward by Gluckman that divorce is rare and difficult in tribes organised on a system of marked father-right, and frequent and easy to obtain in other types.[6] This hypothesis was suggested by a comparison of different tribes which Gluckman divides into two types. Among

[6] Gluckman, op. cit., p. 190.

rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[19] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage payments in the villages. They travel on their own, do not call on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group, so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stabilizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes. Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 172.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found in three separate states in the Dowa and Kasakula districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpezeni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,892. Leaving out the Fort Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliations survives political dispersal? The chief problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, distinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambezi', 'those from the north' and 'those from the country'. The Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realize that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni eni eni*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambezi clan descent names.

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.'[1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognized areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *ahemusana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *ahemusana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognized as *ahemusana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *ahemusana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognized court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *ahemusana* were recognized as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *ahemusana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Shamanland Protectorate*, 1935, p. 24.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[62] the main circle round the kraal to emphasise its connexion with the *cigudu* group.

[62] [57] The group referred to as 'a house' has already been defined in its relation to the Paramount and his *bungule* village, and it will be illustrated and examined further in Chapter III of Part III. As an Ngoni institution the big house was an integral factor in the succession to high office, and the *gogo* house played an essential role in ceremonial and ritual life. Houses were also one of the most important components in village grouping. Men, women and children regarded themselves as associated with a house in one of three ways. They were related to it by descent or by marriage; or they were members of the family of the *induna* who looked after its affairs; or they served the house as servants or labourers, and were possibly the descendants of captives caught in war and assigned to that hottie. Thus it often happened that the people living on the wings of the village had some relationship to the house on the side of the kraal where their huts were sited. There were many Ngoni villages where all the inhabitants were said to belong to one of the two or three or more houses, even though the majority of the inhabitants had no kinship or official relationship with a house.

[64] The term 'clan' or 'clan descent group' has been used already many times and some explanation and definition is needed as a guide to its use in Part II before it is discussed further in Chapter II of Part III. The Ngoni considered that the clan of a person was of great importance for several reasons. The use of the clan descent name was the normal mode [576] of address between all adults. The Ngoni said they could not speak to any stranger until they knew his clan name, and they used it in all social intercourse, except when addressing the Paramount. Exogamy was strict [35] for people with the same clan name, and sexual relations between such individuals was regarded as incest.

2: Read E/S (1935-1939) 1956

FRS Ngoni FRS

In the 1930's, in the villages of the *ohwamane*, individuals with the same clan name formed patrilineal groups of an extended family type. The original *ohwamane* were the leaders of groups of persons bearing their clan descent name, who crossed the Zambezi under Zwangendaba or Mputo. In Part II we shall see how these *ohwamane* were settled in the Ngoni kingdoms round the royal villages, with the result that a group of villages of mixed ethnic origin came to be associated with the village regarded as the head village of a clan. Reference is made from time to time in this study to clan heads, and to the head villages of certain clans. There was no head of a Swazi or trans-Zambezi clan who was not regarded as a *ohwamane*. On the ground that his ancestor crossed the Zambezi with his wives and followers, the head of such a clan was always given that title. In addition to the head village of a *ohwamane* there were a number of other villages connected with the clan, created partly by the working of the *kanogude* system of village segmentation, and partly by other sections of the larger villages moving off to make new gardens. The association of a number of villages owned by individuals with the same descent name was due to the original settlement of the *ohwamane* who were given land at varying distances from the royal village. When the Ngoni spoke of 'clan areas' this was the connotation they gave to the term. Village censuses showed that small family groups bearing the same descent name were scattered widely over a number of villages in several of the chiefs' areas. There was, however, in connexion with each clan an area of concentration round the head village where a number of families and individuals with that descent name were living. These were sometimes referred to as clan areas, using the name of the clan with the prefix *ma*, meaning the people of that clan, in central Nguniland, and with the prefix *u*, meaning the land of the clan, in the northern kingdom.

(c) The ritual pattern

In the rest of this study there will be descriptions and analyses of Ngoni marriage and funeral rites, of the puberty rites carried out for each boy and girl, but not in groups in initiation schools, and of the rituals associated with the ownership of cattle and with the ancestor cult. The marriage and funeral rites have South-eastern Bantu affinities, and so has the ritual associated with cattle-keeping and the ancestor cult. The northern Ngoni had a tradition that circumcision was practised among them when they left Natal, and that it was given up while they were in Tanganyika. Giving the head-ring (*ndhodhi*) to the men who were allowed to leave the regiments and settle as married men in civilian life was another ritual of southern origin which the Ngoni gave up soon after the kingdoms were established in Nyasaland.[1] The

[1] The early Europeans in Nyasaland reported that head-rings were worn by all the senior Ngoni men.

571 643 function and authority was largely evolved and built up during the Ngoni migration across the Zambezi and the early settlement in Nyasaland.

643 The office of the Paramount was supported by three typical Ngoni institutions. The first was the regency exercised by the man who was held responsible for the care of the office of the Paramount. He was called 'the one who takes care of the country', 'the one who has to put the new *induna* in his place', 'the one who takes care of the young *induna* until he enters his father's place'. We shall see later how this principle of regency operated in particular cases in the succession to the Paramountcy. It proved to be an effective provision both in the case of a minor who was recognized as his father's heir, and during an interregnum while the succession was being discussed. The Ngoni showed a clear understanding of what functions the regent ought to perform, and when he exceeded those functions and usurped, or tried to usurp, the Paramount's position they condemned his action as wrong.

The second institution which supported the Paramountcy was the 'big house' from which the heir to the Paramount had to come. We shall see later that it was not always considered essential that the heir should be the actual child of the wife in the big house. A boy could be adopted into the house and, by Ngoni kinship rules, he was then a child of that house and of the woman in it. 892

643 The third institution, which made the Paramount immortal at death after having been supreme in his life-time, was the Ngoni practice of 789 'guarding his spirit' in a hut, usually in the village where he had lived. The guardianship of a spirit was not practised exclusively for the Paramount. All the chiefs and the heads of the Swazi clans had this provision made for their spirits when they died, but in national crises prayers addressed to the spirits of former Paramounts were of supreme importance. 902

The royal clan and the big house

643 Among the Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans which formed the Ngoni aristocracy the royal clan had a unique position. Not only was it the clan of the Paramount, but its members had social rank and prestige because they belonged to his clan. In the northern kingdom informants showed awareness of the fact that their royal clan of Jere was not one of the well-known clans in the south. Other clan names found among them, such as Ngomezulu, Thole, Naima, Ngumayo, and many more, were known to be clan names among the South-eastern Bantu. The following explanation was given by Cibambo about the name Jere and was the one most widely accepted:

● 644 586 189

> 6 The Ngoni themselves say that the clan name of Jere was given during the journey, and that it arose out of the number of people who were with Zwangendaba. When the Ngoni want to speak of a large number of people they use two well-known words which are: '*Nga Jhabe*' (it is Jhabe),

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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'Nge Jere' (it is Jere). Perhaps Zwangendaba and others took their clan name from this, seeing that they had become a great number. It is certain that the clan name of Jere is not known in Zululand or Swaziland.

In the northern kingdom all the chiefs recognized as Subordinate Native Authorities were of the royal clan, and hence its political authority was widespread. It was noticed by the early missionaries in northern Ngoniland that the sons of Zwangendaba who were chiefs under their brother, the Paramount, showed some degree of independence in that they wanted to rule their own areas with the minimum of centralized control. The pre-eminence of the Paramount among the other Jere rulers was strengthened as time went on by the remoter kinship relationship of the other Jere chiefs to the Paramount. After Zwangendaba's death they were his brothers of the same father and different mothers. Two generations later they were further removed from his kinship circle since each of their posts was inherited on a direct father to son principle. The political and social importance of membership of the royal clan tended to go in the direct line of relationship to the Paramount rather than to the collateral branches. Later, in Part III, we shall examine the social prestige of the *amakosana* (lit. children of the *inkosi*). It was the closeness of their relationship to the reigning Paramount which was the basis for their social prestige, though evidence showed that a sister or brother or child from a big house of a former Paramount was also given social recognition as an important personage.

The royal clan of Maseko in the central kingdom was also known in Swaziland. Dr. Kuper refers to it in connexion with the Swazi custom of cremating the body of the Maseko chief at his death on a rock by a river.[1] This custom was brought from the south by the Ngoni under Maseko leadership and carried out for each successive Paramount up to 1892. Among these Ngoni the royal clan had special relationships with other leading clans, but the Paramount did not share his political authority with any others of his clan. His chiefs were all of other clans, and Ngoni informants said that it was a deliberate act of the Paramount Mpezeni to exclude his brothers from political authority and from disputing with him the control of the kingdom. In the isolated position thus established for the royal clan, two other clans had a ritual relationship with the Paramount. One was the Phungwako clan which was custodian of the Paramount's 'medicines', known as the *tenga*. The other was the Ngwato clan which provided the companion for the Paramount whom I have called the 'royal shadow' (see below, pp. 61–3). Yet another special relationship with the royal clan was that of the Nzungu clan which had *ubude*, or brotherly relations, with the Maseko clan, that involved sharing the same avoidances and excluded inter-marriage.

[766]

The relationship of the Paramount to other leaders of the royal clan

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 86.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 was thus different in the two kingdoms. In the north he was one ruler,
614 though a supreme one, among several ruling kinsmen of the same clan.
565 His position in the past had been strengthened by the prestige shared by
184 his clansmen, but also challenged by his near kinsmen in positions of authority. In the central kingdom the Paramount shared no authority with his fellow clansmen. He was unique among them as a ruler, while sharing special ritual relationships with the two other clans which supported his position without challenging it.

643 A new Paramount, in order to be installed in his father's place, had
614 to be of the big house as well as of the royal clan. Dr. Kuper described
585 the Swazi practice whereby cattle were contributed by the nation for the mother of the king, so that she was called the 'mother of the people of the country'. She also described the ritual marriage of the first wife of a ruler, who was called *nsulamniti*, and who was never the mother of the heir.[1] The Ngoni Paramount-elect in the northern kingdom married his first wife when he was a young man and she was called *nsulamnisi*, 'the one who takes the darkness off him'. The big wife, who would bear the heir, was married with a large gift of cattle taken from the herd of the big wife of the reigning Paramount and, after marriage, was attached to her big house. We shall discuss in greater detail in the next chapter the relationships of the royal women to the Paramount and to each other. Here it is important to note that the big house owned by the big wife was the place where the future chief was brought up. In the central kingdom the first marriage of the Paramount was traditionally with a woman of the Magagula clan who was said not to bear children. She held an honoured place in the social hierarchy and was married with cattle taken from the herd of the *gogo* house of the reigning Paramount. It was regarded as a ritual marriage, for if she did bear children they were not acknowledged.
[842 Informants were uncertain whether methods to prevent conception were
847] used, or whether abortion was practised, or whether children, if born, died young or were disposed of or placed out in other households. The last alternatives were unlikely, and one of the first two expedients was in line with the phrase always used of this wife: 'she did not bear children'. The wife who bore the heir was married next and was always of another leading clan, and the cattle for her came from the herd of the big house of the reigning Paramount.

643 The reasons were obvious why the remembered genealogies of the
614 Ngoni Paramounts of the royal clans were short compared with the genealogies of some other African royal houses. The remote ancestors of Jere chiefs and Maseko chiefs, who were, as we have seen, not Paramounts before they left the south, were forgotten once the departure had taken place. Only a few names had been handed down and were repeated by the official praisers, whose task it was to call out the names of the direct ancestors of the Paramount before declaiming his *izibongo* or

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. pp. 34 & 91.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

praise-songs. The northern Ngoni remembered the names of five direct ancestors of Zwangendaba, ancestors who had died before they left the south, and the central Ngoni remembered the names of three direct ancestors of Mpezeni who had died before crossing the Zambezi.[1] 643 614

The genealogy of the Jere Paramounts which was recited in the northern kingdom varied in different localities. Of three versions which I found two agreed, except in the name given for the earliest ancestor. 643 173

Lovumu (Kali is the alternative given by Cibambo)
|
Lomvanda
|
Magalera } Died in the south
|
Magangata
|
Hlacwayo
|
Zwangendaba
|
Mbelwa I
|
Mbelwa II
|
Mbelwa III, ruling in 1939

The list above was given by Cibambo of Ekwendeni and Simon Nhlane of Hoho, the leading member of the Nhlane clan.

Third Version:

Nyandani
|
Mahio enzhomo
|
Jele ka Lovumu
|
Nchingile
|
Gumede
|
Magangata
|
Hlacwayo
|
Zwangendaba
|
Mbelwa I
|
Mbelwa II
|
Mbelwa III

[1] In 'Traditions and Prestige among the Ngoni' (*Africa*, 1956) I said (p. 46) that nine generations of ancestors were remembered in the north and seven in the centre. These referred to the Paramounts after crossing the Zambezi as well as to their ancestors who died in the south.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[p.114]

CHAPTER II

CLANS

In Chapter III of Part I we saw that the Ngoni clans had a particular role in their political and social organization. These clans had certain characteristics which distinguished them from the clans of the local peoples, and which they had in common with the Ngoni group of the South-eastern Bantu. The use of the clan name in address and in thanking for gifts, the strict exogamy in the clans, and the hierarchy of rank among the clans—these were all of southern origin. Mrs. Hoernlé,[1] writing of the social organization among the northern Ngoni, said that the clan was called *inkonga*, 'a word referring more particularly to the name of the group'. The Ngoni spoke of their clan name as their *ekonga*, and they generally added 'that is my thanking name'. Dr. Kuper[2] used the term clan for 'the furthest extension of kinsmen traced through the father or the mother'. She referred also to the sub-division of clans among the Swazi—a process of fission by which a section of a clan was known by a double name, so that the Nkosi clan became the Nkosi Giniza, the Nkosi Mamba, with other sub-divisions. These divisions eventually became recognized as separate clans, so that marriage could take place between them, and so that the heads of the sub-clans could achieve independence from the head of the original clan. It is possible that some development of this kind took place after the Ngoni left Natal for, as we shall see later in this chapter, there were among the Ngoni a number of clan names which they said emphatically were Swazi but which were not among those noted by Dr. Kuper[3] or by Bryant.[4] In tracing the early history of the Swazi Dr. Kuper[5] distinguished between two periods: the first, when small patrilineal clans were migrating southwards, and the second, when rival clan heads became petty chiefs having non-clansmen among their subjects. At the beginning of their northward march Zwangendaba and Ngwana, in addition to being military leaders, were petty chiefs of this type, each including among his followers members of his own clan as well as others.

The Swazi became a heterogeneous nation composed of people from over 70 clan descent groups, of which one-fifth were true Swazi, one-seventh were prior inhabitants of the territory, and the rest were migrants into the kingdom. The clan hierarchy which was part of the structure of the nation showed, as Dr. Kuper[6] pointed out, 'some connexion between the rank of a clan and the period at which it was

[1] Hoernlé, A. W., 'Social organization', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 80.
[2] Op. cit., p. 111.
[3] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 11.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 11.
[5] *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, pp. 181–93.
[6] Ibid. p. 113.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

incorporated into the nation'. This, as we saw in Chapter I of Part I, was what took place in the Ngoni kingdoms. By the time they settled in Nyasaland, a hierarchical relationship had been built up between the clans based on the length of time they had formed part of the Ngoni kingdoms. As the Swazi had their true Swazi, 'those found aboard', and late comers, so the Ngoni had their 'Swazi' clans, others from across the Zambezi, those who joined from this side, and the local peoples. 614 171

Dr. Kuper [1] summarized her description of the Swazi clan hierarchy by saying that it was 'neither precise nor static . . . a certain degree of mobility is recognized amongst the elite'. The Ngoni too had their own ways of adjusting a somewhat rigid system to suit their needs in spite of their recognition of the ranking of clans, and the fact that in the 1930's the kingdoms were ruled by an aristocracy. As among the Swazi, officials were appointed who did not belong to Swazi or trans-Zambezi clans. Much importance was attached, as also among the Swazi, to 'marrying up' and a number of instances of this were recorded, particularly in the central kingdom. In such cases a man, when explaining who he was, often gave the name of his mother as well as that of his father in order to impress upon the inquirer that he came from Swazi stock on one side, though his clan name, being his father's, did not show it. 171 557 614

Since some discussion of clans comes into every section of this book it will be useful to summarize here the main characteristics of the Ngoni clans in the two kingdoms. We shall be referring exclusively to the Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, except when others are specifically mentioned. 614

Each clan was primarily a group of people with a common name. The families bearing this name might be found throughout the Ngoni kingdoms and states, in the towns and elsewhere, as the census figures quoted in Chapter I, Part I show. Their kinship was recognized firstly through clan exogamy, and secondly through the fact that when Ngoni people met a fellow clansman, they greeted him with particular warmth and both individuals were prepared to render each other mutual service. I met a number of the younger educated Ngoni who set out on a journey in Nyasaland, or to Northern or Southern Rhodesia, with the express purpose of looking for fellow clansmen, getting hospitality from them, and inviting them to visit Nyasaland and receive return hospitality. I was present at one or two such meetings in Nyasaland between Ngoni from the two kingdoms and the conversation began by establishing what branch of the Moyo or Gama clan they belonged to, and where the head village was situated. Within each kingdom each clan had a head village, and the head of that village was the head of the clan. In most of the Swazi clans the head of the clan was acknowledged as a *nduna*-*nsone*. This correlation between being head of a Swazi clan and being a [574] 614 622

[1] Ibid. p. 233.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

GH 622 mahomasana was not invariable. Some informants said that *ahomasana* were appointed by the Paramount. Others said that if the ancestor of a Swazi clan was known by name to have crossed the Zambezi with Zwangendaba or Mpezeni then his descendant in the direct line was always a *mahomasana*.

GH [169] It was the criterion of having a known ancestor and knowing the genealogy of the clan that was most widely accepted in acknowledging the head of a Swazi clan as *mahomasana*. At the clan head village prayers were addressed to this ancestor, his cattle were sacrificed, and the names recited as far back as tradition and memory could recall. Later we shall see that there were said to be about 25 Swazi clans in the northern kingdom and 29 in the central. Among these about 15 in the northern and 12 in the central kingdom had head villages where the ancestor cult was performed. In the central kingdom several of the leading clans had their head villages in Portuguese territory, and therefore did not carry out the cult in the central kingdom.

559 GH In the hierarchy of the clans the Swazi clans were the acknowledged leaders. In village and national life this leadership was accorded to the royal clans and the clans of the chiefs, and was the reason for the respect shown to *ahomasana* who had no direct political power. Only the heads of Swazi clans possessed *izidukuzo* (honorific epithets) which commemorated events in the past history of the clan leaders. On all ceremonial occasions heads of Swazi clans, whether in national or in village affairs, took precedence over the rest when walking in procession, standing for dances, taking part in ritual, or sitting down at feasts. Certain [166] forms of burial, such as the use of a sheep-skin, and placing the corpse on a shelf in the grave, were observed only for members of the Swazi clans.

582 GH In arranging marriages, there was, in addition to strict exogamy within a clan, a prohibition on marriage between clans which had *ukuhlala* (brotherhood) relations. In the central kingdom the royal clan, Mawko, had *ukuhlala* with the Ngwane clan which provided the royal shadow, and [162] with the Nzunga clan. The Nzunga and the Mawko clans shared the same taboos, notably elephant and fish. As well as prohibited marriages between certain clans, there were preferred marriages between certain others. In general there was a preference for marriage between the families of leading Swazi clans. In the northern kingdom the Ngwenyama clan had a preference for marrying into the Thole, Nhlane, Mahlaba and Pakati clans. It was alleged that formerly they could marry only into these clans, but in the 1930's exceptions were found in a number of villages.

GH The following lists of the names of Swazi clans were collected from informants in the two kingdoms, who were questioned closely about which names should be included under the title of Swazi. This was the grouping claimed by the Ngoni in both kingdoms. They said emphatic-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

614

sily 'These are Swazi clans.' The first set of names on each list, 17 in the northern kingdom and 12 in the central, occurs in the lists of clan names given by Kuper [1] and by Bryant.[2] Very few, however, were enumerated as names of actual Swazi clans either by Kuper or Bryant, and they related, in fact, to several tribal groups which were found in the early nineteenth century in Natal. The Ngoni made no attempt to separate these so-called Swazi clans into constituent tribal groups, as they did the Karanga, Twonga and Venda clans. I have therefore accepted this classification of these clans and used the name of Swazi as it was used by the Ngoni.

Swazi clans in the Ngoni kingdoms occurring in the lists of Kuper and Bryant

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Tlada	Masebo
Nkosi	Magagula
Gama	Mlangeni
Nzima	Manyoni
Sibande	Magwenni
Ngwenyanda	Mashabana
Ndabandaba	Tabete
Tsela	Pabla
Nkambule	Masiya
Mdluli	Magwinda
Pakati	Dube
Mahoka	Nqumayo
Madlala	
Mlangeni	
Mabaso	
Ndlovu	
Nqumayo	

Swazi clans not occurring in the lists of Kuper and Bryant

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Jere	Magwagwa
Nyambose	Ngozo
Nhlane	Nhlabla
Mkalipi	Ngwana
Madlopa	Ngqongwana
Ngqongwana	Ziphondo
Gazai	Gwazi
Mayeni	Nzunga
	Mhlambi
	Phongwako
	Ndumba
	Mazya
	Likhulani
	Manokera
	Maile

[1] op. cit. p. 232 [2] op. cit., pp. 681–97

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

●614 The Ngoni were, as I have said, emphatic that the names on this second list should be included among the Swazi clans. It was headed in the northern kingdom by the royal clan and in the central kingdom by one of the most honoured clans, and all the clan names were in fact held in great respect. There are three possible explanations for their non-occurrence in the Kuper and Bryant lists. One is that the clan name and the *ishihakazelo*, the ceremonial or address name, may have been interchanged, and the original clan name forgotten. Another explanation may be that fission of the clans took place on the march, and as a result new clan names appeared. Both these were likely and may account for some of the omissions. The third reason may be that on the march and after settlement the Ngoni may have forgotten the correct pronunciation even of their famous clan names, and the anthropologist may have made mistakes in transcribing them.

Reference was made earlier in the chapter to the fact that social mobility was found among the Ngoni aristocracy. One form in which this took place affected the position of individuals belonging to the royal clan. In the northern kingdom the chiefs as well as the Paramount all belonged to the royal clan, and descendants of the sons and grandsons of Zwangendaba and his brothers were found all over the kingdom. In the central kingdom, where none of the chiefs were of the royal clan, the descendants of Cidyawonga, the brother of Cikuni, were in the secession state under Chief Kacindamoto, and the children of the brothers of Cikuni and Gomani I were most of them living in the Portuguese Ngoni kingdom. Thus there were large numbers of the royal clan in the northern kingdom, some in the family groups of the chiefs, others living in their own or other villages; while in the central kingdom members of the royal clan were comparatively few in number and were excluded from all political power unless they were of the Paramount's immediate family. Members of other Swazi clans in the north felt they had to assert themselves against the dominance of the royal clan in social as well as political life. In the central kingdom it was the royal clan who asserted themselves socially because they had no political rights in the chiefdoms.

614 578 594 There was a general opinion that individuals bearing the royal clan name who were not of the immediate family of the Paramount or, in the north, were not among his subordinate chiefs, ought not to trade on their name. This meant in effect expecting to get hospitality and other formal recognition when visiting other villages. As one informant said 'If they come to a village they like people to tremble and say "A chief has come".' They wanted to be recognized everywhere as *mahosana*, children of chiefs. The popular resistance to these claims came from two sources. One was the general public who did not see why an ever-increasing number of people bearing the royal clan name should get free food and beer—gifts which they would not hesitate to give to people

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

they acknowledged as rulers or direct sons of rulers. The other opposition came from the heads of the Swazi clans who saw their claims to recognition threatened by large numbers of these *makosana*. When such a person was announced a *makosana* might comment to bystanders 'Who is this man? We do not know his father.' Then to save his face as well as that of the visitor, he would send a greeting to him and order beer to be supplied, while avoiding any elaborate form of entertainment. This subtle form of resistance to what were considered undue claims from lesser members of the royal clan was found everywhere.

In both kingdoms the Paramounts and chiefs, especially after 1932, appointed as officials for the kingdom and for the royal village, members of Swazi clans, but also, and increasingly, members of cis-Zambezi and local clans. This practice brought together in the royal villages and in the chiefs' villages men of the ruling aristocracy and men of the lesser clans, to share administrative responsibility, to assist on ceremonial occasions, and to take part on an equal footing in giving and receiving hospitality. This mingling on the official level was one of the reasons why marriages became more frequent between girls of Swazi clans and men of non-Swazi clans whose fathers had been promoted to official positions. The marriage of Paramount Gomani II's daughter to the son of his treasurer was an illustration of this. The daughters of families of Swazi clans were also sought in marriage by men of non-Swazi clans who, through their education, had got well-paid work in the Government or in commercial firms, and could therefore afford to give cattle for *lobola* for the girls. These were two instances of the type of marrying up which in the 1930's was lessening the sharp division in social life between Swazi and other clans. We shall see in Chapter IV, pp. 137, 140) that Ngoni fathers of daughters married to non-Swazi clansmen found a way of keeping their married daughters, as well as their sons, in their villages, particularly in the central kingdom.

Though the Ngoni clan system in the 1930's was, in Dr. Kuper's phrase, 'neither precise nor static', it was an integral part of Ngoni social organization. It was closely related on the one hand to the ruling aristocracy, and on the other to the social hierarchy. Both in the villages and in the national life of the kingdoms individuals belonging to Swazi clans played a leading part in social and ceremonial life, and carried on those distinctive Ngoni practices which their ancestors had brought with them from the south.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

The tables which follow show the total population of these villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Men	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Kwanini	25	19	21	38	99	10	4	4	21
Kudendemi	13	8	21	21	51	4	1	4	13
Ekhwangwini	27	19	36	34	109	11	4	3	30
Central kingdom									
Cindwita	30	20	30	34	113	13	5	4	8
Mangoma	60	41	63	78	182	9	18	3	4
Mankhatha	120	71	110	88	231	30	16	14	10

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambezi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *kanyada* and *gogo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *kanja* was not found in the north.

The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *nduna*, in another a son of a great war *nduna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *nduna*, in another a grandson of a great war *nduna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

2: Reed E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Households[1]

	Total	*Leading clan*
Northern Ngoniland		
Ewwaini	83	18
Endindeni	93	19
Ehlangeni	87	21
Central Ngoniland		
Cindwin	39	18
Mangwe	80	26
Mzakhelu	101	37

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head.

Ewwaini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Ewwaini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *kwapula* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother.

Endindeni was a *gupo* village owned by Zibekere Makwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gupo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ubale* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more *kwapula*.

2: Read E-5 (935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Mzungwana, as its nomenclature, was the head village of the Ngwao clan. It had been originally settled by Ngwani Ngwao who brought with him two family groups of Ntumba clans who had been with him in Sangwa. These two Ntumba family groups each formed a *banja*, and one had a kraal. The other two *banja* belonged to two elderly Ngwao brothers, sons of Ngwao and of the same house, who had one kraal between them. The senior of these, Mbiri Ngwao, had in his *banja* a widow of his father, not his own mother, and nine widows of a dead older brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, three grandsons and three granddaughters and his sister. The *banja* of Cinyama Ngwao included two widows of another brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, one grandson and one granddaughter. The two brothers between them had to support eleven widows of dead brothers.

Mzukhathu had a dual foundation. The village site was originally one of the outlying villages of the section known as Ziyembe. It was also the head village of the Nzunga clan. Three of the five *banja* into which the village was divided belonged to Ntumba family groups, and the head of one of these was known as the headman of the village. Of the two *banja* belonging to the Nzunga clan, one was a *gogo banja*, the other that of the ruling chief who was a Sub-Native Authority.[1] Within the *gogo banja* was the house of Bambo Manga in whose hut the spirit of Mpuza was guarded. Two other houses in the *gogo banja* were associated with the guardianship of the spirits of the grandfather and father of the ruling chief. There was therefore a house and a *banja* formation existing together, in which the *banja* predominated. The two Nzunga *banja* consisted of two family groups, one associated with the ruling chief and one with his paternal uncle in charge of the *gogo* section. The chief's *banja* included his own five wives, one sister and two brothers by the same mother, and two sisters and four brothers by other mothers. The *banja* of the head of the *gogo* section included his own five wives and two widows whom he had inherited from the former chief, his older brother; three brothers and two sisters by other mothers; three of his sons. It also included a widow of his father, and nine widows of his dead brother who had not been inherited; and the households of Bambo Manga and her daughter and granddaughter for whom the father of the ruling chief had assumed responsibility. The Ngoni family pattern of this village was more complex than that of Cinkwita or Mangozo because of the clearly marked *gogo* section existing alongside that of the ruling chief. It showed, however, the general characteristics of Ngoni family grouping in the central kingdom, keeping sisters and daughters in the village after marriage while retaining responsibility for widows of fathers and brothers. There were three Nzunga kraals, two in the *gogo banja* and one in the chief's *banja*, but the cattle were always referred to

[1] In northern Ngoniland the ruling chief would have moved out of this village on his father's death, leaving the *gogo banja* as the *gogo* village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

189 as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and
592 the high ranking of the Nzungu clan accounted for the number of
621 *lobola* marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

554 An individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans
565 claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families
614 in the area of a *nsokomanza* owning a head village, and the small Ngoni
621 family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received
[557] 'honour' (*ulemu*). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side, responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and the *bwja*. Quarrels had to be composed, if possible before they came to court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be expected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the northern and Mangusu in the central kingdom.

[476] In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose husbands were away at work. The dislocation caused to the village economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and heads of a *bwja*, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include the needs of these 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradition emphasized this type of help.

867 In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and relationships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty ceremonies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 to be no occasion and no form of ritual in which a generalised appeal was made to the spirits of all former Paramounts.

The reasons for this were related to the place of the sacrifice and the herd of cattle used. The place was determined by the village where the spirit of the dead Paramount was guarded by a particular house, and where some at least of the cattle belonging to that house were kraaled. Thus, in the northern kingdom, the spirit of Zwangendaba Jere was addressed in Ekwendeni; of Hlaowayo his father in Elangeni; and of Magangata his grandfather in Hoho. In the central kingdom the spirit of Mputa was addressed in Mcakhatha and also in Lizulu; and of his father, Ngwana, in a village in Portuguese territory. I heard no reference to the spirits of more recent Paramounts being addressed, and when I asked the reason several informants suggested that it was important to address the Ngoni Paramount who had been with his people in the south, and who therefore knew the names of the spirits of former Paramounts who had died in the south, names which the Ngoni in Nyasaland had forgotten. On the other hand, provision was made for the guardianship of the spirit of each successive Paramount, and in central Ngoniland there was provision for guarding the spirit of a Queen Mother, NaMlangeni, the big wife of Mputa who survived him, and of her daughter, the Royal Sister Bambo Mangs. The reason given for the guardianship of the spirits of these two royal women in Mcakhatha illustrates the close link between the village where the spirit was guarded and the herd of cattle kept there and was explained by informants in the following terms. While the central Ngoni were still in Songea Paramount Mputa wanted cattle to give as *lobola* for his marriage to NaMlangeni. He went to Golozela, the head of the Nzungs clan, and asked him for cattle, which were handed over to the father of NaMlangeni. Golozela Nzungs then became the *induna* of the house of NaMlangeni in the royal village and her daughter Bambo Mangs lived in his section. The cattle given for her *lobola* when she was married were put in the kraal of Golozela Nzungs to repay him for his previous gift. After her husband's death, Bambo Mangs returned to the Nzungs head village where her cattle were, and assumed the guardianship of the spirits of her mother and of her father Mputa.

Ancestral spirits of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans

769 614 Ngoni informants often made statements such as the following by Cibambo:

> The Ngoni believed that each family had its own line of spirits (*amadlozi*) dating far back to the origin of that family, and that these in succession carried the messages until they reached the unknown ancestors, who in turn had the right to carry the message to UMkulumqango.

When such a statement was checked in several areas it was clear that the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans focussed their

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FRS Ngoni FRS

ancestor cult in the head village of their clan. If they were asked 'How do you address the spirit (*zetu ndlozi*)?' they gave the names and genealogy of the former heads of the clan and their attributes if they were known. If they were asked 'Where do you address the spirits?' the reply was always in terms of a particular village where a certain spirit was guarded. 769 614

The occasions on which the Swazi clan ancestors were addressed and sacrifices made were in cases of sickness of an important member of the clan. It was sometimes suggested that there might be trouble in the clan villages for which prayer should be made to the clan spirits, but when pressed the only specific instance informants could give was when the cattle did not thrive. They repudiated immediately any idea of prayer to the clan spirits in cases of drought or epidemics in the clan villages since these troubles, wherever they occurred, could only be helped by the spirits of the Paramounts who were concerned with all the land and all its people. [131]

The procedure followed in the clan head village was the same as that for addressing the spirits of the Paramounts. In that village a diviner was consulted, he named the spirit who should be addressed, a beast was sacrificed and prayers were made. This was the Ngoni pattern of the ancestor cult, and it was limited to the Swazi and some of the trans-Zambesi clans. Its correct observance required that combination of cattle, houses, and known genealogies which only the leading clans possessed. [563]

The living and the dead

At times such as funerals, and when talking about the ancestor cult, the Ngoni often used the phrase: 'Death cannot cut life.' They believed that human spirits had a continued existence after death, and that this existence was related to the place where they had dwelt, the people who were of their family and clan, and the cattle which belonged to their house and village. This continued association was not an automatic process. It had to be assured by the correct performance of the burial rites, the observance of stages of mourning and the deliberate 'bringing back' of the spirit to the village where it would be guarded and honoured after the final mourning ceremony was over. 775 769

In the Ngoni funeral rites there were distinctive elements in the burial of those belonging to Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In handling the corpse the legs were bent and drawn up to the body and the arms folded and crossed each side of the neck, so that the corpse seemed to be sitting and holding its head in its hands. It was wrapped in the skin of a newly killed beast. In the central kingdom men and women of Swazi clans were wrapped first in a sheep-skin, with a cow-skin put over it. The grave was a circular pit, with a small side chamber or shelf where the body was placed in a sitting position, propped up with large stones and facing south-east to the ancestral homeland. Personal possessions, such as skins and shields and baskets, were either put in the grave or taken to be 764 184

military forces obeying the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the [619] ●
Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by handing over cattle, which established the offspring as [585]
'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a [563]
group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

591 Changes in residence at and after marriage influenced the
184 composition of the group of relatives who assisted at births. In
844 the central kingdom daughters of leading men in the village often stayed in their father's village at marriage. Hence the father's sisters were often present at the birth and the wife's mother and her sisters might be living in the village. If the wife belonged to a higher ranking Ngoni clan than her [649] husband, her relatives shared responsibility with those of the husband's family.

As may be imagined the struggle between mother-in-law
777 control and western medical practices at childbirth was a
844 protracted one. Even when there was a younger member of the husband's family trained as a nurse or midwife, she by [759] no means had her way in organising the conduct of the birth. She might introduce a few hygienic measures such as clean cloths instead of old rags, and sterilized thread for tying the cord. But unless the senior women were frightened, and they seldom were, by prolonged and difficult labour, the Ngoni families were averse to taking a young mother into hospital. [606] The chief reason was the challenge to the authority of the mother-in-law, especially when the younger women who had some knowledge of western medical practices questioned the advice of the senior women.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organised with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grandmother with whom they slept, but the other practice was more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611] their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan. In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to remain as a distinctive group. They were members of their [583] father's house until they married; and when that took place it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd be- 858
longing to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 855
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particularly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the carelessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597] grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisability of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

APPENDIX

113 2. *Growing up in New Guinea*. Kegan Paul, 1935—Penguin, 1954. These were two pioneer studies in the Pacific.
3. *New Worlds for Old*. Gollancz, 1956. The New Guinea area was revisited after 25 years. See especially chapters V, XIII and XIV for Dr. Mead's assessment of her former study.

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2. *Education and Social Change in Tropical Areas*. Nelson, 1955. See especially the papers on Anthropology and Education (page 68), and Cultural Contacts in Education (page 96).
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II

DEFINITIONS

128 CULTURE, the total way of living of a people, including kinship relations, economy, religion and magic, law, government, language, myths, child training etc.

[563] ETHNIC GROUP, used here instead of tribe because the Ngoni kingdoms and villages included several tribes. (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 1-6).

● 614 565 CLAN, exogamous group related through male line with a common clan name used in address. True Ngoni clans formed the aristocracy (See Ngoni of Nyasaland p. 116).

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 583

Case history 1

Amos[2] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

N 614 613 [582] [601]

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

N 563 N [361]

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

M [581] [428] N 186 581 N 595 608 582

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognize these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

[2] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 take the "child," going with him to a hut to give him instruction, saying, "To-day you stand alone. Look after your people as did your father before you. [183] If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned."

IV

THE UNAMWALI CEREMONY

881 I. When a young girl finds she has become a woman, she goes and stands beside the pathway [leading to the village]. Any one passing finds her there, standing silent. If it be a man who notices her, he goes off and tells some woman, saying to her, "I have come across game, go and lift it." An old woman goes off to speak to her. She finds the girl, her face enveloped in her calico, and giving no answer to any question put to her. Then the old woman knows the girl is now a matured woman, and takes her off to the stream to bathe her. On returning with her from the water she places her in the hut of the head old woman of the village. (The old woman who first found her is the head of the ensuing ceremony.) Then the old woman goes off to inform other elderly women that "the maiden has reached womanhood." The girl remains in the hut six days. Should she be of the clan of [614] *Kuoni*, they give her porridge made from millet [262] only, if of any other clan, porridge made of any grain. In her relish they do not put salt. Her porridge she eats out of an old basket, and the relish from a potsherd. (This old basket will be

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

844 If a female child, "You have seen a basket." Then the man comes and sits down on the verandah and makes fire. The old fire in the hut is thrown away. The old woman takes up the new fire and kindles with it a new fire in the hut. The husband goes away to another hut. He does not now cohabit with [846] any of his other wives until his wife, who was confined, is seen again in public.

II. When they know the umbilical cord is going to break, when they set the infant on the knees (legs), they lay it on its side so that when the cord breaks it will fall on one side; for if it breaks and falls on the pubes the child will be impotent, or barren. The umbilical cord they bury on the verandah. That day is the one on which they shave the mother and child. They begin with the infant and they shave the mother. On shaving the infant's head they leave a little hair on the fontanel, and [614] should the infant be of the clan *Maseko*, they also leave a little patch on the back of the head, and 553 then his godmother gives the child a name, saying, "My grandchild's name is so and so." This name it will have until such time as it begins to laugh and notice people, then the father, should he wish, will give the child another name. When it grows up still farther it will give itself a name, saying, "Now I am so and so." When the child becomes a man he will once again discard his old name and take another. And if a person calls him by the old name, he says, "He has named me by that thing the wild bush-pigs unearth while digging with their tusks" [meaning something very old]. When they have finished the shaving, the child's grandmother 854 powders some medicine called *pfundabwe*, this she 278 mixes with castor oil and red clay, and then rubs on 751 the fontanel. This medicine they continually renew. When the infant gets strong and big they stop. The

10. *Forbidden and Enjoined Unions* (*Ngoni*).

The Angoni are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*vide infra*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the Angoni it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

When an Mngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headman to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *ankhosue* with a present to the *ankhosue* of the girl. There are always two *ankhosue* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ku-onga*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several elder women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commensuration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ku-tenlera*, and sends a cloth (known as *mchekn*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kulowola*, or *kupereka mabekn*. The *mabekn*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

M 614 [648]

Mwase, died at Kasungu, the Yao chief, Makanjira, living on the lake shore made a journey of fifty miles to attend his funeral ceremonies because both were members of the *Phiri* clan.

Three Chewa *viwango* predominate in the Dowa District. These are—

(1) *Phiri*, meaning a hill, said to be derived from a big hill where this section of the tribe halted during its earlier migrations. It includes chiefs Kamtepa and Mphanda. Its members were forbidden to eat the animals normally found on hills, viz., baboon, klipspringer and hyrax.

(2) *Banda*, including chiefs Kaluzi and Nguruwe. Two derivations of the name are given, (*a*) from *banda*, a small hut, because when on trek they found a small hut by itself in the middle of uninhabited bush, and (*b*) from *ku-wanda*, to beat down the grass, because this clan always took the lead on the march. No tabu is observed.

M [643]

(3) *Mwale*, Dzoole, who is the principal Chewa chief of the district. It is said that one day some Akwa-banda[1] killed a hartebeest, cut its head into strips and scattered them, and then called themselves Akwa-mwale, (from *kumwala*, to scatter). They were forbidden to eat the flesh of the hartebeest.

Other Chewa *viwango* in the district are :

(4) *Nkhoma*, a root eaten by baboons, which might not be eaten by members of the clan. It includes chiefs Bazare and Mamba.

(5) *Chulu*, a termite heap. It includes chief Kalindang'oma. Its members were forbidden to eat termites.

(6) *Mphadwe*. This clan includes Dzuwa and Kayembe Chimchila. The legend of the Akwa-mphadwe is that they were formerly Akwa-banda ; but one day a man went into the bush with his sister, who climbed an *mphadwe* tree for fruit ; her clothes fell off, whereupon the man was excited and had connexion with her, and to avoid the crime of incest said he was an Mkwa-mphadwe.

(7) *Zimba*, from *ku-zimba*, to announce, because one day a messenger came and announced that he had found a large herd of game dead in the bush.

(8) *Kwenda*, (9) *Linde*, (10) *Mbewe*, (11) *Saka*, (12) *Chibwe*, (13) *Zonzi*, (14) *Nyirenda*, (15) *Binga*.

2. *Political Organization and Clans* (*Ngoni*).

N 614

As might be expected from their history during the last century, the Angoni retain greater regard for their chiefs than do the Achewa. They also are divided into clans or *mafuko* (sing. *gifuko*), the members of which were formerly bound by restrictions of exogamy and prohibited food ; but these restrictions have long since ceased to carry any weight, and in most cases they and the origins of the clans have been forgotten.

The following is a list of the true Angoni and of the tribes whom they incorporated with themselves during their wanderings. The names of the principal chiefs are given in brackets following the names of the clans.

[1] The prefix *Akwa-* is used to denote the members of a *chiwanga*.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5

True Ngoni.

(1) *Jere*, the clan of Songandawa, which includes also chiefs Mukambowa, Mazeteangunji, Zamatyula and Chitete. *Jere* means a bangle; but the name is said to be derived from the words of Songandawa when he crossed the Zambezi with all his prisoners, "Ningujere," or "We are many." Members of the clan did not eat or kill the domestic pigeon, because when surrounding a village they attached burning barkcloth to these birds which, when released, flew on to the houses and set them on fire. 614

(2) *Gama* (Maliwa). (3) *Mgomezulu* (Chatambalala). (4) *Nkhosi* (Njolomole).

Of the Suto Tribe.

(1) *Mugwi*. (2) *Mlipo* (Mvuyani). 614 563

Of the Swazi Tribe.

(1) *Ngwenya* (Mjuwi). (2) *Gausi* (Chisenga). (3) *Mangatewa* (Mtumuni). (4) *Mafuleka* (Kofman). (5) *Gwane* (Zembezi).

Of the Thonga Tribe.

(1) *Sembo* (Marasheka). (2) *Mabunu* (Kadanikale). (3) *Sungwani* (Ndawambi). (4) *Mpumulo* (Mapilani). (5) *Zungu* (Machila). (6) *Maliaga* (Mtekateka).

Of the Kalanga Tribe.

(1) *Hera* (Makanjira). (2) *Moyo*, meaning heart (Mandolilo). Members of these two clans might not eat the heart or liver, or drink the blood of any animal. (3) *Sabe*, a monkey, (Chikuni). They might not eat monkeys, or baboons, or any food plucked by them. (4) *Nesu* (Chidzaye II). (5) *Shewe* (Nakutepa). Tabu: the eland. (6) *Honde* (Kalichero). (7) *Mapula* (Simakumi).

Of the Senga Tribe.

(1) *Mvula*, meaning rain (Ndualawa). (2) *Khinda* (Zincombe). (3) *Lungu* (Chiponda). (4) *Mumba* (Pikeni). (5) *Mwanza* (Chinguo). (6) *Sabula* (Chimongo). (7) *Mwendya* (Mgulio). (8) *Nguruwe*, meaning a bushpig, which was tabu, as was also any foodstuff uprooted by bushpigs. (Mkukula II.) (9) *Ngoma* (Dzinaumaleka). (10) *Shamwu* (Chidzaye). (11) *Mito* (Msambo). (12) *Tembo* (Chikunumbu). (13) *Kunda* (Gwireni). (14) *Njobvu*, meaning an elephant, the meat of which was prohibited. To this clan belong Chiefs Chiwere, Mtalimanja and Makarani. (15) *Mbona* (Funzani II). (16) *Maleko* (Mbirintengerenji). (17) *Mkwazi* (Chimangamsasa). (18) *Mkunja* (Wata).

Of the Tumbuka Tribe.

(1) *Nyalenda* (Gwireni). (2) *Chirwa*. (3) *Chunga*.

Of the Swafwa Tribe.

(1) *Mashativu* (Mponera). (2) *Sungu* (Manjakre).

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi

N 614 563

Of the Mandewere Tribe.

(1) *Chimbalo* (Chimbalanga).

Of the Sukuma Tribe.

(1) *Nthera*, meaning the frame put over an anthcap. Tabu: termites (Kamkwamba, Yekoniya). (2) *Chisi* (Kampimbi, Funsani). (3) *Mphepo* (Lichapa). (4) *Chipeta* (Chinyanya). (5) *Chirwa* (Njumbula). (6) *Ng'ombe* (Manyusa). (7) *Chiku* (Dumbo). (8) *Liwinda* (Kalinda). (9) *Mlenje* (Mgubo).

Of the Tonga Tribe. (A tribe allied to the Atumbuka living in the North of Nyasaland, not to be confused with the Aba-thonga south of the Zambezi).

(1) *Munda*. (2) *Nkhata*.

3. *Secret Societies: the Vinyau.*

M 575 535 [825] [764] [881] N [575] [177]

The word *vinyau* (sing. *chinyau*) signifies "representations of animals." It serves also as the name of a dance in which large figures of grass and wicker, masks and other disguises play the principal part. This dance has a wide range and has long been performed by the Achewa in connexion with funerals. Latterly it has been introduced into initiation ceremonies as well. It is not danced by the Ngoni or Tumbuka tribes to the north; but the Dowa Angoni, who have not preserved their own nationality, tribal forms and customs to any great extent, have adopted it generally for funerals and sometimes for initiations. The most prevalent explanation of its origin is that when God made the country and its people He also instituted the *vinyau*. Consequently, the life of the people is bound up with it, and its secrets must be guarded zealously, initiates being warned that if they disclose them, not only will they themselves perish, but also their fathers and mothers and all their relations with them.

M [114] [775] M [178]

In 1907 Captain R. S. Rattray referred to this dance in his "Folk Lore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja," pp. 178 and 179, and expressed the opinion that it was undoubtedly in some way connected with totemism, the grass animals being reincarnations of the dead. He observed that the secrets were scrupulously kept, and that natives accustomed to speak freely on their other customs refused absolutely to discuss the *vinyau*. During the last twenty years of contact with European civilization, its devotees have greatly increased in number; the dance itself has diverged to some extent from its original purpose and degenerated into a mere amusement; and the educated native of to-day does not believe so readily in the mysterious properties of a grass animal, and is therefore comparatively ready to impart his knowledge on the subject.[1]

M [171]

[1] Dr. Stannus makes a brief reference to the *vinyau*, and in Harvard African Studies III, *loc. cit.*, p. 252, he describes one of the corresponding Yao *unyago* figures, viz., the *nambande*, which is a "representation of an animal made of bark on a framework covered with mud and painted with flour in spiral markings, hence the name (*nbande* is part of a spiral shell from the Zanzibar coast much prized by natives as an ornament)." In the following pages he gives a list of the other *unyago* figures, nearly all of which represent various animals, and states that they are used at the *lupanda* (initiation of boys) for instructional purposes, the Wayao denying any totemic origin. The Yao word *unyago* is, of course, the same as the Chewa *vinyau*.

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 101 641 N M 101 186 [464] N M [614]

people of Mpezeni '. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is ' the thing ' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, " We are all Ngoni ". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N 829 [614] N 121 101

The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, ' What is the meaning of a clan? ' they reply, ' It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many ' tribes ' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

N M 197 128 N M 101 128

[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word ' clan ' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. ' Tribe ' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which ' tribe ' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the ' blanket term ' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word ' tribe ' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts?

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *u* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups.

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans.

614 a hierarchy of rank expressed in the clan names, and this rank is
563 evident in the position of houses on a village site, and the degree of authority exercised by the clans and the respect[1] accorded to them. In effect, all those whose ancestors were absorbed before the final
101 break up of the main Ngoni group are recognized as having some
563 claim to the name Ngoni. The rest, that is the clans found in the areas where the Ngoni finally settled are, or rather were, regarded as conquered or slave people.

101 We have seen, however, that there is a much wider sense in which the term Ngoni is used—that is, by all who live under the rule of the
641 Paramount Chief. This extended usage is due to the prestige and
186 honour in which the stricter meaning of Ngoni is held. It was illus-
[643] trated in the instance of the Nyasaland men in Johannesburg, who all claimed to be Ngoni because they had discovered at once that the name commanded respect among the mixture of tribes to be found on the mines. *Indumas* and other leading men sometimes make use of this wider connotation when boasting about the large numbers of people owning allegiance to the Ngoni Paramount Chief, compared with the other petty chieftainships. 'All those in the country of Mpezeni are Ngoni. All are his people.' At the same time they make it clear that there is a distinction between the real Ngoni and the other subjects of the Paramount—a distinction which formerly was much sharper than it is to-day. All are the people of the Paramount, it is true, but in old days the majority of the non-Ngoni were called slaves. To this day the Ngoni when angry may call out to some one, 'Chewa, Chewa', implying 'Slave, slave', and be hauled to the chief's court for insulting language. There the chief will take pains to point out that there are no slaves to-day, and that no Ngoni must 'spoil the country' by insulting the people of the Paramount.

101 It is, I think, clear that there is a connotation in which the term Ngoni can be used with some degree of scientific accuracy—that is, to cover all those clans which are not belonging to the local tribes, or, in an even stricter sense, the clans of indubitably southern origin.

[196] [571] [1] This word 'respect' is constantly in use among the Ngoni. It implies both 'honour' and 'fear', and they sometimes use one word and sometimes the other. It really means, 'to give a person his due', that is, to behave towards him (or her) in the manner which his rank requires.

814 down fully and correctly. When I arrived in Chief Gomani's country,
124 after having stayed in the other two Ngoni areas, the chiefs and leading
[114] men whom he called to see me asked at once, 'What did the other Ngoni do to show you they were Ngoni? *We* want you first to hear the story of our people.' If I said to any older man of good standing, that is of a true Ngoni clan, 'Tell me about the Ngoni', he invariably began with the traditions of the south and their trek north.

173 I have some fifteen long texts[1] of Ngoni history, most of which
[126] begin with the stories of Dingiswayo and Zwidi, leading on to the rise of Chaka and the Ngoni exodus from the south. These texts not only show a measure of agreement with each other, but they also are verifiable by established history as recorded by Europeans. Those texts which came from Gomani's country contain different material after the exodus from the south. For the Ngoni under the leadership of the
[614] Maseko clan came north with Mzilikazi and the Matabele, and crossing the Zambesi alone, went east of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika.[2] The main Ngoni group under the Jere clan went west of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika, and remained a united group until the death of Zwangendaba in 1848. A disputed succession followed and the Ngoni split up under two rival Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera. The history
[814] of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one, the only one to whom the royal salute *Bayete* should be given. Mpezeni's historians say, 'Mwambera snatched *Bayete*'—and vice versa. In spite of these divergences in later history, however, the Ngoni point to their earlier
619 history and say, 'You see we are all one people'. They are conscious
829 of, and troubled about, their present divisions and inclined to attribute them to our premature arrival in the country. 'You came too soon. We would have fought until there was only one *inkosi*.'

814 The detailed knowledge of Ngoni history is regarded as the province of a specialist. 'How can a man of no wisdom remember all those names?' From time to time 'historians' tell episodes of this traditional history in the villages of the Paramount or of other im-

[1] 800–1,000 words.

[2] This is their own account and is confirmed by the Rev. Charles Stuart, formerly at Ekwendeni, but not so far recorded by other Europeans.

814 621 the villages of certain chiefs in the south were preserved.[1] In Mwambera's country there are the names of villages belonging to nine generations of Jere chiefs, and in Gomani's country for seven generations of Maseko chiefs. Villages holding these historic names are in charge of an individual of high rank who is never called the 'owner' of that village but 'the one who takes care'. I realized how clear to the people is the historical significance of these village names, when I asked a question and they exclaimed, 'What? You do not know about Elangeni being the village of Hlachwayo? But all Ngoni people can know that.'[2]

814 614 [193] [576] 4. Clan names. The clan names, as the Ngoni say, denote a person's 'tribe' and the respect due to him. With the prefix, *e*, *a*, *na* (according to the area) the clan name is used as a respectful form of address, and always when thanking for a gift or favour. The tone of reverence with which the great clan names are thus mentioned is itself an indication of the rank and honour of a person.

814 621 5. Village descent. In old days Ngoni villages were very much larger than to-day. The headman of a village on your first visit will always give you the genealogy of his village, how it split off from A, which split off from B, which was the *chigawa* under *induna* X of the big village of chief Y. Reciting these village genealogies generally leads to some recalling of the past, and the village notables, the *amadoda*, gather round to corroborate or correct the headman's recital.

814 It takes very little to stimulate the Ngoni to historical conversations. I have heard them originate in the return of a villager from Johannesburg, where he met Zulu and Swazi men and found they could speak together and had common traditions; in a sermon preached by an Ngoni minister in which he used illustrations from Ngoni warfare; in a rebuke from the Boma to a headman for trying to move his village from worn out land to a site outside the Reserve on an empty farm. And it is not only the aristocrats who take part in such conversations. Sometimes it is evident that men and boys whose [619] fathers had been slaves are anxious to show their knowledge of Ngoni history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni.

[1] I am not clear yet what was the precise sociological process by which the identity of these villages was preserved.

[2] An idiomatic use which has the force of a double negative 'No one cannot know it'.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

582 proposed marriage appears to conflict with these rules of incest, be-
835 cause of some distant relationship between the couple, the connexion
601 may be conveniently forgotten by the parties concerned. Incestuous liaisons between people whose parents are still alive are hampered from becoming proper marriages by the refusal of the woman's parents to accept any marriage payments from the man. Similar liaisons between older people may alter the relative kinship status of other couples so that their marriages become incestuous, and they will appeal to the courts. For example, an old man married his son's wife's mother, whom he called *child's parent-in-law*. In consequence, his son and his son's wife became *sibling* to each other. The young woman refused to go on sleeping with her husband, who appealed to the court. The old man was then ordered to give up his newly acquired wife, so that his son's marriage might continue.

[601] At its widest extension, the term *sibling* is applied to any person of
551 the same descent-name as ego and of approximately the same age.
614 The other kinship terms are then applied to the relatives of this nominal sibling in the usual way. However, there is no rule of exogamy
582 applying to these nominal relatives. These descent-names have been referred to by other writers on the Ngoni as clan-names and the aggregate of people with the same descent-name as a clan. The Ngoni term for such names, *vi-ŵongo*, is related to the Zulu *isi-bongo*, and many of the Ngoni descent-names are the same as the names of the clans described for the South-Eastern and Central Bantu.[1] However, among the Fort Jameson Ngoni at the present time, the category of persons formed by all those holding the same descent-name does not have any of the attributes generally attributed by modern writers to the clan. There are no clan heads, no clan exogamy, no clan taboos, no beliefs in a common origin from a legendary ancestor, no clan totems, and no correlation between clan and territory. In these conditions it seems better to use the term descent-name, as has been done for the Lozi.[2] Informants state that even in the old days, when there was a closer approximation to a clan system, there was no clan exogamy. These names are normally inherited by the child from its father, and some of the names are not very common in the tribe, so that it happens that all the people bearing the one name may be the patrilineal descendants of one man. Such groups are exogamic, but this is

[1] Cf. Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, p. 143, for a classification of some of these names, on the basis of ethnic origin.

[2] Gluckman, *Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*, pp. 84–5.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy.

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking.

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away.

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has

[1] The name *nulu* for a man becomes *mvulu* for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimalo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza ; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo ; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo ; mother, unknown ; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo ; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan ; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere ; born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833 ? Father, Zongendaba ; mother, Nqutu Nzima ; wife, Magodise ; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa) ; born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi ; father, Zongendaba ; half-sister, Mphangela ; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed ; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River ; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1868/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 643

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Mulowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country ; she resided on the Mackera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave ; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

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(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu, and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

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Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Sosera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Bazilyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphanza, Mshamunye Mphanza, Mshawa Mwase Shawa, Dede Tole, Mjoko Ndwambi Jere, Malwalalirhe Tembo, Mzenje Nkhawa, Katenda Manyenny Mahowane, Kapondola Jonesi Mvula, Marhlika Mphanza, Chhenguchane Ngulowe, Chiwere Maimba, Maulan Jere, Magulungu Mphanza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Madalimawe, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndawambi Hara, Matrino Kangwere Nkhawa, Pesyani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gawani Mawere, Chingulukani Dimba, Siya Mvula, Ngungu Singa Jere, Mshaya Mphanza, Mzeki Lobhelo, Njombwa Tembo, Adomhwaeke Mshanga, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

/5 cont'd/

614 Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni
551 families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the
506 Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man
428 and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman,
591 although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

361 In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing
351 the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here.
392 Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as
423 well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they
882 have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of
342 the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The
[524] walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used
[353] for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the wealther. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter One

THE LONG MARCH

1. Sources 2. The Ngumi background 3. Foundation of the State 4. The residential system 5. Under Zwangendaba's leadership 6. Fission 7. Mpezeni's kingdom 8. Foreign policy

1. *Sources*

WHAT WE usually have in mind when we speak of a tribe or nation or empire is a large political unit enduring in time and space. The nation outlives its members, for as they grow old and die their children and grandchildren rise up to take their places. On its fringes there may be continual fluctuations, adjustments of boundaries and migrations of people, but always the majority of the population are born within the national territory and die within it as their ancestors have done before them. There is spatial continuity as well as biological continuity, and the same areas of land, sometimes even the same houses and fields, are occupied and cultivated by successive generations. The Ngoni State, whose history is the subject of this book, was clearly not a state of this kind. It was born suddenly, moved about from one part of Africa to another, and recruited most of its members from outside itself. Only at the end of the nineteenth century, when colonial rule was imposed by Europeans, was the migration of the Ngoni as an organized group brought to an end. Even so, the social and economic development of modern central Africa has ensured that the men and women who from time to time live in Ngoni tribal areas, fixed though these have become, are now part of a wider social system within which they travel great distances in search of work and of kinsmen, wives and friends. Yet despite these differences the Ngoni State, like other states and polities, has had structural, or institutional, continuity. It is an enduring organized social group with a history. The same forms of social organization have endured despite changes in space and despite biological discontinuity; and where these forms have changed there has been continuity even in change.

This history of the Ngoni from 1821 down to 1898 is essentially the history of an armed nation on the march. Our knowledge of it

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Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

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Mpezeni

173 at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually
[561] a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

173 Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment
631 of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local
[613] matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels
[627] between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division.
[621] He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other
[619] chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the
[701] regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[5]

178 The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women,
619 perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages
[613] disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential
[621] system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were,
[56] as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly alignments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organi-
[701] zation, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the
178 bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the
621 former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[5] Based on Bryant, *Olden times*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP A. NGONI MIGRATIONS 1821–1900

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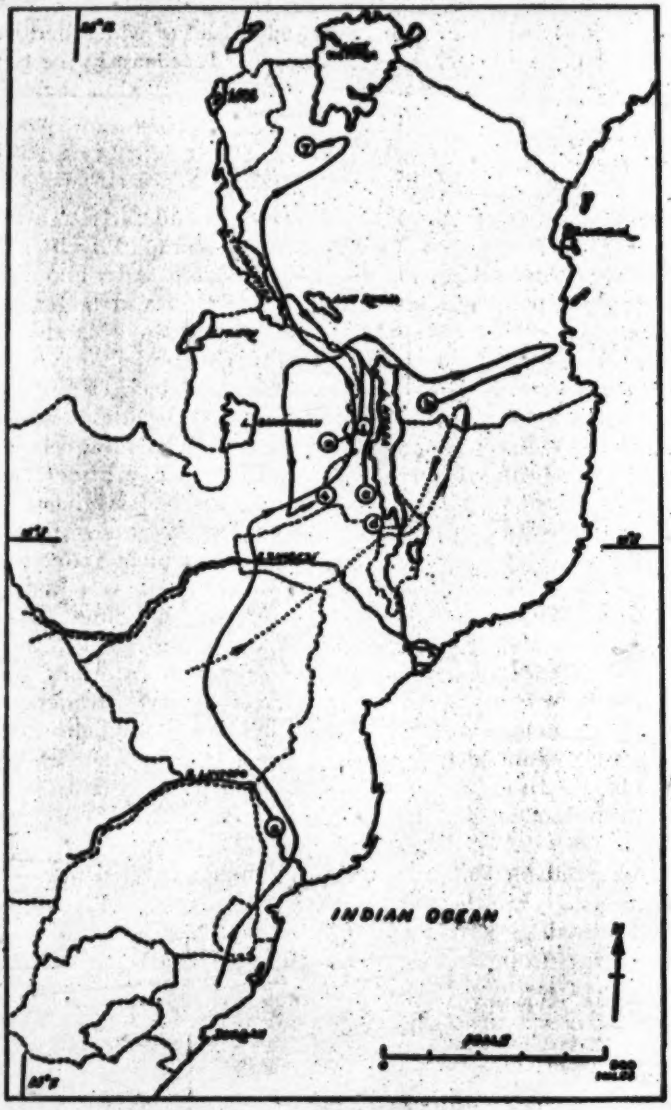

Route of groups stemming from Zwangendaba.

Route of Mzeho Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland.

Modern political boundaries (1958).

1. Northern Nyasaland group, under Mwambera.
2. Fort Jameson group, under Mpezeni.
7. Rusewe group, under Mtambalika and Mtambalala.
8. Lundazi group, under Magodi.
9. Songea group, under Zulu Gama.
10. Dowa group, under Chawe ndhlovu.
11. Southern Nyasaland group, originally under Mpuka Mzeho.
12. Gazaland group, under Soshangane.

[P. 8]

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Mpezeni

They became known as the Rhodesian Ndebele or Matabele. Posselt, who worked among them, does not record in their history any fight with Zwangendaba, nor do Elmslie, Bryant, Young or Chibambo. Money and Smith say that it is a matter of doubt whether or not Zwangendaba met Mzilikazi. However, Wiese, who states that Zwangendaba broke away from Mzilikazi, says that there was a fight between them. Lancaster writes that there was a fight on the Transvaal border in 1828 before the raid of 1833. Poole makes this fight take place in about 1833 and writes of the Ngoni at that time living in the vicinity of modern Bulawayo and raiding Mzilikazi in the Transvaal. If we are to accept the existence of contact between Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi at all, either of these two versions is preferable to that of Winterbottom, who implies that after taking part in the 1833 raid at Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba moved to the vicinity of Bulawayo where he met Mzilikazi, only to move on to the Zambezi in 1835. Winterbottom crowds into two years more marching and fighting than seems likely to have taken place. There is also conclusive evidence, set out by Posselt, that Mzilikazi did not leave the Transvaal under Boer pressure until about 1838.

If Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi were not living side by side, the suggestion by Lancaster and Winterbottom that they quarrelled about a dog is unlikely to be correct. There may be confusion here with the story, recorded by Field and Rangeley, of a quarrel between Mpezeni and Mwambera over their dogs.[22]

6. *Fission*

Various writers describe three occasions on which, according to their accounts, dissident sections broke off from the main body of Ngoni prior to Zwangendaba's death. Our view is that only one of these secessions actually took place, and that it was relatively unimportant.

The first allegedly dissident group is that sometimes known as the Maseko Ngoni, now dwelling in the region round Mount Domwe, on both sides of the border between southern Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa. Murray, Young, Hatchell, Poole and Bruwer state that after crossing the River Zambezi together, the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland broke off from Zwangendaba while he was in Nsenga country. Laws, Johnson, Soga, Lancaster and Rangeley state that these Ngoni crossed the Zambezi separately from Zwangendaba. Elmslie says that they were not an offshoot of Zwangendaba's party, while Read, Chibambo and Winterbottom state that they broke away from Mzilikazi, not from Zwangendaba. Fraser mentions a group that remained behind when Zwangendaba crossed the river and says that it went on to the east of Lake Nyasa, but does not say that it later returned to southern Nyasaland. Of all these writers, Read has had most contact with the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, and her account, as amplified by Winter-

[22] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 5; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', pp. 15*f*; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Young, *History*, pp. 109*f*; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 150; Posselt, *Fact and fiction*, p. 171, Field, *Visiilano*, pp. 16*f*; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 63.

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Mpezeni

114 173 167 619 668 bottom, seems the most acceptable.[23] Two other versions of this alleged dissension can also be rejected. Bryant says that the southern Nyasaland Ngoni remained behind after the main body had crossed the river and that they were led by Gwasa (*sic*), Zwangendaba's principal headman. Stigand's account is similar, except that he says they broke off after crossing the river. This conflicts with the evidence of Young and Chibambo of the subsequent part played by Gwaza, first lieutenant in segment 1, with Zwangendaba's own group. We must also reject the contention of Coxhead and Hodgson that the southern Nyasaland group broke away from the main body of Ngoni after Zwangendaba's death in Tanganyika Territory. The statement made by Stanley and followed by numerous other writers that the Hehe are an Ngoni group is quite without foundation.[24] Some other communities in [101] southern Tanganyika who were merely raided by Ngoni have themselves taken the name Ngoni or some other name used by Ngoni.[25]

Poole speaks in one place of 'the secession of Nquaba' (Nxaba) from Zwangendaba, but this does not tally with his earlier statements that Nxaba's migration was independent of Zwangendaba, and that the first secession from Zwangendaba's host was that of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni. Bryant's account of Nxaba is much fuller than Poole's, and contradicts Poole's suggestion that Nxaba crossed the Zambezi at the Lupata Gorge. According to Bryant, Nxaba's group never formed part of Zwangendaba's following, and Nxaba was eventually killed in Barotseland. Chibambo and Winterbottom support Bryant.[26]

Posselt, who worked among Mzilikazi's people, states that a section of Zwangendaba's group, composed of Swazi, broke off at about the time of the Zambezi crossing and turned back to join Mzilikazi who married the woman who led the dissident section.

[23] The secession of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni from Mzilikazi may explain Wiese's and Decle's assertions that Zwangendaba himself broke away from Mzilikazi. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 466; Decle, *Savage Africa*, p. 151.

[24] Murray, *Handbook*, p. 30; Young, *History*, p. 111, and letter in *African Studies*, 1950; Hatchell, 'Angoni' (1935), p. 69; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 11; Laws, p. 85, f.n.1, in Lugard, *East African Empire*, i; Johnson, *Nyasa*, p. 102; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 275; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Elmslie, *Introductory Grammar*, p. x; Read, 'Tradition', p. 464; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 31; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 16; Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 312*f*; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 465; Stigand, 'Natives', p. 126; Coxhead, *Native tribes*, p. 20; Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 128; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, pp. 499, 503; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 56, 62.

[25] Maples, *Journals*, p. 15; Weule, *Native Life*, p. 339.

[26] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 7 and 6; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 277, 279, 454, 460*f*, 471*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 16; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 16.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This story is followed by Bryant but does not occur in any accounts collected from Ngoni themselves. It seems probable therefore that this seceding section was not numerous or important.[27] 173 668 167

There are no other disruptions mentioned in the literature, and it seems probable therefore that until the death of Zwangendaba, the State remained largely intact. However the process, common in Bantu Africa, by which rival claimants to a throne succeed only in dividing their kingdom, operated with striking effect as soon as the founder of the State was buried. The elimination of segment 18 has sometimes been suggested as the reason why the State broke up, but it is clear from comparative considerations that a State of this kind was likely at any time to break into a number of independent groups, and that this tendency was greatest at the death or senescence of the king. 619 [643]

About 1840 a number of important people, mainly coming from south of the Zambezi, were killed off as a result of an internal struggle for power in which it appears that the recently captured Tumbuka, who were successful witch-finders, were allied with the Swazi and other Ndandwe against the Tsonga from the Delagoa Bay region.[28] Unfortunately there is very little information available on the relationship of this struggle to the rest of the political system. It is, however, clear that the effect of killing off a large number of Ngoni of Tsonga origin was insufficient to prevent the State breaking up a few years later. [754]

When Zwangendaba died, his sons were still young and, for the time being, effective leadership of the State was disputed between men of his own generation whose positions are shown in Diagram 2. His brothers, the lords of segments 5 and 6, were already dead. Fraser describes the dispute as a struggle between Ntabeni's children and Mgayi. Ntabeni was a younger brother of Zwangendaba and the lord of segment 7 while Mgayi was Zwangendaba's father's younger brother's son who, on Chibambo's evidence, represented the interests of the residue of segment 1. Rangeley has a slightly different version and makes Mgayi a supporter of segment 4. Poole, presumably following Fraser, says with some qualification that Ntabeni and Mgayi both claimed the chieftainship. From what we know of the south-eastern Bantu, and from our knowledge of present-day Ngoni, it seems unlikely that a brother would claim to be the legitimate heir in preference to a son, however much he might strive to gain ascendancy over the son. It seems preferable to follow Young and Chibambo in regarding Ntabeni and Mgayi 173 114 643

[27] Posselt, *Fact and fiction*, pp. 146-7, 176; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 464 *f*.
[28] See p. 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later rejoined it peaceably, but other instances of fission were accompanied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Ciwele Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[43] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[44] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force. Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftainship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no mere secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[43] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 34.
[44] Stanley, *Livingstone*, p. 289, and *Dark Continent*, i, p. 499; Hatchell, 'Angoni', *passim*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous 619
societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that 642
some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate [669]
them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes
not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a
segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it
was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a [631]
no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country [648]
was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State
there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies
whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni
society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by [682]
the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not
to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true,
usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement
is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national
first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death [796]
for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for [687]
example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time.
Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the
members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of [561]
the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against
the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of
arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State [669]
was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no mono-
poly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of [631]
every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could
claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting
force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was
little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and [701]
the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited
force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of
guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could [411]
not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns
as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[45] There
was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as 619
in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its 631
internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against
the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled
against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[45] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 196; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, f.n1; Young, *History*, p. 125.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[46] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and
619 the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to
[597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[46] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments [561] 611 571 582 [554] [562] 611 602

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Three

DEFEAT

1. Structural change 2. Portugal or Britain 3. Concession hunters 4. European consolidation 5. Friction 6. Fighting 7. Cattle 8. The end of a system

1. *Structural change*

178 THE STRUGGLES of the Ngoni during the middle of the nineteenth
619 century were with groups of roughly the same character as
64 themselves. The processes at work in the Ngoni social system were in the main repetitive. The State grew in size, split, and grew again, but it was still largely the same kind of State as before. Even though there were important differences between the Ngoni and their opponents, particularly after 1835, those whom they encountered were sufficiently like themselves to be absorbed into the system without difficulty. In the nomenclature of Radcliffe-Brown and the Wilsons, there was social circulation in the Ngoni State but little change in its structural form.[1] For this reason we have been concerned in our analysis so far with but few of the historical details of that period, and have dealt with history only in an abstract and generalized form. Many of the inconsistencies
[114] between various versions of the tribal legend have not been significant. For example, Chief Ciwele Ndhlovu of Dowa broke off from the main body of Ngoni, according to some writers before, and according to others after, the split between Mpezeni and Mwambera.[2] It does not matter for our particular purpose which of these versions is correct, for we are here concerned only to establish that from time to time senior lieutenants did split off with their segments to form independent chiefdoms. This process, of which Ciwele's secession is an example, was essentially the same before and after the Mpezeni-Mwambera split.

After 1880 Ngoni history entered a new phase, and social
648 processes began to operate which were not repetitive. Changes
178 began to occur in the form of the Ngoni social field, for instead of
121 interacting with groups similar to themselves, the Ngoni became involved in a much wider network of social relations. This change

[1] Radcliffe-Brown, 'On social structure', p. 4; Wilson, *Social change*, p. 58.
[2] cf. Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 32-3; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 18; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern
683 Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
574 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
643 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
484 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and
167 other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
567 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
619 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of
571 the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the northern Ngoni kingdom. Other groups of these Ngoni were found in three separate states in the Dowa and Kotakota districts. The Ngoni in the Ncheu district were known as Gomani's Ngoni and will be called in this book the central Ngoni kingdom. Four states which separated from this kingdom were found in the Dedza, Lilongwe and Cholo districts. The Ngoni in Fort Manning district belonged to Mpeseni's kingdom in the Fort Jameson district of Northern Rhodesia.

According to these census figures, the northern Ngoni kingdom with the three separated states accounted for 69,706; the central kingdom with the four separated states accounted for 46,891. Leaving out the Fort Manning Ngoni, there were 71,354 Ngoni in the rest of Nyasaland who had at one time formed part of the northern and central kingdoms and their offshoots, but who had dispersed in search of work and had made large settlements in the towns and on the estates of the southern province where employment was to be found. A similar dispersion from the main Ngoni concentrations in Nyasaland to Southern and Northern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa had taken place which formed part of the extensive emigration from Nyasaland in search of better employment than that available in the territory.

The existence of two Ngoni kingdoms, several smaller Ngoni states, and a still larger number of people enumerated as Ngoni but dispersed in every district of Nyasaland, poses a number of problems for the anthropologist. In this book I have concentrated on the two Ngoni kingdoms and on the Ngoni culture found in them in the 1930's. It was my intention, by focusing on the two kingdoms, to show that there was an Ngoni culture which had common elements in both areas and hence was shared to some extent by all the Ngoni living in Nyasaland. We shall be asking the questions in Part I—Who can be called Ngoni? What is Ngoni culture? Why do people in every district of Nyasaland enumerate themselves as Ngoni though a large number no longer live in the Ngoni kingdoms or in the Ngoni states? Are we discussing a people whose cultural affiliation survives political dispersal? The chief problem in the relation between the Ngoni kingdoms as political states and Ngoni culture will be stated in Part I and illustrated and analysed in the rest of the book. In this chapter, we shall examine the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the two Ngoni kingdoms.

ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

There were four main groups of people in the Ngoni kingdoms, distinguished by the areas from which their ancestors came and designated by the Ngoni as 'those from the south', 'those from south of the Zambesi', 'those from the march' and 'those from this country'. The Ngoni said that the clan descent name of a person showed to which group he or she belonged.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(a) *'Those from the south'*

These were the descendants of the leaders of the two main Ngoni groups represented by the two Ngoni kingdoms, with their followers, who left Natal during the wars of Shaka. They were South-eastern Bantu of Nguni stock, and when they were first encountered by Europeans in Nyasaland, the Europeans called them Zulus and spoke of their language as Zulu. Ngoni informants in the 1930's who were regarded as most reliable repudiated their relationship with the Zulu, and always referred to their ethnic origin as a people of Swazi stock. Y. M. Cibambo whose knowledge of Ngoni traditions was unrivalled, said in his book *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*—'Very many of them [the Ngoni] came from Swaziland, which is north of Zululand'.[1] A nostalgic refrain occurred in more than one of their traditional songs:

> Come let us go to Swaziland
> Where the people die fat.[2]

Cultural affinities between the Ngoni in Nyasaland and the people now living in Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, with the Zulu, will be examined in several chapters of this book. In the chapter on clan descent names in Part III, we shall compare the clan names called Swazi by the Ngoni with the lists of clan names given by Bryant in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*[3] and with the list given by Kuper, in *An African Aristocracy*,[4] of the Swazi and pre-Swazi clans. The military organization of the Ngoni, the age-set system which formed part of it, and other cultural features which will be discussed in Chapter III of this section, all show a general cultural affinity with the peoples of the northern Nguni group of the South-eastern Bantu.

The separation of the Ngoni group from the parent stock, which took place at about the same time as the Ndebele and the Shangaan groups fought their way north, occurred before the Swazi and Zulu kingdoms took final form. It is more correct, therefore, to say that Ngoni cultural affinities were with the northern Nguni group as a whole than to say they were off-shoots of either the Zulu or the Swazi. The Ngoni themselves used the designation 'Swazi' for the people with clan descent names whose ancestors left the south with the original party. Some of the older men remembered their fathers and grandfathers speaking of their clan as having belonged to the Ntungwa group, the Mtetwa group, the Msane group, before the departure of the Ngoni took place. This differentiation into pre-Swazi tribal and clan groupings was not in the 1930's one to which the Ngoni gave much attention. In talking about their southern origin it was the Swazi connexion which they emphasized.

[1] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Lutterworth Press, 1942, p. 8.
[2] Read, M. 'Songs of the Ngoni People.' *Bantu Studies*, March 1937, p. 10.
[3] Bryant, A. T. *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*. Longmans, 1929, pp. 681–97.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*. O.U.P., 1947, p. 233.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to leave and went straight to the country of the Makombe. They conquered it and came to the Nyungwi and conquered them too. 173

When they wanted to cross the Zambesi they made medicine and beat the water with a stick and separated it. All the army crossed and reached Kalumbi. They fought there, and there Magadlela died and Mgoola took care of the chieftainship. Mgoola came with all the army to Ntumba and caught many Ntumba people. In the Ntumba country Mputa entered the chieftainship.

(*b*) '*Those from south of the Zambesi*'

In the northern kingdom two main groups were included in this category: those whose clan names showed Tsonga origin and those who showed Karanga origin. Bryant [1] wrote of the army under Zwangendaba hacking its way through Tsongaland almost by the same route as the army under Soshangane, who fought and defeated him on the head-waters of the Sabi river. To his Tsonga adherents Zwangendaba added a number from the Karanga country, many of whom, trained to fight by the Ngoni, became famous warriors in the Ngoni campaigns farther north. 619 173

The Ngoni under Ngwana with Nqaba and his army kept nearer to the coast, and fought their battle with Soshangane (whom they called Gaza in the text quoted) on the Busi river near Sofala. The two main groups of adherents whom they forced to join them were from the Ndau and Venda peoples, called collectively the Venda group by the Ngoni. Bryant [1] spoke of Nqaba's conquest of the Ndau people on the Busi river, which would indicate that the Venda leaders and their families were already part of the Ngoni army when the Ndau were added. Although, according to central Ngoni tradition, Ngwana's army with its followers zigzagged across the country between the Sabi river and the Zambesi, they do not appear to have collected adherents in any large numbers from the tribal areas through which they passed. This supposition is only based on internal evidence, that of the clan names recognized by the Ngoni as having come from south of the Zambesi. 174

(*c*) '*Those from the march*'

After crossing the Zambesi, the central Ngoni went by the Kirk Range into the western part of what is now the Ncheu district. Then they turned east, crossed the Shire river near Fort Johnston and went up the east side of the lake to the Livingstone mountains in the Songea district of Tanganyika where they fought with the northern Ngoni under the Gama clan. The clan descent names of followers acquired on this route included those from the Ntumba people on the Kirk Range whom they conquered on their first arrival in Nyasaland, and the Tengo people from Songea, some of whom were incorporated with 173 619

[1] op. cit. p. 461

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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these Ngoni before they were defeated and driven out of Songea by the Gama group of Ngoni.

The northern Ngoni, who travelled east of the Luangwa valley into Tanganyika, acquired followers with clan descent names from the Nsenga in Northern Rhodesia and the Safwa and Sukuma in Tanganyika.

(*d*) '*Those from this country*'

Under this category were included all the local peoples in Nyasaland who either were conquered by the Ngoni or surrendered to them, and who were brought within the rule of the Ngoni kingdoms. These in the northern kingdom were chiefly of Tumbuka and Henga clans, with others from Cewa and Bemba stock. In the central kingdom the local clan names were of Cewa and Yao origin.

Two conclusions emerge from this review of the ethnic composition of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first is that the use of Ngoni as a tribal designation causes confusion. In this study the term Ngoni will be used when referring to persons whose clan descent names show that their ancestors were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi stock—that is categories (*a*) and (*b*) in this chapter. This criterion of who were Ngoni would probably not correspond with the criteria used in the 1945 census enumeration. The enumerators may have asked a direct question, 'Are you Ngoni?'; they may have asked the person's clan descent name; they may have asked to which kingdom or chiefdom he belonged; or they may have asked all four questions or any two. Since the Ngoni were found in every district in the country it was likely that there was little uniformity in the form of the questions asked by the enumerators or in the criteria admitted by those being questioned for declaring themselves to be Ngoni.

The second conclusion is that even if the criterion is accepted that the Ngoni were those whose ancestors crossed the Zambesi, the Ngoni kingdoms as political states included all the four elements (*a*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*). The status of the ethnically distinct groups in the kingdoms varied according to their clan names which indicated whether they came from the south or had been incorporated at a later stage. Ngoni forms of culture were found not only in groups (*a*) and (*b*), as would be expected, but often among families in group (*c*) who, through fighting in the Ngoni armies and marrying into Ngoni families, had adopted their social and ritual pattern.[1]

[1] Since the first draft of this book was written, Dr. Barnes's study of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, *Politics in a Changing Society* (O.U.P., 1954), has appeared. The early history of the Ngoni in the northern kingdom is the same as that of the Fort Jameson Ngoni, up to the final separation of the kingdoms under Mpeseni and Mbelwa. Dr. Barnes's excellent bibliography gives the sources for the historical documentation of their travels. A brief sketch of the history of the two groups under the leadership of the Jere and Maseko Paramounts is given in Mary Tew's *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region*.

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Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realise that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni eni eni*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names.

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.' [1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognized areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *alumuzana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *alumuzana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognized as *alumuzana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *alumuzana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognized court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *alumuzana* were recognized as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *alumuzana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*. 1935, p. 34.

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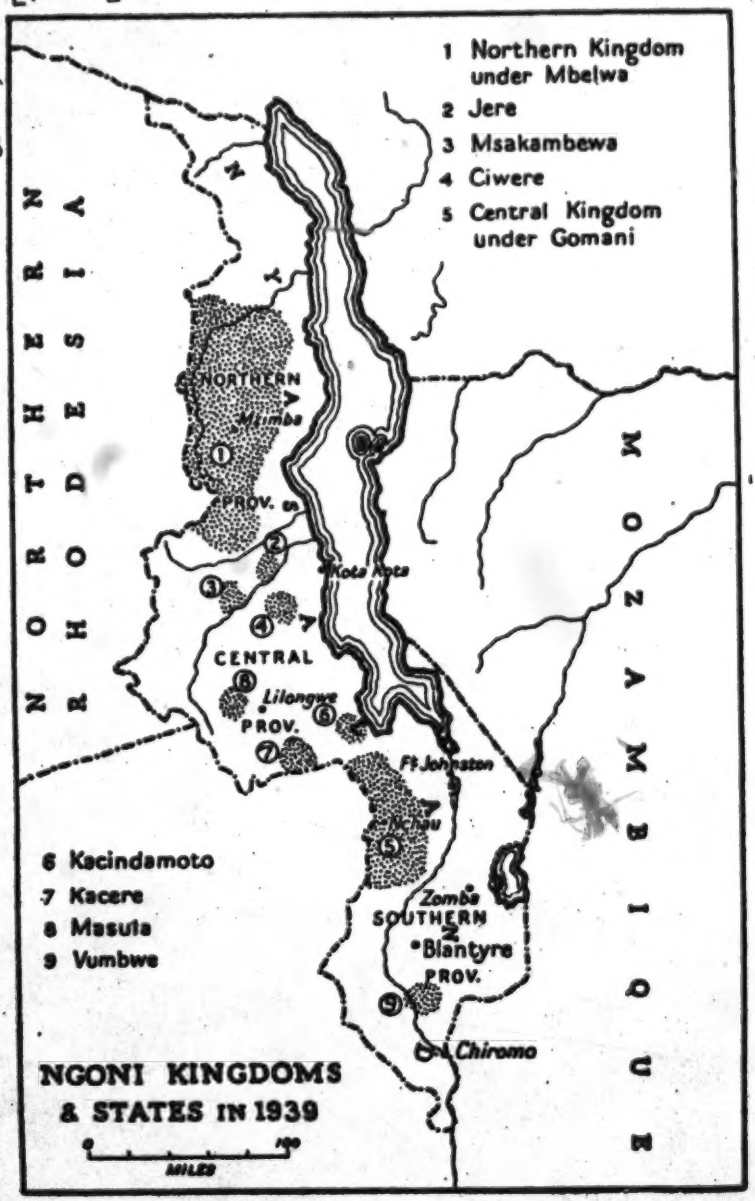

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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then meant running out of the compound to the freedom of the village. At that time young children might behave outrageously and be punished for it, but they were not held accountable. The nurse girls and the mother, or some other adult, was blamed for letting the child grow up with such an uncontrolled temper or appetite or tongue. Once children were recognized as having passed the young child stage, that is when they had their second teeth, they themselves were held accountable for their behaviour and punished more severely, even though parents were also blamed for careless upbringing. The social sanctions of rebuke and ridicule, which began to operate in the later years of young childhood to only a limited extent, were now seen in their full force, made use of by adults, and still more effectively by the children's own age-mates. The fear of estrangement, of social ostracism as the penalty for failing to conform to the required manners and ways of living, had increasing force as the children grew older. As little children they were buttressed and protected by adults in their childish quarrels with, and moods and attitudes towards, other children. As boys in the dormitory and as girls in the girls' circle they had no longer such protection, and the result was that they became increasingly sensitive to the opinion of their peers. Professor Wilson in her study of Nyakusa age-villages, has called this social awareness the quality known as 'being good company'—getting on well with their contemporaries.

It was at this stage, at the beginning of the children's newly-found independence, that the ear-piercing ceremony took place. In contrast with the neighbouring peoples, the Ngoni had no facial or body markings, and it was the pierced ears which showed they were true Ngoni. In the days of warfare, captives, especially boys and men, were forcibly made to have their ears pierced, and hence a number of men in the Ngoni kingdoms who were not of Ngoni clans were found with pierced ears. Sometimes their children went to their parents and said, 'We want to be made Ngoni now.'

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 178 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural heritage of the tribe.

182 As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are [591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition. [606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 619 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the 693 Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their 184 colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view, 648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story 182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but 183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here, unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with 692 real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered 184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the 671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with 692 183 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done

101 one party of them came up from the south, and partly to divisions among the Ngoni during the period of settlement.

About 115 years ago the ancestors of these Ngoni left their homes 173 in the present Zululand and Swaziland for their long trek north. The immediate cause of their departure was the defeat of Zwidi, chief of the Ndwandwe people, by Chaka, the history of whose military career in Zululand is well known and needs no repetition here. As part of Zwidi's people, the Ngoni did not want to stay under Chaka, and the same impetus and military skill which set up Chaka as the Zulu Napoleon drove the Ngoni northward as far as Lake Tanganyika, a conquering military horde amassing followers on the way. To-day 101 they are found in three large groups and several smaller ones, the [649] large groups known as the 'countries' of Mpezeni, Mwambera, and Gomani, who are the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs.[1]

121 These groups of people with their southern origin, settled among people who had a totally different language and social structure, present to the anthropologist a highly complex situation to investigate. He must at the outset ask the questions, 'Who are these Ngoni? Have they a separate identity as a people, marked by distinctive social and [114] political institutions?' After living among them for nearly a year I am convinced that it is correct to speak of the Ngoni as a distinctive 101 group; that they themselves are very conscious of their separate iden- 619 tity as a people, and that they can point to certain of their institutions, notably their language and political, territorial, and kinship groupings, which are definitely Ngoni, that is, of southern origin, and which distinguish them from the people among whom they settled. The 121 complexities of this situation involve the analysing of the ethnic elements included in this term 'Ngoni' and the determining of the sense in which it is to be used. They involve also an explanation of what is meant by the expression 'a distinctive Ngoni culture', or 'distinctive Ngoni institutions'. The anthropologist who is interested in culture contact must go further and indicate the nature of the double contact caused first by the intermingling of the Ngoni with other tribes, and then by the advent of the Europeans. It is not possible in this article to do justice to all these aspects of an intricate problem.

[1] For the purposes of this article these are the only groups which will be considered.

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts?

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *u* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups.

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans.

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

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N 101 186 619 191 Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indumas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the N [123] aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see N [563] how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

N 105 101 186 As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans N M 177 182 and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, 'We taught them to honour their sons' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

N 123 186 After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

814 down fully and correctly. When I arrived in Chief Gomani's country,
124 after having stayed in the other two Ngoni areas, the chiefs and leading
[114] men whom he called to see me asked at once, 'What did the other Ngoni do to show you they were Ngoni? *We* want you first to hear the story of our people.' If I said to any older man of good standing, that is of a true Ngoni clan, 'Tell me about the Ngoni', he invariably began with the traditions of the south and their trek north.

173 I have some fifteen long texts[1] of Ngoni history, most of which
[126] begin with the stories of Dingiswayo and Zwidi, leading on to the rise of Chaka and the Ngoni exodus from the south. These texts not only show a measure of agreement with each other, but they also are verifiable by established history as recorded by Europeans. Those texts which came from Gomani's country contain different material after the exodus from the south. For the Ngoni under the leadership of the
[614] Maseko clan came north with Mzilikazi and the Matabele, and crossing the Zambesi alone, went east of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika.[2] The main Ngoni group under the Jere clan went west of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika, and remained a united group until the death of Zwangendaba in 1848. A disputed succession followed and the Ngoni split up under two rival Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera. The history
[814] of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one, the only one to whom the royal salute *Bayete* should be given. Mpezeni's historians say, 'Mwambera snatched *Bayete*'—and vice versa. In spite of these divergences in later history, however, the Ngoni point to their earlier
619 history and say, 'You see we are all one people'. They are conscious
829 of, and troubled about, their present divisions and inclined to attribute them to our premature arrival in the country. 'You came too soon. We would have fought until there was only one *inkosi*.'

814 The detailed knowledge of Ngoni history is regarded as the province of a specialist. 'How can a man of no wisdom remember all those names?' From time to time 'historians' tell episodes of this traditional history in the villages of the Paramount or of other im-

[1] 800–1,000 words.

[2] This is their own account and is confirmed by the Rev. Charles Stuart, formerly at Ekwendeni, but not so far recorded by other Europeans.

814 621 the villages of certain chiefs in the south were preserved.[1] In Mwambera's country there are the names of villages belonging to nine generations of Jere chiefs, and in Gomani's country for seven generations of Maseko chiefs. Villages holding these historic names are in charge of an individual of high rank who is never called the 'owner' of that village but 'the one who takes care'. I realized how clear to the people is the historical significance of these village names, when I asked a question and they exclaimed, 'What? You do not know about Elangeni being the village of Hlachwayo? But all Ngoni people can know that.'[2]

814 614 [193] [576] 4. Clan names. The clan names, as the Ngoni say, denote a person's 'tribe' and the respect due to him. With the prefix, *e*, *a*, *na* (according to the area) the clan name is used as a respectful form of address, and always when thanking for a gift or favour. The tone of reverence with which the great clan names are thus mentioned is itself an indication of the rank and honour of a person.

814 621 5. Village descent. In old days Ngoni villages were very much larger than to-day. The headman of a village on your first visit will always give you the genealogy of his village, how it split off from A, which split off from B, which was the *chigawa* under *induna* X of the big village of chief Y. Reciting these village genealogies generally leads to some recalling of the past, and the village notables, the *amadoda*, gather round to corroborate or correct the headman's recital.

814 It takes very little to stimulate the Ngoni to historical conversations. I have heard them originate in the return of a villager from Johannesburg, where he met Zulu and Swazi men and found they could speak together and had common traditions; in a sermon preached by an Ngoni minister in which he used illustrations from Ngoni warfare; in a rebuke from the Boma to a headman for trying to move his village from worn out land to a site outside the Reserve on an empty farm. And it is not only the aristocrats who take part in such conversations. Sometimes it is evident that men and boys whose [619] fathers had been slaves are anxious to show their knowledge of Ngoni history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni.

[1] I am not clear yet what was the precise sociological process by which the identity of these villages was preserved.

[2] An idiomatic use which has the force of a double negative 'No one cannot know it'.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approxi- [231] mately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours ● 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 619 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Malumenene*, pl. *alumenene*. [4] *Ndunu*, pl. *adunu*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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the absence of any definite internal land boundaries between the territories of one political segment and another. The constant elements were the residential groups that we now know as villages,[1] and we may liken them to ships of different sizes and importance that preserve a loose formation while the fleet sails from place to place. Villages, discrete clusters of dwellings in comparative proximity and separated from one another by uninhabited stretches of garden-land and bush, were internally divided into divisions,[2] and from time to time these divisions broke away from one another or from their parent village to form new villages of their own. This process of divisional fission was characteristic of the commoner villages. Royal villages were usually formed by a parallel process by which an important member of the royal lineage established a new village for one or more of his queens by recruitment from his own natal village. The eldest son by the senior queen in that village then became the head of the segment of the royal lineage associated with the village. Thus the segmentation of the royal lineage was reflected in a proliferation of royal villages.

In the period immediately prior to the conquest of the tribe by British forces in 1898, there were four important royal villages, with populations of probably several thousands each. One belonged to a brother of Mpezeni, and the other three were controlled by groups of Mpezeni's own queens and their sons. Associated with each royal village were several regional governors, each of whom was responsible for the well-being of a group of lesser villages, and who resided among them in a village of his own. These lesser villages were commoner villages, each under its own headman. Each large royal village had also a number of lesser royal villages attached to it, and also many commoner villages were attached to a royal village of some sort directly, and not through a regional governor.[3]

Each important person, chief, member of the royal lineage, regional governor, or headman was assisted by a number of lieutenants, trusted subordinates who were usually not patrilineal kinsmen of their principal but who were sometimes related affinally. These lieutenants were ranked in order of the creation of their posts by their principal and assisted him in the control of his unit of administration. In the case of Mpezeni himself, however, there were two kinds of lieutenants. Those people known as the lieutenants of Mpezeni were 64

[1] *Musi*, pl. *misi*.
[2] *Cigulu*, pl. *vigulu*.
[3] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66, for a similar system among the Swazi.

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
301 beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
324 cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkholosa grass. These marks
302 are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
531 is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nsenga
619 tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks. When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimental dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys
534 of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long, terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction, made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes, with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys consists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually
[561] a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

173 Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had
631 obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local
[613] matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels
[627] between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division.
[621] He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other
[619] chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the
[701] regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[5]

178 The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women,
619 perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages
[613] disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential
[621] system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were,
[561] as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly align-
[701] ments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organization, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the
178 bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the
621 former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[5] Based on Bryant, *Olden times*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

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Mpezeni

lived with their wives and children, and not all of which had royal headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Ngoni group with which we are most concerned, and within their regiments men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system.

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1775 the pattern of political alignment began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1810 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndandwe and Qwabe,[6] dominated the rest and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethewa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1821[8] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north-eastwards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Ngoni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[9] fighting with Nxaba, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All three parties raided the indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside their new masters.

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on farther north. He took with him his new Tsonga adherents and also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under

[6] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Atkins, 'Spelling Nyanja'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in its old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu.

[8] cf. Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 17, 71. Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1823 and Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 15, has 1823 or 1824. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 8, both have 1825. Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 272, says Zwangendaba left in 1829, while Coxhead, *Native tribes*, p. 20, says he left in the 1850's.

[9] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 161, 279, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*muavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*nkosikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Nduna*, pl. *nduna*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 470, 472, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 together in a cluster of huts, and several clusters together formed a
621 division, inhabited by members of a segment of greater span.
631 Larger segments corresponded to complete villages and the largest segments of all contained many separate villages. The same general pattern of settlement was repeated at successive halting places on the migration, but as a segment grew in size by natural increase and by the addition of more captives, so its settlement grew from a cluster to a division and from a single village to a group of villages. In a large segment with many villages, the constituent inferior segments remained under the political leadership of the lord of the large segment but achieved a certain amount of autonomy. On many occasions the interests of one or more inferior segments diverged from those of the rest of the large segment, from what we shall term the *residue* of the large segment. This divergence of interest sometimes led to the disappearance of the large segment as an effective social unit and, at the highest level in the residential system, to splits in the State itself.

173 The first bevy of wives formed by a lord ranked senior to other
595 bevies, and the wife in charge was the lord's great wife. Her eldest
613 son was his main heir and the eldest son of each bevy leader was
621 heir in its own segment. Yet sons, whether heirs or not, were able to
631 establish segments of their own for their wives when they married and these segments remained as distinct social groups when an heir succeeded. Thus a man could be lord of a segment founded by his father and at the same time lord of a smaller segment, within the first, which he had founded himself. This arrangement was of fundamental importance in the working of the residential system, particularly in the formation of those large and politically dominant segments with which we are mainly concerned in this book, and still finds expression in the new villages founded by each reigning county chief. When the Paramount Chief, or one of his sons, founded a segment for a bevy of queens, the new segment was of village size and many men were called by the chief from existing segments to join the new one. As the segment grew in size, minor segments within it broke out to form separate villages of their own and the parent village became the headquarters of the group of villages and of the segment they formed. The headquarters of all large dispersed segments endured as social groups, as villages, despite the continual throwing off of more and more satellites. Thus the number of large villages, each the headquarters of a segment founded for a bevy of a reigning chief, increased as time went on. These villages remain to-day, and Ngoni history is largely the story of the formation and development of the segments associated with them.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Under Zwangendaba's leadership*

When the Ngoni migration began, the greater portion of Zwangendaba's followers belonged to the primal segment founded for the great wife of Hlatshwayo, father of Zwangendaba. When the migration began there were perhaps a thousand people in this segment (this figure is largely guesswork). For convenience of reference we shall refer to the various historically significant segments by numbers. Thus segment 1, with the proper name of Elangeni, is that of Hlatshwayo's great wife. The structural relationship of seventeen numbered segments to each other and to the royal genealogy is shown in Diagram 1. A list of their proper names and of the names of the lords and ladies associated with them, is given in Table II, together with information on three segments superior to segment 1 and on three other segments which cannot be placed on Diagram 1 for lack of information.

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This diagram and the accompanying table are skeletons, showing only those few men and women who were heads of major groups which, partly fortuitously, have endured to the present day and are now large chiefdoms. There were many more queens than the ten shown on the diagram and very many more sons of chiefs, regional governors, lieutenants and other less exalted men and women all of whom were in charge of named segments, many of which still survive, forming part of a single system. The same principles of organization applied at all levels in the residential system. Here we have set out the names and positions of only the major limbs of the tree of State. We must not forget that the minor branches and little twigs were part of the same growing whole.

Segment 1 included the greater portion of the State, but it is clear from Elmslie and Fraser, and made explicit by Read, that the headquarters of several superior segments were also present on the march north. Read states that villages belonging to nine generations of chiefs were still in existence in northern Nyasaland in 1936. There is no direct evidence from Fort Jameson, for there are no headquarters of ancient royal segments there, but there are several villages belonging to the lieutenants of segments founded by Zwangendaba's father. I have therefore included in Table II the three superior segments whose names are given by Chibambo.[17] It is probable that Zwangendaba had succeeded to the position of

[Text continues on page 15]

[17] Read, 'Tradition', pp. 465*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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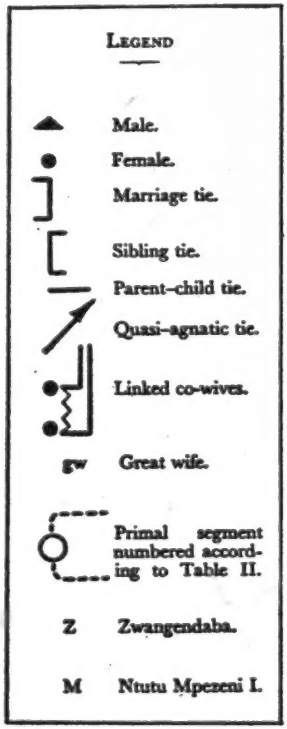
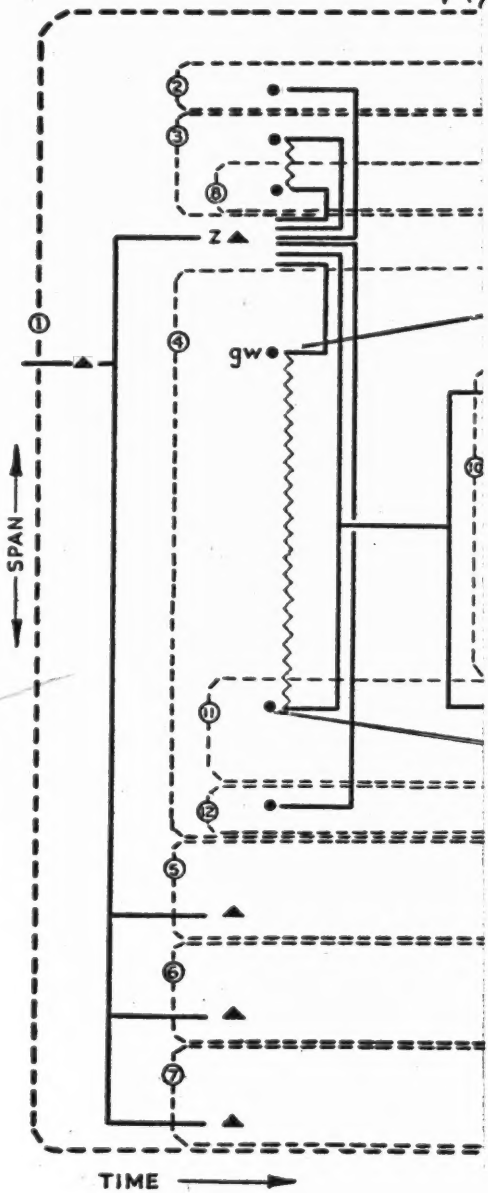
DIAGRAM 1. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

SEGMENTS 1-17





[Diagram I (A)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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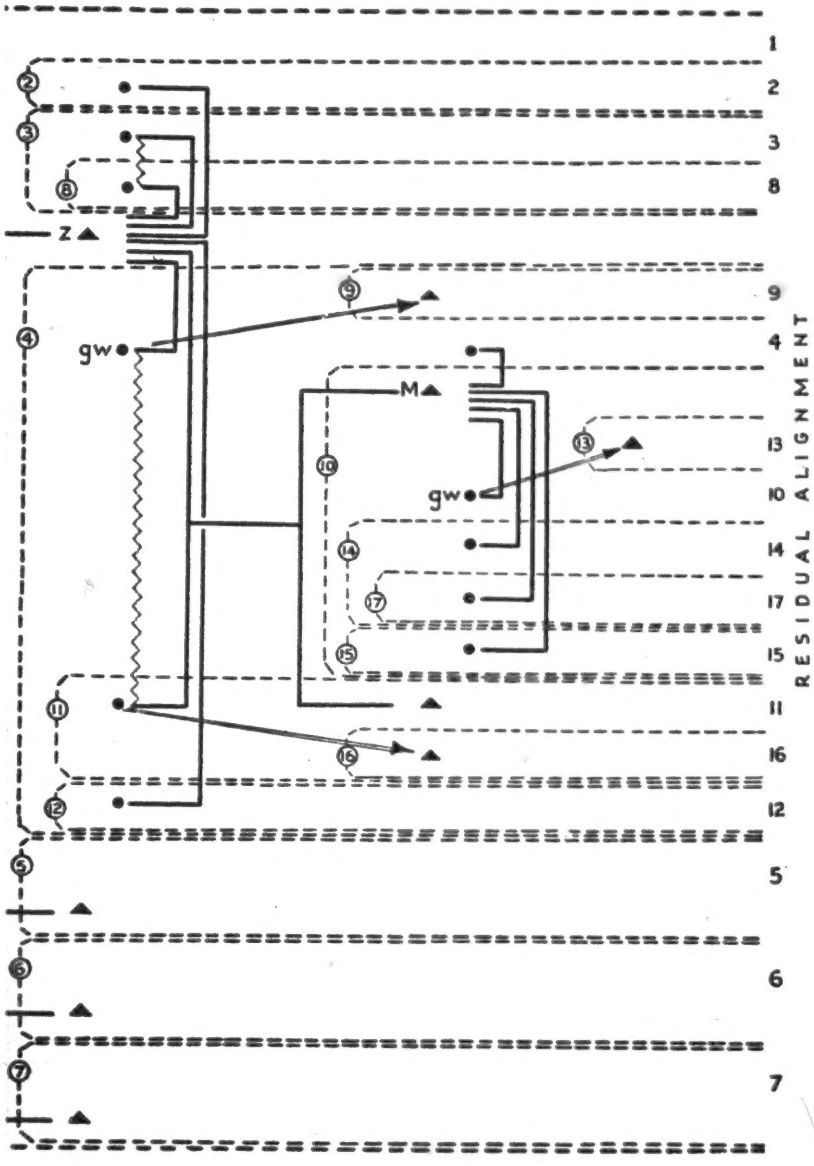
DIAGRAM 1. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM
SEGMENTS 1–17



[Diagram I (B)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration. 173 613

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mveleleni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Emcisweni)[18] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emsizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18. 595 621 631 643

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[19] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent 173 595 613 643 [273] [682]

[18] Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 58, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[19] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 6, 34, 94.

NOTES

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mlonyeni, Fort Manning Division.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mlonyeni and present Chief Teleka, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Misholo, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

[see table on page 14.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible 595
that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy 611
over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in bevies 2 and 3 but not in bevy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in bevy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in bevy 2 and the other by the heir in bevy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I [578] recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were 578
sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should 611
be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious 595
fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of 578
dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this 557
particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who [648] exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs 578
arising from the method of ranking bevies. The same principle of 611
ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to bevies of 621
wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain 554
situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

554 and in other situations that which was founded last. The head-
578 quarters of the highest segment was in some sense capital of the
611 nation, yet chieftainship had already passed from it and it was less
621 important in other ways than the headquarters founded by the
[643] reigning chief. This apparent contradiction applied within every large segment. We have endeavoured to isolate these different contexts by our distinction between primal and residual segments, but as soon as we attempt to arrange villages or bevies of wives in a linear order without reference to the relationship of their associated segments to one another, the contradiction reappears.

A clear and accepted sequence of heirs would have been
621 appropriate to a segmentary system in which segments continued to
611 hold together in all circumstances. Ngoni segments did not do this, and the simple linear sequence of heirs was lacking. The successive formation of inferior segments implied increased structural separation between the first inferior segment to be formed and the headquarters, and hence less likelihood that the former would provide the main heir. As in lineage systems, the farther back the point of departure from the main line the greater the structural separation from it. But whereas in lineage systems it is the junior lines which are continually diverging from the main stem, in the Ngoni system the main heir was the first to break away from his father, who remained longer in close contact with his junior sons. Seniority within the newly formed undivided segment implied early differentiation within it, and hence early separation from its headquarters. Thus, the general principle of increasing separation with the passage of time, together with the particular principle of segment formation in order of seniority, combined to make a system of great flexibility despite essential regularity and uniformity. On the death of each segment head there was a shift of power within his segment and to some extent a formal recognition of the structural separation which had proceeded gradually during his lifetime. The headquarters founded by successive heads of segments persisted as the home of groups whose interests they symbolized. The history of the segments and of the nation itself was embodied in the relationships enduring between successive headquarters.

When a small segment was founded it was usually manned by
557 people drawn from the rump of the immediately superior segment,
611 that is, from those men and women in the superior segment who
621 had not already been allocated to some inferior segment within it. However it is clear that this rule was often over-ridden. When the
[622] lord of a large segment formed a new inferior segment for a wife or son he was able to command the services of everyone within his

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment, even of those who had been allocated to existing inferior segments. If he thought fit he could shift them from one inferior segment to another within his own segment. This process was particularly relevant to the formation of new segments for the great wives of men who were the heirs or lords of large segments. A new lord, making his great wife's segment after the death of his father, did not confine himself to the rump of his father's segment but selected men he thought he could trust from anywhere within his father's primal segment, whether or not they had made segments of their own. Similarly a lord sometimes took a man who occupied an unimportant position in the segment of one of his wives and promoted him to be lieutenant in a newly formed bevy. The more important the lord or heir, the greater the structural distance his dependants could be moved. Thus while the processes by which the Paramount Chief and a man with only a few followers made segments for bevies of wives were formally the same, the consequences were quite different. In the former case, many hundreds of people were involved and many key men were shifted in their allegiance in order to provide the new segment with lieutenants and followers. In the latter, few people were concerned and the event was not of general interest. The formal processes remained the same at all levels in society, but what in one case was essentially a political action in which a Paramount Chief acted as head of a State was in the other largely a matter of domestic reorganization. It is characteristic of the Ngoni State that the transition from one state of affairs to the other was a gradual one.

Occasionally a man moved himself from one segment to another on his own initiative. This happened only infrequently and it seems probable that it was only when a man who had quarrelled with his own segment sought asylum with the reigning chief that a move of this kind could be made. Chibambo records an incident in which many men transferred from their former segments to one newly formed by the reigning chief, but adds that later they returned to their old segments. A similar incident from the Fort Jameson group is noted below.[8] Despite these exceptions it nevertheless remains true that for the most part a man's affiliation to his segment was fixed and could be altered only by the actions of his political superiors.

We have spoken of the formation of segments, but not yet of their disappearance. Many minor segments faded away because their members died or because they were moved elsewhere by a lord. Sometimes a segment ceased to be an effective social unit

[8] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 35; see p. 140.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

because of a divergence of interest between one or more of its inferior segments and the residue. In some instances all the people in the segment were killed, as presumably was the intention when Zwangendaba sent warriors to destroy segment 18. In other instances not everyone was killed and those whose lives were spared were drafted to some other part of a major segment to which they belonged. In the only examples I know of, in which either of these last two alternatives was adopted, action was taken by the highest lieutenants in the segments founded for the great wives of reigning chiefs, and was prompted by allegedly hostile acts directed against the chief. Heads of lesser segments could not readily act in this way for although the Paramount Chief and his lieutenants did not possess a monopoly of this power, they regarded its exercise by others with suspicion as a threat to the unity of the State.

If some of the members of an eliminated segment escaped annihilation, they might presently reform themselves into a new segment and begin a separate existence again. If they were not kinsmen of their lord, no structural complications ensued. If, however, relatives of the lord were concerned, then there might be conflict between the position required of them because of their relationship and that in which their new segment was formed. Thus, if the village of a great wife was annihilated and later a new village was founded for her, this could never replace the original one. Her subordinate bands of co-wives had formed their villages by breaking out from her original village; and that had been their headquarters. The new village was founded after they had made their own, and was not their headquarters, even though they still acknowledged that its head was their great co-wife. As we have seen, such a sequence of events occurred at a critical stage of Ngoni history, and may have influenced the way in which the State split.

2. *Age-sets*

The residential system was dominant in deciding the alignment of persons in most situations, but the waging of war and execution of certain ceremonies were organized on a different basis. The army was divided into age-set regiments. About every three or four years,[9] depending on the military requirements and on the availability of lads of the right age, a new regiment was formed from all the boys aged about fifteen years old. They assembled at the Paramount Chief's great wife's village and were inducted into the army. The chief gave them a regimental name and they came under the orders of his senior lieutenants. An experienced warrior

[9] cf. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sectors attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8] 561 701

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights. [562]

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken. 561 796 [726]

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked. 561 701 727

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs, 561 701 621 [643]

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

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(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Nsingu's regiment. [114]
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Maola. Wiese and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Maiyiza. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Wiese gives two other regimental names. His Madouda or Madoda is merely the status term *madoda*, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madginga or Madjinga, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatakulu, Mang'ombe, Isimpisi, Mabebe, Mahacu, Zimfezi, Manyoni. [554]

Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 56.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 58, - Analysis]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

561 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas
621 the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact,
701 command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly
561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regi-
727 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were
621 indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appro-
[702] priate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*nkwala*) was organized on an
561 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this
796 ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the
[171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social
[167] system, and the relationship between them was a political one.
648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them
631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between
[172] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *inqwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Para-
622 mount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was
[422] his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable
[476] that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were
[462] concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

361 Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village
622 headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of
[787] selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

162 There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

691 The term for lieutenant, *nduna*, was used at all levels in the
621 residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet
624 founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was
[608] selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was
[534] created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, pp. 203*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*ff*, 109*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord's dependants placed under a lieutenant's care became more specifically his dependants and eventually he appointed one or more of the men among them to be his own lieutenants. Thus it was possible for Z to be the lieutenant of Y and at the same time for Y to be the lieutenant of X. When Y died, his son became X's lieutenant or, if Y had no son, Z might succeed him as X's lieutenant. 631 621 624

A lord with but few dependants sometimes appointed one or more of them as his lieutenants without specifically dividing his dependants among them. Thus, a lieutenant might be appointed without the formation of a segment for him, and only later would he differentiate from the rest of his lord's dependants those for whom he was directly responsible.

The ranking of lieutenants was one of the least stable parts of the residential system. In a village under a lord there were lieutenants in charge of segments forming divisions within the village. As their segments grew in size, the lieutenants broke out of the village to found new satellite villages. A new set of lieutenants was gradually appointed to take their places in charge of the people remaining in the headquarters, and in the course of time the new set also broke away from the headquarters village.[21] Though they had moved out from the village the lieutenants still retained their positions as lieutenants within the primal segment of which it was the headquarters. Thus in a large segment containing many villages there was a long ranked roster of lieutenants, of which only the junior members still lived in the segment headquarters. Further proliferation of lieutenants sometimes took place when an heir succeeded as lord of the segment but did not found a new segment of his own. The new lord appointed his own lieutenants, so that within the same segment, and partly within the same settlement, there were two sets of lieutenants, one senior by time of appointment, the other enjoying the favour of the present head of the segment. When in these circumstances one of the senior set died, his eldest son sometimes had difficulty in asserting his position as lieutenant; and in this way the senior set, or part of it, lost control of the segment to the more recently appointed men.

It was in keeping with the expanding social boundaries of the State, and of the high degree of mobility within it, that there was no formally constituted council. Some contemporary accounts mention a tribal council, but it seems clear that until very recently, when the Administration tried to institute a council with defined membership, there has never been a legislative or executive body 631 646 [648]

[21] cf. my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 197f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various bevies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot intervene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[22] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[23]

Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[22] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.
[23] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

power. The history of the State and indeed of each subdivision within it was encapsulated in the formal relations between royal headquarters and between segments. Yet the system was always growing and every few years brought a new royal capital, a new chief, new headquarters for the heirs of large segments and new ambitious men as lieutenants. Each generation also brought greater divergence of interest between the constituent parts of each segment and of the State, as we shall discuss later. Before going on to examine the conditions under which the State split we shall turn aside to compare the Ngoni residential system with similar social structures found in some other societies.

4. *Continually segmenting systems*

Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, in their *African Political Systems*, have provided us with a solid foundation for a typology of political systems in simple societies. It is therefore appropriate to consider what place the Ngoni State has in this typology. The authors distinguish three types of political system in Africa,[24] and we shall attempt to determine to which of these the Ngoni State belongs.

Their first type includes those small societies in which everyone is kin to everyone else, and in which political relations are coterminous with kinship relations. It is clear that Ngoni society was not of this kind.

The other two types are those referred to as primitive states, or Group A, and stateless societies, or Group B. Primitive states are characterized by the presence of organized government, i.e. centralized authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions, and of cleavages of wealth, privilege and status corresponding to the distribution of power and authority. In stateless societies there is no government, in this sense, and political relations are primarily regulated by a segmentary system of permanent unilateral descent groups.

This classification is sometimes taken to imply that segmentary systems are found only in stateless societies but not in primitive states. This implication does not follow inevitably from the scheme of classification, though it is compatible with it. It is, however, easy to assume that this implication is intended, for the authors frequently use the adjective segmentary to characterize stateless societies in contrast to primitive states. This implication is false, as can be shown by reference to a number of societies, and cannot have been intended by the authors, for elsewhere Fortes has written that 'It

[24] Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, *African Political Systems*, pp. 6*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[39] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[40]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[39] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[40] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-5; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Hera kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a seg-
613 ment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A
591 residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in
●621 quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled
631 peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require con-
121 siderable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It
171 seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting
611 systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties.
621 Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential
631 system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there
[183] was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in
[171] many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the
611 Swazi lineage,[41] and perhaps more widely, although in both these
621 societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed
631 as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[41] cf. Holleman, 'Twee-eenheidsbeginsel van die Zulu' and 'Zulu *izigodi*'; Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 729*f*, s.v. *isizinda*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

successive head of a major segment memorialized in this way, but the major divisions of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When splits occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fission had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fission in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fission we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[43] Fission in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fission was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fission did not bring into being any new segments, but merely dissolved the highest segment of all as a cohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fission was a hazardous

[43] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a *state* of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fission' to refer to the *process* of internal subdivision. cf. Fortes, *Web of kinship, passim.* I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These decisions have been taken within frames of reference beyond the reach of our analysis and beyond the reach of Ngoni persuasion. We are here concerned with the way in which Ngoni society has been adapted and has adapted itself to these diverse intrusions from outside. 177 648

3. *Chiefs*

In the old residential system there was no definite category of persons whom we regard as chiefs. In the literature the lords of major segments are sometimes called chiefs, sometimes indunas (i.e. lieutenants), but it is clear that the importance of any particular segment varied from one time and situation to another, and that the only constant relations between positions in the social structure were vertical ones, between lord and dependant, and not horizontal, between persons at the same level in the hierarchy but in different parts of it. The administrative scheme introduced by the Whites provided for horizontal categorization as well as vertical grouping. There were to be a definite number of chiefs, district headmen, and later village headmen, whose names would appear on the Administration's files. The only indigenous categories of this kind were those of Paramount Chief and regional governor, and for this reason alone it was inevitable that the relationship between the old and new systems should be complex. Although the young Mpezeni II was not the only person to be called chief, his superior status was always recognized and later received formal ratification in the qualification Paramount. The regional governors may, perhaps, have formed a category of persons at the same level in the old hierarchy, but they were not very numerous, perhaps only a dozen in number, and under the new dispensation some managed to become chiefs or district headmen, while others failed to do so. Village headmen in the old system were lords of segments of many different orders of segmentation and of varying importance. If the large pre-conquest villages had continued, then perhaps their heads might have secured Administrative recognition. As it was, post-conquest settlements were all much smaller and there were more of them. 622 631 643 648 [621]

Apart from these formal considerations, the peculiar circumstances of the war introduced distortion. Some important people were killed in the fighting, others ran away, and the followers of others were scattered. More significantly, the arrival of the Administration, of traders and missions, provided means whereby people whose segments were of minor importance could advance themselves politically and gain control of large sections of the population. 648 559

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

632 634 621 In these three counties there were no instances of two other types of village found rarely in Ngoniland. Occasionally an immigrant labourer working on the Fort Jameson tobacco farms manages to attract sufficient followers from among other labourers and his local affines to found a new village in an Ngoni chiefdom. The other rare type of village is formed by direct administrative action. The Administration has been largely concerned to amalgamate existing villages rather than to create new ones. In at least one instance, however, scattered clusters of huts inhabited by people who had fled from several different villages to avoid coming under agricultural control have been united into a new village under a headman of their own choosing. One example of each of these rare types of village is included in the sample of villages analysed in Table VII (p. 133).

[648]

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TABLE IV. ORIGIN OF VILLAGES IN SELECTED COUNTIES, 1948

	Number of villages in county, classified by origin				
County	*County segment*	*Other segment under Mpezeni*	*Other Ngoni groups*	*Other tribes, joining Ngoni after 1898*	*Total*
X	60 (72%)	4 (5%)	1 (1%)	18 (22%)	83 (100%)
Y	26 (55%)	10 (21%)	0 (0%)	11 (23%)	47 (100%)
Z	59 (70%)	16 (19%)	0 (0%)	9 (11%)	84 (100%)
Total	145 (68%)	30 (14%)	1 (0.5%)	38 (18%)	214 (100%)

Number of counties in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 10
Number of villages in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 540 approximately

It will be seen from Table IV that about two-thirds of the villages in each of the selected counties belong to their own county segment. It is to villages in this category that the ties of a county chief are strongest. Here old and new systems are in accord and the chief acts both as traditional lord of the segment as well as head of the Native Authority. Villages in their county segment appear to be

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more meticulous than others in such matters as discussing proposed changes of site with the county chief and in reporting important deaths to him. 621 631 634

The proportion of villages in each county belonging to other segments under Mpezeni varies from 5 per cent to 21 per cent. These are villages which chose, or were forced, to move away from the chief to whom they were attached in segmentary terms, or else villages belonging to major segments whose lords did not become chiefs. Villages in this category have ties that in certain situations, as when there is a serious quarrel, link them more closely with some other county than with their own. In any county where there are many villages of this kind the solidarity of the county as a social group is not great. The ruling chief has many rivals who seek to divide his county and to become chiefs themselves. We must distinguish here between villages in one county which belong to the segment of another and those interloping villages which belong to one county but are situated in the territory of another. We shall discuss interloping villages later (p. 128) in connexion with the territorial aspect of counties. [166]

In Nyasaland the history of administration has been separate from that of Northern Rhodesia, but the Ngoni population there also has divided itself on segmentary lines. For many years the two principal leaders recognized by the Administration have been the heads of segments 5 and 6, and these segments form the cores of the two counties they control. The two county chiefs are now Native Authorities and join with an adjacent Cewa chief to form the Fort Manning Council of Chiefs. This acts as the Native administrative body for the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District. 643 648 634

The geographical distribution of the twelve counties, the neighbouring chiefdoms of other tribes, and the tracts of alienated land are shown in Map D. 631 634

The twelve county segments, ten in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, are, in the nomenclature of Chapter I, segments 4 to 6 and 9 to 17. We shall refer to counties in the same way by the numbers of the segments corresponding to them. Thus county 4 is the county whose segment is number 4, and so on. County 10 is the Paramount Chief's county. Some of the county segments are primal, others are residual segments left after the formation of primal segments of lower order. The definition of the segment associated with each county is indicated in Table V. This table merely restates information implicit in Diagram 1. The hereditary names of county chiefs are also given.

[Text continues on page 121]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE V. COUNTY SEGMENTS

County[1]	Specification of county segment	Hereditary name of county chief
4	Residual after formation of segments 9 to 12	Madzimawe
5	Primal	Zulu
6	Primal	Mlonyeni
9	Primal	Mnukwa
10(a)	Residual after formation of segments 13 to 15	Mpezeni [643]
11	Residual after formation of segment 16	Misholo
12	Primal	Mshawa
13	Primal	Kapatamoyo
14	Residual after formation of segment 17	Nzermane
15	Primal	Sayili
16	Primal	Teleka (b)
17	Primal	Maguya

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(a) Paramount Chief's county.
(b) The first chief of this county was known as Mlonyeni. He was succeeded by his brother, who kept his own name of Teleka. The similarity of name with the chief of segment 6 was accidental.

[1] [County numbers refer to map on page 120, category 116 - Analyst]

The county segments are not all of the same order of segmentation, yet the counties occupy positions of equivalence in the Native Authority. Each of the eleven counties under minor chiefs is, or has been for most of the time, the area under the control of a Subordinate Native Authority and also the area of jurisdiction of [692] a second-class Native Court. According to the *Official Gazette* the Paramount Chief's county appears not to have been under any [643] Subordinate Native Authority, nor does it seem to have been provided with a second-class court, but in some respects action takes place as if there were such an authority and court. The Superior Native Authority is responsible for all ten counties in Northern Rhodesia and there is a first-class Native Court for the same area. Thus the structural alignment of the twelve counties is markedly different from that of the segments corresponding to them. In practice the relations existing between the twelve counties and

[Text continues on page 123]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Diagram 4. OLD AND NEW POLITICAL SYSTEMS RELATED

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Old political system		New political system		
Major residential segments		Subordinate Native Authorities showing country numbers 1/	Superior Native Authorities	Districts and Territories
① R ② ③ R ⑧				Malimba District, Nyasaland
① ④ ⑨ R ⑩ ⑬ R ⑭ R ⑰ ⑮ ⑪ R ⑯ ⑫		9 4 13 10 14 17 15 11 16 12	Ngoni Superior Native Authority	Fort Jameson District, Northern Rhodesia
⑤ ⑥		5 6	Fort Manning Council of Chiefs (with one Cewa chief)	Lilongwe District, Nyasaland
⑦				Kahama District, Tanganyika Territory

⑨ Residential segment, numbered as in Table II.

9 County.

R Residual segment.

1/ [County numbers correspond to those on map on page 120 ex tegary 116.-Analyst]

[p. 122]

[The notes to this chart are on page 123.-Analyst]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between their leaders are influenced by both their relative position in the Native Authority scheme and the position of the county segments, as well as by new interests that have emerged. The formal relationship between the alignments of segments and counties is set out in Diagram 4. This diagram also shows the relationship, at a higher level, between some of the other independent Ngoni groups and the major political divisions of British Africa. 621 631 634

In each county the chief, who does not live in the capital but in a village of his own, is head of the county segment and it seems probable that during the early years of the Administration it was the affiliation of villages within their old residential segments that provided the basis for the groupings of convenience which eventually crystallized into counties. In one or two instances succession to headship of the segment and county has been plainly manipulated, but the traditional rules of succession have not been outraged. Where the county segment is a residual one, the county chief may be also head of some segment of higher order. Thus the chief of county 11 is head of primal segment 11 although his county is only the residual segment after the formation of segment 16; county chief 14 is head of primal segment 14; and the Paramount Chief is head of primal segments 4 and 10. [648] [557]

← 1 A Three Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba are not shown on this diagram. 611 621 631

(a) A group under Magodi separated itself from either segment 2 or 3 and is now settled in Lundazi District, Northern Rhodesia.

(b) A group led by Zulu Gama is now settled in Songea District, Tanganyika Territory. The segment corresponding to this group appears to have been formed within segment 1, but I do not know what relation it bears to the other segments nor by what process it was formed. The western part of this group is still led by a descendant of Zulu Gama, but a descendant of one of his associates named Mboanani now leads the eastern part.

(c) A group under Ciwele ndhlovu is settled in Dowa District, Nyasaland. Some writers say it was formed within segment 4, others within the residue of segment 1. He was a lieutenant of either Zwangendaba or Mpezeni.

The two Ngoni groups which do not stem from Zwangendaba cannot be fitted into the diagram. They are located as follows.

(d) The Southern Nyasaland Ngoni, who broke away from the Southern Rhodesia Ndebele and who were led originally by Mputa, are now settled in Ncheu and Dedza Districts, Nyasaland, and in Circunscracão of Angónia, District of Tete, Portuguese East Africa.

(e) The Ngoni group led by Soshangane are now settled in the lower Limpopo Valley, Gazaland, Portuguese East Africa.

There are a few small Ngoni groups in the Shire Valley, Nyasaland, some of which have their own minor chiefs. There are also many Ngoni men and women in the towns of southern and eastern Africa, but they are not organized into political groups on a tribal basis.

1 [These notes refer to the chart on page 122.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [861]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 621 648 [601] agnation of the small segments to what I have termed an omni-directional system), has increased the importance of the single village. After 1898 the Administration endeavoured to bring the people back into villages of moderate size which could be easily supervised by the Administration acting through chiefs.[22] In 1912 a comprehensive scheme of Native reserves was proposed. To facilitate the introduction of the scheme, many small villages were amalgamated with others near by to form units of forty huts or more. The larger groups of composite villages were to form the nuclei of the reserves.[23] After 1930, when villages began to spread out again, many of the enforced amalgamations came to an end. The Administrative rules that every man must live in a recognized village and that a village with less than ten tax-paying men could not be recognized were not always enforced, although they were not repealed until 1945. Administrative recognition has been an important consideration in determining the size of villages but it has not been the only one.

621 631 178 In the residential system, the process of segmentation did not stop with the founding of the segments we now know as county segments. Already in 1898 there were very many more segments in being than the few we have shown in Diagram 1. There we have indicated the position of the major branches of the tree of State but have omitted the hundreds of minor limbs and thousands of twigs which made up the whole. Even if we restrict our attention to segments founded before 1898 we find within any county segment to-day many smaller groups, some of them divisions, others single villages, and a few containing several villages, which are in fact inferior segments formed by one or other of the processes we discussed in Chapter I. Lieutenants and others have made their own segments, junior sons have left their natal villages, and so on. The processes of segment formation since 1898 have not been identical with those prevailing before the conquest, for the quasi-agnatic structure of segments has been modified and segments of recent formation, if in fact we can legitimately call them segments at all, are not organized in the same hierarchical manner as in the old residential system. We shall discuss the formation of small social groups in a later part of our study, the analysis of village life. 178 Here, at the county level, we have to deal with what is essentially a 634 continuation of a pre-conquest process. Each successive head of a county segment, i.e. each county chief, has formed his own new 622 segment within that of his predecessor. Thus, for instance, where

[22] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902, p. 2, and 1903, p. 2.
[23] *M.R.A.*, p. 108.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and village headmen looked after them. About half the cattle in Ngoniland were captured during the fighting of 1898 and although many of these were returned to the Ngoni, they were soon disposed of to White traders. To-day, many of the cattle in royal (i.e. capital, regal and chief's) villages are said to belong to the Paramount Chief. This statement of royal ownership is now not merely one referring to political overlordship, for these beasts are contrasted with others which belong to commoners and to other chiefs

TABLE VII. VILLAGES FOUNDED BEFORE AND AFTER 1898

How founded or incorporated in the Ngoni State	*Type of present-day village*					
	Royal			*Cadet*	*Commoner*	*Total*
	Capital	*Regal*	*Chief's*			
Founded by regional governors or their ancestors prior to creation of the Ngoni State	0	0	0	0	3	3
Founded before 1898 to accommodate other segments of the residential system	1	6	0	1	25	33
Total known to have been founded before 1898	1	6	0	1	28	36
Founded to accommodate segments of the residential system, date unknown	0	0	0	1	11	12
Founded after 1898 to accommodate segments of the residential system or their modern equivalents	0	2	0	4	20	26
Founded outside the Ngoni State, date unknown, entering it after 1898	0	0	0	0	6	6
Founded in Ngoniland by a labour immigrant after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Founded by direct Administrative action after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total known to have been founded or incorporated after 1898	0	2	0	4	28	34
Grand total	1	8	0	6	67	82

Sample collected casually in the general course of fieldwork.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and
631 disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each
621 village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the
432 village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief
231 who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village
[643] concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed
[685] by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion
[643] between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small,
631 contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there
621 was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of
648 British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still
628 formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of
621

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the same processes we have seen at work in the formation of segments. Those villages are linked which have a common origin, and the mechanism of dispersal is still the same as in pre-conquest times. Sons of a headman still break out of their natal village and lieutenants and others move off to make their own villages. However, with the decline in polygyny, fewer new villages arise from the formation of new bands of wives by a headman.

Secondly, the village has become more important than before, and village membership is now critical in a wide variety of situations. Thirdly, because it has become easier to move from one village to another than to form a new village, the genealogical structure of the village has become highly diversified as compared with segments of similar size in the old system.

Thus, the transition has been from a State based on a continuously segmenting political system to a minor unit of administration in a modern State. The new order has grown out of the old, not as the result of any professed policy of preserving indigenous forms of political organization, but because the aims of the Administration were essentially conservative, because it was concerned with preserving order in the country as cheaply as possible and did not wish to introduce economic and political changes which would conflict with the supply of labour to other areas scheduled for earlier development; and because for the most part those individuals who occupied powerful positions in the old régime were best able to survive in the struggle for power which determined the eventual form of the new. Therefore, although their entry into the colonial empire was so much more abrupt than that of their matrilineal neighbours, the political system to which Ngoni are now subject bears many more superficial similarities to its former condition than is the case among the Cewa and others. The changes have been great, as we have seen, but the symbols and names remain, with changed significance, to remind Ngoni of their past.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

647 in the political organization. Some of these officials were also members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but many were not. The officials served the Paramount in his court and his administration, and also the chiefs, and formed the lines of communication between them. This 647 created a network of relationships between the Paramount and the 621 chiefs at the top level, and between the chiefs and the village headmen under them at the lower level. From this network were excluded, in the northern kingdom, all the *ahumuzana* and, in the central kingdom, all those *ahumuzana* who were not chiefs. In the two kingdoms the *ahumuzana* exercised unofficial control over a varying number of villages, and were inclined to assert their social superiority because they were excluded from official recognition.

The foundations of the political structure within which the ruling 571 aristocracy operated were a series of related institutions which will be 171 described and analysed later in the book, but which must be referred to 178 here, partly in order to explain the terminology used. The South-eastern Bantu, whose culture the Ngoni brought with them, had an institution in all important villages known as 'houses', which was a grouping of huts and of the wives owning them round the hut of one or more of the leading women. This institution, with its variations among the southern and northern Nguni people, was described by Mrs. Hoernlé in the chapter on 'Social Organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*.[1] The Ngoni institution of houses had developed from the basic pattern among the South-eastern Bantu into an independent form. In the first place it was only found in relation to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading men of the royal clan, and the *ahumuzana*. It did not, as in South Africa, form the basic pattern of all villages in the Ngoni kingdoms. Where, as in most villages owned by [621] *ahumuzana*, mixed ethnic groups lived together, the house system existed only for the head of the clan, his brothers and his successor. It was specifically an Ngoni institution in the cultural and social sense. In the second place, the terms 'right-hand' and 'left-hand' house, common among the South-eastern Bantu, were not used by the Ngoni in the 1930's. The two terms they used were the 'big house' and the '*gogo* house', and I propose to use these terms here. The principle behind the use of these terms was that the big house was the one from which the heir should come to succeed the Paramount, the chief, or the *mahumuzana*. The *gogo* house was the one which was responsible for maintaining tradition and performing ritual.

Another institution, closely related to that of the houses, was the 621 *hungulu* and *gogo* villages. The Paramounts, the chiefs, and the leading 571 *ahumuzana*, when they succeeded their father after his death, moved out of his village and made their own new village, or took their households

[1] Schapera, I. (ed.). *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*. Routledge, 1937, chap. IV.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and settled where another village already existed.[1] In both forms, this new settlement was called the *lusungulu* village, 'the one which goes in front'; and the village which was left was known as the *gogo* village. This use of the term *gogo* (literally 'grandparent') for house and village had a common basic connotation. It expressed the concept of being left behind to look after something, the *gogo* house being passed over for the heir to the Paramountcy or chieftainship but charged with ritual and ceremonial duties; and the *gogo* village being left behind to take care of the traditions and generally also of most of the widows of the deceased Paramount or chief. Each *lusungulu* village eventually divided on the death of its owner, part 'going forward' with the new successor, part remaining behind. The main groups in the village which went ahead or which remained were the houses connected with the new Paramount or chief or *nalumuzana* and those connected with his dead father. In the chapter on houses (Chapter III, Part III) this process will be examined in greater detail. 621 571

The third related institution was the provision for guarding the spirit of a dead Paramount or chief and those of some leading *alumuzana*. A senior woman was always guardian of such a spirit and in her hut were kept the ritual objects: spear, wooden dish, baskets, fire-stick, which were used in sacrifices to the ancestors. The guardianship of the spirit of a dead Paramount was always associated with the village which had been his *lusungulu*. His corpse was buried on the edge of the kraal containing the cattle of the house where he had grown up, and this village became the *gogo* village associated with him, where his spirit was guarded in a hut, probably though not necessarily belonging to one of his widows. The recognition of such a woman guardian was a matter for selection and appointment, and was the responsibility of the senior men of the *gogo* house in that village in consultation with the senior men of the *gogo* house in the dead man's father's village. The concept of guarding the spirits of important men, and the means by which such guardianship was practised, will be more fully discussed in Part IV in connexion with the ancestor cult. 769 554 775 [766]

THE NGONI KINGDOMS AND AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS

In the final section of this chapter we shall look at the Ngoni kingdoms in their relationship to other African kingdoms and states such as those described in *African Political Systems*.[2] A methodological problem arises here. In this study a number of references are made to the Ngoni kingdoms in pre-European times, especially in connexion 121

[1] This form of the institution was found in densely populated areas and the incoming households dominated the original ones.

[2] Fortes, M., & Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (ed.). *African Political Systems*. O.U.P., 1940 pp. 1–23.

CHAPTER III

NGONI CULTURE

563 AMONG the mixed ethnic elements in the Ngoni kingdoms the ruling aristocracy were those whose ancestors were of Swazi and trans-Zambesi origin, and whose clan descent names established them as belonging to the true Ngoni group. The families with these clan names formed also 563 a social aristocracy in the villages where they lived, in the areas of the 621 chiefs and *abumzana*, and in the Ngoni kingdoms. This social status, established primarily by the clan name, was visible in the position of the huts in the village, arranged at the head of the kraal; in the leading role played by the senior members of these families on all ceremonial occasions; and in the practice of a number of customs which were defined as Ngoni. Ngoni culture, as seen in social and ritual life, was a series of 128 interwoven patterns of social organization and social behaviour. We shall outline these patterns here in order to bring together many of the forms and practices described in the rest of the book. In a more homogeneous society it would have been possible to find in these patterns a [184 consistent and clearly defined culture. Yet one of the main problems in studying Ngoni culture in the 1930's was that there were many variations 121 of each pattern and the anthropologist was all the time trying to find out what degree of cultural conformity existed among the Ngoni aristocracy. Of the different aspects of culture reviewed in this chapter, the ritual 563 pattern was the one most consistently followed, and it was the one in which the Ngoni social aristocracy most clearly demonstrated that they had a distinctive common culture which was found in both kingdoms and in the secession states.

(a) *Kinship pattern*

611 Like the South-eastern Bantu from whom they came the Ngoni were patrilineal in descent and inheritance. Marriage was negotiated by go-583 betweens and concluded through the handing over of cattle, and the term *lobola* was used for the cattle exchanged in this form of marriage. An Ngoni woman married by this form was known as *mlobokazi*. A 593 strict interpretation in the courts was given to this form of marriage as it affected the ownership and custody of the children. The children of [586] a *lobola* marriage contract belonged to their father and could be claimed by him if the marriage broke up, or on the death of their mother. 591 Traditionally, virilocal residence was an Ngoni custom, and it was sup-[592] ported by the house system whereby the male members of each house formed a group with economic interests in common through the joint ownership of the cattle in the name of the house. A widespread variant

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

A widespread variant

on virilocal residence will be discussed later and illustrated in Chapter IV of Part III. 591

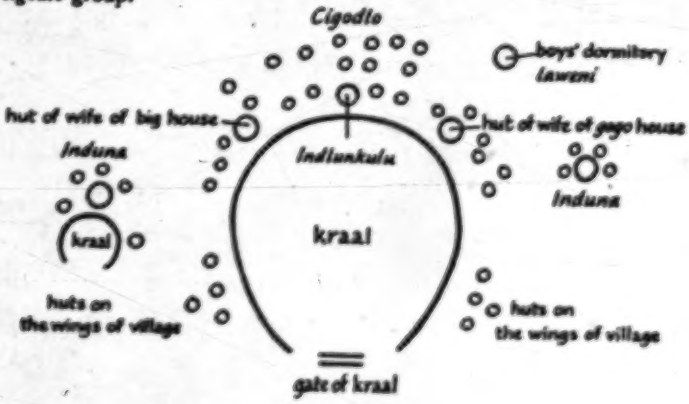
(*b*) *Village pattern*

There was a traditional pattern of Ngoni village organization, which consisted in the siting of the huts in the village and the corresponding social groups formed in the different sections. Informants made it clear that when the Ngoni first settled in the areas where the two kingdoms now exist, the royal villages and the chiefs' villages were very large. Segmentation of these large villages, not only by the *lusungulu* 'going out' as already described, but also by sections of the village breaking off, began before the Europeans came and continued after their arrival. In the 1930's the traditional pattern was sometimes altered by a desire to build a 'model village' laid out in lines instead of in a horse-shoe curve round the kraal. Even in some of these model villages the grouping of huts, though no longer in a series of circles, indicated the house affiliation of their owners and their relationship to the head of the village. 621

The traditional ground-plan of an Ngoni village was based on the main kraal which occupied the centre. The gate of the kraal was on the open end of the horse-shoe formation, and the most important hut, the *indlunkulu*, was at the top of the kraal. On either side of the *indlunkulu* were grouped the huts belonging to the houses associated with the wives of the owner of the village. Behind the *indlunkulu* were the huts of his married sons and those of his brothers who chose to live with him, and this group of huts, known as *cigodlo*, spread round behind the main huts of the owners of houses. Behind each house-group of huts were the huts of the *induna* associated with the house; in large villages he often had a kraal and reproduced a similar small village plan in his own circle of huts. On the wings of the village, curving towards the gate of the kraal and called by the Ngoni 'the horns of the village', were the less important families in the village. The general principle of the village plan in terms of social status and the siting of huts was that the nearer huts were to the *indlunkulu* the higher was the prestige of their owner. The following very much simplified plan of an Ngoni village illustrates the principle of siting the huts in relation to social grouping, as it was when a new *lusungulu* village was set up. In this plan the *indlunkulu* hut was owned by the mother of the owner of the village, one of his father's widows who moved out with him. When she died the big wife on her right might move into the actual *indlunkulu* hut, or stay in her own hut while another widow of her father-in-law entered the *indlunkulu*. There was no invariable rule for this type of succession, but there were only these two possible alternatives. Reference should be made here to one other hut site—that of the *lomeni* or boys' dormitory. It was usually sited behind either the big house or the *gogo* house, far enough behind [417] [554]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

621 the main circle round the kraal to emphasize its connexion with the *cigodlo* group.



621 The group referred to as 'a house' has already been defined in its
571 relation to the Paramount and his *lungulu* village, and it will be illustrated and examined further in Chapter III of Part III. As an Ngoni institution the big house was an integral factor in the succession to high office, and the *gogo* house played an essential role in ceremonial and ritual life. Houses were also one of the most important components in village grouping. Men, women and children regarded themselves as associated with a house in one of three ways. They were related to it by descent or by marriage; or they were members of the family of the *induna* who looked after its affairs; or they served the house as servants or labourers, and were possibly the descendants of captives caught in war and assigned to that house. Thus it often happened that the people living on the wings of the village had some relationship to the house on the side of the kraal where their huts were sited. There were many Ngoni villages where all the inhabitants were said to belong to one of the two or three or more houses, even though the majority of the inhabitants had no kinship or official relationship with a house.

614 The term 'clan' or 'clan descent group' has been used already many times and some explanation and definition is needed as a guide to its use in Part II before it is discussed further in Chapter II of Part III. The Ngoni considered that the clan of a person was of great importance for several reasons. The use of the clan descent name was the normal mode
[576] of address between all adults. The Ngoni said they could not speak to any stranger until they knew his clan name, and they used it in all social intercourse, except when addressing the Paramount. Exogamy was strict for people with the same clan name, and sexual relations between such
[935] individuals was regarded as incest.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The three final acts of the *utimba* were performed for the new wife by the women of her new village. The first took place about two days after the end of the main ceremony and was the occasion for her instruction by her husband's relatives. She sat on a mat by the *indlunkulu*, while the woman of that house dressed her *isikhutu*, anointed her with oil, and clothed her in fresh skins and new beads taken from the store of the house to which she now belonged. They then instructed her in her behaviour to old and young, telling her to avoid selfishness and quarrelling and to be friendly with everyone. 585 182 621

The second act, called *ukufumisa umlobokazi* ((bringing the wife out), took place thirty to forty days later, during which time the wife had been sitting by her hut being watched. All this time she had eaten only a little food, sent to her from her mother-in-law's hut, had been afraid to speak to anyone, and had wept often. Now she was told that she might go anywhere and talk with anyone. She could help her mother-in-law by fetching firewood and by lighting her fire. A pot of water was given to her and an axe to cut firewood, and her mother-in-law gave her the *indlekuza* bead, a sign that she might speak and eat in front of her parents-in-law. But her testing time was not yet over. She was told to fetch a huge bundle of split wood and to lay it down carefully before her mother-in-law's hut without dropping any. As the bundle was on her head, it meant kneeling down and bending forward slowly until she could gently ease the wood on to the ground. Other tests included stripping large quantities of maize, soaking them, and pounding them into stamped maize (*izinkobe*). This testing was called *ukulinga umlobokazi* (watching the new wife), and was in most cases far more exacting than anything she had been made to do in her own home. [482] [252]

The culminating act of the integration process, *ukupekisa umlobokazi*, in which the new wife's hut was recognized as the starting-point of a new house, was the ceremony of making fire in her new hut to cook food for her husband. Two or three months after the marriage, a woman from her father-in-law's *gogo* house suddenly appeared in the doorway of the new wife's hut, carrying three hearth-stones. She fetched fire, kindled it, and began to cook boiled maize. The astonished young wife was expected to cry because she had now been turned away from her mother-in-law's cooking-place, as if she were being put out of the house. The maize cooked on this first fire in the new hut was regarded as having been cooked by the bride, and was divided into portions, one being taken to each section of the village attached to a house. Meanwhile the young wife sat nearby, hanging her head and showing the conventional signs of grief. Nevertheless she was so excited that she went back to her own home as soon as possible to tell them the news. The response of her own people was to prepare food for a feast and bring it to her new village to express to her husband's people their appreciation of this token of confidence in the girl's ability to cook for her husband.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 The prolonged series of interviews, exchanges and ceremonies em-
585 phasized the Ngoni conception of the marriage contract and its binding nature. They also underlined the severance of the new wife from her
621 former family and house, and her gradual assimilation into her mother-in-law's house. This relationship between Ngoni women within the houses provided an effective means of integrating them into a village to which they were strangers.

CHAPTER IV

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

183 'THE Ngoni have power and authority over their women and their
59 children.' So began one of the texts on *cingoni*, 'the thing that is Ngoni', by a man of the Ntumba people whose grandfather had been born among the Ngoni when they were in Songea. There was a recognized ideal pattern of an Ngoni family which covered both the individuals included in the family group and the place where they lived. This pattern was patrilineal in descent, virilocal in residence, polygynous in marriage for all men of standing who were not Christians. Other recognized and often-mentioned characteristics were the continued residence of widows in their husband's village after his death, the grouping of families by houses, and the *laweni*, or dormitory system for boys and unmarried young men.

581 The young wife wept on the day of her marriage because she was
593 leaving the security and known relationships of her own family for the hazards and uncertainty of entering as a stranger into her husband's family group. The dramatization of these sentiments in the protracted marriage ceremony, and the allusions in the *mtimba* songs, brought out clearly the continuity of the man's relations with all members of his family and the sudden sharp break in the woman's relationship when she married. When her first child was born, and a new individual family group launched, her final integration into her husband's family began. As a mother who had borne a grandchild to her husband's parents she had thenceforward a direct part in the relationships within her husband's family, but as a wife she was always a stranger. The marriage negotiations and ceremonial express the closeness of the family ties, showing on the girl's side the anxiety of her family on parting with her to live among strangers; and on the man's side the hesitancy of the husband's family at taking into their midst an unknown and untried stranger. In addition, the protracted exchanges of cattle and feasts, delaying the final ceremony and building up relationships between the two family groups, illustrate the Ngoni attitude towards marriage as a

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

binding contract. In theory at least the girl left her family for good once the agreed *lobola* was handed over, and the responsibility for adjustment to the family she had entered was hers, first as wife and then as mother. 581 593

Investigation of the terminology associated with the Ngoni concept of family immediately poses problems of relating group structure to individual and group relationships. Dr. Kuper did not refer to any single term for family among the Swazi. The nearest was the term *umuti* used for homestead[1] which covered a recognized leader and his dependents, in terms of common residence, mutual relations and economic activities. The Cewa term *banja*,[2] widely used in Nyasaland in the 1930's to translate 'family', in its general use was more akin to the Swazi *umuti* since it denoted the relationships of a group of people to one man, and their common residence in a single village or a section of a village. *Banja* was used to express relationship to one man by kinship and marriage, but when it was used among the central Ngoni it also applied to other individuals, such as his age mates and the descendants of his father's former captives who lived in the same village. Another Cewa term *mbumba* was used in two distinct senses. The common use was to express the relationship of one man with his sisters and their children who inherited his position and his property and looked to him for assistance. A much less common use of the term was found sometimes in central Nyasaland and occasionally in north Nyasaland to cover the group of a man and his children and his brothers and their children—a patrilineal concept of a kinship group which was usually but not always associated with common residence. 593 171

There was one major difference between the Ngoni concept inherent in their use of *banja* and that of the Cewa and other matrilineal peoples. When an important man or woman died among the Cewa, someone always 'entered their place' in the kinship system, and this acquiring of a new position involved a shift in actual relationships and in terminology throughout the group of kin. There was no such change among the Ngoni in the use of kinship terms. When a man or woman among the Ngoni entered a dead person's place it was in order to perform his functions and not to assume the dead person's kinship relationships. 171 768 602 593

The village lay-out in different types of Ngoni village illustrates the way in which family grouping could be recognized in the sharing of the same hut, in the grouping of huts, and in the relations with neighbouring villages. Later in this chapter illustrations will be given from the northern and central Ngoni kingdoms to show how certain patterns of residential grouping on a family basis were evolving from the divisions of mixed tribal groups characteristic of the former large villages of pre-European days. The general tendency in northern Ngoniland was to 621 593

[1] op. cit. p. 36.
[2] Scott and Hetherwick in their dictionary translate *banja*: house, home, household, family.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

621 593 break up into smaller villages, and there were on the whole more villages in the north said to be *wabanja limodzi* (of one family) than among the central Ngoni. On the other hand, the *lusungulu* pattern of village division had almost disappeared among the central Ngoni.

591 592 [361] A man on his first marriage built a hut for his wife behind his mother's hut, where his brothers by the same mother or by mothers of the same house also built. The family grouping by residence was therefore determined by house affiliation. Associated with this residential group based on kinship, there were the residences of the *induna* and his family which had separate alignments on a kinship basis, though for certain common purposes they combined with the family groups related to the house by kinship. The children of the families belonging to the house and the children of the *induna* who took care of it began to intermarry when the prohibitions on marriage within the village ceased to operate. In this way kinship bonds were created within a group which formerly had only residence and certain activities in common, and this process was recognizable in a number of the larger villages, especially in the central kingdom.

593 Within the different types of family groups determined by their residential basis there were certain outstanding relationships between members of the same family. The most important of these was that between father and children; the father, as the biological parent and also the symbol of authority, was the focus of honour and respect, and the one who helped his children when they were in need. The relation between the father and his children among the Ngoni was always a balance between affection and care, and respect and authority. The ideal pattern of a father, as described by informants, included all these elements and also wisdom. This concept of the father relationship was extended to the head of a *banja*, to the headman of a village or a section of a village, to a *mulumuzana* in charge of an area, to a chief, and to the [576] Paramount himself. The Ngoni greeting to all older men, and the most respectful form of address to a man of any seniority, was *baba*, father, or its Nyanja equivalent *bambo*.

The mother, on the other hand, had a more limited relationship within the family circle. To her own children and to the children of her co-wives, especially of her house, she was the provider of food, and the affectionate 'cherisher'[1] of young children; but she was also treated with respect and, when she reached some seniority, she had considerable authority over her daughters and her younger co-wives. She could never compete, however, with the sisters of her husband or with his mothers, who expected to exercise authority over her children and to [591 184] arrange for the ceremonies connected with birth, puberty, and marriage. In villages where virilocal residence was the rule, the husband's sisters were married elsewhere and were only present in the village during

[1] *kulera*, lit. to cherish, is the word used for bringing up children.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

Households[1]

	Total	Leading clan	
Northern Ngoniland			592
Eswazini	23	15	614
Endindeni	15	12	622
Eluhangeni	37	21	631
Central Ngoniland			
Cinkwita	39	18	
Mangozo	60	26	
Mcakhatha	122	37	

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head. [563 565]

Eswazini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Eswazini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *lusungulu* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother. [361] 184 592 621

Endindeni was a *gogo* village owned by Zibekere Makwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gogo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ubale* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more *lamani*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 wife. The village with its single kraal was 'of one house', and it was
592 widely known as a good village by Ngoni standards, because, as the
621 local people said, 'all the men are Makwakwa men'.

Eluhangeni was a *gogo* village where the spirit of Mtenje Jere, the son of a brother of Zwangendaba, was guarded. The kinship group of Mwanamdoko Jere, the owner of the village, were all of one house, that of his mother who was dead. Her place in the *indlunkulu* had been taken by his big wife who also inherited the guardianship of the spirit of Mtenje. There was one widow of his father in the village, but she had become a Christian and therefore could not guard the spirit. Mwanamdoko had two wives, and three widows of his brothers by the same mother were also in the village. One brother by another mother was the only one of his generation still alive and he had two sons and two grandsons living in the *cigodlo* behind the *indlunkulu*. All Mwanamdoko's family were grouped round one kraal. There were two other kraals with family groups round them in the village, one belonging to the *induna* of his dead mother, and one to an age mate who had been in his regiment. The *induna's* group belonged to the same house as Mwanamdoko, but the pattern of the three distinct groups each with its own kraal was more like that of the *banja* in the central kingdom.

184 In the central kingdom the relationships of the various groups in a
563 village followed a different pattern from that in the north. Instead of
592 the *lusungulu* and *gogo* characteristics where the family groups were
621 integrated into houses, the southern pattern was that of a conquered village with the Ngoni element superimposed. In Cinkwita and in Mcakhatha the village headman and his family group had originally been conquered, then established as an outlying village, and finally chosen for the permanent settlement of a family group belonging to an
[361] Ngoni clan when they left the royal village after it broke up. In Cinkwita there were three kraals associated with three *banja*. Two of the *banja* belonged to kinship groups of Ntumba clans, and the head of one was known as the headman of the village. The head of the *banja* of Cinkwita Ndau, the Ngoni clan group, was his eldest son Wilkinson, whose wife was of a leading Swazi clan, the Magwagwa. His family group consisted of his wife, two sons and three daughters; a brother and his two daughters; the widow of a dead brother and his two sons and a daughter; three sisters, one of whom had married the brother of the village headman and one who was a widow; and a widowed sister of his father. This family grouping expressed in terms of households illustrates what has already been referred to several times, namely the tendency of the heads of leading Ngoni families in the central kingdom to keep, in addition to their sons, their sisters and daughters in the village after marriage, even when *lobola* had been given. It also illustrates the comparatively small number of plural marriages in the south among the younger men.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

Mangozo, as its name suggests, was the head village of the Ngozo clan. It had been originally settled by Ngwazi Ngozo who brought with him two family groups of Ntumba clans who had been with him in Songea. These two Ntumba family groups each formed a *banja*, and one had a kraal. The other two *banja* belonged to two elderly Ngozo brothers, sons of Ngwazi and of the same house, who had one kraal between them. The senior of these, Mbiri Ngozo, had in his *banja* a widow of his father, not his own mother, and nine widows of a dead older brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, three grandsons and three granddaughters; and his sister. The *banja* of Cinyama Ngozo included two widows of another brother; his own wife, two sons, two daughters, one grandson and one granddaughter. The two brothers between them had to support eleven widows of dead brothers. 184 592 621 [614]

Mcakhatha had a dual foundation. The village site was originally one of the outlying villages of the section known as Ziyembe. It was also the head village of the Nzunga clan. Three of the five *banja* into which the village was divided belonged to Ntumba family groups, and the head of one of these was known as the headman of the village. Of the two *banja* belonging to the Nzunga clan, one was a *gogo banja*, the other that of the ruling chief who was a Sub-Native Authority.[1] Within the *gogo banja* was the house of Bambo Manga in whose hut the spirit of Mputa was guarded. Two other houses in the *gogo banja* were associated with the guardianship of the spirits of the grandfather and father of the ruling chief. There was therefore a house and a *banja* formation existing together, in which the *banja* predominated. The two Nzunga *banja* consisted of two family groups, one associated with the ruling chief and one with his paternal uncle in charge of the *gogo* section. The chief's *banja* included his own five wives, one sister and two brothers by the same mother, and two sisters and four brothers by other mothers. The *banja* of the head of the *gogo* section included his own five wives and two widows whom he had inherited from the former chief, his older brother; three brothers and two sisters by other mothers; three of his sons. It also included a widow of his father, and nine widows of his dead brother who had not been inherited; and the households of Bambo Manga and her daughter and granddaughter for whom the father of the ruling chief had assumed responsibility. The Ngoni family pattern of this village was more complex than that of Cinkwita or Mangozo because of the clearly marked *gogo* section existing alongside that of the ruling chief. It showed, however, the general characteristics of Ngoni family grouping in the central kingdom, keeping sisters and daughters in the village after marriage while retaining responsibility for widows of fathers and brothers. There were three Nzunga kraals, two in the *gogo banja* and one in the chief's *banja*, but the cattle were always referred to [614]

[1] In northern Ngoniland the ruling chief would have moved out of this village on his father's death, leaving the *gogo banja* as the *gogo* village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and
592 the high ranking of the Nzunga clan accounted for the number of
621 *lobola* marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

554 As individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans
565 claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families
in the area of a *mulumuzana* owning a head village, and the small Ngoni
614 family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received
621 'honour' (*ulemu*). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and
in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were
[557] a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank
and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was
more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick
to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would
enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side, responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and the *banja*. Quarrels had to be composed, if possible before they came to court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be expected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the northern and Mangozo in the central kingdom.

[476] In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose husbands were away at work. The dislocation caused to the village economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and heads of a *banja*, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include the needs of these 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradition emphasized this type of help.

867 In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and relationships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty ceremonies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 in 1938.[1] The sociological and ritual significance of these factors will be
233 the chief emphasis here, with reference to earlier chapters in this book on Ngoni culture and on the structure of Ngoni society.

233 In the sociological significance of cattle-ownership there are certain
554 outstanding points to be emphasized, which will be indicated here and
565 developed further in the analysis which follows. One is the connexion between cattle-ownership and status, illustrated by the dominance of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in village life, since their possession of cattle was related to the kraal and to the siting of huts and to their house organization. The cattle horns on the roof of the *indlunkulu* were no trivial ornament. They were a proud assertion of cattle-ownership attached to the residences of the leading women, with all the implications of 'house herds' of cattle and of *lobola* given and received. Closely related to cattle-ownership and status was the power conferred by the possession of herds. The status of leading families was enhanced by the ability to give feasts, to give *lobola* for their sons' wives, to make sacrifices to the ancestors and, as we saw at the end of the last chapter, to realize cash by the sale of beasts belonging to the herd. Cattle-owners did at times have to decide whether to maintain and augment their herds and thereby be known as wealthy cattle-owning families; or to sell cattle in order to command labour to build a modern brick house, or to buy fine clothes for their wives and display their wealth in another form.

182 In the organization of Ngoni society, cattle were an important factor
233 in uniting groups of persons. We have seen how the house, as a group of men and women, and its variant, the central Ngoni form of *banja*,
621 had common possession of a herd of cattle which formed a source of wealth for all members of the house. Within the house the senior men were bound together by the responsibilities attached to the ownership and care of a herd. Within the village the senior men of a house or *banja* united in the upkeep of the kraal, the supervision of the herd-boys, the tending of sick cattle, and in meeting or resisting the Government's demands for culling or dipping stock. Where cattle were boarded out in another village, ties of association in the care of the beasts and in accountability for them bound together the cattle-owners or cattle-keepers of more than one village. A stage in the adjustment of a young wife to a strange village was reached when she added to the herd of the house she had married into the gift cattle given her by her father and so partly compensated for those which had been given to him by her husband's family. A new wife's standing in a village was thus advanced through any cattle which flowed in the opposite direction from those of the *lobola* cattle. Finally, and this is the main theme of this chapter, cattle were an essential link between the living and the dead.

[1] Read, M. *Native Standards of Living and African Culture Change*. Memorandum XVI of International African Institute, 1938.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

which it belonged, was always given to a woman whose good character was vouched for.[1] The man who inherited the *gogo* village with its particular charge to look after the spirits of the dead, as well as the welfare of the living, also had to be someone of good repute. The responsibility for maintaining social cohesion in a village and among the members of a house with which the cattle, and therefore the spirits, were closely bound up, was one which the senior male members of that house regarded as a solemn duty. If people did not behave well the cattle would not flourish and multiply, and that would upset the spirits and be a sign of their disapproval.

Cibambo wrote the following account of the ancestor cult as a part of the presentation of Ngoni customs to his own people. As a Christian minister he was concerned with making a case to his own people for putting the Ngoni ancestor cult higher in the religious scale than the cults which used images in their worship. He was using his Christian beliefs to rationalize the ancestor cult, particularly in relating it to the concept of a High God. The Ngoni undoubtedly had the idea of a creator, remote and unapproachable by man, as his title implied, but nevertheless referred to as the sender of rain, sickness and other benefits and disasters for the country as a whole. Prayers and sermons by Ngoni ministers in Ngoniland used many of the old Ngoni terms for the creator to express their Christian concept of God.

¶ We think that the worship of the Ngoni was better than the worship of other tribes who were near them, for in their worship there were no images made of wood or stones or other things, but they worshipped spirits who were unseen. Nearly all Central African tribes believe that there is a God who created heaven and earth, and who is unseen by eyes. In worship they could not reach him himself with the things of their hearts, so they did not worship him himself. They followed the custom well known among the black people when they wished to talk to their chiefs or their fathers when there was something of importance. A black man thinks it is a great impertinence and dishonour to speak for himself in front of his chief or his father, so he sends someone of standing as his messenger who carries his words and returns with a reply. This custom took effect also in the worshipping of black peoples. In worshipping the creator they made use of a go-between, who stood between God and men. He knew how to speak for them and pray for them before God. They thought that certain created things ought to accomplish this work.

The Ngoni believed that there was God who was chief of all created things and the source of all. Some of the names they gave him were:

UMkulumqango	The Great Deviser
Uluhlanga	The Original Source
UMkulu Kakulu	The Greatest of All
UMnihazi we Zinto Zonke	The Owner of All Things.

[1] On other grounds, such as kinship, such guardianship might have gone to a woman who was not acceptable on moral grounds and was therefore passed over.

132 rocky outcrops. In September, several weeks before the
137 rains begin, the trees burst out into red foliage, making scarlet rings and patches around the mountains and along the valleys, while through the hard-baked earth spring gladioli and orchids. This is the time of the bush fires when
[221] grass is burned and men and boys go hunting. The first rain storms bring a transformation. Fresh green grass covers the land, and scarlet leaves turn bright green on bushes and trees, and later marigolds turn the hillsides golden and yellow arums and red-hot pokers appear along the roadsides.

311 In making this high plateau their home, the Ngoni chose
361 it primarily for the pasture lands for their cattle. They sited their villages on the ridges or the slopes of the hills, where they had a commanding position, with access to water, good land for cultivation in the shallow dips and river valleys, and woodlands where they could cut poles for their houses and cattle kraals.

361 The traditional Ngoni village was built in a horse shoe
351 formation round a circular cattle kraal. Larger villages had a central kraal with huts round it, and several other kraals each with its horseshoe grouping of huts. A large village, and there were many of over a hundred huts, seemed at first sight to be a sprawling collection of huts and kraals, with a few tall trees about and several red ant-hills. A pattern of hut sites became apparent, however, once the family and kinship grouping was known. Behind each hut was one or more
[343] circular grain stores built on platforms, large ones for maize and smaller ones for millet or ground-nuts. In the Central
[184] Ngoni kingdom, and sometimes in the Northern kingdom,
[351] there were tall reed fences round the huts of leading families, enclosing an open space where household work went on, and wood and grass were stored.

● 621 There were two focal points in each village, reproduced on a minor scale in the hamlets round each kraal. One was
[554] the 'big house'[1] at the head of the kraal, where the leading woman had her home.

woman had her home. The other was the 'gate'[1] of the kraal 621
at the opposite end of the enclosure to the 'big house'. The [417]
name by which this 'gate' was known applied also to the
space on each side of the gap in the kraal fence through
which the cattle went out and came in—a gap which was
closed at night with heavy poles. Here at the gate the men [512]
of the village sat by day, ate their meals brought to them by
children from their wives' huts, talked, received strangers,
pursued their crafts, and supervised the return of the cattle
in the evenings.

In and around the main huts within the tall reed fences, 342
the life of a Ngoni household went on. Some of the huts
were rectangular, others round. All had a veranda built up
above the ground-level and shaded by the house roof. The
back parts of the veranda were often enclosed with mats to
make additional storage space. In old Ngoni households the 351
open space around the hut was kept swept and mudded and
polished like a floor, so that people could sit there in comfort
and cleanliness as well as on the veranda. Near the house 417
was one or more little reed platforms about five feet above
the ground, where kitchen utensils, gourds and vegetables
were laid to dry, and which were used to sit under as shelter
from the sun in the hot months. Large and small wooden 415
pounding mortars and poles, clay pots of every size and 352
shape, mats for sleeping and for drying grain, baskets for
many purposes, wooden food trays and spoons, gourds of
several shapes, formed the traditional household equipment
always to be seen outside and around the hut, as well as
inside.

In each household, within the main hut, there were two 353
places of particular significance. One was by the two main 592
door-posts at the entrance. These posts with the hollow for [354]
the fireplace in the centre of the floor divided the hut into
a right-hand and left-hand side—the men's side and the

[1] and [2] A short list of the vernacular terms for some these common Ngoni place-names is given at end of the book.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [583]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilin[illegible] [illegible]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patr[illegible] 428
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always
a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a [563]
group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

a few weeks. They were both dominated by important Ngoni families, and both the headquarters of subordinate chiefs. They both represented that blend of old and new in Ngoni life which was continually keeping the anthropologist on her toes. 121

Enkodlweni was far from main roads and centres of modern life. When I first went there my lorry cut a swathe of grass knee-high on the so-called road to the village, and the radiator, choked with grass seed, boiled all the time. I lived in the mud-and-wattle hut maintained by the chief for visiting teachers and missionaries opposite the school, a four-standard school under an able young headmaster, well educated and well trained. He and his schoolboys, the resident evangelist and the court clerk represented the new elements in village life. Yet they were not cut off from the Ngoni way of life—on the contrary they were very much part of it and very proud of being Ngoni. The school had been taught in the Ngoni language, akin to old Zulu, until a few years before my visit, and the children were still given Ngoni proverbs to write in their copy-books. Several of the older people had books in their huts written in Zulu as well as in English, and Ngoni was still spoken as the home language in many of the households. The older women knew the traditional special vocabulary used by women only, and dressed their hair in the high chignon style. Proverbs were quoted often in the court and in church; stories of war against the Bemba people in Northern Rhodesia forty years ago were told by the kraal gate as if they happened last year. Several leading Ngoni clans were represented in the village, and each had their own praise songs and forms of addressing their ancestors. 105 621 [342] [872]

The old evangelist, himself a member of a famous clan, had been threatened, thirty years before, with death by the former chief if he continued to teach and preach. He stayed, notwithstanding, and had become one of the trusted counsellors of the present chief. During the day he joined the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] [191] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-[162] [592] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces-[361] sible as Nkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in-[342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was [871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [797] mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East African.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount. Dormitory life was therefore rooted in the Ngoni past and though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a necessary training ground for young manhood. In very large villages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys belonged to the dormitory of that section where their parents' household was situated. There were occasional attempts sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory for boys who were baptized Christians or in an inquirers' class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' development, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled. They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory system except on the geographical lines already mentioned, which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they had their second teeth, from the influence of the women. Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision at what they considered a crucial stage.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 individuals upon the cohesion of that society through their behaviour and actions. This was illustrated in the phrase so constantly used by them, and referred to already several times: 'He is spoiling the land,' or the converse, quoted in Chapter I: 'Young people were well taught that this behaviour was right for the upbuilding of the land.'

181 Among these so-called group values the first of all, and pre-
829 eminent above all, was the value of keeping together. Taught by bitter experience that personal quarrels could lead to political secessions and to the diminution of the power and influence of the Ngoni kingdoms, the focus of much of their thinking was on maintaining cohesion whether in small units or in large. I think the Ngoni were the only people in Nyasa-
[641] land where individuals and families were not allowed to
[166] leave the villages to live elsewhere without permission of the
[621] chief or headman. In the local courts there were frequent
[687] cases in which the accused had been guilty of leaving without permission. This illustration could be used also to indicate the second of the group values. I have called it dominance for want of a better term. It involves the exercise of authority, political and legal, over their own and subject peoples, the determination to exact obedience, influenced by a feeling of paternal responsibility for all over whom authority was claimed. This was an ambivalent sentiment affecting the attitude of the ruler and his relations with the ruled, and was the basis of the court case quoted in Chapter VI, when a chief made a judgement against his own son for adultery with a poor man's wife. The third group value was that of mutual aid and trust within the in-group, in order to secure its cohesion. This was the integrating principle of the 'house' system, described briefly in Chapter I and mentioned in many other contexts. Mutual trust and aid had been in the past the main element in the behaviour of men in their own regiments, in the mutual relation of warrior with warrior, both when on
181 campaign and when living together in the villages.
577 The four personal values were inherent in the acceptance

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived 361
in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a
central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut [585]
and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts
were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a [592]
few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership
of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an [554]
important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and
their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped [727]
into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. 621
Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates
of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or [624]
his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who
were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions [692]
made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The
village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman
or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him.
Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the
headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where 631
there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions,
villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential [728]
system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the [711]
Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same 631
cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to
establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in 571
importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their
clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be
contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves
as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself
affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who
established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained
a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance.
The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters,
a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained
the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigawa*, pl. *vigawa*, from *ku-gawa*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognised and institutionalised. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors.

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system.

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[30] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere

[30] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[p.17]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass shacks built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery, and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1898 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the looting of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chiefdoms reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1898, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Cewa dances, speak Cewa, and are to a lesser extent internally organized on Cewa lines. They do not form a distinct class of village in Ngoni country, and are inextricably bound by ties of kinship with their neighbours. But there are fewer traces of the former pre-1898 system of organization in such villages than in those which have a remembered history linking them with the glorious past.[1]

3. *Christianity*

At the same time as Ngoni values were being undermined from within by the Cewa, they were attacked from without by the Whites. The first missionaries to settle in the area arrived in 1899, although there had been some earlier contact. They attempted to convert Ngoni to Christianity, and therefore to monogamy and pre-marital chastity. In chastity the missionaries were allied with the Ngoni against the Cewa; in monogamy the missions fought against Ngoni allied to Cewa. New rituals were introduced and a new hierarchy developed, composed of priests, evangelists and deacons. However, in this region, unlike much of the rest of Africa, the impact of Christianity has not produced a distinctive legal status of persons married by Christian rite. The Administration's earliest piece of marriage legislation was the *North-Eastern Rhodesia Marriage Regulations*, 1903.[2] There was specific provision for monogamous marriages between Africans, with penalties for bigamy and detailed rules for the division of property left by Africans married under these regulations and dying intestate. Few, if any, marriages involving Africans were made in this form, for it seems that the missions did not license themselves under the Regulations and their ceremonies therefore did not have legal significance to the Administration. These elaborate provisions were repealed by the *Northern Rhodesia Marriage Proclamation*, 1918.[3] Since then the only form of marriage performed within Northern Rhodesia between Africans that has legal significance in the eyes of the Administration is marriage 'in accordance with native law and custom'. What constitutes such a marriage has never been rigidly defined.

The missions themselves have differed in their attitude towards indigenous marriage. One mission insists that all 'customary obligations' must be fulfilled in addition to Christian rites, another holds that it is wrong to transfer wealth from one side to another in marriage, while a third holds that the fulfilment or not of any customary obligations is not the concern of the church. The Native

[1] Cf. Read, 'Tradition and prestige' and 'Moral code' for an account of some of these changes in structure and values, based on observations of three Ngoni kingdoms.

[2] Government Notice No. 2 of 1903, *British Central Africa Gazette*, 148, x, 1, 31 January 1903.

[3] N.R. No. 18 of 1918, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, viii, 11, 7 September 1918.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.22]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [806] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [828] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance [162] of women over men caused by labour migration.

128 Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically 121 from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 257 and 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs concerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 [621] residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles AWAY FROM THE OTHER TWO.

[1] *Cisilu*, pl. *sisilu*, or *cha ŵantu ŵatyalatyala*. Cf. Nsenga *silu*, pl. *masilu*, idiot.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European. 595 648 582

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules. 799 582

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls. 626 582 [554] 628 584 535

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide 628 584 574

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.'

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village.

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

But we know from other areas 121
that loss of sovereignty itself does not necessarily disrupt the marriage arrangements of common people and we must look elsewhere for an explanation.

2. Movement between villages

The old villages formed part of the residential system, and their 621 structure was maintained by the power of the central chieftainship, as expressed through the lieutenants of the royal villages, and by the diffuse sanction of public opinion based on ideas held in common as to the rights conferred by the payment of bridewealth. Nowadays the lieutenants of the royal villages have very much less power, and [178] bridewealth is not often paid. The village is held together by the various ties of kinship and affinity between its members, and to a slight extent by the restriction of movement from one village to another. This control, exercised by the Administration through the [648] system of registration of adult males, is largely ineffective except in the Resettlement Areas.[1] Men and women are more or less free to live wherever they can find relatives, and if they quarrel in one village they can move to another where they hope life will be more pleasant. There is no general rule to which appeal can be made concerning whether a married couple should live uxorilocally or virilocally. Hence a quarrel between man and wife or between affinally related people may lead to a split in the village, and the dissident section may attempt to form a village of its own or attach itself to another village. It is therefore in the interests of the [628] headman that quarrels in his village should be settled as rapidly as possible, and he has therefore an interest in the private lives of his people even though they may not be his close relatives. His interests are represented by his lieutenants and are shared by everyone in the village who wishes his own to be a large prosperous and happy village. The theme of the good and happy village recurs in many [183] of the formal situations of Ngoni life and finds expression in much of local action on a village basis, as for example in the competitive dances, the division of food at a ceremony and the organization of the religious sects.

We find therefore that the headman and his lieutenants participate [628] in the ceremonies of marriage and in marital quarrels. Conversely the headman is brought into relationship with the married couple by the allocation to him of pots of beer whenever there is a general distribution even though he may not be at the ceremony. Other important men and women similarly participate merely because of their common membership of the village. For example, a hoeing party was led by a middle-aged woman who was described as 'an important person' in the son-in-law's village. She was in fact

[1] Areas which have been reopened to settlement by Ngoni and other tribes since 1941 with various restrictions on agricultural methods and on population. About ten per cent of Ngoni live in Resettlement Areas.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 related to him but her participation was explained in terms of her status as an 'important person' and not in terms of this relationship.

591 178 A man can move from his village to his wife's village if he or she has quarrelled with his kinsfolk, and a quarrel with her relatives may cause them to move in the reverse direction. These shifts from one kind of residence to another occurred in a different context in the old system. We have seen that there was sometimes a change from uxorilocal to virilocal residence, for at the beginning of his first marriage a man might leave his wife living uxorilocally until he had paid bridewealth. If there was a quarrel between a man and his wife's kin at this stage, they might try to delay his taking the woman to his own village, although they could not entirely prevent him from so doing. Hostility found expression in the desire to keep him under close surveillance, not in the desire to be rid of him. This old idea still persists to some extent, as we have seen in the story of Abner and Esther (p. 79). Esther wanted her husband Abner to live in her village so that her father could see that he looked after her well. A man may refuse to allow his daughter to move to her husband's village until he is satisfied that the young man is a good husband. This line of action, however, now applies only at the beginning of a marriage and in families where a man is determined to maintain his control over his growing children. When there is a quarrel involving a couple who have been married for a long time, it is then too late to hope that a man will improve his behaviour under the eye of his wife's father. If he quarrels with his father-in-law it is better that he should go and live in his own village.

The significance of the reverse move, from virilocality to uxorilocality, was different in the old system from what it is in the new. In the light of what we know of the South-Eastern Bantu and by reference to the present position among the Ngoni it seems probable that in the old days it did happen from time to time that a man sought refuge with his wife's agnates. Yet from the dearth of instances of this in my genealogical material it would seem that this cannot have occurred very often. Once a man had established himself in virilocal residence he usually stayed there. If he quarrelled with his kinsfolk all he could do was to move off and make his own segment distinct from those of his brothers; he could not seek permanent shelter with his wife's kinsfolk. Nowadays he can do so, and it may be easier for him to change to uxorilocal residence than to try to form his own group. In the old days the transition from what we now call a cluster to a division or from a division to a village was a gradual one. Spatial separation between minor segments of the same order was initially a matter of yards and with successive moves in the tribal migration became a matter of miles. Nowadays there is a definite number of villages recognized by the Administration and a man who establishes his own residential cluster of huts is, or at least was until very recently, in danger of punishment for not living in a recognized village. For many years there was an

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4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without 648
a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the 361
Administration to decrease the number of independent villages.
These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there
have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true
that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is 591
to build his hut in his wife's village.

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[16] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of [754]
killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers.

In this way the movements of men and women between villages 591
reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides
the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles 621
placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements
making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires
affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do
so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related
to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new [178]
rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one
village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves
that a man can make if need be is increased.

3. *Polygyny*

The other important structural change that has been directly 595
related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. 178
In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting
them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and [552]
dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those
of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the
core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny,
wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of
daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties
can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man
with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the [554]
system of ranking that was used to organize large compound
households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been [592]
complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked
in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance

[16] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tion for associating children with one parent rather than the other. 611
There is only the one proud dogma that the Ngoni, unlike their 591
neighbours, are a patrilineal virilocal people. This reflects the 602
actual dominance of the virilocal mode of residence but does not furnish a rule to which appeal can be made in specific cases. The only definite unit to which a man can be said to belong is his village, [621]
and such few attempts as are made to enforce rights *in genetricem* are expressed in terms of residence in villages. In marriages that are made outside the tribe, rights *in genetricem* become significant, 648
for a child is not likely to wander to and fro between one tribe and 583
another hundreds of miles away in the same way as children change from one village to another within the kingdom. Here then we find more attention paid to the payment of bridewealth and to rights *in genetricem* and these rights are enforceable through the police checks on buses and lorries.

If a man is away working his interests are represented by his 593
kinsfolk. They cannot exercise his rights *in uxorem* for him, but if they are violated they can act on his behalf. His permission is necessary, however, before they can proceed to the court, and if they are awarded damages then they are under some sort of obligation to hand over the money to him when he returns. There was no situation comparable to this in the old system, for men did not go away for years at a time, and the violation of rights *in uxorem* was punishable by death.

The position of the man as holder of rights *in uxorem* over his 593
wife is reinforced to some extent by mystical ties believed to connect 581
the couple, and at the same time the man can fortify his rights by the use of medicines to ensure fidelity. During pregnancy, for a short while after childbirth, and during menstruation, the actions of man and wife affect one another automatically, and each is placed in danger of illness by the failure of the other to observe their mutual obligations. To protect his rights *in uxorem* a man may doctor his wife so that possible violators may be deterred by the fear of mystical retribution as well as action in the courts.

7. *Mystical beliefs and marriage stability*

The mystical connexion believed to exist between a man and his 581
wife serves to define their relationship more closely, for this same 600
connexion does not hold between a woman and her husband's kin or between a man and his wife's kin. The adultery of a pregnant woman's brother-in-law, like her husband's adultery, may threaten the peace of her local group of relatives and friends, and may even lead her to change her village or go to the court as a supporter. The important distinction between the adultery of her husband's brother and her husband's adultery is that the former does not automatically endanger her delivery while the latter does. A man confesses his adultery when his own wife gives birth, not when her sister is in labour. This connexion is definite, and is not extended

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unity of full-siblings is the result of the established relationship 602
between their mother and father. A man's relationship with his
wife may in turn lead to solidarity between their children, but until
his wife has stayed with him for many years and borne him live 593
children their own relationship is always uncertain. He must
acknowledge that she too has rights, that she must be clothed and
respected and must be slept with. He must not abuse her at a beer
party or hit her too often, and he must not try to trap her into
adultery. When she runs away, he must go after her to apologize.

8. The support of relatives

It is the tenuousness of the marriage relationship which necessitates 581
the co-operation of the relatives in the marriage. There are occasions 602
when affines quarrel, as when a young woman is encouraged by her
husband's kin to remain in their village to be delivered of her first
child and at the same time is under pressure from her own relatives
to move back to her own village for the confinement. A man who
is anxious to build up his own cluster of huts in a village may attempt
to force his sons and daughters to bring their spouses to live near
him against the wishes of his children's affines. These struggles, [591]
where they occur, are expressed in terms of residence, for it is common
residence that welds kinsfolk together. But in general affines
co-operate rather than quarrel. Litigation about marriage payments
is rare, and frequently divorces are granted without consideration
of the return of marriage payments. During a marriage it is more
important that the married couple should be exhorted to adjust
themselves to each other and be tolerant of each other's foibles,
than that each side should insist on its formal rights. Old people
try to prevent marriages they consider unsuitable, but they do not
usually try to make difficulties once a marriage has taken place.
The successful marriages of a man's children bring him grand-
children to care for and play with, and *children's parents-in-law*
who will welcome him and give him food, even if they do not always
add to his own cluster of huts.

To some degree people appear to be afraid of the sorcery of an [754]
offended affine, but this is not a well-developed idea, and more
frequently people express their reasons for trying to patch up a
marriage that is in danger of breaking in terms of the need for 581
everyone to 'live well together', without bringing troubles into the 621
village. The well-being of the village and of the local group of
kinsfolk within it has ultimate value for the Ngoni and is an end in [181]
itself. It follows that serious quarrels can only be resolved by
means of some new residential alignment, involving moves from
one cluster to another, and from one village to another. The
village itself does not exist in isolation, and a village thrives because 628
of the ties that link it to other villages in the vicinity. Marriages 602
link villages together, by the bonds of affinity which cut across 581
village boundaries, and by the interaction between groups of affines

Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'fly' country, but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern zone that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. The large available land area in Mkushi enabled the relatively small 'fly' areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'fly' areas of Mkushi. 166 136 164 744

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'fly' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the kraals. Ten herds each of five beasts were used; the animals were numbered and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomyaisis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'fly' infestation were defined.

§ 6. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in accordance with the general plan to restore the population-land balance as far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers. 166 621 648

Headmen and other representatives of the villagers who had finally elected to move then toured the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villagers almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Vegetation-Soil Map. Blocks of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total villages population, allowing for temporary absentees, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular; the people are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone beacons, to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features. [622] [311] [423]

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually applied or always possible. The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, 166 648

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts? 121 101

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *n* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups. 101 [197] [173] [829]

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore 101 619 614 563 [114] [621]

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans. [113]

We have also to recognize that the wider connotation of the word is in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction of that name.

III. Ngoni Society as a Cultural Unity. It is evident that the field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong centralized political organization. This society differs radically from that of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state', that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created social structure the principles of centralization and rank were dominant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of systematized law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, political, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history,

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hundreds.

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *induna* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'tribal

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

portant chiefs. The Paramounts have told me that occasionally at their biannual 'meeting of chiefs' and *indunas*, some recital of history is made, especially if they want to quote a precedent or examine an old custom with a view to change. This historical tradition therefore is alive and has a recognized function in regulating Ngoni life. In one area part of it has been written in the vernacular and is used as a school history book.[1] In the other areas the Paramounts have spoken of the need for something of the same kind, as they recognize that with the coming of modern education it is an effective way of training the young in the traditions of the Ngoni past. 814

In addition to recitals of tradition by 'historians' there are many other reminders of the Ngoni past which are constantly before the people. An adequate examination of Ngoni history as it is expressed in their institutions and standardized behaviour would need an article to itself. I shall only mention here some ways and occasions through which tradition and old Ngoni institutions are brought before the people.

1. The praise songs of chiefs, war songs, regimental songs, names of famous regiments, and prayers for rain. These contain references, often rather obscure, to events and persons in the past. The praise songs are sung, or rather shouted, on special occasions, as when thanking the chief for beer, by members of important clans who alone know the words. The war songs and regimental songs recall the great days of conquest, and are sung and danced in war dress at big gatherings at the Paramount's village or at other chief's villages. The prayers for rain invoke the names of great chiefs in old days, but are now only a memory as they are no longer used in ceremonies—at least in none that I have found so far. [583] [782]

2. The names of prominent landmarks, such as hills and rivers where great chiefs built their villages and fights took place. Herd boys will point out a river and say, 'That is where Mtwalo built when he came from Choma', or 'That hill is where Singu hid in the Azungu war'. The historical events attached to these places are widely known and constantly before people's eyes in the diversified landscape of hills and valleys. [823]

3. Important village names. During the trek north, the names of [621]

[1] In Mwamberi's country.

814 the villages of certain chiefs in the south were preserved.[1] In Mwa-
621 mbera's country there are the names of villages belonging to nine generations of Jere chiefs, and in Gomani's country for seven generations of Maseko chiefs. Villages holding these historic names are in charge of an individual of high rank who is never called the 'owner' of that village but 'the one who takes care'. I realized how clear to the people is the historical significance of these village names, when I asked a question and they exclaimed, 'What? You do not know about Elangeni being the village of Hlachwayo? But all Ngoni people can know that.'[2]

814 4. Clan names. The clan names, as the Ngoni say, denote a person's
614 'tribe' and the respect due to him. With the prefix, *e*, *a*, *na* (according
[193] to the area) the clan name is used as a respectful form of address, and
[576] always when thanking for a gift or favour. The tone of reverence with which the great clan names are thus mentioned is itself an indication of the rank and honour of a person.

814 5. Village descent. In old days Ngoni villages were very much
621 larger than to-day. The headman of a village on your first visit will always give you the genealogy of his village, how it split off from A, which split off from B, which was the *chigawa* under *induna* X of the big village of chief Y. Reciting these village genealogies generally leads to some recalling of the past, and the village notables, the *amadoda*, gather round to corroborate or correct the headman's recital.

814 It takes very little to stimulate the Ngoni to historical conversations. I have heard them originate in the return of a villager from Johannesburg, where he met Zulu and Swazi men and found they could speak together and had common traditions; in a sermon preached by an Ngoni minister in which he used illustrations from Ngoni warfare; in a rebuke from the Boma to a headman for trying to move his village from worn out land to a site outside the Reserve on an empty farm. And it is not only the aristocrats who take part in such conversations. Sometimes it is evident that men and boys whose
[619] fathers had been slaves are anxious to show their knowledge of Ngoni history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni.

[1] I am not clear yet what was the precise sociological process by which the identity of these villages was preserved.

[2] An idiomatic use which has the force of a double negative 'No one cannot know it'.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the
178 capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the head-
[622] man, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Gouldsbury, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Royal and Commoner Villages

●621 Nowadays most of the villages in the kingdom are commoner villages, under the charge of headmen. From such evidence as is available, it seems likely that in the pre-conquest period there were fewer villages than there are now, and that they were bigger than are most modern villages.[1] It also appears that the process by which a division of a village broke away to become a separate village was a gradual one, so that at any one time there would have been some doubt in deciding how many distinct villages there were. This is seen at the present time in the histories of what are now distinct villages; the people relate how the first time they made a village of their own it was done only a little distance away from the parent village. Pairs of villages of common origin still tend to occupy sites in comparative proximity to one another, and may arrange their moves from one area to another, in search for new garden land, simultaneously.

In general, however, there is little difficulty in observing the village as a discrete spatial residential group. We may distinguish five types of village,[2] according to the status of the person in charge of the village. The capital villages and chiefs' villages have already been [622] mentioned. Intermediate between these two categories are the regal villages. These have been formed from older royal villages to accommodate a group of wives of a chief or other member of the royal lineage, but do not now have a chief living in them. All these three kinds of royal village, capital, regal, and chief's, are controlled in the same way, by lieutenants appointed to the task in the first instance by a member of the royal family. There is another kind of village which I shall call a cadet village. The junior members of the royal lineage, that is, younger sons and sons by unimportant wives, did not have sufficient following to carry on this process of forming large new villages and merely lived with their wives in their natal villages or founded small villages of their own. Such villages are now similar in form to com- [622] moner villages, except that the headman of the village belongs to the royal lineage. All other villages we may class as commoner villages.

[1] 'The Angoni villages are about five times the size of an average Achewa village ...' (Gamble, p. 1). Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 275.

[2] All types are known in the vernacular by the same descriptive term, *mzinda*, and there are no distinctive terms. It is possible to tell whether a village is royal or commoner by its name. A village with a male personal name is a commoner or cadet village. A village with a female personal name, or a descriptive name in the Ngoni language, is a royal village.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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TABLE 1. *Village Types*

Type of village		*Senior resident*
Royal	Capital	First Lieutenant
	Regal	First Lieutenant
	Chief's	Chief
Cadet		Royal Headman
Commoner		Commoner Headman

This process of village formation may be illustrated from Mpezeni's own country. The capital of the country is the village founded by Mpezeni I for his chief wife and one or two other wives. His heir Singa was born in this village, and when he married he founded two villages of his own which are now regal villages. In the senior of these two Mpezeni II was born, and in about 1915 he founded a new village which is still the chief's village of the country. There are other regal villages in the country founded in a similar manner. 621

This formation of royal villages would, other things being equal, lead to a dispersal of the population. It seems, however, that the major factor in dispersing the population since 1898 has been the formation of independent commoner villages. Many of these villages have histories that go back to the foundation of the village as an independent unit immediately after 1898, and it seems likely that the unsettled conditions of those days and the burning of villages did much to bring about the breakdown of the old system in which the royal villages were more important than they are today. 161 621

The royal villages are more closely connected with the chieftainships than are the commoner villages, and the chiefs visit in them more frequently than in other villages. A dispute in a royal village is usually settled by a meeting in the village itself attended by the local chief, whereas in the case of an ordinary village dispute the matter would be taken to the chief for him to settle in his own village or court. A chief may be called to a royal village to drink beer. The royal herds of cattle are kept in the royal villages, and the chiefs look to the first lieutenants of their royal villages for the well-being of the royal cattle as well as of the inhabitants of the royal villages. All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself,[1] but in so far as the cattle held by most people are concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that 628 [627] 422 231 643

[1] Cf. Cunhamé, p. 19.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the livestock are more under the control of the chief of the country, who may intervene to depose a livestock if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
●621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material Setting

961 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the
[343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the
[417] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of sticks.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually *kadumu*, pl. *makadumu*; otherwise *nfumu yamusi*, pl. *mafumu amusi*. The specific term for headman of a cadet or commoner village is *mwinimusi*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the same hut. There may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from those of their wives. 592 [882] [858] [595] 423

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cooking and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda. 342 [343] [252]

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized. 621

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded by Ilanga, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngulweni, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were founded. 621 103

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of individuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary, 621 622 [103]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief wife who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first lieutenant of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the
551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni on formal occasions in addition to their other personal names.

To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and
624 there may be in the village one or more lieutenants. The office of lieutenant in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no lieutenants.

In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have
621 consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
582 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time
178 some of the senior captives became lieutenants of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aristocratic lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aristocratic captors.

Movement

361 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
166 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Fortes, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 190: '. . . the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

361 Huts sometimes become infested with ticks, or the site itself may prove to be intolerably damp. New huts are then built a short distance away or even contiguously to the old site, and no new gardens are made apart from those made among the deserted huts.

Internal Segmentation of the Village

361 We have already seen that the divisions within the village are
● 621 embryonic new villages. These divisions are most formally indicated in the Nyasaland counties, where there are large villages divided into a distinct number of divisions, with the spatial boundaries between the divisions indicated by a greater interval between the huts, and with each division named and under the charge of a lieutenant or of a patrilineal kinsman of the headman. On the Rhodesian side, however, it is more usual to find that certain small clusters of huts within a village are regarded as being the division of such-and-such a person living in one of them. The bulk of the huts in the village do not belong to any particular cluster but merely to the village as a whole. These clusters do not have any name apart from that of their senior inhabitant, whose close relatives occupy the huts of the cluster. The leader of a cluster may be a lieutenant of the headman or merely some important person with a comparatively large body of dependants. Such clusters, which are often on the periphery of the village, sometimes originate from the grouping together by a polygynist of the huts of his various wives, and grow as their children marry and live alongside their parents. Another mechanism for the formation of clusters is that
[166] of immigration into the village at about the same time by a number of persons related to each other more closely than to the other inhabitants of the village, as, for example, on the break-up of some other village. The immigrants tend to build together if there is room. In this case the leader of the cluster may have little standing in the village. The boundaries of clusters are not always plainly indicated, while a man who is ambitious to make his own village may as a first step try to increase the clarity with which his cluster is defined spatially.

Land Utilization

311 We may divide gardens into three types: main, old village, and moist.
241 The moist gardens are made near streams, and are fenced to keep out cattle. Tomatoes, cabbages, onions, and other vegetables are grown, and maize is planted during the hot season so that it can be harvested in December or January. These gardens are cultivated only by the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

It is therefore appropriate that, when a man has proved himself to be a good son-in-law by fulfilling his obligations to his parents-in-law and by treating their daughter well, he is invited to make a formal entry into the house of his wife's parents. This is the occasion for much dancing and speech-making. The salient features of the ceremony[1] are as follows. The married couple come in procession with their relatives and neighbours from their village to the village of the woman's parents. The procession is led by the eldest child of the couple carrying a knobkerry. They dance in the cattle byre and then enter the hut of the woman's parents. Here after some drinking and dancing, during which the visitors keep themselves more or less to one side of the hut and leave the other side for the relatives of the woman, there is a ceremony in which a gift is offered by the man's people to the woman's people, and in which a female relative of the man takes a spoonful of boiled maize from a dish and then spits it out again. She is followed by a female relative of the woman, who does the same. The two people who do this are close relatives of the couple, sometimes sisters. The knobkerry stays in the hut overnight, and the next day the man's parents come and they formally enter the woman's parents' hut. The couple also come into the hut with their friends and the woman's mother offers beer to the man in the usual way by kneeling at his feet and drinking to him. He then drinks from the bowl, and it is passed round for everyone in the hut to drink.

The completion of this ceremony marks the setting aside of the avoidance taboos to the greatest extent allowed. The man may still not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law but he can now talk to her and can come into her hut. It is, as it were, the final reward of the good son-in-law and marks the end of the series of adjustments in relative status that began with the small gifts that the man made before the legalization payment was fixed. The hostility between the two families has been reduced by carrying out through the years their reciprocal rights and duties, and their common interest in the children of the marriage is symbolized by the eldest child who leads the procession from one village to the other.

Even on such a family occasion as this, village, as distinct from kinship, ties remain important. At one ceremony I attended the leader of the first delegation from the man's village was described as being just as important woman in the village and not related to him.

[1] *Magwaso*. Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-ngwaza*, to enter another person's house (Tshabalala).

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/4 cont'd/
701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
281 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
424 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at
[581] present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

141 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson
Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four
681 huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[118] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

where the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards further on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he expresses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they love to share some of their recreations with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

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Ngoni FR5

[Category 643 is reserved for information pertaining to only the Paramount Chief and his activities; data on village chiefs or headmen will be found under category 622, while information on chiefs and other officials at the county or unstated intermediate level has been classified in category 634. --Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[18]

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*inkhalakala*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapondi, Bangoni, Batuta, Basowa, Bunga, Landeesa, Landlim, Machendi, Maliti, Malitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara,

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820'S

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Sobhangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Mavitti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachunde, Wamachuze, Wangoni, Waponna, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[19] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Ngoni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[20] and their lineages became

[18] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-08; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[19] See Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 55.
[20] Mabuwa-ngwa, pl. *abamkungwa*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzane*, village headman; also Read, 'Traditions', p. 560.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segments in what we shall term the Ngoni residential system. The constituent segments of their lineages formed the nuclei of minor segments of the residential system. Using the adjectives 'superior' and 'inferior' to indicate merely relative position, we may say that each Ngoni agnatic lineage segment was in general contained within superior segments of greater span and at the same time contained within itself smaller but similar inferior units. This formation is characteristic of all lineage systems, as is well known. The segments of the residential system were arranged in the same way but whereas there were several distinct agnatic lineages, or parts of such lineages, under the political leadership of Zwangendaba, in the residential system all, or nearly all, of these distinct lineages were included within the largest residential segment. In other words, the largest segment of the residential system contained almost the whole of Zwangendaba's following, his regional governors, his and their captives and other followers, as well as his own agnatic kinsmen. Again, whereas the various lineage segments contained only the agnatic relatives of the head of the segment, each segment in the residential system included many captives, men, women and children, as well as an agnatic core.

The segments or units of the residential system were enduring social groups which, by analogy with the usual terminology for lineage systems, we shall call primal segments.[10] The segment of highest order was the State itself (or the greater portion thereof), consisting in 1898 of some 75,000 people, while many of the lowest order segments contained only half a dozen people. Each member of a segment belonged not only to that segment but also to all the superior segments of which it was a part.

We shall refer to the man in charge of, or the founder of, a segment as a lord (*nfumu*) and to the members of his segment as his dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord except the Paramount Chief, Zwangendaba, was a dependant of some other lord higher in the hierarchy. A lord was politically responsible for all the men and women in his segment. He was related agnatically to some of the men in his segment and towards his captives he stood in a quasi-agnatic relationship in that, although he had the same rights and duties towards them as if he had been their father, it was nevertheless possible, and indeed quite usual, for his captives to marry one another and for him to marry one of his women captives. In the absence of true agnatic descendants a lord was sometimes succeeded by a quasi-related dependant.

[10] *Cipalo*, pl. *vipalo*, from *ku-palo*, to divide. cf. *Hanga*, *ku-pala*, to divide, and *Kalo*, *ki-palo*, section or portion divided off from the whole.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and in other situations that which was founded last. The headquarters of the highest segment was in some sense capital of the nation, yet chieftainship had already passed from it and it was less important in other ways than the headquarters founded by the reigning chief. This apparent contradiction applied within every large segment. We have endeavoured to isolate these different contexts by our distinction between primal and residual segments, but as soon as we attempt to arrange villages or bevies of wives in a linear order without reference to the relationship of their associated segments to one another, the contradiction reappears.

A clear and accepted sequence of heirs would have been appropriate to a segmentary system in which segments continued to hold together in all circumstances. Ngoni segments did not do this, and the simple linear sequence of heirs was lacking. The successive formation of inferior segments implied increased structural separation between the first inferior segment to be formed and the headquarters, and hence less likelihood that the former would provide the main heir. As in lineage systems, the farther back the point of departure from the main line the greater the structural separation from it. But whereas in lineage systems it is the junior lines which are continually diverging from the main stem, in the Ngoni system the main heir was the first to break away from his father, who remained longer in close contact with his junior sons. Seniority within the newly formed undivided segment implied early differentiation within it, and hence early separation from its headquarters. Thus, the general principle of increasing separation with the passage of time, together with the particular principle of segment formation in order of seniority, combined to make a system of great flexibility despite essential regularity and uniformity. On the death of each segment head there was a shift of power within his segment and to some extent a formal recognition of the structural separation which had proceeded gradually during his lifetime. The headquarters founded by successive heads of segments persisted as the home of groups whose interests they symbolised. The history of the segments and of the nation itself was embodied in the relationships enduring between successive headquarters.

When a small segment was founded it was usually manned by people drawn from the rump of the immediately superior segment, that is, from those men and women in the superior segment who had not already been allocated to some inferior segment within it. However it is clear that this rule was often over-ridden. When the head of a large segment formed a new inferior segment for a wife or son he was able to command the services of everyone within his

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment, even of those who had been allocated to existing inferior segments. If he thought fit he could shift them from one inferior segment to another within his own segment. This process was particularly relevant to the formation of new segments for the great wives of men who were the heirs or lords of large segments. A new lord, making his great wife's segment after the death of his father, did not confine himself to the rump of his father's segment but selected men he thought he could trust from anywhere within his father's primal segment, whether or not they had made segments of their own. Similarly a lord sometimes took a man who occupied an unimportant position in the segment of one of his wives and promoted him to be lieutenant in a newly formed bevy. The more important the lord or heir, the greater the structural distance his dependants could be moved. Thus while the processes by which the Paramount Chief and a man with only a few followers made segments for bevies of wives were formally the same, the consequences were quite different. In the former case, many hundreds of people were involved and many key men were shifted in their allegiance in order to provide the new segment with lieutenants and followers. In the latter, few people were concerned and the event was not of general interest. The formal processes remained the same at all levels in society, but what in one case was essentially a political action in which a Paramount Chief acted as head of a State was in the other largely a matter of domestic reorganization. It is characteristic of the Ngoni State that the transition from one state of affairs to the other was a gradual one.

Occasionally a man moved himself from one segment to another on his own initiative. This happened only infrequently and it seems probable that it was only when a man who had quarrelled with his own segment sought asylum with the reigning chief that a move of this kind could be made. Chibambo records an incident in which many men transferred from their former segments to one newly formed by the reigning chief, but adds that later they returned to their old segments. A similar incident from the Fort Jameson group is noted below.[8] Despite these exceptions it nevertheless remains true that for the most part a man's affiliation to his segment was fixed and could be altered only by the actions of his political superiors.

We have spoken of the formation of segments, but not yet of their disappearance. Many minor segments faded away because their members died or because they were moved elsewhere by a lord. Sometimes a segment ceased to be an effective social unit

[8] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 33; see p. 140.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tiation of function between the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief, it is improbable that there were any special political offices outside the residential system. 665 631

Read mentions a political hierarchy with various titles.[14] At least in the Fort Jameson group, three of the four vernacular terms she gives were used in connexion with the residential system. The fourth, *amazwa*, was used in Zulu for messengers sent by a chief and a dialectical variant of this (*mayuia*) is so used nowadays at Fort Jameson. They have no executive authority and do not seem to have had any in the past. 631 [629]

Fraser, writing of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, says that there were two groups of lieutenants, one composed of men who became Ngoni before the crossing of the Zambezi and which exercised civil power, and the other which included men of more recent incorporation into the Ngoni tribe and which supplied the war leaders. He implies that the war leaders did not take part in the civil administration.

There seems not to have been this distinction between civil and military lieutenants among the Fort Jameson group. Wiese's 'Minister of War', who was referred to as a Commander-in-Chief by other contemporary writers, was a segment head with the same responsibilities towards his people as anyone else. The regiments had leaders responsible for the tactical control of warriors, some of whom were recently incorporated men, and presumably Fraser is referring to them, but his statement that the man often chosen to lead the whole army had no voice in the council conflicts with Elmslie's account of the same place and period. The war leader, Ng'ocomo, who is mentioned by Fraser, acted as regent on the death of the Paramount Chief in northern Nyasaland.[15] 691 701

The village as such had an importance independent of the size or order of segment of which it was headquarters or by which it was inhabited. There were no special terms for distinguishing the heads of large or small segments, for all were lords or ladies. But a special term[16] was used for a village headman, irrespective of the order of segment of which he was lord, provided he was not a lieutenant who had become head of the village in the absence of agnatic descendants of the founder. The use of a special term may have been an indication of the village headman's importance, part of which derived from the control he exercised over the cattle 691 622 [622]

[14] Read, 'Traditions', p. 460. cf. her account of the southern Ngoni in 'Southwards', p. 18.

[15] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 31. cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 101, 189.

[16] *Induna*. In Zulu, a small or petty chief. cf. Read, 'Traditions', p. 460.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *ndunu*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 13f. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Boundaries', p. 18.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, pp. 103f. Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 78f. 109f. 198f. Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedition', p. 480, Wiese mentions this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various levies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot intervene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of these in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[18] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[19]

Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[18] Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 470.
[19] Clarkson reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have
121 a segmentary social organization'.[55]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[56] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesser segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similarities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumstances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follow the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A societies as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political system may now be handled as a separate question, providing a classification cutting across the division into states and stateless societies.

642 We have spoken throughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a state, and this usage is in accord with the definition of a state given [643] here. The Paramount Chief with his lieutenants exercised supreme [622] authority, there was a highly organized administrative machine, and there was an organized method of settling disputes within the [556] State. There were only slight variations in wealth except in the [554] control of cattle, but privilege and status were expressed in the residential system and were inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

121 The presence or absence of a segmentary political system can itself be divided into two questions; was there a segmentary 631 system, and if so, was it the political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, then it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[55] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 234.

[56] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 201, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 34, diagrams.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

political would seem to be, for example, at the medial lineage among the Tallensi, beyond which generation differences are not recognized; and at the village among the Nuer. It seems probable that in the old Ngoni system the village was also the significant unit, above which relationships were dominantly political and below which they were largely determined by the multiplex sentiments and activities arising out of kinship and domestic association. This is certainly so in modern Ngoniland, although the same principles of organization no longer apply at all levels.

I have described elsewhere the critical position of the modern Ngoni headman, linking the political system with the network of ties of kinship and co-residence operative within the village, and similar conditions have been reported elsewhere by Gluckman and Mitchell. Above the village, whether in a state or in a stateless society, relations are in the main between enduring groups and are defined with respect to interests vital to the survival of these groups, even if expressed in the idiom of kinship.[88]

Granted the existence of primitive states with continually segmenting political systems, such as the Zulu and Ngoni, it is then possible to look at from another point of view the various African political systems for which there is adequate information. In terms of political segmentation on a unilineal basis, states like the Ngoni and Zulu are closer in form to the stateless societies of the Nuer, Tallensi, Gusii and Logoli than to the Nupe and Kede states with their administrative systems largely independent of unilineal affiliation. To document this point fully would take us beyond the scope of this book; our purpose here is merely to emphasize the importance in comparative studies of examining political structures from more than one point of view.

When talking of states, we make the convenient distinction between internal and external political relations. No such simple distinction can be made with stateless societies, for in them relations which are external to one segment are internal to the next higher segment, and yet may still legitimately be regarded as political relations. The pre-Shakan chiefdoms of Zululand formed a system similar to the Tallensi maximal lineages, and we may speak therefore in that instance of a segmentary system regulating political relations between states. Ngoni external relations were not regulated in this way, for the Ngoni were isolated and unique in a region

[88] For this section, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* and 'Kinship among the Nuer'; Fortes, *Web of kinship*; Wagner, *Bantu of North Kavirondo*; Mayer, *Lineage principle in Gusii society*; Gluckman, 'Analysis of a social situation' and 'Kingdom of the Zulu'; Gluckman, *et al.*, 'Village headman'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

successive head of a major segment memorialized in this way, but the major divisions of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When splits occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fission had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fission in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fission we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[40] Fission in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fission was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fission did not bring into being any new segments, but merely dissolved the highest segment of all as a cohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fission was a hazardous

[40] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a *state* of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fission' to refer to the *process* of internal subdivision. cf. Fortes, *Web of kinship*, *passim*. I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

always exhaust its total area and districts sometimes overlap. When I inquired of chiefs and their councillors how their counties were subdivided in terms of allegiance, rather than area, I was rarely given a clear answer. The names of various men of importance in the county were mentioned, but there was no consensus about their relative status or the limits of their territories. In the present system village headmen have definite responsibilities and so have county chiefs, but there are no intermediate posts. Segments have given way to counties and villages.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and, possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that the cheapest way of running the country was through the indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[6] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity

[6] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 territory, its amalgamation with North-Western Rhodesia, and the transfer of responsibility from the British South Africa Company to the Colonial Office. Statutory instruments issued under these and later Orders have provided legal backing for successive schemes of African Administration.

In 1900 the Fort Jameson Division, containing the country occupied by the Ngoni, Kunda and part of the Cewa tribes, was established as part of the East Luangwa District, stretching from the Nyasaland border to the River Luangwa. The names of these areas were later changed to Fort Jameson District and Eastern Province respectively, and there have been numerous changes in their boundaries during the last fifty years, though none of them have affected the Ngoni. To avoid confusion, we shall use the term District only in its modern usage. In charge of the African population of the District was a Native Commissioner responsible to a Magistrate, posts corresponding roughly to the modern District Commissioner and Provincial Commissioner. The Native Commissioner, with his assistants who were Whites, had a force of Native [202] messengers (otherwise known as boma messengers) attached to his office to convey instructions to the people of the District and to report irregularities to him. The Administrator, head of the Administration, appointed chiefs in charge of tribal districts [622] (smaller than the Administrative Districts already mentioned), and under them were district headmen appointed by the Secretary for Native Affairs. There were also district messengers who lived in [624] their villages, but assisted the Native Commissioner when he toured in their vicinity.

This scheme was regularized by the issue of the Native Commissioners' Regulations of 12 December 1908, made under King's Regulations of the same date. Minor amendments were introduced in 1913 and 1915, and a consolidating Proclamation was issued in 1916. This again was amended slightly in 1919.[13] The substance of the scheme was not altered until the enactment in 1929 of the Native Authorities Ordinance. A more comprehensive Ordinance, with provision for Native Treasuries, replaced this in 1936.[14]

The initiative in setting up, maintaining and modifying the system of administration lay with the Whites, not with the Ngoni, who indeed were only one tribe among many to whom the system applied. Yet the Administration endeavoured to enlist the support of chiefs and others who for the most part were persons of high status in their tribes. As early as 1905, the Administrator wrote of an

[13] Proclamations No. 3 of 1913, 11 of 1915, 8 of 1916, and 6 of 1919.
[14] Ordinances No. 32 of 1929, 9 of 1936.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These decisions have been taken within frames of reference beyond the reach of our analysis and beyond the reach of Ngoni persuasion. We are here concerned with the way in which Ngoni society has been adapted and has adapted itself to these diverse intrusions from outside. 177 648

3. *Chiefs*

In the old residential system there was no definite category of persons whom we regard as chiefs. In the literature the lords of major segments are sometimes called chiefs, sometimes induna (i.e. lieutenants), but it is clear that the importance of any particular segment varied from one time and situation to another, and that the only constant relations between positions in the social structure were vertical ones, between lord and dependant, and not horizontal, between persons at the same level in the hierarchy but in different parts of it. The administrative scheme introduced by the Whites provided for horizontal categorization as well as vertical grouping. There were to be a definite number of chiefs, district headmen, and later village headmen, whose names would appear on the Administration's files. The only indigenous categories of this kind were those of Paramount Chief and regional governor, and for this reason alone it was inevitable that the relationship between the old and new systems should be complex. Although the young Mpezeni II was not the only person to be called chief, his superior status was always recognized and later received formal ratification in the qualification Paramount. The regional governors may, perhaps, have formed a category of persons at the same level in the old hierarchy, but they were not very numerous, perhaps only a dozen in number, and under the new dispensation some managed to become chiefs or district headmen, while others failed to do so. Village headmen in the old system were lords of segments of many different orders of segmentation and of varying importance. If the large pre-conquest villages had continued, then perhaps their heads might have secured Administrative recognition. As it was, post-conquest settlements were all much smaller and there were more of them. 622 631 643 648 [621]

Apart from these formal considerations, the peculiar circumstances of the war introduced distortion. Some important people were killed in the fighting, others ran away, and the followers of others were scattered. More significantly, the arrival of the Administration, of traders and missions, provided means whereby people whose segments were of minor importance could advance themselves politically and gain control of large sections of the population. 648 557

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

According to Coxhead, an Administrative Officer who published in 1914, there were at that time six minor chiefs under the Paramount. Four of these minor chiefs were sons of Mpezeni I.[10] Other Administrative records of the same period refer to ten 'subdivisions'. The Paramount Chief and the chiefs now in charge of counties 4, 14, 15 and 17 are each described as the 'important chief' in their subdivisions. The important chief in another subdivision is now not a county chief. The remaining four subdivisions had two chiefs each. Five of these are now county chiefs, one is a Cewa chief, and the remaining two are no longer chiefs. The title 'chief' was, however, not applied consistently by the Administration at that time and men who are called chiefs in some documents are called divisional or group headmen in others. In 1920, with the appointment of two new divisional headmen all Ngoniland villages in Northern Rhodesia were divided between ten rulers, not all of whom were called chiefs. Mpezeni II was ruler of one group of villages and Paramount over all ten, and the other nine rulers were the predecessors of the present minor chiefs. These ten groups of villages, and the two corresponding groups in Nyasaland, I have called *counties*. With one exception, each successive county chief has taken the name of his predecessor and this name is often used as the name of the county.

4. *County segments*

In each county there is one village known as the important village or capital. Many, but not all, of the villages in a county belong to the residential segment of which the capital is the headquarters. Thus we may speak of a county segment which forms, as it were, the core of the county. The villages that do not belong to the county segment fall into three main types. There are villages belonging to other segments under Mpezeni, there are a few which trace their origin to other Ngoni groups, and there are those which have entered Ngoniland after 1898 and so never formed part of the segmentary residential system. Most villages of the last type have come into Ngoniland from Cewa chiefdoms and some of them claim to have been settled in Ngoniland before the arrival of Mpezeni and to have been driven out by him. An indication of the distribution of villages in Northern Rhodesia counties among these different types is given in Table IV, where the only three counties for which I have the information are examined from this point of view.

[10] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [361]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 649 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 649 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 621 648 [601] agnation of the small segments to what I have termed an omni-directional system), has increased the importance of the single village. After 1898 the Administration endeavoured to bring the people back into villages of moderate size which could be easily supervised by the Administration acting through chiefs.[30] In 1912 a comprehensive scheme of Native reserves was proposed. To facilitate the introduction of the scheme, many small villages were amalgamated with others near by to form units of forty huts or more. The larger groups of composite villages were to form the nuclei of the reserves.[31] After 1930, when villages began to spread out again, many of the enforced amalgamations came to an end. The Administrative rules that every man must live in a recognized village and that a village with less than ten tax-paying men could not be recognized were not always enforced, although they were not repealed until 1945. Administrative recognition has been an important consideration in determining the size of villages but it has not been the only one.

621 651 178 In the residential system, the process of segmentation did not stop with the founding of the segments we now know as county segments. Already in 1898 there were very many more segments in being than the few we have shown in Diagram 1. There we have indicated the position of the major branches of the tree of State but have omitted the hundreds of minor limbs and thousands of twigs which made up the whole. Even if we restrict our attention to segments founded before 1898 we find within any county segment to-day many smaller groups, some of them divisions, others single villages, and a few containing several villages, which are in fact inferior segments formed by one or other of the processes we discussed in Chapter I. Lieutenants and others have made their own segments, junior sons have left their natal villages, and so on. The processes of segment formation since 1898 have not been identical with those prevailing before the conquest, for the quasi-agnatic structure of segments has been modified and segments of recent formation, if in fact we can legitimately call them segments at all, are not organized in the same hierarchical manner as in the old residential system. We shall discuss the formation of small social groups in a later part of our study, the analysis of village life. 178 Here, at the county level, we have to deal with what is essentially a 634 continuation of a pre-conquest process. Each successive head of a county segment, i.e. each county chief, has formed his own new 622 segment within that of his predecessor. Thus, for instance, where

[30] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902, p. 2, and 1903, p. 2.
[31] *M.R.A.*, p. 108.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's village* as I have defined them elsewhere.[34] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[34] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In contrast to this, the private affairs of the chieftainship, 634
matters connected with royal cattle, disputes among the chief's 622
wives and quarrels between the chief and his affines or close supporters are discussed at the chief's village. Quarrels of an apparently trivial nature, such as a chief's wife's running away with a lorry driver, would in the old days have threatened the whole internal structure of the county segment, and they are still [687]
treated as questions of State by the lieutenants and kinsmen of the chief who attend these meetings. The contrast between these two kinds of assembly is striking. They are described by different vernacular terms,[26] and while any man can attend and speak at a meeting at the court, it would be considered inappropriate for him to intervene in a meeting at the chief's village unless his position in the old residential system was a high one. Women listen to court meetings, but rarely if ever speak, for the Administration works very largely through men and it is men who discuss the kinds of thing in which the Administration is interested. At the chief's village, the interests of the chief's kinswomen and wives are often directly concerned and they themselves contribute to the discussion. The marriages of chiefs established, and to a lesser extent do still [602]
reinforce and establish, affinal ties which cut across the cleavages between segments and which were crucial to the balance of power [578]
within the State. A quarrel between a chief and his wife was a matter of political, and not merely domestic, significance and must therefore be discussed by the chief's political advisers.

The sanction of deportation appears to be employed only in 687
connexion with offences against the chieftainship. Thus a lieu- 627
tenant who embezzled some royal cattle was called before a meeting at his chief's village attended by the important lieutenants in the county, and ordered to leave the country. Similarly, a man who was found drinking with a chief's wife under suspicious circumstances was ordered to leave the country by a tribunal of this kind. He moved first to another county, but was forced to move on again out of Ngoniland. Such actions are sometimes taken without reference to recognized Native Courts or to the Adminis- 648
tration, and the effectiveness of the tribunal's decision depends on 687
the support it has from the people as a whole and from the Native [627]
Authority organization rather than on the ultimate sanctions wielded by the Administration. However, when matters of this

[26] A meeting to discuss matters of general interest is *mukhasu*; one to discuss affairs of the chieftainship is *luŵanyu*. cf. *ku-sukhasa*, to assemble (Nyanja) and *i(li)bandla*, assembly (Zulu). The different derivation of the words, from Nyanja and Zulu, is significant. *Luŵanyu* also means age-set.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

645 671 692 were, however, and they realized it at such assemblies, the people of the Paramount, and he was to them the visible symbol of their unity in one kingdom.

The Court System of the Ngoni

692 The enforcement of the laws as announced and discussed at these assemblies was the business of the courts, where the laws themselves were interpreted and often elaborated on occasions of an open breach.

The relationships of the courts in the kingdom followed the hierarchical pattern of the political organization. All minor cases were heard and, whenever possible, settled at the village level. If the plaintiff failed to get satisfaction, or if the village headman was unable to get his judgement accepted, he had to go with the litigants to the chief's court, and [698] if he failed there, the case could be taken to the appeal court of the Paramount. There were certain cases, such as murder and witchcraft, which in pre-European days could only be dealt with in the Paramount's court.

Some confusion arose over the use of one term 'court' for every type of institution which exercised judicial functions. The Nyanja term used in central Ngoniland for the courts at the lowest level was *bwalo*, literally the open space in front of the *indlunkulu* in any Ngoni village. Nothing could be apparently more informal than the discussion among a group of senior men called together by the headman, on a verandah or under a big tree, in order to settle quarrels and hear complaints. No formal records were kept, there was no clerk, and there was no summing up or pronouncement of judgement. There was, if the meeting was successful, general agreement about the action necessary and about who ought to initiate action. Above the level of this village headman's court were the courts of the *ahowanna* held at their head villages, and above them again the chiefs' courts. After 1933 the courts of the *ahowanna* gave place to the courts at the head villages of the chiefs. The proceedings there were more formal and included presenting evidence, defending the case and pronouncing judgement on cases rather than, as in the villages, talking things over and appealing to certain principles to re-establish equilibrium and resolve disputes.

The Ngoni nevertheless always recognised these courts at the village ● [622] level as an integral part of their system. It was the mark of a good headman that he should be able to settle the minor cases in his village without [563] constant reference to higher authority. The majority of villages under Ngoni rule were villages of local tribes who had surrendered to, or been conquered by, the Ngoni. The headmen were therefore of the local tribe, as a rule surrounded by their kinsmen, and their position carried with it the necessity of relating local tribal custom, especially in matters involving marriage and family affairs, to the legal principles and procedure of the Ngoni courts. Many cases came before the courts in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *inini nendwi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
684 this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was
178 death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *iniindwa* and the *amandwa* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticised each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *indwa* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *indwa* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The
[857] interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *lomwi* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *indwa* organising his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

631 NGONI OFFICE-BEARERS

622 In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni
645 political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a
[565] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *indwa* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

be used exclusively for either group, and in fact there was considerable overlapping between them. 622 631 645

We begin with the text by Cibambo which emphasises the hierarchy of office-bearers in the northern kingdom in pre-European days and illustrates the correlation between the courts and the political administration.

¶ The former government of the Ngoni was based on the following:

(1) Above all was the one called *Inkosi* or *UBabu*, because they thought of him as the father of the country, the head.

(2) After him came the *izinduna*. Sometimes these were two or perhaps four. These were very highly honoured and the Paramount feared them greatly: he called them *Bobabo* and their words had great weight with him. They were the ones who gave advice to the Paramount and if any grave matter arose he called them to hear what they thought. The Paramount in his village had also his old men who helped him with everything small that did not need to go to the *izinduna*. If there was word that the Paramount was meeting with the *izinduna* he first of all met with the old men and asked for advice to place before the *izinduna*. And these old men had the right to speak when the Paramount took counsel with the *izinduna*.

(3) After the *izinduna* came the *amakosana*, or lesser chiefs. These were perhaps the younger brothers of the ruling Paramount, and had their districts under him. They also had their *izinduna* and were responsible for their own districts. When the Paramount met with the *izinduna*, the *amakosana* were also there if it was considered fitting.

(4) Then there were the *abamnumu*. These were over villages or smaller districts. Their villages were called *amakanda* (heads) and they had power in their small districts to carry out the laws and they looked to the *izinduna* for instructions.

(5) Lastly the old men (*amadala*) who wore the head-ring (*idilodlo*) but not all of them; only those who had good sense and understood the ways of the tribe. [882]

All these five divisions had their share in the government of the country. If there was a great court of justice, all these were to be found at it, and took part in the discussions. If fresh matter arose, or new laws, these delivered them to their villages. Also there were men called *amanxusa*, messengers. These were men chosen to run with messages from the Paramount to the *izinduna* or *amakosana*, to go with and return with news. Almost every village or little district had its chosen messengers. All the types (2), (3) and (4) had their messengers. When anything happened, the messenger in the village of the Paramount made a general proclamation and called the *amanxusa* together. When the *amanxusa* had heard the message they scattered throughout all the country. So in the districts and by this way news travelled very quickly. [202]

In the central kingdom one of the big *izinduna* explained the change in their system which occurred after crossing the Zambesi: 178 622 631 645

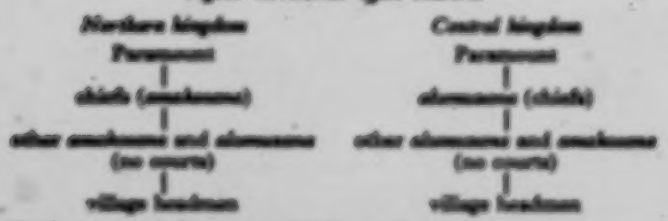
¶ When the Ngoni were coming from the south they chose lesser chiefs and *izinduna* from the *amakosana*, who were the Paramount's brothers,

178 622 631 645 sons of his father and of his father's brothers. These *amakosana* were honoured next to the Paramount. The *ahwazana* were for justice in the courts, and for being the 'ears of the Paramount' in all the country. The change was made by Mpezeni because he saw that if the *amakosana* were given power they claimed to be big chiefs themselves. Therefore he chose for the courts and for the leaders in war and for lesser chiefs the *ahwazana* and *induna* who were clever and whom they could trust.

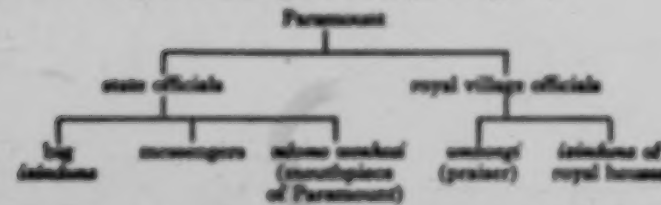
184 622 631 645 [618] The diagram on p. 99 relates to the period between 1933 and 1939 and sets out first the officials in the territorial divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms from the Paramount to the headman of a village. In the northern kingdom only the Paramount and the six chiefs had recognized courts, the chiefs' courts operating for their districts and the Paramount's court for the whole kingdom. There were two sets of office-bearers who had no courts but who exercised authority over groups of villages. One group consisted of members of the Jere clan who were not recognized chiefs but were *amakosana*, literally 'children of the chief' but used as a rule for all members of the royal clan. Only certain *amakosana* had villages under them. The other group consisted of the heads of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who owned several villages and sometimes had authority over a large area. Cibambo put this group below that of the chiefs, and other informants confirmed this as the pre-European pattern. But the informants also said that many of the powerful *ahwazana* formerly had their own courts and did not have to bring their cases to the chiefs' courts as they did in the 1930's. At the bottom of the territorial hierarchy came the headmen of single villages. In some cases the village headman had formerly been an *induna* in a large village which had broken up. Some were of the royal clan or of Swazi clans. The majority belonged to the local tribes and were owners of villages which were for the most part villages of one kinship group.

The text about the hierarchy in the central kingdom shows that a deliberate change had been made in the traditional pattern to avoid a struggle between the Paramount and his brothers when they had recognized positions as chiefs. The *ahwazana* who appear in the diagram as chiefs were the six who were recognized in 1933 as Subordinate Native Authorities. There were other *ahwazana* who were not so recognized, and certain members of the royal clan, all of whom owned a number of villages but had to take their cases to the recognized courts. The division caused by setting up the Portuguese boundary in the 1890's left many of the leaders of the Maseko clan on the Portuguese side, with the result that the number of *amakosana* owning villages and taking any prominent part in the life of the kingdom was very small; and another large group of the Maseko clan were in Dedza district under Chief Kacindamoto. The majority of village headmen in the central kingdom were of local tribes, and their villages were as a rule much larger than those in the northern kingdom.

Ngoni territorial office-bearers.



Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *izinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only recited the praise-songs at ceremonies in the royal village.

The big *izinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *izinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below his. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *alamusana* and *amakosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned.

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

incorporated into the nation'. This, as we saw in Chapter I of Part I, was what took place in the Ngoni kingdoms. By the time they settled in Nyasaland, a hierarchical relationship had been built up between the clans based on the length of time they had formed part of the Ngoni kingdom. As the Swazi had their true Swazi, 'those found ahead', and late comers, so the Ngoni had their 'Swazi' clans, others from across the Zambesi, those who joined from this side, and the local peoples. 614 171

Dr. Kuper [1] summarized her description of the Swazi clan hierarchy by saying that it was 'neither precise nor static . . . a certain degree of mobility is recognized amongst the élite'. The Ngoni too had their own ways of adjusting a somewhat rigid system to suit their needs in spite of their recognition of the ranking of clans, and the fact that in the 1930's the kingdoms were ruled by an aristocracy. As among the Swazi, officials were appointed who did not belong to Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans. Much importance was attached, as also among the Swazi, to 'marrying up' and a number of instances of this were recorded, particularly in the central kingdom. In such cases a man, when explaining who he was, often gave the name of his mother as well as that of his father in order to impress upon the inquirer that he came from Swazi stock on one side, though his clan name, being his father's, did not show it. 171 557 614

Since some discussion of clans comes into every section of this book it will be useful to summarize here the main characteristics of the Ngoni clans in the two kingdoms. We shall be referring exclusively to the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, except when others are specifically mentioned. 614

Each clan was primarily a group of people with a common name. The families bearing this name might be found throughout the Ngoni kingdoms and states, in the towns and elsewhere, as the census figures quoted in Chapter I, Part I show. Their kinship was recognized firstly through clan exogamy, and secondly through the fact that when Ngoni people met a fellow clansman, they greeted him with particular warmth and both individuals were prepared to render each other mutual service. I met a number of the younger educated Ngoni who set out on a journey in Nyasaland, or to Northern or Southern Rhodesia, with the express purpose of looking for fellow clansmen, getting hospitality from them, and inviting them to visit Nyasaland and receive return hospitality. I was present at one or two such meetings in Nyasaland between Ngoni from the two kingdoms and the conversation began by establishing what branch of the Moyo or Gama clan they belonged to, and where the head village was situated. Within each kingdom each clan had a head village, and the head of that village was the head of the clan. In most of the Swazi clans the head of the clan was acknowledged as a *mulumuzana*. This correlation between being head of a Swazi clan and being a [574] 614 622

[1] ibid. p. 233.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

614 *muhumuzana* was not invariable. Some informants said that *ahumuzana*
622 were appointed by the Paramount. Others said that if the ancestor of a Swazi clan was known by name to have crossed the Zambesi with Zwangendaba or Mputa then his descendant in the direct line was always a *muhumuzana*.

614 It was the criterion of having a known ancestor and knowing the genealogy of the clan that was most widely accepted in acknowledging
[769] the head of a Swazi clan as *muhumuzana*. At the clan head village prayers were addressed to this ancestor, his cattle were sacrificed, and the names recited as far back as tradition and memory could recall. Later we shall see that there were said to be about 25 Swazi clans in the northern kingdom and 29 in the central. Among these about 15 in the northern and 12 in the central kingdom had head villages where the ancestor cult was performed. In the central kingdom several of the leading clans had their head villages in Portuguese territory, and therefore did not carry out the cult in the central kingdom.

554 In the hierarchy of the clans the Swazi clans were the acknowledged
614 leaders. In village and national life this leadership was accorded to the royal clans and the clans of the chiefs, and was the reason for the respect shown to *ahumuzana* who had no direct political power. Only the heads of Swazi clans possessed *izitokozo* (honorific epithets) which commemorated events in the past history of the clan leaders. On all ceremonial occasions heads of Swazi clans, whether in national or in village affairs, took precedence over the rest when walking in procession, standing for dances, taking part in ritual, or sitting down at feasts. Certain
[766] forms of burial, such as the use of a sheep-skin, and placing the corpse on a shelf in the grave, were observed only for members of the Swazi clans.

582 In arranging marriages, there was, in addition to strict exogamy
614 within a clan, a prohibition on marriage between clans which had *cibale* (brotherhood) relations. In the central kingdom the royal clan, Maseko, had *cibale* with the Ngozo clan which provided the royal shadow, and
[262] with the Nzunga clan. The Nzunga and the Maseko clans shared the same taboos, notably elephant and fish. As well as prohibited marriages between certain clans, there were preferred marriages between certain others. In general there was a preference for marriage between the families of leading Swazi clans. In the northern kingdom the Nqumayo clan had a preference for marrying into the Thole, Nhlane, Maluleka and Pakati clans. It was alleged that formerly they could marry only into these clans, but in the 1930's exceptions were found in a number of villages.

614 The following lists of the names of Swazi clans were collected from informants in the two kingdoms, who were questioned closely about which names should be included under the title of Swazi. This was the grouping claimed by the Ngoni in both kingdoms. They said emphatic-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

342 356 593 was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

162 585 595 184 The tables which follow show the total population of three villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Huts	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Eswazini .	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Endindeni .	15	9	21	21	51	4	1	4	15
Eluhangeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	32
Central kingdom									
Cinkwita .	39	22	39	54	115	13	5	4	2
Mangozo .	60	41	65	78	184	9	18	2	4
Mcakhatha	122	71	112	68	251	30	16	14	12

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *luungulu* and *gogo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *banja* was not found in the north.

592 614 622 631 The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *muhumuzana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *muhumuzana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

Households[1]

	Total	Leading clan
Northern Ngoniland		
Eswazini	23	15
Endindeni	15	12
Eluhangeni	37	21
Central Ngoniland		
Cinkwita	39	18
Mangoso	60	26
Mcakhatha	122	37

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head.

Eswazini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Eswazini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *lusungulu* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother.

Endindeni was a *gogo* village owned by Zibekere Makwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gogo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ubale* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more *lomsi*.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East Africa.

463 foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group
177 involved the earning, spending and sharing of money in-
[434] comes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered
[571] opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

In local government and in the courts, which formed an
624 integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom,
693 ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain
[827] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial
[562] ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were
622 responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'.

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders.

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the
797 church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been
159 threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition
875 and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary
[622] behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to
[871] some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organize his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described
177 in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose
797 partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or
871 ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools
186 were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose personal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected
871 their boys who had been to school and had entered European
463 employment away from their homes, to find work which
554 assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

position. They wanted them to be, or to become, senior clerks, trusted store assistants, valued houseboys, foremen in charge of other men, hospital assistants. They wanted them, in other words, to be in positions where Ngoni traits would be appreciated, and where good behaviour and self-control, ability to supervise others, responsibility and initiative, obedience to orders, would be recognized and rewarded.

In conclusion here is a record of a conversation I heard in the village of a very senior chief, so senior that he was given the title of *Inkosi* when his subjects addressed him. The chief, who was then in his seventies, but active and vigorous, was sitting in a chair on the veranda of his hut, out of the sun's glare, with several of the senior men of the village behind him. Two young teachers in charge of a school came to greet him. They bent one knee as they squatted in front of him, as they had been taught to do as children, gave him the customary greeting, and waited in silence till he spoke.

'How is your school?'

'The classes are full and the children are learning well, *Inkosi*.'

'How do they behave?'

'Like Ngoni children, *Inkosi*.'

'What do they learn?'

'They learn reading, writing and arithmetic, scripture and geography and drill.'

'Is that education?'

'It is education, *Inkosi*.'

'No! No! Education is *very* broad, *very* deep. It is not only in books, it is learning to live. I am an old man. When I was a boy I went with the army to the Bemba war. Then the mission came and I went to school. I became a teacher. Then I was a chief. I have seen this country change, and now the young men go away to work. I tell you Ngoni children must learn how to live, and how to work and earn money, and how to build up our land. *Uyezwa na?*' (Do you hear?)

'*Yebo Inkosi*.' (Yes, O chief.)

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him. Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions, villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance. The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters, a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigawa*, pl. *vigawa*, from *ku-gawa*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.'

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village.

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

But we know from other areas 121
that loss of sovereignty itself does not necessarily disrupt the marriage arrangements of common people and we must look elsewhere for an explanation.

2. Movement between villages

The old villages formed part of the residential system, and their 621
structure was maintained by the power of the central chieftainship, as expressed through the lieutenants of the royal villages, and by the diffuse sanction of public opinion based on ideas held in common as to the rights conferred by the payment of bridewealth. Nowadays the lieutenants of the royal villages have very much less power, and [178] bridewealth is not often paid. The village is held together by the various ties of kinship and affinity between its members, and to a slight extent by the restriction of movement from one village to another. This control, exercised by the Administration through the [648] system of registration of adult males, is largely ineffective except in the Resettlement Areas.[2] Men and women are more or less free to live wherever they can find relatives, and if they quarrel in one village they can move to another where they hope life will be more pleasant. There is no general rule to which appeal can be made concerning whether a married couple should live uxorilocally or virilocally. Hence a quarrel between man and wife or between affinally related people may lead to a split in the village, and the dissident section may attempt to form a village of its own or attach itself to another village. It is therefore in the interests of the [622] headman that quarrels in his village should be settled as rapidly as possible, and he has therefore an interest in the private lives of his people even though they may not be his close relatives. His interests are represented by his lieutenants and are shared by everyone in the village who wishes his own to be a large prosperous and happy village. The theme of the good and happy village recurs in many [143] of the formal situations of Ngoni life and finds expression in much of local action on a village basis, as for example in the competitive dances, the division of food at a ceremony and the organization of the religious sects.

We find therefore that the headman and his lieutenants participate [622] in the ceremonies of marriage and in marital quarrels. Conversely the headman is brought into relationship with the married couple by the allocation to him of pots of beer whenever there is a general distribution even though he may not be at the ceremony. Other important men and women similarly participate merely because of their common membership of the village. For example, a hoeing party was led by a middle-aged woman who was described as 'an important person' in the son-in-law's village. She was in fact

[2] Areas which have been reopened to settlement by Ngoni and other tribes since 1941 with various restrictions on agricultural methods and on population. About ten per cent of Ngoni live in Resettlement Areas.

Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'fly' country, 166
but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern 136
zone that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. 164
The large available land area in Mkushi enabled the relatively small 'fly' 744
areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'fly' areas of Mkushi.

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'fly' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the kraals. Ten herds each of five beasts were used; the animals were numbered and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomyaisis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'fly' infestation were defined.

§ 6. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in 166
accordance with the general plan to restore the population-land balance as 621
far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in 648
many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers.

Headmen and other representatives of the villagers who had finally [622]
elected to move then toured the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villagers almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Vegetation-Soil Map. Blocks
of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total [311]
villages population, allowing for temporary absentees, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation
of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular; the people [423]
are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone beacons, to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features.

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually app- 166
lied or always possible. The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, 648

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds,
245 seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and
671 banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little
[177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a
[132] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of
311 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush.
648 In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre-
185 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning
[622] of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve
361 the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this
362 has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built
[342] of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's
648 journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

6:Rattray E.G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI

A VILLAGE EXODUS

I. THE village chief, when he wishes to remove the village to a new site, tells the young men of the village beforehand to look out all the building materials necessary. These they will just pile up. Then some day the head old man gets up very early in the morning to go and seek a suitable spot. When he finds a good place, he says, "Yes, this is where I shall build" (lit. "This is my place"). When he goes to the village that evening, he tells them not to break the rules enforced on such occasions, as he wishes to "kindle fire in the forest," as he is tired of the present site of the village. Next morning at dawn he rises very early, along with his brother and the medicine man, and goes to the site of the new village. They begin to walk all round, tying grass tufts into little knots and smearing them with medicine, and they make fire where they are going to build the *Kuka* hut, and they put some medicine on the fire, and bring water, and blow it in a spray out of their mouth. And the reason they thus medicine-guard the village, is for fear of lions and human flesh-eaters. Then the village people come with the building materials, and they are told to "clear the ground." And they do so, and when this is finished, the chief takes the door-posts and sticks them in position, and also the side-posts, when others put them in (firmly). When the *Kuka* hut is completed they begin with that of the headman. When dark others leave, going back to the old village. There remain only the chief, and the others who will continue to sleep there, not

361 166 622 [989]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

again returning to the old village. That evening they take some of the fire (that they made earlier in the day) to kindle a fire with in the (new) hut (*Kuka*). In kindling it they do not squat down, they blow the faggots into flame from a standing position, and they do this lest the smoke might ever after hang in wreaths over the floor. The womenfolk come every day to cook.

II. When the chief's huts are finished, they build those of the old men, and when these are complete, they bring all the huts [from the old village]. When they see that all the huts are finished, beer is made at the old village, and they go and bring the spirits. He who has a grave pours some beer in a gourd-pot and places it on the grave, saying, "We have gone hence, you must not search for us here, come let us go together." On that day they demolish all the huts that remain, they leave only the huts of which the occupant has lately died. When now the sun begins to slant westward, from the *Kuka* hut they take five gourd-pots, and fill them with beer and make young women carrying these lead the way. The head old woman of the *Kuka* hut goes first, the chief wife of the chief follows *Gogo*, and then come the ones carrying the beer. When they arrive at the new village they set down the gourd-pots and all the people assemble. The elder of the village then begins to propitiate, saying, "There is the beer we down on earth have made, we have gone from yonder, we present to you your new village, all men you will have a care for." Then the village chief makes a present of a goat and hands it to the old man, and he again speaks, saying, "Here is a goat which your child presents, you will wash it down with the beer." If the goat makes water, that is to say the spirit consents, if it will not they do not kill it. Then they kill the goat

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the
178 capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the headman, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants
[622] of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Genthe, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and assessors are nominated by the chiefs on the advice of their lieutenants and some of them are in fact lieutenants or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is illiterate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lieutenants or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying sixpence for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the county and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [693]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organized system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional governors. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of their people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 431 [273] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend these to people they can trust. All the chiefs organize their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole county, but only part of the county. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organize enough hunts. 622 224 [411] [136]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Royal and Commoner Villages

621 Nowadays most of the villages in the kingdom are commoner villages, under the charge of headmen. From such evidence as is available, it seems likely that in the pre-conquest period there were fewer villages than there are now, and that they were bigger than are most modern villages.[1] It also appears that the process by which a division of a village broke away to become a separate village was a gradual one, so that at any one time there would have been some doubt in deciding how many distinct villages there were. This is seen at the present time in the histories of what are now distinct villages; the people relate how the first time they made a village of their own it was done only a little distance away from the parent village. Pairs of villages of common origin still tend to occupy sites in comparative proximity to one another, and may arrange their moves from one area to another, in search for new garden land, simultaneously.

In general, however, there is little difficulty in observing the village as a discrete spatial residential group. We may distinguish five types of village,[2] according to the status of the person in charge of the village. The capital villages and chiefs' villages have already been [622] mentioned. Intermediate between these two categories are the regal villages. These have been formed from older royal villages to accommodate a group of wives of a chief or other member of the royal lineage, but do not now have a chief living in them. All these three kinds of royal village, capital, regal, and chief's, are controlled in the same way, by lieutenants appointed to the task in the first instance by a member of the royal family. There is another kind of village which I shall call a cadet village. The junior members of the royal lineage, that is, younger sons and sons by unimportant wives, did not have sufficient following to carry on this process of forming large new villages and merely lived with their wives in their natal villages or founded small villages of their own. Such villages are now similar in form to com- [622] moner villages, except that the headman of the village belongs to the royal lineage. All other villages we may class as commoner villages.

[1] 'The Angoni villages are about five times the size of an average Achewa village . . .' (Gentha, p. 1). Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 475.

[2] All types are known in the vernacular by the same descriptive term, *musani*, and there are no classificatory terms. It is possible to tell whether a village is royal or commoner by its name. A village with a male personal name is a commoner or cadet village. A village with a female personal name, or a descriptive name in the Ngoni language, is a royal village.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621
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TABLE 1. *Village Types*

Type of village		*Senior resident*
Royal	Capital	First lieutenant
	Regal	First lieutenant
	Chief's	Chief
Cadet		Royal Headman
Commoner		Commoner Headman

This process of village formation may be illustrated from Mpezeni's own county. The capital of the county is the village founded by Mpezeni I for his chief wife and one or two other wives. His heir Singu was born in this village, and when he married he founded two villages of his own which are now regal villages. In the senior of these two Mpezeni II was born, and in about 1925 he founded a new village which is still the chief's village of the county. There are other regal villages in the county founded in a similar manner. 621

This formation of royal villages would, other things being equal, lead to a dispersal of the population. It seems, however, that the major factor in dispersing the population since 1898 has been the formation of independent commoner villages. Many of these villages have histories that go back to the foundation of the village as an independent unit immediately after 1898, and it seems likely that the unsettled conditions of those days and the burning of villages did much to bring about the breakdown of the old system in which the royal villages were more important than they are today. 161 621

The royal villages are more closely connected with the chieftainships than are the commoner villages, and the chiefs visit in them more frequently than in other villages. A dispute in a royal village is usually settled by a meeting in the village itself attended by the local chief, whereas in the case of an ordinary village dispute the matter would be taken to the chief for him to settle in his own village or court. A chief may be called to a royal village to drink beer. The royal herds of cattle are kept in the royal villages, and the chiefs look to the first lieutenants of their royal villages for the well-being of the royal cattle as well as of the inhabitants of the royal villages. All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself,[1] but in as far as the cattle held by most people are concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that 628 [627] 422 231 643

[1] Cf. Coxhead, p. 27.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the lieutenants are more under the control of the chief of the county, who may intervene to depose a lieutenant if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

● 622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material Setting

361 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the [343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the [417] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of aloes.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually *bedimas*, pl. *mabedimas*; otherwise *nfumu yamuzi*, pl. *mafumu wamizi*. The specific term for headman of a cadet or commoner village is *mwisimuzi*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from those of their wives. 592 [882] [858] [595] 423

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cooking and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda. 342 [343] [252]

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized. 621

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalaweni, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were founded. 621 103

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of individuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary, 621 622 [103]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief wife who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first lieutenant of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the
551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni on formal occasions in addition to their other personal names.

624 To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and there may be in the village one or more lieutenants. The office of lieutenant in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no lieutenants.

621 In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
582 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time
178 some of the senior captives became lieutenants of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aristocratic lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aristocratic captors.

Movement

361 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
166 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Fortes, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 192: '. . . the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as 361
stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village 166
is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man [311]
has to go farther and farther from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of regenerated land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a [768]
portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1898 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested [648]
areas.

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county [648]
chief, and village headman. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headman and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The first people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till [343]
later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Rattray, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the [622] headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to [184]
be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and 221
is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the 361
new one is gradual, as, unless the distance between the sites is too 166
great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until 241
they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Rattray, *Folk-Lore Stories*, pp. 109–11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 203–5, gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[857] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
● [622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 602 624
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 wait for six or seven years before the procrastinating headmen
[645] could lay aside jealousies, and actually place him in the authority of
his father. Then when he is crowned he cannot sit in judgment
[692] or give a decision unless his councillors have been summoned,
and have deliberated with him. Many a time in the old fierce
days the councillors and chief argued and defied one another for
weeks at a time over the question as to whether the white man
was to be tolerated in the country, and it was the strong affection
of old Mombera for Dr. Laws, and Wm. Koyi which alone held in the
dogs of war, and prevented his councillors from going forth on an
exterminating expedition. Yet in spite of the great power of the
chief he lives as father of the people with all the villagers as his
children. His house is like their own, built right in the centre of
[567] the village. The poorest slave has access to him, and he hands his
beer pot or his snuff to the meanest villager when he would
show him friendliness.

[688] Under the paramount chief there are four great sub-chiefs, and
[634] each of them has his councillors and headmen. Then these
headmen have each a group of villages under their control. They
[692] hear and dispose of petty quarrels between the villagers. Cases
in which headmen are involved go to the sub-chief, and cases in
which the sub-chiefs are involved, and all great tribal affairs,
645 go to the paramount chief. The tribal council is an impressive
sight. Just before I came here I had the privilege of being present
in one of these great gatherings of the tribe. It had met to discuss
the advisability of coming under the British Protectorate. The
great chief, Chimtunga, had sent out his messengers to call to
council all the sub-chiefs and headmen. They marched into the
[634] chief's kraal on the appointed day, each sub-chief followed by his
councillors and hundreds of armed warriors, all walking in single
file, and dressed in their gaudiest clothes. They sat round the
[643] kraal till thousands were present. By-and-bye the paramount
chief walked in, followed by his brothers and council. He was
greeted by a roar of salutation, and took his seat. When the case
was opened, and the subject introduced, the fathers of the people
rose one after the other and saluted the chief, and then addressed
the people. The speakers walked up and down, speaking with
[537] considerable incisiveness and eloquence, their language full of
metaphors and traditional allusions. Then the chief spoke,
closing the discussion. Immediately it was ended and the royal
[535] salutation given, a warrior leapt into the circle with a war cry, fell

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

888 Yet the position of the old women of the village was a highly honoured one. The mother of the headman was almost more [622] powerful than her son. And we always take good care when we enter a new village to win the kindly favour of the old grandmother first of all. Then we are sure we have found a way to the son's heart. One of the most beautiful things in our tribal life is the honour which is paid to the grey hairs of the village. The bent and helpless old men who lived through the glorious fighting [623] days, and understand all precedent and etiquette are the judges and councillors. And no case can be tried, no decision can be made, until the old men give their presence and their opinion. It is hard when the young are leaping ahead of their fathers through education to maintain this veneration for the elders. Yet it is the very backbone of the tribe. There is nothing more contemptible than an African or an Asiastic with a veneer of education who affects to despise the elders of the village. But I know no more pathetic sight than our afternoon schools where grey-haired men and women may be seen peering through faded eyes trying also to learn to read and keep abreast of the young and alert life, while the sun goes down in their eventide.

233 The Ngoni were first of all a fighting people, and then a pastoral. Their land affords splendid pasture for cattle. And [181] they take great pride in their herds. Round the cattle kraal centre all their ambitions, and highest delights, and best intelligence. They sit and watch the cattle going out in the early morning and coming in in the evening, and know every spot and colour of their beautiful animals. The quietest and most peaceful sight I know is when the sun goes down, and the fierce heat has [534] given place to the welcome cool of the evening. Then you will hear the music of reed pipes, and looking up you see a long line [512] of sleek, solemn cows, with large silken dew laps, and fat humps, slowly coming up the village path lowing for their calves, while boys ride on their backs sitting or standing upright, balancing themselves carefully and blowing on their pipes. Before and behind them runs a troop of goats and sheep bleating with such a human cry. In a moment the village is alive—sheep and goats are chased back and forward till they find the huts where they sleep with their masters. And boys run out with wooden pails [234] into which they milk what the calves have not sucked from their mothers.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Maravi FR4
Ngoni FR5

M 587 765 [833] marry, his new wife would die. A widow after her period of mourning of two or three months, if sought in marriage, sends her suitor to her sister, who arranges for some other man to have coitus with the widow, after which she is ready to marry the suitor. Without this her second husband would die should she have committed adultery.

M 767 622 After the funeral of a chief the headmen of the district call the chief *Mdzukulu*, who buried the late chief, and hand him a red blanket and tell him to cover the man who is going to be chief. This he does, at the same time hitting him hard on the head. This action is received with shouting from the women, who put ashes on their heads. He then sits surrounded by his brothers and sisters at one end of the open space, the headmen at the other, the leader of whom gives a sermon.

M 766 At Chipoli on the south-west arm of the Lake the corpse is wrapped in a mat and weighted, and then sunk in the lake. The same practice is followed occasionally at Monkey Bay; it is done with the idea of avoiding interference by *Mphiti*.

Lepers and persons dying of small-pox are not bewailed; the former are thrown in the bush for *Mphiti* to eat, as it is thought the disease is spread if they be buried. A man accused of *Mphiti* and dying of *mwavi* used to be burnt on a pile of wood.

N ●622 766 [*Note on Angoni.*—In the case of a chief the body was kept ten days to be sure of death; it was arranged in a sitting posture covered with cloth, the eyes open, a stream was dammed up with stones and then a pyre made below the dam and the body burnt, the waters were then let free to wash away the ashes. The new chief stood from morning to afternoon on one foot wrapped in the smoke of the pyre.]

M 195 769 In speaking of the dead the expression, "the late so and so" (= *nirimiuzi* . . .), is used. A man will not refer to children that have died in the presence of his wife, as she will cry either from grief or because it is the custom so to do. Some burial grounds are not approached.

ARTIFICIAL DEFORMATIONS.

M 304 [856] At birth pressure is applied to the head of the child to reduce any deformity which may be present—no deformation is attempted. Various practices of piercing nose, lips, and ears have been and are in vogue.

Piercing of the upper lip and subsequent wearing of a thin stick, sometimes a bone (*utona*), until the aperture was large enough to admit a much bigger ivory M [178] or wooden lip-ring, solid or otherwise (*pelele*), was practised among the Nyanja women, but it is going out and is now seen only in the old women. Occasionally the lower lip was pierced in the same way. At the present time among the Y [304] Machinga, Yao, and many Nyasa women, the left *ala nasi* is pierced in the same way when a girl is eight years old. When adult a metal or ivory solid ring is worn (*chipini*). A woman piercing the right *ala nasi* would be laughed at and called a fool.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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[234] into which they milk what the calves have not sucked from their mothers.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*muavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*ntosikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Ndunu*, pl. *ndunu*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 470, 472, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tiation of function between the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief, it is improbable that there were any special political offices outside the residential system. 645 631

Read mentions a political hierarchy with various titles.[15] At least in the Fort Jameson group, three of the four vernacular terms she gives were used in connexion with the residential system. The fourth, *amaxuxu*, was used in Zulu for messengers sent by a chief and a dialectical variant of this (*manyusa*) is so used nowadays at Fort Jameson. They have no executive authority and do not seem to have had any in the past. 631 [624]

Fraser, writing of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, says that there were two groups of lieutenants, one composed of men who became Ngoni before the crossing of the Zambezi and which exercised civil power, and the other which included men of more recent incorporation into the Ngoni tribe and which supplied the war leaders. He implies that the war leaders did not take part in the civil administration.

There seems not to have been this distinction between civil and military lieutenants among the Fort Jameson group. Wiese's 'Minister of War', who was referred to as a Commander-in-Chief by other contemporary writers, was a segment head with the same responsibilities towards his people as anyone else. The regiments had leaders responsible for the tactical control of warriors, some of whom were recently incorporated men, and presumably Fraser is referring to them, but his statement that the man often chosen to lead the whole army had no voice in the council conflicts with Elmslie's account of the same place and period. The war leader, Ng'onomo, who is mentioned by Fraser, acted as regent on the death of the Paramount Chief in northern Nyasaland.[16] 631 701

The village as such had an importance independent of the size or order of segment of which it was headquarters or by which it was inhabited. There were no special terms for distinguishing the heads of large or small segments, for all were lords or ladies. But a special term[17] was used for a village headman, irrespective of the order of segment of which he was lord, provided he was not a lieutenant who had become head of the village in the absence of agnatic descendants of the founder. The use of a special term may have been an indication of the village headman's importance, part of which derived from the control he exercised over the cattle 631 622 [422]

[15] Read, 'Tradition', p. 462. cf. her account of the southern Ngoni in 'Standards', p. 16.

[16] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 32. cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 121, 289.

[17] *Isibhamu*. In Zulu, a small or petty chief. cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *nduna*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, pp. 203*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*ff*, 109*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord's dependants placed under a lieutenant's care became more 631
specifically his dependants and eventually he appointed one or 621
more of the men among them to be his own lieutenants. Thus it 624
was possible for Z to be the lieutenant of Y and at the same time for Y to be the lieutenant of X. When Y died, his son became X's lieutenant or, if Y had no son, Z might succeed him as X's lieutenant.

A lord with but few dependants sometimes appointed one or more of them as his lieutenants without specifically dividing his dependants among them. Thus, a lieutenant might be appointed without the formation of a segment for him, and only later would he differentiate from the rest of his lord's dependants those for whom he was directly responsible.

The ranking of lieutenants was one of the least stable parts of the residential system. In a village under a lord there were lieutenants in charge of segments forming divisions within the village. As their segments grew in size, the lieutenants broke out of the village to found new satellite villages. A new set of lieutenants was gradually appointed to take their places in charge of the people remaining in the headquarters, and in the course of time the new set also broke away from the headquarters village.[21] Though they had moved out from the village the lieutenants still retained their positions as lieutenants within the primal segment of which it was the headquarters. Thus in a large segment containing many villages there was a long ranked roster of lieutenants, of which only the junior members still lived in the segment headquarters. Further proliferation of lieutenants sometimes took place when an heir succeeded as lord of the segment but did not found a new segment of his own. The new lord appointed his own lieutenants, so that within the same segment, and partly within the same settlement, there were two sets of lieutenants, one senior by time of appointment, the other enjoying the favour of the present head of the segment. When in these circumstances one of the senior set died, his eldest son sometimes had difficulty in asserting his position as lieutenant; and in this way the senior set, or part of it, lost control of the segment to the more recently appointed men.

It was in keeping with the expanding social boundaries of the 631
State, and of the high degree of mobility within it, that there was 646
no formally constituted council. Some contemporary accounts [648]
mention a tribal council, but it seems clear that until very recently, when the Administration tried to institute a council with defined membership, there has never been a legislative or executive body

[21] cf. my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 197f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 646 to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various bevies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

643 627 644 The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the [622] [624] village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot intervene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[22] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended [579] by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[23]

62 63 Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[22] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.

[23] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 territory, its amalgamation with North-Western Rhodesia, and the transfer of responsibility from the British South Africa Company to the Colonial Office. Statutory instruments issued under these and later Orders have provided legal backing for successive schemes of African Administration.

In 1900 the Fort Jameson Division, containing the country occupied by the Ngoni, Kunda and part of the Cewa tribes, was established as part of the East Luangwa District, stretching from the Nyasaland border to the River Luangwa. The names of these areas were later changed to Fort Jameson District and Eastern Province respectively, and there have been numerous changes in their boundaries during the last fifty years, though none of them have affected the Ngoni. To avoid confusion, we shall use the term District only in its modern usage. In charge of the African population of the District was a Native Commissioner responsible to a Magistrate, posts corresponding roughly to the modern District Commissioner and Provincial Commissioner. The Native Commissioner, with his assistants who were Whites, had a force of Native [202] messengers (otherwise known as boma messengers) attached to his office to convey instructions to the people of the District and to report irregularities to him. The Administrator, head of the Administration, appointed chiefs in charge of tribal districts [622] (smaller than the Administrative Districts already mentioned), and under them were district headmen appointed by the Secretary for Native Affairs. There were also district messengers who lived in [624] their villages, but assisted the Native Commissioner when he toured in their vicinity.

This scheme was regularized by the issue of the Native Commissioners' Regulations of 12 December 1908, made under King's Regulations of the same date. Minor amendments were introduced in 1913 and 1915, and a consolidating Proclamation was issued in 1916. This again was amended slightly in 1919.[13] The substance of the scheme was not altered until the enactment in 1929 of the Native Authorities Ordinance. A more comprehensive Ordinance, with provision for Native Treasuries, replaced this in 1936.[14]

The initiative in setting up, maintaining and modifying the system of administration lay with the Whites, not with the Ngoni, who indeed were only one tribe among many to whom the system applied. Yet the Administration endeavoured to enlist the support of chiefs and others who for the most part were persons of high status in their tribes. As early as 1905, the Administrator wrote of an

[13] Proclamations No. 3 of 1913, 11 of 1915, 8 of 1916, and 6 of 1919.
[14] Ordinances No. 32 of 1929, 9 of 1936.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

557 This process was facilitated by the actions of some heads of major
648 segments. It had always been correct procedure for one important person to deal with another through intermediaries, at least in the opening stages of negotiation, so that lieutenants and others were
[624] frequently sent as ambassadors for their lords to the headquarters of other major segments. There was particular point in adopting this procedure in dealing with the Administration since its demands on a man sent to it were unpredictable and apt to be onerous. Thus in many instances a lieutenant or other dependant was presented to the Administration as the headman of an area or a group of villages. This nominee was regarded by the Administration as the rightful leader of the area concerned, a belief often fostered by the nominee himself. In this way effective control of an area passed from the head of a segment to one of his dependants.

Unfortunately, few records of the early administrative arrange-
648 ments have survived. From 1883, when a British consul was first
114 appointed to Nyasaland, down to the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898, the doings of the tribe were of political significance to Britain, and were reported on at length in dispatches which are now public records. After 1898, events of similar importance within the tribe to those that had been reported earlier, the death of this lieutenant or the movement of that village from one site to another, were no longer of any interest to Whitehall or even to the Directors of the British South Africa Company. Thus there was a drastic reduction in the scale of reporting. At the same time the loss of sovereignty, of independent action, involved a reduction in the kind of events which were likely to be recorded. The Ngoni no longer made war or sold slaves. They did pay tax and work in the mines, but this they did not as an independent tribe but as part of Fort Jameson District and the Eastern Province, and such records as there are relate to these administrative units rather than to specific tribes. The B.S.A.
[439] Company lacked the long tradition of administration enjoyed by the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, and its reports were scanty by comparison. Thus the only published report of any kind on affairs in North-Eastern Rhodesia for the year 1905-6 is a mere fifteen lines long, and there is only one sentence on African administration: 'The conduct of the Natives has continued to be satisfactory.'[18] It is not until 1928 that annual reports on African affairs began to be published. Our account of Ngoni history from 1898 until recent times therefore cannot be as complete as we would wish.

[18] *Directors' Report and Accounts*, 1906, p. 7.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [361]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy.

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief.

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it.

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have alre 'y mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Lisuus*. cf. Zulu *i(li)suus*, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 140*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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624
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PLATE VI. The clerk of a county Native Court checks the whereabouts of men on the tax register of a village with an important man in the village. Standing are a Native Authority messenger with fez, and an Administrative messenger. The village headman and some of his people sit in the background.

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PLATE VII. Litigants outside a county Native Court wait for hearings to begin.

[Facing p. 152]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of
[645] councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native
[602] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion
[771] Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living, in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
•624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
648 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural
[693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local 647
Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these 624
duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in 648
conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary [693]
Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and [651]
to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees of other technical departments of the Administration, such as Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are [625]
mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder, have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it 648
were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to 647
each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work 167
in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not 582
are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this when the social distance between the two persons involved is small. Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around 166
them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the 582

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

463 foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group
177 involved the earning, spending and sharing of money in-
[434] comes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered
[571] opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

In local government and in the courts, which formed an
624 integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom,
693 ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain
[827] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial
[562] ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were
622 responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived 361 in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut [585] and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a [592] few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an [554] important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped [727] into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. 621 Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or [624] his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions [622] made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him. Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where 631 there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions, villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential [728] system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the [171] Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same 631 cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in 571 importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance. The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters, a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.

[2] *Cigawa*, pl. *vigawa*, from *ku-gawa*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.' 622 624 585

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village. 622 578 [621]

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular 692 648 797 466

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief wife who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first lieutenant of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the
551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni on formal occasions in addition to their other personal names.

To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and
● 624 there may be in the village one or more lieutenants. The office of lieutenant in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no lieutenants.

In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have
621 consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
582 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time
178 some of the senior captives became lieutenants of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aristocratic lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aristocratic captors.

Movement

361 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
166 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Fortes, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 1921 '... the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 602 624
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [361]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local 647
Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these 624
duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in 648
conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary [693]
Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and [651]
to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees of other technical departments of the Administration, such as Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are [625] mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder, have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it 648
were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to 647
each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work 167
in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not 582
are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this when the social distance between the two persons involved is small. Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around 166
them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the 582

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between political and judicial actions is not surprising. There is a connexion of this kind in every society, and the connexion is a particularly close one in societies like the Ngoni, where the same individuals act as legislators, administrators, and judges, and where the court does not confine itself merely to the legal issues in a dispute but examines the whole network of social relationships which are involved, with the object of restoring social order. 692

There are three ways in which this connexion can be seen. First, the court may be used as a vehicle for implementing the policy of the Native Authority. Secondly, the Administration may use the court to implement its policy. Thirdly, positions in the court may be used to satisfy men who seek political authority. We have to deal with the third point in our discussion of the development of the Native Authority. [557]

A chief anxious to gain favour with the Administration sees that his court enforces with heavy penalties the various regulations with which, for the time being, the Administration is concerned, such as those relating to agricultural control, and school attendance. A chief who does not wish to co-operate will neglect these regulations. Thus a few years ago there was a regulation that once a child had begun a two-year course at school, he or she must stay to finish it. In one county this rule was enforced much as the letter of the law indicated, in another it was completely ignored despite the protests of school-teachers, and in a third it was interpreted to mean that every child must go to school. About a year later the Administration decided that as promulgated the rule was *ultra vires*, and said it must be withdrawn. Nevertheless in some counties it is still enforced. These chiefs and courts are not being merely capricious. Some chiefs support the missions and their schools, others oppose them; some are in alliance with the school-teachers and other intelligentsia in their counties, others oppose them. These various attitudes and alignments are reflected in the way in which they respond to a new law. This is particularly noticeable when public delicts, such as absence from school, are concerned, for in general the court is its own law-enforcing agency. There is no independent police force to bring offenders to court whether or not the court wants to see them, but only the assessors, court clerk, messengers and others who, when they are not busy about their own affairs, may if they are so inclined wander through the villages looking for unlicensed dogs and unlicensed beer. Thus the enforcement of law relating to public delicts depends largely on the relationship between the Native Authority and the common people. 696 557 648 692 [872] [625] [693]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

man presenting his request for a gun licence, or for permission to go to Southern Rhodesia, or to move to another village, or whatever it may be, is told first to bring a letter from his chief in support of his request and it will then be considered. Thus the approval of the chief is necessary for a variety of enterprises. 648

A chief may decide not to support a request for a variety of reasons. He does not want to recommend to the Administration projects which will turn out unfavourably, and yet he does not want to oppose unnecessarily the wishes of his people who may begin to drift away into other counties or to Southern Rhodesia if they feel he is being unfair to them. Many of these requests from his people are handled by the court clerk who has custody of the rubber stamps, without whose imprint no letter looks official. Other councillors and advisers may also help with these requests, and may advise the chief, in the light of their own interests and of their estimate of the public interests, on whether or not to support a request. There is thus opportunity for a friend of the chief to block rivals and enemies by seeing that their requests do not go forward. [662] Men who are thwarted in this way can appeal to the Administration, and may perhaps be granted their request. Such action, however, is likely to increase the antagonism of the Native Authority towards them, and in so far as they have defied the authority of the chief by appealing against his decision, they may be censured by their neighbours. [626] Thus what they gain in one respect may be offset by what they lose in another. When the quarrel between a councillor and a man who is, say, trying to open a shop in his village is of long standing and with faults and undisclosed offences on both sides, it may be unwise to risk the whole matter being brought to the notice of the Administration by an appeal over the matter of the shop.

In other situations, where the Administration endeavours to intervene in some matter in which the chief is thought to be dilatory, the Native Authority may shield a man because of the danger of possible repercussions. 627 648 Thus, for instance, a District Officer on tour found a man living in a village at which he was not registered. He turned the offender over to the Native Court. The offender had a perfectly good defence but his story would have involved reference to incest by an important person and it was therefore undesirable that the District Officer should hear of the matter. Accordingly the Court delayed the hearing of the case on some technicality, and after the District Officer had left the area nothing more was done.

In the main the Administration presents a united front to the Ngoni, and the words and actions of each Administrative officer 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kins- 634
woman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political 554
significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the
particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent
incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound 634
by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife 683
while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded 578
him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants
and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's
father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing.
A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said
he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman
complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The
chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting
he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman
said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken
the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why
he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was
accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment 634
and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are 273
protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief 576
himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him
but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a
commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the [626]
reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer
under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages
unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his
intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants 431
are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these 662
presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, 634
they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or
hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia
may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present
is made by an individual and arises from his own political
aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective
as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an 634
affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village 273
or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 by this relationship participate in the presentation and consumption
273 of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the
[769] Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all
797 public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the
[557] ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of
[576] honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are
681 diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded
634 as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and
626 other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Paramount Chief is sometimes told of the matter and calls the minor
[643] chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other counties and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner.
643 The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[14] a
576 salutation which symbolizes his former position as head of an

[14] cf. Zulu *Bayede*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

independent group of Ngoni. Chibambo mentions how the use of this salutation was discontinued when the head of an erstwhile independent group rejoined his parent group.[15] In recent times people have indicated their disapproval of the Paramount Chief's actions by discontinuing this salutation temporarily. 643 576

Despite the security of tenure provided by Administrative recognition, a chief still needs the support of his people. There is an Ngoni maxim, 'chieftainship is people',[16] and commoners are well aware that it is because they support their chief that he has high status. The simplest and most effective sanction that commoners can employ against their chief is to leave him. Movement from one county to another, from one tribe to another, and from the county to the town and back again is crucial in the working of modern Ngoni society. Not all these movements take place as the result of the unpopularity of chiefs, but this is one factor among many. Chibambo records an early example of people moving to segment 8 from the residue of segment 1 in order to share the hospitality of a newly appointed chief, but he goes on to say 'afterwards they found it wise to return to their proper division [segment]'.[17] In more recent times there are several examples, particularly among villages which entered Ngoniland after 1898 and who therefore largely lack segmental affiliation, of villages and clusters that have changed from one county to another for political reasons. More significant at the present time are the numbers of ambitious people who emigrate to the towns because, among other things, they cannot find advancement in the political hierarchy. The most striking instance of this is in the family of the late Mpezeni II. He had six sons who survived him: One is now Paramount Chief, and one is still a boy. The other four, including the chief's deputy, are town-dwellers in other parts of Africa. 634 626 [166] [557] [643]

5. *Royal hunts*

The royal hunt is the only occasion on which a county, or more usually a rural district or part of a county, functions as an economic unit. Even then the economic element in the enterprise is not very marked. The chief announces, through his messengers, that on such-and-such a day he will hold a royal hunt and that the men of such-and-such villages are to meet in a certain place. The procedure followed on the hunt is exactly the same as on an ordinary hunt, with the chief or someone nominated by him in tactical command, though the number of hunters is greater than on a hunt 224 476 634

[15] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 36. [16] *Ufumu ni inonthu.*
[17] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 35.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 rule as a Native Authority Order.[26] Thus the chiefs preferred to
671 appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the
692 judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the
692 indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts.
664 Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of
[797] divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people
671 and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened
646 about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are
661 constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[27]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the
692 ease with which their members may move away to other sur-
648 roundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts
626 are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the
[681] end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[26] *African Affairs, report*, 1948, p. 47.
[27] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

review by the Administration, but in practice the cases are so numerous, the written account of them so brief, and often the handwriting of the record so bad, that it is difficult to make an adequate review. The Administration is able to keep some check on the financial transactions of the courts, and convictions for embezzlement are not uncommon; but the Administration does not greatly influence the decisions taken by the courts nor their enforcement. For though there are police on the lorry routes and crocodiles in the rivers, it is fairly easy for a determined man (or woman) who is dissatisfied with the treatment he has received in the courts to get away. He can usually get to a White farm or to a town, and once there it is not so easy to get him back. Men are not continually running away from the courts, for they usually accept decisions given against them, though appeals from a minor chief's court to the Ngoni Appeal Court are fairly common. Few people take their appeals further to the District Officer, and I have never heard of a case going on appeal beyond the Provincial Commissioner's Court. 692 626 [648] [696]

The general moral approval by the people of the work of the courts which lies behind much of the effectiveness of the Native Court system does not extend automatically to all legal action as such. There is no widely held view that the decisions of the courts must be supported merely because they are the decisions of the courts. Some courts are good, some bad; and some decisions are good, some bad. The great majority of cases that come before a county court are brought by men and women living within the county, but sometimes a litigant begins his suit in a county court not his own, particularly in the Paramount Chief's county court, if he thinks that he will get a better hearing there. Yet chiefs support each other and a case brought before a chief by litigants from another county are sometimes thrown out, in accordance with the Native Courts Ordinance. 692 691

There is little moral sanction attaching to legal procedures, or methods of appeal, or even to the particular sums awarded as damages. The members of courts tend in the main to uphold each other's decisions, so that there is a fair amount of conformity throughout the ten counties. All those who work in courts have in fact an interest in increasing the power of the court system, which the people as a whole have not. Disputants will settle out of court if they can, for it is not so far to walk and the whole process is not so disruptive of social ties, but members of a court will sometimes challenge the right of independent arbitrators, village headmen and the like, to come to any binding decisions. 692 [681] [627]

561 with the main activities of the groups, though it did to some extent illustrate mutual relationships.

Age-Set terms

	Northern Ngoni	*Central Ngoni*
All children	*abanyana*	*ana*
[184 Young men even if married	*amajaha*	*anyamate*
104] Young girls before puberty	*inhakazana*	*nabatsu*
Young girls past puberty	*izintombi*	*anamali*
All married women	*abafazi*	*abazi*
Senior men	*amadoda*	*madode*
Senior women	*amanina*	*manina*

513 One of the most characteristic forms of Ngoni village organization
561 was the *lawesi*, or boys' dormitory. It included the older boys in the group called 'children' and the young men until they married, who were
866 in fact called *amajaha* after they had left the *lawesi* and married and had huts of their own. The age for entering the *lawesi* was approximately seven years, and was as a rule determined by the age when a child began to get his second teeth. When a child was going about the village with several gaps in his front teeth, his companions jeered at him if he still slept in his grandmother's hut, and his father took the view that it was time he stopped playing like a child and took up seriously the job of herding goats and calves. There was often some hesitation, especially among boys who were not so well grown for their age, at taking the plunge and going to live in the *lawesi*, since once made the step could not be retraced. It was primarily an individual decision. It meant leaving the protective affectionate care of the grandmother in the evenings, and the care-free play all day round the mother's hut with meals provided by her, for a different sort of existence altogether. *Lawesi* life was rigorous and was dominated by the senior boys living in the hut. The younger ones were at their mercy, and were made to 'fag' for their elders, clean up the hut, sometimes steal food from their mothers' stores, and were beaten if they were slow or careless, or if they threatened to tell the
[626] elders in the village what went on in the *lawesi*. The main weapon to get boys into the *lawesi* was the ridicule of their fellows. Once members of the *lawesi* group they were disciplined into obedience by threats and beating. The age range within a *lawesi* was often considerable, from seven to seventeen years.

233 All the boys in a *lawesi* who were members of houses possessing
857 cattle—and this as a rule included all sons of Ngoni families of trans-
561 Zambesi clans—had to take part in herding. Cattle-herding was a responsible task and could be an arduous one. The boys got up before dawn, opened the gate of the kraal, and took the cattle to water. They milked the cattle on an open space near the village and carried the milk in wooden jars, gourds or petrol tins to the owner of the cattle, keeping

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugola* supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugola* and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[5]

To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an efficient deterrent of adultery.

Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[5] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually
[561] a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

173 Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment
631 of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local
[613] matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels
[627] between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division.
[621] He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other
[619] chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the
[701] regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[5]

178 The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women, perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social
619 system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages
[618] disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential
[621] system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were,
[561] as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly alignments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organi-
[701] zation, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the
178 bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the
621 former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[5] Based on Bryant, *Olden times*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*mwavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*akosikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Ndunu*, pl. *ndunu*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 470, 472, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various bevies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot intervene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[22] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[23]

Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[22] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.
[23] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

man presenting his request for a gun licence, or for permission to go to Southern Rhodesia, or to move to another village, or whatever it may be, is told first to bring a letter from his chief in support of his request and it will then be considered. Thus the approval of the chief is necessary for a variety of enterprises. 648

A chief may decide not to support a request for a variety of reasons. He does not want to recommend to the Administration projects which will turn out unfavourably, and yet he does not want to oppose unnecessarily the wishes of his people who may begin to drift away into other counties or to Southern Rhodesia if they feel he is being unfair to them. Many of these requests from his people are handled by the court clerk who has custody of the rubber stamps, without whose imprint no letter looks official. Other councillors and advisers may also help with these requests, and may advise the chief, in the light of their own interests and of their estimate of the public interests, on whether or not to support a request. There is thus opportunity for a friend of the chief to block rivals and enemies by seeing that their requests do not go forward. [662] Men who are thwarted in this way can appeal to the Administration, and may perhaps be granted their request. Such action, however, is likely to increase the antagonism of the Native Authority towards them, and in so far as they have defied the authority of the chief by appealing against his decision, they may be censured by their neighbours. Thus what they gain in one respect may be offset by what they lose in another. [626] When the quarrel between a councillor and a man who is, say, trying to open a shop in his village is of long standing and with faults and undisclosed offences on both sides, it may be unwise to risk the whole matter being brought to the notice of the Administration by an appeal over the matter of the shop.

In other situations, where the Administration endeavours to intervene in some matter in which the chief is thought to be dilatory, the Native Authority may shield a man because of the danger of possible repercussions. Thus, for instance, a District Officer on tour found a man living in a village at which he was not registered. He turned the offender over to the Native Court. The offender had a perfectly good defence but his story would have involved reference to incest by an important person and it was therefore undesirable that the District Officer should hear of the matter. Accordingly the Court delayed the hearing of the case on some technicality, and after the District Officer had left the area nothing more was done. 627 648

In the main the Administration presents a united front to the Ngoni, and the words and actions of each Administrative officer 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In contrast to this, the private affairs of the chieftainship, 634
matters connected with royal cattle, disputes among the chief's 622
wives and quarrels between the chief and his affines or close supporters are discussed at the chief's village. Quarrels of an apparently trivial nature, such as a chief's wife's running away with a lorry driver, would in the old days have threatened the whole internal structure of the county segment, and they are still [687]
treated as questions of State by the lieutenants and kinsmen of the chief who attend these meetings. The contrast between these two kinds of assembly is striking. They are described by different vernacular terms,[24] and while any man can attend and speak at a meeting at the court, it would be considered inappropriate for him to intervene in a meeting at the chief's village unless his position in the old residential system was a high one. Women listen to court meetings, but rarely if ever speak, for the Administration works very largely through men and it is men who discuss the kinds of thing in which the Administration is interested. At the chief's village, the interests of the chief's kinswomen and wives are often directly concerned and they themselves contribute to the discussion. The marriages of chiefs established, and to a lesser extent do still [602]
reinforce and establish, affinal ties which cut across the cleavages between segments and which were crucial to the balance of power [578]
within the State. A quarrel between a chief and his wife was a matter of political, and not merely domestic, significance and must therefore be discussed by the chief's political advisers.

The sanction of deportation appears to be employed only in 687
connexion with offences against the chieftainship. Thus a lieu- 627
tenant who embezzled some royal cattle was called before a meeting at his chief's village attended by the important lieutenants in the county, and ordered to leave the country. Similarly, a man who was found drinking with a chief's wife under suspicious circumstances was ordered to leave the country by a tribunal of this kind. He moved first to another county, but was forced to move on again out of Ngoniland. Such actions are sometimes taken without reference to recognized Native Courts or to the Adminis- 648
tration, and the effectiveness of the tribunal's decision depends on 687
the support it has from the people as a whole and from the Native [627]
Authority organization rather than on the ultimate sanctions wielded by the Administration. However, when matters of this

[24] A meeting to discuss matters of general interest is *msonkhano*; one to discuss affairs of the chieftainship is *luŵanzya*. cf. *ku-sonkhana*, to assemble (Nyanja) and *i(li)Sondla*, assembly (Zulu). The different derivation of the words, from Nyanja and Zulu, is significant. *Luŵanzya* also means age-set.

review by the Administration, but in practice the cases are so numerous, the written account of them so brief, and often the handwriting of the record so bad, that it is difficult to make an adequate review. The Administration is able to keep some check on the financial transactions of the courts, and convictions for embezzlement are not uncommon; but the Administration does not greatly influence the decisions taken by the courts nor their enforcement. For though there are police on the lorry routes and crocodiles in the rivers, it is fairly easy for a determined man (or woman) who is dissatisfied with the treatment he has received in the courts to get away. He can usually get to a White farm or to a town, and once there it is not so easy to get him back. Men are not continually running away from the courts, for they usually accept decisions given against them, though appeals from a minor chief's court to the Ngoni Appeal Court are fairly common. Few people take their appeals further to the District Officer, and I have never heard of a case going on appeal beyond the Provincial Commissioner's Court. 692 626 [648] [696]

The general moral approval by the people of the work of the courts which lies behind much of the effectiveness of the Native Court system does not extend automatically to all legal action as such. There is no widely held view that the decisions of the courts must be supported merely because they are the decisions of the courts. Some courts are good, some bad; and some decisions are good, some bad. The great majority of cases that come before a county court are brought by men and women living within the county, but sometimes a litigant begins his suit in a county court not his own, particularly in the Paramount Chief's county court, if he thinks that he will get a better hearing there. Yet chiefs support each other and a case brought before a chief by litigants from another county are sometimes thrown out, in accordance with the Native Courts Ordinance. 692 691

There is little moral sanction attaching to legal procedures, or methods of appeal, or even to the particular sums awarded as damages. The members of courts tend in the main to uphold each other's decisions, so that there is a fair amount of conformity throughout the ten counties. All those who work in courts have in fact an interest in increasing the power of the court system, which the people as a whole have not. Disputants will settle out of court if they can, for it is not so far to walk and the whole process is not so disruptive of social ties, but members of a court will sometimes challenge the right of independent arbitrators, village headmen and the like, to come to any binding decisions. 692 [681] [627]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 pattern covered two generations including the houses of the former
592 chief and the reigning one.

The houses served several purposes in the organization of village life on the one hand, and on the other, provided an important instrument for regulating succession and inheritance, and for carrying out traditional ceremonies and ritual. It was the eldest son of the second house who would, if the *lusungulu* practice was followed, remain behind with the *gogo* village; and he was responsible for conducting traditional ritual and was expected to be able to carry out ceremonial procedure correctly. This was the main function of the *gogo* village and of the man who was head of the male members of the *gogo* house. The corresponding head of the male members of the big house was the owner of the village, and it was his eldest son by his first wife who would normally succeed him as chief or *mulumuzana*. The members of each house had a stake in the property of that house, particularly in the herd of cattle owned by it, and in any goods, such as cloth, bought by the sale of the cattle of the house. The house united the male members who belonged to it through this common ownership of cattle. In Chapter II of Part IV we shall examine further this aspect of belonging to a house.

554 In the organization of village life in villages belonging to chiefs or
592 *alumuzana* the houses established the status of the wives of the owner
562 of the village, and the status of those of his mothers who had come with him. His mother in the *indlunkulu* hut ranked first among her co-widows. The big wife came next, and the wife of the second house after her. Wives attached to the big house ranked above those attached to the second house.

571 The houses fulfilled their most prominent role in the day-to-day activities of the households associated with them. It was in these daily
592 affairs and in planning for future events that the house organization
627 provided the chief channels of authority. The exercise of this authority
562 ranged from instruction in household tasks and emphasis on good standards of housekeeping to settling minor disputes arising from marital quarrels over property and over the custody of children. These minor cases could be settled out of court if the senior women showed that they knew how to listen to complaints and give advice which was accepted, with the result that good relations were restored. The main topics of discussion among the senior women on the verandah of the *indlunkulu* were the ingredients of these minor quarrels and disputes. If, by judicious handling, they could keep the cases out of court, they knew, and so did the village, that their authority was enhanced and their prestige more firmly established.

571 The authority of senior women was further reinforced through their
592 organization of women's labour in household work and in cultivation.
562 This authority in domestic affairs covered a woman's own household and the women and girls attached to it as household servants, the

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

606 in-law replied, "And how am I to wound the
539 winds?"

II. When the father-in-law had gone off, the son-in-law took some maize and went off to set some falling-traps, and one of his traps caught a guinea-fowl, and he took it out, and went and gave it to his wife, saying, "There is a guinea-fowl, cook it; I am going away a long way; I shall be away four days, and for my share you must harden some of the gravy over the fire, the meat you can eat yourself." Then the woman went off and told her father, saying, "That fellow has killed a guinea-fowl, and he tells me I must brown the gravy before the fire for him, and the meat I am to eat, and where he has gone he will remain four days." And the father said, "And how can you brown gravy over a fire, my child?"

III. When the son-in-law returned, he told his wife, "Cook some porridge." And the woman did so, and went with it to her husband. But he looked into the dish and said, "Where is my gravy, that I told you to brown before the fire?" Then the woman went off to tell her father, saying, "He is
539 asking for the gravy." Then the father went off
●627 to tell the villagers, "You must settle a case for
606 me." So the people assembled at the village court in crowds, and (one) said, "Chief of the *Kuka* hut, state your case that we may hear." Then the chief of the *Kuka* hut took up his case and began to speak, saying, "As for me, I bid you ask my son-in-law there, on my account, the things which he has in his heart." Then the people spoke, laying the charge before the son-in-law. And he replied, "Yes, what he says is true about me, but I was at the watch-tower, and I saw the chief of the *Kuka* hut, and he asks of me, saying, "You there, do you just sleep on the watch-tower here, and not keep a look-out over the garden? The arrows I went

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

and forged that you might just keep them by you, 539
and not keep a look-out for what is eating up the 627
maize in the garden." And as for me, I replied, 606
saying, "And you, how do you wound the winds?" So I also went and caught some "meat," that they in their turn should brown some gravy for me, for, seeing they know how to wound the wind with an arrow, they could also brown gravy before a fire; and that is what the case against me is." And the elders said, "That is his complaint, is it? The chief of the *Kuka* hut was in the wrong."

XVI

THE TORTOISE AND THE ANTELOPE

I. A TORTOISE and an Antelope once had an 539
argument. The Antelope said, "Tortoise, are you able to run along with me?" And the Tortoise replied, "Yes, I am able." Then the Tortoise went off to tell his companions, and he said, "We have had a discussion with the Antelope (about running), and he says we must race together, and you, my friends, come along, you must give me your assistance." And the Tortoise began to place them in a long line, and they reached to the plain which they had agreed upon [as the scene of the race]. Then the Antelope said, "Tortoise, come on, let us begin to run." Then the Antelope set off as hard as he could; he runs and runs, and at length calls out, "Hallo, Tortoise!" And the Tortoise replied far in front, "Hallo! I passed long ago." And the Antelope set off again, and again called out, "Where

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

If there are 829
quarrels in a village the headman is blamed by the chief for not controlling 627
his people well. All disputes are best settled out of court, even if they must be 628
referred to court later on. Therefore a quarrel in village A brings to light all the alliances and cleavages which link A with other villages and differentiate it from them. The headman of A appeals to B for support, invoking the historical incident linking them, and hopes to settle affairs of his village with the authority of B's approval behind him. For if the headman of B is a potential ally he is also a potential rival, and the dissident section in A may themselves invoke their link with B and transfer their allegiance to him. Thus although the details of the relationship between A and B, and the historical incident connected with it, may not be widely known there is considerable external pressure on them to maintain their relationship. Connexions of this kind, mainly between villages, but also between chiefdoms, play a large part in contemporary Ngoni life. Men walk twenty miles to a funeral and women carry pots of beer all day in response to ties of this kind.

Thus we see, on the one hand, that tribal legends are widely known, 829
relate to pre-conquest times, and do not directly influence conduct; and, on 173
the other, that legends associated with inter-group relations are known only 628
by the groups concerned, may relate to either before or after 1898, and do directly influence action. Why is there this difference? We may regard the former legends as of significance mainly in external relations and the latter in internal. Within the tribe, and more particularly within the minor chiefdom, inter-group relations are still largely determined by Ngoni themselves, however much they may have altered in form and content since 1898 and however much Ngoni are part of a wide system. Movement between villages is only slightly controlled by the Administration and in quarrelling, in marriage and adultery, beer-drinking and hoeing, Ngoni men and women choose their own allies and enemies. Incidents in reality give rise to inter-group relations and are subsequently invoked to maintain them. History is written not in books but in the names of groups and in the remembered connexions between them, and as these connexions gradually change so local legendary history is gradually rewritten.

In external relations the Ngoni never act as a tribe except within the 829
framework of European-controlled institutions. As yet no myth of origin is 182
needed to explain the fact that Ngoni and Cewa representatives sit together on the Provincial Council save that the Administration put them there. The world of external relations is one of cultural heterogeneity and comparative adequate documentation. In this field legends have only a limited social function. They differentiate tribe X from tribe Y but do not relate them to each other.

Lastly we must consider Ngoni history proper. There have been many 175
alleged accounts of Ngoni history published in Europe and South Africa, 819
but these seem to have had little influence on the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Recently several histories have appeared in the vernacular, and tribal history

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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TABLE I. *Village Types*

Type of village		*Senior resident*
Royal	Capital	First lieutenant
	Regal	First lieutenant
	Chief's	Chief
Cadet		Royal Headman
Commoner		Commoner Headman

This process of village formation may be illustrated from Mpezeni's own county. The capital of the county is the village founded by Mpezeni I for his chief wife and one or two other wives. His heir Singu was born in this village, and when he married he founded two villages of his own which are now regal villages. In the senior of these two Mpezeni II was born, and in about 1925 he founded a new village which is still the chief's village of the county. There are other regal villages in the county founded in a similar manner. 621

This formation of royal villages would, other things being equal, lead to a dispersal of the population. It seems, however, that the major factor in dispersing the population since 1898 has been the formation of independent commoner villages. Many of these villages have histories that go back to the foundation of the village as an independent unit immediately after 1898, and it seems likely that the unsettled conditions of those days and the burning of villages did much to bring about the breakdown of the old system in which the royal villages were more important than they are today. 161 621

The royal villages are more closely connected with the chieftainships than are the commoner villages, and the chiefs visit in them more frequently than in other villages. A dispute in a royal village is usually settled by a meeting in the village itself attended by the local chief, whereas in the case of an ordinary village dispute the matter would be taken to the chief for him to settle in his own village or court. A chief may be called to a royal village to drink beer. The royal herds of cattle are kept in the royal villages, and the chiefs look to the first lieutenants of their royal villages for the well-being of the royal cattle as well as of the inhabitants of the royal villages. All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself,[1] but in as far as the cattle held by most people are concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that 628 [627] 422 231 643

[1] Cf. Cuxhead, p. 27.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and
631 disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each
621 village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the
422 village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief
231 who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village
[643] concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed
[685] by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion
[643] between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small,
631 contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there
621 was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of
648 British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still
●628 formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of
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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the same processes we have seen at work in the formation of segments. Those villages are linked which have a common origin, and the mechanism of dispersal is still the same as in pre-conquest times. Sons of a headman still break out of their natal village and lieutenants and others move off to make their own villages. However, with the decline in polygyny, fewer new villages arise from the formation of new bands of wives by a headman.

Secondly, the village has become more important than before, and village membership is now critical in a wide variety of situations. Thirdly, because it has become easier to move from one village to another than to form a new village, the genealogical structure of the village has become highly diversified as compared with segments of similar size in the old system.

Thus, the transition has been from a State based on a continuously segmenting political system to a minor unit of administration in a modern State. The new order has grown out of the old, not as the result of any professed policy of preserving indigenous forms of political organization, but because the aims of the Administration were essentially conservative, because it was concerned with preserving order in the country as cheaply as possible and did not wish to introduce economic and political changes which would conflict with the supply of labour to other areas scheduled for earlier development; and because for the most part those individuals who occupied powerful positions in the old régime were best able to survive in the struggle for power which determined the eventual form of the new. Therefore, although their entry into the colonial empire was so much more abrupt than that of their matrilineal neighbours, the political system to which Ngoni are now subject bears many more superficial similarities to its former condition than is the case among the Cewa and others. The changes have been great, as we have seen, but the symbols and names remain, with changed significance, to remind Ngoni of their past.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

In the 1930's, in the villages of the *alumuzana*, individuals with the same clan name formed patrilineal groups of an extended family type. The original *alumuzana* were the leaders of groups of persons bearing their clan descent name, who crossed the Zambesi under Zwangendaba or Mputa. In Part II we shall see how these *alumuzana* were settled in the Ngoni kingdoms round the royal villages, with the result that a group of villages of mixed ethnic origin came to be associated with the village regarded as the head village of a clan. Reference is made from time to time in this study to clan heads, and to the head villages of certain clans. There was no head of a Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan who was not regarded as a *mulumuzana*. On the ground that his ancestor crossed the Zambesi with his wives and followers, the head of such a clan was always given that title. In addition to the head village of a *mulumuzana* there were a number of other villages connected with the clan, created partly by the working of the *lusungulu* system of village segmentation, and partly by other sections of the larger villages moving off to make new gardens. The association of a number of villages owned by individuals with the same descent name was due to the original settlement of the *alumuzana* who were given land at varying distances from the royal village. When the Ngoni spoke of 'clan areas' this was the connotation they gave to the term. Village censuses showed that small family groups bearing the same descent name were scattered widely over a number of villages in several of the chiefs' areas. There was, however, in connexion with each clan an area of concentration round the head village where a number of families and individuals with that descent name were living. These were sometimes referred to as clan areas, using the name of the clan with the prefix *ma*, meaning the people of that clan, in central Ngoniland, and with the prefix *u*, meaning the land of the clan, in the northern kingdom.

(c) *The ritual pattern*

In the rest of this study there will be descriptions and analyses of Ngoni marriage and funeral rites, of the puberty rites carried out for each boy and girl, but not in groups in initiation schools, and of the rituals associated with the ownership of cattle and with the ancestor cult. The marriage and funeral rites have South-eastern Bantu affinities, and so has the ritual associated with cattle-keeping and the ancestor cult. The northern Ngoni had a tradition that circumcision was practised among them when they left Natal, and that it was given up while they were in Tanganyika. Giving the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) to the men who were allowed to leave the regiments and settle as married men in civilian life was another ritual of southern origin which the Ngoni gave up soon after the kingdoms were established in Nyasaland.[1] The

[1] The early Europeans in Nyasaland reported that head-rings were worn by all the senior Ngoni men.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

872 go herding. School was sometimes regarded as an easy option where you sat still all day and repeated things after the teacher. This was far from being the case in a village like [875] Enkodlweni where the headmaster was well trained and kept the boys on their toes. In such schools the boys themselves were enthusiastic about learning, and regarded going to school as a dignified and worth-while occupation, and not a childish amusement.

Girls' life in the village

858 When the girls had their second teeth and were acknowledged to have reached the new stage in their development, there was no abrupt transition for them, as for their brothers, from the household circle to the dormitory, or from the women's world to the men's world. They continued as part of the women's world; they changed their occupations and their daily routine on the whole very little; and they went on sleeping in the hut of a widowed aunt or grandmother. All that was said however in the earlier part of the chapter about accountability for their behaviour was as true as for the boys.

561 The Ngoni girls of leading families formed a distinct group, called in the age-set terms 'children' until they were about [565] eleven and then 'immature girls' until they reached puberty. There was in Ngoni thought and practice a clear division between immature and mature girls, and we shall see what this involved in girls' life in Chapters VI and VII. The age-set terms used to distinguish between children and immature girls did not imply any real differences in ways of living, manners and occupations. The girls between about seven and fourteen were looked on as belonging to a 'girls' circle', and this girls' circle had certain distinctive features.

561 In the first place the tendency of the girls to draw apart
562 from the boys of their own age, already evident before the
535 coming of the second teeth, was now more or less complete
628 with the boys' withdrawal into dormitory life and their preoccupation with herding. Later, about the age of twelve

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grandmother with whom they slept, but the other practice was more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan [611] name of their father continued to live in the compound of their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan. In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to remain as a distinctive group. They were members of their [583] father's house until they married; and when that took place it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd belonging to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the carelessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597] grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisability of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

this were used by Ngoni elders to try to express their feelings 535
about their own dances, and were often said to me when we were watching youths and girls practising the *ngoma* dance, the only one allowed in the Ngoni kingdoms for Ngoni young people. On moonlight nights or in the late afternoons, young men and girls took very seriously the perfection of this art of dancing, through practising over and over again a special movement, or a section of the dance. As we have seen, they danced without drums, and all movements and changes of movement were made by a change of voice in the singing, prompted by a sudden impulse in the leader.

The competitive *ngoma* dances took place after harvest in 535
the dry season, and were heralded by one village sending a 628
message to another: 'The *ngoma* of the village of X will come to dance on such and such a day.' As many as fifty girls and sixty or more young men formed a village 'team', and in some dances which I saw they walked eight to ten miles to the other village, and then danced all day. Both teams wore their best clothes, with bead ornaments and headbands, coloured scarves and headcloths. The young men in the dance carried small shields and knobkerries or small axes. The girls had long rods or spears held upside down.

The visiting team danced first, and the adults of the home village were the audience and the judges, deciding, after both teams had performed, which one had 'danced most strongly'. The singing was kept up continuously, the song changing to mark a change of dance step, or a change in the relative positions of the girls' and boys' lines. The points of excellence, as judged by the spectators, were the perfect timing of girls and youths together, and the strong beating of the youths' feet on the dry dung floor of the kraal. When the verdict was announced, the leader of the defeated team went up to the leader of the victorious team and shook hands in Ngoni fashion, saying: 'Yes, we are defeated. Your *ngoma* was stronger.'

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European.

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules.

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls.

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

much opportunity for a man to assess his sweetheart's domestic efficiency and moral character, but he can get information on these matters from other people who live in her vicinity. When he sees a girl in a distant village where he is staying, he has more leisure to see what she is like and can ask his own hosts about her character. Girls visit in the same way as men, and if a girl is anxious to get a husband and fears she may not find one, she may spend most of her time visiting in different villages hoping to attract a suitable man. There is more time for visiting and flirting at the end of the dry season when there is little work to do in the gardens, but marriages are contracted throughout the year.[5]

Young men say that what they like in a girl is a light skin colour, a pretty face, and the ability to dance and to copulate well. Some men, however, say that such a girl might be all right to run after, but for marriage one would also need to know that she could cook porridge. Women say they like a man who is well dressed, who has a good job working for a European, and who has a parting in his hair. Women sometimes wear medicines which are believed to attract men, and men who have no good clothes may borrow the clothes of others in order to attract women.

3. Sexual partners

The relationship between a man and his wife, at least for the first years of their marriage, is spoken of principally in sexual terms, and the sexual activities of the couple are more closely defined by the marriage bond than are their residence and their economic life. Informants say that the reason for the existence of marriage is either 'the work in the house', a euphemism for copulation, or else 'clothes', that is, so that a woman may have someone to buy clothes for her. It is, however, much easier to improvise alternative solutions to the problem of clothing than it is to find alternative means of sexual satisfaction without coming into conflict with law and morality. Furthermore, while we have seen in the old days that the main emphasis was on the fertility of the woman, this has now shifted, and it is her skill in copulation rather than her success in childbearing that is emphasized. Fertility is still valued, but does not appear to form so important a theme in ceremonial, songs, and gossip as among other societies where the principle of unilinear descent has not broken down, and where, therefore, fertility either of a man's wife or of his sister, is a vital necessity for the maintenance of local structure.

The husband-wife relationship is one in which the man is apparently superordinate to his wife, but we shall see that in practice this superordination is not as clear-cut as might at first appear. It is furthermore a relationship in which there are certain prescribed mutual obligations, so that if these obligations are neglected, it is

[5] Cf. Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, p. 69.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unity of full-siblings is the result of the established relationship between their mother and father. A man's relationship with his wife may in turn lead to solidarity between their children, but until his wife has stayed with him for many years and borne him live children their own relationship is always uncertain. He must acknowledge that she too has rights, that she must be clothed and respected and must be slept with. He must not abuse her at a beer party or hit her too often, and he must not try to trap her into adultery. When she runs away, he must go after her to apologize. 602 593

8. The support of relatives

It is the tenuousness of the marriage relationship which necessitates the co-operation of the relatives in the marriage. There are occasions when affines quarrel, as when a young woman is encouraged by her husband's kin to remain in their village to be delivered of her first child and at the same time is under pressure from her own relatives to move back to her own village for the confinement. A man who is anxious to build up his own cluster of huts in a village may attempt to force his sons and daughters to bring their spouses to live near him against the wishes of his children's affines. These struggles, where they occur, are expressed in terms of residence, for it is common residence that welds kinsfolk together. But in general affines co-operate rather than quarrel. Litigation about marriage payments is rare, and frequently divorces are granted without consideration of the return of marriage payments. During a marriage it is more important that the married couple should be exhorted to adjust themselves to each other and be tolerant of each other's foibles, than that each side should insist on its formal rights. Old people try to prevent marriages they consider unsuitable, but they do not usually try to make difficulties once a marriage has taken place. The successful marriages of a man's children bring him grandchildren to care for and play with, and *children's parents-in-law* who will welcome him and give him food, even if they do not always add to his own cluster of huts. 581 602 [691]

To some degree people appear to be afraid of the sorcery of an offended affine, but this is not a well-developed idea, and more frequently people express their reasons for trying to patch up a marriage that is in danger of breaking in terms of the need for everyone to 'live well together', without bringing troubles into the village. The well-being of the village and of the local group of kinsfolk within it has ultimate value for the Ngoni and is an end in itself. It follows that serious quarrels can only be resolved by means of some new residential alignment, involving moves from one cluster to another, and from one village to another. The village itself does not exist in isolation, and a village thrives because of the ties that link it to other villages in the vicinity. Marriages link villages together, by the bonds of affinity which cut across village boundaries, and by the interaction between groups of affines [754] 581 621 [181] 628 602 581

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 in different villages. This distinction between the two groups
602 linked by marriage is symbolised by their spatial separation, and by
581 the existence of 'the man's village' and 'the woman's village', and we have seen how in the story of Daniel and Deborah (p. 82), Daniel wanted Deborah to be warned not in his village but in her own. He wished her own kinsfolk and her own local community to express their condemnation of her conduct, and this could only be done on their own ground. Without their co-operation it would have seemed that it was merely Daniel's relatives who were accusing Deborah, and trying to make trouble for her for no good reason. With the co-operation of her relatives it was possible to pass censure on Deborah with less fear that the marriage might come to an end.

599 It is because the marriage relationship is one which involves other kinsfolk as well as the married couple themselves that the elementary family is not an important grouping in Ngoni society. We have seen that in the old days children left their mother's hut on weaning and went to live with their grandmother or their parents' captor's great wife. A man slept in the same hut as his wife and their unweaned child, but their waking lives were spent with other people. Nowadays the pattern is more variable. Some children stay with their parents until they are old enough to sleep in a dormitory with other children of the same sex. They are fed and clothed by their parents from infancy until they grow up. Yet most old women still gather round themselves groups of three or four grandchildren for whose food and shelter they are responsible. The provision of clothes and school fees is a more difficult thing for an old woman to manage, and for these a child usually turns to its father, if the father is living near. Even the children who live in their parent's hut, however, soon join a play group and spend much of their time away from their parents. Other boys and girls who are
[603] sent home from Southern Rhodesia may have to rely entirely on their grandparents for clothes if their parents do not send money for them. A man who is richer than his neighbours, particularly
[556] if his riches are in money rather than in cattle, is entreated by his relatives to buy them clothes and other necessities, and he may make himself responsible for the clothing of his siblings' children.

Financially, then, the elementary family is a more distinct grouping than in the days when the only form of wealth was cattle, controlled by the heads of segments. But even financially it is not yet a very clear cut grouping and the same is true in other fields of activity. A man and his wife work together in their garden, and they and their children live on its produce, more or less. On the other hand, at the beginning of a marriage they may be dependent on the parents of one or the other for their food and may pool their resources with them. Many meals are taken in common in the village, a group of neighbours cooking for each other in turn and feeding themselves and their children and grandchildren from the same dishes. In court, a woman looks for support to her own kinsfolk

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as well as to her husband and his kin, while a man tries to enlist the support of his own kin but not usually of his wife's kin if the dispute has nothing to do with marital affairs. At birth and death the division of labour and responsibility is mainly on sex lines. In general we may say that the elementary family does not emerge as a grouping of importance because there is no system of elementary families in which it can do so. Village is posed against village in dances, songs, the collection of tax, hunts, division of food, and so on. In other situations, one group of kinsmen act as a body in distinction to another group of kinsmen who are their affines. We have demonstrated this for the ceremonial situations of marriage and for the resolution of quarrels. In the intimacies of the hut, man and wife are in a simple and specific dyadic relationship which does not admit of substitution. To some extent, their infant, from conception to weaning, is a helpless appendage of this relationship. From weaning on, children acquire other social relationships of their own. The distinction drawn between marriage and the care of children is well illustrated by the remark made by an old widow when I asked her why she did not marry again. She replied 'I am now too old for marriage. My job is to look after children.' The missions encourage men and women to bring up and care for their own children, particularly where the children's grandparents are pagan. At the same time the importance of the economic ties that link every Ngoni household with the rest of the world is increasing and it is easier for men to find extra money when they are young and middle-aged than when they become grandparents. These two factors may lead to an increase in the importance of the elementary family, but it is also possible that the number of children sent home from Southern Rhodesia to their grandparents may grow as more women go there to join their husbands, thus increasing the responsibilities of the old towards their young grandchildren.

9. *Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce*

We have seen that whereas in the old days divorce was infrequent, it is now comparatively common. We have also seen that prior to 1898 the kinship structure of the Ngoni was based on localized agnatic and quasi-agnatic lineages, for the captor-captive relationship was similar to that between father and child. These lineages are now no longer effective social groups, and individuals act and live together with cognates and affines related to them in a variety of ways. This parallel change in divorce frequency and in kinship structure provides confirmation for the hypothesis put forward by Gluckman that divorce is rare and difficult in tribes organized on a system of marked father-right, and frequent and easy to obtain in other types.* This hypothesis was suggested by a comparison of different tribes which Gluckman divides into two types. Among

* Gluckman, op. cit., p. 190.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

under the guise of drawing attention to some good Ngoni custom which has been neglected. Thus, for example, a man came to court saying that he was always quarrelling with his wife and that he wished to divorce her. The bench granted the divorce and awarded the woman 30*s.* damages. The litigant protested. The junior member of the bench, a man aged about 25 years, said, "Don't you know, it has always been the custom in this court to award 30*s.* damages against men who divorce their wives?" Yet this was a comparatively recent practice and the litigant's protest seemed, to me, to be quite justified. The young man had been on the bench only about eighteen months. Even without Administrative stimulus, deliberate acts of legislation are not unknown among the Ngoni, but they require considerable discussion and probably a tribal meeting. It is easier, particularly for a court member as junior as the man in question, to appeal to the unwritten corpus of tribal custom when introducing a new rule. An analogous process in our own society is perhaps concealed under the fiction that judges do not make law. Ngoni do not quote specific precedents in court, and in this undocumented environment new decisions, if they are not soon challenged, become part of what has always been the custom since time immemorial.

We may then summarize by saying that their common store of notions about the past provides Ngoni with a means of distinguishing themselves from similar groups at a time when the cultural distinctions between these groups are in fact becoming less and less. In the Courts, appeals to the value of traditional custom are made to gain acceptance for new rulings, while in ordinary life breaches of custom are widespread and are not censured.

When we consider legends associated with particular groups within he tribe the picture is rather different. Separate groups in the population remember, and sometimes act in the light of particular incidents in the past which link them to other similar groups. Thus village A is linked with village B because of some incident in the past when the erstwhile leader of A captured the leader of B, or because at one time the leaders of A and B were brothers. These incidents, and the present inter-group relations with which they are associated, are not known universally but only by the groups concerned and by those near them. Yet in many ways these incidents are of greater practical significance than the more widely known tribal history. The relationships to which they give rise, or rather such of these relationships as have persisted, are remembered at funerals, in the formal exchanges of beer, and in the settlement of quarrels. There are at first glance no sanctions to maintain relationships of this kind, and indeed the very separate existence of two villages A and B may be due to a quarrel followed by a split. But although, for example, when an old woman dies in A there is no way of directly forcing a messenger to carry the news to B, there is in fact a great deal of social pressure on both groups to keep alive the connection between them. This arises from the general responsibility placed on everyone to preserve the peace, that is, to preserve the existing social order intact. If there are

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

If there are 829
quarrels in a village the headman is blamed by the chief for not controlling 627
his people well. All disputes are best settled out of court, even if they must be 628
referred to court later on. Therefore a quarrel in village A brings to light all the alliances and cleavages which link A with other villages and differentiate it from them. The headman of A appeals to B for support, invoking the historical incident linking them, and hopes to settle affairs of his village with the authority of B's approval behind him. For if the headman of B is a potential ally he is also a potential rival, and the dissident section in A may themselves invoke their link with B and transfer their allegiance to him. Thus although the details of the relationship between A and B, and the historical incident connected with it, may not be widely known there is considerable external pressure on them to maintain their relationship. Connexions of this kind, mainly between villages, but also between chiefdoms, play a large part in contemporary Ngoni life. Men walk twenty miles to a funeral and women carry pots of beer all day in response to ties of this kind.

Thus we see, on the one hand, that tribal legends are widely known, 829
relate to pre-conquest times, and do not directly influence conduct; and, on 173
the other, that legends associated with inter-group relations are known only 628
by the groups concerned, may relate to either before or after 1898, and do directly influence action. Why is there this difference? We may regard the former legends as of significance mainly in external relations and the latter in internal. Within the tribe, and more particularly within the minor chiefdom, inter-group relations are still largely determined by Ngoni themselves, however much they may have altered in form and content since 1898 and however much Ngoni are part of a wide system. Movement between villages is only slightly controlled by the Administration and in quarrelling, in marriage and adultery, beer-drinking and hoeing, Ngoni men and women choose their own allies and enemies. Incidents in reality give rise to inter-group relations and are subsequently invoked to maintain them. History is written not in books but in the names of groups and in the remembered connexions between them, and as these connexions gradually change so local legendary history is gradually rewritten.

In external relations the Ngoni never act as a tribe except within the 829
framework of European-controlled institutions. As yet no myth of origin is 182
needed to explain the fact that Ngoni and Cewa representatives sit together on the Provincial Council save that the Administration put them there. The world of external relations is one of cultural heterogeneity and comparative adequate documentation. In this field legends have only a limited social function. They differentiate tribe X from tribe Y but do not relate them to each other.

Lastly we must consider Ngoni history proper. There have been many 175
alleged accounts of Ngoni history published in Europe and South Africa, 819
but these seem to have had little influence on the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Recently several histories have appeared in the vernacular, and tribal history

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest. 647

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping villages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, but this cannot be done openly under the present régime. 628 [643] [648] [692] [669]

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships. 631 64

Sanctions

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exercised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 687 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE 1. *Village Types*

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Type of village		*Senior resident*
Royal	Capital	First lieutenant
	Regal	First lieutenant
	Chief's	Chief
Cadet		Royal Headman
Commoner		Commoner Headman

This process of village formation may be illustrated from Mpezeni's own county. The capital of the county is the village founded by Mpezeni I for his chief wife and one or two other wives. His heir Singu was born in this village, and when he married he founded two villages of his own which are now regal villages. In the senior of these two Mpezeni II was born, and in about 1925 he founded a new village which is still the chief's village of the county. There are other regal villages in the county founded in a similar manner. 621

This formation of royal villages would, other things being equal, lead to a dispersal of the population. It seems, however, that the major factor in dispersing the population since 1898 has been the formation of independent commoner villages. Many of these villages have histories that go back to the foundation of the village as an independent unit immediately after 1898, and it seems likely that the unsettled conditions of those days and the burning of villages did much to bring about the breakdown of the old system in which the royal villages were more important than they are today. 161 621

The royal villages are more closely connected with the chieftainships than are the commoner villages, and the chiefs visit in them more frequently than in other villages. A dispute in a royal village is usually settled by a meeting in the village itself attended by the local chief, whereas in the case of an ordinary village dispute the matter would be taken to the chief for him to settle in his own village or court. A chief may be called to a royal village to drink beer. The royal herds of cattle are kept in the royal villages, and the chiefs look to the first lieutenants of their royal villages for the well-being of the royal cattle as well as of the inhabitants of the royal villages. All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself,[1] but in as far as the cattle held by most people are concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that 628 ● [627] 422 231 643

[1] Cf. Cathcart, p. 27.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Shelters are erected on the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may stay behind to look after the cattle. Streams are in spate at this time of year, and some men build garden byres to which they move their cattle to avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the gardens is important from the point of view of inter-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so that they are adjacent to those of kindred from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in *her* dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organizing public works, and that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as reported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and may be up to 20 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead. Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle

[1] Elmslie, p. 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are 857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve 233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the [868] cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

628 There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into 233 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between 857 the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between [541] the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

233 In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd- 833 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village 857 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief, 631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

call rural districts. By virtue of their membership of rural districts and counties, villages have certain formal relationships with each other which we may regard as mainly political, and which we have discussed in connexion with the organization of the state. But there are other inter-village activities that are not related directly to the tribal political structure. These include hunting, dancing, drinking, trading, and some co-operative economic activities. 628 [631]

Hunting takes place for the most part in the dry season, but hunts may be organized at any time to deal with predatory animals which are causing damage to crops and livestock. Only men and boys hunt. Any man who chooses can organize a hunt, but it is usually a man of middle age with some experience and of some standing in his village who sends out word to the neighbouring villages that he proposes to hunt in such-and-such an area on such-and-such a day. The organizer is referred to as the owner of the hunt, and he is in tactical command. He nominates two men to be in charge of the two wings of the hunt, and himself stays in the middle of the single line abreast in which the hunters arrange themselves. Instructions are shouted from the centre and passed out to the wings. Any animals seen are attacked with knobkerries, spears, dogs, and, if there are any, guns. The owner of the hunt has no special privileges over the animals killed, which are divided between the men who actually kill them and the people who carry them back from the hunt to the village. Attendance at such hunts is not enforced, and if the chase is unsuccessful, people tend to drop out half-way. In the main, people distribute themselves along the line of the hunt in village groups, and the leaders of the wings usually bring with them a large band of hunters from their own villages. There are usually about sixty people on a hunt, coming from perhaps ten different villages. 224 628 [462]

Dancing is an activity that brings people together from many villages. Although girls, and sometimes boys, hold dances in their own villages in the evenings, these dances are thought of as practices rather than as proper dances. The latter take place in connexion with ceremonies of various kinds, and indeed wherever there is beer to drink there is the probability of some sort of dancing. Dances are also held for their own sake, without reference to other forms of social activity. Of these, two are important in promoting inter-village ties. The first, *ngoma*,[1] the most formal of all dances, was danced by regiments in the days when the regimental system was still operative, but 535 628 [279]

[1] Cf. the Zulu dance *ingoma*, and Rand, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 52.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

535 628 is now danced by villages. The important men in one village suggest to another village that this dance should be held in the latter village. If this is agreed, beer is brewed in the second village and on the prearranged day many people from the first village come in procession from their village to the dance. The visiting dancers enter the cattle byre and start to dance. They are joined by people from the home village. The dancers are arranged in two lines, men on one side and women on the other, and the dance consists of a series of virtuoso performances by two or three men and women at a time in the space between the two lines, to the accompaniment of clapping and antiphonal singing. The dance is followed by drinking and more dancing. Later in the year, or in the next year, the host village goes to the home of the visitors, and the performance is repeated. [533]

535 628 883 Of more frequent occurrence are dances involving girls only. These are usually held on Sunday afternoons, and as at the *ngoma* dances, at least two villages are involved. Here the initiative is taken not by the important men but by the senior unmarried girl in the village. She invites a girl of similar status in another village with whom she is acquainted, or whom she has seen dancing, to bring a team of girls to dance in her village. This kind of dance is competitive in that the visitors are opposed by a similar team of girls from the home village, who dance separately from the visitors until, at the end of the session, the two teams combine. That team which has danced best is held to be the winner, although there is always great doubt as to which team this is. The girl who invited the visitors is responsible for seeing that the visiting team is fed, although beer is not provided. No work is done in the gardens on Sundays, so that these dances always attract a large number of onlookers. As with *ngoma*, a return match is danced at some later date. The pairs of villages that are linked in these dance exchanges are not always those that contain many people related to one another. One girl may ask an acquaintance in another village to find a team; in one case the girl who made the invitation did not know the name of the girl he was inviting.

Beer-drinking

273 [271] [574] [272] Beer, water, and tea are the three main drinks of the Ngoni. The ordinary rules of hospitality govern the drinking of water, which is provided for the traveller whenever he asks for some. Tea is sold in the roadside stores known as hotels. Beer is more important socially

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sophisticated informant remarked: 'The Cewa are just slaves, they merely eat. The Ngoni are like the Whites; they eat little and drink much.' 273 262 829

Economic Co-operation

There are other activities which entail inter-village ties. Cattle seek their own fodder, but small stock, pigs, goats, and sheep, are fed on husks and other scraps. A man whose animals have increased beyond his ability to feed them will farm out some of them to his friends, either in his own village or in some neighbouring one. The tender of the animals then exercises some control over the disposal of any natural increase and at the end of the arrangement he is entitled to be given one of the animals. The friends whom a man selects for this task are not always close relatives, and may sometimes be people to whom he can trace no genealogical relationship at all, but whom he may have met, for instance, in Southern Rhodesia. Other people acquire a reputation for integrity, and may be given animals to look after by their acquaintances. Cattle are not disposed of so widely, and there is more often a kinship connexion between the owner and the tender. On the other hand, cattle are more susceptible than small stock to tsetse fly, and in consequence there are many people in the new areas that have been recently resettled who have to keep their cattle in the village of a relative or friend who lives in an area free from fly. 233 476 628

Harvesting of crops is carried out by members of the household except in the case of the aged, who will call on their relatives to help them. Hut-building, making a new section of a garden, clearing the ground prior to planting, and, in particular, weeding the garden during the wet season, are activities that are often carried out by collective effort. Women, particularly pairs of widows, may work together in each other's gardens turn and turn about, and a man may be able to call on relatives, particularly his sons-in-law, to help in his garden without paying them for it. Most of the outside assistance that may be required in a garden is raised by means of a beer-party. The man's wife brews beer, and it is made known in the village and round about that on such-and-such a day there will be a party to hoe in their garden. A dozen or so people go to the garden in the morning, and work until the task set by the owner of the garden is completed. They then move to the village, and are refreshed with beer. Attendance at the beer-party is not restricted to those who have worked in the garden, and at some such parties a jar of beer may be specifically allocated to 241 476 602 273 476 241

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually
[561] a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

173 Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had
631 obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local
[613] matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels
[627] between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division.
[621] He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other
[619] chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the
[701] regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[5]

178 The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women,
619 perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages
[613] disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential
[621] system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within thenation, for the nation began, as it were,
[561] as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly alignments. The age-system remained the basis of military organi-
[701] zation, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the
178 bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the
621 former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[5] Based on Bryant, *Olden time*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[10]

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*isithakazelo*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapundi, Bangoni, Batuta, Bazowa, Bunga, Landeens, Landims, Machendi, Mafiti, Mafitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara,

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820'S

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Soshangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Maviti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Nguni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became

[10] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-16; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] See Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 93.
[12] *Mukomazana*, pl. *abamazana*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzana*, village headman; also Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 segments in what we shall term the Ngoni residential system. The
613 constituent segments of their lineages formed the nuclei of minor
631 segments of the residential system. Using the adjectives 'superior' and 'inferior' to indicate merely relative position, we may say that each Nguni agnatic lineage segment was in general contained within superior segments of greater span and at the same time contained within itself smaller but similar inferior units. This formation is characteristic of all lineage systems, as is well known. The segments of the residential system were arranged in the same way but whereas there were several distinct agnatic lineages, or parts of such lineages, under the political leadership of Zwangendaba, in the residential system all, or nearly all, of these distinct lineages were included within the largest residential segment. In other words, the largest segment of the residential system contained almost the whole of Zwangendaba's following, his regional governors, his and their captives and other followers, as well as his own agnatic kinsmen. Again, whereas the various lineage segments contained only the agnatic relatives of the head of the segment, each segment in the residential system included many captives, men, women and children, as well as an agnatic core.

The segments or units of the residential system were enduring social groups which, by analogy with the usual terminology for lineage systems, we shall call primal segments.[13] The segment of highest order was the State itself (or the greater portion thereof), consisting in 1898 of some 75,000 people, while many of the lowest order segments contained only half a dozen people. Each member of a segment belonged not only to that segment but also to all the superior segments of which it was a part.

173 We shall refer to the man in charge of, or the founder of, a
613 segment as a lord (*mfumu*) and to the members of his segment as his
622 dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord
631 except the Paramount Chief, Zwangendaba, was a dependant of some other lord higher in the hierarchy. A lord was politically responsible for all the men and women in his segment. He was related agnatically to some of the men in his segment and towards
[608] his captives he stood in a quasi-agnatic relationship in that, although he had the same rights and duties towards them as if he had been their father, it was nevertheless possible, and indeed quite usual,
[582] for his captives to marry one another and for him to marry one of his woman captives. In the absence of true agnatic descendants a lord was sometimes succeeded by a quasi-related dependant.

[13] *Cigaûa*, pl. *vigaûa*, from *ku-gaûa*, to divide. cf. Ngonga, *ku-gaûa*, to divide, and Zulu, *isi-gaba*, section or portion divided off from the whole.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*mseni*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*skanikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *ramp*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Ndunu*, pl. *ndunu*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wilson, 'Expedição', pp. 470, 472, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 621 631 together in a cluster of huts, and several clusters together formed a division, inhabited by members of a segment of greater span. Larger segments corresponded to complete villages and the largest segments of all contained many separate villages. The same general pattern of settlement was repeated at successive halting places on the migration, but as a segment grew in size by natural increase and by the addition of more captives, so its settlement grew from a cluster to a division and from a single village to a group of villages. In a large segment with many villages, the constituent inferior segments remained under the political leadership of the lord of the large segment but achieved a certain amount of autonomy. On many occasions the interests of one or more inferior segments diverged from those of the rest of the large segment, from what we shall term the *residue* of the large segment. This divergence of interest sometimes led to the disappearance of the large segment as an effective social unit and, at the highest level in the residential system, to splits in the State itself.

173 595 613 621 631 The first bevy of wives formed by a lord ranked senior to other bevies, and the wife in charge was the lord's great wife. Her eldest son was his main heir and the eldest son of each bevy leader was heir in its own segment. Yet sons, whether heirs or not, were able to establish segments of their own for their wives when they married and these segments remained as distinct social groups when an heir succeeded. Thus a man could be lord of a segment founded by his father and at the same time lord of a smaller segment, within the first, which he had founded himself. This arrangement was of fundamental importance in the working of the residential system, particularly in the formation of those large and politically dominant segments with which we are mainly concerned in this book, and still finds expression in the new villages founded by each reigning county chief. When the Paramount Chief, or one of his sons, founded a segment for a bevy of queens, the new segment was of village size and many men were called by the chief from existing segments to join the new one. As the segment grew in size, minor segments within it broke out to form separate villages of their own and the parent village became the headquarters of the group of villages and of the segment they formed. The headquarters of all large dispersed segments endured as social groups, as villages, despite the continual throwing off of more and more satellites. Thus the number of large villages, each the headquarters of a segment founded for a bevy of a reigning chief, increased as time went on. These villages remain to-day, and Ngoni history is largely the story of the formation and development of the segments associated with them.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Under Zwangendaba's leadership*

When the Ngoni migration began, the greater portion of Zwangendaba's followers belonged to the primal segment founded for the great wife of Hlatshwayo, father of Zwangendaba. When the migration began there were perhaps a thousand people in this segment (this figure is largely guesswork). For convenience of reference we shall refer to the various historically significant segments by numbers. Thus segment 1, with the proper name of Elangeni, is that of Hlatshwayo's great wife. The structural relationship of seventeen numbered segments to each other and to the royal genealogy is shown in Diagram 1. A list of their proper names and of the names of the lords and ladies associated with them, is given in Table II, together with information on three segments superior to segment 1 and on three other segments which cannot be placed on Diagram 1 for lack of information.

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This diagram and the accompanying table are skeletons, showing only those few men and women who were heads of major groups which, partly fortuitously, have endured to the present day and are now large chiefdoms. There were many more queens than the ten shown on the diagram and very many more sons of chiefs, regional governors, lieutenants and other less exalted men and women all of whom were in charge of named segments, many of which still survive, forming part of a single system. The same principles of organization applied at all levels in the residential system. Here we have set out the names and positions of only the major limbs of the tree of State. We must not forget that the minor branches and little twigs were part of the same growing whole.

Segment 1 included the greater portion of the State, but it is clear from Elmslie and Fraser, and made explicit by Read, that the headquarters of several superior segments were also present on the march north. Read states that villages belonging to nine generations of chiefs were still in existence in northern Nyasaland in 1936. There is no direct evidence from Fort Jameson, for there are no headquarters of ancient royal segments there, but there are several villages belonging to the lieutenants of segments founded by Zwangendaba's father. I have therefore included in Table II the three superior segments whose names are given by Chibambo.[17] It is probable that Zwangendaba had succeeded to the position of

[Text continues on page 15]

[17] Read, 'Tradition', pp. 465f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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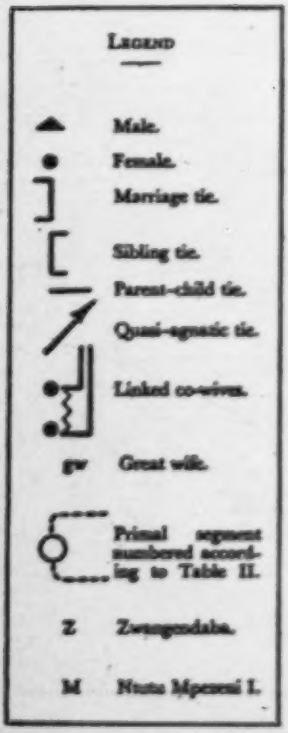
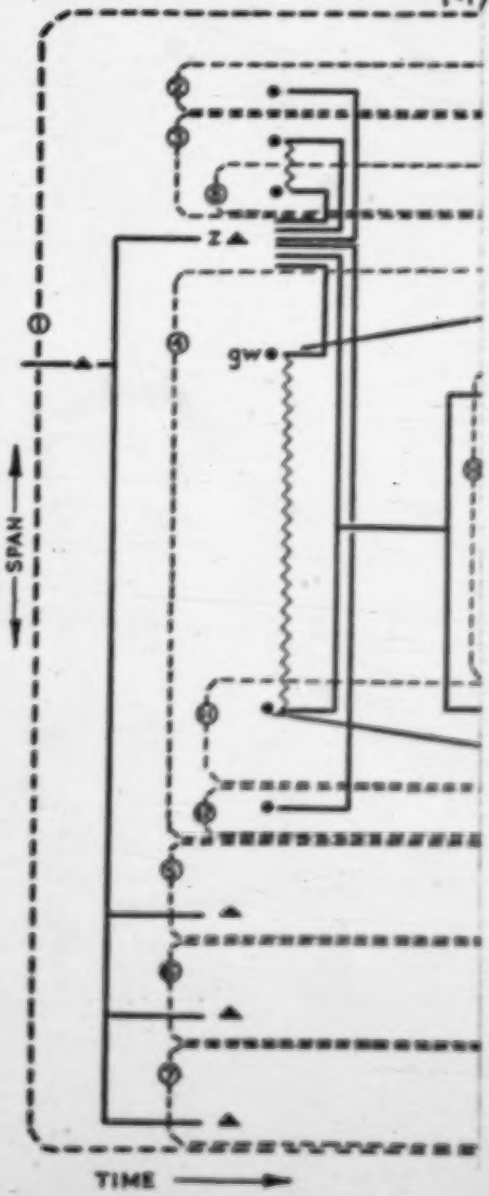
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

SEGMENTS 1-17





[Diagram I (A)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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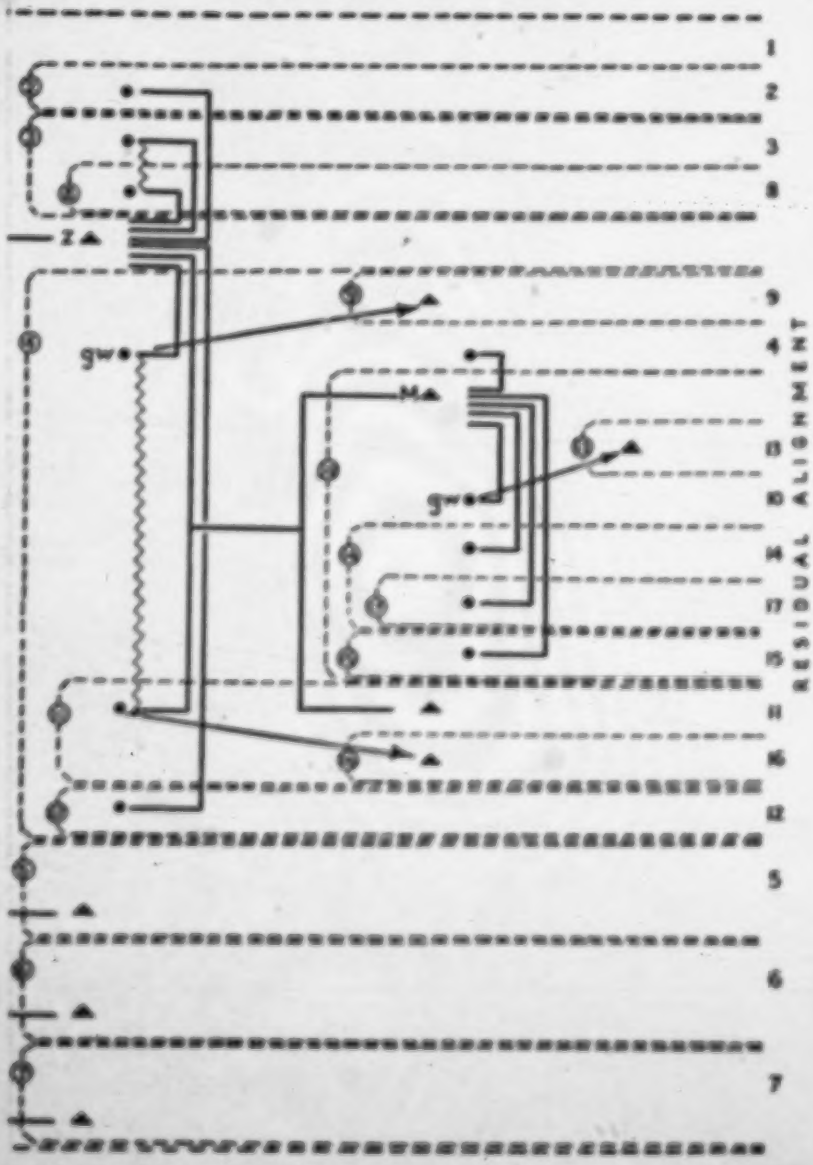
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM
SEGMENTS 1–17



[Diagram I (B)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE II. RESIDENTIAL SEGMENTS OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

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Segment		Lady's husband (in brackets when segment was not the first founded by him)	Lady	Lady's heir
Number	Proper name			
(e)	Enhlakuni	Lonyanda	?	Magalela
(e)	Enhlekheni	Magalela	?	Magangata
(e)	Hoho	Magangata	?	Hlanhwayo
1	Elangeni	Hlanhwayo	Mqamache nsima	Zwangendaba
2	Emciweni	(Zwangendaba)	Mhambose	Mperembe *or* ? Ndindane
3	Ekwendeni	(Zwangendaba)	Munene nsima, *later* Cutu nsima	Mwambera Mtwalo
4	Mtengulani	(Zwangendaba)	Lusiwâwa Lompeta nsumalo	Mpezeni (son of her linked co-wife)
5	Kunyeni	Lomapela	?	Magwambane
6	Nyungweni	Somfula	?	Mkonyeni(a)
7	Engwenyameni (d)	Ntabeni	?	Ngodoyi
8	Erigodhlweni *or* Enchakachakeni	(Zwangendaba)	Munene nsima	Mwambera
9	Cikenkheni	Mnukwa mayoga	?	?
10	Loangeni	Ntutu Mpezeni I	Lupeko pakati	Nsingu
11	Dingeni	(Zwangendaba)	Soseia nsumalo	Nyovhu (second son)
12	Mkuchweni *or* ? Emangeni	(Zwangendaba)	Zinkhave mahlangane	Mlehoko (c)
13	Tundweni	Kapatamoyo	?	?
14	Fumbeni	(Mpezeni I)	Mtirwa nako	Nzermane
15	Chimpinga	(Mpezeni I)	Kukuya Kapili nwala	Sayili
16	Fulaweni	Mahambulani (b)	?	?
17	Ngiyeweni	(Mpezeni I)	Faisako	Maguya
18(e)	Emweyeyeni *or* Mvelekeni *or* ? Mveweni	Zwangendaba	Lusiwâwa nsumalo	——
19(e)	Emaisini	(Zwangendaba)	Mchazana madhlopa	?
20(e)	Emaskocheweni	Mgayi	?	?

[Notes to table are on page 15. Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration. 173 613

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mveleleni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Emciweni)[18] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emsizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18. 595 621 631 643

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[19] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent 173 595 613 643 [273] [682]

[18] Rangeley, 'Mtwale', p. 38, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[19] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 6, 34, 94.

Notes

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mkonyeni, Fort Manning Division.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mkonyeni and present Chief Teleka, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Mshoko, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

[see table on page 14 - analysis]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

mention Ntabeni's group as reaching Victoria Nyanza, and it may be that he has merely attributed this exploit to the wrong group. Such an interpretation would be in accord with the accounts of Elmslie, Young, Chibambo and Rangeley, and following them, Bryant and Tew. All these writers imply that the main body of Ngoni did not go farther north than Ufipa. It also provides a more reasonable chronology, for by Fraser's version we have to assume that within only about five years the main body of Ngoni traversed Tanganyika Territory from south to north and then back again. Lancaster is inconclusive on this point.[10]

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7. *Mpezeni's kingdom*

Mgayi did not live long as regent and after his death the senior lieutenant of segment 1 made Mpezeni chief. There was a considerable shortage of food at the time and this, combined with dissension in the tribe about the succession, appears to have precipitated a further split. A follower of Zwangendaba called Zulu Gama, whose position in the segmentary organization seems not to have been recorded, led his segment off to the east, where in the vicinity of Songea he met with that group of Maseko Ngoni which we have mentioned earlier, and who probably broke off from the Ndebele some time prior to 1835. For a while the two groups operated as one but soon they split apart. Some people stayed on in Songea District, others went south and eventually rounded the southern end of Lake Nyasa to arrive in the Dedza District of southern Nyasaland, where they remain to-day.

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Of those that remained behind under Mpezeni, the principal cleavage was between segments 2, 4, 5 and 6, all led by Mpezeni, on the one side and segment 3 with the headquarters of segment 1 on the other. Led by the senior lieutenant of segment 1, the latter group moved off to the south-east while Mpezeni moved west. While in the country of the Bisa, segment 2 broke off from Mpezeni and after settling for a while in Bemba country as an independent group it eventually went back to join segment 3. Mpezeni, with segments 4, 5 and 6, went south and eventually arrived in Fort Jameson District. His leadership of these segments seems not to have been questioned, but in the other group the senior lieutenant of segment 1 at first supported the headquarters of segment 3 against the claims to the chieftainship made by segment 8. Mtwalo, the son of Zwangendaba who had been put in charge of the headquarters of segment 3, protested, however, that the real head of that segment was Mwambera, head of segment 8, who thus became chief.

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[10] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Sogn, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 274; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 18; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 87; Young, *History*, pp. 115f.; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 29f.; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 467; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 54; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86; Rangeley, 'Mwale', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group
167 consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the
631 now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of
643 Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4. It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwambera's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group,
[648] for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes
173 of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the
613 head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not
643 lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife.
644 However this woman was prompted to independent status by the
595 formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingeni) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers, The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he *could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated* them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

561 227 621 This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regimental system that recent captives, both men and women, were indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appropriate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their [702] coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

561 796 The annual first fruits ceremony (*skwala*) was organized on an age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

[167] The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them 631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [172] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *ingwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and the Ngoni did not seek to vanquish other tribes as states but rather to exhaust them by continued attrition. In later years it appears that a few minor chiefs who lived near the Fort Jameson group did manage to come to some agreement with it, for the Ngoni seem to have raided them only sporadically although warriors passed through their territories *en route* for more distant objectives; but this may have been due to the intervention of European traders. The powerful Cewa chief, Mwase Kasungu, may also have come to some arrangement with the Fort Jameson group even as he did with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. 648 631 [721]

Thus for the most part the external relations of the Ngoni State were warlike. The Ngoni did not trade with their neighbours, or send ambassadors to them, or enter into alliances with them; they merely killed or captured them.[18] The army was organized on a basis of age-sets, but the age-sets as such did not enter into political relations with their enemies. They merely executed the policy of the State or of the major segment to which they belonged. 648 561 701

3. *Officers of State*

The residential and age-set systems formed the structure of the State and there was no separate administrative system. There was little specialization of function among those who wielded power in the State, and those who did have special governmental tasks were all the lords of large segments. 642 631

The nearest approach to special political officers is to be found among the regional governors. A few of Zwangendaba's followers were with him from the beginning of his journey from Natal. Some of these were his agnates, but the descendants of others have now forgotten what relationship, if any, they bore to him. These early followers did not stand in the lord-lieutenant relationship to Zwangendaba, for in Ngoni usage all lieutenants were captives, or the descendants of captives, of their chief. They were organized in segments in the same way as everyone else, but the heads of some of these segments were known by the special term *nduna yaseu* which I have translated as regional governor. Segments headed by regional governors were attached like other large segments to the various royal headquarters, and thus became primary divisions of the segments formed for queens. They differed from the lieutenants of the royal headquarters not only in their title but also in the greater freedom they were allowed in their segments. They kept their own villages separate from the royal villages to which they were attached politically. 631

[18] See pp. 25 f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 The title of regional governor was also awarded by the Paramount Chief to certain of his favoured lieutenants. These promoted lieutenants, with their segments, retained their positions in the residential system unaltered but they were allowed to keep their own captives, a privilege of all regional governors. It seems probable, from incomplete information, that there were about a dozen regional governors of one kind or the other in the Fort Jameson group in 1898.[11] Despite the early date at which some of the regional governors' segments were formed during the migration, they did not expand as rapidly as did the segments led by the chief's queens and lieutenants, and in 1898 they comprised only a small portion of the State. In this respect the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland were organised differently, for there Read writes that the whole country was divided among regional governors, save for a central capital.[12] One of my informants stated that the head of a segment containing more than one village was never known as the lieutenant of his lord but was called, if he were not a kinsman of his lord, by the title regional governor. This is not true to-day, and in view of the large number of present-day commoner villages which claim to have been founded before the conquest, and whose heads are not regional governors, it seems unlikely to have been true earlier. On the other hand, all regional governors to-day are lords of segments containing more than one village, and this may well have been true before 1898 as well.

There were other minor honours similar to the title of regional governor and often awarded to the same people. These were the right to use the royal descent name *jere*, the right to a special praise name *ukhome*, and the right to wear ox bones as a decoration.[13]

Wiese mentions certain special lieutenants who carried out tasks comparable to those of ministers of State. He describes three officials, one a minister for the interior, apparently responsible for the Paramount Chief's domestic affairs; another a minister of war who was also chief priest; and the third a minister of ceremonials at national festivals. He says that the ministers carried out these special tasks in addition to their ordinary duties as lieutenants, and gives the names of two of the three, who were the first lieutenants of two major sections.[14] Thus although there was some differen-

[11] See Table VII. The sample used in this table contains more villages founded by regional governors than would occur in a representative sample.

[12] Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[13] Brown, *Africa*, p. 173; Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 479, and 'Geschichte', p. 198.

[14] Wiese, 'Expedition', pp. 469-70 and 'Geschichte', p. 188. These two men were the first lieutenants of segments 14 and 4.

1:Barcs E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tiation of unction between the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief, it is improbable that there were any special political offices outside the residential system. 645 631

Readmentions a political hierarchy with various titles.[14] At least in the Fort Jameson group, three of the four vernacular terms she gives were used in connexion with the residential system. The fourth, *amaxosa*, was used in Zulu for messengers sent by a chief and a dialectical variant of this (*maxosa*) is so used nowadays at Fort Jameson. They have no executive authority and do not seem to have had any in the past. 631 [624]

Fraser, writing of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, says that there were two groups of lieutenants, one composed of men who became Ngoni before the crossing of the Zambezi and which exercised civil power, and the other which included men of more recent incorporation into the Ngoni tribe and which supplied the war leaders. He implies that the war leaders did not take part in the civil administration.

There seems not to have been this distinction between civil and military lieutenants among the Fort Jameson group. Wiese's 'Minister of War', who was referred to as a Commander-in-Chief by other contemporary writers, was a segment head with the same responsibilities towards his people as anyone else. The regiments had leaders responsible for the tactical control of warriors, some of whom were recently incorporated men, and presumably Fraser is referring to them, but his statement that the man often chosen to lead the whole army had no voice in the council conflicts with Elmslie's account of the same place and period. The war leader, Ng'omomo, who is mentioned by Fraser, acted as regent on the death of the Paramount Chief in northern Nyasaland.[16] 631 701

The village as such had an importance independent of the size or order of segment of which it was headquarters or by which it was inhabited. There were no special terms for distinguishing the heads of large or small segments, for all were lords or ladies. But a special term[17] was used for a village headman, irrespective of the order of segment of which he was lord, provided he was not a lieutenant who had become head of the village in the absence of agnatic descendants of the founder. The use of a special term may have been an indication of the village headman's importance, part of which derived from the control he exercised over the cattle 631 622 [422]

[14] Read, 'Tradition', p. 462. cf. her account of the southern Ngoni in 'Boundaries', p. 16.

[15] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 32. cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 181, 189.

[16] *Induna*. In Zulu, a small or petty chief. cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *ndusa*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, pp. 207*f*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*f*, 109*f*, 196*f*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord's dependants placed under a lieutenant's care became more 631
specifically his dependants and eventually he appointed one or 621
more of the men among them to be his own lieutenants. Thus it 624
was possible for Z to be the lieutenant of Y and at the same time for Y to be the lieutenant of X. When Y died, his son became X's lieutenant or, if Y had no son, Z might succeed him as X's lieutenant.

A lord with but few dependants sometimes appointed one or more of them as his lieutenants without specifically dividing his dependants among them. Thus, a lieutenant might be appointed without the formation of a segment for him, and only later would he differentiate from the rest of his lord's dependants those for whom he was directly responsible.

The ranking of lieutenants was one of the least stable parts of the residential system. In a village under a lord there were lieutenants in charge of segments forming divisions within the village. As their segments grew in size, the lieutenants broke out of the village to found new satellite villages. A new set of lieutenants was gradually appointed to take their places in charge of the people remaining in the headquarters, and in the course of time the new set also broke away from the headquarters village.[51] Though they had moved out from the village the lieutenants still retained their positions as lieutenants within the primal segment of which it was the headquarters. Thus in a large segment containing many villages there was a long ranked roster of lieutenants, of which only the junior members still lived in the segment headquarters. Further proliferation of lieutenants sometimes took place when an heir succeeded as lord of the segment but did not found a new segment of his own. The new lord appointed his own lieutenants, so that within the same segment, and partly within the same settlement, there were two sets of lieutenants, one senior by time of appointment, the other enjoying the favour of the present head of the segment. When in these circumstances one of the senior set died, his eldest son sometimes had difficulty in asserting his position as lieutenant; and in this way the senior set, or part of it, lost control of the segment to the more recently appointed men.

It was in keeping with the expanding social boundaries of the 631
State, and of the high degree of mobility within it, that there was 646
no formally constituted council. Some contemporary accounts [648]
mention a tribal council, but it seems clear that until very recently, when the Administration tried to institute a council with defined membership, there has never been a legislative or executive body

[51] cf. my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 193f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 646 to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various bevies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

643 627 644 The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the [622] village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot inter- [624] vene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[88] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended [579] by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[89]

621 631 Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[88] Wiese, 'Expeditie', p. 470.
[89] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

power. The history of the State and indeed of each subdivision within it was encapsulated in the formal relations between royal headquarters and between segments. Yet the system was always growing and every few years brought a new royal capital, a new chief, new headquarters for the heirs of large segments and new ambitious men as lieutenants. Each generation also brought greater divergence of interest between the constituent parts of each segment and of the State, as we shall discuss later. Before going on to examine the conditions under which the State split we shall turn aside to compare the Ngoni residential system with similar social structures found in some other societies.

4. *Continually segmenting systems*

Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, in their *African Political Systems*, have provided us with a solid foundation for a typology of political systems in simple societies. It is therefore appropriate to consider what place the Ngoni State has in this typology. The authors distinguish three types of political system in Africa,[34] and we shall attempt to determine to which of these the Ngoni State belongs.

Their first type includes those small societies in which everyone is kin to everyone else, and in which political relations are coterminous with kinship relations. It is clear that Ngoni society was not of this kind.

The other two types are those referred to as primitive states, or Group A, and stateless societies, or Group B. Primitive states are characterized by the presence of organized government, i.e. centralised authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions, and of cleavages of wealth, privilege and status corresponding to the distribution of power and authority. In stateless societies there is no government, in this sense, and political relations are primarily regulated by a segmentary system of permanent unilateral descent groups.

This classification is sometimes taken to imply that segmentary systems are found only in stateless societies but not in primitive states. This implication does not follow inevitably from the scheme of classification, though it is compatible with it. It is, however, easy to assume that this implication is intended, for the authors frequently use the adjective segmentary to characterise stateless societies in contrast to primitive states. This implication is false, as can be shown by reference to a number of societies, and cannot have been intended by the authors, for elsewhere Fortes has written that 'It

[34] Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, *African Political Systems*, pp. 6f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have
121 a segmentary social organization'.[25]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[26] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesse segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similrities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumtances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follw the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A ocieties as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political sysem may now be handled as a separate question, providing a clasification cutting across the division into states and stateless societes.

642 We have spoken thnughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a
[643] state, and this usage is inaccord with the definition of a state given
[622] here. The Paramount Cief with his lieutenants exercised supreme authority, there was a lighly organized administrative machine, and there was an organied method of settling disputes within the
[554] State. There were only slight variations in wealth except in the
[554] control of cattle, but pivilege and status were expressed in the residential system and wre inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

121 The presence or abence of a segmentary political system can
631 itself be divided into wo questions; was there a segmentary system, and if so, was it he political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, hen it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[25] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 234.

[26] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 201, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 34, diagrams.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

A wide variety of forms of organization can legitimately be spoken of as segmentary, and can be represented visually by pyramids and triangles. We may even speak of our own system of local government as containing segments (rural districts) which are characteristically grouped together to form segments of higher order (counties) and which are divided internally into segments of lower order (parishes). This *nesting* aspect of segmentation, as we may perhaps call it, by which social groups are arranged in a hierarchy one within another, is of too wide an occurrence to be useful for our purposes. Almost every known political system must be segmentary in this sense. 121

Nor is it the unilineal character of lineage systems which clearly marks them off from others. Until recently it was the general rule in Europe that a child took the nationality of its father, and we were therefore quite justified in talking of European nations as unilineally recruited groups. Yet we do not usually need a typology which places African lineage systems and European nations in the same category.

What then is the particular characteristic of lineage systems which significantly distinguishes them from the fixed social divisions of many states, and which they share with the Ngoni residential system? The critical characteristic seems to me to be that segmentation goes on continually. Every man (or woman) is the potential founder of a segment, and although a segment once formed tends to persist in time, more and more segments of lower and lower order are all the while being formed within it. We cannot count the number of levels at which the State is subdivided, as we can when there is a fixed hierarchy, for these points of subdivision are continually shifting with the passage of time and with change of context. It is difficult to attach labels to segments of different order or of different span, save in precisely defined situations. The magnitude of this difficulty is apparent from Fortes's elaborate descriptive armamentum, with its morphological minimal, effective minimal, nuclear, inner, medial, and maximal lineages, terms referring to successive stages in the life of a single segment, stages which occur at different times in the histories of different segments. The same difficulty arises in describing Ngoni segments, but it is not so pressing, since there was not the same differentiation of function related to degree of segmentation as is found among the Tallensi. 121 631 [171]

Because of this continuous process of segment formation, the system is governed by the same principles at all levels. A group formed in a specific way at a low level eventually becomes a high-level group, and thus at any one time the constancy of past formation 631

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

63| is reflected in present uniformity of organization.[27] Fortes, writing
[121] on the concept of a segmentary society, says

> '. . . It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system . . . the principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.'[28]

171 Here he is describing the egalitarian, homogeneous, stateless
63| society of Taleland, but his description fits Ngoni society very
121 closely. The one significant difference in this matter between Ngoni and Tale society is that Tale society goes back into the unremembered past whereas Ngoni society was founded at a known and remembered time and place. Hence a certain amount of extemporization was necessary to get the system going, to adapt Nguni social organization to the peculiarities of Ngoni life, as we have noted in the relationship between the first Paramount Chief and his companions who became regional governors. Apart from this initial piece of social engineering, the system continued to perpetuate itself until checked by quite different external agencies.

In all these societies, the continually segmenting system has or had political functions. We may well ask if there are other societies in which there are continually segmenting systems lacking political functions. Gluckman has listed a large number of societies stated to possess corporate lineages, including some states as defined above. Some of these, for example the Tswana,[29] appear to organize their internal political relations not on the basis of these corporate lineages but through some separate administrative apparatus. What then is the social function of the lineage system in these societies, and is it continually segmenting? Evans-Pritchard has suggested that segmentation occurs where groups have political functions.[30] Nevertheless, among the Tswana, lineages do segment, even though they have only slight political significance, political action being largely determined by the ward organization.

We shall then take this process of continual formation of segments, which Firth calls the branching or ramifying process,[31]

[27] Fortes, *Web of kinship*, p. 341, suggests the term 'organic' to describe such a system. This word has so many other meanings that I am reluctant to use it.

[28] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 239.

[29] Gluckman in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, p. 4. cf. Schapera, *Tswana law and custom*.

[30] Evans-Pritchard, 'Nuer-speaking peoples', pp. 183f. and 'Nuer of the Southern Sudan', p. 287.

[31] Firth, *Tikopia*, p. 371.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as diagnostic of the presence of the kind of segmentary society in which we are interested. All the societies included by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard in their stateless category, i.e. Logoli, Tallensi and Nuer, have continually segmenting political systems. Of the societies with government, the Zulu were like the Ngoni in being a State and yet having a political system which was continually segmenting. Both of these states were organized by a segmentary system even at the highest level, so that it does not seem necessary to follow Fortes in restricting segmentary systems to only the sub-divisions of states. In Shaka's time various changes came about in Zululand, such as the concentration of the army in a central area, which lessened the importance of the segmentary organization. But in the eighteenth century large-scale relations between and within the Ngoni chiefdoms were governed by the agnatic segmentary organization, that is, by the division of the people into clans, sub-clans, and lineages and by the continual transfer of allegiance by lineage segments from one chief to another. Even during the period of the Zulu empire, the continual segmentation of the constituent tribes was important in maintaining the power of the central government over them.[88]

If one of the main characteristics of the well-known African lineage systems, both in stateless societies like the Nuer, Tallensi, Logoli and Gusii, and in primitive states like the Zulu, is their political function, we may well inquire if these systems are not also one type in a more general category of political systems. Although lineage relations are essentially distinct from kinship relations, a lineage system defines political relations in the idiom of kinship. Thus in agnatic systems, the relationship between territorial groups may be expressed in terms of the relationships between founding ancestors who were brothers or fathers and sons. We have seen how among the Ngoni the relationship between captor and captive, between lord and dependant, and hence the relationship between the segments they founded, was expressed in agnatic terms. The relationship between husband and wife, lord and lady, was employed to define the relationship between the political groups they led, and in this respect the Ngoni system may be seen as taking one stage further the process employed in lineage systems, where most relationships of this kind are phrased agnatically. Among the south-eastern Bantu, however, the relationship between lineage segments founded by paternal half-brothers is defined in terms of their mothers' position as co-wives. Among some central African peoples, this process has been carried even further than

[88] Gluckman, 'Modern Zululand', pp. 147-54.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

among the Ngoni. Thus the device of perpetual kinship among the Yao, by which the holders of certain chiefly offices stand in relation to one another in a fixed arrangement of kinship positions, of Paramount Chief to son and to sister's son and to brother,[88] would seem to be an example of what is essentially the same process as that by which the dominant lineage in one part of Nuerland is conceived of as descended from a brother of the founding ancestor of another dominant lineage. Where a political relationship is expressed in terms of the connexion between husband and wife, rather than between brothers' or sisters' sons, we may find that a woman is used to embody the political relationship, and she then plays what is essentially a political role. The many wives of the Ngoni Paramount Chief were clearly used in roles of this kind. Not only were they rapporteurs for the Chief, as Deare points out,[89] but they were also living symbols of the political relationship between their segments and the State as a whole. Another central African example of this is the Lele institution of 'wife of the village' by which a village, as a group, may stand as daughter's husband or wife's parent to its chief.[90]

Wherever political relationships of this kind are embodied in persons who have private lives of their own, be they queens or sons-in-law of the village, there is bound to be some domestic and inter-personal relationship alongside the corresponding political relationship. But that should not obscure from us the essentially political role played by individuals in these positions. The analogy with the dynastic marriages of Western Europe is clear.

One of the characteristics of lineage systems and of the Ngoni residential system is that the transition from the ties of domesticity and close kinship to purely political relations is a gradual one. The same principles of organization apply at all levels, and it is gradually with the passage of time and with increasing structural separation and internal segmentation that inter-personal relations are replaced by those between groups, and actions based on sentiments of love and hate give way to those based ultimately on an appeal to force. Relations between the larger segments of a lineage, although expressed in the idiom of kinship, and although possibly explainable historically in kinship terms, are relations between political units, whereas the relationship between brothers living under the same roof is not governed by political considerations. The critical point at which relationships of increasing scale become dominantly

[88] Mitchell, 'Social organization of the Yao'
[89] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[90] Tew, 'Polyandry among the Lele'

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

political would seem to be, for example, at the medial lineage among the Tallensi, beyond which generation differences are not recognised; and at the village among the Nuer. It seems probable that in the old Ngoni system the village was also the significant unit, above which relationships were dominantly political and below which they were largely determined by the multiplex sentiments and activities arising out of kinship and domestic association. This is certainly so in modern Ngoniland, although the same principles of organization no longer apply at all levels.

I have described elsewhere the critical position of the modern Ngoni headman, linking the political system with the network of ties of kinship and co-residence operative within the village, and similar conditions have been reported elsewhere by Gluckman and Mitchell. Above the village, whether in a state or in a stateless society, relations are in the main between enduring groups and are defined with respect to interests vital to the survival of these groups, even if expressed in the idiom of kinship.[36]

Granted the existence of primitive states with continually segmenting political systems, such as the Zulu and Ngoni, it is then possible to look at from another point of view the various African political systems for which there is adequate information. In terms of political segmentation on a unilineal basis, states like the Ngoni and Zulu are closer in form to the stateless societies of the Nuer, Tallensi, Gusii and Logoli than to the Nupe and Kede states with their administrative systems largely independent of unilineal affiliation. To document this point fully would take us beyond the scope of this book; our purpose here is merely to emphasize the importance in comparative studies of examining political structures from more than one point of view.

When talking of states, we make the convenient distinction between internal and external political relations. No such simple distinction can be made with stateless societies, for in them relations which are external to one segment are internal to the next higher segment, and yet may still legitimately be regarded as political relations. The pre-Shakan chiefdoms of Zululand formed a system similar to the Tallensi maximal lineages, and we may speak therefore in that instance of a segmentary system regulating political relations between states. Ngoni external relations were not regulated in this way, for the Ngoni were isolated and unique in a region

[36] For this section, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* and 'Kinship among the Nuer'; Fortes, *Web of kinship*; Wagner, *Bantu of North Kavirondo*; Mayer, *Lineage principle in Gusii society*; Gluckman, 'Analysis of a social situation' and 'Kingdom of the Zulu'; Gluckman, *et al.*, 'Village headman'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organised themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[87] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[88] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[87] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[88] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.* Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.*

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

* cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

* cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-3; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Shona kinship*, pp. 1-18; Preston, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-6.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a segment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require considerable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties. Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the Swazi lineage,[41] and perhaps more widely, although in both these societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[41] cf. Hellmann, 'Twee-emboldeloogmoot van die Zulu' and 'Zulu royal', Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 705f., s.v. *izinduna*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40f.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

successive head of a major segment memorialized in this way, but the major divisions of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When split occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fusion had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fusion in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fusion we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[48] Fusion in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fusion was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fusion did not bring into being any new segments, but merely dissolved the highest segment of all as a cohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fusion was a hazardous

[48] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a state of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fusion' to refer to the process of internal subdivision. cf. Fortes, *Web of Kinship*, passim. I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later rejoined it peaceably, but other instances of fission were accompanied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Chwele Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[48] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[49] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force. Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftainship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no mere secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[48] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 30.
[49] Bentley, *Livingstonia*, p. 184; and *Dark Continent*, i, p. 400; Hemsleb, 'Ungoni', passim.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[48] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[48] Wiese, 'Expeditie', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 198; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, [illegible]; Young, [illegible], p. 103.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[68] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
619 and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to
[597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[68] Wiese, 'Expeditie', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mbezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[865] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[49]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organised manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[626] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between
[543] the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[701] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[49] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than were the groups further inland. However, the evidence suggests that no great changes of this kind took place among the Fort Jameson group under Mpezeni, and it is therefore with changes in the external environment of the State that we shall be chiefly concerned.

In this early period, between 1821 and about 1883, there was for most of the time a situation in which the forces attaching people to the State were stronger than those tending to split it. The age-set system, the web of affinal ties, the attachment of segment members to their lord, the reliance of a lord on the support of his dependants, and the external opposition of all non-Ngoni, these all held the State together. Shifts in the balance of power could be made without disrupting the State because the State was continually expanding, and expansion gave it flexibility. The weakest links in the State were at the top, and it was these that were most strained as the State grew in numbers and in degree of segmentation. Under critical conditions, as on the death of the Paramount Chief or when the need for food necessitated a move from one tribal site to another, these were the links that gave way and fresh independent States were formed. Fission in the State led to consolidation of ties in each divergent group, but the same processes leading to further fission began again at once.

During the period of migration the Ngoni flourished. They were successful brigands on the march. Yet they were brigands in a poor land, and despite their military successes their economy remained one of subsistence cultivation, even though others did some of the cultivation for them. They were well organised for war and their enemies were not, but both they and their enemies were poor people relying on shifting cultivation with a poor technology and with access to only moderately valuable natural resources. The hinterland of Africa provided the Ngoni with an area within which they could operate successfully, but this area was bounded by the lands of wealthier and mightier peoples. Towards the end of the century the boundaries of the area began to contract. The Ngoni found themselves in conflict not with subsistence cultivators using hoes and spears, but with peoples using writing and guns and possessing apparently limitless resources of cloth, beads and gunpowder. We now have to turn to the story of the Ngoni struggle with these Arab and European invaders.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

Madunga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Twenga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Ngungu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deane remarked that the 'King had two other sons, younger than Tainko, named Zainane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[88] Swann's report for 1898, *B.C.A.C.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1899), p. 1.
[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.
[90] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 94; Chimamba, *My Ngoni*, p. 93; cf. Young, *Malawi*, p. 110, who mentions the role played by witch-finders in this incident.
[91] As reported by Warren in June 1898, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[92] Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 455.
[93] Deane, 'Diary extract', 11 May. In modern spelling, Ngungu, Nzermane, and Madzimai.
[94] *ibid.*, fn. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to recover under bush fallow. The long-term carrying capacity of the land before the conquest cannot have been much greater than its present average value of 25 persons to the square mile.[144] Thus it is certain that in pre-conquest times the Ngoni were settled at a density even more in excess of the critical value than it is now, despite alienation. There cannot have been much cultivable land in reserve and the State was exhausting the wealth of its own soil as well as drawing on the resources of its neighbours. Thus even if the large villages had not been burnt, the same number of people could not for long have continued to live in them practising subsistence agriculture. A reduction in the density of population necessarily involved under this economy a reduction in the size of villages, for Ngoni do not like to live more than an hour's walk from their gardens. As it was, the villages were burnt, many Ngoni of Crown origin left Ngoniland, and much of the more densely settled land, carrying up to 140 persons to the square mile, was alienated to Europeans within six years of the war.[145] The arrangement of persons over the land and the activities they carried on were both dramatically altered by the European conquest. It is, therefore, not surprising that the old society was so drastically changed at the same time. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as we shall see, the forms of grouping of the past have influenced the forms of the new society.

In brief, the old political system was a system of segments, the new one is a system of villages and counties. The county segment links the two systems, but there is no function in the new order for segments embracing several counties or for those that embrace only part of a county. Within the village, the segmentary processes still go on, but at this level of organization we are dealing with kinship rather than politics. When a segment grows beyond the bounds of a single village, it begins to fade away, and we are left with a network of ties which link villages with one another but which do not define mutually exclusive groups as existed in pre-conquest times. The uncertainty about how counties should be divided internally is an indication of the lack of function of these intermediate segments. For some purposes, such as the organization of royal hunts, a county is divided into a number of rural districts. These are geographically defined areas, and it is sometimes possible to say that such-and-such a man, usually a senior lieutenant of the county segment, is the most important person in such-and-such a rural area. However, the recognizable rural districts in a county do not

[144] Allan, *Land Usage*, pp. 16-17.
[145] *N.R.R.G.C.*, II, 2 (15 March 1924), p. 30.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

always exhaust its total area and districts sometimes overlap. When I inquired of chiefs and their councillors how their counties were subdivided in terms of allegiance, rather than area, I was rarely given a clear answer. The names of various men of importance in the county were mentioned, but there was no consensus about their relative status or the limits of their territories. In the present system village headmen have definite responsibilities and so have county chiefs, but there are no intermediate posts. Segments have given way to counties and villages.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These decisions have been taken within frames of reference beyond the reach of our analysis and beyond the reach of Ngoni persuasion. We are here concerned with the way in which Ngoni society has been adapted and has adapted itself to these diverse intrusions from outside.

3. *Chiefs*

In the old residential system there was no definite category of persons whom we regard as chiefs. In the literature the lords of major segments are sometimes called chiefs, sometimes induna (i.e. lieutenants), but it is clear that the importance of any particular segment varied from one time and situation to another, and that the only constant relations between positions in the social structure were vertical ones, between lord and dependant, and not horizontal, between persons at the same level in the hierarchy but in different parts of it. The administrative scheme introduced by the Whites provided for horizontal categorization as well as vertical grouping. There were to be a definite number of chiefs, district headmen, and later village headmen, whose names would appear on the Administration's files. The only indigenous categories of this kind were those of Paramount Chief and regional governor, and for this reason alone it was inevitable that the relationship between the old and new systems should be complex. Although the young Mpezeni II was not the only person to be called chief, his superior status was always recognized and later received formal ratification in the qualification Paramount. The regional governors may, perhaps, have formed a category of persons at the same level in the old hierarchy, but they were not very numerous, perhaps only a dozen in number, and under the new dispensation some managed to become chiefs or district headmen, while others failed to do so. Village headmen in the old system were lords of segments of many different orders of segmentation and of varying importance. If the large pre-conquest villages had continued, then perhaps their heads might have secured Administrative recognition. As it was, post-conquest settlements were all much smaller and there were more of them.

Apart from these formal considerations, the peculiar circumstances of the war introduced distortion. Some important people were killed in the fighting, others ran away, and the followers of others were scattered. More significantly, the arrival of the Administration, of traders and missions, provided means whereby people whose segments were of minor importance could advance themselves politically and gain control of large sections of the population.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

In these three counties there were no instances of two other types of village found rarely in Ngoniland. Occasionally an immigrant labourer working on the Fort Jameson tobacco farms manages to attract sufficient followers from among other labourers and his local affines to found a new village in an Ngoni chiefdom. The other rare type of village is formed by direct administrative action. The Administration has been largely concerned to amalgamate existing villages rather than to create new ones. In at least one instance, however, scattered clusters of huts inhabited by people who had fled from several different villages to avoid coming under agricultural control have been united into a new village under a headman of their own choosing. One example of each of these rare types of village is included in the sample of villages analysed in Table VII (p. 135).

TABLE IV. ORIGIN OF VILLAGES IN SELECTED COUNTIES, 1948

	Number of villages in county, classified by origin				
County	*County segment*	*Other segment under Mpezeni*	*Other Ngoni groups*	*Other tribes, joining Ngoni after 1898*	*Total*
X	60 (72%)	4 (5%)	1 (1%)	18 (22%)	83 (100%)
Y	26 (55%)	10 (21%)	0 (0%)	11 (23%)	47 (100%)
Z	59 (70%)	16 (19%)	0 (0%)	9 (11%)	84 (100%)
Total	145 (68%)	30 (14%)	1 (0.5%)	38 (18%)	214 (100%)

Number of counties in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 10
Number of villages in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 540 approximately

It will be seen from Table IV that about two-thirds of the villages in each of the selected counties belong to their own county segment. It is to villages in this category that the ties of a county chief are strongest. Here old and new systems are in accord and the chief acts both as traditional lord of the segment as well as head of the Native Authority. Villages in their county segment appear to be

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more meticulous than others in such matters as discussing proposed changes of site with the county chief and in reporting important deaths to him.

The proportion of villages in each county belonging to other segments under Mpezeni varies from 5 per cent to 21 per cent. These are villages which chose, or were forced, to move away from the chief to whom they were attached in segmentary terms, or else villages belonging to major segments whose lords did not become chiefs. Villages in this category have ties that in certain situations, as when there is a serious quarrel, link them more closely with some other county than with their own. In any county where there are many villages of this kind the solidarity of the county as a social group is not great. The ruling chief has many rivals who seek to divide his county and to become chiefs themselves. We must distinguish here between villages in one county which belong to the segment of another and those interloping villages which belong to one county but are situated in the territory of another. We shall discuss interloping villages later (p. 128) in connexion with the territorial aspect of counties.

In Nyasaland the history of administration has been separate from that of Northern Rhodesia, but the Ngoni population there also has divided itself on segmentary lines. For many years the two principal leaders recognized by the Administration have been the heads of segments 5 and 6, and these segments form the core of the two counties they control. The two county chiefs are now Native Authorities and join with an adjacent Cewa chief to form the Fort Manning Council of Chiefs. This acts as the Native administrative body for the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District.

The geographical distribution of the twelve counties, the neighbouring chiefdoms of other tribes, and the tracts of alienated land are shown in Map D.

The twelve county segments, ten in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, are, in the nomenclature of Chapter I, segments 4 to 6 and 9 to 17. We shall refer to counties in the same way by the numbers of the segments corresponding to them. Thus county 4 is the county whose segment is number 4, and so on. County 10 is the Paramount Chief's county. Some of the county segments are primal, others are residual segments left after the formation of primal segments of lower order. The definition of the segment associated with each county is indicated in Table V. This table merely restates information implicit in Diagram 1. The hereditary names of county chiefs are also given.

[Text continues on page 121]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP D. STATUTORY DIVISION OF LAND, FORT JAMIESON 1949

International Boundary.

N. Charterland Concession, Northern Boundary.

Statutory Division Boundary.

County Boundary.

Farmland in non-African ownership.

Native Reserves.

Native Trust land, crown land and disposed land, treated as if it were Native Trust land.

Portuguese East Africa.

County headquarters.

[p. 120]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE V. COUNTY SEGMENTS

County	Specification of county segment	Hereditary name of county chief
4	Residual after formation of segments 9 to 12	Madzimawe
5	Primal	Zulu
6	Primal	Mlonyeni
7	Primal	Mzukwa
10(a)	Residual after formation of segments 13 to 15	Mpezeni
11	Residual after formation of segment 16	Mtholo
12	Primal	Mshawa
13	Primal	Kapatamoyo
14	Residual after formation of segment 17	Nzermane
15	Primal	Sayili
16	Primal	Teleka (b)
17	Primal	Maguya

(a) Paramount Chief's county.
(b) The first chief of this county was known as Mlonyeni. He was succeeded by his brother, who kept his own name of Teleka. The similarity of name with the chief of segment 6 was accidental.

[County numbers refer to map on page 120, category III.—Analysis]

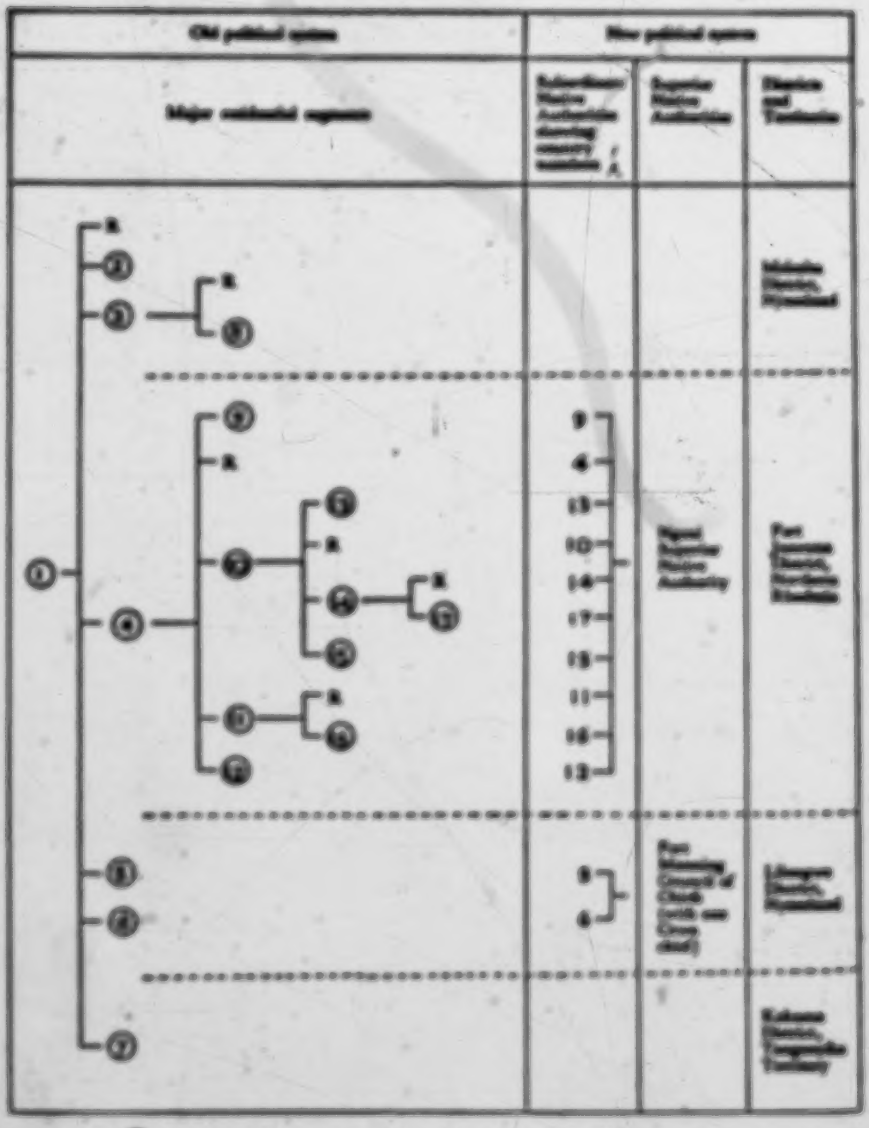
The county segments are not all of the same order of segmentation, yet the counties occupy positions of equivalence in the Native Authority. Each of the eleven counties under minor chiefs is, or has been for most of the time, the area under the control of a Subordinate Native Authority and also the area of jurisdiction of a second-class Native Court. According to the *Official Gazette* the Paramount Chief's county appears not to have been under any Subordinate Native Authority, nor does it seem to have been provided with a second-class court, but in some respects action takes place as if there were such an authority and court. The Superior Native Authority is responsible for all ten counties in Northern Rhodesia and there is a first-class Native Court for the same area. Thus the structural alignment of the twelve counties is markedly different from that of the segments corresponding to them. In practice the relations existing between the twelve counties and

[Text continues on page 123]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611
621
631

DIAGRAM 4. OLD AND NEW POLITICAL SYSTEMS RELATED



(1) Residential segment, numbered as in Table II.

9 County.

R Residual segment.

[County numbers correspond to those on map on page 120 category 116.-Analyst]

[p. 122]

[The notes to this chart are on page 123.-Analyst]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

between their leaders are influenced by both their relative positions in the Native Authority scheme and the position of the county segments, as well as by new interests that have emerged. The formal relationship between the alignments of segments and counties is set out in Diagram 4. This diagram also shows the relationship, at a higher level, between some of the other independent Ngoni groups and the major political divisions of British Africa.

In each county the chief, who does not live in the capital but in a village of his own, is head of the county segment and it seems probable that during the early years of the Administration it was the affiliation of villages within their old residential segments that provided the basis for the groupings of convenience which eventually crystallized into counties. In one or two instances succession to headship of the segment and county has been plainly manipulated, but the traditional rules of succession have not been outraged. Where the county segment is a residual one, the county chief may be also head of some segment of higher order. Thus the chief of county 11 is head of primal segment 11 although his county is only the residual segment after the formation of segment 16; county chief 14 is head of primal segment 14; and the Paramount Chief is head of primal segments 4 and 10.

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[1] These Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba are not shown on this diagram.

(a) A group under Magodi separated itself from either segment 2 or 3 and is now settled in Lundazi District, Northern Rhodesia.

(b) A group led by Zulu Gama is now settled in Songea District, Tanganyika Territory. The segment corresponding to this group appears to have been formed within segment 1, but I do not know what relation it bears to the other segments nor by what process it was formed. The western part of this group is still led by a descendant of Zulu Gama, but a descendant of one of his associates named Mbunzani now leads the eastern part.

(c) A group under Chombo ndhlovu is settled in Dowa District, Nyasaland. Some authority says it was formed within segment 4, others within the residue of segment 1. He was a lieutenant of either Zwangendaba or Mpezeni.

The two Ngoni groups which do not stem from Zwangendaba cannot be fitted into the diagram. They are located as follows.

(d) The Southern Nyasaland Ngoni, who broke away from the Southern Rhodesia Ndebele and who were led originally by Mputa, are now settled in Ncheu and Dedza Districts, Nyasaland, and in Chimanimani of Angoche, District of Tete, Portuguese East Africa.

(e) The Ngoni group led by Soshangane are now settled in the lower Limpopo Valley, Gazaland, Portuguese East Africa.

There are a few small Ngoni groups in the Shire Valley, Nyasaland, some of which have their own minor chiefs. There are also many Ngoni men and women in the towns of southern and eastern Africa, but they are not organized into political groups on a tribal basis.

[These notes refer to the chart on page 122 - Analysis]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

3. *Relative status of Chiefs*

There was nothing inherent in the residential system which facilitated the emergence of twelve, and only twelve, counties from Mpezeni's people. Each major segment already had a large number of lesser segments within it in 1898, and it was during the unsettled years that followed the conquest, when new schemes of organization were tried out, when fresh occupants were sought for existing posts, and when the spatial distribution of people was being radically altered, that these twelve gradually emerged. Considerations of size do not seem to have been very important, for there is a wide variation in the size of counties. However, with the development of the Native Authority and Native Court, there is an upper limit to the size of the county which can be served adequately by a single court and possibly by a single minor chief, and this shows itself in the moves towards forming sub-counties within one or two of the larger ones. Yet in view of administrative attempts to do away with certain chiefs, it seems that in its eyes the Ngoni have too many rather than too few chiefs. The order of segmentation is not critical, as we have seen. Nor has there been merely an ossification of the formal structure as it was at the moment of conquest, as is often the case when a fluid society is suddenly put into a rigid mould. Wiese in 1891 wrote that Ngoniland was divided into four districts.[30] In our terms, these were as follows:

(a) Primal segment 11.
(b) Primal segment 14.
(c) Residual segment 10 after 14 was formed.
(d) Residual segment 4 after 10 and 11 were formed.

Of these four districts, the first has given rise to two counties, 11 and 16; the second to two, 14 and 17; the third to three, 10, 13 and 15; and the fourth to three, 4, 9 and 12. Wiese does not indicate in what districts he would place segments 5 and 6.

The fortuitous manner in which the counties have emerged is illustrated by the fact that for certain purposes one of the counties is treated as if it were two. At one time, when there were more administrative divisions than there are now, it was divided into two areas, and this arrangement still persists for tax collection. Other counties have only one tax register book each, but this one has two.

In genealogical terms also, the emergence of the twelve chiefs appears to have been fortuitous. For example, the second wife of Mpezeni I in segment 10, after the formation of segments 14 and 15,

[30] Wiese, 'Expedition', pp. 469-70.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after Naingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important segment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16.

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kupili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief.

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units*

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1930 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 reserves were amended, and as existing gardens were exhausted.
634 Movement of this kind did not greatly affect political allegiance, so
178 that not all the villages acknowledging the control of a minor chief were built in his vicinity. Coxhead mentions seven defined territorial units in 1914, but by the time I began fieldwork in 1946 their boundaries had been forgotten.[81] Most of the villages in any one county were clustered together, with the capital village and the chief's village somewhere in the middle of the cluster, but there were also more distant villages situated among those belonging to other counties. The next stage of development appears to have been the definition of county boundaries, so that by 1946 it was possible to speak of some villages as situated in one county and owing allegiance to another. Most of these interloping villages, as we may call them, belonged to the segment of the county to which they owed allegiance. They were a bone of contention between chiefs, for although each chief desires as many villages as possible
[311] under his control, he has only a limited amount of land in his county with which to satisfy his people. An analogous situation is found in some Welsh sheep farms, where each farmer likes to own as many sheep as possible but hopes they will graze on someone else's land. The chief in political control of an interloping village endeavoured to maintain his control at a distance and at the same time to make use of the land in the local chief's county, while the latter had to decide between trying to make the interloping village shift its allegiance so as to increase his own following and trying to get it to move away so as to give his people more land. In 1947 and 1948,
[648] to avoid such difficulties between chiefs, the Administration defined county boundaries precisely and insisted that all villages within the area of a county should be under the control of the county chief.

Thus, in the development of the county as a social group, ties
631 of segmentary affiliation have been gradually replaced by those of
634 territorial propinquity. This replacement is not yet complete, nor
648 has it arisen merely as a consequence of Administrative action in
178 the last few years. Village histories show that in many instances a village changed from attachment to the head of its major segment to attachment to the local county chief many years ago and without prompting from the Administration. Villagers marry their neigh-
[582] bours irrespective of county affiliation and thus build up ties which link them to the local county. It may be inconvenient to walk a long way to the court and county meetings of a distant chief, particularly if the local chief appears to listen more readily to his people's complaints and advice.

[81] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22, 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

178 621 648 [601] agnation of the small segments to what I have termed an omni-directional system), has increased the importance of the single village. After 1898 the Administration endeavoured to bring the people back into villages of moderate size which could be easily supervised by the Administration acting through chiefs.[30] In 1910 a comprehensive scheme of Native reserves was proposed. To facilitate the introduction of the scheme, many small villages were amalgamated with others near by to form units of forty huts or more. The larger groups of composite villages were to form the nuclei of the reserves.[31] After 1930, when villages began to spread out again, many of the enforced amalgamations came to an end. The Administrative rules that every man must live in a recognised village and that a village with less than ten tax-paying men could not be recognised were not always enforced, although they were not repealed until 1945. Administrative recognition has been an important consideration in determining the size of villages but it has not been the only one.

621 681 178 In the residential system, the process of segmentation did not stop with the founding of the segments we now know as county segments. Already in 1898 there were very many more segments in being than the few we have shown in Diagram 1. There we have indicated the position of the major branches of the tree of State but have omitted the hundreds of minor limbs and thousands of twigs which made up the whole. Even if we restrict our attention to segments founded before 1898 we find within any county segment to-day many smaller groups, some of them divisions, others single villages, and a few containing several villages, which are in fact inferior segments formed by one or other of the processes we discussed in Chapter I. Lieutenants and others have made their own segments, junior sons have left their natal villages, and so on. The processes of segment formation since 1898 have not been identical with those prevailing before the conquest, for the quasi-agnatic structure of segments has been modified and segments of recent formation, if in fact we can legitimately call them segments at all, are not organized in the same hierarchical manner as in the old residential system. We shall discuss the formation of small social groups in a later part of our study, the analysis of village life. 178 634 621 Here, at the county level, we have to deal with what is essentially a continuation of a pre-conquest process. Each successive head of a county segment, i.e. each county chief, has formed his own new segment within that of his predecessor. Thus, for instance, where

[30] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902, p. 2, and 1903, p. 2.
[31] *M.R.A.*, p. 108.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's* village, as I have defined them elsewhere.[10] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingo or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[10] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 209-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F25 Ngoni F25
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and village headmen looked after them. About half the cattle in Ngoniland were captured during the fighting of 1898 and although many of these were returned to the Ngoni, they were soon disposed of to White traders. To-day, many of the cattle in royal (i.e. capital, regal and chief's) villages are said to belong to the Paramount Chief. This statement of royal ownership is now not merely one referring to political overlordship, for these beasts are contrasted with others which belong to commoners and to other chiefs

TABLE VII. VILLAGES FOUNDED BEFORE AND AFTER 1898

How founded or incorporated in the Ngoni State	*Type of present-day village*					
	Royal			*Cadet*	*Commoner*	*Total*
	Capital	*Regal*	*Chief's*			
Founded by regional governors or their successors prior to creation of the Ngoni State	0	0	0	0	3	3
Founded before 1898 to accommodate other segments of the residential system	1	6	0	1	15	23
Total known to have been founded before 1898	1	6	0	1	18	26
Founded to accommodate segments of the residential system, date unknown	0	0	0	1	11	12
Founded after 1898 to accommodate segments of the residential system or their modern equivalents	0	2	0	4	20	26
Founded outside the Ngoni State, date unknown, entering it after 1898	0	0	0	0	6	6
Founded in Ngoniland by a labour immigrant after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Founded by direct Administrative action after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total known to have been founded or incorporated after 1898	0	2	0	4	28	34
Grand total	1	8	0	6	67	82

Sample collected casually in the general course of fieldwork.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small, contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

guish them from their neighbours are no more significant than the many varieties of custom and belief which are to be found in every Ngoni village. They do not form a group among themselves, their members participate in all communal activities in their counties and are to be found at all levels of the Native Authority organization below that of chief. They are linked by kinship to their neighbours. The two Nyasaland counties, however, include relatively large areas where there are only Cewa-speaking villages, and many of these claim that they have been placed under Ngoni rule only by Administrative action. From time to time they have made efforts to break away and to attach themselves to some neighbouring Cewa chief or to establish a separate chiefdom. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the Ngoni chiefs, with the villages in their county segments, and their Cewa-speaking subjects. It will be remembered that the two Nyasaland chiefdoms represent the head of the eastern movement of Mpezeni's group, and that some of the settlement across the border took place as late as 1897. It is not surprising therefore that in these two counties assimilation of Cewa captives and immigrants has not proceeded so far as in the longer established counties in Northern Rhodesia.

11. *Conclusion*

In this study we have attempted to show what has happened in Ngoni political life during a period of 130 years. To-day Ngoni society is changing but this has not always been so. Prior to the arrival of Wiese in 1886, the actually existing social relations were changing, but the form of the social structure remained the same. Each new segment developed along lines that were already known and each time the State split, the new States were copies of the old. A system of this kind could not have lasted for long, for the supply of new recruits to the Ngoni States must have sooner or later been exhausted. In Africa, even if the overall conditions facilitated the emergence of this kind of migratory militarism, they were particularly unfavourable for its prolonged continuation. The Arabs and the European Powers behind them were closing in on the centre of Africa, and Ngoni days were numbered. Then came the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898 and the emergence of a new system, in which some of the actually existing political groups, and the relations between them, appear to have a much greater stability than before. But at the same time society as a whole has become much more diversified, the spatial distribution of men and women in significant relationship with one another has become highly complicated, and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

new external factors are operating. There has been a change in the scale of social relationships, and Ngoni men and women form part of a large-scale society in which events in one distant part of the system affect events in another part. The history and analysis of this change lies largely outside the scope of this study, and we have restricted ourselves to the way in which the political system of the tribe has adapted itself and been adapted in the changing society. The Ngoni sovereign State has become more and more like a rural district council in a backward area; foreign policy has given place to Native policy; social mobility has been restricted to the lowest caste in a plural society; and the great warrior chief has become in effect the only member of the Administration who never goes home to Britain on leave. But in the eyes of his people, the Paramount Chief still belongs to the Ngoni, and not to the Administration.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

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CHAPTER II

THE NGONI KINGDOMS

In 1935, by the Native Authorities Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance, Mbelwa was recognized as Paramount of the northern Ngoni kingdom with six Subordinate Native Authorities under him, and his court was constituted the appeal court for their six courts. The same procedure was followed in the central kingdom for Paramount Gomani with six Subordinate Native Authorities, and his court as the appeal court for their courts. They were the only rulers in Nyasaland with S.N.A.[1] under them. Two other chiefs, Cikulamayembe of the Henga in Mzimba district and Kyungu of the Ngonde in North Nyasa district, had respectively four and five courts subordinate to them, but the chiefs owning these courts were not recognized as their subordinates. The Ngoni comment on these ordinances was 'Ha! Now they see what big chiefs we have. Only our chiefs are called *inkosi*.'

The northern kingdom was in Mzimba district, and Paramount Mbelwa's royal village was at the southern end of his kingdom. The central kingdom included the whole of Ncheu district with Paramount Gomani's royal village at the northern end. This kingdom had Portuguese territory on its western frontier, close to the royal village. When the Portuguese boundary was fixed in 1891, the Ngoni kingdom under the Maseko Paramount was cut in two and a section under a Maseko ruler became a separate kingdom under the Portuguese. There was constant trouble in the 1930's over this Portuguese frontier, for Gomani's Ngoni visited their relatives, grazed their cattle and hoed gardens on the Portuguese side; and from time to time claims by the Portuguese for rent for gardens and grazing lands and disputes about taxation, needed judicious handling in the District Commissioner's court.

The figures in Table II for Mzimba and Ncheu districts in 1926, 1931, and 1945 show the changes in the ethnic composition of the districts, some of which are difficult to account for. In Mzimba district the Henga under Cikulamayembe were included in the figures for the Tumbuka and hence the northern Ngoni kingdom did not include all the 156,208 in the district. In Ncheu, the total district population of 87,690 were all included in the central Ngoni kingdom, showing the mixed ethnic elements, among which the Ngoni, or those who were enumerated as Ngoni, had declined from 64,023 in 1926 to 15,242 in 1945. Between 1931 and 1945 the decrease in the number of Ngoni (31,066) was almost balanced by the increase in the number of Nyanja

[1] This abbreviation will be used henceforward in referring to Subordinate Native Authorities.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

162 563 (35,107). It is difficult not to assume that many Nyanja had formerly called themselves Ngoni.

Table II

	1926	1931	1945
Mzimba district			
Ngoni	23,484	22,627	44,048
Tumbuka	46,029	78,483	89,135
Cewa	14,041	2,411	21,891
Yao	20	—	—
Tonga	3,052	605	32
Nkonde	141	—	—
Others	334	156	202
Total	89,101	106,282	156,208
Nkhata district			
Ngoni	64,023	46,308	13,242
Cewa	11	4,372	2,815
Nyanja	334	25,303	60,400
Cikunda	360	940	1,336
Yao	203	1,064	3,267
Ngoni, etc.	—	—	4,448
Others	13	278	182
Total	64,944	78,333	87,690

631 Since the two Ngoni kingdoms are the subject of this book and not the secession states, the position of the rulers of those states as Native Authorities and the circumstances of their secession from the two main groups will not be examined here. The three secession states in the north were under Chiefs Ciwere and Maskambewe in Dowa district and Jere in Kotakota district. The four connected formerly with the central Ngoni were under Chiefs Kacere and Kacindamoto in Dedza, Masula in Lilongwe and Vumbwe in Cholo.

484 [114] In the 1930's, when I was living sometimes in the northern kingdom, sometimes in the central, and for a time in the Ngoni state under Chief Jere, I was aware that the existence of the two kingdoms and of the seven secession states did not preclude a great deal of contact between the Ngoni of the different areas. The stream of travel in Nyasaland from south to north and from north to south along the one trunk road, brought Ngoni as visitors from one kingdom to the other, from the smaller states to both kingdoms, and from 'the Ngoni of the dispersion' living in towns to visit their relatives and friends in the Ngoni kingdoms and states. These visits might be social, to see parents or to marry a wife; they might be for economic purposes, to invest in or sell cattle, to supervise cotton or tobacco marketing; or they might be for ritual purposes such as mourning. When I travelled in the central Ngoni kingdom in 1936 with Y. M. Cibambo, the historian of the northern

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realise that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni oni oni*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambezi clan descent names.

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.'[1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognised areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *ahamwana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *ahamwana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognised as *ahamwana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *ahamwana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognised court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *ahamwana* were recognised as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *ahamwana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*, 1935, p. 54.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

647 in the political organization. Some of these officials were also members of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, but many were not. The officials served the Paramount in his court and his administration, and also the chiefs, and formed the lines of communication between them. This 647 created a network of relationships between the Paramount and the 621 chiefs at the top level, and between the chiefs and the village headmen under them at the lower level. From this network were excluded, in the northern kingdom, all the *abamnumu* and, in the central kingdom, all those *abamnumu* who were not chiefs. In the two kingdoms the *abamnumu* exercised unofficial control over a varying number of villages, and were inclined to assert their social superiority because they were excluded from official recognition.

The foundations of the political structure within which the ruling 571 aristocracy operated were a series of related institutions which will be 171 described and analysed later in the book, but which must be referred to 178 here, partly in order to explain the terminology used. The South-eastern Bantu, whose culture the Ngoni brought with them, had an institution in all important villages known as 'houses', which was a grouping of huts and of the wives owning them round the hut of one or more of the leading women. This institution, with its variations among the southern and northern Ngoni people, was described by Mrs. Hoernlé in the chapter on 'Social Organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*.[1] The Ngoni institution of houses had developed from the basic pattern among the South-eastern Bantu into an independent form. In the first place it was only found in relation to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading men of the royal clan, and the *abamnumu*. It did not, as in South Africa, form the basic pattern of all [621] villages in the Ngoni kingdoms. Where, as in most villages owned by *abamnumu*, mixed ethnic groups lived together, the house system existed only for the head of the clan, his brothers and his successor. It was specifically an Ngoni institution in the cultural and social sense. In the second place, the terms 'right-hand' and 'left-hand' house, common among the South-eastern Bantu, were not used by the Ngoni in the 1930's. The two terms they used were the 'big house' and the '*gogo* house', and I propose to use these terms here. The principle behind the use of these terms was that the big house was the one from which the heir should come to succeed the Paramount, the chief, or the *mabumnumu*. The *gogo* house was the one which was responsible for maintaining tradition and performing ritual.

Another institution, closely related to that of the houses, was the 621 *luwagulu* and *gogo* villages. The Paramounts, the chiefs, and the leading 571 *abamnumu*, when they succeeded their father after his death, moved out of his village and made their own new village, or took their households

[1] Schapera, I. (ed.). *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*. Routledge, 1937, chap. IV.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

644 guardianship of his father's spirit, or she could take over the *indlondolo* while a co-widow of the Queen Mother inherited the guardianship of the spirit in her own hut. The second alternative was the one followed in all the instances remembered by informants. In both kingdoms the spirits of the main line of the Paramounts were guarded by someone appointed to that task, chosen on the grounds of reputation and reliability. There was yet another variant in the central kingdom, where, as we have seen, it was Mangu, the daughter of Mpezu, who succeeded to her mother's guardianship of his spirit. The one principle which emerged from a number of cases cited in both kingdoms, was that occupancy of the *indlondolo* and guardianship of a spirit might be undertaken by the same person, but generally it did not work out that way.

The Royal Sister, a title equivalent to the English Princess Royal, was the elder full sister of the Paramount by the same mother, or his elder sister by his father's big wife if she had borne no son. She was always referred to as 'the one who would have been chief if she had been a man'. She stood in a special relationship to the reigning Paramount and to the Paramount-elect. She was in constant touch with the Paramount's children who used the name *dadabazi* (female father) when addressing her or referring to her. Dr. Kuper [1] reported that the Royal Sister among the Swazi was addressed by the same term, and that she came next in rank to the big wife and the leading wives. My informants and my own observations in both Ngoni kingdoms put the Royal Sister next to the big wife and before the other wives. She visited the royal village at frequent intervals to see her brother and his children, and was consulted about their affairs. She took a leading part in the puberty ritual for the daughters of her brother and was prominent at *ligubo* and other dances, and at mourning ceremonies. She was married with an exchange of cattle to a man of a leading Swazi or trans-Zambezi clan, and during his lifetime lived in his village, visiting the royal village often.

565 The position of the royal women in the Ngoni kingdoms has been
644 discussed in terms of the sister, mother and big wife of the Paramount.
631 The same relationships were found in the families of the chiefs and headmen. There the equivalent of the Royal Sister was the older full sister by the same mother of the chief or headman, and his own big wife and his father's big wife played similar roles, within their own spheres, to those played in the Paramount's village by the Queen Mother and his big wife.

Five texts follow which illustrate the life and activities of leading women who filled roles equivalent to those of Royal Sister, big wife and Queen Mother. One of the texts is by a Royal Sister—Bambo Mangu, who was the sister of Paramount Cikusi in the central kingdom. Margaret Jere was the elder full sister of the heir to the chieftanship of

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 59.

Chief Mtwalo II in the northern kingdom. Two texts are by former big wives of leading men. NyaNtanga was the former big wife of a grandson of Zwangendaba, a member of the royal clan but not a chief, though he owned many villages. NaNdumbo was the former big wife of the head of the Ntanga clan in the central kingdom. The last text by Cibambo gives details of the clothes worn by royal women and leading women in pre-European days, some of which were still in use in the 1930's. 565 604 631

Life of the Royal Women
by Manga Mumbo

daughter of Mpezu, former Paramount of the central kingdom

159 565 631 644 [302] [363]

¶ Formerly I was just staying for I did not work. I had many slaves and their work was especially to thread beads. Up to today I have not worked except to cook. Our hair was anointed with the fat of cows and of milk. Our food was milk and we drank it in a wooden cup. We were getting cloth when they sold slaves to the Arabs. For honouring each other, the big men were telling the youths: 'You should honour the big people that the country may be rich.' Only the big women were dancing *ngoma*, *mdudu* and *lipalo*. If a man married the child of a chief, he gave many cattle, and the poor man could not marry the child of a chief.

When NaMlangeni was alive she was a well-known chief and was greatly honoured. When speaking a case, they called her that she might judge. When people went to war and captured slaves and cattle they were giving them to her, and she divided them. For thanking her they said: '*Zaidwa Mal.*'

Life of the Royal Women
by Margaret Jere

granddaughter of Mtwalo I, daughter of Johanna Jere in the northern kingdom

¶ When I was a child I was not allowed to go out quickly in the sun, and when crawling I had to stay in the house. I was very light coloured. The *ndesi* (nurse girl) took me to my mother, UNwabai Naima, to be suckled at special times. I slept in the house of Magdalene Moyo, my grandmother, who was the widow of Chief Mtwalo. The *isidwadwai* (attendant) also slept there. My grandmother and others, the *mamina* (senior women), were telling me how to behave. A special *isidwadwai* living in Magdalene's house was told by my grandmother to speak specially to me when I had reached puberty. This *isidwadwai* could speak to me about anything. When nearing marriage a woman was chosen, Hlanenya Naima, and sent to reveal to me how I was to live in my married state. The sisters of my father, Tinaiwa and Seyeya Jere, also came and spoke to me at the time of my marriage. Hlanenya Naima was sent by my grandmother to examine me (for virginity) before marriage. I was allowed to play with those children who lived in the same section of the village and who were known to my mother and grandmother. The *isidwadwai* did all the work but sometimes I used to pound and fetch water, but not too hard and just for pleasure.

When strangers came, I came and saluted them and then went out of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the house. If my father came to my mother's house, I would go out, but if he went for me I would return and he would talk to me and play with me. We learned how to behave well, and were rebuked if we behaved badly. My father would beat a child for not behaving well. My father did not allow his children to be spoiled by being treated differently from others. He said: 'They are all my children.'

Life of the Royal Women

by Mdingane Nsungu

widow of Chimombo Jere, grandson of Zwangendaba in the northern kingdom

The *amakosikazi* were not working. During the day they kept dressing their hair, both the young women and the old. The old women no longer kept their *isidulo*, or high chignon, but wore the *umaxo*, or long curls. For the *umaxo* the hair was cut short and not allowed to grow very long. Instead of dressing it afterwards they took a blade of grass and kept it pressed down after oil and scent were applied. Their other work was to go to the river and wash.

They also drank beer and some gruel, and afterwards danced *ngoma* in the house where beer was brewed. The men and chief also joined in the *ngoma* and the women were responding to the singing. They began to drink in the morning until the afternoon, but not in the evening. Other people went on drinking until evening, and even some of the *amakosikazi* who were *inidi* (abstainers) but the rest were sleeping or resting.

When drinking in the house the chief always sat by the right-hand doorpost, and the big *inkosikazi* by the left-hand post. They sat near the door to draw breath easily because there were many people inside. The beer-pot being set halfway between the door and the hearth-stones in the centre, a man was chosen to pour the beer in the gourds for drinking. He was called *umtoni*, the lesser power, and was often the village *induna* or one who was favoured by the chief. When the gourds were full he told the chief, and the chief told him to distribute them. Sometimes there were four or even six for the different classes in the house. They sat in order, the *induna* with the *izinduna*, and *amandede*, and the *inkosikazi* with the other wives of the chief and the wives of the *izinduna* and *amandede*. The chief and the *inkosikazi* kept on inviting the common people to come and drink. Each invited people thanked the person at the beginning and at the end, others joining him. The *inkosikazi* or other wives of the chief were thanked '*Nkosi*'.

The *amakosikazi* never worked at all, but the lesser wives worked, and pounded grain and fetched firewood. These were the ones who had not yet got attendants in their houses. All the chief *amakosikazi* had attendants who performed all the work of the house. The *amakosikazi* often sat in the *ngwendeh* or outside under the platform of branches supported by posts. There they ate their food which was *ilambazi* and *umujinji*, thick gruel of millet; *izinkwa za nyawi*, bulrush millet ground to a paste; or *izinkobe*, whole grains of maize boiled and pounded. The meat was eaten as a feast on the *ngwakwi*, the smoothed place in front of the house, and all the chief's wives joined in. A mat was spread for the big *amakosikazi* where they sat

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

THE ROYAL WOMEN

565 631 644

when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *indoona* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingwendo*, or big platter of the *inkuchkani*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *ukhwai* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *indoona* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inkuchkani* called for an *ingwendo* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njelemule Nwanga I in the central kingdom

[361 351]

◀ Old Njelemule had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good.

He was fond of sitting on the *bunda*, and all his wives cooked *ndima* and took many baskets to the *bunda*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bunda*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his courtly behaviour.

[579]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore those cloths and came on the *bunda* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njelemule excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njelemule was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibembo

565 302 [177]

◀ Today Ngoni women are not easily recognised because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isihlata*. The oil was *ipshla*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a

[301]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

boundaries of their own village, and they were afraid to travel even in a large party of twenty or thirty. So no one had any wisdom beyond that of his own village and family. When the Ngoni came they had one law for all people and they had courts to hear cases where this law was enforced. There was freedom to travel in the land where the Ngoni ruled, because they had peace within their boundaries. Therefore, we say: this was the kind of peace we had. 673 671

In these two texts we have one major concept of Ngoni law with three chief ways in which it was implemented. The concept was that there was 'one law for all people' and that the knowledge of and enforcement of this law brought internal peace and resulted in good government in the country. There was one source of law as there was one source of political and military authority—the Paramount. As Cibambo points out, the Paramount delegated his authority for carrying out the law to chiefs and headmen and depended on his 'old men and men of repute' to keep him in touch with the thoughts and desires of all his subjects, so that he might adjust the enforcement of the law to bind the people to him. He also called large gatherings of all the chiefs and *ahemnanna* and headmen in order that they might hear from him any new laws and regulations and understand them so that they in turn could make them known to their people. In the intervals between the holding of these large gatherings, which took place not more than once or twice a year, messengers passed constantly from the Paramount's village to all the areas of the chiefs and *ahemnanna*, reporting to them about decisions taken at the royal village on matters affecting the country as a whole, and taking back reports to the Paramount on what was happening in the outlying districts. 671 643 692 203

I attended two of these annual meetings of the chiefs and *ahemnanna* and headmen in the central kingdom. They took place not at the Paramount's village but at a more central spot for the whole territory. The people were drawn up in a square formation, with the Paramount at one end supported by his 'mouthpiece' (*mlomo wenkosi*), who always spoke for him, with the six Subordinate Native Authority chiefs beside him, and the councillors (*isinduna*) messengers and other officials of his court and of the S.N.A. courts arranged in order of precedence, facing the crowd as they did during court sessions. On the three sides of the square in the front ranks were the *ahemnanna* and the headmen of their villages, sitting in territorial groups, and behind each headman were the *madoda* or senior men of the village, and behind them again the *amajuba* or young men. I watched this assembly of 3,000 to 4,000 people being arranged, as they arrived, by the *isinduna* of the Paramount's court and the *isinduna* of the six chiefs. They took up their places as though on a military parade, and once placed there was no further movement. The effect was that of a barrack square in the straightness of lines and orderliness of behaviour. After all was in order the Paramount 631 643 692 645

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

631 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in
643 his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning
to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount
692 by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one
645 by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first 'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then it was open for any of the *ahumuzana* or headmen to speak 'from the floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with freedom.

The topics covered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from
[744] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits. Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said, would have that leader recognized as a headman. This drew a number of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme, others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognized in the new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages. 'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our headmen. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant afterthought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Paramount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to
[651 be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few
585] shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the *izinduna* had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among the audience during and after this discussion and the *izinduna* had to call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese
[648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izinduna* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

631 643 645 692 [648] [543]

This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izinduna* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambesi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

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643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *izizi zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
684 this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was
178 death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *izinduna* and the *amadoda* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticized each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the
[857] conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *laweni* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organizing his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

●631 NGONI OFFICE-BEARERS

622 In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni
645 political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a
[565] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

be used exclusively for either group, and in fact there was considerable overlapping between them. 622 631

We begin with the text by Cibambo which emphasizes the hierarchy of office-bearers in the northern kingdom in pre-European days and illustrates the correlation between the courts and the political administration. 645

¶ The former government of the Ngoni was based on the following:

(1) Above all was the one called *Inkosi* or *UBaba*, because they thought of him as the father of the country, the head.

(2) After him came the *ixinduna*. Sometimes these were two or perhaps four. These were very highly honoured and the Paramount feared them greatly: he called them *Bobaba* and their words had great weight with him. They were the ones who gave advice to the Paramount and if any grave matter arose he called them to hear what they thought. The Paramount in his village had also his old men who helped him with everything small that did not need to go to the *ixinduna*. If there was word that the Paramount was meeting with the *ixinduna* he first of all met with the old men and asked for advice to place before the *ixinduna*. And these old men had the right to speak when the Paramount took counsel with the *ixinduna*.

(3) After the *ixinduna* came the *amakosana*, or lesser chiefs. These were perhaps the younger brothers of the ruling Paramount, and had their districts under him. They also had their *ixinduna* and were responsible for their own districts. When the Paramount met with the *ixinduna*, the *amakosana* were also there if it was considered fitting.

(4) Then there were the *alumuxana*. These were over villages or smaller districts. Their villages were called *amakanda* (heads) and they had power in their small districts to carry out the laws and they looked to the *ixinduna* for instructions.

(5) Lastly the old men (*madoda*) who wore the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) but not all of them; only those who had good sense and understood the ways of the tribe. [888]

All these five divisions had their share in the government of the country. If there was a great court of justice, all these were to be found at it, and took part in the discussions. If fresh matter arose, or new laws, these delivered them to their villages. Also there were men called *amanxusa*, messengers. These were men chosen to run with messages from the Paramount to the *ixinduna* or *amakosana*, to go with and return with news. Almost every village or little district had its chosen messengers. All the types (2), (3) and (4) had their messengers. When anything happened, the messenger in the village of the Paramount made a general proclamation and called the *amanxusa* together. When the *amanxusa* had heard the message they scattered throughout all the country. So in the districts and by this way news travelled very quickly. [203]

In the central kingdom one of the big *ixinduna* explained the change in their system which occurred after crossing the Zambesi: 178 622 631

¶ When the Ngoni were coming from the south they chose lesser chiefs and *ixinduna* from the *amakosana*, who were the Paramount's brothers, 645

178 622 631 645 sons of his father and of his father's brothers. These *amakosana* were honoured next to the Paramount. The *alumuzana* were for justice in the courts, and for being the 'ears of the Paramount' in all the country. The change was made by Mputa because he saw that if the *amakosana* were given power they claimed to be big chiefs themselves. Therefore he chose for the courts and for the leaders in war and for lesser chiefs the *alumuzana* and *ixinduna* who were clever and whom they could trust.

184 622 631 645 [698] The diagram on p. 99 relates to the period between 1933 and 1939 and sets out first the officials in the territorial divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms from the Paramount to the headman of a village. In the northern kingdom only the Paramount and the six chiefs had recognized courts, the chiefs' courts operating for their districts and the Paramount's court for the whole kingdom. There were two sets of office-bearers who had no courts but who exercised authority over groups of villages. One group consisted of members of the Jere clan who were not recognized chiefs but were *amakosana*, literally 'children of the chief' but used as a rule for all members of the royal clan. Only certain *amakosana* had villages under them. The other group consisted of the heads of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who owned several villages and sometimes had authority over a large area. Cibambo put this group below that of the chiefs, and other informants confirmed this as the pre-European pattern. But the informants also said that many of the powerful *alumuzana* formerly had their own courts and did not have to bring their cases to the chiefs' courts as they did in the 1930's. At the bottom of the territorial hierarchy came the headmen of single villages. In some cases the village headman had formerly been an *induna* in a large village which had broken up. Some were of the royal clan or of Swazi clans. The majority belonged to the local tribes and were owners of villages which were for the most part villages of one kinship group.

The text about the hierarchy in the central kingdom shows that a deliberate change had been made in the traditional pattern to avoid a struggle between the Paramount and his brothers when they had recognized positions as chiefs. The *alumuzana* who appear in the diagram as chiefs were the six who were recognized in 1933 as Subordinate Native Authorities. There were other *alumuzana* who were not so recognized, and certain members of the royal clan, all of whom owned a number of villages but had to take their cases to the recognized courts. The division caused by setting up the Portuguese boundary in the 1890's left many of the leaders of the Maseko clan on the Portuguese side, with the result that the number of *amakosana* owning villages and taking any prominent part in the life of the kingdom was very small; and another large group of the Maseko clan were in Dedza district under Chief Kacindamoto. The majority of village headmen in the central kingdom were of local tribes, and their villages were as a rule much larger than those in the northern kingdom.

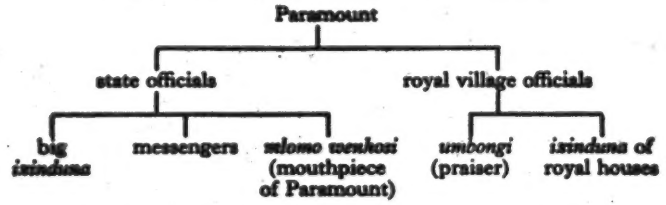
 184

Ngoni territorial office-bearers. 622

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Paramount	Paramount
chiefs (*amahosana*)	*alumuzana* (chiefs)
other *amahosana* and *alumuzana* (no courts)	other *alumuzana* and *amahosana* (no courts)
village headmen	village headmen

631 643 645

Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *izinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only recited the praise-songs at ceremonies in the royal village. 643 645

The big *izinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *izinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below his. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *alumuzana* and *amahosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned. [203] 885

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the 692

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

342 356 593 was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

162 585 595 184 The tables which follow show the total population of three villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Huts	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Eswazini .	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Endindeni .	15	9	21	21	51	4	1	4	15
Eluhangeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	32
Central kingdom									
Cinkwita .	39	22	39	54	115	13	5	4	2
Mangozo .	60	41	65	78	184	9	18	2	4
Mcakhatha	122	71	112	68	251	30	16	14	12

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *lusungulu* and *gogo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *banja* was not found in the north.

592 614 622 631 The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *mulumuzana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *mulumuzana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Households[1]

	Total	Leading clan
Northern Ngoniland		
Eswazini	23	15
Endindeni	15	12
Eluhangeni	37	21
Central Ngoniland		
Cinkwita	39	18
Mangoso	60	26
Mcakhatha	122	37

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The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head. [563 565]

Eswazini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Eswazini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *lusungulu* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother. [361] 184 592 621

Endindeni was a *gogo* village owned by Zibekere Makwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gogo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ubale* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more *lomeni*.

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[721] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3:Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only be-
563 cause they had been conquered, but because they disliked
621 and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were rein-
[582] forced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and
[631] politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

565 The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their
621 traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children
[183] in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni
[177] elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women
[562] of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village,
[593] or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group,
[606] many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages,
[114] in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be interpreted according to the Ngoni social organization, sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle of people forming a young child's contacts was from the beginning much wider than the individual family which a child was born into. When he began to run about and to pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when necessary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related families in other villages, with all members of the same clan [602]
living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads [631]
were also inseparable from the political links between the people and their territorial chief, and between the whole people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence [183]
in most villages there were sharp distinctions between standards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni
families.

4: Barnes
631

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[Category 631 has been applied in a special sense, namely to cover Barnes' concept of "residential system" as defined on page 1 of the text. Thus it refers not only to political organization, but also to the entire hierarchy of spatially defined social groups.]

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part.

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000, live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[3].

[3] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 252 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him. Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions, villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance. The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters, a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.
[2] *Cigawa*, pl. *vigawa*, from *ku-gawa*, to divide.

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
428 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[727] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount
[581] Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was, in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[108] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political
602 ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired 554
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The recent captives

855 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband,
593 wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

631 In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw
554 attention to two features of the residential system which were not,
591 at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features
[178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

581 Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which
613 agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the
[582] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this.
[178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni 114
village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no 178
Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all [643]
day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children [644]
formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indumas*[A] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupu- [692]
lous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It [631]
soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was [183]
strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African terri- 131
tories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni 101
are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

A [i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approxi- [231] mately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

619 The important positions in the old political structure were occupied by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] ●631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mabumnana*, pl. *abumnana*.
[4] *Ndona*, pl. *ndona*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

 619 631 554

the absence of any definite internal land boundaries between the territories of one political segment and another. The constant elements were the residential groups that we now know as villages,[1] and we may liken them to ships of different sizes and importance that preserve a loose formation while the fleet sails from place to place. Villages, discrete clusters of dwellings in comparative proximity and separated from one another by uninhabited stretches of garden-land and bush, were internally divided into divisions,[2] and from time to time these divisions broke away from one another or from their parent village to form new villages of their own. This process of divisional fission was characteristic of the commoner villages. Royal villages were usually formed by a parallel process by which an important member of the royal lineage established a new village for one or more of his queens by recruitment from his own natal village. The eldest son by the senior queen in that village then became the head of the segment of the royal lineage associated with the village. Thus the segmentation of the royal lineage was reflected in a proliferation of royal villages. 631

In the period immediately prior to the conquest of the tribe by British forces in 1898, there were four important royal villages, with populations of probably several thousands each. One belonged to a brother of Mpezeni, and the other three were controlled by groups of Mpezeni's own queens and their sons. Associated with each royal village were several regional governors, each of whom was responsible for the well-being of a group of lesser villages, and who resided among them in a village of his own. These lesser villages were commoner villages, each under its own headman. Each large royal village had also a number of lesser royal villages attached to it, and also many commoner villages were attached to a royal village of some sort directly, and not through a regional governor.[3]

Each important person, chief, member of the royal lineage, regional governor, or headman was assisted by a number of lieutenants, trusted subordinates who were usually not patrilineal kinsmen of their principal but who were sometimes related affinally. These lieutenants were ranked in order of the creation of their posts by their principal and assisted him in the control of his unit of administration. In the case of Mpezeni himself, however, there were two kinds of lieutenants. Those people known as the lieutenants of Mpezeni were 64

[1] *Mzumi*, pl. *mizumi*.
[2] *Cigudu*, pl. *vigudu*.
[3] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66, for a similar system among the Swazi.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that
[558] of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and
178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and
161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political
641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was
[684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a
641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population
727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There
563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State.
[567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain
563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set
641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise
701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Msawa*, pl. *asawa*. Cf. the Zulu term *umnawa*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made in the regimental system, which was organized on a national basis. A person of low ethnic status, that is, of comparatively late incorporation into the tribe but of senior regiment, was considered to be, in most circumstances, as good as a man of more aristocratic family but of a junior regiment. New regiments were formed about every four years. 563 641 701

Development of Minor Chieftainships

The defeat of the Ngoni army at the hands of the British in 1898 and the subsequent establishment of British control led to the partial breakdown of this system. The population was dispersed by the fighting and by the unsettled conditions that followed, and part of the kingdom was cleared for European occupation. The Administration recognized the grandson of Mpezeni I as the chief of the tribe, and also worked through a number of men known as Divisional Headmen, who were made responsible for small areas. Some of these divisional headmen were regional governors, some lieutenants of Mpezeni, some members of the royal lineage, and others were upstarts. It is not clear from the rather meagre records that remain or from the statements of informants exactly what happened between 1898 and 1914, but we know that by the latter date the Administration had come to recognize six men as local chiefs, apart from Mpezeni, and that four of them were said to be sons of Mpezeni I.[1] In 1929, when the term Native Authority was introduced, nine minor chiefs were appointed, of whom four were descended from Mpezeni I and one from the father of Mpezeni I. Two of the other minor chiefs have the descent-name *jere* that belongs to the royal lineage, and may be regarded as belonging to assimilated lineages. One is descended from a regional governor, the other from a policeman. Two minor chiefs do not have this descent-name, one being descended from a lieutenant of Zwangendaba and the other from a regional governor. This arrangement of one Paramount Chief and nine minor chiefs persists to the present day. With each of the ten chiefs is associated a more or less defined area within which most of the villages are said to belong to the chief of the area. What appears to have happened during the thirty years after the conquest is that the central power declined and that certain political and territorial segments achieved a degree of autonomy. The ten areas belonging to the different chiefs, which I shall refer to as counties, represent 175 648 631

[1] Cotnend, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22 and 24.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have
178 continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the head-
[622] man, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Gesthe, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest. 647

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping villages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, but this cannot be done openly under the present régime. 628 [643] [648] [692] [669]

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships. 631 64

Sanctions

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exercised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 687 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are 857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve 233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of [868] milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

628 There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather 233 than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into 857 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between [541] the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

233 In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd- 833 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village 857 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief, 631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

call rural districts. By virtue of their membership of rural districts 628
and counties, villages have certain formal relationships with each [631]
other which we may regard as mainly political, and which we have discussed in connexion with the organization of the state. But there are other inter-village activities that are not related directly to the tribal political structure. These include hunting, dancing, drinking, trading, and some co-operative economic activities.

Hunting takes place for the most part in the dry season, but hunts 224
may be organized at any time to deal with predatory animals which 628
are causing damage to crops and livestock. Only men and boys hunt. [462]
Any man who chooses can organize a hunt, but it is usually a man of middle age with some experience and of some standing in his village who sends out word to the neighbouring villages that he proposes to hunt in such-and-such an area on such-and-such a day. The organizer is referred to as the owner of the hunt, and he is in tactical command. He nominates two men to be in charge of the two wings of the hunt, and himself stays in the middle of the single line abreast in which the hunters arrange themselves. Instructions are shouted from the centre and passed out to the wings. Any animals seen are attacked with knobkerries, spears, dogs, and, if there are any, guns. The owner of the hunt has no special privileges over the animals killed, which are divided between the men who actually kill them and the people who carry them back from the hunt to the village. Attendance at such hunts is not enforced, and if the chase is unsuccessful, people tend to drop out half-way. In the main, people distribute themselves along the line of the hunt in village groups, and the leaders of the wings usually bring with them a large band of hunters from their own villages. There are usually about sixty people on a hunt, coming from perhaps ten different villages.

Dancing is an activity that brings people together from many 535
villages. Although girls, and sometimes boys, hold dances in their own 628
villages in the evenings, these dances are thought of as practices rather than as proper dances. The latter take place in connexion with ceremonies of various kinds, and indeed wherever there is beer to [273]
drink there is the probability of some sort of dancing. Dances are also held for their own sake, without reference to other forms of social activity. Of these, two are important in promoting inter-village ties. The first, *ngoma*,[1] the most formal of all dances, was danced by regiments in the days when the regimental system was still operative, but

[1] Cf. the Zulu dance *ingoma*, and Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 52.

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now 602
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 624
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

According to Coxhead, an Administrative Officer who published in 1914, there were at that time six minor chiefs under the Paramount. Four of these minor chiefs were sons of Mpezeni I.[19] Other Administrative records of the same period refer to ten 'subdivisions'. The Paramount Chief and the chiefs now in charge of counties 4, 14, 15 and 17 are each described as the 'important chief' in their subdivisions. The important chief in another subdivision is now not a county chief. The remaining four subdivisions had two chiefs each. Five of these are now county chiefs, one is a Cewa chief, and the remaining two are no longer chiefs. The title 'chief' was, however, not applied consistently by the Administration at that time and men who are called chiefs in some documents are called divisional or group headmen in others. In 1920, with the appointment of two new divisional headmen all Ngoniland villages in Northern Rhodesia were divided between ten rulers, not all of whom were called chiefs. Mpezeni II was ruler of one group of villages and Paramount over all ten, and the other nine rulers were the predecessors of the present minor chiefs. These ten groups of villages, and the two corresponding groups in Nyasaland, I have called *counties*. With one exception, each successive county chief has taken the name of his predecessor and this name is often used as the name of the county.

648 622 634 643

4. *County segments*

In each county there is one village known as the important village or capital. Many, but not all, of the villages in a county belong to the residential segment of which the capital is the headquarters. Thus we may speak of a county segment which forms, as it were, the core of the county. The villages that do not belong to the county segment fall into three main types. There are villages belonging to other segments under Mpezeni, there are a few which trace their origin to other Ngoni groups, and there are those which have entered Ngoniland after 1898 and so never formed part of the segmentary residential system. Most villages of the last type have come into Ngoniland from Cewa chiefdoms and some of them claim to have been settled in Ngoniland before the arrival of Mpezeni and to have been driven out by him. An indication of the distribution of villages in Northern Rhodesia counties among these different types is given in Table IV, where the only three counties for which I have the information are examined from this point of view.

632 634

[19] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

632 634 621 In these three counties there were no instances of two other types of village found rarely in Ngoniland. Occasionally an immigrant labourer working on the Fort Jameson tobacco farms manages to attract sufficient followers from among other labourers and his local affines to found a new village in an Ngoni chiefdom. The other rare type of village is formed by direct administrative action. The Administration has been largely concerned to amalgamate existing villages rather than to create new ones. In at least one instance, however, scattered clusters of huts inhabited by people who had fled from several different villages to avoid coming under agricultural control have been united into a new village under a headman of their own choosing. One example of each of these rare types of village is included in the sample of villages analysed in Table VII (p. 133).

[648]

TABLE IV. ORIGIN OF VILLAGES IN SELECTED COUNTIES, 1948

621 631 634

	Number of villages in county, classified by origin				
County	*County segment*	*Other segment under Mpezeni*	*Other Ngoni groups*	*Other tribes, joining Ngoni after 1898*	*Total*
X	60 (72%)	4 (5%)	1 (1%)	18 (22%)	83 (100%)
Y	26 (55%)	10 (21%)	0 (0%)	11 (23%)	47 (100%)
Z	59 (70%)	16 (19%)	0 (0%)	9 (11%)	84 (100%)
Total	145 (68%)	30 (14%)	1 (0.5%)	38 (18%)	214 (100%)

Number of counties in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 10
Number of villages in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 540 approximately

It will be seen from Table IV that about two-thirds of the villages in each of the selected counties belong to their own county segment. It is to villages in this category that the ties of a county chief are strongest. Here old and new systems are in accord and the chief acts both as traditional lord of the segment as well as head of the Native Authority. Villages in their county segment appear to be

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after 178
Nsingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. 631
This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to 634
that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the [643]
second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important seg- [557]
ment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this 178
transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by 648
which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely 557
unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to [634]
be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the [632]
formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can [554]
intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget 465
meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and 634
a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is 648
suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the notched sticks were only an *aide-mémoire*, not a necessity. 211

The heavens and the earth

When the Pleiades appeared just before dawn they said the Pleiades were being 'reborn' (the word used for the new moon's appearance and for the initiation of a diviner), and that in this position in the heavens they were heralds of the cold season. They knew the relative positions of Venus as an evening star and a morning star, and watched for the appearance high in the heavens of Jupiter which they knew by its size. Orion they recognized as a man with a spear, a hunter, and the Milky Way as the sands of the sky, since sand was used to denote numbers which cannot be counted. 821

In announcing the death of a great chief by a messenger sent from village to village, the traditional formula was: 'Listen. Do you hear? The heavens have fallen.' Hence when earthquakes were felt, it was believed that some great chief had died, and the earthquake was the trembling when his spirit left the earth for the place of the departed spirits. If it turned out to be no one of their own people, they nevertheless held to the belief that somewhere, unknown to them, a 'great one' had died and his spirit had departed at the time of the earth's trembling. 763 775 823

Eclipses of the sun and moon they also connected with some great event either among their own people or elsewhere, and they used the eclipse year and month to date these events. Their famous crossing of the Zambezi on their northward march, finally and irrevocably cutting off their connexions with the south, was during a solar eclipse. In teaching young adults Ngoni history they said: 'When we crossed the Zambezi it became night at noon.' 821 [167]

A lunar eclipse, almost total, occurred when I was in a chief's village, and all the people were called to the kraal and stood watching it. Then the chief's spokesman, his 'mouthpiece', called for silence in the phrase used for a war summons [632]

1: Barnes
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Ngoni FR5

[Category 643 is reserved for information pertaining to only the Paramount Chief and his activities; data on village chiefs or headmen will be found under category 622, while information on chiefs and other officials at the county or unstated intermediate level has been classified in category 634. --Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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In each county there is one village known as the important village or capital. Many, but not all, of the villages in a county belong to the residential segment of which the capital is the headquarters. Thus we may speak of a county segment which forms, as it were, the core of the county. The villages that do not belong to the county segment fall into three main types. There are villages belonging to other segments under Mpezeni, there are a few which trace their origin to other Ngoni groups, and there are those which have entered Ngoniland after 1898 and so never formed part of the segmentary residential system. Most villages of the last type have come into Ngoniland from Cewa chiefdoms and some of them claim to have been settled in Ngoniland before the arrival of Mpezeni and to have been driven out by him. An indication of the distribution of villages in Northern Rhodesia counties among these different types is given in Table IV, where the only three counties for which I have the information are examined from this point of view.

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634

[19] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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[648]

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Number of counties in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 10
Number of villages in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 540 approximately

It will be seen from Table IV that about two-thirds of the villages in each of the selected counties belong to their own county segment. It is to villages in this category that the ties of a county chief are strongest. Here old and new systems are in accord and the chief acts both as traditional lord of the segment as well as head of the Native Authority. Villages in their county segment appear to be

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more meticulous than others in such matters as discussing proposed 621
changes of site with the county chief and in reporting important 631
deaths to him. 634

The proportion of villages in each county belonging to other segments under Mpezeni varies from 5 per cent to 21 per cent. These are villages which chose, or were forced, to move away from the chief to whom they were attached in segmentary terms, or else villages belonging to major segments whose lords did not become chiefs. Villages in this category have ties that in certain situations, as when there is a serious quarrel, link them more closely with some other county than with their own. In any county where there are many villages of this kind the solidarity of the county as a social group is not great. The ruling chief has many rivals who seek to divide his county and to become chiefs themselves. We must distinguish here between villages in one county which belong to the segment of another and those interloping villages which belong to one county but are situated in the territory of another. We shall discuss interloping villages later (p. 128) in connexion with the territorial aspect of counties. [166]

In Nyasaland the history of administration has been separate 643
from that of Northern Rhodesia, but the Ngoni population there 648
also has divided itself on segmentary lines. For many years the two 634
principal leaders recognized by the Administration have been the heads of segments 5 and 6, and these segments form the cores of the two counties they control. The two county chiefs are now Native Authorities and join with an adjacent Cewa chief to form the Fort Manning Council of Chiefs. This acts as the Native administrative body for the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District.

The geographical distribution of the twelve counties, the 631
neighbouring chiefdoms of other tribes, and the tracts of alienated 634
land are shown in Map D.

The twelve county segments, ten in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, are, in the nomenclature of Chapter I, segments 4 to 6 and 9 to 17. We shall refer to counties in the same way by the numbers of the segments corresponding to them. Thus county 4 is the county whose segment is number 4, and so on. County 10 is the Paramount Chief's county. Some of the county segments are primal, others are residual segments left after the formation of primal segments of lower order. The definition of the segment associated with each county is indicated in Table V. This table merely restates information implicit in Diagram 1. The hereditary names of county chiefs are also given.

[Text continues on page 121]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP D. STATUTORY DIVISION OF LAND, FORT JAMIESON 1949

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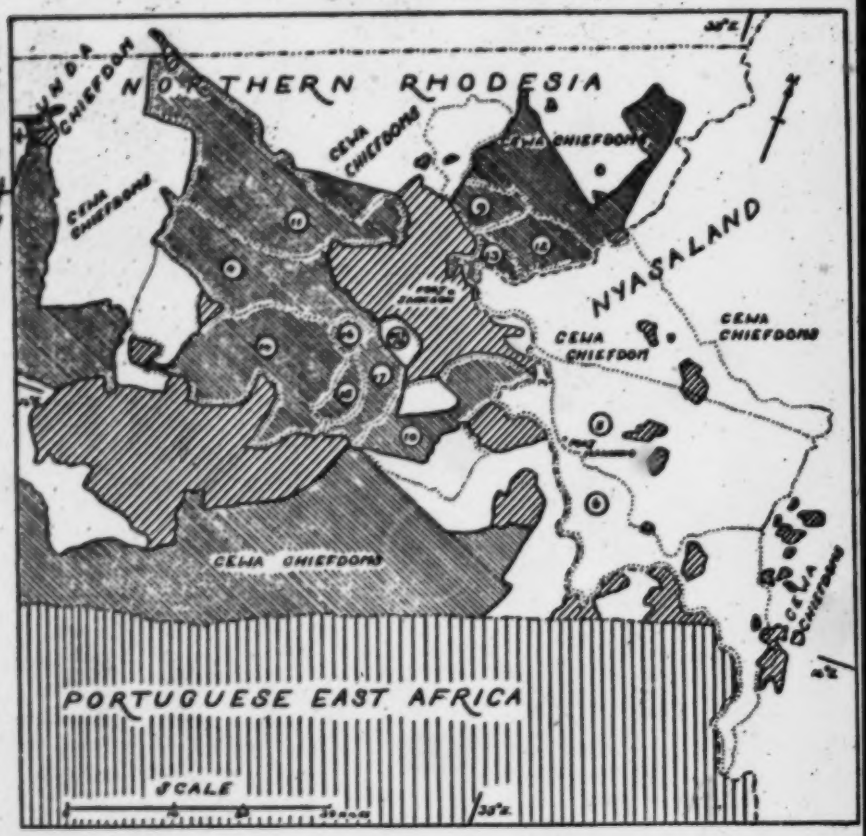

International Boundary.

N. Charterland Concession, Northern Boundary.

Statutory Division Boundary.

County Boundary.

Farmland in non-African ownership.

Native Reserves.

Native Trust land, crown land and disputed land, treated as if it were Native Trust land.

Portuguese East Africa.

County numbers.

[p. 120]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE V. COUNTY SEGMENTS

County	Specification of county segment	Hereditary name of county chief
4	Residual after formation of segments 9 to 12	Madzimawe
5	Primal	Zulu
6	Primal	Mlonyeni
9	Primal	Mnukwa
10(a)	Residual after formation of segments 13 to 15	Mpezeni
11	Residual after formation of segment 16	Misholo
12	Primal	Mshawa
13	Primal	Kapatamoyo
14	Residual after formation of segment 17	Nzermane
15	Primal	Sayili
16	Primal	Teleka (b)
17	Primal	Maguya

(a) Paramount Chief's county.
(b) The first chief of this county was known as Mlonyeni. He was succeeded by his brother, who kept his own name of Teleka. The similarity of name with the chief of segment 6 was accidental.

[County numbers refer to map on page 120, category 116 - Analyst]

631
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621
[643]

The county segments are not all of the same order of segmentation, yet the counties occupy positions of equivalence in the Native Authority. Each of the eleven counties under minor chiefs is, or has been for most of the time, the area under the control of a Subordinate Native Authority and also the area of jurisdiction of [692] a second-class Native Court. According to the *Official Gazette* the [683] Paramount Chief's county appears not to have been under any Subordinate Native Authority, nor does it seem to have been provided with a second-class court, but in some respects action takes place as if there were such an authority and court. The Superior Native Authority is responsible for all ten counties in Northern Rhodesia and there is a first-class Native Court for the same area. Thus the structural alignment of the twelve counties is markedly different from that of the segments corresponding to them. In practice the relations existing between the twelve counties and

[Text continues on page 123]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between their leaders are influenced by both their relative position in the Native Authority scheme and the position of the county segments, as well as by new interests that have emerged. The formal relationship between the alignments of segments and counties is set out in Diagram 4. This diagram also shows the relationship, at a higher level, between some of the other independent Ngoni groups and the major political divisions of British Africa. 621 631 634

In each county the chief, who does not live in the capital but in a village of his own, is head of the county segment and it seems probable that during the early years of the Administration it was the affiliation of villages within their old residential segments that provided the basis for the groupings of convenience which eventually crystallized into counties. In one or two instances succession to headship of the segment and county has been plainly manipulated, but the traditional rules of succession have not been outraged. Where the county segment is a residual one, the county chief may be also head of some segment of higher order. Thus the chief of county 11 is head of primal segment 11 although his county is only the residual segment after the formation of segment 16; county chief 14 is head of primal segment 14; and the Paramount Chief is head of primal segments 4 and 10. [648] [557]

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[1] Three Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba are not shown on this diagram. 611 621 631

(a) A group under Magodi separated itself from either segment 2 or 3 and is now settled in Lundazi District, Northern Rhodesia.

(b) A group led by Zulu Gama is now settled in Songea District, Tanganyika Territory. The segment corresponding to this group appears to have been formed within segment 1, but I do not know what relation it bears to the other segments nor by what process it was formed. The western part of this group is still led by a descendant of Zulu Gama, but a descendant of one of his associates named Mboanani now leads the eastern part.

(c) A group under Ciwele ndhlovu is settled in Dowa District, Nyasaland. Some writers say it was formed within segment 4, others within the residue of segment 1. He was a lieutenant of either Zwangendaba or Mpezeni.

The two Ngoni groups which do not stem from Zwangendaba cannot be fitted into the diagram. They are located as follows.

(d) The Southern Nyasaland Ngoni, who broke away from the Southern Rhodesia Ndebele and who were led originally by Mputa, are now settled in Ncheu and Dedza Districts, Nyasaland, and in Circunscracão of Angónia, District of Tete, Portuguese East Africa.

(e) The Ngoni group led by Soshangane are now settled in the lower Limpopo Valley, Gazaland, Portuguese East Africa.

There are a few small Ngoni groups in the Shire Valley, Nyasaland, some of which have their own minor chiefs. There are also many Ngoni men and women in the towns of southern and eastern Africa, but they are not organized into political groups on a tribal basis.

[These notes refer to the chart on page 122.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Relative status of Chiefs*

178 There was nothing inherent in the residential system which
631 facilitated the emergence of twelve, and only twelve, counties from
634 Mpezeni's people. Each major segment already had a large number
648 of lesser segments within it in 1898, and it was during the unsettled years that followed the conquest, when new schemes of organization were tried out, when fresh occupants were sought for existing posts, and when the spatial distribution of people was being radically altered, that these twelve gradually emerged. Considerations of size do not seem to have been very important, for there is a wide variation in the size of counties. However, with the development of the Native Authority and Native Court, there is an upper limit to
[692] the size of the county which can be served adequately by a single court and possibly by a single minor chief, and this shows itself in the moves towards forming sub-counties within one or two of the larger ones. Yet in view of administrative attempts to do away with certain chiefs, it seems that in its eyes the Ngoni have too many rather than too few chiefs. The order of segmentation is not critical, as we have seen. Nor has there been merely an ossification of the formal structure as it was at the moment of conquest, as is often the case when a fluid society is suddenly put into a rigid mould. Wiese in 1891 wrote that Ngoniland was divided into four districts.[30] In our terms, these were as follows:

(*a*) Primal segment 11.
(*b*) Primal segment 14.
(*c*) Residual segment 10 after 14 was formed.
(*d*) Residual segment 4 after 10 and 11 were formed.

Of these four districts, the first has given rise to two counties, 11 and 16; the second to two, 14 and 17; the third to three, 10, 13 and 15; and the fourth to three, 4, 9 and 12. Wiese does not indicate in what districts he would place segments 5 and 6.

The fortuitous manner in which the counties have emerged is illustrated by the fact that for certain purposes one of the counties is treated as if it were two. At one time, when there were more administrative divisions than there are now, it was divided into two
[651] areas, and this arrangement still persists for tax collection. Other counties have only one tax register book each, but this one has two.

In genealogical terms also, the emergence of the twelve chiefs appears to have been fortuitous. For example, the second wife of
[643] Mpezeni I in segment 10, after the formation of segments 14 and 15,

[30] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648
had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after 178
Nsingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. 631
This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to 634
that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the [643]
second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important seg- [557]
ment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this 178
transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by 648
which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely 557
unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties [634]
had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the [632]
formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed [554]
warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget 465
meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and 634
a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is 648
suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

465 634 648 personal emoluments, there is usually some discussion. Thus the relative amounts paid to each chief provide us with some indication of the importance attached to him by the Administration and his colleagues. The salaries paid in 1946 are set out in Table VI together with the number of villages in each county in 1938, the last year for which I have that information.

TABLE VI. SALARIES OF CHIEFS AND VILLAGES IN THEIR COUNTIES

[643]

County segment	*Number of villages in county*, 1938	*Salary of county chief in £s per annum*, 1946
10	87	120 (*a*)
14	101	97½
4	88	82½
11	77	67½
12	42	52½
17	35	37½
13	30	27 (*b*)
15	28	27 (*b*)
9	19	30
16	19	30
Total	526	571½
Mean	52.6	57.15

(*a*) Paramount Chief.
(*b*) Calculated from monthly rate. Both these chieftainships were vacant for part of 1946.

It will be seen that the amount of a minor chief's salary is closely correlated with the number of villages in his county. The chiefs of counties 13 and 15 appear to be underpaid in relation to the number of their villages, and this may be related to efforts which the Administration had been making about that time to eliminate these two chieftainships and to amalgamate their chiefdoms with others. This arrangement also conforms to the alignment of segments. The Paramount Chief is in charge of county 10 but he is [643] also head of primal segment 4 which includes all the others, and it is therefore appropriate that he should be paid most. Chief 14 is

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16. 634 648

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kupili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief. [465] 634 648 554 [551]

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units*

178

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1930 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed 631 634 [167]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

reserves were amended, and as existing gardens were exhausted. Movement of this kind did not greatly affect political allegiance, so that not all the villages acknowledging the control of a minor chief were built in his vicinity. Coxhead mentions seven defined territorial units in 1914, but by the time I began fieldwork in 1946 their boundaries had been forgotten.[21] Most of the villages in any one county were clustered together, with the capital village and the chief's village somewhere in the middle of the cluster, but there were also more distant villages situated among those belonging to other counties. The next stage of development appears to have been the definition of county boundaries, so that by 1946 it was possible to speak of some villages as situated in one county and owing allegiance to another. Most of these interloping villages, as we may call them, belonged to the segment of the county to which they owed allegiance. They were a bone of contention between chiefs, for although each chief desires as many villages as possible under his control, he has only a limited amount of land in his county with which to satisfy his people. An analogous situation is found in some Welsh sheep farms, where each farmer likes to own as many sheep as possible but hopes they will graze on someone else's land. The chief in political control of an interloping village endeavoured to maintain his control at a distance and at the same time to make use of the land in the local chief's county, while the latter had to decide between trying to make the interloping village shift its allegiance so as to increase his own following and trying to get it to move away so as to give his people more land. In 1947 and 1948, to avoid such difficulties between chiefs, the Administration defined county boundaries precisely and insisted that all villages within the area of a county should be under the control of the county chief.

Thus, in the development of the county as a social group, ties of segmentary affiliation have been gradually replaced by those of territorial propinquity. This replacement is not yet complete, nor has it arisen merely as a consequence of Administrative action in the last few years. Village histories show that in many instances a village changed from attachment to the head of its major segment to attachment to the local county chief many years ago and without prompting from the Administration. Villagers marry their neighbours irrespective of county affiliation and thus build up ties which link them to the local county. It may be inconvenient to walk a long way to the court and county meetings of a distant chief, particularly if the local chief appears to listen more readily to his people's complaints and advice.

[21] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22, 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [361]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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621 agnation of the small segments to what I have termed an omni-
648 directional system), has increased the importance of the single
[601] village. After 1898 the Administration endeavoured to bring the people back into villages of moderate size which could be easily supervised by the Administration acting through chiefs.[22] In 1912 a comprehensive scheme of Native reserves was proposed. To facilitate the introduction of the scheme, many small villages were amalgamated with others near by to form units of forty huts or more. The larger groups of composite villages were to form the nuclei of the reserves.[23] After 1930, when villages began to spread out again, many of the enforced amalgamations came to an end. The Administrative rules that every man must live in a recognized village and that a village with less than ten tax-paying men could not be recognized were not always enforced, although they were not repealed until 1945. Administrative recognition has been an important consideration in determining the size of villages but it has not been the only one.

621 In the residential system, the process of segmentation did not
681 stop with the founding of the segments we now know as county
178 segments. Already in 1898 there were very many more segments in being than the few we have shown in Diagram 1. There we have indicated the position of the major branches of the tree of State but have omitted the hundreds of minor limbs and thousands of twigs which made up the whole. Even if we restrict our attention to segments founded before 1898 we find within any county segment to-day many smaller groups, some of them divisions, others single villages, and a few containing several villages, which are in fact inferior segments formed by one or other of the processes we discussed in Chapter I. Lieutenants and others have made their own segments, junior sons have left their natal villages, and so on. The processes of segment formation since 1898 have not been identical with those prevailing before the conquest, for the quasi-agnatic structure of segments has been modified and segments of recent formation, if in fact we can legitimately call them segments at all, are not organized in the same hierarchical manner as in the old residential system. We shall discuss the formation of small social groups in a later part of our study, the analysis of village life.
178 Here, at the county level, we have to deal with what is essentially a
634 continuation of a pre-conquest process. Each successive head of a
622 county segment, i.e. each county chief, has formed his own new segment within that of his predecessor. Thus, for instance, where

[22] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902, p. 2, and 1903, p. 2.
[23] *M.R.A.*, p. 108.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's villages*, as I have defined them elsewhere.[24] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[24] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of 643
influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed 611
for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express [754]
their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to [669]
establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling [872] with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor 643
chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount 578
Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the 692
courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically 643
important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with 648
the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for [685] embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the [186] feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

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The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and 643
his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each 645

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 643 645 county the senior lieutenants of the county segment are well-known figures, usually headmen of large villages, and often seen at the chief's house. There are also the lieutenants of the segments of lower order founded for their great wives by successive heads of the county segment, and in particular the lieutenants of the reigning chief's great wife's segment. There are individuals who for some reason or other have become friendly with the chief, and there are those occupying posts paid by the Native Treasury. There are the kinsmen of the chief, including the chief's deputy. All these categories contribute to the circle round the chief which keeps him informed of what is going on in his county, advises him what he should do and travels with him on journeys. The constitution of this group is not fixed and there is no formal council to which persons definitely do or do not belong. An Administrative officer once asked Mpezeni II who constituted the tribal council, and the Paramount Chief is said to have found difficulty in thinking of any names. Not all the people who might be expected to advise the chief do so, for there are always quarrels and preferences within each category. In particular, the lieutenants of regal segments seem to play a comparatively minor part. They do not represent the interests of the county as a whole, as do the lieutenants of the county segment, nor of the reigning chief, as do the lieutenants of his own village. They are the favourites of former chiefs and the segments that they represent are not functionally significant under the present scheme of administration.

In recent years the Administration has endeavoured from time [648] to time to discuss affairs with the chiefs and the four newly appointed Native Authority councillors in isolation from the rest of the tribe.[4] In most situations in which matters of common interest are discussed there is, however, no restriction on who can offer advice to the chief or to the meeting. Any man can stand up and say what he wishes, but unless he is in an important social position people will listen to him attentively only if his counsel seems sound.[5]

It is the custom for a chief to nominate one of his agnatic kinsmen, usually a father's son or father's brother's son, as his [605] deputy.[6] Although this appears to have been a traditional post, I 634 do not know what role was played by an important man's deputy 645 in pre-conquest times. Nowadays the deputy of a chief may help in his various official duties and represents the interests of the chief's agnatic kin as against those of his lieutenants. In village affairs

[4] See p. 151.
[5] See pp. 158f.
[6] *Mnene*. cf. Zulu umnane, younger sibling.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy. 634 645

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief. 202 634 624

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it. 611 643 551 634 [648] [645]

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has 634 668

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Lipusa*. cf. Zulu *i(li)nxusa*, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 140*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 delegated a certain amount of responsibility, such as the collection
668 of licence fees or the holding of a court not recognized by the Administration but supplied by the county clerk with the apparatus of official forms. The would-be chief then argues that the rural district in which he lives has always been distinct from the rest of the county and that it is too far for the people in it to attend at the county court. No attempt of this kind since 1920 has been successful, although the recent dispersal of villages into reopened land outside
[693] the reserves has increased the distances some litigants have to travel to the county court, and hence the number of disputes referred to these unrecognized local leaders has increased.

4. *The chief and his people*

634 The chief interacts with his people in a variety of situations. He receives their presents of beer and other valuables, he presides at county meetings, and organizes the royal hunts. He visits them in their villages when there are important celebrations and festivities and they go to him with their requests and complaints.

634 Ngoni offer beer as one of their principal expressions of
574 hospitality, and in a formal beer party the ordered pattern of the
273 social structure is acted out in the distribution and dispensation of
[554] the various jars and bowls of beer.[11] One traditional obligation is to provide a jar of beer for the head of the segment. Everyone belongs, or belonged, to a hierarchy of segments so that there were many people who ought to be honoured in this way at every party. In practice, since beer is heavy to carry, few jars move outside the village in which they are brewed, but a distant political superior is sometimes called in to a village to attend a beer party at which he will be honoured in this way. In the chief's own village the chief lives close at hand and beer is provided in much the same way as for the headman in an ordinary village. When beer is brewed by important people in the capital and regal villages they often call the chief to come and visit them and enjoy their hospitality. The chief is not so frequently called to beer in commoner villages, but on an important occasion such as the formal installation of a village official, or the formal announcement that a village has moved to a new site, it is appropriate to invite the chief to attend. A chief may
634 also be honoured by his affines with beer brewed for him in the
554 same way as any other man, but there is some disagreement about the appropriateness of this, for the chief 'has exceeded all others'

[11] See Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 217-19, for the rules of and attitudes towards beer drinking.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kinswoman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing. A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present is made by an individual and arises from his own political aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE IV. Villagers hoeing a path to another village in preparation for a visit from the District Officer.

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PLATE V. A District Officer, with a county chief on his left, talks to village headmen during a tour of villages. In the distance are villagers listening to the conversation.

[Facing p. 145]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 by this relationship participate in the presentation and consumption
273 of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the
[769] Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all
797 public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the
[557] ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of
[576] honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are
681 diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded
634 as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and
626 other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Paramount Chief is sometimes told of the matter and calls the minor
[643] chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other counties and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner.
643 The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[14] a
576 salutation which symbolizes his former position as head of an

[14] cf. Zulu *Bayede*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

independent group of Ngoni. Chibambo mentions how the use of this salutation was discontinued when the head of an erstwhile independent group rejoined his parent group.[15] In recent times people have indicated their disapproval of the Paramount Chief's actions by discontinuing this salutation temporarily.

Despite the security of tenure provided by Administrative recognition, a chief still needs the support of his people. There is an Ngoni maxim, 'chieftainship is people',[16] and commoners are well aware that it is because they support their chief that he has high status. The simplest and most effective sanction that commoners can employ against their chief is to leave him. Movement from one county to another, from one tribe to another, and from the county to the town and back again is crucial in the working of modern Ngoni society. Not all these movements take place as the result of the unpopularity of chiefs, but this is one factor among many. Chibambo records an early example of people moving to segment 8 from the residue of segment 1 in order to share the hospitality of a newly appointed chief, but he goes on to say 'afterwards they found it wise to return to their proper division [segment]'.[17] In more recent times there are several examples, particularly among villages which entered Ngoniland after 1898 and who therefore largely lack segmental affiliation, of villages and clusters that have changed from one county to another for political reasons. More significant at the present time are the numbers of ambitious people who emigrate to the towns because, among other things, they cannot find advancement in the political hierarchy. The most striking instance of this is in the family of the late Mpezeni II. He had six sons who survived him. One is now Paramount Chief, and one is still a boy. The other four, including the chief's deputy, are town-dwellers in other parts of Africa.

5. *Royal hunts*

The royal hunt is the only occasion on which a county, or more usually a rural district or part of a county, functions as an economic unit. Even then the economic element in the enterprise is not very marked. The chief announces, through his messengers, that on such-and-such a day he will hold a royal hunt and that the men of such-and-such villages are to meet in a certain place. The procedure followed on the hunt is exactly the same as on an ordinary hunt, with the chief or someone nominated by him in tactical command, though the number of hunters is greater than on a hunt

[15] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 56. [16] *Ufumu ni imatu.*
[17] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 35.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

224 organized by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief
476 and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who
634 killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt, but occasionally if the
634 field is very poor a chief will summon absentees in his court.

224 These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic
[136] significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as effectively as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but
[681] he can call out his men hunting.[18] Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with
[411] them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African bureaucracies*

647 Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was
648 little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous
693 leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

[18] See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 215, for Ngoni hunting methods.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him.

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialized services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them.

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo-

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Capital, court and chief's village*

634 We have spoken of the headquarters of the county segment as the capital of the county, and this is in accord with vernacular usage. Although each chief is head of his county segment, no chief lives in his capital village. Each has made his segment and set up a village of his own. This process continues with each successive chief, each making his own new village. When brick buildings [344] were made during the 1930s to house the newly recognized Native Courts, these were located near the villages of the reigning chiefs. Some of these are still in office, while others have died and their successors live in their new villages, some of which are as much as two miles away from the court. There are thus in some counties three foci of political interest. There is the capital village, the court, and the chief's village. Associated with each centre are different leaders and different activities. The capital village provides a link with the past, and in particular with that moment in the past at which the segment was founded. The Paramount Chief [643] retains special rights in his capital village and can make a garden for one year on the old site of his county capital whenever it moves to a new one. Most, if not all, capital villages are larger than the average village but the senior lieutenants of the county segments do not live in them, for like the chiefs, they have made their own villages. Nevertheless, the lieutenants who do live in the capital [554] are regarded as people of considerable importance in the county. Meetings are sometimes held in the capital but more frequently at the county court or in the chief's village. The court is the home of 692 the Native Authority, and it is there that the affairs of the Administration are discussed. An incident well illustrates the association of 648 the court with the Administration. I once called at the house of a 634 county chief who had not previously met me. He insisted that I 647 should go to the court to meet him there, as that was where he always met Administrative officials. County meetings are called at the court to discuss matters raised by the Administration in its letters to chiefs, and to formulate requests and complaints for transmission to the Administration. The court clerk, the Native Authority councillors, assessors, and messengers are much in evidence, while the traditional advisers of the chief, his senior lieutenants, may be in the background even if they are not silent. Meetings of this kind are usually called by county chiefs, but occasionally a meeting may be held open to the whole tribe. I have described elsewhere the procedure at a county meeting.[22]

[22] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 107-9.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In contrast to this, the private affairs of the chieftainship, 634
matters connected with royal cattle, disputes among the chief's 622
wives and quarrels between the chief and his affines or close supporters are discussed at the chief's village. Quarrels of an apparently trivial nature, such as a chief's wife's running away with a lorry driver, would in the old days have threatened the whole internal structure of the county segment, and they are still [687]
treated as questions of State by the lieutenants and kinsmen of the chief who attend these meetings. The contrast between these two kinds of assembly is striking. They are described by different vernacular terms,[24] and while any man can attend and speak at a meeting at the court, it would be considered inappropriate for him to intervene in a meeting at the chief's village unless his position in the old residential system was a high one. Women listen to court meetings, but rarely if ever speak, for the Administration works very largely through men and it is men who discuss the kinds of thing in which the Administration is interested. At the chief's village, the interests of the chief's kinswomen and wives are often directly concerned and they themselves contribute to the discussion. The marriages of chiefs established, and to a lesser extent do still [602]
reinforce and establish, affinal ties which cut across the cleavages between segments and which were crucial to the balance of power [578]
within the State. A quarrel between a chief and his wife was a matter of political, and not merely domestic, significance and must therefore be discussed by the chief's political advisers.

The sanction of deportation appears to be employed only in 687
connexion with offences against the chieftainship. Thus a lieu- 627
tenant who embezzled some royal cattle was called before a meeting at his chief's village attended by the important lieutenants in the county, and ordered to leave the country. Similarly, a man who was found drinking with a chief's wife under suspicious circumstances was ordered to leave the country by a tribunal of this kind. He moved first to another county, but was forced to move on again out of Ngoniland. Such actions are sometimes taken without reference to recognized Native Courts or to the Adminis- 648
tration, and the effectiveness of the tribunal's decision depends on 687
the support it has from the people as a whole and from the Native [627]
Authority organization rather than on the ultimate sanctions wielded by the Administration. However, when matters of this

[24] A meeting to discuss matters of general interest is *nsukhwa*; one to discuss affairs of the chieftainship is *luimcye*. cf. *ku-sukhana*, to assemble (Nyanja) and *i(li)landa*, assembly (Zulu). The different derivation of the words, from Nyanja and Zulu, is significant. *Luimcye* also means age-set.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
648 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[684] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[696] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building
361 other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased importance to the Native Authority centre. Already there have been one or two attempts at opening shops near the courts to cater for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, assessors, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have
178 continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the headman, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants
[622] of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Cesthe, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 wait for six or seven years before the procrastinating headmen
[645] could lay aside jealousies, and actually place him in the authority of his father. Then when he is crowned he cannot sit in judgment
[697] or give a decision unless his councillors have been summoned, and have deliberated with him. Many a time in the old fierce days the councillors and chief argued and defied one another for weeks at a time over the question as to whether the white man was to be tolerated in the country, and it was the strong affection of old Mombera for Dr. Laws, and Wm. Koyi which alone held in the dogs of war, and prevented his councillors from going forth on an exterminating expedition. Yet in spite of the great power of the chief he lives as father of the people with all the villagers as his children. His house is like their own, built right in the centre of
[567] the village. The poorest slave has access to him, and he hands his beer pot or his snuff to the meanest villager when he would show him friendliness.

[622] Under the paramount chief there are four great sub-chiefs, and
[634] each of them has his councillors and headmen. Then these headmen have each a group of villages under their control. They
[692] hear and dispose of petty quarrels between the villagers. Cases in which headmen are involved go to the sub-chief, and cases in which the sub-chiefs are involved, and all great tribal affairs,
645 go to the paramount chief. The tribal council is an impressive sight. Just before I came here I had the privilege of being present in one of these great gatherings of the tribe. It had met to discuss the advisability of coming under the British Protectorate. The great chief, Chimtunga, had sent out his messengers to call to council all the sub-chiefs and headmen. They marched into the
[634] chief's kraal on the appointed day, each sub-chief followed by his councillors and hundreds of armed warriors, all walking in single file, and dressed in their gaudiest clothes. They sat round the kraal till thousands were present. By-and-bye the paramount
[643] chief walked in, followed by his brothers and council. He was greeted by a roar of salutation, and took his seat. When the case was opened, and the subject introduced, the fathers of the people rose one after the other and saluted the chief, and then addressed the people. The speakers walked up and down, speaking with
[537] considerable incisiveness and eloquence, their language full of metaphors and traditional allusions. Then the chief spoke, closing the discussion. Immediately it was ended and the royal
[535] salutation given, a warrior leapt into the circle with a war cry, fell

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

787 rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned.
[177] Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment.
795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a
791 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancien successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities.
695 The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When
766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before
849 their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We
177 seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the
[643] only independent tribe is Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government.
[634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

they find dirt and untidiness compel the people to turn out and sweep the village, and rebuild their houses.

Education is spreading at a great rate, and there are fifty schools already established among the people with about 7,000 scholars in attendance. These pay fees for their attendance. And so great is the thirst for reading that last year more than 4,000 volumes were bought by the people.

A Christian church is rapidly growing up, and at certain religious seasons a great congregation of over 7,000 people may be seen gathered from all quarters.

Yet it would be a pity if with this inrush of new life the old tribal characteristics were lost in a wretched caricature of European methods. There is nothing more slovenly than a lithe athletic African dressed in European cast off clothing, or more repulsive than a lad trying to be an Englishman when he should be an Ngoni proud of his nationality. And this is one of the most serious problems that is constantly before us, to guide this people in their formative period, that in the end they may not be denationalised, and made hideous and ridiculous in a distorted and unnatural mould, to preserve all national customs which are not evil in themselves and yet evolve a people honest, industrous, intelligent, and Christian, who will have some harmonious and beautiful part to take when the world's orchestra is filling up to play its symphony of peace and prosperity.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

797 have affected the content of their Christian beliefs and their utilization of Christian institutions, there is now little religious activity that can be called pagan.

The Nyasaland Counties

635 The Fort Jameson Ngoni maintain strong connexion with the two counties under Ngoni chiefs in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District, Nyasaland. When the border was drawn between North-Eastern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, about a quarter of Mpezeni's tribal area fell within Nyasaland. The two countries have been administered separately, so that the ties that have persisted have done so despite the formal division of the area and are in the main derived from sentiments related to pre-conquest times. These ties are seen in operation in the attendance of the Nyasaland chiefs at Mpezeni's village on various formal occasions, as at the ceremony ending the mourning for Mpezeni II and beginning the reign of Mpezeni III. In 1920 a delegation from the Nyasaland chiefs visited Mpezeni, and in 1922 Mpezeni took a party across into Nyasaland to visit the two chiefs, apparently with the idea of discussing the possibility of moving his capital into Nyasaland[1] where there was more land available than there was for him in Northern Rhodesia. From time to time Mpezeni has called on the Nyasaland chiefs to send him maize when his own supplies have run low, and these requests have been met. The Nyasaland Administration has also tried to keep alive the connexion with Mpezeni. In the past the Magistrate at Fort Manning brought the Nyasaland chiefs into Fort Jameson to meet Mpezeni there on such occasions as the King's Birthday, while in 1932 when there was a dispute between the two chiefs as to which was the senior, the District Officer informed them that the question did not arise as they were both only lieutenants of Mpezeni. On the other hand, the Nyasaland Administration has intervened to prevent tribal levies for the benefit of Mpezeni.

There are also relationships across the border that arise principally from the mere territorial contiguity of the two areas. The border, which is the Luangwa–Nyasa watershed, is not easy to follow and there has sometimes been doubt as to where it runs. The villages [361] stretch without interruption across the watershed and there is much coming and going from one village to another. Some villages have moved from one country to the other and many people have relatives [797] on both sides of the border. The Catholic Missions were for a long

[1] Mpezeni I had the same idea. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 1 August 1897, p. 2.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 635 [797] [743] N [438]

time controlled from a mission station just inside Nyasaland, so that many people crossed to attend religious services and receive instruction. From Mpezeni's own county it is easier to get to the hospital at Fort Manning than to the one at Fort Jameson, so that people wanting European medicine tend to go to Nyasaland for treatment rather than to Fort Jameson. Nyasalanders are for their part attracted into Northern Rhodesia by the market for foodstuffs among the urban population, White and Black, of Fort Jameson and by the greater variety of goods on sale there.

Other Ngoni Groups

N 101 173

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are conscious of their links with the other groups of Ngoni scattered over Central Africa, and of their similarity with the Ndebele and the Swazi and Zulu. The Paramount Chief is sometimes praised by the recital in the Ngoni language of the past exploits of the Ngoni, how they crossed the Zambezi, and how they conquered one tribe after another. On one occasion I heard someone who cannot speak Ngoni praise the Paramount by repeating, in Ndebele, which is similar to Ngoni, a praise of Mzilikazi[1] which he had learnt by rote. This oration was accepted without comment by the Paramount. Lancaster has recorded a legend that Lobengula[2] fled to Mpezeni after the second Matebele War, and that he died in the country.[3] Some years after his installation Mpezeni II was visited by a delegation from Mombera, chief of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland, which, it is said, came to ratify Mpezeni's position as Chief of the Fort Jameson section of the Ngoni. An important headman in Mpezeni's county, who bears the same name as Chief Chiwere of the Ngoni of Dowa District, still claims from time to time that because his namesake and alleged relative is a chief, he too ought to be a chief.

Nsenga and Yao

N M 648 [197]

The Ngoni are on more friendly terms with the Nsenga of Petauke District than with the other matrilineal tribes of the region. Some of the kinship ties that were formed as a result of intermarriage between the two tribes in the 1870's can still be traced, and their languages are similar. Mpezeni III went in 1944 with his first lieutenant and twenty-five followers to visit the Nsenga Chief Manjawanthu, and he is expected to return the invitation.

[1] The first Ndebele king. [2] Son of Mzilikazi, defeated by the Whites.
[3] Lancaster, p. 83. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, and Posselt, *Upengula the Scatterer*, pp. 112–24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkucweni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni). 173 613 643 644 595

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Loangeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary bevies of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Cimpinga). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Fafazeni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thus Young, writing of the period 1835-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.[36] The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambera's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambera in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of 173 361 721 173 636 727

[36] Young, *History*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 worship. They allowed the local chiefs to govern their people
636 according to their own laws and customs, but under the authority
727 of the Ngoni. They followed the method of governing which Europeans call "indirect rule".' They also took selected children from the conquered peoples and reared them as Ngoni in Ngoni villages. Young's account supports this.[27] Whether or not this method of government was wise is clearly a matter of opinion. It is perhaps significant that for Mpezeni's people the evidence provided by the present disposition of persons claiming descent from different ethnic groups suggests that a different policy was followed there. Chibambo and Young talk of groups of warriors under Mwambera belonging to various subjugated tribes; in Mpezeni's area captured men appear to have been drafted into
[561] the various age-set regiments, so that men from the same tribe were distributed throughout the army and did not form a distinct group.
173 Territorially, the dispersion of captives from the same tribe was not so complete, for it appears that in Mpezeni's group the major
563 segment settled on the east of the Ngoni area raided mostly to the
727 east, and the western segment to the west, and so on, so that many of the captives taken from a particular locality were to be found in the major segment of the State nearest their homeland. Yet even this concentration of captives with the same ethnic origin was not complete, and representatives from all the principal tribes with whom the Ngoni came into contact are nowadays to be found in all parts of Mpezeni's Ngoniland. We suggest that this policy of assimilation, practised to a much greater degree by Mpezeni than by Mwambera, may be correlated with the fact that in Mpezeni's group there were no revolts by groups of captives of common origin, whereas in Mwambera's there were three such revolts, by Lake Tonga, Kamanga and Henga tribesmen.

173 Mwambera attacked the Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu some
721 time round about 1860, and was driven off in the face of fire from
648 guns Mwase had obtained from Arabs. He subsequently came to an agreement with Mwase whereby the Cewa chief became his 'child' and lent him soldiers armed with guns to assist in Ngoni raids. Travellers suggest that later Mwase came to an agreement with Mpezeni as well, but this is not so certain. Mpezeni does seem to have established peaceful relations with one or two minor chieftains during the period of early European contact,[28] but for

[27] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 39-41; Young, *History*, p. 119.

[28] e.g. Cuaula, a Kunda chief and Msoro, who had Kunda and Nsenga connexions. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 11; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyassa', p. 746.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[853] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[67]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[636] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-
[701] professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[67] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than were the groups further inland. However, the evidence suggests that no great changes of this kind took place among the Fort Jameson group under Mpezeni, and it is therefore with changes in the external environment of the State that we shall be chiefly concerned.

In this early period, between 1821 and about 1885, there was for most of the time a situation in which the forces attaching people to the State were stronger than those tending to split it. The age-set system, the web of affinal ties, the attachment of segment members to their lord, the reliance of a lord on the support of his dependants, and the external opposition of all non-Ngoni, these all held the State together. Shifts in the balance of power could be made without disrupting the State because the State was continually expanding, and expansion gave it flexibility. The weakest links in the State were at the top, and it was these that were most strained as the State grew in numbers and in degree of segmentation. Under critical conditions, as on the death of the Paramount Chief or when the need for food necessitated a move from one tribal site to another, these were the links that gave way and fresh independent States were formed. Fission in the State led to consolidation of ties in each divergent group, but the same processes leading to further fission began again at once.

During the period of migration the Ngoni flourished. They were successful brigands on the march. Yet they were brigands in a poor land, and despite their military successes their economy remained one of subsistence cultivation, even though others did some of the cultivation for them. They were well organized for war and their enemies were not, but both they and their enemies were poor people relying on shifting cultivation with a poor technology and with access to only moderately valuable natural resources. The hinterland of Africa provided the Ngoni with an area within which they could operate successfully, but this area was bounded by the lands of wealthier and mightier peoples. Towards the end of the century the boundaries of the area began to contract. The Ngoni found themselves in conflict not with subsistence cultivators using hoes and spears, but with peoples using writing and guns and possessing apparently limitless resources of cloth, beads and gunpowder. We now have to turn to the story of the Ngoni struggle with these Arab and European invaders.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Three

DEFEAT

1. Structural change 2. Portugal or Britain 3. Concession hunters 4. European consolidation 5. Friction 6. Fighting 7. Cattle 8. The end of a system

1. *Structural change*

178 619 64 THE STRUGGLES of the Ngoni during the middle of the nineteenth century were with groups of roughly the same character as themselves. The processes at work in the Ngoni social system were in the main repetitive. The State grew in size, split, and grew again, but it was still largely the same kind of State as before. Even though there were important differences between the Ngoni and their opponents, particularly after 1835, those whom they encountered were sufficiently like themselves to be absorbed into the system without difficulty. In the nomenclature of Radcliffe-Brown and the Wilsons, there was social circulation in the Ngoni State but little change in its structural form.[1] For this reason we have been concerned in our analysis so far with but few of the historical details of that period, and have dealt with history only in an abstract and generalized form. Many of the inconsistencies between various versions of the tribal legend have not been [114] significant. For example, Chief Ciwele Ndhlovu of Dowa broke off from the main body of Ngoni, according to some writers before, and according to others after, the split between Mpezeni and Mwambera.[2] It does not matter for our particular purpose which of these versions is correct, for we are here concerned only to establish that from time to time senior lieutenants did split off with their segments to form independent chiefdoms. This process, of which Ciwele's secession is an example, was essentially the same before and after the Mpezeni-Mwambera split.

After 1880 Ngoni history entered a new phase, and social 648 processes began to operate which were not repetitive. Changes 178 began to occur in the form of the Ngoni social field, for instead of 121 interacting with groups similar to themselves, the Ngoni became involved in a much wider network of social relations. This change

[1] Radcliffe-Brown, 'On social structure', p. 4; Wilson, *Social change*, p. 58.
[2] cf. Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 32-3; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 18; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

171 643 between rival heirs even while the occupant of the throne was still alive. The brothers Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fought for the heirship while their father Mpande was still chief.[95]

175 643 648 669 The apparent ineffectiveness of Mpezeni's rule may well have been due to the increasing segmentation of the State as it expanded and to the growing differentiation of interest between one major segment and another. As it happened, there was no civil war and the tribe did not split, at least not in these terms. A cleavage in the royal house did reveal itself later, in 1903, after British rule had begun, when Madzimawi tried to take the name of Zwangendaba and was opposed by the supporters of Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu. But by then the form of the State was already determined by political forces other than the balanced opposition of segments. It is significant of the changed situation that Madzimawi did not send his armed followers against the new Mpezeni to challenge his succession. Instead he applied to the Native Commissioner for permission to take the name of his grandfather.[96]

Instead of dividing in civil war the whole country united against the European interlopers. Mpezeni alone tried to protect his friend Wiese. The effective cleavage was not between rival heirs but between the Paramount Chief and his people. He was now a man in his sixties who seemed not to want war and who perhaps benefited more than his people from the presents made by Europeans. The Ngoni people continued to believe and teach that fighting was the proper occupation for men. An attempt to exploit this cleavage was made in 1897 when Wiese, perhaps remembering his earlier attempt to serve Portugal and Britain simultaneously, offered his services to the B.S.A. Company. Forbes thought that if Wiese was given troops, he would be supported by Mpezeni, who would then be in a position to hold Nsingu and the Ngoni warriors in check.[97] But this plan was overtaken by events.

64 721 We saw in the previous chapter that the organization of the State was based on warfare, not only on war as an activity bringing prestige to successful warriors but also on war as a method of recruitment to the ever-widening segments of the residential system. Without warfare to eliminate the unsuccessful and to bring 175 promotion and dependants to those who survived, the system could 439 not keep going. It was in no sense inevitable that the Fort Jameson 648 Ngoni and the British should fight; we have only to turn to the

[95] Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', pp. 35-6, and *Malinowski's Sociological Theories*, pp. 19-20; Krige, *Social system of the Zulu*, p. 19.
[96] See pp. 139 *f*.
[97] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the same processes we have seen at work in the formation of segments. Those villages are linked which have a common origin, and the mechanism of dispersal is still the same as in pre-conquest times. Sons of a headman still break out of their natal village and lieutenants and others move off to make their own villages. However, with the decline in polygyny, fewer new villages arise from the formation of new bands of wives by a headman.

Secondly, the village has become more important than before, and village membership is now critical in a wide variety of situations. Thirdly, because it has become easier to move from one village to another than to form a new village, the genealogical structure of the village has become highly diversified as compared with segments of similar size in the old system.

Thus, the transition has been from a State based on a continuously segmenting political system to a minor unit of administration in a modern State. The new order has grown out of the old, not as the result of any professed policy of preserving indigenous forms of political organization, but because the aims of the Administration were essentially conservative, because it was concerned with preserving order in the country as cheaply as possible and did not wish to introduce economic and political changes which would conflict with the supply of labour to other areas scheduled for earlier development; and because for the most part those individuals who occupied powerful positions in the old régime were best able to survive in the struggle for power which determined the eventual form of the new. Therefore, although their entry into the colonial empire was so much more abrupt than that of their matrilineal neighbours, the political system to which Ngoni are now subject bears many more superficial similarities to its former condition than is the case among the Cewa and others. The changes have been great, as we have seen, but the symbols and names remain, with changed significance, to remind Ngoni of their past.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

guish them from their neighbours are no more significant than the many varieties of custom and belief which are to be found in every Ngoni village. They do not form a group among themselves, their members participate in all communal activities in their counties and are to be found at all levels of the Native Authority organization below that of chief. They are linked by kinship to their neighbours. The two Nyasaland counties, however, include relatively large areas where there are only Cewa-speaking villages, and many of these claim that they have been placed under Ngoni rule only by Administrative action. From time to time they have made efforts to break away and to attach themselves to some neighbouring Cewa chief or to establish a separate chiefdom. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the Ngoni chiefs, with the villages in their county segments, and their Cewa-speaking subjects. It will be remembered that the two Nyasaland chiefdoms represent the head of the eastern movement of Mpezeni's group, and that some of the settlement across the border took place as late as 1897. It is not surprising therefore that in these two counties assimilation of Cewa captives and immigrants has not proceeded so far as in the longer established counties in Northern Rhodesia.

11. *Conclusion*

In this study we have attempted to show what has happened in Ngoni political life during a period of 130 years. To-day Ngoni society is changing but this has not always been so. Prior to the arrival of Wiese in 1886, the actually existing social relations were changing, but the form of the social structure remained the same. Each new segment developed along lines that were already known and each time the State split, the new States were copies of the old. A system of this kind could not have lasted for long, for the supply of new recruits to the Ngoni States must have sooner or later been exhausted. In Africa, even if the overall conditions facilitated the emergence of this kind of migratory militarism, they were particularly unfavourable for its prolonged continuation. The Arabs and the European Powers behind them were closing in on the centre of Africa, and Ngoni days were numbered. Then came the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898 and the emergence of a new system, in which some of the actually existing political groups, and the relations between them, appear to have a much greater stability than before. But at the same time society as a whole has become much more diversified, the spatial distribution of men and women in significant relationship with one another has become highly complicated, and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 new external factors are operating. There has been a change in the
631 scale of social relationships, and Ngoni men and women form part of a large-scale society in which events in one distant part of the system affect events in another part. The history and analysis of this change lies largely outside the scope of this study, and we have restricted ourselves to the way in which the political system of the tribe has adapted itself and been adapted in the changing society.
[64] The Ngoni sovereign State has become more and more like a rural district council in a backward area; foreign policy has given place
[557] to Native policy; social mobility has been restricted to the lowest caste in a plural society; and the great warrior chief has become in effect the only member of the Administration who never goes home
[643] to Britain on leave. But in the eyes of his people, the Paramount Chief still belongs to the Ngoni, and not to the Administration.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the absence of any definite internal land boundaries between the territories of one political segment and another. The constant elements were the residential groups that we now know as villages,[1] and we may liken them to ships of different sizes and importance that preserve a loose formation while the fleet sails from place to place. Villages, discrete clusters of dwellings in comparative proximity and separated from one another by uninhabited stretches of garden-land and bush, were internally divided into divisions,[2] and from time to time these divisions broke away from one another or from their parent village to form new villages of their own. This process of divisional fission was characteristic of the commoner villages. Royal villages were usually formed by a parallel process by which an important member of the royal lineage established a new village for one or more of his queens by recruitment from his own natal village. The eldest son by the senior queen in that village then became the head of the segment of the royal lineage associated with the village. Thus the segmentation of the royal lineage was reflected in a proliferation of royal villages.

In the period immediately prior to the conquest of the tribe by British forces in 1898, there were four important royal villages, with populations of probably several thousands each. One belonged to a brother of Mpezeni, and the other three were controlled by groups of Mpezeni's own queens and their sons. Associated with each royal village were several regional governors, each of whom was responsible for the well-being of a group of lesser villages, and who resided among them in a village of his own. These lesser villages were commoner villages, each under its own headman. Each large royal village had also a number of lesser royal villages attached to it, and also many commoner villages were attached to a royal village of some sort directly, and not through a regional governor.[3]

Each important person, chief, member of the royal lineage, regional governor, or headman was assisted by a number of lieutenants, trusted subordinates who were usually not patrilineal kinsmen of their principal but who were sometimes related affinally. These lieutenants were ranked in order of the creation of their posts by their principal and assisted him in the control of his unit of administration. In the case of Mpezeni himself, however, there were two kinds of lieutenants. Those people known as the lieutenants of Mpezeni were

[1] *Mzunzi*, pl. *mizunzi*.
[2] *Cigulu*, pl. *vigulu*.
[3] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66, for a similar system among the Swazi.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the [558] holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and 178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and 161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political 641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was [684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a 641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population 727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There 563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State. [567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain 563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set 641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise 701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *M'nawe*, pl. *enawe*. Cf. the Zulu term *nunawe*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest. 647

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping villages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, but this cannot be done openly under the present régime. 628 [643] [648] [692] [669]

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships. 631 64●

Sanctions

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exercised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 687 648

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military Service, obedience to the law,
recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182
the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641
subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614]
clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [589]
handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611]
descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428]
local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591]
'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592]
members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597]
into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621
sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184
descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701]
the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always [563]
a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186
cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563
selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasaland had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 individuals upon the cohesion of that society through their behaviour and actions. This was illustrated in the phrase so constantly used by them, and referred to already several times: 'He is spoiling the land,' or the converse, quoted in Chapter I: 'Young people were well taught that this behaviour was right for the upbuilding of the land.'

181 Among these so-called group values the first of all, and pre-
829 eminent above all, was the value of keeping together. Taught by bitter experience that personal quarrels could lead to political secessions and to the diminution of the power and influence of the Ngoni kingdoms, the focus of much of their thinking was on maintaining cohesion whether in small units or in large. I think the Ngoni were the only people in Nyasa-
[641] land where individuals and families were not allowed to
[166] leave the villages to live elsewhere without permission of the
[621] chief or headman. In the local courts there were frequent cases in which the accused had been guilty of leaving with-
[687] out permission. This illustration could be used also to indicate the second of the group values. I have called it dominance for want of a better term. It involves the exercise of authority, political and legal, over their own and subject peoples, the determination to exact obedience, influenced by a feeling of paternal responsibility for all over whom authority was claimed. This was an ambivalent sentiment affecting the attitude of the ruler and his relations with the ruled, and was the basis of the court case quoted in Chapter VI, when a chief made a judgement against his own son for adultery with a poor man's wife. The third group value was that of mutual aid and trust within the in-group, in order to secure its cohesion. This was the integrating principle of the 'house' system, described briefly in Chapter I and mentioned in many other contexts. Mutual trust and aid had been in the past the main element in the behaviour of men in their own regiments, in the mutual relation of warrior with warrior, both when on
181 campaigns and when living together in the villages.
577 The four personal values were inherent in the acceptance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 Succession to office within this system was from a man to his
498 eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New
641 people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture.
[729] Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was,
[581] in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

571 Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper
121 we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his
581 sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to
602 many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements
[182] then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is
[178] now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

171 The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm
581 of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility
613 of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political
602 ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly
588 developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery, and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1898 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the looting of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chiefdoms reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1898, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

583 rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled
586 affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another
178 in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'[10] but now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall system of social relationships within which marriages would continue caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-existent.

The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the
[436] contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year
[171] of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the
[465] rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause. This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in
[435] bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and those associated with the legalization payment have remained significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago, when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage
[641] payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group,
[581] so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for
[613] stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic
[183] group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative means of stablizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage payments accompany frequent divorce.

121 The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the
171 Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes.
586 Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

[10] *ibid*, p. 172.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of heping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 101 641

people of Mpezeni '. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is ' the thing ' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, " We are all Ngoni ". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N M 101 186 [464] N M [614]

N 829 [614]

The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, ' What is the meaning of a clan? ' they reply, ' It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many ' tribes ' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

N 121 101

[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word ' clan ' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. ' Tribe ' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which ' tribe ' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the ' blanket term ' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word ' tribe ' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

N M 197 128 N M 101 128

614 a hierarchy of rank expressed in the clan names, and this rank is
563 evident in the position of houses on a village site, and the degree of authority exercised by the clans and the respect[1] accorded to them. In effect, all those whose ancestors were absorbed before the final
101 break up of the main Ngoni group are recognized as having some
563 claim to the name Ngoni. The rest, that is the clans found in the areas where the Ngoni finally settled are, or rather were, regarded as conquered or slave people.

101 We have seen, however, that there is a much wider sense in which the term Ngoni is used—that is, by all who live under the rule of the
641 Paramount Chief. This extended usage is due to the prestige and
186 honour in which the stricter meaning of Ngoni is held. It was illus-
[643] trated in the instance of the Nyasaland men in Johannesburg, who all claimed to be Ngoni because they had discovered at once that the name commanded respect among the mixture of tribes to be found on the mines. *Indunas* and other leading men sometimes make use of this wider connotation when boasting about the large numbers of people owning allegiance to the Ngoni Paramount Chief, compared with the other petty chieftainships. 'All those in the country of Mpezeni are Ngoni. All are his people.' At the same time they make it clear that there is a distinction between the real Ngoni and the other subjects of the Paramount—a distinction which formerly was much sharper than it is to-day. All are the people of the Paramount, it is true, but in old days the majority of the non-Ngoni were called slaves. To this day the Ngoni when angry may call out to some one, 'Chewa, Chewa', implying 'Slave, slave', and be hauled to the chief's court for insulting language. There the chief will take pains to point out that there are no slaves to-day, and that no Ngoni must 'spoil the country' by insulting the people of the Paramount.

101 It is, I think, clear that there is a connotation in which the term Ngoni can be used with some degree of scientific accuracy—that is, to cover all those clans which are not belonging to the local tribes, or, in an even stricter sense, the clans of indubitably southern origin.

[196] [571] [1] This word 'respect' is constantly in use among the Ngoni. It implies both 'honour' and 'fear', and they sometimes use one word and sometimes the other. It really means, 'to give a person his due', that is, to behave towards him (or her) in the manner which his rank requires.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] [558] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 178 161 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 641 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was [684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a 641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population 727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There 563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State. [567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain 563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set 641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise 701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Mnewa*, pl. *enewa*. Cf. the Zulu term *nwewa*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made in the regimental system, which was organized on a national basis. A person of low ethnic status, that is, of comparatively late incorporation into the tribe but of senior regiment, was considered to be, in most circumstances, as good as a man of more aristocratic family but of a junior regiment. New regiments were formed about every four years. 563 641 701

Development of Minor Chieftainships

The defeat of the Ngoni army at the hands of the British in 1898 and the subsequent establishment of British control led to the partial breakdown of this system. The population was dispersed by the fighting and by the unsettled conditions that followed, and part of the kingdom was cleared for European occupation. The Administration recognized the grandson of Mpezeni I as the chief of the tribe, and also worked through a number of men known as Divisional Headmen, who were made responsible for small areas. Some of these divisional headmen were regional governors, some lieutenants of Mpezeni, some members of the royal lineage, and others were upstarts. It is not clear from the rather meagre records that remain or from the statements of informants exactly what happened between 1898 and 1914, but we know that by the latter date the Administration had come to recognize six men as local chiefs, apart from Mpezeni, and that four of them were said to be sons of Mpezeni I.[1] In 1929, when the term Native Authority was introduced, nine minor chiefs were appointed, of whom four were descended from Mpezeni I and one from the father of Mpezeni I. Two of the other minor chiefs have the descent-name *jere* that belongs to the royal lineage, and may be regarded as belonging to assimilated lineages. One is descended from a regional governor, the other from a policeman. Two minor chiefs do not have this descent-name, one being descended from a lieutenant of Zwangendaba and the other from a regional governor. This arrangement of one Paramount Chief and nine minor chiefs persists to the present day. With each of the ten chiefs is associated a more or less defined area within which most of the villages are said to belong to the chief of the area. What appears to have happened during the thirty years after the conquest is that the central power declined and that certain political and territorial segments achieved a degree of autonomy. The ten areas belonging to the different chiefs, which I shall refer to as counties, represent 175 648 631

[1] Cotthead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22 and 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Two

THE SNOWBALL STATE

1. Manipulation 2. Age-sets 3. Officers of State 4. Continually segmenting systems 5. Lineage systems compared 6. Splitting the State 7. Stability

1. *Manipulation*

In our first chapter we outlined some of the more significant events in Ngoni history prior to the arrival of Europeans. In this chapter we shall examine the political system within which these events took place. It is not the task of social analysis to determine why these or any other events occurred. What we shall attempt is a discussion of how they occurred, and what were the principal social relations involved in them. 121 128

Most of the incidents referred to in the first chapter concerned the State as a whole or the royal family. Nevertheless, when we begin to consider the conditions under which the State endured we have to discuss the social position of ordinary men and women within the State. For the Ngoni State held together as an organized social group, and on occasion failed to hold together, not merely because Zwangendaba was a good leader or his sons quarrelsome or his brothers ambitious, or because his people were bound by custom and knew no better, but also, and in our view mainly, because the State was a viable social entity in its time and place. The arrangement of people into segments and age-sets was not a mere formal and static division, but a means whereby a motley heterogeneous collection of individuals was converted into an organized society with agreed aims. The structure of the State had rules; in other words there was regularity in its social processes. Yet it was a structure which, within these rules, could be manipulated. The structure could be, and was, utilized by individuals for the realization of their private ends at the expense of others as well as providing for the common good. This is probably true of all social systems. We shall begin our analysis by examining the ways in which this manipulation was carried out. 642 182 661 557

In most societies, from the simplest system of hunting bands to the complex societies of the modern world, one of the most significant sets of rights are those relating to fixed natural resources. [121] The structure of rights in land provides a key to the structure of society. 423

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and the Ngoni did not seek to vanquish other tribes as states but rather to exhaust them by continued attrition. In later years it appears that a few minor chiefs who lived near the Fort Jameson group did manage to come to some agreement with it, for the Ngoni seem to have raided them only sporadically although warriors passed through their territories *en route* for more distant objectives; but this may have been due to the intervention of European traders. The powerful Cewa chief, Mwase Kasungu, may also have come to some arrangement with the Fort Jameson group even as he did with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland.

Thus for the most part the external relations of the Ngoni State were warlike. The Ngoni did not trade with their neighbours, or send ambassadors to them, or enter into alliances with them; they merely killed or captured them.[10] The army was organized on a basis of age-sets, but the age-sets as such did not enter into political relations with their enemies. They merely e[illegible]d the policy of the State or of the major segment to which they b[illegible]onged.

3. *Officers of State*

The residential and age-set systems formed the structure of the State and there was no separate administrative system. There was little specialization of function among those who wielded power in the State, and those who did have special governmental tasks were all the lords of large segments.

The nearest approach to special political officers is to be found among the regional governors. A few of Zwangendaba's followers were with him from the beginning of his journey from Natal. Some of these were his agnates, but the descendants of others have now forgotten what relationship, if any, they bore to him. These early followers did not stand in the lord-lieutenant relationship to Zwangendaba, for in Ngoni usage all lieutenants were captives, or the descendants of captives, of their lords. They were organized in segments in the same way as everyone else, but the heads of some of these segments were known by the special term *mulomuzana* which I have translated as regional governor. Segments headed by regional governors were attached like other large segments to the various royal headquarters, and thus became primary divisions of the segments formed for queens. They differed from the lieutenants of the royal headquarters not only in their title but also in the greater freedom they were allowed in their segments. They kept their own villages separate from the royal villages to which they were attached politically.

[10] See pp. 25 *f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have
121 a segmentary social organization'.[35]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[36] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesser segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similarities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumstances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follow the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A societies as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political system may now be handled as a separate question, providing a classification cutting across the division into states and stateless societies.

642 We have spoken throughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a state, and this usage is in accord with the definition of a state given
[643] here. The Paramount Chief with his lieutenants exercised supreme
[622] authority, there was a highly organized administrative machine, and there was an organized method of settling disputes within the
[556] State. There were only slight variations in wealth except in the
[554] control of cattle, but privilege and status were expressed in the residential system and were inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

121 The presence or absence of a segmentary political system can itself be divided into two questions; was there a segmentary
631 system, and if so, was it the political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, then it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[35] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 234.

[36] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 201, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 34, diagrams.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later rejoined it peaceably, but other instances of fission were accompanied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Ciwele Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[60] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[61] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force. Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftainship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no more secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[60] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 34.
[61] Bentley, *Livingstone*, p. 282, and *Dark Continent*, i, p. 450; Hetherwick, 'Angoni', passim.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[48] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[48] Wilson, 'Ingoniqkn', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 196; Read, 'Tradition', p. 481, f.n.1; Young, *History*, p. 125.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

651 marriages and for selling beer, and from fines and fees taken in court. In some years there has been a local levy on all men liable for Native tax.

642 The Native Authority, the Native Court and the Native Treasury form a single system of what is essentially local government. The judicial aspect of government has always been to the
693 fore, for the hearing of cases is an activity which has gone on without serious interruption since before the conquest. The first people to be appointed as assessors were in many instances the people who had been hearing cases with the chief for many years. They were joined in this by the councillors, for there was no separation between judicial and administrative organization in pre-conquest times and none had emerged by that time. Since the court clerk needed to be at least partially literate, he was usually a younger man who had been to school but, in some instances at least, he had close kinship ties with those in high office. He acted as a member of the bench as much as the councillors and assessors. In some courts other close supporters of the chief, particularly those who lived near their courts, also attended regularly to hear cases although they were not paid to do so, and in at least one instance a chief paid a regular salary out of his own pocket to a member of his court who was not recognized as such by the Administration.

Thus the court was the nucleus round which the Native Authority grew. The court clerk was employed as secretary to the chief and the Native Authority, and he had charge of the rubber stamps which came to be the new symbols of political power. He toured the county looking for dogs and bicycles without licences, for since he was literate he was considered the man to handle the money accruing from court fines, fees and licences. Sometimes he combined with these duties others that had nothing to do with court work, such as seeing that villages were swept clean or paths hoed. Because of his work in court he was well informed on disputes in the county, and since he made frequent trips to the township so that his accounts could be checked by the Administration, he was well informed on what was going on there. The office of court clerk
1554 came in this way to have a greater importance than its formal duties implied.

Yet in recent years the relative status of the court clerk has declined. The executive, as opposed to the judicial and fiscal,
648 functions of the Native Authority have become more numerous.
645 The activities of the Administration, instead of being confined mainly to tax collecting and the punishment of major crimes, have expanded to include a variety of social services for Africans and

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CHAPTER II

THE NGONI KINGDOMS

In 1933, by the Native Authorities Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance, Mbelwa was recognized as Paramount of the northern Ngoni kingdom with six Subordinate Native Authorities under him, and his court was constituted the appeal court for their six courts. The same procedure was followed in the central kingdom for Paramount Gomani with six Subordinate Native Authorities, and his court as the appeal court for their courts. They were the only rulers in Nyasaland with S.N.A.[1] under them. Two other chiefs, Cikulamayembe of the Henga in Maimba district and Kyungu of the Ngonde in North Nyasa district, had respectively four and five courts subordinate to them, but the chiefs owning these courts were not recognized as their subordinates. The Ngoni comment on these ordinances was 'Ha! Now they see what big chiefs we have. Only our chiefs are called *inkosi*.'

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The northern kingdom was in Maimba district, and Paramount Mbelwa's royal village was at the southern end of his kingdom. The central kingdom included the whole of Ncheu district with Paramount Gomani's royal village at the northern end. This kingdom had Portuguese territory on its western frontier, close to the royal village. When the Portuguese boundary was fixed in 1891, the Ngoni kingdom under the Maseko Paramount was cut in two and a section under a Maseko ruler became a separate kingdom under the Portuguese. There was constant trouble in the 1930's over this Portuguese frontier, for Gomani's Ngoni visited their relatives, grazed their cattle and hoed gardens on the Portuguese side; and from time to time claims by the Portuguese for rent for gardens and grazing lands and disputes about taxation, needed judicious handling in the District Commissioner's court.

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The figures in Table II for Maimba and Ncheu districts in 1926, 1931, and 1945 show the changes in the ethnic composition of the districts, some of which are difficult to account for. In Maimba district [illegible] Tumbuka and hence the northern Ngoni kingdom did not include all the 156,208 in the district. In Ncheu, the total district population of 87,690 were all included in the central Ngoni kingdom, showing the mixed ethnic elements, among which the Ngoni, or those who were enumerated as Ngoni, had declined from 64,023 in 1926 to 15,242 in 1945. Between 1931 and 1945 the decrease in the number of Ngoni (31,066) was almost balanced by the increase in the number of Nyanja

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[1] This abbreviation will be used henceforward in referring to Subordinate Native Authorities.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realise that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni esi esi*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambezi clan descent names.

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THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.'[1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognized areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *ahamzana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *ahamzana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognized as *ahamzana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *ahamzana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognized court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *ahamzana* were recognized as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *ahamzana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

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The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*, 1935, p. 50.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 with the military organization and the Paramountcy. The main emphasis in the study is, however, on the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's, when the Paramount and the administrative organization under him were recognized by the Nyasaland government. Though certain elements in 642 the kingdoms, as for example the position and authority of the *ahamsana*, were not recognized by the ordinance, the supreme authority 648 of the Paramounts and the position of their appeal courts received additional support from the colonial officials, from the financial basis of the administration, and from the many new responsibilities of the Paramount for his people illustrated by the bye-laws made and the welfare measures carried out.

121 It is the Ngoni kingdoms as they functioned in the 1930's which will be compared with other African political systems, bearing in mind all the time that behind the Ngoni kingdoms lay the authority and power of the colonial government. The comparison will be made with the general characteristics of what were called by the editors of *African Political Systems*, in their introductory essay, 'Group A systems', and the references will be to the criteria and concepts in that introduction.

The main characteristics cited of the Group A systems were all to be [642] found in the Ngoni kingdoms: centralized authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions. These will be the chief material in Part II of this book on the Ngoni political system. In *African Political Systems* the editors stated that all the societies described in the book which were in the category of Group A systems were 'an amalgam of different peoples, each aware of its unique origin and history, and all except the Zulu and Bemba are still today culturally heterogenous'. Such a definition was appropriate for the Ngoni kingdoms, where [663] political authority was wielded over several different peoples, as the ethnic grouping in the 1945 census showed, and where there was cultural heterogeneity among the different peoples. This second characteristic will be examined more fully in Chapter III of this section, dealing with Ngoni culture. To the factor of diversity within the Ngoni 121 kingdoms should be added one other point made by the editors 57 towards the end of their introduction where they said: 'Community of language and culture does not necessarily give rise to political unity, any more than linguistic and cultural dissimilarity prevents political unity.' In the next chapter we shall be discussing the relation of language and culture among the Ngoni, and between them and other Nyasaland peoples. The second point in the essay which is also applicable to the Ngoni kingdoms and their neighbours was stated in these terms: 'The overlapping and interlocking of societies is due to the fact that where political relations end is not the point at which all social relations cease.' The relevance of this statement to the Ngoni in Nyasaland has already been mentioned in connexion with the visiting which goes on between individuals from the Ngoni kingdoms and states. It

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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was still more clearly demonstrated by the attitude of the Ngoni 'of the dispersion', who returned for visits, some frequently and others at varying intervals, to their former homes though they were no longer in a political sense subjects of the Ngoni Paramount. 121 571

In the Group A systems, not only is the Paramount the political head of a culturally and ethnically heterogeneous state, but he is also a territorial ruler, and everyone living within the boundaries of his state is his subject. This was peculiarly a characteristic of the so-called conquest states, when effective administrative control was established within recognised boundaries after the conquest or surrender of neighbouring peoples. In the chapter on the military organization of the Ngoni, it will be seen how the nature of the military tenure of *alumusana*, and the relation of groups of conquered villages known as *amilaga* to the central villages of the Paramount and *alumusana*, emphasized the limits within which Ngoni authority was effective. One of the often repeated grievances of the older Ngoni was that the Europeans 'arrived too soon', before the Ngoni were able to establish effective authority over the whole country. 121 643 642

Two further points emerge in the introductory essay to *African Political Systems* which relate to the balance of forces within the Group A type of state and to the position of the Paramount. Both these points will be illustrated in Part II. The first concerns the relationship of the subordinate chiefs (called 'local chiefs' in the essay) to the central authority. They represented the central authority in the areas where they ruled, and they represented the people under them and their needs to the central authority. When the older Ngoni were talking about the Paramount in pre-European days, much emphasis was laid on his control of the chiefs and *alumusana*, and on the obligation they felt to visit the Paramount in his village frequently, in order that they might appear to be carrying out his orders and not usurping undue authority. The older Ngoni also laid stress on the accessibility of the Paramount to all his people, provided—and it was an important proviso—that a man came to him with an intermediary, either his headman or his *mulumusana*.

The final point of comparison between Group A systems and the Ngoni kingdoms is the mystical values bound up with kingship. This will be discussed in the chapter on the Paramount (Chapter II, Part II) and it is related also to the ancestor cult. The Ngoni Paramounts were more than ruling monarchs; they were the symbol of the unity of their state; in pre-European days the Paramount was the head of the army; and the ritual at the accession and at the death of a Paramount was related to the fertility of the land and the prosperity of the people. 121 643 829

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

After the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

Ngoni Warfare in Old Days

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligube* dance along with others.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled,
[721] they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[648] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British administration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[681] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

difference to-day between the attitude of the Ngoni to the Europeans and that of the Chewa, for example. In the vernacular expression the Ngoni say, 'The Europeans spoiled our country'; the Chewa say, 'The Europeans saved us'.

Chamtendere, then, was the period of Ngoni supremacy, when they established by force of arms their right to rule over the country and its indigenous inhabitants. There was, however, some difference between the political organization of the Ngoni as a conquering horde on the march, and their organization when they finally settled in their present areas. At both times the focus of their organization was warfare—they were a nation under arms. But once settled on land which they had chosen they began to spread a network of political organization over the country, and to plan in terms of 'countries'[1] instead of mobile villages. To-day when they discuss the advent of the Europeans and the consequent 'spoiling' of their country, they recall the days when extensive tribute was paid to their Paramount Chief, chiefs were free to choose good sites for their very big villages, the outlying areas were ruled by *indunas* and lesser chiefs. It was the partial breaking up of this centralized political organization which they regarded as 'spoiling their country', as well as the economic restrictions with regard to land and the prohibition of raiding for new supplies of cattle.

During this time of Ngoni supremacy Ngoni institutions flourished —those institutions which they had brought with them from the south and preserved through their wanderings. When they are telling to-day about these years they speak fervently and reverently of the part played by the Paramount Chief in every side of life, the training for warfare of all the young men, the instruction and supervision of young chiefs by old *indunas*, Ngoni marriage and initiation ceremonies. It was durihg this time in Mpezeni's country that the *Inqwala* or first fruits ceremony was regularly observed at Mtenguleni, the village of the mother of old Mpezeni.[2] At this ceremony the Paramount Chief 'opened' the new food season by the ritual eating of new fruits, especially young maize and pumpkins. It was also the

[1] *i.e.* chiefs' areas.

[2] The description of this *Inqwala* given by men and women who took part in it in their youth shows much similarity to the *Inqwala* of to-day among the Swazi.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

132 84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes [241] place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, 224 wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, 136 hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and [231] chickens are also kept.

171 The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neigh- 342 bours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and 323 mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; 285 all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to 197 Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

186 The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours 619 because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes 642 of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied 619 by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] 631 and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the 554 territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2-3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *M'dzimuzungu*, pl. *dzimuzungu*. [4] *M'dzuna*, pl. *adzuna*.

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Dilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chiefis a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like al the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermariage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 602
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary 624
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a

1: Barnes

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Ngoni FR5

[Category 643 is reserved for information pertaining to only the Paramount Chief and his activities; data on village chiefs or headmen will be found under category 622, while information on chiefs and other officials at the county or unstated intermediate level has been classified in category 634.--Analyst.]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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[493]

PLATE I. Paramount Chief Paulino Mpezeni Jere III, K.M., standing with a man from the chief's capital. The man points upwards and says that, because they conquered the Ngoni, the Whites must have come from heaven.

[Frontpiece Facing p. i]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primogeniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels segments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses', led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions, each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organization of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large kingdoms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lived with their wives and children, and not all of which had royal headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Ngoni group with which we are most concerned, and within their regiments men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system. 178 621 [901]

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1775 the pattern of political alignment began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1810 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndandwe and Qwabe,[6] dominated the rest and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethewa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1821[8] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north-eastwards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Ngoni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[9] fighting with Nxaba, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All three parties raided the indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside their new masters. 173 643 [167] [720] [727]

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on farther north. He took with him his new Tsonga adherents and also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under 173 167

[6] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Atkins, 'Spelling Nyanja'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in its old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu. [104]

[8] cf. Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 17, 71. Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1823 and Winterbottom, 'Historia', p. 13, has 1823 or 1824. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 8, both have 1825. Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 272, says Zwangendaba left in 1822, while Cumbeni, *Native tribes*, p. 20, says he left in the 1830's.

[9] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 161, 279, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[16]

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*isithakazelo*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapundi, Bangoni, Batuta, Bazowa, Bunga, Landeens, Landims, Machendi, Mafiti, Mafitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara,

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820'S

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Soshangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Maviti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Nguni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became

[16] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-16; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] See Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 95.
[12] *Mabungwane*, pl. *abungwane*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzane*, village headman; also Read, 'Traditions', p. 460.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Under Zwangendaba's leadership*

When the Ngoni migration began, the greater portion of Zwangendaba's followers belonged to the primal segment founded for the great wife of Hlatshwayo, father of Zwangendaba. When the migration began there were perhaps a thousand people in this segment (this figure is largely guesswork). For convenience of reference we shall refer to the various historically significant segments by numbers. Thus segment 1, with the proper name of Elangeni, is that of Hlatshwayo's great wife. The structural relationship of seventeen numbered segments to each other and to the royal genealogy is shown in Diagram 1. A list of their proper names and of the names of the lords and ladies associated with them, is given in Table II, together with information on three segments superior to segment 1 and on three other segments which cannot be placed on Diagram 1 for lack of information.

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This diagram and the accompanying table are skeletons, showing only those few men and women who were heads of major groups which, partly fortuitously, have endured to the present day and are now large chiefdoms. There were many more queens than the ten shown on the diagram and very many more sons of chiefs, regional governors, lieutenants and other less exalted men and women all of whom were in charge of named segments, many of which still survive, forming part of a single system. The same principles of organisation applied at all levels in the residential system. Here we have set out the names and positions of only the major limbs of the tree of State. We must not forget that the minor branches and little twigs were part of the same growing whole.

Segment 1 included the greater portion of the State, but it is clear from Elmslie and Fraser, and made explicit by Read, that the headquarters of several superior segments were also present on the march north. Read states that villages belonging to nine generations of chiefs were still in existence in northern Nyasaland in 1936. There is no direct evidence from Fort Jameson, for there are no headquarters of ancient royal segments there, but there are several villages belonging to the lieutenants of segments founded by Zwangendaba's father. I have therefore included in Table II the three superior segments whose names are given by Chibambo.[11] It is probable that Zwangendaba had succeeded to the position of

[Text continues on page 15]

[11] Read, 'Tradition', pp. 463f.; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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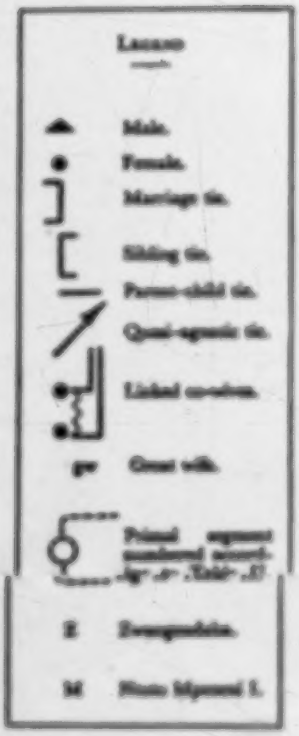
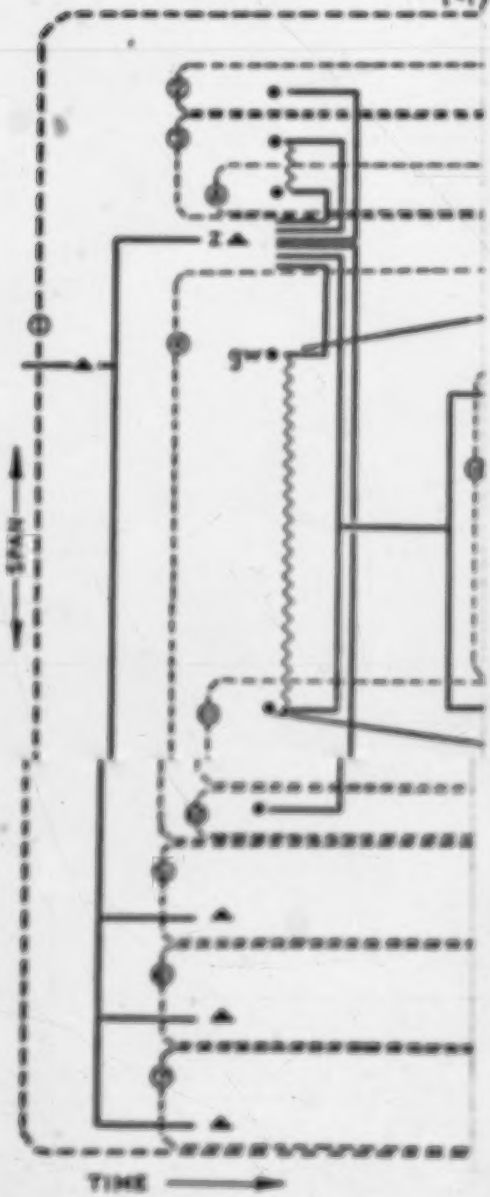
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

Segments 1-17





[Diagram I (b)]
[Facing page 18]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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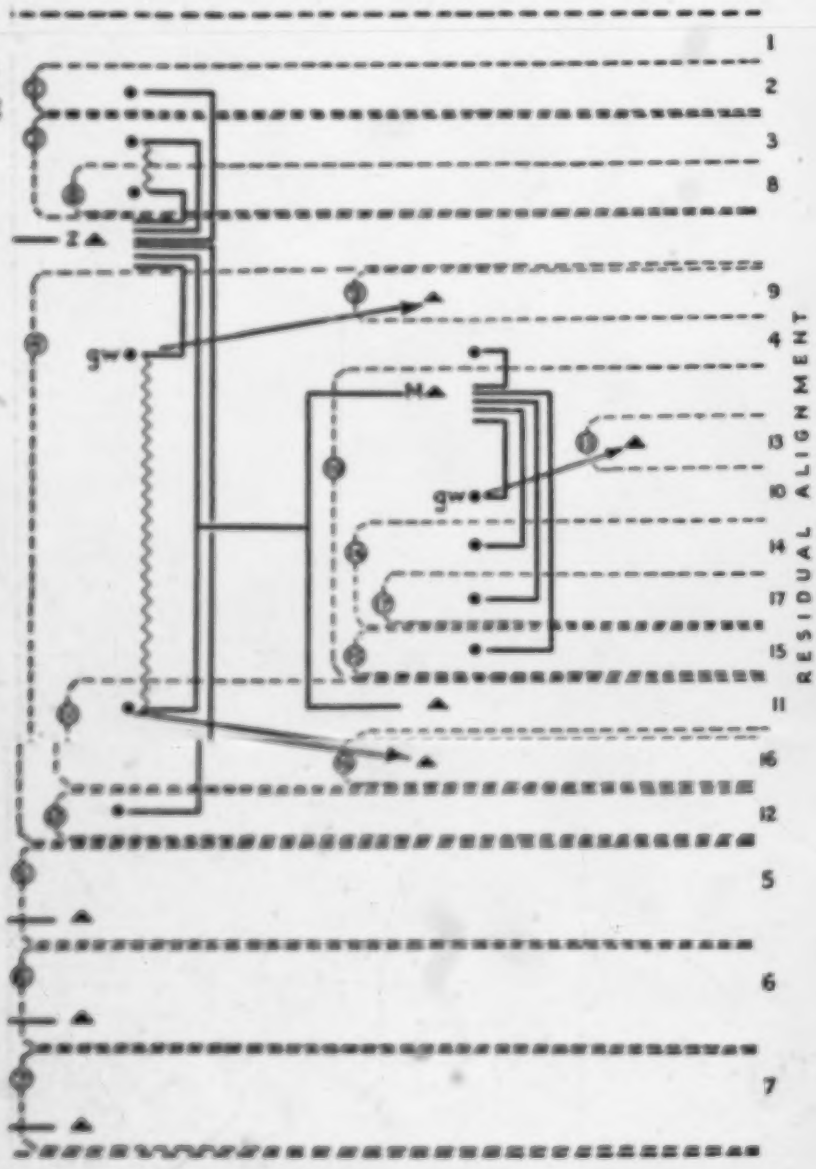
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

SEGMENTS 1–17



[Diagram I (B)]
[Facing page 13]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration.

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Ezweyeyeni or Mvelelelni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Ezeciweni)[18] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emsinini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18.

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[19] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent

[18] Rangeley, 'Mzwalo', p. 58, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[19] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 6, 34, 94.

Notes

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mkonyeni, Fort Manning Division.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mkonyeni and present Chief Tsicka, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Mlakoko, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

[see table on page 14.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 parts of the segment, namely segments 2, 3 and 19, survived as
613 independent inferior segments within segment 1. The lieutenant
985 in charge of the warriors spared the pregnant queen and hid her.
693 She bore a son, Ntutu Mpezeni, and later was shown to Zwange-
ndaba who received her kindly and, according to Chibambo, ordered her to live with her son in the headquarters of segment 1. She was not in charge of a bevy of wives, and as by this time the great wife was dead, the bevy in segment 3 now became Zwangendaba's senior bevy. Mwambera, eldest son of the leader of this bevy, was thus a candidate for the main heirship but owing to the disappearance of segment 18 and the subsequent reconciliation between Zwangendaba and Mpezeni's mother, the relative status of the two sons was uncertain. This uncertainty may have been one of the precipitating causes in the subsequent break-up of the State.

Rangeley's version of this incident is that after he had been
[114] shown Mpezeni, Zwangendaba ordered the headquarters of segment 18 to be rebuilt. This seems less likely to be true than the version we have followed, since there is, as far as I know, no present-day village which we can identify as the headquarters of this segment.[*]

From Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba went up the Limpopo
173 Valley into Mashonaland. He fought with Kalanga and other
147 Shona peoples and there was renewed fighting with other refugee
721 groups under Soshangane and Nxaba. In 1835 Zwangendaba's group crossed over to the north side of the River Zambezi near Zumbo and settled in Nsenga country for four years. They moved on again along the eastern rim of the Luangwa basin and eventually arrived in about 1842 in Ufipa, on the east side of Lake Tanganyika. Here in about 1845 Zwangendaba died.

Two points of historical detail may be mentioned here. There is reliable
114 evidence for a raid made on a Portuguese fort at Delagoa Bay on 21 October 1833
173 by some of Soshangane's people.[*] Poole and Winterbottom state explicitly that
147 Zwangendaba's men also took part in this attack, and Lancaster seems to imply
721 the same. According to the chronology adopted by Young and by Poole himself Zwangendaba was at this time four hundred and fifty miles away in the Kalanga country of Southern Rhodesia and it therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he participated in this raid. Elmslie, Young and Chibambo do not mention it at all, and Bryant refers only to Soshangane's part in it.

A few years after Zwangendaba left Natal, he was followed by Mzilikazi, a chief who for a while fought under Shaka and then fled from him with his followers.

[*] Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', pp. 126f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 56f; Rangeley, 'Mbwela', pp. 58f.
[*] Theal, *Portuguese in South Africa*, pp. 175f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This story is followed by Bryant but does not occur in any accounts collected from Ngoni themselves. It seems probable therefore that this seceding section was not numerous or important.[17]

There are no other disruptions mentioned in the literature, and it seems probable therefore that until the death of Zwangendaba, the State remained largely intact. However the process, common in Bantu Africa, by which rival claimants to a throne succeed only in dividing their kingdom, operated with striking effect as soon as the founder of the State was buried. The elimination of segment 18 has sometimes been suggested as the reason why the State broke up, but it is clear from comparative considerations that a State of this kind was likely at any time to break into a number of independent groups, and that this tendency was greatest at the death or senescence of the king.

About 1840 a number of important people, mainly coming from south of the Zambezi, were killed off as a result of an internal struggle for power in which it appears that the recently captured Tumbuka, who were successful witch-finders, were allied with the Swazi and other Ndandwe against the Tsonga from the Delagoa Bay region.[18] Unfortunately there is very little information available on the relationship of this struggle to the rest of the political system. It is, however, clear that the effect of killing off a large number of Ngoni of Tsonga origin was insufficient to prevent the State breaking up a few years later.

When Zwangendaba died, his sons were still young and, for the time being, effective leadership of the State was disputed between men of his own generation whose positions are shown in Diagram 2. His brothers, the lords of segments 5 and 6, were already dead. Fraser describes the dispute as a struggle between Ntabeni's children and Mgayi. Ntabeni was a younger brother of Zwangendaba and the lord of segment 7 while Mgayi was Zwangendaba's father's younger brother's son who, on Chibambo's evidence, represented the interests of the residue of segment 1. Rangeley has a slightly different version and makes Mgayi a supporter of segment 4. Poole, presumably following Fraser, says with some qualification that Ntabeni and Mgayi both claimed the chieftainship. From what we know of the south-eastern Bantu, and from our knowledge of present-day Ngoni, it seems unlikely that a brother would claim to be the legitimate heir in preference to a son, however much he might strive to gain ascendancy over the son. It seems preferable to follow Young and Chibambo in regarding Ntabeni and Mgayi

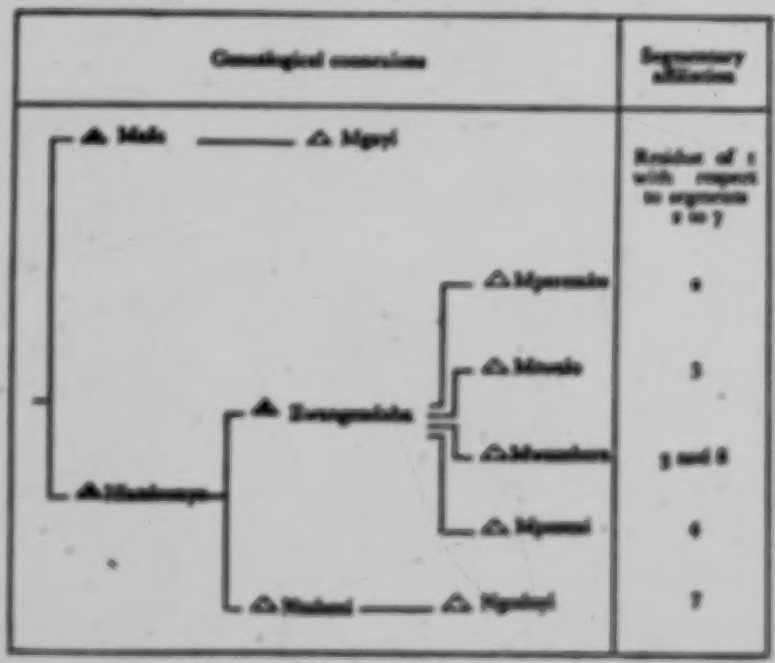
[17] Poole, *Fact and fiction*, pp. 146-7, 176; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 464f.
[18] See p. 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as acting as regent in turn on behalf of the young sons of Zwangendaba.*

The various published accounts of the succession differ from one another and reflect the different interpretations put upon the same event by rival sections of the tribe. Fraser and Young, who

DIAGRAM 2. ZWANGENDABA AND HIS HEIRS



worked in northern Nyasaland, say that Zwangendaba chose Mwambera of segment 3 as his heir, and Elmslie says that Mpezeni and others were under Mwambera. From Fort Jameson, Lancaster says that Zwangendaba chose Mpezeni, formerly of segment 18, and Poole, who is supported by Murray, says he nominated Mtwalo, another son in segment 3. Read, who worked in both areas, states

* For Mgayi's position in the residential system, we have only Chibambo's remark, 'the reason being Mgayi Jere, the father of Mzungu, of Ekangweni', to be compared with Young's and Rangeley's mention of Ecwembelweni (Emawelweni) as the village of Mgayi. Rangeley also implies that Mgayi was Zwangendaba's brother's son, which is unlikely. Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 373; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 23 f.; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 71; Young, *Mzungu*, pp. 103 f.; Rangeley, 'Mawalo', p. 60.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

that 'the history of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one'.[20] It is not our task to decide between these conflicting stories. What is important for our purposes is firstly that there was a disputed succession, and secondly that present-day rival groups are still concerned each to show that its claimant was the legitimate heir.

173 114 643

Chibambo, who belongs to northern Nyasaland, has a different version. He states that Zwangendaba chose as his heir his younger brother's eldest son Ngodoyi, in segment 7. Such a succession would have been unusual, for Ngodoyi's father, Ntabeni, was still alive, and Chibambo does not discuss why Zwangendaba should have passed over all his own sons. Nor does Chibambo explain why Ntabeni, as regent, should have supported the claims of Zwangendaba's sons as against those of his own son Ngodoyi, for according to his account the regent declared that Mpezeni was the rightful heir. The lady of segment 3 had earlier quarrelled with the regent, lord of segment 7,[21] and now to spite her he declared that the next in succession after Mpezeni was not her eldest son Mwambera but Mtwalo, the eldest son of one of her subordinate co-wives.[22] Chibambo suggests that it was this quarrel which led the regent to support Mpezeni as against the legitimate claims of segment 3.

173 643

The regent established a new segment 4, Mzengeleni, for Mpezeni and his mother, and within segment 3 formed a separate segment 8, Ewebakachakeni or Eciguelibweni, for Mwambera and his mother, thus leaving Mtwalo and his mother in the headquarters of segment 3.

Chibambo states that Gwesa Jere, senior lieutenant of segment 1, supported the regent when he selected Mpezeni as Zwangendaba's heir, while Young says he strongly opposed it; both writers agree that after Mpezeni had been chosen there was a quarrel between the regent and the headquarters of segment 1.[23] Ntabeni, the regent, died shortly afterwards and his segment 7 broke off from the rest of the group. They were pursued by a party from segment 1 headquarters, but made their escape. The regentship now passed

[20] Fraser, loc. cit.; Young, loc. cit.; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 27; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 38; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 8; Marwick, *Handbook*, pp. 19f.; Read, 'Tradition and prestige', p. 48n. cf. Winterbottom, 'Outline historical', p. 17.

[21] Brown, *Ishi*, p. 11; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 60.

[22] A lesser co-wife, according to Winterbottom. However, his name for Mwambera's mother differs from that given by Chibambo, who merely says that the two wives were sisters. Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', p. 126; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 18.

[23] cf. *Government papers for Nyasaland*, 2, pp. 14-5.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 to Zwangendaba's father's brother's son Mgayi, of the residue of
643 segment 1.

Elmslie states that Ntabeni's people, i.e. those of segment 7, went northward on the west side of Tanganyika and he is followed in this by Murray, Bryant and Tew. Elmslie bases his statement on Stewart, who heard of them there in 1879. However, Stewart did not visit the west side of Lake Tanganyika himself, and merely gathered his information from people in a Mambwe village on his way to the lake in October 1879. The account of the Ngoni that they gave him was incorrect in a number of particulars, and we have, therefore, to treat with caution their statement about the existence of an Ngoni group west of Lake Tanganyika. Even if part of this segment did settle there, it is certain that the whole of segment 7 did not. Hatchell gives genealogical information for the group of Ngoni at present near Runsewe, Kahama District, Tanganyika Territory, which links them to Ntabeni and segment 7. Stanley describes an Ngoni group which attacked Ujiji and was allied to Mirambo, and in the light of Hatchell's account it is certain that Stanley is here referring to part, if not the whole, of segment 7. This interpretation is made by Fraser, and is in accord with Young and Chibambo. Hence we may conclude that the main body of segment 7 went north on the east side of Lake Tanganyika and eventually settled in Kahama District.

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Part of segment 7 may have split off and gone elsewhere, possibly to the west of the lake. Hatchell, in his account of the Kahama group, does not mention Ngodeyi, son of Ntabeni, and it is possible that he may have led a group elsewhere although Rangeley states that it was his following that reached Kahama. Hatchell and Winterbottom write of an abortive expedition by Zwangendaba to the western shores of Lake Tanganyika but make no mention of a group remaining there.

This interpretation conflicts with Elmslie, who says that segment 7 was west of the lake while the group encountered by Stanley were a separate group led by Ntutu. Elmslie does not say who Ntutu was, but it is clear from the context that he does not refer to Ntutu Mpezeni. Hatchell does not mention the name Ntutu in his genealogies. Elmslie may, therefore, have been misled on this point.

The only other writer to mention a group west of the lake is Poole, who says that Ntabeni settled west of the lake in Nyamwezi country, where they were known as Wazuza, and, co-operating with the Ruga-Ruga, were encountered by Livingstone and Stanley in 1871. Since in 1871 Livingstone, Stanley, the Ruga-Ruga, and the main body of Nyamwezi were all east of the lake, it appears that Poole intended to write 'east', not 'west'.

Colle refers to contact between the Ngoni and Luba, but the section of Luba with whom the Ngoni fought had crossed from the Congo to the east side of Lake Tanganyika before encountering the Ngoni. The existence of an Ngoni group on the west side of Lake Tanganyika seems therefore to be doubtful.[10]

Fraser says that Mgayi led the main body, including Mpezeni, Mwamberu, and Mpezembe, as far north as Victoria Nyanza. Finding the country poor, he led them back towards Sukuma country, but died on the way. Fraser is followed by Poole, Soga and Winterbottom. It is perhaps significant that Fraser does not

[10] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 25-7; Murray, *Handbook*, p. 29; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 468; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Stewart, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 268; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Hatchell, 'Tanganyika territory' (1925), pp. 69 f.; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, p. 490; Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Young, *History*, p. 115; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 25; Colle, *Baluba*, p. 63; Rangeley, 'Mbwela', p. 60.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

mention Nsabeni's group as reaching Victoria Nyanza, and it may be that he has merely attributed this exploit to the wrong group. Such an interpretation would be in accord with the accounts of Elmslie, Young, Chibambo and Rangeley, and following them, Bryant and Tew. All these writers imply that the main body of Ngoni did not go farther north than Ufipa. It also provides a more reasonable chronology, for by Fraser's version we have to assume that within only about five years the main body of Ngoni traversed Tanganyika Territory from south to north and then back again. Lancaster is inconclusive on this point.[10] 173 114 167 668

7. *Mpezeni's kingdom*

Mgayi did not live long as regent and after his death the senior lieutenant of segment 1 made Mpezeni chief. There was a considerable shortage of food at the time and this, combined with dissension in the tribe about the succession, appears to have precipitated a further split. A follower of Zwangendaba called Zulu Gama, whose position in the segmentary organization seems not to have been recorded, led his segment off to the east, where in the vicinity of Songea he met with that group of Maseko Ngoni which we have mentioned earlier, and who probably broke off from the Ndebele some time prior to 1835. For a while the two groups operated as one but soon they split apart. Some people stayed on in Songea District, others went south and eventually rounded the southern end of Lake Nyasa to arrive in the Dedza District of southern Nyasaland, where they remain to-day. 173 167 668 643 651

Of those that remained behind under Mpezeni, the principal cleavage was between segments 2, 4, 5 and 6, all led by Mpezeni, on the one side and segment 3 with the headquarters of segment 1 on the other. Led by the senior lieutenant of segment 1, the latter group moved off to the south-east while Mpezeni moved west. While in the country of the Bisa, segment 2 broke off from Mpezeni and after settling for a while in Bemba country as an independent group it eventually went back to join segment 3. Mpezeni, with segments 4, 5 and 6, went south and eventually arrived in Fort Jameson District. His leadership of these segments seems not to have been questioned, but in the other group the senior lieutenant of segment 1 at first supported the headquarters of segment 3 against the claims to the chieftainship made by segment 8. Mtwalo, the son of Zwangendaba who had been put in charge of the headquarters of segment 3, protested, however, that the real head of that segment was Mwambera, head of segment 8, who thus became chief. 173 167 651 643

[10] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Sage, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 274; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 71; Wissmann, 'Outline histories', p. 18; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 27; Young, *History*, pp. 115 f.; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 29 f.; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 487; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 34; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86; Rangeley, 'Mbwela', p. 65.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4. It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwambera's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group, for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife. However this woman was promoted to independent status by the formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingoni) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkuewni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni).

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Lozengeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary levies of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Cimpinga). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Fafazeni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1850s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thus Young, writing of the period 1855-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.[20] The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambera's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambera in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of

[20] Young, *History*, p. 101; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 20.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because 310 the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 651 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather 262 than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine 422 that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village 643 headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not 644 struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers. The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the 728 allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in 648 general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids 721 organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, p. 33.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

captives were retained within the segment. In later years, at least, small-scale raiding organized by segment heads went on without the Paramount Chief's knowledge and it seems unlikely under those conditions that captives would have been sent in to him. 727 [724]

There is confirmatory evidence from other Ngoni groups. Hodgson wrote of the Dowa group that a warrior who had captured three or more people had one returned to him by the chief,[8] from which we may infer that they were at the disposal of the chief. For the Southern Ngoni, who are not so closely related to the Fort Jameson group as are those in northern Nyasaland and Dowa District, Read wrote that the Paramount Chief had a monopoly of slaves taken in war and that he distributed these to successful warriors, his wives and his relatives.[9]

Cattle were handled in much the same way as captives. There was a dogma that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, but they were dispersed among the different villages and kept in the byres there. The lord of a major segment had effective control of the cattle in his own village and, when he chose to exercise it, in the other villages of his segment as well. When the Paramount Chief visited a village, cattle were killed in his honour and he was praised as the giver of the feast, but in the chief's absence the head of the village decided when beasts were to be killed. A lord appointed his lieutenants to look after his cattle as well as his people. When cattle had been taken on a raid, they were driven back to Ngoniland and then allocated to a lord. 231 712 693 727

Cattle for bridewealth were provided for a man by his lord. However it seems possible that a large proportion of the marriages made by politically unimportant people were not ratified by the passage of cattle.[10] 593 231

Such evidence as there is suggests that the Ngoni consumed their cattle faster than many similar cattle people and, as with dependants, they captured cattle more than they reared them. People speak of the days before the conquest as a time when they lived entirely on meat and beer. Poole suggests that the Ngoni produced little or no food in their own country,[11] and while this is plainly contradicted by contemporary evidence, it is probable that they did rely on raiding to supplement their supplies of cattle and cereals, and that therefore many captured cattle were used as food. Thus cattle themselves were a short-term asset and the control of 231 262 727

[8] Hodgson, 'Dowa Bantu', p. 133.
[9] Read, 'Standards of Living', p. 20.
[10] cf. Barnes, Marriage, pp. 7-8.
[11] Poole, 'Human geography of Lundazi and Petauke', p. 13.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

557 and in other situations that which was founded last. The head-
577 quarters of the highest segment was in some sense capital of the
611 nation, yet chieftainship had already passed from it and it was less
621 important in other ways than the headquarters founded by the
[493] reigning chief. This apparent contradiction applied within every large segment. We have endeavoured to isolate these different contexts by our distinction between primal and residual segments, but as soon as we attempt to arrange villages or bevies of wives in a linear order without reference to the relationship of their associated segments to one another, the contradiction reappears.

A clear and accepted sequence of heirs would have been
621 appropriate to a segmentary system in which segments continued to
611 hold together in all circumstances. Ngoni segments did not do this, and the simple linear sequence of heirs was lacking. The successive formation of inferior segments implied increased structural separation between the first inferior segment to be formed and the headquarters, and hence less likelihood that the former would provide the main heir. As in lineage systems, the farther back the point of departure from the main line the greater the structural separation from it. But whereas in lineage systems it is the junior lines which are continually diverging from the main stem, in the Ngoni system the main heir was the first to break away from his father, who remained longer in close contact with his junior sons. Seniority within the newly formed undivided segment implied early differentiation within it, and hence early separation from its headquarters. Thus, the general principle of increasing separation with the passage of time, together with the particular principle of segment formation in order of seniority, combined to make a system of great flexibility despite essential regularity and uniformity. On the death of each segment head there was a shift of power within his segment and to some extent a formal recognition of the structural separation which had proceeded gradually during his lifetime. The headquarters founded by successive heads of segments persisted as the home of groups whose interests they symbolized. The history of the segments and of the nation itself was embodied in the relationships enduring between successive headquarters.

When a small segment was founded it was usually manned by
557 people drawn from the rump of the immediately superior segment,
611 that is, from those men and women in the superior segment who
621 had not already been allocated to some inferior segment within it.

However it is clear that this rule was often over-ridden. When the
[622] lord of a large segment formed a new inferior segment for a wife or son he was able to command the services of everyone within his

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment, even of those who had been allocated to existing inferior segments. If he thought fit he could shift them from one inferior segment to another within his own segment. This process was particularly relevant to the formation of new segments for the great wives of men who were the heirs or lords of large segments. A new lord, making his great wife's segment after the death of his father, did not confine himself to the rump of his father's segment but selected men he thought he could trust from anywhere within his father's primal segment, whether or not they had made segments of their own. Similarly a lord sometimes took a man who occupied an unimportant position in the segment of one of his wives and promoted him to be lieutenant in a newly formed bevy. The more important the lord or heir, the greater the structural distance his dependants could be moved. Thus while the processes by which the Paramount Chief and a man with only a few followers made segments for bevies of wives were formally the same, the consequences were quite different. In the former case, many hundreds of people were involved and many key men were shifted in their allegiance in order to provide the new segment with lieutenants and followers. In the latter, few people were concerned and the event was not of general interest. The formal processes remained the same at all levels in society, but what in one case was essentially a political action in which a Paramount Chief acted as head of a State was in the other largely a matter of domestic reorganisation. It is characteristic of the Ngoni State that the transition from one state of affairs to the other was a gradual one.

Occasionally a man moved himself from one segment to another on his own initiative. This happened only infrequently and it seems probable that it was only when a man who had quarrelled with his own segment sought asylum with the reigning chief that a move of this kind could be made. Chibambo records an incident in which many men transferred from their former segments to one newly formed by the reigning chief, but adds that later they returned to their old segments. A similar incident from the Fort Jameson group is noted below.* Despite these exceptions it nevertheless remains true that for the most part a man's affiliation to his segment was fixed and could be altered only by the actions of his political superiors.

We have spoken of the formation of segments, but not yet of their disappearance. Many minor segments faded away because their members died or because they were moved elsewhere by a lord. Sometimes a segment ceased to be an effective social unit

* Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 55; see p. 140.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sectors attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8]

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights.

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken.

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked.

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs,

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 51.

(a) Mpezeni II's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Nkungu's regiment.
(c) Mpezeni III's regiment.
(d) Mlaba. Where and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Malyim. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Where given two other regimental names. The Mahwala or Mahwala is merely the status term mahwala, meaning 'mature, experienced and important man'. The other regimental name, Madzingo or Madzingo, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old man'. Langeley has the names Tambokulu, Mbang'ombe, Ichingoni, Mabulu, Mahwala, Zimbini, Mazyani.

Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wilson, 'Rangeley', p. 475, and 'Gwembe', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 80; Langeley, 'Mbwela', p. 30.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38. - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various levies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot intervene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[*] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the outfide he might be forced to take direct action.[*]

Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[*] Wiese, 'Expeditie', p. 270.

[*] Charlesson reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a saying, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Land of Darkness & Darkness'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization'.[36]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[37] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesser segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similarities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumstances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follow the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A societies as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political system may now be handled as a separate question, providing a classification cutting across the division into states and stateless societies.

We have spoken throughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a state, and this usage is in accord with the definition of a state given here. The Paramount Chief with his lieutenants exercised supreme authority, there was a highly organized administrative machine, and there was an organized method of settling disputes within the state. There were only slight variations in wealth except in the control of cattle, but privilege and status were expressed in the residential system and were inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

The presence or absence of a segmentary political system can itself be divided into two questions; was there a segmentary system, and if so, was it the political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, then it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[36] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 250.

[37] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 200, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 24 diagrams.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later rejoined it peacefully, but other instances of fission were accompanied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Chwele Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[48] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[49] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force. Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftainship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no mere secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[48] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 34.
[49] Stanley, *Livingstone*, p. 289, and Dark Continent, i, p. 420; Hamilton, 'Angoni', passim.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State, combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the majority of death sentences.* However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prematurely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

The most striking differences between the residential system and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many of their members when they were already grown up, were able to increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral of population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

* Wiese, 'Expeditie', pp. 431-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular most either of her children to her parents to be cared for until adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[*]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fusion that did occur. The Paramount Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[*] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

Madunga. Swazi appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Twaga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzevmane would not submit to Ndaga on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deane remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[88] Barnes's report for 1898, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.
[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.
[90] See p. 13. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 25; Chidumbo, *My Ngoni*, p. 13; cf. Young, *Halsey*, p. 102, who overrates the role played by whole-blooms in this incident.
[91] As reported by Warren in June 1898, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[92] Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 455.
[93] Deane, 'Diary resident', 11 May. In modern spelling, Ndaga, Nzevmane, and Madzimai.
[94] *ibid.*, fn. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between rival heirs even while the occupant of the throne was still alive. The brothers Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fought for the heirship while their father Mpande was still chief.[86]

The apparent ineffectiveness of Mpezeni's rule may well have been due to the increasing segmentation of the State as it expanded and to the growing differentiation of interest between one major segment and another. As it happened, there was no civil war and the tribe did not split, at least not in these terms. A cleavage in the royal house did reveal itself later, in 1903, after British rule had begun, when Madzimawi tried to take the name of Zwangendaba and was opposed by the supporters of Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu. But by then the form of the State was already determined by political forces other than the balanced opposition of segments. It is significant of the changed situation that Madzimawi did not send his armed followers against the new Mpezeni to challenge his succession. Instead he applied to the Native Commissioner for permission to take the name of his grandfather.[87]

Instead of dividing in civil war the whole country united against the European interlopers. Mpezeni alone tried to protect his friend Wiese. The effective cleavage was not between rival heirs but between the Paramount Chief and his people. He was now a man in his sixties who seemed not to want war and who perhaps benefited more than his people from the presents made by Europeans. The Ngoni people continued to believe and teach that fighting was the proper occupation for men. An attempt to exploit this cleavage was made in 1897 when Wiese, perhaps remembering his earlier attempt to serve Portugal and Britain simultaneously, offered his services to the B.S.A. Company. Forbes thought that if Wiese was given troops, he would be supported by Mpezeni, who would then be in a position to hold Nsingu and the Ngoni warriors in check.[88] But this plan was overtaken by events.

We saw in the previous chapter that the organization of the State was based on warfare, not only on war as an activity bringing prestige to successful warriors but also on war as a method of recruitment to the ever-widening segments of the residential system. Without warfare to eliminate the unsuccessful and to bring promotion and dependants to those who survived, the system could not keep going. It was in no sense inevitable that the Fort Jameson Ngoni and the British should fight; we have only to turn to the

[86] Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', pp. 35-6, and *Malinowski's Sociological Theories*, pp. 19-20; Krige, *Social system of the Zulu*, p. 19.
[87] See pp. 139 f.
[88] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and, possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that the cheapest way of running the country was through the indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[4] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity

[4] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

After the war an agreement was formed but its activities conflicted with the demands of the churches and schools and it was not a success. No further attempts have been made to carry on the system. Ngoni now say, 'What need have we of regiments now that there are no other tribes for us to fight?'

2. *White control*

Apart from the squabble over cattle, the surrender of Mpezeni on 9 February 1898 marked the end of the Ngoni war. The Nyasaland troops did not pursue the leaders who fled, although Brake moved Mpezeni to the vicinity of Fort Manning. In May he wrote, perhaps over-optimistically, that in the central part of Ngoniland rebuilding had begun.[7]

It is clear that at first the Ngoni acquiesced in their defeat. Whereas prior to the war Whites had lived in their country on sufferance, now their right to be there was not challenged. Only a few months after the war Harding arrived, recruiting police for service in Southern Rhodesia. He was received in a 'most friendly manner by the chief in charge who gave an ocular demonstration of his loyalty by voluntarily and immediately handing over to my charge 200 of his young men for my newly formed Police Force . . .'.[8] After the death of Mpezeni I, his lieutenants waited the traditional period of a year. Mpezeni's heir Nzingu and his wife Mkucwa had both been shot during the war, and in September 1901 the lieutenants petitioned the Administration to appoint their eldest son, Cilon, aged about 10 years, as chief. On 23 July 1903 the Native Commissioner held a meeting at which Madzimawi, son of Mpezeni I in the residue of segment 4, asked to be allowed to take the name Zwangendaba.[9] Thus even at that early date the over-riding authority of the Administration was acknowledged in matters concerning the chieftainship.

The establishment of an Administration based on Fort Jameson in 1898 was governed, in so far as the British legal system was concerned, by the legislation consolidated in the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890.[10] Relations between the Administration and its African subjects were controlled by the Africa Order in Council 1889.[11] This was superseded by later Orders in 1900, 1911 and 1924,[12] marking the delimitation of North-Eastern Rhodesia as a separate

[7] 208; 202, fo. 69.
[8] Harding, *For Empire*, p. 82.
[9] *Reports on the Administration*, 1900-2, p. 408; see pp. 1391/.
[10] 53 & 54 Vict., c. 37.
[11] *S.R. & O.*, Rev., 1890, iii, pp. 259-332.
[12] *S.R. & O.*, 85 of 1900, 458 of 1911 and 324 of 1924.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F85 Ngoni F85
Mpezeni

These decisions have been taken within frames of reference beyond the reach of our analysis and beyond the reach of Ngoni persuasion. We are here concerned with the way in which Ngoni society has been adapted and has adapted itself to these diverse intrusions from outside.

3. *Chiefs*

In the old residential system there was no definite category of persons whom we regard as chiefs. In the literature the lords of major segments are sometimes called chiefs, sometimes induna (i.e. lieutenants), but it is clear that the importance of any particular segment varied from one time and situation to another, and that the only constant relations between positions in the social structure were vertical ones, between lord and dependant, and not horizontal, between persons at the same level in the hierarchy but in different parts of it. The administrative scheme introduced by the Whites provided for horizontal categorization as well as vertical grouping. There were to be a definite number of chiefs, district headmen, and later village headmen, whose names would appear on the Administration's files. The only indigenous categories of this kind were those of Paramount Chief and regional governor, and for this reason alone it was inevitable that the relationship between the old and new systems should be complex. Although the young Mpezeni II was not the only person to be called chief, his superior status was always recognized and later received formal ratification in the qualification Paramount. The regional governors may, perhaps, have formed a category of persons at the same level in the old hierarchy, but they were not very numerous, perhaps only a dozen in number, and under the new dispensation some managed to become chiefs or district headmen, while others failed to do so. Village headmen in the old system were lords of segments of many different orders of segmentation and of varying importance. If the large pre-conquest villages had continued, then perhaps their heads might have secured Administrative recognition. As it was, post-conquest settlements were all much smaller and there were more of them.

Apart from these formal considerations, the peculiar circumstances of the war introduced distortion. Some important people were killed in the fighting, others ran away, and the followers of others were scattered. More significantly, the arrival of the Administration, of traders and missions, provided means whereby people whose segments were of minor importance could advance themselves politically and gain control of large sections of the population.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

According to Gouldsbury, an Administrative Officer who published in 1914, there were at that time six minor chiefs under the Paramount. Four of these minor chiefs were sons of Mpezeni I.[10] Other Administrative records of the same period refer to ten 'subdivisions'. The Paramount Chief and the chiefs now in charge of counties 4, 14, 15 and 17 are each described as the 'important chief' in their subdivisions. The important chief in another subdivision is now not a county chief. The remaining four subdivisions had two chiefs each. Five of these are now county chiefs, one is a Cewa chief, and the remaining two are no longer chiefs. The title 'chief' was, however, not applied consistently by the Administration at that time and men who are called chiefs in some documents are called divisional or group headmen in others. In 1900, with the appointment of two new divisional headmen all Ngoniland villages in Northern Rhodesia were divided between ten rulers, not all of whom were called chiefs. Mpezeni II was ruler of one group of villages and Paramount over all ten, and the other nine rulers were the predecessors of the present minor chiefs. These ten groups of villages, and the two corresponding groups in Nyasaland, I have called *counties*. With one exception, each successive county chief has taken the name of his predecessor and this name is often used as the name of the county.

4. *County segments*

In each county there is one village known as the important village or capital. Many, but not all, of the villages in a county belong to the residential segment of which the capital is the headquarters. Thus we may speak of a county segment which forms, as it were, the core of the county. The villages that do not belong to the county segment fall into three main types. There are villages belonging to other segments under Mpezeni, there are a few which trace their origin to other Ngoni groups, and there are those which have entered Ngoniland after 1898 and so never formed part of the segmentary residential system. Most villages of the last type have come into Ngoniland from Cewa chiefdoms and some of them claim to have been settled in Ngoniland before the arrival of Mpezeni and to have been driven out by him. An indication of the distribution of villages in Northern Rhodesia counties among these different types is given in Table IV, where the only three counties for which I have the information are examined from this point of view.

[10] Gouldsbury, *Native Tribes*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni F'R5
Mpezeni

more meticulous than others in such matters as discussing proposed changes of site with the county chief and in reporting important deaths to him.

The proportion of villages in each county belonging to other segments under Mpezeni varies from 3 per cent to 21 per cent. There are villages which chose, or were forced, to move away from the chief to whom they were attached in segmentary terms, or else villages belonging to major segments whose lords did not become chiefs. Villages in this category have ties that in certain situations, as when there is a serious quarrel, link them more closely with some other county than with their own. In any county where there are many villages of this kind the solidarity of the county as a social group is not great. The ruling chief has many rivals who seek to divide his county and to become chiefs themselves. We must distinguish here between villages in one county which belong to the segment of another and those interloping villages which belong to one county but are situated in the territory of another. We shall discuss interloping villages later (p. 128) in connexion with the territorial aspect of counties.

In Nyasaland the history of administration has been separate from that of Northern Rhodesia, but the Ngoni population there also has divided itself on segmentary lines. For many years the two principal leaders recognized by the Administration have been the heads of segments 3 and 6, and these segments form the core of the two counties they control. The two county chiefs are now Native Authorities and join with an adjacent Crown chief to form the Fort Manning Council of Chiefs. This acts as the Native administrative body for the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District.

The geographical distribution of the twelve counties, the neighbouring chieftdoms of other tribes, and the tracts of alienated land are shown in Map D.

The twelve county segments, ten in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, are, in the nomenclature of Chapter I, segments 4 to 6 and 9 to 17. We shall refer to counties in the same way by the numbers of the segments corresponding to them. Thus county 4 is the county whose segment is number 4, and so on. County 10 is the Paramount Chief's county. Some of the county segments are primal, others are residual segments left after the formation of primal segments of lower order. The definition of the segment associated with each county is indicated in Table V. This table merely restates information implicit in Diagram 1. The hereditary names of county chiefs are also given.

[Text continues on page 121]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE V. COUNTY SEGMENTS

County	Specification of county segment	Hereditary name of county chief
4	Residual after formation of segments 9 to 10	Madzimawe
5	Primal	Zulu
6	Primal	Mlonyeni
9	Primal	Mzukwa
10(a)	Residual after formation of segments 13 to 15	Mpezeni
11	Residual after formation of segment 16	Mshola
12	Primal	Mshawa
13	Primal	Kapatamoyo
14	Residual after formation of segment 17	Nzermane
15	Primal	Sayili
16	Primal	Teleka (b)
17	Primal	Magoya

(a) Paramount Chief's county.
(b) The first chief of this county was known as Mlonyeni. He was succeeded by his brother, who kept his own name of Teleka. The similarity of name with the chief of segment 6 was accidental.

[County numbers refer to map on page 120, category 'Ngoni-Angoni']

The county segments are not all of the same order of segmentation, yet the counties occupy positions of equivalence in the Native Authority. Each of the eleven counties under minor chiefs is, or has been for most of the time, the area under the control of a Subordinate Native Authority and also the area of jurisdiction of a second-class Native Court. According to the *Official Gazette* the Paramount Chief's county appears not to have been under any Subordinate Native Authority, nor does it seem to have been provided with a second-class court, but in some respects action takes place as if there were such an authority and court. The Superior Native Authority is responsible for all ten counties in Northern Rhodesia and there is a first-class Native Court for the same area. Thus the structural alignment of the twelve counties is markedly different from that of the segments corresponding to them. In practice the relations existing between the twelve counties and

[Text continues on page 123]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

3. *Relative status of Chiefs*

There was nothing inherent in the residential system which facilitated the emergence of twelve, and only twelve, counties from Mpezeni's people. Each major segment already had a large number of lesser segments within it in 1898, and it was during the unsettled years that followed the conquest, when new schemes of organization were tried out, when fresh occupants were sought for existing posts, and when the spatial distribution of people was being radically altered, that these twelve gradually emerged. Considerations of size do not seem to have been very important, for there is a wide variation in the size of counties. However, with the development of the Native Authority and Native Court, there is an upper limit to the size of the county which can be served adequately by a single court and possibly by a single minor chief, and this shows itself in the moves towards forming sub-counties within one or two of the larger ones. Yet in view of administrative attempts to do away with certain chiefs, it seems that in its eyes the Ngoni have too many rather than too few chiefs. The order of segmentation is not critical, as we have seen. Nor has there been merely an unification of the formal structure as it was at the moment of conquest, as is often the case when a fluid society is suddenly put into a rigid mould. Wiese in 1891 wrote that Ngoniland was divided into four districts.[*] In our terms, these were as follows:

(*a*) Primal segment 11.
(*b*) Primal segment 14.
(*c*) Residual segment 10 after 14 was formed.
(*d*) Residual segment 4 after 10 and 11 were formed.

Of these four districts, the first has given rise to two counties, 11 and 16; the second to two, 14 and 17; the third to three, 10, 13 and 15; and the fourth to three, 4, 9 and 12. Wiese does not indicate in what districts he would place segments 5 and 6.

The fortuitous manner in which the counties have emerged is illustrated by the fact that for certain purposes one of the counties is treated as if it were two. At one time, when there were more administrative divisions than there are now, it was divided into two areas, and this arrangement still persists for tax collection. Other counties have only one tax register book each, but this one has two.

In genealogical terms also, the emergence of the twelve chiefs appears to have been fortuitous. For example, the second wife of Mpezeni I in segment 10, after the formation of segments 14 and 15,

[*] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after Ngungu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important segment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[645] [644] [647] personal emoluments, there is usually some discussion. Thus the relative amounts paid to each chief provide us with some indication of the importance attached to him by the Administration and his colleagues. The salaries paid in 1946 are set out in Table VI together with the number of villages in each county in 1938, the last year for which I have that information.

TABLE VI. SALARIES OF CHIEFS AND VILLAGES IN THEIR COUNTIES

County segment	*Number of villages in county, 1938*	*Salary of county chief in £s per annum, 1946*
10	87	100 (a)
14	101	97½
4	88	82½
11	77	67½
12	42	52½
17	35	37½
13	30	27 (b)
15	28	27 (b)
9	19	30
16	19	30
Total	326	571½
Mean	32.6	57.15

(a) Paramount Chief.
(b) Calculated from monthly rate. Both these chieftainships were vacant for part of 1946.

It will be seen that the amount of a minor chief's salary is closely correlated with the number of villages in his county. The chiefs of counties 13 and 15 appear to be underpaid in relation to the number of their villages, and this may be related to efforts which the Administration had been making about that time to eliminate these two chieftainships and to amalgamate their chiefdoms with others. This arrangement also conforms to the alignment of segments. [643] The Paramount Chief is in charge of county 10 but he is also head of primal segment 4 which includes all the others, and it is therefore appropriate that he should be paid most. Chief 14 is

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's* village, as I have defined them elsewhere.[10] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[10] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-S (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 82 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small, contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

inefficient workers on the local tobacco farms, where the ties that link them to the near-by villages with their marriages, funerals, and beer parties are still operative, and where the wages are much lower than in Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, Ngoni tend to suspect the good intentions of any non-African, however lavish he may be with his presents, and for this reason are reluctant to enter into agreements with them the social consequences of which they cannot foresee.

2. *Rivals of the Paramount Chief*

In pre-conquest times the death of the head of the State was followed by a struggle between rival heirs and by fission of the State. Under British colonial rule these struggles cannot be carried on by force of arms, and it is difficult to split the tribe when there is nowhere for the dissident section to move to and when Administrative recognition is an important condition for political existence. Nevertheless the same struggles continue even if in a different guise.

One of the most interesting incidents in the struggles between rival groups for the chieftainship occurred in 1903 and hinged on an aspect of segmentation within the residential system which we have not so far discussed. It was customary for the heir to a large segment founded by his father to place one wife in the headquarters of that segment as well as establishing his bevies of wives with their own inferior segments. The eldest son of the selected wife grew up to be in charge of the headquarters and came to be identified with his father's father, the founder of the headquarters, as against his father who was lord of its segment. Thus, for example, Zwangendaba, heir to segment 1, founded segment 18 for his own great wife, but also placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 1, the segment founded by his father for *his* great wife. Similarly Mpezeni, as son of Zwangendaba, placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 4, which by then had replaced the annihilated segment 18. In this matter the Ngoni seem to have differed from the Zulu, for among them, according to Bryant, the *isizinda*, son of the placed wife, represents his own father as against the father's main heir.[1]

In 1903 the eldest son of Mpezeni I by the selected wife in segment 4 tried to assume the name of his father's father, Zwangendaba. This was in accord with his structural position as representing the interests of the founder of the segment as against those of the

[1] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 80; Bryant, *Dictionary*, s.v. *isi-zinda*. cf. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 401. Lancaster implies that the selected wife was called *thokhwa*. This seems unlikely in view of the Zulu use of *i(li)thokhwa* for the senior left-hand wife.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

611 643 reigning lord of the segment. It is probable that in this instance the divergence of interest had been increased by the shooting of Nsingu, for Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu and grandson of Mpezeni I, was only a young boy and in the hands of guardians who were commoners and who might respond to pressure from their ward's father's paternal half-brother. So far as can be gathered from the published account of the meeting called by the Administration to [641] discuss the matter, the young Paramount was supported by the lords of segments 12, 14 and 17 and by the senior lieutenants of segment 10. He was opposed by the heads of segments 9, 13 and 16 and by the senior lieutenant of segment 4. Segment 15 seems not to have taken part in the dispute. Thus the main cleavage appears to have been between segments 10 and 12 on the one hand and the residue of 4 on the other. Segment 15, in terms of its structural position, was on the wrong side; this may have been connected with the fact that the regional governor of Mpezeni I who led segment 15 was born in the headquarters of segment 4. After a quarrel about succession to his father's office of lieutenant in that segment, he moved to segment 10 where he found favour with the chief and was later promoted to regional governor. In the 1903 dispute he apparently transferred his support back to his natal segment.[8]

The attempt to assume the name Zwangendaba failed. The young chief's supporters outnumbered their opponents at the meeting and his spokesmen argued that he had been recognized by all the other chiefs and by the Administration as Paramount of the whole Ngoni country. If his rival took the name he would be led to usurp the authority of the young Paramount. The Native Commissioner then ruled that the name could not be taken.

643 611 754 669 578 Throughout his reign Mpezeni II was opposed by a half-brother, a son of Nsingu by a different mother. This man was older than Mpezeni and claimed that his mother had really been Nsingu's great wife, or at least that Nsingu had intended to make her so before he was shot in 1898. This rivalry took two forms. He endeavoured to bring destruction to the chief and his cattle by sorcery, and on one occasion made what seems to have been a half-hearted attempt to kill him with a spear. At the same time he endeavoured to establish his own segment as a county of its own, and in this he was assisted by others who fancied themselves as chief of the proposed new county.[9] The sorcery failed, not only because it was merely sorcery, but also because sorcery and

[8] *N.E.R.G.C.*, i, 4 (1 August 1903), Supplement. See p. 35.
[9] See pp. 143*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F R5 Ngoni F R5
Mpezeni

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divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir. [572]

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The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

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On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers. [685] [186]

3. *The chief's advisers*

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The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

639 county the senior lieutenants of the county segment are well-
643 known figures, usually headmen of large villages, and often seen at
645 the chief's house. There are also the lieutenants of the segments of lower order founded for their great wives by successive heads of the county segment, and in particular the lieutenants of the reigning chief's great wife's segment. There are individuals who for some reason or other have become friendly with the chief, and there are those occupying posts paid by the Native Treasury. There are the kinsmen of the chief, including the chief's deputy. All these categories contribute to the circle round the chief which keeps him informed of what is going on in his county, advises him what he should do and travels with him on journeys. The constitution of this group is not fixed and there is no formal council to which persons definitely do or do not belong. An Administrative officer once asked Mpezeni II who constituted the tribal council, and the Paramount Chief is said to have found difficulty in thinking of any names. Not all the people who might be expected to advise the chief do so, for there are always quarrels and preferences within each category. In particular, the lieutenants of regal segments seem to play a comparatively minor part. They do not represent the interests of the county as a whole, as do the lieutenants of the county segment, nor of the reigning chief, as do the lieutenants of his own village. They are the favourites of former chiefs and the segments that they represent are not functionally significant under the present scheme of administration.

In recent years the Administration has endeavoured from time
[648] to time to discuss affairs with the chiefs and the four newly appointed Native Authority councillors in isolation from the rest of the tribe.[4] In most situations in which matters of common interest are discussed there is, however, no restriction on who can offer advice to the chief or to the meeting. Any man can stand up and say what he wishes, but unless he is in an important social position people will listen to him attentively only if his counsel seems sound.[5]

It is the custom for a chief to nominate one of his agnatic
[605] kinsmen, usually a father's son or father's brother's son, as his deputy.[6] Although this appears to have been a traditional post, I
634 do not know what role was played by an important man's deputy
645 in pre-conquest times. Nowadays the deputy of a chief may help in his various official duties and represents the interests of the chief's agnatic kin as against those of his lieutenants. In village affairs

[4] See p. 151.
[5] See pp. 158f.
[6] *Afumu*. cf. Zulu umnumu, younger sibling.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy.

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief.

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it.

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Lipuse*. cf. Zulu *i(li)*ɮuɮu, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 140*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

by this relationship participate in the preparation and consumption of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Paramount Chief is sometimes told of the matter and calls the minor chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other counties and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner. The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[14] a salutation which symbolizes his former position as head of an

[14] cf. Zulu *Bayede*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

independent group of Ngoni. Chibambo mentions how the use of this salutation was discontinued when the head of an erstwhile independent group rejoined his parent group.[15] In recent times people have indicated their disapproval of the Paramount Chief's actions by discontinuing this salutation temporarily. 643 576

Despite the security of tenure provided by Administrative recognition, a chief still needs the support of his people. There is an Ngoni maxim, 'chieftainship is people',[16] and commoners are well aware that it is because they support their chief that he has high status. The simplest and most effective sanction that commoners can employ against their chief is to leave him. Movement from one county to another, from one tribe to another, and from the county to the town and back again is crucial in the working of modern Ngoni society. Not all these movements take place as the result of the unpopularity of chiefs, but this is one factor among many. Chibambo records an early example of people moving to segment 8 from the residue of segment 1 in order to share the hospitality of a newly appointed chief, but he goes on to say 'afterwards they found it wise to return to their proper division [segment]'.[17] In more recent times there are several examples, particularly among villages which entered Ngoniland after 1898 and who therefore largely lack segmental affiliation, of villages and clusters that have changed from one county to another for political reasons. More significant at the present time are the numbers of ambitious people who emigrate to the towns because, among other things, they cannot find advancement in the political hierarchy. The most striking instance of this is in the family of the late Mpezeni II. He had six sons who survived him. One is now Paramount Chief, and one is still a boy. The other four, including the chief's deputy, are town-dwellers in other parts of Africa. 634 626 [166] [557] [643]

5. *Royal hunts*

The royal hunt is the only occasion on which a county, or more usually a rural district or part of a county, functions as an economic unit. Even then the economic element in the enterprise is not very marked. The chief announces, through his messengers, that on such-and-such a day he will hold a royal hunt and that the men of such-and-such villages are to meet in a certain place. The procedure followed on the hunt is exactly the same as on an ordinary hunt, with the chief or someone nominated by him in tactical command, though the number of hunters is greater than on a hunt 224 476 634

[15] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 56. [16] *Ufumu ni ubantu.*
[17] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 35.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him. 634 648 [647] [687]

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialized services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them. 648 65 [797] 645 643

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo- 648 184

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Capital, court and chief's village*

634 We have spoken of the headquarters of the county segment as the capital of the county, and this is in accord with vernacular usage. Although each chief is head of his county segment, no chief lives in his capital village. Each has made his segment and set up a village of his own. This process continues with each successive chief, each making his own new village. When brick buildings [344] were made during the 1930s to house the newly recognized Native Courts, these were located near the villages of the reigning chiefs. Some of these are still in office, while others have died and their successors live in their new villages, some of which are as much as two miles away from the court. There are thus in some counties three foci of political interest. There is the capital village, the court, and the chief's village. Associated with each centre are different leaders and different activities. The capital village provides a link with the past, and in particular with that moment in the past at which the segment was founded. The Paramount Chief [613] retains special rights in his capital village and can make a garden for one year on the old site of his county capital whenever it moves to a new one. Most, if not all, capital villages are larger than the average village but the senior lieutenants of the county segments do not live in them, for like the chiefs, they have made their own villages. Nevertheless, the lieutenants who do live in the capital [554] are regarded as people of considerable importance in the county. Meetings are sometimes held in the capital but more frequently at the county court or in the chief's village. The court is the home of 692 the Native Authority, and it is there that the affairs of the Administration are discussed. An incident well illustrates the association of 648 the court with the Administration. I once called at the house of a 634 county chief who had not previously met me. He insisted that I 647 should go to the court to meet him there, as that was where he always met Administrative officials. County meetings are called at the court to discuss matters raised by the Administration in its letters to chiefs, and to formulate requests and complaints for transmission to the Administration. The court clerk, the Native Authority councillors, assessors, and messengers are much in evidence, while the traditional advisers of the chief, his senior lieutenants, may be in the background even if they are not silent. Meetings of this kind are usually called by county chiefs, but occasionally a meeting may be held open to the whole tribe. I have described elsewhere the procedure at a county meeting.[22]

[22] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 107-9.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern
693 Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
574 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
643 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
484 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and
167 other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
567 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni
619 as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
571 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market.

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area.

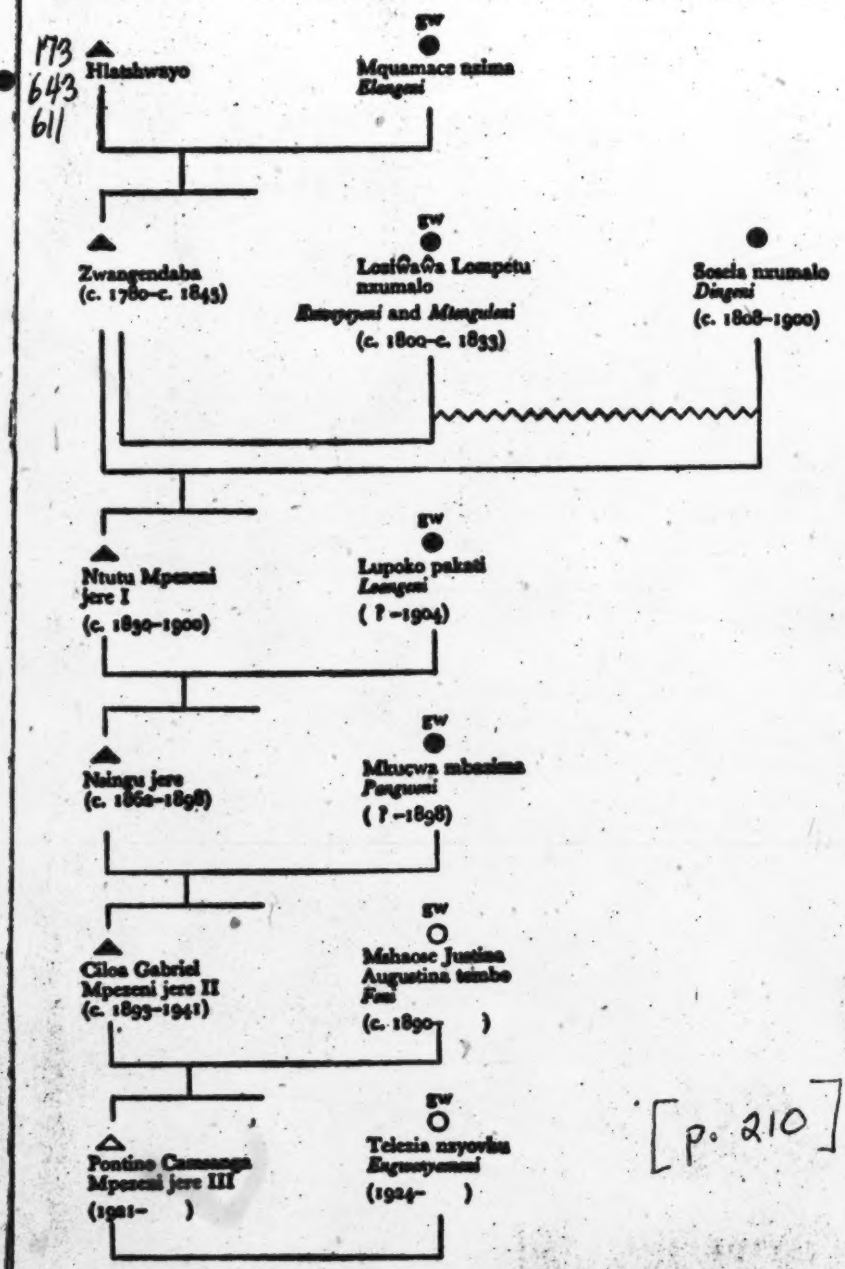
The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 new external factors are operating. There has been a change in the
631 scale of social relationships, and Ngoni men and women form part of a large-scale society in which events in one distant part of the system affect events in another part. The history and analysis of this change lies largely outside the scope of this study, and we have restricted ourselves to the way in which the political system of the tribe has adapted itself and been adapted in the changing society.
[64] The Ngoni sovereign State has become more and more like a rural district council in a backward area; foreign policy has given place
[557] to Native policy; social mobility has been restricted to the lowest caste in a plural society; and the great warrior chief has become in effect the only member of the Administration who never goes home
[613] to Britain on leave. But in the eyes of his people, the Paramount Chief still belongs to the Ngoni, and not to the Administration.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

SKELETON GENEALOGY OF MPEZENI CHIEFTAINSHIP



[p. 210]

(Names of segments founded for queens shown in *italics*; other symbols as in Diagram 1 rotated through ninety degrees. Years of birth and death shown in brackets.)

11

CHAPTER II

THE NGONI KINGDOMS

In 1933, by the Native Authorities Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance, Mbelwa was recognized as Paramount of the northern Ngoni kingdom with six Subordinate Native Authorities under him, and his court was constituted the appeal court for their six courts. The same procedure was followed in the central kingdom for Paramount Gomani with six Subordinate Native Authorities, and his court as the appeal court for their courts. They were the only rulers in Nyasaland with S.N.A.[1] under them. Two other chiefs, Cikulamayembe of the Henga in Mzimba district and Kyungu of the Ngonde in North Nyasa district, had respectively four and five courts subordinate to them, but the chiefs owning these courts were not recognized as their subordinates. The Ngoni comment on these ordinances was 'Ha! Now they see what big chiefs we have. Only our chiefs are called *inkosi*.' 642 643 692

The northern kingdom was in Mzimba district, and Paramount Mbelwa's royal village was at the southern end of his kingdom. The central kingdom included the whole of Ncheu district with Paramount Gomani's royal village at the northern end. This kingdom had Portuguese territory on its western frontier, close to the royal village. When the Portuguese boundary was fixed in 1891, the Ngoni kingdom under the Maseko Paramount was cut in two and a section under a Maseko ruler became a separate kingdom under the Portuguese. There was constant trouble in the 1930's over this Portuguese frontier, for Gomani's Ngoni visited their relatives, grazed their cattle and hoed gardens on the Portuguese side; and from time to time claims by the Portuguese for rent for gardens and grazing lands and disputes about taxation, needed judicious handling in the District Commissioner's court. 631 648

The figures in Table II for Mzimba and Ncheu districts in 1926, 1931, and 1945 show the changes in the ethnic composition of the districts, some of which are difficult to account for. In Mzimba district the Henga under Cikulamayembe were included in the figures for the Tumbuka and hence the northern Ngoni kingdom did not include all the 156,208 in the district. In Ncheu, the total district population of 87,690 were all included in the central Ngoni kingdom, showing the mixed ethnic elements, among which the Ngoni, or those who were enumerated as Ngoni, had declined from 64,023 in 1926 to 15,242 in 1945. Between 1931 and 1945 the decrease in the number of Ngoni (31,066) was almost balanced by the increase in the number of Nyanja 162 563

[1] This abbreviation will be used henceforward in referring to Subordinate Native Authorities.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realize that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni eni eni*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names.

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.'[1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognized areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *alumuzana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *alumuzana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognized as *alumuzana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *alumuzana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognized court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *alumuzana* were recognized as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *alumuzana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*. 1935, p. 54.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

was still more clearly demonstrated by the attitude of the Ngoni 'of the dispersion', who returned for visits, some frequently and others at varying intervals, to their former homes though they were no longer in a political sense subjects of the Ngoni Paramount. 121 571

In the Group A systems, not only is the Paramount the political head of a culturally and ethnically heterogeneous state, but he is also a territorial ruler, and everyone living within the boundaries of his state is his subject. This was peculiarly a characteristic of the so-called conquest states, when effective administrative control was established within recognized boundaries after the conquest or surrender of neighbouring peoples. In the chapter on the military organization of the Ngoni, it will be seen how the nature of the military tenure of *alumuzana*, and the relation of groups of conquered villages known as *amilaga* to the central villages of the Paramount and *alumuzana*, emphasized the limits within which Ngoni authority was effective. One of the often repeated grievances of the older Ngoni was that the Europeans 'arrived too soon', before the Ngoni were able to establish effective authority over the whole country. 121 643 642

Two further points emerge in the introductory essay to *African Political Systems* which relate to the balance of forces within the Group A type of state and to the position of the Paramount. Both these points will be illustrated in Part II. The first concerns the relationship of the subordinate chiefs (called 'local chiefs' in the essay) to the central authority. They represented the central authority in the areas where they ruled, and they represented the people under them and their needs to the central authority. When the older Ngoni were talking about the Paramount in pre-European days, much emphasis was laid on his control of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, and on the obligation they felt to visit the Paramount in his village frequently, in order that they might appear to be carrying out his orders and not usurping undue authority. The older Ngoni also laid stress on the accessibility of the Paramount to all his people, provided—and it was an important proviso—that a man came to him with an intermediary, either his headman or his *mulumuzana*.

The final point of comparison between Group A systems and the Ngoni kingdoms is the mystical values bound up with kingship. This will be discussed in the chapter on the Paramount (Chapter II, Part II) and it is related also to the ancestor cult. The Ngoni Paramounts were more than ruling monarchs; they were the symbol of the unity of their state; in pre-European days the Paramount was the head of the army; and the ritual at the accession and at the death of a Paramount was related to the fertility of the land and the prosperity of the people. 121 643 829

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their spears and gathered together; they went to the kraal and began to dance the *ligubo* war dance. Sometimes they set themselves in order as though they were out on a raid; they came out at the right middle of the kraal and went *pa lisango*, toward the gate, singing, marching, and shaking their shields and spears. Sometimes they retreated as though running from the enemy, then turned about as though running to meet the enemy again. This was done to show how they could fight and defend themselves from the enemy. It showed that the boys were now young men and of the warrior class, and they were asking to be admitted to the status of grown men. If the old men agreed that their prayer should be granted they were formed into a new regiment (*libandla*) and were given a senior to lead and govern them.

539 702 [884]

The Army

All the war companies were under the Paramount. He had the power to call the whole army to go out against enemies. But all big villages and villages of men of reputation had their own companies, like Zulu Gama, Njerenjere Sibande and many others. These companies were under the war *induna* of the Paramount and when they were called they came quickly to the village of the Paramount which was the central meeting place. A *libandla* (company) was divided into *mabuto* (sections) sometimes of 100 or more. For each section there was an *induna* who led it in war, judged all disputes, and spoke for it to the war *induna*. The war *induna* was the eye of the Paramount in all that pertained to war.

539 704 [643]

The army was divided into companies corresponding to the districts or chiefs' villages and all the company leaders were under the war *induna*. All the parts of the army were divided in lesser parts in accordance with the generation of the young men, *amajaha*, and the older men, *amadoda*.

Mobilization

If desired the Paramount had power to send a summons through the whole country that his army should mobilize in his village in order that he might see it. The lesser chiefs had the same power for their districts. The man who delivered the summons went into the kraal and shouted that the Paramount wished the army to gather at the central meeting place. The message was spread everywhere. Then all the sections in the villages and in the districts of the lesser chiefs and clan heads hastened to come at the appointed time. The Paramount prepared cattle to be killed for the army. As the sections were marching in they sang the songs called *imihubo*. Section by section they chose their *muhubo* for arriving and entering the kraal and each section drew up by itself. An open space was left between the sections so that they might be known.

539 726

When they had all gathered in their places the herald rose and shouted '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayigube*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, let them dance.' This was to tell the sections to begin the war-dance. Each section got up with one heart and made a wide circle and began to dance. One of them began a song which he remembered on the spur of the moment from the *ligubo* and led off, the whole section took it up waving their shields and thrusting with their spears now right now left according to their step and each foot stamping the ground.

[535]

539 726 he had danced before all the sections he began to call '*Uyezwa, uti, Aiyime ncgito*', 'Do you hear? Stand to arms.' Immediately section by section got up and rushed forward with noise and whistling deafening the ears. The warriors stood in crowds near the stockade and almost surrounding it. When the army was small, they stood in the shape of a young crescent moon. While they did so, they were blowing their horns and whistling to drown the noise in the stockade.

Very soon the message was heard: '*Utsho njalo yena, uti, Aziqwebane*', 'Thus it is said, let the bulls fight.' On these words the warriors ran at the stockade with one heart and a noise like wind and the country was filled with the tread of their feet. For a short time there would sometimes be silence, then a shout would be heard from a section: '*Nginga pahati: kuti loko*', 'I am inside: I of such and such a village.' The man who was first in the stockade would name his village. Then there would be heard, '*Nginawe, mnakwetu*', 'I am with you, comrade.' All the *izinduna* and warriors fought in their own sections but once the army was inside they began to ask for the name of the first man in and those who had been near gave the name of the heroes. So each *induna* knew all about what had happened in his own section before he met the war *induna*, and when the latter reported to the Paramount at home he could tell everything.

Return from war

539 727 Long ago all that was found in the village or stockade (goats, sheep and cattle) belonged of right to the man who had entered first. That was easy when they sent only one company to the attack. All the other things belonged to the finder. Afterwards when all the warriors went to the attack together, it was difficult to distinguish who had got in first and so the spoils went to the man who reached them first. The Paramount had [643] his portion of everything taken. Outside the stockade those who had taken cattle put aside two or three which they said were *amahloma ankosi*, the first taste to the Paramount.

On the return all who had dipped their spears in the blood of their enemies carried what the killed had been wearing and their weapons or bows. If a man had killed a woman he wore her things (that is her ornaments, bark-cloth, etc.). These things were done to fulfil a taboo. When [783] the end of the time of purification came, all those things that were worthless were thrown away or burned, but the beautiful things were kept. Only the very old people wore the clothes of the killed.

When the army was on the way home it looked for bones of animals and burned them and ground them fine like flour, and also made charcoal dust. On the day of arrival some flour was kneaded and bone dust and the charcoal dust each by itself. They painted themselves on the face and on the body. This custom was to show those who had speared an enemy in the fight.

When the army was near their own country the war *induna* chose some messengers to go and give the news of the fighting and the names of those who had been killed. These messengers went to the important *izinduna*, and from them the news went quickly to the Paramount, headmen, and elders. The women were not told quietly; even if a man knew that his son

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amakanda* of the *alumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were [703] allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.[1] Since he also had the sole right of forming a new regiment of young men and giving it a name, he controlled the intake to the army as well as the discharge of seasoned warriors.

The big war *induna* served directly under the Paramount. Associated with him were other subordinate war leaders or *ixinduna*, one of whom was always at the head of each regiment. Considerable emphasis was laid by Cibambo and other Ngoni informants on the essentially military character, in pre-European days, of the office and function of the *ixinduna*, who were officials serving the whole kingdom. We shall see in Chapters III, IV and V how the term *induna* was also used for civil officials at the royal village and in the courts, as well as for the men in charge of sections of a village and of houses.

The account of the mobilization of the army shows that the Ngoni had changed the system of military barracks concentrated about the capital, described by Gluckman as typical of the Zulu military organization and by Kuper for the Swazi. Gluckman said that the chiefs assembled their people in territorial, not age, divisions, and that the age regiments belonged to the king alone and lived in or near his capital.[2] In pre-European days the Ngoni, according to Cibambo and to other informants, had in their armies territorial divisions as well as age regiments, and there was no concentration of young warriors by age regiments round the Paramount's village.[3]

When a summons to war went forth, the warriors in the territory of each chief or *mulumuzana* assembled at his head village as a *libandla*. This included the warriors from the outlying villages and from the head village. Cibambo's use of the term *libandla* emphasized that it was a territorial unit, divided into *mabuto* (which he called sections) on the basis of age.

When each *libandla* arrived at the Paramount's village ready for warfare, the different age groups within it joined up with their parallel age groups from other *mabandla* to form regiments. The Ngoni term for these national regiments was *mabuto*, the same term as that used for the age divisions of the *mabandla*. Old men who had been warriors in their youth expressed to me many times their immense pride in their own *libuto*, and it had for them something of the tradition and prestige of a famous school. They would recite the names of other *mabuto*, beginning with their own as the most recent, and going backwards through ten or more regimental names to those who had crossed the Zambesi with

[1] Cibambo in the text spoke of warriors wearing the head-ring. The usual practice, according to informants, was to give the head-ring at the end of service in the army. Cibambo may have been referring to former warriors with a head-ring putting on war-dress for a ceremony.

[2] Gluckman, M. 'The Kingdom of the Zulu', in *African Political Systems*, 1940, p. 31.

[3] One example of a concentration of young men was reported at the village of the Queen Mother in the central kingdom in 1898 in *The Central African Times*, see Memorandum XVI, International African Institute, 1938, p. 18.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the common people.
Shall we die on the earth?
The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of all beasts.
Shall we die on the earth?
Listen, you who are asleep, who are left tightly closed in the land!
Shall we all sink into the earth?
Listen, O earth! The sun is setting tightly.
We shall all enter into the earth.

CHAPTER II

THE PARAMOUNT

Introduction

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THE Cewa term for chief (*mfumu*) was widely used in Nyasaland for chiefs of all ranks, as well as for village headmen and, occasionally, as an honorific form of address to an important individual. Among the Cewa a man could 'become a chief' by acquiring, through marriage or purchase, the right to own a site, known as a *mzinda*, on which female initiation rites were carried out. This concept of the office of chieftainship among the Cewa and other local tribes was in sharp contrast to the centralized and unified concept inherent in the Ngoni term *inkosi*. I have translated *inkosi* here as Paramount because the term Paramount Chief was adopted by the Administration to denote a ruler who had recognized subordinate chiefs under him and whose court was an appeal court for their courts. It is necessary to emphasize here how distinctive the office of Paramount was among the various types of chiefs in Nyasaland, both in official recognition, and still more in the Ngoni ideas about their Paramount. We saw in Chapter II of Part I that no Nyasaland chiefs, except the Ngoni Paramounts, had Subordinate Native Authorities under them.

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When the Ngoni left the south, a number of small chiefdoms there were gradually being overcome by Shaka and, based on his armies, he had set up a new and unique type of *inkosi*. The leaders of military bands who left him—Mzilikazi, Soshangane, Zwangendaba and Ngwana—had little recognition before they left, except as military and clan leaders. Yet after the Ngoni left, Zwangendaba and Ngwana received from their followers recognition of their political leadership as *inkosi*, and this was expressed by giving to the Paramount the salute of *Bayete*. Throughout their recitals of traditions and in their accounts of their political system, Ngoni informants in both kingdoms emphasized that for each kingdom there was one *inkosi* to whom alone the *Bayete* was given. We assume, therefore, that the later Ngoni concept of the Paramount and his

571 643 function and authority was largely evolved and built up during the Ngoni migration across the Zambesi and the early settlement in Nyasaland.

643 The office of the Paramount was supported by three typical Ngoni institutions. The first was the regency exercised by the man who was held responsible for the care of the office of the Paramount. He was called 'the one who takes care of the country', 'the one who has to put the new *inkosi* in his place', 'the one who takes care of the young *inkosi* until he enters his father's place'. We shall see later how this principle of regency operated in particular cases in the succession to the Paramountcy. It proved to be an effective provision both in the case of a minor who was recognized as his father's heir, and during an interregnum while the succession was being discussed. The Ngoni showed a clear understanding of what functions the regent ought to perform, and when he exceeded these functions and usurped, or tried to usurp, the Paramount's position they condemned his action as wrong.

The second institution which supported the Paramountcy was the 'big house' from which the heir to the Paramount had to come. We shall see later that it was not always considered essential that the heir should be the actual child of the wife in the big house. A boy could be adopted [597] into the house and, by Ngoni kinship rules, he was then a child of that house and of the woman in it.

643 The third institution, which made the Paramount immortal at death 769 after having been supreme in his life-time, was the Ngoni practice of 'guarding his spirit' in a hut, usually in the village where he had lived. The guardianship of a spirit was not practised exclusively for the Paramount. All the chiefs and the heads of the Swazi clans had this provision made for their spirits when they died, but in national crises prayers [282] addressed to the spirits of former Paramounts were of supreme importance.

The royal clan and the big house

643 Among the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans which formed the Ngoni 614 aristocracy the royal clan had a unique position. Not only was it the clan 565 of the Paramount, but its members had social rank and prestige because 184 they belonged to his clan. In the northern kingdom informants showed awareness of the fact that their royal clan of Jere was not one of the well-known clans in the south. Other clan names found among them, such as Ngomezulu, Thole, Nzima, Nqumayo, and many more, were known to be clan names among the South-eastern Bantu. The following explanation was given by Cibambo about the name Jere and was the one most widely accepted:

¶ The Ngoni themselves say that the clan name of Jere was given during the journey, and that it arose out of the number of people who were with Zwangendaba. When the Ngoni want to speak of a large number of people they use two well-known words which are: '*Ngu Shaka*' (it is Shaka);

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'*Ngu Jere*' (it is Jere). Perhaps Zwangendaba and others took their clan name from this, seeing that they had become a great number. It is certain that the clan name of Jere is not known in Zululand or Swaziland.

In the northern kingdom all the chiefs recognized as Subordinate Native Authorities were of the royal clan, and hence its political authority was widespread. It was noticed by the early missionaries in northern Ngoniland that the sons of Zwangendaba who were chiefs under their brother, the Paramount, showed some degree of independence in that they wanted to rule their own areas with the minimum of centralized control. The pre-eminence of the Paramount among the other Jere rulers was strengthened as time went on by the remoter kinship relationship of the other Jere chiefs to the Paramount. After Zwangendaba's death they were his brothers of the same father and different mothers. Two generations later they were farther removed from his kinship circle since each of their posts was inherited on a direct father to son principle. The political and social importance of membership of the royal clan tended to go in the direct line of relationship to the Paramount rather than to the collateral branches. Later, in Part III, we shall examine the social prestige of the *amakosana* (lit. children of the *inkosi*). It was the closeness of their relationship to the reigning Paramount which was the basis for their social prestige, though evidence showed that a sister or brother or child from a big house of a former Paramount was also given social recognition as an important personage.

The royal clan of Maseko in the central kingdom was also known in Swaziland. Dr. Kuper refers to it in connexion with the Swazi custom of cremating the body of the Maseko chief at his death on a rock by a river.[1] This custom was brought from the south by the Ngoni under Maseko leadership and carried out for each successive Paramount up to 1891. Among these Ngoni the royal clan had special relationships with other leading clans, but the Paramount did not share his political authority with any others of his clan. His chiefs were all of other clans, and Ngoni informants said that it was a deliberate act of the Paramount Mputa to exclude his brothers from political authority and from disputing with him the control of the kingdom. In the isolated position thus established for the royal clan, two other clans had a ritual relationship with the Paramount. One was the Phungwako clan which was custodian of the Paramount's 'medicines', known as the *tonga*. The other was the Ngozo clan which provided the companion for the Paramount whom I have called the 'royal shadow' (see below, pp. 61–3). Yet another special relationship with the royal clan was that of the Nzunga clan which had *cibale*, or brotherly relations, with the Maseko clan, that involved sharing the same avoidances and excluded inter-marriage.

[766]

The relationship of the Paramount to other leaders of the royal clan

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 86.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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643 614 565 184 was thus different in the two kingdoms. In the north he was one ruler, though a supreme one, among several ruling kinsmen of the same clan. His position in the past had been strengthened by the prestige shared by his clansmen, but also challenged by his near kinsmen in positions of authority. In the central kingdom the Paramount shared no authority with his fellow clansmen. He was unique among them as a ruler, while sharing special ritual relationships with the two other clans which supported his position without challenging it.

643 614 585 A new Paramount, in order to be installed in his father's place, had to be of the big house as well as of the royal clan. Dr. Kuper described the Swazi practice whereby cattle were contributed by the nation for the mother of the king, so that she was called the 'mother of the people of the country'. She also described the ritual marriage of the first wife of a ruler, who was called *sisulamsiti*, and who was never the mother of the heir.[1] The Ngoni Paramount-elect in the northern kingdom married his first wife when he was a young man and she was called *msulamsizi*, 'the one who takes the darkness off him'. The big wife, who would bear the heir, was married with a large gift of cattle taken from the herd of the big wife of the reigning Paramount and, after marriage, was attached to her big house. We shall discuss in greater detail in the next chapter the relationships of the royal women to the Paramount and to each other. Here it is important to note that the big house owned by the big wife was the place where the future chief was brought up. In the central kingdom the first marriage of the Paramount was traditionally with a woman of the Magagula clan who was said not to bear children. She held an honoured place in the social hierarchy and was married with cattle taken from the herd of the *gogo* house of the reigning Paramount. It was regarded as a ritual marriage, for if she did bear children they were not acknowledged. [842 847] Informants were uncertain whether methods to prevent conception were used, or whether abortion was practised, or whether children, if born, died young or were disposed of or placed out in other households. The last alternatives were unlikely, and one of the first two expedients was in line with the phrase always used of this wife: 'she did not bear children'. The wife who bore the heir was married next and was always of another leading clan, and the cattle for her came from the herd of the big house of the reigning Paramount.

643 614 The reasons were obvious why the remembered genealogies of the Ngoni Paramounts of the royal clans were short compared with the genealogies of some other African royal houses. The remote ancestors of Jere chiefs and Maseko chiefs, who were, as we have seen, not Paramounts before they left the south, were forgotten once the departure had taken place. Only a few names had been handed down and were repeated by the official praisers, whose task it was to call out the names of the direct ancestors of the Paramount before declaiming his *izibongo* or

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. pp. 54 & 91.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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praise-songs. The northern Ngoni remembered the names of five direct ancestors of Zwangendaba, ancestors who had died before they left the south, and the central Ngoni remembered the names of three direct ancestors of Mputa who had died before crossing the Zambesi.[1] 643 614

The genealogy of the Jere Paramounts which was recited in the northern kingdom varied in different localities. Of three versions which I found two agreed, except in the name given for the earliest ancestor. 643 173

Lovuma (Kali is the alternative given by Cibambo)
|
Lonyanda
|
Magalera — Died in the south
|
Magangata
|
Hlacwayo
|
Zwangendaba
|
Mbelwa I
|
Mbelwa II
|
Mbelwa III, ruling in 1939

The list above was given by Cibambo of Ekwendeni and Simon Nhlane of Hoho, the leading member of the Nhlane clan.

Third Version:

Nyandeni
|
Mehlo enzhomo
|
Jele ka Lovuma
|
Nchingile
|
Gumede
|
Magangata
|
Hlacwayo
|
Zwangendaba
|
Mbelwa I
|
Mbelwa II
|
Mbelwa III

[1] In 'Traditions and Prestige among the Ngoni' (*Africa*, 1936) I said (p. 466) that nine generations of ancestors were remembered in the north and seven in the centre. These referred to the Paramounts after crossing the Zambesi as well as to their ancestors who died in the south.

643 173 The third version was given by Chinombo Jere, a grandson of Zwangendaba, who came from Emcisweni. This section of the Ngoni, under Chief Mperembe, had for a time associated with Paramount Mpeseni, and not with Mbelwa. This separation gave them a slightly different set of traditions, and they were, perhaps owing to their geographical isolation, the last group to give up the old language and dress.

An attempt to check the Emcisweni version of the Jere genealogy with that of Ekwendeni showed one piece of evidence in favour of the latter. This was the tradition preserved by the Nhlane clan that the Swazi chiefs of the Nqumayo clan had as their chief *izinduna* men of the Jere clan who were of the same age regiment. The names remembered were as follows:

Swazi chiefs	*Ngoni izinduna*
Ndwandwe	Magalela
Langa	Magangata
Zwide	Hlacwayo
Sikunyane	Zwangendaba

In the central Ngoni kingdom the following was the generally accepted version of the genealogy of the Maseko Paramounts:

Msizi no bulako } Died in the south
Goqweni
Ngwana — Died before crossing the Zambesi
Mputa
Cikusi
Gomani I
Gomani II, ruling in 1939

After the death of Ngwana before the crossing of the Zambesi, two of his brothers in turn acted as regents. Also, on the death of Mputa, his brother Cidyawonga acted as regent. In the recital of the Paramount's genealogies, however, the names of the regents were not included.

The succession to the Paramountcy and the role of the regent

643 It might appear that among a strictly patrilineal people like the Ngoni, where marriage was formalised by exchange of cattle, and where each wife had a recognized position and rank, it would have been easy to formulate rules for the succession to the Paramountcy, and that they would have been followed without deviation. Such had obviously not

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been the case. It could be argued that the unsettled conditions on the northward journey made it necessary to modify rules of succession in favour of the 'strong man'. Europeans have tried to detect an element of popular choice in the appointment of the *inkosi*, or at least of a popular verdict in favour of or against a proposed candidate. Another element suggested by Ngoni informants was nomination of his heir by the dying Paramount. 643

There were, however, certain principles which were clear in the accounts given by informants. One was that immediately on the death of a Paramount a regent took charge of the country, of the office of the Paramount, and of the person of the heir elect, and also of the funeral rites of the dead Paramount. The provision for a regency allowed for a period of delay before announcing the successor. There was no 'The king is dead. Long live the king.' The office of the Paramount was clearly in suspense during this interregnum which had been known to last a few days, a few months, or even years—the last in the case of a successor who was a minor. During this period the regent was responsible for carrying on the work of the Paramount, and for consultation with heads of leading clans about the successor. In the past the regent was usually a brother of the dead Paramount. The traditions of the central Ngoni were, as we have seen, that after Ngwana had led them out of the south, he died before crossing the Zambesi. Two of his brothers, Magadlera who died before the Zambesi crossing and Mgoola who died near Domwe, successively acted as regents until Mputa was old enough to enter his father's place. When the time came for the end of the interregnum, it was the regent's responsibility to summon the people and present the heir to them as the new Paramount.

The assumption of authority by a regent and the provision for an interregnum make it clear that the identity of the successor was seldom a foregone conclusion even though the heir-apparent stood with a spear at his father's grave. Among the principles of succession which determined the choice of the new Paramount, one was that he should come from the big house. This could be 'arranged' by adopting him into it if there was no likely heir who had been born there. Another principle was a less easily defined qualification, that of suitability. This was discussed by the regent with the leading clan heads, who took into account the wishes of the late Paramount and the character and personality already displayed by the proposed successor, who had stood by his father's grave. Informants made it clear that responsibility for this selection weighed heavily on the regent and the leading men, for the choice once made was final, the power of the Paramount was very great, the 'medicines' used at his accession set him aside as a person of potential supernatural power, and the prosperity of the country and of everyone in it depended on this decision.

Two famous cases of disputed succession in the past had led to major 643 578

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

.643
578

divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first occurred in the north on the death of Zwangendaba, when his brother Ntabeni became regent, and this dispute revolved round the principle that the heir should come from the big house. It led to the final split between Mpeseni and Mbelwa, the setting up of two kingdoms, and the giving of the '*Bayete*' to two Paramounts of the Jere clan. The following account was given by Chief Mtwalo Jere, son of the Mtwalo mentioned, and he told it to me in his own village of Ezondweni. It brings out the function and position of the regent; the relation of 'house' to 'village'; the influence of the popular verdict on the choice of a successor; the magnanimous attitude of other possible rivals for the Paramountcy; and the effect of personal quarrels on a national matter.

¶ Ntabeni went to the house of Munene, the mother of Mbelwa. She insulted him and would not give him beer. Zwangendaba went to bathe and when he returned Ntabeni said to him 'I have been insulted by your wife. She called me "Sutu".' This is a great insult among the Ngoni.[1] Zwangendaba was very angry, and he took a pan and fried groundnuts, and said to his wife 'You must take the groundnuts in your hand.' Her hands were very burnt because the groundnuts were too hot. 'You are burnt because you must not abuse this your brother-in-law. You are punished.' Zwangendaba died. Ntabeni was taking care of the country. He was the right man to put the *inkosi*. He said to Mbelwa: 'You are not a chief because your mother abused me.' So Mpeseni was *inkosi*, and the second was Mtwalo. They chased away Mbelwa. When Mpeseni was elected to be *inkosi* all the people were complaining because they said the chieftainship should be for the village of Elangeni. The people of Elangeni and of Ekwendeni did not want Mpeseni as *inkosi*.

Ntabeni died. The people of Elangeni and of Ekwendeni wanted to fight Ntabeni's people because they were not told of his death, and when he was buried they were not there. The Ntabeni people went away to Tanganyika. All the rest left Ufipa and came to Cidlodlo. Mpeseni and Mperembe stayed there and the rest came to Coma. Then Mperembe returned from Mpeseni.

Mtwalo said to Mbelwa 'You are the right man to be *inkosi*. I am not the right man because through jealousy Ntabeni gave the *inkosi* to Mpeseni.' Then they gave '*Bayete*' to Mbelwa.

Cibambo, whose father was *mlomo wenkosi* (mouthpiece of the chief) in Ekwendeni for old Mtwalo mentioned above, confirmed this part of the story of the succession and the role played by Ntabeni as regent. He also gave in his book [2] the most coherent account of an earlier dispute about which wife of Zwangendaba was the big wife—a dispute which illustrated the significance of the house in the succession.

[1] Bryant, in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, said (p. 134) that 'Sutu' was an insult because it meant 'barbarian'—one who had not had his ears pierced according to the custom of the Zulu.

[2] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. London, 1942, chaps. V & VI.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643
578

A disputed succession in the central kingdom arose over a struggle between Cikusi, the son of the Paramount Mputa, and Cifisi, the son of the regent Cidyawonga who took care of the kingdom after Mputa's death. When the regent died, his son Cifisi claimed the succession and war broke out between the followers of the two claimants. After fighting had continued through two generations of claimants the state under Cifisi seceded and became independent, though the '*Bayete*' was only given to Cikusi and his descendants of Mputa's main line. The following account was given in the royal village of the central kingdom by a former regent assisted by an official reciter of tradition. It related to the succession to Mputa, who died in the Songea district of Tanganyika, and to the defeat of these Ngoni by the followers of Zulu Gama. After this defeat the Ngoni under Cidyawonga returned to the west side of the lake and built on Domwe mountain.

¶ When they burned the body of Mputa, Cidyawonga stood with Cikusi, and that was the sign that Cikusi was still young but was *inkosi*. Cidyawonga was the brother of Mputa. The people told Cidyawonga 'We are in war. You must help us.' They took Cikusi and put him in the big house, because there were no children there.

Cidyawonga was the regent when they built on Domwe. When he was about to die he said to the people 'Now I leave this country in the hands of the owner, because I was only appointed to keep it for him. This is your leader.' He sent for Cikusi and gave him his father's spear, saying to him 'This country is yours.' He said to Cifisi, his own son, 'You my son do not struggle with Cikusi. He is the only Paramount here.' Cidyawonga we did not burn because he had cared for the Paramountcy. And when Cidyawonga died we put Cikusi in his place.

The relation between the regent and the Paramount emerged again from the confusion following the death of Paramount Gomani I in 1896 at the hands of the British. The record in the *Ncheu District Note Book* said that authority was divided between the dead Paramount's brother, Mandala, and NaMlangeni, the mother of Cikusi the former Paramount. After the Portuguese-Nyasaland boundary was fixed dividing the Ngoni territory, the Portuguese entered their section to administer it. NaMlangeni and Mandala resisted their entry and were taken prisoners and died. Meantime a big *mulumuzana* of Paramount Gomani I had acted as regent for his heir who had been placed in the big house. The following account by the treasurer of Gomani II described the situation during the early years of the minority of the Paramount.

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¶ Chief Gomani II was born in 1893. The country was destroyed by the Europeans when this child was three years old, and he was taken care of by the big *mulumuzana* of his father, Cakumbira Mpalale Ndau. When the war of the Europeans had finished, they built the village of Lizulu, near Mlanda mountain, where the Dutch mission is today. The child was with them in that village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 When the European Mr. Walker asked the big people whether Gomani I left any children, those big people refused to tell and said 'He did not leave children, they died when they were small.' They feared lest perhaps the Europeans wanted to kill the children too. Mr. Walker (they called him Cipyoza, 'the thing that goes on boring a hole') did not stop asking because he said 'Gomani was my friend and I want to help his children.' On his second journey they revealed to him that there were two children in the village here, and they named the heir Philip Gomani and his younger brother William Gomani who died in 1919. Then Mr. Walker rejoiced. When they brought the children out before his eyes, he gave them gifts which he brought for them, clothes and other things.

The accession of the Paramount and the royal medicines

When the succession of the new Paramount had been decided according to the principles just discussed, the regent had the further responsibility of presenting the new Paramount to the people. This presentation was the act of accession and, as we have seen, it might take place a short time or a longer time after the death of the former Paramount. In describing the accession and the ritual accompanying it, I shall use illustrations from the central kingdom, partly because the material there was more co-ordinated and more complete, especially that relating to the religious and magical significance of the ritual, and also because the unique feature of the 'royal shadow' in relation to the Paramount was, so far as I could tell, peculiar to that area.

The actual accession of the new Paramount had four main elements in it. The first was the decision as to the individual who was to succeed, which was taken by the regent and the senior men. The second was the 'placing' (*kuimika*) of the chosen successor, which was the announcement to the people that he was the Paramount. The third was the instruction by the senior men, and the fourth was the administering of 'medicines' to strengthen the Paramount.

The two following accounts relate to the accession of Gomani I. The first is by Captain Rattray and was included in his collection of Nyanja texts.[1] It was dictated to him by a man who was present at the death and cremation of Cikusi. At the end of this text there is a brief reference to the acknowledgment of the new Paramount:

[516] ¶ They allow three days to pass [after the funeral], and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps out and says, 'Do you hear? Your new chief is so and so' (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then everyone shouts '*Bayete*', and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes. Then the elders take the 'child', going with him to a hut to give him instruction, saying 'Today you stand alone. Look after

[1] Rattray, R. S. *Some Folklore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja*. London, S.P.C.K. 1907.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

your people as did your father before you. If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned.' 643

Habuya Dube, the official 'praiser' of Paramount Gomani II, had been present at the funeral of Cikusi, and he confirmed that the ceremony of accession was as described above and added these further details:

« At the time of the burning of the body of Cikusi, Gomani stood up in the smoke, standing on one leg with a shield in his hand. When all had been consumed by the fire, they began to open the waters and the grave-digger swept the ashes. And they picked up Gomani and went with him to the mound so that he should wash. When these things were over, we left the water to go to the house. We were dancing *ligubo* in the open place and Gomani had a headdress of *luve* [1] feathers on his head. And they followed him into the house, but all the people were dancing *ligubo* in the *bwalo* for a whole month. When the mourning was over, Bvumbwe Maseko said 'Now let us establish (*tiimike*) our chief.' So he was established. [766]

The 'standing on one leg' referred to in both texts is the position adopted by other East and South-east African people when resting supported by the spear, with one foot flat against the other knee and the shield in front of the body. Other men inheriting their father's position stood at the grave holding a spear, but only those of the Maseko clan, succeeding the Paramount in the direct line, adopted the position of standing on one leg. 'Placing' or establishing the Paramount was done before a large gathering of people with the warriors in full war-dress, described graphically in terms of the waving head-plumes and the thunder of the shields. It was evident that all discussion of who would or would not be a suitable Paramount went on within the closed circle of the regent and the senior men, and the people were presented with the chosen Paramount whom they acclaimed. [516]

The instruction by the senior men was a reminder to the new Paramount that, though his new powers were extensive and unique in their authority, he should not act like a cruel despot. There are references in the *Nchew District Note Book* [2] to the passing-over of an elder brother of Gomani I on the grounds that he was of a fierce and cruel disposition, though, according to Ngoni informants, this man Mandala was a younger brother of Cikusi and an uncle of Gomani, and thus was not eligible to be Paramount. In discussing the type of man who was considered suitable to be Paramount, Ngoni informants always laid stress on the need for him not to be fierce and cruel. This pointed to an ideal type of Paramount and did not agree with European accounts of large-scale poison ordeals at Cikusi's court. The instruction to the new Paramount [183]

[1] Feathers worn only by the Paramount. [2] *Nchew District Note Book*. 1891.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 so briefly referred to was in the nature of a warning that the kingdom must be held together and certain Ngoni customs and institutions preserved. This general mandate to a new Paramount was in keeping with the Ngoni policy of maintaining order and justice within the kingdom, while showing all the aggressive qualities of warfare against external enemies.

173 643 In the story of their northward trek, the division of authority among the central Ngoni between the Maseko and the Phungwako clans was referred to as the Maseko taking the '*Bayete*' and the Phungwako taking [789] the *tonga*.[1] In central Ngoniland the *tonga* was a collective name given to royal medicines used at different times for different purposes and was not reserved for the medicine used in the army as in the northern kingdom. It was said to have been 'from the beginning in the south'; 'it is very old, ever since people were born'. The following description was given by a member of the Phungwako clan in the head village of Chief Kacere:

643 789 ¶ The Ngoni had protection for all their people of the most powerful kind. This was the *tonga*. This was specially to protect the Paramount at his accession. When the Ngoni were thus accustomed to being protected by the *tonga*, there was one thing which gave them protection above all others. If the Paramount died, in arranging matters, the *tonga* was essential in establishing the new Paramount. And if war had to be made, the *tonga* also gave protection so that they had strength to overcome their enemies.

[791] Also when the Ngoni were travelling in wild places and did not find somewhere to stay, they began to listen to the *tonga*. The diviner, who went ahead with the *tonga*, looked to see if there were bad omens. When they found a place to stay and stayed there with their cattle, they were protected by the *tonga*, so that they were not afraid of anything. They just conquered the country and took the cattle and made the people surrender.

[825] When getting ready the *tonga*, they could only do it with a sheep. They killed it, and took its blood and its fat and smeared the *tonga*. And the big people who were set aside for the work of the *tonga*, it was they who were doing these things. The meat of the sheep which was killed for the *tonga*, they did not eat it just anyhow, no. They were eating it in a special way, not in the house, no; nor with the women, no; but in a very different way from the meat of every day. They ate it without being greedy when it was divided, and they took care not to put some aside, for they feared lest someone should eat the *tonga*. They just ate to finish it quickly, and when they had finished they did not sleep in their houses with their wives, but they went apart and slept in the place where this was done for the *tonga*. Their sleeping was different from other days, for they did not sleep on good mats, no. When they had eaten meat for the *tonga* they changed their ways, to act differently from usual. Instead of

[1] The head of the Phungwako clan, Chief Kacere, ruled one of the Ngoni states in the Dedza district which, in the 1930's, was separate from the central Ngoni kingdom.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 643 789

sleeping on mats they slept on grass until the required days were finished, and they scattered to their homes.

This account brings out certain elements in the ritual surrounding the *tonga*. The word *tonga* in the Ngoni language means 'rod', and was used in the very ancient folk tale *Intonga yetusi*, 'The Brass Rod'. There was no rod, however, nor anything representing one, among the medicines or ingredients which together made up the *tonga*. A descendant of one of the early 'guardians' of the *tonga* said about it:

¶ The *tonga* is the horn of a sheep, and the horn by itself has no real power, but there are other things which give it power like the rib of a lion. [778]

It is clear that in the past the *tonga* was regarded as giving protection to the Ngoni people, particularly by providing medicine at the accession of a new Paramount when he needed medicine for strengthening.

Other informants from the Phungwako clan said that the *tonga* provided the medicine with which the Paramount washed at the time of *incwala*, the feast of the first-fruits. No one alive in the 1930's had seen that ceremony and the special songs had been forgotten. A tradition remained that the Paramount had to undergo seclusion and ritual washing with medicines before the first green crops could be eaten. [178]

Throughout the references to the *tonga* there was no hint that it was ever worshipped or addressed in any way similar to the invocations to the ancestor spirits. It was clearly a 'medicine' possessing great power and guarded as a national treasure. The ingredients of the medicine were kept in a particular way, in a particular place, in the guardianship of a particular person. I have seen the ingredients, the place and the guardian, but I gave a promise not to reveal them. I was allowed to handle the objects and, after doing so, I had to perform the ritual act of washing my hands with cowdung. This was the form of ritual cleansing practised by the Paramount after using the medicines. [515 783]

There were two ways in which these medicines were used by the Paramount to strengthen him on his accession. He washed in the kraal with the medicines whipped into a foam. The old men said that in ancient times the water for making the medicines had to be fetched from the sea. In addition to washing he had to eat meat in which the medicines were mixed. The majority of informants said that beef was used for this ritual eating, while others said that, as in the ritual for preparing the *tonga*, the meat taken was sheep. This ritual was said to have taken place for the last time at the death of Cikusi and the accession of Gomani I, though it was hinted that it had been performed at the accession of the Ngoni chief of the Maseko clan now living in Portuguese territory.

It was clear that the Maseko Paramounts made use of the *tonga* as a royal medicine both at their accession and in time of war. The reference [766]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 789 766 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

241 796 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *umsindo*, *ligubo*, *incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said [643 424] '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins everyone sings the songs of *incwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the [178] Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Intokoni* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for [824 224] a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ye'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala seigwabulive*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, [535] wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuzo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiswe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *xi xi*, *oxi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 762 766 came, 'to quieten them'. Thereafter this Ngozo boy did everything with the Paramount. He began by washing with the royal medicine at the time of the accession. He drank beer with him, he ate with him, he 'stood with him' (*amaima naye*) on all important occasions, such as sending out the army and judging cases. He slept in his own hut which was in the *cigodlo*, where the Paramount's sons built, and when he married he built huts for his wives in that same section of the royal village. At the death of the Paramount, he danced the war-dance in full war-dress and leaped on to the pyre to perish with the dead Paramount in the flames.

Informants sometimes said of this Ngozo boy that he was 'of one [582] blood' with the Maseko clan. They described the relationship between the two clans as that of *cibale*, brotherhood, which excluded all possi- [602] bility of inter-marriage. Between the Paramount and the Ngozo boy was established a joking relationship, so that the Ngozo boy could say 'good and bad things to the Paramount'.

643 644 It was clear that the ritual and social aspects of this relationship complemented and supported each other. The recurrent emphasis on the taking of medicine at the accession, on the participation in the war medicines, and most of all on the death on the Paramount's funeral pyre, were all evidence of this ritual relationship. Informants repudiated any idea of a scapegoat which involved protecting the Paramount from poison by eating before him. They reiterated several times that the Ngozo boy did not eat *before* the Paramount; in fact he ate after him though sharing his food dishes. Surrounding the Paramount were other boys called *micetho*, who performed the duties of pages or personal servants. The Ngozo boy was always distinct from them, and the distinction lay in the combined ritual and social relationship.

The concept of a 'shadow' was of something very close to a person, almost indistinguishable from the person himself. In referring to the Ngozo boy in the terms 'he was as the shadow of the *inkosi*; he was as himself', informants emphasized the extreme closeness of the tie between the two men. It seemed as if the royal shadow existed to meet a need for strengthening the Paramount by giving him a second self. It emphasized also the dangerous sphere of life and action in which the Paramount lived, due to the medicines he had used, his powers to protect the land and its fertility, and his power to give strength to the army through the use of the *tonga* medicine. No one else in the royal family shared these dangers and there was inherent in the relationship of royal shadow to *inkosi* the sense of some security through a companionship where protective medicines were shared as well as the hazardous occasions for which they gave protection.

643 644 608 This intense and dangerous ritual relationship was buttressed by the social ties binding the Ngozo boy to the Paramount. We have seen that between them as individuals there was that freedom of a joking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

relationship, described in terms of brotherhood, and this brotherhood was further emphasized by the ban on inter-marriage between the Ngozo and Maseko clans. The significance of the Ngozo boy, when he became a man, building in the *cigodlo* where the Paramount's sons built, was often stressed by informants. Though his huts were in this *cigodlo* section of the royal village, as if he were a son of the Paramount's family, the Paramount never said 'child' to him but invariably 'brother'. 643 644 608

In all the occasions of daily life, as well as in those of special ritual significance, the Ngozo boy stood or sat next to the Paramount. The Ngoni insisted that the status of a man or woman should be expressed in terms of sitting or standing in order of precedence. Sitting or standing next to the Paramount implied that that individual had the highest possible social status. The leading members of the Ngozo clan in their villages displayed an awareness of their social prestige which was very noticeable. This high rank was, however, in the past bought with a price —that of sharing in the dangers of the Paramountcy. This was acknowledged through the gift of cattle to the boy's family, sent at the time when he 'entered the chieftainship' with the Paramount. [554]

The institution of the royal shadow came to an end with the advent of the Europeans. An Ngozo man acted as a royal shadow on the accession of Cikusi but did not die on his funeral pyre. When Cikusi's son Gomani I was installed as *inkosi*, an Ngozo boy 'entered the chieftainship' with him and stood with him 'in the smoke of the *tonga*' when the army went to war. It was this Gomani I who was killed by the British, and there was no royal ritual at this death, and no cremation in a stream in which the Ngozo boy could share. The royal shadow retired in those troubled days to his father's village, where he died in 1937. It was alleged that no Ngozo man stood in this relationship to Gomani II, either at his accession, which took place during the period of Direct Rule, or in 1933 when his Paramount Chieftaincy was recognized. Informants showed a certain hesitation in answering direct questions on this topic, which was attributable partly to the fact that the Paramount was a Christian, and partly to a reluctance to discuss the continued use of 'royal medicines'. The following account of the royal shadow was given by informants of the Nzunga and Ngozo clans. 643 644 178

« When the Paramount entered the chieftainship he stood with a man from the Ngozo clan. The Ngozo people are of one blood with the Paramount, because they stand together when entering the chieftainship. When the Paramount of the Maseko dies, he dies together with one of the Ngozo. It was so when there died Ngwana, Mputa, Cikusi.

When the Ngoni came into this country they stopped killing an Ngozo man when the Paramount died. When the Paramount died a young man of the Ngozo clan just stood beside the body of the Paramount, and when making the funeral pyre of the Paramount, he also was there until they set fire to it. If anyone wanted to kill an Ngozo man by the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 [178] water and the pyre, he was refusing, saying 'No, not in these days, but formerly.'

When Magona Ngozo was with Cikusi he was staying with him in the daytime. Magona had his own huts and Cikusi his. When eating, Cikusi ate alone, but afterwards he gave food to Magona. When Cikusi was washing it was together with Magona. When he went to the bush, they went together. When Cikusi was washing with the *tonga*, he was doing it with Magona. When the warriors were going out, Cikusi and Magona stood together, and they made fire for the medicines and they stood together in the smoke and then the warriors went out. So, when mentioning Magona, they said: 'the shadow of Cikusi'. When they were eating in the *bpalo*, the *nsima* (porridge) was brought to Cikusi, but if some *alumuzana* came, the wives of Magona cooked *nsima* and gave it to the *alumuzana*. When Cikusi died, Magona could take his wives if he wanted. The Ngozo man could tell the Paramount anything, good or bad, and stay like the mouth of the Paramount.

[762] When the Paramount died formerly, the Ngozo man dressed in his war-dress. When he came near the fire he danced with the shield in his hand. When the fire blazed up he ran and jumped on the fire. So the Maseko people gave cattle to the Ngozo people, to quieten their hearts because they were brothers. And when another Paramount was installed they gave an Ngozo man to stand with him. The father of the man who died with the Paramount received cattle and villages to rule over and gifts. The Paramounts gave cattle because they said: 'Since our brother is going to stand with the Paramount, if that Paramount dies, he also will be killed, so the Paramount ought to give cattle like *lobola* so they may quieten the hearts of his brothers.' Though these cattle are not given for a woman but for a man, any Maseko man ought not to marry an Ngozo woman because there is this brotherhood.

And this man of the Ngozo clan was like a chief because he had men to manage his affairs at his door, as did the Paramount. And if he died his funeral was like that of a chief. But the day the Paramount died the Ngozo man was killed. When the Paramount washed with medicines, he was washing with the Ngozo man. When drinking beer, he was drinking in the same hut as the Paramount. When the Paramount was sacrificing he was together with the Ngozo man, and they did not leave each other.

The Ngozo people have a thanking name (*isibongo*) Maphonya. It is they who were standing with the Paramounts, and the Ngozo people were [262] in the section of Ziyembe. Their avoidances were the same as all the Ngoni, especially fish and elephant. When Cikusi died Gulo stood with Gomani when he entered the chieftainship. Gulo was the son of Magona.

The royal village and the daily routine of the Paramount

643 361 644 In Part I, Chapter II we referred to the process by which each Paramount, after his accession, went out from his father's village to build his own. The Ngoni called this *ukupumisa inkosi* (to send out the Paramount) and the term used for the new village, *lusungulu* (the needle), was said to signify 'the front village where you expect to find the Paramount'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Dr. Kuper described the Swazi king making his own capital, but referred also to the existence of several royal villages where the wives of the reigning king lived.[1] The Ngoni system of one royal village which went out from the former royal village resulted in a series of social groups, based on residence, which were related to past Paramounts and their widows and to present Paramounts and their wives. The diagram in Chapter III of Part I shows a very much simplified form of the component parts of a new royal village and their relationship illustrated by the siting of the huts. 643 361 644

The following text was given by an elderly widow of a grandson of Zwangendaba, in the head village of Chief Mperembe in the northern kingdom.

« When a new village, *lusungulu*, was built the *indlunkulu* was first erected and then followed all the other huts of the *inkosi* in order. Those huts which belonged to the *indlunkulu* took the right-hand side facing the kraal. The second house took the left-hand side, and all huts belonging to this one followed it. Such huts could be counted as belonging to the *indlunkulu* and the second house by the cattle that were taken from such houses. To marry a new wife, if the *inkosi* took cattle from the right-hand house that new wife would belong there. All the huts of each house of the *inkosi* were built at the back of the hut of the owner of that house.

When erecting huts, those of the *izinduna* came next and were built next to those of the *inkosi*. After that they built their own according to their *izigawa* or divisions.

All the huts at the back of the *indlunkulu* and behind the other huts were called *cigodlo*. Huts near the gate of the kraal at the left were called *kwa cikulu*.

This text brings out the fact that each new royal village had three main elements in it: the mothers of the Paramount, his wives, and the *izinduna* and their families. The Paramount was always accompanied to his new village by one or more wives of his father, *ukulondolosa mntwana* (to keep the son). One of these was usually his own mother and she occupied the *indlunkulu*. The text points out that the big wife of the Paramount was on the right of the *indlunkulu*, and closely associated with its owner, the Paramount's mother. [592 644]

There was no fixed rule for the number of *izinduna* in charge of the houses of the Paramount's mothers and wives. When the Ngoni kingdoms were established in Nyasaland, the royal villages were very large and the divisions of the village, called in the text *izigawa*, were small hamlets. Each division was generally identified with a house, and in that case the *induna* in charge of the house was also in charge of the division. The original composition of royal villages could only be reconstructed by tracing the relationships of separate villages in the 1930's to their former parent village. This will be illustrated in the next chapter on the

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 41.

royal women. In the royal villages in the 1930's there was one big *induna* and several lesser ones whose position and functions will be described in Chapter IV.

This 'going out' of the new Paramount's village, leaving the former Paramount's village as the *gogo* village, brought about some re-distribution of authority, prestige and material goods. It gave the new Paramount his own village, always to be known as his, even after his death. His village became the focal meeting-place for the territory and for the court and territorial officials who surrounded the Paramount; and it was to the new royal village that the *alumuzana* in pre-European days came frequently to visit the Paramount and report to him on conditions in their areas. His moving out of the *gogo* village, on the other hand, gave his brothers who stayed there, and especially those of the *gogo* house, more freedom and authority within that village as well as responsibility for the conduct of all ritual matters relating to the kingdom. The Paramount's big wife had to take her place as the leading woman in the new village and to order the affairs of the wives attached to her house in consultation with the Paramount's mother. Cattle, beer and food for the royal household became the concern of the new village, and the *izinduna* and the royal women had to plan and manage the economy of a capital where political interests converged and where visitors and hangers-on were constantly turning up.

The following text by Chief Mtwalo Jere in Mzimba district, helped by Cibambo's older brother, describes the daily routine of the Paramount and his royal village as they had known it in their youth before the coming of the Europeans:

¶ The *inkosi* had to wash very early before the people came to see him. The *ingceko* was the servant who took care of washing the *inkosi*. He had to go with the *inkosi* to the bush and hide the faeces to prevent any bad person from getting the faeces. The *ingceko* was anyone whom the *inkosi* called for this, and must be one who walks well with the *inkosi*.

Before leaving his house to go to the kraal the *inkosi* had to eat a little porridge. When he went to the kraal a calabash of beer was brought to him. When any beer was brought to the *inkosi*, the *ingceko* tasted it first to see if it was good. The *inkosi* asked 'Is it good beer?' and the *ingceko* said 'Yes *inkosi*' and gave it to the *inkosi* to drink. When the *inkosi* took snuff the big *alumuzana* could beg from him. The other *amadoda* could only touch their noses. Then the *inkosi* knew they were begging snuff from him. Where the *inkosi* sat a mat was spread, and on it was laid a leopard- or a lion-skin. This was called 'the chair of the *inkosi*'. On arrival the big *alumuzana* went straight into the kraal to where the *inkosi* sat and greeted him '*Bayete*', and sat down in front of him.

The *inkosi* could not eat porridge except that cooked by his own wives. In his own hut he ate alone with one wife to serve him. His mothers also came with food every day. He ate twice in his own hut, early and late, and once in the kraal. When he ate in the kraal all could see him. He could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingcwembe*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *indwna* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *isipheko*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izinduna* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 turn were invited to eat with the Paramount or summoned to special
651 feasts. On the other hand there were people who seemed to have noth-
431 ing, and who came in the hope of getting invited to eat food if they just
527 sat in the kraal and looked hungry. Cibambo called them 'the notable
571 people' and 'the poor people'. This contrast in behaviour ran right through Ngoni society and reflected the social standing of individuals who behaved in such different ways. There was a good deal of cadging for gifts and of gate-crashing at feasts on the part of people who had no intention, or no possibility, of making any adequate return. An Ngoni proverb illustrated the public attitude to reciprocal giving as distinct from begging: 'To say: Give, give, is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.'

571 The bringing of tribute to the Paramount was only one aspect of the
643 reciprocal relationships which ran right through Ngoni society, namely
651 the bringing of gifts by a man in an inferior social position to his
431 superior, with the expectation of receiving food or favour and of standing well with this superior. It was recognized that tribute was of two kinds, one of which was voluntary. If a *mulumuzana* or other notable wanted to please the Paramount he brought him presents—grain, flour, meat, beer. It was always emphasized that this was a free gift, with the added proviso that the giver wished to keep on good terms with the Paramount. Ngoni informants declared that the only compulsory form of tribute in pre-European days was that whenever a lion or a leopard was killed it had to be brought to the royal village through a succession of intermediaries, as described below.

These two principles of free giving and compulsory giving, and the attitudes engendered, are compared with the feeling about compulsory taxes under European rule in this text by Cibambo.

¶ Although people hate giving taxes to strangers in this land, yet tribute (*imitulo*) was given to their *inkosi* and to other chiefs. Such tribute was given in an indirect way, that is the *izinduna* did not mark out those who gave and who did not give tribute. The Ngoni did not wish that every male should give tribute as is done by Europeans today. They were just pleased if the village headman or *mulumuzana* had given something even though other people in his village did not give anything. Even the *alumuzana* themselves gave something at the time they thought it was convenient to themselves to give. There was no fixed time of the month or year. Much that was given as tribute was beer, meat, ivory, hoes and cloth, also cattle, sheep and goats after raids, and other loot from war.

[825] Power to 'eat' (*ukudla*) lion- and leopard-skins was given to certain people of the Swazi clans, but all the rest were obliged to bring them in. The lion- or leopard-skin had to be given first to the village headman. He went with it to the chief or *mulumuzana*. This one brought it to the *inkosi* along with his *amadoda* or *amajaha* of all his villages, the older men and
[554] younger men. This was like going as warriors and they went with dancing (*ligubo*). The one who first stabbed the animal was pointed out, and the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

second and third, and the finisher, at the place of dancing in the kraal. At such times each one when called rose and danced *umgiya*, repeating his names. This was called *ukubika isinhalipi*, reporting the heroes or the fierce ones. This is still being done today. The *inkosi* thanked the people who brought the skins by giving them a beast or a goat. When they were dressing the meat and eating it, they kept on dancing *ligubo* and crying the war-cry. At such times the women went along with the men to help them dance *ligubo*. They made the responses to the songs and jerked their necks. 571 643 651 431 [557]

All such things the *inkosi* divided among his houses. The big house had a big share, but especially his mother's house. She should have most. Even if his real mother was dead, the big share had to go there, to her house, where her successor lived.

Visits to the Paramount, whether for a particular occasion or as a matter of routine, were hedged about with ceremonial. It was expected that *alumuzana* and other important people who lived near enough would visit the Paramount frequently and, according to some informants, they went every day in pre-European times. 643 574 576 644

No one could approach the Paramount except through one of the *izinduna* of the royal village, and the correct person to approach was the *induna* of the *indlunkulu*. Visitors were expected to wait at the gate of the kraal and put down their spears. When they were brought by the *induna* to the Paramount, they greeted him with '*Bayete*'. Then they sat down and the Paramount told the *induna* to greet them, and they replied '*Yebo, inkosi*'. This custom of indirect approach to the Paramount has been maintained. Early travellers in Nyasaland spoke of observing it, and when I was there it was considered outrageous manners on the part of any European if he penetrated immediately to the presence of the Paramount, without going through the accustomed channels. 643 644

The Paramount was both greeted and thanked for gifts of food, beer or snuff, with '*Bayete*'. If he moved from the kraal, all present said '*Bayete*'. If anyone had to leave his presence, he crouched low and murmured '*Bayete*' as he went out. Cibambo described this punctilious formality of thanking for gifts in the Ngoni manner. 643 644 431

¶ When receiving presents the Ngoni thanked the giver by taking them with two hands, even though it was a small present. Afterwards they thanked the giver by his *isibongo*, clan name, openly. They said that receiving a thing with one hand showed that you derided it and did not put any value on it. When receiving a present from bigger people or from a chief, some words of respect were added to the *isibongo*, such as '*Baba*', '*Nhosi yami*', '*E-Jere*'. Often the receiver if he was much pleased with the present added some *izitokozo* to the clan name, if he knew them. Those near him or some further away helped the receiver by thanking loudly after him. If what he received was food, he thanked at the beginning, and after eating the food he thanked again. If such a present of food was given to a body of people, the leader in the company first led the others in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 thanking, and then all thundered the thanking together. This included all
644 the rest who were in the neighbourhood though they did not take part in
the food or the present. The leader would first thank '*E-Jere*' and then all
431 would follow together, '*E-Jere*', or the clan name of the one who was the
giver. The Paramount, if he gave presents to the people, was not thanked
by his clan name as other people. He was thanked by '*Bayete*' as was done
when saluting him. Likewise those who received the title *Nhomo* were
thanked by that title when they gave presents to people.

643 On ceremonial occasions, visitors to the royal village heard the
644 *izibongo* or praise-songs of the Paramount. These were songs referring
533 to great deeds and notable incidents both in the lifetime of the reigning
Paramount and in the lives of his predecessors. They were distinct from
576 the *izitokozo*, which were honorific epithets added to the clan name and
spoken when thanking a well-known man or woman for their gifts. The
izitokozo could be said by anyone, since each person of note had his own
which were well known. The *izibongo* could only be spoken or sung by
an *umbongi* or official 'praiser'. Such a person was a man of good
[826] memory and possessing eloquence. The chest was thought to be the seat
of wisdom and eloquence, and a man who composed praise-songs, as
distinct from repeating well-known ones, had to have the faculty of
finding the right words, since new songs of this kind were generally
invented on a sudden inspiration.

The occasions when the praise-songs were recited were when important visitors came to the royal village; when beasts were slaughtered in the ancestor cult; at special dances at the royal village or at the feasts of the Paramount. On such occasions the official praiser stood up in the kraal, everyone kept silence and did not move, and after a pause he began to call out '*Bayabonga inkosi*', 'let us praise the Paramount'. In repeating the praise-songs he began with those of the immediate ancestor of the Paramount, and then went on to those of earlier ancestors. At the end he shouted '*Bayete*' and all the people replied '*Bayete*'. Examples of the praise-songs of Zwangendaba and his father Hlacwayo of the northern kingdom and of Ngwana, father of Mputa, of the central Ngoni kingdom are given at the end of the chapter.

The tension caused by the extreme formality in the behaviour of the
643 Paramount, his courtiers and his visitors was lightened by the presence
644 of a court jester. Informants were agreed that such an individual was
usually present to amuse the Paramount with his sallies and gestures and
522 clown-like tumbling about. Dr. Laws referred to such a jester at the
court of Mbelwa I when the Livingstonia Mission was making its first
settlement in northern Ngoniland.[1] I saw a jester who came with Paramount Zintambira Maseko from Portuguese territory when he and his officials visited Mcakhatha for the war-dance at the mourning for Bambo

[1] Livingstone, W. P. *Laws of Livingstonia*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1921, p. 200.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Manga. It was a time of great emotional tension and strain, and the absurdities of the jester relieved the solemnity and formality of the visit. This jester was said by informants to be a man of the Moyo clan, who owed his position not to hereditary right but to a ready and witty tongue. 643 644 522

The death of the Paramount

It is in the ceremonies at the death of the Paramount that we find some major differences between the traditional practices of the northern and central Ngoni peoples, which might be attributed to the separate groups in Natal from which they came. I was living in Mcakatha village in the central kingdom at the time of the sickness and death of Bambo Manga, the most important of the royal women among the central Ngoni. The ritual ceremonies at her funeral were said to be almost identical with those at the death of the Paramount, and I was able to check details of similarity and difference with old men who remembered the death of Cikusi, the last Ngoni Paramount in the central kingdom for whom the full ritual was carried out. I was not able after that to pursue further possible parallels and differences among the northern Ngoni. My general impression from informants was that among the northern Ngoni the ritual at the death of a Paramount differed from that of any other prominent man only in certain details of the period and form of mourning. Among the central Ngoni, as Rattray said in a note on the text which will be given, 'such funerals were more of a military pageant than anything else. All outward signs of grief were rigorously excluded.' I can confirm that from my observations at the death of Bambo Manga. 184 643 766 [152]

When the Paramount became ill, a diviner was called to give advice. He might advise that a sacrifice should be made to the ancestor spirits. He might suggest witchcraft as the cause of illness. He might advise calling in a man to give medicine to the Paramount. When, in spite of sacrifices and treatment, the Paramount died, the announcement was made from the edge of his village: *Izulu lidilikile*, 'the heaven has fallen down'. Messengers were sent to all the chiefs and to all the *alumuzana* and other leading men. From the edge of each central village the cry was made, and each chief and *mulumuzana* sent his messengers to make the same announcement in each of the villages under him. [791]

Among the northern Ngoni the actual ceremony of burial does not appear to have been very different from that of any other important man, with one exception, that the Paramount, like other ruling Jere chiefs, was buried at the edge of the cattle kraal in a circular pit of the kind used when digging clay for mudding houses, on one side of which there was a niche where the corpse was placed in a sitting position, facing south-east. This burying in a circular grave on the edge of the kraal was the procedure which I witnessed at the burial of Bambo Manga among the central Ngoni (see below p. 75).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Dr. Steele, one of the early medical missionaries in northern Ngoniland, was present at the burial of Mbelwa I and left an account of it which is quoted by Dr. Elmslie.[1] He spoke of the great crowds of men coming to mourn armed with spears and shields, and some with guns. They came in companies, as if they were the military bands coming for mobilization from the head villages. They marched first with their shields held high over their heads, and then laid them down and clasped their hands behind their heads, advancing towards and retreating from the grave and keeping up a continuous mourning cry of '*Baba be*'. Three days elapsed between the death and the burial. During that time two graves were dug, in order that all the Paramount's possessions might be buried with him or beside him. When the graves were ready, the kraal was cleared of all but the married men who had the head-ring. Meantime the wives of the Paramount, carrying his shields, were advancing towards the grave and retreating, a few steps at a time. They finally went back to their houses, dressed themselves in skins, and returned in single file on their hands and knees. They withdrew as the corpse was brought out and placed in the grave, and other women came with the Paramount's possessions, such as pipes, wooden head-rests and shields, and all were put into the graves. The men stood in circles round the graves with their shields over their heads.

Among the central Ngoni Rattray recorded an account of the funeral rites of Cikusi in 1891, which I was able to check with more than one old man who had been present. There was also the funeral of Bambo Manga which I witnessed in 1937, where the ritual followed was identical with that described by the old men for the Paramount Cikusi, with one exception: that her possessions but not her body were cremated by a stream.

The chief differences between the northern and central Ngoni in the funeral rites at the death of the Paramount were that the central Ngoni Paramounts of the Maseko clan were cremated and not buried, and there was no public mourning, but instead a series of war-dances. There were two other distinctive features among the central Ngoni: formerly the individual known as the 'royal shadow' died with the Paramount; and from the time of the actual death to the time of the cremation there was a period of licence and lawlessness called *ciponde*. This latter phenomenon may have existed among the northern Ngoni, but I did not ask about it specifically when I was there, and I did not hear it referred to. I was made aware of it forcibly at the death of Bambo Manga when my cook and houseboy immediately dumped all their possessions in my hut as the only safe place during the time of *ciponde*. Rattray's account of the death of Cikusi also mentioned this practice.

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In the traditions of the central Ngoni it was recorded that only the Maseko Paramounts in the direct line were cremated, and not the

[1] Elmslie, W. A. op. cit. p. 270.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

brothers of the dead Paramount who acted as regents. Thus Ngwana was cremated in Ulozi before crossing the Zambesi, and Mputa was cremated in the river Lichiningo in Songea in Tanganyika. This was confirmed by an informant of the Gama clan who were for a time under the central Ngoni Paramount in Songea and later were allied with the northern Ngoni. He said 'We killed Mputa, the *inkosi*, when fighting, and his people burned him because it was their custom in burying to burn.' 184 643 766

An old woman who came from Portuguese territory to see me in the central kingdom said that when Zintambira I died the Portuguese made them bury him 'in a box'. The onlookers in Mcakatha at the time of my interview with the old woman said 'Yes, they were not allowed to burn him.' [648]

The central Ngoni leaders referred often to the ritual significance of the cremation of their Paramount, followed by the washing of the ashes into the stream 'to strengthen the land'. On my first arrival in the central kingdom I was questioned closely by several of the big *izinduna* and *ahumuzana* about the practice of cremation in England. They alleged that, under the influence of the local mission, the Paramount Gomani II had said that he wished to be buried in a coffin with Christian burial rites. They were much concerned about this, because of the effect on the strength and status of his successor and on the country as a whole. 'If he is not burned his children will not be honoured and will only be as *ahumuzana*. Is it right that another tribe, the English, should come and change our customs?' Great relief was expressed when I told them that Christians were cremated in England with full Christian ritual, and also when I told them that the ashes of one of the early Scottish missionaries in northern Ngoniland had been brought back by his widow to lie there. [797] [648]

The following account of the funeral of Cikusi was given to Rattray: 643 766

'When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them 'the clouds have fallen today'. They do this because they fear, 'if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death'. Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head until it all glitters, and then take the [203] [301]

643 766 skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors [387] come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre and the flames go roaring up. They place the child [and heir] where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields, and chant their war songs . . .

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry . . ., they burn on a fire on one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse is also consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mowi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut [302] roofs belonging to the chief are removed. Next morning all the headmen shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands.

Additional details and slight variations were supplied by Habuya Dube, an old man who was official praiser of Paramount Gomani II. He was also at the funeral.

¶ After some time Cikusi began to be ill and of that same illness he died. And we danced *ligubo* for one month, and over a hundred beasts were killed. For a whole week [1] he was in the house, and then soon he began to smell because he was decaying. The grave-diggers, they of the Ngono clan, burned the fat of the cattle and roasted it on the fire, doing it as if to prevent the smell. And they made him hold a cup of beer in his hand. On a certain day we lifted him up and went with him to the water. Then

[1] Compare the previous account which gave four days between death and cremation. At Bambo Mange's death it was three days.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

we dammed the stream and made a pool and a mound. And we put him on a rock, and on top of him we put cowhide shields and left them so. And we put firewood above. Then Ngwazi Ngozo took fire and lit that fire. Then *ligubo* was danced and the women were singing. They sang songs of *ligubo* and the *amadoda* danced (*amagiya*). The owner of the country did not cry, no, and the big people did not cry. Only the wives and other women cried. 643 766

Habuya Dube added later that everyone came with one piece of wood and put it on the pyre; and that they killed a cow and took the fat and put it on the wood, and used the skin to wrap the body in.

In discussing the ceremony of cremation with informants among the central Ngoni, there was no reference to the suggestion made by Dr. Kuper, that cremating was a substitute for embalming to avoid the corruption of the body of the king. They regarded the act of burning as an essential element in the continuing strength of the royal line, since the heir stood in the smoke from the pyre, and in the continuing fertility and strength of the country, since the ashes were swept into the river. The concept was that the royal ruler had been strengthened with the *tonga* medicine, and thereafter his body and its strength was the symbol of the unity and strength and fertility of his country.

On the question of mourning or no mourning they were equally emphatic. 'Death cannot cut life' was an expression often on their lips during the funeral ceremonies of Bambo Manga, when great care was taken to carry out the traditional ritual as far as possible in every detail. They were shocked at the idea of mourning and wailing at such a time by any of the big people. The leading Ngoni women were expected to join the *ligubo* dances in the courtyard. Some old women of lower social rank in the village, together with the daughter of Bambo Manga, sat in the house with the corpse sobbing and crying '*Mayi, mayi*' and many of them became quite ill and others hysterical with prolonged sobbing. The leading Ngoni men were contemptuous of this display of grief. They admitted it was correct behaviour for her daughter because of the close kinship tie, but of the behaviour of the rest they said 'Ha, just like the Ntumba people.' The only behaviour which was considered correct was to dance in the courtyard openly before the house of Bambo Manga, or to slip off quietly home and rest before returning to take up the dance. 643 765 565 766 [152]

The traditional ritual procedure at the death of the Paramount, with the exception of the cremation of the corpse, I saw in all its details at the death of Bambo Manga. The corpse was placed in the same position in the hut as described at Cikusi's death, and was wrapped in a sheep-skin first with a cow-skin over, the spleen, gall-bladder and fat decorating the head and neck. The dancing of *ligubo* by the men with shields and spears, and by the women, was continuous from the moment of death to the burial, and afterwards whenever fresh companies from the central 643 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 kingdom and from Portuguese territory arrived to mourn. The grave
766 was made at the edge of the kraal and the kraal fence enlarged to take it in so that the cattle might walk on it.

643 In this chapter I have tried to bring together some of the chief elements in the position of the Paramount, and in the performance of
174 his duties, which were remembered by the old men as having been characteristic of pre-European days. Some of these features, as I have indicated, had disappeared in the 1930's. Others survived and will be illustrated in Chapter V. Chapters III and IV on the royal women and on the officials in the kingdoms will illustrate the importance of the leading women in the Ngoni kingdoms, and the hierarchy of officials already mentioned in Chapter II of Part I.

643 The texts of the praise-songs which conclude this chapter are given because in the 1930's they were still recited in the royal villages and were
533 a feature of all public ceremonies. Most of the allusions in the texts were obscure. Cibambo, who translated them for me and who consulted other older men, did not recognize some of the names or the meaning of the attributes. Some names corresponded with those given in Part I in the texts about the departure of the Ngoni in their two groups from Natal (see pp. 7, 8), such as the Nqumayo people whom Zwide ruled over, Nqaba who left with Ngwana, Nyathi who tried to prevent Ngwana from leaving. But in the way in which they were used in the 1930's these praise-songs had little meaning for those who heard them except as a form of salutation to the Paramount.

Praises of Zwangendaba, son of Hlacwayo

643 Zwangendaba whose intention it is to be black who denies it to be light.
533 Go away, let us go, you the rejected one.
539 We are like a man of the Ntungwa, a fat one; there the people die as fat ones.
Nqaba you must eat people. Leave the cattle.
Nqaba son of Lushwana, there was confusion.
There he is, there he is, where do they see him? They see him in the fences of his mothers.
One who is angry because the cattle have gone with the calves.
His great cunning overcomes the magic stones of the doctors.
I have gone away until I have seen Lebombo Mountains.
We are suffering on account of the great dispute with the Nqumayo people.
You are seeing the hoes which are waiting for you, the hoes which cannot be used for hoeing.
He saw it, the short grass, he was biting it hastily.
He saw it, the ditch, his foot slipped into it.
He who divided the water with a stick at the Zambesi.
He who remembered the cattle of the Balunjana.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Praises of Hlacwayo, son of Magangata

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Hlacwayo the dwarf who cannot trail his cloth
Whereas the tall people trail their cloths.
Meat eaten with knives of axes,
If it is not eaten with forks it is rotten.
Hlacwayo whose bodily vigour is finished off compared with Hlacwayo of former times.
Grass of deep red colour is not burned with burning; it burns very slowly, drop by drop.

Praises of Ngwana, son of Goqweni

You who cut the trees and who cut the mouths,
You the locust, the grasshopper who fixed in your hair the feathers of the locust,
Who went below and climbed up, and went to bring the morning star of the dawn,
You go, since you are rejected; you go and bring the armlets of wild animals; those of cattle will be much disputed.
You who remember the fault of long ago.
In descending, you descend together into the mountains.
You who drank the blood of cattle,
You who separated from the people of Shaka, Shaka of Mbelebele kraal,
You who separated from the people of Nyathi the son of Mashobane; it thundered, it was cloudy.
Thou resemblest cattle which were finished by wolves.
You who originated with the people of Mzilikazi,
You who originated with the people of Mpakana son of Lidonga,
You who originated with the people of Ndwandwe.

CHAPTER III

THE ROYAL WOMEN

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An early traveller in central Ngoniland in 1886 remarked on the number of 'true Ngoni women' to be found there, who were 'easily distinguished from the other women by their light colour and by being taller and stouter'. He went on to say: 'The king's houses at Livisini were 30 feet in diameter, built within an enclosure with other huts where the attendants lived. All were kept very clean and well swept.' This tribute to the appearance and achievements of Ngoni women of high rank was borne out by my own observations in the 1930's in central and northern Ngoniland. There was a definite physical type, light in colour, with high cheek-bones and orthognathic profile, tall with an upright carriage of the head. Women with these physical characteristics were in all cases of leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and their influence on their

[p. 88]

CHAPTER IV

COURTS AND OFFICIALS

121 177 671 THE Ngoni claimed that when they established their kingdoms in Nyasaland they introduced a new idea of law, a different system of courts, and a different procedure for conducting cases in those courts, from those found among the local peoples. Within their kingdoms they imposed on all their subjects these ideas, courts and legal procedure as part of their government, applied to the conquerors and the conquered alike. We shall consider in this chapter only those aspects of the courts and the legal system which were related to the political structure. The categories of crime, the degree of punishment, the sanctions for enforcement of the law, and the effect of the judicial procedure on the balance of equilibrium in the community, all belong to a specialized study and are not included here.

THE NGONI CONCEPT OF LAW

692 643 671 We begin with two texts, the first from the northern kingdom by Cibambo, the second by Ishmael Mwale the Treasurer of the Paramount in the central kingdom.

¶ (1) The Ngoni seem to have been born with a gift for leadership or rule. Though they were a wandering tribe, yet there was one Paramount from whom proceeded the laws for the good government of the people. All the lesser chiefs and headmen received from him the leadership of the people. [203] Though they had no way of writing to each other, they kept their unity by messengers passing between them. The Paramount had power to call gatherings from time to time, in which they talked of the affairs of the country. In these gatherings the old men and the men of repute who had a point to make were heard in criticism and made suggestions for the building up of the realm. By this means the Paramount and his counsellors learned of and understood the thoughts of their people. It was in such large gatherings that the laws of the country were delivered to the people, so that they might hold fast to them and not be punished unreasonably for breaking them in ignorance. After they came back from these gatherings, the headmen and men of standing gathered together their villages to tell the people what had been spoken in the great council of the Paramount, and told them carefully about the laws which had come from the gathering.

173 671 (2) Before the Ngoni came to this country the villages were small and isolated from one another. There was constant pouncing on people to catch them as slaves. It was unsafe to go even a quarter of a mile from one village to another, because a man might be in hiding and pounce out and catch you and take you off to his village as a slave, and there was no redress and no case was heard. Most people never went beyond the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

boundaries of their own village, and they were afraid to travel even in a large party of twenty or thirty. So no one had any wisdom beyond that of his own village and family. When the Ngoni came they had one law for all people and they had courts to hear cases where this law was enforced. There was freedom to travel in the land where the Ngoni ruled, because they had peace within their boundaries. Therefore, we say: this was the kind of peace we had. 173 671

In these two texts we have one major concept of Ngoni law with three chief ways in which it was implemented. The concept was that there was 'one law for all people' and that the knowledge of and enforcement of this law brought internal peace and resulted in good government in the country. There was one source of law as there was one source of political and military authority—the Paramount. As Cibambo points out, the Paramount delegated his authority for carrying out the law to chiefs and headmen and depended on his 'old men and men of repute' to keep him in touch with the thoughts and desires of all his subjects, so that he might adjust the enforcement of the law to bind the people to him. He also called large gatherings of all the chiefs and *alumuzana* and headmen in order that they might hear from him any new laws and regulations and understand them so that they in turn could make them known to their people. In the intervals between the holding of these large gatherings, which took place not more than once or twice a year, messengers passed constantly from the Paramount's village to all the areas of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, reporting to them about decisions taken at the royal village on matters affecting the country as a whole, and taking back reports to the Paramount on what was happening in the outlying districts. 671 643 692 203

I attended two of these annual meetings of the chiefs and *alumuzana* and headmen in the central kingdom. They took place not at the Paramount's village but at a more central spot for the whole territory. The people were drawn up in a square formation, with the Paramount at one end supported by his 'mouthpiece' (*mlomo wenkosi*), who always spoke for him, with the six Subordinate Native Authority chiefs beside him, and the councillors (*izinduna*) messengers and other officials of his court and of the S.N.A. courts arranged in order of precedence, facing the crowd as they did during court sessions. On the three sides of the square in the front ranks were the *alumuzana* and the headmen of their villages, sitting in territorial groups, and behind each headman were the *madoda* or senior men of the village, and behind them again the *amajaha* or young men. I watched this assembly of 3,000 to 4,000 people being arranged, as they arrived, by the *izinduna* of the Paramount's court and the *izinduna* of the six chiefs. They took up their places as though on a military parade, and once placed there was no further movement. The effect was that of a barrack square in the straightness of lines and orderliness of behaviour. After all was in order the Paramount 631 643 692 645

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

631 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in
643 his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning
692 to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount
645 by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first 'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then it was open for any of the *ahumuzana* or headmen to speak 'from the floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with freedom.

The topics covered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from
[744] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits. Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said, would have that leader recognized as a headman. This drew a number of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme, others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognized in the new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages. 'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our headmen. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant afterthought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Paramount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to
[651 be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few
585] shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the *izinduna* had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among the audience during and after this discussion and the *izinduna* had to call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese
[648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izinduna* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

631 643 645 692 [648] [543]

This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izinduna* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambesi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

were, however, and they realized it at such assemblies, the people of the Paramount, and he was to them the visible symbol of their unity in one kingdom.

The Court System of the Ngoni

The enforcement of the laws as announced and discussed at these assemblies was the business of the courts, where the laws themselves were interpreted and often elaborated on occasions of an open breach.

The relationships of the courts in the kingdom followed the hierarchical pattern of the political organization. All minor cases were heard and, whenever possible, settled at the village level. If the plaintiff failed to get satisfaction, or if the village headman was unable to get his judgement accepted, he had to go with the litigants to the chief's court, and if he failed there, the case could be taken to the appeal court of the Paramount. There were certain cases, such as murder and witchcraft, which in pre-European days could only be dealt with in the Paramount's court.

Some confusion arose over the use of one term 'court' for every type of institution which exercised judicial functions. The Nyanja term used in central Ngoniland for the courts at the lowest level was *bwalo*, literally the open space in front of the *indlunkulu* in any Ngoni village. Nothing could be apparently more informal than the discussion among a group of senior men called together by the headman, on a verandah or under a big tree, in order to settle quarrels and hear complaints. No formal records were kept, there was no clerk, and there was no summing up or pronouncement of judgement. There was, if the meeting was successful, general agreement about the action necessary and about who ought to initiate action. Above the level of this village headman's court were the courts of the *alumuzana* held at their head villages, and above them again the chiefs' courts. After 1933 the courts of the *alumuzana* gave place to the courts at the head villages of the chiefs. The proceedings there were more formal and included presenting evidence, defending the case and pronouncing judgement on cases rather than, as in the villages, talking things over and appealing to certain principles to re-establish equilibrium and resolve disputes.

The Ngoni nevertheless always recognized these courts at the village level as an integral part of their system. It was the mark of a good headman that he should be able to settle the minor cases in his village without constant reference to higher authority. The majority of villages under Ngoni rule were villages of local tribes who had surrendered to, or been conquered by, the Ngoni. The headmen were therefore of the local tribe, as a rule surrounded by their kinsmen, and their position carried with it the necessity of relating local tribal custom, especially in matters involving marriage and family affairs, to the legal principles and procedure of the Ngoni courts. Many cases came before the courts in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and appeals were uncommon. Chiefs did not allow a man to come by himself with his case to them, he had to come with his headman. Even those in danger of death went first to the headmen and these brought them to the chiefs. 692

The Ngoni hated bribes. If any *induna* was found to have taken bribes from people he was condemned and punished. [687]

The hearing of the cases was like what it is today. The one who brought the case to the court spoke first, then the one with whom he was quarrelling. If there were elders there from their village they also spoke telling out how these people quarrelled, saying so-and-so began to quarrel in such-and-such a way, and then showed how they had been unable to judge it in the village. They did not go into details of the quarrel, that was done by the men themselves. After those who had quarrelled had told of the beginning of the case any who knew of it were asked to say how it appeared to them in the village. These were the witnesses both for and against. 695

When this had been done, all who were implicated or interested in the case remained silent. It is the custom of the Ngoni that all who spoke in a case should stand and have a stick, and as they spoke they should walk about and limp with the stick or sometimes stand all together, but in that case the hand which held the stick should shake and stick it into the ground. Only women spoke seated. No one at the hearing of a case was allowed to lie down, everyone, even the Paramount, sat. They did this because they were afraid that otherwise the case would not finish quickly. The court was held in the cattle kraal. Women were not allowed into the kraal for cases, but sat outside opposite where the old men were gathered, even though they were the wives of the Paramount. 695 516

After the litigants and the witnesses had spoken it was the turn of the elders of the court. They questioned and agreed with or criticized the men who had quarrelled but they did not pronounce judgement. They waited for the Paramount who first of all sat silent and noticed those who unravelled or twisted the case. Afterwards when the people had finished speaking, the elders delivered the story to the Paramount or judge. The judge then delivered his judgement and condemned those who had twisted the case. He delivered his judgement sitting not standing like the other people and when he had finished all thanked him, or rather saluted him with a loud '*Bayete*' or with the surname if to lesser chiefs. Sometimes he sent an elder to tell the court the judgement. When the case had been judged no one criticized the judgement. The one who began to give thanks for the judgement was the one who was found guilty: this he did to show submission and repentance. The custom of today that the one who wins the case gives the thanks is not good because the man who has lost goes away in resentment and threatening and often the case crops up again. 695 [576]

If an *induna* or man of standing went secretly to the Paramount to accuse somebody that he deserved death (perhaps for witchcraft), very often the Paramount sent a man in secret to warn the condemned man to run to a chief's village and hide his head. In this way many left their fathers and went to build with the chiefs and when they went they took 643 682 692

all their things

643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *izizi zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
684 this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was
178 death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *izinduna* and the *amadoda* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticized each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the
[857] conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *laweni* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organizing his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

631 NGONI OFFICE-BEARERS

622 In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni
645 political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a
[565] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

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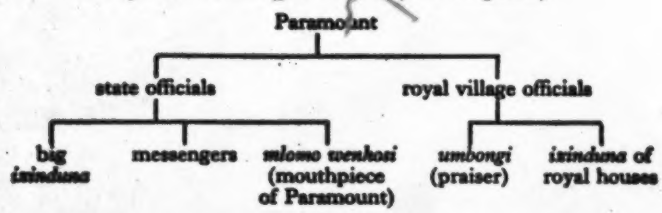
Ngoni territorial office-bearers. 622

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Paramount	Paramount
chiefs (*amahosana*)	*alumuzana* (chiefs)
other *amahosana* and *alumuzana* (no courts)	other *alumuzana* and *amahosana* (no courts)
village headmen	village headmen

631
643
645

Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *izinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only recited the praise-songs at ceremonies in the royal village. 643 645

The big *izinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *izinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below his. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *alumuzana* and *amahosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned. [203] 885

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the 692

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the circular court-house in a commanding position on a small hill with a big open space all round it. 361

There were several places in this village which were referred to as the *bwalo*: they included the open space within the reed fence of the Paramount's section, the much larger open and unfenced space round the court-house, and the more restricted spaces round the huts of the *induna* and of the headman. The meaning of the term *bwalo* was always slightly ambiguous in this village since it was often used for the verandah of the royal residence, as well as the open space in front of it. The central Ngoni custom of surrounding the huts of important men and women with high reed fences with a narrow opening, made it easy to say '*ali pa bwalo*', 'he is on the *bwalo*', so that it covered either the verandah of the hut or the space inside the fence. The local usage of *bwalo* by the Cewa people more often denoted the open space in the middle of the village where the men congregated to sit and talk and drink beer.[1] The connotation of *bwalo* in Ngoni villages in the central kingdom was usually in terms of the big house and the space in front of it within the fence.

In Maganga the place to which the name *bwalo* was most often applied was the space within the reed fence surrounding the Paramount's large brick residence and the outbuildings. When I lived in one of the outbuildings at the back of the house, I was said to be living *pa bwalo*; and 643 ● it was also alluded to as *pa cigodlo*, that is in the enclosure where the 342 Paramount's children lived behind the big house. His daughter's hut 361 was in this section, on the north side, and beyond her hut was that of the *mlomo wenkosi*, who was also the Paramount's brother-in-law, since he had married the Paramount's sister and was the brother of the Paramount's wife. In the other buildings within the reed fence lived several servants of the household, and at the kitchen end of the brick house lived the girls who assisted the Paramount's wife with cooking and looking after her younger children.

When the Paramount built his court-house, he built some offices as 344 part of it for himself, his *mlomo wenkosi*, his treasurer and the court 643 clerk. The intention had been that official business would be carried out there, and relieve the big house of some of its many callers, and also ensure some measure of privacy for those who lived there. It proved very difficult to achieve this separation of public and private affairs, since the tradition that the Paramount was accessible to all his people at all times was persistent.

The entrance to the enclosure or *bwalo* of the big house was guarded 574 in the traditional manner. If strangers (and all visitors were called *alendo* 643 or strangers) arrived on the side road leading off the main road, they inquired from one of the huts there if the headman was present and waited till he arrived. The headman then went to tell the *induna* or the *mlomo wenkosi* that strangers had come, while they waited till the reply

[1] Scott, D. C. *Mang'anja Dictionary*. Edinburgh, 1892.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

574 643 came. One of these two officials usually came to greet them. He then informed the Paramount that strangers were present and took back the Paramount's greeting to them and asked their business. This was in turn reported to the Paramount, who arranged for their business to be taken care of and, if they were important people, sent an invitation for them to come to the *bwalo*, to which they were escorted by one of his officials and given seats. In due time the Paramount came out of his house and they gave him the *Bayete* and then he greeted them. As a rule he carried on all conversation through his *mlomo wenkosi*, and, after staying for a short time, often went back into the house and left his officials to entertain the guests. If the guests were visiting chiefs and *alumuzana*, word had gone round when they first arrived, and the senior men of the village, the *madoda*, gathered to greet them, and sat in a group as they did for court cases. Such conversations of a social nature took place as a rule in the courtyard where chairs and mats were placed. If it rained or was very hot they went onto the verandah which ran the whole length of the house. Never, so far as I could discover, did visitors come into the house unless they were close relatives of the Paramount or his wife.

Women visitors who came with the men or by themselves went through the same procedure of announcing themselves and stating their business. Then, if they were important people, they were escorted to the courtyard at the back of the big house where they were greeted by the Paramount's wife and by her daughter, who then settled down to talk with them, either out of doors or on the back verandah, according to the weather. It was usual for the Paramount's wife and daughter also to go and greet the men visitors on the front verandah or in the courtyard. 26 They did not stay, however, and if the visitors had come from far the 574 Paramount told his wife, after she had greeted them, to 'catch a fowl'. When she returned to the back courtyard, children chased hens and 643 there was squawking and yelling until the right number had been caught and killed. Pounding of maize began, the fowls were dressed and put in pots on the fire and other 'relish' was prepared of vegetables and groundnuts, and the flour was cooked to make porridge (*nsima*). The Paramount's wife and her helpers prepared the best pot-roast of chicken I have ever had. Food thus prepared was served to the guests on the front verandah in the traditional style, the porridge in food baskets (*nsengwa*), the chicken and other relish in small covered pots. The Paramount offered the food to his guests and then withdrew into the house. When they received the food, as well as when they had finished eating, they [576] thanked him with the traditional *Bayete nkosi*, adding, if they were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, some of the praise names or *izitokozo* of the Maseko Paramounts. To European visitors, and occasionally to Christian Africans, tea was offered with milk and sugar.

574 643 Viewed from the back *bwalo*, where I lived and watched all this happening and listened to comments, it was evident that the never-ending

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

hospitality involved both planning and expense. The Paramount's wife had to keep enough food stocks on hand not only to feed her own large family and household, but also to be able to respond to expected and unexpected guests. The Paramount's personal annual salary at that time was £60, out of which he had to keep his family and household in food and clothes and school fees, and pay for the upkeep of his house. The bulk of the cereals and some of the beans and other vegetables used in his house came from his fields worked by hired labour. Another source of food supply was the market 'custom', a small toll levied on the produce sold in the weekly market, which was paid chiefly in kind and put in the storehouses on the Paramount's *bwalo* to be used to feed his guests.[1]

The Paramount not only gave food and drink to the expected and unexpected visitors to the royal village. From time to time he gave a feast to which the Christians of the congregation of the mission church were invited, as on one New Year's Day when I was staying there. He gave a feast to all the neighbourhood on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. From time to time he invited all his people to dance *ligubo* or *ngoma* at the royal village and provided beer for all and food for the *alumuzana* and the chiefs and their wives. The organization of these big feasts demanded planning on a generous scale and a large outlay in maize for porridge and meat for relish. No feast at the Paramount's village was complete without meat enough to satisfy everyone.

The visitors, the feasts, the dances, all had their focal point in the royal residence in the royal village. There were two other focal points in the village where large numbers of people came regularly, and made the place where the Paramount lived a centre which brought his people together and brought him before them as their ruler. These were the market and the court-house which also housed his offices.

Before 1939 the market in the royal village was unique in the area for its size and the service which it rendered to the countryside. At any one time on a Saturday there would be 600 to 1,000 people present. In 1938 a second market was opened by the Paramount at Nsipe at the southern end of his territory. They were definitely his markets in that he allotted space for them; fixed the days on which they were held; controlled the policing of the market and the strangers' huts where sellers arriving overnight could sleep; fixed the prices according to seasonal variations in supply; and, as we have seen, collected 'custom' in lieu of rents for sites. The market at Maganga served an area extending roughly 15 miles to the east, 15 to the west and 10 miles to the north and south. It stretched in the east to below the escarpment whence came bamboo and

[1] An average weekly amount of custom reckoned over several weeks was 10*s.* in cash, and a quantity of bananas, sugar-cane, vegetables and cereals amounting to two sackfuls and sometimes three. The cash was levied on meat, 1*s.* 9*d.* per cow, 1*s.* 6*d.* per goat or pig; and on mats, baskets, etc. at roughly 1*d.* in the 1*s.*

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

443 438 sugar cane, and fish from the lake. From the west came sellers of foodstuffs, mainly maize and vegetables, from the villages in Portuguese territory. Whether by accident or design the sellers took up their stands in the market-place on the side to which they first came. Thus on the east side were the fish-sellers, who had carried their fish up the two escarpments from the lake during the night. Near them were the sellers of bamboo and bark-rope, reed and raffia mats, baskets of all kinds, wooden spoons and hoe handles. The vegetable sellers mostly from Portuguese villages were on the western edge of the market. In the centre under some trees were the butchers selling meat and cutting up the cattle, pigs and goats which they had killed in the early morning. Pottery was in another section, thread for bead-work and grass hats and bangles in another. On the edge of the market site were the Indian stores where, on market days, people with cash in hand from their sales bought cloth and had it made up by the tailors sitting with their sewing machines on the verandahs of the stores.

The Paramount's early life and marriage

613 The officials surrounding the Paramount in the central kingdom were aware that he had begun his rule under difficulties owing to the death of his father. Two texts on this follow, the first by the *induna* of the royal village, Kalilombe Mbewe, and the second by Ishmael Mwale the treasurer of the Paramount, neither of them members of trans-Zambesi clans, but both imbued with Ngoni sentiments and sense of values and devoted to the royal clan.[1] The first text emphasizes the action taken by the two big *izinduna* of the Paramount to hide and protect the young heir to the Paramountcy, and to look after the wives of the big house.

¶ Formerly we were on Domwe, and when we left there, we built the first village here and its name was Lizulu. When Gomani I was taken by the Europeans his *izinduna* Cakumbira Ndau and Mambeyu Moyo were here at Lizulu. When Gomani I was taken, his son Phillip Gomani was a young child. He stayed with Cakumbira Ndau, so did the big wives of Gomani I. Other wives of Gomani I went to their own families. Cakumbira took with him from Domwe his own cattle and those of the Paramount. When Gomani I was killed the Europeans did not ask about the child who would enter his place. Later when the people were accustomed to the Europeans, the Europeans asked: 'Who is the child who should enter his place?' And the senior men brought him out from hiding and said 'This is he.' The senior men revealed this because they knew that the war had finished and that he could not be killed.

The text by the treasurer takes up the story from the times when the existence of the heir to the Paramount was made known, and covers

[1] The fathers of both these men had been taken by the Ngoni from near the Kirk Range, and trained as warriors in Songea before returning to Nyasaland to the royal village on Domwe mountain.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

his boyhood, schooling, marriage, conversion to Christianity and accession to the Paramountcy. The first paragraph refers to the action of a European who had made contact with the young heir because of his friendship with his father. 643

¶ When Mr. Walker returned to Lizulu on another journey he told the big people, 'Today I am taking the big child and I will bring him up in my home.' He took Philip Gomani and he looked after him very well, in the same way as a black man would bring up his child. He engaged a man to teach the child until he knew Cinyanja well and could read and write it. Altogether he took care of him for five years, and then he brought him back to Lizulu.

When the children were back at the village they were thinking and thinking about the European schools. When they were thus thinking, another European came who lived at Nsoni in the Mang'anja country. He came to recruit men for work. When he saw the children he asked them 'Why do you children just stay here without learning anything?' The children said 'It is school that we want, but we have no means by which we can be helped to go to school'. This European said 'Where I live there is a school of the Blantyre Mission. If you come I will take care of you and pay your school fees.' In very truth when those children went to him, he took care of them well, fed and clothed them and paid their school fees as he said.

In 1915 when he was still at school the Paramount married NaNdau. And the big people said 'The child of the Paramount who ought to enter the chieftainship ought not to marry only one wife.' Because they spoke thus he also married two other women, NaNungu and NaMilanzi, whose home was in the Portuguese country in Mpanyila in Chief Zintambira's kingdom. The Paramount did not want these three wives, and only took them because of the words of the big people. When he had stayed with them only one year, he sent away those two wives and said 'I want to join the Church', and so began in the Bible Class at Blantyre Mission to learn there. 797 643

In 1917 before he had finished school they began to build his house in the village which was called Maganga. It was his coming out of the village of Chief Cakumbira. When he left Blantyre in 1918 he went to live in his village because he had finished school. He came with a letter from the Bible Class. But the elders of the church of the Dutch mission in that country did not believe that it could be true that the child of the Paramount would join the church. Before he had been received by the mission, there came to his house at Maganga a European woman who said 'This house is very good. It ought to belong to a Christian'. The Paramount said 'I changed my heart long ago. I brought my letter from the Bible Class and gave it to the elders of the church but they said nothing to me.' Then she said 'Tomorrow you come to my place and let us talk.' The Paramount went. When they had talked she told the minister of the mission station. He said 'All right, next week you come and I will examine you.' That week the Paramount was tested and showed that he believed all the teachings.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

797 643 In 1921 he was baptized by the Rev. J. Botes in the year in which he entered the chieftainship, when Cakumbira, the one who took care of the chieftainship, had died. For entering the chieftainship there was not much to be done. The people gathered together, and the Paramount just stood up and grasped his spear and pointed to the south-east. The people danced *ligubo* and praised the Paramount.

The people began to consider and said 'Seeing that he is a young man, how will he know how to judge the cases?' Ha! But there was confusion in their minds, because his judgements excelled those of the big people who had judged formerly. From 1921 to today in all matters he has the chieftainship and Christianity. He holds both these in his hand to strengthen him.

361 643 The texts bring out several points relative to the royal village which arose from the circumstances surrounding the early life of the Paramount. Reference has already been made to the large royal village on Domwe which broke up when Cikusi entered the Paramountcy and built his *lusungulu* village at Liwisini near the Kirk Range. The section of the royal village called Lizulu moved out almost due east from Domwe under its big *induna*, Cakumbira Ndau. When Gomani I was killed after a brief reign of five years, the Ndau clan brought to their village the big wives of Gomani I, including NaMagagula his first wife, in whose house the child Philip Gomani was brought up. With the big *induna* of Lizulu of the Ndau clan was Mambeyu Moyo, one of the big war *izinduna* of Cikusi. Lizulu, with NaMagagula living there, was regarded as the *gogo* village of the Paramount, and from there his own *lusungulu* village went out to build at Maganga where there was already a village under a headman of the local tribe. One of the reasons given for building on a village site already occupied was that the Portuguese frontier restricted all movements to the west, and round the village of Lizulu to the east and south a number of outlying villages were already in existence. Proximity to the main north to south Nyasaland road was also considered a good reason for building the Paramount's village on the site at Maganga. Lizulu village had two important aspects. It was the *gogo* village of the Paramount, and it was also the head village of the Ndau 643 clan, and the court of Chief George Ndau who was one of the S.N.A.

[797] The conversion of the Paramount to Christianity was a severe blow for the older officials in his kingdom. They feared that much of the ritual associated with the office of the Paramount would necessarily disappear and that the Ngoni kingdom would become weakened in consequence. Three events partly allayed these fears though the older men were never wholly reconciled. One was his marriage to NaNdau, daughter of Cakumbira Ndau who had hidden him, thus binding the royal line to the powerful Ndau clan which had protected him in his childhood. Another was the recognition in 1933 by the Nyasaland government of the Paramountcy with its Appeal Court. The third was

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount's interest in modern aspects of administration, especially after his visit to the course for chiefs held at the Jeanes School in Zomba in 1934. The old councillors, sceptical though they were of many modern innovations, recognized that they were in line with European ideas of administration, and also that they appealed to the younger educated men in the kingdom who had travelled and seen other countries and ways of living. 643

The Paramount married NaNdau as his big wife, and though, as the text mentions, he married two other wives when urged by the senior men, he sent them away after a year or two and NaNdau remained his only wife. She had an assured position since she bore him five sons and two daughters, the first-born being a daughter and receiving all the respect due to a Royal Sister. One of the brothers of NaNdau was chief of a division, and another was *mlomo wenkosi* to the Paramount. She succeeded in maintaining much of the traditional pattern in the royal village and the big house. Her personal supervision of the household was thorough and competent. She exercised complete authority over the girls and women belonging to the household and arranged that the Ngoni custom of examining the young girls, including her own daughter, at regular intervals should be maintained. Her knowledge of Ngoni songs and dances, and her own skilled and graceful participation in the dances on state occasions, brought her before the people in her role as the big wife. At the feasts given by the Paramount she moved about among the people to serve them, and listened to complaints from the women about affairs in their villages which she then handed on to her husband. [595] [586] 644

The back verandah and all the outbuildings were the domain of the Paramount's wife. When I was there, she had some ten or twelve girls and women as well as several men working for her. They came and went if they had homes elsewhere, and the personnel changed often. All the household work was done by them: bringing water and fuel, pounding maize, and a good deal of the cooking, though this was closely supervised by the Paramount's wife. No beer was made in the household as it was against the rules of the church to which they belonged. In other Ngoni households of subordinate chiefs and *alumuzana* who were not Christian, the brewing of beer was a time-absorbing part of the household tasks and was shared by the different wives under the supervision of the big house. In Maganga, when the Paramount was entertaining unexpected guests and wanted to offer them beer, he inquired from his *induna* if anyone was brewing beer in the village, and sent for some for which he paid. When he knew beforehand that guests were coming who would expect beer to be offered to them as part of the Paramount's hospitality, he told his *induna* to see that beer was made in one of the village households, and he paid for it. [273]

The cooking which went on in the big house kitchens was always extensive. The Paramount, his wife and six children had two meals a 643 574 264

643 day, and so did all the regular helpers in the household. The stream of
574 visitors was incessant, especially on Saturdays when the market was
264 held, and on the days when the Appeal Court was in session at the court-house adjoining the village. Not every caller was given food, but if they came from a distance it was always offered. In the setting of a modern brick house and a Christian household with only one wife, the Paramount had to provide a great deal of hospitality. The old tradition that *alumuzana* and other important men visited the Paramount daily no longer held. But the weekly market and the court meetings, and the lorry service on the main road bringing callers from north and south, as well as administrative affairs which had constantly to be discussed and settled, made the Paramount's house and *bwalo* a very busy place.

Officials of the royal village and state officials

574 When I lived in the royal village for several weeks I was aware of a
643 never-ending stream of persons coming to consult or to work with the Paramount. Well protected as he was by the Ngoni method of indirect
645 approach and the surveillance of the village and *bwalo* by the *induna* of the big house and the *mlomo wenkosi*, the Paramount was still subject to constant inquiries from his office-bearers who needed his counsel, and from persons great and small from all over his kingdom who believed that he could help them. Among the village officials the *induna* of the big house worked closely with the headman of the village, and displayed unremitting efforts to see that all affairs in the immediate neighbourhood of the Paramount should go smoothly. They were constantly on the *bwalo* of the big house, or near the gate of the fence surrounding it. These two always turned up when visitors came, and sat on the verandah or in the *bwalo* with the other senior men, and kept an eye on all that happened. If anything went wrong in the village or the compound when the Paramount was away they were in great distress, as on one occasion when a man ran amok and threatened people with a knife. There was a strong tradition that around the Paramount and his living quarters everything and everyone had to be orderly and peaceable.

645 The *umbongi*, or praiser of the Paramount, was among the royal vil-
574 lage officials, though he only appeared on the *bwalo* when ceremonies took place there. He sometimes came when important visitors arrived if their visit was known in advance. He always came to the big dances and feasts held at the royal village. He was an old man, tall and spare, leaning heavily on a long staff, and many of the onlookers who listened attentively to his praise-songs showed nervousness when he began making personal remarks, for he had a sharp tongue and a flow of language.

Of the state officials the *mlomo wenkosi* was seldom away from the big house or far from the person of the Paramount. He had married the Paramount's sister, and was own brother to the *inkosikazi*, and his

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

645 He was a student of Ngoni history and custom, and used his travels as treasurer to collect new information. He always intended to write a history of the central kingdom as Cibambo had done for the northern kingdom, but his public duties never gave him time.

● 643 645 574 In making contact with his people and keeping in touch with his officials the Paramount did not rely only on their visits to the royal village. Two or three times a year he toured his kingdom, accompanied by his *mlomo wenkosi* and the treasurer, and stayed at the head villages of the chiefs and also of other *alumuzana*. The treasurer spoke enthusiastically of the Paramount's habit of making himself known to his people and enabling them to present petitions to him in person. He met village headmen on their own ground, and *alumuzana* who were unostentatiously directing the affairs of their villages and areas, as well as the official chiefs or Subordinate Native Authorities. He saw for himself how his own regulations were being carried out and how the measures for agricultural improvement and cattle-dipping which the Government was promoting were being adopted. These visits in his own territory were followed by visits to Blantyre and Zomba and to the mining centres outside the country where his people were working. He was thus able to check on the conditions in the subordinate chiefs' areas which had been created by the prolonged absence of men from the villages.

The Paramount and changes in law and custom

643 178 Through his school education at Blantyre, his membership of a Christian church, and through attending the chiefs' course at the Jeanes School in Zomba, the Paramount stood between the old and the new in the changing conditions in his kingdom. After the 1933 Ordinance one of the changes in administration was that a Native Authority had to budget for income and expenditure in his area. The income for 1935 for this 652 area was £959, made up of a share of the taxes; fifty per cent. of the yearly [434] rental of stores; court fines and fees and beer licences. The expenditure was £832, under items of salaries to the Paramount and subordinate chiefs; salaries for messengers, councillors, clerks and policemen; payment of fourpence per tax to the headmen of the villages so that it was to their advantage to collect the full amount; and a small sum for uniforms, office expenses and such items as cash boxes and handcuffs. This budget for the central Ngoni kingdom was drawn up in consultation with the District Officer by the Paramount and his treasurer. It was a source of great pride to the treasurer that he had, as we have seen, his own key to a safe in the District Office where he put the tax money collected in the area, and drew out sums needed for expenditure in the Paramount's office.

744 653 In 1933, as already mentioned, a meeting of subordinate chiefs, *alumuzana* and headmen heard the Paramount's proposals for new regulations about village improvement and agreed to them. These regulations were

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

called 'to make a clean village', and were one of the results of the Paramount's visits to his area. They included building latrines, sweeping the open spaces round huts, disposing of rubbish, mending roofs and fences, smooth mudding of houses, digging wells. The Paramount appointed three men who were called *masanitari* to go round the villages to inspect and report to him, and instituted a system of fines for failure to carry out these measures. In addition to promoting clean villages, he ordered that cattle were to be dipped regularly, cultivation was to be carried out by a ridge system instead of mounds, and all sick people, especially women, were to attend hospital. He sent his own daughter to hospital for her confinement, and she attended the baby clinic regularly with her child.

Some of the changes in local customs which the Paramount ordered were not so easy to enforce as the newer practices in relation to health and hygiene. He forbade drinking at night when quarrelling became rife; he prohibited Cewa dances such as *vinyau* and *malombo* and the Cewa female puberty rite of *cinamwali*. The only dances allowed were the Ngoni dance *ngoma*; the *ligubo* or war-dance at his village; and the individual hero's dance (*ligiya*) when a lion or leopard was brought to his village. Marriages had to be registered, and births and deaths recorded and reported to the Paramount when he visited the villages.

It was always possible to start an argument among the senior men sitting on the Paramount's *bwalo*, or on the steps of his court-house, either on the subject of how far Ngoni law and custom had replaced local Ntumba and Cewa custom, or on the advantages and disadvantages of the modern reforms of the Paramount. Some of the older men were anxious to establish that the Ngoni, meaning those of the trans-Zambesi clans, had not only achieved a political conquest but had also changed the practices of the local peoples and made them observe Ngoni customs. They used to assert, among other things, that the local people had become patrilineal, and had adopted a *lobola* form of marriage—statements which could easily be disproved and were laughed at by the onlookers. On the other hand, they were right when they said that Ngoni laws and court procedure were universally approved and followed, and that the younger generations at least were willing to carry out the welfare measures of the Paramount. One constant feature of all such discussions of recent changes was the steady support given by the Ntumba and Tengo clan leaders to the Paramount and his rule. This, more than any other feature, proved that the trans-Zambesi pattern of political rule had triumphed, and that in their loyalty to the Paramount and their practice of Ngoni custom the village headmen and their families could be counted on to support the rulers.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

565 769 771 exclusively related to the aristocratic tradition, and no account will be given or analysis made of ancestor cults practised by those groups in the two Ngoni kingdoms who were not of the leading clans. In the ancestor cult, as it will be described here, the emphasis was always on known and named spirits of the dead, associated with the village where the ritual was performed. In the approach to these known and named spirits—an approach which I have called a cult—there were three essential components: the diviner, the ritual address and the cattle. The diviner's role we shall discuss in Chapter III and the ritual forms of addressing the ancestors in Chapter IV. The Ngoni believed they could not approach their ancestral spirits except through their cattle, which had first to [825] show that the spirits agreed to prayers being made, and the sign was that the beast urinated. The sacrifice of a beast was an integral part of the rite, which was concluded by the suppliants eating the meat together. At no point in their common life did the Ngoni more clearly demonstrate their dependence on their cattle than in the ritual of addressing their ancestral spirits. For this reason, in Chapter II we shall review the place of cattle in Ngoni life and relate it to their role in the ancestor cult.

Ancestral spirits of the Ngoni Paramounts.

643 769 776 The reigning Paramount and his predecessors in that office held an unchallenged supremacy in the hierarchy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The Ngoni believed that the line of dead Paramounts similarly led the hierarchy of the ancestral spirits, and that the dead Paramounts had power to help the Ngoni nation in time of need. It was taken for granted that when Paramounts died they would continue to be powerful and held in great respect, and that their position in the spirit world would enable them to influence UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit. This Great Spirit was believed to be the creator of all things and the ultimate source of power, particularly of sending rain, success in war, and deliverance from pestilence; and he was in general regarded as the giver of health and strength to mankind. The Ngoni held that those ancestors who were nearest to the living in time, whose names they knew, possessed less power than the remote ancestors whose names had been forgotten. On the same principle UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit, the originator of all creation, possessed more power than any other being, but, since he was so far removed in time from the living, no one could know his praise-names or his genealogy, and therefore he could not be addressed directly. In the same way the remotest ancestors of the Paramount could not be addressed directly because their praise-names were unknown to living men. Only those direct ancestors of the Paramount, whose names and genealogy and praise-names were known, could be addressed correctly and they could be counted on to use their influence with remoter and more powerful ancestral spirits and with the Great Spirit himself.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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As one of the Ngoni said: 'The spirits of the dead Paramounts were the guardians of the whole nation. These *amadlozi* stood between UMkulumqango and the people. They were never worshipped at times of plenty and prosperity, but at the time of crisis and danger.' 769 776

In pre-European days there had been two special occasions when the spirits of former Paramounts were addressed on behalf on the whole nation. One was at the time of the *incwala* or first-fruits ceremony, which as we have seen was given up before the final settlement in Nyasaland. This was an occasion uniting all the people with songs and dances at the village of the Paramount. The second occasion was in time of war before the army went out on a raid. This could take place more than once during the fighting season, and always at the Paramount's village. 769 [726]

The remaining occasions for addressing the spirits of former Paramounts on behalf of the nation were when epidemics threatened, when there was a drought, or in the serious illness of the Paramount or of a leading member of his family. In prayer for rain or for the recovery from illness of someone of the royal clan, the diviner had to be consulted about which of the ancestors of the Paramount should be addressed. The ancestor indicated by the diviner had to be named in the ritual, his genealogy given and, as a rule, his particular attributes and his praise-names mentioned. The following account was given to me by Mlonyeni Jere, who prayed for rain in Elangeni in 1935: 769 782

¶ When the rain stopped, the *amadoda* spoke among themselves 'What shall be done?' If they could not find out who had made the rain to stop, they said 'We must ask the *isanusi* (diviner). Perhaps it is one of the *amadlozi* (spirits) who are stopping the rain.'

If the *isanusi* finds it is the spirit of Hlacwayo, then all the big people are called to come to the kraal at Elangeni. Then they say 'We should choose a black ox with no white spot and bring it to the kraal.' They appointed a speaker who knows how to speak well all the names of the chiefs who have died. This man says to the spirit 'This cow is yours. You must eat it all. Then you must tell UMkulumqango our troubles.' If it urinates or makes dung, the spirits agree. This praying to the spirits is in the kraal in the evening. At early dawn next day someone is sent to kill the ox. While it was being flayed, the huts of the chief wives were smeared with cow dung on the floors and on the place outside the door. The meat was cooked in the kraal by the *amadoda*. Some of it was taken into the *indlunkulu* and kept there for one night so that the spirit might lick it. [237]

The Paramount had already eaten in the kraal and the meat was divided for the *amadoda* according to their age regiments. After they have eaten, a big man rises up to thank the spirit with his titles and praise-names, and all the people answer *Bayete* and there is a war-dance in the kraal. Then they look up and see clouds coming. Then the rain comes.

This particularizing of the appeal to an individual dead Paramount in the ancestor cult was an essential element in the ritual, and there seemed 643 769

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 to be no occasion and no form of ritual in which a generalized appeal was made to the spirits of all former Paramounts.

The reasons for this were related to the place of the sacrifice and the herd of cattle used. The place was determined by the village where the spirit of the dead Paramount was guarded by a particular house, and where some at least of the cattle belonging to that house were kraaled. Thus, in the northern kingdom, the spirit of Zwangendaba Jere was addressed in Ekwendeni; of Hlacwayo his father in Elangeni; and of Magangata his grandfather in Hoho. In the central kingdom the spirit of Mputa was addressed in Mcakhatha and also in Lizulu; and of his father, Ngwana, in a village in Portuguese territory. I heard no reference to the spirits of more recent Paramounts being addressed, and when I asked the reason several informants suggested that it was important to address the Ngoni Paramount who had been with his people in the south, and who therefore knew the names of the spirits of former Paramounts who had died in the south, names which the Ngoni in Nyasaland had forgotten. On the other hand, provision was made for the guardianship of the spirit of each successive Paramount, and in central Ngoniland there was provision for guarding the spirit of a Queen Mother, NaMlangeni, the big wife of Mputa who survived him, and of her daughter, the Royal Sister Bambo Manga. The reason given for the guardianship of the spirits of these two royal women in Mcakhatha illustrates the close link between the village where the spirit was guarded and the herd of cattle kept there and was explained by informants in the following terms. While the central Ngoni were still in Songea Paramount Mputa wanted cattle to give as *lobola* for his marriage to NaMlangeni. He went to Golozela, the head of the Nzunga clan, and asked him for cattle, which were handed over to the father of NaMlangeni. Golozela Nzunga then became the *induna* of the house of NaMlangeni in the royal village and her daughter Bambo Manga lived in his section. The cattle given for her *lobola* when she was married were put in the kraal of Golozela Nzunga to repay him for his previous gift. After her husband's death, Bambo Manga returned to the Nzunga head village where her cattle were, and assumed the guardianship of the spirits of her mother and of her father Mputa.

Ancestral spirits of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans

769 614 Ngoni informants often made statements such as the following by Cibambo:

> The Ngoni believed that each family had its own line of spirits (*amadlozi*) dating far back to the origin of that family, and that these in succession carried the messages until they reached the unknown ancestors, who in turn had the right to carry the message to UMkulumqango.

When such a statement was checked in several areas it was clear that the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans focussed their

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled,
[721] they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[648] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British administration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
● [643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part.

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000, live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[3].

[3] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 252 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors.

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system.

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[20] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere

[20] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Chief did however interfere
643 to some extent in the marriages of those near him and on occasion took away a wife from one man and gave her as wife to another. Nsingu, the heir of Mpezeni I, once took a wife from one of the important men in his mother's royal village and made her his queen.
[762] The man committed suicide and Nsingu killed a beast to placate the anger of his mother's lieutenants. Such instances of intervention seem to have been rare and were disliked by the common people.

6. Polygyny

592 The pattern of growth of the residential system was determined by the grouping of children in the compound family. This grouping was in turn determined by the ranking of wives. It seems that the
595 South-Eastern Bantu system of dividing wives into three groups,
[171] a great house and a left- and a right-hand house was not continued. Old men are agreed that in the past wives could be described as either left-hand or right-hand, but there is no agreement on the principles of this division. In discussing the wives of well-known men who flourished about this period, there was no consensus about which women were left-hand wives and which were right. The division cannot in any case have had the same spatial reference to the husband's cattle byre as among the South-Eastern Bantu,
[361] since the Ngoni lived in large villages with a central byre containing all the cattle of the village.

Wives were arranged into small groups which we may term
595 'bands'. A band might contain up to a dozen co-wives and was
592 under the charge of its senior member. Wives in a band lived close to each other in the same cluster of huts. A man might have as many as five or six bands of wives, and the senior wife of one of the bands was the man's great wife, the mother of his heir. We have seen that a cross-cousin was inferior to an unrelated wife, and a wife from the same or related village inferior to one from afar. These two considerations, however, seem only to have influenced a man's choice of senior wives and did not themselves directly determine wifely rank. Thus a man could if he wished make a cross-cousin from his own village his great wife or the senior wife of one of his bands, but most men did not do so. The first wife married with bridewealth was the great wife. If there was a wife married earlier for whom no bridewealth had been paid, perhaps a cross-cousin or a recently captured woman, then she became subordinate to the chief wife and was regarded as a member of her band. Wives married subsequently were attached to this band until the husband decided to start another band. He took either one of the wives of his great wife's band or else a newly acquired wife, and established a new cluster of huts for her. Some other members of the great wife's band might be transferred to the new band, as subordinates of the newly promoted wife. As the man continued to take new wives they were allocated to one or other of the existing bands. If the husband was an important man he allocated to each

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [643] [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [182] [693] [562]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another 486 562

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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"Wage war on the *Afo*,
Hayo, hayo, ho,
They have left him;
They have left him in their midst."

"*Humba*, the mighty medicine man, has gone with them,
He has swallowed a magic horn, has *Humba*."

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry (*kugwira*), they burn on a fire at one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse also is consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief are removed.

766 [231]

IV. Next morning all the headmen shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands. Then they allow three days to pass, and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps out and says, "Do you hear, your new chief is so and so" (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then every one shouts, "Hail," and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes (trans. *biriwiri*). Then the elders

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6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 take the "child," going with him to a hut to give him instruction, saying, "To-day you stand alone. Look after your people as did your father before you. [183] If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned."

IV

THE UNAMWALI CEREMONY

881 I. When a young girl finds she has become a woman, she goes and stands beside the pathway [leading to the village]. Any one passing finds her there, standing silent. If it be a man who notices her, he goes off and tells some woman, saying to her, "I have come across game, go and lift it." An old woman goes off to speak to her. She finds the girl, her face enveloped in her calico, and giving no answer to any question put to her. Then the old woman knows the girl is now a matured woman, and takes her off to the stream to bathe her. On returning with her from the water she places her in the hut of the head old woman of the village. (The old woman who first found her is the head of the ensuing ceremony.) Then the old woman goes off to inform other elderly women that "the maiden has reached womanhood." The girl remains in the hut six days. Should she be of the clan of [614] *Kuoni*, they give her porridge made from millet only, if of any other clan, porridge made of any [262] grain. In her relish they do not put salt. Her porridge she eats out of an old basket, and the relish from a potsherd. (This old basket will be

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

181 that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered
186 all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British.
Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every
648 present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni
186 say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we
would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes
would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly",
[729] and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated
with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain
that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

538 The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are
814 common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are main-
tained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military
traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the con-
versations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the
reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

643 The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also
182 symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his
[551] warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his
people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot
attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because
"he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through
the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the
whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this
context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Para-
mount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the dis-
tribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the
European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor
chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

829 Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths
178 about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or
marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently.
Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would
be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather
[583] than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni
make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and
bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that
these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred
to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898
marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not
always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their
relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these
two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular
adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni 114
village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no 178
Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all [643]
day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children [644]
formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indumas*[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupu- [692]
lous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It [631]
soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was [183]
strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African terri- 131
tories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni 101
are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[1 [i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

one party of them came up from the south, and partly to divisions among the Ngoni during the period of settlement.

About 115 years ago the ancestors of these Ngoni left their homes in the present Zululand and Swaziland for their long trek north. The immediate cause of their departure was the defeat of Zwidi, chief of the Ndwandwe people, by Chaka, the history of whose military career in Zululand is well known and needs no repetition here. As part of Zwidi's people, the Ngoni did not want to stay under Chaka, and the same impetus and military skill which set up Chaka as the Zulu Napoleon drove the Ngoni northward as far as Lake Tanganyika, a conquering military horde amassing followers on the way. To-day they are found in three large groups and several smaller ones, the large groups known as the 'countries' of Mpezeni, Mwambera, and Gomani, who are the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs.[1]

These groups of people with their southern origin, settled among people who had a totally different language and social structure, present to the anthropologist a highly complex situation to investigate. He must at the outset ask the questions, 'Who are these Ngoni? Have they a separate identity as a people, marked by distinctive social and political institutions?' After living among them for nearly a year I am convinced that it is correct to speak of the Ngoni as a distinctive group; that they themselves are very conscious of their separate identity as a people, and that they can point to certain of their institutions, notably their language and political, territorial, and kinship groupings, which are definitely Ngoni, that is, of southern origin, and which distinguish them from the people among whom they settled. The complexities of this situation involve the analysing of the ethnic elements included in this term 'Ngoni' and the determining of the sense in which it is to be used. They involve also an explanation of what is meant by the expression 'a distinctive Ngoni culture', or 'distinctive Ngoni institutions'. The anthropologist who is interested in culture contact must go further and indicate the nature of the double contact caused first by the intermingling of the Ngoni with other tribes, and then by the advent of the Europeans. It is not possible in this article to do justice to all these aspects of an intricate problem.

[1] For the purposes of this article these are the only groups which will be considered.

614 a hierarchy of rank expressed in the clan names, and this rank is
563 evident in the position of houses on a village site, and the degree of authority exercised by the clans and the respect[1] accorded to them. In effect, all those whose ancestors were absorbed before the final
101 break up of the main Ngoni group are recognized as having some
563 claim to the name Ngoni. The rest, that is the clans found in the areas where the Ngoni finally settled are, or rather were, regarded as conquered or slave people.

101 We have seen, however, that there is a much wider sense in which the term Ngoni is used—that is, by all who live under the rule of the
641 Paramount Chief. This extended usage is due to the prestige and
186 honour in which the stricter meaning of Ngoni is held. It was illus-
[643] trated in the instance of the Nyasaland men in Johannesburg, who all claimed to be Ngoni because they had discovered at once that the name commanded respect among the mixture of tribes to be found on the mines. *Indunas* and other leading men sometimes make use of this wider connotation when boasting about the large numbers of people owning allegiance to the Ngoni Paramount Chief, compared with the other petty chieftainships. 'All those in the country of Mpezeni are Ngoni. All are his people.' At the same time they make it clear that there is a distinction between the real Ngoni and the other subjects of the Paramount—a distinction which formerly was much sharper than it is to-day. All are the people of the Paramount, it is true, but in old days the majority of the non-Ngoni were called slaves. To this day the Ngoni when angry may call out to some one, 'Chewa, Chewa', implying 'Slave, slave', and be hauled to the chief's court for insulting language. There the chief will take pains to point out that there are no slaves to-day, and that no Ngoni must 'spoil the country' by insulting the people of the Paramount.

101 It is, I think, clear that there is a connotation in which the term Ngoni can be used with some degree of scientific accuracy—that is, to cover all those clans which are not belonging to the local tribes, or, in an even stricter sense, the clans of indubitably southern origin.

[196] [571] [1] This word 'respect' is constantly in use among the Ngoni. It implies both 'honour' and 'fear', and they sometimes use one word and sometimes the other. It really means, 'to give a person his due', that is, to behave towards him (or her) in the manner which his rank requires.

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni. It is nevertheless recognized that the aristocrats, through their kinship links with the past, have the best knowledge; the rest listen and defer to them. For matters relating to history are no antiquarian interest to the Ngoni. It is probable that recalling history and dwelling on the great days of the past is to some extent a compensation for what the Ngoni consider the indignities of their position to-day. Yet it is also a stimulus to them to maintain their separate identity and to revere their institutions. Tradition supports rank, by recognizing the historical importance of certain clans; and rank preserves tradition because intimate knowledge is the proud monopoly of certain families.

V. TRADITION AND LEGEND AS DOCUMENTATION. To the anthropologist who examines the part played by tradition and legend in the culture of a people, Professor Malinowski has given an invaluable lead. He suggests that myths are the charter and documentation for traditional tribal life, 'statements of reality which live in the institutions and pursuits of the people';[1] and that legend is re-interpreted history. All peoples of whatever level of civilization interpret history in the light of their beliefs about themselves, their achievements, and their destiny. The Ngoni are no exception to this. Sometimes they relate factual history which is verifiable and accurate. At other times it is probably part fact, part fiction. Yet at all times the emphasis in, and interpretation of, tradition, has a definite purpose, and it is possible to see how a standardized form of a narrative has come to be accepted and believed in. The version of a narrative at one time was interpreted or moulded to serve a purpose. Having been established, it then moulds the thinking of the people on that particular issue. The vexed question of the supremacy of the two Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera[2] is a case in point. The basis of the story of the original dispute is the same, but the versions as told in each 'country' differ in a succession of minute details, whose arrangement and emphasis prove the point in each case. Mpezeni's historians have arranged the details to prove that he is the rightful *inkosi*; Mwambera's historians

[1] B. Malinowski. Article on Culture in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

[2] The two Paramounts at present holding these titles are grandsons of the first holders, to whom I refer as old Mpezeni.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 do the same. And in each area the versions as recited convince the
829 people that their *inkosi* is supreme. The main purpose of the tradition
was to show that there cannot be more than one rightful *inkosi* of
643 the Ngoni. The present day interpretations serve the same purpose and exalt one of the two claimants at the expense of the other.

The traditions centring round the person of Zwangendaba are numerous. Some of these are concerned to show that he was an important chief in the south under Zwidi, and that the Jere clan of which he was head was a leading one. Other accounts do not disguise that he was an upstart, but lay stress on his success as leader of the Ngoni in their trek north. All these traditions about Zwangendaba are told as documentation for the importance of the *inkosi*, and centre round the Ngoni belief that their state must have one head in whom authority is centralized. It is easy to see that the circumstances under which the Ngoni state was created demanded a strong autocratic ruler. The traditions gathered round this first ruler of their state now serve to perpetuate the beliefs about the office of Paramount Chief, beliefs which modern ideas and western education have hardly modified at all.

173 Ngoni history divides into three periods, and the traditions in each
829 period, as they are told, form the people's thinking about that section of their past. The traditions of the earliest period, that is, of their life in the south and their trek north, are the charter for their pride as a distinctive people. The traditions of the middle period, of their conquests and settlements, document their superiority over the surrounding peoples. The traditions of the last period, that of the arrival of the European, determine their attitude towards white contact. Their interpretation of their history, therefore, reflected in the established legends and tradition, influences profoundly their thinking about themselves, about their neighbours, and about the Europeans.

173 VI. Prelude to White Contact. This second period of Ngoni
167 history includes the events from the crossing of the Zambezi to the coming of the Europeans, roughly the years 1835–1885. During these fifty years the original Ngoni horde, with additions to it from the tribes south of the Zambezi, explored the country in which they were finally to settle, went farther north into Tanganyika, and finally

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

difference to-day between the attitude of the Ngoni to the Europeans and that of the Chewa, for example. In the vernacular expression the Ngoni say, 'The Europeans spoiled our country'; the Chewa say, 'The Europeans saved us'.

Chamtendere, then, was the period of Ngoni supremacy, when they established by force of arms their right to rule over the country and its indigenous inhabitants. There was, however, some difference between the political organization of the Ngoni as a conquering horde on the march, and their organization when they finally settled in their present areas. At both times the focus of their organization was warfare—they were a nation under arms. But once settled on land which they had chosen they began to spread a network of political organization over the country, and to plan in terms of 'countries'[1] instead of mobile villages. To-day when they discuss the advent of the Europeans and the consequent 'spoiling' of their country, they recall the days when extensive tribute was paid to their Paramount Chief, chiefs were free to choose good sites for their very big villages, the outlying areas were ruled by *indunas* and lesser chiefs. It was the partial breaking up of this centralized political organization which they regarded as 'spoiling their country', as well as the economic restrictions with regard to land and the prohibition of raiding for new supplies of cattle.

During this time of Ngoni supremacy Ngoni institutions flourished —those institutions which they had brought with them from the south and preserved through their wanderings. When they are telling to-day about these years they speak fervently and reverently of the part played by the Paramount Chief in every side of life, the training for warfare of all the young men, the instruction and supervision of young chiefs by old *indunas*, Ngoni marriage and initiation ceremonies. It was during this time in Mpezeni's country that the *Inqwala* or first fruits ceremony was regularly observed at Mtenguleni, the village of the mother of old Mpezeni.[2] At this ceremony the Paramount Chief 'opened' the new food season by the ritual eating of new fruits, especially young maize and pumpkins. It was also the

[1] i.e. chiefs' areas.

[2] The description of this *Inqwala* given by men and women who took part in it in their youth shows much similarity to the *Inqwala* of to-day among the Swazi.

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

when the first white people arrived, as
traders and missionaries and officials, they were all impressed with 114
the power of the Ngoni Paramount Chief and the impossibility of [643]
getting any footing in the country without his consent and aid. 'Mpezeni[1] is a very powerful chief . . . and shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his governing powers. He has formed a powerful kingdom where his subjects are mainly Chewa, Chipeta and Senga stock, but his power is consolidated by a Zulu and half-Zulu aristocracy.' Such was the official view of the Ngoni state under old Mpezeni expressed by Sir Harry Johnston, and similar impressions are recorded of the Ngoni states in Nyasaland. If this was the European impression of Ngoni supremacy it is easy to picture the feelings of the Ngoni themselves with all their pride of race and of achievements in nation-holding, when for the first time a superior power [177] loomed on their horizon.

VII. The Advent of the Europeans. I have up to the present 101
referred to the three Ngoni areas as if they formed one cultural unit. This is true of their earliest days, and to a large extent of the time called *chamtendere*. In spite of certain minor differences there was then a form of society and of political organization which was the same in all three areas, and they all possessed the same language, traditions, and aristocratic hierarchy. After the advent of the Europeans, however, it 177
becomes impossible to generalize, as both the manner and the results 184
of white penetration varied so much in the three areas. As a study in culture contact where eye-witnesses, both white and black, are still available as informants, it is most illuminating to compare the effects of white contact in Mpezeni's and Mwambera's countries. In Mpezeni's the first contact was commercial, in Mwambera's, missionary. The contrast between Ngoni society in those two districts to-day is startling, and is commented on frequently by the Ngoni themselves. 'See', say Mpezeni's people, 'the Charterland Company came to us. To Mwambera's country it was Dr. Laws. And Dr. Laws's men can speak English to-day and we cannot. Our cattle were taken by the Europeans; Mwambera's were not. That is why they *lubola* their wives to-day with many cattle, and we have only a few cattle.' They often referred to these differences as soon as they knew I was going from

[1] This was the old Mpezeni, son of Zwangendaba.

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643] Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, ' because all his chiefs obey him ', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186 The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chamtendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, ' We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes '.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184] Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. ' To pay taxes, that is our war to-day ', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609 Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief 647
holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest.

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional 628
norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration [643] with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping vil- [648] lages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time [692] placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, [669] but this cannot be done openly under the present régime.

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve 631
the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional 64
autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships.

Sanctions

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exer- 687
cised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 sensitive to suggestions that a chief may be oppressing his people,
648 usually works through the Paramount. One minor chief was sent to the Paramount's village for a period of instruction in order that he might learn how to rule wisely. On another occasion a chief who had abused the Administration was fined one month's salary by the Paramount. In both these instances the Administration was the initiator of the Paramount Chief's action, but he may also act without reference to it. It was reported to the Paramount that a certain minor chief had struck one of his subjects who had been slow to offer him beer. The Paramount warned the minor chief that he might kill someone this way, and that he ought to fine people, not to strike them. In a dispute between a minor chief and his court clerk over some new court furniture, which the chief wished to use in his own house, the Paramount intervened and ordered that the chairs be put in the courthouse.

•643 The Paramount himself is subject to social constraint, and may be criticized by his senior lieutenants. He is advised on how he should behave by these men, and if his behaviour is unsatisfactory they may rebuke him. At county meetings, headmen and others can voice their
644 complaints against the royal house as a whole, and have from time to
661 time protested successfully at such a meeting against too many of the Native Authority posts being filled by members of the royal lineage.

The Native Authority

647 Under the Native Authority system, introduced by the Administra-
[648] tion in 1929, there are a number of paid officials, apart from the chiefs, whose salaries are met by the Native Treasury. They include councillors, assessors, clerks, police, postmen, school attendance officers, and others. The most important of these, and the most highly paid, are
692 the councillors and assessors. They sit once or twice a week in court and hear cases brought before them. Each of the chiefs has a court, and for the most part the cases that come before a county court are brought by people living in the county. When litigants from two counties are involved there is no definite rule as to which court will hear the case and it largely depends on the wish of the instigator of the proceedings. Cases come before the Paramount Chief's county court that concern people from other counties and a litigant may take his case from one chief to another, including the Nyasaland chiefs, in an attempt to obtain a favourable and enforceable decision. The Appeal Court sits at the Paramount Chief's village and is held once a month.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE 1. *Village Types*

Type of village		*Senior resident*
Royal	Capital	First lieutenant
	Regal	First lieutenant
	Chief's	Chief
Cadet		Royal Headman
Commoner		Commoner Headman

621
622

This process of village formation may be illustrated from Mpezeni's own county. The capital of the county is the village founded by Mpezeni I for his chief wife and one or two other wives. His heir Singa was born in this village, and when he married he founded two villages of his own which are now regal villages. In the senior of these two Mpezeni II was born, and in about 1925 he founded a new village which is still the chief's village of the county. There are other regal villages in the county founded in a similar manner. 621

This formation of royal villages would, other things being equal, lead to a dispersal of the population. It seems, however, that the major factor in dispersing the population since 1898 has been the formation of independent commoner villages. Many of these villages have histories that go back to the foundation of the village as an independent unit immediately after 1898, and it seems likely that the unsettled conditions of those days and the burning of villages did much to bring about the breakdown of the old system in which the royal villages were more important than they are today. 161 621

The royal villages are more closely connected with the chieftainships than are the commoner villages, and the chiefs visit in them more frequently than in other villages. A dispute in a royal village is usually settled by a meeting in the village itself attended by the local chief, whereas in the case of an ordinary village dispute the matter would be taken to the chief for him to settle in his own village or court. A chief may be called to a royal village to drink beer. The royal herds of cattle are kept in the royal villages, and the chiefs look to the first lieutenants of their royal villages for the well-being of the royal cattle as well as of the inhabitants of the royal villages. All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself,[1] but in as far as the cattle held by most people are concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that 628 [627] 422 231 643

[1] Cf. Cashmore, p. 27.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the lieutenants are more under the control of the chief of the county, who may intervene to depose a lieutenant if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material Setting

361 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the
[343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the
[417] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of aloes.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually *bedinane*, pl. *mabedinane*; otherwise *mfumu yamzini*, pl. *mafumu amzini*. The specific term for headman of a cadet or commoner village is *[illegible]*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tribe is represented to the Administration in the person of its chief, and the fact that it is through him that the Administration articulates with the tribe is realized by thinking people. In a wider sense, he represents the tribe to the White community as a whole. When I first started work in the area there were many formalities at my meetings with the Paramount Chief, so that I should understand the importance of his position. Mpezeni II is said never to have allowed a White to see him dancing, because of the mystical and social dangers involved. At a county meeting, held while the Paramount Chief was away in Livingstone, the court clerk reminded headmen that the month of May was approaching, and that he would soon be wanting people to hoe the Native Authority roads. When the time came, he did not want headmen to say they had no people. He continued: 'If the people do not obey the laws, then Mpezeni will not be well regarded by the Whites. Then when the Administration wants to make bad laws, Mpezeni will not protest, as he will want to punish his own people.' 648

If the chief is too attentive to the requirements of the Administration, then his standing with his own people is likely to suffer. A chief's court was once described as 'just a White court' because of its alleged bias in favour of the Administration's interpretation of native custom. On the other hand, this identification with the White Administration is not accepted by the chiefs and their advisers. In an adultery case, in which the husband did not want to divorce his wife but she refused to go back to him, Mpezeni, who was present, ordered the woman to return to her husband. A councillor asked the woman what she had to say. She said she loved the co-respondent. The councillor was annoyed, and asked her, 'Do you know who Mpezeni is?' The woman said, 'He 's a chief', using the usual word for chief, *mfumu*, current all over north-eastern Rhodesia. The councillor replied: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a chief, everyone is a chief nowadays.' The woman then said, 'He 's a White.' The councillor answered: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a White whose orders can be sometimes obeyed and sometimes ignored. Mpezeni is *nkhosi*, the great chief of the Ngoni, whose commands must always be carried out.' 643 554 177

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed. 101 123 643

NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa. 159 167

Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1825. 173 643 648

In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques. [721]

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son. [595]

1 [induna=military leader--Analyst]

1h: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
578 Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
643 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
648 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.

In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo. In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the
[805] Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Maseko, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Msafwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinalusi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
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562

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 159 173 562 N M 171 643 842 851

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In those cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Awenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze*.

N 159 173 562 [595]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Loziwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtengulani Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

N [764] [423]

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchiza* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

N 159 173 595 842 602

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jere; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 644

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere; born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173 643

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1868/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu.

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Malowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mskera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

He

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

693 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment;
55 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment; Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief
[643 Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[645 Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black oxhide,
[701 white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Susera Nqumayo,
[595 Great Wife; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu;
[593 Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku?; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndanya Mbanzima, Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nquaneleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.
167 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
55 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Uncekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
593 Chief Diviner or *Isanusi*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadose, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595 Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere; Mtigwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere; Maiwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727 1898. Grandson:—Chiloa Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

[727 Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near Mseua Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsaswe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayungo (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu,
704 Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Masoho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera, Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

173

(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazela*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

159

Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

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Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Sosera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. 643 [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Bazaliyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphanza, Mshamunye Mphanza, Mshawa Mwase Shawa, Dede Tole, Mjoko Ndwambi Jere, Malwalabche Tembo, Mwanje Nkhawa, Katenda Manyonny Makowane, Kapondela Jonni Mvula, Machiliha Mphanza, Chhengachano Ngulowe, Chiwere Maimba, Maulau Jere, Mapulanga Mphanza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Madaimawe, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndawambi Hara, Matrino Kengwere Nkhowa, Penyani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gawani Mawere, Chingulukani Dimba, Siya Mvula, Ngungu Singa Jere, Mshawa Mphanza, Mzeki Lukhela, Njombwa Tembo, Adonibwache Mshanga, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

173

GENEALOGICAL TREE OF ABA-GAZA. LINE. (D.)

ULANGA VIMBA NQUMAYO

M. NTOMBHALI

NGODE

MANYUWA GASA — MHLABAWABABUKA

MHLA — MWAWA. Eldest son deposed.

NOTSOUNYANA

MDUGAZA

GENEALOGY OF SOME NGONI CHIEFS. (E.)

MANABA KUMALO

LOYANDA KUMALO

MANGANGATI KUMALO

MPHANDE K. M. MANYUWAZANA

CHAFUMBLA. CHULU. MENE. MAZWE. NJEKWANE KUMALO ... M. MTONGAJOJO. SONDWANI. HOYE.

KAPATAMOYO JERE. ... M. NYAMPENGU MAFULEKA

KAPATAMOYO JERE II.

MANABA KUMALO

LOYANDA KUMALO

MANGANGATI KUMALO

HLATSHWAYO KUMALO

NOMPULA KUMALO M. MAGUMA who re-married MBOTWANE.

MASIMBA JERE — MOLENYENI.....NKUYU

MANABA KUMALO

LOYANDA K.

MANGANGATI K.

HLATSHWAYO K.

ZODUNDABA. K. M. UMBENE NZIMA

MBELWA (Mombera)

Regency of Mperembe.

CHINTUNGA.—Mombera's Induna disagreed over this appointment because Mombera had cast off Chintunga's mother for adultery.
Deposed by Nyasaland Government 1915.

[643]

K.—Kumalo
M.—Married

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries.

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandom everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace.

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth fourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. When he listens in court to some great indaba his face is expressionless as granite, with an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had to

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 wait for six or seven years before the procrastinating headmen
[645] could lay aside jealousies, and actually place him in the authority of his father. Then when he is crowned he cannot sit in judgment
[692] or give a decision unless his councillors have been summoned, and have deliberated with him. Many a time in the old fierce days the councillors and chief argued and defied one another for weeks at a time over the question as to whether the white man was to be tolerated in the country, and it was the strong affection of old Mombera for Dr. Laws, and Wm. Koyi which alone held in the dogs of war, and prevented his councillors from going forth on an exterminating expedition. Yet in spite of the great power of the chief he lives as father of the people with all the villagers as his children. His house is like their own, built right in the centre of
[560] the village. The poorest slave has access to him, and he hands his beer pot or his snuff to the meanest villager when he would show him friendliness.

[622] Under the paramount chief there are four great sub-chiefs, and
[634] each of them has his councillors and headmen. Then these headmen have each a group of villages under their control. They
[692] hear and dispose of petty quarrels between the villagers. Cases in which headmen are involved go to the sub-chief, and cases in which the sub-chiefs are involved, and all great tribal affairs,
645 go to the paramount chief. The tribal council is an impressive sight. Just before I came here I had the privilege of being present in one of these great gatherings of the tribe. It had met to discuss the advisability of coming under the British Protectorate. The great chief, Chimtunga, had sent out his messengers to call to council all the sub-chiefs and headmen. They marched into the
[634] chief's kraal on the appointed day, each sub-chief followed by his councillors and hundreds of armed warriors, all walking in single file, and dressed in their gaudiest clothes. They sat round the kraal till thousands were present. By-and-bye the paramount
[643] chief walked in, followed by his brothers and council. He was greeted by a roar of salutation, and took his seat. When the case was opened, and the subject introduced, the fathers of the people rose one after the other and saluted the chief, and then addressed the people. The speakers walked up and down, speaking with
[530] considerable incisiveness and eloquence, their language full of metaphors and traditional allusions. Then the chief spoke, closing the discussion. Immediately it was ended and the royal
[535] salutation given, a warrior leapt into the circle with a war cry, fell

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

down at the chief's feet, and with a shout dashed up again and 645
danced a furious war dance. His eyes fixed and staring with [535]
passion, every muscle distended, he stabbed into the air with his spear, tossed the dust of the kraal about, and leapt hither and thither in a frenzy of passion. All the while he kept shouting his battle-cry, and the thousands of fighting men around beat their spears and chanted a chorus. When he had exhausted himself, another headman leapt into the circle and went through his own peculiar wild dance, and then another and another, and for half-an-hour or more these fantastic exhibitions were maintained. Then the chief rose. A great roar of salutation greeted him. [643]
Gathering his clothes about him he walked in procession from the kraal, and the council broke up.

In the olden days the power of the chiefs was maintained by a 692
wholesome dread of his warriors, and the laws were enforced with a consistent severity. One result of this is that the Ngoni tribe has always had a higher standard of morality than any Central Africa people. Some persons were stealing mission cattle and complaints were made to the chief. After a time a thief was caught, and 685
then in spite of the pleadings of the missionary the highest penalty was meted out to him. He was hanged on a tree opposite the mission house, and it was forbidden to remove his body. The hyenas wore a path round the foot of the tree trying to get at the carcase, and there he hung, a terrible example to the neighbourhood, until the white ants ate the rope by which he hung, and the body fell to the waiting hyenas.

I have seen a chief receive news of the adultery of one of his 684
wives, turn to his executioner, and give him instructions, and in a [643]
few minutes both man and woman were lying dead outside the village. I have myself begged for the life of a woman who had sinned, and she was spared only after a great fine in cattle was levied instead.

These were harsh and terrible punishments, necessary for rough 177
times. And now when the chief is loosing some of his old 681
authority, and dare not exercise capital punishment because of the overshadowing British Government, one fears that except where the power of religion has taken the place of the old dread, a weaker morality is apt to sap the vitality of the tribe. The punishments were not arbitrary. They were fixed by precedent. And all the past quarrels for forty or fifty years back would be quoted to prove the right of a plaintiff or defender. And now

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity.
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [871]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the 825
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then [753]
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 787
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if [241]
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, 726
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [243]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to [177]
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor [177]
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

787 rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned.
[177] Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment.
795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a
791 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancien successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities.
695 The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him, and he might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When
766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before
849 their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We
177 seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the
[643] only independent tribe is Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government.
[634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group
167 consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the
631 now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of
643 Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4. It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwambera's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group,
[648] for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes
173 of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the
613 head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not
643 lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife.
644 However this woman was prompted to independent status by the
595 formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingeni) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkucweni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni).

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Loangeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary bevies of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Cimpinga). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Fafazeni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thus Young, writing of the period 1835-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.[86] The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambera's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambera in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of

[86] Young, *History*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various bevies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot intervene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[22] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[23]

Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[22] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.

[23] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

among the Ngoni. Thus the device of perpetual kinship among the Yao, by which the holders of certain chiefly offices stand in relation to one another in a fixed arrangement of kinship positions, of Paramount Chief to son and to sister's son and to brother,[83] would seem to be an example of what is essentially the same process as that by which the dominant lineage in one part of Nuerland is conceived of as descended from a brother of the founding ancestor of another dominant lineage. Where a political relationship is expressed in terms of the connexion between husband and wife, rather than between brothers' or sisters' sons, we may find that a woman is used to embody the political relationship, and she then plays what is essentially a political role. The many wives of the Ngoni Paramount Chief were clearly used in roles of this kind. Not only were they rapporteurs for the Chief, as Deare points out,[84] but they were also living symbols of the political relationship between their segments and the State as a whole. Another central African example of this is the Lele institution of 'wife of the village' by which a village, as a group, may stand as daughter's husband or wife's parent to its chief.[85]

Wherever political relationships of this kind are embodied in persons who have private lives of their own, be they queens or sons-in-law of the village, there is bound to be some domestic and inter-personal relationship alongside the corresponding political relationship. But that should not obscure from us the essentially political role played by individuals in these positions. The analogy with the dynastic marriages of Western Europe is clear.

One of the characteristics of lineage systems and of the Ngoni residential system is that the transition from the ties of domesticity and close kinship to purely political relations is a gradual one. The same principles of organization apply at all levels, and it is gradually with the passage of time and with increasing structural separation and internal segmentation that inter-personal relations are replaced by those between groups, and actions based on sentiments of love and hate give way to those based ultimately on an appeal to force. Relations between the larger segments of a lineage, although expressed in the idiom of kinship, and although possibly explainable historically in kinship terms, are relations between political units, whereas the relationship between brothers living under the same roof is not governed by political considerations. The critical point at which relationships of increasing scale become dominantly

[83] Mitchell, 'Social organization of the Yao'
[84] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[85] Tew, 'Polyandry among the Lele'

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiwe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *si si*, *osi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Masuko clan and a member of the Ngoso clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngoso, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngoso boy *was mongo mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did with the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngoso man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngoso clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngoso family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

643 came, 'to quieten them'. Thereafter this Ngozo boy did everything with
644 the Paramount. He began by washing with the royal medicine at the
762 time of the accession. He drank beer with him, he ate with him, he
766 'stood with him' (*amaima naye*) on all important occasions, such as sending out the army and judging cases. He slept in his own hut which was in the *cigodlo*, where the Paramount's sons built, and when he married he built huts for his wives in that same section of the royal village. At the death of the Paramount, he danced the war-dance in full war-dress and leaped on to the pyre to perish with the dead Paramount in the flames.

Informants sometimes said of this Ngozo boy that he was 'of one
[582] blood' with the Maseko clan. They described the relationship between the two clans as that of *cibale*, brotherhood, which excluded all possi-
[602] bility of inter-marriage. Between the Paramount and the Ngozo boy was established a joking relationship, so that the Ngozo boy could say 'good and bad things to the Paramount'.

643 It was clear that the ritual and social aspects of this relationship com-
644 plemented and supported each other. The recurrent emphasis on the taking of medicine at the accession, on the participation in the war medicines, and most of all on the death on the Paramount's funeral pyre, were all evidence of this ritual relationship. Informants repudiated any idea of a scapegoat which involved protecting the Paramount from poison by eating before him. They reiterated several times that the Ngozo boy did not eat *before* the Paramount; in fact he ate after him though sharing his food dishes. Surrounding the Paramount were other boys called *micetho*, who performed the duties of pages or personal servants. The Ngozo boy was always distinct from them, and the distinction lay in the combined ritual and social relationship.

The concept of a 'shadow' was of something very close to a person, almost indistinguishable from the person himself. In referring to the Ngozo boy in the terms 'he was as the shadow of the *inkosi*; he was as himself', informants emphasized the extreme closeness of the tie between the two men. It seemed as if the royal shadow existed to meet a need for strengthening the Paramount by giving him a second self. It emphasized also the dangerous sphere of life and action in which the Paramount lived, due to the medicines he had used, his powers to protect the land and its fertility, and his power to give strength to the army through the use of the *tonga* medicine. No one else in the royal family shared these dangers and there was inherent in the relationship of royal shadow to *inkosi* the sense of some security through a companionship where protective medicines were shared as well as the hazardous occasions for which they gave protection.

643 This intense and dangerous ritual relationship was buttressed by
644 the social ties binding the Ngozo boy to the Paramount. We have seen
608 that between them as individuals there was that freedom of a joking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

relationship, described in terms of brotherhood, and this brotherhood was further emphasised by the ban on inter-marriage between the Ngoso and Maseko clans. The significance of the Ngoso boy, when he became a man, building in the *cigodle* where the Paramount's sons built, was often stressed by informants. Though his huts were in this *cigodle* section of the royal village, as if he were a son of the Paramount's family, the Paramount never said 'child' to him but invariably 'brother'. 643 644 608

In all the occasions of daily life, as well as in those of special ritual significance, the Ngoso boy stood or sat next to the Paramount. The Ngoni insisted that the status of a man or woman should be expressed in terms of sitting or standing in order of precedence. Sitting or standing next to the Paramount implied that that individual had the highest possible social status. The leading members of the Ngoso clan in their villages displayed an awareness of their social prestige which was very noticeable. This high rank was, however, in the past bought with a price —that of sharing in the dangers of the Paramountcy. This was acknowledged through the gift of cattle to the boy's family, sent at the time when he 'entered the chieftainship' with the Paramount. [554]

The institution of the royal shadow came to an end with the advent of the Europeans. An Ngoso man acted as a royal shadow on the accession of Cikusi but did not die on his funeral pyre. When Cikusi's son Gomani I was installed as *inkosi*, an Ngoso boy 'entered the chieftainship' with him and stood with him 'in the smoke of the *tonga*' when the army went to war. It was this Gomani I who was killed by the British, and there was no royal ritual at this death, and no cremation in a stream in which the Ngoso boy could share. The royal shadow retired in those troubled days to his father's village, where he died in 1937. It was alleged that no Ngoso man stood in this relationship to Gomani II, either at his accession, which took place during the period of Direct Rule, or in 1933 when his Paramount Chieftaincy was recognised. Informants showed a certain hesitation in answering direct questions on this topic, which was attributable partly to the fact that the Paramount was a Christian, and partly to a reluctance to discuss the continued use of 'royal medicines'. The following account of the royal shadow was given by informants of the Nzunga and Ngoso clans. 643 644 178

« When the Paramount entered the chieftainship he stood with a man *from the Ngoso clan. The Ngoso people are ca'ene chiwo'* with the *Paramount*, because they stand together when entering the chieftainship. When the Paramount of the Maseko dies, he dies together with one of the Ngoso. It was so when there died Ngwana, Mpuza, Cikusi.

When the Ngoni came into this country they stopped killing an Ngoso man when the Paramount died. When the Paramount died a young man of the Ngoso clan just stood beside the body of the Paramount, and when making the funeral pyre of the Paramount, he also was there until they set fire to it. If anyone wanted to kill an Ngoso man by the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 [178] water and the pyre, he was refusing, saying 'No, not in these days, but formerly.'

When Magona Ngozo was with Cikusi he was staying with him in the daytime. Magona had his own huts and Cikusi his. When eating, Cikusi ate alone, but afterwards he gave food to Magona. When Cikusi was washing it was together with Magona. When he went to the bush, they went together. When Cikusi was washing with the *tonga*, he was doing it with Magona. When the warriors were going out, Cikusi and Magona stood together, and they made fire for the medicines and they stood together in the smoke and then the warriors went out. So, when mentioning Magona, they said: 'the shadow of Cikusi'. When they were eating in the *bepalo*, the *ssima* (porridge) was brought to Cikusi, but if some *alumuzana* came, the wives of Magona cooked *ssima* and gave it to the *alumuzana*. When Cikusi died, Magona could take his wives if he wanted. The Ngozo man could tell the Paramount anything, good or bad, and stay like the mouth of the Paramount.

[762] When the Paramount died formerly, the Ngozo man dressed in his war-dress. When he came near the fire he danced with the shield in his hand. When the fire blazed up he ran and jumped on the fire. So the Maseko people gave cattle to the Ngozo people, to quieten their hearts because they were brothers. And when another Paramount was installed they gave an Ngozo man to stand with him. The father of the man who died with the Paramount received cattle and villages to rule over and gifts. The Paramounts gave cattle because they said: 'Since our brother is going to stand with the Paramount, if that Paramount dies, he also will be killed, so the Paramount ought to give cattle like *lobola* so they may quieten the hearts of his brothers.' Though these cattle are not given for a woman but for a man, any Maseko man ought not to marry an Ngozo woman because there is this brotherhood.

And this man of the Ngozo clan was like a chief because he had men to manage his affairs at his door, as did the Paramount. And if he died his funeral was like that of a chief. But the day the Paramount died the Ngozo man was killed. When the Paramount washed with medicines, he was washing with the Ngozo man. When drinking beer, he was drinking in the same hut as the Paramount. When the Paramount was sacrificing he was together with the Ngozo man, and they did not leave each other.

The Ngozo people have a thanking name (*isibongo*) Maphonya. It is they who were standing with the Paramounts, and the Ngozo people were [762] in the section of Ziyembe. Their avoidances were the same as all the Ngoni, especially fish and elephant. When Cikusi died Gulo stood with Gomani when he entered the chieftainship. Gulo was the son of Magona.

The royal village and the daily routine of the Paramount

643 361 644 In Part I, Chapter II we referred to the process by which each Paramount, after his accession, went out from his father's village to build his own. The Ngoni called this *ukupumisa inkosi* (to send out the Paramount) and the term used for the new village, *lusungulu* (the needle), was said to signify 'the front village where you expect to find the Paramount'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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Dr. Kuper described the Swazi king making his own capital, but referred also to the existence of several royal villages where the wives of the reigning king lived.[1] The Ngoni system of one royal village which went out from the former royal village resulted in a series of social groups, based on residence, which were related to past Paramounts and their widows and to present Paramounts and their wives. The diagram in Chapter III of Part I shows a very much simplified form of the component parts of a new royal village and their relationship illustrated by the siting of the huts.

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The following text was given by an elderly widow of a grandson of Zwangendaba, in the head village of Chief Mperembe in the northern kingdom.

¶ When a new village, *lusengulu*, was built the *indlunkulu* was first erected and then followed all the other huts of the *inkosi* in order. Those huts which belonged to the *indlunkulu* took the right-hand side facing the kraal. The second house took the left-hand side, and all huts belonging to this one followed it. Such huts could be counted as belonging to the *indlunkulu* and the second house by the cattle that were taken from such houses. To marry a new wife, if the *inkosi* took cattle from the right-hand house that new wife would belong there. All the huts of each house of the *inkosi* were built at the back of the hut of the owner of that house.

When erecting huts, those of the *isinduna* came next and were built next to those of the *inkosi*. After that they built their own according to their *isigawa* or divisions.

All the huts at the back of the *indlunkulu* and behind the other huts were called *cigodlo*. Huts near the gate of the kraal at the left were called *kwa cikulu*.

This text brings out the fact that each new royal village had three main elements in it: the mothers of the Paramount, his wives, and the *isinduna* and their families. The Paramount was always accompanied to his new village by one or more wives of his father, *ukulondolosa mntwana* (to keep the son). One of these was usually his own mother and she occupied the *indlunkulu*. The text points out that the big wife of the Paramount was on the right of the *indlunkulu*, and closely associated with its owner, the Paramount's mother.

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There was no fixed rule for the number of *isinduna* in charge of the houses of the Paramount's mothers and wives. When the Ngoni kingdoms were established in Nyasaland, the royal villages were very large and the divisions of the village, called in the text *isigawa*, were small hamlets. Each division was generally identified with a house, and in that case the *induna* in charge of the house was also in charge of the division. The original composition of royal villages could only be reconstructed by tracing the relationships of separate villages in the 1930's to their former parent village. This will be illustrated in the next chapter on the

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 41.

royal women. In the royal villages in the 1930's there was one big *induna* and several lesser ones whose position and functions will be described in Chapter IV.

643 554 644 This 'going out' of the new Paramount's village, leaving the former Paramount's village as the *gogo* village, brought about some re-distribution of authority, prestige and material goods. It gave the new Paramount his own village, always to be known as his, even after his death. His village became the focal meeting-place for the territory and for the court and territorial officials who surrounded the Paramount; and it was to the new royal village that the *abumuzana* in pre-European days came frequently to visit the Paramount and report to him on conditions in their areas. His moving out of the *gogo* village, on the other hand, gave his brothers who stayed there, and especially those of the *gogo* house, more freedom and authority within that village as well as responsibility for the conduct of all ritual matters relating to the kingdom. The Paramount's big wife had to take her place as the leading woman in the new village and to order the affairs of the wives attached to her house in consultation with the Paramount's mother. Cattle, beer and food for the royal household became the concern of the new village, and the *izinduna* and the royal women had to plan and manage the economy of a capital where political interests converged and where visitors and hangers-on were constantly turning up.

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643 644 512 The following text by Chief Mtwalo Jere in Mzimba district, helped by Cibambo's older brother, describes the daily routine of the Paramount and his royal village as they had known it in their youth before the coming of the Europeans:

¶ The *inkosi* had to wash very early before the people came to see him. The *ingceko* was the servant who took care of washing the *inkosi*. He had to go with the *inkosi* to the bush and hide the faeces to prevent any bad person from getting the faeces. The *ingceko* was anyone whom the *inkosi* called for this, and must be one who walks well with the *inkosi*.

Before leaving his house to go to the kraal the *inkosi* had to eat a little porridge. When he went to the kraal a calabash of beer was brought to him. When any beer was brought to the *inkosi*, the *ingceko* tasted it first to see if it was good. The *inkosi* asked 'Is it good beer?' and the *ingceko* said 'Yes *inkosi*' and gave it to the *inkosi* to drink. When the *inkosi* took snuff the big *abumuzana* could beg from him. The other *amadoda* could only touch their noses. Then the *inkosi* knew they were begging snuff from him. Where the *inkosi* sat a mat was spread, and on it was laid a leopard- or a lion-skin. This was called 'the chair of the *inkosi*'. On arrival the big *abumuzana* went straight into the kraal to where the *inkosi* sat and greeted him '*Bayete*', and sat down in front of him.

The *inkosi* could not eat porridge except that cooked by his own wives. In his own hut he ate alone with one wife to serve him. His mothers also came with food every day. He ate twice in his own hut, early and late, and once in the kraal. When he ate in the kraal all could see him. He could

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not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingcwembe*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

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In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

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In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *izipheko*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izinduna* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

second and third, and the finisher, at the place of dancing in the kraal. At such times each one when called rose and danced *umgiya*, repeating his names. This was called *ukubiha izinkalipi*, reporting the heroes or the fierce ones. This is still being done today. The *inkosi* thanked the people who brought the skins by giving them a beast or a goat. When they were dressing the meat and eating it, they kept on dancing *ligubo* and crying the war-cry. At such times the women went along with the men to help them dance *ligulo*. They made the responses to the songs and jerked their necks. 571 643 651 431 [557]

All such things the *inkosi* divided among his houses. The big house had a big share, but especially his mother's house. She should have most. Even if his real mother was dead, the big share had to go there, to her house, where her successor lived.

Visits to the Paramount, whether for a particular occasion or as a matter of routine, were hedged about with ceremonial. It was expected that *abamuzana* and other important people who lived near enough would visit the Paramount frequently and, according to some informants, they went every day in pre-European times. 643 574 576 644

No one could approach the Paramount except through one of the *izinduna* of the royal village, and the correct person to approach was the *induna* of the *indlunkulu*. Visitors were expected to wait at the gate of the kraal and put down their spears. When they were brought by the *induna* to the Paramount, they greeted him with '*Bayete*'. Then they sat down and the Paramount told the *induna* to greet them, and they replied '*Yebo, inkosi*'. This custom of indirect approach to the Paramount has been maintained. Early travellers in Nyasaland spoke of observing it, and when I was there it was considered outrageous manners on the part of any European if he penetrated immediately to the presence of the Paramount, without going through the accustomed channels. 643 644

The Paramount was both greeted and thanked for gifts of food, beer or snuff, with '*Bayete*'. If he moved from the kraal, all present said '*Bayete*'. If anyone had to leave his presence, he crouched low and murmured '*Bayete*' as he went out. Cibambo described this punctilious formality of thanking for gifts in the Ngoni manner. 643 644 431

¶ When receiving presents the Ngoni thanked the giver by taking them with two hands, even though it was a small present. Afterwards they thanked the giver by his *isibongo*, clan name, openly. They said that receiving a thing with one hand showed that you derided it and did not put any value on it. When receiving a present from bigger people or from a chief, some words of respect were added to the *isibongo*, such as '*Baba*', '*Nkosi yami*', '*E-Jere*'. Often the receiver if he was much pleased with the present added some *isitokoso* to the clan name, if he knew them. Those near him or some further away helped the receiver by thanking loudly after him. If what he received was food, he thanked at the beginning, and after eating the food he thanked again. If such a present of food was given to a body of people, the leader in the company first led the others in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 thanking, and then all thundered the thanking together. This included all
644 the rest who were in the neighbourhood though they did not take part in
431 the food or the present. The leader would first thank '*E-Jere*' and then all would follow together, '*E-Jere*', or the clan name of the one who was the giver. The Paramount, if he gave presents to the people, was not thanked by his clan names other people. He was thanked by '*Bayete*' as was done when saluting him. Likewise those who received the title *Nhomo* were thanked by that title when they gave presents to people.

643 On ceremonial occasions, visitors to the royal village heard the
644 *izibongo* or praise-songs of the Paramount. These were songs referring to great deeds and notable incidents both in the lifetime of the reigning
533 Paramount and in the lives of his predecessors. They were distinct from
576 the *izitokozo*, which were honorific epithets added to the clan name and spoken when thanking a well-known man or woman for their gifts. The *izitokozo* could be said by anyone, since each person of note had his own which were well-known. The *izibongo* could only be spoken or sung by an *umbongi* or official 'praiser'. Such a person was a man of good
[826] memory and possessing eloquence. The chest was thought to be the seat of wisdom and eloquence, and a man who composed praise-songs, as distinct from repeating well-known ones, had to have the faculty of finding the right words, since new songs of this kind were generally invented on a sudden inspiration.

The occasions when the praise-songs were recited were when important visitors came to the royal village; when beasts were slaughtered in the ancestor cult at special dances at the royal village or at the feasts of the Paramount. On such occasions the official praiser stood up in the kraal, everyone kept silence and did not move, and after a pause he began to call out '*Bayabonga inkosi*', 'let us praise the Paramount'. In repeating the praise-songs he began with those of the immediate ancestor of the Paramount, and then went on to those of earlier ancestors. At the end he shouted '*Bayete*' and all the people replied '*Bayete*'. Examples of the praise-songs of Zwangendaba and his father Hlacwayo of the northern kingdom and of Ngwana, father of Mputa, of the central Ngoni kingdom are given at the end of the chapter.

643 The tension caused by the extreme formality in the behaviour of the
644 Paramount, his courtiers and his visitors was lightened by the presence of a court jester. Informants were agreed that such an individual was
522 usually present to amuse the Paramount with his sallies and gestures and clown-like tumbling about. Dr. Laws referred to such a jester at the court of Mbelwa I when the Livingstonia Mission was making its first settlement in northern Ngoniland.[1] I saw a jester who came with Paramount Zintambira Maseko from Portuguese territory when he and his officials visited Mcakhatha for the war-dance at the mourning for Bambo

[1] Livingstone, W. P. *Laws of Livingstonia*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1921, p. [illegible]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Manga. It was a time of great emotional tension and strain, and the absurdities of the jester relieved the solemnity and formality of the visit. This jester was said by informants to be a man of the Moyo clan, who owed his position not to hereditary right but to a ready and witty tongue.

643 644 522

The death of the Paramount

It is in the ceremonies at the death of the Paramount that we find some major differences between the traditional practices of the northern and central Ngoni peoples, which might be attributed to the separate groups in Natal from which they came. I was living in Mcakatha village in the central kingdom at the time of the sickness and death of Bambo Manga, the most important of the royal women among the central Ngoni. The ritual ceremonies at her funeral were said to be almost identical with those at the death of the Paramount, and I was able to check details of similarity and difference with old men who remembered the death of Cikusi, the last Ngoni Paramount in the central kingdom for whom the full ritual was carried out. I was not able after that to pursue further possible parallels and differences among the northern Ngoni. My general impression from informants was that among the northern Ngoni the ritual at the death of a Paramount differed from that of any other prominent man only in certain details of the period and form of mourning. Among the central Ngoni, as Rattray said in a note on the text which will be given, 'such funerals were more of a military pageant than anything else. All outward signs of grief were rigorously excluded.' I can confirm that from my observations at the death of Bambo Manga.

184 643 766 [152]

When the Paramount became ill, a diviner was called to give advice. He might advise that a sacrifice should be made to the ancestor spirits. He might suggest witchcraft as the cause of illness. He might advise calling in a man to give medicine to the Paramount. When, in spite of sacrifices and treatment, the Paramount died, the announcement was made from the edge of his village: *Izulu lidilikile*, 'the heaven has fallen down'. Messengers were sent to all the chiefs and to all the *alumuzana* and other leading men. From the edge of each central village the cry was made, and each chief and *mulumuzana* sent his messengers to make the same announcement in each of the villages under him.

[791]

Among the northern Ngoni the actual ceremony of burial does not appear to have been very different from that of any other important man, with one exception, that the Paramount, like other ruling Jere chiefs, was buried at the edge of the cattle kraal in a circular pit of the kind used when digging clay for mudding houses, on one side of which there was a niche where the corpse was placed in a sitting position, facing south-east. This burying in a circular grave on the edge of the kraal was the procedure which I witnessed at the burial of Bambo Manga among the central Ngoni (see below p. 75).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 766 184 Dr. Steele, one of the early medical missionaries in northern Ngoniland, was present at the burial of Mbelwa I and left an account of it which is quoted by Dr. Elmalie.[1] He spoke of the great crowds of men coming to mourn armed with spears and shields, and some with guns. They came in companies, as if they were the military bands coming for mobilization from the head villages. They marched first with their shields held high over their heads, and then laid them down and clasped their hands behind their heads, advancing towards and retreating from the grave and keeping up a continuous mourning cry of '*Baba be*'. Three days elapsed between the death and the burial. During that time two graves were dug, in order that all the Paramount's possessions might be buried with him or beside him. When the graves were ready, the kraal was cleared of all but the married men who had the head-ring. Meantime the wives of the Paramount, carrying his shields, were advancing towards the grave and retreating, a few steps at a time. They finally went back to their houses, dressed themselves in skins, and returned in single file on their hands and knees. They withdrew as the corpse was brought out and placed in the grave, and other women came with the Paramount's possessions, such as pipes, wooden head-rests and shields, and all were put into the graves. The men stood in circles round the graves with their shields over their heads.

Among the central Ngoni Rattray recorded an account of the funeral rites of Cikusi in 1891, which I was able to check with more than one old man who had been present. There was also the funeral of Bambo Manga which I witnessed in 1937, where the ritual followed was identical with that described by the old men for the Paramount Cikusi, with one exception: that her possessions but not her body were cremated by a stream.

The chief differences between the northern and central Ngoni in the funeral rites at the death of the Paramount were that the central Ngoni Paramounts of the Maseko clan were cremated and not buried, and there was no public mourning, but instead a series of war-dances. There [644] were two other distinctive features among the central Ngoni: formerly [786] the individual known as the 'royal shadow' died with the Paramount; and from the time of the actual death to the time of the cremation there was a period of licence and lawlessness called *ciponde*. This latter phenomenon may have existed among the northern Ngoni, but I did not ask about it specifically when I was there, and I did not hear it referred to. I was made aware of it forcibly at the death of Bambo Manga when my cook and houseboy immediately dumped all their possessions in my hut as the only safe place during the time of *ciponde*. Rattray's account of the death of Cikusi also mentioned this practice.

In the traditions of the central Ngoni it was recorded that only the Maseko Paramounts in the direct line were cremated, and not the

[1] Elmalie, W. A. op. cit. p. 270.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

142 surroundings, their families, and the behaviour of those for whom they
565 were responsible was most noticeable. Not all of these women were in the category of royal women, nor did all the royal women conform to this distinctive physical type, though the association of high-ranking family, physical appearance and pride of bearing was striking.

644 There were three main classes of royal women, all associated with the
565 Paramount in a special relationship. These showed some parallels with the classes of royal women among the Swazi described by Dr. Kuper. I have not adopted her terms for distinguishing them, with the exception of the term Queen Mother, which I have used in the English sense of the widow of a former ruler and mother of the existing ruler. The chief women associated with the Paramount in the Ngoni kingdoms were the Royal Sister, the Queen Mother, and the big wife. This same association of three leading women with a ruling chief or *muhumuzana* was found in the subordinate chieftainships under the Paramount, and in the head villages of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. It was a definite Ngoni pattern, associating women of high rank with the men who carried political responsibility. Their positions in the Ngoni patrilineal and virilocal social structure was markedly different from the position of the leading women in the matrilineal and uxorilocal societies of other Nyasaland peoples, especially in their relationship to their husbands, sons and brothers.

644 The relationships of the Queen Mother and the big wife to the Para-
593 mount were of a different character from that of the Royal Sister to her brother, since she was of the royal clan and they were not. We shall first consider the position in the Ngoni kingdoms of the Queen Mother and the big wife, since reference has been made to them already in the previous chapter. In the new *husungulu* village of the Paramount there was a close connexion between the Queen Mother, who moved out with him, and his own big wife. His big wife was of the same house as the Queen Mother, since the cattle for her *lobola* had been taken from the herd of the Queen Mother. At this time of moving out into the new village the big wife began to be head of her own house. Other wives, *married with cattle from the herd which had been built up for her*, and kraaled with those belonging to the Queen Mother, were attached to her house, and their huts were built near her own. She was the mother, actual or potential, of the future Paramount. If she failed to have a male child, or if her sons died, a male child would be taken from another wife's hut and brought up in her hut and would be known as the child of her house. Since she was the mother of the heir she had a special relationship to the *induna* appointed to look after her house. It was the house of the Paramount elect and also she would probably, when the Queen Mother died, succeed to the ownership of the *indlunkulu* hut. Her *induna* would then become one of the most important men in the village as he would receive all guests and strangers.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

When the Queen Mother, who had in her husband's lifetime been the big wife of his village and the head of his big house, moved out with her son to his *kuungulu* village, she had the unrivalled distinction of occupying the *indlunkulu*. While her hut was the centre of all hospitality and of ceremonials such as marriages and funerals, she was aware that her daughter-in-law, her son's big wife, was the leading lady of that village by right of being the Paramount's big wife and the mother of his heir. Such a situation could have produced friction between the big wife and the Queen Mother, but informants were shocked at the idea of two women in such positions not being able to control their tempers and adjust any differences which arose. I never saw any visible signs of friction. The Queen Mother and her co-widows in the village seemed aware that their time of active participation in royal village or national affairs was over, and the Queen Mother appeared content to occupy the *indlunkulu*, provide a meeting-place for all the women, and give advice and counsel when invited to do so. Part of her duty in occupying the *indlunkulu* hut was to keep the ritual vessels for sacrificing to the ancestral spirit of her late husband, the former Paramount, and when the sequence of ceremonies after his death had been completed, she looked after his spirit which had been 'brought back' to that hut. 644 [769]

In the central kingdom, when the Paramount Mputa died in Tanganyika, a regent took care of the kingdom while his son Cikusi was a minor. During that period the royal village built by Domwe mountain was a very large one divided into hamlets. The position of Queen Mother was then held by NaMlangeni, formerly the big wife of Mputa, who had a daughter Manga, but no son. A son, Cikusi, born to the next wife, was put into the house of NaMlangeni and brought up there. Golosela Nzunga, the *induna* in charge of her house, was also in charge of the section of the royal village called Ziyembe. When the royal village divided, its constituent hamlets spread out from Domwe and the section called Ziyembe moved to the east towards the escarpment. The head village of the Nzunga clan was built there, and Golozela continued as *induna* for NaMlangeni. She went with him, while Cikusi's own mother *went into his kuungulu village in the section called Liwisini sited near* the Kirk Range. NaMlangeni took care of the spirit of Paramount Mputa in the Nzunga clan head village of Mcakatha. Her hut in that village was the *indlunkulu* and after she died her daughter Manga came to live in that hut and look after her father's spirit. 644 768 [769]

This brief account of the succession of a Queen Mother in the central kingdom brings up the question of succession, which was a vital element in the office of the Queen Mother, in respect both of her occupancy of the *indlunkulu* and her guardianship of the spirit of the dead Paramount. In the case of a successor to the Queen Mother of a recently deceased Paramount, two alternatives were open. The reigning Paramount's big wife could succeed to the *indlunkulu* and to the 644

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

644 guardianship of his father's spirit, or she could take over the *indlunkulu* while a co-widow of the Queen Mother inherited the guardianship of the spirit in her own hut. The second alternative was the one followed in all the instances remembered by informants. In both kingdoms the spirits of the main line of the Paramounts were guarded by someone appointed to that task, chosen on the grounds of reputation and reliability. There was yet another variant in the central kingdom, where, as we have seen, it was Manga, the daughter of Mputa, who succeeded to her mother's guardianship of his spirit. The one principle which emerged from a number of cases cited in both kingdoms, was that occupancy of the *indlunkulu* and guardianship of a spirit might be undertaken by the same person, but generally it did not work out that way.

The Royal Sister, a title equivalent to the English Princess Royal, was the older full sister of the Paramount by the same mother, or his older sister by his father's big wife if she had borne no son. She was always referred to as 'the one who would have been chief if she had been a man'. She stood in a special relationship to the reigning Paramount and to the Paramount-elect. She was in constant touch with the Paramount's children who used the name *dadakazi* (female father) when addressing her or referring to her. Dr. Kuper [1] reported that the Royal Sister among the Swazi was addressed by the same term, and that she came next in rank to the big wife and the leading wives. My informants and my own observations in both Ngoni kingdoms put the Royal Sister next to the big wife and before the other wives. She visited the royal village at frequent intervals to see her brother and his children, and was consulted about their affairs. She took a leading part in the puberty ritual for the daughters of her brother and was prominent at *ligubo* and other dances, and at mourning ceremonies. She was married with an exchange of cattle to a man of a leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan, and during his lifetime lived in his village, visiting the royal village often.

[601]

565 The position of the royal women in the Ngoni kingdoms has been discussed in terms of the sister, mother and big wife of the Paramount.
644 The same relationships were found in the families of the chiefs and
631 *alumuzana*. There the equivalent of the Royal Sister was the older full sister by the same mother of the chief or *mulumuzana*, and his own big wife and his father's big wife played similar roles, within their own spheres, to those played in the Paramount's village by the Queen Mother and his big wife.

Five texts follow which illustrate the life and activities of leading women who filled roles equivalent to those of Royal Sister, big wife and Queen Mother. One of the texts is by a Royal Sister—Bambo Manga, who was the sister of Paramount Cikusi in the central kingdom. Margaret Jere was the elder full sister of the heir to the chieftanship of

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. p. 59.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Chief Mtwalo II in the northern kingdom. Two texts are by former big wives of leading men. NyaNsangu was the former big wife of a grandson of Zwangendaba, a member of the royal clan but not a chief, though he owned many villages. NaNdumbu was the former big wife of the head of the Nzunga clan in the central kingdom. The last text by Cibambo gives details of the clothes worn by royal women and leading women in pre-European days, some of which were still in use in the 1930's. 565 644 631

Life of the Royal Women
by Manga Maseko

daughter of Mputa, former Paramount of the central kingdom

159 565

¶ Formerly I was just staying for I did not work. I had many slaves and their work was especially to thread beads. Up to today I have not worked except to cook. Our hair was anointed with the fat of cows and of milk. Our food was milk and we drank it in a wooden cup. We were getting cloth when they sold slaves to the Arabs. For honouring each other, the big men were telling the youths: 'You should honour the big people that the country may be rich.' Only the big women were dancing *ngoma*, *msindo* and *ligubo*. If a man married the child of a chief, he gave many cattle, and the poor man could not marry the child of a chief. 631 644 [302] [267]

When NaMlangeni was alive she was a well-known chief and was greatly honoured. When speaking a case, they called her that she might judge. When people went to war and captured slaves and cattle they were giving them to her, and she divided them. For thanking her they said: '*Zaithwa Mai*.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Margaret Jere

granddaughter of Mtwalo I, daughter of Johanne Jere in the northern kingdom

¶ When I was a child I was not allowed to go out quickly in the sun, and when crawling I had to stay in the house. I was very light coloured. The *mlezi* (nurse girl) took me to my mother, UNsulazi Nzima, to be suckled at special times. I slept in the house of Magodise Moyo, my grandmother, who was the widow of Chief Mtwalo. The *isidandani* (attendant) also slept there. My grandmother and others, the *manina* (senior women), were telling me how to behave. A special *isidandani* living in Magodise's house was told by my grandmother to speak specially to me when I had reached puberty. This *isidandani* could speak to me about anything. When nearing marriage a woman was chosen, Hlamseya Nzima, and sent to reveal to me how I was to live in my married state. The sisters of my father, Tinxira and Sayeya Jere, also came and spoke to me at the time of my marriage. Hlamseya Nzima was sent by my grandmother to examine me (for virginity) before marriage. I was allowed to play with those children who lived in the same section of the village and who were known to my mother and grandmother. The *isidandani* did all the work but sometimes I used to pound and fetch water, but not too hard and just for pleasure.

When strangers came, I came and saluted them and then went out of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 565 631 644 the house. If my father came to my mother's house, I would go out, but if he sent for me I would return and he would talk to me and play with me. We learned how to behave well, and were rebuked if we behaved badly. My father would beat a child for not behaving well. My father did not allow his children to be spoiled by being treated differently from others. He said: 'They are all my children.'

Life of the Royal Women
by Mdingase Nsangu

widow of Chinombo Jere, grandson of Zwangendaba in the northern kingdom

565 631 644 [300] ¶ The *amakosikazi* were not working. During the day they kept dressing their hair, both the young women and the old. The old women no longer kept their *isihlutu*, or high chignon, but wore the *umzoco*, or long curls. For the *umzoco* the hair was cut short and not allowed to grow very long. Instead of dressing it upwards they took a blade of grass and kept it pressed down after oil and scent were applied. Their other work was to go to the river and wash.

They also drank beer and some gruel, and afterwards danced *ngoma* in the house where beer was brewed. The men and chief also joined in the *ngoma* and the women were responding to the singing. They began to drink in the morning until the afternoon, but not in the evening. Other people went on drinking until evening, and even some of the *amakosikazi* who were *izidli* (gluttonous) but the rest were sleeping or resting.

When drinking in the house the chief always sat by the right-hand door-post, and the big *inkosikazi* by the left-hand post. They sat near the door to draw breath easily because there were many people inside. The beer-pot being set halfway between the door and the hearth-stones in the centre, a man was chosen to pour the beer in the gourds for drinking. He was *umtele wocwala*, the beer pourer, and was often the village *induna* or one who was favoured by the chief. When the gourds were full he told the chief, and the chief told him to distribute them. Sometimes there were four or even six for the different classes in the house. They sat in order, the *inkosi* with the *izinduna* and *amadoda*, and the *inkosikazi* with the other wives of the chief and the wives of the *izinduna* and *amadoda*. The chief and the *inkosikazi* kept on inviting the common people to come and drink. [576] Such invited people thanked the person at the beginning and at the end, others joining him. The *inkosikazi* or other wives of the chief were thanked '*Nkomo*'.

The *amakosikazi* never worked at all, but the lesser wives worked, and pounded grain and fetched firewood. These were the ones who had not yet got attendants in their houses. All the chief *amakosikazi* had attendants who performed all the work of the house. The *amakosikazi* often sat in the verandah or outside under the platform of branches supported by posts. [262] There they ate their food which was *ilambazi* and *umnjinji*, thick gruel of millet; *isinkwa se nyouti*, bulrush millet ground to a paste; or *isinkobe*, whole grains of maize boiled and pounded. The meat was eaten as a feast on the *egcekeni*, the smeared place in front of the house, and all the chief's wives joined in. A mat was spread for the big *amakosikazi* where they sat

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 565 631 644

when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingcwembe*, or big platter of the *inkosikazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *nhlanzi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inkosikazi* called for an *ingcwembe* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njolomole Nzunga I in the central kingdom

¶ Old Njolomole had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361 351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked *nsima* and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [574]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these cloths and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njolomole excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njolomole was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yessya Cibambo

565 302 [179]

¶ Today Ngoni women are not easily recognised because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isikhutu*. The oil was *ipeklo*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [301]

565

302 there stuck at the top of the *isibhele*, and round it they put narrow bands
[301] of beads (*intsepeze* and *isinemaye*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion claws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*umnange*) which they got from the Arabs,
291 or *isipete*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft
565 dressed leather (*isidwabe*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped
[301] well over. A long piece of soft leather (*ingunyi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *ingunyi*
[304] were fastened small bells made of brass (*ugomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inkosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ngoma* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

565 The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in
644 these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their households and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indlunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *indlunkazi*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

357 In addition to the *indlunkazi* in charge of the big house, the royal women
365 and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *ahamuzana* were sur-
644 rounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*mizethe*), girl companions (*izidandawi*), nurse girls (*alazi*) and older women attendants (*agogo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1930's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

292 The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the
644 clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

clan and for women of leading Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Two of the texts emphasised the distinction conferred on the royal women by special clothing. Cibambo described the use of well-dressed soft skins and of beads and wire, the beads brought with them from the south, the brass wire obtained from the Arabs. In NaNdumbu's text she mentioned cloth bought from the stores. After the Ngoni women gave up wearing soft leather for skirts and the long piece of leather draped from the left shoulder, they used strong cotton cloth of dark blue or black, originally brought by the Arabs and later stocked by the stores. They tied the main cloth under their arms in a draped knot over the breast and on ceremonial occasions they added another fastened on the left shoulder like a plaid. A woman who had been a young girl in the village of Paramount Cikusi, but was not of a leading clan, said that in this village there was a great difference between the royal women and the rest: 'Only the daughters of Cikusi and his big wives could wear dark cloth as the Ngoni do. The others would have been killed if they tried to look like the big women'.

The royal women and the big wives and widows of chiefs and *abamnana* were treated by all with whom they came in contact with the distinction and respect due to their prestige. They were addressed and thanked by the term *Nkomo*, with the clan name and the honorific prefix added, except where, as in the case of Bambo Mangs, a title had been conferred. She was thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*'.[1] *Ukuhlonipa*, and its Nyanja equivalent *kulemekeza*, meaning to honour and to behave in a respectful manner towards senior people and those of superior rank, was an expression constantly used by the Ngoni and by the other peoples in the Ngoni kingdoms. The forms of showing respect were partly verbal; partly in the position adopted, with the eyes cast down and a slight curtsey by the women when facing someone; partly in the tone of voice when speaking; and partly in the deliberate and controlled behaviour noticed by several early travellers in Nyasaland. A particular verbal form of respect practised by the royal women was the use of the '*hlonipa* vocabulary.'[2] *It was practised* surviving only in the Emlaweni area in northern Ngoniland where the Ngoni language was still spoken, but informants said that it had been common to all married women of trans-Zambesi clans in the northern kingdom when they had spoken Ngoni among themselves. The *hlonipa* vocabulary consisted of the substitution of special words, known only to the women, in order to avoid using a word in which the main syllable of a man's name occurred—a man with whom they were connected by marriage or by affinal relationship.[3] Thus Zwangendaba's wives and widows could

[1] *Bambo* (father) was a term of respect used for important senior men.

[2] *Hlonipa* as a form of special vocabulary was widely practised among the Nguni groups in South Africa. Hunter, A. W. 'Social Organisation', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, pp. 74, 77.

551 565 576 644 never use any word in which *indaba* (meeting or affair) occurred. They substituted *incayo* for *indaba* and spoke of him as Zwangencayo. The women of the Ngomezulu clan could never use the word *ilanga* (sun) for which they substituted *ijiko*, since Langa was the name of the father of Zwide who had married into the Ngomezulu clan.

Though the particular verbal form of *hlonipa* which the Ngoni royal women brought from the south survived only in one area of northern Ngoniland, the concept inherent in it and the attitudes of honour and respect which it implied were expressed in the use of *Nkomo* in thanking and in the other non-verbal forms already mentioned. Manga, the Royal Sister of Cikusi, was as we have seen, thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*' but also with the formula '*Zikomo mutwana wenkosi*' (thanks, child of the Paramount). Among the central Ngoni there were two expressions of thanks which were probably a relic of *hlonipa* vocabulary since they were used only by the leading women. The customary form of thanking, and of taking leave after a conversation or after getting a reply to a question, was '*Zikomo*' with the clan name and honorific prefix added. The royal women in this area, when making the response to this form of thanking, always replied '*Zaithwa*' with the clan name, and they thanked each other by '*Zimata*' with the clan name instead of '*Zikomo*'. When I observed this and used it myself, they nudged each other and said 'She also is one of us.'

644 We have discussed so far the outward signs of respect shown to the royal women, and the visible marks of distinction in their clothes and the number of their attendants. We shall now examine the way in which the authority of the royal women was exercised. This will give some indication of their relationship to the political organization of the kingdoms, in so far as they had certain responsibilities to the people as a whole, and to their husbands and sons within the royal village where they lived. At the royal village the Queen Mother and her co-widows shared with the wives of the two leading houses to the right and left of the *indlunkulu*, the responsibility for preparing and serving food and beer for the Paramount and those whom he called to eat with him. The text by NyaNsangu[1] describes the etiquette of beer drinking in one of the chiefdoms in the northern kingdom, of sending food to the chief when he ate in the cattle kraal, and of assembling the wives in order of [264] precedence according to their houses to take their food. The formality of this etiquette was characteristic of Ngoni eating and drinking, and it was maintained by the organization and forethought of the royal women, the big wives and mothers of the Paramount, who planned the work of their own households and supervised that of the lesser wives who were attached to the two main houses.

[1] The procedure described in the text applied equally to the Paramount's village and to the villages of ruling chiefs. The Ngoni in that area used the term '*inkosi*' for chief as well as for Paramount.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

644

The responsibility of the royal women went beyond the sphere of domestic economy, fundamental though that was in a largely subsistence mode of living. They were expected to maintain good relations and settle all disputes among the women under them, except in cases where a dispute had to be taken to court, and such instances were generally regarded as a failure on their part to use their judgement and exert their authority. In pre-European days, when the Paramount and the chiefs held their judicial courts in the kraal, the royal women generally sat outside the kraal fence and listened, and were asked by the chief in the evening what they had to say about the judgements given. Some of the royal women had a great reputation for wisdom and intelligence, though they never spoke in public. They were still acting as unofficial advisers and critics to the chiefs during my visits in the 1930's, though it was recognised and often said that this kind of wisdom in judicial affairs was an unusual gift among women.

The title 'royal women' was adopted for this chapter in order to show the relationship of three particular women to the ruling Paramount in both kingdoms. It was difficult to discover whether the existence of an older full sister was accidental and she was given *ad hoc* recognition, or whether the relationship was considered so important that it was provided for by adoption if there did not happen to be an older full sister. The example of the Swazi, as described by Dr. Kuper, points to evidence of a recognized institution, by which in the case of the Paramount, a woman of the royal clan was always associated with her brother who was the ruler, with the same provision in the case of reigning chiefs and *ahwenzane* of Swazi clans. Informants were able to give the names of Royal Sisters of former Paramounts prior to the establishment of the kingdoms in Nyasaland. It seemed, therefore, that this relationship was a permanent institution and that its chief significance lay in the public acknowledgement of a woman of the royal clan in a position close to her brother who was the ruling Paramount. The fact that she was of his clan, and that she had a special relationship to the Paramount's children, was a check to the power and authority exercised by the Queen Mother and the big wife, who were of other clans, over the Paramount's children of the royal clan.

In the case of the Queen Mother and the big wife, since the big wife in course of time became the Queen Mother, the permanent element in their positions was the setting up and maintenance of houses in the royal village and in other important villages. This will be discussed more fully in Chapter III of Part III. They shared with the Royal Sister the supervision and responsibility for the children of the Paramount, as Margaret Jere shows in her text; and in the royal village, and hence in the kingdom as a whole, they occupied leading positions in daily affairs as well as on ceremonial occasions.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the Paramount's interest in modern aspects of administration, especially after his visit to the course for chiefs held at the Jeanes School in Zomba in 1934. The old councillors, sceptical though they were of many modern innovations, recognized that they were in line with European ideas of administration, and also that they appealed to the younger educated men in the kingdom who had travelled and seen other countries and ways of living. 643

The Paramount married NaNdau as his big wife, and though, as the text mentions, he married two other wives when urged by the senior men, he sent them away after a year or two and NaNdau remained his only wife. She had an assured position since she bore him five sons and two daughters, the first-born being a daughter and receiving all the respect due to a Royal Sister. One of the brothers of NaNdau was chief of a division, and another was *mdumo wenhui* to the Paramount. She succeeded in maintaining much of the traditional pattern in the royal village and the big house. Her personal supervision of the household was thorough and competent. She exercised complete authority over the girls and women belonging to the household and arranged that the Ngoni custom of examining the young girls, including her own daughter, at regular intervals should be maintained. Her knowledge of Ngoni songs and dances, and her own skilled and graceful participation in the dances on state occasions, brought her before the people in her role as the big wife. At the feasts given by the Paramount she moved about among the people to serve them, and listened to complaints from the women about affairs in their villages which she then handed on to her husband. [595] [586] 644

The back verandah and all the outbuildings were the domain of the Paramount's wife. When I was there, she had some ten or twelve girls and women as well as several men working for her. They came and went if they had homes elsewhere, and the personnel changed often. All the household work was done by them: bringing water and fuel, pounding maize, and a good deal of the cooking, though this was closely supervised by the Paramount's wife. No beer was made in the household as it was against the rules of the church to which they belonged. In other Ngoni households of subordinate chiefs and *alawuzana* who were not Christian, the brewing of beer was a time-absorbing part of the household tasks and was shared by the different wives under the supervision of the big house. In Magangu, when the Paramount was entertaining unexpected guests and wanted to offer them beer, he inquired from his *indunas* if anyone was brewing beer in the village, and sent for some for which he paid. When he knew beforehand that guests were coming who would expect beer to be offered to them as part of the Paramount's hospitality, he told his *indunas* to see that beer was made in one of the village households, and he paid for it. [273]

The cooking which went on in the big house kitchens was always extensive. The Paramount, his wife and six children had two meals a 643 574 264

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers 593
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organised kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [803]

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indunas*[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupulous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African territories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 sensitive to suggestions that a chief may be oppressing his people,
649 usually works through the Paramount. One minor chief was sent to the Paramount's village for a period of instruction in order that he might learn how to rule wisely. On another occasion a chief who had abused the Administration was fined one month's salary by the Paramount. In both these instances the Administration was the initiator of the Paramount Chief's action, but he may also act without reference to it. It was reported to the Paramount that a certain minor chief had struck one of his subjects who had been slow to offer him beer. The Paramount warned the minor chief that he might kill someone this way, and that he ought to fine people, not to strike them. In a dispute between a minor chief and his court clerk over some new court furniture, which the chief wished to use in his own house, the Paramount intervened and ordered that the chairs be put in the courthouse.

643 The Paramount himself is subject to social constraint, and may be criticized by his senior lieutenants. He is advised on how he should behave by these men, and if his behaviour is unsatisfactory they may rebuke him. At county meetings, headmen and others can voice their
644 complaints against the royal house as a whole, and have from time to
661 time protested successfully at such a meeting against too many of the Native Authority posts being filled by members of the royal lineage.

The Native Authority

647 Under the Native Authority system, introduced by the Administra-
[648] tion in 1929, there are a number of paid officials, apart from the chiefs, whose salaries are met by the Native Treasury. They include councillors, assessors, clerks, police, postmen, school attendance officers, and others. The most important of these, and the most highly paid, are
692 the councillors and assessors. They sit once or twice a week in court and hear cases brought before them. Each of the chiefs has a court, and for the most part the cases that come before a county court are brought by people living in the county. When litigants from two counties are involved there is no definite rule as to which court will hear the case and it largely depends on the wish of the instigator of the proceedings. Cases come before the Paramount Chief's county court that concern people from other counties and a litigant may take his case from one chief to another, including the Nyasaland chiefs, in an attempt to obtain a favourable and enforceable decision. The Appeal Court sits at the Paramount Chief's village and is held once a month.

N 159 173 562 N M 171 643 842 851

migration about 1820; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombengule, who was a brother of Zwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Mazukana, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Zwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Awanga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nakwaz*.

N 159 173 562 [595]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nakwaz* Soweza Nqumayo, a younger sister of Luziwaza, and by her he had issue as follows:—Mzeze Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jakuz, Mtwalilili, and Mhlabeni Makakwa. Soweza was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Mzeze Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingani," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtengulwini Ukn Soweza close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jeffreys, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

N [764] [423]

Soweza is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her nekiza (staff) in a hasty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her autocracy and dry humour.

N 159 173 595 842 602

After Zongendaba's death, Soweza chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthomana, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawasa Mazunda, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Juwe; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Mzeze Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawundi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawundi Hara.

N 159 173 644

It is agreed by the old indunas that Mzeze Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambezi, that he was carried across as heiling a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lava Ngoma and Ngandu Mhawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 The title of regional governor was also awarded by the Paramount Chief to certain of his favoured lieutenants. These promoted lieutenants, with their segments, retained their positions in the residential system unaltered but they were allowed to keep their own captives, a privilege of all regional governors. It seems probable, from incomplete information, that there were about a dozen regional governors of one kind or the other in the Fort Jameson group in 1898.[11] Despite the early date at which some of the regional governors' segments were formed during the migration, they did not expand as rapidly as did the segments led by the chief's queens and lieutenants, and in 1898 they comprised only a small portion of the State. In this respect the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland were organized differently, for there Read writes that the whole country was divided among regional governors, save for a central capital.[12] One of my informants stated that the head of a segment containing more than one village was never known as the lieutenant of his lord but was called, if he were not a kinsman of his lord, by the title regional governor. This is not true to-day, and in view of the large number of present-day commoner villages which claim to have been founded before the conquest, and whose heads are not regional governors, it seems unlikely to have been true earlier. On the other hand, all regional governors to-day are lords of segments containing more than one village, and this may well have been true before 1898 as well.

There were other minor honours similar to the title of regional governor and often awarded to the same people. These were the right to use the royal descent name *jere*, the right to a special praise name *ndhuna*, and the right to wear ox bones as a decoration.[13]

Wiese mentions certain special lieutenants who carried out tasks comparable to those of ministers of State. He describes three officials, one a minister for the interior, apparently responsible for the Paramount Chief's domestic affairs; another a minister of war who was also high priest; and the third a master of ceremonies at national festivals. He says that the ministers carried out these special tasks in addition to their ordinary duties as lieutenants, and gives the names of two of the three, who were the first lieutenants of two major sections.[14] Thus although there was some differen-

[11] See Table VII. The sample used in this table contains more villages founded by regional governors than would occur in a representative sample.

[12] Read, 'Boundaries', p. 16.

[13] Brewer, *Africa*, p. 253; Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 479, and 'Geschichte', p. 198.

[14] Wiese, 'Expedition', pp. 469-70 and 'Geschichte', p. 188. These two men were the first lieutenants of segments 14 and 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tiation of function between the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief, it is improbable that there were any special political offices outside the residential system. 645 631

Read mentions a political hierarchy with various titles.[14] At least in the Fort Jameson group, three of the four vernacular terms she gives were used in connexion with the residential system. The fourth, *ommmmat*, was used in Zulu for messengers sent by a chief and a dialectical variant of this (*mapuzie*) is so used nowadays at Fort Jameson. They have no executive authority and do not seem to have had any in the past. 631 [624]

Fraser, writing of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, says that there were two groups of lieutenants, one composed of men who became Ngoni before the crossing of the Zambezi and which exercised civil power, and the other which included men of more recent incorporation into the Ngoni tribe and which supplied the war leaders. He implies that the war leaders did not take part in the civil administration.

There seems not to have been this distinction between civil and military lieutenants among the Fort Jameson group. Wiese's 'Minister of War', who was referred to as a Commander-in-Chief by other contemporary writers, was a segment head with the same responsibilities towards his people as anyone else. The regiments had leaders responsible for the tactical control of warriors, some of whom were recently incorporated men, and presumably Fraser is referring to them, but his statement that the man often chosen to lead the whole army had no voice in the council conflicts with Hendie's account of the same place and period. The war leader, Ng'omomo, who is mentioned by Fraser, acted as regent on the death of the Paramount Chief in northern Nyasaland.[16] 681 701

The village as such had an importance independent of the size or order of segment of which it was headquarters or by which it was inhabited. There were no special terms for distinguishing the heads of large or small segments, for all were lords or ladies. But a special term[17] was used for a village headman, irrespective of the order of segment of which he was lord, provided he was not a lieutenant who had become head of the village in the absence of agnatic descendants of the founder. The use of a special term may have been an indication of the village headman's importance, part of which derived from the control he exercised over the cattle. 681 622 [622]

[14] Read, 'Traditions', p. 460. cf. her account of the southern Ngoni in 'Foundations', p. 18.

[15] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 32. cf. Hendie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 101, 189.

[17] *Ishkosana*. In Zulu, a small or petty chief. cf. Read, 'Traditions', p. 460.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of 578 643 influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed 611 for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express [754] their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to [669] establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling [872] with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor 643 chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the 578 courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own 692 court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically 643 important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with 648 the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for [685] embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly [186] marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3 *The chief's advisers*

634
The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and 643 his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each 645

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 643 645 county the senior lieutenants of the county segment are well-known figures, usually headmen of large villages, and often seen at the chief's house. There are also the lieutenants of the segments of lower order founded for their great wives by successive heads of the county segment, and in particular the lieutenants of the reigning chief's great wife's segment. There are individuals who for some reason or other have become friendly with the chief, and there are those occupying posts paid by the Native Treasury. There are the kinsmen of the chief, including the chief's deputy. All these categories contribute to the circle round the chief which keeps him informed of what is going on in his county, advises him what he should do and travels with him on journeys. The constitution of this group is not fixed and there is no formal council to which persons definitely do or do not belong. An Administrative officer once asked Mpezeni II who constituted the tribal council, and the Paramount Chief is said to have found difficulty in thinking of any names. Not all the people who might be expected to advise the chief do so, for there are always quarrels and preferences within each category. In particular, the lieutenants of regal segments seem to play a comparatively minor part. They do not represent the interests of the county as a whole, as do the lieutenants of the county segment, nor of the reigning chief, as do the lieutenants of his own village. They are the favourites of former chiefs and the segments that they represent are not functionally significant under the present scheme of administration.

In recent years the Administration has endeavoured from time [643] to time to discuss affairs with the chiefs and the four newly appointed Native Authority councillors in isolation from the rest of the tribe.[4] In most situations in which matters of common interest are discussed there is, however, no restriction on who can offer advice to the chief or to the meeting. Any man can stand up and say what he wishes, but unless he is in an important social position people will listen to him attentively only if his counsel seems sound.[5]

It is the custom for a chief to nominate one of his agnatic kinsmen, usually a father's son or father's brother's son, as his [645] deputy.[6] Although this appears to have been a traditional post, I 634 do not know what role was played by an important man's deputy 645 in pre-conquest times. Nowadays the deputy of a chief may help in his various official duties and represents the interests of the chief's agnatic kin as against those of his lieutenants. In village affairs

[4] See p. 151.
[5] See pp. 158f.
[6] *Mamwe*. cf. Zulu *umnawe*, younger sibling.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy.

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief.

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it.

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.
[8] *Lingwa*. cf. Zulu *i(li)nxusa*, messenger sent by a king or chief.
[9] See Brower, *Affairs*, p. 63, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.
[10] See p. 149f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

651 marriages and for selling beer, and from fines and fees taken in court. In some years there has been a local levy on all men liable for Native tax.

642 The Native Authority, the Native Court and the Native Treasury form a single system of what is essentially local government. The judicial aspect of government has always been to the 693 fore, for the hearing of cases is an activity which has gone on without serious interruption since before the conquest. The first people to be appointed as assessors were in many instances the people who had been hearing cases with the chief for many years. They were joined in this by the councillors, for there was no separation between judicial and administrative organization in pre-conquest times and none had emerged by that time. Since the court clerk needed to be at least partially literate, he was usually a younger man who had been to school but, in some instances at least, he had close kinship ties with those in high office. He acted as a member of the bench as much as the councillors and assessors. In some courts other close supporters of the chief, particularly those who lived near their courts, also attended regularly to hear cases although they were not paid to do so, and in at least one instance a chief paid a regular salary out of his own pocket to a member of his court who was not recognized as such by the Administration.

Thus the court was the nucleus round which the Native Authority grew. The court clerk was employed as secretary to the chief and the Native Authority, and he had charge of the rubber stamps which came to be the new symbols of political power. He toured the county looking for dogs and bicycles without licences, for since he was literate he was considered the man to handle the money accruing from court fines, fees and licences. Sometimes he combined with these duties others that had nothing to do with court work, such as seeing that villages were swept clean or paths hoed. Because of his work in court he was well informed on disputes in the county, and since he made frequent trips to the township so that his accounts could be checked by the Administration, he was well briefed on what was going on there. The office of court clerk [554] came in this way to have a greater importance than its formal duties implied.

Yet in recent years the relative status of the court clerk has declined. The executive, as opposed to the judicial and fiscal, 648 functions of the Native Authority have become more numerous. 645 The activities of the Administration, instead of being confined mainly to tax collecting and the punishment of major crimes, have expanded to include a variety of social services for Africans and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

these need the support and co-operation of the African community. The Administration has consulted Ngoni and other Native Authorities on such matters as agricultural control, the emigration of women to the railway line, provision of better schools, and so on. In 1948 the number of councillor posts was reduced. Instead of employing councillors for general duties, each of the four councillors remaining, now receiving a much higher salary than before, has been given a specific task, the care of roads, the promotion of agriculture, the efficient use of school facilities, and the co-ordination of the work of the Native Authority as a whole. The Administration has attempted to make these four councillors, together with the ten Northern Rhodesian chiefs, into a formal council competent to take decisions without always referring to the people as a whole. 648 645

So far this attempt has not been very successful, but the power of the four councillors is certainly greater than that of their more numerous and lower-paid predecessors. The court clerks have been overshadowed by these new men and left behind in these new activities. Literacy is becoming common and clerks are no longer in demand as secretaries to chiefs. The Native Authority is beginning to employ men whose jobs do not take them to court at all. [212]

The present range of posts whose emoluments are handled by the Native Treasury is shown in Table VIII. 647

All these posts are filled by the Native Authority in agreement with the Administration. It is easy to show how a large proportion of the employees are connected to the chiefs and senior lieutenants by kinship, but this fact is not as significant as it might appear. The Ngoni possess nowadays what may be called an omni-directional kinship system in which ties of kinship can be traced as convenient through fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and by any combination of these. It would indeed be surprising if Native Authority employees could not trace genealogical connexion with chiefs and their lieutenants, for so can nearly everyone in Ngoniland. There is no formal selection procedure but a chief may announce at a county meeting that there is a post to be filled and those present may suggest names. Alternatively a chief may discuss the matter with his advisers and then offer the post to the man they decide on. Occasionally a man seeking employment approaches the Paramount Chief in the hope that there may be a post to be filled. Thus although those who live near the chief, or who make it their business to see him and drink with him frequently stand a greater chance of being chosen, choice is not restricted to these people. [641] [662]

(see page 152, category 116. — Analyst)
[Text continues on page 153]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him. 634 648 [647] [687]

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialised services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them. 648 65 [797] 645 643

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo- 644 184

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of
[645] councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native
[602] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion
[771] Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living, in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
649 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural
[693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

boundaries of their own village, and they were afraid to travel even in a large party of twenty or thirty. So no one had any wisdom beyond that of his own village and family. When the Ngoni came they had one law for all people and they had courts to hear cases where this law was enforced. There was freedom to travel in the land where the Ngoni ruled, because they had peace within their boundaries. Therefore, we say: this was the kind of peace we had. 173 671

In these two texts we have one major concept of Ngoni law with three chief ways in which it was implemented. The concept was that there was 'one law for all people' and that the knowledge of and enforcement of this law brought internal peace and resulted in good government in the country. There was one source of law as there was one source of political and military authority—the Paramount. As Cibambo points out, the Paramount delegated his authority for carrying out the law to chiefs and headmen and depended on his 'old men and men of repute' to keep him in touch with the thoughts and desires of all his subjects, so that he might adjust the enforcement of the law to bind the people to him. He also called large gatherings of all the chiefs and *abamnanna* and headmen in order that they might hear from him any new laws and regulations and understand them so that they in turn could make them known to their people. In the intervals between the holding of these large gatherings, which took place not more than once or twice a year, messengers passed constantly from the Paramount's village to all the areas of the chiefs and *abamnanna*, reporting to them about decisions taken at the royal village on matters affecting the country as a whole, and taking back reports to the Paramount on what was happening in the outlying districts. 671 643 692 203

I attended two of these annual meetings of the chiefs and *abamnanna* and headmen in the central kingdom. They took place not at the Paramount's village but at a more central spot for the whole territory. The people were drawn up in a square formation, with the Paramount at one end supported by his 'mouthpiece' (*ndomo awakosi*), who always spoke for him, with the six Subordinate Native Authority chiefs beside him, and the councillors (*izinduna*) messengers and other officials of his court and of the S.N.A. courts arranged in order of precedence, facing the crowd as they did during court sessions. On the three sides of the square in the front ranks were the *abamnanna* and the headmen of their villages, sitting in territorial groups, and behind each headman were the *madoda* or senior men of the village, and behind them again the *amajoko* or young men. I watched this assembly of 3,000 to 4,000 people being arranged, as they arrived, by the *izinduna* of the Paramount's court and the *izinduna* of the six chiefs. They took up their places as though on a military parade, and once placed there was no further movement. The effect was that of a barrack square in the straightness of lines and orderliness of behaviour. After all was in order the Paramount 631 643 692 645

631 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in
643 his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning
692 to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount
645 by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first 'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then it was open for any of the *abamnumu* or headmen to speak 'from the floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with freedom.

The topics offered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from [744] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits. Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said, would have that leader recognised as a headman. This drew a number of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme, others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognised in the new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages. 'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our headmen. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant afterthought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Paramount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to [651 be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few 585] shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the *izindwa* had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among the audience during and after this discussion and the *izindwa* had to call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese [648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izindunas* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

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This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izindunas* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambezi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

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were, however, and they realized it at such assemblies, the people of the Paramount, and he was to them the visible symbol of their unity in one kingdom.

The Court System of the Ngoni

The enforcement of the laws as announced and discussed at these assemblies was the business of the courts, where the laws themselves were interpreted and often elaborated on occasions of an open breach.

The relationships of the courts in the kingdom followed the hierarchical pattern of the political organization. All minor cases were heard and, whenever possible, settled at the village level. If the plaintiff failed to get satisfaction, or if the village headman was unable to get his judgement accepted, he had to go with the litigants to the chief's court, and if he failed there, the case could be taken to the appeal court of the Paramount. There were certain cases, such as murder and witchcraft, which in pre-European days could only be dealt with in the Paramount's court.

Some confusion arose over the use of one term 'court' for every type of institution which exercised judicial functions. The Nyanja term used in central Ngoniland for the courts at the lowest level was *bwalo*, literally the open space in front of the *indlwekulu* in any Ngoni village. Nothing could be apparently more informal than the discussion among a group of senior men called together by the headman, on a verandah or under a big tree, in order to settle quarrels and hear complaints. No formal records were kept, there was no clerk, and there was no summing up or pronouncement of judgement. There was, if the meeting was successful, general agreement about the action necessary and about who ought to initiate action. Above the level of this village headman's court were the courts of the *ahamzana* held at their head villages, and above them again the chiefs' courts. After 1933 the courts of the *ahamzana* gave place to the courts at the head villages of the chiefs. The proceedings there were more formal and included presenting evidence, defending the case and pronouncing judgement on cases rather than, as in the villages, talking things over and appealing to certain principles to re-establish equilibrium and resolve disputes.

The Ngoni nevertheless always recognised these courts at the village level as an integral part of their system. It was the mark of a good headman that he should be able to settle the minor cases in his village without constant reference to higher authority. The majority of villages under Ngoni rule were villages of local tribes who had surrendered to, or been conquered by, the Ngoni. The headmen were therefore of the local tribe, as a rule surrounded by their kinsmen, and their position carried with it the necessity of relating local tribal custom, especially in matters involving marriage and family affairs, to the legal principles and procedure of the Ngoni courts. Many cases came before the courts in

643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *isini senkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
684 this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was
178 death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *izinduna* and the *amadoda* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticised each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the
[857] conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *lomesi* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organizing his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

631 NGONI OFFICE-BEARERS

622 In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni
● 645 political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a
[565] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

be used exclusively for either group, and in fact there was considerable overlapping between them. 622 631

We begin with the text by Cibambo which emphasises the hierarchy of office-bearers in the northern kingdom in pre-European days and illustrates the correlation between the courts and the political administration. 645

¶ The former government of the Ngoni was based on the following:

(1) Above all was the one called *Inkosi* or *Ulkulu*, because they thought of him as the father of the country, the head.

(2) After him came the *izinduna*. Sometimes these were two or perhaps four. These were very highly honoured and the Paramount feared them greatly: he called them *Ibubulu* and their words had great weight with him. They were the ones who gave advice to the Paramount and if any grave matter arose he called them to hear what they thought. The Paramount in his village had also his old men who helped him with everything small that did not need to go to the *izinduna*. If there was word that the Paramount was meeting with the *izinduna* he first of all met with the old men and asked for advice to place before the *izinduna*. And these old men had the right to speak when the Paramount took counsel with the *izinduna*.

(3) After the *izinduna* came the *amakosana*, or lesser chiefs. These were perhaps the younger brothers of the ruling Paramount, and had their districts under him. They also had their *izinduna* and were responsible for their own districts. When the Paramount met with the *izinduna*, the *amakosana* were also there if it was considered fitting.

(4) Then there were the *abomasana*. These were over villages or smaller districts. Their villages were called *amakanda* (heads) and they had power in their small districts to carry out the laws and they looked to the *izinduna* for instructions.

(5) Lastly the old men (*madala*) who wore the head-ring (*isidindi*) but not all of them; only those who had good sense and understood the ways of the tribe. [888]

All these five divisions had their share in the government of the country. If there was a great court of justice, all these were to be found at it, and took part in the discussions. If fresh matter arose, or new laws, these delivered them to their villages. Also there were men called *amanxusa*, messengers. These were men chosen to run with messages from the Paramount to the *izinduna* or *amakosana*, to go with and return with news. Almost every village or little district had its chosen messengers. All the types (2), (3) and (4) had their messengers. When anything happened, the messenger in the village of the Paramount made a general proclamation and called the *amanxusa* together. When the *amanxusa* had heard the message they scattered throughout all the country. So in the districts and by this way news travelled very quickly. [203]

In the central kingdom one of the big *izinduna* explained the change in their system which occurred after crossing the Zambesi: 178 622 631

¶ When the Ngoni were coming from the south they chose lesser chiefs and *izinduna* from the *amakosana*, who were the Paramount's brothers, 645

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sons of his father and of his father's brothers. These *amakosana* were honoured next to the Paramount. The *ahosana* were for justice in the courts, and for being the 'ears of the Paramount' in all the country. The change was made by Mputa because he saw that if the *amakosana* were given power they claimed to be big chiefs themselves. Therefore he chose for the courts and for the leaders in war and for lesser chiefs the *ahosana* and *isindosa* who were clever and whom they could trust.

184 622 631 645 [698]

The diagram on p. 99 relates to the period between 1933 and 1939 and sets out first the officials in the territorial divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms from the Paramount to the headman of a village. In the northern kingdom only the Paramount and the six chiefs had recognised courts, the chiefs' courts operating for their districts and the Paramount's court for the whole kingdom. There were two sets of office-bearers who had no courts but who exercised authority over groups of villages. One group consisted of members of the Jere clan who were not recognised chiefs but were *amakosana*, literally 'children of the chief' but used as a rule for all members of the royal clan. Only certain *amakosana* had villages under them. The other group consisted of the heads of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who owned several villages and sometimes had authority over a large area. Cibambo put this group below that of the chiefs, and other informants confirmed this as the pre-European pattern. But the informants also said that many of the powerful *ahosana* formerly had their own courts and did not have to bring their cases to the chiefs' courts as they did in the 1930's. At the bottom of the territorial hierarchy came the headmen of single villages. In some cases the village headman had formerly been an *isidosa* in a large village which had broken up. Some were of the royal clan or of Swazi clans. The majority belonged to the local tribes and were owners of villages which were for the most part villages of one kinship group.

The text about the hierarchy in the central kingdom shows that a deliberate change had been made in the traditional pattern to avoid a struggle between the Paramount and his brothers when they had recognised positions as chiefs. The *ahosana* who appear in the diagram as chiefs were the six who were recognised in 1933 as Subordinate Native Authorities. There were other *ahosana* who were not so recognised, and certain members of the royal clan, all of whom owned a number of villages but had to take their cases to the recognised courts. The division caused by setting up the Portuguese boundary in the 1890's left many of the leaders of the Maseko clan on the Portuguese side, with the result that the number of *amakosana* owning villages and taking any prominent part in the life of the kingdom was very small; and another large group of the Maseko clan were in Dedza district under Chief Kacindamoto. The majority of village headmen in the central kingdom were of local tribes, and their villages were as a rule much larger than those in the northern kingdom.

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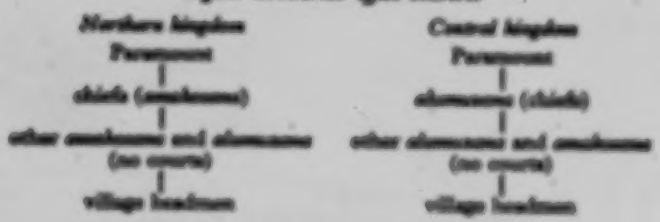
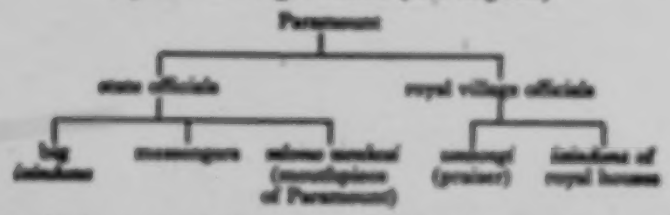
Ngoni territorial office-bearers.



Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *izinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only recited the praise-songs at ceremonies in the royal village. 643 645

The big *izinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *izinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below him. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *ahosana* and *amakosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned. [203]

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the 885 692

885 diagram is that of the *mudude*, the older men who were the head-ring. 692 Probably in pre-European days they received more recognition than was apparent in the 1930's after the head-ring had been given up. The *mudude* will be referred to in the next chapter on the royal village and in Chapter V of Part III on age sets. In the appeal court of the Paramount and in the chief's court there was always a group of these senior men sitting behind the *induna*, to whom the *induna* speaking to the case sometimes turned for advice and consultation.

645 Reference was made to an overlap between territorial office-bearers and national office-bearers. The big *induna*, the spokesman of the Paramount, and sometimes the messengers, were members of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, and often were *abamasumu* who had no courts. This was a method by which in the 1930's these *abamasumu* could be drawn into the circle of officials and receive a small salary for their services.

This set of office-bearers which we have considered in relation to the Paramount, with the exception of his spokesman and his praiser, was duplicated for the chiefs in both kingdoms, whether they were of the royal clan or *abamasumu*. The account of the royal village in the central kingdom which follows in the next chapter will illustrate how these officials functioned in the day-to-day affairs of the Paramount's headquarters.

CHAPTER V

A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933

The Paramount and his village

36 [104] 13 [16] For some weeks in 1935 and in 1936 I lived in the Paramount's village of Magangu in the central kingdom. The central kingdom included all Nchara district, consisting of 1,092 square miles, a total population of 88,456, and a density of 80·99 per square mile. The village was 300 yards off the main road running from north to south of Nyasaland, and was approached by a hard motor road flanked by huts. It consisted of three main sections: the Paramount's large brick residence and the surrounding buildings within a palisade or reed fence, including the huts of his daughter and son-in-law, and of his brother-in-law and sister; the huts and kraal in the section of the *induna* of his big house, Kalikumbe Mhewe; and the huts and kraal of the original village 'owned' by the headman, Lazaro Dzonzi. On the south of the village was the large open space where the weekly market was held, and where several Indian stores faced the main road. On the north was the dispensary building,

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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643 day, and so did all the regular helpers in the household. The stream of
574 visitors was incessant, especially on Saturdays when the market was
264 held, and on the days when the Appeal Court was in session at the court-house adjoining the village. Not every caller was given food, but if they came from a distance it was always offered. In the setting of a modern brick house and a Christian household with only one wife, the Paramount had to provide a great deal of hospitality. The old tradition that *ekwanana* and other important men visited the Paramount daily no longer held. But the weekly market and the court meetings, and the lorry service on the main road bringing callers from north and south, as well as administrative affairs which had constantly to be discussed and settled, made the Paramount's house and *bwalo* a very busy place.

Officials of the royal village and state officials

574 When I lived in the royal village for several weeks I was aware of a
643 never-ending stream of persons coming to consult or to work with the
645 Paramount. Well protected as he was by the Ngoni method of indirect approach and the surveillance of the village and *bwalo* by the *induna* of the big house and the *nkomo nenkosi*, the Paramount was still subject to constant inquiries from his office-bearers who needed his counsel, and from persons great and small from all over his kingdom who believed that he could help them. Among the village officials the *induna* of the big house worked closely with the headman of the village, and displayed unremitting efforts to see that all affairs in the immediate neighbourhood of the Paramount should go smoothly. They were constantly on the *bwalo* of the big house, or near the gate of the fence surrounding it. These two always turned up when visitors came, and sat on the verandah or in the *bwalo* with the other senior men, and kept an eye on all that happened. If anything went wrong in the village or the compound when the Paramount was away they were in great distress, as on one occasion when a man ran amok and threatened people with a knife. There was a strong tradition that around the Paramount and his living quarters everything and everyone had to be orderly and peaceable.

645 The *umbongi*, or praiser of the Paramount, was among the royal vil-
574 lage officials, though he only appeared on the *bwalo* when ceremonies took place there. He sometimes came when important visitors arrived if their visit was known in advance. He always came to the big dances and feasts held at the royal village. He was an old man, tall and spare, leaning heavily on a long staff, and many of the onlookers who listened attentively to his praise-songs showed nervousness when he began making personal remarks, for he had a sharp tongue and a flow of language.

Of the state officials the *nkomo nenkosi* was seldom away from the big house or far from the person of the Paramount. He had married the Paramount's sister, and was own brother to the *inkosikazi*, and his

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kinship links strengthened and facilitated his official relations. If the Paramount went away visiting, he generally went with him, and if he were very busy or resting, then the *nkomo nenkosi* would act as his assistant and endeavour to meet the needs of the applicants. He was known on the register of Native Administration employees as the Paramount's assistant. 645 574

The other state officials who were constantly at the royal village included the clerk of the Appeal Court, the four councillors, the three messengers, and the treasurer. The clerk was in his office on most days, and when the court was sitting he kept the records. He also came to the big house when important visitors arrived and sat with the senior men. The four councillors and three messengers were all senior men, five of them of trans-Zambesi clans. The councillors conducted the cases in the court and reported to the Paramount, and spoke for him when he gave judgement. They and the messengers always came to the big house before the court opened, and returned there to eat food after the sessions were over. This was invariably an occasion for discussing cases and judgements and the general state of the country. The fact that the court was an Appeal Court, to which cases were referred from the six subordinate courts, enabled the councillors to estimate the efficiency of these courts in various parts of the country. Their private comments on the abilities of the respective chiefs to maintain order and judge cases in their courts were often caustic.

Several references have been made to the treasurer of the Paramount, a title assumed by Ishmael Mwale in view of his financial responsibilities for the central kingdom. The District Commissioner in his report for 1935 said: 645

« During the year the financial responsibility of the Native Authority was increased: he was handed over the keys of his safe at the Boma, and the District Commissioner only handled his cash for the purpose of checking. Gomani's clerk has acquired or given himself the name of 'Treasurer', and in this capacity frequently visits the Subordinate Authorities to make a financial inspection of their books, and to collect money which is surplus to their needs and bring it on charge in the main account. The District Commissioner's role has in consequence become akin to that of an auditor.

Ishmael Mwale, the 'Treasurer', has shown ability for his duties. Not only is he capable of abstracting the revenue and expenditure of the Subordinate Authorities into a common ledger, but the time has now come when he should be fully capable of preparing draft estimates for the consideration of the District Commissioner.

The treasurer knew the country and the people of the different regions in a way that no other official of the Paramount knew them, and was therefore often called in for advice when petitions were brought in or complaints made. His eldest son married the Paramount's older daughter, and there was therefore a close tie between the two families.

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645 He was a student of Ngoni history and custom, and used his travels as treasurer to collect new information. He always intended to write a history of the central kingdom as Cibembo had done for the northern kingdom, but his public duties never gave him time.

643 645 974 In making contact with his people and keeping in touch with his officials the Paramount did not rely only on their visits to the royal village. Two or three times a year he toured his kingdom, accompanied by his *mdomo wenkosi* and the treasurer, and stayed at the head villages of the chiefs and also of other *alumwamu*. The treasurer spoke enthusiastically of the Paramount's habit of making himself known to his people and enabling them to present petitions to him in person. He met village headmen on their own ground, and *alumwamu* who were unostentatiously directing the affairs of their villages and areas, as well as the official chiefs or Subordinate Native Authorities. He saw for himself how his own regulations were being carried out and how the measures for agricultural improvement and cattle-dipping which the Government was promoting were being adopted. These visits in his own territory were followed by visits to Blantyre and Zomba and to the mining centres outside the country where his people were working. He was thus able to check on the conditions in the subordinate chiefs' areas which had been created by the prolonged absence of men from the villages.

The Paramount and changes in law and custom

643 178 Through his school education at Blantyre, his membership of a Christian church, and through attending the chiefs' course at the Jeanes School in Zomba, the Paramount stood between the old and the new in the changing conditions in his kingdom. After the 1933 Ordinance one of the changes in administration was that a Native Authority had to budget for income and expenditure in his area. 652 The income for 1935 for this area was £959, made up of a share of the taxes; fifty per cent. of the yearly rental of stores; court fines and fees and beer licences. The expenditure was £832, under items of salaries to the Paramount and subordinate chiefs; salaries for messengers, councillors, clerks and policemen; payment of fourpence per tax to the headmen of the villages so that it was to their advantage to collect the full amount; and a small sum for uniforms, office expenses and such items as cash boxes and handcuffs. This budget for the central Ngoni kingdom was drawn up in consultation with the District Officer by the Paramount and his treasurer. It was a source of great pride to the treasurer that he had, as we have seen, his own key to a safe in the District Office where he put the tax money collected in the area, and drew out sums needed for expenditure in the Paramount's office.

744 653 In 1933, as already mentioned, a meeting of subordinate chiefs, *alumwamu* and headmen heard the Paramount's proposals for new regulations about village improvement and agreed to them. These regulations were

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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they acknowledged as rulers or direct sons of rulers. The other opposition came from the heads of the Swazi clans who saw their claims to recognition threatened by large numbers of these *makosana*. When such a person was announced a *mahowasana* might comment to bystanders 'Who is this man? We do not know his father.' Then to save his face as well as that of the visitor, he would send a greeting to him and order beer to be supplied, while avoiding any elaborate form of entertainment. This subtle form of resistance to what were considered undue claims from lesser members of the royal clan was found everywhere.

In both kingdoms the Paramounts and chiefs, especially after 1933, appointed as officials for the kingdom and for the royal village, members of Swazi clans, but also, and increasingly, members of cis-Zambezi and local clans. This practice brought together in the royal villages and in the chiefs' villages men of the ruling aristocracy and men of the lesser clans, to share administrative responsibility, to assist on ceremonial occasions, and to take part on an equal footing in giving and receiving hospitality. This mingling on the official level was one of the reasons why marriages became more frequent between girls of Swazi clans and men of non-Swazi clans whose fathers had been promoted to official positions. The marriage of Paramount Gomani II's daughter to the son of his treasurer was an illustration of this. The daughters of families of Swazi clans were also sought in marriage by men of non-Swazi clans who, through their education, had got well-paid work in the Government or in commercial firms, and could therefore afford to give cattle for *lobola* for the girls. These were two instances of the type of marrying up which in the 1930's was lessening the sharp division in social life between Swazi and other clans. We shall see in Chapter IV, pp. 137, 140) that Ngoni fathers of daughters married to non-Swazi clansmen found a way of keeping their married daughters, as well as their sons, in their villages, particularly in the central kingdom.

Though the Ngoni clan system in the 1930's was, in Dr. Kuper's phrase, 'neither precise nor static', it was an integral part of Ngoni social organization. It was closely related on the one hand to the ruling aristocracy, and on the other to the social hierarchy. Both in the villages and in the national life of the kingdoms individuals belonging to Swazi clans played a leading part in social and ceremonial life, and carried on those distinctive Ngoni practices which their ancestors had brought with them from the south.

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159 In 1828 Zwangendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
161 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zwangendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
5/18 Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Mzeulwana; this was the year of
643 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Mzeulwana and Zwangendaba midway between
648 the Limpopo and Zambezi Rivers.

In the year 1833, in which Mzeulwana attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenço Marques), Mzeulwana and Zwangendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zwangendaba and his following, accompanied by Mbikwandabuka, a brother of Mzeulwana, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zwangendaba broke with Mbikwandabuka and proceeded in a north-easterly direction, where at the Sugwi-Kwini River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mzeulu, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intala-Di-Ka-Mzeulu.
[305] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the Ulwandle River (Zambezi) at Mazyemwe on the south bank, nearly opposite Zembe on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zwangendaba and an induna, Ngabi Mzeulu, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zwangendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis hunted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaan Tete, who was a brother-in-law to Zwangendaba and his
[645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zwangendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[689] of Zwangendaba's wives for infidelity; Zwangendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mzelwa or Mzeulwa was born, son of Zwangendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zwangendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Mafwa.

In 1845 Zwangendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was force with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaan Tete and Njakwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyimbwi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his amogai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Gwaru), Nkuta Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loulowwa Nqumayo was the wife of Zwangendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zwangendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
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562

159 173 [547] Zimukazi Lovu Ngoma of the Amanga tribe worked for Soanza when he was a youth. Zimukazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chief's sons, Soanza. Zimukazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service until about fifty years of age.

[582] [593] (3) Chiwaya Mkhalepi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the Golden wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mpamanche Ndima, died, Chiwaya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambezi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tolo. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Mashaya Inkhi. Father, Nzyokwana (Nyokwana); mother and wife, not known; sons, Mambambewa and Chibete.

[554] [578] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1848.

159 173 167 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njero; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambow Gama) before the Zambezi crossing. They had no issue.

On the upward trek after crossing the Zambezi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Pawlos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

[578] After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1858. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Mawko was killed by [554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 [701] [645] (6) Nyakwana Ntilile. Father, Mphangu, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyawanana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chola, Mwa, Mazwi. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpindula Hill, Matambazi River, in the year 1860.

(7) Ngwi Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majokwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.

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He

159 was a son of Zongwalala and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

643 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambezi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongwalala, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwazu Tolo, Chief
173 Counsellor. Chief Njhwane, Chief Military Induna. Induna: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Ngwabulo, Induna Zidumba Regiment; Nombula, Induna Nombula Regiment;
551 Mgoi, Induna Nojhwane Regiment; Ntabezi, Induna Zidumba Regiment. Chief
[643] Gwazu Tolo was also Captain of the Mochaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njhwane was
[645] Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Nojhwane, Zidumba (black cobble,
[701] white spot), Nombula, Mochaya Imiti (red and black kids, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives of Zongwalala who crossed over:—Chilenye Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Nowa Ngumuya, Great Wife; Umwene Naima, mother of Mombera; Kqutu Naima, mother of Mtwalo;
[595] Nowelo Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku?; Chigomane, Ngulowe, Ndanya Mhumima,
[593] Mambaw Gama, Vuyakhali, Mwakuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qudzive.

A further list of Zongwalala's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanya, Zin-Khali, Nqumbeni, Nkhalani, Ndanya, Maleti.
167 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabezi, Mgoi, Nombula,
551 Mabuzyabuzya, Ngoya, Umkwane, Uhalle, Ukhungwayo, Undima, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
593 Chief Diviner or *Inyanga*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongwalala's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalo, Ndebudele, Mombera, Mzolan, Mwalule, Mwambo, Makekeva Njobvu, Mpezembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, *Jabaw*, Sikane, Chigomane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyondeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595] Lupeko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madalinawe Jere;
Mtizwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawane Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere;
Malenge Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife.
Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727] 1898. Grandson:—Chibwa Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupeko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupeko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupeko village, in 1901.

[727] Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near Mzuzu Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nzuzu Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayunga (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machibungu,
Mavimba, Mahina, Zinyoka, Mascho, Manyina, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera,
704 Mabema, Kembeyonda, Mafelakudeni, Chimallembalemba.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
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barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries.

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandon everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace.

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth fourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. When he listens in court to some great indaba his face is expressionless as granite, with an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had to

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[643] wait for six or seven years before the procrastinating headmen
[645] could lay aside jealousies, and actually place him in the authority of his father. Then when he is crowned he cannot sit in judgment
[692] or give a decision unless his councillors have been summoned, and have deliberated with him. Many a time in the old fierce days the councillors and chief argued and debated one another for weeks at a time over the question as to whether the white man was to be tolerated in the country, and it was the strong affection of old Mombera for Dr. Laws, and Wm. Koyi which alone held in the dogs of war, and prevented his councillors from going forth on an exterminating expedition. Yet in spite of the great power of the chief he lives as father of the people with all the villagers as his children. His house is like their own, built right in the centre of
[567] the village. The poorest slave has access to him, and he hands his beer pot or his snuff to the meanest villager when he would show him friendliness.

[639] Under the paramount chief there are four great sub-chiefs, and
[639] each of them has his councillors and headmen. Then these
[692] headmen have each a group of villages under their control. They hear and dispose of petty quarrels between the villagers. Cases in which headmen are involved go to the sub-chief, and cases in which the sub-chiefs are involved, and all great tribal affairs,
645 go to the paramount chief. The tribal council is an impressive sight. Just before I came here I had the privilege of being present in one of these great gatherings of the tribe. It had met to discuss the advisability of coming under the British Protectorate. The great chief, Chimtunga, had sent out his messengers to call to council all the sub-chiefs and headmen. They marched into the
[634] chief's kraal on the appointed day, each sub-chief followed by his councillors and hundreds of armed warriors, all walking in single file, and dressed in their gaudiest clothes. They sat round the kraal till thousands were present. By-and-bye the paramount
[643] chief walked in, followed by his brothers and council. He was greeted by a roar of salutation, and took his seat. When the case was opened, and the subject introduced, the fathers of the people rose one after the other and saluted the chief, and then addressed the people. The speakers walked up and down, speaking with
[537] considerable incisiveness and eloquence, their language full of metaphors and traditional allusions. Then the chief spoke, closing the discussion. Immediately it was ended and the royal
[535] salutation given, a warrior leapt into the circle with a war cry, fell

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

down at the chief's feet, and with a shout dashed up again and danced a furious war dance. His eyes fixed and staring with passion, every muscle distended, he stabbed into the air with his spear, toured the dust of the kraal about, and leapt hither and thither in a frenzy of passion. All the while he kept shouting his battle-cry, and the thousands of fighting men around beat their spears and chanted a chorus. When he had exhausted himself, another headman leapt into the circle and went through his own peculiar wild dance, and then another and another, and for half-an-hour or more these fantastic exhibitions were maintained. Then the chief rose. A great roar of salutation greeted him. Gathering his clothes about him he walked in procession from the kraal, and the council broke up. 645 [535] [543]

In the olden days the power of the chiefs was maintained by a wholesome dread of his warriors, and the laws were enforced with a consistent severity. One result of this is that the Ngoni tribe has always had a higher standard of morality than any Central Africa people. Some persons were stealing mission cattle and complaints were made to the chief. After a time a thief was caught, and then in spite of the pleadings of the missionary the highest penalty was meted out to him. He was hanged on a tree opposite the mission house, and it was forbidden to remove his body. The hyenas wore a path round the foot of the tree trying to get at the carcass, and there he hung, a terrible example to the neighbourhood, until the white ants ate the rope by which he hung, and the body fell to the waiting hyenas. 692 685

I have seen a chief receive news of the adultery of one of his wives, turn to his executioner, and give him instructions, and in a few minutes both man and woman were lying dead outside the village. I have myself begged for the life of a woman who had sinned, and she was spared only after a great fine in cattle was levied instead. 684 [543]

These were harsh and terrible punishments, necessary for rough times. And now when the chief is losing some of his old authority, and dare not exercise capital punishment because of the overshadowing British Government, one fears that except where the power of religion has taken the place of the old dread, a weaker morality is apt to sap the vitality of the tribe. The punishments were not arbitrary. They were fixed by precedent. And all the past quarrels for forty or fifty years back would be quoted to prove the right of a plaintiff or defender. And now 177 681

d:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord's dependants placed under a lieutenant's care became more specifically his dependants and eventually he appointed one or more of the men among them to be his own lieutenants. Thus it was possible for Z to be the lieutenant of Y and at the same time for Y to be the lieutenant of X. When Y died, his son became X's lieutenant or, if Y had no son, Z might succeed him as X's lieutenant. 631 621 624

A lord with but few dependants sometimes appointed one or more of them as his lieutenants without specifically dividing his dependants among them. Thus, a lieutenant might be appointed without the formation of a segment for him, and only later would he differentiate from the rest of his lord's dependants those for whom he was directly responsible.

The ranking of lieutenants was one of the least stable parts of the residential system. In a village under a lord there were lieutenants in charge of segments forming divisions within the village. As their segments grew in size, the lieutenants broke out of the village to found new satellite villages. A new set of lieutenants was gradually appointed to take their places in charge of the people remaining in the headquarters, and in the course of time the new set also broke away from the headquarters village.[81] Though they had moved out from the village the lieutenants still retained their positions as lieutenants within the primal segment of which it was the headquarters. Thus in a large segment containing many villages there was a long ranked roster of lieutenants, of which only the junior members still lived in the segment headquarters. Further proliferation of lieutenants sometimes took place when an heir succeeded as lord of the segment but did not found a new segment of his own. The new lord appointed his own lieutenants, so that within the same segment, and partly within the same settlement, there were two sets of lieutenants, one senior by time of appointment, the other enjoying the favour of the present head of the segment. When in these circumstances one of the senior set died, his eldest son sometimes had difficulty in asserting his position as lieutenant; and in this way the senior set, or part of it, lost control of the segment to the more recently appointed men.

It was in keeping with the expanding social boundaries of the State, and of the high degree of mobility within it, that there was no formally constituted council. Some contemporary accounts mention a tribal council, but it seems clear that until very recently, when the Administration tried to institute a council with defined membership, there has never been a legislative or executive body 631 646 [648]

[81] cf. my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 197f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

63/ 646 to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various bevies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

643 The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not 627 himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were 644 specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the [622] village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot inter- [624] vene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[88] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended [579] by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[89]

62/ 63/ Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[88] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.

[89] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

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Mpezeni

648 rule as a Native Authority Order.[26] Thus the chiefs preferred to
671 appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the
692 judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the
692 indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts.
664 Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of
[797] divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people
671 and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened
646 about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are
661 constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[27]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the
692 ease with which their members may move away to other sur-
648 roundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts
626 are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the
[681] end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[26] *African Affairs, report*, 1948, p. 47.
[27] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market. 571 574 [439] [311]

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. [692] 648 643

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area. 611 178 171 [249] [464]

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the 646 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

646 Secretariat or the Legislative Council. The agenda consists of
648 items suggested by the African members and by the Administration.
The African members of the Council elect four of their number as
[666] their nominees to the African Representative Council of Northern Rhodesia, which in its turn advises the Governor on the appointment of the African members of Legislative Council. As yet, the Provincial Council meetings attract little attention among the bulk of the African population, and few Ngoni know who their members are. Nevertheless among the chiefs and councillors these meetings, if regarded with suspicion, are of some interest, and for the two delegates they provide an opportunity for stressing in public what they regard as the Ngoni point of view as contrasted with those of other tribes. Many of the Ngoni speeches are phrased in anachro-
[537] nistic terms, and represent more an affirmation of how different
the Ngoni are or used to be rather than a realization of how similar
[186] their interests now are to those of their neighbours. However, it is possible as the Council acquires more power and the consequences of its deliberations begin to affect more people directly, Ngoni will take a greater interest in its proceedings.[28] The same comments apply to Ngoni participation on the Provincial Team, an advisory body with representatives from the Administration, the unofficial White community, Indians and Africans.

Ngoniland is almost completely surrounded by Cewa chief-
648 doms. The old no-man's-land which isolated the Ngoni from their neighbours in pre-conquest times has long ago disappeared. On the fringes of Ngoni country there is a great deal of contact between Ngoni villages and their Cewa neighbours and the links of kinship stretch across tribal boundaries without interruption. Within
563 Ngoniland itself, under the control of county chiefs, are some
648 villages which still speak the Cewa language rather than the Nsenga dialect used by most Ngoni. Most of these Cewa-speaking villages
[167] have come into Ngoniland after 1898. Their numbers are indicated in Table VII (p. 133) where it will be seen that on the average about one village in five has entered in this way. The great majority of these are Cewa in origin. Some of them claim that they have returned to ancestral sites, others state that they came as a result of land alienation or of some quarrel with their former chief. Others have been formed by non-Ngoni immigrants who have worked for many years in the township or on the farms and built up their own followings. In Northern Rhodesia villages of this kind form an integral part of Ngoni society. The cultural features which distin-

[28] cf. Barnes, 'History', for a discussion of the way in which Ngoni members act at council meetings.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could be raided for their crops, as well as for captives, and when the rivers did not form such an obstacle to rapid movement as they did during the wet season. Some of the early reports of travellers suggest that there was some sort of alliance or working arrangement between the Ngoni and Mwasi Kasungu, whose territory acted as a buffer-state between Mpezeni's Ngoni and Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland[1] but this alliance does not seem to have been very stable. 648 [721]

The British Administration restored or created Cewa chieftainships that now completely encircle the Ngoni except where the Ngoni area reaches to the edge of the waterless and uninhabited Luangwa escarpment. The Administration did not recognize any right of the Ngoni over these Cewa areas, and it is now difficult to discover how much control was in fact exercised by the Ngoni over the Cewa at that time. The Ngoni certainly continued to hold that they were entitled to control the Cewa. In 1913, when the formation of reserves was being discussed with the Administration, the Ngoni chiefs are said to have been disappointed that the scheme would give the Cewa land of their own and later in the same year they tried to ensure that the Cewa to their south, who were to be granted a reserve separate from those of the Ngoni, should be formally placed under the control of Mpezeni.

At the present time the principal institution in which Ngoni co-operate with other tribes under the aegis of the Administration is the Eastern Province African Provincial Council. This body meets once a year for three days, and is attended by delegates from all the Superior Native Authorities in the Eastern Province, as well as by representatives of the Administration. It discusses matters of common interest and it elects two members to represent the Eastern Province on the African Representative Council of the whole Territory, but it does not have any legislative or executive powers. Its meetings are open to the public,[2] but as yet few people attend and the recommendations reached are passed on to only a small section of the tribe. The delegates to the Council are chosen by the Paramount Chief on the advice of his lieutenants. 646 648

There are also other political relationships that unite Ngoni with other tribes. Some of them arise from common residence in an area outside the Ngoni country. Representatives are stationed at the 648

[1] Money and Smith, *Explorations in the Country West of Lake Nyasa*, p. 152.

[2] Except on the first day, when the African members of the Council meet by themselves in Committee.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

224 organized by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief
476 and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who
634 killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt, but occasionally if the
634 field is very poor a chief will summon absentees in his court.

224 These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic
[136] significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as effectively as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but
[681] he can call out his men hunting.[18] Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with
[411] them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African bureaucracies*

647 Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was
648 little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous
693 leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

[18] See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 215, for Ngoni hunting methods.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Adminis- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created,
the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity
as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity
and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[10] were
employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make
arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native
Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of
subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as 692
well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative
legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award [681]
damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish
between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Adminis-
tration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native
Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority
was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni
Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping.
The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction
and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of
messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main
roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production,
for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had
to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries
and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an [647]
assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The
Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the
extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs
their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[10] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapau* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

these need the support and co-operation of the African community. 648
The Administration has consulted Ngoni and other Native Authorities on such matters as agricultural control, the emigration of 645
women to the railway line, provision of better schools, and so on. In 1948 the number of councillor posts was reduced. Instead of employing councillors for general duties, each of the four councillors remaining, now receiving a much higher salary than before, has been given a specific task, the care of roads, the promotion of agriculture, the efficient use of school facilities, and the co-ordination of the work of the Native Authority as a whole. The Administration has attempted to make these four councillors, together with the ten Northern Rhodesian chiefs, into a formal council competent to take decisions without always referring to the people as a whole.

So far this attempt has not been very successful, but the power of the four councillors is certainly greater than that of their more numerous and lower-paid predecessors. The court clerks have been overshadowed by these new men and left behind in these new activities. Literacy is becoming common and clerks are no longer [212]
in demand as secretaries to chiefs. The Native Authority is beginning to employ men whose jobs do not take them to court at all.

The present range of posts whose emoluments are handled by 647
the Native Treasury is shown in Table VIII.

All these posts are filled by the Native Authority in agreement with the Administration. It is easy to show how a large proportion of the employees are connected to the chiefs and senior lieutenants by kinship, but this fact is not as significant as it might appear. The Ngoni possess nowadays what may be called an omni-directional [611]
kinship system in which ties of kinship can be traced as convenient through fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and by any combination of these. It would indeed be surprising if Native Authority employees could not trace genealogical connexion with chiefs and their lieutenants, for so can nearly everyone in Ngoniland. There is no formal selection procedure but a chief may announce at a county meeting that there is a post to be filled and those present may suggest names. Alternatively a chief may discuss the matter with his advisers and then offer the post to the man they decide on. Occasionally a man seeking employment [662]
approaches the Paramount Chief in the hope that there may be a post to be filled. Thus although those who live near the chief, or who make it their business to see him and drink with him frequently stand a greater change of being chosen, choice is not restricted to these people. [see page 152, category 116. —Analyst]

[Text continues on page 153]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE VIII. PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS TO BE PAID BY NGONI NATIVE TREASURY, 1949

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Description of post	*Number of posts*	*Mean annual salary in £s, to nearest £*
Chief	10	72
Councillor	4	60
Treasury clerk	2½(*a*)	57
Artisan	2	42
Court clerk	10	25
Messenger	22	25
Assessor	20	24
School attendance officer	5	24
Road foreman	2	24
Office boy	1	24
Mail runner	2	16
Nursery keeper (fruit trees)	1	15
School matron	6	9(*b*)
Total number of full-time posts	87½	

(*a*) One tax-collecting clerk whose work was in Fort Jameson Township was paid jointly by the Ngoni and Cewa Native Treasuries.
(*b*) Including £1½ contributed by missions.

This table is based on the approved estimates for 1949 and it is possible that not all the posts were filled. In previous years all posts had been filled without difficulty, except for the matrons.
The emoluments shown here do not include allowances paid for bicycles, lorry fares, and rent-free housing available for some employees.
Not included in the table are the sums paid to a few employees at the Demonstration Farm, and the provision made for 240 man-months of casual labour on the roads at 25*s.* a month and 360 man-days of carrier labour at 10*d.* a day.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him. 634 648 [647] [687]

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialized services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them. 648 65 [797] 645 643

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo- 648 184

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of
[645] councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people
[602] and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living,
[771] in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
648 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural
[693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local 647
Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these 624
duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in 648
conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary [693]
Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Adminis-
tration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and [651]
to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand
some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary
for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native
Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees
of other technical departments of the Administration, such as
Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two
police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are [625]
mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White
farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder,
have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European adminis- 648
trators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it
were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to 647
each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely
to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information
concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and
townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of
the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent
employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For
the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the
indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which
smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are
content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of
life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the
villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work 167
in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not 582
are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus
the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land
messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an
administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every
social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this
when the social distance between the two persons involved is small.
Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are
posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some
remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around 166
them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the 582

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

166 closeness of the ties linking them to the areas in which they find
582 themselves. To give two extreme examples, an agricultural demonstrator, after a few months in a rural compound, sought to marry a daughter of a near-by village headman. A policeman, sent to a village to investigate a murder, married a woman related to the dead man. Marriages of this kind are made partly because there is no other way by which a stranger in a village can be certain of getting enough to eat, but they also serve to broaden and diversify the relationship between the stranger and the people among whom he finds himself. Some of these marriages are terminated when the stranger is moved to another district, but there are a number of instances where Ngoni wives have gone with their stranger husbands to distant mines and towns. This process is, of course, merely part of the much wider one by which many Ngoni women follow their
[167] husbands when they leave their villages to seek work in Southern Rhodesia.

Similarly, chiefs and other important rural leaders endeavour
●647 to establish enduring relations with members of the African Civil
557 Service. Some civil servants are their kinsmen, for one way by which a junior son of an important man can gain the position he desires but which is denied him by the rule of primogeniture is to enter the Civil Service or to seek advancement in one of the churches. Others are related by affinity, while yet others may go out of the way to offer hospitality to visiting political leaders when they need food and shelter in town. Some Ngoni civil servants maintain large households in the villages, which they visit at week-ends, and which they hope will have grown into recognized villages by the time they come to retire.

Thus there are two distinct groups of Africans concerned with
554 public affairs, the African Civil Service and the Native Authority
557 bureaucracy. They are in intimate association with one another,
647 and both exercise considerable political power. Both are formally distinct from the old political system. But status in traditional terms, as chief or village headman or head of a division or cluster, is still recognized in the face-to-face relations of people generally, and hence there is a continual attempt to bring the two systems into congruence with one another. Clerks aspire to become headmen when they retire, while headmen aspire to be the fathers and fathers-in-law of clerks. This is no new development, for as early as 1907 Stigand reported that a Swahili, whose home was near Zanzibar, and who had been a soldier, had founded a small village close to Fort Manning.[20]

[20] Stigand, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 125. See p. 118.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

One reason why the two bureaucracies remain separate is that members of the Civil Service are moved from one headquarters to another as the exigencies of the service demand, whereas a Native Authority councillor or foreman cannot, in general, seek similar employment in another tribe. In 1951 an Ngoni Native treasury clerk was transferred to a similar post in a neighbouring tribe, but moves of this kind are still exceptional, and almost out of the question where chiefs' posts are concerned. Clerks and messengers employed by the Administration are more likely to be moved at short notice, and the whole process of adaptation has to be begun again. The Ngoni clerk who is moved away from Ngoni country has to settle down to life in a strange district, and the stranger who comes to Fort Jameson has to find his way around the complexities of Ngoni society. 647 167

This factor of movement is even more significant in the case of the White administrators. Most of them spend only a few years in Ngoniland, and to them the Ngoni are merely one tribe among the many that they meet with in the course of their professional lives. Most of them can speak Nyanja, which most Ngoni can understand, so that there is not the added complication of interaction through interpreters, with the interpreters in a key social position, as Mitchell points out for the Nyasaland Yao.[21] But even though they can speak directly to Ngoni, it takes time for them to learn the faces of the people they see in the various Native Courts and at tribal meetings, and it also takes time to determine how these faces are related in a political system. Thus of necessity administrators are forced to rely on the advice of the African Civil Service, principally the messengers and clerks, and of the important chiefs when they need local knowledge to guide them. Chiefs and clerks attempt to establish firm relations with the administrators with whom they work, but owing to the great social distance which separates Black and White throughout southern Africa, there is little scope for this. Some messengers like to suggest that it is they, and not the White administrators, who really decide what shall be done. While this may have been partially true at one time, it is not true now. As Ngoni society has changed gradually in the direction of something with which administrators are more familiar, and as the content of administrative action has become less and less restricted to such simple activities as collecting tax and making roads, so the power of the district messenger has declined.[22] 648 647 [558]

[21] Mitchell, 'Political Organization of the Yao', pp. 153-4.

[22] Bradley, *Diary of a District Officer*, records in interesting fashion the relationship between himself, as District Officer, and Head Messenger Kachaje of Fort Jameson.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Capital, court and chief's village*

634 We have spoken of the headquarters of the county segment as the capital of the county, and this is in accord with vernacular usage. Although each chief is head of his county segment, no chief lives in his capital village. Each has made his segment and set up a village of his own. This process continues with each successive chief, each making his own new village. When brick buildings [344] were made during the 1930s to house the newly recognized Native Courts, these were located near the villages of the reigning chiefs. Some of these are still in office, while others have died and their successors live in their new villages, some of which are as much as two miles away from the court. There are thus in some counties three foci of political interest. There is the capital village, the court, and the chief's village. Associated with each centre are different leaders and different activities. The capital village provides a link with the past, and in particular with that moment in the past at which the segment was founded. The Paramount Chief [643] retains special rights in his capital village and can make a garden for one year on the old site of his county capital whenever it moves to a new one. Most, if not all, capital villages are larger than the average village but the senior lieutenants of the county segments do not live in them, for like the chiefs, they have made their own villages. Nevertheless, the lieutenants who do live in the capital [554] are regarded as people of considerable importance in the county. Meetings are sometimes held in the capital but more frequently at the county court or in the chief's village. The court is the home of 692 the Native Authority, and it is there that the affairs of the Administration are discussed. An incident well illustrates the association of 648 the court with the Administration. I once called at the house of a 634 county chief who had not previously met me. He insisted that I 647 should go to the court to meet him there, as that was where he always met Administrative officials. County meetings are called at the court to discuss matters raised by the Administration in its letters to chiefs, and to formulate requests and complaints for transmission to the Administration. The court clerk, the Native Authority councillors, assessors, and messengers are much in evidence, while the traditional advisers of the chief, his senior lieutenants, may be in the background even if they are not silent. Meetings of this kind are usually called by county chiefs, but occasionally a meeting may be held open to the whole tribe. I have described elsewhere the procedure at a county meeting.[22]

[22] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 107-9.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern
683 Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native
574 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native
643 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he
574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and
643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some-
484 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many
[202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the
● 647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern
167 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni
567 as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not
619 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of
571 the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their
[557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties
571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia
574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realize that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni eni eni*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names.

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.'[1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognized areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *alumuzana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *alumuzana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognized as *alumuzana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *alumuzana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognized court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *alumuzana* were recognized as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *alumuzana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*. 1935, p. 54.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

647 in the political organization. Some of these officials were also members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but many were not. The officials served the Paramount in his court and his administration, and also the chiefs, and formed the lines of communication between them. This 647 created a network of relationships between the Paramount and the 631 chiefs at the top level, and between the chiefs and the village headmen under them at the lower level. From this network were excluded, in the northern kingdom, all the *alumuzana* and, in the central kingdom, all those *alumuzana* who were not chiefs. In the two kingdoms the *alumuzana* exercised unofficial control over a varying number of villages, and were inclined to assert their social superiority because they were excluded from official recognition.

The foundations of the political structure within which the ruling 571 aristocracy operated were a series of related institutions which will be 171 described and analysed later in the book, but which must be referred to 178 here, partly in order to explain the terminology used. The South-eastern Bantu, whose culture the Ngoni brought with them, had an institution in all important villages known as 'houses', which was a grouping of huts and of the wives owning them round the hut of one or more of the leading women. This institution, with its variations among the southern and northern Nguni people, was described by Mrs. Hoernlé in the chapter on 'Social Organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*.[1] The Ngoni institution of houses had developed from the basic pattern among the South-eastern Bantu into an independent form. In the first place it was only found in relation to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading men of the royal clan, and the *alumuzana*. It did not, as in South Africa, form the basic pattern of all [621] villages in the Ngoni kingdoms. Where, as in most villages owned by *alumuzana*, mixed ethnic groups lived together, the house system existed only for the head of the clan, his brothers and his successor. It was specifically an Ngoni institution in the cultural and social sense. In the second place, the terms 'right-hand' and 'left-hand' house, common among the South-eastern Bantu, were not used by the Ngoni in the 1930's. The two terms they used were the 'big house' and the '*gogo* house', and I propose to use these terms here. The principle behind the use of these terms was that the big house was the one from which the heir should come to succeed the Paramount, the chief, or the *mulumuzana*. The *gogo* house was the one which was responsible for maintaining tradition and performing ritual.

Another institution, closely related to that of the houses, was the 621 *lusungulu* and *gogo* villages. The Paramounts, the chiefs, and the leading 571 *alumuzana*, when they succeeded their father after his death, moved out of his village and made their own new village, or took their households

[1] Schapera, I. (ed.). *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*. Routledge, 1937, chap. IV.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

701 allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.[1] Since he also had the
643 sole right of forming a new regiment of young men and giving it a name,
702 he controlled the intake to the army as well as the discharge of seasoned warriors.

The big war *induna* served directly under the Paramount. Associated
701 with him were other subordinate war leaders or *izinduna*, one of whom was always at the head of each regiment. Considerable emphasis was laid by Cibambo and other Ngoni informants on the essentially military character, in pre-European days, of the office and function of the *izinduna*, who were officials serving the whole kingdom. We shall see in Chapters III, IV and V how the term *induna* was also used for civil
[643] officials at the royal village and in the courts, as well as for the men in charge of sections of a village and of houses.

The account of the mobilization of the army shows that the Ngoni
701 had changed the system of military barracks concentrated about the
171 capital, described by Gluckman as typical of the Zulu military organization and by Kuper for the Swazi. Gluckman said that the chiefs assembled their people in territorial, not age, divisions, and that the age regiments belonged to the king alone and lived in or near his capital.[2] In pre-European days the Ngoni, according to Cibambo and to other informants, had in their armies territorial divisions as well as age regiments, and there was no concentration of young warriors by age regiments round the Paramount's village.[3]

When a summons to war went forth, the warriors in the territory of
726 each chief or *mulumuzana* assembled at his head village as a *libandla*.
704 This included the warriors from the outlying villages and from the head
561 village. Cibambo's use of the term *libandla* emphasized that it was a territorial unit, divided into *mabuto* (which he called sections) on the basis of age.

When each *libandla* arrived at the Paramount's village ready for warfare, the different age groups within it joined up with their parallel age groups from other *mabandla* to form regiments. The Ngoni term for these national regiments was *mabuto*, the same term as that used for the age divisions of the *mabandla*. Old men who had been warriors in their youth expressed to me many times their immense pride in their own
[703] *libuto*, and it had for them something of the tradition and prestige of a famous school. They would recite the names of other *mabuto*, beginning with their own as the most recent, and going backwards through ten or more regimental names to those who had crossed the Zambesi with

703 [1] Cibambo in the text spoke of warriors wearing the head-ring. The usual practice, according to informants, was to give the head-ring at the end of service in the army. Cibambo may have been referring to former warriors with a head-ring putting on war-dress for a ceremony.

[2] Gluckman, M. 'The Kingdom of the Zulu', in *African Political Systems*, 1940, p. 31.

[3] One example of a concentration of young men was reported at the village of the Queen Mother in the central kingdom in 1898 in *The Central African Times*, see Memorandum XVI, International African Institute, 1938, p. 18.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
693 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their
184 colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
692 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done
183

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have
178 continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the head-
[622] man, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
● 647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Genthe, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest. 647

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping villages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, but this cannot be done openly under the present régime. 628 [643] [648] [692] [669]

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships. 631 64

Sanctions

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exercised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 687 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 sensitive to suggestions that a chief may be oppressing his people,
648 usually works through the Paramount. One minor chief was sent to the Paramount's village for a period of instruction in order that he might learn how to rule wisely. On another occasion a chief who had abused the Administration was fined one month's salary by the Paramount. In both these instances the Administration was the initiator of the Paramount Chief's action, but he may also act without reference to it. It was reported to the Paramount that a certain minor chief had struck one of his subjects who had been slow to offer him beer. The Paramount warned the minor chief that he might kill someone this way, and that he ought to fine people, not to strike them. In a dispute between a minor chief and his court clerk over some new court furniture, which the chief wished to use in his own house, the Paramount intervened and ordered that the chairs be put in the courthouse.

643 The Paramount himself is subject to social constraint, and may be criticized by his senior lieutenants. He is advised on how he should behave by these men, and if his behaviour is unsatisfactory they may rebuke him. At county meetings, headmen and others can voice their
644 complaints against the royal house as a whole, and have from time to
661 time protested successfully at such a meeting against too many of the Native Authority posts being filled by members of the royal lineage.

The Native Authority

●647 Under the Native Authority system, introduced by the Administra-
[648] tion in 1929, there are a number of paid officials, apart from the chiefs, whose salaries are met by the Native Treasury. They include councillors, assessors, clerks, police, postmen, school attendance officers, and others. The most important of these, and the most highly paid, are
692 the councillors and assessors. They sit once or twice a week in court and hear cases brought before them. Each of the chiefs has a court, and for the most part the cases that come before a county court are brought by people living in the county. When litigants from two counties are involved there is no definite rule as to which court will hear the case and it largely depends on the wish of the instigator of the proceedings. Cases come before the Paramount Chief's county court that concern people from other counties and a litigant may take his case from one chief to another, including the Nyasaland chiefs, in an attempt to obtain a favourable and enforceable decision. The Appeal Court sits at the Paramount Chief's village and is held once a month.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and assessors are nominated by the chiefs on the advice of their lieutenants and some of them are in fact lieutenants or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is illiterate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lieutenants or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying sixpence for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the county and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [693]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organized system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional governors. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of their people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 431 [273] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend these to people they can trust. All the chiefs organize their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole county, but only part of the county. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organize enough hunts. 622 224 [411] [136]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

work lay in my vicinity, and with Miss P. M. Deane, Colonial Research Fellow, who visited Ngoniland and who kindly placed her data at my disposal. Their researches threw much light on my own. 114

The literature on the Ngoni is considerable, and my work has been helped by the reports of earlier writers. Professor Read visited the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1935, and those of my informants who had met her recalled her visit with great pleasure. I was often able to allay suspicion by explaining that I was trying to do the same kind of work as she had done earlier. In addition to published reports I have made considerable use of official dispatches and other archival material relating to the conquest of the Ngoni by the British in 1898. 127

For kind permission to quote from other works, I am indebted to the Oxford University Press and the International African Institute (in respect of *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* by Meyer Fortes), the Director of Agriculture, Northern Rhodesia Government (*The Soils, Vegetation and Agriculture of North-Eastern Rhodesia* by C. G. Trapnell), and The Editor, *Scottish Geographical Magazine* ('A Trip to Northern Angoniland', by H. Crawford Angus). 000

In preparing this book, I have to thank Miss D. Goldstein and Mr. J. Paing for help with diagrams and maps. Professors Schapera and Evans-Pritchard, Dr. Peristiany and Dr. Kaberry read the manuscript and I have been very grateful for their comments. Finally, I would thank my wife for companionship and assistance in the field, and for unremitting help in the arduous task of writing.

J. A. B.

Meling, Norway
1952

Postscript:

Since this book has gone to press, the British territories of Central Africa have been united in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. This momentous step in the development of the region has been accompanied by a major shift in the balance of power between the Administration, the White settlers and the indigenous African population. I do not know in detail how the Ngoni people have responded to this change. Federation was a topic of conversation among them even while I was carrying out this study, and several Ngoni men have been prominent in the political negotiations of the last four years. It seems, therefore, highly likely that the operation of the political structure discussed in the last two chapters 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 of this book, involving as it does both Blacks and Whites, has now altered considerably. I have described relations between the Ngoni and their White neighbours as I saw them during 1946-9, but this description may not necessarily be valid now.

J. A. B.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group
consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the
167 now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of
631 Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised
643 control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4.
It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwambera's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group,
[648] for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes
173 of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the
613 head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not
643 lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife.
644 However this woman was prompted to independent status by the
595 formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingeni) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 worship. They allowed the local chiefs to govern their people
636 according to their own laws and customs, but under the authority
727 of the Ngoni. They followed the method of governing which Europeans call "indirect rule".' They also took selected children from the conquered peoples and reared them as Ngoni in Ngoni villages. Young's account supports this.[27] Whether or not this method of government was wise is clearly a matter of opinion. It is perhaps significant that for Mpezeni's people the evidence provided by the present disposition of persons claiming descent from different ethnic groups suggests that a different policy was followed there. Chibambo and Young talk of groups of warriors under Mwambera belonging to various subjugated tribes; in Mpezeni's area captured men appear to have been drafted into
[561] the various age-set regiments, so that men from the same tribe were distributed throughout the army and did not form a distinct group.
173 Territorially, the dispersion of captives from the same tribe was not so complete, for it appears that in Mpezeni's group the major
563 segment settled on the east of the Ngoni area raided mostly to the
727 east, and the western segment to the west, and so on, so that many of the captives taken from a particular locality were to be found in the major segment of the State nearest their homeland. Yet even this concentration of captives with the same ethnic origin was not complete, and representatives from all the principal tribes with whom the Ngoni came into contact are nowadays to be found in all parts of Mpezeni's Ngoniland. We suggest that this policy of assimilation, practised to a much greater degree by Mpezeni than by Mwambera, may be correlated with the fact that in Mpezeni's group there were no revolts by groups of captives of common origin, whereas in Mwambera's there were three such revolts, by Lake Tonga, Kamanga and Henga tribesmen.

173 Mwambera attacked the Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu some time round about 1860, and was driven off in the face of fire from
721 guns Mwase had obtained from Arabs. He subsequently came to an
648 agreement with Mwase whereby the Cewa chief became his 'child' and lent him soldiers armed with guns to assist in Ngoni raids. Travellers suggest that later Mwase came to an agreement with Mpezeni as well, but this is not so certain. Mpezeni does seem to have established peaceful relations with one or two minor chieftains during the period of early European contact,[28] but for

[27] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 39-41; Young, *History*, p. 119.

[28] e.g. Cuaula, a Kunda chief and Msoro, who had Kunda and Nsenga connexions. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 11; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyassa', p. 746.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most part all external relations were warlike. The State, as it were, was internally an organization of segments and externally stood posed against an undifferentiated hostile world. Even with the Maseko Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, the Ngoni group spatially nearest to Mpezeni, relations were warlike.

Despite this hostility, it seems probable that some individuals from the neighbouring tribes did leave their own country and join the Ngoni of their own free will. I was given accounts of this in a number of family and village histories, and while it is possible that some of those people whose ancestors were captured may now think it preferable to speak of voluntary attachment to the Ngoni State rather than capture, I do not think this can be the complete explanation. In the first place, very many Ngoni of to-day are quite prepared to admit that their ancestors were captured on Ngoni raids, so that the desire to conceal the capture of an ancestor, if it exists at all, cannot be widespread. On the contrary, some Cewa chiefs and notables who are now politically independent of the Ngoni and live in their own chiefdoms will recount with great interest how their ancestors were captured by the Ngoni. Secondly, some of those who claim that their ancestors joined the Ngoni of their own volition come from places a long way distant from Ngoni country, where the frequency of Ngoni raids cannot have been high, even if the Ngoni ever raided there at all. For instance, one village claims that its people came voluntarily from as far away as Fingoe, in Portuguese East Africa. Thirdly, there is a well-known instance of a son and other close relatives of an Nsenga chief who joined the Ngoni and rose to high position in the State. The Ngoni Paramount Chief and some of the minor chiefs are still friendly with the descendants of this Nsenga chief, Kalindawalo, and the story that these Nsenga nobles were not captured but were instructed by their own chief to transfer their allegiance to the Ngoni seems probably to be true, despite a contrary tradition among the Nsenga that these men were taken as captives.[39] Lastly there is the evidence of Glave, writing in 1894, who says that a host of villages had given themselves up to the Ngoni rather than submit to the constant anxiety of attack.[40] Thus provision was made for men and women to join the State other than as captives. These volunteers were treated in the same way as captives. They were allocated, either as individuals or in small groups, to a segment and came under the orders of a lord or lady. The Ngoni lived at a much higher standard

[39] cf. Field, *Visiilano*, p. 16; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 42-4.
[40] 86, fo. 329. See p. p. 68, f.n. 8. See also Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 473.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 of life than their neighbours, largely at the expense of those neigh-
167 bours. It is therefore not surprising that at least some of the more
648 adventurous of the hunted should have decided to join the ranks of
727 the hunters.
[511] In Tanganyika the activities of the Arabs and other slave traders brought about significant changes in Ngoni society earlier
173 than in the less accessible Nyasa region. The Ngoni in Tanganyika
648 did not regard their neighbours merely as enemies. Ngoni warriors formed part of the army of Mirambo, the Nyamwezi slave trader. An elaborate network of joking relationships seems to have regulated intercourse between the tribes of Tanganyika and the Tanganyika Ngoni were linked to many of their neighbours in this way.[41] Joking relationships of this kind did not develop among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. In recent times, however, Ngoni from Fort Jameson have come into contact on the Copperbelt and elsewhere with tribes such as the Bemba who have developed a joking relationship with other Ngoni groups. These joking relationships are now extended to the Fort Jameson men.

From this historical account we are able to gain some idea of
173 Ngoni polity during the mid-nineteenth century. We have restricted
128 our attention to the relations existing between major portions of the State and between the State and its neighbours. We have seen how forms of organization, in particular the lineage system, with which the Ngoni began their march, were modified in conformity with the peculiar conditions of migrant brigandage. In the next chapter we shall look more closely at the internal organization of the State and attempt to analyse the social processes at work within it.

[41] See the writings of Moreau, Pedler, Scrivener and Spies.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible 595
that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy 611
over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in bevies 2 and 3 but not in bevy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in bevy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in bevy 2 and the other by the heir in bevy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I [578] recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were 578
sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should 611
be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious 595
fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of 578
dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this 557
particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who [648] exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs 578
arising from the method of ranking bevies. The same principle of 611
ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to bevies of 621
wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain 554
situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly 561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regi- 727 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, 621 were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appro- [702] priate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

561 The annual first fruits ceremony (*nkwala*) was organized on an 796 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

[167] The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social 648 system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 631 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [772] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *inqwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and the Ngoni did not seek to vanquish other tribes as states but rather to exhaust them by continued attrition. In later years it appears that a few minor chiefs who lived near the Fort Jameson group did manage to come to some agreement with it, for the Ngoni seem to have raided them only sporadically although warriors passed through their territories *en route* for more distant objectives; but this may have been due to the intervention of European traders. The powerful Cewa chief, Mwase Kasungu, may also have come to some arrangement with the Fort Jameson group even as he did with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland.

Thus for the most part the external relations of the Ngoni State were warlike. The Ngoni did not trade with their neighbours, or send ambassadors to them, or enter into alliances with them; they merely killed or captured them.[10] The army was organized on a basis of age-sets, but the age-sets as such did not enter into political relations with their enemies. They merely executed the policy of the State or of the major segment to which they belonged.

3. *Officers of State*

The residential and age-set systems formed the structure of the State and there was no separate administrative system. There was little specialization of function among those who wielded power in the State, and those who did have special governmental tasks were all the lords of large segments.

The nearest approach to special political officers is to be found among the regional governors. A few of Zwangendaba's followers were with him from the beginning of his journey from Natal. Some of these were his agnates, but the descendants of others have now forgotten what relationship, if any, they bore to him. These early followers did not stand in the lord-lieutenant relationship to Zwangendaba, for in Ngoni usage all lieutenants were captives, or the descendants of captives, of their lords. They were organized in segments in the same way as everyone else, but the heads of some of these segments were known by the special term *mulumuzana* which I have translated as regional governor. Segments headed by regional governors were attached like other large segments to the various royal headquarters, and thus became primary divisions of the segments formed for queens. They differed from the lieutenants of the royal headquarters not only in their title but also in the greater freedom they were allowed in their segments. They kept their own villages separate from the royal villages to which they were attached politically.

[10] See pp. 25*ff*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord's dependants placed under a lieutenant's care became more 631
specifically his dependants and eventually he appointed one or 621
more of the men among them to be his own lieutenants. Thus it 624
was possible for Z to be the lieutenant of Y and at the same time for Y to be the lieutenant of X. When Y died, his son became X's lieutenant or, if Y had no son, Z might succeed him as X's lieutenant.

A lord with but few dependants sometimes appointed one or more of them as his lieutenants without specifically dividing his dependants among them. Thus, a lieutenant might be appointed without the formation of a segment for him, and only later would he differentiate from the rest of his lord's dependants those for whom he was directly responsible.

The ranking of lieutenants was one of the least stable parts of the residential system. In a village under a lord there were lieutenants in charge of segments forming divisions within the village. As their segments grew in size, the lieutenants broke out of the village to found new satellite villages. A new set of lieutenants was gradually appointed to take their places in charge of the people remaining in the headquarters, and in the course of time the new set also broke away from the headquarters village.[21] Though they had moved out from the village the lieutenants still retained their positions as lieutenants within the primal segment of which it was the headquarters. Thus in a large segment containing many villages there was a long ranked roster of lieutenants, of which only the junior members still lived in the segment headquarters. Further proliferation of lieutenants sometimes took place when an heir succeeded as lord of the segment but did not found a new segment of his own. The new lord appointed his own lieutenants, so that within the same segment, and partly within the same settlement, there were two sets of lieutenants, one senior by time of appointment, the other enjoying the favour of the present head of the segment. When in these circumstances one of the senior set died, his eldest son sometimes had difficulty in asserting his position as lieutenant; and in this way the senior set, or part of it, lost control of the segment to the more recently appointed men.

It was in keeping with the expanding social boundaries of the 631
State, and of the high degree of mobility within it, that there was 646
no formally constituted council. Some contemporary accounts [648]
mention a tribal council, but it seems clear that until very recently, when the Administration tried to institute a council with defined membership, there has never been a legislative or executive body

[21] cf. my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 197f.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

political would seem to be, for example, at the medial lineage among the Tallensi, beyond which generation differences are not recognized; and at the village among the Nuer. It seems probable that in the old Ngoni system the village was also the significant unit, above which relationships were dominantly political and below which they were largely determined by the multiplex sentiments and activities arising out of kinship and domestic association. This is certainly so in modern Ngoniland, although the same principles of organization no longer apply at all levels. 602 631 [121] [171]

I have described elsewhere the critical position of the modern Ngoni headman, linking the political system with the network of ties of kinship and co-residence operative within the village, and similar conditions have been reported elsewhere by Gluckman and Mitchell. Above the village, whether in a state or in a stateless society, relations are in the main between enduring groups and are defined with respect to interests vital to the survival of these groups, even if expressed in the idiom of kinship.[36] 622 631

Granted the existence of primitive states with continually segmenting political systems, such as the Zulu and Ngoni, it is then possible to look at from another point of view the various African political systems for which there is adequate information. In terms of political segmentation on a unilineal basis, states like the Ngoni and Zulu are closer in form to the stateless societies of the Nuer, Tallensi, Gusii and Logoli than to the Nupe and Kede states with their administrative systems largely independent of unilineal affiliation. To document this point fully would take us beyond the scope of this book; our purpose here is merely to emphasize the importance in comparative studies of examining political structures from more than one point of view. 121 171 631

When talking of states, we make the convenient distinction between internal and external political relations. No such simple distinction can be made with stateless societies, for in them relations which are external to one segment are internal to the next higher segment, and yet may still legitimately be regarded as political relations. The pre-Shakan chiefdoms of Zululand formed a system similar to the Tallensi maximal lineages, and we may speak therefore in that instance of a segmentary system regulating political relations between states. Ngoni external relations were not regulated in this way, for the Ngoni were isolated and unique in a region 631 174 648

[36] For this section, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* and 'Kinship among the Nuer'; Fortes, *Web of kinship*; Wagner, *Bantu of North Kavirondo*; Mayer, *Lineage principle in Gusii society*; Gluckman, 'Analysis of a social situation' and 'Kingdom of the Zulu'; Gluckman, *et al.*, 'Village headman'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organized themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[37] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[38] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[37] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[38] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[45] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[45] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 196; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, f.n1; Young, *History*, p. 125.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than were the groups further inland. However, the evidence suggests that no great changes of this kind took place among the Fort Jameson group under Mpezeni, and it is therefore with changes in the external environment of the State that we shall be chiefly concerned. 631 178

In this early period, between 1821 and about 1885, there was for most of the time a situation in which the forces attaching people to the State were stronger than those tending to split it. The age-set system, the web of affinal ties, the attachment of segment members to their lord, the reliance of a lord on the support of his dependants, and the external opposition of all non-Ngoni, these all held the State together. Shifts in the balance of power could be made without disrupting the State because the State was continually expanding, and expansion gave it flexibility. The weakest links in the State were at the top, and it was these that were most strained as the State grew in numbers and in degree of segmentation. Under critical conditions, as on the death of the Paramount Chief or when the need for food necessitated a move from one tribal site to another, these were the links that gave way and fresh independent States were formed. Fission in the State led to consolidation of ties in each divergent group, but the same processes leading to further fission began again at once. 178 64

During the period of migration the Ngoni flourished. They were successful brigands on the march. Yet they were brigands in a poor land, and despite their military successes their economy remained one of subsistence cultivation, even though others did some of the cultivation for them. They were well organized for war and their enemies were not, but both they and their enemies were poor people relying on shifting cultivation with a poor technology and with access to only moderately valuable natural resources. The hinterland of Africa provided the Ngoni with an area within which they could operate successfully, but this area was bounded by the lands of wealthier and mightier peoples. Towards the end of the century the boundaries of the area began to contract. The Ngoni found themselves in conflict not with subsistence cultivators using hoes and spears, but with peoples using writing and guns and possessing apparently limitless resources of cloth, beads and gunpowder. We now have to turn to the story of the Ngoni struggle with these Arab and European invaders. 167 721 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Three

DEFEAT

1. Structural change 2. Portugal or Britain 3. Concession hunters 4. European consolidation 5. Friction 6. Fighting 7. Cattle 8. The end of a system

1. *Structural change*

178 619 64 THE STRUGGLES of the Ngoni during the middle of the nineteenth century were with groups of roughly the same character as themselves. The processes at work in the Ngoni social system were in the main repetitive. The State grew in size, split, and grew again, but it was still largely the same kind of State as before. Even though there were important differences between the Ngoni and their opponents, particularly after 1835, those whom they encountered were sufficiently like themselves to be absorbed into the system without difficulty. In the nomenclature of Radcliffe-Brown and the Wilsons, there was social circulation in the Ngoni State but little change in its structural form.[1] For this reason we have been concerned in our analysis so far with but few of the historical details of that period, and have dealt with history only in an abstract and generalized form. Many of the inconsistencies [114] between various versions of the tribal legend have not been significant. For example, Chief Ciwele Ndhlovu of Dowa broke off from the main body of Ngoni, according to some writers before, and according to others after, the split between Mpezeni and Mwambera.[2] It does not matter for our particular purpose which of these versions is correct, for we are here concerned only to establish that from time to time senior lieutenants did split off with their segments to form independent chiefdoms. This process, of which Ciwele's secession is an example, was essentially the same before and after the Mpezeni-Mwambera split.

648 178 121 After 1880 Ngoni history entered a new phase, and social processes began to operate which were not repetitive. Changes began to occur in the form of the Ngoni social field, for instead of interacting with groups similar to themselves, the Ngoni became involved in a much wider network of social relations. This change

[1] Radcliffe-Brown, 'On social structure', p. 4; Wilson, *Social change*, p. 58.
[2] cf. Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 32-3; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 18; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of scale,[8] as we may call it, was accompanied by major changes not only in the positions occupied by individuals in Ngoni society but also in the form of Ngoni society itself. We have to analyse at this stage a non-repetitive process, by which the autonomous Ngoni state, organized by a segmentary residential system and an age-set system, was changed into a dependent unit in a system of Native Authorities forming part of a world-wide colonial empire. For this reason the details of the process are worth noting, for in Ngoni history they are unique and largely determine the form of modern Ngoni society. Having established this significant sequence of events, we are then in a position to look at the same set of facts in a wider context. For what is unique and non-repetitive for the Ngoni may be repetitive in a wider context. The Ngoni are only one tribe among a myriad of tribes, and what happened to them has also happened to many others. Similar sequences of events, each unique for the particular tribe concerned, have occurred throughout the world at various periods of time whenever small autonomous systems have been absorbed into large and more highly resourceful ones. We can therefore look at Ngoni history from 1880 onwards as either unique, from the point of view of the Ngoni, or as typical, or at least probably typical, of a repetitive process which has often occurred in the development of any empire.

Conveniently, at least some of the facts can be ascertained with reasonable certainty. We are no longer dependent only on oral tradition, but can refer to contemporary documents. These reflect in the main only the European side of Black-White relations, but even so their testimony is enlightening. I have therefore set out in full the history, mainly of external relations, of the Fort Jameson Ngoni from 1886 down to 1900 both with the intention of throwing light on how the transition was made from pre-conquest to modern society in this particular tribal instance, and also as an example of what seems probably an oft-repeated process in the history of any empire. A discussion of how typical the Ngoni experience is would take us beyond the bounds of this book. We should, however, bear in mind that the newer comparative method, as developed by Radcliffe-Brown and his followers, is as applicable to mammoth social forms, such as empires, as to small ones such as hordes, provided only that the right kind of data are available.

Our detailed documentation should extend down to modern times, but after 1900 there was a change in the kind of events that were documented, related as we shall see to a change in social relations, and we have to proceed somewhat differently.

[8] For the concept of scale, see Wilson, *Social change*, pp. 25 *ff*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 Livingstone was the first Briton to reach this area. In 1866 he passed through what was to become Mpezeni's country,[5] and in his journals he makes frequent references to Ngoni raids. Unfortunately his carriers would not take him to Ngoni villages and all he saw of Ngoni activity were burnt-out huts and dead bodies killed in battle. The accounts of his journeys stimulated British interest in the region round Lake Nyasa, a centre for the slave trade, and led to the arrival there of missionaries and settlers. In 1874 the [797] Livingstonia Mission was founded and in 1883 a British consul was first appointed to the Shire Highlands.[6]

Mpezeni's country lay some distance from the main centres of British and Portuguese activity, but was not without importance. Apart from Missale, it was thought that there were other gold deposits to be found in the area. In contrast with their harried neighbours, [132] the prosperous Ngoni with their herds of cattle attracted travellers while the pleasant climate of the plateau, compared with the hot valleys of Luangwa, Zambezi, and Nyasa, made it suitable for European colonization. Yet the Ngoni army was formidable, and had to be neutralized in some way if other settlements were to be safe. Mpezeni's country flanked several trade routes of importance from the Zambezi and Lake Nyasa inland to the sources of slaves [439] and ivory. For these various reasons Mpezeni's country attracted the attention of traders and governments, those interested in 175 benefiting by the slave trade as well as those seeking to end it. In 648 addition towards the end of the century when it became clear that Africa was to be completely divided between the Powers, any territory, however inhospitable, that had not already been claimed attracted the attention of treaty-making explorers.

The first move towards incorporating the Fort Jameson Ngoni in a colonial empire was made by the Portuguese who had been stimulated by the increasing British interest in Nyasaland. In November 1888 the Governor-General of Moçambique instructed Wiese, a German[7] trader who had already made contact with Mpezeni, to lead an expedition to him. According to Johnston, Wiese and an associate were offered £2,000 to secure Mpezeni's submission to Portugal.[8] Wiese was well received and distributed flags to Mpezeni and his sons. The Portuguese regarded the

[5] *Last Journals*, i, p. 150.

[6] Johnston, *British Central Africa*, pp. 55-69.

[7] In *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, p. 683, the Portuguese Foreign Minister describes Wiese as a Dutchman. This appears to be incorrect in the light of Wiese's contacts with the German Legation in Lisbon.

[8] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 235; 48, p. 13. (To save space, all public records will be identified by a serial number printed **bold face**, taken from the first column of the Bibliography, List C.)

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

acceptance of these flags as acts of submission, a view echoed by the French explorer Foà. The British view, based on the observations of Sharpe and the statements of Ngoni envoys to Johnston in January 1890, was that no treaty was signed.[9] The official Portuguese report of the expedition records among other things that Mpezeni had been friendly to the Portuguese, that he accepted their flags, and said that their friends and enemies were also his, that he promised not to raid in their territory, and that he refused to see a British traveller [Sharpe] because he had not been recommended by the Portuguese. There is no specific mention of any agreement by which Mpezeni accepted Portuguese protection.[10] Whatever construction was put on these events by Europeans, either Portuguese or British, it seems unlikely that Mpezeni can have felt himself bound by his acceptance of a flag. Wiese evidently thought it necessary to point out to him that the flag was not to be used as an article of clothing.[11] Sharpe suggests that Wiese tried to make a treaty with the Cewa chief Mkanda, who had been driven out by the Ngoni; Wiese then intended to declare Mkanda the rightful owner of Mpezeni's country.[12]

The British Government had been reluctant to extend its commitments in the Lake Nyasa region beyond the appointment of a consul. During 1888-9, however, there was fighting at the north end of Lake Nyasa between Arabs and the African Lakes Company in which Lugard was involved. Rhodes's attention was attracted to the area and he offered Lugard a large subsidy to develop it.[13] This proof of Rhodes's interest emboldened the Foreign Office, and on 28 July 1889 Johnston arrived at the mouth of the Zambezi as the representative of the Foreign Office and of Rhodes and with the task of consolidating the British position in central Africa.

Johnston began at once to make treaties with as many chiefs as possible, spurred on by the activities of Pinto, a Portuguese engaged on a similar task. In August he sent Sharpe on a journey westward from the Shire Valley on which he made treaties with some of the chiefs lying south of Mpezeni and north of the Zambezi.[14] Sharpe returned to the Shire and was sent off again, this time to Mpezeni himself. He did not manage to see him. According to the Portu-

[9] *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, p. 683; Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, pp. 298*f*; 16, fo. 146; 12, fo. 275; 49; 158.
[10] *Boletim Official de Moçambique*, No. 21 (24 May 1890), pp. 238-40.
[11] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 488.
[12] 12, fo. 289, 311.
[13] Lugard, *East African Empire*, i, pp. 157-9, 202-7.
[14] 6, fo. 256; Sharpe, 'Journey between the Shire and Loangwa', pp. 150-7.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 648 guese, Mpezeni refused to see Sharpe, while according to Johnston Sharpe had used up his stock of presents before reaching Mpezeni and hence did not attempt to negotiate with him. Sharpe found Wiese at Mpezeni's with a Portuguese officer and on 11 December 1889 witnessed the formal presentation of a Portuguese flag to one of Nsingu's lieutenants, though, 'for reasons of correctness', he was not asked to sign the document officially recording the incident.[15]

Although Wiese was leading the Portuguese party, he spoke bitterly to Sharpe of the way in which the Portuguese had treated him and indicated to him and in a letter to Johnston that he might consider working in the British interest. Johnston replied in January 1890 with a letter of 'a non-compromising but vaguely reassuring character'.[16]

In March 1890 Sharpe began another journey to Mpezeni, this time with instructions from Johnston to make a treaty with Mpezeni and to 'buy' Wiese with an offer of up to £1,000 a year for three years. He arrived at Mpezeni's village on 24 March, only to find that Wiese had left for Tete over a month earlier, leaving behind him the Portuguese officer. Mpezeni kept Sharpe waiting for an interview until 4 April, and although friendly he refused to discuss a treaty or accept a British flag. Sharpe left a letter for Wiese, offering him £300 a year for his services, and departed for the Luangwa Valley. After an unprofitable trip he returned to Mpezeni's on 21 May, to find Wiese and the Portuguese officer on the point of leaving for a trading-trip to Kasungu. Wiese rejected Sharpe's offer of £300 a year and Sharpe was forced to return to Nyasa with both the principal aims of his expedition unaccomplished. He had, however, made a few treaties with non-Ngoni chiefs.[17] Thomson, another explorer who, like Sharpe, was employed by Rhodes's British South Africa Company, arrived in Ngoni country in December 1890 after a successful trip to the Lala. Thomson was greeted with hostility, sheltered with Wiese, and fled during the night.[18]

175 439 648 Johnston played a dual role in Nyasaland, for besides representing the British Foreign Office he was also responsible for the interests of Rhodes and the British South Africa Company, from

[15] 15, fo. 26-7; 16, fo. 144; *Boletim Official de Moçambique*, 21 (24 May 1890), p. 239.

[16] Wiese may have offered his services to Johnston before Sharpe arrived at Mpezeni's. cf. 49; 158, p. 62; 16, fo. 145-6.

[17] 9, fo. 30; 16, fo. 146; 12, fo. 274-95; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyassa', pp. 745, 749; Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 89; Wiese, 'Expedição', xi, pp. 412-31, 464-80.

[18] Thomson, 'Lake Bangweolo', p. 114; Wiese, 'Expedição', xi, p. 588.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

whom he received a subsidy. When that company was granted its first charter on 29 October 1889, its sphere of operations was restricted to south of the Zambezi. When Johnston began work north of the river the future division of responsibility between the Foreign Office and the B.S.A. Company was uncertain. On 21 September 1889 Buchanan, on Johnston's instructions, proclaimed a British Protectorate over the region round the Shire Highlands, and on 14 May 1891 this was superseded by the proclamation of a British Protectorate over approximately the whole of present-day Nyasaland. In April 1891 the Foreign Office sanctioned the extension of the B.S.A. Company's operations to the north of the Zambezi within the British sphere of influence, excluding Nyasaland. It was, however, still uncertain whether or not the administration of the Protectorate was to remain permanently separate from that of the B.S.A. Company's territory to the west. A complicated story of financial negotiations and of a quarrel between Johnston and Rhodes ended in an agreement whereby after 30 June 1895 all administrative connexion between the two territories ceased.[19]

The western boundary of the Protectorate proclaimed in 1891 was based on that laid down for the Conventional Basin of the Congo[20] at the Berlin West African Conference in 1885. This line, the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, passed through the eastern portion of Mpezeni's country, leaving the greater portion of Ngoniland outside the Protectorate. The dividing line between the British and Portuguese spheres of influence was not finally determined until the Anglo-Portuguese agreement of 11 June 1891. Despite the Portuguese flags and Wiese's affirmations of friendship, the whole of Mpezeni's country was placed by this agreement in the British and not in the Portuguese sphere, as it had also been in the unratified convention of 20 August 1890.[21] As a consequence, then, of the proclamation of the Nyasaland Protectorate, the extension northwards of the B.S.A. Company's sphere of activity, and the Anglo-Portuguese agreement, Mpezeni's country was divided between the Protectorate and the B.S.A. Company's territory. In consequence of the agreement, or because Mpezeni was tired of them, Wiese and the Portuguese expedition left Ngoniland.

Despite this formal division Mpezeni had as yet, as Johnston was to point out six years later, 'ceded nothing to anybody'.[22] On

[19] *State papers*, lxxxi, p. 1009, No. 243; *London Gazette*, 15 May 1891 and 24 February 1893; *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 634-40; *A & P*, 1895, lxxi, pp. 565-8; Johnston, *Story of my life*, p. 497.
[20] *A & P*, 1884-5, lv, p. 439.
[21] *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, pp. 589, 625; *A & P*, 1890-1, xcvi, p. 420.
[22] 158, p. 63. cf. 152, p. 59.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175
648

the other hand, Sharpe and Thomson had made treaties with some of the chiefs round about Mpezeni, and Johnston urged that Mpezeni had merely dispossessed these treaty-making chiefs and 'consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief'. Mpezeni, he held, was a 'robber without rights'.[33] As a matter of policy Johnston supported the friendly matrilineal tribes rather than Mpezeni. He also opposed him because of the Ngoni raids which threatened the settled order he was trying to establish. He held that Mpezeni was such a scourge of the indigenous population that he must some day be dealt with, that he was an intrusive Zulu robber who must eventually be subdued and dethroned, when the country could be administered directly by Europeans or could be restored to the government of the rightful indigenous chieftains.[34] Even after Mpezeni had been defeated, the precipitating causes of the war were regarded by the Nyasaland Administration as only incidental, for 'The Angoni had, however, by their incessant raids into our territory made it a matter which sooner or later would have to be dealt with . . . '.[35]

One factor which delayed Johnston from acting as swiftly against Mpezeni as he did against the Yao and southern Ngoni was that Mpezeni was farther than they from the main artery of Nyasaland, Lake Nyasa and the Shire Valley. In any case Johnston was anxious not to take precipitate action with too few troops which might end in disaster. He was reluctant to allow the parties of prospectors and traders who entered Mpezeni's country to take arms with them lest they should provoke the Ngoni into attacking them before Johnston was ready. He was anxious to avoid having to face an alliance of all the various Ngoni groups. After the downfall of Lobengula in Southern Rhodesia in 1893, Ndebele refugees reached Mpezeni and according to some reports Lobengula himself was among them. Co-ordinated action by Mpezeni and the Ndebele was feared and, as we shall see, an attempt was in fact made by Chabisa to unite Mpezeni's forces with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. The only offensive action taken by the Nyasaland Administration prior to the final conflict in 1898 was in May 1896, when troops were moved from Kotakota to Kasungu in response to a report that Mpezeni was planning to kill some prospectors, but the report was found to be false and the expedition was called off.[36]

[33] 158, pp. 62-3.
[34] 132; 158, p. 61.
[35] *A & P*, 1899, lxiii, p. 253.
[36] 98; 132; 142a, fo. 141; Warton in *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These events made the inclusion of Mpezeni's country in the British colonial empire highly likely. The way in which this would come about was still not obvious, nor had it yet been decided who should control the economic resources of the area. It was the struggle for economic control which in the end decided the political issue. Here again Wiese played a prominent part. 175 648

3. *Concession hunters*

From 1885, if not before, Wiese lived in Ngoni country and among the neighbouring tribes as a trader.[27] His wife, who lived with him part of the time in Mpezeni's country, was Doña Romana, a black Portuguese lady who owned some hundreds of slaves. Wiese's commercial objectives can be inferred from the conversation he had with Sharpe on this matter in May 1890, when he mentioned that he employed over two hundred and fifty of his wife's slaves as elephant-hunters, and that he was planning to employ two thousand men in trading expeditions to the Luapula, Garanganze and other distant places. He was also at that time planning to make war on a certain Cewa chief.[28] 175 439

According to Wiese's own account, he gained a number of concessions from chiefs and he was granted in 1887 various mining rights by the Portuguese Government in the territory to the south of Mpezeni. On 15 November 1886 Mpezeni orally granted him a concession for ninety-nine years and, Wiese claimed, this agreement was ratified in writing on 14 April 1891. Mpezeni, described as 'Paramount Chief of the Angoni (Zulus) and Sovereign Ruler over Maravia and Western Nyassaland', granted Wiese a concession in 'one part' of his country some 6,700 square miles in extent and reaching to within twelve miles of the Zambezi near Chicoa. In return for exclusive mineral, timber, water, railway and other rights, Wiese agreed to pay Mpezeni £200 annually and 1 per cent of his profits. Mpezeni reserved the rights of sovereignty over his people and the land, water and timber necessary to his subjects were guaranteed.[29] [31]

A few months before this written concession was drawn up, Bowler and Rankin, representing the comprehensively named Upper and Lower Zambezi Navigation, Exploration, Trading, Land-acquiring and Colonization Company, Limited, arrived in

[27] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86, says that Wiese visited Mpezeni in 1881. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 71, in another tentative chronology, follows him, although there is no mention of this visit in the body of Poole's book. Wiese himself appears not to mention any date earlier than 1885. See 40.

[28] 67, fo. 199; 22, fo. 285.

[29] 32, pp. 17-18.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175
439

the country.[20] They joined Wiese in collecting concessions from the surrounding chiefs.[21]

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A legal procedure for registering and recognizing concessions within the British sphere was established by Johnston on 18 July 1891.[22] Without recognition by Johnston's Land Court, a concession did not of itself establish a clear right to title under British law. The issue of this proclamation may have been prompted by Wiese's actions. In June, shortly before it was issued, Wiese was travelling to Europe with his concessions. He met Johnston at Quilimane and asked him to recognize them.[23] Johnston refused to do this. He particularly objected to the concession from Mpezeni, not only for its monopolies but also because it had not been signed by Mpezeni but only by a Portuguese allegedly acting on the chief's behalf, and because Mpezeni did not control the large area mentioned in the concession. Such land as he did control he had obtained only by dispossessing the earlier inhabitants. Johnston regarded Wiese as a slave trader who forced chiefs to make their mark on documents without explaining what the documents meant and without making any payment for the concessions obtained. He maintained that Mpezeni had never granted any rights to Wiese and wrote of the concession: 'I always refused to recognize his preposterous document.' He complained that Wiese tried to 'bounce the British Government into recognition of his (wholly unfounded) claims'. Johnston later argued that in order to conclude eight of his other treaties, Wiese must have travelled five hundred miles between 20 December and 23 January, an improbable occurrence.[24] Acting on this policy Johnston insisted, at Quilimane, that he must examine Wiese's concessions before he could pronounce on them. Wiese made a declaration before Johnston's deputy describing the concessions and went on his way to Europe, he maintaining he had thereby registered his concessions and Johnston maintaining he had not.[25]

Wiese's agents in London began corresponding with the Foreign Office in December 1891 pressing for the recognition of his

[20] Hole, *Making of Rhodesia*, p. 241; 17, fo. 390-1.

[21] Bradley, 'Salute to adventurers', p. 54, says Wiese bought concessions from Bowler and Rankin.

[22] 36; 58, fo. 420.

[23] 40, p. 33; 49, p. 14; 67, fo. 140; 81, fo. 144-5.

[24] 49; 81, fo. 148.

[25] There is some uncertainty about the date on which Wiese made his statement at Quilimane. Johnston refers to a declaration sworn to by Wiese before the Acting Vice-Consul on 7 June 1891. Bowler's letter to the Foreign Office was supported by a copy of a receipt for a fee paid for witnessing a signature, dated 27 June. cf. 35; 48, p. 15; 71.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

concessions. In January 1892 Wiese offered his services to Johnston as an agent, and in March repeated the offer. He seems to have mentioned the possibility of his leading the Ngoni in battle on behalf of the Administration. Johnston rejected these offers contemptuously along with similar offers made by Bowler, saying that he wanted Bowler and Wiese to remain in Europe. He also remained adamant in his refusal to recognize Wiese's concessions, although the Foreign Office itself continued to prevaricate on this issue.[36]

In 1891 or 1892 Wiese visited Lisbon in an effort to collect the £2,000 owing to him for his services to the Portuguese during 1888 and the following years. It was, however, in London that he tried to obtain financial backing so that he could begin to exploit his concessions, with or without recognition from Johnston. According to Johnston, Wiese offered his concessions to the Central African and Zoutpansberg Exploration Company, with which the naval explorer Cameron was connected. In August 1892 Wiese told Johnston that he was no longer personally interested in the fate of the concessions. According to a Foreign Office minute, Wiese offered the concessions to the B.S.A. Company for a small sum in January 1893. The search for financial support ended on 18 February 1893 when the Mozambique Gold Land and Concessions Company Limited was incorporated in London to operate Wiese's concessions, for which they paid him £1,500.[37]

The Mozambique Company approached the Foreign Office and were instructed first to register their concessions in Nyasaland. According to Johnston, early in 1893 Bowler sent copies of the concessions to Johnston, who replied that he must produce the originals or certified copies. In April and May 1893 there was an exchange of letters between Wiese and Johnston about the recognition of the concessions, and in the autumn Bowler wrote again on the matter. However, according to Johnston, between June and October 1891 the African Lakes and British South Africa companies had placed claims before his Land Court for recognition in the prescribed manner and no counter-claims were registered there.[38] Therefore, on 25 September 1893 Johnston granted a certificate of claim to the B.S.A. Company, in its commercial capacity, entitling them to exercise mining and other rights throughout the greater part of what was to become North-Eastern Rhodesia and including the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland.

[36] 39; 42; 46, fo. 7; 47, fo. 36; 48; 49; 51; 52; 64, fo. 85-6.

[37] 67, fo. 140; 81, fo. 145; 64, fo. 89 (minute); 230, p. 69; *Maugham report*, p. 6.

[38] 80; 81, fo. 144, 146; 82.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 The B.S.A. Company produced in its support treaties made by
439 Sharpe and Stevenson with six chiefs, Mpezeni not among them.
Johnston's argument for including Mpezeni's country within the
648 area of the grant appears to have been that the land had been wrested by Mpezeni from the treaty-making chiefs. None of the six chiefs mentioned by name in the certificate made any claim in the treaties to rights in Mpezeni's country, and indeed only one of them, Muliro, a minor Nsenga-Ambo chief, bordered on Mpezeni.

However Johnston also refers in the certificate of claim to 'similar privileges obtained through treaties concluded by the African Lakes Company and transferred by them to the British South Africa Company (the said treaties have received separate confirmation at my hands)'. These additional treaties are not specified in the certificate but later Johnston wrote, in connexion with the North Charterland Concession granted by the B.S.A. Company, that 'the B.S.A. Company would base its right to grant this concession on its recognized treaties with Undi, Mwasi Kazungu and ... (I forget the names), the indigenous and partially dispossessed chiefs of Mpezeni's country'. Sharpe had made a treaty with Undi
131 on 15 April 1891, in which the northern boundary of Undi's
175 territory was said to be the parallel of latitude 14° S. or thereabouts,
439 thus cutting into the southern fringe of the no-man's-land round
648 Mpezeni. Mwase made two treaties, one on 17 September 1885 with Stevenson as agent of the African Lakes Company and another on 30 November 1889 with the British Crown. In the earlier treaty the extent of Mwase's country is not stated but when the benefits of this treaty were transferred to the B.S.A. Company in 1893, Mwase's country was said to be bounded on the west by the water-parting between the Luangwa and Zambezi-Nyasa basins and on the south by the Anglo-Portuguese border. This water-parting does not meet the Anglo-Portuguese frontier until as far west as about 31° 15′ E., in what is now Petauke District, and in Ngoniland it runs approximately east-west on latitude 13° 49′ S. In the area controlled by Mpezeni, Mwase's territory, as defined in the transfer agreement, included the whole portion claimed by Undi in 1891 and in addition a strip of land to the north of Undi's claim, forming the southern margin of the Ngoni settled area. The main concentration of Ngoni villages, in the valleys of the Lutembwe, Lunthwele and Msipazi rivers, lay just north of the territory
175 claimed for Mwase. Thus the grant of rights to the B.S.A. Company
439 in Mpezeni's country appears to have been based for the most
648 part on treaties made with chiefs whose names Johnston forgot,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and possibly also on the 1889 treaty between Mwase and the British Crown.[39]

Johnston granted a second certificate of claim, completed on 28 September 1893, to the African Lakes and B.S.A. companies jointly, based on the 1891 treaty with Undi and on another made a week later with a neighbouring chief. The area mentioned in this certificate conforms to that laid down in the treaty.[40]

Therefore when Warton arrived in Nyasaland in 1894 as emissary of the Mozambique Company and tried to secure recognition of Wiese's concessions, he found that the area claimed by his company had already been granted to its rivals. He succeeded in registering the concessions but not in gaining recognition of their validity.

Johnston registered, but did not recognize, the Wiese concessions. On the other hand the concessions acquired by the B.S.A. Company, though registered and recognized by Johnston, were not yet confirmed by the Foreign Office. Johnston's conduct of the affair did not meet with approval from his superiors at home, who thought that Warton had been unfairly treated.[41] One consideration influencing the Foreign Office may have been Wiese's German nationality. There had been an Anglo-German Agreement in 1891[42] defining the spheres of influence of these two countries in central Africa, but Maugham suggests that the Foreign Office thought that Wiese, after offering his services to Portugal and Britain, might now turn to Germany who could then use his concessions as the basis of a claim to the territory. At the same time the Foreign Office thought it might be unwise to declare the concessions invalid, since they might sometime be acquired by the B.S.A. Company and be used to strengthen its hand. Wiese, who according to Johnston had run away from Germany to evade conscription, had nevertheless received the support of the German Minister in Lisbon in securing rights to extensive estates in Portuguese East Africa in lieu of the £2,000 he had been promised originally by the Portuguese Government. Johnston suspected Wiese of trying to introduce German methods on his estates and wrote that it would be 'awkward' if the land between Nyasaland and the coast were 'in the hands of a stronger Power than Portugal and one

[39] 73; 75, fo. 180-1; 76; 7, fo. 33; 158, p. 61. I am much indebted to Sir Dougal Malcolm and the British South Africa Company for permission to cite the 1885 treaty and the transfer agreement of 1893. Unfortunately I have been unable to trace the 1889 treaty.

[40] 74.

[41] 85.

[42] *A & P*, 1890, li, pp. 24-31.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 far less likely to yield its pretensions'. These considerations found
439 expression in the agreement of 24 November 1894, allowing the
B.S.A. Company to take over from Johnston the administration of
648 its sphere north of the Zambezi. The Foreign Office stipulated that sanction for the treaties made by the B.S.A. Company's agents was to be without prejudice to Wiese's possible claims.[43]

The Mozambique Company opened negotiations with the B.S.A. Company with these registered but unrecognized concessions as their asset. Agreement was reached on 8 May 1895. In return for any rights they might have in the British sphere under Wiese's concessions, and conditional on their raising certain capital, the Mozambique Company were granted mineral and land rights in a block of land ten thousand square miles in extent within the B.S.A. Company's territory. The rights of Natives were to be respected. Any rights the Mozambique Company might have in Portuguese territory were not to be exercised. A new company, the North Charterland Exploration Company, in which the B.S.A. Company had an interest, was formed to operate the grant of land. Thus the North Charterland Concession came into being. The whole of Mpezeni's country, except for that portion included in the Nyasaland Protectorate, came within the Concession.[44]

Some thirty-five years later, Mr. Justice Maugham was to rule that this grant to the Mozambique Company could only have been potential, not actual, since at that time the B.S.A. Company did not yet possess the mineral and other rights they were making over. At the time this consideration carried no weight. In April 1895, even before agreement with the B.S.A. Company had been concluded, the Mozambique Company's pioneer party reached Tete. They arrived in Ngoniland in the following year.[45]

4. *European consolidation*

In Nyasaland fighting continued sporadically in an attempt to
175 end the slave trade. From 1891 onwards Johnston's troops fought
439 a series of engagements with Arabs, Yao and southern Ngoni.
567 Mpezeni was regarded not only as a robber with whom no treaties
648 were necessary but also as a partner in the slave trade, for one of
721 the main routes used by Arabs and their African colleagues ran near Mpezeni's country.[46] All Ngoni raids were interpreted by the Nyasaland Administration as raids for slaves and Sharpe, describing his second visit to Mpezeni, wrote that the chief did a brisk

[43] 67, fo. 141-2; 95, p. 48.
[44] 99; 100.
[45] *Maugham report*, pp. 6-7.
[46] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 3 (1 February 1896), p. 2, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

trade in slaves, selling them to the Arabs.[47] Wiese's evidence on this point is contradictory. In 1881 he wrote that Arab caravans continually visited Mpezeni and that most of the raids were to capture slaves for sale to the Arabs. In 1900, he wrote in one place that some captives were sold to the Arabs and in another that Mpezeni scarcely knew of the permanent slave hunters and that the sole object of major raids was to gain captives to cultivate the Ngoni fields.[48] Few tales of the Arabs and no nicknames have survived to the present time among the Ngoni, and it is probable that Sharpe was overestimating the importance to Mpezeni of the external slave trade. Although Livingstone knew it, Wiese and Kerr are the only contemporary writers who were aware that captives were assimilated,[49] for other writers do not distinguish between captives and slaves. Whether or not the raids were made for Ngoni recruits or for slaves to be sold to the Arabs, it is clear that they were often made into Nyasaland and thus challenged the Administration there. Towards the end of 1895 the Collector at Kotakota opened a campaign against Mwase Kasungu, the Cewa chief whose territory lay between Mpezeni and the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. It is alleged that Mpezeni offered to help Mwase in this campaign, but it seems that no help arrived. On 31 December 1895 the fortified village of Kasungu was captured and Chabisa, a chief who had been helping Mwase, fled to Mpezeni.[51]

Chabisa may have been the moving spirit behind the delegation which early in 1896 went from Mpezeni to the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland calling on them to rise with him and Chabisa against the British.[52] The Livingstonia Mission had already been working among the northern Ngoni for eighteen years, and the delegation found little support.

As well as Chabisa, other refugees arrived from the south, after the First Matabele War of 1893 in Southern Rhodesia. According to some accounts the Ndebele Paramount Chief, Lobengula, was with them, only to die a few months later.[53]

[47] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 745. cf. Perham, *Ten Africans*, p. 96.
[48] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478 and 'Geschichte', pp. 188 and 197.
[49] Livingstone, *Narrative*, p. 385; Kerr, 'Upper Zambesi', p. 396.
[51] Swann, the Collector, in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1, and *A & P*, 1896, lviii, pp. 417, 418, describes Chabisa and Mwase as Ngoni and Zulu chiefs. Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168, say Mwase and Chabisa were brothers. It is unlikely that either was Ngoni. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 144, calls Mwase a Cewa but says he had many Ngoni headmen under him, thereby amending his earlier statements that Mwase and Undi were Ngoni. See 20, fo. 129; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 412. [52] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 292.
[53] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2; Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 83; Posselt, *Upengula*, pp. 112-24; 98; 121, fo. 193.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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Meanwhile there was a lull in European activity in Mpezeni's country itself. After Wiese and the Portuguese officer left in mid-1891 a Portuguese trader remained behind. He was subsequently killed, either by accident or on Mpezeni's instructions.[54] After sending envoys to Johnston on Lake Nyasa in January 1890 and reporting the death of the Portuguese trader, Mpezeni seems not to have made any attempts to get in touch with Europeans for some years. Johnston sent an influential Swahili headman to visit Mpezeni in 1891, but Mpezeni threatened to behead the messenger if he entered Ngoniland, and he turned back before reaching the country.[55] In 1892 Ngoni patrols sweeping to the south in Undi's country came in touch with a French explorer living there and some of them were killed by his men. In 1895 they made contact with him again and he visited a senior lieutenant of segment 4.[56]

But the Frenchman was a bird of passage. It was not until 5 December 1895 that prospectors arrived with the intention of remaining in the country. They represented the Rhodesia Concessions Company and began to build Fort Partridge at Mafuta's, only twenty miles to the north of Mpezeni.[57] In the face of Johnston's opposition they had been allowed to bring Maxim guns with them. Despite the threat to Mpezeni implicit in this, they were at first received hospitably. Later the Ngoni became less friendly towards them, due, they thought, to the arrival of Chabisa and the Ndebele refugees and also because of the news reaching Mpezeni of increasing British activity in Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia. In May 1896 the prospectors thought that they might all be massacred and appealed for help to Kotakota. Troops were moved up from the Lake to Kasungu but, as we have mentioned above, they withdrew when it was found that the prospectors were in no danger. Nevertheless the prospectors left Ngoniland on 13 June, not for fear of Mpezeni but because the North Charterland complained that they were poaching on its preserves.[58] Thus the control of Europeans in his country had already passed out of Mpezeni's hands.

There were a number of transient visitors to Mpezeni in 1896,[59] and the B.S.A. Company's representative paid a visit, but

[54] 67, fo. 140.

[55] 81, fo. 147-8.

[56] Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, p. 281, and *Big game*, pp. 84, 105. In another account, 'Traversée de l'Afrique', p. 113, Foà says he visited the lieutenant in 1892.

[57] See Map C.

[58] 97; 101, fo. 483; 102, fo. 479; 113, fo. 41; 115, fo. 281; 125; 126; 142a, fo. 141; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2, and iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 2; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 12.

[59] McClonnie, Smith and Fraser, reported in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 1, and iii, 13 (1 July 1896), p. 2.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most serious intrusion was from the direction of Tete. After his return to Africa in 1892, Wiese had occupied himself with his newly won estates in the Zambezi Valley, where his activities attracted the unfavourable attention of Johnston. His interests in Mpezeni's country took second place for a while, despite his letter to Johnston about them on 14 May 1893. It appears that when the Mozambique Company's party arrived at Tete in April 1895 they made contact with Wiese. Thereafter he was closely connected with the activities of the Mozambique Company and of its successor, the North Charterland. The exact course of events is not clear. Johnston reported on 24 March 1896 that Wiese had broken with the North Charterland, yet when Warton visited Mpezeni four months later as leader of the North Charterland delegation, Wiese was with him as interpreter.[60]

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At the beginning of 1896 representatives of the North Charterland first arrived in Ngoni country. After a short time, one of them was expelled by Mpezeni. On 5 July 1896 Warton with the main party established the North Charterland headquarters at a camp, later known as Fort Young, in the heart of Ngoniland adjacent to Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10.[61]

At first Mpezeni treated the North Charterland party kindly and provided them with carriers to bring up their loads from Tete.[62] According to the Foreign Office, whose sources of information I cannot trace, Mpezeni was friendly because Wiese emphasized that he was a German and offered himself and the expedition as a bulwark against British expansion. Warton, the ex-secretary of a cricket team and sometime lieutenant-colonel, posed, it was said, as Wiese's elder brother.[63] These allegations were denied by Warton and Wiese. They pointed out that the first member of the North Charterland party to enter Ngoniland had been an Englishman and maintained that Mpezeni was too intelligent not to recognize for himself the difference between an Englishman and a German. Warton had been introduced by Wiese merely as *okullo-ango* [*mkulu ŵangu*, my superior]. They maintained that the British flag had always been flown with the North Charterland's own flag.[64] Warton and Wiese's testimony conflicts with the Ngoni recollection

[60] *Maugham report*, p. 7; 121, fo. 192; 163; 164; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12*f*.

[61] 121, fo. 192; 163; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 71. Deare, who never mentions Warton or Wiese by name, claims to have been first to build the fort. Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.

[62] Forbes in *C.A.P.*, 15 November 1896; Warton in *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April; 148a, fo. 141.

[63] 160, p. 64; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 12; Read, 'Tradition', p. 478.

[64] 163; 164.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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of these events, as recorded by Read, and with the contemporary account of Genthe. Genthe was a German traveller who always flew a British flag in central Africa. There was no flag at Warton's camp when he visited it in 1897 and the North Charterland asked him not to display his Union Jack. Whatever may really have happened, an explanation of the North Charterland's success by reference to its anti-British pose conflicts with the evidence of Mpezeni's missions of friendship to the Collector at Kotakota. Deare, one of the North Charterland party, gives the impression that the success of the expedition was due to his ability to speak Zulu, make the right presents, and diagnose the cause of illness in Mpezeni's cattle. This explanation seems just as likely.[65]

It seems probable that Mpezeni was prepared to be friendly with the British at a distance but did not want them on his doorstep. We have noted his deputation to Johnston in January 1890. Early in 1896 Mpezeni sent a mission to the Collector at Kotakota asking for a British flag. Surprisingly this overture seems not to have been followed up. Swann, the Collector, did, however, send twelve beasts as a present to Mpezeni who replied, after prompting from Swann, with a gift of ivory.[66] In September Mpezeni sent word to the Collector that he had punished his warriors who had attacked some B.S.A. Company's carriers. In October his envoys told the Collector that he did not allow raiding and that he was glad to hear of raiders being punished when they were caught, while in February 1897 he appealed through his messengers to the Administration for help in restraining his people from raiding inside Nyasaland.

Wiese accompanied Mpezeni's envoys on this last trip to Kotakota and according to a North Charterland account of their mission, Mpezeni then consented to the introduction of a British garrison in his territory.[67] Even towards Warringham, the B.S.A. Company's representative, he was friendly at first. In about June 1896 he exchanged presents with him and made many expressions of good will, though telling Warringham that he was not afraid to meet him in war if necessary.[68]

[65] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1; 165; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 20, 27 April, 4 May.

[66] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 427; Swann, *Slave hunters*, pp. 315-16.

[67] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 12 (15 June 1896), p. 1; iii, 18 (1 October 1896), p. 2; iii, 22 (1 December 1896), p. 3; iv, 4 (1 March 1897), p. 3; and iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1; 165.

[68] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 15 (1 August 1896), p. 3; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Friction*

On 14 May 1897 Mpezeni wrote to the Collector at Kotakota that he wished to move across the border into the Protectorate. He said, 'If you agree to my removing . . . I shall not raid anywhere.' He was prepared to pay tax if called upon to do so.[69] He may have been led to take this drastic step by his growing annoyance at the activities of Warton and the North Charterland party. In 1896 Warton had apparently enjoyed Mpezeni's approval but he soon began to displease him. Johnston, who had no high opinion of his fellow-men, described Warton as 'that not very capable or prudent man' and as 'not a bad man but not very trustworthy'. The North Charterland was a purely commercial company and Warton had no administrative powers. These were reserved under the charter to the B.S.A. Company and were exercised on its behalf by Johnston until 1 July 1895, when Forbes was appointed Administrator for the B.S.A. Company's sphere. As yet, however, in Johnston's view, the B.S.A. Company had no governing rights in Mpezeni's country, as neither Mpezeni, nor the chiefs he was held to have displaced, had ceded them.[70] Forbes's nearest representatives were Warringham and Middleton, who in March 1896 made a camp sixty miles to the north of Mpezeni in the country of Cinunda, a Cewa chief. Forbes visited Mpezeni in September 1896, but with no success.[71] Warton considered that in the absence of any action by the B.S.A. Company he must set up his own administration. He drew up elaborate plans for developing the country, calling for an armed police force and for a hut tax of 5*s*.[72] He believed, he said, that if Mpezeni were convinced that the North Charterland had sufficient force available, he would not resist them.[73] He may have been influenced in adopting this attitude by the remark he attributed to the chief that if he was seriously threatened by Europeans he would give way. This conflicts with Mpezeni's remark to Warringham that he was quite prepared to fight, which we have noted above. According to Johnston, Warton tried to force a flag on Mpezeni and to stop him raiding for slaves. Johnston seems not to have been impressed with the delegations to Kotakota and maintained that Mpezeni organized raids to spite Warton.[74]

[69] 167.

[70] 169, fo. 63; 172, fo. 161; 158, p. 63; *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 2, cols. 1 and 3; *A & P.*, 1896, lviii, p. 425.

[71] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 71; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 19 (15 October 1896), p. 2.

[72] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12-13.

[73] 122.

[74] 132, p. 59; 158, p. 62.

[Text continues on page 85]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

MAP C. WHITE SETTLEMENTS IN NGONILAND
1890–1900

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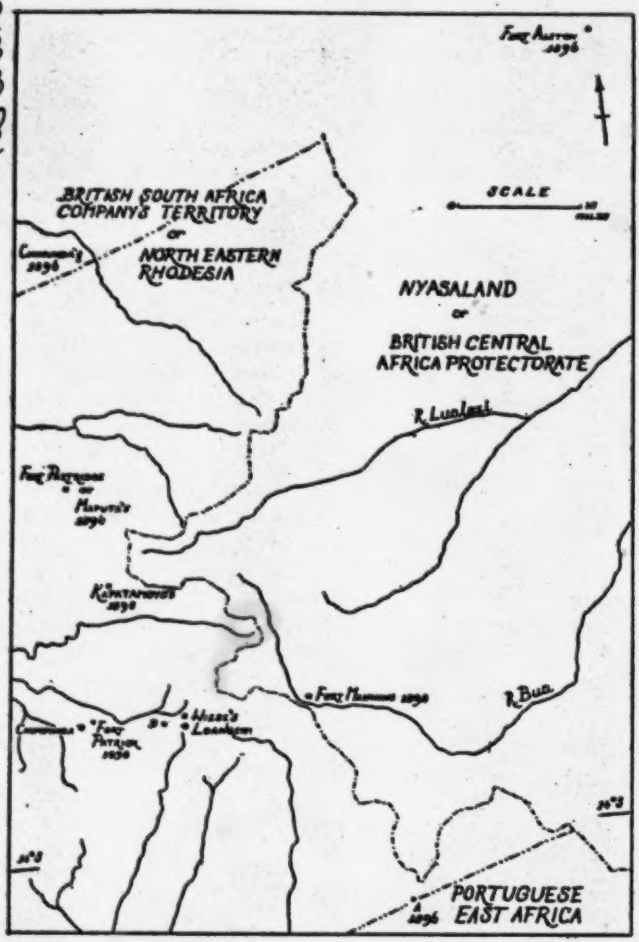

..... White territorial boundaries.

..... North Charterland Concession, northern boundary.

■ White settlements, with date of foundation.

A Camp near Mimale known in 1896 as FORT YOUNG.

B Brick building known from 1898 onwards as FORT YOUNG or FORT ETYAMBA.

FORT JAMESON. The name applied in 1896 to a camp at CHIPUNDA'S; possibly in October 1897 to MAPUTA'S; from December 1897 until March 1898 to CHIPUNDA'S; and from October 1898 onwards to the township founded at KAPATAMOYO'S.

FORT YOUNG. The name applied in 1896 to a camp (A) at Mimale; in 1897 and 1898 to a camp, also known as WEST'S or CHAKWARA, near the village of Loangeni; and from later in 1898 onwards to a brick building (B) about two miles farther west.

LOANGENI. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 10.

CHIPUNDA. Ngoni village, headquarters of segment 15, also known as MPEZENI'S.

[p. 84]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

6. *Fighting*

The European travellers who came to Ngoniland did not come alone. They brought with them their own retinues of servants and carriers, usually not Ngoni, who took orders only from their own masters and over whose misdoings there was continual friction with the Ngoni.[75] Wiese had an armed guard of a hundred and twenty Makua, though later this was disbanded.[76] Mpezeni insisted that the so-called Fort Young should not have a stockade but only a low reed fence, presumably to prevent the North Charterland from putting themselves beyond the reach of his warriors.[77] On the other hand Warton and the North Charterland directors were insistent that their employees should be armed, sought permission from the Foreign Office to import arms through Nyasaland, and even threatened to withdraw if the B.S.A. Company did not make adequate arrangements for their protection. Johnston was firmly opposed to private armies and private wars, and the Foreign Office advocated that if the North Charterland was in a precarious position it should withdraw until an administration had been established. Eventually Johnston came round to the view that the B.S.A. Company was so committed in Southern Rhodesia that it could not provide the North Charterland with the protection it was entitled to, and that, therefore, the North Charterland had a reasonable claim to arms of its own. Accordingly in July 1896, he reluctantly approved the import of two Maxim guns 'for eventual use against Mpezeni'. These Maxims seem never to have arrived, but Deare successfully smuggled in thirty rifles.[78] Thus the stage was set for struggle by persuasion to give way to struggle by arms.

At the same time as they were thus altering the distribution of power within Ngoni country, the European intruders were developing external relations with other African groups which were incompatible with the raided-raiding relationship existing between them and the Ngoni. Wiese had trading-stations in other tribal areas,[79] and we have already noted his plans for building up a large trading business based on the labour of his wife's slaves. Genthe was friendly with Cewa and Kunda chiefs and on that account tried to represent their interests to Mpezeni after they had been raided.[80] Deare went to visit Cimwala and Undi, Cewa chiefs, in about January

[75] e.g. the affair of the stolen red blankets, described by Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[76] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.
[77] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[78] ibid., pp. 57-8; 129-33; 139-42; 149; 155; 156.
[79] op.
[80] *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), pp. 1-2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 1897 and some time later they came to visit him at Fort Young.
439 Deare gave them presents, presumably to gain their support for his
own enterprises, and makes no mention of their seeing Mpezeni.[81]
648 Undi was the chief who claimed part of Mpezeni's country in his
[72] treaty with Sharpe and who in 1892, when Foà was living in his village, was raided by Ngoni several times a month.[82] Thus the Europeans in Ngoniland were affiliated not only to European groups in Nyasaland and in England out of direct touch with Mpezeni but also with African groups with whom he was in contact. There was an essential contradiction in the situation in which, for example, Deare was friendly with both Mpezeni and Undi while Mpezeni was at war with Undi. Everywhere, not only in Nyasaland, the traditional Ngoni pattern of external relations was becoming incompatible with their relations with Europeans in their midst.

The leader of the opposition to the North Charterland was Nsingu, Mpezeni's heir.[83] Nsingu was at first friendly towards Warton but later his attitude changed. Deare, before establishing
[576] the North Charterland camp in 1896, had passed through Nsingu's village, by Ngoni standards an insulting thing to do, and later quarrelled with him, finally flogging him.[84] Genthe, the German traveller, met Nsingu on a path and only grudgingly gave way to let him pass.[85] While Mpezeni remained comparatively friendly, Nsingu and the warriors whose interests he came to represent became increasingly hostile towards all Europeans. At the same time Mpezeni's control over his lieutenants seems not to have been effective, as evidenced by his apparent inability to prevent unauthorized raiding. Deare, according to his own account, enjoyed Mpezeni's favour and was almost forced to marry one of his daughters, and yet Mashanga, the second lieutenant of segment 10, twice tried to kill him.[86] According to Genthe, Mpezeni sent repeatedly for some army leaders who had been raiding and they failed to appear. This may have been deliberate procrastination arranged by Mpezeni, who treated him coldly, but Genthe thought that Mpezeni was only a dummy whose lieutenants did what they liked.[87] With Deare there seems to have been a genuine difference in attitude between Mashanga on the one side and on the other Mpezeni, supported by Mcekwani, the first lieutenant over

[81] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[82] Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, pp. 280-1.
[83] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[84] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[85] *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1.
[86] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. cf. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.
[87] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mashanga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tsonga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tsinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[88] Swann's report for 1896, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.

[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.

[90] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 24; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 23; cf. Young, *History*, p. 112, who reverses the role played by witch-finders in this incident.

[91] As reported by Warton in June 1896, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.

[92] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 493.

[93] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingu, Nzermane, and Madzimawi.

[94] 281, fo. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

171 643 between rival heirs even while the occupant of the throne was still alive. The brothers Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fought for the heirship while their father Mpande was still chief.[96]

175 643 648 669 The apparent ineffectiveness of Mpezeni's rule may well have been due to the increasing segmentation of the State as it expanded and to the growing differentiation of interest between one major segment and another. As it happened, there was no civil war and the tribe did not split, at least not in these terms. A cleavage in the royal house did reveal itself later, in 1903, after British rule had begun, when Madzimawi tried to take the name of Zwangendaba and was opposed by the supporters of Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu. But by then the form of the State was already determined by political forces other than the balanced opposition of segments. It is significant of the changed situation that Madzimawi did not send his armed followers against the new Mpezeni to challenge his succession. Instead he applied to the Native Commissioner for permission to take the name of his grandfather.[98]

Instead of dividing in civil war the whole country united against the European interlopers. Mpezeni alone tried to protect his friend Wiese. The effective cleavage was not between rival heirs but between the Paramount Chief and his people. He was now a man in his sixties who seemed not to want war and who perhaps benefited more than his people from the presents made by Europeans. The Ngoni people continued to believe and teach that fighting was the proper occupation for men. An attempt to exploit this cleavage was made in 1897 when Wiese, perhaps remembering his earlier attempt to serve Portugal and Britain simultaneously, offered his services to the B.S.A. Company. Forbes thought that if Wiese was given troops, he would be supported by Mpezeni, who would then be in a position to hold Nsingu and the Ngoni warriors in check.[99] But this plan was overtaken by events.

64 721 We saw in the previous chapter that the organization of the State was based on warfare, not only on war as an activity bringing prestige to successful warriors but also on war as a method of recruitment to the ever-widening segments of the residential system. Without warfare to eliminate the unsuccessful and to bring 175 promotion and dependants to those who survived, the system could 439 not keep going. It was in no sense inevitable that the Fort Jameson 648 Ngoni and the British should fight; we have only to turn to the

[96] Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', pp. 35-6, and *Malinowski's Sociological Theories*, pp. 19-20; Krige, *Social system of the Zulu*, p. 19.
[98] See pp. 139 *f*.
[99] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F R5 Ngoni F R5
Mpezeni

Ngoni of northern Nyasaland for a similar situation which ended in the relatively peaceful incorporation of the tribe into the framework of colonial administration. But in northern Nyasaland there were no gold-mines, there were only missionaries. Johnston admits that the presence of mission stations among the northern Nyasaland Ngoni embarrassed him, and he refrained from using force against them in 1895 because this might have interfered with missionary activity.[99] In Mpezeni's country there were no mission stations and, as it happened, no gold-mines worth worrying about either; but by the time this fact had been realized it had ceased to be significant for the Ngoni. The North Charterland was formed in the belief that Mpezeni's country was rich. The capital of the company, not all paid up, was £1,000,000 and in 1897 it offered a reward of £10,000 to the discoverer of the first payable gold-field in its concession.[100] Given the fact that wealth of this magnitude was at stake, that there was gold to be found, and given the tactlessness of Warton and the intransigence of Nsingu, it was likely that war would come sooner or later.

As it was, the end of the Ngoni State as a sovereign political unit and its incorporation within a colonial empire came suddenly. Instead of the gradual formation of new groupings and alignments, the new system began as suddenly as the old system ended. We tend to think of the arrival of Europeans in the backwoods of Africa as a gradual process extending through many decades, and indeed even in Ngoniland there were Europeans for at least thirteen years prior to the war. Yet to old Ngoni of to-day the coming of the Europeans is a precisely defined event which took place on 19 January 1898.

The sequence of events which culminated in the fighting was as follows. In May 1897 some of Mpezeni's people began to build shelters and clear gardens at the headwaters of the River Bua, just inside the Nyasaland Protectorate. Sharpe, who had succeeded Johnston as Commissioner, was at first not greatly pleased, but instructed the Collector at Kotakota to make clear to Mpezeni that he would have to conform to the wishes of the Administration. A peaceful settlement between Mpezeni and the British seemed possible, and on second thoughts Sharpe was pleased to see, as he thought, Mpezeni removed from the sphere of influence of the North Charterland and the B.S.A. Company, who might have taken action against him and precipitated a crisis. However, the Collector was single-handed and it seems that he was unable to

[99] *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 437.
[100] *African Review*, xiii, 254 (2 October 1897), p. 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 visit Mpezeni to arrange a peaceful settlement with him.[101] In any
439 case, although some movement of population may well have taken
648 place, Mpezeni and the greater part of his people remained outside the Protectorate and in the Concession. In October 1897 Warringham, the B.S.A. Company's Collector at Cinunda's, moved in closer to Ngoniland and occupied the abandoned Fort Partridge, twenty miles north of Mpezeni. A month or so later, he appears to have found it prudent to move back again to Cinunda's.[102]

In December Manning, acting as Commissioner while Sharpe was on leave, was told by a North Charterland official at Chikwakwa, on the Shire, that Mpezeni's warriors were said to have murdered two Europeans on their way from Tete. This report was not confirmed. On 28 December[103] news arrived from Warringham that he at Cinunda's and Wiese at Fort Young were in danger of attack and could not communicate with each other. On 4 January there was news that Wiese was safe. According to his own account, Wiese was secretly warned by Mpezeni of the planned attack on him and had time 'on the next dark night' to build a small fortification into which he retired.[104] However, Wiese and his two European companions thought themselves still in danger and on 9 January wrote to the North Charterland general manager and to Warringham at Cinunda's asking for help and arms.[105]

Meanwhile a force of about seven hundred troops was organized
FR5 by Manning in Nyasaland. Warringham at Cinunda's was
649 reinforced but on 9 January he reported that Ngoni raids were
726 preventing him from collecting provisions. The next day there was
439 news that Wiese, now with three other Europeans, was still surrounded at Fort Young and that the Ngoni had mustered fully forty thousand fighting men. The rear troops, whose progress

[101] 172, fo. 61; 172a, fo. 172; 173.

[102] Poole implies, but does not specifically mention, the move back to Cinunda's. In 1897 Genthe referred to the Cinunda camp as Fort Jameson and according to Poole this name was transferred to Fort Partridge when Warringham moved there. If so, the name must have been transferred back again with Warringham, for the Fort Jameson mentioned in reports of the fighting, both by Poole and in *B.C.A.G.* and dispatches, is the Cinunda camp. On the other hand, the new Fort Jameson established at Kapatamoyo's after the war is said to have been some twenty miles south of the earlier station of the same name. cf. *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 14-15, 19. The name Fort Young was also moved about, being at first applied to a camp near Missale. cf. *C.A.P.*, 15 November 1896, p. 5, and 1 December 1896, p. 3.

[103] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 15, says this message reached Kotakota on 21 December. This seems unlikely, for Manning states that he received the news at Zomba by wire from Kotakota on the morning of 28 December. cf. 174; 175, fo. 376; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1 (15 January 1898), p. 1.

[104] Wiese, 'Geschichte', pp. 186*ff*.

[105] 177-80.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

towards Ngoniland had been halted after the report of 4 January, resumed their march.

Four companies under Captain Brake reached Cinunda's on 17 January and left the next day for Fort Partridge, which was burnt by Ngoni as they arrived. On 19 January they moved on towards Fort Young. After some skirmishing they arrived there at 5.20 p.m. and relieved Wiese and his companions. Fort Young was only a few hundred yards outside Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10, and in the morning Brake found that this village and others near by, including Nsingu's, were full of warriors. Accordingly he decided not to withdraw to Fort Partridge as he had intended and sent his troops to clear the villages and burn them down. Later in the day there was organized fighting but in the face of fire from seven-pounders and Maxims the Ngoni lost heavily. The number of Ngoni warriors involved was estimated at from 4,000 to 5,000.[106]

On the next day, 21 January, Mpezeni sent messengers to Captain Brake with a present of a sheep. Brake regarded this poor present as an insult and insisted that he would negotiate only with important lieutenants. The next day, five messengers arrived with twelve head of cattle, but Brake regarded the messengers as slaves and said that if a lieutenant did not come the next day, he would deal with Cimpinga, headquarters of segment 15 where Mpezeni was living, as he had dealt with Nsingu's village. On 23 January a lieutenant and an important man arrived to see Brake and were interviewed by him the next day. They stated that Mpezeni was weary of the war brought on by the misconduct of his sons, and that he placed himself in Brake's hands to impose what conditions of peace he might choose. When Brake arrived at Cimpinga on 25 January he was met by two men who said that Mpezeni had gone into hiding outside the village. Brake told them to tell Mpezeni to come, otherwise the village would be destroyed. Brake waited until 5 p.m. and then burnt the village except for Mpezeni's own hut and those of his wives. The next day Lt. Sharp, with five men, succeeded in encountering Mpezeni, who had fifty men with him. Mpezeni asked for twenty minutes' grace while his wives got away and managed to slip away himself.

The main body of troops under Manning arrived at Cimpinga on 28 January. Manning sent out messengers to inform the Ngoni that unless Nsingu was handed over by the night of 30 January, troops would 'penetrate to every valley in Mpezeni's country and punish every village where opposition was encountered'. Manning

[106] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 475; Bradley, *Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 44-5.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

received defiant answers to his messages and on 31 January dispatched four columns each of about two hundred men to sweep the eastern portion of the country. On 3 February Nsingu was surrounded by troops and surrendered to them. Manning tried Nsingu by court martial for murder, instigating to murder and raiding in British territory. He was found guilty and shot on 4 February in the presence of all captured lieutenants. On 5 February another column visited the southern portion of the country. Manning left the country the next day. He recommended, possibly on Deare's advice, that Mpezeni should be allowed to return as chief.

Mpezeni voluntarily surrendered to Brake on 9 February and was told he would be allowed to resettle and that his people could reoccupy their villages. A great number of these must, however, have been burnt by the troops, for even on 23 January Brake had reported that in one district there was hardly a village or hut left standing. More villages had been destroyed by the columns sent out by Manning.[107]

After Mpezeni's surrender, Brake continued trying to capture other important people thought to have been supporters of Nsingu, but it seems no more villages were burnt. Some leaders went into hiding, other like Madzimawi fled west to Nsenga country, while Mlonyeni, head of segment 6, went to Mwambera's country in northern Nyasaland. Mpezeni had at first been instructed to live in a village near his former home at Cimpinga, but was later moved to an Ngoni village near Fort Manning, which Brake was then building just inside the Nyasaland border. After a year he was allowed to return to the centre of his country and was reinstated as chief. He died from natural causes soon afterwards on 21 September 1900.[108] The leaders who had fled drifted back and no further action was taken against them. Some people began to cultivate their gardens again and to make shelters.[109] Others, particularly Cewa who had been captured only a short while before 1898, left Ngoniland and either returned to their former tribal areas or moved on elsewhere.

Although fighting between Ngoni and British ceased, there was still some scrapping between the North Charterland and the

[107] For the preceding paragraphs. see 176, fo. 372-4; 181; 184-90; 193-5; 198; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1-3 (15 January, 5 and 26 February 1898), p. 1 of each issue; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 14-16, 71; Baxter, 'Angoni rebellion', p. 17 (map); Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

[108] *B.C.A.G.*, 118, vii, 9 (30 September 1900), p. 3. In view of this newspaper report the statement that Mpezeni died in October, made in *Reports on the Administration* 31 *March* 1902 and followed by Poole and others, must be wrong.

[109] 201; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 42; Stigand, 'Natives of Nyassaland', p. 126.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

B.S.A. Company's administration which now began to operate in Mpezeni's country itself. Each had its own African police force and on one occasion two people who had been taken prisoner by the Administration's police were released by a party of North Charterland police. The North Charterland police then arrested the Administration's police, and it was necessary for troops to come from Nyasaland to release them and arrest the North Charterland men.[110] By the end of 1899, however, conditions had become more settled. The B.S.A. Administration had acquired effective control over the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland. 175 439 648

The military operations in December 1897 and in 1898 were carried out during the wet season and in consequence there was much sickness among the troops. Although it was not the time of year which the Europeans would have chosen for a campaign, according to one of my informants Warringham had been advised by an Ngoni man whose support he had gained that he should arrange for the war to take place while all the warriors were away from the immediate vicinity of Fort Young attending the national first fruits ceremony at the headquarters of segment 4, the village of Zwangendaba's great wife. The descendants of this man are still regarded as traitors by other Ngoni. The first fruits ceremony was usually held about the new year, so that the war may in fact have followed immediately after the ceremony. This view is supported by the remark made by Harding, who arrived in Ngoniland a few months after the war was over. He said that the war 'arose over a highly strung official [presumably Warringham] mistaking an ordinary Native dance for an act of hostility towards the Administration'.[111] Whatever the truth in the matter, the first fruits ceremony would have been an appropriate time for Nsingu to call for an attack on the Whites. [796]

7. *Cattle*

It has been estimated that before the war there were about 20,000 head of cattle in Mpezeni's country.[112] During the fighting many were taken from Ngoni by Protectorate troops. These animals became the subject of much recrimination. Read states that half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot', while Poole states that a large portion of the 14,000 head captured were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners.[113] 231 648 727 439

[110] 223, fo. 368.
[111] Harding, *Far Dugles*, p. 82.
[112] 230, p. 69 has 24,000, while *Report on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19, has 15,000-20,000.
[113] Read, 'Tradition', p. 478; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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According to Manning, in his first report on the matter dated 17 February 1898, nearly 12,000 head were captured. It seems clear that at the time Manning thought that the whole of this herd would be used for the benefit of the B.S.A. Company, for he wrote:

> 'I have informed the British South Africa Company that we shall require them to pay the actual expenses incurred by us on account of the campaign. I do not imagine the total cost to the British South Africa Company will be more than 2,000*l*. This will be covered ten times over by the value of the cattle captured by the expedition, so that the British South Africa Company will reap a handsome profit on the campaign.'[114]

There seems, however, to have been considerable discussion among Europeans in the region about the disposal of the cattle. Roberts, a surgeon who had been one of Wiese's companions at Fort Young, was dismissed from the North Charterland shortly after the war ended. Wiese also left the country after the war and lost his North Charterland post worth £900 a year. Manning suggests that these two were anxious to make trouble by attacking the conduct of the war. St. Hill, the North Charterland manager, may have been anxious to forestall any accusations for on 23 April he published in a newspaper a statement admitting that there had been criticism on the capture of the cattle, but pointing out that 'Army regulations provide for a certain amount of loot'. He said that it had been a wonderfully cheap expedition, that the Protectorate men who went in certainly deserved something, and that he expected that the B.S.A. Company would return a very large number of cattle to the Natives.[115] Editorial comment on his article was nevertheless critical. Criticism began to be heard in Britain. A letter was written to the Parliamentary Secretary responsible, a question was asked in the Commons, and an article appeared in *Truth*. According to one account, the military officers said they expected £400 or £500 each from their share of the loot.[116] Whether or not he was influenced by this criticism, Sharpe on leave in England proposed on 12 May that half the captured herds be returned to the Ngoni, the other half to be retained by the B.S.A. Company.[117] On the same day the Foreign Office replied to Manning's dispatch of 17 February, quoted above, with the statement that the B.S.A. Company wanted only three hundred beasts. Manning was asked to

[114] 195.
[115] *Central African Times*, i, 30 (23 April 1898), p. 3.
[116] 216, fo. 8; 217; *Parliamentary Debates*, *4th series*, lv (1898), cols. 1240, 1654-5; *Truth*, xliii, 1122 (30 June 1898), pp. 1639-40.
[117] 202.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

consider returning some of the remainder to the Ngoni.[118] Manning replied that representatives of the B.S.A. Company had already made arrangements for driving away five thousand cattle. He proposed to return three thousand to Mpezeni.[119]

The subsequent course of events is not clear. Poole states that due to the opportune arrival and intervention of Selby, a member of the B.S.A. Company's Administration, a large proportion of the cattle were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners. This is in accord with Sharpe's statement on 6 July that 'Mpezeni . . . has had all his cattle returned to him [his underlining]'. A missionary journal published in Blantyre on 15 July stated that probably a considerable part of the cattle had been returned.[120] Manning, who was in a better position to know than Sharpe, who was still on leave, wrote on 31 August that all the cattle had been returned to the Natives with the exception of about a thousand head handed over to the B.S.A. Company as a fine and about two hundred kept for the use of the troops.[121] The matter then seemed to have been settled.

In the next year the North Charterland continued its quarrel with the B.S.A. Company, and the disposal of the captured cattle was discussed again. The North Charterland complained that the whole Ngoni war had been unnecessary and had been provoked by the B.S.A. Company. There had been wholesale looting of cattle which had been disposed of in the interests of the officers concerned, Natives had been expelled from their lands, and in consequence the commercial prospects of the North Charterland had been ruined. The Foreign Office replied to these allegations on 23 August 1899, stating that so far as the cattle were concerned, five thousand head were to be driven out, three thousand returned to Mpezeni, and the balance held at the disposal of the B.S.A. Company, apart from two hundred and fifty head captured inside the Protectorate and driven off for use by the troops. This reply, referring to what would be done rather than what by then presumably had been done, appears to have been based on the arrangements proposed by Manning on 20 May 1898. Either the arrangements he reported on 31 August 1898 were never put into operation or else they were overlooked by mistake when the Foreign Office reply to the North Charterland was drafted a year later. The latter explanation seems more probable.[122]

[118] 203.
[119] 207.
[120] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; 211, fo. 228; *Life and Work in British Central Africa*, 125 (15 July 1898), p. 3.
[121] 219, fo. 456.
[122] 230; 233.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231 439 648 727 Manning stipulated that cattle handed back to the Ngoni should not be sold, to prevent traders bartering cattle for gunpowder.[123] Nevertheless the majority of the cattle remaining in or returned to Ngoni hands were sold within two years. In April 1898 over 14,000 head of cattle were counted.[124] Whether or not all these were in Ngoni ownership at the time is not clear, although the North Charterland implied in a letter written in 1899 that at least 12,000 belonged to Ngoni.[125] During the next year or so, in spite of Administrative opposition, many thousands of cattle were sold to traders or killed. By 31 March 1900 only 1,224 remained.[126] [177] Thus another of the systems of social relationships, those mediated through cattle, which had sustained the old social order, was undermined.

8. *The end of a system*

178 648 Thus ended the Ngoni war and with it the Ngoni State. In the last twelve years of its existence, from 1886 to 1898, three struggles were proceeding simultaneously in linked regions of social space. First there were the traditional processes already described by which Ngoni killed and recruited their neighbours and by which cleavages between segments of their residential system widened and altered with time. Second there was the struggle between Portugal, Great Britain and, peripherally, Germany for the political control of south-central Africa. Third there was a struggle between [439] different groups of financiers in London for the control of the rich economic resources which they believed, quite mistakenly as far as we can now tell, lay waiting to be discovered in Mpezeni's country and round about. Apart from these three major fields of activity, there were two others which affected this particular area to a lesser degree. There were the traders and adventurers like Wiese (until 1896), Matakenya and the Arabs who competed with one another and endeavoured to exploit the region in terms of ivory, gunpowder and slaves. There were also the various missions, [797] representing the interests of their co-religionists and anti-slavery enthusiasts in Europe, competing with each other and with the slave traders for local control. There was even a scheme for colonizing Mpezeni's country with Christian laymen from Britain.[127] All these social fields were interwoven in reality, but in analysis

[123] 207; 208, fo. 15; 233.
[124] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[125] 230, p. 69. Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 393, implies that all the 14,000 belonged to Ngoni.
[126] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[127] 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

our task is to separate them out. Yet even in analysis we have to show how each field interlocks with the other two, how events in one field set up movements in others. [178 648]

The material apparatus used in the various fields was distinct. The traditional processes were decided ultimately by resort to spears and shields. Portugal and Britain fought with artillery, embargoes, customs dues and treaties. The North Charterland fought its rivals with concessions, certificates of claim and share capital.[128] Mpezeni, who knew how to fight with spears, was asked to sign pieces of paper which would then be negotiable in a property system of which he knew nothing, and the manipulators of which knew little of him. The treaty-collectors imagined a patchwork of stationary chiefdoms spread over the region, each with a chief powerful enough to sell his country, whereas in fact there was only an unstable series of groups of shifting cultivators, each liable to attack from the migrating Ngoni. [739 648]

Yet despite the differences in technique and despite the lack of knowledge of each other's systems of government, the various groups involved continued to pursue their own ends as best they could. Mpezeni may not have known what a flag was, yet the issue between Portugal and Britain was decided, and decided in Lisbon rather than in Ngoniland. The treaties may have been made beyond the competence, and the understanding, of the chiefs who signed them, and yet the B.S.A. Company did gain control of the country. Mpezeni never made his mark on a document, yet the North Charterland acquired its ten thousand square miles of land. On the other hand, the Ngoni regiments tried to win another battle like the others they had won before, and this time they failed. In consequence of the war of 1898 there was a revolution, a change of structural form, in Ngoni society, whereas in the histories of Portugal and Britain, and even of the B.S.A. Company, the event passed almost unnoticed. [721] [669]

In northern Nyasaland an analogous process of incorporation within a wider system was taking place. Here also there was an intruding European group and the same distant interest of the Nyasaland Administration. Yet in many ways the chain of events in northern Nyasaland was simpler than at Fort Jameson. In the north, there was only one set of resident Whites, the Livingstonia missionaries, there was no Wiese willing to play for both sides at once, and there was no North Charterland. In consequence the [797]

[128] cf. Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, p. 24: 'Swazi were subjugated through concessions, a type of economic warfare eventually sanctioned by powerful European governments.'

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 relationship between Ngoni and Europeans was of a somewhat
648 different kind, and one of its most interesting features was an attempt by the Ngoni, persisted in for many years, to establish a monopoly over the missionaries, at the expense of another tribe with whom they were at war.[129] In Fort Jameson the social field was more complex. One of Mpezeni's sons tried to sell ivory to Wiese illegally without his father's knowledge,[130] and we may look on this as an attempt to establish a relationship with him differentiated from the wider relationship between Wiese and the Ngoni as a whole, or perhaps as an attempt on Wiese's part to penetrate Ngoni society along its lines of structural cleavage. His and Deare's support for a candidate for the heirship was similar in intention.
[661] Mpezeni's efforts to gain support from Kotakota against his people was a more noticeable attempt to utilize the power of the Whites in his own sectional interest. Similarly the readiness with which raided chiefs made treaties was certainly related to their weak position in relation to the Ngoni and their hope of support against them. Even with the traders, as distinct from the treaty-collectors, this consideration was relevant. Deare relates how he asked Mpezeni to prevent raiding near the North Charterland supply route which passed through Undi's country. When later he visited Undi, he was welcomed for stopping the raids and was given ivory. Thus although at Fort Jameson no one group had a monopoly of access to the Europeans, there were these attempts to establish specific relations with them to the advantage of the different groups concerned.

For as soon as two groups are brought into contact, and for
[178] some reason neither group annihilates the other, there is a change in the structure of the social field in which they act. Life can no longer go on as before, for every man has new potential allies and new potential enemies. There is no established order to which appeal can be made, for a new order has to be created. A new set of alignments, a new social structure, emerges from the manoeuvring and intriguing of the transition period which must differ from the old because of the new interests and new relationships which it contains.

Thus Europeans discriminated between one African group and another. Similarly the Ngoni established different relations with different European groups. From the beginning it was clear that the Portuguese and the British were to be distinguished, and Mpezeni preferred the inaction of the former to the efficiency of

[129] cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 97, 129, 237 and 245.
[130] Wiese, 'Expedição', x, pp. 491-2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the latter. This alignment established, it was natural that Warton, 439
though not himself a party to the Imperial struggle, should utilize 648
it by arriving in the country from Tete, in Portuguese territory, rather than from Nyasaland, that he should pose as Wiese's brother, and, assuming that the Foreign Office was correctly informed, that he should fly a Portuguese flag. Genthe played a similar game with his Union Jack, but in a different area among the raided tribes. Even among the British, Mpezeni had three groups to deal with, North Charterland, B.S.A. Company, and the Nyasaland Administration. He was initially friendly and later hostile towards the first, unyielding to the second, and appealed for help to the third, although, or perhaps because, it was farthest away.

The effective cleavage within the Ngoni chiefdom was between 439
the chief and his eldest son. We might have expected the major 578
cleavage to have been between one son and another, particularly 648
in view of North Charterland support for one son rather than 668
another. We have some information concerning who Wiese and Deare thought were their friends, but some of these people appear to have taken a prominent part in the fighting. Mpezeni was certainly not entirely deserted by his own people, for he was able to send emissaries to Kotakota and to warn Wiese and Deare of plots against their lives.[121] The situation in which one section of the population supported the chief and the remainder supported his son may have been facilitated by the existence of what we have called rump segments in the residential system. For in this system the dependants of a segment head were not completely divided up among his heirs; there was a remainder who even after the death of the head constituted a rump segment and represented his interests as against those of his sons. Thus it may be that Mpezeni was supported by those who remained in his great wife's village, or perhaps in his father's great wife's village, as against those who had broken out from it. In the absence of satisfactory evidence, our hypothesis remains unverified. Such evidence as there is, is contradictory. Deare made friends, eventually, with the two senior lieutenants of segment 10, the segment of Mpezeni's great wife; this would support our thesis, as does Wiese's mention of the senior of these as one of his friends. Yet both of them, according to my informants, descendants of these men, were shot in the course of the campaign; this points against our thesis. In the list of friends and enemies which Wiese and his companions gave Brake, segments 4 and 10 each have members in both lists. Among those listed as friends are Ciboma msitini, regional governor in segment 4 and

[121] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186; 187, fo. 137; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10.
578 Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant
648 of segment 4, and Kamzembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional
668 governor in segment 10.[123] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[124] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour
[721] peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell
[178] their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs
439 traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid
648 Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with
567 Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[124] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[123] 187, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[124] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[124] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Karonga in 1895 and although slave trading went on through Portuguese territory even after 1900, Arabs never made any effort to maintain this trade in the Fort Jameson area. 439 648 [567]

When Wiese left the country in 1898 his work was done. His departure symbolized the end of the pioneering stage of colonialism and the beginning of the stage of settled paternal administration. Mpezeni was reinstated after the war, but there was no position into which Wiese could have been reinstated, nor anyone who wanted to reinstate him. Unlike Mpezeni, Wiese did not represent the long-term interests of any powerful group. In the history of empires there are many examples of men like Wiese who succeeded in weathering the transition from one phase to another and ended their lives in honour and glory. But Wiese had sold his assets before the war began. When it was over, his one saleable attribute, his friendship with Mpezeni, had been compromised and was no longer of value. He departed from a scene which had no place for him.

An examination of how the Imperial and the financial struggles were inter-connected would take us beyond the bounds of Ngoniland and of our subject. We have, however, shown that the three social fields were inter-connected, and that moves in one field were affected by and in turn inspired moves in another. It is important to realize that this inter-connection was not due merely to geographical accident. From one point of view it was accidental that Ngoniland should lie near so many frontiers and that there should be an ancient gold-mine in the vicinity. But Britain, the North Charterland, and Nsingu were all struggling partly for the same thing, control of the Ngoni people. Even Warton understood this. At the end of 1896 he was asked: 'The Natives, I understand, are friendly?' He replied: 'I am glad to say that, so far, we have succeeded in establishing most friendly relations with M'Pesene. . . . Fighting would not only be costly, but we should lose our labourers if we engaged in hostilities. So you see on selfish, as well as humanitarian grounds, we have every reason to avoid warfare and bloodshed.'[125] The mineral resources of Mpezeni's country may have been largely illusory but the human resources were real. Ngoni men could fight for slaves, for dependants, for cattle and for glory; they could carry loads from Tete and prepare to work in the North Charterland's mines; or they could migrate to Southern Rhodesia to work there: but they could not do all these things simultaneously. The fight to destroy the Ngoni army was as much one to secure a labour supply for European capital investment as it was to secure 439 464 648

[125] *African Review*, x, 216 (9 January 1897), p. 67.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 law and order. In this, not only the Ngoni were concerned. There
464 was a shortage of labour in Nyasaland and Mpezeni's raids pre-
648 vented labourers reaching that country from the interior. The campaign against Mwase in 1895 was undertaken partly with the aim of opening up labour routes and Mpezeni's defeat carried this a stage further. The Collector at Kotakota wrote shortly after the war: 'It is quite safe to say that no greater assistance has been given to these districts (and in fact to the Protectorate) than this opening up of the Luapula Valley by the conquest of Mpezeni.'[126] Yet the Luapula is 350 miles from Fort Jameson. Even Ngoni technical skill in fighting was of value to the new conquerors, for within six
[167] months of the war Ngoni fighting men were in Southern Rhodesia, not as allies of the Ndebele but as part of the British South Africa Police. Within ten months, the headquarters of segment 13 had been moved to make way for the new Administrative capital. With the defeat of Mpezeni, North-Eastern Rhodesia became a country.

178 A final point requires explication. Granted that the Ngoni
361 social system had to change in this new complex social environment, and granted also that their activities, in particular raiding, had to
648 be adapted to new demands on their labour, why did not the Ngoni continue to live in large villages as they had done hitherto? There are numerous analogies in Africa where segmentary social systems have been fitted into an Administrative framework, and where raiding has given way to migrant labour, and yet the pattern of settlement has remained the same. Why did the big Ngoni villages disappear after 1898?

Part of the answer to this question can be stated in ecological terms. In pre-conquest times, the dense population, human and bovine, the great stretches of cultivated land, and the manifest prosperity of the people impressed themselves vividly on contemporary observers accustomed to the scattered settlements of the surrounding tribes. Angus writes:

> 'Before us lay an undulating valley some miles in breadth, which, as the heavily timbered hills on either side proclaimed, had once been covered with forest, but was now denuded of every vestige of a tree. Village after village surrounded by waving cornfields, and green plains dotted with herds of cattle, stretched away into the distance. Never before in any of my African wanderings had I seen such an extent of land under cultivation; the cornfields seemed unending, and the size and number of the

[126] *B.C.A.G.*, v, 6 (30 April 1898), p. 4.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

villages fairly astonished me; and it was not till then that I realized what a powerful and prosperous people were those whose acquaintance I was about to make.'[137]

We may compare this description of conditions in 1896 with that given by Trapnell for the same area in 1938.

'. . . Reserve II presents an example of combined cutting-out, soil-deterioration and erosion which probably has no equal in the Territory. . . . Cattle are most numerous in this reserve, and . . . their added burden on the land has doubtless helped to weigh the scales to the point of erosion. With cattle and an excessive population in Mpezeni's and Maguya's country, surface compaction and deterioration of soil have come to give place to wholesale wash, and denuded belts of resting land are now to be seen seared by dongas fully ten feet deep. The enormous gullied scars down the face of Nyamfinsi and neighbouring hills provide notable examples of the effects of millet cultivation on impossible slopes.'[138]

The devastation described by Trapnell has come about in part on account of the alienation of land to Whites, but it is also due to the transition which the Ngoni have been forced to make from living as migrant brigands to working as subsistence cultivators and migrant labourers. Even without alienation, it is likely that the large villages would have disappeared.

The population of the tribe immediately prior to the conquest was estimated by Deare to be 40,000 and possibly more. Johnston, in his highly ambitious population density map, appears to have assumed a population of about 50,000, while an official estimate in 1898 was nearly 150,000.[139] The area of Mpezeni's country was estimated by Angus to be about 400 square miles. He also delimits an area of about 2,700 square miles which he describes as 'Angoniland proper', but it is clear that this large area includes much waterless uninhabited country. Johnston implies, on his map, an inhabited area of 3,200 square miles, but again there is clear evidence that in fact much of this was uninhabited. In 1903 it was estimated that the area within which the Ngoni kept their cattle before the conquest was about 600 square miles.[140] Angus's lower estimate is in accord with the distances between villages given by travellers

[137] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78.
[138] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 67, 71.
[139] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May; *A & P*, 1894, lvii, p. 769; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 3 (26 February 1898), p. 1.
[140] Angus, 'Northern Angoliland', pp. 74, 78; *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 11 (1 June 1896), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Four

TRANSITION

1. Administrative policy 2. White control 3. Chiefs 4. County segments
5. Relative status of chiefs 6. Counties as territorial units 7. Villages

1. *Administrative policy*

THE DEFEAT of the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1898 was followed by the establishment of an Administration under the British South Africa Company. The greater part of the Nyasaland troops who had done the fighting left the area in April 1898[1] but the North Charterland party remained at their old headquarters at Fort Young, the B.S.A. Company made a base at Fort Patrick a few miles away, and in Nyasaland the Protectorate Administration maintained a station at Fort Manning. The new township of Fort Jameson was established in October 1898[2] and the first mission station was opened by the Dutch Reformed Church Mission at Magwero in 1899, in response to a request for a mission made the previous year by Mpezeni.[3] From these bases, White administrators, traders and missionaries, aided by their Black assistants, began to alter the form of Ngoni life. We are here particularly concerned with political organization, and it was the Administration which was particularly influential in determining what form the new Ngoni political organization would take. But political systems do not exist in isolation, and the kinds of political relationship which we find existing to-day have been influenced by the changing economic, commercial and religious relationships which have been determined more specifically by traders, labour recruiters, planters and missionaries as well as by the exertions of administrators.

The Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia was in the hands of the B.S.A. Company, and the policy adopted was to some extent influenced by developments in other territories administered by the Company. Southern Rhodesia was much more accessible from the sea than North-Eastern Rhodesia, more capital had been invested in it, and its mineral wealth appeared to be considerably greater. North-Eastern Rhodesia was therefore

[1] 210, fo. 67.
[2] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71.
[3] Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and,
648 possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop
[464] the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that
[643] the cheapest way of running the country was through the
[622] indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[4] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all
[692] kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the
[651] most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black
[464] leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with
[797] establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

177 Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration
464 to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity
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648

[4] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

of earning money to pay tax, together with such subsidiary measures as the prohibition of Native smelting, and the pressure on men to clothe themselves in imported clothing, ensured that the old order changed beyond the mere loss of sovereignty. Not only were links established with Southern Rhodesia and later with other parts of Africa, but new patterns of distribution of wealth and power were set up which were incompatible with the old order. The chief who stayed at home ruling his people found himself outclassed by the newly returned labourers from the south, with their display of clothes, money and urban mannerisms. The relationships between one tribe and another which formerly had found expression in fighting had now to find other expressions, and began to be based on different interests.

These general considerations applied throughout North-Eastern Rhodesia. In Ngoniland local variation was supplied more by the presence of the North Charterland than by the fact that the Ngoni had been defeated in war. The North Charterland was interested in the economic development of its concession, whereas the Administration had to consider the needs of other territories governed by the B.S.A. Company, particularly Southern Rhodesia. The same administrative policy was applied to the Ngoni as to neighbouring tribes which had not been conquered by force of arms. Nevertheless in Ngoni eyes the Administration discriminated against Ngoni in favour of Cewa. Many Cewa who had been captured shortly before 1898 moved away from Ngoniland after the war, or at least moved in the direction of their homeland. With the end of Ngoni raiding the no-man's-land round Ngoni country filled up again with Cewa who had been displaced when the Ngoni first arrived in the 1870s. Cewa chiefdoms were re-established and recognized by the Administration, to the chagrin of the Ngoni.

Even the Ngoni themselves were referred to by the Administration as the 'Angoni-Chewa' by way of emphasizing their mixed ethnic composition. When the Native Reserve scheme was put forward in 1913 the Ngoni chiefs objected to the Cewa being allotted land of their own, and suggested that all the tribes of the district should be placed in one reserve under Mpezeni II. The Administration did not agree. When villages were moved into the proposed reserves in the 1920s, a few more villages left Ngoniland for Cewa country. At the same time other villages moved into Ngoniland from other chiefdoms in the face of alienation of land or difficulties with the Portuguese Administration. Thus to-day many villages in Ngoniland are of Cewa origin and many villages in Cewa chiefdoms are of Ngoni origin.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 Ngoni origin. The sharp cleavage between the Ngoni and their neighbours has gone.

Another relic of the privileged position enjoyed by the Ngoni 439 before the conquest which did not long survive their defeat was 648 the subsidy paid to Mpezeni. Under the terms of Wiese's alleged concession of 14 April 1891, Mpezeni was to be paid £200 a year 651 and one per cent of Wiese's profits. Wiese made presents to Mpezeni, but there is no record of any substantial payment. When the provisional grant of 10,000 square miles of land was made by the B.S.A. Company to the Mozambique Company on 8 May 1895, the latter agreed not to exercise any rights it might have under Wiese's concessions, but there was no mention of the disposal of any possible obligations. Warton continued Wiese's practice of giving presents to Mpezeni, but there was no regular payment. As Wiese's concession had never been recognized it would seem that there was no legal obligation on either the North Charterland or the B.S.A. Company to pay an annual subsidy. Nevertheless after the Ngoni war the two companies must have come to some agreement on the matter. In April 1898, according to the answer to a question in the Commons, the B.S.A. Company were ready to pay Mpezeni £200 a year 'for the present'. In January 1900 the Administrator stated that the Collector at Fort Jameson had spent only £50 during the current financial year on payments to Mpezeni and 'his loyal indunas'. He proposed to spend a further £50 during the year and the remaining £100 of the subsidy was to be distributed among the surrounding tribes in the interests of the North Charterland.[5] These special arrangements were presumably superseded in 1903 when, under the scheme of Native Administration drawn up in that year, provision was made for the payment of all recognized chiefs from the general funds of the Territory.

Similarly, the military organization of the Ngoni broke down 648 after the conquest. One of the first acts of the Administration was 701 to forbid Ngoni to carry weapons of war.[6] Four new age-set 561 regiments were formed between 1898 and 1914 but they were little more than dancing societies, singing the old songs which had excited their seniors in the 'time of peace' before the conquest but unable to emulate their military achievements. During the 1914-18 war the majority of young Ngoni men who might have formed a [464] new age-set were enrolled as carriers and soldiers on the Allied side.

[5] *Parliamentary Debates, 4th Series*, lv (1898), cols. 1654-5; report of a meeting between Administrator and North Charterland manager, 15 January 1900 (Lusaka archives); cf. Poole, MS., 'Tribes of East Luangwa Province'.

[6] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 201.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

After the war an age-set was formed but its activities conflicted with the demands of the churches and schools and it was not a success. No further attempts have been made to carry on the system. Ngoni now say, 'What need have we of regiments now that there are no other tribes for us to fight?'

2. *White control*

Apart from the squabble over cattle, the surrender of Mpezeni on 9 February 1898 marked the end of the Ngoni war. The Nyasaland troops did not pursue the leaders who fled, although Brake moved Mpezeni to the vicinity of Fort Manning. In May he wrote, perhaps over-optimistically, that in the central part of Ngoniland rebuilding had begun.[7]

It is clear that at first the Ngoni acquiesced in their defeat. Whereas prior to the war Whites had lived in their country on sufferance, now their right to be there was not challenged. Only a few months after the war Harding arrived, recruiting police for service in Southern Rhodesia. He was received in a 'most friendly manner by the chief in charge who gave an ocular demonstration of his loyalty by voluntarily and immediately handing over to my charge 200 of his young men for my newly formed Police Force...'.[8] After the death of Mpezeni I, his lieutenants waited the traditional period of a year. Mpezeni's heir Nsingu and his wife Mkucwa had both been shot during the war, and in September 1901 the lieutenants petitioned the Administration to appoint their eldest son, Ciloa, aged about 10 years, as chief. On 23 July 1903 the Native Commissioner held a meeting at which Madzimawi, son of Mpezeni I in the residue of segment 4, asked to be allowed to take the name Zwangendaba.[9] Thus even at that early date the over-riding authority of the Administration was acknowledged in matters concerning the chieftainship.

The establishment of an Administration based on Fort Jameson in 1898 was governed, in so far as the British legal system was concerned, by the legislation consolidated in the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890.[10] Relations between the Administration and its African subjects were controlled by the Africa Order in Council 1889.[11] This was superseded by later Orders in 1900, 1911 and 1924,[12] marking the delimitation of North-Eastern Rhodesia as a separate

[7] 198; 201, fo. 69.
[8] Harding, *Far Buglet*, p. 82.
[9] *Reports on the Administration*, 1900-2, p. 408; see pp. 1390*f*.
[10] 53 & 54 Vict., c. 37.
[11] *S.R. & O.*, Rev., 1890, iii, pp. 259-332.
[12] *S.R. & O.*, 89 of 1900, 458 of 1911 and 324 of 1924.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 territory, its amalgamation with North-Western Rhodesia, and the transfer of responsibility from the British South Africa Company to the Colonial Office. Statutory instruments issued under these and later Orders have provided legal backing for successive schemes of African Administration.

In 1900 the Fort Jameson Division, containing the country occupied by the Ngoni, Kunda and part of the Cewa tribes, was established as part of the East Luangwa District, stretching from the Nyasaland border to the River Luangwa. The names of these areas were later changed to Fort Jameson District and Eastern Province respectively, and there have been numerous changes in their boundaries during the last fifty years, though none of them have affected the Ngoni. To avoid confusion, we shall use the term District only in its modern usage. In charge of the African population of the District was a Native Commissioner responsible to a Magistrate, posts corresponding roughly to the modern District Commissioner and Provincial Commissioner. The Native Commissioner, with his assistants who were Whites, had a force of Native [202] messengers (otherwise known as boma messengers) attached to his office to convey instructions to the people of the District and to report irregularities to him. The Administrator, head of the Administration, appointed chiefs in charge of tribal districts [622] (smaller than the Administrative Districts already mentioned), and under them were district headmen appointed by the Secretary for Native Affairs. There were also district messengers who lived in [624] their villages, but assisted the Native Commissioner when he toured in their vicinity.

This scheme was regularized by the issue of the Native Commissioners' Regulations of 12 December 1908, made under King's Regulations of the same date. Minor amendments were introduced in 1913 and 1915, and a consolidating Proclamation was issued in 1916. This again was amended slightly in 1919.[13] The substance of the scheme was not altered until the enactment in 1929 of the Native Authorities Ordinance. A more comprehensive Ordinance, with provision for Native Treasuries, replaced this in 1936.[14]

The initiative in setting up, maintaining and modifying the system of administration lay with the Whites, not with the Ngoni, who indeed were only one tribe among many to whom the system applied. Yet the Administration endeavoured to enlist the support of chiefs and others who for the most part were persons of high status in their tribes. As early as 1905, the Administrator wrote of an

[13] Proclamations No. 3 of 1913, 11 of 1915, 8 of 1916, and 6 of 1919.
[14] Ordinances No. 32 of 1929, 9 of 1936.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

effort to induce them to co-operate actively with the government, and by 1910 he was looking forward to reducing the number of White officials in the Administration by devolving much of the Native work on to the Natives themselves. Co-operation was encouraged by the payment of small stipends to chiefs and others, varying in the 1920s in annual value from £22 10s. 0d. for Mpezeni down to 6s. for district messengers. 648

The Ngoni for the most part neither supported nor opposed this scheme of administration; they merely accepted it. For years the Administration bemoaned the indifference of the Ngoni, but apart from an attempt by a mission to set up its teachers as headmen, there was little attempt to obstruct the work of the Administration. [797]

In matters of land, the authority of the Whites was also dominant, but here the paternal amiability which characterized purely political relations between Administration and Ngoni was lacking. The alienation of land was at the instigation of the North Charterland, who considered themselves the owners of Ngoni country. Fort Jameson was built by the Administration in the middle of Ngoni country and the land round the township, few facilities though the town then had, became more valuable to potential settlers than more fertile but inaccessible tracts. The high density of population in Ngoni country also attracted settlers with the prospect of an adequate labour supply. Thus we find that many of the first tracts of land alienated were located in the middle of Ngoni country, in the most densely populated section. As early as 1 January 1904 the first Commission was appointed to inquire into land questions in Ngoni country.[15] Now that Ngoni had to grow their own food on land which had already been heavily exploited the density of population fell; but in relation to the carrying capacity of the land in perpetuity there was still serious overcrowding. During the unsettled period of the war and its aftermath, the population was dispersed, but from 1900 down to about 1930, in consequence of alienation and the formation of reserves, villages were gradually brought closer together. From 1930 onwards, with the recognition of land shortage by the Administration, villages have been allowed to spread out again. The negotiations concerning where the Ngoni should live have been protracted and complicated; I hope to discuss them in a later work in connexion with the economic background of Ngoni social life. What is here significant about them is that to a very large extent these negotiations have been carried on entirely by Whites, with the Administration representing for the greater part Ngoni

423 439 648 311 [167] 361 648

[15] *N.E.R.G.G.*, ii, 1 (1 January 1904), pp. 30-1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

interests and those of neighbouring tribes against the North Charterland and the White settlers. Ngoni themselves have not been in a position to enforce their own point of view.

In the operation of the legal system White control has never been so complete, as we have indicated above. However the support given to the judgments of chiefs and others by the Administration prior to 1929 was political rather than legal, and the courts held by chiefs with or without the approval of the Administration did not form part of the same legal system as the Administration's own courts. In that year Native Courts with defined powers were established as part of the same legal system as other recognized courts in the British Empire, with ultimate connexion to the Privy Council.[16] In matters of religion White dominance has been achieved more slowly and has never been complete. But even in this field the religions brought by the Whites have triumphed over the cult of the chief's ancestors and to-day it is the Christians who are the ritual experts.

A parallel sequence of events has taken place in Nyasaland, save that there the amount of land alienated in the Fort Manning area has been small. A scheme of administration was given a legal basis in 1912, and was similar to that in Northern Rhodesia. It was revised in 1924, and in 1933 Native Authorities and Native Courts were set up.[17] The two principal missions in Fort Jameson District have stations in Nyasaland as well.

In both countries Ngoni have been required to pay tax. A hut tax was introduced on the Rhodesian side of the border in 1901 and at about the same time in Nyasaland. The annual rate has varied in Fort Jameson District from three to ten shillings. The imposition of tax has been of importance, not only in partly meeting the costs of Administration, but also in bringing Ngoni men and women into the wider economic system of farms, mines and offices of southern Africa.

Thus the Whites established control over the Ngoni in most of their important external relations. Politics, settlement, litigation, religion and economic activity have all been moulded by the Whites. In many respects this has been a passive process, for little that the Ngoni have done or not done has been significant to the decision to set up Native Courts, or to expand the production of tobacco, or even to open up a mission of some new denomination.

[16] By Ordinance No. 33 of 1929. Subsequent legislation is contained in Ordinances No. 10 of 1936, 18 of 1940, and 21 of 1942.

[17] Legislation is to be found in Ordinances No. 13 of 1912, 11 of 1924, 13 of 1933 and 14 of 1933.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

These decisions have been taken within frames of reference beyond the reach of our analysis and beyond the reach of Ngoni persuasion. We are here concerned with the way in which Ngoni society has been adapted and has adapted itself to these diverse intrusions from outside. 177 648

3. *Chiefs*

In the old residential system there was no definite category of persons whom we regard as chiefs. In the literature the lords of major segments are sometimes called chiefs, sometimes indunas (i.e. lieutenants), but it is clear that the importance of any particular segment varied from one time and situation to another, and that the only constant relations between positions in the social structure were vertical ones, between lord and dependant, and not horizontal, between persons at the same level in the hierarchy but in different parts of it. The administrative scheme introduced by the Whites provided for horizontal categorization as well as vertical grouping. There were to be a definite number of chiefs, district headmen, and later village headmen, whose names would appear on the Administration's files. The only indigenous categories of this kind were those of Paramount Chief and regional governor, and for this reason alone it was inevitable that the relationship between the old and new systems should be complex. Although the young Mpezeni II was not the only person to be called chief, his superior status was always recognized and later received formal ratification in the qualification Paramount. The regional governors may, perhaps, have formed a category of persons at the same level in the old hierarchy, but they were not very numerous, perhaps only a dozen in number, and under the new dispensation some managed to become chiefs or district headmen, while others failed to do so. Village headmen in the old system were lords of segments of many different orders of segmentation and of varying importance. If the large pre-conquest villages had continued, then perhaps their heads might have secured Administrative recognition. As it was, post-conquest settlements were all much smaller and there were more of them. 622 631 643 648 [621]

Apart from these formal considerations, the peculiar circumstances of the war introduced distortion. Some important people were killed in the fighting, others ran away, and the followers of others were scattered. More significantly, the arrival of the Administration, of traders and missions, provided means whereby people whose segments were of minor importance could advance themselves politically and gain control of large sections of the population. 648 557

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

557 This process was facilitated by the actions of some heads of major
648 segments. It had always been correct procedure for one important person to deal with another through intermediaries, at least in the opening stages of negotiation, so that lieutenants and others were
[624] frequently sent as ambassadors for their lords to the headquarters of other major segments. There was particular point in adopting this procedure in dealing with the Administration since its demands on a man sent to it were unpredictable and apt to be onerous. Thus in many instances a lieutenant or other dependant was presented to the Administration as the headman of an area or a group of villages. This nominee was regarded by the Administration as the rightful leader of the area concerned, a belief often fostered by the nominee himself. In this way effective control of an area passed from the head of a segment to one of his dependants.

Unfortunately, few records of the early administrative arrange-
648 ments have survived. From 1889, when a British consul was first
114 appointed to Nyasaland, down to the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898, the doings of the tribe were of political significance to Britain, and were reported on at length in dispatches which are now public records. After 1898, events of similar importance within the tribe to those that had been reported earlier, the death of this lieutenant or the movement of that village from one site to another, were no longer of any interest to Whitehall or even to the Directors of the British South Africa Company. Thus there was a drastic reduction in the scale of reporting. At the same time the loss of sovereignty, of independent action, involved a reduction in the kind of events which were likely to be recorded. The Ngoni no longer made war or sold slaves. They did pay tax and work in the mines, but this they did not as an independent tribe but as part of Fort Jameson District and the Eastern Province, and such records as there are relate to these administrative units rather than to specific tribes. The B.S.A.
[439] Company lacked the long tradition of administration enjoyed by the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, and its reports were scanty by comparison. Thus the only published report of any kind on affairs in North-Eastern Rhodesia for the year 1905-6 is a mere fifteen lines long, and there is only one sentence on African administration: 'The conduct of the Natives has continued to be satisfactory.'[18] It is not until 1928 that annual reports on African affairs began to be published. Our account of Ngoni history from 1898 until recent times therefore cannot be as complete as we would wish.

[18] *Directors' Report and Accounts*, 1906, p. 7.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

According to Coxhead, an Administrative Officer who published in 1914, there were at that time six minor chiefs under the Paramount. Four of these minor chiefs were sons of Mpezeni I.[19] Other Administrative records of the same period refer to ten 'subdivisions'. The Paramount Chief and the chiefs now in charge of counties 4, 14, 15 and 17 are each described as the 'important chief' in their subdivisions. The important chief in another subdivision is now not a county chief. The remaining four subdivisions had two chiefs each. Five of these are now county chiefs, one is a Cewa chief, and the remaining two are no longer chiefs. The title 'chief' was, however, not applied consistently by the Administration at that time and men who are called chiefs in some documents are called divisional or group headmen in others. In 1920, with the appointment of two new divisional headmen all Ngoniland villages in Northern Rhodesia were divided between ten rulers, not all of whom were called chiefs. Mpezeni II was ruler of one group of villages and Paramount over all ten, and the other nine rulers were the predecessors of the present minor chiefs. These ten groups of villages, and the two corresponding groups in Nyasaland, I have called *counties*. With one exception, each successive county chief has taken the name of his predecessor and this name is often used as the name of the county.

648 622 634 643

4. *County segments*

In each county there is one village known as the important village or capital. Many, but not all, of the villages in a county belong to the residential segment of which the capital is the headquarters. Thus we may speak of a county segment which forms, as it were, the core of the county. The villages that do not belong to the county segment fall into three main types. There are villages belonging to other segments under Mpezeni, there are a few which trace their origin to other Ngoni groups, and there are those which have entered Ngoniland after 1898 and so never formed part of the segmentary residential system. Most villages of the last type have come into Ngoniland from Cewa chiefdoms and some of them claim to have been settled in Ngoniland before the arrival of Mpezeni and to have been driven out by him. An indication of the distribution of villages in Northern Rhodesia counties among these different types is given in Table IV, where the only three counties for which I have the information are examined from this point of view.

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[19] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

632 634 621 In these three counties there were no instances of two other types of village found rarely in Ngoniland. Occasionally an immigrant labourer working on the Fort Jameson tobacco farms manages to attract sufficient followers from among other labourers and his local affines to found a new village in an Ngoni chiefdom. The other rare type of village is formed by direct administrative action. The Administration has been largely concerned to amalgamate existing villages rather than to create new ones. In at least one instance, however, scattered clusters of huts inhabited by people who had fled from several different villages to avoid coming under agricultural control have been united into a new village under a headman of their own choosing. One example of each of these rare types of village is included in the sample of villages analysed in Table VII (p. 133).

[648]

621 631 634

TABLE IV. ORIGIN OF VILLAGES IN SELECTED COUNTIES, 1948

	Number of villages in county, classified by origin				
County	*County segment*	*Other segment under Mpezeni*	*Other Ngoni groups*	*Other tribes, joining Ngoni after 1898*	*Total*
X	60 (72%)	4 (5%)	1 (1%)	18 (22%)	83 (100%)
Y	26 (55%)	10 (21%)	0 (0%)	11 (23%)	47 (100%)
Z	59 (70%)	16 (19%)	0 (0%)	9 (11%)	84 (100%)
Total	145 (68%)	30 (14%)	1 (0.5%)	38 (18%)	214 (100%)

Number of counties in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 10
Number of villages in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 540 approximately

It will be seen from Table IV that about two-thirds of the villages in each of the selected counties belong to their own county segment. It is to villages in this category that the ties of a county chief are strongest. Here old and new systems are in accord and the chief acts both as traditional lord of the segment as well as head of the Native Authority. Villages in their county segment appear to be

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

more meticulous than others in such matters as discussing proposed changes of site with the county chief and in reporting important deaths to him. 621 631 634

The proportion of villages in each county belonging to other segments under Mpezeni varies from 5 per cent to 21 per cent. These are villages which chose, or were forced, to move away from the chief to whom they were attached in segmentary terms, or else villages belonging to major segments whose lords did not become chiefs. Villages in this category have ties that in certain situations, as when there is a serious quarrel, link them more closely with some other county than with their own. In any county where there are many villages of this kind the solidarity of the county as a social group is not great. The ruling chief has many rivals who seek to divide his county and to become chiefs themselves. We must distinguish here between villages in one county which belong to the segment of another and those interloping villages which belong to one county but are situated in the territory of another. We shall discuss interloping villages later (p. 128) in connexion with the territorial aspect of counties. [166]

In Nyasaland the history of administration has been separate from that of Northern Rhodesia, but the Ngoni population there also has divided itself on segmentary lines. For many years the two principal leaders recognized by the Administration have been the heads of segments 5 and 6, and these segments form the cores of the two counties they control. The two county chiefs are now Native Authorities and join with an adjacent Cewa chief to form the Fort Manning Council of Chiefs. This acts as the Native administrative body for the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District. 643 648 634

The geographical distribution of the twelve counties, the neighbouring chiefdoms of other tribes, and the tracts of alienated land are shown in Map D. 631 634

The twelve county segments, ten in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, are, in the nomenclature of Chapter I, segments 4 to 6 and 9 to 17. We shall refer to counties in the same way by the numbers of the segments corresponding to them. Thus county 4 is the county whose segment is number 4, and so on. County 10 is the Paramount Chief's county. Some of the county segments are primal, others are residual segments left after the formation of primal segments of lower order. The definition of the segment associated with each county is indicated in Table V. This table merely restates information implicit in Diagram 1. The hereditary names of county chiefs are also given.

[Text continues on page 121]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between their leaders are influenced by both their relative position in the Native Authority scheme and the position of the county segments, as well as by new interests that have emerged. The formal relationship between the alignments of segments and counties is set out in Diagram 4. This diagram also shows the relationship, at a higher level, between some of the other independent Ngoni groups and the major political divisions of British Africa. 621 631 634

In each county the chief, who does not live in the capital but in a village of his own, is head of the county segment and it seems probable that during the early years of the Administration it was the affiliation of villages within their old residential segments that provided the basis for the groupings of convenience which eventually crystallized into counties. In one or two instances succession to headship of the segment and county has been plainly manipulated, but the traditional rules of succession have not been outraged. Where the county segment is a residual one, the county chief may be also head of some segment of higher order. Thus the chief of county 11 is head of primal segment 11 although his county is only the residual segment after the formation of segment 16; county chief 14 is head of primal segment 14; and the Paramount Chief is head of primal segments 4 and 10. [648] [557]

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[1] Three Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba are not shown on this diagram. 61 62 63

(*a*) A group under Magodi separated itself from either segment 2 or 3 and is now settled in Lundazi District, Northern Rhodesia.

(*b*) A group led by Zulu Gama is now settled in Songea District, Tanganyika Territory. The segment corresponding to this group appears to have been formed within segment 1, but I do not know what relation it bears to the other segments nor by what process it was formed. The western part of this group is still led by a descendant of Zulu Gama, but a descendant of one of his associates named Mboanani now leads the eastern part.

(*c*) A group under Ciwele ndhlovu is settled in Dowa District, Nyasaland. Some writers say it was formed within segment 4, others within the residue of segment 1. He was a lieutenant of either Zwangendaba or Mpezeni.

The two Ngoni groups which do not stem from Zwangendaba cannot be fitted into the diagram. They are located as follows.

(*d*) The Southern Nyasaland Ngoni, who broke away from the Southern Rhodesia Ndebele and who were led originally by Mputa, are now settled in Ncheu and Dedza Districts, Nyasaland, and in Circunscracão of Angónia, District of Tete, Portuguese East Africa.

(*e*) The Ngoni group led by Soshangane are now settled in the lower Limpopo Valley, Gazaland, Portuguese East Africa.

There are a few small Ngoni groups in the Shire Valley, Nyasaland, some of which have their own minor chiefs. There are also many Ngoni men and women in the towns of southern and eastern Africa, but they are not organized into political groups on a tribal basis.

[These notes refer to the chart on page 122.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Relative status of Chiefs*

178 There was nothing inherent in the residential system which
631 facilitated the emergence of twelve, and only twelve, counties from
634 Mpezeni's people. Each major segment already had a large number
648 of lesser segments within it in 1898, and it was during the unsettled years that followed the conquest, when new schemes of organization were tried out, when fresh occupants were sought for existing posts, and when the spatial distribution of people was being radically altered, that these twelve gradually emerged. Considerations of size do not seem to have been very important, for there is a wide variation in the size of counties. However, with the development of the Native Authority and Native Court, there is an upper limit to
[692] the size of the county which can be served adequately by a single court and possibly by a single minor chief, and this shows itself in the moves towards forming sub-counties within one or two of the larger ones. Yet in view of administrative attempts to do away with certain chiefs, it seems that in its eyes the Ngoni have too many rather than too few chiefs. The order of segmentation is not critical, as we have seen. Nor has there been merely an ossification of the formal structure as it was at the moment of conquest, as is often the case when a fluid society is suddenly put into a rigid mould. Wiese in 1891 wrote that Ngoniland was divided into four districts.[30] In our terms, these were as follows:

(*a*) Primal segment 11.
(*b*) Primal segment 14.
(*c*) Residual segment 10 after 14 was formed.
(*d*) Residual segment 4 after 10 and 11 were formed.

Of these four districts, the first has given rise to two counties, 11 and 16; the second to two, 14 and 17; the third to three, 10, 13 and 15; and the fourth to three, 4, 9 and 12. Wiese does not indicate in what districts he would place segments 5 and 6.

The fortuitous manner in which the counties have emerged is illustrated by the fact that for certain purposes one of the counties is treated as if it were two. At one time, when there were more administrative divisions than there are now, it was divided into two
[651] areas, and this arrangement still persists for tax collection. Other counties have only one tax register book each, but this one has two.

In genealogical terms also, the emergence of the twelve chiefs appears to have been fortuitous. For example, the second wife of
[643] Mpezeni I in segment 10, after the formation of segments 14 and 15,

[30] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648

had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after 178
Nsingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. 631
This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to 634
that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the [643]
second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important seg- [557]
ment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this 178
transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by 648
which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely 557
unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to [634]
be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the [632]
formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can [554]
intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget 465
meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and 634
a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is 648
suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

465 634 648 personal emoluments, there is usually some discussion. Thus the relative amounts paid to each chief provide us with some indication of the importance attached to him by the Administration and his colleagues. The salaries paid in 1946 are set out in Table VI together with the number of villages in each county in 1938, the last year for which I have that information.

TABLE VI. SALARIES OF CHIEFS AND VILLAGES IN THEIR COUNTIES

[643]

County segment	*Number of villages in county*, 1938	*Salary of county chief in £s per annum*, 1946
10	87	120 (*a*)
14	101	97½
4	88	82½
11	77	67½
12	42	52½
17	35	37½
13	30	27 (*b*)
15	28	27 (*b*)
9	19	30
16	19	30
Total	526	571½
Mean	52.6	57.15

(*a*) Paramount Chief.
(*b*) Calculated from monthly rate. Both these chieftainships were vacant for part of 1946.

It will be seen that the amount of a minor chief's salary is closely correlated with the number of villages in his county. The chiefs of counties 13 and 15 appear to be underpaid in relation to the number of their villages, and this may be related to efforts which the Administration had been making about that time to eliminate these two chieftainships and to amalgamate their chiefdoms with others. This arrangement also conforms to the alignment of segments. The Paramount Chief is in charge of county 10 but he is also head of primal segment 4 which includes all the others, and it is therefore appropriate that he should be paid most. Chief 14 is

[643]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16. 634 648 [465]

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. 634 648 554 Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. [551] Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kupili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief.

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units* 178

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. 631 634 This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. [167] The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1930 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 reserves were amended, and as existing gardens were exhausted.
634 Movement of this kind did not greatly affect political allegiance, so
178 that not all the villages acknowledging the control of a minor chief were built in his vicinity. Coxhead mentions seven defined territorial units in 1914, but by the time I began fieldwork in 1946 their boundaries had been forgotten.[21] Most of the villages in any one county were clustered together, with the capital village and the chief's village somewhere in the middle of the cluster, but there were also more distant villages situated among those belonging to other counties. The next stage of development appears to have been the definition of county boundaries, so that by 1946 it was possible to speak of some villages as situated in one county and owing allegiance to another. Most of these interloping villages, as we may call them, belonged to the segment of the county to which they owed allegiance. They were a bone of contention between chiefs, for although each chief desires as many villages as possible
[311] under his control, he has only a limited amount of land in his county with which to satisfy his people. An analogous situation is found in some Welsh sheep farms, where each farmer likes to own as many sheep as possible but hopes they will graze on someone else's land. The chief in political control of an interloping village endeavoured to maintain his control at a distance and at the same time to make use of the land in the local chief's county, while the latter had to decide between trying to make the interloping village shift its allegiance so as to increase his own following and trying to get it to move away so as to give his people more land. In 1947 and 1948,
[648] to avoid such difficulties between chiefs, the Administration defined county boundaries precisely and insisted that all villages within the area of a county should be under the control of the county chief.

Thus, in the development of the county as a social group, ties
631 of segmentary affiliation have been gradually replaced by those of
634 territorial propinquity. This replacement is not yet complete, nor
648 has it arisen merely as a consequence of Administrative action in
178 the last few years. Village histories show that in many instances a village changed from attachment to the head of its major segment to attachment to the local county chief many years ago and without prompting from the Administration. Villagers marry their neigh-
[582] bours irrespective of county affiliation and thus build up ties which link them to the local county. It may be inconvenient to walk a long way to the court and county meetings of a distant chief, particularly if the local chief appears to listen more readily to his people's complaints and advice.

[21] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22, 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush. 621 [361]

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time. 622 648 [634] 624 202 [625]

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi- 621 648 178 [622] [601]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 621 agnation of the small segments to what I have termed an omni-
648 directional system), has increased the importance of the single
[601] village. After 1898 the Administration endeavoured to bring the people back into villages of moderate size which could be easily supervised by the Administration acting through chiefs.[22] In 1912 a comprehensive scheme of Native reserves was proposed. To facilitate the introduction of the scheme, many small villages were amalgamated with others near by to form units of forty huts or more. The larger groups of composite villages were to form the nuclei of the reserves.[23] After 1930, when villages began to spread out again, many of the enforced amalgamations came to an end. The Administrative rules that every man must live in a recognized village and that a village with less than ten tax-paying men could not be recognized were not always enforced, although they were not repealed until 1945. Administrative recognition has been an important consideration in determining the size of villages but it has not been the only one.

621 In the residential system, the process of segmentation did not
681 stop with the founding of the segments we now know as county
178 segments. Already in 1898 there were very many more segments in being than the few we have shown in Diagram 1. There we have indicated the position of the major branches of the tree of State but have omitted the hundreds of minor limbs and thousands of twigs which made up the whole. Even if we restrict our attention to segments founded before 1898 we find within any county segment to-day many smaller groups, some of them divisions, others single villages, and a few containing several villages, which are in fact inferior segments formed by one or other of the processes we discussed in Chapter I. Lieutenants and others have made their own segments, junior sons have left their natal villages, and so on. The processes of segment formation since 1898 have not been identical with those prevailing before the conquest, for the quasi-agnatic structure of segments has been modified and segments of recent formation, if in fact we can legitimately call them segments at all, are not organized in the same hierarchical manner as in the old residential system. We shall discuss the formation of small social groups in a later part of our study, the analysis of village life.
178 Here, at the county level, we have to deal with what is essentially a
634 continuation of a pre-conquest process. Each successive head of a
622 county segment, i.e. each county chief, has formed his own new segment within that of his predecessor. Thus, for instance, where

[22] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902, p. 2, and 1903, p. 2.
[23] *M.R.A.*, p. 108.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and
631 disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each
621 village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the
432 village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief
231 who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village
[643] concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed
[685] by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion
[643] between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small,
631 contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there
621 was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of
648 British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still
628 formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of
621

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Five

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN A LARGE-SCALE SOCIETY

1. The Administration and the Native Authority 2. Rivals of the Paramount Chief 3. The chief's advisers 4. The chief and his people 5. Royal hunts 6. African bureaucracies 7. Capital, court, and chief's village 8. Politics and the courts 9. Moral and physical sanctions 10. External links 11. Conclusion

1. *The Administration and the Native Authority*

648 UNDER THE present system, political power lies not with the Paramount Chief but with the Administration. The administrative officers who come into face-to-face contact with the Ngoni are themselves subordinate to higher provincial officers and to the headquarters of the Government at Lusaka, and the Government is in its turn partly under the control of the United Kingdom Government through the Colonial Office and partly responsible to the local Legislative Council. Even the most recently joined cadet represents this powerful hierarchy to the Ngoni, and to a large extent his actions have its backing. There are about seventy tribes in Northern Rhodesia, and thousands more in the rest of the Colonial Empire, and matters of general administrative policy are decided by people some of whom have never heard of the Ngoni, and with reference to considerations of which the Ngoni are unaware. Thus to the Ngoni, the Administration appears always inscrutable and unpredictable. The unpredictability partly arises from the latitude which must inevitably be allowed to individual officers combined with a high rate of turnover. The good intentions of the Administration are suspect except where the Administration appears clearly as protecting Ngoni interests against the demands of some other group in the community, such as planters, Cewa, Indians, Coloureds, or missions.

The Administration works through the Native Authority, and it is through the Native Authority that Ngoni men and women have access to the Administration. This is not entirely true of Ngoni who live permanently in the township, where there are other channels of access, but applies to the bulk of the rural population. If direct representations are made to the Administration, then the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

man presenting his request for a gun licence, or for permission to go to Southern Rhodesia, or to move to another village, or whatever it may be, is told first to bring a letter from his chief in support of his request and it will then be considered. Thus the approval of the chief is necessary for a variety of enterprises. 648

A chief may decide not to support a request for a variety of reasons. He does not want to recommend to the Administration projects which will turn out unfavourably, and yet he does not want to oppose unnecessarily the wishes of his people who may begin to drift away into other counties or to Southern Rhodesia if they feel he is being unfair to them. Many of these requests from his people are handled by the court clerk who has custody of the rubber stamps, without whose imprint no letter looks official. Other councillors and advisers may also help with these requests, and may advise the chief, in the light of their own interests and of their estimate of the public interests, on whether or not to support a request. There is thus opportunity for a friend of the chief to block rivals and enemies by seeing that their requests do not go [illegible]rd. [662] Men who are thwarted in this way can appeal to the Administration, and may perhaps be granted their request. Such action, however, is likely to increase the antagonism of the Native Authority towards them, and in so far as they have defied the authority of the chief by appealing against his decision, they may be censured by their neighbours. Thus what they gain in one respect may be offset by what they lose in another. When the quarrel between a councillor and a man who is, say, trying to open a shop in his village is of long standing and with faults and undisclosed offences on both sides, it may be unwise to risk the whole matter being brought to the notice of the Administration by an appeal over the matter of the shop. [626]

In other situations, where the Administration endeavours to intervene in some matter in which the chief is thought to be dilatory, the Native Authority may shield a man because of the danger of possible repercussions. Thus, for instance, a District Officer on tour found a man living in a village at which he was not registered. He turned the offender over to the Native Court. The offender had a perfectly good defence but his story would have involved reference to incest by an important person and it was therefore undesirable that the District Officer should hear of the matter. Accordingly the Court delayed the hearing of the case on some technicality, and after the District Officer had left the area nothing more was done. 627 648

In the main the Administration presents a united front to the Ngoni, and the words and actions of each Administrative officer 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 support those of his colleagues. However, chiefs and others do
[661] sometimes manage to play off one administrator against another where there are differences of interest between different departments of the Administration, and occasionally appeals by Ngoni chiefs to high Administrative officials against the actions of their juniors are successful. It is easier for Ngoni to exploit the much greater differences of interest between the different sections of the non-African community, officials, missions, planters and European and Indian traders.

648 In the early years of this century it appears that the chiefs were
662 approached by labour recruiters, planters, and missionaries who wished to gain their favour and utilize this to their own advantage. It is difficult to gauge to what extent this practice continues. There are one or two recent instances where the missions have clearly
[797] recognized the importance to them of securing the goodwill of an Ngoni in high authority, and it would also appear that some high-placed Ngoni have utilized their position to gain from the missions services which might not otherwise have been so readily available to them. With the cessation of labour recruiting there has been no
[464] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[466] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[574] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

inefficient workers on the local tobacco farms, where the ties that link them to the near-by villages with their marriages, funerals, and beer parties are still operative, and where the wages are much lower than in Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, Ngoni tend to suspect the good intentions of any non-African, however lavish he may be with his presents, and for this reason are reluctant to enter into agreements with them the social consequences of which they cannot foresee.

648 662 [461] [186]

2. *Rivals of the Paramount Chief*

In pre-conquest times the death of the head of the State was followed by a struggle between rival heirs and by fission of the State. Under British colonial rule these struggles cannot be carried on by force of arms, and it is difficult to split the tribe when there is nowhere for the dissident section to move to and when Administrative recognition is an important condition for political existence. Nevertheless the same struggles continue even if in a different guise.

643 648

One of the most interesting incidents in the struggles between rival groups for the chieftainship occurred in 1903 and hinged on an aspect of segmentation within the residential system which we have not so far discussed. It was customary for the heir to a large segment founded by his father to place one wife in the headquarters of that segment as well as establishing his bevies of wives with their own inferior segments. The eldest son of the selected wife grew up to be in charge of the headquarters and came to be identified with his father's father, the founder of the headquarters, as against his father who was lord of its segment. Thus, for example, Zwangendaba, heir to segment 1, founded segment 18 for his own great wife, but also placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 1, the segment founded by his father for *his* great wife. Similarly Mpezeni, as son of Zwangendaba, placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 4, which by then had replaced the annihilated segment 18. In this matter the Ngoni seem to have differed from the Zulu, for among them, according to Bryant, the *isizinda*, son of the placed wife, represents his own father as against the father's main heir.[1]

611 643

In 1903 the eldest son of Mpezeni I by the selected wife in segment 4 tried to assume the name of his father's father, Zwangendaba. This was in accord with his structural position as representing the interests of the founder of the segment as against those of the

[1] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 80; Bryant, *Dictionary*, s.v. *isi-zinda*. cf. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 401. Lancaster implies that the selected wife was called *ikhlulu*. This seems unlikely in view of the Zulu use of *i(li)thokhlu* for the senior left-hand wife.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 reigning lord of the segment. It is probable that in this instance
643 the divergence of interest had been increased by the shooting of Nsingu, for Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu and grandson of Mpezeni I, was only a young boy and in the hands of guardians who were commoners and who might respond to pressure from their ward's father's paternal half-brother. So far as can be gathered from the published account of the meeting called by the Administration to
[648] discuss the matter, the young Paramount was supported by the lords of segments 12, 14 and 17 and by the senior lieutenants of segment 10. He was opposed by the heads of segments 9, 13 and 16 and by the senior lieutenant of segment 4. Segment 15 seems not to have taken part in the dispute. Thus the main cleavage appears to have been between segments 10 and 12 on the one hand and the residue of 4 on the other. Segment 13, in terms of its structural position, was on the wrong side; this may have been connected with the fact that the regional governor of Mpezeni I who led segment 13 was born in the headquarters of segment 4. After a quarrel about succession to his father's office of lieutenant in that segment, he moved to segment 10 where he found favour with the chief and was later promoted to regional governor. In the 1903 dispute he apparently transferred his support back to his natal segment.[3]

The attempt to assume the name Zwangendaba failed. The young chief's supporters outnumbered their opponents at the meeting and his spokesmen argued that he had been recognized by all the other chiefs and by the Administration as Paramount of the whole Ngoni country. If his rival took the name he would be led to usurp the authority of the young Paramount. The Native Commissioner then ruled that the name could not be taken.

Throughout his reign Mpezeni II was opposed by a half-
643 brother, a son of Nsingu by a different mother. This man was older
611 than Mpezeni and claimed that his mother had really been Nsingu's
754 great wife, or at least that Nsingu had intended to make her so
669 before he was shot in 1898. This rivalry took two forms. He
578 endeavoured to bring destruction to the chief and his cattle by sorcery, and on one occasion made what seems to have been a half-hearted attempt to kill him with a spear. At the same time he endeavoured to establish his own segment as a county of its own, and in this he was assisted by others who fancied themselves as chief of the proposed new county.[3] The sorcery failed, not only because it was merely sorcery, but also because sorcery and

[3] *N.E.R.G.G.*, i, 4 (1 August 1903), Supplement. See p. 35.
[3] See pp. 143 f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

578
divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of 643
influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed 611
for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express [754]
their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to [669]
establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling [872] with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor 643
chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount 578
Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the 692
courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically 643
important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with 648
the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for [685] embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the [186] feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

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The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and 643
his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each 645

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 county the senior lieutenants of the county segment are well-
643 known figures, usually headmen of large villages, and often seen at
645 the chief's house. There are also the lieutenants of the segments of lower order founded for their great wives by successive heads of the county segment, and in particular the lieutenants of the reigning chief's great wife's segment. There are individuals who for some reason or other have become friendly with the chief, and there are those occupying posts paid by the Native Treasury. There are the kinsmen of the chief, including the chief's deputy. All these categories contribute to the circle round the chief which keeps him informed of what is going on in his county, advises him what he should do and travels with him on journeys. The constitution of this group is not fixed and there is no formal council to which persons definitely do or do not belong. An Administrative officer once asked Mpezeni II who constituted the tribal council, and the Paramount Chief is said to have found difficulty in thinking of any names. Not all the people who might be expected to advise the chief do so, for there are always quarrels and preferences within each category. In particular, the lieutenants of regal segments seem to play a comparatively minor part. They do not represent the interests of the county as a whole, as do the lieutenants of the county segment, nor of the reigning chief, as do the lieutenants of his own village. They are the favourites of former chiefs and the segments that they represent are not functionally significant under the present scheme of administration.

In recent years the Administration has endeavoured from time
[648] to time to discuss affairs with the chiefs and the four newly appointed Native Authority councillors in isolation from the rest of the tribe.[4] In most situations in which matters of common interest are discussed there is, however, no restriction on who can offer advice to the chief or to the meeting. Any man can stand up and say what he wishes, but unless he is in an important social position people will listen to him attentively only if his counsel seems sound.[5]

It is the custom for a chief to nominate one of his agnatic
[645] kinsmen, usually a father's son or father's brother's son, as his deputy.[6] Although this appears to have been a traditional post, I
634 do not know what role was played by an important man's deputy
645 in pre-conquest times. Nowadays the deputy of a chief may help in his various official duties and represents the interests of the chief's agnatic kin as against those of his lieutenants. In village affairs

[4] See p. 131.
[5] See pp. 158f.
[6] *Mnanu*. cf. Zulu *umnawe*, younger sibling.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy. 634 645

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief. 202 634 624

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it. 611 643 551 634 [648] [645]

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has 634 668

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Lingwa*. cf. Zulu *i(li)ngwa*, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Brewer, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 140*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE IV. Villagers hoeing a path to another village in preparation for a visit from the District Officer.

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PLATE V. A District Officer, with a county chief on his left, talks to village headmen during a tour of villages. In the distance are villagers listening to the conversation.

[Facing p. 145]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

224 organized by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief
476 and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who
634 killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt, but occasionally if the
634 field is very poor a chief will summon absentees in his court.

224 These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic
[136] significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as effectively as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but
[681] he can call out his men hunting.[18] Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with
[411] them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African bureaucracies*

647 Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was
698 little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous
693 leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

[18] See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 215, for Ngoni hunting methods.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Adminis- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created,
the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity
as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity
and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[19] were
employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make
arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native
Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of
subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The 692
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as
well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative
legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences [681]
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award
damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish
between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Adminis-
tration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native
Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority
was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni
Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping.
The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction
and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of
messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main
roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production,
for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had
to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries
and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an [647]
assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The
Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the
extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs
their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[19] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapasu* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

651 marriages and for selling beer, and from fines and fees taken in court. In some years there has been a local levy on all men liable for Native tax.

642 The Native Authority, the Native Court and the Native Treasury form a single system of what is essentially local government. The judicial aspect of government has always been to the 693 fore, for the hearing of cases is an activity which has gone on without serious interruption since before the conquest. The first people to be appointed as assessors were in many instances the people who had been hearing cases with the chief for many years. They were joined in this by the councillors, for there was no separation between judicial and administrative organization in pre-conquest times and none had emerged by that time. Since the court clerk needed to be at least partially literate, he was usually a younger man who had been to school but, in some instances at least, he had close kinship ties with those in high office. He acted as a member of the bench as much as the councillors and assessors. In some courts other close supporters of the chief, particularly those who lived near their courts, also attended regularly to hear cases although they were not paid to do so, and in at least one instance a chief paid a regular salary out of his own pocket to a member of his court who was not recognized as such by the Administration.

Thus the court was the nucleus round which the Native Authority grew. The court clerk was employed as secretary to the chief and the Native Authority, and he had charge of the rubber stamps which came to be the new symbols of political power. He toured the county looking for dogs and bicycles without licences, for since he was literate he was considered the man to handle the money accruing from court fines, fees and licences. Sometimes he combined with these duties others that had nothing to do with court work, such as seeing that villages were swept clean or paths hoed. Because of his work in court he was well informed on disputes in the county, and since he made frequent trips to the township so that his accounts could be checked by the Administration, he was well briefed on what was going on there. The office of court clerk [554] came in this way to have a greater importance than its formal duties implied.

Yet in recent years the relative status of the court clerk has declined. The executive, as opposed to the judicial and fiscal, 648 functions of the Native Authority have become more numerous. 645 The activities of the Administration, instead of being confined mainly to tax collecting and the punishment of major crimes, have expanded to include a variety of social services for Africans and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

these need the support and co-operation of the African community. 648
The Administration has consulted Ngoni and other Native Authorities on such matters as agricultural control, the emigration of 645
women to the railway line, provision of better schools, and so on. In 1948 the number of councillor posts was reduced. Instead of employing councillors for general duties, each of the four councillors remaining, now receiving a much higher salary than before, has been given a specific task, the care of roads, the promotion of agriculture, the efficient use of school facilities, and the co-ordination of the work of the Native Authority as a whole. The Administration has attempted to make these four councillors, together with the ten Northern Rhodesian chiefs, into a formal council competent to take decisions without always referring to the people as a whole.

So far this attempt has not been very successful, but the power of the four councillors is certainly greater than that of their more numerous and lower-paid predecessors. The court clerks have been overshadowed by these new men and left behind in these new activities. Literacy is becoming common and clerks are no longer [212]
in demand as secretaries to chiefs. The Native Authority is beginning to employ men whose jobs do not take them to court at all.

The present range of posts whose emoluments are handled by 647
the Native Treasury is shown in Table VIII.

All these posts are filled by the Native Authority in agreement with the Administration. It is easy to show how a large proportion of the employees are connected to the chiefs and senior lieutenants by kinship, but this fact is not as significant as it might appear. The Ngoni possess nowadays what may be called an omni-directional [611]
kinship system in which ties of kinship can be traced as convenient through fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and by any combination of these. It would indeed be surprising if Native Authority employees could not trace genealogical connexion with chiefs and their lieutenants, for so can nearly everyone in Ngoniland. There is no formal selection procedure but a chief may announce at a county meeting that there is a post to be filled and those present may suggest names. Alternatively a chief may discuss the matter with his advisers and then offer the post to the man they decide on. Occasionally a man seeking employment [662]
approaches the Paramount Chief in the hope that there may be a post to be filled. Thus although those who live near the chief, or who make it their business to see him and drink with him frequently stand a greater change of being chosen, choice is not restricted to these people. [see page 152, category 116. —Analyst]

[Text continues on page 153]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him. 634 648 [647] [687]

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialized services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them. 648 65 [797] 645 643

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo- 648 184

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of
[645] councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native
[602] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion
[771] Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living, in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
648 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural
[693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local 647
Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these 624
duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in 648
conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary [693]
Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and [651]
to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees of other technical departments of the Administration, such as Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are [625]
mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder, have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it 648
were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to 647
each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of the Administraton when they seek its support. Thus the permanent employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work 167
in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not 582
are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this when the social distance between the two persons involved is small. Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some
remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around 166
them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the 582

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

One reason why the two bureaucracies remain separate is that members of the Civil Service are moved from one headquarters to another as the exigencies of the service demand, whereas a Native Authority councillor or foreman cannot, in general, seek similar employment in another tribe. In 1951 an Ngoni Native treasury clerk was transferred to a similar post in a neighbouring tribe, but moves of this kind are still exceptional, and almost out of the question where chiefs' posts are concerned. Clerks and messengers employed by the Administration are more likely to be moved at short notice, and the whole process of adaptation has to be begun again. The Ngoni clerk who is moved away from Ngoni country has to settle down to life in a strange district, and the stranger who comes to Fort Jameson has to find his way around the complexities of Ngoni society. 647 167

This factor of movement is even more significant in the case of the White administrators. Most of them spend only a few years in Ngoniland, and to them the Ngoni are merely one tribe among the many that they meet with in the course of their professional lives. Most of them can speak Nyanja, which most Ngoni can understand, so that there is not the added complication of interaction through interpreters, with the interpreters in a key social position, as Mitchell points out for the Nyasaland Yao.[21] But even though they can speak directly to Ngoni, it takes time for them to learn the faces of the people they see in the various Native Courts and at tribal meetings, and it also takes time to determine how these faces are related in a political system. Thus of necessity administrators are forced to rely on the advice of the African Civil Service, principally the messengers and clerks, and of the important chiefs when they need local knowledge to guide them. Chiefs and clerks attempt to establish firm relations with the administrators with whom they work, but owing to the great social distance which separates Black and White throughout southern Africa, there is little scope for this. Some messengers like to suggest that it is they, and not the White administrators, who really decide what shall be done. While this may have been partially true at one time, it is not true now. As Ngoni society has changed gradually in the direction of something with which administrators are more familiar, and as the content of administrative action has become less and less restricted to such simple activities as collecting tax and making roads, so the power of the district messenger has declined.[22] 648 647 [558]

[21] Mitchell, 'Political Organization of the Yao', pp. 153-4.

[22] Bradley, *Diary of a District Officer*, records in interesting fashion the relationship between himself, as District Officer, and Head Messenger Kachaje of Fort Jameson.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Capital, court and chief's village*

634 We have spoken of the headquarters of the county segment as the capital of the county, and this is in accord with vernacular usage. Although each chief is head of his county segment, no chief lives in his capital village. Each has made his segment and set up a village of his own. This process continues with each successive chief, each making his own new village. When brick buildings [344] were made during the 1930s to house the newly recognized Native Courts, these were located near the villages of the reigning chiefs. Some of these are still in office, while others have died and their successors live in their new villages, some of which are as much as two miles away from the court. There are thus in some counties three foci of political interest. There is the capital village, the court, and the chief's village. Associated with each centre are different leaders and different activities. The capital village provides a link with the past, and in particular with that moment in the past at which the segment was founded. The Paramount Chief [643] retains special rights in his capital village and can make a garden for one year on the old site of his county capital whenever it moves to a new one. Most, if not all, capital villages are larger than the average village but the senior lieutenants of the county segments do not live in them, for like the chiefs, they have made their own villages. Nevertheless, the lieutenants who do live in the capital [554] are regarded as people of considerable importance in the county. Meetings are sometimes held in the capital but more frequently at the county court or in the chief's village. The court is the home of 692 the Native Authority, and it is there that the affairs of the Administration are discussed. An incident well illustrates the association of 648 the court with the Administration. I once called at the house of a 634 county chief who had not previously met me. He insisted that I 647 should go to the court to meet him there, as that was where he always met Administrative officials. County meetings are called at the court to discuss matters raised by the Administration in its letters to chiefs, and to formulate requests and complaints for transmission to the Administration. The court clerk, the Native Authority councillors, assessors, and messengers are much in evidence, while the traditional advisers of the chief, his senior lieutenants, may be in the background even if they are not silent. Meetings of this kind are usually called by county chiefs, but occasionally a meeting may be held open to the whole tribe. I have described elsewhere the procedure at a county meeting.[22]

[22] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 107-9.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In contrast to this, the private affairs of the chieftainship, 634
matters connected with royal cattle, disputes among the chief's 622
wives and quarrels between the chief and his affines or close supporters are discussed at the chief's village. Quarrels of an apparently trivial nature, such as a chief's wife's running away with a lorry driver, would in the old days have threatened the whole internal structure of the county segment, and they are still [687]
treated as questions of State by the lieutenants and kinsmen of the chief who attend these meetings. The contrast between these two kinds of assembly is striking. They are described by different vernacular terms,[24] and while any man can attend and speak at a meeting at the court, it would be considered inappropriate for him to intervene in a meeting at the chief's village unless his position in the old residential system was a high one. Women listen to court meetings, but rarely if ever speak, for the Administration works very largely through men and it is men who discuss the kinds of thing in which the Administration is interested. At the chief's village, the interests of the chief's kinswomen and wives are often directly concerned and they themselves contribute to the discussion. The marriages of chiefs established, and to a lesser extent do still [602]
reinforce and establish, affinal ties which cut across the cleavages between segments and which were crucial to the balance of power [578]
within the State. A quarrel between a chief and his wife was a matter of political, and not merely domestic, significance and must therefore be discussed by the chief's political advisers.

The sanction of deportation appears to be employed only in 687
connexion with offences against the chieftainship. Thus a lieu- 627
tenant who embezzled some royal cattle was called before a meeting at his chief's village attended by the important lieutenants in the county, and ordered to leave the country. Similarly, a man who was found drinking with a chief's wife under suspicious circumstances was ordered to leave the country by a tribunal of this kind. He moved first to another county, but was forced to move on again out of Ngoniland. Such actions are sometimes taken without reference to recognized Native Courts or to the Adminis- 648
tration, and the effectiveness of the tribunal's decision depends on 687
the support it has from the people as a whole and from the Native [627]
Authority organization rather than on the ultimate sanctions wielded by the Administration. However, when matters of this

[24] A meeting to discuss matters of general interest is *mukhanu*; one to discuss affairs of the chieftainship is *luimanga*. cf. *ku-sukhana*, to assemble (Nyanja) and *i(li)landa*, assembly (Zulu). The different derivation of the words, from Nyanja and Zulu, is significant. *Luimanga* also means age-set.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
648 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[684] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[696] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building
361 other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased *importance to the Native Authority centre.* Already there have been one or two attempts at opening shops near the courts to cater for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, assessors, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between political and judicial actions is not surprising. There is a connexion of this kind in every society, and the connexion is a particularly close one in societies like the Ngoni, where the same individuals act as legislators, administrators, and judges, and where the court does not confine itself merely to the legal issues in a dispute but examines the whole network of social relationships which are involved, with the object of restoring social order. 692

There are three ways in which this connexion can be seen. First, the court may be used as a vehicle for implementing the policy of the Native Authority. Secondly, the Administration may use the court to implement its policy. Thirdly, positions in the court may be used to satisfy men who seek political authority. We have to deal with the third point in our discussion of the development of the Native Authority. [557]

A chief anxious to gain favour with the Administration sees that his court enforces with heavy penalties the various regulations with which, for the time being, the Administration is concerned, such as those relating to agricultural control, and school attendance. A chief who does not wish to co-operate will neglect these regulations. Thus a few years ago there was a regulation that once a child had begun a two-year course at school, he or she must stay to finish it. In one county this rule was enforced much as the letter of the law indicated, in another it was completely ignored despite the protests of school-teachers, and in a third it was interpreted to mean that every child must go to school. About a year later the Administration decided that as promulgated the rule was *ultra vires*, and said it must be withdrawn. Nevertheless in some counties it is still enforced. These chiefs and courts are not being merely capricious. Some chiefs support the missions and their schools, others oppose them; some are in alliance with the school-teachers and other intelligentsia in their counties, others oppose them. These various attitudes and alignments are reflected in the way in which they respond to a new law. This is particularly noticeable when public delicts, such as absence from school, are concerned, for in general the court is its own law-enforcing agency. There is no independent police force to bring offenders to court whether or not the court wants to see them, but only the assessors, court clerk, messengers and others who, when they are not busy about their own affairs, may if they are so inclined wander through the villages looking for unlicensed dogs and unlicensed beer. Thus the enforcement of law relating to public delicts depends largely on the relationship between the Native Authority and the common people. 696 557 648 692 [872] [625] [693]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

696 In the court itself the magnitude of the penalties imposed and damages awarded is to some extent at the discretion of the court, and political considerations, among others, may influence judgments. Adultery with the wife of a chief is more heavily punished [681] than ordinary adultery, and people from other tribes, particularly [186] the Yao, are discriminated against. Ngoni courts maintain that they recognize only Ngoni law, even though the disputants may belong to other tribes. These ideas are familiar enough, but they indicate that questions of group membership, that is, political affiliation, and relations between groups, do influence the actions of the court. Within a county, hostility between a group having [578] the ear of the court and one lacking it may find expression in procedural obstructions, such as always hearing a particular suit at the end of a day, or of continually postponing the hearing because some minor witness is absent.

The chief and his advisers usually endeavour to maintain a 661 monopoly of access to the Administration, and this endeavour is ●648 largely supported by the Administration as a matter of policy. In 696 the particular sphere of legal action, appeal from the Native Court to the District Officer is sometimes regarded as a challenge to this monopoly, and litigants are sometimes punished for stating that they intend to appeal. In a celebrated recent case when a chief was successfully sued in the District Commissioner's court for damages for adultery, his people came to him afterwards to express their condolences, as after a funeral, at the injury done to his high office by this procedure.

Native Courts are formally recognized under Ordinance by 692 the Administration, and hence changes in the indigenous legal 648 system brought about by the Administration are legal changes, in that they have behind them all the paraphernalia of Ordinances, Letters Patent, Orders-in-Council, and Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. This gives a special quality to manipulation of the legal system by the Administration, for this is really only another way of saying that effective sovereignty lies with the British Crown and not with Paramount Chief Mpezeni. But within the framework of analysis of the local situation, the actions of the Administration and of the chiefs in controlling the working of the courts are comparable sociologically.

The Administration is continually exercised about the quality of the work done in Native Courts, and in so far as all cases heard in Native Courts are subject to revision by the District Commissioner a direct check is, or could be, exerted on the way in which the courts operate. But Administrative intervention goes further

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than this. Annual reports often draw attention to the smooth 648
working of Native Courts and their impartiality, while attempts 692
are made to establish British rules of evidence and of legal procedure [696]
generally. By trying thus to isolate the judiciary from the Native Authority and, more recently, by the proposal to introduce an entirely separate police force into rural areas, the Administration is engaged on an active policy of social change. One change that has already occurred widely is in the role played by the chief in his [177]
court. We have seen that traditionally disputes were settled by the senior lieutenants of the segment concerned and referred to the chief only if the lieutenants did not agree, for the chief represented the unity of the people and was above all disputes. When Administrative officers began to supervise the work of Native Courts they usually interpreted the chief's absence from his court as neglect of his duties. Pressure was put on chiefs to attend and participate in their courts, another step towards the secularization of their office. Nowadays some Ngoni chiefs stay out of their courts, others actively hear cases in them, and others drift in and out, sometimes intervening, sometimes waiting for difficult issues to be referred to them. The changed Native Court is one of the agencies whereby the transition from small-scale to large-scale society is to be made. The very successes which were hailed generally for Native Courts in Africa on the introduction of Indirect Rule are surely evidence of the importance attached by the Administration to maintaining courts of the right kind.

The role of the court in the essentially political relationship 648
between the Administration and the Native Authority is made 671
clear when we consider the sources of law enforced in the courts. 692
I have described elsewhere[86] how many of the regulations sought for by the Administration are introduced as Native Authority Rules and Orders, which are then approved by the Administration. This is a harmless legal fiction which worries no one, since new legislation emanating from within the counties is enforced or not quite independently of whether or not it is referred to the Administration and is included in its list of Native Authority legislation. But it is significant that even this fiction can have political significance, for recently it was suggested that a soil erosion law, which had been introduced as a Native Authority Order, would be more accurately described as an Administrative rule which the Native Courts were empowered to enforce. This suggestion was rejected by a meeting of chiefs, who stated that they wished to retain the

[86] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 102-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 rule as a Native Authority Order.[26] Thus the chiefs preferred to
671 appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the
692 judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the
692 indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts.
664 Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of
[797] divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people
671 and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened
646 about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are
661 constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[27]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the
692 ease with which their members may move away to other sur-
648 roundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts
626 are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the
[681] end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[26] *African Affairs*, report, 1948, p. 47.
[27] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

review by the Administration, but in practice the cases are so numerous, the written account of them so brief, and often the handwriting of the record so bad, that it is difficult to make an adequate review. The Administration is able to keep some check on the financial transactions of the courts, and convictions for embezzlement are not uncommon; but the Administration does not greatly influence the decisions taken by the courts nor their enforcement. For though there are police on the lorry routes and crocodiles in the rivers, it is fairly easy for a determined man (or woman) who is dissatisfied with the treatment he has received in the courts to get away. He can usually get to a White farm or to a town, and once there it is not so easy to get him back. Men are not continually running away from the courts, for they usually accept decisions given against them, though appeals from a minor chief's court to the Ngoni Appeal Court are fairly common. Few people take their appeals further to the District Officer, and I have never heard of a case going on appeal beyond the Provincial Commissioner's Court.

The general moral approval by the people of the work of the courts which lies behind much of the effectiveness of the Native Court system does not extend automatically to all legal action as such. There is no widely held view that the decisions of the courts must be supported merely because they are the decisions of the courts. Some courts are good, some bad; and some decisions are good, some bad. The great majority of cases that come before a county court are brought by men and women living within the county, but sometimes a litigant begins his suit in a county court not his own, particularly in the Paramount Chief's county court, if he thinks that he will get a better hearing there. Yet chiefs support each other and a case brought before a chief by litigants from another county are sometimes thrown out, in accordance with the Native Courts Ordinance.

There is little moral sanction attaching to legal procedures, or methods of appeal, or even to the particular sums awarded as damages. The members of courts tend in the main to uphold each other's decisions, so that there is a fair amount of conformity throughout the ten counties. All those who work in courts have in fact an interest in increasing the power of the court system, which the people as a whole have not. Disputants will settle out of court if they can, for it is not so far to walk and the whole process is not so disruptive of social ties, but members of a court will sometimes challenge the right of independent arbitrators, village headmen and the like, to come to any binding decisions.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenuousness of the moral sanctions behind the court
696 assists in the long run in maintaining the courts as courts of equity, despite the contrary tendencies generated by political manipulation. This is also partly due to the relatively poor physical sanctions directly available to the court. If a man is actually inside the brick court building he can be handcuffed and taken off to the Administration in the township. But if a man A has been told by the court to bring £1 next Friday to hand over to B, then either he can run away, or he can offer B 5s. out of court and hope to hear no more about the matter; or he can persuade B that it would be wiser not to press his claim. It may be months before B can persuade the court to send one of its messengers to bring A in by force, and by that time anything may have happened, and even the court may have changed its mind about the case.

It is the Administration which possesses physical sanctions.
648 However, little moral support is given by the Black section of
696 society to the exercise of these sanctions. The Native Court has to utilize the power of the Administration when it sentences a man to imprisonment, but this punishment is not regarded as a proper penalty for the offence for which the man is committed. If a man is ordered by the court to pay a fine or damages and refuses to do so, or maintains that he has no money, the court will order him to be imprisoned in the Administration's jail. When he comes out again, he is still under an obligation to pay. Associated with the use of prison is the lack of any stigma attached to having been, or
697 actually being, in prison. Prisoners are allowed a good deal of liberty and at one time were sometimes allowed to go home for a visit. Unskilled prisoners are employed in the disposal of sewage in the township, and it is sometimes said that it is only this that keeps people out of prison. Clerks and others who are sent to prison are allowed considerable freedom and are sometimes to be seen visiting their friends in town. There is good technical training available for prisoners, and many craftsmen owe their start in their profession to a stay in prison. Prison is regarded as essentially a foreign institution introduced by the Whites, to be manipulated if possible by the Native Court, but in no way connected with making people suffer for their crimes.

The Administration is able to use physical sanctions not only
648 696 against culprits but also to retain in the township possible witnesses in cases under investigation. For this reason, and also because it is likely to investigate incidental irregularities which may come to light in the course of an inquiry, people try to avoid becoming involved with it. This affects their actions where in the abstract

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

they might give their support to the enforcement of law. Murder has always been a public delict in Ngoni society and before the conquest, a murderer was usually tried by senior lieutenants at the headquarters of either segment 4 or 10 and if found guilty was executed by the first lieutenant of the segment. Ngoni still think that murderers ought to be brought to justice, but the investigation of murder, a matter for the Northern Rhodesia Police, is likely to be obstructed even though the investigation may be carried out entirely by Africans. Those affected by the murder wish to see the murderer punished, but they also want to keep clear of the legal process involved.

10. *External links*

The death of Zwangendaba was followed by a dispersal of Ngoni groups into various parts of east and central Africa. The present dispersal of Ngoni men and women from Fort Jameson over southern Africa arises from a different social situation and takes place in a different way. The early mining enterprises of Southern Rhodesia, like those in the Union of South Africa before them, were based on migratory labour. As we have noted, Ngoni began going to Southern Rhodesia only a few months after they had been conquered, and they have continued to go ever since. Although the first batch of migrants were apparently ordered to go by someone in authority, the great bulk of men who have gone away subsequently have gone as individuals, even if they were recruited in batches of a hundred or more at a time. Thus, the dispersal of population is not directly related to the political system of the tribe, as was the pre-conquest dispersal. There has been a certain amount of regional preference, one county supplying more than its share of migrants to the Northern Rhodesia Copperbelt, the Nyasaland counties supplying proportionately more migrants to the Union as compared with the Northern Rhodesia counties, and so on, but these preferences are not marked. The inhabitants of each county, and indeed of nearly every village, have kinsfolk who are scattered over the towns and farms of the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, the Transvaal and farther south.

Ngoni men and women are thus bound by many ties to other persons and groups located far away from the villages of Ngoniland. For the most part these ties bind individuals, for each person has distant attachments which are not the same as his neighbours. In this volume we are concerned primarily with politics, with social relations between enduring groups, and we shall reserve our discussion of the social implications of migration for a later work in

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market.

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area.

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

646 Secretariat or the Legislative Council. The agenda consists of
648 items suggested by the African members and by the Administration.
The African members of the Council elect four of their number as
[666] their nominees to the African Representative Council of Northern Rhodesia, which in its turn advises the Governor on the appointment of the African members of Legislative Council. As yet, the Provincial Council meetings attract little attention among the bulk of the African population, and few Ngoni know who their members are. Nevertheless among the chiefs and councillors these meetings, if regarded with suspicion, are of some interest, and for the two delegates they provide an opportunity for stressing in public what they regard as the Ngoni point of view as contrasted with those of other tribes. Many of the Ngoni speeches are phrased in anachro-
[537] nistic terms, and represent more an affirmation of how different
[196] the Ngoni are or used to be rather than a realization of how similar their interests now are to those of their neighbours. However, it is possible as the Council acquires more power and the consequences of its deliberations begin to affect more people directly, Ngoni will take a greater interest in its proceedings.[36] The same comments apply to Ngoni participation on the Provincial Team, an advisory body with representatives from the Administration, the unofficial White community, Indians and Africans.

Ngoniland is almost completely surrounded by Cewa chief-
648 doms. The old no-man's-land which isolated the Ngoni from their neighbours in pre-conquest times has long ago disappeared. On the fringes of Ngoni country there is a great deal of contact between Ngoni villages and their Cewa neighbours and the links of kinship stretch across tribal boundaries without interruption. Within
563 Ngoniland itself, under the control of county chiefs, are some
649 villages which still speak the Cewa language rather than the Nsenga
[167] dialect used by most Ngoni. Most of these Cewa-speaking villages have come into Ngoniland after 1898. Their numbers are indicated in Table VII (p. 133) where it will be seen that on the average about one village in five has entered in this way. The great majority of these are Cewa in origin. Some of them claim that they have returned to ancestral sites, others state that they came as a result of land alienation or of some quarrel with their former chief. Others have been formed by non-Ngoni immigrants who have worked for many years in the township or on the farms and built up their own followings. In Northern Rhodesia villages of this kind form an integral part of Ngoni society. The cultural features which distin-

[36] cf. Barnes, 'History', for a discussion of the way in which Ngoni members act at council meetings.

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Mpezeni

guish them from their neighbours are no more significant than the 563
many varieties of custom and belief which are to be found in every 648
Ngoni village. They do not form a group among themselves, their members participate in all communal activities in their counties and are to be found at all levels of the Native Authority organization below that of chief. They are linked by kinship to their neighbours. [602]
The two Nyasaland counties, however, include relatively large areas where there are only Cewa-speaking villages, and many of these claim that they have been placed under Ngoni rule only by Administrative action. From time to time they have made efforts to break away and to attach themselves to some neighbouring Cewa chief or to establish a separate chiefdom. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the Ngoni chiefs, with the villages in their county segments, and their Cewa-speaking subjects. It will be remembered that the two Nyasaland chiefdoms represent the head of the eastern movement of Mpezeni's group, and that some of the settlement across the border took place as late as 1897. It is not surprising therefore that in these two counties assimilation of Cewa captives and immigrants has not proceeded so far as in the longer established counties in Northern Rhodesia.

11. *Conclusion*

In this study we have attempted to show what has happened 17
in Ngoni political life during a period of 130 years. To-day Ngoni society is changing but this has not always been so. Prior to the arrival of Wiese in 1886, the actually existing social relations were changing, but the form of the social structure remained the same. Each new segment developed along lines that were already known and each time the State split, the new States were copies of the old. [631]
A system of this kind could not have lasted for long, for the supply [649]
of new recruits to the Ngoni States must have sooner or later been exhausted. In Africa, even if the overall conditions facilitated the emergence of this kind of migratory militarism, they were particularly unfavourable for its prolonged continuation. The Arabs and the European Powers behind them were closing in on the centre of Africa, and Ngoni days were numbered. Then came the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898 and the emergence of a new system, in which some of the actually existing political groups, and the relations between them, appear to have a much greater stability than before.
But at the same time society as a whole has become much more 631
diversified, the spatial distribution of men and women in significant 178
relationship with one another has become highly complicated, and

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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CHAPTER II

THE NGONI KINGDOMS

In 1933, by the Native Authorities Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance, Mbelwa was recognized as Paramount of the northern Ngoni kingdom with six Subordinate Native Authorities under him, and his court was constituted the appeal court for their six courts. The same procedure was followed in the central kingdom for Paramount Gomani with six Subordinate Native Authorities, and his court as the appeal court for their courts. They were the only rulers in Nyasaland with S.N.A.[1] under them. Two other chiefs, Cikulamayembe of the Henga in Maimba district and Kyungu of the Ngonde in North Nyasa district, had respectively four and five courts subordinate to them, but the chiefs owning these courts were not recognized as their subordinates. The Ngoni comment on these ordinances was 'Ha! Now they see what big chiefs we have. Only our chiefs are called *inkosi*.' 642 643 692

The northern kingdom was in Maimba district, and Paramount Mbelwa's royal village was at the southern end of his kingdom. The central kingdom included the whole of Ncheu district with Paramount Gomani's royal village at the northern end. This kingdom had Portuguese territory on its western frontier, close to the royal village. When the Portuguese boundary was fixed in 1891, the Ngoni kingdom under the Maseko Paramount was cut in two and a section under a Maseko ruler became a separate kingdom under the Portuguese. There was constant trouble in the 1930's over this Portuguese frontier, for Gomani's Ngoni visited their relatives, grazed their cattle and hoed gardens on the Portuguese side; and from time to time claims by the Portuguese for rent for gardens and grazing lands and disputes about taxation, needed judicious handling in the District Commissioner's court. 631 641

The figures in Table II for Maimba and Ncheu districts in 1926, 1931, and 1945 show the changes in the ethnic composition of the districts, some of which are difficult to account for. In Maimba district the Henga under Cikulamayembe were included in the figures for the Tumbuka and hence the northern Ngoni kingdom did not include all the 156,208 in the district. In Ncheu, the total district population of 87,690 were all included in the central Ngoni kingdom, showing the mixed ethnic elements, among which the Ngoni, or those who were enumerated as Ngoni, had declined from 64,023 in 1926 to 15,242 in 1945. Between 1931 and 1945 the decrease in the number of Ngoni (31,066) was almost balanced by the increase in the number of Nyanja 162 563

[1] This abbreviation will be used henceforward in referring to Subordinate Native Authorities.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

121 with the military organization and the Paramountcy. The main emphasis in the study is, however, on the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's, when the Paramount and the administrative organization under him were recognized by the Nyasaland government. Though certain elements in 642 the kingdoms, as for example the position and authority of the *alumu-* 648 *zana*, were not recognized by the ordinance, the supreme authority of the Paramounts and the position of their appeal courts received additional support from the colonial officials, from the financial basis of the administration, and from the many new responsibilities of the Paramount for his people illustrated by the bye-laws made and the welfare measures carried out.

121 It is the Ngoni kingdoms as they functioned in the 1930's which will be compared with other African political systems, bearing in mind all the time that behind the Ngoni kingdoms lay the authority and power of the colonial government. The comparison will be made with the general characteristics of what were called by the editors of *African Political Systems*, in their introductory essay, 'Group A systems', and the references will be to the criteria and concepts in that introduction.

The main characteristics cited of the Group A systems were all to be [642] found in the Ngoni kingdoms: centralized authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions. These will be the chief material in Part II of this book on the Ngoni political system. In *African Political Systems* the editors stated that all the societies described in the book which were in the category of Group A systems were 'an amalgam of different peoples, each aware of its unique origin and history, and all except the Zulu and Bemba are still today culturally heterogenous'. Such a definition was appropriate for the Ngoni kingdoms, where [563] political authority was wielded over several different peoples, as the ethnic grouping in the 1945 census showed, and where there was cultural heterogeneity among the different peoples. This second characteristic will be examined more fully in Chapter III of this section, dealing with Ngoni culture. To the factor of diversity within the Ngoni 121 kingdoms should be added two other points made by the editors 571 towards the end of their introduction where they said: 'Community of language and culture does not necessarily give rise to political unity, any more than linguistic and cultural dissimilarity prevents political unity.' In the next chapter we shall be discussing the relation of language and culture among the Ngoni, and between them and other Nyasaland peoples. The second point in the essay which is also applicable to the Ngoni kingdoms and their neighbours was stated in these terms: 'The overlapping and interlocking of societies is due to the fact that where political relations end is not the point at which all social relations cease.' The relevance of this statement to the Ngoni in Nyasaland has already been mentioned in connexion with the visiting which goes on between individuals from the Ngoni kingdoms and states. It

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

After the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

Noonni Warfare in Old Days

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligulo* dance along with others.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

from the campaign and the purification of those who had killed any of the enemy. 726

Cibambo and other Ngoni informants had no idea of the size of the Ngoni armies beyond emphasizing that they were 'very big and very strong'. Evidence was forthcoming, however, from early European sources on the size of the armies which, though it can only have been based on guess-work, nevertheless gave an indication of the numbers involved. Dr. Elmslie referred in 1878 to having seen in the previous year an army of 10,000 of the northern Ngoni which went out in June and returned in September.[1] In the *B.C.A. Gazette* of December 1894, reference was made to the armies of the central Ngoni which were said to be, at the time of their last raids, 50,000 strong. In the *Blantyre District Note Book* there was an entry of 1884, giving no numbers for the army but reporting on the raid on Blantyre in that year when the 'vanguard of the army was composed entirely of young men in their first vigour of manhood, who were said to have marched 50 miles in half a day'. From such scanty references by Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni armies in the field consisted of large numbers, were highly organized, and trained to feats of endurance as well as in fighting skill. The Blantyre reference also brought out the authority of the big war *induna*, who was presented with cloth by the Moir brothers of the African Lakes Corporation as a bribe not to attack the Blantyre area again, and kept his promise. 701 175 [662]

Objectives in warfare

Dr. Kuper wrote of the Swazi military kingdom that wars were waged 'to extend the boundaries, to retain tribal independence and to secure internal solidarity'.[2] After the Ngoni kingdoms were set up in Nyasaland, warfare had the same objectives with the additional one of bringing back captives and cattle. In north Nyasaland Dr. Elmslie, in the reference already cited, wrote that, after the four months' campaigning the Ngoni armies returned 'laden with spoil in slaves, cattle and ivory'. Up to the coming of the Europeans many of the raids and wars took place in the hope of annexing additional territory. Dr. Elmslie wrote in 1878 of the Ngoni dominating an area of 30,000 square miles in north Nyasaland from the lake-shore to the Luangwa river. In central Nyasaland the *B.C.A. Gazette* of 1894 reported that the Ngoni Paramount ruled from the Lintippe river near Lilongwe to the Luvubwe river south of the Kirk Range. The chief challenge to Ngoni security in the northern kingdom came from the Bemba, and in the central kingdom from a combination of Yao and Arabs. Dr. Laws recorded in 1886 that the Ngoni, in their final victorious campaign against the Bemba, had 721 175 [171] [648]

[1] Elmslie, W. A. *Among the Wild Ngoni*. Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1899, p. 79.
[2] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organization in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

721 175 648 defeated an alliance between the Arabs and the Bembs in which the allies intended to dominate all the territory between the Luangwa river and the lake-shore, driving the Ngoni from their highlands and opening all the country to the slave-trade. In the central kingdom, during the interregnum after Cikusi's death in 1891, a powerful Yao chief raided the kingdom, destroyed six villages and took many captives. In both kingdoms it was necessary for the Ngoni to defend their independence by constant vigilance and preparedness, especially against a combination of Arab slave-raiders and local tribes. Since large numbers of warriors were mobilized every year, these trained armies demanded an outlet, and the policy of aggression served the dual purpose of raiding enemy territory and maintaining a defence force.

727 There was a difference of opinion among informants about the results of raids in terms of spoils of war. In both kingdoms captives were taken in war, especially young men of military age and women. From tsetse-free areas where cattle were to be found, live beasts were brought to add to the herds in the Paramount's village and in those of the chiefs and *alumanna*. Ivory for trading and cloth for wearing were two of the most valued forms of booty, and Cibambo mentioned the looting of clothes and weapons from those who had been killed. From accounts by the first Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni burned the villages and killed the inhabitants in the majority of their later raids.

721 182 If defensive and aggressive military action and the acquisition of valued forms of wealth were two of the main objectives in war, a third was undoubtedly the need to build up a national sentiment within the military kingdoms by success in warfare in the first place, and by intensive training of all young men in the second, thus integrating the youth from conquered units with those who belonged to the trans-Zambesi clans. Again and again, in talking about their past, Ngoni informants from the Paramounts downwards emphasized the discipline and training of the young men in the days of warfare, and expressed their opinion that no other training could take its place. It was not only the common military training which contributed to this national sentiment and held the Ngoni together in a common purpose of preparedness for warfare. The *libuto* or age set within the *libandla* or territorial unit, and the *impi* or national army in which the territorial units were merged, provided a military organization which was adaptable and balanced, and which, through the control of the Paramount, gave the main impetus to centralization, while encouraging pride and initiative among local and age-set groups.

The relics of a military tradition

648 In north Nyasaland the Ngoni never fought against the Europeans, and were not coerced into giving up warfare, but, as a result of their [792] contacts with the Livingstonia Mission, they finally agreed to give it up voluntarily. When Dr. Laws met the Commissioner near Mponda's at

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the south end of the lake in 1891, he pleaded with him not to use force against the northern Ngoni. 'Don't fight them,' he urged, 'enlist them.' The military commander, Captain Macguire, who was present at the interview, showed interest in the idea of a new recruiting ground for the regular forces in Nyasaland, but his ideas were not pursued as it proved to be easier to continue recruiting the Yao and Tonga who had already shown themselves good military material.

In the central kingdom the first reactions of the Administration towards the Ngoni were favourable. Paramount Cikusi was visited by administrators in 1882 and 1886, and in 1890 concluded a treaty placing himself under British protection. On his death in 1891 his successor Gomani I sent messengers to inform the Administration of his father's death, to declare his allegiance to the British, and to present a bull and a cow, four tusks of ivory and twenty-five men to help in the war against the slave-raiders. In the following year 100 Ngoni warriors were drafted into the regular forces and Mr. H. H. Johnston reported: 'The Ngoni are altogether a splendid people and may be regarded as the backbone of British Central Africa.'[1] But this co-operative relationship did not last. In 1896 it was reported that 'Gomani and a number of his turbulent young headmen were opposed to our influence.'[2] Ngoni armies raided a mission station, an expeditionary force under British officers was sent, the Paramount's village was attacked and his army defeated. He was taken prisoner and, refusing to walk to Zomba, was shot near Dombole in his former kingdom.

In the 1930's the Ngoni of the central kingdom referred repeatedly to the expedition sent against them, the defeat of their army, the death of their Paramount and the seizure of some of their cattle. They nursed a grudge against their conqueror which coloured much of their sentiments towards Europeans. They sometimes referred to the long period of contact of the northern Ngoni kingdom with the Livingstonia Mission, and contrasted it with their contacts with several missions who appeared to them to be in league with the Administration against them and not to take their side in relations with the Government as Dr. Laws had done in the north.

When Cibambo visited the central Ngoni kingdom with me in 1936 he was interested in making comparisons with his own Ngoni of the north. He found that in central Ngoniland there were very few men who knew Ngoni songs well, and that in general the knowledge of the Ngoni language had almost died out. The big shields were not, he thought, as well cut as those in the north. Yet the war-dances were performed correctly, and the war-dress which the dancers wore was more striking than anything which had been preserved in the north.

[1] Johnston, H. H. *Report of the First Three Years' Administration of the Eastern Portion of B.C.A.* 1894, p. 60.
[2] Johnston, H. H. *Report on Trade and General Conditions in Nyasaland*, 1896–7, p. 3.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

brothers of the dead Paramount who acted as regents. Thus Ngwana was cremated in Uosi before crossing the Zambesi, and Mputa was cremated in the river Lichiningo in Songea in Tanganyika. This was confirmed by an informant of the Gama clan who were for a time under the central Ngoni Paramount in Songea and later were allied with the northern Ngoni. He said 'We killed Mputa, the *inkosi*, when fighting, and his people burned him because it was their custom in burying to burn.' 184 643 766

An old woman who came from Portuguese territory to see me in the central kingdom said that when Zintambira I died the Portuguese made them bury him 'in a box'. The onlookers in Mcakatha at the time of my interview with the old woman said 'Yes, they were not allowed to burn him.' [648]

The central Ngoni leaders referred often to the ritual significance of the cremation of their Paramount, followed by the washing of the ashes into the stream 'to strengthen the land'. On my first arrival in the central kingdom I was questioned closely by several of the big *izinduna* and *abamnumne* about the practice of cremation in England. They alleged that, under the influence of the local mission, the Paramount Gomani II had said that he wished to be buried in a coffin with Christian burial rites. They were much concerned about this, because of the effect on the strength and status of his successor and on the country as a whole. 'If he is not burned his children will not be honoured and will only be as *abamnumne*. Is it right that another tribe, the English, should come and change our customs?' Great relief was expressed when I told them that Christians were cremated in England with full Christian ritual, and also when I told them that the ashes of one of the early Scottish missionaries in northern Ngoniland had been brought back by his widow to lie there. [797] [648]

The following account of the funeral of Cikusi was given to Rattray: 643 766

'When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them the clouds have fallen today'. They do this because they fear, 'if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death'. Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then one of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the chest, and they take a small gourd-cup and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and lock his head until it all glitters, and then take the [203] [301]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

631 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in
643 his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning
to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount
692 by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one
645 by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first
'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then
it was open for any of the *ahumuzana* or headmen to speak 'from the
floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to
be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from
those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with
freedom.

The topics covered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with
matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement
of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from
[744] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern
Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits.
Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men
in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice
exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages
below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for
sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said,
would have that leader recognized as a headman. This drew a number
of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme,
others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning
money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognized in the
new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages.
'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our head-
men. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant after-
thought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Para-
[651 mount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to
be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few
585 shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A
number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the
izindunas had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are
your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay
a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted
to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict
was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that
marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among
the audience during and after this discussion and the *izindunas* had to
call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had
been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese
[648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands
over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izindunas* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

631 643 645 692 [648] [543]

This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izindunas* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambesi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

563 643 645 671 692

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[721] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[681] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
600 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

There were musicians and craftsmen there, as at Enkodlweni. All the senior Ngoni men knew Ngoni history, used proverbs in the courts and in conversation, and two or three senior men knew and carried out the ritual of the ancestor cult. The new element in this village was due to economic influences rather than missionary and educational. Most of the men had learned to read and write Nyanja while away at work, but no one knew more than a few words of English, and only one or two of the leading men, and no women, spoke Ngoni.

The men of the leading Ngoni families formed a closely knit group for purposes of village affairs, social life and ritual performances. There was a group of senior Ngoni women who exerted a powerful influence in all matters concerned with household life and the bringing up of children. But out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one households, only thirty-seven belonged to men of Ngoni clans, and there were only thirty-two women of Ngoni clans including both the older and the younger groups of women. The aristocratic group here was small in comparison with Enkodlweni, but the influence of their ways of living was proportionately much stronger. The Ngoni men and women of leading families were very conscious of their cultural distinction and also of their relatively small numbers, and many were the complaints about 'those other people who are spoiling our land'.

Political and social changes

When the British took over the administration of Nyasaland between 1891 and 1901, the Ngoni kingdoms received no special recognition. Their chiefs, called by the administration principal village headmen, and their heads of clans called village headmen, were relegated to the same position *vis-à-vis* the administration as the local peoples. Part of the Central Ngoni kingdom was cut off from the rest by the treaty demarcating the Nyasaland boundary from Portuguese East Africa.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182]

In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Para-
mount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity,
under several missions, never achieved, especially in educa-
tion, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved
among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans
had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils
from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered
villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn
money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command
financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment
which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the
1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they
called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here
to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the genera-
tion of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[8]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[8] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part. 121

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000 live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[a]. 101 [161] 131 167 [648] [693] 631 241 [839] 469

[a] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 252 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.17]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass shacks built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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came. Others followed maternal links or were attracted to the district messengers, the newly-created political agents of the White Administration. About 1912 the Administration adopted a policy of decreasing the number of distinct villages and effected amalgamations between villages which had nothing at all in common except spatial proximity. Later still, from about 1920 onwards, new immigrants began to enter the area from the surrounding Cewa tribe in the face of alienation of land to Whites.

These villages became the basic local administrative units. Men were identified in terms of their tribe, their chief, and their village. To this extent the new village inherited the political functions of the old. But men, instead of being fixed in their allegiance, moved from village to village seeking good land for their gardens and freedom from quarrels. The proliferation of villages was to some extent controlled by the Administration, so that if a man quarrelled with his elder brother he could no longer easily set up a village of his own. Instead he sought refuge with his maternal or affinal kin, registered himself in their village, and became for some purposes at least subordinate to the headman of that village. A man's political position was determined by where he had decided to live, whereas under the old system he had had to live where he belonged politically. The whole nature of affinal and maternal ties shifted so that in some instances they became more important than the ties of paternal kinship.

2. Rival tribes

The values of Ngoni life were in the old days held in conscious opposition to those of the tribes with whom they fought. All the later captives came from matrilineal uxorilocal tribes, who made only token transfers at marriage, and who married at an earlier age than did the military Ngoni. They did not take so severe a view of adultery, and for girls copulation at puberty was obligatory. Captives who had been brought up in this tradition were in the old days forcibly required to adopt the Ngoni way of life, and indeed it seems likely that to some extent they did so willingly as part of the process by which they transferred themselves in allegiance from one group to the other. After 1896 the central government of the Ngoni lost much of its power and it was no longer able to enforce conformity to Ngoni standards. Ngoni marriage payments had been made in cattle, and the looting of cattle made it more difficult to maintain these payments. The example provided by the adjacent Cewa chiefdoms reinforced the tendency to depart from the modes of behaviour of the past. Furthermore, groups of Cewa entered Ngoni country after 1896, as we have already noted, and these people had never been indoctrinated with Ngoni beliefs and values. In addition, many individuals followed their captured relatives and joined them where they were living in Ngoni country. To-day some villages, although under Ngoni chiefs, have matrilineal succession, dance

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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Cewa dances, speak Cewa, and are to a lesser extent internally organized on Cewa lines. They do not form a distinct class of village in Ngoni country, and are inextricably bound by ties of kinship with their neighbours. But there are fewer traces of the former pre-1898 system of organization in such villages than in those which have a remembered history linking them with the glorious past.[1]

3. Christianity

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At the same time as Ngoni values were being undermined from within by the Cewa, they were attacked from without by the Whites. The first missionaries to settle in the area arrived in 1899, although there had been some earlier contact. They attempted to convert Ngoni to Christianity, and therefore to monogamy and pre-marital chastity. In chastity the missionaries were allied with the Ngoni against the Cewa; in monogamy the missions fought against Ngoni allied to Cewa. New rituals were introduced and a new hierarchy developed, composed of priests, evangelists and deacons. However, in this region, unlike much of the rest of Africa, the impact of Christianity has not produced a distinctive legal status of persons married by Christian rite. The Administration's earliest piece of marriage legislation was the *North-Eastern Rhodesia Marriage Regulations*, 1903.[2] There was specific provision for monogamous marriages between Africans, with penalties for bigamy and detailed rules for the division of property left by Africans married under these regulations and dying intestate. Few, if any, marriages involving Africans were made in this form, for it seems that the missions did not license themselves under the Regulations and their ceremonies therefore did not have legal significance to the Administration. These elaborate provisions were repealed by the *Northern Rhodesia Marriage Proclamation*, 1918.[3] Since then the only form of marriage performed within Northern Rhodesia between Africans that has legal significance in the eyes of the Administration is marriage 'in accordance with native law and custom'. What constitutes such a marriage has never been rigidly defined.

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The missions themselves have differed in their attitude towards indigenous marriage. One mission insists that all 'customary obligations' must be fulfilled in addition to Christian rites, another holds that it is wrong to transfer wealth from one side to another in marriage, while a third holds that the fulfilment or not of any customary obligations is not the concern of the church. The Native

[1] Cf. Read, 'Tradition and prestige' and 'Moral code' for an account of some of these changes in structure and values, based on observations of three Ngoni kingdoms.

[2] Government Notice No. 2 of 1903, *British Central Africa Gazette*, 146, x, 1, 31 January 1903.

[3] N.R. No. 18 of 1918, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, viii, 11, 7 September 1918.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. *The punishment of adultery*

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognized other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognized and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. *Labour migration*

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Khodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing numbers of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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Case History 1

Amos[1] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

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There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

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Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

N [361] M [581] [428] N 186 581 N

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognise these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

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[1] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European.

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules.

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls.

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.' 622 624 585

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village. 622 578 [621]

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular 692 648 797 466

if the latter is unable to leave the area legally.[30] Various devices have been introduced to prevent women from using other people's passes, such as recording finger-prints on the certificate. On the other hand there are a great variety of ways in which women contrive to leave the area without a proper pass, such as marrying the bus driver for the duration of the journey, getting off the bus and walking round the control points, and so on.

13. The Administration and the missions

Under the Laws of Northern Rhodesia, which guide the Administration, the only valid marriages between Africans are those performed in accordance with 'customary tribal law'. There has never been any systematic attempt to codify the rules implied by this phrase, and in any particular case that comes before the Administration's courts, the views of individual African assessors must carry weight. The tendency has been to try and discover what used to happen in the old days rather than what was the *de facto* law at the time. On the other hand, there appears to have been a feeling that women were entitled to certain rights in equity that may perhaps have been associated with the proviso that 'customary tribal law' shall not be administered when it is 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. The Administration has certainly been sympathetic towards deserted wives seeking divorce and has encouraged Native Courts to allow their pleas where the husband has been many years away and has not written home. In the past the District Officer on tour has divorced batches of women who had applied in vain to the Native Courts for divorce on the ground of desertion. It has been argued by the Administration that since chiefs depend on the gifts of returned labour migrants to supplement their own income, they are reluctant to offend men by divorcing their wives in their absence. There are fewer divorces, in relation to the same number of pleas, granted in Ngoni courts than among the neighbouring Cewa, who are subject to the same Administrative and mission influences. The Ngoni find no consolation in this comparison. They merely observe that there are more divorces now than there used to be, and blame the Whites for the change.

The missions are all concerned with the development of Christian marriage, but their ideas as to what this is differ from one denomination to another, as do their views on the relationship of Christian to other types of marriage. The White Fathers and the Universities Mission to Central Africa do not allow divorce, while the Dutch Reformed Church Mission does. The U.M.C.A. insist that all 'customary obligations' shall be fulfilled before a marriage can be solemnized between Christians, the White Fathers

[30] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 245f for the rules regulating the movement of women beyond Fort Jameson District.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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[P.105]

CHAPTER V

SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS

1. *Old and new marriage*

WE HAVE described marriage at two periods in Ngoni history, as it was in the 1890's and as it is now. The differences we have found between the two periods are not due to chance except in the sense in which we may speak of all historical incidents as being partly due to chance and partly determined by the limiting conditions imposed by the past. Changes in the field of Ngoni marriage have been paralleled by changes in other aspects of Ngoni social life, have been influenced by other changes and have in turn influenced them. Throughout Ngoni history men and women have always married, but the society in which they married has changed. Marriage in the time of peace was appropriate, more or less, to the general ordering of social life in those days, and modern marriage is appropriate, again more or less, to the social structure of today. 581 178

Our task is then a threefold one. We have to show the relationship between old marriage and the rest of the old society, a similar relationship between modern marriage and modern society, and the process by which the transition from one set of conditions to the other has come about. We have outlined in Chapter II some of the internal and external factors responsible for this transition, and the nature of the material available to us on the 1890 period has led us, in Chapter I, to describe the old system largely in analytic terms. In this chapter we shall attempt to clarify our picture of the past in the light of an analysis of modern marriage. 121 128

In the old days the residential system provided the framework for political and lineage ties. Marriage was a legitimate means whereby children were recruited into segments of the system. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of fertility from the woman's kin to her husband's kin. Adultery was punishable by death, and divorce was rare. Affinal ties cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system, but while these ties were important, a man could not transfer his allegiance to his wife's or to his mother's group. A man who quarrelled with his kinsmen could not move to another village to live, but could only hive off to form a dependent but recognizable cluster of his own, which still remained part of the same residential segment. 511

The material apparatus belonging to the system, that is, the great villages with hundreds of huts and central cattle byres, was to a large extent destroyed in 1898 by the British. A few important people in the system were killed, and many of the cattle looted. With the establishment of British rule, it was physically possible for the 727 648 178 648

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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Ngoni to rebuild their old system, yet they did not do so. The social conditions that permitted the old system to operate had disappeared.

The most important new factor was the presence of the Administration in political control of the area and backed by a superior technology. Tribal warfare was no longer possible, so that recruitment into the tribe by capture ceased. Frontiers and land boundaries were established, and free movement across the face of Africa ended. Instead men went off in parties to work in the mines, and either returned or were lost to the tribe. The internal structure of the state was modified by the creation of new posts held by Ngoni and by the actions and exhortations of Administrative officers who did not fully understand the operation of the old system and who were themselves bound by the general plan of Native Administration decided on for the Territory as a whole. The sanctions available to chiefs and headmen were severely curtailed, and in particular they were prevented from killing adulterers. Unrelated groups of neighbours were forced to amalgamate into single villages, while other populated areas were cleared and the land made over to White farmers who began employing labourers from near and far. Cewa captives returned to their old areas while other Cewa entered the area as labourers or seeking places to make their villages. At the same time as these new elements were intruding into the system, mobility within it by traditional processes became more difficult. The old political structure held together because there was provision within it for promotion and demotion, for vertical as well as horizontal social mobility. Successful warriors were rewarded by the chief, and made lieutenants and regional governors. After 1898 this was no longer possible. The chief lost his power to allocate people as dependants to an important or ambitious man, and as it became futile for men to struggle for position within the old system, so they began to struggle outside it, in the Administration, the churches, farms and mines.[1]

These were new phenomena, without structural equivalents in the old order. The most important change was the loss of sovereignty, but this in itself did not directly impinge on the field of marriage. It was no longer possible to divide up the kingdom in terms of the great royal villages under the leadership of senior queens, for the Paramount Chief was a young boy and a Catholic, and by the time he had acquired a number of queens, boundaries had already been drawn and the formation of new villages controlled by the Administration. Royal marriage has ceased to have the political significance that it had in the old days. This is attributable to the confinement of the kingdom within the geographical and administrative bounds of the larger system. But we know from other areas

[1] Cf. Barnes, 'Some aspects of political development among the Fort Jameson Ngoni', *African Studies*, vii (1948), pp. 104-105, 108-109.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

But we know from other areas 121
that loss of sovereignty itself does not necessarily disrupt the marriage arrangements of common people and we must look elsewhere for an explanation.

2. Movement between villages

The old villages formed part of the residential system, and their 621
structure was maintained by the power of the central chieftainship, as expressed through the lieutenants of the royal villages, and by the diffuse sanction of public opinion based on ideas held in common as to the rights conferred by the payment of bridewealth. Nowadays [178]
the lieutenants of the royal villages have very much less power, and bridewealth is not often paid. The village is held together by the various ties of kinship and affinity between its members, and to a slight extent by the restriction of movement from one village to another. This control, exercised by the Administration through the [648]
system of registration of adult males, is largely ineffective except in the Resettlement Areas.[8] Men and women are more or less free to live wherever they can find relatives, and if they quarrel in one village they can move to another where they hope life will be more pleasant. There is no general rule to which appeal can be made concerning whether a married couple should live uxorilocally or virilocally. Hence a quarrel between man and wife or between affinally related people may lead to a split in the village, and the dissident section may attempt to form a village of its own or attach itself to another village. It is therefore in the interests of the [620]
headman that quarrels in his village should be settled as rapidly as possible, and he has therefore an interest in the private lives of his people even though they may not be his close relatives. His interests are represented by his lieutenants and are shared by everyone in the village who wishes his own to be a large prosperous and happy village. The theme of the good and happy village recurs in many [183]
of the formal situations of Ngoni life and finds expression in much of local action on a village basis, as for example in the competitive dances, the division of food at a ceremony and the organization of the religious sects.

We find therefore that the headman and his lieutenants participate [622]
in the ceremonies of marriage and in marital quarrels. Conversely the headman is brought into relationship with the married couple by the allocation to him of pots of beer whenever there is a general distribution even though he may not be at the ceremony. Other important men and women similarly participate merely because of their common membership of the village. For example, a hoeing party was led by a middle-aged woman who was described as 'an important person' in the son-in-law's village. She was in fact

[8] Areas which have been reopened to settlement by Ngoni and other tribes since 1941 with various restrictions on agricultural methods and on population. About ten per cent of Ngoni live in Resettlement Areas.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 related to him but her participation was explained in terms of her status as an 'important person' and not in terms of this relationship.

591 178 A man can move from his village to his wife's village if he or she has quarrelled with his kinsfolk, and a quarrel with her relatives may cause them to move in the reverse direction. These shifts from one kind of residence to another occurred in a different context in the old system. We have seen that there was sometimes a change from uxorilocal to virilocal residence, for at the beginning of his first marriage a man might leave his wife living uxorilocally until he had paid bridewealth. If there was a quarrel between a man and his wife's kin at this stage, they might try to delay his taking the woman to his own village, although they could not entirely prevent him from so doing. Hostility found expression in the desire to keep him under close surveillance, not in the desire to be rid of him. This old idea still persists to some extent, as we have seen in the story of Abner and Esther (p. 79). Esther wanted her husband Abner to live in her village so that her father could see that he looked after her well. A man may refuse to allow his daughter to move to her husband's village until he is satisfied that the young man is a good husband. This line of action, however, now applies only at the beginning of a marriage and in families where a man is determined to maintain his control over his growing children. When there is a quarrel involving a couple who have been married for a long time, it is then too late to hope that a man will improve his behaviour under the eye of his wife's father. If he quarrels with his father-in-law it is better that he should go and live in his own village.

The significance of the reverse move, from virilocality to uxorilocality, was different in the old system from what it is in the new. In the light of what we know of the South-Eastern Bantu and by reference to the present position among the Ngoni it seems probable that in the old days it did happen from time to time that a man sought refuge with his wife's agnates. Yet from the dearth of instances of this in my genealogical material it would seem that this cannot have occurred very often. Once a man had established himself in virilocal residence he usually stayed there. If he quarrelled with his kinsfolk all he could do was to move off and make his own segment distinct from those of his brothers; he could not seek permanent shelter with his wife's kinsfolk. Nowadays he can do so, and it may be easier for him to change to uxorilocal residence than to try to form his own group. In the old days the transition from what we now call a cluster to a division or from a division to a village was a gradual one. Spatial separation between minor segments of the same order was initially a matter of yards and with successive moves in the tribal migration became a matter of miles. Nowadays there is a definite number of villages recognized by the Administration and a man who establishes his own residential cluster of huts is, or at least was until very recently, in danger of punishment for not living in a recognized village. For many years there was an

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4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village.

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[88] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers.

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased.

3. *Polygyny*

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organize large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance

[88] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E 5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tion for associating children with one parent rather than the other. There is only the one proud dogma that the Ngoni, unlike their neighbours, are a patrilineal virilocal people. This reflects the actual dominance of the virilocal mode of residence but does not furnish a rule to which appeal can be made in specific cases. The only definite unit to which a man can be said to belong is his village, and such few attempts as are made to enforce rights *in genetricem* are expressed in terms of residence in villages. In marriages that are made outside the tribe, rights *in genetricem* become significant, for a child is not likely to wander to and fro between one tribe and another hundreds of miles away in the same way as children change from one village to another within the kingdom. Here then we find more attention paid to the payment of bridewealth and to rights *in genetricem* and these rights are enforceable through the police checks on buses and lorries.

If a man is away working his interests are represented by his kinsfolk. They cannot exercise his rights *in uxorem* for him, but if they are violated they can act on his behalf. His permission is necessary, however, before they can proceed to the court, and if they are awarded damages then they are under some sort of obligation to hand over the money to him when he returns. There was no situation comparable to this in the old system, for men did not go away for years at a time, and the violation of rights *in uxorem* was punishable by death.

The position of the man as holder of rights *in uxorem* over his wife is reinforced to some extent by mystical ties believed to connect the couple, and at the same time the man can fortify his rights by the use of medicines to ensure fidelity. During pregnancy, for a short while after childbirth, and during menstruation, the actions of man and wife affect one another automatically, and each is placed in danger of illness by the failure of the other to observe their mutual obligations. To protect his rights *in uxorem* a man may doctor his wife so that possible violators may be deterred by the fear of mystical retribution as well as action in the courts.

7. *Mystical beliefs and marriage stability*

The mystical connexion believed to exist between a man and his wife serves to define their relationship more closely, for this same connexion does not hold between a woman and her husband's kin or between a man and his wife's kin. The adultery of a pregnant woman's brother-in-law, like her husband's adultery, may threaten the peace of her local group of relatives and friends, and may even lead her to change her village or go to the court as a supporter. The important distinction between the adultery of her husband's brother and her husband's adultery is that the former does not automatically endanger her delivery while the latter does. A man confesses his adultery when his own wife gives birth, not when her sister is in labour. This connexion is definite, and is not extended

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rare divorce, has survived despite loss of sovereignty, territorial dispersal, economic impoverishment, high incidence of labour migration, and frequent adultery and illegitimacy.[11] The Ngoni, subjected to similar external processes, but in addition surrounded by matrilineal peoples and themselves largely of matrilineal origin, have lost their agnatic affiliation and, with it, stable marriage.

It is difficult to see exactly where this trend will lead. The third phase, as I have characterized it, is a recent development. There does not seem to have been any sharp rise in marriage payments until the 1939-45 war. During the war many Ngoni men earned higher wages than ever before in the Army and in industry. It may have been this that was decisive in raising the level of payments. It will be remembered that the thirty shillings minimum for the legalization payment was fixed by law during the war. It may, however, be suggested that if it is hoped by raising the level of payments to achieve stability in marriage, this hope is in vain. Payments may rise if people are in a position to pay more. Higher wages permit higher marriage payments without necessitating further changes in economic life, but in fact these changes are already taking place. Money is needed for more clothes, more food, more education, as well as for higher marriage payments. Payments rise as Africans participate increasingly in the general money economy of Southern Africa. The more they participate, the less marriage is constrained by a kinship structure based on morally significant face-to-face relations between agnates. The higher payments rise the more frequent becomes divorce. This is not a long-term prognosis, for I have indicated above that affiliation is not the only possible determining factor, and it is clear that if more people align themselves with those missions which do not permit divorce, the frequency of divorce as a whole may decline. There are other possibilities, but it seems to me unlikely that any of these other social mechanisms will become effective quickly; therefore the most probable concomitant of a rise in marriage payments in the immediate future is more frequent divorce.

Thus we see that at least for the Ngoni, changes in the amount and distribution of property have had a marked effect on the level of marriage payments, and that this effect can to some extent be isolated from that due to changes in kinship structure and in divorce frequency.

10. Attempts to resist change

The major structural changes taking place in Ngoni society in the last fifty years have not come about entirely unopposed. The Administration, the missions, and the Ngoni people themselves have noticed from year to year how the old order was changing and with varying success have made attempts to control the direction of change.

[11] Cf. information from Kark cited by Gluckman, op. cit., p. 204, footnote 1

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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178 648 change. In the field of marriage we have seen that it was the conscious intervention of the Administration which forced the abolition of the death penalty for adultery. It is to some extent due to the Administration, with its emphasis that women must have rights equal to those of men, that divorce is more frequent than it was, though this result does not seem to have been planned. In the eyes of the Administration the important fact is that it is more difficult for a woman to get a divorce among the Ngoni than among the Cewa. Of recent years it has been more concerned with the increase in concubinage, prostitution and juvenile delinquency in the towns, and has introduced measures designed to check the flow of women and children from the rural areas to the towns. As we have seen, one result has been that it is possible for rights *in genetricem* to be enforced in inter-tribal marriages, and bridewealth has therefore more significance in these marriages than in marriages within the tribe.

889 181 The Ngoni people themselves have, on the whole, accepted the changes passively and regretfully. The one deliberate constructive action appears to have been the law made in about 1944 that the legalization payment shall be at least thirty shillings. Apart from this, the Ngoni appear to have been overwhelmed by events. The frustrations of the present time are all attributed to the coming of the Whites, and this in turn provides the reason why nothing can be done to change things. The past, 'the time of peace', is glorified and simplified, and to some extent reinterpreted in terms of the new values which have been acquired in the interim. Thus, some informants said that the Ngoni never fought other tribes, but only invited people to join the Ngoni kingdom. People like to assert dogmatically that adulterers were always killed, that every man always paid bridewealth, that women always married whom they were told, and only reluctantly admit, on closer questioning, that there were sometimes exceptions to these rules. The imputed rules of the past have become the 'customs' of the present, and the adjective *Ngoni* is applied not to what the Ngoni people do today but to what they like to think they did in the virtuous past. *Ngoni* marriage (*ukwati wacingoni*) is marriage in which all the ceremonial observances are carried out in detail, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth are paid, the woman is obedient and fertile, the man dutiful and respectful towards his wife's parents, and in which the couple 'live well together'. This is contrasted with modern marriage (*ukwati wamakono*) in which there is no bridewealth, few ceremonies, little attention paid to obligations towards kin, and in which the woman sues successfully for divorce. Modern marriage is an invention of the Whites, designed to worry the Ngoni. The Whites have conquered the Ngoni, they are the owners of the country, and there is nothing to be done except to keep alive the knowledge of the past.[18]

[18] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', and 'Traditions and prestige . . .', *passim*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This attitude of resignation, while still very common, has to some extent been replaced by a more constructive attitude among members of the Native Authority bureaucracy. Chiefs, councillors and other officials have considerable political power and are encouraged to use it by the Administration, whose policy it is to strengthen the hand of the Native Authority.[18] Court members introduce changes in law with some confidence, although this is still done under the guise of a re-enforcement of a forgotten traditional law. Chiefs, under increasing pressure from their people and the Administration, endeavour to take action to modify social life in their areas. As yet political action is not very sophisticated, and the workings of the Administration are not well understood. In those fields of activity where Administrative interest is strongest, such as price control, food production, and the amalgamation of villages, the Ngoni response tends to be in moral rather than in political terms. It is wrong that the price of maize should be so low, the good man knows best how to cultivate his own garden, people in a village must live peacefully together. By contrast, in the field of marriage, where the Administration is comparatively disinterested, and where the wishes of the Administration, missions and Ngoni do to a large extent coincide, the bureaucracy has been able to act in a more positive manner. The thirty shillings law is one of the rare legislative acts of the Ngoni chiefs and people, and it is significant that the law was not made until 1944, fifteen years after the passing of the Native Authorities Ordinance. It is said that the law was made so that women could be punished for adultery in the same way as men. At the meeting at which the law was agreed upon, it was also decided that bridewealth should be a minimum of six pounds or one cow. Whereas the ruling about legalization payments is still remembered and increasingly followed, the bridewealth rule has been largely forgotten. This attempt to check adultery by increasing the legalization payment was in general agreement with the wishes of the Administration and more or less with the wishes of the missions. It was possible to envisage a decrease in adultery due to a clarification of rights *in uxorem* without any other major structural changes, whereas the re-introduction of bridewealth as a universal payment could only be envisaged in terms of a return to the patrilineal virilocal residential system of 'the time of peace'. It would hardly have been possible for the Native Authority to have restored the old system had they wished to do so. Ngoni village life is now part of a system wider than the chiefdom and there are other ways of acquiring wealth and status than within the residential system and at the pleasure of the Paramount Chief.

11. Marriage in an omnidirectional kinship system

We may characterize the change from the old order to the new

[18] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. 'Some aspects of political development . . .'.

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PART IV

THE RESETTLEMENT OF NATIVE POPULATIONS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

§ 1. *The Problem and its Origin*

IN Northern Rhodesia and doubtless over a much greater part of Africa before the coming of the Europeans, the population-land pattern was a changing, kaleidoscopic picture. If an area became overcrowded more land was available, or it could be taken from a neighbouring people. A rough balance between land and population was maintained by means of migration, inter-tribal wars, periodic famine and disease.

With the coming of the European the kaleidoscopic picture was arrested, producing what we may call the primary population-land pattern. This was later modified, by alienation and reservation of land and by the movement of peoples into Native reserves, to produce a secondary pattern. New economic factors have so far modified this secondary pattern only to a minor extent, but it may be expected that they will tend to do so increasingly in the future.

The secondary population-land pattern was brought about mainly by the movement of the African population into Native reserves. As a result of this movement large areas of Crown Land were left practically uninhabited, and a number of factors operating together brought about mal-distribution and congestion of populations within the reserves themselves.

So far the problem has been studied in detail only in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts of the Eastern Province, the Mkushi District of the Central Province and the Ndola District of the Western Province, and it is within these districts that resettlement work—other than the 'Chitemene Control' scheme—has been carried out. The four districts are contiguous and the total area within them to which this discussion refers is about 33,800 square miles (4,000 square miles more than the whole land area of Scotland but only about one-ninth of the area of Northern Rhodesia) with a total population, in round figures, of 290,000 (about one-sixth of the total populaton of the Territory).

The primary population-land pattern was such that the ten tribes living within this area had ample or much more than ample land, except to a minor extent in the Fort Jameson District where the incursion of the immigrant Ngoni in the later 19th century had created a potential congestion problem. Under former conditions this problem would doubtless have resolved itself as it arose by migration of the Chewa to north and west, under pressure from the Ngoni, but once the kaleidoscopic pattern was arrested no such

L M N 174 166 311 L M N 648 166 L M N 166 311 L M N [101] L M N 131 L N M 166 311 [167]

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Maravi FR4

L M N 101 102 131

Fig 1.— THE ORIGINAL POPULATION-LAND PATTERN
Showing areas held by tribes.

M N 164 311 448 [131]

movement was possible. The lands of the Ngoni and Chewa were then reduced, by alienation to European settlers and by reservation, to an extent which the following figures illustrate:

Habitable Land held by Tribes (square miles)

	Chewa	*Ngoni* *
Before Ngoni invasion	3,580	–
After Ngoni invasion	2,280	1,300
After land alienation	1,124	878
After creation of reserves	889	675

L M 648 166

Throughout the Petauke and Mkushi Districts the amount of land taken up by European settlers was negligible, but the Senga, Ambo, Lala and Swaka peoples were moved into Reserves some of which proved totally inadequate for the land needs of their traditional agricultural systems.

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In the west (Ndola District) the congestion problem arose largely as a result of displacement of people from the area which is now the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia, a land loss which fell on the Lamba tribe. The land area of Mushiri's section of the Lamba, for example, which formerly included part of the Copperbelt, was reduced from 2,200 to 360 square miles. The Lamba were removed from the new mining areas and this movement accentuated by some migration of more distant peoples attracted by the mines, gave rise to a belt of relatively high population concentration about the southern and eastern margins of the Copperbelt.

L [316] [161]

* With a mixture of Chewa and other tribes.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Marawi FR4

In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chieftaincies remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional sytems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
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of mixed farming would not have solved the problem without the transfer of a considerable proportion of the people.

§ 2. *Recommendations of the Land Commission*

In 1941 a large part of the land held by the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts was acquired by Government, and in 1942 a Land Commission was appointed which included in its terms of reference the making of 'full provision for the agricultural requirements of the Natives'. This Commission recommended that some 5,600 square miles of unalienated Crown Land in the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts, about 2,000 square miles in the Mkushi District and 4,800 square miles in the Ndola District, should be constituted Native Trust Land and made available for Native occupation.

§ 3. *The Problem of Resettlement*

The problem then resolved itself into making the best possible use of the additional land, and using it in such a way as to restore the population-land balance where this could be done. It was not, of course, possible, even if it had been desirable, to recreate the primary population-land pattern, but the grant of additional land gave an opportunity of creating a planned tertiary pattern to replace the arbitrary secondary pattern.

Such planning requires a detailed knowledge of the land and of the agricultural systems employed on it. Fortunately the basic knowledge had already been provided by the Ecological Survey of the Territory. The vegetation-soil method, evolved by Trapnell, provided a rapid and reliable means of land classification and, again on the basis of the work of the survey, a method of estimating approximate land carrying capacities for traditional African systems of usage was devised. Description of the vegetation-soil method of land classification will be found in the two reports of the Ecological Survey and notes on the factors involved in the estimation of land carrying capacities are given in the second of these reports.*

A complete description of the method of estimating land carrying capacities, as employed in the resettlement work, and examples of its application are given in the other papers in this series.

It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the terms 'land carrying capacity' and 'population-land balance', as they are used here. There is a very definite limit to the number of people any land area will support in perpetuity, if the population obtains its food only from within that area. This limit is fixed by certain natural characteristics of soil and

* *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Western Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 15s. *The Soil, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North Eastern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 5s.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
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Crown land, Company land, alienated land and unoccupied Native Reserve. Largely uninhabited.

Land in Native occupation. Largely under-populated.

Land in Native occupation. Over-populated.

Fig 2.— THE SECONDARY POPULATION-LAND PATTERN.

Trust Land for future use of African peoples, Crown lands and alienated land.

Land in Native occupation. Balanced or under-populated.

Remaining areas of over-population, capable of supporting their populations on the basis of improved agriculture.

Fig. 3.— THE POPULATION-LAND PATTERN AFTER RESETTLEMENT.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
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Maravi FR4

L M N 121 128

climate and by the way in which the land is used. If the limit is exceeded *without a compensating change in the system of land usage* then a process of land degradation is set in operation and ultimately, unless food is obtained from outside the area, population must decline to the limit determined by natural conditions and the system of land use, or to a lower level. This limit, the maximum number of people that a given land area will maintain in perpetuity under a certain system of land usage, has been termed the 'carrying capacity' of the area *for that system*. It will be clear that the term can be used only in relation to a clearly defined system of land usage. Throughout these notes, when no statement to the contrary is made, the expression is used in relation to the traditional agricultural system of the tribes concerned. These systems, and the staple crops which go with them, vary greatly within this relatively small area of 33,800 square miles, and range from a primitive form of axe-agriculture among the Western Lala to comparatively advanced soil selection methods practised by the Eastern tribes. Descriptions of all of these systems will be found in the publications to which reference has already been made.

The term 'population-land balance' hardly requires definition. If the total population of an area is equal to or less than the land capacity for the system of agriculture practised, then a population-land balance exists within that area. When the total population is well below the land carrying capacity the areas may be described as under-populated.

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These concepts, and the methods of survey and of estimating the carrying capacities for the different land categories and agricultural systems, were applied to the problem of resettlement. Rapid reconnaissance surveys were made throughout the populated areas, with the objects of assessing approximately the land carrying capacity for each chief's area and estimating the number of people who would have to be moved to unoccupied land in order to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of the traditional agricultural systems. The estimate indicated that a total of about 160,800 people would have to be moved, as shown in the Table below.

District	*Tribe*	*Number of people to be moved*
Fort Jameson	Chewa Ngoni	98,300
Petauke	Senga Ambo	35,000 8,000
Mkushi	Lala Swaka	3,200 4,300
Ndola	Lamba	12,000

The estimates make no allowances for the readjustment of population distribution within the old Reserves. Some chieftaincies were in fact much under-populated and in some of the Reserves considerable areas remained almost or completely uninhabited because of water shortage, the occur-

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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rence of sleeping sickness or for other reasons. It would have been possible by re-distribution of populations within the old Reserves, in conjunction with provision of water supplies and measures against 'fly', materially to reduce the number of people to be moved to unoccupied land. Such a course would have involved serious political repercussions and, in view of the amount of land available, it was never contemplated.

The next essential step was to survey the vacant land available for resettlement, to prepare vegetation-soil maps of the areas, and to estimate the carrying capacity of each area for the traditional agricultural system of the people who would occupy it. In the Eastern Province and the Ndola District surveys were made on the basis of parallel straight line traverses, using liquid prismatic compasses and cyclometer wheels. Traverse lines were usually one mile apart, but wider intervals up to three miles were used, in order to save time, if the country was relatively uniform or if no high degree of accuracy was required. In some instances, when very accurate maps were wanted, the traverse interval was reduced to one half or one quarter of a mile. Information on water supplies, the state of regeneration of land and timber, the former inhabitants and other relevant details, was collected in the course of these surveys. In the case of Mkushi District, where there was an abundance of available land in relation to the needs of the population, sample traverses only were used. The methods of survey and mapping are described in one of the other papers in this series.

When estimates had been made of the number of people to be moved from each of the over-crowded chieftaincies and the carrying capacity of the available land, divided into convenient areas, had been ascertained, the planning of population movements became, in theory, simple. In practice, of course, there were a good many difficulties.

Tribal boundaries and the original ownership of the land had to be taken into consideration, though these were not regarded as sacrosanct and, in fact, a large area formerly occupied by the Senga was used for the resettlement of a section of the Chewa. Other factors also limit movement. There is, obviously, a physical limit; fifty miles was regarded as the maximum practical move, but in extreme cases villages were moved as much as seventy miles. Traditional systems of land usuage are, generally, adaptations to particular sets of ecological conditions and people cannot be moved into an environment unsuited to their food crops and method of production. Cattle-owning people will not willingly move to tsetse country leaving their herds behind.

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Water supplies proved to be a very great difficulty over large areas, especially in the Eastern Province. Natural supplies were not sufficient to allow of full utilization of the land on the basis of its carrying capacity, and in some cases practically no settlement was possible before artificial watering points had been provided. It appeared that, in the Eastern Province at least, permanent surface water had greatly diminished in the twelve to twenty years during which the land had lain unoccupied. The old sites of villages and their sources of water supply were noted in the course of the

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5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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L M N 312 361 surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The fierce late fires which swept through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the dessication.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

L M N 648 491 After survey had been completed and before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their food-stocks and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

L M N 648 312 653 Wherever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (25 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mushiri resettlement area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central L [228] dam which was stocked with bream (*Tilapia spp.*) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

L M N 136 166 311 Another difficulty was the occurance of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

N 744 [164] In the northern part of Fort Jameson Districts, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on compacting pedocal soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'fly' country, but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern zone that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. The large available land area in Mkushi enabled the relatively small 'fly' areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'fly' areas of Mkushi. 166 136 164 744

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'fly' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the kraals. Ten herds each of five beasts were used; the animals were numbered and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomyaisis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'fly' infestation were defined.

§ 6. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in accordance with the general plan to restore the population-land balance as far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers. 166 621 648

Headmen and other representatives of the villagers who had finally elected to move then toured the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villagers almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Vegetation-Soil Map. Blocks of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total villages population, allowing for temporary absentees, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular; the people are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone beacons, to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features. [622] [311] [423]

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually applied or always possible. The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, 166 648

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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L M 166 648 The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, much of it inaccessible and uninhabitable, except for small pockets of fertile soil, was opened to unrestricted settlement by the Ambo and Senga-Kunda peoples. Other areas of poor soils and low carrying capacities in Fort Jameson District were also opened to free settlement up to a population total determined by the carrying capacity.

In Ndola District an area was opened to immediate uncontrolled settlement, in order to relieve acute land shortage and actual starvation in one section of the Reserve. L [731]

L M A somewhat modified method has been used in parts of Petauke District where dams are the only means of providing water. Here the population unit consists of three or four villages grouped into a 'parish' and settled about the watering points. A single land area is demarcated for each of these groups, instead of allocating a separate block to each village. This method allows of economy in the distribution of watering points, tends to reduce the effect of inter-village movements and, it is hoped, will lead to larger administrative units. [312] [361] [632]

§ 7. *Agricultural Control and Improvement*

N 161 [311] The general object of resettlement is to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of traditional land usage *and the present population numbers*. Obviously, this balance cannot be permanent if the population is increasing; and if it is not increasing something is seriously wrong. Reliable vital statistics are entirely lacking but probably most of the tribes are increasing (the Ngoni may be an exception) at a rate which, judging by the very few available data, may be about 1½ per cent per annum, a rate which would double the population in forty-six years.

N 242 654 648 Resettlement is not, and was never regarded as, a substitute for agricultural improvement. The objects are to reduce the agricultural problem to practicable proportions, to relieve acute land shortage, to give time for experiment and the introduction of new methods. The assumption is that an evolutionary process of agricultural improvement will keep pace with natural increase of population, and that this process must be guided by experiment.

Simple measures of agricultural control, and the beginnings of soil conservation and agricultural improvement, have been introduced in each of the resettlement areas as a condition of occupation. It need hardly be said that these are not popular with the majority and the existence of such conditions is a deterrent to movement. N [177] M

N 648 242 [185] [241] In the case of the earlier settlements in the Fort Jameson District an elementary system of soil conservation was introduced by demarcating the land for cultivation in contour strips separated by untouched belts of grass (which acquired the name of 'ten-yardis' since the original strips were ten paces wide). This was followed by an attempt to replace the traditional mound system of Ngoni, Chewa and Senga by cultivation on ridges

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni
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Lamba FQ8

approximately on the contour and parallel to demarcated 'marker' ridges on the true contour. A system of contour cultivation has now been developed which is proving practical and effective. The 'marker' ridges are demarcated at a vertical interval of two feet six inches and are gradually converted by the people into more or less broad-based banks. In the first year the ridge is built up to a base width of six feet and a height of not less than six inches. The base and height are increased until a permanent bank eight feet wide at the base and eighteen inches in height is completed. Villages on the 'ten yardi' system can change over to contour cultivation if the majority of people elect to do so. New villages are allowed to move into resettlement areas in the Eastern Province only on condition that they agree to practice contour cultivation; they are given four or five years to adapt themselves to the new system but in many cases practically the whole of the new gardens are under ridges by the end of the second year. Cultivation practice has been adapted to the new system and, meanwhile, experiments are being made to find the best methods of ridging, spacing and planting of crops for use in conjunctions with the ridge cultivation system. M N 648 242 [241] M N [166]

In the Ndola District gardens are laid off between contour grass strips at vertical intervals of two feet. The people are then encouraged to convert the grass strip into three parallel ridges approximating to the normal dimension of their mounds for subsidiary crops and to plant the ridges with beans and cowpeas; or to make one or two such ridges and plant the remainder of the strip with groundnuts on the flat—a combination of contour ridges and strip cropping. This method, an adaptation of normal Lamba practice was adopted after a series of trials to find the simplest method of erosion control acceptable to these somewhat backward people. The object is not only to check erosion but to restore the cultivation of subsidiary crops, now almost entirely neglected. The planting of the ridges to beans and cowpeas and the strips to groundnuts restores the balance between cereals and legumes and should allow of a small surplus for sale. The idea seems to be less unpopular than one might expect and most villages have made a satisfactory effort to convert the strips into ridges for the cultivation of subsidiary crops. L 242 648 L [177]

Contours are laid off by trained African Assistants of the Department of Agriculture, using road tracers, and it has been found necessary during the initial stages of settlement to have one or two African Assistants* for at least every ten villages or, approximately, for every 600 to 1,000 people. Constant supervision is maintained during the initial phase by the African Agricultural Assistants in co-operation with District Messengers and the Native Authorities. This supervision is irksome and resented by some of the older people but it is, perhaps, significant that at a recent meeting of the African Regional Council of the Western Province after the subject had been freely debated, the council voted by a large majority for an increase in the number of Agricultural Capitaos. L [177]

Fruit tree planting has also been introduced and in the Eastern and Western Provinces laws made by the Native Authorities require each household N 245 648 671

* Usually one and a learner assistant at Ndola.

648 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds,
245 seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and
671 banana are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little
[177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a
[132] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of
311 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush.
648 In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre-
185 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning
[622] of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve
361 the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this
362 has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built
[342] of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's
648 journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
MARAVI FR4

to clear large enough gardens at the new site in the first year a part of the old gardens can be used, for it is easy to travel back and forward between the old and new villages. The majority of the moves were of this order and no assistance was required or given. In the case of longer moves, heavy household goods and food stocks were transported by motor lorry, or in some instances when it was convenient to do so the entire grain stock was bought at the old village and food, purchased locally, was sold at the new site. This enabled the people to give the whole of their time to preparing a large garden acreage in the first year. The great majority of villages moving for moderate or long distances (twenty five to seventy miles) succeeded in preparing large enough gardens and growing sufficient food for themselves in the first year. A few did not, for one reason or another, such as starting too late, a bad season or just plain laziness, and these villages were supplied with food in the first season either in return for work or on promise of repayment after a good harvest. Less than 5 per cent of villages received such relief.

§ 10. *The Progress of Resettlement*

It was estimated that, in order to restore a complete population-land balance, about 141,300 people would have to be moved from the Reserves of the Fort Jameson and Petauke Districts. No such movement was, in fact, possible. The total carrying capacity of the land available for resettlement which contained a vast mass of escarpment hills and other large areas of almost useless land, was estimated to be 78,000 people. This land was, of necessity, allocated to the tribal groups in the following way:

Ngoni and Chewa	:	Sufficient land	for	35,000	people
Senga	:	"	"	35,000	"
Ambo	:	"	"	8,000	"

Thus in the case of the Ngoni and Chewa the available land was totally insufficient to allow of the restoration of a population-land balance, while in the case of the other peoples such a balance could be achieved.

Two alternatives were possible; to re-distribute the Ngoni and Chewa populations more or less evenly over the new land and the Reserves, in which case both would be over-populated in relation to their carrying capacities, or to populate the new land to the maximum of its carrying capacity, leaving the Reserves still over-populated. The latter course was adopted for a variety of reasons, including the fact that much of the new land was tsetse infested and the keeping of cattle and development of mixed farming would not be possible at least for a very considerable time. The Reserves, on the other hand, carried many cattle and, with reduction of the population by resettlement, would be able to support their populations on a basis of mixed farming.

Movement was therefore designed to populate the new areas to the maximum of their carrying capacity and to reduce the agricultural problem

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
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M N 166 311 648 of the Reserves to manageable proportions, leaving an excess of population, but not too great an excess, within the cattle areas.

L M 166 311 648 In Petauke District, where there is ample land available, the object aimed at is a complete restoration of the population-land balance by controlled movement of some 35,000 Senga and uncontrolled movement of 8,000 Ambo and Senga-Kunda.

L M N 166 648 Survey work in the Eastern Province started in 1941 and a few pioneer villages were moved in that year, but the main movement started in 1942 (when over 18,000 people were moved) and it is still in progress. By the end of 1945 the programme was more than half completed; 292 villages (about 32,000 people) had been moved into controlled 'village blocks' or 'parish settlements' in addition to uncontrolled or partially controlled movements in the escarpment area and parts of the Fort Jameson District. The comparatively slow rate of progress is due to water-shortage. Large areas [312] in Petauke District and the north of Fort Jameson have not yet been settled [136] for this reason, while in the latter area there is also some danger of sleeping sickness, and measures for the control of 'fly' (game destruction and clearing of 'hard pan') are in progress. Settlement is continuing at the rate set by provision of water supplies and the control of tsetse.

L 648 311 166 The Mkushi District presents an entirely different picture since the available land is about twice as much as the present population require, on the basis of their traditional agricultural practice. Here, instead of village blocks, comparatively large areas have been demarcated to take a number of villages and there is no strict control. The Superior Native Authority has introduced L [242] rules intended to bring about a gradual conversion from small circle *chitemene* (a primitive form of axe-agriculture) to hoe cultivation of kaffir corn with subsidiary gardens for a variety of crops.

The land not actually required for immediate use has not been allocated but is being held in reserve against the future needs of the African people and the Native Authorities undertake responsibility for early burning within the reserved land.

The bulk of the necessary population transfers have already been carried out.

In Ndola District also the available land is considerably greater than present needs and some is being held in reserve. Populations moved from the congested zone about the mines have been settled in village blocks and, apart from an area demarcated for immediate settlement in 1943 to relieve actual starvation, there is no uncontrolled settlement.

Movement of 120 villages, having a total estimated population of 11,775, was completed in 1945. It has since been found, however, that the population counts made by a District Officer seconded for the purpose are in fact over-estimated and a considerable number of the blocks are under-populated and further movements may be necessary.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

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Livingstone found chief Mwase, at Kasungu, ruling over "a section of Mang'anja, called Machewa, or Macheba[1]."

M 175 648 [241] [167]

For some years the Achewa enjoyed a peaceful existence in their new home, keeping cattle, but living mainly by agriculture, until their tranquility was disturbed by the Ngoni invasion and by the slave raids of the Jumbe[2] at Kota Kota. By these the eastern branch of Achewa was continually harassed; and consequently in 1893 Dzoole, Kanyenda and others of the house of Karonga moved south to the Kasangadzi and Mtiti Rivers, and in 1896 handed over this part of the country to the protection of the British Government.

N 175 101 N 174

The Angoni, under the name of Mazitu, were described by Livingstone as Zulus,[3] and this terminological error has been copied by more than one subsequent writer. Of their earlier wanderings no record has been traced. Owing, perhaps, to their lighter colour it has been surmised that they came from far up the east coast; but it is known that under the style of Abe-nguni, derived from an ancient chief Mnguni, they were settled on the Dedesi, a small tributary of the upper St. John's River, when the Aba-mbo first arrived in Natal about 1620.[4] In this locality they remained for a couple of centuries, till towards the end of his reign the notorious Zulu king Chaka fell upon their allies the Ama-ndwandwe under Zwide. A section of the Abe-nguni then migrated northwards under Zwangendaba; and wherever they went they fought and subdued the peoples through whose country they passed, seizing cattle and incorporating captives in their own tribe. After raiding the Aba-suto, Ama-swazi, Aba-thonga[5] and Ama-kalanga, they crossed the Zambezi near Zumbo at the time of the total eclipse of the sun on the 19th of November, 1835,[6] and overran the territories of the Aba-senga, A-tumbuka, A-safwa and A-mandewere till they came to the land of the Wa-fipa and Wa-sukuma.

Here Zwangendaba (or Songandawa, as he is generally called in Nyasaland) died, and his following broke up and scattered in different directions. While others advanced to the north and east, four sections turned back, one under Mombera to the Tumbuka country, another under Mpezeni to the Loangwa river, the third under Chiwere to Dowa, and the fourth under Chikusi still further south. It is with the third section that we are now dealing. The hybrid nature of the Dowa Angoni can be inferred from the list of clans given in a subsequent section (IV, 2). During the last four decades they have intermarried still further with the Achewa, and there are now few, if any, pure-blooded Angoni in the district. Their paramount chief, Chiwere, though calling himself an Mngoni, is in reality an Msenga.

N 101 M N 648

M 171 121

The general features, characteristics and habits of these peoples are akin to those of neighbouring tribes which have been described by the Reverend Duff Macdonald,[7] Miss Alice Werner

[1] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, pp. 526, 548.

[2] A coast Arab, acting as *wali*, or representative, of the Sultan of Zanzibar.

[3] D. and C. Livingstone: *loc. cit.*, p. 381.

[4] Eric A. Walker: *Historical Atlas of South Africa*, p. 6. J. H. Soga: *The South-Eastern Bantu*, pp. 81, *et seq.*

[5] In *ph* and *th* each consonant is pronounced. Similarly, in *oo* and *ee* each vowel is pronounced.

[6] E. H. L. Poole: *Journal African Society*, vol. xxix, No. cxv, p. 290.

[7] Rev. Duff Macdonald, *Africana*. Miss Alice Werner, *The Natives of British Central Africa*. Dr. H. S. Stannus, *The Wayao of Nyasaland*, Harvard African Studies III, *Varia Africana* III, pp. 229-372, "Notes on Some Tribes of British Central Africa," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl. 1910, pp. 285-355, etc., etc.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

212 The Fort Jameson Ngoni[3] are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish
121 between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821–1898, which we may regard as tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly history proper, documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

181 Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of Euro-
[177] pean control Ngoni raids ceased. Today in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller
181 looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battle-
178 dress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung
[538] at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language now
533 largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs
182 they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing "Green grow the rushes, O". Prose tales, however, are in
538 ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is
173 the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women
648 are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The
186 cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

175 We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though on the
648 whole the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories
648 are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not
179 only the elimination of defeat. The Administration and the Missions have,

3. I worked among these people during 1946–49 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes
177 as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there
[769] was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made
648 to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The
186 Ngoni identified themselves with European rather than with their matrilineal neighbours even before the European conquest. Wiese, himself the main
156 agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[4]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount
[197] Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[5] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not pro-
829 duced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days
183 I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian
181 neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to ration-
186 alize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

4. Wiese, *Geschichte*, pp. 200 f.

5. Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'zeni said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Deare, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 25.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

181 that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered
186 all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British.
Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every
648 present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni
186 say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we
would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes
would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly",
[729] and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated
with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain
that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

538 The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are
814 common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

643 The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also
182 symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his
[551] warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

879 Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths
178 about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather
[583] than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the
693 Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
184 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
● 648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are
692 bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
183 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

178 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard
829 the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form-
[183] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state,
[177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship
[182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior
● 648 in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were
[161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[304] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-
[186] piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

serve their own culture, so that they were not submerged in the very different cultures round them? The Ngoni themselves give the answer to this first question, saying, 'We fought with spears and shields; those others had only bows and arrows and sometimes guns.'[1] The making of these shields, which formerly gave courage and protection to the warriors, is to this day almost a ritual. To watch a chief working at one on the threshold of his hut, or a village headman and his friends cutting and shaping one in the kraal, is to realize the value put on them by the Ngoni. They refuse to make them for sale as curiosities, and several Europeans have told me that they have tried in vain to get one.

Having conquered by the shield and spear, the Ngoni maintained their prestige by their highly developed political organization. All around them were small chieftains owning a few villages with no integration in any large political unit.[2] The Ngoni state was focussed in the *inkosi*, the Paramount Chief, who was at once the 'owner'[3] of the land, the 'head'[3] of the state, and the 'father'[3] of his people. The Ngoni, as we have seen, are always ready to indicate those institutions and related traditions which mark them off from the surrounding tribes, and which give their state a cultural reality of its own. They point first to their language and their traditions of Dingiswayo, Zwidi, and Chaka as proving their southern origin. Other neighbouring peoples have vague traditions of wandering from north to south, or west to east, but the Ngoni know exactly where they came from and by what route. Their language is almost identical with old Zulu. I was told by many Europeans that it hardly existed any longer, and I was therefore surprised to find to what an extent it is still spoken and used. Most of the true Ngoni to-day are bilingual[4]; with the exception of a few very old Ngoni people, everyone to-day speaks one of the local vernaculars, Nsenga, Tumbuka, or Chewa.[5] Ngoni is the language of the aristocrats, and a large proportion of the true

[1] The kind of antique guns traded to the Chewa by the Portuguese and Arabs were no match for the Ngoni skill with the long throwing-spear or the short stabbing-assegai, and the bullets were such that the stout cow-hide shields of the Ngoni could withstand them. Hence the consternation of the Ngoni when the machine-gun bullets of the British troops pierced their shields in the Ngoni 'war'.

[2] With the possible exception of Chikuramayembe, Chief of the Henga.

[3] Translations of vernacular terms.

[4] Or trilingual if they know English too.

[5] The same as Nyanja.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

returned between the years 1855–1865, to settle in their present habitat. The earlier part of the period was one of exploring and of conquest. The later part was the time of settlement and consolidation, during which the Ngoni 'states' emerged in the form in which they were found, when the Europeans first arrived.

The Ngoni in Mpezeni's country, when speaking of this time, call it *chamtendere* (the time of peace). Any white travellers' tales referring to these years lay stress on the constant raids carried out by the Ngoni, the fierceness of their warriors, and their ravaging of the countryside for slaves and cattle. It was obviously a time of frequent wars. Why then do the Ngoni call it a time of peace? I have asked this question of many men of rank and standing and they give one invariable reply, 'We call it *chamtendere* because the *Azungu* (Europeans) were not there to trouble us'. This statement is in effect the key to Ngoni thinking about the days of pre-white contact, and also about the advent of the Europeans. The way in which they speak of *chamtendere* is itself significant. I first heard it during a long recital of Ngoni history, and stopped the narrator to ask the meaning of the word. There was instantly an embarrassed silence and self-conscious grins in the group. The word had evidently slipped out unawares, for later on they told me that it was a word they only used among themselves. Having once been used, however, it appeared frequently in conversations with me, and proved a useful starting-point for accounts of the organization of their own state and the effects on it of the European advent. 'Ah, *chamtendere*', they say, with a deep sigh, 'then we were people'. It proved also to be a pass-word to their confidence, for whenever I mentioned *chamtendere* to a village headman, he and his notables nudged each other, and laughed and said, 'She can know about us'. When pressed to be more specific about this 'troubling' by the *Azungu* they spoke of taxes, of the ban upon raiding and warfare, of young men being called away to work, of their land being taken for European farms. These restrictions and disabilities caused by white contact they regarded as warfare, that is, as troubled times, because the Europeans forcibly prevented them from doing as they liked, just as they had done in their day to the surrounding tribes. The conquered tribes, on the other hand, naturally hailed the advent of the Europeans as a time of peace and security. Therein lies the chief

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

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difference to-day between the attitude of the Ngoni to the Europeans and that of the Chewa, for example. In the vernacular expression the Ngoni say, 'The Europeans spoiled our country'; the Chewa say, 'The Europeans saved us'.

N 173 178 642

Chamtendere, then, was the period of Ngoni supremacy, when they established by force of arms their right to rule over the country and its indigenous inhabitants. There was, however, some difference between the political organization of the Ngoni as a conquering horde on the march, and their organization when they finally settled in their present areas. At both times the focus of their organization was warfare—they were a nation under arms. But once settled on land which they had chosen they began to spread a network of political organization over the country, and to plan in terms of 'countries'[1] instead of mobile villages. To-day when they discuss the advent of the Europeans and the consequent 'spoiling' of their country, they recall the days when extensive tribute was paid to their Paramount Chief, chiefs were free to choose good sites for their very big villages, the outlying areas were ruled by *indunas* and lesser chiefs. It was the partial breaking up of this centralized political organization which they regarded as 'spoiling their country', as well as the economic restrictions with regard to land and the prohibition of raiding for new supplies of cattle.

N [648] [829]

N 173 178 829 643 796

During this time of Ngoni supremacy Ngoni institutions flourished —those institutions which they had brought with them from the south and preserved through their wanderings. When they are telling to-day about these years they speak fervently and reverently of the part played by the Paramount Chief in every side of life, the training for warfare of all the young men, the instruction and supervision of young chiefs by old *indunas*, Ngoni marriage and initiation ceremonies. It was during this time in Mpezeni's country that the *Inqwala* or first fruits ceremony was regularly observed at Mtenguleni, the village of the mother of old Mpezeni.[2] At this ceremony the Paramount Chief 'opened' the new food season by the ritual eating of new fruits, especially young maize and pumpkins. It was also the

[1] i.e. chiefs' areas.

[2] The description of this *Inqwala* given by men and women who took part in it in their youth shows much similarity to the *Inqwala* of to-day among the Swazi.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no 186
means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely 726
about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'.

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard 173
the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of 721
strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni 726
tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British [713]
superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the [727]
huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale.

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni 173
it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they [186]
dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain [648]
Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] [423]

[1] In the Report of Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'. [361]

[2] Over 3 miles across. [3] in 1885.

173 made friends with old Mpezeni and finally made Luangeni, Mpezeni's
648 head village, his head-quarters. He obtained mining rights in the land
[423] from Mpezeni, by word of mouth, but Mpezeni signed no deed of gift or transfer. This legal point which subsequently became one of the major points at issue in the North Charterland Company case has been emphasized again and again to me in the villages. 'Mpezeni was writing nothing. He was only giving presents to Weise, and
[491] Weise gave presents to him, and Mpezeni was saying, "You may travel in my country and dig for gold. You are my friend."' They
[648] add further, 'Mpezeni did not want to make friends with the British because he had heard from the Matabele and from Nyasaland what they were doing. Weise said "I am not from the British", and so Mpezeni was making promises with him.' So deeply is this tradition of friendship between Mpezeni and Weise, with its consequences of betrayal and disaster, embedded in the Ngoni thinking, that when I stayed in the Paramount Chief's village and exchanged presents with
[123] him, many old people shook their heads and warned the young people, 'The *Azungu* war will come again. This is how that other war was beginning.'

Weise failed to establish his claim to mining rights in Mpezeni's
175 territory with Sir Harry Johnston, then Commissioner for all British
648 territories north of the Zambezi. Meantime the British South Africa Company obtained a new charter to extend its field north of the Zambezi, and sent an emissary to Mpezeni's kraal to make a treaty with him. Mpezeni refused. He also refused Sir Harry Johnston's emissary who met Weise at Mpezeni's kraal with a view to getting Mpezeni to make a treaty direct with the British Crown. The mining rights in Mpezeni's country were potentially valuable, and on Mpezeni's refusal to grant them were claimed by the British South Africa Company[1] on the ground of treaties made with the conquered Chewa people, whom Mpezeni had dispossessed.[2] Weise was at this time at Mpezeni's with one or two Portuguese traders and officials, making hay while the sun shone.

[1] 'Finding Mpezeni obdurate the British South Africa Company concluded treaties with all the surrounding indigenous chiefs whom Mpezeni had dispossessed. We consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief.'

[2] F.O. 6537.

In 1895 the North Charterland Company was formed, distinct from and yet allied with the British South Africa Company,[1] with mining and trading rights over 10,000 square miles, most of which lay in Mpezeni's territory. The legal right to this concession was based on the British South Africa Company's treaties with 'dispossessed chiefs'. At the same time the North Charterland Company recognized that Mpezeni still held the effective sovereignty over the area, and that the success and safety of any mining or trading expedition sent to the territory depended on good relations being established with Mpezeni. They therefore persuaded Weise to join their staff in order to get Mpezeni's consent to the venture. They gained a foothold and did some prospecting, and then tried to impose a hut tax, and to exercise administrative powers through their own uniformed police of the Tonga tribe from Lake Nyasa—a tribe despised by the Ngoni. Two memoranda by Sir Harry Johnston to the Foreign Office set out the chain of events which led to the use of armed force against Mpezeni in January 1898, the pretext being the alleged danger of two white men in his country. Sir Harry Johnston wrote, 'Mpezeni is a very powerful Zulu chief and intimately allied with the Matabele. He offers no great objection to mining for gold but shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his independence or governing powers. The latter is the cause of his quarrel with Colonel Warton on the matter of a British flag and taxation.' He concludes the second memorandum with the remarks, 'Mpezeni is an intrusive Zulu robber who must sooner or later be dethroned and subdued. He is very powerful and is the only avowedly recalcitrant chief in all British Central Africa. When his hour comes he can be dealt with by the present Protectorate forces.' Following the last memoranda on the situation in Mpezeni's country the Foreign Office wrote to the British South Africa Company in April 1897, 'Lord Salisbury gathers that the North Charterland Company have maintained friendly relations with Mpezeni by withholding from his knowledge their connexion with the British South Africa Company and their British nationality. It is stated that the representative of the North Charterland Company has passed himself off to Mpezeni as brother to Weise.'

Lord Salisbury was well informed. When the Ngoni tell this story

[1] See North Charterland Inquiry.

648 in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of
814 those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Azungu* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for under-
[609] standing the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognize Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final
175 humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with
648 his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot';
[727] and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the old *indunas* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *inkosi* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic
178 changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and
[648] demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on
[464] both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its
[167] turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1924.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union. This exodus to the south in N 178
its turn brought the Ngoni into touch once more with the Matabele, 177
the Zulu, and the Swazi, and reawakened their consciousness of their 186
southern origin. It is significant that just at the point when their power in their own country received a crushing blow, they came into contact once more in the south with the stock from which they had sprung and to whom they could still speak in their own language. The anthropologist who looks for the reason why the distinctive Ngoni culture did not die out entirely after their military defeat and the advent of the whites, can see at least part of the reason supplied by the results of this economic exodus to work in the south. When the other tribes in the neighbourhood were, in the Ngoni phrase, 'running always to the Boma' and incidentally picking up fragments of European customs, the Ngoni remained, according to their own account, to a great extent aloof and were strengthened in this aloofness by their renewed southern connexions.

N
Ngoni supremacy over the country was at an end. The Europeans M
were the overlords of all the tribes, not the Ngoni. Instead of one 178
big chief in the country, many small ones were now recognized who 563
dared to give themselves airs because they knew the Ngoni could not 648 ●
compel allegiance to their Paramount. Chewa people living under Ngoni chiefs could no longer be forced to stay there, therefore a different attitude towards them was necessary. 'Chewa' could no longer be synonymous with 'slave'. I have heard Ngoni chiefs in court address their *indunas* and headmen many times on behaving well to people of other tribes 'Or they will leave us and to-day we cannot N
make them return'. A recent case in which a young chief, but a very M
important one, was summoned to the Paramount's court for insulting [689]
a Chewa woman, was made the occasion by the Paramount for a long public discourse on the present relations between Ngoni and Chewa, pointing out that an Ngoni chief whose Chewa subjects left him would 'spoil his country' and 'all his people would be ashamed'. Ngoni prestige, in fact, having lost the support of military power, had to N
rely on other sanctions. In their own eyes, their prestige was still due [829]
to their southern origin, their success in creating the Ngoni state in N
an alien milieu, and those distinctive institutions which they had M
retained. To the surrounding people, to the Chewa and other tribes, [692]

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643]

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, ' because all his chiefs obey him ', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chamtendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, ' We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes '.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184]

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. ' To pay taxes, that is our war to-day ', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

177 hitherto been the chief sanction for Ngoni supremacy. With their
178 invincibility gone, the regiments broke up and the Ngoni military prestige was at an end. At the same time the direction of political affairs and the relations between the different tribes was assumed by a superior power. Ngoni political ascendancy and their control of economic organization was also at an end. The subject races of the Ngoni who had hitherto either been conquered or submitted voluntarily to the Ngoni had now an ally who was stronger than their former masters.

3. The new situation forced the Ngoni to make drastic readjust-
177 ments. They had to readjust themselves to new relations with other
178 tribes, and at the same time to the Europeans. In their contact with
186 the Chewa and other subject tribes they could no longer maintain the
● 648 social exclusiveness which had marked the distinction between Ngoni and slaves. There was therefore less actual resistance to culture fusion, though the dislike of adopting alien customs persisted. This dislike of alien customs was evident to some extent also in white contacts. The missionaries brought a new religion, western education, and western medicine. Other Europeans introduced land reserves, taxation, and working for wages. To the local tribes the European represented security as well as certain material benefits. To the Ngoni these material benefits appeared less welcome in the face of their defeat. There was therefore a psychological conflict set up among the Ngoni
178 —a malaise due to their military and political downfall, together with
181 their determination to preserve certain elements in their own culture.
182 That psychological conflict is evident everywhere to-day, and finds expression in all conversations which turn on the relations of the Ngoni to other tribes or to Europeans. To the persistence of that conflict is due the strength of Ngoni 'national feeling', which has directed the selective process by which some of their political, legal, and social institutions have survived the results of culture contact.

4. Conditions all over Africa are changing and new forms of social
178 and political organization are emerging due to the contact of the
648 Africans with European civilization. What place has the Ngoni state in this emergent African society? Are there still cultural realities in Ngoni society which should be preserved, and can the Ngoni political structure be galvanized into new life through the medium of Indirect

9: Read È-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Rule? There might have been a time, before the Ngoni wars, when treaties could have been made with the Ngoni Paramount Chiefs, and the Ngoni state have evolved without defeat. Policy, however, was different in those days, and strong chiefs were crushed. The demand now is for strong tribal organization which can carry on its own administration with the minimum of European interference and direction. The vital question is: has that moment gone for the Ngoni? Has their defeat, not only military, but economic and political, so taken the heart out of them, that they can no longer rebuild their tribal organization and make a success of Indirect Rule?

The answer to that question has two desiderata. One is a thorough intensive study of Ngoni society and Ngoni institutions as they exist to-day, and of the relation of the true Ngoni to those who call themselves Ngoni. The other is the willingness of Europeans, officials, missionaries, and settlers, to show some recognition of Ngoni pride in their past. The Ngoni are not children. They do not want a toy called Indirect Rule handed out to them to play with. If their political aspirations were appreciated and their racial pride acknowledged, they could make a successful synthesis between Ngoni institutions and modern administration with its concomitants of modern education and modern economic methods. They themselves discuss frequently in the men's talking places in the villages such a synthesis of Ngoni and western culture. The attempt in one area in Nyasaland to work out such a synthesis is a sign that it is not impossible. With fuller knowledge and co-operation on both sides the strength of Ngoni national sentiment might be used to make a success of the policy of Indirect Rule.

MARGARET READ.

Résumé

TRADITION ET PRESTIGE CHEZ LES NGONI

Les Ngoni sont une section des Zoulou qui habitent l'Afrique orientale. Le vocable Ngoni désigne aujourd'hui deux groupes: les descendants des clans originels qui, il y a cent cinquante ans environ, émigrèrent vers le nord et les membres des tribus assujetties et absorbées dans l'état Ngoni. Les Ngoni proprement dits forment une aristocratie, qui se distingue par la communauté clanique et la connaissance de la langue Ngoni originelle et des traditions historiques de la tribu. Leurs institutions également diffèrent de celles des tribus soumises

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made in the regimental system, which was organized on a national basis. A person of low ethnic status, that is, of comparatively late incorporation into the tribe but of senior regiment, was considered to be, in most circumstances, as good as a man of more aristocratic family but of a junior regiment. New regiments were formed about every four years. 563 641 701

Development of Minor Chieftainships

The defeat of the Ngoni army at the hands of the British in 1898 and the subsequent establishment of British control led to the partial breakdown of this system. The population was dispersed by the fighting and by the unsettled conditions that followed, and part of the kingdom was cleared for European occupation. The Administration recognized the grandson of Mpezeni I as the chief of the tribe, and also worked through a number of men known as Divisional Headmen, who were made responsible for small areas. Some of these divisional headmen were regional governors, some lieutenants of Mpezeni, some members of the royal lineage, and others were upstarts. It is not clear from the rather meagre records that remain or from the statements of informants exactly what happened between 1898 and 1914, but we know that by the latter date the Administration had come to recognize six men as local chiefs, apart from Mpezeni, and that four of them were said to be sons of Mpezeni I.[1] In 1929, when the term Native Authority was introduced, nine minor chiefs were appointed, of whom four were descended from Mpezeni I and one from the father of Mpezeni I. Two of the other minor chiefs have the descent-name *jere* that belongs to the royal lineage, and may be regarded as belonging to assimilated lineages. One is descended from a regional governor, the other from a policeman. Two minor chiefs do not have this descent-name, one being descended from a lieutenant of Zwangendaba and the other from a regional governor. This arrangement of one Paramount Chief and nine minor chiefs persists to the present day. With each of the ten chiefs is associated a more or less defined area within which most of the villages are said to belong to the chief of the area. What appears to have happened during the thirty years after the conquest is that the central power declined and that certain political and territorial segments achieved a degree of autonomy. The ten areas belonging to the different chiefs, which I shall refer to as counties, represent 175 648 631

[1] Cochead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22 and 24.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have
178 continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the head-
[622] man, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Genthe, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest. 647

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping villages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, but this cannot be done openly under the present régime. 628 [643] [648] [692] [669]

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships. 631 64

Sanctions

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exercised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 687 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 sensitive to suggestions that a chief may be oppressing his people,
648 usually works through the Paramount. One minor chief was sent to the Paramount's village for a period of instruction in order that he might learn how to rule wisely. On another occasion a chief who had abused the Administration was fined one month's salary by the Paramount. In both these instances the Administration was the initiator of the Paramount Chief's action, but he may also act without reference to it. It was reported to the Paramount that a certain minor chief had struck one of his subjects who had been slow to offer him beer. The Paramount warned the minor chief that he might kill someone this way, and that he ought to fine people, not to strike them. In a dispute between a minor chief and his court clerk over some new court furniture, which the chief wished to use in his own house, the Paramount intervened and ordered that the chairs be put in the courthouse.

643 The Paramount himself is subject to social constraint, and may be criticized by his senior lieutenants. He is advised on how he should behave by these men, and if his behaviour is unsatisfactory they may rebuke him. At county meetings, headmen and others can voice their
644 complaints against the royal house as a whole, and have from time to
661 time protested successfully at such a meeting against too many of the Native Authority posts being filled by members of the royal lineage.

The Native Authority

647 Under the Native Authority system, introduced by the Administra-
[648] tion in 1929, there are a number of paid officials, apart from the chiefs, whose salaries are met by the Native Treasury. They include councillors, assessors, clerks, police, postmen, school attendance officers, and others. The most important of these, and the most highly paid, are
692 the councillors and assessors. They sit once or twice a week in court and hear cases brought before them. Each of the chiefs has a court, and for the most part the cases that come before a county court are brought by people living in the county. When litigants from two counties are involved there is no definite rule as to which court will hear the case and it largely depends on the wish of the instigator of the proceedings. Cases come before the Paramount Chief's county court that concern people from other counties and a litigant may take his case from one chief to another, including the Nyasaland chiefs, in an attempt to obtain a favourable and enforceable decision. The Appeal Court sits at the Paramount Chief's village and is held once a month.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

422 Mpezeni is the owner of the land, or of the world. The cattle kept in
231 the royal villages are held to have belonged formerly to Mpezeni I or
643 to Zwangendaba, and therefore still belong to the Paramount Chief. Chiefs and other members of the royal lineage who have cattle inherited in this way, in fact dispose of them as they please when the Paramount Chief is not in their village, but if he appears and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount who is praised as the owner of the beast and not the local owner. In the capital and chief's villages the lieutenants are more under the control of the chief of the county, who may intervene to depose a lieutenant if he thinks that his cattle are not being well looked after.

622 The Administration does not distinguish between one type of vil-
621 lage and another, and gives the same title of headman[1] to the man in
648 charge of the village, whoever he may be. It tends to act on the assumption that all headmen are of equal status and have the same amount of authority in their villages. Combined with the decline in the power of the royal lineage, this policy may lead to the assimilation of the different types of village to a common form.

II. THE VILLAGE

Material Setting

361 Ngoni villages, which form the principal units of administration in the country, contain from half a dozen to 120 huts. It is seldom more than a quarter of a mile from one edge of a village to the other. There is a rough arrangement of huts into parallel lines, with the doors all facing the same way at right-angles to the direction of the
[343] lines. Kitchen huts, which are similar in appearance to dwelling huts, are included in these lines, while in front of a line of dwellings may be a line of storehouses and sties for small stock. On the edge of the
[417] village are the cattle byres. There are seldom any fences marking off courtyards within the village, so that it is possible to sit on the veranda of a hut and look along at all the other verandas. If there are well-established divisions within the village, the boundaries of the divisions may be indicated by lines of aloes.

592 Most people, except polygynists and some children, may be said to live in one hut, in which they keep most of their belongings and where they usually sleep. A single hut may be occupied by up to about ten

[1] Usually *bedinan*, pl. *mabedinan*; otherwise *mfumu yomunzi*, pl. *mafumu wominzi*. The specific term for headman of a cadet or commoner village is *mwisimunzi*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as 361
stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village 166
is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man [311]
has to go farther and farther from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of regenerated land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a [768]
portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1898 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested [648]
areas.

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county [648]
chief, and village headman. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headman and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The first people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till [343]
later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Rattray, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the [622]
headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to [184]
be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and 221
is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the 361
new one is gradual, as, unless the distance between the sites is too 166
great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until 241
they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Rattray, *Folk-Lore Stories*, pp. 109–11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 203–5, gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 widows continue to cultivate the gardens they had before his death. When a man opens up a new garden he may hand over his nearly exhausted old garden to some relative who does not wish to go to the labour of clearing new ground himself. Rights in land cannot be sold, but only given away, and no presents are given to the donor by the recipient of a garden or garden site. They can only be sustained by continued residence in the locality, either by the owner of the rights himself or by his relatives. There are very few court cases concerned with rights in land, and in the courts the only attempt I saw in which a man tried to enforce what he thought to be his rights was met by the statement from the bench that no one had any rights in land, for did not all land belong to the chief?

Maize is planted at the beginning of the rains, and the garden is 241 usually weeded twice over before the maize has grown high enough to surmount the weeds. When the rains end, the stalks are felled and put into large stooks to dry. The cobs are then taken off the stalks and carried back to the village to be stored. Finger millet is grown in ash-fertilized patches scattered through the main garden, and in between the maize ground-nuts, pumpkins, and other crops are grown. Sorghum, bulrush millet, and rice are also grown. Most of the work in the garden is carried on in the rainy season, and after the harvest the garden is more or less deserted until the next season, although a certain amount of new land may be cleared as a garden extension.

Dwellings outside the Village

There are two types of settlement outside the recognized villages 361 that require mention. These are permanently occupied settlements consisting of two or three huts which I shall refer to as hamlets and temporarily occupied huts in the gardens. The hamlets usually arise [578] as a result of quarrels within a village that are resolved by the breaking away of one of the parties to the quarrel. The activities of the Agricul- [648] tural Department have also led to the formation of hamlets of similar size, both of hamlets of persons accepting agricultural control whose co-villagers have all moved off, and the other way about. These hamlets are all attached to proper villages for registration purposes, and participate in many of the collective activities of the villages near by.

The damage done to crops in the latter part of the rainy season 221 necessitates the keeping of a continuous watch, particularly at gar- 361 dens that are on the edge of a cultivated area, in order to drive off the [241] monkeys by day and the wild pigs by night. Shelters are erected on

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neighbouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern practice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
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time controlled from a mission station just inside Nyasaland, so that 635
many people crossed to attend religious services and receive instruc- [797]
tion. From Mpezeni's own county it is easier to get to the hospital at [743]
Fort Manning than to the one at Fort Jameson, so that people
wanting European medicine tend to go to Nyasaland for treatment
rather than to Fort Jameson. Nyasalanders are for their part attracted N
into Northern Rhodesia by the market for foodstuffs among the urban [438]
population, White and Black, of Fort Jameson and by the greater
variety of goods on sale there.

Other Ngoni Groups

N
The Fort Jameson Ngoni are conscious of their links with the other 101
groups of Ngoni scattered over Central Africa, and of their similarity 173
with the Ndebele and the Swazi and Zulu. The Paramount Chief is
sometimes praised by the recital in the Ngoni language of the past
exploits of the Ngoni, how they crossed the Zambezi, and how they
conquered one tribe after another. On one occasion I heard someone
who cannot speak Ngoni praise the Paramount by repeating, in
Ndebele, which is similar to Ngoni, a praise of Mzilikazi[1] which he had
learnt by rote. This oration was accepted without comment by the
Paramount. Lancaster has recorded a legend that Lobengula[2] fled to
Mpezeni after the second Matebele War, and that he died in the
country.[3] Some years after his installation Mpezeni II was visited by
a delegation from Mombera, chief of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasa-
land, which, it is said, came to ratify Mpezeni's position as Chief of
the Fort Jameson section of the Ngoni. An important headman in
Mpezeni's county, who bears the same name as Chief Chiwere of the
Ngoni of Dowa District, still claims from time to time that because his
namesake and alleged relative is a chief, he too ought to be a chief.

Nsenga and Yao

N
M
The Ngoni are on more friendly terms with the Nsenga of Petauke 648
District than with the other matrilineal tribes of the region. Some of [197]
the kinship ties that were formed as a result of intermarriage between
the two tribes in the 1870's can still be traced, and their languages
are similar. Mpezeni III went in 1944 with his first lieutenant and
twenty-five followers to visit the Nsenga Chief Manjawanthu, and he
is expected to return the invitation.

[1] The first Ndebele king. [2] Son of Mzilikazi, defeated by the Whites.
[3] Lancaster, p. 83. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, and Posselt, *Upangula the Scatterer*, pp. 112–24.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Yao FT7

N Y 648 691

The Yao are mistrusted more than any other tribe, and some of the decisions taken by the courts are harsh on Yao. For example, a Yao man who was married to an Ngoni woman had, it was alleged, caught venereal disease from his wife. His wife then applied to the courts for a divorce, which was granted, together with the custody of the children. No bride-wealth had been paid in the marriage, but the husband now offered to pay in order to retain the children. This bride-wealth was refused by the woman's parents. The Yao appealed, but the judgement was upheld, and in addition he was ordered to go back to Nyasaland at once. He asked for permission to return to the woman's village in order to collect his belongings, and this was granted by the court, after first securing agreement between the couple as to the extent of his possessions, to wit, four plates and two beds. This deportation order was made despite the fact that the Yao had been living with his wife for twenty-one years. If a man of some other tribe had been involved, it is unlikely that he would have been ordered to leave the country, nor would the court have been so suspicious of his trying to take away more than his rightful share of the household possessions.

N Y 648 583

A Yao, who had a good job in Fort Jameson, once offered 30*s.* to the Paramount Chief when he was in the town as the legalization payment for a woman of the royal lineage whom he wished to marry. The Paramount Chief refused the money on the ground that the man was a Yao and he was not going to permit Yao to marry into the royal lineage, despite the protest of one of his lieutenants that the Yao was just a man like anyone else.

N 186 609 N Y 648

The reason that is given for this dislike of Yao is that they are sexually very virile, due to the medicines that they possess for increasing potency. It is perhaps significant that the same is said of Indians, who are also disliked. The Yao are known among the Ngoni for their great knowledge of medicines of all kinds, and the allegation of unnatural sexual vigour may be a rationalization of the fear that the Yao may practise sorcery among the families into which they marry. Another factor that may operate is that the Yao are the only tribe in the region that the Ngoni cannot claim to have conquered.

Political Relations with Other Tribes

N 648 721

Before the European conquest relations between the Ngoni and other tribes were principally those of raiders and raided. The great season for raiding was after the harvest, when the surrounding tribes

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could be raided for their crops, as well as for captives, and when the rivers did not form such an obstacle to rapid movement as they did during the wet season. Some of the early reports of travellers suggest that there was some sort of alliance or working arrangement between the Ngoni and Mwasi Kasungu, whose territory acted as a buffer-state between Mpezeni's Ngoni and Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland[1] but this alliance does not seem to have been very stable. 648 [721]

The British Administration restored or created Cewa chieftainships that now completely encircle the Ngoni except where the Ngoni area reaches to the edge of the waterless and uninhabited Luangwa escarpment. The Administration did not recognize any right of the Ngoni over these Cewa areas, and it is now difficult to discover how much control was in fact exercised by the Ngoni over the Cewa at that time. The Ngoni certainly continued to hold that they were entitled to control the Cewa. In 1913, when the formation of reserves was being discussed with the Administration, the Ngoni chiefs are said to have been disappointed that the scheme would give the Cewa land of their own and later in the same year they tried to ensure that the Cewa to their south, who were to be granted a reserve separate from those of the Ngoni, should be formally placed under the control of Mpezeni.

At the present time the principal institution in which Ngoni co-operate with other tribes under the aegis of the Administration is the Eastern Province African Provincial Council. This body meets once a year for three days, and is attended by delegates from all the Superior Native Authorities in the Eastern Province, as well as by representatives of the Administration. It discusses matters of common interest and it elects two members to represent the Eastern Province on the African Representative Council of the whole Territory, but it does not have any legislative or executive powers. Its meetings are open to the public,[2] but as yet few people attend and the recommendations reached are passed on to only a small section of the tribe. The delegates to the Council are chosen by the Paramount Chief on the advice of his lieutenants. 646 648

There are also other political relationships that unite Ngoni with other tribes. Some of them arise from common residence in an area outside the Ngoni country. Representatives are stationed at the 648

[1] Money and Smith, *Explorations in the Country West of Lake Nyasa*, p. 152.

[2] Except on the first day, when the African members of the Council meet by themselves in Committee.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 principal urban centres on the railway line in Northern Rhodesia who represent the Ngoni Native Authority in the various Native Urban Courts. These representatives are appointed by the Superior Native Authority, that is, by the Paramount Chief and his lieutenants. These posts are regarded in much the same light as those of the minor chiefs except that the tenure of office is not so stable, and the same struggles to gain them take place. There are Ngoni members of the Fort Jameson African Urban Advisory Council, but they are elected by urban Africans and are not appointed by the Native Authority.

Rural and Urban Status

369 554 The relatively privileged position of certain individuals in the urban order may raise their status in the life of the tribe. We have already seen how the initiative in religious matters is taken by the deacons and evangelists, and these people are also called upon to lead the prayers that precede all county meetings. The orderlies in the hospitals in Fort Jameson are able to establish private practices and number chiefs and other important people among their clients. The senior shop assistants may find it possible to entertain important people by offering them European spirits. The clerks of the Administration, as part of the protective screen around the District Officers, can exercise their discretion in allowing pleas to go forward to them.

There seems to be very much less bribery and corruption than has been reported from other parts of Africa. The Ngoni are in the main more interested in and more able to make effective use of medicines and other material goods than they are of advance information. But the fact remains that the African Civil Service and the various commercial undertakings are institutions within which a man of no importance in the village and tribe can rise to a position of influence which will affect his dealings with other tribesmen. The only Ngoni on the African Representative Council, which meets yearly and includes representatives from the whole of Northern Rhodesia, was in 1946 not a headman or lieutenant but was the most prominent African businessman in Fort Jameson.

To some extent this association of high status in the urban community and low status in the rural one is inevitable, since it is only by absence from the district for many years that a man can advance himself sufficiently and acquire sufficient skill and seniority to reach this high urban status. The member of the African Representative

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Council mentioned above spent some tweny years of his life in Johannesburg. Fort Jameson itself is not a sufficiently big town for this process to take place within it, and yet it is only in Fort Jameson or on the tobacco farms that a man can live with a leg in both camps, going home to the village at the week-ends and probably keeping his wife in the village during the wet season to tend her crop. 369 554

On the other hand, there is some rivalry between the traditional leaders and the comparatively prosperous townspeople. The well-clad and well-housed Ngoni of the township are sometimes described scornfully by village people as 'merely White'. There is a feeling that the leading African traders are trying to monopolize the economic opportunities in the villages. Recently the same prominent Ngoni businessman proposed that he should take over the delivery of mail to the Native Authorities, which he claimed he would be able to do more efficiently with a car than can the present postman on a bicycle. The Paramount Chief did not answer this proposal but wrote instead to the Administration to complain against the danger of one man being allowed to earn so much more than anyone else while there were so many people who needed money. At the same time, men whose lives are led principally in the towns complain that in the villages there is 'nothing but jungle', and that the chiefs are old-fashioned and obstructive. 369 578 177 [205] [493]

The Administration

The relationship between the Provincial Administration and the Ngoni is characteristically one of superordination and subordination. The District Officer can send for any Ngoni, but not even the Paramount Chief can send for the District Officer. This characteristic arises from two sources, from the premiss which we find held all over Southern Africa, that any White is superior to any Black, and from the supervisory role allotted to the Administration in the Native Authority scheme. These two facets of the same relationship are not always seen separately by the Ngoni, and in many contexts their behaviour towards the Administration is governed entirely by the fact that the District Officer and those above him are all White. Official reports by the Administration during the reign of Mpezeni II repeatedly remarked on the Paramount Chief's distrust of Whites, and this attitude still persists. Any kind of trouble at all, particularly when it is seen as a characteristic of the present times as opposed to the glorious trouble-free past of the days of peace, before the Whites 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 came, is attributed to the Whites. I was told that the high incidence of divorce, the disappearance of wooden plates, the frequent breaches of the mother-in-law avoidance, were all due to the Whites. The District Officer is seen primarily as a member of this White tribe, and only secondarily as a member of the Administration as opposed to being a farmer or a missionary. An Administration official was once described by an admirer as 'a man whom the Ngoni trusted, although he was a White'.

In practice, it is the Administration, through the person of the District Officer, which supplies the stimulus to maintain the Native Authority structure in being in its present form. As far as many of the tasks allocated to it by the Administration are concerned, the Ngoni Native Authority falls into the class mentioned by Davidson as having 'still to be continually stirred into activity by the local District Officer'.[1] It is the Administration which calls the meetings of representatives of the whole tribe to discuss questions relating to land, agriculture, schools, labour migration, ex-soldiers, and the like. It is the Administration which supplies the forms to the Native Courts, the ubiquitous books that are the symbol of White power, which informs the Native Authority what taxes and licence fees to collect, which supplies land for resettlement, organizes the building of wells and roads, and so on.

Mistrust is certainly the principal characteristic of the Ngoni attitude to Whites, a mistrust which is based as much on what are felt to be past wrongs as on an inability to understand the motives for present administrative actions, however well intentioned these may be.[2] At the same time there is considerable admiration for White material achievements, and to a lesser extent for the large-scale political and economic developments of which they are aware. Sentiments such as 'the British Empire means peace for everybody' are not at all uncommon.

It is in relation to the farmers that the Administration is seen in the kindliest light, and it is from the Administration that Ngoni seek redress for infringements of their rights by Whites and Indians. The District Officer also acts as an agent for some of the smaller Ngoni traders, obtaining supplies for them from the urban centres. The Administration attempts to protect the rights of Ngoni by seeing that they are not cheated of their wages by planters or overcharged by traders.

[1] Davidson, *N.R. Legislative Council*, p. 29.
[2] Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, pp. 473–81.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tribe is represented to the Administration in the person of its chief, and the fact that it is through him that the Administration articulates with the tribe is realized by thinking people. In a wider sense, he represents the tribe to the White community as a whole. When I first started work in the area there were many formalities at my meetings with the Paramount Chief, so that I should understand the importance of his position. Mpezeni II is said never to have allowed a White to see him dancing, because of the mystical and social dangers involved. At a county meeting, held while the Paramount Chief was away in Livingstone, the court clerk reminded headmen that the month of May was approaching, and that he would soon be wanting people to hoe the Native Authority roads. When the time came, he did not want headmen to say they had no people. He continued: 'If the people do not obey the laws, then Mpezeni will not be well regarded by the Whites. Then when the Administration wants to make bad laws, Mpezeni will not protest, as he will want to punish his own people.' 648

If the chief is too attentive to the requirements of the Administration, then his standing with his own people is likely to suffer. A chief's court was once described as 'just a White court' because of its alleged bias in favour of the Administration's interpretation of native custom. On the other hand, this identification with the White Administration is not accepted by the chiefs and their advisers. In an adultery case, in which the husband did not want to divorce his wife but she refused to go back to him, Mpezeni, who was present, ordered the woman to return to her husband. A councillor asked the woman what she had to say. She said she loved the co-respondent. The councillor was annoyed, and asked her, 'Do you know who Mpezeni is?' The woman said, 'He 's a chief', using the usual word for chief, *mfumu*, current all over north-eastern Rhodesia. The councillor replied: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a chief, everyone is a chief nowadays.' The woman then said, 'He 's a White.' The councillor answered: 'No, Mpezeni is not just a White whose orders can be sometimes obeyed and sometimes ignored. Mpezeni is *nkosi*, the great chief of the Ngoni, whose commands must always be carried out.' 643 554 177

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

484 167 Looked at from the point of view of the individual, we find that all adult men have at some time or other been away to work, and that the majority have been to Southern Rhodesia once or twice.

Conclusion

466 In their lives on the farms and in Fort Jameson, Ngoni mix with men from other tribes, and their position is largely subsumed under the conditions common to all African labourers on all European-controlled farms. The Administration does not support the Ngoni more [648] than the Cewa, or one chief more than another. As the content of the relationship becomes more and more related to the world-wide polity and economy, so the nature of the relationship becomes common to a wider group. Ngoni living in Fort Jameson Compound live lives that are closer to the lives led by other tribes in compounds in other towns than they are to those led in the villages 5 miles away. 464 The phenomenon of labour migration greatly affects Ngoni social [167] structure, but is not a distinctively Ngoni institution in the same way as the Ngoni village is distinctively Ngoni. When Ngoni ex-[729] soldiers complain that when they were recruited they were promised that after the war they would get good jobs, and now find they do not get them, their sentiments derive more from their status as ex-soldiers, which they share with some millions of others, than they do from their status as Ngoni.

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TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed. 101 123 643

NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa. 159 167

Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1825. 173 643 698

In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques. [721]

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son. [595]

1' [induna=military leader--Analyst]

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
578 Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
643 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
648 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.

In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo. [805] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Masekо, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his [645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one [684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Msafwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njokwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinaluzi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
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11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tule (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu, and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE OF DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

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Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Sacra village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Basaliyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphanza, Mhamunye Mphanza, Mahawa Mwase Shawa, Dede Tule, Njobo Ndwambi Jere, Malwalaliche Tembo, Mzeje Nkhawa, Katonda Manyanny Makowane, Kapondola Jonesi Mvula, Machiliha Mphanza, Chhongerhane Ngulowa, Chiwere Maimba, Maulau Jere, Magulanga Mphanza, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Madalimowe, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndawambi Hara, Matrino Kangwere Nkhawa, Penyani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo Gawani Mawere, Chingulukani Hlomba, Siya Mvula, Ngunga Singa Jere, Mahawa Mphanza, Mzebi Lekhelo, Njombwa Tembo, Adwinbwake Mohanga, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 602
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary 624
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

borne out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful 171
and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the
fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. [648]
The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a [177]
moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to
hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land
they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where
family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived
in an atmosphere that was charged with vice. But when the
Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were
punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited,
many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally
a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. 565
His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fear- 181
lessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your
privacy. I have heard the old men storm in a village because
some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a 576
superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in
whispers. When they address you they always give you your
family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each
sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at
the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a
long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that 574
the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come
out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly.
When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain
silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a
decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say,
"We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the
whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would
rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they
reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous
and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way,
and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interests and amusements. 692
During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in
open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual [537]
speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus
of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance 535
is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE VIII. PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS TO BE PAID BY NGONI NATIVE TREASURY, 1949

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Description of post	*Number of posts*	*Mean annual salary in £s, to nearest £*
Chief	10	72
Councillor	4	60
Treasury clerk	2½(*a*)	57
Artisan	2	42
Court clerk	10	25
Messenger	22	25
Assessor	20	24
School attendance officer	5	24
Road foreman	2	24
Office boy	1	24
Mail runner	2	16
Nursery keeper (fruit trees)	1	15
School matron	6	9(*b*)
Total number of full-time posts	87½	

(*a*) One tax-collecting clerk whose work was in Fort Jameson Township was paid jointly by the Ngoni and Cewa Native Treasuries.
(*b*) Including £1½ contributed by missions.

This table is based on the approved estimates for 1949 and it is possible that not all the posts were filled. In previous years all posts had been filled without difficulty, except for the matrons.
The emoluments shown here do not include allowances paid for bicycles, lorry fares, and rent-free housing available for some employees.
Not included in the table are the sums paid to a few employees at the Demonstration Farm, and the provision made for 240 man-months of casual labour on the roads at 25*s.* a month and 360 man-days of carrier labour at 10*d.* a day.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him. 634 648 [647] [687]

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialized services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them. 648 65 [797] 645 643

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo- 648 184

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182] In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Para-
mount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and,
648 possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop
[464] the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that
[643] the cheapest way of running the country was through the
[622] indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[4] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all
[692] kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the
[657] most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black
[464] leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with
[797] establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

177 Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration
464 to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity
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[4] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 Ngoni origin. The sharp cleavage between the Ngoni and their neighbours has gone.

Another relic of the privileged position enjoyed by the Ngoni 439 before the conquest which did not long survive their defeat was 648 the subsidy paid to Mpezeni. Under the terms of Wiese's alleged 651 concession of 14 April 1891, Mpezeni was to be paid £200 a year and one per cent of Wiese's profits. Wiese made presents to Mpezeni, but there is no record of any substantial payment. When the provisional grant of 10,000 square miles of land was made by the B.S.A. Company to the Mozambique Company on 8 May 1895, the latter agreed not to exercise any rights it might have under Wiese's concessions, but there was no mention of the disposal of any possible obligations. Warton continued Wiese's practice of giving presents to Mpezeni, but there was no regular payment. As Wiese's concession had never been recognized it would seem that there was no legal obligation on either the North Charterland or the B.S.A. Company to pay an annual subsidy. Nevertheless after the Ngoni war the two companies must have come to some agreement on the matter. In April 1898, according to the answer to a question in the Commons, the B.S.A. Company were ready to pay Mpezeni £200 a year 'for the present'. In January 1900 the Administrator stated that the Collector at Fort Jameson had spent only £50 during the current financial year on payments to Mpezeni and 'his loyal indunas'. He proposed to spend a further £50 during the year and the remaining £100 of the subsidy was to be distributed among the surrounding tribes in the interests of the North Charterland.[5] These special arrangements were presumably superseded in 1903 when, under the scheme of Native Administration drawn up in that year, provision was made for the payment of all recognized chiefs from the general funds of the Territory.

Similarly, the military organization of the Ngoni broke down 648 after the conquest. One of the first acts of the Administration was 701 to forbid Ngoni to carry weapons of war.[6] Four new age-set 561 regiments were formed between 1898 and 1914 but they were little more than dancing societies, singing the old songs which had excited their seniors in the 'time of peace' before the conquest but unable to emulate their military achievements. During the 1914-18 war the majority of young Ngoni men who might have formed a [464] new age-set were enrolled as carriers and soldiers on the Allied side.

[5] *Parliamentary Debates, 4th Series*, lv (1898), cols. 1654-5; report of a meeting between Administrator and North Charterland manager, 15 January 1900 (Lusaka archives); cf. Poole, MS., 'Tribes of East Luangwa Province'.

[6] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 201.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

interests and those of neighbouring tribes against the North Charterland and the White settlers. Ngoni themselves have not been in a position to enforce their own point of view.

In the operation of the legal system White control has never been so complete, as we have indicated above. However the support given to the judgments of chiefs and others by the Administration prior to 1929 was political rather than legal, and the courts held by chiefs with or without the approval of the Administration did not form part of the same legal system as the Administration's own courts. In that year Native Courts with defined powers were established as part of the same legal system as other recognized courts in the British Empire, with ultimate connexion to the Privy Council.[16] In matters of religion White dominance has been achieved more slowly and has never been complete. But even in this field the religions brought by the Whites have triumphed over the cult of the chief's ancestors and to-day it is the Christians who are the ritual experts.

A parallel sequence of events has taken place in Nyasaland, save that there the amount of land alienated in the Fort Manning area has been small. A scheme of administration was given a legal basis in 1912, and was similar to that in Northern Rhodesia. It was revised in 1924, and in 1933 Native Authorities and Native Courts were set up.[17] The two principal missions in Fort Jameson District have stations in Nyasaland as well.

In both countries Ngoni have been required to pay tax. A hut tax was introduced on the Rhodesian side of the border in 1901 and at about the same time in Nyasaland. The annual rate has varied in Fort Jameson District from three to ten shillings. The imposition of tax has been of importance, not only in partly meeting the costs of Administration, but also in bringing Ngoni men and women into the wider economic system of farms, mines and offices of southern Africa.

Thus the Whites established control over the Ngoni in most of their important external relations. Politics, settlement, litigation, religion and economic activity have all been moulded by the Whites. In many respects this has been a passive process, for little that the Ngoni have done or not done has been significant to the decision to set up Native Courts, or to expand the production of tobacco, or even to open up a mission of some new denomination.

[16] By Ordinance No. 33 of 1929. Subsequent legislation is contained in Ordinances No. 10 of 1936, 18 of 1940, and 21 of 1942.

[17] Legislation is to be found in Ordinances No. 13 of 1912, 11 of 1924, 13 of 1933 and 14 of 1933.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Relative status of Chiefs*

178 There was nothing inherent in the residential system which
631 facilitated the emergence of twelve, and only twelve, counties from
634 Mpezeni's people. Each major segment already had a large number
648 of lesser segments within it in 1898, and it was during the unsettled years that followed the conquest, when new schemes of organization were tried out, when fresh occupants were sought for existing posts, and when the spatial distribution of people was being radically altered, that these twelve gradually emerged. Considerations of size do not seem to have been very important, for there is a wide variation in the size of counties. However, with the development of the Native Authority and Native Court, there is an upper limit to
[692] the size of the county which can be served adequately by a single court and possibly by a single minor chief, and this shows itself in the moves towards forming sub-counties within one or two of the larger ones. Yet in view of administrative attempts to do away with certain chiefs, it seems that in its eyes the Ngoni have too many rather than too few chiefs. The order of segmentation is not critical, as we have seen. Nor has there been merely an ossification of the formal structure as it was at the moment of conquest, as is often the case when a fluid society is suddenly put into a rigid mould. Wiese in 1891 wrote that Ngoniland was divided into four districts.[20] In our terms, these were as follows:

(*a*) Primal segment 11.
(*b*) Primal segment 14.
(*c*) Residual segment 10 after 14 was formed.
(*d*) Residual segment 4 after 10 and 11 were formed.

Of these four districts, the first has given rise to two counties, 11 and 16; the second to two, 14 and 17; the third to three, 10, 13 and 15; and the fourth to three, 4, 9 and 12. Wiese does not indicate in what districts he would place segments 5 and 6.

The fortuitous manner in which the counties have emerged is illustrated by the fact that for certain purposes one of the counties is treated as if it were two. At one time, when there were more administrative divisions than there are now, it was divided into two
[651] areas, and this arrangement still persists for tax collection. Other counties have only one tax register book each, but this one has two.

In genealogical terms also, the emergence of the twelve chiefs appears to have been fortuitous. For example, the second wife of
[643] Mpezeni I in segment 10, after the formation of segments 14 and 15,

[20] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE II. Beer party at a chief's house. Standing in the foreground wearing a fez is a Native Authority messenger.

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PLATE III. Collecting tax in a village. The Administrative clerk sits at a table on the verandah of the village headman's hut. Near him stand two Administrative messengers, and seated on the ground are men waiting to pay.

[Facing p. 144]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Adminis- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created,
the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity
as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity
and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[19] were
employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make
arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native
Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of
subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The 692
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as
well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative
legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences [681]
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award
damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish
between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Adminis-
tration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native
Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority
was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni
Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping.
The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction
and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of
messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main
roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production,
for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had
to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries
and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for [647]
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an
assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The
Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the
extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs
their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[19] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapasu* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

651 marriages and for selling beer, and from fines and fees taken in court. In some years there has been a local levy on all men liable for Native tax.

642 The Native Authority, the Native Court and the Native Treasury form a single system of what is essentially local government. The judicial aspect of government has always been to the 693 fore, for the hearing of cases is an activity which has gone on without serious interruption since before the conquest. The first people to be appointed as assessors were in many instances the people who had been hearing cases with the chief for many years. They were joined in this by the councillors, for there was no separation between judicial and administrative organization in pre-conquest times and none had emerged by that time. Since the court clerk needed to be at least partially literate, he was usually a younger man who had been to school but, in some instances at least, he had close kinship ties with those in high office. He acted as a member of the bench as much as the councillors and assessors. In some courts other close supporters of the chief, particularly those who lived near their courts, also attended regularly to hear cases although they were not paid to do so, and in at least one instance a chief paid a regular salary out of his own pocket to a member of his court who was not recognized as such by the Administration.

Thus the court was the nucleus round which the Native Authority grew. The court clerk was employed as secretary to the chief and the Native Authority, and he had charge of the rubber stamps which came to be the new symbols of political power. He toured the county looking for dogs and bicycles without licences, for since he was literate he was considered the man to handle the money accruing from court fines, fees and licences. Sometimes he combined with these duties others that had nothing to do with court work, such as seeing that villages were swept clean or paths hoed. Because of his work in court he was well informed on disputes in the county, and since he made frequent trips to the township so that his accounts could be checked by the Administration, he was [554] well briefed on what was going on there. The office of court clerk came in this way to have a greater importance than its formal duties implied.

Yet in recent years the relative status of the court clerk has declined. The executive, as opposed to the judicial and fiscal, 648 functions of the Native Authority have become more numerous. 645 The activities of the Administration, instead of being confined mainly to tax collecting and the punishment of major crimes, have expanded to include a variety of social services for Africans and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VI. The clerk of a county Native Court checks the whereabouts of men on the tax register of a village with an important man in the village. Standing are a Native Authority messenger with fez, and an Administrative messenger. The village headman and some of his people sit in the background.

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PLATE VII. Litigants outside a county Native Court wait for hearings to begin.

[Facing p. 152]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local 647
Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these 624
duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in 648
conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary [693]
Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and [651]
to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees of other technical departments of the Administration, such as Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are [625]
mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder, have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it 648
were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to 647
each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work 167
in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not 582
are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this when the social distance between the two persons involved is small. Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around 166
them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the 582

not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingcwembe*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat. 643 644 512

In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest. 643 [754] [564 574]

In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *izipheko*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount. 643 651 431 527 571

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izinduna* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 turn were invited to eat with the Paramount or summoned to special
651 feasts. On the other hand there were people who seemed to have noth-
431 ing, and who came in the hope of getting invited to eat food if they just
527 eat in the kraal and looked hungry. Cibambo called them 'the notable
571 people' and 'the poor people'. This contrast in behaviour ran right through Ngoni society and reflected the social standing of individuals who behaved in such different ways. There was a good deal of cadging for gifts and of gate-crashing at feasts on the part of people who had no intention, or no possibility, of making any adequate return. An Ngoni proverb illustrated the public attitude to reciprocal giving as distinct from begging: 'To say: Give, give, is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.'

571 The bringing of tribute to the Paramount was only one aspect of the
643 reciprocal relationships which ran right through Ngoni society, namely
651 the bringing of gifts by a man in an inferior social position to his
431 superior, with the expectation of receiving food or favour and of standing well with this superior. It was recognized that tribute was of two kinds, one of which was voluntary. If a *mulumuzana* or other notable wanted to please the Paramount he brought him presents—grain, flour, meat, beer. It was always emphasized that this was a free gift, with the added proviso that the giver wished to keep on good terms with the Paramount. Ngoni informants declared that the only compulsory form of tribute in pre-European days was that whenever a lion or a leopard was killed it had to be brought to the royal village through a succession of intermediaries, as described below.

These two principles of free giving and compulsory giving, and the attitudes engendered, are compared with the feeling about compulsory taxes under European rule in this text by Cibambo.

¶ Although people hate giving taxes to strangers in this land, yet tribute (*imitulo*) was given to their *inkosi* and to other chiefs. Such tribute was given in an indirect way, that is the *izinduna* did not mark out those who gave and who did not give tribute. The Ngoni did not wish that every male should give tribute as is done by Europeans today. They were just pleased if the village headman or *mulumuzana* had given something even though other people in his village did not give anything. Even the *alumuzana* themselves gave something at the time they thought it was convenient to themselves to give. There was no fixed time of the month or year. Much that was given as tribute was beer, meat, ivory, hoes and cloth, also cattle, sheep and goats after raids, and other loot from war.

[825] Power to 'eat' (*ukudla*) lion- and leopard-skins was given to certain people of the Swazi clans, but all the rest were obliged to bring them in. The lion- or leopard-skin had to be given first to the village headman. He went with it to the chief or *mulumuzana*. This one brought it to the *inkosi* along with his *amadoda* or *amajaha* of all his villages, the older men and
[554] younger men. This was like going as warriors and they went with dancing (*ligubo*). The one who first stabbed the animal was pointed out, and the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

second and third, and the finisher, at the place of dancing in the kraal. At such times each one when called rose and danced *umgiya*, repeating his names. This was called *ukubiha izinkalipi*, reporting the heroes or the fierce ones. This is still being done today. The *inkosi* thanked the people who brought the skins by giving them a beast or a goat. When they were dressing the meat and eating it, they kept on dancing *ligubo* and crying the war-cry. At such times the women went along with the men to help them dance *ligubo*. They made the responses to the songs and jerked their necks. 571 643 651 431 [557]

All such things the *inkosi* divided among his houses. The big house had a big share, but especially his mother's house. She should have most. Even if his real mother was dead, the big share had to go there, to her house, where her successor lived.

Visits to the Paramount, whether for a particular occasion or as a matter of routine, were hedged about with ceremonial. It was expected that *alumuzana* and other important people who lived near enough would visit the Paramount frequently and, according to some informants, they went every day in pre-European times. 643 574 576 644

No one could approach the Paramount except through one of the *izinduna* of the royal village, and the correct person to approach was the *induna* of the *indlunkulu*. Visitors were expected to wait at the gate of the kraal and put down their spears. When they were brought by the *induna* to the Paramount, they greeted him with '*Bayete*'. Then they sat down and the Paramount told the *induna* to greet them, and they replied '*Yebo, inkosi*'. This custom of indirect approach to the Paramount has been maintained. Early travellers in Nyasaland spoke of observing it, and when I was there it was considered outrageous manners on the part of any European if he penetrated immediately to the presence of the Paramount, without going through the accustomed channels. 643 644

The Paramount was both greeted and thanked for gifts of food, beer or snuff, with '*Bayete*'. If he moved from the kraal, all present said '*Bayete*'. If anyone had to leave his presence, he crouched low and murmured '*Bayete*' as he went out. Cibambo described this punctilious formality of thanking for gifts in the Ngoni manner. 643 644 431

¶ When receiving presents the Ngoni thanked the giver by taking them with two hands, even though it was a small present. Afterwards they thanked the giver by his *isibongo*, clan name, openly. They said that receiving a thing with one hand showed that you derided it and did not put any value on it. When receiving a present from bigger people or from a chief, some words of respect were added to the *isibongo*, such as '*Baba*', '*Nhosi yami*', '*E-Jere*'. Often the receiver if he was much pleased with the present added some *izitokozo* to the clan name, if he knew them. Those near him or some further away helped the receiver by thanking loudly after him. If what he received was food, he thanked at the beginning, and after eating the food he thanked again. If such a present of food was given to a body of people, the leader in the company first led the others in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

631 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in
643 his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning
to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount
692 by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one
645 by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first 'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then it was open for any of the *alumuzana* or headmen to speak 'from the floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with freedom.

The topics covered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from
[644] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits. Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said, would have that leader recognized as a headman. This drew a number of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme, others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognized in the new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages. 'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our headmen. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant afterthought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Para-
[651 mount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to
585] be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the *izinduna* had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among the audience during and after this discussion and the *izinduna* had to call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese
[648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

233 her daughters had died, and the herd of cattle was either inherited by
576 the senior daughter's eldest son or divided among the sons of different daughters. Cewa informants said that quarrels constantly arose over the ownership of cattle, and two modern developments—the spread of *utengwa*[1] marriage and of a patrilineal form of *mbumba* with its repercussions on cattle acquisition and disposal—caused further tensions in Cewa society.

M [178]

N 233 571 The role which cattle played in Ngoni social life partly depended on the structure and inter-relationships of the Ngoni social groups. The house and the family within the larger village unit were so organized that group ownership and group disposal of cattle caused no permanent friction. There were arguments about the disposal of cattle, but they were temporary and relatively trivial. The strength of tradition in the concept of ownership, and in the values and attitudes inherent in cattle-owning and keeping, was firmly established and was related to modern needs by the ingenuity of the Ngoni in manipulating traditional practices to suit new situations. Cattle therefore strengthened the integration of existing social units, and helped to preserve that unity and cohesion in Ngoni society which the ancestors were said to commend and to wish for. On this plane of conformity to a required pattern, cattle influenced the living and their behaviour. They also, through the structure and function of the houses, belonged to the spirit who was guarded in a particular house. As we shall see in Chapter IV, the ritual formula of address to the ancestor at the sacrifice of a beast was always 'Here is your beast . . . Here is your meat.' The living and the dead were joined therefore in the common ownership of a herd or part of a herd. The actual practices in social and ritual life where cattle were concerned, and the ideas and concepts from which the practices arose, will take up most of this chapter and form the necessary prelude to the further analysis of the ancestor cult.

N

Ownership of cattle and care of herds

171 'The war of the cattle-tax' was the name given in the central kingdom
422 to the installation of dipping tanks in the 1930's and the levying of a
[232 tax of a shilling per head of cattle on all cattle-owners. The attempt by
65] the Government to focus responsibility for dipping and to collect the taxes due brought out clearly the difficulties of applying English conceptions of ownership to the Ngoni. In the English meaning of the word ownership, a man can claim as his possession cattle which he has bought or inherited, and their offspring. This individual ownership means that he alone has the right to sell the animals or their milk, to regard the profits from such sale as his, and at any time to kill an animal for meat. He can will them to his descendants or to anyone he chooses after his

[1] Marriages in which the man took his wife to live in his village, but did not give *lobola* for her.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

cattle never came back to the kraal in the evening without one or more of the senior men standing by the gate and watching them and counting them as they went in. Sick cattle were noted and the herd-boys questioned about them. Mating was observed and noted, but not regulated, though poorly developed male beasts were sometimes castrated by one of the men who had acquired skill as a cattle doctor. Such a man would also administer drenches and other medicines, but the responsibility for calling a *sing'anga*, the specialist in medicines, to perform a ritual for a sick beast was taken by the whole group. They also made the decision to call a *sing'anga* to protect the kraal against lions. On several occasions I was in a village where lions attempted to get into the kraal at night, and the next morning the senior men who were responsible for the herd discussed the efficacy of this or that man's 'lion medicine' and decided who should be sent for to make the kraal safe again.

Important decisions were taken from time to time about placing the cattle belonging to the herd of a house in other kraals. This custom of *kuikilila* (lit. to entrust) was common in the central kingdom and had been adapted to modern needs as one means of evading the cattle-tax by appearing to have few cattle, whereas a number were boarded out in other areas. This boarding out was a long-established custom of the Ngoni and was practised for various reasons. One reason, and probably the most important formerly, was to build up good relations with leading men in the outlying villages by entrusting cattle to their care. The reward if the cattle throve was often the gift of a beast, and this was one means by which men of local tribes could build up a herd. It was also a signal honour to have cattle entrusted in this way and it was acknowledged by sending to such a 'keeper' the head of any beast killed from this herd. Another reason for boarding out was to prevent diseases spreading among a whole herd all kept in one kraal, and yet another was a belief that certain men had latent power with cattle, and that beasts put in their care throve and multiplied. This emphasis on enlarging the herds by natural increase was the main motive for letting the calves have all the milk they needed in order that they might thrive.

The uses of cattle and cattle products

Many of the uses to which cattle were put and for which they were greatly valued have been referred to in this chapter and in earlier sections of this book. We shall now examine the consumption of meat, milk and blood as food, and the forms of exchange in which cattle were directly exchanged or converted into cash. The ritual use of cattle will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

The testimony of early Europeans in Nyasaland and the accounts by the Ngoni of their life in the pre-European period agree in giving the consumption of meat, milk, and blood a high place in the diet of the cattle-owning families. It was a widespread European criticism in the

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643]

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, ' because all his chiefs obey him ', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chamtendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, ' We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes '.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184]

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. ' To pay taxes, that is our war to-day ', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[857] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Adminis- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created,
the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity
as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity
and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[19] were
employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make
arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native
Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of
subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The 692
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as
well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative
legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences [681]
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award
damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish
between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Adminis-
tration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native
Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority
was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni
Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping.
The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction
and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of
messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main
roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production,
for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had
to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries
and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an [647]
assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The
Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the
extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs
their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[19] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapau* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

645 He was a student of Ngoni history and custom, and used his travels as treasurer to collect new information. He always intended to write a history of the central kingdom as Cibambo had done for the northern kingdom, but his public duties never gave him time.

643 645 574 In making contact with his people and keeping in touch with his officials the Paramount did not rely only on their visits to the royal village. Two or three times a year he toured his kingdom, accompanied by his *mlomo wenkosi* and the treasurer, and stayed at the head villages of the chiefs and also of other *alumuzana*. The treasurer spoke enthusiastically of the Paramount's habit of making himself known to his people and enabling them to present petitions to him in person. He met village headmen on their own ground, and *alumuzana* who were unostentatiously directing the affairs of their villages and areas, as well as the official chiefs or Subordinate Native Authorities. He saw for himself how his own regulations were being carried out and how the measures for agricultural improvement and cattle-dipping which the Government was promoting were being adopted. These visits in his own territory were followed by visits to Blantyre and Zomba and to the mining centres outside the country where his people were working. He was thus able to check on the conditions in the subordinate chiefs' areas which had been created by the prolonged absence of men from the villages.

The Paramount and changes in law and custom

643 178 Through his school education at Blantyre, his membership of a Christian church, and through attending the chiefs' course at the Jeanes School in Zomba, the Paramount stood between the old and the new in the changing conditions in his kingdom. After the 1933 Ordinance one of the changes in administration was that a Native Authority had to budget 652 [434] for income and expenditure in his area. The income for 1935 for this area was £959, made up of a share of the taxes; fifty per cent. of the yearly rental of stores; court fines and fees and beer licences. The expenditure was £832, under items of salaries to the Paramount and subordinate chiefs; salaries for messengers, councillors, clerks and policemen; payment of fourpence per tax to the headmen of the villages so that it was to their advantage to collect the full amount; and a small sum for uniforms, office expenses and such items as cash boxes and handcuffs. This budget for the central Ngoni kingdom was drawn up in consultation with the District Officer by the Paramount and his treasurer. It was a source of great pride to the treasurer that he had, as we have seen, his own key to a safe in the District Office where he put the tax money collected in the area, and drew out sums needed for expenditure in the Paramount's office.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

called 'to make a clean village', and were one of the results of the Paramount's visits to his area. They included building latrines, sweeping the open spaces round huts, disposing of rubbish, mending roofs and fences, smooth mudding of houses, digging wells. The Paramount appointed three men who were called *masanitari* to go round the villages to inspect and report to him, and instituted a system of fines for failure to carry out these measures. In addition to promoting clean villages, he ordered that cattle were to be dipped regularly, cultivation was to be carried out by a ridge system instead of mounds, and all sick people, especially women, were to attend hospital. He sent his own daughter to hospital for her confinement, and she attended the baby clinic regularly with her child. 744 653

Some of the changes in local customs which the Paramount ordered were not so easy to enforce as the newer practices in relation to health and hygiene. He forbade drinking at night when quarrelling became rife; he prohibited Cewa dances such as *vinyau* and *malombo* and the Cewa female puberty rite of *cinamwali*. The only dances allowed were the Ngoni dance *ngoma*; the *ligubo* or war-dance at his village; and the individual hero's dance (*ligiya*) when a lion or leopard was brought to his village. Marriages had to be registered, and births and deaths recorded and reported to the Paramount when he visited the villages. 178 643 656 563

It was always possible to start an argument among the senior men sitting on the Paramount's *bwalo*, or on the steps of his court-house, either on the subject of how far Ngoni law and custom had replaced local Ntumba and Cewa custom, or on the advantages and disadvantages of the modern reforms of the Paramount. Some of the older men were anxious to establish that the Ngoni, meaning those of the trans-Zambesi clans, had not only achieved a political conquest but had also changed the practices of the local peoples and made them observe Ngoni customs. They used to assert, among other things, that the local people had become patrilineal, and had adopted a *lobola* form of marriage—statements which could easily be disproved and were laughed at by the onlookers. On the other hand, they were right when they said that Ngoni laws and court procedure were universally approved and followed, and that the younger generations at least were willing to carry out the welfare measures of the Paramount. One constant feature of all such discussions of recent changes was the steady support given by the Ntumba and Tengo clan leaders to the Paramount and his rule. This, more than any other feature, proved that the trans-Zambesi pattern of political rule had triumphed, and that in their loyalty to the Paramount and their practice of Ngoni custom the village headmen and their families could be counted on to support the rulers.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

L M N 312 361 surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The fierce late fires which swept through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the dessication.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

L M N 648 491 After survey had been completed and before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their food-stocks and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

L M N 648 312 653 Wherever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (25 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mushiri resettlement area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central L [228] dam which was stocked with bream (*Tilapia spp.*) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

L M N 136 166 311 Another difficulty was the occurance of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

N 744 [164] In the northern part of Fort Jameson Districts, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on compacting pedocal soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Shelters are erected on the edge of gardens, and some people spend most of their time there, returning to the village only to fetch food. Beer parties are held in the gardens, and the villages, particularly in the middle of the week, are largely deserted during the day. One or two boys or old men may stay behind to look after the cattle. Streams are in spate at this time of year, and some men build garden byres to which they move their cattle to avoid the risk of the animals or their herdboys being taken by the water.

This life in the gardens is important from the point of view of inter-village action in that it provides an opportunity for new residential groups to form, albeit temporarily. People without garden shelters of their own may share the shelter of a neighbouring gardener, who may be from another village. People may site their gardens so that they are adjacent to those of kindred from other villages, with whom they will be united for this period of garden residence. Thus, for example, a woman who lives in her husband's village has a widowed mother still living in *her* dead husband's village a mile away. The gardens of the mother and daughter are adjacent, and they both possess garden huts which are built alongside one another. They co-operate in much of the work of their gardens.

With the completion of the harvest, the need for living in the garden ceases, but some people delay their return to the village for a month or so. The explanation given is that immediately after the end of the rains and the harvest, there is much activity by the Administration and the Native Authority in organizing public works, and that by staying on in the gardens people hope to avoid becoming involved in these projects.

Cattle-keeping

The circular village cattle byre, with the dwelling huts built round it in a great circle, as occurs among the South-Eastern Bantu and as reported by Elmslie[1] from Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland, is not found at the present time among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Most villages now have two or three separate cattle byres, and they are placed on the periphery of the village area. They consist of fenced enclosures open to the weather, with a single entrance blocked with poles, and may be up to 20 yards across. Calves are kept in smaller enclosures or in deserted dwelling huts whose owners have gone away or are dead. Where there are well-defined clusters of huts within a village, each cluster may have its own byre, but this is not always the case. Cattle

[1] Elmslie, p. 37.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[857] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
● 653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, much of it inaccessible and uninhabitable, except for small pockets of fertile soil, was opened to unrestricted settlement by the Ambo and Senga-Kunda peoples. Other areas of poor soils and low carrying capacities in Fort Jameson District were also opened to free settlement up to a population total determined by the carrying capacity.

In Ndola District an area was opened to immediate uncontrolled settlement, in order to relieve acute land shortage and actual starvation in one section of the Reserve.

A somewhat modified method has been used in parts of Petauke District where dams are the only means of providing water. Here the population unit consists of three or four villages grouped into a 'parish' and settled about the watering points. A single land area is demarcated for each of these groups, instead of allocating a separate block to each village. This method allows of economy in the distribution of watering points, tends to reduce the effect of inter-village movements and, it is hoped, will lead to larger administrative units.

§ 7. *Agricultural Control and Improvement*

The general object of resettlement is to re-establish a population-land balance on the basis of traditional land usage *and the present population numbers*. Obviously, this balance cannot be permanent if the population is increasing; and if it is not increasing something is seriously wrong. Reliable vital statistics are entirely lacking but probably most of the tribes are increasing (the Ngoni may be an exception) at a rate which, judging by the very few available data, may be about 1½ per cent per annum, a rate which would double the population in forty-six years.

Resettlement is not, and was never regarded as, a substitute for agricultural improvement. The objects are to reduce the agricultural problem to practicable proportions, to relieve acute land shortage, to give time for experiment and the introduction of new methods. The assumption is that an evolutionary process of agricultural improvement will keep pace with natural increase of population, and that this process must be guided by experiment.

Simple measures of agricultural control, and the beginnings of soil conservation and agricultural improvement, have been introduced in each of the resettlement areas as a condition of occupation. It need hardly be said that these are not popular with the majority and the existence of such conditions is a deterrent to movement.

In the case of the earlier settlements in the Fort Jameson District an elementary system of soil conservation was introduced by demarcating the land for cultivation in contour strips separated by untouched belts of grass (which acquired the name of 'ten-yardis' since the original strips were ten paces wide). This was followed by an attempt to replace the traditional mound system of Ngoni, Chewa and Senga by cultivation on ridges

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

called 'to make a clean village', and were one of the results of the Paramount's visits to his area. They included building latrines, sweeping the open spaces round huts, disposing of rubbish, mending roofs and fences, smooth mudding of houses, digging wells. The Paramount appointed three men who were called *masanitari* to go round the villages to inspect and report to him, and instituted a system of fines for failure to carry out these measures. In addition to promoting clean villages, he ordered that cattle were to be dipped regularly, cultivation was to be carried out by a ridge system instead of mounds, and all sick people, especially women, were to attend hospital. He sent his own daughter to hospital for her confinement, and she attended the baby clinic regularly with her child.

Some of the changes in local customs which the Paramount ordered were not so easy to enforce as the newer practices in relation to health and hygiene. He forbade drinking at night when quarrelling became rife; he prohibited Cewa dances such as *vinyau* and *malombo* and the Cewa female puberty rite of *cisamwali*. The only dances allowed were the Ngoni dance *ngoma*; the *ligubo* or war-dance at his village; and the individual hero's dance (*ligiya*) when a lion or leopard was brought to his village. Marriages had to be registered, and births and deaths recorded and reported to the Paramount when he visited the villages.

It was always possible to start an argument among the senior men sitting on the Paramount's *bwalo*, or on the steps of his court-house, either on the subject of how far Ngoni law and custom had replaced local Ntumba and Cewa custom, or on the advantages and disadvantages of the modern reforms of the Paramount. Some of the older men were anxious to establish that the Ngoni, meaning those of the trans-Zambesi clans, had not only achieved a political conquest but had also changed the practices of the local peoples and made them observe Ngoni customs. They used to assert, among other things, that the local people had become patrilineal, and had adopted a *lobola* form of marriage—statements which could easily be disproved and were laughed at by the onlookers. On the other hand, they were right when they said that Ngoni laws and court procedure were universally approved and followed, and that the younger generations at least were willing to carry out the welfare measures of the Paramount. One constant feature of all such discussions of recent changes was the steady support given by the Ntumba and Tengo clan leaders to the Paramount and his rule. This, more than any other feature, proved that the trans-Zambesi pattern of political rule had triumphed, and that in their loyalty to the Paramount and their practice of Ngoni custom the village headmen and their families could be counted on to support the rulers.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Two

THE SNOWBALL STATE

1. Manipulation 2. Age-sets 3. Officers of State 4. Continually segmenting systems 5. Lineage systems compared 6. Splitting the State 7. Stability

1. *Manipulation*

In our first chapter we outlined some of the more significant events in Ngoni history prior to the arrival of Europeans. In this chapter we shall examine the political system within which these events took place. It is not the task of social analysis to determine why these or any other events occurred. What we shall attempt is a discussion of how they occurred, and what were the principal social relations involved in them.

Most of the incidents referred to in the first chapter concerned the State as a whole or the royal family. Nevertheless, when we begin to consider the conditions under which the State endured we have to discuss the social position of ordinary men and women within the State. For the Ngoni State held together as an organized social group, and on occasion failed to hold together, not merely because Zwangendaba was a good leader or his sons quarrelsome or his brothers ambitious, or because his people were bound by custom and knew no better, but also, and in our view mainly, because the State was a viable social entity in its time and place. The arrangement of people into segments and age-sets was not a mere formal and static division, but a means whereby a motley heterogeneous collection of individuals was converted into an organized society with agreed aims. The structure of the State had rules; in other words there was regularity in its social processes. Yet it was a structure which, within these rules, could be manipulated. The structure could be, and was, utilized by individuals for the realization of their private ends at the expense of others as well as providing for the common good. This is probably true of all social systems. We shall begin our analysis by examining the ways in which this manipulation was carried out.

In most societies, from the simplest system of hunting bands to the complex societies of the modern world, one of the most significant sets of rights are those relating to fixed natural resources. The structure of rights in land provides a key to the structure of society.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 relationship between Ngoni and Europeans was of a somewhat
648 different kind, and one of its most interesting features was an attempt by the Ngoni, persisted in for many years, to establish a monopoly over the missionaries, at the expense of another tribe with whom they were at war.[129] In Fort Jameson the social field was more complex. One of Mpezeni's sons tried to sell ivory to Wiese illegally without his father's knowledge,[130] and we may look on this as an attempt to establish a relationship with him differentiated from the wider relationship between Wiese and the Ngoni as a whole, or perhaps as an attempt on Wiese's part to penetrate Ngoni society along its lines of structural cleavage. His and Deare's support for a candidate for the heirship was similar in intention.
[661] Mpezeni's efforts to gain support from Kotakota against his people was a more noticeable attempt to utilize the power of the Whites in his own sectional interest. Similarly the readiness with which raided chiefs made treaties was certainly related to their weak position in relation to the Ngoni and their hope of support against them. Even with the traders, as distinct from the treaty-collectors, this consideration was relevant. Deare relates how he asked Mpezeni to prevent raiding near the North Charterland supply route which passed through Undi's country. When later he visited Undi, he was welcomed for stopping the raids and was given ivory. Thus although at Fort Jameson no one group had a monopoly of access to the Europeans, there were these attempts to establish specific relations with them to the advantage of the different groups concerned.

For as soon as two groups are brought into contact, and for
[178] some reason neither group annihilates the other, there is a change in the structure of the social field in which they act. Life can no longer go on as before, for every man has new potential allies and new potential enemies. There is no established order to which appeal can be made, for a new order has to be created. A new set of alignments, a new social structure, emerges from the manoeuvring and intriguing of the transition period which must differ from the old because of the new interests and new relationships which it contains.

Thus Europeans discriminated between one African group and another. Similarly the Ngoni established different relations with different European groups. From the beginning it was clear that the Portuguese and the British were to be distinguished, and Mpezeni preferred the inaction of the former to the efficiency of

[129] cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 97, 129, 237 and 245.
[130] Wiese, 'Expedição', x, pp. 491-2.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 support those of his colleagues. However, chiefs and others do
[661] sometimes manage to play off one administrator against another where there are differences of interest between different departments of the Administration, and occasionally appeals by Ngoni chiefs to high Administrative officials against the actions of their juniors are successful. It is easier for Ngoni to exploit the much greater differences of interest between the different sections of the non-African community, officials, missions, planters and European and Indian traders.

648 In the early years of this century it appears that the chiefs were
662 approached by labour recruiters, planters, and missionaries who wished to gain their favour and utilize this to their own advantage. It is difficult to gauge to what extent this practice continues. There are one or two recent instances where the missions have clearly
[797] recognized the importance to them of securing the goodwill of an Ngoni in high authority, and it would also appear that some high-placed Ngoni have utilized their position to gain from the missions services which might not otherwise have been so readily available to them. With the cessation of labour recruiting there has been no
[464] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[466] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[574] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

696 In the court itself the magnitude of the penalties imposed and damages awarded is to some extent at the discretion of the court, and political considerations, among others, may influence judgments. Adultery with the wife of a chief is more heavily punished than ordinary adultery, and people from other tribes, particularly the Yao, are discriminated against. Ngoni courts maintain that they recognize only Ngoni law, even though the disputants may belong to other tribes. These ideas are familiar enough, but they indicate that questions of group membership, that is, political affiliation, and relations between groups, do influence the actions of the court. Within a county, hostility between a group having the ear of the court and one lacking it may find expression in procedural obstructions, such as always hearing a particular suit at the end of a day, or of continually postponing the hearing because some minor witness is absent.

[681] [186] [578]

The chief and his advisers usually endeavour to maintain a monopoly of access to the Administration, and this endeavour is largely supported by the Administration as a matter of policy. In the particular sphere of legal action, appeal from the Native Court to the District Officer is sometimes regarded as a challenge to this monopoly, and litigants are sometimes punished for stating that they intend to appeal. In a celebrated recent case when a chief was successfully sued in the District Commissioner's court for damages for adultery, his people came to him afterwards to express their condolences, as after a funeral, at the injury done to his high office by this procedure.

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Native Courts are formally recognized under Ordinance by the Administration, and hence changes in the indigenous legal system brought about by the Administration are legal changes, in that they have behind them all the paraphernalia of Ordinances, Letters Patent, Orders-in-Council, and Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. This gives a special quality to manipulation of the legal system by the Administration, for this is really only another way of saying that effective sovereignty lies with the British Crown and not with Paramount Chief Mpezeni. But within the framework of analysis of the local situation, the actions of the Administration and of the chiefs in controlling the working of the courts are comparable sociologically.

692 648

The Administration is continually exercised about the quality of the work done in Native Courts, and in so far as all cases heard in Native Courts are subject to revision by the District Commissioner a direct check is, or could be, exerted on the way in which the courts operate. But Administrative intervention goes further

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 rule as a Native Authority Order.[26] Thus the chiefs preferred to
671 appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the
692 judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the
692 indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts.
664 Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of
[797] divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people
671 and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened
646 about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are
661 constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[27]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the
692 ease with which their members may move away to other sur-
648 roundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts
626 are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the
[681] end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[26] *African Affairs, report*, 1948, p. 47.
[27] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182]

In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
● [661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 sensitive to suggestions that a chief may be oppressing his people,
648 usually works through the Paramount. One minor chief was sent to the Paramount's village for a period of instruction in order that he might learn how to rule wisely. On another occasion a chief who had abused the Administration was fined one month's salary by the Paramount. In both these instances the Administration was the initiator of the Paramount Chief's action, but he may also act without reference to it. It was reported to the Paramount that a certain minor chief had struck one of his subjects who had been slow to offer him beer. The Paramount warned the minor chief that he might kill someone this way, and that he ought to fine people, not to strike them. In a dispute between a minor chief and his court clerk over some new court furniture, which the chief wished to use in his own house, the Paramount intervened and ordered that the chairs be put in the courthouse.

643 The Paramount himself is subject to social constraint, and may be criticized by his senior lieutenants. He is advised on how he should behave by these men, and if his behaviour is unsatisfactory they may rebuke him. At county meetings, headmen and others can voice their
644 complaints against the royal house as a whole, and have from time to
661 time protested successfully at such a meeting against too many of the Native Authority posts being filled by members of the royal lineage.

The Native Authority

647 Under the Native Authority system, introduced by the Administra-
[648] tion in 1929, there are a number of paid officials, apart from the chiefs, whose salaries are met by the Native Treasury. They include councillors, assessors, clerks, police, postmen, school attendance officers, and others. The most important of these, and the most highly paid, are
692 the councillors and assessors. They sit once or twice a week in court and hear cases brought before them. Each of the chiefs has a court, and for the most part the cases that come before a county court are brought by people living in the county. When litigants from two counties are involved there is no definite rule as to which court will hear the case and it largely depends on the wish of the instigator of the proceedings. Cases come before the Paramount Chief's county court that concern people from other counties and a litigant may take his case from one chief to another, including the Nyasaland chiefs, in an attempt to obtain a favourable and enforceable decision. The Appeal Court sits at the Paramount Chief's village and is held once a month.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mashanga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tsonga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tsinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[88] Swann's report for 1896, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.

[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.

[90] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 24; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 23; cf. Young, *History*, p. 112, who reverses the role played by witch-finders in this incident.

[91] As reported by Warton in June 1896, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.

[92] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 493.

[93] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingu, Nzermane, and Madzimawi.

[94] 181, fo. 99.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

man presenting his request for a gun licence, or for permission to go to Southern Rhodesia, or to move to another village, or whatever it may be, is told first to bring a letter from his chief in support of his request and it will then be considered. Thus the approval of the chief is necessary for a variety of enterprises. 648

A chief may decide not to support a request for a variety of reasons. He does not want to recommend to the Administration projects which will turn out unfavourably, and yet he does not want to oppose unnecessarily the wishes of his people who may begin to drift away into other counties or to Southern Rhodesia if they feel he is being unfair to them. Many of these requests from his people are handled by the court clerk who has custody of the rubber stamps, without whose imprint no letter looks official. Other councillors and advisers may also help with these requests, and may advise the chief, in the light of their own interests and of their estimate of the public interests, on whether or not to support a request. There is thus opportunity for a friend of the chief to block rivals and enemies by seeing that their requests do not go forward. [662] Men who are thwarted in this way can appeal to the Administration, and may perhaps be granted their request. Such action, however, is likely to increase the antagonism of the Native Authority towards them, and in so far as they have defied the authority of the chief by appealing against his decision, they may be censured by their neighbours. [626] Thus what they gain in one respect may be offset by what they lose in another. When the quarrel between a councillor and a man who is, say, trying to open a shop in his village is of long standing and with faults and undisclosed offences on both sides, it may be unwise to risk the whole matter being brought to the notice of the Administration by an appeal over the matter of the shop.

In other situations, where the Administration endeavours to intervene in some matter in which the chief is thought to be dilatory, the Native Authority may shield a man because of the danger of possible repercussions. 627 648 Thus, for instance, a District Officer on tour found a man living in a village at which he was not registered. He turned the offender over to the Native Court. The offender had a perfectly good defence but his story would have involved reference to incest by an important person and it was therefore undesirable that the District Officer should hear of the matter. Accordingly the Court delayed the hearing of the case on some technicality, and after the District Officer had left the area nothing more was done.

In the main the Administration presents a united front to the Ngoni, and the words and actions of each Administrative officer 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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[464] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[466] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[574] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

inefficient workers on the local tobacco farms, where the ties that link them to the near-by villages with their marriages, funerals, and beer parties are still operative, and where the wages are much lower than in Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, Ngoni tend to suspect the good intentions of any non-African, however lavish he may be with his presents, and for this reason are reluctant to enter into agreements with them the social consequences of which they cannot foresee.

2. *Rivals of the Paramount Chief*

In pre-conquest times the death of the head of the State was followed by a struggle between rival heirs and by fission of the State. Under British colonial rule these struggles cannot be carried on by force of arms, and it is difficult to split the tribe when there is nowhere for the dissident section to move to and when Administrative recognition is an important condition for political existence. Nevertheless the same struggles continue even if in a different guise.

One of the most interesting incidents in the struggles between rival groups for the chieftainship occurred in 1903 and hinged on an aspect of segmentation within the residential system which we have not so far discussed. It was customary for the heir to a large segment founded by his father to place one wife in the headquarters of that segment as well as establishing his bevies of wives with their own inferior segments. The eldest son of the selected wife grew up to be in charge of the headquarters and came to be identified with his father's father, the founder of the headquarters, as against his father who was lord of its segment. Thus, for example, Zwangendaba, heir to segment 1, founded segment 18 for his own great wife, but also placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 1, the segment founded by his father for *his* great wife. Similarly Mpezeni, as son of Zwangendaba, placed one of his wives in the headquarters of segment 4, which by then had replaced the annihilated segment 18. In this matter the Ngoni seem to have differed from the Zulu, for among them, according to Bryant, the *isizinda*, son of the placed wife, represents his own father as against the father's main heir.[1]

In 1903 the eldest son of Mpezeni I by the selected wife in segment 4 tried to assume the name of his father's father, Zwangendaba. This was in accord with his structural position as representing the interests of the founder of the segment as against those of the

[1] Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 80; Bryant, *Dictionary*, s.v. *isi-zinda*. cf. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 401. Lancaster implies that the selected wife was called *ikhlulu*. This seems unlikely in view of the Zulu use of *i(li)khlulu* for the senior left-hand wife.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kins- 634
woman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political 554
significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the
particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent
incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound 634
by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife 683
while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded 578
him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants
and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's
father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing.
A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said
he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman
complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The
chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting
he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman
said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken
the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why
he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was
accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment 634
and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are 273
protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief 576
himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him
but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a
commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the [626]
reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer
under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages
unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his
intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants 431
are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these
presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, 662
they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or 634
hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia
may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present
is made by an individual and arises from his own political
aspiration. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective
as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an 634
affirmation of a reationship between a social group, often a village 273
or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Mariage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

these need the support and co-operation of the African community. 648
The Administration has consulted Ngoni and other Native Authorities on such matters as agricultural control, the emigration of 645
women to the railway line, provision of better schools, and so on. In 1948 the number of councillor posts was reduced. Instead of employing councillors for general duties, each of the four councillors remaining, now receiving a much higher salary than before, has been given a specific task, the care of roads, the promotion of agriculture, the efficient use of school facilities, and the co-ordination of the work of the Native Authority as a whole. The Administration has attempted to make these four councillors, together with the ten Northern Rhodesian chiefs, into a formal council competent to take decisions without always referring to the people as a whole.

So far this attempt has not been very successful, but the power of the four councillors is certainly greater than that of their more numerous and lower-paid predecessors. The court clerks have been overshadowed by these new men and left behind in these new activities. Literacy is becoming common and clerks are no longer [212]
in demand as secretaries to chiefs. The Native Authority is beginning to employ men whose jobs do not take them to court at all.

The present range of posts whose emoluments are handled by 647
the Native Treasury is shown in Table VIII.

All these posts are filled by the Native Authority in agreement with the Administration. It is easy to show how a large proportion of the employees are connected to the chiefs and senior lieutenants by kinship, but this fact is not as significant as it might appear. The Ngoni possess nowadays what may be called an omni-directional [611]
kinship system in which ties of kinship can be traced as convenient through fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and by any combination of these. It would indeed be surprising if Native Authority employees could not trace genealogical connexion with chiefs and their lieutenants, for so can nearly everyone in Ngoniland. There is no formal selection procedure but a chief may announce at a county meeting that there is a post to be filled and those present may suggest names. Alternatively a chief may discuss the matter with his advisers and then offer the post to the man they decide on. Occasionally a man seeking employment approaches the Paramount Chief in the hope that there may be a [662]
post to be filled. Thus although those who live near the chief, or who make it their business to see him and drink with him frequently stand a greater change of being chosen, choice is not restricted to these people. [see page 152, category 116. —Analyst]

[Text continues on page 153]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

from the campaign and the purification of those who had killed any of the enemy. 726

Cibambo and other Ngoni informants had no idea of the size of the Ngoni armies beyond emphasizing that they were 'very big and very strong'. Evidence was forthcoming, however, from early European sources on the size of the armies which, though it can only have been based on guess-work, nevertheless gave an indication of the numbers involved. Dr. Elmslie referred in 1878 to having seen in the previous year an army of 10,000 of the northern Ngoni which went out in June and returned in September.[1] In the *B.C.A. Gazette* of December 1894, reference was made to the armies of the central Ngoni which were said to be, at the time of their last raids, 50,000 strong. In the *Blantyre District Note Book* there was an entry of 1884, giving no numbers for the army but reporting on the raid on Blantyre in that year when the 'vanguard of the army was composed entirely of young men in their first vigour of manhood, who were said to have marched 50 miles in half a day'. From such scanty references by Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni armies in the field consisted of large numbers, were highly organized, and trained to feats of endurance as well as in fighting skill. The Blantyre reference also brought out the authority of the big war *induna*, who was presented with cloth by the Moir brothers of the African Lakes Corporation as a bribe not to attack the Blantyre area again, and kept his promise. 701 175 [662]

Objectives in warfare

Dr. Kuper wrote of the Swazi military kingdom that wars were waged 'to extend the boundaries, to retain tribal independence and to secure internal solidarity'.[2] After the Ngoni kingdoms were set up in Nyasaland, warfare had the same objectives with the additional one of bringing back captives and cattle. In north Nyasaland Dr. Elmslie, in the reference already cited, wrote that, after the four months' campaigning the Ngoni armies returned 'laden with spoil in slaves, cattle and ivory'. Up to the coming of the Europeans many of the raids and wars took place in the hope of annexing additional territory. Dr. Elmslie wrote in 1878 of the Ngoni dominating an area of 30,000 square miles in north Nyasaland from the lake-shore to the Luangwa river. In central Nyasaland the *B.C.A. Gazette* of 1894 reported that the Ngoni Paramount ruled from the Lintippe river near Lilongwe to the Luvubwe river south of the Kirk Range. The chief challenge to Ngoni security in the northern kingdom came from the Bemba, and in the central kingdom from a combination of Yao and Arabs. Dr. Laws recorded in 1886 that the Ngoni, in their final victorious campaign against the Bemba, had 721 175 [171] [648]

[1] Elmslie, W. A. *Among the Wild Ngoni*. Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1899, p. 79.
[2] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organisation in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 rule as a Native Authority Order.[36] Thus the chiefs preferred to
671 appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the
692 judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the
692 indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts.
664 Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of
[787] divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people
671 and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened
646 about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are
661 constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[37]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the
692 ease with which their members may move away to other sur-
648 roundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts
626 are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the
[681] end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[36] *African Affairs*, report, 1948, p. 47.
[37] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

646 Secretariat or the Legislative Council. The agenda consists of
648 items suggested by the African members and by the Administration.
The African members of the Council elect four of their number as
[666] their nominees to the African Representative Council of Northern Rhodesia, which in its turn advises the Governor on the appointment of the African members of Legislative Council. As yet, the Provincial Council meetings attract little attention among the bulk of the African population, and few Ngoni know who their members are. Nevertheless among the chiefs and councillors these meetings, if regarded with suspicion, are of some interest, and for the two delegates they provide an opportunity for stressing in public what they regard as the Ngoni point of view as contrasted with those of other tribes. Many of the Ngoni speeches are phrased in anachro-
[537] nistic terms, and represent more an affirmation of how different
[196] the Ngoni are or used to be rather than a realization of how similar their interests now are to those of their neighbours. However, it is possible as the Council acquires more power and the consequences of its deliberations begin to affect more people directly, Ngoni will take a greater interest in its proceedings.[88] The same comments apply to Ngoni participation on the Provincial Team, an advisory body with representatives from the Administration, the unofficial White community, Indians and Africans.

Ngoniland is almost completely surrounded by Cewa chief-
648 doms. The old no-man's-land which isolated the Ngoni from their neighbours in pre-conquest times has long ago disappeared. On the fringes of Ngoni country there is a great deal of contact between Ngoni villages and their Cewa neighbours and the links of kinship stretch across tribal boundaries without interruption. Within
563 Ngoniland itself, under the control of county chiefs, are some
648 villages which still speak the Cewa language rather than the Nsenga dialect used by most Ngoni. Most of these Cewa-speaking villages
[167] have come into Ngoniland after 1898. Their numbers are indicated in Table VII (p. 133) where it will be seen that on the average about one village in five has entered in this way. The great majority of these are Cewa in origin. Some of them claim that they have returned to ancestral sites, others state that they came as a result of land alienation or of some quarrel with their former chief. Others have been formed by non-Ngoni immigrants who have worked for many years in the township or on the farms and built up their own followings. In Northern Rhodesia villages of this kind form an integral part of Ngoni society. The cultural features which distin-

[88] cf. Barnes, 'History', for a discussion of the way in which Ngoni members act at council meetings.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

They became known as the Rhodesian Ndebele or Matabele. Posselt, who worked among them, does not record in their history any fight with Zwangendaba, nor do Elmslie, Bryant, Young or Chibambo. Money and Smith say that it is a matter of doubt whether or not Zwangendaba met Mzilikazi. However, Wiese, who states that Zwangendaba broke away from Mzilikazi, says that there was a fight between them. Lancaster writes that there was a fight on the Transvaal border in 1828 before the raid of 1833. Poole makes this fight take place in about 1833 and writes of the Ngoni at that time living in the vicinity of modern Bulawayo and raiding Mzilikazi in the Transvaal. If we are to accept the existence of contact between Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi at all, either of these two versions is preferable to that of Winterbottom, who implies that after taking part in the 1833 raid at Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba moved to the vicinity of Bulawayo where he met Mzilikazi, only to move on to the Zambezi in 1835. Winterbottom crowds into two years more marching and fighting than seems likely to have taken place. There is also conclusive evidence, set out by Posselt, that Mzilikazi did not leave the Transvaal under Boer pressure until about 1838.

If Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi were not living side by side, the suggestion by Lancaster and Winterbottom that they quarrelled about a dog is unlikely to be correct. There may be confusion here with the story, recorded by Field and Rangeley, of a quarrel between Mpezeni and Mwambera over their dogs.[22]

6. *Fission*

Various writers describe three occasions on which, according to their accounts, dissident sections broke off from the main body of Ngoni prior to Zwangendaba's death. Our view is that only one of these secessions actually took place, and that it was relatively unimportant.

The first allegedly dissident group is that sometimes known as the Maseko Ngoni, now dwelling in the region round Mount Domwe, on both sides of the border between southern Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa. Murray, Young, Hatchell, Poole and Bruwer state that after crossing the River Zambezi together, the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland broke off from Zwangendaba while he was in Nsenga country. Laws, Johnson, Soga, Lancaster and Rangeley state that these Ngoni crossed the Zambezi separately from Zwangendaba. Elmslie says that they were not an offshoot of Zwangendaba's party, while Read, Chibambo and Winterbottom state that they broke away from Mzilikazi, not from Zwangendaba. Fraser mentions a group that remained behind when Zwangendaba crossed the river and says that it went on to the east of Lake Nyasa, but does not say that it later returned to southern Nyasaland. Of all these writers, Read has had most contact with the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, and her account, as amplified by Winter-

[22] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 5; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', pp. 15f; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Young, *History*, pp. 109f; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 190; Posselt, *Fact and fiction*, p. 171, Field, *Visitions*, pp. 16f; Rangeley, 'Mbwela', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 173 167 619 668 bottom, seems the most acceptable.[33] Two other versions of this alleged dissension can also be rejected. Bryant says that the southern Nyasaland Ngoni remained behind after the main body had crossed the river and that they were led by Gwasa (*sic*), Zwangendaba's principal headman. Stigand's account is similar, except that he says they broke off after crossing the river. This conflicts with the evidence of Young and Chibambo of the subsequent part played by Gwaza, first lieutenant in segment 1, with Zwangendaba's own group. We must also reject the contention of Coxhead and Hodgson that the southern Nyasaland group broke away from the main body of Ngoni after Zwangendaba's death in Tanganyika Territory. The statement made by Stanley and followed by numerous other writers that the Hehe are an Ngoni group is quite without foundation.[34] Some other communities in [101] southern Tanganyika who were merely raided by Ngoni have themselves taken the name Ngoni or some other name used by Ngoni.[35]

Poole speaks in one place of 'the secession of Nquaba' (Nxaba) from Zwangendaba, but this does not tally with his earlier statements that Nxaba's migration was independent of Zwangendaba, and that the first secession from Zwangendaba's host was that of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni. Bryant's account of Nxaba is much fuller than Poole's, and contradicts Poole's suggestion that Nxaba crossed the Zambezi at the Lupata Gorge. According to Bryant, Nxaba's group never formed part of Zwangendaba's following, and Nxaba was eventually killed in Barotseland. Chibambo and Winterbottom support Bryant.[36]

Posselt, who worked among Mzilikazi's people, states that a section of Zwangendaba's group, composed of Swazi, broke off at about the time of the Zambezi crossing and turned back to join Mzilikazi who married the woman who led the dissident section.

[33] The secession of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni from Mzilikazi may explain Wiese's and Decle's assertions that Zwangendaba himself broke away from Mzilikazi. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 466; Decle, *Savage Africa*, p. 151.

[34] Murray, *Handbook*, p. 30; Young, *History*, p. 111, and letter in *African Studies*, 1950; Hatchell, 'Angoni' (1935), p. 69; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 11; Laws, p. 85, f.n.1, in Lugard, *East African Empire*, i; Johnson, *Nyasa*, p. 102; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 275; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Elmslie, *Introductory Grammar*, p. x; Read, 'Tradition', p. 464; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 31; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 16; Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 312*f*; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 463; Stigand, 'Natives', p. 126; Coxhead, *Native tribes*, p. 20; Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 128; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, pp. 499, 503; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 56, 62.

[35] Maples, *Journals*, p. 13; Weule, *Native Life*, p. 339.

[36] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 7 and 6; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 277, 279, 434, 460*f*, 471*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 16; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 18.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This story is followed by Bryant but does not occur in any accounts collected from Ngoni themselves. It seems probable therefore that this seceding section was not numerous or important.[27]

There are no other disruptions mentioned in the literature, and it seems probable therefore that until the death of Zwangendaba, the State remained largely intact. However the process, common in Bantu Africa, by which rival claimants to a throne succeed only in dividing their kingdom, operated with striking effect as soon as the founder of the State was buried. The elimination of segment 18 has sometimes been suggested as the reason why the State broke up, but it is clear from comparative considerations that a State of this kind was likely at any time to break into a number of independent groups, and that this tendency was greatest at the death or senescence of the king.

About 1840 a number of important people, mainly coming from south of the Zambezi, were killed off as a result of an internal struggle for power in which it appears that the recently captured Tumbuka, who were successful witch-finders, were allied with the Swazi and other Ndandwe against the Tsonga from the Delagoa Bay region.[28] Unfortunately there is very little information available on the relationship of this struggle to the rest of the political system. It is, however, clear that the effect of killing off a large number of Ngoni of Tsonga origin was insufficient to prevent the State breaking up a few years later.

When Zwangendaba died, his sons were still young and, for the time being, effective leadership of the State was disputed between men of his own generation whose positions are shown in Diagram 2. His brothers, the lords of segments 5 and 6, were already dead. Fraser describes the dispute as a struggle between Ntabeni's children and Mgayi. Ntabeni was a younger brother of Zwangendaba and the lord of segment 7 while Mgayi was Zwangendaba's father's younger brother's son who, on Chibambo's evidence, represented the interests of the residue of segment 1. Rangeley has a slightly different version and makes Mgayi a supporter of segment 4. Poole, presumably following Fraser, says with some qualification that Ntabeni and Mgayi both claimed the chieftainship. From what we know of the south-eastern Bantu, and from our knowledge of present-day Ngoni, it seems unlikely that a brother would claim to be the legitimate heir in preference to a son, however much he might strive to gain ascendancy over the son. It seems preferable to follow Young and Chibambo in regarding Ntabeni and Mgayi

[27] Powell, *Fact and fiction*, pp. 146-7, 176; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 464 *f*.
[28] See p. 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 to Zwangendaba's father's brother's son Mgayi, of the residue of
643 segment 1.

Elmslie states that Ntabeni's people, i.e. those of segment 7, went northward
173 on the west side of Tanganyika and he is followed in this by Murray, Bryant and
167 Tew. Elmslie bases his statement on Stewart, who heard of them there in 1879.
114 However, Stewart did not visit the west side of Lake Tanganyika himself, and
668 merely gathered his information from people in a Mambwe village on his way to the lake in October 1879. The account of the Ngoni that they gave him was incorrect in a number of particulars, and we have, therefore, to treat with caution their statement about the existence of an Ngoni group west of Lake Tanganyika. Even if part of this segment did settle there, it is certain that the whole of segment 7 did not. Hatchell gives genealogical information for the group of Ngoni at present near Runsewe, Kahama District, Tanganyika Territory, which links them to Ntabeni and segment 7. Stanley describes an Ngoni group which attacked Ujiji and was allied to Mirambo, and in the light of Hatchell's account it is certain that Stanley is here referring to part, if not the whole, of segment 7. This interpretation is made by Fraser, and is in accord with Young and Chibambo. Hence we may conclude that the main body of segment 7 went north on the east side of Lake Tanganyika and eventually settled in Kahama District.

Part of segment 7 may have split off and gone elsewhere, possibly to the west of the lake. Hatchell, in his account of the Kahama group, does not mention Ngodoyi, son of Ntabeni, and it is possible that he may have led a group elsewhere although Rangeley states that it was his following that reached Kahama. Hatchell and Winterbottom write of an abortive expedition by Zwangendaba to the western shores of Lake Tanganyika but make no mention of a group remaining there.

This interpretation conflicts with Elmslie, who says that segment 7 was west of the lake while the group encountered by Stanley were a separate group led by Ntutu. Elmslie does not say who Ntutu was, but it is clear from the context that he does not refer to Ntutu Mpezeni. Hatchell does not mention the name Ntutu in his genealogies. Elmslie may, therefore, have been misled on this point.

The only other writer to mention a group west of the lake is Poole, who says that Ntabeni settled west of the lake in Nyamwezi country, where they were known as Watuta, and, co-operating with the Ruga-Ruga, were encountered by Livingstone and Stanley in 1871. Since in 1871 Livingstone, Stanley, the Ruga-Ruga, and the main body of Nyamwezi were all east of the lake, it appears that Poole intended to write 'east', not 'west'.

Colle refers to contact between the Ngoni and Luba, but the section of Luba with whom the Ngoni fought had crossed from the Congo to the east side of Lake Tanganyika before encountering the Ngoni. The existence of an Ngoni group on the west side of Lake Tanganyika seems therefore to be doubtful.[84]

Fraser says that Mgayi led the main body, including Mpezeni, Mwambera, and Mperembe, as far north as Victoria Nyanza. Finding the country poor, he led them back towards Sukuma country, but died on the way. Fraser is followed by Poole, Soga and Winterbottom. It is perhaps significant that Fraser does not

[84] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 25-7; Murray, *Handbook*, p. 29; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 468; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Stewart, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 268; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Hatchell, 'Tanganyika territory' (1935), pp. 69*f*; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, p. 499; Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Young, *History*, p. 115; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 29; Colle, *Baluba*, p. 65; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 62.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

mention Ntabeni's group as reaching Victoria Nyanza, and it may be that he has merely attributed this exploit to the wrong group. Such an interpretation would be in accord with the accounts of Elmslie, Young, Chibambo and Rangeley, and following them, Bryant and Tew. All these writers imply that the main body of Ngoni did not go farther north than Ufipa. It also provides a more reasonable chronology, for by Fraser's version we have to assume that within only about five years the main body of Ngoni traversed Tanganyika Territory from south to north and then back again. Lancaster is inconclusive on this point.[86] 173 114 167 668

7. *Mpezeni's kingdom*

Mgayi did not live long as regent and after his death the senior lieutenant of segment 1 made Mpezeni chief. There was a considerable shortage of food at the time and this, combined with dissension in the tribe about the succession, appears to have precipitated a further split. A follower of Zwangendaba called Zulu Gama, whose position in the segmentary organization seems not to have been recorded, led his segment off to the east, where in the vicinity of Songea he met with that group of Maseko Ngoni which we have mentioned earlier, and who probably broke off from the Ndebele some time prior to 1835. For a while the two groups operated as one but soon they split apart. Some people stayed on in Songea District, others went south and eventually rounded the southern end of Lake Nyasa to arrive in the Dedza District of southern Nyasaland, where they remain to-day. 173 167 668 643 631

Of those that remained behind under Mpezeni, the principal cleavage was between segments 2, 4, 5 and 6, all led by Mpezeni, on the one side and segment 3 with the headquarters of segment 1 on the other. Led by the senior lieutenant of segment 1, the latter group moved off to the south-east while Mpezeni moved west. While in the country of the Bisa, segment 2 broke off from Mpezeni and after settling for a while in Bemba country as an independent group it eventually went back to join segment 3. Mpezeni, with segments 4, 5 and 6, went south and eventually arrived in Fort Jameson District. His leadership of these segments seems not to have been questioned, but in the other group the senior lieutenant of segment 1 at first supported the headquarters of segment 3 against the claims to the chieftainship made by segment 8. Mtwalo, the son of Zwangendaba who had been put in charge of the headquarters of segment 3, protested, however, that the real head of that segment was Mwambera, head of segment 8, who thus became chief. 173 167 631 643

[86] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 274; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 18; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 27; Young, *History*, pp. 115*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 29*ff*; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 467; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers, The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

successive head of a major segment memorialized in this way, but the major divisions of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When splits occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fission had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fission in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fission we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[43] Fission in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fission was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fission did not bring into being any *new segments*, but *merely* dissolved the highest segment of all as a cohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fission was a hazardous

[43] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a *state* of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fission' to refer to the *process* of internal subdivision. cf. Fortes, *Web of kinship, passim*. I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later rejoined it peaceably, but other instances of fission were accompanied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Ciwele Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[43] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[44] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force. Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftainship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no mere secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[43] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 34.
[44] Stanley, *Livingstone*, p. 169, and *Dark Continent*, i, p. 499; Hatchell, 'Angoni', passim.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the latter. This alignment established, it was natural that Warton, 439
though not himself a party to the Imperial struggle, should utilize 648
it by arriving in the country from Tete, in Portuguese territory, rather than from Nyasaland, that he should pose as Wiese's brother, and, assuming that the Foreign Office was correctly informed, that he should fly a Portuguese flag. Genthe played a similar game with his Union Jack, but in a different area among the raided tribes. Even among the British, Mpezeni had three groups to deal with, North Charterland, B.S.A. Company, and the Nyasaland Administration. He was initially friendly and later hostile towards the first, unyielding to the second, and appealed for help to the third, although, or perhaps because, it was farthest away.

The effective cleavage within the Ngoni chiefdom was between 439
the chief and his eldest son. We might have expected the major 578
cleavage to have been between one son and another, particularly 648
in view of North Charterland support for one son rather than 668
another. We have some information concerning who Wiese and Deare thought were their friends, but some of these people appear to have taken a prominent part in the fighting. Mpezeni was certainly not entirely deserted by his own people, for he was able to send emissaries to Kotakota and to warn Wiese and Deare of plots against their lives.[121] The situation in which one section of the population supported the chief and the remainder supported his son may have been facilitated by the existence of what we have called rump segments in the residential system. For in this system the dependants of a segment head were not completely divided up among his heirs; there was a remainder who even after the death of the head constituted a rump segment and represented his interests as against those of his sons. Thus it may be that Mpezeni was supported by those who remained in his great wife's village, or perhaps in his father's great wife's village, as against those who had broken out from it. In the absence of satisfactory evidence, our hypothesis remains unverified. Such evidence as there is, is contradictory. Deare made friends, eventually, with the two senior lieutenants of segment 10, the segment of Mpezeni's great wife; this would support our thesis, as does Wiese's mention of the senior of these as one of his friends. Yet both of them, according to my informants, descendants of these men, were shot in the course of the campaign; this points against our thesis. In the list of friends and enemies which Wiese and his companions gave Brake, segments 4 and 10 each have members in both lists. Among those listed as friends are Ciboma msitini, regional governor in segment 4 and

[121] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186; 287, fo. 137; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10.
578 Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant
648 of segment 4, and Kamzembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional
668 governor in segment 10.[123] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[124] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour
[721] peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell
[178] their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs
439 traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid
648 Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with
567 Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[125] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[123] 187, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[124] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[125] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy. 634 645

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief. 202 634 624

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it. 611 643 551 634 [648] [645]

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has 634 668

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Liqunu*. cf. Zulu *i(li)nuna*, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 149f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 delegated a certain amount of responsibility, such as the collection
668 of licence fees or the holding of a court not recognized by the Administration but supplied by the county clerk with the apparatus of official forms. The would-be chief then argues that the rural district in which he lives has always been distinct from the rest of the county and that it is too far for the people in it to attend at the county court. No attempt of this kind since 1920 has been successful, although the recent dispersal of villages into reopened land outside
[693] the reserves has increased the distances some litigants have to travel to the county court, and hence the number of disputes referred to these unrecognized local leaders has increased.

4. *The chief and his people*

634 The chief interacts with his people in a variety of situations. He receives their presents of beer and other valuables, he presides at county meetings, and organizes the royal hunts. He visits them in their villages when there are important celebrations and festivities and they go to him with their requests and complaints.

634 Ngoni offer beer as one of their principal expressions of
574 hospitality, and in a formal beer party the ordered pattern of the
273 social structure is acted out in the distribution and dispensation of
[554] the various jars and bowls of beer.[11] One traditional obligation is to provide a jar of beer for the head of the segment. Everyone belongs, or belonged, to a hierarchy of segments so that there were many people who ought to be honoured in this way at every party. In practice, since beer is heavy to carry, few jars move outside the village in which they are brewed, but a distant political superior is sometimes called in to a village to attend a beer party at which he will be honoured in this way. In the chief's own village the chief lives close at hand and beer is provided in much the same way as for the headman in an ordinary village. When beer is brewed by important people in the capital and regal villages they often call the chief to come and visit them and enjoy their hospitality. The chief is not so frequently called to beer in commoner villages, but on an important occasion such as the formal installation of a village official, or the formal announcement that a village has moved to a new site, it is appropriate to invite the chief to attend. A chief may
634 also be honoured by his affines with beer brewed for him in the
554 same way as any other man, but there is some disagreement about the appropriateness of this, for the chief 'has exceeded all others'

[11] See Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 217-19, for the rules of and attitudes towards beer drinking.

1;Barnes E-! (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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[48] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 34.
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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[48] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[48] Wiese, 'Expedicke', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 198; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, fn1; Young, *Hiney*, p. 185.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State, [668] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the [684] majority of death sentences.[66] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema- [687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
619 and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many [161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to [597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[66] Wiese, 'Regelsicht', pp. 471-4, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

l:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

171 643 between rival heirs even while the occupant of the throne was still alive. The brothers Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fought for the heirship while their father Mpande was still chief.[56]

175 643 648 669 The apparent ineffectiveness of Mpezeni's rule may well have been due to the increasing segmentation of the State as it expanded and to the growing differentiation of interest between one major segment and another. As it happened, there was no civil war and the tribe did not split, at least not in these terms. A cleavage in the royal house did reveal itself later, in 1903, after British rule had begun, when Madzimawi tried to take the name of Zwangendaba and was opposed by the supporters of Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu. But by then the form of the State was already determined by political forces other than the balanced opposition of segments. It is significant of the changed situation that Madzimawi did not send his armed followers against the new Mpezeni to challenge his succession. Instead he applied to the Native Commissioner for permission to take the name of his grandfather.[57]

Instead of dividing in civil war the whole country united against the European interlopers. Mpezeni alone tried to protect his friend Wiese. The effective cleavage was not between rival heirs but between the Paramount Chief and his people. He was now a man in his sixties who seemed not to want war and who perhaps benefited more than his people from the presents made by Europeans. The Ngoni people continued to believe and teach that fighting was the proper occupation for men. An attempt to exploit this cleavage was made in 1897 when Wiese, perhaps remembering his earlier attempt to serve Portugal and Britain simultaneously, offered his services to the B.S.A. Company. Forbes thought that if Wiese was given troops, he would be supported by Mpezeni, who would then be in a position to hold Nsingu and the Ngoni warriors in check.[58] But this plan was overtaken by events.

69 721 175 439 648 We saw in the previous chapter that the organization of the State was based on warfare, not only on war as an activity bringing prestige to successful warriors but also on war as a method of recruitment to the ever-widening segments of the residential system. Without warfare to eliminate the unsuccessful and to bring promotion and dependants to those who survived, the system could not keep going. It was in no sense inevitable that the Fort Jameson Ngoni and the British should fight; we have only to turn to the

[56] Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', pp. 35-6, and *Malinowski's Sociological Theories*, pp. 19-20; Krige, *Social system of the Zulu*, p. 19.
[57] See pp. 139 f.
[58] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

our task is to separate them out. Yet even in analysis we have to show how each field interlocks with the other two, how events in one field set up movements in others. [178 648]

The material apparatus used in the various fields was distinct. The traditional processes were decided ultimately by resort to spears and shields. Portugal and Britain fought with artillery, embargoes, customs dues and treaties. The North Charterland fought its rivals with concessions, certificates of claim and share capital.[188] Mpezeni, who knew how to fight with spears, was asked to sign pieces of paper which would then be negotiable in a property system of which he knew nothing, and the manipulators of which knew little of him. The treaty-collectors imagined a patchwork of stationary chiefdoms spread over the region, each with a chief powerful enough to sell his country, whereas in fact there was only an unstable series of groups of shifting cultivators, each liable to attack from the migrating Ngoni. [739 648]

Yet despite the differences in technique and despite the lack of knowledge of each other's systems of government, the various groups involved continued to pursue their own ends as best they could. Mpezeni may not have known what a flag was, yet the issue between Portugal and Britain was decided, and decided in Lisbon rather than in Ngoniland. The treaties may have been made beyond the competence, and the understanding, of the chiefs who signed them, and yet the B.S.A. Company did gain control of the country. Mpezeni never made his mark on a document, yet the North Charterland acquired its ten thousand square miles of land. On the other hand, the Ngoni regiments tried to win another battle like the others they had won before, and this time they failed. In consequence of the war of 1898 there was a revolution, a change of structural form, in Ngoni society, whereas in the histories of Portugal and Britain, and even of the B.S.A. Company, the event passed almost unnoticed. [721 669]

In northern Nyasaland an analogous process of incorporation within a wider system was taking place. Here also there was an intruding European group and the same distant interest of the Nyasaland Administration. Yet in many ways the chain of events in northern Nyasaland was simpler than at Fort Jameson. In the north, there was only one set of resident Whites, the Livingstonia missionaries, there was no Wiese willing to play for both sides at once, and there was no North Charterland. In consequence the [797]

[188] cf. Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, p. 24: 'Swazi were subjugated through concessions, a type of economic warfare eventually sanctioned by powerful European governments.'

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 643 reigning lord of the segment. It is probable that in this instance the divergence of interest had been increased by the shooting of Nsingu, for Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu and grandson of Mpezeni I, was only a young boy and in the hands of guardians who were commoners and who might respond to pressure from their ward's father's paternal half-brother. So far as can be gathered from the published account of the meeting called by the Administration to [648] discuss the matter, the young Paramount was supported by the lords of segments 12, 14 and 17 and by the senior lieutenants of segment 10. He was opposed by the heads of segments 9, 13 and 16 and by the senior lieutenant of segment 4. Segment 15 seems not to have taken part in the dispute. Thus the main cleavage appears to have been between segments 10 and 12 on the one hand and the residue of 4 on the other. Segment 13, in terms of its structural position, was on the wrong side; this may have been connected with the fact that the regional governor of Mpezeni I who led segment 13 was born in the headquarters of segment 4. After a quarrel about succession to his father's office of lieutenant in that segment, he moved to segment 10 where he found favour with the chief and was later promoted to regional governor. In the 1903 dispute he apparently transferred his support back to his natal segment.[1]

The attempt to assume the name Zwangendaba failed. The young chief's supporters outnumbered their opponents at the meeting and his spokesmen argued that he had been recognised by all the other chiefs and by the Administration as Paramount of the whole Ngoni country. If his rival took the name he would be led to usurp the authority of the young Paramount. The Native Commissioner then ruled that the name could not be taken.

Throughout his reign Mpezeni II was opposed by a half-643 brother, a son of Nsingu by a different mother. This man was older 611 than Mpezeni and claimed that his mother had really been Nsingu's 754 great wife, or at least that Nsingu had intended to make her so 669 before he was shot in 1898. This rivalry took two forms. He 578 endeavoured to bring destruction to the chief and his cattle by sorcery, and on one occasion made what seems to have been a half-hearted attempt to kill him with a spear. At the same time he endeavoured to establish his own segment as a county of its own, and in this he was assisted by others who fancied themselves as chief of the proposed new county.[2] The sorcery failed, not only because it was merely sorcery, but also because sorcery and

[1] *N.E.R.C.C.J.*, 4 (1 August 1903). Supplement. See p. 35.
[2] See pp. 143 f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief 647
holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest.

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional 628
norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles [643]
may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration [648]
with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping vil- [692]
lages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time
placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, [669]
but this cannot be done openly under the present régime.

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve 631
the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional 64
autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships.

Interviews

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exer- 687
cised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than this. Annual reports often draw attention to the smooth working of Native Courts and their impartiality, while attempts are made to establish British rules of evidence and of legal procedure generally. By trying thus to isolate the judiciary from the Native Authority and, more recently, by the proposal to introduce an entirely separate police force into rural areas, the Administration is engaged on an active policy of social change. One change that has already occurred widely is in the role played by the chief in his court. We have seen that traditionally disputes were settled by the senior lieutenants of the segment concerned and referred to the chief only if the lieutenants did not agree, for the chief represented the unity of the people and was above all disputes. When Administrative officers began to supervise the work of Native Courts they usually interpreted the chief's absence from his court as neglect of his duties. Pressure was put on chiefs to attend and participate in their courts, another step towards the secularization of their office. Nowadays some Ngoni chiefs stay out of their courts, others actively hear cases in them, and others drift in and out, sometimes intervening, sometimes waiting for difficult issues to be referred to them. The changed Native Court is one of the agencies whereby the transition from small-scale to large-scale society is to be made. The very successes which were hailed generally for Native Courts in Africa on the introduction of Indirect Rule are surely evidence of the importance attached by the Administration to maintaining courts of the right kind.

The role of the court in the essentially political relationship between the Administration and the Native Authority is made clear when we consider the sources of law enforced in the courts. I have described elsewhere[10] how many of the regulations sought for by the Administration are introduced as Native Authority Rules and Orders, which are then approved by the Administration. This is a harmless legal fiction which worries no one, since new legislation emanating from within the counties is enforced or not quite independently of whether or not it is referred to the Administration and is included in its list of Native Authority legislation. But it is significant that even this fiction can have political significance, for recently it was suggested that a soil erosion law, which had been introduced as a Native Authority Order, would be more accurately described as an Administrative rule which the Native Courts were empowered to enforce. This suggestion was rejected by a meeting of chiefs, who stated that they wished to retain the

[10] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 102-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 rule as a Native Authority Order.[26] Thus the chiefs preferred to
671 appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the
692 judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the
692 indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts.
664 Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of
[797] divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people
671 and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened
646 about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are
661 constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[27]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the
692 ease with which their members may move away to other sur-
648 roundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts
626 are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the
[681] end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[26] *African Affairs*, report, 1948, p. 47.
[27] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

[p. 88]

CHAPTER IV

COURTS AND OFFICIALS

121 177 671 THE Ngoni claimed that when they established their kingdoms in Nyasaland they introduced a new idea of law, a different system of courts, and a different procedure for conducting cases in those courts, from those found among the local peoples. Within their kingdoms they imposed on all their subjects these ideas, courts and legal procedure as part of their government, applied to the conquerors and the conquered alike. We shall consider in this chapter only those aspects of the courts and the legal system which were related to the political structure. The categories of crime, the degree of punishment, the sanctions for enforcement of the law, and the effect of the judicial procedure on the balance of equilibrium in the community, all belong to a specialized study and are not included here.

THE NGONI CONCEPT OF LAW

692 643 671 We begin with two texts, the first from the northern kingdom by Cibambo, the second by Ishmael Mwale the Treasurer of the Paramount in the central kingdom.

671 ¶ (1) The Ngoni seem to have been born with a gift for leadership or rule. Though they were a wandering tribe, yet there was one Paramount from whom proceeded the laws for the good government of the people. All the lesser chiefs and headmen received from him the leadership of the people. [203] Though they had no way of writing to each other, they kept their unity by messengers passing between them. The Paramount had power to call gatherings from time to time, in which they talked of the affairs of the country. In these gatherings the old men and the men of repute who had a point to make were heard in criticism and made suggestions for the building up of the realm. By this means the Paramount and his counsellors learned of and understood the thoughts of their people. It was in such large gatherings that the laws of the country were delivered to the people, so that they might hold fast to them and not be punished unreasonably for breaking them in ignorance. After they came back from these gatherings, the headmen and men of standing gathered together their villages to tell the people what had been spoken in the great council of the Paramount, and told them carefully about the laws which had come from the gathering.

173 671 (2) Before the Ngoni came to this country the villages were small and isolated from one another. There was constant pouncing on people to catch them as slaves. It was unsafe to go even a quarter of a mile from one village to another, because a man might be in hiding and pounce out and catch you and take you off to his village as a slave, and there was no redress and no case was heard. Most people never went beyond the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

boundaries of their own village, and they were afraid to travel even in a large party of twenty or thirty. So no one had any wisdom beyond that of his own village and family. When the Ngoni came they had one law for all people and they had courts to hear cases where this law was enforced. There was freedom to travel in the land where the Ngoni ruled, because they had peace within their boundaries. Therefore, we say: this was the kind of peace we had.

In these two texts we have one major concept of Ngoni law with three chief ways in which it was implemented. The concept was that there was 'one law for all people' and that the knowledge of and enforcement of this law brought internal peace and resulted in good government in the country. There was one source of law as there was one source of political and military authority—the Paramount. As Cibambo points out, the Paramount delegated his authority for carrying out the law to chiefs and headmen and depended on his 'old men and men of repute' to keep him in touch with the thoughts and desires of all his subjects, so that he might adjust the enforcement of the law to bind the people to him. He also called large gatherings of all the chiefs and *alumuzana* and headmen in order that they might hear from him any new laws and regulations and understand them so that they in turn could make them known to their people. In the intervals between the holding of these large gatherings, which took place not more than once or twice a year, messengers passed constantly from the Paramount's village to all the areas of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, reporting to them about decisions taken at the royal village on matters affecting the country as a whole, and taking back reports to the Paramount on what was happening in the outlying districts.

I attended two of these annual meetings of the chiefs and *alumuzana* and headmen in the central kingdom. They took place not at the Paramount's village but at a more central spot for the whole territory. The people were drawn up in a square formation, with the Paramount at one end supported by his 'mouthpiece' (*nkomo nenkosi*), who always spoke for him, with the six Subordinate Native Authority chiefs beside him, and the councillors (*isinduna*) messengers and other officials of his court and of the S.N.A. courts arranged in order of precedence, facing the crowd as they did during court sessions. On the three sides of the square in the front ranks were the *alumuzana* and the headmen of their villages, sitting in territorial groups, and behind each headman were the *madoda* or senior men of the village, and behind them again the *amajaha* or young men. I watched this assembly of 3,000 to 4,000 people being arranged, as they arrived, by the *isinduna* of the Paramount's court and the *isinduna* of the six chiefs. They took up their places as though on a military parade, and once placed there was no further movement. The effect was that of a barrack square in the straightness of lines and orderliness of behaviour. After all was in order the Paramount

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izinduna* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

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This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izinduna* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambezi class, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

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were, however, and they realized it at such assemblies, the people of the Paramount, and he was to them the visible symbol of their unity in one kingdom.

The Court System of the Ngoni

692 The enforcement of the laws as announced and discussed at these assemblies was the business of the courts, where the laws themselves were interpreted and often elaborated on occasions of an open breach.

The relationships of the courts in the kingdom followed the hierarchical pattern of the political organization. All minor cases were heard and, whenever possible, settled at the village level. If the plaintiff failed to get satisfaction, or if the village headman was unable to get his judgement accepted, he had to go with the litigants to the chief's court, and [698] if he failed there, the case could be taken to the appeal court of the Paramount. There were certain cases, such as murder and witchcraft, which in pre-European days could only be dealt with in the Paramount's court.

Some confusion arose over the use of one term 'court' for every type of institution which exercised judicial functions. The Nyanja term used in central Ngoniland for the courts at the lowest level was *bwalo*, literally the open space in front of the *indlwekulu* in any Ngoni village. Nothing could be apparently more informal than the discussion among a group of senior men called together by the headman, on a verandah or under a big tree, in order to settle quarrels and hear complaints. No formal records were kept, there was no clerk, and there was no summing up or pronouncement of judgment. There was, if the meeting was successful, general agreement about the action necessary and about who ought to initiate action. Above the level of this village headman's court were the courts of the *ahamasana* held at their head villages, and above them again the chiefs' courts. After 1933 the courts of the *ahamasana* gave place to the courts at the head villages of the chiefs. The proceedings there were more formal and included presenting evidence, defending the case and pronouncing judgment on cases rather than, as in the villages, talking things over and appealing to certain principles to re-establish equilibrium and resolve disputes.

The Ngoni nevertheless always recognized these courts at the village [622] level as an integral part of their system. It was the mark of a good headman that he should be able to settle the minor cases in his village without [563] constant reference to higher authority. The majority of villages under Ngoni rule were villages of local tribes who had surrendered to, or been conquered by, the Ngoni. The headmen were therefore of the local tribe, as a rule surrounded by their kinsmen, and their position carried with it the necessity of relating local tribal custom, especially in matters involving marriage and family affairs, to the legal principles and procedure of the Ngoni courts. Many cases came before the courts in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

695 suspected a witness of lying, they accused him of doing so after he had told his story. If he persisted in his version of the events, and they still thought he was lying, they cross-questioned him, and when the point where he contradicted himself was reached they turned on him and said: 'You lied. Now you have said you lied. You do not speak well.'

● 671 In the following account of Ngoni law by Cibambo there are two main emphases. One is on the existence of law, in the sense of a norm
695 of good conduct, conformity to which was expected and enforced. The text at the beginning of this chapter showed how the law was made known to all the inhabitants of the country, so that ignorance could not be pleaded as an excuse for law-breaking. The other emphasis is on decorum and the regular and accepted pattern of behaviour expected in the courts, and on the Ngoni hatred of bribery, which was claimed by them, and on the whole endorsed by Europeans.[1] Respect for the law, for the court in session and for the judgement, are expressed in Cibambo's account of the proceedings, and the winner of the case (though formerly it was the loser) expressed his thanks, after judgement was given, to the Paramount or the chief, and to the elders.

671 ¶ The laws and the power to punish disturbers of the peace were in the power of the Paramount and those who were under him. If there was a
692 bad case in which the guilty man deserved death according to the law, such a matter was in the power of the Paramount and the lesser chiefs who helped him, and of them only. It was the same in the case of anyone who deserved to be despoiled of all his possessions because of his wrong-doing. The law was a protection for the people who might have been killed causelessly by their masters if they had had the power. People who were in danger from those who were above them, in danger of confiscation or of death, ran to the younger brothers of the Paramount or to the Paramount himself or sometimes they ran to the great *isindwa*. Praises had been added to those of Chief Mtwalo for this very reason that he had saved many whom Mbelwa had wanted to kill '*Izifuba zinamazwi, nizalo nkohutsala abalumazana*' (a chest with words which spoke for the men of noble birth).

692 If people quarrelled in a village and could not be reconciled it was the work, as it is today, of the headman to try and bring them together, and if he thought that one had wronged the other he ordered him to bring something to recompense the other. Such recompenses were small things, from beads to a goat, perhaps an axe or a hoe. If the headman found he could not settle the business he went with them himself to the next court, to the head of the group of villages, and the standard of the payment increased. Serious cases went to the courts of the chiefs but these cases were few and not like today. People were very much afraid of each other

[1] On the walls of Paramount Mbelwa's court in Mzimba district in north Nyasaland were painted three sayings in English and in Tumbuka. Over the Paramount's chair was written 'Justice is blind'; by the place where the witnesses stood to speak, 'The law has no respect of a person'; and over where the general public sat 'Everyone is equal before the law'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *izini zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
684 this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was
178 death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *isinduna* and the *amadonda* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticized each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the
[857] conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *lomeni* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organizing his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

631 NGONI OFFICE-BEARERS

627 In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni
645 political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a
[565] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[721] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[691] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,
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179 parallel of the Jews of the Old Testament preparing the way
177 for the Christian era to illustrate and drive home their belief
that they, the Ngoni, had prepared the way for the Christian
797 Gospel in Nyasaland. 'Were we not also a people who hated idols and images? We too tried to reach the Great God through our ancestor spirits, but we failed, until the mission came to teach us.' 'We held together the people of this land under one rule so that the missionaries could travel safely and spread the Gospel teaching.' These beliefs were stated so often that they became almost standard formula, and the incongruity of this picture with some of the warlike situations recorded by the earliest missionaries was ignored and forgotten. In the churches, where the people sat on mats, Sunday by Sunday, facing their Ngoni ministers, rising to sing, in
[533] their typical Ngoni harmonies, Christian hymns set to former Ngoni war tunes—in this setting Ngoni history was brought home, interwoven with the new teaching, to young adults who formed the majority of the congregation. For Ngoni elders it was something more than a reminder of their past. It was setting the Ngoni people in a special relationship to
[186] the European missionaries and the new learning, compensating for the passing of military power and political supremacy by establishing Ngoni cultural superiority over their neighbours. This gave some spiritual reassurance to a people in the throes of political change, and it was a lesson which lost none of its significance for the young adults who heard it.

Ngoni law

671 'There was one law for all the people. No one could be ignorant of the law.' These were the words, quoted in Chapter I, which the Ngoni used frequently to describe the importance
[182] of law in their culture, its role in the political unification of their own and subject peoples, and the responsibility, laid on all adults, for knowledge of the law and conformity with its demands. An incident in a court of law, which was unforgettable to an anthropologist, was a case in which a chief sat
692

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unless he has paid bridewealth, the children will go to her relatives, whatever the cause of the divorce and whichever party is at fault. He can then offer bridewealth to secure custody of the children at the same time as he loses the services of his wife.

Bridewealth to-day is almost entirely concerned with the custody of children of the marriage and does not affect the rights of a man in his wife. These rights are determined by a payment which probably did not exist in the old marriage system and which we may call the legalization payment.[17] This payment is now the most important in marriage and is the only one recorded on the printed marriage certificates issued by the Administration through the Native Authorities. The Ngoni believe that the word has been taken from the Cewa, although the Cewa use the word differently. A law was made in about 1944 by the Ngoni chiefs fixing the amount of the legalization payment at a minimum of thirty shillings. Prior to this edict smaller amounts were more usual. The way in which the magnitude of the payment has varied through time can be seen from Table VII. Some people do not follow the law and pay less than thirty shillings; the majority pay the legal amount, in some areas thirty-five shillings is more usual, and recently a few fathers have successfully demanded much higher sums, up to £10, for their daughters. The edict implied that at least thirty shillings should be offered in every marriage, but marriages have been and still are being contracted without any legalization payment, as can be seen from Table VIII. However, from this table it appears that in the last twelve years legalization payments have been offered in a greater proportion of marriages than previously.

The most important right established by this payment is that to damages in the event of adultery. If a man has made the legalization payment he is sure that when his wife commits adultery the court will order both the woman and her lover to pay him damages. Adultery suits are the commonest heard in court and the legalization payment clearly establishes the fact that the man and woman are married in the eyes of the law. If the first payment a man makes is bridewealth, the legalization payment falls away, and he gains the exclusive right of sexual access to his wife without any further payment. In this respect we can see a carry-over from the old system in which bridewealth followed after 'snuff-box', and adultery was punishable by death. Usually if bridewealth is paid in a subsisting marriage, it comes after the legalization payment and is additional to it. The one payment relates to the custody of the children, the other to the sexual services of the woman. We have noted that bridewealth can be offered on the occasion of divorce when perhaps no legalization payment has ever been made.

[17] Cimade. Cf. Young, *Notes on the customs and folk-lore of the Tumbuka-Kamanga peoples*, p. 61; Cosbland, *The Native tribes of North-Eastern Rhodesia; their laws and customs* (Occasional Papers No. Five, Royal Anthropological Institute), p. 25; Barnes, op. cit. p. 227

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [643] [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [182] [693] [542]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another 486 562

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 if the latter is unable to leave the area legally.[88] Various devices
520 have been introduced to prevent women from using other people's passes, such as recording finger-prints on the certificate. On the other hand there are a great variety of ways in which women contrive to leave the area without a proper pass, such as marrying the bus driver for the duration of the journey, getting off the bus and walking round the control points, and so on.

13. The Administration and the missions

498 Under the Laws of Northern Rhodesia, which guide the Administration, the only valid marriages between Africans are those
671 performed in accordance with 'customary tribal law'. There has
581 never been any systematic attempt to codify the rules implied by this
586 phrase, and in any particular case that comes before the Administration's courts, the views of individual African assessors must carry weight. The tendency has been to try and discover what used to happen in the old days rather than what was the *de facto* law at the time. On the other hand, there appears to have been a feeling that women were entitled to certain rights in equity that may perhaps have been associated with the proviso that 'customary tribal law' shall not be administered when it is 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. The Administration has certainly been sympathetic towards deserted wives seeking divorce and has encouraged Native Courts to allow their pleas where the husband has been many years away and has not written home. In the past the District Officer on tour has divorced batches of women who had applied in vain to the Native Courts for divorce on the ground of desertion. It has been argued by the Administration that since chiefs depend on the gifts of returned labour migrants to supplement their own income, they are reluctant to offend men by divorcing their wives in their absence. There are fewer divorces, in relation to the same number
[671] of pleas, granted in Ngoni courts than among the neighbouring Cewa, who are subject to the same Administrative and mission influences. The Ngoni find no consolation in this comparison. They merely observe that there are more divorces now than there used to be, and blame the Whites for the change.

671 The missions are all concerned with the development of Christian
581 marriage, but their ideas as to what this is differ from one
586 denomination to another, as do their views on the relationship of Christian to other types of marriage. The White Fathers and the Universities Mission to Central Africa do not allow divorce, while the Dutch Reformed Church Mission does. The U.M.C.A. insist that all 'customary obligations' shall be fulfilled before a marriage can be solemnized between Christians, the White Fathers

[88] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 245f for the rules regulating the movement of women beyond Fort Jameson District.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This attitude of resignation, while still very common, has to some extent been replaced by a more constructive attitude among members of the Native Authority bureaucracy. Chiefs, councillors and other officials have considerable political power and are encouraged to use it by the Administration, whose policy it is to strengthen the hand of the Native Authority.[18] Court members introduce changes in law with some confidence, although this is still done under the guise of a re-enforcement of a forgotten traditional law. Chiefs, under increasing pressure from their people and the Administration, endeavour to take action to modify social life in their areas. As yet political action is not very sophisticated, and the workings of the Administration are not well understood. In those fields of activity where Administrative interest is strongest, such as price control, food production, and the amalgamation of villages, the Ngoni response tends to be in moral rather than in political terms. It is wrong that the price of maize should be so low, the good man knows best how to cultivate his own garden, people in a village must live peacefully together. By contrast, in the field of marriage, where the Administration is comparatively disinterested, and where the wishes of the Administration, missions and Ngoni do to a large extent coincide, the bureaucracy has been able to act in a more positive manner. The thirty shillings law is one of the rare legislative acts of the Ngoni chiefs and people, and it is significant that the law was not made until 1944, fifteen years after the passing of the Native Authorities Ordinance. It is said that the law was made so that women could be punished for adultery in the same way as men. At the meeting at which the law was agreed upon, it was also decided that bridewealth should be a minimum of six pounds or one cow. Whereas the ruling about legalization payments is still remembered and increasingly followed, the bridewealth rule has been largely forgotten. This attempt to check adultery by increasing the legalization payment was in general agreement with the wishes of the Administration and more or less with the wishes of the missions. It was possible to envisage a decrease in adultery due to a clarification of rights *in statum* without any other major structural changes, whereas the re-introduction of bridewealth as a universal payment could only be envisaged in terms of a return to the patrilineal virilocal residential system of 'the time of peace'. It would hardly have been possible for the Native Authority to have restored the old system had they wished to do so. Ngoni village life is now part of a system wider than the chiefdom and there are other ways of acquiring wealth and status than within the residential system and at the pleasure of the Paramount Chief.

11. Marriage in an omnidirectional kinship system

We may characterize the change from the old order to the new

[18] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. 'Some aspects of political development . . .'.

5:Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Lamba FQ8

approximately on the contour and parallel to demarcated 'marker' ridges on the true contour. A system of contour cultivation has now been developed which is proving practical and effective. The 'marker' ridges are demarcated at a vertical interval of two feet six inches and are gradually converted by the people into more or less broad-based banks. In the first year the ridge is built up to a base width of six feet and a height of not less than six inches. The base and height are increased until a permanent bank eight feet wide at the base and eighteen inches in height is completed. Villages on the 'ten yardi' system can change over to contour cultivation if the majority of people elect to do so. New villages are allowed to move into resettlement areas in the Eastern Province only on condition that they agree to practice contour cultivation; they are given four or five years to adapt themselves to the new system but in many cases practically the whole of the new gardens are under ridges by the end of the second year. Cultivation practice has been adapted to the new system and, meanwhile, experiments are being made to find the best methods of ridging, spacing and planting of crops for use in conjunctions with the ridge cultivation system. M N 648 242 [241] M N [166]

In the Ndola District gardens are laid off between contour grass strips at vertical intervals of two feet. The people are then encouraged to convert the grass strip into three parallel ridges approximating to the normal dimension of their mounds for subsidiary crops and to plant the ridges with beans and cowpeas; or to make one or two such ridges and plant the remainder of the strip with groundnuts on the flat—a combination of contour ridges and strip cropping. This method, an adaptation of normal Lamba practice was adopted after a series of trials to find the simplest method of erosion control acceptable to these somewhat backward people. The object is not only to check erosion but to restore the cultivation of subsidiary crops, now almost entirely neglected. The planting of the ridges to beans and cowpeas and the strips to groundnuts restores the balance between cereals and legumes and should allow of a small surplus for sale. The idea seems to be less unpopular than one might expect and most villages have made a satisfactory effort to convert the strips into ridges for the cultivation of subsidiary crops. L 242 648 L [177]

Contours are laid off by trained African Assistants of the Department of Agriculture, using road tracers, and it has been found necessary during the initial stages of settlement to have one or two African Assistants* for at least every ten villages or, approximately, for every 600 to 1,000 people. Constant supervision is maintained during the initial phase by the African Agricultural Assistants in co-operation with District Messengers and the Native Authorities. This supervision is irksome and resented by some of the older people but it is, perhaps, significant that at a recent meeting of the African Regional Council of the Western Province after the subject had been freely debated, the council voted by a large majority for an increase in the number of Agricultural Capitaos. L [177]

Fruit tree planting has also been introduced and in the Eastern and Western Provinces laws made by the Native Authorities require each household N 245 648 671

* Usually one and a learner assistant at Ndola.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

648 245 671 to plant a small number of trees (four per hut is the general rule). Seeds, seedlings and cuttings of mango, mulberry, lemon, guava, pawpaw and bananas are distributed free from Departmental and Native Authority nurseries. The trees are planted within or about the sites of the new villages and the people are on the whole willing enough to plant them but show little [177] inclination to care for them once they have been planted. Losses from drought and damage from fowls and small stocks are fairly heavy and in the Western Province two severe winters in succession have frosted off a [132] number of young plantations. It is still uncertain whether this attempt to establish village orchards will be successful.

The only other general restrictions on land use are the prohibition of 311 cultivation within demarcated areas and of late burning of grass and bush. 648 In all village blocks non-cultivation areas have been demarcated for the pre- 185 servation of streamsides and steep slopes. Areas have also been demarcated as Forest Reserves for future timber supplies and for the protection of watersheds, and in some cases land which is not required for present use has been reserved against the future needs of a growing population. Late burning [622] of grass and bush is prohibited and the responsibility for early burning of the village blocks is placed upon the headman concerned. These prohibitions are enforced by Native Authority Rules.

§ 8. *Housing*

648 In most of the resettlement areas an attempt has been made to improve 361 the standard of housing and the layout of villages and on the whole this has been fairly successful. When the permanent site has been selected 362 (sometimes a lengthy business involving consultation with the ancestral spirits) the lay-out of the village is planned and the situation of each building marked out by an African Assistant. The people are persuaded to adopt a somewhat higher standard of building, but no compulsion is used and they have generally been willing enough to do so if the standard expected is not too high. The standard of housing and village lay-out is certainly an improvement, if not a very great one, on the standard within the Reserves.

In the Western Province a number of model villages have been built [342] of Kimberley brick. These were built by the villagers themselves, with the assistance of a small team of skilled builders and thatchers employed by the Administration. The object was to stimulate a desire for better housing and it seems to have done so in some degree since most of the other villages have now volunteered to become 'models'.

§ 9. *Assisted Movements*

166 The movement of a village for a comparatively short distance, a day's 648 journey of fifteen miles or so does not present any particular difficulty and the African has long been used to such movements. If it is impossible

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the
693 Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
184 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with
184 real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
• 671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are
692 bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
183 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

under the guise of drawing attention to some good Ngoni custom which has been neglected. Thus, for example, a man came to court saying that he was always quarrelling with his wife and that he wished to divorce her. The bench granted the divorce and awarded the woman 30s. damages. The litigant protested. The junior member of the bench, a man aged about 25 years, said, "Don't you know, it has always been the custom in this court to award 30s. damages against men who divorce their wives?" Yet this was a comparatively recent practice and the litigant's protest seemed, to me, to be quite justified. The young man had been on the bench only about eighteen months. Even without Administrative stimulus, deliberate acts of legislation are not unknown among the Ngoni, but they require considerable discussion and probably a tribal meeting. It is easier, particularly for a court member as junior as the man in question, to appeal to the unwritten corpus of tribal custom when introducing a new rule. An analogous process in our own society is perhaps concealed under the fiction that judges do not make law. Ngoni do not quote specific precedents in court, and in this undocumented environment new decisions, if they are not soon challenged, become part of what has always been the custom since time immemorial.

We may then summarize by saying that their common store of notions about the past provides Ngoni with a means of distinguishing themselves from similar groups at a time when the cultural distinctions between these groups are in fact becoming less and less. In the Courts, appeals to the value of traditional custom are made to gain acceptance for new rulings, while in ordinary life breaches of custom are widespread and are not censured.

When we consider legends associated with particular groups within he tribe the picture is rather different. Separate groups in the population remember, and sometimes act in the light of, particular incidents in the past which link them to other similar groups. Thus village A is linked with village B because of some incident in the past when the erstwhile leader of A captured the leader of B, or because at one time the leaders of A and B were brothers. These incidents, and the present inter-group relations with which they are associated, are not known universally but only by the groups concerned and by those near them. Yet in many ways these incidents are of greater practical significance than the more widely known tribal history. The relationships to which they give rise, or rather such of these relationships as have persisted, are remembered at funerals, in the formal exchanges of beer, and in the settlement of quarrels. There are at first glance no sanctions to maintain relationships of this kind, and indeed the very separate existence of two villages A and B may be due to a quarrel followed by a split. But although, for example, when an old woman dies in A there is no way of directly forcing a messenger to carry the news to B, there is in fact a great deal of social pressure on both groups to keep alive the connection between them. This arises from the general responsibility placed on everyone to preserve the peace, that is, to preserve the existing social order intact. If there are

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembe*, *hengu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of company. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [898]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name *nsoko* for a man becomes *nsoko* for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimalo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

583 [671] been made. It is the legalization payment that is recorded on the marriage registration certificate when one is issued.

Often this payment is postponed until some years after marriage and sometimes it is never made at all. It is generally £1. 10s., and is normally provided by the bridegroom himself out of his savings, although in the old days a man would have been helped by his father. The money goes to the bride's father, and there is no legal obligation on him to share the money with his relatives, although he may do so. Marriage ties can be reinforced by a whole series of ceremonies and ceremonial exchanges and payments between the man's people and the woman's people, and a marriage in which all these ceremonies have been performed is regarded as being 'well fixed'. In such a marriage the parents and siblings of the couple have come to know each other, have collaborated in ritual activities, and have probably had occasion to deliberate together as a court of conciliation in settling quarrels between the couple. This line of development is seldom taken in a marriage in which the legalization payment has not been made. If the husband refuses to pay, then the wife's people will not brew beer for him and his parents, and will not use their influence with his wife to maintain the marriage. We may say that in a well-fixed marriage the two families are linked together, and that in one that is not well fixed it is only the two individuals who are linked. Indeed when no payments have been made it is common for the bride's relatives to profess ignorance of the name of the husband, or at least of his parents' names. No action can be taken in the court to enforce marriage payments, although in an adultery or divorce case the court may order the legalization payment to be made.

585 476 578 The ceremonies of marriage should not be thought of merely as occasions for harmonious co-operation. They may also become the vehicle for the expression of aggression between the two families involved. This is particularly true of the obligation on the man to bring a party of his friends to hoe in the garden of his father-in-law. The hoeing party may do more harm than good to the crops if the present offered them by the father-in-law is considered inadequate.

583 178 [231] Prior to the conquest of the tribe the principal marriage payment was bride-wealth,[1] consisting of so many head of cattle. In those days, according to informants, no legalization payment was made. Nowadays bride-wealth is paid only in a small proportion of marriages, and rarely until after several children have been born. In the old days

[1] *Malobolo*. Cf. the Zulu verb *ukw-lobola* and noun *ilobolo*.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FRS Ngoni FRS

in judgement on his own son, a young man of twenty-one, 692
for committing adultery with the wife of a man of a former
slave family. The husband brought the case against the [684]
chief's son, and the chief ordered the man to speak truly and [694]
not be afraid. The case was heard amid the most deathly [695]
silence. In awarding a heavy penalty of compensation against
his son, the chief spoke of the central position of law in Ngoni
life, and of the fact, so sharply brought out by the case, that
the law was no respecter of persons.

Young adults, boys and girls, were held personally re- 672
sponsible for breaches of the law which they had committed.
Penalties were awarded against them as individuals, even
though they often could not pay the compensation without
the help of their father and his family. They were expected 967
to become acquainted with the law in various ways. One
was by conformity to accepted social codes of behaviour, in-
stilled into them by their elders, particularly in such matters
as sex relations, respect for property, avoidance of slander
and of injury by violence. Another way of learning how the
law operated, as well as the principles upon which the case-
law was built, was by attending the courts, and listening [695]
carefully to the cross-examinations as well as to the judge-
ments. Young people were expected also to ask their fathers,
and elders generally, about points of law which they had not
understood, or had confused with some of the practices of the
local people. The onus was upon young adults for acquiring
this knowledge of the law as well as for behaving in accord-
ance with it. We shall see in the next chapter how the Ngoni
regarded being law-abiding as one of their basic cultural [577]
traits, as well as being evidence of the individual character
of a young adult.

Ngoni traditional skills

We made a distinction, albeit a rather tentative one, at the 128
beginning of this chapter between certain kinds of tradi-
tional knowledge which we have been describing up to this

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FRS Ngoni FRS
Maravi FR4

M 575 535 [534]

so that anyone coming that way may see "medicine" and turn aside. After which, all bathe in the stream, and the ceremonies are over.

During a *ciwaw* dance six drums are always used, namely, the *mphonje* (five or six feet in length, and beaten at one end only); the *ndumwe* (another large drum three feet in length), or the *ndulula*; the *ndondondondo* and the *mtinin* (of medium size about two feet long); and two *kondondo* (small drums eighteen inches in length). These are beaten by men detailed by the headman or *chiwindo*; but there are no special drums appertaining exclusively to particular *mikhondo* or *mzogo*. The big village drum always belongs to the headman; the others are privately owned, and are hired out for a small fee, such as an *ungwan* basket. Before use they are always warmed first at the fire.

4. *Property.*

M N 423 [925]

Land was acquired by the Achewa by conquest and by the Angoni by conquest. It was divided by the paramount *chief* among his lieutenants, who in turn divided their sections among the heads of lesser groups or families. Each headman now allots land to his villagers; and if they move the village to a new site, everyone retains possession of the garden which he held before. The allottee is entitled to trees, *mithunga*, honey or anything else on his plot; and he may sell crops or other produce, but may not sell or lease the land itself. When reaping his crop, he presents a basket of maize to his headman.

M N [422]

In the home, the wife must provide the pots, and they are her personal property. The husband must supply her with baskets, hoes, etc.; but everything which pertains to woman's work belongs to the wife. The produce of a garden is the equal property of both. After a boy has passed through his initiation, he is given a small garden of his own. When, as in the case of the Achewa, he leaves the village to marry, the garden reverts to the chief, who is always spoken of as the owner of the land, since it is he who divides it out among his people.

N [622]

N 422 233

The majority of the cattle owners are Angoni. Possession is individual; but all the animals in one village are kept in one open kraal belonging to the village headman, who selects small boys to look after them. Herdsmen were formerly unpaid; but now, when a beast is sold, killed or otherwise removed, they receive a present from the owner, as also does the headman. There is no fixed fee; but the owner of a dozen head may give the headman a calf every other year, while the owner of one or two only gives him a goat. If a man living in a village where there is no kraal buys cattle, he frequently places them in the care of a friend at a neighbouring village where there is a kraal, instead of handing them over to his own headman. The friend makes his own arrangement with the headman; but the friend is liable to the owner, and the usual payment is made to the friend, who divides it with the headman.

N 672 233

If a beast dies in the kraal, there is no liability, provided that the headman (or responsible friend) informs the owner, so that the latter can make use of the meat. Should the headman or friend fail to do this, he must pay the owner a live animal of the same age and sex. Where loss occurs through the carelessness of a headman, a case for damages lies against him. Sometimes cows calve in the kraal, but generally they wander off into the bush for the purpose; if they are then lost, or killed by carnivora, there is no liability. If a cow sold as sound dies

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the headman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good one; and the headman in return hands over three other animals of similar age. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organization: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Achewa consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'anga* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'anga* under Chief Chiwere was Chimange, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unawares, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a stout resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'anga* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the *chimanda* or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connexion with women. Next day, they burned goats' bones, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[46] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
619 and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to
[597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[46] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

639 by this relationship participate in the presentation and consumption
273 of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the
[769] Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all
797 public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the
[557] ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of
[576] honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are
● 681 diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded
634 as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and
626 other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Paramount Chief is sometimes told of the matter and calls the minor
[643] chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other counties and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner.
643 The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[16] a
576 salutation which symbolizes his former position as head of an

[16] cf. Zulu *Bayede*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

224 organized by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief
476 and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who
634 killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt, but occasionally if the
634 field is very poor a chief will summon absentees in his court.

224 These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic
[136] significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as effectively as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but
[681] he can call out his men hunting.[18] Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with
[411] them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African bureaucracies*

647 Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was
648 little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous
693 leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

[18] See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 215, for Ngoni hunting methods.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Adminis- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created, the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[29] were employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The 692
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences [481]
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Administration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping. The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production, for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for [647]
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[29] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapau* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

696 In the court itself the magnitude of the penalties imposed and damages awarded is to some extent at the discretion of the court, and political considerations, among others, may influence judgments. Adultery with the wife of a chief is more heavily punished [681] than ordinary adultery, and people from other tribes, particularly [186] the Yao, are discriminated against. Ngoni courts maintain that they recognise only Ngoni law, even though the disputants may belong to other tribes. These ideas are familiar enough, but they indicate that questions of group membership, that is, political affiliation, and relations between groups, do influence the actions of the court. Within a county, hostility between a group having [578] the ear of the court and one lacking it may find expression in procedural obstructions, such as always hearing a particular suit at the end of a day, or of continually postponing the hearing because some minor witness is absent.

661 The chief and his advisers usually endeavour to maintain a 648 monopoly of access to the Administration, and this endeavour is 696 largely supported by the Administration as a matter of policy. In the particular sphere of legal action, appeal from the Native Court to the District Officer is sometimes regarded as a challenge to this monopoly, and litigants are sometimes punished for stating that they intend to appeal. In a celebrated recent case when a chief was successfully sued in the District Commissioner's court for damages for adultery, his people came to him afterwards to express their condolences, as after a funeral, at the injury done to his high office by this procedure.

692 Native Courts are formally recognized under Ordinance by 648 the Administration, and hence changes in the indigenous legal system brought about by the Administration are legal changes, in that they have behind them all the paraphernalia of Ordinances, Letters Patent, Orders-in-Council, and Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. This gives a special quality to manipulation of the legal system by the Administration, for this is really only another way of saying that effective sovereignty lies with the British Crown and not with Paramount Chief Mpezeni. But within the framework of analysis of the local situation, the actions of the Administration and of the chiefs in controlling the working of the courts are comparable sociologically.

The Administration is continually exercised about the quality of the work done in Native Courts, and in so far as all cases heard in Native Courts are subject to revision by the District Commissioner a direct check is, or could be, exerted on the way in which the courts operate. But Administrative intervention goes further

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

rule as a Native Authority Order.[16] Thus the chiefs preferred to appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts. Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[17]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the ease with which their members may move away to other surroundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[16] *African Affairs, report*, 1948, p. 47.
[17] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

review by the Administration, but in practice the cases are so numerous, the written account of them so brief, and often the handwriting of the record so bad, that it is difficult to make an adequate review. The Administration is able to keep some check on the financial transactions of the courts, and convictions for embezzlement are not uncommon; but the Administration does not greatly influence the decisions taken by the courts nor their enforcement. For though there are police on the lorry routes and crocodiles in the rivers, it is fairly easy for a determined man (or woman) who is dissatisfied with the treatment he has received in the courts to get away. He can usually get to a White farm or to a town, and once there it is not so easy to get him back. Men are not continually running away from the courts, for they usually accept decisions given against them, though appeals from a minor chief's court to the Ngoni Appeal Court are fairly common. Few people take their appeals further to the District Officer, and I have never heard of a case going on appeal beyond the Provincial Commissioner's Court.

The general moral approval by the people of the work of the courts which lies behind much of the effectiveness of the Native Court system does not extend automatically to all legal action as such. There is no widely held view that the decisions of the courts must be supported merely because they are the decisions of the courts. Some courts are good, some bad; and some decisions are good, some bad. The great majority of cases that come before a county court are brought by men and women living within the county, but sometimes a litigant begins his suit in a county court not his own, particularly in the Paramount Chief's county court, if he thinks that he will get a better hearing there. Yet chiefs support each other and a case brought before a chief by litigants from another county are sometimes thrown out, in accordance with the Native Courts Ordinance.

There is little moral sanction attaching to legal procedures, or methods of appeal, or even to the particular sums awarded as damages. The members of courts tend in the main to uphold each other's decisions, so that there is a fair amount of conformity throughout the ten counties. All those who work in courts have in fact an interest in increasing the power of the court system, which the people as a whole have not. Disputants will settle out of court if they can, for it is not so far to walk and the whole process is not so disruptive of social ties, but members of a court will sometimes challenge the right of independent arbitrators, village headmen and the like, to come to any binding decisions.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

money to buy herself clothes, if her husband has no money to give her.

681 In court, when a woman has to pay damages or a fine, she may
913 be able to provide the money from her own resources. If not, she can turn to her husband or to her own kinsfolk. Provided damages for adultery are not involved, her husband, if he is not away working, ought to provide the money and a deliberate refusal to do so would precipitate a major quarrel and the possibility of divorce. If a woman gets into a fight at a party, and has to pay, say, half-a-crown to someone she has hurt, her husband ought to find the money for her. If he refuses to do so though she has no money of her own, the court will say that he no longer loves his wife, and is trying to find an opportunity to divorce her. Indeed, there would be little point in the husband refusing to pay, as those who cannot pay their fines are committed to prison, and he would then lose the services of his wife.

593 A woman can hold property in her own right and a husband honours
421 a well-loved wife by giving her cattle. Gifts that she gets from her own kinsfolk do not pass to her husband, and such things as blankets and mats that she has used, even if her husband bought them, are regarded as her own property. Even the money that her husband gives her to make specific purchases is her own to do as she pleases with, so that a woman may forgo the skirt for which her husband has given her money and instead give it to her sister to buy something else. Husbands do not always like such actions, but they cannot do anything directly to prevent them. One of the ways in which a wife acquires livestock of her own is by buying animals with the money she gets from her husband for clothes. The produce of a wife's wet-season garden, maize, sorghum, millet, root crops, pulses,
[341] cucurbits, is in effect held in common by husband and wife, and neither ought to sell any of it without first consulting the other.
[386] On divorce the crops are divided between them unless the court decides that one party did not work in the garden, or has deserted the other. The money a woman earns by brewing beer for sale she
[465] usually keeps, although some men say that a woman should hand the money over to her husband, lest he find her with it and suspect that she has earned it by prostitution. In practice, most women seem to keep their own earnings and it is not uncommon, where the husband is a drunkard and weak-willed, for his wife to have custody of his money as well. Indeed the simultaneous operation within the husband-wife relationship of structural separation and social co-operation is well demonstrated by the apparently paradoxical situation, of which I saw two instances, in which a man ordered to pay damages to his wife for fighting her had to ask her to hand him over the money so that he could duly hand it back to her.

6. *Mystical links*

593 Symbolic expression of the relationship between man and wife is not greatly developed among the Ngoni, and the mystical bonds

/4 cont'd/

701 national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regi-
182 ments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exo-
167 dus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high
[162] that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and
221 women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms
464 of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

241 The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to pro-
432 vide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and fin-
231 ger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as
[583] the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital
[581] investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

161 The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority liv-
131 ing in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four
681 huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

611 The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical
[178] purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

down at the chief's feet, and with a shout dashed up again and danced a furious war dance. His eyes fixed and staring with passion, every muscle distended, he stabbed into the air with his spear, tossed the dust of the kraal about, and leapt hither and thither in a frenzy of passion. All the while he kept shouting his battle-cry, and the thousands of fighting men around built their spears and chanted a chorus. When he had exhausted himself, another headman leapt into the circle and went through his own peculiar wild dance, and then another and another, and for half-an-hour or more these fantastic exhibitions were maintained. Then the chief rose. A great roar of salutation greeted him. Gathering his clothes about him he walked in procession from the kraal, and the council broke up. 645 [535] [543]

In the olden days the power of the chiefs was maintained by a wholesome dread of his warriors, and the laws were enforced with a consistent severity. One result of this is that the Ngoni tribe has always had a higher standard of morality than any Central Africa people. Some persons were stealing mission cattle and complaints were made to the chief. After a time a thief was caught, and then in spite of the pleadings of the missionary the highest penalty was meted out to him. He was hanged on a tree opposite the mission house, and it was forbidden to remove his body. The hyenas wore a path round the foot of the tree trying to get at the carcase, and there he hung, a terrible example to the neighbourhood, until the white ants ate the rope by which he hung, and the body fell to the waiting hyenas. 692 685

I have seen a chief receive news of the adultery of one of his wives, turn to his executioner, and give him instructions, and in a few minutes both man and woman were lying dead outside the village. I have myself begged for the life of a woman who had sinned, and she was spared only after a great fine in cattle was levied instead. 684 [543]

These were harsh and terrible punishments, necessary for rough times. And now when the chief is loosing some of his old authority, and dare not exercise capital punishment because of the overshadowing British Government, one fears that except where the power of religion has taken the place of the old dread, a weaker morality is apt to sap the vitality of the tribe. The punishments were not arbitrary. They were fixed by precedent. And all the past quarrels for forty or fifty years back would be quoted to prove the right of a plaintiff or defender. And now 177 681

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of bechive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration. 173 613

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mveleleni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Emcisweni)[18] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emsizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18. 595 621 631 643

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[19] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent 173 595 613 643 [273] [682]

[18] Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 58, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[19] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 6, 34, 94.

NOTES 1

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mlonyeni, Fort Manning Division.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mlonyeni and present Chief Teleka, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Misholo, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

1 [see table on page 14.—Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous 619
societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that 642
some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate
them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes [669]
not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a
segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it
was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a [631]
no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country
was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State [648]
there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies
whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni
society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by [682]
the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not
to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true,
usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement
is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national
first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death [796]
for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for [687]
example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time.
Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the
members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of [561]
the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against
the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of
arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State [669]
was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no mono-
poly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of [631]
every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could
claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting
force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was
little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and [701]
the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited
force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of
guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could [411]
not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns
as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[45] There
was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as 619
in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its 631
internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against
the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled
against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[45] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 196; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, f.n1; Young, *History*, p. 125.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

they might give their support to the enforcement of law. Murder has always been a public delict in Ngoni society and before the conquest, a murderer was usually tried by senior lieutenants at the headquarters of either segment 4 or 10 and if found guilty was executed by the first lieutenant of the segment. Ngoni still think that murderers ought to be brought to justice, but the investigation of murder, a matter for the Northern Rhodesia Police, is likely to be obstructed even though the investigation may be carried out entirely by Africans. Those affected by the murder wish to see the murderer punished, but they also want to keep clear of the legal process involved.

10. *External links*

The death of Zwangendaba was followed by a dispersal of Ngoni groups into various parts of east and central Africa. The present dispersal of Ngoni men and women from Fort Jameson over southern Africa arises from a different social situation and takes place in a different way. The early mining enterprises of Southern Rhodesia, like those in the Union of South Africa before them, were based on migratory labour. As we have noted, Ngoni began going to Southern Rhodesia only a few months after they had been conquered, and they have continued to go ever since. Although the first batch of migrants were apparently ordered to go by someone in authority, the great bulk of men who have gone away subsequently have gone as individuals, even if they were recruited in batches of a hundred or more at a time. Thus, the dispersal of population is not directly related to the political system of the tribe, as was the pre-conquest dispersal. There has been a certain amount of regional preference, one county supplying more than its share of migrants to the Northern Rhodesia Copperbelt, the Nyasaland counties supplying proportionately more migrants to the Union as compared with the Northern Rhodesia counties, and so on, but these preferences are not marked. The inhabitants of each county, and indeed of nearly every village, have kinsfolk who are scattered over the towns and farms of the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, the Transvaal and farther south.

Ngoni men and women are thus bound by many ties to other persons and groups located far away from the villages of Ngoniland. For the most part these ties bind individuals, for each person has distant attachments which are not the same as his neighbours. In this volume we are concerned primarily with politics, with social relations between enduring groups, and we shall reserve our discussion of the social implications of migration for a later work in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and appeals were uncommon. Chiefs did not allow a man to come by himself with his case to them, he had to come with his headman. Even those in danger of death went first to the headmen and these brought them to the chiefs. 692

The Ngoni hated bribes. If any *induna* was found to have taken bribes from people he was condemned and punished. [687]

The hearing of the cases was like what it is today. The one who brought the case to the court spoke first, then the one with whom he was quarrelling. If there were elders there from their village they also spoke telling out how these people quarrelled, saying so-and-so began to quarrel in such-and-such a way, and then showed how they had been unable to judge it in the village. They did not go into details of the quarrel, that was done by the men themselves. After those who had quarrelled had told of the beginning of the case any who knew of it were asked to say how it appeared to them in the village. These were the witnesses both for and against. 695

When this had been done, all who were implicated or interested in the case remained silent. It is the custom of the Ngoni that all who spoke in a case should stand and have a stick, and as they spoke they should walk about and limp with the stick or sometimes stand all together, but in that case the hand which held the stick should shake and stick it into the ground. Only women spoke seated. No one at the hearing of a case was allowed to lie down, everyone, even the Paramount, sat. They did this because they were afraid that otherwise the case would not finish quickly. The court was held in the cattle kraal. Women were not allowed into the kraal for cases, but sat outside opposite where the old men were gathered, even though they were the wives of the Paramount. 695 516

After the litigants and the witnesses had spoken it was the turn of the elders of the court. They questioned and agreed with or criticized the men who had quarrelled but they did not pronounce judgement. They waited for the Paramount who first of all sat silent and noticed those who unravelled or twisted the case. Afterwards when the people had finished speaking, the elders delivered the story to the Paramount or judge. The judge then delivered his judgement and condemned those who had twisted the case. He delivered his judgement sitting not standing like the other people and when he had finished all thanked him, or rather saluted him with a loud '*Bayete*' or with the surname if to lesser chiefs. Sometimes he sent an elder to tell the court the judgement. When the case had been judged no one criticized the judgement. The one who began to give thanks for the judgement was the one who was found guilty: this he did to show submission and repentance. The custom of today that the one who wins the case gives the thanks is not good because the man who has lost goes away in resentment and threatening and often the case crops up again. 695 [576]

If an *induna* or man of standing went secretly to the Paramount to accuse somebody that he deserved death (perhaps for witchcraft), very often the Paramount sent a man in secret to warn the condemned man to run to a chief's village and hide his head. In this way many left their fathers and went to build with the chiefs and when they went they took 643 682 692

all their things

643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *izizi zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
684 this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was
178 death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *izinduna* and the *amadoda* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticized each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the
[857] conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *laweni* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organizing his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

631 NGONI OFFICE-BEARERS

622 In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni
645 political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a
[565] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

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Mpezeni

Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*mwavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*nkosikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Nduna*, pl. *nduna*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 470, 472, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kins- 634
woman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political 554
significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the
particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent
incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound 634
by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife 683
while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded 578
him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants
and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's
father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing.
A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said
he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman
complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The
chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting
he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman
said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken
the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why
he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was
accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment 634
and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are 273
protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief 576
himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him
but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a
commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the [626]
reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer
under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages
unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his
intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants 431
are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these 662
presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, 634
they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or
hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia
may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present
is made by an individual and arises from his own political
aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective
as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an 634
affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village 273
or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[46] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and
619 the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree
[597] of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[46] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
648 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[684] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[686] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building
361 other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased importance to the Native Authority centre. Already there have been one or two attempts at opening shops near the courts to cater for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, assessors, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *izizi zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
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178 death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

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[565] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
842 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

562 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nhlanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshlanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanti* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedicao . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in judgement on his own son, a young man of twenty-one, 692
for committing adultery with the wife of a man of a former
slave family. The husband brought the case against the [684]
chief's son, and the chief ordered the man to speak truly and [694]
not be afraid. The case was heard amid the most deathly [695]
silence. In awarding a heavy penalty of compensation against
his son, the chief spoke of the central position of law in Ngoni
life, and of the fact, so sharply brought out by the case, that
the law was no respecter of persons.

Young adults, boys and girls, were held personally re- 672
sponsible for breaches of the law which they had commited.
Penalties were awarded against them as individuals, even
though they often could not pay the compensation without
the help of their father and his family. They were expected 867
to become acquainted with the law in various ways. One
was by conformity to accepted social codes of behaviour, in-
stilled into them by their elders, particularly in such matters
as sex relations, respect for property, avoidance of slander
and of injury by violence. Another way of learning how the
law operated, as well as the principles upon which the case-
law was built, was by attending the courts, and listening [695]
carefully to the cross-examinations as well as to the judge-
ments. Young people were expected also to ask their fathers,
and elders generally, about points of law which they had not
understood, or had confused with some of the practices of the
local people. The onus was upon young adults for acquiring
this knowledge of the law as well as for behaving in accord-
ance with it. We shall see in the next chapter how the Ngoni [577]
regarded being law-abiding as one of their basic cultural
traits, as well as being evidence of the individual character
of a young adult.

Ngoni traditional skills

We made a distinction, albeit a rather tentative one, at the 128
beginning of this chapter between certain kinds of tradi-
tional knowledge which we have been describing up to this

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. The punishment of adultery

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognized other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognized and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. Labour migration

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Rhodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

has the money to do so. Sometimes a wife brings her husband to court seeking damages from him for cruelty without asking for a divorce. 586

The woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of desertion is usually the wife of a labour migrant. Her struggle is not with her husband himself but with her affines, his kinsfolk who try to protect his interests for him while he is away. We shall consider this type of situation in the next chapter, where we deal with the relationship between a woman and her husband's kin. Here it will suffice to say that provided the man has been away for about four years without writing the divorce is usually granted.

Actions for adultery are always liable to turn into divorce cases, and the amount of damages awarded depends on whether or not a divorce is granted. If adultery is proved, and it is easier to prove than to disprove it, the woman and her lover each pay 30*s*. to the husband and 5*s*. fine to the court. If the woman is divorced on the ground of the adultery, the damages are increased to £3 each to the husband and 10*s*. each to the court. In court the woman is usually asked 'Which man do you love?' and if she selects her lover, the divorce is granted. Sometimes the husband protests that he wants his wife back, but if the court is persuaded that to send the woman back would only lead to more trouble, they will divorce the woman despite the protests of the husband. 684 586

When divorce is granted the legalization payment, if it has been made, should be returned. The court does not, however, make any definite order on this point unless called upon to do so by the man or his relatives, and it seems that in the absence of definite instructions to hand over the money, it is retained by the woman's relatives. This is particularly true when the divorce is on the ground of the man's desertion when it is likely that his interests will be poorly represented by his relatives. 586 583

If the husband has brought his wife to court in order to divorce her on some ground other than adultery, the court may merely tell the couple that they are divorced, without awarding damages to either party. But the law on this point appears to be changing, and the rule followed in one court is not always followed in another. Even in the same court the decisions given at one time may conflict with those given at another. If the court decides that the woman is at fault she may be ordered to pay £3 damages to her husband. If the man is at fault then, more rarely, the man is ordered to pay £3 damages to his wife. Occasionally, although the fault is held to lie with the man, the woman is ordered to pay £3 damages to secure her divorce. The factors influencing these decisions appear to be the readiness of any particular court to listen to the pleas of a woman, and its opinion of the character of the woman. A woman who is regarded as foolish, or given to quarrelling over nothing, or promiscuous, is sometimes ordered to pay damages to her husband 586 692 562

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unless he has paid bridewealth, the children will go to her relatives, whatever the cause of the divorce and whichever party is at fault. He can then offer bridewealth to secure custody of the children at the same time as he loses the services of his wife. 583 586

Bridewealth to-day is almost entirely concerned with the custody of children of the marriage and does not affect the rights of a man in his wife. These rights are determined by a payment which probably did not exist in the old marriage system and which we may call the legalization payment.[17] This payment is now the most important in marriage and is the only one recorded on the printed marriage certificates issued by the Administration through the Native Authorities. The Ngoni believe that the word has been taken from the Cewa, although the Cewa use the word differently. A law was made in about 1944 by the Ngoni chiefs fixing the amount of the legalization payment at a minimum of thirty shillings. Prior to this edict smaller amounts were more usual. The way in which the magnitude of the payment has varied through time can be seen from Table VII. Some people do not follow the law and pay less than thirty shillings; the majority pay the legal amount, in some areas thirty-five shillings is more usual, and recently a few fathers have successfully demanded much higher sums, up to £10, for their daughters. The edict implied that at least thirty shillings should be offered in every marriage, but marriages have been and still are being contracted without any legalization payment, as can be seen from Table VIII. However, from this table it appears that in the last twelve years legalization payments have been offered in a greater proportion of marriages than previously. 583 [671]

The most important right established by this payment is that to damages in the event of adultery. If a man has made the legalization payment he is sure that when his wife commits adultery the court will order both the woman and her lover to pay him damages. Adultery suits are the commonest heard in court and the legalization payment clearly establishes the fact that the man and woman are married in the eyes of the law. If the first payment a man makes is bridewealth, the legalization payment falls away, and he gains the exclusive right of sexual access to his wife without any further payment. In this respect we can see a carry-over from the old system in which bridewealth followed after 'snuff-box', and adultery was punishable by death. Usually if bridewealth is paid in a subsisting marriage, it comes after the legalization payment and is additional to it. The one payment relates to the custody of the children, the other to the sexual services of the woman. We have noted that bridewealth can be offered on the occasion of divorce when perhaps no legalization payment has ever been made. 583 684 [692] 583

[17] *Cimalo.* Cf. Young, *Notes on the customs and folk-lore of the Tumbuka-Kamanga peoples*, p. 61; Coxhead, *The Native tribes of North-Eastern Rhodesia; their laws and customs* (Occasional Papers No. Five, Royal Anthropological Institute), p. 25; Barnes, op. cit. p. 227

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

apparent ease with which women get divorces and councillors say that they divorce people only because the Administration would interfere if they did not. We can see that in one sense the Ngoni analysis is correct. Whatever may be the precipitating causes of particular divorces, one basic factor is that the old social order in which divorce was rare has been replaced, through a series of events beginning with the White conquest, by a different form of social structure in which wives are relatively mobile from one husband to another. Adultery and desertion lead to divorce because it is no longer necessary to tie down the fertility of women to definite points in a segmentary system based on patrilineal descent, and this is so because the system no longer exists. It is true that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Missions do not recognize divorce but ecclesiastical ceremonies have no force in law, either in the eyes of the Administration or of the Native Courts, and the sanctions utilized by these missions do not entirely prevent their members seeking divorce. 586 178

Immediately after a divorce the couple usually wish to have little to do with one another. After the passage of years the hostility between them fades away and they may talk to one another in the ordinary course of village life. They continue to address each other as *husband* and *wife* and their children, although nominally in the custody of one group or the other continue to visit back and forth and keep the parents informed of each other's doings. A woman now married elsewhere may return to her former husband when their son comes home on leave from work. In her old age a woman may even go back to the man from whom she was divorced a long time ago if she has no one else to turn to for shelter and assistance. More frequently she follows her children to where they are living in her former husband's village but has little to do with him directly, only through their children. 586

8. Co-wives

593 595

We have seen that the rights of a man over his wife's sexual activities are different from hers over his. Whereas a woman who commits adultery pays damages to her husband, he does not pay her when he commits adultery. This lack of symmetry derives from the polygynous nature of the Ngoni marriage system. A man can always argue that he is seeking another wife, even if the woman he is running after is married to someone else. It is considered no business of his wife to interfere. She may attempt to stop him but all she can use are domestic and mystical sanctions, she cannot appeal to the law. Again, a wife has no right to the sexual monopoly of her husband and cannot prevent him from taking additional wives except by making his life with her so difficult that he decides to abandon the attempt. [584]

As can be seen from Table III, about one man in seven has two or more wives. Although the Christian Missions do not tolerate 595 794

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Beyond the Village The Native Courts deal to a great extent with matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage 692 certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage 581 stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the [997] development of Christian marriage.

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who 858 rears him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are responsible for their own actions before the court, and that truant 593 schoolboys can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peaceably with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms.

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and 593 independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole 584 more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage.

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, 882 and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. 848 It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom 684 she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later

[1] Called *cidumu*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

848 that if the lover is thought to be very desirable as a husband, the girl
684 and her parents will begin to act as though she had in fact been married by him. Few cases of seduction come before the courts, perhaps because of the fact that it is only pre-marital pregnancy that can lead to action in the court and not merely pre-marital copulation. If the lover agrees to marry the girl it is in the interests of her kin to let him do so, rather than take the matter to court when they may be awarded more damages but where also their daughter will appear as a foolish and indiscreet person. It is said that some girls hand on to their parents some of the presents they receive from their lovers, and that therefore the parents take no action against the lovers, but I have no information as to the extent of this practice.

The kin of a woman have therefore an interest in her sexual activities before she is married, and to a lesser extent a man's relatives have a similar interest. The main concern of a man, however, is that he shall not get himself into such serious trouble that he has to find the money for damages in the court and that he will not be forced to marry an unsuitable girl whom he has impregnated.

2. The marriages of children

581 At marriage itself a person's relatives may act on his or her behalf in choosing a spouse, and the factors that influence their choice are different from those which operate when people choose their own spouses. A man's relatives stress that the wife-to-be must be hardworking, polite to her superiors and not given to promiscuity. The fact that a girl begins to sleep with her lover may influence her lover's parents against her for they argue that if she sleeps so easily with their son she will soon tire of him and run off after someone else. They pay more attention to the character of her parents and siblings and look to see what sort of wives her sisters have made. Similarly the parents of the girl may look critically at the young man and they too argue that as he has already begun to sleep with their daughter he will soon begin running after other women and leave his wife 'alone in her hut'. If a relative of the girl has already married a relative of the man and that marriage has not been a success, their kinsfolk may try to prevent a second marriage.

Case history 4

Absolom, who works in South Africa, wrote to his brother saying he wanted to marry Mary. The brother, who was married to Mary's sister, approached Mary's father who said that he could not agree. Mary's father later said that he opposed the marriage as Absolom's brother had infected his wife with syphilis and he did not want another of his daughters to marry into that family.

[164]

584 If a man is away working he may write home and ask his father or some other relative to find a wife for him. A marriage arranged in this way does not necessarily find favour with the man when he finds out who his bride is to be, but a number of soldiers successfully

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 approval of his father before he offers, and as in the case of Amos and Eve (p. 28), the father may sometimes disapprove. If the man is from another part of the territory or from abroad the parents of
583 the woman, even if they accept the legalization payment, may be
603 reluctant to allow their grandchildren to go a long way away from them to live among their son-in-law's kin. This consideration applies
593 particularly to strangers in the township who marry Ngoni women. When they leave their jobs or retire they try to take their wives and children with them. They may be frustrated in the removal of their children by the woman's parents, who refuse the bridewealth. The courts support the claims of Ngoni grandparents for the retention of their grandchildren under these conditions and a returning Yao or Cipeta man may be forced to travel without his children and sometimes without his wife. I have recorded elsewhere [2] an incident in which a Yao man who had been married to an Ngoni woman for twenty-one years was divorced by her and his offer of bridewealth refused by her parents. The police who check the movements of women and children by bus and lorry away from Fort Jameson are in touch with the Native Courts and may be on the look out if it seems likely that a man from a strange tribe will attempt to smuggle his wife and children away from their Ngoni kin.

581 Thus we see that the kinsfolk are directly concerned with marriage. When the children are still toddlers, they are paired off in fun by their
[858] adult relatives as they sit playing. For a week or month or even longer a woman will laughingly call her neighbour *child's parent-in-law* because their children have been nominated *husband* and *wife* in this way. As a child grows older, so the interest of its relatives in its marriage become clearer. Before marriage the relatives of a
684 girl hold rights in her that are violated if she is seduced and bears
848 a child. It is to them that the girl's lover pays the beast of seduction to recompense them for the wrong he has done by impregnating the girl, but he does not gain custody of the child. On the other hand,
836 no one brings a case against a man merely because he sleeps with an unmarried girl. It is only when she becomes pregnant that an action can be laid against him. A man caught *in flagrante delicto* by one of the unmarried girl's kin can expect abuse and possibly blows but unless he is provocative he need not fear action in the courts. The hostility directed towards him seems to be due in part to his having behaved so indiscreetly as to be caught and having forced the girl's kin to take cognizance of what was happening.

At marriage the woman's kin grant rights in her sexual activities
581 to her husband. These rights are unambiguously transferred by the
583 legalization payment, and the woman's kin are therefore in a position to delay or facilitate the tranfser of these rights by their attitude towards the payment. There is no corresponding right in an unmarried man held by his kin, and at marriage there is no corres-

[2] Barnes, op. cit. p. 238

843 her husband's village, the occasion must be recognized in a more elaborate manner. Her husband or his relatives buy her a new cloth. Wearing this cloth she stands at the door of her husband's hut, and is undressed by her husband's grandmother. The old woman rubs castor oil on her abdomen and dresses her again. A small girl from her husband's kin goes with her to her own village, and their arrival there, with the woman dressed in her new cloth, indicates formally to her parents that she is pregnant. They stay at the woman's village for about a week, and then return to her husband's village.[14] Her parents have thus been made socially aware of her pregnancy, and the man can legitimately look to them for help if she becomes ill or fractious.

844 761 606 684 If the woman does die in childbirth, her husband has to offer a beast to her parents even though they were told of her pregnancy.[15] The husband may confess to adultery when called upon to do so by the midwife, but this does not absolve him from the obligation to pay the beast. Confession absolves him from the charge of having caused the death of his wife by his careless behaviour, but he must still recompense his parents-in-law for the death of their daughter. It is recognized that a woman may die in childbirth despite the absence of adultery during pregnancy or despite full confession of adultery by both the woman and her husband. She dies just because God lets her die, and not because of any human misconduct. Yet she reaches the situation in which there is the danger of death because of her position as the wife of her husband. It is the 'work' of married women to bear children, and it is the 'work' of the husband if his wife dies in childbirth to offer a beast to her parents so that they may mourn their daughter.

5. Quarrels

581 We see then that a woman is not severed utterly from her own group when she marries, but that her kinsfolk retain an interest in her welfare and have certain rights in her and in her husband. The recognition of these rights by their son-in-law increases his esteem in their eyes, and enables him to appeal to them with confidence when he needs their support. The common interest of all is in the successful maintenance of the marriage, and the mutual recognition of rights and fulfilment of obligations consolidate the social relationships established between people related by marriage. Quarrels threaten the continued existence of the marriage, 578 and it is therefore in the common interest that they should be settled 602 as expeditiously as possible. The intervention of affines in a personal quarrel between husband and wife is characteristic of a system in which most neighbours are kinsfolk and in which the spatial concentration of people into compact villages, where abuse shouted at one

[14] This ceremony is called *ngayi*, which means 'breast-cloth' in Nsenga.
[15] See above, pp. 39f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

578 602 that he was drunk when he quarrelled with his wife and did not mean what he said, the woman may agree to return. If she is adamant, or if a serious issue such as cruelty or adultery is involved, a formal discussion is held in the village of one or the other. Relatives come from both sides and a man of senior status convenes the meeting.[16] Sometimes it may be agreed that the offending spouse must pay nominal damages to the other. The usual procedure is to offer a chicken to the other, but sometimes a few shillings are given instead. If agreement cannot be reached at a meeting like this, the matter can either be referred to the court, or else the issue of the quarrel may be left unresolved in the hope that at some later date a solution may be possible. While the initiative in holding a village meeting lies with the senior relatives of the [694] couple, the only people who can take the matter to the court are the couple themselves. A father may sometimes handle the formalities of laying a case against his son-in-law on his daughter's behalf but it would be difficult for him to do so without her co-operation, and, on the man's side, it is only he and not his father or brother who can effectively sue his wife.

The interests of the two groups of relatives are centred on the successful maintenance of the marriage. It is considered more important that people should live together in peace without quarrelling than that the exact rights of one side or the other, even where these rights can be defined precisely, should be upheld. [684] A man who commits adultery may be censured by his father, who will perhaps refuse to speak to his son if he thinks that the stability of his son's marriage is threatened, even though it is admitted that the man's wife has no legal right to object to her husband's adultery. When there has been a quarrel people do not rush to hold a village meeting since, by doing so, the existence of the quarrel is formally recognized and its seriousness increased. It is better if possible to get the couple to 'change their character', that is, to become reconciled to each other on their own account. Until the woman's sudden departure indicates to the world that they have quarrelled, relatives are reluctant to interfere between man and wife. People gossip about the quarrels of married couples, but even their close kinsmen will hedge and say that these affairs are not their responsibility if pressed for an opinion. The action of the wife in running away is the mechanism by which she begins her appeal to her relatives for support, and she carries it a stage further by refusing to accept her husband's apologies. Finally if the settlement proposed at the meeting is not acceptable she appeals to the court. Men do not run away to their kinsmen and do not rely on relatives to the same extent as do their wives. Yet a man can if he wishes

[92] [16] *Tanda.* This word is used of any formal meeting in a village to settle a quarrel, matrimonial or otherwise, before the issue is referred to the court. Cf. Nsenga *ku-tandala*, to talk or discuss.

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the [182]
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with 843
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant.
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child 169
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are [837]
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court 692
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

602 that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address
593 of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife,
the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration.
684 Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the
692 woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

593 The general principle that no court action involving the husband's
684 sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

578 Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their
602 relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both
[845] from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman
[787] had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who
[754] was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great
167 deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by
602 the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [643] [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [187] [693] [562]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another. 486 562

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni

842 otherwise *mdulo* of the child will still result. Medicine is taken also by women who are unable to conceive. If it fails, it is because a spirit has entered the womb; and lots are taken to find whose spirit it is, after which sacrifices are offered until the desired result is obtained.

8. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Chewa*).

586 The Achewa have no form of legal separation by agreement, and a divorce can be effected only where adequate reason exists. A husband may not divorce his wife on account of barrenness; but he may divorce her for adultery or desertion; or if she persistently neglects to cook food, bring water or perform her other work; or if she is offensively and perpetually jealous. A wife may divorce her husband if he is impotent; or if he fails to maintain a habitable house, or to do his share of the work; or if he fails to pay her tax, feed and clothe her properly; or on account of desertion or ill-treatment. Effect is given to the divorce after the hearing of the case by the husband handing over a fowl or other token, always known as *mubei*[1] (an arrow), in the presence of the *anklosue*[2] to the wife's father, who passes it on to her *mtsibweni*. The wife always keeps the children, even if she has been at fault; though sometimes in very flagrant cases one or more fully-grown children may be awarded to the husband; and in adultery the co-respondent is obliged to pay heavy damages as compensation for the loss of the children, [684] and the value of several years' tax is refunded by the *mtsibweni*. A woman may not be divorced while she is pregnant.

9. *Marriage of Widows* (*Chewa*).

587 A widow may not be courted until after the conclusion of the funeral ceremonies described in Section VII. When, a few months later, she has to make her choice, she brews beer at her own house, and on the evening of the *tsiku loskambula* her suitors, friends and relations foregather outside; the eldest female relation holds before her pieces of *tsekera*[2] grass, and tells her which of the suitors each piece represents. Then she signifies her choice by taking the appropriate piece in her hand; and the old woman proceeds to the house of the chosen one, selects therefrom a knife or other small article, and hands it to the widow. In due course the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, brings a cow, sheep, goat or fowl, according to his [775] means, and ties it to the centre post of the widow's house, in order to get rid of the spirit [842] of her late husband; otherwise, he will not be able to beget a child. The widow brings out beer; her relations subsequently remove the animal from the centre post, and at night the bridal pair sleep apart in the house. Next day they procure medicine from a doctor and put it in a big pot in the house; and in the evening first the man and then the woman bathes in it. That night they again abstain from conjugal intercourse; but at cockcrow, after bathing a second time in the pot, they take it outside the village to a place where two paths meet, and break it there, thus finally and completely ridding themselves of the spirit of the first husband. They return to the village before it is light, and then commence their married life.

[1] Cf. H. S. Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 309.
[2] *Tsekera*, a long coarse grass used for thatching.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

12. *Customary Licence* (*Ngoni*).

N 896 [183] [684] [583]

Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

N 586 [595]

Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mabeka*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *nakhonse* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mbeka*, *kutenders* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

M [586]

III.—DOMESTIC LIFE: FILIAL.

1. *Infancy*.

M 845

Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*kigelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man at the same time, and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

[582]

M 429

Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *nsoibweni*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

N 429 593

Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] [558] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 178 161 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 641 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was [684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a 641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population 727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There 563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State. [567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain 563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set 641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise 701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Mnewa*, pl. *anewa*. Cf. the Zulu term *umnewa*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 and inform her that she is divorced. If the wife has committed adultery, the husband can take the case to court. If the adultery is proved he is 586 usually awarded £3 damages against his wife and £3 against the co-684 respondent, and the woman is divorced. On the other hand, a woman can seek a divorce in the courts on the grounds of desertion or cruelty. The court will award a divorce if the desertion or cruelty is proved, but may also rule that the woman must pay £3 to her husband's family.

If a man does not wish to divorce his adulterous wife, the court will award him damages of £1. 10*s.* against his wife and £1. 10*s.* against the co-respondent. In adultery cases in which a divorce is granted the damages awarded against the woman are often met by the co-respondent, who then marries the woman, but where there is no divorce the woman will appeal to her father or brothers to help her pay her husband.

If a woman runs away from her husband there is nothing that the husband can do to force her back, and if methods of conciliation fail, he has little hope of redress, except in cases of seduction or abduction. If the woman refuses to rejoin her husband the court may award damages against her, but such a marriage usually ends in adultery on the part of the woman and a divorce on that ground.

It has been observed by District Officers that divorce is not so 586 frequent among the Ngoni as compared with their Cewa neighbours. 593 Nevertheless, divorce must be considered as a frequent occurrence among the Ngoni, and is so regarded by the people themselves. There is a maxim that a man ought to rely on his brothers, not on his wife, and one informant remarked: 'Never trust your wife; perhaps tomorrow you will divorce her.'

The Wife's Mother

The tensions between the two groups linked by a marriage find 606 their most formal expression in the attitude prescribed for a man to his wife's mother. While a woman can speak to her parents-in-law and enter their house, a man cannot do so. In his contacts with his father-in-law he must be quiet and reserved, and although face-to-face contact is not considered shocking, it should be as rare as possible. But a man must go out of his way to avoid his mother-in-law, and this injunction is in the main observed in practice. The avoidance is usually phrased in terms of a prohibition on the entry into the hut of the mother-in-law. A man who has to pass by this hut will normally go round the back of it.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage. [606] The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

593 691 578 While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on [586] grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

593 571 578 Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other. In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a [684] woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
578 Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
643 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
648 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.

In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo.
[805] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the Ukwembo River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Maseko, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Msafwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinaluzi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
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11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere: born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1888/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 643

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Malowi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mackera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

down at the chief's feet, and with a shout dashed up again and danced a furious war dance. His eyes fixed and staring with passion, every muscle distended, he stabbed into the air with his spear, tossed the dust of the kraal about, and leapt hither and thither in a frenzy of passion. All the while he kept shouting his battle-cry, and the thousands of fighting men around beat their spears and chanted a chorus. When he had exhausted himself, another headman leapt into the circle and went through his own peculiar wild dance, and then another and another, and for half-an-hour or more these fantastic exhibitions were maintained. Then the chief rose. A great roar of salutation greeted him. Gathering his clothes about him he walked in procession from the kraal, and the council broke up.

In the olden days the power of the chiefs was maintained by a wholesome dread of his warriors, and the laws were enforced with a consistent severity. One result of this is that the Ngoni tribe has always had a higher standard of morality than any Central Africa people. Some persons were stealing mission cattle and complaints were made to the chief. After a time a thief was caught, and then in spite of the pleadings of the missionary the highest penalty was meted out to him. He was hanged on a tree opposite the mission house, and it was forbidden to remove his body. The hyenas wore a path round the foot of the tree trying to get at the carcase, and there he hung, a terrible example to the neighbourhood, until the white ants ate the rope by which he hung, and the body fell to the waiting hyenas.

I have seen a chief receive news of the adultery of one of his wives, turn to his executioner, and give him instructions, and in a few minutes both man and woman were lying dead outside the village. I have myself begged for the life of a woman who had sinned, and she was spared only after a great fine in cattle was levied instead.

These were harsh and terrible punishments, necessary for rough times. And now when the chief is loosing some of his old authority, and dare not exercise capital punishment because of the overshadowing British Government, one fears that except where the power of religion has taken the place of the old dread, a weaker morality is apt to sap the vitality of the tribe. The punishments were not arbitrary. They were fixed by precedent. And all the past quarrels for forty or fifty years back would be quoted to prove the right of a plaintiff or defender. And now

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and
631 disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each
621 village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the
422 village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief
221 who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village
[643] concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed
[685] by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion
[643] between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small,
631 contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there
621 was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of
648 British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still
628 formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of
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1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

578
divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of 643
influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed 611
for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express [754]
their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to [669]
establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling [872] with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor 643
chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount 578
Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the 692
courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically 643
important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with 648
the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for [685] embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly [186] marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

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The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and 643
his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each 645

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. [146] This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when [272] milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made [262] curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [867] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for autho- [155] rity. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

down at the chief's feet, and with a shout dashed up again and danced a furious war dance. His eyes fixed and staring with passion, every muscle distended, he stabbed into the air with his spear, tossed the dust of the kraal about, and leapt hither and thither in a frenzy of passion. All the while he kept shouting his battle-cry, and the thousands of fighting men around beat their spears and chanted a chorus. When he had exhausted himself, another headman leapt into the circle and went through his own peculiar wild dance, and then another and another, and for half-an-hour or more these fantastic exhibitions were maintained. Then the chief rose. A great roar of salutation greeted him. Gathering his clothes about him he walked in procession from the kraal, and the council broke up.

In the olden days the power of the chiefs was maintained by a wholesome dread of his warriors, and the laws were enforced with a consistent severity. One result of this is that the Ngoni tribe has always had a higher standard of morality than any Central Africa people. Some persons were stealing mission cattle and complaints were made to the chief. After a time a thief was caught, and then in spite of the pleadings of the missionary the highest penalty was meted out to him. He was hanged on a tree opposite the mission house, and it was forbidden to remove his body. The hyenas wore a path round the foot of the tree trying to get at the carcase, and there he hung, a terrible example to the neighbourhood, until the white ants ate the rope by which he hung, and the body fell to the waiting hyenas.

I have seen a chief receive news of the adultery of one of his wives, turn to his executioner, and give him instructions, and in a few minutes both man and woman were lying dead outside the village. I have myself begged for the life of a woman who had sinned, and she was spared only after a great fine in cattle was levied instead.

These were harsh and terrible punishments, necessary for rough times. And now when the chief is loosing some of his old authority, and dare not exercise capital punishment because of the overshadowing British Government, one fears that except where the power of religion has taken the place of the old dread, a weaker morality is apt to sap the vitality of the tribe. The punishments were not arbitrary. They were fixed by precedent. And all the past quarrels for forty or fifty years back would be quoted to prove the right of a plaintiff or defender. And now

687

687 OFFENSES AGAINST THE STATE--definitions of and punishments for political offenses (e.g., treason, espionage, illegal entry, conspiracy, lese majesty, electoral fraud, malfeasance in office); penalties for military offenses (e.g., insubordination, cowardice, desertion, mutiny); definitions of and punishments for judicial offenses (e.g., giving or receiving bribes, perjury, subornation, barratry, contempt of court); penalties for monetary or fiscal offenses (e.g., counterfeiting, falsification of records or documents, smuggling, tax evasion); etc. See also:

Money	436	Revolution	669
Smuggling	439	Court procedure	696
International law	648	Courts-martial	698
Taxation	661	Military discipline	703

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[48] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[48] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 196; Read, 'Tradition' p. 461, f.n1; Young, *History*, p. 125.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[46] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
619 and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to
[597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[46] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him. 634 648 [647] [687]

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialized services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them. 648 65 [797] 645 643

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo- 648 184

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In contrast to this, the private affairs of the chieftainship, matters connected with royal cattle, disputes among the chief's wives and quarrels between the chief and his affines or close supporters are discussed at the chief's village. Quarrels of an apparently trivial nature, such as a chief's wife's running away with a lorry driver, would in the old days have threatened the whole internal structure of the county segment, and they are still treated as questions of State by the lieutenants and kinsmen of the chief who attend these meetings. The contrast between these two kinds of assembly is striking. They are described by different vernacular terms,[24] and while any man can attend and speak at a meeting at the court, it would be considered inappropriate for him to intervene in a meeting at the chief's village unless his position in the old residential system was a high one. Women listen to court meetings, but rarely if ever speak, for the Administration works very largely through men and it is men who discuss the kinds of thing in which the Administration is interested. At the chief's village, the interests of the chief's kinswomen and wives are often directly concerned and they themselves contribute to the discussion. The marriages of chiefs established, and to a lesser extent do still reinforce and establish, affinal ties which cut across the cleavages between segments and which were crucial to the balance of power within the State. A quarrel between a chief and his wife was a matter of political, and not merely domestic, significance and must therefore be discussed by the chief's political advisers.

The sanction of deportation appears to be employed only in connexion with offences against the chieftainship. Thus a lieutenant who embezzled some royal cattle was called before a meeting at his chief's village attended by the important lieutenants in the county, and ordered to leave the country. Similarly, a man who was found drinking with a chief's wife under suspicious circumstances was ordered to leave the country by a tribunal of this kind. He moved first to another county, but was forced to move on again out of Ngoniland. Such actions are sometimes taken without reference to recognized Native Courts or to the Administration, and the effectiveness of the tribunal's decision depends on the support it has from the people as a whole and from the Native Authority organization rather than on the ultimate sanctions wielded by the Administration. However, when matters of this

[24] A meeting to discuss matters of general interest is *musokhano*; one to discuss affairs of the chieftainship is *luinsanya*. cf. *ku-sokhana*, to assemble (Nyanja) and *i(li)landa*, assembly (Zulu). The different derivation of the words, from Nyanja and Zulu, is significant. *Luinsanya* also means age-set.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
648 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[684] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[696] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building
361 other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased importance to the Native Authority centre. Already there have been one or two attempts at opening shops near the courts to cater for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, assessors, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and appeals were uncommon. Chiefs did not allow a man to come by himself with his case to them, he had to come with his headman. Even those in danger of death went first to the headmen and these brought them to the chiefs. 692

The Ngoni hated bribes. If any *induna* was found to have taken bribes from people he was condemned and punished. [687]

The hearing of the cases was like what it is today. The one who brought the case to the court spoke first, then the one with whom he was quarrelling. If there were elders there from their village they also spoke telling out how these people quarrelled, saying so-and-so began to quarrel in such-and-such a way, and then showed how they had been unable to judge it in the village. They did not go into details of the quarrel, that was done by the men themselves. After those who had quarrelled had told of the beginning of the case any who knew of it were asked to say how it appeared to them in the village. These were the witnesses both for and against. 695

When this had been done, all who were implicated or interested in the case remained silent. It is the custom of the Ngoni that all who spoke in a case should stand and have a stick, and as they spoke they should walk about and limp with the stick or sometimes stand all together, but in that case the hand which held the stick should shake and stick it into the ground. Only women spoke seated. No one at the hearing of a case was allowed to lie down, everyone, even the Paramount, sat. They did this because they were afraid that otherwise the case would not finish quickly. The court was held in the cattle kraal. Women were not allowed into the kraal for cases, but sat outside opposite where the old men were gathered, even though they were the wives of the Paramount. 695 516

After the litigants and the witnesses had spoken it was the turn of the elders of the court. They questioned and agreed with or criticized the men who had quarrelled but they did not pronounce judgement. They waited for the Paramount who first of all sat silent and noticed those who unravelled or twisted the case. Afterwards when the people had finished speaking, the elders delivered the story to the Paramount or judge. The judge then delivered his judgement and condemned those who had twisted the case. He delivered his judgement sitting not standing like the other people and when he had finished all thanked him, or rather saluted him with a loud '*Bayete*' or with the surname if to lesser chiefs. Sometimes he sent an elder to tell the court the judgement. When the case had been judged no one criticized the judgement. The one who began to give thanks for the judgement was the one who was found guilty: this he did to show submission and repentance. The custom of today that the one who wins the case gives the thanks is not good because the man who has lost goes away in resentment and threatening and often the case crops up again. 695 [576]

If an *induna* or man of standing went secretly to the Paramount to accuse somebody that he deserved death (perhaps for witchcraft), very often the Paramount sent a man in secret to warn the condemned man to run to a chief's village and hide his head. In this way many left their fathers and went to build with the chiefs and when they went they took 643 682 692

all their things

829 individuals upon the cohesion of that society through their behaviour and actions. This was illustrated in the phrase so constantly used by them, and referred to already several times: 'He is spoiling the land,' or the converse, quoted in Chapter I: 'Young people were well taught that this behaviour was right for the upbuilding of the land.'

181 Among these so-called group values the first of all, and pre-
829 eminent above all, was the value of keeping together. Taught by bitter experience that personal quarrels could lead to political secessions and to the diminution of the power and influence of the Ngoni kingdoms, the focus of much of their thinking was on maintaining cohesion whether in small units or in large. I think the Ngoni were the only people in Nyasa-
[641] land where individuals and families were not allowed to
[166] leave the villages to live elsewhere without permission of the
[621] chief or headman. In the local courts there were frequent cases in which the accused had been guilty of leaving with-
[687] out permission. This illustration could be used also to indicate the second of the group values. I have called it dominance for want of a better term. It involves the exercise of authority, political and legal, over their own and subject peoples, the determination to exact obedience, influenced by a feeling of paternal responsibility for all over whom authority was claimed. This was an ambivalent sentiment affecting the attitude of the ruler and his relations with the ruled, and was the basis of the court case quoted in Chapter VI, when a chief made a judgement against his own son for adultery with a poor man's wife. The third group value was that of mutual aid and trust within the in-group, in order to secure its cohesion. This was the integrating principle of the 'house' system, described briefly in Chapter I and mentioned in many other contexts. Mutual trust and aid had been in the past the main element in the behaviour of men in their own regiments, in the mutual relation of warrior with warrior, both when on
181 campaigns and when living together in the villages.
577 The four personal values were inherent in the acceptance

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest. 647

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping villages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, but this cannot be done openly under the present régime. 628 [643] [648] [692] [669]

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships. 631 64

Sanctions

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exercised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 687 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 sensitive to suggestions that a chief may be oppressing his people,
648 usually works through the Paramount. One minor chief was sent to the Paramount's village for a period of instruction in order that he might learn how to rule wisely. On another occasion a chief who had abused the Administration was fined one month's salary by the Paramount. In both these instances the Administration was the initiator of the Paramount Chief's action, but he may also act without reference to it. It was reported to the Paramount that a certain minor chief had struck one of his subjects who had been slow to offer him beer. The Paramount warned the minor chief that he might kill someone this way, and that he ought to fine people, not to strike them. In a dispute between a minor chief and his court clerk over some new court furniture, which the chief wished to use in his own house, the Paramount intervened and ordered that the chairs be put in the courthouse.

643 The Paramount himself is subject to social constraint, and may be criticized by his senior lieutenants. He is advised on how he should behave by these men, and if his behaviour is unsatisfactory they may rebuke him. At county meetings, headmen and others can voice their
644 complaints against the royal house as a whole, and have from time to
661 time protested successfully at such a meeting against too many of the Native Authority posts being filled by members of the royal lineage.

The Native Authority

647 Under the Native Authority system, introduced by the Administra-
[648] tion in 1929, there are a number of paid officials, apart from the chiefs, whose salaries are met by the Native Treasury. They include councillors, assessors, clerks, police, postmen, school attendance officers, and others. The most important of these, and the most highly paid, are
692 the councillors and assessors. They sit once or twice a week in court and hear cases brought before them. Each of the chiefs has a court, and for the most part the cases that come before a county court are brought by people living in the county. When litigants from two counties are involved there is no definite rule as to which court will hear the case and it largely depends on the wish of the instigator of the proceedings. Cases come before the Paramount Chief's county court that concern people from other counties and a litigant may take his case from one chief to another, including the Nyasaland chiefs, in an attempt to obtain a favourable and enforceable decision. The Appeal Court sits at the Paramount Chief's village and is held once a month.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

may often be heard in the afternoons blowing their whistles to call 797
their flock to prayer in the local school.

Meetings of all deacons and evangelists of one denomination within 795
the tribe are held every year or so. Permission to hold these meetings has to be obtained from the chief, who may sometimes attend. Food is provided by the local church members and a levy to raise funds for buying a goat or sheep may be made. The initiative at these meetings is taken by the senior deacons and decisions reached are passed on to the members by the deacons. Church services, which are attended by people from many villages, are not only meetings for worship but are [794] also occasions when instructions for collective action are given. For example, a lieutenant was recently suspended by his mission for helping [688] to find another wife for his chief. Church members in his county were then instructed at a church service that they must not attend the funeral of this man or of any of his children.

The tribal area is divided into two zones controlled by the two main denominations, with some overlapping, and this division cuts across the county boundaries, so that people from more than one county have a common interest in a church serving them all. This interest is reinforced by attendance at funerals and prayer meetings in the villages.

The Watch Tower, also known as Jehovah's Witnesses, or in the vernacular, as The Society, is now the third sect of importance in the area. This organization has had a rather chequered career, and has been the target of much adverse criticism from missions, Administration, and chiefs. From the point of view of social structure, it is significant because its organization within the tribe cuts across the county boundaries, because it holds that the teachers of the other denominations are wholly false, because its membership is drawn largely from people who previously belonged to these other denominations, and because no local Whites and few persons of importance in the tribe are members of this sect. In the past, members of the Society opposed the chiefs on principle, but this attitude is not held now, and opportunities are taken to demonstrate their loyalty to the existing order. Meetings are held in different parts of the country every month, and members from other parts are housed and fed by the local members.

Not every person in the tribe has been baptized as a Christian, but 797
the initiative in religious affairs has passed to the functionaries of the different denominations. While the indigenous practices of the people

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

clan and for women of leading Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. Two of the texts emphasized the distinction conferred on the royal women by special clothing. Cibambo described the use of well-dressed soft skins and of beads and wire, the beads brought with them from the south, the brass wire obtained from the Arabs. In NaNdumbu's text she mentioned cloth bought from the stores. After the Ngoni women gave up wearing soft leather for skirts and the long piece of leather draped from the left shoulder, they used strong cotton cloth of dark blue or black, originally brought by the Arabs and later stocked by the stores. They tied the main cloth under their arms in a draped knot over the breast and on ceremonial occasions they added another fastened on the left shoulder like a plaid. A woman who had been a young girl in the village of Paramount Cikusi, but was not of a leading clan, said that in this village there was a great difference between the royal women and the rest: 'Only the daughters of Cikusi and his big wives could wear dark cloth as the Ngoni do. The others would have been killed if they tried to look like the big women'.

The royal women and the big wives and widows of chiefs and *alumuzana* were treated by all with whom they came in contact with the distinction and respect due to their prestige. They were addressed and thanked by the term *Nkomo*, with the clan name and the honorific prefix added, except where, as in the case of Bambo Manga, a title had been conferred. She was thanked '*Nkomo Bambo*'.[1] *Ukuhlonipa*, and its Nyanja equivalent *kulemekeza*, meaning to honour and to behave in a respectful manner towards senior people and those of superior rank, was an expression constantly used by the Ngoni and by the other peoples in the Ngoni kingdoms. The forms of showing respect were partly verbal; partly in the position adopted, with the eyes cast down and a slight curtsey by the women when facing someone; partly in the tone of voice when speaking; and partly in the deliberate and controlled behaviour noticed by several early travellers in Nyasaland. A particular verbal form of respect practised by the royal women was the use of the *hlonipa* vocabulary. I found this practice surviving only in the Emcisweni area in northern Ngoniland where the Ngoni language was still spoken, but informants said that it had been common to all married women of trans-Zambesi clans in the northern kingdom when they had spoken Ngoni among themselves. The *hlonipa* vocabulary consisted of the substitution of special words, known only to the women, in order to avoid using a word in which the main syllable of a man's name occurred—a man with whom they were connected by marriage or by affinal relationship.[2] Thus Zwangendaba's wives and widows could

[1] *Bambo* (father) was a term of respect used for important senior men.

[2] *Hlonipa* as a form of special vocabulary was widely practised among the Nguni groups in South Africa. Hoernlé, A. W. 'Social Organisation', in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, pp. 74, 77.

work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union. This exodus to the south in its turn brought the Ngoni into touch once more with the Matabele, the Zulu, and the Swazi, and reawakened their consciousness of their southern origin. It is significant that just at the point when their power in their own country received a crushing blow, they came into contact once more in the south with the stock from which they had sprung and to whom they could still speak in their own language. The anthropologist who looks for the reason why the distinctive Ngoni culture did not die out entirely after their military defeat and the advent of the whites, can see at least part of the reason supplied by the results of this economic exodus to work in the south. When the other tribes in the neighbourhood were, in the Ngoni phrase, 'running always to the Boma' and incidentally picking up fragments of European customs, the Ngoni remained, according to their own account, to a great extent aloof and were strengthened in this aloofness by their renewed southern connexions.

Ngoni supremacy over the country was at an end. The Europeans were the overlords of all the tribes, not the Ngoni. Instead of one big chief in the country, many small ones were now recognized who dared to give themselves airs because they knew the Ngoni could not compel allegiance to their Paramount. Chewa people living under Ngoni chiefs could no longer be forced to stay there, therefore a different attitude towards them was necessary. 'Chewa' could no longer be synonymous with 'slave'. I have heard Ngoni chiefs in court address their *indunas* and headmen many times on behaving well to people of other tribes 'Or they will leave us and to-day we cannot make them return'. A recent case in which a young chief, but a very important one, was summoned to the Paramount's court for insulting a Chewa woman, was made the occasion by the Paramount for a long public discourse on the present relations between Ngoni and Chewa, pointing out that an Ngoni chief whose Chewa subjects left him would 'spoil his country' and 'all his people would be ashamed'. Ngoni prestige, in fact, having lost the support of military power, had to rely on other sanctions. In their own eyes, their prestige was still due to their southern origin, their success in creating the Ngoni state in an alien milieu, and those distinctive institutions which they had retained. To the surrounding people, to the Chewa and other tribes,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VI. The clerk of a county Native Court checks the whereabouts of men on the tax register of a village with an important man in the village. Standing are a Native Authority messenger with fez, and an Administrative messenger. The village headman and some of his people sit in the background.

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PLATE VII. Litigants outside a county Native Court wait for hearings to begin.

[Facing p. 152]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

review by the Administration, but in practice the cases are so numerous, the written account of them so brief, and often the handwriting of the record so bad, that it is difficult to make an adequate review. The Administration is able to keep some check on the financial transactions of the courts, and convictions for embezzlement are not uncommon; but the Administration does not greatly influence the decisions taken by the courts nor their enforcement. For though there are police on the lorry routes and crocodiles in the rivers, it is fairly easy for a determined man (or woman) who is dissatisfied with the treatment he has received in the courts to get away. He can usually get to a White farm or to a town, and once there it is not so easy to get him back. Men are not continually running away from the courts, for they usually accept decisions given against them, though appeals from a minor chief's court to the Ngoni Appeal Court are fairly common. Few people take their appeals further to the District Officer, and I have never heard of a case going on appeal beyond the Provincial Commissioner's Court. 692 626 [648] [696]

The general moral approval by the people of the work of the courts which lies behind much of the effectiveness of the Native Court system does not extend automatically to all legal action as such. There is no widely held view that the decisions of the courts must be supported merely because they are the decisions of the courts. Some courts are good, some bad; and some decisions are good, some bad. The great majority of cases that come before a county court are brought by men and women living within the county, but sometimes a litigant begins his suit in a county court not his own, particularly in the Paramount Chief's county court, if he thinks that he will get a better hearing there. Yet chiefs support each other and a case brought before a chief by litigants from another county are sometimes thrown out, in accordance with the Native Courts Ordinance. 692 691

There is little moral sanction attaching to legal procedures, or methods of appeal, or even to the particular sums awarded as damages. The members of courts tend in the main to uphold each other's decisions, so that there is a fair amount of conformity throughout the ten counties. All those who work in courts have in fact an interest in increasing the power of the court system, which the people as a whole have not. Disputants will settle out of court if they can, for it is not so far to walk and the whole process is not so disruptive of social ties, but members of a court will sometimes challenge the right of independent arbitrators, village headmen and the like, to come to any binding decisions. 692 [681] [627]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage. [606] The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

593 While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it 691 is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the 578 brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on [586] grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

593 Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other. 571 In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative 578 in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a [684] woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Yao FT7

N Y 648 691

The Yao are mistrusted more than any other tribe, and some of the decisions taken by the courts are harsh on Yao. For example, a Yao man who was married to an Ngoni woman had, it was alleged, caught venereal disease from his wife. His wife then applied to the courts for a divorce, which was granted, together with the custody of the children. No bride-wealth had been paid in the marriage, but the husband now offered to pay in order to retain the children. This bride-wealth was refused by the woman's parents. The Yao appealed, but the judgement was upheld, and in addition he was ordered to go back to Nyasaland at once. He asked for permission to return to the woman's village in order to collect his belongings, and this was granted by the court, after first securing agreement between the couple as to the extent of his possessions, to wit, four plates and two beds. This deportation order was made despite the fact that the Yao had been living with his wife for twenty-one years. If a man of some other tribe had been involved, it is unlikely that he would have been ordered to leave the country, nor would the court have been so suspicious of his trying to take away more than his rightful share of the household possessions.

N Y 648 583

A Yao, who had a good job in Fort Jameson, once offered 30*s.* to the Paramount Chief when he was in the town as the legalization payment for a woman of the royal lineage whom he wished to marry. The Paramount Chief refused the money on the ground that the man was a Yao and he was not going to permit Yao to marry into the royal lineage, despite the protest of one of his lieutenants that the Yao was just a man like anyone else.

N 186 609 N Y 648

The reason that is given for this dislike of Yao is that they are sexually very virile, due to the medicines that they possess for increasing potency. It is perhaps significant that the same is said of Indians, who are also disliked. The Yao are known among the Ngoni for their great knowledge of medicines of all kinds, and the allegation of unnatural sexual vigour may be a rationalization of the fear that the Yao may practise sorcery among the families into which they marry. Another factor that may operate is that the Yao are the only tribe in the region that the Ngoni cannot claim to have conquered.

Political Relations with Other Tribes

N 648 721

Before the European conquest relations between the Ngoni and other tribes were principally those of raiders and raided. The great season for raiding was after the harvest, when the surrounding tribes

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[857] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
578 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Labour Ordinances, he can only do so through the District Commissioner's court at Fort Jameson, which may take up more of his time than he thinks the matter worth. In consequence, few actions are brought by farmers against their African labourers and if a man breaks his contract and deserts, no action may be taken against him. 691 578

It is not surprising that the efficiency of labour operating under these conditions is low, and that the wages are also low. These two conditions react on one another, and it is misleading to regard the low wages as the only cause of the inefficiency, or the inefficiency as the only cause of the low wages. The practical effect is that men who wish to earn more money than they can get as labourers on the farms at 14*s.* a month with food go away to Southern Rhodesia. It must be observed, however, that men started going to Southern Rhodesia long before the tobacco farms were opened up to their present extent. 461 [465]

Labour Migration

Prior to the European conquest, the only men who had worked for Whites were those employed as carriers by the handful of travellers who passed through the country before 1896, and as carriers and labourers by the North Charterland Exploration Company from 1896 onwards. But immediately after the end of the fighting in 1898, recruiting started among the Ngoni for police work in Southern Rhodesia, and there has been a continual flow of labour migrants south ever since. 167 464

There have been considerable fluctuations in the number of men going south since that time, particularly during the two world wars, when the military requirements of the Territory exercised a greater claim. The latest figures for the Eastern Province as a whole show that, in 1946, 23 per cent. of the taxable males registered in the province were absent from the province. Another 17½ per cent. were at work within the province.[1] In May 1947, in two Ngoni counties with a combined total of 1,739 registered taxable males, it was found that 30 per cent. of them were at work in the Eastern Province and a further 42 per cent. were away elsewhere, a total of 72 per cent. away from their villages. Half of those living outside the Eastern Province were classified as 'lost', in that their present whereabouts were unknown to the people at home.[2] These figures exclude all men who have been 'lost' for more than five years.

[1] Labour Department, *Annual Report, 1946*, p. 12.
[2] These figures were given me by the District Commissioner, Fort Jameson.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

The conflict between identification with one's lord and
692 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
643 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
681 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies
631 that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power to sentence adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the
[684] majority of death sentences.[46] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prema-
[687] turely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
619 and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system
178 depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to
[597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[46] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and,
648 possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop
[464] the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that
[643] the cheapest way of running the country was through the
[622] indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[4] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all
[692] kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the
[651] most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black
[444] leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with
[797] establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

177 Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration
464 to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity
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648

[4] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

interests and those of neighbouring tribes against the North Charterland and the White settlers. Ngoni themselves have not been in a position to enforce their own point of view.

In the operation of the legal system White control has never been so complete, as we have indicated above. However the support given to the judgments of chiefs and others by the Administration prior to 1929 was political rather than legal, and the courts held by chiefs with or without the approval of the Administration did not form part of the same legal system as the Administration's own courts. In that year Native Courts with defined powers were established as part of the same legal system as other recognized courts in the British Empire, with ultimate connexion to the Privy Council.[16] In matters of religion White dominance has been achieved more slowly and has never been complete. But even in this field the religions brought by the Whites have triumphed over the cult of the chief's ancestors and to-day it is the Christians who are the ritual experts.

A parallel sequence of events has taken place in Nyasaland, save that there the amount of land alienated in the Fort Manning area has been small. A scheme of administration was given a legal basis in 1912, and was similar to that in Northern Rhodesia. It was revised in 1924, and in 1933 Native Authorities and Native Courts were set up.[17] The two principal missions in Fort Jameson District have stations in Nyasaland as well.

In both countries Ngoni have been required to pay tax. A hut tax was introduced on the Rhodesian side of the border in 1901 and at about the same time in Nyasaland. The annual rate has varied in Fort Jameson District from three to ten shillings. The imposition of tax has been of importance, not only in partly meeting the costs of Administration, but also in bringing Ngoni men and women into the wider economic system of farms, mines and offices of southern Africa.

Thus the Whites established control over the Ngoni in most of their important external relations. Politics, settlement, litigation, religion and economic activity have all been moulded by the Whites. In many respects this has been a passive process, for little that the Ngoni have done or not done has been significant to the decision to set up Native Courts, or to expand the production of tobacco, or even to open up a mission of some new denomination.

[16] By Ordinance No. 33 of 1929. Subsequent legislation is contained in Ordinances No. 10 of 1936, 18 of 1940, and 21 of 1942.

[17] Legislation is to be found in Ordinances No. 13 of 1912, 11 of 1924, 13 of 1933 and 14 of 1933.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE V. COUNTY SEGMENTS

County[1]	Specification of county segment	Hereditary name of county chief
4	Residual after formation of segments 9 to 12	Madzimawe
5	Primal	Zulu
6	Primal	Mlonyeni
9	Primal	Mnukwa
10(a)	Residual after formation of segments 13 to 15	Mpezeni [643]
11	Residual after formation of segment 16	Misholo
12	Primal	Mshawa
13	Primal	Kapatamoyo
14	Residual after formation of segment 17	Nzermane
15	Primal	Sayili
16	Primal	Teleka (b)
17	Primal	Maguya

(a) Paramount Chief's county.
(b) The first chief of this county was known as Mlonyeni. He was succeeded by his brother, who kept his own name of Teleka. The similarity of name with the chief of segment 6 was accidental.

[1] [County numbers refer to map on page 120, category 116 - Analyst]

The county segments are not all of the same order of segmentation, yet the counties occupy positions of equivalence in the Native Authority. Each of the eleven counties under minor chiefs is, or has been for most of the time, the area under the control of a Subordinate Native Authority and also the area of jurisdiction of [692] a second-class Native Court. According to the *Official Gazette* the [693] Paramount Chief's county appears not to have been under any Subordinate Native Authority, nor does it seem to have been provided with a second-class court, but in some respects action takes place as if there were such an authority and court. The Superior Native Authority is responsible for all ten counties in Northern Rhodesia and there is a first-class Native Court for the same area. Thus the structural alignment of the twelve counties is markedly different from that of the segments corresponding to them. In practice the relations existing between the twelve counties and

[Text continues on page 123]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

5. *Relative status of Chiefs*

178 There was nothing inherent in the residential system which
631 facilitated the emergence of twelve, and only twelve, counties from
Mpezeni's people. Each major segment already had a large number
634 of lesser segments within it in 1898, and it was during the unsettled
648 years that followed the conquest, when new schemes of organization were tried out, when fresh occupants were sought for existing posts, and when the spatial distribution of people was being radically altered, that these twelve gradually emerged. Considerations of size do not seem to have been very important, for there is a wide variation in the size of counties. However, with the development of the Native Authority and Native Court, there is an upper limit to
[692] the size of the county which can be served adequately by a single court and possibly by a single minor chief, and this shows itself in the moves towards forming sub-counties within one or two of the larger ones. Yet in view of administrative attempts to do away with certain chiefs, it seems that in its eyes the Ngoni have too many rather than too few chiefs. The order of segmentation is not critical, as we have seen. Nor has there been merely an ossification of the formal structure as it was at the moment of conquest, as is often the case when a fluid society is suddenly put into a rigid mould. Wiese in 1891 wrote that Ngoniland was divided into four districts.[20] In our terms, these were as follows:

(*a*) Primal segment 11.
(*b*) Primal segment 14.
(*c*) Residual segment 10 after 14 was formed.
(*d*) Residual segment 4 after 10 and 11 were formed.

Of these four districts, the first has given rise to two counties, 11 and 16; the second to two, 14 and 17; the third to three, 10, 13 and 15; and the fourth to three, 4, 9 and 12. Wiese does not indicate in what districts he would place segments 5 and 6.

The fortuitous manner in which the counties have emerged is illustrated by the fact that for certain purposes one of the counties is treated as if it were two. At one time, when there were more administrative divisions than there are now, it was divided into two
[651] areas, and this arrangement still persists for tax collection. Other counties have only one tax register book each, but this one has two.

In genealogical terms also, the emergence of the twelve chiefs appears to have been fortuitous. For example, the second wife of
[643] Mpezeni I in segment 10, after the formation of segments 14 and 15,

[20] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Adminis- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created,
the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity
as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity
and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[19] were
employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make
arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native
Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of
subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The 692
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as
well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative
legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences [681]
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award
damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish
between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Adminis-
tration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native
Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority
was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni
Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping.
The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction
and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of
messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main
roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production,
for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had
to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries
and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an [647]
assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The
Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the
extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs
their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[19] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapasu* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

7. *Capital, court and chief's village*

634 We have spoken of the headquarters of the county segment as the capital of the county, and this is in accord with vernacular usage. Although each chief is head of his county segment, no chief lives in his capital village. Each has made his segment and set up a village of his own. This process continues with each successive chief, each making his own new village. When brick buildings [344] were made during the 1930s to house the newly recognized Native Courts, these were located near the villages of the reigning chiefs. Some of these are still in office, while others have died and their successors live in their new villages, some of which are as much as two miles away from the court. There are thus in some counties three foci of political interest. There is the capital village, the court, and the chief's village. Associated with each centre are different leaders and different activities. The capital village provides a link with the past, and in particular with that moment in the past at which the segment was founded. The Paramount Chief [643] retains special rights in his capital village and can make a garden for one year on the old site of his county capital whenever it moves to a new one. Most, if not all, capital villages are larger than the average village but the senior lieutenants of the county segments do not live in them, for like the chiefs, they have made their own villages. Nevertheless, the lieutenants who do live in the capital [554] are regarded as people of considerable importance in the county. Meetings are sometimes held in the capital but more frequently at the county court or in the chief's village. The court is the home of the Native Authority, and it is there that the affairs of the Administration are discussed. An incident well illustrates the association of the court with the Administration. I once called at the house of a county chief who had not previously met me. He insisted that I should go to the court to meet him there, as that was where he always met Administrative officials. County meetings are called at the court to discuss matters raised by the Administration in its letters to chiefs, and to formulate requests and complaints for transmission to the Administration. The court clerk, the Native Authority councillors, assessors, and messengers are much in evidence, while the traditional advisers of the chief, his senior lieutenants, may be in the background even if they are not silent. Meetings of this kind are usually called by county chiefs, but occasionally a meeting may be held open to the whole tribe. I have described elsewhere the procedure at a county meeting.[22]

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[22] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 107-9.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
648 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[684] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[696] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building
361 other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased importance to the Native Authority centre. Already there have been one or two attempts at opening shops near the courts to cater for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, assessors, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between political and judicial actions is not surprising. There is a connexion of this kind in every society, and the connexion is a particularly close one in societies like the Ngoni, where the same individuals act as legislators, administrators, and judges, and where the court does not confine itself merely to the legal issues in a dispute but examines the whole network of social relationships which are involved, with the object of restoring social order. 692

There are three ways in which this connexion can be seen. First, the court may be used as a vehicle for implementing the policy of the Native Authority. Secondly, the Administration may use the court to implement its policy. Thirdly, positions in the court may be used to satisfy men who seek political authority. We have to deal with the third point in our discussion of the development of the Native Authority. [557]

A chief anxious to gain favour with the Administration sees that his court enforces with heavy penalties the various regulations with which, for the time being, the Administration is concerned, such as those relating to agricultural control, and school attendance. A chief who does not wish to co-operate will neglect these regulations. Thus a few years ago there was a regulation that once a child had begun a two-year course at school, he or she must stay to finish it. In one county this rule was enforced much as the letter of the law indicated, in another it was completely ignored despite the protests of school-teachers, and in a third it was interpreted to mean that every child must go to school. About a year later the Administration decided that as promulgated the rule was *ultra vires*, and said it must be withdrawn. Nevertheless in some counties it is still enforced. These chiefs and courts are not being merely capricious. Some chiefs support the missions and their schools, others oppose them; some are in alliance with the school-teachers and other intelligentsia in their counties, others oppose them. These various attitudes and alignments are reflected in the way in which they respond to a new law. This is particularly noticeable when public delicts, such as absence from school, are concerned, for in general the court is its own law-enforcing agency. There is no independent police force to bring offenders to court whether or not the court wants to see them, but only the assessors, court clerk, messengers and others who, when they are not busy about their own affairs, may if they are so inclined wander through the villages looking for unlicensed dogs and unlicensed beer. Thus the enforcement of law relating to public delicts depends largely on the relationship between the Native Authority and the common people. 696 557 648 692 [872] [625] [693]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

696 In the court itself the magnitude of the penalties imposed and damages awarded is to some extent at the discretion of the court, and political considerations, among others, may influence judgments. Adultery with the wife of a chief is more heavily punished [681] than ordinary adultery, and people from other tribes, particularly [186] the Yao, are discriminated against. Ngoni courts maintain that they recognize only Ngoni law, even though the disputants may belong to other tribes. These ideas are familiar enough, but they indicate that questions of group membership, that is, political affiliation, and relations between groups, do influence the actions of the court. Within a county, hostility between a group having [578] the ear of the court and one lacking it may find expression in procedural obstructions, such as always hearing a particular suit at the end of a day, or of continually postponing the hearing because some minor witness is absent.

661 The chief and his advisers usually endeavour to maintain a monopoly of access to the Administration, and this endeavour is 648 largely supported by the Administration as a matter of policy. In 696 the particular sphere of legal action, appeal from the Native Court to the District Officer is sometimes regarded as a challenge to this monopoly, and litigants are sometimes punished for stating that they intend to appeal. In a celebrated recent case when a chief was successfully sued in the District Commissioner's court for damages for adultery, his people came to him afterwards to express their condolences, as after a funeral, at the injury done to his high office by this procedure.

692 Native Courts are formally recognized under Ordinance by the Administration, and hence changes in the indigenous legal 648 system brought about by the Administration are legal changes, in that they have behind them all the paraphernalia of Ordinances, Letters Patent, Orders-in-Council, and Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. This gives a special quality to manipulation of the legal system by the Administration, for this is really only another way of saying that effective sovereignty lies with the British Crown and not with Paramount Chief Mpezeni. But within the framework of analysis of the local situation, the actions of the Administration and of the chiefs in controlling the working of the courts are comparable sociologically.

The Administration is continually exercised about the quality of the work done in Native Courts, and in so far as all cases heard in Native Courts are subject to revision by the District Commissioner a direct check is, or could be, exerted on the way in which the courts operate. But Administrative intervention goes further

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than this. Annual reports often draw attention to the smooth working of Native Courts and their impartiality, while attempts are made to establish British rules of evidence and of legal procedure generally. By trying thus to isolate the judiciary from the Native Authority and, more recently, by the proposal to introduce an entirely separate police force into rural areas, the Administration is engaged on an active policy of social change. One change that has already occurred widely is in the role played by the chief in his court. We have seen that traditionally disputes were settled by the senior lieutenants of the segment concerned and referred to the chief only if the lieutenants did not agree, for the chief represented the unity of the people and was above all disputes. When Administrative officers began to supervise the work of Native Courts they usually interpreted the chief's absence from his court as neglect of his duties. Pressure was put on chiefs to attend and participate in their courts, another step towards the secularization of their office. Nowadays some Ngoni chiefs stay out of their courts, others actively hear cases in them, and others drift in and out, sometimes intervening, sometimes waiting for difficult issues to be referred to them. The changed Native Court is one of the agencies whereby the transition from small-scale to large-scale society is to be made. The very successes which were hailed generally for Native Courts in Africa on the introduction of Indirect Rule are surely evidence of the importance attached by the Administration to maintaining courts of the right kind.

648 692 [696] [177]

The role of the court in the essentially political relationship between the Administration and the Native Authority is made clear when we consider the sources of law enforced in the courts. I have described elsewhere[25] how many of the regulations sought for by the Administration are introduced as Native Authority Rules and Orders, which are then approved by the Administration. This is a harmless legal fiction which worries no one, since new legislation emanating from within the counties is enforced or not quite independently of whether or not it is referred to the Administration and is included in its list of Native Authority legislation. But it is significant that even this fiction can have political significance, for recently it was suggested that a soil erosion law, which had been introduced as a Native Authority Order, would be more accurately described as an Administrative rule which the Native Courts were empowered to enforce. This suggestion was rejected by a meeting of chiefs, who stated that they wished to retain the

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[25] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 102-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 rule as a Native Authority Order.[26] Thus the chiefs preferred to
671 appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the
692 judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the
692 indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts.
664 Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of
[797] divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people
671 and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened
646 about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are
661 constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[27]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the
692 ease with which their members may move away to other sur-
648 roundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts
626 are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the
[681] end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[26] *African Affairs, report*, 1948, p. 47.
[27] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

review by the Administration, but in practice the cases are so numerous, the written account of them so brief, and often the handwriting of the record so bad, that it is difficult to make an adequate review. The Administration is able to keep some check on the financial transactions of the courts, and convictions for embezzlement are not uncommon; but the Administration does not greatly influence the decisions taken by the courts nor their enforcement. For though there are police on the lorry routes and crocodiles in the rivers, it is fairly easy for a determined man (or woman) who is dissatisfied with the treatment he has received in the courts to get away. He can usually get to a White farm or to a town, and once there it is not so easy to get him back. Men are not continually running away from the courts, for they usually accept decisions given against them, though appeals from a minor chief's court to the Ngoni Appeal Court are fairly common. Few people take their appeals further to the District Officer, and I have never heard of a case going on appeal beyond the Provincial Commissioner's Court.

The general moral approval by the people of the work of the courts which lies behind much of the effectiveness of the Native Court system does not extend automatically to all legal action as such. There is no widely held view that the decisions of the courts must be supported merely because they are the decisions of the courts. Some courts are good, some bad; and some decisions are good, some bad. The great majority of cases that come before a county court are brought by men and women living within the county, but sometimes a litigant begins his suit in a county court not his own, particularly in the Paramount Chief's county court, if he thinks that he will get a better hearing there. Yet chiefs support each other and a case brought before a chief by litigants from another county are sometimes thrown out, in accordance with the Native Courts Ordinance.

There is little moral sanction attaching to legal procedures, or methods of appeal, or even to the particular sums awarded as damages. The members of courts tend in the main to uphold each other's decisions, so that there is a fair amount of conformity throughout the ten counties. All those who work in courts have in fact an interest in increasing the power of the court system, which the people as a whole have not. Disputants will settle out of court if they can, for it is not so far to walk and the whole process is not so disruptive of social ties, but members of a court will sometimes challenge the right of independent arbitrators, village headmen and the like, to come to any binding decisions.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

for a few heaps of stones hidden among the trees on the tops of hills. People visit back and forth freely, except for the control imposed at the customs barrier on the one lorry road. Many people grow vegetables in Nyasaland, where there is more land, and sell them in Northern Rhodesia, where there is a better market. 571 574 [439] [311]

While this territorial proximity gives rise to a multitude of ties linking individuals across the border, it does not lead to new political relations between the counties with a common boundary. Such political relations as do persist are survivals from the old order. Although the formal structure of the Native Court system, as determined by the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Administrations, does not permit it, cases sometimes come on appeal from the Nyasaland counties to Mpezeni. There is official visiting between chiefs across the border, and when the Paramount Chief is short of food he may ask the Nyasaland chiefs to send him a few baskets of maize. But despite the nearness of the Nyasaland chiefs to Mpezeni in spatial terms, their political interests lie mainly in the opposite direction. They are the only two Ngoni chiefs in that district of Nyasaland and most of the chiefs whom they meet are Cewa. Their Administration is separate from that in Northern Rhodesia, their laws are different, and they look towards Zomba rather than Lusaka as the seat of Administrative power. We have noted how Mpezeni I contemplated moving into Nyasaland in 1897. As late as 1922, when the Native Reserve scheme was under discussion, Mpezeni II made some preliminary soundings on moving across the border, but already by 1946 such projects were overshadowed by the prospects of federation for the two countries of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. [692] 648 643

The people of the two Nyasaland counties are subject to the same general influences as are their Northern Rhodesia neighbours in such matters as increasing dependence on an exchange economy and the development of a cognatic or omni-directional kinship system in which links can be traced through spouses as well as through fathers or mothers. Yet even in economic activity there are significant differences. In Nyasaland, Africans grow tobacco for sale, while the Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia are not able to do so; recruiting for the Rand gold-mines is allowed in Nyasaland and prohibited in most of Northern Rhodesia, including the Fort Jameson area. 611 178 171 [249] [464]

The annual meetings of the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province are attended by representatives from each tribe in the province, two people from Fort Jameson township, the Provincial Commissioner and sometimes a representative of the 646 648

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CHAPTER II

THE NGONI KINGDOMS

In 1933, by the Native Authorities Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance, Mbelwa was recognized as Paramount of the northern Ngoni kingdom with six Subordinate Native Authorities under him, and his court was constituted the appeal court for their six courts. The same procedure was followed in the central kingdom for Paramount Gomani with six Subordinate Native Authorities, and his court as the appeal court for their courts. They were the only rulers in Nyasaland with S.N.A.[1] under them. Two other chiefs, Cikulamayembe of the Henga in Mzimba district and Kyungu of the Ngonde in North Nyasa district, had respectively four and five courts subordinate to them, but the chiefs owning these courts were not recognized as their subordinates. The Ngoni comment on these ordinances was 'Ha! Now they see what big chiefs we have. Only our chiefs are called *inkosi*.' 642 643 692

The northern kingdom was in Mzimba district, and Paramount Mbelwa's royal village was at the southern end of his kingdom. The central kingdom included the whole of Ncheu district with Paramount Gomani's royal village at the northern end. This kingdom had Portuguese territory on its western frontier, close to the royal village. When the Portuguese boundary was fixed in 1891, the Ngoni kingdom under the Maseko Paramount was cut in two and a section under a Maseko ruler became a separate kingdom under the Portuguese. There was constant trouble in the 1930's over this Portuguese frontier, for Gomani's Ngoni visited their relatives, grazed their cattle and hoed gardens on the Portuguese side; and from time to time claims by the Portuguese for rent for gardens and grazing lands and disputes about taxation, needed judicious handling in the District Commissioner's court. 631 648

The figures in Table II for Mzimba and Ncheu districts in 1926, 1931, and 1945 show the changes in the ethnic composition of the districts, some of which are difficult to account for. In Mzimba district the Henga under Cikulamayembe were included in the figures for the Tumbuka and hence the northern Ngoni kingdom did not include all the 156,208 in the district. In Ncheu, the total district population of 87,690 were all included in the central Ngoni kingdom, showing the mixed ethnic elements, among which the Ngoni, or those who were enumerated as Ngoni, had declined from 64,023 in 1926 to 15,242 in 1945. Between 1931 and 1945 the decrease in the number of Ngoni (31,066) was almost balanced by the increase in the number of Nyanja 162 563

[1] This abbreviation will be used henceforward in referring to Subordinate Native Authorities.

[p. 88]

CHAPTER IV

COURTS AND OFFICIALS

121 177 671 THE Ngoni claimed that when they established their kingdoms in Nyasaland they introduced a new idea of law, a different system of courts, and a different procedure for conducting cases in those courts, from those found among the local peoples. Within their kingdoms they imposed on all their subjects these ideas, courts and legal procedure as part of their government, applied to the conquerors and the conquered alike. We shall consider in this chapter only those aspects of the courts and the legal system which were related to the political structure. The categories of crime, the degree of punishment, the sanctions for enforcement of the law, and the effect of the judicial procedure on the balance of equilibrium in the community, all belong to a specialized study and are not included here.

THE NGONI CONCEPT OF LAW

692 643 671 We begin with two texts, the first from the northern kingdom by Cibambo, the second by Ishmael Mwale the Treasurer of the Paramount in the central kingdom.

¶ (1) The Ngoni seem to have been born with a gift for leadership or rule. Though they were a wandering tribe, yet there was one Paramount from whom proceeded the laws for the good government of the people. All the lesser chiefs and headmen received from him the leadership of the people. [203] Though they had no way of writing to each other, they kept their unity by messengers passing between them. The Paramount had power to call gatherings from time to time, in which they talked of the affairs of the country. In these gatherings the old men and the men of repute who had a point to make were heard in criticism and made suggestions for the building up of the realm. By this means the Paramount and his counsellors learned of and understood the thoughts of their people. It was in such large gatherings that the laws of the country were delivered to the people, so that they might hold fast to them and not be punished unreasonably for breaking them in ignorance. After they came back from these gatherings, the headmen and men of standing gathered together their villages to tell the people what had been spoken in the great council of the Paramount, and told them carefully about the laws which had come from the gathering.

173 671 (2) Before the Ngoni came to this country the villages were small and isolated from one another. There was constant pouncing on people to catch them as slaves. It was unsafe to go even a quarter of a mile from one village to another, because a man might be in hiding and pounce out and catch you and take you off to his village as a slave, and there was no redress and no case was heard. Most people never went beyond the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

boundaries of their own village, and they were afraid to travel even in a large party of twenty or thirty. So no one had any wisdom beyond that of his own village and family. When the Ngoni came they had one law for all people and they had courts to hear cases where this law was enforced. There was freedom to travel in the land where the Ngoni ruled, because they had peace within their boundaries. Therefore, we say: this was the kind of peace we had. 173 671

In these two texts we have one major concept of Ngoni law with three chief ways in which it was implemented. The concept was that there was 'one law for all people' and that the knowledge of and enforcement of this law brought internal peace and resulted in good government in the country. There was one source of law as there was one source of political and military authority—the Paramount. As Cibambo points out, the Paramount delegated his authority for carrying out the law to chiefs and headmen and depended on his 'old men and men of repute' to keep him in touch with the thoughts and desires of all his subjects, so that he might adjust the enforcement of the law to bind the people to him. He also called large gatherings of all the chiefs and *alumuzana* and headmen in order that they might hear from him any new laws and regulations and understand them so that they in turn could make them known to their people. In the intervals between the holding of these large gatherings, which took place not more than once or twice a year, messengers passed constantly from the Paramount's village to all the areas of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, reporting to them about decisions taken at the royal village on matters affecting the country as a whole, and taking back reports to the Paramount on what was happening in the outlying districts. 671 643 692 203

I attended two of these annual meetings of the chiefs and *alumuzana* and headmen in the central kingdom. They took place not at the Paramount's village but at a more central spot for the whole territory. The people were drawn up in a square formation, with the Paramount at one end supported by his 'mouthpiece' (*mlomo wenkosi*), who always spoke for him, with the six Subordinate Native Authority chiefs beside him, and the councillors (*izinduna*) messengers and other officials of his court and of the S.N.A. courts arranged in order of precedence, facing the crowd as they did during court sessions. On the three sides of the square in the front ranks were the *alumuzana* and the headmen of their villages, sitting in territorial groups, and behind each headman were the *madoda* or senior men of the village, and behind them again the *amajaha* or young men. I watched this assembly of 3,000 to 4,000 people being arranged, as they arrived, by the *izinduna* of the Paramount's court and the *izinduna* of the six chiefs. They took up their places as though on a military parade, and once placed there was no further movement. The effect was that of a barrack square in the straightness of lines and orderliness of behaviour. After all was in order the Paramount 631 643 692 645

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

631 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in
643 his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning
to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount
692 by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one
645 by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first 'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then it was open for any of the *alumuzana* or headmen to speak 'from the floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with freedom.

The topics covered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from [744] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits. Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said, would have that leader recognized as a headman. This drew a number of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme, others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognized in the new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages. 'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our headmen. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant afterthought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Paramount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to [651 be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few 585] shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the *izinduna* had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among the audience during and after this discussion and the *izinduna* had to call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese [648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *iniadusa* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

631 643 645 692 [648] [543]

This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *iniadusa* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambesi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

were, however, and they realized it at such assemblies, the people of the Paramount, and he was to them the visible symbol of their unity in one kingdom.

The Court System of the Ngoni

The enforcement of the laws as announced and discussed at these assemblies was the business of the courts, where the laws themselves were interpreted and often elaborated on occasions of an open breach.

The relationships of the courts in the kingdom followed the hierarchical pattern of the political organization. All minor cases were heard and, whenever possible, settled at the village level. If the plaintiff failed to get satisfaction, or if the village headman was unable to get his judgement accepted, he had to go with the litigants to the chief's court, and if he failed there, the case could be taken to the appeal court of the Paramount. There were certain cases, such as murder and witchcraft, which in pre-European days could only be dealt with in the Paramount's court.

Some confusion arose over the use of one term 'court' for every type of institution which exercised judicial functions. The Nyanja term used in central Ngoniland for the courts at the lowest level was *bwalo*, literally the open space in front of the *indlunkulu* in any Ngoni village. Nothing could be apparently more informal than the discussion among a group of senior men called together by the headman, on a verandah or under a big tree, in order to settle quarrels and hear complaints. No formal records were kept, there was no clerk, and there was no summing up or pronouncement of judgement. There was, if the meeting was successful, general agreement about the action necessary and about who ought to initiate action. Above the level of this village headman's court were the courts of the *ahumusana* held at their head villages, and above them again the chiefs' courts. After 1933 the courts of the *ahumusana* gave place to the courts at the head villages of the chiefs. The proceedings there were more formal and included presenting evidence, defending the case and pronouncing judgement on cases rather than, as in the villages, talking things over and appealing to certain principles to re-establish equilibrium and resolve disputes.

The Ngoni nevertheless always recognized these courts at the village level as an integral part of their system. It was the mark of a good headman that he should be able to settle the minor cases in his village without constant reference to higher authority. The majority of villages under Ngoni rule were villages of local tribes who had surrendered to, or been conquered by, the Ngoni. The headmen were therefore of the local tribe, as a rule surrounded by their kinsmen, and their position carried with it the necessity of relating local tribal custom, especially in matters involving marriage and family affairs, to the legal principles and procedure of the Ngoni courts. Many cases came before the courts in

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

central Ngoniland in which Ngoni law and usage differed from local usage in such matters as the custody of children, the right to 'leave the village' and the ownership of cattle. 692

Above the informal courts of the village headmen were the courts held in pre-European days at the head villages of the *alumuzana*. A *mulumuzana* was called 'the owner' of those villages surrounding his head village, consisting of his own clan members, local people and captives. The *mulumuzana* had a double interest in maintaining justice in his area. If he failed in a case, there was in the central kingdom only one court above him—that of the Paramount—though in the northern kingdom the areas ruled by the leading Jere chiefs had courts which came between the *alumuzana* and the Paramount. Except in cases of murder and witchcraft, which he was obliged to take to the Paramount's court, the *mulumuzana* was anxious to prove to the Paramount that he was a man fit to hold and wield authority over a number of villages. He was also concerned to maintain his authority among his own people, and this was recognized most clearly in the conduct of cases in his court. The system of checks and balances in the Ngoni political organization required that the Paramount should always dominate, but at the same time delegate authority to his chiefs and the heads of leading clans. The authority exercised by a *mulumuzana* derived from his leadership of a Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan in a particular area, but he had to maintain his position in pre-European days by constant vigilance over his people. In the process of holding together villages of mixed tribal origin the courts of the *alumuzana* and the administration of law in them played an important integrating role.

The conduct of cases in Ngoni courts

Informants in the northern and central kingdoms made it clear that there were certain common elements in Ngoni procedure in pre-European days which were carried on in the courts in the 1930's. The one who brought the case to court, the plaintiff, was called the owner of the case (*mwini wa mlandu*). Those who were called as witnesses were those who were present at the time of the quarrel who might have seen or heard something which bore on the case. The Ngoni practice of legal procedure was not to call witnesses to support either side, but to appeal to the public to give evidence about what had occurred. I heard Ngoni counsellors press a witness to say exactly where he or she was at the time of an assault. On other occasions they addressed a witness in these terms: 'Now you are from X's family. Here in this court you must tell us truly what happened. Do not be afraid. Do not remember your kinship (*cibale*) but remember what you saw, and speak well.' There was explicit in this approach a definite appeal to the public to take their part in seeing that justice was done and so restoring equilibrium and good feeling in the village. If the counsellors who were conducting a case 695

695 suspected a witness of lying, they accused him of doing so after he had told his story. If he persisted in his version of the events, and they still thought he was lying, they cross-questioned him, and when the point where he contradicted himself was reached they turned on him and said: 'You lied. Now you have said you lied. You do not speak well.'

671 In the following account of Ngoni law by Cibambo there are two main emphases. One is on the existence of law, in the sense of a norm
695 of good conduct, conformity to which was expected and enforced. The text at the beginning of this chapter showed how the law was made known to all the inhabitants of the country, so that ignorance could not be pleaded as an excuse for law-breaking. The other emphasis is on decorum and the regular and accepted pattern of behaviour expected in the courts, and on the Ngoni hatred of bribery, which was claimed by them, and on the whole endorsed by Europeans.[1] Respect for the law, for the court in session and for the judgement, are expressed in Cibambo's account of the proceedings, and the winner of the case (though formerly it was the loser) expressed his thanks, after judgement was given, to the Paramount or the chief, and to the elders.

671 ¶ The laws and the power to punish disturbers of the peace were in the power of the Paramount and those who were under him. If there was a
● 692 bad case in which the guilty man deserved death according to the law, such a matter was in the power of the Paramount and the lesser chiefs who helped him, and of them only. It was the same in the case of anyone who deserved to be despoiled of all his possessions because of his wrong-doing. The law was a protection for the people who might have been killed causelessly by their masters if they had had the power. People who were in danger from those who were above them, in danger of confiscation or of death, ran to the younger brothers of the Paramount or to the Paramount himself or sometimes they ran to the great *izindwa*. Praises had been added to those of Chief Mtwalo for this very reason that he had saved many whom Mbelwa had wanted to kill '*Isifuba esinamazwi, nitsho nkukutetela abahumazana*' (a chest with words which spoke for the men of noble birth).

692 If people quarrelled in a village and could not be reconciled it was the work, as it is today, of the headman to try and bring them together, and if he thought that one had wronged the other he ordered him to bring something to recompense the other. Such recompenses were small things, from beads to a goat, perhaps an axe or a hoe. If the headman found he could not settle the business he went with them himself to the next court, to the head of the group of villages, and the standard of the payment increased. Serious cases went to the courts of the chiefs but these cases were few and not like today. People were very much afraid of each other

[1] On the walls of Paramount Mbelwa's court in Mzimba district in north Nyasaland were painted these sayings in English and in Tumbuka. Over the Paramount's chair was written 'Justice is blind'; by the place where the witnesses stood to speak, 'The law has no respect of a person'; and over where the general public sat 'Everyone is equal before the law'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and appeals were uncommon. Chiefs did not allow a man to come by himself with his case to them, he had to come with his headman. Even those in danger of death went first to the headmen and these brought them to the chiefs. 692

The Ngoni hated bribes. If any *induna* was found to have taken bribes from people he was condemned and punished. [687]

The hearing of the cases was like what it is today. The one who brought the case to the court spoke first, then the one with whom he was quarrelling. If there were elders there from their village they also spoke telling out how these people quarrelled, saying so-and-so began to quarrel in such-and-such a way, and then showed how they had been unable to judge it in the village. They did not go into details of the quarrel, that was done by the men themselves. After those who had quarrelled had told of the beginning of the case any who knew of it were asked to say how it appeared to them in the village. These were the witnesses both for and against. 695

When this had been done, all who were implicated or interested in the case remained silent. It is the custom of the Ngoni that all who spoke in a case should stand and have a stick, and as they spoke they should walk about and limp with the stick or sometimes stand all together, but in that case the hand which held the stick should shake and stick it into the ground. Only women spoke seated. No one at the hearing of a case was allowed to lie down, everyone, even the Paramount, sat. They did this because they were afraid that otherwise the case would not finish quickly. The court was held in the cattle kraal. Women were not allowed into the kraal for cases, but sat outside opposite where the old men were gathered, even though they were the wives of the Paramount. 695 516

After the litigants and the witnesses had spoken it was the turn of the elders of the court. They questioned and agreed with or criticized the men who had quarrelled but they did not pronounce judgement. They waited for the Paramount who first of all sat silent and noticed those who unravelled or twisted the case. Afterwards when the people had finished speaking, the elders delivered the story to the Paramount or judge. The judge then delivered his judgement and condemned those who had twisted the case. He delivered his judgement sitting not standing like the other people and when he had finished all thanked him, or rather saluted him with a loud '*Bayete*' or with the surname if to lesser chiefs. Sometimes he sent an elder to tell the court the judgement. When the case had been judged no one criticized the judgement. The one who began to give thanks for the judgement was the one who was found guilty: this he did to show submission and repentance. The custom of today that the one who wins the case gives the thanks is not good because the man who has lost goes away in resentment and threatening and often the case crops up again. 695 [576]

If an *induna* or man of standing went secretly to the Paramount to accuse somebody that he deserved death (perhaps for witchcraft), very often the Paramount sent a man in secret to warn the condemned man to run to a chief's village and hide his head. In this way many left their fathers and went to build with the chiefs and when they went they took 643 682 692

all their things

178 622 631 645 sons of his father and of his father's brothers. These *amakosana* were honoured next to the Paramount. The *alumuzana* were for justice in the courts, and for being the 'ears of the Paramount' in all the country. The change was made by Mputa because he saw that if the *amakosana* were given power they claimed to be big chiefs themselves. Therefore he chose for the courts and for the leaders in war and for lesser chiefs the *alumuzana* and *izinduna* who were clever and whom they could trust.

184 622 631 645 [698] The diagram on p. 99 relates to the period between 1933 and 1939 and sets out first the officials in the territorial divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms from the Paramount to the headman of a village. In the northern kingdom only the Paramount and the six chiefs had recognized courts, the chiefs' courts operating for their districts and the Paramount's court for the whole kingdom. There were two sets of office-bearers who had no courts but who exercised authority over groups of villages. One group consisted of members of the Jere clan who were not recognized chiefs but were *amakosana*, literally 'children of the chief' but used as a rule for all members of the royal clan. Only certain *amakosana* had villages under them. The other group consisted of the heads of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who owned several villages and sometimes had authority over a large area. Cibambo put this group below that of the chiefs, and other informants confirmed this as the pre-European pattern. But the informants also said that many of the powerful *alumuzana* formerly had their own courts and did not have to bring their cases to the chiefs' courts as they did in the 1930's. At the bottom of the territorial hierarchy came the headmen of single villages. In some cases the village headman had formerly been an *induna* in a large village which had broken up. Some were of the royal clan or of Swazi clans. The majority belonged to the local tribes and were owners of villages which were for the most part villages of one kinship group.

The text about the hierarchy in the central kingdom shows that a deliberate change had been made in the traditional pattern to avoid a struggle between the Paramount and his brothers when they had recognized positions as chiefs. The *alumuzana* who appear in the diagram as chiefs were the six who were recognized in 1933 as Subordinate Native Authorities. There were other *alumuzana* who were not so recognized, and certain members of the royal clan, all of whom owned a number of villages but had to take their cases to the recognized courts. The division caused by setting up the Portuguese boundary in the 1890's left many of the leaders of the Maseko clan on the Portuguese side, with the result that the number of *amakosana* owning villages and taking any prominent part in the life of the kingdom was very small; and another large group of the Maseko clan were in Dedza district under Chief Kacindamoto. The majority of village headmen in the central kingdom were of local tribes, and their villages were as a rule much larger than those in the northern kingdom.

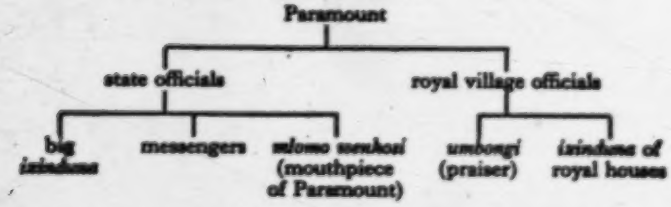
 184

Ngoni territorial office-bearers. 622

Northern kingdom	*Central kingdom*
Paramount	Paramount
chiefs (*amakosana*)	*alumusana* (chiefs)
other *amakosana* and *alumusana* (no courts)	other *alumusana* and *amakosana* (no courts)
village headmen	village headmen

631
643
645

Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *izinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only recited the praise-songs at ceremonies in the royal village. 643 645

The big *izinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *izinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below his. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *alumusana* and *amakosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned. [203]

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the 885 692

885 diagram is that of the *madoda*, the older men who wore the head-ring. 692 Probably in pre-European days they received more recognition than was apparent in the 1930's after the head-ring had been given up. The *madoda* will be referred to in the next chapter on the royal village and in Chapter V of Part III on age sets. In the appeal court of the Paramount and in the chief's court there was always a group of these senior men sitting behind the *izinduna*, to whom the *induna* speaking to the case sometimes turned for advice and consultation.

645 Reference was made to an overlap between territorial office-bearers and national office-bearers. The big *izinduna*, the spokesman of the Paramount, and sometimes the messengers, were members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and often were *alumuzana* who had no courts. This was a method by which in the 1930's those *alumuzana* could be drawn into the circle of officials and receive a small salary for their services.

This set of office-bearers which we have considered in relation to the Paramount, with the exception of his spokesman and his praiser, was duplicated for the chiefs in both kingdoms, whether they were of the royal clan or *alumuzana*. The account of the royal village in the central kingdom which follows in the next chapter will illustrate how these officials functioned in the day-to-day affairs of the Paramount's headquarters.

CHAPTER V

A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933

The Paramount and his village

361 [114] [13] 161 For some weeks in 1935 and in 1936 I lived in the Paramount's village of Maganga in the central kingdom. The central kingdom included all Ncheu district, consisting of 1,092 square miles, a total population of 88,446, and a density of 80·99 per square mile. The village was 300 yards off the main road running from north to south of Nyasaland, and was approached by a hoed motor road flanked by huts. It consisted of three main sections: the Paramount's large brick residence and the surrounding buildings within a palisade or reed fence, including the huts of his daughter and son-in-law, and of his brother-in-law and sister; the huts and kraal in the section of the *induna* of his big house, Kalilombe Mbewe; and the huts and kraal of the original village 'owned' by the headman, Lazaro Dzonzi. On the south of the village was the large open space where the weekly market was held, and where several Indian stores faced the main road. On the north was the dispensary building,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[721] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[681] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 parallel of the Jews of the Old Testament preparing the way
177 for the Christian era to illustrate and drive home their belief
797 that they, the Ngoni, had prepared the way for the Christian Gospel in Nyasaland. 'Were we not also a people who hated idols and images? We too tried to reach the Great God through our ancestor spirits, but we failed, until the mission came to teach us.' 'We held together the people of this land under one rule so that the missionaries could travel safely and spread the Gospel teaching.' These beliefs were stated so often that they became almost standard formula, and the incongruity of this picture with some of the warlike situations recorded by the earliest missionaries was ignored and forgotten. In the churches, where the people sat on mats, Sunday by Sunday, facing their Ngoni ministers, rising to sing, in
[533] their typical Ngoni harmonies, Christian hymns set to former Ngoni war tunes—in this setting Ngoni history was brought home, interwoven with the new teaching, to young adults who formed the majority of the congregation. For Ngoni elders it was something more than a reminder of their past. It was setting the Ngoni people in a special relationship to
[186] the European missionaries and the new learning, compensating for the passing of military power and political supremacy by establishing Ngoni cultural superiority over their neighbours. This gave some spiritual reassurance to a people in the throes of political change, and it was a lesson which lost none of its significance for the young adults who heard it.

Ngoni law

671 'There was one law for all the people. No one could be ignorant of the law.' These were the words, quoted in Chapter I, which the Ngoni used frequently to describe the importance
[182] of law in their culture, its role in the political unification of their own and subject peoples, and the responsibility, laid on all adults, for knowledge of the law and conformity with its demands. An incident in a court of law, which was unfor-
692 gettable to an anthropologist, was a case in which a chief sat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in judgement on his own son, a young man of twenty-one, 692
for committing adultery with the wife of a man of a former
slave family. The husband brought the case against the [684]
chief's son, and the chief ordered the man to speak truly and [694]
not be afraid. The case was heard amid the most deathly [695]
silence. In awarding a heavy penalty of compensation against
his son, the chief spoke of the central position of law in Ngoni
life, and of the fact, so sharply brought out by the case, that
the law was no respecter of persons.

Young adults, boys and girls, were held personally re- 672
sponsible for breaches of the law which they had commited.
Penalties were awarded against them as individuals, even
though they often could not pay the compensation without
the help of their father and his family. They were expected 867
to become acquainted with the law in various ways. One
was by conformity to accepted social codes of behaviour, in-
stilled into them by their elders, particularly in such matters
as sex relations, respect for property, avoidance of slander
and of injury by violence. Another way of learning how the
law operated, as well as the principles upon which the case-
law was built, was by attending the courts, and listening [695]
carefully to the cross-examinations as well as to the judge-
ments. Young people were expected also to ask their fathers,
and elders generally, about points of law which they had not
understood, or had confused with some of the practices of the
local people. The onus was upon young adults for acquiring
this knowledge of the law as well as for behaving in accord-
ance with it. We shall see in the next chapter how the Ngoni
regarded being law-abiding as one of their basic cultural [577]
traits, as well as being evidence of the individual character
of a young adult.

Ngoni traditional skills

We made a distinction, albeit a rather tentative one, at the 128
beginning of this chapter between certain kinds of tradi-
tional knowledge which we have been describing up to this

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. *The punishment of adultery*

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognized other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognized and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. *Labour migration*

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Khodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unless he has paid bridewealth, the children will go to her relatives, whatever the cause of the divorce and whichever party is at fault. He can then offer bridewealth to secure custody of the children at the same time as he loses the services of his wife. 583 586

Bridewealth to-day is almost entirely concerned with the custody of children of the marriage and does not affect the rights of a man in his wife. These rights are determined by a payment which probably did not exist in the old marriage system and which we may call the legalization payment.[17] This payment is now the most important in marriage and is the only one recorded on the printed marriage certificates issued by the Administration through the Native Authorities. The Ngoni believe that the word has been taken from the Cewa, although the Cewa use the word differently. A law was made in about 1944 by the Ngoni chiefs fixing the amount of the legalization payment at a minimum of thirty shillings. Prior to this edict smaller amounts were more usual. The way in which the magnitude of the payment has varied through time can be seen from Table VII. Some people do not follow the law and pay less than thirty shillings; the majority pay the legal amount, in some areas thirty-five shillings is more usual, and recently a few fathers have successfully demanded much higher sums, up to £10, for their daughters. The edict implied that at least thirty shillings should be offered in every marriage, but marriages have been and still are being contracted without any legalization payment, as can be seen from Table VIII. However, from this table it appears that in the last twelve years legalization payments have been offered in a greater proportion of marriages than previously. 583 [671]

The most important right established by this payment is that to damages in the event of adultery. If a man has made the legalization payment he is sure that when his wife commits adultery the court will order both the woman and her lover to pay him damages. Adultery suits are the commonest heard in court and the legalization payment clearly establishes the fact that the man and woman are married in the eyes of the law. If the first payment a man makes is bridewealth, the legalization payment falls away, and he gains the exclusive right of sexual access to his wife without any further payment. In this respect we can see a carry-over from the old system is which bridewealth followed after 'snuff-box', and adultery was punishable by death. Usually if bridewealth is paid in a subsisting marriage, it comes after the legalization payment and is additional to it. The one payment relates to the custody of the children, the other to the sexual services of the woman. We have noted that bridewealth can be offered on the occasion of divorce when perhaps no legalization payment has ever been made. 583 684 [692] 583

[17] *Cimalo.* Cf. Young, *Notes on the customs and folk-lore of the Tumbuka-Kamanga people*, p. 61; Coxhead, *The Native tribes of North-Eastern Rhodesia; their laws and customs* (Occasional Papers No. Five, Royal Anthropological Institute), p. 25; Barnes, op. cit. p. 227

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sorrow, it is not necessarily always so, for loud wailing and tears are appropriate at the death of all neighbours and kinsfolk, whether friends or enemies. Men do not usually seek the companionship of their wives at dances and beer parties, although there are some men who do. In our own society we think of a man earning his living in company with other men, but spending his leisure with his wife. By contrast Ngoni men work in the gardens with their wives but seek other company for recreation.

7. Divorce

The relationship between husband and wife can be terminated by death or by divorce. If one spouse dies, then his or her interest in the marriage is guarded by the surviving kinsfolk, and we shall deal with their actions in our next chapter as part of the intervention of affines in a marriage. In divorce, however, except in cases of desertion, both husband and wife are themselves involved and it is primarily by their own actions, rather than by the actions of their kinsmen, that the marriage is terminated.

While a marriage is established without reference to the Ngoni state organization, except in so far as the issue of a marriage certificate is concerned, divorce more frequently involves resort to the Native courts. It is possible to effect divorce without taking the matter to the court, and in the past, before the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy had begun, many people were divorced in the village. Kinsfolk of the two parties meet together in the village of one or other party, discuss the marriage, and agree among themselves that the couple are to be divorced. The formal act of divorce is made by the couple shaking hands with each other, while those present tell them to stop hating each other. The woman is told 'If this man comes as a traveller to your house, and asks for water, do not refuse him'.

It is more usual for a divorce to be referred to the court. Attempts are made by the kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, if quarrel there is, and when the attempts fail, the group seeking the divorce or hoping to get damages from the other side take the matter to the county Native Court. It is open to either the man or the woman to take the initiative in this matter. The court hears the case, awards damages as appropriate, and, if it thinks fit, declares the couple divorced. The formal act of shaking hands is sometimes performed in court, but is often dispensed with.

Divorce takes place in the village only when there is substantial agreement on both sides that it would be a mistake to allow the marriage to continue. The meeting of kinsfolk in the village may reach agreement about the return of the legalization payment or even the award of damages, but it is only the court that has power to enforce decisions of this kind, and it is to the court that disputants turn when they cannot agree. When a man wishes to divorce his wife on the ground of her adultery he usually does so through the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 court. Women whose husbands have threatened them with divorce often bring the matter to court so that the divorce may be ratified 592 and their grievance brought to light, or in the hope that they may be awarded damages for cruelty. If a woman does not wish to be divorced she may hope that the court will persuade her husband to take her back. In some areas where the Native Court is powerful, divorces are referred to it even after they have been agreed to in the village. The Dutch Reformed Church Mission sometimes allows divorce, but its members first seek divorce in the Native courts [794] and then, when the divorce has been granted, apply to the Mission for divorce in the eyes of the Church.

586 After a quarrel between a man and his wife he may give her a present of sixpence or a shilling and tell her that she is divorced and must go home. This act does not of itself constitute a certain divorce unless the man takes no steps to persuade her to return after she has stayed at her own village for a month or more. If the man does not go to her kinsfolk to apologize and ask them to intercede with the woman on his behalf, then it is plain that he meant what he said, and the woman may feel free to seek a new husband. A woman divorced in this way is not, however, so sure of her position as if she had been divorced in court or by agreement at a meeting of kinsfolk and there is always the possibility that her old husband may bring a suit of adultery against her and the new husband. The gift and the husband's statement 'I divorce you' constitute really only a threat of divorce, and a woman who returns to her own people after such a threat and who is not followed by an apologetic husband will, if she is sensible, take steps to clarify her status. Her kinsfolk may go to her husband's kin and discuss the quarrel with them and attempt a reconciliation or they refer the matter to the court.

A man does not need any specific grounds for divorcing his wife and if the marriage has lasted only a short time he may just say that he does not like her or does not want her as a wife. If no marriage payments have been made a man may merely say he is tired of his wife and send her home. The more common reasons given when divorce occurs soon after marriage are that a wife is always quarrelling, is lazy about preparing food, is disrespectful, or is always running off to her own village. Where the marriage has lasted longer, the most common grounds for divorce are adultery by the wife and desertion by the husband.

A woman usually seeks divorce on the grounds of cruelty or desertion. It is not sufficient for her to claim that her husband is a leper, or is mad, or has syphilis, for the court will argue that she ought to seek out the proper medicine to cure her husband. If her husband has been sent to prison, the court will argue that he went against his will and that his wife must wait for him to come out. She is more likely to get a divorce if she can prove that he is continually beating her or that he does not clothe her although he

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

has the money to do so. Sometimes a wife brings her husband to court seeking damages from him for cruelty without asking for a divorce. 586

The woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of desertion is usually the wife of a labour migrant. Her struggle is not with her husband himself but with her affines, his kinsfolk who try to protect his interests for him while he is away. We shall consider this type of situation in the next chapter, where we deal with the relationship between a woman and her husband's kin. Here it will suffice to say that provided the man has been away for about four years without writing the divorce is usually granted.

Actions for adultery are always liable to turn into divorce cases, and the amount of damages awarded depends on whether or not a divorce is granted. If adultery is proved, and it is easier to prove than to disprove it, the woman and her lover each pay 30*s*. to the husband and 5*s*. fine to the court. If the woman is divorced on the ground of the adultery, the damages are increased to £3 each to the husband and 10*s*. each to the court. In court the woman is usually asked 'Which man do you love?' and if she selects her lover, the divorce is granted. Sometimes the husband protests that he wants his wife back, but if the court is persuaded that to send the woman back would only lead to more trouble, they will divorce the woman despite the protests of the husband. 684 586

When divorce is granted the legalization payment, if it has been made, should be returned. The court does not, however, make any definite order on this point unless called upon to do so by the man or his relatives, and it seems that in the absence of definite instructions to hand over the money, it is retained by the woman's relatives. This is particularly true when the divorce is on the ground of the man's desertion when it is likely that his interests will be poorly represented by his relatives. 586 583

If the husband has brought his wife to court in order to divorce her on some ground other than adultery, the court may merely tell the couple that they are divorced, without awarding damages to either party. But the law on this point appears to be changing, and the rule followed in one court is not always followed in another. Even in the same court the decisions given at one time may conflict with those given at another. If the court decides that the woman is at fault she may be ordered to pay £3 damages to her husband. If the man is at fault then, more rarely, the man is ordered to pay £3 damages to his wife. Occasionally, although the fault is held to lie with the man, the woman is ordered to pay £3 damages to secure her divorce. The factors influencing these decisions appear to be the readiness of any particular court to listen to the pleas of a woman, and its opinion of the character of the woman. A woman who is regarded as foolish, or given to quarrelling over nothing, or promiscuous, is sometimes ordered to pay damages to her husband 586 692 562

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

although the evidence presented during the hearing of the case has established the husband's fault as the ground for divorce.

Only if there is dispute over the matter will the court make an order about the division of crops. The principles of division are that the crops belong to those who worked hard to grow them and that the children of the marriage have to be fed by the parent with whom they live, whoever may eventually have their custody. Thus in a case in which a woman successfully pleaded for divorce because of her husband's cruelty, the court awarded all the crops in the couple's garden to the husband, as the woman had been lazy and had done only a little towards their cultivation.

Bridewealth is not automatically returned on divorce and as we have seen, divorce is the time for paying bridewealth rather than for retrieving it. The disposal of the children of a divorced couple is regarded as a separate issue and to be treated on its own merits.

It is useful to have some quantitive estimate of divorce frequency, but the construction of a satisfactory measure is not easy. One aspect of the occurrence of divorce is presented in Tables IX and X, where the number of divorces experienced by wedded men and women of different ages is set out.

It will be seen that, considering only those wedded men and women whose divorces are known, the mean number of divorces per head of wedded population is 0·49 (51/104) for men and 0·30 (62/210) for women. This difference may be due in part to a greater reluctance on the part of women to admit to divorce, but is also due to the greater mobility of men. While women stay at home, their husbands go off to marry in the towns, divorcing their urban wives when they return home or when the strange rural environment proves intolerable to the women from the towns.

By considering the number of years that marriages have lasted, it is possible to say what is the mean duration of marriage. The necessary information was available for 403 marriages extant as well as completed, experienced by men and women who were resident in the sample villages. The mean duration of all these marriages is 15·6 years, and the mean duration of the marriages that ended in divorce is 6·6 years. The median duration of all marriages is, to the nearest year, 8 years, and of marriages ended in divorce, 5 years. More divorces occurred in the period from four-and-a-half years to five-and-a-half years after marriage than in any other similar one-year period.[25]

For comparison with other societies, we can express as a ratio the relationship between the number of marriages that ended in divorce and the number that did not or have not yet done so. This can be done in three ways, as set out in Table XI.

[25] There is no space here to give the method by which these calculations were made, but see my "Measures of divorce frequency in simple Societies" *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, LXXIX (1949) (pp. 37-62).

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Beyond the Village The Native Courts deal to a great extent with matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the development of Christian marriage. 692 581 [797]

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who rears him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are responsible for their own actions before the court, and that truant schoolboys can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peaceably with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms. 858 593

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage. 593 584

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later 882 848 684

[1] Called *cidumu*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the [182]
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with 843
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant.
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child 167
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for [837]
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 598
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent 692
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

602 that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address
593 of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife,
684 the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration.
692 Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

593 The general principle that no court action involving the husband's
684 sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a w[illegible] is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

578 Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their
602 relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both
[845 from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman
787 had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who
1054] was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go
167 away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great
602 deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.'

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village.

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In the particular

427 field of urban housing, however, the forms of marriage become
581 important and a man may be required to show that he is legally married before he can rent married quarters.

The work of the court is, in the words of the councillor hearing the
692 pleas of Ruth (p. 54), 'not . . . to force men and women to divorce
581 each other, but to instruct them how to live well together'. Whereas kinsfolk have an interest in a particular marriage, the court is concerned with the well-being of the tribe as a whole, and the maintenance of Ngoni values. It has a particular interest in those aspects of marriage in which the Native Authority bureaucracy is concerned, namely the issue of marriage certificates and the handing over of the legalization payment. In court as yet, no inquiry is made as to whether a marriage certificate has been issued in respect of any particular marriage. These certificates were first introduced only a few years ago, and if a married couple want one they must make a visit to the court accompanied by one or two relatives, and pay sixpence fee. They do not go to this trouble until they need one for the journey away from Fort Jameson. This may be after several years of married life.[17] In village discussions of marriage I never heard mention of marriage certificates, nor did I see a litigant produce one in court. One man, obtaining a certificate for his marriage that had taken place a year previously remarked that in these days one could not be sure of damages for adultery unless one had a certificate. I think he was ahead of custom in this matter, but as the same individuals issue certificates and try cases, it seems probable that such a development will take place. But even with the increased importance of the issue of certificates, it seems likely that the role of the court as primarily a conciliatory body will continue for some time, so long as court members do not become a body of specialists differentiated from the rest of the population.

The court is reluctant to grant divorce to a woman on the ground
692 of her husband's desertion if he is a labour migrant until it can be
586 shown that she has made efforts to trace him and has given him a chance of re-establishing contact with her. Therefore, women are made to write to their husbands informing them of their intention to proceed with a divorce. These letters are sometimes shown to the court as evidence that they have been written. It is only after an adjournment of several months that the court will take up the case, and the wise woman, during this time, avoids any indication that she has a new husband in view. It is, as it were, assumed that there is always a suspicion of adultery, but if her husband's kin cannot marshal any evidence against her, the court will grant her plea. It is felt by some court members that the attention paid to the pleas of women is forced on them by the Administration, and they are anxious to show that they do not divorce women too

[17] Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 84.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586 [543]

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [182] [693] [542]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another 486 562

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indunas*[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupulous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African territories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[1 [i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

177 one Ngoni area to another, and it is evident that they are well aware
184 that they met with different kinds of white contact. A frequent topic of discussion in villages is the differences between the administration of N. Rhodesia and of Nyasaland, as well as the policy and attitudes of the different missions.

177 There is, however, one common factor in the situation called culture contact, existing wherever the Ngoni meet any Europeans.
186 Like the Zulu, the Ngoni do not necessarily take kindly to white ways nor desire to make an extensive imitation of white culture. Their racial and cultural pride makes them cling to their own institutions and resent the assertion of white superiority in every sphere of life. This is evident in material culture as well as in the realm of political and social values. The Ngoni are well known for their skill in house-
[342] building, yet they prefer their own of poles and mud, and are slow to take to brick houses. Their houses, both in the villages and on the copper mines, were noticeably bare of 'store goods', and their expenditure on clothes and 'trash' is low in comparison with the wages earned. Their standards of hospitality, of courtesy, and of mutual assistance they believe to be much superior to the Europeans. They carried on their own system of courts by themselves until it was
• [692] recognized by the Native Courts Ordinance a few years ago, and they speak with scorn of the chief who cannot decide his own cases and has to have recourse to the Boma. Several times in the villages, when describing their agricultural methods, or hygiene for young men, or moral training of children, they have said to me, 'Write that we knew this before the *Azungu* came'.

On one count they do concede superiority to the Europeans. 'Only
186 in war the *Azungu* knew better', and that to the Ngoni was the acid
726 test. In Mpezeni's and Gomani's countries, where they were conquered by force of arms, they knew they had to yield as they had made others yield in their day. Yet even here they find a cause for pride. 'No one ever conquered us until the *Azungu* came, and no one will conquer us again until they first conquer the *Azungu*.' This I have had said to me many times by men when speaking of their experiences as carriers and as *askari* in the East African campaign. They add as explanation, 'We went to the war of the Germans because the Boma said we should go. But we wanted also to see if the English would

work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union. This exodus to the south in its turn brought the Ngoni into touch once more with the Matabele, the Zulu, and the Swazi, and reawakened their consciousness of their southern origin. It is significant that just at the point when their power in their own country received a crushing blow, they came into contact once more in the south with the stock from which they had sprung and to whom they could still speak in their own language. The anthropologist who looks for the reason why the distinctive Ngoni culture did not die out entirely after their military defeat and the advent of the whites, can see at least part of the reason supplied by the results of this economic exodus to work in the south. When the other tribes in the neighbourhood were, in the Ngoni phrase, 'running always to the Boma' and incidentally picking up fragments of European customs, the Ngoni remained, according to their own account, to a great extent aloof and were strengthened in this aloofness by their renewed southern connexions.

Ngoni supremacy over the country was at an end. The Europeans were the overlords of all the tribes, not the Ngoni. Instead of one big chief in the country, many small ones were now recognized who dared to give themselves airs because they knew the Ngoni could not compel allegiance to their Paramount. Chewa people living under Ngoni chiefs could no longer be forced to stay there, therefore a different attitude towards them was necessary. 'Chewa' could no longer be synonymous with 'slave'. I have heard Ngoni chiefs in court address their *indunas* and headmen many times on behaving well to people of other tribes 'Or they will leave us and to-day we cannot make them return'. A recent case in which a young chief, but a very important one, was summoned to the Paramount's court for insulting a Chewa woman, was made the occasion by the Paramount for a long public discourse on the present relations between Ngoni and Chewa, pointing out that an Ngoni chief whose Chewa subjects left him would 'spoil his country' and 'all his people would be ashamed'. Ngoni prestige, in fact, having lost the support of military power, had to rely on other sanctions. In their own eyes, their prestige was still due to their southern origin, their success in creating the Ngoni state in an alien milieu, and those distinctive institutions which they had retained. To the surrounding people, to the Chewa and other tribes,

N M 178 563 648 [692] [643]

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, ' because all his chiefs obey him ', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

N 178 186

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chamtendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, ' We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes '.

N 648 [609] [186] [651] [184]

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. ' To pay taxes, that is our war to-day ', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

N 177 609

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[604] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the
693 Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
184 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their
648 colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
182 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are
682 bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
183 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done

under the guise of drawing attention to some good Ngoni custom which has been neglected. Thus, for example, a man came to court saying that he was always quarrelling with his wife and that he wished to divorce her. The bench granted the divorce and awarded the woman 30s. damages. The litigant protested. The junior member of the bench, a man aged about 25 years, said, "Don't you know, it has always been the custom in this court to award 30s. damages against men who divorce their wives?" Yet this was a comparatively recent practice and the litigant's protest seemed, to me, to be quite justified. The young man had been on the bench only about eighteen months. Even without Administrative stimulus, deliberate acts of legislation are not unknown among the Ngoni, but they require considerable discussion and probably a tribal meeting. It is easier, particularly for a court member as junior as the man in question, to appeal to the unwritten corpus of tribal custom when introducing a new rule. An analogous process in our own society is perhaps concealed under the fiction that judges do not make law. Ngoni do not quote specific precedents in court, and in this undocumented environment new decisions, if they are not soon challenged, become part of what has always been the custom since time immemorial.

We may then summarize by saying that their common store of notions about the past provides Ngoni with a means of distinguishing themselves from similar groups at a time when the cultural distinctions between these groups are in fact becoming less and less. In the Courts, appeals to the value of traditional custom are made to gain acceptance for new rulings, while in ordinary life breaches of custom are widespread and are not censured.

When we consider legends associated with particular groups within he tribe the picture is rather different. Separate groups in the population remember, and sometimes act in the light of, particular incidents in the past which link them to other similar groups. Thus village A is linked with village B because of some incident in the past when the erstwhile leader of A captured the leader of B, or because at one time the leaders of A and B were brothers. These incidents, and the present inter-group relations with which they are associated, are not known universally but only by the groups concerned and by those near them. Yet in many ways these incidents are of greater practical significance than the more widely known tribal history. The relationships to which they give rise, or rather such of these relationships as have persisted, are remembered at funerals, in the formal exchanges of beer, and in the settlement of quarrels. There are at first glance no sanctions to maintain relationships of this kind, and indeed the very separate existence of two villages A and B may be due to a quarrel followed by a split. But although, for example, when an old woman dies in A there is no way of directly forcing a messenger to carry the news to B, there is in fact a greal deal of social pressure on both groups to keep alive the connection between them. This arises from the general responnibility placed on everyone to preserve the peace, that is, to preserve the existing social order intact. If there are

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have
178 continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the head-
[622] man, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Gesche, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest. 647

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping villages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, but this cannot be done openly under the present régime. 628 [643] [648] [692] [669]

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships. 631 64

Exercises

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exercised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 687 648

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 sensitive to suggestions that a chief may be oppressing his people,
648 usually works through the Paramount. One minor chief was sent to the Paramount's village for a period of instruction in order that he might learn how to rule wisely. On another occasion a chief who had abused the Administration was fined one month's salary by the Paramount. In both these instances the Administration was the initiator of the Paramount Chief's action, but he may also act without reference to it. It was reported to the Paramount that a certain minor chief had struck one of his subjects who had been slow to offer him beer. The Paramount warned the minor chief that he might kill someone this way, and that he ought to fine people, not to strike them. In a dispute between a minor chief and his court clerk over some new court furniture, which the chief wished to use in his own house, the Paramount intervened and ordered that the chairs be put in the courthouse.

643 The Paramount himself is subject to social constraint, and may be criticized by his senior lieutenants. He is advised on how he should behave by these men, and if his behaviour is unsatisfactory they may rebuke him. At county meetings, headmen and others can voice their
644 complaints against the royal house as a whole, and have from time to
661 time protested successfully at such a meeting against too many of the Native Authority posts being filled by members of the royal lineage.

The Native Authority

647 Under the Native Authority system, introduced by the Administra-
[648] tion in 1929, there are a number of paid officials, apart from the chiefs, whose salaries are met by the Native Treasury. They include councillors, assessors, clerks, police, postmen, school attendance officers, and others. The most important of these, and the most highly paid, are
692 the councillors and assessors. They sit once or twice a week in court and hear cases brought before them. Each of the chiefs has a court, and for the most part the cases that come before a county court are brought by people living in the county. When litigants from two counties are involved there is no definite rule as to which court will hear the case and it largely depends on the wish of the instigator of the proceedings. Cases come before the Paramount Chief's county court that concern people from other counties and a litigant may take his case from one chief to another, including the Nyasaland chiefs, in an attempt to obtain a favourable and enforceable decision. The Appeal Court sits at the Paramount Chief's village and is held once a month.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries. 175 [101]

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandon everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace. 177 175 797 [643]

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth tourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. *Where the Britons do convert the same great dudeen into their dirty clay* expressionless as granite, with an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had to 643 [643] [973] [976] [645]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

wait for six or seven years before the procrastinating headmen could lay aside jealousies, and actually place him in the authority of his father. Then when he is crowned he cannot sit in judgment or give a decision unless his councillors have been summoned, and have deliberated with him. Many a time in the old fierce days the councillors and chief argued and defied one another for weeks at a time over the question as to whether the white man was to be tolerated in the country, and it was the strong affection of old Mombera for Dr. Laws, and Wm. Koyi which alone held in the dogs of war, and prevented his councillors from going forth on an exterminating expedition. Yet in spite of the great power of the chief he lives as father of the people with all the villagers as his children. His house is like their own, built right in the centre of the village. The poorest slave has access to him, and he hands his beer pot or his snuff to the meanest villager when he would show him friendliness.

Under the paramount chief there are four great sub-chiefs, and each of them has his councillors and headmen. Then these headmen have each a group of villages under their control. They hear and dispose of petty quarrels between the villagers. Cases in which headmen are involved go to the sub-chief, and cases in which the sub-chiefs are involved, and all great tribal affairs, go to the paramount chief. The tribal council is an impressive sight. Just before I came here I had the privilege of being present in one of these great gatherings of the tribe. It had met to discuss the advisability of coming under the British Protectorate. The great chief, Chimtunga, had sent out his messengers to call to council all the sub-chiefs and headmen. They marched into the chief's kraal on the appointed day, each sub-chief followed by his councillors and hundreds of armed warriors, all walking in single file, and dressed in their gaudiest clothes. They sat round the kraal till thousands were present. By-and-bye the paramount chief walked in, followed by his brothers and council. He was greeted by a roar of salutation, and took his seat. When the case was opened, and the subject introduced, the fathers of the people rose one after the other and saluted the chief, and then addressed the people. The speakers walked up and down, speaking with considerable incisiveness and eloquence, their language full of metaphors and traditional allusions. Then the chief spoke, closing the discussion. Immediately it was ended and the royal salutation given, a warrior leapt into the circle with a war cry, fell

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

down at the chief's feet, and with a shout dashed up again and danced a furious war dance. His eyes fixed and staring with passion, every muscle distended, he stabbed into the air with his spear, tossed the dust of the kraal about, and leapt hither and thither in a frenzy of passion. All the while he kept shouting his battle-cry, and the thousands of fighting men around beat their spears and chanted a chorus. When he had exhausted himself, another headman leapt into the circle and went through his own peculiar wild dance, and then another and another, and for half-an-hour or more these fantastic exhibitions were maintained. Then the chief rose. A great roar of salutation greeted him. Gathering his clothes about him he walked in procession from the kraal, and the council broke up.

In the olden days the power of the chiefs was maintained by a wholesome dread of his warriors, and the laws were enforced with a consistent severity. One result of this is that the Ngoni tribe has always had a higher standard of morality than any Central Africa people. Some persons were stealing mission cattle and complaints were made to the chief. After a time a thief was caught, and then in spite of the pleadings of the missionary the highest penalty was meted out to him. He was hanged on a tree opposite the mission house, and it was forbidden to remove his body. The hyenas wore a path round the foot of the tree trying to get at the carcase, and there he hung, a terrible example to the neighbourhood, until the white ants ate the rope by which he hung, and the body fell to the waiting hyenas.

I have seen a chief receive news of the adultery of one of his wives, turn to his executioner, and give him instructions, and in a few minutes both man and woman were lying dead outside the village. I have myself begged for the life of a woman who had sinned, and she was spared only after a great fine in cattle was levied instead.

These were harsh and terrible punishments, necessary for rough times. And now when the chief is loosing some of his old authority, and dare not exercise capital punishment because of the overshadowing British Government, one fears that except where the power of religion has taken the place of the old dread, a weaker morality is apt to sap the vitality of the tribe. The punishments were not arbitrary. They were fixed by precedent. And all the past quarrels for forty or fifty years back would be quoted to prove the right of a plaintiff or defender. And now

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

borne out in Roman days also, that the handier, and more artful and skilful people have usually a lower social morality than the fighting races. Our Ngoni came to Nyasaland as a moral blessing. The ordinary obscenity of the indigenous people was not for a moment tolerated among the Ngoni. It is very appalling to hear and see how degraded were the Tumbuka into whose land they came. A people among whom virginity was unknown, where family relationship was no defence, where men and women lived in an atmosphere that was charged with vice. But when the Ngoni came, many of the foul practices of the Tumbuka were punished with death. Their obscene dances were prohibited, many of their superstitious customs were banned, and generally a higher type of morality was superimposed.

The aristocratic Ngoni is a gentleman through and through. His word is absolute. When he gives a promise you may fearlessly rely on it. He does not steal, nor does he intrude on your privacy. I have heard the old men storm in a village because some boys stood around staring at me, or speaking. Before a superior they should sit down, and remain silent, or only speak in whispers. When they address you they always give you your family name of honour, or if they don't know it, round off each sentence with a "sire." When you come into a village you sit at the gate of the cattle kraal and wait for your reception. After a long time the elders of the village appear. Their courtesy is that the longer the wait the greater the welcome. For if they come out quickly they seem to say you had better clear out quickly. When they appear they sit down at some distance, and remain silent. You must not speak till you are spoken to. After a decent interval, they come forward, sit down, and leisurely say, "We see you, sire." Then you reply, "Yes, sire." That is the whole courtesy. Conversation may now begin. When you would rise to go, you first of all say, "Remain in peace, sire," and they reply, "Yes, and go thou in peace, sire." It is very courteous and friendly, and they accompany you along the path a little way, and again send you off with salutation.

Their village life is not without interests and amusements. During the day in the head villages there are continual trials in open court—trials which last for hours and days with continual speech-making. In the evenings the kraal echoes with the chorus of village dances. Quite the prettiest and most delightful dance is the village competitive dance which is held during the day. A

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 delegated a certain amount of responsibility, such as the collection
668 of licence fees or the holding of a court not recognized by the Administration but supplied by the county clerk with the apparatus of official forms. The would-be chief then argues that the rural district in which he lives has always been distinct from the rest of the county and that it is too far for the people in it to attend at the county court. No attempt of this kind since 1920 has been successful, although the recent dispersal of villages into reopened land outside
[693] the reserves has increased the distances some litigants have to travel to the county court, and hence the number of disputes referred to these unrecognized local leaders has increased.

4. *The chief and his people*

634 The chief interacts with his people in a variety of situations. He receives their presents of beer and other valuables, he presides at county meetings, and organizes the royal hunts. He visits them in their villages when there are important celebrations and festivities and they go to him with their requests and complaints.

634 Ngoni offer beer as one of their principal expressions of
574 hospitality, and in a formal beer party the ordered pattern of the
273 social structure is acted out in the distribution and dispensation of
[554] the various jars and bowls of beer.[11] One traditional obligation is to provide a jar of beer for the head of the segment. Everyone belongs, or belonged, to a hierarchy of segments so that there were many people who ought to be honoured in this way at every party. In practice, since beer is heavy to carry, few jars move outside the village in which they are brewed, but a distant political superior is sometimes called in to a village to attend a beer party at which he will be honoured in this way. In the chief's own village the chief lives close at hand and beer is provided in much the same way as for the headman in an ordinary village. When beer is brewed by important people in the capital and regal villages they often call the chief to come and visit them and enjoy their hospitality. The chief is not so frequently called to beer in commoner villages, but on an important occasion such as the formal installation of a village official, or the formal announcement that a village has moved to a new site, it is appropriate to invite the chief to attend. A chief may
634 also be honoured by his affines with beer brewed for him in the
554 same way as any other man, but there is some disagreement about the appropriateness of this, for the chief 'has exceeded all others'

[11] See Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 217-19, for the rules of and attitudes towards beer drinking.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

224 organized by a commoner. All the animals killed belong to the chief
476 and must be taken to him. He then usually rewards the men who
634 killed and carried the animals with part of the meat. There is thus a difference from commoner hunts, on which the animals belong to those who kill and carry them and not to the man in charge of the hunt. Whereas on a commoner hunt some men usually lose interest and drop out during the chase, this is less likely to happen on a royal hunt. A commoner, even if he is a headman, cannot force his neighbours to come with him on a hunt, but occasionally if the
634 field is very poor a chief will summon absentees in his court.

224 These royal hunts appear to be of social rather than economic
[136] significance. Big game is scarce in Ngoniland, and a hunt attended by two hundred men may sometimes yield as few as half a dozen antelope. Ngoni like to eat game meat, but they do not regard hunting as an activity in which game should be killed as effectively as possible. They scorn the much more efficient methods employed by the Cewa, illegal though they are in the eyes of the Administration. An Ngoni lad was once ordered by his village headman to attend me on a hunt in which we used nets in Cewa fashion. The lad was sulky throughout the hunt and made no effort to kill any animals. A few days later we went hunting again, this time employing Ngoni techniques. We tramped many miles on a very hot day and killed nothing at all, and yet he appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. Royal hunts must be seen in this light. A chief can no longer command a regiment of soldiers but
[681] he can call out his men hunting.[18] Men attend because they consider it their duty to do so and because they are aware of the sanctions at the chief's disposal.

Royal hunts are sometimes of practical importance, when there are lions to be hunted. Lions appear in Ngoniland sporadically, apparently on passage between the game reserve on the Nyasaland side of the border and the sparsely inhabited Luangwa Valley. Hunters like to be in strength when tackling lion, and the men of a county look to their chief to call a royal hunt to deal with
[411] them. Chiefs are relatively well supplied with guns, and the combination of many hunters armed with spears and a few guns gives confidence.

6. *African bureaucracies*

647 Prior to the recognition of Native Courts in 1929 there was
698 little specialization in the functions of the various indigenous
693 leaders supported by the Administration. All of them, chief, sub-

[18] See my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', p. 213, for Ngoni hunting methods.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Admini- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created,
the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity
as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity
and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[19] were
employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make
arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native
Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of
subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The 692
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as
well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative
legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences [681]
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award
damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish
between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Admini-
tration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native
Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority
was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni
Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping.
The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction
and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of
messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main
roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production,
for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had
to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries
and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an [647]
assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The
Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the
extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs
their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[19] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapaw* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

l:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

651 marriages and for selling beer, and from fines and fees taken in court. In some years there has been a local levy on all men liable for Native tax.

642 The Native Authority, the Native Court and the Native Treasury form a single system of what is essentially local government. The judicial aspect of government has always been to the 693 fore, for the hearing of cases is an activity which has gone on without serious interruption since before the conquest. The first people to be appointed as assessors were in many instances the people who had been hearing cases with the chief for many years. They were joined in this by the councillors, for there was no separation between judicial and administrative organization in pre-conquest times and none had emerged by that time. Since the court clerk needed to be at least partially literate, he was usually a younger man who had been to school but, in some instances at least, he had close kinship ties with those in high office. He acted as a member of the bench as much as the councillors and assessors. In some courts other close supporters of the chief, particularly those who lived near their courts, also attended regularly to hear cases although they were not paid to do so, and in at least one instance a chief paid a regular salary out of his own pocket to a member of his court who was not recognized as such by the Administration.

Thus the court was the nucleus round which the Native Authority grew. The court clerk was employed as secretary to the chief and the Native Authority, and he had charge of the rubber stamps which came to be the new symbols of political power. He toured the county looking for dogs and bicycles without licences, for since he was literate he was considered the man to handle the money accruing from court fines, fees and licences. Sometimes he combined with these duties others that had nothing to do with court work, such as seeing that villages were swept clean or paths hoed. Because of his work in court he was well informed on disputes in the county, and since he made frequent trips to the township so that his accounts could be checked by the Administration, he was well briefed on what was going on there. The office of court clerk [554] came in this way to have a greater importance than its formal duties implied.

Yet in recent years the relative status of the court clerk has declined. The executive, as opposed to the judicial and fiscal, 648 functions of the Native Authority have become more numerous. 645 The activities of the Administration, instead of being confined mainly to tax collecting and the punishment of major crimes, have expanded to include a variety of social services for Africans and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VI. The clerk of a county Native Court checks the whereabouts of men on the tax register of a village with an important man in the village. Standing are a Native Authority messenger with his, and an Administration messenger. The village headman and some of his people sit in the background.

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PLATE VII. Litigants outside a county Native Court wait for hearings to begin.

[Facing p. 152]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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PLATE VIII. The clerk of a Native Court, with one of the court assessors, sits in the chief's village issuing a permit for selling beer to a man who has come on behalf of his sister.

[222]

PLATE IX. A Native Authority councillor, sitting on the verandah of the Native Court in his country, issues passes to men wishing to collect caterpillars. There are no edible caterpillars in Ngoniland, and Ngoni who wish to collect them provide themselves with passes to show to the Cewa chiefs in whose countries caterpillars are found.

[Facing p. 153]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly intergrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native [645] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people [602] and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living, [771] in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
648 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural [693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local 647
Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these 624
duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in 648
conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary [693]
Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and [651]
to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees of other technical departments of the Administration, such as Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are [625]
mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder, have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it 648
were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to 647
each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work 167
in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not 582
are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this when the social distance between the two persons involved is small. Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some
remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around 166
them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the 582

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between political and judicial actions is not surprising. There is a connexion of this kind in every society, and the connexion is a particularly close one in societies like the Ngoni, where the same individuals act as legislators, administrators, and judges, and where the court does not confine itself merely to the legal issues in a dispute but examines the whole network of social relationships which are involved, with the object of restoring social order. 692

There are three ways in which this connexion can be seen. First, the court may be used as a vehicle for implementing the policy of the Native Authority. Secondly, the Administration may use the court to implement its policy. Thirdly, positions in the court may be used to satisfy men who seek political authority. We have to deal with the third point in our discussion of the development of the Native Authority. [557]

A chief anxious to gain favour with the Administration sees that his court enforces with heavy penalties the various regulations with which, for the time being, the Administration is concerned, such as those relating to agricultural control, and school attendance. A chief who does not wish to co-operate will neglect these regulations. Thus a few years ago there was a regulation that once a child had begun a two-year course at school, he or she must stay to finish it. In one county this rule was enforced much as the letter of the law indicated, in another it was completely ignored despite the protests of school-teachers, and in a third it was interpreted to mean that every child must go to school. About a year later the Administration decided that as promulgated the rule was *ultra vires*, and said it must be withdrawn. Nevertheless in some counties it is still enforced. These chiefs and courts are not being merely capricious. Some chiefs support the missions and their schools, others oppose them; some are in alliance with the school-teachers and other intelligentsia in their counties, others oppose them. These various attitudes and alignments are reflected in the way in which they respond to a new law. This is particularly noticeable when public delicts, such as absence from school, are concerned, for in general the court is its own law-enforcing agency. There is no independent police force to bring offenders to court whether or not the court wants to see them, but only the assessors, court clerk, messengers and others who, when they are not busy about their own affairs, may if they are so inclined wander through the villages looking for unlicensed dogs and unlicensed beer. Thus the enforcement of law relating to public delicts depends largely on the relationship between the Native Authority and the common people. 696 557 648 692 [872] [625] [693]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

167 which we shall be more directly concerned with the smaller
464 groupings of Ngoni society. There are, however, a few points that
[567] must be mentioned here.

In Fort Jameson and in a few of the towns on the Northern Rhodesia railway line there are Ngoni members of the Native 683 Urban Courts. These posts are largely in the gift of the Native 574 Authority although they are not paid by the Native Treasury. The 643 man recommended by the Paramount Chief to the Administration is usually the one appointed, and he acts as a representative of the Native Authority in the town as well as carrying out his duties in the court. He is likely to act as host when a chief visits his town, and messages are sometimes sent through him to men and women who are wanted in connexion with affairs in Ngoniland.

Every few years or so a chief goes to visit the towns. Here he 574 is received by his people and those of other Ngoni counties, and 643 may be given substantial presents. The Paramount Chief is some- 464 times called to Lusaka by the Administration to attend some function, and newly appointed chiefs go to a school near there, where courses of instruction are held for them. Thus although migrants may leave their villages and not return to them for many [202] years, there are opportunities for them to keep in touch with rural happenings. Most of their contacts are with their kinsfolk, who visit them or write to them, but there are also these links with the political system of the tribe. When political offices have to be filled, not only Ngoni living rurally are considered but also those in the 647 towns whose whereabouts are known. Sometimes the fare is sent for the lorry journey back to Fort Jameson if the town-dweller has no money.

There is little contact between the Fort Jameson group and other Ngoni groups. In 1914 envoys came from the northern 167 Nyasaland group in order, it is said, formally to confirm Mpezeni 567 as Paramount Chief of the Fort Jameson group, but there does not 619 seem to have been any subsequent contact between the heads of 571 the two groups. Individuals from northern Nyasaland from time to time find their way into Fort Jameson District, usually while searching for work on the tobacco farms, in the same way as men from other tribes. These immigrants may persuade some of their [557] relatives to join them and so build up sufficient following to set themselves up as village headmen.

Contact is naturally closer with the two Nyasaland counties 571 formerly under Mpezeni and many Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia 574 have relatives across the border. The border twists and turns, and there is no physical indication of its existence on the ground save

463 foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group
177 involved the earning, spending and sharing of money in-
[434] comes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered
[571] opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

624 In local government and in the courts, which formed an integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom,
693 ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain
[827] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial
[562] ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

622 In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said 692 586

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country. [643] [539]

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village. [182] [693] [562]

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained. 671 583 684 581 583

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another 486 586 562

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

649 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the
693 Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
184 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their
648 colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view, a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are
692 bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
183 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and amenors are nominated by the chiefs on the advice of their lieutenants and some of them are in fact lieutenants or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is illiterate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lieutenants or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying sixpence for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the county and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [693]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organized system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional governors. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of their people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 43 [2] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend these to people they can trust. All the chiefs organize their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole county, but only part of the county. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organize enough hunts. 622 224 [411] [136]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in judgment on his own son, a young man of twenty-one, 692
for committing adultery with the wife of a man of a former
slave family. The husband brought the case against the [684]
chief's son, and the chief ordered the man to speak truly and [694]
not be afraid. The case was heard amid the most deathly [695]
silence. In awarding a heavy penalty of compensation against
his son, the chief spoke of the central position of law in Ngoni
life, and of the fact, so sharply brought out by the case, that
the law was no respecter of persons.

Young adults, boys and girls, were held personally re- 672
sponsible for breaches of the law which they had committed.
Penalties were awarded against them as individuals, even
though they often could not pay the compensation without
the help of their father and his family. They were expected 867
to become acquainted with the law in various ways. One
was by conformity to accepted social codes of behaviour, in-
stilled into them by their elders, particularly in such matters
as sex relations, respect for property, avoidance of slander
and of injury by violence. Another way of learning how the
law operated, as well as the principles upon which the case-
law was built, was by attending the courts, and listening
carefully to the cross-examinations as well as to the judge- [695]
ments. Young people were expected also to ask their fathers,
and elders generally, about points of law which they had not
understood, or had confused with some of the practices of the
local people. The onus was upon young adults for acquiring
this knowledge of the law as well as for behaving in accord-
ance with it. We shall see in the next chapter how the Ngoni
regarded being law-abiding as one of their basic cultural [577]
traits, as well as being evidence of the individual character
of a young adult.

Ngoni traditional skills

We made a distinction, albeit a rather tentative one, at the 128
beginning of this chapter between certain kinds of tradi-
tional knowledge which we have been describing up to this

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sorrow, it is not necessarily always so, for loud wailing and tears are appropriate at the death of all neighbours and kinsfolk, whether friends or enemies. Men do not usually seek the companionship of their wives at dances and beer parties, although there are some men who do. In our own society we think of a man earning his living in company with other men, but spending his leisure with his wife. By contrast Ngoni men work in the gardens with their wives but seek other company for recreation. 593 765 593

7. Divorce

The relationship between husband and wife can be terminated by death or by divorce. If one spouse dies, then his or her interest in the marriage is guarded by the surviving kinsfolk, and we shall deal with their actions in our next chapter as part of the intervention of affines in a marriage. In divorce, however, except in cases of desertion, both husband and wife are themselves involved and it is primarily by their own actions, rather than by the actions of their kinsmen, that the marriage is terminated. 586

While a marriage is established without reference to the Ngoni state organization, except in so far as the issue of a marriage certificate is concerned, divorce more frequently involves resort to the Native courts. It is possible to effect divorce without taking the matter to the court, and in the past, before the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy had begun, many people were divorced in the village. Kinsfolk of the two parties meet together in the village of one or other party, discuss the marriage, and agree among themselves that the couple are to be divorced. The formal act of divorce is made by the couple shaking hands with each other, while those present tell them to stop hating each other. The woman is told 'If this man comes as a traveller to your house, and asks for water, do not refuse him'. [692]

It is more usual for a divorce to be referred to the court. Attempts are made by the kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, if quarrel there is, and when the attempts fail, the group seeking the divorce or hoping to get damages from the other side take the matter to the county Native Court. It is open to either the man or the woman to take the initiative in this matter. The court hears the case, awards damages as appropriate, and, if it thinks fit, declares the couple divorced. The formal act of shaking hands is sometimes performed in court, but is often dispensed with. [694]

Divorce takes place in the village only when there is substantial agreement on both sides that it would be a mistake to allow the marriage to continue. The meeting of kinsfolk in the village may reach agreement about the return of the legalization payment or even the award of damages, but it is only the court that has power to enforce decisions of this kind, and it is to the court that disputants turn when they cannot agree. When a man wishes to divorce his wife on the ground of her adultery he usually does so through the 586 692

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

578 602 that he was drunk when he quarrelled with his wife and did not mean what he said, the woman may agree to return. If she is adamant, or if a serious issue such as cruelty or adultery is involved, a formal discussion is held in the village of one or the other. Relatives come from both sides and a man of senior status convenes the meeting.[16] Sometimes it may be agreed that the offending spouse must pay nominal damages to the other. The usual procedure is to offer a chicken to the other, but sometimes a few shillings are given instead. If agreement cannot be reached at a meeting like this, the matter can either be referred to the court, or else the issue of the quarrel may be left unresolved in the hope that at some later date a solution may be possible. While the initiative in holding a village meeting lies with the senior relatives of the [699] couple, the only people who can take the matter to the court are the couple themselves. A father may sometimes handle the formalities of laying a case against his son-in-law on his daughter's behalf but it would be difficult for him to do so without her co-operation, and, on the man's side, it is only he and not his father or brother who can effectively sue his wife.

The interests of the two groups of relatives are centred on the successful maintenance of the marriage. It is considered more important that people should live together in peace without quarrelling than that the exact rights of one side or the other, even where these rights can be defined precisely, should be upheld. [684] A man who commits adultery may be censured by his father, who will perhaps refuse to speak to his son if he thinks that the stability of his son's marriage is threatened, even though it is admitted that the man's wife has no legal right to object to her husband's adultery. When there has been a quarrel people do not rush to hold a village meeting since, by doing so, the existence of the quarrel is formally recognised and its seriousness increased. It is better if possible to get the couple to 'change their character', that is, to become reconciled to each other on their own account. Until the woman's sudden departure indicates to the world that they have quarrelled, relatives are reluctant to interfere between man and wife. People gossip about the quarrels of married couples, but even their close kinsmen will hedge and say that these affairs are not their responsibility if pressed for an opinion. The action of the wife in running away is the mechanism by which she begins her appeal to her relatives for support, and she carries it a stage further by refusing to accept her husband's apologies. Finally if the settlement proposed at the meeting is not acceptable she appeals to the court. Men do not run away to their kinsmen and do not rely on relatives to the same extent as do their wives. Yet a man can if he wishes

[742] [16] *Tende.* This word is used of any formal meeting in a village to settle a quarrel, matrimonial or otherwise, before the issue is referred to the court. Cf. Nsenga *ku-tendela*, to talk or discuss.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*mwavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*akosikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Nguni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] Hilton, pl. cdxxx. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wilson, 'Rituals', pp. 47n, 57n, and 'Gwetchisa', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'kraal' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. 81.

692

central Ngoniland in which Ngoni law and usage differed from local usage in such matters as the custody of children, the right to 'leave the village' and the ownership of cattle.

Above the informal courts of the village headmen were the courts held in pre-European days at the head villages of the *ohwamanu*. A *mahwamanu* was called 'the owner' of those villages surrounding his head village, consisting of his own clan members, local people and captives. The *mahwamanu* had a double interest in maintaining justice in his area. If he failed in a case, there was in the central kingdom only one court above him—that of the Paramount—though in the northern kingdom the areas ruled by the leading Jere chiefs had courts which came between the *ohwamanu* and the Paramount. Except in cases of murder and witchcraft, which he was obliged to take to the Paramount's court, the *mahwamanu* was anxious to prove to the Paramount that he was a man fit to hold and wield authority over a number of villages. He was also concerned to maintain his authority among his own people, and this was recognized most clearly in the conduct of cases in his court. The system of checks and balances in the Ngoni political organization required that the Paramount should always dominate, but at the same time delegate authority to his chiefs and the heads of leading clans. The authority exercised by a *mahwamanu* derived from his leadership of a Swazi or trans-Zambezi clan in a particular area, but he had to maintain his position in pre-European days by constant vigilance over his people. In the process of holding together villages of mixed tribal origin the courts of the *ohwamanu* and the administration of law in them played an important integrating role.

The conduct of cases in Ngoni courts

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Informants in the northern and central kingdoms made it clear that there were certain common elements in Ngoni procedure in pre-European days which were carried on in the courts in the 1930's. The one who brought the case to court, the plaintiff, was called the owner of the case (*mwini wo mlonde*). Those who were called as witnesses were those who were present at the time of the quarrel who might have seen or heard something which bore on the case. The Ngoni practice of legal procedure was not to call witnesses to support either side, but to appeal to the public to give evidence about what had occurred. I heard Ngoni counsellors press a witness to say exactly where he or she was at the time of an assault. On other occasions they addressed a witness in these terms: 'Now you are from X's family. Here in this court you must tell us truly what happened. Do not be afraid. Do not remember your kinship (*ubude*) but remember what you saw, and speak well.' There was explicit in this approach a definite appeal to the public to take their part in seeing that justice was done and so restoring equilibrium and good feeling in the village. If the counsellors who were conducting a case

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

695 suspected a witness of lying, they accused him of doing so after he had told his story. If he persisted in his version of the events, and they still thought he was lying, they cross-questioned him, and when the point where he contradicted himself was reached they turned on him and said: 'You lied.' Now you have said you lied. You do not speak well.'

671 In the following account of Ngoni law by Cibambo there are two
695 main emphases. One is on the existence of law, in the sense of a norm of good conduct, conformity to which was expected and enforced. The text at the beginning of this chapter showed how the law was made known to all the inhabitants of the country, so that ignorance could not be pleaded as an excuse for law-breaking. The other emphasis is on decorum and the regular and accepted pattern of behaviour expected in the courts, and on the Ngoni hatred of bribery, which was claimed by them, and on the whole endorsed by Europeans.[1] Respect for the law, for the court in session and for the judgement, are expressed in Cibambo's account of the proceedings, and the winner of the case (though formerly it was the loser) expressed his thanks, after judgement was given, to the Paramount or the chief, and to the elders.

671 The laws and the power to punish disturbers of the peace were in the
692 power of the Paramount and those who were under him. If there was a bad case in which the guilty man deserved death according to the law, such a matter was in the power of the Paramount and the lesser chiefs who helped him, and of them only. It was the same in the case of anyone who deserved to be despoiled of all his possessions because of his wrong-doing. The law was a protection for the people who might have been killed casually by their masters if they had had the power. People who were in danger from those who were above them, in danger of confiscation or of death, ran to the younger brothers of the Paramount or to the Paramount himself or sometimes they ran to the great *izinduna*. Praises had been added to those of Chief Mbwalo for this very reason that he had saved many whom Mbulwa had wanted to kill '*Injinda eimnamweni, sinda ekuhlatuleki ekuhlanwanwa*' (a chant with words which spoke for the men of noble birth).

692 If people quarrelled in a village and could not be reconciled it was the work, as it is today, of the headman to try and bring them together, and if he thought that one had wronged the other he ordered him to bring something to recompense the other. Such recompenses were small things, from beads to a goat, perhaps an axe or a hoe. If the headman found he could not settle the business he went with them himself to the next court, to the head of the group of villages, and the standard of the payment increased. Serious cases went to the courts of the chiefs but these cases were few and not like today. People were very much afraid of each other

[1] On the walls of Paramount Mbelwa's court in Mazabu district in north Nyasaland were painted three sayings in English and in Tumbuka. Over the Paramount's chair was written 'Justice is blind', by the place where the witnesses stood to speak, 'The law has no respect of a person', and over where the general public sat 'Everyone is equal before the law'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and appeals were unknown. Chiefs did not allow a man to come by himself with his case to them, he had to come with his headman. Even those in danger of death went first to the headmen and these brought them to the chiefs. 692

The Ngoni hated bribes. If any indunas was found to have taken bribes from people he was condemned and punished. [687]

The hearing of the cases was like what it is today. The one who brought the case to the court spoke first, then the one with whom he was quarrelling. If there were elders there from their village they also spoke telling just how these people quarrelled, saying so-and-so began to quarrel in such-and-such a way, and then showed how they had been unable to judge in the village. They did not go into details of the quarrel, that was done by the men themselves. After those who had quarrelled had told of the beginning of the case any who knew of it were asked to say how it appeared to them in the village. These were the witnesses both for and against. 695

When this had been done, all who were implicated or interested in the case remained silent. It is the custom of the Ngoni that all who spoke in a case should stand and have a stick, and as they spoke they should walk about and limp with the stick or sometimes stand all together, but in that case the hand which held the stick should shake and stick it into the ground. Only women spoke seated. No one at the hearing of a case was allowed to lie down, everyone, even the Paramount, sat. They did this because they were afraid that otherwise the case would not finish quickly. The court was held in the cattle kraal. Women were not allowed into the kraal for cases, but sat outside opposite where the old men were gathered, even though they were the wives of the Paramount. 695 516

After the litigants and the witnesses had spoken it was the turn of the elders of the court. They questioned and agreed with or criticised the men who had quarrelled but they did not pronounce judgement. They waited for the Paramount who first of all sat silent and noticed those who unravelled or twisted the case. Afterwards when the people had finished speaking, the elders delivered the story to the Paramount or judge. The judge then delivered his judgement and condemned those who had twisted the case. He delivered his judgement sitting not standing like the other people and when he had finished all thanked him, or rather saluted him with a loud 'Bayete' or with the surname if to lesser chiefs. Sometimes he sent an elder to tell the court the judgement. When the case had been judged no one criticised the judgement. The one who began to give thanks for the judgement was the one who was found guilty: this he did to show submission and repentance. The custom of today that the one who wins the case gives the thanks is not good because the man who has lost goes away in resentment and threatening and often the case crops up again. 695 [594]

If an *induna* or man of standing went secretly to the Paramount to accuse somebody that he deserved death (perhaps for witchcraft), very often the Paramount sent a man in secret to warn the condemned man to run to a chief's village and hide his head. In this way many left their failures and went to build with the chiefs and when they went they took all their things. 693 692 692

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in judgement on his own son, a young man of twenty-one, 692
for committing adultery with the wife of a man of a former
slave family. The husband brought the case against the [694]
chief's son, and the chief ordered the man to speak truly and [694]
not be afraid. The case was heard amid the most deathly [695]
silence. In awarding a heavy penalty of compensation against
his son, the chief spoke of the central position of law in Ngoni
life, and of the fact, so sharply brought out by the case, that
the law was no respecter of persons.

Young adults, boys and girls, were held personally re- 672
sponsible for breaches of the law which they had commited.
Penalties were awarded against them as individuals, even
though they often could not pay the compensation without
the help of their father and his family. They were expected 867
to become acquainted with the law in various ways. One
was by conformity to accepted social codes of behaviour, in-
stilled into them by their elders, particularly in such matters
as sex relations, respect for property, avoidance of slander
and of injury by violence. Another way of learning how the
law operated, as well as the principles upon which the case-
law was built, was by attending the courts, and listening [695]
carefully to the cross-examinations as well as to the judge-
ments. Young people were expected also to ask their fathers,
and elders generally, about points of law which they had not
understood, or had confused with some of the practices of the
local people. The onus was upon young adults for acquiring
this knowledge of the law as well as for behaving in accord-
ance with it. We shall see in the next chapter how the Ngoni
regarded being law-abiding as one of their basic cultural [577]
traits, as well as being evidence of the individual character
of a young adult.

Ngoni traditional skills

We made a distinction, albeit a rather tentative one, at the 128
beginning of this chapter between certain kinds of tradi-
tional knowledge which we have been describing up to this

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

I

THE ORDEAL POISON

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I. In the event of a chief's wife dying, or perhaps his child, the chief holds a consultation with the village elders, saying, "You at the village here, we wish to consult the oracle." At the "chief's" ordeal they summon all the headmen, but in the case of the "people's" ordeal, every one partakes of the poison. When they see that people are often dying they talk it over with the headmen, saying, "Look here at the village, here people are dying and we wish to summon the medicine man, that he may follow up the clue for us at the village." So they send one youth to summon the medicine man. He arrives very late in the evening. They put him in some hut, without people knowing that he has come. In the morning a young man gets up, and goes and stands at the open space in the village [where the men sit and talk, and where the different disputes are settled], and when he has climbed on an ant-hill, that all men may hear, he says, "Do you hear, you must not eat your 'asima' porridge to-day; he who is asleep let him arise that he may himself hear. They are saying you all must bathe, you taste a little of the beer that is not sweet, to-day."

II. He who was about to have his morning sup, pushes aside his flour against the hut wall, he begins

6:Ratray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1967 FRS Ngoni FRS

754 to hide his household goods for, says he, "How
• 755 do we know we shall return from there." And all
791 their beads are taken off. When they see the sun is beginning to rise, every one assembles. And then they begin to pick out some strong young men, saying, "So and so must stay behind, and so and so, they must look after their companions and keep guard over the village, lest the medicine man's children begin to pillage the property of them who do not die." And then they begin to set out to go to the spot the poison is to be drunk at, and they
[412] carry in readiness a grain mortar and a pestle (just any mortar), and follow the path in single file, and come to where the witch doctor is, and he begins to arrange them in a line; they do not turn their backs to the sun, the women spread out in one line, the men in another. The place is black with people.
[222] The medicine man has his feather head-dress on, and goat's-hair bands are round his wrists. And then some old man gets up to present that for which the medicine is pounded, perhaps a goat, and this is for opening his bag [where he keeps the poison].

III. Thereupon the doctor says, "Give to me the spirit of the dead." Then that old man gets up, and going up to the village chief, tells him "The doctor is seeking the spirit of the dead." And the chief speaks, saying, "Well, and know you not them who have died here?" And then the old man gives him, the doctor, the spirit, saying, "Here so and so, and so and so have died, and it is on their account we summon you." Then the pounder of the poison says, "Give to me the partakers of human flesh who have eaten these ones you name." And then they call up two people, a man and a woman, saying, "Let her of the race of the Hills, and him of such and such a clan come here." And them they thus called come and stand near the mortar. Then

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the pounder of the ordeal poison opens his monkey-skin wallet, pulls out the poison bark, and breaks it off into the mortar with a hippo's tooth. When he is chipping it off, he does not finish all the bark he has in his hand, he chips off a little and leaves the rest. When he is doing this the bark jumps, and falls on the left, and again on the right. They surely know that here to-day wonders will befall and that men will die and women. Then the medicine man says, "Give us men to go and draw water." Then the old man asks, "How many men shall we bring?" And perhaps he says, "Bring three, because the people are many," and the doctor tells them, "You must not glance behind, but just draw the water and return." (Lest they give warning to the flesh-eaters.) When he has finished cutting down the bark, he bids his attendant "begin to pound." They do not pound the poison bark as they would grain, they pound, thud! thud! and turn the pestle in the hands. While the attendant is pounding, the pounder of the bark keeps tapping, rat, tat, tat, on the mortar, with his monkey stick [which monkeys use for digging roots], and chants—

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IV. "You have heard mother of children,
Mother of children of *Kundamva*.
Indiscriminate slaughter is the game war plays,
It slew the baboon at *Bonqwe*,
When you slay let your victims fall backward and not forward.
Bag, make the poison hear my words.
You are come into the village, you are their advocate.
They say, that here so and so and so and so have died.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1909) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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It is to plead for them you have been summoned.
There they are, she of the house of the Hills, and he of so and so's clan.
She of the Hills, it is she who has taken the basket.
He, the man, took the little sharp knife,
If it be not you, on the spot, on the spot, you must vomit,
If it be you,
Oh slay, slay, slay."

When they come with the water, the medicine man takes a water-jar full, and pours it into the mortar. You can hear the froth come foaming up, and then he draws a cup of the poison and struts about stirring it with his monkey stick, and uttering this incantation—

"Pick them out, pick them out, pick them out,
You see only the morning's sun, its rays when sinking in the west you must not see.
Are you not that one?
You went to Zomba,
You beat the drum,
It was heard in the 'Never-reach-there country' of the fly,
The spurred fly.
There is a squint-eyed lizard there.
If it were not you who beat that drum,
You must vomit.
If it were you,
You must die.

V. "You went into the regions of the air,
You captured a ray of the sun,
You likened it unto a girdle,
Saying, 'Do you be my strength,
That when the poison comes,

6:Rattray E,G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

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You will give me the mastery over it,
I shall win,
This girdle do you sever, sever, sever.'
You swallowed the egg of a fish-eagle,
That the poison when it came might become as naught,
This egg you must smash.

" You took the spleen of a crocodile,
You laid it in your heart,
You took a python's belly,
You swallowed it, that power might be yours,
Do you [my poison bark] rend these.

" You took wax,
You smeared it on your feet,
Going in your neighbours' fields,
Going with stealthy tread to gather up his grain,
To dust off again in your own garden,
Your companions are in want,
You have wealth to overflowing.

VI. " When you see your neighbour's child,
You say, 'Why should he walk thus at large?'
But surely I had better have eaten him
He who thinks thus shall enter here [into the mortar].

" The broken gourd-cups off the grave you beat together, that they might turn into snakes.
Was it not you who sang the song, saying,
'If it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy,
They go about rolling it,
If it be small and light, they just lift it' [the corpse].

6.Battey E, G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

754 Was it not you who sang so?
695 I seem to think I heard you.
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"That little razor have you brought it now?
539 No, I have forgotten it [supposed answer].

"Maiden, beautiful maiden, E! E! E!
You took the arm-bones of the children of men,
You used to go and dance with them,
The squint-eyed lizard is on his seat, and
Sounding the drum,
Wheeling ever one way.
Now in the opposite direction, see they have rent the drum.

"There is a thing that walks by night,
There is something that comes by day,
It has seen him."

754 VII. "No, to-day we have met each other, the
695 boundary is there, from the east to the zenith is
791 yours, from the zenith to the west is mine alone." He kneels down where one of the human flesh-eaters is, he does not address the demon himself, but talks with another who is next him, and says, "My child, where did you get your black magic; did you get it that you might be all-powerful, you alone?" When he gets up he exclaims, "I have got you, you must not escape, you must go in there, in there, you must enter here" [into the mortar]. When he sees that his attendant has finished pounding the poison, he takes some water and pours it into the mortar, and stirs it, and removes the dregs and takes two gourd-cups, and fills them with the poison. The woman and the man, they are the first to drink. Then the doctor makes every one else do so. Two men drink, he draws again, and gives two women. And so on until all have partaken.

6.Rattray E,G-5 (ea. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

VIII. Then the witch finder says, "That beer I had great trouble in buying, you must not waste it, no, you there, we only told you to sip it, do not you see it is a small pot." Then he knocks down the mortar with his foot, and beats together two pieces of metal. When he sees that one human flesh-eater is dead, he says he has caused the mortar to fall. Some, when dying, cry out [like a hyena]. "Uwi, uwi"; and people know he used to transform himself into that animal; should he roar like a lion, they know he was at times that mighty beast. Others again, when dying, clench their hands. Should they clench one hand, it is known they have eaten five people; if they clench both, men know their victims have been ten. When all have vomited, he causes the survivors to jump over the path. When he sees a man has jumped, he knows that one is an ordinary person and not an eater of human flesh, and the reason the doctor knows this is because he has washed the poison with a medicine made from the "*siswisi*" mouse [and it cannot cross a path and live]. Then the medicine man says, "Let them return to the village now, where a tree has fallen you cannot hide the fall thereof." Any one who has withstood all these tests, on seeing the grass tuft on his hut, dies. When the doctor hears a man has died, he goes to the place to strip him of his cloth and cut off the belt of beads from his waist. Of them who die at the drinking-place and who are free born, their friends make some payment to the doctor, saying, father has died from the poison. Anything the dead man be a slave they burn the body. They who remained behind at the village will drink on the morrow. The pounder of the poison, on returning to his home, is given a goat, perhaps a slave whose "Let me go and bury them." Should the dead

Library E, G-8 (ra. 1900) 1907 PRS Ngumi PRS

NGA 695 791 [115]

human flesh-eaters may have worn, the doctor takes home with him and washes his poison bark with it, that it may still retain its virtue. In the case of a man who dies from drinking the poison, his spirit is not brought back to the village, but is driven out into the bush.

II

A FUNERAL

NGA

1. When a person dies every one is told that so and so, who was ill, is "finished for." Then the village elders come together and go into his hut. They begin to bathe the body and anoint it with oil, folding the knees against the chest, and laying the palms of the hands against the cheeks, the arms being bent from the elbows. Then they take a large flat stone, set it against the hut wall, and on it place the body in a sitting position. Then they commence to wail, the women folk only are in the hut where the corpse is, the men are outside, and the children on the verandah. They lament, saying, "Alas, alas, my husband, what shall I do this day?" [The women pass the night in the hut with the dead body, the men sleep outside.] Next morning, when it is dawn, some men take their hoes, and sacrificial flour, and go to some resting-place on the wayside, and sprinkle some flour at the foot of a tree, and set out again, and when now they are drawing near the burial ground, the one who is in front picks up a stone and throws it, with the words, "We have passed." Then they commence to clear a piece of ground, and take the flour and mark out the grave.

6.Ratuzy E,G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

right, the animal is the property of him who first 224
[drew blood].

II. Should it be a buck about which there is a 224
dispute, one saying, "My dog was first," another, 578
"My dog was first," then they say, "Come, let 695
us dig up medicine." And they take the medicine,
one his lot, the other his, and chew a bit between the teeth, and one blows it out over his dog, saying, "You dog, if it were not you (who caught the buck), you must die; if it were you, you must vomit." And the other man says the same (to his dog), and they see the dog of one of them is dying. Should it chance that two men throw together, and one says, "It was I who began," they say, "Do not let us be always arguing about this; come, let us go to the medicine man." They do not drink (the poison) themselves, but their dogs drink. And when they have finished hunting they say, "Let us be getting back now." All the game they have killed 224
they pile up together, and the master of the hunt begins to "twist off" the legs that are his share. If they see that there is a great quantity of meat, [251]
they cut it in strips, and make a drying rack and light a fire (under it), that the meat may dry. When dry, it is taken off the rack and tied into bundles.

III. One way of hunting is with many men and dogs, and another of the single hunter. Others, again, dig game pits, and make long fences leading up to them, leaving gaps here and there where the pits are. Another way of hunting is by cutting off a stretch of bush. A man separates his bit of jungle, [by clearing a bare strip all round it] and when all the bush is burned, it alone remains. The game run away from the bare place and enter the bush patch; when the rains are just about to begin to fall, he goes and sets fire to the cut off bush patch. When the game run for the open, people kill them.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[780] [771] rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned. Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Hongo villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment. 795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a 791 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancient successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities. • 695 The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When 766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before 849 their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We 177 seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the [643] only independent tribe in Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government. [634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

687 kind are referred to the Administration, it may sometimes act in the
648 way desired by the chief and his lieutenants. Thus a chief once discovered his wife in bed with a lover. The man was eventually caught, and there were some who urged that he be hanged right away, for no one would tell the Administration about the matter. However, more cautious counsels prevailed, the incident was
[684] referred to the Administration, and the man was sentenced, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs and their lieutenants, to three months' imprisonment. On his release, he was escorted from Ngoniland by a chief. Later the man returned, only to be driven out again. The Administration is concerned with upholding the
[696] position of chiefs, and in situations of this kind may regard, say, adultery with a chief's wife as more heinous that with a commoner's wife. On the other hand, the Administration cannot be relied on to give its support automatically, and for this reason chiefs and lieutenants may decide to act without reference to it. The Administration has even on occasion awarded damages to a commoner against the Paramount Chief.

It is perhaps significant that a minor chief whose county con-
634 tained a comparatively large number of villages from the segments of other counties and whose claims to the county chieftainship was disputed decided to hold a meeting to discuss county affairs not at his court or at his village but at the capital of the county. He may have hoped to quell dissension by emphasizing the links with the pre-conquest past shared by the majority of his people.

Now that chiefs and others have begun building in burnt
344 brick, it may be that newly acceded chiefs may not find it so easy
182 to found their own villages. At the same time the policy of building
361 other public buildings in brick, such as treasuries and the proposed welfare halls, in the vicinity of existing courts, may give increased importance to the Native Authority centre. Already there have been one or two attempts at opening shops near the courts to cater for the needs of litigants, and it seems likely that the effective social centre of the county will in future be the site of the Native Authority rather than the capital village or the home of the chief.

8. *Politics and the courts*

The day-to-day work of the court takes up much of the time of
692 chiefs, assessors, and senior lieutenants of the chief. General discussion of Ngoni law lies outside the particular theme of this book, but we are here concerned with the courts in so far as they form part of the political system of the tribe. That there is a close connexion

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between political and judicial actions is not surprising. There is a connexion of this kind in every society, and the connexion is a particularly close one in societies like the Ngoni, where the same individuals act as legislators, administrators, and judges, and where the court does not confine itself merely to the legal issues in a dispute but examines the whole network of social relationships which are involved, with the object of restoring social order. 692

There are three ways in which this connexion can be seen. First, the court may be used as a vehicle for implementing the policy of the Native Authority. Secondly, the Administration may use the court to implement its policy. Thirdly, positions in the court may be used to satisfy men who seek political authority. We have to deal with the third point in our discussion of the development of the Native Authority. [557]

A chief anxious to gain favour with the Administration sees that his court enforces with heavy penalties the various regulations with which, for the time being, the Administration is concerned, such as those relating to agricultural control, and school attendance. A chief who does not wish to co-operate will neglect these regulations. Thus a few years ago there was a regulation that once a child had begun a two-year course at school, he or she must stay to finish it. In one county this rule was enforced much as the letter of the law indicated, in another it was completely ignored despite the protests of school-teachers, and in a third it was interpreted to mean that every child must go to school. About a year later the Administration decided that as promulgated the rule was *ultra vires*, and said it must be withdrawn. Nevertheless in some counties it is still enforced. These chiefs and courts are not being merely capricious. Some chiefs support the missions and their schools, others oppose them; some are in alliance with the school-teachers and other intelligentsia in their counties, others oppose them. These various attitudes and alignments are reflected in the way in which they respond to a new law. This is particularly noticeable when public delicts, such as absence from school, are concerned, for in general the court is its own law-enforcing agency. There is no independent police force to bring offenders to court whether or not the court wants to see them, but only the assessors, court clerk, messengers and others who, when they are not busy about their own affairs, may if they are so inclined wander through the villages looking for unlicensed dogs and unlicensed beer. Thus the enforcement of law relating to public delicts depends largely on the relationship between the Native Authority and the common people. 696 557 644 692 [872] [625] [693]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

696 In the court itself the magnitude of the penalties imposed and damages awarded is to some extent at the discretion of the court, and political considerations, among others, may influence judgments. Adultery with the wife of a chief is more heavily punished than ordinary adultery, and people from other tribes, particularly the Yao, are discriminated against. Ngoni courts maintain that they recognize only Ngoni law, even though the disputants may belong to other tribes. These ideas are familiar enough, but they indicate that questions of group membership, that is, political affiliation, and relations between groups, do influence the actions of the court. Within a county, hostility between a group having the ear of the court and one lacking it may find expression in procedural obstructions, such as always hearing a particular suit at the end of a day, or of continually postponing the hearing because some minor witness is absent.

The chief and his advisers usually endeavour to maintain a monopoly of access to the Administration, and this endeavour is largely supported by the Administration as a matter of policy. In the particular sphere of legal action, appeal from the Native Court to the District Officer is sometimes regarded as a challenge to this monopoly, and litigants are sometimes punished for stating that they intend to appeal. In a celebrated recent case when a chief was successfully sued in the District Commissioner's court for damages for adultery, his people came to him afterwards to express their condolences, as after a funeral, at the injury done to his high office by this procedure.

Native Courts are formally recognized under Ordinance by the Administration, and hence changes in the indigenous legal system brought about by the Administration are legal changes, in that they have behind them all the paraphernalia of Ordinances, Letters Patent, Orders-in-Council, and Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. This gives a special quality to manipulation of the legal system by the Administration, for this is really only another way of saying that effective sovereignty lies with the British Crown and not with Paramount Chief Mpezeni. But within the framework of analysis of the local situation, the actions of the Administration and of the chiefs in controlling the working of the courts are comparable sociologically.

The Administration is continually exercised about the quality of the work done in Native Courts, and in so far as all cases heard in Native Courts are subject to revision by the District Commissioner a direct check is, or could be, exerted on the way in which the courts operate. But Administrative intervention goes further

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than this. Annual reports often draw attention to the smooth working of Native Courts and their impartiality, while attempts are made to establish British rules of evidence and of legal procedure generally. By trying thus to isolate the judiciary from the Native Authority and, more recently, by the proposal to introduce an entirely separate police force into rural areas, the Administration is engaged on an active policy of social change. One change that has already occurred widely is in the role played by the chief in his court. We have seen that traditionally disputes were settled by the senior lieutenants of the segment concerned and referred to the chief only if the lieutenants did not agree, for the chief represented the unity of the people and was above all disputes. When Administrative officers began to supervise the work of Native Courts they usually interpreted the chief's absence from his court as neglect of his duties. Pressure was put on chiefs to attend and participate in their courts, another step towards the secularization of their office. Nowadays some Ngoni chiefs stay out of their courts, others actively hear cases in them, and others drift in and out, sometimes intervening, sometimes waiting for difficult issues to be referred to them. The changed Native Court is one of the agencies whereby the transition from small-scale to large-scale society is to be made. The very successes which were hailed generally for Native Courts in Africa on the introduction of Indirect Rule are surely evidence of the importance attached by the Administration to maintaining courts of the right kind.

The role of the court in the essentially political relationship between the Administration and the Native Authority is made clear when we consider the sources of law enforced in the courts. I have described elsewhere[88] how many of the regulations sought for by the Administration are introduced as Native Authority Rules and Orders, which are then approved by the Administration. This is a harmless legal fiction which worries no one, since new legislation emanating from within the counties is enforced or not quite independently of whether or not it is referred to the Administration and is included in its list of Native Authority legislation. But it is significant that even this fiction can have political significance, for recently it was suggested that a soil erosion law, which had been introduced as a Native Authority Order, would be more accurately described as an Administrative rule which the Native Courts were empowered to enforce. This suggestion was rejected by a meeting of chiefs, who stated that they wished to retain the

[88] Barnes, 'Political development', pp. 102-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

review by the Administration, but in practice the cases are so numerous, the written account of them so brief, and often the handwriting of the record so bad, that it is difficult to make an adequate review. The Administration is able to keep some check on the financial transactions of the courts, and convictions for embezzlement are not uncommon; but the Administration does not greatly influence the decisions taken by the courts nor their enforcement. For though there are police on the lorry routes and crocodiles in the rivers, it is fairly easy for a determined man (or woman) who is dissatisfied with the treatment he has received in the courts to get away. He can usually get to a White farm or to a town, and once there it is not so easy to get him back. Men are not continually running away from the courts, for they usually accept decisions given against them, though appeals from a minor chief's court to the Ngoni Appeal Court are fairly common. Few people take their appeals further to the District Officer, and I have never heard of a case going on appeal beyond the Provincial Commissioner's Court. 692 626 [648] [696]

The general moral approval by the people of the work of the courts which lies behind much of the effectiveness of the Native Court system does not extend automatically to all legal action as such. There is no widely held view that the decisions of the courts must be supported merely because they are the decisions of the courts. Some courts are good, some bad; and some decisions are good, some bad. The great majority of cases that come before a county court are brought by men and women living within the county, but sometimes a litigant begins his suit in a county court not his own, particularly in the Paramount Chief's county court, if he thinks that he will get a better hearing there. Yet chiefs support each other and a case brought before a chief by litigants from another county are sometimes thrown out, in accordance with the Native Courts Ordinance. 692 691

There is little moral sanction attaching to legal procedures, or methods of appeal, or even to the particular sums awarded as damages. The members of courts tend in the main to uphold each other's decisions, so that there is a fair amount of conformity throughout the ten counties. All those who work in courts have in fact an interest in increasing the power of the court system, which the people as a whole have not. Disputants will settle out of court if they can, for it is not so far to walk and the whole process is not so disruptive of social ties, but members of a court will sometimes challenge the right of independent arbitrators, village headmen and the like, to come to any binding decisions. 692 [681] [627]

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenuousness of the moral sanctions behind the court 69% assists in the long run in maintaining the courts as courts of equity, despite the contrary tendencies generated by political manipulation. This is also partly due to the relatively poor physical sanctions directly available to the court. If a man is actually inside the brick court building he can be handcuffed and taken off to the Administration in the township. But if a man A has been told by the court to bring £1 next Friday to hand over to B, then either he can run away, or he can offer B 5s. out of court and hope to hear no more about the matter; or he can persuade B that it would be wiser not to press his claim. It may be months before B can persuade the court to send one of its messengers to bring A in by force, and by that time anything may have happened, and even the court may have changed its mind about the case.

It is the Administration which possesses physical sanctions. 648 However, little moral support is given by the Black section of 69% society to the exercise of these sanctions. The Native Court has to utilise the power of the Administration when it sentences a man to imprisonment, but this punishment is not regarded as a proper penalty for the offence for which the man is committed. If a man is ordered by the court to pay a fine or damages and refuses to do so, or maintains that he has no money, the court will order him to be imprisoned in the Administration's jail. When he comes out again, he is still under an obligation to pay. Associated with this use of prison is the lack of any stigma attached to having been, or 697 actually being, in prison. Prisoners are allowed a good deal of liberty and at one time were sometimes allowed to go home for a visit. Unskilled prisoners are employed in the disposal of sewage in the township, and it is sometimes said that it is only this that keeps people out of prison. Clerks and others who are sent to prison are allowed considerable freedom and are sometimes to be seen visiting their friends in town. There is good technical training available for prisoners, and many craftsmen owe their start in their profession to a stay in prison. Prison is regarded as essentially a foreign institution introduced by the Whites, to be manipulated if possible by the Native Court, but in no way connected with making people suffer for their crimes.

648 The Administration is able to use physical sanctions not only 696 against culprits but also to retain in the township possible witnesses in cases under investigation. For this reason, and also because it is likely to investigate incidental irregularities which may come to light in the course of an inquiry, people try to avoid becoming involved with it. This affects their actions where in the abstract

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

they might give their support to the enforcement of law. Murder has always been a public delict in Ngoni society and before the conquest, a murderer was usually tried by senior lieutenants at the headquarters of either segment 4 or 10 and if found guilty was executed by the first lieutenant of the segment. Ngoni still think that murderers ought to be brought to justice, but the investigation of murder, a matter for the Northern Rhodesia Police, is likely to be obstructed even though the investigation may be carried out entirely by Africans. Those affected by the murder wish to see the murderer punished, but they also want to keep clear of the legal process involved.

10. *External links*

The death of Zwangendaba was followed by a dispersal of Ngoni groups into various parts of east and central Africa. The present dispersal of Ngoni men and women from Fort Jameson over southern Africa arises from a different social situation and takes place in a different way. The early mining enterprises of Southern Rhodesia, like those in the Union of South Africa before them, were based on migratory labour. As we have noted, Ngoni began going to Southern Rhodesia only a few months after they had been conquered, and they have continued to go ever since. Although the first batch of migrants were apparently ordered to go by someone in authority, the great bulk of men who have gone away subsequently have gone as individuals, even if they were recruited in batches of a hundred or more at a time. Thus, the dispersal of population is not directly related to the political system of the tribe, as was the pre-conquest dispersal. There has been a certain amount of regional preference, one county supplying more than its share of migrants to the Northern Rhodesia Copperbelt, the Nyasaland counties supplying proportionately more migrants to the Union as compared with the Northern Rhodesia counties, and so on, but these preferences are not marked. The inhabitants of each county, and indeed of nearly every village, have kinsfolk who are scattered over the towns and farms of the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, the Transvaal and farther south.

Ngoni men and women are thus bound by many ties to other persons and groups located far away from the villages of Ngoniland. For the most part these ties bind individuals, for each person has distant attachments which are not the same as his neighbours. In this volume we are concerned primarily with politics, with social relations between enduring groups, and we shall reserve our discussion of the social implications of migration for a later work in

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

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were, however, and they realized it at such assemblies, the people of the Paramount, and he was to them the visible symbol of their unity in one kingdom.

The Court System of the Ngoni

692 The enforcement of the laws as announced and discussed at these assemblies was the business of the courts, where the laws themselves were interpreted and often elaborated on occasions of an open breach.

The relationships of the courts in the kingdom followed the hierarchical pattern of the political organization. All minor cases were heard and, whenever possible, settled at the village level. If the plaintiff failed to get satisfaction, or if the village headman was unable to get his judgement accepted, he had to go with the litigants to the chief's court, and [698] if he failed there, the case could be taken to the appeal court of the Paramount. There were certain cases, such as murder and witchcraft, which in pre-European days could only be dealt with in the Paramount's court.

Some confusion arises over the use of one term 'court' for every type of institution which exercised judicial functions. The Nyanja term used in central Ngoniland for the courts at the lowest level was *bwalo*, literally the open space in front of the *malikulu* in any Ngoni village. Nothing could be apparently more informal than the discussion among a group of senior men called together by the headman, on a verandah or under a big tree, in order to settle quarrels and hear complaints. No formal records were kept, there was no clerk, and there was no summing up or pronouncement of judgement. There was, if the meeting was successful, general agreement about the action necessary and about who ought to initiate action. Above the level of this village headman's court were the courts of the *ahamwamu* held at their head villages, and above them again the chiefs' courts. After 1933 the courts of the *ahamwamu* gave place to the courts at the head villages of the chiefs. The proceedings there were more formal and included presenting evidence, defending the case and pronouncing judgement on cases rather than, as in the villages, talking things over and appealing to certain principles to re-establish equilibrium and resolve disputes.

The Ngoni nevertheless always recognized these courts at the village [622] level as an integral part of their system. It was the mark of a good headman that he should be able to settle the minor cases in his village without [563] constant reference to higher authority. The majority of villages under Ngoni rule were villages of local tribes who had surrendered to, or been conquered by, the Ngoni. The headmen were therefore of the local tribe, as a rule surrounded by their kinsmen, and their position carried with it the necessity of relating local tribal custom, especially in matters involving marriage and family affairs, to the legal principles and procedure of the Ngoni courts. Many cases came before the courts in

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kingdom under Sobhuza I and Mswati and the various Ngoni 173
States. Despite their common social and cultural origin these
emergent polities had each its distinctive features. The special
characteristics of Ngoni society are at least in part understandable 105
as due to the differences in its social environment as compared with 171
Zulu and Swazi. The Ngoni were migrants, whereas Zulu and 173
Swazi were not. The Ngoni captured a large number of men and
women of non-Nguni origin who were assimilated into the Ngoni
State as individuals, whereas for the most part the Zulu and Swazi
States expanded by the incorporation of existing social groups as
groups, not as individuals, and these groups, if not all Nguni in
origin, at least belonged to closely allied peoples.

Thus to set the Ngoni in proper perspective we must begin 173
with a brief description of their Nguni forebears. In the eighteenth
century the Nguni were grouped into a large number of small [619]
chiefdoms each containing a dominant agnatic lineage segment [613]
to which the chief belonged. Each chiefdom contained segments of
other lineages, and most lineages had segments in a number of
chiefdoms, one segment being dominant in its chiefdom. Lineages
were exogamous, their members were graded in terms of primo-
geniture and the ranking of wives, and as a result of quarrels seg-
ments transferred their allegiance from one chief to another or even
founded new chiefdoms. Most residential settlements were small, [592]
containing only the agnatic descendants of a living man, with their
wives and children, and were divided into three sections or 'houses',
led by the great, right- and left-hand wives of the polygynous head
of the settlement. There were also larger homesteads containing
the dwellings of chiefs and other members of the dominant lineage [643]
as well as those of many genealogically unrelated dependants. The 63
chief was assisted by his agnatic kinsmen and by the heads of non-
chiefly lineage segments and by other unrelated men whom he
placed as lieutenants, or indunas, in charge of districts or responsible
for specific administrative, judicial or military tasks. For fighting [701]
and hunting the men of the chiefdom were organized in divisions,
each attached to a royal homestead. There was also an organi- [561]
zation of youths into small age-sets, groupings of coevals who had
been circumcised together.

At the turn of the century, with the emergence of large king- 173
doms, each containing many chiefdoms under the leadership of a 561
king, the age-set system changed its form and the royal homesteads [643]
acquired greater significance. Circumcision was discontinued and
the age-sets began to be organized on a national basis. Each [304]
age-set constituted a regiment in the national army, had it barracks

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually
[561] a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

173 Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment
631 of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local
[613] matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels
[627] between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division.
[621] He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other
[619] chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the
[701] regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[5]

178 The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women, perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social
619 system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages
[618] disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential
[621] system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were,
[561] as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly alignments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organi-
[701] zation, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the
178 bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the
621 former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[5] Based on Bryant, *Olden times*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lived with their wives and children, and not all of which had royal headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Ngoni group with which we are most concerned, and within their regiments men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system. 178 621 [701]

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1775 the pattern of political alignment began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1810 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndandwe and Qwabe,[6] dominated the rest and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethewa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1821[8] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north-eastwards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Ngoni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[9] fighting with Nxaba, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All three parties raided the indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside their new masters. 173 643 [167] [721] [727]

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on farther north. He took with him his new Tsonga adherents and also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under 173 167

[6] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Atkins, 'Spelling Nyanja'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in its old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu. [104]

[8] cf. Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 17, 71. Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1823 and Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 15, has 1823 or 1824. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 8, both have 1825. Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 272, says Zwangendaba left in 1829, while Coxhead, *Native tribes*, p. 20, says he left in the 1850's.

[9] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 161, 279, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

because of a divergence of interest between one or more of its inferior segments and the residue. In some instances all the people in the segment were killed, as presumably was the intention when Zwangendaba sent warriors to destroy segment 18. In other instances not everyone was killed and those whose lives were spared were drafted to some other part of a major segment to which they belonged. In the only examples I know of, in which either of these last two alternatives was adopted, action was taken by the highest lieutenants in the segments founded for the great wives of reigning chiefs, and was prompted by allegedly hostile acts directed against the chief. Heads of lesser segments could not readily act in this way for although the Paramount Chief and his lieutenants did not possess a monopoly of this power, they regarded its exercise by others with suspicion as a threat to the unity of the State.

If some of the members of an eliminated segment escaped annihilation, they might presently reform themselves into a new segment and begin a separate existence again. If they were not kinsmen of their lord, no structural complications ensued. If, however, relatives of the lord were concerned, then there might be conflict between the position required of them because of their relationship and that in which their new segment was formed. Thus, if the village of a great wife was annihilated and later a new village was founded for her, this could never replace the original one. Her subordinate bands of co-wives had formed their villages by breaking out from her original village, and that had been their headquarters. The new village was founded after they had made their own, and was not their headquarters, even though they still acknowledged that its head was their great co-wife. As we have seen, such a sequence of events occurred at a critical stage of Ngoni history, and may have influenced the way in which the State split.

2. *Age-sets*

The residential system was dominant in deciding the alignment of persons in most situations, but the waging of war and execution of certain ceremonies were organized on a different basis. The army was divided into age-set regiments. About every three or four years,[7] depending on the military requirements and on the availability of lads of the right age, a new regiment was formed from all the boys aged about fifteen years old. They assembled at the Paramount Chief's great wife's village and were inducted into the army. The chief gave them a regimental name and they came under the orders of his senior lieutenants. An experienced warrior

[7] cf. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

from a senior regiment was given command of the new regiment. 561
This post seems not to have been politically so important as it was 701
among the Zulu, where princes commanded regiments. In major [702]
battles, regiments fought as tactical units.

A list of regimental names is given in Table III. Some regiments had more than one proper name, and sometimes that portion of a regiment belonging to a single major segment was given a name of its own.

The regimental system was more formally prescribed than the 561
residential system, in that every lad had to join, and his regiment 557
was, at least initially, fixed for him by his apparent age. But even 701
here there was some possibility of manipulation. Men were expected to defer to members of senior age-sets and a well-favoured warrior might gain promotion from one regiment to the next above, either because of his own prowess in war or because the senior regiment was short of men. There were some offices of leadership within a regiment, but I was unable to discover what they were or how they were filled. Certain warriors were selected for special tasks, such as spying or scouting or forming an advance guard. But the greatest measure of flexibility derived from the nature of the activities carried on under this system. Some men fought well, others did not. Some survived and some were killed in battle. The successful warrior was rewarded by his superiors with dependants and thus he established his own segment. Thus success in one system led to advancement in the other.

On national raids one or more regiments were mobilized and 561
were commanded by a senior lieutenant from the Paramount Chief's 701
great wife's segment. Some informants said that in the line of battle [726]
men from the same segment were separated, so that there would be less chance of their being killed all at once. However within a regiment there must have been cleavages on segmentary lines, for at least in later years the leader of a major segment would from time to time mobilize all the men in his segment belonging to certain regiments and send them off raiding. Thus the Ngoni military system differed from the Zulu, in which the king alone was able to mobilize age-sets. Some of the segmentary divisions within Ngoni regiments had their own proper names. In battle, the men of a regiment might be divided for tactical reasons but this was not a lasting arrangement, and the only permanent cleavages within a regiment appear to have been those determined by the residential system. There does not seem to have been any system of non-territorial sectors, nor was there any organization, apart from the State-organized regiments, by which men of a single segment

[Text continues on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE III. REGIMENTAL NAMES

Men's regiments		Approximate year of formation	Women's regiments	
Information poor	Information good		Information good	Information poor
Majekwane		1821		
Ziolemba		1824		
Somfula		1827		
Machaya		1830		
Imiti				
Zimpofu		1833		
Makupu		1836		
Ngowongo, Macihungu		1839		
Mangazi, Magazi		1842		
Malunge, Mavimba (a)		1845		
Masapi, Mashapi		1848		
Manyoka, Zinyoka		1851		
Manyinsa, Manyisa		1854		
Majuwela		1857		
Majunge, Mayunge		1859		
Maiyiza (e)		1861		
	Zinkhondo, Macaiya	1863		
Masala		1866		
	Macona	1869		
Maola (d)		1871		
Zinyati	Manyela	1874		
	Mabema (b)	1877		Mateza
Maola (d)		1879		
Masoo, Manoo		1882		
	Kabaenda	1885	Mashambisa	Matukwa
	Mafelakudeni	1889	Magalela	Mashaose
Lembani, Maiyiza (e)	Cimale, Lembalemba	1892	Mashumela	Makanya
	Mtani, Cotamoto	1895	Maiekesa	Mekela ng'ombe
	Azola	1900	Macaiya	
	Ngazaza (c)	1906	Mambonya	
	Ngaziaiya	1912	Mtetema	
	Ciwombola, Nganya	1914		Mekela
	Kalusilo, Msolokoto	1920	Gwaula	

[Footnotes on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sectors attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8] 561 701

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights. [562]

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken. 561 796 [726]

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked. 561 701 727

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs, 561 701 621 [643]

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Nsingu's regiment. [114]
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Maola. Wiese and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Maiyiza. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Wiese gives two other regimental names. His Madouda or Madoda is merely the status term *madoda*, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madginga or Madjinga, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatakakulu, Mang'ombe, Izimpisi, Makeke, Mahacu, Zimfezi, Manyoni. [554]

Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 59.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38, - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly 561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regi- 727 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were 621 indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appro- [702] priate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*nkwala*) was organized on an 561 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this 796 ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social [167] system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them 631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [172] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *inqwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and the Ngoni did not seek to vanquish other tribes as states but rather to exhaust them by continued attrition. In later years it appears that a few minor chiefs who lived near the Fort Jameson group did manage to come to some agreement with it, for the Ngoni seem to have raided them only sporadically although warriors passed through their territories *en route* for more distant objectives; but this may have been due to the intervention of European traders. The powerful Cewa chief, Mwase Kasungu, may also have come to some arrangement with the Fort Jameson group even as he did with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland.

Thus for the most part the external relations of the Ngoni State were warlike. The Ngoni did not trade with their neighbours, or send ambassadors to them, or enter into alliances with them; they merely killed or captured them.[10] The army was organized on a basis of age-sets, but the age-sets as such did not enter into political relations with their enemies. They merely executed the policy of the State or of the major segment to which they belonged.

3. *Officers of State*

The residential and age-set systems formed the structure of the State and there was no separate administrative system. There was little specialization of function among those who wielded power in the State, and those who did have special governmental tasks were all the lords of large segments.

The nearest approach to special political officers is to be found among the regional governors. A few of Zwangendaba's followers were with him from the beginning of his journey from Natal. Some of these were his agnates, but the descendants of others have now forgotten what relationship, if any, they bore to him. These early followers did not stand in the lord-lieutenant relationship to Zwangendaba, for in Ngoni usage all lieutenants were captives, or the descendants of captives, of their lords. They were organized in segments in the same way as everyone else, but the heads of some of these segments were known by the special term *mulumuzana* which I have translated as regional governor. Segments headed by regional governors were attached like other large segments to the various royal headquarters, and thus became primary divisions of the segments formed for queens. They differed from the lieutenants of the royal headquarters not only in their title but also in the greater freedom they were allowed in their segments. They kept their own villages separate from the royal villages to which they were attached politically.

[10] See pp. 25 *f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

tiation of function between the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief, it is improbable that there were any special political offices outside the residential system. 645 631

Read mentions a political hierarchy with various titles.[15] At least in the Fort Jameson group, three of the four vernacular terms she gives were used in connexion with the residential system. The fourth, *amanxusa*, was used in Zulu for messengers sent by a chief and a dialectical variant of this (*manyusa*) is so used nowadays at Fort Jameson. They have no executive authority and do not seem to have had any in the past. 631 [624]

Fraser, writing of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, says that there were two groups of lieutenants, one composed of men who became Ngoni before the crossing of the Zambezi and which exercised civil power, and the other which included men of more recent incorporation into the Ngoni tribe and which supplied the war leaders. He implies that the war leaders did not take part in the civil administration.

There seems not to have been this distinction between civil and military lieutenants among the Fort Jameson group. Wiese's 'Minister of War', who was referred to as a Commander-in-Chief by other contemporary writers, was a segment head with the same responsibilities towards his people as anyone else. The regiments had leaders responsible for the tactical control of warriors, some of whom were recently incorporated men, and presumably Fraser is referring to them, but his statement that the man often chosen to lead the whole army had no voice in the council conflicts with Elmslie's account of the same place and period. The war leader, Ng'onomo, who is mentioned by Fraser, acted as regent on the death of the Paramount Chief in northern Nyasaland.[16] 631 701

The village as such had an importance independent of the size or order of segment of which it was headquarters or by which it was inhabited. There were no special terms for distinguishing the heads of large or small segments, for all were lords or ladies. But a special term[17] was used for a village headman, irrespective of the order of segment of which he was lord, provided he was not a lieutenant who had become head of the village in the absence of agnatic descendants of the founder. The use of a special term may have been an indication of the village headman's importance, part of which derived from the control he exercised over the cattle 631 622 [422]

[15] Read, 'Tradition', p. 462. cf. her account of the southern Ngoni in 'Standards', p. 16.

[16] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 32. cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 121, 289.

[17] *Inkosana*. In Zulu, a small or petty chief. cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[45] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[45] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 196; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, f.n1; Young, *History*, p. 125.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezéni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[855] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[67]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and
643 of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[626] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between
[563] the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[701] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[67] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 Ngoni origin. The sharp cleavage between the Ngoni and their neighbours has gone.

Another relic of the privileged position enjoyed by the Ngoni 439 before the conquest which did not long survive their defeat was 648 the subsidy paid to Mpezeni. Under the terms of Wiese's alleged 651 concession of 14 April 1891, Mpezeni was to be paid £200 a year and one per cent of Wiese's profits. Wiese made presents to Mpezeni, but there is no record of any substantial payment. When the provisional grant of 10,000 square miles of land was made by the B.S.A. Company to the Mozambique Company on 8 May 1895, the latter agreed not to exercise any rights it might have under Wiese's concessions, but there was no mention of the disposal of any possible obligations. Warton continued Wiese's practice of giving presents to Mpezeni, but there was no regular payment. As Wiese's concession had never been recognized it would seem that there was no legal obligation on either the North Charterland or the B.S.A. Company to pay an annual subsidy. Nevertheless after the Ngoni war the two companies must have come to some agreement on the matter. In April 1898, according to the answer to a question in the Commons, the B.S.A. Company were ready to pay Mpezeni £200 a year 'for the present'. In January 1900 the Administrator stated that the Collector at Fort Jameson had spent only £50 during the current financial year on payments to Mpezeni and 'his loyal indunas'. He proposed to spend a further £50 during the year and the remaining £100 of the subsidy was to be distributed among the surrounding tribes in the interests of the North Charterland.[5] These special arrangements were presumably superseded in 1903 when, under the scheme of Native Administration drawn up in that year, provision was made for the payment of all recognized chiefs from the general funds of the Territory.

Similarly, the military organization of the Ngoni broke down 648 after the conquest. One of the first acts of the Administration was 701 to forbid Ngoni to carry weapons of war.[6] Four new age-set 561 regiments were formed between 1898 and 1914 but they were little more than dancing societies, singing the old songs which had excited their seniors in the 'time of peace' before the conquest but unable to emulate their military achievements. During the 1914-18 war the majority of young Ngoni men who might have formed a [464] new age-set were enrolled as carriers and soldiers on the Allied side.

[5] *Parliamentary Debates, 4th Series*, lv (1898), cols. 1654-5; report of a meeting between Administrator and North Charterland manager, 15 January 1900 (Lusaka archives); cf. Poole, MS., 'Tribes of East Luangwa Province'.

[6] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 201.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

After the war an age-set was formed but its activities conflicted with the demands of the churches and schools and it was not a success. No further attempts have been made to carry on the system. Ngoni now say, 'What need have we of regiments now that there are no other tribes for us to fight?'

2. *White control*

Apart from the squabble over cattle, the surrender of Mpezeni on 9 February 1898 marked the end of the Ngoni war. The Nyasaland troops did not pursue the leaders who fled, although Brake moved Mpezeni to the vicinity of Fort Manning. In May he wrote, perhaps over-optimistically, that in the central part of Ngoniland rebuilding had begun.[7]

It is clear that at first the Ngoni acquiesced in their defeat. Whereas prior to the war Whites had lived in their country on sufferance, now their right to be there was not challenged. Only a few months after the war Harding arrived, recruiting police for service in Southern Rhodesia. He was received in a 'most friendly manner by the chief in charge who gave an ocular demonstration of his loyalty by voluntarily and immediately handing over to my charge 200 of his young men for my newly formed Police Force...'.[8] After the death of Mpezeni I, his lieutenants waited the traditional period of a year. Mpezeni's heir Nsingu and his wife Mkucwa had both been shot during the war, and in September 1901 the lieutenants petitioned the Administration to appoint their eldest son, Ciloa, aged about 10 years, as chief. On 23 July 1903 the Native Commissioner held a meeting at which Madzimawi, son of Mpezeni I in the residue of segment 4, asked to be allowed to take the name Zwangendaba.[9] Thus even at that early date the over-riding authority of the Administration was acknowledged in matters concerning the chieftainship.

The establishment of an Administration based on Fort Jameson in 1898 was governed, in so far as the British legal system was concerned, by the legislation consolidated in the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890.[10] Relations between the Administration and its African subjects were controlled by the Africa Order in Council 1889.[11] This was superseded by later Orders in 1900, 1911 and 1924,[12] marking the delimitation of North-Eastern Rhodesia as a separate

[7] 198; 201, fo. 69.
[8] Harding, *Far Bugles*, p. 82.
[9] *Reports on the Administration*, 1900-2, p. 408; see pp. 1390*f*.
[10] 53 & 54 Vict., c. 37.
[11] *S.R. & O.*, Rev., 1890, iii, pp. 259-332.
[12] *S.R. & O.*, 89 of 1900, 438 of 1911 and 324 of 1924.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amakanda* of the *alumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were [703] allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

701 allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.[1] Since he also had the
643 sole right of forming a new regiment of young men and giving it a name,
702 he controlled the intake to the army as well as the discharge of seasoned warriors.

The big war *induna* served directly under the Paramount. Associated
701 with him were other subordinate war leaders or *izinduna*, one of whom was always at the head of each regiment. Considerable emphasis was laid by Cibambo and other Ngoni informants on the essentially military character, in pre-European days, of the office and function of the *izinduna*, who were officials serving the whole kingdom. We shall see in Chapters III, IV and V how the term *induna* was also used for civil
[642] officials at the royal village and in the courts, as well as for the men in charge of sections of a village and of houses.

The account of the mobilization of the army shows that the Ngoni
701 had changed the system of military barracks concentrated about the
171 capital, described by Gluckman as typical of the Zulu military organization and by Kuper for the Swazi. Gluckman said that the chiefs assembled their people in territorial, not age, divisions, and that the age regiments belonged to the king alone and lived in or near his capital.[2] In pre-European days the Ngoni, according to Cibambo and to other informants, had in their armies territorial divisions as well as age regiments, and there was no concentration of young warriors by age regiments round the Paramount's village.[3]

When a summons to war went forth, the warriors in the territory of
726 each chief or *mulumuzana* assembled at his head village as a *libandla*.
704 This included the warriors from the outlying villages and from the head
561 village. Cibambo's use of the term *libandla* emphasized that it was a territorial unit, divided into *mabuto* (which he called sections) on the basis of age.

When each *libandla* arrived at the Paramount's village ready for warfare, the different age groups within it joined up with their parallel age groups from other *mabandla* to form regiments. The Ngoni term for these national regiments was *mabuto*, the same term as that used for the age divisions of the *mabandla*. Old men who had been warriors in their youth expressed to me many times their immense pride in their own
[703] *libuto*, and it had for them something of the tradition and prestige of a famous school. They would recite the names of other *mabuto*, beginning with their own as the most recent, and going backwards through ten or more regimental names to those who had crossed the Zambesi with

703 [1] Cibambo in the text spoke of warriors wearing the head-ring. The usual practice, according to informants, was to give the head-ring at the end of service in the army. Cibambo may have been referring to former warriors with a head-ring putting on war-dress for a ceremony.

[2] Gluckman, M. 'The Kingdom of the Zulu', in *African Political Systems*, 1940, p. 31.

[3] One example of a concentration of young men was reported at the village of the Queen Mother in the central kingdom in 1898 in *The Central African Times*, see Memorandum XVI, International African Institute, 1938, p. 18.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

from the campaign and the purification of those who had killed any of the enemy. 726

Cibambo and other Ngoni informants had no idea of the size of the Ngoni armies beyond emphasizing that they were 'very big and very strong'. Evidence was forthcoming, however, from early European sources on the size of the armies which, though it can only have been based on guess-work, nevertheless gave an indication of the numbers involved. Dr. Elmslie referred in 1878 to having seen in the previous year an army of 10,000 of the northern Ngoni which went out in June and returned in September.[1] In the *B.C.A. Gazette* of December 1894, reference was made to the armies of the central Ngoni which were said to be, at the time of their last raids, 50,000 strong. In the *Blantyre District Note Book* there was an entry of 1884, giving no numbers for the army but reporting on the raid on Blantyre in that year when the 'vanguard of the army was composed entirely of young men in their first vigour of manhood, who were said to have marched 50 miles in half a day'. From such scanty references by Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni armies in the field consisted of large numbers, were highly organized, and trained to feats of endurance as well as in fighting skill. The Blantyre reference also brought out the authority of the big war *induna*, who was presented with cloth by the Moir brothers of the African Lakes Corporation as a bribe not to attack the Blantyre area again, and kept his promise. 701 175 [662]

Objectives in warfare

Dr. Kuper wrote of the Swazi military kingdom that wars were waged 'to extend the boundaries, to retain tribal independence and to secure internal solidarity'.[2] After the Ngoni kingdoms were set up in Nyasaland, warfare had the same objectives with the additional one of bringing back captives and cattle. In north Nyasaland Dr. Elmslie, in the reference already cited, wrote that, after the four months' campaigning the Ngoni armies returned 'laden with spoil in slaves, cattle and ivory'. Up to the coming of the Europeans many of the raids and wars took place in the hope of annexing additional territory. Dr. Elmslie wrote in 1878 of the Ngoni dominating an area of 30,000 square miles in north Nyasaland from the lake-shore to the Luangwa river. In central Nyasaland the *B.C.A. Gazette* of 1894 reported that the Ngoni Paramount ruled from the Lintippe river near Lilongwe to the Luvubwe river south of the Kirk Range. The chief challenge to Ngoni security in the northern kingdom came from the Bemba, and in the central kingdom from a combination of Yao and Arabs. Dr. Laws recorded in 1886 that the Ngoni, in their final victorious campaign against the Bemba, had 721 175 [171] [648]

[1] Elmslie, W. A. *Among the Wild Ngoni*. Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1899, p. 79.
[2] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organisation in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Military service, obedience to the law, recognition of the Paramount's supremacy were therefore 182 the main traditional forces uniting the mixed populations in the kingdoms.

Ngoni society

Although all people living in the Ngoni kingdoms were 641 subjects of the Paramount, only those who could trace their descent from families who crossed the Zambezi River were recognized as 'true Ngoni'. Four main characteristics marked off this true Ngoni group from the rest. The first was their [614] clan name, giving them an authentic origin south of the Zambezi. The second was a marriage contract sealed by [583] handing over cattle, which established the offspring as 'children of their fathers', for, as they said, 'where the children are, the cattle are not'. The third was patrilineal [611] descent and inheritance through the male line, and patri- [428] local residence at marriage, so that the wife came as a [591] 'stranger' to her husband's people and village. The fourth was membership of a 'house', the social group of male [592] members of Ngoni families with their wives and children round a leading woman. Everyone was born into a 'house' and the men remained in it for life, the women until their marriage. For special reasons children could be adopted [597] into another house than the one into which they were born.

In a few of the smaller villages of North Nyasaland, con- 621 sisting of ten to fifteen huts, all the men were true Ngoni, 184 descendants of one or more former warriors in the same regiment, who had chosen to set up their own villages after [701] the British had taken over the country. In such villages the cultural pattern of Ngoni life could be seen clearly, but they were not typical of the Ngoni kingdoms. There was always [563] a mixture of peoples in the larger villages, dominated by a group of true Ngoni families.

This group of true Ngoni families were the social and 186 cultural aristocracy of these villages. They considered them- 563 selves superior to and distinct from the other ethnic elements 621

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that
[558] of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and
178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and
161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political
641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was
[684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a
641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population
727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There
563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State.
[567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain
563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set
641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise
701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Mnene*, pl. *enene*. Cf. the Zulu term *umnene*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made in the regimental system, which was organized on a national basis. A person of low ethnic status, that is, of comparatively late incorporation into the tribe but of senior regiment, was considered to be, in most circumstances, as good as a man of more aristocratic family but of a junior regiment. New regiments were formed about every four years. 563 641 701

Development of Minor Chieftainships

The defeat of the Ngoni army at the hands of the British in 1898 and the subsequent establishment of British control led to the partial breakdown of this system. The population was dispersed by the fighting and by the unsettled conditions that followed, and part of the kingdom was cleared for European occupation. The Administration recognized the grandson of Mpezeni I as the chief of the tribe, and also worked through a number of men known as Divisional Headmen, who were made responsible for small areas. Some of these divisional headmen were regional governors, some lieutenants of Mpezeni, some members of the royal lineage, and others were upstarts. It is not clear from the rather meagre records that remain or from the statements of informants exactly what happened between 1898 and 1914, but we know that by the latter date the Administration had come to recognize six men as local chiefs, apart from Mpezeni, and that four of them were said to be sons of Mpezeni I.[1] In 1929, when the term Native Authority was introduced, nine minor chiefs were appointed, of whom four were descended from Mpezeni I and one from the father of Mpezeni I. Two of the other minor chiefs have the descent-name *jere* that belongs to the royal lineage, and may be regarded as belonging to assimilated lineages. One is descended from a regional governor, the other from a policeman. Two minor chiefs do not have this descent-name, one being descended from a lieutenant of Zwangendaba and the other from a regional governor. This arrangement of one Paramount Chief and nine minor chiefs persists to the present day. With each of the ten chiefs is associated a more or less defined area within which most of the villages are said to belong to the chief of the area. What appears to have happened during the thirty years after the conquest is that the central power declined and that certain political and territorial segments achieved a degree of autonomy. The ten areas belonging to the different chiefs, which I shall refer to as counties, represent 175 648 631

[1] Cotnhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22 and 24.

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Ansenga tribe worked for Sosera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Sosera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the *ikhlulu* wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamache Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Imiti. Father, Nzyekezera (Njekerezera); mother and wife, not known; sons, Masakambewa and Chitete.

Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly [554] and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his [578] instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1846.

159 173 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambose Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

167 On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed [578] by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Maseko was killed by [554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 (6) Njekwane Ntilila. Father, Mphange, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyuwazana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mene, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu [701] regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpinduka Hill, Matambazi River, [645] in the year 1868.

(7) Mgai Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majekwane. Died in the Ufipa Country 1848.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

(8) Mguzhulu Mphanza; one of the indunas of the Ziolomba Regiment. Crossed over the Zambesi in 1835. No further particulars known. 159 173

(9) Ntabeni Kumalo; half brother of Zongendaba. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Uthuvi. Regiment, Ziolomba. Died and was buried in Ufipa Country in 1846. [701]

(10) Mafu Kumalo; elder brother of Hlatshwayo. Father, Mangangati. Killed in action prior to arrival at the Zambesi.

(11) Hlatshwayo Kumalo, the son of Mangangati of the Kumalo clan; married Mquamache Nzima. He had three brothers, Mafu, Gumete and Mphange. He was the father of Zongendaba, Ntabeni, Somfula, Mgai and Lomapela. [614]

I have been unable to ascertain if he took part in the Great Migration. My information leads me to the conclusion that he was dead before Tshaka vanquished the Ama-Ndwandwe.

(12) Mtwalu Jere: born before the Crossing of the Zambesi, about 1833? Father, Zongendaba; mother, Nqutu Nzima; wife, Magodise; sons, Amon Jere, and Yohane Jere. Regiment, Manyoka Masoko. Refused the chieftainship because he stated that his father's, Chief Zongendaba's, last wishes had not been carried out. There is no truth in the statement that he was unfitted to hold the chieftainship through physical defects. Died in Nyasaland (Angoni Land), 1890. [643]

(13) Mombera Jere (Mbelwa); born at Chulu on the way to Fipa, 1840. Mother, Umnene Nzima, a Swazi; father, Zongendaba; half-sister, Mphangela; blood sister, Lomagazi, who it is stated by some was born before the Zambesi was crossed; son, Chimtunga, whose mother was cast off because of adultery. Chimtunga's appointment was not recognised by his grandfather's indunas. Died in 1891, Angoni Land, Nyasaland. [684] [643]

(14) Mperembe Jere. Not born north side of the Zambesi River; it is stated his mother did not cross the Zambesi in 1835. 159 173

Mperembe went into the Awemba Country after the break up of the tribe, but appears to have crossed back eastwards over the Loangwa River and joined Mombera and Mtwalu about 1868/9, after being badly beaten by the Chitimukulu. 693

It is known in the Mpezeni country that he captured Chanda mukulu, sister of Chitimukulu, whom he brought back with him and married at Mtelela village near the Mulovi River, that he had one son by her named Chinombo, and that after the Ngoni rebellion Chanda mukulu was returned to her own country; she resided on the Mkekera River for some years. She had slits in her ears so large that one could put one's hand through them. [583] [304]

My informant, Sayeye Phiri, who was born at Kasitu, was caught by Mombera's people at Kanyenda, Kotakota, and made a slave; she knew Mombera and Chanda mukulu well. She is well over seventy and resides in the Fort Jameson Location. Mperembe Jere appears to have been a disgruntled and bloodthirsty despot and to have had no interests other than bloodthirsty raids and the joys of his harem. He [115] [567] [152]

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

He

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

643 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment;
551 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment; Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief
[643 Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[645 Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black oxhide,
701 white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Sosera Nqumayo,
[595 Great Wife; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu;
[543 Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku?; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndauya Mbanzima, Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nquaneleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.

Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
167 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
551 Chief Diviner or *Isanusi*:—Manyonkolo.
543

(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadose, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe;
[595 Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere; Mtizwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere; Malwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727 1898. Grandson:—Chibo Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near
[727 Maesa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsaswe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayunge (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu,
704 Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Masoho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera, Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 602 624
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a

/4 cont'd/

national basis to include all the adolescent males in the tribe, whatever their origin. Women were grouped into corresponding regiments. This system broke down after the first World War, when so many young men went away in the fighting. To-day the great exodus is not to war but to work, to the mines of Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, and the incidence of labour migration is so high that it is not unknown to find a village in which there is no adult male resident. Part of the exodus is seasonal, and many men and women, as well as children, find employment on the tobacco farms of the district and in Fort Jameson Township.

II

The staple crop is maize, of which enough is grown to provide in good years for a small surplus for sale to the tobacco farms and the Administration. Tobacco is not grown by Africans for sale, except within the villages, but vegetables and a little rice and finger millet are sold to Europeans. Cattle are kept in the fly-free areas, and play an important but diminishing part in social life as the means of paying bridewealth, but the sale of cattle is not at present a regular affair. Their principal use is as a form of capital investment that can be called up to meet damages and fines awarded by the Courts.

The population of the tribe is about 60,000, the majority living in the Ngoni and Msandile Reserves, both near to Fort /5/ Jameson. The remainder live on the tobacco farms or in Fort Jameson Township. Villages vary in size from settlements of three or four huts to large clusters containing up to 500 people. The average size of a village is about thirty huts with a population of 100.

The Ngoni conquerors reckoned descent in the male line, while most of the people whom they conquered and with whom they married traced descent through the mother. To-day for practical purposes, descent is omnilateral, in that any connection through a male or female ancestor can be made use of as the occasion demands.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

because of a divergence of interest between one or more of its inferior segments and the residue. In some instances all the people in the segment were killed, as presumably was the intention when Zwangendaba sent warriors to destroy segment 18. In other instances not everyone was killed and those whose lives were spared were drafted to some other part of a major segment to which they belonged. In the only examples I know of, in which either of these last two alternatives was adopted, action was taken by the highest lieutenants in the segments founded for the great wives of reigning chiefs, and was prompted by allegedly hostile acts directed against the chief. Heads of lesser segments could not readily act in this way for although the Paramount Chief and his lieutenants did not possess a monopoly of this power, they regarded its exercise by others with suspicion as a threat to the unity of the State.

If some of the members of an eliminated segment escaped annihilation, they might presently reform themselves into a new segment and begin a separate existence again. If they were not kinsmen of their lord, no structural complications ensued. If, however, relatives of the lord were concerned, then there might be conflict between the position required of them because of their relationship and that in which their new segment was formed. Thus, if the village of a great wife was annihilated and later a new village was founded for her, this could never replace the original one. Her subordinate bands of co-wives had formed their villages by breaking out from her original village, and that had been their headquarters. The new village was founded after they had made their own, and was not their headquarters, even though they still acknowledged that its head was their great co-wife. As we have seen, such a sequence of events occurred at a critical stage of Ngoni history, and may have influenced the way in which the State split.

2. *Age-sets*

The residential system was dominant in deciding the alignment of persons in most situations, but the waging of war and execution of certain ceremonies were organized on a different basis. The army was divided into age-set regiments. About every three or four years,[1] depending on the military requirements and on the availability of lads of the right age, a new regiment was formed from all the boys aged about fifteen years old. They assembled at the Paramount Chief's great wife's village and were inducted into the army. The chief gave them a regimental name and they came under the orders of his senior lieutenants. An experienced warrior

[1] cf. Wirse, 'Expedição', p. 470.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

from a senior regiment was given command of the new regiment. 561
This post seems not to have been politically so important as it was 701
among the Zulu, where princes commanded regiments. In major [702]
battles, regiments fought as tactical units.

A list of regimental names is given in Table III. Some regiments had more than one proper name, and sometimes that portion of a regiment belonging to a single major segment was given a name of its own.

The regimental system was more formally prescribed than the 561
residential system, in that every lad had to join, and his regiment 557
was, at least initially, fixed for him by his apparent age. But even 701
here there was some possibility of manipulation. Men were expected to defer to members of senior age-sets and a well-favoured warrior might gain promotion from one regiment to the next above, either because of his own prowess in war or because the senior regiment was short of men. There were some offices of leadership within a regiment, but I was unable to discover what they were or how they were filled. Certain warriors were selected for special tasks, such as spying or scouting or forming an advance guard. But the greatest measure of flexibility derived from the nature of the activities carried on under this system. Some men fought well, others did not. Some survived and some were killed in battle. The successful warrior was rewarded by his superiors with dependants and thus he established his own segment. Thus success in one system led to advancement in the other.

On national raids one or more regiments were mobilized and 561
were commanded by a senior lieutenant from the Paramount Chief's 701
great wife's segment. Some informants said that in the line of battle [726]
men from the same segment were separated, so that there would be less chance of their being killed all at once. However within a regiment there must have been cleavages on segmentary lines, for at least in later years the leader of a major segment would from time to time mobilize all the men in his segment belonging to certain regiments and send them off raiding. Thus the Ngoni military system differed from the Zulu, in which the king alone was able to mobilize age-sets. Some of the segmentary divisions within Ngoni regiments had their own proper names. In battle, the men of a regiment might be divided for tactical reasons but this was not a lasting arrangement, and the only permanent cleavages within a regiment appear to have been those determined by the residential system. There does not seem to have been any system of non-territorial sectors, nor was there any organization, apart from the State-organized regiments, by which men of a single segment

[Text continues on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly 561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regi- 727 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, 621 were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appro- [702] priate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*nkwala*) was organized on an 561 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this 796 ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social [167] system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them 631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [72] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *inqwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Herding as preparation for war

Preparation for war began in youth. When boys were about ten or twelve they were sent to herd goats or calves; when they were older they herded the cattle. At this time the boys were in the bush with their elders who were often haughty and fierce. The older herders taught the boys how to fight and how to defend themselves. They taught them to fight with twigs and sticks; the older herders fought with *izinduku* (knobkerries) and *izinkhonjo* (wooden swords). They were not allowed to fight with real spears though some had them. The older herders stirred up the hearts of the younger to fight and taught them to strike each other with knobkerries and to use little shields. If the herders of one village met the herders of another, the bulls were teased till they fought, and the little herders also. The small herders were not allowed to say anything about the herding to their parents. The older herders also loved to fight as in war with those of other villages. At such times the older men and even the elders came out from the village to see the battle and to stir up the hearts of the boys. If the herders of one village ran away they were laughed at, but the winners were greatly praised.

At the time when the cattle ate the refuse in the maize-gardens, after harvest, fighting most often broke out. Some of the boys provoked their neighbours to go and drive the cattle into the maize-fields of another village deliberately. The custom was that cattle might eat in the maize-gardens of their own village and the boys ought to ask if they may go into the fields of others. The herders did this to annoy the other herders and to start a fight. Often a great struggle was the result and the young men of the village who had outgrown herding joined in the fight to help the youngsters of their village. But they did it sensibly, none caused a wound with a spear, for anyone who did that was punished by law.

So the boys grew accustomed to the first steps in fighting which would help them later in war. Those who knew how to protect themselves with a knobkerry and small shield had no scars on their heads, but there were many long ago who had scars from fighting in the herding time. Children of the chief were in the same predicament—if they could not defend themselves they were beaten by their herding companions and possibly got their heads broken. The flowing of blood was not considered very serious, only if one did it in a stealthy way then he had to pay compensation. In this way the boys grew up with stout hearts and loved fighting.

Another thing which excited the boys was the custom of whistling. The boys were very expert and quick in expressing changes of mood in whistling. This was done so that the cattle would go carefully or quickly, but also when they were fighting the herders loved to whistle and even the older men in war did so also. The whistling stirred up the hearts of those who were thinking of running away. There were many ways of whistling and some were very good at it.

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Enlistment

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When the young men reached the age of 21–26 they left off herding. Sometimes it was their fathers who stopped them, sometimes they themselves wished to stay at home. They took their shields (*amahawu*) and

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

their spears and gathered together; they went to the kraal and began to dance the *ligubo* war dance. Sometimes they set themselves in order as though they were out on a raid; they came out at the right middle of the kraal and went *pa lisango*, toward the gate, singing, marching, and shaking their shields and spears. Sometimes they retreated as though running from the enemy, then turned about as though running to meet the enemy again. This was done to show how they could fight and defend themselves from the enemy. It showed that the boys were now young men and of the warrior class, and they were asking to be admitted to the status of grown men. If the old men agreed that their prayer should be granted they were formed into a new regiment (*libandla*) and were given a senior to lead and govern them. 539 702 [884]

The Army

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When they had all gathered in their places the herald rose and shouted '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayigube*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, let them dance.' This was to tell the sections to begin the war-dance. Each section got up with one heart and made a wide circle and began to dance. One of them began a song which he remembered on the spur of the moment from the *ligubo* and led off, the whole section took it up waving their shields and thrusting with their spears now right now left according to their step and each foot stamping the ground. [535]

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[721] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasaland had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

539 the
727 salutation being '*Amehlo amhlope*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Buyani*', 'Return',
[576] along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebo*' also with the clan name. This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Echigodhlweni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amakanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[824] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Po*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[834] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Po*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of heroes

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
● 703 then they were called again together to dance the *ligubo*. On that day bulls
[862] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the hero of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the heroes of the sections
[837] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amakanda* of the *alumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were [703] allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.

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action of the hoe. 'They are our kin according to their eyes' was said as a reminder of misplaced trust in those who appeared to be helpful but were not really. 577 538 829

Readiness to take advice both from their age-mates and from older men was another quality held to be desirable in young men. Proverbs illustrating this were: 'He that refuses instruction will be surprised by blood,' and 'He remembers that he fell; he forgot that he was hurt.' As often with proverbs, there were others with a contrary emphasis which were sometimes used as a retort to the former ones, or in self-defence. 'The inheritance was eaten by those worthy of it' was intended as a rejoinder not to interfere in other people's affairs, when unwanted advice was offered. 'The body is felt by its owner' was sometimes said to encourage a man to stick to his own opinion. On the other hand a too abrupt rejoinder, especially to an older person, was regarded as discourteous, and onlookers said 'You cause the spittle to be dry' to express extreme disapproval.

Ngoni personality in a changing culture

The direction of the training of boys had been formerly towards military life, and towards the qualities which made effective fighting men, and emphasized loyalty to leaders and camaraderie in the regiments. This emphasis on military preparedness was however never the sole emphasis in Ngoni training, and hence when warfare came to an end, there remained traditional spheres of influence and activity which were an integral part of life in the Ngoni kingdoms, as well as new spheres of activity opened up by missions, the administration, the trading companies and the labour recruiters. 867 177 [703]

The traditional forms of activity were found in Ngoni local government which included the chief's administration and the courts of law; family and village affairs including the building up of herds and buying and selling cattle; and ritual life. The new kinds of activity included occupations such as teacher, minister, clerk, store assistant, houseboy, 463 177

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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[1] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organization in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

1b Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

He

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

643 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835 :—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief
173 Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas : Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser ; Mguzhulu, Induna Ziolomba Regiment ; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment ;
551 Mgai, Induna Majekwane Regiment ; Ntabeni, Induna Ziolomba Regiment. Chief
[643 Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[645 Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments :—Majekwane, Ziolomba (black oxhide,
[701 white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives of Zongendaba who crossed over :—Chibenya Mkhalapi, Great Mother ; Soseza Nqumayo,
[595 Great Wife ; Umnene Nzima, mother of Mombera ; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu ;
[593 Mavocho Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku ? ; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndanya Mbanzima, Mambose Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker ? Daughters :—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister :—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over :—
173 Nthomane, Bazyamanzya, Zin-Khabi, Nqunoleni, Nkhaleni, Nshanya, Mabeti.
167 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over :—Ntabeni, Mgai, Somfula,
551 Mabuzyubuzyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Undina, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
593 Chief Diviner or *Isanusi* :—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongendaba's sons :—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndelendele, Mombera, Maulau, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadoor, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives :—Nyendeka Muzyopa, Athungwa tribe ;
[595 Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere ; Chota ; Mtonga, mother of Madzimawe Jere ; Mtizwa Soko, Makalanga tribe ; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere ; Maiwape Hara, Makalanga tribe ; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe ; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son :—Tsingu Jere ; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727] 1898. Grandson :—Chiloa Mpezeni II ; married Augustina ; heir, Pontilino.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle
766 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901.

[727] Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near Massa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley ; buried on the top of Nsaswe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments :—Mayunge (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu,
● 704 Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Masoho, Manyisa, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera, Mabema, Kambayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

726 The *intelezi* was made from the roots of a creeper and a bush which grew on the banks of rivers. These roots were burned over the fire, 789 pounded and mixed with water. The warriors were given some to lick [824] on the tips of their fingers, some was smeared inside their shields, and the rest was beaten in a gourd till it foamed. The 'war doctor' took the tail of a gnu or of a zebra and dipped it in the foam and sprinkled the warriors as they finally passed out of the gateway of the kraal on the campaign. This medicine was for strengthening them and also for making them 'slippery', so that the enemy spears would glide by them and not pierce them, and they could slip between the posts of the enemy stockade. After being sprinkled with the *intelezi* no one could sleep with [834] his wife or any other woman, as he would risk spoiling the effect of the medicine and therefore would be more liable to be killed.

[411] The *inhlenza* was a spear with a barbed hook. The Paramount threw it in front of the army as they stood in the kraal until all the warriors had left. It was then put back in the *indlunkulu* where it was kept in the care of the owner of that hut.

There were thus three functions to be performed, each by one of the war medicines. The *intelezi* was to strengthen and protect individual warriors. The *intonga* was the symbol of their Paramount and their kingdom leading them to war and weakening the enemy. The *inhlenza* was the symbol of invincibility, administered by the Paramount.

726b There were two stages of assembling in the Paramount's village before a campaign. The first followed the initial summons to mobilize, when the local companies (*mabandla*) marched into the kraal, sorted themselves into age regiments (*mabuto*) and sang their regimental songs. Then followed the *ligubo*, the war-dance, when the warriors wore their full war-dress, and the women joined in. There was no individual dancing but a working up of corporate feeling through the dancing and songs. The Ngoni used no drums in their music, relying on achieving [533] rhythm and unison by the stamping of their feet and their singing. After this dance the warriors left for their villages, while at the Paramount's village preparation was made for food and snuff for the campaign. Hard ● [705 251] cakes of roasted bullrush millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts pounded together, and dried meat, were the main supplies carried. At the second summons the warriors returned in their companies with their carriers. These carriers, who were usually young boys, carried the war-dresses and ornaments wrapped in a mat, and the food supplies.

Since on this final meeting depended much of the ultimate success of the campaign, only the warriors and the senior men were present, and all women and young children were excluded from the kraal. After the objectives of the fighting had been explained the warriors were addressed by the old men and exhorted to be brave and to help their comrades, and then the final medication by the 'war doctor' took place. The separation of the army from the civil population was complete until their return

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[1] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organization in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 4, p. 176.

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no 186
means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely 726
about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'.

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard 173
the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of 721
strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni 726
tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British [713]
superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the [727]
huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale.

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni 173
it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they [186]
dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain [648]
Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] [423]

[1] In the Report of Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'. [361]

[2] Over 3 miles across. [3] in 1885.

539 726 714 301 At the dance the warriors wore their full war-dress. Those who had the head-ring wore a little bunch of black feathers sewn together and attached to a skin and looking like a lion's mane, which came out from under the head-ring on the neck, and they tied a strip of other skin over their eyes. Those who had not the head-ring had their heads completely covered and at the side of their face they put rosettes of feather ends so that the head-dress should not hide their sight. The head-dress was of birds' black feathers, especially ravens; they took out the quills so that they were soft and they sewed them together on cowhide, the man's head resting on the skin. On the body and arms they wore a white skin of goat-hair, or a white belt with long hair, and twisted strips of skin reaching to the knee at the loins. The belts were made from the skins of white goats which had long hair and they stitched them. Round the loins they had whole skins of kids both front and back. Some tied *isinkondo*, hides made to look like a tail, at the back. In their ears they had *inicaso*, earrings of ivory, or sometimes of bone or wood. Truly they looked as terrifying as wild beasts when they stood up. So they ornamented themselves. The oldest of the men stuck a tail feather of a crane in the skin strip above the eyes.

539 728 535 When the dance had begun the women rose to help the men. The Paramount's wives and wives of the men of standing wore the claws of lion and leopard on the top of their hair combed up on the crown and ound the neck along with other beads. Ordinary women also wore beads on their heads and necks. All looked very well. Both men and women sang the dance songs and danced. The men spread out in a circle round the edge of the space; the women faced the men at a distance or perhaps they put them in the middle of the ring. All sang, the women commencing, the men joining in or responding. The women had little sticks or reeds in their hands shooting high up. Others came forward and went into the middle of the circle or half circle, and went singing and dancing and shaking their sticks and thrusting out their necks.

539 726 When the dance was over the herald told the army to scatter to their villages until the provisions and snuff had been prepared, and on such and such a day they were to gather again in the Paramount's village. On the day of the gathering of the army they brought their dress and food, the sections dressing as they were in the kraal. The herald called again, '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayikete*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, fall in.' Then all the sections stood up, each by itself but now joined together in close order, shields and spears raised above them. Then the chief *induna* or someone else who had been chosen told them the enemy stockade which it was proposed to attack, and the plan of campaign. When the sections had heard, they began to march out of the kraal one by one.

The whole day the sections had been kept in the kraal, no one was allowed to go to a house and say good-bye. Those outside were not allowed to greet the warriors inside. Children were kept out of the way, lest they should greet their fathers as they went out to war. If a man was greeted as he went out to war, the fear was that he would not come back but would die there.

When the army went out in the evening near sunset it slept near the

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

The third day is known as *tsiku lakupola*.[1] In the morning more *chimera* is pounded and added to the *mlusu*, which is boiled again to make it frothy. The process is repeated in the afternoon, and the *mlusu* is left for the night. M 273

The fourth day is called *tsiku lachambula*, the day of mixing. Early in the morning more *chimera* is pounded and cooked separately. When the *mlusu* is boiling well, the *chimera* is poured into the big pot. Then a girl cooks *nsima ya lipoko* (bean porridge) while her mother strains the beer. Later in the afternoon they pour the beer from the big pots into the smaller pots, which are then put on one side. As soon as it is cool enough they taste it, and when it is quite cold they taste again.

The fifth day is *tsiku lakumwa mow*, the day of drinking the beer. At early dawn it is tasted again, and after the *nsima ya lipoko* has been added it is well stirred. It is now quite strong and is called *mow*, the ordinary name for beer.

On the sixth day it is still called *mow* and is good for drinking. On the seventh day it is known as *mirala* and it is not so palatable; and on the eighth day—in the *mbwunde*[2] stage—it begins to go bad. It is usually consumed by the end of the sixth day; but the woman who has made it always pours a little into a small pot, which she hides away and preserves for the benefit of her husband and herself.

2. *Iron Smelting* (*Chewa*).

When a man wishes to make a furnace he first consults a doctor (*sing'anga*). The *sing'anga* puts medicine in a stripped maize cob, and instructs a small boy to throw it at a pregnant woman. This causes her to have a miscarriage the same evening. The abortion is buried in a refuse heap in the usual manner[3]; but the doctor digs it up at night, mixes it with medicine known as *mkungu* (lit. a thief), and burns it in a hole in the ground. The furnace is then made by working the clay into a wall rising above this hole; more *mkungu* is poured on to it, and a fowl is killed and also thrown on to it. If the fowl falls so that its head points to the north, the furnace is no good, and another one must be made the following month in a different place. The fowl is then plucked, roasted whole without being gutted, and eaten with their *nsima* (maize porridge) by the people who have made the furnace. Strict continence must be observed by all the workers during the process of smelting. When the hoes have been made, some are given as compensation to the woman who had the miscarriage, but she is not supposed to know the reason for the gift. M 326 [754] [847] M [262] [834] [431]

3. *Implements of War.*

The Angoni carried shields or *visyango*, made of oxhide. Down the centre of each *chisyango* runs a bamboo stick, to the top of which is fastened a *mwila* or binding made from the fur of the genet cat (*mwiri*). The stick is kept in place by cross-pieces of hide known as *matoto*. Each side of the shield outside the *matoto* is called the *ngwapa*. Their favourite weapon was N 714 281 000

[1] *Ku-pola*, to get better.
[2] *Ku-bwunda*, to be rotten.
[3] *Cf.* H. S. Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 311.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Maravi FR4

N 411 N 714 281

Their favorite weapon

the *nyakuta* or throwing spear, the shaft of which was made of *mnako* or *mnepani* or other hard wood. The head is bound to the shaft with copper wire; part of an ox tail serves as a grip; and at the top is a plume of goat's hair known as the *chosa*. Battle axes were also used. Round his waist the warrior wore a *mipepe*, or kilt composed of strips of skin of leopard, wild cat, monkey, baboon or sheep—some of them straight, and others plaited and twisted. In lieu of a *mipepe*, a sporran or *chitowe cha ku nsato* might be worn in front with a similar covering styled *chitowe cha ku nkugo* behind. These were generally made of serval or other wild cat skins. *Njinsiri* or garters, consisting of strips of goat skin threaded with iron bells also known as *njinsiri*, were worn below the knee; and *mitobwe* or earrings of lead completed the fighting man's attire.

M 411 825 [828] [381] M 714

The Achewa also carried battle-axes, but they relied mainly on the bow (*uta*) and arrow (*mpaliro*). The favourite wood for the bow was *mudzuna*, and the bowstring or *mzinga* was made from the skin of Sharpe's steinbuck or another small antelope. The barbed head (*nchete*) of the arrow is bound to the *bano* (shaft of *bango* reed) by *bwazi* string cemented with the sap of the wild fig tree. The fork at the butt end is known as *nkwa*, and is protected by a binding of *bwazi* string called *bwazi*, which is also the name for the hair of an elephant's tail. Chiefs displayed a battle headdress styled *nyoni*, consisting of the feathers of the turaco, coucal (*vide supra* VIII, 2) and other birds sewn on to a pad of goat skin. An *nkwa*, or band of cowrie shells, was frequently worn round the forehead.

/9 cont'd/

294 the hunt walks in the middle of the line, with a responsible person posted on each flank. A started animal, if not shot by the guns, usually turns to run parallel to the line of hunters, who hurl spears and knobkerries at it, and send their dogs after it. The chances of escape for a hunted animal are fairly high. Animals are also trapped, usually with a piece of meat tied to the muzzle of a gun. Hunting with nets is sometimes undertaken in the wet season. Rats are caught in small conical traps baited with beans. The rat chews through a piece of string and releases a green stick, thereby strangling itself.

[714] Shields, once the pride of the Ngoni armies, are not carried on hunts and are infrequently seen.

VI

291 It is only the old men who still wear skin garments, and then [177] only as additions to European style clothing. Men are dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, long trousers, cast-off European clothing, or clothes brought back from the army. Often two shirts are worn on top of one another. Women wear a blouse, a skirt tied on a tape, a cloth wrapped round on top of the skirt, and a small cloth tied [854] round their waist. If carrying a baby, the cloth supporting the child is slung over the left and under the right shoulder, and another cloth may be wrapped round the woman and child under her armpits. Dresses are also worn, and sometimes a singlet under the blouse. Shoes are less common for women than for men. Men /10/ wear a [177] variety of European style hats, but women wear only embroidered cloths or berets, or in the case of poorer women, plain bands of cloth.

Children go naked, or may be draped in whatever garment, of whatever size, happens to be available. If the money is there to pay for them, boys are dressed in shorts and shirts, and girls in little dresses.

304 In the old days, every adult had slit ears, but this custom has [178] died out. Women nowadays pierce their ears if they wish, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a small slit made as a

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lived with their wives and children, and not all of which had royal headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Ngoni group with which we are most concerned, and within their regiments men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system. 178 621 [901]

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1775 the pattern of political alignment began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1810 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndandwe and Qwabe,[6] dominated the rest and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethewa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1821[6] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north-eastwards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Ngoni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[9] fighting with Nxaba, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All three parties raided the indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside their new masters. 173 643 [167] [721] [727]

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on farther north. He took with him his new Tsonga adherents and also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under 173 167

[6] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Atkins, 'Spelling Nyanja'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in its old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu. [104]

[6] cf. Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 17, 71. Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1823 and Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 15, has 1823 or 1824. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 8, both have 1825. Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 272, says Zwangendaba left in 1829, while Cozhead, *Native tribes*, p. 20, says he left in the 1850's.

[9] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 161, 279, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 parts of the segment, namely segments 2, 3 and 19, survived as
613 independent inferior segments within segment 1. The lieutenant
595 in charge of the warriors spared the pregnant queen and hid her.
643 She bore a son, Ntutu Mpezeni, and later was shown to Zwangendaba who received her kindly and, according to Chibambo, ordered her to live with her son in the headquarters of segment 1. She was not in charge of a bevy of wives, and as by this time the great wife was dead, the bevy in segment 3 now became Zwangendaba's senior bevy. Mwambera, eldest son of the leader of this bevy, was thus a candidate for the main heirship but owing to the disappearance of segment 18 and the subsequent reconciliation between Zwangendaba and Mpezeni's mother, the relative status of the two sons was uncertain. This uncertainty may have been one of the precipitating causes in the subsequent break-up of the State.

Rangeley's verson of this incident is that after he had been
[114] shown Mpezeni, Zwangendaba ordered the headquarters of segment 18 to be rebuilt. This seems less likely to be true than the version we have followed, since there is, as far as I know, no present-day village which we can identify as the headquarters of this segment.[20]

From Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba went up the Limpopo
173 Valley into Mashonaland. He fought with Kalanga and other
167 Shona peoples and there was renewed fighting with other refugee
721 groups under Soshangane and Nxaba. In 1835 Zwangendaba's group crossed over to the north side of the River Zambezi near Zumbo and settled in Nsenga country for four years. They moved on again along the eastern rim of the Luangwa basin and eventually arrived in about 1842 in Ufipa, on the east side of Lake Tanganyika. Here in about 1845 Zwangendaba died.

Two points of historical detail may be mentioned here. There is reliable
114 evidence for a raid made on a Portuguese fort at Delagoa Bay on 22 October 1833
173 by some of Soshangane's people.[21] Poole and Winterbottom state explicitly that
167 Zwangendaba's men also took part in this attack, and Lancaster seems to imply
721 the same. According to the chronology adopted by Young and by Poole himself Zwangendaba was at this time four hundred and fifty miles away in the Kalanga country of Southern Rhodesia and it therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he participated in this raid. Elmslie, Young and Chibambo do not mention it at all, and Bryant refers only to Soshangane's part in it.

A few years after Zwangendaba left Natal, he was followed by Mzilikazi, a chief who for a while fought under Shaka and then fled from him with his followers.

[20] Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', pp. 126*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 26*f*; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 58*f*.
[21] Theal, *Portuguese in South Africa*, pp. 279*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

They became known as the Rhodesian Ndebele or Matabele. Posselt, who worked among them, does not record in their history any fight with Zwangendaba, nor do Elmslie, Bryant, Young or Chibambo. Money and Smith say that it is a matter of doubt whether or not Zwangendaba met Mzilikazi. However, Wiese, who states that Zwangendaba broke away from Mzilikazi, says that there was a fight between them. Lancaster writes that there was a fight on the Transvaal border in 1828 before the raid of 1833. Poole makes this fight take place in about 1833 and writes of the Ngoni at that time living in the vicinity of modern Bulawayo and raiding Mzilikazi in the Transvaal. If we are to accept the existence of contact between Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi at all, either of these two versions is preferable to that of Winterbottom, who implies that after taking part in the 1833 raid at Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba moved to the vicinity of Bulawayo where he met Mzilikazi, only to move on to the Zambezi in 1835. Winterbottom crowds into two years more marching and fighting than seems likely to have taken place. There is also conclusive evidence, set out by Posselt, that Mzilikazi did not leave the Transvaal under Boer pressure until about 1838.

If Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi were not living side by side, the suggestion by Lancaster and Winterbottom that they quarrelled about a dog is unlikely to be correct. There may be confusion here with the story, recorded by Field and Rangeley, of a quarrel between Mpezeni and Mwambera over their dogs.[22]

6. *Fission*

Various writers describe three occasions on which, according to their accounts, dissident sections broke off from the main body of Ngoni prior to Zwangendaba's death. Our view is that only one of these secessions actually took place, and that it was relatively unimportant.

The first allegedly dissident group is that sometimes known as the Maseko Ngoni, now dwelling in the region round Mount Domwe, on both sides of the border between southern Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa. Murray, Young, Hatchell, Poole and Bruwer state that after crossing the River Zambezi together, the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland broke off from Zwangendaba while he was in Nsenga country. Laws, Johnson, Soga, Lancaster and Rangeley state that these Ngoni crossed the Zambezi separately from Zwangendaba. Elmslie says that they were not an offshoot of Zwangendaba's party, while Read, Chibambo and Winterbottom state that they broke away from Mzilikazi, not from Zwangendaba. Fraser mentions a group that remained behind when Zwangendaba crossed the river and says that it went on to the east of Lake Nyasa, but does not say that it later returned to southern Nyasaland. Of all these writers, Read has had most contact with the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, and her account, as amplified by Winter-

[22] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 5; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', pp. 15*f*; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Young, *History*, pp. 109*f*; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 150; Posselt, *Fact and fiction*, p. 171, Field, *Visiilana*, pp. 16*f*; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 63.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkucweni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni).

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Loangeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary bevies of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Cimpinga). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Fafazeni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thus Young, writing of the period 1835-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.[38] The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambera's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambera in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of

[38] Young, *History*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 22.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 worship. They allowed the local chiefs to govern their people
636 according to their own laws and customs, but under the authority
727 of the Ngoni. They followed the method of governing which Europeans call "indirect rule".' They also took selected children from the conquered peoples and reared them as Ngoni in Ngoni villages. Young's account supports this.[27] Whether or not this method of government was wise is clearly a matter of opinion. It is perhaps significant that for Mpezeni's people the evidence provided by the present disposition of persons claiming descent from different ethnic groups suggests that a different policy was followed there. Chibambo and Young talk of groups of warriors under Mwambera belonging to various subjugated tribes; in Mpezeni's area captured men appear to have been drafted into
[561] the various age-set regiments, so that men from the same tribe were distributed throughout the army and did not form a distinct group.
173 Territorially, the dispersion of captives from the same tribe was not
563 so complete, for it appears that in Mpezeni's group the major
727 segment settled on the east of the Ngoni area raided mostly to the east, and the western segment to the west, and so on, so that many of the captives taken from a particular locality were to be found in the major segment of the State nearest their homeland. Yet even this concentration of captives with the same ethnic origin was not complete, and representatives from all the principal tribes with whom the Ngoni came into contact are nowadays to be found in all parts of Mpezeni's Ngoniland. We suggest that this policy of assimilation, practised to a much greater degree by Mpezeni than by Mwambera, may be correlated with the fact that in Mpezeni's group there were no revolts by groups of captives of common origin, whereas in Mwambera's there were three such revolts, by Lake Tonga, Kamanga and Henga tribesmen.

173 Mwambera attacked the Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu some
721 time round about 1860, and was driven off in the face of fire from
648 guns Mwase had obtained from Arabs. He subsequently came to an agreement with Mwase whereby the Cewa chief became his 'child' and lent him soldiers armed with guns to assist in Ngoni raids. Travellers suggest that later Mwase came to an agreement with Mpezeni as well, but this is not so certain. Mpezeni does seem to have established peaceful relations with one or two minor chieftains during the period of early European contact,[28] but for

[27] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 39-41; Young, *History*, p. 119.

[28] *e.g.* Cusula, a Kunda chief and Msoro, who had Kunda and Nsenga connexions. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 11; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyassa', p. 746.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 F'R5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most part all external relations were warlike. The State, as it were, was internally an organization of segments and externally stood posed against an undifferentiated hostile world. Even with the Maseko Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, the Ngoni group spatially nearest to Mpezeni, relations were warlike.

Despite this hostility, it seems probable that some individuals from the neighbouring tribes did leave their own country and join the Ngoni of their own free will. I was given accounts of this in a number of family and village histories, and while it is possible that some of those people whose ancestors were captured may now think it preferable to speak of voluntary attachment to the Ngoni State rather than capture, I do not think this can be the complete explanation. In the first place, very many Ngoni of to-day are quite prepared to admit that their ancestors were captured on Ngoni raids, so that the desire to conceal the capture of an ancestor, if it exists at all, cannot be widespread. On the contrary, some Cewa chiefs and notables who are now politically independent of the Ngoni and live in their own chiefdoms will recount with great interest how their ancestors were captured by the Ngoni. Secondly, some of those who claim that their ancestors joined the Ngoni of their own volition come from places a long way distant from Ngoni country, where the frequency of Ngoni raids cannot have been high, even if the Ngoni ever raided there at all. For instance, one village claims that its people came voluntarily from as far away as Fingoe, in Portuguese East Africa. Thirdly, there is a well-known instance of a son and other close relatives of an Nsenga chief who joined the Ngoni and rose to high position in the State. The Ngoni Paramount Chief and some of the minor chiefs are still friendly with the descendants of this Nsenga chief, Kalindawalo, and the story that these Nsenga nobles were not captured but were instructed by their own chief to transfer their allegiance to the Ngoni seems probably to be true, despite a contrary tradition among the Nsenga that these men were taken as captives.[39] Lastly there is the evidence of Glave, writing in 1894, who says that a host of villages had given themselves up to the Ngoni rather than submit to the constant anxiety of attack.[40] Thus provision was made for men and women to join the State other than as captives. These volunteers were treated in the same way as captives. They were allocated, either as individuals or in small groups, to a segment and came under the orders of a lord or lady. The Ngoni lived at a much higher standard

[39] cf. Field, *Visiilana*, p. 16; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 42-4.
[40] 86, fo. 329. See p. p. 68, f.n. 8. See also Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers. The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

captives were retained within the segment. In later years, at least, small-scale raiding organized by segment heads went on without the Paramount Chief's knowledge and it seems unlikely under those conditions that captives would have been sent in to him. 727 [721]

There is confirmatory evidence from other Ngoni groups. Hodgson wrote of the Dowa group that a warrior who had captured three or more people had one returned to him by the chief,[2] from which we may infer that they were at the disposal of the chief. For the Southern Ngoni, who are not so closely related to the Fort Jameson group as are those in northern Nyasaland and Dowa District, Read wrote that the Paramount Chief had a monopoly of slaves taken in war and that he distributed these to successful warriors, his wives and his relatives.[3] [643]

Cattle were handled in much the same way as captives. There was a dogma that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, but they were dispersed among the different villages and kept in the byres there. The lord of a major segment had effective control of the cattle in his own village and, when he chose to exercise it, in the other villages of his segment as well. When the Paramount Chief visited a village, cattle were killed in his honour and he was praised as the giver of the feast, but in the chief's absence the head of the village decided when beasts were to be killed. A lord appointed his lieutenants to look after his cattle as well as his people. When cattle had been taken on a raid, they were driven back to Ngoniland and then allocated to a lord. 231 422 643 727

Cattle for bridewealth were provided for a man by his lord. However it seems possible that a large proportion of the marriages made by politically unimportant people were not ratified by the passage of cattle.[4] 583 231

Such evidence as there is suggests that the Ngoni consumed their cattle faster than many similar cattle people and, as with dependants, they captured cattle more than they reared them. People speak of the days before the conquest as a time when they lived entirely on meat and beer. Poole suggests that the Ngoni produced little or no food in their own country,[5] and while this is plainly contradicted by contemporary evidence, it is probable that they did rely on raiding to supplement their supplies of cattle and cereals, and that therefore many captured cattle were used as food. Thus cattle themselves were a short-term asset and the control of 231 262 727

[2] Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 153.
[3] Read, 'Standards of Living', p. 20.
[4] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 7-8.
[5] Poole, 'Human geography of Lundazi and Petauke', p. 13.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly 561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regi- 727 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were 621 indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appro- [702] priate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*nkwala*) was organized on an 561 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this 796 ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social [167] system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them 631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [722] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *ingwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and the Ngoni did not seek to vanquish other tribes as states but rather to exhaust them by continued attrition. In later years it appears that a few minor chiefs who lived near the Fort Jameson group did manage to come to some agreement with it, for the Ngoni seem to have raided them only sporadically although warriors passed through their territories *en route* for more distant objectives; but this may have been due to the intervention of European traders. The powerful Cewa chief, Mwase Kasungu, may also have come to some arrangement with the Fort Jameson group even as he did with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. 648 631 [721]

Thus for the most part the external relations of the Ngoni State were warlike. The Ngoni did not trade with their neighbours, or send ambassadors to them, or enter into alliances with them; they merely killed or captured them.[10] The army was organized on a basis of age-sets, but the age-sets as such did not enter into political relations with their enemies. They merely executed the policy of the State or of the major segment to which they belonged. 648 561 701

3. *Officers of State*

The residential and age-set systems formed the structure of the State and there was no separate administrative system. There was little specialization of function among those who wielded power in the State, and those who did have special governmental tasks were all the lords of large segments. 642 631

The nearest approach to special political officers is to be found among the regional governors. A few of Zwangendaba's followers were with him from the beginning of his journey from Natal. Some of these were his agnates, but the descendants of others have now forgotten what relationship, if any, they bore to him. These early followers did not stand in the lord-lieutenant relationship to Zwangendaba, for in Ngoni usage all lieutenants were captives, or the descendants of captives, of their lords. They were organized in segments in the same way as everyone else, but the heads of some of these segments were known by the special term *mulumuzana* which I have translated as regional governor. Segments headed by regional governors were attached like other large segments to the various royal headquarters, and thus became primary divisions of the segments formed for queens. They differed from the lieutenants of the royal headquarters not only in their title but also in the greater freedom they were allowed in their segments. They kept their own villages separate from the royal villages to which they were attached politically. 631

[10] See pp. 25 *f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than were the groups further inland. However, the evidence suggests that no great changes of this kind took place among the Fort Jameson group under Mpezeni, and it is therefore with changes in the external environment of the State that we shall be chiefly concerned. 631 178

In this early period, between 1821 and about 1885, there was for most of the time a situation in which the forces attaching people to the State were stronger than those tending to split it. The age-set system, the web of affinal ties, the attachment of segment members to their lord, the reliance of a lord on the support of his dependants, and the external opposition of all non-Ngoni, these all held the State together. Shifts in the balance of power could be made without disrupting the State because the State was continually expanding, and expansion gave it flexibility. The weakest links in the State were at the top, and it was these that were most strained as the State grew in numbers and in degree of segmentation. Under critical conditions, as on the death of the Paramount Chief or when the need for food necessitated a move from one tribal site to another, these were the links that gave way and fresh independent States were formed. Fission in the State led to consolidation of ties in each divergent group, but the same processes leading to further fission began again at once. 178 64

During the period of migration the Ngoni flourished. They were successful brigands on the march. Yet they were brigands in a poor land, and despite their military successes their economy remained one of subsistence cultivation, even though others did some of the cultivation for them. They were well organized for war and their enemies were not, but both they and their enemies were poor people relying on shifting cultivation with a poor technology and with access to only moderately valuable natural resources. The hinterland of Africa provided the Ngoni with an area within which they could operate successfully, but this area was bounded by the lands of wealthier and mightier peoples. Towards the end of the century the boundaries of the area began to contract. The Ngoni found themselves in conflict not with subsistence cultivators using hoes and spears, but with peoples using writing and guns and possessing apparently limitless resources of cloth, beads and gunpowder. We now have to turn to the story of the Ngoni struggle with these Arab and European invaders. 167 721 648

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 439 648 far less likely to yield its pretensions'. These considerations found expression in the agreement of 24 November 1894, allowing the B.S.A. Company to take over from Johnston the administration of its sphere north of the Zambezi. The Foreign Office stipulated that sanction for the treaties made by the B.S.A. Company's agents was to be without prejudice to Wiese's possible claims.[43]

The Mozambique Company opened negotiations with the B.S.A. Company with these registered but unrecognized concessions as their asset. Agreement was reached on 8 May 1895. In return for any rights they might have in the British sphere under Wiese's concessions, and conditional on their raising certain capital, the Mozambique Company were granted mineral and land rights in a block of land ten thousand square miles in extent within the B.S.A. Company's territory. The rights of Natives were to be respected. Any rights the Mozambique Company might have in Portuguese territory were not to be exercised. A new company, the North Charterland Exploration Company, in which the B.S.A. Company had an interest, was formed to operate the grant of land. Thus the North Charterland Concession came into being. The whole of Mpezeni's country, except for that portion included in the Nyasaland Protectorate, came within the Concession.[44]

Some thirty-five years later, Mr. Justice Maugham was to rule that this grant to the Mozambique Company could only have been potential, not actual, since at that time the B.S.A. Company did not yet possess the mineral and other rights they were making over. At the time this consideration carried no weight. In April 1895, even before agreement with the B.S.A. Company had been concluded, the Mozambique Company's pioneer party reached Tete. They arrived in Ngoniland in the following year.[45]

4. *European consolidation*

175 439 567 648 721 In Nyasaland fighting continued sporadically in an attempt to end the slave trade. From 1891 onwards Johnston's troops fought a series of engagements with Arabs, Yao and southern Ngoni. Mpezeni was regarded not only as a robber with whom no treaties were necessary but also as a partner in the slave trade, for one of the main routes used by Arabs and their African colleagues ran near Mpezeni's country.[46] All Ngoni raids were interpreted by the Nyasaland Administration as raids for slaves and Sharpe, describing his second visit to Mpezeni, wrote that the chief did a brisk

[43] 67, fo. 141-2; 95, p. 48.
[44] 99; 100.
[45] *Maugham report*, pp. 6-7.
[46] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 3 (1 February 1896), p. 2, and iii, 8 (15 April 1896), p. 1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

trade in slaves, selling them to the Arabs.[47] Wiese's evidence on this point is contradictory. In 1881 he wrote that Arab caravans continually visited Mpezeni and that most of the raids were to capture slaves for sale to the Arabs. In 1900, he wrote in one place that some captives were sold to the Arabs and in another that Mpezeni scarcely knew of the permanent slave hunters and that the sole object of major raids was to gain captives to cultivate the Ngoni fields.[48] Few tales of the Arabs and no nicknames have survived to the present time among the Ngoni, and it is probable that Sharpe was overestimating the importance to Mpezeni of the external slave trade. Although Livingstone knew it, Wiese and Kerr are the only contemporary writers who were aware that captives were assimilated,[49] for other writers do not distinguish between captives and slaves. Whether or not the raids were made for Ngoni recruits or for slaves to be sold to the Arabs, it is clear that they were often made into Nyasaland and thus challenged the Administration there. Towards the end of 1895 the Collector at Kotakota opened a campaign against Mwase Kasungu, the Cewa chief whose territory lay between Mpezeni and the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. It is alleged that Mpezeni offered to help Mwase in this campaign, but it seems that no help arrived. On 31 December 1895 the fortified village of Kasungu was captured and Chabisa, a chief who had been helping Mwase, fled to Mpezeni.[51]

Chabisa may have been the moving spirit behind the delegation which early in 1896 went from Mpezeni to the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland calling on them to rise with him and Chabisa against the British.[52] The Livingstonia Mission had already been working among the northern Ngoni for eighteen years, and the delegation found little support.

As well as Chabisa, other refugees arrived from the south, after the First Matabele War of 1893 in Southern Rhodesia. According to some accounts the Ndebele Paramount Chief, Lobengula, was with them, only to die a few months later.[53]

[47] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 745. cf. Perham, *Ten Africans*, p. 96.
[48] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478 and 'Geschichte', pp. 188 and 197.
[49] Livingstone, *Narrative*, p. 385; Kerr, 'Upper Zambesi', p. 396.
[51] Swann, the Collector, in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1, and *A & P*, 1896, lviii, pp. 417, 418, describes Chabisa and Mwase as Ngoni and Zulu chiefs. Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168, say Mwase and Chabisa were brothers. It is unlikely that either was Ngoni. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 144, calls Mwase a Cewa but says he had many Ngoni headmen under him, thereby amending his earlier statements that Mwase and Undi were Ngoni. See 20, fo. 129; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 412. [52] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 292.
[53] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2; Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 83; Posselt, *Upengula*, pp. 112-24; 98; 121, fo. 193.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 1897 and some time later they came to visit him at Fort Young.
439 Deare gave them presents, presumably to gain their support for his
own enterprises, and makes no mention of their seeing Mpezeni.[81]
648 Undi was the chief who claimed part of Mpezeni's country in his
treaty with Sharpe and who in 1892, when Foà was living in his
[72] village, was raided by Ngoni several times a month.[82] Thus the Europeans in Ngoniland were affiliated not only to European groups in Nyasaland and in England out of direct touch with Mpezeni but also with African groups with whom he was in contact. There was an essential contradiction in the situation in which, for example, Deare was friendly with both Mpezeni and Undi while Mpezeni was at war with Undi. Everywhere, not only in Nyasaland, the traditional Ngoni pattern of external relations was becoming incompatible with their relations with Europeans in their midst.

The leader of the opposition to the North Charterland was Nsingu, Mpezeni's heir.[83] Nsingu was at first friendly towards Warton but later his attitude changed. Deare, before establishing
the North Charterland camp in 1896, had passed through Nsingu's
[576] village, by Ngoni standards an insulting thing to do, and later quarrelled with him, finally flogging him.[84] Genthe, the German traveller, met Nsingu on a path and only grudgingly gave way to let him pass.[85] While Mpezeni remained comparatively friendly, Nsingu and the warriors whose interests he came to represent became increasingly hostile towards all Europeans. At the same time Mpezeni's control over his lieutenants seems not to have been effective, as evidenced by his apparent inability to prevent unauthorized raiding. Deare, according to his own account, enjoyed Mpezeni's favour and was almost forced to marry one of his daughters, and yet Mashanga, the second lieutenant of segment 10, twice tried to kill him.[86] According to Genthe, Mpezeni sent repeatedly for some army leaders who had been raiding and they failed to appear. This may have been deliberate procrastination arranged by Mpezeni, who treated him coldly, but Genthe thought that Mpezeni was only a dummy whose lieutenants did what they liked.[87] With Deare there seems to have been a genuine difference in attitude between Mashanga on the one side and on the other Mpezeni, supported by Mcekwani, the first lieutenant over

[81] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 4 May.
[82] Foà, *Lac Nyassa*, pp. 280-1.
[83] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[84] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[85] *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1.
[86] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. cf. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.
[87] Genthe, 'Mpezeni's'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

171 643 between rival heirs even while the occupant of the throne was still alive. The brothers Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fought for the heirship while their father Mpande was still chief.[95]

175 643 648 669 The apparent ineffectiveness of Mpezeni's rule may well have been due to the increasing segmentation of the State as it expanded and to the growing differentiation of interest between one major segment and another. As it happened, there was no civil war and the tribe did not split, at least not in these terms. A cleavage in the royal house did reveal itself later, in 1903, after British rule had begun, when Madzimawi tried to take the name of Zwangendaba and was opposed by the supporters of Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu. But by then the form of the State was already determined by political forces other than the balanced opposition of segments. It is significant of the changed situation that Madzimawi did not send his armed followers against the new Mpezeni to challenge his succession. Instead he applied to the Native Commissioner for permission to take the name of his grandfather.[96]

Instead of dividing in civil war the whole country united against the European interlopers. Mpezeni alone tried to protect his friend Wiese. The effective cleavage was not between rival heirs but between the Paramount Chief and his people. He was now a man in his sixties who seemed not to want war and who perhaps benefited more than his people from the presents made by Europeans. The Ngoni people continued to believe and teach that fighting was the proper occupation for men. An attempt to exploit this cleavage was made in 1897 when Wiese, perhaps remembering his earlier attempt to serve Portugal and Britain simultaneously, offered his services to the B.S.A. Company. Forbes thought that if Wiese was given troops, he would be supported by Mpezeni, who would then be in a position to hold Nsingu and the Ngoni warriors in check.[97] But this plan was overtaken by events.

64 721 We saw in the previous chapter that the organization of the State was based on warfare, not only on war as an activity bringing prestige to successful warriors but also on war as a method of recruitment to the ever-widening segments of the residential system. Without warfare to eliminate the unsuccessful and to bring 175 promotion and dependants to those who survived, the system could 439 not keep going. It was in no sense inevitable that the Fort Jameson 648 Ngoni and the British should fight; we have only to turn to the

[95] Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', pp. 35-6, and *Malinowski's Sociological Theories*, pp. 19-20; Krige, *Social system of the Zulu*, p. 19.
[96] See pp. 139 *f*.
[97] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 14.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

our task is to separate them out. Yet even in analysis we have to show how each field interlocks with the other two, how events in one field set up movements in others. 178 648

The material apparatus used in the various fields was distinct. The traditional processes were decided ultimately by resort to spears and shields. Portugal and Britain fought with artillery, embargoes, customs dues and treaties. The North Charterland fought its rivals with concessions, certificates of claim and share capital.[128] Mpezeni, who knew how to fight with spears, was asked to sign pieces of paper which would then be negotiable in a property system of which he knew nothing, and the manipulators of which knew little of him. The treaty-collectors imagined a patchwork of stationary chiefdoms spread over the region, each with a chief powerful enough to sell his country, whereas in fact there was only an unstable series of groups of shifting cultivators, each liable to attack from the migrating Ngoni. 439 648

Yet despite the differences in technique and despite the lack of knowledge of each other's systems of government, the various groups involved continued to pursue their own ends as best they could. Mpezeni may not have known what a flag was, yet the issue between Portugal and Britain was decided, and decided in Lisbon rather than in Ngoniland. The treaties may have been made beyond the competence, and the understanding, of the chiefs who signed them, and yet the B.S.A. Company did gain control of the country. Mpezeni never made his mark on a document, yet the North Charterland acquired its ten thousand square miles of land. On the other hand, the Ngoni regiments tried to win another battle like the others they had won before, and this time they failed. In consequence of the war of 1898 there was a revolution, a change of structural form, in Ngoni society, whereas in the histories of Portugal and Britain, and even of the B.S.A. Company, the event passed almost unnoticed. [721] [669]

In northern Nyasaland an analogous process of incorporation within a wider system was taking place. Here also there was an intruding European group and the same distant interest of the Nyasaland Administration. Yet in many ways the chain of events in northern Nyasaland was simpler than at Fort Jameson. In the north, there was only one set of resident Whites, the Livingstonia missionaries, there was no Wiese willing to play for both sides at once, and there was no North Charterland. In consequence the [797]

[128] cf. Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, p. 24: 'Swazi were subjugated through concessions, a type of economic warfare eventually sanctioned by powerful European governments.'

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10.
578 Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant
648 of segment 4, and Kamzembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional
668 governor in segment 10.[122] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[123] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour
[724] peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell
[178] their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs
439 traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid
648 Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with
567 Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[124] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[122] 187, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[123] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[124] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

After the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterized by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognized. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cibambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cibambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

Ngoni Warfare in Old Days

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *ligubo* dance along with others.

[p. 28 is blank]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amakanda* of the *alumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were [703] allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

from the campaign and the purification of those who had killed any of the enemy. 726

Cibambo and other Ngoni informants had no idea of the size of the Ngoni armies beyond emphasizing that they were 'very big and very strong'. Evidence was forthcoming, however, from early European sources on the size of the armies which, though it can only have been based on guess-work, nevertheless gave an indication of the numbers involved. Dr. Elmslie referred in 1878 to having seen in the previous year an army of 10,000 of the northern Ngoni which went out in June and returned in September.[1] In the *B.C.A. Gazette* of December 1894, reference was made to the armies of the central Ngoni which were said to be, at the time of their last raids, 50,000 strong. In the *Blantyre District Note Book* there was an entry of 1884, giving no numbers for the army but reporting on the raid on Blantyre in that year when the 'vanguard of the army was composed entirely of young men in their first vigour of manhood, who were said to have marched 50 miles in half a day'. From such scanty references by Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni armies in the field consisted of large numbers, were highly organized, and trained to feats of endurance as well as in fighting skill. The Blantyre reference also brought out the authority of the big war *induna*, who was presented with cloth by the Moir brothers of the African Lakes Corporation as a bribe not to attack the Blantyre area again, and kept his promise. 701 175 [662]

Objectives in warfare

Dr. Kuper wrote of the Swazi military kingdom that wars were waged 'to extend the boundaries, to retain tribal independence and to secure internal solidarity'.[2] After the Ngoni kingdoms were set up in Nyasaland, warfare had the same objectives with the additional one of bringing back captives and cattle. In north Nyasaland Dr. Elmslie, in the reference already cited, wrote that, after the four months' campaigning the Ngoni armies returned 'laden with spoil in slaves, cattle and ivory'. Up to the coming of the Europeans many of the raids and wars took place in the hope of annexing additional territory. Dr. Elmslie wrote in 1878 of the Ngoni dominating an area of 30,000 square miles in north Nyasaland from the lake-shore to the Luangwa river. In central Nyasaland the *B.C.A. Gazette* of 1894 reported that the Ngoni Paramount ruled from the Lintippe river near Lilongwe to the Luvubwe river south of the Kirk Range. The chief challenge to Ngoni security in the northern kingdom came from the Bemba, and in the central kingdom from a combination of Yao and Arabs. Dr. Laws recorded in 1886 that the Ngoni, in their final victorious campaign against the Bemba, had 721 175 [171] [648]

[1] Elmslie, W. A. *Among the Wild Ngoni*. Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1899, p. 79.
[2] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organisation in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

721 defeated an alliance between the Arabs and the Bemba in which the
175 allies intended to dominate all the territory between the Luangwa river
648 and the lake-shore, driving the Ngoni from their highlands and opening all the country to the slave-trade. In the central kingdom, during the interregnum after Cikusi's death in 1891, a powerful Yao chief raided the kingdom, destroyed six villages and took many captives. In both kingdoms it was necessary for the Ngoni to defend their independence by constant vigilance and preparedness, especially against a combination of Arab slave-raiders and local tribes. Since large numbers of warriors were mobilized every year, these trained armies demanded an outlet, and the policy of aggression served the dual purpose of raiding enemy territory and maintaining a defence force.

727 There was a difference of opinion among informants about the results of raids in terms of spoils of war. In both kingdoms captives were taken in war, especially young men of military age and women. From tsetse-free areas where cattle were to be found, live beasts were brought to add to the herds in the Paramount's village and in those of the chiefs and *alumuzana*. Ivory for trading and cloth for wearing were two of the most valued forms of booty, and Cibambo mentioned the looting of clothes and weapons from those who had been killed. From accounts by the first Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni burned the villages and killed the inhabitants in the majority of their later raids.

72/ If defensive and aggressive military action and the acquisition of
182 valued forms of wealth were two of the main objectives in war, a third was undoubtedly the need to build up a national sentiment within the military kingdoms by success in warfare in the first place, and by intensive training of all young men in the second, thus integrating the youth from conquered units with those who belonged to the trans-Zambesi clans. Again and again, in talking about their past, Ngoni informants from the Paramounts downwards emphasized the discipline and training of the young men in the days of warfare, and expressed their opinion that no other training could take its place. It was not only the common military training which contributed to this national sentiment and held the Ngoni together in a common purpose of preparedness for warfare. The *libuto* or age set within the *libandla* or territorial unit, and the *impi* or national army in which the territorial units were merged, provided a military organization which was adaptable and balanced, and which, through the control of the Paramount, gave the main impetus to centralization, while encouraging pride and initiative among local and age-set groups.

The relics of a military tradition

648 In north Nyasaland the Ngoni never fought against the Europeans,
and were not coerced into giving up warfare, but, as a result of their
[797] contacts with the Livingstonia Mission, they finally agreed to give it up voluntarily. When Dr. Laws met the Commissioner near Mponda's at

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

262 1930's that the Ngoni did not live as well as they might and had, in fact, an impoverished diet, because they did not make full use, and sometimes very little use, of the milk and meat which they had available. In pre-European days, when the possession of cattle was confined to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading *alumuzana*, there was a continuous slaughter of animals to provide a regular diet of meat and *ulubende*, the cooked blood which the Ngoni liked very much. The heads of the big houses saw that there was always on hand *amasi*, the milk curds which was the form in which adults took their milk, fresh milk being reserved for young children and herd-boys. This provision of meat, *ulubende* and *amasi* was only possible for those who had plenty of cattle, [721] and in both kingdoms wars and raids were carried out partly to obtain fresh supplies of cattle from neighbouring and unconquered tribes. As we saw in the chapter on the Paramount, in pre-European days the *alumuzana* who lived near enough to the royal village made a practice of calling frequently, if not daily, and such calls were rewarded by their being asked to eat with the Paramount, and 'food' in those days was predominantly meat. Between fighting seasons, that is during the rains, the young men (*amajaha*) who were newly recruited to the regiments were kept busy in and around the Paramount's village and the head [883] villages of the *alumuzana*, mending fences, making shields, and clearing new land. When they were thus employed they also were fed by the Paramount or *mulumuzana*, who regarded these periodic feasts for the *amajaha* as one of the first calls on the consumption of his cattle. The Ngoni later rationalized this earlier procedure of restricting meat and milk consumption to certain groups of people by arguing that it made the young warriors strong and able to fight and endure hardships, and they declared that the senior men and women who also shared the Paramount's supplies lived long and had great wisdom and strength of character. This rationalization was not only looking back to a past Utopia. It was also based on the argument that Europeans ate meat regularly and that they were strong, both physically and politically.

262 178 The European criticism in the 1930's that the Ngoni did not make full dietary use of their cattle and their products was justified, but there are two factors to note in this connexion. One was that the number of those who lived well on meat and milk in the old days was relatively small—confined in fact to cattle-owners, women owners of big houses, and warriors. The situation changed after the Europeans came, and a large number of people owned a few cattle and many of the new owners had no tradition about using their products. Among the cattle-owners of the Swazi clans the tradition of cooking blood and making curds continued and both were valued as food, but some of those who had only recently become owners of cattle did not know these practices, and 262 I came across many cattle-owners of local tribes who did not know how 272 to milk a cow. The failure to use milk in the Ngoni diet was due partly

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled,
[721] they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182]

In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors. 581 602 554

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system. 621 581 591 [611] [591] [554]

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[20] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere [121] 582 [114] [561] [643]

[20] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.17]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass shacks built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the headman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good one; and the headman in return hands over three other animals of similar age. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organization: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Achewa consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'anga* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'anga* under Chief Chiwere was Chimongo, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unawares, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a stout resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'anga* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the *chisunda* or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connexion with women. Next day, they burned goats' bones, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

returned between the years 1855–1865, to settle in their present habitat. The earlier part of the period was one of exploring and of conquest. The later part was the time of settlement and consolidation, during which the Ngoni 'states' emerged in the form in which they were found, when the Europeans first arrived.

The Ngoni in Mpezeni's country, when speaking of this time, call it *chamtendere* (the time of peace). Any white travellers' tales referring to these years lay stress on the constant raids carried out by the Ngoni, the fierceness of their warriors, and their ravaging of the countryside for slaves and cattle. It was obviously a time of frequent wars. Why then do the Ngoni call it a time of peace? I have asked this question of many men of rank and standing and they give one invariable reply, 'We call it *chamtendere* because the *Azungu* (Europeans) were not there to trouble us'. This statement is in effect the key to Ngoni thinking about the days of pre-white contact, and also about the advent of the Europeans. The way in which they speak of *chamtendere* is itself significant. I first heard it during a long recital of Ngoni history, and stopped the narrator to ask the meaning of the word. There was instantly an embarrassed silence and self-conscious grins in the group. The word had evidently slipped out unawares, for later on they told me that it was a word they only used among themselves. Having once been used, however, it appeared frequently in conversations with me, and proved a useful starting-point for accounts of the organization of their own state and the effects on it of the European advent. 'Ah, *chamtendere*', they say, with a deep sigh, 'then we were people'. It proved also to be a pass-word to their confidence, for whenever I mentioned *chamtendere* to a village headman, he and his notables nudged each other, and laughed and said, 'She can know about us'. When pressed to be more specific about this 'troubling' by the *Azungu* they spoke of taxes, of the ban upon raiding and warfare, of young men being called away to work, of their land being taken for European farms. These restrictions and disabilities caused by white contact they regarded as warfare, that is, as troubled times, because the Europeans forcibly prevented them from doing as they liked, just as they had done in their day to the surrounding tribes. The conquered tribes, on the other hand, naturally hailed the advent of the Europeans as a time of peace and security. Therein lies the chief

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Moravi FR4

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no 186
means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely 726
about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'.

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard 173
the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of 721
strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni 726
tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British [713]
superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the [727]
huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale.

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni 173
it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they [186]
dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] [648] [423]

[1] In the Report of Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'. [361]

[2] Over 3 miles across. [3] in 1885.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are
648 now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new.
631 Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

621 There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village
634 in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have
178 continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

692 Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the head-
[622] man, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old
647 days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for
[721] instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime
[648] meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Gesthe, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Yao FT7

N Y 648 691

The Yao are mistrusted more than any other tribe, and some of the decisions taken by the courts are harsh on Yao. For example, a Yao man who was married to an Ngoni woman had, it was alleged, caught venereal disease from his wife. His wife then applied to the courts for a divorce, which was granted, together with the custody of the children. No bride-wealth had been paid in the marriage, but the husband now offered to pay in order to retain the children. This bride-wealth was refused by the woman's parents. The Yao appealed, but the judgement was upheld, and in addition he was ordered to go back to Nyasaland at once. He asked for permission to return to the woman's village in order to collect his belongings, and this was granted by the court, after first securing agreement between the couple as to the extent of his possessions, to wit, four plates and two beds. This deportation order was made despite the fact that the Yao had been living with his wife for twenty-one years. If a man of some other tribe had been involved, it is unlikely that he would have been ordered to leave the country, nor would the court have been so suspicious of his trying to take away more than his rightful share of the household possessions.

N Y 648 583

A Yao, who had a good job in Fort Jameson, once offered 30*s.* to the Paramount Chief when he was in the town as the legalization payment for a woman of the royal lineage whom he wished to marry. The Paramount Chief refused the money on the ground that the man was a Yao and he was not going to permit Yao to marry into the royal lineage, despite the protest of one of his lieutenants that the Yao was just a man like anyone else.

N 186 609 N Y 648

The reason that is given for this dislike of Yao is that they are sexually very virile, due to the medicines that they possess for increasing potency. It is perhaps significant that the same is said of Indians, who are also disliked. The Yao are known among the Ngoni for their great knowledge of medicines of all kinds, and the allegation of unnatural sexual vigour may be a rationalization of the fear that the Yao may practise sorcery among the families into which they marry. Another factor that may operate is that the Yao are the only tribe in the region that the Ngoni cannot claim to have conquered.

Political Relations with Other Tribes

N 648 721

Before the European conquest relations between the Ngoni and other tribes were principally those of raiders and raided. The great season for raiding was after the harvest, when the surrounding tribes

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could be raided for their crops, as well as for captives, and when the rivers did not form such an obstacle to rapid movement as they did during the wet season. Some of the early reports of travellers suggest that there was some sort of alliance or working arrangement between the Ngoni and Mwasi Kasungu, whose territory acted as a buffer-state between Mpezeni's Ngoni and Mombera's Ngoni of Nyasaland[1] but this alliance does not seem to have been very stable. 648 [721]

The British Administration restored or created Cewa chieftainships that now completely encircle the Ngoni except where the Ngoni area reaches to the edge of the waterless and uninhabited Luangwa escarpment. The Administration did not recognize any right of the Ngoni over these Cewa areas, and it is now difficult to discover how much control was in fact exercised by the Ngoni over the Cewa at that time. The Ngoni certainly continued to hold that they were entitled to control the Cewa. In 1913, when the formation of reserves was being discussed with the Administration, the Ngoni chiefs are said to have been disappointed that the scheme would give the Cewa land of their own and later in the same year they tried to ensure that the Cewa to their south, who were to be granted a reserve separate from those of the Ngoni, should be formally placed under the control of Mpezeni.

At the present time the principal institution in which Ngoni co-operate with other tribes under the aegis of the Administration is the Eastern Province African Provincial Council. This body meets once a year for three days, and is attended by delegates from all the Superior Native Authorities in the Eastern Province, as well as by representatives of the Administration. It discusses matters of common interest and it elects two members to represent the Eastern Province on the African Representative Council of the whole Territory, but it does not have any legislative or executive powers. Its meetings are open to the public,[2] but as yet few people attend and the recommendations reached are passed on to only a small section of the tribe. The delegates to the Council are chosen by the Paramount Chief on the advice of his lieutenants. 646 648

There are also other political relationships that unite Ngoni with other tribes. Some of them arise from common residence in an area outside the Ngoni country. Representatives are stationed at the 648

[1] Money and Smith, *Explorations in the Country West of Lake Nyasa*, p. 152.

[2] Except on the first day, when the African members of the Council meet by themselves in Committee.

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed. 101 123 643

NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa. 159 167

Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1825. 173 643 648

In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques. [721]

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son. [595]

[induna=military leader--Analyst]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539
726
[834]

village in grass-shelters opposite the kraal gate, and no one was allowed to go to a house or to be with his wife. They said that if a man broke this law the army would be unlucky. Even the Paramount if he still went with the army slept there outside. If the Paramount left for the war, his oldest *induna* left his own village and went to the Paramount's and stayed there till the army came back. In the royal village there was continence and all the people were ordered to control themselves in the villages, until the army left.

When the army went out the old men accompanied it, but after they had spoken words of warning they came back to the village. The chief point in it all was that the young men should have courage, and should help each other if one is wounded or there is any other difficulty, and should obey the leaders. They warned the leaders too to begin the fighting wisely and not on a bad or treacherous place. If a leader did that sort of thing and many were killed a case was brought against him. When the army went out two sections were detached to guard the village. These stayed at home along with the companies of old men. They 'kept the tribe', the Paramount and the old people and the stock. [887]

The approach and attack

When the army went out it marched very slowly, and halts for the night were at short intervals. All the sections kept together as ordered by the war *induna*. In all the sections there were scouts to show the way for the army. In each section one or perhaps two were chosen and were put together to walk ahead and look carefully, and come and report any news, especially when they were in enemy country. When the army rested, the scouts went forward to see if there was any danger near. When the army slept in grass-shelters, one or two sections were sent to guard against danger both in front and rear. The army had provision carriers, that is, those who carried food and the coverings of the old men. These were boys and girls, sometimes women from their houses. These were not sent by the Paramount but each household chose its young people to carry the food. The section of the food carriers had another section to protect them when the enemy were attacked or when they went to meet enemies. [724]

When the army was near the enemy stockade the leader ordered them to sit down and rest before they attacked. At such a time the warriors snuffed or smoked hemp. This hemp-smoking was preferred because it maddened the warriors and gave them hearts without fear in facing the enemy. In the enemy stockade the drums would be beating to show that their enemies were angry, but the army of the Ngoni sat and rested as though there were no enemy. [726]

When the army had rested, the war *induna* and the other *izinduna*, or the leader of this army (for all the armes that went out were put under one man of whom they said, the owner of this army is so and so) scouted to see the difficulties of the stockade and to choose a good place for attack.

When it had been carefully chosen and the *izinduna* had agreed together how the attack should begin, then the leader roused the army and began to dance his own praise-dance. The army responded to him. After

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

from a senior regiment was given command of the new regiment. 561
This post seems not to have been politically so important as it was 701
among the Zulu, where princes commanded regiments. In major [702]
battles, regiments fought as tactical units.

A list of regimental names is given in Table III. Some regiments had more than one proper name, and sometimes that portion of a regiment belonging to a single major segment was given a name of its own.

The regimental system was more formally prescribed than the 561
residential system, in that every lad had to join, and his regiment 557
was, at least initially, fixed for him by his apparent age. But even 701
here there was some possibility of manipulation. Men were expected to defer to members of senior age-sets and a well-favoured warrior might gain promotion from one regiment to the next above, either because of his own prowess in war or because the senior regiment was short of men. There were some offices of leadership within a regiment, but I was unable to discover what they were or how they were filled. Certain warriors were selected for special tasks, such as spying or scouting or forming an advance guard. But the greatest measure of flexibility derived from the nature of the activities carried on under this system. Some men fought well, others did not. Some survived and some were killed in battle. The successful warrior was rewarded by his superiors with dependants and thus he established his own segment. Thus success in one system led to advancement in the other.

On national raids one or more regiments were mobilized and 561
were commanded by a senior lieutenant from the Paramount Chief's 701
great wife's segment. Some informants said that in the line of battle [726]
men from the same segment were separated, so that there would be less chance of their being killed all at once. However within a regiment there must have been cleavages on segmentary lines, for at least in later years the leader of a major segment would from time to time mobilize all the men in his segment belonging to certain regiments and send them off raiding. Thus the Ngoni military system differed from the Zulu, in which the king alone was able to mobilize age-sets. Some of the segmentary divisions within Ngoni regiments had their own proper names. In battle, the men of a regiment might be divided for tactical reasons but this was not a lasting arrangement, and the only permanent cleavages within a regiment appear to have been those determined by the residential system. There does not seem to have been any system of non-territorial sectors, nor was there any organization, apart from the State-organized regiments, by which men of a single segment

[Text continues on page 39]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sectors attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8] 561 701

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights. [562]

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken. 561 796 [726]

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked. 561 701 727

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs, 561 701 621 [643]

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Nsingu's regiment. [114]
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Maola. Wiese and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Maiyiza. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Wiese gives two other regimental names. His Madouda or Madoda is merely the status term *madoda*, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madginga or Madjinga, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatakakulu, Mang'ombe, Izimpisi, Makeke, Mahacu, Zimfezi, Manyoni. [554]

Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 59.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38, - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 visit Mpezeni to arrange a peaceful settlement with him.[101] In any
457 case, although some movement of population may well have taken
648 place, Mpezeni and the greater part of his people remained outside the Protectorate and in the Concession. In October 1897 Warringham, the B.S.A. Company's Collector at Cinunda's, moved in closer to Ngoniland and occupied the abandoned Fort Partridge, twenty miles north of Mpezeni. A month or so later, he appears to have found it prudent to move back again to Cinunda's.[102]

In December Manning, acting as Commissioner while Sharpe was on leave, was told by a North Charterland official at Chikwakwa, on the Shire, that Mpezeni's warriors were said to have murdered two Europeans on their way from Tete. This report was not confirmed. On 28 December[103] news arrived from Warringham that he at Cinunda's and Wiese at Fort Young were in danger of attack and could not communicate with each other. On 4 January there was news that Wiese was safe. According to his own account, Wiese was secretly warned by Mpezeni of the planned attack on him and had time 'on the next dark night' to build a small fortification into which he retired.[104] However, Wiese and his two European companions thought themselves still in danger and on 9 January wrote to the North Charterland general manager and to Warringham at Cinunda's asking for help and arms.[105]

Meanwhile a force of about seven hundred troops was organized
175 by Manning in Nyasaland. Warringham at Cinunda's was
649 reinforced but on 9 January he reported that Ngoni raids were
721 preventing him from collecting provisions. The next day there was
457 news that Wiese, now with three other Europeans, was still surrounded at Fort Young and that the Ngoni had mustered fully forty thousand fighting men. The rear troops, whose progress

[101] 172, fo. 61; 172, fo. 172; 173.

[102] Poole implies, but does not specifically mention, the move back to Cinunda's. In 1897 Genthe referred to the Cinunda camp as Fort Jameson and according to Poole this name was transferred to Fort Partridge when Warringham moved there. If so, the name must have been transferred back again with Warringham, for the Fort Jameson mentioned in reports of the fighting, both by Poole and in *B.C.A.G.* and dispatches, is the Cinunda camp. On the other hand, the new Fort Jameson established at Kapatamoyo's after the war is said to have been some twenty miles south of the earlier station of the same name. cf. *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 13 (1 August 1897), p. 1; *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 12, 14-15, 19. The name Fort Young was also moved about, being at first applied to a camp near Missale. cf. *C.A.P.*, 15 November 1896, p. 5, and 1 December 1896, p. 3.

[103] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 15, says this message reached Kotakota on 21 December. This seems unlikely, for Manning states that he received the news at Zomba by wire from Kotakota on the morning of 28 December. cf. 174; 175, fo. 376; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1 (15 January 1898), p. 1.

[104] Wiese, 'Geschichte', pp. 186*ff*.

[105] 177-80.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

towards Ngoniland had been halted after the report of 4 January, resumed their march. 175 648

Four companies under Captain Brake reached Cinunda's on 17 January and left the next day for Fort Partridge, which was burnt by Ngoni as they arrived. On 19 January they moved on towards Fort Young. After some skirmishing they arrived there at 5.20 p.m. and relieved Wiese and his companions. Fort Young was only a few hundred yards outside Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10, and in the morning Brake found that this village and others near by, including Nsingu's, were full of warriors. Accordingly he decided not to withdraw to Fort Partridge as he had intended and sent his troops to clear the villages and burn them down. Later in the day there was organized fighting but in the face of fire from seven-pounders and Maxims the Ngoni lost heavily. The number of Ngoni warriors involved was estimated at from 4,000 to 5,000.[168] 726 439

On the next day, 21 January, Mpezeni sent messengers to Captain Brake with a present of a sheep. Brake regarded this poor present as an insult and insisted that he would negotiate only with important lieutenants. The next day, five messengers arrived with twelve head of cattle, but Brake regarded the messengers as slaves and said that if a lieutenant did not come the next day, he would deal with Cimpinga, headquarters of segment 15 where Mpezeni was living, as he had dealt with Nsingu's village. On 23 January a lieutenant and an important man arrived to see Brake and were interviewed by him the next day. They stated that Mpezeni was weary of the war brought on by the misconduct of his sons, and that he placed himself in Brake's hands to impose what conditions of peace he might choose. When Brake arrived at Cimpinga on 25 January he was met by two men who said that Mpezeni had gone into hiding outside the village. Brake told them to tell Mpezeni to come, otherwise the village would be destroyed. Brake waited until 5 p.m. and then burnt the village except for Mpezeni's own hut and those of his wives. The next day Lt. Sharp, with five men, succeeded in encountering Mpezeni, who had fifty men with him. Mpezeni asked for twenty minutes' grace while his wives got away and managed to slip away himself. 175 439 648 728

The main body of troops under Manning arrived at Cimpinga on 28 January. Manning sent out messengers to inform the Ngoni that unless Nsingu was handed over by the night of 30 January, troops would 'penetrate to every valley in Mpezeni's country and punish every village where opposition was encountered'. Manning

[168] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 475; Bradley, *Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 44-5.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their spears and gathered together; they went to the kraal and began to dance the *ligubo* war dance. Sometimes they set themselves in order as though they were out on a raid; they came out at the right middle of the kraal and went *pa lisango*, toward the gate, singing, marching, and shaking their shields and spears. Sometimes they retreated as though running from the enemy, then turned about as though running to meet the enemy again. This was done to show how they could fight and defend themselves from the enemy. It showed that the boys were now young men and of the warrior class, and they were asking to be admitted to the status of grown men. If the old men agreed that their prayer should be granted they were formed into a new regiment (*libandla*) and were given a senior to lead and govern them.

539 702 [884]

The Army

All the war companies were under the Paramount. He had the power to call the whole army to go out against enemies. But all big villages and villages of men of reputation had their own companies, like Zulu Gama, Njerenjere Sibande and many others. These companies were under the war *induna* of the Paramount and when they were called they came quickly to the village of the Paramount which was the central meeting place. A *libandla* (company) was divided into *mabuto* (sections) sometimes of 100 or more. For each section there was an *induna* who led it in war, judged all disputes, and spoke for it to the war *induna*. The war *induna* was the eye of the Paramount in all that pertained to war.

539 704 [643]

The army was divided into companies corresponding to the districts or chiefs' villages and all the company leaders were under the war *induna*. All the parts of the army were divided in lesser parts in accordance with the generation of the young men, *amajaha*, and the older men, *amadoda*.

Mobilization

If desired the Paramount had power to send a summons through the whole country that his army should mobilize in his village in order that he might see it. The lesser chiefs had the same power for their districts. The man who delivered the summons went into the kraal and shouted that the Paramount wished the army to gather at the central meeting place. The message was spread everywhere. Then all the sections in the villages and in the districts of the lesser chiefs and clan heads hastened to come at the appointed time. The Paramount prepared cattle to be killed for the army. As the sections were marching in they sang the songs called *imihubo*. Section by section they chose their *muhubo* for arriving and entering the kraal and each section drew up by itself. An open space was left between the sections so that they might be known.

539 726

When they had all gathered in their places the herald rose and shouted '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayigube*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, let them dance.' This was to tell the sections to begin the war-dance. Each section got up with one heart and made a wide circle and began to dance. One of them began a song which he remembered on the spur of the moment from the *ligubo* and led off, the whole section took it up waving their shields and thrusting with their spears now right now left according to their step and each foot stamping the ground.

[535]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 726 [834]

village in grass-shelters opposite the kraal gate, and no one was allowed to go to a house or to be with his wife. They said that if a man broke this law the army would be unlucky. Even the Paramount if he still went with the army slept there outside. If the Paramount left for the war, his oldest *induna* left his own village and went to the Paramount's and stayed there till the army came back. In the royal village there was continence and all the people were ordered to control themselves in the villages, until the army left.

When the army went out the old men accompanied it, but after they had spoken words of warning they came back to the village. The chief point in it all was that the young men should have courage, and should help each other if one is wounded or there is any other difficulty, and should obey the leaders. They warned the leaders too to begin the fighting wisely and not on a bad or treacherous place. If a leader did that sort of thing and many were killed a case was brought against him. When the army went out two sections were detached to guard the village. These stayed at home along with the companies of old men. They 'kept the tribe', the Paramount and the old people and the stock. [887]

The approach and attack

When the army went out it marched very slowly, and halts for the night were at short intervals. All the sections kept together as ordered by the war *induna*. In all the sections there were scouts to show the way for the army. In each section one or perhaps two were chosen and were put together to walk ahead and look carefully, and come and report any news, especially when they were in enemy country. When the army rested, the scouts went forward to see if there was any danger near. When the army slept in grass-shelters, one or two sections were sent to guard against danger both in front and rear. The army had provision carriers, that is, those who carried food and the coverings of the old men. These were boys and girls, sometimes women from their houses. These were not sent by the Paramount but each household chose its young people to carry the food. The section of the food carriers had another section to protect them when the enemy were attacked or when they went to meet enemies. [224]

When the army was near the enemy stockade the leader ordered them to sit down and rest before they attacked. At such a time the warriors snuffed or smoked hemp. This hemp-smoking was preferred because it maddened the warriors and gave them hearts without fear in facing the enemy. In the enemy stockade the drums would be beating to show that their enemies were angry, but the army of the Ngoni sat and rested as though there were no enemy. [226]

When the army had rested, the war *induna* and the other *izinduna*, or the leader of this army (for all the armies that went out were put under one man of whom they said, the owner of this army is so and so) scouted to see the difficulties of the stockade and to choose a good place for attack.

When it had been carefully chosen and the *izinduna* had agreed together how the attack should begin, then the leader roused the army and began to dance his own praise-dance. The army responded to him. After

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 326 714 301

At the dance the warriors wore their full war-dress. Those who had the head-ring wore a little bunch of black feathers sewn together and attached to a skin and looking like a lion's mane, which came out from under the head-ring on the neck, and they tied a strip of other skin over their eyes. Those who had not the head-ring had their heads completely covered and at the side of their face they put rosettes of feather ends so that the head-dress should not hide their sight. The head-dress was of birds' black feathers, especially ravens; they took out the quills so that they were soft and they sewed them together on cowhide, the man's head resting on the skin. On the body and arms they wore a white skin of goat-hair, or a white belt with long hair, and twisted straps of skin reaching to the knee at the loins. The belts were made from the skins of white goats which had long hair and they stitched them. Round the loins they had whole skins of kids both front and back. Some tied *izinkondo*, hides made to look like a tail, at the back. In their ears they had *izicaso*, earrings of ivory, or sometimes of bone or wood. Truly they looked as terrifying as wild beasts when they stood up. So they ornamented themselves. The oldest of the men stuck a tail feather of a crane in the skin strip above the eyes.

539 326 535

When the dance had begun the women rose to help the men. The Paramount's wives and wives of the men of standing wore the claws of lion and leopard on the top of their hair combed up on the crown and round the neck along with other beads. Ordinary women also wore beads on their heads and necks. All looked very well. Both men and women sang the dance songs and danced. The men spread out in a circle round the edge of the space; the women faced the men at a distance or perhaps they put them in the middle of the ring. All sang, the women commencing, the men joining in or responding. The women had little sticks or reeds in their hands shooting high up. Others came forward and went into the middle of the circle or half circle, and went singing and dancing and shaking their sticks and thrusting out their necks.

539 326

When the dance was over the herald told the army to scatter to their villages until the provisions and snuff had been prepared, and on such and such a day they were to gather again in the Paramount's village. On the day of the gathering of the army they brought their dress and food, the sections dressing as they were in the kraal. The herald called again, '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayikete*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, fall in.' Then all the sections stood up, each by itself but now joined together in close order, shields and spears raised above them. Then the chief *induna* or someone else who had been chosen told them the enemy stockade which it was proposed to attack, and the plan of campaign. When the sections had heard, they began to march out of the kraal one by one.

The whole day the sections had been kept in the kraal, no one was allowed to go to a house and say good-bye. Those outside were not allowed to greet the warriors inside. Children were kept out of the way, lest they should greet their fathers as they went out to war. If a man was greeted as he went out to war, the fear was that he would not come back but would die there.

When the army went out in the evening near sunset it slept near the

539 726 he had danced before all the sections he began to call '*Uyerwa, uti, Aiyime ngito*', 'Do you hear? Stand to arms.' Immediately section by section got up and rushed forward with noise and whistling deafening the ears. The warriors stood in crowds near the stockade and almost surrounding it. When the army was small, they stood in the shape of a young crescent moon. While they did so, they were blowing their horns and whistling to drown the noise in the stockade.

Very soon the message was heard: '*Utsho njalo yena, uti, Aniqwehawa*', 'Thus it is said, let the bulls fight.' On these words the warriors ran at the stockade with one heart and a noise like wind and the country was filled with the tread of their feet. For a short time there would sometimes be silence, then a shout would be heard from a section: '*Ngingu pakati: luti loko*', 'I am inside: I of such and such a village.' The man who was first in the stockade would name his village. Then there would be heard, '*Ngiwawe, wenkwetu*', 'I am with you, comrade.' All the *induna* and warriors fought in their own sections but once the army was inside they began to ask for the name of the first man in and those who had been near gave the name of the heroes. So each *induna* knew all about what had happened in his own section before he met the war *induna*, and when the latter reported to the Paramount at home he could tell everything.

Return from war

539 727 Long ago all that was found in the village or stockade (goats, sheep and cattle) belonged of right to the man who had entered first. That was easy when they sent only one company to the attack. All the other things belonged to the finder. Afterwards when all the warriors went to the attack together, it was difficult to distinguish who had got in first and so the spoils went to the man who reached them first. The Paramount had [643] his portion of everything taken. Outside the stockade those who had taken cattle put aside two or three which they said were *amakhomo ankosi*, the first taste to the Paramount.

On the return all who had dipped their spears in the blood of their enemies carried what the killed had been wearing and their weapons or bows. If a man had killed a woman he wore her things (that is her ornaments, bark-cloth, etc.). These things were done to fulfil a taboo. When [783] the end of the time of purification came, all those things that were worthless were thrown away or burned, but the beautiful things were kept. Only the very old people wore the clothes of the killed.

When the army was on the way home it looked for bones of animals and burned them and ground them fine like flour, and also made charcoal dust. On the day of arrival some flour was kneaded and bone dust and the charcoal dust each by itself. They painted themselves on the face and on the body. This custom was to show those who had speared an enemy in the fight.

When the army was near their own country the war *induna* chose some messengers to go and give the news of the fighting and the names of those who had been killed. These messengers went to the important *induna*, and from them the news went quickly to the Paramount, headmen, and elders. The women were not told quietly; even if a man knew that his son

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkomo zo impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralise and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amakanda* of the *olumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were [703] allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

701 allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.[1] Since he also had the
643 sole right of forming a new regiment of young men and giving it a name,
702 he controlled the intake to the army as well as the discharge of seasoned warriors.

The big war *induna* served directly under the Paramount. Associated
701 with him were other subordinate war leaders or *izinduna*, one of whom was always at the head of each regiment. Considerable emphasis was laid by Cibambo and other Ngoni informants on the essentially military character, in pre-European days, of the office and function of the *izinduna*, who were officials serving the whole kingdom. We shall see in Chapters III, IV and V how the term *induna* was also used for civil
[642] officials at the royal village and in the courts, as well as for the men in charge of sections of a village and of houses.

701 The account of the mobilization of the army shows that the Ngoni
171 had changed the system of military barracks concentrated about the capital, described by Gluckman as typical of the Zulu military organization and by Kuper for the Swazi. Gluckman said that the chiefs assembled their people in territorial, not age, divisions, and that the age regiments belonged to the king alone and lived in or near his capital.[2] In pre-European days the Ngoni, according to Cibambo and to other informants, had in their armies territorial divisions as well as age regiments, and there was no concentration of young warriors by age regiments round the Paramount's village.[3]

726 When a summons to war went forth, the warriors in the territory of
704 each chief or *mulumuzana* assembled at his head village as a *libandla*.
561 This included the warriors from the outlying villages and from the head village. Cibambo's use of the term *libandla* emphasized that it was a territorial unit, divided into *mabuto* (which he called sections) on the basis of age.

When each *libandla* arrived at the Paramount's village ready for warfare, the different age groups within it joined up with their parallel age groups from other *mabandla* to form regiments. The Ngoni term for these national regiments was *mabuto*, the same term as that used for the age divisions of the *mabandla*. Old men who had been warriors in their
[703] youth expressed to me many times their immense pride in their own *libuto*, and it had for them something of the tradition and prestige of a famous school. They would recite the names of other *mabuto*, beginning with their own as the most recent, and going backwards through ten or more regimental names to those who had crossed the Zambesi with

703 [1] Cibambo in the text spoke of warriors wearing the head-ring. The usual practice, according to informants, was to give the head-ring at the end of service in the army. Cibambo may have been referring to former warriors with a head-ring putting on war-dress for a ceremony.

[2] Gluckman, M. 'The Kingdom of the Zulu', in *African Political Systems*, 1940, p. 31.

[3] One example of a concentration of young men was reported at the village of the Queen Mother in the central kingdom in 1898 in *The Central African Times*, see Memorandum XVI, International African Institute, 1938, p. 18.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Zwangendaba or Mputa. Some informants showed that there was not always agreement about the use of the terms *mabandla* and *malute* when relating stories of the past, and the connotation of age regiment was sometimes given to *mabandla*. Cibambo and the other Ngoni historians who used the Ngoni language habitually were, however, quite clear about the differentiation between the two terms, one being territorial and the other denoting an age group. This use of the term *libuto* was confirmed by Dr. Kuper in her account of Swazi military organization.[1]

The organization of Ngoni warfare included the use of divining and of medicines to ensure success in war, and the summoning of the men charged to carry out these functions. In both Ngoni kingdoms there were men alive at the time of my visits who knew the medicines for war and had performed the functions of a 'war-medicine doctor'. According to these informants there was no sharp division between the functions of the diviner and the 'doctor' in relation to their services to the kingdom and to the army. There were individuals who had acted in both capacities. The diviner's task was to prophesy about probable success in war and about attacks from the enemy. He might, and sometimes did, combine this with 'doctoring' the army.

The preparation and administering of medicines to strengthen the army were discussed by informants in terms of two main types of medicine and a third which was less often referred to. The two main types were *intonga* and *intelezi* and the third one *inkhenza*. In the northern kingdom Mopo Jere, who had been a 'war doctor' and was the son of a former famous 'war doctor', insisted that the term *intonga* could be used in several different ways: for medicines made of roots; for a rod or stick (*ndulu*) which was medicated; and occasionally for the 'doctor' who used these objects. He also emphasized that each chief or *nduna* had his own *intonga* and performed ceremonies for his own warriors before they left his kraal for that of the Paramount, where they went through another ceremony of having medicines administered to them before going on the campaign.

Formerly the *intonga*, that is, the stick or rod, was treated with the root of a shrub ground up and mixed with water. A beast was then killed, the Paramount ate the meat in the kraal with his senior men, and the skin was made into a bag in which the medicated *intonga* was placed. This skin bag containing the *intonga* was carried in front of the army when it was on the march. It could only be carried and handled when with the army by boys who had not yet reached puberty. The *intonga* in its bag was pointed at the enemy, as the army drew near, to make his warriors tremble and feel powerless and take to their heels. Its potency to make men powerless was so strong that no man from the Ngoni army dared walk in front of it, lest he too should lose all his strength.

[1] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organization in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 156.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

726 The *intelezi* was made from the roots of a creeper and a bush which
789 grew on the banks of rivers. These roots were burned over the fire,
pounded and mixed with water. The warriors were given some to lick
[824] on the tips of their fingers, some was smeared inside their shields, and
the rest was beaten in a gourd till it foamed. The 'war doctor' took the
tail of a gnu or of a zebra and dipped it in the foam and sprinkled the
warriors as they finally passed out of the gateway of the kraal on the
campaign. This medicine was for strengthening them and also for
making them 'slippery', so that the enemy spears would glide by them
and not pierce them, and they could slip between the posts of the enemy
stockade. After being sprinkled with the *intelezi* no one could sleep with
[834] his wife or any other woman, as he would risk spoiling the effect of the
medicine and therefore would be more liable to be killed.

[411] The *inhlenza* was a spear with a barbed hook. The Paramount threw
it in front of the army as they stood in the kraal until all the warriors had
left. It was then put back in the *indlunkulu* where it was kept in the care
of the owner of that hut.

There were thus three functions to be performed, each by one of the
war medicines. The *intelezi* was to strengthen and protect individual
warriors. The *intunga* was the symbol of their Paramount and their
kingdom leading them to war and weakening the enemy. The *inhlenza*
was the symbol of invincibility, administered by the Paramount.

726 There were two stages of assembling in the Paramount's village before
a campaign. The first followed the initial summons to mobilize, when
the local companies (*mabandla*) marched into the kraal, sorted them-
selves into age regiments (*mabuto*) and sang their regimental songs.
Then followed the *ligubo*, the war-dance, when the warriors wore their
full war-dress, and the women joined in. There was no individual
dancing but a working up of corporate feeling through the dancing and
songs. The Ngoni used no drums in their music, relying on achieving
[533] rhythm and unison by the stamping of their feet and their singing. After
this dance the warriors left for their villages, while at the Paramount's
village preparation was made for food and snuff for the campaign. Hard
[905 cakes of roasted bullrush millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts pounded
251] together, and dried meat, were the main supplies carried. At the second
summons the warriors returned in their companies with their carriers.
These carriers, who were usually young boys, carried the war-dresses
and ornaments wrapped in a mat, and the food supplies.

Since on this final meeting depended much of the ultimate success of
the campaign, only the warriors and the senior men were present, and
all women and young children were excluded from the kraal. After the
objectives of the fighting had been explained the warriors were addressed
by the old men and exhorted to be brave and to help their comrades, and
then the final medication by the 'war doctor' took place. The separation
of the army from the civil population was complete until their return

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

from the campaign and the purification of those who had killed any of the enemy. 726

Cibambo and other Ngoni informants had no idea of the size of the Ngoni armies beyond emphasizing that they were 'very big and very strong'. Evidence was forthcoming, however, from early European sources on the size of the armies which, though it can only have been based on guess-work, nevertheless gave an indication of the numbers involved. Dr. Elmslie referred in 1878 to having seen in the previous year an army of 10,000 of the northern Ngoni which went out in June and returned in September.[1] In the *B.C.A. Gazette* of December 1894, reference was made to the armies of the central Ngoni which were said to be, at the time of their last raids, 50,000 strong. In the *Blantyre District Note Book* there was an entry of 1884, giving no numbers for the army but reporting on the raid on Blantyre in that year when the 'vanguard of the army was composed entirely of young men in their first vigour of manhood, who were said to have marched 50 miles in half a day'. From such scanty references by Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni armies in the field consisted of large numbers, were highly organised, and trained to feats of endurance as well as in fighting skill. The Blantyre reference also brought out the authority of the big war *induna*, who was presented with cloth by the Moir brothers of the African Lakes Corporation as a bribe not to attack the Blantyre area again, and kept his promise. 701 175 [662]

Objectives in warfare

Dr. Kuper wrote of the Swazi military kingdom that wars were waged 'to extend the boundaries, to retain tribal independence and to secure internal solidarity'.[2] After the Ngoni kingdoms were set up in Nyasaland, warfare had the same objectives with the additional one of bringing back captives and cattle. In north Nyasaland Dr. Elmslie, in the reference already cited, wrote that, after the four months' campaigning the Ngoni armies returned 'laden with spoil in slaves, cattle and ivory'. Up to the coming of the Europeans many of the raids and wars took place in the hope of annexing additional territory. Dr. Elmslie wrote in 1878 of the Ngoni dominating an area of 30,000 square miles in north Nyasaland from the lake-shore to the Luangwa river. In central Nyasaland the *B.C.A. Gazette* of 1894 reported that the Ngoni Paramount ruled from the Lintippe river near Lilongwe to the Luvubwe river south of the Kirk Range. The chief challenge to Ngoni security in the northern kingdom came from the Bemba, and in the central kingdom from a combination of Yao and Arabs. Dr. Laws recorded in 1886 that the Ngoni, in their final victorious campaign against the Bemba, had 721 175 [171] [648]

[1] Elmslie, W. A. *Among the Wild Ngoni*. Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1899, p. 79.
[2] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organisation in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

the south end of the lake in 1891, he pleaded with him not to use force against the northern Ngoni. 'Don't fight them,' he urged, 'enlist them.' The military commander, Captain Maguire, who was present at the interview, showed interest in the idea of a new recruiting ground for the regular forces in Nyasaland, but his ideas were not pursued as it proved to be easier to continue recruiting the Yao and Tongs who had already shown themselves good military material.

In the central kingdom the first reactions of the Administration towards the Ngoni were favourable. Paramount Cikusi was visited by administrators in 1882 and 1886, and in 1890 concluded a treaty placing himself under British protection. On his death in 1891 his successor Gomani I sent messengers to inform the Administration of his father's death, to declare his allegiance to the British, and to present a bull and a cow, four tusks of ivory and twenty-five men to help in the war against the slave-raiders. In the following year 100 Ngoni warriors were drafted into the regular forces and Mr. H. H. Johnston reported: 'The Ngoni are altogether a splendid people and may be regarded as the backbone of British Central Africa.'[1] But this co-operative relationship did not last. In 1896 it was reported that 'Gomani and a number of his turbulent young headmen were opposed to our influence.'[2] Ngoni armies raided a mission station, an expeditionary force under British officers was sent, the Paramount's village was attacked and his army defeated. He was taken prisoner and, refusing to walk to Zomba, was shot near Dombole in his former kingdom.

In the 1930's the Ngoni of the central kingdom referred repeatedly to the expedition sent against them, the defeat of their army, the death of their Paramount and the seizure of some of their cattle. They nursed a grudge against their conqueror which coloured much of their sentiments towards Europeans. They sometimes referred to the long period of contact of the northern Ngoni kingdom with the Livingstonia Mission, and contrasted it with their contacts with several missions who appeared to them to be in league with the Administration against them and not to take their side in relations with the Government as Dr. Laws had done in the north.

When Cibambo visited the central Ngoni kingdom with me in 1936 he was interested in making comparisons with the own Ngoni of the north. He found that in central Ngoniland there were very few men who knew Ngoni songs well, and that in general the knowledge of the Ngoni language had almost died out. The big shields were not, he thought, as well cut as those in the north. Yet the war-dances were performed correctly, and the war-dress which the dancers wore was more striking than anything which had been preserved in the north.

[1] Johnston, H. H. *Report of the First Three Years' Administration of the Eastern Portion of B.C.A.* 1894, p. 24.

[2] Johnston, H. H. *Report on Trade and General Conditions in Nyasaland, 1896–7*, p. 7.

2: ReadE-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 643

As one of the Ngoni said: 'The spirits of the dead Paramounts were the guardians of the whole nation. These *amadlozi* stood between UMkulumqango and the people. They were never worshipped at times of plenty and prosperity, but at the time of crisis and danger.' 769 776

In pre-European days there had been two special occasions when the spirits of former Paramounts were addressed on behalf on the whole nation. One was at the time of the *incwala* or first-fruits ceremony, which as we have seen was given up before the final settlement in Nyasaland. This was an occasion uniting all the people with songs and dances at the village of the Paramount. The second occasion was in time of war before the army went out on a raid. This could take place more than once during the fighting season, and always at the Paramount's village. 769 [726]

The remaining occasions for addressing the spirits of former Paramounts on behalf of the nation were when epidemics threatened, when there was a drought, or in the serious illness of the Paramount or of a leading member of his family. In prayer for rain or for the recovery from illness of someone of the royal clan, the diviner had to be consulted about which of the ancestors of the Paramount should be addressed. The ancestor indicated by the diviner had to be named in the ritual, his genealogy given and, as a rule, his particular attributes and his praise-names mentioned. The following account was given to me by Mlonyeni Jere, who prayed for rain in Elangeni in 1935: 769 782

'When the rain stopped, the *amadoda* spoke among themselves 'What shall be done?' If they could not find out who had made the rain to stop, they said 'We must ask the *isanusi* (diviner). Perhaps it is one of the *amadlozi* (spirits) who are stopping the rain.'

If the *isanusi* finds it is the spirit of Hlacwayo, then all the big people are called to come to the kraal at Elangeni. Then they say 'We should choose a black ox with no white spot and bring it to the kraal.' They appointed a speaker who knows how to speak well all the names of the chiefs who have died. This man says to the spirit 'This cow is yours. You must eat it all. Then you must tell UMkulumqango our troubles.' If it urinates or makes dung, the spirits agree. This praying to the spirits is in the kraal in the evening. At early dawn next day someone is sent to kill the ox. While it was being flayed, the huts of the chief wives were smeared with cow dung on the floors and on the place outside the door. The meat was cooked in the kraal by the *amadoda*. Some of it was taken into the *indlunkulu* and kept there for one night so that the spirit might lick it. [237]

The Paramount had already eaten in the kraal and the meat was divided for the *amadoda* according to their age regiments. After they have eaten, a big man rises up to thank the spirit with his titles and praise-names, and all the people answer *Bayete* and there is a war-dance in the kraal. Then they look up and see clouds coming. Then the rain comes.

This particularizing of the appeal to an individual dead Paramount in the ancestor cult was an essential element in the ritual, and there seemed 643 769

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the headman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good one; and the headman in return hands over three other animals of similar ages. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organization: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Achewa consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'anga* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'anga* under Chief Chiwere was Chimongo, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unawares, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a stout resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'anga* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the *chiwanda* or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connexion with women. Next day, they burned goats' bones, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

177 one Ngoni area to another, and it is evident that they are well aware
184 that they met with different kinds of white contact. A frequent topic of discussion in villages is the differences between the administration of N. Rhodesia and of Nyasaland, as well as the policy and attitudes of the different missions.

177 There is, however, one common factor in the situation called culture contact, existing wherever the Ngoni meet any Europeans.
186 Like the Zulu, the Ngoni do not necessarily take kindly to white ways nor desire to make an extensive imitation of white culture. Their racial and cultural pride makes them cling to their own institutions and resent the assertion of white superiority in every sphere of life. This is evident in material culture as well as in the realm of political and social values. The Ngoni are well known for their skill in house-
[342] building, yet they prefer their own of poles and mud, and are slow to take to brick houses. Their houses, both in the villages and on the copper mines, were noticeably bare of 'store goods', and their expenditure on clothes and 'trash' is low in comparison with the wages earned. Their standards of hospitality, of courtesy, and of mutual assistance they believe to be much superior to the Europeans. They carried on their own system of courts by themselves until it was
[692] recognized by the Native Courts Ordinance a few years ago, and they speak with scorn of the chief who cannot decide his own cases and has to have recourse to the Boma. Several times in the villages, when describing their agricultural methods, or hygiene for young men, or moral training of children, they have said to me, 'Write that we knew this before the *Azungu* came'.

On one count they do concede superiority to the Europeans. 'Only
186 in war the *Azungu* knew better', and that to the Ngoni was the acid
726 test. In Mpezeni's and Gomani's countries, where they were conquered by force of arms, they knew they had to yield as they had made others yield in their day. Yet even here they find a cause for pride. 'No one ever conquered us until the *Azungu* came, and no one will conquer us again until they first conquer the *Azungu*.' This I have had said to me many times by men when speaking of their experiences as carriers and as *askari* in the East African campaign. They add as explanation, 'We went to the war of the Germans because the Boma said we should go. But we wanted also to see if the English would

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'. 186 726

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale. 173 721 726 [713] [727]

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] 173 [186] [648] [423]

[1] In the Report of Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'. [361]

[2] Over 3 miles across. [3] in 1885.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

101 [175] ardly people compared with the wild spirits who remained under Mombera.

This tribe is variously named Mazitu, Vikoko, Abangoni, and so on, and readers of Livingstone's 'Zambezi and its Tributaries,' will remember his frequent references to the wild marauding bands of Mazitu. The word Abangoni, by which the tribe calls itself, [186] simply means "The people." They reckon themselves the blooded aristocrats of Africa.

[193] The prefix *aba* before ngoni, is simply the plural form of the noun *umgoni*, a single man. The country is called Ubungoni, and the language Chingoni. For the peculiarity of the Bantu languages, is that words alter their number from singular to plural, and character from noun to adjective, not by changing the suffix but the prefix.

197 The language which the Ngoni speak is a slight modification of Zulu—but they only use two clicks—the dental *c* and labial *q*. In our schools therefore we use the Zulu literature in which there are already nearly 40 volumes, and the best of these are the translations left by Bishop Colenso. Zulu is however rapidly dying [507] out, as the language of the slaves and of the surrounding tribes is becoming the vernacular of the common people. When Mombera's 175 Ngoni settled down in the watershed of the Ruhuru, they soon made their presence disagreeably felt throughout West Nyasa. Their marauding parties were always out on the war path. Dressing [126] in a frightsome garb of cock feathers, carrying a large shield and two or three stabbing assegais, they terrorised the neighbouring tribes. They used to sleep near some village which they wished to attack, and then in the early morning just before the light had come, with a wild war whoop they would sweep through the village, killing the men and the old people; then when they had seized the women and children and tied them together they would start back for the hills, driving with them all the cattle and sheep and goats that they could find. Their fighting was never done in the open. It generally took the form of a wild and sudden rush, and in a moment bleeding corpses were lying about, and the village was in flames.

The terrified people betook themselves to huge stockaded villages, others piled their villages in the lake itself. The Poka, and Henga [101] fled to mountain fastnesses, and built on the edges of fearful precipices, the Henga fled to the Luangwa marsh and built great protected villages in the depths of huge thorn thickets. And the land became

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity.
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [871]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [825]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then [753]
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 782
the gardens are hoed, and when the raping time draws near; if
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [241]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas 726
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when 643
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then [177]
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor [177]
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lived with their wives and children, and not all of which had royal headmen. The system of 'heads' disappeared, at least in the Ngoni group with which we are most concerned, and within their regiments men were grouped in terms of their place in the residential system. 178 621 [701]

3. *Foundation of the State*

The Nguni chiefdoms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, according to all accounts, comparatively small. There were many of them and they were unstable. After about 1775 the pattern of political alignment began to alter and larger states appeared. By 1810 three kingdoms, the Mthethwa, Ndandwe and Qwabe,[6] dominated the rest and in 1818 Zwide, king of the Ndandwe, whose territory was in what is now northern Zululand, killed the Mthethewa king. He then turned his attention to Shaka, an Mthethwa by political affiliation who had conquered his kinsmen the Qwabe and had become the effective leader of the Mthethwa kingdom. Unfortunately for Zwide, he was defeated in 1819 by Shaka and thereupon the Ndandwe kingdom broke up. Some segments became part of Shaka's expanding State, others moved off to the north. About 1821[8] Zwangendaba, who had been for a time a sub-chief of Zwide, led a party of refugees north-eastwards into the region of Delagoa Bay. The route probably taken by Zwangendaba and his followers, and by other Ngoni groups, is shown in Map A. Near Delagoa Bay Zwangendaba found Soshangane, a classificatory brother of Zwide,[9] fighting with Nxaba, another minor chief, both of them refugees like Zwangendaba from the rising power of Shaka. All three parties raided the indigenous Tsonga peoples and made captives fight alongside their new masters. 173 643 [167] [721] [727]

Zwangendaba quarrelled with Soshangane and moved on farther north. He took with him his new Tsonga adherents and also some small groups of Swazi and related peoples who had fled independently from Shaka and who now placed themselves under 173 167

[6] I do not claim any consistency in my spelling of indigenous names and other words. As far as possible I have endeavoured to follow Atkins, 'Spelling Nyanja'. However I have written the unaspirated post-alveolar affricative in its old form *ch* whenever the new form *c* might be confused with the radical dental click consonant represented by *c* in Zulu. [104]

[8] cf. Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 459. He is followed by Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 5, 17, 71. Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 77, 84, gives 1823 and Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 15, has 1823 or 1824. Young, *History*, p. 109, and Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 8, both have 1825. Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 272, says Zwangendaba left in 1828, while Cothead, *Native tribes*, p. 20, says he left in the 1850's.

[9] For the exact relationship between Soshangane and Zwide, see Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 161, 279, 454.

[Text continues on page 9]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[10] 173 167

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*isithakazelo*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapundi, Bangoni, Batuta, Bazowa, Bunga, Landeens, Landims, Machendi, Mafiti, Mafitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara, 101

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820's

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Soshangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

[551] [643]

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Maviti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Nguni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became 173 613 [727] [622] [631]

[10] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-16; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] See Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 93.
[12] *Mdumucana*, pl. *abamucana*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzana*, village headman; also Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkucweni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni).

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Loangeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary bevies of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Cimpinga). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Fafazeni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. *Foreign policy*

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thus Young, writing of the period 1835-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.[26] The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambera's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambera in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of

[26] Young, *History*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 worship. They allowed the local chiefs to govern their people
636 according to their own laws and customs, but under the authority
727 of the Ngoni. They followed the method of governing which Europeans call "indirect rule".' They also took selected children from the conquered peoples and reared them as Ngoni in Ngoni villages. Young's account supports this.[37] Whether or not this method of government was wise is clearly a matter of opinion. It is perhaps significant that for Mpezeni's people the evidence provided by the present disposition of persons claiming descent from different ethnic groups suggests that a different policy was followed there. Chibambo and Young talk of groups of warriors under Mwambera belonging to various subjugated tribes; in Mpezeni's area captured men appear to have been drafted into
[561] the various age-set regiments, so that men from the same tribe were distributed throughout the army and did not form a distinct group.
173 Territorially, the dispersion of captives from the same tribe was not
563 so complete, for it appears that in Mpezeni's group the major
727 segment settled on the east of the Ngoni area raided mostly to the east, and the western segment to the west, and so on, so that many of the captives taken from a particular locality were to be found in the major segment of the State nearest their homeland. Yet even this concentration of captives with the same ethnic origin was not complete, and representatives from all the principal tribes with whom the Ngoni came into contact are nowadays to be found in all parts of Mpezeni's Ngoniland. We suggest that this policy of assimilation, practised to a much greater degree by Mpezeni than by Mwambera, may be correlated with the fact that in Mpezeni's group there were no revolts by groups of captives of common origin, whereas in Mwambera's there were three such revolts, by Lake Tonga, Kamanga and Henga tribesmen.

173 Mwambera attacked the Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu some
721 time round about 1860, and was driven off in the face of fire from
648 guns Mwase had obtained from Arabs. He subsequently came to an agreement with Mwase whereby the Cewa chief became his 'child' and lent him soldiers armed with guns to assist in Ngoni raids. Travellers suggest that later Mwase came to an agreement with Mpezeni as well, but this is not so certain. Mpezeni does seem to have established peaceful relations with one or two minor chieftains during the period of early European contact,[38] but for

[37] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 39-41; Young, *History*, p. 119.

[38] e.g. Cusula, a Kunda chief and Msoro, who had Kunda and Nsenga connexions. Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 11; Sharpe, 'Journey from Lake Nyassa', p. 746.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the most part all external relations were warlike. The State, as it were, was internally an organization of segments and externally stood posed against an undifferentiated hostile world. Even with the Maseko Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, the Ngoni group spatially nearest to Mpezeni, relations were warlike.

Despite this hostility, it seems probable that some individuals from the neighbouring tribes did leave their own country and join the Ngoni of their own free will. I was given accounts of this in a number of family and village histories, and while it is possible that some of those people whose ancestors were captured may now think it preferable to speak of voluntary attachment to the Ngoni State rather than capture, I do not think this can be the complete explanation. In the first place, very many Ngoni of to-day are quite prepared to admit that their ancestors were captured on Ngoni raids, so that the desire to conceal the capture of an ancestor, if it exists at all, cannot be widespread. On the contrary, some Cewa chiefs and notables who are now politically independent of the Ngoni and live in their own chiefdoms will recount with great interest how their ancestors were captured by the Ngoni. Secondly, some of those who claim that their ancestors joined the Ngoni of their own volition come from places a long way distant from Ngoni country, where the frequency of Ngoni raids cannot have been high, even if the Ngoni ever raided there at all. For instance, one village claims that its people came voluntarily from as far away as Fingoe, in Portuguese East Africa. Thirdly, there is a well-known instance of a son and other close relatives of an Nsenga chief who joined the Ngoni and rose to high position in the State. The Ngoni Paramount Chief and some of the minor chiefs are still friendly with the descendants of this Nsenga chief, Kalindawalo, and the story that these Nsenga nobles were not captured but were instructed by their own chief to transfer their allegiance to the Ngoni seems probably to be true, despite a contrary tradition among the Nsenga that these men were taken as captives.[39] Lastly there is the evidence of Glave, writing in 1894, who says that a host of villages had given themselves up to the Ngoni rather than submit to the constant anxiety of attack.[40] Thus provision was made for men and women to join the State other than as captives. These volunteers were treated in the same way as captives. They were allocated, either as individuals or in small groups, to a segment and came under the orders of a lord or lady. The Ngoni lived at a much higher standard

[39] cf. Field, *Visiilana*, p. 16; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 42-4.
[40] 86, fo. 329. See p. p. 68, f.n. 8. See also Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

173 of life than their neighbours, largely at the expense of those neigh-
167 bours. It is therefore not surprising that at least some of the more
648 adventurous of the hunted should have decided to join the ranks of
727 the hunters.
[511] In Tanganyika the activities of the Arabs and other slave traders brought about significant changes in Ngoni society earlier
173 than in the less accessible Nyasa region. The Ngoni in Tanganyika
648 did not regard their neighbours merely as enemies. Ngoni warriors formed part of the army of Mirambo, the Nyamwezi slave trader. An elaborate network of joking relationships seems to have regulated intercourse between the tribes of Tanganyika and the Tanganyika Ngoni were linked to many of their neighbours in this way.[41] Joking relationships of this kind did not develop among the Fort Jameson Ngoni. In recent times, however, Ngoni from Fort Jameson have come into contact on the Copperbelt and elsewhere with tribes such as the Bemba who have developed a joking relationship with other Ngoni groups. These joking relationships are now extended to the Fort Jameson men.

From this historical account we are able to gain some idea of
173 Ngoni polity during the mid-nineteenth century. We have restricted
128 our attention to the relations existing between major portions of the State and between the State and its neighbours. We have seen how forms of organization, in particular the lineage system, with which the Ngoni began their march, were modified in conformity with the peculiar conditions of migrant brigandage. In the next chapter we shall look more closely at the internal organization of the State and attempt to analyse the social processes at work within it.

[41] See the writings of Moreau, Fedler, Scrivener and Spies.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers. The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

captives were retained within the segment. In later years, at least, small-scale raiding organized by segment heads went on without the Paramount Chief's knowledge and it seems unlikely under those conditions that captives would have been sent in to him.

There is confirmatory evidence from other Ngoni groups. Hodgson wrote of the Dowa group that a warrior who had captured three or more people had one returned to him by the chief,[1] from which we may infer that they were at the disposal of the chief. For the Southern Ngoni, who are not so closely related to the Fort Jameson group as are those in northern Nyasaland and Dowa District, Read wrote that the Paramount Chief had a monopoly of slaves taken in war and that he distributed these to successful warriors, his wives and his relatives.[2]

Cattle were handled in much the same way as captives. There was a dogma that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, but they were dispersed among the different villages and kept in the byres there. The lord of a major segment had effective control of the cattle in his own village and, when he chose to exercise it, in the other villages of his segment as well. When the Paramount Chief visited a village, cattle were killed in his honour and he was praised as the giver of the feast, but in the chief's absence the head of the village decided when beasts were to be killed. A lord appointed his lieutenants to look after his cattle as well as his people. When cattle had been taken on a raid, they were driven back to Ngoniland and then allocated to a lord.

Cattle for bridewealth were provided for a man by his lord. However it seems possible that a large proportion of the marriages made by politically unimportant people were not ratified by the passage of cattle.[4]

Such evidence as there is suggests that the Ngoni consumed their cattle faster than many similar cattle people and, as with dependants, they captured cattle more than they reared them. People speak of the days before the conquest as a time when they lived entirely on meat and beer. Poole suggests that the Ngoni produced little or no food in their own country,[5] and while this is plainly contradicted by contemporary evidence, it is probable that they did rely on raiding to supplement their supplies of cattle and cereals, and that therefore many captured cattle were used as food. Thus cattle themselves were a short-term asset and the control of

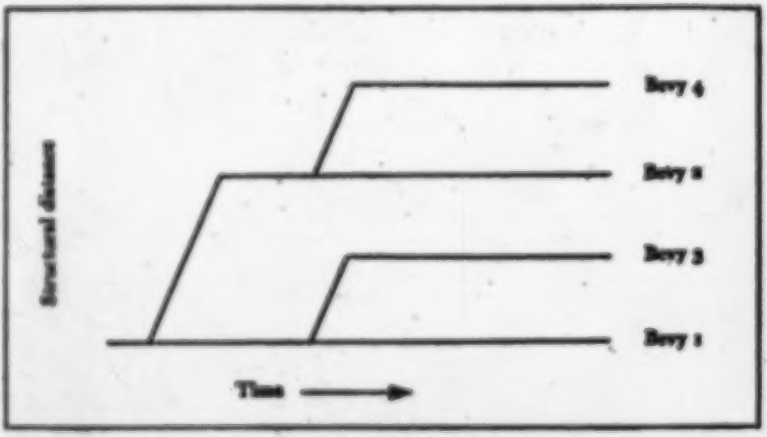
[1] Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 155.
[2] Read, 'Standards of Living', p. 20.
[4] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 7-8.
[5] Poole, 'Human geography of Lundazi and Petauke', p. 13.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

cattle did not give rise to any cleavage of interest which was not already present in the residential system.

The system could also be manipulated by disputes about succession. If a man had many bevies of wives there was usually no doubt concerning which was the senior bevy and who was the great wife in it. Yet in general it was not possible to rank a man's bevies in a simple linear order of seniority, any more than the segments

DIAGRAM 3. RANKING OF BEVIES



to which they corresponded could be ordered in this way. In topological terms, ranking of bevies and of segments among the Ngoni was only partially, not simply, ordered. An example, illustrated in Diagram 3, will make this clear.

Suppose a man started with bevy 1 and then took part of it to form bevy 2. Later he took another part of bevy 1 to form bevy 3 and took part of bevy 2 to form bevy 4. With four bevies of wives, his senior bevy was bevy 1 and his great wife was the leader of bevy 1. Her eldest son was his principal heir, and if she had no sons the eldest son by the next wife in her bevy became heir. But suppose there was no son by any wife in bevy 1. Which bevy provided the principal heir? It seems clear that bevy 4 did not, at least not if there were sons in bevy 2, for bevy 2 was senior to bevy 4. Bevy 2 might be regarded as senior to bevy 3, for it was formed from bevy 1 earlier. On the other hand, with reference to bevy 2, bevy 3 was merely a part of bevy 1 and hence the search for heirs should be continued in bevy 3 before shifting to bevy 2. Unfortunately I

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sectors attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8] 561 701

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights. [562]

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken. 561 796 [726]

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked. 561 701 727

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs, 561 701 621 [643]

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Nzungu's regiment. [114]
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Maola. Wiese and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Maiyiza. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Wiese gives two other regimental names. His Madouda or Madoda is merely the status term *madoda*, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madjinga or Madjinga, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatakulu, Mang'ombe, Izimpisi, Makche, Mahacu, Zimfezi, Manyoni. [559]

Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 50.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38, - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly 561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regi- 227 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were 621 indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appro- [702] priate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*ukusela*) was organized on an 561 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this 796 ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

[167] The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them 631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [720] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *ingwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as diagnostic of the presence of the kind of segmentary society in which we are interested. All the societies included by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard in their stateless category, i.e. Logoli, Tallensi and Nuer, have continually segmenting political systems. Of the societies with government, the Zulu were like the Ngoni in being a State and yet having a political system which was continually segmenting. Both of these states were organized by a segmentary system even at the highest level, so that it does not seem necessary to follow Fortes in restricting segmentary systems to only the subdivisions of states. In Shaka's time various changes came about in Zululand, such as the concentration of the army in a central area, which lessened the importance of the segmentary organization. But in the eighteenth century large-scale relations between and within the Nguni chiefdoms were governed by the agnatic segmentary organization, that is, by the division of the people into clans, sub-clans, and lineages and by the continual transfer of allegiance by lineage segments from one chief to another. Even during the period of the Zulu empire, the continual segmentation of the constituent tribes was important in maintaining the power of the central government over them.[88]

If one of the main characteristics of the well-known African lineage systems, both in stateless societies like the Nuer, Tallensi, Logoli and Gusii, and in primitive states like the Zulu, is their political function, we may well inquire if these systems are not also one type in a more general category of political systems. Although lineage relations are essentially distinct from kinship relations, a lineage system defines political relations in the idiom of kinship. Thus in agnatic systems, the relationship between territorial groups may be expressed in terms of the relationships between founding ancestors who were brothers or fathers and sons. We have seen how among the Ngoni the relationship between captor and captive, between lord and dependant, and hence the relationship between the segments they founded, was expressed in agnatic terms. The relationship between husband and wife, lord and lady, was employed to define the relationship between the political groups they led, and in this respect the Ngoni system may be seen as taking one stage further the process employed in lineage systems, where most relationships of this kind are phrased agnatically. Among the south-eastern Bantu, however, the relationship between lineage segments founded by paternal half-brothers is defined in terms of their mothers' position as co-wives. Among some central African peoples, this process has been carried even further than

[88] Gluckman, 'Modern Zululand', pp. 147-54.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

where other states, if states they were, organized themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[87] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[88] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[87] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[88] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178 611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619 The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727] [597] [173]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. 611 The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments 602 [561] 611 571 582 [554] [582]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mashanga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[89]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[90] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tsonga who had been promoted at their expense.[91] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[92] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[93] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tsinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[94] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[95]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[89] Swann's report for 1896, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.
[90] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.
[91] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 24; Chihambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 23; cf. Young, *History*, p. 118, who reverses the role played by witch-finders in this incident.
[92] As reported by Warton in June 1896, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[93] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 433.
[94] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingu, Nzermane, and Madzimai.
[95] *ibid.*, fn. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

B.S.A. Company's administration which now began to operate in Mpezeni's country itself. Each had its own African police force and on one occasion two people who had been taken prisoner by the Administration's police were released by a party of North Charterland police. The North Charterland police then arrested the Administration's police, and it was necessary for troops to come from Nyasaland to release them and arrest the North Charterland men.[110] By the end of 1899, however, conditions had become more settled. The B.S.A. Administration had acquired effective control over the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland.

The military operations in December 1897 and in 1898 were carried out during the wet season and in consequence there was much sickness among the troops. Although it was not the time of year which the Europeans would have chosen for a campaign, according to one of my informants Warringham had been advised by an Ngoni man whose support he had gained that he should arrange for the war to take place while all the warriors were away from the immediate vicinity of Fort Young attending the national first fruits ceremony at the headquarters of segment 4, the village of Zwangendaba's great wife. The descendants of this man are still regarded as traitors by other Ngoni. The first fruits ceremony was usually held about the new year, so that the war may in fact have followed immediately after the ceremony. This view is supported by the remark made by Harding, who arrived in Ngoniland a few months after the war was over. He said that the war 'arose over a highly strung official [presumably Warringham] mistaking an ordinary Native dance for an act of hostility towards the Administration'.[111] Whatever the truth in the matter, the first fruits ceremony would have been an appropriate time for Nsingu to call for an attack on the Whites.

7. *Cattle*

It has been estimated that before the war there were about 20,000 head of cattle in Mpezeni's country.[112] During the fighting many were taken from Ngoni by Protectorate troops. These animals became the subject of much recrimination. Read states that half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot', while Poole states that a large portion of the 14,000 head captured were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners.[112]

[110] 403, fo. 368.
[111] Harding, *Far Bugles*, p. 82.
[112] 230, p. 69 has 14,000, while *Report on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19, has 15,000-20,000.
[112] Read, 'Tradition', p. 478; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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According to Manning, in his first report on the matter dated 17 February 1898, nearly 12,000 head were captured. It seems clear that at the time Manning thought that the whole of this herd would be used for the benefit of the B.S.A. Company, for he wrote:

> 'I have informed the British South Africa Company that we shall require them to pay the actual expenses incurred by us on account of the campaign. I do not imagine the total cost to the British South Africa Company will be more than 2,000*l*. This will be covered ten times over by the value of the cattle captured by the expedition, so that the British South Africa Company will reap a handsome profit on the campaign.'[114]

There seems, however, to have been considerable discussion among Europeans in the region about the disposal of the cattle. Roberts, a surgeon who had been one of Wiese's companions at Fort Young, was dismissed from the North Charterland shortly after the war ended. Wiese also left the country after the war and lost his North Charterland post worth £900 a year. Manning suggests that these two were anxious to make trouble by attacking the conduct of the war. St. Hill, the North Charterland manager, may have been anxious to forestall any accusations for on 23 April he published in a newspaper a statement admitting that there had been criticism on the capture of the cattle, but pointing out that 'Army regulations provide for a certain amount of loot'. He said that it had been a wonderfully cheap expedition, that the Protectorate men who went in certainly deserved something, and that he expected that the B.S.A. Company would return a very large number of cattle to the Natives.[115] Editorial comment on his article was nevertheless critical. Criticism began to be heard in Britain. A letter was written to the Parliamentary Secretary responsible, a question was asked in the Commons, and an article appeared in *Truth*. According to one account, the military officers said they expected £400 or £500 each from their share of the loot.[116] Whether or not he was influenced by this criticism, Sharpe on leave in England proposed on 12 May that half the captured herds be returned to the Ngoni, the other half to be retained by the B.S.A. Company.[117] On the same day the Foreign Office replied to Manning's dispatch of 17 February, quoted above, with the statement that the B.S.A. Company wanted only three hundred beasts. Manning was asked to

[114] ibid.
[115] *Central African Times*, i, 30 (23 April 1898), p. 3.
[116] 216, fn. 8; 217; *Parliamentary Debates*, 4th series, lv (1898), cols. 1240, 1654-5; *Truth*, xliii, 1102 (30 June 1898), pp. 1639-40.
[117] ibid.

1;Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

consider returning some of the remainder to the Ngoni.[118] Manning replied that representatives of the B.S.A. Company had already made arrangements for driving away five thousand cattle. He proposed to return three thousand to Mpezeni.[119]

The subsequent course of events is not clear. Poole states that due to the opportune arrival and intervention of Selby, a member of the B.S.A. Company's Administration, a large proportion of the cattle were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners. This is in accord with Sharpe's statement on 6 July that 'Mpezeni . . . has had all his cattle returned to him [his underlining]'. A missionary journal published in Blantyre on 15 July stated that probably a considerable part of the cattle had been returned.[120] Manning, who was in a better position to know than Sharpe, who was still on leave, wrote on 31 August that all the cattle had been returned to the Natives with the exception of about a thousand head handed over to the B.S.A. Company as a fine and about two hundred kept for the use of the troops.[121] The matter then seemed to have been settled.

In the next year the North Charterland continued its quarrel with the B.S.A. Company, and the disposal of the captured cattle was discussed again. The North Charterland complained that the whole Ngoni war had been unnecessary and had been provoked by the B.S.A. Company. There had been wholesale looting of cattle which had been disposed of in the interests of the officers concerned, Natives had been expelled from their lands, and in consequence the commercial prospects of the North Charterland had been ruined. The Foreign Office replied to these allegations on 23 August 1899, stating that so far as the cattle were concerned, five thousand head were to be driven out, three thousand returned to Mpezeni, and the balance held at the disposal of the B.S.A. Company, apart from two hundred and fifty head captured inside the Protectorate and driven off for use by the troops. This reply, referring to what would be done rather than what by then presumably had been done, appears to have been based on the arrangements proposed by Manning on 20 May 1898. Either the arrangements he reported on 31 August 1898 were never put into operation or else they were overlooked by mistake when the Foreign Office reply to the North Charterland was drafted a year later. The latter explanation seems more probable.[122]

[118] 223.
[119] 227.
[120] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; 222, fn. 228; *Life and Work in British Central Africa*, 125 (15 July 1898), p. 3.
[121] 229, fn. 456.
[122] 230; 233.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Manning stipulated that cattle handed back to the Ngoni should not be sold, to prevent traders bartering cattle for gunpowder.[188] Nevertheless the majority of the cattle remaining in or returned to Ngoni hands were sold within two years. In April 1898 over 14,000 head of cattle were counted.[189] Whether or not all these were in Ngoni ownership at the time is not clear, although the North Charterland implied in a letter written in 1899 that at least 12,000 belonged to Ngoni.[190] During the next year or so, in spite of Administrative opposition, many thousands of cattle were sold to traders or killed. By 31 March 1900 only 1,224 remained.[191] Thus another of the systems of social relationships, those mediated through cattle, which had sustained the old social order, was undermined.

8. *The end of a system*

Thus ended the Ngoni war and with it the Ngoni State. In the last twelve years of its existence, from 1886 to 1898, three struggles were proceeding simultaneously in linked regions of social space. First there were the traditional processes already described by which Ngoni killed and recruited their neighbours and by which cleavages between segments of their residential system widened and altered with time. Second there was the struggle between Portugal, Great Britain and, peripherally, Germany for the political control of south-central Africa. Third there was a struggle between different groups of financiers in London for the control of the rich economic resources which they believed, quite mistakenly as far as we can now tell, lay waiting to be discovered in Mpezeni's country and round about. Apart from these three major fields of activity, there were two others which affected this particular area to a lesser degree. There were the traders and adventurers like Wiese (until 1896), Matakenya and the Arabs who competed with one another and endeavoured to exploit the region in terms of ivory, gunpowder and slaves. There were also the various missions, representing the interests of their co-religionists and anti-slavery enthusiasts in Europe, competing with each other and with the slave traders for local control. There was even a scheme for colonizing Mpezeni's country with Christian laymen from Britain.[192] All these social fields were interwoven in reality, but in analysis

[188] 227; 228, fn. 13; 233.
[189] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[190] 230, p. 69. Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 333, implies that all the 14,000 belonged to Ngoni.
[191] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[192] 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

such as Sharpe, Thomson and Deare, and with my own information based on village histories. Combining this with the lowest estimate of population, we arrive at a population density of 100 persons to the square mile, while the highest estimate implies a density of 375. Highly unreliable as these figures are, it is clear that the density of population was considerably greater before the conquest than it is now, when it averages about 68 persons to the square mile. Even the present-day figure is nearly three times the density which the land can sustain in perpetuity.

This dense population was concentrated in large villages. Angus estimated that there were at least a thousand huts in Loangeni, while Deare estimated that there were sixteen hundred. Read states that it was over three miles across, while Genthe says that Ngoni villages were about five times the size of the average Cewa village. From the top of a mountain, Deare saw eleven villages all about the same size as Loangeni.[141] Thus it seems that there were several villages with populations of the order of three thousand. If Deare and Johnston are right in their estimates of tribal population the majority of the people lived in these big villages.

Yet by September 1898 the only villages left in Mpezeni's country were a few to the east of Fort Young. All the rest had been destroyed by troops, and their former inhabitants were said to be 'still timid' and living in scattered groups in grass shelters.[142] The large pre-conquest settlements were particularly vulnerable to attack by troops armed with guns and intent on burning, the more so because there were no defensive preparations at all. Glave wrote in 1894 that the Ngoni 'have no stockaded village, such protection they deem unnecessary as no enemy can be strong enough to attack them'.[143]

The large villages and the high density of population were appropriate only to a victorious military society, relying for at least part of its subsistence on raided crops and beasts produced outside its borders and for the rest on the maximum exploitation of the land inside them. When its enemies had been plundered and its own lands exhausted, it moved on. We can infer from Angus and from Sharpe, who wrote of 'entirely open' country,[144] that within the settled area most of the cultivable land was in use at the same time. Yet in many parts of the Fort Jameson area the soil is now exhausted after five years under maize and must be left for twenty-five years

[141] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 78; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 11 May; Read, 'Tradition', p. 475, f.n. 2; Genthe, 'Mpezeni's', p. 1.
[142] Sell-7, memorandum dated 10 March 1901.
[143] [illegible], fn. 3[illegible].
[144] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyasa', p. 343. For Angus, see pp. 104f.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

After the war an age-set was formed but its activities conflicted with the demands of the churches and schools and it was not a success. No further attempts have been made to carry on the system. Ngoni now say, 'What need have we of regiments now that there are no other tribes for us to fight?'

2. *White control*

Apart from the squabble over cattle, the surrender of Mpezeni on 9 February 1898 marked the end of the Ngoni war. The Nyasaland troops did not pursue the leaders who fled, although Brake moved Mpezeni to the vicinity of Fort Manning. In May he wrote, perhaps over-optimistically, that in the central part of Ngoniland rebuilding had begun.[7]

It is clear that at first the Ngoni acquiesced in their defeat. Whereas prior to the war Whites had lived in their country on sufferance, now their right to be there was not challenged. Only a few months after the war Harding arrived, recruiting police for service in Southern Rhodesia. He was received in a 'most friendly manner by the chief in charge who gave an ocular demonstration of his loyalty by voluntarily and immediately handing over to my charge 200 of his young men for my newly formed Police Force . . .'.[8] After the death of Mpezeni I, his lieutenants waited the traditional period of a year. Mpezeni's heir Nsingu and his wife Mkucwa had both been shot during the war, and in September 1901 the lieutenants petitioned the Administration to appoint their eldest son, Ciloa, aged about 10 years, as chief. On 23 July 1903 the Native Commissioner held a meeting at which Madzimawi, son of Mpezeni I in the residue of segment 4, asked to be allowed to take the name Zwangendaba.[9] Thus even at that early date the over-riding authority of the Administration was acknowledged in matters concerning the chieftainship.

The establishment of an Administration based on Fort Jameson in 1898 was governed, in so far as the British legal system was concerned, by the legislation consolidated in the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890.[10] Relations between the Administration and its African subjects were controlled by the Africa Order in Council 1889.[11] This was superseded by later Orders in 1900, 1911 and 1924,[12] marking the delimitation of North-Eastern Rhodesia as a separate

[7] 158; see, fn. 69.
[8] Harding, *For Empire*, p. 82.
[9] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902-2, p. 408; see pp. 1391f.
[10] 53 & 54 Vict., c. 37.
[11] *S.R. & O.*, Rev., 1890, iii, pp. 259-332.
[12] *S.R. & O.*, 89 of 1900, 456 of 1911 and 324 of 1924.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 726 he had danced before all the sections he began to call '*Uyewa, uti, Aiyima ngito*', 'Do you hear? Stand to arms.' Immediately section by section got up and rushed forward with noise and whistling deafening the ears. The warriors stood in crowds near the stockade and almost surrounding it. When the army was small, they stood in the shape of a young crescent moon. While they did so, they were blowing their horns and whistling to drown the noise in the stockade.

Very soon the message was heard: '*Utsho njalo yewa, uti, Aniqwehewe*', 'Thus it is said, let the bulls fight.' On these words the warriors ran at the stockade with one heart and a noise like wind and the country was filled with the tread of their feet. For a short time there would sometimes be silence, then a shout would be heard from a section: '*Ngingu pakati: huti loko*', 'I am inside: I of such and such a village.' The man who was first in the stockade would name his village. Then there would be heard, '*Ngineswe, nmokweto*', 'I am with you, comrade.' All the *isindumo* and warriors fought in their own sections but once the army was inside they began to ask for the name of the first man in and those who had been near gave the name of the heroes. So each *indumo* knew all about what had happened in his own section before he met the war *indumo*, and when the latter reported to the Paramount at home he could tell everything.

Return from war

539 727 Long ago all that was found in the village or stockade (goats, sheep and cattle) belonged of right to the man who had entered first. That was easy when they sent only one company to the attack. All the other things belonged to the finder. Afterwards when all the warriors went to the attack together, it was difficult to distinguish who had got in first and so the spoils went to the man who reached them first. The Paramount had [643] his portion of everything taken. Outside the stockade those who had taken cattle put aside two or three which they said were *amahlomo ankosi*, the first taste to the Paramount.

On the return all who had dipped their spears in the blood of their enemies carried what the killed had been wearing and their weapons or bows. If a man had killed a woman he wore her things (that is her ornaments, bark-cloth, etc.). These things were done to fulfil a taboo. When [783] the end of the time of purification came, all those things that were worthless were thrown away or burned, but the beautiful things were kept. Only the very old people wore the clothes of the killed.

When the army was on the way home it looked for bones of animals and burned them and ground them fine like flour, and also made charcoal dust. On the day of arrival some flour was kneaded and bone dust and the charcoal dust each by itself. They painted themselves on the face and on the body. This custom was to show those who had speared an enemy in the fight.

When the army was near their own country the war *indumo* chose some messengers to go and give the news of the fighting and the names of those who had been killed. These messengers went to the important *isindumo*, and from them the news went quickly to the Paramount, headmen, and elders. The women were not told quickly; even if a man knew that his son

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

had been killed it was not permitted to show his grief before the army had returned and mobilised in the kraal.

When the sections marched back to the village the first sections to go out to war came last and the one that had been last now led the way. The army never entered the Paramount's village in the afternoon but in the morning or before midday. They did this because it took a long time to tell all the news of the war, so if the army arrived near the village in the afternoon they slept in grass-shelters outside.

When the army was ready to enter, the sections were set in order, each one told off to follow another and each one chose its own song for the entry. When they sang the warriors covered their heads with their shields, with their spears in the middle of the shields. While they were singing one warrior of the section would jump out in front and dance his own praise-dance and the others let him; when he had fallen into the ranks again, they took up the section-song. The songs sung at the entry to the kraal were called *imikubo*. These were different from *ligubo* for they were sung by mouth only, whereas a *ligubo* was sung with stamping of the feet.

When the warriors marched on the cattle track there was heard a confused noise of singing and shouting praises. All the warriors marched very slowly as they sang, section by section but crowding together. When they came close to the gateway they stood and waited to let those who had not blooded their spears have their dance out, because once inside only the 'killers' might dance before the Paramount and the headmen. When they stood they were as though the kraal were built of men but they left a space in the middle for the Paramount and headmen to sit and watch. For a little time the warriors danced their own praise-dances and these were chiefly those whose bravery was well known.

After these had danced a little there was a shout for silence, and all kept silent waiting for the words of the war *indoma*. He came out from the throng and began to dance while all the warriors responded to his war-cry or praise-names. After he had finished he began to tell the story. He began by saying that in such and such a section, so and so had been first to enter the stockade, or to throw a spear first which killed a man inside. In all the sections he went over those whose names had been taken by the *indoma*; if he forgot anything or the name of a 'killer' he went and asked the *indoma* of the section to help him. Whenever he mentioned a name, the warrior jumped forward and danced so as to be known to the Paramount and all the men. Then the Paramount and the headmen chose one of themselves to reply and thank the army; sometimes it was the chief *indoma*. Before he began he also danced a little, then spoke praising or blaming. After he had finished he danced again and sat down among his peers. This the Ngoni called *ukuhomisela impi*, thanking in respect for the army.

Demobilisation and purification

When all was finished in the kraal the warriors scattered and went to their villages to take off all their war equipment and to put their shields on the *upalosu*, the resting place or bedstead of shields. Then they sat down by their big house and were greeted by their wives, parents, children and friends. The custom was the same as that on the birth of a child, the

539 the
727 salutation being '*Amahle amabipe*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Beyond*', '*Return*',
[576] along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebe*' also with the clan name. This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Ecbigulibi-weni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amabanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[424] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Pv*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[424] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Pv*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of horses

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
703 then they were called again together to dance the *Ngoda*. On that day bulls
[212] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the horse of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the horses of the sections
[232] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that back-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

721 defeated an alliance between the Arabs and the Bemba in which the
175 allies intended to dominate all the territory between he Luangwa river
648 and the lake-shore, driving the Ngoni from their highlands and opening all the country to the slave-trade. In the central kingdom, during the interregnum after Cikusi's death in 1891, a powerful Yao chief raided the kingdom, destroyed six villages and took many captives. In both kingdoms it was necessary for the Ngoni to defend their independence by constant vigilance and preparedness, especially against a combination of Arab slave-raiders and local tribes. Since large numbers of warriors were mobilised every year, these trained armies demanded an outlet, and the policy of aggression served the dual purpose of raiding enemy territory and maintaining a defence force.

727 There was a difference of opinion among informants about the results of raids in terms of spoils of war. In both kingdoms captives were taken in war, especially young men of military age and women. From tsetse-free areas where cattle were to be found, live beasts were brought to add to the herds in the Paramount's village and in those of the chiefs and *ahamasana*. Ivory for trading and cloth for wearing were two of the most valued forms of booty, and Cibambo mentioned the looting of clothes and weapons from those who had been killed. From accounts by the first Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni burned thevillages and killed the inhabitants in the majority of their later raids.

721 If defensive and aggressive military action and the acquisition of
182 valued forms of wealth were two of the main objectives in war, a third was undoubtedly the need to build up a national sentiment within the military kingdoms by success in warfare in the first place, and by intensive training of all young men in the second, thus integrating the youth from conquered units with those who belonged to the trans-Zambesi clans. Again and again, in talking about their past, Ngoni informants from the Paramounts downwards emphasised the discipline and training of the young men in the days of warfare, and expressed their opinion that no other training could take its place. It was not only the common military training which contributed to this national sentiment and held the Ngoni together in a common purpose of preparedness for warfare. The *libuto* or age set within the *libandla* or territorial unit, and the *impi* or national army in which the territorial units were merged, provided a military organisation which was adaptable and balanced, and which, through the control of the Paramount, gave the main impetus to centralisation, while encouraging pride and initiative among local and age-set groups.

The relics of a military tradition

648 In north Nyasaland the Ngoni never fought against the Europeans,
and were not coerced into giving up warfare, but, as a result of their
[297] contacts with the Livingstonia Missions, they finally agreed to give it up voluntarily. When Dr. Laws met the Commissioner near Mponda's at

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

group consisted of himself and the mother and her children, including her daughters only until they married. 571 592

The affinal element in a house consisted of the other wives associated with the owner of the house as co-wives, and the wives of the sons of the owner. Both the kinship group and the affinal group were bound together by their rights in the cattle of the herd which was known as 'the cattle of the house of X'. From that herd were taken cattle for the *lobola* of the wives married after the house was founded, and for the wives of the sons and adopted sons of the house. Into that herd came the cattle received for the marriages of the daughters belonging to the house and the gift cattle sent to wives by their fathers after marriage. When the *lobola* had been fully paid up for a daughter of the house, then her relationship with it ceased and she was thenceforth known as belonging to her husband's mother's house. 592 585 571 [591]

Associated with the house in the villages of the Paramounts, the chiefs and the leading *abamuzana* were two other groups of people. One was the *induna* appointed 'to take care of the house' and his family. In the 1930's the *induna* was in charge of the cattle and of the many activities connected with the house, including the organisation of male labour in hut-building, in kraal construction and in cultivation; he was consulted by the male members of the house about the selling of cattle and the use of the goods accumulated in the house. The other group associated with the house in pre-European days consisted of captives taken in war and allocated to the house who worked as labourers. The servants who worked for a house in the 1930's assisted with cooking, beer-making and minding the children, and they had huts near that of the owner of the house to which they belonged, placed on the right- or left-hand side of the kraal according to their affiliation with the big house or the second house. Informants said that in the past such association with a house included giving a beast from the herd of the house for the marriage of a servant. The *induna*, through the marriage of his daughters, built up his own herd, which he frequently kept at first with the cattle of the house in the main kraal, later building his own kraal. 592 571 357 [727]

A new house began when a man married his big wife. Although at first he built her a hut at the back of his mother's hut in his father's village, as soon as he moved out to his new village after his father's death, the big wife's hut had the next most important site in the kraal after that of the *indlunkulu*, and the second wife had the third place of importance. In some of the larger villages of the central kingdom, the custom of moving out into a new village after the death of the former owner had been given up, partly because of pressure on the land. The house grouping in relation to the siting of huts then became very complex, but the pattern was nevertheless discernible. The two sections under the big house and the *gqo* house, which had formerly divided into two villages, continued to exist together, and at Mzakhatha this dual 361 591 592 [768] 361 592

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 836 565 emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

Many of the *umindo* songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni [533] history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

852 304 The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and [727] annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambesi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

561 857 After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance *ngoma* in a neighbouring village.

857 535 In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the *ngoma* dance played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

then meant running out of the compound to the freedom of the village. At that time young children might behave outrageously and be punished for it, but they were not held accountable. The nurse girls and the mother, or some other adult, was blamed for letting the child grow up with such an uncontrolled temper or appetite or tongue. Once children were recognised as having passed the young child stage, that is when they had their second teeth, they themselves were held accountable for their behaviour and punished more severely, even though parents were also blamed for careless upbringing. The social sanctions of rebuke and ridicule, which began to operate in the later years of young childhood to only a limited extent, were now seen in their full force, made use of by adults, and still more effectively by the children's own age-mates. The fear of estrangement, of social ostracism as the penalty for failing to conform to the required manners and ways of living, had increasing force as the children grew older. As little children they were buttressed and protected by adults in their childish quarrels with, and moods and attitudes towards, other children. As boys in the dormitory and as girls in the girls' circle they had no longer such protection, and the result was that they became increasingly sensitive to the opinion of their peers. Professor Wilson in her study of Nyakusa age-villages, has called this social awareness the quality known as 'being good company'—getting on well with their contemporaries.

It was at this stage, at the beginning of the children's newly-found independence, that the ear-piercing ceremony took place. In contrast with the neighbouring peoples, the Ngoni had no facial or body markings, and it was the pierced ears which showed they were true Ngoni. In the days of warfare, captives, especially boys and men, were forcibly made to have their ears pierced, and hence a number of men in the Ngoni kingdoms who were not of Ngoni clans were found with pierced ears. Sometimes their children went to their parents and said, 'We want to be made Ngoni now.'

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him. Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions, villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance. The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters, a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 98.
[2] *Cigaba*, pl. *zigaba*, from *ku-gaba*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Succession to office within this system was from a man to his eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture. Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was, in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of [581] his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 851 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriage belonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth his sons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin on behalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim. I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past and when recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

[727] Important men sometimes married female captives and no [954] bridewealth passed. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons founded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bride-183 wealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.[13] The infor-[128] mation on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II.

It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was [276] offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898

[13] See pp. 221.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.105]

CHAPTER V

SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS

1. Old and new marriage

WE HAVE described marriage at two periods in Ngoni history, as it was in the 1890's and as it is now. The differences we have found between the two periods are not due to chance except in the sense in which we may speak of all historical incidents as being partly due to chance and partly determined by the limiting conditions imposed by the past. Changes in the field of Ngoni marriage have been paralleled by changes in other aspects of Ngoni social life, have been influenced by other changes and have in turn influenced them. Throughout Ngoni history men and women have always married, but the society in which they married has changed. Marriage in the time of peace was appropriate, more or less, to the general ordering of social life in those days, and modern marriage is appropriate, again more or less, to the social structure of today. 581 178

Our task is then a threefold one. We have to show the relationship between old marriage and the rest of the old society, a similar relationship between modern marriage and modern society, and the process by which the transition from one set of conditions to the other has come about. We have outlined in Chapter II some of the internal and external factors responsible for this transition, and the nature of the material available to us on the 1890 period has led us, in Chapter I, to describe the old system largely in analytic terms. In this chapter we shall attempt to clarify our picture of the past in the light of an analysis of modern marriage. 121 128

In the old days the residential system provided the framework for political and lineage ties. Marriage was a legitimate means whereby children were recruited into segments of the system. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of fertility from the woman's kin to her husband's kin. Adultery was punishable by death, and divorce was rare. Affinal ties cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system, but while these ties were important, a man could not transfer his allegiance to his wife's or to his mother's group. A man who quarrelled with his kinsmen could not move to another village to live, but could only hive off to form a dependent but recognizable cluster of his own, which still remained part of the same residential segment. 571

The material apparatus belonging to the system, that is, the great villages with hundreds of huts and central cattle byres, was to a large extent destroyed in 1898 by the British. A few important people in the system were killed, and many of the cattle looted. With the establishment of British rule, it was physically possible for the 227 648 178 648

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have been discussing it. Divorce took place because the man, a recently captured Kunda, ran away back to his former tribe leaving his wife, daughter of one of Mpezeni's lieutenants, behind in her father's village. In 'the time of peace' marriages were stable, with or without payment. The wealthy men were the politically important men, and indeed Wiese's assertion that men married off their daughters so as to gain the maximum number of cattle[9] may be based on the behaviour of socially ambitious fathers in what was largely an upward-mobile society. Political affiliation effected by marriage was ratified by a transfer of wealth appropriate to its importance in the general field of political and social relations. Divorce frequency and kinship structure were the same for rich and poor, aristocrats and captives, and were neutral factors in determining the amount of marriage payment.

The second phase began immediately after the war of 1898 and lasted until about 1930. At the beginning of this period the tribe as a whole was poorer than it has been before or since. Many cattle were looted in the war and for a long time there was little money in circulation. The majority of marriages without payment were contracted during this phase, and it seems reasonable to associate this in part with the poverty of the people. It is difficult to make any precise estimate of divorce frequency at this time, although we know that many Cewa and Nsenga women who had been married before 1898 deserted their husbands and returned home when British control was established. There does not seem to be any evidence for supposing that at this period women moved from one husband to another within the confines of the Ngoni kingdom more quickly than they do now. It is perhaps safe to say that the low level of payments was due partly to poverty but also partly to the general uncertainty about the future, about the kind of society which the White Administration was building for the Ngoni. Evans-Pritchard has stressed that 'It is morals that censure divorce and law that refuses to recognize grounds for divorce which ensure the stability of the union of husband and wife.'[9] The laws and moral code that had been enforced by the old chieftainship had been shaken by the defeat of 1898. The payment of bridewealth had defined legitimate expectations of behaviour, obligations and rights, within an organized system of social relations which had been shattered. While many Ngoni must still have regarded marriage with payment of bridewealth as morally right and desirable, they must also have been aware of the greatly increased risk they were running when making these payments, even if they had the cattle to make them. Rights *in uxorem* and *in genetricem* which were socially recognized but could not be enforced through the machinery of the State were hardly

[9] See above, p. 3, footnote 3.
[9] Evans-Pritchard, 'Social character of bride-wealth, with special reference to the Azande', *Man*, xxxiv (1934), p. 174.

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the headman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good one; and the headman in return hands over these other animals of similar age. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organisation: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Achewa consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'anga* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'anga* under Chief Chiwere was Chimanga, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unawares, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a stout resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'anga* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the *chimwala* or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connexion with women. Next day, they burned goats' horns, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

181 that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered
186 all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British.
Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every
648 present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni
186 say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we
would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes
would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly",
and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated
[592] with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain
that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

538 The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are
814 common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

643 The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also
182 symbolised in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his
[551] warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

829 Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths
178 about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather
[583] than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

conquer the Germans as they conquered us.' The Ngoni are by no means unaware of white political antagonism and questioned me closely about present day relations between English and Germans, and between English and Dutch in South Africa. Though they have seen from their own observation that modern warfare as practised by Europeans is entirely different from warfare as they knew it, they are nevertheless interested in war to-day as an 'instrument of national policy'. 186 726

It is from this angle that the Ngoni in Mpezeni's country regard the 'war' between them and the British in 1898. It was a trial of strength; they were defeated by superior power.[1] When the Ngoni tell the story of this war they make it clear that just as they had defeated the other tribes with their superior weapons, so it was British superiority in weapons which won the day, because their machine-guns were used with deadly force on the Ngoni warriors. The version of the fighting current in the villages was told me many times, always with a note of awe and horror at the unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe. When the British punitive force camped outside Mpezeni's kraal, the Ngoni war *induna* sent to ask if they were ready to fight. The reply was, 'Wait, the *Azungu* are eating'. Another later messenger brought back word that the *Azungu* had finished breakfast and were ready, and the companies sallied out, and the machine-guns were arranged facing the kraal exit. Then the Ngoni warriors sprang out, holding their shields before them, and were met by a hail of fire from the machine-guns. To their horror they found their invincible shields were no longer a protection. Many fell, the rest fled, and the huge village[2] was looted and burned. 'The *Azungu* war was too strong', is the way they invariably end this often repeated tale. 173 721 726 [713] [727]

Overwhelming though this military catastrophe was, to the Ngoni it is the events preceding and following the 'war' on which they dwell, when in the villages they speak of this period of white contact. 'We are not ashamed for the war', they say, 'We are ashamed for losing our cattle and our land'. They tell to this day how a certain Carl Weise, a German, came up from Portuguese East Africa trading,[3] 173 [186] [648] [423]

[1] In the Report of Justice Maughan on the North Charterland Inquiry he says, 'It was a remarkably well-managed little war and the Ngoni accepted their defeat in good spirit like other Bantu races'. [361]

[2] Over 5 miles across. [3] in 1885.

648 in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of
814 those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Azungu* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for under-
[609] standing the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognize Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final
175 humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with
648 his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot';
[727] and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the old *indunas* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *inkosi* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic
178 changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and
[648] demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on
[464] both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand
[167] for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1924.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that
[558] of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants [illegible] promoted to be regional governors.

631 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and
178 of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and
161 by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political
641 structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was
[684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a
641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population
727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There
563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State.
[567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain
563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set
641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise
701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Mawu*, pl. *awawu*. Cf. the Zulu term *wawu*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The councillors and sessors are nominated by the chiefs on the advice of their lieutenants and some of them are in fact lieutenants or their sons. The court clerk acts as secretary to his chief if he is illiterate, and he assists the chief in his contacts with the Administration. These clerks are also sometimes sons of lieutenants or brothers of chiefs. One of the tasks of the court clerk is to issue licences of all kinds, for guns, beer selling, bicycles, dogs, and so on. This brings him into contact with many people and he does a certain amount of touring looking for unlicensed dogs and bicycles. Owing to this interest in licences and the running of the court, he is the person who takes the initiative in the few public prosecutions that are brought. Civil actions are initiated by paying sixpence for a summons, which is usually issued by the court clerk. He is thus well informed of quarrels in advance before they come up for hearing in the court. He is well known throughout the county and exercises a great deal of influence. 647 [693]

Chiefs and People

Whenever beer was brewed in a village, there was an obligation to carry one pot to the chief, and this obligation persists. Apart from this, however, there does not seem ever to have been any organized system of sending tribute to the chief. Mpezeni is said to have had a monopoly of all prisoners of war, but those who had taken the captives were frequently allowed to keep them themselves. This is mentioned as a specific privilege of regional governors. Nowadays the chiefs expect hospitality when they enter the villages, but they have little call on the services of their people. The little assistance they get locally is probably less valuable than the presents they are given by men who are away working or who have just returned. When the chiefs visit the mining towns they are offered money and clothes by Ngoni working there. 622 431 [273] [727]

The chiefs own a number of guns and lend these to people they can trust. All the chiefs organize their own hunts, which differ from the hunts of ordinary people in that all the animals killed belong to the chief, who should, however, give a leg to the killer of each animal. Attendance is compulsory for adult men in the villages that are called out on the hunt, although in practice there are always many absentees. These royal hunts do not usually involve a whole county, but only part of the county. They are useful in keeping down the number of predatory animals, and damage done to crops by wild pigs and baboons is sometimes attributed to the failure of the chief to organize enough hunts. 622 224 [411] [136]

Hi Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 F85 Ngoni F85

was a son of Zongwadeba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was acting chief for some years until Chimtenga was appointed.

(15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Rambwi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongwadeba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gomani Tole, Chief Counsellor. Chief Nyhowane, Chief Military Induna. Induna: Zulu Gomani, Military Adviser; Ngwabulu, Induna Zidumbu Regiment; Sonfulu, Induna Sonfulu Regiment; Ngoi, Induna Nyhowane Regiment; Mabwi, Induna Zidumbu Regiment. Chief Gomani Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Inuti Regiment. Chief Nyhowane was Captain of the Zimpolo Regiment. Regiments:—Nyhowane, Zidumbu (black cattle, white spot), Sonfulu, Machaya Inuti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpolo. Wives of Zongwadeba who crossed over:—Chibwaya Mhlalapi, Great Mother; Swaweu Ngumuyo, First Wife; Umawe Naimo, mother of Mombera; Nyatu Naimo, mother of Mwale; Mazwebo Mhlalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku I; Chigumane, Ngulawe, Ndunya Mhamtimo, Mambwe Gomo, Voyabhani, Mwabuma, slave wife and rain maker! Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphengula. Sister:—Qudzwe.

A further list of Zongwadeba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—Mthomane, Bonyamonya, Zin-Khabi, Nqumbwi, Mhlabati, Ndunya, Malwi.

Brothers and half brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabwi, Ngoi, Sonfulu, Mabuyabuya, Ngwe, Umkwane, Ubalo, Ubhengenye, Umfina, Mtyane, Lomapela. Chief Diviner or Inyanga:—Manyumbulu.

(16) Zongwadeba's sons:—Mzeta Mpezeni, Mwala, Ndebulele, Mombera, Mwalu, Mwabule, Mwamba, Nakabwa Ngbwa, Mpezeule, Mzukuzuku (?) Kalaya, Jubwe, Sikaw, Chigumane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Mzeta) wives:—Nyemkba Mnyopa, Athengwa tribe; Lepoko Phakati, mother of Tsingo Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Mchimwaw Jere; Mtiwa Soko, Mchalanga tribe; Mawaw Soko, Mchalanga tribe, mother of Mgwaza Jere; Malunga Kuva, Mchalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Nyambiyabi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingo Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of 1898. Grandson:—Chibwa Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilian.

(18) Mzeta Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lepoko village near Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

Lepoko, wife of Mzeta Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingo was buried near the cattle kraal in Lepoko village, in 1901.

Tsingo Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipingo old camp near Mzuzu Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingo Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Velvet Valley; buried on the top of Nzeuve Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayonga (Mzeta Mpezeni's regiment); Machilongo, Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyuka, Maucho, Mazyina, Zinkondo, Mathosa, Mahora, Manyera, Mahewa, Kambayonia, Mabinkudwi, Chimalikambalowla.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

towards Ngoniland had been halted after the report of 4 January, resumed their march.

Four companies under Captain Brake reached Cinunda's on 17 January and left the next day for Fort Partridge, which was burnt by Ngoni as they arrived. On 19 January they moved on towards Fort Young. After some skirmishing they arrived there at 5.20 p.m. and relieved Wiese and his companions. Fort Young was only a few hundred yards outside Loangeni, headquarters of segment 10, and in the morning Brake found that this village and others near by, including Nsingu's, were full of warriors. Accordingly he decided not to withdraw to Fort Partridge as he had intended and sent his troops to clear the villages and burn them down. Later in the day there was organized fighting but in the face of fire from seven-pounders and Maxims the Ngoni lost heavily. The number of Ngoni warriors involved was estimated at from 4,000 to 5,000.[108]

On the next day, 21 January, Mpezeni sent messengers to Captain Brake with a present of a sheep. Brake regarded this poor present as an insult and insisted that he would negotiate only with important lieutenants. The next day, five messengers arrived with twelve head of cattle, but Brake regarded the messengers as slaves and said that if a lieutenant did not come the next day, he would deal with Cimpinga, headquarters of segment 15 where Mpezeni was living, as he had dealt with Nsingu's village. On 23 January a lieutenant and an important man arrived to see Brake and were interviewed by him the next day. They stated that Mpezeni was weary of the war brought on by the misconduct of his sons, and that he placed himself in Brake's hands to impose what conditions of peace he might choose. When Brake arrived at Cimpinga on 25 January he was met by two men who said that Mpezeni had gone into hiding outside the village. Brake told them to tell Mpezeni to come, otherwise the village would be destroyed. Brake waited until 5 p.m. and then burnt the village except for Mpezeni's own hut and those of his wives. The next day Lt. Sharp, with five men, succeeded in encountering Mpezeni, who had fifty men with him. Mpezeni asked for twenty minutes' grace while his wives got away, and managed to slip away himself.

The main body of troops under Manning arrived at Cimpinga on 28 January. Manning sent out messengers to inform the Ngoni that unless Nsingu was handed over by the night of 30 January, troops would 'penetrate to every valley in Mpezeni's country and punish every village where opposition was encountered'. Manning

[108] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 475; Bradley, *Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 44-5.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

received defiant answers to his messages and on 31 January dispatched four columns each of about two hundred men to sweep the eastern portion of the country. On 3 February Nsingu was surrounded by troops and surrendered to them. Manning tried Nsingu by court martial for murder, instigating to murder and raiding in British territory. He was found guilty and shot on 4 February in the presence of all captured lieutenants. On 5 February another column visited the southern portion of the country. Manning left the country the next day. He recommended, possibly on Deare's advice, that Mpezeni should be allowed to return as chief.

Mpezeni voluntarily surrendered to Brake on 9 February and was told he would be allowed to resettle and that his people could reoccupy their villages. A great number of these must, however, have been burnt by the troops, for even on 23 January Brake had reported that in one district there was hardly a village or hut left standing. More villages had been destroyed by the columns sent out by Manning.[107]

After Mpezeni's surrender, Brake continued trying to capture other important people thought to have been supporters of Nsingu, but it seems no more villages were burnt. Some leaders went into hiding, other like Madzimawi fled west to Nsenga country, while Mlonyeni, head of segment 6, went to Mwambera's country in northern Nyasaland. Mpezeni had at first been instructed to live in a village near his former home at Cimpinga, but was later moved to an Ngoni village near Fort Manning, which Brake was then building just inside the Nyasaland border. After a year he was allowed to return to the centre of his country and was reinstated as chief. He died from natural causes soon afterwards on 21 September 1900.[108] The leaders who had fled drifted back and no further action was taken against them. Some people began to cultivate their gardens again and to make shelters.[109] Others, particularly Cewa who had been captured only a short while before 1898, left Ngoniland and either returned to their former tribal areas or moved on elsewhere.

Although fighting between Ngoni and British ceased, there was still some scrapping between the North Charterland and the

[107] For the preceding paragraphs, see 276, fo. 372-4; 281; 284-90; 293-5; 298; *B.C.A.G.*, v, 1-3 (15 January, 5 and 26 February 1898), p. 1 of each issue; Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 14-16, 71; Baxter, 'Angoni rebellion', p. 17 (map); Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

[108] *B.C.A.G.*, 118, vii, 9 (30 September 1900), p. 3. In view of this newspaper report the statement that Mpezeni died in October, made in *Reports on the Administration* 31 *March* 1902 and followed by Poole and others, must be wrong.

[109] 202; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16; Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 42; Stigand, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 126.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

484 167 Looked at from the point of view of the individual, we find that all adult men have at some time or other been away to work, and that the majority have been to Southern Rhodesia once or twice.

Centralism

466 In their lives on the farms and in Fort Jameson, Ngoni mix with men from other tribes, and their position is largely subsumed under the conditions common to all African labourers on all European-controlled farms. The Administration does not support the Ngoni more [648] than the Cewa, or one chief more than another. As the context of the relationship becomes more and more related to the world-wide policy and economy, so the nature of the relationship becomes common to a wider group. Ngoni living in Fort Jameson Compound live lives that are closer to the lives led by other tribes in compounds in other towns than they are to those led in the village 5 miles away. 464 The phenomenon of labour migration greatly affects Ngoni social [167] structure, but is not a distinctively Ngoni institution in the same way as the Ngoni village is distinctively Ngoni. When Ngoni ex-[729] soldiers complain that when they were recruited they were promised that after the war they would get good jobs, and now find they do not get them, their sentiments derive more from their status as ex-soldiers, which they share with some millions of others, than they do from their status as Ngoni.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

ancestor cult in the head village of their clan. If they were asked 'How do you address the spirit (*tete ldhosi*)?' they gave the names and genealogy of the former heads of the clan and their attributes if they were known. If they were asked 'Where do you address the spirits?' the reply was always in terms of a particular village where a certain spirit was guarded. 769 614

The occasions on which the Swazi clan ancestors were addressed and sacrifices made were in cases of sickness of an important member of the clan. It was sometimes suggested that there might be trouble in the clan villages for which prayer should be made to the clan spirits, but when pressed the only specific instance informants could give was when the cattle did not thrive. They repudiated immediately any idea of prayer to the clan spirits in cases of drought or epidemics in the clan villages since these troubles, wherever they occurred, could only be helped by the spirits of the Paramounts who were concerned with all the land and all its people. [131]

The procedure followed in the clan head village was the same as that for addressing the spirits of the Paramounts. In that village a diviner was consulted, he named the spirit who should be addressed, a beast was sacrificed and prayers were made. This was the Ngoni pattern of the ancestor cult, and it was limited to the Swazi and some of the trans-Zambesi clans. Its correct observance required that combination of cattle, houses, and known genealogies which only the leading clans possessed. [563]

The living and the dead

At times such as funerals, and when talking about the ancestor cult, the Ngoni often used the phrase: 'Death cannot cut life.' They believed that human spirits had a continued existence after death, and that this existence was related to the place where they had dwelt, the people who were of their family and clan, and the cattle which belonged to their house and village. This continued association was not an automatic process. It had to be assured by the correct performance of the burial rites, the observance of stages of mourning and the deliberate 'bringing back' of the spirit to the village where it would be guarded and honoured after the final mourning ceremony was over. 775 769

In the Ngoni funeral rites there were distinctive elements in the burial of those belonging to Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In handling the corpse the legs were bent and drawn up to the body and the arms folded and crossed each side of the neck, so that the corpse seemed to be sitting and holding its head in its hands. It was wrapped in the skin of a newly killed beast. In the central kingdom men and women of Swazi clans were wrapped first in a sheep-skin, with a cow-skin put over it. The grave was a circular pit, with a small side chamber or shelf where the body was placed in a sitting position, propped up with large stones and facing south-east to the ancestral homeland. Personal possessions, such as skins and shields and baskets, were either put in the grave or taken to be 764 184

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The art of cultivating the ground is only now being learned by the Ngoni. Formerly this was the work of the slaves. The masters know how to kill not to till. The soil is fairly rich though not nearly so fertile as what is found at the lake shore and in the deep valleys between. Maize is the great crop. But owing to the devastation of locusts for several years in succession the Ngoni have learned to plant also reserve gardens of kassava, for the locusts and drought can scarcely affect this crop. A great variety of vegetables is cultivated, peas, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and so on. I have counted a variety of twenty-two different vegetables in the gardens beside one village.

Those vegetables are used as relish, but the staple food is always maize porridge, and a tasty dish it is. The maize is well cleaned, ground into a fine flour, and when cooked by a clever woman makes a most tempting dish of white porridge. The relish may consist of a piece of stewed fowl or goat, or well boiled vegetable. The greatest dainty that was ever offered to me was a dish of lovely maize porridge with relish of stewed caterpillars. I did without the relish on that occasion. An interesting thing about these caterpillars is that they live on the top of trees, and the natives, to get at them, will hew down the tree. You can see how delicate a dish it makes if every caterpillar in the dish has been got at the cost of a tree. They take the place of the old European dish of peacocks cooked in their feathers.

No native thinks he has eaten until he has had his porridge. A missionary whom I know once unwisely gave a feast to his elders, feeding them on European food. They ate till they could eat no more, then stretching themselves, and after politely expressing their satisfaction by audible sounds of satiety, they rose and and said, "We must now go home to our porridge."

The maize and vegetables are grown with very little trouble, but there is also a species of millet which is largely cultivated, and at great cost to the country. The ground has to be carefully prepared, trees are hewn down in the hot season, and left to dry up in the blazing sun. The whole patch of garden is covered over with these trees and the branches, then when the first clouds appear, the wood is fired. For a day it blazes, and then during the gathering of the clouds the atmosphere is thick with the smoke of burning trees. The rains come and wash the carbon into the soil, and it makes an excellent fertiliser. But the crop exhausts the ground in two or three years, so another patch of

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Marari FR4

time controlled from a mission station just inside Nyasaland, so that many people crossed to attend religious services and receive instruction. From Mpezeni's own county it is easier to get to the hospital at Fort Manning than to the one at Fort Jameson, so that people wanting European medicine tend to go to Nyasaland for treatment rather than to Fort Jameson. Nyasalanders are for their part attracted into Northern Rhodesia by the market for foodstuffs among the urban population, White and Black, of Fort Jameson and by the greater variety of goods on sale there.

N 635 [797] [743] N [438]

Other Ngoni Groups

The Fort Jameson Ngoni are conscious of their links with the other groups of Ngoni scattered over Central Africa, and of their similarity with the Ndebele and the Swazi and Zulu. The Paramount Chief is sometimes praised by the recital in the Ngoni language of the past exploits of the Ngoni, how they crossed the Zambezi, and how they conquered one tribe after another. On one occasion I heard someone who cannot speak Ngoni praise the Paramount by repeating, in Ndebele, which is similar to Ngoni, a praise of Mzilikazi[1] which he had learnt by rote. This oration was accepted without comment by the Paramount. Lancaster has recorded a legend that Lobengula[2] fled to Mpezeni after the second Matebele War, and that he died in the country.[3] Some years after his installation Mpezeni II was visited by a delegation from Mombera, chief of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland, which, it is said, came to ratify Mpezeni's position as Chief of the Fort Jameson section of the Ngoni. An important headman in Mpezeni's county, who bears the same name as Chief Chiwere of the Ngoni of Dowa District, still claims from time to time that because his namesake and alleged relative is a chief, he too ought to be a chief.

N 101 173

Nsenga and Yao

The Ngoni are on more friendly terms with the Nsenga of Petauke District than with the other matrilineal tribes of the region. Some of the kinship ties that were formed as a result of intermarriage between the two tribes in the 1870's can still be traced, and their languages are similar. Mpezeni III went in 1944 with his first lieutenant and twenty-five followers to visit the Nsenga Chief Manjawanthu, and he is expected to return the invitation.

N M 648 [197]

[1] The first Ndebele king. [2] Son of Mzilikazi, defeated by the Whites.
[3] Lancaster, p. 83. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, and Fossett, *Upengula the Scatterer*, pp. 112–24.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

631 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in
643 his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning
to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount
692 by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one
645 by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first
'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then
it was open for any of the *ahumuzana* or headmen to speak 'from the
floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to
be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from
those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with
freedom.

The topics covered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with
matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement
of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from
[744] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern
Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits.
Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men
in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice
exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages
below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for
sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said,
would have that leader recognized as a headman. This drew a number
of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme,
others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning
money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognized in the
new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages.
'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our head-
men. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant after-
thought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Para-
mount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to
[651 be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few
585] shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A
number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the
izinduna had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are
your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay
a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted
to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict
was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that
marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among
the audience during and after this discussion and the *izinduna* had to
call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had
been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese
[648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands
over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

645 He was a student of Ngoni history and custom, and used his travels as treasurer to collect new information. He always intended to write a history of the central kingdom as Cibambo had done for the northern kingdom, but his public duties never gave him time.

643 645 574 In making contact with his people and keeping in touch with his officials the Paramount did not rely only on their visits to the royal village. Two or three times a year he toured his kingdom, accompanied by his *mlomo wenkosi* and the treasurer, and stayed at the head villages of the chiefs and also of other *alumuzana*. The treasurer spoke enthusiastically of the Paramount's habit of making himself known to his people and enabling them to present petitions to him in person. He met village headmen on their own ground, and *alumuzana* who were unostentatiously directing the affairs of their villages and areas, as well as the official chiefs or Subordinate Native Authorities. He saw for himself how his own regulations were being carried out and how the measures for agricultural improvement and cattle-dipping which the Government was promoting were being adopted. These visits in his own territory were followed by visits to Blantyre and Zomba and to the mining centres outside the country where his people were working. He was thus able to check on the conditions in the subordinate chiefs' areas which had been created by the prolonged absence of men from the villages.

The Paramount and changes in law and custom

643 178 Through his school education at Blantyre, his membership of a Christian church, and through attending the chiefs' course at the Jeanes School in Zomba, the Paramount stood between the old and the new in the changing conditions in his kingdom. After the 1933 Ordinance one of the changes in administration was that a Native Authority had to budget for income and expenditure in his area. The income for 1935 for this area was £959, made up of a share of the taxes; fifty per cent. of the yearly rental of stores; court fines and fees and beer licences. The expenditure was £832, under items of salaries to the Paramount and subordinate chiefs; salaries for messengers, councillors, clerks and policemen; payment of fourpence per tax to the headmen of the villages so that it was to their advantage to collect the full amount; and a small sum for uniforms, office expenses and such items as cash boxes and handcuffs. This budget for the central Ngoni kingdom was drawn up in consultation with the District Officer by the Paramount and his treasurer. It was a source of great pride to the treasurer that he had, as we have seen, his own key to a safe in the District Office where he put the tax money collected in the area, and drew out sums needed for expenditure in the Paramount's office.

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744 653 In 1933, as already mentioned, a meeting of subordinate chiefs, *alumuzana* and headmen heard the Paramount's proposals for new regulations about village improvement and agreed to them. These regulations were

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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called 'to make a clean village', and were one of the results of the Paramount's visits to his area. They included building latrines, sweeping the open spaces round huts, disposing of rubbish, mending roofs and fences, smooth mudding of houses, digging wells. The Paramount appointed three men who were called *masanitari* to go round the villages to inspect and report to him, and instituted a system of fines for failure to carry out these measures. In addition to promoting clean villages, he ordered that cattle were to be dipped regularly, cultivation was to be carried out by a ridge system instead of mounds, and all sick people, especially women, were to attend hospital. He sent his own daughter to hospital for her confinement, and she attended the baby clinic regularly with her child.

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Some of the changes in local customs which the Paramount ordered were not so easy to enforce as the newer practices in relation to health and hygiene. He forbade drinking at night when quarrelling became rife; he prohibited Cewa dances such as *vinyau* and *malombo* and the Cewa female puberty rite of *cinamwali*. The only dances allowed were the Ngoni dance *ngoma*; the *ligubo* or war-dance at his village; and the individual hero's dance (*ligiya*) when a lion or leopard was brought to his village. Marriages had to be registered, and births and deaths recorded and reported to the Paramount when he visited the villages.

It was always possible to start an argument among the senior men sitting on the Paramount's *bwalo*, or on the steps of his court-house, either on the subject of how far Ngoni law and custom had replaced local Ntumba and Cewa custom, or on the advantages and disadvantages of the modern reforms of the Paramount. Some of the older men were anxious to establish that the Ngoni, meaning those of the trans-Zambesi clans, had not only achieved a political conquest but had also changed the practices of the local peoples and made them observe Ngoni customs. They used to assert, among other things, that the local people had become patrilineal, and had adopted a *lobola* form of marriage—statements which could easily be disproved and were laughed at by the onlookers. On the other hand, they were right when they said that Ngoni laws and court procedure were universally approved and followed, and that the younger generations at least were willing to carry out the welfare measures of the Paramount. One constant feature of all such discussions of recent changes was the steady support given by the Ntumba and Tengo clan leaders to the Paramount and his rule. This, more than any other feature, proved that the trans-Zambesi pattern of political rule had triumphed, and that in their loyalty to the Paramount and their practice of Ngoni custom the village headmen and their families could be counted on to support the rulers.

5: Allan C-5 (1941)1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Lamba FQ8
Maravi FR4

L M N 312 361 surveys. In an astonishing number of cases these sites were in completely waterless country and what were stated to have been permanent streams, pools and springs had dried up. The fierce late fires which swept through the empty country each year may have been a major cause of the dessication.

§ 4. *Roads and Watering Points*

L M N 648 491 After survey had been completed and before movement into an area started, roads (generally earth tracks twelve feet wide) were constructed. These were essential in order to facilitate movements of people and their food-stocks and goods, to enable subsequent supervision and to allow of the construction of watering-points. The preliminary surveys and the maps constructed from them were invaluable in planning the road systems in relation to topography and soils, so that they would be passable throughout the year.

L M N 648 312 653 Wherever necessary plans were prepared in advance, also on the basis of the preliminary surveys, to provide sufficient water for the number of people to be moved into each area, and the work of constructing water points was undertaken by the Water Development Department. Water was usually provided by means of dug wells (25 to 100 feet in depth), occasionally supplemented by bore-holes, but in some areas wells were unsuccessful and earth dams were constructed. In one locality, the Mushiri resettlement area of Ndola, a particularly favourable site was used to make a large central L [228] dam which was stocked with bream (*Tilapia spp.*) in the hope of producing a fish supply for the surrounding villages. A large scale water programme was undertaken, and is still in progress, in the Eastern Province and a minor programme of some thirty wells has been completed in Ndola District where natural supplies are very much better.

§ 5. *Game and Tsetse Control*

L M N 136 166 311 Another difficulty was the occurance of destructive game in unoccupied country. Villages commonly objected to movement on the grounds that elephant and wild pigs would destroy the crops, an objection which often contained a good deal of substance.

Reduction of destructive game was carried out, as far as ammunition supplies and trained African staff would allow, by the Department of Game and Tsetse Control.

N 744 [164] In the northern part of Fort Jameson Districts, where a few cases of sleeping sickness appeared among villages moved into a 'fly' area, a campaign of game elimination was undertaken by the Department in conjunction with the clearing of 'hard pan' (pockets of *Albizzia Harveyi* on compacting pedocal soils, generally near watercourses). These measures appear to be giving very satisfactory and rapid results and the fly has been much reduced or eliminated in areas where it was formerly abundant.

5: Allan C-5 (1941) 1949 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

Other parts of the Eastern Province resettlement areas are also 'fly' country, but apparently free from sleeping sickness and it is only in the northern zone that intensive measures against tsetse have been carried out so far. The large available land area in Mkushi enabled the relatively small 'fly' areas to be avoided. This was fortunate as sleeping sickness is believed to be endemic in the western 'fly' areas of Mkushi. 166 136 164 744

The resettlement area of Ndola District was believed to contain sparse 'fly' in local pockets. Trials were made by the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments in co-operation by placing herds of cattle throughout the area and grazing them within a definite range about the kraals. Ten herds each of five beasts were used ; the animals were numbered and blood slides were taken from each at frequent intervals. As a result of these trials it was found that almost the whole area was free of trypanosomyaisis and suitable for stock raising, and the small areas of 'fly' infestation were defined.

§ 6. *Method of Settlement*

Areas for resettlement were allocated to each tribe and chieftaincy in accordance with the general plan to restore the population-land balance as far as possible. Movement was, in theory at least, entirely voluntary but in many cases a good deal of persuasion was necessary to obtain the necessary number of villages. Most villages naturally preferred that their neighbour should move and that they should take over the vacated land rather than go to the trouble of moving. District Officers and Agricultural Officers held preliminary discussions with the people and the question of the villages to move into the resettlement areas was settled with the co-operation of the Native Authorities. Population counts of these villages were made, usually by District Officers. 166 621 648

Headmen and other representatives of the villagers who had finally elected to move then toured the area allocated to them and selected sites for the new villages. The headmen and the villagers almost invariably arranged this matter among themselves without any difficulty whatsoever. The selected sites were then marked on the Vegetation-Soil Map. Blocks of land having an estimated carrying capacity approximating to the total villages population, allowing for temporary absentees, were demarcated around the selected sites, using roads, streams, hills and cut or blazed lines as boundaries. Estimates of land carrying capacity were, of course, based on the traditional agriculture of the people concerned. This allocation of land areas for individual villages proved universally popular ; the people are jealous of their boundaries and, apparently, willing to maintain them. They have usually built permanent stone beacons, to replace temporary timber structures, where the boundaries are not clearly defined by natural features. [622] [311] [423]

This general method of controlled settlement was not individually applied or always possible. The great escarpment area of the Eastern Province, 166 648

854 anxious to protect her charge in every way, and with the connivance of the women helpers she made little charms of bits of roots to hang around the baby's neck to make him [751] grow quickly and to ward off sorcery and witchcraft. She [754] threaded pumpkin seeds and tied them around his neck to [856] make his teeth come quickly if they were late in appearing. These charms were generally those used by the local peoples, and Ngoni fathers were contemptuous about their use and efficacy. 'These women are spoiling our children,' they said, and then reassured themselves by remembering that a boy would be free from such women's spoiling once he went into the boys' dormitory.

Variants on the Ngoni pattern

183 This traditional pattern of authority and behaviour in respect of birth, infant care and weaning was essentially that of the [565] true Ngoni, that relatively small aristocratic group who never forgot their superior social status and its foundation in their ancestry. This first stage in the socialization of a child, from 861 birth to weaning, brought out clearly two fundamental 596 features of Ngoni social organization. One was the role played by the senior women who had themselves in their childhood been brought up on strict Ngoni lines. The father of the new baby accepted the role played by his own mother in controlling, and if necessary coercing, his young wife. Though, as we shall see later, every Ngoni boy and young man had a period of virtually complete escape from feminine control, once a man married and his young wife was established within the social group of his mother's house, he acknowledged his mother's authority over her, and particularly over the birth and care of his child. The mother-son relationship of the young father to his own mother dominated the relationship of the young mother to her child. Young Ngoni fathers never questioned their allegiance to their own mothers, cherishing them as they grew older and supporting them in their exercise of authority. Much as he loved his

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that [301] beadbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear 301 the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took 356 an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain 515 standards in their homes and in their persons, which were 182 held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not [751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government [177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

844 If a female child, "You have seen a basket." Then the man comes and sits down on the verandah and makes fire. The old fire in the hut is thrown away. The old woman takes up the new fire and kindles with it a new fire in the hut. The husband goes away to another hut. He does not now cohabit with [846] any of his other wives until his wife, who was confined, is seen again in public.

II. When they know the umbilical cord is going to break, when they set the infant on the knees (legs), they lay it on its side so that when the cord breaks it will fall on one side; for if it breaks and falls on the pubes the child will be impotent, or barren. The umbilical cord they bury on the verandah. That day is the one on which they shave the mother and child. They begin with the infant and they shave the mother. On shaving the infant's head they leave a little hair on the fontanel, and [614] should the infant be of the clan *Maseko*, they also leave a little patch on the back of the head, and 553 then his godmother gives the child a name, saying, "My grandchild's name is so and so." This name it will have until such time as it begins to laugh and notice people, then the father, should he wish, will give the child another name. When it grows up still farther it will give itself a name, saying, "Now I am so and so." When the child becomes a man he will once again discard his old name and take another. And if a person calls him by the old name, he says, "He has named me by that thing the wild bush-pigs unearth while digging with their tusks" [meaning something very old]. When they have finished the shaving, the child's grandmother 854 powders some medicine called *pfundabwe*, this she 278 mixes with castor oil and red clay, and then rubs on ●751 the fontanel. This medicine they continually renew. When the infant gets strong and big they stop. The

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

reason they put on this medicine is that they fear 854
the sun lest it strike through the skull. They also 278
take a purgative medicine called *chizuzu*, and pour 751
a decoction in a gourd used for cooking the infant's gruel. The gruel is left off once the child gets strong.

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III. Now they prepare to steam the infant. They 854
get the roots of the *Nyalinse* tree and the leaves of [824]
the *Chipunganyunyu*, and put them in a pot of water, and get four large white pebbles, and put them in the fire, and when they are red hot, lift them out between two pieces of stick, and drop them into the pot, and the steam envelops the infant. [751]
They do this because they fear a disease called *Tsempo* and *Mauka*. This done, the floor of the hut is replastered [with dung], and they set fire to every- 846
thing that was left in the hut—baskets, potsherds, and spoons. The fire in the hollow in the centre of the floor, they rake up on the floor level, and remove the ashes only, but when they come to fasten the mkuzi belt round the infant's waist, the fire is completely extinguished, and rekindled from that of some other hut. Then the husband comes and stands upright near the doorway, and little cuts are made on his leg. They begin with his big toe, and cut four little slashes, and four on his shin, and four on his knee, both sides, and do the same on the other leg, and on his chest are cut two little gashes, and on his back two. Into these cuts is rubbed some medicine for a disease called *Chinyalo*. When they do this they fear, should the man step over the spot on the verandah where the umbilical cord and after-
birth are buried, he might take this disease of the [753]
legs (Chinyalo). If the man have another wife it is she who twists the belt made from the bark of [824]
the *Mpoza* tree and places it underneath the mat where she and her husband sleep. Next morning

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao
Maravi FR4
Ngoni FR5

The placenta is buried in a refuse heap,[1] outside whence it is sometimes said to be stolen by *mphiti* (evil spirits) to make medicine. A caul is known, and now is said to be caused by the father continually wearing a hat. It is not kept for any purpose, as far as I know. If a woman die with the child unborn the child is cut out through the abdomen, when the body is in the grave, and the two bodies then buried together, the reason given being that if this is not done many other women would die in the same way. Cæsarian section is never performed; a still-born child is buried in the refuse heap; there is no treatment for still-birth.[2] Miscarriage is said to be common. Post-partum hæmorrhage is said to be one of the frequent causes of death. M 844 M [845] M [766] M [845]

After the confinement the whole body is washed, and then a piece of burning wood is placed between the legs of the woman and allowed to smoulder for several hours; this as a means of purification. M [783]

The woman stays in the house for a week. She does not resume sexual intercourse with her husband for two years unless she is the only wife, when six months to one year is allowed to elapse, though she cohabits after one or two weeks. During the puerperium there is no special diet. The child is suckled for two to three years by mother, or grandmother if the former die; or if neither are available, by the aunt (maternal). Death of the child may ensue as the result of being suckled by others. Suckling sometimes prolonged for four years, belief holding that thereby pregnancy is prevented. M 846 M 853 M [842]

After miscarriage the woman remains in the house only two days, but has to take medicine for six months, abstaining from sexual intercourse for half that period. Medicine is frequently taken to cause abortion, and may be made by one person to affect another; it is taken when a period is missed. Sterility is said to be common among women. No artificial sterility is produced, but medicine is taken and a cord run round the loins to prevent pregnancy supervening. The new-born child is first washed in ordinary water and then in the water in which a man and his wife have washed after coitus. After this the other women may touch the baby, but not young girls, otherwise it might die. If it die before it has left the house it would be buried by women just as a still-born child, the men refusing to assist. After the cord has separated (one week) the child and mother leave the house and appear in public. The child's head is oiled this day and sometimes medicine made of charcoal is pasted on with some beads as a preventive against injury by the strong sun.[3] M 845 M 847 M 844 M 766 M 846 302 751

The child is named usually after the maternal uncle's child-name which is given by the uncle (Nyasa). M 551

[1] In an Angoni village a woman I saw buried the placenta under the floor of the hut, using a hoe to dig with, upon which she first milked her breasts—the first milk. This to prevent abscess in the gland. N 751 844

[2] With still-birth, women accuse their husbands of having syphilis, and "a child is often born with sores on it." M 845

[3] Medicine called *Pyandabus*, see p. 296.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

will die. The child is in danger from the illness known as *mdulo* throughout the period from birth until the resumption of intercourse between its parents. It is not until after this ceremony, known as 'taking up the child'[23] that the mystical link between man, wife, and child is broken and the man free to commit adultery without mystical retribution. Thus while there are definite rights and obligations between husband and wife which can be enforced in the courts or are susceptible to the pressure of public opinion there are also in the critical situations of pregnancy and childbirth other mystical forces operating which unite the couple to a greater extent than at any other time. To a lesser extent the same principle operates when a woman menstruates. Her husband is in danger from her menstrual blood. She may not lie on the same mat with him and if he has a bed she must lie on the floor. If he has intercourse with her while she is menstruating he will contract an illness called *lugola*[24] whose symptoms are a very black face, nasal discharge, and continual feeling of cold. After death a man's widows are in danger of *mdulo* if they commit adultery during the first month of mourning.

We see then that the relationship between a man and his wife is partly defined in legal terms, with mutual duties and rights that are enforceable in the courts. This relationship is documentated and validated by the transfer of money and cattle from one group to the other and by the performance of the various marriage ceremonies. Because of the relationship between them, man and wife live together, sleep together, eat together and work together. But above all, together they produce and rear children. It is primarily because of these children that the kin of man and wife are concerned in the marriage relationship. It is during the long process of producing children that the two spouses are most closely associated with each other, and actions of the one in some mystical way directly and automatically influence the well-being of the other.

When a marriage grows out of flirtation between a young man and a young woman, there is at first sexual attraction between them. With the passage of time this may give place to a broader sentiment of mutual affection and respect. To this extent we may say that man and wife come to love each other. But whereas young men frequently discuss with other men the attraction they experience towards women, unmarried or married, they do not do this when they have settled down and begun to acquire prestige in the community. A man may quarrel with his wife in public, but he never expresses his affection for her, save in the intimacies of the hut. Men and women mourn their spouses with great lamentation at funerals, but while this may sometimes be the expression of a personal

[23] *Kutola mwana*. Cf. *kutenga mwana* among the Cewa.

[24] Cf. Read, op. cit., 'The moral code . . .', p. 19, where she describes a medicine called *ugola* with which men doctored their wives so that their lovers would die of a wasting sickness. Also cf. Zulu *ulugola*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene 602 in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

N 753 The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugola* 182 supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour 626 which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory N it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use 755 of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man 754 to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even N the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, 626 have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, N although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern [171] Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other N people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can M only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at [626] both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugola* [177] and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[5]

N To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act 753 as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in 834 running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the 164 big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an N efficient deterrent of adultery.

581 Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you N may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable 602 and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[5] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

reason they put on this medicine is that they fear 854
the sun lest it strike through the skull. They also 278
take a purgative medicine called *chizuzu*, and pour 751
a decoction in a gourd used for cooking the infant's
gruel. The gruel is left off once the child gets
strong. 846

III. Now they prepare to steam the infant. They 854
get the roots of the *Nyalinse* tree and the leaves of
the *Chipunganyunyu*, and put them in a pot of [824]
water, and get four large white pebbles, and put
them in the fire, and when they are red hot, lift
them out between two pieces of stick, and drop them
into the pot, and the steam envelops the infant.
They do this because they fear a disease called [751]
Tsempo and *Mauka*. This done, the floor of the hut
is replastered [with dung], and they set fire to every- 846
thing that was left in the hut—baskets, potsherds,
and spoons. The fire in the hollow in the centre of
the floor, they rake up on the floor level, and remove
the ashes only, but when they come to fasten the
mkuzi belt round the infant's waist, the fire is com-
pletely extinguished, and rekindled from that of
some other hut. Then the husband comes and
stands upright near the doorway, and little cuts are
made on his leg. They begin with his big toe, and
cut four little slashes, and four on his shin, and four
on his knee, both sides, and do the same on the other
leg, and on his chest are cut two little gashes, and
on his back two. Into these cuts is rubbed some
medicine for a disease called *Chinyalo*. When they
do this they fear, should the man step over the spot
on the verandah where the umbilical cord and after-
birth are buried, he might take this disease of the [753]
legs (Chinyalo). If the man have another wife it
is she who twists the belt made from the bark of
the *Mpoza* tree and places it underneath the mat [824]
where she and her husband sleep. Next morning

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

846 she rises early to go and fasten the belt on the infant. Should the man not have a second wife, the one to put the belt on the child is his (the man's) sister. The man does not immediately see the face of his child; some day these same old women make him take it in his arms [hands]. The father then makes them a present of beads.

854 IV. When they notice the infant is beginning to grow his bottom teeth and to smile at people, the 852 elders tell the father that, "Now you must bring 301 the child into the village." The child's grandmother ties up beforehand some *lizango*. She begins with a little strip of calico, and rolls it round and round the medicine charm and along with a piece of string; then takes a little piece of skin and sews it over this, and takes some beads and sews them on the skin. The mother cooks some relish beforehand. That evening the husband and wife sleep together (this is "to bring the child into the village.") She cuts off the old belt the child is wearing, and puts on the new one with the *lizango* medicine in it, some more of the medicine, similarly tied up, is placed under the infant's head. In the morning she takes the relish to present to the two old women, and then takes the *lizango* she had placed under the child's head and ties it round his neck, and then takes a belt of beads, interspersed [789] with little wooden charms, and adorns the child. When in time the *lizango* belt breaks, they do not look for it or replace it. In the event of an infant dying before he has been "brought into the village," 766 they bury it in some open glade, near the edge of some stream, its funeral is attended by women only. Should a man tramp over the spot where the child [753] is buried, he "has taken" the disease known as *nyesi*. Such a grave is known as *nsenye*.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

X

THE LOTS

753 791 I. If a man be ill, his companion goes off and seeks the oracle man. He comes outside his hut and hails him, "Zikomo." The owner says, "Yes, come in here." And the man enters the hut, and says, "We have come to you that you may trace a spirit for us." Then the man takes out his lots from a little cat's-skin bag, and takes some ashes and rubs the lots with them, and begins to consult them, and says, "Are you nursing some sick person?" And he replies, "Yes, indeed, I have been attending on a sick person; the little thing that is ill is a child, and I cannot get sleep for him (lit. with him), and he will not even eat gruel, and I said, 'But I must go to the oracle man; perhaps there he may follow up for me the spirit which is causing the child to be ill.'" Then he begins to consult the lots, and says, "It is the spirit of the child's grandmother; it is she who is causing the child to be ill." And he who has come to consult the lots replies, "I have heard." And the lots again speak (through the man): "Why do you not keep me in mind, and even my grandchild, you also go without calling me to mind," but if you give the spirit a fowl take it from me, the child is sitting up; when you go and take the fowl, kneel down with it, and say, "Grandmother, there is the fowl on account of which you are taking a life" (*muntu*). Then the man who has come from the road (to consult the lots) says, "Put the spirit of mine back in the bag."

782 755 II. Then he goes home, and takes his fowl, and kneels down with it, and takes a gourd-cup of water,

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVI

THE KANONOMERA DANCE

If a person is ill, they go and consult the lots, 753
and then he of the lots says, "It is the spirit of his 791
grandmother, it is wanting a dance; when you dance 755
that dance, you can take it from us the child is 782
sitting up." And they go to the village and take a basket of grain, and with it they address the spirit, saying, "There is the grain for which you are killing a person; when we have made beer, let us see the person (who is ill) sitting up." And then they assemble every one, and the day the beer is strained, they all come together, and that evening they enter the hut (where the sick person is), and begin to clap their hands to rouse the spirit, and then they see the sick one is trembling and crying out, and then the people say (to the spirit), "You must not come with war, it is we who have called you; see here at the village the drums have come, but let them depart again without anything happening to mar the dance." And when they have finished
clapping their hands the dance comes forth, and the 535
drums begin to sound, and they are dancing. He 755
who remembers a song sings it; when one is pos- 782
sessed by a spirit, down he falls, and they drag him 787
out of the dance, and deck him with calico and skins of animals, and he again enters the circle and dances. When a person is possessed by a child's spirit, they bind his calico tightly round him that it be strong, because that person is wishing to strip it off, and dance naked, as a child does not wear anything. Should a woman be seized by a man's spirit, saying, "I am so and so," they deck her with a

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity.
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [821]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [825]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then [753]
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 787
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [241]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [726]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when [643]
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to [177]
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor [177]
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This story is followed by Bryant but does not occur in any accounts collected from Ngoni themselves. It seems probable therefore that this seceding section was not numerous or important.[27] 173 668 167

There are no other disruptions mentioned in the literature, and it seems probable therefore that until the death of Zwangendaba, the State remained largely intact. However the process, common in Bantu Africa, by which rival claimants to a throne succeed only in dividing their kingdom, operated with striking effect as soon as the founder of the State was buried. The elimination of segment 18 has sometimes been suggested as the reason why the State broke up, but it is clear from comparative considerations that a State of this kind was likely at any time to break into a number of independent groups, and that this tendency was greatest at the death or senescence of the king. 619 [643]

About 1840 a number of important people, mainly coming from south of the Zambezi, were killed off as a result of an internal struggle for power in which it appears that the recently captured Tumbuka, who were successful witch-finders, were allied with the Swazi and other Ndandwe against the Tsonga from the Delagoa Bay region.[28] Unfortunately there is very little information available on the relationship of this struggle to the rest of the political system. It is, however, clear that the effect of killing off a large number of Ngoni of Tsonga origin was insufficient to prevent the State breaking up a few years later. [754]

When Zwangendaba died, his sons were still young and, for the time being, effective leadership of the State was disputed between men of his own generation whose positions are shown in Diagram 2. His brothers, the lords of segments 5 and 6, were already dead. Fraser describes the dispute as a struggle between Ntabeni's children and Mgayi. Ntabeni was a younger brother of Zwangendaba and the lord of segment 7 while Mgayi was Zwangendaba's father's younger brother's son who, on Chibambo's evidence, represented the interests of the residue of segment 1. Rangeley has a slightly different version and makes Mgayi a supporter of segment 4. Poole, presumably following Fraser, says with some qualification that Ntabeni and Mgayi both claimed the chieftainship. From what we know of the south-eastern Bantu, and from our knowledge of present-day Ngoni, it seems unlikely that a brother would claim to be the legitimate heir in preference to a son, however much he might strive to gain ascendancy over the son. It seems preferable to follow Young and Chibambo in regarding Ntabeni and Mgayi 173 114 643

[27] Posselt, *Fact and fiction*, pp. 146-7, 176; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 464 *f*.
[28] See p. 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 reigning lord of the segment. It is probable that in this instance
643 the divergence of interest had been increased by the shooting of Nsingu, for Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu and grandson of Mpezeni I, was only a young boy and in the hands of guardians who were commoners and who might respond to pressure from their ward's father's paternal half-brother. So far as can be gathered from the published account of the meeting called by the Administration to
[648] discuss the matter, the young Paramount was supported by the lords of segments 12, 14 and 17 and by the senior lieutenants of segment 10. He was opposed by the heads of segments 9, 13 and 16 and by the senior lieutenant of segment 4. Segment 15 seems not to have taken part in the dispute. Thus the main cleavage appears to have been between segments 10 and 12 on the one hand and the residue of 4 on the other. Segment 13, in terms of its structural position, was on the wrong side; this may have been connected with the fact that the regional governor of Mpezeni I who led segment 13 was born in the headquarters of segment 4. After a quarrel about succession to his father's office of lieutenant in that segment, he moved to segment 10 where he found favour with the chief and was later promoted to regional governor. In the 1903 dispute he apparently transferred his support back to his natal segment.[2]

The attempt to assume the name Zwangendaba failed. The young chief's supporters outnumbered their opponents at the meeting and his spokesmen argued that he had been recognized by all the other chiefs and by the Administration as Paramount of the whole Ngoni country. If his rival took the name he would be led to usurp the authority of the young Paramount. The Native Commissioner then ruled that the name could not be taken.

Throughout his reign Mpezeni II was opposed by a half-
643 brother, a son of Nsingu by a different mother. This man was older
611 than Mpezeni and claimed that his mother had really been Nsingu's
954 great wife, or at least that Nsingu had intended to make her so
669 before he was shot in 1898. This rivalry took two forms. He
578 endeavoured to bring destruction to the chief and his cattle by sorcery, and on one occasion made what seems to have been a half-hearted attempt to kill him with a spear. At the same time he endeavoured to establish his own segment as a county of its own, and in this he was assisted by others who fancied themselves as chief of the proposed new county.[3] The sorcery failed, not only because it was merely sorcery, but also because sorcery and

[2] *N.E.R.G.G.*, i, 4 (1 August 1903), Supplement. See p. 35.
[3] See pp. 143*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of 643
influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed 611
for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express [754]
their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to [669]
establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling [872] with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor 643
chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount 578
Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the 692
courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically 643
important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with 648
the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for [685] embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly [186] marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

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The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and 643
his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each 645

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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not eat so much as other people. He must leave enough for others or he would be ashamed. He would take a few lumps of porridge from one wooden dish (*ingcwembe*) and then hand the other dishes to those around him. Each day one beast had to be killed from the house of each wife of the *inkosi* in turn. It was their food and they could not cease killing. The *inkosi* had his own great garden. After hoeing the *induna* of the *indlunkulu* called all the village people to come and plant these gardens first before their own. They did this because if a man was hungry, he went to the *inkosi* and said 'I am hungry' and he was given food to eat.

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[754]

In this account it is clear that the daily life of the Paramount had both private and public aspects. In private he was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. Hence he depended on the services of a trusted attendant to see that no sorcerers could make bad magic from his excreta; and he ate no food except that prepared by his own wives and mothers. On the other hand, in public he appeared as the generous and ceremonious ruler, providing food, beer and snuff for his visitors, and himself practising that restraint in eating which was characteristic of Ngoni good manners both from host and guest.

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In addition to the daily routine of sharing food with his immediate entourage and chance visitors, the Paramount had special feasts known as *izipheko*. These feasts, as described by Cibambo, were related to the bringing of tribute, thus emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the gifts passing between the people and the Paramount.

¶ Along with the tribute the *inkosi* had his feasts with which he wanted to feed his people. At an appointed time the *inkosi* and his wives and mothers prepared beer and three or four beasts for his men and women. Men ate their meat in the kraal but the women at the *indlunkulu*. All the people thanked him everywhere, including the women, and the men were thanking with dancing. Even although people were not called by the *inkosi*, yet many people came to his village to beg food from the *inkosi*. Also by telling the *izinduna* the *inkosi* would invite people to eat with him, and many would come from far away. The wives of the *inkosi* and his mothers were cooking soft or hard porridge, with different *imbido* (relishes) so that the *inkosi* could give them to his people. They would all be waiting in the kraal. A generous *inkosi* liked to stay in the kraal so that his food should be sent there in order to feed both notable people and poor people. He would be watching whom to give food to.

In this way although there was tribute (*imitulo*), it was not very burdensome. People did not complain to the *inkosi* about it. It was as if they were playing, because of the dancing. Those who had no wealth came to the *inkosi* and begged him to help them. The *inkosi* gave cattle to these people without asking them to pay again, because he said 'The people and the cattle, they are all mine. They are eating each other.'

'There was an apparent contradiction here. On the one hand there was true reciprocity, that of the people who brought tribute or gifts and in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

854 anxious to protect her charge in every way, and with the connivance of the women helpers she made little charms of bits of roots to hang around the baby's neck to make him [751] grow quickly and to ward off sorcery and witchcraft. She [754] threaded pumpkin seeds and tied them around his neck to [856] make his teeth come quickly if they were late in appearing. These charms were generally those used by the local peoples, and Ngoni fathers were contemptuous about their use and efficacy. 'These women are spoiling our children,' they said, and then reassured themselves by remembering that a boy would be free from such women's spoiling once he went into the boys' dormitory.

Variants on the Ngoni pattern

183 This traditional pattern of authority and behaviour in respect of birth, infant care and weaning was essentially that of the [565] true Ngoni, that relatively small aristocratic group who never forgot their superior social status and its foundation in their ancestry. This first stage in the socialization of a child, from 861 birth to weaning, brought out clearly two fundamental 596 features of Ngoni social organization. One was the role played by the senior women who had themselves in their childhood been brought up on strict Ngoni lines. The father of the new baby accepted the role played by his own mother in controlling, and if necessary coercing, his young wife. Though, as we shall see later, every Ngoni boy and young man had a period of virtually complete escape from feminine control, once a man married and his young wife was established within the social group of his mother's house, he acknowledged his mother's authority over her, and particularly over the birth and care of his child. The mother-son relationship of the young father to his own mother dominated the relationship of the young mother to her child. Young Ngoni fathers never questioned their allegiance to their own mothers, cherishing them as they grew older and supporting them in their exercise of authority. Much as he loved his

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Girls are not examined to see if they have been deflowered. Many girls have love affairs with young boys before they reach puberty, and at one time children built play-houses, after the manner of the Cewa, where they pretended to be adults playing at cooking and copulation. The Cewa encouraged this among their own children and at puberty Cewa girls, if not already deflowered, had their hymen forcibly ruptured in a prescribed manner. We have seen that the Ngoni formerly expected girls to be chaste before marriage while the Cewa believed that if a girl did not copulate at puberty she would die. It seems nowadays that adults expect that pre-pubescent boys and girls will play together sexually and that, provided this takes place with a certain amount of discretion, nothing is done to stop it. Boys and girls visit each other in dormitories, hoping that their voices will not be recognized by people in neighbouring huts. After puberty young men and women continue to flirt together, individuals varying in the extent to which they copulate. Grown men do not usually sleep with young girls, nor grown women with young boys, and if this does happen and is discovered there is always the suspicion of sorcery. The Ngoni believe, with most of their neighbours, that in order to make many of the anti-social medicines of sorcery effective, a sorcerer must copulate with some partner morally forbidden to him (or her), such as a close relative or a person of greatly disparate age or an animal. With this background of belief, Ngoni say that after puberty young men and women naturally like to frolic together and not with their juniors. Within this framework of tolerated covert activity no particular arrangements are made at puberty, save that if a man is betrothed to a young girl he will be invited formally to come and sleep with her once while she is secluded.

Thus from an early age their future roles as husbands and wives condition the sexual activities of boys and girls. A girl who allows herself to be seduced too easily is regarded as foolish and a man who is for ever chasing unmarried girls when he should be founding a family is regarded as immature. But sexual activity is taken for granted, and the only stipulations are that it should be conducted discreetly so that the older people in the village are not forced to notice it, and that unmarried girls should not bear live children. Knowledge of abortifacients seems to be fairly common and recently contraceptives, issued originally to soldiers in the 1939-45 war, have come into use. Few cases of seduction of unmarried girls come before the courts.

Despite the emphasis on sexual satisfaction rather than on fertility, Ngoni men and women still desire children. This is so for men despite the low incidence of bridewealth payments and the uncertainty about the custody of children. A man's children may decide to live with their mother's people, but they are still his children and he can always follow them from village to village in his old age wherever they decide to settle.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

married women chosen for them by their kinsfolk while they were 584
away during the 1939-45 war. If the woman selected for him by one relative is unsatisfactory, a man may turn to another relative for help, as is shown in the following incident.

Case history 5

Ahab, a young man of about twenty, was working in Fort Jameson. He wrote to his father in the village enclosing money for the legalization payment, asking that his father should find him a wife. His father spoke to a friend living in another village who had an unmarried daughter. The friend agreed that his daughter should marry Ahab, but the girl said that she wanted to see Ahab before making up her mind about him. Ahab was [581]
told of the arrangement but refused to agree to it, saying that he knew that the girl chosen was a prostitute.

Ahab then asked a classificatory grandmother to find him a wife. This woman found a girl and when Ahab came home from work he and a friend went for a walk to the girl's village to spy her out. The friend, on seeing the girl, advised Ahab against marrying her and the negotiations again fell through.

Ahab asked his grandmother to try again and this time he approved of the girl selected. The legalization payment was made and the girl came to live in Ahab's village with his grandmother. After a week or so, she was [591]
taken by the grandmother and other important women of the village into the township to start living with Ahab.

On the other hand a man may desist from marrying the girl of his choice in the face of parental opposition. For example, the first girl that Amos found for himself was opposed by his father because [154]
her father was a sorcerer; the second on the ground that her parents [581]
were unreliable and that she was a cross-cousin, a point against her in that Amos's brother had married a cross-cousin and the marriage was not a success; only with the third choice did the father agree to his marriage.

The initiative in arranging a marriage lies with the man and his kin rather than with the woman, and a girl who goes too much out of her way to attract a husband risks her reputation and may be regarded as a potential prostitute. On elopement, it is the woman 583
who runs off to the man's village or to his place of work, and it might be expected that her relatives would initiate action to bring her back or to claim damages for abduction. Sometimes a man does take action against the lover with whom his daughter has run away, and the lover pays a beast. Another man, however, may take no steps to follow his runaway daughter, merely refusing to recognize the existence of any marriage between her and her lover, and sometimes denying any knowledge of the lover's name. If the woman shows no sign of returning to her own village, efforts may be made to bring her children back to her parents to be brought up. Sometimes a man who has eloped with a woman later approaches her parents, apologizes for his precipitate action and makes them gifts, after which they may decide to recognize him as a son-in-law.

If a man shows his intention of marrying despite the disapproval 584
of his close kin, they can retaliate by not helping him financially,

602 that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address
593 of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife,
684 the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration.
692 Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

593 The general principle that no court action involving the husband's
684 sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

578 Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their
602 relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both
[845] from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman
[787] had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who
[154] was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go
167 away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great
602 deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village.

Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel[26] married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers.

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased.

3. *Polygyny*

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organize large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance

[26] See genealogy, p. 81.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 581 to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene 602 in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

N 753 The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugola* 182 supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour 626 which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory N it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use 755 of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man 754 to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, N depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even 626 the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, N although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern [177] Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other N people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can M only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at 626 both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugola* [177] and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[8]

N To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act 753 as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in 834 running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the 164 big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an N efficient deterrent of adultery.

581 Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you N may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable 602 and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[8] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

unity of full-siblings is the result of the established relationship 602
between their mother and father. A man's relationship with his
wife may in turn lead to solidarity between their children, but until
his wife has stayed with him for many years and borne him live 593
children their own relationship is always uncertain. He must
acknowledge that she too has rights, that she must be clothed and
respected and must be slept with. He must not abuse her at a beer
party or hit her too often, and he must not try to trap her into
adultery. When she runs away, he must go after her to apologize.

8. The support of relatives

It is the tenuousness of the marriage relationship which necessitates 581
the co-operation of the relatives in the marriage. There are occasions 602
when affines quarrel, as when a young woman is encouraged by her
husband's kin to remain in their village to be delivered of her first
child and at the same time is under pressure from her own relatives
to move back to her own village for the confinement. A man who
is anxious to build up his own cluster of huts in a village may attempt
to force his sons and daughters to bring their spouses to live near
him against the wishes of his children's affines. These struggles, [591]
where they occur, are expressed in terms of residence, for it is common
residence that welds kinsfolk together. But in general affines
co-operate rather than quarrel. Litigation about marriage payments
is rare, and frequently divorces are granted without consideration
of the return of marriage payments. During a marriage it is more
important that the married couple should be exhorted to adjust
themselves to each other and be tolerant of each other's foibles,
than that each side should insist on its formal rights. Old people
try to prevent marriages they consider unsuitable, but they do not
usually try to make difficulties once a marriage has taken place.
The successful marriages of a man's children bring him grand-
children to care for and play with, and *children's parents-in-law*
who will welcome him and give him food, even if they do not always
add to his own cluster of huts.

To some degree people appear to be afraid of the sorcery of an [754]
offended affine, but this is not a well-developed idea, and more
frequently people express their reasons for trying to patch up a
marriage that is in danger of breaking in terms of the need for 581
everyone to 'live well together', without bringing troubles into the 621
village. The well-being of the village and of the local group of
kinsfolk within it has ultimate value for the Ngoni and is an end in [181]
itself. It follows that serious quarrels can only be resolved by
means of some new residential alignment, involving moves from
one cluster to another, and from one village to another. The
village itself does not exist in isolation, and a village thrives because 628
of the ties that link it to other villages in the vicinity. Marriages 602
link villages together, by the bonds of affinity which cut across
village boundaries, and by the interaction between groups of affines 581

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

I

THE ORDEAL POISON

I. In the event of a chief's wife dying, or perhaps his child, the chief holds a consultation with the village elders, saying, "You at the village here, we wish to consult the oracle." At the "chief's" ordeal they summon all the headmen, but in the case of the "people's" ordeal, every one partakes of the poison. When they see that people are often dying they talk it over with the headmen, saying, "Look here at the village, here people are dying and we wish to summon the medicine man, that he may follow up the clue for us at the village." So they send one youth to summon the medicine man. He arrives very late in the evening. They put him in some hut, without people knowing that he has come. In the morning a young man gets up, and goes and stands at the open space in the village [where the men sit and talk, and where the different disputes are settled], and when he has climbed on an ant-hill, that all men may hear, he says, "Do you hear, you must not eat your '*nsima*' porridge to-day; he who is asleep let him arise that he may himself hear. They are saying you all must bathe, you taste a little of the beer that is not sweet, to-day."

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II. He who was about to have his morning sup, pushes aside his flour against the hut wall, he begins

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 695 791 to hide his household goods for, says he, "How do we know we shall return from there." And all their beads are taken off. When they see the sun is beginning to rise, every one assembles. And then they begin to pick out some strong young men, saying, "So and so must stay behind, and so and so, they must look after their companions and keep guard over the village, lest the medicine man's children begin to pillage the property of them who do not die." And then they begin to set out to go to the spot the poison is to be drunk at, and they [412] carry in readiness a grain mortar and a pestle (just any mortar), and follow the path in single file, and come to where the witch doctor is, and he begins to arrange them in a line; they do not turn their backs to the sun, the women spread out in one line, the men in another. The place is black with people. [242] The medicine man has his feather head-dress on, and goat's-hair bands are round his wrists. And then some old man gets up to present that for which the medicine is pounded, perhaps a goat, and this is for opening his bag [where he keeps the poison].

III. Thereupon the doctor says, "Give to me the spirit of the dead." Then that old man gets up, and going up to the village chief, tells him "The doctor is seeking the spirit of the dead." And the chief speaks, saying, "Well, and know you not them who have died here?" And then the old man gives him, the doctor, the spirit, saying, "Here so and so, and so and so have died, and it is on their account we summon you." Then the pounder of the poison says, "Give to me the partakers of human flesh who have eaten these ones you name." And then they call up two people, a man and a woman, saying, "Let her of the race of the Hills, and him of such and such a clan come here." And them they thus called come and stand near the mortar. Then

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the pounder of the ordeal poison opens his monkey-skin wallet, pulls out the poison bark, and breaks it off into the mortar with a hippo's tooth. When he is chipping it off, he does not finish all the bark he has in his hand, he chips off a little and leaves the rest. When he is doing this the bark jumps, and falls on the left, and again on the right. They surely know that here to-day wonders will befall and that men will die and women. Then the medicine man says, "Give us men to go and draw water." Then the old man asks, "How many men shall we bring?" And perhaps he says, "Bring three, because the people are many," and the doctor tells them, "You must not glance behind, but just draw the water and return." (Lest they give warning to the flesh-eaters.) When he has finished cutting down the bark, he bids his attendant "begin to pound." They do not pound the poison bark as they would grain, they pound, thud! thud! and turn the pestle in the hands. While the attendant is pounding, the pounder of the bark keeps tapping, rat, tat, tat, on the mortar, with his monkey stick [which monkeys use for digging roots], and chants—

IV. "You have heard mother of children,
Mother of children of *Kundamva*.
Indiscriminate slaughter is the game war plays,
It slew the baboon at *Bongwe*,
When you slay let your victims fall backward and not forward.
Bag, make the poison hear my words.
You are come into the village, you are their advocate.
They say, that here so and so and so and so have died.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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It is to plead for them you have been summoned.
There they are, she of the house of the Hills, and he of so and so's clan.
She of the Hills, it is she who has taken the basket.
He, the man, took the little sharp knife,
If it be not you, on the spot, on the spot, you must vomit,
If it be you,
Oh slay, slay, slay."

When they come with the water, the medicine man takes a water-jar full, and pours it into the mortar. You can hear the froth come foaming up, and then he draws a cup of the poison and struts about stirring it with his monkey stick, and uttering this incantation—

"Pick them out, pick them out, pick them out,
You see only the morning's sun, its rays when sinking in the west you must not see.
Are you not that one?
You went to Zomba,
You beat the drum,
It was heard in the 'Never-reach-there country' of the fly,
The spurred fly.
There is a squint-eyed lizard there.
If it were not you who beat that drum,
You must vomit.
If it were you,
You must die.

V. "You went into the regions of the air,
You captured a ray of the sun,
You likened it unto a girdle,
Saying, 'Do you be my strength,
That when the poison comes,

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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You will give me the mastery over it,
I shall win,
This girdle do you sever, sever, sever.'
You swallowed the egg of a fish-eagle,
That the poison when it came might become as naught,
This egg you must smash.

"You took the spleen of a crocodile,
You laid it in your heart,
You took a python's belly,
You swallowed it, that power might be yours,
Do you [my poison bark] rend these.

"You took wax,
You smeared it on your feet,
Going in your neighbours' fields,
Going with stealthy tread to gather up his grain,
To dust off again in your own garden,
Your companions are in want,
You have wealth to overflowing.

VI. "When you see your neighbour's child,
You say, 'Why should he walk thus at large?'
But surely I had better have eaten him
He who thinks thus shall enter here [into the mortar].

"The broken gourd-cups off the grave you beat together, that they might turn into snakes.
Was it not you who sang the song, saying,
'If it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy,
They go about rolling it,
If it be small and light, they just lift it' [the corpse].

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Was it not you who sang so?
I seem to think I heard you.

"That little razor have you brought it now?
No, I have forgotten it [supposed answer].

"Maiden, beautiful maiden, E! E! E!
You took the arm-bones of the children of men,
You used to go and dance with them,
The squint-eyed lizard is on his seat, and
Sounding the drum,
Wheeling ever one way.
Now in the opposite direction, see they have rent the drum.

"There is a thing that walks by night,
There is something that comes by day,
It has seen him."

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VII. "No, to-day we have met each other, the boundary is there, from the east to the zenith is yours, from the zenith to the west is mine alone." He kneels down where one of the human flesh-eaters is, he does not address the demon himself, but talks with another who is next him, and says, "My child, where did you get your black magic; did you get it that you might be all-powerful, you alone?" When he gets up he exclaims, "I have got you, you must not escape, you must go in there, in there, you must enter here" [into the mortar]. When he sees that his attendant has finished pounding the poison, he takes some water and pours it into the mortar, and stirs it, and removes the dregs and takes two gourd-cups, and fills them with the poison. The woman and the man, they are the first to drink. Then the doctor makes every one else do so. Two men drink, he draws again, and gives two women. And so on until all have partaken.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

VIII. Then the witch finder says, "That beer I had great trouble in buying, you must not waste it, no, you there, we only told you to sip it, do not you see it is a small pot." Then he knocks down the mortar with his foot, and beats together two pieces of metal. When he sees that one human flesh-eater is dead, he says he has caused the mortar to fall. Some, when dying, cry out [like a hyæna]. "Uwi, uwi"; and people know he used to transform himself into that animal; should he roar like a lion, they know he was at times that mighty beast. Others again, when dying, clench their hands. Should they clench one hand, it is known they have eaten five people; if they clench both, men know their victims have been ten. When all have vomited, he causes the survivors to jump over the path. When he sees a man has jumped, he knows that one is an ordinary person and not an eater of human flesh, and the reason the doctor knows this is because he has washed the poison with a medicine made from the "*siswiri*" mouse [and it cannot cross a path and live]. Then the medicine man says, "Let them return to the village now, where a tree has fallen you cannot hide the fall thereof." Any one who has withstood all these tests, on seeing the grass tuft on his hut, dies. When the doctor hears a man has died, he goes to the place to strip him of his cloth and cut off the belt of beads from his waist. Of them who die at the drinking-place and who are free born, their friends make some payment to the doctor, saying, father has died from the poison. Anything the dead man be a slave they burn the body. They who remained behind at the village will drink on the morrow. The pounder of the poison, on returning to his home, is given a goat, perhaps a slave whose "Let me go and bury them." Should the dead

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6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 human flesh-eaters may have worn, the doctor takes
695 home with him and washes his poison bark with it,
791 that it may still retain its virtue. In the case of a man who dies from drinking the poison, his spirit is
[795] not brought back to the village, but is driven out into the bush.

II

A FUNERAL

764 I. When a person dies every one is told that so and so, who was ill, is "finished for." Then the village elders come together and go into his hut. They begin to bathe the body and anoint it with oil, folding the knees against the chest, and laying the palms of the hands against the cheeks, the arms being bent from the elbows. Then they take a large flat stone, set it against the hut wall, and on it place the body in a sitting position. Then they commence to wail, the women folk only are in the hut where the corpse is, the men are outside, and the children on the verandah. They lament, saying, "Alas, alas, my husband, what shall I do this day?" [The women pass the night in the hut with the dead body, the men sleep outside.] Next morning, when it is dawn, some men take their hoes, and sacrificial flour, and go to some resting-place on the wayside, and sprinkle some flour at the foot of a tree, and set out again, and when now they are drawing near the burial ground, the one who is in front picks up a stone and throws it, with the words, "We have passed." Then they commence to clear a piece of ground, and take the flour and mark out the grave.

Ih Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 *Circa*

1846. Death of Ntabeni in U'fipa country.

1847. Death of Gwaza Tole in U'fipa country. Northward trek of a body of Ngoni led by Mgai.

1848. Ngoni at Victoria Nyanza.

1849. Death of Mgai in Sukuma country. Zulu Gama and his people broke away into Songea. They were followed by Mombera's adherents, who caught them up. Mombera's people badly beaten; the fight took place near Old Langenburg. Mombera returned.

1850. Mpezeni and Mperembe break away and enter the Wina and Wemba country. Mombera and Mtwalu move to the Henga country.

1855. Mombera's Ngoni in the Tumbuka country in the vicinity of Hora Mountain.

1856. Mpezeni skirted the Wemba country on southward migration and raided Wina and Lala tribes en route, east of Bangweulu.

1858. Death of Manukusa; his son, Maweva, succeeds him.

1860. Mpezeni's Ngoni at Cheronga on the Mchinga escarpment where an encampment was made, crops were grown, and local natives raided for slaves. Maweva defeated by Mzila, son of Manukusa.

1861. Mzila takes chieftainship.

1861. Uloziba, Great Wife of Mzilikazi, died at Inyati, Oct. 5th, 1861.

1862. Zombo Boma re-occupied by Albino Manuel Pacheeho.

1865. Mpezeni's Ngoni at Mkoma and Mbangombe Hills. Further encampment. Tsingu Jere born, son of Mpezeni Jere by his wife, Lupoko.

1868. Zula Gama crossed the Shire river, 5th September. Death of Chief Mzilikazi at Inyati. Mpezeni at Mpinduka Hill, Matambadzi Stream. Death of Induna Njekwane. Mperembe's Ngoni defeated by the combined forces of Arab traders and Wemba near Chikumbo, Lake Bangweulu district.

1869. Mombera turned back, crossed the Luangwa river and joined Mtwalu and Mperembe in the Tumbuka country.

1870. Lobengula, son of Mzilikazi by his wife, Fulata, crowned King of the Ama-Tebele.

1873. Mpezeni at Mtenguleni-Uka-Sosera V. at the Lutembwe. R. Mpezeni at the Msipazi river.

●[154] 1878. "Ningi," sister of Lobengula, murdered on an alleged charge of witchcraft, causing Lobengula's wife, Loskeyi, to have a still born child.

1880. Massacre of the Tumbuka on Hora Mountain by Mombera's Ngoni.

1881. Mpezeni at Langeni Village. Visited by Carl Wiese.

1884. Death of Mzila, known to the Ngoni as Kaulandwa.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

123 brother arranged for first one *isanusi* and then, when he became ill, for another to come and see me. In each case they concluded that I was 791 consulting them and foretold what would happen and gave me advice, warning and assurance. There was great seriousness of purpose and no mountebank atmosphere, even though they came to the courtyard of my hut and saw round them all the paraphernalia of a European's camping equipment.

791 The first diviner, who was of a Venda clan, was a very old man and greatly respected and trusted by the Nzunga clan, who were looking after Bambo Manga in Mcakhatha and who had called him several times to divine for them during her illness. His story was that he was the son of an *isanusi* and when the signs of his initiation began to appear before he reached puberty, his father recognized the fainting and the pain and refusal to eat, and said 'This child will be a diviner also.' The spirit who came to him in dreams was his father's father who had died south of the Zambesi, where his father had been born.

This man was very definite about the kind of situations for which he could and would divine and the type of advice he would give. Questioned further on this point, he gave in this order: sickness, journeys, auspicious days for holding an *ngoma* dance or a hunt, 'absent treatment' of relatives in trouble in the south asked for by letter, sickness of cattle, moving a village to a new site. He refused contemptuously any divining about stealing or death, or agricultural practices such as choosing new gardens or beginning cultivation. Neither he nor the people with him made any specific reference to the different roles of an *isanusi* among the Ngoni and the local Cewa and other tribes, but since they used the same terms for divining, *kuombeza maula* (to throw the lots), they were careful to point out what the Ngoni diviners did *not* do. In the case of sickness due [755] to 'spirits troubling', of auspicious days for journeys and other events, of cattle sickness, of moving villages, his invariable advice was to sacrifice a beast to the spirits. Most of the inquiries addressed to him were about sickness. When such an inquiry came to him in his village, he smelled his medicines and asked of *his* ancestral spirit 'Is the man likely to live or not? Who is troubling him? What shall he do?'

787 The first occasion on which I saw him divine was in the hut of a widow of the former chief, Njolomole I, which had been newly swept 791 and a new fire made. The chief and his uncle sat on either side of the fire, the diviner on the right-hand side of the door and I on the left on the woman's side. The diviner was told to begin. He pulled out his *ntibo*, the stem of a gourd, which was wrapped in bark and cloth and had inside it the medicine, and which was waxed at each end. He scraped bits of the *nsiha* root into a pot with a little water in it. He put the *ntibo* in the water for a moment and then took it out and rubbed it in his hands. He put it under a flat food basket and swept his hand over the top of the basket once or twice before putting the pot on top. He gazed

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the [182]
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with 843
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant.
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 841
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child 167
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are [837]
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court 692
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugola* supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugola* and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[5]

To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an efficient deterrent of adultery.

Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[5] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

X

THE LOTS

753 I. If a man be ill, his companion goes off and
791 seeks the oracle man. He comes outside his hut and hails him, "Zikomo." The owner says, "Yes, come in here." And the man enters the hut, and says, "We have come to you that you may trace a spirit for us." Then the man takes out his lots from a little cat's-skin bag, and takes some ashes and rubs the lots with them, and begins to consult them, and says, "Are you nursing some sick person?" And he replies, "Yes, indeed, I have been attending on a sick person; the little thing that is ill is a child, and I cannot get sleep for him (lit. with him), and he will not even eat gruel, and I said, 'But I must go to the oracle man; perhaps there he may follow up for me the spirit which is causing the child to be ill.'" Then he begins to consult the lots, and says, "It is the spirit of the child's grandmother; it is she who is causing the child to be ill." And he who has come to consult the lots replies, "I have heard." And the lots again speak (through the man): "Why do you not keep me in mind, and even my grandchild, you also go without calling me to mind," but if you give the spirit a fowl take it from me, the child is sitting up; when you go and take the fowl, kneel down with it, and say, "Grandmother, there is the fowl on account of which you are taking a life" (*muntu*). Then the man who has come from the road (to consult the lots) says, "Put the spirit of mine back in the bag."

782 II. Then he goes home, and takes his fowl, and
● 755 kneels down with it, and takes a gourd-cup of water,

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

and fills his mouth, and blows the water out in a spray, and says, "Grandmother, there is the fowl for which you are causing a person to be ill; you harden your heart all for the sake of a fowl; go, let your little child alone, that he also shall walk about like his companions do; you must not see fit to take a man, only for the sake of a fowl." Then he takes the fowl and kills it, and plucks it, and cleans it; he roasts the liver, and places it at that side of the hut where his head is towards when he sleeps. When the fowl is cooked, he makes some porridge and dishes it out in little baskets, leaving some in the pot, and commences the propitiation of the spirit, saying, "Here is the fowl we have killed for you; eat of it together, let there not be one who refuses. And there is your portion also, little children; you must eat together and rejoice." And he takes the pot, and says, "And this is yours, old women." And when he has finished propitiating, he takes the porridge and puts it at "the head" of the hut, so that he can eat what is left on the morrow, and then he begins to divide out the food to the people, saying, "You, there is your portion; and you, also, there is yours, and this is yours, old women." And when they have finished eating they clap their hands and sound the *ntungululu*, and then disperse. Next morning, at dawn, they take what they had put at the head, and eat it.

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6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVI

THE KANONOMERA DANCE

If a person is ill, they go and consult the lots, 753
and then he of the lots says, "It is the spirit of his 791
grandmother, it is wanting a dance; when you dance 755
that dance, you can take it from us the child is 782
sitting up." And they go to the village and take a basket of grain, and with it they address the spirit, saying, "There is the grain for which you are killing a person; when we have made beer, let us see the person (who is ill) sitting up." And then they assemble every one, and the day the beer is strained, they all come together, and that evening they enter the hut (where the sick person is), and begin to clap their hands to rouse the spirit, and then they see the sick one is trembling and crying out, and then the people say (to the spirit), "You must not come with war, it is we who have called you; see here at the village the drums have come, but let them depart again without anything happening to mar the dance." And when they have finished
clapping their hands the dance comes forth, and the 535
drums begin to sound, and they are dancing. He 755
who remembers a song sings it; when one is pos- 782
sessed by a spirit, down he falls, and they drag him 787
out of the dance, and deck him with calico and skins of animals, and he again enters the circle and dances. When a person is possessed by a child's spirit, they bind his calico tightly round him that it be strong, because that person is wishing to strip it off, and dance naked, as a child does not wear anything. Should a woman be seized by a man's spirit, saying, "I am so and so," they deck her with a

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 755 782 787 feather head-dress, and in her hand she holds a little stick (for a spear), and her calico is tied round her waist, and her breasts swing free. The songs they sing at the Kanonomera dance go thus—

533 755 539 What knocks off the dew,
Comes at the early dawn.—(*Repeat.*)

Looking, gazing, we just gaze one at the other.
(*Repeat.*)

When the drum sounds it is the *choinjoli* drum
that brings the spirit.—(*Repeat.*)

Far away there, far away,
Far away there, far away,
Far away where shines white that little cloud,
Far away there, is my bow.

Little quail, little quail, you are picking up the
little grains.
And what if he is,
Are they not his eyes?
It broke his leg for him;
Only hunger, only hunger.

Oh no, indeed, indeed,
Two wives have been too many for him indeed;
Two wives have been too many for him indeed.

You hate me,
You hate me for my being so old.—(*Repeat.*)

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Little maiden, whom war has given me,
Should you refuse to be mine,
I am as a slave in my grief,
And then what must you do?

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755
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We were far away;
Our companions had cut off their head rings.

XXVII

THE NTETEREZI DANCE

539
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[164]

It is danced only at a funeral.

Scrape out the beer pot and give me.
Have some sense, the beer is finished.

He is the husband who favours your companion
(*i.e.* his second wife),
And you, you only cook and give him, all in silence;
And here you return,
And weep against the hut post.

Should you be a childless man,
Do not be hitting your neighbour's child,
That's so, father.
Don't you think you should go and beat that maize you planted?
That's so, father.

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the headman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good one; and the headman in return hands over three other animals of similar ages. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organization: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Achewa consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'anga* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'anga* under Chief Chiwere was Chimongo, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unawares, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a stout resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'anga* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the *chiwanda* or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connexion with women. Next day, they burned goats' bones, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour. 539 703 237

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount. 539 703

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount. 182 701 721 643

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amakanda* of the *alumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty. 726 643

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army. 701 643 [756]

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were [703] allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.

791 an *isanusi* today". When he entered the place of his sister, NaNdumbu, he was dreaming. If there was a war he could say "You must not go to that war because all the people will be killed." He was just dreaming and dancing his *isanusi* dance. When he danced that dance on the chief's *bwalo* the people praised him with special praises.'

791 Two informants remembered fragments of the songs sung by NaNdumbu and her brother, and these songs were also sung by the old 533 *izanusi* in the northern kingdom. I give here the Ngoni versions with an English translation, omitting the repetition of lines and the 'sounds' which accompanied the singing:

[539]

Uyezwa mihlolo	Do you see the omens?
Inkanyezo ipuma	The star comes out,
Ipuma yanga	It comes out in the East.
. . . . .	. . . . .
Ubaba uyangibiza	My father is calling me.
Hamba ekaya	Go home.
Indaba zikuyandela	Things have turned against you,
Hamba ekaya	Go home.

791 Although these diviners acted at times on their own initiative, this did not prevent their being called on in time of crisis to diagnose the reason 787 for disaster or sickness. *Izanusi* who used their own medicines to smell 237 could prophesy and speak on their own initiative as well as waiting to be called on. These medicines were said to induce the dreams on which the prophecy was based, and they were generally contained in the tail of a gnu or in a sheep's horn, or some other horn.

Below this category of the prophets, whether *abantu benhloko* or 787 *izanusi*, came those who used lots when called on to diagnose a par- 791 ticular situation. These were often men who dreamed, or who used their own medicines to receive messages from their ancestral spirits, but instead of announcing their message directly, they brought with them some form of lots which they used when they were consulted, and gave their diagnosis as a result of observing the lots. Sometimes they sang their own songs, accompanied by dancing, which led to an almost trance-like condition; sometimes they used their lots without any previous working up of an emotional state through song or dance. I never met any of the dreamer type of prophet who used no medicines and no lots. There was general agreement among the Ngoni that they had died out, that their main service had been in times of war, and that the number of men or women who possessed such powers had, even in the past, been very small indeed. I did, however, see one diviner at work who used the song and dance technique with the lots, and two who used the lots without song or dance.

● 756 The *isanusi* whom I saw in the northern kingdom was divining for 787 sickness at the request of a party of people who had come to consult him

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

about a sick relative. He asked for a preliminary payment in cash from me before he would say anything in front of me, having already received the customary present of fowls from the sick man's relatives. There was an atmosphere of part pantomime, part reluctant performance in front of a stranger whose presence seemed to trouble him more than it did his clients. He wore a python-skin cap with beads dangling from it, and carried the tail of a black cow bound with lead and a small skin bag with the lots in it. At first he sat holding the tail in his hands and sniffing it occasionally. Then he suddenly shook the lots out of the bag—six large beans called *kulumo* and about twenty small round nuts called *mapi*. He put snuff on the top of each bean, sprinkled snuff on the nuts, picked the nuts up in both hands, shook his hands together and threw the nuts on the ground. Some fell near the big beans, others rolled between them. He looked intently at them, then at the group waiting to consult him. 'There is someone who is sick,' he said to them and the group replied '*Siyavuma*' (we agree). They continued to chant *siyavuma* in a low tone over and over again, with an almost mesmeric effect. He meantime went on to describe the sickness, that it was a pain inside the man (the chanting was loud), that it had been on the right side (less response), in the stomach (less response), on the left side (loud response). At intervals he waved the tail in the air and knocked the leaded end on the ground to emphasize the louder response. He did not specify the complaint but advised the people consulting him to go home and kill a goat as a sacrifice to their ancestors, and give the sick man some medicines which he would sell them.

It may have been the mixture of a real consultation with my visit which produced his slightly mountebank performance, and it may also have been his combination of the role of diviner with peddling medicines which the people present for the consultation evidently expected to obtain from him. This aspect of his performance impressed itself on the Ngoni informant who was with me. He was slightly contemptuous throughout, even when the songs were being sung and taken down. He kept on muttering 'This is Nsenga,' and said afterwards as we were going away that this diviner worked only for ordinary people and their sickness, as witnessed by his telling them to sacrifice a goat, and that he would not have been acknowledged by the real Ngoni. He was making comparisons all the time between the 'people of the head' and the diviners of this type, illustrating the Ngoni esteem for the real dreamers, and the slight, sometimes great, contempt for those who combined divining with recommending medicines as remedies.

The contrast between the performance of this diviner and that of the two *izanusi* whom I saw at work in the central kingdom was considerable. My long residence in Mcakhatha and the entrée I had to all that was taking place in connexion with the sickness of Bambo Manga no doubt helped to give confidence to the diviners. The chief and his

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

It was the fathers who decided at what age a child should go to school, and having once enrolled the boy or girl and paid the fees, the fathers insisted on regular attendance. 593 [872]

All Ngoni fathers showed affection for their young children, some consistently and others when it occurred to them. They picked them up and carried them about, held their hand while they tried their first steps, listened to their attempts to speak correctly, held them in their arms when they sat on the veranda. In one village twin boys aged four were devoted to their father and he to them. When he walked about, he held a hand of each. When he sat on the veranda they were always beside him and he had an arm round each. When he was elsewhere, the twins wandered about the compound disconsolately, hand in hand, rejecting the advances of their nurse girls and uncertain what to do until he appeared again.

Ngoni fathers had to be consulted in cases of sickness when the grandmother's remedies had failed and specialist help was needed. Then the father and his brothers and their father decided whether to summon a diviner or a herbalist, and arranged for the throwing of lots or the search for 'medicines', and paid the agreed fee when the cure worked. 593 757

It was part of Ngoni tradition to keep the knowledge of death away from young children. The father was held responsible for seeing that his children were kept away from the hut where the corpse was awaiting burial, and from the funeral itself. When men and women of leading Ngoni families were buried at the edge of the kraal, and the fence enlarged so that the cattle stamped over the grave, the explanation given (though it was not the only reason) was that 'the young children should not know or fear death in this village'. 593 764 858

The physical surroundings of the small child

The two diagrams, overleaf, illustrate the layout of the hut and compound in typical Ngoni households. Some of these 342 351

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

863 of dust, and many of them began to suffer from sores, itch and sore eyes. The girls however, had already begun to like a clean and shining skin for the sake of being beautiful, and their ablutions were no longer under duress.

The smallest children urinated and defecated wherever they happened to be. From the age of three or four, however, they were taught to tell someone if they wanted to defecate, and taken outside the hut. Maize cobs or soft leaves or grass were used to clean the child, and then thrown on the fire. When the child began to look after himself, he was shown how to use the left hand only when cleaning himself, [826] and told it was 'the hand of shame, only used for bad things'. From the age of four or five small girls and boys went with their mothers and the other women to the section of the sur- [514] rounding bush reserved for the women's toilet. At about the same age boys and girls were taught to withdraw from the public gaze when urinating, and to conceal themselves behind a hut or in some other hiding-place. The Ngoni were [514] extremely prudish about all physical acts connected with [834] evacuating or sex, and began to demand correct behaviour from children at an early age.

If a child was constipated, or had diarrhoea, or was vomi- 757 ting, or had a fever or stomach-ache, the nurse girl reported 603 it to his mother who went to tell the child's paternal grandmother. For all the range of usual childish ailments the grandmother prescribed and carried out standard treatments, such as whey used as a purgative, or very thin gruel to check diarrhoea. The Ngoni women had a number of herbal remedies which they used for themselves and their children. They also used hot poultices, cupping, and forms of massage. Only when the known household remedies failed, did the grandmother tell the child's father and he, as we have seen, took the responsibility for calling in 'specialists'.

Sleep, the little child's third major need, was sometimes 867 well ordered and sometimes erratic. It was not considered 864 proper for children to sleep in the same hut as their parents

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

591 Changes in residence at and after marriage influenced the
184 composition of the group of relatives who assisted at births. In
844 the central kingdom daughters of leading men in the village often stayed in their father's village at marriage. Hence the father's sisters were often present at the birth and the wife's mother and her sisters might be living in the village. If the
[614] wife belonged to a higher ranking Ngoni clan than her husband, her relatives shared responsibility with those of the husband's family.

As may be imagined the struggle between mother-in-law
177 control and western medical practices at childbirth was a
844 protracted one. Even when there was a younger member of the husband's family trained as a nurse or midwife, she by
[759] no means had her way in organizing the conduct of the birth. She might introduce a few hygienic measures such as clean cloths instead of old rags, and sterilized thread for tying the cord. But unless the senior women were frightened, and they seldom were, by prolonged and difficult labour, the Ngoni families were averse to taking a young mother into hospital.
[606] The chief reason was the challenge to the authority of the mother-in-law, especially when the younger women who had some knowledge of western medical practices questioned the advice of the senior women.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

those who have not been working. Some people choose to do their work in the garden on the day previous to the party, on the theory that working and drinking do not go together. A few people offer baskets of ground-nuts or other crops or meat in return for a day's labour, and monetary payments are also known.

Craftsmen

There are a number of specialized occupations which give rise to inter-village trading. Pots are made by women. Some villages have no potter and their inhabitants are dependent on pot-makers in neighbouring villages. Sometimes a woman may acquire a reputation for pot-making sufficiently high to attract custom even from villages where there are already pot-makers. Pots are sold in return for their own volume of maize, or for money, or the customers may be required to provide sufficient clay for twice the amount of pottery that they wish to obtain.

Basketry is a man's craft, and at the end of the rainy season, when it is necessary to watch all day in the gardens for monkeys, men with this skill spend their time at it. Baskets are sold for money or for maize, and, as with pottery, there is a certain amount of inter-village sale.

Herbalists draw their clients from a wider area than do the pot- and basket-makers, and their contacts with their patients are more intense. If a man falls sick, the remedies known in the family are tried first, but if these are unsuccessful he may go to someone who is known for his wide knowledge of medicines. Patients will travel up to 15 miles or so to consult a herbalist, who may require them to live in his village to receive treatment. Payment for medical treatment is sometimes demanded part in advance, but other practitioners ask for a fee only when a cure has been effected. Since the establishment of medical services by the Administration the way has been open for the medical orderlies to operate in opposition to the herbalists, using misappropriated European drugs.

III. THE FAMILY

Principles of Descent

The Ngoni are traditionally a patrilineal patrilocal people paying bride-wealth with cattle. This tradition is reflected in modern practice only to a limited extent. Many of the men and women who were incorporated after Zwangendaba had crossed the Zambezi came from

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 UMkulumqango or other names for the High God were rare. When
771 questioned they said that such a High God existed and the spirits knew him, but they, the living, did not. The Ngoni phrase, *asiyasi*, 'we do not know', and its Nyanja version, *sitingadziwa*, 'we cannot know', were constantly on their lips in discussions on this topic. Among Christians like Cibambo as well as non-Christians like Nzunga, their interest in the ancestor cult was part of maintaining their identity as Ngoni. The neighbouring tribes had other forms of ancestor cults but the Ngoni form brought from the south was distinctive, and many of the concepts and practices were known to the South-eastern Bantu peoples.

The ritual for a new ancestral spirit

761 The Ngoni believed that at the moment of death the spirit left the
775 body. If a sick person fell into a coma and was unconscious for a long time they said that the person had died when the coma began even though they knew he went on breathing. This happened at the death of Bambo Manga when she had periods of unconsciousness before she died. They said that her spirit had left her at the beginning of the last long coma, even though they knew from her pulse and breathing that she was not dead. At the parting of the spirit from the body they had to care for both, in order that the new ancestral spirit might be happy and in the right relationship with the living. Equal importance was attached to caring for the spirit and to caring for the corpse, since the correct performance of ritual had deep significance for the dead and for the living.

763 When the spirit left the body it was believed to go to the bush at the
775 outskirts of the village where the person had been accustomed to go to relieve himself. Between the death of Bambo Manga and the burial, each morning before it was light, the men marched with a dancing step up the path to the bush where she was wont to go, singing a war song dating from trans-Zambesi days which was sung at the sending out of the *impi*. Marching to the bush and singing the war song was one step in bringing the spirit back or, more correctly perhaps, keeping in touch with it so that it should not go too far away. This approach to the spirit between the death and burial was the first of three ritual acts, each called 'bringing back the spirit'. The other two occurred after the first and second ritual shaving.

764 The preparation of the corpse for burial has been described in the first chapter of this section. Those features of Ngoni burial were considered essential for the welfare of the spirit, and were carried out in the majority of funerals which I witnessed, whether the dead person was a Christian or not. An account of the burial of a leading *mulumuzana* in the northern kingdom who was a Christian, given to me by another Christian Ngoni and confirmed by some of the missionaries present at the funeral, emphasized all the distinctive Ngoni elements: the round

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

843 her husband's village, the occasion must be recognized in a more elaborate manner. Her husband or his relatives buy her a new cloth. Wearing this cloth she stands at the door of her husband's hut, and is undressed by her husband's grandmother. The old woman rubs castor oil on her abdomen and dresses her again. A small girl from her husband's kin goes with her to her own village, and their arrival there, with the woman dressed in her new cloth, indicates formally to her parents that she is pregnant. They stay at the woman's village for about a week, and then return to her husband's village.[14] Her parents have thus been made socially aware of her pregnancy, and the man can legitimately look to them for help if she becomes ill or fractious.

844 If the woman does die in childbirth, her husband has to offer a beast to her parents even though they were told of her pregnancy.[15] 761 The husband may confess to adultery when called upon to do so 606 by the midwife, but this does not absolve him from the obligation 684 to pay the beast. Confession absolves him from the charge of having caused the death of his wife by his careless behaviour, but he must still recompense his parents-in-law for the death of their daughter. It is recognized that a woman may die in childbirth despite the absence of adultery during pregnancy or despite full confession of adultery by both the woman and her husband. She dies just because God lets her die, and not because of any human misconduct. Yet she reaches the situation in which there is the danger of death because of her position as the wife of her husband. It is the 'work' of married women to bear children, and it is the 'work' of the husband if his wife dies in childbirth to offer a beast to her parents so that they may mourn their daughter.

5. Quarrels

581 We see then that a woman is not severed utterly from her own group when she marries, but that her kinsfolk retain an interest in her welfare and have certain rights in her and in her husband. The recognition of these rights by their son-in-law increases his esteem in their eyes, and enables him to appeal to them with confidence when he needs their support. The common interest of all is in the successful maintenance of the marriage, and the mutual recognition of rights and fulfilment of obligations consolidate the social relationships established between people related by marriage. Quarrels threaten the continued existence of the marriage, 578 and it is therefore in the common interest that they should be settled 602 as expeditiously as possible. The intervention of affines in a personal quarrel between husband and wife is characteristic of a system in which most neighbours are kinsfolk and in which the spatial concentration of people into compact villages, where abuse shouted at one

[14] This ceremony is called *ngayi*, which means 'breast-cloth' in Nsenga.
[15] See above, pp. 39f.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuse* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiwe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *zi zi*, *ozi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 762 766 came, 'to quieten them'. Thereafter this Ngozo boy did everything with the Paramount. He began by washing with the royal medicine at the time of the accession. He drank beer with him, he ate with him, he 'stood with him' (*amaima naye*) on all important occasions, such as sending out the army and judging cases. He slept in his own hut which was in the *cigodlo*, where the Paramount's sons built, and when he married he built huts for his wives in that same section of the royal village. At the death of the Paramount, he danced the war-dance in full war-dress and leaped on to the pyre to perish with the dead Paramount in the flames.

Informants sometimes said of this Ngozo boy that he was 'of one [582] blood' with the Maseko clan. They described the relationship between the two clans as that of *cibale*, brotherhood, which excluded all possi- [602] bility of inter-marriage. Between the Paramount and the Ngozo boy was established a joking relationship, so that the Ngozo boy could say 'good and bad things to the Paramount'.

It was clear that the ritual and social aspects of this relationship com- 643 644 plemented and supported each other. The recurrent emphasis on the taking of medicine at the accession, on the participation in the war medicines, and most of all on the death on the Paramount's funeral pyre, were all evidence of this ritual relationship. Informants repudiated any idea of a scapegoat which involved protecting the Paramount from poison by eating before him. They reiterated several times that the Ngozo boy did not eat *before* the Paramount; in fact he ate after him though sharing his food dishes. Surrounding the Paramount were other boys called *micetho*, who performed the duties of pages or personal servants. The Ngozo boy was always distinct from them, and the distinction lay in the combined ritual and social relationship.

The concept of a 'shadow' was of something very close to a person, almost indistinguishable from the person himself. In referring to the Ngozo boy in the terms 'he was as the shadow of the *inkosi*; he was as himself', informants emphasized the extreme closeness of the tie between the two men. It seemed as if the royal shadow existed to meet a need for strengthening the Paramount by giving him a second self. It emphasized also the dangerous sphere of life and action in which the Paramount lived, due to the medicines he had used, his powers to protect the land and its fertility, and his power to give strength to the army through the use of the *tonga* medicine. No one else in the royal family shared these dangers and there was inherent in the relationship of royal shadow to *inkosi* the sense of some security through a companionship where protective medicines were shared as well as the hazardous occasions for which they gave protection.

643 644 608 This intense and dangerous ritual relationship was buttressed by the social ties binding the Ngozo boy to the Paramount. We have seen that between them as individuals there was that freedom of a joking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 [178] water and the pyre, he was refusing, saying 'No, not in these days, but formerly.'

When Magona Ngozo was with Cikusi he was staying with him in the daytime. Magona had his own huts and Cikusi his. When eating, Cikusi ate alone, but afterwards he gave food to Magona. When Cikusi was washing it was together with Magona. When he went to the bush, they went together. When Cikusi was washing with the *tonga*, he was doing it with Magona. When the warriors were going out, Cikusi and Magona stood together, and they made fire for the medicines and they stood together in the smoke and then the warriors went out. So, when mentioning Magona, they said: 'the shadow of Cikusi'. When they were eating in the *bwalo*, the *nsima* (porridge) was brought to Cikusi, but if some *alumuzana* came, the wives of Magona cooked *nsima* and gave it to the *alumuzana*. When Cikusi died, Magona could take his wives if he wanted. The Ngozo man could tell the Paramount anything, good or bad, and stay like the mouth of the Paramount.

● [762] When the Paramount died formerly, the Ngozo man dressed in his war-dress. When he came near the fire he danced with the shield in his hand. When the fire blazed up he ran and jumped on the fire. So the Maseko people gave cattle to the Ngozo people, to quieten their hearts because they were brothers. And when another Paramount was installed they gave an Ngozo man to stand with him. The father of the man who died with the Paramount received cattle and villages to rule over and gifts. The Paramounts gave cattle because they said: 'Since our brother is going to stand with the Paramount, if that Paramount dies, he also will be killed, so the Paramount ought to give cattle like *lobola* so they may quieten the hearts of his brothers.' Though these cattle are not given for a woman but for a man, any Maseko man ought not to marry an Ngozo woman because there is this brotherhood.

And this man of the Ngozo clan was like a chief because he had men to manage his affairs at his door, as did the Paramount. And if he died his funeral was like that of a chief. But the day the Paramount died the Ngozo man was killed. When the Paramount washed with medicines, he was washing with the Ngozo man. When drinking beer, he was drinking in the same hut as the Paramount. When the Paramount was sacrificing he was together with the Ngozo man, and they did not leave each other.

The Ngozo people have a thanking name (*isibongo*) Maphonya. It is they who were standing with the Paramounts, and the Ngozo people were in the section of Ziyembe. Their avoidances were the same as all the [762] Ngoni, especially fish and elephant. When Cikusi died Gulo stood with Gomani when he entered the chieftainship. Gulo was the son of Magona.

The royal village and the daily routine of the Paramount

643 361 644 In Part I, Chapter II we referred to the process by which each Paramount, after his accession, went out from his father's village to build his own. The Ngoni called this *ukupumisa inkosi* (to send out the Paramount) and the term used for the new village, *lusungulu* (the needle), was said to signify 'the front village where you expect to find the Paramount'.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

The Chief did however interfere

643 to some extent in the marriages of those near him and on occasion took away a wife from one man and gave her as wife to another. Nsingu, the heir of Mpezeni I, once took a wife from one of the important men in his mother's royal village and made her his queen. [760] The man committed suicide and Nsingu killed a beast to placate the anger of his mother's lieutenants. Such instances of intervention seem to have been rare and were disliked by the common people.

6. Polygyny

592 The pattern of growth of the residential system was determined by the grouping of children in the compound family. This grouping was in turn determined by the ranking of wives. It seems that the 595 South-Eastern Bantu system of dividing wives into three groups, [171] a great house and a left- and a right-hand house was not continued. Old men are agreed that in the past wives could be described as either left-hand or right-hand, but there is no agreement on the principles of this division. In discussing the wives of well-known men who flourished about this period, there was no consensus about which women were left-hand wives and which were right. The division cannot in any case have had the same spatial reference to the husband's cattle byre as among the South-Eastern Bantu, since the Ngoni lived in large villages with a central byre containing [361] all the cattle of the village.

595 Wives were arranged into small groups which we may term 'bands'. A band might contain up to a dozen co-wives and was 592 under the charge of its senior member. Wives in a band lived close to each other in the same cluster of huts. A man might have as many as five or six bands of wives, and the senior wife of one of the bands was the man's great wife, the mother of his heir. We have seen that a cross-cousin was inferior to an unrelated wife, and a wife from the same or related village inferior to one from afar. These two considerations, however, seem only to have influenced a man's choice of senior wives and did not themselves directly determine wifely rank. Thus a man could if he wished make a cross-cousin from his own village his great wife or the senior wife of one of his bands, but most men did not do so. The first wife married with bridewealth was the great wife. If there was a wife married earlier for whom no bridewealth had been paid, perhaps a cross-cousin or a recently captured woman, then she became subordinate to the chief wife and was regarded as a member of her band. Wives married subsequently were attached to this band until the husband decided to start another band. He took either one of the wives of his great wife's band or else a newly acquired wife, and established a new cluster of huts for her. Some other members of the great wife's band might be transferred to the new band, as subordinates of the newly promoted wife. As the man continued to take new wives they were allocated to one or other of the existing bands. If the husband was an important man he allocated to each

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The ritual for a new ancestral spirit

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and the notched sticks were only an *aide-mémoire*, not a necessity. 211

The heavens and the earth

When the Pleiades appeared just before dawn they said the Pleiades were being 'reborn' (the word used for the new moon's appearance and for the initiation of a diviner), and that in this position in the heavens they were heralds of the cold season. They knew the relative positions of Venus as an evening star and a morning star, and watched for the appearance high in the heavens of Jupiter which they knew by its size. Orion they recognized as a man with a spear, a hunter, and the Milky Way as the sands of the sky, since sand was used to denote numbers which cannot be counted. 821

In announcing the death of a great chief by a messenger sent from village to village, the traditional formula was: 'Listen. Do you hear? The heavens have fallen.' Hence when earthquakes were felt, it was believed that some great chief had died, and the earthquake was the trembling when his spirit left the earth for the place of the departed spirits. If it turned out to be no one of their own people, they nevertheless held to the belief that somewhere, unknown to them, a 'great one' had died and his spirit had departed at the time of the earth's trembling. 763 775 823

Eclipses of the sun and moon they also connected with some great event either among their own people or elsewhere, and they used the eclipse year and month to date these events. Their famous crossing of the Zambezi on their northward march, finally and irrevocably cutting off their connexions with the south, was during a solar eclipse. In teaching young adults Ngoni history they said: 'When we crossed the Zambezi it became night at noon.' 821 [167]

A lunar eclipse, almost total, occurred when I was in a chief's village, and all the people were called to the kraal and stood watching it. Then the chief's spokesman, his 'mouthpiece', called for silence in the phrase used for a war summons [632]

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173

(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu, and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions *and in his own home.* [643]

(20) Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE *re* DEATH OF LOBENGU'LA.

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Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtenguleni Uka Sosera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Bazaliyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphansa, Mahamunye Mphansa, Mshawa Mwase Shawa, Dede Tole, Mjobo Ndwambi Jere, Malwalaliche Tembo, Mzenje Nkhawa, Katenda Manyndny Makowane, Kapendela Jonani Mvula, Machilika Mphansa, Chhongachane Ngulowe, Chiwere Maimba, Maulau Jere, Magulanga Mphansa, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Madalmawe, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, James Ndawambi Hara, Matrino Kangerere Nkhawa, Penyani Mvula, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulabulo Gawani Mawere, Chingulukani Dimba, Siya Mvula, Ngungu Singu Jere, Mshawa Mphansa, Mzeki Lukhelo, Njombwa Tembo, Adonikeache Mchanga, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 797 He was present with me in November 1936 at a big *ligubo* dance in the royal village of Maganga. It took place on the open space in front of the court-house. The Provincial Commissioner brought a party of Europeans to see it, and some members of a South African mission a few miles away were persuaded to come. Some of the missionaries before coming had been afraid that the dances and songs would be obscene, but when they saw the translations of the Ngoni songs which with Cibambo's help I had prepared, and watched the rhythm and dignity of the dances they were so favourably impressed that they asked the Paramount to send senior men to teach the songs and dances to the boys in the mission school.

535 At this *ligubo* dance contingents came from all over the central kingdom. The men came in groups based on the head villages of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, with young carriers bringing their war-dress fastened up in rolls of mats. They put on this war-dress in the neighbouring village of Lizulu, the *gogo* village from which Magonga had 'gone out', using the compounds of the huts belonging to the houses of the senior women for their robing. They climbed the steep path up to Maganga in companies, and near the Paramount's house they advanced in close formation with their shields held over their heads, while an official 'praiser' called out the *izibongo*, the praise names of the Paramount and his ancestors. On the open space in front of the court-house, the different detachments came together and formed a crescent facing the Paramount and his guests. The dance was chiefly a rhythmic stamping of the feet, with from time to time a slow movement of a few steps to the right and then to the left. A number of women of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, including the Paramount's wife, danced in front of the warriors, facing them, carrying small sticks and small shields, and co-ordinating their steps with a rhythmic jerking of the right arm and neck, described by Cibambo as the women's dance in his account of warfare in old days. Every now and then one of the men leaped out in front, jumping high in the air, brandishing his spear and shield, and singing his own war song, the *ligiya*, the dance of the individual warrior. At intervals one of the official praisers came forward and sang the praise-songs of the Maseko line of Paramounts.

535 764 The *ligubo*, as a war-dance, could only be danced at the Paramount's village, or at the funeral of the Paramount or of his older sister by the same mother. In 1937 the older sister of the former Paramount Cikusi died, and the *ligubo* was danced during the mourning ceremonies which took place in the village of Mcakhatha.

During these funeral ceremonies the *ligubo* was danced continually from the moment when the corpse was wrapped in skins after death, until it was lowered into the grave three days later. *Ligubo*, the individual *ligiya*, and the songs of the army going out to war, went on all day and much of the night, and broke out with renewed vigour every time a

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

fresh detachment came into the village from another part of the country. The corpse was finally carried in a cow-skin from the hut to the grave between a double line of warriors singing *ligubo* songs and thundering with their shields knocking against their knees.

The only relics, therefore, of the military tradition which could be observed in the Ngoni kingdoms in the 1930's were related either to the national gatherings at the Paramount's village, or to the mourning ritual for the royal line. The knowledge of the songs and the war-dresses was preserved by the senior leading men and women of the trans-Zambesi clans. The songs which follow were sung, except for the last one, in both Ngoni kingdoms, and not only when *ligubo* dances took place. Some were sung at marriage ceremonies, and some formerly as *umsindo* songs at the pre-marriage rite for girls. In northern Ngoniland the last two songs were sung in the churches, and tunes of other well-known war songs were used in the churches of the Scottish mission with different words written for them. Most of the songs when translated sound very brief. They were less brief when sung in the Ngoni language since there was repetition of certain lines, with repeated refrains, and with a series of 'sounds' such as *inyo ho*, *zi*, *ye ye* which accompanied the stamping of feet and the clash of shields. These untranslatable 'sounds' were sometimes the only part of the song which was known by the younger men who had never used the Ngoni language, and they chanted them in the right places as a chorus.

The first four songs were all intended to encourage the warriors at the time of mobilization before going out on a campaign. They reminded the singers that in the use of the short stabbing spear the Ngoni armies were stronger than their enemies; that they brought their fighting skill from the south-east; that, though the fight might be long, rest would come in the evening; and that the army belonged to the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The fifth song suggested the kind of warning given to warriors by the old men—that they should not give in after a fight, but pursue the enemy and capture their cattle. The sixth song, though the reference to Longiyeka was obscure, was said to be a warning against treachery and revolt in the army. The seventh song had three themes: that death was the lot of every man, and the earth where the grave would be dug was never satisfied (*ukunona* means 'to be satisfied'); that no one would escape the universal fate of death, from the senior men wearing the head-plumes to the common people and the cattle; and that the ancestors already buried in the land would be joined by those then alive. The terms used in this song to describe the social groups among the Ngoni people were those which will occur throughout this book.

1. No Paramount can be poor because of the spear.
   Then why are you running away?

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

ancestor cult in the head village of their clan. If they were asked 'How do you address the spirit (*teta idloti*)?' they gave the names and genealogy of the former heads of the clan and their attributes if they were known. If they were asked 'Where do you address the spirits?' the reply was always in terms of a particular village where a certain spirit was guarded. 769 614

The occasions on which the Swazi clan ancestors were addressed and sacrifices made were in cases of sickness of an important member of the clan. It was sometimes suggested that there might be trouble in the clan villages for which prayer should be made to the clan spirits, but when pressed the only specific instance informants could give was when the cattle did not thrive. They repudiated immediately any idea of prayer to the clan spirits in cases of drought or epidemics in the clan villages since those troubles, wherever they occurred, could only be helped by the spirits of the Paramounts who were concerned with all the land and all its people. [731]

The procedure followed in the clan head village was the same as that for addressing the spirits of the Paramounts. In that village a diviner was consulted, he named the spirit who should be addressed, a beast was sacrificed and prayers were made. This was the Ngoni pattern of the ancestor cult, and it was limited to the Swazi and some of the trans-Zambesi clans. Its correct observance required that combination of cattle, houses, and known genealogies which only the leading clans possessed. [563]

The living and the dead

At times such as funerals, and when talking about the ancestor cult, the Ngoni often used the phrase: 'Death cannot cut life.' They believed that human spirits had a continued existence after death, and that this existence was related to the place where they had dwelt, the people who were of their family and clan, and the cattle which belonged to their house and village. This continued association was not an automatic process. It had to be assured by the correct performance of the burial rites, the observance of stages of mourning and the deliberate 'bringing back' of the spirit to the village where it would be guarded and honoured after the final mourning ceremony was over. 775 769

In the Ngoni funeral rites there were distinctive elements in the burial of those belonging to Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In handling the corpse the legs were bent and drawn up to the body and the arms folded and crossed each side of the neck, so that the corpse seemed to be sitting and holding its head in its hands. It was wrapped in the skin of a newly killed beast. In the central kingdom men and women of Swazi clans were wrapped first in a sheep-skin, with a cow-skin put over it. The grave was a circular pit, with a small side chamber or shelf where the body was placed in a sitting position, propped up with large stones and facing south-east to the ancestral homeland. Personal possessions, such as skins and shields and baskets, were either put in the grave or taken to be 764 184

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

764 184 burned immediately after the burial on the banks of the stream where the living performed their ritual washing. Small children who were related to the dead took charcoal in their hands, and walked up to the grave backwards and threw the charcoal in without looking. Some leaders of the Swazi clans were buried on the edge of the kraal of the house to which they belonged, and the fence was enlarged to include the grave. The Ngoni comment on this place of burial was: 'If we make a grave, we make it outside the kraal, and afterwards build the kraal round that place so that cattle may walk over it and lie on it. Thus it may become flat as if it were nothing, for Ngoni people do not want a grave to [765] be seen from the outside.' The women who were near relatives of the dead were allowed to mourn in the hut where the person had died, or they could if they chose take part in the war-songs and dances which were the only form of mourning allowed to the male relatives and to the men and women of the village who were not closely related to the dead person. The usual procedure was for a group of older women to wail and sob in the hut, but for all the rest, men and women, to mourn in the Ngoni way by taking part in war-dances and songs.

764 182 Much of this ritual appears to have had as its purpose to remove the fear of death from the living. That was the explanation of why the children threw charcoal in the grave—that they should not remember with fear the dead person being put in the earth. The obliteration of the grave site on the edge of the kraal had a dual purpose. One has been already referred to—that the grave should not be seen. The other was to identify the grave of a leading man or woman with the kraal site and the cattle herded there. If the village moved and a new kraal was set up, people would still say 'X was buried here', adding 'He was buried here when we were on Domwe—or in Songea', referring to an earlier site of the village. Placing the corpse facing south-east, and singing Ngoni war-songs which had come from the south, linked the newly dead with the ancestral dead, and emphasized the chain of communication between the living and the dead, which a new ancestral spirit could help to forge. It was establishing this means of communication which was the dominant note in the ritual of the funeral and in the post-burial rites.

When a death took place, the first action taken after the corpse had been prepared and wrapped in a skin was to send out a summons to come and mourn. We saw in the chapter on the Paramount that at his death the summons was in the formula 'The skies have fallen.' For others the announcement was: 'So and so has died. Come and mourn.' The [765] obligation to mourn was binding. If relatives and fellow clansmen could not come at the time of the burial, or were away in the south, one of their first duties on returning to their home village was to go and mourn by the kraal where the dead person was buried. This was intended partly to show sympathy for the bereaved, but also to acknowledge and salute a new ancestral spirit, and to demonstrate the re-integration of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 [182 764] 765

the group of those living relatives who had performed or were about to perform certain rites for the newly dead.

These rites were the stages of mourning laid down in the Ngoni funeral ritual. They were stages in which all adults took part, and they fulfilled the need to build up the future links with the spirit who had joined the ancestors and to bring together in common acts those from whom death had removed one of their number. The following text by one of the leaders of a Swazi clan in the central kingdom puts together briefly the successive stages of shaving, drinking beer, eating meat, singing war-songs, ritual cleansing and widow inheritance, and bringing back the spirit.

¶ If a man died, the second day they shave; after 5 or 6 months they shave again and cook beer. This means the widows must take off their white *xitambo* (head bands). After 12 months they take off their black *xitambo* and kill a beast to praise the spirit so that he may return to his house. This is also the time for inheriting the widows.

When they take off the white *xitambo*, the brother of the one who died takes sheep dung and sprinkles it in the houses where the widows are sleeping. At the same time the men wash their hands with cattle dung. The meaning of this is to tell the widows to cook food for the brothers of the dead man to send to them when they sit by the kraal. This they do before they can see them.

From the ritual witnessed at many funeral ceremonies, which never altered in its main elements, and from discussions with Ngoni informants, it was possible to gain some idea of Ngoni beliefs about the relation between the living and the dead. It was clear that the attitude of the living towards the dead was one of respect and honour, but not predominantly one of avoidance and fear as among some of the neighbouring tribes. The post-burial ritual culminated in 'bringing back the spirit' to the village, and we shall examine this further in the last chapter of this section. An observer was always conscious of a sense that people were waiting for the return of the spirit, which had to be planned for and carried out by the living. During the interval between the death and bringing back the spirit, it was said to be 'in the bush'. When asked where in fact the spirit was, the answer was always 'We do not know. How can we know?' They admitted that the life of the spirits was unknown to them, and there was evidence of a slightly uneasy relationship during this interval of waiting. When the spirit had been brought back and was being guarded by some woman appointed for that purpose, then it was once more near to the living and their cattle, and it could be addressed correctly. In the absence of any clear concepts about life in a spirit world, the Ngoni clung to the ritual by which they believed they could establish and maintain contact of a safe and respectful nature between the living and the dead. 769 775

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 769 764 In the central kingdom there were two instances of a modern adaptation of the ancestor cult, both of which were evidence of its close links with the aristocratic tradition; one related to a *mahwanana* of a Swazi clan, the other to the royal clan. One of the first things which caught the eye of a visitor to the village of Mcakhatha was a large circular brick and cement tomb with a wooden cross on the top, in the middle of the village by the main kraal and within sight of the ruling chief's hut. It was the tomb of Njolomole Nzunga I, son of Golozela Nzunga who gave the cattle for NaMlangeni's *lobola*, and father of the ruling Chief Njolomole Nzunga II. The idea of this memorial originated with Lopati Nzunga, younger brother of Njolomole I and head of the *gogo* section of the village, and he had organized its erection. The bricks and cement were given by Europeans in the neighbourhood, and three beasts were killed for meat for those who carried the materials. The money to pay for the bricklayers' wages was raised by the sale of another beast. The name on the wooden cross was cut by the Chief's brother-in-law who was a carpenter, and Lopati said that the cross was for writing the name on and had no Christian significance. The tomb was declared 'open' to the public in the presence of a large number of people. A beast was presented to the Paramount Chief, and another beast was killed and cooked for a feast in the village. Beer was brewed in the huts of the two leading widows who had been in the big house and second house of Njolomole I.

This tomb was a memorial and not a grave, for Njolomole I had been buried in Ngoni fashion on the edge of the kraal, the fence of which was enlarged to take in the grave. It was regarded as a central point in the village. Ngoni visitors saluted it as they went by with the right arm upraised in Ngoni fashion, and war-dances and *ngoma* dances took place beside it. The idea of a brick tomb with a cross on top was of course a modern concept taken from European cemeteries in Nyasaland which Lopati had seen. It cost six cattle to put it up and 'open' it, and these cattle were taken from the herds of the big house of Njolomole I.

[576 201]

In the chapter on the Paramount (Part II, Chapter II) it was pointed out that in the central kingdom the Paramount Gomani I was shot as a result of the 'war with the English' when he refused to walk to Zomba for his trial. On the Zomba road near the turning to the mission station of Dombole was a track leading into some woods. In an open clearing was a brick and cement tomb to Gomani I, subscribed to by the central Ngoni (including those living in the towns of Blantyre and Zomba). A memorial fund called 'The late Gomani Memorial Fund' was opened in 1926, and three years later those who had organized the fund formed the Angoni Highlands Association, mainly of Ngoni working in Blantyre and Zomba and wishing to maintain their links with their home villages. In discussing the origin of this fund for the memorial informants pointed out that they were aware that Gomani I, unlike his father and grand-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

father, had been a fierce ruler, and had gathered round him bands of young men who were not easily restrained. Though they could judge his character in this objective way, they respected his office, and hence his death and the confiscation of cattle which followed were a deep injury to Ngoni pride. So thirty years after his death they collected money and put up the memorial, and the appeal was supported for three main reasons. One was to commemorate this Paramount who had not had the traditional cremation by a river; another was to remove the shame of his death; the last was to draw together all his people in a common act. Every year numbers of Ngoni gathered at this memorial and held a Christian service which was followed by a general meeting. This memorial service and meeting had a definite link with the ancestor cult, and illustrated in a particular form Ngoni beliefs in the relation of the living and the dead.

In the 1930's, as we saw in Chapter III of Part I, the form of Ngoni funerals and the ritual of mourning were closely related to the ancestor cult and were practised by the Ngoni aristocracy. These forms of ritual and their beliefs they brought with them from the south, and they were an important part of Ngoni culture. We shall see in a later chapter how some of these cultural elements were combined with Christian ritual, both for leading individuals of Swazi clans and for lesser members of those clans.

CHAPTER II

CATTLE AND THE ANCESTOR CULT

There are many references throughout this study to the importance of cattle among the Ngoni. In this chapter the place of cattle in Ngoni life will be examined with reference to the ancestor cult, and hence certain limitations have been imposed in the selection of material and its interpretation. There will, for example, be no analysis of the role of cattle in the economic life of Ngoni families and villages. Much of the material discussed has an economic significance which is immediately apparent, but the limitations set will not allow the economic implications of certain practices to be pursued further here. It is important for the main purpose of this chapter to make a brief analysis of some factors in the ownership, care, and use of cattle, and to follow that with references to some of the values and attitudes inherent in the Ngoni ownership and use of cattle. I made a preliminary analysis of these factors in a memorandum on standards of living in the central kingdom, published

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Cattle in the ancestor cult

The Ngoni, unlike the Swazi as described by Dr. Kuper,[1] had no clear ideas about the life after death as lived by their immediate ancestors with whom they had associated in their lifetime. They did not, as the Swazi did, picture them living somewhere surrounded with cattle and other familiar creatures and objects. The importance of bringing the spirit back (*ukubuyisa idloazi*) to the house where it would be cared for signified two main things for them. The first was the continuous association of the spirit of the dead with the living persons in the community to which he had belonged, through the individuals belonging to the house, the actual hut where the sacrificial vessels were kept, and the cattle which belonged to the house. The other significant point was that contact with the returned spirit, and through him with the spirits of more remote ancestors, could only be established in the village containing the cattle of the house to which the dead man had belonged.

769 775 [171]

We shall be examining some aspects of the ritual of addressing the ancestral spirits in a later chapter of this section. Here we shall establish three constituent parts of the ancestor cult in which cattle were essential links between those taking part in the cult and the spirits whom they addressed.

764

The first part was the group of ceremonies which took place at death, at the burial, at the first ritual shaving and at bringing back the spirit. A text by Lopati Nzunga (see Chapter IV, p. 200) illustrates how three parts of a beast—the skin, the kidney fat (*nseso*) and the gall bladder (*nyongo*)—were considered essential for Ngoni burial. It was interesting to find in Blantyre among educated Ngoni who were Christians and occupied clerical and commercial posts, that they had given up the cow-skin for wrapping the corpse and substituted a coffin. But they admitted confidentially that in most Ngoni funerals the use of the *nseso* and the *nyongo* was customary. After the burial the ritual shaving, shared in by all who attended the funeral, was accompanied by the killing of a beast and the consumption of its meat, though with no ritual significance beyond its association with the purification of the mourners and their integration as a group. From six to twelve months later the second shaving and the bringing back of the spirit was also accompanied by killing a beast and eating its meat. These ceremonies expressed the sense of loss felt for the human person who had died, the sorrow of the mourners, their successive acts of purification which served to bring them together, and the final bringing of the spirit to live among them again. As we have seen, each stage of the death and mourning rites was accompanied by the eating of a beast or the use of certain parts of a beast. The cattle of the house to which the dead person belonged were used to bury him or her, to strengthen the mourners, and to reintegrate the spirit with the living community.

769 825 [177]

765 769 825 [783]

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 186.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 UMkulumqango or other names for the High God were rare. When
771 questioned they said that such a High God existed and the spirits knew him, but they, the living, did not. The Ngoni phrase, *asiyazi*, 'we do not know', and its Nyanja version, *sitingadziwa*, 'we cannot know', were constantly on their lips in discussions on this topic. Among Christians like Cibambo as well as non-Christians like Nzunga, their interest in the ancestor cult was part of maintaining their identity as Ngoni. The neighbouring tribes had other forms of ancestor cults but the Ngoni form brought from the south was distinctive, and many of the concepts and practices were known to the South-eastern Bantu peoples.

The ritual for a new ancestral spirit

761 The Ngoni believed that at the moment of death the spirit left the
775 body. If a sick person fell into a coma and was unconscious for a long time they said that the person had died when the coma began even though they knew he went on breathing. This happened at the death of Bambo Manga when she had periods of unconsciousness before she died. They said that her spirit had left her at the beginning of the last long coma, even though they knew from her pulse and breathing that she was not dead. At the parting of the spirit from the body they had to care for both, in order that the new ancestral spirit might be happy and in the right relationship with the living. Equal importance was attached to caring for the spirit and to caring for the corpse, since the correct performance of ritual had deep significance for the dead and for the living.

763 When the spirit left the body it was believed to go to the bush at the
775 outskirts of the village where the person had been accustomed to go to relieve himself. Between the death of Bambo Manga and the burial, each morning before it was light, the men marched with a dancing step up the path to the bush where she was wont to go, singing a war song dating from trans-Zambesi days which was sung at the sending out of the *impi*. Marching to the bush and singing the war song was one step in bringing the spirit back or, more correctly perhaps, keeping in touch with it so that it should not go too far away. This approach to the spirit between the death and burial was the first of three ritual acts, each called 'bringing back the spirit'. The other two occurred after the first and second ritual shaving.

764 The preparation of the corpse for burial has been described in the first chapter of this section. Those features of Ngoni burial were considered essential for the welfare of the spirit, and were carried out in the majority of funerals which I witnessed, whether the dead person was a Christian or not. An account of the burial of a leading *mulumuzana* in the northern kingdom who was a Christian, given to me by another Christian Ngoni and confirmed by some of the missionaries present at the funeral, emphasized all the distinctive Ngoni elements: the round

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

grave with the little shelf at one side, the corpse wrapped in a cow-skin, the *nseso* and *nyongo* on the neck and forehead, the bent legs and upright sitting position facing south-east, and washing the face of the corpse at the grave side with a bunch of grass. On this occasion the Ngoni form of burial was followed by the Christian burial service after the grave had been filled in. During the digging of the grave hymns set to the tunes of Ngoni war songs were sung by the onlookers until the body was brought out of the house. After that there was complete silence while the corpse was lowered into the grave and the grave was filled up, until the service began. This combination of Christian and Ngoni ritual I witnessed many times. One of the missions set its face against the use of the cow-skin and declared that no Christian could be buried except in a coffin, but even this was sometimes disregarded and the full Ngoni ritual was carried out, followed by a Christian service.

After the body had been put in the grave and when the first calling back of the spirit from the bush had reminded the living that they had to care for this new spirit, a series of further duties faced them. These have been referred to as the first and second shaving. The first shaving we shall consider later as a necessary purification before eating the meat of the funeral rites which brought back the spirit right into the village. The second shaving, which took place from six to twelve months after the funeral, was the prelude to the time when the new ancestral spirit came, or was brought back, to its final lodging. The importance of this last rite was emphasized by Lopati Nzunga in his account of the ritual which took place at the tomb put up to the memory of Gomani I (see p. 165) When the building of the tomb under the supervision of Ngoni in the area was finished, many leading Ngoni from all parts, including those from the towns, gathered there for two days. Every morning before dawn they went up the forest paths singing war songs, as they did later at the time of the death of Bambo Manga, to call back the spirit from the bush where it had spent some thirty years. After a Christian service held by the tomb, the Ngoni *alumuzana* 'brought back' the spirit to Lizulu, Gomani I's village, to the house of NaMagagula his big wife. She was a Christian, so could not take the care of the spirit in her hut, but another of the widows of Gomani I, NaNsambi, who was in the house of NaMagagula, was chosen as guardian. Earlier in the proceedings, when they had decided that the tomb was going to be built, a diviner was consulted, the spirits were addressed in the kraal, the cattle showed that they agreed, and a beast from the herd of the house of NaMagagula was sacrificed and the meat offered to the ancestral spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Then they built a new hut for NaNsambi and put in it new sacrificial vessels. When the spirit of Gomani I was finally brought home it was to this hut and guardianship that it came. They were uncertain about what had happened to the spirit in the thirty years interval and it did not seem advisable to probe

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

It was the fathers who decided at what age a child should go to school, and having once enrolled the boy or girl and paid the fees, the fathers insisted on regular attendance. 593 [872]

All Ngoni fathers showed affection for their young children, some consistently and others when it occurred to them. They picked them up and carried them about, held their hand while they tried their first steps, listened to their attempts to speak correctly, held them in their arms when they sat on the veranda. In one village twin boys aged four were devoted to their father and he to them. When he walked about, he held a hand of each. When he sat on the veranda they were always beside him and he had an arm round each. When he was elsewhere, the twins wandered about the compound disconsolately, hand in hand, rejecting the advances of their nurse girls and uncertain what to do until he appeared again.

Ngoni fathers had to be consulted in cases of sickness when the grandmother's remedies had failed and specialist help was needed. Then the father and his brothers and their father decided whether to summon a diviner or a herbalist, and arranged for the throwing of lots or the search for 'medicines', and paid the agreed fee when the cure worked. 593 757

It was part of Ngoni tradition to keep the knowledge of death away from young children. The father was held responsible for seeing that his children were kept away from the hut where the corpse was awaiting burial, and from the funeral itself. When men and women of leading Ngoni families were buried at the edge of the kraal, and the fence enlarged so that the cattle stamped over the grave, the explanation given (though it was not the only reason) was that 'the young children should not know or fear death in this village'. 593 764 858

The physical surroundings of the small child

The two diagrams, overleaf, illustrate the layout of the hut and compound in typical Ngoni households. Some of these 342 351

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 human flesh-eaters may have worn, the doctor takes
695 home with him and washes his poison bark with it,
791 that it may still retain its virtue. In the case of a man who dies from drinking the poison, his spirit is
[115] not brought back to the village, but is driven out into the bush.

II

A FUNERAL

764 I. When a person dies every one is told that so and so, who was ill, is "finished for." Then the village elders come together and go into his hut. They begin to bathe the body and anoint it with oil, folding the knees against the chest, and laying the palms of the hands against the cheeks, the arms being bent from the elbows. Then they take a large flat stone, set it against the hut wall, and on it place the body in a sitting position. Then they commence to wail, the women folk only are in the hut where the corpse is, the men are outside, and the children on the verandah. They lament, saying, "Alas, alas, my husband, what shall I do this day?" [The women pass the night in the hut with the dead body, the men sleep outside.] Next morning, when it is dawn, some men take their hoes, and sacrificial flour, and go to some resting-place on the wayside, and sprinkle some flour at the foot of a tree, and set out again, and when now they are drawing near the burial ground, the one who is in front picks up a stone and throws it, with the words, "We have passed." Then they commence to clear a piece of ground, and take the flour and mark out the grave.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

When they have finished doing so, one old man comes forward and turns up a little of the soil at each end of the grave, while the rest then begin to dig. People at a funeral do not fear each other; should they wish to abuse one another they just do so. When they have finished digging the grave, a person getting in is invisible. The reason they dig a deep hole is that they fear the eaters of human flesh, lest they should lift out the corpse should it be [lit. from] close to the surface. Then they take the blade of grass which they have measured the body with, and measure the cave, which they now dig inwards on one side of the grave, and throw out the earth to form this space. When this is finished, some of the old men come to have a look at the work. The two men who now remain in the grave (to await the corpse) are the chief mourners, whose duty it will be to divide out the mourning feast to their fellows.

II. They who go to bring the body now set out, uttering the funeral wail. And all the people who remained behind at the village come together and congregate at the hut, and they enter and lift up the body. A mat is spread at the doorway and the body set down upon it; they lift it from there, and make a circuit of all the huts the man used to frequent when alive, and they take him also to the village court, and set him down there. On lifting him from there, they go to the burial ground. When they arrive at the accustomed halting-place for travellers, the corpse is again set down, and then they come with it to the grave. On the way to the burial ground they who carry the household goods and mats of the deceased go first. And the people take turns in carrying the body. When they come to the grave, they hand down the body to the two men who remained in it. They strip off his calico,

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

764 and take a large flat stone and set the corpse on it, and take a millstone and place it on his head. If it be he has children, they are made to take charcoal in their hands, and this they cast into the grave (this is to cause them to forget). Then some old man takes up a hoe, and strikes the ground at one side of the grave and again at the other, when many begin to fill in the earth, the chief mourners trampling it down.

III. When they have finished filling in, they knock out the hoe heads, and set off for the stream. They who carry the hoes and household belongings of the deceased go first. When they reach the water, the chief mourners bathe first, then every one else; the men bathe up-stream, the women down-stream. They do not rub each other's backs. When
768 they have finished bathing, they take the calico, sporran, and "*nsengwa*" baskets the dead man used to eat out of, and set fire to them, and splash the ashes with water. Then they set out for the village, wailing. When they come to the grave, the medicine man looks for medicine to remove the evil
[M5] influence of the spirit of the dead; [this medicine] he breaks up, puts in a potsherd, pours on water, and stirs. The chief mourner begins to rub it on his
765 legs, face, and hands, then others come and do the same. If the deceased had children of his own, they also rub some of the medicine on. They again keep wake at the hut in which the man died. Next morning at dawn the nearest relation of the dead
[431] takes goats and fowls and gives them to the chief mourners, who then begin to shave a little patch of hair from the side of each person's head, when the people will then shave each other quite bald. The widows go to some spot in the bush to weave the "red" bands and to shave. When every one has quite finished shaving, the meat is taken from the

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Little maiden, whom war has given me, 533
Should you refuse to be mine, 755
I am as a slave in my grief, 539
And then what must you do?

We were far away;
Our companions had cut off their head rings.

XXVII

THE NTETEREZI DANCE

539
533
[764]

It is danced only at a funeral.

Scrape out the beer pot and give me.
Have some sense, the beer is finished.

He is the husband who favours your companion
(*i.e.* his second wife),
And you, you only cook and give him, all in silence;
And here you return,
And weep against the hut post.

Should you be a childless man,
Do not be hitting your neighbour's child,
That's so, father.
Don't you think you should go and beat that maize you planted?
That's so, father.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVIII

THE KANDENGA DANCE

In dancing this dance the women stand in line on one side, the men in a line on another, the drums are where the men are; then a woman goes and takes the knobkerry from a man, and the man goes back with her to where the women are, and again they return and stand close together. The man places one hand on the woman's shoulder, and they dance thus, and when they have done dancing the woman turns round and hands the man his knobkerry. The Kandenga is danced at a funeral, but also just for fun when the moon is shining. 535 [764]

A white-haired man is malt; 539
On his coming, let him make beer; 533
  Yes, father.
On his coming he shall make beer.

Towards the river to *Likongwe*
A cloud shines white like some little bird, maybe,
But it's those Angoni; they always said
  "That's a rich little spot where the *Nsugudzi* flows."

I am an unmarried maiden, and one of Njolo's men will be my lord,
  De, de.
The youths from here think too much of themselves.
Did not one say, I was his,
  De, de.
The youths of here are too conceited.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

The final day of the proceedings, *tsiku la kumuna*, is known as *tsiku la kumuta malire*. The beer is tested at cockcrow, and *kuziya malire* begins to dance, followed first by a *chiwulo* and then by *mdondo*. At sunrise the dancers proceed to the *dambwe*, and those who play no further active part may go and bathe, after which they repair to the *liunda*, where they rest and drink till noon. Meanwhile, the relations, accompanied by any other of the men who assisted in digging the grave or were present at the interment, have betaken themselves early to the banks of the stream where they bathed on the former occasion. The women who have worn *zisthambo* burn them in a fire, and scatter the ashes. If they have indulged in sexual intercourse while wearing them, the *zisthambo* refuse to burn. Both sexes bathe separately as before, and all return to the house of the deceased, outside which the men shave each others' heads, as also do the women. About noon one or more *amalipu* come from the *liunde* and dance in the *mzinda*. *Chadumda* hobbles out, peers round the graveyard, and goes first to the house of the deceased to receive a *supo* from the widow and then to the house of the headman, where he sits on a chair while people come and give him *masupo* and beer. After this refreshment he dances in the *bwalo*, and then retreats to the *liunde* for a rest, returning to dance a second and third time before retiring finally to the *dambwe*. Then *kuziya malire* dances for the last time, and is taken to the *dambwe* and burnt, and those who have handled him bathe. *Viwulo* again bring broken pots from the graveyard, and dance with them in the bush, singing "*Mbiya zodonda*," and the *amalipu* continue dancing for a while. At sunset the ceremonies are ended by the male relations of the deceased burning first the beer fence and then the house. The widow sleeps in someone else's house for a few weeks, until a new house has been built for her by her relations.

M 765 575 M [515] [302] [535] M [768]

5. *Funeral rites (Ngoni).*

The procedure described by Captain Rattray[2] in 1907 is still remembered by the old men; but the younger Angoni are inclined to follow the customs of the Achewa with certain modifications. For example, they place the corpse in a recess cut out from the bottom of the wall of the grave in order that it may not be soiled when the grave is filled in. They do not leave him any food, but place his spear and shield and one or two of his knives in the recess by his side. Part of his remaining property is deposited in the main shaft; but the sons always inherit the knives, except the *chipumbo* (knife for cutting meat), which falls to the head wife.

N 764 [177] N 428

On the second day after the death, the widows send children to cut *mpalapudwa* grass, from which they weave *zisthambo* to bind on their heads. As long as the widows wear these *zisthambo*, they must abstain from sexual intercourse; if they fall from grace, they invariably remove the *zisthambo* first. They must also keep their hands behind their backs when walking abroad, and may only use one hand when gesticulating. They must refrain from conversation and ablution for two or three weeks, at the end of which they brew beer (known as *mwa wa zisthambo*) and invite a few friends to partake of it. Very often a widow's near female relations past the time of childbearing wear *zisthambo* and observe prohibitions in sympathy with her.

N 765 N [273]

[1] Mourning bands of plaited grass (see following section).
[2] "Some Folk Lore Songs and Stories in Chinyanja," pp. 98-99.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 765 [262] On the second day, also, the *mwini malire* takes cows or a goat according to his means, and divides the flesh among the mourners. The bones may not be gnawed, as this would be considered equivalent to eating the dead man, but they are put into an *nguombe* basket and thrown away into the bush at the end of the feast.

M N [764] [177] On the third and fourth days the male relations surround the grave with a fence of *tsebera* grass known as *chilira*, which is sometimes plastered by the women with mud. The Achewa are now beginning to imitate this custom, and also that of wearing *zisthembe*. Both tribes plant *nkhadzi*[1] trees about the graves in order that the dead may have shade.

N 766 765 237 A chief is not buried in the common graveyard, but in the village just outside his hut, and a chair is sometimes placed inside the *chilira*. One of his senior relations kills a goat, and the new prospective chief ties a root along the handle and blade of a knife, with which he cuts a horizontal strip of skin round the quarters of a goat, and wears the strip for two or three months as a belt, the tail hanging down behind. With the same knife the widows cut off the false hoofs together with a small piece of adjacent skin, through which they thread a string, and then bind a false hoof on each wrist and wear them till the end of the period of mourning. The root must remain fastened to the knife throughout this period, at the end of which all are burnt together.

VIII.—MENTAL CHARACTERS.

1. *Reincarnation and Spirits* (*Chewa*).

M 769 [776] [622] [778] [262] *Mizimu* or spirits are invoked as intermediaries between man and God (*Chauta*), and each village contains a hut for the spirits of past chiefs, to whom prayers are generally made because they are powerful and because they are known to everybody. Some of the larger villages have two huts, one for the spirits of men and the other for the spirits of women. A man may also make offerings to the spirits of his own family in his own hut. When the green maize is ready for eating, the people may not taste it until their headman has taken a cob, cooked it in his house and placed it in the spirits' house, where he claps his hands and thanks the spirits for the crop. The cob, like other offerings to spirits, may be eaten next morning by children below the age of initiation.

M 775 It, as frequently happens, a traveller strays—as we should say, absentmindedly—when following a route which he knows quite well, it is the work of a spirit which has been annoyed by him. On one such occasion a police constable of mine, who had been sent to the neighbouring station while his child was ill, found himself wandering several times from the main road, and knew thereby that his child was dead, and that its spirit was troubling him because he should

[1] *Nkhadzi*, euphorbia. These are evergreen, quickly propagated and long lived, and so they serve also as a sign to mark the grave long afterwards. In the Mlanje District the Anyanja and other tribes sometimes plant them in maize fields because they are supposed to be obnoxious to termites. [824]

Livingstone, *loc. cit.*, p. 105, writes that in the Shire Highlands in 1859 they found all Mang'anja villages surrounded by an impenetrable hedge of poisonous euphorbia. He continues: "This tree casts a deep shade, which would render it difficult to bowmen to take aim at the villagers inside. The grass does not grow beneath it, and this may be the reason why it is so universally used, for when dry the grass would convey fire to huts inside; moreover, the hedge acts as a fender to all flying sparks.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XVI

281
764
349
231
516

7. Drying a cow-hide at a funeral. A beast from the herd of the dead man has been killed for the mourners. The skin will be buried on top of the coffin

764
349

8. Later, at the same funeral. The body has been interred and the mourners are sitting round the grave, near the cattle-byre, listening to a sermon by a local preacher of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission

[Facing P. 225]

II:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

 N 159 173 562

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze*. N M 171 643 842 851

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Loziwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtenguleni Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara. N 159 173 562 [595] N [764] [423]

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchizu* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jere; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara. N 159 173 595 842 602

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth. N 159 173 644

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

we dammed the stream and made a pool and a mound. And we put him on a rock, and on top of him we put cowhide shields and left them so. And we put firewood above. Then Ngwazi Ngozo took fire and lit that fire. Then *ligubo* was danced and the women were singing. They sang songs of *ligubo* and the *amadoda* danced (*anagiya*). The owner of the country did not cry, no, and the big people did not cry. Only the wives and other women cried. 643 766

Habuya Dube added later that everyone came with one piece of wood and put it on the pyre; and that they killed a cow and took the fat and put it on the wood, and used the skin to wrap the body in.

In discussing the ceremony of cremation with informants among the central Ngoni, there was no reference to the suggestion made by Dr. Kuper, that cremating was a substitute for embalming to avoid the corruption of the body of the king. They regarded the act of burning as an essential element in the continuing strength of the royal line, since the heir stood in the smoke from the pyre, and in the continuing fertility and strength of the country, since the ashes were swept into the river. The concept was that the royal ruler had been strengthened with the *tonga* medicine, and thereafter his body and its strength was the symbol of the unity and strength and fertility of his country.

On the question of mourning or no mourning they were equally emphatic. 'Death cannot cut life' was an expression often on their lips during the funeral ceremonies of Bambo Manga, when great care was taken to carry out the traditional ritual as far as possible in every detail. They were shocked at the idea of mourning and wailing at such a time by any of the big people. The leading Ngoni women were expected to join the *ligubo* dances in the courtyard. Some old women of lower social rank in the village, together with the daughter of Bambo Manga, sat in the house with the corpse sobbing and crying '*Mayi, mayi*' and many of them became quite ill and others hysterical with prolonged sobbing. The leading Ngoni men were contemptuous of this display of grief. They admitted it was correct behaviour for her daughter because of the close kinship tie, but of the behaviour of the rest they said 'Ha, just like the Ntumba people.' The only behaviour which was considered correct was to dance in the courtyard openly before the house of Bambo Manga, or to slip off quietly home and rest before returning to take up the dance. 643 765 565 766 [152]

The traditional ritual procedure at the death of the Paramount, with the exception of the cremation of the corpse, I saw in all its details at the death of Bambo Manga. The corpse was placed in the same position in the hut as described at Cikusi's death, and was wrapped in a sheep-skin first with a cow-skin over, the spleen, gall-bladder and fat decorating the head and neck. The dancing of *ligubo* by the men with shields and spears, and by the women, was continuous from the moment of death to the burial, and afterwards whenever fresh companies from the central 643 766

764 184 burned immediately after the burial on the banks of the stream where the living performed their ritual washing. Small children who were related to the dead took charcoal in their hands, and walked up to the grave backwards and threw the charcoal in without looking. Some leaders of the Swazi clans were buried on the edge of the kraal of the house to which they belonged, and the fence was enlarged to include the grave. The Ngoni comment on this place of burial was: 'If we make a grave, we make it outside the kraal, and afterwards build the kraal round that place so that cattle may walk over it and lie on it. Thus it may become flat as if it were nothing, for Ngoni people do not want a grave to [765] be seen from the outside.' The women who were near relatives of the dead were allowed to mourn in the hut where the person had died, or they could if they chose take part in the war-songs and dances which were the only form of mourning allowed to the male relatives and to the men and women of the village who were not closely related to the dead person. The usual procedure was for a group of older women to wail and sob in the hut, but for all the rest, men and women, to mourn in the Ngoni way by taking part in war-dances and songs.

764 182 Much of this ritual appears to have had as its purpose to remove the fear of death from the living. That was the explanation of why the children threw charcoal in the grave—that they should not remember with fear the dead person being put in the earth. The obliteration of the grave site on the edge of the kraal had a dual purpose. One has been already referred to—that the grave should not be seen. The other was to identify the grave of a leading man or woman with the kraal site and the cattle herded there. If the village moved and a new kraal was set up, people would still say 'X was buried here', adding 'He was buried here when we were on Domwe—or in Songea', referring to an earlier site of the village. Placing the corpse facing south-east, and singing Ngoni war-songs which had come from the south, linked the newly dead with the ancestral dead, and emphasized the chain of communication between the living and the dead, which a new ancestral spirit could help to forge. It was establishing this means of communication which was the dominant note in the ritual of the funeral and in the post-burial rites.

When a death took place, the first action taken after the corpse had been prepared and wrapped in a skin was to send out a summons to come and mourn. We saw in the chapter on the Paramount that at his death the summons was in the formula 'The skies have fallen.' For others the announcement was: [illegible] and so has died. Come and mourn.' The [765] obligation to mourn was [illegible]ing. If relatives and fellow clansmen could not come at the time of the burial, or were away in the south, one of their first duties on returning to their home village was to go and mourn by the kraal where the dead person was buried. This was intended partly to show sympathy for the bereaved, but also to acknowledge and salute a new ancestral spirit, and to demonstrate the re-integration of

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 [182

the group of those living relatives who had performed or were about to perform certain rites for the newly dead. 764] 765

These rites were the stages of mourning laid down in the Ngoni funeral ritual. They were stages in which all adults took part, and they fulfilled the need to build up the future links with the spirit who had joined the ancestors and to bring together in common acts those from whom death had removed one of their number. The following text by one of the leaders of a Swazi clan in the central kingdom puts together briefly the successive stages of shaving, drinking beer, eating meat, singing war-songs, ritual cleansing and widow inheritance, and bringing back the spirit.

¶ If a man died, the second day they shave; after 5 or 6 months they shave again and cook beer. This means the widows must take off their white *zitambo* (head bands). After 12 months they take off their black *zitambo* and kill a beast to praise the spirit so that he may return to his house. This is also the time for inheriting the widows.

When they take off the white *zitambo*, the brother of the one who died takes sheep dung and sprinkles it in the houses where the widows are sleeping. At the same time the men wash their hands with cattle dung. The meaning of this is to tell the widows to cook food for the brothers of the dead man to send to them when they sit by the kraal. This they do before they can see them.

From the ritual witnessed at many funeral ceremonies, which never altered in its main elements, and from discussions with Ngoni informants, it was possible to gain some idea of Ngoni beliefs about the relation between the living and the dead. It was clear that the attitude of the living towards the dead was one of respect and honour, but not predominantly one of avoidance and fear as among some of the neighbouring tribes. The post-burial ritual culminated in 'bringing back the spirit' to the village, and we shall examine this further in the last chapter of this section. An observer was always conscious of a sense that people were waiting for the return of the spirit, which had to be planned for and carried out by the living. During the interval between the death and bringing back the spirit, it was said to be 'in the bush'. When asked where in fact the spirit was, the answer was always 'We do not know. How can we know?' They admitted that the life of the spirits was unknown to them, and there was evidence of a slightly uneasy relationship during this interval of waiting. When the spirit had been brought back and was being guarded by some woman appointed for that purpose, then it was once more near to the living and their cattle, and it could be addressed correctly. In the absence of any clear concepts about life in a spirit world, the Ngoni clung to the ritual by which they believed they could establish and maintain contact of a safe and respectful nature between the living and the dead. 769 775

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Cattle in the ancestor cult 825

The Ngoni, unlike the Swazi as described by Dr. Kuper,[1] had no 769
clear ideas about the life after death as lived by their immediate ancestors 775
with whom they had associated in their lifetime. They did not, as the [171]
Swazi did, picture them living somewhere surrounded with cattle and other familiar creatures and objects. The importance of bringing the spirit back (*ukubuyisa idlozi*) to the house where it would be cared for signified two main things for them. The first was the continuous association of the spirit of the dead with the living persons in the community to which he had belonged, through the individuals belonging to the house, the actual hut where the sacrificial vessels were kept, and the cattle which belonged to the house. The other significant point was that contact with the returned spirit, and through him with the spirits of more remote ancestors, could only be established in the village containing the cattle of the house to which the dead man had belonged.

We shall be examining some aspects of the ritual of addressing the ancestral spirits in a later chapter of this section. Here we shall establish three constituent parts of the ancestor cult in which cattle were [illegible]al links between those taking part in the cult and the spirits whom [illegible]ey addressed. 764

The first part was the group of ceremonies which took place at death, 769
at the burial, at the first ritual shaving and at bringing back the spirit. 825
A text by Lopati Nzunga (see Chapter IV, p. 200) illustrates how three parts of a beast—the skin, the kidney fat (*nseso*) and the gall bladder (*nyongo*)—were considered essential for Ngoni burial. It was interesting [177]
to find in Blantyre among educated Ngoni who were Christians and occupied clerical and commercial posts, that they had given up the cow-skin for wrapping the corpse and substituted a coffin. But they admitted confidentially that in most Ngoni funerals the use of the *nseso* and the *nyongo* was customary. After the burial the ritual shaving, 765
shared in by all who attended the funeral, was accompanied by the 769
killing of a beast and the consumption of its meat, though with no ritual 825
significance beyond its association with the purification of the mourners and their integration as a group. From six to twelve months later the [783]
second shaving and the bringing back of the spirit was also accompanied by killing a beast and eating its meat. These ceremonies expressed the sense of loss felt for the human person who had died, the sorrow of the mourners, their successive acts of purification which served to bring them together, and the final bringing of the spirit to live among them again. As we have seen, each stage of the death and mourning rites was accompanied by the eating of a beast or the use of certain parts of a beast. The cattle of the house to which the dead person belonged were used to bury him or her, to strengthen the mourners, and to reintegrate the spirit with the living community.

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 186.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 too closely because of the still bitter feeling against Europeans for having caused the Paramount's death. It was quite clear, however, that since this essential step in the recognition of an ancestral spirit had been omitted at the time of his death, it was considered important to make good the omission, and the 'opening' of the grave appeared as the logical occasion.

● 765 In Mcakhatha village I witnessed a ritual second shaving for a man
769 of the Nzunga clan, a son of the former chief, Njolomole I. This man had been absent from the village for many years, having left as a young man still living in the *laweni*, and his death in the south was reported by letter from a fellow villager to his relatives in the village. When the letter was received, a diviner was consulted and he advised a sacrifice to the spirits. The first ritual shaving of all members of the Nzunga clan and their affines took place as it would have done on the day after burial if he had died in the village, and a beast was killed and the meat offered to the spirits and ritually eaten. The women of the Nzunga clan and the wives and widows of Nzunga men put on *zitambo* or mourning caps. Six months later the diviner was consulted again, and a day was fixed for the second shaving 'to bring back the spirit'. The spirits of the Nzunga clan were addressed, the beast selected for the sacrifice urinated, the spirits 'agreed', and the shaving of the Nzunga clan members and
[302] their affines took place; this time the whole head was shaved whereas the first shaving was only a small patch on the temple. The men were shaved by the kraal, the women near the hut of the dead man's mother which was uninhabited. The women who were relatives or affines of the deceased took off their *zitambo* and unravelled the threads of which the caps were made, collecting in front of each a little heap of hair and thread. Then one of the leading women got up and said '*Tiyeni* (Let us go)', and the women went in procession to the stream, each carrying her little handful of hair and thread. As they passed they pulled a handful of dry grass from the roof of the hut by which they had been sitting to start their fires. By the stream each of the former mourners, eleven in all, made a fire of grass and dried leaves lit from a bunch of smouldering grass carried by one of them, put on it the threads and hair and tended the fire until only ashes were left. All these eleven women stood erect behind their fires facing the stream, except when bending down to fan the flames. When the fires died down each woman swept the ashes into the stream with her hand and splashed water on the site of the fire until no trace was left, lifting overhanging branches to leave a free passage for the ashes on to the water. The leading widow, a descendant of NaNdumbu, the famous woman diviner of Mputa's day, took a look round to see if all traces of the fires had gone, said 'We have finished', and led the way to the washing pool where all the women washed their clothes and their bodies. Meantime the men had been to wash in the stream on the other side of the village and had also burned their hair

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

765 769

by the stream and swept the ashes into the water. The beast for the sacrifice had been killed early in the morning before the shaving, and the ritual eating of the meat took place. This second shaving and sacrifice were to end the mourning period and to bring back the spirit to the village. A widow of Chief Njolomole I was appointed to guard the spirit and she kept in her hut the baskets which had been used for the sacrifice.

When asked whether this ritual of bringing back the spirit was followed for everyone who died away from home, the answer was 'No. It was done for this man because he was a big one and he was the son of a chief.' Only for members of leading Swazi clans and some others of trans-Zambesi origin was the ritual invariably followed of recalling the spirit to the village where he had lived and where the clan sacrifices were performed with the cattle of the man's house. The ritual ensured that a new ancestor spirit was recognized, that provision could be made for its guardianship, and that the spirit had been brought back to the village even though the man had died and been buried elsewhere. The ritual was based, not on the assumption that the spirit would be angry if not so treated and might injure his living descendants, but on the belief that absence had weakened the bonds between members of the clan and the house, and that the ritual associated with the making of an ancestor spirit gave an opportunity for strengthening these bonds. This was achieved by bringing together the living to commemorate the dead; by repeating once again the traditional pattern of speaking to the ancestors through the cattle; by giving the spirits their meat which the living shared; and by making sure that the spirit of the dead man would henceforth be taken care of by an appointed guardian. [(82)]

In the case of important people of the royal clan and chiefs, the second shaving was a preliminary to bringing back the spirit to be taken care of permanently and there were two stages to this last ritual in the making of an ancestral spirit. Three months after the death of Bambo Manga there was an elaborate ceremony of the second shaving which was accompanied by brewing vast amounts of beer. On this occasion there was an offering of beer, not meat, to the ancestral spirits. The ritual began with consulting the diviner first about whether the beer would be good. The diviner reported that two quarrelling women were spoiling it, and the quarrel would have to be resolved before the brewing would be successful. The diviner was also asked which spirit should be offered beer on this occasion, and answered that NaQwana, the mother of Mputa and grandmother of Bambo Manga, was the one to be addressed. The next act was making the ritual fire, since all the beer had to be cooked on newly made fires. Lopati Nzunga took the ritual fire-stick from Bambo Manga's hut, two young men kindled a fire outside and the women took grass from Bambo Manga's fence to build a fire. The women picked up bits of this fire to kindle their own new fires before brewing the beer. 769

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

577 accident. These visits and expressions of sympathy could not be omitted without grave social disapproval. If a young man or woman was absent from the village at the time of death or loss, their first duty on returning was to go and express sympathy with the sufferer. To assist in these condolences so that the speaker and the hearer would readily understand each [538] other, proverbs were used such as: 'If the pot is broken it is broken indeed,' and, 'When water is poured out it cannot be gathered up.' The Ngoni disliked the noisy and unrestrained [765] forms of mourning which they saw among the people round them. To them the quiet visit and the note of resignation in the proverbs used fully conveyed the sympathy they wished to express.

All through the later stages of training children and young 577 adults the importance of speaking well was emphasized. 191 This at first referred to correct language and being audible 195 but not noisy. Later, as we saw in Chapter VII, the art of 588 speech was held up as a Ngoni characteristic, and many proverbs brought this out in ordinary conversation as well as on more formal occasions such as giving evidence in the courts. When a group of people, generally women, kept up a continuous meaningless chatter, onlookers, generally men, shrugged their shoulders and said, 'They are preparing meat without salt.' When a person talked on and on about a matter which was being discussed without getting to the point, impatient listeners, or the councillor in the law courts said: 'Your wisdom is like mushrooms which come after the cooking is finished,' or, more scathingly, 'You are the feet of a centipede' which wander aimlessly with many steps but no direction. Proverbs were not always a form of rebuke; they could also be a commendation. When a person brought out clearly the point of an argument the listeners said, 'You have rung a little bell'; and when after a prolonged discussion or the hearing of a case in the courts the audience accepted a decision as conclusive and just, they said, 'The upper and the lower teeth meet together.'

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

846 will die. The child is in danger from the illness known as *mdulo*
788 throughout the period from birth until the resumption of intercourse
[753] between its parents. It is not until after this ceremony, known as 'taking up the child'[33] that the mystical link between man, wife, and child is broken and the man free to commit adultery without mystical
593 retribution. Thus while there are definite rights and obligations between husband and wife which can be enforced in the courts or are susceptible to the pressure of public opinion there are also in the critical situations of pregnancy and childbirth other mystical forces operating which unite the couple to a greater extent than at any other time. To a lesser extent the same principle operates when a
841 woman menstruates. Her husband is in danger from her menstrual blood. She may not lie on the same mat with him and if he has a bed she must lie on the floor. If he has intercourse with her while she is
[753] menstruating he will contract an illness called *lugola*[34] whose symptoms are a very black face, nasal discharge, and continual
765 feeling of cold. After death a man's widows are in danger of *mdulo*
753 if they commit adultery during the first month of mourning.

We see then that the relationship between a man and his wife is partly defined in legal terms, with mutual duties and rights that
593 are enforceable in the courts. This relationship is documentated and validated by the transfer of money and cattle from one group to the other and by the performance of the various marriage ceremonies. Because of the relationship between them, man and wife live together, sleep together, eat together and work together. But above all, together they produce and rear children. It is primarily because of these children that the kin of man and wife are concerned
[581] in the marriage relationship. It is during the long process of producing children that the two spouses are most closely associated with each other, and actions of the one in some mystical way directly and automatically influence the well-being of the other.

When a marriage grows out of flirtation between a young man and a young woman, there is at first sexual attraction between them. With the passage of time this may give place to a broader sentiment of mutual affection and respect. To this extent we may say that man and wife come to love each other. But whereas young men frequently discuss with other men the attraction they experience towards women, unmarried or married, they do not do this when they have settled down and begun to acquire prestige in the community. A man may quarrel with his wife in public, but he never expresses his affection for her, save in the intimacies of the hut. Men
[965] and women mourn their spouses with great lamentation at funerals, but while this may sometimes be the expression of a personal

[33] *Kutola mwana*. Cf. *kulenga mwana* among the Cewa.

[34] Cf. Read, op. cit., 'The moral code . . .', p. 19, where she describes a medicine called *ugola* with which men doctored their wives so that their lovers would die of a wasting sickness. Also cf. Zulu *ulugola*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sorrow, it is not necessarily always so, for loud wailing and tears are appropriate at the death of all neighbours and kinsfolk, whether friends or enemies. Men do not usually seek the companionship of their wives at dances and beer parties, although there are some men who do. In our own society we think of a man earning his living in company with other men, but spending his leisure with his wife. By contrast Ngoni men work in the gardens with their wives but seek other company for recreation. 593 765 593

7. Divorce

The relationship between husband and wife can be terminated by death or by divorce. If one spouse dies, then his or her interest in the marriage is guarded by the surviving kinsfolk, and we shall deal with their actions in our next chapter as part of the intervention of affines in a marriage. In divorce, however, except in cases of desertion, both husband and wife are themselves involved and it is primarily by their own actions, rather than by the actions of their kinsmen, that the marriage is terminated. 586

While a marriage is established without reference to the Ngoni state organization, except in so far as the issue of a marriage certificate is concerned, divorce more frequently involves resort to the Native courts. It is possible to effect divorce without taking the matter to the court, and in the past, before the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy had begun, many people were divorced in the village. Kinsfolk of the two parties meet together in the village of one or other party, discuss the marriage, and agree among themselves that the couple are to be divorced. The formal act of divorce is made by the couple shaking hands with each other, while those present tell them to stop hating each other. The woman is told 'If this man comes as a traveller to your house, and asks for water, do not refuse him'. [692]

It is more usual for a divorce to be referred to the court. Attempts are made by the kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, if quarrel there is, and when the attempts fail, the group seeking the divorce or hoping to get damages from the other side take the matter to the county Native Court. It is open to either the man or the woman to take the initiative in this matter. The court hears the case, awards damages as appropriate, and, if it thinks fit, declares the couple divorced. The formal act of shaking hands is sometimes performed in court, but is then dispensed with. [694]

Divorce takes place in the village only when there is substantial agreement on both sides that it would be a mistake to allow the marriage to continue. The meeting of kinsfolk in the village may reach agreement about the return of the legalization payment or even the award of damages, but it is only the court that has power to enforce decisions of this kind, and it is to the court that disputants turn when they cannot agree. When a man wishes to divorce his wife on the ground of her adultery he usually does so through the 586 692

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

581 and widows are subject to the same restrictions
583 and wear the same signs of mourning whether or not their deceased
[1.65] husbands made any payments. The absence of payments does not automatically deny to a man and woman the status of husband and wife any more than the completed payments automatically ensure marital happiness.

583 As reflected in Table XII, the proportion of marriages in which
581 no payments are offered has decreased in the last twelve years,
595 ans we know from Table VIII that this is due to an increase in the number of marriages in which the legalization payment is made. It is therefore possible in future there will be a clearer division between marriage, with its legalization payment, and concubinage, with no such payment and with a completely different relationship between the sexual partners and between their respective groups of relatives. We are not in this paper concerned specifically with concubinage and prostitution, but it may at this point be useful to point out that not many women are concubines. In our sample, as set out in Table IV, there was only one concubine, a wedded woman, among 223 wedded women. From Table III, we see that there were no men at all, in our sample of 116 wedded men, living with concubines. The paramour of the concubine in our sample was resident on a nearby farm, and so did not come into the sample of men.

4. Co-operation between affines

583 The payments and ceremonies of marriages are isolated and
585 memorable events. The ceremonies are public in that neighbours

Table XII. Incidence of marriage without payment, by decades

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Marriage payment	Date of marriage									
	1878–87	1888–97	1898–1907	1908–17	1918–27	1928–37	1938–47	1948–9	Not known	Total
At least one payment offered	1	6	17	37	38	34	86	14	5	238
None offered ..	–	7	11	19	26	24	29	3	3	122
Ratio of marriages without offer of payment to total	0%	54%	39%	34%	41%	41%	25%	18%	—	34%
Not known if any payments offered	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

he has not been brought up by them but by some other relative. In particular a man is reluctant to discuss his affairs directly with his father if he can get his eldest brother to act as his intermediary. The eldest brother is heir to their father and it is considered that he should act as the channel by which the father is approached. He deals with proposals of marriage arising from his younger siblings and if he approves of them, he refers the matter to their father. This pattern of relations seems most marked in aristocratic families. 593 [184]

9. Widows

While it is a man's eldest brother who helps to arrange his marriage, it is his younger brothers who become pro-husbands to his widows. We have seen that in the old days a widow was usually looked after by a younger brother of the dead man but she continued to live in her dead husband's segment, and the children she bore by her pro-husband were grouped with the children of the dead man. This can still happen but it is no longer the invariable rule. As in the old days, if bridewealth has been paid by the first husband and after his death his widow goes to live with someone else, the second husband or pro-husband cannot offer bridewealth and the children he begets belong to the dead husband and take his descent name. 587 851

Some indication of the extent to which widows remain with their dead husbands' kin is given by data collected in two villages. All the women now living in these villages had between them experienced widowhood 31 times. In two instances (6 per cent) the widow had been cared for by her dead husband's brother; and in 11 instances (35 per cent) the widow took a new husband not directly related to the dead man. In the remaining 18 instances (58 per cent) the widow had not married again and was living alone. 587 [589]

A man may die at any stage of his marriage. If he is betrothed to a girl and then dies, the betrothal passes to a younger brother. When the girl is old enough, the younger brother marries her as though she had been betrothed to him in the first place and the children he has by her are his own children. Similarly, if a betrothed girl dies before she is married, the betrothal passes to a younger sister. 584

If a man dies after he has been properly married his widows have definite roles to play. For a month after his death, they must wear the signs of mourning, and they are in danger of *mdulo*[34] if they commit adultery during that time. They must be ready to wail when distant visitors arrive to mourn. At the end of a month they brew beer, and there is a joyous party. A year after the death there is another party, and the fate of the widows is discussed. If none of the younger brothers or kinsmen of the dead man wish to look after the widows, they are free to go their own way, and there may be a formal statement of divorce. They are in any case now spoken 765● 589

[34] See above, p. 46.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

764 and take a large flat stone and set the corpse on it, and take a millstone and place it on his head. If it be he has children, they are made to take charcoal in their hands, and this they cast into the grave (this is to cause them to forget). Then some old man takes up a hoe, and strikes the ground at one side of the grave and again at the other, when many begin to fill in the earth, the chief mourners trampling it down.

III. When they have finished filling in, they knock out the hoe heads, and set off for the stream. They who carry the hoes and household belongings of the deceased go first. When they reach the water, the chief mourners bathe first, then every one else; the men bathe up-stream, the women down-stream. They do not rub each other's backs. When
768 they have finished bathing, they take the calico, sporran, and "*nsengwa*" baskets the dead man used to eat out of, and set fire to them, and splash the ashes with water. Then they set out for the village, wailing. When they come to the grave, the medicine man looks for medicine to remove the evil
[765] influence of the spirit of the dead; [this medicine] he breaks up, puts in a potsherd, pours on water, and stirs. The chief mourner begins to rub it on his
765 legs, face, and hands, then others come and do the same. If the deceased had children of his own, they also rub some of the medicine on. They again keep wake at the hut in which the man died. Next morning at dawn the nearest relation of the dead
[431] takes goats and fowls and gives them to the chief mourners, who then begin to shave a little patch of hair from the side of each person's head, when the people will then shave each other quite bald. The widows go to some spot in the bush to weave the "red" bands and to shave. When every one has quite finished shaving, the meat is taken from the

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

fire and divided out. They again sleep at the hut of the deceased. Next morning they begin to lift away any refuse. The chief mourners do this, throwing away the stuff at the cross-roads [where they set fire to them]. And then the people disperse. 765

IV. The widows live in the hut where the man died; they get up night and morning to go and utter their laments in the bush; if they meet any one, they cover their head with their calico. The chief mourners and the elders of the village now leave off cohabiting with their wives. When perhaps a month has passed, the elders make preparations for soaking the grain for beer. Previous to boiling the beer, they go to the village oracle to consult him, saying, "We are putting the beer-pots on the fire, and we are not sure if it will be successfully made with no hitch, and whether or not the people will quarrel." Then the oracle may say none of these evils will happen, telling them "the beer will be successfully made." Then they also ask, saying, "Who is she who is to set the beer on the fire?" And then the oracle consults the lots, and says, "But she of so and so's clan, it is she who shall set the beer on the fire." Next morning the beer is set on the fire, the following day it still boils, on the third day it stands off the fire, on the fourth the malt is put in. (In making beer not connected with any mourning, should it not ferment, it is allowed to stand over another day, but mourning beer, even should it not ferment well, they just go on boiling it.) On that day they summon the dance, and every one is told that the beer is ready on that evening. Then all the people collect and begin to dance. They beg some beer for "kindling the fire," and some to "pour on the drums." When they have danced some time an old man comes forth and 765 791 273 765 273

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

765 273 commands silence, saying, "You have all met together here, look well to what I say. We are a people in affliction, let no one stir up discord; he who has adultery in his heart let him not commit it here, but at his own village." When it is dawn, some more beer, [called] the "bather of the eyes," is brought out. When the sun begins to get hot, all the chief mourners assemble, and a pot of beer, called the "shaving beer," is produced, and some [307] is poured into a potsherd and used like water (for shaving), that the chief mourners may use it for shaving a small patch from each person's head, and when this is done, one shaves his companion. The womenfolk shave at the hut of the deceased. The widows alone shave their heads somewhere in the bush, and remove the "red" head-bands, and put on new ones, smeared with oil, and go to the water to bathe. Should there still be some beer remaining they again pass the night dancing, that it may be quickly finished, so that the villagers may resume cohabitation with their wives. The widows no longer go to the bush to lament, and they are privileged to commit adultery, provided they remove the head-bands.

V. When they have passed another month, they then begin to hurry on the women, saying, "Now you must make haste with the malt." This beer is that for "bringing back the spirit," and for "knocking down the deceased's hut." When it is 765 ready they put it in a new hut that has been built *beside the one the man died in*. The elders then meet together in the hut, and one speaks as follows [to the spirit], "This is your new abode, these children you must guard from harm, and not, when they are walking, cause to fall over a snag; should you wish to ask for anything send the (harmless) *mshawa* snake, or the lizard, or the chameleon, and

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

when they see these they will consult the village lots, and the oracle will tell them it is the spirit of their relation who is asking for beer." And when the beer is finished they honour (use *kuonga*) him by saying, "Hail to him of so and so's clan-animal name." Then the chief mourners commence to pull down the hut in which the man died, and when they have done so they take water and wash their hands. Then they take a little pot and dig a hole at the hut door (they have just demolished), and put the pot in, and fill in the earth, the rim only of the pot being visible, and they knock a hole in the bottom of the pot, and they take beer and pour it into the pot, and it goes right through into the ground; and they take a potsherd and cover over the pot, and over that place the old grass door, and pin down the door with a bamboo stick, and take a gourd-cup, and having broken the handle, hang it on the bamboo. When they have done all this they bring out the beer of the chief mourners and dance, perhaps the *Chitoto* dance.

VI. On that day the widows may again meet face to face with men. For another year they hoe by themselves, and then some old person comes to speak to them, saying, "The mourning is now long past, get some malt, and look out for another husband (use *kugana*); when water gets spilt (people) do not pick it up." And then they begin to hurry on the beer, and when it is ready all the chief mourners (and all who took part in the funeral) come and spend the night dancing. The widows get up early in the morning, and take a gourd of beer and go with it to the stream, and take off their bands, and set fire to them and quench the fire with the beer. Then the elders say, "Come, let us take the widows, who are now eligible for marriage again." And they tell some very old women to go to the *Kuka*

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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hut and tell the women that so and so is wishing to marry them, and take the place of him who died. At first the women refuse, saying, "We do not want (to marry again) but to go on mourning," and the old women go off and tell the men, who are congregated at the village court. The men say, "Oh, that is what they say, is it?" and they take their knobkerries and give them to the old women, who go off again to the women and produce the knobkerries. Say they, "This is so and so's, this so and so's." And the women take the one of him they wish to marry. When they have received the stick, the old women come out again to say, "She, who is now an eligible widow, wants so and so." And he, the man, then sends some one to bring out the beer from the hut [where the women are]. The man whom she loves then goes off to the medicine man to get medicine, and takes that for which the medicine is pounded. And the doctor gives him it, saying, "But go and bathe your former wife (or wives), before you enter the hut of her who is a widow." And he takes the medicine, and goes and gives it to his former wife, saying, "There is medicine, you must go and bathe." And he goes to the hut of his new wife, and takes a potsherd and sets it on the fire near the doorway. When it gets hot he pours in some water, and then some of the medicine. Then the man takes some of the mixture, puts his fingers to his lips, and smears his knees with it. Then the woman does the same. Some other medicine is in a pot. The woman stirs it round with a stick which has a little piece of wood fastened to one end, which she revolves in the hands (as if making fire); this pot she then lifts, and goes with it to where cross-roads meet, and here the man bathes, and then the woman. In the evening they take a hen and put it at one end of

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the hut "towards the feet," and then they sleep together. Next morning a relation of the man who died comes and takes away the fowl, going with it to the house of the man's mother. The spirit follows the fowl. When the man has lived some time with the woman, and if he does not get on with her, he just leaves her, and his companions say, "He only went to get his bows." If the woman wants to marry any one else she can do so, without any further medicine. 765 587

III

THE FUNERAL OF AN ANGONI CHIEF

I. When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them "the clouds have fallen to-day." They do this because they fear, "if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death." Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter *as if it were all for show and not for a funeral.* Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup, and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not 766

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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"Wage war on the *Afo*,
Hayo, hayo ho,
They have left him;
They have left him in their midst."

"*Humba*, the mighty medicine man, has gone with them,
He has swallowed a magic horn, has *Humba*."

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry (*kugwira*), they burn on a fire at one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse also is consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief are removed. 766 [231]

IV. Next morning all the headmen shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands. Then they allow three days to pass, and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps out and says, "Do you hear, your new chief is so and so" (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then every one shouts, "Hail," and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes (trans. *biriwiri*). Then the elders 765 766 643

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

The final day of the proceedings, *tsibu la kumsu*, is known as *tsibu la kumsa malire*. The beer is tasted at cockcrow, and *hasiya malire* begins to dance, followed first by a *chisudzo* and then by *mdondo*. At sunrise the dancers proceed to the *dambwe*, and those who play no further active part may go and bathe, after which they repair to the *liunda*, where they rest and drink till noon. Meanwhile, the relations, accompanied by any other of the men who assisted in digging the grave or were present at the interment, have betaken themselves early to the banks of the stream where they bathed on the former occasion. The women who have worn *zinthambo*[1] burn them in a fire, and scatter the ashes. If they have indulged in sexual intercourse while wearing them, the *zinthambo* refuse to burn. Both sexes bathe separately as before, and all return to the house of the deceased, outside which the men shave each others' heads, as also do the women. About noon one or more *amaliya* come from the *liunde* and dance in the *mzinda*. *Chadzunda* hobbles out, peers round the graveyard, and goes first to the house of the deceased to receive a *supo* from the widow and then to the house of the headman, where he sits on a chair while people come and give him *masupo* and beer. After this refreshment he dances in the *bwalo*, and then retreats to the *liunde* for a rest, returning to dance a second and third time before retiring finally to the *dambwe*. Then *hasiya malire* dances for the last time, and is taken to the *dambwe* and burnt, and those who have handled him bathe. *Visudzo* again bring broken pots from the graveyard, and dance with them in the bush, singing "*Mbiya sodoola*," and the *amaliya* continue dancing for a while. At sunset the ceremonies are ended by the male relations of the deceased burning first the beer fence and then the house. The widow sleeps in someone else's house for a few weeks, until a new house has been built for her by her relations.

M 765 575 M [515] [302] [535] M [768]

5. *Funeral rites (Ngoni).*

The procedure described by Captain Rattray[2] in 1907 is still remembered by the old men; but the younger Angoni are inclined to follow the customs of the Achewa with certain modifications. For example, they place the corpse in a recess cut out from the bottom of the wall of the grave in order that it may not be soiled when the grave is filled in. They do not leave him any food, but place his spear and shield and one or two of his knives in the recess by his side. Part of his remaining property is deposited in the main shaft; but the sons always inherit the knives, except the *chipumbu* (knife for cutting meat), which falls to the head wife.

N 764 [177] N 428

On the second day after the death, the widows send children to cut *mpulupulwa* grass, from which they weave *zinthambo* to bind on their heads. As long as the widows wear these *zinthambo*, they must abstain from sexual intercourse; if they fall from grace, they invariably remove the *zinthambo* first. They must also keep their hands behind their backs when walking abroad, and may only use one hand when gesticulating. They must refrain from conversation and ablution for two or three weeks, at the end of which they brew beer (known as *mso wa zinthindo*) and invite a few friends to partake of it. Very often a widow's near female relations past the time of childbearing wear *zinthambo* and observe prohibitions in sympathy with her.

N 765 N [273]

[1] Mourning bands of plaited grass (see following section).
[2] "Some Folk Lore Songs and Stories in Chinyanja," pp. 98-99.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Marawi FR4

N 765 [262] On the second day, also, the *mwini malire* takes cows or a goat according to his means, and divides the flesh among the mourners. The bones may not be gnawed, as this would be considered equivalent to eating the dead man, but they are put into an *ngoombe* basket and thrown away into the bush at the end of the feast.

M N [764] [177] On the third and fourth days the male relations surround the grave with a fence of *tashewa* grass known as *chilisa*, which is sometimes plastered by the women with mud. The Achewa are now beginning to imitate this custom, and also that of wearing *sinthembe*. Both tribes plant *nkhadzi*[1] trees about the graves in order that the dead may have shade.

N 766 765 237 A chief is not buried in the common graveyard, but in the village just outside his hut, and a chair is sometimes placed inside the *chilisa*. One of his senior relations kills a goat, and the new prospective chief ties a root along the handle and blade of a knife, with which he cuts a horizontal strip of skin round the quarters of a goat, and wears the strip for two or three months as a belt, the tail hanging down behind. With the same knife the widows cut off the false hoofs together with a small piece of adjacent skin, through which they thread a string, and then bind a false hoof on each wrist and wear them till the end of the period of mourning. The root must remain fastened to the knife throughout this period, at the end of which all are burnt together.

VIII.—Mental Characters.

1. *Reincarnation and Spirits* (*Chewa*).

M 769 [776] [622] [778] [262] *Mizimu* or spirits are invoked as intermediaries between man and God (*Chauta*), and each village contains a hut for the spirits of past chiefs, to whom prayers are generally made because they are powerful and because they are known to everybody. Some of the larger villages have two huts, one for the spirits of men and the other for the spirits of women. A man may also make offerings to the spirits of his own family in his own hut. When the green maize is ready for eating, the people may not taste it until their headman has taken a cob, cooked it in his house and placed it in the spirits' house, where he claps his hands and thanks the spirits for the crop. The cob, like other offerings to spirits, may be eaten next morning by children below the age of initiation.

M 775 If, as frequently happens, a traveller strays—as we should say, absentmindedly—when following a route which he knows quite well, it is the work of a spirit which has been annoyed by him. On one such occasion a police constable of mine, who had been sent to the neighbouring station while his child was ill, found himself wandering several times from the main road, and knew thereby that his child was dead, and that its spirit was troubling him because he should

[824] [1] *Nkhadzi*, euphorbia. These are evergreen, quickly propagated and long lived, and so they serve also as a sign to mark the grave long afterwards. In the Mzuzu District the Anyanja and other tribes sometimes plant them in maize fields because they are supposed to be obnoxious to termites.

Livingstone, *loc. cit.*, p. 105, writes that in the Shire Highlands in 1859 they found all Mang'anja villages surrounded by an impenetrable hedge of poisonous euphorbia. He continues: "This tree casts a deep shade, which would render it difficult to bowmen to take aim at the villagers inside. The grass does not grow beneath it, and this may be the reason why it is so universally used, for when dry the grass would convey fire to huts inside; moreover, the hedge acts as a feeder to all flying sparks.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and settled where another village already existed.[1] In both forms, this new settlement was called the *lusungulu* village, 'the one which goes in front'; and the village which was left was known as the *gogo* village. This use of the term *gogo* (literally 'grandparent') for house and village had a common basic connotation. It expressed the concept of being left behind to look after something, the *gogo* house being passed over for the heir to the Paramountcy or chieftainship but charged with ritual and ceremonial duties; and the *gogo* village being left behind to take care of the traditions and generally also of most of the widows of the deceased Paramount or chief. Each *lusungulu* village eventually divided on the death of its owner, part 'going forward' with the new successor, part remaining behind. The main groups in the village which went ahead or which remained were the houses connected with the new Paramount or chief or *mulumuzana* and those connected with his dead father. In the chapter on houses (Chapter III, Part III) this process will be examined in greater detail.

The third related institution was the provision for guarding the spirit of a dead Paramount or chief and those of some leading *alumuzana*. A senior woman was always guardian of such a spirit and in her hut were kept the ritual objects: spear, wooden dish, baskets, fire-stick, which were used in sacrifices to the ancestors. The guardianship of the spirit of a dead Paramount was always associated with the village which had been his *lusungulu*. His corpse was buried on the edge of the kraal containing the cattle of the house where he had grown up, and this village became the *gogo* village associated with him, where his spirit was guarded in a hut, probably though not necessarily belonging to one of his widows. The recognition of such a woman guardian was a matter for selection and appointment, and was the responsibility of the senior men of the *gogo* house in that village in consultation with the senior men of the *gogo* house in the dead man's father's village. The concept of guarding the spirits of important men, and the means by which such guardianship was practised, will be more fully discussed in Part IV in connexion with the ancestor cult.

THE NGONI KINGDOMS AND AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS

In the final section of this chapter we shall look at the Ngoni kingdoms in their relationship to other African kingdoms and states such as those described in *African Political Systems*.[2] A methodological problem arises here. In this study a number of references are made to the Ngoni kingdoms in pre-European times, especially in connexion

[1] This form of the institution was found in densely populated areas and the incoming households dominated the original ones.

[2] Fortes, M., & Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (ed.). *African Political Systems*. O.U.P., 1940 pp. 9–23.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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614
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'*Ngu Jere*' (it is Jere). Perhaps Zwangendaba and others took their clan name from this, seeing that they had become a great number. It is certain that the clan name of Jere is not known in Zuhland or Swaziland.

In the northern kingdom all the chiefs recognized as Subordinate Native Authorities were of the royal clan, and hence its political authority was widespread. It was noticed by the early missionaries in northern Ngoniland that the sons of Zwangendaba who were chiefs under their brother, the Paramount, showed some degree of independence in that they wanted to rule their own areas with the minimum of centralized control. The pre-eminence of the Paramount among the other Jere rulers was strengthened as time went on by the remoter kinship relationship of the other Jere chiefs to the Paramount. After Zwangendaba's death they were his brothers of the same father and different mothers. Two generations later they were farther removed from his kinship circle since each of their posts was inherited on a direct father to son principle. The political and social importance of membership of the royal clan tended to go in the direct line of relationship to the Paramount rather than to the collateral branches. Later, in Part III, we shall examine the social prestige of the *amakosana* (lt. children of the *inkosi*). It was the closeness of their relationship to the reigning Paramount which was the basis for their social prestige, though evidence showed that a sister or brother or child from a big house of a former Paramount was also given social recognition as an important personage.

The royal clan of Maseko in the central kingdom was also known in Swaziland. Dr. Kuper refers to it in connexion with the Swazi custom of cremating the body of the Maseko chief at his death on a rock by a river.[1] This custom was brought from the south by the Ngoni under Maseko leadership and carried out for each successive Paramount up to 1891. Among these Ngoni the royal clan had special relationships with other leading clans, but the Paramount did not share his political authority with any others of his clan. His chiefs were all of other clans, and Ngoni informants said that it was a deliberate act of the Paramount Mputa to exclude his brothers from political authority and from disputing with him the control of the kingdom. In the isolated position thus established for the royal clan, two other clans had a ritual relationship with the Paramount. One was the Phungwako clan which was custodian of the Paramount's 'medicines', known as the *tonga*. The other was the Ngozo clan which provided the companion for the Paramount whom I have called the 'royal shadow' (see below, pp. 61–3). Yet another special relationship with the royal clan was that of the Nzunga clan which had *cibale*, or brotherly relations, with the Maseko clan, that involved sharing the same avoidances and excluded inter-marriage.

[766]

The relationship of the Paramount to other leaders of the royal clan

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 86.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

your people as did your father before you. If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned.' 643

Habuya Dube, the official 'praiser' of Paramount Gomani II, had been present at the funeral of Cikusi, and he confirmed that the ceremony of accession was as described above and added these further details:

¶ At the time of the burning of the body of Cikusi, Gomani stood up in the smoke, standing on one leg with a shield in his hand. When all had been consumed by the fire, they began to open the waters and the grave-digger swept the ashes. And they picked up Gomani and went with him to the mound so that he should wash. When these things were over, we left the water to go to the house. We were dancing *ligubo* in the open place and Gomani had a headdress of *luve* [1] feathers on his head. And they followed him into the house, but all the people were dancing *ligubo* in the *bwalo* for a whole month. When the mourning was over, Bvumbwe Maseko said 'Now let us establish (*tiimike*) our chief.' So he was established. [766]

The 'standing on one leg' referred to in both texts is the position adopted by other East and South-east African people when resting supported by the spear, with one foot flat against the other knee and the shield in front of the body. Other men inheriting their father's position stood at the grave holding a spear, but only those of the Maseko clan, succeeding the Paramount in the direct line, adopted the position of standing on one leg. 'Placing' or establishing the Paramount was done before a large gathering of people with the warriors in full war-dress, described graphically in terms of the waving head-plumes and the thunder of the shields. It was evident that all discussion of who would or would not be a suitable Paramount went on within the closed circle of the regent and the senior men, and the people were presented with the chosen Paramount whom they acclaimed. [516]

The instruction by the senior men was a reminder to the new Paramount that, though his new powers were extensive and unique in their authority, he should not act like a cruel despot. There are references in the *Ncheu District Note Book* [2] to the passing-over of an elder brother of Gomani I on the grounds that he was of a fierce and cruel disposition, though, according to Ngoni informants, this man Mandala was a younger brother of Cikusi and an uncle of Gomani, and thus was not eligible to be Paramount. In discussing the type of man who was considered suitable to be Paramount, Ngoni informants always laid stress on the need for him not to be fierce and cruel. This pointed to an ideal type of Paramount and did not agree with European accounts of large-scale poison ordeals at Cikusi's court. The instruction to the new Paramount [83]

[1] Feathers worn only by the Paramount. [2] *Ncheu District Note Book*, 1891.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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sleeping on mats they slept on grass until the required days were finished, and they scattered to their homes.

This account brings out certain elements in the ritual surrounding the *tonga*. The word *tonga* in the Ngoni language means 'rod', and was used in the very ancient folk tale *Intonga yetusi*, 'The Brass Rod'. There was no rod, however, nor anything representing one, among the medicines or ingredients which together made up the *tonga*. A descendant of one of the early 'guardians' of the *tonga* said about it:

[778]

¶ The *tonga* is the horn of a sheep, and the horn by itself has no real power, but there are other things which give it power like the rib of a lion.

It is clear that in the past the *tonga* was regarded as giving protection to the Ngoni people, particularly by providing medicine at the accession of a new Paramount when he needed medicine for strengthening.

Other informants from the Phungwako clan said that the *tonga* provided the medicine with which the Paramount washed at the time of *incwala*, the feast of the first-fruits. No one alive in the 1930's had seen that ceremony and the special songs had been forgotten. A tradition remained that the Paramount had to undergo seclusion and ritual washing with medicines before the first green crops could be eaten. [178]

Throughout the references to the *tonga* there was no hint that it was ever worshipped or addressed in any way similar to the invocations to the ancestor spirits. It was clearly a 'medicine' possessing great power and guarded as a national treasure. The ingredients of the medicine were kept in a particular way, in a particular place, in the guardianship of a particular person. I have seen the ingredients, the place and the guardian, but I gave a promise not to reveal them. I was allowed to handle the objects and, after doing so, I had to perform the ritual act of washing my hands with cowdung. This was the form of ritual cleansing practised by the Paramount after using the medicines. [515 783]

There were two ways in which these medicines were used by the Paramount to strengthen him on his accession. He washed in the kraal with the medicines whipped into a foam. The old men said that in ancient times the water for making the medicines had to be fetched from the sea. In addition to washing he had to eat meat in which the medicines were mixed. The majority of informants said that beef was used for this ritual eating, while others said that, as in the ritual for preparing the *tonga*, the meat taken was sheep. This ritual was said to have taken place for the last time at the death of Cikusi and the accession of Gomani I, though it was hinted that it had been performed at the accession of the Ngoni chief of the Maseko clan now living in Portuguese territory.

It was clear that the Maseko Paramounts made use of the *tonga* as a royal medicine both at their accession and in time of war. The reference [766]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuzo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiwe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *zi zi*, *ozi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

643 789 766 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

241 796 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *umzindo*, *ligubo*, *incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said [643 424] '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins everyone sings the songs of *incwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult [178] because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Intokozi* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for [824 224] a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ya'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala seigqubelisa*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women [535] were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 644 762 766 came, 'to quieten them'. Thereafter this Ngozo boy did everything with the Paramount. He began by washing with the royal medicine at the time of the accession. He drank beer with him, he ate with him, he 'stood with him' (*amaima naye*) on all important occasions, such as sending out the army and judging cases. He slept in his own hut which was in the *cigodlo*, where the Paramount's sons built, and when he married he built huts for his wives in that same section of the royal village. At the death of the Paramount, he danced the war-dance in full war-dress and leaped on to the pyre to perish with the dead Paramount in the flames.

Informants sometimes said of this Ngozo boy that he was 'of one [582] blood' with the Maseko clan. They described the relationship between the two clans as that of *cibale*, brotherhood, which excluded all possi- [602] bility of inter-marriage. Between the Paramount and the Ngozo boy was established a joking relationship, so that the Ngozo boy could say 'good and bad things to the Paramount'.

643 644 It was clear that the ritual and social aspects of this relationship complemented and supported each other. The recurrent emphasis on the taking of medicine at the accession, on the participation in the war medicines, and most of all on the death on the Paramount's funeral pyre, were all evidence of this ritual relationship. Informants repudiated any idea of a scapegoat which involved protecting the Paramount from poison by eating before him. They reiterated several times that the Ngozo boy did not eat *before* the Paramount; in fact he ate after him though sharing his food dishes. Surrounding the Paramount were other boys called *sicetho*, who performed the duties of pages or personal servants. The Ngozo boy was always distinct from them, and the distinction lay in the combined ritual and social relationship.

The concept of a 'shadow' was of something very close to a person, almost indistinguishable from the person himself. In referring to the Ngozo boy in the terms 'he was as the shadow of the *inkosi*; he was as himself', informants emphasized the extreme closeness of the tie between the two men. It seemed as if the royal shadow existed to meet a need for strengthening the Paramount by giving him a second self. It emphasized also the dangerous sphere of life and action in which the Paramount lived, due to the medicines he had used, his powers to protect the land and its fertility, and his power to give strength to the army through the use of the *tonga* medicine. No one else in the royal family shared these dangers and there was inherent in the relationship of royal shadow to *inkosi* the sense of some security through a companionship where protective medicines were shared as well as the hazardous occasions for which they gave protection.

643 644 608 This intense and dangerous ritual relationship was buttressed by the social ties binding the Ngozo boy to the Paramount. We have seen that between them as individuals there was that freedom of a joking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Manga. It was a time of great emotional tension and strain, and the absurdities of the jester relieved the solemnity and formality of the visit. This jester was said by informants to be a man of the Moyo clan, who owed his position not to hereditary right but to a ready and witty tongue. 643 644 522

The death of the Paramount

It is in the ceremonies at the death of the Paramount that we find some major differences between the traditional practices of the northern and central Ngoni peoples, which might be attributed to the separate groups in Natal from which they came. I was living in Mcakatha village in the central kingdom at the time of the sickness and death of Bambo Manga, the most important of the royal women among the central Ngoni. The ritual ceremonies at her funeral were said to be almost identical with those at the death of the Paramount, and I was able to check details of similarity and difference with old men who remembered the death of Cikusi, the last Ngoni Paramount in the central kingdom for whom the full ritual was carried out. I was not able after that to pursue further possible parallels and differences among the northern Ngoni. My general impression from informants was that among the northern Ngoni the ritual at the death of a Paramount differed from that of any other prominent man only in certain details of the period and form of mourning. Among the central Ngoni, as Rattray said in a note on the text which will be given, 'such funerals were more of a military pageant than anything else. All outward signs of grief were rigorously excluded.' I can confirm that from my observations at the death of Bambo Manga. 184 643 766 [152]

When the Paramount became ill, a diviner was called to give advice. He might advise that a sacrifice should be made to the ancestor spirits. He might suggest witchcraft as the cause of illness. He might advise calling in a man to give medicine to the Paramount. When, in spite of sacrifices and treatment, the Paramount died, the announcement was made from the edge of his village: *Izulu lidilikile*, 'the heaven has fallen down'. Messengers were sent to all the chiefs and to all the *alumuzana* and other leading men. From the edge of each central village the cry was made, and each chief and *mulumuzana* sent his messengers to make the same announcement in each of the villages under him. [791]

Among the northern Ngoni the actual ceremony of burial does not appear to have been very different from that of any other important man, with one exception, that the Paramount, like other ruling Jere chiefs, was buried at the edge of the cattle kraal in a circular pit of the kind used when digging clay for mudding houses, on one side of which there was a niche where the corpse was placed in a sitting position, facing south-east. This burying in a circular grave on the edge of the kraal was the procedure which I witnessed at the burial of Bambo Manga among the central Ngoni (see below p. 75).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 766 184 Dr. Steele, one of the early medical missionaries in northern Ngoniland, was present at the burial of Mbelwa I and left an account of it which is quoted by Dr. Elmslie.[1] He spoke of the great crowds of men coming to mourn armed with spears and shields, and some with guns. They came in companies, as if they were the military bands coming for mobilization from the head villages. They marched first with their shields held high over their heads, and then laid them down and clasped their hands behind their heads, advancing towards and retreating from the grave and keeping up a continuous mourning cry of '*Baba be*'. Three days elapsed between the death and the burial. During that time two graves were dug, in order that all the Paramount's possessions might be buried with him or beside him. When the graves were ready, the kraal was cleared of all but the married men who had the head-ring. Meantime the wives of the Paramount, carrying his shields, were advancing towards the grave and retreating, a few steps at a time. They finally went back to their houses, dressed themselves in skins, and returned in single file on their hands and knees. They withdrew as the corpse was brought out and placed in the grave, and other women came with the Paramount's possessions, such as pipes, wooden head-rests and shields, and all were put into the graves. The men stood in circles round the graves with their shields over their heads.

Among the central Ngoni Rattray recorded an account of the funeral rites of Cikusi in 1891, which I was able to check with more than one old man who had been present. There was also the funeral of Bambo Mangs which I witnessed in 1937, where the ritual followed was identical with that described by the old men for the Paramount Cikusi, with one exception: that her possessions but not her body were cremated by a stream.

The chief differences between the northern and central Ngoni in the funeral rites at the death of the Paramount were that the central Ngoni Paramounts of the Maseko clan were cremated and not buried, and there was no public mourning, but instead a series of war-dances. There [644] were two other distinctive features among the central Ngoni: formerly [786] the individual known as the 'royal shadow' died with the Paramount; and from the time of the actual death to the time of the cremation there was a period of licence and lawlessness called *ciponde*. This latter phenomenon may have existed among the northern Ngoni, but I did not ask about it specifically when I was there, and I did not hear it referred to. I was made aware of it forcibly at the death of Bambo Mangs when my cook and houseboy immediately dumped all their possessions in my hut as the only safe place during the time of *ciponde*. Rattray's account of the death of Cikusi also mentioned this practice.

In the traditions of the central Ngoni it was recorded that only the Maseko Paramounts in the direct line were cremated, and not the

[1] Elmslie, W. A. op. cit. p. 270.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

brothers of the dead Paramount who acted as regents. Thus Ngwana was cremated in Ulosi before crossing the Zambesi, and Mputa was cremated in the river Lichiningo in Songea in Tanganyika. This was confirmed by an informant of the Gama clan who were for a time under the central Ngoni Paramount in Songea and later were allied with the northern Ngoni. He said 'We killed Mputa, the *inkosi*, when fighting, and his people burned him because it was their custom in burying to burn.' 184 643 766

An old woman who came from Portuguese territory to see me in the central kingdom said that when Zintambira I died the Portuguese made them bury him 'in a box'. The onlookers in Mcakatha at the time of my interview with the old woman said 'Yes, they were not allowed to burn him.' [648]

The central Ngoni leaders referred often to the ritual significance of the cremation of their Paramount, followed by the washing of the ashes into the stream 'to strengthen the land'. On my first arrival in the central kingdom I was questioned closely by several of the big *izinduna* and *abamnyama* about the practice of cremation in England. They alleged that, under the influence of the local mission, the Paramount Gomani II had said that he wished to be buried in a coffin with Christian burial rites. They were much concerned about this, because of the effect on the strength and status of his successor and on the country as a whole. 'If he is not burned his children will not be honoured and will only be as *abamnyama*. Is it right that another tribe, the English, should come and change our customs?' Great relief was expressed when I told them that Christians were cremated in England with full Christian ritual, and also when I told them that the ashes of one of the early Scottish missionaries in northern Ngoniland had been brought back by his widow to lie there. [797] [648]

The following account of the funeral of Cikusi was given to Rattray: 643

'When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them 'the clouds have fallen today'. They do this because they fear, 'if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death'. Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head until it all glitters, and then take the 766 [203] [301]

643 766 skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors [287] come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre and the flames go roaring up. They place the child [and heir] where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields, and chant their war songs . . .

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry . . ., they burn on a fire on one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse is also consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief are removed. Next morning all the headmen [302] shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands.

Additional details and slight variations were supplied by Habuya Dube, an old man who was official praiser of Paramount Gomani II. He was also at the funeral.

« After some time Cikusi began to be ill and of that same illness he died. And we danced *ligube* for one month, and over a hundred beasts were killed. For a whole week [1] he was in the house, and then soon he began to smell because he was decaying. The grave-diggers, they of the Ngono clan, burned the fat of the cattle and roasted it on the fire, doing it as if to prevent the smell. And they made him hold a cup of beer in his hand. On a certain day we lifted him up and went with him to the water. Then

[1] Compare the previous account which gave four days between death and cremation. At Bumbo Mungu's death it was three days.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

we dammed the stream and made a pool and a mound. And we put him on a rock, and on top of him we put cowhide shields and left them so. And we put firewood above. Then Ngwazi Ngozo took fire and lit that fire. Then *ligube* was danced and the women were singing. They sang songs of *ligube* and the *amadoda* danced (*anagiya*). The owner of the country did not cry, no, and the big people did not cry. Only the wives and other women cried. 643 766

Habuya Dube added later that everyone came with one piece of wood and put it on the pyre; and that they killed a cow and took the fat and put it on the wood, and used the skin to wrap the body in.

In discussing the ceremony of cremation with informants among the central Ngoni, there was no reference to the suggestion made by Dr. Kuper, that cremating was a substitute for embalming to avoid the corruption of the body of the king. They regarded the act of burning as an essential element in the continuing strength of the royal line, since the heir stood in the smoke from the pyre, and in the continuing fertility and strength of the country, since the ashes were swept into the river. The concept was that the royal ruler had been strengthened with the *fungo* medicine, and thereafter his body and its strength was the symbol of the unity and strength and fertility of his country.

On the question of mourning or no mourning they were equally emphatic. 'Death cannot cut life' was an expression often on their lips during the funeral ceremonies of Bambo Mangs, when great care was taken to carry out the traditional ritual as far as possible in every detail. They were shocked at the idea of mourning and wailing at such a time by any of the big people. The leading Ngoni women were expected to join the *ligube* dances in the courtyard. Some old women of lower social rank in the village, together with the daughter of Bambo Mangs, sat in the house with the corpse sobbing and crying '*Mayi, mayi*' and many of them became quite ill and others hysterical with prolonged sobbing. The leading Ngoni men were contemptuous of this display of grief. They admitted it was correct behaviour for her daughter because of the close kinship tie, but of the behaviour of the rest they said 'Ha, just like the Ntumba people.' The only behaviour which was considered correct was to dance in the courtyard openly before the house of Bambo Mangs, or to slip off quietly home and rest before returning to take up the dance. 643 765 565 766 [52]

The traditional ritual procedure at the death of the Paramount, with the exception of the cremation of the corpse, I saw in all its details at the death of Bambo Mangs. The corpse was placed in the same position in the hut as described at Cikusi's death, and was wrapped in a sheep-skin first with a cow-skin over, the spleen, gall-bladder and fat decorating the head and neck. The dancing of *ligube* by the men with shields and spears, and by the women, was continuous from the moment of death to the burial, and afterwards whenever fresh companies from the central 643 766

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 kingdom and from Portuguese territory arrived to mourn. The grave
766 was made at the edge of the kraal and the kraal fence enlarged to take it in so that the cattle might walk on it.

643 In this chapter I have tried to bring together some of the chief elements in the position of the Paramount, and in the performance of
174 his duties, which were remembered by the old men as having been characteristic of pre-European days. Some of these features, as I have indicated, had disappeared in the 1930's. Others survived and will be illustrated in Chapter V. Chapters III and IV on the royal women and on the officials in the kingdoms will illustrate the importance of the leading women in the Ngoni kingdoms, and the hierarchy of officials already mentioned in Chapter II of Part I.

643 The texts of the praise-songs which conclude this chapter are given because in the 1930's they were still recited in the royal villages and were
533 a feature of all public ceremonies. Most of the allusions in the texts were obscure. Cibambo, who translated them for me and who consulted other older men, did not recognize some of the names or the meaning of the attributes. Some names corresponded with those given in Part I in the texts about the departure of the Ngoni in their two groups from Natal (see pp. 7, 8), such as the Nqumayo people whom Zwide ruled over, Nqaba who left with Ngwana, Nyathi who tried to prevent Ngwana from leaving. But in the way in which they were used in the 1930's these praise-songs had little meaning for those who heard them except as a form of salutation to the Paramount.

Praises of Zwangendaba, son of Hlaciwayo

643 Zwangendaba whose intention it is to be black who denies it to be light.
533 Go away, let us go, you the rejected one.
539 We are like a man of the Ntungwa, a fat one; there the people die as fat ones.
Nqaba you must eat people. Leave the cattle.
Nqaba son of Lushwana, there was confusion.
There he is, there he is, where do they see him? They see him in the fences of his mothers.
One who is angry because the cattle have gone with the calves.
His great cunning overcomes the magic stones of the doctors.
I have gone away until I have seen Lebombo Mountains.
We are suffering on account of the great dispute with the Nqumayo people.
You are seeing the hoes which are waiting for you, the hoes which cannot be used for hoeing.
He saw it, the short grass, he was biting it hastily.
He saw it, the ditch, his foot slipped into it.
He who divided the water with a stick at the Zambesi.
He who remembered the cattle of the Balunjana.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

614 622 *muhumuzana* was not invariable. Some informants said that *alumuzana* were appointed by the Paramount. Others said that if the ancestor of a Swazi clan was known by name to have crossed the Zambesi with Zwangendaba or Mputa then his descendant in the direct line was always a *muhumuzana*.

614 [769] It was the criterion of having a known ancestor and knowing the genealogy of the clan that was most widely accepted in acknowledging the head of a Swazi clan as *muhumuzana*. At the clan head village prayers were addressed to this ancestor, his cattle were sacrificed, and the names recited as far back as tradition and memory could recall. Later we shall see that there were said to be about 25 Swazi clans in the northern kingdom and 29 in the central. Among these about 15 in the northern and 12 in the central kingdom had head villages where the ancestor cult was performed. In the central kingdom several of the leading clans had their head villages in Portuguese territory, and therefore did not carry out the cult in the central kingdom.

554 614 In the hierarchy of the clans the Swazi clans were the acknowledged leaders. In village and national life this leadership was accorded to the royal clans and the clans of the chiefs, and was the reason for the respect shown to *alumuzana* who had no direct political power. Only the heads of Swazi clans possessed *izitokozo* (honorific epithets) which commemorated events in the past history of the clan leaders. On all ceremonial occasions heads of Swazi clans, whether in national or in village affairs, took precedence over the rest when walking in procession, standing for dances, taking part in ritual, or sitting down at feasts. Certain [766] forms of burial, such as the use of a sheep-skin, and placing the corpse on a shelf in the grave, were observed only for members of the Swazi clans.

582 614 In arranging marriages, there was, in addition to strict exogamy within a clan, a prohibition on marriage between clans which had *cibale* (brotherhood) relations. In the central kingdom the royal clan, Maseko, had *cibale* with the Ngozo clan which provided the royal shadow, and with the Nzunga clan. The Nzunga and the Maseko clans shared the [762] same taboos, notably elephant and fish. As well as prohibited marriages between certain clans, there were preferred marriages between certain others. In general there was a preference for marriage between the families of leading Swazi clans. In the northern kingdom the Nqumayo clan had a preference for marrying into the Thole, Nhlane, Maluleka and Pakati clans. It was alleged that formerly they could marry only into these clans, but in the 1930's exceptions were found in a number of villages.

614 The following lists of the names of Swazi clans were collected from informants in the two kingdoms, who were questioned closely about which names should be included under the title of Swazi. This was the grouping claimed by the Ngoni in both kingdoms. They said emphatic-

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and massaged them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

845 The other ethnic groups surrounding the Ngoni in Nyasa-[184] land considered it disastrous if a child was born face down or with the buttocks first, and twins were dreaded as ill omens. The Ngoni shared none of these beliefs and were particularly considerate for the mother of twins, often killing [262] a beast to give the mother meat and broth to increase her [853] flow of milk. The only notice the Ngoni took of the method of presentation at birth was that they gave a child a name [553] indicative of such a birth. They gave special names for the first and second twin born. If one twin died it was buried under the veranda of the hut and a smooth stone was placed [766] on top. This stone was used for sitting on, and the surviving twin was held on it when being washed.

Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and 783 everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the hut "towards the feet," and then they sleep together. Next morning a relation of the man who died comes and takes away the fowl, going with it to the house of the man's mother. The spirit follows the fowl. When the man has lived some time with the woman, and if he does not get on with her, he just leaves her, and his companions say, "He only went to get his bows." If the woman wants to marry any one else she can do so, without any further medicine. 765 587

III

THE FUNERAL OF AN ANGONI CHIEF

I. When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them "the clouds have fallen today." They do this because they fear, "if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death." Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup, and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not 766

6;Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

•766 wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head till it all glitters, and then take the skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

II. The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day, they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre, and the flames go roaring up. They place the child [and heir] where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields and chant their war songs—

766 538 539 533 III. "This thing (that has befallen),
Have you heard these things, wife of an old man?"

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

766 539 533

"Wage war on the *Afo*,
Hayo, hayo, ho,
They have left him;
They have left him in their midst."

"*Humba*, the mighty medicine man, has gone with them,
He has swallowed a magic horn, has *Humba*."

766 The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry (*kugwira*), they burn on a fire at one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse also is consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people [231] still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief are removed.

IV. Next morning all the headmen shave their 765 heads, and then the people from the different 766 villages. The widows put on the red head-bands. Then they allow three days to pass, and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps 643 out and says, "Do you hear, your new chief is so and so" (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then every one shouts, "Hail," and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes (trans. *biriwiri*). Then the elders

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

846 she rises early to go and fasten the belt on the infant. Should the man not have a second wife, the one to put the belt on the child is his (the man's) sister. The man does not immediately see the face of his child; some day these same old women make him take it in his arms [hands]. The father then makes them a present of beads.

854 852 301 IV. When they notice the infant is beginning to grow his bottom teeth and to smile at people, the elders tell the father that, "Now you must bring the child into the village." The child's grandmother ties up beforehand some *lizango*. She begins with a little strip of calico, and rolls it round and round the medicine charm and along with a piece of string; then takes a little piece of skin and sews it over this, and takes some beads and sews them on the skin. The mother cooks some relish beforehand. That evening the husband and wife sleep together (this is "to bring the child into the village.") She cuts off the old belt the child is wearing, and puts on the new one with the *lizango* medicine in it, some more of the medicine, similarly tied up, is placed under the infant's head. In the morning she takes the relish to present to the two old women, and then takes the *lizango* she had placed under the child's head and ties it round his neck, and then takes a belt of beads, interspersed [789] with little wooden charms, and adorns the child. When in time the *lizango* belt breaks, they do not look for it or replace it. In the event of an infant dying before he has been "brought into the village," ●766 they bury it in some open glade, near the edge of some stream, its funeral is attended by women only. Should a man tramp over the spot where the child [753] is buried, he "has taken" the disease known as *nyesi*. Such a grave is known as *nsenye*.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Then they kill the goat

and take the liver, and lungs, and stomach, and set them down beside the beer, and cut off some meat from a fore-leg, and roast it, and cut off a piece, and give the head of the *Kuka* hut, and cut another piece, and the chief eats it, and another his old men eat, and then they begin to cut off bits for their children. The rest of the meat is put in a basket, and next morning is cut up. 166 782 [262]

III. When the propitiation of the spirits is finished the chief tells his headman, "To-day you must cook some relish, and give it to all the people, and finish the ceremony in connection with the exodus." So he (the headman) sleeps with his wife, and in the morning she takes the relish to give to the chief. All persons of lesser importance come and take theirs from the hut, and any one who is at a distance at the time has his put aside. Now the ceremony is over, and the villagers again resume cohabitation with their wives [broken off since the beginning of the ceremony]. One month passes, and then a great quantity of beer is cooked all over the village, and they have a dance that at the new village the ground may become trampled and hard. When some farther time has elapsed, they cook beer, to demolish the huts of the dead, that were left standing at the old village. At the new village, when a man dies, the first one to do so is buried at the old village; when one of the village elders dies, he is buried at the new settlement, and thereafter all who die are buried there. [834] [769]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

789 hut with, and set it (the basket) down at "the
782 head" against the wall, and say, "There is the ox we have killed for you." Then they bring all the meat and put it in the *Kaka* hut. In the morning the elders rise early to cut it up; every one eats of it.

XIV

THE FUNERAL OF AN NSUTU

•766 I. When the chief of the *Asutu* dies, people are not told at first; they hide the fact from them lest his attendants run away. On the day on which they make it known, they seize beforehand youths and maidens, and then every one is told that the chief has died. Then every one assembles and goes to the grave, and they dig and dig a very large "village" (cave) in the grave. When they have dug this cavity, they take the youths and maidens and shave their heads and rub them with oil, streaming down, and red clay. The youths have already their bows in their hands, as if going to the dance, though they are going to die. Then they lift the corpse and make the youths go in first, and the corpse follows. When they come to the cross-ways,
766 they take one of the young men, and sharpening
782 a bamboo, hammer it down through his head with a stone, and the stake grips (lit. bites) the ground. He is sitting upright as if alive, and he is made to hold a bow in his hand. When they come to the grave, they commence to break the legs of the others, and pour the juice of chilies over their heads. (And the reason they do this is because they fear

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

their relations may dig them out, and place them in 766
some other country.) And they throw them to the 782
back of the cave, and take the corpse and lay it on top of them. Then they begin to fill in, the ones in the cave are groaning, "Alas, alas!" When they have finished filling in, they go to the water to bathe. When they return to the village they dance.

XV

THE CHIEF OF THE KUKA AND THE SON-IN-LAW

I. The chief of the *Kuka* hut and his son-in-law 606
once hoed a garden. When the maize grew up, the 539
father-in-law told his son-in-law to build a watch-tower. Then the father-in-law went off and forged some arrow-heads, and gave them to his son-in-law, saying, "There are some arrows, you must keep a look-out with them in the garden here." And the son-in-law received the arrows, and remained at the watch-tower there. One day the wind came [243]
and flattened down all the maize, and his father-in-law came to walk on a round of inspection in the garden, and then he saw that the wind had laid the maize, and he clapped his hands and said, "Oh, to-day I see wonders, those arrow-heads I just forged for him to keep by him [and look at]." And then he went up to the watch-tower, where his son-in-law was, and asked him, saying, "Those arrow-heads I forged, I just forged that you might sleep with them on the watch-tower here?" And the son-

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 765 [262] On the second day, also, the *mwini malire* takes cows or a goat according to his means, and divides the flesh among the mourners. The bones may not be gnawed, as this would be considered equivalent to eating the dead man, but they are put into an *upanda* basket and thrown away into the bush at the end of the feast.

M N [764] [177] On the third and fourth days the male relations surround the grave with a fence of *tinkwa* grass known as *chilina*, which is sometimes plastered by the women with mud. The Achewa are now beginning to imitate this custom, and also that of wearing *nisthando*. Both tribes plant *ukhalu*[1] trees about the graves in order that the dead may have shade.

N ● 766 765 237 A chief is not buried in the common graveyard, but in the village just outside his hut, and a chair is sometimes placed inside the *chilina*. One of his senior relations kills a goat, and the new prospective chief ties a rent along the handle and blade of a knife, with which he cuts a horizontal strip of skin round the quarters of a goat, and wears the strip for two or three months as a belt, the tail hanging down behind. With the same knife the widows cut off the false heels together with a small piece of adjacent skin, through which they thread a string, and then bind a false hoof on each wrist and wear them till the end of the period of mourning. The rent must remain fastened to the knife throughout this period, at the end of which all are buried together.

VIII.—Mental Characters.

1. *Reincarnation and Spirits* (Chewa).

M 769 [776] [622] [778] [262] *Mizimu* or spirits are invoked as intermediaries between man and God (*Chauta*), and each village contains a hut for the spirits of past chiefs, to whom prayers are generally made because they are powerful and because they are known to everybody. Some of the larger villages have two huts, one for the spirits of men and the other for the spirits of women. A man may also make offerings to the spirits of his own family in his own hut. When the green maize is ready for eating, the people may not taste it until their headman has taken a cob, cooked it in his house and placed it in the spirits' house, where he clops his hands and thanks the spirits for the crop. The cob, like other offerings to spirits, may be eaten next morning by children below the age of initiation.

M 775 If, as frequently happens, a traveller strays—as we should say, absentmindedly—when following a route which he knows quite well, it is the work of a spirit which has been annoyed by him. On one such occasion a police constable of mine, who had been sent to the neighbouring station while his child was ill, found himself wandering several times from the main road, and knew thereby that his child was dead, and that its spirit was troubling him because he should

[1] *Ukhalu*, euphorbia. These are evergreen, quickly propagated and long lived, and so they serve also as a sign to mark the graves long afterwards. In the Mzuzu District the Angonde and other tribes sometimes plant them in under fields because they are supposed to be obnoxious to termites.

[824] Livingstone, *loc. cit.*, p. 105, writes that it in the Shire Highlands in 1859 they found all Mang'anja villages surrounded by an impenetrable hedge of gigantic euphorbia. He continues: "This tree casts a deep shade, which would render it difficult to keep men in order, and this may be the reason why it is so universally used, for when dry the grass would convey fire to huts inside; moreover, the hedge acts as a fire-guard to all flying sparks.

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mailikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mailikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukuse; this was the year of
578 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukuse and Zongendaba midway between
643 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.
648

In the year 1833, in which Manukuse attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marquez), Manukuse and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukuse, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwini River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo. In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the
[805] Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyevere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngubi Mawko, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis lorded the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1820 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaza Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[645] Chief Counsellor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River on route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Mafwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[764] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyimbwi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Swera), Ntabe Mpezeni, who was then in his twentieth year.

(2) Luziwewa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
173
562

lh Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

He

159 was a son of Zongwalaba and died after Mombera. After Mombera's death he was
173 acting chief for some years until Chintungu was appointed.

643 (16) The following is a list of induna and chiefs who crossed the Zambezi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongwalaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwana Tolo, Chief
173 Counsellor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Induna: Zulu Gama, Military
167 Adviser; Mgulubu, Induna Zidumba Regiment; Sonfula, Induna Sonfula Regiment;
55 Mgoi, Induna Majekwane Regiment; Ntabeni, Induna Zidumba Regiment. Chief
[643 Gwana Tolo was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was
[645 Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Zidumba (black cobble,
[701 white spot), Sonfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives of Zongwalaba who crossed over:—Chibwaya Mkhalapi, Great Mother; Sowera Nqumayo,
[595 Great Wife; Umorne Naima, mother of Mombera; Nqutu Naima, mother of Mtwalo;
[593 Mavuko Mkhalapi, mother of Mzukuzuku!; Chipomane, Ngulwe, Ndunya Mhqusima, Mambane Gama, Vuyukhani, Mwachoma, slave wife and rain-maker!. Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qwikiwe.

A further list of Zongwalaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:—
173 Nthomane, Buzyamanya, Zin-Khali, Nqumbeni, Nkhalwi, Nohanya, Maleti.
167 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgoi, Sonfula,
55 Malunyubunya, Ngoya, Umkwane, Ubalo, Ukhongwayo, Umlima, Mtiyane, Lomapela.
593 Chief Diviner or *Inyanga*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongwalaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalo, Ndebulele, Mombera, Mzolan, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makukwe Njelwa, Mpezembe, Mzukuzuku (?) Kakuya, Jadow, Sikane, Chipomane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyonkeka Mnyoqua, Athongwa tribe;
[895 Lepoko Phakati, mother of Tsingo Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Mafulumwe Jere; Mtawa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawaw Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwazu Jere; Malwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kokuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. Eldest Son:—Tsingo Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of
[727 1898. Grandson:—Chiwa Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilian.

159 (18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lepoko village near
173 Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

166 Lepoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingo was buried near the cattle kraal in Lepoko village, in 1901.

[927 Tsingo Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near Mosse Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingo Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Nsanwe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayunge (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Mashlunge,
704 Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Mawbo, Mazyina, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahoza, Mazyera, Mabona, Kambayenzo, Mabikabeni, Chimalikambalambe.

(19) The *isi-bongo*[1] *Jere*, appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1855, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nzima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu, and Nkosi. 173 [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Mdaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20) Ba-Pale people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pale; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were Bafuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERPRETED NOTE OF DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

Lobengula, Chief of the Amaswati. It is stated as follows. 159 173 643

Lobengula crossed the Zambezi at Manyeere Drift and arrived at the Mtengulani Uha Sweta village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1884. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambezi in 1884. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Ropa, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Dundiso Tole, Zwangiwe Ngkomane, Ndamanyo Ngkomane, Ndawo Mvuo Gama, Gule Tole, Ngubo Edwardi Jere, Mabedulele Tembo, Mwaje Ndhlovu, Kalanda Mangwana Ndhlovu, Kapendula Jameni Mvula, Mwikilika Ngkomane, Chimangadowa Ngoboni, Chimwe Mulenga, Mwalwa Jere, Mkhalanga Ngkomane, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Mkhalanga, Andrew Kapatamoyo Jere, Jacob Edwardi Gama, Mulenga Kampwere Ndhlovu, Pengani Mvula, Adriyanu Phiri, Edwardulo Gwinani Mvuno, Chingulubani Ndaba, Ngwa Mvula, Ngungu Nkuga Jere, Ndawo Ngkomane, Mwaki Lubinda, Kipembwa Tembo, Adamkwabi Mdungu, etc. 115 527 551 514

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

787 rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned.
[177] Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment.
795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a
791 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancient successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities.
695 The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When
766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before
849 their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

Those atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We
177 seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the
[643] only independent tribe in Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government.
[634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Meravi FR4
Ngoni FR5

M 587 765 [833] marry, his new wife would die. A widow after her period of mourning of two or three months, if sought in marriage, sends her suitor to her sister, who arranges for some other man to have coitus with the widow, after which she is ready to marry the suitor. Without this her second husband would die should she have committed adultery.

M 767 622 After the funeral of a chief the headmen of the district call the chief *Mdzukulu*, who buried the late chief, and hand him a red blanket and tell him to cover the man who is going to be chief. This he does, at the same time hitting him hard on the head. This action is received with shouting from the women, who put ashes on their heads. He then sits surrounded by his brothers and sisters at one end of the open space, the headmen at the other, the leader of whom gives a sermon.

M 766 At Chipoli on the south-west arm of the Lake the corpse is wrapped in a mat and weighted, and then sunk in the lake. The same practice is followed occasionally at Monkey Bay; it is done with the idea of avoiding interference by *Mphiti*.

Lepers and persons dying of small-pox are not bewailed; the former are thrown in the bush for *Mphiti* to eat, as it is thought the disease is spread if they be buried. A man accused of *Mphiti* and dying of *mwaji* used to be burnt on a pile of wood.

N 622 ●766 [*Notes on Angoni.*—In the case of a chief the body was kept ten days to be sure of death; it was arranged in a sitting posture covered with cloth, the eyes open, a stream was dammed up with stones and then a pyre made below the dam and the body burnt, the waters were then let free to wash away the ashes. The new chief stood from morning to afternoon on one foot wrapped in the smoke of the pyre.]

M 195 769 In speaking of the dead the expression, "the late so and so" (= *mzimizi* . . .), is used. A man will not refer to children that have died in the presence of his wife, as she will cry either from grief or because it is the custom so to do. Some burial grounds are not approached.

Artificial Deformations.

M 304 [856] At birth pressure is applied to the head of the child to reduce any deformity which may be present—no deformation is attempted. Various practices of piercing nose, lips, and ears have been and are in vogue.

M [178] Piercing of the upper lip and subsequent wearing of a thin stick, sometimes a bone (*stone*), until the aperture was large enough to admit a much bigger ivory or wooden lip-ring, solid or otherwise (*pelele*), was practised among the Nyanja women, but it is going out and is now seen only in the old women. Occasionally the lower lip was pierced in the same way. At the present time among the Y [304] Machinga, Yao, and many Nyasa women, the left *ala nasi* is pierced in the same way when a girl is eight years old. When adult a metal or ivory solid ring is worn (*shipini*). A woman piercing the right *ala nasi* would be laughed at and called a fool.

When the Queen Mother, who had in her husband's lifetime been the big wife of his village and the head of his big house, moved out with her son to his *lunungulu* village, she had the unrivalled distinction of occupying the *indlunkulu*. While her hut was the centre of all hospitality and of ceremonials such as marriages and funerals, she was aware that her daughter-in-law, her son's big wife, was the leading lady of that village by right of being the Paramount's big wife and the mother of his heir. Such a situation could have produced friction between the big wife and the Queen Mother, but informants were shocked at the idea of two women in such positions not being able to control their tempers and adjust any differences which arose. I never saw any visible signs of friction. The Queen Mother and her co-widows in the village seemed aware that their time of active participation in royal village or national affairs was over, and the Queen Mother appeared content to occupy the *indlunkulu*, provide a meeting-place for all the women, and give advice and counsel when invited to do so. Part of her duty in occupying the *indlunkulu* hut was to keep the ritual vessels for sacrificing to the ancestral spirit of her late husband, the former Paramount, and when the sequence of ceremonies after his death had been completed, she looked after his spirit which had been 'brought back' to that hut. 644 [769]

In the central kingdom, when the Paramount Mputa died in Tanganyika, a regent took care of the kingdom while his son Cikusi was a minor. During that period the royal village built by Domwe mountain was a very large one divided into hamlets. The position of Queen Mother was then held by NaMlangeni, formerly the big wife of Mputa, who had a daughter Manga, but no son. A son, Cikusi, born to the next wife, was put into the house of NaMlangeni and brought up there. Goloseła Nzunga, the *induna* in charge of her house, was also in charge of the section of the royal village called Ziyembe. When the royal village divided, its constituent hamlets spread out from Domwe and the section called Ziyembe moved to the east towards the escarpment. The head village of the Nzunga clan was built there, and Goloseła continued as *induna* for NaMlangeni. She went with him, while Cikusi's own mother went into his *lunungulu* village in the section called Liwisini sited near the Kirk Range. NaMlangeni took care of the spirit of Paramount Mputa in the Nzunga clan head village of Mcakatha. Her hut in that village was the *indlunkulu* and after she died her daughter Manga came to live in that hut and look after her father's spirit. 644 768 [769]

This brief account of the succession of a Queen Mother in the central kingdom brings up the question of succession, which was a vital element in the office of the Queen Mother, in respect both of her occupancy of the *indlunkulu* and her guardianship of the spirit of the dead Paramount. In the case of a successor to the Queen Mother of a recently deceased Paramount, two alternatives were open. The reigning Paramount's big wife could succeed to the *indlunkulu* and to the 644

group consisted of himself and the mother and her children, including her daughters only until they married. 571 592

The affinal element in a house consisted of the other wives associated with the owner of the house as co-wives, and the wives of the sons of the owner. Both the kinship group and the affinal group were bound together by their rights in the cattle of the herd which was known as 'the cattle of the house of X'. From that herd were taken cattle for the *lobola* of the wives married after the house was founded, and for the wives of the sons and adopted sons of the house. Into that herd came the cattle received for the marriages of the daughters belonging to the house and the gift cattle sent to wives by their fathers after marriage. When the *lobola* had been fully paid up for a daughter of the house, then her relationship with it ceased and she was thenceforth known as belonging to her husband's mother's house. 592 585 571 [591]

Associated with the house in the villages of the Paramounts, the chiefs and the leading *abamnumna* were two other groups of people. One was the *induna* appointed 'to take care of the house' and his family. In the 1930's the *induna* was in charge of the cattle and of the many activities connected with the house, including the organisation of male labour in hut-building, in kraal construction and in cultivation; he was consulted by the male members of the house about the selling of cattle and the use of the goods accumulated in the house. The other group associated with the house in pre-European days consisted of captives taken in war and allocated to the house who worked as labourers. The servants who worked for a house in the 1930's assisted with cooking, beer-making and minding the children, and they had huts near that of the owner of the house to which they belonged, placed on the right- or left-hand side of the kraal according to their affiliation with the big house or the second house. Informants said that in the past such association with a house included giving a beast from the herd of the house for the marriage of a servant. The *induna*, through the marriage of his daughters, built up his own herd, which he frequently kept at first with the cattle of the house in the main kraal, later building his own kraal. 592 571 357 [727]

A new house began when a man married his big wife. Although at first he built her a hut at the back of his mother's hut in his father's village, as soon as he moved out to his new village after his father's death, the big wife's hut had the next most important site in the kraal after that of the *indlunkulu*, and the second wife had the third place of importance. In some of the larger villages of the central kingdom, the custom of moving out into a new village after the death of the former owner had been given up, partly because of pressure on the land. The house grouping in relation to the siting of huts then became very complex, but the pattern was nevertheless discernible. The two sections under the big house and the *gogo* house, which had formerly divided into two villages, continued to exist together, and at Mcakhatha this dual 361 591 592 [768] 361 592

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

581 binding contract. In theory at least the girl left her family for good once 593 the agreed *lobola* was handed over, and the responsibility for adjustment to the family she had entered was hers, first as wife and then as mother.

593 Investigation of the terminology associated with the Ngoni concept 171 of family immediately poses problems of relating group structure to individual and group relationships. Dr. Kuper did not refer to any single term for family among the Swazi. The nearest was the term *umuti* used for homestead[1] which covered a recognized leader and his dependents, in terms of common residence, mutual relations and economic activities. The Cewa term *banja*,[2] widely used in Nyasaland in the 1930's to translate 'family', in its general use was more akin to the Swazi *umuti* since it denoted the relationships of a group of people to one man, and their common residence in a single village or a section of a village. *Banja* was used to express relationship to one man by kinship and marriage, but when it was used among the central Ngoni it also applied to other individuals, such as his age mates and the descendants of his father's former captives who lived in the same village. Another Cewa term *mbumba* was used in two distinct senses. The common use was to express the relationship of one man with his sisters and their children who inherited his position and his property and looked to him for assistance. A much less common use of the term was found sometimes in central Nyasaland and occasionally in north Nyasaland to cover the group of a man and his children and his brothers and their children—a patrilineal concept of a kinship group which was usually but not always associated with common residence.

171 There was one major difference between the Ngoni concept inherent 768 in their use of *banja* and that of the Cewa and other matrilineal peoples. 602 When an important man or woman died among the Cewa, someone 593 always 'entered their place' in the kinship system, and this acquiring of a new position involved a shift in actual relationships and in terminology throughout the group of kin. There was no such change among the Ngoni in the use of kinship terms. When a man or woman among the Ngoni entered a dead person's place it was in order to perform his functions and not to assume the dead person's kinship relationships.

621 The village lay-out in different types of Ngoni village illustrates the 593 way in which family grouping could be recognized in the sharing of the same hut, in the grouping of huts, and in the relations with neighbouring villages. Later in this chapter illustrations will be given from the northern and central Ngoni kingdoms to show how certain patterns of residential grouping on a family basis were evolving from the divisions of mixed tribal groups characteristic of the former large villages of pre-European days. The general tendency in northern Ngoniland was to

[1] op. cit. p. 38.
[2] Scott and Hetherwick in their dictionary translate *banja*: house, home, household, family.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

The ritual of the purification of the living

The living had certain rites to carry out on their own behalf which, if omitted, would bring the displeasure of the ancestors upon them. These were essentially purification rites for they removed the defilement of death from each individual who was closely related to, or had performed some office for, the dead; and through the rites the houses and utensils were cleansed, and the living community was re-integrated after the loss of one of its members. Shaving, burning the hair and mourning bands, and washing in a stream, were the prescribed acts for all who were connected by kinship or marriage with the deceased, or who had taken part in preparing the body or digging the grave. These were a succession of rites as we have seen, and emphasized the need for ritual cleansing over a long period, and for renewed integration between the living. 783 768

In addition to this generally practised ritual, there were some acts of ritual purification of houses and utensils found only among the Swazi clans. One informant told of the ritual washing of hoes used to dig the grave in the blood of a newly killed sheep. Several others spoke of the cleansing with sheep dung of the huts of the widows of a dead man at the time of the second shaving. On each occasion when meat was offered to the ancestors after a death, the living who ate the meat had to be made ceremonially clean through the act of shaving, followed by ritual washing at the river.

The ritual of addressing the spirits

There was no set formula for addressing the ancestral spirits but there were three parts in all the prayers which I heard and which were recited to me. The first was the naming of the ancestors. The leading clans in the two kingdoms demonstrated the way in which they prayed to their ancestors by repeating the names of successive heads of the clan. They began with the name of the ancestor who had died in Swaziland and those of his father and grandfather and other forbears if known. The Nhlane clan, for example, told me 'We pray: *UNdlos ka UNkuba ka UMalowu ka UMazongele*' and then added: 'UNdlos died in our village of Hobo before we left Swaziland and he was buried in the kraal in Hobo.' The Mhlambi clan in central Nguniland named their ancestor UNgekwazi who died in Swaziland, but they did not know any names before him. Other clans in the central kingdom used the name of their ancestor who crossed the Zambezi with Mputa. The most important element in the prayer, therefore, was the naming of the 'big spirit', sometimes coupled with more remote ancestors. 769 782

The second element in addressing the spirits was to call their attention to the beast which was to be offered to them if they 'agreed'. 'Here is your beast' was the formula. Although three or four beasts or even

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

356 in with a smooth round stone. This too was hard work, but every now and then the grandmother, watching and supervising, handed out a lump of clarified fat which quickly brought up a fine polish. The girls were told that this high polish was necessary so that people might sit with pleasure on the floor, and so that all dust and refuse showed up clearly in the morning sweeping of the hut. The floor of the veranda was similarly polished, and, as we saw in Chapter [351] IV, the more important huts had a smeared and polished space all round the front.

353 In arranging the inside of the hut girls were taught the right places to put the water-jars and other pots, the baskets and mats, and the bundles of cloth and ornaments belonging to the 'house' wrapped in mats or packed neatly in wooden or tin chests. Brass and bead ornaments, and special cloths [301] for use by men and women on ceremonial occasions, were [292] all kept in the huts of leading women. The ornaments worn [768] by such a woman during her lifetime were returned to the 'house' after her death and looked after in the hut of her successor. These possessions and heirlooms were periodically 356 brought out into the sun, and shaken and aired or polished. A housewife was publicly shamed if she did not take care of such property, and people spread stories that she was careless about keeping the wealth of the house in good repair. Girls were reminded of this when they were called to help at such a 'spring cleaning', and told as a warning: 'So-and-so in that village over there, she let the insects eat the cloth of the house. The mildew spoiled the bead-bands and waistcoats. The green rust came on the brass wire. She was shamed when men spoke about it.'

251 Part of the property of each household was the food stored after harvest or gathered from the bush. Formerly the Ngoni stored their staple cereal in pits dug in the kraal, mudded and fired and covered with a flat rock. The same kind of pit was sometimes made in the side veranda for storing sweet potatoes, but nothing was stored in the kraal.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

764 and take a large flat stone and set the corpse on it, and take a millstone and place it on his head. If it be he has children, they are made to take charcoal in their hands, and this they cast into the grave (this is to cause them to forget). Then some old man takes up a hoe, and strikes the ground at one side of the grave and again at the other, when many begin to fill in the earth, the chief mourners trampling it down.

III. When they have finished filling in, they knock out the hoe heads, and set off for the stream. They who carry the hoes and household belongings of the deceased go first. When they reach the water, the chief mourners bathe first, then every one else; the men bathe up-stream, the women down-stream. They do not rub each other's backs. When
•768 they have finished bathing, they take the calico, sporran, and "*nsengwa*" baskets the dead man used to eat out of, and set fire to them, and splash the ashes with water. Then they set out for the village, wailing. When they come to the grave, the medicine man looks for medicine to remove the evil
[975] influence of the spirit of the dead; [this medicine] he breaks up, puts in a potsherd, pours on water, and stirs. The chief mourner begins to rub it on his
765 legs, face, and hands, then others come and do the same. If the deceased had children of his own, they also rub some of the medicine on. They again keep wake at the hut in which the man died. Next morning at dawn the nearest relation of the dead
[931] takes goats and fowls and gives them to the chief mourners, who then begin to shave a little patch of hair from the side of each person's head, when the people will then shave each other quite bald. The widows go to some spot in the bush to weave the "red" bands and to shave. When every one has quite finished shaving, the meat is taken from the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

replaced by new ones, but the village as a whole may be regarded as 361
stationary. The exhaustion of garden land in the vicinity of the village 166
is the principal reason for moving, as with the passage of time a man [311]
has to go farther and farther from the village to find new land. Sooner or later it becomes more convenient to move the village to another locality where there is plenty of regenerated land on which gardens can be made. The death of the headman is sometimes followed by a move to a new site, while quarrels within a village may cause a [768] portion of the inhabitants to go off and live on their own, usually after the matter has been referred to the chief. Since 1898 many villages have been moved off land alienated to Whites, or away from congested [648] areas.

When the Administration is the instigator of the move, the new village site is a matter for discussion between District Officer, county [648] chief, and village headman. In moves made on the initiative of the villagers, the various possible new sites are reconnoitred by the headman and other important people in the village and the site chosen is notified to the chief for his approval. The first people start to make their gardens in the vicinity of the site, and work is started on the new village. For this a recently abandoned garden site may be chosen, as it is easier to clear. The first structure to be built is usually a cattle byre. Making a byre is very hard work, and I was told that if it was left till [343] later it would be difficult to get people to tackle the job. Rattray, writing of Gomani's Ngoni of central Nyasaland, relates how the [622] headman's hut is built before the others, but this custom appears to [184] be unknown in Fort Jameson District.[1]

Building is begun by the more industrious before the rains end, and 221
is completed after the harvest. The transition from the old site to the 361
new one is gradual, as, unless the distance between the sites is too 166
great, people will continue working the gardens in the old area until 241
they are exhausted. New gardens are indeed opened up on the old site of the village, and it is quite common to see the ground dug up between the huts at the end of the rains while there are people still living there.

[1] Rattray, *Folk-Lore Stories*, pp. 109–11. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*, pp. 203–5, gives an account of the building of a new village among Mombera's Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, in which the cattle byre was built first, but it must be remembered that this was a village built round a central byre, after the fashion of the South-Eastern Bantu, whereas the cattle byre in a Fort Jameson village is nowadays a smaller affair placed on the outskirts of the village.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[60] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[61]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[60] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[61] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-5; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Hoffman, *Nova kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

interests and those of neighbouring tribes against the North Charterland and the White settlers. Ngoni themselves have not been in a position to enforce their own point of view.

In the operation of the legal system White control has never been so complete, as we have indicated above. However the support given to the judgments of chiefs and others by the Administration prior to 1929 was political rather than legal, and the courts held by chiefs with or without the approval of the Administration did not form part of the same legal system as the Administration's own courts. In that year Native Courts with defined powers were established as part of the same legal system as other recognized courts in the British Empire, with ultimate connexion to the Privy Council.[16] In matters of religion White dominance has been achieved more slowly and has never been complete. But even in this field the religions brought by the Whites have triumphed over the cult of the chief's ancestors and to-day it is the Christians who are the ritual experts.

A parallel sequence of events has taken place in Nyasaland, save that there the amount of land alienated in the Fort Manning area has been small. A scheme of administration was given a legal basis in 1912, and was similar to that in Northern Rhodesia. It was revised in 1924, and in 1933 Native Authorities and Native Courts were set up.[17] The two principal missions in Fort Jameson District have stations in Nyasaland as well.

In both countries Ngoni have been required to pay tax. A hut tax was introduced on the Rhodesian side of the border in 1901 and at about the same time in Nyasaland. The annual rate has varied in Fort Jameson District from three to ten shillings. The imposition of tax has been of importance, not only in partly meeting the costs of Administration, but also in bringing Ngoni men and women into the wider economic system of farms, mines and offices of southern Africa.

Thus the Whites established control over the Ngoni in most of their important external relations. Politics, settlement, litigation, religion and economic activity have all been moulded by the Whites. In many respects this has been a passive process, for little that the Ngoni have done or not done has been significant to the decision to set up Native Courts, or to expand the production of tobacco, or even to open up a mission of some new denomination.

[16] By Ordinance No. 33 of 1929. Subsequent legislation is contained in Ordinances No. 10 of 1936, 18 of 1940, and 21 of 1942.

[17] Legislation is to be found in Ordinances No. 13 of 1912, 11 of 1924, 13 of 1933 and 14 of 1933.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 by this relationship participate in the presentation and consumption
273 of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the
[769] Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all
797 public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the
[557] ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of
[576] honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are
681 diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded
634 as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and
626 other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Paramount Chief is sometimes told of the matter and calls the minor
[643] chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other counties and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner.
643 The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[14] a
576 salutation which symbolizes his former position as head of an

[14] cf. Zulu *Bayede*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and settled where another village already existed.[1] In both forms, this new settlement was called the *lusungulu* village, 'the one which goes in front'; and the village which was left was known as the *gogo* village. This use of the term *gogo* (literally 'grandparent') for house and village had a common basic connotation. It expressed the concept of being left behind to look after something, the *gogo* house being passed over for the heir to the Paramountcy or chieftainship but charged with ritual and ceremonial duties; and the *gogo* village being left behind to take care of the traditions and generally also of most of the widows of the deceased Paramount or chief. Each *lusungulu* village eventually divided on the death of its owner, part 'going forward' with the new successor, part remaining behind. The main groups in the village which went ahead or which remained were the houses connected with the new Paramount or chief or *mulumuzana* and those connected with his dead father. In the chapter on houses (Chapter III, Part III) this process will be examined in greater detail. 621 571

The third related institution was the provision for guarding the spirit of a dead Paramount or chief and those of some leading *ahumuzana*. A senior woman was always guardian of such a spirit and in her hut were kept the ritual objects: spear, wooden dish, baskets, fire-stick, which were used in sacrifices to the ancestors. The guardianship of the spirit of a dead Paramount was always associated with the village which had been his *lusungulu*. His corpse was buried on the edge of the kraal containing the cattle of the house where he had grown up, and this village became the *gogo* village associated with him, where his spirit was guarded in a hut, probably though not necessarily belonging to one of his widows. The recognition of such a woman guardian was a matter for selection and appointment, and was the responsibility of the senior men of the *gogo* house in that village in consultation with the senior men of the *gogo* house in the dead man's father's village. The concept of guarding the spirits of important men, and the means by which such guardianship was practised, will be more fully discussed in Part IV in connexion with the ancestor cult. 769 554 775 [766]

THE NGONI KINGDOMS AND AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS

In the final section of this chapter we shall look at the Ngoni kingdoms in their relationship to other African kingdoms and states such as those described in *African Political Systems*.[2] A methodological problem arises here. In this study a number of references are made to the Ngoni kingdoms in pre-European times, especially in connexion 121

[1] This form of the institution was found in densely populated areas and the incoming households dominated the original ones.

[2] Fortes, M., & Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (ed.). *African Political Systems*. O.U.P., 1940 pp. 9–23.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

571 643 function and authority was largely evolved and built up during the Ngoni migration across the Zambesi and the early settlement in Nyasaland.

643 The office of the Paramount was supported by three typical Ngoni institutions. The first was the regency exercised by the man who was held responsible for the care of the office of the Paramount. He was called 'the one who takes care of the country', 'the one who has to put the new *inkosi* in his place', 'the one who takes care of the young *inkosi* until he enters his father's place'. We shall see later how this principle of regency operated in particular cases in the succession to the Paramountcy. It proved to be an effective provision both in the case of a minor who was recognized as his father's heir, and during an interregnum while the succession was being discussed. The Ngoni showed a clear understanding of what functions the regent ought to perform, and when he exceeded these functions and usurped, or tried to usurp, the Paramount's position they condemned his action as wrong.

The second institution which supported the Paramountcy was the 'big house' from which the heir to the Paramount had to come. We shall see later that it was not always considered essential that the heir should be the actual child of the wife in the big house. A boy could be adopted [59] into the house and, by Ngoni kinship rules, he was then a child of that house and of the woman in it.

643 The third institution, which made the Paramount immortal at death after having been supreme in his life-time, was the Ngoni practice of 769 'guarding his spirit' in a hut, usually in the village where he had lived. The guardianship of a spirit was not practised exclusively for the Paramount. All the chiefs and the heads of the Swazi clans had this provision made for their spirits when they died, but in national crises prayers [282] addressed to the spirits of former Paramounts were of supreme importance.

The royal clan and the big house

643 614 565 184 Among the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans which formed the Ngoni aristocracy the royal clan had a unique position. Not only was it the clan of the Paramount, but its members had social rank and prestige because they belonged to his clan. In the northern kingdom informants showed awareness of the fact that their royal clan of Jere was not one of the well-known clans in the south. Other clan names found among them, such as Ngomezulu, Thole, Nzima, Nqumayo, and many more, were known to be clan names among the South-eastern Bantu. The following explanation was given by Cibambo about the name Jere and was the one most widely accepted:

‹ The Ngoni themselves say that the clan name of Jere was given during the journey, and that it arose out of the number of people who were with Zwangendaba. When the Ngoni want to speak of a large number of people they use two well-known words which are: '*Ngu Shaka*' (it is Shaka);

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

When the Queen Mother, who had in her husband's lifetime been the big wife of his village and the head of his big house, moved out with her son to his *hosugulu* village, she had the unrivalled distinction of occupying the *indlunkulu*. While her hut was the centre of all hospitality and of ceremonials such as marriages and funerals, she was aware that her daughter-in-law, her son's big wife, was the leading lady of that village by right of being the Paramount's big wife and the mother of his heir. Such a situation could have produced friction between the big wife and the Queen Mother, but informants were shocked at the idea of two women in such positions not being able to control their tempers and adjust any differences which arose. I never saw any visible signs of friction. The Queen Mother and her co-widows in the village seemed aware that their time of active participation in royal village or national affairs was over, and the Queen Mother appeared content to occupy the *indlunkulu*, provide a meeting-place for all the women, and give advice and counsel when invited to do so. Part of her duty in occupying the *indlunkulu* hut was to keep the ritual vessels for sacrificing to the ancestral spirit of her late husband, the former Paramount, and when the sequence of ceremonies after his death had been completed, she looked after his spirit which had been 'brought back' to that hut. 644 [769]

In the central kingdom, when the Paramount Mputa died in Tanganyika, a regent took care of the kingdom while his son Cikusi was a minor. During that period the royal village built by Domwe mountain was a very large one divided into hamlets. The position of Queen Mother was then held by NaMlangeni, formerly the big wife of Mputa, who had a daughter Manga, but no son. A son, Cikusi, born to the next wife, was put into the house of NaMlangeni and brought up there. Golozela Nzunga, the *induna* in charge of her house, was also in charge of the section of the royal village called Ziyembe. When the royal village divided, its constituent hamlets spread out from Domwe and the section called Ziyembe moved to the east towards the escarpment. The head village of the Nzunga clan was built there, and Golozela continued as *induna* for NaMlangeni. She went with him, while Cikusi's own mother went into his *hosugulu* village in the section called Liwisini sited near the Kirk Range. NaMlangeni took care of the spirit of Paramount Mputa in the Nzunga clan head village of Mcakatha. Her hut in that village was the *indlunkulu* and after she died her daughter Manga came to live in that hut and look after her father's spirit. 644 768 [769]

This brief account of the succession of a Queen Mother in the central kingdom brings up the question of succession, which was a vital element in the office of the Queen Mother, in respect both of her occupancy of the *indlunkulu* and her guardianship of the spirit of the dead Paramount. In the case of a successor to the Queen Mother of a recently deceased Paramount, two alternatives were open. The reigning Paramount's big wife could succeed to the *indlunkulu* and to the 644

2: Read E-5 (1935-191 9) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

614 *mahwazana* was not invariabl . Some informants said that *ahwazana*
622 were appointed by the Paramo nt. Others said that if the ancestor of a
Swazi clan was known by na e to have crossed the Zambesi with
Zwangendaba or Mputa then his descendant in the direct line was
always a *mahwazana*.

614 It was the criterion of havi g a known ancestor and knowing the
genealogy of the clan that was most widely accepted in acknowledging
[769] the head of a Swazi clan as *mahwazana*. At the clan head village
prayers were addressed to this ancestor, his cattle were sacrificed, and
the names recited as far back as tradition and memory could recall. Later
we shall see that there were said to be about 25 Swazi clans in the
northern kingdom and 29 in the central. Among these about 15 in the
northern and 12 in the central kingdom had head villages where the
ancestor cult was performed. In the central kingdom several of the
leading clans had their head villages in Portuguese territory, and there-
fore did not carry out the cult in the central kingdom.

554 In the hierarchy of the clans the Swazi clans were the acknowledged
614 leaders. In village and national life this leadership was accorded to the
royal clans and the clans of the chiefs, and was the reason for the respect
shown to *ahwazana* who had o direct political power. Only the heads
of Swazi clans possessed *izi hoso* (honorific epithets) which com-
memorated events in the past history of the clan leaders. On all cere-
monial occasions heads of Swazi clans, whether in national or in village
affairs, took precedence over the rest when walking in procession, stand-
ing for dances, taking part in ritual, or sitting down at feasts. Certain
[766] forms of burial, such as the use of a sheep-skin, and placing the corpse
on a shelf in the grave, were observed only for members of the Swazi
clans.

582 In arranging marriages, there was, in addition to strict exogamy
614 within a clan, a prohibition on marriage between clans which had *cibale*
(brotherhood) relations. In the central kingdom the royal clan, Maseko,
had *cibale* with the Ngozo clan, which provided the royal shadow, and
[642] with the Nzunga clan. The Nzunga and the Maseko clans shared the
same taboos, notably elephant and fish. As well as prohibited marriages
between certain clans, there were preferred marriages between certain
others. In general there was a preference for marriage between the
families of leading Swazi clans. In the northern kingdom the Nqumayo
clan had a preference for marrying into the Thole, Nhlane, Maluleka
and Pakati clans. It was alleged that formerly they could marry only
into these clans, but in the 19 o's exceptions were found in a number
of villages.

614 The following lists of the names of Swazi clans were collected from
informants in the two kingdoms, who were questioned closely about
which names should be included under the title of Swazi. This was the
grouping claimed by the Ngoni in both kingdoms. They said emphatic-

[P. 157]
[P. 156 is blank]

CHAPTER I

THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS AND THE ARISTOCRATIC TRADITION

THIS section is not an account of Ngoni religion. It would require a study in itself to examine their beliefs about supernatural beings, their ideas on cosmogony, their concepts of the causes of disaster and sickness, their approach to and practice of forms of magic, and their attitude to witchcraft. Living in Ngoni villages, listening to individuals of different ages discussing prosperity and disaster, the seen and the unseen, the known and the feared, it was clear that it would be difficult to isolate a comprehensive system of beliefs and say that these were distinctively Ngoni beliefs concerning religion and magic and witchcraft. The observer was always aware of the intermingling of ideas and practices from the many Nyasaland tribal peoples who lived side by side and were in constant contact with one another in all those spheres of thought and action which demanded explanation and some remedial or therapeutic treatment. Among the Nyasaland tribes in the 1930's the influence of sixty years of Christian teaching by the missions played an important part, since the missions had introduced western medicine and education as well as a new religion and ethic, and so had influenced both thinking and action among their converts and their families. 114 771

In this complex situation it was virtually impossible to say: this is the Cewa religion, this is the Tumbuka cosmogony, this is Ntumba magic. It was nevertheless clear that there was an Ngoni cult of their ancestral spirits, which was not shared, in the form in which they practised it, by any of the neighbouring peoples, and the Ngoni had their own selective methods of relating it to Christian beliefs and practices. One reason why the Ngoni ancestor cult could be singled out as peculiar to them was its foundation in their aristocratic tradition. As long as the Ngoni political and social structure and organization survived, including the reciprocal roles of leading men and important women, the concept of houses with their ownership of cattle, and the role of the *gogo* house in maintaining tradition and carrying out ritual, the performance of the cult of ancestral spirits was assured. The eminent ancestors whose spirits were guarded in a village and who were known and remembered were addressed in times of trouble, and meat was offered to them as a form of sacrifice from the herd of cattle associated with the house to which they had belonged. This section will deal with the cult of ancestral spirits of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who formed the political and social aristocracy. Thus, in the form described here, the cult is 771 769 [563] [565]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

565 exclusively related to the aristocratic tradition, and no account will be
769 given or analysis made of ancestor cults practised by those groups in the
771 two Ngoni kingdoms who were not of the leading class. In the ancestor cult, as it will be described here, the emphasis was always on known and named spirits of the dead, associated with the village where the ritual was performed. In the approach to these known and named spirits—an approach which I have called a cult—there were three essential components: the diviner, the ritual address and the cattle. The diviner's role we shall discuss in Chapter III and the ritual forms of addressing the ancestors in Chapter IV. The Ngoni believed they could not approach their ancestral spirits except through their cattle, which had first to
[828] show that the spirits agreed to prayers being made, and the sign was that the beast urinated. The sacrifice of a beast was an integral part of the rite, which was concluded by the suppliants eating the meat together. At no point in their common life did the Ngoni more clearly demonstrate their dependence on their cattle than in the ritual of addressing their ancestral spirits. For this reason, in Chapter II we shall review the place of cattle in Ngoni life and relate it to their role in the ancestor cult.

Ancestral spirits of the Ngoni Paramounts.

643 The reigning Paramount and his predecessors in that office held an
769 unchallenged supremacy in the hierarchy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The
776 Ngoni believed that the line of dead Paramounts similarly led the hierarchy of the ancestral spirits, and that the dead Paramounts had power to help the Ngoni nation in time of need. It was taken for granted that when Paramounts died they would continue to be powerful and held in great respect, and that their position in the spirit world would enable them to influence UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit. This Great Spirit was believed to be the creator of all things and the ultimate source of power, particularly of sending rain, success in war, and deliverance from pestilence; and he was in general regarded as the giver of health and strength to mankind. The Ngoni held that those ancestors who were nearest to the living in time, whose names they knew, possessed less power than the remote ancestors whose names had been forgotten. On the same principle UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit, the originator of all creation, possessed more power than any other being, but, since he was so far removed in time from the living, no one could know his praise-names or his genealogy, and therefore he could not be addressed directly. In the same way the remotest ancestors of the Paramount could not be addressed directly because their praise-names were unknown to living men. Only those direct ancestors of the Paramount, whose names and genealogy and praise-names were known, could be addressed correctly and they could be counted on to use their influence with remoter and more powerful ancestral spirits and with the Great Spirit himself.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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As one of the Ngoni said: 'The spirits of the dead Paramounts were the guardians of the whole nation. These *amadlozi* stood between UMkulumqango and the people. They were never worshipped at times of plenty and prosperity, but at the time of crisis and danger.' 769 776

In pre-European days there had been two special occasions when the spirits of former Paramounts were addressed on behalf on the whole nation. One was at the time of the *incwala* or first-fruits ceremony, which as we have seen was given up before the final settlement in Nyasaland. This was an occasion uniting all the people with songs and dances at the village of the Paramount. The second occasion was in time of war before the army went out on a raid. This could take place more than once during the fighting season, and always at the Paramount's village. 769 [726]

The remaining occasions for addressing the spirits of former Paramounts on behalf of the nation were when epidemics threatened, when there was a drought, or in the serious illness of the Paramount or of a leading member of his family. In prayer for rain or for the recovery from illness of someone of the royal clan, the diviner had to be consulted about which of the ancestors of the Paramount should be addressed. The ancestor indicated by the diviner had to be named in the ritual, his genealogy given and, as a rule, his particular attributes and his praise-names mentioned. The following account was given to me by Mlonyeni Jere, who prayed for rain in Elangeni in 1935: 769 782

¶ When the rain stopped, the *amadoda* spoke among themselves 'What shall be done?' If they could not find out who had made the rain to stop, they said 'We must ask the *isanusi* (diviner). Perhaps it is one of the *amadlozi* (spirits) who are stopping the rain.'

If the *isanusi* finds it is the spirit of Hlacwayo, then all the big people are called to come to the kraal at Elangeni. Then they say 'We should choose a black ox with no white spot and bring it to the kraal.' They appointed a speaker who knows how to speak well all the names of the chiefs who have died. This man says to the spirit 'This cow is yours. You must eat it all. Then you must tell UMkulumqango our troubles.' If it urinates or makes dung, the spirits agree. This praying to the spirits is in the kraal in the evening. At early dawn next day someone is sent to kill the ox. While it was being flayed, the huts of the chief wives were smeared with cow dung on the floors and on the place outside the door. The meat was cooked in the kraal by the *amadoda*. Some of it was taken into the *indlunkulu* and kept there for one night so that the spirit might lick it. [237]

The Paramount had already eaten in the kraal and the meat was divided for the *amadoda* according to their age regiments. After they have eaten, a big man rises up to thank the spirit with his titles and praise-names, and all the people answer *Bayete* and there is a war-dance in the kraal. Then they look up and see clouds coming. Then the rain comes.

This particularizing of the appeal to an individual dead Paramount in the ancestor cult was an essential element in the ritual, and there seemed 643 769

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 to be no occasion and no form of ritual in which a generalized appeal was made to the spirits of all former Paramounts.

The reasons for this were related to the place of the sacrifice and the herd of cattle used. The place was determined by the village where the spirit of the dead Paramount was guarded by a particular house, and where some at least of the cattle belonging to that house were kraaled. Thus, in the northern kingdom, the spirit of Zwangendaba Jere was addressed in Ekwendeni; of Hlacwayo his father in Elangeni; and of Magangata his grandfather in Hoho. In the central kingdom the spirit of Mputa was addressed in Mcakhatha and also in Lizulu; and of his father, Ngwana, in a village in Portuguese territory. I heard no reference to the spirits of more recent Paramounts being addressed, and when I asked the reason several informants suggested that it was important to address the Ngoni Paramount who had been with his people in the south, and who therefore knew the names of the spirits of former Paramounts who had died in the south, names which the Ngoni in Nyasaland had forgotten. On the other hand, provision was made for the guardianship of the spirit of each successive Paramount, and in central Ngoniland there was provision for guarding the spirit of a Queen Mother, NaMlangeni, the big wife of Mputa who survived him, and of her daughter, the Royal Sister Bambo Manga. The reason given for the guardianship of the spirits of these two royal women in Mcakhatha illustrates the close link between the village where the spirit was guarded and the herd of cattle kept there and was explained by informants in the following terms. While the central Ngoni were still in Songea Paramount Mputa wanted cattle to give as *lobola* for his marriage to NaMlangeni. He went to Golozela, the head of the Nzunga clan, and asked him for cattle, which were handed over to the father of NaMlangeni. Golozela Nzunga then became the *induna* of the house of NaMlangeni in the royal village and her daughter Bambo Manga lived in his section. The cattle given for her *lobola* when she was married were put in the kraal of Golozela Nzunga to repay him for his previous gift. After her husband's death, Bambo Manga returned to the Nzunga head village where her cattle were, and assumed the guardianship of the spirits of her mother and of her father Mputa.

Ancestral spirits of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans

769 614 Ngoni informants often made statements such as the following by Cibambo:

> ¶ The Ngoni believed that each family had its own line of spirits (*amadlozi*) dating far back to the origin of that family, and that these in succession carried the messages until they reached the unknown ancestors, who in turn had the right to carry the message to UMkulumqango.

When such a statement was checked in several areas it was clear that the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans focussed their

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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ancestor cult in the head village of their clan. If they were asked 'How do you address the spirit (*teta idloxi*)?' they gave the names and genealogy of the former heads of the clan and their attributes if they were known. If they were asked 'Where do you address the spirits?' the reply was always in terms of a particular village where a certain spirit was guarded. 769 614

The occasions on which the Swazi clan ancestors were addressed and sacrifices made were in cases of sickness of an important member of the clan. It was sometimes suggested that there might be trouble in the clan villages for which prayer should be made to the clan spirits, but when pressed the only specific instance informants could give was when the cattle did not thrive. They repudiated immediately any idea of prayer to the clan spirits in cases of drought or epidemics in the clan villages since those troubles, wherever they occurred, could only be helped by the spirits of the Paramounts who were concerned with all the land and all its people. [731]

The procedure followed in the clan head village was the same as that for addressing the spirits of the Paramounts. In that village a diviner was consulted, he named the spirit who should be addressed, a beast was sacrificed and prayers were made. This was the Ngoni pattern of the ancestor cult, and it was limited to the Swazi and some of the trans-Zambesi clans. Its correct observance required that combination of cattle, houses, and known genealogies which only the leading clans possessed. [563]

The living and the dead

At times such as funerals, and when talking about the ancestor cult, the Ngoni often used the phrase: 'Death cannot cut life.' They believed that human spirits had a continued existence after death, and that this existence was related to the place where they had dwelt, the people who were of their family and clan, and the cattle which belonged to their house and village. This continued association was not an automatic process. It had to be assured by the correct performance of the burial rites, the observance of stages of mourning and the deliberate 'bringing back' of the spirit to the village where it would be guarded and honoured after the final mourning ceremony was over. 775 769

In the Ngoni funeral rites there were distinctive elements in the burial of those belonging to Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In handling the corpse the legs were bent and drawn up to the body and the arms folded and crossed each side of the neck, so that the corpse seemed to be sitting and holding its head in its hands. It was wrapped in the skin of a newly killed beast. In the central kingdom men and women of Swazi clans were wrapped first in a sheep-skin, with a cow-skin put over it. The grave was a circular pit, with a small side chamber or shelf where the body was placed in a sitting position, propped up with large stones and facing south-east to the ancestral homeland. Personal possessions, such as skins and shields and baskets, were either put in the grave or taken to be 764 184

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the group of those living relatives who had performed or were about to perform certain rites for the newly dead.

These rites were the stages of mourning laid down in the Ngoni funeral ritual. They were stages in which all adults took part, and they fulfilled the need to build up the future links with the spirit who had joined the ancestors and to bring together in common acts those from whom death had removed one of their number. The following text by one of the leaders of a Swazi clan in the central kingdom puts together briefly the successive stages of shaving, drinking beer, eating meat, singing war-songs, ritual cleansing and widow inheritance, and bringing back the spirit.

¶ If a man died, the second day they shave; after 5 or 6 months they shave again and cook beer. This means the widows must take off their white *xitambo* (head bands). After 12 months they take off their black *xitambo* and kill a beast to praise the spirit so that he may return to his house. This is also the time for inheriting the widows.

When they take off the white *xitambo*, the brother of the one who died takes sheep dung and sprinkles it in the houses where the widows are sleeping. At the same time the men wash their hands with cattle dung. The meaning of this is to tell the widows to cook food for the brothers of the dead man to send to them when they sit by the kraal. This they do before they can see them.

From the ritual witnessed at many funeral ceremonies, which never altered in its main elements, and from discussions with Ngoni informants, it was possible to gain some idea of Ngoni beliefs about the relation between the living and the dead. It was clear that the attitude of the living towards the dead was one of respect and honour, but not predominantly one of avoidance and fear as among some of the neighbouring tribes. The post-burial ritual culminated in 'bringing back the spirit' to the village, and we shall examine this further in the last chapter of this section. An observer was always conscious of a sense that people were waiting for the return of the spirit, which had to be planned for and carried out by the living. During the interval between the death and bringing back the spirit, it was said to be 'in the bush'. When asked where in fact the spirit was, the answer was always 'We do not know. How can we know?' They admitted that the life of the spirits was unknown to them, and there was evidence of a slightly uneasy relationship during this interval of waiting. When the spirit had been brought back and was being guarded by some woman appointed for that purpose, then it was once more near to the living and their cattle, and it could be addressed correctly. In the absence of any clear concepts about life in a spirit world, the Ngoni clung to the ritual by which they believed they could establish and maintain contact of a safe and respectful nature between the living and the dead. 769 775

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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178 In the central kingdom there were two instances of a modern adaptation of the ancestor cult, both of which were evidence of its close links
● 769 with the aristocratic tradition; one related to a *muhumuzana* of a Swazi
764 clan, the other to the royal clan. One of the first things which caught the eye of a visitor to the village of Mcakhatha was a large circular brick and cement tomb with a wooden cross on the top, in the middle of the village by the main kraal and within sight of the ruling chief's hut. It was the tomb of Njolomole Nzunga I, son of Golozela Nzunga who gave the cattle for NaMlangeni's *lobola*, and father of the ruling Chief Njolomole Nzunga II. The idea of this memorial originated with Lopati Nzunga, younger brother of Njolomole I and head of the *gogo* section of the village, and he had organized its erection. The bricks and cement were given by Europeans in the neighbourhood, and three beasts were killed for meat for those who carried the materials. The money to pay for the bricklayers' wages was raised by the sale of another beast. The name on the wooden cross was cut by the Chief's brother-in-law who was a carpenter, and Lopati said that the cross was for writing the name on and had no Christian significance. The tomb was declared 'open' to the public in the presence of a large number of people. A beast was presented to the Paramount Chief, and another beast was killed and cooked for a feast in the village. Beer was brewed in the huts of the two leading widows who had been in the big house and second house of Njolomole I.

This tomb was a memorial and not a grave, for Njolomole I had been buried in Ngoni fashion on the edge of the kraal, the fence of which was enlarged to take in the grave. It was regarded as a central point in the
[576 village. Ngoni visitors saluted it as they went by with the right arm
201] upraised in Ngoni fashion, and war-dances and *ngoma* dances took place beside it. The idea of a brick tomb with a cross on top was of course a modern concept taken from European cemeteries in Nyasaland which Lopati had seen. It cost six cattle to put it up and 'open' it, and these cattle were taken from the herds of the big house of Njolomole I.

In the chapter on the Paramount (Part II, Chapter II) it was pointed out that in the central kingdom the Paramount Gomani I was shot as a result of the 'war with the English' when he refused to walk to Zomba for his trial. On the Zomba road near the turning to the mission station of Dombole was a track leading into some woods. In an open clearing was a brick and cement tomb to Gomani I, subscribed to by the central Ngoni (including those living in the towns of Blantyre and Zomba). A memorial fund called 'The late Gomani Memorial Fund' was opened in 1926, and three years later those who had organized the fund formed the Angoni Highlands Association, mainly of Ngoni working in Blantyre and Zomba and wishing to maintain their links with their home villages. In discussing the origin of this fund for the memorial informants pointed out that they were aware that Gomani I, unlike his father and grand-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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father, had been a fierce ruler, and had gathered round him bands of young men who were not easily restrained. Though they could judge his character in this objective way, they respected his office, and hence his death and the confiscation of cattle which followed were a deep injury to Ngoni pride. So thirty years after his death they collected money and put up the memorial, and the appeal was supported for three main reasons. One was to commemorate this Paramount who had not had the traditional cremation by a river; another was to remove the shame of his death; the last was to draw together all his people in a common act. Every year numbers of Ngoni gathered at this memorial and held a Christian service which was followed by a general meeting. This memorial service and meeting had a definite link with the ancestor cult, and illustrated in a particular form Ngoni beliefs in the relation of the living and the dead.

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In the 1930's, as we saw in Chapter III of Part I, the form of Ngoni funerals and the ritual of mourning were closely related to the ancestor cult and were practised by the Ngoni aristocracy. These forms of ritual and their beliefs they brought with them from the south, and they were an important part of Ngoni culture. We shall see in a later chapter how some of these cultural elements were combined with Christian ritual, both for leading individuals of Swazi clans and for lesser members of those clans.

CHAPTER II

CATTLE AND THE ANCESTOR CULT

THERE are many references throughout this study to the importance of cattle among the Ngoni. In this chapter the place of cattle in Ngoni life will be examined with reference to the ancestor cult, and hence certain limitations have been imposed in the selection of material and its interpretation. There will, for example, be no analysis of the role of cattle in the economic life of Ngoni families and villages. Much of the material discussed has an economic significance which is immediately apparent, but the limitations set will not allow the economic implications of certain practices to be pursued further here. It is important for the main purpose of this chapter to make a brief analysis of some factors in the ownership, care, and use of cattle, and to follow that with references to some of the values and attitudes inherent in the Ngoni ownership and use of cattle. I made a preliminary analysis of these factors in a memorandum on standards of living in the central kingdom, published

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

death, or he can give them to anyone he likes during his lifetime. Hence individual acquisition in the English sense involves the legal right of individual disposal; the individual possession of profits from such disposal; and the individual responsibility for complying with any regulations concerning cattle, such as inoculation, slaughter for foot-and-mouth disease, and testing of milk.

In Ngoni usage the concept of ownership involved the acquisition and disposal of, and the responsibility for, cattle, but behind this apparent similarity of terms lay a wide difference in interpretation. Cattle could be acquired by inheritance, by natural increase, by *lobola*, as payment in a court case, as a gift, or by purchase. Formerly cattle could be acquired in warfare and raiding, but never by purchase. With this exception of buying cattle for cash, the methods of acquiring cattle had not altered since the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland. In pre-European days in the Ngoni kingdoms only the Paramount, the subordinate chiefs, the *alumuzana* and the big *ixinduna* possessed cattle. Having a herd marked the owner as a leading member of a leading clan, or as a famous warrior of a lesser clan whose distinguished war service had been rewarded by the Paramount giving him cattle, or allowing him to keep some of those he had taken from the enemy. New herds were formed when a Paramount or a chief moved out of his father's village and set up his own *lusungulu* village, taking with him one or more of his mothers who, together with his big wife, set up houses in the new village, and these houses were allotted cattle from the former undivided herd. Another way in which a herd was divided was when a big *induna* in charge of the house of a leading wife of a Paramount or a chief built a kraal for the cattle of that house near his own huts, and added to that herd any cattle which he acquired. Large Ngoni villages in pre-European days usually had one or more kraals on the edge of the village, as well as the big central one. When the large villages broke up and the *induna* moved off to found his own village, he still took care of the cattle of that house. If the house was one where an ancestral spirit was guarded, a successor was always appointed to live in the hut and guard the spirit. Hence the relationship of the house, its spirit guardian, its cattle and the *induna* in charge continued, though the personalities changed through death and for other reasons. This explained how in the 1930's cattle were found in one kraal which were said to belong to a house or a woman guardian of a spirit miles away in another village. Sometimes they were described as the cattle of a man long dead.

It is clear, therefore, that the Ngoni methods of acquiring cattle and building up herds did not result in a concept of individual ownership. Cattle were not willed from father to son, but the son of a Paramount or a chief, when he made his new *lusungulu* village, had the right to receive and to take with him the cattle of his mother's house; and the head of the *gogo* village who stayed behind also received and looked after the

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Cattle in the ancestor cult

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The Ngoni, unlike the Swazi as described by Dr. Kuper,[1] had no clear ideas about the life after death as lived by their immediate ancestors with whom they had associated in their lifetime. They did not, as the Swazi did, picture them living somewhere surrounded with cattle and other familiar creatures and objects. The importance of bringing the spirit back (*ukubuyisa idlozi*) to the house where it would be cared for signified two main things for them. The first was the continuous association of the spirit of the dead with the living persons in the community to which he had belonged, through the individuals belonging to the house, the actual hut where the sacrificial vessels were kept, and the cattle which belonged to the house. The other significant point was that contact with the returned spirit, and through him with the spirits of more remote ancestors, could only be established in the village containing the cattle of the house to which the dead man had belonged.

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We shall be examining some aspects of the ritual of addressing the ancestral spirits in a later chapter of this section. Here we shall establish three constituent parts of the ancestor cult in which cattle were essential links between those taking part in the cult and the spirits whom they addressed.

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The first part was the group of ceremonies which took place at death, at the burial, at the first ritual shaving and at bringing back the spirit. A text by Lopati Nzunga (see Chapter IV, p. 200) illustrates how three parts of a beast—the skin, the kidney fat (*nseso*) and the gall bladder (*nyongo*)—were considered essential for Ngoni burial. It was interesting to find in Blantyre among educated Ngoni who were Christians and occupied clerical and commercial posts, that they had given up the cow-skin for wrapping the corpse and substituted a coffin. But they admitted confidentially that in most Ngoni funerals the use of the *nseso* and the *nyongo* was customary. After the burial the ritual shaving, shared in by all who attended the funeral, was accompanied by the killing of a beast and the consumption of its meat, though with no ritual significance beyond its association with the purification of the mourners and their integration as a group. From six to twelve months later the second shaving and the bringing back of the spirit was also accompanied by killing a beast and eating its meat. These ceremonies expressed the sense of loss felt for the human person who had died, the sorrow of the mourners, their successive acts of purification which served to bring them together, and the final bringing of the spirit to live among them again. As we have seen, each stage of the death and mourning rites was accompanied by the eating of a beast or the use of certain parts of a beast. The cattle of the house to which the dead person belonged were used to bury him or her, to strengthen the mourners, and to reintegrate the spirit with the living community.

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[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 186.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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769 825 787 In another part of the cult cattle played a still more direct part. When a diviner advised that prayer should be made to the spirit of a leading man on behalf of someone of his clan who was sick, the man who was in charge of the *gogo* section of the village informed the head of the clan or *banja* and they agreed to address the spirits, and to offer a sacrifice if the spirits were willing. The sign of willingness on the part of the spirits was for the selected beast, when it had been driven out of the kraal, to urinate or make dung. If either happened they said the spirit was willing, and arranged a time for the prayer and sacrifice. If neither happened, if the beast just stood still or lay down, the spirits had 'refused' and the sacrifice could not go forward. This sign or lack of sign by the beast could not be ignored, and was a further illustration that the Ngoni considered cattle to be essential as a medium of approach to the spirits of their ancestors.

When the beast 'refused', those responsible called the diviner again and asked for an explanation. He produced a reason and advised them to try again, and the process was repeated until the sign of agreement was given. There was always anxiety when the beast 'refused', partly because of the delay in sacrificing and partly owing to an uneasy feeling that they had left something undone and the ancestral spirit was not pleased with them.

The main part of the ritual of sacrifice to an ancestral spirit was killing the beast, offering the meat to the spirits and the eating of the meat by the principal persons concerned. This we shall examine more closely in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER III

THE ROLE OF THE DIVINER IN THE ANCESTOR CULT

791 769 It has been apparent in the chapters on the Paramount and on warfare in Part II, and in the two previous chapters of Part IV, that divining by an accredited person was a necessary preliminary for sacrificing to and addressing the ancestors.[1] I never heard or received any account of the ancestor cult in which divining was not specifically mentioned as the first step in the performance of the ritual. Moreover, all the diviners of good standing were themselves operating because they had contact with and were possessed by the spirit of an ancestor. By virtue of this direct contact with the spirit world the diviners claimed their special powers.

[1] The one possible exception was the first-fruits ceremony, but this had been given up before the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland, and the old men had no clear memories of the ritual followed.

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Dr. Kuper called the diviners among the Swazi 'the most powerful and respected specialists operating in both individual and national situations'.[1] I found that among the Ngoni also they were greatly respected once they had established their reputation for prophecy and diagnosis. Except on the occasions when they were called upon to carry out their functions the majority of diviners whom I saw in the 1930's lived in relative seclusion, and had no outward signs of power in any political or economic sense, though in the past some of the 'prophets' had also been warriors and leaders. Socially they were always shown great honour when they came in response to a call, or when they went visiting on non-professional occasions. They were addressed in a respectful tone of voice, given a mat to sit on, and village noises around them were hushed. They were, however, essentially recluses, withdrawn from public life except when they were called on to help in time of crisis, and they did not show any ostentation of wealth or position.

Dr. Kuper used the term 'specialist' to describe the diviners among the Swazi. In the Ngoni kingdoms there were many kinds of specialists owing to the existence of several tribal groups each with its traditional system of religion and magic, and each with varying methods of treating sickness, diagnosing the causes of misfortune, and interpreting omens and dreams. The diviners in the Ngoni kingdoms who were best known and on whom the greatest responsibility lay were those who were called by the Paramount in times of national crisis. Such responsibility and such fame had in pre-European days corresponding risks. The following story, which was told me in Hoho by Timoti Jere and which I heard quoted in several areas in the northern kingdom, puts in a traditional setting and with much circumstantial detail the kind of demands formerly made on diviners and the kind of treatment meted out to them:

¶ Zwangendaba in his coming out of South Africa arrived in the country of the Maculu at Mabiri. It is there now. When the *impi* was summoned it went out to contend for the country of the Sukuma. That *impi* wanted very much to be victorious, because it went to fight in two countries, in that of the Sukuma, where they took the long-horned cattle, and in that of the Ngonde, where they took the cattle without horns and with big humps. While the *impi* was away, the Paramount called all the *izinduna* and said 'Why has the *impi* delayed so long? Call the *isanusi* that they may divine. Perhaps the *impi* has run away and turned back.' Then the *izinduna* called the *isanusi*. In their divining they said 'The *impi* has run away and turned back.' There was one *isanusi*, his name was UMakhende Nkosi, who divined and said 'All the *impi* is there and it will return in this month. The long delay of the *impi* is because they have raided two countries, the country of the Sukuma with long-horned cattle and the country of the Ngonde with unhorned cattle.' It was so, and that month the *impi* returned and arrived at Mabiri with many herds of cattle as UMakhende Nkosi had said.

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 163.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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goods were handed over, the diviner thanked the giver in the customary manner, and his wife or child carried the gifts away. Informants said that leading Ngoni would never be mean in their payments to diviners, and that diviners of the upper grades would never bargain over their rewards. It was openly said that a leading diviner cared most for his reputation as a successful specialist, and that the kind of life he led and the sort of man he was did not induce a desire to be wealthy. 791

One aspect of the diviner's role among the Ngoni was that he, an individualist, was always summoned at the request of a group. In a case of sickness of one of its members, it was the family or the senior men of a house who summoned the diviner, and they gave him his reward and carried out his advice. When a family heard from the diviner that a sick member might recover if a sacrifice were made to their ancestors, they regarded the diviner, in Cibambo's phrase, as a go-between linking the living group and their dead ancestors. The diviner therefore, like the cattle, was an essential link in the relationship between the living and the dead. [769]

CHAPTER IV

THE RITUAL OF ADDRESSING THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS

In the course of the first three chapters of this section, and in earlier sections, many beliefs and practices have been discussed which bear on the ritual of the ancestor cult. In spite of the risk of some repetition it will be useful to bring together here in one chapter the main elements in the ritual, and in so doing to raise certain theoretical issues. 769

Dr. Kuper said[1] that among the Swazi, ancestor spirits were not worshipped, and she gave as the reasons for this statement that the spirits were addressed as living persons would be, being sometimes scolded and seldom thanked, and that indignation rather than humility was the attitude of the living when disasters befell them which might have been due to malice or carelessness on the part of the ancestors. Without entering into an argument on the nature of worship and its essential accompaniments, I would state that certain aspects of the Ngoni ancestor cult showed those features which are usually considered to be part of a people's worship. These were sacrifice, prayer, and purification, which, not necessarily in that order, were the main elements in the cult. There was, moreover, a connexion between the ancestor cult and ethical behaviour in Ngoni thinking. The guardianship of an ancestral spirit, involving much respect for the house to [171]

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 192.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

which it belonged, was always given to a woman whose good character was vouched for.[1] The man who inherited the *gogo* village with its particular charge to look after the spirits of the dead, as well as the welfare of the living, also had to be someone of good repute. The responsibility for maintaining social cohesion in a village and among the members of a house with which the cattle, and therefore the spirits, were closely bound up, was one which the senior male members of that house regarded as a solemn duty. If people did not behave well the cattle would not flourish and multiply, and that would upset the spirits and be a sign of their disapproval.

Cibambo wrote the following account of the ancestor cult as a part of the presentation of Ngoni customs to his own people. As a Christian minister he was concerned with making a case to his own people for putting the Ngoni ancestor cult higher in the religious scale than the cults which used images in their worship. He was using his Christian beliefs to rationalize the ancestor cult, particularly in relating it to the concept of a High God. The Ngoni undoubtedly had the idea of a creator, remote and unapproachable by man, as his title implied, but nevertheless referred to as the sender of rain, sickness and other benefits and disasters for the country as a whole. Prayers and sermons by Ngoni ministers in Ngoniland used many of the old Ngoni terms for the creator to express their Christian concept of God.

¶ We think that the worship of the Ngoni was better than the worship of other tribes who were near them, for in their worship there were no images made of wood or stones or other things, but they worshipped spirits who were unseen. Nearly all Central African tribes believe that there is a God who created heaven and earth, and who is unseen by eyes. In worship they could not reach him himself with the things of their hearts, so they did not worship him himself. They followed the custom well known among the black people when they wished to talk to their chiefs or their fathers when there was something of importance. A black man thinks it is a great impertinence and dishonour to speak for himself in front of his chief or his father, so he sends someone of standing as his messenger who carries his words and returns with a reply. This custom took effect also in the worshipping of black peoples. In worshipping the creator they made use of a go-between, who stood between God and men. He knew how to speak for them and pray for them before God. They thought that certain created things ought to accomplish this work.

The Ngoni believed that there was God who was chief of all created things and the source of all. Some of the names they gave him were:

UMkulumqango	The Great Deviser
Uluhlanga	The Original Source
UMkulu Kakulu	The Greatest of All
UMnikazi we Zinto Zonke	The Owner of All Things.

[1] On other grounds, such as kinship, such guardianship might have gone to a woman who was not acceptable on moral grounds and was therefore passed over.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

In these names it is clear that God was known as the Beginning of All Things, the Owner, the One Above All. They knew him as the nourisher of the earth, sending rain and all good things, but they thought that he had little knowledge of his people. Nor could his people know much of him, so they did not worship him himself or speak with him. His character they did not know and so they were not able to praise or glorify him as they were the spirits of their ancestors, whom they knew thoroughly. They knew him from afar and so they could not pray and speak to him. 769 776

Since the Ngoni were not able to be at home with UMkulumqango so in worship they sought others known to them that they should tell them the things of their hearts, and these were the spirits of those who had died. At once when one of themselves died, they thought that now he is a spirit with living power greater than he had when a man on the earth, and that he is a spirit who can watch over and protect his relatives on earth, but they also realized that he had power to rebuke and punish. So this spirit was added to the spirits of the tribe who were worshipped. They thought that each clan had its own spirits, stretching back to the beginning of the clan. They believed that the recent spirits received the news from their friends on earth, and handed it on until it arrived at the spirits of very long ago and now forgotten. These then delivered the message to the Creator of all.

Cibambo's main intention in this account of Ngoni worship was to put the ancestor cult in its setting as a means of approach to the creator. He used the Ngoni concept of an intermediary, who was essential in the approach to a Paramount, to argue that the ancestor cult was not necessarily wrong but was an earlier stage towards Christianity. This was a theme constantly expressed in sermons and prayers in Ngoni churches. In the rest of this account he emphasized 'becoming an ancestral spirit', which we shall examine later in its ritual context; allocation of authority among the ancestral spirits; and the fact that prayer and sacrifice, which he called worship, were made chiefly in times of trouble, and not in times of prosperity.

It is legitimate, in view of Dr. Kuper's statement, to ask whether there was a fundamental difference between addressing an ancestral spirit as a go-between and worshipping him. The Ngoni were not trained theologians, except for Christian ministers like Cibambo, but they had a range of philosophical concepts to which it is impossible to do justice in this context. In the prayers which I heard their thoughts were focused on the ancestors whose names they knew and recited. Questioned afterwards, they said that there were other ancestors whose names they did not know, but the ones they named could not fail to be aware of the living, their descendants, since their spirits were guarded in a house and their cattle were sacrificed in the ritual. They therefore directed their worship, or address, to those who were known to them, believing that they would influence the remoter but possibly more powerful spirits whose names were unknown. Spontaneous references to 769 771

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 UMkulumqango or other names for the High God were rare. When
771 questioned they said that such a High God existed and the spirits knew him, but they, the living, did not. The Ngoni phrase, *asiyazi*, 'we do not know', and its Nyanja version, *sitingadziwa*, 'we cannot know', were constantly on their lips in discussions on this topic. Among Christians like Cibambo as well as non-Christians like Nzunga, their interest in the ancestor cult was part of maintaining their identity as Ngoni. The neighbouring tribes had other forms of ancestor cults but the Ngoni form brought from the south was distinctive, and many of the concepts and practices were known to the South-eastern Bantu peoples.

The ritual for a new ancestral spirit

761 The Ngoni believed that at the moment of death the spirit left the
775 body. If a sick person fell into a coma and was unconscious for a long time they said that the person had died when the coma began even though they knew he went on breathing. This happened at the death of Bambo Manga when she had periods of unconsciousness before she died. They said that her spirit had left her at the beginning of the last long coma, even though they knew from her pulse and breathing that she was not dead. At the parting of the spirit from the body they had to care for both, in order that the new ancestral spirit might be happy and in the right relationship with the living. Equal importance was attached to caring for the spirit and to caring for the corpse, since the correct performance of ritual had deep significance for the dead and for the living.

763 When the spirit left the body it was believed to go to the bush at the
775 outskirts of the village where the person had been accustomed to go to relieve himself. Between the death of Bambo Manga and the burial, each morning before it was light, the men marched with a dancing step up the path to the bush where she was wont to go, singing a war song dating from trans-Zambesi days which was sung at the sending out of the *impi*. Marching to the bush and singing the war song was one step in bringing the spirit back or, more correctly perhaps, keeping in touch with it so that it should not go too far away. This approach to the spirit between the death and burial was the first of three ritual acts, each called 'bringing back the spirit'. The other two occurred after the first and second ritual shaving.

764 The preparation of the corpse for burial has been described in the first chapter of this section. Those features of Ngoni burial were considered essential for the welfare of the spirit, and were carried out in the majority of funerals which I witnessed, whether the dead person was a Christian or not. An account of the burial of a leading *mulumuzana* in the northern kingdom who was a Christian, given to me by another Christian Ngoni and confirmed by some of the missionaries present at the funeral, emphasized all the distinctive Ngoni elements: the round

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

grave with the little shelf at one side, the corpse wrapped in a cow-skin, the *nseso* and *nyongo* on the neck and forehead, the bent legs and upright sitting position facing south-east, and washing the face of the corpse at the grave side with a bunch of grass. On this occasion the Ngoni form of burial was followed by the Christian burial service after the grave had been filled in. During the digging of the grave hymns set to the tunes of Ngoni war songs were sung by the onlookers until the body was brought out of the house. After that there was complete silence while the corpse was lowered into the grave and the grave was filled up, until the service began. This combination of Christian and Ngoni ritual I witnessed many times. One of the missions set its face against the use of the cow-skin and declared that no Christian could be buried except in a coffin, but even this was sometimes disregarded and the full Ngoni ritual was carried out, followed by a Christian service.

After the body had been put in the grave and when the first calling back of the spirit from the bush had reminded the living that they had to care for this new spirit, a series of further duties faced them. These have been referred to as the first and second shaving. The first shaving we shall consider later as a necessary purification before eating the meat of the funeral rites which brought back the spirit right into the village. The second shaving, which took place from six to twelve months after the funeral, was the prelude to the time when the new ancestral spirit came, or was brought back, to its final lodging. The importance of this last rite was emphasized by Lopati Nzunga in his account of the ritual which took place at the tomb put up to the memory of Gomani I (see p. 165) When the building of the tomb under the supervision of Ngoni in the area was finished, many leading Ngoni from all parts, including those from the towns, gathered there for two days. Every morning before dawn they went up the forest paths singing war songs, as they did later at the time of the death of Bambo Manga, to call back the spirit from the bush where it had spent some thirty years. After a Christian service held by the tomb, the Ngoni *alumuzana* 'brought back' the spirit to Lizulu, Gomani I's village, to the house of NaMagagula his big wife. She was a Christian, so could not take the care of the spirit in her hut, but another of the widows of Gomani I, NaNsambi, who was in the house of NaMagagula, was chosen as guardian. Earlier in the proceedings, when they had decided that the tomb was going to be built, a diviner was consulted, the spirits were addressed in the kraal, the cattle showed that they agreed, and a beast from the herd of the house of NaMagagula was sacrificed and the meat offered to the ancestral spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Then they built a new hut for NaNsambi and put in it new sacrificial vessels. When the spirit of Gomani I was finally brought home it was to this hut and guardianship that it came. They were uncertain about what had happened to the spirit in the thirty years interval and it did not seem advisable to probe

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 too closely because of the still bitter feeling against Europeans for having caused the Paramount's death. It was quite clear, however, that since this essential step in the recognition of an ancestral spirit had been omitted at the time of his death, it was considered important to make good the omission, and the 'opening' of the grave appeared as the logical occasion.

765 In Mcakhatha village I witnessed a ritual second shaving for a man of the Nzunga clan, a son of the former chief, Njolomole I. This man
769 had been absent from the village for many years, having left as a young man still living in the *laweni*, and his death in the south was reported by letter from a fellow villager to his relatives in the village. When the letter was received, a diviner was consulted and he advised a sacrifice to the spirits. The first ritual shaving of all members of the Nzunga clan and their affines took place as it would have done on the day after burial if he had died in the village, and a beast was killed and the meat offered to the spirits and ritually eaten. The women of the Nzunga clan and the wives and widows of Nzunga men put on *zitambo* or mourning caps. Six months later the diviner was consulted again, and a day was fixed for the second shaving 'to bring back the spirit'. The spirits of the Nzunga clan were addressed, the beast selected for the sacrifice urinated, the spirits 'agreed', and the shaving of the Nzunga clan members and
[302] their affines took place; this time the whole head was shaved whereas the first shaving was only a small patch on the temple. The men were shaved by the kraal, the women near the hut of the dead man's mother which was uninhabited. The women who were relatives or affines of the deceased took off their *zitambo* and unravelled the threads of which the caps were made, collecting in front of each a little heap of hair and thread. Then one of the leading women got up and said '*Tiyeni* (Let us go)', and the women went in procession to the stream, each carrying her little handful of hair and thread. As they passed they pulled a handful of dry grass from the roof of the hut by which they had been sitting to start their fires. By the stream each of the former mourners, eleven in all, made a fire of grass and dried leaves lit from a bunch of smouldering grass carried by one of them, put on it the threads and hair and tended the fire until only ashes were left. All these eleven women stood erect behind their fires facing the stream, except when bending down to fan the flames. When the fires died down each woman swept the ashes into the stream with her hand and splashed water on the site of the fire until no trace was left, lifting overhanging branches to leave a free passage for the ashes on to the water. The leading widow, a descendant of NaNdumbu, the famous woman diviner of Mputa's day, took a look round to see if all traces of the fires had gone, said 'We have finished', and led the way to the washing pool where all the women washed their clothes and their bodies. Meantime the men had been to wash in the stream on the other side of the village and had also burned their hair

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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by the stream and swept the ashes into the water. The beast for the sacrifice had been killed early in the morning before the shaving, and the ritual eating of the meat took place. This second shaving and sacrifice were to end the mourning period and to bring back the spirit to the village. A widow of Chief Njolomole I was appointed to guard the spirit and she kept in her hut the baskets which had been used for the sacrifice.

When asked whether this ritual of bringing back the spirit was followed for everyone who died away from home, the answer was 'No. It was done for this man because he was a big one and he was the son of a chief.' Only for members of leading Swazi clans and some others of trans-Zambesi origin was the ritual invariably followed of recalling the spirit to the village where he had lived and where the clan sacrifices were performed with the cattle of the man's house. The ritual ensured that a new ancestor spirit was recognized, that provision could be made for its guardianship, and that the spirit had been brought back to the village even though the man had died and been buried elsewhere. The ritual was based, not on the assumption that the spirit would be angry if not so treated and might injure his living descendants, but on the belief that absence had weakened the bonds between members of the clan and the house, and that the ritual associated with the making of an ancestor spirit gave an opportunity for strengthening these bonds. This was achieved by bringing together the living to commemorate the dead; by repeating once again the traditional pattern of speaking to the ancestors through the cattle; by giving the spirits their meat which the living shared; and by making sure that the spirit of the dead man would henceforth be taken care of by an appointed guardian.

[182]

In the case of important people of the royal clan and chiefs, the second shaving was a preliminary to bringing back the spirit to be taken care of permanently and there were two stages to this last ritual in the making of an ancestral spirit. Three months after the death of Bambo Manga there was an elaborate ceremony of the second shaving which was accompanied by brewing vast amounts of beer. On this occasion there was an offering of beer, not meat, to the ancestral spirits. The ritual began with consulting the diviner first about whether the beer would be good. The diviner reported that two quarrelling women were spoiling it, and the quarrel would have to be resolved before the brewing would be successful. The diviner was also asked which spirit should be offered beer on this occasion, and answered that NaQwana, the mother of Mputa and grandmother of Bambo Manga, was the one to be addressed. The next act was making the ritual fire, since all the beer had to be cooked on newly made fires. Lopati Nzunga took the ritual fire-stick from Bambo Manga's hut, two young men kindled a fire outside and the women took grass from Bambo Manga's fence to build a fire. The women picked up bits of this fire to kindle their own new fires before brewing the beer.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 When the beer was ready, Lopati took from Bambo Manga's hut the gourd cup (another of the ritual objects kept there), filled it with beer and offered it to the spirit of NaQwana, and left it at the right side of the hut where the corpse had been set upright before the burial. Cups of beer from the other houses who were brewing were also put in the hut and drunk during the night by the old women who had slept there continuously since the death of Bambo Manga in order to guard her spirit. The next morning the *ligubo* (war-dance) was danced by the grave at the edge of the kraal. When the time came for shaving, the men were shaved, first a small lock as at the first shaving, and then the whole head. The women were shaved over the whole head and cut the strings of their *xitambo* and unravelled the threads. Ritual washing at the stream and burning of the hair and threads took place as described earlier, but in this case the *nseso* from the beast killed at the death of Bambo Manga was burned on the same fires. Part of the *nseso* had been put round her neck for the burial, but part had been hung at the back of the hut, and this was now taken down and divided up to be burned.

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In the final part of the ceremony the men danced *ligubo* in the courtyard of Bambo Manga's hut, while the old women danced *umsindo* at her grave. All this went on for four days as long as the beer lasted, and the way was then clear for bringing back the spirit. The spirit had been 'guarded' in the hut where the old women slept, lest if it were empty the spirit might depart. The spirit was there, but not quite there, and could not be addressed as an ancestral spirit until the final 'bringing back'.

After the second shaving the leading men of the village had a new hut built in which Ciabwe Maseko, the daughter of Cikusi and older sister of Paramount Gomani I, was installed as guardian of the spirit of Bambo Manga. They bought new baskets, cups and a fire-stick, and destroyed the old ones. After the diviner had been consulted and had appointed a day for the sacrifice, a beast was killed and the meat offered to the spirit of Bambo Manga in the new hut in the new baskets. A sheep was killed at the same time and the meat of both was eaten by the men and boys.

We have now seen the process by which the living descendants and kin of a dead person recognized the spirit of that person as an ancestral spirit. This, as we saw, was no automatic process following on death. Ceremonies had to be undertaken and rituals performed which, through successive stages, brought the spirit of the dead into such relationship with the living that they could offer sacrifices and call on its name in the naming of the ancestors in the cult. These were acts performed by the living for the dead to cause the spirit to be settled in a place it knew and guarded by someone held in respect, and the living community hoped the spirit was therefore content and happy and ready to be approached and addressed as an ancestral spirit.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The ritual of the purification of the living

The living had certain rites to carry out on their own behalf which, if omitted, would bring the displeasure of the ancestors upon them. These were essentially purification rites for they removed the defilement of death from each individual who was closely related to, or had performed some office for, the dead; and through the rites the houses and utensils were cleansed, and the living community was re-integrated after the loss of one of its members. Shaving, burning the hair and mourning bands, and washing in a stream, were the prescribed acts for all who were connected by kinship or marriage with the deceased, or who had taken part in preparing the body or digging the grave. These were a succession of rites as we have seen, and emphasized the need for ritual cleansing over a long period, and for renewed integration between the living. 783 768

In addition to this generally practised ritual, there were some acts of ritual purification of houses and utensils found only among the Swazi clans. One informant told of the ritual washing of hoes used to dig the grave in the blood of a newly killed sheep. Several others spoke of the cleansing with sheep dung of the huts of the widows of a dead man at the time of the second shaving. On each occasion when meat was offered to the ancestors after a death, the living who ate the meat had to be made ceremonially clean through the act of shaving, followed by ritual washing at the river.

The ritual of addressing the spirits

There was no set formula for addressing the ancestral spirits but there were three parts in all the prayers which I heard and which were recited to me. The first was the naming of the ancestors. The leading clans in the two kingdoms demonstrated the way in which they prayed to their ancestors by repeating the names of successive heads of the clan. They began with the name of the ancestor who had died in Swaziland and those of his father and grandfather and other forbears if known. The Nhlane clan, for example, told me 'We pray: *UNdina ka UNchaba ka UMulawu ka UMazongolo*' and then added: 'UNdina died in our village of Hoho before we left Swaziland and he was buried in the kraal in Hoho.' The Mhlambi clan in central Ngoniland named their ancestor UNgekwazi who died in Swaziland, but they did not know any names before him. Other clans in the central kingdom used the name of their ancestor who crossed the Zambesi with Mputa. The most important element in the prayer, therefore, was the naming of the 'big spirit', sometimes coupled with more remote ancestors. 769 782

The second element in addressing the spirits was to call their attention to the beast which was to be offered to them if they 'agreed'. 'Here is your beast' was the formula. Although three or four beasts or even

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 more were driven out of the kraal before the invocation of the spirits, one had been selected for the sacrifice, and the spirits' attention was 782 drawn to this animal. They were reminded that it was their beast because it belonged to the herd of the house which guarded their spirits, and it was also their beast because it was to be killed and its meat offered to them if they showed agreement.

The third part of the prayer was mentioning the needs of the person on whose behalf the spirits were being addressed. The following words were used by Lopati Nzunga when he spoke this prayer to the spirits when Bambo Manga was ill:

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O thou Gumede!
O thou Mputa!
O thou great chief!
Here is your beast.
That your child may be healed,
Look on what is yours.
May you remain well
And your child recover.
We do not know,
We do not know.
If you say that she will die,
She is yours, this child of yours.
It is your affair.
As for us, we long that your child may recover.
If she dies, this child of yours,
We can only speak your names.
We cry to you for her.

769 Bambo Manga was there and her daughter and Chief Njolomole, and while Lopati Nzunga addressed the spirits, the rest murmured the 782 names '*Wena Gumede*', '*Wena Mputa*', and added '*Mntwanayako*' (your child), '*Inkomoyako*' (your beast). The form of the prayer varied, and might be a sequence of address and petition as in this one, or a series of ejaculations with little consecutive thought. It depended on the eloquence and skill of the speaker of the prayer, and that form of eloquence was a well-recognized characteristic among the Ngoni. In the central kingdom before the Europeans came, the head of the Phungwako clan had addressed the spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Since the Phungwako chiefs had separated from Gomani's kingdom, the Nzunga clan performed this ritual for Bambo Manga in their head village. In addition to speaking the prayer, the same man had to see that all was done in order, the cattle driven out, the chief people assembled, and the subsequent action taken in accordance with the sign given by the spirits, either to kill a beast for sacrifice, or to find out from the diviners why the spirits had failed to agree. When the spirits 'refused' the first time Lopati Nzunga addressed them, he concluded the proceedings by gently

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

reminding the spirits that all depended on them. There was no tone of scolding in the words but a respectful plea for attention and help. 769 782

Alas O Paramount, [539]
Alas O Father,
Why do you refuse us?
What do you say about your child?
We say we are your people,
Alas O Paramount.

In prayers for rain the same form of address was used with the three parts of the prayer. The ancestral spirits addressed were those of the line of the Paramounts, since the needs of the whole country were involved. The beast chosen for the offering to the spirits was a black one with no white markings, and in place of the sick person's name, the need for rain was mentioned. In the account given by Mlonyeni Jere (quoted in the first chapter of Part IV) he used this formula, mentioning the names, presenting the cow, and then asking the ancestral spirits to tell UMkulumqango how greatly they were troubled through lack of rain.

The ritual of sacrificing to the spirits

The essential equipment in the ritual of sacrificing was the spear with which the beast was killed; baskets, both the wide winnowing basket (*lichero*) and the food basket (*usengwa*); the wooden dish (*ngcwembe*) on which the meat was placed; and the gourd cups for beer. These have been mentioned already in several contexts as the sacrificial vessels or ritual objects connected with the ancestor cult and kept in the hut of the woman who was guardian of a particular ancestral spirit. In the northern kingdom one of the Nhlane clan who carried out the ritual for sacrifices to UNdina Nhlane at Hoho said that in the hut of UNtani Nzima who died in Swaziland, but whose house had continued, was a spear, a black cloth for rain-making and a wooden meat dish. These were kept on the right-hand side at the back of the hut, and no one passing by could stand erect; he had to bend his back and head 'as men do when passing the *inhou*'. Since the coming of the missions these had been thrown away. 769 778 782 [415]

In the central kingdom I saw in several houses this collection of ritual vessels. There was always a spear, a food basket, one or more gourds for beer, and one or more of the wide, flat, winnowing baskets on which uncooked flour was carried and which was used for meat if there was no wooden dish. These were kept at the back of the hut hanging on the wall, above the place where sacrificial meat was laid.

The first stage of the ritual sacrifice was killing and flaying the beast. It was killed either in the kraal or just outside the fence, with a thrust from the spear, or more than one if necessary, by some member of the leading clan. At the time of the sacrifice when Bambo Manga was ill 769 782

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 the killing and the flaying were done just outside the kraal by young men of the Nzunga clan, younger brothers of the chief. The cow ran 782 backward as she was stabbed and a second blow killed her, and she was dragged round when she fell to lie with her head to the south-east. Some of the blood from the wound was collected immediately by Lopati and taken by him and put in Bambo Manga's hut in 'the place of the spirits'. The cow was skinned with a few neat strokes of the knife, and a thin strip of meat about six inches wide was cut from the back. This Lopati put in the sacrificial food basket and he and the chief went with it to Bambo Manga's house. The three firestones were removed and the meat was spread on the glowing logs till it was cooked through and quite white. Bambo Manga, who was lying on her mat, washed her hands and face with water brought by her daughter and rinsed out her mouth. Two small pieces of the meat were given to her to eat, and the rest was cut up in small pieces and eaten by Lopati, the chief, his sister and Bambo Manga's daughter. This meat could only be eaten by that inner group.

The men who had skinned the beast cut it up and, following an Ngoni practice, laid all the meat on the gate of the reed fence surrounding the *bwalo*, and carried it to the hut and laid it outside the door. Holding the sacrificial winnowing basket Lopati directed the men to put in it three right ribs, a piece of liver, both stomachs, the heart and lungs, the fat from round the kidneys, a bit of the intestine and the spleen. The head of the beast was arranged facing towards Kabwazi's village, since he had always kraaled some of the Nzunga cattle.

Lopati took the basket into the hut and was followed by the head herd-boy holding the tip of the tail and the gall bladder. The basket with the meat in it was put on the floor at the back of the hut in 'the place of the spirits'. Lopati and the chief squatted on their haunches [516] nearby, and Bambo Manga knelt on her mat while her daughter wiped the soles of her feet, and she went forward on her knees to the place of the spirits. Lopati intervened and said 'Please walk upright', but she refused and said 'I will do as my ancestors did'. Her daughter knelt behind her.

Then Lopati began to praise the spirits, calling on Mputa by name, saying 'Here is your meat. Please eat. We praise you. We are your children.' The rest ejaculated '*Wena Nhosi*', '*Wena, Gumede*' as if supporting him, keeping quite still and facing the place of the spirits. After the invocation Bambo Manga went back to her mat, and Lopati took the gall bladder and sprinkled the juice round her, and then round the meat basket and round the hearth-stones. The gall bladder was then put in a small pot with water in it and laid on the floor, and the tip of the tail was tied above the place of the spirits. The skin of the beast, which had been washed but not scraped, was brought in and laid on the ground between the firestones and the wall and the gate with the meat

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

on was placed on it. The meat in the basket and on the gate stayed there all night.

Following the ritual of offering meat to the spirits came the ritual of cooking and eating the meat, both that offered to the spirits and the rest. After the basket of meat had been left all night in the place of the spirits, the large quantity on the gate was carried away and cooked by an old woman outside the hut of Bambo Manga's granddaughter. The meat in the basket which had been offered to the spirits was put in a pot and cooked on the fire in Bambo Manga's hut. It stayed cooking all day and all night till the following morning. Dzinthenga Phungwako, an old and highly respected *lidoda*, came to the hut and divided the sacrificial meat among all who were in the house, that is Bambo Manga, her daughter and granddaughter and several senior women. When they had finished the leading women stood up and thanked '*Zikhomo Maseko*', '*Zikhomo Magwagwa*'. Then they washed their hands and went to their own houses.

The large quantity of meat which had been laid on the gate and cooked on another fire in another *bwalo* was carried in a big pot and put down outside Bambo Manga's hut in the late afternoon. Her daughter came outside and divided the meat into three piles: a small one from the breast-bones for the women, a leg for the chief, the head for Kabwazi the headman of a neighbouring village, and the rest in a big pot for the men. A boy came to tell Lopati that all was ready and he and the chief went out to the place where the beast was killed, near the gate of the kraal. There were four groups already sitting there and the chief and Lopati made a fifth: the *madoda*, the senior men; the *majaha*, the young men; the *mabusa*, the herd-boys; and the little boys. Before Lopati divided the meat he and the chief washed elaborately with water brought in a gourd, and then he washed the knife before cutting the meat. He called the *madoda* to send someone for their portion in a basket, then the young men and the herd-boys were given their portions—a basket for each group, and the small boys had bits put in their hands. The eating was very sedate, there was no snatching of choice bits, and in each group the one who fetched the meat distributed it. There was the general atmosphere of a ritual meal rather than a feast, though the small boys smacked their lips appreciatively. From time to time Lopati called up someone from a group and gave him a bit more to divide up. When it was all eaten, a boy was sent to fetch water and the soapy leaves which the Ngoni used for washing, and the chief and Lopati and the *madoda* all washed the grease off their fingers. Then Lopati stood up and called out '*Siyadumisa baba, zihomo mntwana wenkosi*', 'We are praising you, father, thank you child of the Paramount', and the others all agreed and said '*Zikhomo baba.*' Then they all went together to Bambo Manga's hut and stood opposite her door and called out the same thanks. The women who had eaten their meat

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in three age groups on the verandah also came forward and, led by NaNkoloma, a widow of Njolomole I, thanked in the women's language, '*Zimata, zaithwa mntwana wenkosi.*'

I did not witness any ritual sacrifices in the northern kingdom but the accounts given me by informants corresponded closely with the ritual in Mcakhatha just described. When sacrificing for rain to the spirits of the Paramount, a black ox with no white spot was driven into the kraal in the late afternoon and the chosen spokesman addressed the ancestral spirits of the Jere clan telling them that this was their beast, they must eat the meat and tell UMkulumqango that the people needed rain. While this man prayed to the spirits he stood facing the beast, and everyone else sat looking in front of them and keeping very quiet. The women stayed at home in their huts and the Paramount stayed in his hut 'as if mourning'. When the beast urinated and showed that the spirits had heard, a messenger came and informed the Paramount. The beast was killed early the next morning in the kraal. While the flaying took place, all the huts of the chief wives were smeared with dried cow-dung on the floors and on the smooth place outside the doors. The meat, in two parts, was taken into the *indlunkulu* and left there all night at the back, so that the spirits might lick it. The next morning the meat was cooked in the kraal by the *madoda* and when it was ready they reported to the big *induna*. He called all the people into the kraal and divided them into companies according to their sections and head villages. The meat was given to the head of each head village who divided it among his group. When everyone had finished, one of the leading men stood up and began to praise the spirit using his titles and praise-names (*izitokozo*). The rest stood up and shouted *Bayete*. They then began to dance a war-dance but, the informants added, that was soon stopped by torrents of rain.

These chapters on the Ngoni ancestor cult bring to an end this study of the two Ngoni kingdoms in Nyasaland in the 1930's. We have seen how their distinctiveness as a people depended on the culture which they brought with them from the south and how this culture was found among the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In the topics included in the three sections of this book: the political system, the social organization, and the ancestor cult, the main features of Ngoni culture are most clearly seen. In much of their economic and agricultural life there was little to distinguish them from their neighbours among the other Nyasaland peoples. The changes brought about by the missions, the schools, new forms of local government, and new types of occupation, were all tending to make the Ngoni less distinctive as a people. The conversion of some leading Ngoni to Christianity, as suggested in Chapter V of Part II, and the spread of schools were together the most powerful influences in altering Ngoni traditional culture. The

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[721] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war
000 summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

181 577 828 [182] The four so-called personal values will be reflected in the Ngoni personality traits which we are going on to discuss. There are however two values which did not appear to fit into any integrated system, and which yet recurred as themes in Ngoni culture, and here and there in the ideas inherent in child training. One was the theme of childhood innocence, which was much deeper and more subtle than merely keeping children in ignorance of sexual life and intercourse. The other was the value set on the 'gentle' man. He was a man who appeared to be almost wholly self-controlled, able to have normal sexual intercourse with his wives but not always thinking about women, showing sternness but without anger, being just but also merciful. These were the qualities looked for in the man responsible for the guardianship of certain head villages where the ancestor cult was [769] carried on, and who was entrusted with the ritual associated with the ancestor cult. In the more ancient ritual, such as [778] carrying the sacred emblem before the armies, it was young boys, exemplifying the childhood innocence theme, who were entrusted with this charge. In the more modern contexts, [793] many of the outstanding Ngoni ministers in the church were recognized and revered as 'gentle' men.

The Ngoni ideal personality

577 Chapters IV and V, as well as Chapters VI and VII, showed that there were certain elements in the Ngoni ideal of what their children should be like which were common to young men and women, to boys and girls, while others were emphasized only for girls or for boys. Among the common traits we have already seen the outstanding emphasis on 'respect' in all forms of behaviour and in all kinds of contact with older people, and with others who should be 'honoured'. Part of this respect was shown in obedience, and with this obedience in all the detailed inter-personal relations with senior people was associated, in the individual's relations to society as a whole, being law-abiding and complying with Ngoni law.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes
177 as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there
[769] was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made
648 to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The
186 Ngoni identified themselves with European rather than with their matrilineal neighbours even before the European conquest. Wiese, himself the main
156 agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[4]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount
[197] Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[5] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not pro-
829 duced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days
183 I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

181 Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian
186 neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to rationalize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

4. Wiese, *Geschichte*, pp. 200 f.

5. Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'zeni said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Deare, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 25.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca.1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 challenge is sent from one group of villages to another. And on the day appointed the strangers arrive walking in procession. The girls and women are dressed in their gaudiest clothes, and their heads and arms are decked with bright coloured beads, and the claws of lions and leopards. The lads carry dancing sticks and miniature shields. The strangers open the dance. The girls standing together and holding reed wands in their hands sing in chorus, while the men arranged in a great semi-circle dance and sing. Their dance is wonderfully energetic and graceful, and is executed with a rythm and unison which is fascinating. You can hear a long way off the hundred feet come down on the earth of the kraal with a thud as of one man. When they have danced for about an hour they give way to their rivals. The home villagers step in and dance for another hour. And so on they go from ten o'clock till about four. There is no mingling of men and women. And the whole exercise is chaste, healthful, and beautiful. It is quite the show piece of our village life.

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776 They have a name for Him which means the great great one. But the ordinary name is the one which south of the Zambesi is used for all white men, and seems also to imply some feeling of wisdom and greatness. But they seem to have no idea of God's imminence in the world. He is rather the mighty far away Spirit to whom men cannot come. Along with this, homage is made to 771 great mountains and ancient trees, and to the strong elemental forces, as thunder and lightening. But this seems to me to be an [177] addition which has come through their residence among the Tumbuka.

● 769 The great pervading article in their religious life is reverence and dread of the ancestral spirits. The whole land is full of their presence. And offerings are continually made to them to appease

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity. When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about teaching the people the words of God." There was something very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow, so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there. So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees, and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more. Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native [645] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people [602] and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living, [771] in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
648 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural [693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

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CHAPTER I

THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS AND THE ARISTOCRATIC TRADITION

THIS section is not an account of Ngoni religion. It would require a study in itself to examine their beliefs about supernatural beings, their ideas on cosmogony, their concepts of the causes of disaster and sickness, their approach to and practice of forms of magic, and their attitude to witchcraft. Living in Ngoni villages, listening to individuals of different ages discussing prosperity and disaster, the seen and the unseen, the known and the feared, it was clear that it would be difficult to isolate a comprehensive system of beliefs and say that these were distinctively Ngoni beliefs concerning religion and magic and witchcraft. The observer was always aware of the intermingling of ideas and practices from the many Nyasaland tribal peoples who lived side by side and were in constant contact with one another in all those spheres of thought and action which demanded explanation and some remedial or therapeutic treatment. Among the Nyasaland tribes in the 1930's the influence of sixty years of Christian teaching by the missions played an important part, since the missions had introduced western medicine and education as well as a new religion and ethic, and so had influenced both thinking and action among their converts and their families. 114 771

In this complex situation it was virtually impossible to say: this is the Cewa religion, this is the Tumbuka cosmogony, this is Ntumba magic. It was nevertheless clear that there was an Ngoni cult of their ancestral spirits, which was not shared, in the form in which they practised it, by any of the neighbouring peoples, and the Ngoni had their own selective methods of relating it to Christian beliefs and practices. One reason why the Ngoni ancestor cult could be singled out as peculiar to them was its foundation in their aristocratic tradition. As long as the Ngoni political and social structure and organization survived, including the reciprocal roles of leading men and important women, the concept of houses with their ownership of cattle, and the role of the *gogo* house in maintaining tradition and carrying out ritual, the performance of the cult of ancestral spirits was assured. The eminent ancestors whose spirits were guarded in a village and who were known and remembered were addressed in times of trouble, and meat was offered to them as a form of sacrifice from the herd of cattle associated with the house to which they had belonged. This section will deal with the cult of ancestral spirits of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who formed the political and social aristocracy. Thus, in the form described here, the cult is 771 769 [563] [565]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

565 exclusively related to the aristocratic tradition, and no account will be
769 given or analysis made of ancestor cults practised by those groups in the
771 two Ngoni kingdoms who were not of the leading clans. In the ancestor cult, as it will be described here, the emphasis was always on known and named spirits of the dead, associated with the village where the ritual was performed. In the approach to these known and named spirits—an approach which I have called a cult—there were three essential components: the diviner, the ritual address and the cattle. The diviner's role we shall discuss in Chapter III and the ritual forms of addressing the ancestors in Chapter IV. The Ngoni believed they could not approach their ancestral spirits except through their cattle, which had first to
[825] show that the spirits agreed to prayers being made, and the sign was that the beast urinated. The sacrifice of a beast was an integral part of the rite, which was concluded by the suppliants eating the meat together. At no point in their common life did the Ngoni more clearly demonstrate their dependence on their cattle than in the ritual of addressing their ancestral spirits. For this reason, in Chapter II we shall review the place of cattle in Ngoni life and relate it to their role in the ancestor cult.

Ancestral spirits of the Ngoni Paramounts.

643 The reigning Paramount and his predecessors in that office held an
769 unchallenged supremacy in the hierarchy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The
776 Ngoni believed that the line of dead Paramounts similarly led the hierarchy of the ancestral spirits, and that the dead Paramounts had power to help the Ngoni nation in time of need. It was taken for granted that when Paramounts died they would continue to be powerful and held in great respect, and that their position in the spirit world would enable them to influence UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit. This Great Spirit was believed to be the creator of all things and the ultimate source of power, particularly of sending rain, success in war, and deliverance from pestilence; and he was in general regarded as the giver of health and strength to mankind. The Ngoni held that those ancestors who were nearest to the living in time, whose names they knew, possessed less power than the remote ancestors whose names had been forgotten. On the same principle UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit, the originator of all creation, possessed more power than any other being, but, since he was so far removed in time from the living, no one could know his praise-names or his genealogy, and therefore he could not be addressed directly. In the same way the remotest ancestors of the Paramount could not be addressed directly because their praise-names were unknown to living men. Only those direct ancestors of the Paramount, whose names and genealogy and praise-names were known, could be addressed correctly and they could be counted on to use their influence with remoter and more powerful ancestral spirits and with the Great Spirit himself.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

In these names it is clear that God was known as the Beginning of All Things, the Owner, the One Above All. They knew him as the nourisher of the earth, sending rain and all good things, but they thought that he had little knowledge of his people. Nor could his people know much of him, so they did not worship him himself or speak with him. His character they did not know and so they were not able to praise or glorify him as they were the spirits of their ancestors, whom they knew thoroughly. They knew him from afar and so they could not pray and speak to him. 769 776

Since the Ngoni were not able to be at home with UMkulumqango so in worship they sought others known to them that they should tell them the things of their hearts, and these were the spirits of those who had died. At once when one of themselves died, they thought that now he is a spirit with living power greater than he had when a man on the earth, and that he is a spirit who can watch over and protect his relatives on earth, but they also realized that he had power to rebuke and punish. So this spirit was added to the spirits of the tribe who were worshipped. They thought that each clan had its own spirits, stretching back to the beginning of the clan. They believed that the recent spirits received the news from their friends on earth, and handed it on until it arrived at the spirits of very long ago and now forgotten. These then delivered the message to the Creator of all.

Cibambo's main intention in this account of Ngoni worship was to put the ancestor cult in its setting as a means of approach to the creator. He used the Ngoni concept of an intermediary, who was essential in the approach to a Paramount, to argue that the ancestor cult was not necessarily wrong but was an earlier stage towards Christianity. This was a theme constantly expressed in sermons and prayers in Ngoni churches. In the rest of this account he emphasized 'becoming an ancestral spirit', which we shall examine later in its ritual context; allocation of authority among the ancestral spirits; and the fact that prayer and sacrifice, which he called worship, were made chiefly in times of trouble, and not in times of prosperity.

It is legitimate, in view of Dr. Kuper's statement, to ask whether there was a fundamental difference between addressing an ancestral spirit as a go-between and worshipping him. The Ngoni were not trained theologians, except for Christian ministers like Cibambo, but they had a range of philosophical concepts to which it is impossible to do justice in this context. In the prayers which I heard their thoughts were focused on the ancestors whose names they knew and recited. Questioned afterwards, they said that there were other ancestors whose names they did not know, but the ones they named could not fail to be aware of the living, their descendants, since their spirits were guarded in a house and their cattle were sacrificed in the ritual. They therefore directed their worship, or address, to those who were known to them, believing that they would influence the remoter but possibly more powerful spirits whose names were unknown. Spontaneous references to 769 771

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 UMkulumqango or other names for the High God were rare. When
771 questioned they said that such a High God existed and the spirits knew him, but they, the living, did not. The Ngoni phrase, *asiyazi*, 'we do not know', and its Nyanja version, *sitingadziwa*, 'we cannot know', were constantly on their lips in discussions on this topic. Among Christians like Cibambo as well as non-Christians like Nzunga, their interest in the ancestor cult was part of maintaining their identity as Ngoni. The neighbouring tribes had other forms of ancestor cults but the Ngoni form brought from the south was distinctive, and many of the concepts and practices were known to the South-eastern Bantu peoples.

The ritual for a new ancestral spirit

761 The Ngoni believed that at the moment of death the spirit left the
775 body. If a sick person fell into a coma and was unconscious for a long time they said that the person had died when the coma began even though they knew he went on breathing. This happened at the death of Bambo Manga when she had periods of unconsciousness before she died. They said that her spirit had left her at the beginning of the last long coma, even though they knew from her pulse and breathing that she was not dead. At the parting of the spirit from the body they had to care for both, in order that the new ancestral spirit might be happy and in the right relationship with the living. Equal importance was attached to caring for the spirit and to caring for the corpse, since the correct performance of ritual had deep significance for the dead and for the living.

763 When the spirit left the body it was believed to go to the bush at the
775 outskirts of the village where the person had been accustomed to go to relieve himself. Between the death of Bambo Manga and the burial, each morning before it was light, the men marched with a dancing step up the path to the bush where she was wont to go, singing a war song dating from trans-Zambesi days which was sung at the sending out of the *impi*. Marching to the bush and singing the war song was one step in bringing the spirit back or, more correctly perhaps, keeping in touch with it so that it should not go too far away. This approach to the spirit between the death and burial was the first of three ritual acts, each called 'bringing back the spirit'. The other two occurred after the first and second ritual shaving.

764 The preparation of the corpse for burial has been described in the first chapter of this section. Those features of Ngoni burial were considered essential for the welfare of the spirit, and were carried out in the majority of funerals which I witnessed, whether the dead person was a Christian or not. An account of the burial of a leading *muhumuzana* in the northern kingdom who was a Christian, given to me by another Christian Ngoni and confirmed by some of the missionaries present at the funeral, emphasized all the distinctive Ngoni elements: the round

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 challenge is sent from one group of villages to another. And on the day appointed the strangers arrive walking in procession. The girls and women are dressed in their gaudiest clothes, and their heads and arms are decked with bright coloured beads, and the claws of lions and leopards. The lads carry dancing sticks and miniature shields. The strangers open the dance. The girls standing together and holding reed wands in their hands sing in chorus, while the men arranged in a great semi-circle dance and sing. Their dance is wonderfully energetic and graceful, and is executed with a rythm and unison which is fascinating. You can hear a long way off the hundred feet come down on the earth of the kraal with a thud as of one man. When they have danced for about an hour they give way to their rivals. The home villagers step in and dance for another hour. And so on they go from ten o'clock till about four. There is no mingling of men and women. And the whole exercise is chaste, healthful, and beautiful. It is quite the show piece of our village life.

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and settled where another village already existed.[1] In both forms, this new settlement was called the *lusungulu* village, 'the one which goes in front'; and the village which was left was known as the *gogo* village. This use of the term *gogo* (literally 'grandparent') for house and village had a common basic connotation. It expressed the concept of being left behind to look after something, the *gogo* house being passed over for the heir to the Paramountcy or chieftainship but charged with ritual and ceremonial duties; and the *gogo* village being left behind to take care of the traditions and generally also of most of the widows of the deceased Paramount or chief. Each *lusungulu* village eventually divided on the death of its owner, part 'going forward' with the new successor, part remaining behind. The main groups in the village which went ahead or which remained were the houses connected with the new Paramount or chief or *mulumuzana* and those connected with his dead father. In the chapter on houses (Chapter III, Part III) this process will be examined in greater detail.

The third related institution was the provision for guarding the spirit of a dead Paramount or chief and those of some leading *alumuzana*. A senior woman was always guardian of such a spirit and in her hut were kept the ritual objects: spear, wooden dish, baskets, fire-stick, which were used in sacrifices to the ancestors. The guardianship of the spirit of a dead Paramount was always associated with the village which had been his *lusungulu*. His corpse was buried on the edge of the kraal containing the cattle of the house where he had grown up, and this village became the *gogo* village associated with him, where his spirit was guarded in a hut, probably though not necessarily belonging to one of his widows. The recognition of such a woman guardian was a matter for selection and appointment, and was the responsibility of the senior men of the *gogo* house in that village in consultation with the senior men of the *gogo* house in the dead man's father's village. The concept of guarding the spirits of important men, and the means by which such guardianship was practised, will be more fully discussed in Part IV in connexion with the ancestor cult.

THE NGONI KINGDOMS AND AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS

In the final section of this chapter we shall look at the Ngoni kingdoms in their relationship to other African kingdoms and states such as those described in *African Political Systems*.[2] A methodological problem arises here. In this study a number of references are made to the Ngoni kingdoms in pre-European times, especially in connexion

[1] This form of the institution was found in densely populated areas and the incoming households dominated the original ones.

[2] Fortes, M., & Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (ed.). *African Political Systems*. O.U.P., 1940. pp. 9–23.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

ancestor cult in the head village of their clan. If they were asked 'How do you address the spirit (*teta idloxi*)?' they gave the names and genealogy of the former heads of the clan and their attributes if they were known. If they were asked 'Where do you address the spirits?' the reply was always in terms of a particular village where a certain spirit was guarded. 769 614

The occasions on which the Swazi clan ancestors were addressed and sacrifices made were in cases of sickness of an important member of the clan. It was sometimes suggested that there might be trouble in the clan villages for which prayer should be made to the clan spirits, but when pressed the only specific instance informants could give was when the cattle did not thrive. They repudiated immediately any idea of prayer to the clan spirits in cases of drought or epidemics in the clan villages since those troubles, wherever they occurred, could only be helped by the spirits of the Paramounts who were concerned with all the land and all its people. [731]

The procedure followed in the clan head village was the same as that for addressing the spirits of the Paramounts. In that village a diviner was consulted, he named the spirit who should be addressed, a beast was sacrificed and prayers were made. This was the Ngoni pattern of the ancestor cult, and it was limited to the Swazi and some of the trans-Zambesi clans. Its correct observance required that combination of cattle, houses, and known genealogies which only the leading clans possessed. [563]

The living and the dead

At times such as funerals, and when talking about the ancestor cult, the Ngoni often used the phrase: 'Death cannot cut life.' They believed that human spirits had a continued existence after death, and that this existence was related to the place where they had dwelt, the people who were of their family and clan, and the cattle which belonged to their house and village. This continued association was not an automatic process. It had to be assured by the correct performance of the burial rites, the observance of stages of mourning and the deliberate 'bringing back' of the spirit to the village where it would be guarded and honoured after the final mourning ceremony was over. 775 769

In the Ngoni funeral rites there were distinctive elements in the burial of those belonging to Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In handling the corpse the legs were bent and drawn up to the body and the arms folded and crossed each side of the neck, so that the corpse seemed to be sitting and holding its head in its hands. It was wrapped in the skin of a newly killed beast. In the central kingdom men and women of Swazi clans were wrapped first in a sheep-skin, with a cow-skin put over it. The grave was a circular pit, with a small side chamber or shelf where the body was placed in a sitting position, propped up with large stones and facing south-east to the ancestral homeland. Personal possessions, such as skins and shields and baskets, were either put in the grave or taken to be 764 184

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 [182 764] 765

the group of those living relatives who had performed or were about to perform certain rites for the newly dead.

These rites were the stages of mourning laid down in the Ngoni funeral ritual. They were stages in which all adults took part, and they fulfilled the need to build up the future links with the spirit who had joined the ancestors and to bring together in common acts those from whom death had removed one of their number. The following text by one of the leaders of a Swazi clan in the central kingdom puts together briefly the successive stages of shaving, drinking beer, eating meat, singing war-songs, ritual cleansing and widow inheritance, and bringing back the spirit.

¶ If a man died, the second day they shave; after 5 or 6 months they shave again and cook beer. This means the widows must take off their white *xitambo* (head bands). After 12 months they take off their black *xitambo* and kill a beast to praise the spirit so that he may return to his house. This is also the time for inheriting the widows.

When they take off the white *xitambo*, the brother of the one who died takes sheep dung and sprinkles it in the houses where the widows are sleeping. At the same time the men wash their hands with cattle dung. The meaning of this is to tell the widows to cook food for the brothers of the dead man to send to them when they sit by the kraal. This they do before they can see them.

From the ritual witnessed at many funeral ceremonies, which never altered in its main elements, and from discussions with Ngoni informants, it was possible to gain some idea of Ngoni beliefs about the relation between the living and the dead. It was clear that the attitude of the living towards the dead was one of respect and honour, but not predominantly one of avoidance and fear as among some of the neighbouring tribes. The post-burial ritual culminated in 'bringing back the spirit' to the village, and we shall examine this further in the last chapter of this section. An observer was always conscious of a sense that people were waiting for the return of the spirit, which had to be planned for and carried out by the living. During the interval between the death and bringing back the spirit, it was said to be 'in the bush'. When asked where in fact the spirit was, the answer was always 'We do not know. How can we know?' They admitted that the life of the spirits was unknown to them, and there was evidence of a slightly uneasy relationship during this interval of waiting. When the spirit had been brought back and was being guarded by some woman appointed for that purpose, then it was once more near to the living and their cattle, and it could be addressed correctly. In the absence of any clear concepts about life in a spirit world, the Ngoni clung to the ritual by which they believed they could establish and maintain contact of a safe and respectful nature between the living and the dead. 769 775

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Cattle in the ancestor cult

The Ngoni, unlike the Swazi as described by Dr. Kuper,[1] had no clear ideas about the life after death as lived by their immediate ancestors with whom they had associated in their lifetime. They did not, as the Swazi did, picture them living somewhere surrounded with cattle and other familiar creatures and objects. The importance of bringing the spirit back (*ukubuyisa idlozi*) to the house where it would be cared for signified two main things for them. The first was the continuous association of the spirit of the dead with the living persons in the community to which he had belonged, through the individuals belonging to the house, the actual hut where the sacrificial vessels were kept, and the cattle which belonged to the house. The other significant point was that contact with the returned spirit, and through him with the spirits of more remote ancestors, could only be established in the village containing the cattle of the house to which the dead man had belonged.

769 775 [171]

We shall be examining some aspects of the ritual of addressing the ancestral spirits in a later chapter of this section. Here we shall establish three constituent parts of the ancestor cult in which cattle were essential links between those taking part in the cult and the spirits whom they addressed.

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The first part was the group of ceremonies which took place at death, at the burial, at the first ritual shaving and at bringing back the spirit. A text by Lopati Nzunga (see Chapter IV, p. 200) illustrates how three parts of a beast—the skin, the kidney fat (*nseso*) and the gall bladder (*nyongo*)—were considered essential for Ngoni burial. It was interesting to find in Blantyre among educated Ngoni who were Christians and occupied clerical and commercial posts, that they had given up the cow-skin for wrapping the corpse and substituted a coffin. But they admitted confidentially that in most Ngoni funerals the use of the *nseso* and the *nyongo* was customary. After the burial the ritual shaving, shared in by all who attended the funeral, was accompanied by the killing of a beast and the consumption of its meat, though with no ritual significance beyond its association with the purification of the mourners and their integration as a group. From six to twelve months later the second shaving and the bringing back of the spirit was also accompanied by killing a beast and eating its meat. These ceremonies expressed the sense of loss felt for the human person who had died, the sorrow of the mourners, their successive acts of purification which served to bring them together, and the final bringing of the spirit to live among them again. As we have seen, each stage of the death and mourning rites was accompanied by the eating of a beast or the use of certain parts of a beast. The cattle of the house to which the dead person belonged were used to bury him or her, to strengthen the mourners, and to reintegrate the spirit with the living community.

769 825 [177] 765 769 825 [783]

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 186.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

791 lack of appetite, forgetfulness, sweating. These manifestations could
158 take place in childhood, around puberty, or when the man was fully grown, though the most usual age was in the late teens. The symptoms culminated in sharp pains and a prolonged collapse, and after that a deep sleep. It was then that the dreams came giving the man the assurance that he was henceforth a medium, and that through the spirit of his grandfather, or whoever was now appearing to him, he could communicate with the spirit world. At this time also he was told in dreams where to find medicines and what to do with them. A constant feature in the initiation of well known and accredited diviners was that they [775] knew the name and identity of the spirit with whom they were in contact, and it appeared to be always someone related to them and most often their father's father.

791 As they returned to normality from an experience which was frightening in its intensity, it dawned on them that they now had to practise as a diviner, to make use of the powers which had come to them. There was evidence that they accepted this role with reluctance. Their relatives, when they saw them going through the earlier stages, were aware that there was an inevitable sequel, that of practising as a diviner, and they too shared the reluctance of the man himself. Sometimes a diviner began to practise by associating as a junior partner with a successful practitioner; sometimes he began hesitantly by himself. The criterion of the validity of their calling was their success. No one seemed to know what became of diviners who were unsuccessful and never became accredited. They apparently disappeared from the field because no one employed them.

791 The diviners whom I met and talked with, as well as those few whom I saw practising their calling, were considered by the Ngoni to possess
157 a distinctive temperament. It was evident that they wished to live somewhat apart, and that they were withdrawn in a social as well as in a spatial sense. They married, but usually only one wife, and had children, but played little part in extended family or village affairs. Their huts were always on the outskirts of villages and were neither large and prosperous nor very poor looking. They had a reputation for being unpunctual and forgetful, but they were far from being unobservant. Part of their skill lay in watching people and learning about their concerns from observation and storing events in a good memory. Though they could work themselves up into emotionally excited states during a consultation, at other times they gave the impression of being controlled, rather quiet, detached, and uninfluenced by the currents of talk and opinion around them.

791 The rewards for their services were in kind as a rule, and could be articles of household equipment, food, cloth, and sometimes European clothes or goods from the stores, such as lanterns, soap, matches and cigarettes. There appeared to be no bargaining over payment. The

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 UMkulumqango or other names for the High God were rare. When
771 questioned they said that such a High God existed and the spirits knew him, but they, the living, did not. The Ngoni phrase, *asiyazi*, 'we do not know', and its Nyanja version, *sitingadziwa*, 'we cannot know', were constantly on their lips in discussions on this topic. Among Christians like Cibambo as well as non-Christians like Nzunga, their interest in the ancestor cult was part of maintaining their identity as Ngoni. The neighbouring tribes had other forms of ancestor cults but the Ngoni form brought from the south was distinctive, and many of the concepts and practices were known to the South-eastern Bantu peoples.

The ritual for a new ancestral spirit

761 The Ngoni believed that at the moment of death the spirit left the body. If a sick person fell into a coma and was unconscious for a long
775 time they said that the person had died when the coma began even though they knew he went on breathing. This happened at the death of Bambo Manga when she had periods of unconsciousness before she died. They said that her spirit had left her at the beginning of the last long coma, even though they knew from her pulse and breathing that she was not dead. At the parting of the spirit from the body they had to care for both, in order that the new ancestral spirit might be happy and in the right relationship with the living. Equal importance was attached to caring for the spirit and to caring for the corpse, since the correct performance of ritual had deep significance for the dead and for the living.

763 When the spirit left the body it was believed to go to the bush at the outskirts of the village where the person had been accustomed to go to
775 relieve himself. Between the death of Bambo Manga and the burial, each morning before it was light, the men marched with a dancing step up the path to the bush where she was wont to go, singing a war song dating from trans-Zambesi days which was sung at the sending out of the *impi*. Marching to the bush and singing the war song was one step in bringing the spirit back or, more correctly perhaps, keeping in touch with it so that it should not go too far away. This approach to the spirit between the death and burial was the first of three ritual acts, each called 'bringing back the spirit'. The other two occurred after the first and second ritual shaving.

764 The preparation of the corpse for burial has been described in the first chapter of this section. Those features of Ngoni burial were considered essential for the welfare of the spirit, and were carried out in the majority of funerals which I witnessed, whether the dead person was a Christian or not. An account of the burial of a leading *mulumuzana* in the northern kingdom who was a Christian, given to me by another Christian Ngoni and confirmed by some of the missionaries present at the funeral, emphasized all the distinctive Ngoni elements: the round

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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and the notched sticks were only an *aide-mémoire*, not a necessity. 211

The heavens and the earth

When the Pleiades appeared just before dawn they said the Pleiades were being 'reborn' (the word used for the new moon's appearance and for the initiation of a diviner), and that in this position in the heavens they were heralds of the cold season. They knew the relative positions of Venus as an evening star and a morning star, and watched for the appearance high in the heavens of Jupiter which they knew by its size. Orion they recognized as a man with a spear, a hunter, and the Milky Way as the sands of the sky, since sand was used to denote numbers which cannot be counted. 821

In announcing the death of a great chief by a messenger sent from village to village, the traditional formula was: 'Listen. Do you hear? The heavens have fallen.' Hence when earthquakes were felt, it was believed that some great chief had died, and the earthquake was the trembling when his spirit left the earth for the place of the departed spirits. If it turned out to be no one of their own people, they nevertheless held to the belief that somewhere, unknown to them, a 'great one' had died and his spirit had departed at the time of the earth's trembling. 763 775 823

Eclipses of the sun and moon they also connected with some great event either among their own people or elsewhere, and they used the eclipse year and month to date these events. Their famous crossing of the Zambezi on their northward march, finally and irrevocably cutting off their connexions with the south, was during a solar eclipse. In teaching young adults Ngoni history they said: 'When we crossed the Zambezi it became night at noon.' 821 [167]

A lunar eclipse, almost total, occurred when I was in a chief's village, and all the people were called to the kraal and stood watching it. Then the chief's spokesman, his 'mouthpiece', called for silence in the phrase used for a war summons [632]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 human flesh-eaters may have worn, the doctor takes
695 home with him and washes his poison bark with it,
791 that it may still retain its virtue. In the case of a man who dies from drinking the poison, his spirit is
[775] not brought back to the village, but is driven out into the bush.

II

A FUNERAL

764 I. When a person dies every one is told that so and so, who was ill, is "finished for." Then the village elders come together and go into his hut. They begin to bathe the body and anoint it with oil, folding the knees against the chest, and laying the palms of the hands against the cheeks, the arms being bent from the elbows. Then they take a large flat stone, set it against the hut wall, and on it place the body in a sitting position. Then they commence to wail, the women folk only are in the hut where the corpse is, the men are outside, and the children on the verandah. They lament, saying, "Alas, alas, my husband, what shall I do this day?" [The women pass the night in the hut with the dead body, the men sleep outside.] Next morning, when it is dawn, some men take their hoes, and sacrificial flour, and go to some resting-place on the wayside, and sprinkle some flour at the foot of a tree, and set out again, and when now they are drawing near the burial ground, the one who is in front picks up a stone and throws it, with the words, "We have passed." Then they commence to clear a piece of ground, and take the flour and mark out the grave.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

764 and take a large flat stone and set the corpse on it, and take a millstone and place it on his head. If it be he has children, they are made to take charcoal in their hands, and this they cast into the grave (this is to cause them to forget). Then some old man takes up a hoe, and strikes the ground at one side of the grave and again at the other, when many begin to fill in the earth, the chief mourners trampling it down.

III. When they have finished filling in, they knock out the hoe heads, and set off for the stream. They who carry the hoes and household belongings of the deceased go first. When they reach the water, the chief mourners bathe first, then every one else; the men bathe up-stream, the women down-stream. They do not rub each other's backs. When
768 they have finished bathing, they take the calico, sporran, and "*nsengwa*" baskets the dead man used to eat out of, and set fire to them, and splash the ashes with water. Then they set out for the village, wailing. When they come to the grave, the medicine man looks for medicine to remove the evil
● [765] influence of the spirit of the dead; [this medicine] he breaks up, puts in a potsherd, pours on water, and stirs. The chief mourner begins to rub it on his
765 legs, face, and hands, then others come and do the same. If the deceased had children of his own, they also rub some of the medicine on. They again keep wake at the hut in which the man died. Next morning at dawn the nearest relation of the dead
[431] takes goats and fowls and gives them to the chief mourners, who then begin to shave a little patch of hair from the side of each person's head, when the people will then shave each other quite bald. The widows go to some spot in the bush to weave the "red" bands and to shave. When every one has quite finished shaving, the meat is taken from the

842 otherwise *ndule* of the child will still result. Medicine is taken also by women who are unable to conceive. If it fails, it is because a spirit has entered the womb; and lots are taken to find whose spirit it is, after which sacrifices are offered until the desired result is obtained.

8. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Chewa*).

586 The Achewa have no form of legal separation by agreement, and a divorce can be effected only where adequate reason exists. A husband may not divorce his wife on account of barrenness; but he may divorce her for adultery or desertion; or if she persistently neglects to cook food, bring water or perform her other work; or if she is offensively and perpetually jealous. A wife may divorce her husband if he is impotent; or if he fails to maintain a habitable house, or to do his share of the work; or if he fails to pay her tax, feed and clothe her properly; or on account of desertion or ill-treatment. Effect is given to the divorce after the hearing of the case by the husband handing over a fowl or other token, always known as *mubvi*[1] (an arrow), in the presence of the *ankhosure*[2] to the wife's father, who passes it on to her *mtsibweni*. The wife always keeps the children, even if she has been at fault; though sometimes in very flagrant cases one or more fully-grown children may be awarded to the husband; and in adultery the co-respondent is obliged to pay heavy damages as compensation for the loss of the children, [684] and the value of several years' tax is refunded by the *mtsibweni*. A woman may not be divorced while she is pregnant.

9. *Marriage of Widows* (*Chewa*).

587 A widow may not be courted until after the conclusion of the funeral ceremonies described in Section VII. When, a few months later, she has to make her choice, she brews beer at her own house, and on the evening of the *tsiku lokumbula* her suitors, friends and relations foregather outside; the eldest female relation holds before her pieces of *tsekwa*[2] grass, and tells her which of the suitors each piece represents. Then she signifies her choice by taking the appropriate piece in her hand; and the old woman proceeds to the house of the chosen one, selects therefrom a knife or other small article, and hands it to the widow. In due course the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, brings a cow, sheep, goat or fowl, according to his means, and ties it to the centre post of the widow's house, in order to get rid of the spirit [775] [842] of her late husband; otherwise, he will not be able to beget a child. The widow brings out beer; her relations subsequently remove the animal from the centre post, and at night the bridal pair sleep apart in the house. Next day they procure medicine from a doctor and put it in a big pot in the house; and in the evening first the man and then the woman bathes in it. That night they again abstain from conjugal intercourse; but at cockcrow, after bathing a second time in the pot, they take it outside the village to a place where two paths meet, and break it there, thus finally and completely ridding themselves of the spirit of the first husband. They return to the village before it is light, and then commence their married life.

[1] Cf. H. S. Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 309.
[2] *Tsekwa*, a long coarse grass used for thatching.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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cease, *lalulu* may begin to dance on the day of interment, and *kadyankhazi* dances near the grave, while *hang'wing'wi* dashes out into the village with a stick, kills two or three fowls, runs with them to the *dambwe*, roasts them there, and takes them to the people who are digging the grave. In the early morning of the third day, the women sweep the hut and burn the rubbish outside; men and women then bathe as before, and most of the friends depart; but the near relations, male and female, shave their heads and sleep at the hut. M 766 M 765

On the fourth morning the *dambwe* is swept up, and the performers bathe, the figures having been destroyed overnight. The near relations must still remain and sleep at the hut. During this period, all who sleep at the hut must abstain from sexual intercourse; should anyone have intercourse, he must cease to sleep at the hut, or he will *dula* the other (*vide* II, 1). On the fifth day all go away, and the widow sleeps alone in the house. During the next week or two, and sometimes even longer, she must not talk except when absolutely necessary, nor may she wash any part of her person except her mouth. [833]

After the death of a headman or other important personage,[1] it is necessary to recall the spirit which has departed to the base of a tree in the bush; and beer is therefore made by the widow when a month or so has elapsed. On the *tsiku lachyumbula* (*vide infra* IX, 1) all those who have assisted at the interment gather outside the house and drink. Later, in the evening, two of the deceased's elderly male relations go into the bush with two *nsengwa* baskets, into one of which they put a *chiabwi* (species of caterpillar), afterwards placing the baskets in the house at the head of the bed. The caterpillars are eaten in due course by the ubiquitous small *nyerere* ant; but the spirit remains, and the widow presents periodical offerings of beer and porridge, invoking him by his clan name (*kwonga chiwongo chake*), *e.g.* "Yo Banda! Yo Banda!" Anything left by the spirit is given to the children next morning. The Angoni keep the spirit by making a small fence round the *nsengwa*, but the Achewa consider this unnecessary. On the *tsiku lakumwa* all bathe together in the stream and drink beer at the house. Next day the first offering to the spirit is made by the widow, and the relations may disperse. M 775 N [775]

4. *Memorial Rites* (*Chewa*).

After an interval of two or three months, when they have had time to collect food, money and other presents, a *rinjau* dance is held by way of memorial. If two men die in the same village at the same time, the funeral rites described above may be held for the two jointly; but each must have his own memorial separately. The dance is arranged by the *mwini malivo* and lasts three days. The relations are now permitted to look on. There is no beer; and generally not more than four or five *mikhwala* perform each day. On the first evening *injedza* always begins, but he receives no *masupo*, though the *mikhwala* and *viwadzo* receive the usual presents. *Kasinja* performs about midnight, and dancing continues till cockcrow. On the second night *kasinja* always begins, and dancing is generally over by midnight. On the third night there is no particular order of precedence, and the figures are usually taken to the *dambwe* M 765 575 [535]

[1] *Cf.* Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xl, 1910, p. 200, on the Anyanja: "The spirits of the departed retain their former stations, thus the *mzimu* of a chief is a thing of greater account than that of an ordinary man. It is thought to continue to hold a directing influence on the well-being of the tribe."

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

565 exclusively related to the aristocratic tradition, and no account will be
769 given or analysis made of ancestor cults practised by those groups in the
771 two Ngoni kingdoms who were not of the leading clans. In the ancestor cult, as it will be described here, the emphasis was always on known and named spirits of the dead, associated with the village where the ritual was performed. In the approach to these known and named spirits—an approach which I have called a cult—there were three essential components: the diviner, the ritual address and the cattle. The diviner's role we shall discuss in Chapter III and the ritual forms of addressing the ancestors in Chapter IV. The Ngoni believed they could not approach their ancestral spirits except through their cattle, which had first to
[825] show that the spirits agreed to prayers being made, and the sign was that the beast urinated. The sacrifice of a beast was an integral part of the rite, which was concluded by the suppliants eating the meat together. At no point in their common life did the Ngoni more clearly demonstrate their dependence on their cattle than in the ritual of addressing their ancestral spirits. For this reason, in Chapter II we shall review the place of cattle in Ngoni life and relate it to their role in the ancestor cult.

Ancestral spirits of the Ngoni Paramounts.

643 The reigning Paramount and his predecessors in that office held an
769 unchallenged supremacy in the hierarchy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The
776 Ngoni believed that the line of dead Paramounts similarly led the hierarchy of the ancestral spirits, and that the dead Paramounts had power to help the Ngoni nation in time of need. It was taken for granted that when Paramounts died they would continue to be powerful and held in great respect, and that their position in the spirit world would enable them to influence UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit. This Great Spirit was believed to be the creator of all things and the ultimate source of power, particularly of sending rain, success in war, and deliverance from pestilence; and he was in general regarded as the giver of health and strength to mankind. The Ngoni held that those ancestors who were nearest to the living in time, whose names they knew, possessed less power than the remote ancestors whose names had been forgotten. On the same principle UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit, the originator of all creation, possessed more power than any other being, but, since he was so far removed in time from the living, no one could know his praise-names or his genealogy, and therefore he could not be addressed directly. In the same way the remotest ancestors of the Paramount could not be addressed directly because their praise-names were unknown to living men. Only those direct ancestors of the Paramount, whose names and genealogy and praise-names were known, could be addressed correctly and they could be counted on to use their influence with remoter and more powerful ancestral spirits and with the Great Spirit himself.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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As one of the Ngoni said: 'The spirits of the dead Paramounts were the guardians of the whole nation. These *amadlozi* stood between UMkulumqango and the people. They were never worshipped at times of plenty and prosperity, but at the time of crisis and danger.'

In pre-European days there had been two special occasions when the spirits of former Paramounts were addressed on behalf on the whole nation. One was at the time of the *incwala* or first-fruits ceremony, which as we have seen was given up before the final settlement in Nyasaland. This was an occasion uniting all the people with songs and dances at the village of the Paramount. The second occasion was in time of war before the army went out on a raid. This could take place more than once during the fighting season, and always at the Paramount's village.

769 [726]

The remaining occasions for addressing the spirits of former Paramounts on behalf of the nation were when epidemics threatened, when there was a drought, or in the serious illness of the Paramount or of a leading member of his family. In prayer for rain or for the recovery from illness of someone of the royal clan, the diviner had to be consulted about which of the ancestors of the Paramount should be addressed. The ancestor indicated by the diviner had to be named in the ritual, his genealogy given and, as a rule, his particular attributes and his praise-names mentioned. The following account was given to me by Mlonyeni Jere, who prayed for rain in Elangeni in 1935:

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¶ When the rain stopped, the *amadoda* spoke among themselves 'What shall be done?' If they could not find out who had made the rain to stop, they said 'We must ask the *isanusi* (diviner). Perhaps it is one of the *amadlozi* (spirits) who are stopping the rain.'

If the *isanusi* finds it is the spirit of Hlacwayo, then all the big people are called to come to the kraal at Elangeni. Then they say 'We should choose a black ox with no white spot and bring it to the kraal.' They appointed a speaker who knows how to speak well all the names of the chiefs who have died. This man says to the spirit 'This cow is yours. You must eat it all. Then you must tell UMkulumqango our troubles.' If it urinates or makes dung, the spirits agree. This praying to the spirits is in the kraal in the evening. At early dawn next day someone is sent to kill the ox. While it was being flayed, the huts of the chief wives were smeared with cow dung on the floors and on the place outside the door. The meat was cooked in the kraal by the *amadoda*. Some of it was taken into the *indlunkulu* and kept there for one night so that the spirit might lick it.

[237]

The Paramount had already eaten in the kraal and the meat was divided for the *amadoda* according to their age regiments. After they have eaten, a big man rises up to thank the spirit with his titles and praise-names, and all the people answer *Bayete* and there is a war-dance in the kraal. Then they look up and see clouds coming. Then the rain comes.

This particularizing of the appeal to an individual dead Paramount in the ancestor cult was an essential element in the ritual, and there seemed

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

768 which it belonged, was always given to a woman whose good character was vouched for.[1] The man who inherited the *gogo* village with its par-
769 ticular charge to look after the spirits of the dead, as well as the welfare of the living, also had to be someone of good repute. The responsibility
621 for maintaining social cohesion in a village and among the members of a house with which the cattle, and therefore the spirits, were closely bound up, was one which the senior male members of that house regarded as a solemn duty. If people did not behave well the cattle would not flourish and multiply, and that would upset the spirits and be a sign of their disapproval.

769 Cibambo wrote the following account of the ancestor cult as a part of the presentation of Ngoni customs to his own people. As a Christian
●776 minister he was concerned with making a case to his own people for putting the Ngoni ancestor cult higher in the religious scale than the cults which used images in their worship. He was using his Christian beliefs to rationalize the ancestor cult, particularly in relating it to the concept of a High God. The Ngoni undoubtedly had the idea of a creator, remote and unapproachable by man, as his title implied, but nevertheless referred to as the sender of rain, sickness and other benefits and disasters for the country as a whole. Prayers and sermons by Ngoni ministers in Ngoniland used many of the old Ngoni terms for the creator to express their Christian concept of God.

¶ We think that the worship of the Ngoni was better than the worship of other tribes who were near them, for in their worship there were no images made of wood or stones or other things, but they worshipped spirits who were unseen. Nearly all Central African tribes believe that there is a God who created heaven and earth, and who is unseen by eyes. In worship they could not reach him himself with the things of their hearts, so they did not worship him himself. They followed the custom well known among the black people when they wished to talk to their chiefs or their fathers when there was something of importance. A black man thinks it is a great impertinence and dishonour to speak for himself in front of his chief or his father, so he sends someone of standing as his messenger who carries his words and returns with a reply. This custom took effect also in the worshipping of black peoples. In worshipping the creator they made use of a go-between, who stood between God and men. He knew how to speak for them and pray for them before God. They thought that certain created things ought to accomplish this work.

The Ngoni believed that there was God who was chief of all created things and the source of all. Some of the names they gave him were:

UMkulumqango	The Great Deviser
Uluhlanga	The Original Source
UMkulu Kakulu	The Greatest of All
UMnikazi we Zinto Zonke	The Owner of All Things.

[1] On other grounds, such as kinship, such guardianship might have gone to a woman who was not acceptable on moral grounds and was therefore passed over.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

In these names it is clear that God was known as the Beginning of All Things, the Owner, the One Above All. They knew him as the nourisher of the earth, sending rain and all good things, but they thought that he had little knowledge of his people. Nor could his people know much of him, so they did not worship him himself or speak with him. His character they did not know and so they were not able to praise or glorify him as they were the spirits of their ancestors, whom they knew thoroughly. They knew him from afar and so they could not pray and speak to him. 769 776

Since the Ngoni were not able to be at home with UMkulumqango so in worship they sought others known to them that they should tell them the things of their hearts, and these were the spirits of those who had died. At once when one of themselves died, they thought that now he is a spirit with living power greater than he had when a man on the earth, and that he is a spirit who can watch over and protect his relatives on earth, but they also realized that he had power to rebuke and punish. So this spirit was added to the spirits of the tribe who were worshipped. They thought that each clan had its own spirits, stretching back to the beginning of the clan. They believed that the recent spirits received the news from their friends on earth, and handed it on until it arrived at the spirits of very long ago and now forgotten. These then delivered the message to the Creator of all.

Cibambo's main intention in this account of Ngoni worship was to put the ancestor cult in its setting as a means of approach to the creator. He used the Ngoni concept of an intermediary, who was essential in the approach to a Paramount, to argue that the ancestor cult was not necessarily wrong but was an earlier stage towards Christianity. This was a theme constantly expressed in sermons and prayers in Ngoni churches. In the rest of this account he emphasized 'becoming an ancestral spirit', which we shall examine later in its ritual context; allocation of authority among the ancestral spirits; and the fact that prayer and sacrifice, which he called worship, were made chiefly in times of trouble, and not in times of prosperity.

It is legitimate, in view of Dr. Kuper's statement, to ask whether there was a fundamental difference between addressing an ancestral spirit as a go-between and worshipping him. The Ngoni were not trained theologians, except for Christian ministers like Cibambo, but they had a range of philosophical concepts to which it is impossible to do justice in this context. In the prayers which I heard their thoughts were focused on the ancestors whose names they knew and recited. Questioned afterwards, they said that there were other ancestors whose names they did not know, but the ones they named could not fail to be aware of the living, their descendants, since their spirits were guarded in a house and their cattle were sacrificed in the ritual. They therefore directed their worship, or address, to those who were known to them, believing that they would influence the remoter but possibly more powerful spirits whose names were unknown. Spontaneous references to 769 771

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Next day the hunters assemble at the *chiwe* with their bows and arrows, spears and dogs; and the women commenced to sow in anticipation of the rain which they knew would fall. Chauwa himself again remained at home, and his deputy alone was allowed to burn the grass after it had been surrounded by every available man and boy in the neighbourhood so that nothing might escape. Such was the reputation of Chauwa that it is said that rain always fell before sunset on the same day. M 789 791

Then the women cooked the goat at the house of Chauwa, who could not himself partake, as he was the director of the sacrifice; and all the other members of his *chisongo* abstained with him. The liver was cooked in a separate pot after it had been tied up with a piece of *mtsiroti* tree in red cloth and genet cat skin. It was then covered over, and any other person was allowed to kill a goat and cook its liver in the same pot. Next morning any of their children who had not yet reached the age of initiation were allowed to eat such part of the livers as had not been consumed by the spirits. The meat of the game killed was divided in accordance with the usual rules of hunting. M [262] M [224]

2. *Rainmaking* (*Ngoni*).

Songandawa's slave wife, Mwachuma, who was brought by Chief Chiwere to the Dowa District, remained there as the mother of all the people and was always referred to as Gogo (grandmother). All the principal spirits of the Angoni were to be found at her village. When rain was desired, Chiwere assembled his Angoni there, and killed four or five black cows, which were cooked and eaten outside the kraal. Then he prayed to the spirits of Songandawa and Gwaza, and poured water into an *ngwembe* (wooden bowl), which was covered with another bowl after some of the water had been poured out into a gourd. This praying was known as *upasha*. As the chief prayed, he held the gourd in his hand; and as he invoked each spirit in turn, he poured a little water on the ground. After the last spirit had been invoked, he rinsed his mouth, spat the water out, and emptied the gourd upon the ground. Then the people went home, and rain fell. N 789 [776]

VII.—Tribal Life: Funeral Rites.

1. *Preparation of the Body* (*Chewa*).

When a man dies, the men (usually relations) watching beside him in the hut close his eyes, straighten his fingers and all his limbs, shave his head, wash and oil him, and wrap him in cloths. These cloths must always be new, and though coloured ones may be used, the outside one must always be white. However poor the relations may be, they invariably manage somehow or other to procure a new white cloth. The death is announced at once with the formula "*anatsirizitu*" (he is finished). M 764 M [763]

2. *Disposal of the Corpse* (*Chewa*).

On hearing the news, the men of the village beat drums in the *bwalo* until the following morning, while men and women wail together, uttering cries of mourning, and occasionally breaking forth into expressions such as, "So and so is dead, I am alone in the world"; "God has done evil to me"; "Whom shall I live with now?" "God should have killed me too";

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 challenge is sent from one group of villages to another. And on the day appointed the strangers arrive walking in procession. The girls and women are dressed in their gaudiest clothes, and their heads and arms are decked with bright coloured beads, and the claws of lions and leopards. The lads carry dancing sticks and miniature shields. The strangers open the dance. The girls standing together and holding reed wands in their hands sing in chorus, while the men arranged in a great semi-circle dance and sing. Their dance is wonderfully energetic and graceful, and is executed with a rythm and unison which is fascinating. You can hear a long way off the hundred feet come down on the earth of the kraal with a thud as of one man. When they have danced for about an hour they give way to their rivals. The home villagers step in and dance for another hour. And so on they go from ten o'clock till about four. There is no mingling of men and women. And the whole exercise is chaste, healthful, and beautiful. It is quite the show piece of our village life.

121 And now a few remarks in conclusion on their religious beliefs. I do not intend to say much on this point as one only can get at the inner meaning of their faith after long and careful investigation, 771 and with a thorough knowledge of their language. Their religion was not formulated. If you ask them about it they can tell you little or nothing. They will deny that they knew anything of God until we came. Their observances were scarcely recognised by themselves, they were the spontaneous and almost unconscious expression of a people groping after the unknown God if haply they might find Him. They recognise a spirit who presides over the universe.

776 They have a name for Him which means the great great one. But the ordinary name is the one which south of the Zambesi is used for all white men, and seems also to imply some feeling of wisdom and greatness. But they seem to have no idea of God's imminence in the world. He is rather the mighty far away Spirit to whom men cannot come. Along with this, homage is made to 771 great mountains and ancient trees, and to the strong elemental forces, as thunder and lightening. But this seems to me to be an [777] addition which has come through their residence among the Tumbuka.

769 The great pervading article in their religious life is reverence and dread of the ancestral spirits. The whole land is full of their presence. And offerings are continually made to them to appease

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[39] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[40]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[39] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[40] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-5; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Hera kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 643 789

sleeping on mats they slept on grass until the required days were finished, and they scattered to their homes.

This account brings out certain elements in the ritual surrounding the *tonga*. The word *tonga* in the Ngoni language means 'rod', and was used in the very ancient folk tale *Intonga yetusi*, 'The Brass Rod'. There was no rod, however, nor anything representing one, among the medicines or ingredients which together made up the *tonga*. A descendant of one of the early 'guardians' of the *tonga* said about it:

¶ The *tonga* is the horn of a sheep, and the horn by itself has no real power, but there are other things which give it power like the rib of a lion. [778]

It is clear that in the past the *tonga* was regarded as giving protection to the Ngoni people, particularly by providing medicine at the accession of a new Paramount when he needed medicine for strengthening.

Other informants from the Phungwako clan said that the *tonga* provided the medicine with which the Paramount washed at the time of *incwala*, the feast of the first-fruits. No one alive in the 1930's had seen that ceremony and the special songs had been forgotten. A tradition remained that the Paramount had to undergo seclusion and ritual washing with medicines before the first green crops could be eaten. [178]

Throughout the references to the *tonga* there was no hint that it was ever worshipped or addressed in any way similar to the invocations to the ancestor spirits. It was clearly a 'medicine' possessing great power and guarded as a national treasure. The ingredients of the medicine were kept in a particular way, in a particular place, in the guardianship of a particular person. I have seen the ingredients, the place and the guardian, but I gave a promise not to reveal them. I was allowed to handle the objects and, after doing so, I had to perform the ritual act of washing my hands with cowdung. This was the form of ritual cleansing practised by the Paramount after using the medicines. [515 783]

There were two ways in which these medicines were used by the Paramount to strengthen him on his accession. He washed in the kraal with the medicines whipped into a foam. The old men said that in ancient times the water for making the medicines had to be fetched from the sea. In addition to washing he had to eat meat in which the medicines were mixed. The majority of informants said that beef was used for this ritual eating, while others said that, as in the ritual for preparing the *tonga*, the meat taken was sheep. This ritual was said to have taken place for the last time at the death of Cikusi and the accession of Gomani I, though it was hinted that it had been performed at the accession of the Ngoni chief of the Maseko clan now living in Portuguese territory.

It was clear that the Maseko Paramounts made use of the *tonga* as a royal medicine both at their accession and in time of war. The reference [766]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

reminding the spirits that all depended on them. There was no tone of scolding in the words but a respectful plea for attention and help. 769 782

[539]

Alas O Paramount,
Alas O Father,
Why do you refuse us?
What do you say about your child?
We say we are your people,
Alas O Paramount.

In prayers for rain the same form of address was used with the three parts of the prayer. The ancestral spirits addressed were those of the line of the Paramounts, since the needs of the whole country were involved. The beast chosen for the offering to the spirits was a black one with no white markings, and in place of the sick person's name, the need for rain was mentioned. In the account given by Mlonyeni Jere (quoted in the first chapter of Part IV) he used this formula, mentioning the names, presenting the cow, and then asking the ancestral spirits to tell UMkulumqango how greatly they were troubled through lack of rain.

The ritual of sacrificing to the spirits

The essential equipment in the ritual of sacrificing was the spear with which the beast was killed; baskets, both the wide winnowing basket (*lichero*) and the food basket (*nzengwa*); the wooden dish (*ugcwembe*) on which the meat was placed; and the gourd cups for beer. These have been mentioned already in several contexts as the sacrificial vessels or ritual objects connected with the ancestor cult and kept in the hut of the woman who was guardian of a particular ancestral spirit. In the northern kingdom one of the Nhlane clan who carried out the ritual for sacrifices to UNdina Nhlane at Hoho said that in the hut of UNtani Nzima who died in Swaziland, but whose house had continued, was a spear, a black cloth for rain-making and a wooden meat dish. These were kept on the right-hand side at the back of the hut, and no one passing by could stand erect; he had to bend his back and head 'as men do when passing the *inhosi*'. Since the coming of the missions these had been thrown away. 769 778 782 [415]

In the central kingdom I saw in several houses this collection of ritual vessels. There was always a spear, a food basket, one or more gourds for beer, and one or more of the wide, flat, winnowing baskets on which uncooked flour was carried and which was used for meat if there was no wooden dish. These were kept at the back of the hut hanging on the wall, above the place where sacrificial meat was laid.

The first stage of the ritual sacrifice was killing and flaying the beast. It was killed either in the kraal or just outside the fence, with a thrust from the spear, or more than one if necessary, by some member of the leading clan. At the time of the sacrifice when Bambo Manga was ill 769 782

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

353 women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side,
592 and the women on the left, the place of honour for the
[562] leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the
[778] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the
[769] baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that
[721] area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad-
[648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the
[162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern
[643] with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the
[671] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was
[692] one law for all people'. Military service was required from
[702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his
[631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,
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181 577 828 [182] The four so-called personal values will be reflected in the Ngoni personality traits which we are going on to discuss. There are however two values which did not appear to fit into any integrated system, and which yet recurred as themes in Ngoni culture, and here and there in the ideas inherent in child training. One was the theme of childhood innocence, which was much deeper and more subtle than merely keeping children in ignorance of sexual life and intercourse. The other was the value set on the 'gentle' man. He was a man who appeared to be almost wholly self-controlled, able to have normal sexual intercourse with his wives but not always thinking about women, showing sternness but without anger, being just but also merciful. These were the qualities looked for in the man responsible for the guardianship of certain head villages where the ancestor cult was [769] carried on, and who was entrusted with the ritual associated with the ancestor cult. In the more ancient ritual, such as [778] carrying the sacred emblem before the armies, it was young boys, exemplifying the childhood innocence theme, who were entrusted with this charge. In the more modern contexts, many of the outstanding Ngoni ministers in the church [793] were recognized and revered as 'gentle' men.

The Ngoni ideal personality

577 Chapters IV and V, as well as Chapters VI and VII, showed that there were certain elements in the Ngoni ideal of what their children should be like which were common to young men and women, to boys and girls, while others were emphasized only for girls or for boys. Among the common traits we have already seen the outstanding emphasis on 'respect' in all forms of behaviour and in all kinds of contact with older people, and with others who should be 'honoured'. Part of this respect was shown in obedience, and with this obedience in all the detailed inter-personal relations with senior people was associated, in the individual's relations to society as a whole, being law-abiding and complying with Ngoni law.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

571 643 function and authority was largely evolved and built up during the Ngoni migration across the Zambesi and the early settlement in Nyasaland.

643 The office of the Paramount was supported by three typical Ngoni institutions. The first was the regency exercised by the man who was held responsible for the care of the office of the Paramount. He was called 'the one who takes care of the country', 'the one who has to put the new *inkosi* in his place', 'the one who takes care of the young *inkosi* until he enters his father's place'. We shall see later how this principle of regency operated in particular cases in the succession to the Paramountcy. It proved to be an effective provision both in the case of a minor who was recognized as his father's heir, and during an interregnum while the succession was being discussed. The Ngoni showed a clear understanding of what functions the regent ought to perform, and when he exceeded these functions and usurped, or tried to usurp, the Paramount's position they condemned his action as wrong.

The second institution which supported the Paramountcy was the 'big house' from which the heir to the Paramount had to come. We shall see later that it was not always considered essential that the heir should be the actual child of the wife in the big house. A boy could be adopted [597] into the house and, by Ngoni kinship rules, he was then a child of that house and of the woman in it.

643 The third institution, which made the Paramount immortal at death after having been supreme in his life-time, was the Ngoni practice of 769 'guarding his spirit' in a hut, usually in the village where he had lived. The guardianship of a spirit was not practised exclusively for the Paramount. All the chiefs and the heads of the Swazi clans had this provision made for their spirits when they died, but in national crises prayers [282] addressed to the spirits of former Paramounts were of supreme importance.

The royal clan and the big house

643 Among the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans which formed the Ngoni 614 aristocracy the royal clan had a unique position. Not only was it the clan 565 of the Paramount, but its members had social rank and prestige because 184 they belonged to his clan. In the northern kingdom informants showed awareness of the fact that their royal clan of Jere was not one of the well-known clans in the south. Other clan names found among them, such as Ngomezulu, Thole, Nzima, Nqumayo, and many more, were known to be clan names among the South-eastern Bantu. The following explanation was given by Cibambo about the name Jere and was the one most widely accepted:

« The Ngoni themselves say that the clan name of Jere was given during the journey, and that it arose out of the number of people who were with Zwangendaba. When the Ngoni want to speak of a large number of people they use two well-known words which are: '*Ngu Shaka*' (it is Shaka);

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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As one of the Ngoni said: 'The spirits of the dead Paramounts were the guardians of the whole nation. These *amadlozi* stood between UMkulumqango and the people. They were never worshipped at times of plenty and prosperity, but at the time of crisis and danger.' 769 776

In pre-European days there had been two special occasions when the spirits of former Paramounts were addressed on behalf on the whole nation. One was at the time of the *incwala* or first-fruits ceremony, which as we have seen was given up before the final settlement in Nyasaland. This was an occasion uniting all the people with songs and dances at the village of the Paramount. The second occasion was in time of war before the army went out on a raid. This could take place more than once during the fighting season, and always at the Paramount's village. 769 [726]

The remaining occasions for addressing the spirits of former Paramounts on behalf of the nation were when epidemics threatened, when there was a drought, or in the serious illness of the Paramount or of a leading member of his family. In prayer for rain or for the recovery from illness of someone of the royal clan, the diviner had to be consulted about which of the ancestors of the Paramount should be addressed. The ancestor indicated by the diviner had to be named in the ritual, his genealogy given and, as a rule, his particular attributes and his praise-names mentioned. The following account was given to me by Mlonyeni Jere, who prayed for rain in Elangeni in 1935: 769 782

¶ When the rain stopped, the *amadoda* spoke among themselves 'What shall be done?' If they could not find out who had made the rain to stop, they said 'We must ask the *isanusi* (diviner). Perhaps it is one of the *amadlozi* (spirits) who are stopping the rain.'

If the *isanusi* finds it is the spirit of Hlacwayo, then all the big people are called to come to the kraal at Elangeni. Then they say 'We should choose a black ox with no white spot and bring it to the kraal.' They appointed a speaker who knows how to speak well all the names of the chiefs who have died. This man says to the spirit 'This cow is yours. You must eat it all. Then you must tell UMkulumqango our troubles.' If it urinates or makes dung, the spirits agree. This praying to the spirits is in the kraal in the evening. At early dawn next day someone is sent to kill the ox. While it was being flayed, the huts of the chief wives were smeared with cow dung on the floors and on the place outside the door. The meat was cooked in the kraal by the *amadoda*. Some of it was taken into the *indlunkulu* and kept there for one night so that the spirit might lick it. [237]

The Paramount had already eaten in the kraal and the meat was divided for the *amadoda* according to their age regiments. After they have eaten, a big man rises up to thank the spirit with his titles and praise-names, and all the people answer *Bayete* and there is a war-dance in the kraal. Then they look up and see clouds coming. Then the rain comes.

This particularizing of the appeal to an individual dead Paramount in the ancestor cult was an essential element in the ritual, and there seemed 643 769

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

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The ritual of the purification of the living

The living had certain rites to carry out on their own behalf which, if omitted, would bring the displeasure of the ancestors upon them. These were essentially purification rites for they removed the defilement of death from each individual who was closely related to, or had performed some office for, the dead; and through the rites the houses and utensils were cleansed, and the living community was re-integrated after the loss of one of its members. Shaving, burning the hair and mourning bands, and washing in a stream, were the prescribed acts for all who were connected by kinship or marriage with the deceased, or who had taken part in preparing the body or digging the grave. These were a succession of rites as we have seen, and emphasized the need for ritual cleansing over a long period, and for renewed integration between the living. 783 768

In addition to this generally practised ritual, there were some acts of ritual purification of houses and utensils found only among the Swazi clans. One informant told of the ritual washing of hoes used to dig the grave in the blood of a newly killed sheep. Several others spoke of the cleansing with sheep dung of the huts of the widows of a dead man at the time of the second shaving. On each occasion when meat was offered to the ancestors after a death, the living who ate the meat had to be made ceremonially clean through the act of shaving, followed by ritual washing at the river.

The ritual of addressing the spirits

There was no set formula for addressing the ancestral spirits but there were three parts in all the prayers which I heard and which were recited to me. The first was the naming of the ancestors. The leading clans in the two kingdoms demonstrated the way in which they prayed to their ancestors by repeating the names of successive heads of the clan. They began with the name of the ancestor who had died in Swaziland and those of his father and grandfather and other forbears if known. The Nhlane clan, for example, told me 'We pray: *UNdina ka UNchaba ka UMulawu ka UMazongolo*' and then added: 'UNdina died in our village of Hoho before we left Swaziland and he was buried in the kraal in Hoho.' The Mhlambi clan in central Ngoniland named their ancestor UNgekwazi who died in Swaziland, but they did not know any names before him. Other clans in the central kingdom used the name of their ancestor who crossed the Zambesi with Mputa. The most important element in the prayer, therefore, was the naming of the 'big spirit', sometimes coupled with more remote ancestors. 769 782

The second element in addressing the spirits was to call their attention to the beast which was to be offered to them if they 'agreed'. 'Here is your beast' was the formula. Although three or four beasts or even

769 more were driven out of the kraal before the invocation of the spirits, one had been selected for the sacrifice, and the spirits' attention was 782 drawn to this animal. They were reminded that it was their beast because it belonged to the herd of the house which guarded their spirits, and it was also their beast because it was to be killed and its meat offered to them if they showed agreement.

The third part of the prayer was mentioning the needs of the person on whose behalf the spirits were being addressed. The following words were used by Lopati Nzunga when he spoke this prayer to the spirits when Bambo Manga was ill:

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O thou Gumede!
O thou Mputa!
O thou great chief!
Here is your beast.
That your child may be healed,
Look on what is yours.
May you remain well
And your child recover.
We do not know,
We do not know.
If you say that she will die,
She is yours, this child of yours.
It is your affair.
As for us, we long that your child may recover.
If she dies, this child of yours,
We can only speak your names.
We cry to you for her.

769 Bambo Manga was there and her daughter and Chief Njolomole, and while Lopati Nzunga addressed the spirits, the rest murmured the 782 names '*Wena Gumede*', '*Wena Mputa*', and added '*Mntwanayako*' (your child), '*Inkomoyako*' (your beast). The form of the prayer varied, and might be a sequence of address and petition as in this one, or a series of ejaculations with little consecutive thought. It depended on the eloquence and skill of the speaker of the prayer, and that form of eloquence was a well-recognized characteristic among the Ngoni. In the central kingdom before the Europeans came, the head of the Phungwako clan had addressed the spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Since the Phungwako chiefs had separated from Gomani's kingdom, the Nzunga clan performed this ritual for Bambo Manga in their head village. In addition to speaking the prayer, the same man had to see that all was done in order, the cattle driven out, the chief people assembled, and the subsequent action taken in accordance with the sign given by the spirits, either to kill a beast for sacrifice, or to find out from the diviners why the spirits had failed to agree. When the spirits 'refused' the first time Lopati Nzunga addressed them, he concluded the proceedings by gently

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

reminding the spirits that all depended on them. There was no tone of scolding in the words but a respectful plea for attention and help. 769 782 [539]

Alas O Paramount,
Alas O Father,
Why do you refuse us?
What do you say about your child?
We say we are your people,
Alas O Paramount.

In prayers for rain the same form of address was used with the three parts of the prayer. The ancestral spirits addressed were those of the line of the Paramounts, since the needs of the whole country were involved. The beast chosen for the offering to the spirits was a black one with no white markings, and in place of the sick person's name, the need for rain was mentioned. In the account given by Mlonyeni Jere (quoted in the first chapter of Part IV) he used this formula, mentioning the names, presenting the cow, and then asking the ancestral spirits to tell UMkulumqango how greatly they were troubled through lack of rain.

The ritual of sacrificing to the spirits

The essential equipment in the ritual of sacrificing was the spear with which the beast was killed; baskets, both the wide winnowing basket (*lichero*) and the food basket (*nsengwa*); the wooden dish (*ngcwembe*) on which the meat was placed; and the gourd cups for beer. These have been mentioned already in several contexts as the sacrificial vessels or ritual objects connected with the ancestor cult and kept in the hut of the woman who was guardian of a particular ancestral spirit. In the northern kingdom one of the Nhlane clan who carried out the ritual for sacrifices to UNdina Nhlane at Hoho said that in the hut of UNtani Nzima who died in Swaziland, but whose house had continued, was a spear, a black cloth for rain-making and a wooden meat dish. These were kept on the right-hand side at the back of the hut, and no one passing by could stand erect; he had to bend his back and head 'as men do when passing the *inkosi*'. Since the coming of the missions these had been thrown away. 769 778 782 [415]

In the central kingdom I saw in several houses this collection of ritual vessels. There was always a spear, a food basket, one or more gourds for beer, and one or more of the wide, flat, winnowing baskets on which uncooked flour was carried and which was used for meat if there was no wooden dish. These were kept at the back of the hut hanging on the wall, above the place where sacrificial meat was laid.

The first stage of the ritual sacrifice was killing and flaying the beast. It was killed either in the kraal or just outside the fence, with a thrust from the spear, or more than one if necessary, by some member of the leading clan. At the time of the sacrifice when Bambo Manga was ill 769 782

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 the killing and the flaying were done just outside the kraal by young men of the Nzunga clan, younger brothers of the chief. The cow ran 782 backward as she was stabbed and a second blow killed her, and she was dragged round when she fell to lie with her head to the south-east. Some of the blood from the wound was collected immediately by Lopati and taken by him and put in Bambo Manga's hut in 'the place of the spirits'. The cow was skinned with a few neat strokes of the knife, and a thin strip of meat about six inches wide was cut from the back. This Lopati put in the sacrificial food basket and he and the chief went with it to Bambo Manga's house. The three firestones were removed and the meat was spread on the glowing logs till it was cooked through and quite white. Bambo Manga, who was lying on her mat, washed her hands and face with water brought by her daughter and rinsed out her mouth. Two small pieces of the meat were given to her to eat, and the rest was cut up in small pieces and eaten by Lopati, the chief, his sister and Bambo Manga's daughter. This meat could only be eaten by that inner group.

The men who had skinned the beast cut it up and, following an Ngoni practice, laid all the meat on the gate of the reed fence surrounding the *bwalo*, and carried it to the hut and laid it outside the door. Holding the sacrificial winnowing basket Lopati directed the men to put in it three right ribs, a piece of liver, both stomachs, the heart and lungs, the fat from round the kidneys, a bit of the intestine and the spleen. The head of the beast was arranged facing towards Kabwazi's village, since he had always kraaled some of the Nzunga cattle.

Lopati took the basket into the hut and was followed by the head herd-boy holding the tip of the tail and the gall bladder. The basket with the meat in it was put on the floor at the back of the hut in 'the place of the spirits'. Lopati and the chief squatted on their haunches [516] nearby, and Bambo Manga knelt on her mat while her daughter wiped the soles of her feet, and she went forward on her knees to the place of the spirits. Lopati intervened and said 'Please walk upright', but she refused and said 'I will do as my ancestors did'. Her daughter knelt behind her.

Then Lopati began to praise the spirits, calling on Mputa by name, saying 'Here is your meat. Please eat. We praise you. We are your children.' The rest ejaculated '*Wena Nhosi*', '*Wena, Gumede*' as if supporting him, keeping quite still and facing the place of the spirits. After the invocation Bambo Manga went back to her mat, and Lopati took the gall bladder and sprinkled the juice round her, and then round the meat basket and round the hearth-stones. The gall bladder was then put in a small pot with water in it and laid on the floor, and the tip of the tail was tied above the place of the spirits. The skin of the beast, which had been washed but not scraped, was brought in and laid on the ground between the firestones and the wall and the gate with the meat

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

on was placed on it. The meat in the basket and on the gate stayed there all night. 769 782

Following the ritual of offering meat to the spirits came the ritual of cooking and eating the meat, both that offered to the spirits and the rest. After the basket of meat had been left all night in the place of the spirits, the large quantity on the gate was carried away and cooked by an old woman outside the hut of Bambo Manga's granddaughter. The meat in the basket which had been offered to the spirits was put in a pot and cooked on the fire in Bambo Manga's hut. It stayed cooking all day and all night till the following morning. Dzinthenga Phungwako, an old and highly respected *lidoda*, came to the hut and divided the sacrificial meat among all who were in the house, that is Bambo Manga, her daughter and granddaughter and several senior women. When they had finished the leading women stood up and thanked '*Zikhomo Maseko*', '*Zikhomo Magwagwa*'. Then they washed their hands and went to their own houses. 252 769 782

The large quantity of meat which had been laid on the gate and cooked on another fire in another *bwalo* was carried in a big pot and put down outside Bambo Manga's hut in the late afternoon. Her daughter came outside and divided the meat into three piles: a small one from the breast-bones for the women, a leg for the chief, the head for Kabwazi the headman of a neighbouring village, and the rest in a big pot for the men. A boy came to tell Lopati that all was ready and he and the chief went out to the place where the beast was killed, near the gate of the kraal. There were four groups already sitting there and the chief and Lopati made a fifth: the *madoda*, the senior men; the *majaha*, the young men; the *mabusa*, the herd-boys; and the little boys. Before Lopati divided the meat he and the chief washed elaborately with water brought in a gourd, and then he washed the knife before cutting the meat. He called the *madoda* to send someone for their portion in a basket, then the young men and the herd-boys were given their portions—a basket for each group, and the small boys had bits put in their hands. The eating was very sedate, there was no snatching of choice bits, and in each group the one who fetched the meat distributed it. There was the general atmosphere of a ritual meal rather than a feast, though the small boys smacked their lips appreciatively. From time to time Lopati called up someone from a group and gave him a bit more to divide up. When it was all eaten, a boy was sent to fetch water and the soapy leaves which the Ngoni used for washing, and the chief and Lopati and the *madoda* all washed the grease off their fingers. Then Lopati stood up and called out '*Siyadumisa baba, zihomo mntwana wenkosi*', 'We are praising you, father, thank you child of the Paramount', and the others all agreed and said '*Zikhomo baba*.' Then they all went together to Bambo Manga's hut and stood opposite her door and called out the same thanks. The women who had eaten their meat

431 769 782 [264] [515] [561]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in three age groups on the verandah also came forward and, led by NaNkoloma, a widow of Njolomole I, thanked in the women's language, '*Zimata, zaithwa mntwana wenkosi.*'

I did not witness any ritual sacrifices in the northern kingdom but the accounts given me by informants corresponded closely with the ritual in Mcakhatha just described. When sacrificing for rain to the spirits of the Paramount, a black ox with no white spot was driven into the kraal in the late afternoon and the chosen spokesman addressed the ancestral spirits of the Jere clan telling them that this was their beast, they must eat the meat and tell UMkulumqango that the people needed rain. While this man prayed to the spirits he stood facing the beast, and everyone else sat looking in front of them and keeping very quiet. The women stayed at home in their huts and the Paramount stayed in his hut 'as if mourning'. When the beast urinated and showed that the spirits had heard, a messenger came and informed the Paramount. The beast was killed early the next morning in the kraal. While the flaying took place, all the huts of the chief wives were smeared with dried cow-dung on the floors and on the smooth place outside the doors. The meat, in two parts, was taken into the *indlunkulu* and left there all night at the back, so that the spirits might lick it. The next morning the meat was cooked in the kraal by the *madoda* and when it was ready they reported to the big *induna*. He called all the people into the kraal and divided them into companies according to their sections and head villages. The meat was given to the head of each head village who divided it among his group. When everyone had finished, one of the leading men stood up and began to praise the spirit using his titles and praise-names (*izitokozo*). The rest stood up and shouted *Bayete*. They then began to dance a war-dance but, the informants added, that was soon stopped by torrents of rain.

These chapters on the Ngoni ancestor cult bring to an end this study of the two Ngoni kingdoms in Nyasaland in the 1930's. We have seen how their distinctiveness as a people depended on the culture which they brought with them from the south and how this culture was found among the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In the topics included in the three sections of this book: the political system, the social organization, and the ancestor cult, the main features of Ngoni culture are most clearly seen. In much of their economic and agricultural life there was little to distinguish them from their neighbours among the other Nyasaland peoples. The changes brought about by the missions, the schools, new forms of local government, and new types of occupation, were all tending to make the Ngoni less distinctive as a people. The conversion of some leading Ngoni to Christianity, as suggested in Chapter V of Part II, and the spread of schools were together the most powerful influences in altering Ngoni traditional culture. The

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
● [782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

361 again returning to the old village. That evening
166 they take some of the fire (that they made earlier in
the day) to kindle a fire with in the (new) hut
622 (*Kuka*). In kindling it they do not squat down, they blow the faggots into flame from a standing position, and they do this lest the smoke might ever after hang in wreaths over the floor. The womenfolk come every day to cook.

II. When the chief's huts are finished, they build those of the old men, and when these are complete, they bring all the huts [from the old village]. When they see that all the huts are finished, beer is made at the old village, and they go and bring
166 the spirits. He who has a grave pours some beer
182 in a gourd-pot and places it on the grave, saying, "We have gone hence, you must not search for us here, come let us go together." On that day they demolish all the huts that remain, they leave only the huts of which the occupant has lately died. When now the sun begins to slant westward, from the *Kuka* hut they take five gourd-pots, and fill them
[273] with beer and make young women carrying these lead the way. The head old woman of the *Kuka*
[554] hut goes first, the chief wife of the chief follows *Gogo*, and then come the ones carrying the beer. When they arrive at the new village they set down the gourd-pots and all the people assemble. The elder of the village then begins to propitiate, saying, "There is the beer we down on earth have made, we have gone from yonder, we present to you your new village, all men you will have a care for." Then
[431] the village chief makes a present of a goat and hands it to the old man, and he again speaks, saying, "Here is a goat which your child presents, you will wash it down with the beer." If the goat makes water, that is to say the spirit consents, if it will not they do not kill it. Then they kill the goat

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Then they kill the goat

and take the liver, and lungs, and stomach, and set them down beside the beer, and cut off some meat from a fore-leg, and roast it, and cut off a piece, and give the head of the *Kuka* hut, and cut another piece, and the chief eats it, and another his old men eat, and then they begin to cut off bits for their children. The rest of the meat is put in a basket, and next morning is cut up. 166 782 [262]

III. When the propitiation of the spirits is finished the chief tells his headman, "To-day you must cook some relish, and give it to all the people, and finish the ceremony in connection with the exodus." So he (the headman) sleeps with his wife, and in the morning she takes the relish to give to the chief. All persons of lesser importance come and take theirs from the hut, and any one who is at a distance at the time has his put aside. Now the ceremony is over, and the villagers again resume cohabitation with their wives [broken off since the beginning of the ceremony]. One month passes, and then a great quantity of beer is cooked all over the village, and they have a dance that at the new village the ground may become trampled and hard. When some farther time has elapsed, they cook beer, to demolish the huts of the dead, that were left standing at the old village. At the new village, when a man dies, the first one to do so is buried at the old village; when one of the village elders dies, he is buried at the new settlement, and thereafter all who die are buried there. [834] [766]

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

must perish indeed. Give your children the rains, there is the beer we have given you." Then the people begin to clap their hands and sound the *nkulungwani;* they sing, swaying their bodies backwards and forwards, and keep saying, "Pardon, pardon." When they have finished propitiating, they take the beer that remains and dip a cup in and give every one to drink, just a little, no one is short, and even the children are made to sip it. When they have finished they take branches of trees and commence to dance and sing—

"This little cloud, and this,
This little cloud, and this,
Let the rains come with this little cloud.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Krōle.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Krōle."

When they come to the village they find an old woman has drawn water in readiness, and put it at the doorway, and the people begin to dip in their branches and wave them aloft, scattering the drops, and then they see the rain come in heavy storm-clouds.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

X

THE LOTS

753 791 I. If a man be ill, his companion goes off and seeks the oracle man. He comes outside his hut and hails him, "Zikomo." The owner says, "Yes, come in here." And the man enters the hut, and says, "We have come to you that you may trace a spirit for us." Then the man takes out his lots from a little cat's-skin bag, and takes some ashes and rubs the lots with them, and begins to consult them, and says, "Are you nursing some sick person?" And he replies, "Yes, indeed, I have been attending on a sick person; the little thing that is ill is a child, and I cannot get sleep for him (lit. with him), and he will not even eat gruel, and I said, 'But I must go to the oracle man; perhaps there he may follow up for me the spirit which is causing the child to be ill.'" Then he begins to consult the lots, and says, "It is the spirit of the child's grandmother; it is she who is causing the child to be ill." And he who has come to consult the lots replies, "I have heard." And the lots again speak (through the man): "Why do you not keep me in mind, and even my grandchild, you also go without calling me to mind," but if you give the spirit a fowl take it from me, the child is sitting up; when you go and take the fowl, kneel down with it, and say, "Grandmother, there is the fowl on account of which you are taking a life" (*muntu*). Then the man who has come from the road (to consult the lots) says, "Put the spirit of mine back in the bag."

782 755 II. Then he goes home, and takes his fowl, and kneels down with it, and takes a gourd-cup of water,

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

and fills his mouth, and blows the water out in a spray, and says, "Grandmother, there is the fowl for which you are causing a person to be ill; you harden your heart all for the sake of a fowl; go, let your little child alone, that he also shall walk about like his companions do; you must not see fit to take a man, only for the sake of a fowl." Then he takes the fowl and kills it, and plucks it, and cleans it; he roasts the liver, and places it at that side of the hut where his head is towards when he sleeps. When the fowl is cooked, he makes some porridge and dishes it out in little baskets, leaving some in the pot, and commences the propitiation of the spirit, saying, "Here is the fowl we have killed for you; eat of it together, let there not be one who refuses. And there is your portion also, little children; you must eat together and rejoice." And he takes the pot, and says, "And this is yours, old women." And when he has finished propitiating, he takes the porridge and puts it at "the head" of the hut, so that he can eat what is left on the morrow, and then he begins to divide out the food to the people, saying, "You, there is your portion; and you, also, there is yours, and this is yours, old women." And when they have finished eating they clap their hands and sound the *ntungululu*, and then disperse. Next morning, at dawn, they take what they had put at the head, and eat it.

782 755

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

between their legs, and begins one by one, and tells him, "You, you will let three days elapse, the fourth you will die;" and tells another, "You will let four days pass, and on the fifth you die." All of them he speaks to thus. Then he takes some medicine and scatters it, and they rise and begin to run off, and the witch-finder also runs away. At the village, when they have slept three days, they hear so and so is dead, and when four days have gone they hear so and so is dead.

XIII

AN ANGONI PRAYER FOR RAIN

I. When rain does not come, they go to the man with the lots to consult them. He of the lots says, "It is the great spirit; it is she who is keeping the rain from coming." Then all the elders assemble. In the morning at dawn, an ox is taken from the kraal, and the chief stands up and says, "This ox I have given you, our ancestor, seeing that you are keeping the rain from us; give us, your children, rain; look, all men are afflicted because of you." And the elders utter a response, saying, "Hail, chief, spare us, help us, thy people." And when they are answering (thus) the ox makes water, and then people know the spirit has heard. Should it not make water, they say the spirit refused (to do as asked), and leave the ox, and go again to consult the lots. And they kill the ox, and cut off its tail, and put it in a basket, and take also the liver, and put in the basket, and these they go off to the *Kuka*

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

789 hut with, and set it (the basket) down at "the
782 head" against the wall, and say, "There is the ox we have killed for you." Then they bring all the meat and put it in the *Kuka* hut. In the morning the elders rise early to cut it up; every one eats of it.

XIV

THE FUNERAL OF AN NSUTU

766 I. When the chief of the *Asutu* dies, people are not told at first; they hide the fact from them lest his attendants run away. On the day on which they make it known, they seize beforehand youths and maidens, and then every one is told that the chief has died. Then every one assembles and goes to the grave, and they dig and dig a very large "village" (cave) in the grave. When they have dug this cavity, they take the youths and maidens and shave their heads and rub them with oil, streaming down, and red clay. The youths have already their bows in their hands, as if going to the dance, though they are going to die. Then they lift the corpse and make the youths go in first, and the corpse follows. When they come to the cross-ways,
766 they take one of the young men, and sharpening
782 a bamboo, hammer it down through his head with a stone, and the stake grips (lit. bites) the ground. He is sitting upright as if alive, and he is made to hold a bow in his hand. When they come to the grave, they commence to break the legs of the others, and pour the juice of chilies over their heads. (And the reason they do this is because they fear

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

their relations may dig them out, and place them in 766
some other country.) And they throw them to the 782
back of the cave, and take the corpse and lay it on top of them. Then they begin to fill in, the ones in the cave are groaning, "Alas, alas!" When they have finished filling in, they go to the water to bathe. When they return to the village they dance.

XV

THE CHIEF OF THE KUKA AND THE SON-IN-LAW

I. The chief of the *Kuka* hut and his son-in-law 606
once hoed a garden. When the maize grew up, the 539
father-in-law told his son-in-law to build a watch-tower. Then the father-in-law went off and forged some arrow-heads, and gave them to his son-in-law, saying, "There are some arrows, you must keep a look-out with them in the garden here." And the son-in-law received the arrows, and remained at the watch-tower there. One day the wind came [243]
and flattened down all the maize, and his father-in-law came to walk on a round of inspection in the garden, and then he saw that the wind had laid the maize, and he clapped his hands and said, "Oh, to-day I see wonders, those arrow-heads I just forged for him to keep by him [and look at]." And then he went up to the watch-tower, where his son-in-law was, and asked him, saying, "Those arrow-heads I forged, I just forged that you might sleep with them on the watch-tower here?" And the son-

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVI

THE KANONOMERA DANCE

If a person is ill, they go and consult the lots, 753
and then he of the lots says, "It is the spirit of his [791]
grandmother, it is wanting a dance; when you dance 755
that dance, you can take it from us the child is 782
sitting up." And they go to the village and take a
basket of grain, and with it they address the spirit,
saying, "There is the grain for which you are killing
a person; when we have made beer, let us see the
person (who is ill) sitting up." And then they
assemble every one, and the day the beer is strained,
they all come together, and that evening they enter
the hut (where the sick person is), and begin to
clap their hands to rouse the spirit, and then they
see the sick one is trembling and crying out, and
then the people say (to the spirit), "You must not
come with war, it is we who have called you; see
here at the village the drums have come, but let
them depart again without anything happening to
mar the dance." And when they have finished
clapping their hands the dance comes forth, and the 535
drums begin to sound, and they are dancing. He 755
who remembers a song sings it; when one is pos- 782
sessed by a spirit, down he falls, and they drag him 787
out of the dance, and deck him with calico and
skins of animals, and he again enters the circle and
dances. When a person is possessed by a child's
spirit, they bind his calico tightly round him that
it be strong, because that person is wishing to strip
it off, and dance naked, as a child does not wear any-
thing. Should a woman be seized by a man's spirit,
saying, "I am so and so," they deck her with a

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 755 782 787 feather head-dress, and in her hand she holds a little stick (for a spear), and her calico is tied round her waist, and her breasts swing free. The songs they sing at the Kanonomera dance go thus—

533 755 539 What knocks off the dew,
Comes at the early dawn.—(*Repeat.*)

Looking, gazing, we just gaze one at the other.
(*Repeat.*)

When the drum sounds it is the *choinjoli* drum
that brings the spirit.—(*Repeat.*)

Far away there, far away,
Far away there, far away,
Far away where shines white that little cloud,
Far away there, is my bow.

Little quail, little quail, you are picking up the
little grains.
And what if he is,
Are they not his eyes?
It broke his leg for him;
Only hunger, only hunger.

Oh no, indeed, indeed,
Two wives have been too many for him indeed;
Two wives have been too many for him indeed.

You hate me,
You hate me for my being so old.—(*Repeat.*)

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

portant chiefs. The Paramounts have told me that occasionally at 814
their biannual 'meeting of chiefs' and *indunas*, some recital of history is made, especially if they want to quote a precedent or examine an old custom with a view to change. This historical tradition therefore is alive and has a recognized function in regulating Ngoni life. In one area part of it has been written in the vernacular and is used as a school history book.[1] In the other areas the Paramounts have spoken of the need for something of the same kind, as they recognize that with the coming of modern education it is an effective way of training the young in the traditions of the Ngoni past.

In addition to recitals of tradition by 'historians' there are many other reminders of the Ngoni past which are constantly before the people. An adequate examination of Ngoni history as it is expressed in their institutions and standardized behaviour would need an article to itself. I shall only mention here some ways and occasions through which tradition and old Ngoni institutions are brought before the people.

1. The praise songs of chiefs, war songs, regimental songs, names of famous regiments, and prayers for rain. These contain references, [583] often rather obscure, to events and persons in the past. The praise songs are sung, or rather shouted, on special occasions, as when thanking the chief for beer, by members of important clans who alone know the words. The war songs and regimental songs recall the great days of conquest, and are sung and danced in war dress at big gatherings at the Paramount's village or at other chief's villages. The prayers for rain invoke the names of great chiefs in old days, but are [782] now only a memory as they are no longer used in ceremonies—at least in none that I have found so far.

2. The names of prominent landmarks, such as hills and rivers where great chiefs built their villages and fights took place. Herd [823] boys will point out a river and say, 'That is where Mtwalo built when he came from Choma', or 'That hill is where Singu hid in the Azungu war'. The historical events attached to these places are widely known and constantly before people's eyes in the diversified landscape of hills and valleys.

3. Important village names. During the trek north, the names of [621]

[1] In Mwambera's country.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity.
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [87]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [825]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then [753]
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 782
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if [241]
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [726]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [643]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when [177]
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty [177]
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor
in blowing them told them that they would meet a white man

539 726 he had danced before all the sections he began to call '*Uyezwa, uti, Aiyime ngito*', 'Do you hear? Stand to arms.' Immediately section by section got up and rushed forward with noise and whistling deafening the ears. The warriors stood in crowds near the stockade and almost surrounding it. When the army was small, they stood in the shape of a young crescent moon. While they did so, they were blowing their horns and whistling to drown the noise in the stockade.

Very soon the message was heard: '*Utsho njalo yena, uti, Aniqwebana*', 'Thus it is said, let the bulls fight.' On these words the warriors ran at the stockade with one heart and a noise like wind and the country was filled with the tread of their feet. For a short time there would sometimes be silence, then a shout would be heard from a section: '*Nginga pakati: luti loko*', 'I am inside: I of such and such a village.' The man who was first in the stockade would name his village. Then there would be heard, '*Nginawe, wmakwetu*', 'I am with you, comrade.' All the *izinduna* and warriors fought in their own sections but once the army was inside they began to ask for the name of the first man in and those who had been near gave the name of the heroes. So each *induna* knew all about what had happened in his own section before he met the war *induna*, and when the latter reported to the Paramount at home he could tell everything.

Return from war

539 727 Long ago all that was found in the village or stockade (goats, sheep and cattle) belonged of right to the man who had entered first. That was easy when they sent only one company to the attack. All the other things belonged to the finder. Afterwards when all the warriors went to the attack together, it was difficult to distinguish who had got in first and so the spoils went to the man who reached them first. The Paramount had [643] his portion of everything taken. Outside the stockade those who had taken cattle put aside two or three which they said were *amahloma ankosi*, the first taste to the Paramount.

On the return all who had dipped their spears in the blood of their enemies carried what the killed had been wearing and their weapons or bows. If a man had killed a woman he wore her things (that is her ornaments, bark-cloth, etc.). These things were done to fulfil a taboo. When [783] the end of the time of purification came, all those things that were worthless were thrown away or burned, but the beautiful things were kept. Only the very old people wore the clothes of the killed.

When the army was on the way home it looked for bones of animals and burned them and ground them fine like flour, and also made charcoal dust. On the day of arrival some flour was kneaded and bone dust and the charcoal dust each by itself. They painted themselves on the face and on the body. This custom was to show those who had speared an enemy in the fight.

When the army was near their own country the war *induna* chose some messengers to go and give the news of the fighting and the names of those who had been killed. These messengers went to the important *izinduna*, and from them the news went quickly to the Paramount, headmen, and elders. The women were not told quietly; even if a man knew that his son

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[576] salutation being '*Amehlo amhlope*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Buyani*', 'Return', along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebo*' also with the clan name. This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Echigodhlweni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amakanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[824] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Po*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[834] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Po*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of heroes

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
703 then they were called again together to dance the *ligubo*. On that day bulls
[812] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the hero of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the heroes of the sections
[837] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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sleeping on mats they slept on grass until the required days were finished, and they scattered to their homes.

This account brings out certain elements in the ritual surrounding the *tonga*. The word *tonga* in the Ngoni language means 'rod', and was used in the very ancient folk tale *Intonga yetusi*, 'The Brass Rod'. There was no rod, however, nor anything representing one, among the medicines or ingredients which together made up the *tonga*. A descendant of one of the early 'guardians' of the *tonga* said about it:

[778]

¶ The *tonga* is the horn of a sheep, and the horn by itself has no real power, but there are other things which give it power like the rib of a lion.

It is clear that in the past the *tonga* was regarded as giving protection to the Ngoni people, particularly by providing medicine at the accession of a new Paramount when he needed medicine for strengthening.

Other informants from the Phungwako clan said that the *tonga* provided the medicine with which the Paramount washed at the time of *incwala*, the feast of the first-fruits. No one alive in the 1930's had seen that ceremony and the special songs had been forgotten. A tradition remained that the Paramount had to undergo seclusion and ritual washing with medicines before the first green crops could be eaten. [178]

Throughout the references to the *tonga* there was no hint that it was ever worshipped or addressed in any way similar to the invocations to the ancestor spirits. It was clearly a 'medicine' possessing great power and guarded as a national treasure. The ingredients of the medicine were kept in a particular way, in a particular place, in the guardianship of a particular person. I have seen the ingredients, the place and the guardian, but I gave a promise not to reveal them. I was allowed to handle the objects and, after doing so, I had to perform the ritual act of washing my hands with cowdung. This was the form of ritual cleansing practised by the Paramount after using the medicines. [515 783]

There were two ways in which these medicines were used by the Paramount to strengthen him on his accession. He washed in the kraal with the medicines whipped into a foam. The old men said that in ancient times the water for making the medicines had to be fetched from the sea. In addition to washing he had to eat meat in which the medicines were mixed. The majority of informants said that beef was used for this ritual eating, while others said that, as in the ritual for preparing the *tonga*, the meat taken was sheep. This ritual was said to have taken place for the last time at the death of Cikusi and the accession of Gomani I, though it was hinted that it had been performed at the accession of the Ngoni chief of the Maseko clan now living in Portuguese territory.

It was clear that the Maseko Paramounts made use of the *tonga* as a royal medicine both at their accession and in time of war. The reference [766]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Cattle in the ancestor cult 825

The Ngoni, unlike the Swazi as described by Dr. Kuper,[1] had no clear ideas about the life after death as lived by their immediate ancestors with whom they had associated in their lifetime. They did not, as the Swazi did, picture them living somewhere surrounded with cattle and other familiar creatures and objects. The importance of bringing the spirit back (*ukubuyisa idlozi*) to the house where it would be cared for signified two main things for them. The first was the continuous association of the spirit of the dead with the living persons in the community to which he had belonged, through the individuals belonging to the house, the actual hut where the sacrificial vessels were kept, and the cattle which belonged to the house. The other significant point was that contact with the returned spirit, and through him with the spirits of more remote ancestors, could only be established in the village containing the cattle of the house to which the dead man had belonged. 769 775 [171]

We shall be examining some aspects of the ritual of addressing the ancestral spirits in a later chapter of this section. Here we shall establish three constituent parts of the ancestor cult in which cattle were essential links between those taking part in the cult and the spirits whom they addressed. 764

The first part was the group of ceremonies which took place at death, at the burial, at the first ritual shaving and at bringing back the spirit. A text by Lopati Nzunga (see Chapter IV, p. 200) illustrates how three parts of a beast—the skin, the kidney fat (*nseso*) and the gall bladder (*nyongo*)—were considered essential for Ngoni burial. It was interesting to find in Blantyre among educated Ngoni who were Christians and occupied clerical and commercial posts, that they had given up the cow-skin for wrapping the corpse and substituted a coffin. But they admitted confidentially that in most Ngoni funerals the use of the *nseso* and the *nyongo* was customary. After the burial the ritual shaving, shared in by all who attended the funeral, was accompanied by the killing of a beast and the consumption of its meat, though with no ritual significance beyond its association with the purification of the mourners and their integration as a group. From six to twelve months later the second shaving and the bringing back of the spirit was also accompanied by killing a beast and eating its meat. These ceremonies expressed the sense of loss felt for the human person who had died, the sorrow of the mourners, their successive acts of purification which served to bring them together, and the final bringing of the spirit to live among them again. As we have seen, each stage of the death and mourning rites was accompanied by the eating of a beast or the use of certain parts of a beast. The cattle of the house to which the dead person belonged were used to bury him or her, to strengthen the mourners, and to reintegrate the spirit with the living community. 769 825 [177] 765 769 825 [783]

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 186.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

grave with the little shelf at one side, the corpse wrapped in a cow-skin, the *nasso* and *nyongo* on the neck and forehead, the bent legs and upright sitting position facing south-east, and washing the face of the corpse at the grave side with a bunch of grass. On this occasion the Ngoni form of burial was followed by the Christian burial service after the grave had been filled in. During the digging of the grave hymns set to the tunes of Ngoni war songs were sung by the onlookers until the body was brought out of the house. After that there was complete silence while the corpse was lowered into the grave and the grave was filled up, until the service began. This combination of Christian and Ngoni ritual I witnessed many times. One of the missions set its face against the use of the cow-skin and declared that no Christian could be buried except in a coffin, but even this was sometimes disregarded and the full Ngoni ritual was carried out, followed by a Christian service.

After the body had been put in the grave and when the first calling back of the spirit from the bush had reminded the living that they had to care for this new spirit, a series of further duties faced them. These have been referred to as the first and second shaving. The first shaving we shall consider later as a necessary purification before eating the meat of the funeral rites which brought back the spirit right into the village. The second shaving, which took place from six to twelve months after the funeral, was the prelude to the time when the new ancestral spirit came, or was brought back, to its final lodging. The importance of this last rite was emphasized by Lopati Nzunga in his account of the ritual which took place at the tomb put up to the memory of Gomani I (see p. 165) When the building of the tomb under the supervision of Ngoni in the area was finished, many leading Ngoni from all parts, including those from the towns, gathered there for two days. Every morning before dawn they went up the forest paths singing war songs, as they did later at the time of the death of Bambo Manga, to call back the spirit from the bush where it had spent some thirty years. After a Christian service held by the tomb, the Ngoni *alumuzana* 'brought back' the spirit to Lizulu, Gomani I's village, to the house of NaMagagula his big wife. She was a Christian, so could not take the care of the spirit in her hut, but another of the widows of Gomani I, NaNsambi, who was in the house of NaMagagula, was chosen as guardian. Earlier in the proceedings, when they had decided that the tomb was going to be built, a diviner was consulted, the spirits were addressed in the kraal, the cattle showed that they agreed, and a beast from the herd of the house of NaMagagula was sacrificed and the meat offered to the ancestral spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Then they built a new hut for NaNsambi and put in it new sacrificial vessels. When the spirit of Gomani I was finally brought home it was to this hut and guardianship that it came. They were uncertain about what had happened to the spirit in the thirty years interval and it did not seem advisable to probe

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The ritual of the purification of the living

The living had certain rites to carry out on their own behalf which, if omitted, would bring the displeasure of the ancestors upon them. These were essentially purification rites for they removed the defilement of death from each individual who was closely related to, or had performed some office for, the dead; and through the rites the houses and utensils were cleansed, and the living community was re-integrated after the loss of one of its members. Shaving, burning the hair and mourning bands, and washing in a stream, were the prescribed acts for all who were connected by kinship or marriage with the deceased, or who had taken part in preparing the body or digging the grave. These were a succession of rites as we have seen, and emphasized the need for ritual cleansing over a long period, and for renewed integration between the living. 783 768

In addition to this generally practised ritual, there were some acts of ritual purification of houses and utensils found only among the Swazi clans. One informant told of the ritual washing of hoes used to dig the grave in the blood of a newly killed sheep. Several others spoke of the cleansing with sheep dung of the huts of the widows of a dead man at the time of the second shaving. On each occasion when meat was offered to the ancestors after a death, the living who ate the meat had to be made ceremonially clean through the act of shaving, followed by ritual washing at the river.

The ritual of addressing the spirits

There was no set formula for addressing the ancestral spirits but there were three parts in all the prayers which I heard and which were recited to me. The first was the naming of the ancestors. The leading clans in the two kingdoms demonstrated the way in which they prayed to their ancestors by repeating the names of successive heads of the clan. They began with the name of the ancestor who had died in Swaziland and those of his father and grandfather and other forbears if known. The Nhlane clan, for example, told me 'We pray: *UNdina ka UNchaba ka UMulawu ka UMazongolo*' and then added: 'UNdina died in our village of Hoho before we left Swaziland and he was buried in the kraal in Hoho.' The Mhlambi clan in central Ngoniland named their ancestor UNgekwazi who died in Swaziland, but they did not know any names before him. Other clans in the central kingdom used the name of their ancestor who crossed the Zambesi with Mputa. The most important element in the prayer, therefore, was the naming of the 'big spirit', sometimes coupled with more remote ancestors. 769 782

The second element in addressing the spirits was to call their attention to the beast which was to be offered to them if they 'agreed'. 'Here is your beast' was the formula. Although three or four beasts or even

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and massaged them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

845 The other ethnic groups surrounding the Ngoni in Nyasa- [184] land considered it disastrous if a child was born face down or with the buttocks first, and twins were dreaded as ill omens. The Ngoni shared none of these beliefs and were particularly considerate for the mother of twins, often killing [262] a beast to give the mother meat and broth to increase her [853] flow of milk. The only notice the Ngoni took of the method of presentation at birth was that they gave a child a name [553] indicative of such a birth. They gave special names for the first and second twin born. If one twin died it was buried under the veranda of the hut and a smooth stone was placed [766] on top. This stone was used for sitting on, and the surviving twin was held on it when being washed.

Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were 783 considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

over the age of ten had to avoid the hut and its inhabitants altogether. The husband slept either in the boys' dormitory or with the husband of the woman who was looking after his wife. 846 783

This ritual uncleanness extended to any food once it was carried into the hut. Ngoni women used to demonstrate their love for their husbands by stopping cooked food being carried into the hut, and sending it instead by the child who brought it to her husband where the men were gathered at the gate of the kraal. [593]

Ritual cleansing of a hut and its occupants took place in stages. At the time of 'bringing out the child', which I shall shortly describe, the hut itself was made clean again. It was thoroughly swept, and the floor and veranda were smeared with cowdung. Cowdung was used habitually for smearing on floors, prior to polishing them with a smooth stone. But fresh wet cowdung rubbed on the hands was also used for ritual cleansing after some 'dangerous' act such as touching sacred objects or administering the royal medicines. In the case of its use after childbirth it was undoubtedly used in the ritual sense, for the operation was called 'making the hut safe for the husband to sleep in'. The household goods were then put back in their places, anyone could go into the hut, and the husband returned to sleep there, though on a separate mat on his, the right-hand side, of the fireplace. If the child was a first baby, the husband's return to sleep in the hut was delayed, since the senior women stayed on to instruct the young mother how to take care of the baby at night, and especially how to be careful not to smother it as it lay beside her on her mat. [237]

'Coming out of the hut'

The falling of the cord was the signal that the baby was ready to 'come out of the hut' and be presented to the village. Ngoni women used to hasten the falling of the cord by burning a maize cob, and squeezing into the ashes the juice of the 846 851 278

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5

within about four months of purchase, the money is refunded, unless it is shown that the owner is to blame. In the case of a sheep or goat, this period is reduced to about six weeks. 233 [672]

It is not the custom to hire out cattle, either for ploughing, or for milk. If a cow brings forth twin calves together, she and her offspring are presented to the headman, as the cow is supposed to be an exceptionally good one; and the headman in return hands over three other animals of similar ages. [427] [431]

V.—Social Organization: Military.

1. *Preparations for War.*

The Ngoni expeditions against the Achewa consisted principally of raids at times when the crops were ripening and they were short of food. At such times the young warriors who thirsted for war signified their desire by dancing outside the house of the chief. After they had danced for three evenings, the chief fixed a day, food was prepared, and warriors were summoned from the neighbouring villages. The *sing'anga* made medicine to protect them against the weapons of their enemies, and as the army filed past him, he dipped a hammer into the medicine; and struck each man on the chest with it. The best-known *sing'anga* under Chief Chiwere was Chimsange, and his name is still held in veneration. 721 726 756

2. *Methods.*

The Angoni usually came upon their foe unawares, and attacked with a rush. If they met with a stout resistance from a stockaded village, they surrounded it and camped till lack of water forced the besieged to sally forth. Quarter was rarely given to the men. 726

3. *Subsequent Proceedings.*

On their return, all who had killed a man repaired immediately to the *sing'anga* who mixed medicine with goats' milk. The warriors dipped their fingers in the mixture and put them into their mouths. Then they dipped again into the mixture, and rubbed it on their arms and legs, after which they stood up and shouted "O-o-o!" This form of purification was undergone in order to drive away the *chiwanda* or affliction which they would otherwise suffer from the spirits of their dead enemies, and until they were cleansed they might not have any connexion with women. Next day, they burned goats' bones, pounded them and mixed them in water, smearing the mixture first on cheeks and throat and then over the remainder of their persons. After this they proceeded to their homes and, having decorated themselves, displayed their reasonable pride by jumping about before the chief, who sent for a bull to be cooked and eaten. Prisoners were paraded, and when a man had taken three or more, one of them was always returned to him by the chief. 727 [783] [755]

The practice of 464
returning from work in the south about every two years or 177
so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, 561
mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young [182]
men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten 582
years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a
further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place im- 885
mediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young 584
man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some [565]
time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's 885
home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child
is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the
state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony [785]
meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice [789]
associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house.
While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked [574]
quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and [535]
relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special [533]
dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of [831]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 766 184 Dr. Steele, one of the early medical missionaries in northern Ngoniland, was present at the burial of Mbelwa I and left an account of it which is quoted by Dr. Elmslie.[1] He spoke of the great crowds of men coming to mourn armed with spears and shields, and some with guns. They came in companies, as if they were the military bands coming for mobilization from the head villages. They marched first with their shields held high over their heads, and then laid them down and clasped their hands behind their heads, advancing towards and retreating from the grave and keeping up a continuous mourning cry of '*Baba be*'. Three days elapsed between the death and the burial. During that time two graves were dug, in order that all the Paramount's possessions might be buried with him or beside him. When the graves were ready, the kraal was cleared of all but the married men who had the head-ring. Meantime the wives of the Paramount, carrying his shields, were advancing towards the grave and retreating, a few steps at a time. They finally went back to their houses, dressed themselves in skins, and returned in single file on their hands and knees. They withdrew as the corpse was brought out and placed in the grave, and other women came with the Paramount's possessions, such as pipes, wooden head-rests and shields, and all were put into the graves. The men stood in circles round the graves with their shields over their heads.

Among the central Ngoni Rattray recorded an account of the funeral rites of Cikusi in 1891, which I was able to check with more than one old man who had been present. There was also the funeral of Bambo Manga which I witnessed in 1937, where the ritual followed was identical with that described by the old men for the Paramount Cikusi, with one exception: that her possessions but not her body were cremated by a stream.

The chief differences between the northern and central Ngoni in the funeral rites at the death of the Paramount were that the central Ngoni Paramounts of the Maseko clan were cremated and not buried, and there was no public mourning, but instead a series of war-dances. There [644] were two other distinctive features among the central Ngoni: formerly [786] the individual known as the 'royal shadow' died with the Paramount; and from the time of the actual death to the time of the cremation there was a period of licence and lawlessness called *ciponde*. This latter phenomenon may have existed among the northern Ngoni, but I did not ask about it specifically when I was there, and I did not hear it referred to. I was made aware of it forcibly at the death of Bambo Manga when my cook and houseboy immediately dumped all their possessions in my hut as the only safe place during the time of *ciponde*. Rattray's account of the death of Cikusi also mentioned this practice.

In the traditions of the central Ngoni it was recorded that only the Maseko Paramounts in the direct line were cremated, and not the

[1] Elmslie, W. A. op. cit. p. 270.

l:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *nduna*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony in which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 203*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*ff*, 109*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 825 787 In another part of the cult cattle played a still more direct part. When a diviner advised that prayer should be made to the spirit of a leading man on behalf of someone of his clan who was sick, the man who was in charge of the *gogo* section of the village informed the head of the clan or *banja* and they agreed to address the spirits, and to offer a sacrifice if the spirits were willing. The sign of willingness on the part of the spirits was for the selected beast, when it had been driven out of the kraal, to urinate or make dung. If either happened they said the spirit was willing, and arranged a time for the prayer and sacrifice. If neither happened, if the beast just stood still or lay down, the spirits had 'refused' and the sacrifice could not go forward. This sign or lack of sign by the beast could not be ignored, and was a further illustration that the Ngoni considered cattle to be essential as a medium of approach to the spirits of their ancestors.

When the beast 'refused', those responsible called the diviner again and asked for an explanation. He produced a reason and advised them to try again, and the process was repeated until the sign of agreement was given. There was always anxiety when the beast 'refused', partly because of the delay in sacrificing and partly owing to an uneasy feeling that they had left something undone and the ancestral spirit was not pleased with them.

The main part of the ritual of sacrifice to an ancestral spirit was killing the beast, offering the meat to the spirits and the eating of the meat by the principal persons concerned. This we shall examine more closely in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER III

THE ROLE OF THE DIVINER IN THE ANCESTOR CULT

791 769 It has been apparent in the chapters on the Paramount and on warfare in Part II, and in the two previous chapters of Part IV, that divining by an accredited person was a necessary preliminary for sacrificing to and addressing the ancestors.[1] I never heard or received any account of the ancestor cult in which divining was not specifically mentioned as the first step in the performance of the ritual. Moreover, all the diviners of good standing were themselves operating because they had contact with and were possessed by the spirit of an ancestor. By virtue of this direct contact with the spirit world the diviners claimed their special powers.

[1] The one possible exception was the first-fruits ceremony, but this had been given up before the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland, and the old men had no clear memories of the ritual followed.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

791 an *isanusi* today". When he entered the place of his sister, NaNdumbu, he was dreaming. If there was a war he could say "You must not go to that war because all the people will be killed." He was just dreaming and dancing his *isanusi* dance. When he danced that dance on the chief's *bwalo* the people praised him with special praises.'

791 Two informants remembered fragments of the songs sung by NaNdumbu and her brother, and these songs were also sung by the old
533 *izanusi* in the northern kingdom. I give here the Ngoni versions with an English translation, omitting the repetition of lines and the 'sounds' which accompanied the singing:

[539]

Uyezwa mihlolo	Do you see the omens?
Inkanyezo ipuma	The star comes out,
Ipuma yanga	It comes out in the East.
. . . . .	. . . . .
Ubaba uyangibiza	My father is calling me.
Hamba ekaya	Go home.
Indaba zikuyandela	Things have turned against you,
Hamba ekaya	Go home.

791 Although these diviners acted at times on their own initiative, this did not prevent their being called on in time of crisis to diagnose the reason
●787 for disaster or sickness. *Izanusi* who used their own medicines to smell
237 could prophesy and speak on their own initiative as well as waiting to be called on. These medicines were said to induce the dreams on which the prophecy was based, and they were generally contained in the tail of a gnu or in a sheep's horn, or some other horn.

787 Below this category of the prophets, whether *abantu benhloko* or *izanusi*, came those who used lots when called on to diagnose a par-
791 ticular situation. These were often men who dreamed, or who used their own medicines to receive messages from their ancestral spirits, but instead of announcing their message directly, they brought with them some form of lots which they used when they were consulted, and gave their diagnosis as a result of observing the lots. Sometimes they sang their own songs, accompanied by dancing, which led to an almost trance-like condition; sometimes they used their lots without any previous working up of an emotional state through song or dance. I never met any of the dreamer type of prophet who used no medicines and no lots. There was general agreement among the Ngoni that they had died out, that their main service had been in times of war, and that the number of men or women who possessed such powers had, even in the past, been very small indeed. I did, however, see one diviner at work who used the song and dance technique with the lots, and two who used the lots without song or dance.

756 The *isanusi* whom I saw in the northern kingdom was divining for
787 sickness at the request of a party of people who had come to consult him

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

about a sick relative. He asked for a preliminary payment in cash from me before he would say anything in front of me, having already received the customary present of fowls from the sick man's relatives. There was an atmosphere of part pantomime, part reluctant performance in front of a stranger whose presence seemed to trouble him more than it did his clients. He wore a python-skin cap with beads dangling from it, and carried the tail of a black cow bound with lead and a small skin bag with the lots in it. At first he sat holding the tail in his hands and sniffing it occasionally. Then he suddenly shook the lots out of the bag—six large beans called *kulumo* and about twenty small round nuts called *mapi*. He put snuff on the top of each bean, sprinkled snuff on the nuts, picked the nuts up in both hands, shook his hands together and threw the nuts on the ground. Some fell near the big beans, others rolled between them. He looked intently at them, then at the group waiting to consult him. 'There is someone who is sick,' he said to them and the group replied '*Siyavuma*' (we agree). They continued to chant *siyavuma* in a low tone over and over again, with an almost mesmeric effect. He meantime went on to describe the sickness, that it was a pain inside the man (the chanting was loud), that it had been on the right side (less response), in the stomach (less response), on the left side (loud response). At intervals he waved the tail in the air and knocked the leaded end on the ground to emphasize the louder response. He did not specify the complaint but advised the people consulting him to go home and kill a goat as a sacrifice to their ancestors, and give the sick man some medicines which he would sell them.

It may have been the mixture of a real consultation with my visit which produced his slightly mountebank performance, and it may also have been his combination of the role of diviner with peddling medicines which the people present for the consultation evidently expected to obtain from him. This aspect of his performance impressed itself on the Ngoni informant who was with me. He was slightly contemptuous throughout, even when the songs were being sung and taken down. He kept on muttering 'This is Nsenga,' and said afterwards as we were going away that this diviner worked only for ordinary people and their sickness, as witnessed by his telling them to sacrifice a goat, and that he would not have been acknowledged by the real Ngoni. He was making comparisons all the time between the 'people of the head' and the diviners of this type, illustrating the Ngoni esteem for the real dreamers, and the slight, sometimes great, contempt for those who combined divining with recommending medicines as remedies.

The contrast between the performance of this diviner and that of the two *izanusi* whom I saw at work in the central kingdom was considerable. My long residence in Mcakhatha and the entrée I had to all that was taking place in connexion with the sickness of Bambo Manga no doubt helped to give confidence to the diviners. The chief and his

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

123 brother arranged for first one *isanusi* and then, when he became ill, for another to come and see me. In each case they concluded that I was
791 consulting them and foretold what would happen and gave me advice, warning and assurance. There was great seriousness of purpose and no mountebank atmosphere, even though they came to the courtyard of my hut and saw round them all the paraphernalia of a European's camping equipment.

791 The first diviner, who was of a Venda clan, was a very old man and greatly respected and trusted by the Nzunga clan, who were looking after Bambo Manga in Mcakhatha and who had called him several times to divine for them during her illness. His story was that he was the son of an *isanusi* and when the signs of his initiation began to appear before he reached puberty, his father recognized the fainting and the pain and refusal to eat, and said 'This child will be a diviner also.' The spirit who came to him in dreams was his father's father who had died south of the Zambesi, where his father had been born.

This man was very definite about the kind of situations for which he could and would divine and the type of advice he would give. Questioned further on this point, he gave in this order: sickness, journeys, auspicious days for holding an *ngoma* dance or a hunt, 'absent treatment' of relatives in trouble in the south asked for by letter, sickness of cattle, moving a village to a new site. He refused contemptuously any divining about stealing or death, or agricultural practices such as choosing new gardens or beginning cultivation. Neither he nor the people with him made any specific reference to the different roles of an *isanusi* among the Ngoni and the local Cewa and other tribes, but since they used the same terms for divining, *kuombeza maula* (to throw the lots), they were careful to point out what the Ngoni diviners did *not* do. In the case of sickness due
[755] to 'spirits troubling', of auspicious days for journeys and other events, of cattle sickness, of moving villages, his invariable advice was to sacrifice a beast to the spirits. Most of the inquiries addressed to him were about sickness. When such an inquiry came to him in his village, he smelled his medicines and asked of *his* ancestral spirit 'Is the man likely to live or not? Who is troubling him? What shall he do?'

787 The first occasion on which I saw him divine was in the hut of a widow of the former chief, Njolomole I, which had been newly swept
791 and a new fire made. The chief and his uncle sat on either side of the fire, the diviner on the right-hand side of the door and I on the left on the woman's side. The diviner was told to begin. He pulled out his *ntibo*, the stem of a gourd, which was wrapped in bark and cloth and had inside it the medicine, and which was waxed at each end. He scraped bits of the *nuhu* root into a pot with a little water in it. He put the *ntibo* in the water for a moment and then took it out and rubbed it in his hands. He put it under a flat food basket and swept his hand over the top of the basket once or twice before putting the pot on top. He gazed

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

into the pot, which he kept turning with his right hand, and he murmured in a low voice from time to time, and shook his head. The only words which were audible were '*Inu tamverani*', 'You, please listen.' After three minutes he tried to lift the pot, but it seemed to stick to the basket. All this time he was very calm and unexcited, though the pot appeared to stick every time. Finally he said the spirits of the Maseko chiefs were not willing for a sacrifice to be made. The reason, he said, was that I was there and they were afraid of a white face, because the Europeans had killed Gomani I and the spirits 'were ashamed' before white people. The following day the lots were tried again when I was not present and the spirits gave the diviner the sign that they agreed to the sacrifice.

About three weeks later, at the suggestion of the head of the *gogo* house in the village, he came to see me, having been asked to tell me about his initiation. He treated the call as a genuine summons to a consultation, however, and performed for me the ritual I had seen him carry out in the hut. This time he consulted the spirits of his father and grandfather. I had made no specific inquiry of him, but he asked his spirits for advice about my movements, whether I should go or stay, addressing them with '*Tamverani*', 'Please listen.' The pot came off the basket after the second effort and he looked at the bits of *nsika* root as they floated inside. Then he looked up at me and said 'You must not leave here. Perhaps you were thinking of returning to the Paramount's village. You should not do this because my spirits tell me that the spirits here want you to stay.'

When this old diviner became ill, another one of an Ntumba clan was called to Mcakhatha to divine about the illness of one of the leading women. His father had also been a diviner, a dreamer who did not dance or throw lots for sickness, but told of things to come, especially about war. His father had been in the Tengo country in Songea with Mputa and had spoken Ngoni there, and the spirit of his father's father was the one who came to him at his initiation as a young man. His equipment and technique were slightly different from those of the former diviner. He had a small duiker horn which had medicine inside it of the *ciwambalame* tree roots and, like the *ntibo*, was waxed at the end and rounded so that it could swivel on its base. At first he smelled the horn and made deep belching noises, almost like retching. He put the horn in an empty gourd cup, waxed end down, and left it by his left thigh. Out of a skin bag he took ten small half-shells of nuts, four large and six small, which he said he got from the Venda people. They were called *nihlobo*. He arranged them face down in front of him, the larger ones in the middle. He gathered them up again, smelled them, belched and threw them down. Five fell face down and five face up. He picked them up and threw them five times until they fell in the position he wanted, muttering as he did so '*ai, ai*' (no, no), and finally '*akondwera*' (they are happy).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

787 791 He left the shells, picked up a small rattle, a little gourd with stones in it, and knocked it on his knees. Meantime he picked up the gourd with the horn in it, and held it on the palm of his left hand with the base resting on his extended fingers. The horn rocked on its base inside the gourd and came to rest, touching one edge of the gourd or another and sometimes standing erect without touching the rim of the gourd. During this part he was much disturbed and sweat ran down his face while he murmured to his spirits '*Nanga inu*' (What are you doing?), '*Mubodza ndithu*' (You are surely lying), '*Ai ai ndithudi*' (No, no truly). Finally the horn came to rest against the rim of the gourd towards him, and he put it down, and wiped his forehead. Then he said to me 'You will be ill, but you will recover. You will not die in this country. So do not fear. You will not die'.[1]

During the rocking of the horn in the gourd the diviner was listening to and speaking to his spirits. His obvious distress at first, and his subsequent relief were genuine and onlookers said that with this man such swaying of fortunes, through appeal to his spirits, often took place. He was considered a very powerful diviner, in that he could argue with the spirits and did not depend only on what the lots said or take them as the final word. His combination of the use of the medicated horn with the throwing of lots was considered a sign of power. He said himself that he always knew the day before when a man was coming to consult him about someone who was ill and that night he dreamed and his spirits told him what to say.

791 Several references have been made to the initiation of a diviner, which was an essential preparation for his role, and an experience which marked him out as different from other men. Both the diviners whom I saw at work in the central kingdom gave short accounts of what happened before they became diviners. In the first (*a*) that of the very old man, most emphasis was laid on the finding and preparing of the medicines. In the second (*b*) the emphasis was on the re-birth element of the initiation, denoted by the expression *ukutwasa* which was used for the reappearance of the new moon after the period of darkness.

¶ (*a*) When I began to divine I slept, and in the night I dreamed dreams, and they said go and fetch a tree, its name is *nsiku*, and when you have done so take the handle of a gourd and put some of the *nsiku* inside, and shut each end of the handle with wax and on the wax put beads. Find a pot and pour water in it and put in pieces of *nsiku* bark. Take that handle and put it on the ground and cover it with an *nsengwa* and put the pot on top and what you say will be true.

They told me just to go anywhere to find that tree. These dreams came to me when I was a young man. After these dreams I was very ill, near to death, and another thing I had pains in my heart; and my mother and my father thought I was dead.

[1] This prophecy was remembered by the people and often quoted when two weeks later I was attacked by a swarm of wild bees and nearly died.

that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife, the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration. Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

The general principle that no court action involving the husband's sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 585 III. Then they spread a mat and go and bring her husband, and set them down on the mat side by side and begin to shave his head. As the hair falls the people throw down beads. Then they take a stick and lay it across the legs of the man and woman so that each may know it is that stick that will beat them [if they do wrong]. When they have finished shaving the man, they bring oil and rub the bodies of the man and woman. When it is dark the old women escort the girl to her husband's hut. The *ndiwo* relish is cooking on the fire. [243] During the night the woman rises and puts some salt in the pot. Next morning, before dawn, before the villagers have opened their doors, the woman goes off, and gives some of the relish to her mother, and to the old woman who was mistress of the ceremony. This relish she just sets down at the door, and when they open they find it, and rub it on their feet and under their arm-pits; little children just eat it. If she have any relations who are at a distance, they sharpen a little piece of bamboo and stick the relish on the end (and put it aside) that the distant one, when he returns, shall also rub his feet with it. Perhaps the absent one, should he not have heard that these events have happened when he comes to the village, and should say, "Give me water that I may drink," they refuse him, but with a purpose, even though the water is there, and go and bring the relish that first he may rub some on his feet. It may be the woman discovers that her husband is impotent, then she just stays in her hut and does not come forth to distribute the relish. Then the old women [who know the reason] will persuade the man, saying, "Go off to the man with the lots to consult them" [to see what is to be done]. When he goes off (on this errand) some other man is called in, and he

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVI

THE KANONOMERA DANCE

If a person is ill, they go and consult the lots, 753
and then he of the lots says, "It is the spirit of his [791]
grandmother, it is wanting a dance; when you dance 755
that dance, you can take it from us the child is 782
sitting up." And they go to the village and take a basket of grain, and with it they address the spirit, saying, "There is the grain for which you are killing a person; when we have made beer, let us see the person (who is ill) sitting up." And then they assemble every one, and the day the beer is strained, they all come together, and that evening they enter the hut (where the sick person is), and begin to clap their hands to rouse the spirit, and then they see the sick one is trembling and crying out, and then the people say (to the spirit), "You must not come with war, it is we who have called you; see here at the village the drums have come, but let them depart again without anything happening to mar the dance." And when they have finished
clapping their hands the dance comes forth, and the 535
drums begin to sound, and they are dancing. He 755
who remembers a song sings it; when one is pos- 782
sessed by a spirit, down he falls, and they drag him 787
out of the dance, and deck him with calico and skins of animals, and he again enters the circle and dances. When a person is possessed by a child's spirit, they bind his calico tightly round him that it be strong, because that person is wishing to strip it off, and dance naked, as a child does not wear anything. Should a woman be seized by a man's spirit, saying, "I am so and so," they deck her with a

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

535
755 feather head-dress, and in her hand she holds a little
782 stick (for a spear), and her calico is tied round her
787 waist, and her breasts swing free. The songs they sing at the Kanonomera dance go thus—

533 What knocks off the dew,
755 Comes at the early dawn.—(*Repeat.*)
539

Looking, gazing, we just gaze one at the other. (*Repeat.*)

When the drum sounds it is the *choinjoli* drum that brings the spirit.—(*Repeat.*)

Far away there, far away,
Far away there, far away,
Far away where shines white that little cloud,
Far away there, is my bow.

Little quail, little quail, you are picking up the little grains.
And what if he is,
Are they not his eyes?
It broke his leg for him;
Only hunger, only hunger.

Oh no, indeed, indeed,
Two wives have been too many for him indeed;
Two wives have been too many for him indeed.

You hate me,
You hate me for my being so old.—(*Repeat.*)

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity.
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [827]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [825]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then [753]
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 782
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [241]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [726]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when [843]
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to [177]
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor [177]
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

787 [177] rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned. Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment. 795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a 791 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancien successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities. 695 The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When 766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before 849 their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We 177 seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the [643] only independent tribe is Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government. [634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

uniting a married couple are weak as compared with say, the Bemba.[21] 593
The bride is anointed with gall, and carries the gall bladder in her hair back to her own village as a sign that she has been through the marriage ceremony and has been instructed in her wifely duties by her husband's kinsfolk and neighbours. But the husband himself is usually not there, 'that day is not his work', and I once saw a man quietly drinking on one side of the village while his bride was being anointed on the other. In general it is not until much later that husband and wife appear together in ceremonial situations. The personal association of husband and wife begins in darkness and the privacy of the hut. Later the wife will have validated her status as a married woman, and can appear as such in public alongside her husband without embarrassment.

It is when a woman is pregnant that her husband's actions are most 843
liable to affect her mystically. In general a man may commit 839
adultery and his wife has no case against him; but when she is pregnant he is under a moral obligation to sleep only with her and, if he is a polygynist, with his other wives. His adultery endangers her life, for it is believed that her labour will be difficult and she or the child may die. The pregnant woman is in mortal danger if she herself commits adultery and there is a common obligation of fidelity on both man and wife throughout pregnancy, accompanied in the eyes of some people by a positive obligation to copulate together so that the foetus may grow strong in the womb. When labour proves 845
difficult, the midwife calls on the husband to confess the adulteries he committed while his wife was pregnant so that the child can be born. She may also tell the woman to confess.[22] If the child is born dead, the woman's relatives begin to suspect that the man confessed only some of his adulteries and concealed others, thereby killing the child. We have already noted that if the woman dies the husband must offer a beast to her kinsfolk (pp. 39f).

From the birth of the child until its umbilical cord has fallen off 846
and it has been doctored, the husband should not sleep with anyone 788
at all, not even with his other wives. He can resume sexual relations with them after the cord has fallen but he does not sleep with the mother of the child until about three months after the birth, when he has ritual intercourse with her and the child is again doctored. While the infant is sleeping the husband has *coitus interruptus* with its mother and allows his semen to fall on her thighs. She smears the semen over her thighs and then takes up the child and gives it to her husband, who rests it on his hips. After a moment he hands the infant back to his wife who also rests it on her hips. The child is then put back to sleep on the mat beside the couple. This ritual intercourse is obligatory in that if it is omitted it is believed the child

[21] Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 113.
[22] Cf. Rattray, op. cit., p. 105, and H. F. Barnes, 'The birth of a Ngoni child' *Man*, xlix (1949), p. 89.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

will die. The child is in danger from the illness known as *mdulo* throughout the period from birth until the resumption of intercourse between its parents. It is not until after this ceremony, known as 'taking up the child'[23] that the mystical link between man, wife, and child is broken and the man free to commit adultery without mystical retribution. Thus while there are definite rights and obligations between husband and wife which can be enforced in the courts or are susceptible to the pressure of public opinion there are also in the critical situations of pregnancy and childbirth other mystical forces operating which unite the couple to a greater extent than at any other time. To a lesser extent the same principle operates when a woman menstruates. Her husband is in danger from her menstrual blood. She may not lie on the same mat with him and if he has a bed she must lie on the floor. If he has intercourse with her while she is menstruating he will contract an illness called *lugola*[24] whose symptoms are a very black face, nasal discharge, and continual feeling of cold. After death a man's widows are in danger of *mdulo* if they commit adultery during the first month of mourning.

We see then that the relationship between a man and his wife is partly defined in legal terms, with mutual duties and rights that are enforceable in the courts. This relationship is documentated and validated by the transfer of money and cattle from one group to the other and by the performance of the various marriage ceremonies. Because of the relationship between them, man and wife live together, sleep together, eat together and work together. But above all, together they produce and rear children. It is primarily because of these children that the kin of man and wife are concerned in the marriage relationship. It is during the long process of producing children that the two spouses are most closely associated with each other, and actions of the one in some mystical way directly and automatically influence the well-being of the other.

When a marriage grows out of flirtation between a young man and a young woman, there is at first sexual attraction between them. With the passage of time this may give place to a broader sentiment of mutual affection and respect. To this extent we may say that man and wife come to love each other. But whereas young men frequently discuss with other men the attraction they experience towards women, unmarried or married, they do not do this when they have settled down and begun to acquire prestige in the community. A man may quarrel with his wife in public, but he never expresses his affection for her, save in the intimacies of the hut. Men and women mourn their spouses with great lamentation at funerals, but while this may sometimes be the expression of a personal

[23] *Kutola mwana.* Cf. *kutenga mwana* among the Cewa.

[24] Cf. Read, op. cit., 'The moral code . . .', p. 19, where she describes a medicine called *ugola* with which men doctored their wives so that their lovers would die of a wasting sickness. Also cf. Zulu *ulugola.*

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Zwangendaba or Mputa. Some informants showed that there was not always agreement about the use of the terms *mabandla* and *mabuto* when relating stories of the past, and the connotation of age regiment was sometimes given to *mabandla*. Cibambo and the other Ngoni historians who used the Ngoni language habitually were, however, quite clear about the differentiation between the two terms, one being territorial and the other denoting an age group. This use of the term *libuto* was confirmed by Dr. Kuper in her account of Swazi military organization.[1] 726 704 561

The organization of Ngoni warfare included the use of divining and of medicines to ensure success in war, and the summoning of the men charged to carry out these functions. In both Ngoni kingdoms there were men alive at the time of my visits who knew the medicines for war and had performed the functions of a 'war-medicine doctor'. According to these informants there was no sharp division between the functions of the diviner and the 'doctor' in relation to their services to the kingdom and to the army. There were individuals who had acted in both capacities. The diviner's task was to prophesy about probable success in war and about attacks from the enemy. He might, and sometimes did, combine this with 'doctoring' the army. 708 791

The preparation and administering of medicines to strengthen the army were discussed by informants in terms of two main types of medicine and a third which was less often referred to. The two main types were *intonga* and *intelezi* and the third one *inklenza*. In the northern kingdom Mopo Jere, who had been a 'war doctor' and was the son of a former famous 'war doctor', insisted that the term *intonga* could be used in several different ways: for medicines made of roots; for a rod or stick (*nduku*) which was medicated; and occasionally for the 'doctor' who used these objects. He also emphasized that each chief or *nsuhmuzana* had his own *intonga* and performed ceremonies for his own warriors before they left his kraal for that of the Paramount, where they went through another ceremony of having medicines administered to them before going on the campaign. 726 789

Formerly the *intonga*, that is, the stick or rod, was treated with the root of a shrub ground up and mixed with water. A beast was then killed, the Paramount ate the meat in the kraal with his senior men, and the skin was made into a bag in which the medicated *intonga* was placed. This skin bag containing the *intonga* was carried in front of the army when it was on the march. It could only be carried and handled when with the army by boys who had not yet reached puberty. The *intonga* in its bag was pointed at the enemy, as the army drew near, to make his warriors tremble and feel powerless and take to their heels. Its potency to make men powerless was so strong that no man from the Ngoni army dared walk in front of it, lest he too should lose all his strength.

[1] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organization in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 176.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

726 789 [824] The *intelezi* was made from the roots of a creeper and a bush which grew on the banks of rivers. These roots were burned over the fire, pounded and mixed with water. The warriors were given some to lick on the tips of their fingers, some was smeared inside their shields, and the rest was beaten in a gourd till it foamed. The 'war doctor' took the tail of a gnu or of a zebra and dipped it in the foam and sprinkled the warriors as they finally passed out of the gateway of the kraal on the campaign. This medicine was for strengthening them and also for making them 'slippery', so that the enemy spears would glide by them and not pierce them, and they could slip between the posts of the enemy stockade. After being sprinkled with the *intelezi* no one could sleep with [834] his wife or any other woman, as he would risk spoiling the effect of the medicine and therefore would be more liable to be killed.

[411] The *inhlenza* was a spear with a barbed hook. The Paramount threw it in front of the army as they stood in the kraal until all the warriors had left. It was then put back in the *indlunkulu* where it was kept in the care of the owner of that hut.

There were thus three functions to be performed, each by one of the war medicines. The *intelezi* was to strengthen and protect individual warriors. The *intonga* was the symbol of their Paramount and their kingdom leading them to war and weakening the enemy. The *inhlenza* was the symbol of invincibility, administered by the Paramount.

726 There were two stages of assembling in the Paramount's village before a campaign. The first followed the initial summons to mobilize, when the local companies (*mabandla*) marched into the kraal, sorted themselves into age regiments (*mabuto*) and sang their regimental songs. Then followed the *ligubo*, the war-dance, when the warriors wore their full war-dress, and the women joined in. There was no individual dancing but a working up of corporate feeling through the dancing and songs. The Ngoni used no drums in their music, relying on achieving [533] rhythm and unison by the stamping of their feet and their singing. After this dance the warriors left for their villages, while at the Paramount's village preparation was made for food and snuff for the campaign. Hard [705 251] cakes of roasted bullrush millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts pounded together, and dried meat, were the main supplies carried. At the second summons the warriors returned in their companies with their carriers. These carriers, who were usually young boys, carried the war-dresses and ornaments wrapped in a mat, and the food supplies.

Since on this final meeting depended much of the ultimate success of the campaign, only the warriors and the senior men were present, and all women and young children were excluded from the kraal. After the objectives of the fighting had been explained the warriors were addressed by the old men and exhorted to be brave and to help their comrades, and then the final medication by the 'war doctor' took place. The separation of the army from the civil population was complete until their return

643 so briefly referred to was in the nature of a warning that the kingdom must be held together and certain Ngoni customs and institutions preserved. This general mandate to a new Paramount was in keeping with the Ngoni policy of maintaining order and justice within the kingdom, while showing all the aggressive qualities of warfare against external enemies.

173 643 In the story of their northward trek, the division of authority among the central Ngoni between the Maseko and the Phungwako clans was referred to as the Maseko taking the '*Bayete*' and the Phungwako taking the *tonga*.[1] In central Ngoniland the *tonga* was a collective name given [789] to royal medicines used at different times for different purposes and was not reserved for the medicine used in the army as in the northern kingdom. It was said to have been 'from the beginning in the south'; 'it is very old, ever since people were born'. The following description was given by a member of the Phungwako clan in the head village of Chief Kacere:

643 789 ¶ The Ngoni had protection for all their people of the most powerful kind. This was the *tonga*. This was specially to protect the Paramount at his accession. When the Ngoni were thus accustomed to being protected by the *tonga*, there was one thing which gave them protection above all others. If the Paramount died, in arranging matters, the *tonga* was essential in establishing the new Paramount. And if war had to be made, the *tonga* also gave protection so that they had strength to overcome their enemies.

[791] Also when the Ngoni were travelling in wild places and did not find somewhere to stay, they began to listen to the *tonga*. The diviner, who went ahead with the *tonga*, looked to see if there were bad omens. When they found a place to stay and stayed there with their cattle, they were protected by the *tonga*, so that they were not afraid of anything. They just conquered the country and took the cattle and made the people surrender.

[825] When getting ready the *tonga*, they could only do it with a sheep. They killed it, and took its blood and its fat and smeared the *tonga*. And the big people who were set aside for the work of the *tonga*, it was they who were doing these things. The meat of the sheep which was killed for the *tonga*, they did not eat it just anyhow, no. They were eating it in a special way, not in the house, no; nor with the women, no; but in a very different way from the meat of every day. They ate it without being greedy when it was divided, and they took care not to put some aside, for they feared lest someone should eat the *tonga*. They just ate to finish it quickly, and when they had finished they did not sleep in their houses with their wives, but they went apart and slept in the place where this was done for the *tonga*. Their sleeping was different from other days, for they did not sleep on good mats, no. When they had eaten meat for the *tonga* they changed their ways, to act differently from usual. Instead of

[1] The head of the Phungwako clan, Chief Kacere, ruled one of the Ngoni states in the Dedza district which, in the 1930's, was separate from the central Ngoni kingdom.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

 643 789

sleeping on mats they slept on grass until the required days were finished, and they scattered to their homes.

This account brings out certain elements in the ritual surrounding the *tonga*. The word *tonga* in the Ngoni language means 'rod', and was used in the very ancient folk tale *Intonga yetusi*, 'The Brass Rod'. There was no rod, however, nor anything representing one, among the medicines or ingredients which together made up the *tonga*. A descendant of one of the early 'guardians' of the *tonga* said about it:

[778]

¶ The *tonga* is the horn of a sheep, and the horn by itself has no real power, but there are other things which give it power like the rib of a lion.

It is clear that in the past the *tonga* was regarded as giving protection to the Ngoni people, particularly by providing medicine at the accession of a new Paramount when he needed medicine for strengthening.

Other informants from the Phungwako clan said that the *tonga* provided the medicine with which the Paramount washed at the time of *incwala*, the feast of the first-fruits. No one alive in the 1930's had seen that ceremony and the special songs had been forgotten. A tradition remained that the Paramount had to undergo seclusion and ritual washing with medicines before the first green crops could be eaten. [178]

Throughout the references to the *tonga* there was no hint that it was ever worshipped or addressed in any way similar to the invocations to the ancestor spirits. It was clearly a 'medicine' possessing great power and guarded as a national treasure. The ingredients of the medicine were kept in a particular way, in a particular place, in the guardianship of a particular person. I have seen the ingredients, the place and the guardian, but I gave a promise not to reveal them. I was allowed to handle the objects and, after doing so, I had to perform the ritual act of *washing my hands with cowdung. This was the form of ritual cleansing* practised by the Paramount after using the medicines. [515 783]

There were two ways in which these medicines were used by the Paramount to strengthen him on his accession. He washed in the kraal with the medicines whipped into a foam. The old men said that in ancient times the water for making the medicines had to be fetched from the sea. In addition to washing he had to eat meat in which the medicines were mixed. The majority of informants said that beef was used for this ritual eating, while others said that, as in the ritual for preparing the *tonga*, the meat taken was sheep. This ritual was said to have taken place for the last time at the death of Cikusi and the accession of Gomani I, though it was hinted that it had been performed at the accession of the Ngoni chief of the Maseko clan now living in Portuguese territory.

It was clear that the Maseko Paramounts made use of the *tonga* as a royal medicine both at their accession and in time of war. The reference [766]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the
789 former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of
766 the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilise the land.

241 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance
796 among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni *ngoma, umsindo, ligubo, incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said
[643 '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins every-
424] one sings the songs of *incwala* and so others. This dance belonged to the
[178] Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Intokoni* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for
[824 a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up
224] their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ye'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala seigwabulisiwe*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the krsal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths,
[535 wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

cattle never came back to the kraal in the evening without one or more of the senior men standing by the gate and watching them and counting them as they went in. Sick cattle were noted and the herd-boys questioned about them. Mating was observed and noted, but not regulated, though poorly developed male beasts were sometimes castrated by one of the men who had acquired skill as a cattle doctor. Such a man would also administer drenches and other medicines, but the responsibility for calling a *sing'anga*, the specialist in medicines, to perform a ritual for a sick beast was taken by the whole group. They also made the decision to call a *sing'anga* to protect the kraal against lions. On several occasions I was in a village where lions attempted to get into the kraal at night, and the next morning the senior men who were responsible for the herd discussed the efficacy of this or that man's 'lion medicine' and decided who should be sent for to make the kraal safe again.

Important decisions were taken from time to time about placing the cattle belonging to the herd of a house in other kraals. This custom of *kuikitila* (lit. to entrust) was common in the central kingdom and had been adapted to modern needs as one means of evading the cattle-tax by appearing to have few cattle, whereas a number were boarded out in other areas. This boarding out was a long-established custom of the Ngoni and was practised for various reasons. One reason, and probably the most important formerly, was to build up good relations with leading men in the outlying villages by entrusting cattle to their care. The reward if the cattle throve was often the gift of a beast, and this was one means by which men of local tribes could build up a herd. It was also a signal honour to have cattle entrusted in this way and it was acknowledged by sending to such a 'keeper' the head of any beast killed from this herd. Another reason for boarding out was to prevent diseases spreading among a whole herd all kept in one kraal, and yet another was a belief that certain men had latent power with cattle, and that beasts put in their care throve and multiplied. This emphasis on enlarging the herds by natural increase was the main motive for letting the calves have all the milk they needed in order that they might thrive.

The uses of cattle and cattle products

Many of the uses to which cattle were put and for which they were greatly valued have been referred to in this chapter and in earlier sections of this book. We shall now examine the consumption of meat, milk and blood as food, and the forms of exchange in which cattle were directly exchanged or converted into cash. The ritual use of cattle will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

The testimony of early Europeans in Nyasaland and the accounts by the Ngoni of their life in the pre-European period agree in giving the consumption of meat, milk, and blood a high place in the diet of the cattle-owning families. It was a widespread European criticism in the

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

necessary to take formal action to restore harmony. Husband and wife still remain separate persons, separated socially by their distinct roles. Yet they are bound together by economic ties, by symbolic procedures, and by mystical connexion. 593

The sexual rights and obligations of husband and wife in each other are not symmetrical. A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, but a woman cannot gain exclusive sexual rights over her husband. Her husband can take other wives, or commit adultery, and she has no ground in law for complaint unless at the same time he neglects her. The most she can do is to make life so unpleasant for him that rather than face her anger he decides to sleep with her alone. Mystical procedures are available to both man and wife, and while a husband may use medicines to safeguard that which is his by right, a wife uses medicines to augment her other sanctions, such as the threat of not cooking food for her husband or of running away to her relatives. There is one class of medicines[6] which a man can administer to his wife by cicatrization which it is believed will cause any lover of the woman to die. Another magical procedure is stated to prevent the lover from withdrawing after coitus, so that the adulterous pair will have to reveal themselves to their neighbours in order to gain medical assistance. These medicines are said to be favoured by men going off to Southern Rhodesia without their wives. It is difficult to tell to what extent they are actually administered, but the belief in their efficacy is wide-spread, and people would comment that so-and-so who was ill had become so because he had slept with a woman doctored in this way, and that the scars on such-and-such a woman were made when her husband had given her this sort of medicine. On the other hand a woman may use medicine[7] to prevent her husband from copulating with anyone else, and there are other medicines which act as love charms or which encourage the husband to stay at home at night.[8] The beliefs about difficult labour and *mdulo*[9] also have a stabilizing effect in that the man may fear for the fate of his child and for that reason be faithful to his wife while she is pregnant. On the other hand it is believed that a rejected lover can give medicine[10] to a woman who resists his approaches, so that she will die or have difficulties in childbirth. The only way for a woman to avoid this hazard is to live demurely and not to excite the attention of other men.

593 837 837 789 832 843

If a woman believes that her husband is committing adultery with

[6] Known as *lukaakko*. There are at least four varieties of this, associated with different maladies all of which are fatal to the adulterer. Cf. *lukaako* in Colson, *Marriage among the Plateau Tonga* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers—forthcoming).

[7] *Ndomanga*. See below, p. 56.

[8] E.g., medicine made from the house lizard (*mbolobiko*) and the domesticated cat, because these animals are always in the house and do not wander about.

[9] See below, p. 46.

[10] *Kalomatila*, from the name of the species of frog from which it is made.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

846 she rises early to go and fasten the belt on the infant. Should the man not have a second wife, the one to put the belt on the child is his (the man's) sister. The man does not immediately see the face of his child; some day these same old women make him take it in his arms [hands]. The father then makes them a present of beads.

854 852 301 IV. When they notice the infant is beginning to grow his bottom teeth and to smile at people, the elders tell the father that, "Now you must bring the child into the village." The child's grandmother ties up beforehand some *lizango*. She begins with a little strip of calico, and rolls it round and round the medicine charm and along with a piece of string; then takes a little piece of skin and sews it over this, and takes some beads and sews them on the skin. The mother cooks some relish beforehand. That evening the husband and wife sleep together (this is "to bring the child into the village.") She cuts off the old belt the child is wearing, and puts on the new one with the *lizango* medicine in it, some more of the medicine, similarly tied up, is placed under the infant's head. In the morning she takes the relish to present to the two old women, and then takes the *lizango* she had placed under the child's head and ties it round his neck, and then takes a belt of beads, interspersed [789] with little wooden charms, and adorns the child. When in time the *lizango* belt breaks, they do not look for it or replace it. In the event of an infant dying before he has been "brought into the village," 766 they bury it in some open glade, near the edge of some stream, its funeral is attended by women only. Should a man tramp over the spot where the child [753] is buried, he "has taken" the disease known as *nyesi*. Such a grave is known as *nsenye*.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

VI

A VILLAGE EXODUS

I. THE village chief, when he wishes to remove the village to a new site, tells the young men of the village beforehand to look out all the building materials necessary. These they will just pile up. Then some day the head old man gets up very early in the morning to go and seek a suitable spot. When he finds a good place, he says, "Yes, this is where I shall build" (lit. "This is my place"). When he goes to the village that evening, he tells them not to break the rules enforced on such occasions, as he wishes to "kindle fire in the forest," as he is tired of the present site of the village. Next morning at dawn he rises very early, along with his brother and the medicine man, and goes to the site of the new village. They begin to walk all round, tying grass tufts into little knots and smearing them with medicine, and they make fire where they are going to build the *Kuka* hut, and they put some medicine on the fire, and bring water, and blow it in a spray out of their mouth. And the reason they thus medicine-guard the village, is for fear of lions and human flesh-eaters. Then the village people come with the building materials, and they are told to "clear the ground." And they do so, and when this is finished, the chief takes the door-posts and sticks them in position, and also the side-posts, when others put them in (firmly). When the *Kuka* hut is completed they begin with that of the headman. When dark others leave, going back to the old village. There remain only the chief, and the others who will continue to sleep there, not

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

585 606 present of calico and gives it her. The mother-in-law pours out a little pot of beer and gives it to her "little" son-in-law, and he drinks and drinks, and one drinks and hands to the other. The brother is still sitting (covered up). When this is finished the mother-in-law goes out and the man then gets up and drinks with his companions, saying, "Now we have 'uncovered' each other, and the state of mother-in-lawship requiring one to run away from the other is finished." They now honour each other.

IX

THE RAIN TEMPLE

789 I. If the rains do not come people say, "Look at this, the rain keeps refusing to fall from above; come, let us try to propitiate the rain spirit, and perhaps the rain may come." Then they begin to make ready, saying, "Let all of you collect a few handfuls of grain, we can at least try; if we fail we shall do so having at least made the attempt." Then they begin to collect the maize, the very same day it is ground and pounded, and they boil the beer and pour it in a gourd-cup. Next morning at dawn every one comes together and they go to the rain temple. They clear away the grass that the ground may be open. He who is chief of the ceremony sits in the middle and first draws some of the beer and pours it in a pot buried in the ground, and says, "Master, *Chauta*, you have hardened your heart towards us, what would you have us do? We

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

must perish indeed. Give your children the rains, there is the beer we have given you." Then the people begin to clap their hands and sound the *nkulungwani;* they sing, swaying their bodies backwards and forwards, and keep saying, "Pardon, pardon." When they have finished propitiating, they take the beer that remains and dip a cup in and give every one to drink, just a little, no one is short, and even the children are made to sip it. When they have finished they take branches of trees and commence to dance and sing—

"This little cloud, and this,
This little cloud, and this,
Let the rains come with this little cloud.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Kröle.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Kröle."

When they come to the village they find an old woman has drawn water in readiness, and put it at the doorway, and the people begin to dip in their branches and wave them aloft, scattering the drops, and then they see the rain come in heavy storm-clouds.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

between their legs, and begins one by one, and tells him, "You, you will let three days elapse, the fourth you will die;" and tells another, "You will let four days pass, and on the fifth you die." All of them he speaks to thus. Then he takes some medicine and scatters it, and they rise and begin to run off, and the witch-finder also runs away. At the village, when they have slept three days, they hear so and so is dead, and when four days have gone they hear so and so is dead. 791 539

XIII

AN ANGONI PRAYER FOR RAIN

I. When rain does not come, they go to the man with the lots to consult them. He of the lots says, "It is the great spirit; it is she who is keeping the rain from coming." Then all the elders assemble. In the morning at dawn, an ox is taken from the kraal, and the chief stands up and says, "This ox I have given you, our ancestor, seeing that you are keeping the rain from us; give us, your children, rain; look, all men are afflicted because of you." And the elders utter a response, saying, "Hail, chief, spare us, help us, thy people." And when they are answering (thus) the ox makes water, and then people know the spirit has heard. Should it not make water, they say the spirit refused (to do as asked), and leave the ox, and go again to consult the lots. And they kill the ox, and cut off its tail, and put it in a basket, and take also the liver, and put in the basket, and these they go off to the *Kuka* 789 791 782

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

789 hut with, and set it (the basket) down at "the
782 head" against the wall, and say, "There is the ox we have killed for you." Then they bring all the meat and put it in the *Kuka* hut. In the morning the elders rise early to cut it up; every one eats of it.

XIV

THE FUNERAL OF AN NSUTU

766 I. When the chief of the *Asutu* dies, people are not told at first; they hide the fact from them lest his attendants run away. On the day on which they make it known, they seize beforehand youths and maidens, and then every one is told that the chief has died. Then every one assembles and goes to the grave, and they dig and dig a very large "village" (cave) in the grave. When they have dug this cavity, they take the youths and maidens and shave their heads and rub them with oil, streaming down, and red clay. The youths have already their bows in their hands, as if going to the dance, though they are going to die. Then they lift the corpse and make the youths go in first, and the corpse follows. When they come to the cross-ways,
766 they take one of the young men, and sharpening
782 a bamboo, hammer it down through his head with a stone, and the stake grips (lit. bites) the ground. He is sitting upright as if alive, and he is made to hold a bow in his hand. When they come to the grave, they commence to break the legs of the others, and pour the juice of chilies over their heads. (And the reason they do this is because they fear

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FRS Ngoni FRS
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Next day the hunters assemble at the *chiwe* with their bows and arrows, spears and dogs; and the women commenced to sow in anticipation of the rain which they knew would fall. Chowwa himself again remained at home, and his deputy alone was allowed to burn the grass after it had been surrounded by every available man and boy in the neighbourhood so that nothing might escape. Such was the reputation of Chowwa that it is said that rain always fell before sunset on the same day. M 789 791

Then the women cooked the goat at the house of Chawwa, who could not himself partake, as he was the director of the sacrifice; and all the other members of his *chiwanga* abstained with him. The liver was cooked in a separate pot after it had been tied up with a piece of *mtsiwati* tree in red cloth and goat cut skin. It was then covered over, and any other person was allowed to kill a goat and cook its liver in the same pot. Next morning any of their children who had not yet reached the age of initiation were allowed to eat such part of the livers as had not been consumed by the spirits. The meat of the game killed was divided in accordance with the usual rules of hunting. M [262] M [224]

2. *Rainmaking (Ngoni).*

Sengundowa's slave wife, Mwachuma, who was brought by Chief Chiwere to the Dowa District, remained there as the mother of all the people and was always referred to as Gogo (grandmother). All the principal spirits of the Angoni were to be found at her village. When rain was desired, Chiwere assembled his Angoni there, and killed four or five black cows, which were *pinked* and eaten outside the kraal. Then he prayed to the spirits of Sengundowa and Gwazu, and poured water into an *upondo* (wooden bowl), which was covered with another bowl after some of the water had been poured out into a gourd. This praying was known as *upondo*. As the chief prayed, he held the gourd in his hand; and as he invoked each spirit in turn, he poured a little water on the ground. After the last spirit had been invoked, he rinsed his mouth, spat the water out, and emptied the gourd upon the ground. Then the people went home, and rain fell. N 789 [776]

VII.—Tribal Life: Funeral Rites.

1. *Preparation of the Body (Chewa).*

When a man dies, the men (usually relatives) watching beside him in the hut close his eyes, straighten his fingers and all his limbs, shave his head, wash and oil him, and wrap him in cloths. These cloths must always be new, and though coloured ones may be used, the outside one must always be white. However poor the relatives may be, they invariably manage somehow or other to procure a new white cloth. The death is announced at once with the formula "*wafaidwa*" (he is finished). M 764 M [763]

2. *Disposal of the Corpse (Chewa).*

On hearing the news, the men of the village beat drums in the funda until the following morning, while men and women wail together, uttering cries of mourning, and occasionally breaking forth into expressions such as, "So and so is dead, I am alone in the world"; "God has done evil to me"; "Whom shall I live with now?" "God should have killed me too";

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Zwangendaba or Mputa. Some informants showed that there was not always agreement about the use of the terms *mabandla* and *mabuto* when relating stories of the past, and the connotation of age regiment was sometimes given to *mabandla*. Cibambo and the other Ngoni historians who used the Ngoni language habitually were, however, quite clear about the differentiation between the two terms, one being territorial and the other denoting an age group. This use of the term *libuto* was confirmed by Dr. Kuper in her account of Swazi military organization.[1]

The organization of Ngoni warfare included the use of divining and of medicines to ensure success in war, and the summoning of the men charged to carry out these functions. In both Ngoni kingdoms there were men alive at the time of my visits who knew the medicines for war and had performed the functions of a 'war-medicine doctor'. According to these informants there was no sharp division between the functions of the diviner and the 'doctor' in relation to their services to the kingdom and to the army. There were individuals who had acted in both capacities. The diviner's task was to prophesy about probable success in war and about attacks from the enemy. He might, and sometimes did, combine this with 'doctoring' the army.

The preparation and administering of medicines to strengthen the army were discussed by informants in terms of two main types of medicine and a third which was less often referred to. The two main types were *intonga* and *intelezi* and the third one *inkhuza*. In the northern kingdom Mopo Jere, who had been a 'war doctor' and was the son of a former famous 'war doctor', insisted that the term *intonga* could be used in several different ways: for medicines made of roots; for a rod or stick (*ndulu*) which was medicated; and occasionally for the 'doctor' who used these objects. He also emphasized that each chief or *nduna* had his own *intonga* and performed ceremonies for his own warriors before they left his kraal for that of the Paramount, where they went through another ceremony of having medicines administered to them before going on the campaign.

Formerly the *intonga*, that is, the stick or rod, was treated with the root of a shrub ground up and mixed with water. A beast was then killed, the Paramount ate the meat in the kraal with his senior men, and the skin was made into a bag in which the medicated *intonga* was placed. This skin bag containing the *intonga* was carried in front of the army when it was on the march. It could only be carried and handled when with the army by boys who had not yet reached puberty. The *intonga* in its bag was pointed at the enemy, as the army drew near, to make his warriors tremble and feel powerless and take to their heels. Its potency to make men powerless was so strong that no man from the Ngoni army dared walk in front of it, lest he too should lose all his strength.

[1] Kuper, H. 'The Development of the Military Organization in Swaziland.' *Africa*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 178.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 so briefly referred to was in the nature of a warning that the kingdom must be held together and certain Ngoni customs and institutions preserved. This general mandate to a new Paramount was in keeping with the Ngoni policy of maintaining order and justice within the kingdom, while showing all the aggressive qualities of warfare against external enemies.

173 643 In the story of their northward trek, the division of authority among the central Ngoni between the Maseko and the Phungwako clans was referred to as the Maseko taking the '*Bayete*' and the Phungwako taking the *tonga*.[1] In central Ngoniland the *tonga* was a collective name given to royal medicines used at different times for different purposes and was not reserved for the medicine used in the army as in the northern kingdom. It was said to have been 'from the beginning in the south'; 'it is very old, ever since people were born'. The following description was given by a member of the Phungwako clan in the head village of Chief Kacere:

643 789 ¶ The Ngoni had protection for all their people of the most powerful kind. This was the *tonga*. This was specially to protect the Paramount at his accession. When the Ngoni were thus accustomed to being protected by the *tonga*, there was one thing which gave them protection above others. If the Paramount died, in arranging matters, the *tonga* was essential in establishing the new Paramount. And if war had to be made, the *tonga* also gave protection so that they had strength to overcome their enemies.

[741] Also when the Ngoni were travelling in wild places and did not find somewhere to stay, they began to listen to the *tonga*. The diviner, who went ahead with the *tonga*, looked to see if there were bad omens. When they found a place to stay and stayed there with their cattle, they were protected by the *tonga*, so that they were not afraid of anything. They just conquered the country and took the cattle and made the people surrender.

[825] When getting ready the *tonga*, they could only do it with a sheep. They killed it, and took its blood and its fat and smeared the *tonga*. And the big people who were set aside for the work of the *tonga*, it was they who were doing these things. The meat of the sheep which was killed for the *tonga*, they did not eat it just anyhow, no. They were eating it in a special way, not in the house, no; nor with the women, no; but in a very different way from the meat of every day. They ate it without being greedy when it was divided, and they took care not to put some aside, for they feared lest someone should eat the *tonga*. They just ate to finish it quickly, and when they had finished they did not sleep in their houses with their wives, but they went apart and slept in the place where this was done for the *tonga*. Their sleeping was different from other days, for they did not sleep on good mats, no. When they had eaten meat for the *tonga* they changed their ways, to act differently from usual. Instead of

[1] The head of the Phungwako clan, Chief Kacere, ruled one of the Ngoni states in the Dedza district which, in the 1930's, was separate from the central Ngoni kingdom.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Mangs. It was a time of great emotional tension and strain, and the absurdities of the jester relieved the solemnity and formality of the visit. This jester was said by informants to be a man of the Moyo clan, who owed his position not to hereditary right but to a ready and witty tongue.

643 644 522

The death of the Paramount

It is in the ceremonies at the death of the Paramount that we find some major differences between the traditional practices of the northern and central Ngoni peoples, which might be attributed to the separate groups in Natal from which they came. I was living in Mcakatha village in the central kingdom at the time of the sickness and death of Bambo Mangs, the most important of the royal women among the central Ngoni. The ritual ceremonies at her funeral were said to be almost identical with those at the death of the Paramount, and I was able to check details of similarity and difference with old men who remembered the death of Cikusi, the last Ngoni Paramount in the central kingdom for whom the full ritual was carried out. I was not able after that to pursue further possible parallels and differences among the northern Ngoni. My general impression from informants was that among the northern Ngoni the ritual at the death of a Paramount differed from that of any other prominent man only in certain details of the period and form of mourning. Among the central Ngoni, as Rattray said in a note on the text which will be given, 'such funerals were more of a military pageant than anything else. All outward signs of grief were rigorously excluded.' I can confirm that from my observations at the death of Bambo Mangs.

184 643 766 [152]

When the Paramount became ill, a diviner was called to give advice. He might advise that a sacrifice should be made to the ancestor spirits. He might suggest witchcraft as the cause of illness. He might advise calling in a man to give medicine to the Paramount. When, in spite of sacrifices and treatment, the Paramount died, the announcement was made from the edge of his village: *Izulu lidilikile*, 'the heaven has fallen down'. Messengers were sent to all the chiefs and to all the *abumnumu* and other leading men. From the edge of each central village the cry was made, and each chief and *mabumnumu* sent his messengers to make the same announcement in each of the villages under him.

[191]

Among the northern Ngoni the actual ceremony of burial does not appear to have been very different from that of any other important man, with one exception, that the Paramount, like other ruling Jere chiefs, was buried at the edge of the cattle kraal in a circular pit of the kind used when digging clay for mudding houses, on one side of which there was a niche where the corpse was placed in a sitting position, facing south-east. This burying in a circular grave on the edge of the kraal was the procedure which I witnessed at the burial of Bambo Mangs among the central Ngoni (see below p. 75).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 425 787 In another part of the cult cattle played a still more direct part. When a diviner advised that prayer should be made to the spirit of a leading man on behalf of someone of his clan who was sick, the man who was in charge of the *gogo* section of the village informed the head of the clan or *banja* and they agreed to address the spirits, and to offer a sacrifice if the spirits were willing. The sign of willingness on the part of the spirits was for the selected beast, when it had been driven out of the kraal, to urinate or make dung. If either happened they said the spirit was willing, and arranged a time for the prayer and sacrifice. If neither happened, if the beast just stood still or lay down, the spirits had 'refused' and the sacrifice could not go forward. This sign or lack of sign by the beast could not be ignored, and was a further illustration that the Ngoni considered cattle to be essential as a medium of approach to the spirits of their ancestors.

When the beast 'refused', those responsible called the diviner again and asked for an explanation. He produced a reason and advised them to try again, and the process was repeated until the sign of agreement was given. There was always anxiety when the beast 'refused', partly because of the delay in sacrificing and partly owing to an uneasy feeling that they had left something undone and the ancestral spirit was not pleased with them.

The main part of the ritual of sacrifice to an ancestral spirit was killing the beast, offering the meat to the spirits and the eating of the meat by the principal persons concerned. This we shall examine more closely in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER III

THE ROLE OF THE DIVINER IN THE ANCESTOR CULT

791 769 It has been apparent in the chapters on the Paramount and on warfare in Part II, and in the two previous chapters of Part IV, that divining by an accredited person was a necessary preliminary for sacrificing to and addressing the ancestors.[1] I never heard or received any account of the ancestor cult in which divining was not specifically mentioned as the first step in the performance of the ritual. Moreover, all the diviners of good standing were themselves operating because they had contact with and were possessed by the spirit of an ancestor. By virtue of this direct contact with the spirit world the diviners claimed their special powers.

[1] The one possible exception was the first-fruits ceremony, but this had been given up before the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland, and the old men had no clear memories of the ritual followed.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Dr. Kuper called the diviners among the Swazi 'the most powerful and respected specialists operating in both individual and national situations'.[1] I found that among the Ngoni also they were greatly respected once they had established their reputation for prophecy and diagnosis. Except on the occasions when they were called upon to carry out their functions the majority of diviners whom I saw in the 1930's lived in relative seclusion, and had no outward signs of power in any political or economic sense, though in the past some of the 'prophets' had also been warriors and leaders. Socially they were always shown great honour when they came in response to a call, or when they went visiting on non-professional occasions. They were addressed in a respectful tone of voice, given a mat to sit on, and village noises around them were hushed. They were, however, essentially recluses, withdrawn from public life except when they were called on to help in time of crisis, and they did not show any ostentation of wealth or position.

Dr. Kuper used the term 'specialist' to describe the diviners among the Swazi. In the Ngoni kingdoms there were many kinds of specialists owing to the existence of several tribal groups each with its traditional system of religion and magic, and each with varying methods of treating sickness, diagnosing the causes of misfortune, and interpreting omens and dreams. The diviners in the Ngoni kingdoms who were best known and on whom the greatest responsibility lay were those who were called by the Paramount in times of national crisis. Such responsibility and such fame had in pre-European days corresponding risks. The following story, which was told me in Hoho by Timoti Jere and which I heard quoted in several areas in the northern kingdom, puts in a traditional setting and with much circumstantial detail the kind of demands formerly made on diviners and the kind of treatment meted out to them:

> When Zwangendaba in his coming out of South Africa arrived in the country of the Maculusi Mabiri. It is there now. When the *impi* was summoned it went out to contend for the country of the Sukuma. That *impi* wanted very much to be victorious, because it went to fight in two countries, in that of the Sukuma, where they took the long-horned cattle, and in that of the Ngonde, where they took the cattle without horns and with big humps. While the *impi* was away, the Paramount called all the *izinduna* and said 'Why has the *impi* delayed so long? Call the *izanusi* that they may divine. Perhaps the *impi* has run away and turned back.' Then the *izinduna* called the *izanusi*. In their divining they said 'The *impi* has run away and turned back.' There was one *izanusi*, his name was UMakhendo Nkosi, who divined and said 'All the *impi* is there and it will return in this month. The long delay of the *impi* is because they have raided two countries, the country of the Sukuma with long-horned cattle and the country of the Ngonde with unhorned cattle.' It was so, and that month the *impi* returned and arrived at Mabiri with many herds of cattle as UMakhendo Nkosi had said.

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 163.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

173 After one year Zwangendaba called again all the *izinduna* and said
791 'Let us test all those *isanusi* in their divining.' So they spoke together secretly and said 'Let us take a goat and kill it, and take its blood, and let us sprinkle it on the doorways of the huts and on the posts of the doorways.' The *izinduna* agreed and no man knew of it. So they took a goat and stabbed its throat and when the blood came out they received it in the *sgwembe*, and then sprinkled it on the doorways and the posts of the huts in the enclosure of the Paramount. They did this at night and returned to their huts and slept.

When it was dawn, all the people were astonished at seeing blood on the doorways of the Paramount's huts. The people told the *izinduna* and the *izinduna* told the Paramount. He said 'Call the *isanusi* that they may divine.' They called all the *isanusi* and they divined together and they said, 'That blood is of man. There are flesh eaters here. They are striving that you O Paramount may die.' There was one *isanusi* UMakhende Nkosi who divined alone, and he said 'O Paramount the blood is of a goat. You, together with the *izinduna*, are proving us as *isanusi*. It is you O Paramount and the *izinduna* who have done this thing.' So the Paramount agreed. He commanded the *izinduna* and said 'Kill all the *isanusi* except UMakhende only.' All the *isanusi* were killed in this way by Paramount Zwangendaba at Mabiri.

The moral of this traditional story, as the Ngoni always pointed out when relating it, was that diviners could be wrong. The specialized skill which they claimed to possess carried with it a recognized responsi-
791 bility for using it correctly and not deceiving the people who consulted them. There was also a suggestion in the story of the contempt for this kind of skill shown by leaders who possessed great political and military power. Hard-headed chiefs and army leaders in the past expected efficiency in their diviners, and punished them severely for ineptness and what appeared as deceit. This veiled contempt, associated as it was with the tacit admission that the diviner as a specialist could not be dispensed with in Ngoni life, appeared often in the 1930's when Ngoni leaders were talking about divining and were planning to have recourse to it. As in this story, they were ready to recognise authentic diagnosis when they heard it, but not to regard the diviners as a class as infallible. One of the reasons for this view about divining was the wide range of social background and the diversity of functions among the diviners. The following account by Cibambo suggests that two categories of diviners were recognized by the Ngoni and indicates certain Ngoni attitudes towards their range of operations and the way in which they carried them out. The account refers to pre-European days, and there was in the 1930's little evidence of these distinctions between types of diviners.

« There were men who acted as go-betweens between the spirits and the people called *isanusi*. Just as in the days of the Jews there were true and false prophets, so it was among the Ngoni. It is going too far, indeed it is

untrue, to say that all the prophets were false. Some were true go-betweens between the land of the spirits and the land of men. They received in dreams, sometimes in visions, things that related to the people of their time. God himself agreed to make them his workers and messengers even though these men sought for him in twisty ways. 791

The real go-betweens or prophets were called *isanusi*, 'those who smell something', and *abantu beshloko*, 'people of the head, people of dreams'. These men were considered to meet with the spirits in dreams or by their medicines which lifted them up to see the things of the spirit land. The people thought that these men received news from the spirits which they were to give to the earth people.

These men who had the gift of seeing in dreams were not allowed to live in big villages where there were often noises, but the chiefs sent them out to build for themselves a little distance from the chief's village along with their family. They were afraid that people would be disturbing them and making a noise when they met with the spirits. They were also afraid that in the big villages there would be many people who did not walk in an orderly way, and so these men, meeting those people, would spoil their own good sense.

These men did not talk with the spirits all the time. Often they did not receive any messages, but on other days their heads were stirred up and they spoke.

In the central kingdom there had been in the past the same distinction mentioned by Cibambo between diviners who dreamed, and those who used medicines to smell before giving their message. Informants said that there was also a distinction between those who took the initiative in announcing that they had something to say, and those who waited to be called for consultation. In pre-European days, in the hierarchy of diviners, the highest esteem was given to those who dreamed only (*abantu beshloko*) and who announced as a result of their dreams that they had something of importance to tell the Paramount. The Maseko line of Paramounts had, in the days of Mputa, a famous woman diviner called NaNdumbu who was of a Swazi clan. She went north to Tanganyika with the Paramount Mputa and was regarded as the *isanusi* for the whole country who foretold events as a result of her dreams. An informant who had seen her described her after she had had a dream or a vision coming into the *bwalo*, the open space in front of the Paramount's hut, and dancing with the little stick which the women carry in the *umuindo* dance. When the Paramount saw her dancing thus he came out to her and she spoke with him alone, telling him of her dream. Then, when the people around were silent, she lifted up her stick high with an outstretched arm, and the Paramount told the people what she had told him, and when they heard it they knocked their sticks on the ground and said '*e e e e*'. After she died her brother took her place as *isanusi*, and his daughter was living in Mzakhatha when I was there. This woman said of her father 'When I was young they told me "Your father has become [554]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

791 an *isanusi* today". When he entered the place of his sister, NaNdumbu, he was dreaming. If there was a war he could say "You must not go to that war because all the people will be killed." He was just dreaming and dancing his *isanusi* dance. When he danced that dance on the chief's *benzo* the people praised him with special praises.'

791 Two informants remembered fragments of the songs sung by NaNdumbu and her brother, and these songs were also sung by the old 533 *isanusi* in the northern kingdom. I give here the Ngoni versions with an English translation, omitting the repetition of lines and the 'sounds' which accompanied the singing:

[539]

Uyezwe nikhlolo	Do you see the omens?
Inkanyezo ipuma	The star comes out,
Ipuma yanga	It comes out in the East.
. . . . .	. . . . .
Ubaba uyangibiza	My father is calling me.
Hamba ekaya	Go home.
Indaba zikuyandela	Things have turned against you,
Hamba ekaya	Go home.

791 Although these diviners acted at times on their own initiative, this did 787 not prevent their being called on in time of crisis to diagnose the reason for disaster or sickness. *Isanusi* who used their own medicines to smell 237 could prophesy and speak on their own initiative as well as waiting to be called on. These medicines were said to induce the dreams on which the prophecy was based, and they were generally contained in the tail of a gnu or in a sheep's horn, or some other horn.

787 Below this category of the prophets, whether *abantu bezikhlolo* or 791 *isanusi*, came those who used lots when called on to diagnose a particular situation. These were often men who dreamed, or who used their own medicines to receive messages from their ancestral spirits, but instead of announcing their message directly, they brought with them some form of lots which they used when they were consulted, and gave their diagnosis as a result of observing the lots. Sometimes they sang their own songs, accompanied by dancing, which led to an almost trance-like condition; sometimes they used their lots without any previous working up of an emotional state through song or dance. I never met any of the dreamer type of prophet who used no medicines and no lots. There was general agreement among the Ngoni that they had died out, that their main service had been in times of war, and that the number of men or women who possessed such powers had, even in the past, been very small indeed. I did, however, see one diviner at work who used the song and dance technique with the lots, and two who used the lots without song or dance.

756 The *isanusi* whom I saw in the northern kingdom was divining for 787 sickness at the request of a party of people who had come to consult him

about a sick relative. He asked for a preliminary payment in cash from me before he would say anything in front of me, having already received the customary present of fowls from the sick man's relatives. There was an atmosphere of part pantomime, part reluctant performance in front of a stranger whose presence seemed to trouble him more than it did his clients. He wore a python-skin cap with beads dangling from it, and carried the tail of a black cow bound with lead and a small skin bag with the lots in it. At first he sat holding the tail in his hands and sniffing it occasionally. Then he suddenly shook the lots out of the bag—six large beans called *kalumo* and about twenty small round nuts called *mapi*. He put snuff on the top of each bean, sprinkled snuff on the nuts, picked the nuts up in both hands, shook his hands together and threw the nuts on the ground. Some fell near the big beans, others rolled between them. He looked intently at them, then at the group waiting to consult him. 'There is someone who is sick,' he said to them and the group replied '*Siyavuma*' (we agree). They continued to chant *siyavuma* in a low tone over and over again, with an almost mesmeric effect. He meantime went on to describe the sickness, that it was a pain inside the man (the chanting was loud), that it had been on the right side (less response), in the stomach (less response), on the left side (loud response). At intervals he waved the tail in the air and knocked the leaded end on the ground to emphasize the louder response. He did not specify the complaint but advised the people consulting him to go home and kill a goat as a sacrifice to their ancestors, and give the sick man some medicines which he would sell them.

It may have been the mixture of a real consultation with my visit which produced his slightly mountebank performance, and it may also have been his combination of the role of diviner with peddling medicines which the people present for the consultation evidently expected to obtain from him. This aspect of his performance impressed itself on the Ngoni informant who was with me. He was slightly contemptuous throughout, even when the songs were being sung and taken down. He kept on muttering 'This is Neengo,' and said afterwards as we were going away that this diviner worked only for ordinary people and their sickness, as witnessed by his telling them to sacrifice a goat, and that he would not have been acknowledged by the real Ngoni. He was making comparisons all the time between the 'people of the head' and the diviners of this type, illustrating the Ngoni esteem for the real dreamers, and the slight, sometimes great, contempt for those who combined divining with recommending medicines as remedies.

The contrast between the performance of this diviner and that of the two *izanusi* whom I saw at work in the central kingdom was considerable. My long residence in Mzakhatha and the entrée I had to all that was taking place in connexion with the sickness of Bambo Mangu no doubt helped to give confidence to the diviners. The chief and his

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

123 brother arranged for first one *isanusi* and then, when he became ill, for
another to come and see me. In each case they concluded that I was
•791 consulting them and foretold what would happen and gave me advice,
warning and assurance. There was great seriousness of purpose and no
mountebank atmosphere, even though they came to the courtyard of my
hut and saw round them all the paraphernalia of a European's camping
equipment.

791 The first diviner, who was of a Vende clan, was a very old man and
greatly respected and trusted by the Nzungu clan, who were looking
after Bambo Mangu in Mzakhatha and who had called him several
times to divine for them during her illness. His story was that he was the
son of an *isanusi* and when the signs of his initiation began to appear
before he reached puberty, his father recognised the fainting and the
pain and refused to eat, and said 'This child will be a diviner also.' The
spirit who came to him in dreams was his father's father who had died
south of the Zambesi, where his father had been born.

This man was very definite about the kind of situations for which he
could and would divine and the type of advice he would give. Questioned
further on this point, he gave in this order: sickness, journeys, suspicious
days for holding an *ngoma* dance or a hunt, 'absent treatment' of rela-
tives in trouble in the south asked for by letter, sickness of cattle, moving
a village to a new site. He refused contemptuously any divining about
stealing or death, or agricultural practices such as choosing new gardens
or beginning cultivation. Neither he nor the people with him made any
specific reference to the different roles of an *isanusi* among the Ngoni
and the local Cewa and other tribes, but since they used the same terms
for divining, *kumbwa mundu* (to throw the lots), they were careful to
point out what the Ngoni diviners *did not* do. In the case of sickness due
[788] to 'spirits troubling', of suspicious days for journeys and other events,
of cattle sickness, of moving villages, his invariable advice was to sacrifice
a beast to the spirits. Most of the inquiries addressed to him were about
sickness. When such an inquiry came to him in his village, he smelled
his medicines and asked of *his* ancestral spirit 'Is the man likely to live
or not? Who is troubling him? What shall he do?'

787 The first occasion on which I saw him divine was in the hut of a
791 widow of the former chief, Njakomude I, which had been newly swept
and a new fire made. The chief and his uncle sat on either side of the
fire, the diviner on the right-hand side of the door and I on the left on
the woman's side. The diviner was told to begin. He pulled out his
stilo, the stem of a gourd, which was wrapped in bark and cloth and had
inside it the medicine, and which was waxed at each end. He scraped
bits of the stilo root into a pot with a little water in it. He put the stilo
in the water for a moment and then took it out and rubbed it in his
hands. He put it under a flat food basket and swept his hand over the
top of the basket once or twice before putting the pot on top. He gazed

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

into the pot, which he kept turning with his right hand, and he murmured in a low voice from time to time, and shook his head. The only words which were audible were '*Inu tawteraui*', 'You, please listen.' After three minutes he tried to lift the pot, but it seemed to stick to the basket. All this time he was very calm and unexcited, though the pot appeared to stick every time. Finally he said the spirits of the Maseko chiefs were not willing for a sacrifice to be made. The reason, he said, was that I was there and they were afraid of a white face, because the Europeans had killed Gomani I and the spirits 'were ashamed' before white people. The following day the lots were tried again when I was not present and the spirits gave the diviner the sign that they agreed to the sacrifice.

About three weeks later, at the suggestion of the head of the *gugo* house in the village, he came to see me, having been asked to tell me about his initiation. He treated the call as a genuine summons to a consultation, however, and performed for me the ritual I had seen him carry out in the hut. This time he consulted the spirits of his father and grandfather. I had made no specific inquiry of him, but he asked his spirits for advice about my movements, whether I should go or stay, addressing them with '*Tawteraui*', 'Please listen.' The pot came off the basket after the second effort and he looked at the bits of *nzika* root as they floated inside. Then he looked up at me and said 'You must not leave here. Perhaps you were thinking of returning to the Paramount's village. You should not do this because my spirits tell me that the spirits here want you to stay.'

When this old diviner became ill, another one of an Nzumba clan was called to Mzakhatha to divine about the illness of one of the leading women. His father had also been a diviner, a dreamer who did not dance or throw lots for sickness, but told of things to come, especially about war. His father had been in the Tengo country in Songea with Mputa and had spoken Ngoni there, and the spirit of his father's father was the one who came to him at his initiation as a young man. His equipment and technique were slightly different from those of the former diviner. He had a small duiker horn which had medicine inside it of the *cinsumbalume* tree roots and, like the *nzibo*, was waxed at the end and rounded so that it could swivel on its base. At first he smelled the horn and made deep belching noises, almost like retching. He put the horn in an empty gourd cup, waxed end down, and left it by his left thigh. Out of a skin bag he took ten small half-shells of nuts, four large and six small, which he said he got from the Venda people. They were called *nzikidzo*. He arranged them face down in front of him, the larger ones in the middle. He gathered them up again, smelled them, belched and threw them down. Five fell face down and five face up. He picked them up and threw them five times until they fell in the position he wanted, muttering as he did so '*ai, ai*' (no, no), and finally '*ahandwera*' (they are happy).

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

He left the shells, picked up a small rattle, a little gourd with stones in it, and knocked it on his knees. Meantime he picked up the gourd with the horn in it, and held it on the palm of his left hand with the base resting on his extended fingers. The horn rocked on its base inside the gourd and came to rest, touching one edge of the gourd or another and sometimes standing erect without touching the rim of the gourd. During this part he was much disturbed and sweat ran down his face while he murmured to his spirits '*Nanga inu*' (What are you doing?), '*Mabodza nditha*' (You are surely lying), '*Ai ai nditheuh*' (No, no truly). Finally the horn came to rest against the rim of the gourd towards him, and he put it down, and wiped his forehead. Then he said to me 'You will be ill, but you will recover. You will not die in this country. So do not fear. You will not die'.[1]

During the rocking of the horn in the gourd the diviner was listening to and speaking to his spirits. His obvious distress at first, and his subsequent relief were genuine and onlookers said that with this man such swaying of fortunes, through appeal to his spirits, often took place. He was considered a very powerful diviner, in that he could argue with the spirits and did not depend only on what the lots said or take them as the final word. His combination of the use of the medicated horn with the throwing of lots was considered a sign of power. He said himself that he always knew the day before when a man was coming to consult him about someone who was ill and that night he dreamed and his spirits told him what to say.

Several references have been made to the initiation of a diviner, which was an essential preparation for his role, and an experience which marked him out as different from other men. Both the diviners whom I saw at work in the central kingdom gave short accounts of what happened before they became diviners. In the first (*a*) that of the very old man, most emphasis was laid on the finding and preparing of the medicines. In the second (*b*) the emphasis was on the re-birth element of the initiation, denoted by the expression *ukutwasa* which was used for the reappearance of the new moon after the period of darkness.

(*a*) When I began to divine I slept, and in the night I dreamed dreams, and they said go and fetch a tree, its name is *nsiku*, and when you have done so take the handle of a gourd and put some of the *nsiku* inside, and shut each end of the handle with wax and on the wax put beads. Find a pot and pour water in it and put in pieces of *nsiku* bark. Take that handle and put it on the ground and cover it with an *nungwa* and put the pot on top and what you say will be true.

They told me just to go anywhere to find that tree. These dreams came to me when I was a young man. After these dreams I was very ill, near to death, and another thing I had pains in my heart; and my mother and my father thought I was dead.

[1] This prophecy was remembered by the people and often quoted when two weeks later I was attacked by a swarm of wild bees and nearly died.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

(b) At first I died and when I rose up again I felt the wind of the spirits. My dying was my initiation. This ukutwasa was like that of the moon when it is new. I began to speak and speak and I danced with the python skin on my head. Then the people tested me whether I had bad or good spirits and after that I began to divine. The spirit of my grandfather, he has told me about this work. I am talking with his spirit when the horn is going round. 791

The fact of my being in Mzakhetha during the illness and death of Bambo Mangu, and witnessing all the attendant ritual, gave me many opportunities of discussing the role of diviners in the ancestor cult, as well as of observing two of them at work. No such opportunity presented itself in the northern kingdom, but the role of the diviner was very fully discussed with leading Ngoni in Ekwendeni, Enondweni and Hoho, and the account given by Cibambo at the beginning of this chapter was partly the result of these talks. 124 791

I have made several references to the graded hierarchy among the diviners, though I have not made any connexion between those diviners who either prophesied or made a diagnosis and those others, whether they were called *isanusi* or *izing'anga*, who made a diagnosis and also gave treatment through medicines. I have limited the analysis here to the diviners who operated through their own ancestral spirits and who, by virtue of this contact of theirs, claimed to be able to interpret the will of the ancestral spirits of the Ngoni clans. It was a notable fact that very few of the famous diviners, and none of the less well-known, were of Swazi clans, though the one true prophet in the story of the slaughter at Mabiri was of a Swazi clan. Two great *izindwa* and *abamazanga*, who were also dreamers and prophets, Gwaza Jere in the north and Goloneka Nzunga in the central kingdom, were of Swazi clans. So also was the famous woman diviner NaNdumbu. It appeared that the capacity to become a diviner and the successful practice of the art was very unusual among the leading Ngoni. They depended therefore on men of lesser trans-Zambesi and cis-Zambesi clans to perform these duties for them. The attitude shown by leading Ngoni towards the diviners, already referred to, may have been partly a rationalization of their dependence on this kind of skill as well as on force of arms. It may also have been due to the necessity, admitted somewhat reluctantly, of using men of lower social status, that is of cis-Zambesi clans, for such vital services to the nation and to their own families. The Ngoni had a strong pragmatic streak which led them to suspect knowledge and skill which could not be reduced to concrete terms, and hence they were always ready to accuse the less well accredited diviners of lying and deceit. 791

In spite of Ngoni doubts and suspicions about the class of diviners as a whole, within their kingdoms these persons were recognized as specialists for certain reasons. They had all been through the experience described as ukutwasa. It began with physical symptoms, such as fainting, 791 158

791 lack of appetite, forgetfulness, sweating. These manifestations could
158 take place in childhood, around puberty, or when the man was fully grown, though the most usual age was in the late teens. The symptoms culminated in sharp pains and a prolonged collapse, and after that a deep sleep. It was then that the dreams came giving the man the assurance that he was henceforth a medium, and that through the spirit of his grandfather, or whoever was now appearing to him, he could communicate with the spirit world. At this time also he was told in dreams where to find medicines and what to do with them. A constant feature in the initiation of well known and accredited diviners was that they
[775] knew the name and identity of the spirit with whom they were in contact, and it appeared to be always someone related to them and most often their father's father.

791 As they returned to normality from an experience which was frightening in its intensity, it dawned on them that they now had to practise as a diviner, to make use of the powers which had come to them. There was evidence that they accepted this role with reluctance. Their relatives, when they saw them going through the earlier stages, were aware that there was an inevitable sequel, that of practising as a diviner, and they too shared the reluctance of the man himself. Sometimes a diviner began to practise by associating as a junior partner with a successful practitioner; sometimes he began hesitantly by himself. The criterion of the validity of their calling was their success. No one seemed to know what became of diviners who were unsuccessful and never became accredited. They apparently disappeared from the field because no one employed them.

791 The diviners whom I met and talked with, as well as those few whom
157 I saw practising their calling, were considered by the Ngoni to possess a distinctive temperament. It was evident that they wished to live somewhat apart, and that they were withdrawn in a social as well as in a spatial sense. They married, but usually only one wife, and had children, but played little part in extended family or village affairs. Their huts were always on the outskirts of villages and were neither large and prosperous nor very poor looking. They had a reputation for being unpunctual and forgetful, but they were far from being unobservant. Part of their skill lay in watching people and learning about their concerns from observation and storing events in a good memory. Though they could work themselves up into emotionally excited states during a consultation, at other times they gave the impression of being controlled, rather quiet, detached, and uninfluenced by the currents of talk and opinion around them.

791 The rewards for their services were in kind as a rule, and could be articles of household equipment, food, cloth, and sometimes European clothes or goods from the stores, such as lanterns, soap, matches and cigarettes. There appeared to be no bargaining over payment. The

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

goods were handed over, the diviner thanked the giver in the customary manner, and his wife or child carried the gifts away. Informants said that leading Ngoni would never be mean in their payments to diviners, and that diviners of the upper grades would never bargain over their rewards. It was openly said that a leading diviner cared most for his reputation as a successful specialist, and that the kind of life he led and the sort of man he was did not induce a desire to be wealthy. 791

One aspect of the diviner's role among the Ngoni was that he, an individualist, was always summoned at the request of a group. In a case of sickness of one of its members, it was the family or the senior men of a house who summoned the diviner, and they gave him his reward and carried out his advice. When a family heard from the diviner that a sick member might recover if a sacrifice were made to their ancestors, they regarded the diviner, in Cibambo's phrase, as a go-between linking the living group and their dead ancestors. The diviner therefore, like the cattle, was an essential link in the relationship between the living and the dead. [769]

CHAPTER IV

THE RITUAL OF ADDRESSING THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS

In the course of the first three chapters of this section, and in earlier sections, many beliefs and practices have been discussed which bear on the ritual of the ancestor cult. In spite of the risk of some repetition it will be useful to bring together here in one chapter the main elements in the ritual, and in so doing to raise certain theoretical issues. 769

Dr. Kuper said[1] that among the Swazi, ancestor spirits were not worshipped, and she gave as the reasons for this statement that the spirits were addressed as living persons would be, being sometimes scolded and seldom thanked, and that indignation rather than humility was the attitude of the living when disasters befell them which might have been due to malice or carelessness on the part of the ancestors. Without entering into an argument on the nature of worship and its essential accompaniments, I would state that certain aspects of the Ngoni ancestor cult showed those features which are usually considered to be part of a people's worship. These were sacrifice, prayer, and purification, which, not necessarily in that order, were the main elements in the cult. There was, moreover, a connexion between the ancestor cult and ethical behaviour in Ngoni thinking. The guardianship of an ancestral spirit, involving much respect for the house to [170]

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit., p. 192.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. 814
Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on [224] Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry [172] grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous secessions from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Ciwere had gone. All the people shouted "Ciwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni 814
succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the 871
schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Cibambo, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred 173
to historical events which were illustrated in songs or record- 537
ed in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, 791
called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni 177
Christian leaders went further than this. They used the 173
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6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

I

THE ORDEAL POISON

I. In the event of a chief's wife dying, or perhaps his child, the chief holds a consultation with the village elders, saying, "You at the village here, we wish to consult the oracle." At the "chief's" ordeal they summon all the headmen, but in the case of the "people's" ordeal, every one partakes of the poison. When they see that people are often dying they talk it over with the headmen, saying, "Look here at the village, here people are dying and we wish to summon the medicine man, that he may follow up the clue for us at the village." So they send one youth to summon the medicine man. He arrives very late in the evening. They put him in some hut, without people knowing that he has come. In the morning a young man gets up, and goes and stands at the open space in the village [where the men sit and talk, and where the different disputes are settled], and when he has climbed on an ant-hill, that all men may hear, he says, "Do you hear, you must not eat your '*nsima*' porridge to-day; he who is asleep let him arise that he may himself hear. They are saying you all must bathe, you taste a little of the beer that is not sweet, to-day."

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II. He who was about to have his morning sup, pushes aside his flour against the hut wall, he begins

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 to hide his household goods for, says he, "How
695 do we know we shall return from there." And all
791 their beads are taken off. When they see the sun is beginning to rise, every one assembles. And then they begin to pick out some strong young men, saying, "So and so must stay behind, and so and so, they must look after their companions and keep guard over the village, lest the medicine man's children begin to pillage the property of them who do not die." And then they begin to set out to go to the spot the poison is to be drunk at, and they [412] carry in readiness a grain mortar and a pestle (just any mortar), and follow the path in single file, and come to where the witch doctor is, and he begins to arrange them in a line; they do not turn their backs to the sun, the women spread out in one line, the men in another. The place is black with people. [222] The medicine man has his feather head-dress on, and goat's-hair bands are round his wrists. And then some old man gets up to present that for which the medicine is pounded, perhaps a goat, and this is for opening his bag [where he keeps the poison].

III. Thereupon the doctor says, "Give to me the spirit of the dead." Then that old man gets up, and going up to the village chief, tells him "The doctor is seeking the spirit of the dead." And the chief speaks, saying, "Well, and know you not them who have died here?" And then the old man gives him, the doctor, the spirit, saying, "Here so and so, and so and so have died, and it is on their account we summon you." Then the pounder of the poison says, "Give to me the partakers of human flesh who have eaten these ones you name." And then they call up two people, a man and a woman, saying, "Let her of the race of the Hills, and him of such and such a clan come here." And them they thus called come and stand near the mortar. Then

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

the pounder of the ordeal poison opens his monkey-skin wallet, pulls out the poison bark, and breaks it off into the mortar with a hippo's tooth. When he is chipping it off, he does not finish all the bark he has in his hand, he chips off a little and leaves the rest. When he is doing this the bark jumps, and falls on the left, and again on the right. They surely know that here to-day wonders will befall and that men will die and women. Then the medicine man says, "Give us men to go and draw water." Then the old man asks, "How many men shall we bring?" And perhaps he says, "Bring three, because the people are many," and the doctor tells them, "You must not glance behind, but just draw the water and return." (Lest they give warning to the flesh-eaters.) When he has finished cutting down the bark, he bids his attendant "begin to pound." They do not pound the poison bark as they would grain, they pound, thud! thud! and turn the pestle in the hands. While the attendant is pounding, the pounder of the bark keeps tapping, rat, tat, tat, on the mortar, with his monkey stick [which monkeys use for digging roots], and chants—

IV. "You have heard mother of children,
Mother of children of *Kundamva*.
Indiscriminate slaughter is the game war plays,
It slew the baboon at *Bongwe*,
When you slay let your victims fall backward and not forward.
Bag, make the poison hear my words.
You are come into the village, you are their advocate.
They say, that here so and so and so and so have died.

6:Ratray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

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It is to plead for them you have been summoned.
There they are, she of the house of the Hills, and he of so and so's clan.
She of the Hills, it is she who has taken the basket.
He, the man, took the little sharp knife,
If it be not you, on the spot, on the spot, you must vomit,
If it be you,
Oh slay, slay, slay."

When they come with the water, the medicine man takes a water-jar full, and pours it into the mortar. You can hear the froth come foaming up, and then he draws a cup of the poison and struts about stirring it with his monkey stick, and uttering this incantation—

"Pick them out, pick them out, pick them out,
You see only the morning's sun, its rays when sinking in the west you must not see.
Are you not that one?
You went to Zombe,
You beat the drum,
It was heard in the 'Never-reach-there country' of the fly,
The spurred fly.
There is a squint-eyed lizard there.
If it were not you who beat that drum,
You must vomit.
If it were you,
You must die.

V. "You went into the regions of the air,
You captured a ray of the sun,
You likened it unto a girdle,
Saying, 'Do you be my strength,
That when the poison comes,

Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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You will give me the mastery over it,
I shall win,
This girdle do you sever, sever, sever.'
You swallowed the egg of a fish-eagle,
That the poison when it came might become as naught,
This egg you must smash.

'You took the spleen of a crocodile,
You laid it in your heart,
You took a python's belly,
You swallowed it, that power might be yours,
Do you [my poison bark] rend these.

'You took wax,
You smeared it on your feet,
Going in your neighbours' fields,
Going with stealthy tread to gather up his grain,
To dust off again in your own garden,
Your companions are in want,
You have wealth to overflowing.

VI. "When you see your neighbour's child,
You say, 'Why should he walk thus at large?'
But surely I had better have eaten him
He who thinks thus shall enter here [into the mortar].

"The broken gourd-cups off the grave you beat together, that they might turn into snakes.
Was it not you who sang the song, saying,
'If it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy,
They go about rolling it,
If it be small and light, they just lift it' [the corpse].

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 Was it not you who sang so?
695 I seem to think I heard you.
791
539 "That little razor have you brought it now?
No, I have forgotten it [supposed answer].

"Maidan, beautiful maiden, E! E! E!
You took the arm-bones of the children of men,
You used to go and dance with them,
The squint-eyed lizard is on his seat, and
Sounding the drum,
Wheeling ever one way.
Now in the opposite direction, see they have rent the drum.

"There is a thing that walks by night,
There is something that comes by day,
It has seen him."

754 VII. "No, to-day we have met each other, the
695 boundary is there, from the east to the zenith is
791 yours, from the zenith to the west is mine alone."
He kneels down where one of the human flesh-eaters is, he does not address the demon himself, but talks with another who is next him, and says, "My child, where did you get your black magic; did you get it that you might be all-powerful, you alone?" When he gets up he exclaims, "I have got you, you must not escape, you must go in there, in there, you must enter here" [into the mortar]. When he sees that his attendant has finished pounding the poison, he takes some water and pours it into the mortar, and stirs it, and removes the dregs and takes two gourd-cups, and fills them with the poison. The woman and the man, they are the first to drink. Then the doctor makes every one else do so. Two men drink, he draws again, and gives two women. And so on until all have partaken.

6;Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

VIII. Then the witch finder says, "That beer I had great trouble in buying, you must not waste it, no, you there, we only told you to sip it, do not you see it is a small pot." Then he knocks down the mortar with his foot, and beats together two pieces of metal. When he sees that one human flesh-eater is dead, he says he has caused the mortar to fall. Some, when dying, cry out [like a hyæna]. "Uwi, uwi"; and people know he used to transform himself into that animal; should he roar like a lion, they know he was at times that mighty beast. Others again, when dying, clench their hands. Should they clench one hand, it is known they have eaten five people; if they clench both, men know their victims have been ten. When all have vomited, he causes the survivors to jump over the path. When he sees a man has jumped, he knows that one is an ordinary person and not an eater of human flesh, and the reason the doctor knows this is because he has washed the poison with a medicine made from the "*siswiri*" mouse [and it cannot cross a path and live]. Then the medicine man says, "Let them return to the village now, where a tree has fallen you cannot hide the fall thereof." Any one who has withstood all these tests, on seeing the grass tuft on his hut, dies. When the doctor hears a man has died, he goes to the place to strip him of his cloth and cut off the belt of beads from his waist. Of them who die at the drinking-place and who are free born, their friends make some payment to the doctor, saying, father has died from the poison. Anything the dead man be a slave they burn the body. They who remained behind at the village will drink on the morrow. The pounder of the poison, on returning to his home, is given a goat, perhaps a slave whose "Let me go and bury them." Should the dead

6.Ratray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

754 human flesh-eaters may have worn, the doctor takes
695 home with him and washes his poison bark with it,
●791 that it may still retain its virtue. In the case of a
man who dies from drinking the poison, his spirit is
[MS] not brought back to the village, but is driven out into
the bush.

II

A FUNERAL

764 I. When a person dies every one is told that so and so, who was ill, is "finished for." Then the village elders come together and go into his hut. They begin to bathe the body and anoint it with oil, folding the knees against the chest, and laying the palms of the hands against the cheeks, the arms being bent from the elbows. Then they take a large flat stone, set it against the hut wall, and on it place the body in a sitting position. Then they commence to wail, the women folk only are in the hut where the corpse is, the men are outside, and the children on the verandah. They lament, saying, "Alas, alas, my husband, what shall I do this day?" [The women pass the night in the hut with the dead body, the men sleep outside.] Next morning, when it is dawn, some men take their hoes, and sacrificial flour, and go to some resting-place on the wayside, and sprinkle some flour at the foot of a tree, and set out again, and when now they are drawing near the burial ground, the one who is in front picks up a stone and throws it, with the words, "We have passed." Then they commence to clear a piece of ground, and take the flour and mark out the grave.

6:Ratuzay E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

fire and divided out. They again sleep at the hut of the deceased. Next morning they begin to lift away any refuse. The chief mourners do this, throwing away the stuff at the cross-roads [where they set fire to them]. And then the people disperse. 765

IV. The widows live in the hut where the man died; they get up night and morning to go and utter their laments in the bush; if they meet any one, they cover their head with their calico. The chief mourners and the elders of the village now leave off cohabiting with their wives. When perhaps a month has passed, the elders make preparations for soaking the grain for beer. Previous to boiling the beer, they go to the village oracle to consult him, saying, "We are putting the beer-pots on the fire, and we are not sure if it will be successfully made with no hitch, and whether or not the people will quarrel." Then the oracle may say none of these evils will happen, telling them "the beer will be successfully made." Then they also ask, saying, "Who is she who is to set the beer on the fire?" And then the oracle consults the lots, and says, "But she of so and so's clan, it is she who shall set the beer on the fire." Next morning the beer is set on the fire, the following day it still boils, on the third day it stands off the fire, on the fourth the malt is put in. (In making beer not connected with any mourning, should it not ferment, it is allowed to stand over another day, but mourning beer, even should it not ferment well, they just go on boiling it.) On that day they summon the dance, and every one is told that the beer is ready on that evening. Then all the people collect and begin to dance. They beg some beer for "kindling the fire," and some to "pour on the drums." When they have danced some time an old man comes forth and

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X

THE LOTS

753 I. If a man be ill, his companion goes off and
● 791 seeks the oracle man. He comes outside his hut and hails him, "Zikomo." The owner says, "Yes, come in here." And the man enters the hut, and says, "We have come to you that you may trace a spirit for us." Then the man takes out his lots from a little cat's-skin bag, and takes some ashes and rubs the lots with them, and begins to consult them, and says, "Are you nursing some sick person?" And he replies, "Yes, indeed, I have been attending on a sick person; the little thing that is ill is a child, and I cannot get sleep for him (lit. with him), and he will not even eat gruel, and I said, 'But I must go to the oracle man; perhaps there he may follow up for me the spirit which is causing the child to be ill.'" Then he begins to consult the lots, and says, "It is the spirit of the child's grandmother; it is she who is causing the child to be ill." And he who has come to consult the lots replies, "I have heard." And the lots again speak (through the man): "Why do you not keep me in mind, and even my grandchild, you also go without calling me to mind," but if you give the spirit a fowl take it from me, the child is sitting up; when you go and take the fowl, kneel down with it, and say, "Grandmother, there is the fowl on account of which you are taking a life" (*muntu*). Then the man who has come from the road (to consult the lots) says, "Put the spirit of mine back in the bag."

782 II. Then he goes home, and takes his fowl, and
755 kneels down with it, and takes a gourd-cup of water,

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

turns it out. They also trap them with a falling stone trap, and a spring trap, and others they dig for and smoke out. Mice dig out a hole, and a little farther on make a little chamber, where their nest is; farther on still is their escape exit, with just a thin layer of earth between them and the surface, so that when any one starts digging they can just burst out there. Other mice make a nest in the grass. The *Siswiri* mouse people do not eat; it cannot jump a path; if it tries to, it dies.

XII

THE WITCH-FINDER

I. When a person has died, the chief mourner goes off to seek the witch-finder. When he finds him he says, "At my home something awful has happened, and I am saying that perhaps you can follow up the thing that has killed the person." The witch-finder comes very late in the evening. When he comes, the chief mourner gives him children to lead him to the grave. When they come to the grave there, he asks them, saying, "Which way did they come with the body?" And they say they came there. And he puts medicine where they came, and asks again, saying, "Well, and his head, which direction did they lay it?" And they tell him, "His head was in this direction." He again with medicine guards the place. Then the witch-finder makes fire, and kindles it into flame, and pours medicine on it; and he does so lest people see the fire. And then they see the human flesh-eaters

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are coming; they stand a long way off, and then they call the dead man by his old name, the one he was born with, saying, "Come forth so and so." And the dead man begins to come out of the grave. Then the witch-finder says, "You must not come forth; I am your redeemer." And he returns to the bottom of his grave again. Those flesh-eaters call him again, and he would come forth, but the witch-finder again says the same. Then the human flesh-eaters say, "Who is it that is making our meat to refuse [to step forth]?" And they throw two little pieces of wood, and they turn into lions; they keep coming and clawing (the ground) and roaring, and then the witch-finder sees they are come quite close, and he takes his medicine and scatters it, and these wild beasts turn into little bits of wood, and he takes the bits of wood and puts them in his horn. They send all the wild beasts, but they effect nothing. Then they say, "Whoever can it be who is more powerful than we? Come, come, come, let us see him." Then they come, as it were there, and stand in line, and send one; say they, "Go you and dance and wriggle." And he, when he would wriggle and dance, was not able, and he comes and says, "No, no, no, I cannot dance." (The witch-finder and his fire are glimmering.) "Let another go and try, if it be you think I am lying." And the other, when he would dance, is made to fail just the same. Then the witch-finder says, "I am tired of them." And he takes his (medicine) tail and waves it, and they are dead, and he commences to identify them, saying, "That is so and so, and that so and so." And then he asks, "Well, what shall we do with them—shall we kill them, shall we leave them?" Then perhaps he whose case it is (*mwini wache*) says, "Kill them." The witch-doctor takes sharpened sticks and drives them in

6:Ratzray E,G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

between their legs, and begins one by one, and tells him, "You, you will let three days elapse, the fourth you will die;" and tells another, "You will let four days pass, and on the fifth you die." All of them he speaks to thus. Then he takes some medicine and scatters it, and they rise and begin to run off, and the witch-finder also runs away. At the village, when they have slept three days, they hear so and so is dead, and when four days have gone they hear so and so is dead. 791 539

XIII

AN ANGONI PRAYER FOR RAIN

I. When rain does not come, they go to the man with the lots to consult them. He of the lots says, "It is the great spirit; it is she who is keeping the rain from coming." Then all the elders assemble. In the morning at dawn, an ox is taken from the kraal, and the chief stands up and says, "This ox I have given you, our ancestor, seeing that you are keeping the rain from us; give us, your children, rain; look, all men are afflicted because of you." And the elders utter a response, saying, "Hail, chief, spare us, help us, thy people." And when they are answering (thus) the ox makes water, and then people know the spirit has heard. Should it not make water, they say the spirit refused (to do as asked), and leave the ox, and go again to consult the lots. And they kill the ox, and cut off its tail, and put it in a basket, and take also the liver, and put in the basket, and these they go off to the *Kuka* 789 791 782

6Ratzay E, G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Ngoni PRS

XXVI

THE KANONOMERA DANCE

If a person is ill, they go and consult the lots, and then he of the lots says, "It is the spirit of his grandmother, it is wanting a dance; when you dance that dance, you can take it from us the child is sitting up." And they go to the village and take a basket of grain, and with it they address the spirit, saying, "There is the grain for which you are killing a person; when we have made beer, let us see the person (who is ill) sitting up." And then they assemble every one, and the day the beer is strained, they all come together, and that evening they enter the hut (where the sick person is), and begin to clap their hands to rouse the spirit, and then they see the sick one is trembling and crying out, and then the people say (to the spirit), "You must not come with war, it is we who have called you; see here at the village the drums have come, but let them depart again without anything happening to mar the dance." And when they have finished clapping their hands the dance comes forth, and the drums begin to sound, and they are dancing. He who remembers a song sings it; when one is possessed by a spirit, down he falls, and they drag him out of the dance, and deck him with calico and skins of animals, and he again enters the circle and dances. When a person is possessed by a child's spirit, they bind his calico tightly round him that it be strong, because that person is wishing to strip it off, and dance naked, as a child does not wear anything. Should a woman be seized by a man's spirit, saying, "I am so and so," they deck her with a

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[78] rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned.
[79] Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment.
795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a
741 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancien successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities.
695 The witch doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When
766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before
849 their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We
177 seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the
[643] only independent tribe in Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government.
[634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

181 577 828 [182] The four so-called personal values will be reflected in the Ngoni personality traits which we are going on to discuss. There are however two values which did not appear to fit into any integrated system, and which yet recurred as themes in Ngoni culture, and here and there in the ideas inherent in child training. One was the theme of childhood innocence, which was much deeper and more subtle than merely keeping children in ignorance of sexual life and intercourse. The other was the value set on the 'gentle' man. He was a man who appeared to be almost wholly self-controlled, able to have normal sexual intercourse with his wives but not always thinking about women, showing sternness but without anger, being just but also merciful. These were the qualities looked for in the man responsible for the guardianship of certain head villages where the ancestor cult was [769] carried on, and who was entrusted with the ritual associated [778] with the ancestor cult. In the more ancient ritual, such as carrying the sacred emblem before the armies, it was young boys, exemplifying the childhood innocence theme, who were entrusted with this charge. In the more modern con- [793] texts, many of the outstanding Ngoni ministers in the church were recognized and revered as 'gentle' men.

The Ngoni ideal personality

577 Chapters IV and V, as well as Chapters VI and VII, showed that there were certain elements in the Ngoni ideal of what their children should be like which were common to young men and women, to boys and girls, while others were emphasized only for girls or for boys. Among the common traits we have already seen the outstanding emphasis on 'respect' in all forms of behaviour and in all kinds of contact with older people, and with others who should be 'honoured'. Part of this respect was shown in obedience, and with this obedience in all the detailed inter-personal relations with senior people was associated, in the individual's relations to society as a whole, being law-abiding and complying with Ngoni law.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European.

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules.

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[4] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls.

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide

[4] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

586 court. Women whose husbands have threatened them with divorce often bring the matter to court so that the divorce may be ratified 692 and their grievance brought to light, or in the hope that they may be awarded damages for cruelty. If a woman does not wish to be divorced she may hope that the court will persuade her husband to take her back. In some areas where the Native Court is powerful, divorces are referred to it even after they have been agreed to in the village. The Dutch Reformed Church Mission sometimes allows divorce, but its members first seek divorce in the Native courts [994] and then, when the divorce has been granted, apply to the Mission for divorce in the eyes of the Church.

586 After a quarrel between a man and his wife he may give her a present of sixpence or a shilling and tell her that she is divorced and must go home. This act does not of itself constitute a certain divorce unless the man takes no steps to persuade her to return after she has stayed at her own village for a month or more. If the man does not go to her kinsfolk to apologize and ask them to intercede with the woman on his behalf, then it is plain that he meant what he said, and the woman may feel free to seek a new husband. A woman divorced in this way is not, however, so sure of her position as if she had been divorced in court or by agreement at a meeting of kinsfolk and there is always the possibility that her old husband may bring a suit of adultery against her and the new husband. The gift and the husband's statement 'I divorce you' constitute really only a threat of divorce, and a woman who returns to her own people after such a threat and who is not followed by an apologetic husband will, if she is sensible, take steps to clarify her status. Her kinsfolk may go to her husband's kin and discuss the quarrel with them and attempt a reconciliation or they refer the matter to the court.

A man does not need any specific grounds for divorcing his wife and if the marriage has lasted only a short time he may just say that he does not like her or does not want her as a wife. If no marriage payments have been made a man may merely say he is tired of his wife and send her home. The more common reasons given when divorce occurs soon after marriage are that a wife is always quarrelling, is lazy about preparing food, is disrespectful, or is always running off to her own village. Where the marriage has lasted longer, the most common grounds for divorce are adultery by the wife and desertion by the husband.

A woman usually seeks divorce on the grounds of cruelty or desertion. It is not sufficient for her to claim that her husband is a leper, or is mad, or has syphilis, for the court will argue that she ought to seek out the proper medicine to cure her husband. If her husband has been sent to prison, the court will argue that he went against his will and that his wife must wait for him to come out. She is more likely to get a divorce if she can prove that he is continually beating her or that he does not clothe her although he

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

apparent ease with which women get divorces and councillors say that they divorce people only because the Administration would interfere if they did not. We can see that in one sense the Ngoni analysis is correct. Whatever may be the precipitating causes of particular divorces, one basic factor is that the old social order in which divorce was rare has been replaced, through a series of events beginning with the White conquest, by a different form of social structure in which wives are relatively mobile from one husband to another. Adultery and desertion lead to divorce because it is no longer necessary to tie down the fertility of women to definite points in a segmentary system based on patrilineal descent, and this is so because the system no longer exists. It is true that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Missions do not recognize divorce but ecclesiastical ceremonies have no force in law, either in the eyes of the Administration or of the Native Courts, and the sanctions utilized by these missions do not entirely prevent their members seeking divorce. 586 178

Immediately after a divorce the couple usually wish to have little to do with one another. After the passage of years the hostility between them fades away and they may talk to one another in the ordinary course of village life. They continue to address each other as *husband* and *wife* and their children, although nominally in the custody of one group or the other continue to visit back and forth and keep the parents informed of each other's doings. A woman now married elsewhere may return to her former husband when their son comes home on leave from work. In her old age a woman may even go back to the man from whom she was divorced a long time ago if she has no one else to turn to for shelter and assistance. More frequently she follows her children to where they are living in her former husband's village but has little to do with him directly, only through their children. 586

8. Co-wives

We have seen that the rights of a man over his wife's sexual activities are different from hers over his. Whereas a woman who commits adultery pays damages to her husband, he does not pay her when he commits adultery. This lack of symmetry derives from the polygynous nature of the Ngoni marriage system. A man can always argue that he is seeking another wife, even if the woman he is running after is married to someone else. It is considered no business of his wife to interfere. She may attempt to stop him but all she can use are domestic and mystical sanctions, she cannot appeal to the law. Again, a wife has no right to the sexual monopoly of her husband and cannot prevent him from taking additional wives except by making his life with her so difficult that he decides to abandon the attempt. 593 595 [684]

As can be seen from Table III, about one man in seven has two or more wives. Although the Christian Missions do not tolerate 595 794

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

595 polygyny, and punish their members who take additional wives,
● 794 there are still a number of Christian polygynists who for most purposes align themselves with the Christian group.

As in the old days, the wives of a polygynist are ranked in the
595 chronological order of marriage, the first wife married being the
178 great wife. If, however, bridewealth has been paid, the wives married
[583] in this way are all senior to those who are married without it. The arrangement by which a barren or aged wife was given a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) has now almost disappeared. A young girl may still be indicated as a linked co-wife designate at the gall bladder ceremony of her kinswoman and the intestines placed round her neck, but this is now a mere ceremonial, and the girl marries elsewhere when she grows up. As mentioned above a chief negotiated recently for a linked co-wife on the strength of bridewealth paid by his father, but with no success.

593 A man makes his headquarters in his great wife's hut, and keeps
595 his possessions and money in it. During the day it is considered proper that he should sit and chat or entertain visitors on the verandah of her hut. Her hut is likely to be of better design than those of her co-wives, and she is more likely than they to have a separate kitchen. When her husband returns from a journey, he ought to go first to her hut, and if he has brought back goods from Southern Rhodesia, it is in her house that he stores his loads until he has time to divide them among his wives and relatives. A visitor from afar goes first to the great wife's hut and there asks for the man he is seeking. In her husband's absence it is she who must entertain the visitor. This pattern of precedence is followed to greater or lesser extent despite quarrels between husband and wife, and is not affected by where the husband actually sleeps at night.

Apart from this emphasis on the importance of the great wife, the
595 correct behaviour for a man with many wives is impartiality. He must sleep with each wife in rotation, usually for a week at a time, and must not confide in one wife the secrets of his relationship to another. Relationships between co-wives are sometimes strained, and one may use medicines against the others. The medicine[28]
[830] believed to prevent a man from achieving erection with anyone other than the woman who gives it to him is sometimes used by one wife against another. On the other hand, some co-wives help each other in their gardens and many polygynists' households run smoothly. Each wife has her own hut and her own garden and it is possible for them to arrange their affairs so that they can co-operate or act separately as they find best. If they persistently quarrel
[591] their husband may deem it well for them to live in separate villages, so that for example a man may live virilocally with his great wife and uxorilocally with his second wife, going from one village to the

[28] Possibly known as *ndamanga*. The details of this medicine are not known by many men, and I was unable to question any women on this matter.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

833 Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within the marriage bond it is not merely permitted, it is right and proper and positively sanctioned. All intercourse is dangerous, whether marital or not, and indeed it is perhaps the licit social significance of marital intercourse that leads to the attribution of mystical 843 significance. While a woman is pregnant, her husband can and indeed should sleep with her and with her co-wives, for it is not her husband's mere copulation with others that endangers her child, but frivolous and illicit intercourse with the wife of another or with some woman he has no intention of marrying. The moral code supports the social order, and the infant is born live into a righteous and well-regulated family. Otherwise it will not be born, or be born dead. Thus runs the belief.

5. Christian marriage

794 We have noted that, whatever were the intentions of the framers of the 1903 Regulations, Christian marriage ceremonies do not now have 581 any legal significance, either in the Administration's courts or in the Native Courts. They are, however, significant in the eyes of the missions concerned, and sanctions are employed to ensure that all Christians are married in church. Marriages usually take place at the mission itself and there is some sort of preparation beforehand to verify that the couple concerned are aware of the religious implications of the marriage. Important people are sometimes married in a village church and the ceremony is attended by many people. These rites, both at the mission and in the village, involve the local groups of Christians and serve to integrate the members. The barriers against marriage outside the sectarian group might under some conditions lead to Christian or even sectarian endogamy but among the Ngoni this has not taken place. If a couple are anxious to marry and cannot by reason of a religious disparity, the pagan will usually join the church and then proceed to marriage as soon as the rules of the denomination permit. After marriage, a number then cease active participation in the affairs of the church, although they usually continue to regard themselves and are regarded as Christians. The fairly rapid growth of Christianity in the last fifty years makes it impossible to tell as yet whether an endogamous community will be formed. In any case, the Christian community stretches like the rest of Ngoni society to the Copperbelt and the towns of Southern Rhodesia, and there are facilities for Christian labour migrants who wish to marry Christian girls in the towns.

799 The missions have attacked polygyny, the inheritance of widows, the ceremony of 'taking up the child', belief in *mdulo* and pre-marital [517] copulation. In addition, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission has opposed the drinking of beer, and in theory but not as yet in practice, payment of bridewealth. The prohibition on the drinking of beer has led to the exchange of gifts of cooked food between the two sides in the various ceremonies of marriage, without making any important difference to their content and meaning. The missions have had

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

797 Central Africa. The U.M.C.A. subsequently concentrated its activi-
795 ties in another part of the District, so that the two main denominations are now the Dutch Reformed Church and the Catholic Church. There was for a time a branch of the Livingstonia Mission (Free Church of Scotland) in the area, while more recently a Seventh Day Adventist Mission has begun work. Since 1924 there have been some adherents to the Watch Tower[1] amongst the Ngoni, but this movement did not become important until some years later.

797 Primary education is carried on in mission schools subsidized by
872 the Administration, but there is also a Native Authority school over which the chiefs exercise some influence and which is to some extent supported by Native Treasury funds. The teachers in the elementary
[875] schools live in the villages, but they do not exercise very much influence outside their classrooms. This does not appear to have been the case in the past, when there was greater hostility between the different missions and when the missions tended to disregard the tribal authorities. The teachers then seem to have set themselves up as headmen on their own, and schools were built without the permission of the local headmen. In many cases where the issue between the missions was undecided, there were two schools in the same village. In the middle 'thirties many of these so-called schools were closed on the initiative of the Administration and the teachers who remain are now more interested in education than in politics.

872 A village school serves more than one village, so that the children of a neighbourhood containing, say, half a dozen villages get to know each other and visit in each other's villages. Certain dances and songs,
[535] known as *konsert*, are performed by parties of schoolchildren going from
[533] one village to another, and this leads to similar inter-village dancing in the evenings organized by groups of boys. At the end of term a number of schools of the same denomination combine to perform a rather more elaborate programme of songs and dances, and these displays are attended by many adults.

797 The deacons and evangelists are of greater importance in the political life of the tribe than are the school teachers. Deacons take a
● 794 certain initiative in settling disputes in the village, and they report to their missions deaths and serious sins that affect their people. They arrange for religious instruction for catechumens and may on occasion organize opposition to some practice that has been declared wrong by
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[1] The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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the tribe are held every year or so. Permission to hold these meetings has to be obtained from the chief, who may sometimes attend. Food is provided by the local church members and a levy to raise funds for buying a goat or sheep may be made. The initiative at these meetings is taken by the senior deacons and decisions reached are passed on to the members by the deacons. Church services, which are attended by people from many villages, are not only meetings for worship but are [794] also occasions when instructions for collective action are given. For example, a lieutenant was recently suspended by his mission for helping [688] to find another wife for his chief. Church members in his county were then instructed at a church service that they must not attend the funeral of this man or of any of his children.

The tribal area is divided into two zones controlled by the two main denominations, with some overlapping, and this division cuts across the county boundaries, so that people from more than one county have a common interest in a church serving them all. This interest is reinforced by attendance at funerals and prayer meetings in the villages.

The Watch Tower, also known as Jehovah's Witnesses, or in the vernacular, as The Society, is now the third sect of importance in the area. This organization has had a rather chequered career, and has been the target of much adverse criticism from missions, Administration, and chiefs. From the point of view of social structure, it is significant because its organization within the tribe cuts across the county boundaries, because it holds that the teachers of the other denominations are wholly false, because its membership is drawn largely from people who previously belonged to these other denominations, and because no local Whites and few persons of importance in the tribe are members of this sect. In the past, members of the Society opposed the chiefs on principle, but this attitude is not held now, and opportunities are taken to demonstrate their loyalty to the existing order. Meetings are held in different parts of the country every month, and members from other parts are housed and fed by the local members.

Not every person in the tribe has been baptized as a Christian, but 797
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10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

IV. WIDER CONTACTS

Other Local Groups

We have so far in this account been concerned with delineating the main outlines of political and village structure and the kinship system. We have examined the internal constitution of the tribe and have only been concerned secondarily with the external relationships by which the Ngoni are connected with the wider world. But in the Fort Jameson District there are, and have been for many years, people who do not fall within the tribal framework but with whom the Ngoni interact. These include people from the British Isles and South Africa, Indians, and Coloured persons, as well as Africans from other tribes. The Europeans are there as administrators, missionaries, farmers, and traders. Indians are traders and farmers, while Coloured persons are farmers and foremen. Africans from other tribes are, like the Ngoni, labourers on the farms and in the township, as well as subsistence cultivators in their own tribal areas. 563

The land of the District is divided into Native Reserve and Trust land, farm-land, township, and Crown land. Almost all Ngoni villages lie on Reserve or Trust land, and it is in this zone that most of the activities described so far take place. On the farm-land Ngoni participate not as headmen or lieutenants or chiefs, but as labourers and foremen. They still fill the roles of husband, wife, sibling, parent, and child, and sometimes other kinship positions, but the family in the farm compound is on a smaller scale than in the village. In the town of Fort Jameson the range of activity open to them is greater, and there are Ngoni butchers, drivers, clerks, shop assistants, Native Urban Court assessors, and so on. All these roles on farm and in the town are shared with Africans from other tribes in the Eastern Province and from more distant regions. 311 463

The Churches

The influence of the non-African groups extends out beyond the areas in which they live into the reserves. We have already seen how the Administration has affected the life of the tribe. The Christian Church has also had a profound influence. By 1910 there were three denominations at work in Ngoni country: the Dutch Reformed Church Mission,[1] the White Fathers,[2] and the Universities' Mission to 797 795

[1] Algemeente Zending Commissie der Nederduitsche Gereformeerde Kerk in den Oranje Vrijstaat.

[2] Société des Missionaires de Notre Dame d'Afrique, a Catholic Order.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned. Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment. Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancien successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities. The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the only independent tribe is Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government. Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

could assemble for hunting and fighting, similar to the sectors attached to chiefly villages among the Zulu.[8] 561 701

Women were organized into parallel age-sets, led by daughters of the royal line and other important young women. Men and women of corresponding sets danced together on ceremonial occasions, and among themselves women in a regiment used to fight 'to see who was strongest'. After marriage a woman ceased to participate actively in these regimental dances and fights. [562]

The most important national festival was the first fruits ceremony held annually at the headquarters of Zwangendaba's great wife's segment. This was organized on an age-set basis, and there was much competitive dancing. Special songs were sung, and on conclusion of the ceremony a large national raid might be undertaken. 561 796 [726]

The Ngoni depended largely on the efficiency of their army for the continual inflow of captives on which the strength and continued existence of the State depended. The age-set system provided them with an efficient army, and in addition was a means whereby the centrifugal tendency inherent in their segmentary system was partly checked. 561 701 727

Each major segment had members in each regiment, and each regiment was drawn from every major segment. It provided the central authority with an instrument by which the segments could be held together, for on national raids the young men of every segment were in danger. No one segment, save the State itself, could claim the glory for a successful battle, but only the regiments involved. The Paramount Chief did not possess a complete monopoly of force, for we have already noted that sometimes segment heads organized their own raids. But these were small affairs, 561 701 621 [643]

[8] cf. Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p. 31.

(a) Mpezeni I's regiment. Lancaster says Mpezeni I was in Mayunge.
(b) Nsingu's regiment. [114]
(c) Mpezeni II's regiment.
(d) Maola. Wiese and some of my informants support the earlier position; Lancaster and other of my informants support the later one.
(e) Maiyiza. Lancaster and one of my informants support the earlier position; a more reliable informant supports the later one.

Wiese gives two other regimental names. His Madouda or Madoda is merely the status term *madoda*, meaning 'mature, respected and important men'. His other regimental name, Madginga or Madjinga, is probably also a status term, meaning 'very old men'. Rangeley has the names Tatakakulu, Mang'ombe, Izimpisi, Makeke, Mahacu, Zimfezi, Manyoni. [554]

Sources: twenty-three independent informants, offering partly conflicting accounts; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 195; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 82; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 59.

[Footnotes pertain to Table III, page 38, - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly 561 to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regi- 727 mental system that recent captives, both men and women, were 621 indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appro- [702] priate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

The annual first fruits ceremony (*nkwala*) was organized on an 561 age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this 796 ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [171] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[9]

The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social [167] system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them 631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [172] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[9] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *inqwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[39] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nsenga origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[40]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[39] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[40] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-5; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Hera kinship*, pp. 1-18; Pretorius, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-8.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later rejoined it peaceably, but other instances of fission were accompanied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Ciwele Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[43] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[44] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force. Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftainship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no mere secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[43] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 34.
[44] Stanley, *Livingstone*, p. 289, and *Dark Continent*, i, p. 499; Hatchell, 'Angoni', *passim*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[45] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[45] Wiese, 'Expédição', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 196; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, f.n1; Young, *History*, p. 125.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

B.S.A. Company's administration which now began to operate in Mpezeni's country itself. Each had its own African police force and on one occasion two people who had been taken prisoner by the Administration's police were released by a party of North Charterland police. The North Charterland police then arrested the Administration's police, and it was necessary for troops to come from Nyasaland to release them and arrest the North Charterland men.[110] By the end of 1899, however, conditions had become more settled. The B.S.A. Administration had acquired effective control over the whole of Mpezeni's country outside Nyasaland.

The military operations in December 1897 and in 1898 were carried out during the wet season and in consequence there was much sickness among the troops. Although it was not the time of year which the Europeans would have chosen for a campaign, according to one of my informants Warringham had been advised by an Ngoni man whose support he had gained that he should arrange for the war to take place while all the warriors were away from the immediate vicinity of Fort Young attending the national first fruits ceremony at the headquarters of segment 4, the village of Zwangendaba's great wife. The descendants of this man are still regarded as traitors by other Ngoni. The first fruits ceremony was usually held about the new year, so that the war may in fact have followed immediately after the ceremony. This view is supported by the remark made by Harding, who arrived in Ngoniland a few months after the war was over. He said that the war 'arose over a highly strung official [presumably Warringham] mistaking an ordinary Native dance for an act of hostility towards the Administration'.[111] Whatever the truth in the matter, the first fruits ceremony would have been an appropriate time for Nsingu to call for an attack on the Whites.

7. *Cattle*

It has been estimated that before the war there were about 20,000 head of cattle in Mpezeni's country.[112] During the fighting many were taken from Ngoni by Protectorate troops. These animals became the subject of much recrimination. Read states that half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot', while Poole states that a large portion of the 14,000 head captured were ultimately restored to their Ngoni owners.[113]

[110] 223, fo. 368.
[111] Harding, *Far Bugles*, p. 82.
[112] 232, p. 69 has 24,000, while *Report on the Administration*, 1903, p. 19, has 15,000-20,000.
[113] Read, 'Tradition', p. 478; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 16.

643 789 766 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

241 796 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *umsindo*, *ligubo*, *incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said [643 424] '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins everyone sings the songs of *incwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the [178] Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Intokoni* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for [824 224] a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ye'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala sesiqwabulisiwe*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, [535] wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuzo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiwe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *zi zi*, *ozi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'. 622 [554]

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders. 463 177 [871]

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the 797 871 [177] 159 797 [577] [796] [184] [851]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 173 829 184

difference to-day between the attitude of the Ngoni to the Europeans and that of the Chewa, for example. In the vernacular expression the Ngoni say, 'The Europeans spoiled our country'; the Chewa say, 'The Europeans saved us'.

N 173 178 642

Chamtendere, then, was the period of Ngoni supremacy, when they established by force of arms their right to rule over the country and its indigenous inhabitants. There was, however, some difference between the political organization of the Ngoni as a conquering horde on the march, and their organization when they finally settled in their present areas. At both times the focus of their organization was warfare—they were a nation under arms. But once settled on land which they had chosen they began to spread a network of political organization over the country, and to plan in terms of 'countries'[1] instead of mobile villages. To-day when they discuss the advent of the Europeans and the consequent 'spoiling' of their country, they recall the days when extensive tribute was paid to their Paramount Chief, chiefs were free to choose good sites for their very big villages, the outlying areas were ruled by *indunas* and lesser chiefs. It was the partial breaking up of this centralized political organization which they regarded as 'spoiling their country', as well as the economic restrictions with regard to land and the prohibition of raiding for new supplies of cattle.

N. [648] [829]

N 173 178 829 643 796

During this time of Ngoni supremacy Ngoni institutions flourished —those institutions which they had brought with them from the south and preserved through their wanderings. When they are telling to-day about these years they speak fervently and reverently of the part played by the Paramount Chief in every side of life, the training for warfare of all the young men, the instruction and supervision of young chiefs by old *indunas*, Ngoni marriage and initiation ceremonies. It was during this time in Mpezeni's country that the *Inqwala* or first fruits ceremony was regularly observed at Mtenguleni, the village of the mother of old Mpezeni.[2] At this ceremony the Paramount Chief 'opened' the new food season by the ritual eating of new fruits, especially young maize and pumpkins. It was also the

[1] i.e. chiefs' areas.

[2] The description of this *Inqwala* given by men and women who took part in it in their youth shows much similarity to the *Inqwala* of to-day among the Swazi.

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

than either of these two drinks, and the drinking of it is essentially a social event. The kind of beer brewed is made from maize, sorghum, and finger millet. It is brewed by women, the process lasting about a week. The beer can be drunk at any time during the week, but it is not regarded as truly beer until after the brewing process has been completed. It remains good to drink for about three days, after which it becomes too sour. About 20 to 30 gallons of beer are brewed at a time. The beer can be sold, used to provide refreshment for participants in some ceremony or other, offered in return for labour or other services, or else just drunk for its own sake. In each case the presence of beer in the village acts as a magnet attracting people from other villages. Beer that is sold is of economic importance as it is the principal way in which women raise funds for themselves. In connexion with a ceremony of some kind, the attraction of the beer is secondary in general to that exerted by the ceremony itself. The provision of beer in return for utilitarian services we shall discuss later. It is in the pattern of behaviour adopted when beer is drunk for its own sake that we can see reflected the structure of social action at the village level.

273 [462] [434] [796]

Beer is stored in earthenware jars of about 7 gallons capacity. A calabash-gourd cup is used to ladle the beer into earthenware bowls holding about 4 pints; from these the beer is drunk. When the beer is ready for drinking, the friendly fellow villagers of the man whose wife has brewed come to the beer-hut, which is usually the woman's kitchen, and the owner of the beer drinks the first jar with them. The procedure with each jar is that the owner of the beer gives the jar to someone, almost invariably a man, who becomes known as the divider of the beer, and who calls on someone junior to him to act as the dispenser of the beer. The dispenser sits on the ground and fills up the bowls from the jar under the instruction of the divider of the beer, and then takes them, or points them out to, the people to whom the divider wishes to give the beer. Thus the beer is given away in jars by the owner of the beer to the dividers of the beer, and is then divided into bowlfuls, and given by the dividers to yet other people. The owners of the bowlfuls drink some and pass on the bowls so that other people may drink. Each time these gifts of beer of different quantities are made they are acknowledged by the recipient in the form of a praise, consisting of the syllable *yo* followed by the descent-name of the giver. This is also done when a bowl or a jar is finished, so that when the last bowl of a jar is finished the owner of the bowl is praised, then the divider of the beer, and finally the owner of the beer. The

[25] [415]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

175 Livingstone was the first Briton to reach this area. In 1866 he passed through what was to become Mpezeni's country,[5] and in his journals he makes frequent references to Ngoni raids. Unfortunately his carriers would not take him to Ngoni villages and all he saw of Ngoni activity were burnt-out huts and dead bodies killed in battle. The accounts of his journeys stimulated British interest in the region round Lake Nyasa, a centre for the slave trade, and led to the arrival there of missionaries and settlers. In 1874 the [797] Livingstonia Mission was founded and in 1883 a British consul was first appointed to the Shire Highlands.[6]

Mpezeni's country lay some distance from the main centres of British and Portuguese activity, but was not without importance. Apart from Missale, it was thought that there were other gold deposits to be found in the area. In contrast with their harried neighbours, [132] the prosperous Ngoni with their herds of cattle attracted travellers while the pleasant climate of the plateau, compared with the hot valleys of Luangwa, Zambezi, and Nyasa, made it suitable for European colonization. Yet the Ngoni army was formidable, and had to be neutralized in some way if other settlements were to be safe. Mpezeni's country flanked several trade routes of importance from the Zambezi and Lake Nyasa inland to the sources of slaves [439] and ivory. For these various reasons Mpezeni's country attracted the attention of traders and governments, those interested in 175 benefiting by the slave trade as well as those seeking to end it. In 648 addition towards the end of the century when it became clear that Africa was to be completely divided between the Powers, any territory, however inhospitable, that had not already been claimed attracted the attention of treaty-making explorers.

The first move towards incorporating the Fort Jameson Ngoni in a colonial empire was made by the Portuguese who had been stimulated by the increasing British interest in Nyasaland. In November 1888 the Governor-General of Moçambique instructed Wiese, a German[7] trader who had already made contact with Mpezeni, to lead an expedition to him. According to Johnston, Wiese and an associate were offered £2,000 to secure Mpezeni's submission to Portugal.[8] Wiese was well received and distributed flags to Mpezeni and his sons. The Portuguese regarded the

[5] *Last Journals*, i, p. 150.

[6] Johnston, *British Central Africa*, pp. 55-69.

[7] In *A & P*, 1890-1, lvii, p. 683, the Portuguese Foreign Minister describes Wiese as a Dutchman. This appears to be incorrect in the light of Wiese's contacts with the German Legation in Lisbon.

[8] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 235; **49**, p. 13. (To save space, all public records will be identified by a serial number printed **bold face**, taken from the first column of the Bibliography, List C.)

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

trade in slaves, selling them to the Arabs.[47] Wiese's evidence on this point is contradictory. In 1881 he wrote that Arab caravans continually visited Mpezeni and that most of the raids were to capture slaves for sale to the Arabs. In 1900, he wrote in one place that some captives were sold to the Arabs and in another that Mpezeni scarcely knew of the permanent slave hunters and that the sole object of major raids was to gain captives to cultivate the Ngoni fields.[48] Few tales of the Arabs and no nicknames have survived to the present time among the Ngoni, and it is probable that Sharpe was overestimating the importance to Mpezeni of the external slave trade. Although Livingstone knew it, Wiese and Kerr are the only contemporary writers who were aware that captives were assimilated,[49] for other writers do not distinguish between captives and slaves. Whether or not the raids were made for Ngoni recruits or for slaves to be sold to the Arabs, it is clear that they were often made into Nyasaland and thus challenged the Administration there. Towards the end of 1895 the Collector at Kotakota opened a campaign against Mwase Kasungu, the Cewa chief whose territory lay between Mpezeni and the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland. It is alleged that Mpezeni offered to help Mwase in this campaign, but it seems that no help arrived. On 31 December 1895 the fortified village of Kasungu was captured and Chabisa, a chief who had been helping Mwase, fled to Mpezeni.[51]

Chabisa may have been the moving spirit behind the delegation which early in 1896 went from Mpezeni to the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland calling on them to rise with him and Chabisa against the British.[52] The Livingstonia Mission had already been working among the northern Ngoni for eighteen years, and the delegation found little support.

As well as Chabisa, other refugees arrived from the south, after the First Matabele War of 1893 in Southern Rhodesia. According to some accounts the Ndebele Paramount Chief, Lobengula, was with them, only to die a few months later.[53]

[47] Sharpe, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 745. cf. Perham, *Ten Africans*, p. 96.
[48] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 478 and 'Geschichte', pp. 188 and 197.
[49] Livingstone, *Narrative*, p. 385; Kerr, 'Upper Zambesi', p. 396.
[51] Swann, the Collector, in *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 4 (15 February 1896), p. 1, and *A & P*, 1896, lviii, pp. 417, 418, describes Chabisa and Mwase as Ngoni and Zulu chiefs. Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 168, say Mwase and Chabisa were brothers. It is unlikely that either was Ngoni. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 144, calls Mwase a Cewa but says he had many Ngoni headmen under him, thereby amending his earlier statements that Mwase and Undi were Ngoni. See 10, fo. 129; *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 412. [52] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 292.
[53] *B.C.A.G.*, iii, 10 (15 May 1896), p. 2; Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 83; Posselt, *Ufengula*, pp. 112-24; 98; 121, fo. 193.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Ngoni of northern Nyasaland for a similar situation which ended in the relatively peaceful incorporation of the tribe into the framework of colonial administration. But in northern Nyasaland there were no gold-mines, there were only missionaries. Johnston admits that the presence of mission stations among the northern Nyasaland Ngoni embarrassed him, and he refrained from using force against them in 1895 because this might have interfered with missionary activity.[99] In Mpezeni's country there were no mission stations and, as it happened, no gold-mines worth worrying about either; but by the time this fact had been realized it had ceased to be significant for the Ngoni. The North Charterland was formed in the belief that Mpezeni's country was rich. The capital of the company, not all paid up, was £1,000,000 and in 1897 it offered a reward of £10,000 to the discoverer of the first payable gold-field in its concession.[100] Given the fact that wealth of this magnitude was at stake, that there was gold to be found, and given the tactlessness of Warton and the intransigence of Nsingu, it was likely that war would come sooner or later.

As it was, the end of the Ngoni State as a sovereign political unit and its incorporation within a colonial empire came suddenly. Instead of the gradual formation of new groupings and alignments, the new system began as suddenly as the old system ended. We tend to think of the arrival of Europeans in the backwoods of Africa as a gradual process extending through many decades, and indeed even in Ngoniland there were Europeans for at least thirteen years prior to the war. Yet to old Ngoni of to-day the coming of the Europeans is a precisely defined event which took place on 19 January 1898.

The sequence of events which culminated in the fighting was as follows. In May 1897 some of Mpezeni's people began to build shelters and clear gardens at the headwaters of the River Bua, just inside the Nyasaland Protectorate. Sharpe, who had succeeded Johnston as Commissioner, was at first not greatly pleased, but instructed the Collector at Kotakota to make clear to Mpezeni that he would have to conform to the wishes of the Administration. A peaceful settlement between Mpezeni and the British seemed possible, and on second thoughts Sharpe was pleased to see, as he thought, Mpezeni removed from the sphere of influence of the North Charterland and the B.S.A. Company, who might have taken action against him and precipitated a crisis. However, the Collector was single-handed and it seems that he was unable to

[99] *A & P*, 1896, lviii, p. 437.
[100] *African Review*, xiii, 254 (2 October 1897), p. 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

231 439 648 727 Manning stipulated that cattle handed back to the Ngoni should not be sold, to prevent traders bartering cattle for gunpowder.[123] Nevertheless the majority of the cattle remaining in or returned to Ngoni hands were sold within two years. In April 1898 over 14,000 head of cattle were counted.[124] Whether or not all these were in Ngoni ownership at the time is not clear, although the North Charterland implied in a letter written in 1899 that at least 12,000 belonged to Ngoni.[125] During the next year or so, in spite of Administrative opposition, many thousands of cattle were sold to traders or killed. By 31 March 1900 only 1,224 remained.[126] [177] Thus another of the systems of social relationships, those mediated through cattle, which had sustained the old social order, was undermined.

8. *The end of a system*

178 648 Thus ended the Ngoni war and with it the Ngoni State. In the last twelve years of its existence, from 1886 to 1898, three struggles were proceeding simultaneously in linked regions of social space. First there were the traditional processes already described by which Ngoni killed and recruited their neighbours and by which cleavages between segments of their residential system widened and altered with time. Second there was the struggle between Portugal, Great Britain and, peripherally, Germany for the political control of south-central Africa. Third there was a struggle between [439] different groups of financiers in London for the control of the rich economic resources which they believed, quite mistakenly as far as we can now tell, lay waiting to be discovered in Mpezeni's country and round about. Apart from these three major fields of activity, there were two others which affected this particular area to a lesser degree. There were the traders and adventurers like Wiese (until 1896), Matakenya and the Arabs who competed with one another and endeavoured to exploit the region in terms of ivory, gunpowder and slaves. There were also the various missions, [799] representing the interests of their co-religionists and anti-slavery enthusiasts in Europe, competing with each other and with the slave traders for local control. There was even a scheme for colonizing Mpezeni's country with Christian laymen from Britain.[127] All these social fields were interwoven in reality, but in analysis

[123] 207; 208, fo. 15; 233.
[124] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[125] 230, p. 69. Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 393, implies that all the 14,000 belonged to Ngoni.
[126] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 65.
[127] 87.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

our task is to separate them out. Yet even in analysis we have to show how each field interlocks with the other two, how events in one field set up movements in others. 178 648

The material apparatus used in the various fields was distinct. The traditional processes were decided ultimately by resort to spears and shields. Portugal and Britain fought with artillery, embargoes, customs dues and treaties. The North Charterland fought its rivals with concessions, certificates of claim and share capital.[188] Mpezeni, who knew how to fight with spears, was asked to sign pieces of paper which would then be negotiable in a property system of which he knew nothing, and the manipulators of which knew little of him. The treaty-collectors imagined a patchwork of stationary chiefdoms spread over the region, each with a chief powerful enough to sell his country, whereas in fact there was only an unstable series of groups of shifting cultivators, each liable to attack from the migrating Ngoni. 439 648

Yet despite the differences in technique and despite the lack of knowledge of each other's systems of government, the various groups involved continued to pursue their own ends as best they could. Mpezeni may not have known what a flag was, yet the issue between Portugal and Britain was decided, and decided in Lisbon rather than in Ngoniland. The treaties may have been made beyond the competence, and the understanding, of the chiefs who signed them, and yet the B.S.A. Company did gain control of the country. Mpezeni never made his mark on a document, yet the North Charterland acquired its ten thousand square miles of land. On the other hand, the Ngoni regiments tried to win another battle like the others they had won before, and this time they failed. In consequence of the war of 1898 there was a revolution, a change of structural form, in Ngoni society, whereas in the histories of Portugal and Britain, and even of the B.S.A. Company, the event passed almost unnoticed. [721] [669]

In northern Nyasaland an analogous process of incorporation within a wider system was taking place. Here also there was an intruding European group and the same distant interest of the Nyasaland Administration. Yet in many ways the chain of events in northern Nyasaland was simpler than at Fort Jameson. In the north, there was only one set of resident Whites, the Livingstonia missionaries, there was no Wiese willing to play for both sides at once, and there was no North Charterland. In consequence the [797]

[188] cf. Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, p. 24: 'Swazi were subjugated through concessions, a type of economic warfare eventually sanctioned by powerful European governments.'

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Chapter Four

TRANSITION

1. Administrative policy 2. White control 3. Chiefs 4. County segments
5. Relative status of chiefs 6. Counties as territorial units 7. Villages

1. *Administrative policy*

THE DEFEAT of the Fort Jameson Ngoni in 1898 was followed by the establishment of an Administration under the British South Africa Company. The greater part of the Nyasaland troops who had done the fighting left the area in April 1898[1] but the North Charterland party remained at their old headquarters at Fort Young, the B.S.A. Company made a base at Fort Patrick a few miles away, and in Nyasaland the Protectorate Administration maintained a station at Fort Manning. The new township of Fort Jameson was established in October 1898[2] and the first mission station was opened by the Dutch Reformed Church Mission at Magwero in 1899, in response to a request for a mission made the previous year by Mpezeni.[3] From these bases, White administrators, traders and missionaries, aided by their Black assistants, began to alter the form of Ngoni life. We are here particularly concerned with political organization, and it was the Administration which was particularly influential in determining what form the new Ngoni political organization would take. But political systems do not exist in isolation, and the kinds of political relationship which we find existing to-day have been influenced by the changing economic, commercial and religious relationships which have been determined more specifically by traders, labour recruiters, planters and missionaries as well as by the exertions of administrators.

The Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia was in the hands of the B.S.A. Company, and the policy adopted was to some extent influenced by developments in other territories administered by the Company. Southern Rhodesia was much more accessible from the sea than North-Eastern Rhodesia, more capital had been invested in it, and its mineral wealth appeared to be considerably greater. North-Eastern Rhodesia was therefore

[1] 220, fo. 67.
[2] *Reports on the Administration*, 1898-1900, p. 71.
[3] Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 22.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

439 regarded as a territory which would supply Native labour and,
648 possibly, cattle to the south. Little attempt was made to develop
[464] the resources of the territory itself, and indeed in so far as Mpezeni's country was concerned, the B.S.A. Company had ceded its rights to do so to the North Charterland. The general pattern of White-Black participation in economic activity was taken over from South Africa, whence many of the early settlers came, and there was no attempt to train a Black *élite* to perform skilled tasks. Apart from the Ngoni and the Bemba, the Black population of North-Eastern Rhodesia had been taken under the administration of the B.S.A. Company without serious fighting and their chiefs did not have the opportunity to become leaders of opposition against the Whites. The Administration wished to keep its expenses low and found that
[643] the cheapest way of running the country was through the
[622] indigenous chiefs and headmen. Hence a system of administration grew up which was in many respects similar to that later known as Indirect Rule.[4] Chiefs and village headmen were placed under a statutory obligation to preserve law and order among their people. Some of them were paid a few shillings a year for their labours and were given ceremonial spears of office. There were no formally constituted Native courts, as there are now, but minor cases of all
[692] kinds were heard by indigenous tribunals, and the authority of these tribunals appears to have been upheld by the Administration in so far as their judgments were regarded as maintaining law and order. Indeed on occasion the Administration indicated to chiefs what kinds of cases they should deal with and what should be referred to the Administration. The collection of tax, one of the
[651] most important activities of the early administrators, was carried out with the assistance, or the enforced co-operation, of the Black
[464] leaders. Labour recruiters appear to have operated in much the same kind of way. Thus the commoner in his village found that to a considerable extent access for him to these new White agencies was along the traditional chain of authority through headman and chief. The missions were to a greater extent concerned with
[797] establishing relationships with individuals without reference to their position in indigenous society, but even they tried occasionally to work through chiefs and other notables. Thus despite the changed situation, the indigenous order was utilized by the White invaders and in so far as that order was useful to them they endeavoured to uphold it.

177 Nevertheless, the encouragement given by the Administration
464 to recruiters of labour from the south, and the economic necessity
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[4] cf. Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 452-3.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

effort to induce them to co-operate actively with the government, and by 1910 he was looking forward to reducing the number of White officials in the Administration by devolving much of the Native work on to the Natives themselves. Co-operation was encouraged by the payment of small stipends to chiefs and others, varying in the 1920s in annual value from £22 10*s.* 0*d.* for Mpezeni down to 6*s.* for district messengers. 648

The Ngoni for the most part neither supported nor opposed this scheme of administration; they merely accepted it. For years the Administration bemoaned the indifference of the Ngoni, but apart from an attempt by a mission to set up its teachers as headmen, there was little attempt to obstruct the work of the Administration. [797]

In matters of land, the authority of the Whites was also dominant, but here the paternal amiability which characterized purely political relations between Administration and Ngoni was lacking. The alienation of land was at the instigation of the North Charterland, who considered themselves the owners of Ngoni country. Fort Jameson was built by the Administration in the middle of Ngoni country and the land round the township, few facilities though the town then had, became more valuable to potential settlers than more fertile but inaccessible tracts. The high density of population in Ngoni country also attracted settlers with the prospect of an adequate labour supply. Thus we find that many of the first tracts of land alienated were located in the middle of Ngoni country, in the most densely populated section. As early as 1 January 1904 the first Commission was appointed to inquire into land questions in Ngoni country.[16] Now that Ngoni had to grow their own food on land which had already been heavily exploited the density of population fell; but in relation to the carrying capacity of the land in perpetuity there was still serious overcrowding. During the unsettled period of the war and its aftermath, the population was dispersed, but from 1900 down to about 1930, in consequence of alienation and the formation of reserves, villages were gradually brought closer together. From 1930 onwards, with the recognition of land shortage by the Administration, villages have been allowed to spread out again. The negotiations concerning where the Ngoni should live have been protracted and complicated; I hope to discuss them in a later work in connexion with the economic background of Ngoni social life. What is here significant about them is that to a very large extent these negotiations have been carried on entirely by Whites, with the Administration representing for the greater part Ngoni

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[16] *N.E.R.G.G.*, ii, 1 (1 January 1904), pp. 30-1.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

361 interests and those of neighbouring tribes against the North Charter-
648 land and the White settlers. Ngoni themselves have not been in a position to enforce their own point of view.

In the operation of the legal system White control has never
648 been so complete, as we have indicated above. However the
692 support given to the judgments of chiefs and others by the Administration prior to 1929 was political rather than legal, and the courts held by chiefs with or without the approval of the Administration did not form part of the same legal system as the Administration's own courts. In that year Native Courts with defined powers were established as part of the same legal system as other recognized courts in the British Empire, with ultimate connexion to the Privy Council.[16] In matters of religion White dominance has been achieved more slowly and has never been complete. But even in
[797] this field the religions brought by the Whites have triumphed over
[769] the cult of the chief's ancestors and to-day it is the Christians who are the ritual experts.

A parallel sequence of events has taken place in Nyasaland, save that there the amount of land alienated in the Fort Manning area has been small. A scheme of administration was given a legal basis in 1912, and was similar to that in Northern Rhodesia. It was revised in 1924, and in 1933 Native Authorities and Native Courts were set up.[17] The two principal missions in Fort Jameson District
[797] have stations in Nyasaland as well.

In both countries Ngoni have been required to pay tax. A
651 hut tax was introduced on the Rhodesian side of the border in 1901
648 and at about the same time in Nyasaland. The annual rate has varied in Fort Jameson District from three to ten shillings. The imposition of tax has been of importance, not only in partly meeting the costs of Administration, but also in bringing Ngoni men and women into the wider economic system of farms, mines and offices of southern Africa.

Thus the Whites established control over the Ngoni in most
177 of their important external relations. Politics, settlement, litigation,
648 religion and economic activity have all been moulded by the Whites. In many respects this has been a passive process, for little that the Ngoni have done or not done has been significant to the decision to set up Native Courts, or to expand the production of tobacco, or even to open up a mission of some new denomination.

[16] By Ordinance No. 33 of 1929. Subsequent legislation is contained in Ordinances No. 10 of 1936, 18 of 1940, and 21 of 1942.

[17] Legislation is to be found in Ordinances No. 13 of 1912, 11 of 1924, 13 of 1933 and 14 of 1933.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 support those of his colleagues. However, chiefs and others do
[661] sometimes manage to play off one administrator against another where there are differences of interest between different departments of the Administration, and occasionally appeals by Ngoni chiefs to high Administrative officials against the actions of their juniors are successful. It is easier for Ngoni to exploit the much greater differences of interest between the different sections of the non-African community, officials, missions, planters and European and Indian traders.

648 In the early years of this century it appears that the chiefs were
662 approached by labour recruiters, planters, and missionaries who wished to gain their favour and utilize this to their own advantage. It is difficult to gauge to what extent this practice continues. There are one or two recent instances where the missions have clearly
[797] recognized the importance to them of securing the goodwill of an Ngoni in high authority, and it would also appear that some high-placed Ngoni have utilized their position to gain from the missions services which might not otherwise have been so readily available to them. With the cessation of labour recruiting there has been no
[464] opportunity for recruiters to offer presents to chiefs to sweeten their way. The nearest modern equivalent to this practice is found in the
[466] facilities sometimes provided by mine managers in the Copperbelt
[574] and elsewhere for Ngoni and other chiefs to visit their tribesmen working there, but with the increased stabilization of labour at the mines this arrangement has declined in importance. Traders have been known to offer bribes to chiefs, but so far as can be judged, money and goods handed over in this way often bring no return, and indeed some of the objects for which bribes are offered are plainly beyond the power of the person concerned to grant. Planters also seek to gain the support of those with influence in tribal and village life. In matters of this kind it is difficult for the observer who spends only a short time in the area to come to any quantitative estimates, but it is my impression that as compared with comparable situations in West Africa, as reported in the literature, there is little bribery in Ngoni society. The first reason that suggests itself is the poverty of the Ngoni in relation to their European and Indian neighbours. Ngoni do not control any rich natural resources,
[556] save perhaps for a few timber trees, with which they might be persuaded to part. The only form of wealth they possess which is of value to their neighbours is their manpower. This was once worth buying and perhaps could be bought. Now the chiefs and headmen do not have the authority to order their people to go and
[461] work for a particular employer. Even if they did, Ngoni make

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

634 by this relationship participate in the presentation and consumption
273 of the beer.

The religion of the Ngoni before the conquest was a cult of the
[769] Paramount Chief's ancestors. This cult has disappeared and all
797 public religious activities are now conducted by members of the various Christian denominations, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church Mission, Anglican (U.M.C.A.), Seventh Day Adventist, and Watch Tower. There are a few adherents of other Christian sects who do not have churches in the Fort Jameson area and there are a few Moslems. There is little evidence to show how much the disappearance of the tribal religion has altered relations between the chief and his people. Most chiefs have some connexion with one or other mission, attend mission services from time to time and send their children to mission schools. The evangelists, deacons and elders of the churches act as leaders of the community in certain situations, particularly at funerals. Advancement within the
[557] ecclesiastical organization can be an alternative route to high status, but in most secular matters church leaders do not rival the chiefs. In church, chiefs are treated with respect and given seats of
[576] honour, while tribal and county meetings are usually opened with prayers led by a catechist or elder of the denomination to which the chief is attached.

The sanctions which people can use against their chiefs are
681 diffuse rather than organized. If the conduct of a chief is regarded
634 as outrageous, the senior lieutenants of his county segment and
626 other traditionally important people may hold a small meeting in the chief's village and there rebuke him for his misbehaviour. If the chief has offended against one of his people, say by striking him, the lieutenants may tell the chief to pay a beast to the wronged man as damages. If it is a minor chief who is involved, the Paramount Chief is sometimes told of the matter and calls the minor
[643] chief to his village to reprimand or caution him. A chief who flouted the instructions of his lieutenants or Paramount in matters of this kind would lose a great deal of the support of his people on which his position ultimately depends. The common people themselves cannot take much direct action against a chief of whose actions they disapprove, but they can gradually drift away from him into other counties and they can refrain from sending him gifts of beer or from answering his calls for labour, and they may show their disapproval by not saluting him in the traditional manner.
643 The Paramount Chief alone is saluted with the word 'Baiyete',[14] a
576 salutation which symbolizes his former position as head of an

[14] cf. Zulu *bayede*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The tenure of a chief is very secure. Unless the chief is found guilty of some crime serious in the eyes of the Administration or unless there is serious disaffection in his county which gains Administrative support, a chief remains a chief for life. For the last fifty years the Administration has complained that Ngoni chiefs are inefficient and unco-operative, yet the number of instances in which a chief has been deposed is very small. I could discover only one clear instance. This security is not enjoyed by other Native Authority employees. Clerks who are found to have embezzled public money lose their posts even as they are punished in the Administration's courts, but the impetus to remove the occupant of a post comes usually from the Ngoni themselves and not from the Administration. Assessors and others who offend their chief are usually dismissed, while at a county meeting men may raise complaints against the actions of an office holder which, if sufficiently sustained, may result in the chief's dismissing him. 634 648 [647] [687]

The secure tenure of the chiefs derives in part from the acceptance by the Administration that their posts are hereditary. It is interesting to note that some holders of less important and more recently created posts are saying that their sons should succeed them.

Table VIII (p. 152) shows clearly the kinds of activities that come within the control of the Native Authority. It does not show the whole range of social services which affect the Ngoni, for education is largely paid for by the Central Government and largely administered by the missions, while the Administration itself handles a wide variety of services, such as agricultural instruction, control of labour, maintenance of main roads, postal services, and very many more. The Administration endeavours to supervise contracts between Africans and non-Africans, and retains for its own courts the right to deal with disputes between Africans and non-Africans. Ngoni participate with other tribes as political groups only within the framework of institutions supervised by the Administration, such as the African Provincial Council of the Eastern Province. The Ngoni Native Authority is in fact, like any other Native Authority, a local government body to which certain functions have been delegated completely by the Central Government, and which for other functions relies partly or wholly on skilled or specialized services provided for it by the centre. The Paramount Chief is hereditary chairman of a rural district council, representing the interests of his peasants to the central authority and representing it to them. 648 65 [797] 645 643

However this analogy of local government is only partly correct, for the society in which Ngoni now live is not a homo- 648 184

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

648 rule as a Native Authority Order.[26] Thus the chiefs preferred to
671 appear as legislators enforcing their own laws rather than as the
692 judicial agents of the Administration.

Besides the Administration, other groups external to the
692 indigenous system endeavour to influence the action of the courts.
664 Thus missions work through chiefs to try to prevent the granting of
[797] divorces in the courts, traders endeavour to get their disputes with Africans heard in Native Courts rather than in those of the Administration, and farmers request courts to hear promptly cases which concern their employees.

Occasionally the Ngoni chiefs meet together with their people
671 and formally make a new law. This appears to have happened
646 about once in each decade. Yet in the courts new decisions are
661 constantly being taken since the circumstances in which disputes arise are continually altering. The way in which these decisions are imposed throws light on the position of the court within the county, for many of these new decisions, precedents as we would call them, are introduced under the guise of a revival of some good but lately neglected tribal custom. There is no recorded corpus of Native law and custom which the Native Courts are empowered to enforce and, therefore, to say that a new decision is merely a revival of an established usage satisfies the requirements of the Administration, provided the usage is not 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. On the other hand, it enables the court members to legislate without referring the matter to a meeting of the whole tribe or county, at which anyone would be free to speak his mind. Thus the group of persons who are in power in the court further entrench their position.[27]

9. *Moral and physical sanctions*

The counties and the tribe persist as social groups despite the
692 ease with which their members may move away to other sur-
648 roundings. The Native Authority remains in power, and its courts
626 are full of litigants, despite the unequal distribution of privileges and rewards. In a general sense the system works because there are moral as well as physical sanctions behind the rulings of the court. There is general agreement about the rights and wrongs of the actions with which the courts have to deal, and it is this that in the
[681] end usually makes a man pay damages and fines that have been awarded against him rather than the threat of the Administration's force behind the court. The decisions of the courts are subject to

[26] *African Affairs, report*, 1948, p. 47.
[27] For a further analysis of this legislative process, see my paper, 'History'.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

721 175 648 defeated an alliance between the Arabs and the Bemba in which the allies intended to dominate all the territory between the Luangwa river and the lake-shore, driving the Ngoni from their highlands and opening all the country to the slave-trade. In the central kingdom, during the interregnum after Cikusi's death in 1891, a powerful Yao chief raided the kingdom, destroyed six villages and took many captives. In both kingdoms it was necessary for the Ngoni to defend their independence by constant vigilance and preparedness, especially against a combination of Arab slave-raiders and local tribes. Since large numbers of warriors were mobilized every year, these trained armies demanded an outlet, and the policy of aggression served the dual purpose of raiding enemy territory and maintaining a defence force.

727 There was a difference of opinion among informants about the results of raids in terms of spoils of war. In both kingdoms captives were taken in war, especially young men of military age and women. From tsetse-free areas where cattle were to be found, live beasts were brought to add to the herds in the Paramount's village and in those of the chiefs and *alumuzana*. Ivory for trading and cloth for wearing were two of the most valued forms of booty, and Cibambo mentioned the looting of clothes and weapons from those who had been killed. From accounts by the first Europeans, it is clear that the Ngoni burned the villages and killed the inhabitants in the majority of their later raids.

727 182 If defensive and aggressive military action and the acquisition of valued forms of wealth were two of the main objectives in war, a third was undoubtedly the need to build up a national sentiment within the military kingdoms by success in warfare in the first place, and by intensive training of all young men in the second, thus integrating the youth from conquered units with those who belonged to the trans-Zambesi clans. Again and again, in talking about their past, Ngoni informants from the Paramounts downwards emphasized the discipline and training of the young men in the days of warfare, and expressed their opinion that no other training could take its place. It was not only the common military training which contributed to this national sentiment and held the Ngoni together in a common purpose of preparedness for warfare. The *libuto* or age set within the *libandla* or territorial unit, and the *impi* or national army in which the territorial units were merged, provided a military organization which was adaptable and balanced, and which, through the control of the Paramount, gave the main impetus to centralization, while encouraging pride and initiative among local and age-set groups.

The relics of a military tradition

648 In north Nyasaland the Ngoni never fought against the Europeans, and were not coerced into giving up warfare, but, as a result of their [797] contacts with the Livingstonia Mission, they finally agreed to give it up voluntarily. When Dr. Laws met the Commissioner near Mponda's at

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the south end of the lake in 1891, he pleaded with him not to use force against the northern Ngoni. 'Don't fight them,' he urged, 'enlist them.' The military commander, Captain Macguire, who was present at the interview, showed interest in the idea of a new recruiting ground for the regular forces in Nyasaland, but his ideas were not pursued as it proved to be easier to continue recruiting the Yao and Tonga who had already shown themselves good military material.

In the central kingdom the first reactions of the Administration towards the Ngoni were favourable. Paramount Cikusi was visited by administrators in 1882 and 1886, and in 1890 concluded a treaty placing himself under British protection. On his death in 1891 his successor Gomani I sent messengers to inform the Administration of his father's death, to declare his allegiance to the British, and to present a bull and a cow, four tusks of ivory and twenty-five men to help in the war against the slave-raiders. In the following year 100 Ngoni warriors were drafted into the regular forces and Mr. H. H. Johnston reported: 'The Ngoni are altogether a splendid people and may be regarded as the backbone of British Central Africa.'[1] But this co-operative relationship did not last. In 1896 it was reported that 'Gomani and a number of his turbulent young headmen were opposed to our influence.'[2] Ngoni armies raided a mission station, an expeditionary force under British officers was sent, the Paramount's village was attacked and his army defeated. He was taken prisoner and, refusing to walk to Zomba, was shot near Dombole in his former kingdom.

In the 1930's the Ngoni of the central kingdom referred repeatedly to the expedition sent against them, the defeat of their army, the death of their Paramount and the seizure of some of their cattle. They nursed a grudge against their conqueror which coloured much of their sentiments towards Europeans. They sometimes referred to the long period of contact of the northern Ngoni kingdom with the Livingstonia Mission, and contrasted it with their contacts with several missions who appeared to them to be in league with the Administration against them and not to take their side in relations with the Government as Dr. Laws had done in the north.

When Cibambo visited the central Ngoni kingdom with me in 1936 he was interested in making comparisons with his own Ngoni of the north. He found that in central Ngoniland there were very few men who knew Ngoni songs well, and that in general the knowledge of the Ngoni language had almost died out. The big shields were not, he thought, as well cut as those in the north. Yet the war-dances were performed correctly, and the war-dress which the dancers wore was more striking than anything which had been preserved in the north.

[1] Johnston, H. H. *Report of the First Three Years' Administration of the Eastern Portion of B.C.A.* 1894, p. 24.
[2] Johnston, H. H. *Report on Trade and General Conditions in Nyasaland*, 1896–7, p. 7.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 797 He was present with me in November 1936 at a big *ligubo* dance in the royal village of Maganga. It took place on the open space in front of the court-house. The Provincial Commissioner brought a party of Europeans to see it, and some members of a South African mission a few miles away were persuaded to come. Some of the missionaries before coming had been afraid that the dances and songs would be obscene, but when they saw the translations of the Ngoni songs which with Cibambo's help I had prepared, and watched the rhythm and dignity of the dances they were so favourably impressed that they asked the Paramount to send senior men to teach the songs and dances to the boys in the mission school.

535 At this *ligubo* dance contingents came from all over the central kingdom. The men came in groups based on the head villages of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, with young carriers bringing their war-dress fastened up in rolls of mats. They put on this war-dress in the neighbouring village of Lizulu, the *gogo* village from which Magonga had 'gone out', using the compounds of the huts belonging to the houses of the senior women for their robing. They climbed the steep path up to Maganga in companies, and near the Paramount's house they advanced in close formation with their shields held over their heads, while an official 'praiser' called out the *izibongo*, the praise names of the Paramount and his ancestors. On the open space in front of the court-house, the different detachments came together and formed a crescent facing the Paramount and his guests. The dance was chiefly a rhythmic stamping of the feet, with from time to time a slow movement of a few steps to the right and then to the left. A number of women of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, including the Paramount's wife, danced in front of the warriors, facing them, carrying small sticks and small shields, and co-ordinating their steps with a rhythmic jerking of the right arm and neck, described by Cibambo as the women's dance in his account of warfare in old days. Every now and then one of the men leaped out in front, jumping high in the air, brandishing his spear and shield, and singing his own war song, the *ligiya*, the dance of the individual warrior. At intervals one of the official praisers came forward and sang the praise-songs of the Maseko line of Paramounts.

535 764 The *ligubo*, as a war-dance, could only be danced at the Paramount's village, or at the funeral of the Paramount or of his older sister by the same mother. In 1937 the older sister of the former Paramount Cikusi died, and the *ligubo* was danced during the mourning ceremonies which took place in the village of Mcakhatha.

During these funeral ceremonies the *ligubo* was danced continually from the moment when the corpse was wrapped in skins after death, until it was lowered into the grave three days later. *Ligubo*, the individual *ligiya*, and the songs of the army going out to war, went on all day and much of the night, and broke out with renewed vigour every time a

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

brothers of the dead Paramount who acted as regents. Thus Ngwana was cremated in Ulozi before crossing the Zambesi, and Mputa was cremated in the river Lichiningo in Songea in Tanganyika. This was confirmed by an informant of the Gama clan who were for a time under the central Ngoni Paramount in Songea and later were allied with the northern Ngoni. He said 'We killed Mputa, the *inkosi*, when fighting, and his people burned him because it was their custom in burying to burn.' 184 643 766

An old woman who came from Portuguese territory to see me in the central kingdom said that when Zintambira I died the Portuguese made them bury him 'in a box'. The onlookers in Mcakatha at the time of my interview with the old woman said 'Yes, they were not allowed to burn him.' [648]

The central Ngoni leaders referred often to the ritual significance of the cremation of their Paramount, followed by the washing of the ashes into the stream 'to strengthen the land'. On my first arrival in the central kingdom I was questioned closely by several of the big *izinduna* and *ahumuzana* about the practice of cremation in England. They alleged that, under the influence of the local mission, the Paramount Gomani II had said that he wished to be buried in a coffin with Christian burial rites. They were much concerned about this, because of the effect on the strength and status of his successor and on the country as a whole. 'If he is not burned his children will not be honoured and will only be as *ahumuzana*. Is it right that another tribe, the English, should come and change our customs?' Great relief was expressed when I told them that Christians were cremated in England with full Christian ritual, and also when I told them that the ashes of one of the early Scottish missionaries in northern Ngoniland had been brought back by his widow to lie there. [797] [648]

The following account of the funeral of Cikusi was given to Rattray: 643

«When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them 'the clouds have fallen today'. They do this because they fear, 'if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death'. Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head until it all glitters, and then take the 766 [203] [301]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

his boyhood, schooling, marriage, conversion to Christianity and accession to the Paramountcy. The first paragraph refers to the action of a European who had made contact with the young heir because of his friendship with his father. 643

¶ When Mr. Walker returned to Lizulu on another journey he told the big people, 'Today I am taking the big child and I will bring him up in my home.' He took Philip Gomani and he looked after him very well, in the same way as a black man would bring up his child. He engaged a man to teach the child until he knew Cinyanja well and could read and write it. Altogether he took care of him for five years, and then he brought him back to Lizulu.

When the children were back at the village they were thinking and thinking about the European schools. When they were thus thinking, another European came who lived at Nsoni in the Mang'anja country. He came to recruit men for work. When he saw the children he asked them 'Why do you children just stay here without learning anything?' The children said 'It is school that we want, but we have no means by which we can be helped to go to school'. This European said 'Where I live there is a school of the Blantyre Mission. If you come I will take care of you and pay your school fees.' In very truth when those children went to him, he took care of them well, fed and clothed them and paid their school fees as he said.

In 1915 when he was still at school the Paramount married NaNdau. And the big people said 'The child of the Paramount who ought to enter the chieftainship ought not to marry only one wife.' Because they spoke thus he also married two other women, NaNungu and NaMilanzi, whose home was in the Portuguese country in Mpanyila in Chief Zintambira's kingdom. The Paramount did not want these three wives, and only took them because of the words of the big people. When he had stayed with them only one year, he sent away those two wives and said 'I want to join the Church', and so began in the Bible Class at Blantyre Mission to learn there. 797 643

In 1917 before he had finished school they began to build his house in the village which was called Maganga. It was his coming out of the village of Chief Cakumbira. When he left Blantyre in 1918 he went to live in his village because he had finished school. He came with a letter from the Bible Class. But the elders of the church of the Dutch mission in that country did not believe that it could be true that the child of the Paramount would join the church. Before he had been received by the mission, there came to his house at Maganga a European woman who said 'This house is very good. It ought to belong to a Christian'. The Paramount said 'I changed my heart long ago. I brought my letter from the Bible Class and gave it to the elders of the church but they said nothing to me.' Then she said 'Tomorrow you come to my place and let us talk.' The Paramount went. When they had talked she told the minister of the mission station. He said 'All right, next week you come and I will examine you.' That week the Paramount was tested and showed that he believed all the teachings.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

797 643 In 1921 he was baptized by the Rev. J. Botes in the year in which he entered the chieftainship, when Cakumbira, the one who took care of the chieftainship, had died. For entering the chieftainship there was not much to be done. The people gathered together, and the Paramount just stood up and grasped his spear and pointed to the south-east. The people danced *ligubo* and praised the Paramount.

The people began to consider and said 'Seeing that he is a young man, how will he know how to judge the cases?' Ha! But there was confusion in their minds, because his judgements excelled those of the big people who had judged formerly. From 1921 to today in all matters he has the chieftainship and Christianity. He holds both these in his hand to strengthen him.

361 643 The texts bring out several points relative to the royal village which arose from the circumstances surrounding the early life of the Paramount. Reference has already been made to the large royal village on Domwe which broke up when Cikusi entered the Paramountcy and built his *lusungulu* village at Liwisini near the Kirk Range. The section of the royal village called Lizulu moved out almost due east from Domwe under its big *induna*, Cakumbira Ndau. When Gomani I was killed after a brief reign of five years, the Ndau clan brought to their village the big wives of Gomani I, including NaMagagula his first wife, in whose house the child Philip Gomani was brought up. With the big *induna* of Lizulu of the Ndau clan was Mambeyu Moyo, one of the big war *izinduna* of Cikusi. Lizulu, with NaMagagula living there, was regarded as the *gogo* village of the Paramount, and from there his own *lusungulu* village went out to build at Maganga where there was already a village under a headman of the local tribe. One of the reasons given for building on a village site already occupied was that the Portuguese frontier restricted all movements to the west, and round the village of Lizulu to the east and south a number of outlying villages were already in existence. Proximity to the main north to south Nyasaland road was also considered a good reason for building the Paramount's village on the site at Maganga. Lizulu village had two important aspects. It was the *gogo* village of the Paramount, and it was also the head village of the Ndau clan, and the court of Chief George Ndau who was one of the S.N.A.

643 [797] The conversion of the Paramount to Christianity was a severe blow for the older officials in his kingdom. They feared that much of the ritual associated with the office of the Paramount would necessarily disappear and that the Ngoni kingdom would become weakened in consequence. Three events partly allayed these fears though the older men were never wholly reconciled. One was his marriage to NaNdau, daughter of Cakumbira Ndau who had hidden him, thus binding the royal line to the powerful Ndau clan which had protected him in his childhood. Another was the recognition in 1933 by the Nyasaland government of the Paramountcy with its Appeal Court. The third was

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CHAPTER I

NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF review was given in Chapter III of Part I of the main elements of Ngoni culture, analysed into 'patterns' covering kinship, village layout, ritual, ceremonial, and language. In this section we shall be considering the principal social institutions embodying Ngoni culture: their clans, houses, families and age sets. We shall find evidence in the two kingdoms of an extensive common element in the social organization which the Ngoni brought with them from the south. Some important diversities will be evident also, such as the variations in virilocal residence found in the central kingdom, and the less widespread practice there of *lobola* marriage. Those elements which were common to Ngoni social organization in both kingdoms were often those which distinguished Ngoni culture from that of the neighbouring peoples. Patrilineal descent, the house system, the ranking of clans, the *laweni* organization of boys' life and activities—these were all distinctively Ngoni, practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and sometimes adopted by individuals and families of other clans who had been associated with the Ngoni over long periods. Nevertheless, in many of the villages of the central kingdom there were clearly two cultures existing side by side: the Ngoni culture being that of an aristocratic minority and the local culture that of the majority, who in the kingdom were equally subjects of the Paramount but in their villages possessed inferior social status. 114 121 [563 565]

Indications were to be seen, even in the more conservative and more isolated northern kingdom, that modern influences were affecting Ngoni social institutions. We have already noticed some of the effects of the cessation of warfare on a social system founded on military traditions. The exodus of young men from Ngoni villages to seek work elsewhere was very extensive, especially in the northern kingdom, where the level of education was higher but employment was not available, and this had repercussions on the age of marriage, the distribution of wealth, and the undertaking of family responsibilities, including the care of the old people. The gradual decline in polygyny, largely but not entirely due to the work of missions, was beginning to have its effects on the working of the house system and on the interrelations of the generations within the family group. 178 [595 797]

In the 1930's many of these modern changes were appearing but the traditional institutions were still functioning, and the Ngoni leaders themselves were clear about those forms and activities which were distinctively their own.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

571 our child who is now leaving her home. She has no father now. She is
585 leaving his care. We expect you to cherish her now as her father would.' In reply the *induna* assured them, 'Now she is here we will cherish her, but she must respect the owner of this house and be under her in all things.' Speeches about the absence of disease in either village were then made and the men took snuff. The bridal party and the villagers all remained seated and began to sing *umbedlo* songs (songs to be sung sitting).

585 At the marriage at Ezondweni, where I was present, the girls of the bridal party began to shiver as night fell, and a woman of the village [533] brought a sleeping mat as an invitation to go into the huts. Singing as they went, the women of the bridal party were shown a place to sleep, and the bride slept among them for that night. The bride's party went off the next morning to the church at Elangeni for the church marriage [797] service, while the bridegroom with a party from Ezondweni went by a separate route. In the days before the mission came, they used to spend the morning dancing in the kraal, while the husband's family killed a beast, or more than one, for the feast. During the day's dancing in the kraal, the leader of the village women took the husband's spear, came into the kraal with the village party and touched the bride gently on the shoulder. This was a sign that the bride was now one of the village [152] group, and the correct response was for her party to turn their backs and weep to show their grief because she had left them.

In Ezondweni, when the parties returned from church in the afternoon, a large crowd had assembled. The bridal party danced and sang in the kraal and outside the *indlunkulu* and now and then a leading woman of the bridegroom's village joined in. The bride and two supporting friends were given a mat to sit on, the husband and the *madoda* also sat down, the minister from the church prayed and they sang a hymn. Then the food, bowls of *nsima* with large pieces of meat on top, was divided. The names of the divisions of Ezondweni were called out and the leaders of the divisions of that village and of other villages came to get the portions for their people.

Dancing continued after the feast until the bride's party took the bride to the husband's hut and left her there. The next morning the [533] bridal party returned home singing. Formerly the bride came to the door of the hut where she had slept with her husband, and called out the praise-names of her father. She then sang the *ummekezo* song (song of the deflowering) and the husband stood in the doorway behind her. Then he went into the kraal and sat facing the bridal party, who were singing. When the bride came in with a gourd of water there was silence while she poured water for him to wash his hands, mouth and eyes. This was the first public act of service for the husband after the consummation of the marriage and ended the main part of the ceremony, after which the bridal party went home.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show subservience to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss. 562 565 867

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private. 881 836 565 [797] 178 [195] [831]

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony [554]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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grave with the little shelf at one side, the corpse wrapped in a cow-skin, the *nseso* and *nyongo* on the neck and forehead, the bent legs and upright sitting position facing south-east, and washing the face of the corpse at the grave side with a bunch of grass. On this occasion the Ngoni form of burial was followed by the Christian burial service after the grave had been filled in. During the digging of the grave hymns set to the tunes of Ngoni war songs were sung by the onlookers until the body was brought out of the house. After that there was complete silence while the corpse was lowered into the grave and the grave was filled up, until the service began. This combination of Christian and Ngoni ritual I witnessed many times. One of the missions set its face against the use of the cow-skin and declared that no Christian could be buried except in a coffin, but even this was sometimes disregarded and the full Ngoni ritual was carried out, followed by a Christian service.

After the body had been put in the grave and when the first calling back of the spirit from the bush had reminded the living that they had to care for this new spirit, a series of further duties faced them. These have been referred to as the first and second shaving. The first shaving we shall consider later as a necessary purification before eating the meat of the funeral rites which brought back the spirit right into the village. The second shaving, which took place from six to twelve months after the funeral, was the prelude to the time when the new ancestral spirit came, or was brought back, to its final lodging. The importance of this last rite was emphasized by Lopati Nzunga in his account of the ritual which took place at the tomb put up to the memory of Gomani I (see p. 165) When the building of the tomb under the supervision of Ngoni in the area was finished, many leading Ngoni from all parts, including those from the towns, gathered there for two days. Every morning before dawn they went up the forest paths singing war songs, as they did later at the time of the death of Bambo Manga, to call back the spirit from the bush where it had spent some thirty years. After a Christian service held by the tomb, the Ngoni *alumuzana* 'brought back' the spirit to Lizulu, Gomani I's village, to the house of NaMagagula his big wife. She was a Christian, so could not take the care of the spirit in her hut, but another of the widows of Gomani I, NaNsambi, who was in the house of NaMagagula, was chosen as guardian. Earlier in the proceedings, when they had decided that the tomb was going to be built, a diviner was consulted, the spirits were addressed in the kraal, the cattle showed that they agreed, and a beast from the herd of the house of NaMagagula was sacrificed and the meat offered to the ancestral spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Then they built a new hut for NaNsambi and put in it new sacrificial vessels. When the spirit of Gomani I was finally brought home it was to this hut and guardianship that it came. They were uncertain about what had happened to the spirit in the thirty years interval and it did not seem advisable to probe

105 senior men who related to me historial events, family genea-
621 logies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to
[124] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their
[191] plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-
[162] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine
[592] elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces-
[361] sible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in-
[342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was
[871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all
[797] their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organization, and at their system of training their young men.

In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area. In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance, in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school education leading to paid employment, there was an economic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly wealth had been associated with political power, and the Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and government were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Paramount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934. The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

as young men, and had known the independence and 178
supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'every- 184
thing is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when 561
faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the [797] influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, mini- [463] sters and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni [183] way of living, and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they [156] said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described 178
briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes domin- 829
ated social relationships. There was a determined struggle 177
on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate [861]
these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasa- [186] land sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which
182 he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was
called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount.
342 Dormitory life was therefore rooted in the Ngoni past and
though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared
with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the
organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a neces-
575 sary training ground for young manhood. In very large vil-
[342] lages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a
[621] section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys be-
longed to the dormitory of that section where their parents'
household was situated. There were occasional attempts
sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory
[797] for boys who were baptized Christians or in an inquirers'
class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the
Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to
divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an
important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' de-
velopment, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled.
They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory
system except on the geographical lines already mentioned,
which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining
purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

575 The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they
had their second teeth, from the influence of the women.
562 Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all
861 women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in
favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking
Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and
[177] often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and
practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly
in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that
[186] dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract
non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them
so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision
at what they considered a crucial stage.

VILLAGE LIFE FOR OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS

The youngest boys were not expected to herd cattle until 233
they were ten or eleven years old. Their work was to look 857
after the calves, sheep and goats, sometimes following the 561
cattle to the grazing ground, sometimes wandering round the edge of the village, avoiding the cultivated areas until after harvest. At that time cattle, calves, sheep and goats were driven into the stubble and left to forage.

As a result of dormitory life, combined with cattle-herding, 155
a definite ideal herd-boy personality developed. This was 157
fostered by the hero-worship of the older herd-boys by the young ones. It was also built up by the praise or blame meted out for herding well or badly by the older herd-boys to younger ones, and by the cattle-owners. This 'ideal herds- 157
man' was used by Ngoni ministers and teachers living in the 797
villages to relate their teaching about Christianity to the life around them. Prayers near the kraal, conducted by an Ngoni minister each evening, or before people went on a journey, often began with the words 'Jesus our shepherd, keep us well'. Young teachers often said to me how they always listened as boys when a prayer began like this, and that in school their favourite Bible story was that of David the herd-boy.

When there was a school in the village or near by which 233
the Ngoni elders approved of, the herd-boys had a busy life. 857
They watered the cattle very early, took them to graze and 872
milked them. Then they went to school from ten to two, taking the cattle out grazing afterwards. In the cold weather they went to school from six to ten and herded cattle the rest of the day, after the sun had dried the dew off the grass. School attendance depended on the attitude of fathers to the new learning, and how the village elders regarded the local mission and its teachers. The boys whose fathers had no 872
cattle, in general the non-Ngoni elements in the village, were free to attend school continuously since they had no herding responsibilities. There was some jeering among the boys in the dormitory at those who only went to school and did not

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The missionaries, and through their influence Ngoni Christian teachers and ministers, tried to put a stop to this form of courtship. It was very difficult to convince Ngoni elders and young people that a practice which had been considered socially correct and was under some measure of social control, was now wrong and must be given up. They saw it as something quite distinct from casual and promiscuous intercourse, which they discouraged and despised. A young Christian teacher, speaking of his own youth, said: 'The Christian rule forbade boys and girls to sleep together at night and to play as our fathers played. We did not keep those rules, and we visited girls at night who wanted us, but we were careful not to harm them.' The Ngoni Christian leaders who were aware of the problems on both sides finally threw their weight into advocating much earlier marriages while supporting the carrying out of the private puberty rituals. As we have seen, marriage became usual at about sixteen for girls and from eighteen upwards for youths. This as a rule, though not invariably, ensured that the girls were virgin at marriage which was a very strict Ngoni requirement. But it brought in its train a number of other difficulties which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. 814
Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on [224]
Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry [172]
grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous secessions from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Ciwere had gone. All the people shouted "Ciwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni 814
succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the 871
schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Cibambo, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred 173
to historical events which were illustrated in songs or record- 537
ed in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, 791
called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni 177
Christian leaders went further than this. They used the 173
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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173 parallel of the Jews of the Old Testament preparing the way
177 for the Christian era to illustrate and drive home their belief
797 that they, the Ngoni, had prepared the way for the Christian Gospel in Nyasaland. 'Were we not also a people who hated idols and images? We too tried to reach the Great God through our ancestor spirits, but we failed, until the mission came to teach us.' 'We held together the people of this land under one rule so that the missionaries could travel safely and spread the Gospel teaching.' These beliefs were stated so often that they became almost standard formula, and the incongruity of this picture with some of the warlike situations recorded by the earliest missionaries was ignored and forgotten. In the churches, where the people sat on mats, Sunday by Sunday, facing their Ngoni ministers, rising to sing, in
[533] their typical Ngoni harmonies, Christian hymns set to former Ngoni war tunes—in this setting Ngoni history was brought home, interwoven with the new teaching, to young adults who formed the majority of the congregation. For Ngoni elders it was something more than a reminder of their past. It was setting the Ngoni people in a special relationship to
[186] the European missionaries and the new learning, compensating for the passing of military power and political supremacy by establishing Ngoni cultural superiority over their neighbours. This gave some spiritual reassurance to a people in the throes of political change, and it was a lesson which lost none of its significance for the young adults who heard it.

Ngoni law

671 'There was one law for all the people. No one could be ignorant of the law.' These were the words, quoted in Chapter I, which the Ngoni used frequently to describe the importance
[182] of law in their culture, its role in the political unification of their own and subject peoples, and the responsibility, laid on all adults, for knowledge of the law and conformity with its demands. An incident in a court of law, which was unfor-
692 gettable to an anthropologist, was a case in which a chief sat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'.

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders.

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the

159 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the
797 church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been
159 threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition
875 and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary
[622] behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to
[871] some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organize his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described
177 in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose
797 partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or
871 ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools
186 were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose personal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected
871 their boys who had been to school and had entered European
463 employment away from their homes, to find work which
554 assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

[P.17]

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF CHANGE

1. *White conquest*

THE SOCIAL system which we have so far described flourished in an environment in which the Ngoni people were separated from other tribes by a no-man's-land. Ngoni raiding parties crossed this tract and returned with captives, food and some cattle. The only other contacts with the outside world were with Arab slave-traders and their agents who exchanged slaves and ivory for cloth and guns, and with a few white and half-caste traders and explorers. In 1898 the Ngoni army was defeated by a force under British leadership and many villages were burnt down. Very many of the cattle were looted and the people dispersed. A White township was built in the middle of the Ngoni kingdom, the warriors were disarmed, and an administrative system was established involving both Whites and Ngoni. Missionaries arrived, schools were opened, labour recruiters and later tobacco planters began their activities.

We are not concerned here with the total effect of this sequence of events but only with the results it has had on marriage. We can distinguish a number of fields in which processes initially external to the indigenous society began to impinge on it and to become part of it. The establishment of White control brought to an end the Ngoni wars. The building up of the Cewa chieftainships contiguous to Ngoni country affected the whole scheme of values held by Ngoni people at the same time as those values were being altered by the intrusion of White technology, political offices, legal concepts, and religions. The physical dispersion of the people in the face of the British troops was followed by a greater dispersion of men, and later of women and children as well, over the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia and the Copperbelt.

The large villages which formed the core of the residential system were burnt, and their inhabitants never all came together again. At first people lived in small settlements of three or four grass shacks built in the hills or in the bush. Gradually the people gathered together in distinct villages, but their population was different in structure from that of the former villages. The groupings of people which stayed together after 1898 represented the smallest fragments of the residential system, and these small fragments collected together into larger associations which were related to, but by no means coincident with, the larger segments of the old system. Some segments left the area and rejoined the tribes from whence they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Cewa dances, speak Cewa, and are to a lesser extent internally organized on Cewa lines. They do not form a distinct class of village in Ngoni country, and are inextricably bound by ties of kinship with their neighbours. But there are fewer traces of the former pre-1898 system of organization in such villages than in those which have a remembered history linking them with the glorious past.[1]

3. *Christianity*

At the same time as Ngoni values were being undermined from within by the Cewa, they were attacked from without by the Whites. The first missionaries to settle in the area arrived in 1899, although there had been some earlier contact. They attempted to convert Ngoni to Christianity, and therefore to monogamy and pre-marital chastity. In chastity the missionaries were allied with the Ngoni against the Cewa; in monogamy the missions fought against Ngoni allied to Cewa. New rituals were introduced and a new hierarchy developed, composed of priests, evangelists and deacons. However, in this region, unlike much of the rest of Africa, the impact of Christianity has not produced a distinctive legal status of persons married by Christian rite. The Administration's earliest piece of marriage legislation was the *North-Eastern Rhodesia Marriage Regulations*, 1903.[2] There was specific provision for monogamous marriages between Africans, with penalties for bigamy and detailed rules for the division of property left by Africans married under these regulations and dying intestate. Few, if any, marriages involving Africans were made in this form, for it seems that the missions did not license themselves under the Regulations and their ceremonies therefore did not have legal significance to the Administration. These elaborate provisions were repealed by the *Northern Rhodesia Marriage Proclamation*, 1918.[3] Since then the only form of marriage performed within Northern Rhodesia between Africans that has legal significance in the eyes of the Administration is marriage 'in accordance with native law and custom'. What constitutes such a marriage has never been rigidly defined.

The missions themselves have differed in their attitude towards indigenous marriage. One mission insists that all 'customary obligations' must be fulfilled in addition to Christian rites, another holds that it is wrong to transfer wealth from one side to another in marriage, while a third holds that the fulfilment or not of any customary obligations is not the concern of the church. The Native

[1] Cf. Read, 'Tradition and prestige' and 'Moral code' for an account of some of these changes in structure and values, based on observations of three Ngoni kingdoms.

[2] Government Notice No. 2 of 1903, *British Central Africa Gazette*, 146, x, 1, 31 January 1903.

[3] N.R. No. 18 of 1918, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, viii, 11, 7 September 1918.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The Native

courts themselves have been influenced by the introduction of Christian rites, and in matters of divorce have been subject to pressure from the missions.

4. *The punishment of adultery*

The Administration prevented Ngoni from killing adulterers. Instead they changed adultery into a private delict, without specifying what damages could be awarded. Indeed the whole position of indigenous tribunals was equivocal until 1929, when the Native Courts Ordinance was passed. Until then no specific courts were recognized other than those presided over by White officers of the Administration. At the same time the Administration expected chiefs and others to maintain law and order and formally listed their duties in these terms. The chiefs had therefore to extemporize and administer traditional law as best they could. Since 1929 Native Courts have been recognized and the Administration has in the main supported the decisions reached in these courts. The law as administered now is certainly not the same as it was before 1898 and the differences are not merely the substitution of 'civilized' penalties for those 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. Nor is the law identical with English or Roman-Dutch law. The law of adultery and divorce is adapted to a situation in which bridewealth is rarely paid, wives are left deserted for years by their husbands, and the custody of children is uncertain and dependent on the agreement of the children themselves.

5. *Labour migration*

Labour migration began in 1898 and since then there has been a continual flow of men and women seeking work in the mining towns of Southern Rhodesia and on the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. The constant absence of men away at work leaving their wives behind has made for a preponderance of women over men in the rural area and has led to more adultery and to the emergence of pleas for divorce on ground of desertion. The increasing number of wives who accompany or follow their husbands had enlarged the social field within which the marriage relationship operates so that a quarrel between a man and his wife in town may be referred for resolution to kinsmen many hundreds of miles away in the village. Men marry fresh wives in the towns and bring them home years later with many children. Two people living in villages may trace their relationship to each other through some half-forgotten migrant in the towns.

In 'the time of peace' marriage was a process by which an established social structure was maintained and developed. That structure has gone and Ngoni now live in a world of larger scale and greater social mobility. Marriage has become something by which local stability of relationship is maintained despite the fluidity of society as a whole. A man moves from village to village, from

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

 Beyond the 59

Village The Native Courts deal to a great extent with 692
matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage 581
certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the [797] development of Christian marriage.

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who 858
rears him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are 593
responsible for their own actions before the court, and that truant schoolboys can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peaceably with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms.

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and 593
independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole 584
more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage.

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, 882
and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes 848
pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom 684
she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later

[1] Called *cidumu*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.'

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village.

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

486 if the latter is unable to leave the area legally.[38] Various devices
560 have been introduced to prevent women from using other people's passes, such as recording finger-prints on the certificate. On the other hand there are a great variety of ways in which women contrive to leave the area without a proper pass, such as marrying the bus driver for the duration of the journey, getting off the bus and walking round the control points, and so on.

13. The Administration and the missions

648 Under the Laws of Northern Rhodesia, which guide the Administration, the only valid marriages between Africans are those
671 performed in accordance with 'customary tribal law'. There has
581 never been any systematic attempt to codify the rules implied by this phrase, and in any particular case that comes before the Administration's courts, the views of individual African assessors must carry
586 weight. The tendency has been to try and discover what used to happen in the old days rather than what was the *de facto* law at the time. On the other hand, there appears to have been a feeling that women were entitled to certain rights in equity that may perhaps have been associated with the proviso that 'customary tribal law' shall not be administered when it is 'repugnant to natural justice and morality'. The Administration has certainly been sympathetic towards deserted wives seeking divorce and has encouraged Native Courts to allow their pleas where the husband has been many years away and has not written home. In the past the District Officer on tour has divorced batches of women who had applied in vain to the Native Courts for divorce on the ground of desertion. It has been argued by the Administration that since chiefs depend on the gifts of returned labour migrants to supplement their own income, they are reluctant to offend men by divorcing their wives in their absence. There are fewer divorces, in relation to the same number
[171] of pleas, granted in Ngoni courts than among the neighbouring Cewa, who are subject to the same Administrative and mission influences. The Ngoni find no consolation in this comparison. They merely observe that there are more divorces now than there used to be, and blame the Whites for the change.

● 791 The missions are all concerned with the development of Christian
581 marriage, but their ideas as to what this is differ from one denomination to another, as do their views on the relationship
586 of Christian to other types of marriage. The White Fathers and the Universities Mission to Central Africa do not allow divorce, while the Dutch Reformed Church Mission does. The U.M.C.A. insist that all 'customary obligations' shall be fulfilled before a marriage can be solemnized between Christians, the White Fathers

[38] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 245f for the rules regulating the movement of women beyond Fort Jameson District.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

teach that the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of marriage payments is no concern of the Church, while the D.R.C.M. have a rule that bridewealth shall not be paid although this rule does not seem to be enforced. In general, in the village and in the court, the obligations of Christians are thought of as supplementary to their obligations as ordinary men and women, and Christian ceremonies to some extent supplement, but do not replace, traditional ceremonies. Thus there may be a church wedding in addition to a gall bladder ceremony, and a divorce in the eyes of the mission following after a divorce in court. Pressure has sometimes been put on chiefs and court members to act in accordance with the teaching of the mission, as in a past attempt on the part of the Catholic White Fathers to prevent courts from granting divorces to Catholics.[29] This type of intervention has applied particularly to courts where the chief was himself a Catholic. The Administration has opposed this pressure, and does not itself recognize any legal significance in religious ceremonies.

14. Spouses and kinsfolk

We may see the married couple in the middle of a system of relationships which connects them with persons and institutions each interested in their behaviour and in the maintenance of the marriage tie. By living peacefully together, by producing children, and by fulfilling their obligations to their kinsfolk and affines, they can, with discretion, satisfy the divergent claims implicit in this system of relationships. If they begin to quarrel, their kinsmen and neighbours attempt in the first instance to reconcile them. Only when this is impossible do those interested in the marriage begin to split up into groups with differing interests whose rival claims must be weighed by the court. Even then it is hoped that reconciliation will be possible, that a wife will return to her husband after she has paid him damages for adultery, and a husband return to his wife after many years of neglect. Whereas in the old days marriage was related to a fairly definite residential system, and rights and obligations were clear cut, nowadays the forces holding together a body of kinsfolk are weaker, and the danger of disruption of the group because of quarrelling is greater. The genealogical composition of the group is more variable and alters from year to year. Marriage, as one of the mechanisms by which local groups are built up, is part of the general political process, and is affected by inter-group and inter-personal relations that at first sight appear to have little to do with marriage. We observed that tribal and religious affiliation are significant criteria in a possible spouse. The divergent interests of less permanent groups, such as cliques and factions, influence choice of marriage partner and behaviour within marriage, as we have seen in the stories of Absolom and Mary (p. 60) and Amos and Eve (p. 28). Conversely, marital interests affect non-

[29] Cf. Richards, op. cit. pp. 83-4, for similar events among the Bemba.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

developed as the men's. It is to be expected, therefore, that there would be greater Cewa and Nsenga influence in those affairs controlled by women than in political and military matters, which were organized by men. This is borne out by linguistic evidence, for while many of the words, but not all, pertaining to affairs of state are of Ngoni origin, the words now used in the seclusion of girls are drawn from Cewa and Nsenga.

We find therefore that it is the bearing of children before marriage and to a lesser extent pre-marital impregnation which are disapproved of rather than pre-marital copulation. The real contrast in attitude is between pre-marital copulation and adultery. We have seen that in the old days adulterers were killed by order of the chief. The punishment of adultery was a process involving headmen, lieutenants and other important men. The abhorrence of adultery remains despite its great frequency and the prohibition on killing adulterers. An adulterer is a thief, stealing the rights of another man and endangering his marriage. Even when the wife of a labour migrant bears a child and it is in danger of *mdulo* until it can be 'taken up' (p. 87) she cannot openly call in a man with whom to perform this rite. She must either get a man to come in secret or obtain expensive medicines which remove the danger. In like manner, if her husband is impotent, there must be no public recognition of any extra-marital intercourse, for impotence is shameful and not to be admitted and cannot justify the intervention of another man. It is thought regrettable that a woman should grow old without bearing daughters to help her pound maize and sons to clothe her in her old age. Yet when medicines have been of no avail and her husband calls in a seed-raiser he must come in secret and later be rewarded covertly. Similarly the sexual activities of children must be conducted discreetly. Here, however, a much more tolerant attitude is taken and there is not the same need for secrecy. There is no chaperoning of unmarried girls but only of married women whose husbands are away. There is no inspection of girls at marriage, and one informant said that if after puberty a girl has no lover with whom she can sleep, her grandmother will call in a young man to copulate with the girl in the grandmother's house to see if she is proficient, and that for this he would be rewarded by the grandmother. From one point of view we may say that there is pre-marital freedom, with discretion, and marital restriction of sexual activity. Pre-marital intercourse does, however, have a moral connotation, and it is held that the girl who sleeps too easily with all comers before marriage will continue thus after she is married. The need for discretion in premarital affairs is in some part due to the activities of the missions, working at the village level through deacons, elders and women helpers. Yet in general no action is taken by the local Christian group in the village unless the pre-marital sexual activities of its members are conducted in such a way that it is no longer possible to ignore them.

Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within

833 Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within the marriage bond it is not merely permitted, it is right and proper and positively sanctioned. All intercourse is dangerous, whether marital or not, and indeed it is perhaps the licit social significance of marital intercourse that leads to the attribution of mystical 843 significance. While a woman is pregnant, her husband can and indeed should sleep with her and with her co-wives, for it is not her husband's mere copulation with others that endangers her child, but frivolous and illicit intercourse with the wife of another or with some woman he has no intention of marrying. The moral code supports the social order, and the infant is born live into a righteous and well-regulated family. Otherwise it will not be born, or be born dead. Thus runs the belief.

5. Christian marriage

794 We have noted that, whatever were the intentions of the framers of the 1903 Regulations, Christian marriage ceremonies do not now have 581 any legal significance, either in the Administration's courts or in the Native Courts. They are, however, significant in the eyes of the missions concerned, and sanctions are employed to ensure that all Christians are married in church. Marriages usually take place at the mission itself and there is some sort of preparation beforehand to verify that the couple concerned are aware of the religious implications of the marriage. Important people are sometimes married in a village church and the ceremony is attended by many people. These rites, both at the mission and in the village, involve the local groups of Christians and serve to integrate the members. The barriers against marriage outside the sectarian group might under some conditions lead to Christian or ever. sectarian endogamy but among the Ngoni this has not taken place. If a couple are anxious to marry and cannot by reason of a religious disparity, the pagan will usually join the church and then proceed to marriage as soon as the rules of the denomination permit. After marriage, a number then cease active participation in the affairs of the church, although they usually continue to regard themselves and are regarded as Christians. The fairly rapid growth of Christianity in the last fifty years makes it impossible to tell as yet whether an endogamous community will be formed. In any case, the Christian community stretches like the rest of Ngoni society to the Copperbelt and the towns of Southern Rhodesia, and there are facilities for Christian labour migrants who wish to marry Christian girls in the towns.

799 The missions have attacked polygyny, the inheritance of widows, [597] the ceremony of 'taking up the child', belief in *mdulo* and pre-marital copulation. In addition, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission has opposed the drinking of beer, and in theory but not as yet in practice, payment of bridewealth. The prohibition on the drinking of beer has led to the exchange of gifts of cooked food between the two sides in the various ceremonies of marriage, without making any important difference to their content and meaning. The missions have had

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with 797
dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of [595]
monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general [587]
change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for [836]
premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a 854
consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of 177
hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used [278]
to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that 581
there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the 177
matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some 182
points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage 583
payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment 593
of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in* 613
uxorem in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

as well as to her husband and his kin, while a man tries to enlist the support of his own kin but not usually of his wife's kin if the dispute has nothing to do with marital affairs. At birth and death the division of labour and responsibility is mainly on sex lines. In general we may say that the elementary family does not emerge as a grouping of importance because there is no system of elementary families in which it can do so. Village is posed against village in dances, songs, the collection of tax, hunts, division of food, and so on. In other situations, one group of kinsmen act as a body in distinction to another group of kinsmen who are their affines. We have demonstrated this for the ceremonial situations of marriage and for the resolution of quarrels. In the intimacies of the hut, man and wife are in a simple and specific dyadic relationship which does not admit of substitution. To some extent, their infant, from conception to weaning, is a helpless appendage of this relationship. From weaning on, children acquire other social relationships of their own. The distinction drawn between marriage and the care of children is well illustrated by the remark made by an old widow when I asked her why she did not marry again. She replied 'I am now too old for marriage. My job is to look after children.' The missions encourage men and women to bring up and care for their own children, particularly where the children's grandparents are pagan. At the same time the importance of the economic ties that link every Ngoni household with the rest of the world is increasing and it is easier for men to find extra money when they are young and middle-aged than when they become grandparents. These two factors may lead to an increase in the importance of the elementary family, but it is also possible that the number of children sent home from Southern Rhodesia to their grandparents may grow as more women go there to join their husbands, thus increasing the responsibilities of the old towards their young grandchildren.

594 [628] [799]

9. Kinship structure, marriage payments and divorce

178

We have seen that whereas in the old days divorce was infrequent, it is now comparatively common. We have also seen that prior to 1898 the kinship structure of the Ngoni was based on localized agnatic and quasi-agnatic lineages, for the captor-captive relationship was similar to that between father and child. These lineages are now no longer effective social groups, and individuals act and live together with cognates and affines related to them in a variety of ways. This parallel change in divorce frequency and in kinship structure provides confirmation for the hypothesis put forward by Gluckman that divorce is rare and difficult in tribes organized on a system of marked father-right, and frequent and easy to obtain in other types.[6] This hypothesis was suggested by a comparison of different tribes which Gluckman divides into two types. Among

[586] [613] 121 114

[6] Gluckman, op. cit., p. 190.

low productivity and little power of recovery. Next, the weaker soils will be abandoned: such data as we have suggests that this stage is reached when grain yields fall below 200 lb. per acre in the normal season. The former cultivators of the abandoned land may then offer work in exchange for the food surplus still enjoyed by the holders of the stronger soils, or they may be entitled to a share of the surplus by virtue of kinship obligations. In this way a period of increasing pressure and accelerated erosion on the stronger and more fertile soils is brought about. These stages will commonly be accompanied by migration of able-bodied men to the centres of employment and the stage finally be reached when the area is dependent to a large extent on food purchased from outside sources. 000

In 1941 a study was made of a highly congested area in Fort Jameson District; the area of Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni. The chieftaincy was found to be 54,000 acres in extent and, after detailed survey, the carrying capacity for traditional Ngoni agriculture was estimated to be about 1,300 to 1,400 persons. A total of 7,700 people, between five and six times the carrying capacity, were supposedly living within the chieftaincy. In short, an area which, because of the high proportion of mountain country, had a critical density of only about 16 persons per square mile did in fact appear to be carrying over 90 to the square mile. 114 101 121 161 311 [133]

The main reasons for the continued survival of this population were found to be as follows:

(a) The time during which these conditions had existed (about 15 years) was not sufficient to show the full effects of this degree of land pressure.

(b) Great areas of hill country and dambos, which would not normally be cultivated, had been taken into cultivation. The almost incredible mountain cultivation on the Nyamfinzi range was, until recently, a startling spectacle. Use of dambo grassland for *fipoka* gardens had seriously reduced grazing and was a sore point with the cattle-loving Ngoni. [181]

(c) Under extreme pressure the population had burst its bounds and an irresistible tide had inundated adjoining private land and unoccupied European farms. In addition, a missionary organization had permitted cultivation, on payment, on land owned by the mission. By these means the effective acreage had, in fact, been increased by almost 50 per cent. [797] [427]

(d) A very heavy burden had been thrown on the limited soils of high fertility and resistance to erosion, the only soils left in the original area still carrying moderately good crops. These soils, then in continuous cultivation, were feeding more than twice as many people as they would normally do. [134]

(e) The Paramount Chief was importing from Nyasaland each year a considerable quantity of food for the use of his people. [439]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

IV. WIDER CONTACTS

Other Local Groups

We have so far in this account been concerned with delineating the main outlines of political and village structure and the kinship system. We have examined the internal constitution of the tribe and have only been concerned secondarily with the external relationships by which the Ngoni are connected with the wider world. But in the Fort Jameson District there are, and have been for many years, people who do not fall within the tribal framework but with whom the Ngoni interact. These include people from the British Isles and South Africa, Indians, and Coloured persons, as well as Africans from other tribes. The Europeans are there as administrators, missionaries, farmers, and traders. Indians are traders and farmers, while Coloured persons are farmers and foremen. Africans from other tribes are, like the Ngoni, labourers on the farms and in the township, as well as subsistence cultivators in their own tribal areas. 563

The land of the District is divided into Native Reserve and Trust land, farm-land, township, and Crown land. Almost all Ngoni villages lie on Reserve or Trust land, and it is in this zone that most of the activities described so far take place. On the farm-land Ngoni participate not as headmen or lieutenants or chiefs, but as labourers and foremen. They still fill the roles of husband, wife, sibling, parent, and child, and sometimes other kinship positions, but the family in the farm compound is on a smaller scale than in the village. In the town of Fort Jameson the range of activity open to them is greater, and there are Ngoni butchers, drivers, clerks, shop assistants, Native Urban Court assessors, and so on. All these roles on farm and in the town are shared with Africans from other tribes in the Eastern Province and from more distant regions. 311 463

The Churches

The influence of the non-African groups extends out beyond the areas in which they live in the reserves. We have already seen how the Administration has affected the life of the tribe. The Christian Church has also had a profound influence. By 1910 there were three denominations at work in Ngoni country: the Dutch Reformed Church Mission,[1] the White Fathers,[2] and the Universities' Mission to 797 795

[1] Algemeente Zending Commissie der Nederduitsche Gereformeerde Kerk in den Oranje Vrijstaat.

[2] Société des Missionaires de Notre Dame d'Afrique, a Catholic Order.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

797 Central Africa. The U.M.C.A. subsequently concentrated its activi-
795 ties in another part of the District, so that the two main denominations are now the Dutch Reformed Church and the Catholic Church. There was for a time a branch of the Livingstonia Mission (Free Church of Scotland) in the area, while more recently a Seventh Day Adventist Mission has begun work. Since 1924 there have been some adherents to the Watch Tower[1] amongst the Ngoni, but this movement did not become important until some years later.

797 Primary education is carried on in mission schools subsidized by
872 the Administration, but there is also a Native Authority school over which the chiefs exercise some influence and which is to some extent supported by Native Treasury funds. The teachers in the elementary
[875] schools live in the villages, but they do not exercise very much influence outside their classrooms. This does not appear to have been the case in the past, when there was greater hostility between the different missions and when the missions tended to disregard the tribal authorities. The teachers then seem to have set themselves up as headmen on their own, and schools were built without the permission of the local headmen. In many cases where the issue between the missions was undecided, there were two schools in the same village. In the middle 'thirties many of these so-called schools were closed on the initiative of the Administration and the teachers who remain are now more interested in education than in politics.

872 A village school serves more than one village, so that the children of a neighbourhood containing, say, half a dozen villages get to know each other and visit in each other's villages. Certain dances and songs,
[535] known as *konsert*, are performed by parties of schoolchildren going from
[533] one village to another, and this leads to similar inter-village dancing in the evenings organized by groups of boys. At the end of term a number of schools of the same denomination combine to perform a rather more elaborate programme of songs and dances, and these displays are attended by many adults.

797 The deacons and evangelists are of greater importance in the
794 political life of the tribe than are the school teachers. Deacons take a certain initiative in settling disputes in the village, and they report to their missions deaths and serious sins that affect their people. They arrange for religious instruction for catechumens and may on occasion organize opposition to some practice that has been declared wrong by
797 the mission. Evangelists are responsible for a number of villages and

[1] The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

may often be heard in the afternoons blowing their whistles to call 797
their flock to prayer in the local school.

Meetings of all deacons and evangelists of one denomination within 795
the tribe are held every year or so. Permission to hold these meetings has to be obtained from the chief, who may sometimes attend. Food is provided by the local church members and a levy to raise funds for buying a goat or sheep may be made. The initiative at these meetings is taken by the senior deacons and decisions reached are passed on to the members by the deacons. Church services, which are attended by people from many villages, are not only meetings for worship but are [794]
also occasions when instructions for collective action are given. For example, a lieutenant was recently suspended by his mission for helping [688]
to find another wife for his chief. Church members in his county were then instructed at a church service that they must not attend the funeral of this man or of any of his children.

The tribal area is divided into two zones controlled by the two main denominations, with some overlapping, and this division cuts across the county boundaries, so that people from more than one county have a common interest in a church serving them all. This interest is reinforced by attendance at funerals and prayer meetings in the villages.

The Watch Tower, also known as Jehovah's Witnesses, or in the vernacular, as The Society, is now the third sect of importance in the area. This organization has had a rather chequered career, and has been the target of much adverse criticism from missions, Administration, and chiefs. From the point of view of social structure, it is significant because its organization within the tribe cuts across the county boundaries, because it holds that the teachers of the other denominations are wholly false, because its membership is drawn largely from people who previously belonged to these other denominations, and because no local Whites and few persons of importance in the tribe are members of this sect. In the past, members of the Society opposed the chiefs on principle, but this attitude is not held now, and opportunities are taken to demonstrate their loyalty to the existing order. Meetings are held in different parts of the country every month, and members from other parts are housed and fed by the local members.

Not every person in the tribe has been baptized as a Christian, but 797
the initiative in religious affairs has passed to the functionaries of the different denominations. While the indigenous practices of the people

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

797 have affected the content of their Christian beliefs and their utilization of Christian institutions, there is now little religious activity that can be called pagan.

The Nyasaland Counties

685 The Fort Jameson Ngoni maintain strong connexion with the two counties under Ngoni chiefs in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District, Nyasaland. When the border was drawn between North-Eastern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, about a quarter of Mpezeni's tribal area fell within Nyasaland. The two countries have been administered separately, so that the ties that have persisted have done so despite the formal division of the area and are in the main derived from sentiments related to pre-conquest times. These ties are seen in operation in the attendance of the Nyasaland chiefs at Mpezeni's village on various formal occasions, as at the ceremony ending the mourning for Mpezeni II and beginning the reign of Mpezeni III. In 1920 a delegation from the Nyasaland chiefs visited Mpezeni, and in 1922 Mpezeni took a party across into Nyasaland to visit the two chiefs, apparently with the idea of discussing the possibility of moving his capital into Nyasaland[1] where there was more land available than there was for him in Northern Rhodesia. From time to time Mpezeni has called on the Nyasaland chiefs to send him maize when his own supplies have run low, and these requests have been met. The Nyasaland Administration has also tried to keep alive the connexion with Mpezeni. In the past the Magistrate at Fort Manning brought the Nyasaland chiefs into Fort Jameson to meet Mpezeni there on such occasions as the King's Birthday, while in 1932 when there was a dispute between the two chiefs as to which was the senior, the District Officer informed them that the question did not arise as they were both only lieutenants of Mpezeni. On the other hand, the Nyasaland Administration has intervened to prevent tribal levies for the benefit of Mpezeni.

There are also relationships across the border that arise principally from the mere territorial contiguity of the two areas. The border, which is the Luangwa–Nyasa watershed, is not easy to follow and there has sometimes been doubt as to where it runs. The villages [361] stretch without interruption across the watershed and there is much coming and going from one village to another. Some villages have moved from one country to the other and many people have relatives [797] on both sides of the border. The Catholic Missions were for a long

[1] Mpezeni I had the same idea. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 1 August 1897, p. 2.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Marari FR4

N
time controlled from a mission station just inside Nyasaland, so that 635
many people crossed to attend religious services and receive instruc- [797]
tion. From Mpezeni's own county it is easier to get to the hospital at [743]
Fort Manning than to the one at Fort Jameson, so that people
wanting European medicine tend to go to Nyasaland for treatment
rather than to Fort Jameson. Nyasalanders are for their part attracted N
into Northern Rhodesia by the market for foodstuffs among the urban [438]
population, White and Black, of Fort Jameson and by the greater
variety of goods on sale there.

Other Ngoni Groups

N
The Fort Jameson Ngoni are conscious of their links with the other 101
groups of Ngoni scattered over Central Africa, and of their similarity 173
with the Ndebele and the Swazi and Zulu. The Paramount Chief is
sometimes praised by the recital in the Ngoni language of the past
exploits of the Ngoni, how they crossed the Zambezi, and how they
conquered one tribe after another. On one occasion I heard someone
who cannot speak Ngoni praise the Paramount by repeating, in
Ndebele, which is similar to Ngoni, a praise of Mzilikazi[1] which he had
learnt by rote. This oration was accepted without comment by the
Paramount. Lancaster has recorded a legend that Lobengula[2] fled to
Mpezeni after the second Matebele War, and that he died in the
country.[3] Some years after his installation Mpezeni II was visited by
a delegation from Mombera, chief of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasa-
land, which, it is said, came to ratify Mpezeni's position as Chief of
the Fort Jameson section of the Ngoni. An important headman in
Mpezeni's county, who bears the same name as Chief Chiwere of the
Ngoni of Dowa District, still claims from time to time that because his
namesake and alleged relative is a chief, he too ought to be a chief.

Nsenga and Yao

N
M
The Ngoni are on more friendly terms with the Nsenga of Petauke 648
District than with the other matrilineal tribes of the region. Some of [197]
the kinship ties that were formed as a result of intermarriage between
the two tribes in the 1870's can still be traced, and their languages
are similar. Mpezeni III went in 1944 with his first lieutenant and
twenty-five followers to visit the Nsenga Chief Manjawanthu, and he
is expected to return the invitation.

[1] The first Ndebele king. [2] Son of Mzilikazi, defeated by the Whites.
[3] Lancaster, p. 83. Cf. *British Central Africa Gazette*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, and Posselt, *Upongula the Scatterer*, pp. 112–24.

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

barren with terror, till a great belt of uninhabited territory surrounded Ngoniland on all sides. It was sad to pass through this rich land, left to the wild beasts, to see mouldering smelting furnaces, and other signs of lost industries.

It was when the tribe was still in the height of its devastating tendencies that the Livingstonia Mission came into the country. At first the early pioneers were barely tolerated, and more than once it seemed as if they would have to abandom everything and flee for their lives. But gradually, imperceptibly the preaching of peace began to sweeten and purify the atmosphere, and the horrors of these fighting days became part and parcel of a dreadful past. Three years ago a new paramount chief was elected. At the great council the wild spirits of the tribe tried to rouse the people to celebrate the coronation with a great raid. They danced, threatened and raved, but the younger chiefs, themselves Christians, spoke eloquently for peace, and in the end peace prevailed, and the death knell of the past was sounded. And now there is no more settled, peaceable, law-abiding people in Central Africa. And this victory has been won not by the rattle of Maxim guns, not even by the wisdom of diplomacy, but by the daily teaching of the Gospel of Peace.

The political structure of the tribe is strong and conservative. The father of all the people is the paramount chief. His authority has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, the eldest son of the principal wife succeeding to his father's position. In some cases the head wife has had no sons, then she adopted a son of one of the other wives and he became the heir. The chief's power is nominally absolute, and he is surrounded with a certain regal dignity. It is impressive to see the aristocratic majesty that a great chief can maintain. Though his regal robes may not be more than a dirty bit of blue calico, which is not worth fourpence, he walks with a scornful dignity that any European prince might envy. When he listens in court to some great indaba his face is expressionless as granite, with an affected indifference he drinks from his great calabash of beer, and ladles ounces of snuff into his nostrils, while his poor subject pleads with passion and eloquence over a matter which may mean death or life to him. Yet behind his nominal power he is controlled and restrained by the voice of his council. His succession may be plain and acknowledged, yet he cannot assume the reins of government until he has been nominated by the sub-chiefs and councillors. Our present chief had to

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

243 forest is cut down and burnt, and another garden cultivated, and so the country is rapidly being deforested. The crop is largely used to make a heady beer, and although Central Africa has been 213 happily saved from the curse of European liquor, the native beer is a great source of big drunken bouts. Heavy drinking, however, does not bring the evil effects that brandy drunkenness would entail. The drink is a nutritious and a very sustaining food, I know some of the old chiefs who are drunk almost every day of their lives by midday, yet they bear up wonderfully. But [579] these drunken bouts, when whole villages run riot, are the source of nearly all quarrels, adultery, bloodshed, and every outburst of passion. We have had to denounce the beer drinking as a menace [177] to the social order of the country, and for lack of the strong restraint of the British Government, which forbids the cutting down of trees, we have preached against the deforesting of the land as a wicked improvidence. The native church has, of its own initiative, taken up the question, and enjoined on the members total abstinence, and the preservation of the forests.

461 Three or four months labour are sufficient to provide a family with food for the year, and the sale of a sheep or a heifer will buy all the clothes the family requires. There is therefore little necessity to work, and the tendency is to spend the months lounging about the village, talking and trifling. Now, happily a more 177 industrious period is waking, and larger ambitions for cloth and 461 for stock, are drawing out the men to work. As a mission we insist on the duty of labour, we refuse church privileges to a man 797 if he cannot show that he has been engaged for some months each year at some labour centre doing honest work. No moral good is ever effected by pampering African pride and indolence, and one of the first lessons Christianity has to teach the native, is the dignity of labour, and the absolute necessity for the labourer to be industrious and honest in the discharge of his work. A penny a day is the ordinary wage we give a labourer, and even the great majority of my 220 teachers do not receive more than 1/6 a month.

171 Of course many of the Central Africans have industries of their own, smelting, basket making, cloth weaving, wire pulling, and so on. But the Ngoni were a handless people until they got a spear in their hand. Then they drew themselves up as men, and defied the universe. Yet this martial life had an ennobling effect on them. It is a curious thing to notice, and a fact which was

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

they find dirt and untidiness compel the people to turn out and sweep the village, and rebuild their houses.

Education is spreading at a great rate, and there are fifty schools already established among the people with about 7,000 scholars in attendance. These pay fees for their attendance. And so great is the thirst for reading that last year more than 4,000 volumes were bought by the people.

A Christian church is rapidly growing up, and at certain religious seasons a great congregation of over 7,000 people may be seen gathered from all quarters.

Yet it would be a pity if with this inrush of new life the old tribal characteristics were lost in a wretched caricature of European methods. There is nothing more slovenly than a lithe athletic African dressed in European cast off clothing, or more repulsive than a lad trying to be an Englishman when he should be an Ngoni proud of his nationality. And this is one of the most serious problems that is constantly before us, to guide this people in their formative period, that in the end they may not be denationalised, and made hideous and ridiculous in a distorted and unnatural mould, to preserve all national customs which are not evil in themselves and yet evolve a people honest, industrous, intelligent, and Christian, who will have some harmonious and beautiful part to take when the world's orchestra is filling up to play its symphony of peace and prosperity.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

821 or other pregnant announcement: 'Listen. Do you hear? The chief says there is a great matter being discussed. It is not here but elsewhere. The case is very important.' Then the women took their poles and struck the tall wooden pounding mortars with resounding blows. A Ngoni elder commented to me: 'Listen. They are washing the moon from its clouds, so that it may come out of the darkness and shine again.' The event was curiously reminiscent of an eclipse during my stay in an Indian village when pots were struck 'to wash the moon'.

Reckoning of numbers

802 The Ngoni used tens as units in counting. They began with the right hand clenched, like the fist they raised in the traditional greeting. One by one they raised from the bent-in position the thumb and each finger in turn, and then did the same with the left hand. When they reached ten they struck one hand against the other with all the fingers extended and said '*ihlumi*' (ten), and for twenty, thirty and so on they struck their hands together the correct number of times. For one hundred they used the word '*ikulu*', but it was generally agreed that this had not been in their original counting [177] terms, but had been brought in when the Zulu Bible came to them with the first Scottish missionaries.

Ngoni history

814 To a people like the Ngoni whose remembered past was one of migrations, conquests and settlement in a new country, their history was no dead verbal record but a living reminder [186] of their past achievements, and of their cultural and political differences from the people around them in Nyasaland. There were many occasions in Ngoni village life, especially in the villages of chiefs and heads of leading clans when recitals of history took place. Frequent references were made to historical events in songs, court cases, when visiting Ngoni came, in the vernacular readers used in the Scottish Mission

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

not understand how Europeans could draw such a sharp line 867
and equate ignorance with the absence of a literature and [212]
written traditions. When talking about how they instructed
their young people in the traditional knowledge about the
natural world and their own national law and history, they
pointed out that there were no set periods for this kind of
teaching, but that there was a recognition that the young
man, before or about the time when he himself became a
father, should know what his father knew. We will begin 128
then with some indication of the kind of matters included
in this traditional store of knowledge, recognizing that re-
ference can be made only to a small selection from it. We
will go on in the second half of the chapter to the other kind
of knowledge which was inseparably connected with practi-
cal and technical skills.

Ngoni traditional knowledge: the reckoning of time

The Ngoni had a system of reckoning time and a recognized 805
calendar. This consisted of thirteen lunar months in the year,
reckoned from the first appearance of each new moon, and
beginning with our December as the first month. The names
of the months are all related to natural events, and these as
the following list shows were in five main groups: when cer-
tain wild animals had their young; the time of bitter cold
and frosts; when the hawks came to catch chickens; when
certain trees fruited; when the new crops were ripe and the
former first fruit ceremony took place.

NGONI NAMES FOR MONTHS

1 *Impala*	Antelopes have their young
2 *Inkokoni*	Gnu have their young
3 *Impuso*	Tasting new crops
4 *Inyati*	Buffaloes have their young
5 *Indlovu*	Elephants have their young
6 *Ilizy eliscipane*	Beginning of cold weather
7 *Ilizy elikulu*	Great cold weather

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

805	8 *Ukholo omnsinyane*	Hawks fly and hover
	9 *Ukholo omkhulu*	Hawks catch chickens
	10 *Isiganyane esincinyane*	Trees begin to flower
	11 *Isiganyane esikhulu*	Trees fruiting
	12 *Inhlachana*	Trees fruiting
	13 *Umgano*	Trees fruiting

The months were more generally grouped in two main [132] seasons: the rains, whose name meant that the earth was 'clothed and decorated with new grass, leaves and flowers'; and the dry season, the time for moving village sites, felling trees and clearing bush for new gardens, castrating oxen. It was the true Ngoni families who knew the names for the months and the relation of months to the seasons. Among these families in every Ngoni village there were men who watched the sun's movements, and noted the hill or tall trees behind which the sun set when it reached its most southerly point. This was for them one of the signals that the rains were near. If the rains did not begin when the sun reached this point, they announced that this year the rains were delayed and the crops would probably suffer. When the *inkaku* bird [825] began to sing, the first man who heard it went to tell his neighbours to repair their hoe handles and begin to clear the fields, for the rains and the planting season was at hand. [824] When a large flat mushroom appeared in the woodland, it too was the herald of rain.

Not only were these months and the seasons they indicated 805 the means of regulating work. They were also the way by 211 which the Ngoni reckoned time. They had rods for each month and notches for the days. They took these with them on campaigns, and when returning they produced the rods, and pointing to the notches they said: 'On the sixth day of the seventh month we began fighting against X's village,' or 'We reached that river on the first day of the fifth month.' 211 Ngoni elders were however quick to point out that they were all trained from childhood up to have excellent memories,

Il: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
161 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
578 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
643 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.
648

In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by Mhlabwadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba broke with Mhlabwadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the Ingwe-Kwizi River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief, Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo. In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the
[805] Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Masako, who with a small following remained on the south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed, after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Msafwa.

In 1844 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinalusi River. On his death bed he gave
[766] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntatu Mpezeni, who was
[428] then in his twentieth year.

(2) Lozwana Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi". She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
159 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
173
562

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

167 563 (35,107). It is difficult not to assume that many Nyanja had formerly called themselves Ngoni.

Table II

	1926	1931	1945
Mzimba district			
Ngoni	25,484	24,627	44,948
Tumbuka	46,029	78,483	89,135
Cewa	14,041	2,411	21,891
Yao	20	—	—
Tonga	3,052	605	32
Nkonde	141	—	—
Others	334	156	202
Total	89,101	106,282	156,208
Ncheu district			
Ngoni	64,023	46,308	15,242
Cewa	11	4,372	2,815
Nyanja	334	25,393	60,400
Cikunda	360	940	1,336
Yao	203	1,064	3,267
Nguru, etc.	—	—	4,448
Others	13	278	182
Total	64,944	78,355	87,690

631 Since the two Ngoni kingdoms are the subject of this book and not the secession states, the position of the rulers of those states as Native Authorities and the circumstances of their secession from the two main groups will not be examined here. The three secession states in the north were under Chiefs Ciwere and Msakambewa in Dowa district and Jere in Kotakota district. The four connected formerly with the central Ngoni were under Chiefs Kacere and Kacindamoto in Dedza, Masula in Lilongwe and Vumbwe in Cholo.

484 [114] In the 1930's, when I was living sometimes in the northern kingdom, sometimes in the central, and for a time in the Ngoni state under Chief Jere, I was aware that the existence of the two kingdoms and of the seven secession states did not preclude a great deal of contact between the Ngoni of the different areas. The stream of travel in Nyasaland from south to north and from north to south along the one trunk road, brought Ngoni as visitors from one kingdom to the other, from the smaller states to both kingdoms, and from 'the Ngoni of the dispersion' living in towns to visit their relatives and friends in the Ngoni kingdoms and states. These visits might be social, to see parents or to marry a wife; they might be for economic purposes, to invest in or sell cattle, to supervise cotton or tobacco marketing; or they might be for ritual purposes such as mourning. When I travelled in the central Ngoni kingdom in 1936 with Y. M. Cibambo, the historian of the northern

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realize that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni eni eni*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambesi clan descent names.

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.' [1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognized areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *alumuzana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *alumuzana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognized as *alumuzana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *alumuzana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognized court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *alumuzana* were recognized as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *alumuzana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*, 1935, p. 54.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

821 or other pregnant announcement: 'Listen. Do you hear? The chief says there is a great matter being discussed. It is not here but elsewhere. The case is very important.' Then the women took their poles and struck the tall wooden pounding mortars with resounding blows. A Ngoni elder commented to me: 'Listen. They are washing the moon from its clouds, so that it may come out of the darkness and shine again.' The event was curiously reminiscent of an eclipse during my stay in an Indian village when pots were struck 'to wash the moon'.

Reckoning of numbers

802 The Ngoni used tens as units in counting. They began with the right hand clenched, like the fist they raised in the traditional greeting. One by one they raised from the bent-in position the thumb and each finger in turn, and then did the same with the left hand. When they reached ten they struck one hand against the other with all the fingers extended and said '*ihlumi*' (ten), and for twenty, thirty and so on they struck their hands together the correct number of times. For one hundred they used the word '*ikulu*', but it was generally agreed that this had not been in their original counting [177] terms, but had been brought in when the Zulu Bible came to them with the first Scottish missionaries.

Ngoni history

● 814 To a people like the Ngoni whose remembered past was one of migrations, conquests and settlement in a new country, their history was no dead verbal record but a living reminder [186] of their past achievements, and of their cultural and political differences from the people around them in Nyasaland. There were many occasions in Ngoni village life, especially in the villages of chiefs and heads of leading clans when recitals of history took place. Frequent references were made to historical events in songs, court cases, when visiting Ngoni came, in the vernacular readers used in the Scottish Mission

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. 814 Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on [224] Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry [172] grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous secessions from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Ciwere had gone. All the people shouted "Ciwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni 814 succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the 871 schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Cibambo, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred 173 to historical events which were illustrated in songs or record- 537 ed in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, 791 called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni 177 Christian leaders went further than this. They used the 173 797

information is insufficient for any reconstruction in great detail, but the general principles are clear and to some extent our conclusions can be checked by reference to material from other areas, particularly the nineteenth century accounts of the Ngoni of Northern Nyasaland and the Zulu. The account of present-day marriage is based on information collected in the field during 1946-9.[2]

The period of the 1890's is chosen for comparison with the present because of the catastrophic change in Ngoni life which occurred in 1898 when they were defeated by the British. Old people who were alive during the period are still available for questioning and many younger people have been told of those times by their parents and grandparents. Although Ngoni cannot generally remember beyond their grandparents, genealogies collected now yield some information about the 1890's and link that period to the present. Important social changes occurred in 1898, changes which for the greater part were, and still are, regretted by the Ngoni, and these accentuate the difference between time present and time past. The past is recollected and recounted and has a moral value. Children are taught the glories of the past to compensate them for the inadequacies of the present. The teaching of tribal history as a school subject reinforces this view. With the passage of time the past has been idealized and simplified but the picture is still clear enough for us to be able to distinguish probable fact from unlikely rationalization. Marriage in 'the time of peace', as the period prior to 1898 is called, is one aspect of this picture.

Marriage is one part of kinship, for it is by the twin processes of marriage and childbirth that the web of kinship is spun. For the purposes of our analysis we have had to sever marriage from its context in what may appear at times rather an arbitrary fashion. A society is a whole, if not always a well integrated whole, and no one part of it can be fully understood without a simultaneous knowledge of all its other parts. Societies persist, more or less, through time, and it is clear that we cannot hope to grasp the total significance of the working of a society at any one time without a knowledge of the changes or lack of change in that society both before and after. Yet we cannot marshal all these relationships simultaneously, let alone present them through the medium of words. Our attempt to comprehend the present cannot wait until we have full knowledge of the future, and our analysis of one sector of a system must proceed in advance of our synthesis of the whole. Ngoni society has persisted through the last sixty years rather less than more, and it may well be argued that present-day Ngoni society is poorly integrated. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that an analysis of Ngoni marriage may, on the one hand, demonstrate

[2] I made two visits to the Fort Jameson Ngoni while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, spending in all a year and eight months there. I was assisted by my clerk, Mr. M. B. Lukhero, in inquiring into former conditions as well as observing contemporary social life.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

181 that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered
186 all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British.
Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every
648 present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni
186 say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we
would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes
would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly",
[929] and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated
with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain
that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

538 The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are
814 common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

643 The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also
182 symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his
[551] warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

829 Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths
178 about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather
[563] than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

If there are 829
quarrels in a village the headman is blamed by the chief for not controlling [627]
his people well. All disputes are best settled out of court, even if they must be 628
referred to court later on. Therefore a quarrel in village A brings to light all the alliances and cleavages which link A with other villages and differentiate it from them. The headman of A appeals to B for support, invoking the historical incident linking them, and hopes to settle affairs of his village with the authority of B's approval behind him. For if the headman of B is a potential ally he is also a potential rival, and the dissident section in A may themselves invoke their link with B and transfer their allegiance to him. Thus although the details of the relationship between A and B, and the historical incident connected with it, may not be widely known there is considerable external pressure on them to maintain their relationship. Connexions of this kind, mainly between villages, but also between chiefdoms, play a large part in contemporary Ngoni life. Men walk twenty miles to a funeral and women carry pots of beer all day in response to ties of this kind.

Thus we see, on the one hand, that tribal legends are widely known, 829
relate to pre-conquest times, and do not directly influence conduct; and, on 173
the other, that legends associated with inter-group relations are known only 628
by the groups concerned, may relate to either before or after 1898, and do directly influence action. Why is there this difference? We may regard the former legends as of significance mainly in external relations and the latter in internal. Within the tribe, and more particularly within the minor chiefdom, inter-group relations are still largely determined by Ngoni themselves, however much they may have altered in form and content since 1898 and however much Ngoni are part of a wide system. Movement between villages is only slightly controlled by the Administration and in quarrelling, in marriage and adultery, beer-drinking and hoeing, Ngoni men and women choose their own allies and enemies. Incidents in reality give rise to inter-group relations and are subsequently invoked to maintain them. History is written not in books but in the names of groups and in the remembered connexions between them, and as these connexions gradually change so local legendary history is gradually rewritten.

In external relations the Ngoni never act as a tribe except within the 829
framework of European-controlled institutions. As yet no myth of origin is 182
needed to explain the fact that Ngoni and Cewa representatives sit together on the Provincial Council save that the Administration put them there. The world of external relations is one of cultural heterogeneity and comparative adequate documentation. In this field legends have only a limited social function. They differentiate tribe X from tribe Y but do not relate them to each other.

Lastly we must consider Ngoni history proper. There have been many 175
alleged accounts of Ngoni history published in Europe and South Africa, 819
but these seem to have had little influence on the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Recently several histories have appeared in the vernacular, and tribal history

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few. We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of these providing the information.[6] The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin. Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from contemporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grow shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that "the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory". From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations, as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

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6. Read and Winterbottom have pointed out that informants from Northern Nyasaland assert that their Paramount Chief is the heir of Zwangondaba, while those from Fort Jameson say that their Chief is the heir. Cf. Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 467, and Winterbottom, *Outline Histories*, p. 17.

 123 186

the reason for this enthusiasm about being 'written up'. 'At last', he said, 'someone will know about us.' He went on to speak with regret about the old days when one or two missionaries and others really knew about the Ngoni and could speak their language. He then spoke with bitterness about the present, lamenting that the Ngoni were no longer regarded as a great people. Gradually it became evident that the Ngoni, being very conscious themselves of their distinctive cultural identity, and of their positive achievements in setting up the Ngoni state, expect other people to recognize this too. They keep constantly before them memories of their past greatness, and they dwell gloomily on the coming of the Europeans which marked the end of their ascendancy.

IV. The Historical Sense of the Ngoni. From the beginning of my stay among the Ngoni the chiefs and leading men impressed on me the importance of knowing about their past. In each area the Paramount Chief arranged that 'historians', that is, old men accredited by him as having correct information, should come to dictate Ngoni history to me. At first this relating of history took place in public before any who liked to listen. The old historians, however, grizzled warriors of many fights, trembled and stammered in giving their accounts, because the Paramount Chief so impressed on them the importance of the occasion, and pulled them up sharply when they hesitated over names or events. At the subsequent private sittings, where the old men could argue fiercely with each other without any fear of causing shame before an audience, the accounts were much more coherent, and, as the Paramount Chief assured me, correct. After one such taking down of history in the Paramount's village, I went to stay in the village of one of these 'historians', a very much respected *mulumuzana* and one of the 'best families'. He gently but firmly put aside my scheme of studying village organization and economic life, saying, 'First you ought to know about our beginnings'.[1] After giving me still more detailed accounts of Ngoni history, he explained that though much of their social life was mixed up to-day with that of other tribes, their history and traditions were distinct and belonged to them alone. Hence I ought to have it written 814 124

[1] He used the verb *kudauka*, which implies root or origin.

814 down fully and correctly. When I arrived in Chief Gomani's country,
124 after having stayed in the other two Ngoni areas, the chiefs and leading
[114] men whom he called to see me asked at once, 'What did the other Ngoni do to show you they were Ngoni? *We* want you first to hear the story of our people.' If I said to any older man of good standing, that is of a true Ngoni clan, 'Tell me about the Ngoni', he invariably began with the traditions of the south and their trek north.

173 I have some fifteen long texts[1] of Ngoni history, most of which
[126] begin with the stories of Dingiswayo and Zwidi, leading on to the rise of Chaka and the Ngoni exodus from the south. These texts not only show a measure of agreement with each other, but they also are verifiable by established history as recorded by Europeans. Those texts which came from Gomani's country contain different material after the exodus from the south. For the Ngoni under the leadership of the
[614] Maseko clan came north with Mzilikazi and the Matabele, and crossing the Zambesi alone, went east of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika.[2] The main Ngoni group under the Jere clan went west of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika, and remained a united group until the death of Zwangendaba in 1848. A disputed succession followed and the Ngoni split up under two rival Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera. The history
[814] of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one, the only one to whom the royal salute *Bayete* should be given. Mpezeni's historians say, 'Mwambera snatched *Bayete*'—and vice versa. In spite of these divergences in later history, however, the Ngoni point to their earlier
619 history and say, 'You see we are all one people'. They are conscious
829 of, and troubled about, their present divisions and inclined to attribute them to our premature arrival in the country. 'You came too soon. We would have fought until there was only one *inkosi*.'

814 The detailed knowledge of Ngoni history is regarded as the province of a specialist. 'How can a man of no wisdom remember all those names?' From time to time 'historians' tell episodes of this traditional history in the villages of the Paramount or of other im-

[1] 800–1,000 words.

[2] This is their own account and is confirmed by the Rev. Charles Stuart, formerly at Ekwendeni, but not so far recorded by other Europeans.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

portant chiefs. The Paramounts have told me that occasionally at 814
their biannual ' meeting of chiefs ' and *indunas*, some recital of history is made, especially if they want to quote a precedent or examine an old custom with a view to change. This historical tradition therefore is alive and has a recognized function in regulating Ngoni life. In one area part of it has been written in the vernacular and is used as a school history book.[1] In the other areas the Paramounts have spoken of the need for something of the same kind, as they recognize that with the coming of modern education it is an effective way of training the young in the traditions of the Ngoni past.

In addition to recitals of tradition by ' historians ' there are many other reminders of the Ngoni past which are constantly before the people. An adequate examination of Ngoni history as it is expressed in their institutions and standardized behaviour would need an article to itself. I shall only mention here some ways and occasions through which tradition and old Ngoni institutions are brought before the people.

1. The praise songs of chiefs, war songs, regimental songs, names of famous regiments, and prayers for rain. These contain references, [533]
often rather obscure, to events and persons in the past. The praise songs are sung, or rather shouted, on special occasions, as when thanking the chief for beer, by members of important clans who alone know the words. The war songs and regimental songs recall the great days of conquest, and are sung and danced in war dress at big gatherings at the Paramount's village or at other chief's villages. The
prayers for rain invoke the names of great chiefs in old days, but are [782]
now only a memory as they are no longer used in ceremonies—at least in none that I have found so far.

2. The names of prominent landmarks, such as hills and rivers where great chiefs built their villages and fights took place. Herd [823]
boys will point out a river and say, ' That is where Mtwalo built when he came from Choma ', or ' That hill is where Singu hid in the Azungu war '. The historical events attached to these places are widely known and constantly before people's eyes in the diversified landscape of hills and valleys.

3. Important village names. During the trek north, the names of [621]

[1] In Mwambera's country.

814 621 the villages of certain chiefs in the south were preserved.[1] In Mwambera's country there are the names of villages belonging to nine generations of Jere chiefs, and in Gomani's country for seven generations of Maseko chiefs. Villages holding these historic names are in charge of an individual of high rank who is never called the 'owner' of that village but 'the one who takes care'. I realized how clear to the people is the historical significance of these village names, when I asked a question and they exclaimed, 'What? You do not know about Elangeni being the village of Hlachwayo? But all Ngoni people can know that.'[2]

814 614 [193] [576] 4. Clan names. The clan names, as the Ngoni say, denote a person's 'tribe' and the respect due to him. With the prefix, *e*, *a*, *na* (according to the area) the clan name is used as a respectful form of address, and always when thanking for a gift or favour. The tone of reverence with which the great clan names are thus mentioned is itself an indication of the rank and honour of a person.

814 621 5. Village descent. In old days Ngoni villages were very much larger than to-day. The headman of a village on your first visit will always give you the genealogy of his village, how it split off from A, which split off from B, which was the *chigawa* under *induna* X of the big village of chief Y. Reciting these village genealogies generally leads to some recalling of the past, and the village notables, the *amadoda*, gather round to corroborate or correct the headman's recital.

814 It takes very little to stimulate the Ngoni to historical conversations. I have heard them originate in the return of a villager from Johannesburg, where he met Zulu and Swazi men and found they could speak together and had common traditions; in a sermon preached by an Ngoni minister in which he used illustrations from Ngoni warfare; in a rebuke from the Boma to a headman for trying to move his village from worn out land to a site outside the Reserve on an empty farm. And it is not only the aristocrats who take part in such conversations. Sometimes it is evident that men and boys whose [619] fathers had been slaves are anxious to show their knowledge of Ngoni history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni.

[1] I am not clear yet what was the precise sociological process by which the identity of these villages was preserved.

[2] An idiomatic use which has the force of a double negative 'No one cannot know it'.

history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni. It is nevertheless recognized that the aristocrats, through their kinship links with the past, have the best knowledge; the rest listen and defer to them. For matters relating to history are no antiquarian interest to the Ngoni. It is probable that recalling history and dwelling on the great days of the past is to some extent a compensation for what the Ngoni consider the indignities of their position to-day. Yet it is also a stimulus to them to maintain their separate identity and to revere their institutions. Tradition supports rank, by recognizing the historical importance of certain clans; and rank preserves tradition because intimate knowledge is the proud monopoly of certain families.

V. Tradition and Legend as Documentation. To the anthropologist who examines the part played by tradition and legend in the culture of a people, Professor Malinowski has given an invaluable lead. He suggests that myths are the charter and documentation for traditional tribal life, 'statements of reality which live in the institutions and pursuits of the people';[1] and that legend is re-interpreted history. All peoples of whatever level of civilization interpret history in the light of their beliefs about themselves, their achievements, and their destiny. The Ngoni are no exception to this. Sometimes they relate factual history which is verifiable and accurate. At other times it is probably part fact, part fiction. Yet at all times the emphasis in, and interpretation of, tradition, has a definite purpose, and it is possible to see how a standardized form of a narrative has come to be accepted and believed in. The version of a narrative at one time was interpreted or moulded to serve a purpose. Having been established, it then moulds the thinking of the people on that particular issue. The vexed question of the supremacy of the two Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera[2] is a case in point. The basis of the story of the original dispute is the same, but the versions told in each 'country' differ in a succession of minute details, whose arrangement and emphasis prove the point in each case. Mpezeni's historians have arranged the details to prove that he is the rightful *inkosi*; Mwambera's historians

[1] B. Malinowski. Article on Culture in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

[2] The two Paramounts at present holding these titles are grandsons of the first holders, to whom I refer as old Mpezeni.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

In 1895 the North Charterland Company was formed, distinct from and yet allied with the British South Africa Company,[1] with mining and trading rights over 10,000 square miles, most of which lay in Mpezeni's territory. The legal right to this concession was based on the British South Africa Company's treaties with 'dispossessed chiefs'. At the same time the North Charterland Company recognized that Mpezeni still held the effective sovereignty over the area, and that the success and safety of any mining or trading expedition sent to the territory depended on good relations being established with Mpezeni. They therefore persuaded Weise to join their staff in order to get Mpezeni's consent to the venture. They gained a foothold and did some prospecting, and then tried to impose a hut tax, and to exercise administrative powers through their own uniformed police of the Tonga tribe from Lake Nyasa—a tribe despised by the Ngoni. Two memoranda by Sir Harry Johnston to the Foreign Office set out the chain of events which led to the use of armed force against Mpezeni in January 1898, the pretext being the alleged danger of two white men in his country. Sir Harry Johnston wrote, 'Mpezeni is a very powerful Zulu chief and intimately allied with the Matabele. He offers no great objection to mining for gold but shows the greatest dislike to any interference with his independence or governing powers. The latter is the cause of his quarrel with Colonel Warton on the matter of a British flag and taxation.' He concludes the second memorandum with the remarks, 'Mpezeni is an intrusive Zulu robber who must sooner or later be dethroned and subdued. He is very powerful and is the only avowedly recalcitrant chief in all British Central Africa. When his hour comes he can be dealt with by the present Protectorate forces.' Following the last memoranda on the situation in Mpezeni's country the Foreign Office wrote to the British South Africa Company in April 1897, 'Lord Salisbury gathers that the North Charterland Company have maintained friendly relations with Mpezeni by withholding from his knowledge their connexion with the British South Africa Company and their British nationality. It is stated that the representative of the North Charterland Company has passed himself off to Mpezeni as brother to Weise.'

Lord Salisbury was well informed. When the Ngoni tell this story

[1] See North Charterland Inquiry.

648 in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of
814 those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Azungu* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for under-
[609] standing the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognize Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final
175 humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with
648 his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot';
[727] and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the old *indunas* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *inkosi* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic
178 changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and
[648] demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on
[464] both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand
[167] for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1924.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

173

(19) The *isi-bongo*,[1] "Jere," appears to have definitely not been used prior to the year 1835, and from information received it is extremely unlikely that it was in general use until after the death of Zongendaba. The chief *isi-bongo* up to that time appear to have been Kumalo, Nqumayo, Tole (said to be the eye of an ox), Nxima, Gama, Mkhalapi, Ndhlovu and Nkosi. [614]

The *isitakazelo*[2] now little used were Ndaba and Ntungwa. [576]

The language spoken by the Ngoni was closely allied to isi-swazi. [197]

The Paramount Chief, Mpezeni II, still receives the royal salute of "Bayete" on all official occasions and in his own home. [643]

(20)-Ba-Pule people. It is stated that, when the Ngoni first met these people, they carried long spears and shields made of game hides, and they could converse with the Ngoni in isi-swazi, which was not the language of the Ba-Pule; when they spoke their own language they were not understood by the Ngoni. The general opinion of the old indunas is that they were BaSuto people. They supplied excellent fighting material to the Ngoni impis and were treated as equals. [648]

INTERESTING NOTE re DEATH OF LOBENGULA.

159

Lobengula, Chief of the Ama-Tebele. It is stated as follows.

173

Lobengula crossed the Zambesi at Manyerere Drift and arrived at the Mtengulenl Uka Sosera village on the Lutembwe River in January, 1894. He was carried by an Ngoni party who had been sent for that purpose. He was a very heavily built man with a large protruding belly, and breasts like those of a woman heavy in milk. So cumbersome was he, that he had to be helped to move about from one place to another. He had a great pipe in which he smoked hemp. If he passed the pipe he would talk, but if not it was a sign he wished to be alone. When Chief Mpezeni visited him he used to crawl on his hands and knees to greet him. The day Lobengula died the rock on the Sanjika Kopje split and fell and all the great Ngoni indunas mourned. Sanjika is on the road between Fort Jameson and Fort Manning. I have seen the split and fallen rock. 643 [142] [276] [763]

It is not known where Lobengula was buried; as he was a fugitive from justice, the secret was closely kept. It is said he died shortly after his arrival from the Zambesi in 1894. This information was given by an aged Ngoni councillor, named Repu, who resided near Fort Jameson, and died in 1927. This story is but little known and usually all knowledge is denied of this subject. [766] [115]

List of people who, being the oldest living Ngoni, attended a meeting held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 18th, 19th and 20th of January, 1935, at the Paramount Chief's village to discuss the history of Chief Zongendaba:—Basilyo Soko, Zamajaya Mphamu, Mahamanyo Mphamu, Mdawa Wezo Shawa, Dede Tole, Njobo Mdwandi Jere, Malwalalirke Tembo, Mwaje Mkhawa, Katenda Mangwanyi Mdawanu, Kapendula Jonesi Mvulu, Mwbilika Mphamu, Chimpurbine Ngubwa, Chiwere Mainina, Madua Jere, Magubanga Mphamu, Chief Mpezeni Jere II, Chief Mudaimawu, Andrew Kapotamoyo Jere, James Kdawandi Hara, Matrino Kangwere Mkhawa, Pengani Mvulu, Adriyano Phiri, Zebulubulo (Iawani) Mowzu, Chingulubani Hlanka, Siya Mvulu, Ngunga Singa Jere, Mdawa Mphamu, Nwaki Lekhelo, Njambwa Tembo, Adwilwarbe Mdungu, etc. 115 527 551 814

[1] [isi-bongo = sib name -- Analyst]

[2] [isitakazelo = honorific epithets -- Analyst]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the notched sticks were only an *aide-mémoire*, not a necessity. 211

The heavens and the earth

When the Pleiades appeared just before dawn they said the Pleiades were being 'reborn' (the word used for the new moon's appearance and for the initiation of a diviner), and that in this position in the heavens they were heralds of the cold season. They knew the relative positions of Venus as an evening star and a morning star, and watched for the appearance high in the heavens of Jupiter which they knew by its size. Orion they recognized as a man with a spear, a hunter, and the Milky Way as the sands of the sky, since sand was used to denote numbers which cannot be counted. 821

In announcing the death of a great chief by a messenger sent from village to village, the traditional formula was: 'Listen. Do you hear? The heavens have fallen.' Hence when earthquakes were felt, it was believed that some great chief had died, and the earthquake was the trembling when his spirit left the earth for the place of the departed spirits. If it turned out to be no one of their own people, they nevertheless held to the belief that somewhere, unknown to them, a 'great one' had died and his spirit had departed at the time of the earth's trembling. 769 775 829

Eclipses of the sun and moon they also connected with some great event either among their own people or elsewhere, and they used the eclipse year and month to date these events. Their famous crossing of the Zambezi on their northward march, finally and irrevocably cutting off their connexions with the south, was during a solar eclipse. In teaching young adults Ngoni history they said: 'When we crossed the Zambezi it became night at noon.' 821 [167]

A lunar eclipse, almost total, occurred when I was in a chief's village, and all the people were called to the kraal and stood watching it. Then the chief's spokesman, his 'mouthpiece', called for silence in the phrase used for a war summons [632]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

821 or other pregnant announcement: 'Listen. Do you hear? The chief says there is a great matter being discussed. It is not here but elsewhere. The case is very important.' Then the women took their poles and struck the tall wooden pounding mortars with resounding blows. A Ngoni elder commented to me: 'Listen. They are washing the moon from its clouds, so that it may come out of the darkness and shine again.' The event was curiously reminiscent of an eclipse during my stay in an Indian village when pots were struck 'to wash the moon'.

Reckoning of numbers

802 The Ngoni used tens as units in counting. They began with the right hand clenched, like the fist they raised in the traditional greeting. One by one they raised from the bent-in position the thumb and each finger in turn, and then did the same with the left hand. When they reached ten they struck one hand against the other with all the fingers extended and said '*ihlumi*' (ten), and for twenty, thirty and so on they struck their hands together the correct number of times. For one hundred they used the word '*ikulu*', but it was generally agreed that this had not been in their original counting [177] terms, but had been brought in when the Zulu Bible came to them with the first Scottish missionaries.

Ngoni history

814 To a people like the Ngoni whose remembered past was one of migrations, conquests and settlement in a new country, their history was no dead verbal record but a living reminder [186] of their past achievements, and of their cultural and political differences from the people around them in Nyasaland. There were many occasions in Ngoni village life, especially in the villages of chiefs and heads of leading clans when recitals of history took place. Frequent references were made to historical events in songs, court cases, when visiting Ngoni came, in the vernacular readers used in the Scottish Mission

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

which his army was defeated. The warriors knew that they would be killed when they got back to the great Zulu despot, and so they fled north, fighting as they went. As they went along, they conquered and absorbed the tribes, gathering Swazi, Atonga, and a medley of people into the nation. They came to the Zambezi, and on the day when they crossed it they were terrified by a total eclipse of the sun. From the Zambezi they fought their way to Nyasaland, then striking west, they passed through the Senga and Wemba populations till they reached Lake Tanganyika. On the plateau there the first great chief died. He had become infirm in his latter days, and travelled about riding on an ox. At his funeral a terrible massacre took place. One section of the tribe, eager to observe the old bloody funeral ceremonies, surprised and murdered all the widows of the chief that their spirits might accompany the dead chief to the other world. This butchery aroused great indignation among the others, and the tribe split in two. The butchers remained at the S.E. of Lake Tanganyika, where they still are a terror to the surrounding people. The great part of the tribe however, again marched south. One of the sons of the paramount chief was appointed his successor. His name was Mombera. His four brothers, Mpezeni, Mperembe, Maurau, and Mtwaro, were given large and powerful sub-chieftainships under him. This led to a scattering and readjustment of the tribe. Mperembe remained as chief and conqueror over the northern people, keeping the wild Wemba, and other tribes under his suzerainty. Mombera, along with two other brothers, settled in the highlands to the north-west of Nyasa. And Mpezeni went south and gradually got so far separated from the others that his people became an independent and insolated section of the tribe. A few years ago, the British Government levied war on Mpezeni, and his country came under the British Government.

In the north also, Mperembe was sore driven through his separation from the main section of the tribe, and at last his people rebelled, and with the aid of the Wemba, drove him south to join hands with his brother Mombera the paramount chief. Around Mombera the great part of the Ngoni nation remained. Some of his head men started petty chieftainships to the south among whom were Mandala, and Mwazi. Their people are called the Central and Southern Ngoni, and are well known in the Blantyre district as labourers, but they are not Ngoni. Few of them can speak the Zulu or Ngoni language, and they are a poor effeminate and cow-

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity. [87]
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [825]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [753]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 782
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if [241]
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [726]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [243]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when [177]
Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees,
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty [177]
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time. 241 796 [643 302]

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuzo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiwe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *zi zi*, *ozi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni. 241 533 539

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name. 643 644 822

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy 643 644 762 766

CHAPTER III

HOUSES

361 171 823 WRITING of the social organization of the northern Nguni among the South-eastern Bantu, Mrs. Hoernlé[1] referred to three divisions of the typical village: the *indlunkulu* section where the principal hut was that of the mistress of the village; the *ikhohlo* section on the left-hand side of this hut, and the *inqadi* section on the right. The terminology used by the northern Nguni expressed right and left hand from the point of view of someone looking up from the gate of the kraal. I found that among the Ngoni they used right and left the other way as if the person were at the top of the kraal looking down at the gate, and I have adopted their usage.

171 361 554 Ngoni villages, which were royal villages or the head villages of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, also had a tripartite division into houses related to leading women, as we saw in the village plan in Chapter III of Part I, but there was a major difference between them and the northern Nguni grouping described by Mrs. Hoernlé. In Ngoni villages the *indlunkulu*, the hut at the head of the kraal, was occupied by the mother of the owner of the village, who had 'come out' with him from his father's village. In the right-hand section of the huts round the kraal was the hut of the owner's big wife, and on the left the hut of his next important wife. These three huts, representing three houses, were the focal points of the main divisions of the village. In fact in most villages the owner of the *indlunkulu* had the huts of other widows of her late husband beside her on each side, and the *cigodlo*, or section where the sons of the owner of the village lived, spread over a wide area behind the *indlunkulu* and behind the huts of the two chief wives. The plan used in Chapter III of Part I was necessarily simplified in order to bring out the main points. The grouping of huts in typical Ngoni villages showed varying degrees of elaboration, and it was not always easy at first to trace their connexions with the houses.

592 571 Houses in the Ngoni kingdoms could be considered as divisions of the village, though they did not always cover all the divisions. If we look at the membership of a house, as it was illustrated in a typical Ngoni village, it is clear that it had in it three elements connected by ties of kinship, affinity or association with the owner of the house, who was either a wife or a mother of the male owner of the village. The kinship group related to the *indlunkulu* comprised the male owner of the village, his mother and classificatory mothers with his brothers who had joined him. In the big house and in the second house of his wives the kinship

[1] op. cit. p. 83.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 boys took more interest and more part in adult occupations and affairs,
866 the emergence of leadership among Ngoni boys of high-ranking families was watched by their elders and recognized by their age mates. This was the formative period when a boy's capacity to succeed his father in a position of authority was carefully observed and judged. The Ngoni had ways of passing over a man who was a physical weakling, a coward in face of danger, a sadistic bully to weaker men, a pursuer of women and a breaker-up of marriages. The *madoda* in a Ngoni village, who appeared to let the boys in the *laweni* manage their own affairs without interfering, had nevertheless a shrewd idea of who was making good and who was proving disappointing. Their comments, showing continued observation over a long period, were often expressed when two or three friends and age mates from the *laweni* decided to go off to the south to work together. The *madoda* would then say: 'We hope they will come back soon and not be "lost". So and so is like his father and he will help us here in the village'; or they might comment: 'Good riddance, they were always hanging round the girls—worthless ones, indeed' (*wa chabe ndithu*).

881 It has already been pointed out that there was no circumcision school
856 nor public initiation rite among the Ngoni. At puberty the ritual observed was a private and personal affair. On a boy's first nocturnal emission his age mates informed an older boy in the *laweni*, who told him to go at once before it was light and bathe in the river, and to do so
[823 each morning after an emission. This use of cold water was believed to
827] give a boy strength and virility. The boy was also instructed by the older boys in the *laweni* on how to behave to his equals and his elders and to women. This stage was called *ukuchayiwa nga' manzi*, 'to be beaten with water', and was not reported to the older people. When the older people noticed that the boy's voice was breaking, his father inquired whether he had passed puberty and, on being assured of this, he found a man who knew the *uludengele* medicine. The father killed a goat, and the medicine man took some of the unchewed cud from the goat's stomach, mixed it with the bitter *uludengele* root and put it on a pan over a fire. This took place near the gate of the kraal or near the parents' hut, with the father and the father's male relatives standing by. When the mixture boiled, the boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the pan one after the other and lick each one quickly. At the same time he kept jumping over the fire and striking his elbows against his sides. The Ngoni believed that this medicine gave boys physical strength and stamina and they administered it to their servants' sons as well. It was still practised in the 1930's among Ngoni who were educated and partly westernized.

867 While the organization of the *laweni* catered for all boys from their
881 second teeth till their marriage, including boys from the age sets called *abantwana* and *amajaha*, the organization of girls' life followed a

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

different pattern. They also went to sleep with a grandmother or some other older member of the family when they were old enough to be excluded from their mother's hut at night, and they shared with their small brothers the grandmother's care and her story-telling round the fire in the evenings. During the day the girls continued as part of their mother's household group, eating with her and the younger children. As little girls they were taught to sit down carefully and to smooth down the cloth which they wore round their waists. They were trained to speak correctly and to know the right forms of address, to greet strangers politely, to avoid touching their father's mats or bed, to eat tidily and with restraint. The emphasis was on exclusiveness for these high-born Ngoni girls, lest, as a result of mixing too freely with everyone, they should forget the teaching given and the behaviour which was expected of them. In contrast to their brothers' rigorous training in the *laweni*, Ngoni girls, as they showed signs of approaching puberty, were guarded and looked after and instructed further in correct behaviour.

When a girl found that she was menstruating for the first time, she told one of her age mates and sent her to tell her *gogo*.[1] The *gogo* told her to stay in the hut during the period and showed her how to wear a cloth between her legs, which she had henceforth to wear always whether menstruating or not. She was told to sleep from now on in a different part of the hut from the smaller children and never to bathe with younger girls. At the end of her first period the girl was escorted to the women's bathing-place by her father's sisters and other female members of her father's family. She was made to wash in the stream and squat in the cold water while doing so. I saw more than one child trying to control her shivering while her relatives watched to see if she would be strong and brave, or weak and cowardly. When she was in the water she was made to face south-east—the quarter which the Ngoni called *kwathu* (our home). After this ceremony the girl's father and mother were informed, and her father informed the head of his *banja* and the head of the village. The news was greeted with rejoicing and made generally public.

From about the age of ten or eleven, the Ngoni girl belonged to an age set distinguished by a separate name. She was no longer included in the group of children, as were her brothers of the same age, but was marked out by belonging to the age set called *inkakazana* or *mabuthu*. After her first menstruation she belonged to the age set called *izintombi* or *anamwali*. From this stage, Ngoni girls were under the close supervision of the older women. The association of a *gogo* or older woman with each house in a Ngoni village meant that the girls of the house were under her special care, particularly after they had passed puberty. There

[1] *gogo* in this context is used for grandmother or for the elderly woman to whose care the girl was assigned.

girl's former nurse girl and had continued to take an interest 881
in the girl. This woman came to the hut, gave the girl a cloth to wear, told her to stay in the hut until the period was over, and instructed her companion to stay with her, bring her food, and look after her other needs. When the period was over, the companion told the senior helper who in the meantime had informed the girl's paternal grandmother, her father's sister (to whom a special message was sent to the village where she lived), and the girl's own mother. The information was always given in the phrase, 'This child has now matured.' The father's sister, who made a special visit for the [604]
purpose, came into the hut and told the girl to get up and follow her. A little procession formed, the father's sister leading, the girl immediately behind her, then the grandmother and other senior women of the father's house, the senior helper who had attended the girl, and finally the girl's mother. At the river the girl was made to take off her clothes
and sit in shallow water, facing south-east, the ritual position [823]
adopted in all Ngoni crises of life and death. On the bank the women stood in silence and watched the girl splashing herself with water and trying to control her shivering, until she was allowed to come out and given clean clothes to put on.

Back at the grandmother's hut, the women sat on the veranda, the girl in front of them, legs tucked in sideways, head bent in a respectful attitude. The father's sister led off with some matter-of-fact instructions to the girl. At subsequent periods she would not be in seclusion but she would take every care to conceal her condition from everyone. She must always wear a cloth between her legs, whether menstruating or not, and she must now consider herself separated from the children's and the immature girls' groups. She would sleep only with mature girls in a senior helper's hut, and must wash in the river only with them, and never anywhere near young children or immature girls. Later on, not on this 881
occasion, the senior helper who had assisted her and felt 864

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and the notched sticks were only an *aide-mémoire*, not a necessity. 211

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9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

portant chiefs. The Paramounts have told me that occasionally at 814
their biannual 'meeting of chiefs' and *indunas*, some recital of history is made, especially if they want to quote a precedent or examine an old custom with a view to change. This historical tradition therefore is alive and has a recognized function in regulating Ngoni life. In one area part of it has been written in the vernacular and is used as a school history book.[1] In the other areas the Paramounts have spoken of the need for something of the same kind, as they recognize that with the coming of modern education it is an effective way of training the young in the traditions of the Ngoni past.

In addition to recitals of tradition by 'historians' there are many other reminders of the Ngoni past which are constantly before the people. An adequate examination of Ngoni history as it is expressed in their institutions and standardized behaviour would need an article to itself. I shall only mention here some ways and occasions through which tradition and old Ngoni institutions are brought before the people.

1. The praise songs of chiefs, war songs, regimental songs, names of famous regiments, and prayers for rain. These contain references, [583]
often rather obscure, to events and persons in the past. The praise songs are sung, or rather shouted, on special occasions, as when thanking the chief for beer, by members of important clans who alone know the words. The war songs and regimental songs recall the great days of conquest, and are sung and danced in war dress at big gatherings at the Paramount's village or at other chief's villages. The prayers for rain invoke the names of great chiefs in old days, but are [782]
now only a memory as they are no longer used in ceremonies—at least in none that I have found so far.

2. The names of prominent landmarks, such as hills and rivers where great chiefs built their villages and fights took place. Herd [823]
boys will point out a river and say, 'That is where Mtwalo built when he came from Choma', or 'That hill is where Singu hid in the Azungu war'. The historical events attached to these places are widely known and constantly before people's eyes in the diversified landscape of hills and valleys.

3. Important village names. During the trek north, the names of [621]

[1] In Mwambera's country.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 the
727 salutation being '*Amehlo amhlope*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Buyani*', 'Return',
[576] along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebo*' also with the clan name. This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Echigodhlweni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amakanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[824] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Po*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[834] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Po*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of heroes

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
703 then they were called again together to dance the *ligubo*. On that day bulls
[212] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the hero of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the heroes of the sections
[237] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

726 The *intelezi* was made from the roots of a creeper and a bush which grew on the banks of rivers. These roots were burned over the fire, 789 pounded and mixed with water. The warriors were given some to lick [824] on the tips of their fingers, some was smeared inside their shields, and the rest was beaten in a gourd till it foamed. The 'war doctor' took the tail of a gnu or of a zebra and dipped it in the foam and sprinkled the warriors as they finally passed out of the gateway of the kraal on the campaign. This medicine was for strengthening them and also for making them 'slippery', so that the enemy spears would glide by them and not pierce them, and they could slip between the posts of the enemy stockade. After being sprinkled with the *intelezi* no one could sleep with [834] his wife or any other woman, as he would risk spoiling the effect of the medicine and therefore would be more liable to be killed.

[411] The *inhlenza* was a spear with a barbed hook. The Paramount threw it in front of the army as they stood in the kraal until all the warriors had left. It was then put back in the *indlunkulu* where it was kept in the care of the owner of that hut.

There were thus three functions to be performed, each by one of the war medicines. The *intelezi* was to strengthen and protect individual warriors. The *intonga* was the symbol of their Paramount and their kingdom leading them to war and weakening the enemy. The *inhlenza* was the symbol of invincibility, administered by the Paramount.

726 There were two stages of assembling in the Paramount's village before a campaign. The first followed the initial summons to mobilize, when the local companies (*mabandla*) marched into the kraal, sorted themselves into age regiments (*mabuto*) and sang their regimental songs. Then followed the *ligubo*, the war-dance, when the warriors wore their full war-dress, and the women joined in. There was no individual *dancing but a working up of corporate feeling through the dancing and* songs. The Ngoni used no drums in their music, relying on achieving [533] rhythm and unison by the stamping of their feet and their singing. After this dance the warriors left for their villages, while at the Paramount's village preparation was made for food and snuff for the campaign. Hard [705 251] cakes of roasted bullrush millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts pounded together, and dried meat, were the main supplies carried. At the second summons the warriors returned in their companies with their carriers. These carriers, who were usually young boys, carried the war-dresses and ornaments wrapped in a mat, and the food supplies.

Since on this final meeting depended much of the ultimate success of the campaign, only the warriors and the senior men were present, and all women and young children were excluded from the kraal. After the objectives of the fighting had been explained the warriors were addressed by the old men and exhorted to be brave and to help their comrades, and then the final medication by the 'war doctor' took place. The separation of the army from the civil population was complete until their return

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 789 766 to its use at the *incwala* ceremony and dance was a reminder of the former belief in the close connexion between the health and strength of the Paramount and the fertility of the land and its crops, a belief which had its counterpart in the cremation of the Paramount and the sweeping of the ashes into the river to fertilize the land.

241 796 The *incwala*, or ceremony of the first-fruits, was of great importance among the Swazi, and the Ngoni 'took it with them' when they left the south. Among the northern and central Ngoni the tradition of the ceremony remained, but the practice was given up before the kingdoms were finally established. Cibambo collected from the old men in the northern kingdom the following account of what took place at the *incwala:*

¶ Among the dances of the Ngoni, *ngoma*, *unsindo*, *ligubo*, *incwala* was the best and most important. They say it lasted about two weeks, or if it began when the moon was full until it became new again. When they said [643 424] '*incwala* is closed', no one sings or dances it again; when it begins everyone sings the songs of *incwala* and no others. This dance belonged to the [178] Paramount of the whole country. A description of *incwala* is difficult because it was given up long ago. Even the old people of today have never seen it.

It began in the middle of the month of *Intowoni* (January). Young men were sent to look for ripe food in the gardens by streams. The owners had not picked any nor was much of the crop nearly ready. They took some juicy stalks of maize, and pumpkins with their roots. They also looked for [824 324] a wild fruit like a gourd, very bitter, which some people use to stir up their dogs to make them fierce in hunting and quick in scent. This fruit the Ngoni call *igumuzo*. These they mix with medicines and the *inkosi* eats it without the people knowing. The belief was that if the Paramount ate the first-fruits carelessly, or if the people were the first to taste the first-fruits of the year, there would be disaster for the *inkosi* and the country. After a month, when the crops were ripening, the *incwala* began, the crops not being completely ripe and no one having yet tasted the new crops.

In the month of February the *inkosi* announced that everywhere the *incwala ye'nkosi* should begin on such-and-such a day. Quickly much beer was cooked in all the villages by everyone. On the day the beer-making began, the dance began also. The word was sent round everywhere: *incwala seiguabulive*, '*incwala* is now opened'. All the people went to the central village of Elangeni, the village of Hlacwayo. They took crops which had been planted in December, *impala*, and added the first *igumuzo* fruit to them. Great crowds of people gathered at Elangeni and danced. Many were in the kraal but many more were dancing outside. All were dressed carefully. They danced with reeds in their hands or with the sticks of their shields. It seemed as though the song everywhere was the same. Women going for wood and water, and children and youths, wherever they went, the song was on their lips. In dancing the women [635] were by themselves, and the men by themselves. They faced each other in the dance. They were bending their bodies backwards and forwards, and moving their necks and shoulders.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Some of these
surroundings were described in Chapter I, but in spite of some 342
repetition I have given a fuller description here to set the stage 351
for the earlier years of a young Ngoni child. In several re- [128]
spects a casual observer, looking at the external appearance
of the hut and the objects round it, might fail to distinguish
between them and almost any Nyasaland village. Many of [171]
the household objects were indeed the same as those used by
other Nyasaland peoples. But there was more elaboration
about Ngoni huts and compounds; they were as a rule kept
in an orderly and clean condition; and there was cultural
significance about some of the features of Ngoni households
mentioned here and in Chapter I which was not found else-
where.

To the small child taken to his grandmother's hut at
weaning, the space within the fence of her compound was
full of interest. There was the hut itself which might be the 342
'great hut' of the village or one of those known as the 'right
hand' and 'left hand' huts. It was generally circular, with
interior walls some seven to eight feet high, with a conical
roof of tightly packed grass neatly trimmed at the edges and [824]
decorated with cows' horns from the peak downwards in [237]
four lines. Inside the hut framing the doorway were the two
main door-posts, solid and polished with much handling.
Four posts in the middle of the floor went up to the rafters
and supported cross-bars and a light platform on which [251]
gourds, herbs and green vegetables were dried. Under this
platform, in the centre of the hut, was the hollow place for
the fire and the three rounded hearthstones on which pots [354]
were balanced when cooking took place there. Against the
back wall of the hut was a slightly raised platform in which
were several small hollows for the round bottomed pots hold- [415]
ing water, or grain or beans. Surrounding the entire hut
was a raised veranda some four to five feet wide, shaded by
the projecting roof, and generally fenced in all round the
back, thus making extra storage space. All round the front 351
of the hut was a well-swept space, mudded and polished in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

805

8	*Ukholo omnsinyane*	Hawks fly and hover
9	*Ukholo omkhulu*	Hawks catch chickens
10	*Isiganyane esincinyane*	Trees begin to flower
11	*Isiganyane esikhulu*	Trees fruiting
12	*Inhlachana*	Trees fruiting
13	*Umgano*	Trees fruiting

The months were more generally grouped in two main [132] seasons: the rains, whose name meant that the earth was 'clothed and decorated with new grass, leaves and flowers'; and the dry season, the time for moving village sites, felling trees and clearing bush for new gardens, castrating oxen. It was the true Ngoni families who knew the names for the months and the relation of months to the seasons. Among these families in every Ngoni village there were men who watched the sun's movements, and noted the hill or tall trees behind which the sun set when it reached its most southerly point. This was for them one of the signals that the rains were near. If the rains did not begin when the sun reached this point, they announced that this year the rains were delayed and the crops would probably suffer. When the *inkaku* bird [825] began to sing, the first man who heard it went to tell his neighbours to repair their hoe handles and begin to clear the fields, for the rains and the planting season was at hand. [824] When a large flat mushroom appeared in the woodland, it too was the herald of rain.

Not only were these months and the seasons they indicated 805 the means of regulating work. They were also the way by 211 which the Ngoni reckoned time. They had rods for each month and notches for the days. They took these with them on campaigns, and when returning they produced the rods, and pointing to the notches they said: 'On the sixth day of the seventh month we began fighting against X's village,' or 'We reached that river on the first day of the fifth month.' 211 Ngoni elders were however quick to point out that they were all trained from childhood up to have excellent memories,

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

reason they put on this medicine is that they fear the sun lest it strike through the skull. They also take a purgative medicine called *chiruru*, and pour a decoction in a gourd used for cooking the infant's gruel. The gruel is left off once the child gets strong. 854 278 751

III. Now they prepare to steam the infant. They get the roots of the *Nyalinse* tree and the leaves of the *Chipunganyunyu*, and put them in a pot of water, and get four large white pebbles, and put them in the fire, and when they are red hot, lift them out between two pieces of stick, and drop them into the pot, and the steam envelops the infant. They do this because they fear a disease called *Tsempo* and *Mauka*. This done, the floor of the hut is replastered [with dung], and they set fire to everything that was left in the hut—baskets, potsherds, and spoons. The fire in the hollow in the centre of the floor, they rake up on the floor level, and remove the ashes only, but when they come to fasten the mkuzi belt round the infant's waist, the fire is completely extinguished, and rekindled from that of some other hut. Then the husband comes and stands upright near the doorway, and little cuts are made on his leg. They begin with his big toe, and cut four little slashes, and four on his shin, and four on his knee, both sides, and do the same on the other leg, and on his chest are cut two little gashes, and on his back two. Into these cuts is rubbed some medicine for a disease called *Chinyalo*. When they do this they fear, should the man step over the spot on the verandah where the umbilical cord and afterbirth are buried, he might take this disease of the legs (Chinyalo). If the man have another wife it is she who twists the belt made from the bark of the *Mpoza* tree and places it underneath the mat where she and her husband sleep. Next morning

846 854 [824] [751] 846 [753] [824]

/5 cont'd/

Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman, although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here. Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the weather. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

/7 cont'd/

IV

353 Inside the house most of the household possessions are kept on the floor. At the back of the hut are the pots of the household, 415 large ten-gallon beer brewing pots, smaller pots for holding the beer when brewed, bowls for drinking beer, wide mouthed pots for washing, small deep pots for cooking porridge and relish, waterpots, ornamented gourds for strong beer, and simple gourd cups for water. With them are also enamel saucepans, basins, mugs, and dishes, and sometimes a kettle. Only the very prosperous have glassware or [511] china crockery.

323 Pottery is made by women only, and it is not a skill that every [462] woman possesses. In a village there are usually one or two women who make pots, while a few women have a reputation for good pottery that attracts customers to them from a wider neighbourhood. [88] Pots are usually sold for money, salt, or in return for bringing twice [415] the amount of clay needed to make the article required. Petrol and paraffin tins as well as enamel and tinware are also used.

For pot making, clay is chosen from an anthill or marsh, and soaked for three days before being kneaded. The pot is made from a coil, and after smoothing it is ornamented. It is burnt for one day, and may be given a dull black colour by being rubbed with the leaves [524] of the mbwabwa tree.

385 Hung on the walls of the hut or lying on the floor are the different baskets owned by the household. Baskets are made by men, [353] and during the dry season when there is much road repair work to be [464] done it is common to see three or four men spending their evenings [491] after work on the road in making baskets. These baskets are often [343] made to order, but the occasional hawker is seen. Large cuboid baskets are used for transporting mealies and grain, shallow baskets of two feet in diameter are used for winnowing flour, and small hemispherical baskets take the place of plates for /8/ porridge. These latter are frequently made in pairs, tied together with a string of beads, so that the second basket acts as a lid for the first and keeps

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
[301] beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
[304] cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkholosa grass. These marks
[302] are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period
of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both
men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
[531] is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent
mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nsenga
[619] tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks.
When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature
shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held
aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and
skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimen-
tal dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen
worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a
single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the
stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

534 Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys
of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out
of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie
stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in
diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long,
terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction,
made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed
along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes,
with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes
scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys con-
sists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

4: Stanner D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Women wear their cloth folded across the upper level of the breasts from right to left. Men and women often have two cloths, one over the loins, only the second fastening over the chest. 291

A menstruating woman also wears a small piece of calico corresponding to a diaper supported by string round the waist.[1] The same thing is worn after childbirth for six months. Angoni women always wear them.

The Angoni, Chipeta wear their cloth toga-fashion, carrying a fold of cloth on the left arm. An Angoni chief wears three such, blue, white and coloured, the first outside, the last next to the skin.

The material used is now practically everywhere European-made calico, formerly bark cloth only was used by Nyanja, though weaving had been accomplished by Angoni, where skins were and are used as articles of clothing.

There is nothing to distinguish men of various grades, etc. Fashion at the present time is very capricious—some patterned cloth being much worn one month will have no sale a month later; this is true both of men and of women.

There is no these uniform, and no "costumes" are worn save in dancing (q.v.).

Men are now seen wearing a piece of calico twisted up on the head in turban form, a custom lately introduced from the coast—the only indigenous head-gear is the string skull-cap worn by Angoni widows.

Under the heading of dress must be included the lead aprons worn by Yao and Angoni. Among the former the use of this garment is restricted to the women, who in the home sometimes wear nothing else; among the Angoni the children often have them and no other clothing.

Sandals are sometimes made of skin and fastened on the feet with a thong when crossing thorny country.

Among Angoni the *wonde* only used to be worn; this is a small hard-cased fruit which was hollowed out and worn just covering the glans penis.

Food, etc.

The staple food throughout the country is either maize or rice, the latter only at various spots on the lake shore where it can be grown. Two final meals per diem are taken, at 9 or 10 a.m. and again at 6 p.m.; each consists of *ufumu* porridge made from maize flour or rice flour or boiled rice with some *ndiwo* (relish) to which the salt is added. At odd times the native will eat anything that opportunity offers—a piece of cassava root, a boiled sweet potato, a roasted maize cob, etc.

The *ufumu* is made by stirring flour (*ufa*) into boiling water till a stiff paste is formed; this is kept cooking for five minutes and then scraped out with a wooden

[1] Diaper or nappy: a woman keeps five or six; they are never put away in baskets but always hung up; a woman changes every time she bathes, using two or three per diem; they may be given to a female child to wear, but are then not worn again by a woman.

643 so briefly referred to was in the nature of a warning that the kingdom must be held together and certain Ngoni customs and institutions preserved. This general mandate to a new Paramount was in keeping with the Ngoni policy of maintaining order and justice within the kingdom, while showing all the aggressive qualities of warfare against external enemies.

173 In the story of their northward trek, the division of authority among
643 the central Ngoni between the Maseko and the Phungwako clans was referred to as the Maseko taking the '*Bayete*' and the Phungwako taking
[719] the *tonga*.[1] In central Ngoniland the *tonga* was a collective name given to royal medicines used at different times for different purposes and was not reserved for the medicine used in the army as in the northern kingdom. It was said to have been 'from the beginning in the south'; 'it is very old, ever since people were born'. The following description was given by a member of the Phungwako clan in the head village of Chief Kacere:

643 ¶ The Ngoni had protection for all their people of the most powerful
789 kind. This was the *tonga*. This was specially to protect the Paramount at his accession. When the Ngoni were thus accustomed to being protected by the *tonga*, there was one thing which gave them protection above all others. If the Paramount died, in arranging matters, the *tonga* was essential in establishing the new Paramount. And if war had to be made, the *tonga* also gave protection so that they had strength to overcome their enemies.

[741] Also when the Ngoni were travelling in wild places and did not find somewhere to stay, they began to listen to the *tonga*. The diviner, who went ahead with the *tonga*, looked to see if there were bad omens. When they found a place to stay and stayed there with their cattle, they were protected by the *tonga*, so that they were not afraid of anything. They just conquered the country and took the cattle and made the people surrender.

[725] When getting ready the *tonga*, they could only do it with a sheep. They killed it, and took its blood and its fat and smeared the *tonga*. And the big people who were set aside for the work of the *tonga*, it was they who were doing these things. The meat of the sheep which was killed for the *tonga*, they did not eat it just anyhow, no. They were eating it in a special way, not in the house, no; nor with the women, no; but in a very different way from the meat of every day. They ate it without being greedy when it was divided, and they took care not to put some aside, for they feared lest someone should eat the *tonga*. They just ate to finish it quickly, and when they had finished they did not sleep in their houses with their wives, but they went apart and slept in the place where this was done for the *tonga*. Their sleeping was different from other days, for they did not sleep on good mats, no. When they had eaten meat for the *tonga* they changed their ways, to act differently from usual. Instead of

[1] The head of the Phungwako clan, Chief Kacere, ruled one of the Ngoni states in the Dedza district which, in the 1930's, was separate from the central Ngoni kingdom.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 turn were invited to eat with the Paramount or summoned to special
651 feasts. On the other hand there were people who seemed to have noth-
431 ing, and who came in the hope of getting invited to eat food if they just
sat in the kraal and looked hungry. Cibambo called them 'the notable
527 people' and 'the poor people'. This contrast in behaviour ran right
571 through Ngoni society and reflected the social standing of individuals
who behaved in such different ways. There was a good deal of cadging
for gifts and of gate-crashing at feasts on the part of people who had no
intention, or no possibility, of making any adequate return. An Ngoni
proverb illustrated the public attitude to reciprocal giving as distinct
from begging: 'To say: Give, give, is to snatch. The child of a free man
only gives.'

571 The bringing of tribute to the Paramount was only one aspect of the
643 reciprocal relationships which ran right through Ngoni society, namely
651 the bringing of gifts by a man in an inferior social position to his
431 superior, with the expectation of receiving food or favour and of stand-
ing well with this superior. It was recognized that tribute was of two
kinds, one of which was voluntary. If a *nduna*-*nsuna* or other notable
wanted to please the Paramount he brought him presents—grain, flour,
meat, beer. It was always emphasized that this was a free gift, with the
added proviso that the giver wished to keep on good terms with the
Paramount. Ngoni informants declared that the only compulsory form
of tribute in pre-European days was that whenever a lion or a leopard
was killed it had to be brought to the royal village through a succession
of intermediaries, as described below.

These two principles of free giving and compulsory giving, and the
attitudes engendered, are compared with the feeling about compulsory
taxes under European rule in this text by Cibambo.

◐ Although people hate giving taxes to strangers in this land, yet tribute
(*imitulo*) was given to their *inkosi* and to other chiefs. Such tribute was
given in an indirect way, that is the *inkosi* did not mark out those who
gave and who did not give tribute. The Ngoni did not wish that every
male should give tribute as is done by Europeans today. They were just
pleased if the village headman or *nduna*-*nsuna* had given something even
though other people in his village did not give anything. Even the
abanumzane themselves gave something at the time they thought it was
convenient to themselves to give. There was no fixed time of the month or
year. Much that was given as tribute was beer, meat, ivory, bows and
cloth, also cattle, sheep and goats after raids, and other loot from war.

[528] Power to 'eat' (*ukudla*) lion- and leopard-skins was given to certain
people of the Swazi clans, but all the rest were obliged to bring them in.
The lion- or leopard-skin had to be given first to the village headman. He
went with it to the chief or *nduna*-*nsuna*. This one brought it to the *inkosi*
along with his *amadula* or *amajuba* of all his villages, the older men and
[554] younger men. This was like going as warriors and they went with dancing
(*ligubo*). The one who first stabbed the animal was pointed out, and the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

565 769 771 exclusively related to the aristocratic tradition, and no account will be given or analysis made of ancestor cults practised by those groups in the two Ngoni kingdoms who were not of the leading clans. In the ancestor cult, as it will be described here, the emphasis was always on known and named spirits of the dead, associated with the village where the ritual was performed. In the approach to these known and named spirits—an approach which I have called a cult—there were three essential components: the diviner, the ritual address and the cattle. The diviner's role we shall discuss in Chapter III and the ritual forms of addressing the ancestors in Chapter IV. The Ngoni believed they could not approach their ancestral spirits except through their cattle, which had first to [829] show that the spirits agreed to prayers being made, and the sign was that the beast urinated. The sacrifice of a beast was an integral part of the rite, which was concluded by the suppliants eating the meat together. At no point in their common life did the Ngoni more clearly demonstrate their dependence on their cattle than in the ritual of addressing their ancestral spirits. For this reason, in Chapter II we shall review the place of cattle in Ngoni life and relate it to their role in the ancestor cult.

Ancestral spirits of the Ngoni Paramounts.

643 769 776 The reigning Paramount and his predecessors in that office held an unchallenged supremacy in the hierarchy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The Ngoni believed that the line of dead Paramounts similarly led the hierarchy of the ancestral spirits, and that the dead Paramounts had power to help the Ngoni nation in time of need. It was taken for granted that when Paramounts died they would continue to be powerful and held in great respect, and that their position in the spirit world would enable them to influence UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit. This Great Spirit was believed to be the creator of all things and the ultimate source of power, particularly of sending rain, success in war, and deliverance from pestilence; and he was in general regarded as the giver of health and strength to mankind. The Ngoni held that those ancestors who were nearest to the living in time, whose names they knew, possessed less power than the remote ancestors whose names had been forgotten. On the same principle UMkulumqango, the Great Spirit, the originator of all creation, possessed more power than any other being, but, since he was so far removed in time from the living, no one could know his praise-names or his genealogy, and therefore he could not be addressed directly. In the same way the remotest ancestors of the Paramount could not be addressed directly because their praise-names were unknown to living men. Only those direct ancestors of the Paramount, whose names and genealogy and praise-names were known, could be addressed correctly and they could be counted on to use their influence with remoter and more powerful ancestral spirits and with the Great Spirit himself.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

825

Cattle in the ancestor cult

The Ngoni, unlike the Swazi as described by Dr. Kuper,[1] had no clear ideas about the life after death as lived by their immediate ancestors with whom they had associated in their lifetime. They did not, as the Swazi did, picture them living somewhere surrounded with cattle and other familiar creatures and objects. The importance of bringing the spirit back (*ukubuyisa idlozi*) to the house where it would be cared for signified two main things for them. The first was the continuous association of the spirit of the dead with the living persons in the community to which he had belonged, through the individuals belonging to the house, the actual hut where the sacrificial vessels were kept, and the cattle which belonged to the house. The other significant point was that contact with the returned spirit, and through him with the spirits of more remote ancestors, could only be established in the village containing the cattle of the house to which the dead man had belonged.

769 775 [171]

We shall be examining some aspects of the ritual of addressing the ancestral spirits in a later chapter of this section. Here we shall establish three constituent parts of the ancestor cult in which cattle were essential links between those taking part in the cult and the spirits whom they addressed.

764

The first part was the group of ceremonies which took place at death, at the burial, at the first ritual shaving and at bringing back the spirit. A text by Lopati Nzunga (see Chapter IV, p. 200) illustrates how three parts of a beast—the skin, the kidney fat (*nseso*) and the gall bladder (*nyongo*)—were considered essential for Ngoni burial. It was interesting to find in Blantyre among educated Ngoni who were Christians and occupied clerical and commercial posts, that they had given up the cow-skin for wrapping the corpse and substituted a coffin. But they admitted confidentially that in most Ngoni funerals the use of the *nseso* and the *nyongo* was customary. After the burial the ritual shaving, shared in by all who attended the funeral, was accompanied by the killing of a beast and the consumption of its meat, though with no ritual significance beyond its association with the purification of the mourners and their integration as a group. From six to twelve months later the second shaving and the bringing back of the spirit was also accompanied by killing a beast and eating its meat. These ceremonies expressed the sense of loss felt for the human person who had died, the sorrow of the mourners, their successive acts of purification which served to bring them together, and the final bringing of the spirit to live among them again. As we have seen, each stage of the death and mourning rites was accompanied by the eating of a beast or the use of certain parts of a beast. The cattle of the house to which the dead person belonged were used to bury him or her, to strengthen the mourners, and to reintegrate the spirit with the living community.

769 825 [177]

765 769 825 [783]

[1] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*, p. 180.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

769 In another part of the cult cattle played a still more direct part. When
● 825 a diviner advised that prayer should be made to the spirit of a leading
787 man on behalf of someone of his clan who was sick, the man who was in charge of the *gogo* section of the village informed the head of the clan or *banja* and they agreed to address the spirits, and to offer a sacrifice if the spirits were willing. The sign of willingness on the part of the spirits was for the selected beast, when it had been driven out of the kraal, to urinate or make dung. If either happened they said the spirit was willing, and arranged a time for the prayer and sacrifice. If neither happened, if the beast just stood still or lay down, the spirits had 'refused' and the sacrifice could not go forward. This sign or lack of sign by the beast could not be ignored, and was a further illustration that the Ngoni considered cattle to be essential as a medium of approach to the spirits of their ancestors.

When the beast 'refused', those responsible called the diviner again and asked for an explanation. He produced a reason and advised them to try again, and the process was repeated until the sign of agreement was given. There was always anxiety when the beast 'refused', partly because of the delay in sacrificing and partly owing to an uneasy feeling that they had left something undone and the ancestral spirit was not pleased with them.

The main part of the ritual of sacrifice to an ancestral spirit was killing the beast, offering the meat to the spirits and the eating of the meat by the principal persons concerned. This we shall examine more closely in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER III

THE ROLE OF THE DIVINER IN THE ANCESTOR CULT

791 It has been apparent in the chapters on the Paramount and on warfare
769 in Part II, and in the two previous chapters of Part IV, that divining by an accredited person was a necessary preliminary for sacrificing to and addressing the ancestors.[1] I never heard or received any account of the ancestor cult in which divining was not specifically mentioned as the first step in the performance of the ritual. Moreover, all the diviners of good standing were themselves operating because they had contact with and were possessed by the spirit of an ancestor. By virtue of this direct contact with the spirit world the diviners claimed their special powers.

[1] The one possible exception was the first-fruits ceremony, but this had been given up before the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland, and the old men had no clear memories of the ritual followed.

431 769 782 561 in three age groups on the verandah also came forward and, led by NaNkoloma, a widow of Njolomole I, thanked in the women's language, '*Zimota, zaithwa mntwana wenhoi.*'

769 782 I did not witness any ritual sacrifices in the northern kingdom but the accounts given me by informants corresponded closely with the ritual in Mcakhatha just described. When sacrificing for rain to the spirits of the Paramount, a black ox with no white spot was driven into [425] the kraal in the late afternoon and the chosen spokesman addressed the ancestral spirits of the Jere clan telling them that this was their beast, they must eat the meat and tell UMkulumqango that the people needed rain. While this man prayed to the spirits he stood facing the beast, and everyone else sat looking in front of them and keeping very quiet. The women stayed at home in their huts and the Paramount stayed in his hut 'as if mourning'. When the beast urinated and showed that the spirits had heard, a messenger came and informed the Paramount. The beast was killed early the next morning in the kraal. While the flaying took place, all the huts of the chief wives were smeared with dried cow-dung on the floors and on the smooth place outside the doors. The meat, in two parts, was taken into the *indlunkulu* and left there all night at the back, so that the spirits might lick it. The next morning the meat was cooked in the kraal by the *madoda* and when it was ready they reported to the big *induna*. He called all the people into the kraal and divided them into companies according to their sections and head villages. The meat was given to the head of each head village who divided it among his group. When everyone had finished, one of the leading men stood up and began to praise the spirit using his titles and praise-names (*izitshwa*). The rest stood up and shouted *Bayete*. They then began to dance a war-dance but, the informants added, that was soon stopped by torrents of rain.

114 118 These chapters on the Ngoni ancestor cult bring to an end this study of the two Ngoni kingdoms in Nyasaland in the 1930's. We have seen how their distinctiveness as a people depended on the culture which they brought with them from the south and how this culture was found among the families of the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. In the topics included in the three sections of this book: the political system, the social organization, and the ancestor cult, the main features of Ngoni culture are most clearly seen. In much of their economic and agricultural life there was little to distinguish them from their neighbours among the other Nyasaland peoples. The changes brought about by the missions, the schools, new forms of local government, and new types of occupation, were all tending to make the Ngoni less distinctive as a people. The conversion of some leading Ngoni to Christianity, as suggested in Chapter V of Part II, and the spread of schools were together the most powerful influences in altering Ngoni traditional culture. The

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

805	8 *Ukhole emsinyane*	Hawks fly and hover
	9 *Ukhole emkhulu*	Hawks catch chickens
	10 *Izigazyane ezincinyane*	Trees begin to flower
	11 *Izigazyane ezikhulu*	Trees fruiting
	12 *Inklachana*	Trees fruiting
	13 *Umgazo*	Trees fruiting

[132] The months were more generally grouped in two main seasons: the rains, whose name meant that the earth was 'clothed and decorated with new grass, leaves and flowers'; and the dry season, the time for moving village sites, felling trees and clearing bush for new gardens, castrating oxen. It was the true Ngoni families who knew the names for the months and the relation of months to the seasons. Among these families in every Ngoni village there were men who watched the sun's movements, and noted the hill or tall trees behind which the sun set when it reached its most southerly point. This was for them one of the signals that the rains were near. If the rains did not begin when the sun reached this point, they announced that this year the rains were delayed and the crops would probably suffer. When the *iskaka* bird [825] began to sing, the first man who heard it went to tell his neighbours to repair their hoe handles and begin to clear the fields, for the rains and the planting season was at hand. [824] When a large flat mushroom appeared in the woodland, it too was the herald of rain.

805 Not only were these months and the seasons they indicated the means of regulating work. They were also the way by 211 which the Ngoni reckoned time. They had rods for each month and notches for the days. They took these with them on campaigns, and when returning they produced the rods, and pointing to the notches they said: 'On the sixth day of the seventh month we began fighting against X's village,' or 'We reached that river on the first day of the fifth month.' 211 Ngoni elders were however quick to point out that they were all trained from childhood up to have excellent memories,

3: Read E-! (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 561 severed portions. On branches of fresh leaves, brought by the younger herd-boys, were piled the sections of the animal, down to the lat bit of intestine, for distribution according to a fixed Ngoni pattern.

231 825 A senior man of the house owning the beast, when all was ready, 'counted' all the parts, that is he named each part, head, horns, tail, feet, joints and internal organs, and each was pointed out to him as being present. The herd-boys standing round leaned the names of the organs and the sections of the animal, and heard the names and status of the men to whom the pars were assigned. The herd-boys of the family of the owner were given certain symbolic parts: an ear, an eye and the nose, for hearing, seeing and smelling; parts of an artery and of an intestine as controlling the blood flow and the waste matrial, and the rectum as ejecting waste; and the foot for waking steadily and fast.

[868]

252 [251] Some of the meat was roasted over a fire, parts like the stomach and intestines were cleaned and boiled, some was dried slowly on a rack over a fire of green wood, and put in fibre bags for keeping. The blood was taken to the head woman of the house owning the herd. She cooked it with the fat round the kidneys till it coagulated and formed a dish, salty and meaty, much liked by the Ngoni, and rather akin to black pudding. The women also took over any spare fat and rendered it down and clarified it to use as unguents.

[278]

233 868 The young adult who had had six or seven years of herding cattle and had advanced to be a senior herd-boy, had acquired not only certain manual skills such as those just described, but also some knowledge of the anatomy of cattle, some idea of the social attitudes towards cattle and their ownership, and some idea of their economic value to the Ngoni. For certain restricted ritual purposes, a cow in calf had to be killed for sacrifice, and herd-boys saw the foetus removed when the cow was cut up. They were also often present at the birth of calves in the bush, and had to wait

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [248] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 177 233 234

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

generally assumed that everything was 'dirty' which was not hygienically clean. The Ngoni resented this, all the more because of their cultural insistence on decency and order, and on certain forms of external cleanliness. 181 356 515 182

Their huts, furniture and mats were often infested with ticks and bugs—neither of which the Ngoni liked, regarding them as rather disgusting. The old remedy was to leave the tick-infested site and burn the objects full of bugs. As villages became more stationary and property accumulated in the huts, and became more valuable and expensive, they built strangers' huts for visitors who might otherwise infect their own. Bugs were dealt with by bringing all bedding, mats and bedsteads out into the sun and pouring boiling water on them again and again. 825 356 [485]

Similarly it was an aesthetic disgust rather than hygiene which made them insist that there should be no spitting or nose-blowing on the floors of huts or verandas. Such actions had to take place outside, and vehement comments were made when a visitor forgot his manners in this way. An ingenious tiny iron spoon with a long handle was used by the older Ngoni for cleaning the ears and nose. 515 356 [413]

Perhaps nothing showed the Ngoni pleasure in and desire for cleanliness so clearly as the quick and apt excuses made when standards were obviously in temporary abeyance. There was no doubt that young men and girls liked looking clean and well-groomed. The daily wash in the river with soapy leaves, followed by rubbing on fat or oil made the skin glisten. We have talked already about the use of twigs as tooth-brushes, the rinsing of the mouth before and after meals, and the use of astringent fruit to make the mouth feel clean. 515 [576]

The same scrupulous attitude about cleanliness was seen in the washing of dishes, spoons and cooking-pots after each meal. It was almost as if the standard of housewifery was proclaimed by the sight of food baskets, gourds, spoons, etc., spread on the platform outside the hut to dry. Washing up 264

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the pounder of the ordeal poison opens his monkey-skin wallet, pulls out the poison bark, and breaks it off into the mortar with a hippo's tooth. When he is chipping it off, he does not finish all the bark he has in his hand, he chips off a little and leaves the rest. When he is doing this the bark jumps, and falls on the left, and again on the right. They surely know that here to-day wonders will befall and that men will die and women. Then the medicine man says, "Give us men to go and draw water." Then the old man asks, "How many men shall we bring?" And perhaps he says, "Bring three, because the people are many," and the doctor tells them, "You must not glance behind, but just draw the water and return." (Lest they give warning to the flesh-eaters.) When he has finished cutting down the bark, he bids his attendant "begin to pound." They do not pound the poison bark as they would grain, they pound, thud! thud! and turn the pestle in the hands. While the attendant is pounding, the pounder of the bark keeps tapping, rat, tat, tat, on the mortar, with his monkey stick [which monkeys use for digging roots], and chants—

IV. "You have heard mother of children,
Mother of children of *Kundamwa*.
Indiscriminate slaughter is the game war plays,
It slew the baboon at *Bongwe*,
When you slay let your victims fall backward and not forward.
Bag, make the poison hear my words.
You are come into the village, you are their advocate.
They say, that here so and so and so and so have died.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

VIII. Then the witch finder says, "That beer I had great trouble in buying, you must not waste it, no, you there, we only told you to sip it, do not you see it is a small pot." Then he knocks down the mortar with his foot, and beats together two pieces of metal. When he sees that one human flesh-eater is dead, he says he has caused the mortar to fall. Some, when dying, cry out [like a hyæna]. "Uwi, uwi"; and people know he used to transform himself into that animal; should he roar like a lion, they know he was at times that mighty beast. Others again, when dying, clench their hands. Should they clench one hand, it is known they have eaten five people; if they clench both, men know their victims have been ten. When all have vomited, he causes the survivors to jump over the path. When he sees a man has jumped, he knows that one is an ordinary person and not an eater of human flesh, and the reason the doctor knows this is because he has washed the poison with a medicine made from the "*siswiri*" mouse [and it cannot cross a path and live]. Then the medicine man says, "Let them return to the village now, where a tree has fallen you cannot hide the fall thereof." Any one who has withstood all these tests, on seeing the grass tuft on his hut, dies. When the doctor hears a man has died, he goes to the place to strip him of his cloth and cut off the belt of beads from his waist. Of them who die at the drinking-place and who are free born, their friends make some payment to the doctor, saying, father has died from the poison. Anything the dead man be a slave they burn the body. They who remained behind at the village will drink on the morrow. The pounder of the poison, on returning to his home, is given a goat, perhaps a slave whose "Let me go and bury them." Should the dead

6:Ratusy E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FI5

turns it out. They also trap them with a falling stone trap, and a spring trap, and others they dig for and smoke out. Mice dig out a hole, and a little farther on make a little chamber, where their nest is; farther on still is their escape exit, with just a thin layer of earth between them and the surface, so that when any one starts digging they can just burst out there. Other mice make a nest in the grass. The *Siswiri* mouse people do not eat; it cannot jump a path; if it tries to, it dies. 224 [825] [869]

XII

THE WITCH-FINDER

I. When a person has died, the chief mourner goes off to seek the witch-finder. When he finds him he says, "At my home something awful has happened, and I am saying that perhaps you can follow up the thing that has killed the person." The witch-finder comes very late in the evening. When he comes, the chief mourner gives him children to lead him to the grave. When they come to the grave there, he asks them, saying, "Which way did they come with the body?" And they say they came there. And he puts medicine where they came, and asks again, saying, "Well, and his head, which direction did they lay it?" And they tell him, "His head was in this direction." He again with medicine guards the place. Then the witch-finder makes fire, and kindles it into flame, and pours medicine on it; and he does so lest people see the fire. And then they see the human flesh-eaters 791 529

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made 769
in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity. [87]
When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up [825]
their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the [753]
spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then
they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also
certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before 787
the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if [241]
an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, [726]
then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas [243]
was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when [177]
Mpezembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to
the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then
added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about
teaching the people the words of God." There was something
very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller
shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them 538
are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others
with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near
Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the
Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away 539
the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I
passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed
my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They
laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over
there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they
told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow,
so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there.
So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees
and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had
got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more.
Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked
up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught
hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to
heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots
broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the 787
tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty [177]
years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor
in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day
[302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one
[291] fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony,
[516] her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

Many references have been made already to the relation-
577 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife,
602 especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognised by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

Competence in household management, being a success-
577 ful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if
592 she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house

[P.20]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [206] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [828] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance [162] of women over men caused by labour migration.

128 Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically 121 from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 257 and 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs concerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 [621] residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles AWAY FROM THE OTHER TWO.

[1] *Ciziba*, pl. *siziba*, or *ciwe* [illegible] *ewityakatyala*. Cf. *Nwanga ziba*, pl. *maziba*, idiot.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 thanking, and then all thundered the thanking together. This included all
644 the rest who were in the neighbourhood though they did not take part in
the food or the present. The leader would first thank '*E-Jere*' and then all
431 would follow together, '*E-Jere*', or the clan name of the one who was the
giver. The Paramount, if he gave presents to the people, was not thanked
by his clan name as other people. He was thanked by '*Bayete*' as was done
when saluting him. Likewise those who received the title *Nhomo* were
thanked by that title when they gave presents to people.

643 On ceremonial occasions, visitors to the royal village heard the
644 *izibongo* or praise-songs of the Paramount. These were songs referring
to great deeds and notable incidents both in the lifetime of the reigning
533 Paramount and in the lives of his predecessors. They were distinct from
576 the *izitokozo*, which were honorific epithets added to the clan name and
spoken when thanking a well-known man or woman for their gifts. The
izitokozo could be said by anyone, since each person of note had his own
which were well known. The *izibongo* could only be spoken or sung by
an *umbongi* or official 'praiser'. Such a person was a man of good
[826] memory and possessing eloquence. The chest was thought to be the seat
of wisdom and eloquence, and a man who composed praise-songs, as
distinct from repeating well-known ones, had to have the faculty of
finding the right words, since new songs of this kind were generally
invented on a sudden inspiration.

The occasions when the praise-songs were recited were when important visitors came to the royal village; when beasts were slaughtered in the ancestor cult; at special dances at the royal village or at the feasts of the Paramount. On such occasions the official praiser stood up in the kraal, everyone kept silence and did not move, and after a pause he began to call out '*Bayabonga inkosi*', 'let us praise the Paramount'. In repeating the praise-songs he began with those of the immediate ancestor of the Paramount, and then went on to those of earlier ancestors. At the end he shouted '*Bayete*' and all the people replied '*Bayete*'. Examples of the praise-songs of Zwangendaba and his father Hlacwayo of the northern kingdom and of Ngwana, father of Mputa, of the central Ngoni kingdom are given at the end of the chapter.

The tension caused by the extreme formality in the behaviour of the
643 Paramount, his courtiers and his visitors was lightened by the presence
644 of a court jester. Informants were agreed that such an individual was
usually present to amuse the Paramount with his sallies and gestures and
522 clown-like tumbling about. Dr. Laws referred to such a jester at the court of Mbelwa I when the Livingstonia Mission was making its first settlement in northern Ngoniland.[1] I saw a jester who came with Paramount Zintambira Mtetho from Portuguese territory when he and his officials visited Mzukhatha for the war-dance at the mourning for Bambo

[1] Livingstone, W. P. *Laws of Livingstonia*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1921, p. [illegible].

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

863 of dust, and many of them began to suffer from sores, itch and sore eyes. The girls however, had already begun to like a clean and shining skin for the sake of being beautiful, and their ablutions were no longer under duress.

The smallest children urinated and defecated wherever they happened to be. From the age of three or four, however, they were taught to tell someone if they wanted to defecate, and taken outside the hut. Maize cobs or soft leaves or grass were used to clean the child, and then thrown on the fire. When the child began to look after himself, he was shown how to use the left hand only when cleaning himself, [826] and told it was 'the hand of shame, only used for bad things'. From the age of four or five small girls and boys went with [514] their mothers and the other women to the section of the surrounding bush reserved for the women's toilet. At about the same age boys and girls were taught to withdraw from the public gaze when urinating, and to conceal themselves behind a hut or in some other hiding-place. The Ngoni were [514] extremely prudish about all physical acts connected with [834] evacuating or sex, and began to demand correct behaviour from children at an early age.

757 If a child was constipated, or had diarrhoea, or was vomiting, or had a fever or stomach-ache, the nurse girl reported 603 it to his mother who went to tell the child's paternal grandmother. For all the range of usual childish ailments the grandmother prescribed and carried out standard treatments, such as whey used as a purgative, or very thin gruel to check diarrhoea. The Ngoni women had a number of herbal remedies which they used for themselves and their children. They also used hot poultices, cupping, and forms of massage. Only when the known household remedies failed, did the grandmother tell the child's father and he, as we have seen, took the responsibility for calling in 'specialists'.

867 Sleep, the little child's third major need, was sometimes well ordered and sometimes erratic. It was not considered 864 proper for children to sleep in the same hut as their parents

561 boys took more interest and more part in adult occupations and affairs,
866 the emergence of leadership among Ngoni boys of high-ranking families was watched by their elders and recognised by their age mates. This was the formative period when a boy's capacity to succeed his father in a position of authority was carefully observed and judged. The Ngoni had ways of passing over a man who was a physical weakling, a coward in face of danger, a sadistic bully to weaker men, a pursuer of women and a breaker-up of marriages. The *madoda* in a Ngoni village, who appeared to let the boys in the *lawesi* manage their own affairs without interfering, had nevertheless a shrewd idea of who was making good and who was proving disappointing. Their comments, showing continued observation over a long period, were often expressed when two or three friends and age mates from the *lawesi* decided to go off to the south to work together. The *madoda* would then say: 'We hope they will come back soon and not be "lost". So and so is like his father and he will help us here in the village'; or they might comment: 'Good riddance, they were always hanging round the girls—worthless ones, indeed' (see *chabe ndibha*).

881 It has already been pointed out that there was no circumcision school
856 nor public initiation rite among the Ngoni. At puberty the ritual observed was a private and personal affair. On a boy's first nocturnal emission his age mates informed an older boy in the *lawesi*, who told him to go at once before it was light and bathe in the river, and to do so
[823 each morning after an emission. This use of cold water was believed to
827] give a boy strength and virility. The boy was also instructed by the older boys in the *lawesi* on how to behave to his equals and his elders and to women. This stage was called *ukuchayisa nga' manzi*, 'to be beaten with water', and was not reported to the older people. When the elder people noticed that the boy's voice was breaking, his father inquired whether he had passed puberty and, on being assured of this, he found a man who knew the *ukudengele* medicine. The father killed a goat, and the medicine man took some of the unchewed cud from the goat's stomach, mixed it with the bitter *ukudengele* root and put it on a pan over a fire. This took place near the gate of the kraal or near the parents' hut, with the father and the father's male relatives standing by. When the mixture boiled, the boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the pan one after the other and lick each one quickly. At the same time he kept jumping over the fire and striking his elbows against his sides. The Ngoni believed that this medicine gave boys physical strength and stamina and they administered it to their servants' sons as well. It was still practised in the 1930's among Ngoni who were educated and partly westernized.

867 While the organization of the *lawesi* catered for all boys from their
881 second teeth till their marriage, including boys from the age sets called *ukutwasa* and *amajaha*, the organization of girls' life followed a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to himself: 'Can that be for me? No? Yes? It *is* me. I am ashamed.' No one said anything but the shamed one took the first chance of slipping away to avoid further public notice. The use of proverbs in this way were an effective way of making a child learn for himself and apply the lesson; and with children, as with adults, the use of proverbs was a way of 'saving face' when a direct rebuke in the presence of others would have caused overwhelming shame.

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This fixed code of social behaviour between persons was instilled by Ngoni adults into their children from their early years. By the time they had their second teeth, a significant stage to the Ngoni, they were expected to conduct themselves towards other people according to this code. Their behaviour, in public at any rate, should be predictable, if those responsible for the teaching of 'respect' had carried out their task conscientiously. But, as the Ngoni themselves recognized, it was one thing to have a system of training with a desired goal in view. It was another thing to see how each individual child responded to the training, and either conformed to the code or resisted it. The Ngoni thought that the clue to conformity or resistance lay in the individual's character, and they talked a great deal about the character of their children. Such conversations generally arose when adults were watching a group of boys and girls carrying out a socially required or self-appointed task. They might be bringing back the cattle in the evening, practising for the *ngoma* dance, grinding bulrush millet for snacks for the little children, asking each other riddles or telling a story. Some of the tasks called for intelligence, some for physical strength, some for initiative or organizing ability, some for eloquence.

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

828 parents, such as colour of skin, shape of face and features,
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The acquired qualities were known as *makhalidwe*, the root of which was *khkhale*. This was a word used in a great many contexts with different meanings in each. In the context of child training it was used to mean to behave, with the added implication that it was what a person was like, due to his behaviour. *Makhalidwe* was used therefore, in the sense of conduct, implying behaviour in all relationships and including what had been acquired through response to training.

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1: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

mother's household if the mother showed obvious signs of being a 'bad character'. They might take the child away and put her with some relative of acknowledged 'good character', in the hope of offsetting the effects of heredity by careful training. 828 867

In later childhood and especially on the threshold of adulthood, as we shall see in Chapters VI and VII, boys and girls were expected to learn and practise traditional Ngoni skills and to be conversant with traditional Ngoni knowledge. Skills and knowledge, or rather the ability to use them, might be inherited from a parent, but they were generally regarded as acquired qualities. In any case, they needed careful training and direction in order that they might be fully developed. 868 828 827

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After the Scottish Mission had been in North Nyasaland for some time, and the Bible and other Christan literature had been translated into the vernacular, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* became one of the most popular and widely read books in Ngoniland, both by older children and by adults. The reason was that its imagery portrayed so many ideas and situations which the Ngoni recognized as being relevant for them in the new world to which they had to adapt themselves. It became for Ngoni Christians, and for many others too since it was told far more often than it was read, a new kind of folk-tale, and was told as such to children in school and in the villages. The themes of striving towards a goal, and fighting lions and giants on the way, and listening to good advice as well as hearing bad—these and other themes were recognized as in the Ngoni tradition although in such a different setting. 177 538

In the final chapter of this book we shall talk about personality and character among the Ngoni, looking at the ideas of basic personality as set out by Linton and others, and trying to see how training at different stages of childhood had been converging towards the ideal personality of the Ngoni 128

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

When the Ngoni talked about the separate ideal personalities of men and women, they emphasized the training needed for younger men, and to some extent also for younger women. Senior men and women were expected to possess special qualities due to their age and status and experience. It was recognised that the limited responsibilities of young men before marriage gave them little authority in village and family affairs. Since each family however was bringing up its girls to leave them on marriage and to take the good name of the family elsewhere, there was less distinction made between the qualities desired in younger married women and older ones than there was between the two groups of men. 577 562 561

The ideal personality of Ngoni women

This had four main aspects: physical capacity and appearance, relationship to her husband and his relatives, competence in household management, and general reputation for justice and wisdom. 562 577

We talked in Chapter III about the connexion in Ngoni thinking between women being healthy and strong and being able to bear healthy children. In the marriage negotiations and even at the final ceremony itself in the bridegroom's village, there were formalised standard questions put by the bridegroom's representatives about the health of the girl and her family, and these were replied to also in conventional phrases. Such inquiries about health had been made secretly long before the final ceremony, and indeed before any formal approaches had been made which led to the betrothal. But the fact that they were made in public on two distinct occasions, at the preliminary visit of the man's representatives and at the marriage itself, underlined the importance of health and its relation to child-bearing capacity in the ideal Ngoni woman. 577 842 581

We saw in the last chapter that physical strength for continuous hard manual work in the household and in the 827 577

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
/ FR5 Ngoni FR5

827 gardens was not required of most Ngoni women, though they
577 were expected to know by experience how to hoe and to pound, to mud walls and to clean a house in order to supervise their helpers and to see that household work was done efficiently.

577 In addition to being healthy, the ideal Ngoni woman was
581 always well-groomed. She might lack the facial formation of high cheek-bones, narrow nose and deep-set eyes and the
[826] light bronze colouring which were the accepted standards of beauty. Even without these natural, usually inherited, advantages she spent, as we have seen, much time every day
[302] taking care of her skin and hair. When she was receiving visitors or sitting outside her hut, her two long cloths, one
[291] fastened under the armpits and the other over one shoulder and knotted on the chest, were carefully draped and arranged. If she walked to another compound or out of the village on the road, or walked or danced in any ceremony,
[516] her dignity of bearing and poise of head was always marked. She did not hurry, but, as the Ngoni said, 'she walked strongly'. A government official passing an octogenarian
[481] Ngoni princess on the road stopped and offered her a lift in his car. She looked him up and down and said: 'Thank you, young man. I can still walk.'

Many references have been made already to the relation-
577 ship between a wife and her husband, and between a wife,
602 especially a young one, and her husband's relatives. The keynotes of this relationship were devotion to her husband, respect for his relatives, and circumspection in her relations with her co-wives and with her non-Ngoni helpers. Jealousy between co-wives was recognized by the Ngoni but not condoned, and the young wife at marriage was warned by her own family against quarrelling with anyone, co-wives, helpers or in-laws, though the last was almost unthinkable.

Competence in household management, being a success-
577 ful 'châtelaine', made many demands on a Ngoni woman if
542 she were to live up to what was considered an ideal house

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

577 affairs. Boys and young men were expected to be physically
562 strong, and tough in the sense of being able to do hard tasks,
561 walk long distances, dance for hours on end, and put up
[827] with hardships without grumbling. The senior men, as we saw earlier in this chapter hated to see idleness and set great store by young men working hard and persistently at any tasks undertaken. Several proverbs illustrated this quality
[538] and were used with effect when boys were found hanging round in the village doing nothing: 'Loitering eats the owner,' 'Laziness is eating dung,' 'The garden will not be tilled if you stop hoeing it.'

577 Other qualities desired in young men were all connected
829 with the values of staying together as a family and as a village group, and of fostering mutual aid and trust within the groups of males in the dormitory and in the 'house'. It was believed that they ought to be acutely sensitive to the opinion of their contemporaries, a lesson which they learned from early days in the dormitory. To an insensitive person, showing intolerance and hard-heartedness they said: 'Were you made with dog's bones?' for dogs' bones were thought
[538] to be hard and unfeeling; or, 'You have a heart like a crocodile.' A fear of social ostracism was fostered all the time and expressed in the proverb: 'The bird eats in his own field.'

577 There were innumerable proverbs about willingness to
829 co-operate in all the necessary tasks which fell to the young
538 men, such as communal hoeing described in Chapter VII, or digging the grave at a funeral. 'The eyes for seeing,' 'One arm cannot crush a louse,' 'A river grows by its little streams,' 'The heifer grows by giving it more food'—these and many others were used to admonish those who held back and to encourage those who joined in willingly. Other proverbs warned against promises of help which were not kept. 'You will eat those of the axe but not those of the hoe' was said to someone who had counted on noisy assertions of forthcoming help, like the sounds made by the chopping of an axe, and not in quiet persistent help, like the smooth almost silent

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

463 177 [434] [571] foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group involved the earning, spending and sharing of money income, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

624 693 In local government and in the courts, which formed an integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom, ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain [927] [562] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

622 In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

get their own back. Psychologists will say 'But this is all too positive! Positive aims in training, positive methods and, apparently, positive results. Were there no failures and breakdowns in the systems, no cleavages in the society, no maladjusted individuals?' Of course there were. Again the bold outlines have been essential in portraying a situation unfamiliar to many readers. And the rest of the answer to that criticism, as I hinted more than once in the book, lies in studies of individual Ngoni people and how they came out of the training process; and also in studies of the relation of schools and the education given in them to that somewhat rigid and self-consciously controlled Ngoni society. Both of these I hope to write one day, but this book is long enough already. 128

Young parents the world over are often surprised, and delighted (though not always), at the individual character shown by each of their children. They look in their children for signs of heredity and for evidence of the success or failure of their training. So did the Ngoni, and yet at the end they always came back to 'It is his own human nature'. 858 828

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their 576
family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If 577
children did not so behave to old and poor people, they 858
were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had [867]
failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early 576
travellers in Ngoniland to the good manners found in Ngoni 828
households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the 829
Ngoni because they liked living together without any scat- 867
tering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . . Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of being beaten, but because all children were well taught that this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion 829
between personal behaviour and the integrity and prosperity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were talking about child training and its effect on the future of the Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within their society, so that harmonious relations would build up the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic secessions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human societies from the individual family outwards. We see this however in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about 539
keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining 829
their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who [115]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to himself: 'Can that be for me? No? Yes? It *is* me. I am ashamed.' No one said anything but the shamed one took the first chance of slipping away to avoid further public notice. The use of proverbs in this way were an effective way of making a child learn for himself and apply the lesson; and with children, as with adults, the use of proverbs was a way of 'saving face' when a direct rebuke in the presence of others would have caused overwhelming shame.

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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3: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

264 might be a chore but when it was done in the open it was also an advertisement of high standards.

The art of speech

191 The Ngoni believed that as boys and girls neared adult life
195 they should be well drilled in the art of speaking, because it was regarded as a basic Ngoni characteristic. We have seen how adults watched children tossing riddles at each other to test, among other things, their quickness of speech. Girls had been watched telling stories to see how they held their audience and showed a sense of dramatic values in recitation.

In all the standardized forms of speech such as greetings, messages, announcements, responses, young adults were expected to speak clearly and correctly, without mumbling but not too loudly. When relating an event, such as a visit, a bull-fight, or when giving evidence in the courts, they had to give an orderly account without repetition. Otherwise they were told: 'You are speaking badly. Tell it again, in order, from the beginning.' An ordered sequence of the narrative was always demanded, and, as we shall see in the next chapter, they used proverbs frequently to impress on people speaking the need to get to the point, while leaving out nothing of importance.

The art of words used with music in songs was regarded as
533 a special gift and those who possessed it were encouraged to develop it. Inspiration for words and music was as we have seen something which came 'from the chest' and was regarded almost as if it was a special kind of breathing. Some used this gift to sing with a solo instrument such as a stringed lyre. Others used it to compose new songs for *ngoma* dances.
[177] Others again wrote Christian hymns and composed music for them, or set them to traditional Ngoni tunes.

The art of dancing

535 'Ngoni people think that their dances show their personality,
● [828] their manhood, that which was born in them.' Phrases like

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

this overt response to training, character is the distinctive individual twist given to the basic personality, together with certain special abilities and individual traits which might be in harmony with, or at variance with, the basic personality traits. When an individual showed abilities and traits which harmonised with the concept of the basic personality, he was recognized as a 'good character'. If however he developed traits which eventually showed his failure to adjust to the basic personality, then he was, or would probably become, a 'bad character'. The 'badness' was his responsibility due to a series of choices which he had made, though it might also reflect on the training given in his earlier years.

The Ngoni had a word which very nearly expressed their concept of individual character. They spoke of a person's 'own human nature' (*Ubwato*), 'the human nature of himself'. Thus they recognized, as studies of personality and culture are bound to recognize, two distinct results of child training, arising from the interweaving of the threads of teaching and learning, namely the development of young men and women into Ngoni adults whom the society regarded as fulfilling, at least to some extent, their ideals of behaviour, skills and knowledge; and the development of young individual adults, distinguishable each from his fellows by the individual character he displayed before his elders who either approved or disapproved of him.

Anthropologists on the whole would agree with Kluckhohn that so far they have studied personality as a socially directed product rather than the unique product of each individual's growth and development. Individual reactions and responses are recognized as being primarily in the field of psychology. But the anthropologist and the educationist can make some claim to understanding this essential complement to individual personality studies. On the one hand they find the society they are studying recognizing values which do not always fit into an accepted basic personality pattern. On the other hand they become aware that individual reactions to

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and demonstration of the group values. The first two, physical and moral strength, and working hard and persistently at allotted tasks, were, as we have seen, instilled into children from the stage of second teeth onward. The second two, dignity and wisdom, were to a large extent values implicit in adult life, and in the case of wisdom seen specially in the contribution made by senior men and women to community life. Dignity, however, had an ambivalent meaning, as did dominance among the group values. It covered not only language, deportment, self-control, accepted rank and precedence within the hierarchy on all social occasions, but the more subtle and very typical Ngoni attitude towards 'losing face'. In the sense that young adults and even older children hated being rebuked in public because it made them lose face, it belonged to younger people as well as to older, to those called the 'humble ones' as well as to the 'great ones'. 181 577

All the emphases in child training on language, deportment, self-control, manners and inter-personal behaviour of all kinds were related to the value of human dignity, and to the concept of a person's 'human nature' as being something to be respected and built up, and carefully guarded, since it was very vulnerable. [867] [828]

At the end of Chapter II when some Ngoni values were mentioned, wisdom was contrasted with cleverness, and equated with knowledge, good judgement, ability to control others and keep the peace, and skill in the use of speech. The young Ngoni headmaster in the first village described in Chapter I said reflectively one evening, after listening to some of the elders talking with me about Ngoni values, 'Yes, we are different in our generation. We are proud, but they had wisdom.' It was an acknowledgement of the pretensions which his generation had begun to claim as a result of the new knowledge in the schools. It was also a recognition that the accumulated wisdom of the generations of his father and grandfather had in it an understanding of values which the younger generation had not yet acquired. [184]

181 The four so-called personal values will be reflected in the
577 Ngoni personality traits which we are going on to discuss.
828 There are however two values which did not appear to fit
[182] into any integrated system, and which yet recurred as themes in Ngoni culture, and here and there in the ideas inherent in child training. One was the theme of childhood innocence, which was much deeper and more subtle than merely keeping children in ignorance of sexual life and intercourse. The other was the value set on the 'gentle' man. He was a man who appeared to be almost wholly self-controlled, able to have normal sexual intercourse with his wives but not always thinking about women, showing sternness but without anger, being just but also merciful. These were the qualities looked for in the man responsible for the guardianship of certain head villages where the ancestor cult was
[769] carried on, and who was entrusted with the ritual associated
[778] with the ancestor cult. In the more ancient ritual, such as carrying the sacred emblem before the armies, it was young boys, exemplifying the childhood innocence theme, who were entrusted with this charge. In the more modern con-
[793] texts, many of the outstanding Ngoni ministers in the church were recognized and revered as 'gentle' men.

The Ngoni ideal personality

577 Chapters IV and V, as well as Chapters VI and VII, showed that there were certain elements in the Ngoni ideal of what their children should be like which were common to young men and women, to boys and girls, while others were emphasized only for girls or for boys. Among the common traits we have already seen the outstanding emphasis on 'respect' in all forms of behaviour and in all kinds of contact with older people, and with others who should be 'honoured'. Part of this respect was shown in obedience, and with this obedience in all the detailed inter-personal relations with senior people was associated, in the individual's relations to society as a whole, being law-abiding and complying with Ngoni law.

[P.22]

CHAPTER III

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1. *The field of modern marriage*

581 MARRIAGE nowadays among the Ngoni still regulates the sexual activities of man and wife and determines the responsibility for the care of their young children, the inheritance of their property, and succession to office. To a lesser extent it still determines residence and establishes relationships between a partner to the marriage and his or her affines. It is an institution which involves sooner or later almost every Ngoni man or woman who survives into adulthood. The number of people who die adult and [826] unmarried is very small. Even albinos, who are regarded generally with disgust, usually succeed in marrying. The only people who 589 fail to marry at all are: seriously crippled people who are regarded as not strong enough to look after themselves; a few prostitutes who [548] acquire a reputation for wantonness before they have managed to find a husband and who live in a succession of temporary alliances with men in and around the township of Fort Jameson; and a category of persons known as 'quite useless people',[1] that is, people [828] who are mad or in some way deranged so that they are unable to settle down in any place and are always wandering about from village to village, begging shelter, beer and food.

A man who does not marry, or who remains divorced or widowed for many years, is regarded as unusual, and others say of him that he must smell like a he-goat so that no woman will have him. A man in his twenties without a wife is laughed at by the married women, who despise him as impotent. Very few men in fact stay long without a wife, and of people whose personalities are regarded as normal it is only a few old widowers who do not have a wife to cook for them and sleep with them. Some women stay for longer without a husband, partly because of the numerical preponderance [162] of women over men caused by labour migration.

128 Some idea of the extent to which marriage affects everyone sooner or later is given by Tables III and IV. These tables, like all the others in this paper, are based on information collected systematically 121 from six Ngoni villages. Two of these villages, containing 257 and 142 residents, situated twenty-five miles apart and in different counties, were selected for me to live in by the county chiefs concerned. The remaining four villages containing 143, 104, 55 and 45 [621] residents, were close together but in a third county and twenty miles away from the other two.

[1] *Cisilu*, pl. *visilu*, or else *wantu watyalatyala*. Cf. Nsenga *silu*, pl. *masilu*, idiot.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

was still more clearly demonstrated by the attitude of the Ngoni 'of the dispersion', who returned for visits, some frequently and others at varying intervals, to their former homes though they were no longer in a political sense subjects of the Ngoni Paramount. 121 571

In the Group A systems, not only is the Paramount the political head of a culturally and ethnically heterogeneous state, but he is also a territorial ruler, and everyone living within the boundaries of his state is his subject. This was peculiarly a characteristic of the so-called conquest states, when effective administrative control was established within recognized boundaries after the conquest or surrender of neighbouring peoples. In the chapter on the military organization of the Ngoni, it will be seen how the nature of the military tenure of *alumuzana*, and the relation of groups of conquered villages known as *amilaga* to the central villages of the Paramount and *alumuzana*, emphasized the limits within which Ngoni authority was effective. One of the often repeated grievances of the older Ngoni was that the Europeans 'arrived too soon', before the Ngoni were able to establish effective authority over the whole country. 121 643 642

Two further points emerge in the introductory essay to *African Political Systems* which relate to the balance of forces within the Group A type of state and to the position of the Paramount. Both these points will be illustrated in Part II. The first concerns the relationship of the subordinate chiefs (called 'local chiefs' in the essay) to the central authority. They represented the central authority in the areas where they ruled, and they represented the people under them and their needs to the central authority. When the older Ngoni were talking about the Paramount in pre-European days, much emphasis was laid on his control of the chiefs and *alumuzana*, and on the obligation they felt to visit the Paramount in his village frequently, in order that they might appear to be carrying out his orders and not usurping undue authority. The older Ngoni also laid stress on the accessibility of the Paramount to all his people, provided—and it was an important proviso—that a man came to him with an intermediary, either his headman or his *mulumuzana*.

The final point of comparison between Group A systems and the Ngoni kingdoms is the mystical values bound up with kingship. This will be discussed in the chapter on the Paramount (Chapter II, Part II) and it is related also to the ancestor cult. The Ngoni Paramounts were more than ruling monarchs; they were the symbol of the unity of their state; in pre-European days the Paramount was the head of the army; and the ritual at the accession and at the death of a Paramount was related to the fertility of the land and the prosperity of the people. 121 643 829

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as young men, and had known the independence and supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'everything is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, ministers and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni way of living, and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes dominated social relationships. There was a determined struggle on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasaland sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

178 culture worth preserving, inspired them to put up a fight
829 against all that threatened the values inherent in their way
177 of living. It was perhaps the struggle of a disappearing aristocracy. But Ngoni fathers thought that the principles of education on which they brought up their children were worth a struggle.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

answers to them somewhere, then there have been some vital omissions in the narrative.

Clues to this study

In relating this study to other field studies and analyses of socialization techniques and processes, I have not attempted to present here any general assessment of similar or related studies, much less any review of the field as a whole, since I have touched on both in earlier publications.[1] Instead I have brought into this chapter one or two clues or guide lines from other sources which seemed to me to elucidate some of my problems, particularly in regard to four main aspects of this study, which have already been mentioned in Chapter I and which to a large extent set the limits and determine the emphases of this book. The 'true Ngoni' were a society within a society, a distinct cultural group within the Ngoni kingdom. This society of theirs had sharp edges, definable and recognizable limits, and that partly accounted for their own awareness of themselves as distinct from, though at so many points connected with, the neighbouring peoples. Their culture, that is their way of living within this society, had definite values which they strove to maintain, and this was one of the reasons why the ideal Ngoni personality pattern, and their endeavour to see it reproduced in each child, was easy to recognize. In order to safeguard their society and maintain their culture they exercised a fairly rigid social control over the upbringing of their children, which resulted in something approaching a 'system' of training and educating children. Set against this conservation of traditional values however was the reality and extent of changes due to external circumstances mentioned at the end of Chapter I. In the face of these changes the Ngoni showed that they could adapt some of them to their own purposes, and they made use of the schools, for example, once they approved of them, to help adjust their

[1] See Appendix (i)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their 576
family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If 577
children did not so behave to old and poor people, they 858
were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had [867]
failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early 576
travellers in Ngoniland to the good manners found in Ngoni 828
households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the 829
Ngoni because they liked living together without any scat- 867
tering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . .
Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of being beaten, but because all children were well taught that this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion 829
between personal behaviour and the integrity and prosperity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were talking about child training and its effect on the future of the Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within their society, so that harmonious relations would build up the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic secessions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human societies from the individual family outwards. We see this however in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about 539
keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining 829
their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who [115]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

115 had heard it from his grandmother. She had been a young
539 Ngoni woman at the time the Ngoni crossed the Zambezi,
829 and hence this story was said to have had its origin in the Ngoni former homeland in Natal.

The story of Heva

539 At the beginning of the creation of the world there was a woman of reddish colour whose name was Golela, and she had two children. The name of the older one was Heva, and of the second one Malusi. My grandmother, Madakacha, said that Malusi was the cause of our herds of cattle becoming smaller. When Malusi was herding cattle on the river plains where they were feeding, he kept on disturbing them and driving some away from the rest.

At this time Heva was staying with his mother. Her work was to keep watch over the sun so that the birds did not peck it, and Heva helped her by flapping away the flies which were troubling her.

Their mother Golela asked Heva, 'Where is your brother? What is he doing?' Heva replied, 'There he is yonder, disturbing your cattle on the river plain.' Then Golela called Malusi and said to him, 'Go. Choose what you want and depart. Go with them far away. What is left here is for Heva.'

After Malusi went away, all that remained on the river plain belonged to Heva, including the animals and the birds and the crops, but the cattle were reduced in number.

My grandmother used to say about this story, 'We who are descended from Heva are the victims of this separation between the brothers. Because Malusi in the beginning of the world took away many of the cattle of his mother's house, we have never had large herds of cattle since then.'

The Ngoni saw in the archaic form of this folk-tale several meanings. It was one of their traditional creation myths. It supported their belief that they were once owners of vast

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the observer or anthropologist. One such observer might pursue the line suggested by the use of different persons of the verb and different pronouns in personal contacts, and the values inherent in such standardized usage. Another might choose to examine the institution of the boys' dormitory and its contribution to the total value system. Another might take the different emphases in bringing up boys and girls in relation to the fact that men were the permanent element in village society and that girls left the village on marriage. A dozen more examples could be taken from the narrative chapters of this study and usefully followed up. They would all illustrate, in the first instance, the subjective nature of the initial selection, whether the final results of several different investigations made a coherent integrated system or not. They would also illustrate the uncharted area of such studies, where there is little to guide the observer and the analyst, in spite of the growing interest in recent years in studying the value systems of non-literate societies. 121

Among the leads which I found most useful has been Professor Monica Wilson's *Good Company*, to which I referred in Chapter I, where she associated cultural values with the age-village system in Nyakusa society. I owe much also to help and suggestions given to me at Harvard by Professor Cora Du Bois and Dr Ethel Albert, and to Professor Kluckhohn and his associates in discussions on their published and projected series on the study of values. 121 114

The relation between Ngoni values and their ideal personality pattern is based on the study of their society and culture described in my earlier book, and on the analysis of their system of bringing up children in this book. I referred in Chapter II to certain values as group values and to others as personal values. I am not sure that the distinction is a valid one, but it is a convenient form of classification and it corresponds closely to the Ngoni way of thinking. They were continually referring to their society, or a local community in it, as if it were an integrated whole, and to the effect of 128 829

individuals upon the cohesion of that society through their behaviour and actions. This was illustrated in the phrase so constantly used by them, and referred to already several times: 'He is spoiling the land,' or the converse, quoted in Chapter I: 'Young people were well taught that this behaviour was right for the upbuilding of the land.'

Among these so-called group values the first of all, and pre-eminent above all, was the value of keeping together. Taught by bitter experience that personal quarrels could lead to political secessions and to the diminution of the power and influence of the Ngoni kingdoms, the focus of much of their thinking was on maintaining cohesion whether in small units or in large. I think the Ngoni were the only people in Nyasaland where individuals and families were not allowed to leave the villages to live elsewhere without permission of the chief or headman. In the local courts there were frequent cases in which the accused had been guilty of leaving without permission. This illustration could be used also to indicate the second of the group values. I have called it dominance for want of a better term. It involves the exercise of authority, political and legal, over their own and subject peoples, the determination to exact obedience, influenced by a feeling of paternal responsibility for all over whom authority was claimed. This was an ambivalent sentiment affecting the attitude of the ruler and his relations with the ruled, and was the basis of the court case quoted in Chapter VI, when a chief made a judgement against his own son for adultery with a poor man's wife. The third group value was that of mutual aid and trust within the in-group, in order to secure its cohesion. This was the integrating principle of the 'house' system, described briefly in Chapter I and mentioned in many other contexts. Mutual trust and aid had been in the past the main element in the behaviour of men in their own regiments, in the mutual relation of warrior with warrior, both when on campaigns and when living together in the villages.

The four personal values were inherent in the acceptance

577 affairs. Boys and young men were expected to be physically
562 strong, and tough in the sense of being able to do hard tasks,
561 walk long distances, dance for hours on end, and put up
[827] with hardships without grumbling. The senior men, as we saw earlier in this chapter hated to see idleness and set great store by young men working hard and persistently at any tasks undertaken. Several proverbs illustrated this quality
[538] and were used with effect when boys were found hanging round in the village doing nothing: 'Loitering eats the owner,' 'Laziness is eating dung,' 'The garden will not be tilled if you stop hoeing it.'

577 Other qualities desired in young men were all connected with the values of staying together as a family and as a
829 village group, and of fostering mutual aid and trust within the groups of males in the dormitory and in the 'house'. It was believed that they ought to be acutely sensitive to the opinion of their contemporaries, a lesson which they learned from early days in the dormitory. To an insensitive person, showing intolerance and hard-heartedness they said: 'Were you made with dog's bones?' for dogs' bones were thought
[538] to be hard and unfeeling; or, 'You have a heart like a crocodile.' A fear of social ostracism was fostered all the time and expressed in the proverb: 'The bird eats in his own field.'

577 There were innumerable proverbs about willingness to
829 co-operate in all the necessary tasks which fell to the young
538 men, such as communal hoeing described in Chapter VII, or digging the grave at a funeral. 'The eyes for seeing,' 'One arm cannot crush a louse,' 'A river grows by its little streams,' 'The heifer grows by giving it more food'—these and many others were used to admonish those who held back and to encourage those who joined in willingly. Other proverbs warned against promises of help which were not kept. 'You will eat those of the axe but not those of the hoe' was said to someone who had counted on noisy assertions of forthcoming help, like the sounds made by the chopping of an axe, and not in quiet persistent help, like the smooth almost silent

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

action of the hoe. 'They are our kin according to their eyes' was said as a reminder of misplaced trust in those who appeared to be helpful but were not really. 577 538 829

Readiness to take advice both from their age-mates and from older men was another quality held to be desirable in young men. Proverbs illustrating this were: 'He that refuses instruction will be surprised by blood,' and 'He remembers that he fell; he forgot that he was hurt.' As often with proverbs, there were others with a contrary emphasis which were sometimes used as a retort to the former ones, or in self-defence. 'The inheritance was eaten by those worthy of it' was intended as a rejoinder not to interfere in other people's affairs, when unwanted advice was offered. 'The body is felt by its owner' was sometimes said to encourage a man to stick to his own opinion. On the other hand a too abrupt rejoinder, especially to an older person, was regarded as discourteous, and onlookers said 'You cause the spittle to be dry' to express extreme disapproval.

Ngoni personality in a changing culture

The direction of the training of boys had been formerly towards military life, and towards the qualities which made effective fighting men, and emphasized loyalty to leaders and camaraderie in the regiments. This emphasis on military preparedness was however never the sole emphasis in Ngoni training, and hence when warfare came to an end, there remained traditional spheres of influence and activity which were an integral part of life in the Ngoni kingdoms, as well as new spheres of activity opened up by missions, the administration, the trading companies and the labour recruiters. 867 177 [703]

The traditional forms of activity were found in Ngoni local government which included the chief's administration and the courts of law; family and village affairs including the building up of herds and buying and selling cattle; and ritual life. The new kinds of activity included occupations such as teacher, minister, clerk, store assistant, houseboy, 463 177

606 good man behaves towards his father-in-law with obedience and respect, and that he is rewarded by the gifts of beer sent to his father by his wife's father. If these gifts are not made, then the man must be 'bad' or his father-in-law 'fierce' or 'cruel'.

581 There is one type of marriage in which none of these ceremonies are performed. This is what is known as the 'poorly fixed marriage'* which lies on the borderland between marriage and concubinage. 829 People do not expect a 'poorly fixed' marriage to last long, and this expectation is based more on their estimation of the characters of the couple involved than on a consideration of the absence of marriage ceremonies and payments. If a couple, who have shown by their general behaviour that they are fickle and quarrelsome, begin to live together without going through any of the formalities of marriage, people speak of their marriage as 'poorly fixed'. If the union breaks up there is no divorce procedure and the couple merely go their own separate ways. The categorization 'poorly fixed' is not applied to all marriages in which there are no marriage [583] payments, for poverty is usually regarded as a valid excuse for not offering money or animals or for not brewing beer. It is rather poverty of character and love of promiscuity and fickleness that lead to 'poorly fixed' marriages.

581 Sometimes a marriage which begins as 'poorly fixed' lasts for some time and becomes accepted as a proper marriage. An example of this is the marriage of Rachel and Esau (p. 63). In 1946 I was told this was a 'poorly fixed' marriage and that it would not last. In 1949 opinion had changed, and as we have seen, Esau succeeded in making the legalization payment for his wife. Even if his money had been refused his position would still have been better than it was in 1946 for he had shown that he could live with Rachel for three years without an undue amount of quarrelling and she had not drifted off to some other man. By making the legalization payment [583] Esau made his rights over her more certain.

People who live in 'poorly fixed' marriages are not despised for [829] doing so, but are rather pitied for their moral inability to make a 'well fixed' marriage. They are never so sure of the support of their relatives and neighbours as they would be otherwise. A man who 586 has not made the legalization payment may be supported by his wife's relatives when she commits adultery if they think that he is a good husband and that it is she who is at fault in the matter. But if a man neglects his obligations towards his wife's parents and in particular does not approach them formally at the beginning [606] of the marriage to tell them of his desire to marry their daughter, they may turn on him if he tries to exercise rights over the woman. In court, the wife's father may look at his son-in-law, who perhaps has been his neighbour for many years, and say 'Who is this man? We do not know him'; and the court will refuse to recognize his claims.

* *Ukwali owayawaya.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 parents have different fields of interest, but the two fields overlap in the well-being of the married couple. At first there is much formality between them, and intermediaries are used whenever possible. Later they become more friendly. In the setting of the village meeting some parents appear to see themselves as allied in wisdom with the opposite parents against the foolishness of the younger generation whose immature behaviour has been the cause of the meeting. At other times, they may act to defend the rights and happiness of their child against the claims of the rival kin group. We have seen in the story of Daniel and Deborah [21] how yet another alignment can occur when both sets of parents support one spouse against the other. There is no simple way in which these different alignments can be predicted, for they are in fact the outcome of
• 829 the continually changing pattern of social relationships within the local community. In general, all people wish to preserve the existing configuration of relationships, to support the interests of their children and to maintain the values of their society. In any particular situation, these goals may be mutually incompatible, and there is
571 no over-riding principle, such as agnatic descent or a state-enforced code of law, to which all decisions can be referred. The tenuousness of the cohesion of the local group of kin is reflected in the varying alignments of parents in marital quarrels.

578 We tend to think of quarrels as socially disruptive, and in so far as
571 they are not resolved they do lead to the break-up of existing groupings and the formation of new ones. Yet from another point of view, quarrelling is as much a cohesive process as is common participation in marriage ceremonial. Indeed, just as we have seen already [22] that a ceremony of marriage may be a vehicle for expressing hostility between kin groups as well as recognition of common interest, so a quarrel may lead to increased solidarity between kin groups as well as express hostility between spouses. By taking steps to resolve a quarrel, one kin group is brought into face-to-face contact with the other; there is visiting between their villages and mutual hospitality in somewhat the same way as in marriage ceremonial. The two groups may join to censure the erring spouse. The censured person may feel deserted by his (or her) parents but his father and his father-in-law may have come closer together.

602 The formality that characterizes relations between parents at the beginning of a marriage gradually disappears. A man or woman can always seek shelter and hospitality at the hut of a *child's parent-in-law* and in the final ceremony of marriage, when the married couple enter the wife's mother's hut, the two pairs of parents sit together and discuss the merits and limitations of their respective
835 offspring. It is regarded as incestuous for a man to marry a woman whom he calls *child's parent-in-law*. By so doing his son's wife

[21] See above, p. 82.
[22] See above, pp. 76f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

178 648 change. In the field of marriage we have seen that it was the conscious intervention of the Administration which forced the abolition of the death penalty for adultery. It is to some extent due to the Administration, with its emphasis that women must have rights equal to those of men, that divorce is more frequent than it was, though this result does not seem to have been planned. In the eyes of the Administration the important fact is that it is more difficult for a woman to get a divorce among the Ngoni than among the Cewa. Of recent years it has been more concerned with the increase in concubinage, prostitution and juvenile delinquency in the towns, and has introduced measures designed to check the flow of women and children from the rural areas to the towns. As we have seen, one result has been that it is possible for rights *in genetricem* to be enforced in inter-tribal marriages, and bridewealth has therefore more significance in these marriages than in marriages within the tribe.

● 829 181 The Ngoni people themselves have, on the whole, accepted the changes passively and regretfully. The one deliberate constructive action appears to have been the law made in about 1944 that the legalization payment shall be at least thirty shillings. Apart from this, the Ngoni appear to have been overwhelmed by events. The frustrations of the present time are all attributed to the coming of the Whites, and this in turn provides the reason why nothing can be done to change things. The past, 'the time of peace', is glorified and simplified, and to some extent reinterpreted in terms of the new values which have been acquired in the interim. Thus, some informants said that the Ngoni never fought other tribes, but only invited people to join the Ngoni kingdom. People like to assert dogmatically that adulterers were always killed, that every man always paid bridewealth, that women always married whom they were told, and only reluctantly admit, on closer questioning, that there were sometimes exceptions to these rules. The imputed rules of the past have become the 'customs' of the present, and the adjective *Ngoni* is applied not to what the Ngoni people do today but to what they like to think they did in the virtuous past. *Ngoni* marriage (*ukwati wacingoni*) is marriage in which all the ceremonial observances are carried out in detail, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth are paid, the woman is obedient and fertile, the man dutiful and respectful towards his wife's parents, and in which the couple 'live well together'. This is contrasted with modern marriage (*ukwati wamakono*) in which there is no bridewealth, few ceremonies, little attention paid to obligations towards kin, and in which the woman sues successfully for divorce. Modern marriage is an invention of the Whites, designed to worry the Ngoni. The Whites have conquered the Ngoni, they are the owners of the country, and there is nothing to be done except to keep alive the knowledge of the past.[12]

[12] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', and 'Traditions and prestige . . .', *passim*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

This attitude of resignation, while still very common, has to some extent been replaced by a more constructive attitude among members of the Native Authority bureaucracy. Chiefs, councillors and other officials have considerable political power and are encouraged to use it by the Administration, whose policy it is to strengthen the hand of the Native Authority.[18] Court members introduce changes in law with some confidence, although this is still done under the guise of a re-enforcement of a forgotten traditional law. Chiefs, under increasing pressure from their people and the Administration, endeavour to take action to modify social life in their areas. As yet political action is not very sophisticated, and the workings of the Administration are not well understood. In those fields of activity where Administrative interest is strongest, such as price control, food production, and the amalgamation of villages, the Ngoni response tends to be in moral rather than in political terms. It is wrong that the price of maize should be so low, the good man knows best how to cultivate his own garden, people in a village must live peacefully together. By contrast, in the field of marriage, where the Administration is comparatively disinterested, and where the wishes of the Administration, missions and Ngoni do to a large extent coincide, the bureaucracy has been able to act in a more positive manner. The thirty shillings law is one of the rare legislative acts of the Ngoni chiefs and people, and it is significant that the law was not made until 1944, fifteen years after the passing of the Native Authorities Ordinance. It is said that the law was made so that women could be punished for adultery in the same way as men. At the meeting at which the law was agreed upon, it was also decided that bridewealth should be a minimum of six pounds or one cow. Whereas the ruling about legalization payments is still remembered and increasingly followed, the bridewealth rule has been largely forgotten. This attempt to check adultery by increasing the legalization payment was in general agreement with the wishes of the Administration and more or less with the wishes of the missions. It was possible to envisage a decrease in adultery due to a clarification of rights *in uxorem* without any other major structural changes, whereas the re-introduction of bridewealth as a universal payment could only be envisaged in terms of a return to the patrilineal virilocal residential system of 'the time of peace'. It would hardly have been possible for the Native Authority to have restored the old system had they wished to do so. Ngoni village life is now part of a system wider than the chiefdom and there are other ways of acquiring wealth and status than within the residential system and at the pleasure of the Paramount Chief.

11. *Marriage in an omnidirectional kinship system*

We may characterize the change from the old order to the new

[18] Cf. Barnes, op. cit. 'Some aspects of political development . . .'.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes
177 as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than a war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there
[769] was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors were merely mentioned in prayers "as King George is mentioned now". This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made
648 to look like the European conquerors of today is no new phenomenon. The
186 Ngoni identified themselves with European rather than with their matrilineal neighbours even before the European conquest. Wiese, himself the main
156 agent of their defeat, wrote, "They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them."[4]

Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount
[197] Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying, "He is an Ngoni and a white man."[5] My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not pro-
● 829 duced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An
183 aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, "If this was the old days I would kill all these Cewa drinking here." Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

181 Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian
186 neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to rationalize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connection

4. Wiese, *Geschichte*, pp. 200 f.
5. Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mp'zeni said of him, "He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us." Deare, *Slave Raiders*, pp. 19 and 25.

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

181 that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered
186 all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British.
Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every
648 present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni
186 say, "If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we
would not now go hungry"; and "If we had not been defeated the tribes
would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly",
[729] and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated
with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain
that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

538 The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are
814 common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions, when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators and by the writings of ethnologists.

643 The link between the Ngoni of today and their illustrious forebears is also
182 symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his
[551] warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because "he has already conquered all others"; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because "he has already conquered the whole world". He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before the European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

829 Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths
178 about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather
[583] than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, "snuff-box" and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments, and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and

8: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5

829 blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural
178 heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned
182 standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are
[591] knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less-well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people, yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition.
[606] Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him, "I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law." He laughed and replied, "Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting, and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed."

647 In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast
619 to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the
693 Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies
184 tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view,
648 a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story
182 about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but
183 one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours, Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

183 In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here,
692 unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered
184 with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the
671 Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are
692 bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with
183 new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done

under the guise of drawing attention to some good Ngoni custom which has been neglected. Thus, for example, a man came to court saying that he was always quarrelling with his wife and that he wished to divorce her. The bench granted the divorce and awarded the woman 30s. damages. The litigant protested. The junior member of the bench, a man aged about 25 years, said, "Don't you know, it has always been the custom in this court to award 30s. damages against men who divorce their wives?" Yet this was a comparatively recent practice and the litigant's protest seemed, to me, to be quite justified. The young man had been on the bench only about eighteen months. Even without Administrative stimulus, deliberate acts of legislation are not unknown among the Ngoni, but they require considerable discussion and probably a tribal meeting. It is easier, particularly for a court member as junior as the man in question, to appeal to the unwritten corpus of tribal custom when introducing a new rule. An analogous process in our own society is perhaps concealed under the fiction that judges do not make law. Ngoni do not quote specific precedents in court, and in this undocumented environment new decisions, if they are not soon challenged, become part of what has always been the custom since time immemorial.

We may then summarize by saying that their common store of notions about the past provides Ngoni with a means of distinguishing themselves from similar groups at a time when the cultural distinctions between these groups are in fact becoming less and less. In the Courts, appeals to the value of traditional custom are made to gain acceptance for new rulings, while in ordinary life breaches of custom are widespread and are not censured.

When we consider legends associated with particular groups within he tribe the picture is rather different. Separate groups in the population remember, and sometimes act in the light of, particular incidents in the past which link them to other similar groups. Thus village A is linked with village B because of some incident in the past when the erstwhile leader of A captured the leader of B, or because at one time the leaders of A and B were brothers. These incidents, and the present inter-group relations with which they are associated, are not known universally but only by the groups concerned and by those near them. Yet in many ways these incidents are of greater practical significance than the more widely known tribal history. The relationships to which they give rise, or rather such of these relationships as have persisted, are remembered at funerals, in the formal exchanges of beer, and in the settlement of quarrels. There are at first glance no sanctions to maintain relationships of this kind, and indeed the very separate existence of two villages A and B may be due to a quarrel followed by a split. But although, for example, when an old woman dies in A there is no way of directly forcing a messenger to carry the news to B, there is in fact a greal deal of social pressure on both groups to keep alive the connection between them. This arises from the general responsibility placed on everyone to preserve the peace, that is, to preserve the existing social order intact. If there are

If there are 829
quarrels in a village the headman is blamed by the chief for not controlling 627
his people well. All disputes are best settled out of court, even if they must be 628
referred to court later on. Therefore a quarrel in village A brings to light all the alliances and cleavages which link A with other villages and differentiate it from them. The headman of A appeals to B for support, invoking the historical incident linking them, and hopes to settle affairs of his village with the authority of B's approval behind him. For if the headman of B is a potential ally he is also a potential rival, and the dissident section in A may themselves invoke their link with B and transfer their allegiance to him. Thus although the details of the relationship between A and B, and the historical incident connected with it, may not be widely known there is considerable external pressure on them to maintain their relationship. Connexions of this kind, mainly between villages, but also between chiefdoms, play a large part in contemporary Ngoni life. Men walk twenty miles to a funeral and women carry pots of beer all day in response to ties of this kind.

Thus we see, on the one hand, that tribal legends are widely known, 829
relate to pre-conquest times, and do not directly influence conduct; and, on 173
the other, that legends associated with inter-group relations are known only 628
by the groups concerned, may relate to either before or after 1898, and do directly influence action. Why is there this difference? We may regard the former legends as of significance mainly in external relations and the latter in internal. Within the tribe, and more particularly within the minor chiefdom, inter-group relations are still largely determined by Ngoni themselves, however much they may have altered in form and content since 1898 and however much Ngoni are part of a wide system. Movement between villages is only slightly controlled by the Administration and in quarrelling, in marriage and adultery, beer-drinking and hoeing, Ngoni men and women choose their own allies and enemies. Incidents in reality give rise to inter-group relations and are subsequently invoked to maintain them. History is written not in books but in the names of groups and in the remembered connexions between them, and as these connexions gradually change so local legendary history is gradually rewritten.

In external relations the Ngoni never act as a tribe except within the 829
framework of European-controlled institutions. As yet no myth of origin is 182
needed to explain the fact that Ngoni and Cewa representatives sit together on the Provincial Council save that the Administration put them there. The world of external relations is one of cultural heterogeneity and comparative adequate documentation. In this field legends have only a limited social function. They differentiate tribe X from tribe Y but do not relate them to each other.

Lastly we must consider Ngoni history proper. There have been many 175
alleged accounts of Ngoni history published in Europe and South Africa, 819
but these seem to have had little influence on the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Recently several histories have appeared in the vernacular, and tribal history

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 101 641 N M 101 186 [464] N M [614]

people of Mpezeni'. When questioned, they acknowledged their local origin as Nsenga or Chewa by kinship and clan, but claimed the name Ngoni in terms of their political allegiance. It is worth while mentioning here that this claim to be Ngoni is made with even more force when men are away from home on the mines or at other work. I found men on the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt and in Johannesburg assert emphatically that they were Ngoni because they were the people of Mpezeni or Gomani, at the same time giving their clan names with a grin because they knew it would reveal their Chewa or Nsenga origin. It is 'the thing' to pass as Ngoni if you can carry it off and in strange places—where the acid test of the clan name is not known—it is easy to do this. A group of Nyasaland men newly arrived on the Crown Mines in Johannesburg told me confidentially, 'Here we say only, "We are all Ngoni". You know that our clan names are Chewa or Tumbuka, but we are the people of Gomani or of Mwambera, and so we say we are Ngoni. And then people are respecting us.' The prestige in the name Ngoni is a matter of pride, not only in their own country, but far and wide in Africa.

N 829 [614] N 121 101

The chiefs and other important men among the Ngoni recognize that they are a very mixed group ethnically. When asked, 'What is the meaning of a clan?' they reply, 'It shows a man's tribe that we may know how to respect him.'[1] It is hardly correct, therefore, to speak of the Ngoni as a tribe, for from Natal to Tanganyika men of many 'tribes' joined, or were captured and forcibly assimilated by, the original nucleus of Zulu and Swazi warriors, to be welded by their

N M 197 128 N M 101 128

[1] I avoid using vernacular terms in this article because usually the Ngoni, Chewa, Nsenga, and Tumbuka terms are all different. The field worker has to make a comparative linguistic table giving equivalent meanings in vernacular terms. Here I use the English word 'clan' to express the unilateral group according to kinship descent. 'Tribe' should be used in a cultural sense, of a group of people possessing a common language and common institutions. The ambiguity with which 'tribe' and its vernacular equivalents is used, by Europeans and Africans alike, necessitates an investigation on linguistic and historical lines. The so-called Chewa tribe, for example, rarely, if ever, use the word Chewa, but refer to themselves as Ntumba, Maravi, &c. The Ngoni, speaking of themselves in the south, refer to the Ndwandwe, Ntungwa, &c., and only use the 'blanket term' Zulu or Swazi when they think you are ignorant of the finer distinctions. I use the word 'tribe' here to express these distinctive groups, but it is impossible to avoid some ambiguity without long linguistic digressions.

political and military organization into an effective group. What meaning, therefore, can we give to the term 'Ngoni', and how can this group which calls itself Ngoni be analysed into its component parts?

II. WHAT DOES THE TERM 'NGONI' MEAN? The references made hitherto show that the term 'Ngoni' is used in several different connotations. It is, strictly speaking, an historical linguistic term, and referred originally to that group of clans described as 'Nguni' because they spoke a language classified to-day as the Nguni dialects.[1] Somewhere on the march north the Ngoni changed the *u* to an *o*, and arrived in their present areas saying 'We are Ngoni'. They assert emphatically that it was on the march they began to say 'We are Ngoni', and they suggest that it was important to have some general term to cover individuals from many mixed groups.

The name Ngoni having been assumed on the march north, it obviously at first only covered those clans which were of true southern origin, or as we should say to-day, of Zulu or Swazi stock. This is the meaning which Ngoni still has when used in its narrow or strict sense to-day. In collecting the clan names in a village, for example, the headman says 'Those are Ngoni, those are Makalanga, those are Nsenga', and so on. The true Ngoni clans are those most highly honoured, the real aristocrats, and a little experience teaches the field worker to recognize their bearing as they walk about among the rest. In a village containing several clans, the houses of the Ngoni clans occupy the most honourable places in the middle of the horse-shoe formation surrounding the cattle kraal. In any meeting at a chief's village the men and women of Ngoni clans sit nearest to the chief and drink beer before the rest. This ranking by clans, however, does not stop at the true Ngoni. They lead the hierarchy, but other clans also claim precedence in a rough geographical order of the tribes absorbed from south to north. The true Ngoni illustrate this by saying, 'In old days the only men who were made *indunas* were those of the Swazi, Zulu, Suto, and Tonga clans. After we settled here, *indunas* were made from the Makalanga, Nsenga, and Sukuma clans'. There is therefore

[1] See *Bantu Studies*, Sept. 1934, for classification of the South African languages. Also A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, for list of Nguni clans.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

We have also to recognize that the wider connotation of the word is in constant use to-day, and it will be apparent in the course of this article that those who like to be thought Ngoni but have no real claim to the name, find ways in which to identify themselves with the real Ngoni, and to impress upon outsiders that they share the distinction of that name.

III. Ngoni Society as a Cultural Unit. It is evident that the field worker who tries to describe and analyse the society which is found in the Ngoni areas to-day has some difficulty in establishing appropriate and correct terms. Here is a society which is a compound of ethnic units, subdivided into clans according to kinship, stratified into ranks, held together by a ruling aristocracy and a strong centralized political organization. This society differs radically from that of a homogeneous community where the sociological structure has gone through a long process of integration or disintegration, or has remained static over a period of time. The Ngoni created their 'state', that is, their present political and social units, within a relatively short period by a series of deliberate acts. They brought with them a pattern of society from the south; they modified[1] it during their forty odd years of wandering and warfare; and they moulded it finally when they settled in their present areas. Within this deliberately created social structure the principles of centralization and rank were dominant. Based on these two principles the Ngoni set up, in an alien milieu, the institutions of chieftainship,[2] of military training, of systematized law courts, of recognized ranks in society, of patrilineal succession and inheritance, speaking among themselves a language foreign to the country. The resultant society, a compound of the Ngoni ruling aristocracy and the conquered indigenous people, formed the Ngoni state. So conscious was all this social engineering that old men to-day can give detailed accounts of the various processes, political, legal, military, by which the conquerors and conquered were brought under one rule.[3] Borrowing a term from European history,

[1] One striking modification was the replacing of the village as a small kinship group by villages of hundreds of huts, with an elaborate organization into hamlets.

[2] Using chieftainship in the sense of the Ngoni *inkosi* whose office and powers were very different from those of the surrounding petty chiefs.

[3] As one of these processes, the piercing of the ear-lobes became the 'tribal

178 it might almost be called nation-building. And when you have heard
829 the Ngoni Paramount discuss the position of minorities in his country, and his claim to territories no longer under his rule, you could almost imagine you were in the corridors of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

The Ngoni state, however, to-day is not only a political structure, a framework for political and social life. Within that structure, form-
[183] ing parts of it, are institutions embodying those social, political, economic, and ethical values which are peculiarly Ngoni. The Ngoni, that is to say, when they absorbed other peoples into their state,
[177] imposed upon them a new social order together with the values inherent in that order. Patrilineal succession and inheritance, for example, introduced by the Ngoni, was bound up with the relations of father to son, the acquiring and distribution of cattle, the worship
[182] of clan and family ancestors. Each institution had its clearly related rules and values, and these are made explicit by the Ngoni when they describe them. The casual European observer in the country sees only the Paramount Chief and his subordinate chiefs ruling over a welter of tribes with a confusing mixture of social behaviour. To the Ngoni, however, and to the anthropologist who follows their lead, the pattern of society which they set up is clear and definite; it has a cultural reality of its own. The seeming welter of tribes is in reality an ordered relationship. Each group, tribe, or clan, has its recognized place *vis-à-vis* other groups. Within that ordered relationship the different groups have pursued a process of preserving some customs and adopting others, and they can give a coherent account of what they have retained and what they have borrowed. The real Ngoni do not admit to borrowing much. They like to think of their society as very distinctive as well as being well integrated. Yet the degree of modification in Ngoni society needs very close investigation because it shows much variety in different localities.

121 When they entered their present areas the Ngoni were very inferior
648 in numbers to the indigenous people. How was it then that they were
[161] able to subdue them? And having subdued them, how did they pre-

[304] mark' of the Ngoni as various forms of tattooing were of other tribes. Ear-
[186] piercing was sometimes forced (i.e. upon captives taken in war), sometimes voluntary. To-day children of local clans are teased by children of Ngoni clans and called 'Chewa' if they have not had their ears pierced, and they beg their mothers to take them to the 'doctor' to be 'made Ngoni'.

814 down fully and correctly. When I arrived in Chief Gomani's country,
124 after having stayed in the other two Ngoni areas, the chiefs and leading
[114] men whom he called to see me asked at once, 'What did the other Ngoni do to show you they were Ngoni? *We* want you first to hear the story of our people.' If I said to any older man of good standing, that is of a true Ngoni clan, 'Tell me about the Ngoni', he invariably began with the traditions of the south and their trek north.

173 I have some fifteen long texts[1] of Ngoni history, most of which
[126] begin with the stories of Dingiswayo and Zwidi, leading on to the rise of Chaka and the Ngoni exodus from the south. These texts not only show a measure of agreement with each other, but they also are verifiable by established history as recorded by Europeans. Those texts which came from Gomani's country contain different material after the exodus from the south. For the Ngoni under the leadership of the
[614] Maseko clan came north with Mzilikazi and the Matabele, and crossing the Zambesi alone, went east of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika.[2] The main Ngoni group under the Jere clan went west of Lake Nyasa into Tanganyika, and remained a united group until the death of Zwangendaba in 1848. A disputed succession followed and the Ngoni split up under two rival Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera. The history
[814] of those years, as related to-day, is largely concerned with proving in each area that their Paramount is the only rightful one, the only one to whom the royal salute *Bayete* should be given. Mpezeni's historians say, 'Mwambera snatched *Bayete*'—and vice versa. In spite of these divergences in later history, however, the Ngoni point to their earlier
619 history and say, 'You see we are all one people'. They are conscious
• 829 of, and troubled about, their present divisions and inclined to attribute them to our premature arrival in the country. 'You came too soon. We would have fought until there was only one *inkosi*.'

814 The detailed knowledge of Ngoni history is regarded as the province of a specialist. 'How can a man of no wisdom remember all those names?' From time to time 'historians' tell episodes of this traditional history in the villages of the Paramount or of other im-

[1] 800–1,000 words.

[2] This is their own account and is confirmed by the Rev. Charles Stuart, formerly at Ekwendeni, but not so far recorded by other Europeans.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

history in order to prove their unity with the true Ngoni. It is nevertheless recognized that the aristocrats, through their kinship links with the past, have the best knowledge; the rest listen and defer to them. For matters relating to history are no antiquarian interest to the Ngoni. It is probable that recalling history and dwelling on the great days of the past is to some extent a compensation for what the Ngoni consider the indignities of their position to-day. Yet it is also a stimulus to them to maintain their separate identity and to revere their institutions. Tradition supports rank, by recognizing the historical importance of certain clans; and rank preserves tradition because intimate knowledge is the proud monopoly of certain families.

V. TRADITION AND LEGEND AS DOCUMENTATION. To the anthropologist who examines the part played by tradition and legend in the culture of a people, Professor Malinowski has given an invaluable lead. He suggests that myths are the charter and documentation for traditional tribal life, 'statements of reality which live in the institutions and pursuits of the people';[1] and that legend is re-interpreted history. All peoples of whatever level of civilization interpret history in the light of their beliefs about themselves, their achievements, and their destiny. The Ngoni are no exception to this. Sometimes they relate factual history which is verifiable and accurate. At other times it is probably part fact, part fiction. Yet at all times the emphasis in, and interpretation of, tradition, has a definite purpose, and it is possible to see how a standardized form of a narrative has come to be accepted and believed in. The version of a narrative at one time was interpreted or moulded to serve a purpose. Having been established, it then moulds the thinking of the people on that particular issue. The vexed question of the supremacy of the two Paramounts, Mpezeni and Mwambera[2] is a case in point. The basis of the story of the original dispute is the same, but the versions as told in each 'country' differ in a succession of minute details, whose arrangement and emphasis prove the point in each case. Mpezeni's historians have arranged the details to prove that he is the rightful *inkosi*; Mwambera's historians

[1] B. Malinowski. Article on Culture in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

[2] The two Paramounts at present holding these titles are grandsons of the first holders, to whom I refer as old Mpezeni.

173 do the same. And in each area the versions as recited convince the
829 people that their *inkosi* is supreme. The main purpose of the tradition
643 was to show that there cannot be more than one rightful *inkosi* of the Ngoni. The present day interpretations serve the same purpose and exalt one of the two claimants at the expense of the other.

The traditions centring round the person of Zwangendaba are numerous. Some of these are concerned to show that he was an important chief in the south under Zwidi, and that the Jere clan of which he was head was a leading one. Other accounts do not disguise that he was an upstart, but lay stress on his success as leader of the Ngoni in their trek north. All these traditions about Zwangendaba are told as documentation for the importance of the *inkosi*, and centre round the Ngoni belief that their state must have one head in whom authority is centralized. It is easy to see that the circumstances under which the Ngoni state was created demanded a strong autocratic ruler. The traditions gathered round this first ruler of their state now serve to perpetuate the beliefs about the office of Paramount Chief, beliefs which modern ideas and western education have hardly modified at all.

173 Ngoni history divides into three periods, and the traditions in each
829 period, as they are told, form the people's thinking about that section of their past. The traditions of the earliest period, that is, of their life in the south and their trek north, are the charter for their pride as a distinctive people. The traditions of the middle period, of their conquests and settlements, document their superiority over the surrounding peoples. The traditions of the last period, that of the arrival of the European, determine their attitude towards white contact. Their interpretation of their history, therefore, reflected in the established legends and tradition, influences profoundly their thinking about themselves, about their neighbours, and about the Europeans.

173 VI. Prelude to White Contact. This second period of Ngoni
167 history includes the events from the crossing of the Zambezi to the coming of the Europeans, roughly the years 1835–1885. During these fifty years the original Ngoni horde, with additions to it from the tribes south of the Zambezi, explored the country in which they were finally to settle, went farther north into Tanganyika, and finally

returned between the years 1855–1865, to settle in their present habitat. The earlier part of the period was one of exploring and of conquest. The later part was the time of settlement and consolidation, during which the Ngoni 'states' emerged in the form in which they were found, when the Europeans first arrived.

The Ngoni in Mpezeni's country, when speaking of this time, call it *chamtendere* (the time of peace). Any white travellers' tales referring to these years lay stress on the constant raids carried out by the Ngoni, the fierceness of their warriors, and their ravaging of the countryside for slaves and cattle. It was obviously a time of frequent wars. Why then do the Ngoni call it a time of peace? I have asked this question of many men of rank and standing and they give one invariable reply, 'We call it *chamtendere* because the *Azungu* (Europeans) were not there to trouble us'. This statement is in effect the key to Ngoni thinking about the days of pre-white contact, and also about the advent of the Europeans. The way in which they speak of *chamtendere* is itself significant. I first heard it during a long recital of Ngoni history, and stopped the narrator to ask the meaning of the word. There was instantly an embarrassed silence and self-conscious grins in the group. The word had evidently slipped out unawares, for later on they told me that it was a word they only used among themselves. Having once been used, however, it appeared frequently in conversations with me, and proved a useful starting-point for accounts of the organization of their own state and the effects on it of the European advent. 'Ah, *chamtendere*', they say, with a deep sigh, 'then we were people'. It proved also to be a pass-word to their confidence, for whenever I mentioned *chamtendere* to a village headman, he and his notables nudged each other, and laughed and said, 'She can know about us'. When pressed to be more specific about this 'troubling' by the *Azungu* they spoke of taxes, of the ban upon raiding and warfare, of young men being called away to work, of their land being taken for European farms. These restrictions and disabilities caused by white contact they regarded as warfare, that is, as troubled times, because the Europeans forcibly prevented them from doing as they liked, just as they had done in their day to the surrounding tribes. The conquered tribes, on the other hand, naturally hailed the advent of the Europeans as a time of peace and security. Therein lies the chief

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

difference to-day between the attitude of the Ngoni to the Europeans and that of the Chewa, for example. In the vernacular expression the Ngoni say, 'The Europeans spoiled our country'; the Chewa say, 'The Europeans saved us'.

Chamtendere, then, was the period of Ngoni supremacy, when they established by force of arms their right to rule over the country and its indigenous inhabitants. There was, however, some difference between the political organization of the Ngoni as a conquering horde on the march, and their organization when they finally settled in their present areas. At both times the focus of their organization was warfare—they were a nation under arms. But once settled on land which they had chosen they began to spread a network of political organization over the country, and to plan in terms of 'countries'[1] instead of mobile villages. To-day when they discuss the advent of the Europeans and the consequent 'spoiling' of their country, they recall the days when extensive tribute was paid to their Paramount Chief, chiefs were free to choose good sites for their very big villages, the outlying areas were ruled by *indunas* and lesser chiefs. It was the partial breaking up of this centralized political organization which they regarded as 'spoiling their country', as well as the economic restrictions with regard to land and the prohibition of raiding for new supplies of cattle.

During this time of Ngoni supremacy Ngoni institutions flourished —those institutions which they had brought with them from the south and preserved through their wanderings. When they are telling to-day about these years they speak fervently and reverently of the part played by the Paramount Chief in every side of life, the training for warfare of all the young men, the instruction and supervision of young chiefs by old *indunas*, Ngoni marriage and initiation ceremonies. It was during this time in Mpezeni's country that the *Inqwala* or first fruits ceremony was regularly observed at Mtenguleni, the village of the mother of old Mpezeni.[2] At this ceremony the Paramount Chief 'opened' the new food season by the ritual eating of new fruits, especially young maize and pumpkins. It was also the

[1] i.e. chiefs' areas.

[2] The description of this *Inqwala* given by men and women who took part in it in their youth shows much similarity to the *Inqwala* of to-day among the Swazi.

9: Read , E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Moravi FR4

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 173 829 177 [582] this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chinamwali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *umsindo* or *umgonxo* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chinamwali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

N M [881]

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

N M [191] [562]

N [178]

N 114 If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chamtendere*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union. This exodus to the south in its turn brought the Ngoni into touch once more with the Matabele, the Zulu, and the Swazi, and reawakened their consciousness of their southern origin. It is significant that just at the point when their power in their own country received a crushing blow, they came into contact once more in the south with the stock from which they had sprung and to whom they could still speak in their own language. The anthropologist who looks for the reason why the distinctive Ngoni culture did not die out entirely after their military defeat and the advent of the whites, can see at least part of the reason supplied by the results of this economic exodus to work in the south. When the other tribes in the neighbourhood were, in the Ngoni phrase, 'running always to the Boma' and incidentally picking up fragments of European customs, the Ngoni remained, according to their own account, to a great extent aloof and were strengthened in this aloofness by their renewed southern connexions.

Ngoni supremacy over the country was at an end. The Europeans were the overlords of all the tribes, not the Ngoni. Instead of one big chief in the country, many small ones were now recognized who dared to give themselves airs because they knew the Ngoni could not compel allegiance to their Paramount. Chewa people living under Ngoni chiefs could no longer be forced to stay there, therefore a different attitude towards them was necessary. 'Chewa' could no longer be synonymous with 'slave'. I have heard Ngoni chiefs in court address their *indunas* and headmen many times on behaving well to people of other tribes 'Or they will leave us and to-day we cannot make them return'. A recent case in which a young chief, but a very important one, was summoned to the Paramount's court for insulting a Chewa woman, was made the occasion by the Paramount for a long public discourse on the present relations between Ngoni and Chewa, pointing out that an Ngoni chief whose Chewa subjects left him would 'spoil his country' and 'all his people would be ashamed'. Ngoni prestige, in fact, having lost the support of military power, had to rely on other sanctions. In their own eyes, their prestige was still due to their southern origin, their success in creating the Ngoni state in an alien milieu, and those distinctive institutions which they had retained. To the surrounding people, to the Chewa and other tribes,

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

273 recipient usually takes the lead in praising, and his praise is chorused by the rest of the people in the hut.

The first jar, then, is divided by the owner himself and the bowlfuls are given to his village neighbours. The next jar is given to the headman or lieutenant of the village for division, and it is with the drinking of this jar that the party is held really to begin. The first bowl of this second jar is given by the divider of the beer back to the owner of the beer, who praises the divider before drinking. The second bowl goes to some other lieutenant or, if there is no other village lieutenant, to some important woman. Successive bowls go to other important people in the village. Subsequent jars are usually given to important visitors from other villages, who will allocate the bowls to their companions and to people in the host village. The first bowl of each jar goes to the divider of the jar, and the dregs, which are usually taken as the two last bowlfuls in each jar, and which are poured out after the jar has been tilted on its side, go to the dispenser of the beer, and to anyone who has been helping him.

There is a great deal of freedom in the allocation of beer in this way, and the complaints of people who hoped to be given beer and who were unfortunate are an invariable aftermath of any beer-party. It is important to note that the quantity of beer consumed by any individual is to some extent independent of the allocation of the jars and bowls. There are usually two or three bowls in use, and these are all filled up at each round. This means that most people in the hut drink each time. But what is remembered is not the beer drunk, but the method of allocation. Even if a man becomes intoxicated, he may yet complain the next day to his friends that the owner of the beer was miserly and lacking in generosity if no jar or bowl was specifically allocated to him. There is an obligation to return gifts of beer made in
[431] this way, so that a man can ensure a favourable reception for himself in other villages where there is beer, by his generosity and sagacity in distributing when there is beer in his own house.

The importance attached to beer-drinking is well brought out in
262 some essays written by schoolboys on the topic 'What I want to do
273 when I leave school'. One of the boys wrote: 'Beer and cattle are the food of the Ngoni. . . . If your friend comes and he doesn't get beer and meat, then although he gets porridge, he still says that there was hunger in the house.' Another said: 'I will brew beer very often. Our life depends on drinking beer.' The small importance attached to beer
[829] by the neighbouring Cewa tribe is well known to the Ngoni, and one

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

sophisticated informant remarked: 'The Cewa are just slaves, they merely eat. The Ngoni are like the Whites; they eat little and drink much.' 273 262 829

Economic Co-operation

There are other activities which entail inter-village ties. Cattle seek their own fodder, but small stock, pigs, goats, and sheep, are fed on husks and other scraps. A man whose animals have increased beyond his ability to feed them will farm out some of them to his friends, either in his own village or in some neighbouring one. The tender of the animals then exercises some control over the disposal of any natural increase and at the end of the arrangement he is entitled to be given one of the animals. The friends whom a man selects for this task are not always close relatives, and may sometimes be people to whom he can trace no genealogical relationship at all, but whom he may have met, for instance, in Southern Rhodesia. Other people acquire a reputation for integrity, and may be given animals to look after by their acquaintances. Cattle are not disposed of so widely, and there is more often a kinship connexion between the owner and the tender. On the other hand, cattle are more susceptible than small stock to tsetse fly, and in consequence there are many people in the new areas that have been recently resettled who have to keep their cattle in the village of a relative or friend who lives in an area free from fly. 233 476 628

Harvesting of crops is carried out by members of the household except in the case of the aged, who will call on their relatives to help them. Hut-building, making a new section of a garden, clearing the ground prior to planting, and, in particular, weeding the garden during the wet season, are activities that are often carried out by collective effort. Women, particularly pairs of widows, may work together in each other's gardens turn and turn about, and a man may be able to call on relatives, particularly his sons-in-law, to help in his garden without paying them for it. Most of the outside assistance that may be required in a garden is raised by means of a beer-party. The man's wife brews beer, and it is made known in the village and round about that on such-and-such a day there will be a party to hoe in their garden. A dozen or so people go to the garden in the morning, and work until the task set by the owner of the garden is completed. They then move to the village, and are refreshed with beer. Attendance at the beer-party is not restricted to those who have worked in the garden, and at some such parties a jar of beer may be specifically allocated to 241 476 602 273 476 241

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show subservience to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss. 562 565 867

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private. 881 836 565 [797] 178 [195] [831]

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony [554]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
831 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
292 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
885 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often
301 trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the premarriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
885 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
556 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after.
593 It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
[836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to
177 say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'
885 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
842 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

562 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nhlanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshlanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanti* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedicao . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

If a women
837 believes that her husband is committing adultery with
578 another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

864 The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged
[897] five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages.
[533] Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they
[535] also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a
881 girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a
864 month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

864 There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis
[831] is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

842 Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use
830 of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl
[864] learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13]
881 The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour
593 of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her
[535] erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mololo*, a root, and *hajalejale*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cihapa*. Cf. Nyanja *hapahapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Girls are not examined to see if they have been deflowered. Many girls have love affairs with young boys before they reach puberty, and at one time children built play-houses, after the manner of the Cewa, where they pretended to be adults playing at cooking and copulation. The Cewa encouraged this among their own children and at puberty Cewa girls, if not already deflowered, had their hymen forcibly ruptured in a prescribed manner. We have seen that the Ngoni formerly expected girls to be chaste before marriage while the Cewa believed that if a girl did not copulate at puberty she would die. It seems nowadays that adults expect that pre-pubescent boys and girls will play together sexually and that, provided this takes place with a certain amount of discretion, nothing is done to stop it. Boys and girls visit each other in dormitories, hoping that their voices will not be recognized by people in neighbouring huts. After puberty young men and women continue to flirt together, individuals varying in the extent to which they copulate. Grown men do not usually sleep with young girls, nor grown women with young boys, and if this does happen and is discovered there is always the suspicion of sorcery. The Ngoni believe, with most of their neighbours, that in order to make many of the anti-social medicines of sorcery effective, a sorcerer must copulate with some partner morally forbidden to him (or her), such as a close relative or a person of greatly disparate age or an animal. With this background of belief, Ngoni say that after puberty young men and women naturally like to frolic together and not with their juniors. Within this framework of tolerated covert activity no particular arrangements are made at puberty, save that if a man is betrothed to a young girl he will be invited formally to come and sleep with her once while she is secluded.

N 864 831 M 88 831 N 836 N [864] N [154]

Thus from an early age their future roles as husbands and wives condition the sexual activities of boys and girls. A girl who allows herself to be seduced too easily is regarded as foolish and a man who is for ever chasing unmarried girls when he should be founding a family is regarded as immature. But sexual activity is taken for granted, and the only stipulations are that it should be conducted discreetly so that the older people in the village are not forced to notice it, and that unmarried girls should not bear live children. Knowledge of abortifacients seems to be fairly common and recently contraceptives, issued originally to soldiers in the 1939-45 war, have come into use. Few cases of seduction of unmarried girls come before the courts.

N [847] [842]

Despite the emphasis on sexual satisfaction rather than on fertility, Ngoni men and women still desire children. This is so for men despite the low incidence of bridewealth payments and the uncertainty about the custody of children. A man's children may decide to live with their mother's people, but they are still his children and he can always follow them from village to village in his old age wherever they decide to settle.

N 842 N [593]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 much opportunity for a man to assess his sweetheart's domestic
584 efficiency and moral character, but he can get information on these
matters from other people who live in her vicinity. When he sees
574 a girl in a distant village where he is staying, he has more leisure to
see what she is like and can ask his own hosts about her character.
Girls visit in the same way as men, and if a girl is anxious to get a
husband and fears she may not find one, she may spend most of her
time visiting in different villages hoping to attract a suitable man.
[221] There is more time for visiting and flirting at the end of the dry
season when there is little work to do in the gardens, but marriages
are contracted throughout the year.[5]

Young men say that what they like in a girl is a light skin colour,
581 a pretty face, and the ability to dance and to copulate well. Some
832 men, however, say that such a girl might be all right to run after,
but for marriage one would also need to know that she could cook
porridge. Women say they like a man who is well dressed, who
has a good job working for a European, and who has a parting in his
hair. Women sometimes wear medicines which are believed to
attract men, and men who have no good clothes may borrow the
clothes of others in order to attract women.

3. Sexual partners

593 The relationship between a man and his wife, at least for the
first years of their marriage, is spoken of principally in sexual terms,
581 and the sexual activities of the couple are more closely defined by
the marriage bond than are their residence and their economic life.
Informants say that the reason for the existence of marriage is
either 'the work in the house', a euphemism for copulation, or else
'clothes', that is, so that a woman may have someone to buy clothes
for her. It is, however, much easier to improvise alternative solutions
to the problem of clothing than it is to find alternative means of
sexual satisfaction without coming into conflict with law and
morality. Furthermore, while we have seen in the old days that the
main emphasis was on the fertility of the woman, this has now shifted,
and it is her skill in copulation rather than her success in childbearing
[842] that is emphasized. Fertility is still valued, but does not appear to
form so important a theme in ceremonial, songs, and gossip as among
other societies where the principle of unilinear descent has not
broken down, and where, therefore, fertility either of a man's wife
or of his sister, is a vital necessity for the maintenance of local
structure.

593 The husband-wife relationship is one in which the man is apparently
superordinate to his wife, but we shall see that in practice this
superordination is not as clear-cut as might at first appear. It is
furthermore a relationship in which there are certain prescribed
mutual obligations, so that if these obligations are neglected, it is

[5] Cf. Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, p. 69.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

necessary to take formal action to restore harmony. Husband and wife still remain separate persons, separated socially by their distinct roles. Yet they are bound together by economic ties, by symbolic procedures, and by mystical connexion. 593

The sexual rights and obligations of husband and wife in each other are not symmetrical. A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, but a woman cannot gain exclusive sexual rights over her husband. Her husband can take other wives, or commit adultery, and she has no ground in law for complaint unless at the same time he neglects her. The most she can do is to make life so unpleasant for him that rather than face her anger he decides to sleep with her alone. Mystical procedures are available to both man and wife, and while a husband may use medicines to safeguard that which is his by right, a wife uses medicines to augment her other sanctions, such as the threat of not cooking food for her husband or of running away to her relatives. There is one class of medicines[6] which a man can administer to his wife by cicatrization which it is believed will cause any lover of the woman to die. Another magical procedure is stated to prevent the lover from withdrawing after coitus, so that the adulterous pair will have to reveal themselves to their neighbours in order to gain medical assistance. These medicines are said to be favoured by men going off to Southern Rhodesia without their wives. It is difficult to tell to what extent they are actually administered, but the belief in their efficacy is wide-spread, and people would comment that so-and-so who was ill had become so because he had slept with a woman doctored in this way, and that the scars on such-and-such a woman were made when her husband had given her this sort of medicine. On the other hand a woman may use medicine[7] to prevent her husband from copulating with anyone else, and there are other medicines which act as love charms or which encourage the husband to stay at home at night.[8] The beliefs about difficult labour and *mdulo*[9] also have a stabilizing effect in that the man may fear for the fate of his child and for that reason be faithful to his wife while she is pregnant. On the other hand it is believed that a rejected lover can give medicine[10] to a woman who resists his approaches, so that she will die or have difficulties in childbirth. The only way for a woman to avoid this hazard is to live demurely and not to excite the attention of other men. 593 837 837 789 [832] [843]

If a woman believes that her husband is committing adultery with

[6] Known as *lukankho*. There are at least four varieties of this, associated with different maladies all of which are fatal to the adulterer. Cf. *lukanko* in Colson, *Marriage among the Plateau Tonga* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers—forthcoming).

[7] *Ndamanga*. See below, p. 56.

[8] E.g., medicine made from the house lizard (*mbololiko*) and the domesticated cat, because these animals are always in the house and do not wander about.

[9] See below, p. 46.

[10] *Kalamatila*, from the name of the species of frog from which it is made.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

If a women
837 believes that her husband is committing adultery with
another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She
578 usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

864 The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged
[897] five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages.
[533] Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they
[535] also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a
881 girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a
864 month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

864 There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only
[831] specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

842 Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use
830 of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl
[864] learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13]
881 The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour
593 of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her
[535] erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[12] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[13] Such as *mtoloto*, a root, and *hajalejala*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cihapa*. Cf. Nyanja *hapahapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

595 polygyny, and punish their members who take additional wives,
794 there are still a number of Christian polygynists who for most purposes align themselves with the Christian group.

As in the old days, the wives of a polygynist are ranked in the
595 chronological order of marriage, the first wife married being the
178 great wife. If, however, bridewealth has been paid, the wives married
[583] in this way are all senior to those who are married without it. The arrangement by which a barren or aged wife was given a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) has now almost disappeared. A young girl may still be indicated as a linked co-wife designate at the gall bladder ceremony of her kinswoman and the intestines placed round her neck, but this is now a mere ceremonial, and the girl marries elsewhere when she grows up. As mentioned above a chief negotiated recently for a linked co-wife on the strength of bridewealth paid by his father, but with no success.

593 A man makes his headquarters in his great wife's hut, and keeps
595 his possessions and money in it. During the day it is considered proper that he should sit and chat or entertain visitors on the verandah of her hut. Her hut is likely to be of better design than those of her co-wives, and she is more likely than they to have a separate kitchen. When her husband returns from a journey, he ought to go first to her hut, and if he has brought back goods from Southern Rhodesia, it is in her house that he stores his loads until he has time to divide them among his wives and relatives. A visitor from afar goes first to the great wife's hut and there asks for the man he is seeking. In her husband's absence it is she who must entertain the visitor. This pattern of precedence is followed to greater or lesser extent despite quarrels between husband and wife, and is not affected by where the husband actually sleeps at night.

Apart from this emphasis on the importance of the great wife, the
595 correct behaviour for a man with many wives is impartiality. He must sleep with each wife in rotation, usually for a week at a time, and must not confide in one wife the secrets of his relationship to another. Relationships between co-wives are sometimes strained, and one may use medicines against the others. The medicine[28]
[830] believed to prevent a man from achieving erection with anyone other than the woman who gives it to him is sometimes used by one wife against another. On the other hand, some co-wives help each other in their gardens and many polygynists' households run smoothly. Each wife has her own hut and her own garden and it is possible for them to arrange their affairs so that they can co-operate or act separately as they find best. If they persistently quarrel
[591] their husband may deem it well for them to live in separate villages, so that for example a man may live virilocally with his great wife and uxorilocally with his second wife, going from one village to the

[28] Possibly known as *ndamanga*. The details of this medicine are not known by many men, and I was unable to question any women on this matter.

833

833 SEXUAL INTERCOURSE--sexual initiation (e.g., age and circumstances of first intercourse for each sex, preferred partner); defloration; times and places considered appropriate for coitus; degree of interest and enjoyment ascribed to and manifested by each sex; initiative in copulation; degree of elaboration of preliminary sex play; preferred, variant, and tabooed postures; accompanying behavior (e.g., biting, urination); frequency and duration of coitus; occurrence of female orgasm; artificial means of augmenting sensation; behavior after coitus (e.g., sexual hygiene); psychic difficulties in coitus; impotence and frigidity (e.g., prevalence, explanation, prevention, treatment); etc. See also:

Defloration rites at marriage 585
Regulation of intercourse under polygamy . . . 595
Contraception 842
Sex training of children 864

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (1)

When the boy's voice began to break, and his father or another older man noticed it, the second part of the ritual took place. The father's brother went to a senior man famed in the village as a herbalist and obtained from him several kinds of roots. These were ground and then cooked either in milk or in the cud from a goat's stomach, usually the latter, for the father liked it to be known that he killed a goat for his son. If the mixture was cooked in milk, a fowl was killed, and in either case the boy was given the meat to eat immediately after the mixture to take away the extremely bitter taste. The cooking took place on a small fire by the kraal gate in the presence of the male members of the father's house. The boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the mixture as it was bubbling in the pan and to lick them quickly. He was not expected to show that he found the mixture very bitter as well as hot to touch. At intervals the boy had to jump over the fire, hitting his elbows and knees with the palms of his hands. The more often he did this, the less often did he have to dip in the pan because the mixture soon dried up, but he had to continue dipping and licking till there was no liquid left. The senior men watched intently all through this performance because they believed the mixture not only helped physical growth and muscular strength but would prevent impotence. When this ritual was performed for the heir of a chief, it was followed by a war-dance in the cattle kraal and the boy had to take a second dose of medicine in the kraal surrounded by the warriors. In such a case a bull was killed instead of the customary goat, and the contents of its stomach used for mixing the medicine. The meat was eaten by the boy and his father's relatives.

As in the case of the girls, this boy's ritual was an occasion for asserting the authority of the father and his kin over the boy. For him there was however no separating off into another group after this maturing. He continued to live in the dormitory, herd cattle, and go to school as before.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5
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Cewa

The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual

N 881 182 We now come back to the question of why the Ngoni held to this private ritual for girls and boys at puberty. There were three main reasons. The first was that each Ngoni child belonged to his or her father's house. At this sign of physical maturity, significant for the boy or girl, and for the society, the elders of the house asserted anew their authority over them, performed a brief traditional ritual, and watched during the ritual for evidence of the Ngoni personality traits of courage and physical endurance which they expected to see in young adults. The second reason was that the change at puberty was regarded as marking only one of the stages in the development of growing boys and girls. It is true it had more significance for girls, in that it set the mature girls apart as a separate group. But it was not the prelude to immediate M [881] marriage, as the girls' initiation school was among the neighbouring Cewa people; nor was it in old days the prelude for N [171] the boys joining the army. The third reason was that the Ngoni did not regard fertility as the major dominant factor N [842] in the development of young women, as it undoubtedly was considered among the Cewa. They greatly disliked the ritual and the significance of the Cewa female initiation rites and forbade Ngoni women to have any part in them. Potency N [833] among men, on the other hand, was recognized as important both for the individual and for the social group, and impotence, particularly in leading men, was kept secret and hidden from outside knowledge as far as possible. If an Ngoni N [842] woman after marriage did not bear children, it was not con- [595] sidered a stigma on her, either individually or socially. The [597] common practice of marrying one of her sisters as a 'substitute', or the very common practice of adoption was resorted to. The latter was always referred to as 'putting a child into the house of So and so'.

N 881 171 One of the alleged objects of initiation schools among other ethnic groups was to instruct the young initiates in correct

833 Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within the marriage bond it is not merely permitted, it is right and proper and positively sanctioned. All intercourse is dangerous, whether marital or not, and indeed it is perhaps the licit social significance of marital intercourse that leads to the attribution of mystical 843 significance. While a woman is pregnant, her husband can and indeed should sleep with her and with her co-wives, for it is not her husband's mere copulation with others that endangers her child, but frivolous and illicit intercourse with the wife of another or with some woman he has no intention of marrying. The moral code supports the social order, and the infant is born live into a righteous and well-regulated family. Otherwise it will not be born, or be born dead. Thus runs the belief.

5. Christian marriage

794 We have noted that, whatever were the intentions of the framers of 581 the 1903 Regulations, Christian marriage ceremonies do not now have any legal significance, either in the Administration's courts or in the Native Courts. They are, however, significant in the eyes of the missions concerned, and sanctions are employed to ensure that all Christians are married in church. Marriages usually take place at the mission itself and there is some sort of preparation beforehand to verify that the couple concerned are aware of the religious implications of the marriage. Important people are sometimes married in a village church and the ceremony is attended by many people. These rites, both at the mission and in the village, involve the local groups of Christians and serve to integrate the members. The barriers against marriage outside the sectarian group might under some conditions lead to Christian or even sectarian endogamy but among the Ngoni this has not taken place. If a couple are anxious to marry and cannot by reason of a religious disparity, the pagan will usually join the church and then proceed to marriage as soon as the rules of the denomination permit. After marriage, a number then cease active participation in the affairs of the church, although they usually continue to regard themselves and are regarded as Christians. The fairly rapid growth of Christianity in the last fifty years makes it impossible to tell as yet whether an endogamous community will be formed. In any case, the Christian community stretches like the rest of Ngoni society to the Copperbelt and the towns of Southern Rhodesia, and there are facilities for Christian labour migrants who wish to marry Christian girls in the towns.

799 The missions have attacked polygyny, the inheritance of widows, [597] the ceremony of 'taking up the child', belief in *mdulo* and pre-marital copulation. In addition, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission has opposed the drinking of beer, and in theory but not as yet in practice, payment of bridewealth. The prohibition on the drinking of beer has led to the exchange of gifts of cooked food between the two sides in the various ceremonies of marriage, without making any important difference to their content and meaning. The missions have had

10. *Forbidden and Enjoined Unions (Ngoni).*

The Angoni are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*vide infra*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the Angoni it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage (Ngoni).*

When an Mngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headman to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his *aukhosue* with a present to the *aukhosue* of the girl. There are always two *aukhosue* on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *ku-onga*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several elder women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commensuration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *ku-tenderu*, and sends a cloth (known as *mcheku*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kulowola*, or *kupereka mabeku*. The *mabeku*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are
857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve
233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the
[868] cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

628 There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather
233 than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into
857 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between
[541] the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

233 In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd-
833 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village
857 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief,
631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall

834

834 GENERAL SEX RESTRICTIONS--sexual modesty and decorum; ideas of proper behavior between the sexes; sex taboos observed on particular occasions (e.g., before or during ceremonies, war, hunting, or special industrial activities); miscellaneous sex restrictions; etc. See also:

Effect of sexual repression on personality 15
Regulation of sex relations between classes, castes, and ethnic groups. 56
Sex behavior and taboos at menstruation and during pregnancy 84
Euphemisms 195
Modesty in dress 291
Modesty about elimination 514
Modesty in bathing 515
Etiquette 576
Deferred consummation 585
Sex regulation under polygamy 595
Avoidance and joking relationships. 602
Punishable sex offenses 684
Word taboos. 784
Asceticism 785
Sex taboos during lactation 853
Training of children in modesty 864

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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726
[834]

village in grass-shelters opposite the kraal gate, and no one was allowed to go to a house or to be with his wife. They said that if a man broke this law the army would be unlucky. Even the Paramount if he still went with the army slept there outside. If the Paramount left for the war, his oldest *induna* left his own village and went to the Paramount's and stayed there till the army came back. In the royal village there was continence and all the people were ordered to control themselves in the villages, until the army left.

When the army went out the old men accompanied it, but after they had spoken words of warning they came back to the village. The chief point in it all was that the young men should have courage, and should help each other if one is wounded or there is any other difficulty, and should obey the leaders. They warned the leaders too to begin the fighting wisely and not on a bad or treacherous place. If a leader did that sort of thing and many were killed a case was brought against him. When the army went out two sections were detached to guard the village. These stayed at home along with the companies of old men. They 'kept the tribe', the Paramount and the old people and the stock. [887]

The approach and attack

When the army went out it marched very slowly, and halts for the night were at short intervals. All the sections kept together as ordered by the war *induna*. In all the sections there were scouts to show the way for the army. In each section one or perhaps two were chosen and were put together to walk ahead and look carefully, and come and report any news, especially when they were in enemy country. When the army rested, the scouts went forward to see if there was any danger near. When the army slept in grass-shelters, one or two sections were sent to guard against danger both in front and rear. The army had provision carriers, that is, those who carried food and the coverings of the old men. These were boys and girls, sometimes women from their houses. These were not sent by the Paramount but each household chose its young people to carry the food. The section of the food carriers had another section to protect them when the enemy were attacked or when they went to meet enemies. [724]

When the army was near the enemy stockade the leader ordered them to sit down and rest before they attacked. At such a time the warriors snuffed or smoked hemp. This hemp-smoking was preferred because it maddened the warriors and gave them hearts without fear in facing the enemy. In the enemy stockade the drums would be beating to show that their enemies were angry, but the army of the Ngoni sat and rested as though there were no enemy. [726]

When the army had rested, the war *induna* and the other *izinduna*, or the leader of this army (for all the armies that went out were put under one man of whom they said, the owner of this army is so and so) scouted to see the difficulties of the stockade and to choose a good place for attack.

When it had been carefully chosen and the *izinduna* had agreed together how the attack should begin, then the leader roused the army and began to dance his own praise-dance. The army responded to him. After

539 the
727 salutation being '*Amehlo amhlope*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Buyani*', 'Return',
[576] along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebo*' also with the clan name. This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Echigodhlweni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amakanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[824] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Po*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[834] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Po*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of heroes

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
703 then they were called again together to dance the *ligubo*. On that day bulls
[862] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the hero of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the heroes of the sections
[837] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

726 The *intelezi* was made from the roots of a creeper and a bush which
789 grew on the banks of rivers. These roots were burned over the fire,
[824] pounded and mixed with water. The warriors were given some to lick on the tips of their fingers, some was smeared inside their shields, and the rest was beaten in a gourd till it foamed. The 'war doctor' took the tail of a gnu or of a zebra and dipped it in the foam and sprinkled the warriors as they finally passed out of the gateway of the kraal on the campaign. This medicine was for strengthening them and also for making them 'slippery', so that the enemy spears would glide by them and not pierce them, and they could slip between the posts of the enemy stockade. After being sprinkled with the *intelezi* no one could sleep with
[834] his wife or any other woman, as he would risk spoiling the effect of the medicine and therefore would be more liable to be killed.

[411] The *inhlenza* was a spear with a barbed hook. The Paramount threw it in front of the army as they stood in the kraal until all the warriors had left. It was then put back in the *indlunkulu* where it was kept in the care of the owner of that hut.

There were thus three functions to be performed, each by one of the war medicines. The *intelezi* was to strengthen and protect individual warriors. The *intonga* was the symbol of their Paramount and their kingdom leading them to war and weakening the enemy. The *inhlenza* was the symbol of invincibility, administered by the Paramount.

726 There were two stages of assembling in the Paramount's village before a campaign. The first followed the initial summons to mobilize, when the local companies (*mabandla*) marched into the kraal, sorted themselves into age regiments (*mabuto*) and sang their regimental songs. Then followed the *ligubo*, the war-dance, when the warriors wore their full war-dress, and the women joined in. There was no individual dancing but a working up of corporate feeling through the dancing and songs. The Ngoni used no drums in their music, relying on achieving
[533] rhythm and unison by the stamping of their feet and their singing. After this dance the warriors left for their villages, while at the Paramount's village preparation was made for food and snuff for the campaign. Hard cakes of roasted bullrush millet, kaffir-corn and groundnuts pounded
[705 251] together, and dried meat, were the main supplies carried. At the second summons the warriors returned in their companies with their carriers. These carriers, who were usually young boys, carried the war-dresses and ornaments wrapped in a mat, and the food supplies.

Since on this final meeting depended much of the ultimate success of the campaign, only the warriors and the senior men were present, and all women and young children were excluded from the kraal. After the objectives of the fighting had been explained the warriors were addressed by the old men and exhorted to be brave and to help their comrades, and then the final medication by the 'war doctor' took place. The separation of the army from the civil population was complete until their return

606 handle them, as well as how to conform to required behaviour. So she put up with present restrictions for the sake of future peace and harmony. Her lot was to live there with her husband's people, and the birth of the child was a strong link in the chain which bound her to them. Meantime she [572] found some relief in her friends among the other young wives, and particularly with the one in whom she placed her confidence, and who acted as her go-between with her mother-in-law.

Wife to husband

593 Throughout the intricate and often vexing relations with her mother-in-law and other senior women, the husband-wife relationship remained for the young mother a steadying and constant factor. She had been attracted to him in courtship; [58] she had had the chance of accepting or refusing him when the marriage proposals were made; the cattle had been handed over to her father to seal the marriage contract. For all these and other reasons she held on to her love for her husband and her relationship with him, whatever overbearing behaviour might be shown her by his relatives. Hence she took care of his possessions in the hut they shared, helping the senior women to send them out of the hut just before the confinement. She redirected food towards him when it was sent to her during her confinement, gladly going short herself in order to prove her devotion. She was glad that after coming out of the hut, having a nurse girl meant that she could keep her body and her clothes clean and sweet-smelling and therefore pleasing to him. She was happy when the ritual cleansing of the hut and of herself made it possible for her to cook for her husband again and endear him to her by that means. When weaning the child caused her pain and frustration, there was at the same time a deep satisfaction that full intercourse was now officially permitted [834] between her and her husband, and that they were free to have another child.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

863 of dust, and many of them began to suffer from sores, itch and sore eyes. The girls however, had already begun to like a clean and shining skin for the sake of being beautiful, and their ablutions were no longer under duress.

The smallest children urinated and defecated wherever they happened to be. From the age of three or four, however, they were taught to tell someone if they wanted to defecate, and taken outside the hut. Maize cobs or soft leaves or grass were used to clean the child, and then thrown on the fire. When the child began to look after himself, he was shown how to use the left hand only when cleaning himself, [826] and told it was 'the hand of shame, only used for bad things'. From the age of four or five small girls and boys went with their mothers and the other women to the section of the surrounding bush reserved for the women's toilet. [514] At about the same age boys and girls were taught to withdraw from the public gaze when urinating, and to conceal themselves behind a hut or in some other hiding-place. The Ngoni were extremely prudish about all physical acts connected with [514] [834] evacuating or sex, and began to demand correct behaviour from children at an early age.

If a child was constipated, or had diarrhoea, or was vomiting, or had a fever or stomach-ache, the nurse girl reported 757 603 it to his mother who went to tell the child's paternal grandmother. For all the range of usual childish ailments the grandmother prescribed and carried out standard treatments, such as whey used as a purgative, or very thin gruel to check diarrhoea. The Ngoni women had a number of herbal remedies which they used for themselves and their children. They also used hot poultices, cupping, and forms of massage. Only when the known household remedies failed, did the grandmother tell the child's father and he, as we have seen, took the responsibility for calling in 'specialists'.

Sleep, the little child's third major need, was sometimes 867 well ordered and sometimes erratic. It was not considered 864 proper for children to sleep in the same hut as their parents

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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to the kin of the married couple however much the kin may intervene in the marriage and act on behalf of the couple.

The belief in the occurrence of such diseases as *mdulo* and *lugola* supports the values of Ngoni society, and acts as a check on behaviour which is wrong in Ngoni eyes. Beliefs in the efficacy of medicines do not have such a straightforward moral connotation, for in theory it is as easy for a man to harm the wife of someone else by the use of medicines, or for a woman to harm her co-wife, as it is for a man to harm his cuckold. Medicines can, therefore, be used for good or ill, depending on the intentions of those who manipulate them. Even the possibility of anti-social manipulation of medicines can, however, have a positive effect, as we have seen in the way in which a wife is encouraged to live demurely without attracting the attention of other men, lest when she spurns their advances they retaliate with medicines to harm her in childbirth. Old people like to maintain that in 'the time of peace' the Ngoni did not use medicines at all, although from what we know of the Zulu and other South-Eastern Bantu tribes from which the Ngoni came, this is almost certainly untrue. 'Our spears were our medicines', they say, meaning that when the state was powerful both internally and in relation to their neighbours, law and order and the wishes of the Paramount Chief could be enforced by physical sanctions. Only now, when the chieftainship has lost so much of its former power and men and women can do wrong without fear of punishment in the courts, is it necessary to fall back on mystical processes in an attempt to control other people's behaviour. By contrast the mystical diseases which can only be caught through socially disapproved actions operated at both stages of Ngoni history, although *mdulo* itself, unlike *lugola* and other similar conditions, appears to have been introduced by the Cewa.[8]

To a lesser extent the fear of venereal disease may be said to act as a stabilizing factor, since men admit that they are cautious in running after women on farms, in Fort Jameson and away in the big towns, because they fear syphilis. In the village an infected woman, if she cannot conceal her condition, is shunned by careful men, and a newcomer to the village who starts to flirt with her may be taken aside by an older man and warned of the risk of infection. It is an actionable offence for one partner in a marriage to transmit venereal disease to the other. Venereal disease is, however, commonly believed to be widespread and the fear of it cannot be said to be an efficient deterrent of adultery.

Despite the mystical safeguards and despite the fairly well defined rights *in uxorem*, marriage is not regarded as a permanent bond. There is a maxim 'Never confide in your wife, for tomorrow you may divorce her.' Consanguinity is permanent and unchangeable and a man should confide in a brother rather than in his wife. The

[8] Cf. Read, op. cit. 'The moral code . . .', p. 7.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

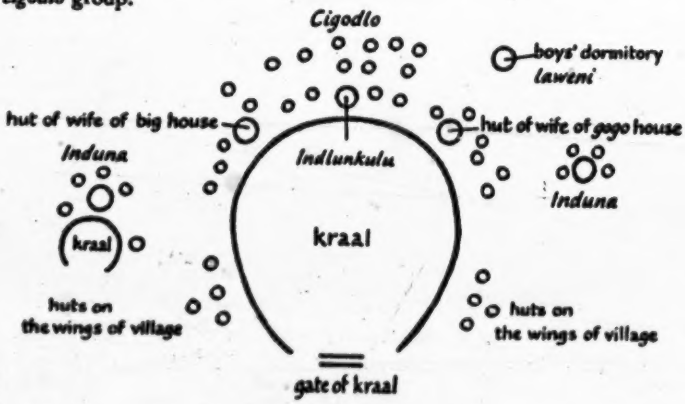
Then they kill the goat

and take the liver, and lungs, and stomach, and set them down beside the beer, and cut off some meat from a fore-leg, and roast it, and cut off a piece, and give the head of the *Kuka* hut, and cut another piece, and the chief eats it, and another his old men eat, and then they begin to cut off bits for their children. The rest of the meat is put in a basket, and next morning is cut up. 166 782 [262]

III. When the propitiation of the spirits is finished the chief tells his headman, "To-day you must cook some relish, and give it to all the people, and finish the ceremony in connection with the exodus." So he (the headman) sleeps with his wife, and in the morning she takes the relish to give to the chief. All persons of lesser importance come and take theirs from the hut, and any one who is at a distance at the time has his put aside. Now the ceremony is over, and the villagers again resume cohabitation with their wives [broken off since the beginning of the ceremony]. One month passes, and then a great quantity of beer is cooked all over the village, and they have a dance that at the new village the ground may become trampled and hard. When some farther time has elapsed, they cook beer, to demolish the huts of the dead, that were left standing at the old village. At the new village, when a man dies, the first one to do so is buried at the old village; when one of the village elders dies, he is buried at the new settlement, and thereafter all who die are buried there. [834] [766]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

621 the main circle round the kraal to emphasize its connexion with the *cigodlo* group.



621 The group referred to as 'a house' has already been defined in its
571 relation to the Paramount and his *lusungulu* village, and it will be illustrated and examined further in Chapter III of Part III. As an Ngoni institution the big house was an integral factor in the succession to high office, and the *gogo* house played an essential role in ceremonial and ritual life. Houses were also one of the most important components in village grouping. Men, women and children regarded themselves as associated with a house in one of three ways. They were related to it by descent or by marriage; or they were members of the family of the *induna* who looked after its affairs; or they served the house as servants or labourers, and were possibly the descendants of captives caught in war and assigned to that house. Thus it often happened that the people living on the wings of the village had some relationship to the house on the side of the kraal where their huts were sited. There were many Ngoni villages where all the inhabitants were said to belong to one of the two or three or more houses, even though the majority of the inhabitants had no kinship or official relationship with a house.

614 The term 'clan' or 'clan descent group' has been used already many times and some explanation and definition is needed as a guide to its use in Part II before it is discussed further in Chapter II of Part III. The Ngoni considered that the clan of a person was of great importance for several reasons. The use of the clan descent name was the normal mode
[576] of address between all adults. The Ngoni said they could not speak to any stranger until they knew his clan name, and they used it in all social intercourse, except when addressing the Paramount. Exogamy was strict for people with the same clan name, and sexual relations between such
[635] individuals was regarded as incest.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especially the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes,
561 but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and
867 competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter
128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there
584 were certain social controls among the Ngoni which operated in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited
835 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers
582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment.
581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptized or under instruction. This last pre-
581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference
182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

602 parents have different fields of interest, but the two fields overlap in the well-being of the married couple. At first there is much formality between them, and intermediaries are used whenever possible. Later they become more friendly. In the setting of the village meeting some parents appear to see themselves as allied in wisdom with the opposite parents against the foolishness of the younger generation whose immature behaviour has been the cause of the meeting. At other times, they may act to defend the rights and happiness of their child against the claims of the rival kin group. We have seen in the story of Daniel and Deborah [21] how yet another alignment can occur when both sets of parents support one spouse against the other. There is no simple way in which these different alignments can be predicted, for they are in fact the outcome of
829 the continually changing pattern of social relationships within the local community. In general, all people wish to preserve the existing configuration of relationships, to support the interests of their children and to maintain the values of their society. In any particular
571 situation, these goals may be mutually incompatible, and there is no over-riding principle, such as agnatic descent or a state-enforced code of law, to which all decisions can be referred. The tenuousness of the cohesion of the local group of kin is reflected in the varying alignments of parents in marital quarrels.

578 We tend to think of quarrels as socially disruptive, and in so far as
571 they are not resolved they do lead to the break-up of existing groupings and the formation of new ones. Yet from another point of view, quarrelling is as much a cohesive process as is common participation in marriage ceremonial. Indeed, just as we have seen already [22] that a ceremony of marriage may be a vehicle for expressing hostility between kin groups as well as recognition of common interest, so a quarrel may lead to increased solidarity between kin groups as well as express hostility between spouses. By taking steps to resolve a quarrel, one kin group is brought into face-to-face contact with the other; there is visiting between their villages and mutual hospitality in somewhat the same way as in marriage ceremonial. The two groups may join to censure the erring spouse. The censured person may feel deserted by his (or her) parents but his father and his father-in-law may have come closer together.

602 The formality that characterizes relations between parents at the beginning of a marriage gradually disappears. A man or woman can always seek shelter and hospitality at the hut of a *child's parent-in-law* and in the final ceremony of marriage, when the married couple enter the wife's mother's hut, the two pairs of parents sit together and discuss the merits and limitations of their respective
● 835 offspring. It is regarded as incestuous for a man to marry a woman whom he calls *child's parent-in-law*. By so doing his son's wife

[21] See above, p. 82.
[22] See above, pp. 76f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

becomes her husband's *sibling* so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere[23] an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her *sibling*. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court. 835

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages. 578 602 851 [583] [589] 431 586

8. Other Kinsfolk

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of 602

[23] See Barnes, op. cit. p. 232

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In all the diagrams ego is shown as male. There is no difference in the way these terms are used when ego is a woman, except that she calls her spouse *husband* and not *wife*. There is no consensus as to what great-grandparents should be called. Sometimes *father* 601 [183]

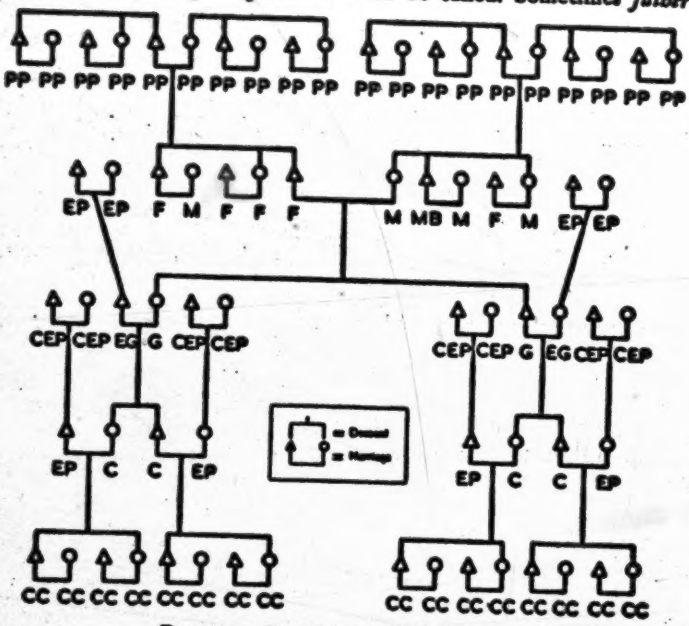


DIAGRAM 5. Extended use of kinship terms

or *mother* is used, according to sex, while others use *grandparent*. Similarly, great-grandchildren are sometimes called *child*, sometimes *grandchild*.

Exogamy and Descent-names

A man may not marry anyone whom he calls *mother*, *father*, *mother's brother*, *child*, *affine*, *child's parent-in-law*, and, except for his *cross-cousins*, *sibling*. Marriage with his brother's wife's sister, whom he calls *sibling-in-law*, is allowed, but is thought to be not very satisfactory. As we have seen, these terms can be applied widely, with no theoretical limit to the extent of application. Little interest is shown, however, in tracing genealogical relationships accurately, and the sex and age of the relative referred to may affect the term used. If a 582 835 601

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

582 proposed marriage appears to conflict with these rules of incest, be-
835 cause of some distant relationship between the couple, the connexion
601 may be conveniently forgotten by the parties concerned. Incestuous liaisons between people whose parents are still alive are hampered from becoming proper marriages by the refusal of the woman's parents to accept any marriage payments from the man. Similar liaisons between older people may alter the relative kinship status of other couples so that their marriages become incestuous, and they will appeal to the courts. For example, an old man married his son's wife's mother, whom he called *child's parent-in-law*. In consequence, his son and his son's wife became *sibling* to each other. The young woman refused to go on sleeping with her husband, who appealed to the court. The old man was then ordered to give up his newly acquired wife, so that his son's marriage might continue.

[601] At its widest extension, the term *sibling* is applied to any person of
551 the same descent-name as ego and of approximately the same age.
614 The other kinship terms are then applied to the relatives of this
582 nominal sibling in the usual way. However, there is no rule of exogamy applying to these nominal relatives. These descent-names have been referred to by other writers on the Ngoni as clan-names and the aggregate of people with the same descent-name as a clan. The Ngoni term for such names, *vi-ŵongo*, is related to the Zulu *isi-bongo*, and many of the Ngoni descent-names are the same as the names of the clans described for the South-Eastern and Central Bantu.[1] However, among the Fort Jameson Ngoni at the present time, the category of persons formed by all those holding the same descent-name does not have any of the attributes generally attributed by modern writers to the clan. There are no clan heads, no clan exogamy, no clan taboos, no beliefs in a common origin from a legendary ancestor, no clan totems, and no correlation between clan and territory. In these conditions it seems better to use the term descent-name, as has been done for the Lozi.[2] Informants state that even in the old days, when there was a closer approximation to a clan system, there was no clan exogamy. These names are normally inherited by the child from its father, and some of the names are not very common in the tribe, so that it happens that all the people bearing the one name may be the patrilineal descendants of one man. Such groups are exogamic, but this is

[1] Cf. Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, p. 143, for a classification of some of these names, on the basis of ethnic origin.

[2] Gluckman, *Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*, pp. 84–5.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

different pattern. They also went to sleep with a grandmother or some other older member of the family when they were old enough to be excluded from their mother's hut at night, and they shared with their small brothers the grandmother's care and her story-telling round the fire in the evenings. During the day the girls continued as part of their mother's household group, eating with her and the younger children. As little girls they were taught to sit down carefully and to smooth down the cloth which they wore round their waists. They were trained to speak correctly and to know the right forms of address, to greet strangers politely, to avoid touching their father's mats or bed, to eat tidily and with restraint. The emphasis was on exclusiveness for these high-born Ngoni girls, lest, as a result of mixing too freely with everyone, they should forget the teaching given and the behaviour which was expected of them. In contrast to their brothers' rigorous training in the *laweni*, Ngoni girls, as they showed signs of approaching puberty, were guarded and looked after and instructed further in correct behaviour.

When a girl found that she was menstruating for the first time, she told one of her age mates and sent her to tell her *gogo*.[1] The *gogo* told her to stay in the hut during the period and showed her how to wear a cloth between her legs, which she had henceforth to wear always whether menstruating or not. She was told to sleep from now on in a different part of the hut from the smaller children and never to bathe with younger girls. At the end of her first period the girl was escorted to the women's bathing-place by her father's sisters and other female members of her father's family. She was made to wash in the stream and squat in the cold water while doing so. I saw more than one child trying to control her shivering while her relatives watched to see if she would be strong and brave, or weak and cowardly. When she was in the water she was made to face south-east—the quarter which the Ngoni called *kwathu* (our home). After this ceremony the girl's father and mother were informed, and her father informed the head of his *banja* and the head of the village. The news was greeted with rejoicing and made generally public.

From about the age of ten or eleven, the Ngoni girl belonged to an age set distinguished by a separate name. She was no longer included in the group of children, as were her brothers of the same age, but was marked out by belonging to the age set called *inkakazana* or *mabuthu*. After her first menstruation she belonged to the age set called *izintombi* or *anamwali*. From this stage, Ngoni girls were under the close supervision of the older women. The association of a *gogo* or older woman with each house in a Ngoni village meant that the girls of the house were under her special care, particularly after they had passed puberty. There

[1] *gogo* in this context is used for grandmother or for the elderly woman to whose care the girl was assigned.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR

565 836 864 881 were clearly defined aims in this care of girls after puberty, including instruction in personal hygiene and in pre-marital sexual relations. A girl's father's sisters and her own mother wanted to be able to say, when marriage negotiations began: *Ngombe zake zidzala*, 'her cattle are full', which was the comment made when girls were examined periodically to see if they were still virgin. To achieve this they constantly said to her: '*Mudzisunge, mudzileise*', 'take care of yourself, control yourself'; and the *gogo* explained to the girl how she could protect herself. In one area where I lived, the chief's daughter was examined every week, with her *izidandani* or companions, and the girls who helped in the big house were examined every month. The strict behaviour required of Ngoni girls of good family was expected also of those of the same age who were members of the same household, either appointed to be with them as companions or as servants in the big house.

868 881 565 Looking forward to marriage involved not only preservation of her virginity. An Ngoni girl going to a strange village had to know how to perform women's work in the home, how to do it herself as well as how to direct others, and she had to be carefully trained in that meticulous and exclusive social behaviour required of Ngoni women of good family. She might be going to marry a man who intended to 'marry up', in which case she might be thought in one sense to be 'marrying below her station'. Yet her personal position as a member of her father's clan and family could not be altered by her marriage, and she was well aware that she was conferring something on the man and on the family she married into.

[562] While the boys were learning their roles in later life in the democratic atmosphere of the *laweni* and of the boys' pursuits in the village, the girls in the later stage of their training after puberty were treated more individually, and were not left to find their level in a group of their age mates. The adult women took an active part in telling them how to behave, how to dress and how to cook. The girls of high-ranking families sometimes pounded maize with their age mates, singing as they did so, but more for fun than because their food depended on it. They learned to dress their hair and put on clothes, and to walk and dance in company with other girls, but always with the critical eye of their *gogo* upon them. Their lower-ranking companions could make mistakes and be careless, and walk and dance in an exaggerated fashion. Ngoni girls might never pass certain bounds of decorum, and the standard expected of them was high and exacting. I have heard *manina* of leading clans scold young girls many times for careless behaviour and badly done work.

562 565 867 In this training, as throughout that of the boys, there was a deliberate preparation for leadership. A girl's character and ability were being watched and, while an awareness of her personal dignity and position was being fostered, it was accompanied by requirements of obedience

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show subservience to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss. 562 565 867

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private. 881 836 565 [797] 178 [195] [831]

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony [554]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

Many of the *umsindo* songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambesi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance *ngoma* in a neighbouring village.

In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the *ngoma* dance played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic 881
and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards 171
authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past 177
in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasa- 561
land had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded
up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior 641
herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at 561
irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time [702]
they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season,
during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were [464]
called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they 885
were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the
hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they [302]
were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to
sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then [836]
the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They
moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives [591]
in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house.
The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's [583]
family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
881 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
292 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
885 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often
301 trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the premarriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
885 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
556 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after.
593 It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
● [836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to
177 say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'

885 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 a strenuous resistance, during which one of them earned the name which stuck to her ever afterwards of 'the biting spider'. Considerations in choosing a mate, both for youths
581 and girls, were not only influenced by the Ngoni desire, especially strong among the senior people, for linking Ngoni clans and families together by marriage. The high proportion of young people, boys especially, who had been to school and were Christian, weighed the scales in favour of an educated Christian wife or husband. As always, however, the factor of personal liking was very strong. Attraction first, and then liking based on further acquaintance, was held as most important by the youths and girls themselves. It was partly the question of the transfer of cattle to seal the mar-
[583] riage contract which inclined the young men to listen to the advice of their elders, for they were dependent on them, at least in the first instance, for providing the cattle.

● 836 The other direction in which social control operated in relations between the sexes was in the forms of courtship
584 tolerated and permitted. In pre-European days, and for a long time after the missions came, the age of marriage was, as we have seen, postponed for many years after puberty. In those days there was a recognized and socially accepted pattern of sexual freedom before marriage, which we have already mentioned. A girl could indicate to a young man, who had recently joined a regiment, and had shown in various ways that he was attracted by her, that she was willing to take him as a lover. Often this relationship led eventually to marriage between the two, but it was not always the case. These two slept together from time to time in the dormitory, practising limited intercourse. The fear of being deflowered and still more of being pregnant before marriage acted as a
[848] very strong deterrent to the girls not to let the young man, in the Ngoni phrase, 'harm her in any way'. If this occurred the girls knew they would have no pre-marriage rite and no full public wedding ceremony, and this would bring shame not only on them but on their father's family and house.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The missionaries, and through their influence Ngoni Christian teachers and ministers, tried to put a stop to this form of courtship. It was very difficult to convince Ngoni elders and young people that a practice which had been considered socially correct and was under some measure of social control, was now wrong and must be given up. They saw it as something quite distinct from casual and promiscuous intercourse, which they discouraged and despised. A young Christian teacher, speaking of his own youth, said: 'The Christian rule forbade boys and girls to sleep together at night and to play as our fathers played. We did not keep those rules, and we visited girls at night who wanted us, but we were careful not to harm them.' The Ngoni Christian leaders who were aware of the problems on both sides finally threw their weight into advocating much earlier marriages while supporting the carrying out of the private puberty rituals. As we have seen, marriage became usual at about sixteen for girls and from eighteen upwards for youths. This as a rule, though not invariably, ensured that the girls were virgin at marriage which was a very strict Ngoni requirement. But it brought in its train a number of other difficulties which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

584 836 177 797 177 582

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5 ●
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Girls are not examined to see if they have been deflowered. Many girls have love affairs with young boys before they reach puberty, and at one time children built play-houses, after the manner of the Cewa, where they pretended to be adults playing at cooking and copulation. The Cewa encouraged this among their own children and at puberty Cewa girls, if not already deflowered, had their hymen forcibly ruptured in a prescribed manner. We have seen that the Ngoni formerly expected girls to be chaste before marriage while the Cewa believed that if a girl did not copulate at puberty she would die. It seems nowadays that adults expect that pre-pubescent boys and girls will play together sexually and that, provided this takes place with a certain amount of discretion, nothing is done to stop it. Boys and girls visit each other in dormitories, hoping that their voices will not be recognized by people in neighbouring huts. After puberty young men and women continue to flirt together, individuals varying in the extent to which they copulate. Grown men do not usually sleep with young girls, nor grown women with young boys, and if this does happen and is discovered there is always the suspicion of sorcery. The Ngoni believe, with most of their neighbours, that in order to make many of the anti-social medicines of sorcery effective, a sorcerer must copulate with some partner morally forbidden to him (or her), such as a close relative or a person of greatly disparate age or an animal. With this background of belief, Ngoni say that after puberty young men and women naturally like to frolic together and not with their juniors. Within this framework of tolerated covert activity no particular arrangements are made at puberty, save that if a man is betrothed to a young girl he will be invited formally to come and sleep with her once while she is secluded.

N 864 831 M 88 831 N 836 ● N [864] N [154]

Thus from an early age their future roles as husbands and wives condition the sexual activities of boys and girls. A girl who allows herself to be seduced too easily is regarded as foolish and a man who is for ever chasing unmarried girls when he should be founding a family is regarded as immature. But sexual activity is taken for granted, and the only stipulations are that it should be conducted discreetly so that the older people in the village are not forced to notice it, and that unmarried girls should not bear live children. Knowledge of abortifacients seems to be fairly common and recently contraceptives, issued originally to soldiers in the 1939-45 war, have come into use. Few cases of seduction of unmarried girls come before the courts.

N [847] [842]

Despite the emphasis on sexual satisfaction rather than on fertility, Ngoni men and women still desire children. This is so for men despite the low incidence of bridewealth payments and the uncertainty about the custody of children. A man's children may decide to live with their mother's people, but they are still his children and he can always follow them from village to village in his old age wherever they decide to settle.

N 842 N [593]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 approval of his father before he offers, and as in the case of Amos and Eve (p. 28), the father may sometimes disapprove. If the man is from another part of the territory or from abroad the parents of
583 the woman, even if they accept the legalization payment, may be
603 reluctant to allow their grandchildren to go a long way away from them to live among their son-in-law's kin. This consideration applies
593 particularly to strangers in the township who marry Ngoni women. When they leave their jobs or retire they try to take their wives and children with them. They may be frustrated in the removal of their children by the woman's parents, who refuse the bridewealth. The courts support the claims of Ngoni grandparents for the retention of their grandchildren under these conditions and a returning Yao or Cipeta man may be forced to travel without his children and sometimes without his wife. I have recorded elsewhere [2] an incident in which a Yao man who had been married to an Ngoni woman for twenty-one years was divorced by her and his offer of bridewealth refused by her parents. The police who check the movements of women and children by bus and lorry away from Fort Jameson are in touch with the Native Courts and may be on the look out if it seems likely that a man from a strange tribe will attempt to smuggle his wife and children away from their Ngoni kin.

581 Thus we see that the kinsfolk are directly concerned with marriage. When the children are still toddlers, they are paired off in fun by their
[858] adult relatives as they sit playing. For a week or month or even longer a woman will laughingly call her neighbour *child's parent-in-law* because their children have been nominated *husband* and *wife* in this way. As a child grows older, so the interest of its relatives in its marriage become clearer. Before marriage the relatives of a
684 girl hold rights in her that are violated if she is seduced and bears
848 a child. It is to them that the girl's lover pays the beast of seduction to recompense them for the wrong he has done by impregnating the girl, but he does not gain custody of the child. On the other hand,
836 no one brings a case against a man merely because he sleeps with an unmarried girl. It is only when she becomes pregnant that an action can be laid against him. A man caught *in flagrante delicto* by one of the unmarried girl's kin can expect abuse and possibly blows but unless he is provocative he need not fear action in the courts. The hostility directed towards him seems to be due in part to his having behaved so indiscreetly as to be caught and having forced the girl's kin to take cognizance of what was happening.

At marriage the woman's kin grant rights in her sexual activities
581 to her husband. These rights are unambiguously transferred by the
583 legalization payment, and the woman's kin are therefore in a position to delay or facilitate the tranfser of these rights by their attitude towards the payment. There is no corresponding right in an unmarried man held by his kin, and at marriage there is no corres-

[2] Barnes, op. cit. p. 238

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

N 595 178 of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an expression more of their different matrilateral affiliations than of the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its N [855] own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother, although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by his first and third wives [1] were reared by their father's fourth wife's mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally N a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of 855 his children. This division is in accord with the statement made 183 frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's. Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace', however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft- N reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make M these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal 591 identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The 177 facility with which married couples live uxorilocally is no doubt partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxorilocal Cewa and other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

N M *4. The moral significance of sexual activity*

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to ● 836 be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa 177 believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die, and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa N view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives M and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to 569 have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so 177 carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

[1] See above, p. 109

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

developed as the men's. It is to be expected, therefore, that there would be greater Cewa and Nsenga influence in those affairs controlled by women than in political and military matters, which were organized by men. This is borne out by linguistic evidence, for while many of the words, but not all, pertaining to affairs of state are of Ngoni origin, the words now used in the seclusion of girls are drawn from Cewa and Nsenga.

We find therefore that it is the bearing of children before marriage and to a lesser extent pre-marital impregnation which are disapproved of rather than pre-marital copulation. The real contrast in attitude is between pre-marital copulation and adultery. We have seen that in the old days adulterers were killed by order of the chief. The punishment of adultery was a process involving headmen, lieutenants and other important men. The abhorrence of adultery remains despite its great frequency and the prohibition on killing adulterers. An adulterer is a thief, stealing the rights of another man and endangering his marriage. Even when the wife of a labour migrant bears a child and it is in danger of *mdulo* until it can be 'taken up' (p. 87) she cannot openly call in a man with whom to perform this rite. She must either get a man to come in secret or obtain expensive medicines which remove the danger. In like manner, if her husband is impotent, there must be no public recognition of any extra-marital intercourse, for impotence is shameful and not to be admitted and cannot justify the intervention of another man. It is thought regrettable that a woman should grow old without bearing daughters to help her pound maize and sons to clothe her in her old age. Yet when medicines have been of no avail and her husband calls in a seed-raiser he must come in secret and later be rewarded covertly. Similarly the sexual activities of children must be conducted discreetly. Here, however, a much more tolerant attitude is taken and there is not the same need for secrecy. There is no chaperoning of unmarried girls but only of married women whose husbands are away. There is no inspection of girls at marriage, and one informant said that if after puberty a girl has no lover with whom she can sleep, her grandmother will call in a young man to copulate with the girl in the grandmother's house to see if she is proficient, and that for this he would be rewarded by the grandmother. From one point of view we may say that there is pre-marital freedom, with discretion, and marital restriction of sexual activity. Pre-marital intercourse does, however, have a moral connotation, and it is held that the girl who sleeps too easily with all comers before marriage will continue thus after she is married. The need for discretion in premarital affairs is in some part due to the activities of the missions, working at the village level through deacons, elders and women helpers. Yet in general no action is taken by the local Christian group in the village unless the pre-marital sexual activities of its members are conducted in such a way that it is no longer possible to ignore them.

Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within

N M 562 177 N M [192] N 848 N 837 N [842] N 836 N [197]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights *in genetricem*.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

7: Hodgson G-5 (1926) 1933 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

12. *Customary Licence* (*Ngoni*).

N 836 [183] [684] [583]

Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Ngoni*).

N 586 [595]

Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mabala*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *nakhosse* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mchala*, *kutendera* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

M [586]

III.—Domestic Life: Filial.

1. *Infancy*.

M 845

Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*kigelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man at the same time, and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

[582]

M 429

Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *mtelwani*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

N 429 593

Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
842 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

567 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nhlanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshlanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanti* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedicao . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

necessary to take formal action to restore harmony. Husband and wife still remain separate persons, separated socially by their distinct roles. Yet they are bound together by economic ties, by symbolic procedures, and by mystical connexion. 593

The sexual rights and obligations of husband and wife in each other are not symmetrical. A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, but a woman cannot gain exclusive sexual rights over her husband. Her husband can take other wives, or commit adultery, and she has no ground in law for complaint unless at the same time he neglects her. The most she can do is to make life so unpleasant for him that rather than face her anger he decides to sleep with her alone. Mystical procedures are available to both man and wife, and while a husband may use medicines to safeguard that which is his by right, a wife uses medicines to augment her other sanctions, such as the threat of not cooking food for her husband or of running away to her relatives. There is one class of medicines [6] which a man can administer to his wife by cicatrization which it is believed will cause any lover of the woman to die. Another magical procedure is stated to prevent the lover from withdrawing after coitus, so that the adulterous pair will have to reveal themselves to their neighbours in order to gain medical assistance. These medicines are said to be favoured by men going off to Southern Rhodesia without their wives. It is difficult to tell to what extent they are actually administered, but the belief in their efficacy is wide-spread, and people would comment that so-and-so who was ill had become so because he had slept with a woman doctored in this way, and that the scars on such-and-such a woman were made when her husband had given her this sort of medicine. On the other hand a woman may use medicine [7] to prevent her husband from copulating with anyone else, and there are other medicines which act as love charms or which encourage the husband to stay at home at night.[8] The beliefs about difficult labour and *mdulo*[9] also have a stabilizing effect in that the man may fear for the fate of his child and for that reason be faithful to his wife while she is pregnant. On the other hand it is believed that a rejected lover can give medicine [10] to a woman who resists his approaches, so that she will die or have difficulties in childbirth. The only way for a woman to avoid this hazard is to live demurely and not to excite the attention of other men.

593 837 837 789 [832] [843]

If a woman believes that her husband is committing adultery with

[6] Known as *lukankho*. There are at least four varieties of this, associated with different maladies all of which are fatal to the adulterer. Cf. *lukanko* in Colson, *Marriage among the Plateau Tonga* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers—forthcoming).

[7] *Ndamanga*. See below, p. 56.

[8] E.g., medicine made from the house lizard (*mbololiko*) and the domesticated cat, because these animals are always in the house and do not wander about.

[9] See below, p. 46.

[10] *Kalamatila*, from the name of the species of frog from which it is made.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

If a women
837 believes that her husband is committing adultery with
578 another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

864 The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged [897] five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages. [533] Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they [535] also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a 881 girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a 864 month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

864 There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis [831] is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

842 Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use 832 of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl [864] learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13] The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is 881 sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour 593 of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her [535] erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mlototo*, a root, and *kajelejele*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cikapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kapakapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 wherever they decide to settle. Children are still valuable. A barren woman is pitied, and a man's impotence is whispered about behind his back. Men and women seek fertility, and a man tries to conceal his impotence. A woman who does not want to bear children is regarded as irresponsible.

We have seen that the traditional solution for barrenness was to introduce a linked co-wife, but this is now rarely done. A woman can either look for medicines[15] to make her fertile, or, if she is unsuccessful, she may beg children from a fertile sister. These children will stay with her while they are young, but they are not thought of or talked about as being her own children.

No clear distinction is drawn between impotence and sterility, and men who are said to be impotent are also known to commit adultery. A sterile husband does not find favour with his wife or with her relatives, who want her to have children to care for her when she grows old. If medicines fail to cure a man's sterility, and it is thought that the lack of children is due to him and not to his wife, then he may call in an acquaintance to sleep with his wife so that [837] she may conceive. For this task, it is said that a man will choose a person whose discretion he can trust, but one on the fringe of his acquaintance who will not feel disposed to gossip maliciously about the incident afterwards. Thus it is said that a man would never ask his brother to do this. If the woman bears a child then at some [431] later date the husband gives a goat to the progenitor, hoping that people will not connect the present with the birth of the child.

Sterility is a shameful thing and men do not easily admit to it. [128] My information on the procedure followed in specific instances is based only on village gossip and not on admissions by the men and women concerned. Although it is agreed that a sterile man may feel 842 forced to call in a seed-raiser the whole matter must remain secret. 837 There must be no loophole by which adultery might be condoned. In the words of an informant,

> A man may be impotent and may ask someone to copulate with his wife so that she may have children. This man coming to copulate with his wife comes in secret as it is considered a disgraceful thing among the people of the family and the rest of the village if they know, yet the people in the village know very well sometimes. In the old days the same thing happened, but if a man coming to sleep with the woman came in an open way, and everyone knew of his sleeping with the wife of an impotent man, he was to be killed by the chief, even though the impotent man asked him to do this work for him. The person coming to do this work of copulating with this woman was to be paid a cow or a goat for the work that he did. In these days it happens.

The sterile husband takes the risk that his friend will continue sleeping with the woman after she has conceived. I have recorded

[15] Called *cisaŵa*. The first child born after the successful administration of this medicine is sometimes called Cisaŵa.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one instance where the woman ran off with the man called in by her sterile husband. 842 837

4. The legal relationship

Emphasis on sexual partnership is characteristic of the beginning of marriage. Young people are 'foolish', dance all night long and sleep late in the morning. With the arrival of children, man and wife emerge from the tutelage of their elders and non-sexual aspects of their marriage relationship gain in importance. Even then the importance of sexual satisfaction is not forgotten. People say openly of a woman who obstructs her husband when he seeks a second wife, 'She is too fond of his penis', and old widows explain their failure to remarry by saying 'Our joints are too stiff to copulate'. 593 [851]

Nevertheless at all times there is a great deal more in Ngoni marriage than mere sexual partnership. The obligations and duties of husband and wife towards each other and each other's kin are determined by the marriage payments and ratified by the ceremonies of marriage. These obligations persist despite the fluctuations of sexual attraction. We have seen that in 'the time of peace' the two principal transfers were 'snuff-box' and bridewealth. Today the position is different and the rights transferred by the marriage payments are different. For simplicity we may discuss the latter payment first. Bridewealth is still recognized but, as can be seen from Table V, is paid in only about four per cent of all marriages. It consists of a payment of one or more beasts or £6 made by the man to his wife's father.[16] If only one cow is offered and it dies before calving, it must be replaced. Some indication of the range of variation in amounts paid is given by Table VI. 583 178

This sample of only twelve payments is very small, but there is some indication that the amount paid has decreased in recent years. This is of interest in view of the general rise in the standard of wealth and in the amount offered as legalization payment.

By the payment of bridewealth a man ensures that all the children of his wife, by whatever genitor, shall, or rather ought to, belong to his group of relatives and live in his village when they grow up. The payment is made only after several children have been born. In the old days, if this payment was made, the children were legitimate and lived in their father's segment, and if it was not paid they could be claimed by their mother's father's segment. In these days there is no such hard and fast rule. Everyone has in effect a large choice of places where he can live, and the payment or non-payment of bridewealth for his mother is only one factor operating with many others in influencing his decisions. It is not surprising that so few people pay bridewealth. [851]

[16] For comparative figures for the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Native standards of living and African cultural change', *Africa* xi (1938), 3, supplement, p. 33.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

uniting a married couple are weak as compared with say, the Bemba.[21] 593
The bride is anointed with gall, and carries the gall bladder in her hair back to her own village as a sign that she has been through the marriage ceremony and has been instructed in her wifely duties by her husband's kinsfolk and neighbours. But the husband himself is usually not there, 'that day is not his work', and I once saw a man quietly drinking on one side of the village while his bride was being anointed on the other. In general it is not until much later that husband and wife appear together in ceremonial situations. The personal association of husband and wife begins in darkness and the privacy of the hut. Later the wife will have validated her status as a married woman, and can appear as such in public alongside her husband without embarrassment.

It is when a woman is pregnant that her husband's actions are most 843
liable to affect her mystically. In general a man may commit 837
adultery and his wife has no case against him; but when she is pregnant he is under a moral obligation to sleep only with her and, if he is a polygynist, with his other wives. His adultery endangers her life, for it is believed that her labour will be difficult and she or the child may die. The pregnant woman is in mortal danger if she herself commits adultery and there is a common obligation of fidelity on both man and wife throughout pregnancy, accompanied in the eyes of some people by a positive obligation to copulate together so that the foetus may grow strong in the womb. When labour proves 845
difficult, the midwife calls on the husband to confess the adulteries he committed while his wife was pregnant so that the child can be born. She may also tell the woman to confess.[22] If the child is born dead, the woman's relatives begin to suspect that the man confessed only some of his adulteries and concealed others, thereby killing the child. We have already noted that if the woman dies the husband must offer a beast to her kinsfolk (pp. 39f).

From the birth of the child until its umbilical cord has fallen off 846
and it has been doctored, the husband should not sleep with anyone 788
at all, not even with his other wives. He can resume sexual relations with them after the cord has fallen but he does not sleep with the mother of the child until about three months after the birth, when he has ritual intercourse with her and the child is again doctored. While the infant is sleeping the husband has *coitus interruptus* with its mother and allows his semen to fall on her thighs. She smears the semen over her thighs and then takes up the child and gives it to her husband, who rests it on his hips. After a moment he hands the infant back to his wife who also rests it on her hips. The child is then put back to sleep on the mat beside the couple. This ritual intercourse is obligatory in that if it is omitted it is believed the child

[21] Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 113.
[22] Cf. Rattray, op. cit., p. 105, and H. F. Barnes, 'The birth of a Ngoni child' *Man*, xlix (1949), p. 89.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Where a woman has already troubled her relatives by her adultery, they may try to avoid further expense by refusing the legalization payment offered for her. 583 586 [837]

Case history 7

Rachel had had two husbands and had been divorced from them both. She had also lived with a White for some years. In 1946 she began to live with Esau, who already had three wives. In 1948 Esau approached an important man in Rachel's village and asked him to act as intermediary as he wished to offer the legalization payment to Rachel's brother. This man refused to do so, and in the end Esau approached his brother-in-law himself. The brother-in-law said that he had known his sister Rachel a long time and she was just a prostitute. He would not take the money for her. Esau said he would speak to his wife and ask her to change her character. Eventually the brother-in-law agreed to accept the thirty shillings offered.

Although the kinsfolk of the man or woman can exercise social pressure to prevent a marriage it is difficult for them to force a girl to marry against her will, and impossible in the case of a man. We have noted that in the old days, according to informants, people married whom they were told and did not refuse. Even if this was ever true, it is true no longer. A man can move off to the towns in the face of pressure and a woman can always run away to other relatives if her parents are insistent on an unwanted marriage. The Administration does not allow girls to be married against their will, but I do not know of any recent instance in which it has intervened on this issue. A girl's relatives can show their anger by abusing her and by scaring off her own preferred mate, but they cannot detain her against her will and they cannot force her to go through the ceremonies of marriage. They cannot appeal to the court to punish the girl for disobedience. 584

In some instances pressure is put on a man by a woman's kin to force him into marrying her. If a woman bears a pre-marital child, and it is known that the genitor is an important man or chief, her kinsfolk begin to adopt towards the genitor's family the patterns of respect and avoidance which would be appropriate if he were their affine. This procedure may be adopted although it is plain to people in general that the genitor has no intention of marrying the woman. If it is unsuccessful in forcing the hand of the genitor, the formal attitudes of the woman's kinsfolk come to be generally ridiculed and they abandon the pretence. 848 602

So far we have considered only the attitude of kinsfolk towards a proposed marriage and the legalization payment associated with it. The factors influencing the acceptance or refusal of bridewealth are different. Bridewealth, when offered, is not often refused. Table V shows that in our sample this happened in only one out of 360 marriages. We must remember that bridewealth is paid only in about four per cent of all marriages, and that a man is usually on good terms with his affines and has lived in peace for many years with his wife before he offers it. A youngish man may seek the 583

593 167 Some men when they decide to return home from work in the normal course of events do not let their relatives know that they will be arriving. There are a variety of reasons for this, one being that the mystical hazards of the journey home are increased if a man's enemies know that it is taking place. There is also sometimes the desire to check on the fidelity of a wife. A chief returning from the railway line in 1947 reached Fort Jameson and sent on ahead a man to tell the people their chief had returned. A councillor who was with him remarked 'What sort of chief is this who gives his queens time to get back to their own houses? We ought to arrive suddenly and catch them all with their lovers.'

593 167 602 The woman's kin also wish to avoid trouble in her marriage and do what they can to prevent her committing adultery if they think that her husband is still treating her well. They talk to her about her obligations to her absent husband and if they think she cannot be trusted, one of them, perhaps the woman's mother, may sleep in the hut with her to see that she does not entertain lovers there. They may warn her that if she is taken to court for adultery they will not support her.

Thus we see that there is social prescription not only of the ways in which a man and his affines should behave towards each other, but also of the ways in which his affines should behave when the man is away. Similarly a woman and her affines interact in the light of their relationship not only when her husband is present but also when he has been absent for years. As a husband can exceed his rights over his wife, so can an affine go beyond what is tolerated while trying to safeguard the interests of an absent husband. The perseverence of some brothers of absent husbands, and the limitations imposed on their actions by public opinion, are recalled by a girls' song current in 1949.

[533]

> I am wanting to go and sleep,
> What stops me is something in the loins,
> I go to the water, and the one who keeps on following comes,
> He has exceeded his sibling-in-law-ship,[18]
> He has dragged Eleni from the reeds.

Eleni is supposed to be the wife of a labour migrant. Her husband's brother follows her to the stream, where she has gone ostensibly to draw water, as he thinks that she is really going to meet a lover. [607] She hides in the reeds and he drags her out. Such active intervention is inappropriate and dangerous for if there is a struggle the woman is likely to claim that the man was trying to rape her. The astute brother-in-law would have waited his time until he could catch her red-handed with her lover in a village.

167 It is never legitimate for a woman whose husband is a labour migrant to have intercourse with another man. People regret that

[193]

[18] *Ulamu*, the abstract noun formed from *mulamu*, sibling-in-law.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one [182]
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant. 843
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives 167
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are [837]
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court 692
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

developed as the men's. It is to be expected, therefore, that there would be greater Cewa and Nsenga influence in those affairs controlled by women than in political and military matters, which were organized by men. This is borne out by linguistic evidence, for while many of the words, but not all, pertaining to affairs of state are of Ngoni origin, the words now used in the seclusion of girls are drawn from Cewa and Nsenga.

We find therefore that it is the bearing of children before marriage and to a lesser extent pre-marital impregnation which are disapproved of rather than pre-marital copulation. The real contrast in attitude is between pre-marital copulation and adultery. We have seen that in the old days adulterers were killed by order of the chief. The punishment of adultery was a process involving headmen, lieutenants and other important men. The abhorrence of adultery remains despite its great frequency and the prohibition on killing adulterers. An adulterer is a thief, stealing the rights of another man and endangering his marriage. Even when the wife of a labour migrant bears a child and it is in danger of *mdulo* until it can be 'taken up' (p. 87) she cannot openly call in a man with whom to perform this rite. She must either get a man to come in secret or obtain expensive medicines which remove the danger. In like manner, if her husband is impotent, there must be no public recognition of any extra-marital intercourse, for impotence is shameful and not to be admitted and cannot justify the intervention of another man. It is thought regrettable that a woman should grow old without bearing daughters to help her pound maize and sons to clothe her in her old age. Yet when medicines have been of no avail and her husband calls in a seed-raiser he must come in secret and later be rewarded covertly. Similarly the sexual activities of children must be conducted discreetly. Here, however, a much more tolerant attitude is taken and there is not the same need for secrecy. There is no chaperoning of unmarried girls but only of married women whose husbands are away. There is no inspection of girls at marriage, and one informant said that if after puberty a girl has no lover with whom she can sleep, her grandmother will call in a young man to copulate with the girl in the grandmother's house to see if she is proficient, and that for this he would be rewarded by the grandmother. From one point of view we may say that there is pre-marital freedom, with discretion, and marital restriction of sexual activity. Pre-marital intercourse does, however, have a moral connotation, and it is held that the girl who sleeps too easily with all comers before marriage will continue thus after she is married. The need for discretion in premarital affairs is in some part due to the activities of the missions, working at the village level through deacons, elders and women helpers. Yet in general no action is taken by the local Christian group in the village unless the pre-marital sexual activities of its members are conducted in such a way that it is no longer possible to ignore them.

Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within

N M 562 177 N M [192] N 848 N 837 N [842] N 836 N [797] 000

6:Rattray E.G-5 (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

will finish the ceremony [that the relish may be given out]. Should the girl, before she came to maturity, not have been betrothed to any man, the matrons tell her she must go to some lover; this is known as "chigango." In the evening she takes her cooking pot and relish and goes to the quarters of the young unmarried men, who for the night sleep somewhere else. In the morning the girl goes back to the *Kuka* hut. 881 585 [837]

V

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

I. When a woman becomes pregnant, the matrons of the village tell the husband "he must now no longer cohabit with her." If the man have another wife he goes off to her house. When the time draws near for the woman's accouchement, she bids her husband leave her. He goes to one of the village matrons and tells her, "My wife is very ill." Then old women go to the hut and begin to take out all the cooking utensils and household goods. Should the woman have difficulty in giving birth the old women bid her confess, saying, "Speak, child, lest you die; who committed adultery with you?" Should she have been faithless she confesses, saying, "I sinned with so and so." The matrons hide such confessions. When she is safely delivered they bathe the infant, then one old woman goes off to tell the husband, "Your wife is well." Perhaps the woman has given birth to a male child, then she tells him, "You have seen a knobkerry." 843 593 844 [845]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 585 III. Then they spread a mat and go and bring her husband, and set them down on the mat side by side and begin to shave his head. As the hair falls the people throw down beads. Then they take a stick and lay it across the legs of the man and woman so that each may know it is that stick that will beat them [if they do wrong]. When they have finished shaving the man, they bring oil and rub the bodies of the man and woman. When it is dark the old women escort the girl to her husband's hut. The *ndiwo* relish is cooking on the fire. [243] During the night the woman rises and puts some salt in the pot. Next morning, before dawn, before the villagers have opened their doors, the woman goes off, and gives some of the relish to her mother, and to the old woman who was mistress of the ceremony. This relish she just sets down at the door, and when they open they find it, and rub it on their feet and under their arm-pits; little children just eat it. If she have any relations who are at a distance, they sharpen a little piece of bamboo and stick the relish on the end (and put it aside) that the distant one, when he returns, shall also rub his feet with it. Perhaps the absent one, should he not have heard that these events have happened when he comes to the village, and should say, "Give me water that I may drink," they refuse him, but with a purpose, even though the water is there, and go and bring the relish that first he may rub some on his feet. It may be the woman discovers that her husband is impotent, then she just stays in her hut and does not come forth to distribute the relish. Then the old women [who know the reason] will persuade the man, saying, "Go [787] off to the man with the lots to consult them" [to see what is to be done]. When he goes off (on [837] this errand) some other man is called in, and he

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway. 596 861

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but wh[illegible]rned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers. 183 596 [184]

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it. 177 563 [845] [841]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

will die. The child is in danger from the illness known as *mdulo* throughout the period from birth until the resumption of intercourse between its parents. It is not until after this ceremony, known as 'taking up the child'[33] that the mystical link between man, wife, and child is broken and the man free to commit adultery without mystical retribution. Thus while there are definite rights and obligations between husband and wife which can be enforced in the courts or are susceptible to the pressure of public opinion there are also in the critical situations of pregnancy and childbirth other mystical forces operating which unite the couple to a greater extent than at any other time. To a lesser extent the same principle operates when a woman menstruates. Her husband is in danger from her menstrual blood. She may not lie on the same mat with him and if he has a bed she must lie on the floor. If he has intercourse with her while she is menstruating he will contract an illness called *lugola*[34] whose symptoms are a very black face, nasal discharge, and continual feeling of cold. After death a man's widows are in danger of *mdulo* if they commit adultery during the first month of mourning.

We see then that the relationship between a man and his wife is partly defined in legal terms, with mutual duties and rights that are enforceable in the courts. This relationship is documentated and validated by the transfer of money and cattle from one group to the other and by the performance of the various marriage ceremonies. Because of the relationship between them, man and wife live together, sleep together, eat together and work together. But above all, together they produce and rear children. It is primarily because of these children that the kin of man and wife are concerned in the marriage relationship. It is during the long process of producing children that the two spouses are most closely associated with each other, and actions of the one in some mystical way directly and automatically influence the well-being of the other.

When a marriage grows out of flirtation between a young man and a young woman, there is at first sexual attraction between them. With the passage of time this may give place to a broader sentiment of mutual affection and respect. To this extent we may say that man and wife come to love each other. But whereas young men frequently discuss with other men the attraction they experience towards women, unmarried or married, they do not do this when they have settled down and begun to acquire prestige in the community. A man may quarrel with his wife in public, but he never expresses his affection for her, save in the intimacies of the hut. Men and women mourn their spouses with great lamentation at funerals, but while this may sometimes be the expression of a personal

[33] *Kutola mwana*. Cf. *kutenga mwana* among the Cewa.

[34] Cf. Read, op. cit., 'The moral code . . .', p. 19, where she describes a medicine called *ugola* with which men doctored their wives so that their lovers would die of a wasting sickness. Also cf. Zulu *ulugola*.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Women wear their cloth folded across the upper level of the breasts from right to left. Men and women often have two cloths, one over the loins, only the second fastening over the chest. M Y N 291

A menstruating woman also wears a small piece of calico corresponding to a diaper supported by string round the waist.[1] The same thing is worn after child-birth for six months. Angoni women always wear them. M Y N [341] [346]

The Angoni, Chipeta wear their cloth toga-fashion, carrying a fold of cloth on the left arm. An Angoni chief wears three such, blue, white and coloured, the first outside, the last next to the skin.

The material used is now practically everywhere European-made calico, formerly bark cloth only was used by Nyanja, though weaving had been accomplished by Angoni, where skins were and are used as articles of clothing. M Y N [246]

There is nothing to distinguish men of various grades, etc. Fashion at the present time is very capricious—some patterned cloth being much worn one month will have no sale a month later; this is true both of men and of women.

There is no class uniform, and no "costumes" are worn save in dancing (*q.v.*).

Men are now seen wearing a piece of calico twisted up on the head in turban form, a custom lately introduced from the coast—the only indigenous head-gear is the string skull-cap worn by Angoni widows. N [589]

Under the heading of dress must be included the bead aprons worn by Yao and Angoni. Among the former the use of this garment is restricted to the women, who in the house sometimes wear nothing else; among the Angoni the children often have them and no other clothing.

Sandals are sometimes made of skin and fastened on the feet with a thong when crossing thorny country.

Among Angoni the *mwende* only used to be worn; this is a small hard-cased fruit which was hollowed out and worn just covering the glans penis. N 291 824

FOOD, ETC.

The staple food throughout the country is either maize or rice, the latter only at various spots on the lake shore where it can be grown. Two fixed meals per diem are taken, at 9 or 10 a.m. and again at 6 p.m.; each consists of *nsima* porridge made from maize flour or rice flour or boiled rice with some *ndiwo* (relish) to which the salt is added. At odd times the native will eat anything that opportunity offers—a piece of cassava root, a boiled sweet potato, a roasted maize cob, etc. M Y 262 [264]

The *nsima* is made by stirring flour (*ufa*) into boiling water till a stiff paste is formed; this is kept cooking for five minutes and then scraped out with a wooden M Y 252

[1] Diaper *ne ntikete*: a woman keeps five or six; they are never put away in baskets but always hung up; a woman changes every time she bathes, using two or three per diem; they may be given to a female child to wear, but are then not worn again by a woman.

643 614 565 184 was thus different in the two kingdoms. In the north he was one ruler, though a supreme one, among several ruling kinsmen of the same clan. His position in the past had been strengthened by the prestige shared by his clansmen, but also challenged by his near kinsmen in positions of authority. In the central kingdom the Paramount shared no authority with his fellow clansmen. He was unique among them as a ruler, while sharing special ritual relationships with the two other clans which supported his position without challenging it.

643 614 585 A new Paramount, in order to be installed in his father's place, had to be of the big house as well as of the royal clan. Dr. Kuper described the Swazi practice whereby cattle were contributed by the nation for the mother of the king, so that she was called the 'mother of the people of the country'. She also described the ritual marriage of the first wife of a ruler, who was called *sisulamsiti*, and who was never the mother of the heir.[1] The Ngoni Paramount-elect in the northern kingdom married his first wife when he was a young man and she was called *msulamsizi*, 'the one who takes the darkness off him'. The big wife, who would bear the heir, was married with a large gift of cattle taken from the herd of the big wife of the reigning Paramount and, after marriage, was attached to her big house. We shall discuss in greater detail in the next chapter the relationships of the royal women to the Paramount and to each other. Here it is important to note that the big house owned by the big wife was the place where the future chief was brought up. In the central kingdom the first marriage of the Paramount was traditionally with a woman of the Magagula clan who was said not to bear children. She held an honoured place in the social hierarchy and was married with cattle taken from the herd of the *gogo* house of the reigning Paramount. It was regarded as a ritual marriage, for if she did bear children they were not acknowledged. [842 847] Informants were uncertain whether methods to prevent conception were used, or whether abortion was practised, or whether children, if born, died young or were disposed of or placed out in other households. The last alternatives were unlikely, and one of the first two expedients was in line with the phrase always used of this wife: 'she did not bear children'. The wife who bore the heir was married next and was always of another leading clan, and the cattle for her came from the herd of the big house of the reigning Paramount.

643 614 The reasons were obvious why the remembered genealogies of the Ngoni Paramounts of the royal clans were short compared with the genealogies of some other African royal houses. The remote ancestors of Jere chiefs and Maseko chiefs, who were, as we have seen, not Paramounts before they left the south, were forgotten once the departure had taken place. Only a few names had been handed down and were repeated by the official praisers, whose task it was to call out the names of the direct ancestors of the Paramount before declaiming his *izibongo* or

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. pp. 34 & 91.

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

Father's family to child

Ngoni children were indeed the children of their fathers 596
from the time of their birth onwards. They were born into a 'house', of which their father was a member. If their father divorced his wife or she ran away, the children remained in [586]
the custody of his family. We have seen how the paternal grandmother took charge of all the preparations for birth, and of the actual birth itself. It was her proud duty to present the child to the public after the 'coming out of the hut' ceremony, when she took it to the kraal gate where the assembled elders were sitting. The other senior women of Ngoni families held her responsible for advising on the spac- 842
ing between the birth of this new baby and the next, so that 596
the interests of this child should be safeguarded. If it was suspected that the young wife was pregnant again before the grandmother had planned to wean the child, the other senior women said to her: 'Look now. You are foolish. The child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to him.' That touched her on a very vital point, and she in turn accused the young parents of harming the present child. Having rebuked them, generally in public, she followed it up with a box on the ear for her son and his wife. When this [858]
next child was born it was called 'the destroyer', because by following on too quickly, it had injured the propects of the first child.

Baby to nurse girl and women helpers

The baby, as we have seen, spent a great deal of its time in 854
the company of its nurse girl, and after weaning she was its constant companion. She and the older woman helpers who supervised her formed a counterbalancing influence to the paternal grandmother, though outwardly they obeyed her instructions about the care of the child. The nurse girl especially was inclined to be indulgent; she was young and playful; the baby was her only responsibility. She was

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4
Cewa

The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual

N 881 182 We now come back to the question of why the Ngoni held to this private ritual for girls and boys at puberty. There were three main reasons. The first was that each Ngoni child belonged to his or her father's house. At this sign of physical maturity, significant for the boy or girl, and for the society, the elders of the house asserted anew their authority over them, performed a brief traditional ritual, and watched during the ritual for evidence of the Ngoni personality traits of courage and physical endurance which they expected to see in young adults. The second reason was that the change at puberty was regarded as marking only one of the stages in the development of growing boys and girls. It is true it had more significance for girls, in that it set the mature girls apart as a separate group. But it was not the prelude to immediate M [881] marriage, as the girls' initiation school was among the neighbouring Cewa people; nor was it in old days the prelude for N [171] the boys joining the army. The third reason was that the Ngoni did not regard fertility as the major dominant factor N [842] in the development of young women, as it undoubtedly was considered among the Cewa. They greatly disliked the ritual and the significance of the Cewa female initiation rites and forbade Ngoni women to have any part in them. Potency N [833] among men, on the other hand, was recognized as important both for the individual and for the social group, and impotence, particularly in leading men, was kept secret and hidden from outside knowledge as far as possible. If an Ngoni N [842] woman after marriage did not bear children, it was not con- [595] sidered a stigma on her, either individually or socially. The [597] common practice of marrying one of her sisters as a 'substitute', or the very common practice of adoption was resorted to. The latter was always referred to as 'putting a child into the house of So and so'.

N 881 171 One of the alleged objects of initiation schools among other ethnic groups was to instruct the young initiates in correct

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

When the Ngoni talked about the separate ideal personalities of men and women, they emphasized the training needed for younger men, and to some extent also for younger women. Senior men and women were expected to possess special qualities due to their age and status and experience. It was recognized that the limited responsibilities of young men before marriage gave them little authority in village and family affairs. Since each family however was bringing up its girls to leave them on marriage and to take the good name of the family elsewhere, there was less distinction made between the qualities desired in younger married women and older ones than there was between the two groups of men.

The ideal personality of Ngoni women

This had four main aspects: physical capacity and appearance, relationship to her husband and his relatives, competence in household management, and general reputation for justice and wisdom.

We talked in Chapter III about the connexion in Ngoni thinking between women being healthy and strong and being able to bear healthy children. In the marriage negotiations and even at the final ceremony itself in the bridegroom's village, there were formalized standard questions put by the bridegroom's representatives about the health of the girl and her family, and these were replied to also in conventional phrases. Such inquiries about health had been made secretly long before the final ceremony, and indeed before any formal approaches had been made which led to the betrothal. But the fact that they were made in public on two distinct occasions, at the preliminary visit of the man's representatives and at the marriage itself, underlined the importance of health and its relation to child-bearing capacity in the ideal Ngoni woman.

We saw in the last chapter that physical strength for continuous hard manual work in the household and in the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

•4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*)[7] subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
842 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having been called in by the husband.[8]

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
684 always killed;[9] all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed by one of the senior lieutenants.

567 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

[7] Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nhlanzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshlanze*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhlanti* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshanzi*, and some *nshanzi* are not substitutes.

[8] See below, p. 34.

[9] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedieao . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

628 much opportunity for a man to assess his sweetheart's domestic
584 efficiency and moral character, but he can get information on these
matters from other people who live in her vicinity. When he sees
574 a girl in a distant village where he is staying, he has more leisure to see what she is like and can ask his own hosts about her character. Girls visit in the same way as men, and if a girl is anxious to get a husband and fears she may not find one, she may spend most of her time visiting in different villages hoping to attract a suitable man.
[221] There is more time for visiting and flirting at the end of the dry season when there is little work to do in the gardens, but marriages are contracted throughout the year.[5]

581 Young men say that what they like in a girl is a light skin colour,
a pretty face, and the ability to dance and to copulate well. Some
832 men, however, say that such a girl might be all right to run after, but for marriage one would also need to know that she could cook porridge. Women say they like a man who is well dressed, who has a good job working for a European, and who has a parting in his hair. Women sometimes wear medicines which are believed to attract men, and men who have no good clothes may borrow the clothes of others in order to attract women.

3. Sexual partners

593 The relationship between a man and his wife, at least for the
first years of their marriage, is spoken of principally in sexual terms,
581 and the sexual activities of the couple are more closely defined by the marriage bond than are their residence and their economic life. Informants say that the reason for the existence of marriage is either 'the work in the house', a euphemism for copulation, or else 'clothes', that is, so that a woman may have someone to buy clothes for her. It is, however, much easier to improvise alternative solutions to the problem of clothing than it is to find alternative means of sexual satisfaction without coming into conflict with law and morality. Furthermore, while we have seen in the old days that the main emphasis was on the fertility of the woman, this has now shifted, and it is her skill in copulation rather than her success in childbearing
[842] that is emphasized. Fertility is still valued, but does not appear to form so important a theme in ceremonial, songs, and gossip as among other societies where the principle of unilinear descent has not broken down, and where, therefore, fertility either of a man's wife or of his sister, is a vital necessity for the maintenance of local structure.

593 The husband-wife relationship is one in which the man is apparently superordinate to his wife, but we shall see that in practice this superordination is not as clear-cut as might at first appear. It is furthermore a relationship in which there are certain prescribed mutual obligations, so that if these obligations are neglected, it is

[5] Cf. Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, p. 69.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

If a women
837 believes that her husband is committing adultery with
578 another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

864 The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged
[897] five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages.
[533] Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they
[535] also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a
881 girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a
864 month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

864 There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis
[831] is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

842 Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use
832 of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl
[864] learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13]
881 The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour
593 of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her
[535] erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mlototo*, a root, and *hajelejela*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cikapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kapakapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Girls are not examined to see if they have been deflowered. Many girls have love affairs with young boys before they reach puberty, and at one time children built play-houses, after the manner of the Cewa, where they pretended to be adults playing at cooking and copulation. The Cewa encouraged this among their own children and at puberty Cewa girls, if not already deflowered, had their hymen forcibly ruptured in a prescribed manner. We have seen that the Ngoni formerly expected girls to be chaste before marriage while the Cewa believed that if a girl did not copulate at puberty she would die. It seems nowadays that adults expect that prepubescent boys and girls will play together sexually and that, provided this takes place with a certain amount of discretion, nothing is done to stop it. Boys and girls visit each other in dormitories, hoping that their voices will not be recognized by people in neighbouring huts. After puberty young men and women continue to flirt together, individuals varying in the extent to which they copulate. Grown men do not usually sleep with young girls, nor grown women with young boys, and if this does happen and is discovered there is always the suspicion of sorcery. The Ngoni believe, with most of their neighbours, that in order to make many of the anti-social medicines of sorcery effective, a sorcerer must copulate with some partner morally forbidden to him (or her), such as a close relative or a person of greatly disparate age or an animal. With this background of belief, Ngoni say that after puberty young men and women naturally like to frolic together and not with their juniors. Within this framework of tolerated covert activity no particular arrangements are made at puberty, save that if a man is betrothed to a young girl he will be invited formally to come and sleep with her once while she is secluded.

Thus from an early age their future roles as husbands and wives condition the sexual activities of boys and girls. A girl who allows herself to be seduced too easily is regarded as foolish and a man who is for ever chasing unmarried girls when he should be founding a *family is regarded as immature. But sexual activity is taken for* granted, and the only stipulations are that it should be conducted discreetly so that the older people in the village are not forced to notice it, and that unmarried girls should not bear live children. Knowledge of abortifacients seems to be fairly common and recently contraceptives, issued originally to soldiers in the 1939-45 war, have come into use. Few cases of seduction of unmarried girls come before the courts.

Despite the emphasis on sexual satisfaction rather than on fertility, Ngoni men and women still desire children. This is so for men despite the low incidence of bridewealth payments and the uncertainty about the custody of children. A man's children may decide to live with their mother's people, but they are still his children and he can always follow them from village to village in his old age wherever they decide to settle.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

842 wherever they decide to settle. Children are still valuable. A barren woman is pitied, and a man's impotence is whispered about behind his back. Men and women seek fertility, and a man tries to conceal his impotence. A woman who does not want to bear children is regarded as irresponsible.

We have seen that the traditional solution for barrenness was to introduce a linked co-wife, but this is now rarely done. A woman can either look for medicines[15] to make her fertile, or, if she is unsuccessful, she may beg children from a fertile sister. These children will stay with her while they are young, but they are not thought of or talked about as being her own children.

No clear distinction is drawn between impotence and sterility, and men who are said to be impotent are also known to commit adultery. A sterile husband does not find favour with his wife or with her relatives, who want her to have children to care for her when she grows old. If medicines fail to cure a man's sterility, and it is thought that the lack of children is due to him and not to his wife, then he may call in an acquaintance to sleep with his wife so that [837] she may conceive. For this task, it is said that a man will choose a person whose discretion he can trust, but one on the fringe of his acquaintance who will not feel disposed to gossip maliciously about the incident afterwards. Thus it is said that a man would never ask his brother to do this. If the woman bears a child then at some [431] later date the husband gives a goat to the progenitor, hoping that people will not connect the present with the birth of the child.

Sterility is a shameful thing and men do not easily admit to it. [128] My information on the procedure followed in specific instances is based only on village gossip and not on admissions by the men and women concerned. Although it is agreed that a sterile man may feel 842 forced to call in a seed-raiser the whole matter must remain secret. 837 There must be no loophole by which adultery might be condoned. In the words of an informant,

> A man may be impotent and may ask someone to copulate with his wife so that she may have children. This man coming to copulate with his wife comes in secret as it is considered a disgraceful thing among the people of the family and the rest of the village if they know, yet the people in the village know very well sometimes. In the old days the same thing happened, but if a man coming to sleep with the woman came in an open way, and everyone knew of his sleeping with the wife of an impotent man, he was to be killed by the chief, even though the impotent man asked him to do this work for him. The person coming to do this work of copulating with this woman was to be paid a cow or a goat for the work that he did. In these days it happens.

The sterile husband takes the risk that his friend will continue sleeping with the woman after she has conceived. I have recorded

[15] Called *cisawa*. The first child born after the successful administration of this medicine is sometimes called Cisawa.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one instance where the woman ran off with the man called in by her sterile husband. 842 839

4. The legal relationship

Emphasis on sexual partnership is characteristic of the beginning of marriage. Young people are 'foolish', dance all night long and sleep late in the morning. With the arrival of children, man and wife emerge from the tutelage of their elders and non-sexual aspects of their marriage relationship gain in importance. Even then the importance of sexual satisfaction is not forgotten. People say openly of a woman who obstructs her husband when he seeks a second wife, 'She is too fond of his penis', and old widows explain their failure to remarry by saying 'Our joints are too stiff to coopulate'. 593 [851]

Nevertheless at all times there is a great deal more in Ngoni marriage than mere sexual partnership. The obligations and duties of husband and wife towards each other and each other's kin are determined by the marriage payments and ratified by the ceremonies of marriage. These obligations persist despite the fluctuations of sexual attraction. We have seen that in 'the time of peace' the two principal transfers were 'snuff-box' and bridewealth. Today the position is different and the rights transferred by the marriage payments are different. For simplicity we may discuss the latter payment first. Bridewealth is still recognized but, as can be seen from Table V, is paid in only about four per cent of all marriages. It consists of a payment of one or more beasts or £6 made by the man to his wife's father.[16] If only one cow is offered and it dies before calving, it must be replaced. Some indication of the range of variation in amounts paid is given by Table VI. 583 178

This sample of only twelve payments is very small, but there is some indication that the amount paid has decreased in recent years. This is of interest in view of the general rise in the standard of wealth and in the amount offered as legalization payment.

By the payment of bridewealth a man ensures that all the children of his wife, by whatever genitor, shall, or rather ought to, belong to his group of relatives and live in his village when they grow up. The payment is made only after several children have been born. In the old days, if this payment was made, the children were legitimate and lived in their father's segment, and if it was not paid they could be claimed by their mother's father's segment. In these days there is no such hard and fast rule. Everyone has in effect a large choice of places where he can live, and the payment or non-payment of bridewealth for his mother is only one factor operating with many others in influencing his decisions. It is not surprising that so few people pay bridewealth. [851]

[16] For comparative figures for the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Native standards of living and African cultural change', *Africa* xi (1938), 3, supplement, p. 33.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

two groups of relatives. In the partial destruction of the father-in-law's crop by the man's friends, the latent hostility between the two groups is canalized into a form that is just socially acceptable. In the later stages of hoeing the men and women in the party act wildly, dance round and round anyone who tries to interfere with them and throw earth all over them. At first all contact between the father-in-law and the leader of the party is through intermediaries, and if all goes well, and there is no crisis, the father-in-law will always remain in the background. But with rising tempers the tension increases, and the father-in-law may himself go to cajole and threaten the party. When they do decide to stop and go into the village, an attempt is made to establish peaceful relations again, and the leader of the party begins to protest that they never really intended holding out for such a large present, that they knew it was getting dark and that they could not hoe at night. They settle down to drink the beer provided by the father-in-law and in the morning go back to their own village. It is significant that the man himself cannot be the leader of the party, so that he does not come into direct contact with his father-in-law. He shelters behind the party leader, so that the chances of an open breach between him and his father-in-law are lessened.

The formalized expression of hostility, which is a feature of many Ngoni ceremonials,[12] appears most clearly in marriage in the custom of the hoeing party, but is present in some other situations, as in the instruction of the bride at the gall bladder ceremony, when she is sometimes told she has a bad character, is mean and deceitful. Even the carrying of beer can be used to express hostility, as is indicated by Reuben's remark towards the end of his son-in-law's hoeing party, that he would tell his wife to brew beer and send it to his son-in-law's village, where the women bringing beer would demand a present even greater than the one demanded by the leader of the hoers.[13]

Men and women wish their daughters to bear children, and are reluctant to marry them to impotent men. Yet childbirth is hazardous, and a woman may die in labour because of her adultery or the adultery of her husband. It is important, therefore, that a woman's parents should be informed whenever she becomes pregnant, lest the woman die and her parents hear of her death without being forewarned of the danger. It is not sufficient that the woman's parents should hear from others that their daughter is pregnant. She must go to them on a special visit to tell them the news herself. This formal notification takes place every time she is pregnant, but if, when she becomes pregnant for the first time, she is living in

[12] For another example, see the installation of the headman's deputy described in Gluckman, Mitchell and Barnes, 'The village headman in British Central Africa', *Africa*, xix (1949), pp. 100-106.
[13] See Appendix III, p. 131.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the [182]
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with 843
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant.
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child 167
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are [837]
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court 692
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

developed as the men's. It is to be expected, therefore, that there would be greater Cewa and Nsenga influence in those affairs controlled by women than in political and military matters, which were organized by men. This is borne out by linguistic evidence, for while many of the words, but not all, pertaining to affairs of state are of Ngoni origin, the words now used in the seclusion of girls are drawn from Cewa and Nsenga.

We find therefore that it is the bearing of children before marriage and to a lesser extent pre-marital impregnation which are disapproved of rather than pre-marital copulation. The real contrast in attitude is between pre-marital copulation and adultery. We have seen that in the old days adulterers were killed by order of the chief. The punishment of adultery was a process involving headmen, lieutenants and other important men. The abhorrence of adultery remains despite its great frequency and the prohibition on killing adulterers. An adulterer is a thief, stealing the rights of another man and endangering his marriage. Even when the wife of a labour migrant bears a child and it is in danger of *mdulo* until it can be 'taken up' (p. 87) she cannot openly call in a man with whom to perform this rite. She must either get a man to come in secret or obtain expensive medicines which remove the danger. In like manner, if her husband is impotent, there must be no public recognition of any extra-marital intercourse, for impotence is shameful and not to be admitted and cannot justify the intervention of another man. It is thought regrettable that a woman should grow old without bearing daughters to help her pound maize and sons to clothe her in her old age. Yet when medicines have been of no avail and her husband calls in a seed-raiser he must come in secret and later be rewarded covertly. Similarly the sexual activities of children must be conducted discreetly. Here, however, a much more tolerant attitude is taken and there is not the same need for secrecy. There is no chaperoning of unmarried girls but only of married women whose husbands are away. There is no inspection of girls at marriage, and one informant said that if after puberty a girl has no lover with whom she can sleep, her grandmother will call in a young man to copulate with the girl in the grandmother's house to see if she is proficient, and that for this he would be rewarded by the grandmother. From one point of view we may say that there is pre-marital freedom, with discretion, and marital restriction of sexual activity. Pre-marital intercourse does, however, have a moral connotation, and it is held that the girl who sleeps too easily with all comers before marriage will continue thus after she is married. The need for discretion in premarital affairs is in some part due to the activities of the missions, working at the village level through deacons, elders and women helpers. Yet in general no action is taken by the local Christian group in the village unless the pre-marital sexual activities of its members are conducted in such a way that it is no longer possible to ignore them.

Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within

842 otherwise *mdulo* of the child will still result. Medicine is taken also by women who are unable to conceive. If it fails, it is because a spirit has entered the womb; and lots are taken to find whose spirit it is, after which sacrifices are offered until the desired result is obtained.

8. *Dissolution of Marriage* (*Chewa*).

586 The Achewa have no form of legal separation by agreement, and a divorce can be effected only where adequate reason exists. A husband may not divorce his wife on account of barrenness; but he may divorce her for adultery or desertion; or if she persistently neglects to cook food, bring water or perform her other work; or if she is offensively and perpetually jealous. A wife may divorce her husband if he is impotent; or if he fails to maintain a habitable house, or to do his share of the work; or if he fails to pay her tax, feed and clothe her properly; or on account of desertion or ill-treatment. Effect is given to the divorce after the hearing of the case by the husband handing over a fowl or other token, always known as *mubei*[1] (an arrow), in the presence of the *ankhosue*[17] to the wife's father, who passes it on to her *mtsibweni*.[2] The wife always keeps the children, even if she has been at fault; though sometimes in very flagrant cases one or more fully-grown children may be awarded to the husband; and in adultery the co-respondent is obliged to pay heavy damages as compensation for the loss of the children, [684] and the value of several years' tax is refunded by the *mtsibweni*. A woman may not be divorced while she is pregnant.

9. *Marriage of Widows* (*Chewa*).

587 A widow may not be courted until after the conclusion of the funeral ceremonies described in Section VII. When, a few months later, she has to make her choice, she brews beer at her own house, and on the evening of the *tsiku loskambula* her suitors, friends and relations foregather outside; the eldest female relation holds before her pieces of *tsekwa*[2] grass, and tells her which of the suitors each piece represents. Then she signifies her choice by taking the appropriate piece in her hand; and the old woman proceeds to the house of the chosen one, selects therefrom a knife or other small article, and hands it to the widow. In due course the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, brings a cow, sheep, goat or fowl, according to his [775] means, and ties it to the centre post of the widow's house, in order to get rid of the spirit [842] of her late husband; otherwise, he will not be able to beget a child. The widow brings out beer; her relations subsequently remove the animal from the centre post, and at night the bridal pair sleep apart in the house. Next day they procure medicine from a doctor and put it in a big pot in the house; and in the evening first the man and then the woman bathes in it. That night they again abstain from conjugal intercourse; but at cockcrow, after bathing a second time in the pot, they take it outside the village to a place where two paths meet, and break it there, thus finally and completely ridding themselves of the spirit of the first husband. They return to the village before it is light, and then commence their married life.

[1] Cf. H. S. Stannus, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 300.
[2] *Tsekwa*, a long coarse grass used for thatching.

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 159 173 562 N M 171 643 842 851

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhenguls, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansenga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze*.

N 159 173 562 [595]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Loziwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtengulenl Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

N [164] [423]

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchiza* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

N 159 173 595 842 602

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazunko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Juro; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 644

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

III

'A New Stranger has come'

In these words the father's mother announced from the door of the hut that a child had been born. From inside the hut the women assisting the mother at the time of delivery had given a single cry if it was a boy and two cries for a girl. If the birth had been delayed till late afternoon towards sunset, the women in the hut said to the mother, if it was a boy: 'See the baby has been awaiting the return of the cattle, because it is he who will tend the cattle.' 844 851

The new baby was at first regarded as a stranger, born by a woman who had herself come to the village as a stranger when she married. In later years, when speaking of his parents, the child would say: 'X is my father, and I am of the womb of A, and G and H they are my brother and my sister of one womb.' This particularization of a full brother and sister was used to correct the extended use of the kinship terms, and also to convey the idea that having been born from the womb of one woman gave children a special relationship important in Ngoni thinking. 851 593 [591] [601]

Preparation for birth

When an Ngoni wife was aware that she was pregnant she did not say anything to her husband, and indeed endeavoured to conceal her condition from him as long as possible, continuing the normal sleeping arrangements and intercourse. Ngoni women liked to assert their authority and ascendancy on those occasions, and therefore excluded the men from knowledge of the coming event and from all preparations for it. The senior women used to say, 'Men are 843 593 562

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

843 593 562 little children. They are not able to hear those things which belong to pregnancy.' The men on their part accepted the role of being ignorant of what was coming, though they were generally aware of it. It was an elaborate piece of role-playing, standardized by custom, emphasizing the separation of the men's and women's worlds in Ngoni life, and giving control and authority into the experienced hands of the senior women.

843 606 572 The Ngoni culture pattern forbade the wife to tell her mother-in-law herself about her condition. She had, as so often in the Ngoni pattern, to approach first a friend who was her confidante, who might be another young wife or a helper in the household. This friend had to tell her mother-in-law, the future paternal grandmother of the baby, who was destined to play a big part in the child's upbringing.

During the months of pregnancy a Ngoni woman carried on with her normal work in the household, including cooking for her husband. If she feared a miscarriage, and suffered from what was called 'a shaking inside', she stayed quietly in the hut, and, saying that she had a headache, asked her husband to call her friend. Then the friend told the mother-in-law who sent for a 'doctor' to bring medicines 'to make the inside not shake'. A young Ngoni woman did not expect

843 152 to have miscarriages, and feared that her husband's relatives would blame her home for not giving her enough food before marriage to make her strong and healthy in child-bearing.

The fear of invidious comparisons with her own home and upbringing also operated when the wife felt herself near to labour. She would keep on working up to the last minute, for if she told her friend that her time was come, and the friend summoned the senior women, they came to examine her. Should they find on examination that she was not about to deliver, they looked at her and said, 'What are you afraid of? Did you call us for fear?' The young wife was ashamed of being thought fearful, both for her own reputation and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

because it was implied that her family had not given her 843 152
good instruction and advice before marriage.

The birth of the child

When the senior women were satisfied that labour was about 844
to begin, they took charge of all the preparations. They first
sent out of the hut all the things belonging to the husband,
his clothes, axes, spears, shields, and all the good mats, pots [422]
and baskets. Only old mats and clothes and pots were used
during labour, and the hut was henceforth unclean and [846]
forbidden to the husband and to all males. The mother-in-
law directed operations, with the help of her co-wives, the
wives of her husband's brothers, widowed sisters of her
husband, and some of the wives of the younger generation.
The women who took an active part in the actual delivery
were the older ones, but several younger women came to
assist, or look on, and to encourage the young wife.

She was made to sit on a mat leaning back against the knees of another woman, and the experienced 'midwives' were in front to receive the child in their hands. She was told to bear down and sometimes given a bark rope tied to the rafters to pull on. Though she might be in great pain, she was not expected to cry out or even to groan. The older women talked to her encouragingly, and wiped her face, or gave her a little water to drink. After the birth, the woman knelt forward leaning on her hands until the placenta was born. It was buried in a hole, in the floor at the back of the hut on the women's side.

The baby was washed by a senior woman and oiled with castor oil. The cord was tied with thread and the baby was
given very thin gruel made of finger millet fried and ground. [858]
This was intended to act as a purgative to get rid of the mucus in the stomach. After this had been ejected, a tiny bit of the sour milk curds was put in the baby's mouth.

The mother was washed and covered with a cloth and left to rest, while the women folded up the delivery mat

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

necessary to take formal action to restore harmony. Husband and wife still remain separate persons, separated socially by their distinct roles. Yet they are bound together by economic ties, by symbolic procedures, and by mystical connexion. 593

The sexual rights and obligations of husband and wife in each other are not symmetrical. A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, but a woman cannot gain exclusive sexual rights over her husband. Her husband can take other wives, or commit adultery, and she has no ground in law for complaint unless at the same time he neglects her. The most she can do is to make life so unpleasant for him that rather than face her anger he decides to sleep with her alone. Mystical procedures are available to both man and wife, and while a husband may use medicines to safeguard that which is his by right, a wife uses medicines to augment her other sanctions, such as the threat of not cooking food for her husband or of running away to her relatives. There is one class of medicines[6] which a man can administer to his wife by cicatrization which it is believed will cause any lover of the woman to die. Another magical procedure is stated to prevent the lover from withdrawing after coitus, so that the adulterous pair will have to reveal themselves to their neighbours in order to gain medical assistance. These medicines are said to be favoured by men going off to Southern Rhodesia without their wives. It is difficult to tell to what extent they are actually administered, but the belief in their efficacy is wide-spread, and people would comment that so-and-so who was ill had become so because he had slept with a woman doctored in this way, and that the scars on such-and-such a woman were made when her husband had given her this sort of medicine. On the other hand a woman may use medicine[7] to prevent her husband from copulating with anyone else, and there are other medicines which act as love charms or which encourage the husband to stay at home at night.[8] The beliefs about difficult labour and *mdulo*[9] also have a stabilizing effect in that the man may fear for the fate of his child and for that reason be faithful to his wife while she is pregnant. On the other hand it is believed that a rejected lover can give medicine[10] to a woman who resists his approaches, so that she will die or have difficulties in childbirth. The only way for a woman to avoid this hazard is to live demurely and not to excite the attention of other men.

593 837 837 789 [832] [843]

If a woman believes that her husband is committing adultery with

[6] Known as *lukenkke*. There are at least four varieties of this, associated with different maladies all of which are fatal to the adulterer. Cf. *lukenko* in Colson, *Marriage among the Plateau Tonga* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers—forthcoming).

[7] *Ndamenge*. See below, p. 56.

[8] E.g., medicine made from the house lizard (*mbololiko*) and the domesticated cat, because these animals are always in the house and do not wander about.

[9] See below, p. 66.

[10] *Kalamatila*, from the name of the species of frog from which it is made.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

uniting a married couple are weak as compared with say, the Bemba.[31] 593
The bride is anointed with gall, and carries the gall bladder in her hair back to her own village as a sign that she has been through the marriage ceremony and has been instructed in her wifely duties by her husband's kinsfolk and neighbours. But the husband himself is usually not there, 'that day is not his work', and I once saw a man quietly drinking on one side of the village while his bride was being anointed on the other. In general it is not until much later that husband and wife appear together in ceremonial situations. The personal association of husband and wife begins in darkness and the privacy of the hut. Later the wife will have validated her status as a married woman, and can appear as such in public alongside her husband without embarrassment.

It is when a woman is pregnant that her husband's actions are most 843
liable to affect her mystically. In general a man may commit 837
adultery and his wife has no case against him; but when she is pregnant he is under a moral obligation to sleep only with her and, if he is a polygynist, with his other wives. His adultery endangers her life, for it is believed that her labour will be difficult and she or the child may die. The pregnant woman is in mortal danger if she herself commits adultery and there is a common obligation of fidelity on both man and wife throughout pregnancy, accompanied in the eyes of some people by a positive obligation to copulate together so that the foetus may grow strong in the womb. When labour proves 845
difficult, the midwife calls on the husband to confess the adulteries he committed while his wife was pregnant so that the child can be born. She may also tell the woman to confess.[32] If the child is born dead, the woman's relatives begin to suspect that the man confessed only some of his adulteries and concealed others, thereby killing the child. We have already noted that if the woman dies the husband must offer a beast to her kinsfolk (pp. 39f).

From the birth of the child until its umbilical cord has fallen off 846
and it has been doctored, the husband should not sleep with anyone 788
at all, not even with his other wives. He can resume sexual relations with them after the cord has fallen but he does not sleep with the mother of the child until about three months after the birth, when he has ritual intercourse with her and the child is again doctored. While the infant is sleeping the husband has *coitus interruptus* with its mother and allows his semen to fall on her thighs. She smears the semen over her thighs and then takes up the child and gives it to her husband, who rests it on his hips. After a moment he hands the infant back to his wife who also rests it on her hips. The child is then put back to sleep on the mat beside the couple. This ritual intercourse is obligatory in that if it is omitted it is believed the child

[31] Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 113.
[32] Cf. Rattray, op. cit., p. 105, and H. F. Barnes, 'The birth of a Ngoni child', *Man*, xlix (1949), p. 89.

584 or friends. If the man is away working or in the Army he may make his proposal by letter. When agreement has been reached negotiations can proceed although they are carried on as if there had been no prior agreement and the proposal was entirely a new one.

A man tells his eldest brother of his intention to marry, or, if he is the eldest son, he may approach his father direct. He does not [593] speak to his mother about this matter, for a man does not confide in his mother about anything connected with sex, but she is told of his intention by her husband. A man ought to tell his grand- [603] mother at an early stage, particularly the grandmother who reared him. A woman tells her sisters and her grandmother, and her eldest sister will tell her eldest brother. The man's father or eldest brother may decide on who shall act as intermediaries in the matchmaking, or else the man may himself ask important people in the village to act. There is no definite rule as to who they should be, and either men or women or both may make up the party. Usually two or three people go, and a man will try and choose people who are reliable and sober and tactful. Marriage intermediaries do not have the same important responsibilities for the marriage as do the marriage [191] sureties (or witnesses) among the Nyanja and Yao although they are known by the same term.[8] The intermediaries go to the woman's village and consult her senior relatives. Traditionally they should go to the woman's grandmother, either her father's mother or her mother's mother, depending on who lives in the village and who is the more important. They tell her that they have heard that such-and-such a marriage has been contemplated. The girl's grandmother tells the girl's father that the intermediaries have come, and if nothing has arisen to jeopardize the marriage, the visiting party are told that all is well and that they must come back again. They return to their own village, and the next day, or the next week if it is a long way to walk, they go again, bringing with them a gift or some- [583] times the legalization payment. The gift or money is handed to the person leading the negotiations on the woman's side who passes it on to the woman's father. Arrangements are made about the gall bladder ceremony and a date fixed. The intermediaries then go back to their village.

585 At the gall bladder ceremony the bride receives formal advice [591] from her affines and the people in their village. Shortly afterwards she begins to live with her husband in either his or her village. If they live virilocally she does not at first cook for her husband, but the couple rely on food prepared by his other wives or his mother or [593] grandmother. It may be up to a year later that the woman first cooks for her husband and husband's father, the latter commenting on her cooking. When she first becomes pregnant she is anointed 843 by her husband's grandmother, and goes with a young girl from her husband's kinsfolk to announce her pregnancy to her own kin.

[8] *Nkhoswe.*

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

two groups of relatives. In the partial destruction of the father-in-law's crop by the man's friends, the latent hostility between the two groups is canalized into a form that is just socially acceptable. In the later stages of hoeing the men and women in the party act wildly, dance round and round anyone who tries to interfere with them and throw earth all over them. At first all contact between the father-in-law and the leader of the party is through intermediaries, and if all goes well, and there is no crisis, the father-in-law will always remain in the background. But with rising tempers the tension increases, and the father-in-law may himself go to cajole and threaten the party. When they do decide to stop and go into the village, an attempt is made to establish peaceful relations again, and the leader of the party begins to protest that they never really intended holding out for such a large present, that they knew it was getting dark and that they could not hoe at night. They settle down to drink the beer provided by the father-in-law and in the morning go back to their own village. It is significant that the man himself cannot be the leader of the party, so that he does not come into direct contact with his father-in-law. He shelters behind the party leader, so that the chances of an open breach between him and his father-in-law are lessened.

The formalized expression of hostility, which is a feature of many Ngoni ceremonials,[18] appears most clearly in marriage in the custom of the hoeing party, but is present in some other situations, as in the instruction of the bride at the gall bladder ceremony, when she is sometimes told she has a bad character, is mean and deceitful. Even the carrying of beer can be used to express hostility, as is indicated by Reuben's remark towards the end of his son-in-law's hoeing party, that he would tell his wife to brew beer and send it to his son-in-law's village, where the women bringing beer would demand a present even greater than the one demanded by the leader of the hoers.[19]

Men and women wish their daughters to bear children, and are reluctant to marry them to impotent men. Yet childbirth is hazardous, and a woman may die in labour because of her adultery or the adultery of her husband. It is important, therefore, that a woman's parents should be informed whenever she becomes pregnant, lest the woman die and her parents hear of her death without being forewarned of the danger. It is not sufficient that the woman's parents should hear from others that their daughter is pregnant. She must go to them on a special visit to tell them the news herself. This formal notification takes place every time she is pregnant, but if, when she becomes pregnant for the first time, she is living in

[18] For another example, see the installation of the headman's deputy described in Gluckman, Mitchell and Barnes, 'The village headman in British Central Africa', *Africa*, xix (1949), pp. 100-108.
[19] See Appendix III, p. 131.

843 her husband's village, the occasion must be recognized in a more elaborate manner. Her husband or his relatives buy her a new cloth. Wearing this cloth she stands at the door of her husband's hut, and is undressed by her husband's grandmother. The old woman rubs castor oil on her abdomen and dresses her again. A small girl from her husband's kin goes with her to her own village, and their arrival there, with the woman dressed in her new cloth, indicates formally to her parents that she is pregnant. They stay at the woman's village for about a week, and then return to her husband's village.[14] Her parents have thus been made socially aware of her pregnancy, and the man can legitimately look to them for help if she becomes ill or fractious.

844 If the woman does die in childbirth, her husband has to offer a beast to her parents even though they were told of her pregnancy.[15] 761 The husband may confess to adultery when called upon to do so 606 by the midwife, but this does not absolve him from the obligation 684 to pay the beast. Confession absolves him from the charge of having caused the death of his wife by his careless behaviour, but he must still recompense his parents-in-law for the death of their daughter. It is recognized that a woman may die in childbirth despite the absence of adultery during pregnancy or despite full confession of adultery by both the woman and her husband. She dies just because God lets her die, and not because of any human misconduct. Yet she reaches the situation in which there is the danger of death because of her position as the wife of her husband. It is the 'work' of married women to bear children, and it is the 'work' of the husband if his wife dies in childbirth to offer a beast to her parents so that they may mourn their daughter.

5. Quarrels

581 We see then that a woman is not severed utterly from her own group when she marries, but that her kinsfolk retain an interest in her welfare and have certain rights in her and in her husband. The recognition of these rights by their son-in-law increases his esteem in their eyes, and enables him to appeal to them with confidence when he needs their support. The common interest of all is in the successful maintenance of the marriage, and the mutual recognition of rights and fulfilment of obligations consolidate the social relationships established between people related by marriage. Quarrels threaten the continued existence of the marriage, 578 and it is therefore in the common interest that they should be settled 602 as expeditiously as possible. The intervention of affines in a personal quarrel between husband and wife is characteristic of a system in which most neighbours are kinsfolk and in which the spatial concentration of people into compact villages, where abuse shouted at one

[14] This ceremony is called *ngayi*, which means 'breast-cloth' in Ngonga.
[15] See above, pp. 39f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant. This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman. These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for 'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery. The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 48f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

833 Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within the marriage bond it is not merely permitted, it is right and proper and positively sanctioned. All intercourse is dangerous, whether marital or not, and indeed it is perhaps the licit social significance of marital intercourse that leads to the attribution of mystical
843 significance. While a woman is pregnant, her husband can and indeed should sleep with her and with her co-wives, for it is not her husband's mere copulation with others that endangers her child, but frivolous and illicit intercourse with the wife of another or with some woman he has no intention of marrying. The moral code supports the social order, and the infant is born live into a righteous and well-regulated family. Otherwise it will not be born, or be born dead. Thus runs the belief.

5. Christian marriage

794 581 We have noted that, whatever were the intentions of the framers of the 1903 Regulations, Christian marriage ceremonies do not now have any legal significance, either in the Administration's courts or in the Native Courts. They are, however, significant in the eyes of the missions concerned, and sanctions are employed to ensure that all Christians are married in church. Marriages usually take place at the mission itself and there is some sort of preparation beforehand to verify that the couple concerned are aware of the religious implications of the marriage. Important people are sometimes married in a village church and the ceremony is attended by many people. These rites, both at the mission and in the village, involve the local groups of Christians and serve to integrate the members. The barriers against marriage outside the sectarian group might under some conditions lead to Christian or even sectarian endogamy but among the Ngoni this has not taken place. If a couple are anxious to marry and cannot by reason of a religious disparity, the pagan will usually join the church and then proceed to marriage as soon as the rules of the denomination permit. After marriage, a number then cease active participation in the affairs of the church, although they usually continue to regard themselves and are regarded as Christians. The fairly rapid growth of Christianity in the last fifty years makes it impossible to tell as yet whether an endogamous community will be formed. In any case, the Christian community stretches like the rest of Ngoni society to the Copperbelt and the towns of Southern Rhodesia, and there are facilities for Christian labour migrants who wish to marry Christian girls in the towns.

799 [397] The missions have attacked polygyny, the inheritance of widows, the ceremony of 'taking up the child', belief in *mdulo* and pre-marital copulation. In addition, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission has opposed the drinking of beer, and in theory but not as yet in practice, payment of bridewealth. The prohibition on the drinking of beer has led to the exchange of gifts of cooked food between the two sides in the various ceremonies of marriage, without making any important difference to their content and meaning. The missions have had

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

will finish the ceremony [that the relish may be given out]. Should the girl, before she came to maturity, not have been betrothed to any man, the matrons tell her she must go to some lover; this is known as "chigango." In the evening she takes her cooking pot and relish and goes to the quarters of the young unmarried men, who for the night sleep somewhere else. In the morning the girl goes back to the *Kuka* hut.

V

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

I. When a woman becomes pregnant, the matrons of the village tell the husband "he must now no longer cohabit with her." If the man have another wife he goes off to her house. When the time draws near for the woman's accouchement, she bids her husband leave her. He goes to one of the village matrons and tells her, "My wife is very ill." Then old women go to the hut and begin to take out all the cooking utensils and household goods. Should the woman have difficulty in giving birth the old women bid her confess, saying, "Speak, child, lest you die; who committed adultery with you?" Should she have been faithless she confesses, saying, "I sinned with so and so." The matrons hide such confessions. When she is safely delivered they bathe the infant, then one old woman goes off to tell the husband, "Your wife is well." Perhaps the woman has given birth to a male child, then she tells him, "You have seen a knobkerry."

593 extended to his brothers' sons, especially if their father was dead. Following the same pattern, a man's sons who were away at work sent back money to their father who bought cattle with it, or spent it as the sons asked. It was clear in the 1930's that Ngoni men rarely sent money directly to their wives, though they frequently asked their father to give money to their wives and to buy for them cloth or needed household equipment.

562 Within the larger orbit of the male family responsibilities women had their more restricted but clearly defined sphere. At a woman's
● 844 confinement she was looked after by her husband's own mother, aided
593 by his other mothers and by his sisters if they were present in the village. At the 'coming out' of the new member of the family, ten to fourteen days after birth, the woman and the baby, bathed and ritually cleansed, were seated on a mat outside the hut and presented to the
562 male members of the father's family who gave small gifts to the baby.
846 If it was a boy, the father's mother generally carried it to the gate of
593 the kraal where the men were sitting, to present it to them as one who would eventually herd the cattle. On this occasion, or soon after, the
[553] child's name was chosen, usually by the father's father, who prepared and gave to the mother a calf-skin or goat-skin for carrying the child in. The meat of the animal was cooked by the father's mother and a small feast was held for the father's mothers, sisters, brothers and their wives, and any others of the father's family who had helped in the confinement.[1] After the child had thus been acknowledged in its father's family circle, the mother took the baby to visit her own family, who also gave it presents.

593 During the rearing of the child, its father's female relatives assumed responsibility for giving the young mother advice. The father's mother
862 was expected to note the stage at which the child should be weaned, always if possible before the mother's next pregnancy. If the father's mother was unobservant, the other senior women of the husband's family would rebuke her and say 'Look now you are foolish because the child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to it.' These women then took the initiative and insisted on weaning the child. They said to the baby's mother 'We want to wean the child.' They made a paste of ground chillies and put it on the mother's breasts and covered them with a skin or cloth. The child was taken from her after it had tried to
[853] suck and had been refused, and given to the father's mother or sister, who looked after it with the help of a nursemaid. It was fed on cow's milk, *amasi* (milk curds), and gruel.

The publicity given to the weaning and the initiative taken by the senior women of the husband's family were intended to inform others in
[718] the village that the parents were now free to have another child. This was one aspect of the old Ngoni form of family planning and, in describing

[1] This feast was also held when a carrying cloth was given instead of a skin.

III

'A New Stranger has come'

In these words the father's mother announced from the door of the hut that a child had been born. From inside the hut the women assisting the mother at the time of delivery had given a single cry if it was a boy and two cries for a girl. If the birth had been delayed till late afternoon towards sunset, the women in the hut said to the mother, if it was a boy: 'See the baby has been awaiting the return of the cattle, because it is he who will tend the cattle.' 844 851

The new baby was at first regarded as a stranger, born by a woman who had herself come to the village as a stranger when she married. In later years, when speaking of his parents, the child would say: 'X is my father, and I am of the womb of A, and G and H they are my brother and my sister of one womb.' This particularisation of a full brother and sister was used to correct the extended use of the kinship terms, and also to convey the idea that having been born from the womb of one woman gave children a special relationship important in Ngoni thinking. 851 593 [591] [601]

Preparation for birth

When an Ngoni wife was aware that she was pregnant she did not say anything to her husband, and indeed endeavoured to conceal her condition from him as long as possible, continuing the normal sleeping arrangements and intercourse. Ngoni women liked to assert their authority and ascendancy on those occasions, and therefore excluded the men from knowledge of the coming event and from all preparations for it. The senior women used to say, 'Men are 843 593 562

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

because it was implied that her family had not given her 843 152
good instruction and advice before marriage.

The birth of the child

When the senior women were satisfied that labour was about 844
to begin, they took charge of all the preparations. They first
sent out of the hut all the things belonging to the husband,
his clothes, axes, spears, shields, and all the good mats, pots [422]
and baskets. Only old mats and clothes and pots were used
during labour, and the hut was henceforth unclean and [846]
forbidden to the husband and to all males. The mother-in-
law directed operations, with the help of her co-wives, the
wives of her husband's brothers, widowed sisters of her
husband, and some of the wives of the younger generation.
The women who took an active part in the actual delivery
were the older ones, but several younger women came to
assist, or look on, and to encourage the young wife.

She was made to sit on a mat leaning back against the knees of another woman, and the experienced 'midwives' were in front to receive the child in their hands. She was told to bear down and sometimes given a bark rope tied to the rafters to pull on. Though she might be in great pain, she was not expected to cry out or even to groan. The older women talked to her encouragingly, and wiped her face, or gave her a little water to drink. After the birth, the woman knelt forward leaning on her hands until the placenta was born. It was buried in a hole, in the floor at the back of the hut on the women's side.

The baby was washed by a senior woman and oiled with
castor oil. The cord was tied with thread and the baby was
given very thin gruel made of finger millet fried and ground. [853]
This was intended to act as a purgative to get rid of the
mucus in the stomach. After this had been ejected, a tiny
bit of the sour milk curds was put in the baby's mouth.

The mother was washed and covered with a cloth and left to rest, while the women folded up the delivery mat

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and massaged them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

845 The other ethnic groups surrounding the Ngoni in Nyasa-land considered it disastrous if a child was born face down [184] or with the buttocks first, and twins were dreaded as ill omens. The Ngoni shared none of these beliefs and were particularly considerate for the mother of twins, often killing [262] a beast to give the mother meat and broth to increase her [853] flow of milk. The only notice the Ngoni took of the method of presentation at birth was that they gave a child a name [553] indicative of such a birth. They gave special names for the first and second twin born. If one twin died it was buried under the veranda of the hut and a smooth stone was placed [766] on top. This stone was used for sitting on, and the surviving twin was held on it when being washed.

Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and 783 everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

591 184 844 Changes in residence at and after marriage influenced the composition of the group of relatives who assisted at births. In the central kingdom daughters of leading men in the village often stayed in their father's village at marriage. Hence the father's sisters were often present at the birth and the wife's mother and her sisters might be living in the village. If the [614] wife belonged to a higher ranking Ngoni clan than her husband, her relatives shared responsibility with those of the husband's family.

177 844 [759] As may be imagined the struggle between mother-in-law control and western medical practices at childbirth was a protracted one. Even when there was a younger member of the husband's family trained as a nurse or midwife, she by no means had her way in organizing the conduct of the birth. She might introduce a few hygienic measures such as clean cloths instead of old rags, and sterilized thread for tying the cord. But unless the senior women were frightened, and they seldom were, by prolonged and difficult labour, the Ngoni families were averse to taking a young mother into hospital. [606] The chief reason was the challenge to the authority of the mother-in-law, especially when the younger women who had some knowledge of western medical practices questioned the advice of the senior women.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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V

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

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844 If a female child, "You have seen a basket." Then the man comes and sits down on the verandah and makes fire. The old fire in the hut is thrown away. The old woman takes up the new fire and kindles with it a new fire in the hut. The husband goes away to another hut. He does not now cohabit with [844] any of his other wives until his wife, who was confined, is seen again in public.

II. When they know the umbilical cord is going to break, when they set the infant on the knees (legs), they lay it on its side so that when the cord breaks it will fall on one side; for if it breaks and falls on the pubes the child will be impotent, or barren. The umbilical cord they bury on the verandah. That day is the one on which they shave the mother and child. They begin with the infant and they shave the mother. On shaving the infant's head they leave a little hair on the fontanel, and [619] should the infant be of the clan *Maseko*, they also leave a little patch on the back of the head, and 553 then his godmother gives the child a name, saying, "My grandchild's name is so and so." This name it will have until such time as it begins to laugh and notice people, then the father, should he wish, will give the child another name. When it grows up still farther it will give itself a name, saying, "Now I am so and so." When the child becomes a man he will once again discard his old name and take another. And if a person calls him by the old name, he says, "He has named me by that thing the wild bush-pigs unearth while digging with their tusks" [meaning something very old]. When they have finished the shaving, the child's grandmother 854 powders some medicine called *pfundabwe*, this she 218 mixes with castor oil and red clay, and then rubs on 751 the fontanel. This medicine they continually renew. When the infant gets strong and big they stop. The

4:Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao
Marovi FR4
Ngoni FR5

The placenta is buried in a refuse heap,[1] outside whence it is sometimes said to be stolen by *mphiti* (evil spirits) to make medicine. A cowl is known, and now is said to be caused by the father continually wearing a hat. It is not kept for any purpose, as far as I know. If a woman die with the child unborn the child is cut out through the abdomen, when the body is in the grave, and the two bodies then buried together, the reason given being that if this is not done many other women would die in the same way. Cæsarian section is never performed; a still-born child is buried in the refuse heap; there is no treatment for still-birth.[2] Miscarriage is said to be common. Post-partum hæmorrhage is said to be one of the frequent causes of death. M 844 M [845] M [766] M [845]

After the confinement the whole body is washed, and then a piece of burning wood is placed between the legs of the woman and allowed to smoulder for several hours; this as a means of purification. M [783]

The woman stays in the house for a week. She does not resume sexual intercourse with her husband for two years unless she is the only wife, when six months to one year is allowed to elapse, though she cohabits after one or two weeks. During the puerperium there is no special diet. The child is suckled for two to three years by mother, or grandmother if the former die; or if neither are available, by the aunt (maternal). Death of the child may ensue as the result of being suckled by others. Suckling sometimes prolonged for four years, belief holding that thereby pregnancy is prevented. M 846 M 853 M [842]

After miscarriage the woman remains in the house only two days, but has to take medicine for six months, abstaining from sexual intercourse for half that period. Medicine is frequently taken to cause abortion, and may be made by one person to affect another; it is taken when a period is missed. Sterility is said to be common among women. No artificial sterility is produced, but medicine is taken and a cord run round the loins to prevent pregnancy supervening. The new-born child is first washed in ordinary water and then in the water in which a man and his wife have washed after coitus. After this the other women may touch the baby, but not young girls, otherwise it might die. If it die before it has left the house it would be buried by women just as a still-born child, the men refusing to assist. After the cord has separated (one week) the child and mother leave the house and appear in public. The child's head is oiled this day and sometimes medicine made of charcoal is pasted on with some beads as a preventative against injury by the strong sun.[3] M 845 M 847 M 844 M 766 M 846 302 751

The child is named usually after the maternal uncle's child-name which is given by the uncle (Nyam). M 551

[1] In an Angoni village a woman I saw buried the placenta under the floor of the hut, using a hoe to dig with, upon which she first milked her breasts—the first milk. This to prevent chancre in the gland. M 751 844

[2] With still-birth, women accuse their husbands of having syphilis, and "a child is often born with sores on it."

[3] Medicine called *Ifyendaben*, see p. 296. M 845

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and massaged them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

845 The other ethnic groups surrounding the Ngoni in Nyasa- [184] land considered it disastrous if a child was born face down or with the buttocks first, and twins were dreaded as ill omens. The Ngoni shared none of these beliefs and were particularly considerate for the mother of twins, often killing [262] a beast to give the mother meat and broth to increase her [853] flow of milk. The only notice the Ngoni took of the method of presentation at birth was that they gave a child a name [553] indicative of such a birth. They gave special names for the first and second twin born. If one twin died it was buried under the veranda of the hut and a smooth stone was placed [766] on top. This stone was used for sitting on, and the surviving twin was held on it when being washed.

Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and 783 everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

societies maintaining officially a conspiracy of silence, the 864
stories were only standard replies by adults to children, and most adults admitted that children pursued these inquiries among themselves and found out what they wanted to know from each other.

Naming the child

After coming out of the hut and being presented to its male 553
kin and to the elders of the village as 'the new stranger', the baby was given a name. The choice of a name was usually left to the baby's paternal grandfather. He sometimes gave it his name or his father's name, if a boy, or if a girl, his mother's name or his father's sister's name. There was no ceremony attached to naming. After the matter had been talked over by the men at the kraal gate, the grandfather came to the hut, and called the mother and child out and said, 'His name is so and so.' The personal name was seldom [551]
used in ordinary social intercourse, but in spite of this every child was given a personal name, and sometimes had added to it a descriptive name indicating that it had been born [845]
face downwards, or born a twin, or born too soon after the previous baby.

At this time of naming, the father, or more generally the 854
paternal grandfather, prepared a 'carrying skin' for the mother to carry the baby in. It really belonged to the baby rather than to the mother, for it was used by the nurse girl to carry the baby, and she had the child in her charge most [281]
of the day. The skin was that of a goat or small calf from the [922]
herd owned by the house to which the baby's father belonged. The skin was cleaned and scraped and made soft by rubbing in fat, and handed over to the mother with some of the meat for broth, and the rest of the meat was eaten by the males [262]
of that house. The gift in time became a cloth and not a skin, as skins for wearing or household use went out of fashion. The cloth when presented however was still called a 'carrying skin' and a goat or a calf from the herd of the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway. 596 861

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but which turned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers. 183 596 [184]

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it. 177 563 [845] [841]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

uniting a married couple are weak as compared with say, the Bemba.[31] 593
The bride is anointed with gall, and carries the gall bladder in her hair back to her own village as a sign that she has been through the marriage ceremony and has been instructed in her wifely duties by her husband's kinsfolk and neighbours. But the husband himself is usually not there, 'that day is not his work', and I once saw a man quietly drinking on one side of the village while his bride was being anointed on the other. In general it is not until much later that husband and wife appear together in ceremonial situations. The personal association of husband and wife begins in darkness and the privacy of the hut. Later the wife will have validated her status as a married woman, and can appear as such in public alongside her husband without embarrassment.

It is when a woman is pregnant that her husband's actions are most 843
liable to affect her mystically. In general a man may commit 839
adultery and his wife has no case against him; but when she is pregnant he is under a moral obligation to sleep only with her and, if he is a polygynist, with his other wives. His adultery endangers her life, for it is believed that her labour will be difficult and she or the child may die. The pregnant woman is in mortal danger if she herself commits adultery and there is a common obligation of fidelity on both man and wife throughout pregnancy, accompanied in the eyes of some people by a positive obligation to copulate together so that the foetus may grow strong in the womb. When labour proves 845
difficult, the midwife calls on the husband to confess the adulteries he committed while his wife was pregnant so that the child can be born. She may also tell the woman to confess.[32] If the child is born dead, the woman's relatives begin to suspect that the man confessed only some of his adulteries and concealed others, thereby killing the child. We have already noted that if the woman dies the husband must offer a beast to her kinsfolk (pp. 39f).

From the birth of the child until its umbilical cord has fallen off 846
and it has been doctored, the husband should not sleep with anyone 788
at all, not even with his other wives. He can resume sexual relations with them after the cord has fallen but he does not sleep with the mother of the child until about three months after the birth, when he has ritual intercourse with her and the child is again doctored. While the infant is sleeping the husband has *coitus interruptus* with its mother and allows his semen to fall on her thighs. She smears the semen over her thighs and then takes up the child and gives it to her husband, who rests it on his hips. After a moment he hands the infant back to his wife who also rests it on her hips. The child is then put back to sleep on the mat beside the couple. This ritual intercourse is obligatory in that if it is omitted it is believed the child

[31] Cf. Richards, op. cit., p. 113.
[32] Cf. Rattray, op. cit., p. 105, and H. F. Barnes, 'The birth of a Ngoni child', *Man*, xlix (1949), p. 89.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)195[illegible]FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

602 that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address
593 of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife,
684 the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration.
692 Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

593 The general principle that no court action involving the husband's
684 sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

578 Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their
602 relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman
[845] had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who
[787] was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife
[754] had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go
167 away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great
602 deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

will finish the ceremony [that the relish may be given out]. Should the girl, before she came to maturity, not have been betrothed to any man, the matrons tell her she must go to some lover; this is known as "chigango." In the evening she takes her cooking pot and relish and goes to the quarters of the young unmarried men, who for the night sleep somewhere else. In the morning the girl goes back to the *Kuka* hut.

V

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

I. When a woman becomes pregnant, the matrons of the village tell the husband "he must now no longer cohabit with her." If the man have another wife he goes off to her house. When the time draws near for the woman's accouchement, she bids her husband leave her. He goes to one of the village matrons and tells her, "My wife is very ill." Then old women go to the hut and begin to take out all the cooking utensils and household goods. Should the woman have difficulty in giving birth the old women bid her confess, saying, "Speak, child, lest you die; who committed adultery with you?" Should she have been faithless she confesses, saying, "I sinned with so and so." The matrons hide such confessions. When she is safely delivered they bathe the infant, then one old woman goes off to tell the husband, "Your wife is well." Perhaps the woman has given birth to a male child, then she tells him, "You have seen a knobkerry."

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

[787] rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned.
[177] Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment.
795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a
741 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancien successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities.
695 The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When
766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before
849 their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

177 These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

[643] Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the only independent tribe in Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government.
[634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

593 extended to his brothers' sons, especially if their father was dead. Following the same pattern, a man's sons who were away at work sent back money to their father who bought cattle with it, or spent it as the sons asked. It was clear in the 1930's that Ngoni men rarely sent money directly to their wives, though they frequently asked their father to give money to their wives and to buy for them cloth or needed household equipment.

562 Within the larger orbit of the male family responsibilities women
844 had their more restricted but clearly defined sphere. At a woman's
593 confinement she was looked after by her husband's own mother, aided by his other mothers and by his sisters if they were present in the village. At the 'coming out' of the new member of the family, ten to fourteen days after birth, the woman and the baby, bathed and ritually
562 cleansed, were seated on a mat outside the hut and presented to the
846 male members of the father's family who gave small gifts to the baby.
593 If it was a boy, the father's mother generally carried it to the gate of the kraal where the men were sitting, to present it to them as one who would eventually herd the cattle. On this occasion, or soon after, the
[553] child's name was chosen, usually by the father's father, who prepared and gave to the mother a calf-skin or goat-skin for carrying the child in. The meat of the animal was cooked by the father's mother and a small feast was held for the father's mothers, sisters, brothers and their wives, and any others of the father's family who had helped in the confinement.[1] After the child had thus been acknowledged in its father's family circle, the mother took the baby to visit her own family, who also gave it presents.

593 During the rearing of the child, its father's female relatives assumed
862 responsibility for giving the young mother advice. The father's mother was expected to note the stage at which the child should be weaned, always if possible before the mother's next pregnancy. If the father's mother was unobservant, the other senior women of the husband's family would rebuke her and say 'Look now you are foolish because the child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to it.' These women then took the initiative and insisted on weaning the child. They said to the baby's mother 'We want to wean the child.' They made a paste of ground chillies and put it on the mother's breasts and covered them with a skin or cloth. The child was taken from her after it had tried to
[853] suck and had been refused, and given to the father's mother or sister, who looked after it with the help of a nursemaid. It was fed on cow's milk, *amasi* (milk curds), and gruel.

The publicity given to the weaning and the initiative taken by the senior women of the husband's family were intended to inform others in
[178] the village that the parents were now free to have another child. This was one aspect of the old Ngoni form of family planning and, in describing

[1] This feast was also held when a carrying cloth was given instead of a skin.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

because it was implied that her family had not given her 843 152
good instruction and advice before marriage.

The birth of the child

When the senior women were satisfied that labour was about 844
to begin, they took charge of all the preparations. They first
sent out of the hut all the things belonging to the husband,
his clothes, axes, spears, shields, and all the good mats, pots [422]
and baskets. Only old mats and clothes and pots were used
during labour, and the hut was henceforth unclean and [846]
forbidden to the husband and to all males. The mother-in-
law directed operations, with the help of her co-wives, the
wives of her husband's brothers, widowed sisters of her
husband, and some of the wives of the younger generation.
The women who took an active part in the actual delivery
were the older ones, but several younger women came to
assist, or look on, and to encourage the young wife.

She was made to sit on a mat leaning back against the knees of another woman, and the experienced 'midwives' were in front to receive the child in their hands. She was told to bear down and sometimes given a bark rope tied to the rafters to pull on. Though she might be in great pain, she was not expected to cry out or even to groan. The older women talked to her encouragingly, and wiped her face, or gave her a little water to drink. After the birth, the woman knelt forward leaning on her hands until the placenta was born. It was buried in a hole, in the floor at the back of the hut on the women's side.

The baby was washed by a senior woman and oiled with
castor oil. The cord was tied with thread and the baby was
given very thin gruel made of finger millet fried and ground. [858]
This was intended to act as a purgative to get rid of the
mucus in the stomach. After this had been ejected, a tiny
bit of the sour milk curds was put in the baby's mouth.

The mother was washed and covered with a cloth and left to rest, while the women folded up the delivery mat

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and managed them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

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Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and 783 everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

over the age of ten had to avoid the hut and its inhabitants altogether. The husband slept either in the boys' dormitory or with the husband of the woman who was looking after his wife. 846 783

This ritual uncleanness extended to any food once it was carried into the hut. Ngoni women used to demonstrate their love for their husbands by stopping cooked food being carried into the hut, and sending it instead by the child who brought it to her husband where the men were gathered at the gate of the kraal. [599]

Ritual cleansing of a hut and its occupants took place in stages. At the time of 'bringing out the child', which I shall shortly describe, the hut itself was made clean again. It was thoroughly swept, and the floor and veranda were smeared with cowdung. Cowdung was used habitually for smearing on floors, prior to polishing them with a smooth stone. But fresh wet cowdung rubbed on the hands was also used for ritual cleansing after some 'dangerous' act such as touching sacred objects or administering the royal medicines. In the case of its use after childbirth it was undoubtedly used in the ritual sense, for the operation was called 'making the hut safe for the husband to sleep in'. The household goods were then put back in their places, anyone could go into the hut, and the husband returned to sleep there, though on a separate mat on his, the right-hand side, of the fireplace. If the child was a first baby, the husband's return to sleep in the hut was delayed, since the senior women stayed on to instruct the young mother how to take care of the baby at night, and especially how to be careful not to smother it as it lay beside her on her mat. [237]

'Coming out of the hut'

The falling of the cord was the signal that the baby was ready to 'come out of the hut' and be presented to the village. Ngoni women used to hasten the falling of the cord by burning a maize cob, and squeezing into the ashes the juice of the 846 851 278

small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was applied with a feather to the baby's navel.

When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grandmother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

will die. The child is in danger from the illness known as *mdulo* throughout the period from birth until the resumption of intercourse between its parents. It is not until after this ceremony, known as 'taking up the child'[53] that the mystical link between man, wife, and child is broken and the man free to commit adultery without mystical retribution. Thus while there are definite rights and obligations between husband and wife which can be enforced in the courts or are susceptible to the pressure of public opinion there are also in the critical situations of pregnancy and childbirth other mystical forces operating which unite the couple to a greater extent than at any other time. To a lesser extent the same principle operates when a woman menstruates. Her husband is in danger from her menstrual blood. She may not lie on the same mat with him and if he has a bed she must lie on the floor. If he has intercourse with her while she is menstruating he will contract an illness called *lugola*[54] whose symptoms are a very black face, nasal discharge, and continual feeling of cold. After death a man's widows are in danger of *mdulo* if they commit adultery during the first month of mourning.

We see then that the relationship between a man and his wife is partly defined in legal terms, with mutual duties and rights that are enforceable in the courts. This relationship is documentated and validated by the transfer of money and cattle from one group to the other and by the performance of the various marriage ceremonies. Because of the relationship between them, man and wife live together, sleep together, eat together and work together. But above all, together they produce and rear children. It is primarily because of these children that the kin of man and wife are concerned in the marriage relationship. It is during the long process of producing children that the two spouses are most closely associated with each other, and actions of the one in some mystical way directly and automatically influence the well-being of the other.

When a marriage grows out of flirtation between a young man and a young woman, there is at first sexual attraction between them. With the passage of time this may give place to a broader sentiment of mutual affection and respect. To this extent we may say that man and wife come to love each other. But whereas young men frequently discuss with other men the attraction they experience towards women, unmarried or married, they do not do this when they have settled down and begun to acquire prestige in the community. A man may quarrel with his wife in public, but he never expresses his affection for her, save in the intimacies of the hut. Men and women mourn their spouses with great lamentation at funerals, but while this may sometimes be the expression of a personal

[53] *Kutola mwana*. Cf. *kutenga mwana* among the Cewa.

[54] Cf. Read, op. cit., 'The moral code . . .', p. 19, where she describes a medicine called *ugola* with which men doctored their wives so that their lovers would die of a wasting sickness. Also cf. Zulu *ulugola*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not 167
bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged 837
absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen 842
as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. [177]
It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages
where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in
marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the [182]
virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one
solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with 843
particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant.
This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at
the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing
their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected 846
by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child 167
may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives
as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only
consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can [755]
be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman.
These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to
find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is
under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the
woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are [837]
caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for
'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and
the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent
husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit
adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the 602
kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour 578
later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are
fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They
can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage
payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is
in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. 602
They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages 593
for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here 684
much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent
man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court 692
enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The
husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them
to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether
he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery.
The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is
done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her
husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

844 If a female child, "You have seen a basket." Then the man comes and sits down on the verandah and makes fire. The old fire in the hut is thrown away. The old woman takes up the new fire and kindles with it a new fire in the hut. The husband goes away to another hut. He does not now cohabit with [84] any of his other wives until his wife, who was confined, is seen again in public.

II. When they know the umbilical cord is going to break, when they set the infant on the knees (legs), they lay it on its side so that when the cord breaks it will fall on one side; for if it breaks and falls on the pubes the child will be impotent, or barren. The umbilical cord they bury on the verandah. That day is the one on which they shave the mother and child. They begin with the infant and they shave the mother. On shaving the infant's head they leave a little hair on the fontanel, and [614] should the infant be of the clan *Maseko*, they also leave a little patch on the back of the head, and 553 then his godmother gives the child a name, saying, "My grandchild's name is so and so." This name it will have until such time as it begins to laugh and notice people, then the father, should he wish, will give the child another name. When it grows up still farther it will give itself a name, saying, "Now I am so and so." When the child becomes a man he will once again discard his old name and take another. And if a person calls him by the old name, he says, "He has named me by that thing the wild bush-pigs unearth while digging with their tusks" [meaning something very old]. When they have finished the shaving, the child's grandmother 854 powders some medicine called *pfundabwe*, this she 278 mixes with castor oil and red clay, and then rubs on 751 the fontanel. This medicine they continually renew. When the infant gets strong and big they stop. The

6:Ratray E.G-S (ca.1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

reason they put on this medicine is that they fear the sun lest it strike through the skull. They also take a purgative medicine called *chizura*, and pour a decoction in a gourd used for cooking the infant's gruel. The gruel is left off once the child gets strong. 854 278 751

III. Now they prepare to steam the infant. They get the roots of the *Nyalinse* tree and the leaves of the *Chipungenyungu*, and put them in a pot of water, and get four large white pebbles, and put them in the fire, and when they are red hot, lift them out between two pieces of stick, and drop them into the pot, and the steam envelops the infant. They do this because they fear a disease called *Tsempo* and *Mauka*. This done, the floor of the hut is replastered [with dung], and they set fire to everything that was left in the hut—baskets, potsherds, and spoons. The fire in the hollow in the centre of the floor, they rake up on the floor level, and remove the ashes only, but when they come to fasten the *mkusi* belt round the infant's waist, the fire is completely extinguished, and rekindled from that of some other hut. Then the husband comes and stands upright near the doorway, and little cuts are made on his leg. They begin with his big toe, and cut four little slashes, and four on his shin, and four on his knee, both sides, and do the same on the other leg, and on his chest are cut two little gashes, and on his back two. Into these cuts is rubbed some medicine for a disease called *Chinyalo*. When they do this they fear, should the man step over the spot on the verandah where the umbilical cord and afterbirth are buried, he might take this disease of the legs (Chinyalo). If the man have another wife it is she who twists the belt made from the bark of the *Mpoza* tree and places it underneath the mat where she and her husband sleep. Next morning

846 854 [824] [751] 846 [753] [824]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

846 she rises early to go and fasten the belt on the infant. Should the man not have a second wife, the one to put the belt on the child is his (the man's) sister. The man does not immediately see the face of his child; some day these same old women make him take it in his arms [hands]. The father then makes them a present of beads.

854 852 301 IV. When they notice the infant is beginning to grow his bottom teeth and to smile at people, the elders tell the father that, "Now you must bring the child into the village." The child's grandmother ties up beforehand some *lizango*. She begins with a little strip of calico, and rolls it round and round the medicine charm and along with a piece of string; then takes a little piece of skin and sews it over this, and takes some beads and sews them on the skin. The mother cooks some relish beforehand. That evening the husband and wife sleep together (this is "to bring the child into the village.") She cuts off the old belt the child is wearing, and puts on the new one with the *lizango* medicine in it, some more of the medicine, similarly tied up, is placed under the infant's head. In the morning she takes the relish to present to the two old women, and then takes the *lizango* she had placed under the child's head and ties it round his neck, and then takes a belt of beads, interspersed [789] with little wooden charms, and adorns the child. When in time the *lizango* belt breaks, they do not look for it or replace it. In the event of an infant dying before he has been "brought into the village," 766 they bury it in some open glade, near the edge of some stream, its funeral is attended by women only. Should a man tramp over the spot where the child [753] is buried, he "has taken" the disease known as *nyesi*. Such a grave is known as *nsenye*.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Women wear their cloth folded across the upper level of the breasts from right to left. Men and women often have two cloths, one over the loins, only the second fastening over the chest. M Y N 291

A menstruating woman also wears a small piece of calico corresponding to a diaper supported by string round the waist.[1] The same thing is worn after child-birth for six months. Angoni women always wear them. M Y N [241] [246]

The Angoni, Chipeta wear their cloth toga-fashion, carrying a fold of cloth on the left arm. An Angoni chief wears three such, blue, white and coloured, the first outside, the last next to the skin.

The material used is now practically everywhere European-made calico, formerly bark cloth only was used by Nyanja, though weaving had been accomplished by Angoni, where skins were and are used as articles of clothing. M Y N [286]

There is nothing to distinguish men of various grades, etc. Fashion at the present time is very capricious—some patterned cloth being much worn one month will have no sale a month later; this is true both of men and of women.

There is no class uniform, and no "costumes" are worn save in dancing (q.v.).

Men are now seen wearing a piece of calico twisted up on the head in turban form, a custom lately introduced from the coast—the only indigenous head-gear is the string skull-cap worn by Angoni widows. N [589]

Under the heading of dress must be included the bead aprons worn by Yao and Angoni. Among the former the use of this garment is restricted to the women, who in the home sometimes wear nothing else; among the Angoni the children often have them and no other clothing.

Sandals are sometimes made of skin and fastened on the feet with a thong when crossing thorny country.

Among Angoni the *wande* only used to be worn; this is a small hard-cased fruit which was hollowed out and worn just covering the glans penis. N 291 [24]

FOOD, ETC.

The staple food throughout the country is either maize or rice, the latter only at various spots on the lake shore where it can be grown. Two final meals per diem are taken, at 9 or 10 a.m. and again at 6 p.m.; each consists of *nsima* porridge made from maize flour or rice flour or boiled rice with some *ndiwo* (relish) to which the salt is added. At odd times the native will eat anything that opportunity offers—a piece of cassava root, a boiled sweet potato, a roasted maize cob, etc. M Y 262 [264]

The *nsima* is made by stirring flour (*ufa*) into boiling water till a stiff paste is formed; this is kept cooking for five minutes and then scraped out with a wooden M Y 252

[1] Diaper = *mikete*; a woman keeps five or six; they are never put away in baskets but always hung up; a woman changes every time she bathes, using two or three per diem; they may be given to a female child to wear, but are then not worn again by a woman.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 was thus different in the two kingdoms. In the north he was one ruler,
614 though a supreme one, among several ruling kinsmen of the same clan.
565 His position in the past had been strengthened by the prestige shared by
184 his clansmen, but also challenged by his near kinsmen in positions of authority. In the central kingdom the Paramount shared no authority with his fellow clansmen. He was unique among them as a ruler, while sharing special ritual relationships with the two other clans which supported his position without challenging it.

643 A new Paramount, in order to be installed in his father's place, had
614 to be of the big house as well as of the royal clan. Dr. Kuper described
585 the Swazi practice whereby cattle were contributed by the nation for the mother of the king, so that she was called the 'mother of the people of the country'. She also described the ritual marriage of the first wife of a ruler, who was called *sisulamsiti*, and who was never the mother of the heir.[1] The Ngoni Paramount-elect in the northern kingdom married his first wife when he was a young man and she was called *msulamsizi*, 'the one who takes the darkness off him'. The big wife, who would bear the heir, was married with a large gift of cattle taken from the herd of the big wife of the reigning Paramount and, after marriage, was attached to her big house. We shall discuss in greater detail in the next chapter the relationships of the royal women to the Paramount and to each other. Here it is important to note that the big house owned by the big wife was the place where the future chief was brought up. In the central kingdom the first marriage of the Paramount was traditionally with a woman of the Magagula clan who was said not to bear children. She held an honoured place in the social hierarchy and was married with cattle taken from the herd of the *gogo* house of the reigning Paramount. It was regarded as a ritual marriage, for if she did bear children they were not acknowledged.
[842 Informants were uncertain whether methods to prevent conception were
847] used, or whether abortion was practised, or whether children, if born, died young or were disposed of or placed out in other households. The last alternatives were unlikely, and one of the first two expedients was in line with the phrase always used of this wife: 'she did not bear children'. The wife who bore the heir was married next and was always of another leading clan, and the cattle for her came from the herd of the big house of the reigning Paramount.

643 The reasons were obvious why the remembered genealogies of the
614 Ngoni Paramounts of the royal clans were short compared with the genealogies of some other African royal houses. The remote ancestors of Jere chiefs and Maseko chiefs, who were, as we have seen, not Paramounts before they left the south, were forgotten once the departure had taken place. Only a few names had been handed down and were repeated by the official praisers, whose task it was to call out the names of the direct ancestors of the Paramount before declaiming his *izibongo* or

[1] Kuper, H. op. cit. pp. 54 & 91.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Girls are not examined to see if they have been deflowered. Many girls have love affairs with young boys before they reach puberty, and at one time children built play-houses, after the manner of the Cewa, where they pretended to be adults playing at cooking and copulation. The Cewa encouraged this among their own children and at puberty Cewa girls, if not already deflowered, had their hymen forcibly ruptured in a prescribed manner. We have seen that the Ngoni formerly expected girls to be chaste before marriage while the Cewa believed that if a girl did not copulate at puberty she would die. It seems nowadays that adults expect that pre-pubescent boys and girls will play together sexually and that, provided this takes place with a certain amount of discretion, nothing is done to stop it. Boys and girls visit each other in dormitories, hoping that their voices will not be recognized by people in neighbouring huts. After puberty young men and women continue to flirt together, individuals varying in the extent to which they copulate. Grown men do not usually sleep with young girls, nor grown women with young boys, and if this does happen and is discovered there is always the suspicion of sorcery. The Ngoni believe, with most of their neighbours, that in order to make many of the anti-social medicines of sorcery effective, a sorcerer must copulate with some partner morally forbidden to him (or her), such as a close relative or a person of greatly disparate age or an animal. With this background of belief, Ngoni say that after puberty young men and women naturally like to frolic together and not with their juniors. Within this framework of tolerated covert activity no particular arrangements are made at puberty, save that if a man is betrothed to a young girl he will be invited formally to come and sleep with her once while she is secluded.

N 864 831 M 88 831 N 836 N [864] N [754]

Thus from an early age their future roles as husbands and wives condition the sexual activities of boys and girls. A girl who allows herself to be seduced too easily is regarded as foolish and a man who is for ever chasing unmarried girls when he should be founding a family is regarded as immature. But sexual activity is taken for granted, and the only stipulations are that it should be conducted discreetly so that the older people in the village are not forced to notice it, and that unmarried girls should not bear live children. Knowledge of abortifacients seems to be fairly common and recently contraceptives, issued originally to soldiers in the 1939-45 war, have come into use. Few cases of seduction of unmarried girls come before the courts.

N [847] [842]

Despite the emphasis on sexual satisfaction rather than on fertility, Ngoni men and women still desire children. This is so for men despite the low incidence of bridewealth payments and the uncertainty about the custody of children. A man's children may decide to live with their mother's people, but they are still his children and he can always follow them from village to village in his old age wherever they decide to settle.

N 842 N [593]

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

787 rising out of the lake, this was the spirit of the fathers returned.
[177] Now they had never heard before of men with white skins. But one day when they were burning the Henga villages, suddenly they came on David Livingstone and his party on their first journey of exploration on the Lake. More than once I have heard them tell how this wicked hag had cursed her enemy and said that beneath that tree the lightning would strike her, or some other terrible prediction, and there came a strange fulfilment.
795 Such curious accidents gave to witch-doctors and others a
791 dangerous power over the people. And in spite of their constant failure to bring rain, or ward off sickness and death, their reputation was kept alive by the memory of one or two ancien successes, and by playing on the terrors of the people. Unfortunately these superstitious terrors led to miserable atrocities.
695 The witch-doctor was always called in to detect crime which was not patent. He brought his poison pot with him. He might accuse whom he pleased, and the only way the accused could clear himself was by drinking the poison. If he became sick and vomited then he was innocent. If he died he was guilty. When
766 a chief died his spirit was not allowed to go to the other world alone. A great fight was organised and many were killed, that they might be with him. Or the women and slaves were taken and buried alive with him in the pit.

845 The twin children and those who cut their upper teeth before their lower, or any who showed any abnormality were buried alive
849 in the sand of the river, or were cast out to the hyenas.

These atrocities are happily becoming matters of history. We
177 seldom now hear of them, and when we do, it sends a thrill of horror through many of the people.

Now a great change is coming over the people. They are the
[643] only independent tribe is Central Africa, living under their own chiefs. But the old military days have passed away, and with them much of the great power of the chiefs. The old men see it, and shake their heads, but do nothing to readjust the state. But the young chiefs, most of whom are readers and Christians, have set themselves energetically to try and remould their government.
[634] Our most capable and powerful sub-chief, who is himself an elder of the church has recently established a regular hut tax, and has formed a police force. His police bring criminals to justice, enforce his judgments, prohibit the people from cutting down trees, and during slack seasons go through the villages, and where

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

584 a strenuous resistance, during which one of them earned the name which stuck to her ever afterwards of 'the biting spider'. Considerations in choosing a mate, both for youths
581 and girls, were not only influenced by the Ngoni desire, especially strong among the senior people, for linking Ngoni clans and families together by marriage. The high proportion of young people, boys especially, who had been to school and were Christian, weighed the scales in favour of an educated Christian wife or husband. As always, however, the factor of personal liking was very strong. Attraction first, and then liking based on further acquaintance, was held as most important by the youths and girls themselves. It was partly the question of the transfer of cattle to seal the mar-
[583] riage contract which inclined the young men to listen to the advice of their elders, for they were dependent on them, at least in the first instance, for providing the cattle.

836 The other direction in which social control operated in relations between the sexes was in the forms of courtship
584 tolerated and permitted. In pre-European days, and for a long time after the missions came, the age of marriage was, as we have seen, postponed for many years after puberty. In those days there was a recognized and socially accepted pattern of sexual freedom before marriage, which we have already mentioned. A girl could indicate to a young man, who had recently joined a regiment, and had shown in various ways that he was attracted by her, that she was willing to take him as a lover. Often this relationship led eventually to marriage between the two, but it was not always the case. These two slept together from time to time in the dormitory, practising limited intercourse. The fear of being deflowered and still more of being pregnant before marriage acted as a
[848] very strong deterrent to the girls not to let the young man, in the Ngoni phrase, 'harm her in any way'. If this occurred the girls knew they would have no pre-marriage rite and no full public wedding ceremony, and this would bring shame not only on them but on their father's family and house.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Beyond the village the Native Courts deal to a great extent with matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the development of Christian marriage.

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who rears him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are responsible for their own actions before the court, and that truant schoolboys can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peaceably with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms.

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage.

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later

[1] Called *cidumu*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

848 684 that if the lover is thought to be very desirable as a husband, the girl and her parents will begin to act as though she had in fact been married by him. Few cases of seduction come before the courts, perhaps because of the fact that it is only pre-marital pregnancy that can lead to action in the court and not merely pre-marital copulation. If the lover agrees to marry the girl it is in the interests of her kin to let him do so, rather than take the matter to court when they may be awarded more damages but where also their daughter will appear as a foolish and indiscreet person. It is said that some girls hand on to their parents some of the presents they receive from their lovers, and that therefore the parents take no action against the lovers, but I have no information as to the extent of this practice.

The kin of a woman have therefore an interest in her sexual activities before she is married, and to a lesser extent a man's relatives have a similar interest. The main concern of a man, however, is that he shall not get himself into such serious trouble that he has to find the money for damages in the court and that he will not be forced to marry an unsuitable girl whom he has impregnated.

2. The marriages of children

581 At marriage itself a person's relatives may act on his or her behalf in choosing a spouse, and the factors that influence their choice are different from those which operate when people choose their own spouses. A man's relatives stress that the wife-to-be must be hardworking, polite to her superiors and not given to promiscuity. The fact that a girl begins to sleep with her lover may influence her lover's parents against her for they argue that if she sleeps so easily with their son she will soon tire of him and run off after someone else. They pay more attention to the character of her parents and siblings and look to see what sort of wives her sisters have made. Similarly the parents of the girl may look critically at the young man and they too argue that as he has already begun to sleep with their daughter he will soon begin running after other women and leave his wife 'alone in her hut'. If a relative of the girl has already married a relative of the man and that marriage has not been a success, their kinsfolk may try to prevent a second marriage.

Case history 4

Absolom, who works in South Africa, wrote to his brother saying he wanted to marry Mary. The brother, who was married to Mary's sister, approached Mary's father who said that he could not agree. Mary's father later said that he opposed the marriage as Absolom's brother had infected his wife with syphilis and he did not want another of his daughters to marry into that family. [164]

584 If a man is away working he may write home and ask his father or some other relative to find a wife for him. A marriage arranged in this way does not necessarily find favour with the man when he finds out who his bride is to be, but a number of soldiers successfully

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Where a woman has already troubled her relatives by her adultery, they may try to avoid further expense by refusing the legalization payment offered for her. 583 586 [837]

Case history 7

Rachel had had two husbands and had been divorced from them both. She had also lived with a White for some years. In 1946 she began to live with Esau, who already had three wives. In 1948 Esau approached an important man in Rachel's village and asked him to act as intermediary as he wished to offer the legalisation payment to Rachel's brother. This man refused to do so, and in the end Esau approached his brother-in-law himself. The brother-in-law said that he had known his sister Rachel a long time and she was just a prostitute. He would not take the money for her. Esau said he would speak to his wife and ask her to change her character. Eventually the brother-in-law agreed to accept the thirty shillings offered.

Although the kinsfolk of the man or woman can exercise social pressure to prevent a marriage it is difficult for them to force a girl to marry against her will, and impossible in the case of a man. We have noted that in the old days, according to informants, people married whom they were told and did not refuse. Even if this was ever true, it is true no longer. A man can move off to the towns in the face of pressure and a woman can always run away to other relatives if her parents are insistent on an unwanted marriage. The Administration does not allow girls to be married against their will, but I do not know of any recent instance in which it has intervened on this issue. A girl's relatives can show their anger by abusing her and by scaring off her own preferred mate, but they cannot detain her against her will and they cannot force her to go through the ceremonies of marriage. They cannot appeal to the court to punish the girl for disobedience. 584

In some instances pressure is put on a man by a woman's kin to force him into marrying her. If a woman bears a pre-marital child, and it is known that the genitor is an important man or chief, her kinsfolk begin to adopt towards the genitor's family the patterns of respect and avoidance which would be appropriate if he were their affine. This procedure may be adopted although it is plain to people in general that the genitor has no intention of marrying the woman. If it is unsuccessful in forcing the hand of the genitor, the formal attitudes of the woman's kinsfolk come to be generally ridiculed and they abandon the pretence. 848 602

So far we have considered only the attitude of kinsfolk towards a proposed marriage and the legalization payment associated with it. The factors influencing the acceptance or refusal of bridewealth are different. Bridewealth, when offered, is not often refused. Table V shows that in our sample this happened in only one out of 360 marriages. We must remember that bridewealth is paid only in about four per cent of all marriages, and that a man is usually on good terms with his affines and has lived in peace for many years with his wife before he offers it. A youngish man may seek the 583

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 approval of his father before he offers, and as in the case of Amos and Eve (p. 28), the father may sometimes disapprove. If the man is from another part of the territory or from abroad the parents of
583 the woman, even if they accept the legalization payment, may be reluctant to allow their grandchildren to go a long way away from
603 them to live among their son-in-law's kin. This consideration applies
593 particularly to strangers in the township who marry Ngoni women. When they leave their jobs or retire they try to take their wives and children with them. They may be frustrated in the removal of their children by the woman's parents, who refuse the bridewealth. The courts support the claims of Ngoni grandparents for the retention of their grandchildren under these conditions and a returning Yao or Cipeta man may be forced to travel without his children and sometimes without his wife. I have recorded elsewhere[3] an incident in which a Yao man who had been married to an Ngoni woman for twenty-one years was divorced by her and his offer of bridewealth refused by her parents. The police who check the movements of women and children by bus and lorry away from Fort Jameson are in touch with the Native Courts and may be on the look out if it seems likely that a man from a strange tribe will attempt to smuggle his wife and children away from their Ngoni kin.

581 Thus we see that the kinsfolk are directly concerned with marriage. When the children are still toddlers, they are paired off in fun by their
[858] adult relatives as they sit playing. For a week or month or even longer a woman will laughingly call her neighbour *child's parent-in-law* because their children have been nominated *husband* and *wife* in this way. As a child grows older, so the interest of its relatives in its marriage become clearer. Before marriage the relatives of a
684 girl hold rights in her that are violated if she is seduced and bears
• 918 a child. It is to them that the girl's lover pays the beast of seduction to recompense them for the wrong he has done by impregnating the girl, but he does not gain custody of the child. On the other hand,
836 no one brings a case against a man merely because he sleeps with an unmarried girl. It is only when she becomes pregnant that an action can be laid against him. A man caught *in flagrante delicto* by one of the unmarried girl's kin can expect abuse and possibly blows but unless he is provocative he need not fear action in the courts. The hostility directed towards him seems to be due in part to his having behaved so indiscreetly as to be caught and having forced the girl's kin to take cognizance of what was happening.

581 At marriage the woman's kin grant rights in her sexual activities
583 to her husband. These rights are unambiguously transferred by the legalization payment, and the woman's kin are therefore in a position to delay or facilitate the tranfser of these rights by their attitude towards the payment. There is no corresponding right in an unmarried man held by his kin, and at marriage there is no corres-

[3] Barnes, op. cit. p. 238

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

turn to a younger brother for help in arranging a marriage, but 593
although it is said that a man cannot marry the widow of a younger brother, this is sometimes done. The position of children born in a union of this kind is anomalous and there is likely to be dissension in the family if the elder brother has no children by his own wives.

10. Rights in wives and children

The new-born child sleeps in its mother's hut, is in danger from its 854
father's adultery, and is held by its parents at their ritual resumption of sexual intercourse. It is carried to the garden on its mother's back and at mealtimes sucks porridge from her finger. Perhaps its father may play a little with it, but this is not very likely. After [862]
weaning, which takes place about the age of two, it may be sent to a grandparent or some other relative, or may perhaps remain in the parental hut for a few more years. But already it has been handled and probably suckled by many women, has learnt to play 857
with the other young children in the village, and has gone off with them into the bush or to the stream. It has learnt also the correct kinship terms for most people in the village and has seen its village teams dance against those of other villages. It has gone visiting in other villages with its parents and has begun to explore its web of kinship, of which it is the centre.

The growing child therefore does not see its parents as sharply 593
distinguished from all other adults in the vicinity, but merely as the two people to whom its ties are closest and on whom it is most dependent. If a child whose parents are dead or are living in Southern Rhodesia is brought up by a relative, it may not learn their names until it is adult, if then. Parents are important to their children only when they live near them or with them. It is when children grow up in the village of their parents that they rely on them for school fees, clothes and medicines. Later a boy may ask his father for financial help or may use him as a banker, handing over his wages to him.

This is true not only of a man's own children of whom he is both 848
genitor and pater, but also of his wife's adulterine and pre-marital children, if he chooses to accept them into his household. It is clear that if a man has paid bridewealth, he has custody of all the children borne by his wife, in adultery as well as in wedlock. If he has not paid bridewealth, then adulterine children like legitimate children belong in theory to his wife's relatives. In practice a man can either accept or spurn them. If he has been away a long time and returns to find his wife with illegitimate children, he may decide to accept the children as his own. They then take his descent name and not that of their genitor. The biological parentage of such children is not mentioned openly, but is remembered in malicious gossip.

Case history 11

Laban went away to work in Southern Rhodesia. His wife Sara went

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

848

to a farm to work and while there had a child by a man working on the farm. When Laban returned from Southern Rhodesia people said to him, 'You have a bad wife, she has borne a child by a man while you have been away.' Laban said 'It does not matter, I love my wife and I will look after the child.'

The rights of children born in adultery to inherit their pater's property on his death are never certain. If there is enmity between them and the true sons of their pater, they may be denied any assistance from the estate of the dead man.

593 583 A man acquires rights *in genetricem* in his wife,[25] that is, rights in her as a mother, by the payment of bridewealth. We have seen that bridewealth is not often paid and that the rights exercised by a man over his children by virtue of this payment are ill defined.[26] Ngoni argue that in theory when a woman marries, the marriage payments should be paid to her mother's brother and not to her father if he has not paid bridewealth for her mother. Rights in a woman *in genetricem* are held to include the right to the marriage payments of the woman's daughters. In practice this aspect of rights *in genetricem* is as ill defined as rights to determine where children shall live. If a girl is living in the same village as her father or even her mother's husband, the fact that he may not have paid bridewealth is overlooked when the time comes for the girl to marry. Her suitor does not inquire into the affairs of her relatives before he marries her and indeed if her parents are divorced or dead he may never know their names. He respects his affines and does not probe into their secrets. He offers the legalization payment to whosoever appears to be responsible for his bride, her father or her mother's husband or her mother's brother or some other relative, depending on how and where she is living. At the level of the next generation, if a man treats his wife well, her relatives will not want to make trouble in the marriage by insisting on their theoretical rights when his daughters get married. If the man is prudent he gives them some of the money and they are content. On the other hand, if there is a quarrel between affines and the case is taken to court, it may be possible to establish rights *in genetricem*. The court holds that to take the legalization payment of a daughter is to exercise rights *in genetricem* in her mother. The following case concerns a man who exercised rights *in genetricem* that he did not possess.[26a]

Here the award of £3 damages against Nebo is due partly to his having initiated the action for divorce without any substantial complaint against his wife, and partly because he had taken the legalization payment which should have gone to her relatives.

Cases like this are not common, and the interest of the court is more often focussed on the legalization payment than on bridewealth. The legalization payment is becoming the more important payment

[25] See below, p. 113.
[26] See above, p. 35. and Table V.
[26a] See p. 97.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

developed as the men's. It is to be expected, therefore, that there would be greater Cewa and Nsenga influence in those affairs controlled by women than in political and military matters, which were organized by men. This is borne out by linguistic evidence, for while many of the words, but not all, pertaining to affairs of state are of Ngoni origin, the words now used in the seclusion of girls are drawn from Cewa and Nsenga.

We find therefore that it is the bearing of children before marriage and to a lesser extent pre-marital impregnation which are disapproved of rather than pre-marital copulation. The real contrast in attitude is between pre-marital copulation and adultery. We have seen that in the old days adulterers were killed by order of the chief. The punishment of adultery was a process involving headmen, lieutenants and other important men. The abhorrence of adultery remains despite its great frequency and the prohibition on killing adulterers. An adulterer is a thief, stealing the rights of another man and endangering his marriage. Even when the wife of a labour migrant bears a child and it is in danger of *mdulo* until it can be 'taken up' (p. 87) she cannot openly call in a man with whom to perform this rite. She must either get a man to come in secret or obtain expensive medicines which remove the danger. In like manner, if her husband is impotent, there must be no public recognition of any extra-marital intercourse, for impotence is shameful and not to be admitted and cannot justify the intervention of another man. It is thought regrettable that a woman should grow old without bearing daughters to help her pound maize and sons to clothe her in her old age. Yet when medicines have been of no avail and her husband calls in a seed-raiser he must come in secret and later be rewarded covertly. Similarly the sexual activities of children must be conducted discreetly. Here, however, a much more tolerant attitude is taken and there is not the same need for secrecy. There is no chaperoning of unmarried girls but only of married women whose husbands are away. There is no inspection of girls at marriage, and one informant said that if after puberty a girl has no lover with whom she can sleep, her grandmother will call in a young man to copulate with the girl in the grandmother's house to see if she is proficient, and that for this he would be rewarded by the grandmother. From one point of view we may say that there is pre-marital freedom, with discretion, and marital restriction of sexual activity. Pre-marital intercourse does, however, have a moral connotation, and it is held that the girl who sleeps too easily with all comers before marriage will continue thus after she is married. The need for discretion in premarital affairs is in some part due to the activities of the missions, working at the village level through deacons, elders and women helpers. Yet in general no action is taken by the local Christian group in the village unless the pre-marital sexual activities of its members are conducted in such a way that it is no longer possible to ignore them.

Sexual intercourse is the critical activity of marriage. Within

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10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *tembo*, *lungu*, and *phili*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connotation of exogamy. 551 614 582

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influence, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1] 177 611 551 [848]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking. 602 551 571

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to offer the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939–45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away. 583 584

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has 583 671

[1] The name *sulu* for a man becomes *moula* for a woman in certain areas.

[2] *Cimalo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be interpreted according to the Ngoni social organization, sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle of people forming a young child's contacts was from the beginning much wider than the individual family which a child was born into. When he began to run about and to pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when necessary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related [602]
families in other villages, with all members of the same clan living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads [631]
were also inseparable from the political links between the people and their territorial chief, and between the whole people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence [183]
in most villages there were sharp distinctions between standards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni
families.

III

'A New Stranger has come'

In these words the father's mother announced from the door of the hut that a child had been born. From inside the hut the women assisting the mother at the time of delivery had given a single cry if it was a boy and two cries for a girl. If the birth had been delayed till late afternoon towards sunset, the women in the hut said to the mother, if it was a boy: 'See the baby has been awaiting the return of the cattle, because it is he who will tend the cattle.' 844 851

The new baby was at first regarded as a stranger, born by a woman who had herself come to the village as a stranger when she married. In later years, when speaking of his parents, the child would say: 'X is my father, and I am of the womb of A, and G and H they are my brother and my sister of one womb.' This particularization of a full brother and sister was used to correct the extended use of the kinship terms, and also to convey the idea that having been born from the womb of one woman gave children a special relationship important in Ngoni thinking. 851 593 [591] [601]

Preparation for birth

When an Ngoni wife was aware that she was pregnant she did not say anything to her husband, and indeed endeavoured to conceal her condition from him as long as possible, continuing the normal sleeping arrangements and intercourse. Ngoni women liked to assert their authority and ascendancy on those occasions, and therefore excluded the men from knowledge of the coming event and from all preparations for it. The senior women used to say, 'Men are 843 593 562

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

over the age of ten had to avoid the hut and its inhabitants altogether. The husband slept either in the boys' dormitory or with the husband of the woman who was looking after his wife. 846 783

This ritual uncleanness extended to any food once it was carried into the hut. Ngoni women used to demonstrate their love for their husbands by stopping cooked food being carried into the hut, and sending it instead by the child who brought it to her husband where the men were gathered at the gate of the kraal. [593]

Ritual cleansing of a hut and its occupants took place in stages. At the time of 'bringing out the child', which I shall shortly describe, the hut itself was made clean again. It was thoroughly swept, and the floor and veranda were smeared with cowdung. Cowdung was used habitually for smearing on floors, prior to polishing them with a smooth stone. But fresh wet cowdung rubbed on the hands was also used for ritual cleansing after some 'dangerous' act such as touching sacred objects or administering the royal medicines. In the case of its use after childbirth it was undoubtedly used in the ritual sense, for the operation was called 'making the hut safe for the husband to sleep in'. The household goods were then put back in their places, anyone could go into the hut, and the husband returned to sleep there, though on a separate mat on his, the right-hand side, of the fireplace. If the child was a first baby, the husband's return to sleep in the hut was delayed, since the senior women stayed on to instruct the young mother how to take care of the baby at night, and especially how to be careful not to smother it as it lay beside her on her mat. [237]

'Coming out of the hut'

The falling of the cord was the signal that the baby was ready to 'come out of the hut' and be presented to the village. Ngoni women used to hasten the falling of the cord by burning a maize cob, and squeezing into the ashes the juice of the 846 851 278

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

851 small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was
[846] applied with a feather to the baby's navel.
[278] When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and
[302] the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then
[515] they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a
[431] basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for
[177] pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village
[554] stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grand-
[603] mother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to
[431] the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's
864 lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'.

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders.

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

new wife to replace the divorced woman. Divorce however seems to have been rare, and in the genealogies I collected I met with only one instance of divorce at this period. 586

3. *Payments and ceremonies*

Betrothal[10] was a preliminary to marriage but was not compulsory. 584 A girl was betrothed only if she was sought in marriage before puberty and the marriage then did not take place until some years after puberty. If a girl passed puberty without being betrothed she was subsequently married without a betrothal period. A man was expected to make presents to the girl he had betrothed and he began to adopt avoidance relationships towards her parents. If after puberty the girl or her parents wished to break off the engagement they could do so but were then under an obligation to return the man's presents. The ceremony at which an aristocratic girl after puberty chose her own husband has been described by Wiese.[11]

In the marriage itself there are two main stages marked by two 583 distinct transfers of cattle. The first transfer was called 'snuff-box', *mfuko*. The name of the payment is based on the practice of begging snuff from one's friends and acquaintances and indicates something trifling and not recoverable. It consisted of one beast. Payment of 'snuff-box' established the man's rights to bring an action against an adulterer but it did not give him the right to take his wife away to his own village nor to the custody of any children she might bear [591] him. These rights were obtained only by the payment of bride-wealth, *malowolo*,[12] which consisted of from one to a dozen beasts [851] depending on the status of the woman's father. Both payments, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth, were made by the man or, if he was a young man, by his father to his wife's father. No specifically defined relatives were obliged to help a man find his marriage cattle but a man with few cattle of his own looked for assistance to the head of his cluster. Similarly there were no definite rules of distribution of the marriage cattle among the woman's relatives and the matter

[10] The verb is *ku-homsha* for a man, and the passive *ku-homshewa* for a woman. Cf. Bemba *uku-hobeka* and *uku-hobekwa* in Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Present Economic Conditions* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Four), p. 61.

[11] In his later paper he calls the ceremony *inyamuale*. In the earlier paper 881 he calls the ceremony held at first menstruation *inhamuale* and says that after this ceremony the girl went with others to choose the man she liked. The vernacular words he mentions are presumably connected with the modern Nyanja *cinamwali*, which is now sometimes applied to three ceremonies held (1) at first menstruation, (2) six months later, *cinamwali cacimaya*, and (3) after first pregnancy, *cinamwali cacikulu*. The abstract noun *unamwali* is sometimes used in place of the concrete *cinamwali*. Cf. Wiese, op. cit., 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191; Rattray, op. cit. pp. 102 and 190; Stigand, 'Notes on the natives of Nyasaland, N.E. Rhodesia, and Portuguese Zambezia, their arts, customs and modes of subsistence', *JRAI*, xxxvii (1907), p. 121; Read, 'Tradition and prestige among the Ngoni', *Africa*, ix (1936), p. 472; Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, pp. 22-4.

[12] Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola*; also Rattray, op. cit. p. 199.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of [587] his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 851 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriage belonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth his sons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin on behalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim. I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past and when recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

[727] Important men sometimes married female captives and no [954] bridewealth passed. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons founded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bride- 183 wealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.[13] The infor- [128] mation on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II.

It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was [276] offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898

[13] See pp. 22f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her pro-husband. If there was no younger brother the pro-husband was one of her husband's junior patrilineal kinsmen of his own generation. She could not refuse a pro-husband although her husband's brothers could choose not to provide her with a pro-husband if they so wished. The widow continued to live in her own cluster where her pro-husband came to visit her. Rattray states that widows waited one year after their husband's death before their re-marriage was settled[23] and this is nowadays the traditional procedure. Wiese, however, writes that widows waited four years before they could marry again.[24] The children begotten by the pro-husband were regarded as children of the dead man for social purposes but the identity of their genitor was not disguised. They called him *father*, but this was as much because he was their dead pater's brother and their mother's pro-husband as because he was their genitor.

The same principle of substitution was applied to betrothal. If a man died before marrying a girl to whom he was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger brother or a classificatory brother. If a girl died before marrying the man to whom she was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger sister. Unlike the operation of the levirate, however, the children of this type of marriage were regarded as the children of their genitor and genetrix for all purposes, as though their parents had been betrothed to each other in the first place. Again, unlike the levirate, if a man considered himself too old when his betrothed became marriageable he might give her instead to his son as a wife. The children of this marriage were also regarded for all purposes as the children of their genitor and genetrix.

Occasionally a woman whose husband died young, went to live with a man who was not her dead husband's brother, real or classificatory. The pro-husband gave a goat to the woman, but if bride-wealth had been offered for her by her first husband, the pro-husband could never gain permanent custody of the children. The children that she bore by him belonged to the segment of the dead man, took his descent name, and when old enough went to live in his segment. When the dead man's kinsmen claimed these children, they gave a beast to their genitor 'to straighten his back', that is, for his labour in begetting them. This arrangement is in some ways analagous to Nuer widow-concubinage[25] but with the important difference that the pro-husband, although not a kinsman of the dead man, had rights in the widow as a wife and an exclusive right to her sexual services. It seems that the status of a widow living in this kind of union was not low. In one instance I heard of, very aristocratic families were involved, and the arrangement appears to have been

[23] Rattray, op. cit., p. 97.
[24] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 474, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192.
[25] Cf. Evans-Pritchard, *Some Aspects of Marriage and Family Among the Nuer* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Eleven), p. 18.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 589
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in 554
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

one instance where the woman ran off with the man called in by her sterile husband. 842 839

4. The legal relationship

Emphasis on sexual partnership is characteristic of the beginning of marriage. Young people are 'foolish', dance all night long and sleep late in the morning. With the arrival of children, man and wife emerge from the tutelage of their elders and non-sexual aspects of their marriage relationship gain in importance. Even then the importance of sexual satisfaction is not forgotten. People say openly of a woman who obstructs her husband when he seeks a second wife, 'She is too fond of his penis', and old widows explain their failure to remarry by saying 'Our joints are too stiff to copulate'. 593 [851]

Nevertheless at all times there is a great deal more in Ngoni marriage than mere sexual partnership. The obligations and duties of husband and wife towards each other and each other's kin are determined by the marriage payments and ratified by the ceremonies of marriage. These obligations persist despite the fluctuations of sexual attraction. We have seen that in 'the time of peace' the two principal transfers were 'snuff-box' and bridewealth. Today the position is different and the rights transferred by the marriage payments are different. For simplicity we may discuss the latter payment first. Bridewealth is still recognized but, as can be seen from Table V, is paid in only about four per cent of all marriages. It consists of a payment of one or more beasts or £6 made by the man to his wife's father.[16] If only one cow is offered and it dies before calving, it must be replaced. Some indication of the range of variation in amounts paid is given by Table VI. 583 178

This sample of only twelve payments is very small, but there is some indication that the amount paid has decreased in recent years. This is of interest in view of the general rise in the standard of wealth and in the amount offered as legalization payment.

By the payment of bridewealth a man ensures that all the children of his wife, by whatever genitor, shall, or rather ought to, belong to his group of relatives and live in his village when they grow up. The payment is made only after several children have been born. In the old days, if this payment was made, the children were legitimate and lived in their father's segment, and if it was not paid they could be claimed by their mother's father's segment. In these days there is no such hard and fast rule. Everyone has in effect a large choice of places where he can live, and the payment or non-payment of bridewealth for his mother is only one factor operating with many others in influencing his decisions. It is not surprising that so few people pay bridewealth. [851]

[16] For comparative figures for the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Native standards of living and African cultural change', *Africa* xi (1938), 3, supplement, p. 33.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

becomes her husband's *sibling* so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere[33] an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her *sibling*. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court.

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages.

8. Other Kinsfolk

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of

[33] See Barnes, op. cit. p. 232

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

he has not been brought up by them but by some other relative. In 593
particular a man is reluctant to discuss his affairs directly with his father if he can get his eldest brother to act as his intermediary. The eldest brother is heir to their father and it is considered that he should act as the channel by which the father is approached. He deals with proposals of marriage arising from his younger siblings and if he approves of them, he refers the matter to their father. This [184]
pattern of relations seems most marked in aristocratic families.

9. Widows

While it is a man's eldest brother who helps to arrange his marriage, 587
it is his younger brothers who become pro-husbands to his widows. 851
We have seen that in the old days a widow was usually looked after by a younger brother of the dead man but she continued to live in her dead husband's segment, and the children she bore by her pro-husband were grouped with the children of the dead man. This can still happen but it is no longer the invariable rule. As in the old days, if bridewealth has been paid by the first husband and after his death his widow goes to live with someone else, the second husband or pro-husband cannot offer bridewealth and the children he begets belong to the dead husband and take his descent name.

Some indication of the extent to which widows remain with their 587
dead husbands' kin is given by data collected in two villages. All the women now living in these villages had between them experienced widowhood 31 times. In two instances (6 per cent) the widow had been cared for by her dead husband's brother; and in 11 instances (35 per cent) the widow took a new husband not directly related to the dead man. In the remaining 18 instances (58 per cent) [589]
the widow had not married again and was living alone.

A man may die at any stage of his marriage. If he is betrothed to 584
a girl and then dies, the betrothal passes to a younger brother. When the girl is old enough, the younger brother marries her as though she had been betrothed to him in the first place and the children he has by her are his own children. Similarly, if a betrothed girl dies before she is married, the betrothal passes to a younger sister.

If a man dies after he has been properly married his widows have 765
definite roles to play. For a month after his death, they must wear the signs of mourning, and they are in danger of *mdulo*[24] if they commit adultery during that time. They must be ready to wail when distant visitors arrive to mourn. At the end of a month they brew beer, and there is a joyous party. A year after the death there is another party, and the fate of the widows is discussed. If none 589
of the younger brothers or kinsmen of the dead man wish to look after the widows, they are free to go their own way, and there may be a formal statement of divorce. They are in any case now spoken

[24] See above, p. 46.

589 of as being divorced from the dead man. If they do not themselves wish to be inherited they cannot be forced to remain.

589 If a widow is cared for by a younger brother of her dead husband, and that man already has a wife of his own, the widow is regarded as inferior in status to the man's own wife. Yet any children she ● 851 has by him count as if they were children by the dead husband, and 428 as such they inherit his cattle and offices before the brother's children by his own wife. This apparent paradox is due to the nature of 554 Ngoni seniority. Seniority was always associated with position in a definite segment in the old residential system. The widow belongs to the segment of her dead husband, and even today if she is a queen she ought to stay there after she has been given a pro-husband. If she moves to live in proximity to her pro-husband, she comes into the ranking system of which the pro-huband's great wife is the superior. Her children are, however, still associated with the segment from whence she came.

587 The new husband, whether he is a kinsman of the dead man or not, pays one goat, also known as 'snuff-box', on taking the woman, 583 and this animal she keeps herself, and does not hand on to her father 851 or brother. If no bridewealth was paid by the first husband, the children borne to the second take the descent name of their own father and his rights in the marriage are the same as if he were marrying the woman for the first time and had made the legalization payment.

589 There is then an opportunity for the marriage to continue after the death of the man if his wife and his kinsmen are both agreeable. If the widow wishes to go her own way, she can do so, and if his kinsmen do not wish to care for her, they need not. Even if they do not like the woman they cannot turn her out of the village, and she can go on living in her dead husband's hut and cultivating the same garden as before. She may even re-marry and bring in her new husband to live with her in her dead spouse's village. The extent to which this can be done without quarrelling depends very much on the personalities of the people involved. If the widow decides to go back to her own village, her husband's kin may try to prevent her removing possessions of which the ownership is not certain, and she should discuss with them how much of the crops she can take away from her garden.

587 Nowadays the death of a wife brings the marriage to an end. We have seen that in the old days the dead woman was replaced by a linked co-wife, and that this institution has now all but disappeared. There is no other form of sororate, and although a man may sometimes in jest address his wife's sister as *wife*, he has no rights over her.

593 The specific responsibilities of brothers towards a man's marriage are demonstrated in the role of the elder brother as a marriage negotiator and of the younger brother as potential husbands for a man's widows. A man would not, save in exceptional circumstances,

11:Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N 159 173 562 N M 171 643 842 851

migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vimba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Zlwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansonga Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nshlanze.*

N 159 173 562 [595]

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nshlanze* Sosera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Loziwawa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhlunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekevu. Sosera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtenguleni Uka Sosera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

N [764] [A23]

Sosera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchizu* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

N 159 173 595 842 602

After Zongendaba's death, Sosera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazumko, as a seed raiser, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jere; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

N 159 173 644

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitted a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

836 emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in
565 their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

Many of the *umsindo* songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni
[533] history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

●852 The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes
304 practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and
[727] annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambesi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

561 After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested
857 in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance *ngoma* in a neighbouring village.

857 In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the *ngoma* dance
535 played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

then meant running out of the compound to the freedom of the village. At that time young children might behave outrageously and be punished for it, but they were not held accountable. The nurse girls and the mother, or some other adult, was blamed for letting the child grow up with such an uncontrolled temper or appetite or tongue. Once children were recognized as having passed the young child stage, that is when they had their second teeth, they themselves were held accountable for their behaviour and punished more severely, even though parents were also blamed for careless upbringing. The social sanctions of rebuke and ridicule, which began to operate in the later years of young childhood to only a limited extent, were now seen in their full force, made use of by adults, and still more effectively by the children's own age-mates. The fear of estrangement, of social ostracism as the penalty for failing to conform to the required manners and ways of living, had increasing force as the children grew older. As little children they were buttressed and protected by adults in their childish quarrels with, and moods and attitudes towards, other children. As boys in the dormitory and as girls in the girls' circle they had no longer such protection, and the result was that they became increasingly sensitive to the opinion of their peers. Professor Wilson in her study of Nyakusa age-villages, has called this social awareness the quality known as 'being good company'—getting on well with their contemporaries.

It was at this stage, at the beginning of the children's newly-found independence, that the ear-piercing ceremony took place. In contrast with the neighbouring peoples, the Ngoni had no facial or body markings, and it was the pierced ears which showed they were true Ngoni. In the days of warfare, captives, especially boys and men, were forcibly made to have their ears pierced, and hence a number of men in the Ngoni kingdoms who were not of Ngoni clans were found with pierced ears. Sometimes their children went to their parents and said, 'We want to be made Ngoni now.'

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

852 304 Children of Ngoni families, as also these others, chose their own time to have their ears pierced, though sometimes their father or father's sister or father's mother reminded them that it was about time. It was nearly always soon after the second teeth had come, and children who delayed having it done were taunted by their fellows: 'You, are you afraid, my age-mate? See my ears already have bone in them.' This was a reference to the round plugs of bone inserted when the [237] hole was large enough. A bit of thread was put in at first, then a small bit of grass, then a fine reed, and finally a bone plug. Ear piercing was always done in the cold weather so that the lobe of the ear would heal quickly. It was carried out by a leading woman of one of the Ngoni families, who watched the children to see how they took it. They knew it was a test of courage, and however much they were afraid it would hurt, [152] they stood like little statues during the operation, with a face as set and expressionless as when they were being beaten.

Accountability for individual behaviour was one aspect of 866 the responsibility which Ngoni adults now began to demand 868 from children. Another aspect was the performance of their allotted tasks. The responsibility for cattle herding was in a sense a corporate responsibility of all the boys whose fathers owned cattle. The older herd-boys had in fact to answer for [233] the condition of the cattle they brought back every evening to their owners. They passed on, however, a number of small duties, such as care of the calves, sheep and goats, to the younger boys, who in turn were held responsible by the older boys for performing these duties. The boys' world, centred in the dormitory, recognized grades of responsibility from which no one escaped.

Another facet of responsibility which was at a later stage 868 remarked on often by Ngoni adults, was seen in children's [517] choice of leisure-time occupations, according to their individual manual and intellectual and artistic capacities. They stopped playing childish games and began instead to develope their skills in making things from local materials.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

846 she rises early to go and fasten the belt on the infant. Should the man not have a second wife, the one to put the belt on the child is his (the man's) sister. The man does not immediately see the face of his child; some day these same old women make him take it in his arms [hands]. The father then makes them a present of beads.

854 IV. When they notice the infant is beginning to grow his bottom teeth and to smile at people, the
●852 elders tell the father that, "Now you must bring
301 the child into the village." The child's grandmother ties up beforehand some *lizango*. She begins with a little strip of calico, and rolls it round and round the medicine charm and along with a piece of string; then takes a little piece of skin and sews it over this, and takes some beads and sews them on the skin. The mother cooks some relish beforehand. That evening the husband and wife sleep together (this is "to bring the child into the village.") She cuts off the old belt the child is wearing, and puts on the new one with the *lizango* medicine in it, some more of the medicine, similarly tied up, is placed under the infant's head. In the morning she takes the relish to present to the two old women, and then takes the *lizango* she had placed under the child's head and ties it round his neck, and then takes a belt of beads, interspersed
[789] with little wooden charms, and adorns the child. When in time the *lizango* belt breaks, they do not look for it or replace it. In the event of an infant dying before he has been "brought into the village,"
766 they bury it in some open glade, near the edge of some stream, its funeral is attended by women only. Should a man tramp over the spot where the child
[753] is buried, he "has taken" the disease known as *nyesi*. Such a grave is known as *nsenye*.

593 extended to his brothers' sons, especially if their father was dead. Following the same pattern, a man's sons who were away at work sent back money to their father who bought cattle with it, or spent it as the sons asked. It was clear in the 1930's that Ngoni men rarely sent money directly to their wives, though they frequently asked their father to give money to their wives and to buy for them cloth or needed household equipment.

562 Within the larger orbit of the male family responsibilities women had their more restricted but clearly defined sphere. At a woman's
844 confinement she was looked after by her husband's own mother, aided
593 by his other mothers and by his sisters if they were present in the village. At the 'coming out' of the new member of the family, ten to fourteen days after birth, the woman and the baby, bathed and ritually
562 cleansed, were seated on a mat outside the hut and presented to the male members of the father's family who gave small gifts to the baby.
846 If it was a boy, the father's mother generally carried it to the gate of
593 the kraal where the men were sitting, to present it to them as one who would eventually herd the cattle. On this occasion, or soon after, the
[553] child's name was chosen, usually by the father's father, who prepared and gave to the mother a calf-skin or goat-skin for carrying the child in. The meat of the animal was cooked by the father's mother and a small feast was held for the father's mothers, sisters, brothers and their wives, and any others of the father's family who had helped in the confinement.[1] After the child had thus been acknowledged in its father's family circle, the mother took the baby to visit her own family, who also gave it presents.

593 During the rearing of the child, its father's female relatives assumed responsibility for giving the young mother advice. The father's mother
862 was expected to note the stage at which the child should be weaned, always if possible before the mother's next pregnancy. If the father's mother was unobservant, the other senior women of the husband's family would rebuke her and say 'Look now you are foolish because the child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to it.' These women then took the initiative and insisted on weaning the child. They said to the baby's mother 'We want to wean the child.' They made a paste of ground chillies and put it on the mother's breasts and covered them with a skin or cloth. The child was taken from her after it had tried to
[853] suck and had been refused, and given to the father's mother or sister, who looked after it with the help of a nursemaid. It was fed on cow's milk, *amasi* (milk curds), and gruel.

The publicity given to the weaning and the initiative taken by the senior women of the husband's family were intended to inform others in
[178] the village that the parents were now free to have another child. This was one aspect of the old Ngoni form of family planning and, in describing

[1] This feast was also held when a carrying cloth was given instead of a skin.

because it was implied that her family had not given her 843 152
good instruction and advice before marriage.

The birth of the child

When the senior women were satisfied that labour was about 844
to begin, they took charge of all the preparations. They first
sent out of the hut all the things belonging to the husband,
his clothes, axes, spears, shields, and all the good mats, pots [422]
and baskets. Only old mats and clothes and pots were used
during labour, and the hut was henceforth unclean and [846]
forbidden to the husband and to all males. The mother-in-law directed operations, with the help of her co-wives, the wives of her husband's brothers, widowed sisters of her husband, and some of the wives of the younger generation. The women who took an active part in the actual delivery were the older ones, but several younger women came to assist, or look on, and to encourage the young wife.

She was made to sit on a mat leaning back against the knees of another woman, and the experienced 'midwives' were in front to receive the child in their hands. She was told to bear down and sometimes given a bark rope tied to the rafters to pull on. Though she might be in great pain, she was not expected to cry out or even to groan. The older women talked to her encouragingly, and wiped her face, or gave her a little water to drink. After the birth, the woman knelt forward leaning on her hands until the placenta was born. It was buried in a hole, in the floor at the back of the hut on the women's side.

The baby was washed by a senior woman and oiled with
castor oil. The cord was tied with thread and the baby was
given very thin gruel made of finger millet fried and ground. [853]
This was intended to act as a purgative to get rid of the mucus in the stomach. After this had been ejected, a tiny bit of the sour milk curds was put in the baby's mouth.

The mother was washed and covered with a cloth and left to rest, while the women folded up the delivery mat

844 ready for burning, and generally cleaned up. The fire in the middle of the hut was rekindled to warm the mother and [262] baby, and gruel was given to the mother of millet flour, brought from the mother-in-law's hut where it had been cooked. With the help of the other women, the mother [853] washed her breasts with warm water and massaged them to make the milk flow, ready for the child to suck.

845 The other ethnic groups surrounding the Ngoni in Nyasa- [184] land considered it disastrous if a child was born face down or with the buttocks first, and twins were dreaded as ill omens. The Ngoni shared none of these beliefs and were particularly considerate for the mother of twins, often killing [262] a beast to give the mother meat and broth to increase her [853] flow of milk. The only notice the Ngoni took of the method of presentation at birth was that they gave a child a name [553] indicative of such a birth. They gave special names for the first and second twin born. If one twin died it was buried under the veranda of the hut and a smooth stone was placed [766] on top. This stone was used for sitting on, and the surviving twin was held on it when being washed.

Ritual and social uncleanness

846 From the time just before the birth took place the hut and 783 everything in it, and the woman and her new baby, were considered ritually unclean. If she had to leave the hut to answer the call of nature, she covered herself with a cloth from head to foot and avoided meeting anyone. She did no cooking herself until the ritual uncleanness was removed. Food was brought to her from her mother-in-law's hut or from her co-wives' huts, a special dish was used and washed separately, and she did not use her hands to eat with but a wooden spoon which was also washed separately. During the period of seclusion within the hut one of the senior women who helped at the birth slept in the hut with the mother and baby. No other young children were allowed to sleep in the hut, though they might come in to see the baby. All males

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

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Kholwane, Kholwane, son of Makhwaphuna,
What are you carrying?
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For someone may go about defiling it
In the dark paths.

The following is an example of an impromptu lullaby which I heard from a nurse girl in the Northern kingdom:

Bu, bu, bu, bu,
The baby cries for its nurse and not for its mother.
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She is coming to make gruel for the baby.
There she comes,
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

not enough milk, or was unable to suckle the child, or was ill or died. If a woman died in or just after childbirth, and the child survived, it might be suckled by the paternal grandmother or by another co-wife of the dead woman, but as a rule they resorted to artificial feeding, and often used it to supplement breast feeding. The father of the child took the food pipe of a beast recently killed, washed it and dried it, and handed it over to the women to rub with fat until it was soft and pliable. One end was then tied tightly to close it, it was filled with warm cow's milk, and the other end was tied loosely so that the child could just suck through it. It was kept well washed with warm water, and many infants were brought up successfully with this 'bottle'.

The babies were also given very thin gruel made of millet or maize flour, and curds and whey beaten up together. This was put in a very small gourd, decorated with drawings, with a spout to pour from, and a cover to keep flies and dust out.

Weaning

Studies of weaning in different cultures lay emphasis on the traumatic shock of separation from the mother, not only in terms of being refused the breast, but also of being removed to sleep elsewhere than beside the mother, and perhaps being sent away to stay with another relative.

In the Ngoni pattern of nurse-girl care and of supplementary feeding, especially after the first few months, it might seem that the actual weaning was less of a shock than in cultural situations where the baby was with the mother all day, carried about by her and never refused the breast if it cried. Ngoni women, however, and men too, all asserted that weaning was a shock to the child, even if it happened at two years old.

The reasons for this shock were partly that it was done all in one morning at one fell swoop, and partly that the child was sent away from the mother at night. The same nurse girl looked after it all day, but now took it more often to

This breast is now bad'—and they spat downwards as they did when something was really bad. While the child was howling with fright and frustration, the mother's breasts were covered with a cloth. The child was then picked up and carried away in its carrying cloth to the compound of its paternal grandmother, or a widowed paternal aunt, attended by its own nurse girl. If it had a feeding bottle, or one could be made for it, it was given cow's milk, as well as gruel, and curds and whey. The Ngoni women believed that if a weaned child was given cow's milk it would forget its mother's breasts quickly, but they admitted that it was a conventional belief and not always justified. 862 [853]

Social relationships involved in the birth of a child: Wife to husband's family

Throughout the period of pregnancy, during childbirth and after, up to and including weaning, the mother of a new baby was made to feel her position as a stranger among her husband's relatives. Before marriage it had been impressed on her by her own family that, at any rate in the early years of marriage, she must be obedient and humble, not only to establish her own present and future position among her husband's people, but for the sake of the reputation of her own family from whom she was now separated. The key relationship in this cycle of pregnancy, birth, weaning and new conception was that between her and her mother-in-law. If she showed respect by being humble and obedient, she could establish a behaviour pattern which in the end rewarded her by giving her self-respect because she was doing her duty in accepting the authority of her husband's mother. It was no easy path for a high-spirited girl who had had freedom and indulgence in her own home. She knew however that these first few years of marriage and child-bearing were the critical ones. She could see for herself how women who had been married longer had more freedom from the authority of their mothers-in-law because they had learned how to 606

/12 cont'd/

252 The maize is shelled as required, the grains are pounded in a mortar, and then soaked in water for three or four days, if there is time. They are then pounded again, and the flour winnowed out. [831] The residue is ground between two stones. The husks obtained after the first pounding are used as animal fodder, and in beer making. [293] The diligent housewife pounds twice a week, each pounding lasting for about three hours. It is usual for a group of women living as [461] neighbours to pound at the same time, singing together.

The maize flour is dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or [251] basket until required for porridge or beer. Porridge forms the basis 262 of most meals, although in February and March there may not be enough maize left in the storehouses to make this possible. Adults [264] eat porridge in solid form, kneading handfuls of it between their fingers before eating, but infants are fed on fluid porridge made from [853] the ground flour. The herdboys in charge of the cattle may use the milk to make their porridge with. Cooking is women's work, but [464] men by themselves on a journey or working on the tobacco farms will cook porridge for themselves. Green mealies, usually fried, are eaten when available.

263 Relish is required to go with the porridge, the commonest relishes being pumpkin leaves and hibiscus leaves. There are in addition 222 many wild fruits and leaves searched for in the bush at their appro- 241 priate seasons, while the gardens provide pumpkins, cucumbers, 262 various kinds of beans and peas, and edible gourds. The most sought-after relish, and one of the most infrequently found, is meat. Chick- 262 ens are given to honoured visitors, while beef, mutton, pork, and goat meat are eaten when they can be found. Livestock other than chickens are killed for eating only on ceremonial occasions, such as [231] funerals or marriages, but owners not infrequently kill animals and sell the meat to raise money to pay damages, to finance a journey, or to obtain labour in the garden. Animals that die are usually eaten. Some people keep ducks, pigeons and tame guinea fowl, while such 235 game as is killed on the /13/ hunt is divided among the hunters and taken home to be eaten. Owners of guns sometimes hunt by them- 224 selves and sell the meat.

societies maintaining officially a conspiracy of silence, the stories were only standard replies by adults to children, and most adults admitted that children pursued these inquiries among themselves and found out what they wanted to know from each other. 864

Naming the child

After coming out of the hut and being presented to its male kin and to the elders of the village as 'the new stranger', the baby was given a name. The choice of a name was usually left to the baby's paternal grandfather. He sometimes gave it his name or his father's name, if a boy, or if a girl, his mother's name or his father's sister's name. There was no ceremony attached to naming. After the matter had been talked over by the men at the kraal gate, the grandfather came to the hut, and called the mother and child out and said, 'His name is so and so.' The personal name was seldom used in ordinary social intercourse, but in spite of this every child was given a personal name, and sometimes had added to it a descriptive name indicating that it had been born face downwards, or born a twin, or born too soon after the previous baby. 553 [551] [845]

At this time of naming, the father, or more generally the paternal grandfather, prepared a 'carrying skin' for the mother to carry the baby in. It really belonged to the baby rather than to the mother, for it was used by the nurse girl to carry the baby, and she had the child in her charge most of the day. The skin was that of a goat or small calf from the herd owned by the house to which the baby's father belonged. The skin was cleaned and scraped and made soft by rubbing in fat, and handed over to the mother with some of the meat for broth, and the rest of the meat was eaten by the males of that house. The gift in time became a cloth and not a skin, as skins for wearing or household use went out of fashion. The cloth when presented however was still called a 'carrying skin' and a goat or a calf from the herd of the 854 [281] [922] [262]

854 house was still killed and eaten. The cloth came out of the
[432] store of cloth bought when cattle were sold, and kept in the hut of the senior woman of the father's house.

Visit to the mother's home

593 If, as was always the case in earlier days, the mother of the
574 new baby had come from a distant village, she did not see her own mother or her relatives, and they did not see the child until it was several weeks old, and considered by the senior women strong enough to undertake a journey. Then a visit involving much ceremony took place, for the wife's
[606] mother-in-law headed the party. The stiff and formal relations between the two sets of 'in-laws' had been eased slightly through the series of feasts and exchanges which preceded and followed the marriage ceremony. Face-to-face
[571] intercourse was, however, still very formal between the two families, and this first visit with the grandchild was in one sense an act of condescension on the part of the husband's family, since the child belonged to them. It was also a human and natural recognition of the eagerness of the young mother to see her own mother and display her child. Word was sent in advance by a messenger from the husband's village to announce the visit, so that the wife's family could make due preparation.

The main object of this visit was, in the Ngoni phrase, 'to show the child at its mother's home'. The young mother and
[606] baby, with her mother-in-law in the place of honour, sat outside the big house of the girl's father's family. Her father
[431] and his male relatives came to salute the child and to give it presents of beads, and in modern times small gifts of money
[603] as well. If the girl's father owned many cattle, he killed a beast, and they feasted that night, and the visitors carried home meat with them as well as the presents to the child. It was all very formal and correct, except when the young mother escaped for a short time to the circle of her sisters and girlhood friends, and exchanged confidences with them.

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

After this formal visit had taken place, the young mother was free to visit her former home more often, and her relatives could come and see her and her baby in her husband's village. 593 574

Taking care of the baby

There were two special features of infant care among the Ngoni which were not found among the neighbouring peoples. One was the assignment of a nurse girl from outside the circle of relatives to care for a new infant. The nurse girl was chosen by the grandmother from among her dependent household staff, and was allotted to one particular baby. The girl, who was usually in her early teens and unmarried, was supervised by an older woman, also of the grandmother's household. This woman watched over the personal behaviour of several nurse girls, as well as seeing that they did their work properly as nurses. 854 357 [592] [883]

The nurse girl took charge of the baby in the early morning and kept it with her all day until nightfall, bringing it back to the mother at more or less regular intervals for suckling. The mother played with the baby if she felt like it, and sent for the nurse girl to bring it to her if strangers came and she wanted to display the child. The Ngoni commended this practice by saying that their women kept clean because they did not carry babies about all day on their backs. They admitted at the same time that many infants grew greatly attached to their nurse girls, to the extent of being happier with them than with their mother. The nurse girls did not take little babies far afield. They stayed around within the fences of the household or near at hand, helping with domestic chores, chatting to other nurse girls, helping to prepare meals, and eating with the baby's mother and anyone else who formed part of the household eating unit. At night, after she had given the baby to its mother, she went off to sleep in the hut of the older woman who was in charge of her and other nurse girls.

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

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'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

Father's family to child

Ngoni children were indeed the children of their fathers 596
from the time of their birth onwards. They were born into a 'house', of which their father was a member. If their father divorced his wife or she ran away, the children remained in [586]
the custody of his family. We have seen how the paternal grandmother took charge of all the preparations for birth, and of the actual birth itself. It was her proud duty to present the child to the public after the 'coming out of the hut' ceremony, when she took it to the kraal gate where the assembled elders were sitting. The other senior women of Ngoni families held her responsible for advising on the spac- 842
ing between the birth of this new baby and the next, so that 596
the interests of this child should be safeguarded. If it was suspected that the young wife was pregnant again before the grandmother had planned to wean the child, the other senior women said to her: 'Look now. You are foolish. The child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to him.' That touched her on a very vital point, and she in turn accused the young parents of harming the present child. Having rebuked them, generally in public, she followed it up with a box on the ear for her son and his wife. When this [858]
next child was born it was called 'the destroyer', because by following on too quickly, it had injured the propects of the first child.

Baby to nurse girl and women helpers

The baby, as we have seen, spent a great deal of its time in 854
the company of its nurse girl, and after weaning she was its constant companion. She and the older woman helpers who supervised her formed a counterbalancing influence to the paternal grandmother, though outwardly they obeyed her instructions about the care of the child. The nurse girl especially was inclined to be indulgent; she was young and playful; the baby was her only responsibility. She was

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

854 anxious to protect her charge in every way, and with the connivance of the women helpers she made little charms of bits of roots to hang around the baby's neck to make him [751] grow quickly and to ward off sorcery and witchcraft. She [754] threaded pumpkin seeds and tied them around his neck to [856] make his teeth come quickly if they were late in appearing. These charms were generally those used by the local peoples, and Ngoni fathers were contemptuous about their use and efficacy. 'These women are spoiling our children,' they said, and then reassured themselves by remembering that a boy would be free from such women's spoiling once he went into the boys' dormitory.

Variants on the Ngoni pattern

183 This traditional pattern of authority and behaviour in respect [565] of birth, infant care and weaning was essentially that of the true Ngoni, that relatively small aristocratic group who never forgot their superior social status and its foundation in their ancestry. This first stage in the socialization of a child, from 861 birth to weaning, brought out clearly two fundamental 596 features of Ngoni social organization. One was the role played by the senior women who had themselves in their childhood been brought up on strict Ngoni lines. The father of the new baby accepted the role played by his own mother in controlling, and if necessary coercing, his young wife. Though, as we shall see later, every Ngoni boy and young man had a period of virtually complete escape from feminine control, once a man married and his young wife was established within the social group of his mother's house, he acknowledged his mother's authority over her, and particularly over the birth and care of his child. The mother-son relationship of the young father to his own mother dominated the relationship of the young mother to her child. Young Ngoni fathers never questioned their allegiance to their own mothers, cherishing them as they grew older and supporting them in their exercise of authority. Much as he loved his

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

142
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854

14. Mother and babies

142
302
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[facing page 96]

15. Nursemaids with their charges

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

turn to a younger brother for help in arranging a marriage, but 593
although it is said that a man cannot marry the widow of a younger brother, this is sometimes done. The position of children born in a union of this kind is anomalous and there is likely to be dissension in the family if the elder brother has no children by his own wives.

10. Rights in wives and children

The new-born child sleeps in its mother's hut, is in danger from its 854
father's adultery, and is held by its parents at their ritual resumption of sexual intercourse. It is carried to the garden on its mother's back and at mealtimes sucks porridge from her finger. Perhaps its father may play a little with it, but this is not very likely. After [862]
weaning, which takes place about the age of two, it may be sent to a grandparent or some other relative, or may perhaps remain in the parental hut for a few more years. But already it has been handled and probably suckled by many women, has learnt to play 857
with the other young children in the village, and has gone off with them into the bush or to the stream. It has learnt also the correct kinship terms for most people in the village and has seen its village teams dance against those of other villages. It has gone visiting in other villages with its parents and has begun to explore its web of kinship, of which it is the centre.

The growing child therefore does not see its parents as sharply 593
distinguished from all other adults in the vicinity, but merely as the two people to whom its ties are closest and on whom it is most dependent. If a child whose parents are dead or are living in Southern Rhodesia is brought up by a relative, it may not learn their names until it is adult, if then. Parents are important to their children only when they live near them or with them. It is when children grow up in the village of their parents that they rely on them for school fees, clothes and medicines. Later a boy may ask his father for financial help or may use him as a banker, handing over his wages to him.

This is true not only of a man's own children of whom he is both 848
genitor and pater, but also of his wife's adulterine and pre-marital children, if he chooses to accept them into his household. It is clear that if a man has paid bridewealth, he has custody of all the children borne by his wife, in adultery as well as in wedlock. If he has not paid bridewealth, then adulterine children like legitimate children belong in theory to his wife's relatives. In practice a man can either accept or spurn them. If he has been away a long time and returns to find his wife with illegitimate children, he may decide to accept the children as his own. They then take his descent name and not that of their genitor. The biological parentage of such children is not mentioned openly, but is remembered in malicious gossip.

Case history 11

Laban went away to work in Southern Rhodesia. His wife Sara went

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with 797
dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of [595]
monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general [587]
change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for [836]
premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a 854
consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support 177
from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used [278]
to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that 581
there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the 177
matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some 182
points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. *The transfer of rights*

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage 583
payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment 593
of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights *in uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights 613
in genetricem.[4] If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

[4] I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

844 If a female child, "You have seen a basket." Then the man comes and sits down on the verandah and makes fire. The old fire in the hut is thrown away. The old woman takes up the new fire and kindles with it a new fire in the hut. The husband goes away to another hut. He does not now cohabit with [846] any of his other wives until his wife, who was confined, is seen again in public.

II. When they know the umbilical cord is going to break, when they set the infant on the knees (legs), they lay it on its side so that when the cord breaks it will fall on one side; for if it breaks and falls on the pubes the child will be impotent, or barren. The umbilical cord they bury on the verandah. That day is the one on which they shave the mother and child. They begin with the infant and they shave the mother. On shaving the infant's head they leave a little hair on the fontanel, and [614] should the infant be of the clan *Maseko*, they also leave a little patch on the back of the head, and 553 then his godmother gives the child a name, saying, "My grandchild's name is so and so." This name it will have until such time as it begins to laugh and notice people, then the father, should he wish, will give the child another name. When it grows up still farther it will give itself a name, saying, "Now I am so and so." When the child becomes a man he will once again discard his old name and take another. And if a person calls him by the old name, he says, "He has named me by that thing the wild bush-pigs unearth while digging with their tusks" [meaning something very old]. When they have finished the shaving, the child's grandmother •854 powders some medicine called *pfundabwe*, this she 278 mixes with castor oil and red clay, and then rubs on 751 the fontanel. This medicine they continually renew. When the infant gets strong and big they stop. The

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

reason they put on this medicine is that they fear the sun lest it strike through the skull. They also take a purgative medicine called *chizuzu*, and pour a decoction in a gourd used for cooking the infant's gruel. The gruel is left off once the child gets strong. 854 278 751

III. Now they prepare to steam the infant. They get the roots of the *Nyalinse* tree and the leaves of the *Chipunganyunyu*, and put them in a pot of water, and get four large white pebbles, and put them in the fire, and when they are red hot, lift them out between two pieces of stick, and drop them into the pot, and the steam envelops the infant. They do this because they fear a disease called *Tsempo* and *Mauka*. This done, the floor of the hut is replastered [with dung], and they set fire to everything that was left in the hut—baskets, potsherds, and spoons. The fire in the hollow in the centre of the floor, they rake up on the floor level, and remove the ashes only, but when they come to fasten the mkuzi belt round the infant's waist, the fire is completely extinguished, and rekindled from that of some other hut. Then the husband comes and stands upright near the doorway, and little cuts are made on his leg. They begin with his big toe, and cut four little slashes, and four on his shin, and four on his knee, both sides, and do the same on the other leg, and on his chest are cut two little gashes, and on his back two. Into these cuts is rubbed some medicine for a disease called *Chinyalo*. When they do this they fear, should the man step over the spot on the verandah where the umbilical cord and afterbirth are buried, he might take this disease of the legs (Chinyalo). If the man have another wife it is she who twists the belt made from the bark of the *Mpoza* tree and places it underneath the mat where she and her husband sleep. Next morning

846 854 [824] [751] 846 [753] [824]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

846 she rises early to go and fasten the belt on the infant. Should the man not have a second wife, the one to put the belt on the child is his (the man's) sister. The man does not immediately see the face of his child; some day these same old women make him take it in his arms [hands]. The father then makes them a present of beads.

854 IV. When they notice the infant is beginning to
852 grow his bottom teeth and to smile at people, the elders tell the father that, "Now you must bring
301 the child into the village." The child's grandmother ties up beforehand some *lizango*. She begins with a little strip of calico, and rolls it round and round the medicine charm and along with a piece of string; then takes a little piece of skin and sews it over this, and takes some beads and sews them on the skin. The mother cooks some relish beforehand. That evening the husband and wife sleep together (this is "to bring the child into the village.") She cuts off the old belt the child is wearing, and puts on the new one with the *lizango* medicine in it, some more of the medicine, similarly tied up, is placed under the infant's head. In the morning she takes the relish to present to the two old women, and then takes the *lizango* she had placed under the child's head and ties it round his neck, and then takes a belt of beads, interspersed
[789] with little wooden charms, and adorns the child. When in time the *lizango* belt breaks, they do not look for it or replace it. In the event of an infant dying before he has been "brought into the village,"
766 they bury it in some open glade, near the edge of some stream, its funeral is attended by women only. Should a man tramp over the spot where the child
[753] is buried, he "has taken" the disease known as *nyesi*. Such a grave is known as *nsenye*.

/9 cont'd/

224 the hunt walks in the middle of the line, with a responsible person posted on each flank. A started animal, if not shot by the guns, usually turns to run parallel to the line of hunters, who hurl spears and knobkerries at it, and send their dogs after it. The chances of escape for a hunted animal are fairly high. Animals are also trapped, usually with a piece of meat tied to the muzzle of a gun. Hunting with nets is sometimes undertaken in the wet season. Rats are caught in small conical traps baited with beans. The rat chews through a piece of string and releases a green stick, thereby strangling itself.

[114] Shields, once the pride of the Ngoni armies, are not carried on hunts and are infrequently seen.

VI

29 [177] It is only the old men who still wear skin garments, and then only as additions to European style clothing. Men are dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, long trousers, cast-off European clothing, or clothes brought back from the army. Often two shirts are worn on top of one another. Women wear a blouse, a skirt tied on a tape, a cloth wrapped round on top of the skirt, and a small cloth tied [854] round their waist. If carrying a baby, the cloth supporting the child is slung over the left and under the right shoulder, and another cloth may be wrapped round the woman and child under her armpits. Dresses are also worn, and sometimes a singlet under the blouse. Shoes are less common for women than for men. Men /10/ wear a [177] variety of European style hats, but women wear only embroidered cloths or berets, or in the case of poorer women, plain bands of cloth.

Children go naked, or may be draped in whatever garment, of whatever size, happens to be available. If the money is there to pay for them, boys are dressed in shorts and shirts, and girls in little dresses.

304 [178] In the old days, every adult had slit ears, but this custom has died out. Women nowadays pierce their ears if they wish, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a small slit made as a

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular
602 sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until
[853] adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[47]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his
561 matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his
602 dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together
64 by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small
182 bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fission that did occur. The Paramount
643 Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organized manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the
177 stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The
178 second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni
631 of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought
[636] under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no
[563] longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-
[701] professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[47] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 301
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602 855
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy and therefore to be removed from them when the time came for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with him, they sometimes carried him about while the nurse girl
[262] did something else, they ground bulrush millet or roasted ground-nuts to give him as snacks. They were particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[533] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he addressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
[554] measure of the authority which his father and his father's brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and grandmother's households. There were young children who were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 357
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organized through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

855 primarily within his mother's household, but also, and especially immediately after weaning, in his grandmother's household. His needs for food and warmth could in fact be met in any of the households which formed part of his father's house and family group. There was no greater contrast for the small boy about the age of seven between this kind of life in the women's compound and his plunge into the life of the boys' dormitory.

The father's role with young children

562 During day-time in Ngoni villages Ngoni men and women lived almost in two separate worlds, the women in their compounds, the men by the kraal gate or about the village. When important visitors arrived the veranda of the 'big house' be-
574 came a general meeting-place. Chiefs and leading men who
[342] had acquired chairs, among other modern household furni-
[177] ture, preferred to entertain their guests on their own veranda
[352] where they had some degree of privacy, and to offer them chairs to sit on instead of the kraal fence to lean against. This
512 use of chairs which they found more comfortable to sit on brought many of the fathers of families back to their own verandas now and then during the day, though they con-
[264] tinued to eat their meals with the other men at the kraal
[521] gate, and to go there to discuss village affairs and watch over the coming and going of the cattle.

593 This change of habit brought the fathers of families into closer touch with their young children, and it was accele-
[177] rated by the growing Christian tradition in which fathers were more closely associated with certain aspects of their children's upbringing. It was the father who arranged for the baptism
[851] of the children which took place in the local church and was a ceremony attended by most of the village, whether Christians or not. When an evangelist or a school-teacher con-
[782] ducted evening prayers, as they often did near the kraal where anyone could come after the evening meal, Christian fathers sometimes carried a child in their arms to the prayers.

858 signs of irritation at female control, especially with this pro-
867 hibition on going to the kraal gate. They escaped surveillance and ran off there now and then, only to be caught by one of the men, beaten and brought back to the compound with the remark: 'This child is not yet a herd boy. Keep him with you.'

If the village was near a roadway with traffic on it, or near a river, children were forbidden to go there without some older person with them. They were also warned not to go near fireplaces in case a burning log fell out, and to keep away from the woodpile where there might be snakes.

Training in habits

855 In these surroundings, diversified, orderly, and on the whole safe if forbidden places were avoided, young children's needs were attended to and they were gradually trained to look after themselves. For food, health and sleep, their primary physical needs, they had their older sisters, nurse girls, mothers, grandmothers and helpers all at hand to ensure that these needs were satisfied.

After the post-weaning months were over, and generally
264 though not always after the next baby was born, a young
862 child went back to eat with his mother in her compound and sleep in her hut, though a grandmother, if she had taken a special fancy to a child, might say she was going to keep him to eat and sleep with her. In his mother's compound twice a day the child watched her and her helpers preparing and cooking a meal. In due time he was called to the veranda where the food lay smoking, his hands were wiped, he was made to rinse out his mouth, and he sat down beside his mother or his nurse in a circle round the food basket. This contained the mash of cooked grain, usually maize, and be-
[262] side it were the little pots of cooked 'relish', beans, peas, green vegetables, tomatoes, ground-nuts. At first someone pinched up a little lump of the mash, dipped it in a relish, and popped it into his mouth, telling him to shut his mouth and chew before he swallowed. Later he learned to do this

himself, with his eyes rather anxiously on the elders, lest he should take too large a lump, or get the relish all over his hand and wrist instead of only on his finger-tips. He learned, however hungry he was, not to stuff himself, and not to eat noisily. If he smacked his lips and gulped audibly, someone in the circle might say: 'I hear the guns of the Tyandla people booming.' They all stopped eating and looked at him, and he learned that a proverb could be a veiled rebuke, and he hung his head, ashamed. 862 264 [539]

Sometimes the smaller children had cow's milk or curds and whey or thin gruel given to them in a tiny gourd between the main meal-times, and through the day nurse girls and older sisters gave them little snacks if they thought of it or if the child whimpered because it was hungry. A favourite snack was ground bulrush millet, creamy and nutty to taste. Throughout this period spent in the women's world the child did not lack food either at or between meals. As he grew more mobile and independent, he went foraging in the compounds of his other mothers and his grandmothers, especially if his own mother had gone to her garden. They always welcomed him and gave him something to go on with. 855 [262]

After set meals the child was made to rinse his mouth, and his hands were cleaned by his nurse girl and his face and chest washed if he had covered himself with food fragments. His nurse girl found him a 'tooth-brush twig' and frayed it for him, and taught him to use it after meals as well as in the early morning. 863

Washing of small children was always done in the compound. While some children squirmed and yelled when washed, others liked it. They sat grinning on the veranda while their mother or nurse splashed water over them, rubbed soapy leaves on their hair, dried them with a cloth, and rubbed cow's fat on their skin. The Ngoni children in well-ordered households shone with cleanliness till they were about six years old. Then the boys dodged these female attentions, their skin became dry and scruffy, and their hair full

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

864 of cloth hanging in front from a bead or grass waistband.
[291] They were all taught before that age, and most stringently after it, to sit correctly. For the little girls, this meant kneel-
516 ing first and then sitting with the legs tucked on one side.
864 They always smoothed down their scrap of cloth so that their genitals were covered. Little boys often squatted, sitting on their heels. Their correct position however, especially when eating food, was to sit with their legs crossed and the soles of their feet pressed against their thighs, and their cloth or skin apron arranged to cover their genitals.

Any rudeness in speech or action towards parents or elders
867 was corrected at once, and the child was told: 'That is not the Ngoni way.' Studied courtesy included looking down when addressed by an elder, and as we saw in Chapter II, never walking behind a group of elders but passing in front of them, bending slightly forward and murmuring: 'I am before your eyes.'

Play places and playthings

857 In spite of what appeared like a somewhat restrictive régime, Ngoni children were merry and busy all their waking hours. Occasionally lack of health, or an awkward temperament, produced a child who sat around by himself, or glowered at
[157] other children, or was spiteful and vindictive. For the most
[855] part their nurse girls and older sisters paid them the attention they demanded, were always ready to provide distractions and amusements, and showed them how to use all that lay around them as playthings.

The places where they played depended on their age and mobility. The youngest children stayed round the hut and inside the fence. Occasionally the nurse girls and older sisters in the afternoons took them to a 'playground' on the outskirts of the village, where the older girls were accustomed to
[868] meet and practise dancing, or to thread beads and chatter. When the harvest was in, some of the older children about five and six years old, helped by the nurse girls, made 'play

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Young Ngoni children among their siblings and age-mates

593 The hard-worked theme of sibling rivalry among small
855 children in a family was not obvious among young Ngoni children. I expected to see outbursts of jealousy when the ex-baby returned after weaning to his mother's compound and found another baby installed there. But even with the new baby present, the mother seemed to have time to pet the ex-baby, telling the nurse girl to leave him with her, and there were few overt signs of emotional tension. This was certainly due to a large extent to the nurse-girl pattern, the fenced compound which was the child's home, and the interest of older sisters in their younger brothers and sisters. Young children growing up, as we have seen, were the focus of attention for a group of girls and women of different ages. They were hardly ever in a situation in which they had to struggle to assert themselves against a sibling, or, in their early years, against their age-mates. If they felt slighted or miserable or hungry or tired they could always go to someone to be petted or fed.

Hence their emotional needs for affection and attention never seemed to be unsatisfied. They were accustomed to having their physical needs supplied by any one of several women, and did not depend only on their mother for these needs. Nurse girls and older sisters were often demonstrative to small children, and they got more actual petting from them than from their mother or grandmother. Young children in turn often petted one smaller than themselves, or a new baby, and there was a contented affectionate relationship between children in the home which indicated the absence of any acute sibling rivalry.

From about the age of five or six, boys, who were escaping
857 from the restrictions and security of the compound to the
561 freedom and competition of village life, found a new challenge in a large group of their own age-mates, also just coming out of the younger child seclusion of the home. Boys

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960

FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grandmother with whom they slept, but the other practice was more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611] their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan. In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to remain as a distinctive group. They were members of their father's house until they married; and when that took place [583] it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd belonging to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the carelessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597] grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisability of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

858 upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if
581 the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended not only on her own reputation and character, but on the household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive
561 group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one.
858 The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of
[603] the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training
357 ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl,
855 to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter into all her occupations and amusements. This companion, chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's household, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and ate in the same household.

In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her
561 circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their compan-
872 ions. There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this
[601] group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided that it would also be wise to send their girls to school, especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men, learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daugh-
[565] ters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and dignified behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 589
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return [851]
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with 593
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired 554
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

The recent captives
855 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband,
593 wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw
631 attention to two features of the residential system which were not,
554 at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man
591 lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features
[178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which
581 agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their
613 own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the
[582] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this.
[178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

[P.58]

CHAPTER IV

KINSFOLK, AFFINES AND NEIGHBOURS

1. *The setting of marriage*

581 602 When a man marries he acquires not only a wife but also affinal relatives. His kinsfolk become her affines and both groups of relatives become kin of the children of the marriage. Husband and wife do not exist in isolation but are the centre of a network of relationships by which one group is articulated with the other. The common interest of the two groups is in the well-being of the couple and of the family which they found. This is true of all societies but among the Ngoni the relatives of a married couple play a more important part in the marriage than they do, for example, in Western society. The importance of the kin is increased by the custom of sending children away to live with their grandparents as soon as they have been weaned, and by the fact that husband and [591] wife do not set up their residence entirely on their own but follow their relatives and live in close proximity to one or more of them. We have said that in the old days the elementary family did not emerge as an important grouping in society. This proposition is still true to-day, although our grounds for making it have shifted somewhat. In the towns the old pattern of kinship cannot operate and husband [594] and wife live their lives much more as an isolated pair, cut off from their kin and alone responsible for their children. But in villages neighbours are kinsmen and a quarrel between man and wife brings kinsfolk from all around seeking to establish the rights and wrongs of the quarrel and to effect reconciliation. Many children are not sent to live with their grandparents, but even they grow up with their age-mates in the village, are fed by many different women, sleep in [855] different huts, and visit to and fro with their relatives in other villages. The difficulties of rearing children in the towns have led to the rise of a new pattern in which children born in Southern Rhodesia are brought back hundreds of miles to the village to be cared for by rural kinsfolk. The quarrels of spouses in the towns are referred home to the village for discussion.

It is the kinsfolk of the pair who are most directly concerned with their marriage, but there are other persons and groups who are also interested. In the village the headman and his lieutenants, even if they are not close kinsmen of one of the spouses, have an interest in the good behaviour of the couple, and they too may intervene in a quarrel. They participate in the ceremonials of marriage, and may receive part of the meat and beer given by one side to the other. 000 Beyond the village the Native Courts deal to a great extent with

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an expression more of their different matrilateral affiliations than of the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother, although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by his first and third wives [3] were reared by their father's fourth wife's mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of his children. This division is in accord with the statement made frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's. Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace', however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft-reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The facility with which married couples live uxorilocally is no doubt partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxorilocal Cewa and other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

4. *The moral significance of sexual activity*

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die, and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

[3] See above, p. 109

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Maravi FR4
Ngoni FR5
Bemba FQ5

M 301 Necklaces, most commonly for children, are made of a number of little square pieces of hippo ivory strung together, ornamented with geometrical designs.

M 789 Medicine is often carried in a little packet suspended round the neck, as also charms of various kinds. The medicine may be some powdered charred roots or little twigs, leaves, etc., of some tree; these are sometimes now wrapped up in a Y [789] piece of paper on which is written some extract from the Koran (among Mohammedan Yao); this is then sewn in a little piece of calico and adorned with beads and suspended round the neck with a string.

Charms take various forms. Small pieces of wood or, to guard against attack M 301 by lion, teeth are worn. Armlets of the same kind are worn against sickness, and others are worn by Angoni, made of beads to which knives are attached. Bracelets of ivory, plaited grass and elephant tail hairs are also worn.

N 301 Metal and wirework bracelets are commonly worn by Angoni, also twisted wire finger rings and rings of lead and ivory. Heavy brass ankle rings and spiral brass leg and arm rings 6 inches and 8 inches wide are worn by some of the women (Atonga).

B 301 Bracelets cut from the nail of the elephant's foot are worn by Awemba hunters, and little finger rings cut from the scale of the ant-eater are worn as medicine against fever by headmen.

Belts made of wound copper wire are worn round the waists by Wankonde.

M 302 The use of pigments applied to the body is very limited. I have seen stripes of these, white and red, on the faces of young women, boys and dancers, generally M [439] after some ceremony. The significance I do not know. Pigments are now obtained from Indian traders, and I do not know how old the custom is. There is no beautification of face, body, nails, and eyes by pigments. The only application made to the skin is castor and ground-nut oils to keep it soft—no scents are used.

CLOTHING.

M Y ●N 291 Among tribes of Nyasaland the amount of clothing worn varies very considerably from nothing to European garments.

Of the large majority, however, including Maßanja people, Yao and Angoni, one may speak generally.

●[855] The young children commonly run about naked, or have a strip of cloth covering the pudenda, supported by a string round the waist.

M Y N [556] Among the adult population the amount of clothing depends largely on the affluence of the individual, and those who cannot afford much have little clothing. A man wears a strip of calico supported in front and behind by a string round the waist, a woman a piece of calico 18 inches wide reaching from the middle of the thighs to the umbilicus.

Of the more prosperous, the men wear calico from a little below the knee to the waist, carefully wrapped round the body, and kept in position by some kind of belt; sometimes it is folded across the upper part of the chest or sometimes crossed over in front and two ends tied behind the neck.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 boys took more interest and more part in adult occupations and affairs,
866 the emergence of leadership among Ngoni boys of high-ranking families was watched by their elders and recognized by their age mates. This was the formative period when a boy's capacity to succeed his father in a position of authority was carefully observed and judged. The Ngoni had ways of passing over a man who was a physical weakling, a coward in face of danger, a sadistic bully to weaker men, a pursuer of women and a breaker-up of marriages. The *madoda* in a Ngoni village, who appeared to let the boys in the *laweni* manage their own affairs without interfering, had nevertheless a shrewd idea of who was making good and who was proving disappointing. Their comments, showing continued observation over a long period, were often expressed when two or three friends and age mates from the *laweni* decided to go off to the south to work together. The *madoda* would then say: 'We hope they will come back soon and not be "lost". So and so is like his father and he will help us here in the village'; or they might comment: 'Good riddance, they were always hanging round the girls—worthless ones, indeed' (*wa chabe ndithu*).

881 It has already been pointed out that there was no circumcision school
856 nor public initiation rite among the Ngoni. At puberty the ritual observed was a private and personal affair. On a boy's first nocturnal emission his age mates informed an older boy in the *laweni*, who told him to go at once before it was light and bathe in the river, and to do so
[823 each morning after an emission. This use of cold water was believed to
827] give a boy strength and virility. The boy was also instructed by the older boys in the *laweni* on how to behave to his equals and his elders and to women. This stage was called *ukuchayiwa nga' manzi*, 'to be beaten with water', and was not reported to the older people. When the older people noticed that the boy's voice was breaking, his father inquired whether he had passed puberty and, on being assured of this, he found a man who knew the *uludengele* medicine. The father killed a goat, and the medicine man took some of the unchewed cud from the goat's stomach, mixed it with the bitter *uludengele* root and put it on a pan over a fire. This took place near the gate of the kraal or near the parents' hut, with the father and the father's male relatives standing by. When the mixture boiled, the boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the pan one after the other and lick each one quickly. At the same time he kept jumping over the fire and striking his elbows against his sides. The Ngoni believed that this medicine gave boys physical strength and stamina and they administered it to their servants' sons as well. It was still practised in the 1930's among Ngoni who were educated and partly westernized.

867 While the organization of the *laweni* catered for all boys from their
881 second teeth till their marriage, including boys from the age sets called *abantwana* and *amajaha*, the organization of girls' life followed a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

854 anxious to protect her charge in every way, and with the connivance of the women helpers she made little charms of bits of roots to hang around the baby's neck to make him [751] grow quickly and to ward off sorcery and witchcraft. She [754] threaded pumpkin seeds and tied them around his neck to [856] make his teeth come quickly if they were late in appearing. These charms were generally those used by the local peoples, and Ngoni fathers were contemptuous about their use and efficacy. 'These women are spoiling our children,' they said, and then reassured themselves by remembering that a boy would be free from such women's spoiling once he went into the boys' dormitory.

Variants on the Ngoni pattern

183 This traditional pattern of authority and behaviour in respect of birth, infant care and weaning was essentially that of the [565] true Ngoni, that relatively small aristocratic group who never forgot their superior social status and its foundation in their ancestry. This first stage in the socialization of a child, from 861 birth to weaning, brought out clearly two fundamental 596 features of Ngoni social organization. One was the role played by the senior women who had themselves in their childhood been brought up on strict Ngoni lines. The father of the new baby accepted the role played by his own mother in controlling, and if necessary coercing, his young wife. Though, as we shall see later, every Ngoni boy and young man had a period of virtually complete escape from feminine control, once a man married and his young wife was established within the social group of his mother's house, he acknowledged his mother's authority over her, and particularly over the birth and care of his child. The mother-son relationship of the young father to his own mother dominated the relationship of the young mother to her child. Young Ngoni fathers never questioned their allegiance to their own mothers, cherishing them as they grew older and supporting them in their exercise of authority. Much as he loved his

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

V

Village Life for older Brothers and Sisters

Second teeth: a new stage

858 We saw in Chapter II that Ngoni children who lost their first teeth, and acquired their second, had reached a new stage in their development. The obvious gaps in their mouths [856] were filled, and this might happen between the ages of six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half, and some of the children might be rather small and slight for their age. Socially, because they had their second teeth, and because it was a sign of physical change recognized by everyone, the Ngoni adult would regard these children as ready for a different kind of life than that described in the previous chapter. The children were no longer dependent on adults for the detailed care and attention which we saw in the last chapter spelled security for the young child because every need of his was met. These older children could feed themselves, wash themselves, say what they wanted, speak correctly; and were beginning to behave as Ngoni children were expected to behave in all the relationships and activities of daily living. They were still in the wider sense dependent on adults for their basic needs—food to eat, a place to sleep in, tasks to perform, care when sick. But they had passed completely out of the hands of nurse girls, and the boys, to a very large extent, out of the control and surveillance of the women.

[866] A new-found independence had begun to show in the little boys before they got their second teeth. Independence

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 *Herding as preparation for war*

857 Preparation for war began in youth. When boys were about ten or twelve they were sent to herd goats or calves; when they were older they herded the cattle. At this time the boys were in the bush with their elders who were often haughty and fierce. The older herders taught the boys how to fight and how to defend themselves. They taught them to fight with twigs and sticks; the older herders fought with *izinduku* (knobkerries) and *izinkhonjo* (wooden swords). They were not allowed to fight with real spears though some had them. The older herders stirred up the hearts of the younger to fight and taught them to strike each other with knobkerries and to use little shields. If the herders of one village met the herders of another, the bulls were teased till they fought, and the little herders also. The small herders were not allowed to say anything about the herding to their parents. The older herders also loved to fight as in war with those of other villages. At such times the older men and even the elders came out from the village to see the battle and to stir up the hearts of the boys. If the herders of one village ran away they were laughed at, but the winners were greatly praised.

883 865 868

At the time when the cattle ate the refuse in the maize-gardens, after harvest, fighting most often broke out. Some of the boys provoked their neighbours to go and drive the cattle into the maize-fields of another village deliberately. The custom was that cattle might eat in the maize-gardens of their own village and the boys ought to ask if they may go into the fields of others. The herders did this to annoy the other herders and to start a fight. Often a great struggle was the result and the young men of the village who had outgrown herding joined in the fight to help the youngsters of their village. But they did it sensibly, none caused a wound with a spear, for anyone who did that was punished by law.

So the boys grew accustomed to the first steps in fighting which would help them later in war. Those who knew how to protect themselves with a knobkerry and small shield had no scars on their heads, but there were many long ago who had scars from fighting in the herding time. Children of the chief were in the same predicament—if they could not defend themselves they were beaten by their herding companions and possibly got their heads broken. The flowing of blood was not considered very serious, only if one did it in a stealthy way then he had to pay compensation. In this way the boys grew up with stout hearts and loved fighting.

Another thing which excited the boys was the custom of whistling. The boys were very expert and quick in expressing changes of mood in whistling. This was done so that the cattle would go carefully or quickly, but also when they were fighting the herders loved to whistle and even the older men in war did so also. The whistling stirred up the hearts of those who were thinking of running away. There were many ways of whistling and some were very good at it.

[198]

Enlistment

539 When the young men reached the age of 21–26 they left off herding. Sometimes it was their fathers who stopped them, sometimes they themselves wished to stay at home. They took their shields (*amahawu*) and

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2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be
682 killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *izizi zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in
684 this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was
178 death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *izinduna* and the *amadoda* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticized each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the
● [857] conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *laweni* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organizing his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

631 NGONI OFFICE-BEARERS

622 In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni
645 political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a
[565] hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

561 with the main activities of the groups, though it did to some extent illustrate mutual relationships.

Age-Set terms

	Northern Ngoni	*Central Ngoni*
All children	*abantwana*	*ana*
[184 Young men even if married	*amajaha*	*anyamata*
104] Young girls before puberty	*inhakazana*	*mabuthu*
Young girls past puberty	*izintombi*	*anamwali*
All married women	*abafazi*	*ahazi*
Senior men	*amadoda*	*madoda*
Senior women	*amanina*	*manina*

513 One of the most characteristic forms of Ngoni village organization
561 was the *laweni*, or boys' dormitory. It included the older boys in the group called 'children' and the young men until they married, who were
866 in fact called *amajaha* after they had left the *laweni* and married and had huts of their own. The age for entering the *laweni* was approximately seven years, and was as a rule determined by the age when a child began to get his second teeth. When a child was going about the village with several gaps in his front teeth, his companions jeered at him if he still slept in his grandmother's hut, and his father took the view that it was time he stopped playing like a child and took up seriously the job of herding goats and calves. There was often some hesitation, especially among boys who were not so well grown for their age, at taking the plunge and going to live in the *laweni*, since once made the step could not be retraced. It was primarily an individual decision. It meant leaving the protective affectionate care of the grandmother in the evenings, and the care-free play all day round the mother's hut with meals provided by her, for a different sort of existence altogether. *Laweni* life was rigorous and was dominated by the senior boys living in the hut. The younger ones were at their mercy, and were made to 'fag' for their elders, clean up the hut, sometimes steal food from their mothers' stores, and were beaten if they were slow or careless, or if they threatened to tell the
[626] elders in the village what went on in the *laweni*. The main weapon to get boys into the *laweni* was the ridicule of their fellows. Once members of the *laweni* group they were disciplined into obedience by threats and beating. The age range within a *laweni* was often considerable, from seven to seventeen years.

233 All the boys in a *laweni* who were members of houses possessing
857 cattle—and this as a rule included all sons of Ngoni families of trans-
561 Zambesi clans—had to take part in herding. Cattle-herding was a responsible task and could be an arduous one. The boys got up before dawn, opened the gate of the kraal, and took the cattle to water. They milked the cattle on an open space near the village and carried the milk in wooden jars, gourds or petrol tins to the owner of the cattle, keeping

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

some for themselves as their perquisite. They then drove the cattle to pasture, and this might be some distance away when grass was scarce in the dry season. They sometimes drove the cattle back near the village to rest at noon under the shade trees, but if the pasture was far away the cattle rested there and went on feeding later. They were brought back to the kraal in the late afternoon and counted by one of the senior men.

The herd-boys taught each other to fight with sticks, to wrestle, to catch rats and small birds, to use the knobkerry, catapults, and bows and arrows. Sometimes in the afternoon they went to other villages and challenged another herd to a fight between bulls.[1] During the long day's herding, the boys used to drink milk, make *amasi* (milk curds) in a gourd and eat it, bake birds in clay and roast ears of maize taken from their mothers' grain stores. Precedence among the herd-boys depended first on age and only secondly on the rank and position of the families they belonged to. There was an easily recognizable air of authority and almost of arrogance among the older boys responsible for their fathers' and uncles' cattle. They superintended the process of letting out the cattle, milking them, driving them to pasture and the return to the kraal in the evening. Mounted on donkeys, wearing large straw hats made by themselves, the senior boys acted like ranch owners bossing up inefficient work hands.

This period of living in the *laweni* was, as we have seen, shared by boys of a wide age group. In a large village where there were two or three or four *laweni*, there was often one in each section, which generally meant that the boys belonging to one *banja* or section shared one *laweni*. This had the effect of dividing them up to some extent on a basis of family and rank, but in a *laweni* serving a whole village all the boys went in together whatever families they came from. There was no respecting of clan status in the *laweni* and young boys of high-ranking families had to wait on and obey older boys of lower rank. *Laweni* life was therefore a democratizing influence among the boys of the village, and no boys were excused from herding cattle because they belonged to a house which owned cattle. Even if some went to school and others did not, the schoolboys had to take their share of herding in the holidays. Ngoni chiefs and leading men laid great emphasis on keeping the boys busy and making them carry out the work allotted to them. The older boys began to listen in at court cases and to discuss them among themselves. During the wet season from time to time they formed hoeing parties for clearing new ground and for the periodical weeding of gardens. They seldom did any continuous cultivation, as the women and the older men did, and a boy who liked to go off and hoe by himself was pointed out as one with rather peculiar tastes.

During this period of *laweni* life, when in addition to herding the

[1] For the relation between the training of herd-boys and preparation for war, see Part II, Chap. I, p. 30.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 836 565 emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

Many of the *umuindo* songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni [533] history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

852 304 The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and [727] annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambesi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

561 After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested 857 in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance *ngoma* in a neighbouring village.

857 535 In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the *ngoma* dance played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organized on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of an *ngoma* 'competition' the team was made up of lads and girls of about fourteen to eighteen years old. They went off to another village, having announced their arrival previously, and challenged the 'home team' to dance *ngoma*. The dancing was in the kraal with the adults looking on and acting as judges. It was all very decorous and orderly and the competing teams were in dead earnest. As we have noticed already, the Ngoni danced without drums. The steady beat of the feet of the young men made the rhythm for the dance, but the co-ordination in the long lines of boys in front and girls behind needed assiduous practice to produce harmonious results. In both northern and central Ngoniland the Paramounts had forbidden all dances except Ngoni dances, and in the north the *ngoma* was encouraged by the chiefs because it was considered a 'good dance' for young people. 857 535

After marriage, the young women were absorbed in the care of their huts and young children and only appeared as an age set when they took part in a communal hoeing; on such occasions they were inclined to keep apart from the older women, sometimes on the grounds that they did not drink the full-strength beer, and therefore clustered round a pot of 'sweet' beer when they knocked off work. In most Ngoni villages the young men after marriage went off to find work and, as a group of friends within an age set, they would get together to talk things over, make their preparations and travel to the south. 462 476 561 273

In day-to-day village affairs, as well as on ceremonial occasions, the age sets of the *manina* and *madoda* were very much in evidence. The *madoda* met at meal-times by the gate of the kraal, and they went there to count the cattle when they came back in the evening. The same group could be seen either at the kraal gate or on a verandah talking about village affairs or drinking together, or at a court listening to cases. The *manina* usually gathered in the verandah of the *indhunkulu* to talk over women's affairs or to receive guests. As an age set they met less frequently than the men because the larger part of their tasks lay in their own huts or in the group of women associated with a house. On all occasions when the formal reception of strangers took place, or when ritual feasting or shaving or washing occurred, or when important decisions had to be made, the *manina* and the *madoda* in their separate sets were in evidence. 561

Although the age sets in village life were social units carrying definite responsibilities and performing recognized activities, their chief importance in Ngoni social life was in regulating behavioural patterns and prescribing mutual relationships. Here we have to take note of a selective principle at work among the *manina* and *madoda*. Although in one sense all women and men of forty to forty-five and upwards belonged to these age sets, the individuals who carried out the characteristic activities of these groups did not include all the men and women of that age. The very old people did not continue to exercise any influence in village 561 888

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 867 The moral, which was always repeated at the end as part of the story, was that children were warned not to show unkindness to people but to treat them well so that people would bless them. They were reminded that the older sister showed the qualities of pity, courage and obedience, while the younger sister did not hesitate to display disgust and fear and carelessness. It was the older sister who had her ultimate reward as leading wife of a handsome chief, while the younger sister, as a subsidiary wife, had to take second place.

These two folk-tales were popular among the children, even though they were so different from the animal folk-tales, full of humour and absurdities. The children used to shiver with excitement over the Brass-Rod story, especially the little girls, and the boys sucked in their breath when the wind blew and snapped their fingers for the rattling in the pit. Because the stories were serious and had a didactic purpose, Ngoni fathers approved of them, and encouraged the grandmothers to tell them often in order that the children might remember the moral.

Learning how to behave

203 857 [202] Ngoni villages, like the whole Ngoni kingdom, had an efficient system of communication between individuals and groups, but whereas the kingdom had a network of official messengers continually moving between the capital and the outlying sections, the village 'intercom' depended on the children. At any time of day, from first light till after dark, children were moving about the village from one hut to another, from a hut to the kraal gate, taking messages, summoning people, carrying food, reporting arrivals. The messages and summons were all at the bidding of the adults. 576 857 867 202 When a child was called to take a message, he had to respond immediately wherever he was, and run to hear what he was wanted for. Someone calling a child's name, followed by a long drawn out 'Yo—o—o', punctuated all the hours of daylight in a village. When a child was told to call someone

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

older, on reaching them he had to bend one knee, or sit down, and say in a low but clear voice: 'They are calling you.' If a child was sent to call another child to his father because he had a scolding to administer, the bad child had to listen with head bent down, not saying a word or making a sound until the father had finished all he had to say, whether the accusation was just or not. If the child forgot himself and answered back or made excuses, the onlookers would beat the child for being rude to his father. If when taking a message a child had to pass a line or a group of people, he had always to go in front of them, never behind, bending forward from the waist and murmuring as he went by, 'I am before your eyes.' If a child had to give an adult a food basket or any other object, he had to offer it with both hands and bend slightly over it; and when he received it back he always did so with both hands outstretched and bent head.

Acting as messengers constantly, and no child was immune from being called if he or she was in the village, impressed on children from their early years the chief behavioural skills of language and deportment. Taking a message was always a formal occasion, and standards of behaviour in language, posture and gesture were rigidly enforced. We shall see in later chapters how very small children were first taught to thank people for gifts or in response to a greeting, and later to greet people politely themselves. The correct terms in which to address or to refer to relatives formed another stage in learning language skills, and later on came reminders about the use of pronouns and the use of the second person singular and plural of verbs, the first to equals only, the second to all adults, with the third person plural for chiefs and 'great ones'. About the age of five or six a child was told: 'When your mother speaks to a stranger she says "Please (you) sit here". You should speak like this to all people you must honour. Only rude people speak that other way—people who do not know how to thank and how to honour, not like the Ngoni who know these things.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to himself: 'Can that be for me? No? Yes? It *is* me. I am ashamed.' No one said anything but the shamed one took the first chance of slipping away to avoid further public notice. The use of proverbs in this way were an effective way of making a child learn for himself and apply the lesson; and with children, as with adults, the use of proverbs was a way of 'saving face' when a direct rebuke in the presence of others would have caused overwhelming shame.

Ngoni ideas about nature and nurture

This fixed code of social behaviour between persons was instilled by Ngoni adults into their children from their early years. By the time they had their second teeth, a significant stage to the Ngoni, they were expected to conduct themselves towards other people according to this code. Their behaviour, in public at any rate, should be predictable, if those responsible for the teaching of 'respect' had carried out their task conscientiously. But, as the Ngoni themselves recognized, it was one thing to have a system of training with a desired goal in view. It was another thing to see how each individual child responded to the training, and either conformed to the code or resisted it. The Ngoni thought that the clue to conformity or resistance lay in the individual's character, and they talked a great deal about the character of their children. Such conversations generally arose when adults were watching a group of boys and girls carrying out a socially required or self-appointed task. They might be bringing back the cattle in the evening, practising for the *ngoma* dance, grinding bulrush millet for snacks for the little children, asking each other riddles or telling a story. Some of the tasks called for intelligence, some for physical strength, some for initiative or organizing ability, some for eloquence.

Character, so the Ngoni thought, came from two sources, inborn qualities and acquired qualities. The first they called *mabadidwe*, literally those things which an individual was born with. These included physical resemblances to their

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

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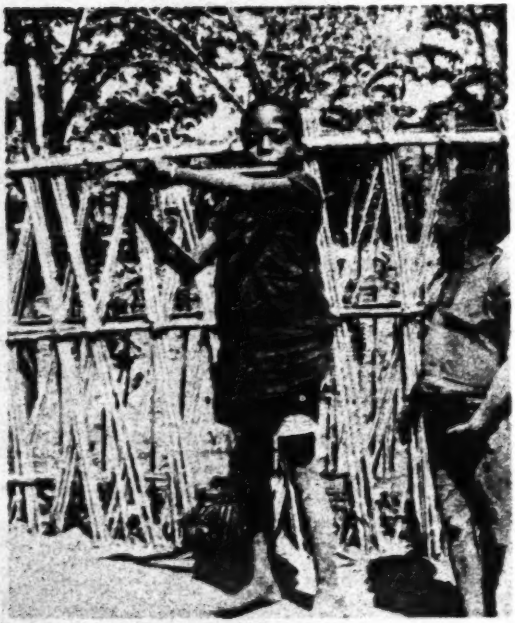

10. Young musicians

[facing page 49]

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to 351
make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, 415
and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry,
and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time [356]
sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into [513]
the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at
night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as [352]
pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fasci- [531]
nate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from 351
time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer [285]
was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child [273]
was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. [857]
These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked [231]
and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and
young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped 361
round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay 311
patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens',
and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or 857
grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work
in the gardens was an expedition for young children which
they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places for- 858
bidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone 867
with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep
away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where
the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had
passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of [562]
the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children
strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and
fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went
there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless
a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven
years old, because they found their fathers there and the
herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

after the age of four or five, when they might become aware 867
that intercourse was taking place. From this age, when the 864
Ngoni said 'they will now begin to see things and to ask questions', they went to sleep either with a widowed grandmother or senior helper.

During the 'dark half of the month' and in the rains, most 512
people went to bed soon after dark and little children got a 857
long sleep. When the moon was bright, and in dry weather, [132]
the whole village was astir, walking around, dancing, talking, visiting. Little children tagged round with their older 513
sisters or nurse girls, and if they were sleepy were either picked up and carried, or put in the hut to sleep on their mat, provided there was no fire burning into which they could fall. During the day, especially in the hot weather, children dropped off to sleep just where they were, on the veranda, under the platform, or in some other shady spot.

It was just before bedtime, in the grandmother's hut, that [538]
traditional folk-tales were told, round the last flickers of a wood fire. Sometimes a child dropped off to sleep before the story was finished. Someone either took him on her lap, or dumped him on his mat and covered him up.

This acquiring of habits, directed consciously by adults, 867
was designed to give the child increasingly a sense of being 858
part of a community which had certain standards of behaviour. There were, in this training, some prohibitions
which a child was expected to observe as soon as he could 864
walk and talk. The most stringent was on any form of sex play between boys and girls. To avoid any likelihood of this, little boys and girls were early encouraged to form separate play groups. The elders kept an eye particularly on the boys, and if they showed any inquisitiveness in their play about the private parts of a girl playmate, they were beaten and reproved and told: 'If you do this again, I shall tell your father.'

Many little boys and girls up to the age of four or five ran 864
about naked, but in leading Ngoni families they wore a scrap 291

864 of cloth hanging in front from a bead or grass waistband.
[291] They were all taught before that age, and most stringently after it, to sit correctly. For the little girls, this meant kneeling first and then sitting with the legs tucked on one side.
516 864 They always smoothed down their scrap of cloth so that their genitals were covered. Little boys often squatted, sitting on their heels. Their correct position however, especially when eating food, was to sit with their legs crossed and the soles of their feet pressed against their thighs, and their cloth or skin apron arranged to cover their genitals.

Any rudeness in speech or action towards parents or elders
867 was corrected at once, and the child was told: 'That is not the Ngoni way.' Studied courtesy included looking down when addressed by an elder, and as we saw in Chapter II, never walking behind a group of elders but passing in front of them, bending slightly forward and murmuring: 'I am before your eyes.'

Play places and playthings

857 In spite of what appeared like a somewhat restrictive régime, Ngoni children were merry and busy all their waking hours. Occasionally lack of health, or an awkward temperament, produced a child who sat around by himself, or glowered at
[157] other children, or was spiteful and vindictive. For the most
[855] part their nurse girls and older sisters paid them the attention they demanded, were always ready to provide distractions and amusements, and showed them how to use all that lay around them as playthings.

The places where they played depended on their age and mobility. The youngest children stayed round the hut and inside the fence. Occasionally the nurse girls and older sisters in the afternoons took them to a 'playground' on the outskirts of the village, where the older girls were accustomed to
[868] meet and practise dancing, or to thread beads and chatter. When the harvest was in, some of the older children about five and six years old, helped by the nurse girls, made 'play

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

houses' among the maize stalks, tying the stalks together to make conical shelters. There they played house, pretending to cook and pound. But the enthusiasm for these playhouses was shortlived, and on the whole the children and their nurse girls preferred to be in the village where they could see and hear what was going on. The older boys in this age-group seldom went to the playground, and pursued their games in the open spaces of the village. 857

The small girls had 'dolls' which they treated as little babies. Sometimes it was a maize cob tucked into a bit of cloth and carried on their backs. More realistic dolls were made of a bundle of reeds tied together with the hard round shell of a fruit fitted on top and painted with eyes, nose and mouth. Older girls made these dolls for the little ones, and showed them how to feed the doll from a tiny gourd and taught them lullabies to sing while they jogged the dolls on their back or nursed them on their lap. 524

Little boys had a wider range of toys, made for them by older brothers and quickly copied by the children themselves. They made windmills from maize sheaths which twisted on a stick as they ran. They had hoops of bamboo peelings, trundled with a notched stick, and a small round solid wooden wheel with a hole in it which they pushed with a long-handled crook. They had tops of wood and whipped them with lengths of bark rope. They were for ever collecting scraps of iron from wherever men were working. These they sharpened on stones, and used as knives, or bound them to a haft, as a little axe, with fragments of skin which they scrounged when a shield was being cut, or an ox flayed. The small boys were the tinkers of the village, collecting whatever scrap they thought they could use, and hiding it each in his own safe and secret place, and fighting savagely if anyone robbed a secret store. Many boys spent hours making clay figures, men, cattle, monkeys, dogs, and there were certain conventions which allowed little variety governing their style and shape. Sometimes they drew, or 'wrote' as they 857 857 532

857 said, in the sand more conventional figures of men and
532 animals which are reproduced here. Their ingenuity in the use of local materials was boundless, and led later to remarkably accurate scale models of lorries and aeroplanes made from pith, bamboo and thorns.

A man

A wild pig

A baboon

A dog

A cow

857 Most of the games such as tops and hoops were seasonal. They appeared suddenly in the village, lasted for a few weeks and then ceased as abruptly as they had begun. A perennial amusement among Ngoni boys of five to seven was playing at law courts. They sat round in traditional style with a 'chief' and his elders facing the court, the plantiffs and defendants presenting their case, and the counsellors conducting proceedings and cross-examining witnesses. In their high squeaky voices the little boys imitated their fathers whom they had seen in the courts, and they gave judgements, imposing heavy penalties, and keeping order in the court with ferocious severity. Another game which the boys of five to seven enjoyed was a form of tug-of-war, two gangs pulling on a bark rope, until one gave way, with shouting, whistling and a final cry: 'The strong ones. They prevail.'

000 In the dry season which was the dancing season children

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

In the dry season which was the dancing season children from three and four years upwards spent hours watching the 535 older boys and girls dancing. On the edge of the main group 868 small boys particularly would with intense solemnity and exaggerated movements practise steps and postures, singing meanwhile. The Ngoni used no drums and no musical instruments in their dancing, and despised the users of drums. [534] All their rhythm and synchrony was achieved by perfect unison of action and voice. The little boys practising solo on the edge of a dance-group listened intently every now and then to get the rhythm correctly, shifted their feet and stamped with the rest.

The little girls were collected together by older girls now 524 and then, and sometimes joined by the boys, to play games 533 of catch and various miming games such as choosing a lover, 857 hen and chickens, slave-raiding, baboons in the maize gardens. These were accompanied by songs in which the leader, or 'owner', of the game sang the story and the rest joined in the refrains. Many of these miming games called for alertness and co-operation, and the slow and solitary were soon shown up and laughed at. Another set of songs with refrains were ballads or stories without action, and these were listened to by the hour by the younger children towards the end of the day, especially if the singer of the ballad was a lively narrator.

Girl children of this age-group spent a lot of their time 868 watching adults and older girls doing their household work. In time they learned to imitate the actions of pounding and grinding, using a small pole or a stone, of sweeping with a frayed-out stalk, of winnowing or sieving with a little basket, or ladling food with a tiny wooden spoon. When they went to the gardens with their mother, they were given a small branch to carry home on their heads for the fire. Later the little girls had a tiny pot put on their head, perched on a miniature grass carrying-ring and went to the water-hole with their nurse girl to fill it and carry it home without spilling the water.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Young Ngoni children among their siblings and age-mates

593 855 The hard-worked theme of sibling rivalry among small children in a family was not obvious among young Ngoni children. I expected to see outbursts of jealousy when the ex-baby returned after weaning to his mother's compound and found another baby installed there. But even with the new baby present, the mother seemed to have time to pet the ex-baby, telling the nurse girl to leave him with her, and there were few overt signs of emotional tension. This was certainly due to a large extent to the nurse-girl pattern, the fenced compound which was the child's home, and the interest of older sisters in their younger brothers and sisters. Young children growing up, as we have seen, were the focus of attention for a group of girls and women of different ages. They were hardly ever in a situation in which they had to struggle to assert themselves against a sibling, or, in their early years, against their age-mates. If they felt slighted or miserable or hungry or tired they could always go to someone to be petted or fed.

Hence their emotional needs for affection and attention never seemed to be unsatisfied. They were accustomed to having their physical needs supplied by any one of several women, and did not depend only on their mother for these needs. Nurse girls and older sisters were often demonstrative to small children, and they got more actual petting from them than from their mother or grandmother. Young children in turn often petted one smaller than themselves, or a new baby, and there was a contented affectionate relationship between children in the home which indicated the absence of any acute sibling rivalry.

857 561 From about the age of five or six, boys, who were escaping from the restrictions and security of the compound to the freedom and competition of village life, found a new challenge in a large group of their own age-mates, also just coming out of the younger child seclusion of the home. Boys

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this age, escaping from the women, showed their independence in their choice of games and occupations, many of which, as we have seen, were of an individual nature. They were not much inclined to join together as an age-group except for occasional gang enterprises. If one boy interfered with another's game of tops or took away his axe or hoop, there was an immediate short sharp fight. The defeated one either ran home to be comforted, with the jeers of the victor in his ears, or he stood and sulked for a moment, and then went on with his pursuit. It was outside in the open village spaces and not behind the fences of the compounds that small boys learned to put up with each other, to meet aggression and to be aggresive in turn, and then suddenly to gang up with a group and play happily together. 857 561

The test for boys of correct Ngoni training in the childhood stage, between weaning and second teeth, was their ability to get on with their age-mates and fellow villagers when they went to live in the dormitory. One boy went to live for long periods with his maternal grandmother in his mother's home village, after an argument in which for once his father was overruled by his wife and her family. This boy was indulged and spoiled by his maternal relatives who were afraid to correct him and to discipline him because he was the child of their son-in-law. The result was that when the boy came back about the age of seven, on his father's insisting that he should take part in herding and live in the dormitory, he was selfish, rude and disobedient, and failed to fit in with the other boys. This and similar stories were often quoted to show the importance of the father's family being in sole control during the early stages of childhood. 858 867

VILLAGE LIFE FOR OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS

There was no doubt that this abrupt transition, like the sudden weaning, was a shock for many boys between six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half. From having been impudent, well-fed, self-confident and spoiled youngsters among the women many of them quickly became skinny, scruffy, subdued and with a hunted expression. The subdued and hunted looks passed off as they adjusted themselves to their new environment and there were boys, generally those exceptionally well grown and physically strong, who showed no apparent signs of shock. They all, however, showed the effects of irregular and inadequate feeding. The younger boys were chronically hungry and their hair and skin and bony knees and ribs were eloquent of calory, protein and vitamin shortages. 575 156 [146]

The other main purpose of dormitory life in Ngoni culture was to mix up all the boys in the village and let the common life together teach them how to get on with their age-mates and knuckle under to their superiors in age. Age and strength were the only criteria for authority. Older brothers might try to protect and intercede for younger brothers but it was not encouraged. All the young ones had to take their chance equally, without regard for their family name or their father's position. 575 858

The dormitory was primarily a sleeping-place, but through the group of boys who slept there the herding of cattle was organized and the off-duty amusements and occupations of the older boys were planned. The young ones had to 'fag' for the rest, fetching wood and water, keeping fires going, sweeping the hut, taking messages, huddling in a corner at night when the oldest boys brought girls in, and submitting to beatings both as a warning and as a punishment. They were usually beaten once or twice soon after their arrival and then threatened with much worse if they ever divulged what went on in the dormitory. It was not however a torture house, far from it, and the boys boasted of belonging to 'our dormitory' and were proud of having their own hidden life 575 [513] [857]

524 of the riddle. An unexpected reply or a good guess often drew applause, even if it was not the accepted correct answer.

535 Before it was dark, all the herd-boys joined in what they called 'drill' on the flat space where they milked the cows
857 in front of the kraal gate. As a rule this 'drill' was practising for the *ngoma* dance which took place after harvest and was the only dance for boys and girls approved by the Ngoni rulers. Sometimes they varied this dance, practising with swift follow-my-leader manœuvres, turning, twisting, lifting sticks, knocking knobkerries together, stamping, whistling.
[534] As we have said already, the Ngoni had no drums, and all the precision and rhythm in any dances or concerted movements depended on exact timing and following the leader. The accuracy and precision reached was remarkable, and represented a high degree of intense concentration and co-operation among the dancers or 'drillers', who developed an almost intuitive knowledge of what the leader was going to do next. This dancing was practised in front of the men and older youths on purpose. They criticized it freely, and sometimes, though rarely, praised the boys. More often they came forward to show them how to do it better.

For the greater part of the day the herd-boys were with
233 the cattle. They rose before it was light, undid the kraal gate,
857 and as dawn broke led the cattle to the river. Then they went to the grazing grounds which according to the season were near or far from the village. As the dry season advanced and the grass became poorer, they had to go farther afield to find grazing. They returned to the village about ten o'clock
[234] and milked the cows and took the milk in gourds to the senior women, keeping some as their own perquisite. The cattle were driven under some trees to rest during the heat of the day, and taken to the grazing ground again about two and brought back about five, watered and put in the kraal and the gate was closed. Variations in this time-table depended on the seasons, the quality of the pasture, and on whether the herd-boys went to school or not.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The youngest boys were not expected to herd cattle until they were ten or eleven years old. Their work was to look after the calves, sheep and goats, sometimes following the cattle to the grazing ground, sometimes wandering round the edge of the village, avoiding the cultivated areas until after harvest. At that time cattle, calves, sheep and goats were driven into the stubble and left to forage.

As a result of dormitory life, combined with cattle-herding, a definite ideal herd-boy personality developed. This was fostered by the hero-worship of the older herd-boys by the young ones. It was also built up by the praise or blame meted out for herding well or badly by the older herd-boys to younger ones, and by the cattle-owners. This 'ideal herdsman' was used by Ngoni ministers and teachers living in the villages to relate their teaching about Christianity to the life around them. Prayers near the kraal, conducted by an Ngoni minister each evening, or before people went on a journey, often began with the words 'Jesus our shepherd, keep us well'. Young teachers often said to me how they always listened as boys when a prayer began like this, and that in school their favourite Bible story was that of David the herd-boy.

When there was a school in the village or near by which the Ngoni elders approved of, the herd-boys had a busy life. They watered the cattle very early, took them to graze and milked them. Then they went to school from ten to two, taking the cattle out grazing afterwards. In the cold weather they went to school from six to ten and herded cattle the rest of the day, after the sun had dried the dew off the grass. School attendance depended on the attitude of fathers to the new learning, and how the village elders regarded the local mission and its teachers. The boys whose fathers had no cattle, in general the non-Ngoni elements in the village, were free to attend school continuously since they had no herding responsibilities. There was some jeering among the boys in the dormitory at those who only went to school and did not

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when 561
asked questions. They took their school work seriously in 872
order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent 565
ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be
transferred at their marriage would be greater according to [583]
whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or
even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daugh- 561
ters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls 857
continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. 592
They and their companions, according to their growth and 512
strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water,
grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household,
where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family
only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores.
As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time
with the young children, or washing themselves and their
clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rub- [302]
bing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass [301]
or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head
bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more
amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' 572
circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they
always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classifica-
tory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this
friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about
her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the
other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage.
The friend was always from another compound and of a
leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and
necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream to-
gether. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were
married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a
violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about
these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

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If a women believes that her husband is committing adultery with
837 another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She
578 usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

864 The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged [897] five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages. [533] Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they [535] also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a 881 girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a 864 month, and is tested by women who have borne [illegible]en to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic d[illegible]ces effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

864 There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis [831] is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

842 Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use 832 of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl [864] learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13] The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is 881 sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour 593 of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her [535] erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mtototo*, a root, and *kajelejele*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cikapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kapakapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

turn to a younger brother for help in arranging a marriage, but 593
although it is said that a man cannot marry the widow of a younger brother, this is sometimes done. The position of children born in a union of this kind is anomalous and there is likely to be dissension in the family if the elder brother has no children by his own wives.

10. Rights in wives and children

The new-born child sleeps in its mother's hut, is in danger from its 854
father's adultery, and is held by its parents at their ritual resumption of sexual intercourse. It is carried to the garden on its mother's back and at mealtimes sucks porridge from her finger. Perhaps its father may play a little with it, but this is not very likely. After [862]
weaning, which takes place about the age of two, it may be sent to a grandparent or some other relative, or may perhaps remain in the parental hut for a few more years. But already it has been handled and probably suckled by many women, has learnt to play 857
with the other young children in the village, and has gone off with them into the bush or to the stream. It has learnt also the correct kinship terms for most people in the village and has seen its village teams dance against those of other villages. It has gone visiting in other villages with its parents and has begun to explore its web of kinship, of which it is the centre.

The growing child therefore does not see its parents as sharply 593
distinguished from all other adults in the vicinity, but merely as the two people to whom its ties are closest and on whom it is most dependent. If a child whose parents are dead or are living in Southern Rhodesia is brought up by a relative, it may not learn their names until it is adult, if then. Parents are important to their children only when they live near them or with them. It is when children grow up in the village of their parents that they rely on them for school fees, clothes and medicines. Later a boy may ask his father for financial help or may use him as a banker, handing over his wages to him.

This is true not only of a man's own children of whom he is both 848
genitor and pater, but also of his wife's adulterine and pre-marital children, if he chooses to accept them into his household. It is clear that if a man has paid bridewealth, he has custody of all the children borne by his wife, in adultery as well as in wedlock. If he has not paid bridewealth, then adulterine children like legitimate children belong in theory to his wife's relatives. In practice a man can either accept or spurn them. If he has been away a long time and returns to find his wife with illegitimate children, he may decide to accept the children as his own. They then take his descent name and not that of their genitor. The biological parentage of such children is not mentioned openly, but is remembered in malicious gossip.

Case history 11

Laban went away to work in Southern Rhodesia. His wife Sara went

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

PLATE XIV

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857
516

3. Boys crushing ground-nuts. The expressed oil will be used in a bird trap

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857
516

4. Boy playing with a toy motor-car made from maize stalks

NGONI

[Facing P.209]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are
● 857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve
233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of
[868] milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

628 There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into
233 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between
857 the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between
[541] the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

233 In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd-
833 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village
857 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief,
631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come
464 back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most
[857] boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep them-
[462] selves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work
466 together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made
584 as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the
444 township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving
464 as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another.
651 For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtain-
653 ing labour for the Administration for essential public works. He
[622] adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest
691 Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the
578

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

get their own back. Psychologists will say 'But this is all too positive! Positive aims in training, positive methods and, apparently, positive results. Were there no failures and breakdowns in the systems, no cleavages in the society, no maladjusted individuals?' Of course there were. Again the bold outlines have been essential in portraying a situation unfamiliar to many readers. And the rest of the answer to that criticism, as I hinted more than once in the book, lies in studies of individual Ngoni people and how they came out of the training process; and also in studies of the relation of schools and the education given in them to that somewhat rigid and self-consciously controlled Ngoni society. Both of these I hope to write one day, but this book is long enough already.

Young parents the world over are often surprised, and delighted (though not always), at the individual character shown by each of their children. They look in their children for signs of heredity and for evidence of the success or failure of their training. So did the Ngoni, and yet at the end they always came back to 'It is his own human nature'.

M. R.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

194 563 [867] families. It was, however, demanded from Ngoni children that they should behave in the socially approved manner to everyone, and not only to their Ngoni kin and fellow clansmen. And it was evident in non-Ngoni families that there was often some attempt to teach Ngoni standards of behaviour to their children, but that such attempts broke down when their family system was not organized to enforce the necessary training.

576 577 [867]

The goals of Ngoni child training

Ngoni adults, and especially the senior men and women who were in control of the training of children and themselves deeply conscious of the traditional values of their society, summed up the aims of the upbringing of children in one word 'respect'. The vernacular term *ulemu*—in the old Ngoni language *klonipa*—is a concept very difficult to translate adequately, certainly to convey its full meaning in a single English word or phrase. The nearest terms are honour and respect, and though in some contexts it is often translated as politeness, that is too limited a term. In fact they had another vernacular term to express courtesy which was to them one way of showing respect. The concept of *ulemu* included the recognition that a particular person or office was entitled to honour; that all behaviour to that person must express respect; and that by showing respect in language, posture and action, a child or adult so behaving, shared in that honour which they were acknowledging. Conversely, through failing to convey respect, a person, whether child [558] or adult, was 'ashamed' and lost face accordingly. I have just said that a particular person was entitled to honour and therefore to respect in the behaviour of others. The Ngoni said that was the origin of the concept, and it was demonstrated in the punctilious observance of etiquette to all chiefs, and to all leading men and women by everyone else. [858] But there was an extension of this concept to include all older people, and Ngoni children were expected to show

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their 576
family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If 577
children did not so behave to old and poor people, they 858
were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had [867]
failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early 576
travellers in Ngoniland to the good manners found in Ngoni 828
households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the 829
Ngoni because they liked living together without any scat- 867
tering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . . Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of being beaten, but because all children were well taught that this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion 829
between personal behaviour and the integrity and prosperity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were talking about child training and its effect on the future of the Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within their society, so that harmonious relations would build up the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic secessions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human societies from the individual family outwards. We see this however in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about 539
keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining 829
their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who [115]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to himself: 'Can that be for me? No? Yes? It *is* me. I am ashamed.' No one said anything but the shamed one took the first chance of slipping away to avoid further public notice. The use of proverbs in this way were an effective way of making a child learn for himself and apply the lesson; and with children, as with adults, the use of proverbs was a way of 'saving face' when a direct rebuke in the presence of others would have caused overwhelming shame.

Ngoni ideas about nature and nurture

This fixed code of social behaviour between persons was instilled by Ngoni adults into their children from their early years. By the time they had their second teeth, a significant stage to the Ngoni, they were expected to conduct themselves towards other people according to this code. Their behaviour, in public at any rate, should be predictable, if those responsible for the teaching of 'respect' had carried out their task conscientiously. But, as the Ngoni themselves recognized, it was one thing to have a system of training with a desired goal in view. It was another thing to see how each individual child responded to the training, and either conformed to the code or resisted it. The Ngoni thought that the clue to conformity or resistance lay in the individual's character, and they talked a great deal about the character of their children. Such conversations generally arose when adults were watching a group of boys and girls carrying out a socially required or self-appointed task. They might be bringing back the cattle in the evening, practising for the *ngoma* dance, grinding bulrush millet for snacks for the little children, asking each other riddles or telling a story. Some of the tasks called for intelligence, some for physical strength, some for initiative or organizing ability, some for eloquence.

Character, so the Ngoni thought, came from two sources, inborn qualities and acquired qualities. The first they called *mabadidwe*, literally those things which an individual was born with. These included physical resemblances to their

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

Father's family to child

Ngoni children were indeed the children of their fathers 596
from the time of their birth onwards. They were born into a 'house', of which their father was a member. If their father divorced his wife or she ran away, the children remained in [586]
the custody of his family. We have seen how the paternal grandmother took charge of all the preparations for birth, and of the actual birth itself. It was her proud duty to present the child to the public after the 'coming out of the hut' ceremony, when she took it to the kraal gate where the assembled elders were sitting. The other senior women of Ngoni families held her responsible for advising on the spac- 842
ing between the birth of this new baby and the next, so that 596
the interests of this child should be safeguarded. If it was suspected that the young wife was pregnant again before the grandmother had planned to wean the child, the other senior women said to her: 'Look now. You are foolish. The child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to him.' That touched her on a very vital point, and she in turn accused the young parents of harming the present child. Having rebuked them, generally in public, she followed it up with a box on the ear for her son and his wife. When this [858]
next child was born it was called 'the destroyer', because by following on too quickly, it had injured the propects of the first child.

Baby to nurse girl and women helpers

The baby, as we have seen, spent a great deal of its time in 854
the company of its nurse girl, and after weaning she was its constant companion. She and the older woman helpers who supervised her formed a counterbalancing influence to the paternal grandmother, though outwardly they obeyed her instructions about the care of the child. The nurse girl especially was inclined to be indulgent; she was young and playful; the baby was her only responsibility. She was

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 357
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organized through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

It was the fathers who decided at what age a child should go to school, and having once enrolled the boy or girl and paid the fees, the fathers insisted on regular attendance. 593 [872]

All Ngoni fathers showed affection for their young children, some consistently and others when it occurred to them. They picked them up and carried them about, held their hand while they tried their first steps, listened to their attempts to speak correctly, held them in their arms when they sat on the veranda. In one village twin boys aged four were devoted to their father and he to them. When he walked about, he held a hand of each. When he sat on the veranda they were always beside him and he had an arm round each. When he was elsewhere, the twins wandered about the compound disconsolately, hand in hand, rejecting the advances of their nurse girls and uncertain what to do until he appeared again.

Ngoni fathers had to be consulted in cases of sickness when the grandmother's remedies had failed and specialist help was needed. Then the father and his brothers and their father decided whether to summon a diviner or a herbalist, and arranged for the throwing of lots or the search for 'medicines', and paid the agreed fee when the cure worked. 593 757

It was part of Ngoni tradition to keep the knowledge of death away from young children. The father was held responsible for seeing that his children were kept away from the hut where the corpse was awaiting burial, and from the funeral itself. When men and women of leading Ngoni families were buried at the edge of the kraal, and the fence enlarged so that the cattle stamped over the grave, the explanation given (though it was not the only reason) was that 'the young children should not know or fear death in this village'. 593 764 858

The physical surroundings of the small child

The two diagrams, overleaf, illustrate the layout of the hut and compound in typical Ngoni households. Some of these 342 351

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to 351
make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, 415
and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry, [356]
and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time [513]
sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into
the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at
night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as [352]
pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fasci- [531]
nate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from 351
time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer [285]
was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child [273]
was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats. [857]
These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked [231]
and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and
young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped 361
round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay 311
patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens',
and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or 857
grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work
in the gardens was an expedition for young children which
they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places for- 858
bidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone 867
with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep
away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where
the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had
passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of [562]
the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children
strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and
fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went
there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless
a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven
years old, because they found their fathers there and the
herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

858 signs of irritation at female control, especially with this pro-
867 hibition on going to the kraal gate. They escaped surveillance and ran off there now and then, only to be caught by one of the men, beaten and brought back to the compound with the remark: 'This child is not yet a herd boy. Keep him with you.'

If the village was near a roadway with traffic on it, or near a river, children were forbidden to go there without some older person with them. They were also warned not to go near fireplaces in case a burning log fell out, and to keep away from the woodpile where there might be snakes.

Training in habits

855 In these surroundings, diversified, orderly, and on the whole safe if forbidden places were avoided, young children's needs were attended to and they were gradually trained to look after themselves. For food, health and sleep, their primary physical needs, they had their older sisters, nurse girls, mothers, grandmothers and helpers all at hand to ensure that these needs were satisfied.

After the post-weaning months were over, and generally
264 though not always after the next baby was born, a young
862 child went back to eat with his mother in her compound and sleep in her hut, though a grandmother, if she had taken a special fancy to a child, might say she was going to keep him to eat and sleep with her. In his mother's compound twice a day the child watched her and her helpers preparing and cooking a meal. In due time he was called to the veranda where the food lay smoking, his hands were wiped, he was made to rinse out his mouth, and he sat down beside his mother or his nurse in a circle round the food basket. This contained the mash of cooked grain, usually maize, and be-
[262] side it were the little pots of cooked 'relish', beans, peas, green vegetables, tomatoes, ground-nuts. At first someone pinched up a little lump of the mash, dipped it in a relish, and popped it into his mouth, telling him to shut his mouth and chew before he swallowed. Later he learned to do this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

after the age of four or five, when they might become aware 867
that intercourse was taking place. From this age, when the 864
Ngoni said 'they will now begin to see things and to ask questions', they went to sleep either with a widowed grandmother or senior helper.

During the 'dark half of the month' and in the rains, most 512
people went to bed soon after dark and little children got a 857
long sleep. When the moon was bright, and in dry weather, [132]
the whole village was astir, walking around, dancing, talking, visiting. Little children tagged round with their older 513
sisters or nurse girls, and if they were sleepy were either picked up and carried, or put in the hut to sleep on their mat, provided there was no fire burning into which they could fall. During the day, especially in the hot weather, children dropped off to sleep just where they were, on the veranda, under the platform, or in some other shady spot.

It was just before bedtime, in the grandmother's hut, that [538]
traditional folk-tales were told, round the last flickers of a wood fire. Sometimes a child dropped off to sleep before the story was finished. Someone either took him on her lap, or dumped him on his mat and covered him up.

This acquiring of habits, directed consciously by adults, 867
was designed to give the child increasingly a sense of being 858
part of a community which had certain standards of behaviour. There were, in this training, some prohibitions
which a child was expected to observe as soon as he could 864
walk and talk. The most stringent was on any form of sex play between boys and girls. To avoid any likelihood of this, little boys and girls were early encouraged to form separate play groups. The elders kept an eye particularly on the boys, and if they showed any inquisitiveness in their play about the private parts of a girl playmate, they were beaten and reproved and told: 'If you do this again, I shall tell your father.'

Many little boys and girls up to the age of four or five ran 864
about naked, but in leading Ngoni families they wore a scrap 291

of this age, escaping from the women, showed their independence in their choice of games and occupations, many of which, as we have seen, were of an individual nature. They were not much inclined to join together as an age-group except for occasional gang enterprises. If one boy interfered with another's game of tops or took away his axe or hoop, there was an immediate short sharp fight. The defeated one either ran home to be comforted, with the jeers of the victor in his ears, or he stood and sulked for a moment, and then went on with his pursuit. It was outside in the open village spaces and not behind the fences of the compounds that small boys learned to put up with each other, to meet aggression and to be aggresive in turn, and then suddenly to gang up with a group and play happily together. 857 561

The test for boys of correct Ngoni training in the childhood stage, between weaning and second teeth, was their ability to get on with their age-mates and fellow villagers when they went to live in the dormitory. One boy went to live for long periods with his maternal grandmother in his mother's home village, after an argument in which for once his father was overruled by his wife and her family. This boy was indulged and spoiled by his maternal relatives who were afraid to correct him and to discipline him because he was the child of their son-in-law. The result was that when the boy came back about the age of seven, on his father's insisting that he should take part in herding and live in the dormitory, he was selfish, rude and disobedient, and failed to fit in with the other boys. This and similar stories were often quoted to show the importance of the father's family being in sole control during the early stages of childhood. 858 867

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

V

Village Life for older Brothers and Sisters

Second teeth: a new stage

858 We saw in Chapter II that Ngoni children who lost their first teeth, and acquired their second, had reached a new stage in their development. The obvious gaps in their mouths [856] were filled, and this might happen between the ages of six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half, and some of the children might be rather small and slight for their age. Socially, because they had their second teeth, and because it was a sign of physical change recognized by everyone, the Ngoni adult would regard these children as ready for a different kind of life than that described in the previous chapter. The children were no longer dependent on adults for the detailed care and attention which we saw in the last chapter spelled security for the young child because every need of his was met. These older children could feed themselves, wash themselves, say what they wanted, speak correctly; and were beginning to behave as Ngoni children were expected to behave in all the relationships and activities of daily living. They were still in the wider sense dependent on adults for their basic needs—food to eat, a place to sleep in, tasks to perform, care when sick. But they had passed completely out of the hands of nurse girls, and the boys, to a very large extent, out of the control and surveillance of the women.

[866] A new-found independence had begun to show in the little boys before they got their second teeth. Independence

then meant running out of the compound to the freedom of the village. At that time young children might behave outrageously and be punished for it, but they were not held accountable. The nurse girls and the mother, or some other adult, was blamed for letting the child grow up with such an uncontrolled temper or appetite or tongue. Once children were recognized as having passed the young child stage, that is when they had their second teeth, they themselves were held accountable for their behaviour and punished more severely, even though parents were also blamed for careless upbringing. The social sanctions of rebuke and ridicule, which began to operate in the later years of young childhood to only a limited extent, were now seen in their full force, made use of by adults, and still more effectively by the children's own age-mates. The fear of estrangement, of social ostracism as the penalty for failing to conform to the required manners and ways of living, had increasing force as the children grew older. As little children they were buttressed and protected by adults in their childish quarrels with, and moods and attitudes towards, other children. As boys in the dormitory and as girls in the girls' circle they had no longer such protection, and the result was that they became increasingly sensitive to the opinion of their peers. Professor Wilson in her study of Nyakusa age-villages, has called this social awareness the quality known as 'being good company'—getting on well with their contemporaries.

It was at this stage, at the beginning of the children's newly-found independence, that the ear-piercing ceremony took place. In contrast with the neighbouring peoples, the Ngoni had no facial or body markings, and it was the pierced ears which showed they were true Ngoni. In the days of warfare, captives, especially boys and men, were forcibly made to have their ears pierced, and hence a number of men in the Ngoni kingdoms who were not of Ngoni clans were found with pierced ears. Sometimes their children went to their parents and said, 'We want to be made Ngoni now.'

VILLAGE LIFE FOR OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS

There was no doubt that this abrupt transition, like the sudden weaning, was a shock for many boys between six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half. From having been impudent, well-fed, self-confident and spoiled youngsters among the women many of them quickly became skinny, scruffy, subdued and with a hunted expression. The subdued and hunted looks passed off as they adjusted themselves to their new environment and there were boys, generally those exceptionally well grown and physically strong, who showed no apparent signs of shock. They all, however, showed the effects of irregular and inadequate feeding. The younger boys were chronically hungry and their hair and skin and bony knees and ribs were eloquent of calory, protein and vitamin shortages. 575 156 [146]

The other main purpose of dormitory life in Ngoni culture was to mix up all the boys in the village and let the common life together teach them how to get on with their age-mates and knuckle under to their superiors in age. Age and strength were the only criteria for authority. Older brothers might try to protect and intercede for younger brothers but it was not encouraged. All the young ones had to take their chance equally, without regard for their family name or their father's position. 575 858

The dormitory was primarily a sleeping-place, but through the group of boys who slept there the herding of cattle was organized and the off-duty amusements and occupations of the older boys were planned. The young ones had to 'fag' for the rest, fetching wood and water, keeping fires going, sweeping the hut, taking messages, huddling in a corner at night when the oldest boys brought girls in, and submitting to beatings both as a warning and as a punishment. They were usually beaten once or twice soon after their arrival and then threatened with much worse if they ever divulged what went on in the dormitory. It was not however a torture house, far from it, and the boys boasted of belonging to 'our dormitory' and were proud of having their own hidden life 575 [513] [857]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. [146] This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when [272] milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made [262] curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [867] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for autho- [155] rity. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

There was con-
siderable latent, and at times overt, antagonism from the 575
younger towards the older group. This was to some extent [578]
mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in
cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of import-
ance, called in for consultations with the adults who were [858]
cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went
with them to market when beasts were sold. These older
boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger
ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good
care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones', [555]
with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle,
skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive 865
impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. 526
They fought with 'rods', like single-sticks, and became adept
at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days
there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the
elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There
was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting
made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard
out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the
edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal.
Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leader- [555]
ship among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a
kind of knock-out championship, hotly contested, until every-
one agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to
school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case
they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to
hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not 858
only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They 521
entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they con-
ducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge
of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about
men's affairs.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

521 867 men's affairs. The kind of topics discussed by men at the kraal gate included hunting, in the right season; cases heard in the courts and the application of Ngoni law to all subjects of the Ngoni chiefs; the organization of village affairs from tax collecting and dealing with tax evaders to beer drinks and burials and building houses; the sales of cotton, tobacco and cattle at near-by markets and the current prices; the various labour recruiters combing the villages for likely young men and the latest stories brought back by men who had returned from working in the south. Every now and then, particularly when the talk ranged round decisions in the courts or adding to the herds of cattle, references were made to the Ngoni past, to their relations with Europeans, both missionaries and officials, and to the behaviour of the non-Ngoni groups in the Ngoni kingdoms. The older boys listened attentively and as we shall see later in Chapter VII acquired among other things an extensive knowledge about the needs and uses of cattle. The younger ones pricked up their ears now and then when a familiar name or event was mentioned, and stored up questions to ask their father at a time when he was willing to listen and answer.

576 417 There was the usual Ngoni formality about where people sat at the kraal gate. The most senior men sat on each side of the opening, leaning up against the gate-posts, with the rest in decreasing order of rank as they were farther from the gate. The cleared space on each side of the gate and in front of it was all known as the 'gate of the kraal'. The craftsmen [469] who were carving wood or twisting bark rope, making baskets or plaiting mats, sat according to their age and rank on the edges of the senior group or among them. They could have carried on their trade anywhere, but they preferred the company of their fellows and did not want to miss listening to the talk or the arrival of strangers. The herd-boys, when 858 they were present, were on the extreme edges of those sitting [561] there, divided into two groups, 'youths' and boys. Each [262] group made its own fire for boiling milk and roasting sweet potatoes or ground-nuts 96

872 go herding. School was sometimes regarded as an easy option where you sat still all day and repeated things after the teacher. This was far from being the case in a village like [875] Enkodlweni where the headmaster was well trained and kept the boys on their toes. In such schools the boys themselves were enthusiastic about learning, and regarded going to school as a dignified and worth-while occupation, and not a childish amusement.

Girls' life in the village

858 When the girls had their second teeth and were acknowledged to have reached the new stage in their development, there was no abrupt transition for them, as for their brothers, from the household circle to the dormitory, or from the women's world to the men's world. They continued as part of the women's world; they changed their occupations and their daily routine on the whole very little; and they went on sleeping in the hut of a widowed aunt or grandmother. All that was said however in the earlier part of the chapter about accountability for their behaviour was as true as for the boys.

561 The Ngoni girls of leading families formed a distinct group, called in the age-set terms 'children' until they were about [565] eleven and then 'immature girls' until they reached puberty. There was in Ngoni thought and practice a clear division between immature and mature girls, and we shall see what this involved in girls' life in Chapters VI and VII. The age-set terms used to distinguish between children and immature girls did not imply any real differences in ways of living, manners and occupations. The girls between about seven and fourteen were looked on as belonging to a 'girls' circle', and this girls' circle had certain distinctive features.

561 In the first place the tendency of the girls to draw apart
562 from the boys of their own age, already evident before the
535 coming of the second teeth, was now more or less complete
628 with the boys' withdrawal into dormitory life and their preoccupation with herding. Later, about the age of twelve

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

or thirteen, the girls began to take part in *ngoma* dances 562
with the boys. This was on a village basis and organized with 535
a view to competition with other villages. In practising such 628
dancing, as we shall see later, the girls were often by them- 561
selves, though when getting ready for a competition they
joined with the boys' group.

The Ngoni girls' circle was to some extent split into the 591
households to which the girls belonged. There was no com- 561
mon residence or common eating-place for all the group, to
correspond with the boys' dormitory and eating together at
the kraal gate. Generally the girls continued to eat in their
mothers' compound with their own younger brothers and
sisters. They sometimes ate with the widowed aunt or grand-
mother with whom they slept, but the other practice was
more common. This meant that Ngoni girls who bore the clan
name of their father continued to live in the compound of [611]
their mother who might not be of a high-ranking Ngoni clan.
In such cases the grandmother and the father's elder sister
kept a sharp eye on the training and deportment of the girl.

The Ngoni girls' circle was an exclusive group. Unlike the 561
dormitory where all village boys mixed up, the Ngoni girls, 614
in virtue of bearing their father's clan name, tended to re-
main as a distinctive group. They were members of their
father's house until they married; and when that took place [583]
it was they who could cause cattle to flow into the herd be-
longing to that house. It was partly for this reason, the trans- 858
fer of cattle, that the Ngoni women of that house, particu- 855
larly the grandmother, watched closely the bringing up of the
girls from the second teeth stage onward. If she thought the
training of the girl was unsatisfactory, because of the care-
lessness or doubtful character of the girl's own mother, the [597]
grandmother might discuss with the girl's father the advisa-
bility of arranging for the girl to be adopted into another
household or into a collateral house. The reason for this was 581
that when marriage negotiations began and the prospective 858
parents-in-law made inquiries about the girl's character and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

858 upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if
581 the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended not only on her own reputation and character, but on the household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive
561 group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one.
858 The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of
[603] the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training
357 ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl,
855 to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter into all her occupations and amusements. This companion, chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's household, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and ate in the same household.

In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her
561 circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their compan-
872 ions. There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this
[601] group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided that it would also be wise to send their girls to school, especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men, learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daugh-
[565] ters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and dignified behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

606 Wiese suggests that the woman only gradually transferred her place
[591] of residence from her father's village to that of her husband.[19] If
[593] the husband and wife quarrelled, the woman ran away to her father's village for protection, and had to be persuaded to return by her husband. It is difficult to find out if there was any obligation on the man to labour for his father-in-law. Such an obligation exists
[583] to-day, but informants like to maintain that in the past the Ngoni never troubled themselves with agriculture, but lived entirely on
[241] beer, meat, and raided crops. But we know from contemporary writers that they did have gardens, although they may perhaps have been cultivated only by recent captives and by women.

An important obligation on the man was to avoid his wife's mother. He did not speak to her, went off into the bush if he met her on a path, and did not pass in front of her hut. With his father-in-law he was formal and reserved, but he did speak to him. These patterns were established at betrothal, and with the passage of years were gradually set aside. The final ceremony in which the man ate with his mother-in-law was the social recognition of his successful performance of the role of son-in-law and of husband to their daughter. Even after this ceremony he could not sit on the same mat as his mother-in-law. The position of the woman in respect to her parents-in-law was much easier, and she did not avoid them or their hut.

581 As a result of these formal and informal modes of interaction
602 between the man's group and the woman's group, links of affinity were established which cut across the residential system, with its chains of authority and responsibility, superordination and subordination. The common interest of persons bound together by these links was the success of the marriage, and the well-being of the children. A quarrel between a man and his wife led to processes of discussion, deliberation and conciliation involving the two groups. The children of the marriage grew up knowing not only where they
[858] belonged politically, but also where they were welcome as sister's sons and daughter's sons. Some children were sent to the father's mother to be reared, some to the mother's mother. The pregnancies of the woman were reported to her own relatives as well as to her husband's.

It is impossible to tell to what extent people consciously planned their marriages and the marriages of their children with the object of ramifying their affinal ties. But we do know that a wife who
[554] had been brought from a long way off was regarded more highly than one who came from the same village as her husband, and that a woman who married her cross-cousin was, other things being equal, lower in status than her husband's unrelated other wives. These gradations in status suggest that the value of a marriage which established a link between a man and some hitherto unconnected

[19] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 191-2.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. 595
Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments 592
of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.[21] Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy [858] of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendents senior to the lines [554] springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast[22] to his wife's [583] father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property [858] allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. *The levirate*

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal 581
polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as 182
a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her 587
husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

[21] Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

[22] Called variously *mceka* or *mtoso*. *Mceka* is an Nsenga word meaning a small [192] cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt [291] by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Beyond the Village The Native Courts deal to a great extent with matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the development of Christian marriage.

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who rears him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are responsible for their own actions before the court, and that truant schoolboys can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peaceably with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms.

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage.

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later

[1] Called *cidumu*.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 approval of his father before he offers, and as in the case of Amos and Eve (p. 28), the father may sometimes disapprove. If the man is from another part of the territory or from abroad the parents of
583 the woman, even if they accept the legalization payment, may be
603 reluctant to allow their grandchildren to go a long way away from them to live among their son-in-law's kin. This consideration applies
593 particularly to strangers in the township who marry Ngoni women. When they leave their jobs or retire they try to take their wives and children with them. They may be frustrated in the removal of their children by the woman's parents, who refuse the bridewealth. The courts support the claims of Ngoni grandparents for the retention of their grandchildren under these conditions and a returning Yao or Cipeta man may be forced to travel without his children and sometimes without his wife. I have recorded elsewhere [3] an incident in which a Yao man who had been married to an Ngoni woman for twenty-one years was divorced by her and his offer of bridewealth refused by her parents. The police who check the movements of women and children by bus and lorry away from Fort Jameson are in touch with the Native Courts and may be on the look out if it seems likely that a man from a strange tribe will attempt to smuggle his wife and children away from their Ngoni kin.

581 Thus we see that the kinsfolk are directly concerned with marriage. When the children are still toddlers, they are paired off in fun by their
[858] adult relatives as they sit playing. For a week or month or even longer a woman will laughingly call her neighbour *child's parent-in-law* because their children have been nominated *husband* and *wife* in this way. As a child grows older, so the interest of its relatives in its marriage become clearer. Before marriage the relatives of a
684 girl hold rights in her that are violated if she is seduced and bears
848 a child. It is to them that the girl's lover pays the beast of seduction to recompense them for the wrong he has done by impregnating the girl, but he does not gain custody of the child. On the other hand,
836 no one brings a case against a man merely because he sleeps with an unmarried girl. It is only when she becomes pregnant that an action can be laid against him. A man caught *in flagrante delicto* by one of the unmarried girl's kin can expect abuse and possibly blows but unless he is provocative he need not fear action in the courts. The hostility directed towards him seems to be due in part to his having behaved so indiscreetly as to be caught and having forced the girl's kin to take cognizance of what was happening.

581 At marriage the woman's kin grant rights in her sexual activities
583 to her husband. These rights are unambiguously transferred by the legalization payment, and the woman's kin are therefore in a position to delay or facilitate the tranfser of these rights by their attitude towards the payment. There is no corresponding right in an unmarried man held by his kin, and at marriage there is no corres-

[3] Barnes, op. cit. p. 238

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from those of their wives. 592 [882] [858] [595] 423

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cooking and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda. 342 [343] [252]

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized. 621

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalaweni, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were founded. 621 103

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of individuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary, 621 622 [103]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1949
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Lupa goldfields and Dar-es-Salaam. Nowadays almost everyone goes 101
by lorry, but now as then a man has to go a long way before he can 489
arrive at an island of friends in one of the urban centres. This means
that, for the Ngoni, emigration is a definite event, and does not occur [167]
as a result of a gradual drifting farther and farther away from the
tribal area. Lorries run from Fort Jameson to Lusaka and to Lilongwe, 489
and from Missale to Mtoko in Southern Rhodesia. There is also a
lorry service from Lundazi to Fort Jameson, but this does not lead
anywhere else, and is not used by Mpezeni's people except locally.
Lusaka is on a railway line, Lilongwe is connected by bus and train to
Blantyre, while Mtoko is on the way to Salisbury. It is these lorry
routes which now provide the links with the outside world, and along
which people and goods travel, the people in both directions, and the
goods, apart from tobacco, mainly inwards. Use of these routes is
controlled by the chiefs, the Administration, by economic factors, and
by the weather. This last has been less important of late, and the roads
are seldom impassable for more than a week at a time, however heavy
the rains. In order to travel on the lorries from Fort Jameson a man
must have a ticket, which costs £1 for the journey to Lusaka, and
less for the trip to Lilongwe. The lorry service from Missale to Mtoko
is free.

The Administration exercise control by insisting that no man shall 486
leave the Territory of Northern Rhodesia unless he is in possession of 166
an identification certificate endorsed by the Administration permit-
ting him to do so. In practice, such endorsements are not usually made
unless the man can produce written permission from the chief that he
is free to go. This working arrangement is intended to ensure that
men do not flee the country when there are cases pending against them,
and to prevent unjustifiable desertion of wives and children. In fact
men are sometimes given permission to go while cases in which they
are involved are still unheard.

The emigration of women and children is further controlled in that 486
there is a law[1] forbidding a woman to leave the tribal area except in 562
the company of her husband, or with a pass to leave from the Native 858
Authority. Sucking children are allowed to accompany their mothers,
but other children under the age of sixteen are not allowed to leave the
province without permission of the Native Authority,[2] while boys

[1] Ngoni Native Authority Order 24.

[2] Ngoni N. A. Order 39. The child must be either accompanied by its parents or else accompanied by a guardian on the way to join its parents.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

486 over sixteen are not allowed to leave without a pass from their Native
562 Authority until they have paid tax for one year at home.[1] These laws
858 are quite energetically enforced, principally by the placing of Native Authority police at strategic points along the lorry routes. These police inspect the passes of all passengers on the lorries, and bring offenders before the nearest Native Court.

The devices adopted to evade these restrictions are much as one
486 might expect. The drivers of the lorries may be won over, particularly
562 by women. A woman may get a lorry driver to say that she is his wife, or even enter into a temporary marriage with him, if she wishes to run away without a ticket. Some people walk to the far side of the police point and then attempt to get on the lorry after the search has been completed. A woman who has a ticket but no pass may pose as the wife of some unaccompanied male passenger.

The motives for leaving the area are many. Most of the men go to
484 look for work, although a few go away to visit their urban relatives
167 and friends for a holiday. Others go to buy goods that may be unobtainable locally for the time being, such as tools or window-panes, or which they think they can get more cheaply elsewhere, such as bicycles. Many of the women go to join their husbands, but some are fleeing from them, or have grown tired of living at home married to men who live permanently in Southern Rhodesia, and are out to try their luck in the towns.

489 Whereas the outgoing lorries are comparatively empty of goods, the returning passengers are well loaded with belongings. The fares are higher, and the Mtoko–Missale service is not free on the northward trip. One of the most important commodities brought in along these
205 routes is the mail. Men working in Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere write home to keep their wives and brothers informed of their whereabouts, and send postal orders to enable their families to buy clothes.

This movement to and from the outside world must be seen in its relationship to the opportunities that exist for employment within the District on the tobacco farms.

Farm Labour

464 No village in either of the reserves occupied by the Ngoni is more
249 than 12 miles from a farm. This means that it is possible for a man
[361] to work as a labourer on a farm and yet retain a large number of his contacts with his village and chief. In particular, his wife and children

[1] Ngoni N. A. Order 37.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

as young men, and had known the independence and 178
supremacy of the Ngoni kingdoms. The expression 'every- 184
thing is finished now' was often on their lips, especially when 561
faced by new demands from the government, or by rebellious attitudes from their former subject peoples.

'The middle generation' was the term applied to the men who had as children known the Ngoni kingdoms in their prime. Though they had never fought as warriors nor been enrolled in an age-regiment, some of them had gone to the wars as young boys, carrying the gear for their older brothers. Many of these men, especially in the North, came under the [797] influence of the missions, and became teachers, clerks, mini- [469] sters and hospital assistants, married Christian wives and brought up their children in Christian, but Ngoni Christian, families. These men never lost their attachment to the Ngoni [183] way of living, and many of them had made a successful synthesis of the old and the new ways. They stood, as they [156] said, 'between' the generations, for they knew and understood both sides of an immensely different way of living and standard of values. Their children were 'the generation of today', who had no personal experience of past Ngoni ascendancy, and who took mission schooling and working for wages as a normal feature of their life.

When I lived in Ngoni villages, such as those described 178
briefly in this chapter, Ngoni values and attitudes domin- 829
ated social relationships. There was a determined struggle 177
on the part of all responsible for child training to inculcate [861]
these Ngoni ideas and ways of living. The senior men and women were aware of the constant and increasing infiltration into their way of living of ideas, attitudes and behaviour coming from other ethnic groups in their midst. In addition their culture was being undermined by European influences in the schools, in the money economy, and from modern political developments, emphasizing an all-Nyasa- [186] land sentiment rather than loyalties based on ethnic grouping. Ngoni pride of race, and a consciousness that they had a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

answers to them somewhere, then there have been some vital omissions in the narrative. 121

Clues to this study

In relating this study to other field studies and analyses of socialization techniques and processes, I have not attempted to present here any general assessment of similar or related studies, much less any review of the field as a whole, since I have touched on both in earlier publications.[1] Instead I have brought into this chapter one or two clues or guide lines from other sources which seemed to me to elucidate some of my problems, particularly in regard to four main aspects of this study, which have already been mentioned in Chapter I and which to a large extent set the limits and determine the emphases of this book. The 'true Ngoni' were a society within a society, a distinct cultural group within the Ngoni kingdom. This society of theirs had sharp edges, definable and recognizable limits, and that partly accounted for their own awareness of themselves as distinct from, though at so many points connected with, the neighbouring peoples. Their culture, that is their way of living within this society, had definite values which they strove to maintain, and this was one of the reasons why the ideal Ngoni personality pattern, and their endeavour to see it reproduced in each child, was easy to recognize. In order to safeguard their society and maintain their culture they exercised a fairly rigid social control over the upbringing of their children, which resulted in something approaching a 'system' of training and educating children. Set against this conservation of traditional values however was the reality and extent of changes due to external circumstances mentioned at the end of Chapter I. In the face of these changes the Ngoni showed that they could adapt some of them to their own purposes, and they made use of the schools, for example, once they approved of them, to help adjust their

184 186 829 183 [157] [861] 177

[1] See Appendix (i)

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

854 anxious to protect her charge in every way, and with the connivance of the women helpers she made little charms of bits of roots to hang around the baby's neck to make him [751] grow quickly and to ward off sorcery and witchcraft. She [754] threaded pumpkin seeds and tied them around his neck to [856] make his teeth come quickly if they were late in appearing. These charms were generally those used by the local peoples, and Ngoni fathers were contemptuous about their use and efficacy. 'These women are spoiling our children,' they said, and then reassured themselves by remembering that a boy would be free from such women's spoiling once he went into the boys' dormitory.

Variants on the Ngoni pattern

183 This traditional pattern of authority and behaviour in respect [565] of birth, infant care and weaning was essentially that of the true Ngoni, that relatively small aristocratic group who never forgot their superior social status and its foundation in their ancestry. This first stage in the socialization of a child, from 861 birth to weaning, brought out clearly two fundamental 596 features of Ngoni social organization. One was the role played by the senior women who had themselves in their childhood been brought up on strict Ngoni lines. The father of the new baby accepted the role played by his own mother in controlling, and if necessary coercing, his young wife. Though, as we shall see later, every Ngoni boy and young man had a period of virtually complete escape from feminine control, once a man married and his young wife was established within the social group of his mother's house, he acknowledged his mother's authority over her, and particularly over the birth and care of his child. The mother-son relationship of the young father to his own mother dominated the relationship of the young mother to her child. Young Ngoni fathers never questioned their allegiance to their own mothers, cherishing them as they grew older and supporting them in their exercise of authority. Much as he loved his

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway. 596 861

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but which turned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers. 183 596 [184]

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it. 177 563 [845] [841]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 the qualities required in self-defence and in mutual aid which
182 he would need when, at the age of eighteen or so, he was
called up into the new regiment formed by the Paramount.
342 Dormitory life was therefore rooted in the Ngoni past and
though its original purpose and outcome had disappeared
with the suppression of tribal wars, it was still part of the
organization for herding cattle and was regarded as a neces-
575 sary training ground for young manhood. In very large vil-
[342] lages there was more than one dormitory, each placed in a
[621] section of the village surrounding a cattle kraal. Boys be-
longed to the dormitory of that section where their parents'
household was situated. There were occasional attempts
sponsored by certain missions to set up a separate dormitory
[797] for boys who were baptized Christians or in an inquirers'
class. This kind of separation was greatly disliked by the
Ngoni on the grounds that they did not want anything to
divide their people. They regarded dormitory life as an
important co-ordinating factor in their young peoples' de-
velopment, and they did not want the tradition to be spoiled.
They therefore opposed any sectionalizing of the dormitory
system except on the geographical lines already mentioned,
which allowed for the full operation of the two remaining
purposes of the dormitory in Ngoni culture.

575 The first of these purposes was to remove boys, once they
had their second teeth, from the influence of the women.
562 Ngoni men were outspoken in condemning the effects of all
861 women's influence on boys. They made a slight exception in
favour of the mothers and grandmothers of high-ranking
Ngoni clans. Non-Ngoni women they always suspected, and
[177] often rightly, of introducing youths and girls to ideas and
practices which were contrary to Ngoni custom, particularly
in connexion with sex and magic. It was partly a belief that
[186] dormitory life would 'Ngoni-ize' the boys and counteract
non-Ngoni influences from whatever source that made them
so unyielding about boys leaving the women's supervision
at what they considered a crucial stage.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

593 extended to his brothers' sons, especially if their father was dead. Following the same pattern, a man's sons who were away at work sent back money to their father who bought cattle with it, or spent it as the sons asked. It was clear in the 1930's that Ngoni men rarely sent money directly to their wives, though they frequently asked their father to give money to their wives and to buy for them cloth or needed household equipment.

562 Within the larger orbit of the male family responsibilities women
844 had their more restricted but clearly defined sphere. At a woman's
593 confinement she was looked after by her husband's own mother, aided by his other mothers and by his sisters if they were present in the village. At the 'coming out' of the new member of the family, ten to fourteen days after birth, the woman and the baby, bathed and ritually
562 cleansed, were seated on a mat outside the hut and presented to the
846 male members of the father's family who gave small gifts to the baby.
593 If it was a boy, the father's mother generally carried it to the gate of the kraal where the men were sitting, to present it to them as one who would eventually herd the cattle. On this occasion, or soon after, the
[553] child's name was chosen, usually by the father's father, who prepared and gave to the mother a calf-skin or goat-skin for carrying the child in. The meat of the animal was cooked by the father's mother and a small feast was held for the father's mothers, sisters, brothers and their wives, and any others of the father's family who had helped in the confinement.[1] After the child had thus been acknowledged in its father's family circle, the mother took the baby to visit her own family, who also gave it presents.

593 During the rearing of the child, its father's female relatives assumed responsibility for giving the young mother advice. The father's mother
862 was expected to note the stage at which the child should be weaned, always if possible before the mother's next pregnancy. If the father's mother was unobservant, the other senior women of the husband's family would rebuke her and say 'Look now you are foolish because the child has been endangered. You are like an enemy to it.' These women then took the initiative and insisted on weaning the child. They said to the baby's mother 'We want to wean the child.' They made a paste of ground chillies and put it on the mother's breasts and covered them with a skin or cloth. The child was taken from her after it had tried to
[853] suck and had been refused, and given to the father's mother or sister, who looked after it with the help of a nursemaid. It was fed on cow's milk, *amasi* (milk curds), and gruel.

The publicity given to the weaning and the initiative taken by the senior women of the husband's family were intended to inform others in
[78] the village that the parents were now free to have another child. This was one aspect of the old Ngoni form of family planning and, in describing

[1] This feast was also held when a carrying cloth was given instead of a skin.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

what took place, informants were anxious to point this out. They also admitted that its successful carrying out depended on several factors which no longer operated. The former Ngoni households with a number of servants and nursemaids were only to be found in the families of the Paramount and subordinate chiefs. The rigid separation of the girl from her own family at marriage was no longer usual in the central kingdom where Ngoni marriages often took place in the same village, and where daughters of important men stayed in their fathers' villages at marriage instead of leaving.

In Ngoni households family sleeping and eating arrangements depended not upon the small individual family but on the extended family group and on the boys' dormitory (*lawesi*). As a general rule small children slept with their mother in her hut, but when her husband was sleeping with her it was considered wrong to have any but very young children in the hut. Boys up to the age of seven, when they went to the *lawesi*, and girls up to their marriage, usually slept in the hut of a mother or a widowed sister of their father.

Each wife, after she had been 'shown the hearth-stones', had a granary built for her by her husband or her husband's brothers where she stored grain. On the rafters in her hut, and in pots and jars on the enclosed verandah, and in pits dug under the eaves, she stored other foodstuffs, such as chillies, beans and sweet potatoes. From these supplies, supplemented by fresh 'relish' from the gardens or bush, she cooked daily meals which she served to her husband, and which her younger sons in the *lawesi* fetched to eat there, while she ate with her young children. Her husband's meals and the older boys' meals were taken in company with the male members of his kinship group and other villagers at the men's meeting-place by the gate of the kraal. His wife sent his food by a child in a covered basket with the small pot of relish on top. The publicity of the men's eating habits made them critical among their fellows of their wives' cooking, and this was a strong incentive among Ngoni wives to maintain a high standard of cooking. In addition to sending food to her husband, an Ngoni wife was expected to send a basket of food now and then to her father-in-law, or to any of her brothers-in-law who had assisted her to mend a roof or build a granary.

Within a wife's hut, not only food but other possessions, both personal and household, were stored. Clothes for daily and ceremonial use; mats for sleeping on and for drying grain; pots for water, cooking, and beer-brewing; ornamental jars for storing beans; baskets for carrying grain; food baskets embroidered with beads—the Ngoni wife of good family expected to possess all these and to keep them carefully. Many of them she brought with her on her marriage or had given her later as presents by her own parents and family, in order that she might not appear poor or of low rank among her husband's people. For the same reason, she

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

not enough milk, or was unable to suckle the child, or was ill or died. If a woman died in or just after childbirth, and the child survived, it might be suckled by the paternal grandmother or by another co-wife of the dead woman, but as a rule they resorted to artificial feeding, and often used it to supplement breast feeding. The father of the child took the food pipe of a beast recently killed, washed it and dried it, and handed it over to the women to rub with fat until it was soft and pliable. One end was then tied tightly to close it, it was filled with warm cow's milk, and the other end was tied loosely so that the child could just suck through it. It was kept well washed with warm water, and many infants were brought up successfully with this 'bottle'.

The babies were also given very thin gruel made of millet or maize flour, and curds and whey beaten up together. This was put in a very small gourd, decorated with drawings, with a spout to pour from, and a cover to keep flies and dust out.

Weaning

Studies of weaning in different cultures lay emphasis on the traumatic shock of separation from the mother, not only in terms of being refused the breast, but also of being removed to sleep elsewhere than beside the mother, and perhaps being sent away to stay with another relative.

In the Ngoni pattern of nurse-girl care and of supplementary feeding, especially after the first few months, it might seem that the actual weaning was less of a shock than in cultural situations where the baby was with the mother all day, carried about by her and never refused the breast if it cried. Ngoni women, however, and men too, all asserted that weaning was a shock to the child, even if it happened at two years old.

The reasons for this shock were partly that it was done all in one morning at one fell swoop, and partly that the child was sent away from the mother at night. The same nurse girl looked after it all day, but now took it more often to

862 other compounds, so that the child should not 'see the mother's breasts and cry for them'. Nevertheless they did cry, some of them day and night at first, and many for weeks at night when the indulgent warmth of the mother on her mat was exchanged for the kindly but somewhat stern care [603] of the grandmother or another older woman. Paternal grandmothers did not believe in spoiling Ngoni children, and the child was often left to cry itself to sleep.

The Ngoni used to say: 'On the day when a child was 593 weaned, all the village knew. It was not a secret. People 862 spoke about it to show that the parents were now free to 606 have another child.' The mother-in-law and the other senior women of the father's family took the initiative as well as assuming responsibility for deciding the moment for weaning. Those same senior women who had assisted at the birth of the child arrived one morning on the veranda of the mother's hut and announced, 'We want to wean this child.' Apparently the mother was sometimes capable of refusing to co-operate. She did not want to give up suckling the child, so she picked it up and ran out of the hut past the women, and hid herself and her child with some of her friends. The senior women did not stoop to argument. They formed into a procession and filed out of the compound saying, 'Well, she has refused. She can now find the proper time herself, with her husband.' The young mother, who had yielded to a sudden impulse, found herself on reflection in great difficulty. It was considered a 'shame' for her to do the weaning herself, and her husband was jeered at by his brothers and friends for having a rebellious wife who did not pay attention to the claims of his family on the child.

So when the senior women announced that they had come 862 to do the weaning, most young mothers meekly submitted, whatever their personal sentiments were. The senior women pounded chillies and put the hot paste on the mother's breasts, and held the child near enough to smell the chillies, even to touch them. They said to the child, 'Leave it alone.

This breast is now bad'—and they spat downwards as they did when something was really bad. While the child was howling with fright and frustration, the mother's breasts were covered with a cloth. The child was then picked up and carried away in its carrying cloth to the compound of its paternal grandmother, or a widowed paternal aunt, attended by its own nurse girl. If it had a feeding bottle, or one could be made for it, it was given cow's milk, as well as gruel, and curds and whey. The Ngoni women believed that if a weaned child was given cow's milk it would forget its mother's breasts quickly, but they admitted that it was a conventional belief and not always justified. 862 ● [853]

Social relationships involved in the birth of a child: Wife to husband's family

Throughout the period of pregnancy, during childbirth and after, up to and including weaning, the mother of a new baby was made to feel her position as a stranger among her husband's relatives. Before marriage it had been impressed on her by her own family that, at any rate in the early years of marriage, she must be obedient and humble, not only to establish her own present and future position among her husband's people, but for the sake of the reputation of her own family from whom she was now separated. The key relationship in this cycle of pregnancy, birth, weaning and new conception was that between her and her mother-in-law. If she showed respect by being humble and obedient, she could establish a behaviour pattern which in the end rewarded her by giving her self-respect because she was doing her duty in accepting the authority of her husband's mother. It was no easy path for a high-spirited girl who had had freedom and indulgence in her own home. She knew however that these first few years of marriage and child-bearing were the critical ones. She could see for herself how women who had been married longer had more freedom from the authority of their mothers-in-law because they had learned how to 606

3: Read E-S (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

858 signs of irritation at female control, especially with this pro-
867 hibition on going to the kraal gate. They escaped surveillance and ran off there now and then, only to be caught by one of the men, beaten and brought back to the compound with the remark: 'This child is not yet a herd boy. Keep him with you.'

If the village was near a roadway with traffic on it, or near a river, children were forbidden to go there without some older person with them. They were also warned not to go near fireplaces in case a burning log fell out, and to keep away from the woodpile where there might be snakes.

Training in habits

855 In these surroundings, diversified, orderly, and on the whole safe if forbidden places were avoided, young children's needs were attended to and they were gradually trained to look after themselves. For food, health and sleep, their primary physical needs, they had their older sisters, nurse girls, mothers, grandmothers and helpers all at hand to ensure that these needs were satisfied.

After the post-weaning months were over, and generally
264 though not always after the next baby was born, a young
962 child went back to eat with his mother in her compound and sleep in her hut, though a grandmother, if she had taken a special fancy to a child, might say she was going to keep him to eat and sleep with her. In his mother's compound twice a day the child watched her and her helpers preparing and cooking a meal. In due time he was called to the veranda where the food lay smoking, his hands were wiped, he was made to rinse out his mouth, and he sat down beside his mother or his nurse in a circle round the food basket. This contained the mash of cooked grain, usually maize, and be-
[262] side it were the little pots of cooked 'relish', beans, peas, green vegetables, tomatoes, ground-nuts. At first someone pinched up a little lump of the mash, dipped it in a relish, and popped it into his mouth, telling him to shut his mouth and chew before he swallowed. Later he learned to do this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

himself, with his eyes rather anxiously on the elders, lest he should take too large a lump, or get the relish all over his hand and wrist instead of only on his finger-tips. He learned, however hungry he was, not to stuff himself, and not to eat noisily. If he smacked his lips and gulped audibly, someone in the circle might say: 'I hear the guns of the Tyandla people booming.' They all stopped eating and looked at him, and he learned that a proverb could be a veiled rebuke, and he hung his head, ashamed. 862 264 [539]

Sometimes the smaller children had cow's milk or curds and whey or thin gruel given to them in a tiny gourd between the main meal-times, and through the day nurse girls and older sisters gave them little snacks if they thought of it or if the child whimpered because it was hungry. A favourite snack was ground bulrush millet, creamy and nutty to taste. Throughout this period spent in the women's world the child did not lack food either at or between meals. As he grew more mobile and independent, he went foraging in the compounds of his other mothers and his grandmothers, especially if his own mother had gone to her garden. They always welcomed him and gave him something to go on with. 855 [262]

After set meals the child was made to rinse his mouth, and his hands were cleaned by his nurse girl and his face and chest washed if he had covered himself with food fragments. His nurse girl found him a 'tooth-brush twig' and frayed it for him, and taught him to use it after meals as well as in the early morning. 863

Washing of small children was always done in the compound. While some children squirmed and yelled when washed, others liked it. They sat grinning on the veranda while their mother or nurse splashed water over them, rubbed soapy leaves on their hair, dried them with a cloth, and rubbed cow's fat on their skin. The Ngoni children in well-ordered households shone with cleanliness till they were about six years old. Then the boys dodged these female attentions, their skin became dry and scruffy, and their hair full

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

turn to a younger brother for help in arranging a marriage, but 593
although it is said that a man cannot marry the widow of a younger brother, this is sometimes done. The position of children born in a union of this kind is anomalous and there is likely to be dissenaion in the family if the elder brother has no children by his own wives.

10. Rights in wives and children

The new-born child sleeps in its mother's hut, is in danger from its 854
father's adultery, and is held by its parents at their ritual resumption of sexual intercourse. It is carried to the garden on its mother's back and at mealtimes sucks porridge from her finger. Perhaps its father may play a little with it, but this is not very likely. After [862]
weaning, which takes place about the age of two, it may be sent to a grandparent or some other relative, or may perhaps remain in the parental hut for a few more years. But already it has been handled and probably suckled by many women, has learnt to play 857
with the other young children in the village, and has gone off with them into the bush or to the stream. It has learnt also the correct kinship terms for most people in the village and has seen its village teams dance against those of other villages. It has gone visiting in other villages with its parents and has begun to explore its web of kinship, of which it is the centre.

The growing child therefore does not see its parents as sharply 593
distinguished from all other adults in the vicinity, but merely as the two people to whom its ties are closest and on whom it is most dependent. If a child whose parents are dead or are living in Southern Rhodesia is brought up by a relative, it may not learn their names until it is adult, if then. Parents are important to their children only when they live near them or with them. It is when children grow up in the village of their parents that they rely on them for school fees, clothes and medicines. Later a boy may ask his father for financial help or may use him as a banker, handing over his wages to him.

This is true not only of a man's own children of whom he is both 848
genitor and pater, but also of his wife's adulterine and pre-marital children, if he chooses to accept them into his household. It is clear that if a man has paid bridewealth, he has custody of all the children borne by his wife, in adultery as well as in wedlock. If he has not paid bridewealth, then adulterine children like legitimate children belong in theory to his wife's relatives. In practice a man can either accept or spurn them. If he has been away a long time and returns to find his wife with illegitimate children, he may decide to accept the children as his own. They then take his descent name and not that of their genitor. The biological parentage of such children is not mentioned openly, but is remembered in malicious gossip.

Case history 11

Laban went away to work in Southern Rhodesia. His wife Sara went

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Sometimes the smaller children had cow's milk or curds and whey or thin gruel given to them in a tiny gourd between the main meal-times, and through the day nurse girls and older sisters gave them little snacks if they thought of it or if the child whimpered because it was hungry. A favourite snack was ground bulrush millet, creamy and nutty to taste. Throughout this period spent in the women's world the child did not lack food either at or between meals. As he grew more mobile and independent, he went foraging in the compounds of his other mothers and his grandmothers, especially if his own mother had gone to her garden. They always welcomed him and gave him something to go on with. 855 [262]

After set meals the child was made to rinse his mouth, and his hands were cleaned by his nurse girl and his face and chest washed if he had covered himself with food fragments. His nurse girl found him a 'tooth-brush twig' and frayed it for him, and taught him to use it after meals as well as in the early morning. 863

Washing of small children was always done in the compound. While some children squirmed and yelled when washed, others liked it. They sat grinning on the veranda while their mother or nurse splashed water over them, rubbed soapy leaves on their hair, dried them with a cloth, and rubbed cow's fat on their skin. The Ngoni children in well-ordered households shone with cleanliness till they were about six years old. Then the boys dodged these female attentions, their skin became dry and scruffy, and their hair full

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Sleep, the little child's third major need, was sometimes 867 well ordered and sometimes erratic. It was not considered 864 proper for children to sleep in the same hut as their parents

different pattern. They also went to sleep with a grandmother or some other older member of the family when they were old enough to be excluded from their mother's hut at night, and they shared with their small brothers the grandmother's care and her story-telling round the fire in the evenings. During the day the girls continued as part of their mother's household group, eating with her and the younger children. As little girls they were taught to sit down carefully and to smooth down the cloth which they wore round their waists. They were trained to speak correctly and to know the right forms of address, to greet strangers politely, to avoid touching their father's mats or bed, to eat tidily and with restraint. The emphasis was on exclusiveness for these high-born Ngoni girls, lest, as a result of mixing too freely with everyone, they should forget the teaching given and the behaviour which was expected of them. In contrast to their brothers' rigorous training in the *lawesi*, Ngoni girls, as they showed signs of approaching puberty, were guarded and looked after and instructed further in correct behaviour.

When a girl found that she was menstruating for the first time, she told one of her age mates and sent her to tell her *gogo*.[1] The *gogo* told her to stay in the hut during the period and showed her how to wear a cloth between her legs, which she had henceforth to wear always whether menstruating or not. She was told to sleep from now on in a different part of the hut from the smaller children and never to bathe with younger girls. At the end of her first period the girl was escorted to the women's bathing-place by her father's sisters and other female members of her father's family. She was made to wash in the stream and squat in the cold water while doing so. I saw more than one child trying to control her shivering while her relatives watched to see if she would be strong and brave, or weak and cowardly. When she was in the water she was made to face south-east—the quarter which the Ngoni called *kwaithu* (our home). After this ceremony the girl's father and mother were informed, and her father informed the head of his *banja* and the head of the village. The news was greeted with rejoicing and made generally public.

From about the age of ten or eleven, the Ngoni girl belonged to an age set distinguished by a separate name. She was no longer included in the group of children, as were her brothers of the same age, but was marked out by belonging to the age set called *inkakazana* or *mabuthu*. After her first menstruation she belonged to the age set called *izintombi* or *anamwali*. From this stage, Ngoni girls were under the close supervision of the older women. The association of a *gogo* or older woman with each house in a Ngoni village meant that the girls of the house were under her special care, particularly after they had passed puberty. There

[1] *gogo* in this context is used for grandmother or for the elderly woman to whose care the girl was assigned.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR

were clearly defined aims in this care of girls after puberty, including instruction in personal hygiene and in pre-marital sexual relations. A girl's father's sisters and her own mother wanted to be able to say, when marriage negotiations began: *Ngombe zake zidzala*, 'her cattle are full', which was the comment made when girls were examined periodically to see if they were still virgin. To achieve this they constantly said to her: '*Mudzinunge, mudziletse*', 'take care of yourself, control yourself'; and the *gogo* explained to the girl how she could protect herself. In one area where I lived, the chief's daughter was examined every week, with her *izidandani* or companions, and the girls who helped in the big house were examined every month. The strict behaviour required of Ngoni girls of good family was expected also of those of the same age who were members of the same household, either appointed to be with them as companions or as servants in the big house.

Looking forward to marriage involved not only preservation of her virginity. An Ngoni girl going to a strange village had to know how to perform women's work in the home, how to do it herself as well as how to direct others, and she had to be carefully trained in that meticulous and exclusive social behaviour required of Ngoni women of good family. She might be going to marry a man who intended to 'marry up', in which case she might be thought in one sense to be 'marrying below her station'. Yet her personal position as a member of her father's clan and family could not be altered by her marriage, and she was well aware that she was conferring something on the man and on the family she married into.

While the boys were learning their roles in later life in the democratic atmosphere of the *lawesi* and of the boys' pursuits in the village, the girls in the later stage of their training after puberty were treated more individually, and were not left to find their level in a group of their age mates. The adult women took an active part in telling them how to behave, how to dress and how to cook. The girls of high-ranking families sometimes pounded maize with their age mates, singing as they did so, but more for fun than because their food depended on it. They learned to dress their hair and put on clothes, and to walk and dance in company with other girls, but always with the critical eye of their *gogo* upon them. Their lower-ranking companions could make mistakes and be careless, and walk and dance in an exaggerated fashion. Ngoni girls might never pass certain bounds of decorum, and the standard expected of them was high and exacting. I have heard *manina* of leading clans scold young girls many times for careless behaviour and badly done work.

In this training, as throughout that of the boys, there was a deliberate preparation for leadership. A girl's character and ability were being watched and, while an awareness of her personal dignity and position was being fostered, it was accompanied by requirements of obedience

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

851 small bitter thorn apple and mixing in castor oil. This was
[846] applied with a feather to the baby's navel.
[278] When the cord dropped the baby's head was shaved, and
[302] the mother shaved a little hair round her temples. Then
[515] they washed carefully, using sweet-smelling soapy leaves, oiled the baby's skin, put on clean clothes, and came out of the hut door and sat on a clean mat outside. This first public coming out of the hut took place in the late afternoon, so that the men, after their work was finished, could come to 'salute the new stranger'. The husband and his brothers were the first to come, and this was the first time he had seen the baby. They brought small presents such as a fowl or a
[431] basket of flour, and always strings of beads which were tied round the baby's wrists and ankles, neck and waist. The word used for these little gifts was 'to give a present just for pleasing', and Ngoni Christians when speaking of such
[177] presents to new babies likened them to the gifts brought by the Magi to the infant Christ.

While the husband and his immediate kinsmen came to greet the baby at the hut door, the senior men of the village stayed by the gate of the kraal. After the cattle had come
[554] back that evening and the kraal gates were shut, the grand-
[603] mother carried the baby to the gate and presented him to
[431] the senior men who responded by giving small presents to the child. This was always done if the baby was a boy, but sometimes omitted for girls.

● 864 When small children seeing the new baby on its mother's lap asked where it came from, they were always told that the mother had found it by the river in the rushes on the bank. The object of this reply, so Ngoni women said, was to hide the secret of birth from the children and stop them asking further questions. The Ngoni culture pattern of childhood innocence required that children should be kept in ignorance of birth and sexual intercourse while they were young. By adults therefore they were put off with stories of finding the baby on the river bank. As usual, however, in

societies maintaining officially a conspiracy of silence, the stories were only standard replies by adults to children, and most adults admitted that children pursued these inquiries among themselves and found out what they wanted to know from each other. 864

Naming the child

After coming out of the hut and being presented to its male kin and to the elders of the village as 'the new stranger', the baby was given a name. The choice of a name was usually left to the baby's paternal grandfather. He sometimes gave it his name or his father's name, if a boy, or if a girl, his mother's name or his father's sister's name. There was no ceremony attached to naming. After the matter had been talked over by the men at the kraal gate, the grandfather came to the hut, and called the mother and child out and said, 'His name is so and so.' The personal name was seldom used in ordinary social intercourse, but in spite of this every child was given a personal name, and sometimes had added to it a descriptive name indicating that it had been born face downwards, or born a twin, or born too soon after the previous baby. 553 [551] [845]

At this time of naming, the father, or more generally the paternal grandfather, prepared a 'carrying skin' for the mother to carry the baby in. It really belonged to the baby rather than to the mother, for it was used by the nurse girl to carry the baby, and she had the child in her charge most of the day. The skin was that of a goat or small calf from the herd owned by the house to which the baby's father belonged. The skin was cleaned and scraped and made soft by rubbing in fat, and handed over to the mother with some of the meat for broth, and the rest of the meat was eaten by the males of that house. The gift in time became a cloth and not a skin, as skins for wearing or household use went out of fashion. The cloth when presented however was still called a 'carrying skin' and a goat or a calf from the herd of the 854 [281] [922] [262]

3:Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

after the age of four or five, when they might become aware 867
that intercourse was taking place. From this age, when the 864
Ngoni said 'they will now begin to see things and to ask questions', they went to sleep either with a widowed grandmother or senior helper.

During the 'dark half of the month' and in the rains, most 512
people went to bed soon after dark and little children got a 857
long sleep. When the moon was bright, and in dry weather, [132]
the whole village was astir, walking around, dancing, talking, visiting. Little children tagged round with their older 513
sisters or nurse girls, and if they were sleepy were either picked up and carried, or put in the hut to sleep on their mat, provided there was no fire burning into which they could fall. During the day, especially in the hot weather, children dropped off to sleep just where they were, on the veranda, under the platform, or in some other shady spot.

It was just before bedtime, in the grandmother's hut, that [538]
traditional folk-tales were told, round the last flickers of a wood fire. Sometimes a child dropped off to sleep before the story was finished. Someone either took him on her lap, or dumped him on his mat and covered him up.

This acquiring of habits, directed consciously by adults, 867
was designed to give the child increasingly a sense of being 858
part of a community which had certain standards of behaviour. There were, in this training, some prohibitions 864
which a child was expected to observe as soon as he could walk and talk. The most stringent was on any form of sex play between boys and girls. To avoid any likelihood of this, little boys and girls were early encouraged to form separate play groups. The elders kept an eye particularly on the boys, and if they showed any inquisitiveness in their play about the private parts of a girl playmate, they were beaten and reproved and told: 'If you do this again, I shall tell your father.'

Many little boys and girls up to the age of four or five ran 864
about naked, but in leading Ngoni families they wore a scrap 291

864 of cloth hanging in front from a bead or grass waistband.
[291] They were all taught before that age, and most stringently after it, to sit correctly. For the little girls, this meant kneeling first and then sitting with the legs tucked on one side.
516 864 They always smoothed down their scrap of cloth so that their genitals were covered. Little boys often squatted, sitting on their heels. Their correct position however, especially when eating food, was to sit with their legs crossed and the soles of their feet pressed against their thighs, and their cloth or skin apron arranged to cover their genitals.

Any rudeness in speech or action towards parents or elders
867 was corrected at once, and the child was told: 'That is not the Ngoni way.' Studied courtesy included looking down when addressed by an elder, and as we saw in Chapter II, never walking behind a group of elders but passing in front of them, bending slightly forward and murmuring: 'I am before your eyes.'

Play places and playthings

857 In spite of what appeared like a somewhat restrictive régime, Ngoni children were merry and busy all their waking hours. Occasionally lack of health, or an awkward temperament, produced a child who sat around by himself, or glowered at
[157] other children, or was spiteful and vindictive. For the most
[855] part their nurse girls and older sisters paid them the attention they demanded, were always ready to provide distractions and amusements, and showed them how to use all that lay around them as playthings.

The places where they played depended on their age and mobility. The youngest children stayed round the hut and inside the fence. Occasionally the nurse girls and older sisters in the afternoons took them to a 'playground' on the outskirts of the village, where the older girls were accustomed to
[868] meet and practise dancing, or to thread beads and chatter. When the harvest was in, some of the older children about five and six years old, helped by the nurse girls, made 'play

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

girl's former nurse girl and had continued to take an interest 881
in the girl. This woman came to the hut, gave the girl a cloth to wear, told her to stay in the hut until the period was over, and instructed her companion to stay with her, bring her food, and look after her other needs. When the period was over, the companion told the senior helper who in the meantime had informed the girl's paternal grandmother, her father's sister (to whom a special message was sent to the village where she lived), and the girl's own mother. The information was always given in the phrase, 'This child has now matured.' The father's sister, who made a special visit for the [604]
purpose, came into the hut and told the girl to get up and follow her. A little procession formed, the father's sister leading, the girl immediately behind her, then the grandmother and other senior women of the father's house, the senior helper who had attended the girl, and finally the girl's mother. At the river the girl was made to take off her clothes [823]
and sit in shallow water, facing south-east, the ritual position adopted in all Ngoni crises of life and death. On the bank the women stood in silence and watched the girl splashing herself with water and trying to control her shivering, until she was allowed to come out and given clean clothes to put on.

Back at the grandmother's hut, the women sat on the veranda, the girl in front of them, legs tucked in sideways, head bent in a respectful attitude. The father's sister led off with some matter-of-fact instructions to the girl. At subsequent periods she would not be in seclusion but she would take every care to conceal her condition from everyone. She must always wear a cloth between her legs, whether menstruating or not, and she must now consider herself separated from the children's and the immature girls' groups. She would sleep only with mature girls in a senior helper's hut, and must wash in the river only with them, and never anywhere near young children or immature girls. Later on, not on this 881
occasion, the senior helper who had assisted her and felt 964

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

88 responsible for her, told her how to keep her legs together if
[864] she should sleep with a boy, and warned her against full intercourse and possible pregnancy. This warning was followed up with regular examination to see if the hymen was intact, carried out every two months or so by some senior woman of the girl's father's house.

When the simple ritual was over, the grandmother sent for the girl's father and told him what had taken place. He in turn told the male members of his house and the elders of the village. The news 'So and so's daughter is now mature' was received in the village with quiet rejoicing, and the father was congratulated as one who would in time receive cattle on his daughter's marriage.

In this ritual the seclusion, washing with cold water and
881 facing south-east in the river were the only strictly ritual
182 acts. Equally important in Ngoni thinking however was the reassertion, at a critical time, of the authority of the women of her father's house over the girl. The girl was also made aware of her new status by being forbidden to perform certain daily functions in the presence of children and younger girls. Later we shall see how the first stages of courtship followed this event.

Boys' private ritual

881 The boys' ritual consisted of two distinct parts. At his first nocturnal emission the boy told one of his age-mates or his friend, who went and told one of the older boys in the dormitory. This older boy told him to go to the river very early in the morning and 'wash strongly', splashing the water all over him, and to do this after each emission. This act, called 'being beaten with water', the Ngoni believed was essential to strengthen the body and assist to control sexual impulse. There was great secrecy observed about this stage, only the boy and his friend and the older boy knowing about it. If other boys said to him 'You have now matured', he denied it vehemently.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

If a woman believes that her husband is committing adultery with another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages. Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13] The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mitoto*, a root, and *hanjelejele*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cikapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kapakapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4

Girls are not examined to see if they have been deflowered. Many girls have love affairs with young boys before they reach puberty, and at one time children built play-houses, after the manner of the Cewa, where they pretended to be adults playing at cooking and copulation. The Cewa encouraged this among their own children and at puberty Cewa girls, if not already deflowered, had their hymen forcibly ruptured in a prescribed manner. We have seen that the Ngoni formerly expected girls to be chaste before marriage while the Cewa believed that if a girl did not copulate at puberty she would die. It seems nowadays that adults expect that pre-pubescent boys and girls will play together sexually and that, provided this takes place with a certain amount of discretion, nothing is done to stop it. Boys and girls visit each other in dormitories, hoping that their voices will not be recognized by people in neighbouring huts. After puberty young men and women continue to flirt together, individuals varying in the extent to which they copulate. Grown men do not usually sleep with young girls, nor grown women with young boys, and if this does happen and is discovered there is always the suspicion of sorcery. The Ngoni believe, with most of their neighbours, that in order to make many of the anti-social medicines of sorcery effective, a sorcerer must copulate with some partner morally forbidden to him (or her), such as a close relative or a person of greatly disparate age or an animal. With this background of belief, Ngoni say that after puberty young men and women naturally like to frolic together and not with their juniors. Within this framework of tolerated covert activity no particular arrangements are made at puberty, save that if a man is betrothed to a young girl he will be invited formally to come and sleep with her once while she is secluded.

Thus from an early age their future roles as husbands and wives condition the sexual activities of boys and girls. A girl who allows herself to be seduced too easily is regarded as foolish and a man who is for ever chasing unmarried girls when he should be founding a family is regarded as immature. But sexual activity is taken for granted, and the only stipulations are that it should be conducted discreetly so that the older people in the village are not forced to notice it, and that unmarried girls should not bear live children. Knowledge of abortifacients seems to be fairly common and recently contraceptives, issued originally to soldiers in the 1939-45 war, have come into use. Few cases of seduction of unmarried girls come before the courts.

Despite the emphasis on sexual satisfaction rather than on fertility, Ngoni men and women still desire children. This is so for men despite the low incidence of bridewealth payments and the uncertainty about the custody of children. A man's children may decide to live with their mother's people, but they are still his children and he can always follow them from village to village in his old age wherever they decide to settle.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Herding as preparation for war

Preparation for war began in youth. When boys were about ten or twelve they were sent to herd goats or calves; when they were older they herded the cattle. At this time the boys were in the bush with their elders who were often haughty and fierce. The older herders taught the boys how to fight and how to defend themselves. They taught them to fight with twigs and sticks; the older herders fought with *izinduku* (knobkerries) and *izinkhonjo* (wooden swords). They were not allowed to fight with real spears though some had them. The older herders stirred up the hearts of the younger to fight and taught them to strike each other with knobkerries and to use little shields. If the herders of one village met the herders of another, the bulls were teased till they fought, and the little herders also. The small herders were not allowed to say anything about the herding to their parents. The older herders also loved to fight as in war with those of other villages. At such times the older men and even the elders came out from the village to see the battle and to stir up the hearts of the boys. If the herders of one village ran away they were laughed at, but the winners were greatly praised.

At the time when the cattle ate the refuse in the maize-gardens, after harvest, fighting most often broke out. Some of the boys provoked their neighbours to go and drive the cattle into the maize-fields of another village deliberately. The custom was that cattle might eat in the maize-gardens of their own village and the boys ought to ask if they may go into the fields of others. The herders did this to annoy the other herders and to start a fight. Often a great struggle was the result and the young men of the village who had outgrown herding joined in the fight to help the youngsters of their village. But they did it sensibly, none caused a wound with a spear, for anyone who did that was punished by law.

So the boys grew accustomed to the first steps in fighting which would help them later in war. Those who knew how to protect themselves with a knobkerry and small shield had no scars on their heads, but there were many long ago who had scars from fighting in the herding time. Children of the chief were in the same predicament—if they could not defend themselves they were beaten by their herding companions and possibly got their heads broken. The flowing of blood was not considered very serious, only if one did it in a stealthy way then he had to pay compensation. In this way the boys grew up with stout hearts and loved fighting.

Another thing which excited the boys was the custom of whistling. The boys were very expert and quick in expressing changes of mood in whistling. This was done so that the cattle would go carefully or quickly, [198] but also when they were fighting the herders loved to whistle and even the older men in war did so also. The whistling stirred up the hearts of those who were thinking of running away. There were many ways of whistling and some were very good at it.

Enlistment

539 702

When the young men reached the age of 21–26 they left off herding. Sometimes it was their fathers who stopped them, sometimes they themselves wished to stay at home. They took their shields (*amahowu*) and

There was con-
siderable latent, and at times overt, antagonism from the 575
younger towards the older group. This was to some extent [578]
mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in
cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of import-
ance, called in for consultations with the adults who were [858]
cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went
with them to market when beasts were sold. These older
boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger
ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good
care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones', [555]
with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle,
skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive 865
impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. 526
They fought with 'rods', like single-sticks, and became adept
at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days
there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the
elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There
was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting
made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard
out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the
edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal.
Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leader-
ship among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a [555]
kind of knock-out championship, hotly contested, until every-
one agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to
school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case
they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to
hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not 858
only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They 521
entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they con-
ducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge
of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about
men's affairs.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

535 The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called
571 the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group,
[578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

865 The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

157 One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect-
538 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell-
555 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 with the main activities of the groups, though it did to some extent illustrate mutual relationships.

Age-Set terms

	Northern Ngoni	*Central Ngoni*
All children	*abantwana*	*ana*
Young men even if married	*amajaha*	*anyamata*
Young girls before puberty	*inhakazana*	*mabuthu*
Young girls past puberty	*izintombi*	*anamwali*
All married women	*abafazi*	*ahazi*
Senior men	*amadoda*	*madoda*
Senior women	*amanina*	*manina*

513 One of the most characteristic forms of Ngoni village organization
561 was the *laweni*, or boys' dormitory. It included the older boys in the group called 'children' and the young men until they married, who were
866 in fact called *amajaha* after they had left the *laweni* and married and had huts of their own. The age for entering the *laweni* was approximately seven years, and was as a rule determined by the age when a child began to get his second teeth. When a child was going about the village with several gaps in his front teeth, his companions jeered at him if he still slept in his grandmother's hut, and his father took the view that it was time he stopped playing like a child and took up seriously the job of herding goats and calves. There was often some hesitation, especially among boys who were not so well grown for their age, at taking the plunge and going to live in the *laweni*, since once made the step could not be retraced. It was primarily an individual decision. It meant leaving the protective affectionate care of the grandmother in the evenings, and the care-free play all day round the mother's hut with meals provided by her, for a different sort of existence altogether. *Laweni* life was rigorous and was dominated by the senior boys living in the hut. The younger ones were at their mercy, and were made to 'fag' for their elders, clean up the hut, sometimes steal food from their mothers' stores, and were beaten if they were slow or careless, or if they threatened to tell the
[626] elders in the village what went on in the *laweni*. The main weapon to get boys into the *laweni* was the ridicule of their fellows. Once members of the *laweni* group they were disciplined into obedience by threats and beating. The age range within a *laweni* was often considerable, from seven to seventeen years.

233 All the boys in a *laweni* who were members of houses possessing
857 cattle—and this as a rule included all sons of Ngoni families of trans-
561 Zambesi clans—had to take part in herding. Cattle-herding was a responsible task and could be an arduous one. The boys got up before dawn, opened the gate of the kraal, and took the cattle to water. They milked the cattle on an open space near the village and carried the milk in wooden jars, gourds or petrol tins to the owner of the cattle, keeping

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

some for themselves as their perquisite. They then drove the cattle to pasture, and this might be some distance away when grass was scarce in the dry season. They sometimes drove the cattle back near the village to rest at noon under the shade trees, but if the pasture was far away the cattle rested there and went on feeding later. They were brought back to the kraal in the late afternoon and counted by one of the senior men. 233 857 561

The herd-boys taught each other to fight with sticks, to wrestle, to catch rats and small birds, to use the knobkerry, catapults, and bows and arrows. Sometimes in the afternoon they went to other villages and challenged another herd to a fight between bulls.[1] During the long day's herding, the boys used to drink milk, make *amasi* (milk curds) in a gourd and eat it, bake birds in clay and roast ears of maize taken from their mothers' grain stores. Precedence among the herd-boys depended first on age and only secondly on the rank and position of the families they belonged to. There was an easily recognizable air of authority and almost of arrogance among the older boys responsible for their fathers' and uncles' cattle. They superintended the process of letting out the cattle, milking them, driving them to pasture and the return to the kraal in the evening. Mounted on donkeys, wearing large straw hats made by themselves, the senior boys acted like ranch owners bossing up inefficient work hands. [868] [554] [492]

This period of living in the *laweni* was, as we have seen, shared by boys of a wide age group. In a large village where there were two or three or four *laweni*, there was often one in each section, which generally meant that the boys belonging to one *banja* or section shared one *laweni*. This had the effect of dividing them up to some extent on a basis of family and rank, but in a *laweni* serving a whole village all the boys went in together whatever families they came from. There was no respecting of clan status in the *laweni* and young boys of high-ranking families had to wait on and obey older boys of lower rank. *Laweni* life was therefore a democratizing influence among the boys of the village, and no boys were excused from herding cattle because they belonged to a house which owned cattle. Even if some went to school and others did not, the school-boys had to take their share of herding in the holidays. Ngoni chiefs and leading men laid great emphasis on keeping the boys busy and making them carry out the work allotted to them. The older boys began to listen in at court cases and to discuss them among themselves. During the wet season from time to time they formed hoeing parties for clearing new ground and for the periodical weeding of gardens. They seldom did any continuous cultivation, as the women and the older men did, and a boy who liked to go off and hoe by himself was pointed out as one with rather peculiar tastes. 561 866 [565] [867]

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V

Village Life for older Brothers and Sisters

Second teeth: a new stage

858 We saw in Chapter II that Ngoni children who lost their first teeth, and acquired their second, had reached a new stage in their development. The obvious gaps in their mouths [856] were filled, and this might happen between the ages of six-and-a-half and seven-and-a-half, and some of the children might be rather small and slight for their age. Socially, because they had their second teeth, and because it was a sign of physical change recognized by everyone, the Ngoni adult would regard these children as ready for a different kind of life than that described in the previous chapter. The children were no longer dependent on adults for the detailed care and attention which we saw in the last chapter spelled security for the young child because every need of his was met. These older children could feed themselves, wash themselves, say what they wanted, speak correctly, and were beginning to behave as Ngoni children were expected to behave in all the relationships and activities of daily living. They were still in the wider sense dependent on adults for their basic needs—food to eat, a place to sleep in, tasks to perform, care when sick. But they had passed completely out of the hands of nurse girls, and the boys, to a very large extent, out of the control and surveillance of the women.

[866] A new-found independence had begun to show in the little boys before they got their second teeth. Independence

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

then meant running out of the compound to the freedom of the village. At that time young children might behave outrageously and be punished for it, but they were not held accountable. The nurse girls and the mother, or some other adult, was blamed for letting the child grow up with such an uncontrolled temper or appetite or tongue. Once children were recognized as having passed the young child stage, that is when they had their second teeth, they themselves were held accountable for their behaviour and punished more severely, even though parents were also blamed for careless upbringing. The social sanctions of rebuke and ridicule, which began to operate in the later years of young childhood to only a limited extent, were now seen in their full force, made use of by adults, and still more effectively by the children's own age-mates. The fear of estrangement, of social ostracism as the penalty for failing to conform to the required manners and ways of living, had increasing force as the children grew older. As little children they were buttressed and protected by adults in their childish quarrels with, and moods and attitudes towards, other children. As boys in the dormitory and as girls in the girls' circle they had no longer such protection, and the result was that they became increasingly sensitive to the opinion of their peers. Professor Wilson in her study of Nyakusa age-villages, has called this social awareness the quality known as 'being good company'—getting on well with their contemporaries.

It was at this stage, at the beginning of the children's newly-found independence, that the ear-piercing ceremony took place. In contrast with the neighbouring peoples, the Ngoni had no facial or body markings, and it was the pierced ears which showed they were true Ngoni. In the days of warfare, captives, especially boys and men, were forcibly made to have their ears pierced, and hence a number of men in the Ngoni kingdoms who were not of Ngoni clans were found with pierced ears. Sometimes their children went to their parents and said, 'We want to be made Ngoni now.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

852 Children of Ngoni families, as also these others, chose their
304 own time to have their ears pierced, though sometimes their father or father's sister or father's mother reminded them that it was about time. It was nearly always soon after the second teeth had come, and children who delayed having it done were taunted by their fellows: 'You, are you afraid, my age-mate? See my ears already have bone in them.' This
[237] was a reference to the round plugs of bone inserted when the hole was large enough. A bit of thread was put in at first, then a small bit of grass, then a fine reed, and finally a bone plug. Ear piercing was always done in the cold weather so that the lobe of the ear would heal quickly. It was carried out by a leading woman of one of the Ngoni families, who watched the children to see how they took it. They knew it was a test of courage, and however much they were afraid it would hurt,
[152] they stood like little statues during the operation, with a face as set and expressionless as when they were being beaten.

Accountability for individual behaviour was one aspect of
● 866 the responsibility which Ngoni adults now began to demand
868 from children. Another aspect was the performance of their allotted tasks. The responsibility for cattle herding was in a sense a corporate responsibility of all the boys whose fathers owned cattle. The older herd-boys had in fact to answer for
[233] the condition of the cattle they brought back every evening to their owners. They passed on, however, a number of small duties, such as care of the calves, sheep and goats, to the younger boys, who in turn were held responsible by the older boys for performing these duties. The boys' world, centred in the dormitory, recognized grades of responsibility from which no one escaped.

Another facet of responsibility which was at a later stage
868 remarked on often by Ngoni adults, was seen in children's
[517] choice of leisure-time occupations, according to their individual manual and intellectual and artistic capacities. They stopped playing childish games and began instead to develope their skills in making things from local materials.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

184 as belonging to the houses. The relatively large number of cattle and
592 the high ranking of the Nzunga clan accounted for the number of
621 *lobola* marriages.

Family structure in individual and group life

554 As individuals and in family groups members of leading Ngoni clans
565 claimed and exercised leadership in their villages. The leading families
614 in the area of a *mulumuzana* owning a head village, and the small Ngoni
621 family groups in a larger non-Ngoni setting, all expected and received
[557] 'honour' (*ulemu*). The tendency in the central kingdom to marry up, and in the northern kingdom to marry into the clan of the mother if it were a high-ranking one, emphasized the importance attached to the rank and prestige of certain clans. This attitude towards family prestige was more noticeable in the central kingdom where individuals were quick to announce who was their mother or wife if that information would enhance their reputation.

The leadership of high-ranking families was not only a matter of claiming prestige. It carried with it, on the male and the female side, responsibility for regulating the affairs of the village and the house and the *banja*. Quarrels had to be composed, if possible before they came to court, troubles over deserted wives looked into, provision made for hospitality and for keeping the village premises in order. Informants emphasized again and again that in Ngoni villages where many men and women were of Swazi clans, order and cleanliness were to be expected. This was not always the case, but it was strikingly illustrated in two of the villages referred to in this chapter—Endindeni in the northern and Mangozo in the central kingdom.

[476] In day-to-day village affairs much mutual help was given by members of Ngoni families to each other, especially by the men to widowed mothers and sisters, and by the husband's brothers to wives whose husbands were away at work. The dislocation caused to the village economy by the emigration of males called for considerable organization on the part of those who were left. Ngoni male leaders of families and heads of a *banja*, and the women heads of the houses, all had to include the needs of these 'deserted' women in their own planning. In the northern kingdom, in spite of its relative poverty, better care was taken of wives whose husbands were away because the strong virilocal tradition emphasized this type of help.

● 867 In rearing and training children the Ngoni family structure and relationships provided direction and responsibility. We shall discuss in the next chapter on age sets the significance of birth and puberty ceremonies in Ngoni life. More significant, however, than any ceremony was the continuous provision for the training of children, adolescents and young adults in correct behaviour. This duty fell on the women as far as young children and girls were concerned, and on the men for the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

boys and young men, so long as they were in the village. Ngoni men insisted that their children should be correctly trained, and they were contemptuous of Cewa and other tribal groups who left it 'all to the women'. The handing on of correct behaviour by the mother-in-law to her daughter-in-law was, they considered, essential, and one of the reasons why young men in the central kingdom liked to 'marry up' was that they could count on the careful grounding in all the canons of behaviour which their wives had received. 867 [186 563]

CHAPTER V

AGE SETS

THE Ngoni brought with them to Nyasaland an age-set system akin to that among the South-eastern Bantu, which was an important element in their social structure. In pre-European days the division into cattle-herders or pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors or senior men, regulated the tasks and responsibilities of boys and men in other spheres besides those of warfare. At the beginning of this section, when reviewing age sets as one of the constituent forms of Ngoni social organization, I said that some features of an age-set system had persisted. In comparison with age-grouping in the other Nyasaland tribes it was distinctively Ngoni in form; it influenced behaviour patterns in inter-group and intra-group relations; and in it were recognized certain responsibilities and activities belonging to the different groups based on age. 561

Among the distinctively Ngoni elements in the age-set system were the private nature of the puberty ritual and the absence of initiation schools; the organization of boys' life in the *laweni*; the strong ties between age mates up to marriage; the selective principle in designating senior men and women as *madoda* and *manina*; and a different kind of selective principle in the formation of friendship pacts between individuals of the same age. In observing the role of age sets in Ngoni village society, the two main groups which were constantly in evidence as groups were the older boys and girls and the senior men and women. These groups not only carried out activities together, but also showed evidence of the strength of the internal ties linking members of an age set. There were, however, no sharp edges to these groups, either in terms of actual age or physiological development or of exclusive membership. The following list of terms applied to age sets in the two main Ngoni areas shows primarily the difference in designation between males and females according to broad age grouping, but it illustrates also the fact that the terminology applied to the age sets did not always coincide [881] [572]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

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different pattern. They also went to sleep with a grandmother or some other older member of the family when they were old enough to be excluded from their mother's hut at night, and they shared with their small brothers the grandmother's care and her story-telling round the fire in the evenings. During the day the girls continued as part of their mother's household group, eating with her and the younger children. As little girls they were taught to sit down carefully and to smooth down the cloth which they wore round their waists. They were trained to speak correctly and to know the right forms of address, to greet strangers politely, to avoid touching their father's mats or bed, to eat tidily and with restraint. The emphasis was on exclusiveness for these high-born Ngoni girls, lest, as a result of mixing too freely with everyone, they should forget the teaching given and the behaviour which was expected of them. In contrast to their brothers' rigorous training in the *laweni*, Ngoni girls, as they showed signs of approaching puberty, were guarded and looked after and instructed further in correct behaviour.

When a girl found that she was menstruating for the first time, she told one of her age mates and sent her to tell her *gogo*.[1] The *gogo* told her to stay in the hut during the period and showed her how to wear a cloth between her legs, which she had henceforth to wear always whether menstruating or not. She was told to sleep from now on in a different part of the hut from the smaller children and never to bathe with younger girls. At the end of her first period the girl was escorted to the women's bathing-place by her father's sisters and other female members of her father's family. She was made to wash in the stream and squat in the cold water while doing so. I saw more than one child trying to control her shivering while her relatives watched to see if she would be strong and brave, or weak and cowardly. When she was in the water she was made to face south-east—the quarter which the Ngoni called *kwathu* (our home). After this ceremony the girl's father and mother were informed, and her father informed the head of his *banja* and the head of the village. The news was greeted with rejoicing and made generally public.

From about the age of ten or eleven, the Ngoni girl belonged to an age set distinguished by a separate name. She was no longer included in the group of children, as were her brothers of the same age, but was marked out by belonging to the age set called *inkakazana* or *mabuthu*. After her first menstruation she belonged to the age set called *izintombi* or *anamwali*. From this stage, Ngoni girls were under the close supervision of the older women. The association of a *gogo* or older woman with each house in a Ngoni village meant that the girls of the house were under her special care, particularly after they had passed puberty. There

[1] *gogo* in this context is used for grandmother or for the elderly woman to whose care the girl was assigned.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

565 836 864 881 were clearly defined aims in this care of girls after puberty, including instruction in personal hygiene and in pre-marital sexual relations. A girl's father's sisters and her own mother wanted to be able to say, when marriage negotiations began: *Ngombe zake zidzala*, 'her cattle are full', which was the comment made when girls were examined periodically to see if they were still virgin. To achieve this they constantly said to her: '*Mudzisunge, mudzileteze*', 'take care of yourself, control yourself'; and the *gogo* explained to the girl how she could protect herself. In one area where I lived, the chief's daughter was examined every week, with her *izidandani* or companions, and the girls who helped in the big house were examined every month. The strict behaviour required of Ngoni girls of good family was expected also of those of the same age who were members of the same household, either appointed to be with them as companions or as servants in the big house.

868 881 565 Looking forward to marriage involved not only preservation of her virginity. An Ngoni girl going to a strange village had to know how to perform women's work in the home, how to do it herself as well as how to direct others, and she had to be carefully trained in that meticulous and exclusive social behaviour required of Ngoni women of good family. She might be going to marry a man who intended to 'marry up', in which case she might be thought in one sense to be 'marrying below her station'. Yet her personal position as a member of her father's clan and family could not be altered by her marriage, and she was well aware that she was conferring something on the man and on the family she married into.

[562] While the boys were learning their roles in later life in the democratic atmosphere of the *laweni* and of the boys' pursuits in the village, the girls in the later stage of their training after puberty were treated more individually, and were not left to find their level in a group of their age mates. The adult women took an active part in telling them how to behave, how to dress and how to cook. The girls of high-ranking families sometimes pounded maize with their age mates, singing as they did so, but more for fun than because their food depended on it. They learned to dress their hair and put on clothes, and to walk and dance in company with other girls, but always with the critical eye of their *gogo* upon them. Their lower-ranking companions could make mistakes and be careless, and walk and dance in an exaggerated fashion. Ngoni girls might never pass certain bounds of decorum, and the standard expected of them was high and exacting. I have heard *manina* of leading clans scold young girls many times for careless behaviour and badly done work.

562 565 867 In this training, as throughout that of the boys, there was a deliberate preparation for leadership. A girl's character and ability were being watched and, while an awareness of her personal dignity and position was being fostered, it was accompanied by requirements of obedience

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show subservience to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss. 562 565 867

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private. 881 836 565 [797] 178 [195] [831]

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony [554]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how 128
the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of
living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and
the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We
shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the
setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be in-
terpreted according to the Ngoni social organization,
sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my
earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another 156
angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni 861
villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and 571
the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and
who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle
of people forming a young child's contacts was from the
beginning much wider than the individual family which a
child was born into. When he began to run about and to
pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was
as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni
adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when neces-
sary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between 182
one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related
families in other villages, with all members of the same clan [602]
living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship
and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads
were also inseparable from the political links between the [631]
people and their territorial chief, and between the whole
people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The 184
difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the 563
Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-
Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the
villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who [867]
understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their
children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence
in most villages there were sharp distinctions between stand- [183]
ards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni
families.

194 563 families. It was, however, demanded from Ngoni children that they should behave in the socially approved manner to [867] everyone, and not only to their Ngoni kin and fellow clansmen. And it was evident in non-Ngoni families that there was often some attempt to teach Ngoni standards of behaviour to their children, but that such attempts broke down when their family system was not organized to enforce the necessary training.

576 *The goals of Ngoni child training*

577 [867] Ngoni adults, and especially the senior men and women who were in control of the training of children and themselves deeply conscious of the traditional values of their society, summed up the aims of the upbringing of children in one word 'respect'. The vernacular term *ulemu*—in the old Ngoni language *klonipa*—is a concept very difficult to translate adequately, certainly to convey its full meaning in a single English word or phrase. The nearest terms are honour and respect, and though in some contexts it is often translated as politeness, that is too limited a term. In fact they had another vernacular term to express courtesy which was to them one way of showing respect. The concept of *ulemu* included the recognition that a particular person or office was entitled to honour; that all behaviour to that person must express respect; and that by showing respect in language, posture and action, a child or adult so behaving, shared in that honour which they were acknowledging. Conversely, through failing to convey respect, a person, whether child [558] or adult, was 'ashamed' and lost face accordingly. I have just said that a particular person was entitled to honour and therefore to respect in the behaviour of others. The Ngoni said that was the origin of the concept, and it was demonstrated in the punctilious observance of etiquette to all chiefs, and to all leading men and women by everyone else. [858] But there was an extension of this concept to include all older people, and Ngoni children were expected to show

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their 576
family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If 577
children did not so behave to old and poor people, they 858
were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had [867]
failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early 576
travellers in Ngoniland to the good manners found in Ngoni 828
households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the 829
Ngoni because they liked living together without any scat- 867
tering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . .
Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of being beaten, but because all children were well taught that this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion 829
between personal behaviour and the integrity and prosperity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were talking about child training and its effect on the future of the Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within their society, so that harmonious relations would build up the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic secessions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human societies from the individual family outwards. We see this however in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about 539
keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining 829
their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who [115]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 867 The moral, which was always repeated at the end as part of the story, was that children were warned not to show unkindness to people but to treat them well so that people would bless them. They were reminded that the older sister showed the qualities of pity, courage and obedience, while the younger sister did not hesitate to display disgust and fear and carelessness. It was the older sister who had her ultimate reward as leading wife of a handsome chief, while the younger sister, as a subsidiary wife, had to take second place.

These two folk-tales were popular among the children, even though they were so different from the animal folk-tales, full of humour and absurdities. The children used to shiver with excitement over the Brass-Rod story, especially the little girls, and the boys sucked in their breath when the wind blew and snapped their fingers for the rattling in the pit. Because the stories were serious and had a didactic purpose, Ngoni fathers approved of them, and encouraged the grandmothers to tell them often in order that the children might remember the moral.

Learning how to behave

203 857 Ngoni villages, like the whole Ngoni kingdom, had an efficient system of communication between individuals and groups, but whereas the kingdom had a network of official [202] messengers continually moving between the capital and the outlying sections, the village 'intercom' depended on the children. At any time of day, from first light till after dark, children were moving about the village from one hut to another, from a hut to the kraal gate, taking messages, summoning people, carrying food, reporting arrivals. The messages and summons were all at the bidding of the adults. 576 When a child was called to take a message, he had to respond 857 immediately wherever he was, and run to hear what he was 867 wanted for. Someone calling a child's name, followed by a 202 long drawn out 'Yo—o—o', punctuated all the hours of daylight in a village. When a child was told to call someone

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

older, on reaching them he had to bend one knee, or sit down, and say in a low but clear voice: 'They are calling you.' If a child was sent to call another child to his father because he had a scolding to administer, the bad child had to listen with head bent down, not saying a word or making a sound until the father had finished all he had to say, whether the accusation was just or not. If the child forgot himself and answered back or made excuses, the onlookers would beat the child for being rude to his father. If when taking a message a child had to pass a line or a group of people, he had always to go in front of them, never behind, bending forward from the waist and murmuring as he went by, 'I am before your eyes.' If a child had to give an adult a food basket or any other object, he had to offer it with both hands and bend slightly over it; and when he received it back he always did so with both hands outstretched and bent head.

857 576 867 202

Acting as messengers constantly, and no child was immune from being called if he or she was in the village, impressed on children from their early years the chief behavioural skills of language and deportment. Taking a message was always a formal occasion, and standards of behaviour in language, posture and gesture were rigidly enforced. We shall see in later chapters how very small children were first taught to thank people for gifts or in response to a greeting, and later to greet people politely themselves. The correct terms in which to address or to refer to relatives formed another stage in learning language skills, and later on came reminders about the use of pronouns and the use of the second person singular and plural of verbs, the first to equals only, the second to all adults, with the third person plural for chiefs and 'great ones'. About the age of five or six a child was told: 'When your mother speaks to a stranger she says "Please (you) sit here". You should speak like this to all people you must honour. Only rude people speak that other way—people who do not know how to thank and how to honour, not like the Ngoni who know these things.'

[191]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

867 Correction of bad behaviour, even if thoughtless or careless, was just as often carried out by older children as by adults. I used to hold a 'children's hour' now and then round [123] the fire in my compound, or a honey party if I had been given some wild honey. These occasions were open to all and were enthusiastically organized by the older children of leading Ngoni families. They pushed the children into some sort of order, whether sitting or standing, or marching round the honey-pot to stick one finger in and lick it as they passed. When we were sitting round the fire there was always due regard for family ranking, the places immediately on my right and left being the places of honour. Children of non-Ngoni families were sharply rebuked if they failed to respond to my greeting or say farewell, and shyness was never admitted as an excuse. Scathing remarks were dealt out to any who did not say the correct formal thanks for the honey. 'You, fellow-villager, you are with the Ngoni now. Say "thank you" to the lady or she will think you are a wild animal from the bush, unable to speak.' Bad behaviour was not only corrected by adults with beating and rebukes. Sometimes the more 867 indirect form of a proverb was used, especially to correct un- 538 kindness, lack of generosity, boasting or bragging. When someone said with biting emphasis: 'Strength breaks the handle,' it was enough to deflate a young (or an old) braggart. When children plagued their elders to give them something, they rounded on the children with: 'Give! Give! that is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.' This was invariably effective with Ngoni children who hung their heads in shame at the very idea of being thought the child of a captive. Proverbs, except ones like those quoted which were very often used, were generally enigmatic, and the meaning was hidden rather than obvious. In a mixed gathering of children and adults, a proverb might suddenly be dropped like a stone into a pond. The conversation rippled away into silence, and the boy or girl who had refused to share some peanuts or had been boasting began to wonder

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to himself: 'Can that be for me? No? Yes? It *is* me. I am ashamed.' No one said anything but the shamed one took the first chance of slipping away to avoid further public notice. The use of proverbs in this way were an effective way of making a child learn for himself and apply the lesson; and with children, as with adults, the use of proverbs was a way of 'saving face' when a direct rebuke in the presence of others would have caused overwhelming shame.

Ngoni ideas about nature and nurture

This fixed code of social behaviour between persons was instilled by Ngoni adults into their children from their early years. By the time they had their second teeth, a significant stage to the Ngoni, they were expected to conduct themselves towards other people according to this code. Their behaviour, in public at any rate, should be predictable, if those responsible for the teaching of 'respect' had carried out their task conscientiously. But, as the Ngoni themselves recognized, it was one thing to have a system of training with a desired goal in view. It was another thing to see how each individual child responded to the training, and either conformed to the code or resisted it. The Ngoni thought that the clue to conformity or resistance lay in the individual's character, and they talked a great deal about the character of their children. Such conversations generally arose when adults were watching a group of boys and girls carrying out a socially required or self-appointed task. They might be bringing back the cattle in the evening, practising for the *ngoma* dance, grinding bulrush millet for snacks for the little children, asking each other riddles or telling a story. Some of the tasks called for intelligence, some for physical strength, some for initiative or organizing ability, some for eloquence.

Character, so the Ngoni thought, came from two sources, inborn qualities and acquired qualities. The first they called *mabadidwe*, literally those things which an individual was born with. These included physical resemblances to their

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

828 parents, such as colour of skin, shape of face and features,
827 posture and carriage, speaking voice; and the less tangible qualities such as control of temper, power to command others, eloquence in speech, as well as anti-social characteristics such as cruelty, rages, meanness, jealousy. Both kinds of inborn qualities, physical and moral, could come from either parent. In the case of the average child, who was not outstanding in any way, few comments if any were made on his heredity. But if a child showed outstanding ability or powers of leadership, or was on the contrary always quarrelling or showing off or sulking, they looked for an explanation of such qualities in his parentage.

Yet heredity was not in Ngoni thinking the only explana-
828 tion for a child's character. Nor did they believe that it al-
●867 ways followed that a cruel father had vicious sons, nor a mother who was tactful and pacific, daughters showing the same traits. They thought character, though partly inherited, was modified by and moulded by acquired qualities due to training. In the case of bad inherited qualities they could be, it was hoped, corrected by persistent training. When desirable qualities were shown by either or both parents it was always hoped that the child would also show them, and that good upbringing would ensure their development. They were always puzzled when sons of outstanding men and daughters of distinguished women turned out badly.

The acquired qualities were known as *makhalidwe*, the root of which was *kukhala*. This was a word used in a great many contexts with different meanings in each. In the context of child training it was used to mean to behave, with the added implication that it was what a person was like, due to his behaviour. *Makhalidwe* was used therefore, in the sense of conduct, implying behaviour in all relationships and including what had been acquired through response to training.

As we shall see later, Ngoni elders were afraid to leave a child, especially a girl after the age of seven or so, in her

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

mother's household if the mother showed obvious signs of 828
being a 'bad character'. They might take the child away 867
and put her with some relative of acknowledged 'good character', in the hope of offsetting the effects of heredity by careful training.

In later childhood and especially on the threshold of adult- 868
hood, as we shall see in Chapters VI and VII, boys and girls were expected to learn and practise traditional Ngoni skills and to be conversant with traditional Ngoni knowledge. Skills and knowledge, or rather the ability to use them, might [828]
be inherited from a parent, but they were generally regarded [827]
as acquired qualities. In any case, they needed careful training and direction in order that they might be fully developed.

Ngoni cultural values

After the Scottish Mission had been in North Nyasaland for 177
some time, and the Bible and other Christan literature had 538
been translated into the vernacular, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* became one of the most popular and widely read books in Ngoniland, both by older children and by adults. The reason was that its imagery portrayed so many ideas and situations which the Ngoni recognized as being relevant for them in the new world to which they had to adapt themselves. It became for Ngoni Christians, and for many others too since it was told far more often than it was read, a new kind of folk-tale, and was told as such to children in school and in the villages. The themes of striving towards a goal, and fighting lions and giants on the way, and listening to good advice as well as hearing bad—these and other themes were recognized as in the Ngoni tradition although in such a different setting.

In the final chapter of this book we shall talk about per- 128
sonality and character among the Ngoni, looking at the ideas of basic personality as set out by Linton and others, and trying to see how training at different stages of childhood had been converging towards the ideal personality of the Ngoni

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had 561
come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who them- 357
selves had married in her new village. Above them again
were the older women helpers of his grandmother's genera-
tion, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as [601]
'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child 602
saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her 855
old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for
living in a different place among people who want to gratify
his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the
child's home, but then their relationship with him was on
more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give
him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him,
lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them:
'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child 609
learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and
those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw
mostly the women who were entertained in the compound
of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother
when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he [867]
learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call
attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status 561
group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief 156
authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for 858
breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For
the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the
women's world built round his daily life a sense of security,
partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When
the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can
all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this
women's world, organized through the households and the
families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, 855
washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

sieves for straining beer or water poured through ashes to 351
make salt. These lay around all day if they were being used, 415
and were periodically scrubbed and put on the rack to dry,
and at night stacked tidily in the veranda. In the day-time [356]
sleeping-mats of finely woven fibre were brought out into [513]
the sun, and so were skins and cloths used as coverings at
night. Some of the Ngoni used curved wooden headrests as [352]
pillows often carved at the ends with animals' heads to fasci- [531]
nate a small child.

On the polished space in front of the hut were laid from 351
time to time mats on which sprouting millet for making beer [285]
was dried, or partly pounded damp maize. A young child [273]
was sometimes told to keep the fowls and dogs off these mats.
These animals and often small kids, wandered and pecked [857]
and scratched and quarrelled inside the fence all day, and [231]
young children chased them.

Beyond the fence lay other fenced compounds grouped 361
round the cattle kraal, and beyond the village buildings lay 311
patches of woodland, grass pastures, cultivated 'gardens',
and water-holes and streams. Going with the mother or 857
grandmother or a nurse girl or helper to fetch water, or work
in the gardens was an expedition for young children which
they delighted in.

In these village surroundings there were some places for- 858
bidden to young children, who were corrected by everyone 867
with smacks and stern reproofs until they learned to keep
away. One such forbidden place was the kraal gateway where
the men sat and talked and ate. No woman until she had
passed the menopause was allowed to cross over in front of [562]
the gateway lest she injure the cattle. If therefore children
strayed down there, younger women did not like to go and
fetch them back, as the men always grumbled if women went
there lest they should harm the cattle. It was nevertheless
a place that had a great attraction for boys of five to seven
years old, because they found their fathers there and the
herd boys. The boys in this age-group of five to seven showed

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

858 signs of irritation at female control, especially with this pro-
hibition on going to the kraal gate. They escaped surveillance
867 and ran off there now and then, only to be caught by one of
the men, beaten and brought back to the compound with the
remark: 'This child is not yet a herd boy. Keep him with you.'

If the village was near a roadway with traffic on it, or near a river, children were forbidden to go there without some older person with them. They were also warned not to go near fireplaces in case a burning log fell out, and to keep away from the woodpile where there might be snakes.

Training in habits

855 In these surroundings, diversified, orderly, and on the whole safe if forbidden places were avoided, young children's needs were attended to and they were gradually trained to look after themselves. For food, health and sleep, their primary physical needs, they had their older sisters, nurse girls, mothers, grandmothers and helpers all at hand to ensure that these needs were satisfied.

After the post-weaning months were over, and generally
264 though not always after the next baby was born, a young
862 child went back to eat with his mother in her compound and sleep in her hut, though a grandmother, if she had taken a special fancy to a child, might say she was going to keep him to eat and sleep with her. In his mother's compound twice a day the child watched her and her helpers preparing and cooking a meal. In due time he was called to the veranda where the food lay smoking, his hands were wiped, he was made to rinse out his mouth, and he sat down beside his mother or his nurse in a circle round the food basket. This contained the mash of cooked grain, usually maize, and be-
[262] side it were the little pots of cooked 'relish', beans, peas, green vegetables, tomatoes, ground-nuts. At first someone pinched up a little lump of the mash, dipped it in a relish, and popped it into his mouth, telling him to shut his mouth and chew before he swallowed. Later he learned to do this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

863 of dust, and many of them began to suffer from sores, itch and sore eyes. The girls however, had already begun to like a clean and shining skin for the sake of being beautiful, and their ablutions were no longer under duress.

The smallest children urinated and defecated wherever they happened to be. From the age of three or four, however, they were taught to tell someone if they wanted to defecate, and taken outside the hut. Maize cobs or soft leaves or grass were used to clean the child, and then thrown on the fire. When the child began to look after himself, he was shown how to use the left hand only when cleaning himself, [826] and told it was 'the hand of shame, only used for bad things'. From the age of four or five small girls and boys went with [514] their mothers and the other women to the section of the surrounding bush reserved for the women's toilet. At about the same age boys and girls were taught to withdraw from the public gaze when urinating, and to conceal themselves behind a hut or in some other hiding-place. The Ngoni were [514] [834] extremely prudish about all physical acts connected with evacuating or sex, and began to demand correct behaviour from children at an early age.

757 If a child was constipated, or had diarrhoea, or was vomi-
603 ting, or had a fever or stomach-ache, the nurse girl reported it to his mother who went to tell the child's paternal grandmother. For all the range of usual childish ailments the grandmother prescribed and carried out standard treatments, such as whey used as a purgative, or very thin gruel to check diarrhoea. The Ngoni women had a number of herbal remedies which they used for themselves and their children. They also used hot poultices, cupping, and forms of massage. Only when the known household remedies failed, did the grandmother tell the child's father and he, as we have seen, took the responsibility for calling in 'specialists'.

867 Sleep, the little child's third major need, was sometimes
864 well ordered and sometimes erratic. It was not considered proper for children to sleep in the same hut as their parents

after the age of four or five, when they might become aware 867
that intercourse was taking place. From this age, when the 864
Ngoni said 'they will now begin to see things and to ask questions', they went to sleep either with a widowed grandmother or senior helper.

During the 'dark half of the month' and in the rains, most 512
people went to bed soon after dark and little children got a 857
long sleep. When the moon was bright, and in dry weather, [132]
the whole village was astir, walking around, dancing, talking, visiting. Little children tagged round with their older 513
sisters or nurse girls, and if they were sleepy were either picked up and carried, or put in the hut to sleep on their mat, provided there was no fire burning into which they could fall. During the day, especially in the hot weather, children dropped off to sleep just where they were, on the veranda, under the platform, or in some other shady spot.

It was just before bedtime, in the grandmother's hut, that [538]
traditional folk-tales were told, round the last flickers of a wood fire. Sometimes a child dropped off to sleep before the story was finished. Someone either took him on her lap, or dumped him on his mat and covered him up.

This acquiring of habits, directed consciously by adults, 867
was designed to give the child increasingly a sense of being 858
part of a community which had certain standards of behaviour. There were, in this training, some prohibitions
which a child was expected to observe as soon as he could 864
walk and talk. The most stringent was on any form of sex play between boys and girls. To avoid any likelihood of this, little boys and girls were early encouraged to form separate play groups. The elders kept an eye particularly on the boys, and if they showed any inquisitiveness in their play about the private parts of a girl playmate, they were beaten and reproved and told: 'If you do this again, I shall tell your father.'

Many little boys and girls up to the age of four or five ran 864
about naked, but in leading Ngoni families they wore a scrap 291

of cloth hanging in front from a bead or grass waistband. They were all taught before that age, and most stringently after it, to sit correctly. For the little girls, this meant kneeling first and then sitting with the legs tucked on one side. They always smoothed down their scrap of cloth so that their genitals were covered. Little boys often squatted, sitting on their heels. Their correct position however, especially when eating food, was to sit with their legs crossed and the soles of their feet pressed against their thighs, and their cloth or skin apron arranged to cover their genitals.

Any rudeness in speech or action towards parents or elders was corrected at once, and the child was told: 'That is not the Ngoni way.' Studied courtesy included looking down when addressed by an elder, and as we saw in Chapter II, never walking behind a group of elders but passing in front of them, bending slightly forward and murmuring: 'I am before your eyes.'

Play places and playthings

In spite of what appeared like a somewhat restrictive régime, Ngoni children were merry and busy all their waking hours. Occasionally lack of health, or an awkward temperament, produced a child who sat around by himself, or glowered at other children, or was spiteful and vindictive. For the most part their nurse girls and older sisters paid them the attention they demanded, were always ready to provide distractions and amusements, and showed them how to use all that lay around them as playthings.

The places where they played depended on their age and mobility. The youngest children stayed round the hut and inside the fence. Occasionally the nurse girls and older sisters in the afternoons took them to a 'playground' on the outskirts of the village, where the older girls were accustomed to meet and practise dancing, or to thread beads and chatter. When the harvest was in, some of the older children about five and six years old, helped by the nurse girls, made 'play

of this age, escaping from the women, showed their independence in their choice of games and occupations, many of which, as we have seen, were of an individual nature. They were not much inclined to join together as an age-group except for occasional gang enterprises. If one boy interfered with another's game of tops or took away his axe or hoop, there was an immediate short sharp fight. The defeated one either ran home to be comforted, with the jeers of the victor in his ears, or he stood and sulked for a moment, and then went on with his pursuit. It was outside in the open village spaces and not behind the fences of the compounds that small boys learned to put up with each other, to meet aggression and to be aggresive in turn, and then suddenly to gang up with a group and play happily together. 857 561

The test for boys of correct Ngoni training in the childhood stage, between weaning and second teeth, was their ability to get on with their age-mates and fellow villagers when they went to live in the dormitory. One boy went to live for long periods with his maternal grandmother in his mother's home village, after an argument in which for once his father was overruled by his wife and her family. This boy was indulged and spoiled by his maternal relatives who were afraid to correct him and to discipline him because he was the child of their son-in-law. The result was that when the boy came back about the age of seven, on his father's insisting that he should take part in herding and live in the dormitory, he was selfish, rude and disobedient, and failed to fit in with the other boys. This and similar stories were often quoted to show the importance of the father's family being in sole control during the early stages of childhood. 858 867

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

then meant running out of the compound to the freedom of the village. At that time young children might behave outrageously and be punished for it, but they were not held accountable. The nurse girls and the mother, or some other adult, was blamed for letting the child grow up with such an uncontrolled temper or appetite or tongue. Once children were recognized as having passed the young child stage, that is when they had their second teeth, they themselves were held accountable for their behaviour and punished more severely, even though parents were also blamed for careless upbringing. The social sanctions of rebuke and ridicule, which began to operate in the later years of young childhood to only a limited extent, were now seen in their full force, made use of by adults, and still more effectively by the children's own age-mates. The fear of estrangement, of social ostracism as the penalty for failing to conform to the required manners and ways of living, had increasing force as the children grew older. As little children they were buttressed and protected by adults in their childish quarrels with, and moods and attitudes towards, other children. As boys in the dormitory and as girls in the girls' circle they had no longer such protection, and the result was that they became increasingly sensitive to the opinion of their peers. Professor Wilson in her study of Nyakusa age-villages, has called this social awareness the quality known as 'being good company'—getting on well with their contemporaries.

It was at this stage, at the beginning of the children's newly-found independence, that the ear-piercing ceremony took place. In contrast with the neighbouring peoples, the Ngoni had no facial or body markings, and it was the pierced ears which showed they were true Ngoni. In the days of warfare, captives, especially boys and men, were forcibly made to have their ears pierced, and hence a number of men in the Ngoni kingdoms who were not of Ngoni clans were found with pierced ears. Sometimes their children went to their parents and said, 'We want to be made Ngoni now.'

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

575 there. It was a rough Spartan existence, where individual feelings and preferences had little scope, and where the younger ones were kept busy from dawn to dusk. Ngoni elders believed and indeed it was a key concept in their [858] culture, that boys should be kept busy all the time and made [515] to wash in cold water. Bathing in the cold streams of the Ngoni highlands was part of dormitory life. No Edwardian father talked more piously and convincingly about the merits of cold baths than Ngoni parents did.

575 The boys living in the dormitory continued to be fed from 264 their mother's household. The older boys had their food brought by a child to the kraal gate as was done for their fathers. The younger ones sometimes fetched their own and took it to the kraal gate where they sat on the extreme edge of the men's group. More often they were given what was left over from their fathers' and older brothers' servings. [146] This procedure accounted for the inadequate amounts eaten [272] by the younger boys, though they drank some milk when [262] milking the herds and out at the grazing grounds they made curds and caught birds and baked them in clay. Sometimes the desperation of hunger drove them to steal maize cobs or ground nuts from their mother's granary to roast in the [685] ashes of their fire. This kind of stealing was condemned as very wrong by Ngoni standards, and sometimes older boys, in order to show their authority, forced the young ones to steal in this way on their behalf.

575 What effect did dormitory life produce on the boys? The Ngoni parents, the fathers that is, expected it to produce [867] toughness, leadership, responsibility and respect for authority. On the whole it was successful. The Spartan life ensured toughness, the herding of cattle demanded responsibility and leadership, and the smooth running of dormitory society was based on respect for authority and obedience to it. From time to time the younger boys ganged up together to protect themselves from over-exploitation, and learned in these efforts at resistance the value of joint action. There was con-

521 867 men's affairs. The kind of topics discussed by men at the kraal gate included hunting, in the right season; cases heard in the courts and the application of Ngoni law to all subjects of the Ngoni chiefs; the organization of village affairs from tax collecting and dealing with tax evaders to beer drinks and burials and building houses; the sales of cotton, tobacco and cattle at near-by markets and the current prices; the various labour recruiters combing the villages for likely young men and the latest stories brought back by men who had returned from working in the south. Every now and then, particularly when the talk ranged round decisions in the courts or adding to the herds of cattle, references were made to the Ngoni past, to their relations with Europeans, both missionaries and officials, and to the behaviour of the non-Ngoni groups in the Ngoni kingdoms. The older boys listened attentively and as we shall see later in Chapter VII acquired among other things an extensive knowledge about the needs and uses of cattle. The younger ones pricked up their ears now and then when a familiar name or event was mentioned, and stored up questions to ask their father at a time when he was willing to listen and answer.

There was the usual Ngoni formality about where people 576 sat at the kraal gate. The most senior men sat on each side 417 of the opening, leaning up against the gate-posts, with the rest in decreasing order of rank as they were farther from the gate. The cleared space on each side of the gate and in front of it was all known as the 'gate of the kraal'. The craftsmen [463] who were carving wood or twisting bark rope, making baskets or plaiting mats, sat according to their age and rank on the edges of the senior group or among them. They could have carried on their trade anywhere, but they preferred the company of their fellows and did not want to miss listening to the talk or the arrival of strangers. The herd-boys, when 858 they were present, were on the extreme edges of those sitting [561] there, divided into two groups, 'youths' and boys. Each [262] group made its own fire for boiling milk and roasting sweet potatoes or ground-nuts.96

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to establish their hold. The Ngoni elders said the missions did not like it, and alleged that they gave it up for this reason. But they held on to other rituals also not approved by the missions, and it was probably largely due to the fact that there were no longer large herds of cattle to provide lavish feasts. The songs were remembered and sung by the older women when dancing the special dances associated with the ritual, holding in their hands short rods and small rounded shields, and making stiff jerking movements of head and elbows. Such dances as were put on for me were however a relic and not a living tradition. For the Ngoni girl of good family there was no longer any intervening ritual between her private puberty ceremony and the marriage ceremony.

The marriage age of girls, like that of men, was much earlier than formerly, the most usual age being from sixteen upwards. Most of the older women held that this left very little time in which to teach girls all that they were expected to know before being married and leaving their own home and their father's village for good. This was a particular cause of anxiety to the senior women in areas where the young men emigrated soon after marriage, and where the girl had to maintain her own position and reputation among his relatives without his companionship and support.

Young adults in Ngoni society

We have just seen that cultural changes coming from the outside radically altered the traditional pattern of development of Ngoni youths and girls. The net result of these changes was to telescope the period between physical maturity at puberty and full adult status at marriage, to squeeze the former eight to ten years of this intervening period into about two for the girls and four at most for the youths. This shortened period of preparation for full adult life raised a number of problems for the Ngoni elders. They were aware, as was suggested in the beginning of this chapter, that the attainment of physical maturity called for some re-alignment

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

177 of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especially the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes,
561 but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and
867 competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter
128 we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

582 In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there were certain social controls among the Ngoni which opera-
584 ted in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited
835 marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers
582 and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment.
581 In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptized or under instruction. This last pre-
581 ference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference
182 for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VII

The Threshold of Adulthood (ii)

Knowledge and skills

867 868 Towards the end of the last chapter we said that in this following chapter we would be concerned with the knowledge and skills which young adults in Ngoni society needed before they could assume the adult role of setting up and managing a new home, and of taking part in village and national affairs. Here and there in earlier chapters there have been references to 'men's affairs' and the 'world of women', suggesting that there was a range of knowledge, of activities and of competence in those activities for which preparation and training was needed for those on the threshold of adulthood.

In talking with the Ngoni about the way in which they were handing on their traditional knowledge to the younger generations, they often distinguished between two kinds of knowledge: one a wide range of perceptions and information necessary to carry out daily and occasional activities in the household and village; and the other, a corpus of traditional lore about natural phenomena, and about their history and law. This is not altogether a valid distinction since both kinds of knowledge were traditional but it is a convenient way of approaching the two kinds of instruction given to young adults. The Ngoni were often apt to stress the importance of 867 this second kind of knowledge because they resented the [186] attitude of many Europeans that the Ngoni, and other African peoples, were 'ignorant' until the schools came. This [577] touched them on a very sore point since they set great store on knowledge and wisdom in men and women, and did

not understand how Europeans could draw such a sharp line 867
and equate ignorance with the absence of a literature and [212]
written traditions. When talking about how they instructed
their young people in the traditional knowledge about the
natural world and their own national law and history, they
pointed out that there were no set periods for this kind of
teaching, but that there was a recognition that the young
man, before or about the time when he himself became a
father, should know what his father knew. We will begin 128
then with some indication of the kind of matters included
in this traditional store of knowledge, recognizing that reference can be made only to a small selection from it. We will go on in the second half of the chapter to the other kind of knowledge which was inseparably connected with practical and technical skills.

Ngoni traditional knowledge: the reckoning of time

The Ngoni had a system of reckoning time and a recognized 805
calendar. This consisted of thirteen lunar months in the year, reckoned from the first appearance of each new moon, and beginning with our December as the first month. The names of the months are all related to natural events, and these as the following list shows were in five main groups: when certain wild animals had their young; the time of bitter cold and frosts; when the hawks came to catch chickens; when certain trees fruited; when the new crops were ripe and the former first fruit ceremony took place.

NGONI NAMES FOR MONTHS

1 *Impala*	Antelopes have their young
2 *Inkokoni*	Gnu have their young
3 *Impuso*	Tasting new crops
4 *Inyati*	Buffaloes have their young
5 *Indlovu*	Elephants have their young
6 *Ilize elincinyane*	Beginning of cold weather
7 *Ilize elikulu*	Great cold weather

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in judgement on his own son, a young man of twenty-one, 692
for committing adultery with the wife of a man of a former
slave family. The husband brought the case against the [684]
chief's son, and the chief ordered the man to speak truly and [694]
not be afraid. The case was heard amid the most deathly [695]
silence. In awarding a heavy penalty of compensation against
his son, the chief spoke of the central position of law in Ngoni
life, and of the fact, so sharply brought out by the case, that
the law was no respecter of persons.

Young adults, boys and girls, were held personally re- 672
sponsible for breaches of the law which they had commited.
Penalties were awarded against them as individuals, even
though they often could not pay the compensation without
the help of their father and his family. They were expected 867
to become acquainted with the law in various ways. One
was by conformity to accepted social codes of behaviour, in-
stilled into them by their elders, particularly in such matters
as sex relations, respect for property, avoidance of slander
and of injury by violence. Another way of learning how the
law operated, as well as the principles upon which the case-
law was built, was by attending the courts, and listening [695]
carefully to the cross-examinations as well as to the judge-
ments. Young people were expected also to ask their fathers,
and elders generally, about points of law which they had not
understood, or had confused with some of the practices of the
local people. The onus was upon young adults for acquiring
this knowledge of the law as well as for behaving in accord-
ance with it. We shall see in the next chapter how the Ngoni [577]
regarded being law-abiding as one of their basic cultural
traits, as well as being evidence of the individual character
of a young adult.

Ngoni traditional skills

We made a distinction, albeit a rather tentative one, at the 128
beginning of this chapter between certain kinds of tradi-
tional knowledge which we have been describing up to this

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and demonstration of the group values. The first two, physical and moral strength, and working hard and persistently at allotted tasks, were, as we have seen, instilled into children from the stage of second teeth onward. The second two, dignity and wisdom, were to a large extent values implicit in adult life, and in the case of wisdom seen specially in the contribution made by senior men and women to community life. Dignity, however, had an ambivalent meaning, as did dominance among the group values. It covered not only language, deportment, self-control, accepted rank and precedence within the hierarchy on all social occasions, but the more subtle and very typical Ngoni attitude towards 'losing face'. In the sense that young adults and even older children hated being rebuked in public because it made them lose face, it belonged to younger people as well as to older, to those called the 'humble ones' as well as to the 'great ones'. 181 577

All the emphases in child training on language, deportment, self-control, manners and inter-personal behaviour of all kinds were related to the value of human dignity, and to the concept of a person's 'human nature' as being something to be respected and built up, and carefully guarded, since it was very vulnerable. [867] [828]

At the end of Chapter II when some Ngoni values were mentioned, wisdom was contrasted with cleverness, and equated with knowledge, good judgement, ability to control others and keep the peace, and skill in the use of speech. The young Ngoni headmaster in the first village described in Chapter I said reflectively one evening, after listening to some of the elders talking with me about Ngoni values, 'Yes, we are different in our generation. We are proud, but they had wisdom.' It was an acknowledgement of the pretensions which his generation had begun to claim as a result of the new knowledge in the schools. It was also a recognition that the accumulated wisdom of the generations of his father and grandfather had in it an understanding of values which the younger generation had not yet acquired. [184]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

As we saw in Chapter VII ignorance of the law was no excuse for breaking the law, and the positive virtue of being law-abiding was constantly emphasized in families, villages and in the kingdom generally. Inherent in showing respect and being obedient and law-abiding was the much stressed quality of self-control. Early travellers remarked on the restrained, dignified and courteous behaviour in Ngoni villages, which was my experience also, and especially in the vicinity of leading Ngoni families. This kind of self-control was taught as we have seen in a great variety of contexts, from avoiding greedy and noisy eating as young children to putting up with being ordered about in the boys' dormitory, and from the insistence on the decorous forms of greeting and thanks to the suppression of any overt fear or pain at the puberty ceremonies.

Two other qualities were emphasized in child training since they were expected of all Ngoni people in inter-personal relations. One was generosity in sharing anything that a person had. It was a quality demanded of everyone, from the small child who was made to unclench his fist in which he was hiding three ground-nuts and give two of them to his fellows, to the big chief whose duty at a feast was to see that everyone had enough and to send food from his own portion to anyone who looked hungry. A number of proverbs called attention to the value of generosity and to the social attitude towards meanness, which was felt to be despicable. 'If you do not play with other people the grass will grow round your hut' implied that isolation and social ostracism would be the retaliation to a mean man. The reciprocal element in generosity was always implicit in the teaching and the practice and was illustrated in the proverb, often said hopefully by visitors when hospitality was not very readily forthcoming: 'I have sent my food basket to someone; the basket will return to me.'

The other quality was the conventional display of sympathy, especially at times of mourning for the dead, but also on occasions of severe loss, such as cattle dying, or illness or

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

action of the hoe. 'They are our kin according to their eyes' was said as a reminder of misplaced trust in those who appeared to be helpful but were not really. 577 538 829

Readiness to take advice both from their age-mates and from older men was another quality held to be desirable in young men. Proverbs illustrating this were: 'He that refuses instruction will be surprised by blood,' and 'He remembers that he fell; he forgot that he was hurt.' As often with proverbs, there were others with a contrary emphasis which were sometimes used as a retort to the former ones, or in self-defence. 'The inheritance was eaten by those worthy of it' was intended as a rejoinder not to interfere in other people's affairs, when unwanted advice was offered. 'The body is felt by its owner' was sometimes said to encourage a man to stick to his own opinion. On the other hand a too abrupt rejoinder, especially to an older person, was regarded as discourteous, and onlookers said 'You cause the spittle to be dry' to express extreme disapproval.

Ngoni personality in a changing culture

The direction of the training of boys had been formerly towards military life, and towards the qualities which made effective fighting men, and emphasized loyalty to leaders and camaraderie in the regiments. This emphasis on military preparedness was however never the sole emphasis in Ngoni training, and hence when warfare came to an end, there remained traditional spheres of influence and activity which were an integral part of life in the Ngoni kingdoms, as well as new spheres of activity opened up by missions, the administration, the trading companies and the labour recruiters. 867 177 [703]

The traditional forms of activity were found in Ngoni local government which included the chief's administration and the courts of law; family and village affairs including the building up of herds and buying and selling cattle; and ritual life. The new kinds of activity included occupations such as teacher, minister, clerk, store assistant, houseboy, 463 177

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

585 bride herself refuses to sit on the mat until she has been given a present. She is joined on the mat by a small girl, aged about ten, from the groom's family, who becomes known as 'the guide'.[1] The leader of the bride's party and one other of the bride's women sit down on the mat, with the bride and the guide between them.

The instruction of the bride now begins, with a speech from some [237] important man in the village, who takes the gall bladder and anoints the head, arms and feet of the bride with the gall, going on to anoint the guide in the same way. They are then sometimes anointed with vaseline by a woman. One person after another, men and women, [867] now proceed to lecture the bride on how she should behave in the village, and each explains to her who he or she is in relation to her. The gall bladder is blown up and stuck in the hair of the bride, where she will keep it until she returns to her own village. Each person who delivers a speech of instruction gives a small present, a threepenny bit or beads, which they put into a plate on the mat at the bride's feet. This situation of formal instruction, often of an [183] abusive nature, accompanied by presents, is a recurrent one in Ngoni ceremonial.[2]

[237] Sometimes the small intestine of the animal is placed round the shoulders of a younger sister of the bride who is a member of her party. This girl is then designated linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) of the bride. This is not always done, and when it is done it does not imply that the girl will later become the real linked co-wife of her elder sister. Although in the two ceremonies I saw this designation of a linked co-wife did not occur, in both a sister of the bride was one of the bridal party.

[262] At the end of the instruction, the bride and her party go back into their own hut, and the leader cooks the liver of the animal, and the blood and fat. This she divides between the two families, sending the portion of the bridegroom's family to their hut for them to eat there. The guide stays in the bride's hut. After they have rested, the bride, guide, and their companions leave the village, taking the meat with them back to the bride's village. Outside her village the party stop, and are met by more women from the bride's family. The guide demands a small present before she will enter the village, usually beads. Inside the village the bride's mother takes the gall bladder from her daughter's head and buries it in the byre. The guide stays in the village for a few days, and demands another small present before she will assist the bride's people with cooking. When a quantity of flour has been pounded for the bride, and some maize half-pounded for the guide, the bride and the guide return quietly to the bridegroom's village. The bride begins to live with her husband, and the guide resumes her normal

[1] *Mpelekezi*, from the verb *ku-pelekeza*, to accompany part of the way. Cf. Zulu *impelezi*, girl accompanying a bride to her wedding.
[2] See above, p. 77.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 857 883 865 868

Herding as preparation for war

Preparation for war began in youth. When boys were about ten or twelve they were sent to herd goats or calves; when they were older they herded the cattle. At this time the boys were in the bush with their elders who were often haughty and fierce. The older herders taught the boys how to fight and how to defend themselves. They taught them to fight with twigs and sticks; the older herders fought with *izinduku* (knobkerries) and *izinkhonjo* (wooden swords). They were not allowed to fight with real spears though some had them. The older herders stirred up the hearts of the younger to fight and taught them to strike each other with knobkerries and to use little shields. If the herders of one village met the herders of another, the bulls were teased till they fought, and the little herders also. The small herders were not allowed to say anything about the herding to their parents. The older herders also loved to fight as in war with those of other villages. At such times the older men and even the elders came out from the village to see the battle and to stir up the hearts of the boys. If the herders of one village ran away they were laughed at, but the winners were greatly praised.

At the time when the cattle ate the refuse in the maize-gardens, after harvest, fighting most often broke out. Some of the boys provoked their neighbours to go and drive the cattle into the maize-fields of another village deliberately. The custom was that cattle might eat in the maize-gardens of their own village and the boys ought to ask if they may go into the fields of others. The herders did this to annoy the other herders and to start a fight. Often a great struggle was the result and the young men of the village who had outgrown herding joined in the fight to help the youngsters of their village. But they did it sensibly, none caused a wound with a spear, for anyone who did that was punished by law.

So the boys grew accustomed to the first steps in fighting which would help them later in war. Those who knew how to protect themselves with a knobkerry and small shield had no scars on their heads, but there were many long ago who had scars from fighting in the herding time. Children of the chief were in the same predicament—if they could not defend themselves they were beaten by their herding companions and possibly got their heads broken. The flowing of blood was not considered very serious, only if one did it in a stealthy way then he had to pay compensation. In this way the boys grew up with stout hearts and loved fighting.

Another thing which excited the boys was the custom of whistling. The boys were very expert and quick in expressing changes of mood in whistling. This was done so that the cattle would go carefully or quickly, but also when they were fighting the herders loved to whistle and even the older men in war did so also. The whistling stirred up the hearts of those who were thinking of running away. There were many ways of whistling and some were very good at it.

[198]

Enlistment

539 702

When the young men reached the age of 21–26 they left off herding. Sometimes it was their fathers who stopped them, sometimes they themselves wished to stay at home. They took their shields (*amahawu*) and

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

some for themselves as their perquisite. They then drove the cattle to 233
pasture, and this might be some distance away when grass was scarce in 857
the dry season. They sometimes drove the cattle back near the village to 561
rest at noon under the shade trees, but if the pasture was far away the cattle rested there and went on feeding later. They were brought back to the kraal in the late afternoon and counted by one of the senior men.

The herd-boys taught each other to fight with sticks, to wrestle, to [868]
catch rats and small birds, to use the knobkerry, catapults, and bows and arrows. Sometimes in the afternoon they went to other villages and challenged another herd to a fight between bulls.[1] During the long day's herding, the boys used to drink milk, make *amasi* (milk curds) in a gourd and eat it, bake birds in clay and roast ears of maize taken from their mothers' grain stores. Precedence among the herd-boys depended [554]
first on age and only secondly on the rank and position of the families they belonged to. There was an easily recognizable air of authority and almost of arrogance among the older boys responsible for their fathers' and uncles' cattle. They superintended the process of letting out the cattle, milking them, driving them to pasture and the return to the [492]
kraal in the evening. Mounted on donkeys, wearing large straw hats made by themselves, the senior boys acted like ranch owners bossing up inefficient work hands.

This period of living in the *laweni* was, as we have seen, shared by boys 561
of a wide age group. In a large village where there were two or three or 866
four *laweni*, there was often one in each section, which generally meant that the boys belonging to one *banja* or section shared one *laweni*. This had the effect of dividing them up to some extent on a basis of family and rank, but in a *laweni* serving a whole village all the boys went in together whatever families they came from. There was no respecting of clan [565]
status in the *laweni* and young boys of high-ranking families had to wait on and obey older boys of lower rank. *Laweni* life was therefore a democratizing influence among the boys of the village, and no boys were excused from herding cattle because they belonged to a house which owned cattle. Even if some went to school and others did not, the school-boys had to take their share of herding in the holidays. Ngoni chiefs and leading men laid great emphasis on keeping the boys busy and making them carry out the work allotted to them. The older boys began to listen [867]
in at court cases and to discuss them among themselves. During the wet season from time to time they formed hoeing parties for clearing new ground and for the periodical weeding of gardens. They seldom did any continuous cultivation, as the women and the older men did, and a boy who liked to go off and hoe by himself was pointed out as one with rather peculiar tastes.

During this period of *laweni* life, when in addition to herding the

[1] For the relation between the training of herd-boys and preparation for war, see Part II, Chap. I, p. 30.

565 836 864 881 were clearly defined aims in this care of girls after puberty, including instruction in personal hygiene and in pre-marital sexual relations. A girl's father's sisters and her own mother wanted to be able to say, when marriage negotiations began: *Ngombe zake zidzala*, 'her cattle are full', which was the comment made when girls were examined periodically to see if they were still virgin. To achieve this they constantly said to her: '*Mudzinunge, mudzileze*', 'take care of yourself, control yourself'; and the *gogo* explained to the girl how she could protect herself. In one area where I lived, the chief's daughter was examined every week, with her *izidandani* or companions, and the girls who helped in the big house were examined every month. The strict behaviour required of Ngoni girls of good family was expected also of those of the same age who were members of the same household, either appointed to be with them as companions or as servants in the big house.

868 881 565 Looking forward to marriage involved not only preservation of her virginity. An Ngoni girl going to a strange village had to know how to perform women's work in the home, how to do it herself as well as how to direct others, and she had to be carefully trained in that meticulous and exclusive social behaviour required of Ngoni women of good family. She might be going to marry a man who intended to 'marry up', in which case she might be thought in one sense to be 'marrying below her station'. Yet her personal position as a member of her father's clan and family could not be altered by her marriage, and she was well aware that she was conferring something on the man and on the family she married into.

[562] While the boys were learning their roles in later life in the democratic atmosphere of the *laweni* and of the boys' pursuits in the village, the girls in the later stage of their training after puberty were treated more individually, and were not left to find their level in a group of their age mates. The adult women took an active part in telling them how to behave, how to dress and how to cook. The girls of high-ranking families sometimes pounded maize with their age mates, singing as they did so, but more for fun than because their food depended on it. They learned to dress their hair and put on clothes, and to walk and dance in company with other girls, but always with the critical eye of their *gogo* upon them. Their lower-ranking companions could make mistakes and be careless, and walk and dance in an exaggerated fashion. Ngoni girls might never pass certain bounds of decorum, and the standard expected of them was high and exacting. I have heard *manina* of leading clans scold young girls many times for careless behaviour and badly done work.

562 565 867 In this training, as throughout that of the boys, there was a deliberate preparation for leadership. A girl's character and ability were being watched and, while an awareness of her personal dignity and position was being fostered, it was accompanied by requirements of obedience

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

mother's household if the mother showed obvious signs of being a 'bad character'. They might take the child away and put her with some relative of acknowledged 'good character', in the hope of offsetting the effects of heredity by careful training. 828 867

In later childhood and especially on the threshold of adulthood, as we shall see in Chapters VI and VII, boys and girls were expected to learn and practise traditional Ngoni skills and to be conversant with traditional Ngoni knowledge. Skills and knowledge, or rather the ability to use them, might be inherited from a parent, but they were generally regarded as acquired qualities. In any case, they needed careful training and direction in order that they might be fully developed. 868 [828 827]

Ngoni cultural values

After the Scottish Mission had been in North Nyasaland for some time, and the Bible and other Christan literature had been translated into the vernacular, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* became one of the most popular and widely read books in Ngoniland, both by older children and by adults. The reason was that its imagery portrayed so many ideas and situations which the Ngoni recognized as being relevant for them in the new world to which they had to adapt themselves. It became for Ngoni Christians, and for many others too since it was told far more often than it was read, a new kind of folk-tale, and was told as such to children in school and in the villages. The themes of striving towards a goal, and fighting lions and giants on the way, and listening to good advice as well as hearing bad—these and other themes were recognized as in the Ngoni tradition although in such a different setting. 177 538

In the final chapter of this book we shall talk about personality and character among the Ngoni, looking at the ideas of basic personality as set out by Linton and others, and trying to see how training at different stages of childhood had been converging towards the ideal personality of the Ngoni 128

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 related to a young child by kinship, there were three distinct
855 age-groups. Nearest in age to him were his older sisters,
602 children of his own mother, of his father's other wives, and of his father's brothers' wives. When he began to talk he
[601] addressed all these as 'sister', or rather as 'my sister', and they took a kindly interest in him, especially if he were a boy and therefore to be removed from them when the time came for him to live in the boys' dormitory. They played with him, they sometimes carried him about while the nurse girl
[262] did something else, they ground bulrush millet or roasted ground-nuts to give him as snacks. They were particularly
[868] concerned with teaching him to speak correctly, to say the right names for things, to use the correct terms for older
[533] people, and later to sing the refrains of little songs in their singing games.

Above this sister group in age came his own mother and his other 'mothers', who were his father's other wives and his father's brothers' wives. All of them he was taught to
[601] address as 'my mother'. His father's sisters on the other hand, who took a special interest in his upbringing, he addressed as 'woman father', and the name implied some
[554] measure of the authority which his father and his father's brothers exercised in the household and in the village.

Above this generation of mothers and woman-fathers came the grandmothers. Pre-eminent in supervising his life
[601] and the care taken of him was his father's own mother, but he also addressed as 'grandmother' his grandfather's other wives and his grandfather's brothers' wives.

The same triple grouping by age and generation, which
561 the child learned by degrees to distinguish among his own
357 kin, was repeated among the 'helpers' in his mother's and grandmother's households. There were young children who were the children of the household staff. His nurse girl and her fellow nurse girls formed a slightly senior group in this division, both by reason of their responsibilities as well as of their age. Above them, as the next generation, were the

864 of cloth hanging in front from a bead or grass waistband.
[291] They were all taught before that age, and most stringently after it, to sit correctly. For the little girls, this meant kneel-
516 ing first and then sitting with the legs tucked on one side.
864 They always smoothed down their scrap of cloth so that their genitals were covered. Little boys often squatted, sitting on their heels. Their correct position however, especially when eating food, was to sit with their legs crossed and the soles of their feet pressed against their thighs, and their cloth or skin apron arranged to cover their genitals.

Any rudeness in speech or action towards parents or elders
867 was corrected at once, and the child was told: 'That is not the Ngoni way.' Studied courtesy included looking down when addressed by an elder, and as we saw in Chapter II, never walking behind a group of elders but passing in front of them, bending slightly forward and murmuring: 'I am before your eyes.'

Play places and playthings

857 In spite of what appeared like a somewhat restrictive régime, Ngoni children were merry and busy all their waking hours. Occasionally lack of health, or an awkward temperament, produced a child who sat around by himself, or glowered at
[157] other children, or was spiteful and vindictive. For the most
[855] part their nurse girls and older sisters paid them the attention they demanded, were always ready to provide distractions and amusements, and showed them how to use all that lay around them as playthings.

The places where they played depended on their age and mobility. The youngest children stayed round the hut and inside the fence. Occasionally the nurse girls and older sisters in the afternoons took them to a 'playground' on the out-
● [868] skirts of the village, where the older girls were accustomed to meet and practise dancing, or to thread beads and chatter. When the harvest was in, some of the older children about five and six years old, helped by the nurse girls, made 'play

In the dry season which was the dancing season children from three and four years upwards spent hours watching the 535 older boys and girls dancing. On the edge of the main group 468 small boys particularly would with intense solemnity and exaggerated movements practise steps and postures, singing meanwhile. The Ngoni used no drums and no musical instruments in their dancing, and despised the users of drums. [534] All their rhythm and synchrony was achieved by perfect unison of action and voice. The little boys practising solo on the edge of a dance-group listened intently every now and then to get the rhythm correctly, shifted their feet and stamped with the rest.

The little girls were collected together by older girls now 524 and then, and sometimes joined by the boys, to play games 533 of catch and various miming games such as choosing a lover, 857 hen and chickens, slave-raiding, baboons in the maize gardens. These were accompanied by songs in which the leader, or 'owner', of the game sang the story and the rest joined in the refrains. Many of these miming games called for alertness and co-operation, and the slow and solitary were soon shown up and laughed at. Another set of songs with refrains were ballads or stories without action, and these were listened to by the hour by the younger children towards the end of the day, especially if the singer of the ballad was a lively narrator.

Girl children of this age-group spent a lot of their time 868 watching adults and older girls doing their household work. In time they learned to imitate the actions of pounding and grinding, using a small pole or a stone, of sweeping with a frayed-out stalk, of winnowing or sieving with a little basket, or ladling food with a tiny wooden spoon. When they went to the gardens with their mother, they were given a small branch to carry home on their heads for the fire. Later the little girls had a tiny pot put on their head, perched on a miniature grass carrying-ring and went to the water-hole with their nurse girl to fill it and carry it home without spilling the water.

852 Children of Ngoni families, as also these others, chose their
304 own time to have their ears pierced, though sometimes their father or father's sister or father's mother reminded them that it was about time. It was nearly always soon after the second teeth had come, and children who delayed having it done were taunted by their fellows: 'You, are you afraid, my age-mate? See my ears already have bone in them.' This
[237] was a reference to the round plugs of bone inserted when the hole was large enough. A bit of thread was put in at first, then a small bit of grass, then a fine reed, and finally a bone plug. Ear piercing was always done in the cold weather so that the lobe of the ear would heal quickly. It was carried out by a leading woman of one of the Ngoni families, who watched the children to see how they took it. They knew it was a test of courage, and however much they were afraid it would hurt,
[152] they stood like little statues during the operation, with a face as set and expressionless as when they were being beaten.

Accountability for individual behaviour was one aspect of
866 the responsibility which Ngoni adults now began to demand
868 from children. Another aspect was the performance of their allotted tasks. The responsibility for cattle herding was in a sense a corporate responsibility of all the boys whose fathers owned cattle. The older herd-boys had in fact to answer for
[233] the condition of the cattle they brought back every evening to their owners. They passed on, however, a number of small duties, such as care of the calves, sheep and goats, to the younger boys, who in turn were held responsible by the older boys for performing these duties. The boys' world, centred in the dormitory, recognized grades of responsibility from which no one escaped.

Another facet of responsibility which was at a later stage
868 remarked on often by Ngoni adults, was seen in children's
[517] choice of leisure-time occupations, according to their individual manual and intellectual and artistic capacities. They stopped playing childish games and began instead to develope their skills in making things from local materials.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

All of them made their own axes, knobkerries and catapults for hunting. Some were interested in music and made shepherds' pipes, or one-stringed lyres, or hand pianos of metal strips affixed to a wooden base. They composed their own songs and airs for these instruments. Others showed ingenuity in making elaborate models of lorries and aeroplanes, or in carving heads of animals. Others liked to weave fibre into the wide-brimmed hats some herd-boys wore.

More significant still for their future social relationships, they began now to choose their own intimate friend and to form the friendship pacts which were characteristic of Ngoni society, and regarded by adults as important in the child's development. In the friendship pacts, especially those between boys, there was no implied or manifest restraint. They could have 'joking relations', and hence say outrageous things to each other. They could quarrel and make it up, and defy each other's wishes and decisions, without a final breach. The relationship between friends often lasted into later adult life, and was probably all the stronger for the occasional lapses and outbursts, and by the fact that in the daily companionship of friends the burden of observing 'respect' did not oppress them.

The boys' dormitory

The hut known as the boys' dormitory and the whole system of living which it represented was a traditional feature of Ngoni village life. In their culture it had three main purposes. Formerly, when as they said 'War was our school', it was the place where boys slept and lived together, and where they learned to defend themselves and to obey authority. It was in a sense the preparatory school for the regiment, and the herding of cattle was the basis of the curriculum. Once a boy went to sleep in a dormitory he never left it until he married, unless he was seriously ill. In the days of warfare, he learned in the dormitory and out herding the cattle, a knowledge of the bush and its wild life and of his fellows, and

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

VII

The Threshold of Adulthood (ii)

Knowledge and skills

867 Towards the end of the last chapter we said that in this fol-
●868 lowing chapter we would be concerned with the knowledge and skills which young adults in Ngoni society needed before they could assume the adult role of setting up and managing a new home, and of taking part in village and national affairs. Here and there in earlier chapters there have been references to 'men's affairs' and the 'world of women', suggesting that there was a range of knowledge, of activities and of competence in those activities for which preparation and training was needed for those on the threshold of adulthood.

In talking with the Ngoni about the way in which they were handing on their traditional knowledge to the younger generations, they often distinguished between two kinds of knowledge: one a wide range of perceptions and information necessary to carry out daily and occasional activities in the household and village; and the other, a corpus of traditional lore about natural phenomena, and about their history and law. This is not altogether a valid distinction since both kinds of knowledge were traditional but it is a convenient way of approaching the two kinds of instruction given to young
867 adults. The Ngoni were often apt to stress the importance of
[186] this second kind of knowledge because they resented the attitude of many Europeans that the Ngoni, and other Afri-
[577] can peoples, were 'ignorant' until the schools came. This touched them on a very sore point since they set great store on knowledge and wisdom in men and women, and did

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

372
516
291
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868

24. Learning to make fire

25. Explaining how to do it

[facing page 129]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

128 point, and other kinds of knowledge which in Ngoni culture were the basis for performing certain traditional activities. This second part of the chapter I have called traditional skills, to avoid the clumsiness of constantly differentiating between knowledge, skill and activities. Again, as in the first part of the chapter, we have to be selective, and I have 128 chosen a few out of the typical Ngoni skills taught to young 868 adults to make them efficient producers in the village economy, able to manage and direct various units of workers, and to be 'good company' in those pursuits which were for leisure time enjoyment. The young men's traditional skills which we [462] shall look at are the care of cattle, hunting and some of their crafts; the young women's are the care of property, the storage and use of food-stuffs and some women's crafts. At the end of the chapter we shall look at certain Ngoni 'arts', which demanded individual and corporate skill of a special nature.

Men's skills: Care of cattle

868 The senior herd-boys, sons of cattle-owners, carried consider- able responsibilities for the herds under their care during 233 the day. By the time they gave up herding they had learned a great deal about cattle. Understanding about what constituted good herding had been handed on to them by their seniors, and they were well aware that losing an animal, failing to find good grazing so that the beasts became thin, letting them escape into the cultivated fields—all these were signs of bad herding and they would be punished accordingly by the cattle-owners. The daily scrutiny of the herds by the owners was made the occasion for blame or commendation. Every evening the owners of the cattle stood by the kraal gate as the boys drove the animals in, and the head herd-boys reported to the owners if a cow was sick, or if a bull had been mating.

Cattle-owners, since they were anxious that any cases of illness should be promptly reported, made a point of calling

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

the older herd-boys when they were discussing 'cattle problems' in the evening. They took them into the kraal and showed them signs of the cattle not being well from the condition of the skin, udders, hoofs and mouth. The older boys were also called to be present if medicine was given to cattle, either some specific known to the owners, or treatment given by a 'specialist' called in, who might have real skill and knowledge about sick animals or be trying his luck with secret remedies known only to himself. The herd-boys were taught to notice the condition of other cattle than the ones of which they had charge, and to report on them. These might be cattle in other villages, or cattle belonging to their father's house 'boarded out' in another kraal according to Ngoni practice. The older herd-boys went with their father and his brothers to local markets where cattle were bought and sold, and listened to arguments about their condition which could make a difference of several pounds in the price they fetched.

When it had been decided in the village to kill a beast, for eating, or for selling the meat, or for a sacrifice, it was usually a young adult who was called to spear the animal. Some young men became adept at planting the spear behind the left shoulder in such a way that the beast dropped dead at once. At times two or more stabs were necessary, but it was a matter of pride and no small skill to succeed the first time. The senior herd-boys, who had driven the animal out of the kraal after separating it from its fellows, stood close round and watched attentively, for the stab had to be both accurate and forceful. The reputation of being skilful at killing a beast, of being a 'one stab' man, was greatly desired by herd-boys. They coveted equally the reputation of being skilful at flaying the beast. With carefully sharpened knives, in a few quick deft strokes, the young men slit the skin, opened it up and began to cut up the carcase. Like assistants at a surgical operation, the senior herd-boys held the knives, lifted a limb, turned back the skin, collected the blood, removed the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

231 561 severed portions. On branches of fresh leaves, brought by the younger herd-boys, were piled the sections of the animal, down to the last bit of intestine, for distribution according to a fixed Ngoni pattern.

231 825 A senior man of the house owning the beast, when all was ready, 'counted' all the parts, that is he named each part, head, horns, tail, feet, joints and internal organs, and each was pointed out to him as being present. The herd-boys standing round [868] learned the names of the organs and the sections of the animal, and heard the names and status of the men to whom the parts were assigned. The herd-boys of the family of the owner were given certain symbolic parts: an ear, an eye and the nose, for hearing, seeing and smelling; parts of an artery and of an intestine as controlling the blood flow and the waste material, and the rectum as ejecting waste; and the foot for walking steadily and fast.

252 [251] Some of the meat was roasted over a fire, parts like the stomach and intestines were cleaned and boiled, some was dried slowly on a rack over a fire of green wood, and put in fibre bags for keeping. The blood was taken to the head woman of the house owning the herd. She cooked it with the fat round the kidneys till it coagulated and formed a dish, salty and meaty, much liked by the Ngoni, and rather akin to black pudding. The women also took over any spare fat and rendered it down and clarified it to use as [278] unguents.

233 868 The young adult who had had six or seven years of herding cattle and had advanced to be a senior herd-boy, had acquired not only certain manual skills such as those just described, but also some knowledge of the anatomy of cattle, some idea of the social attitudes towards cattle and their ownership, and some idea of their economic value to the Ngoni. For certain restricted ritual purposes, a cow in calf had to be killed for sacrifice, and herd-boys saw the foetus removed when the cow was cut up. They were also often present at the birth of calves in the bush, and had to wait

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

round to protect the cow and calf, until they were strong enough to go back to the kraal. 868 233

The intricate system of ownership of cattle, including the relation between a house and a herd, and between certain herds and the spirits of former great people, was part of a herd-boy's background knowledge. He listened at the kraal gate to the men discussing questions of ownership. When a decision was taken to kill a beast, or sell one, or to transfer one or more at a marriage, or to hand over a beast in payment of a fine, the senior boys knew which group of beasts in the kraal must be driven out to be looked over in order that a selection could be made by the man concerned. [422] [825]

The Ngoni classified their cattle according to age, sex, colouring, size and shape of horns, whether castrated or not, whether in calf or not. Knowledge of the extensive series of names used for these 'classes' of cattle was part of a herd-boy's A.B.C. By the time he was old enough to be told to drive certain cattle out of the kraal, designated by their class, he knew exactly which ones were meant. He could also use the cattle terminology to be precise in telling an owner about a beast which had strayed or one that had a sore hoof, or one that was giving an exceptionally good or poor flow of milk. [192]

Herd-boys learned that cattle constituted a form of wealth, not only by the numbers a man possessed and could display, but also because they were easily realizable assets. Cattle could be sold to pay taxes, debts and court fines; and to pay men working for an Ngoni owner of cotton or tobacco gardens. They learned also that since cattle could be converted into money, the men of the house owning the cattle could use the money to buy cloth. This cloth, the property of the house, was kept and looked after by the senior women, who would lend it out temporarily to young men wishing to dress up smartly to go courting or go on a visit. [556] [432] [465] [248] [249] [292]

In the modern forms of Nyasaland economy it was a 177 233 234

177 natural translation for Ngoni young men to become butchers
233 and dairymen, if they could apprentice themselves to a rela-
234 tive, or if their father could put up the necessary capital outlay for starting independently. This conversion of knowledge and traditional skill into a channel offering higher rewards in cash incomes found the young Ngoni adult well prepared to earn his living.

Hunting

224 There was an aura of manhood and of distinction about all forms of hunting among the Ngoni. They did it because they enjoyed it, and not seriously to augment their family's food supply. There were two main corporate forms of hunting: the chase, when hare and deer were hunted with dogs; and killing lions and leopards. The first was the pursuit of a Ngoni gentleman which no one wanted to miss during the right season; and the second was the act of warriors defending themselves and their cattle and villages from marauders.

Ngoni boys in their herding days acquired some of the
868 skills needed later for hunting with the men. They made
224 traps to catch birds from the hair of cows tails or smeared bird lime on branches. They developed great adroitness at hitting birds on the wing with knobkerries. In these pursuits, which for them were half fun, half to get bits of extra food, they were training their eye, learning to observe the habits of birds and small animals, learning to track them, and developing that combination of patience, prompt action and accuracy of aim essential to successful hunting.

Some of the Ngoni men liked to go off hunting on their own, usually those who had a gun. Fathers used to take their sons on such hunting trips, and use the opportunity to teach them how to track successfully, how to put up with hunger and thirst on long marches, how to load and fire a gun. One young man described how his father used to point out to him on such trips the birds and butterflies in the bush. On one trip his father taught him to use his muzzle-loading gun, how

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

to carry it safely when loaded and how to aim carefully. His father, who was a noted preacher, then likened aiming in shooting to aims in life: 'There are many things in the world, and when you see them you will think that you can have them all at once. But you will fail if you have no aim and do not choose what you want to aim at.' 868 224

The 'chase', the main Ngoni form of hunting in a group, took place in the hot dry season, after the grass fires and before the first rains fell. A leading man who wanted to hunt sent messengers to neighbouring villages to announce that a hunt would be held on a certain day in such and such an area. The form of the message was the same as that for mobilization for war. The villagers turned out in companies according to their old military formations; and on the night before the hunt they slept apart from their wives, as when mobilized for a campaign. On reaching the hunting site, the slope of a hill, or the head of a valley, or a shallow depression, the important people were in the centre, the ordinary men around them and the youths on the wing. All could come to the hunt, masters and servants alike. 224 [221]

Etiquette was strict about the kill. The first man who wounded the game with his spear called out his name, the second who inflicted a wound did the same, and so did the man who dealt the final blow. All those three were entitled to some part of the animal according to his share in the killing, and part was set aside for the 'owner' of the hunt. Spears were used in this kind of hunt, and those who had no spears, chiefly the non-Ngoni servants and lesser villagers, used long hunting-knives and knobkerries. No guns were taken on this kind of chase, but dogs accompanied the huntsmen. These dogs were trained for hunting and tracking game, and were lean and fierce but under control by their owners. Accompanying the main body of huntsmen were skilled trackers who knew the area well and could guide the hunt, calling out at intervals one of the Ngoni war-cries: 'Listen. Do you hear me? I say the game is over there.'

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

Women's skills: Guardianship of property

Ngoni social organization, as we saw in Chapter I, placed the guardianship of all wealth except cattle in the hands of the women who were heads of houses. As a Ngoni girl grew towards adulthood and the time drew nearer when she would marry and leave her home for a strange village, the leading women of her father's house initiated her into the skills needed to create and preserve the forms of property for which she would some day be responsible. 429 462 868

First among these skills came the care of the hut and compound. The framework and roof of the huts were built by men, but the walls were mudded and the floors of the hut and veranda were strengthened and polished by women. Ngoni women of good family did not often do the actual plastering of mud upon the wooden framework of the hut. It was considered too dirty and exhausting a job for them to do, but they had to know how it should be done, and what standards of good work involved, in order that they might later instruct others. During a hut building Ngoni girls might be seen tucking up their clothes and rather half-heartedly slapping mud on the walls, to the good-humoured jesting of the village women who were vigorous and expert at the job. The girl's grandmother stood by and said at intervals: 'That is too thick; it will fall off. Fill up those cracks. Smooth over those joins,' and so on. The girls shrugged their shoulders and obeyed while Grandmother was watching, but gave up as soon as she went away. 462 342

The flat-ended flails with which the floor was beaten were heavy and girls were generally unable to use them expertly, but they were made to watch the process, with its seemingly endless beating of the earth floor compounded of river mud, ant-hill clay and cowdung. Once the floor was beaten so that it was level and all cracks had disappeared, the Ngoni girls were made to get down on their knees and learn how to polish it with damp ashes and a smear of cowdung, rubbed [413] 356 868 [287]

Maize, the Ngoni staple cereal which had replaced the tall millet they had formerly preferred, was stored on the cob in the grain stores which were described in Chapter IV. Women whose husbands could afford to hire labour to work in their fields often had three or four large grain stores, and their presence in the compound conferred importance on their owners. Inside the hut were earthenware jars of beans, cowpeas, bulrush millet, clarified fat and butter, dried chillies, while from the rafters hung bunches of herbs and dried green spinach. Some of the jars were polished a shining black, others had a blue or green glaze on them. It was a Ngoni girl's ambition to go to her new home when married with a good array of storage pots, baskets, mats, spoons, stirring sticks, and a wooden meat-dish. This would show her in-laws that she was industrious and intended to have a high standard of household management in her new home.

251 [262] [556] [415] [323] 583 577

Varieties of food and their preparation

Ngoni women prided themselves on feeding their households well, both in variety, quantity and quality. Although they could rely on helpers to work in the gardens and to do some of the preparing of food before cooking, they always managed their own supplies and provided a variety of menus, and showed that they could cook well themselves and instruct others.

511 577 [357]

Ngoni girls clustered round the fire when a special dish was being prepared. They watched every movement of their mother as she lifted one pot off the fire and put another on, measured out water in a spoon to add to the sauce, stirred the maize porridge strongly and evenly to get rid of lumps and bubbles, washed each stirring stick in a pot of water before using it again.

252 868

There was variety in the dishes served from day to day in big Ngoni households, usually in the form of a main dish of cereal with side dishes of broth and vegetables and less often of meat or chicken. The main dish was served in the

262 [415]

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are 857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve 233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the [868] cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

628 There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather 233 than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into 857 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between [541] the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

233 In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd- 833 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village 857 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief, 631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this 587
arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted [851]
place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return
of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the 595
children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, 592
the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children
of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior
wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was
more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division
was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were
expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to
each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement 644
of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions 631
into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in
charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of
politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with
two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers 593
while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a 182
clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal
residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the
Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was 562
determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage
males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent
and succession were traced through males, the pattern of
segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the
organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetu-
ated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from
them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children 594
did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises
a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the 613
organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the
payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in
status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired 554
many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been
divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these
considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were
many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended
on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some
extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural
work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children 855
once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary
family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be [869]
trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [603]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of 647
people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came pro- 648
vision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Adminis- 693
tration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary.
Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. [212]
At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created, the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[10] were employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The 692
Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences [681]
of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a 652
treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Adminis- tration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the [871]
Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping. The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells [653]
and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production, for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for [647]
these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the 651
Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[10] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapasu* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family genealogies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] [191] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty-[162] [592] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces-[361] sible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in-[342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was [871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all [797] their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.
[182] In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
184 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
178 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
184 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
561 mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
[648] The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

177 561 464 The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, [871] if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons [434] at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or [583] seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that [885] earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the head-ring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any probition on marriage until [582] a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no [167] wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. 814
Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on [224]
Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry [172]
grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous secessions from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Ciwere had gone. All the people shouted "Ciwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni 814
succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the 871
schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Cibambo, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred 173
to historical events which were illustrated in songs or record- 537
ed in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, 791
called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni 177
Christian leaders went further than this. They used the 173
797

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'. 622 [554]

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders. 463 177 [871]

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the 797 871 [177] 159 797 [577] [796] [184] [851]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the
797 church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been
159 threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition
875 and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary
[622] behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the
● [871] playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organize his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described
177 in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose
797 partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or
871 ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose per-
186 sonal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected
871 their boys who had been to school and had entered European
463 employment away from their homes, to find work which
554 assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

position. They wanted them to be, or to become, senior clerks, trusted store assistants, valued houseboys, foremen in charge of other men, hospital assistants. They wanted them, in other words, to be in positions where Ngoni traits would be appreciated, and where good behaviour and self-control, ability to supervise others, responsibility and initiative, obedience to orders, would be recognized and rewarded.

In conclusion here is a record of a conversation I heard in the village of a very senior chief, so senior that he was given the title of *Inkosi* when his subjects addressed him. The chief, who was then in his seventies, but active and vigorous, was sitting in a chair on the veranda of his hut, out of the sun's glare, with several of the senior men of the village behind him. Two young teachers in charge of a school came to greet him. They bent one knee as they squatted in front of him, as they had been taught to do as children, gave him the customary greeting, and waited in silence till he spoke.

'How is your school?'

'The classes are full and the children are learning well, *Inkosi*.'

'How do they behave?'

'Like Ngoni children, *Inkosi*.'

'What do they learn?'

'They learn reading, writing and arithmetic, scripture and geography and drill.'

'Is that education?'

'It is education, *Inkosi*.'

'No! No! Education is *very* broad, *very* deep. It is not only in books, it is learning to live. I am an old man. When I was a boy I went with the army to the Bemba war. Then the mission came and I went to school. I became a teacher. Then I was a chief. I have seen this country change, and now the young men go away to work. I tell you Ngoni children must learn how to live, and how to work and earn money, and how to build up our land. *Uyezwa na?*' (Do you hear?)

'*Yebo Inkosi*.' (Yes, O chief.)

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

they find dirt and untidiness compel the people to turn out and sweep the village, and rebuild their houses.

Education is spreading at a great rate, and there are fifty schools already established among the people with about 7,000 scholars in attendance. These pay fees for their attendance. And so great is the thirst for reading that last year more than 4,000 volumes were bought by the people.

A Christian church is rapidly growing up, and at certain religious seasons a great congregation of over 7,000 people may be seen gathered from all quarters.

Yet it would be a pity if with this inrush of new life the old tribal characteristics were lost in a wretched caricature of European methods. There is nothing more slovenly than a lithe athletic African dressed in European cast off clothing, or more repulsive than a lad trying to be an Englishman when he should be an Ngoni proud of his nationality. And this is one of the most serious problems that is constantly before us, to guide this people in their formative period, that in the end they may not be denationalised, and made hideous and ridiculous in a distorted and unnatural mould, to preserve all national customs which are not evil in themselves and yet evolve a people honest, industrous, intelligent, and Christian, who will have some harmonious and beautiful part to take when the world's orchestra is filling up to play its symphony of peace and prosperity.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

114 second-hand account of the Ngoni, and some relevant information is given by Soga (1930).

Good accounts of pre-conquest social life are not so numerous. The most useful accounts are those of Wiese (1891 and 1900), Angus (1899), and Deare (1928), based on observations in the years immediately prior to the war of 1898. For the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland there are the works of Elmslie (1899) and Fraser (1901 and 1914). Read, in 1935, was the first to apply modern methods of inquiry and has published comparative material on the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, Fort Jameson and southern Nyasaland, and on the neighbouring Cewa.

Some of this literature has found its way back to the Ngoni [872] themselves, and children nowadays acquire their knowledge of the exploits of their ancestors as much from school books as from oral tradition. Under these circumstances, I decided that no useful 121 purpose would be served by my trying to make conventional inquiries into tribal history with the aim of establishing what had in fact occurred in the past. I found it was impossible to tell whether similarity between an informant's account of a past event and a previously published version was due to common origin, independent invention, or good teaching in school. I was however concerned with the quite different problem of what use the Ngoni made of their history,[4] and I collected the histories of many counties, villages and people. For the material in this chapter I have therefore relied on the fullest and most lucid of these many versions of [115] Ngoni history, that by Chibambo, an Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, supplemented by the writings of Poole, a member of the Administration at Fort Jameson for many years, and Lancaster, who was a game warden in the area.

2. *The Nguni background*

Before we can understand the Ngoni of central Africa we must 173 first consider social conditions farther south, for it was from the south that many Ngoni came. From the sixteenth century onwards, south-eastern Africa was peopled by subsistence cultivators growing cereals and herding cattle. The Nguni, as the southernmost branch of these peoples is now called, occupied the area which has become Swaziland, Natal and the Transkei. At first the Nguni were not organized into powerful states but from the common background of Nguni society there developed, from the last quarter of the eighteenth century onwards, several strong political units. We may mention among others the Zulu empire under Shaka, the Swazi

[4] See my 'History in a changing society'.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

between political and judicial actions is not surprising. There is a connexion of this kind in every society, and the connexion is a particularly close one in societies like the Ngoni, where the same individuals act as legislators, administrators, and judges, and where the court does not confine itself merely to the legal issues in a dispute but examines the whole network of social relationships which are involved, with the object of restoring social order. 692

There are three ways in which this connexion can be seen. First, the court may be used as a vehicle for implementing the policy of the Native Authority. Secondly, the Administration may use the court to implement its policy. Thirdly, positions in the court may be used to satisfy men who seek political authority. We have to deal with the third point in our discussion of the development of the Native Authority. [557]

A chief anxious to gain favour with the Administration sees that his court enforces with heavy penalties the various regulations with which, for the time being, the Administration is concerned, such as those relating to agricultural control, and school attendance. A chief who does not wish to co-operate will neglect these regulations. Thus a few years ago there was a regulation that once a child had begun a two-year course at school, he or she must stay to finish it. In one county this rule was enforced much as the letter of the law indicated, in another it was completely ignored despite the protests of school-teachers, and in a third it was interpreted to mean that every child must go to school. About a year later the Administration decided that as promulgated the rule was *ultra vires*, and said it must be withdrawn. Nevertheless in some counties it is still enforced. These chiefs and courts are not being merely capricious. Some chiefs support the missions and their schools, others oppose them; some are in alliance with the school-teachers and other intelligentsia in their counties, others oppose them. These various attitudes and alignments are reflected in the way in which they respond to a new law. This is particularly noticeable when public delicts, such as absence from school, are concerned, for in general the court is its own law-enforcing agency. There is no independent police force to bring offenders to court whether or not the court wants to see them, but only the assessors, court clerk, messengers and others who, when they are not busy about their own affairs, may if they are so inclined wander through the villages looking for unlicensed dogs and unlicensed beer. Thus the enforcement of law relating to public delicts depends largely on the relationship between the Native Authority and the common people. 696 557 648 692 [872] [625] [693]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

a few weeks. They were both dominated by important Ngoni families, and both the headquarters of subordinate chiefs. They both represented that blend of old and new in Ngoni life which was continually keeping the anthropologist on her toes. 121

Enkodlweni was far from main roads and centres of modern life. When I first went there my lorry cut a swathe of grass knee-high on the so-called road to the village, and the radiator, choked with grass seed, boiled all the time. I lived in the mud-and-wattle hut maintained by the chief for visiting teachers and missionaries opposite the school, a four-standard school under an able young headmaster, well educated and well trained. He and his schoolboys, the resident evangelist and the court clerk represented the new elements in village life. Yet they were not cut off from the Ngoni way of life—on the contrary they were very much part of it and very proud of being Ngoni. The school had been taught in the Ngoni language, akin to old Zulu, until a few years before my visit, and the children were still given Ngoni proverbs to write in their copy-books. Several of the older people had books in their huts written in Zulu as well as in English, and Ngoni was still spoken as the home language in many of the households. The older women knew the traditional special vocabulary used by women only, and dressed their hair in the high chignon style. Proverbs were quoted often in the court and in church; stories of war against the Bemba people in Northern Rhodesia forty years ago were told by the kraal gate as if they happened last year. Several leading Ngoni clans were represented in the village, and each had their own praise songs and forms of addressing their ancestors. 105 621 [342] [872]

The old evangelist, himself a member of a famous clan, had been threatened, thirty years before, with death by the former chief if he continued to teach and preach. He stayed, notwithstanding, and had become one of the trusted counsellors of the present chief. During the day he joined the

FAMILY LIFE FOR THE YOUNG CHILD

It was the fathers who decided at what age a child should go to school, and having once enrolled the boy or girl and paid the fees, the fathers insisted on regular attendance. 593 [872]

All Ngoni fathers showed affection for their young children, some consistently and others when it occurred to them. They picked them up and carried them about, held their hand while they tried their first steps, listened to their attempts to speak correctly, held them in their arms when they sat on the veranda. In one village twin boys aged four were devoted to their father and he to them. When he walked about, he held a hand of each. When he sat on the veranda they were always beside him and he had an arm round each. When he was elsewhere, the twins wandered about the compound disconsolately, hand in hand, rejecting the advances of their nurse girls and uncertain what to do until he appeared again.

Ngoni fathers had to be consulted in cases of sickness when the grandmother's remedies had failed and specialist help was needed. Then the father and his brothers and their father decided whether to summon a diviner or a herbalist, and arranged for the throwing of lots or the search for 'medicines', and paid the agreed fee when the cure worked. 593 757

It was part of Ngoni tradition to keep the knowledge of death away from young children. The father was held responsible for seeing that his children were kept away from the hut where the corpse was awaiting burial, and from the funeral itself. When men and women of leading Ngoni families were buried at the edge of the kraal, and the fence enlarged so that the cattle stamped over the grave, the explanation given (though it was not the only reason) was that 'the young children should not know or fear death in this village'. 593 764 858

The physical surroundings of the small child

The two diagrams, overleaf, illustrate the layout of the hut and compound in typical Ngoni households. Some of these 342 351

VILLAGE LIFE FOR OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS

The youngest boys were not expected to herd cattle until 233
they were ten or eleven years old. Their work was to look 857
after the calves, sheep and goats, sometimes following the 561
cattle to the grazing ground, sometimes wandering round the edge of the village, avoiding the cultivated areas until after harvest. At that time cattle, calves, sheep and goats were driven into the stubble and left to forage.

As a result of dormitory life, combined with cattle-herding, 155
a definite ideal herd-boy personality developed. This was 157
fostered by the hero-worship of the older herd-boys by the young ones. It was also built up by the praise or blame meted out for herding well or badly by the older herd-boys to younger ones, and by the cattle-owners. This 'ideal herds- 157
man' was used by Ngoni ministers and teachers living in the 797
villages to relate their teaching about Christianity to the life around them. Prayers near the kraal, conducted by an Ngoni minister each evening, or before people went on a journey, often began with the words 'Jesus our shepherd, keep us well'. Young teachers often said to me how they always listened as boys when a prayer began like this, and that in school their favourite Bible story was that of David the herd-boy.

When there was a school in the village or near by which 233
the Ngoni elders approved of, the herd-boys had a busy life. 857
They watered the cattle very early, took them to graze and 872
milked them. Then they went to school from ten to two, taking the cattle out grazing afterwards. In the cold weather they went to school from six to ten and herded cattle the rest of the day, after the sun had dried the dew off the grass. School attendance depended on the attitude of fathers to the new learning, and how the village elders regarded the local mission and its teachers. The boys whose fathers had no 872
cattle, in general the non-Ngoni elements in the village, were free to attend school continuously since they had no herding responsibilities. There was some jeering among the boys in the dormitory at those who only went to school and did not

872 go herding. School was sometimes regarded as an easy option where you sat still all day and repeated things after the teacher. This was far from being the case in a village like [875] Enkodlweni where the headmaster was well trained and kept the boys on their toes. In such schools the boys themselves were enthusiastic about learning, and regarded going to school as a dignified and worth-while occupation, and not a childish amusement.

Girls' life in the village

858 When the girls had their second teeth and were acknowledged to have reached the new stage in their development, there was no abrupt transition for them, as for their brothers, from the household circle to the dormitory, or from the women's world to the men's world. They continued as part of the women's world; they changed their occupations and their daily routine on the whole very little; and they went on sleeping in the hut of a widowed aunt or grandmother. All that was said however in the earlier part of the chapter about accountability for their behaviour was as true as for the boys.

The Ngoni girls of leading families formed a distinct group, 561 called in the age-set terms 'children' until they were about [565] eleven and then 'immature girls' until they reached puberty. There was in Ngoni thought and practice a clear division between immature and mature girls, and we shall see what this involved in girls' life in Chapters VI and VII. The age-set terms used to distinguish between children and immature girls did not imply any real differences in ways of living, manners and occupations. The girls between about seven and fourteen were looked on as belonging to a 'girls' circle', and this girls' circle had certain distinctive features.

561 In the first place the tendency of the girls to draw apart 562 from the boys of their own age, already evident before the 535 coming of the second teeth, was now more or less complete 628 with the boys' withdrawal into dormitory life and their preoccupation with herding. Later, about the age of twelve

858 upbringing, they would be unwilling to consider an alliance if
581 the girl's mother were known to be a doubtful character or a careless housewife. The girl's prospects in marriage depended not only on her own reputation and character, but on the household milieu in which she was known to have grown up.

The Ngoni girls in this circle were not only an exclusive
561 group. They were a carefully guarded and protected one.
858 The surveillance of the grandmother, as the woman head of
[603] the girl's father's house, was dominant. Besides watching to see if the girl's home was proving a satisfactory training
357 ground, she chose a 'companion' or 'attendant' for the girl,
855 to take the place of the nurse girl. She was a little older than the Ngoni girl, but near enough in age to enjoy and enter into all her occupations and amusements. This companion, chosen from among the helpers in the grandmother's household, grew up with the Ngoni girl, waited on her to some extent, went everywhere with her, slept in the same hut and ate in the same household.

In her daily life in the village an Ngoni girl had in her
561 circle all those whom she called 'sisters' and their compan-
● 872 ions. There was one exception to the exclusiveness of this
[601] group, and that was the school. Many Ngoni fathers who decided that school was a good thing for their boys, decided that it would also be wise to send their girls to school, especially if they showed signs of exceptional ability and leadership. This was sometimes carried through in the teeth of opposition from the grandmother, but the father usually won the day. For Ngoni girls school was an escape from the relative dullness and monotony of compound life, as also from the continual surveillance which became stricter as they grew older and entered the immature girls' group. The Ngoni girls enjoyed mixing with boys, being taught by men, learning to read and write, hearing Bible stories. The daugh-
[565] ters of Ngoni chiefs and heads of leading clans were easily distinguishable in the schools by their controlled and dignified behaviour in class and in the playground. They were not

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when asked questions. They took their school work seriously in order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be transferred at their marriage would be greater according to whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or even VI. 561 872 565 [583]

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daughters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. They and their companions, according to their growth and strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water, grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household, where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores. As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time with the young children, or washing themselves and their clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rubbing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more amusing side of the daily routine. 561 857 592 512 [302] [301]

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classificatory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage. The friend was always from another compound and of a leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream together. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained 572

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

797 Central Africa. The U.M.C.A. subsequently concentrated its activi-
795 ties in another part of the District, so that the two main denominations are now the Dutch Reformed Church and the Catholic Church. There was for a time a branch of the Livingstonia Mission (Free Church of Scotland) in the area, while more recently a Seventh Day Adventist Mission has begun work. Since 1924 there have been some adherents to the Watch Tower[1] amongst the Ngoni, but this movement did not become important until some years later.

797 Primary education is carried on in mission schools subsidized by
872 the Administration, but there is also a Native Authority school over which the chiefs exercise some influence and which is to some extent supported by Native Treasury funds. The teachers in the elementary
[875] schools live in the villages, but they do not exercise very much influence outside their classrooms. This does not appear to have been the case in the past, when there was greater hostility between the different missions and when the missions tended to disregard the tribal authorities. The teachers then seem to have set themselves up as headmen on their own, and schools were built without the permission of the local headmen. In many cases where the issue between the missions was undecided, there were two schools in the same village. In the middle 'thirties many of these so-called schools were closed on the initiative of the Administration and the teachers who remain are now more interested in education than in politics.

872 A village school serves more than one village, so that the children of a neighbourhood containing, say, half a dozen villages get to know each other and visit in each other's villages. Certain dances and songs,
[595] known as *konsert*, are performed by parties of schoolchildren going from
[533] one village to another, and this leads to similar inter-village dancing in the evenings organized by groups of boys. At the end of term a number of schools of the same denomination combine to perform a rather more elaborate programme of songs and dances, and these displays are attended by many adults.

797 The deacons and evangelists are of greater importance in the
794 political life of the tribe than are the school teachers. Deacons take a certain initiative in settling disputes in the village, and they report to their missions deaths and serious sins that affect their people. They arrange for religious instruction for catechumens and may on occasion organize opposition to some practice that has been declared wrong by
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3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the
797 church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been
159 threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition
875 and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary
[622] behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the
[871] playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organize his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described
177 in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose
797 partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or
871 ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose per-
186 sonal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected
871 their boys who had been to school and had entered European
463 employment away from their homes, to find work which
554 assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

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FR5 Ngoni FR5

boys and young men, so long as they were in the village. Ngoni men insisted that their children should be correctly trained, and they were contemptuous of Cewa and other tribal groups who left it 'all to the women'. The handing on of correct behaviour by the mother-in-law to her daughter-in-law was, they considered, essential, and one of the reasons why young men in the central kingdom liked to 'marry up' was that they could count on the careful grounding in all the canons of behaviour which their wives had received. 867 [186 563]

CHAPTER V

AGE SETS

THE Ngoni brought with them to Nyasaland an age-set system akin to that among the South-eastern Bantu, which was an important element in their social structure. In pre-European days the division into cattle-herders or pre-warriors, warriors, and post-warriors or senior men, regulated the tasks and responsibilities of boys and men in other spheres besides those of warfare. At the beginning of this section, when reviewing age sets as one of the constituent forms of Ngoni social organization, I said that some features of an age-set system had persisted. In comparison with age-grouping in the other Nyasaland tribes it was distinctively Ngoni in form; it influenced behaviour patterns in inter-group and intra-group relations; and in it were recognized certain responsibilities and activities belonging to the different groups based on age. 561

Among the distinctively Ngoni elements in the age-set system were the private nature of the puberty ritual and the absence of initiation schools; the organization of boys' life in the *laweni*; the strong ties between age mates up to marriage; the selective principle in designating senior men and women as *madoda* and *manina*; and a different kind of selective principle in the formation of friendship pacts between individuals of the same age. In observing the role of age sets in Ngoni village society, the two main groups which were constantly in evidence as groups were the older boys and girls and the senior men and women. These groups not only carried out activities together, but also showed evidence of the strength of the internal ties linking members of an age set. There were, however, no sharp edges to these groups, either in terms of actual age or physiological development or of exclusive membership. The following list of terms applied to age sets in the two main Ngoni areas shows primarily the difference in designation between males and females according to broad age grouping, but it illustrates also the fact that the terminology applied to the age sets did not always coincide [881] [572]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 boys took more interest and more part in adult occupations and affairs,
866 the emergence of leadership among Ngoni boys of high-ranking families was watched by their elders and recognized by their age mates. This was the formative period when a boy's capacity to succeed his father in a position of authority was carefully observed and judged. The Ngoni had ways of passing over a man who was a physical weakling, a coward in face of danger, a sadistic bully to weaker men, a pursuer of women and a breaker-up of marriages. The *madoda* in a Ngoni village, who appeared to let the boys in the *laweni* manage their own affairs without interfering, had nevertheless a shrewd idea of who was making good and who was proving disappointing. Their comments, showing continued observation over a long period, were often expressed when two or three friends and age mates from the *laweni* decided to go off to the south to work together. The *madoda* would then say: 'We hope they will come back soon and not be "lost". So and so is like his father and he will help us here in the village'; or they might comment: 'Good riddance, they were always hanging round the girls—worthless ones, indeed' (*wa chabe ndithu*).

881 It has already been pointed out that there was no circumcision school
856 nor public initiation rite among the Ngoni. At puberty the ritual observed was a private and personal affair. On a boy's first nocturnal emission his age mates informed an older boy in the *laweni*, who told him to go at once before it was light and bathe in the river, and to do so
[823 each morning after an emission. This use of cold water was believed to
827] give a boy strength and virility. The boy was also instructed by the older boys in the *laweni* on how to behave to his equals and his elders and to women. This stage was called *ukuchayiwa nga' manzi*, 'to be beaten with water', and was not reported to the older people. When the older people noticed that the boy's voice was breaking, his father inquired whether he had passed puberty and, on being assured of this, he found a man who knew the *uludengele* medicine. The father killed a goat, and the medicine man took some of the unchewed cud from the goat's stomach, mixed it with the bitter *uludengele* root and put it on a pan over a fire. This took place near the gate of the kraal or near the parents' hut, with the father and the father's male relatives standing by. When the mixture boiled, the boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the pan one after the other and lick each one quickly. At the same time he kept jumping over the fire and striking his elbows against his sides. The Ngoni believed that this medicine gave boys physical strength and stamina and they administered it to their servants' sons as well. It was still practised in the 1930's among Ngoni who were educated and partly westernized.

867 While the organization of the *laweni* catered for all boys from their
881 second teeth till their marriage, including boys from the age sets called *abantwana* and *amajaha*, the organization of girls' life followed a

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

different pattern. They also went to sleep with a grandmother or some other older member of the family when they were old enough to be excluded from their mother's hut at night, and they shared with their small brothers the grandmother's care and her story-telling round the fire in the evenings. During the day the girls continued as part of their mother's household group, eating with her and the younger children. As little girls they were taught to sit down carefully and to smooth down the cloth which they wore round their waists. They were trained to speak correctly and to know the right forms of address, to greet strangers politely, to avoid touching their father's mats or bed, to eat tidily and with restraint. The emphasis was on exclusiveness for these high-born Ngoni girls, lest, as a result of mixing too freely with everyone, they should forget the teaching given and the behaviour which was expected of them. In contrast to their brothers' rigorous training in the *laweni*, Ngoni girls, as they showed signs of approaching puberty, were guarded and looked after and instructed further in correct behaviour.

When a girl found that she was menstruating for the first time, she told one of her age mates and sent her to tell her *gogo*.[1] The *gogo* told her to stay in the hut during the period and showed her how to wear a cloth between her legs, which she had henceforth to wear always whether menstruating or not. She was told to sleep from now on in a different part of the hut from the smaller children and never to bathe with younger girls. At the end of her first period the girl was escorted to the women's bathing-place by her father's sisters and other female members of her father's family. She was made to wash in the stream and squat in the cold water while doing so. I saw more than one child trying to control her shivering while her relatives watched to see if she would be strong and brave, or weak and cowardly. When she was in the water she was made to face south-east—the quarter which the Ngoni called *kwathu* (our home). After this ceremony the girl's father and mother were informed, and her father informed the head of his *banja* and the head of the village. The news was greeted with rejoicing and made generally public.

From about the age of ten or eleven, the Ngoni girl belonged to an age set distinguished by a separate name. She was no longer included in the group of children, as were her brothers of the same age, but was marked out by belonging to the age set called *inkakazana* or *mabuthu*. After her first menstruation she belonged to the age set called *izintombi* or *anamwali*. From this stage, Ngoni girls were under the close supervision of the older women. The association of a *gogo* or older woman with each house in a Ngoni village meant that the girls of the house were under her special care, particularly after they had passed puberty. There

[1] *gogo* in this context is used for grandmother or for the elderly woman to whose care the girl was assigned.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR

565 836 864 881 were clearly defined aims in this care of girls after puberty, including instruction in personal hygiene and in pre-marital sexual relations. A girl's father's sisters and her own mother wanted to be able to say, when marriage negotiations began: *Ngombe zake zidzala*, 'her cattle are full', which was the comment made when girls were examined periodically to see if they were still virgin. To achieve this they constantly said to her: '*Mudzinunge, mudziletse*', 'take care of yourself, control yourself'; and the *gogo* explained to the girl how she could protect herself. In one area where I lived, the chief's daughter was examined every week, with her *izidandani* or companions, and the girls who helped in the big house were examined every month. The strict behaviour required of Ngoni girls of good family was expected also of those of the same age who were members of the same household, either appointed to be with them as companions or as servants in the big house.

868 881 565 Looking forward to marriage involved not only preservation of her virginity. An Ngoni girl going to a strange village had to know how to perform women's work in the home, how to do it herself as well as how to direct others, and she had to be carefully trained in that meticulous and exclusive social behaviour required of Ngoni women of good family. She might be going to marry a man who intended to 'marry up', in which case she might be thought in one sense to be 'marrying below her station'. Yet her personal position as a member of her father's clan and family could not be altered by her marriage, and she was well aware that she was conferring something on the man and on the family she married into.

[562] While the boys were learning their roles in later life in the democratic atmosphere of the *laweni* and of the boys' pursuits in the village, the girls in the later stage of their training after puberty were treated more individually, and were not left to find their level in a group of their age mates. The adult women took an active part in telling them how to behave, how to dress and how to cook. The girls of high-ranking families sometimes pounded maize with their age mates, singing as they did so, but more for fun than because their food depended on it. They learned to dress their hair and put on clothes, and to walk and dance in company with other girls, but always with the critical eye of their *gogo* upon them. Their lower-ranking companions could make mistakes and be careless, and walk and dance in an exaggerated fashion. Ngoni girls might never pass certain bounds of decorum, and the standard expected of them was high and exacting. I have heard *manina* of leading clans scold young girls many times for careless behaviour and badly done work.

562 565 867 In this training, as throughout that of the boys, there was a deliberate preparation for leadership. A girl's character and ability were being watched and, while an awareness of her personal dignity and position was being fostered, it was accompanied by requirements of obedience

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

and docility, especially to older women. This last was intended to stand her in good stead when she went to be married in a strange village and would be expected to show subservience to her mother-in-law. At the same time, since the girl belonged to a high-ranking clan, she knew, and so did those who were training her, that she would eventually have to exercise authority and teach others what to do and show them how to do it. She would also be expected to have a mind of her own and to speak out on occasions to her husband and, when she grew older, to rebuke women in her house or in her service if they did anything amiss. 562 565 867

In pre-European days, between the private puberty ritual and her marriage, the Ngoni girl went through another ceremony, the *umsindo*. This was a pre-marriage rite, and was in many instances followed almost immediately by marriage. It was held for girls of high-ranking families, though their companions from their own and other villages shared in the ritual. The ceremony was abandoned after the missionaries came, but many of the songs and the dances were well-known to the leading Ngoni women. I saw many *umsindo* dances in the northern and central kingdoms and collected a number of the songs which were still in use, some sung to solo instruments, such as the *igubu*, and others sung at funerals or at tribal gatherings. Those *umsindo* songs which referred to sexual intercourse and used expressions which were considered obscene, had been sung only at the ceremony itself. The Ngoni made a practice of referring to genital organs and to sexual intercourse in veiled language. As soon as the meaning of the terms became obvious, they were disguised by other allusive terms. The degree of obscenity in the actual words of songs was therefore very difficult to establish, but Ngoni informants were always clear about which could be sung in public and which only on occasions of licence or strictly in private. 881 836 565 [797] [178] [195] [831]

The *umsindo* ceremony as a preliminary to marriage fulfilled certain functions. It was a public declaration that the girl for whom it was held had been examined and found to be a virgin, for it was not held for anyone who had been deflowered in earlier love affairs. It emphasized the social rank and the wealth of the girl's father, for only rich and important men could afford to hold *umsindo* for their daughters. It had a strong element of a *rite de passage* in it, for the girls were secluded in a hut during most of the ceremony, they fasted, they were given instruction by older women, and they were finally 'brought out' of the hut and adorned with parts of the beasts slaughtered, and with beads given as presents by friends and relatives. Perhaps the chief significance of the *umsindo* was the fact that it was a ceremony held for the girl in her father's village. It was an assertion of her membership in her own family and village circle, and of her father's status and of his regard for her. There is no doubt that the Ngoni women of high rank had a keen sense of their own importance and position; the *umsindo* ceremony [554]

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

emphasized this, and was a reminder of their careful bringing up in their father's village surrounded by their attendant girls and older women.

Many of the *umsindo* songs referred to well-known events in Ngoni history. Others were warnings against jealousy when living in a polygynous household. One of these, said to be a lament of the women about the difficulties of polygynous households, was very popular in the northern kingdom and was used by Ngoni ministers in the churches when speaking against polygamy, even though the actual words of the song seemed to be referring to a historical event.

The boys and girls went through one common ceremony about the age of seven, when their second teeth were coming. The local tribes practised various forms of scarification, including facial tribal markings. The Ngoni never did this in the past and said that they despised it. Their distinctive marking was the piercing of the ear lobes in order to insert a small piece of reed, or a stud, or some beads. Formerly, when captives were taken in war, or when a village was conquered and annexed, the local people, especially the younger men, were forced to have their ears pierced as a condition of service in the regiments. After the Europeans came, the forcible ear-piercing was resisted by the local tribes, but among the Ngoni, especially those of trans-Zambesi clans, it continued to be practised, and I saw it being carried out in several villages. It was done in the dry cold-weather months, usually by one of the senior women of the children's family or house, and included all the children of about the same age who wanted to have their ears pierced. The woman pierced the lobe with a thorn, or a needle if she had one, and threaded some cotton through the hole. A day or so later they put in tiny bits of grass and replaced these with larger and larger bits until the hole was considered the right size.

After this ear-piercing ceremony, the boys' and girls' groups developed on their separate lines until their members became interested in each other as members of the opposite sex. Then, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, the groups of youths and girls were the two most prominent age groups in a village. They paid great attention to their clothes, washed with sweet-smelling leaves, used fats to anoint their hair, and the girls wore bead ornaments in their hair and on neck and wrists. Thus adorned, they spent their leisure time, especially in the cold weather after harvest, visiting other villages, usually in separate groups of youths and girls, except when they went as a team to dance *ngoma* in a neighbouring village.

In the social life of young people in Ngoni villages, the *ngoma* dance played an important part, especially in the northern kingdom. It took place after the harvest and was organised on a 'village team' basis. The boys practised their dance outside the cattle kraal in the evenings, and the girls did their dancing by themselves as a rule. But on the occasion

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

at puberty and their subsequent implications for marriage and sexual life; the social recognition by the society of the significance of this change; and the rituals which marked this transition. Initiation rites, as a form of *rites de passage*, occur in many societies immediately after puberty. The majority of these initiation rites takes the form of a 'school', involving a period of seclusion in some remote locality away from normal social life, varying degrees of physical endurance tests, instruction in traditional hygiene and sex life and in correct behaviour to senior people, with an intense emphasis on submission to authority. At the end of the seclusion period, which varies in different societies from a few weeks to three or four months, there is generally feasting and other forms of rejoicing when the initiates return to their villages to resume normal life but with a new status.

The underlying aim in many initiation rites was to bring home to the individuals, and to the entire age-group which they represented, the dominant importance of fertility in the life of their society. This lesson among the Cewa, one of the ethnic groups living close to the Ngoni, was driven home by a second ritual which occurred at the first pregnancy of every married woman. In sociological and psychological terms the aims of the ritual in initiation schools were to strengthen the individual at a time of crisis in his life, to sanction his new status in society after the period of seclusion and instruction, and to assert the authority of society over the individual through the solemnity and rigour of the ritual. One purpose of these rituals which has not received much attention was to bring together separately boys and girls in homogeneous sex and age-groups for the last time before they broke up into separate heterogeneous relationships on marriage.

Ngoni puberty rituals

The Ngoni, unlike the ethnic groups by which they were surrounded, had no initiation schools either at or after puberty. In spite of their cultural emphasis on the importance

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 of 'staying together', they did not make the occasion of physical maturity an opportunity for driving home the lesson. According to Ngoni tradition the forms of private ritual for girls and for boys had come with them from the [173] south. At one point in their wanderings, said to be in Tanganyika before they settled in Nyasaland, they gave up the practice of circumcision, also brought from the south. This rite, according to tradition, had coincided with boys passing out from herding cattle and being called up into a regiment.

178 The question naturally arises why the Ngoni adhered to their private ritual at puberty, and never adopted any of the 881 local forms of initation schools, and why they abandoned their only corporate ritual of this type: the circumcision school. Various reasons were given by the Ngoni elders for abandoning the circumcision ritual: that there were no more grass to be found of the sharp kind with which the foreskin was cut; that the school which lasted three to four months delayed for too long the intake of young men into the army; and that the young men of non-Ngoni families, compulsorily absorbed into the army, objected strongly to being circumcised.

After a short description of the private ritual for girls and boys, we will return to answer the question why the Ngoni held to these forms.

Girls' private ritual

881 When a Ngoni girl found she was menstruating for the first time, she stayed in the hut where she was sleeping and called her companion or her friend and told her what was taking place. Ngoni women declared that their girls were as a rule unprepared, and that the flow of blood was unexpected and alarming. Some Ngoni girls agreed that this was true. The majority said, 'We knew about this from our older sisters and companions, but we hid this knowledge from the elders.' The companion or friend found a senior helper in the grandmother's household, generally the one who had supervised the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

girl's former nurse girl and had continued to take an interest 881
in the girl. This woman came to the hut, gave the girl a cloth to wear, told her to stay in the hut until the period was over, and instructed her companion to stay with her, bring her food, and look after her other needs. When the period was over, the companion told the senior helper who in the meantime had informed the girl's paternal grandmother, her father's sister (to whom a special message was sent to the village where she lived), and the girl's own mother. The information was always given in the phrase, 'This child has now matured.' The father's sister, who made a special visit for the [604]
purpose, came into the hut and told the girl to get up and follow her. A little procession formed, the father's sister leading, the girl immediately behind her, then the grandmother and other senior women of the father's house, the senior helper who had attended the girl, and finally the girl's mother. At the river the girl was made to take off her clothes [823]
and sit in shallow water, facing south-east, the ritual position adopted in all Ngoni crises of life and death. On the bank the women stood in silence and watched the girl splashing herself with water and trying to control her shivering, until she was allowed to come out and given clean clothes to put on.

Back at the grandmother's hut, the women sat on the veranda, the girl in front of them, legs tucked in sideways, head bent in a respectful attitude. The father's sister led off with some matter-of-fact instructions to the girl. At subsequent periods she would not be in seclusion but she would take every care to conceal her condition from everyone. She must always wear a cloth between her legs, whether menstruating or not, and she must now consider herself separated from the children's and the immature girls' groups. She would sleep only with mature girls in a senior helper's hut, and must wash in the river only with them, and never anywhere near young children or immature girls. Later on, not on this 881
occasion, the senior helper who had assisted her and felt 864

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

88 [864] responsible for her, told her how to keep her legs together if she should sleep with a boy, and warned her against full intercourse and possible pregnancy. This warning was followed up with regular examination to see if the hymen was intact, carried out every two months or so by some senior woman of the girl's father's house.

When the simple ritual was over, the grandmother sent for the girl's father and told him what had taken place. He in turn told the male members of his house and the elders of the village. The news 'So and so's daughter is now mature' was received in the village with quiet rejoicing, and the father was congratulated as one who would in time receive cattle on his daughter's marriage.

881 182 In this ritual the seclusion, washing with cold water and facing south-east in the river were the only strictly ritual acts. Equally important in Ngoni thinking however was the reassertion, at a critical time, of the authority of the women of her father's house over the girl. The girl was also made aware of her new status by being forbidden to perform certain daily functions in the presence of children and younger girls. Later we shall see how the first stages of courtship followed this event.

Boys' private ritual

881 The boys' ritual consisted of two distinct parts. At his first nocturnal emission the boy told one of his age-mates or his friend, who went and told one of the older boys in the dormitory. This older boy told him to go to the river very early in the morning and 'wash strongly', splashing the water all over him, and to do this after each emission. This act, called 'being beaten with water', the Ngoni believed was essential to strengthen the body and assist to control sexual impulse. There was great secrecy observed about this stage, only the boy and his friend and the older boy knowing about it. If other boys said to him 'You have now matured', he denied it vehemently.

THE THRESHOLD OF ADULTHOOD (1)

When the boy's voice began to break, and his father or another older man noticed it, the second part of the ritual took place. The father's brother went to a senior man famed in the village as a herbalist and obtained from him several kinds of roots. These were ground and then cooked either in milk or in the cud from a goat's stomach, usually the latter, for the father liked it to be known that he killed a goat for his son. If the mixture was cooked in milk, a fowl was killed, and in either case the boy was given the meat to eat immediately after the mixture to take away the extremely bitter taste. The cooking took place on a small fire by the kraal gate in the presence of the male members of the father's house. The boy was told to dip the tips of his fingers in the mixture as it was bubbling in the pan and to lick them quickly. He was not expected to show that he found the mixture very bitter as well as hot to touch. At intervals the boy had to jump over the fire, hitting his elbows and knees with the palms of his hands. The more often he did this, the less often did he have to dip in the pan because the mixture soon dried up, but he had to continue dipping and licking till there was no liquid left. The senior men watched intently all through this performance because they believed the mixture not only helped physical growth and muscular strength but would prevent impotence. When this ritual was performed for the heir of a chief, it was followed by a war-dance in the cattle kraal and the boy had to take a second dose of medicine in the kraal surrounded by the warriors. In such a case a bull was killed instead of the customary goat, and the contents of its stomach used for mixing the medicine. The meat was eaten by the boy and his father's relatives.

As in the case of the girls, this boy's ritual was an occasion for asserting the authority of the father and his kin over the boy. For him there was however no separating off into another group after this maturing. He continued to live in the dormitory, herd cattle, and go to school as before.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4
Cewa

The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual

N 881 182 We now come back to the question of why the Ngoni held to this private ritual for girls and boys at puberty. There were three main reasons. The first was that each Ngoni child belonged to his or her father's house. At this sign of physical maturity, significant for the boy or girl, and for the society, the elders of the house asserted anew their authority over them, performed a brief traditional ritual, and watched during the ritual for evidence of the Ngoni personality traits of courage and physical endurance which they expected to see in young adults. The second reason was that the change at puberty was regarded as marking only one of the stages in the development of growing boys and girls. It is true it had more significance for girls, in that it set the mature girls apart as a separate group. But it was not the prelude to immediate M [881] marriage, as the girls' initiation school was among the neighbouring Cewa people; nor was it in old days the prelude for N [171] the boys joining the army. The third reason was that the Ngoni did not regard fertility as the major dominant factor N [842] in the development of young women, as it undoubtedly was considered among the Cewa. They greatly disliked the ritual and the significance of the Cewa female initiation rites and forbade Ngoni women to have any part in them. Potency N [833] among men, on the other hand, was recognized as important both for the individual and for the social group, and impotence, particularly in leading men, was kept secret and hidden from outside knowledge as far as possible. If an Ngoni N [842] woman after marriage did not bear children, it was not con- [595] sidered a stigma on her, either individually or socially. The [597] common practice of marrying one of her sisters as a 'substitute', or the very common practice of adoption was resorted to. The latter was always referred to as 'putting a child into the house of So and so'.

N 881 171 One of the alleged objects of initiation schools among other ethnic groups was to instruct the young initiates in correct

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave. 881 171

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasaland had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's family were taken from the herd belonging to that house. 177 561 641 561 [702] [464] 885 [302] [836] [591] [583]

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

new wife to replace the divorced woman. Divorce however seems to have been rare, and in the genealogies I collected I met with only one instance of divorce at this period. 586

3. *Payments and ceremonies*

Betrothal[10] was a preliminary to marriage but was not compulsory. A girl was betrothed only if she was sought in marriage before puberty and the marriage then did not take place until some years after puberty. If a girl passed puberty without being betrothed she was subsequently married without a betrothal period. A man was expected to make presents to the girl he had betrothed and he began to adopt avoidance relationships towards her parents. If after puberty the girl or her parents wished to break off the engagement they could do so but were then under an obligation to return the man's presents. The ceremony at which an aristocratic girl after puberty chose her own husband has been described by Wiese.[11] 584

In the marriage itself there are two main stages marked by two distinct transfers of cattle. The first transfer was called 'snuff-box', *mfuko*. The name of the payment is based on the practice of begging snuff from one's friends and acquaintances and indicates something trifling and not recoverable. It consisted of one beast. Payment of 'snuff-box' established the man's rights to bring an action against an adulterer but it did not give him the right to take his wife away to his own village nor to the custody of any children she might bear him. These rights were obtained only by the payment of bride-wealth, *malowolo*,[12] which consisted of from one to a dozen beasts depending on the status of the woman's father. Both payments, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth, were made by the man or, if he was a young man, by his father to his wife's father. No specifically defined relatives were obliged to help a man find his marriage cattle but a man with few cattle of his own looked for assistance to the head of his cluster. Similarly there were no definite rules of distribution of the marriage cattle among the woman's relatives and the matter 583 [591] [851]

[10] The verb is *ku-komeka* for a man, and the passive *ku-komekwa* for a woman. Cf. Bemba *uku-kobeka* and *uku-kobekwa* in Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Present Economic Conditions* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Four), p. 61.

[11] In his later paper he calls the ceremony *isyamwali*. In the earlier paper he calls the ceremony held at first menstruation *isikamwali* and says that after *this ceremony the girl went with others to choose the man she liked. The* vernacular words he mentions are presumably connected with the modern Nyanja *cinamwali*, which is now sometimes applied to three ceremonies held (1) at first menstruation, (2) six months later, *cinamwali cacimaya*, and (3) after first pregnancy, *cinamwali cachulu*. The abstract noun *unamwali* is sometimes used in place of the concrete *cinamwali*. Cf. Wiese, op. cit., 'Expedição . . .', p. 472, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191; Rattray, op. cit. pp. 189 and 190; Stigand, 'Notes on the natives of Nyasaland, N.E. Rhodesia, and Portuguese Zambesia, their arts, customs and modes of subsistence', *JRAI*, xxxvii (1907), p. 121; Read, 'Tradition and prestige among the Ngoni', *Africa*, ix (1936), p. 472; Young and Banda, *Our African Way of Life*, pp. 22-4. 881

[12] Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola*; also Rattray, op. cit. p. 190.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

If a women
837 believes that her husband is committing adultery with
another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. She
578 usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

864 The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged
[897] five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages.
[533] Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they
[535] also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a
881 girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a
864 month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

864 There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis
[831] is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

842 Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use
830 of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl
[864] learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13]
881 The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour
593 of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her
[535] erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mololo*, a root, and *kajelejele*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cikapa*. Cf. Nyanja *kapakapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

643 take the "child," going with him to a hut to give him instruction, saying, "To-day you stand alone. Look after your people as did your father before you. [183] If a man be at fault, forgive him; but the sin of adultery cannot be pardoned."

IV

THE UNAMWALI CEREMONY

● 881 I. When a young girl finds she has become a woman, she goes and stands beside the pathway [leading to the village]. Any one passing finds her there, standing silent. If it be a man who notices her, he goes off and tells some woman, saying to her, "I have come across game, go and lift it." An old woman goes off to speak to her. She finds the girl, her face enveloped in her calico, and giving no answer to any question put to her. Then the old woman knows the girl is now a matured woman, and takes her off to the stream to bathe her. On returning with her from the water she places her in the hut of the head old woman of the village. (The old woman who first found her is the head of the ensuing ceremony.) Then the old woman goes off to inform other elderly women that "the maiden has reached womanhood." The girl remains in the hut six days. Should she be of the clan of [614] *Kuoni*, they give her porridge made from millet only, if of any other clan, porridge made of any [262] grain. In her relish they do not put salt. Her porridge she eats out of an old basket, and the relish from a potsherd. (This old basket will be

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

thrown away the day she comes out of the *tsimba* hut.) 881

II. On the seventh day, before dawn, one of the old women rises and makes a shrill noise with her tongue, then old matrons only collect and go with the girl to the stream. Should the maiden formerly have been of an insolent nature, she is tied up in a bundle of grass and thrown into the water. The old women warm themselves over a fire on the bank. When the sun gets hot, she is taken out, and set on the bank, and they commence to dance and pull her about, and reprove her, saying, "You there, listen; I sent you to go and draw water for me, and you refused. You said, 'I am not a slave.' But could you have come to the water here to-day? She who has brought you here, is not she that very old creature?" Then she is given all sorts of advice. When they have finished they shave her head and pubes, and rub her with oil and adorn her with beads. Then the old woman who is head of the ceremony takes her up on her back, and as they go they sing— [302]

"Wrinkles, mother, wrinkles,
I was at my own home, and never a wrinkle,
I came among the Angoni,
I saw wrinkles,
Wrinkles, O!
Things like this all fall on me.
Maiden cluck like an old sitting hen,
How can I cluck, I am only a young bird?
Cluck."

[539]
[533]

When they come with her to her mother's house, they sing—

"Tumbling about the things in her mother's hut.
In the hut that is no longer hers."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

881 585 III. Then they spread a mat and go and bring her husband, and set them down on the mat side by side and begin to shave his head. As the hair falls the people throw down beads. Then they take a stick and lay it across the legs of the man and woman so that each may know it is that stick that will beat them [if they do wrong]. When they have finished shaving the man, they bring oil and rub the bodies of the man and woman. When it is dark the old women escort the girl to her husband's hut. The *ndiwo* relish is cooking on the fire. [243] During the night the woman rises and puts some salt in the pot. Next morning, before dawn, before the villagers have opened their doors, the woman goes off, and gives some of the relish to her mother, and to the old woman who was mistress of the ceremony. This relish she just sets down at the door, and when they open they find it, and rub it on their feet and under their arm-pits; little children just eat it. If she have any relations who are at a distance, they sharpen a little piece of bamboo and stick the relish on the end (and put it aside) that the distant one, when he returns, shall also rub his feet with it. Perhaps the absent one, should he not have heard that these events have happened when he comes to the village, and should say, "Give me water that I may drink," they refuse him, but with a purpose, even though the water is there, and go and bring the relish that first he may rub some on his feet. It may be the woman *discovers that her husband is impotent*, then she just stays in her hut and does not come forth to distribute the relish. Then the old women [who know the reason] will persuade the man, saying, "Go off to the man with the lots to consult them" [187] [to see what is to be done]. When he goes off (on [188] this errand) some other man is called in, and he

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

will finish the ceremony [that the relish may be given out]. Should the girl, before she came to maturity, not have been betrothed to any man, the matrons tell her she must go to some lover; this is known as "chigango." In the evening she takes her cooking pot and relish and goes to the quarters of the young unmarried men, who for the night sleep somewhere else. In the morning the girl goes back to the *Kuka* hut.

V

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

I. When a woman becomes pregnant, the matrons of the village tell the husband "he must now no longer cohabit with her." If the man have another wife he goes off to her house. When the time draws near for the woman's accouchement, she bids her husband leave her. He goes to one of the village matrons and tells her, "My wife is very ill." Then old women go to the hut and begin to take out all the cooking utensils and household goods. Should the woman have difficulty in giving birth the old women bid her confess, saying, "*Speak, child, lest you die; who committed adultery with you?*" Should she have been faithless she confesses, saying, "I sinned with so and so." The matrons hide such confessions. When she is safely delivered they bathe the infant, then one old woman goes off to tell the husband, "Your wife is well." Perhaps the woman has given birth to a male child, then she tells him, "You have seen a knobkerry."

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

N M 173 829 177 [582]

this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chinamwali*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *umsindo* or *umgonxo* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chinamwali*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

N M [881]

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

N M [191] [562]

N [178]

N 114

If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chamtendere*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Beyond the village the Native Courts deal to a great extent with matrimonial matters, and are responsible for issuing marriage certificates. The Administration is concerned to see that marriage stability is maintained, that women are not denied justice in marriage disputes, and that adultery and prostitution do not flourish. The missions are interested in the maintenance of monogamy and the development of Christian marriage.

An unmarried individual is under the tutelage of the person who rears him. It is true that sometimes people say that children are responsible for their own actions before the court, and that truant schoolboys can be made to pay their fines themselves, but in practice it would be a harsh parent who denied help to his son in such a predicament. He has a legal right to refuse to accept responsibility for his child's actions, and public opinion would support a parent who washed his hands of a recalcitrant son who had given much trouble to his father for many years. A parent should however be very patient with his children, hoping that in the end after he has borne with their escapades they will become mature and wise. Where the child is in charge of another relative, such as a parent's sibling or a grandparent, the same attitude of adult towards child is expected. Some children live peaceably with their parents, and accept their direction in important affairs, while others move off of their own accord to more congenial kinsfolk or to earn their livelihood as best they can as juvenile labourers on the tobacco farms.

In relation to marriage this variable pattern of dependence and independence shows itself characteristically. Girls are on the whole more dependent on their parents than boys, yet some girls become economically independent and seek their own husbands a few years after puberty, while some men in their late twenties ask their parents to find wives for them. Between these two extremes the majority of the young population seek their own sexual partners but turn to their parents for assistance in arranging the marriage.

An unmarried girl depends on her kinsfolk for shelter and food, and it is they who take action on her behalf to protect her interests and to defend their own rights in her. If she is seduced and becomes pregnant her kinswomen find out from her the name of her lover. It is said that a girl will sometimes suggest the name of a lad whom she dislikes rather than reveal her true lover. Other people say that a girl will indicate the name of the man she wants to marry, whether or not he is the genitor of her child, in the hope that he will then marry her to avoid trouble. The girl's father, if he is available, takes the matter to court if he cannot get satisfaction from the alleged genitor, and it is to the father that the lover pays a beast[1] if he is found guilty. The child belongs to the girl's kin. The girl's parents may try to persuade the lover to marry their daughter if they think he will make her a good husband, but if he does not find favour in their eyes they remain hostile to him. We shall see later

[1] Called *cidowe*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from those of their wives. 592 [882] [858] [595] 423

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cooking and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda. 342 [343] [252]

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized. 621

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalaweni, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were founded. 621 103

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of individuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary, 621 622 [103]

/5 cont'd/

614 Clan names, however, are inherited from the father in most Ngoni
551 families. These names are used as surnames for the purposes of the
576 Administration, and as forms of polite address. On marriage, a man
428 and wife may live in either the village of the man or of the woman,
591 although the custom whereby initially they should live in the village of the woman for a few years is still followed by some.

III

361 In the village there are dwelling huts, storehouses, pens for the small animals, drying platforms, and cattle byres. The huts are often arranged in rather uneven parallel lines, with all the huts facing
351 the same way. The fences found in other parts of the country enclosing a small courtyard round the hut, are not often seen here.
342 Each married woman has her own hut, and possibly a smaller hut as
423 well, used as a kitchen and sleeping place for visitors and children. Unmarried adolescents of one sex sleep together in modest huts they
882 have built for themselves or else in a hut left empty by a former resident. Where bamboos are available, as in the north and east of
342 the area, they are used to form the framework of a circular hut. The
[824] walls are made in two concentric circles, with mud plastered on the inside of the inner circle, but with the outer circle often left unmudded. The walls are made in unbroken circles, doorways being cut out later with an axe. The space between the two circles is used
[353] for storing pots and other household goods and is sometimes used for cooking. The bamboos are woven together, split bamboos going horizontally and unsplit ones vertically, so that light is able to pass through the unplastered wall. Open lattice fencing is also found forming part of the outer wall.

Where bamboos are not available, either circular or rectangular huts of poles and mud are made. Rectangular huts are often subdivided with a partition wall, to make a separate sleeping place, while the verandah may be partly walled in to make a cooking shelter protected from the weather. With both bamboo and pole huts, the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 857 883 865 868

Herding as preparation for war

Preparation for war began in youth. When boys were about ten or twelve they were sent to herd goats or calves; when they were older they herded the cattle. At this time the boys were in the bush with their elders who were often haughty and fierce. The older herders taught the boys how to fight and how to defend themselves. They taught them to fight with twigs and sticks; the older herders fought with *izinduku* (knobkerries) and *izinkhonjo* (wooden swords). They were not allowed to fight with real spears though some had them. The older herders stirred up the hearts of the younger to fight and taught them to strike each other with knobkerries and to use little shields. If the herders of one village met the herders of another, the bulls were teased till they fought, and the little herders also. The small herders were not allowed to say anything about the herding to their parents. The older herders also loved to fight as in war with those of other villages. At such times the older men and even the elders came out from the village to see the battle and to stir up the hearts of the boys. If the herders of one village ran away they were laughed at, but the winners were greatly praised.

At the time when the cattle ate the refuse in the maize-gardens, after harvest, fighting most often broke out. Some of the boys provoked their neighbours to go and drive the cattle into the maize-fields of another village deliberately. The custom was that cattle might eat in the maize-gardens of their own village and the boys ought to ask if they may go into the fields of others. The herders did this to annoy the other herders and to start a fight. Often a great struggle was the result and the young men of the village who had outgrown herding joined in the fight to help the youngsters of their village. But they did it sensibly, none caused a wound with a spear, for anyone who did that was punished by law.

So the boys grew accustomed to the first steps in fighting which would help them later in war. Those who knew how to protect themselves with a knobkerry and small shield had no scars on their heads, but there were many long ago who had scars from fighting in the herding time. Children of the chief were in the same predicament—if they could not defend themselves they were beaten by their herding companions and possibly got their heads broken. The flowing of blood was not considered very serious, only if one did it in a stealthy way then he had to pay compensation. In this way the boys grew up with stout hearts and loved fighting.

Another thing which excited the boys was the custom of whistling. The boys were very expert and quick in expressing changes of mood in whistling. This was done so that the cattle would go carefully or quickly, but also when they were fighting the herders loved to whistle and even the older men in war did so also. The whistling stirred up the hearts of those who were thinking of running away. There were many ways of whistling and some were very good at it.

[198]

Enlistment

539 702

When the young men reached the age of 21–26 they left off herding. Sometimes it was their fathers who stopped them, sometimes they themselves wished to stay at home. They took their shields (*amahowu*) and

262 1930's that the Ngoni did not live as well as they might and had, in fact, an impoverished diet, because they did not make full use, and sometimes very little use, of the milk and meat which they had available. In pre-European days, when the possession of cattle was confined to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading *ahumuzana*, there was a continuous slaughter of animals to provide a regular diet of meat and *ulubende*, the cooked blood which the Ngoni liked very much. The heads of the big houses saw that there was always on hand *amasi*, the milk curds which was the form in which adults took their milk, fresh milk being reserved for young children and herd-boys. This provision of meat, *ulubende* and *amasi* was only possible for those who had plenty of cattle, [721] and in both kingdoms wars and raids were carried out partly to obtain fresh supplies of cattle from neighbouring and unconquered tribes. As we saw in the chapter on the Paramount, in pre-European days the *ahumuzana* who lived near enough to the royal village made a practice of calling frequently, if not daily, and such calls were rewarded by their being asked to eat with the Paramount, and 'food' in those days was predominantly meat. Between fighting seasons, that is during the rains, the young men (*amajaha*) who were newly recruited to the regiments [883] were kept busy in and around the Paramount's village and the head villages of the *ahumuzana*, mending fences, making shields, and clearing new land. When they were thus employed they also were fed by the Paramount or *muhumuzana*, who regarded these periodic feasts for the *amajaha* as one of the first calls on the consumption of his cattle. The Ngoni later rationalized this earlier procedure of restricting meat and milk consumption to certain groups of people by arguing that it made the young warriors strong and able to fight and endure hardships, and they declared that the senior men and women who also shared the Paramount's supplies lived long and had great wisdom and strength of character. This rationalization was not only looking back to a past Utopia. It was also based on the argument that Europeans ate meat regularly and that they were strong, both physically and politically.

262 178 The European criticism in the 1930's that the Ngoni did not make full dietary use of their cattle and their products was justified, but there are two factors to note in this connexion. One was that the number of those who lived well on meat and milk in the old days was relatively small—confined in fact to cattle-owners, women owners of big houses, and warriors. The situation changed after the Europeans came, and a large number of people owned a few cattle and many of the new owners had no tradition about using their products. Among the cattle-owners of the Swazi clans the tradition of cooking blood and making curds continued and both were valued as food, but some of those who had only recently become owners of cattle did not know these practices, and 262 I came across many cattle-owners of local tribes who did not know how 272 to milk a cow. The failure to use milk in the Ngoni diet was due partly

'A NEW STRANGER HAS COME'

After this formal visit had taken place, the young mother was free to visit her former home more often, and her relatives could come and see her and her baby in her husband's village. 593 594

Taking care of the baby

There were two special features of infant care among the Ngoni which were not found among the neighbouring peoples. One was the assignment of a nurse girl from outside the circle of relatives to care for a new infant. The nurse girl was chosen by the grandmother from among her dependent household staff, and was allotted to one particular baby. The girl, who was usually in her early teens and unmarried, was supervised by an older woman, also of the grandmother's household. This woman watched over the personal behaviour of several nurse girls, as well as seeing that they did their work properly as nurses. 854 357 [592] [885]

The nurse girl took charge of the baby in the early morning and kept it with her all day until nightfall, bringing it back to the mother at more or less regular intervals for suckling. The mother played with the baby if she felt like it, and sent for the nurse girl to bring it to her if strangers came and she wanted to display the child. The Ngoni commended this practice by saying that their women kept clean because they did not carry babies about all day on their backs. They admitted at the same time that many infants grew greatly attached to their nurse girls, to the extent of being happier with them than with their mother. The nurse girls did not take little babies far afield. They stayed around within the fences of the household or near at hand, helping with domestic chores, chatting to other nurse girls, helping to prepare meals, and eating with the baby's mother and anyone else who formed part of the household eating unit. At night, after she had given the baby to its mother, she went off to sleep in the hut of the older woman who was in charge of her and other nurse girls.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

535 628 is now danced by villages. The important men in one village suggest to another village that this dance should be held in the latter village. If this is agreed, beer is brewed in the second village and on the prearranged day many people from the first village come in procession from their village to the dance. The visiting dancers enter the cattle byre and start to dance. They are joined by people from the home village. The dancers are arranged in two lines, men on one side and women on the other, and the dance consists of a series of virtuoso performances by two or three men and women at a time in the space between the two lines, to the accompaniment of clapping and antiphonal singing. [533] The dance is followed by drinking and more dancing. Later in the year, or in the next year, the host village goes to the home of the visitors, and the performance is repeated.

535 628 883 Of more frequent occurrence are dances involving girls only. These are usually held on Sunday afternoons, and as at the *ngoma* dances, at least two villages are involved. Here the initiative is taken not by the important men but by the senior unmarried girl in the village. She invites a girl of similar status in another village with whom she is acquainted, or whom she has seen dancing, to bring a team of girls to dance in her village. This kind of dance is competitive in that the visitors are opposed by a similar team of girls from the home village, who dance separately from the visitors until, at the end of the session, the two teams combine. That team which has danced best is held to be the winner, although there is always great doubt as to which team this is. The girl who invited the visitors is responsible for seeing that the visiting team is fed, although beer is not provided. No work is done in the gardens on Sundays, so that these dances always attract a large number of onlookers. As with *ngoma*, a return match is danced at some later date. The pairs of villages that are linked in these dance exchanges are not always those that contain many people related to one another. One girl may ask an acquaintance in another village to find a team; in one case the girl who made the invitation did not know the name of the girl she was inviting.

Beer-drinking

273 [271] [574] [272] Beer, water, and tea are the three main drinks of the Ngoni. The ordinary rules of hospitality govern the drinking of water, which is provided for the traveller whenever he asks for some. Tea is sold in the roadside stores known as hotels. Beer is more important socially

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their spears and gathered together; they went to the kraal and began to dance the *ligubo* war dance. Sometimes they set themselves in order as though they were out on a raid; they came out at the right middle of the kraal and went *pa lisango*, toward the gate, singing, marching, and shaking their shields and spears. Sometimes they retreated as though running from the enemy, then turned about as though running to meet the enemy again. This was done to show how they could fight and defend themselves from the enemy. It showed that the boys were now young men and of the warrior class, and they were asking to be admitted to the status of grown men. If the old men agreed that their prayer should be granted they were formed into a new regiment (*libandla*) and were given a senior to lead and govern them.

539 702 [884]

The Army

All the war companies were under the Paramount. He had the power to call the whole army to go out against enemies. But all big villages and villages of men of reputation had their own companies, like Zulu Gama, Njerenjere Sibande and many others. These companies were under the war *induna* of the Paramount and when they were called they came quickly to the village of the Paramount which was the central meeting place. A *libandla* (company) was divided into *mabuto* (sections) sometimes of 100 or more. For each section there was an *induna* who led it in war, judged all disputes, and spoke for it to the war *induna*. The war *induna* was the eye of the Paramount in all that pertained to war.

539 704 [643]

The army was divided into companies corresponding to the districts or chiefs' villages and all the company leaders were under the war *induna*. All the parts of the army were divided in lesser parts in accordance with the generation of the young men, *amajaha*, and the older men, *amadoda*.

Mobilization

If desired the Paramount had power to send a summons through the whole country that his army should mobilize in his village in order that he might see it. The lesser chiefs had the same power for their districts. The man who delivered the summons went into the kraal and shouted that the Paramount wished the army to gather at the central meeting place. The message was spread everywhere. Then all the sections in the villages and in the districts of the lesser chiefs and clan heads hastened to come at the appointed time. The Paramount prepared cattle to be killed for the army. As the sections were marching in they sang the songs called *imihubo*. Section by section they chose their *muhubo* for arriving and entering the kraal and each section drew up by itself. An open space was left between the sections so that they might be known.

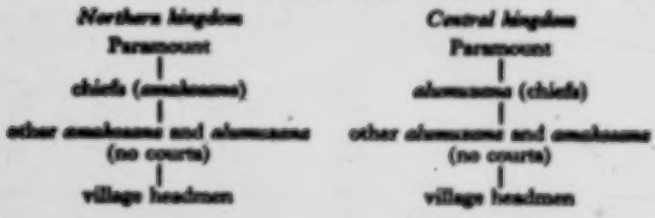
539 726

When they had all gathered in their places the herald rose and shouted '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayigube*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, let them dance.' This was to tell the sections to begin the war-dance. Each section got up with one heart and made a wide circle and began to dance. One of them began a song which he remembered on the spur of the moment from the *ligubo* and led off, the whole section took it up waving their shields and thrusting with their spears now right now left according to their step and each foot stamping the ground.

[535]

 184

Ngoni territorial office-bearers. 622



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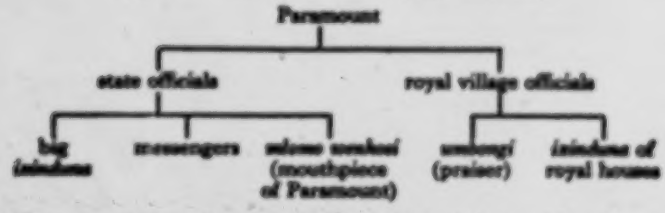
Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *isinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only recited the praise-songs at ceremonies in the royal village. 643 645

The big *isinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *isinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below his. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *abamnana* and *amakosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned. [203] 885

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the 692

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

885 692 diagram is that of the *mabuda*, the older men who wore the head-ring. Probably in pre-European days they received more recognition than was apparent in the 1930's after the head-ring had been given up. The *mabuda* will be referred to in the next chapter on the royal village and in Chapter V of Part III on age sets. In the appeal court of the Paramount and in the chief's court there was always a group of these senior men sitting behind the *isinduna*, to whom the *induna* speaking to the case sometimes turned for advice and consultation.

645 Reference was made to an overlap between territorial office-bearers and national office-bearers. The big *isinduna*, the spokesman of the Paramount, and sometimes the messengers, were members of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and often were *abamuzana* who had no courts. This was a method by which in the 1930's those *abamuzana* could be drawn into the circle of officials and receive a small salary for their services.

This set of office-bearers which we have considered in relation to the Paramount, with the exception of his spokesman and his praiser, was duplicated for the chiefs in both kingdoms, whether they were of the royal clan or *abamuzana*. The account of the royal village in the central kingdom which follows in the next chapter will illustrate how these officials functioned in the day-to-day affairs of the Paramount's headquarters.

CHAPTER V

A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933

The Paramount and his village

361 [114] [13] 161 For some weeks in 1935 and in 1936 I lived in the Paramount's village of Magangu in the central kingdom. The central kingdom included all Nchesu district, consisting of 1,092 square miles, a total population of 88,446, and a density of 80·99 per square mile. The village was 300 yards off the main road running from north to south of Nyasaland, and was approached by a hoed motor road flanked by huts. It consisted of three main sections: the Paramount's large brick residence and the surrounding buildings within a palisade or reed fence, including the huts of his daughter and son-in-law, and of his brother-in-law and sister; the huts and kraal in the section of the *induna* of his big house, Kalikumbe Mbewe; and the huts and kraal of the original village 'owned' by the headman, Lazaro Daoni. On the south of the village was the large open space where the weekly market was held, and where several Indian stores faced the main road. On the north was the dispensary building,

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

behaviour especially to elders, and to enforce by dramatic and sometimes brutal means a submissive attitude towards authority. That objective, as we have seen, was carried out by the Ngoni throughout their training of their children, from the earliest age upwards. They were half amused and half scandalized at the idea that young people had to be put in a camp in the bush in order to teach them how to behave.

Cultural changes in the assumption of adult roles

It is necessary to look back for a moment to the Ngoni past in order to see how changed external conditions in Nyasaland had altered the sequences and the timing of the process by which youths and young girls were recognized as adults. The stages of arriving at social maturity had been speeded up by cultural changes. In the days of warfare the senior herd-boys, from about twenty years of age, were called up at irregular intervals to form a new regiment. From this time they were known as 'young men' or 'youths', and they fought in the tribal wars for five years. In the off-season, during the rains when raids were not carried out, they were called to clear and cultivate the gardens of the Paramount and chiefs, and to help build houses and fence cattle kraals. At approximately the age of twenty-six to twenty-eight they were ordered to take the head-ring, the form of dressing the hair which formerly marked a married Ngoni man, and they were told they could marry and retire from the army. The older Ngoni declared that young men were not allowed to sleep with girls at all until they joined the army. Even then the relationship had to be initiated by the girl expressing her preference for a lover, and then sex relations were limited to partial intercourse. It was at marriage, after having been given the head-ring, that Ngoni youths were called 'men'. They moved out of the dormitory and built a hut for their wives in the area behind the huts belonging to their father's house. The cattle handed over on their marriage to the bride's family were taken from the herd belonging to that house.

[177 561 464] The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, [871 434 583] if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that [885] earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the headring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any probition on marriage until [582] a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no [167] wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, mitigated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony meant—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

885 the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex
533 organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events.
831 Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut
292 of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt,
885 cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often
301 trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the premarriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like
[237] beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement
885 that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage
556 negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after.
593 It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for
[836] the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'

177 This ritual was given up about the time the missions began
885

to establish their hold. The Ngoni elders said the missions did not like it, and alleged that they gave it up for this reason. But they held on to other rituals also not approved by the missions, and it was probably largely due to the fact that there were no longer large herds of cattle to provide lavish feasts. The songs were remembered and sung by the older women when dancing the special dances associated with the ritual, holding in their hands short rods and small rounded shields, and making stiff jerking movements of head and elbows. Such dances as were put on for me were however a relic and not a living tradition. For the Ngoni girl of good family there was no longer any intervening ritual between her private puberty ceremony and the marriage ceremony.

The marriage age of girls, like that of men, was much earlier than formerly, the most usual age being from sixteen upwards. Most of the older women held that this left very little time in which to teach girls all that they were expected to know before being married and leaving their own home and their father's village for good. This was a particular cause of anxiety to the senior women in areas where the young men emigrated soon after marriage, and where the girl had to maintain her own position and reputation among his relatives without his companionship and support.

Young adults in Ngoni society

We have just seen that cultural changes coming from the outside radically altered the traditional pattern of development of Ngoni youths and girls. The net result of these changes was to telescope the period between physical maturity at puberty and full adult status at marriage, to squeeze the former eight to ten years of this intervening period into about two for the girls and four at most for the youths. This shortened period of preparation for full adult life raised a number of problems for the Ngoni elders. They were aware, as was suggested in the beginning of this chapter, that the attainment of physical maturity called for some re-alignment

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 726 [834]

village in grass-shelters opposite the kraal gate, and no one was allowed to go to a house or to be with his wife. They said that if a man broke this law the army would be unlucky. Even the Paramount if he still went with the army slept there outside. If the Paramount left for the war, his oldest *induna* left his own village and went to the Paramount's and stayed there till the army came back. In the royal village there was continence and all the people were ordered to control themselves in the villages, until the army left.

When the army went out the old men accompanied it, but after they had spoken words of warning they came back to the village. The chief point in it all was that the young men should have courage, and should help each other if one is wounded or there is any other difficulty, and should obey the leaders. They warned the leaders too to begin the fighting wisely and not on a bad or treacherous place. If a leader did that sort of thing and many were killed a case was brought against him. When the army went out two sections were detached to guard the village. These stayed at home along with the companies of old men. They 'kept the tribe', the Paramount and the old people and the stock.

The approach and attack

When the army went out it marched very slowly, and halts for the night were at short intervals. All the sections kept together as ordered by the war *induna*. In all the sections there were scouts to show the way for the army. In each section one or perhaps two were chosen and were put together to walk ahead and look carefully, and come and report any news, especially when they were in enemy country. When the army rested, the scouts went forward to see if there was any danger near. When the army slept in grass-shelters, one or two sections were sent to guard against danger both in front and rear. The army had provision carriers, that is, those who carried food and the coverings of the old men. These were boys and girls, sometimes women from their houses. These were not sent by the Paramount but each household chose its young people to carry the food. The section of the food carriers had another section to protect them when the enemy were attacked or when they went to meet enemies.

When the army was near the enemy stockade the leader ordered them to sit down and rest before they attacked. At such a time the warriors snuffed or smoked hemp. This hemp-smoking was preferred because it maddened the warriors and gave them hearts without fear in facing the enemy. In the enemy stockade the drums would be beating to show that their enemies were angry, but the army of the Ngoni sat and rested as though there were no enemy.

When the army had rested, the war *induna* and the other *izinduna*, or the leader of this army (for all the armies that went out were put under one man of whom they said, the owner of this army is so and so) scouted to see the difficulties of the stockade and to choose a good place for attack.

When it had been carefully chosen and the *izinduna* had agreed together how the attack should begin, then the leader roused the army and began to dance his own praise-dance. The army responded to him. After

643 766 skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors [287] come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre and the flames go roaring up. They place the child [and heir] where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields, and chant their war songs . . .

The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry . . ., they burn on a fire on one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse is also consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tufts of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief are removed. Next morning all the headmen [302] shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands.

Additional details and slight variations were supplied by Habuya Dube, an old man who was official praiser of Paramount Gomani II. He was also at the funeral.

"After some time Cikusi began to be ill and of that same illness he died. And we danced *Ngulo* for one month, and over a hundred beasts were killed. For a whole week [1] he was in the house, and then soon he began to smell because he was decaying. The grave-diggers, they of the Ngono clan, burned the fat of the cattle and roasted it on the fire, doing it as if to prevent the smell. And they made him hold a cup of beer in his hand. On a certain day we lifted him up and went with him to the water. Then

[1] Compare the previous account which gave four days between death and cremation. At Simbo Mangi's death it was three days.

be used exclusively for either group, and in fact there was considerable overlapping between them. 622 631

We begin with the text by Cibembo which emphasises the hierarchy of office-bearers in the northern kingdom in pre-European days and illustrates the correlation between the courts and the political administration. 645

« The former government of the Ngoni was based on the following:

(1) Above all was the one called *Inkosi* or *UBaba*, because they thought of him as the father of the country, the head.

(2) After him came the *izinduna*. Sometimes these were two or perhaps four. These were very highly honoured and the Paramount feared them greatly: he called them *Bobabe* and their words had great weight with him. They were the ones who gave advice to the Paramount and if any grave matter arose he called them to hear what they thought. The Paramount in his village had also his old men who helped him with everything small that did not need to go to the *izinduna*. If there was word that the Paramount was meeting with the *izinduna* he first of all met with the old men and asked for advice to place before the *izinduna*. And these old men had the right to speak when the Paramount took counsel with the *izinduna*.

(3) After the *izinduna* came the *amakosana*, or lesser chiefs. These were perhaps the younger brothers of the ruling Paramount, and had their districts under him. They also had their *izinduna* and were responsible for their own districts. When the Paramount met with the *izinduna*, the *amakosana* were also there if it was considered fitting.

(4) Then there were the *alomusana*. These were over villages or smaller districts. Their villages were called *amakonda* (heads) and they had power in their small districts to carry out the laws and they looked to the *izinduna* for instructions.

(5) Lastly the old men (*madude*) who wore the head-ring (*idindile*) but not all of them; only those who had good sense and understood the ways of the tribe. [388]

All these five divisions had their share in the government of the country. If there was a great court of justice, all these were to be found at it, and took part in the discussions. If fresh matter arose, or new laws, these delivered them to their villages. Also there were men called *amaxaxat*, messengers. These were men chosen to run with messages from the Paramount to the *izinduna* or *amakosana*, to go with and return with news. Almost every village or little district had its chosen messengers. All the types (2), (3) and (4) had their messengers. When anything happened, the messenger in the village of the Paramount made a general proclamation and called the *amaxaxat* together. When the *amaxaxat* had heard the message they scattered throughout all the country. So in the districts and by this way news travelled very quickly. [202]

In the central kingdom one of the big *izinduna* explained the change in their system which occurred after crossing the Zambesi: 178 622 631

« When the Ngoni were coming from the south they chose lesser chiefs and *izinduna* from the *amakosana*, who were the Paramount's brothers, 645

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of an *ngoma* 'competition' the team was made up of lads and girls of about fourteen to eighteen years old. They went off to another village, having announced their arrival previously, and challenged the 'home team' to dance *ngoma*. The dancing was in the kraal with the adults looking on and acting as judges. It was all very decorous and orderly and the competing teams were in dead earnest. As we have noticed already, the Ngoni danced without drums. The steady beat of the feet of the young men made the rhythm for the dance, but the co-ordination in the long lines of boys in front and girls behind needed assiduous practice to produce harmonious results. In both northern and central Ngoniland the Paramounts had forbidden all dances except Ngoni dances, and in the north the *ngoma* was encouraged by the chiefs because it was considered a 'good dance' for young people.

After marriage, the young women were absorbed in the care of their huts and young children and only appeared as an age set when they took part in a communal hoeing; on such occasions they were inclined to keep apart from the older women, sometimes on the grounds that they did not drink the full-strength beer, and therefore clustered round a pot of 'sweet' beer when they knocked off work. In most Ngoni villages the young men after marriage went off to find work and, as a group of friends within an age set, they would get together to talk things over, make their preparations and travel to the south.

In day-to-day village affairs, as well as on ceremonial occasions, the age sets of the *mamisa* and *madoda* were very much in evidence. The *madoda* met at meal-times by the gate of the kraal, and they went there to count the cattle when they came back in the evening. The same group could be seen either at the kraal gate or on a verandah talking about village affairs or drinking together, or at a court listening to cases. The *mamisa* usually gathered in the verandah of the *indlunkulu* to talk over women's affairs or to receive guests. As an age set they met less frequently than the men because the larger part of their tasks lay in their own huts or in the group of women associated with a house. On all occasions when the formal reception of strangers took place, or when ritual feasting or shaving or washing occurred, or when important decisions had to be made, the *mamisa* and the *madoda* in their separate sets were in evidence.

Although the age sets in village life were social units carrying definite responsibilities and performing recognized activities, their chief importance in Ngoni social life was in regulating behavioural patterns and prescribing mutual relationships. Here we have to take note of a selective principle at work among the *mamisa* and *madoda*. Although in one sense all women and men of forty to forty-five and upwards belonged to these age sets, the individuals who carried out the characteristic activities of these groups did not include all the men and women of that age. The very old people did not continue to exercise any influence in village

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

561 888 affairs unless they were exceptionally vigorous mentally and physically, or the kind of dominating personality who could not be overlooked. It was evident also that individuals of weak character or evil disposition were not included in the group. I saw one or two such persons who bore a bad reputation in village society turned away from a senior group which was talking over a difficult village affair, with the caustic comment: 'Who is that worthless one? We cannot know him.' On the other hand, on social occasions when food or beer was being dispensed, all the old ones and the less reputable ones would be given their share, though sometimes with a cutting remark about the people who never missed a party but never did any work.

Selection in the senior age sets was intended to show that only persons who could be trusted, that is who were of known good character, were qualified to supervise the growing up of boys and girls, for whom the village elders as a group felt responsible. The maintenance of Ngoni standards of behaviour in young people was in the hands of this older group, who could and did exercise authority over and above that of the family and house. There were no more ardent supporters of Ngoni behaviour patterns than some of the older men and women of Ntumba clans in the central kingdom who had been brought up in the houses of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and were recognized as *mamina* and *madala* in their villages.

561 576 Among the younger people below the group of elders, it was common to hear them address each other as *stanga yami*, or *mazanga*, 'my age mate'. Boys shouted it at each other on the cattle ground, young women called to each other in those terms when pounding maize, and when on a visit as an *ngoma* dance team it was a frequent form of address among the youths and girls. There was inherent in that form of address an ease of relationship, an absence of seniority or inferiority, and an acknowledgement of a tie which went beyond that of the family or house or clan. It was most commonly used within a village, but it was sometimes used between young people of different villages.

561 572 Within these groups of youths and girls and among young married men and women, there was a recognized friendship relation, *cibawazi*, which existed as a rule between pairs of individuals of the same sex and age. It was sometimes a continuation of a playmate companionship; sometimes an expression of the need of a young boy in a *lomesi* or a young married woman for a confidante or sympathizer. Most often it was a spontaneous specialized liking for another person, expressed invariably through an exchange of small gifts and generally of confidences, and often by going off together to bathe or cut firewood or catapult small birds. Such friendships were said as a rule to be permanent, though girls and women sometimes referred contemptuously to someone as 'She was my friend. Now she hates me and does not give me anything.' The decision to go off in search of work was often taken

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890)1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

888 Yet the position of the old women of the village was a highly
[622] honoured one. The mother of the headman was almost more powerful than her son. And we always take good care when we enter a new village to win the kindly favour of the old grandmother first of all. Then we are sure we have found a way to the son's heart. One of the most beautiful things in our tribal life is the honour which is paid to the grey hairs of the village. The best and helpless old men who lived through the glorious fighting
[623] days, and understand all precedent and etiquette are the judges and councillors. And no case can be tried, no decision can be made, until the old men give their presence and their opinion. It is hard when the young are leaping ahead of their fathers through education to maintain this veneration for the elders. Yet it is the very backbone of the tribe. There is nothing more contemptible than an African or an Asiatic with a veneer of education who affects to despise the elders of the village. But I know no more pathetic sight than our afternoon schools where grey-haired men and women may be seen peering through faded eyes trying also to learn to read and keep abreast of the young and alert life, while the sun goes down in their eventide.

233 The Ngoni were first of all a fighting people, and then a
[181] pastoral. Their land affords splendid pasture for cattle. And they take great pride in their herds. Round the cattle kraal centre all their ambitions, and highest delights, and best intelligence. They sit and watch the cattle going out in the early morning and coming in in the evening, and know every spot and colour of their beautiful animals. The quietest and most peaceful sight I know is when the sun goes down, and the fierce heat has
[534] given place to the welcome cool of the evening. Then you will hear the music of reed pipes, and looking up you see a long line
[513] of sleek, solemn cows, with large silken dew laps, and fat humps, slowly coming up the village path lowing for their calves, while boys ride on their backs sitting or standing upright, balancing themselves carefully and blowing on their pipes. Before and behind them runs a troop of goats and sheep bleating with such a human cry. In a moment the village is alive—sheep and goats are chased back and forward till they find the huts where they sleep with their masters. And boys run out with wooden pails
[234] into which they milk what the calves have not sucked from their mothers.